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Are You Aware ?

Of the 2.4 million juvenile arrests in 2000, 1.9 million involved substance abuse but only 68,600 or 3.6% of those arrested received any treatment.
Source: The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, Juvenile Justice and the Children Left Behind, 2004.

Alcohol and drug abuse is the No. 1 public health problem in the US. \$1 of every \$12 that is spent on personal health care involved the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of those suffering from addictive diseases.
Source: Myths About Addiction

Teens that have 5 or more dinners a week with their family are less likely to try marijuana, smoke cigarettes, or drink alcohol.
Source: The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, The Importance of Family Dinners I and II, 2003, 2005

For every \$1 invested in addiction treatment, society saves \$7.
Source: UCLA

The 12-17 population in the US has one of the fastest growing rates of prescription drug abuse, such as OxyContin, Ritalin, and Valium.
Source: National Institutes of Health

The no. of people seeking treatment for methamphetamine addiction quadrupled between 1993 & 2003 attesting to the addictive nature of meth.
Source: SAMHSA

Nearly one in 10 American teenagers, or 2.2 million experienced major depression in 2004.
Source: SAMHSA

Depressed youths are more likely to smoke, drink alcohol, and/or abuse drugs.
Source: SAMHSA

Half of the students in the US have tried an illegal drug before they graduated from high school.
Source: Monitoring the Future

Students who use marijuana are more likely to drop out of school, have lower academic aspirations, and experience job instability in young adulthood.
Source: Hall, W., Room B. & Bondy, WHO Project of Health Implications of Cannabis Use: A Comparative Appraisal of the Health and Psychological Consequences of Alcohol, Cannabis, Nicotine, and Opiate Use, August 28, 1995 (Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization, 1998.

86% of all high school seniors think it would be 'very easy' or 'fairly easy' for them to get marijuana.
Source: Monitoring the Future

Between 1992 and 2002, the number of adolescent treatment admissions increased 65%, while all admissions, for the same time period, only increased 23%.
Source: The DASIS Report, October 15, 2005, p. 1.

Between 1992 and 2002, adolescent admissions with marijuana as the primary substance increased from 23 to 64 percent.
Source: The DASIS Report, October 15, 2005, p. 1.

Over half of all admissions (56%) to substance abuse treatment are due to use of multiple substances (polydrug abuse).
Source: The DASIS Report, October 15, 2005, p. 1.

Among polydrug admissions, alcohol was the most commonly reported substance (76%). Marijuana was the 2nd most commonly reported substance (55%), followed by cocaine (48%), opiates (27%) & other drugs (26%).
Source: The DASIS Report, March 35, 2005, p. 1.

Youths admitted for substance abuse treatment are more likely than older admissions to report multiple drugs use, 65% of admissions for those under 20 years of age.
Source: The DASIS Report, March 25, 2005, p. 1,2.

Every day, approximately, 4,700 American children under the age of 18 try marijuana for the first time.
Source: Parents. The Anti-Drug.

Drug Addiction Information

Many people view drug abuse and addiction as strictly a social problem. Parents, teens, older adults, and other members of the community tend to characterize people who take drugs as morally weak or as having criminal tendencies. They believe that drug abusers and addicts should be able to stop taking drugs if they are willing to change their behavior.

These myths have not only stereotyped those with drug-related problems, but also their families, their communities, and the health care professionals who work with them. Drug abuse and addiction comprise a public health problem that affects many people and has wide-ranging social consequences. It is our goal to help the public replace its myths and long-held mistaken beliefs about drug abuse and addiction with scientific evidence that addiction is a chronic, relapsing, and treatable disease.

Addiction does begin with drug abuse when an individual makes a conscious choice to use drugs, but addiction is not just "a lot of drug use." Recent scientific research provides overwhelming evidence that not only does drug addiction interfere with normal brain functioning creating powerful feelings of pleasure, but they also have long-term effects on brain metabolism and activity. At some point, changes occur in the brain that can turn drug abuse into addiction, a chronic, relapsing illness. Those people with a drug addiction suffer from a compulsive drug craving and usage and cannot quit by themselves.

Treatment for drug addiction is necessary to end this compulsive behavior.

A variety of approaches are used in treatment programs to help patients deal with these cravings and possibly avoid drug relapse. NIDA research shows that addiction is clearly treatable. Through treatment that is tailored to individual needs, patients can learn to control their condition and live relatively normal lives.

