

# Combating the Opioid Crisis:

## A Guide for Students

An opioid is a type of medicine that reduces physical pain. These powerful drugs are meant to be given to a patient by a doctor for a short period of time. Opioids usually come in pill form.

Like other drugs, opioids can have bad side effects, even when a person takes them as their doctor tells them to do. Opioids are dangerous because they are so strong that a person can quickly become addicted. This means that the person has a hard time living without the drug and struggles with painful symptoms and other problems.

Today in America, we are dealing with an “opioid crisis.” Opioids are killing our loved ones and people in our communities. This is happening for many reasons, and many people are working to stop the pain caused by opioids. You can help, too.

### What you can do:

- If someone offers you pills that weren't ordered by your doctor, say no. Tell that person to dispose of them so that someone else won't take them.
- Never offer your own medicine to someone else. Be sure to store medicine safely, out of reach of others.
- If you find painkillers or other pills at home, leave them alone. Better yet, ask the person whose name is on the label to lock them up or dispose of them if they are expired or no longer needed.
- Warn your friends about the dangers of abusing drugs including opioids and other painkillers. Tell them the fact that 4 out of 5 heroin addicts started by abusing painkillers.
- In Arkansas, we have a “Good Samaritan” law. You, or the person using opioids, will not be arrested or charged for breaking the law if you try to get help for someone who is experiencing an opiate-related overdose. If you or someone you know needs medical help, call 911.