



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**College Initiative to Reduce High-Risk Drinking Partners with Ohio State University
College of Pharmacy to Combat Prescription Drug Abuse**

(Columbus, Ohio) The Ohio College Initiative, a program of Drug-Free Action Alliance, hosted a presentation by the Ohio State University College of Pharmacy titled: *Generation Rx and the abuse of medications in a drug-taking society*. Faculty and staff leaders representing Ohio's colleges and universities came to explore the ramifications for the use and abuse of medications in this pharmaceutical era.

One of the growing substance abuse problems in the United States is the non-medical use of prescription drugs. Many benefit from the advancements in medicine that allows for a healthier, longer life. However, when particular prescriptions are misused or abused, they can be as addictive and dangerous as illegal street drugs.

Kenneth Hale, R.Ph., Ph.D., Assistant Dean for External and Professional Affairs at the College of Pharmacy, led a team of experts from The Ohio State University in an in-depth discussion of how many are turning away from street drugs and using prescription drugs to achieve a euphoric state of mind. He was joined by Curtis Haywood, MA, LPCC, LICDC, Clinical Therapist and Substance Abuse Specialist, Nicole Kwiek, Ph.D. Assistant Director for Educational Outreach and Connie Boehm, M.A., Director of Student Wellness at OSU.

Individuals who abuse prescription drugs are prevalent in every demographic and cultural group throughout the United States. Studies indicate that in 2005, 2.1 million teens abused prescription drugs and that prescription drugs are the most commonly abused drug among 12-13 year-olds (Misuse of Prescription Drugs, National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 2006). Many Americans perceive prescription drugs as "safe" because they require a doctor's prescription to obtain – therefore, mistakenly thought to pose fewer health risks. Nearly one in five teens report abusing prescription medications that were not prescribed to them (Partnership for a Drug Free America, Annual Tracking Study, 2006).

The availability of prescribed drugs like OxyContin, Vicodin and Percocet is increasing nationwide as more people seek prescription remedies for pain relief. Nearly half of teens who use prescription drugs say that they get them free from a relative or friend (Misuse of Prescription Drugs, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2006). Research is also showing stimulants such as Ritalin and Adderall alarmingly are gaining popularity among college students.

"Ohioans, particularly youth, should know that abuse of prescription drugs is extremely dangerous. There is no 'safe-high' and by putting these substances into your body you are subjecting yourselves to increased risks of negative health consequences," said Marcie Seidel, Assistant Director of Drug-Free Action Alliance and Project Director for the Ohio College Initiative. "We are proud to join with The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy to call attention to this growing problem."

Drug-Free Action Alliance is a statewide non-profit organization providing leadership to promote safe and drug-free communities throughout Ohio. To obtain more information, visit www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org or call Drug-Free Action Alliance at (614) 540-9985.

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Red Ribbon Celebration

College Initiative to Reduce
High Risk Drinking

Ohio Resource Network
Clearinghouse

Statewide Prevention
Coalition Association

Parents Who Host, Lose The Most:
Don't be a party to teenage drinking

Ohio Center for
Coalition Excellence

Know!

Youth Philanthropy
Council

www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org