Preventing and Responding to Youth Substance Misuse and Substance Use Disorders

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Drug Deaths in America Are Rising Faster Than Ever

By JOSH KATZ  JUNE 9, 2017

59,000 to 65,000 people died from drug overdoses in the U.S. in 2016

Peak car crash deaths (1972)
Peak H.I.V. deaths (1995)
Peak gun deaths (1993)

Drug overdose deaths, 1980 to 2016

10,000 deaths per year
Drug Overdose in Texas

• In 2016, 2,790 Texans died due to drug overdose
• More than the population of a Texas 6A high school
• More than the population of nearly 60 percent of the cities and towns in Texas

Sources: Texas DSHS Provisional counts of drug overdose deaths, 2/15/2018.
Drug Use Starts Early and Peaks in Adolescence
Adolescence is a period of profound brain maturation.

- We thought brain development was complete by adolescence.
- We now know... maturation is not complete until about age 25.
Developing Brain = Less Brakes on the “Go” System
Correlates of Substance Misuse

Keys to Effective Prevention

- Accurate, honest information
- Social Skills / Effective Communication
- Problem Solving
- Affect Regulation
- Self Efficacy
- Drug Resistance Strategies
- Culturally grounded approaches
- Consideration of Harm Reduction and Abstinence Based Models
TOOL KIT: How to talk about drugs

• Set a respectful and inquisitive, intimate, and safe tone
• Do not interrupt
• You cannot change someone – they must choose change
• Don’t make assumptions – there is no typical “profile” for substance misuse and addiction
• Listen more than talk – reflect what you hear – don’t try to FIX
• Be candid and nonjudgmental
• Affirm perspective, feelings, and freedom of choice
• Ask questions tentatively
• Be patient and do not get defensive – people with substance use problems may turn the conversation quickly to make the person asking lose balance
• Use non-stigmatizing language
Stages of Change

- **Pre-Contemplation**: No intention on changing behavior
- **Contemplation**: Aware a problem exists but with no commitment to action.
- **Preparation**: Intent on taking action to address the problem
- **Action**: Active modification of behavior
- **Maintenance**: Sustained change; new behavior replaces old
- **Relapse**: Fall back into old patterns of behavior

**Upward Spiral**: Learn from each relapse
Change Conversations

Students can articulate the “payoffs and downsides” of using substances, and this is key for motivational change.
Towards Solving the Problem of Substance Misuse and Addiction among Youth and Emerging Adults

The Youth Substance Misuse and Addiction Pop-Up Institute will launch a diverse network of UT and renowned scholars, agencies/organizations who focus on youth substance misuse, research, intervention, and recovery initiatives. As such, the group is positioned to make substantial contributions to research and practice in multiple settings, to examine the impact of addiction as it undermines the health of young people on and off campus, their families, the community, the state, and the nation. The group will also focus its energy on making sure that the work creates the best possible impact on UT students, both as participants and recipients of the innovations that grow from the Institute. Undergraduate Studies (UGS) will participate to integrate drug/alcohol wellness components to UT programming.

http://sites.utexas.edu/youthsubstancemisuse/
A Bold Call to Action: Shifting the existing norms around substance use at UT Austin through the cutting-edge collaboration of scholars, researchers and instructors with college health and student-affairs practitioners. SHIFT is a national model for proactive prevention of substance misuse and improved campus wellness.
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<tr>
<th>UT STUDENT SPECIFIC STATISTICS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>68.7%</strong> drank alcohol on one or more days in the last 30 days</td>
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<td><strong>32.6%</strong> had 5 or more drinks in one sitting in the past 2 weeks</td>
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<td><strong>8.2%</strong> had 5 or more drinks in one sitting on 3 or more occasions in the past 2 weeks</td>
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<td><strong>5.6%</strong> used an illicit drug in the last month</td>
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<td><strong>19.9%</strong> used marijuana on one or more days in the past 30 days</td>
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Alcohol use, drug use, and mental health outcomes have a cascade of effects on college students’ academic outcomes.

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Questions?

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