Adolescent Drug Trends, Signs and Symptoms

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Even the very best school is a difficult place for a child.

Michael Thompson, Ph.D., The Pressured Child
Adolescents struggling with anxiety and depression will often self-medicate with drugs and alcohol.
Factors that affect/change drug use trends

- Availability
- Perception of harm
- Cost
Availability

- The more readily available a drug is the higher the risk it will be used
Perception of harm

- Will this drug cause me harm?
- What are the perceived consequences of using a particular drug?
Cost

- Generally the lower the cost of a drug or the production of the drug the higher the trend to use
  - Stolen prescription medication
  - Alcohol
  - Inhalants
  - Marijuana
  - Heroin
Sobering facts

- People who drink before the age 14: up to 8 times more likely to develop alcoholism/ addiction than those who start drinking after age 21.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings.*
Addictive substances physically alter the teen brain’s structure and function faster and more intensely than adults increasing the risk of addiction. Teens can develop addiction in 6 months to 2 years from 1st use.
Adolescent Brain:
The adolescent brain is not yet fully developed until the mid-20’s. The regions critical to decision making, judgment, impulse control, emotion and memory make an adolescent more prone to take harmful risks like substance use. The adolescent brain is especially susceptible to all the negative effects of drugs.
Adolescent Drug Trends
Observations from Illinois Youth Survey

- Alcohol is still number one, by far
- Marijuana has been chasing tobacco and is now number two
- Biggest jumps are seen between the 8th and 10th grades
- Prescription Drug use increasing
- Decrease in 10\textsuperscript{th} and 12\textsuperscript{th} OTC use
Cannabinoids

Common types

- Marijuana
- Hash
- Hash oil
- Salvia

Routes of admission

- Smoked
- Taken orally
- Brewed
- Vaped
Cannabinoids

Effects

- Increased heart rate
- Bloodshot eyes
- Dry mouth
- Increased appetite
- Brain changes causing developmental delays
- Short-term memory loss
- Paranoia
- Aggression
- Mood swings changes
Cannabinoids

How High?

• ‘High’ lasts 2-3 hours, up to 6 hours in some studies
• Impairment can last up to 24 hours
• Effect on driving - delayed reaction
• Pilot study in 1985 showed impaired performance up to 24 hours after use
Vaping

Term used to describe when a substance is heated to the point of releasing vapor but not combusted (*lit on fire*).

- Increasing in popularity as a way to ingest nicotine and cannabis, often in an electronic device that looks like a pen.
- Usually relatively odorless and difficult to distinguish between nicotine and cannabis vape device.
Ingredients frequently found in e-cigarettes include:

- Nicotine
- Propylene Glycol
- Vegetable Glycerin
- Acetone
- Formaldehyde
- Nickel
- Chromium
- Cadmium
- Lead
Vaping/E-cigarettes

- FDA ruled that vape manufacturers must register ingredients by 2019.
- Harvard study (51 vaping devices) 75% contained dangerous flavoring chemicals
- Popcorn lung (Diacetyl)
Chemicals in E-liquids
Popcorn Lung

Popcorn lung is a serious lung disease linked to the chemical diacetyl that is used in some vaping liquids.
Juul (pronounced jewel)

Specific vaping product from Pax Labs similar to an e-cigarette used to ingest nicotine ($50)

- Liquid contains nicotine salts extracted from the tobacco leaf (2x nicotine of previous e-cigs)
- Variety of flavors
  - Cool mint
  - Mango
  - Crème brûlée
Suorin Air

Another common vaping product from Goldreams Technology in China ($20)

• Comes with refillable nicotine cartridge
• Size of a credit card
• Looks like battery
• E-liquids in flavors
Phix

Another common vaping product from ECS Global ($35)

- Slightly stronger battery than Juul
- Strawberry
- Spearmint
- Mango
- Butterscotch
Vape Device
Dabs

Dabs is a highly concentrated butane hash oil (BHO) created in a process where high quality cannabis is blasted with butane and extracted.

