



Thomas Newton, MPP, REHS  
Director

Chester J. Culver  
Governor

Patty Judge  
Lt. Governor

## **Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Strategies for Professionals**

### **Educate**

- Educate the public of the danger of medications being passed on to others and of the risk involved with misuse of those medications. To end the common occurrence of prescription drug sharing, the public must come to view misusing prescription medications as a practice that is just as potentially addictive and dangerous as illegal drug use.
- Promote education initiatives which teach the public that prescription medications must be used only as prescribed, safely stored, and properly disposed of.

### **Safe Storage**

- Support parents and others legitimately using prescription medications to employ precautions such as taking regular inventory of their pills and locking their medicine cabinets
- Encourage pharmacies to educate consumers about medication sharing and to routinely stock lockboxes for consumer purchase

### **Responsible Disposal**

- Partner with community groups to host a medication collection event where old medications can be collected and disposed of properly
- Inform the public about the proper way to dispose of medications by mixing with cat litter or coffee grounds before throwing them away

### **Advocate**

- Collaborate with federal and state governments and advocacy organizations in developing and implementing public education initiatives to promote lawful access to and appropriate use, safe storage, and responsible disposal of prescription medications.
- Ensure that substance abuse prevention education for elementary and secondary education students includes the dangers of using medication without a prescription

### **Be Aware of Available Resources**

- The [www.ZeroDeaths.org](http://www.ZeroDeaths.org) campaign calls consumers' attention to six principles to help reduce unintentional overdose deaths from prescription medications
- The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has opened a toll-free international hotline where any person suspecting illegal sale and abuse of pharmaceutical drugs can call anonymously to report it at 1-877-Rx-Abuse
- The [www.AntiDrug.org](http://www.AntiDrug.org) Web site has free resources regarding prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse for parents and for professionals working with youth