

Grades  
**K-5**

At a young age, start talking to your children about medication and how you make decisions about

### begin the conversation

medication for yourself and your family. Some topics to talk about include:

- 1. What do different medications and vitamins do** for our bodies?
- 2. Who has your child seen taking medicine** (e.g. a parent, grandparent, someone on TV) and discuss why they might be taking it
- 3. When is it okay to take medication?** (ie: when prescribed by a doctor)
- 4. What does medicine safety look like in your home?** What do you currently do to secure medications, and why do you do this?
- 5. Have your child participate in conversations** between you and your child's pediatrician about medication that your child may be prescribed

### continue the conversation



Grades  
**6-8**

Your pre-teen is now in middle school and could face exposure to unsafe use of prescription medications by their peers. Engage in conversation with your child. Some ways to continue the

conversation include:

- 1. Plan to have many short talks;** always try to listen more than you speak
- 2. Choose informal times to have the conversations,** such as in the car or during dinner
- 3. Clearly state what you expect** regarding prescription drug and opioid use
- 4. Create family rules together** and empower your child to make healthy decisions
- 5. Let your child know that you are always there for them**

Grades  
**9+**

In addition to talking to your teen or young adult about illegal drugs, it is essential that you also address the misuse and abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Here are some tips to consider:

## own the conversation

- 1. Always role model safe use** and teach your teen to respect medication
- 2. Be knowledgeable about the risks of misuse/abuse of over-the-counter and prescription medications;** be ready to communicate the dangers of long-term use (Note: Long-term dependence to opioids can happen after only 3-5 days of use)
- 3. Be clear that you do not want your teen taking medicine without your knowledge;** always keep medications secure within the home
- 4. Make sure your teen understands** that they should never take prescription medication not prescribed to them by a doctor
- 5. If your child has surgery, talk to their doctor about alternative pain management and monitor your child's dosage; invite your teen to participate in these discussions** and show them how to advocate for their own health and well-being



For more information about this campaign, please contact Skagit County Public Health at (360) 416-1500. Funding provided by Skagit County Public Health and the Washington State Health Care Authority.

