

Adolescent Substance Abuse: Faces and Prevention Strategies

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Risk Factors: positive family history of substance problems, family violence or child abuse, lack of adult supervision, childhood aggression, lack of problem-solving skills, sensation/thrill seeking/risk taking tendencies, compulsiveness, depression, learning problems, peer rejection, lack of commitment to school, school failure, & early (middle school) tobacco/alcohol use.

Protective Factors (individual personality style): insight, independence, positive relationships, initiative, creativity, humor, & morality.

Protective Factors (family/social network): celebrations (holidays, weddings, funerals, graduations), traditions (vacations, anniversaries, birthdays, reunions, extended family contact), established routines (dinners, bedtime, leisure), strong ties to a cultural heritage, positive adult role models & mentors, and special hobbies.

Reasons Adolescents Use Substances: relieve boredom, feel good, forget troubles, relax, have fun, satisfy curiosity, take risks, ease pain, feel grown up, show independence, look cool, fit in

Use/Abuse Warning Signs: sudden changes in mood or attitude, sudden drop in school/work attendance or performance, sudden resistance to discipline at home or school, unusual temper flare-ups, increased borrowing of money, stealing, secrecy about actions or possessions, associated with a new group of friends (especially one that uses alcohol/other drugs)

Abuse Screening Test (RAFFT):

(positive if the answer to any question is yes)

Relax (uses substances to relax, feel better, or fit in)

Alone (uses substances when alone)

Friends (closest friends regularly use substances)

Family (close family member has a substance problem)

Trouble (trouble from drinking or other drug use)

Parental Prevention Strategies: know your family substance history & tell your children, evaluate your own tobacco, alcohol & other drug use and its message to your children, make time for each child, set clear expectations for substance use and other risky behaviors, let your kids know they can talk to you about anything, expose your children to various activities to develop their interest (sports, art, music, reading, drama, etc), help them feel part of the school by attending activities with them, teach them to make independent decisions, teach them effective ways to deal with frustration & stress, teach them to be skeptical of sales pitches/advertisements, know your children's friends & talk to them, communicate your values.

Family Prevention Strategies: let family members know you love them, take all family members' concerns seriously, make time for fun, establish or renew family traditions, hold family meetings to problem-solve or plan activities, limit TV, foster strong family bonds, and openly talk about tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.

Adolescent Substance Use/Abuse For 2004 (used in last year)

	8th Graders	10th Graders	12th Graders
Any Alcohol	37%	58%	71%
Been Drunk	15%	35%	52%
Any Marijuana	12%	28%	34%
Any Other Illicit Drugs but Weed	8%	14%	21%
Inhalants	10%	6%	4%
Hydrocodone	3%	5%	9%
Amphetamines	5%	9%	10%
Current Cigarette Smoker	9%	16%	29%