

## The Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic: School Nurses Forming Community Coalitions

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### **Educational Objectives:**

*At the completion of this presentation, the participant will be able to:*

Conduct an interactive exploration of the teen, parent and community problems created by prescription drug abuse, and

Identify resources and create community coalitions to address school, family and community issues created by the abuse of prescription drugs.

### **About the Session:**

The statistics are alarming and of epidemic proportion, yet because of the stigma surrounding drug abuse, it is a problem we keep quiet and don't talk about. We need to speak up because we have a serious problem! The United States consumes 80% of the world's prescription painkillers. 41% of kids mistakenly believe prescription medication is safer than abusing illegal street drugs. Drug poisoning deaths by overdose now surpasses the rate of deaths from motor vehicle accidents which was always the leading cause of accidental deaths in the U.S. Three fourths of school nurses say that prescription drugs are a problem in their community. Because the school nurses are integral and trusted members of the local community, they are in a perfect position to provide awareness and education in their community about the dangers of prescription drug abuse. They have access to resources and possess the leadership skills to identify stakeholders and form community coalitions to address the multifaceted issues that arise from this epidemic.

### **Why this is important to a school nurse:**

The purpose of this session is to enable the learner to gain an understanding of the disease process of addiction and the impact on youth and families. The learner will be able to identify resources within their community, identify stakeholders and subsequently create a community coalition to raise awareness and provide education to their community on the epidemic of prescription drug abuse.

Additional Author(s): Jenni Terry

**The Prescription Drug & OTC Abuse Epidemic:  
School Nurses Forming  
Community Coalitions**

**What You Can Do to Safeguard the  
Kids in Your Communities**

Rebecca King, MSN, RN, NCSN  
Jenni Terry

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**Disclosure**

**Rebecca King, MSN, RN, NCSN:**

I disclose the absence of personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this educational activity within the past 12 months.

**Jenni Terry, Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA):**

A member-based trade association, CHPA represents the leading manufacturers and marketers of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and dietary supplements – including OTC cough medicine.

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SMSC is Sponsored by Janssen Pharmaceuticals in partnership with The National Association of School Nurses

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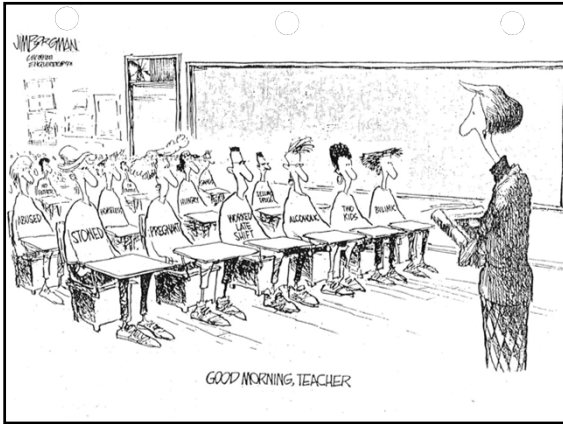
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### Session Objectives

- Conduct an interactive exploration of the teen, parent, and societal aspects of prescription and over the counter (OTC) drug abuse
- Provide the knowledge and practical resources to move forward and address issues created by the abuse of prescription and OTC drugs

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“Because of our unique position within the schools, students trust and confide in school nurses. We need to be prepared to respond accordingly when we hear about the misuse of prescription drugs, including drugs being mixed with alcohol or stimulant drinks. It is important to keep abreast of current trends, as students have access to so much information on the internet that can be potentially lethal. ”

Paula Apa-Hall  
Past President, Oregon School Nurses Association  
Former NASN Board Member

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**1 in 4**  
**teens has abused**  
a prescription (Rx) medication\*



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**41%**

**41% of kids mistakenly believe abusing Rx medicine is safer than abusing illegal street drugs like cocaine or heroin.**

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**78%**

**78% of School Nurses say that prescription drug abuse is a problem in their community.**

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**Most teens get their hands on prescription drugs from the homes of friends and relatives (medicine cabinets, cupboards, drawers, etc.)**



