**The Problem**

* + 2,500 teens between the ages of 12 and 17 begin abusing prescription drugs each day, and two-thirds of teens who abuse prescription drugs did so before the age of 16 (2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health)
  + 90 percent of addictions start in the teen years. (Partnership at Drugfree.org)
  + Teen painkiller use to get high had the second highest prevalence of all 30-day drug use measures in 2013, behind marijuana. (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile,* August 2014.)
  + 8.5 percent of New Mexico high school students report having used prescription painkillers to get high. (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile,* August 2014.)
  + In 2011, New Mexico had the second highest total drug overdose death rate in the nation (most recent data available). (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile,* August 2014.)
  + 49 percent of drugs causing unintentional overdose death were prescription opioids (painkillers), compared with 29 percent for heroin, 28 percent for tranquilizers/muscle relaxants, 21 percent for antidepressants, 19 percent for cocaine and 9 percent for methamphetamine. (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile,* August 2014.)
  + Unintentional drug overdose is the largest subset of total drug overdose deaths, accounting for 80-85 percent of drug overdose deaths in New Mexico. (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile,* August 2014.)
  + Poisoning has been the leading cause of unintentional death in New Mexico, surpassing motor vehicle crash deaths, largely as a result of increased unintentional drug overdose associated with prescription drug use. (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile,* August 2014.)
  + Between 2008-2012, 48 percent of unintentional drug overdose deaths were caused by prescription drugs, while 35 percent were caused by illicit drug drugs and 16 percent involved both. (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile,* August 2014.)
* Drug overdose is the leading cause of injury death in New Mexico. The increase in overdose deaths over the past decade has been driven by an increase in prescription drug overdose deaths. (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Prescription Monitoring Program Data Report 2006-2013.)*
* Opioids are the most common class of controlled substance prescriptions filled in New Mexico. Opioids and benzodiazepines account for 83% of controlled substance fills. (New Mexico Department of Health, *New Mexico Prescription Monitoring Program Data Report 2006-2013.)*
* Two-thirds of teens who abuse pain relievers report getting them from family members and friends. (National Survey on Drug Use and Health)

**Prevention**

* Never take a prescription pain medication not prescribed for you.
* Never take more than is prescribed.
* Never share your prescription pain medication with anyone.
* Store medications out of reach with the label attached and the child-resistant cap secured.
* Keep track of the number of pills in the bottle so you are immediately aware if any are missing.
* Dispose of all unused and expired prescription medications properly.