Treatment can have a profound effect not only on drug abusers, but on society as a whole by significantly improving social and psychological functioning, decreasing related criminality and violence, and reducing the spread of AIDS. It can also dramatically reduce the costs to society of drug abuse.

Understanding drug addiction also helps in understanding how to prevent use in the first place. Results from NIDA-funded prevention research have shown that comprehensive prevention programs that involve the family, schools, communities, and the media are effective in reducing drug abuse. It is necessary to keep sending the message that it is better to not start at all than to enter rehabilitation if addiction occurs.

**Reprinted from The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)*

DRUG OVERVIEW

The Drug Problem Today

Today's young people are faced with more choices than their parents had just 20 or 30 years ago.

Cell phones, chat rooms, instant messaging, cable TV, email, and ipods- the world is changing at a rate that grows every day. We have instant and unfiltered access to information, products, media, and people. While this age of technology can be very exciting, it can also be quite overwhelming and brings new challenges to the family structure. Our kids now have tools that enrich their lives in some ways, but also raise the level of responsibility that they must assume at a young age. This new independence and accessibility makes our kids even more vulnerable to the allure of drugs than ever before.

Every family and every child today is exposed to an ever growing presence of drugs. It is not just the "troubled" teens and slackers that are using drugs. Honor students, athletes and ordinary kids are unable to avoid drugs at school, parties, and friends' homes. Temptation, curiosity and desensitization by the media lead otherwise good kids to make bad choices. Stable families and good schools provide only some protection. In interviews with students who use drugs with their parents, it is clear that there is no absolute barrier to drug use. Children of physicians, lawyers, and law enforcement officers have all become casualties of the drug problem.

By the time an adolescent finishes high school, he/she runs a risk of becoming one of the "casualties" of today's epidemic of drug use. According to the most recent studies conducted in our nations school systems, **54% of all high school students will have used an illegal drug by the time they become seniors.** These students are doing far more than "just" smoking marijuana - 82% have used cocaine and roughly 2% have tried heroine. They have far more to choose from than their parents did. Today, drugs like Ecstasy, Ketamine, GHB, and other substances are just as available as marijuana was only a few years ago. These drugs can have short and long term effects that can interfere with intellectual, emotional, and physical development, as well as produce more immediate dangers.

Many parents recall their own adolescence and wonder whether a little marijuana use or even experimentation with "harder" drugs is such a bad thing. *After all, they survived, so how bad could it be?* This view, more common than many would admit, is mistaken on several points. Drugs today, including marijuana, are more potent that they were even 15 years ago. In addition, newer synthetic drugs, such as

Ecstasy and GHB, are used along with the more traditional intoxicants of alcohol and marijuana. These drugs are dangerous; they not only present a risk for habitual use and dependence, but also can produce abrupt and dramatic effects, including overdose and death.

In addition to the dangers the drugs themselves pose, there is the threat from the environment where adolescents frequently acquire them. "Club drugs" are used at "raves" or parties where supervision is lacking, and the "underground" nature of the event fosters secrecy, unsafe sex, and impaired judgment. This environment leaves teens vulnerable to others to prey on them - to both introduce them to drugs and to add them to drinks without their knowledge, dubbed by the media as the "date rape" drug phenomenon.

We are living in a society where 1 out of every 2 teens is trying drugs, and 2 out of 10 are using them on a regular basis. Parents and guardians risk the chance of their teenager getting behind the wheel of a car, loaded or high, and *the parents are responsible for the damage their children do*. The family car, personal property, private property, other peoples' lives are at risk. Parents are ultimately held accountable for the actions of their kids.

Not acknowledging that our kids are facing these situations is unrealistic. Parents who fear that the mere mention of drugs will put ideas into their kid's heads are naïve. Kids know about drugs, see their friends taking drugs and are being offered drugs. Parents cannot assume that their attentive and thoughtful parenting will make their kids immune to the allure of drugs, and pressure from peers. Ignoring the problem will not make it go away. Proactive parents, who take their responsibility seriously, can make a difference in their kid's lives.

SIGNS OF DRUG USE

Adolescence is a period where young people undergo physical and behavioral changes that can be profound and alarming - to them as well as to their parents. Many of the following symptoms may indicate the presence of diseases or factors other than drug use and should be investigated by a trusted and competent physician.

