



# COMMUNITY NEWS

District 4

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## Epidemic Among Our Youth: Prescription Drug Abuse

According to the Arizona Affiliate of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, kids are more likely to experiment with drugs due to boredom, spending time with friends who use drugs or too much unsupervised time throughout the summer months. In June and July alone, there was a startling 40 percent increase nationally in the number of youth who tried marijuana for the first time compared to the rest of the year. Even though we are through the summer months, we still need to be diligent about the dangers affecting our kids.

Even more startling is the newest trend – intentional misuse of prescription medications, which is the largest teen substance abuse challenge we face today. According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) abusing prescription and over-the-counter drugs can be just as dangerous, addictive and even deadlier as using “street” drugs. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (HSDUH) states, “every day 2,500 teens abuse a prescription drug for the first time.” The trend is alarming:

- The number of new abusers of Rx drugs is now greater than new users of marijuana (NSDUH SAMSHA)
- Rx drugs are now the most commonly abused drugs among 12-13 year olds (NSDUH)
- Rx/OTC medications account for 7 of the 11 most frequently abused drugs (NIDA)

Aggravating the issue are weak perceptions of risk among both teens and their parents – both believe abusing medicine is NOT as dangerous as using “street” drugs. Consider the ease of access to teens – medicines are readily



## From The Desk Of Commander Bill Wilton

GAIN night was very successful and it was great to see how many people showed up for their neighborhood parties. I want to personally thank the Neighborhood Watch Captains. It is the Captains who drive the success of the program and help us collectively keep our neighborhoods safe.

Speaking of neighborhood safety, October 18<sup>th</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup> is National Teen Driver Safety Week. The first six months after obtaining a license is the most dangerous times for any driver. Traffic accidents are the #1 cause of death for teens. This is a great opportunity for all of us to set the example and “practice what we preach.” Please, always drive *with* caution and *without* distractions when driving around our neighborhoods. This is especially important on Halloween when pedestrian traffic is increased.

The following are a few Halloween safety tips for your family and friends: Keep costumes short to prevent trips, encourage children to wear comfortable shoes, try makeup instead of masks, make sure children wear reflective tape on their costumes, younger children should be accompanied by an adult, set a time limit for children to trick-or-treat, map out a safe route and avoid “short cuts,” remind children not to enter houses, try to trick-or-treat while it is still light out, carry a flashlight, cell phone and report any suspicious activity to the police.

Have a Safe and Happy Halloween!

**Commander Bill Wilton**  
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(prescription drug abuse continued)

available in their own or a friend's medicine cabinet. Teens abuse their own prescriptions, a family member's or a friend's prescription. Medicine abuse has become "normalized" in teen culture. In Arizona twelfth grade students abuse prescription medications at twice the national rate. The effects of prescription and over the counter drug use are not to be taken lightly:

- Seizures, Heart Attack, Stroke
- Permanent Brain Damage and Liver Damage
- Slow Breathing
- Small Pinpoint Pupils
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Nausea, Vomiting, Seizures
- Death

The Arizona Affiliate of The Partnership for a Drug-Free America encourages parents and community members to take action by following these 3 steps:

- **Educate** themselves on the medications kids are abusing
- **Communicate** the risks of abusing medicine with their children
- **Safeguard** their medicine cabinets and ask family and friends to do the same

The Scottsdale Police Department and the Arizona Affiliate of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America are pleased to offer you the Rx360 program. Rx360 is a research-based community education program developed by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America to raise awareness of the problem of prescription drug abuse by middle and high school-age children.

"We are pleased to be partnering with the Arizona Affiliate for this important program," said Commander Bill Wilton. "Teens take their lives into their own hands when they intentionally abuse prescription medications. Whether it's to get high or deal with stress, or if they mistakenly believe it will help them perform better in school or sports. Teens do not realize that when they abuse medication or use without a prescription, these medicines can be every bit as harmful as illegal street drugs. We have to educate our community on this issue."

A recent article from Join Together on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 stated, "23 percent of teens say they can get marijuana within an hour and that prescription drugs

are easier to obtain than beer – findings echoed in stories from young drug users themselves." Each child faces pressure and how we work with them on handling that pressure is extremely important. If we as parents allow ourselves to become complacent or self-absorbed, we may miss the signs telling us that something is wrong. As adults, we may have the pressures of a divorce, a death in the family, work obligations or even a marriage. Let's ask ourselves, how is it affecting our children. Take the time to ask them about their day. If you notice any changes in mood, attitude, grades or feelings ask them about it. Those minutes may be the most important of your life and theirs!

If you would like to schedule a presentation or for more information on crime prevention or additional opportunities to get involved in your community contact Crime Prevention Officer Jason Glenn at 480-312-8802 or [jglenn@scottsdaleaz.gov](mailto:jglenn@scottsdaleaz.gov), or District 4 Police Aide Shannon Ziemba at 480-312-8801 or [sziemba@scottsdaleaz.gov](mailto:sziemba@scottsdaleaz.gov)

## Upcoming Events:

**Crime Free Multi-Housing Phase 1** – Thursday, November 5, 2009 from 8:15 am to 4:30 pm at the Via Linda Station Community Room located at 9065 E. Via Linda, Scottsdale, Az. 85258. The Scottsdale Police Department will present the FREE Phase 1 class. This class is geared towards apartment managers, leasing consultants and maintenance staff who hope to achieve the Crime Free certification and limit crime on their property. Please contact Officer Kory Sneed at (480) 312-5696 to sign up.

## Public Safety Community Contact Numbers and E-mail Links

- **Scottsdale Police Non-Emergency** 480-312-5000
- **Scottsdale Fire Department Non-Emergency** 480-312-8000
- **SPD Drug Enforcement Hotline** - Suspected illegal activity, 480-312-TIPS (Hot lines are not monitored)
- **SPD Traffic Enforcement Hotline** - chronic traffic problems, 480-312-CARS
- **Code Enforcement** 480-312-2546
- **Child Safety Seat Installation** 480-312-BABY
- **CPR/First Aid Classes** 480-312-1817