

# 5<sup>th</sup> grade

## PARENT ALERT

# KNOCK OUT OPIOID ABUSE

Prescribed opioid use before high school graduation increases the risk of future opioid misuse after high school by 33 percent.

Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey  
in Cooperation with the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and the NJ Dept. of Human Services

Horizon  
Foundation for New Jersey

## FACTS

Family bonding helps build the foundation for the relationship between parents and their children. Bonding can be strengthened through parent-child communication and parental involvement.

## Information for Parents

1

### LISTEN

It's important to take time to listen to your kids. Try to find time to be with your child when he or she asks to talk to you. Try to avoid saying "In just a minute", or "not right now". Devote your attention to what your son or daughter is saying because kids know when you're pretending to listen.

#### Some ideas for good listening:

- Ask open-ended questions that encourage conversation.
- Avoid questions that kids can answer with a simple yes or no.
- Tap into what your child is good at by having them teach you.

2

### TALK

You've listened and you've thought about what to say. Now comes the tough part—actually starting the conversation. You don't have to follow a script word for word. Find your own words and find times and places that are comfortable for you to talk, like in the car, on walks or during a meal.

#### Tips to help you improve communication:

- Get into the habit of having conversations with your kids every day.
- Create realistic situations where kids can practice refusing drugs or alcohol.
- Use events in the media and daily life as opportunities to begin a conversation.
- Make it a point to praise and reward your child for his or her unique qualities and talents as often as you can.

- Nearly one in three parents of New Jersey middle school students do not believe there is a link between painkillers prescribed for things like sports injuries and wisdom tooth removal and the rising use of heroin in New Jersey. The study also found that less than 50 percent of parents feel they are knowledgeable about heroin.
- According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), nearly 10 million people misused prescription pain relievers in 2018, including nearly 700,000 adolescents (ages 12 to 17) and almost 2 million young adults (ages 18 to 25).
- In New Jersey alone last year, nearly 4 million prescriptions for addictive opioids were dispensed to New Jersey residents.



### 3

## TRENDS

### Vaping

Teen vaping has increased significantly in recent years. Nearly 40 percent of 12th grade students have reported vaping in the past year. More than 35 percent of 10th graders and 20 percent of 8th graders have vaped during the past year.

Signs of vaping include your child disappearing for long periods of time frequently, avoiding long flights or car trips, and spending more money.

### Alcohol

Research shows that the average age of first use is now 11 years old and nearly half of New Jersey 7th and 8th grade students have tried alcohol.

Children who begin drinking before age 21 are more than twice as likely to develop alcohol-related problems.

### Opioids

Nearly one in seven people who take a prescribed opioid for seven or more days will be addicted to opioids within a year.

Nearly one in three people who take a prescribed opioid for 30 days will be addicted to opioids a year later.

Nearly 6 percent of patients ages 16 to 25 who received initial opioid prescriptions for a dental procedure are diagnosed with opioid abuse within a year.

### 4

## BE ALERT

### Know the Signs of Dependency and Addiction

#### Behavioral

- Risky behavior
- Slipping grades, lateness, skipping class
- Fights with family/friends
  - Change in friends
- Change in mood, eating or sleeping patterns
- Depressed/less motivation
  - Missing prescription or over-the-counter medications
- Missing money/valuables
  - Trouble with the law
- Increased candle, incense, or air freshener use
  - Secretive, deceptive, or manipulative behavior

#### Physical

- Neglecting appearance or hygiene
- Sudden change in weight
  - Slurred speech
  - Skin abrasions
- Chemical smell on breath or clothing
  - Glassy or red eyes
  - Drug paraphernalia
    - Itching

### 5

## RULES

Research shows that young people are less likely to use drugs if their parents set clear rules.

Don't leave your kids guessing.

Tell them very clearly that you don't want them using alcohol or illegal drugs.

Appreciate your child's individuality.

Allow your child to express his or her uniqueness.

Monitor your child's activities. Get to know his or her friends, as well as the friends' parents.

Secure your medicine cabinet and educate your child about taking medicine only as prescribed.

Tell your kids never to take anyone else's medication.

### 6

## ACTION

Talk to your child's doctor about the medicine they are being prescribed, as well as possible alternatives. Secure and dispose of prescription drugs. Take the American Medicine Chest Challenge to safeguard your home.

For information, visit

**[KnockOutOpioidAbuse.DrugFreeNJ.org](http://KnockOutOpioidAbuse.DrugFreeNJ.org)**

If you need assistance for your child, ask for help.

### TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION.

Have a conversation with your child. Talk to someone you trust, such as:

- Local Prevention Specialist
  - Family Physician
- Student Assistance Counselor
  - Religious Leader
- Employee Assistance Program

# Resources for Parents

The Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey

973-467-2100  
[www.DrugFreeNJ.org](http://www.DrugFreeNJ.org)  
[www.TalkNowNJ.com](http://www.TalkNowNJ.com)  
[KnockOutOpioidAbuse.DrugFreeNJ.org](http://KnockOutOpioidAbuse.DrugFreeNJ.org)

Partnership to End Addiction

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

American Medicine Chest Challenge

*A resource for information on prevention of prescription drug abuse.*  
[www.AmericanMedicineChest.com](http://www.AmericanMedicineChest.com)

Governor's Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse

[www.state.nj.us/treasury/gcada](http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/gcada)  
[www.KnowAddiction.NJ.Gov](http://www.KnowAddiction.NJ.Gov)

NJ Connect for Recovery

(855) 652-3737  
hearing impaired (877) 294-4356  
[www.NJConnectForRecovery.org/](http://www.NJConnectForRecovery.org/)

Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services

[www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/home](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/home)

New Jersey Prevention Network

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

Supporting New Jersey's Military Families

[www.nj.gov/military/support](http://www.nj.gov/military/support)

National Institute on Drug Abuse

[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

NJ Addiction Services Hotline

1-844-276-2777

Parent Check New Jersey

[www.ParentCheckNJ.com](http://www.ParentCheckNJ.com)

Suicide Hotline

1-855-654-6735  
[www.njhopenline.com](http://www.njhopenline.com)

COVID-19 Support

[www.covid.nj.gov](http://www.covid.nj.gov)

The New Jersey Legislature enacted P.L. 2000, Chapter 33, allowing municipalities "to enact local ordinances making it unlawful for any person under the legal age who, without legal authority, knowingly possesses or knowingly consumes an alcoholic beverage on private property." A complete list of ordinances, with county by county and municipal breakdowns, can be found by visiting [www.DrugFreeNJ.org](http://www.DrugFreeNJ.org).



## The CDC has declared prescription drug abuse a public health epidemic.

Every day, 129 people in the U.S. die from an opioid overdose.

Prescription pain medication can become a gateway to heroin use, with research showing that 4 out of 5 new heroin users abused prescription pain relievers before turning to heroin.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, legitimate opioid use before high school graduation is independently associated with a 33 percent increase in the risk of future opioid misuse after high school. This association is concentrated among individuals who have little to no history of drug use.

Male adolescent athletes who participate in competitive sports are twice as likely to be prescribed painkillers and four times more likely to misuse them (i.e., using them too much or to get high) than males who did not participate in competitive athletics.

According to the CDC, opioid pain relievers that are abused were most often obtained via prescription from physicians.

For more information, please visit:

[DrugFreeNJ.org/DrugFacts](http://DrugFreeNJ.org/DrugFacts)

## The opioid crisis impacts every community in New Jersey.

### Learn how to be part of the solution.

### KNOCK OUT OPIOID ABUSE



[KnockOutOpioidAbuse.DrugFreeNJ.org](http://KnockOutOpioidAbuse.DrugFreeNJ.org)

*The Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey and Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, through its philanthropic arm, The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, have collaborated to create Knock Out Opioid Abuse, an initiative to address the opioid epidemic through community outreach, prescriber education, parent education and a statewide media campaign to increase awareness of the crisis.*

# Take the American Medicine Chest Challenge in 5 easy steps.



- 1- Take inventory of your prescription and over-the-counter medicine.
- 2- Secure your medicine.
- 3- Safely dispose of your unused, unwanted, & expired medicine.
- 4- Do not share the medicine prescribed to you.
- 5- Talk to your children and physician about the dangers of prescription drug abuse... they are listening.

To find out more, visit...  
[AmericanMedicineChest.com](http://AmericanMedicineChest.com)

Find a Rx disposal location near you!

Download the American Medicine Chest Challenge Permanent Collection Site App "AMCC RxDrop" on your Droid or iPhone today! Use the QR code to the right, or visit [www.AmericanMedicineChest.com](http://www.AmericanMedicineChest.com)



# VAPING is as safe as skydiving without a parachute!



To learn the truth about vaping, visit [VapeFactsNJ.com](http://VapeFactsNJ.com)

Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey



[DrugFreeNJ.org](http://DrugFreeNJ.org)

**THIS** is how you protect your family from the **Covid-19 Pandemic**



TALK TO YOUR KIDS

**THIS** is how you protect your family from the **Addiction Epidemic**

[DrugFreeNJ.org](http://DrugFreeNJ.org)

## Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey

In Cooperation with the Governor's Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse, and the New Jersey Department of Human Services

For information on this and other PDFNJ programs in the School, the Community and the Workplace, please visit [www.drugfreenj.org](http://www.drugfreenj.org)

## Horizon Foundation for New Jersey

The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey is committed to working alongside those who can help us improve our neighbor's health, inform their health decisions and inspire them to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. The Foundation's funding pillars are Caring, Connecting and Creating. Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey is the sole member of The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, both of which are independent licenses of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. For more information please visit [www.Community.HorizonBlue.com](http://www.Community.HorizonBlue.com)

# KNOCK OUT OPIOID ABUSE

Prescription opioid misuse is a leading cause of unintentional injury and death among adolescents and young adults.