

# Drug Intervention Institute's Medication Safety Curriculum for Youth on National PBS LearningMedia Platform

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- A medication safety curriculum and program previously offered only to West Virginia schools, is now available to schools and communities nationwide through PBS LearningMedia, an online educational platform for educators, parents, and youth community leaders.



Don't Keep Rx Around □ is a medication safety program developed by the Drug Intervention Institute, focusing on safe medication use, storage, and disposal. Through a partnership with West Virginia Public Broadcasting the curriculum is now available on PBS LearningMedia at no cost to schools, parents, and communities throughout the United States via an online streaming. The available curriculum includes a short cartoon, featuring "Rex the Rx" (the Institute's medication safety ambassador), support materials for working with students including downloadable worksheets and activities, and a certificate of completion. Rex educates children on medication safety via a fun, engaging cartoon that is age-appropriate and simplifies the message at a level children can understand while emphasizing the program's tagline, "See, Stop, Say." This messaging reminds young children when using medication, they should consult their "trusted adult."

The program was developed using State of West Virginia early learning standards, evidence-based prevention practices, and a comprehensive review of public health theory and effective harm reduction campaign measures. The curriculum also meets education standards required by PBS.

"The Don't Keep Rx Around □ medication safety curriculum and program was developed in direct response to two young children overdoses in our community by taking their grandparents opioid medication," said Rex creator, Joe Murphy. "The presence of this curriculum on a national platform will reach not only children in our home state of West Virginia but the nation."

According to an article published in 2018 by the Journal of Pharmaceutical Health Services Research, there is an urgent need to educate children about medication safety since they receive little medication education from providers. In addition, self-medication including medication misuse begins around the age of 11 years old. And, by age 16, almost all children have reported self-medicating with over-the-counter (OTC) medications.

“We know that opioids are the highest proportion of emergency department visits involving prescription drugs and children,” explained Dr. Susan Bissett, Institute president. “In addition, 9 of 10 unintentional childhood poisonings occur at home with poison control centers throughout the United States receiving 32 calls a day for children exposed to opioids.”

The West Virginia Public Broadcasting education department and DII encourage not only educators and school administrators to utilize this free program, but youth groups, church groups, scouting organizations, prevention coalitions, and any group working with children to implement this program to educate children and families about medication safety. It’s never too early to talk to children about safe medication use and only using medication with the assistance of a trusted adult.

For more information about the West Virginia Drug Intervention Institute, contact President Susan Bissett at: [susan@wvdii.org](mailto:susan@wvdii.org) or Vice President Heather McDaniel at: [heather@wvdii.org](mailto:heather@wvdii.org).

For more information about West Virginia Public Broadcasting’s education programs, contact [education@wvpublic.org](mailto:education@wvpublic.org).

To access the program visit: <https://wv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/dont-keep-rex-around-video/medication-safety-program/>

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#### About the West Virginia Drug Intervention Institute

Located in Charleston, WV, the mission of the Drug Intervention Institute is to reduce opioid and drug-related deaths in Appalachia and the nation by (a) preventing substance use through education (b) reducing overdose through training and distribution related to naloxone and other opioid reversal agents, and (c) supporting harm reduction and other drug-response efforts.

#### About West Virginia Public Broadcasting

West Virginia Public Broadcasting is dedicated to Telling West Virginia’s Story through its statewide radio and television network and online platforms. WVPB’s mission is to educate, inform and inspire the people of West Virginia. WVPB is the Mountain State’s only source for national NPR and PBS programming and is the home of Mountain Stage.

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