



Prescription Drug Misuse:
What Administrators Need to
Know about “Study Drugs”

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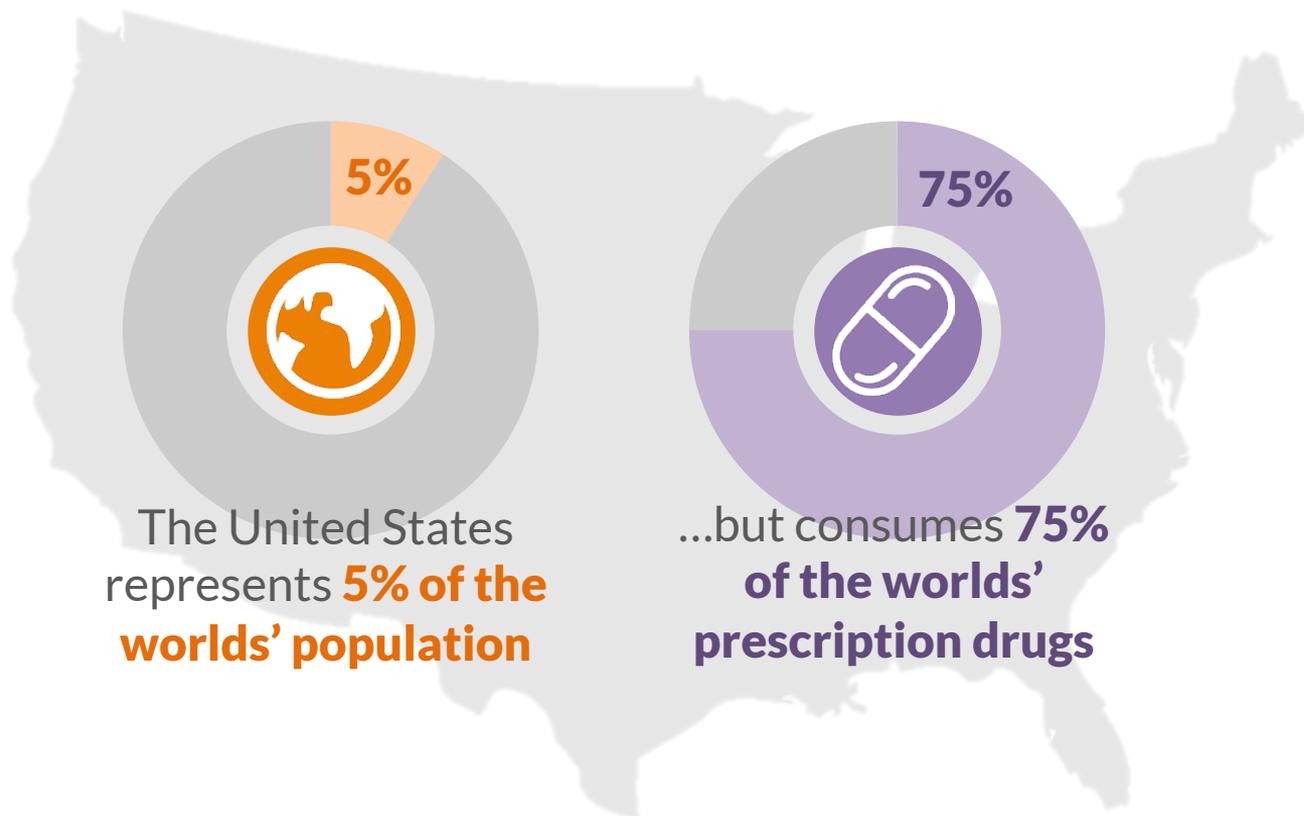
Instant Info Access and Quick Fixes for Health Issues



Google Search I'm Feeling Lucky



United States Drug-Taking Culture



The United States
represents **5% of the
worlds' population**

...but consumes **75%
of the worlds'
prescription drugs**

Contributing Factors to Prescription Drug Misuse Epidemic



ACCESS

Easy access to prescription medications

4 billion prescriptions filled each year in U.S.



