



Know! To Role Model RESPECT for the Rx

Why focus on prescription drugs? Research shows that more deaths are now occurring each year from accidental drug overdose than from car accidents. Someone in the US dies every 15 minutes from an accidental overdose. And nearly half of the drug overdose deaths are due to prescription drugs.

Parents are powerful influencers when it comes to our children's attitudes and behaviors regarding alcohol, tobacco and the use of other drugs. Having ongoing conversations and sharing information on the dangers of substance use/abuse with our children is fundamental. It is also vitally important to make clear our expectations for them not to drink underage, smoke or use drugs. But it is not just what we say that matters. It is also what we do. The behavioral choices our children see us make has the greatest impact on the lifestyle choices they make surrounding substances.

When it comes to the use of prescription drugs, what are your children learning from you? Do you role model respect for prescription drugs by locking up and monitoring your medicines, as encouraged by experts? Do you properly dispose of unused and unwanted medications? Have you made it clear, by example, that sharing prescription medications with others is dangerous and not okay?

Substance Abuse Awareness Initiative

Substance abuse, including drug and alcohol abuse, is prevalent throughout Ohio, within our communities and affects many State of Ohio employees, their spouses and their dependents. Throughout this year, the Ohio Employee Assistance Program is raising awareness about substance abuse and offering resources and tools in the Frontline Focus newsletter. This edition of Frontline Focus features stories about having "RE-SPECT" for prescription drugs, understanding substance abuse treatment from a supervisor's perspective and warning signs for parents of teens.

The substance abuse initiative will culminate at the 2015 OEAP Conference, which will be held Sept. 15 at the Ohio Department of Commerce's Division of State Fire Marshal office building.

If so, you are doing an incredible job, and we encourage you to keep up the great work! If not, it is important to remember that while prescription drugs have the ability to improve and save lives, they also have the potential to harm, and that they can be fatal if used improperly or by an unintended person. Role modeling the above behavioral choices are key in promoting family wellness and teaching our children respect for potentially harmful medications.

Another way to RESPECT the Rx is to ask your health care provider or pharmacist specific questions about your prescription medications, in order to avoid unintended harmful effects. The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy came up with the acronym RESPECT, as a way to help you remember those questions:

- R.** Reason: Why is this medication being prescribed for me?
- E.** Explain Usage: Should I take this medication regularly or as needed? What restrictions are there with food/alcohol/other medications?
- S.** Symptoms: When is it appropriate for me to take this medication (e.g., on a scale from 1 – 10 for pain severity)?

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- P.** Practitioners: Inform your doctor if you are seeing other healthcare providers and which pharmacy you use (you should only use one pharmacy).
- E.** Expected Effects: What effects can I expect from taking this medication? What precautions do I need to take while driving, operating machinery, etc.?
- C.** Concerns with Controlled Substances: Is there addiction potential with my medication?
- T.** Time to Stop: When and how should I stop taking my medication? How should I store and dispose of it when I am done?

If the opportunity is there, take your son or daughter with you to your next doctor's appointment, allowing him/her to observe you using this guide. If your child is prescribed a medication, similar questions should also be asked during his/her doctor visit. You and your child will not only obtain the detailed information you need, but the importance of RESPECTing the Rx will be reinforced.

One of the most powerful skills youth possess is their ability to observe. One of the most powerful opportunities we, as parents possess, is our opportunity to positively influence our children who are paying close attention to our lifestyle choices.

[Click here](#) for a printable version of the RESPECT the Rx Guide.

For more information about prescription medication safety, visit

<http://pharmacy.osu.edu/outreach/generation-rx-initiative>.

Source: [The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy: Generation Rx – RESPECT the Rx](#). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Prescription Drug Overdose in the United States: Fact Sheet](#).

Understanding Substance Use Treatment: Information for Supervisors

Substance use affects the workplace in many ways, including employee morale, productivity and profitability. If you have an employee who is actively using drugs or alcohol, these workplace problems impact not only the using worker but also the employee's co-workers.

