



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

Tip Sheet Suggestions

Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medicine Safety Program is a free, evidence-based, comprehensive Common Core-ready educational program on the safe use of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, with a rich online hub at tinyurl.com/ScholasticOTC-Teachers

Research shows that students begin to self-medicate around age 11. If not equipped with the knowledge and training to make safe choices, mistakes can happen. By age 16, approximately 90% of adolescents report self-administering OTC medications. In 2018, America's poison centers managed more than 300,000 exposure cases involving children ages 6 to 19; more than half of these cases involved medication errors and misuse. This tip sheet suggests best practices for prevention leaders to implement the OTC Medicine Safety Program to educate our nation's youth with the knowledge they need to make good choices.

1. Engage Public and Private School Superintendents, Principals and School Healthcare Staff.

Start your efforts with private schools, which have fewer approval layers you will have to go through.

HOW-TO STEPS

- ▶ Educate yourself and the coalition on the approval process for substance misuse education in your local schools.
- ▶ Develop an OTC action plan with specific goals for everyone involved.
- ▶ Attend meetings and build working relationships with school officials.
- ▶ Homeschool families can be reached by local chapters of Home School Associations and home education coalitions.

2. Check Current Substance Prevention Education Curriculum Requirements.

If your state Department of Education or local school system has a prevention education curriculum requirement, propose OTC to help fulfill the requirement.

HOW-TO STEPS

- ▶ Search the state and local Departments of Health and Education for required substance misuse education in schools.
Example: tinyurl.com/OhioDrugUsePrevention
- ▶ Review requirements to assess if a Common Core-ready curricula require a separate state / local review process before implementation.
- ▶ Apply for OTC to meet the requirement to provide substance misuse education to school-aged children.

3. Add to the Statewide Teachers' Online Instructional Resource Library.

Getting approval at the state level and sharing the resources through a common library allows teachers to easily implement the program at their individual schools.
Example: tinyurl.com/HealthSmartVA

HOW-TO STEPS

- ▶ Research approval process to add OTC content to the resource library.
- ▶ Develop an action plan to get the necessary support from administrators and teachers.
- ▶ Get approval.
- ▶ Develop implementation plan.

4. Add OTC Video Tutorials and Print Materials to Individual School Resource Libraries.

Many schools have a resource library of approved prevention resources. Ask to add OTC videos and materials to their current resource library.
tinyurl.com/OTCVideoTutorials
tinyurl.com/ScholasticOTC-Teachers

HOW-TO STEPS

- ▶ Ask school administrator or teacher if they have a prevention resource library for teachers.
- ▶ Explain how OTC is evidence-based and aligns with common core curriculum standards.
- ▶ Learn the approval process for OTC to be added and implement the steps.

Tip Sheet Suggestions

5. Engage Youth-Serving Organizations.

Promote OTC to afterschool programs, summer camps, scouting associations, 4H Clubs, etc.

HOW-TO STEPS

- ▶ Identify youth-serving organizations in your area and conduct a community scan of where they are located.
- ▶ Study their missions and see where OTC education aligns with their goals.
- ▶ Set up meetings to discuss the benefits of OTC education and convince them to move forward with the training. Contact CADCA to get examples of successful trainings.

6. Implement an OTC Train-the-Trainer Program.

Propose an in-depth skill-building session on how to engage youth in a critical conversation about responsible medicine use. Teaching educators to train on OTC builds training capacity across your state.

HOW-TO STEPS

- ▶ Get all the OTC training materials from tinyurl.com/ScholasticOTC
- ▶ Train your presenters. Youth engagement is key and peer-to-peer training is very effective, so be sure to train youth as well as adults to present. Contact www.cadca.org/ to learn how to get youth trained to teach OTC.
- ▶ Identify local and state prevention or education conferences.
- ▶ Submit proposal or abstract to implement training.

7. Present at State, Regional and Local Conferences.

Presenting at conferences allow you to educate large numbers of people at one time.

HOW-TO STEPS

- ▶ Identify statewide, regional, and local conferences within your state.
- ▶ Identify the mission and vision of the conference host agency and assess comparable goals.
- ▶ Determine if there are existing or legacy relationships or coordinated efforts with the conference host(s). Establish or expand upon current collaborations with host organizations to include youth medicine safety.
- ▶ Establish relationships at agency or departmental level to assist with sustainability efforts, i.e. Department Heads awareness, involvement, and greenlight to create ongoing collaborative opportunities.

8. Promote OTC to State Legislators.

Some states have approved mandatory substance prevention education for elementary, middle and high school students. Many states are currently considering legislation to implement mandatory substance misuse prevention education.

HOW-TO STEPS

- ▶ Educate the local coalition, including the government sector (to create the will), to help promote and raise awareness of OTC to the general public.
- ▶ Provide training to the local coalition on effective policies and policy change processes on both the local and state levels.
- ▶ Mobilize the youth to promote local and state policy change to include mandatory OTC to the legislators at the local and state level.
- ▶ Recruit a state representative from the State Board of Education to become a “state champion” of the OTC training within the schools.
- ▶ Document and evaluate the process for future reference.