



**Belleville Area Cares
Coalition**

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**AODA Prevention
Newsletter**

DECEMBER 2023

Prescription Medication Misuse

Prescription Medication Misuse is when someone takes a medication for a reason other than why the doctor prescribed it or taking another person's prescription medication without their knowledge. Experts estimate that more than 18 million people ages 12 and older have used prescription medication for nonmedical reason in the previous year. That's more than 6% of the US population.

The three types of prescription medications include:

- Opioids which are used to treat pain, such as medicines containing oxycodone (Oxycontin, Percocet) and those containing hydrocodone (Norco)
- Anti-anxiety medicines, sedatives and hypnotics which are used to treat anxiety and sleep disorders, such as alprazolam (Xanax), diazepam (Valium) and zolpidem (Ambien).
- Stimulants which are used to treat attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and certain sleep disorders, such as methylphenidate (Ritalin, Concerta, others), dextroamphetamine-amphetamine (Adderall XR, Mydayis) and dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine)



Side Effects

- Opioids: Constipation, Nausea, Feeling high, Slowed breathing rate, Drowsiness, Confusion, Poor coordination, Increased dose needed for pain relief, worsening or increased sensitivity to pain with higher doses.
- Anti-anxiety and sedatives: Drowsiness, Confusion, Unsteady walking, Slurred speech, Poor concentration, Dizziness, Problems with memory, Slowed Breathing
- Stimulants: Increased alertness, Feeling high, Irregular heartbeat, High blood pressure, High body temperature, Reduced appetite, Insomnia, Agitation, Anxiety, Paranoia.

Securing Prescription Medication

About 35,000 young children end up in the emergency room each year because they got into medication while an adult wasn't looking. And with the holiday season just around the corner, it is important to know how to safely secure your medication as well as your guests prescription medication to prevent young children and/or teens from gaining access to them.

Securing your medication:

- Lock your medications: Keeping your medications behind lock and key helps prevent medications from getting in the hands of children, adolescents, guests and anyone else who may enter your home. The only person who should have access to the locked medications is the person for whom they are prescribed (and a caregiver, if necessary). There are a variety of ways to safely lock your medications including:



- Lock bags: These devices can have a combination or key lock. They can protect medications both at home and during travel. These bags are not indestructible and can be broken with enough force.
- Lock boxes: These devices can have a combination or key lock. They are a sturdy option but can still be broken into with enough force.



- Safes: Medications can also be kept in safes where other valuables like jewelry or important paperwork are kept.
- Choose a Safe Spot: Walk around your house to find the safest place to keep your medicines. The location should be up and away and out of the sight and reach of young children.
- Lock the Safety Cap: Always relock the cap on a medicine bottle. If the bottle has a locking cap that turns, twist it until you hear the click or cannot twist anymore.
- Put Medicines Away: After locking the safety cap, it's important to always put medicines back in their safe storage location. Curious children act fast, so never leave medicine out on a kitchen counter or at a sick child's bedside, even if you have to give it again in a few hours.
- Remind Guests: Ask family members, houseguests, and other visitors to keep purses, bags, or coats that have medicine in them up and away and out of sight when they are in your home.

Alternatives to Giving Store-Bought Gift

According to a survey conducted in 2022, more than half of Americans feel more financially stressed about the holidays than they did last year. Of the 34% who feel financially unprepared for the holidays, 50% are worried about affording gifts. 59% percent of all respondents plan to alter their gift-giving practice this year.

Here are some alternatives to gift giving this year:

- **Write a letter:**
 - In a world of text, email and DMs, the art of letter-writing is becoming lost. Yet anyone who's received a heartfelt written note can tell you how special it made them feel.
 - As a particularly thoughtful gift, consider writing letters of gratitude to loved ones. Research has shown that expressing gratitude is linked to an increase in happiness for both the giver and receiver. Unfortunately, most of us do not always express our gratitude to the people in our lives, so this holiday season is a good opportunity to do so.
- **Gift your skills:**
 - Whatever your skill is, consider sharing it with others as a holiday gift. This can be as simple as cleaning the gutters for an elderly family member. Or it can be as elaborate as gifting your skill as part of a larger experience. For example, you could teach someone how to cook or how to play an instrument you know.
- **Give a charitable gift in a loved one's name:**
 - Instead of buying a material good, make a donation to a favorite nonprofit in honor of the person you're gifting. Personalize your giving by picking something that matters to your giftee.
- **Give Gifts of Service:**
 - Perhaps this is an alternative gift-giving idea that parents and extremely busy people would most appreciate. It's not just the free housekeeping, babysitting, gardening, or whatever service you're giving to your loved one; you're also giving them extra time back. If you know someone who has their hands full with responsibilities — perhaps they've even shared about feeling overwhelmed — decreasing the amount on their plate is just the perfect gift.
- **Give them something to look forward to**
 - It's been said that having something to look forward to is important, maybe even happiness-inducing. From anticipating a special occasion to savoring the long-lasting memories (and photographs) it creates, the value extends way beyond the experience itself.
 - This season, pick up tickets to a concert, play, comedy show, sporting event, or other event that someone can get excited about once the holidays are over.

