



StopMedicineAbuse.org

Leading Makers of OTC Medicines Join with the National Association of School Nurses in New Effort to Prevent Teen Medicine Abuse

-- Program Connects Parents and School Nurses from "Home to Homeroom" in the Fight Against Teen Medicine Abuse --

Washington, D.C., April 13, 2010 - The Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) today announced the launch of "Home to Homeroom," an educational program that teams parents with the medical expert in their teen's school – the school nurse – to help prevent and address teen medicine abuse. Parents play a pivotal role in keeping kids drug-free. Research shows that kids who learn a lot from their parents about the risks of drug abuse are up to half as likely to use.

Troubling Teen Statistics Underscore Need for Education

Multiple national surveys point to the disturbing abuse of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, like OTC cough medicine, among today's teens. In the 2009 Monitoring the Future report, six percent of high school teens admit to having abused cough medicine to get high in the past year, and, as a strong wake-up call for those parents who think their kid isn't affected, in the 2009 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS), thirty-three percent of high school teens say they know someone who has abused cough medicine.

"The ingredient in OTC cough medicines that the teens are abusing is dextromethorphan, or DXM. While these medicines are safe and effective when used as directed, they can be dangerous when abused in extreme amounts, especially when combined with alcohol, illicit drugs, or certain prescription drugs," said Linda A. Suydam, D.P.A., CHPA president. "The makers of OTC medicines have been aggressive in their efforts to prevent cough medicine abuse among teens and we are proud to partner with NASN in bringing parents the resources they need to have regular conversations with their teens about the real risks of medicine abuse."

School Nurses on the Frontlines of Teen Issues

Working on the frontlines every day, school nurses know the range of issues parents deal with concerning the development and welfare of their teens and often serve as a valuable ally to parents.

"Medicine abuse is a serious issue that needs to be on every parent's radar," said Amy Garcia, NASN executive director. "Parents need to know that they are the most powerful voice in their teens' lives. Teens will take an issue like medicine abuse seriously when they know their parents are well-informed on the topic and want to prevent the misuse of all substances."



Empowering Parents From 'Home to Homeroom'

Ongoing education and communication are the keys to prevention. Home to Homeroom provides parents with advice and tools on how to integrate medicine abuse into regular "drug" talks with teens. It helps them keep the dialogue going, and find resources to support at-risk teens. Found at StopMedicineAbuse.org, the campaign tools include:

- **Home to Homeroom Parent Toolkit:** Free downloadable brochure and tip sheet with answers to parents' most frequently asked questions. School nurses will also receive this toolkit and other supporting materials to assist them when providing information to parents about the risks of teen medicine abuse.
- **Home to Homeroom Communities:** Growing social networks for information sharing and support—available at the StopMedicineAbuse Facebook page and Twitter feed @StopMedAbuse—provide a forum for parents to share their concerns, questions, and experiences with each other.
- **Home to Homeroom Digest:** Articles and advice from school nurses with ready-to-use, practical tips aimed at helping parents prevent medicine abuse in their family.

Parents are encouraged to visit StopMedicineAbuse.org to learn more.

The Consumer Healthcare Products Association

The Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA), a 129-year-old-trade association representing U.S. manufacturers and distributors of over-the-counter medicines and nutritional supplements, is committed to promoting the increasingly vital role of healthcare remedies in America's healthcare system through science, education, and advocacy. For more information, visit www.chpa-info.org.

StopMedicineAbuse.org was developed by the leading makers of OTC cough medicines to build awareness around the potential for this type of substance abuse behavior, provide tips to prevent it from happening, and encourage parents to safeguard their medicine cabinets.

The National Association of School Nurses

The National Association of School Nurses is a non-profit specialty nursing organization, organized in 1968 and incorporated in 1977, representing school nurses exclusively. NASN has over 14,000 members and 51 affiliates, including the District of Columbia and overseas. The mission of the NASN is to improve the health and educational success of children and youth by developing and providing leadership to advance the school nursing practice. For more information, visit <http://www.nasn.org> or call 866-627-6767.

