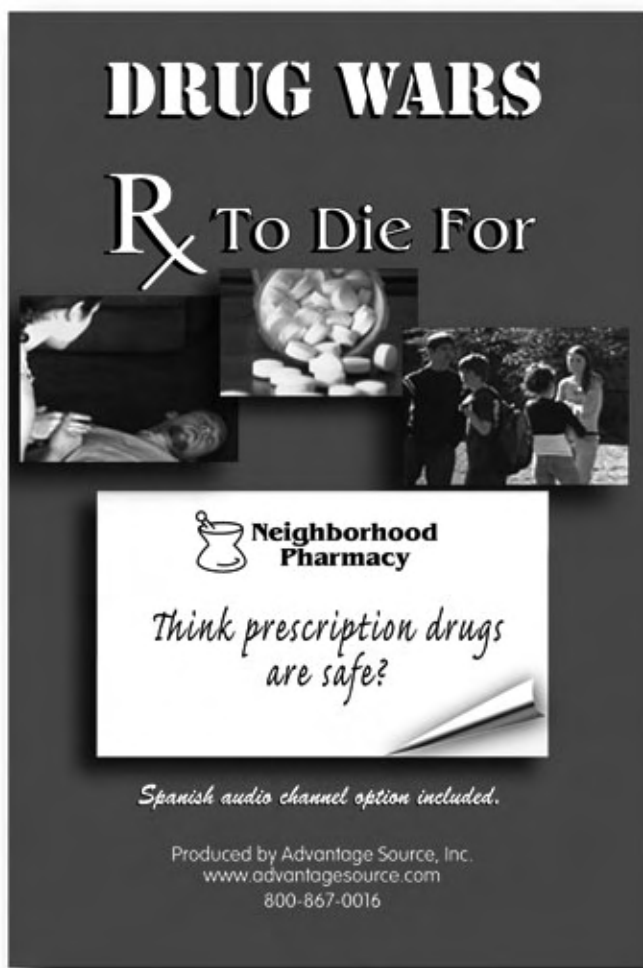


# Instructor Materials

*This Productivity Pack is for use with the video:*

## DRUG WARS Rx To Die For



### **FOR INSTRUCTORS:**

How to Use this Video Package  
pages 2 - 3

Facts on Prescription Drugs  
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Prescription Drug Use  
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# How to use this video package

## **Introduction: Why we made this video**

We created a video on the harmful effects of prescription drug use because we wanted to raise awareness of the growing misuse of prescription drugs, especially among school children, teenagers and young adults. “Pharming” is the name given to prescription drug use—the use of any prescription drug or over-the-counter medication for nonmedical or recreational purposes.

The video is a comprehensive examination of an increasingly troublesome national trend. Today more than 6,000,000 Americans abuse prescription drugs and the sales of prescription painkillers have tripled since 1996. Roughly 6% of the nation’s 12th graders have used a prescription narcotic painkillers, sedatives, or stimulants recreationally in the past year. The video is interview-based and speaks to how a prescription drug addiction can affect families and the individual user who risks heart and liver damage, stroke, seizures, depression, and sometimes even death.

The interviews include: high school students, law enforcement officials, former prescription drug abusers, their family members and those in the medical field. They paint the grim picture of the ready availability and abuse of prescription drugs so highly addictive that once the brain is addicted, a user is essentially addicted for life.

## **What this video teaches**

This film can be used to teach many lessons. Following are some themes you can emphasize when showing *Drug Wars: To Die For*.

- Young kids, teenage kids, are having prescription drug heart attacks, strokes, sometimes fatal ones, inside the schools, for no apparent reason.
- School health classes are not cautioning kids against the use of prescription drugs.
- Kids think prescription drugs aren’t harmful because they are “medicine”. They are FDA approved, prescribed by a doctor and over-the-counter medications can be bought legally, so people consider painkillers safe.
- Prescription drugs are easily available, not only from dealers, but from friends, in the family medicine cabinet or by “doctor-hopping”.
- “Everyday people” are abusing them. These are people you would least suspect of having a prescription drug addiction, housewives, professional people, educators, people in healthcare, etc.
- Teens are 18 times more likely to die from an overdose of over-the-counter medications than from an overdose of an illegal drug such as heroin, cocaine, or methamphetamine.
- It isn’t easy to tell when a person has taken a painkiller but there are physical and emotional signs to watch for.
- Teenagers don’t realize that taking prescription drugs a few times at a party, could lead to a lifelong problem with addiction.

### **People who should watch this video**

This show will be useful in providing knowledge and increasing awareness in a prevention setting. We suggest you try it with:

- **ADOLESCENTS AND EVEN JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS:** Many young people are not aware of the serious health and addiction risks of prescription drugs use. They may doubt the harmful effects because the drugs may be obtained from a doctor or legally over-the-counter.
- **PARENTS:** Some parents are blissfully ignorant about the widespread availability and use of prescription drugs by young people. Parents play a pivotal role in their children's ability to say no to drugs. This video will prepare them for a truthful discussion on prescription drugs.
- **COUNSELORS AND TEACHERS:** People in the teaching and helping professions need to operate on the basis of authoritative information. They can't afford to act on misconceptions about drugs. This program will give them the facts they need about prescription drugs.
- **MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:** This program will educate young people about the dangers of prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines in order to make informed decisions.
- **GENERAL PUBLIC:** Videos such as this one are very good at arousing public awareness to the dangers of the use of prescription drugs, especially among young people.

