

## Overview

In this lesson, you will see different scenarios regarding drug use and have the opportunity to practice peer resistance skills using effective communication skills. Identifying improper use of prescription drugs and practicing communication skills to avoid prescription drugs in a safe classroom environment will help to build confidence if ever faced with these pressures. By the end of this lesson, students will have strategies to keep them safe from the pressures associated with drug use.

## National Health Education Standards

**Standard 1:** Comprehending Concepts

*Performance Indicator 1.12.6:* Summarize the harmful short- and long-term physical, psychological, and social effects of drug use.

**Standard 4:** Interpersonal Communication Skills

*Performance Indicator 4.12.1:* Demonstrate effective communication skills to avoid taking prescription medication.

*Performance Indicator 4.12.2:* Demonstrate effective communication skills to be drug free.

*Performance Indicator 4.12.4:* Demonstrate effective peer resistance, negotiation, and collaboration skills to avoid drug use.

## Healthy Behavior Outcomes (HBOs)

Use refusal skills to stay drug free.

### Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

Objective	Assessment
1. Identify the negative physical, psychological and social effects of drug use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lead the Scene Reflection Question 10</li></ul>
2. Identify inappropriate use of prescription medicines. Suggest alternatives to inappropriate use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lead the Scene Reflection</li></ul>
3. Demonstrate effective peer resistance, negotiation, communication and collaboration skills to avoid drug use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Refusal Skill Practice &amp; Rubric</li></ul>

**Time:** 45-50 minutes

## Materials

*Assessments and Worksheets*

- Lead the Scene Reflection & Notes Sheet ([Attachment 1](#)); Refusal Skill Practice ([Attachment 2](#)); Refusal Skill Rubric ([Attachment 3](#)).

## Resources

- Theatrical Performance **Vimeo:** <https://player.vimeo.com/video/161513021>
- Lead the Scene PowerPoint (Generation RX): <http://www.generationrx.org/take-action/teen/>

## Introduction

In the last lesson, we talked about making healthy decisions. It is important to have effective communication skills to support your decision to be drug free. Today we are going to practice effective communication skills to strengthen your ability and confidence to stay drug free.

## Teaching Steps

### Activity 1: Bell Ringer Question

- Bell Ringer Question: “What is your style for saying “NO” to drugs?”
  - **Possible Answers:** “No, no, no, not today!” (using humor), “My parents will kill me!” (blame parents), “I’ve got this big test tomorrow.” (make an excuse), etc.

### Activity 2: Generation Rx PowerPoint & Scenario 1

- Use the **Generation RX PowerPoint:**
- **Slide 1:** Today we have a skit-based activity that focuses on preventing prescription drug misuse as well as identifying positive alternatives for coping with the demands of life. The scenarios we will be watching are presented by InterACT, a theatrical group from The Ohio State University. After each scenario we will have a brief discussion about the contents and after the last scenario we will conduct a skit-based activity to apply what we have learned.
- **Slide 2:** We are first going to review how prescription drugs can help us. They can help us lead longer and healthier lives, but only when used as directed by a healthcare professional.
- **Slide 3:** We define prescription drug misuse as:
  - Taking more of a prescription than prescribed
  - Taking a prescription medication for a different reason than prescribed
  - Sharing or taking someone else’s prescription medication
    - Engaging in these behaviors can have serious health risks
- **Slide 4: Scenario 1:** Cue up the **Vimeo** link to view the first scenario about James celebrating his 21st birthday.
- **Slide 5:** Processing Scene 1:
  - **Did any of the characters misuse medication?**
    - James: Took more of a medication than prescribed; shared medication; took medication for a reason different than prescribed; took someone else’s medication.
    - Peter: Took someone else’s medication; stole medication; took medication for a reason different than prescribed.

- o What types of medication did Peter and James misuse?
  - Percocet (prescription opioid pain medication) and Xanax (prescription sedative)
  - Prescription sedatives, stimulants, and opioids, or painkillers, are the most commonly misused types of prescription drugs.
- o Why do you think Peter and James misused medication?
  - Peter: To have fun, to provide James with a good time on his birthday.
    - o James: To have fun, to seek attention (he wanted others to think of him as an individual that threw great parties).

