



SAFE HOMES
COALITION

**GREATER BOSTON/MASSACHUSETTS
KEEP KIDS SAFE PROGRAM**

Safeguarding Your Prescriptions Before Opening Your Home to Others



“Across the Commonwealth, we’ve seen instances of opioid and prescription drug abuse rise to epidemic levels, requiring assistance from a broad range of ideas and stakeholders rather than one-size-fits-all solutions. The attention and work the medical community, law enforcement, public health officials and officeholders are bringing to the table is an essential step towards addressing this issue, and we must consider creative and practical solutions like that proposed by the Safe Homes Coalition to impact change.”

Governor Charlie Baker

“Any opportunity we have to intervene and stop medications from getting into the hands of the wrong people is a welcome solution, and I love the mission of the Safe Homes Coalition.”

Joanne Peterson, Founder, Learn to Cope

“Health plans, and the broader health care community, play an important role in ensuring that patients who need medication maintain access. However, due to the potential some of these medications have to be misused or abused, it is also our responsibility to support efforts such as the Safe Homes Coalition. We recognize that Safe Homes uses this unique channel as a means of educating patients about their role in securing medications and reducing inappropriate access. CeltiCare Health is proud to join with so many others in the health care community to support the Safe Homes Coalition’s Keep Kids Safe educational program.”

Jay Gonzalez, President and CEO, Celticare Health Plan of Massachusetts

“The issue of prescription drug abuse is bigger than me or you, and it’s really reaching epidemic levels across the nation. We need more practitioners involved—ranging from law enforcement, the medical community, local activists, social service agencies—and the more people with eyes on this issue, the greater our likelihood for success. The Safe Homes Coalition provides one solution, very simple in nature that is not hard to do, and something that people can easily understand.”

Steve W. Tompkins, M.P.A., Sheriff Suffolk County

About

The Safe Homes Coalition (SHC) is a 501(c)(3) organization that helps raise awareness about the proper use, storage and disposal of prescription medication to create safer homes and communities.

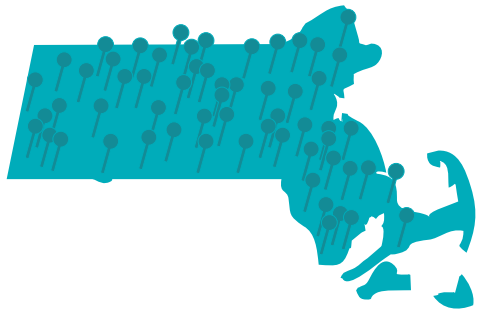
The SHC’s Keep Kids Safe Program provides re-sealable plastic bags so people can secure prescription medications while their home is open to potential buyers. The objective is to utilize the open house or other home showing “events” to demonstrate the importance of safe storage and disposal of medications at any time a person other the patient to whom the medications are prescribed has access to your home.

The Problem

Prescription drug abuse is a critical and complex public health issue that impacts more than 6 million Americans. The costs to the health care system and to law enforcement are considerable, not to mention the loss of life and destruction of families. In order to tackle this national problem, we all need to take a stand and get involved.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), prescription medication misuse and abuse causes more accidental deaths than heroin and cocaine combined. Massachusetts has one of the highest rates of narcotic abuse, and the majority of drug overdoses in Massachusetts are from prescription drugs. Access is part of the problem. The vast majority of misused drugs—more than 70 percent—are reportedly obtained from another person’s medicine cabinet, not from a dealer on the street.

Law enforcement, prevention providers, and media all report that open houses are among the opportunities for those seeking to inappropriately obtain prescription medications for misuse or abuse. This initiative provides specific and simple solutions for industry and consumers to safely store prescription medications and, where appropriate, drop them off at the nearest disposal location approved by law enforcement.



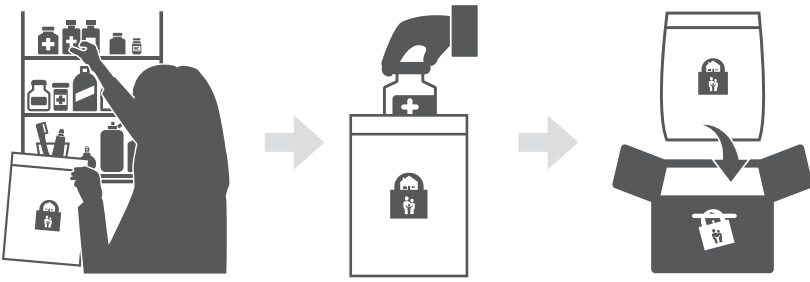
In Massachusetts, **18,000 adolescent males and 20,000 adolescent females** reported the non-medical use of pain relievers in the last year.

What You Can Do

Any time a person other than the patient is in a home where prescription medications are present, those medications should be properly secured.

During a short term event, such as an open house, those medications could be placed in a re-sealable plastic bag such as the one provided by the Safe Homes Coalition, and stored in the trunk of a car (be careful of temperature however as some medications may be affected by extremes). There are also longer-term solutions to keeping medications secured, such as keeping them in a locking medicine cabinet or desk drawer.

When a medication has expired, is unwanted, or is simply unused, it is important for that medication to be disposed of properly. The safest and most effective way of disposing these medications is by placing them into a re-sealable plastic bag such as the one provided by the Safe Homes Coalition, and bringing them to a secure drop-box location typically found at your town/community police station.



“The Safe Homes Coalition is also creating an entry point to expand our discussion about broader solutions.”

Michael W. Morrissey, Norfolk District Attorney

“We’ve seen instances of prescription drug abuse grow at an alarming rate, and we attribute that—in part—to access to these medications. We need creative programs like the Safe Homes Coalition to explore ways to cut off these access points.”

John McGahan, President & CEO, Gavin Foundation

For a list of drop box locations in the Commonwealth, please go to: makeitasafehome.org/boston. Or scan this QR code.



Statistics



The number of drug overdose deaths in Massachusetts—a majority of which are from prescription drugs—increased by **47 percent** from 1999 to 2013.



Sixty-two percent of teens chose prescription drugs because they are easy to get from their parents’ medicine cabinets.



One-third of teens believe it is okay to use prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them to deal with injury, illness or physical pain.



43 percent of teens indicate prescription drugs are easier to get than illegal drugs.



4 in 10 teens who used or misused prescription drugs obtained the medications from their parents’ medicine cabinet.



Almost 1 in 3 kids who report misuse or abuse of a prescription drug did so before the age of 14.



SAFE HOMES COALITION

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

FOUNDING PARTNER



EDUCATION PARTNER



COMMUNITY PARTNER



LEADERSHIP PARTNERS



SUPPORTING PARTNERS

