

THE OTHER FRESHMAN 15

Fifteen facts about prescription drug abuse that could save your life!

Facilitator's Notes

General approach to the workshop: This program is designed to be a discussion-based, PowerPoint® directed workshop to raise awareness about the dangers of prescription drug abuse. The presentation could be given to any size audience but may be best conducted with small groups to allow meaningful discussions. As a presenter of this program, your goal is to relay useful information (provided in the program materials) and encourage student discussion. The program should require 20-30 minutes.

The workshop focuses on the dangers of prescription drug misuse and abuse toward the goal of prevention. However, it is important to not imply that the danger lies in taking prescription medications per se. It is the non-medical use of these medications, their use without a prescription from a healthcare provider, or their use in ways other than prescribed that we are trying to prevent.

Definition of "misuse" and "abuse" of prescription medications: The words "misuse" and "abuse" are commonly used when talking about this issue, often interchangeably.

Workshop Agenda

1) Introduction of workshop facilitators

Introduce each workshop facilitator and perhaps provide e-mail addresses for follow-up questions. Facilitators may include faculty or staff members as well as students.

2) Begin the PowerPoint® slide presentation

Each slide includes accompanying "talking points" in the comments section. [Note: All points do not need to be used in every discussion.] Remember to leave ample time for student comments/discussion throughout the program.

3) Additional supporting data for selected slides

Slide #5 – Alternatives to the use of prescription stimulants as "study drugs"

Here are some healthy alternatives to a reliance on prescription stimulants for studying:

- Don't skip class! This is one of the biggest mistakes students make in terms of academic success.
- Stay current with class material and review a little every day.
- Establish good study habits and a regular study schedule. Set aside extra time before important tests or deadlines.
- Use healthier "stimulants" – snacks, exercise, light, and even caffeine in moderation.
- Use your available resources (TAs, professors, tutors, friends, etc.) to get help when needed.
- Establish a study group to reinforce your learning.

We are actually trying to prevent both of these behaviors. The "misuse" of a prescription drug refers to its use in ways other than as directed by the prescriber, but not for non-medical reasons or the feeling it causes (e.g., to get "high"). The "abuse" of a prescription medication refers to its non-medical use for the feeling it causes.

Materials needed: PowerPoint® slides and corresponding handouts based on the 15 facts are provided to use as visual aids. These are designed to encourage discussion. A program evaluation instrument is also provided for your audience to complete at the conclusion of the workshop.

Procedure for discussion: The 15 facts are presented in the context of six "fact or fiction" questions. You are encouraged to give the audience time to discuss each of these "fact or fiction" questions and perhaps come to consensus before continuing with your talking points. In some cases, additional follow-up questions are also provided for group discussion. Additional information/statistics from the facilitator may be interjected at any point.

Workshop Agenda continued

Slide #8 – Additional information about teen misperceptions of safety when abusing prescription drugs:

- 41% of surveyed teens agreed that prescription drugs are safer to use than illegal drugs, even if they are not prescribed by a doctor.¹
- About 1/3 of teens believe that there is “nothing wrong” with using prescription drugs without a prescription “once in a while.”²
- Nearly 1 out of every 3 teens (29%) agreed that prescription painkillers – even if not prescribed by a doctor – are not addictive.³

Slide #14 – Additional information about drug overdose deaths

- The fact that, on average, about 100 people die everyday in the U.S. from unintentional drug overdoses equates to about one death every 15 minutes.
- Every year, more people die from prescription painkiller overdoses than from those due to heroin or cocaine combined – and the rate of overdose death from prescription painkillers has more than tripled since 1999.⁴

Slide #17 – Additional information about drug disposal

Additional information on how to dispose of medications properly is available at smarxtdisposal.net.

4) Conclude the workshop

Conclude the program by taking questions, distributing copies of the handout, and asking your audience to complete a program evaluation.

Slide content sources:

National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2k10NSDUH/2k10Results.htm)

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (www.cdc.gov)

National Council on Patient Information and Education (www.talkaboutrx.org)

Monitoring the Future (Social Research Center, Institute for Social research, University of Michigan) (www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/series/00035)

For more information:

The Generation Rx Initiative (go.osu.edu/generationrx or cardinalhealth.com/generationrx)

References:

1 http://www.drugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Full-Report-FINAL-PATS-Teens-2008_updated.pdf

2 http://www.theantidrug.com/pdfs/TEENS_AND_PRESCRIPTION_DRUGS.pdf

3 http://www.theantidrug.com/pdfs/prescription_report.pdf

4 <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/VitalSigns/PainkillerOverdoses/>