• Heated and inhaled
• Contains 70-90% THC compared to 5-15% THC in regular cannabis
• Wax, oil, shatter, crumble
• Sauce, distillate
• Dab pens
Edibles

- Increasingly popular alternative to smoking marijuana
- Produced to infuse marijuana into various ingestible forms
- Problem is that effects are hard to predict and difficult to know dose
- “Couch lock” or “couching”
Other Terms for Cannabis

- Bud
- Dank
- Nug
- Loud
- Fire
- Gas
- “Let’s Match”
Prescription drugs

More teens abuse prescription drugs than any illicit drug except marijuana.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SeqZs4tURI
Where do you get these drugs?

Sources of Pain Relievers for Most Recent Nonmedical Use, ≥ 12 years

- Obtained free from a friend or relative: 56%
- Bought from friend or relative: 18%
- Took from a friend or relative without asking: 9%
- From one doctor: 4.3%
- Other, including bought on internet: 7.2%
- Bought from drug dealer: 5.4%
Prescription opiates

Common types
- Vicodin
- Oxycontin
- Fentanyl
- Percocet
- Tylenol with codeine

Routes of admission
- Injected
- Taken orally
- Snorted
- Smoked
Heroin

Slang names
- Smack
- Horse
- Big H
- Black tar
- Brown sugar
- China white

Routes of admission
- Snorted
- Injected
- Smoked

Class
- Depressant, Opioid
Heroin

Effects

- Constricted pupils and droopy eyelids
- Depression and apathy
- Drowsiness and inability to concentrate
- Nod or appear sleepy

- Decreased physical activity
- Constipation and nausea
Heroin

Current Trends

- DEA has issued a nationwide alert
- Dealers mixing with Fentanyl. 30-50 times more powerful than heroin. Higher rate of overdose.
Bars (Ladders)

Another name for the rectangular shaped Xanax (anti-anxiety medication) with three lines in them (typically 2mg per ‘bar’).

- The term “barred out” means being highly sedated due to Xanax consumption.
- School bus (yellow ‘bar’)
- Hulks, green monsters (green)
- Using with alcohol
Addies

Slang term for ADHD medication Adderall. It is a mixture of amphetamine salts.

• Commonly prescribed for ADHD
• Occasionally abused by students seeking a competitive advantage in their studies
• Replaced Ritalin as ADHD med
• Vyvanse
Parachuting

- Method of Ingestion
- Toilet or tissue paper
- Overlooked
DXM – dextromethorphan

Slang names
- Robo
- Dex
- Tussin
- Skittles
- Velvet
- Triple C
- “Lean”/ “Purple drank”

Route of admission
- Taken orally
- Snorted (powered form)
Dextromethorphan (DXM)

- DXM is a common cough suppressant in cold medicines.
- Robitussin, NyQuil, Dimetapp, Coricidin, TheraFlu
- When abused in higher doses, it produces dissociation, distorted bodily perceptions, and loss of sense of time.
Signs and Symptoms

What should you be looking for?
Signs & Symptoms

Physical/Emotional

• Unexplained extreme mood swings
• Increased aggression or anxiety
• Change in dress or appearance/hygiene
• Changes in sleeping habits
• Panic attacks
• Dilated pupils and bloodshot eyes

• Loss of appetite, yet periods of binge eating
• Threats and attempts of suicide
Signs & Symptoms

Family & Home

- Tells lies to parents
- Ignores curfews and other household rules
- Withdraws from family activities
- Isolates from family members and is rarely home

- Collects alcohol and other drug paraphernalia
Signs & Symptoms

School

- Misses excessive time from school
- Increased tardiness
- Fails to turn in assignments
- Sleeps in class
- Exhibits persistent behavior problems

- Reduced grades
- Reduced interest in extracurricular activities
Signs & Symptoms