ADS

The U.S. is one of two countries that allow **direct-to-consumer advertisements** for prescription drugs



MISPERCEPTIONS

Incorrect belief that prescription medication are **safe** because a physician prescribes them



There is **little negative stigma** attached to taking pills



Defining the Issue

Defining Misuse

PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE DEFINED BY GENERATION RX

- ✓ Taking more of a prescription medication than prescribed
- ✓ Taking a prescription medication for a reason different than prescribed
- ✓ Sharing or taking someone else's prescription medication



Most Common Types of Prescription Drugs

STIMULANTS

ADHD

Adderall, Ritalin, Concerta

- Increase alertness
- Increase attention
- Increase energy
- Increase blood pressure
- and heart rate
- Seizures
- Hostility

DEPRESSANTS

Anxiety

Valium, Xanax, Ambien

- Increase GABA in the brain
- Decreases brain activity producing calming effect
- Drowsiness
- Slowed respiration and heart rate
- Seizure from withdrawal

OPIOIDS

Pain

Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet

- Affects regions of the brain that trigger euphoria
- Drowsiness
- Constipation
- Slowed breathing
- Respiratory depression or death

Prevalence of Stimulant Misuse



17% of college students misuse stimulant medication (*meta-analysis*)

RESEARCH DEMONSTRATES A RANGE OF MISUSE RATES AMONG COLLEGE STUDENT POPULATION

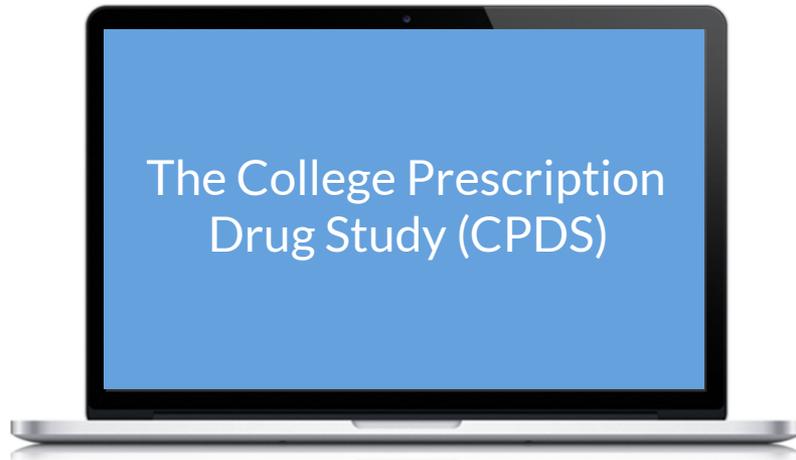
Lifetime Misuse

8.1%

Past Year Misuse

5.3%

Measuring Prescription Drug Misuse Among College Students



8 four-year public and private institutions



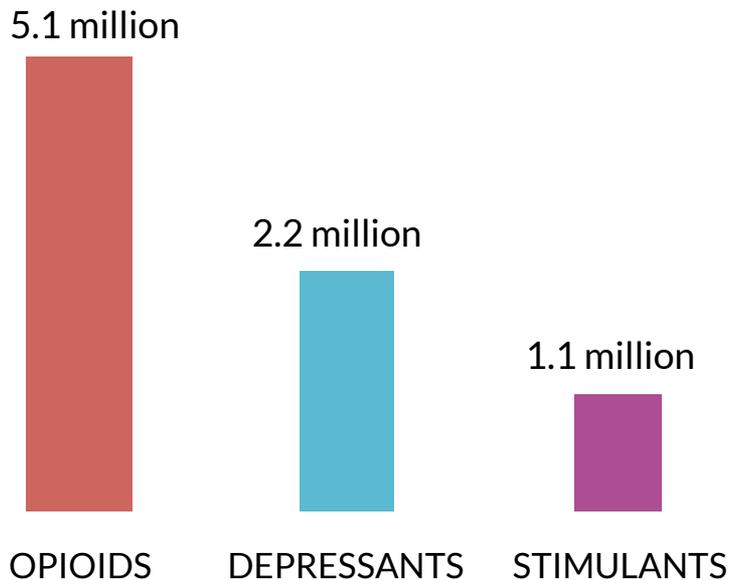
27,495
students received the survey



14.2%
response rate

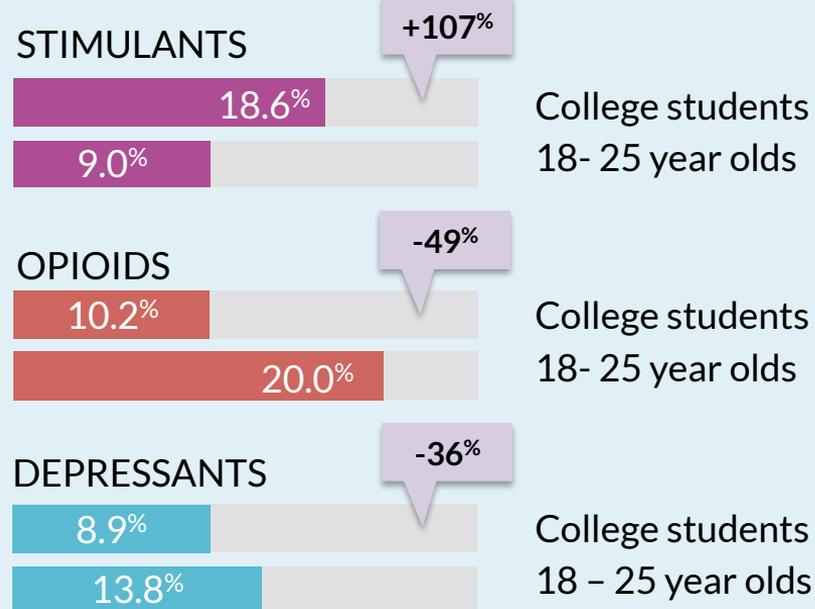
Drilling Down on Misuse

NUMBER OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSERS



Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse (2010);
College Prescription Drug Study (2015)

Have You Ever Used The Following Prescription Drugs For Non-Medical Reasons?



Stress and Pressure to Succeed at College

Next to the cost of education, **stress is the second biggest problem** students face while attending college, followed by alcohol abuse.

