Prescription Drug Abuse 101

April Rovero
Founder/Executive Director
• **501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization**
• **Founded in 2010 in San Ramon, CA**
• **Mission:**

Prevent prescription drug overdose deaths and addiction through community education, policy change and legislative advocacy.

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### Key Affiliations

- Alameda County MEDS Coalition
- Alameda County Safety Net Community Workgroup
- California PDA Prevention Workgroup
- California Opioid Safety Network
- Contra Costa County MEDS Coalition
- East Bay Safe Prescribing Coalition
- FED UP! Coalition
- Lamorinda ADAPT Coalition
- Rx Safe Marin
- San Ramon Valley ADAPT Coalition
- Santa Clara Opioid Overdose Prevention Project
- Teen Esteem
Joseph John Rovero, III

March 9, 1988  -  Dec. 18, 2009
Tragic Downstream Impact
National Epidemic

Prescription Drugs More Abused Than All Illegal Drugs Combined (except marijuana)
National Data

Leading Cause of Injury Deaths:
Drug Poisoning from Prescription & Illicit Drugs

2016
64,070+ Drug Induced Deaths

2016 Fentanyl & Fentanyl Analogs
20,000+

2015
1,000 ER Visits Daily for Opioid Misuse

2017
130 Opioid Overdose Deaths Per Day

Data Source: CDC
Avoidable Deaths
What is Prescription Drug Abuse?

✓ Giving or Selling Medication to Someone Else
✓ Taking it if You Don’t Have a Prescription
Community Impact

- Death
- Crime
- Addiction
- Drugged Driving Injury
- U.S. Financial Costs
  - $72+ Billion/Year
No Boundaries

High Performing Students & Athletes

Those with Mental or Physical Health Issues

Parents, Co-Workers, Elderly Anyone!
Common Misconception

PD’s Safer Than Illegal Drugs
Because a Doctor Prescribed Them

Just as Deadly

Just as Addictive

Just as Illegal

But They Are...
Legal Consequences

Possessing Pills Without a Prescription
Misdemeanor
Citation - Usually Fine/Probation

Selling or Furnishing PD’s
FELONY
Jail Time/ Probation/ Prison Time

Driving Under the Influence
Average Cost - Over $15K, Probation, Jail Time
With Injuries- Felony- Prison Time
Where Do Abusers Get Meds?

Majority of Abusers
- 70% from Family & Friends
- Home Medicine Cabinets

Primary Drug Sources
- Primary Care Providers (Including Dentists)
- Emergency Departments
- Internet Pharmacies

Most Addictions
- Begin With Legitimate Mental and Physical Health Issues
Most Abused Medications

- Painkillers
- Sedatives
- Stimulants
Painkillers

- OxyContin
- Vicodin
- Norco
- Percocet

Effects
- Drowsiness
- Constipation
- Slowed or Stopped Breathing
How Painkillers Are Abused

Crushed/Snorted

Injected

Smoked
Pills to Heroin Transition

Opiates
Narcotic analgesic derived from a natural source (opium poppy)

Natural
Opium
Morphine
Codeine

Semi-Synthetic
Heroin (Diamorphine)
Hydrocodone (Vicodin) (Lortab)
Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)

Meperidine (Demerol)
Oxycodone (Percodan) (OxyContin)

Synthetic
Fentanyl (Sublimaze)
Methadone (Dolophine)
Pentazocine (Talwin)
Propoxyphene (Darvon)

Narcotic analgesic derived from a natural source (opium poppy)
Fentanyl Threat

**Fentanyl: Overdoses On The Rise**

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid approved for treating severe pain, such as advanced cancer pain. Illicitly manufactured fentanyl is the main driver of recent increases in synthetic opioid deaths.

**Synthetic Opioid Deaths Across The U.S.**

- **50-100x More Potent Than Morphine**
- **73% Increase from 2014 to 2015**
- **264% Increase from 2012 to 2015**

**Ohio Drug Submissions Testing Positive for Illicitly Manufactured Fentanyl**

- **196% Increase from 2014 to 2015**

**Illicitly Manufactured Fentanyl**

Although prescription rates have fallen, overdoses associated with fentanyl have risen dramatically, contributing to a sharp spike in synthetic opioid deaths.