The following should be causes for concern:

- Abrupt changes in work or school attendance, quality of schoolwork or grades and/or discipline problems.
- Unusual outbursts or displays of temper.
- A shirking of responsibility.
- Unexplained changes in overall attitude, including depression, withdrawal or apathy.
- Deterioration or sudden change of physical appearance or grooming habits.
- Sudden secretiveness or inappropriate concerns for privacy; poorly concealed attempts to avoid attention and suspicion, such as frequent trips to the restroom or basement may be an attempt to conceal drug use.
- Wearing sunglasses, or frequent use of eye drops, to conceal the appearance of the eyes.
- Association with known drug users or "problem" students.
- Unusual borrowing of money from friends, siblings, or parents.
- Stealing - either at home or through shoplifting.
- Possessing unexplained valuables.
- Drug paraphernalia.

But also be aware that kids are more sophisticated these days. They, too, know the above warning signs, and they will go out of their way to maintain good grades and an appearance of sobriety. The only way to know with certainty is by drug testing.

4 Stages of Abuse

Drug abuse involves 4 stages:

The first stage is **experimentation**. A person tries drugs for the first time, usually at a party or on a date.

The second stage is **occasional use**. The drug is available from another person or openly offered at a party.

The third stage involves **regular use**. The person finds he may like drugs and goes and purchases the drugs for himself.

The fourth stage is **habitual use**. The person *needs* drugs. Drug hunger and craving control the user's life, and he will do anything to obtain drugs.

The first, second, and possibly the third stage can be confronted within the family. The family needs to be very proactive in addressing the problem and discouraging any further drug use.

If parents educate, define clear consequences of drug use, and implement home drug testing, they will be using powerful tools in shaping their kids lives, and keeping them on the right path.

The fourth stage of drug abuse needs not only family understanding and recognition, but most likely requires professional help. Once identified through visible clues and signs, and verified by drug testing, parents must intervene and seek professional help immediately.

Intervention gets results. Hunterdon Central High School in New Jersey was faced with a drug problem that had come to the attention of the parents, administration and school board. 80% of the senior class stated that they had used drugs within the past 12 months. A major anti-drug program was initiated that made clear to students that they would be tested for drugs. Drug use declined dramatically, with less than 5 percent of the students testing positive.

John P. Walter, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, commenting on the Pride Survey Finding, said,

"If our schools and parents were to utilize recognized, successful intervention techniques, including drug testing, we would be able to identify these youth and get them the counseling and treatment they need to turn away from drug use."

General Facts about Drugs Today

- The average age for kids to begin experimenting with illegal substances is 13.
- The potency of marijuana THC levels is 15-20 times stronger than marijuana in the 1970s.
- Every year from 1975 to 1999, at least 82% of high school seniors surveyed have said they find marijuana "fairly easy" or "very easy" to obtain. In 2000, 88.5% of high school seniors said it was fairly or very easy to obtain.
- 60 percent of youngsters who use marijuana before age 15 go on to use cocaine.
- Columbia University has found that kids who smoke marijuana are 85 times more likely to use cocaine than their non-marijuana smoking peers.
- On average, kids found by their parents to be using drugs, have been using for two years prior to discovery.
- Most medical insurance policies have a clause that allows them to not pay a medical claim "if there is an illegal substance in the system, or an illegal act is being performed at the time of the loss." Parents can be held legally responsible for those bills.
- Several states are enacting Parental Responsibility Laws in which the parent is held responsible for the behavior of the child.
- Average cost of drug rehabilitation is \$20,000 - \$30,000 a month, with few, if any medical insurers paying anything on such a claim.
- The number of offenders under age 18 admitted to prison for drug offenses increased twelve fold (from 70 to 840) between 1985 to 1997. By 1997, drug offenders made up 11% of admissions among persons under 18 compared to 2% in 1985.
- The US has higher rates of illicit drug use by young people than European nations, as noted by the Monitoring the Future survey: "The MTF study found that in 1999, 41% of tenth grade students in the United States had used marijuana or cannabis at least once in their lifetimes. All the participating European countries had a considerably lower rate of lifetime use, averaging 17%. This proportion varied among European countries from 1% in Romania to a high 35% in France, the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic.

WHO IS VULNERABLE?

Every family and every child today is vulnerable to the allure of drug use. Good kids are not immune to the lure of drug use. Stable families and good schools provide only some protection. In interviews with the parents of students who use drugs and with the students themselves, it is clear that there is no absolute barrier to drug use. The children of physicians, lawyers, and law enforcement officers have become casualties of the drug problem.

Studies demonstrate that there exist several factors that can increase the likelihood of adolescent drug use, but every family is vulnerable. Factors such as siblings who already use drugs or parents who abuse alcohol or other substances can make it more likely that a young person will get involved with drugs. Children with difficult temperaments and conduct disorders may be more likely to have problems, such as drug use. But, again, a good child from a healthy family can fall prey to drug use, too - nobody is immune.