The 2015 National College Health Assessment found **85% of students had felt overwhelmed** by everything they had to do at some point in the past year.



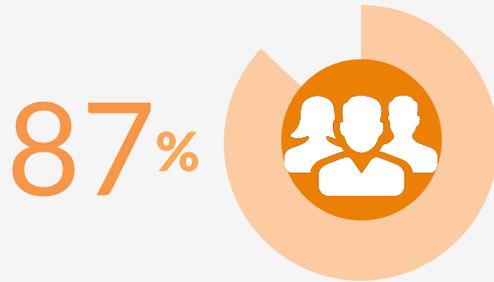
Source: Student Monitor;
ACHA-NCHA (2015)

“I think we have come to a place in our culture where students will do anything to get the grade. Where students get in the mindset ‘I need to get to the end, I need to pass this, I need this to get through this week,’ and these drugs provide a means to that end.”

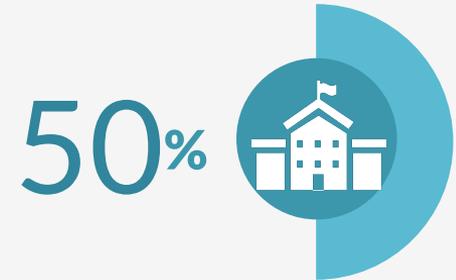
— SAM DILLISTIN

Senior at Christopher Newport University who has a Vyvanse prescription for his ADHD diagnosis

Incoming Students Emotionally Unprepared



of incoming first-year students report college preparation during high school focused more on academics than emotional readiness for college



said their independent living skills need improvement

Students who feel emotionally unprepared for college more likely to report poor academic performance and negative college experience

Misuse on the Rise while Prescriptions Remain Steady

STUDY DESIGN

DATA SOURCES

National Survey on Drug Use and Health: population survey of substance use

Drug Abuse Warning Network: survey of emergency department visits

National Disease and Therapeutic Index: survey of office-based practices

TIME PERIOD

2006 - 2011

POPULATION

18 - 25 year olds

RESULTS



Number of prescriptions for Adderall remain steady



67% increase in misuse of Adderall
156% increase in Adderall-related emergency room visits

FINDINGS

Diversion is main driver: sharing, selling, or trading to others who do not have a prescription

Source of medication usually a friend or relative who obtained medication from physician



Attitudes and Beliefs about Stimulants

Most Students Believe Stimulant Misuse Is A Big Deal

Students Consider The Use Of ADHD Medicine Without A Prescription To Be:



80%

a "big deal"



73%

harmful



75%

unethical

3 of 5

students view misuse for academic reasons as a form of cheating

65%

liken academic misuse to athletes who use performance-enhancing drugs

3 of 5

students feel their school does not make it clear that they do not approve of ADHD prescription stimulant medication misuse

