
The Substance Abuse in the Youth Populations

Substance abuse among adolescents has been a serious health issue where there has been a crucial public health issue. Most people who struggle with drug addiction even in their later stages of life mainly began substance abuse during their teenage years. Teenagers are vulnerable to substance abuse due to a number of factors, which influence their decision-making and increase the chances of trying out on substance abuse. Risk factors in this case include underlying factors, which seek to facilitate the chances of drug abuse among individuals. Being in a position to understand the risk factors in adolescent substance helps in improving the overall understanding on why there is a very high number of adolescent who abuse drugs.

Parenting style is a key risk factor, which influences the chances of an adolescent in substance abuse. Parents have a greater role to play where they are expected to raise their children with positive values that help them to grow and become well-cultured individuals. However, there exists various parental styles that parents opt for and each of the parental style that is adopted has its own impact on children. A child who is raised in an abuse family is likely to opt for substance abuse in his adolescent in trying to forget the difficult times at home. It is very difficult to have a positive interaction between members of an abusive family since there is no clear understanding under which it would be possible to guide children to adopt positive behavior. A child that is raised in a dysfunctional family is likely to try substance abuse compared to a child who is raised in a family that is filled with love and care where an interactive parenting approach is practiced (Gaither et.al., 2016).

Peer influence is an important risk factor in adolescentsubstance abuse. The mind of an adolescent is very much young and thus it can be easily influenced by the decisions that are made by others. The type of friends that an adolescent interacts with has a huge influence on their own behaviors. If an adolescent interacts with friends who are substance abusers, there is a high chance that they will start substance abuse since they are more inclined to live in a similar lifestyle to their friends. This is the most common risk factors that has contributed to a significant rate of drug abuse among the adolescent. Peer influence is more severe in schools among friends who interact together and influence the decisions that are made by each other. Peer pressure has been a critical aspect in influencing the behavior and the lifestyle of adolescent within different cultures and the level of peer influence varies depending on the underlying behavioral traits that are instilled in an individual from a parental perspective. Female adolescent are more likely to fall susceptible to peer influence due to their weaker mental capacity to deal with peer rejection (Mojtabai et.al., 2016).

Drug availability is another factor, which is making it very difficult for adolescent to stay away from substance abuse. Adolescents are by nature led by curiosity and thus the availability of the drugs increases their chances to try out new things, which lead to continued use due to the addictive properties that these drugs have. Drugs have become common and in other cases, prescription drugs such as opioid have been largely abused to their addictive property.

From your own perspective, what have been the trends in adolescent drug use over the past decade?

The current focus on drug use among adolescents is significantly shifting where it is becoming more difficult for parents to detect drug use among their parents. The current shift in drug use among adolescent is significantly focusing on use of readily available drugs in their households. The use of hard drugs among adolescents is currently declining mainly because of the new methods that have been developed by the adolescents. Videos of adolescents ingesting large quantities of nutmeg have surfaced online creating a very difficult situation for parents. Nutmeg spice contains myristicin, which is a naturally occurring compound that is known to cause hallucination and euphoria especially when taken in large quantities (Gaither et.al., 2016).

These current trends are worrying considering the fact that the traditional drugs are declining in use among adolescent although new techniques are being invented which are being adapted. Most of these developments are common among young adolescents who have not developed strong connections where they can be able to access hard drugs and thus opt to alternative ways to get intoxicated. Technology has created a very enabling environment where drugs are sold and delivered via online platforms which means that unlike in the past when an individual would have to physically search for the drugs, the technological advancement are creating a very difficult environment in the fight against drug abuse (Daley, 2016).

Which drugs do you feel are most commonly used?

Prescription drugs have become the common drugs that are being abused by adolescents. Opioid painkillers, stimulants and depressants that have a high level of addiction have been the most preferred drugs in the recent years. Prescription drugs are usually given through the authorization of physician in order to control pain or depression. The continued use of these drugs influences an individual mental focus where the body develops a unique demand for the drugs.

Alcohol, tobacco and marijuana are some of the drugs that are abused by adolescents at high rate to their easy availability as well as conducive risk factors that have created an enabling environment for adolescent to engage in drug abuse. Individuals in their late adolescent tend to have a high rate of substance abuse mainly due to their interactions that expose them highly to these drugs as well as the risk factors such as peer pressure and the availability of the drugs (Gaither et.al., 2016).

Do you think drug use has been increasing or decreasing?

I think that the rate of substance abuse has been on the rise despite implementation of drug abuse prevention strategies. The recent rise has been because of laxity in implementation of control programs after it was believed that the rates had fallen significantly. Drug use among adolescent is a serious issue that means that there is need to develop a better focus and understanding on the underlying risk factors where better prevention strategies can be implemented to control the increasing rates of substance abuse.

What are 3 ways in which have been used to prevent adolescents from using drugs? Explain.

Different strategies have been put in place in trying to control substance abuse among the

adolescents with fewer efforts put in place to implement them. School based programs have been put in place where learners have been highly engaged in trying to sensitize them about the consequences of drug abuse and the need to have a better understanding under which they can be able to adapt positive lifestyle away from drugs. Public campaigns against adolescent drug abuse such as say no drugs have been implemented emphasizing on the role different stakeholders need to play in creating a conducive environment where adolescents can be well engaged and ensure that their behavioral wellbeing is effectively taken care of and integrate positive living away from drugs. The society therefore has plays a major role in establishing better environment where adolescents have lead positive lives that are drug free. Another preventive strategy that has been put in place is the implementation of youth drug programs. The programs have sought to improve the health of youths and ensure that any addicts are rehabilitated and become ambassadors of positive change within the societies (Daley, 2016).

Have these approaches been successful? Explain and provide evidence.

The current statistics of adolescent substance abusers shows that the strategies that have been put in place to prevent adolescent substance abuse have been largely unsuccessful. These strategies have failed due to poor implementation strategies that have been put in place which leave gaps that have been greatly exploited by adolescents in continuing their substance abuse tendencies. The fact that currently drugs are easily available means that there are issues, which have not been addressed, and thus these strategies are destined to fail if there is no intervention to prevent the current upsurge in drug, which has been made possible by the existing gaps in preventive measures that are being implemented(Adams et.al., 2016).

What do you feel are the best methods for treating adolescents with drug problems? Why?

The best methods that can be integrated to treat adolescents with drug abuse problems should focus on both behavioral and cognitive focus. Behavioral-cognitive therapy offers the best solution in this case since it focuses on creating an individual understanding on the negative impact of substance abuse and it creates an understanding on a victim under which it is possible to have a better understanding on the factors that contributed to the existing condition of an individual. Ensuring that an adolescent realizes that substance abuse is wrong is an initial step that can be taken to full recovery (Adams et.al., 2016). Accepting the mistakes done in the past regarding drug use plays a key role in ensuring that an individual is able to recover and embrace positive concepts which focus on improving their overall wellbeing. Ensuring that an individual identifies the risk factors is important since it creates a better understanding to an individual and improve their overall cognitive focus where they will be able to avoid them since they know the pitfalls and how they can easily avoid falling back into addiction. Understanding the issues leading to an individual's drug problem ensure that there is a low chance of relapse (Fortuna et.al., 2017).