

# ALCOHOL & DRUGS *F.Y.I.*

Council on Alcoholism and Addictions of the Finger Lakes (315 789-0310) [www.CouncilonAlcoholism.net](http://www.CouncilonAlcoholism.net)

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**Prescription drugs can be addictive and lethal when misused.**

**Prescription painkillers can lead to heroin use.**

**Young adults, ages 18 - 24 are at higher risk for opioid addiction.**

**Upstate New York admission for opioid dependency increased 222%.**

**A person dies every 19 minutes from Prescription Drug Abuse.**

Between 2007 and 2012 the number of individuals using heroin during the past 30 days more than doubled nationwide (161,000 to 335,000). In 2011 nonmedical use of prescription drugs was the second most commonly used illicit drug among youth and young adults (marijuana is still number one).

To combat this growing problem, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed legislation to develop and conduct a public health awareness campaign to address the dangers of opioid addiction and heroin in use in New York State. The campaign, Combat Heroin, launched Monday, September 22, 2014.

## **Prescription Opioids and Heroin --- What you should know!**

- Prescription painkiller overdoses caused nearly 15,000 deaths in 2008 in the US, more than three times the 4,000 killed by these medications in 1999.
- One in five teens has taken prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription at least once in their life.
- The percentage of New York State high school students who reported using heroin more than doubled between 2005 and 2011 (1.8 % to 4%).
- Most youth obtain prescription drugs from a parent's or relative's unlocked medicine cabinet.

### **What you can do:**

- Educate yourself:
- Be aware of the medications in your home. Lock up medications in your home that have the potential for abuse. If you aren't sure which medication can be addicting ask your pharmacists or physician.
- Familiarize yourself with warning signs of prescription or over the counter medication abuse.
- Communicate with your children and family about the dangers of opioid abuse and keep the lines of communication open. Let them feel comfortable coming to you with questions or concerns about drug use.
- And remind family members in your home that many medications do not mix well with alcohol or other medications, including herbal remedies.
- Teach your teens and younger children to respect medicines. Medicines are important tools in health care but they must be used according to directions.

For more information about the Combat Heroin campaign or for more information on opioid abuse visit [www.combatheroin.ny.gov](http://www.combatheroin.ny.gov).

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*Sources: [www.combatheroin.ny.gov](http://www.combatheroin.ny.gov), OASAS ([www.oasas.ny.gov](http://www.oasas.ny.gov)), NYS Department of Health*