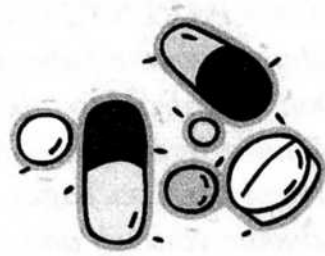


# Parent /Grandparent Alert:

## Has your child been invited To a "Pharm" Party?



"Pharming" parties are a national trend in teen drug use where middle school and high school age children scour their parents' and grandparents' medicine cabinets for pharmaceuticals and pool their pills at parties, where they take random handfuls of the legally prescribed drugs. The pills could be Viagra, antibiotics, blood pressure medication or anything else.

For these parties, teens take whatever drugs they can get, combine them in a bowl, taking handfuls at one time, and they have no idea what very dangerous interactions these drugs have. These parties are usually held while the parents are out.

At one time, kids raided their parents' liquor cabinet when they wanted to get high. Today, it's their medicine cabinet. The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University estimates that 2.3 million children ages 12 to 17 take legal prescription drugs illegally every year:

- ❖ 1 in 5 teens abuse Vicodin
- ❖ 1 in 10 teens abuse OxyContin
- ❖ 1 in 10 teens abuse Ritalin and/or Adderall without a prescription
- ❖ 1 in 11 teens (9 percent) abuse OTC cough medications intentionally to get high

Prescription drugs have dangerous side effects, but these effects and dangers are intensified when combined with other prescription drugs, alcohol or illegal street drugs. The wrong combination can be deadly!

### Signs of Abuse:

- Grades drop
- Loses interest in activities and hobbies
- Changes friends, appearance or behavior
- Eating and sleeping patterns change
- Medicines disappear from the house or medicine cabinet, with no explanation
- Signs of drug abuse, such as slurred speech, dilated pupils, sweating, nausea, vomiting

### WHAT CAN PARENTS/GRANDPARENTS DO?

(See Reverse Side)



## **WHAT CAN PARENTS/GRANDPARENTS DO?**

- *Educate yourself about what kids are abusing, including prescription drugs*
- *Don't be afraid to talk to kids about trends at school*
- *Monitor Internet use-another major source of prescription drugs – monitor mail for unexplained packages.*
- *Educate yourself and other parents. Too many parents are not aware of the possibility of this kind of abuse.*
- *Clean out the medicine cabinet. Discard left-over and expired medications, either by burning them or placing them in coffee grounds. Coffee grounds are acidic and will dissolve the pills. There are only certain pills that can safely be flushed without “drugging” the water supply.*
- *Talk to your children about the dangers and your expectations. They need to hear that abusing prescription or OTC drugs is NOT safe and can result in death.*

*Monitor your medicine cabinet, especially if you are prescribed drugs for pain relief, anxiety or hyperactivity. Keep those medications locked and out of reach of your children and grandchildren.*

***If you need Help, contact:***      ***Kids Escaping Drugs – (716) 854-2997***  
***Drug and Alcohol Dependency Services – (716) 854-2977***  
***Narcotics Anonymous -- (716) 878-2316***



***Information courtesy of your Parish***

***“Respect Life Committee”***

***For more information  
Check out our bulletin board and brochures  
located at the front side, handicapped  
entrance.***