

# The danger of addiction is closer than you think...

A growing number of students are becoming addicted to painkillers after being prescribed painkillers for an injury. Commonly prescribed opioids are: Vicodin, Oxycodone or Percocet. Heroin is also an opioid.

Opioids can be addictive and dangerous. People aged 12 - 49 who became dependent on prescription painkillers were 19 times more likely to have used heroin.<sup>1</sup>

We need your help to fight prescription painkiller addiction and overdose. It only takes a little to lose a lot.



## TALK BEFORE YOU TAKE.

While your child may have a real need for pain medication, new research shows that often times the best pain relief is found through over-the-counter drugs, which are effective and are not addictive.

## 500 MG TYLENOL & 200 MG IBUPROFEN

taken together every 6 hours up to 4x per day with food and water reduces severe pain for most people.



## AS A PARENT OR STUDENT ASK QUESTIONS.

*"What are the side effects of this medication?"*

*"Do I have to finish taking all of these pills?"*

*"When can I switch to acetaminophen and ibuprofen?"*



## Parents can help stop addiction and overdoses.

- Work with your child's friend group to keep them upbeat as they heal. Traumatic events and depression can be connected to addiction.
- Children who learn about the risks of drugs at home are up to 50 percent less likely to use drugs than those who do not get that message from their parents.<sup>2</sup>
- Count and secure prescriptions in your home. Drop off unused pills at an RX Drop box. Ask your friends and family members to do the same.
- Signs of substance use disorder include: changes in mood, grades, weight; lack of energy; red, watery eyes; large or small pupils; cold, shaky hands; running nose; poor physical coordination; puffy face or paleness. However, sometimes there are no physical signs of substance use disorder.
- School nurses and guidance counselors are trusted members of the school community where students can turn for help - either for themselves or a friend.
- If you suspect your child might be addicted to an opioid, talk to your child's healthcare provider right away or call VAYA at 1-800-849-6127 and ask how to get Narcan to help prevent overdose.

If you would like to learn more about MAHEC's opioid education initiatives, please email [opioideducation@mahec.net](mailto:opioideducation@mahec.net).

1. Rudd RA, Seth P, David F, Scholl L. Increases in Drug and Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths — United States, 2010–2015. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm650501e1>  
2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Misuse of prescription drugs. 2006 Retrieved from: <http://oas.samhsa.gov/prescription/toc.htm>.