

Chapter 1

Why Worry About Substance Abuse or Addiction?

Ongoing Issues

- Substance use disorders (SUDs) are collectively still the most prevalent mental health problem facing the United States
- The face of SUDs changes over time as popularity of specific substances rise and fall
- Alcohol and nicotine are unique in their stability of popularity and legal status.

Ongoing issues

- Approximately 25% of patients seen by primary care physicians have an alcohol or drug problems
- Excessive alcohol use was a factor in 50% of all deaths from acute traumatic injuries (Baron, Garbely & Boyd, 2009).
- Approximately 25% of those individuals on Medicaid have a substance use disorder.

Significant contributing Factors

- Substance abuse is a factor in 50% - 75% of all psychiatric admissions
- 1/3 of those who commit suicide had alcohol disorders (Karch, Dahlberg, & Patel, 2010)
- Between 40% and 60% of those who commit suicide were intoxicated at the time
- 10% of those who commit suicide had evidence of other drugs of abuse in their body at the time of their death

Significant contributing factors

- Adults with a substance use disorder were 2.7 times as likely to report having engaged in the physical abuse of a child and 4.2 times as likely to report child neglect as non-using control substance.
- Alcohol is a factor in 40-86% of all U.S. homicides (Parrott & Giancola, 2006).
- Illicit drug use in home increase a woman's chances of being murdered by a significant other by 28-fold even if she was not herself using drugs.

The scope of the problem

- Globally, about 200 million people (5% of the world's population) have abused illicit substance at least once.
- The world-wide illicit drug trade is an estimated \$800 billion industry (larger than the gross domestic product figures of 90% of the world's countries).
- The U.S. makes up under 5% of the world's population, but consumes 60% of the world's illicit drugs.

The scope of the problem

- Alcohol use (in U.S.)
 - Estimated 119 million drink at least once annually
 - Between 8 to 16 million drinkers will become physically dependent on it
 - 5.6 million abuse it on a regular basis
 - 10% drink 60% of alcohol consumed
 - top 30% drink 90% of alcohol consumed
 - Majority with alcohol use disorder (AUD) are male

The scope of the problem

- Narcotics:
 - Globally around 15.6 million people abuse or are addicted to heroin.
 - In the U.S., approximately 3 million have used heroin at some point
 - There are 4 males user for every female user (Krambeer, von McKnelly, Gabrielli, & Penick, 2001)
 - Growing numbers are addicted to prescription narcotics

The scope of the problem

- Cocaine:
 - Globally, an estimated 14 million people abuse or are addicted
 - 2.5 million cocaine addicts in the United States

The scope of the problem

- Marijuana:
 - Just under 30 million are thought to be current users in North America
 - 25% of the entire population of the US have abused marijuana at least once
 - Of this, approximately 3 million are addicted

The scope of the problem

- Hallucinogens:
 - 10% of the entire population of the United States has abused hallucinogens at least once (Sadock & Sadock, 2007)
 - An estimated 1.1million have abused a hallucinogenic compounds in the past month

The scope of the problem

- Tobacco:
 - 20.8% of Americans are current smokers
 - 25% of Americans are former smokers
 - 50% of Americans have never smoked

Costs of abuse/addiction

- Drug use disorders are the 6th leading cause of disease in adults.
- Global financial impact is about 880 billion a year.
- In the U.S., drug and alcohol use disorders may drain \$375 billion from economy (Falco, 2005)

Alcohol Costs

- Globally, thought to be a direct factor in 10-11% of all deaths each year.
- Financially costs U.S. at least \$185 billion a year.
- Alcohol is thought to be involved in approximately 40% of all motor vehicle accidents

Tobacco Costs

- Worldwide more than 3 million people a year die as a direct result of their tobacco consumption.
- In the U.S., 1 in every 5 deaths can be directly traced to smoking related illness (Sadock & Sadock, 2007)

Who Treats a Person with a SUD?

- Less than 1 in 5 physicians reported that they thought they were trained to treat patients with common substance abuse problems.
- Physicians have a negative view of those with an SUD due to lack of training. They don't screen well for SUD in their patients.
- Less than 50% of patients who go to see a physician about an alcohol-related issue are asked about their alcohol intake by their physician.

Who Treats a Person with a SUD?

- Nurses are also ill prepared to work with SUD patients
- Seventy-four percent of psychologists report no formal training in diagnosis or treatment of addictions, rating their graduate school training as “inadequate” in this area
- Only professional substance abuse counselors are required to have a high level of profession training with substance abuse issues.