

Out of Reach Tools to Take Action

Out of Reach Screening and Discussion Guide

This kit is an easy-to-use tool you can use to share information with parents and other concerned adults about the real dangers of medicine abuse (both prescription drugs and over-the-counter cough medicine) and the actions that can be taken to prevent and respond to it. The centerpiece of the kit is the *Out of Reach* documentary, which was created by a teen student filmmaker to show parents just how dangerous – and prevalent – medicine abuse is in the lives of today’s teens and young adults.

What do you need?

- A place to meet. This can be your home, a library, church hall, school or community meeting room, a café or local restaurant. You simply want enough space for everyone to be seated comfortably. It can also be delivered in your place of work as a “lunch and learn” presentation, or at a meeting of a club or organization of which you are a member.
- A computer connected to a video monitor or projector or DVD player and television.
- The *Out of Reach* documentary.
- Enough copies of the “Taking Action” documents for your guests.
- If you are having a large group at a public location, you may also want to consider inviting three or four community leaders (local law enforcement, school nurses, emergency room doctors, pharmacists, etc.) to serve on a panel and discuss what is being done in your community to address medicine abuse. Members of the press can also attend and potentially cover the event (sample press release and advisory templates enclosed).*

Please contact us at contact@toendaddiction.org if you need any technical assistance.

Invite Your Guests

This film is intended for adults, as content may be educative for teens. Invite your guests in the same way that you would invite them to any other gathering – by phone, e-mail and social media - or in any way that works best for you. Be sure to let your guests know when and where the event will happen. Here’s an example:

“Please join me and some friends to watch and discuss a documentary called Out of Reach on [date/time]. It was created by a teen filmmaker working with Partnership to End Addiction. The documentary is about 25 minutes long, and the whole event should take less than an hour.”

Let your guests know why you want to meet and why is it important to you to bring your friends and family together to discuss medicine abuse.

At Your Event

Thank your guests for coming. If your guests don't know each other, ask them to introduce themselves. Introduce the film and let your guests know that:

- This film was created by a teen student filmmaker, who worked with mentor and director Tucker Capps (from A&E's popular show "Intervention") and Partnership to End Addiction. The documentary premiered at the 18th annual Genart Film Festival.
- It runs about 25 minutes.
- The teenagers and people featured are real people – not actors.

Discussion Guide:

After playing the film, discuss it with your guests. Every conversation about the film will be different, and you can adapt your discussion to fit the needs of your attendees. The following are some questions to help you start the conversation:

Question: *"What are your immediate responses? In just a few words, what do you think or feel about what you just saw?"* Try to get as many people to respond as possible, and try to limit responses to a few words. One guest's strong opinions may prevent others from sharing their views. Ask guests to hold their questions until everyone has shared their initial response.

Question: *"What was the most surprising thing that you learned about teen medicine abuse from the video?"* Ask audience members to share what they know about teen prescription drug abuse. Some of the points you want to address are:

- Many teens say they've used.
- Most kids get drugs at home/from friends.
- Kids in the film expressed that they don't think medicine abuse is a big deal.
- Teens are using medicine while at school. Not enough parents are talking to their kids about medicine abuse.

Question: *"In the film, teens talk about taking prescription drugs at home, in school and in their communities. What have you heard about the issue of medicine abuse in your community's schools? Are your friends and other parents aware of the issue of medicine abuse?"* Ask audience members whether or not this is on other parents' radar. Some points that you may want to address:

- Teens are typically good at hiding medicine abuse until it gets out of hand.
- Teens are using medicine while at school.
- Many parents don't know because the signs of medicine abuse aren't as "obvious" as the signs of other illicit drug use.

Question: *"What is happening in our community to address the problem of teen medicine abuse and what more should we be doing?"* Ask audience members to share information about programs or initiatives that local schools, law enforcement or community leaders may be spearheading. Also ask them to think about ways to fill any gaps that may exist and ideas for getting additional programs implemented. Some questions that you may want to raise:

- Does your community partner with the Drug Enforcement Administration on National Prescription Drug Take-Back Days? Are there permanent take-back locations that are convenient to where you live?
- Is your local media covering the issue of teen medicine abuse? Can you write letters to the editor or pitch stories to local reporters about the problem or good work that your community is doing to address it?
- Are your elected officials speaking out about this problem? Can you set up meetings to talk about your concerns and ask local leaders to work with you and/or local leaders to address medicine abuse?
- Are there others in the community who would benefit from seeing *Out of Reach* and, if so, how to go about making sure that more people see the film?
- Are there currently programs in the schools to teach teens about the dangers of medicine abuse? If not, would people support urging schools to use some of the free resources on drugfree.org (school curricula, posters, materials to send home for parents, etc.)?

The following are some tips to have a good discussion:

- Encourage communication by avoiding criticism. Nothing shuts down open dialogue like embarrassment.
- Use a “pivot” when necessary. Pivoting means changing the topic back to the issue that you want to talk about. If an audience member makes a statement that is not germane to your conversation, you “pivot,” by saying “that’s really interesting – I’d like to hear some other responses to our main question.”
- Keep the conversation focused on actions that can be taken to help prevent and respond to medicine abuse by teens and in your homes and community.

Motivating Action:

After you feel that everyone has had the opportunity to share their views, it is important to move on to the next step of your gathering: **Taking Action**. The Taking Action handouts consist of four documents. Share and discuss each document with your guests.

- Taking Action Against Medicine Abuse: Outlines the actions individuals can take to prevent and respond to medicine abuse. The other documents address the same issues in greater detail. If you can only hand out one document, this is the one to use.
- Action 1: Three Steps to Safeguard your Home
- Action 2: Know the Signs and Symptoms of Medicine Abuse
- Action 3: Talk to Your Family, Friends and Other Parents

If a question arises about medicine abuse or the *Out of Reach* documentary that you cannot answer, if you would like to offer direct feedback on the presentation or have any questions about medicine abuse or Partnership to End Addiction, please email contact@toendaddiction.org.

To learn more about medicine abuse and access additional resources, visit [The Medicine Abuse Project](http://TheMedicineAbuseProject) online at drugfree.org and follow on social media.