However, there is a solution. The best way to confront drug use in adolescents is to bring the issue home to them. Parents must establish a clear policy about drug use - the same way that they must communicate about sex and other issues that every young person faces. If parents don't communicate, then kids will turn to friends and associates for "facts" that hardly can be called objective.

And parents have another tool - they must institute a policy of regularly testing their children for drugs. This is as important as regular trips to the family doctor to prevent and detect infectious diseases. Many children don't want to use drugs but feel pressured to do so in order to "fit in." Testing gives adolescents another way of saying "NO," because they are being tested.

**TESTING GIVES ADOLESCENTS ANOTHER WAY OF SAY, "NO,"
BECAUSE THEY ARE BEING TESTED.**

WHY SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?

It is difficult to detect drug use from observation alone.

The threat continues throughout adolescence. Parents must keep up the message that drug use is not acceptable in their home or by their children.

1. Student drug use often occurs before and after school, when students are not under regular and constant supervision
2. It is difficult to detect drug use from observation alone.
3. Drug use may be deterred. Maturing nervous systems are more critically impaired by intoxicants than mature ones are; childhood losses in learning are lifelong and profound.
4. Testing gives students a chance to say, "NO," to drugs when peers ask them to use drugs.
5. Testing provides an opportunity for intervention and treatment.

For each child who complains about a supposed lack of privacy, there are thousands of parents who bury their children due to drugs. Ask yourself if you would be willing to give up a little privacy to know your kids are alive and well and drug-free.

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT ALL OF THIS?

Parents have the absolute right to test their children for the presence of illegal drugs. In fact, the **Supreme Court on June 27, 2002**, not only upheld, but also broadened a previous 1995 ruling that schools may, under certain circumstances, test for the presence of drugs. This is in recognition of the widespread nature of drug use among young people and the responsibility that parents and educators have for raising healthy drug-free kids. While it is important to respect your child's individuality, no "right to privacy" can or should prevent you from taking rational steps to ensure your child's safety.

WHAT DO I DO IF MY CHILD ALREADY HAS A PROBLEM WITH DRUGS OR ALCOHOL?

Do not delay in getting started on a treatment Program at once. Ours is a complete approach to educating the family and preventing drug abuse. It is also designed to stop drug abuse. Parental interaction, handled correctly, is key in getting your child's attention and to helping them both recognize their problem and to change it. **You absolutely can make a positive difference in your child's life direction!**

However, if the problem should prove overwhelming and you've already tried home intervention, again, don't hesitate to contact a treatment professional at once.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, a Federal agency charged with improving the quality and availability of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitative services, maintains a "treatment locator" for these situations. You can find them on the Internet at:

<http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov/facilitylocator.doc.htm> or you can call SAMHSA at 1-800-729-6686 for listings of centers and professional organizations in your area.

You will also find all the links under the "Get Support & Advice" in our Now You CAN section.

WHY DO YOUNG PEOPLE USE DRUGS ANYWAY?

The fact is most people get handed their first drugs from either friends or relatives.

Adolescence is a difficult and challenging period of life. Stresses associated with growing up and becoming an adult can seem overwhelming. Adolescence is also a time when "fitting in" becomes very important and young people can mistakenly believe that "everyone" is trying marijuana or other drugs. Everyone isn't doing it, but perceptions matter, and in the case of drug use, perceptions can result in very dangerous behaviors.

The fact is most people get handed their first drugs from either friends or relatives. The idea that children are corrupted by "sinister looking men who hang around schoolyards" is a popular myth. More often than not, it is a peer or a family member, who wants to "share" the experience.

Studies over the past two decades have tried to determine the origins and pathways of drug abuse - how the problem starts and how it progresses. Several factors have been identified that differentiate those who use drugs from those who do not. Factors associated with greater potential for drug use are called "risk" factors, and those associated with reduced potential for such use are called "protective" factors.

