

Safe Medicine Storage Campaign

Guidance for people who work with adults taking prescribed medicines or illegal drugs

The presence of substances, legal or illegal, is a safety risk for families who have young children in the home. Children by nature are curious and if they accidentally eat or drink medicine that is in the home or the community, they can get seriously ill or, in some cases, die.

When meeting with families, both with known and unknown drug histories, discuss the harms of accidental drug overdose. Talk to them about where and how their medicines are kept. Create a plan for how to keep these medicines up and out of reach of children.

Help keep families with young children in the home safe by reviewing these tips and resources with them:

WHEN VISITING FAMILIES, LOOK OUT FOR:

- Pill bottles lying out in shared spaces
- Easily accessible cabinets and containers
- Drug paraphernalia, including:
 - Needles
 - Suspicious substances
 - Open pill containers
- Signs of drug use in adults or youth, including:
 - Slurred or slow speech
 - Nodding off
 - Quick, frantic speech
 - Odd behavior
 - Glassy eyes

WHEN SPEAKING WITH FAMILIES ABOUT SAFE STORAGE, REMIND THEM TO:

1. Keep medicine, paraphernalia, and other hazardous materials up and away from children. If at all possible, in cabinets that can be locked or child-proofed with latches. If locks are not easily available, make sure they are placed inside cabinets and drawers and not out in the open.
2. Make sure that the safety caps are locked after use.
3. Always put medicine away after using them.

4. Dispose of unused medicine (information in resource section below).
5. Encourage caregivers to talk with children about what medicine is and that they should only take medicine when it's given to them by an adult.
6. Keep medicine in a safe place because children often mistake medicine for candy or juice.
7. Tell children that medicine can help them if they are sick but that it can be harmful if they take it the wrong way or they take the wrong amount.
8. Talk to caregivers about who is coming into their home. When babysitters, extended family, and friends come over, ask that they keep any medicine they may have out of the home or safely stored when visiting.

SHARE THESE RESOURCES WITH YOUR FAMILIES:

- Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222
- [HealthyMindsPhilly.org](https://www.healthymindsphilly.org)
- [Prevention Point](#)
- [Personal safety and overdose prevention for injection drug users](#)
- [City of Philadelphia Harm Reduction Program](#)
- [Comprehensive list of drug and alcohol programs for youth and adults](#)
- [Safehouse Philly](#)
- [Where and How to Dispose of Unused Medicines](#)
- [Safe Medicine Storage Flyer](#)

Let's work together to end child drug ingestions and deaths.
Safe Storage. Safe Kids. Safe Philly!