Social

- Changes in friends
- Drug using peers
- Avoids contact with concerned persons
- Loses interests in hobbies/activities
- Secretive and defensive regarding actions and possessions
Signs & Symptoms

Financial

• Steals money or objects from family or friends
• Develops unexplained shortages of money
• Loss of possessions
• Increased amounts of alcohol missing in the home
Signs & Symptoms

Legal

- Runs away from home
- Increased involvement with the police
- Arrested for alcohol or other drug related charges
Those at Moderate to High Risk for Substance Abuse

- Use of substances during childhood or early teen years
- Substance use before or during school
- Peer involvement with Substance Use
- Alcohol use at age 16 (monthly), age 17 (twice monthly), and age 18 (weekly)
- 3-7x a week use of marijuana
- Combining use of drugs
Signs & Symptoms

Clinical Factors

- Continued use despite adverse consequences
- Tolerance, pattern, ingestion
- Impaired emotional health
- Environment that influences drug use
Hiding Places

- Writing Utensils
- Personal Hygiene Items
- Cars
- Toilets and Vents
- Altoid Tins
- Posters
- Books
- Clothes
Hiding Places

- Soda Cans
- Hair brush
- “Axe” bottle
- Candles
- Wall Safe
- Chap stick
Hiding Places

- Bottle opener
- Surge protector
- Flip flops
Intervention
What You Can Do

- Educate yourself about addiction.
  
  What does addiction look like for teens?
  What’s normal behavior and what’s not?
  Addiction can occur quickly in teens.

- Don’t go it alone.
  
  Involve key people/resources and build support and opportunity for intervention with others.

- An intervention is not a one time event.
  
  “Getting past no!” is a process. Continue to communicate concern and provide consequences.
What You Can Do

- Act quickly when the time is right! Provide consequences and use a crisis to expedite referral to treatment.

- “Think outside the box.” Remove barriers as they are presented to get help.

- Don’t underestimate the power of consequences and boundaries. Fewer boundaries for teens today. Make the connection between behavior and consequences.

- Limit teens access to drugs and alcohol. Educate others about limiting teen’s access to alcohol, marijuana, RX drugs, and others.
What You Can Do

- **Provide parental support**
  
  Teens often have less parental involvement and supervision.

  Validate, be an ally with parents, connect parents with support like Rosecrance Parent Café or Al-Anon or Families Anonymous.

- **Enlist help from Addiction Professionals.**
  
  Assessments and consultations are helpful tools.

- **Help is available and Recovery happens!**
  
  Be aware that getting help might take time, energy and commitment.
What You Can Do

- **Rosecrance Can Help.** Our goal is to remove barriers.

  Location of assessment, Virtual tour or actual tour of facilities, School issues, Insurance issues, working with parents and engaging them to understand the need for treatment, etc.
Visit our website

www.rosecrance.org
Lakeview

Adult Services:
• Free Assessments
• Individual/Family Counseling
• Intensive Outpatient Program
• Day Treatment
• Recovery Home

Naperville

Services:
• Free Assessments
• Early Intervention Services
• Urine drug screens offered at an additional cost
• Resources and trainings for parents, professionals and community members

Frankfort

Teen & Adult Services:
• Free Assessments
• Early Intervention Services
• Intensive Outpatient Program
• Urine drug screens offered at an additional cost
• Resources and trainings for parents, professionals and community members

La Grange

Northbrook

Oak Park
The Rosecrance Griffin Williamson Campus is a 67,000 square foot, 78-bed treatment center for teens ages 12-20.

The facility includes an on-site school, chapel, gymnasium, fitness center, healing garden and conservatory.
Services offered:

- Free confidential drug and alcohol evaluations
- Partial hospitalization
- Residential substance abuse treatment
  - Gender specific counseling
  - Experiential therapies including art, music, recreation, and horticulture
  - Family education and support
  - Transition planning
  - Alumni program
- Recovery homes for teens also offered in Rockford.
Rosecrance Healing Garden at the Griffin Williamson Campus