- Often mixed with heroin or cocaine with or without user knowledge.
Synthetic Opioids

One City, Two Days, 78 Overdoses

Fentanyl

What you should know:

- It's an opioid licensed for use with large animals, but not for humans.
- It's 100 times more toxic than fentanyl (and 10,000 times more toxic than morphine).
- An amount as small as a grain of sand could be lethal.
- Carfentanil has not been seized by police in Toronto or Ontario.
- It has been linked to 2 deaths in Alberta, at least 2 deaths in Winnipeg and multiple deaths in Michigan and Ohio.
- Has been cut into heroin and other drugs.

Please let us know about any changes in the drug supply. The more we all know, the more we can keep each other safe!
America’s Opiate Epidemic Saga

The relentless marketing of pain pills. Crews from one small Mexican town selling heroin like pizza. The collision has led to America’s greatest drug scourge.

The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic

DREAMLAND

SAM QUINONES

AMERICAN OVERDOSE

THE OPIOID TRAGEDY IN THREE ACTS

CHRIS MCGREAL
Sedatives

- Valium
- Xanax
- Codeine
- Ambien

**Effects**

- Slowed Brain Function
- Lack of Coordination
- Sedated or Drowsy
- Disorientation
- Lethal Seizures
- Shallow Breathing and Slow Heart Rate
Stimulants

Ritalin

Adderall

Dexedrine

Effects

- Increased Heart Rate & Blood Pressure
- Heart Attack
- Psychotic Episodes
- Chronic Insomnia
- Dangerously High Temperature
Robotripping, Dexing, Robodosing

Effects

- Hallucinations
- Paranoia
- Disorientation
- Loss of Consciousness
- Seizures
- Brain Damage
- Death
Loperamide

• 10x > Recommended Dose, Can Manage Opioid Withdrawals

• At Very Large Doses, Can Produce High Similar to Opioids

• Can Fatally Disrupt Heart’s Rhythm
Multiplier Effect

Mixing Prescription Drugs, Especially With Alcohol, Is Like Playing Russian Roulette
How We Breath
Why Prescription Drugs Can Be So Deadly

- **Alcohol**
- **Painkillers**
- **Other Sedatives** (Ambien, Lunesta, Marijuana, Benadryl)
- **Benzodiazepines** (Valium, Ativan, Xanax, Klonopin, Rohypnol)
- **GHB**
- **Barbiturates** (Downers, Yellow Jackets, Purple Hearts, Pink Ladies)
SUD Risk Factors

- Family History of Addiction
- Mental Health Disorder
- Learning Disabilities
- Childhood Trauma
- Early First Use
General Signs of Abuse

- Changes in Mood or Attitude
  - Loss of Appetite
  - Unexplained Weight Loss or Gain

- Drug Paraphernalia
  - Pinpoint or Enlarged Pupils
  - Unusual Temper Outbursts

- Slurred Speech
  - Lack of Personal Grooming
  - Missing Work or School
Painkillers (OxyContin, Vicodin, Heroin) can be snorted, smoked or injected intravenously.

Watch For

- Straws, Syringes, Darkened or Missing Spoons
- Tin Foil With Dark Streaks
- Nodding Off, Slowed Breathing
- Itching and Scratching
- Slurred Speech/Change in Voice
- Pinpoint Pupils
Signs of Sedative Abuse

**Sedatives** (Anti-Anxiety, Sleep Aids, etc.)
- Sedated/Drowsiness
- Slurred Speech
- Loss of Consciousness
- Lack of Coordination
- Dizziness
- Change in Sleep Patterns
- Amnesia and Other Memory Problems

*Watch For*
Stimulants (Adderall, Ritalin, etc.) can be taken non-medically by those without ADHD to stay awake to study, party, lose weight

Watch For
- Weight Loss
- Aggression and Unusual Emotional Outbursts
- Dilated Pupils
- Sleep Problems/Insomnia
Over-the-Counter or Prescription (DMX, Codeine) is normally mixed with soda, Jolly Ranchers or other candy to help make the medicine go down.

