

## **Building Medication Literacy Among Adolescents**

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### **Abstract**

Introduction: Young adults often face decisions that can significantly impact their lives, including the choice to experiment with medications that do or don't belong to them, whether prescription or over the counter (OTC). This poses serious risks, such as accidental overdose, addiction, and even death. This project aims to educate high school students on the risks of medication misuse and provide resources for seeking help, ultimately promoting safer medication practices and improving overall community health.

Methods: Create and provide teachers with materials, including a PowerPoint presentation, handout, and Kahoot quiz, to enhance students' understanding of medication safety. The PowerPoint will be the main form of information covering key topics such as medication sharing, accidental overdose, and disposal. The materials are designed to fit within one class period and can be integrated into existing curricula. These resources will be distributed to local school districts to allow the teachers to integrate the materials into their lesson plans where most appropriate.

Conclusion: Substance misuse/abuse is a major public health issue across all age groups. However, young adults are not being provided the resources and education they deserve when it comes to this health issue. Young adults are one of the most vulnerable populations as they are going through major life changes and wanting to fit in with their friends or the older “cool kids”. We are doing a disservice by not providing teens and young adults with more in-depth learning opportunities on how to overcome substance use/abuse and what resources are available to them if they get themselves into such a situation. Our children, teachers, healthcare workers, law enforcement, and communities overall will benefit from providing better education to people of all age groups about medication safety and literacy.

Discussion: This project should be viewed as a steppingstone for other projects to expand on. There is so much information to be discovered and presented to adolescents, this project only breaks the ice. This is a topic that should be continually revisited as the information will likely be ever-changing. Also, as time goes on, today's children will become adolescents, and they will face different obstacles than what is presented in this project.