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**Prescription drugs are the drug of choice among 12-13 year olds.**

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**Every 19 minutes, a person in the U.S. dies of a prescription drug overdose.**

**3,000 young adults (18-25) died of an Rx drug overdose in 2010.**

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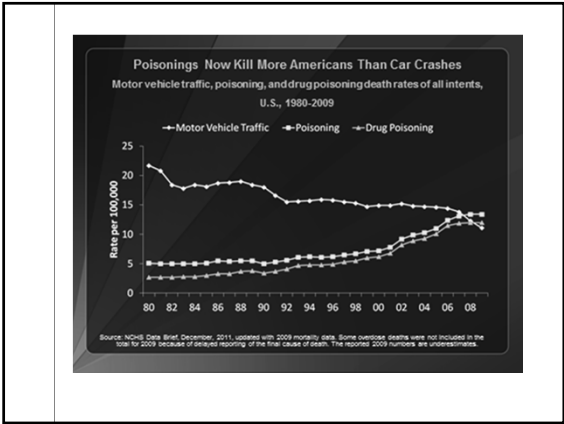
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**Why Do Kids Abuse Prescription Medicines?**

- Easy access
- Perceive them to be safer
- To get high
- To help them study
- To relieve stress and anxiety
- To experiment
- To fit in

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## You May Know Them As...

### Opioids

- Vicodin
- Percoset
- Oxycotin
- Demerol

### Benzodiazepines

- Xanax
- Valium
- Nembutal

### Stimulants

- Ritalin
- Concerta/Adderall
- Dexadrine

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## Adolescents' Rationales for Sharing Prescription Drugs

Rationale	Respondents (%)
Got it from a family member	66.2
Have a prescription but ran out	64.8
Have the same problem as the person who gave me the medicine	60.5
Want something strong for pain or headache	43.3
Have an emergency	39.0
Got it from someone who knows about medicine	28.1
Need help sleeping	21.9
Want something strong for pimples or oily skin	19.0
Need the medicine but can't afford to buy it	18.1
Have leftover medicine that would be wasted	13.8
Want to relax or feel good	12.9
Have heard a lot about this medicine from ads or commercials	4.3

\*Multiple reasons were accepted: therefore, total may exceed 100%. Source: Pediatrics

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"They never think that it's going to be them. Parents sometimes think their kids may get into trouble with drugs... but kids never think that they are going to be the one who becomes an addict."  
— M. Embrey

"The scariest thing I ever hear a parent say about drug abuse is 'Not My Kid.'"

— Dr. Drew Pinsky

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## Key Points

- ❑ Variety of users and variety of drugs being used- adolescents using Rx meds are a very diverse group
- ❑ Data is of significant concern:
  - 1 in 5 teens is given a legal Rx each year
  - 75% store it in an unsafe place
  - They don't know it's illegal to share
  - They don't know the addictive properties & no one told them when it was prescribed
  - They don't know how to dispose of it

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## Teen Drug Abuse: Popular Trends

- OTC (over-the-counter) medicine abuse



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## Teen Drug Abuse: Popular Trends

- Mixing prescription drugs with other substances



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### Teen Drug Abuse: Popular Trends

- Use/abuse of designer synthetic drugs (bath salts, Molly)



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### Who Are the Most Significant Teen Influencers?

- PARENTS & other caring adults

Teens who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to 50% less likely to try drugs



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### How to Reach Teens

- Knowledge is power
- Learn the signs of abuse
- Establish a "family belief system"
- Create safeguards and safe practices
- Communicate within the family
- Communicate with outside influencers



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**Show me the resources.....**

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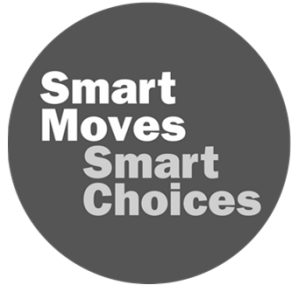
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**A Comprehensive Free Resource Available to You**



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**Educational Videos and Classroom Curricula**



**Segment 1 Myth Busting**  
The truth behind teens' common beliefs about prescription drugs and abuse



**Segment 2 Science of Addiction**  
Information on the physical consequences of prescription drug abuse on the developing brain



