



Students Will Do Anything To Get An “A”

(NAPSA)—A recent survey revealed just how stressed today’s college students are, and that despite overwhelming disapproval of the misuse, abuse and diversion of ADHD prescription stimulant medications, some students still believe that students who misuse are just doing what they have to do to keep up with the pressures of college.

Students Are Conflicted

A spring 2014 online survey of over 2,000 U.S. college students¹, conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of the Coalition to Prevent ADHD Medication Misuse (CPAMM), found that college students consider taking ADHD prescription stimulant medications that were not prescribed to them to be unethical (75 percent), a form of cheating (when used for schoolwork) (59 percent), extremely or very harmful (73 percent) and a “big deal” (80 percent), with 65 percent likening the misuse of ADHD prescription stimulants to do schoolwork to athletes who use performance-enhancing drugs.

On the other hand, 42 percent of students incorrectly believe misusing ADHD prescription stimulants is no more harmful than an energy drink or a strong cup of coffee, and nearly half (48 percent) believe that students who misuse are just doing what they have to do to keep up with the pressures of college. Overall, 64 percent of students declare that they would “do anything to get an A”, and 29 percent admit they will do whatever it takes to succeed academically, even if it requires breaking the rules.

Another perception of note is that 75 percent of students believe at least some of their peers have used ADHD prescription stimulants not prescribed to them. Reported rates of actual nonmedical use vary, but a 2013 survey at one large public university indicated that 9.3 percent of college students reported nonmedical use of prescription stimulant medication in the past year.²

Who’s At Risk?

Two groups that stand out based on the survey are members of Greek organizations (fraternities and sororities) and athletes (members of varsity, junior varsity, intramural and/or club teams). These groups are significantly more likely than their respective counterparts to say they are at least somewhat likely to use



While most college students don’t think they should take other people’s prescription medicine, some would to get good grades.

ADHD prescription stimulants in a way that is different from a doctor’s instructions (fraternity and sorority members, 40 percent; non-members, 23 percent; athletes, 36 percent; non-athletes, 21 percent). These groups are also more likely to believe that using ADHD prescription stimulants without a prescription can help students get better grades even if they don’t have ADHD: 52 percent of fraternity and sorority members (versus 42 percent of non-members) and 50 percent of athletes (versus 41 percent of non-athletes).

Where Do College Students Believe Their Peers Are Getting ADHD Prescription Stimulants?

Nearly half (48 percent) of college students think an avenue to obtain prescription stimulants is pretending to have ADHD and getting a prescription from a health care professional. In addition, 87 percent of students believe friends who have a prescription are the primary source of prescription ADHD stimulants for those who are misusing.

Students’ Perception Of University Policies

Despite a belief by two in five students (40 percent) that misuse is a problem at their school, nearly three in five students (57 percent) believe that the administration and the professors at their school are unaware of the misuse of ADHD prescription stimulants on campus. In addition, 58 percent of college students feel that their school does not make it clear that it does not approve of ADHD prescription stimulant medication misuse.

Taking Action

Members of CPAMM include The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD), The Jed Foundation, NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in

Higher Education, The BACCHUS Initiatives of NASPA, and Shire, the sole funder of CPAMM. CPAMM has also enlisted student advisors to help inform the Coalition’s strategies and messaging.

CPAMM strives to be a trusted source of information on the issue of ADHD prescription stimulant medication misuse, abuse and diversion—with a primary focus on college students. Throughout 2015, CPAMM plans to:

- Survey medical professionals to identify primary-care based strategies to help reduce ADHD prescription stimulant misuse;
- Conduct focus groups among college students and administrators to try to gain a better understanding of how the college environment affects the issue and what kind of programmatic efforts might be most effective;
- Evaluate potential partnerships with other organizations, associations and programs that reach college students;
- Develop peer-to-peer interventions for use by college students to help prevent the nonmedical use of ADHD prescription stimulant medications; and
- Convene experts, influencers and stakeholders at a two-day Summit to identify ways to help prevent ADHD prescription stimulant misuse on college campuses.

Learn More

For more information regarding CPAMM or the “College Students and the Misuse, Abuse and Diversion of ADHD Prescription Stimulant Medications” survey, visit CPAMM.org, and join the conversation online using #CPAMMorg.

About the Survey Method

Harris Poll conducted the survey on behalf of the Coalition to Prevent ADHD Medication Misuse (CPAMM). The survey was administered online within the United States between May 15 and June 11, 2014, among 2,056 U.S. college students (full-time, 91 percent, and part-time, 9 percent), defined as adults aged 18 to 24 enrolled and seeking a degree at a 4-year college or university and attending at least some in-person classes. Among that group, 164 were diagnosed with ADHD. Data are weighted where necessary by age within gender, race/ethnicity, region, and propensity to be online in order to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population.

¹ College students were defined as those age 18–24 seeking a degree at a 4-year college or university and attending at least some in-person classes.

² Source: McCabe, S.E., West, B.T., Teter, C.J. & Boyd, C.J., Trends in Medical Use, Diversion, and Nonmedical Use of Prescription Medications among College Students from 2003 to 2013: Connecting the Dots, *Addictive Behaviors* (2014), doi: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2014.03.008