



POLICE DEPARTMENT

School Safety Division
28-11 Queens Plaza North
Long Island City, N.Y. 11101

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The Police Department has recently begun adopting a multi-faceted approach to combat the problem of prescription drug abuse in New York City, including an innovative joint initiative between the Police Department's School Safety Division and the New York City Department of Education. This joint initiative focuses on outreach and education to public school students, parents and faculty concerning the danger of such drugs, particularly painkillers (opioids). The necessity for such a robust awareness campaign is substantiated by a number of troubling statistics:

- The United States makes up 4.6% of the world's population, yet consumes 80% of the global supply of opioid pain relievers.
• Today, the abuse of prescription medicines is more widespread than the abuse of traditional street drugs, with the exception of marijuana.
• The number of people who abuse prescription medicines is approximately three times the number of people who abuse cocaine.
• 70% of people 12 years and older who abused pain relievers in 2007-2008 say they got them from a friend or relative.
• According to the NYS Department of Health - Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement, 76% of the drug diversion theft is taken from residential medicine cabinets.
• 20% of U.S. high school students have reported abusing a prescription medication at least once in their lives.
• Nearly 40 Americans die per day from overdoses of prescription painkillers.
• Some studies have shown that people who are addicted to heroin often started out abusing prescription opioids like OxyCotin or Vicodin.
• According to some studies conducted it was found that 24.6% of students who used drugs dropped out of high school.

The primary objective of the Police Department is to preserve and protect human life. When it comes to the topic of prescription drugs, we need your help! Only with your participation can we make measurable progress in reducing the incidence of potentially harmful behavior that too often leads to terrible consequences, including physical addiction, legal problems and even death. We ask that you talk to your teens about this important topic, become better informed regarding this public health issue and to take an active role in safeguarding all the medicines in your home. For more information on this subject matter, including helpful resources, we strongly urge you to visit our website at www.nypdcommunityaffairs.org, where you can proceed to the School Safety Division's drop down screen, scroll down and click on "Combat Prescription Drugs" to view this valuable information. Thank you for your interest in this very important undertaking.

Sincerely,

[Signature of Brian Conroy]
Assistant Chief Brian Conroy
NYPD School Safety Division

Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly

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Website: http://nyc.gov/nypd