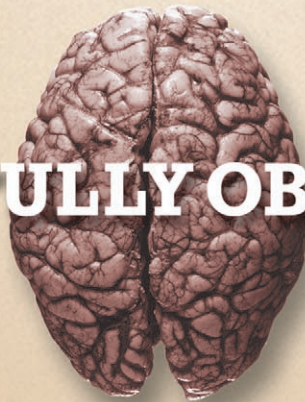


# THE EFFECTS OF ABUSING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

*are*

**PAINFULLY OBVIOUS**



## Discussion Guide

NOTE TO EDUCATORS: THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE SHOULD BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ENCLOSED LEADER'S GUIDE

A Community Service of Purdue Pharma L.P.



**This discussion guide includes questions and activities to help you begin a discussion with your group about the dangers of prescription drug abuse. It is divided into three areas:**

**1) Initial Perceptions of Drugs & Prescription Drugs**

A good way to initiate a discussion with kids about drug abuse is to start by getting a sense of what drugs they are familiar with, their perceptions of these drugs, and their perceptions of people who abuse these drugs. Ask the kids in your group to rank the drugs they mention from “least dangerous” to “most dangerous,” and to explain their rankings. Then have them place “prescription drug abuse” on their danger spectrum. The result is usually eye-opening. Many kids do not realize that prescription drugs can be as dangerous as illegal drugs, such as heroin or crack, when abused.

**2) Myths/Facts about Prescription Drug Abuse**

This section can be utilized like a True/False quiz. The “Myths” in this section are typical reasons kids give for abusing prescription drugs recreationally. The “Painfully Obvious Facts” show what the actual results of prescription drug abuse can be, and are stated in language that is especially attention-getting and relevant to kids.

**3) Class Activities**

The purpose of this section is to provide ideas for discussion topics and activities that can lead to a better understanding of the dangers of prescription drug abuse. For example, on page 20, talking about what it would be like to be addicted to something, and how addiction might affect the life of their favorite celebrity, offers a platform from which kids can begin to understand how addiction to a substance would truly affect them. The “hypothetical” nature of the question may also elicit real-life stories that the kids can then begin to see within the context of this new information. Discussions about Individuality, Self-Respect, and Trust show kids how these important elements of their life can be destroyed by drug addiction.

**Drug abuse is a sensitive subject among kids, and may be difficult for them to talk about honestly. Before you start, ensure your group that they will not get in trouble for sharing their experiences.**



---

# **What Do You Know About Prescription Drug Abuse?**



- 
- What kinds of drugs have you ever heard of?
  - What are your impressions of these drugs?
  - Rank these drugs in order from “least dangerous” to “most dangerous”.
  - What makes the “most dangerous drugs” so dangerous?



- 
- What about prescription drugs? What are some common prescription drugs?
  - What forms do they come in/what do they look like?
  - What does a doctor consider before prescribing a prescription drug? Why?
  - Do you know anyone who takes prescription drugs? What for? How does it affect their lives?



- List some adjectives to describe prescription drugs/your perception of prescription drugs.
  - What if they were being misused? Would these adjectives still hold true? Are there different adjectives you would use to describe them?
- Where would you place “prescription drugs” on the list of least to most dangerous drugs you completed earlier?
  - What if they were being misused?



---

# **Myths and Facts about Prescription Drug Abuse**



---

Myth:

*Getting high from prescription drugs will  
make me look cool.*



Fact:

*Throwing up in the hallways isn't cool.*



---

Myth:

*I'll have more friends if I get involved in prescription drug abuse.*

PAINFULLY OBVIOUS



PAINFULLY OBVIOUS



Fact:

*Violent seizures caused by abusing  
prescription drugs freak people out.  
Not the best road to popularity.*



---

## Myth:

*Taking prescription drugs to get high will help me loosen up and “be myself” around my friends.*



**Fact:**

*Being a thief, liar, and drug abuser  
isn't really who you want to be.*



---

Myth:

*Prescription drugs are always safe to use -  
whether they are prescribed directly for  
you or not.*

PAINFULLY OBVIOUS



PAINFULLY OBVIOUS



Fact:

*Prescription drugs are to be used only as directed and by the person for whom they are prescribed.*

*If they are not prescribed for you, there's no telling how they may affect you.*



---

Myth:

*Selling or giving prescription drugs to a friend is no big deal.*



**Fact:**

*Going to jail is a big deal.*

*If you are not a doctor or pharmacist,  
distributing prescription drugs is illegal.*

*You can be arrested and jailed for drug  
trafficking or, in the worst case,  
accessory to murder.*



---

Myth:

*You cannot get addicted to or die from  
using prescription drugs.*

PAINFULLY OBVIOUS



PAINFULLY OBVIOUS



Fact:

*That's dead wrong.*

*When prescription drugs are abused,  
they can be as addictive and dangerous  
as "illegal" drugs.*

*You can die from abusing prescription  
drugs . . . even the first time.*



# ACTIVITIES

Note to Educators:

Explore the consequences of Prescription Drug Abuse with some or all of the following activities, or create your own.



## **Activity - Addiction**

- What do you think it would be like to be addicted to something?
  - How would you feel?
  - What would your day be like?
  - What would you look like?
  - What would others think about you?
- Imagine if your favorite music star, actor, or athlete became addicted to prescription drugs.
  - What would happen to them, their career, their reputation?
  - What do they lose because of their addiction?



## **Activity - Individuality**

- What makes you unique? What special interests, talents, traits do you have that differentiate you from others?
- How do you think other kids describe you?
- How do you think drug abuse would affect these qualities?



---

## **Activity - Self-Respect**

- What is self-respect? How do you exhibit self-respect?
- How does it feel to have self-respect? How do others react to you?
- How does it feel to lose your self-respect? How do others react to you?



---

## Activity - Trust

- Who are the most important people in your life?  
Who do you trust? Why?
- How would you feel if you lost these relationships?
- Write a story about when you betrayed the trust of someone close to you.
  - How did that person react?
  - How did *you* feel?
  - What happened to your relationship? How did you get that person to trust you again?



---

## **Activity - Real-Life Effects**

- Tell a story about someone who has been abusing prescription drugs (real or imagined person).
  - How has this person's life been affected?
  - What were they like before they began abusing?
  - What do they do now?
  - What do they look like?
  - What do others think of them?
  - What do you think of them?
  - Does this make you want to experiment with drugs - why or why not?



---

## **Activity - Conversations**

- Create a skit about an encounter between a student who is addicted to prescription drugs and one who is not. They can be talking about anything, not just drug abuse.
  - Describe how they act and what they look like as well as what they say.



---

## **Activity - Painfully Obvious Comparisons**

*You have seen the posters that compare abusing prescription drugs to other silly things like picking your nose or using tuna fish as deodorant.*

- Give some examples of other things someone might do that are “obviously” dumb or silly things to do.
  - What would you think of people who did these things?
  - How would you feel about yourself if you did these things?
  - Extra credit: Create a poster similar to the other “painfully obvious” posters you have seen using one of the examples you thought of.



---

## **Additional Extra-Credit Activity Ideas**

- Research the effects of prescription drug abuse on the brain. How does it affect day-to-day activities? Why do these effects occur?
- Visit websites: [www.freevibe.com](http://www.freevibe.com), [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com), [www.drugfreeamerica.com](http://www.drugfreeamerica.com), or [www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov). Write about your reactions to these websites - were they helpful, informative, fun? What did you learn?



## **Conclusion:**

- Of all we have talked about today, what is the most “painfully obvious” negative result of prescription drug abuse?