**Segment 3 Changes for Life**  
First-hand accounts from teens on how prescription drug abuse impacts relationships with family and affects social lives, participation in sports and academics



**Segment 4 Media Literacy**  
Analyzing messages in the media about abuse of prescription drugs by popular figures



**Segment 5 What Parents Should Know**  
Information for parents about prescription drug abuse, communicating with teens, recognizing signs of abuse and resources

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## Smart Moves Smart Choices Web Site



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## Smart Moves Smart Choices School Toolkit



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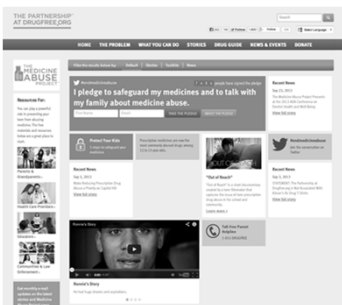
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## Medicine Abuse Project



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## Government Resources

- **DEA** – Drug Enforcement Agency
- **NIDA** – National Institute on Drug Abuse
- **SAMHSA** – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- **ONDCP** – Office of National Drug Control Policy

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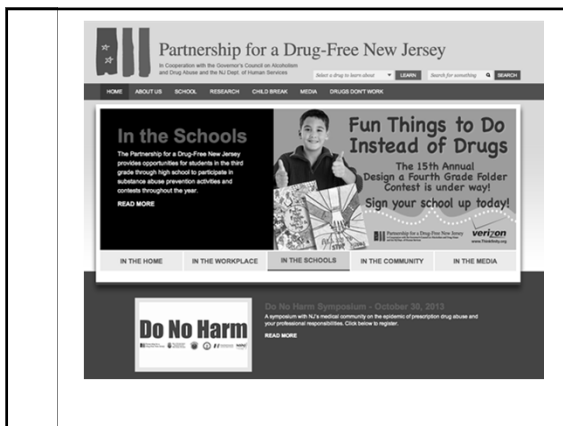
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## How do Coalitions Fit In?

- Coalitions are the *Connector*
- Connect with the education sector
- Ask what schools are doing to reach students and parents
- Link with the school nurses in the school districts
- Utilize the numerous free resources
- Make SMSC part of your community's toolbox

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## Johnson & Johnson School Health Leadership Fellows

### Red Clay School Nurses

Kathleen Bugbee  
North Star Elementary

Megan Fioravanti  
AI High School

Sharon-Rose Gargula  
Stanton Middle School

Rebecca King  
Brandywine Springs School

Fran Russo-Avena  
Richardson Park Learning  
Center



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## RIGHT PLACE at the RIGHT TIME



**Prescription Drug Action Committee (PDAC)**

**MISSION:**  
PDAC is a public-private partnership created by the Division of Public Health and the Medical Society of Delaware to enable multiple stakeholders to work collaboratively to address the prescription drug abuse problem in Delaware.

**PDAC Objectives**

1. Summarize current knowledge about the extent of the epidemic;
2. Identify existing efforts intended to curtail the epidemic;
3. Identify local and statewide providers (both prescribers and from other jurisdictions);
4. Recommend educational interventions, public health, and policy strategies to monitor and curtail the epidemic; and
5. Recommend measures to assure the availability of state-of-the-art resources for pain management.

**Important Information**

- Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- Facilities
- Subcommittees
- Resources

<http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/pdachome.html>

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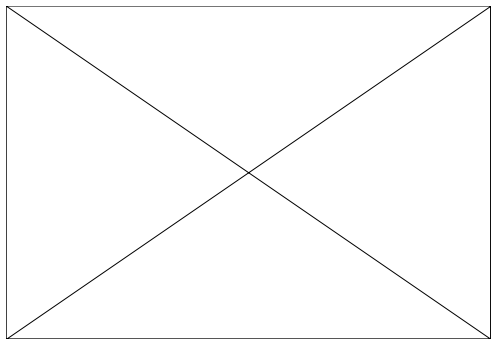
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**"I am not a bad person trying to get good,  
I am a sick person trying to get well."**



