

Out of the shadows and into the spotlight: Prescription drug abuse

A friend. A son. A mother. An aunt. Their stories about losing a loved one to prescription drug abuse are, sadly, becoming daily news – right here in Ohio. In 2007, accidental drug overdose became the leading cause of injury death in the state – more than motor vehicle crashes and suicides for the first time ever.

Those struggling with prescription drug addiction could be anyone – as the website says: Painkiller abuse – starting is easy; stopping isn't. You can listen to their stories on www.dontgetme-startedohio.org, the statewide public service campaign to combat the prescription opiate abuse epidemic.

Statistics show 27% of Ohio high school use report using prescription drugs illegally. Our state is ranked 3rd in the nation for the total number of pharmacy-related robberies.

And it's happening right here in Lorain County. Check out Steele News Live report: The Opana Story, about the prescription drug, rising in recreational use among Marion L. Steele High School students. <http://>



[www.youtube.com/
watch?v=0cmj63KuGtQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cmj63KuGtQ).

Of 454 students surveyed by the SNL, 12% said they had tried Opana, and 46% who hadn't tried it, still knew someone who did.

The video includes anonymous interviews with those who used the drug and friends of those who used. Included are symptoms from the drug, what the drug looks like, how it's affecting relationship, the impact on school work, possible suspension and expulsion and facing jail sentences and a record that follows the offender (think job applications, college applications, and more). The SNL team covered all the bases.

Their message: Out of the Shadows and Into the Spotlight. Get help. Talk to someone. Even if there are consequences, the ones you face have solutions. Death doesn't offer many options except burial or cremation.

Communities That Care of Lorain County applauds the Steele News Live team for their hard-hitting report. The Marion L. Steele High School seniors who created, produced and reported the story are: Kasey Carrender, Jaliah Neely, Jen Sutton and Alison Gillam.

The Opana Story is becoming all too common. We hope other youth take SNL's example and share their local challenges – you'll help others, probably get a great project out of it and might even find out you've got a budding career as a top-notch communicator.

Learn how to get involved in stopping risky behaviors. For more information the a countywide youth leadership program – Teen Institute of Lorain County (TiLC) contact Catherine Gabe at 440-282-9920 or cgabe@lorainadas.org.