



# BE THEIR BEACON!

**PCSAC Quarterly Newsletter for Adults Raising Youth**

**Volume 7 January 2018 - March 2018**

## DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly 6% of Pinal County youth have abused alcohol and prescription drugs together in the past 30 days.

(2016 Arizona Youth Survey)

## IN THIS ISSUE

Talk to your child about the dangers of prescription drugs and alcohol.

## PCSAC POINTERS

Another way to prevent medication abuse is to dispose of your unused and expired medicines. To find the nearest drop box location, visit <http://azdhs.gov/gis/dump-the-drugs-az/>



A Safer Community for Everyone

**Pinal County Substance Abuse Council**

To find a local coalition near you, call (520) 836-5022.

## ALCOHOL AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS DON'T MIX!



Substance use, whether it's alcohol or other drugs, is especially dangerous to young people while their brains are still growing and developing. In fact, the frontal lobe of the brain doesn't reach full maturity until age 25-30, on average. When you consider that the frontal lobe is responsible for important functions like self-control, organization, and goal setting; it becomes even more important to prevent youth substance use.

It is even more dangerous to use alcohol and prescription medications together. Some possible reactions to mixing medications and alcohol are slowed or difficulty breathing, rapid heartbeat, liver damage, and increased risk of overdose.<sup>1</sup> Alcohol can also have harmful interactions with over-the-counter medications. To learn more, visit: [https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/medicine/harmful\\_interactions.pdf](https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/medicine/harmful_interactions.pdf)

When youth are present, whether in your own home or in a relative or caregiver's home, it is safest to keep alcohol and medications locked up in a cabinet or drawer. Combination locks for liquor, wine, and prescription bottles can also prevent misuse and are sold online.

<sup>1</sup>[https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/medicine/harmful\\_interactions.pdf](https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/medicine/harmful_interactions.pdf)

**Youth whose parents talk to them regularly about the dangers of drugs and alcohol are 50% less likely to use drugs, yet less than half of Pinal County youth report having these conversations with their parents.**<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, *Parents: What You Say — and What You Do — Matters to Your Kids.* (March 2011)

<sup>3</sup>Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, *2016 Arizona Youth Survey.*