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## Resources

- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- The Partnership at DrugFree.org
- The Medicine Abuse Project
- StopMedicineAbuse.org – Five Moms
- Consumer Healthcare Products Association [www.chpa.org](http://www.chpa.org)
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America [www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org)
- MEDLINEplus Health Information on Drug Abuse - National Library of Medicine, NIH
- [www.abovetheinfluence.com](http://www.abovetheinfluence.com) Office of National Drug Control Policy
- [healthfinder.gov](http://healthfinder.gov) - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- OTCsafety.org
- The Anonymous People - [manyfaces1voice.org](http://manyfaces1voice.org)
- [Attackaddiction.com](http://Attackaddiction.com)
- [Shatterproof.org](http://Shatterproof.org)
- [Heroinalert.org](http://Heroinalert.org)
- Project Purple
- The Caron Institute



THE PARTNERSHIP<sup>®</sup>  
AT DRUGFREE.ORG



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## STOPMEDICINEABUSE

Teen Abuse of  
Over-the-Counter Cough Medicines



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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

Today's Discussion

Trends

Resources

Questions?

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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

What is the problem?

- Approximately one out of 25 teens report abusing over-the-counter cough medicine to get high.
- Roughly one in three teens knows someone who has abused OTC cough medicine to get high.

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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

What is dextromethorphan (DXM)?

A safe and effective cough suppressant ingredient found in 100+ OTC cough/cold medicines.

The most widely used cough suppressant in the U.S.



Abused by teens taking 25 times or more than the recommended dose to get "high"

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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

**What is the problem?**

- Only 59 percent of teens strongly believe that abusing OTC cough medicine to get high is risky. That means that nearly half believe that it is not.
- Nearly half of teens say that cough medicine is “easy to get” (to abuse).

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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

**Key Factors Driving Teen  
Medicine Abuse**

- ✓ **Misperception** that abusing medicine is not as dangerous as “street drugs”
- ✓ **Ease of access** via medicine cabinets at home or friend’s house, Internet, retailers, another’s prescription, etc.

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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

**Abuse: The (Lousy) “High”**



- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Slurred speech
- Impaired physical coordination
- Rapid heart beat
- Drowsiness
- Numbness of fingers and toes
- Disorientation

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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

Education at Point-of-Purchase

**PARENTS:**

Learn about teen medicine abuse

[www.StopMedicineAbuse.org](http://www.StopMedicineAbuse.org)



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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

How can we inform parents?

**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

What is DXM? What does abuse look like? How can you prevent abuse? Contact Your Legislators

Dextromethorphan (DXM) is a safe & effective ingredient found in many over-the-counter (OTC) cough medicines, but approximately one in 20 teens reports abusing excessive amounts of DXM to get high.

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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

Products Containing DXM

- Alka-Seltzer Plus Cold
- Coricidin
- Delsym
- Dimetapp DM
- Mucinex DM
- Robitussin
- Sudafed cough medicines
- TheraFlu
- Triaminic
- Tylenol Cough/Cold
- Vicks Formula 44
- Vicks NyQuil and Dayquil
- Zicam
- **Generic/store brands**



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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

### Other Ways to Help

- Write to Congress
- Encourage others to do the same

**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**  
Legislative Action Center

**1 in 20 Teens Gets High on OTC Cough Medicines**  
Let's Stop It Together!  
You can make a difference in the fight to protect minors from medicine abuse. Please take action on our current Action Alerts below to help stop medicine abuse.

Ask your U.S. Senators to cosponsor S. 664, the "Preventing Abuse of Cough Treatments Act of 2012" (the PACT Act)

[CLICK HERE](#)

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**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**

### How You Can Help

**STOPMEDICINEABUSE**  
Together, we can put an end to teen cough medicine abuse.

**GETCONNECTED** f t You Tube

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### Questions?

