

DRUGS

Addiction and Dependency

* Youth are more susceptible to addiction problems than adults. Certain genetic, social and environmental factors make it more likely that some individuals will become addicted. These include:

1. Sensation Seekers- youths who enjoy the feeling of being drunk or high.
2. Youths suffering from psychological problems or depression may attempt to “self medicate” by using drugs or alcohol.
3. Teens with learning disabilities may have difficulty “fitting in”.

* Younger Ages of Initiation:

1. Continued use leads to earlier dependency.
2. Creates lifetime problems.

* Using drugs leads to making bad choices:

1. Less interest in school, sports and friends.
2. Illness and physical side effects.

Enforcement:

1. Arrest.
2. Notifications to school.
3. Convictions = Lifetime label.
4. Name gets reported in the Media.

National Survey of American Attitudes on Substance Abuse VIII

- Teenagers who are under high stress are twice as likely to use illegal drugs
- Teenagers who are often bored are 50% more likely to use drugs than their contemporaries
- Teenagers with \$25 or more a week in spending money are nearly twice as likely as teens with less spending money to use illegal drugs

Many times; parents discover things in their child’s possession that causes them concern. The Glastonbury Police Department’s Youth Unit is committed to working with these parents. If a parent contacts the Youth Unit for assistance, they will receive it. However, if or when someone is caught with an illegal substance in their possession, enforcement action will be taken.

For example: A parent finds what they suspect is marijuana in their child’s pocket. The Youth Unit can:

- Positively identify the substance
- Work with the parents and the family
- Offer services at the state and local level
- In extreme cases, the police will work with the parents and enforcement action can be taken

ADD Drugs Misused to Boost School Performance

Prescription drugs used for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are being misused by a growing number of high school and college students to stay alert and confident while taking SAT's, or to stay up all night cramming for exams. While students have long taken stimulants such as caffeine to help them stay awake, increasing numbers are turning to prescription drugs such as Adderall or Ritalin for longer lasting effects. As the name suggests, stimulants are a class of drugs that enhance brain activity - they cause an increase in alertness, attention, and energy that is accompanied by elevated blood pressure and increased heart rate and respiration.

Parents in competitive schools should be especially mindful. Students have been taught that there are health risks associated with the drugs, and that it is illegal to use without a prescription. However, it continues to become more prevalent at competitive schools. William Pollack, a psychologist and director The Center for Men and Young Men at Harvard University's McLean Hospital, talked to more than 50 students who said they had used stimulants such as Adderall and Ritalin to increase test scores.

Adderall dubbed "kiddie coke" is being abused in mainstream schools across the country. While some students have valid prescriptions, others buy them off the streets or from friends who have prescriptions. Adderall is the amphetamine most widely prescribed to treat ADD/ADHD. As with other amphetamines, regular use can lead to dependency or compulsive use. Many youth access the drug legally, but find that they can sell it anywhere from three to ten dollars a pill. It is illegal to use Adderall, Ritalin and other drugs without a prescription. In many states it is a felony to be in possession of a drug that has not been prescribed to them.

Health risks include:

- Sleeplessness
- Chills
- Racing heart
- Weight loss
- Increase in blood pressure
- Increase in blood glucose levels

Taking high doses over a short time can result in:

- Feelings of hostility
- Feelings of paranoia
- Dangerously high body temperatures
- Irregular heartbeat

If your child has legitimately been prescribed a stimulant and seems to be requiring additional refills, appears not to be taking the drug but still require refills, or if you suspect that your child has been using these drugs without a prescription, please immediately discuss your concerns with your child and his/her physician.

In the 2003 Glastonbury Student Survey, 11.6% of Glastonbury 11-12th grade students responded that they had used stimulants or amphetamines without a prescription or a doctors authorization.

For additional information please contact the Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator at 652-7531

Contacts:

Glastonbury Police Youth Unit 860-652-4280

Links:

National Institute on Drug Abuse

www.drugabuse.gov

www.theantidrug.com

www.freevibe.com

www.mediacampaign.org