### Activity 3. Identify Misuse of Prescription Medicines

- **Slide 6:** Some people misuse prescription medications by taking them for a reason different than prescribed. What reasons do teens give for misusing prescription medications? \*Have students record on their *Lead the Scene Reflection and Notes Sheet (Attachment 1)*.
  - o To manage stress
  - o To improve academic performance or help in school
  - o To cope with feelings of depression
  - o To deal with a physical injury to perform in an athletic event (“play through the pain”)
  - o To have fun
  - o To have something to do (i.e. boredom) or try something new (i.e. curiosity)
- **Slide 7:** Now that we have identified common reasons for misusing, let’s consider some positive alternatives:
  1. **To help with school:** It may be tempting to misuse prescription drugs as a “quick fix” to help you cram for an upcoming exam. However, this isn’t a sustainable approach for earning good grades. Try studying with friends, work with a tutor, or meet with your teacher before or after school.
  2. **To cope with depression:** If your mood feels depressed, confide in a trusted adult. Resorting to misusing prescription medications or using other substances will only prolong your feelings of depression.
  3. **To deal with an injury:** If you are an athlete experiencing an injury, you may feel pressure to “play through the pain.” However, the possible consequences from misusing a prescription opioid pain medication are far more devastating than not performing in an athletic event. If you are dealing with an injury, work with an athletic trainer or a healthcare professional to safely plan your recovery.
  4. **To handle boredom:** Boredom can affect all of us...try curing your boredom by engaging in something you enjoy (like art, sports, helping others, etc).
  5. **To handle stress:** Stress will always be present in life. Try adopting healthy habits for dealing with stress like exercising, watching TV or a movie or taking a nap.
- **Slide 8:** Watch Scenario 2: Noah and Peter are having a phone conversation.

- **Slide 9:** Discuss the scene:
  - o What happened in this scenario?
    - Noah has a legitimate prescription for Adderall, a prescription stimulant. Peter asked Noah for some of his Adderall to help him study.
  - o **How should Noah handle this situation?** Before students respond, consider posing the question, then advancing the presentation to the next slide. Slide 10 focuses on participants brainstorming techniques for saying no to requests for sharing prescription drugs.

### Activity 5. Ways to Say “No!”

- **Slide 10:** Ways to say no
- Two Elements: What we say and how we say it
  - o What we say:
    - Have students report out from their **bell ringer** at the start of the lesson.
      - o Here are additional strategies:
        1. Use humor while still saying no.
        2. Give a reason or make up an excuse for saying no.
        3. Suggest positive alternatives.
        4. Own your statement; use “I” messages.
        5. Be direct in your statement.
  - o How we say it:
    - Be assertive and consistent.
    - Nonverbal strategies including:
      - o Body language: Posture — Sit or stand up tall, be aware of your gestures
      - o Facial expressions — Pleasant, but serious face. Eye contact
      - o Proximity — Leaving the area if you feel unsafe
      - o Voice volume — Calm and steady, not whiny or abrasive
- **Slide 11:** Scenario 3: Noah and Peter are at a college party.
- **Slide 12:** Discuss the scene:
  - o **What happened in this scenario?**
    - Noah now appears to be misusing prescription drugs, as he was mixing alcohol with them. He also invited Peter to misuse, but he turned down the invitation.
  - o **What potential outcomes could happen for Noah in this situation?**
    - Multiple negative outcomes could occur, including legal, social and health-related consequences:

- o **Legal:** It doesn't appear that Noah is 21; therefore, he is not of legal age to drink. In addition, federal law prohibits the possession of a prescription drug without a written prescription.
- o **Health:** Not taking a prescription as directed by a healthcare professional can result in immediate negative effects, including:
  - For **prescription opioid pain medications:** drowsiness, confusion, sedation, slowed breathing
  - For **prescription sedatives:** decreased heart rate and blood pressure, impaired coordination and judgment, confusion, sedation, slowed breathing
  - For **prescription stimulants:** increased heart rate and blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, nervousness, insomnia
- o Mixing alcohol with a prescription medication can be dangerous to a person's health. For example, alcohol use under the age of 21 can impact brain development, and mixing alcohol with prescription medications can lead to breathing and heart problems.
- o When prescription medications are not taken as instructed by a healthcare professional, it increases the likelihood that negative side effects, including developing dependency and addiction, will occur.
- o **Social:** The misuse of medications can affect our family and friends, our job, our education, our finances, and much more.
- o **Do you agree with how Peter handled this situation?**
  - Peter did refuse Noah's invitation to misuse. To help Noah, he could try to remove Noah from the situation to prevent him from continuing to drink or misuse prescription drugs. Once he is sober, Peter could share his concerns with Noah and a trusted adult.
- **Slide 13:** Here are other approaches for turning down an invitation to misuse prescription drugs.
  1. Use humor or make a joke.
  2. Give a reason or make-up an excuse.
  3. Suggest positive alternatives.
  4. Leave the situation.
  5. Remember to not be afraid to stand up for yourself and that, by not misusing prescription drugs, you are a part of the majority of teens who use medications safely.
- **Slide 14:** Examples of specific approaches, as well as identifies positive alternatives instead of misusing prescription drugs.
- **Slide 15:** Students are challenged to think about how the characters in scenes 1-3 could make different choices for a positive outcome.