- **Rebecca King, MSN, RN, NCSN**  
[Rebecca.King@redclay.k12.de.us](mailto:Rebecca.King@redclay.k12.de.us)
- **Jenni Terry**  
Consumer Healthcare Products Association  
[jterry@chpa.org](mailto:jterry@chpa.org)

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## RESOURCES for Prescription Drug Abuse Education and Awareness

Rebecca King, MSN, RN, NCSN

[Rebecca.King@redclay.k12.de.us](mailto:Rebecca.King@redclay.k12.de.us)

Above the Influence, National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign: [www.abovetheinfluence.com](http://www.abovetheinfluence.com) (The most recent campaign, which encourages kids to be “above the influence” of drugs. Includes various interactive resources, first-hand accounts, Q & A’s, and other information, including information specific to prescription drugs. A good place to see teen-produced video segments, as well as PSAs related to drug abuse to gather ideas for the students’ own advertisements).

American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) - a professional society representing over 3,000 physicians and associated professionals dedicated to increasing access and improving the quality of addiction treatment; educating physicians, other medical professionals and the public; supporting research and prevention; and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addictions @ [www.asam.org](http://www.asam.org)

“atTAcK addiction”: Grassroots group raising awareness in Delaware: [www.attackaddiction.com](http://www.attackaddiction.com)

The Caron Institute: Caron offers addiction treatment for teens, young adults and adults: [www.caron.org](http://www.caron.org)

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

Consumer Healthcare Products Association: [www.chpa.org](http://www.chpa.org)

Five Moms Campaign - five moms from different backgrounds who have come together with a common concern: teenagers abusing OTC cough medicine to get high @ <http://stopmedicineabuse.org>

Healthfinder: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services- Your source for reliable health information from the Federal government @ [www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

The Heroin Alert Program (Marie Allen with the New Castle County Police, Delaware) @ [heroinalert.org](http://heroinalert.org)

Home to Homeroom: Partnered with The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) to provide school nurses with tools to use when spreading awareness in schools. Many of these tools can be used when speaking at assemblies, Parent Teacher Association meetings, or one-on-one meetings with parents or students @ [www.stopmedicineabuse.org/home-to-homeroom](http://www.stopmedicineabuse.org/home-to-homeroom)

Medline Plus, <http://medlineplus.gov/> (health information from the world's largest medical library, the National Library of Medicine).

OTCsafety.org – Your resource for Over-The-Counter Medicine Safety

Project Purple: Go Project Purple (an initiative of The Herren Project) was launched to break the stigma of addiction @ <http://goprojectpurple.com/the-herren-project/>

ManyFaces1Voice: Moms and dads, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters - all bringing the power and proof of recovery to communities. Together we will change public perception, and ultimately the public response to the addiction crisis. View the documentary "The Anonymous People" @ [www.manyfaces1voice.org](http://www.manyfaces1voice.org)

The Medicine Abuse Project (through The Partnership at Drugfree): Free materials and resources to help prevent teens from abusing medicine @ [www.medicineabuseproject.org](http://www.medicineabuseproject.org)

The Partnership at Drugfree.org: A multitude of resources including public service announcements, blogs, etc. @ [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)

National Association of School Nurses, [www.nasn.org](http://www.nasn.org)

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): The mission of the NIDA is to lead the Nation in bringing the power of science to bear on drug abuse and addiction @ <http://www.drugabuse.gov>

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): The NIDA for Teens Web site helps educate adolescents ages 11 through 15 (as well as their parents and teachers) on the science behind drug abuse @ [www.teens.drugabuse.gov](http://www.teens.drugabuse.gov)

Shatterproof: Shatterproof will work to educate, empower and equip parents, families, educators, health care providers, legislators, and others to address addiction head on by building a national organization to address serious gaps in funding and resources for the disease of addiction @ [www.shatterproof.org](http://www.shatterproof.org)

Smart Moves, Smart Choices: [www.smartmovessmartchoices.org](http://www.smartmovessmartchoices.org) To order a Smart Moves Smart Choices Toolkit visit: <http://www.smartmovessmartchoices.org/school-tool-kit>

SAMHSA- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: Behavioral health is essential to health, prevention works, people recover, treatment is effective. @ <http://samhsa.gov/index.aspx>

Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator: [www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov)