

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS ABUSE AND MISUSE PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS MORE THAN ANY OTHER AGE GROUP

Opioid misuse and abuse is widespread among all ages. But statistics show that abuse is more prevalent among youth and young adults. Some evidence suggests that this is partially due to children and adolescents finding leftover prescriptions from family and friends — but there is also ample data that shows providers do prescribe opioids for this vulnerable population to relieve pain post-surgery, or after injuries or dental procedures.

The Facts About Youth and Young Adult Opioid Use and Abuse



YOUNG ADULTS, AGES 18 TO 25, ARE THE BIGGEST ABUSERS

of prescription opioid pain relievers, along with ADHD stimulants and anti-anxiety drugs.¹

NEARLY HALF OF ADOLESCENTS AGES 12 TO 17

who reported misusing pain relievers said they got or bought them from a friend or relative.⁵

Prescription-opioid-related health care facility admissions and **SERIOUS MEDICAL OUTCOMES WERE HIGHER AMONG TEENAGERS.**²

THE RATE OF DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS AMONG TEENS IN THE UNITED STATES CLIMBED 19 PERCENT FROM 2014 TO 2015.

Most of these overdose deaths were unintentional and driven primarily by opioids, including prescribed painkillers, such as oxycodone, as well as illicit drugs like heroin and street fentanyl.³



IN 2014, MORE YOUNG ADULTS DIED FROM PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSES

in the U.S. than from any other drug, including heroin and cocaine combined.¹

In 2014, more than **5,700 YOUTH REPORTED USING PRESCRIPTION PAIN RELIEVERS** in the U.S. without a doctor's guidance for the first time.⁴

¹ National Institute on Drug Abuse; ² American Academy of Pediatric Research; ³ National Center for Health Statistics; ⁴ National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH); ⁵ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). *2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed tables.*