Misbeliefs About Stimulant Prescriptions Misuse



75%

of student believe at least some of their peers have used ADHD medication not prescribed to them



In reality, 17% of students have used ADHD medicine not prescribed to them



43% of student believe using ADHD medication can help them get better grades even if they do not have ADHD

Reasons Why College Students Report Misusing

Primary reason students misuse: **ACADEMIC PRESSURES**



- improve their grades (70%)
- pressure to succeed (68%)
- improve concentration
- maintain focus during late-night study sessions and all nighters

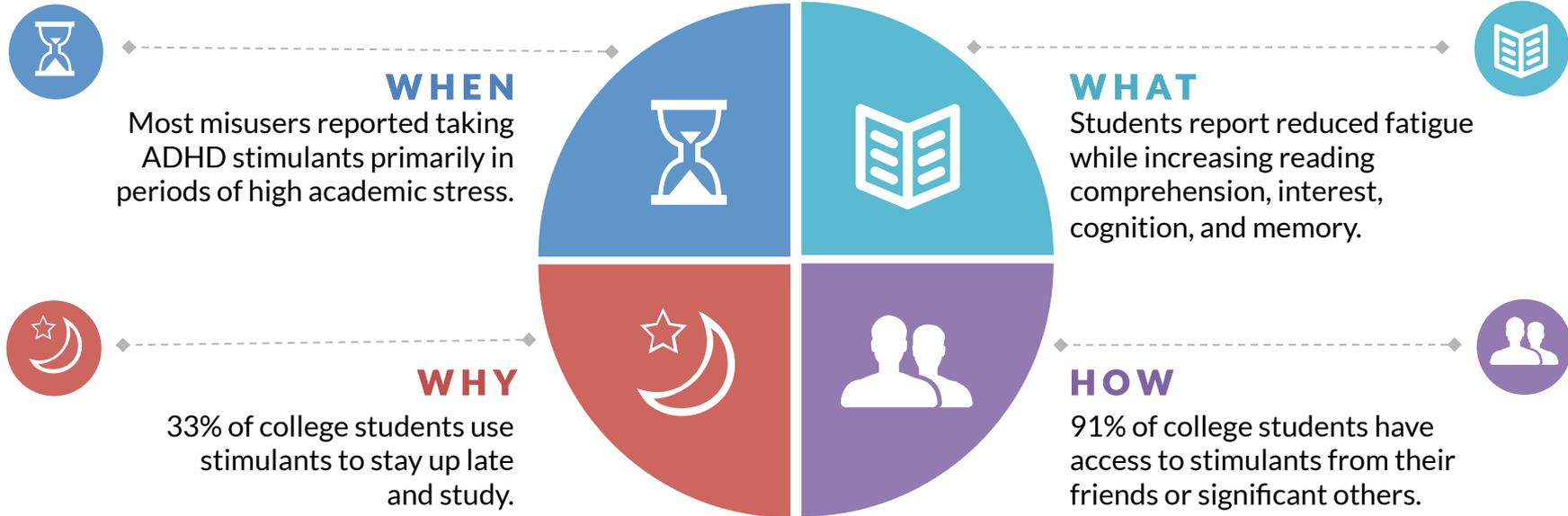
Other reasons students misuse:

- enhance athletic performance
- forget about problems
- reduce stress
- diet/appetite suppressor
- get high/feel good
- partying

FURTHER RESEARCH REQUIRED

relation between stimulant medication misuse and athletics, academic outcomes, depression, eating disorders

From the Misuser's Point of View



Who is at Risk?

Characteristics of Stimulant Misusers

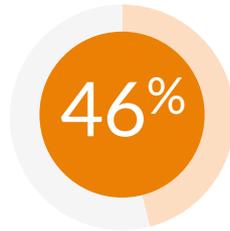
ATTRIBUTES THAT DIFFERENTIATE A MISUSER FROM A NONUSER:

- Symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder
 - 71% of stimulant misusers screened positive for ADHD symptoms
 - For every standard deviation increase in attention problems, the odds of becoming stimulant misuser increased by 1.78
- Problems associated with alcohol use
- Marijuana use

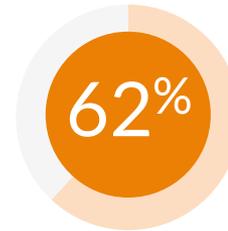
ASSOCIATED WITH STIMULANT MISUSE:

