

#2. Prescriptions Are Not Recreational.

10 Ways To Prevent Prescription Drug Abuse

Cuyahoga County, like all across the country, is experiencing an epidemic of prescription drug abuse. The number of deaths directly related to prescription drug abuse increased nearly 500% from 1999 to 2013. These accidental deaths now outnumber traffic crash fatalities. Prescription pain relievers continue to be the key factor behind this epidemic.

Here's how you can have your SAY and help that change.

1. **Know that just because a drug is prescribed by a doctor does NOT mean that it cannot cause harm.** When taking a prescription drug follow the guidelines from the doctor or pharmacy and never take more than prescribed.
2. **Prescription pain relievers are highly addictive.** Some individuals are more prone to addiction than others. Know your personal risk factors for addiction such as family history or mental health diagnoses.
3. **Never take a prescription drug that was prescribed for someone else.** Medications affect each person differently and only your doctor would know what is safe for you.
4. **Sharing your prescription with another person is a federal offense.** It doesn't matter if you sell them or give them away — it is illegal to share your prescription medications.
5. **Know and practice proper storage guidelines for prescription medications.** Monitor the use of prescription medication by counting how many pills are left in the bottle. Lock medications in a safe or keep in a secure cabinet.
6. **Know and practice proper disposal guidelines for prescription medications.** If your community does not have a "drug take-back program" for unused/expired prescription medications, visit rxdrugdropbox.org or sheriff.cuyahogacounty.us/rx to find disposal locations.
7. **Understand the link between heroin and prescription pain relievers.** As a result of efforts to decrease the number of prescription pills available the use of heroin has increased. Heroin is less expensive and more available than pills. It is more dangerous since it is not a controlled substance.
8. **Have a plan for what to do if you are confronted with an opportunity to take someone else's prescription drug.** Practice a couple of ways of saying "no thanks" and know who you can call to help get you out of the situation.
9. **Know the warning signs that someone you care about might be abusing prescription drugs.** Things like significant personality changes, isolation from family or friends, changes in daily habits, neglecting responsibility and defensiveness all could be a sign of drug abuse.
10. **Know where to go for help or more information.** Parents, teachers, relatives, school counselors, coaches, and religious leaders are all people to turn to for help. Or visit these local resources:
www.adamhsc.org | First Call For Help: 216-436-2000 | www.211cleveland.org



Chris Ruma-Cullen, LISW-S, CDCA — Director of SAY
(216) 320-8203 • cullenc@bellefairejcb.org

Nancy Schaumburg, LISW-S — SAY Coalition Coordinator
(216) 320-8469 • schaumburn@bellefairejcb.org

www.e-say.org  

SAY – Social Advocates for Youth is a school-based prevention and early intervention program of Bellefaire JCB for students in middle and high school. The SAY Coalition sponsors educational programs, parent education, and youth leadership.