

Nationwide, Emergency Department (ED) visits involving pharmaceuticals have increased 115% over a 7-year period for all ages, with the largest increase (255%) involving Oxycodone™ products. Of these visits, about half (46.8%) were attributed to drug misuse or abuse. Narcotic pain relievers are sending youth (those 20 or younger) to the ED at a rate of 36.6 per 100,000. To provide context, in 2010 the rate of prescription drugs incidents resulting in an ED visit was 458.3 per 100,000.

Source: "Highlights of the 2010 Drug Use Warning Network (DAWN) Findings on Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits", Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2012.

## The dangers are real...

"I was so convinced that he was not using, it became a sort of joke between us – as he would leave home at the end of a weekend, I would frequently say, 'Jason, don't do drugs.' 'I know, Mom,' he would say, 'I won't.' But he did." – Linda Surks, whose 19-year-old son Jason died of a Rx drug overdose (from [getsmartaboutdrugs.com](http://getsmartaboutdrugs.com))

"I've been to more funerals than my grandparents have. It's really upsetting that it has to be that way." – Evan, a 23-year old who had 16 friends die from drug addiction in just 3 years (from [The California Report](http://The California Report))

"Three-quarters of his brain had been damaged. Aaron is now a quadriplegic, unable to speak, confined to a wheel chair." – Sherrie Rubin, whose son Aaron had a heart attack and two strokes after overdosing on OxyContin™ (from [pillskill.net](http://pillskill.net))



**Did you know that prescription drugs are second only to marijuana as teenagers' drug of choice?**

**In Shasta County, 42% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade high school students report recent drug use (including alcohol and marijuana) with 16% saying they are heavy users.**

## Learn More in Shasta County

**Think Again Shasta**  
[www.thinkagainshasta.info](http://www.thinkagainshasta.info)

**Shasta County Public Health**  
[www.shastapublichealth.net](http://www.shastapublichealth.net)

## Other Resources

**Partnership for a Drug Free America**  
[www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)

**Parents. The Anti-Drug**  
[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)

**Get Smart About Drugs:  
A DEA Resource for Parents**  
[www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com)

**Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America**  
[www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org)

**Substance Abuse and  
Mental Health Services Administration**  
[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)



The Community Prevention Initiative (CPI) is administered by the Center for Applied Research Solutions and funded and directed by the California Department of Health Care Services, Substance Use Disorder Prevention, Treatment & Recovery Services Division.

## Shasta County Parents Beware:

High school students in Shasta County are getting high off prescription drugs. Twenty percent of Shasta 11th graders report ever using prescription pain killers (such as Vicodin™ and OxyContin™) without a doctor's note, compared to 17% of 11th graders statewide.

Source: 2009-11 Shasta CHKS, Main Report



Prescription (Rx) drugs can be just as deadly as illegal drugs and, right now, America is facing an explosive prescription drug abuse problem. The rate of Emergency Department (ED) visits for prescription drugs was 458.3 per 100,000, while cocaine and marijuana were 162.1 and 146.2 visits, respectively. Sources: "Highlights of the 2011 Drug Use Warning Network (DAWN) Findings on Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits", Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2012. ; "Prescription for Disaster: How Teens Abuse Medicine," Drug Enforcement Agency, August, 2012.

Parents need to be aware that the family medicine cabinet and the Internet have become today's back alley drug dealers." – Michele Leonhart, Drug Enforcement Administration

**One in five teens report abusing prescription drugs to get high. Could that one be your child?**



# Commonly Abused Drugs

# What can you do?

# Using Rx meds without a prescription is ILLEGAL

## Narcotics (painkillers)

Darvon™, Demerol™, OxyContin™, Vicodin™, painkillers, OC, happy pills, oxy, percs, vikes, hillbilly heroin

## Stimulants (such as drugs for ADD)

Dexedrine™, Adderall™, Ritalin™, Concerta™, uppers, speed, bennies, roses, skippy, vitamin r

## Depressants (sleeping pills or anti-anxiety meds)

Nembutal™, Valium™, Xanax™, barbs, reds, yellows, downers, tranks, zombie pills

## Over-the-counter meds like cough syrup

Cough syrups containing DXM (dextromethorphan), robo, skittles, triple C, tussin, dex

## Signs of possible abuse:

- Your child becomes more secretive
- Your child has unexplained changes in personal appearance or has trouble in school
- Empty pill bottles or missing pills, unfamiliar pills, or empty cough medicine containers

## Symptoms of abuse:

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Slurred speech   | Sleep avoidance       |
| Flushed skin   | Excessive sweating    |
| Pupils that appear small                                   | Loss of appetite      |
| Personality changes  | Unusual forgetfulness |
| Mood swings (irritability, excessive energy or sleepiness) | Abnormal clumsiness   |

## TALK to your kids

While many Shasta County youth are connecting with their parent(s) about drug use...

62% of 11 graders report speaking with their parents about the dangers of tobacco, alcohol, or drug use. *Source 2009-11 Shasta CHKS, Main Report*

### ...we could do better.

- Ask about what they experience at school, friend's houses, and parties
- Share what you've learned about the dangers of Rx misuse and abuse
- Remember, you are the greatest influence on your child

## TRACK your meds

- Put medications in a locked drawer or separate lock box
- Make a list of the medicines you have and regularly count the pills in containers
- Inform your friends and family about the danger of prescription drugs and suggest they secure their medications. More than 70% of teens who abuse prescription painkillers say they get them from family, relatives and friends.

## DISPOSE of unneeded drugs

Call your local water agency, County Health Department, local law enforcement agency, or pharmacy

The Drug Enforcement Agency has a take back website with information on collection sites near you [www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/index.html](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html)



In Shasta County contact the Sheriff's Office in Redding and visit [www.shastahsa.net](http://www.shastahsa.net) or call 530.245.6858 for more information

Don't flush! Research has found that prescription drugs are already present in our nation's water supply, and may cause environmental harm.

When over-the-counter and prescription drugs are used to get high, they are every bit as dangerous as "street drugs" like cocaine, heroin, and meth

The Internet makes it almost too easy for kids to get information about using Rx drugs to get high

Many teens mistakenly believe Rx drugs are safer because they are "medicine"



There is a growing body of research that shows that parents are central to preventing adolescent substance abuse. In fact, kids themselves say that losing their parents' trust and respect are the most important reasons not to use drugs. As a parent, your actions do matter. When you suspect, or know, that your child has used drugs, take action to stop it as soon as you can. It may be the most important step you ever take. (from Parents. The Anti-Drug)

