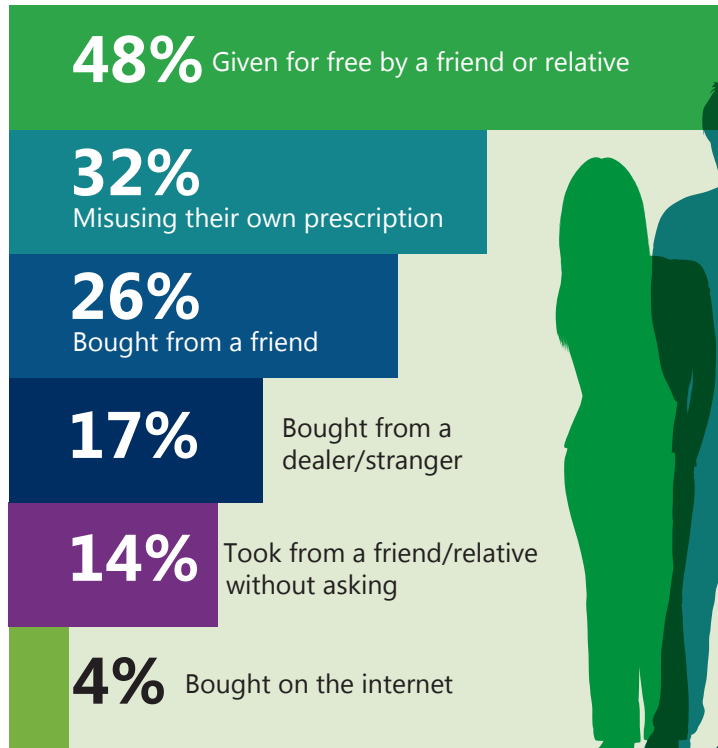
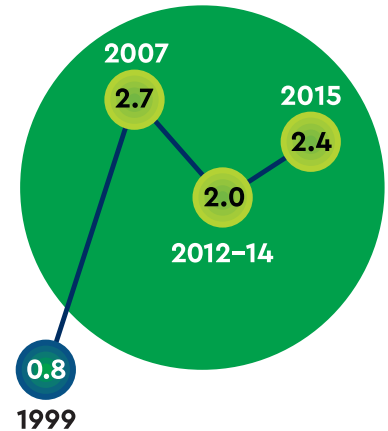


Keeping Adolescents Safe Around Prescription Opioids and Other Medications

Where are adolescents getting non-medical prescription drugs?^{1, 2}



In 2016, **3.6 percent** of adolescents ages **12-17** reported misusing opioids over the past year. This percentage is **twice as high** among older adolescents and young adults ages **18-25**. The vast majority of this misuse is due to prescription opioids, not heroin.³



The drug overdose death rate involving opioids for adolescents aged 15–19 **more than tripled** from 1999 (0.8 per 100,000) to 2007 (2.7 per 100,000) but was generally stable between 2007 and 2011. The rate declined to 2.0 per 100,000 in 2012–2014 and then **increased between 2014 and 2015** (2.4 per 100,000).⁴

What can families do to protect adolescents?^{5, 6, 7}

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | Dispose: Dispose of expired, unused, unwanted, or damaged medications; perform an annual spring cleaning in the medicine cabinet. |
| ✓ | Secure: Store medications to limit access; track positioning of containers if unsecured. |
| ✓ | Monitor: Track how many pills are in prescription bottles or packets and track refills. Give special attention to addictive/commonly abused medicine such as opioids (prescription pain relievers), benzodiazepines (sedatives and anti-anxiety meds), and stimulants (ADHD meds). |
| ✓ | Educate: Speak with other adults in your teen's life (grandparents, parents of your teen's friends, and neighbors) about the risks and ask them to monitor and secure their medications as well. |
| ✓ | Take as Prescribed: Tell your teen not to take medicine from friends or give away their medicine to anyone. |
| ✓ | Dispense: Dispense the medicine to your teen on an as-needed basis to minimize risk for misuse. |
| ✓ | Talk: Talk with your teen about the dangers of medicine misuse/abuse. |

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