- Being a member of a college sorority or fraternity
- Struggling academically
- Using/misusing alcohol, cigarettes, and/or other substance
- High sensation seeker

Attitudes and Beliefs of Students Diagnosed with ADHD

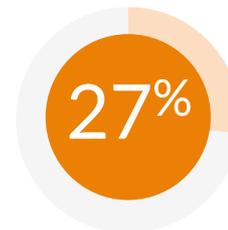
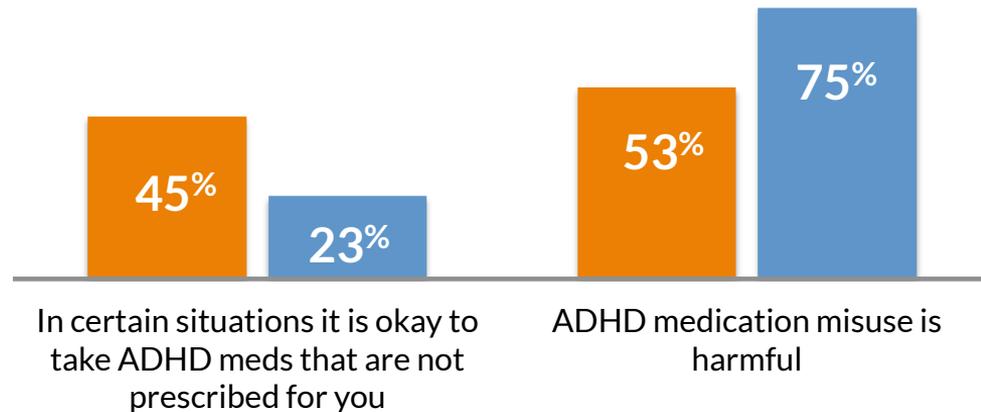


Feel at least a little
**PRESSURE TO
SHARE OR SELL**
medication



Report
**SHARING OR
SELLING**
medication

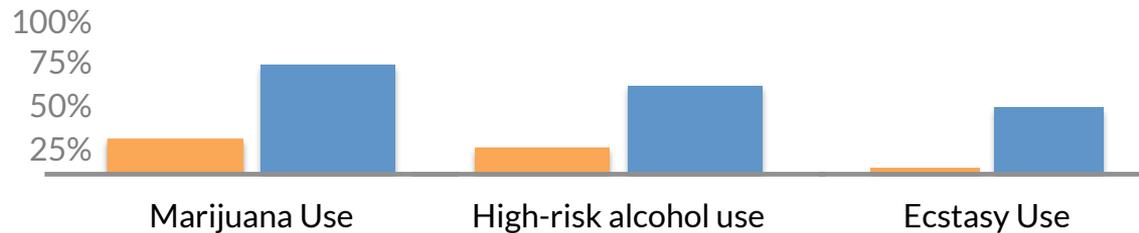
ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS DIAGNOSED WITH ADHD



Think it is
**ACCEPTABLE
TO SHARE**
medication
with a friend

Increased Use of Other Substances

REPORTING OF OTHER SUBSTANCE USE IN PAST YEAR



Significant difference between **stimulant misusers** and **nonusers** in rates of other substance use

SIGNIFICANT ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN STIMULANT MISUSE AND ALCOHOL INCLUDING:

- ✓ High-risk drinking
- ✓ Problematic drinking
- ✓ Alcohol abuse

Odds of becoming a stimulant medication misuser increase by 3.81 for each standard deviation increase in the amount of other substance use