### **Additional suggestions for how to use this video**

Your purchase of Drug Wars: To Die For entitles you to "unlimited Public Performance Rights." This is a license commonly offered with training and educational media. Here are some of the ways you can use this program.

- Show it to therapy groups, families and classes.
- Show it at seminars and workshops.
- Show it in classrooms. Recommended for middle school and up.
- Loan it to clients or other community groups.
- Photocopy the support materials as needed.
- Show it to community leaders and residents.
- Use it as a special program at a Community/Neighborhood Watch meeting.
- Show it at a place of worship.
- Make it available through your library.

There is no limit to these uses! (Note: We also offer Limited Broadcast Rights for an additional charge. Show this program on community cable access. Let us help you find a sponsor! Call us at 1-800-867-0016 for further details.)

### **How to get the most out of this video**

Following is a suggested plan for using Drug Wars: To Die For video package

1. Ask yourself this question: What is your primary purpose? Is it to inform people about something or to tell them why they need to do something about it?
2. Decide whether to show the entire video or just excerpts. What local information do you want to present? Do you want to invite any local experts? For example, school administrators and counselors, local doctors and pharmacists or law enforcement personnel experienced in working with young people.
3. Arrange for facilities and supplies: meeting room, VCR or DVD player, projection screen, easel, overhead projector, markers, and refreshments.
4. Prepare handouts. NOTE: Purchase of Drug Wars: To Die For includes authorization to photocopy materials in the Productivity Pack and accompanying audience handouts.
5. Anticipate the questions you will be asked. The handouts accompanying this Productivity Pack should enable you to deal with most questions effectively.
6. If time permits, allow audience members to work in small groups on topics that concern them. This gets them working together and improves chances that they will be motivated to become involved in local prevention programs.

You should also go over the Discussion Questions in advance because this will help you better prepare for the meeting.

### **PRESCRIPTION DRUG FACTS:**

“Pharming” is prescription drug abuse... the use of any prescription drug or over-the-counter medication for nonmedical or recreational use.

The most commonly abused drugs include sedatives, stimulants, and especially narcotic painkillers. Prescription narcotic painkillers now rank second behind marijuana as the most-abused drug in the country.

Sedatives include: Xanax, Lorazepam, Valium

Stimulants: Ritalin, Adderall, Cylert.

Pain Killers: Oxys, Vicodin, Percocet, Lortabs, Percodan Oxycontin.

OxyContin and Vicodin are the two big ones you actually see on the street.

Today more than 6 million Americans abuse prescription medications. Sales of Prescription painkillers have tripled since 1996 and their recreational use by teens is rising at an alarming rate. Kids are selling their parents' prescription drugs out of their medicine cabinets and either taking them themselves or selling them at school or on the street. Some adults even sell their prescription drugs to kids.

Many teens are experimenting with over-the-counter products containing dextromethorphan such as Coricidan HPB and Robitussin Cough Syrup. Nyquil and Tylenol Extra Strength can be taken in large doses for the same effect. Because these products can be purchased legally at a grocery store, many teens have the false sense of security of their safety. These medications are just as deadly as prescription drugs, especially when mixed with alcohol. Teens are 18 times more likely to die from an overdose of over-the-counter medications than from an overdose of an illegal drug.

## EFFECTS OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND OVER-THE-COUNTER PRODUCTS:

Prescription stimulants provide a surge of energy enabling teens to stay up all night. But because these stimulants are chemically similar to cocaine and methamphetamines, they can be dangerous in large doses, causing allergic reactions, heart problems, liver damage, strokes, seizures, depression and psychosis.

Drug abuse and chemical dependency keep a teen's brain from maturing normally. The first time a teen uses OxyContin or some other drug, he or she can become addicted. Once the brain is addicted, the person is addicted for the rest of his or her life. Such addiction can lead to bankruptcy, the loss of family, marriage, home, children, and job. Some cases end in death.

### Physical Signs:

- Fatigue; sleeping all the time; lethargy; change in sleep patterns
- Repeated health complaints
- Repeated visits to multiple doctors
- Red, glazed eyes
- Lasting cough that doesn't go away even with treatment
- Change in appearance
- No eye contact
- Rapid increase in heart rate
- Sweating profusely
- Clammy skin
- Fidgety; inability to sit still
- Agitation; restlessness
- Constricted pupils (stimulants)
- Dilated pupils (painkillers, muscle relaxers)
- Unusual increase in activity

### Emotional signs:

- Change in personality
- Sudden mood swings
- Irritability
- Irresponsible behavior
- Low self-esteem
- Poor judgment
- Depression
- General lack of interest in activities previously enjoyed
- Paranoia

