

Prescription drug abuse on teenagers



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Number: Prescription Drug Abuse on Teenagers Prescription drug abuse and misuse has remained a major problem among teenagers in the US today.

Generally, abuse of drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and marijuana has remained dominant among the teens but prescription drug abuse has rapidly increased over the last couple of years. Abuse of prescription drugs such as barbiturates, is continuously becoming popular among US teenagers living in today's fast paced world according to Henn and DeEugenio (11). Prescription drugs though recommended by the doctor may have an effect on the mind and body of the individual. Since most of the teens tend to avoid reality in life, they take these drugs in order to control their moods, feelings and mental status. Teenagers have become familiar with the names of the brands of numerous prescription drugs and are in fact able to explain the effects that specific drugs have on them. The disadvantage with taking prescription drugs is that they change one's state of the mind in a harmful manner. For instance, teenagers who take barbiturates tend to engage in socially unacceptable behavior such as stealing. A survey conducted by the National Institute on Drug Abuse in 2004 indicated that overall drug abuse by teens had decreased but abuse of prescription drugs indicated an increase. Pain killers are among the most commonly used prescription drugs by the teenagers. Prescription drugs have remained popular in the US because even without the prescription of the doctor there are a big numbers of those using these drugs. Prescription drugs are perceived by teenagers as milder in effect, less costly and safer than hard drugs. They are hence perceived to be better evil compared to hard drugs found in the streets such as marijuana. In most cases, teenagers use prescription drugs in order to get high which is an important feeling when identifying with fellow friends. Apart

from getting high, prescription drugs are used by teens to increase concentration or alertness and to reduce pain or anxiety. Since prescription drugs are taken under doctor's prescription, teenagers do not experience a lot of stigmatization when they are known to use them by their peers or superior others. According Abadinsky (117), this has led to the increased abuse of such drugs like during ' Pharm parties' where youths encourage each other to bring prescription drugs and share them out with their friends. When teenagers combine these drugs in such parties in addition to alcohol, the drugs end up having lethal effects on them. Prescription drugs are also easier to access, a factor that contributes to their prevalent use among teenagers. While perceived to boost concentration as previously noted, the drugs instead adversely affect students' concentration leading to poor performance at work and in school. In order to reduce the abuse of prescription drugs, there is need to educate the community and especially teenagers and their parents about the dangers of taking prescription drugs. This should be done by everyone who gets in contact with teens such as teachers, church elders and counselors. Parents also need to communicate with their children about the use of prescription drugs. They should make sure their children understand the risks associated with taking drugs that are not specifically prescribed by the doctor for their use. Finally the teenagers need to understand that prescription drugs can be as risky as the illicit drugs. Works cited: Abadinsky, Howard. Drug Use and Abuse: A Comprehensive Introduction. Auckland: Cengage Learning. 2010. Henn, Debra. & DeEugenio, Deborah. Barbiturates. New York, NY: Infobase Publishing. 2007.