

PRESS RELEASE

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PARENT: THE ANTI-DRUG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JACKSON (October 10, 2012) – It is not uncommon for parents to occasionally share their prescription medication with their teenagers, such as a painkiller for a headache or a sports-related injury. Despite the good intentions, this practice can be risky for teens. That behavior may send the message that there's nothing wrong with taking another person's drugs.

Modeling appropriate use of medications and parental disapproval of using other people's prescriptions is a powerful way to keep teens away from drugs. Make sure that your words — and your actions — communicate to teens that it's not safe to take someone else's prescription medication.

Here are ways to set a good example when it comes to prescription drugs

- If you or your family members are taking a prescription medication, discuss the instructions regarding prescribed doses, the time between doses and the need to stay away from alcohol and certain other medications or foods when taking a prescription.
- As with street drugs, express clear disapproval of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drug abuse and misuse to ensure your teen knows exactly where you stand.
- Check prescription and OTC labels about what not to do—for example, driving or using machinery when taking prescription drugs—and enforce these safeguards with family members taking the medication.
- Be careful not to make exceptions to these rules when you are stressed out, uncomfortable or in a hurry. **Consistency is important to send a clear message.**
- Talk to your children about the dangers of prescription and OTC abuse. Regularly reinforce this message and the rules that you've set for your family.
- Keep prescriptions out of sight of teens and guests in your home. For example, it is sometimes convenient to place prescriptions in the window sill over the kitchen sink. This can be destructive to the medication and make access to the medication easy.

Many teens form opinions about prescription and over-the-counter medications based on the behavior and attitude of their parents. Parents can be the best line of defense- educate yourself and model responsible choices when it comes to medication.

For more information go to www.family.samhsa.gov/be/prescriptionharm

You can also contact:

- Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition at (517) 796-5133 or khaynes@uwjackson.org
- Breakout Drug Education Program at (517) 937-9242 or shelly@breakoutdrugfree.org

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