### School signs:

- Decreased interest
- Negative attitude
- Skipping class
- Discipline problems
- Drop in grades

### Social signs:

- Change in friends
- Argumentative
- Breaking family rules
- Withdrawing from normal family activities
- Financial difficulties
- Unexplained increase in medical bills

## Discussion Questions Based on the Video

1. What are prescription drugs?

**Prescription drugs are drugs such as narcotic painkillers, sedatives and stimulants obtained with a prescription from a doctor.**

2. Why can they be dangerous?

**They become dangerous when they are obtained without a doctor's prescription or from a doctor under false pretenses and used by unauthorized persons.**

3. How do young people gain access to prescription drugs?

**Young people obtain the drugs from parents' medicine cabinets, buy them at school from other students or on the street from a dealer.**

4. Is there any danger in taking over-the-counter medications purchased legally in a grocery store?

**Over-the-counter medications are just as deadly as prescription drugs, especially if mixed with alcohol. Teens are just as likely to die from an overdose of over-the-counter medication as an overdose of an illegal drug.**

5. Who are the people most likely to abuse prescription drugs?

**It's everyday people, your next-door neighbors, the kids at school, the people you work with, people you're sitting next to. The sad thing is how easy it is to get them.**

6. Why might prescription drug abusers think these drugs are safe and nothing to worry about?

**Because they are FDA approved and prescribed by a doctor, many people consider prescription painkillers, etc. safe. They think it's medicine so it's OK and won't hurt them. Kids don't think of overdose potential or the addiction factor.**

7. Why do people get addicted so quickly?

**10-15% of the population carries a genetic predisposition to physically dependent on mood-altering substances.**

8. How would you know if you are biologically susceptible to addiction?

**You wouldn't know, at least for sure. People who experiment with any drug use, including prescription drugs and over-the-counter medication are experimenting with their lives and their chances of becoming addicted.**

9. Are there any lasting negative effects if a teen who had abused prescription drugs has been able to stop?

**Drug abuse and chemical dependency keep a teen's brain from maturing normally. All drugs of abuse can cause significant and lasting changes in brain chemistry, and often, the brain does not return to its previous state even after years of abstinence. Once the brain becomes addicted, the person is essentially addicted forever.**

10. What are the health risks for a person who abuses prescription drugs and/or over-the-counter products?

**Some are heart problems, liver damage, strokes, seizures, depression, psychosis, and ultimately death for some.**

11. Are there other risks besides health risks?

**Prescription drug use can be financially devastating leading to bankruptcy. Forging prescriptions can end in jail time, being charged with felonies for altering prescriptions or stealing drugs from someone. People have lost marriages, families, homes and children, as well as careers, and in many cases, their very lives.**

12. Are there any signs to watch for to determine if someone is using prescription drugs or other medications?

**(See list of signs on page 5).**

13. What are the most commonly abused drugs or medicines?

**(See list on page 4).**

# Sample Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions (5-10 minutes).
2. Why we're here (5 minutes). Give a brief statement of purpose explaining why the use of prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications, especially among young people, is a local concern. Provide some statistics (use Web resources) and examples of local incidents in which the use was a factor. Ask audience members to list their questions. Write them on an easel or overhead.
3. Show video DRUG WARS: To Die For ( 22 minutes).
4. Audience Review (15-20 minutes). Allow audience members to give some reactions to the program. Use the Discussion Questions (pages 6 & 7) to lead them through a review of the program. Do you plan to ask them for something – such as for help in planning the next meeting or for a commitment to start a community program? This is the time to bring it up – when the images are fresh in their minds.
5. Break (5-10 minutes).
6. Local experts panel – investigators, rehab counselors, drug enforcement agents, and other authorities with expertise about local issues (20-30 minutes). Bring in a local expert or panel of experts to talk about the solutions and to answer questions from the audience. If you don't have a panel, continue the discussion by asking audience members to brainstorm about how you can get the word out to the entire community about the need for local prevention efforts. List their ideas and find out who is willing to follow up.

## Web Resources

Join Together Online  
<http://www.jointogether.org>  
617-437-1500

Drug Wars USA  
<http://www.drugwars.com>

(D.A.R.E.)  
<http://www.dare-america.com>

Natl. Clearinghouse for Alcohol &  
Drug Information  
<http://www.health.org>  
800-729-6686

Natl. Institute on Drug Abuse  
<http://www.nida.nih.gov>

Web of Addictions  
<http://www.well.com/user/woa/>

Minnesota Institute of Public Health  
<http://www.miph.org/>

National Drug Prevention League  
<http://www.ndpl.org>  
410-385-9094

Drug Enforcement Agency  
<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/>

Partnership for a Drug Free America  
<http://www.drugfreeamerica.org/>

Drug Strategies  
<http://www.drugstrategies.org>

Drug Abuse Resistance Education  
Life or Meth  
<http://www.lifeormeth.org>

Stop Drugs  
<http://www.stopdrugs.org>  
916-322-2796

Advantage Source  
<http://www.advantagesource.com>  
800-867-0016

Drug Wars  
<http://www.drugwars.com>

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