

# Navajo County Drug Project

## Navajo County Coalition Against Drug Abuse



A Coalition of Concerned Navajo County Residents Joined Together to:

- EDUCATE the Community on the substance abuse crisis
- REHABILITATE those who have fallen into the addiction
- ENFORCE laws pertaining to the spread of substance abuse in our communities

## Press Release

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## New Resources Available To Educate Community About Prescription Drug Misuse

The National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE), along with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and representatives from 15 nationally recognized prevention, health professional and child advocacy organizations, are launching *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer: What You Can Do to Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse*.

Although the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs among youth has declined from 2002 through 2008, over this time many teens have turned to misusing prescription drugs, according to SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health. In fact, prescription drugs are misused more by this age group than any illicit drug, except marijuana. The nonmedical use of these medicines—the very same drugs used to legitimately relieve pain, and treat conditions like anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, or ADHD in some people—is a growing and under-recognized problem that puts young lives at risk.

“Prescription drugs found in home medicine cabinets across the country have become the new drug of choice among teens, and every teen is at risk,” says Ray Bullman, Executive Vice President of NCPIE. “This initiative gives teen influencers—anyone who interacts with teens on a regular basis and can have a positive influence—the tools to help prevent prescription drug abuse in their school districts and communities. It also provides tips for delivering consistent prevention messages to teens at home, at school, on the field or during health-related visits.”

“These tools are essential for engaging youth and the adults who come in contact with them through a solid message that prescription misuse is dangerous and can be fatal,” adds H. Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H., CAS, FASAM, Director of SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment.

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*Mission Statement:*

To develop a diverse community representation, coordinate a sustained effort in educating and preventing the substance abuse through a plan for change in local social norms through prevention, treatment and vigorous enforcement of existing laws.

Unlike other forms of adolescent drug use, the desire to feel good or get high ranks much lower as a motivation for prescription drug misuse. Experts note that adolescents are turning to prescription drugs not just for recreational use—they are turning to prescription drugs to help manage their daily lives. The reasons include to lower stress and anxiety, boost their mood, stay up all night studying for an exam, or to enhance academic or athletic performance. According to the 2007 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study conducted by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, dealing with pressures and managing school-related stress is cited as the number one reason teens use prescription drugs.

The comprehensive online resource, *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer*, offers a complete workshop module to educate and equip teen influencers—parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, community and school-based healthcare providers and others—with credible information about teen prescription drug abuse and effective strategies to take action to help prevent it.

The *Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer* toolkit includes complete workshop materials and instructions, as well as real-life scenarios, warning signs and symptoms, common myths about teen prescription drug abuse, brochures and sample promotional materials. This resource was developed with the guidance and insight of an esteemed group of experts, and is available for download at [www.talkaboutrx.org](http://www.talkaboutrx.org).

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