Watch For

- Hallucinations
- Paranoia
- Loss of Consciousness
- Seizures
- Disorientation
Physical Signs

Stimulants

- dilated pupil

Opiates

- constricted pupil
When to Intervene

- Earlier the Better – Trust Your ‘Gut’
- Even Casual & Experimental Use in Teens Is Cause for Alarm

Substance Use ➔ Dependence ➔ Addiction

Can Lead to

Accidents    Legal Trouble    Serious Health Issues
Pill Party Danger

“Pharm Party”

“Skittle Party”
Youth Brain Development

• Brain Matures Around Age 25

• Prefrontal Cortex Develops Last
  – Poor Planning/Judgement
  – Risky, Impulsive Behaviors
  – More Prone to Damage from Substance Abuse
Substance Use Impact on Youth Brain

• Can Negatively Impact Memory Center (Hippocampus)

• May Disrupt Brain Development, Making it Harder for Teens to Cope With Life Pressures
Properly Manage Medications

- Proper Disposal
- Safeguard
Find Alternative Treatment Options for Pain Management

- Injuries
- Dental Procedures

Youth & Adults

Youth & Adults
Alternative Treatment Options

Pain Issues
- OTC Medications
- Physical/Water Therapy
- Braces/Corsets
- Acupuncture
- Chiropractic Care

Anxiety/Sleep Issues
- Exercise
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Mindfulness Training
- Massage
Ask Your Doctor...

• What Are the Side Effects of This Medication?

• Can This Medication Be Addictive?

• What Other Treatment Options Are There?

Read & Follow Drug Labels & Info!
Teach & Practice Resistance Strategies

- Walk Away/Leave
- Hang Out With Those Who Don’t Use
- Change the Subject
- Give an Excuse
- Avoid Problem Situations
- “My Parents Drug Test Me!”
- Make a Joke
- Say “No”
- Offer an Alternative
Learn and Teach Signs of Overdose

**Convulsions**
- Drowsiness
- Sweating or Hot Skin

**Unconscious**
- Hallucinations
- Violent, Aggressive, Paranoid, Delusional Behavior

**Difficulty Breathing**
- Nausea & Vomiting
- Call 911!
Keep Naloxone Rescue Kits On Hand
Discuss Good Samaritan Law

• California Law AB 472 signed into law in September, 2012
• Provides limited immunity from low-level drug law violations
• Does not apply to...
  – Selling, giving
  – Forcible administration
  – Driving under the influence
Teach Youth How to Help Friends

• Call Out Concerns

• LISTEN and Offer Assistance in Finding Help

• Be Prepared to Part Ways if Abuse Continues

• Talk to a Trusted Adult for Advise
Learn the Language

**Opioids**
Hillbilly heroin, Oxy, OC, Oycotton, Oxycet, Percs, Happy Pills, Vikes, Watson-387, Tuss, Big Boys, Cotton, Percs, Morph, Kicker

**Benzodiazepines**
Candy, Downers, Sleeping pills, Tranks, Totem Poles, Chill Pills, French Fries, Tranqs, Blues, Z-bar, Bricks, Benzos

**Stimulants**
Skippy, The Smart Drug, Vitamin R, Bennies, Black beauties, Roses, Hearts, Speed, Uppers, Kiddy cocaine, West Coast, Crosses, LA Turnaround, Truck Drivers, Beans, Christmas Trees, Double Trouble, Rid, Jif, R-ball, Rittys, Rits

**Sleep Medications**
A-Minus, Zombie pills

**Cough Medicine**
DXM, Dex, Drex, Dexing, Orange Crush, Red Devils, Red Hots, Robo, Robo Dosing, Robo-fizzing, Robotard, Robo-tripping, Skittles, Triple C’s, Tussin, Velvet Syrup, Vitamin D
Resources

• National Institute on Drug Abuse
  www.drugabuse.gov

• Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
  www.cdc.gov

• Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
  www.samhsa.gov
Resources

Parents 360Rx Documentary re: Impact
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuQH6ft7oO1

Chasing the Dragon Documentary re: Painkiller to Heroin Addiction

Up and Away Campaign (Medicine Safety Website with Tools)
www.upandaway.org/

Operation Prevention (K-12 Opioid Education Curriculum)
www.operationprevention.com/#about
National Coalition Against Prescription Drug Abuse (NCAPDA)

925-480-7723
www.ncapda.org

Spread the Word…One Pill Can Kill