Lower Performers at Higher Risk for Misuse

NONUSERS REPORT HIGHER GPA COMPARED TO MISUSERS



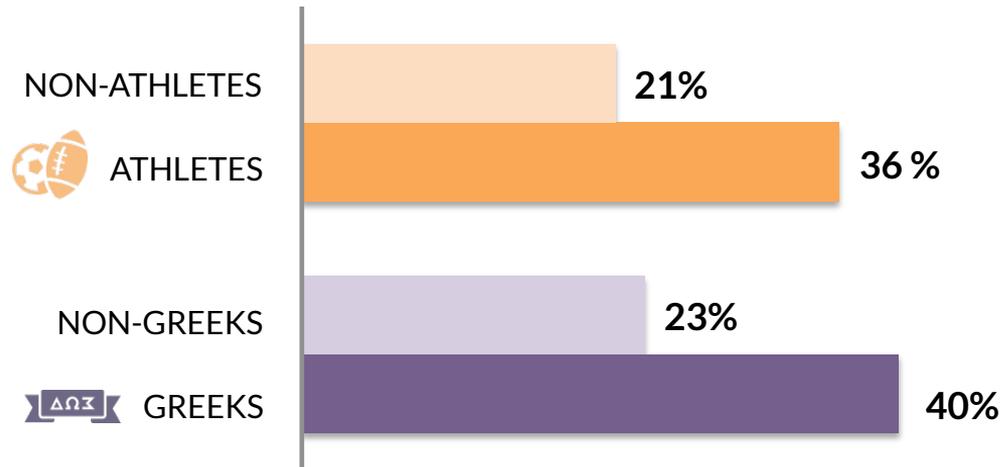
Misusing stimulant medication is significantly related to skipping class and less studying

The lower the student's GPA is, the greater the odds are of the student misusing stimulant medication

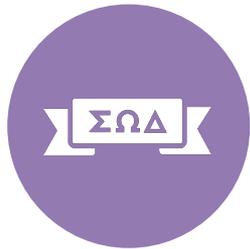
Greek and Athletes Report Higher Intentions of Misuse

Members of Greek organizations (fraternity and sororities) and Athletes (members of varsity, Junior varsity, intramural and/or club teams) are **more likely** than their counterparts to **misuse**

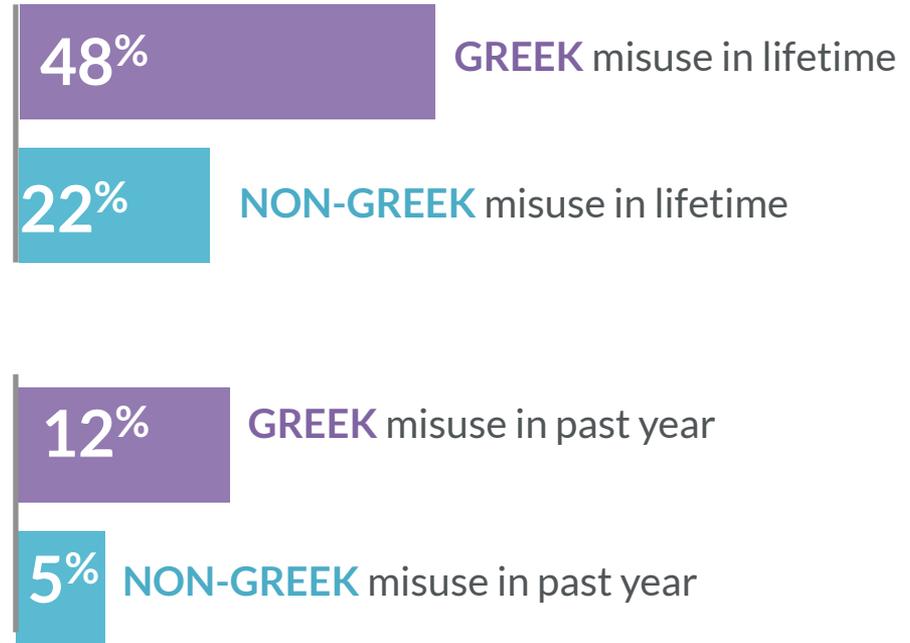
At least somewhat likely to use ADHD prescription stimulants in a way that is different from a doctor's instructions



Greek Students At Higher Risk For Misuse



GREEK MEMBERS
ARE TWICE
as likely to report misuse



Ivy League Students More Likely To Misuse



Rates of nonmedical use or abuse of ADHD drugs tend to be higher at colleges and universities where admission standards are higher

24% of Ivy League juniors report stimulant misuse, the highest rate of any class

Why Ivy League Students Misuse Stimulants



69% to write an essay

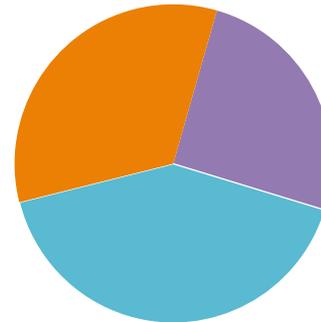
66% to study for an exam

27% to take a test

Is misusing stimulant for academics cheating?