Giving Back This Holiday Season

- Pay It Forward
 - Unexpected, random acts of kindness are often the best ways to give back during the holidays. Whether you're in the drive-thru at Starbucks or out to a nice dinner, pay for the person behind you or cover the check for another family's table. Either way, it's always a nice surprise to be treated by a stranger
- Give a toy to a child in need
 - There's no better feeling than to put a smile on a child's face. From Toys for Tots to the Salvation Army Angel Tree, there are a lot of different ways to donate toys to kids in need.
- Donate warm clothes
 - If you needed a reason to clean out your closet, this is it. From old coats you no longer need to gloves, scarves and sweaters, local homeless shelters are always looking for these kinds of donations this time of year.
- Help a neighbor
 - Whether you have an elderly neighbor or young family that lives next door, offer a helping hand during this busy time of year. Maybe they need help shoveling snow off their driveway, or perhaps you could babysit for a few hours. Even the simplest gestures can go a long way and often mean the most.
- Volunteer your time
 - If you have a little extra time on your hands, volunteer at your local food bank or animal shelter. Now's a great time to get involved with a charity that's meaningful to you and give back during the holidays. If you don't have the time to volunteer, consider donating instead.
- Participate in a food drive
 - A great way to give back is by donating your canned goods to a local food drive. If you're hosting a party this holiday season, ask everyone to bring at least one canned good.
- Send a Christmas card
 - This time of year can be especially difficult and lonely for soldiers overseas. Write them a letter or send them a Christmas card expressing your gratitude. Here's where you can send it. You could also do the same for seniors in nursing homes who might not have any family. You never know who needs to hear some thoughtful, kind words this time of year.



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BELLS

EARMUFFS

MITTENS

SNOW

BOOTS

EGGNOG

NEWYEARESEVE

SNOWFLAKE

BOWLING

EVERGREEN

ORNAMENT

SNOWMAN

CABIN

FAMILY

PINECONE

STAR

CANDLE

FIREPLACE

POINTSETTIA

STOCKING

CANDYCANE

FURCOAT

REINDEER

SWEATER

CELEBRATE

FROST

RELATIVES

TOQUE

CHILLY

FROZEN

SANTA

TOYS

CHRISTMAS

GIFTS

SCARF

TREE

CIDER

GREETINGS

SHOPPING

WINTER

COCOA

HOLIDAY

SHOVEL

WREATH

COLD

ICICLE

SKATES

DECORATE

LIGHTS

SLEIGH

Belleville is a small community southwest of Madison in Dane and Green Counties. Belleville is a special place to visit because of its natural beauty, recreational activities and friendly people and atmosphere. Belleville is a great community for families seeking a solid educational system along with the natural amenities of the community.

The Belleville Area Cares Coalition came into existence following a town hall meeting in April of 2014.



We are comprised of local representatives from schools, businesses, churches, village administration as well as parents, and youth—all working together to promote healthy lifestyles

More information can be found at : <https://www.bellevillewicare.org/>

BACC meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 4:45 pm in the Belleville Village Hall.

BACC Mission Statement

“The mission of Belleville’s Area Cares Coalition is to promote a healthy community for youth and young adults, free of alcohol and other drug abuse.”

The Belleville Area Cares Coalition works to develop, implement and support environmental strategies to reduce substance abuse.

We believe by working together, we can nurture social and environmental changes to make the Belleville area a safer and healthier place, brightening the future of our children, youth and families.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

The BAAC asks you to give the gift of time. Make a difference in the lives of our youth and our community by

1. Working with us in providing support for planning, project management and awareness campaigns
2. Helping with coalition events, conferences, workshops, and fairs held throughout the year.
3. Being a voice for change in our community, it is time to come together and be that force for change in the Belleville area.