

Did You Know . . .

By Chief Mathew Workman
Vernonia Police Department



If you read the crime blotter this week you will get the impression that we have some issues with theft and drugs here in our commu-

nity. Though our community is a safe place, I would agree that we are starting to see a slight rise in random thefts, problems with scams/personal information security, and some drug use issues by our teen age groups. The predominant drug use issues we hear about and deal with continue to be marijuana and prescription drug use. Prescription drug use has grown at an alarming rate as there seems to be a steady

supply of prescription meds making their way into the hands of our teens and other citizens as well.

A recent article from the Office of National Drug Control Policy discussed how Teen Marijuana Use Worsens Depression. Their analysis found that recent data shows that teens were "self-medicating" themselves for depression symptoms with marijuana and other drugs. The study found

that teens reported using marijuana and other drugs to "feel good", "feel better", "relieve stress", and to "cope". The study also found that self-medicating would actually worsen depression, lead to more serious mental health issues like schizophrenia, anxiety, and even suicide. The study also found that three-times as many girls reported being depressed as boys.

Often one of the keys to

helping a teen with depression or other issues is parental (guardian) involvement/support. Don't dismiss changes in your teen's behavior as a "phase," as there could be more serious issues that need your attention. Make an effort to understand the pressures and influences on young people. Teens who report having conversations with their parents about alcohol and drug

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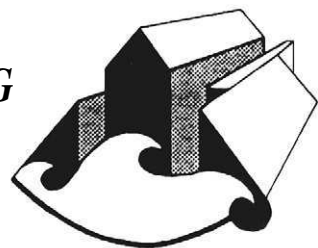
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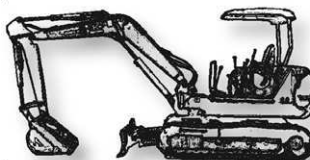


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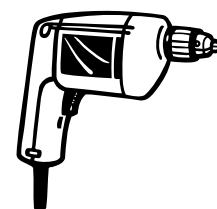
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