33%
not
cheating

41%
cheating



25%
not sure
if cheating



Talking About Stimulants

Students Are Talking About Prescription Drug Misuse

Twitter status messages containing "Adderall" were monitored from November 2011 - May 2012

213,633 tweets

231,099 unique accounts mentioned Adderall

Tweets most often used joking, sarcastic, or casual manner



adderall + school = winning



Does anyone have adderall? #desperate



Adderall stockpile for finals

WHEN

Adderall tweets peaked during final exam time

WHERE

Clustered in the northeast & south

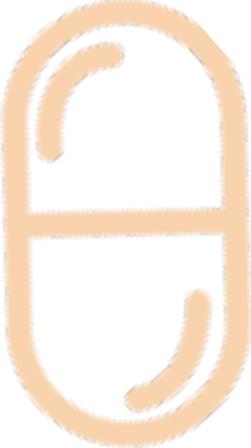
OTHER SUBSTANCES MENTIONED

Alcohol (4.8%)
Stimulants (4.7%)

SIDE EFFECTS MENTIONED

Sleep deprivation (5%)
Loss of appetite (2.6%)

Where Students THINK Other Students Access Stimulants



87%

of students believe **friends who have a prescription** are the primary source for those who are misusing

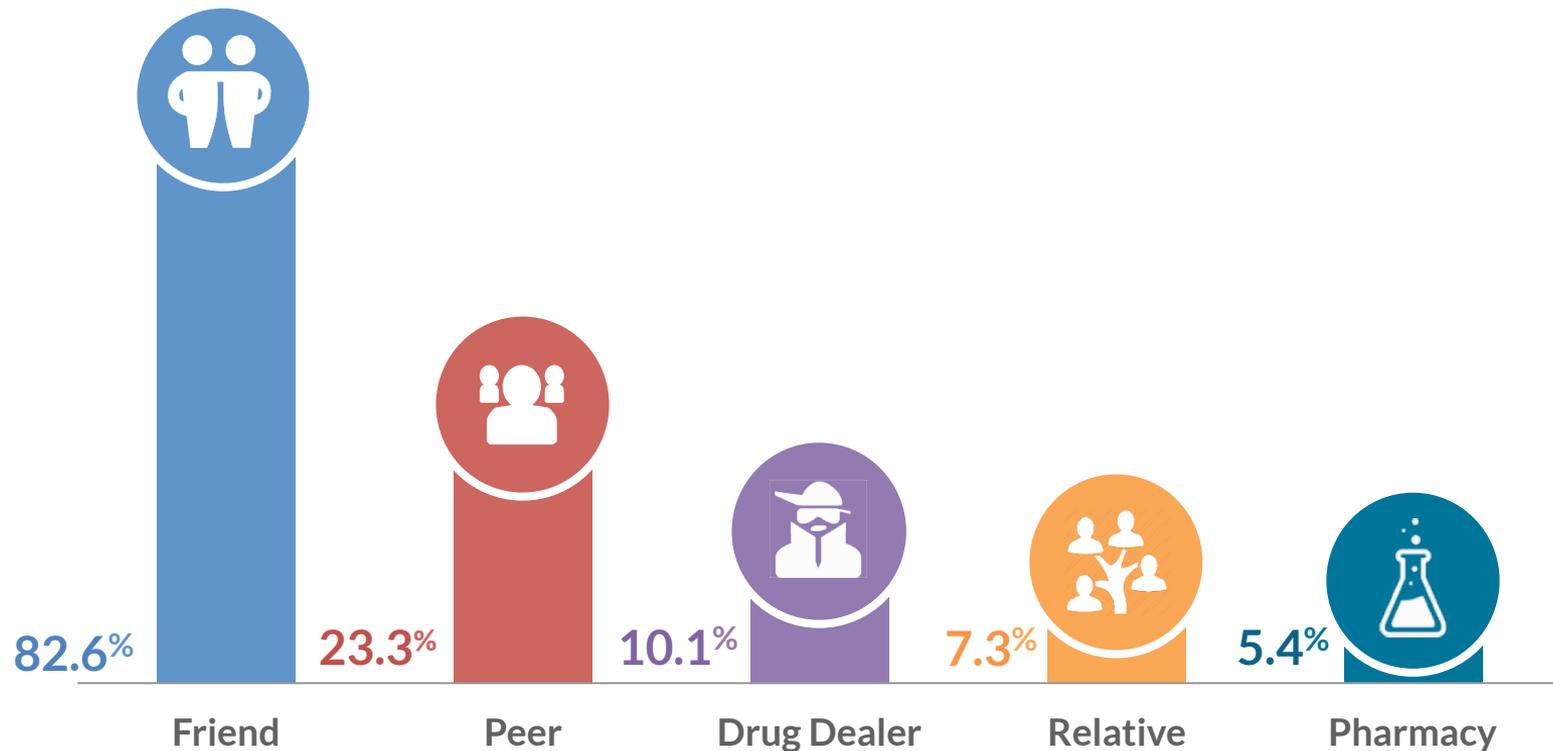
71%

believe it is easy for other **students without a prescription** to get access to ADHD medicine

