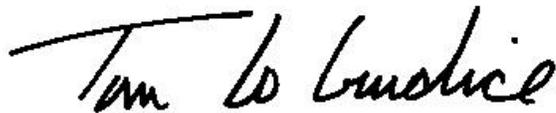


THE WAR ON ADDICTIONS IN ADOLESCENTS

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Lo Giudice". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Approved

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Descriptor Terms:

Adolescent Addiction
War on Drugs

THE WAR ON
ADDICTIONS IN ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

The war on drugs was a term coined by the media after a press conference with President Richard M. Nixon in 1971. Currently, rehabilitation resources are targeting the adult addicts. Research shows that addicts report first abusing drug early during adolescents. Thus understanding the nature of adolescent developmental tasks and trends in addiction is important. The possible effects of addiction are also important. Finally, information related to how parents and professional caregivers is provided.

Descriptor Terms:

Adolescent Addictions

War on Drugs

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CHAPTER ONE I NTRODUCTION

The “war on drugs” is a term used that began to be used by the media following a press conference by President Richard M. Nixon on June 18, 1971. The war on drugs has come to be applied to a variety of United States government campaigns related o probation of drugs, military aid, military intervention, reducing drug trade as well initiatives to educate and curtail the use of illegal drugs (Cockburn and St. Clair, 1998). Of special interest to educators is curtailing and ending the use of illegal substances by younger and older adolescents. The health education initiatives that are a part of education codes in many states and districts have been increasingly focused on drug prevention.

Many Mothers and Fathers are “at war” about how drugs are having such a negative impact on teens. This war affects all teens and their families no matter what the race, back ground, where they come from or their social economic standing. Most are in agreement that that “We (Americans) are in this together as a nation of people and we to come up with ways to start helping and saving our teens”. The war on drugs is American’s longest war. Unfortunately teens are too often casualties the ” War against Drugs”.

Statement of the Problem

The focus of this study is on adolescents and drug use prevention. The problems addressed are stated as three questions:

1. What is the nature of drug abuse among young adolescents?
2. How is drug abuse related to the developmental tasks of young adolescents?
3. What should be the orientation of parents and professional caregivers who are not psychologist or other specialists in preventing substance abuse?

Definition of Terms

Addiction: Addiction refers to more long –term use of alcohol and drugs. The person may use greater amounts of the drug they as can tolerate larger amounts. They can also experience serious withdrawal symptoms if they cannot get the drug or alcohol their body and mind craves (Merriam-Webster website).

Adolescent: Adolescent describes the teenage years between 13 and 19 (specialist identify the period as a time of pubescent to young adulthood and use the years 10-20) and can be considered the transitional stages from childhood to adulthood. The state or process of growing up The period of life from puberty to maturity terminating legally at the age of majority (Merriam Webster website).

Drugs: a substance used in dyeing or chemical operations

b: a substance used as a medication or in the preparation of medication *according to the Food,*

Drug, and Cosmetic Act (1): a substance recognized in an official pharmacopoeia or formulary (2):

a substance intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease

(3): a substance other than food intended to affect the structure or function of the body (4): a

substance intended for use as a component of a medicine but not a device or a component, part, or

accessory of a device : a commodity that is not salable or for which there is no demand —used in

the phrase *drug on the market*: something and often an illegal substance that causes addiction, habituation, or a marked change in consciousness (Merriam Webster website).

Significance of the Study

Insights to understanding why adolescent are using drugs at during the adolescent period and why it is currently a growing problem are important to educators and other caregivers who work with adolescents as wells as to parents..

Purpose of Study

A review of literature related to the problem statement focuses on how adolescents construct explanations of events and behaviors. The concern is understanding why events and behaviors occur. It is important that parents and professionals to be able to explain how adolescents judge their own behavior and others teens use of drugs.

Delimitations of Research

The references used for the review of literature were collected over a period of 40 days using the resources of the Karmann Library at the University of Wisconsin– Platteville. ." Google", "Google Scholar" and a PSYINFO search were all useful in locating useful literature.

Method of Approach

A brief review of the history of the War on Drugs in America is presented. Then a review of adolescent drug use is presented. The developmental tasks of adolescents and the relationship between drug use and abuse related to the tasks are described. Finally, findings are summarized and recommendations made.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

The Problem

Identifying drug abuse among adolescent is an ongoing problem. Drug abuse stems from many factors, including unhappy home lives and psychological traumas have effected these teenagers. . Among teenagers, however, it often arises from peer pressure. Teens try dugs in order to fit in or be accepted by their peers, and then continue on a downward as addiction sinks its claws deeper. Countering peer pressure in ways that reach the teen makes a huge difference when dealing with addictions. Peer pressureaffects the majority of teenagers every day and most fall victim one way or another. More than 7percent of high-school seniors used prescription drugs for non-medical purpose in the past year, meanwhile 2.3 percent of high –school seniors have abused drugs (Chan, 2014). The age group with the highest concentration of drug users is concentrated in the late teen years and twenties . However, ages 14-15 have a higher average rate of use than all of the age groups of 35 and over, showing that drug use is affecting teens at a younger age than ever before. The most widely abused drug among teens is currently alcohol and second comes marijuana. teens users are also at a significantly higher risk of developing an addictive personally compared to adults, and the earlier they began using, the higher the risk. Nine out of ten people who meet the criteria for substance use disorder involving nicotine, alcohol or other drug abuse began smoking, drinking or using drugs before they turned 18. People who began using addictive Substances before 15 are six and a half times more likely to develop a substance use disorder as those who delay use until age 21 or older.

