

The Opioid Crisis: Our Community

Issue 3

Is My Teen Abusing Opioids?

Physical signs of opioid use include sleepiness, confusion, nausea, constipation, and slowed or shallow breathing.

Signs of a possible overdose include:

- Small pupils
- Blue lips and fingernails
- Cold, damp skin
- Shaking
- Vomiting or gurgling noises
- Extreme sleepiness
- Respiratory depression, when severe, can lead to coma or respiratory failure.

People who have overdosed need urgent medical help (call 911 immediately).

What Have You Noticed?

Does your teen:

Have someone else's prescription.

Have pills but hasn't gone to a doctor.

Use a prescription up quickly with little explanation.

Hang out with a different group of friends.

Change how they communicate and behave with friends.

Borrow more money or trade possessions frequently.

Have you seen?

Your teen crush, snort, or inject a substance.

Pills go missing from the medicine cabinet.

If you notice one or two of these signs, it doesn't necessarily mean your teen is abusing opioids.

However, several signs in combination are red flags of a serious issue.

What Can I Do if I Have Suspicions?

Get Educated: Learn as much as you can about Opioid use. Attend available educational events and reach out to organizations in your community like Prairie View Prevention.

Act Now:

- Keep track of changes in behavior, appearance, and friends of your teen.
- Monitor your prescriptions, know how many pills are in each bottle, and keep in a locked cabinet.
- Use prescriptions as directed.
- Check with local law enforcement for legal disposal sites for unused prescriptions.

Don't Make Excuses: Enabling makes it harder for a young person to become responsible and self-reliant.

Have the Talk: Let them know you know.

How Do I have the Talk?

Practice what you want to say, and how you want to say it. Your teen may react in a number of ways from denial to anger to confrontation to relief. If your teen asks about you in your youth, be honest, but link your bad choices to negative consequences.

Clues for Effective Communication:

- Give your full attention. Be an active listener.
- Use eye contact.
- Be alert to voice and body language.
- Speak in "I" messages. (I'm concerned).
- Avoid 'you' messages. (You didn't; You can't)
- Don't interrupt.
- Avoid criticizing.
- Stay Calm.

Set Limits with Love.

- Make clear, simple, and specific rules that your teen understands.
- Have a list of consequences and follow through with consequences when rules are broken.
- Remind them this comes from a place of concern and love.
- Reach out for help – Schedule an appointment with Prairie View Prevention Services for an evaluation or contact us for assistance with a referral to a treatment provider.



**For more information:
Visit
www.PrairieView.net
like us on Facebook.**

NIDA
<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/prescription-pain-medications-opioids>

Rx Drugs of Abuse – Prevent Med Abuse
Preventmedabuse.org/facts-tools/rx-drugs-of-abuse/

Family Checkup: Positive Parenting Prevents Drug Abuse (NIDA 2015)

The Courage to Parent: Guide to Parenting Seventh Edition (Prairie View Prevention)