- **Slide 16:** Time to put your skills to the test! Students will break into small groups and perform a more positive outcome. Follow the steps below:
  - o Randomly assign groups Scenario 1-3. If needed, advance the presentation to slide 17 so groups can review the original scenario.
  - o Ensure groups understand they are traveling back in time and exchanging any negative choices in the scenario for more positive choices. In their skit, they are demonstrating how to implement that more positive choice as well as demonstrating effective refusal skills. Each group has the opportunity to essentially change the scenario to ensure a more positive outcome.
    - \*Each group or student has the opportunity to make a choice to demonstrate the refusal skills on paper or demonstrate it in the given scenario.
  - o Complete **Attachment 2** and use **Attachment 3** as a self, peer or teacher assessment.
- **Slide 17:** Scenario Recap.
- **Slide 18:** Suggestions for different choices.
- **Slide 19:** Summary: **Using Medications Safely**

In summary, we can prevent prescription drug misuse by using medications safely. This includes keeping medications for ourselves (not sharing or taking someone else’s medication); following instructions and taking prescription medication as instructed by a healthcare professional (including taking it for only the prescribed reason); and by being a good role model. This includes modeling these practices at home, and encouraging your family and friends to do the same.
- **Slide 20:** Helping Others: Share what you have learned.
- **Slide 21:** Questions?

## Closure

- We reviewed strategies for saying no to drugs and practiced effective communication skills by working through various scenarios involving decisions around prescription drug use.
- Ask students, **“How would you rate your level of confidence on a scale of 1-5 (5 being the most confident) for saying no to drugs? Explain your answer on a half-sheet of paper.”**

## LEAD THE SCENE REFLECTION AND NOTES SHEET

1. Finish the phrase: Medications can help us... (list three answers)

1.
2.
3.

2. Misusing medication is:

a. Taking more than \_\_\_\_\_.

b. Taking medication for a reason \_\_\_\_\_ than  
\_\_\_\_\_.

c. \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ someone else's  
medication.

3. Did any of the characters' misuse medication? If yes, how did they misuse the medication?

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4. What types of medication did Peter and James misuse?

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5. Why do you think Peter and James misused medication?

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### LEAD THE SCENE REFLECTION AND NOTES SHEET (CONTINUED)

6. What reasons do teens give for misusing prescription medications? List four.

1.
2.
3.
4.

7. Provide a positive alternative for the reason to use drugs listed below:

To Handle Stress:
To Handle Boredom:
To Cope with Depression:

8. How should Noah handle the situation in scenario 2?

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9. List three approaches for saying “NO!”

1.
2.
3.

10. List potential negative outcomes that could happen to Noah in scenario 3:

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## TIME TO PRACTICE!

**Group Members' Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scenario:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Decision to be made:**

**Brainstorm Different Choices:**

Ways to Say NO	
Option 1:	Option 2:
<i>Write out what you would say in this situation:</i>	
<i>What else would you do to ensure your message is effective in this situation?</i>	

**Notes for Skit:**

## RUBRIC FOR REFUSAL SKILLS

Category	3	2	1
<b>Decision &amp; Options</b>	Describes the decision to be made in this scenario. Identifies more than two specific options to respond to the behavior. Selects the healthy decision.	Identifies the decision to be made in the scenario. Identifies two different options. Selects a healthy decision.	Does not complete one or more aspects: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the decision to be made.</li> <li>2. Identifies less than two options.</li> <li>3. Select a healthy decision.</li> </ol>
<b>Refusal Statement</b>	Provides an effective refusal statement provides a detailed and reasonable argument.	Provides an effective refusal statement using one of the strategies identified in the class.	Does not provide an appropriate refusal statement aligned with one of the strategies from class.
<b>Other important steps to ensure message is delivered effectively</b>	Demonstrates or describes other behaviors that are appropriate for the situation and aligned with the refusal statement.	Described other behaviors including: nonverbal, facial expressions, removing self from activity.	Does not identify or describe other behaviors to support the refusal skill message.