48%

of students believe their peers pretend to have ADHD and **obtain meds from health care provider**

Where Students ACTUALLY Access Prescription Stimulants



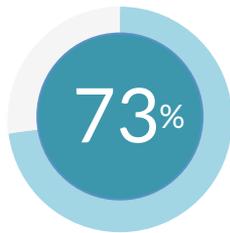
Physicians Do Not Feel Qualified to Talk



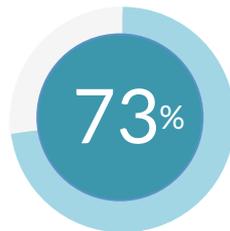
Doctor
Specializing in
ADHD



Believe **THEIR OWN PATIENTS ARE DIVERTING** their medication



Received **NO TRAINING** on prevention of Rx drug diversion in medical school



Believe **PATIENT TRYING TO OBTAIN DRUG TO IMPROVE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

When physicians prescribe stimulants for treatment of ADHD they should:

- ✓ Directly caution all patients against diversion
- ✓ Discuss possible health and legal consequences of misusing and diverting
- ✓ Monitor patients for signs of diversion
- ✓ Discuss safe storage
- ✓ Dispense small amounts



Shifting the Culture



Addressing Risky Behaviors

OHIO UNIVERSITY'S PEER EDUCATION

- Collect data through Alcohol and Other Drug Survey every other year
- Skit that incorporates OU prescription drug use data
- Strategies for not sharing prescription medication

Other efforts in place:

- ✓ Fact flyers in bathrooms and residence halls
- ✓ Stop at the Buzz poster campaign connecting alcohol use and prescription drug misuse
- ✓ Drug disposal education
- ✓ Drug disposal as environmentally friendly

Resources for Practitioners



GenerationRx
 Safe medication practices for life.

Materials designed for faculty, staff or peer educators to use in courses, student orientation, residence halls, Greek life, recreational sports, student organizations, or any other venue where college students live and learn

Supply and Demand: Addressing the Root of the Problem



Reducing the **SUPPLY** of stimulant medications is only one part of puzzle

Reducing the **DEMAND** for prescription is more complicated

REDUCING MISUSE REQUIRES COLLABORATION WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- **Reducing the supply of stimulant medication**
Key stakeholders: health services, physicians, students, policy makers
- **Addressing the underlying reasons for decreased academic performance**
Key stakeholders: academic advisor, counselor, AOD specialist
- **Identifying and assist students who are in need of academic support**
Key stakeholder: faculty, academic advisor, athletic trainers, Greek advisors
- **Target at-risk students with prevention messages early in their college career**
Key stakeholder: AOD specialist, health promotion office

Steps to Shifting the Culture

1

Problem Assessment:

determine the prevalence of prescription drug misuse and diversion

3

Student Education and Training Programs

- Correct myths and misperceptions
- Inform students about the institution's policies
- Provide info on how to get help

5

Train The Front Line Health Service Providers

to provide education on misuse and diversion

2

Ensure Clear Policies

on substance use and diligent enforcement

*Policy example:
Duke University includes "the unauthorized use of prescription medication to enhance academic performance" as a category of cheating.*

4

Students

- Provide time management and academic skills training
- Skills for how to refuse sharing medication

6

Engage Key Stakeholders

in shifting the culture

- faculty, staff, academic advisors, residence hall advisors, athletic trainers

STEPS TO SHIFTING THE CULTURE

Shifting the Campus Wellness Culture

The best way to combat the misuse of Prescription stimulants is not just about educating students about the negative effects of misuse, but **ENCOURAGING THEM TO INTEGRATE HEALTHIER WORK HABITS**, in hopes of diminishing stress and their urge to ever resort to a pill.

- DR. BILL RITCHEY
Executive Director of Health and Counseling at Christopher Newport University

