

Your Voice, Your Community
SOUTH ANCHORAGE

**What can South Anchorage do about
prescription opioid misuse?**

Opioid misuse and addiction leads to challenges in our community, but there's a lot we can do to address it. You're invited to discuss the opioid response in South Anchorage.

**A Community Cafe
6-8 pm on Thursday, February 8
Goldenview Middle School Cafeteria**

Uncle Joe's pizza provided by Goldenview PTSA.

RSVP appreciated, but not required: akcommunitycafe@gmail.com



Hosted by Goldenview Middle School PTSA in partnership with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.



OPIOID FACTS

WHAT ARE PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS?

Prescription opioids can be used in treating severe pain in certain circumstances, such as cancer or immediately after a surgery. However, these prescriptions are chemical cousins of heroin, with serious risks, and need to be handled carefully.

Specific examples of opioids include Codeine, Fentanyl, Hydrocodone (Vicodin), Hydromorphone (Dilaudid), Meperidine (Demerol), Methadone, Morphine, (MS Contin, Kadian), Oxycodone (Opana), Oxycodone (OxyContin, Percocet), Tramadol. Heroin is also an opioid.

WHY ARE OPIOIDS AN ISSUE?



7% of Alaska youth have used a prescription pain medication without a doctor's prescription, or differently than how a doctor told them to use it, in the past 30 days.

2017 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey



More than **2 out of 5 teens** who misused or abused a prescription drug took it from their parent's medicine cabinet. Partnership for Drug-Free Kids



Nationally, **4 out of 5 heroin users** started out misusing prescription opioids.

American Society of Addiction Medicine



Drug overdose was Alaska's **leading cause of accidental death** for 2016. Opioid addiction is driving the epidemic. More than **3 out of 5** drug overdoses involve an opioid.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services



Black market opioids, sold on the street or on the Internet, may contain **fatal potencies**. These pills may look identical to prescription opioids.

WHAT CAN I DO?

>> You can make an impact from home:

- **Dispose of unused medication promptly and safely.** Take medication to a drug take-back event or use a medication disposal bag to deactivate your unused medication.
- **Store your medication securely.** Lock up your medication to prevent youth and others who may misuse them from having access. Don't forget about grandma's home, as well!
- **Never share opioid medication.** The Drug Enforcement Agency classifies opioids as controlled substances. Sharing is not only dangerous for the person you share them with, but it's illegal, too.

>> Before you're prescribed:

- **Ask about all pain treatment options.** For post-operative pain, Ibuprofen (e.g. Motrin) and Acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be just as [or more!] effective, than commonly prescribed opioids such as Oxycodone, Codeine and Percocet (Cochrane Reviews). For chronic pain, your provider may recommend combinations of non-medication options such as physical therapy, massage, traditional medicine, exercises, diet and nutrition or professional help managing the emotional aspects of help.
- **Ask for the lowest dose possible,** for the shortest amount of time, to reduce likelihood of physical dependence; ideally, three days or less. You can also ask your pharmacist to only partially fill your prescription.
- **Ask about risks** and signs of overdose and know how to start and stop the medication.

>> **If you or someone you know is struggling** with substance use, contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) for free and confidential information. Or visit <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

The Anchorage School District does not endorse these materials or the viewpoints expressed in them.