Once a professional counselor identifies an employee's substance use problem and makes a chemical dependency treatment recommendation, you can retain your valuable employee by supporting that person's treatment participation.

Types of Treatment

To best support your employee, understand that the time frame of a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) or Chemical Dependency (CD) (terms are used interchangeably) treatment program varies, according to the program requirements and regionally established norms. During treatment, an individual learns about the disease of addiction as well as some of the tools necessary to live life without drugs or alcohol.

There are essentially two levels of treatment, inpatient and outpatient. The specific treatment level of care (LOC) recommendation is based on the information gathered during the CD or SUD assessment, conducted by a qualified counselor.

Depending on factors identified during the CD/SUD assessment, your employee may require detoxification services. "Detox," as it is usually called, is not considered treatment for drugs or alcohol since the main focus of the program is to manage any physical symptoms of withdrawal.

Detoxification

Prior to entering a therapeutic treatment community, either Inpatient or Outpatient, a person may need detoxification. Detox allows time for the individual to withdraw from their acute, physical drug/alcohol effects. Like Inpatient, the person is admitted into the facility and stays overnight, until discharge. Duration of detox depends on the particular substance from which a person is withdrawing.

Frequently, a detox facility is in a medical setting with 24-hour doctor and nursing supervision. Medications may be used to lessen the intensity of withdrawal symptoms. In

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addition, there are "social" detox programs where medical support is on-call and daily visits are made to check on the well-being of the participants. The 24-hour social detox facility staff is usually comprised of qualified SUD/CD counselors.

Inpatient treatment

As the name implies, the individual lives "in" the facility for the duration of the treatment and may have little or no contact with outside individuals. Such treatment may be advised when a person requires removal from his "using" environment in order to stay drug and alcohol free. It may also be recommended for persons who have complicating medical or psychological factors.



Outpatient treatment

The individual continues to live in his or her home environment and attends treatment sessions at a treatment facility. How frequently the individual attends treatment depends on the program requirements. It is not uncommon for a person to be in a structured outpatient treatment program, sometimes called "Intensive Outpatient" and still maintain their daily work responsibilities.

In substance use treatment, the individual begins to physically, mentally and spiritually heal from the alcohol or drug dependency. Through educational and therapeutic groups combined with individual counseling, SUD/CD treatment teaches the individual the physical and behavioral effects of addiction while presenting alternative coping mechanisms.

Aftercare

Aftercare is an essential part of the treatment continuum. Through aftercare groups, the individual is given the



opportunity to continue his or her therapeutic treatment and share recovering experiences with other treatment participants. In general, aftercare groups monitor the individual's early recovery progress and take place in a treatment facility. Groups may meet once or twice a week, include individual therapy, and/or urine tests.

Aftercare programs vary in length. When your employee returns to work, he or she will most likely be in the aftercare stage of treatment. As a supervisor, your encouragement and support of your employee's aftercare participation can be particularly important. Many employers, who have required employees to enter treatment, continue to follow the employee's aftercare participation. The employer's Employee Assistance Program can be particularly helpful facilitating treatment program communication.

Support groups offer a complementary facet of the treatment continuum. Peer support groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, allow the person to bond with and receive support from others who share similar substance use histories. Support groups may be held at treatment facilities, but usually are held in other community meeting areas. Support groups strengthen a person's resolve for ongoing abstinence and present the chance for lifelong participation.

Remember that treatment is only the beginning of recovery. Recovery itself is an ongoing, daily process.

This article is intended to provide general informational content only. Please consult your company policy and procedures for specific guidance on this topic.



Is Your Child Using? Spotting the Signs and Symptoms of Substance Use in Teenagers

As a parent, you may be concerned about whether or not your child is experimenting with drugs or alcohol. It is difficult to know whether your child is using substances, or if he or she is just going through a period of normal adolescent adjustment.

Even if your teenager exhibits several of the warning signs listed here, they may not have an addiction problem, because substance-using behavior is not significantly different from typical teenage behavior.