Some of the risk factors are:

COMMUNITY RISK FACTORS

- Economic and social deprivation
- Low neighborhood attachment and community disorganization
- Community laws and norms favorable toward drug use
- Availability of drugs

FAMILY RISK FACTORS

- Family history of alcoholism
- Family management problems
 1. Adapting to divorce, remarriage, or a marked worsening of family relations
 2. Distant, uninvolved and inconsistent parenting
 3. Negative parent/child communication
 4. Poor parental monitoring
 5. Unclear family rules, expectations, and rewards
- Parental drug use and positive attitudes toward use

SCHOOL RISK FACTORS

- Low commitment to school
- Academic failure
- Early antisocial behavior

INDIVIDUAL/PEER RISK FACTORS

- Alienation or rebelliousness
- Antisocial behavior in early adolescence
- Friends who use drugs
- Favorable attitudes toward drug use
- Early first use of drugs

Protective factors include:

FAMILY PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Parental Supervision
- Child's Attachment to Parent
- Parent's Attachment to Child
- Parent's Involvement in Child's Activities

EDUCATIONAL PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Reading Percentile
- Mathematics Percentile
- Commitment to School
- Attachment to Teachers
- Aspirations to Go to College
- Expectations to Go to College
- Parent's Expectation for Child to Go to College
- Parent's Values About College

PEER PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Peers Have Conventional Values
- Parent's Positive Evaluation of Peers

OTHER PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Child Has Good Self Esteem
- Child's Involvement in Religious Activities
- Child's Involvement in Pro-social Activities
- Child is Close to an Adult Outside the Family

The most important finding in several research studies is that the accumulation of protective factors in school, family, and peer environments has a positive effect on keeping a child drug-free over the longer term.

Drug abuse has a great economic impact on society - an estimated \$67 billion per year. This figure includes costs related to crime, medical care, drug abuse treatment, social welfare programs, and time lost from work. Treatment of drug abuse can reduce those costs. Studies have shown that from \$4 to \$7 are saved for every dollar spent on treatment.

WHAT TO SAY IF YOUR CHILD SAYS:

"MARIJUANA IS HARMLESS"

Smoking marijuana is at least as bad as smoking cigarettes, and you already know how dangerous tobacco is to your health.

"IT'S NOT ADDICTIVE"

More kids enter drug treatment for marijuana than for all other illicit drugs combined.

"IT CAN'T CAUSE ANY REAL PROBLEMS IN THE LONG TERM"

If you're smoking marijuana, you could do things that jeopardize your future, like having sex or getting in trouble with the law.

"MARIJUANA MAKES YOU MELLOW"

Not always. Marijuana use is associated with violent behavior. Kids who use marijuana weekly are four times more likely to engage in violent behavior than those who don't.

"MARIJUANA'S NOT AS POPULAR AS NEW DRUGS LIKE ECSTASY"

More kids use marijuana than cocaine, heroin, ecstasy and all other illicit drugs combined. Sixty percent of kids who use illicit drugs use marijuana only.

"IF I SMOKE MARIJUANA, I'M NOT HURTING ANYONE ELSE"

Marijuana trafficking is a big, often violent business, t home and abroad. And if you get caught, it will really hurt your parents.

The following additional reports and information are available.

Send Request via email to info@ModernDrugTesting.com

You can also find additional information and updated articles and newspaper reports at the www.ModernDrugTesting.com website.

THE DRUG DEPENDENCY TEST

How do you know if you or your loved one is drug dependent?

FAMILY SUPPORT BOOKLET

This 21-page report covers a wide range of topics and issues every parent needs to know to help their child remain drug free.

FAQs for PARENTS

This 8-page report contains FAQs about youth and substance abuse that every parent should know.

DRUG EDUCATION

Drugs of Abuse and Their Effects (38 pages)

IMPORTANT: This booklet is designed to inform parents about Specific drugs, drug groups and other related information, it is not a booklet designed to be shared with your child without supervision, as some wording, (especially sections describing drug usage) may be perceived by a young reader as a "how to" guide to drug use. This may be especially true for a child who is already using drugs and is looking for other drugs with which to experiment.

Information is included on "Gateway Drugs" such as alcohol, tobacco, inhalants, and marijuana. Additional information on "harder" drugs like opiates, narcotics, cocaine, amphetamines, hallucinogens, steroids and other drugs is included, as well.

DISCIPLINE (14 pages)

This booklet is designed to provide an overview of the basic role parents should assume to establish discipline and structure for their child. The important principles included within will give your child the opportunity to grow up drug-free. Topics include:

- Why Children Need Discipline
- Family Guidelines and Policies
- The No-Use Rule
- Tips for Parents
- Proper Supervision

The Modern Drug Testing website also contains valuable information And reports for parents and schools. Please visit the site at www.ModernDrugTesting.com to get a full overview of the information available and to stay current on news reports and articles regarding drug testing.

This report prepared by:



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