



For Immediate Release

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New School Curriculum Addresses Rx and OTC Drug Abuse

December 12, 2007 (Washington, D.C.) — A new school curriculum that counters abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs was the topic of conversation at a press conference today in Washington, D.C. The curriculum is comprised of components for students as well as presentations for parents. This curriculum was created by D.A.R.E. America (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), with the support and expertise of law enforcement officials; the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA); Abbott; the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA); and a number of other organizations, including the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations' Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (SAMHSA/CSAT) and the Partnership for a Drug-Free America (the Partnership).

According to the 2005 Partnership Attitude Tracking Survey conducted by the Partnership, while the abuse of illegal drugs is on the decline, statistics on teen abuse of legal drugs show a disturbing trend:

- One in three teens reports having a close friend who abuses prescription pain relievers to get high.
- One in four has a close friend who abuses over-the-counter (OTC) cough medicine to get high.
- Nearly one in five teens has used a prescription medication that was not prescribed to them.

While the abuse of illegal drugs is on the decline, SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows that teen abuse of legal drugs is on the rise:

- In 2006, one in ten kids between the ages of 12 to 17 had used illicit drugs in the past month, including 3.3 percent who had used prescription drugs for non-medical reasons.

- Among youth between the ages of 12 to 17, male and female adolescents had similar rates of past month non-medical use of prescription-type psychotherapeutics (3.1 percent of males and 3.5 percent of females).
- Most kids who abuse pain relievers obtained the drugs from a friend or relative for free, while about 10 percent took the pain relievers from a friend or relative without asking.
- New youth abusers of prescription drugs now outnumber new users of every illicit drug, except marijuana.

“The rise in medicine abuse, both prescription and OTC, requires action, and that is why we have worked with the manufacturers of these medicines and our own experts in developing this new curriculum,” noted Charlie Parsons, President and Chief Executive Officer of D.A.R.E. America.

The new curriculum is being incorporated around the country into D.A.R.E.’s law enforcement officer-led classes during the 2007-2008 school year.

“Prescription drugs improve the lives of millions of patients every day,” says Billy Tauzin, PhRMA’s President and CEO. “The misuse of these drugs is tragic and I believe we have a moral obligation to ensure that medications are used properly and that we actively work to prevent medication abuse.”

“Over-the-counter medicines are an important part of the healthcare of most American families,” says Linda A. Suydam, D.P.A., president of CHPA. “The makers of these medicines are committed to stopping the dangerous behavior of teens abusing these medicines through work with organizations—like D.A.R.E. America—and programming designed to educate communities, parents, and teens about the dangers of medicine abuse.”

“Abuse of prescription drugs for non-medical reasons is of increasing concern,” noted H. Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H., CAS, FASAM, Director, SAMHSA/CSAT. “This is an area that SAMHSA/CSAT considers an important issue to address,” he said. In SAMHSA’s 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medicines was found to be a problem that often begins at home, highlighting the importance of informing parents of the need to appropriately discard medications past their period of intended use. Moreover, the survey found that the majority of the legal prescription drugs abused by teenagers were obtained from within their homes or from the homes of friends or relatives. For more information on the full report, visit: <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/>

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About D.A.R.E. America

This year millions of school children around the world will benefit from D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), the highly acclaimed program that gives kids the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence. D.A.R.E. was founded in

1983 in Los Angeles and has proven so successful that it is now being implemented in 75 percent of our nation's school districts and in more than 43 countries around the world. D.A.R.E. is a police officer-led series of classroom lessons that teaches children from kindergarten through 12th grade how to resist peer pressure and live productive drug and violence-free lives.

www.dare.org

About PhRMA

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) represents the country's leading pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies, which are devoted to inventing medicines that allow patients to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives. PhRMA companies are leading the way in the search for new cures. PhRMA members alone invested an estimated \$43 billion in 2006 in discovering and developing new medicines. Industry-wide research and investment reached a record \$55.2 billion in 2006.

www.phrma.org

About CHPA

CHPA is the 126-year-old trade association representing U.S. manufacturers and distributors of over-the-counter medicines and nutritional supplement products. CHPA members are engaged in a broad, multi-year collaborative initiative, headquartered at www.StopMedicineAbuse.org, to ensure over-the-counter medicines are not abused by teens.

www.chpa-info.org