The following behaviors occur to some degree in most teens. Avoid jumping to conclusions, but don't ignore the warning signs, especially if your "gut instinct" tells you that your child is using drugs or alcohol. Many of these symptoms are also signs of depression, so only an open talk with your child or a visit to a qualified professional can tell you what may really be going on.

POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNS

Physical signs

- Slurred or slow speech, unresponsive when spoken to
- Loss of motor skills
- Sudden weight gain or loss (change in appetite)
- Poor personal hygiene
- Eye pupils become dilated, constricted or bloodshot
- Insomnia or hyperactivity

Psychological signs

- Short attention span, trouble concentrating, forgetfulness
- Increased feelings of frustration, anger or overwhelmed when trying to handle complex or multiple mental challenges
- Noticeable personality changes: aggressiveness, sullenness, anger, hostility, irritability, evasiveness or lying
- Increased complaints about medical or emotional problems, such as stomach disorders, paranoia or talk of suicide

Social and behavioral signs

- Relationships with parents and siblings deteriorate
- Money or valuables disappear
- Spending unusually large amounts of time in the bathroom
- Changes in friends, evasiveness about new ones
- Use of Visine, room deodorizers, incense, Vicks VapoRub or Vicks Nasal Inhalers
- Drug-related graphics or slogans
- Pipes, small boxes or containers, baggies, rolling papers or other drug-related items; peculiar odors or butts, seeds, and/or leaves in ashtrays or clothing pockets
- School tardiness, truancy, declining grades; trouble with the law or at school
- Less motivation, energy and self-discipline; loss of interest in extracurricular activities

HELPFUL STRATEGIES

- Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of substance use. Behaviors are important clues to a child's possible involvement with drugs or alcohol. As a parent, you are often closest to your child, and therefore the one best equipped to recognize subtle changes in his/her behavior.
- Become informed about drugs, so that you can provide accurate information to your child. Information about drugs of abuse can be found at the National Institute on Drug Abuse's website: drugabuse.gov.
- Don't minimize your concerns. Drug and alcohol addiction does not happen overnight, but often

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develops much faster in children than in adults. As caring parents, act on your concerns. Ignoring or denying a problem may waste precious time in addressing the issue.

- Get your child's version of events before drawing conclusions. For example, a sudden change in clothes or hairstyle may or may not signal a problem. Some teens dress in certain ways to express their interest in certain kinds of music, not necessarily in drugs. Open communication can help you determine whether your child is "asking for help" or engaging in healthy self-expression.
- Develop open lines of communication. In a non-judgmental, non-authoritarian and non-blaming way, ask open-ended, probing questions (e.g. What are your thoughts and feelings about the drugs and alcohol use among the teenagers in your school?). It is very important to communicate in this way if you want your child to be responsive and honest with you. Don't be discouraged if you don't make headway right away. Your unconditional love and open communication can be a potent defense against drug use.
- See if your teenager is reacting to any family problems. Look at sudden changes and talk to your children carefully and compassionately about any problems.

- Contacting other parents who are dealing with similar concerns may be helpful.
- Contact your insurance company, family physician or employee assistance program about obtaining a referral to a mental health professional.
- If you think that your child is suicidal, call 9-1-1 or take him/her to the nearest hospital emergency room.

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can only enhance your life and that of your loved ones. By staying active and keeping fit you'll not only help prevent physical and mental decline; you will actually thrive well into your golden years.

Substance Abuse Resources

Articles, webinars, action plans, videos and resources about substance abuse and other behavioral health topics can be accessed via the Live and Work

Well website at liveandworkwell.com;
enter access code: 00832.

Also, contact OEAP at 800-221-6327 for consultation services.



**OHIO EMPLOYEE
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Your employee assistance program offers confidential help for personal problems and concerns. Concerned about a troubled family member who won't get help? Feel tired and exhausted, but don't know if it's burnout, loss of motivation, depression or all three? Late for work too often? Has the use of alcohol or drugs created a crisis you are facing right now? The bottom line, never wonder if your concern is appropriate to contact OEAP. So, if you've been putting off taking action to solve a serious issue that is weighing on you, give OEAP a call today.

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