



Substance Abuse: Helping those you Love

Ahhh . . . the joys of parenthood! We experience excitement, wonder, joy, and especially love for our children. As parents, we naturally protect our children and want what is best for them. We protect our homes with alarms; we prepare first-aid kits and supplies for emergencies. We have smoke detectors and neighborhood watches.

Parents do the best they can to protect their children from so many dangers. But, if our children were abusing drugs or alco-

hol, are we prepared to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse or addiction? And if we do recognize the symptoms, will we do something about it?

No matter how much love and support a parent gives, children and adults can still make unhealthy decisions. However, parents and family members can give their family added protection by preparing themselves with the knowledge needed to prevent and identify substance abuse in their families.

Signs and symptoms of substance abuse:

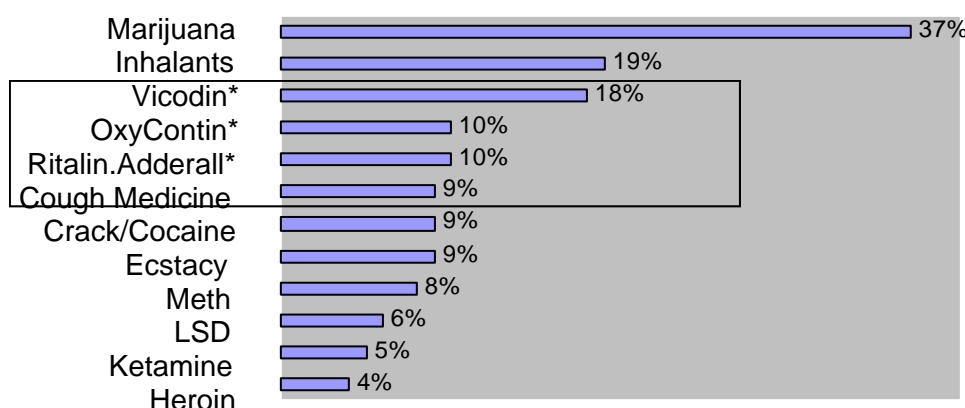
- Excessive worry or anxiety
- Depression and/or feelings of hopelessness
- Angry outbursts that appear to be an overreaction
- Excessive fear or paranoia
- Crying often and suddenly for no particular reason
- Declining school grades
- Isolation-avoiding family and friends
- Self-destructive behavior or violence toward others

- Threatening suicide
- Change in peers
- Missing money or valuables from home

These symptoms can also be warning signs for other mental or emotional problems. So, if you feel someone you care about may be in trouble, please take the first step to help them. Call the Substance Abuse Treatment Services Program of the Health Department at 926-7135.

Generation Rx: Emerging Category of Substance Abuse

Percentage of Teens Who Have Ever Abused:



*That a doctor did not prescribe for them

Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, 2004

Prevention of Teen Prescription Drug Abuse

According to a recent press release from the Michigan Department of Community Health, Michigan has one of the highest rates of teen prescription drug abuse in the county. In fact, the number of people in Michigan reporting prescription drug abuse when they entered publicly funded treatment rose from 1,556 in 2002 to 3,368 in 2006.

Many households have over the counter and prescribed medications available. Here are some tips for to keep your family safe:

1 Know your medication: Ask your provider if your medications have the potential for abuse or addiction.

2 Monitor your medications: Check the amount of



pills in each bottle regularly, including cough medicine.

3 Keep medications out of the medicine cabinet and other easily reachable places.

And most importantly,

4 Discuss the subject with your teenagers! Explore what they know about their friends using medications without a doctor's prescription. Let your teenagers know that they should never take any medications without permission.

Berrien County Health

Department:
Preventing Disease,
Prolonging Life and
Protecting the
Health of the
Community.



September Health: Focus on Family

September is Be Prepared... Protect Your Family Month. The Berrien County Health Department wants to make sure that your family is safe and healthy as the kids go back to school and the weather gets cooler! This month we will provide you with information on Adolescent Health, Opportunities for the Uninsured, Substance Abuse and Mental Health, and Influenza and Pneumonia. For more information about any of these topics, please call the health department at 926-7121.

We often read or hear and see news stories about the prevalence and tragic consequences that result from the use or abuse of illegal drugs or alcohol. But prescription medication abuse by teens and young adults is a growing problem in the United States. Some surprising statistics to consider:

- 1 in 5 teens has abused a prescription pain medication
- 1 in 5 report abusing prescription stimulants and tranquilizers
- 1 in 10 has abused cough medicine



How to get help

The Berrien County Health Department Substance Abuse Treatment Services Program provides individual and family counseling, plus urine screening for drug use. For more information, call

926-7135

The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor

769 Pipestone
P.O. Box 706
926-7121

M-139 Office

2106 S. M-139
927-5623

School Based

870 Colfax Ave
925-4500

Niles

1205 N. Front St.
684-2800

Three Oaks

21 N. Elm
756-2008

Or visit us on the web at www.berriencohlthdept.org

This page is sponsored by the Berrien County Health Department