History of Substance Abuse in the United States

Concern and control of drug use dates at least back to the 1870s starting with local ordinances related to opium use. By 1914 the first federal law, the Harrison Narcotics Tax Act of 1914 was enacted. By 1930 the Federal Bureau of Narcotics was established by the United States Department of the Department of the Treasury (retrieved January 20,

2015 http://faculty.morris.umn.edu/~ratliffj/psy1081/drug_laws.htm).

More recently there has been a concern with youth use of illegal drugs. For this review of literature much use has been made of Monitoring Our Future (MTF) a long term study of American adolescents, college students, and adults through age 50. Substance use by American young people has proven to be a rapidly changing phenomenon, requiring frequent assessments and reassessments (Johnston, O'Malley,

Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2012). This became necessary in the 1960's when it burgeoned into the general youth population, since illicit drug use has remained a major concern for the nation.

Smoking, drinking and illicit drug use is leading causes of morbidity and mortality, during adolescence as well as later in life. How vigorously the nation responds to teenage substance use, how accurately it identifies the emerging substance abuse problem, and how it comes to understand the effectiveness of policy and intervention efforts largely depend on the ongoing collection of valid and reliable data. Monitoring the Future is uniquely designed to generate such data in order to provide an accurate picture of what is happening in this domain

(Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2012).

The 2012 the MTF survey encompassed about 45,400 8th – 10th and 12th grade students in 395 secondary schools nationwide. Recent trends in the use of licit and illicit drugs are emphasized, as well as trends in the levels of perceived risk and personal disapproval associated

with each drug. This study has shown these beliefs and attitudes to be particularly important in explaining trends of drug use among adolescents and college students. MFT routinely reports three different indexes of illicit drug use-any illicit drug other than marijuana, and any illicit drug including inhalants.

Trends among Adolescents and Substance Abuse In the early late 20th century, young Americans reached extraordinarily high levels of illicit drug use by U.S. as well as international standards. The trends in this lifetime use of any illicit drug use are given in the first panel on the facing page. In 1975, when MTF began, the majority of young people 55% had used an illicit drug by the time they left high school. Right away it became clear that this was not just a phase for our youth, it was something that would go on to affect the youth to come (Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenburg, 2012).

The use of amphetamines rose in the last half of the 1970s, reaching a high in 1981 two years after the use of marijuana use rose. The researchers believed that the usage rate reached among 12th graders in 1981 (annual prevalence of 26%) may have been an exaggeration of true amphetamine use because "look-alikes" were in common use at the time. Starting in the early 1980s, there was a consistent and substantial decline in the 12th graders use of amphetamines, which stop in 1992 (Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenburg, 2012). As with many other illicit drugs, amphetamines did start appearing again on the seen in the 1990s. The uses heighten again by two grades by 1996.

Annual marijuana reached its peak among 12th graders in 1979 at 51% following a rise that began during the 1960s. Then use started declining at a fairly steady paste for the next 13 years, bottoming at 22% in 1992 which was a decline in more than half. However the 1990s did see a resurgence of use. After a heighten increase among (8th graders a year earlier than 10th and 12th

graders) this decrease lasted for these three grades all the way into 2006, 2007 & 2008. Then again in 2010 – 2011 there was some decline (Johnston, O’Malley, Bachman, & Schulenburg, 2012). In 2012 there were no significant declines for daily use in the lower grades and a leveling at 12th grade with use reaching 1.1%, 3.5%, and 6.5% in grades 8, 10 and 12, respectively.

Synthetic marijuana, street names are Spice and K-2, this is an herbal drug mixture that contains designer chemicals that fall into the cannabinoid family. Not until March 2011 this drug was not even scheduled by the drug Enforcement Administration. MTF first addressed the use of synthetic marijuana in its 2011 survey, asking 12th grades about use in the prior 12 months, which would have covered a considerable amount of time prior to the drugs being scheduled (Johnston, O’Malley, Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2012). More than 11.4% indicated use in the prior 12 months. Despite this intervention, use among 12th graders remained unchanged in 2012 at 11.3%. In 2012 for the first time 8th and 10th graders were asked about their use of synthetic marijuana: annual prevalence rates were 4.4% and 8.8%, respectively.

The annual prevalence for LSD use among 12th graders has been below 10% since MTF began doing surveys. Use has declined some for the first 10 years among 12th graders likely continuing a decline that had already started before 1975. Use was fairly level in the latter half of the 1980’s but , as was true for the numbers of other drugs , rose in all three grades between 1990 & 1996 and 2006 or so, use declined in all three grades. With a particularly sharp decline between 2001 and 2003, since then use has remained at historically low levels (Johnston, O’Malley, Bachman, & Schulenburg, 2012).

According to MTF there had been some important changes in the level of overall cocaine use over the life of MTF doing surveys. Use among 12th graders appeared in the late 1970s, and did remain stable through the first half of the 1980s before starting a decline by 1996. Annual

prevalence among 12th graders dropped by about three quarters between 1986 and 1992(Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenburg, 2012). Between 1992 and 1999, use reversed course again and doubled before declining by 2000. Use also rose among 8th and 10th graders after 1992, before reaching peak levels in 1998 and 1999. Over the last decade, use has now declined in all three grades: 12th graders use stands at an historical low of 2.7% in 2012 with the use by 8th and 10th grade still getting lower.

Without question crack had rose rapidly in the early 1980s but, after 1986 there was a precipitous drop in crack use among 12th graders a drop that continued through 1991. After 1991 for 8th and 10th graders (when data was first available) after 1993 for 12th grades all three grades showed a steady increase in use through 1998.Since 1999 , annual prevalence dropped by seven tenths in 8th and 10th graders and by about half in the 12th (Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenberg , 2012).

The declines of crack researchers think came from a generational forgetting wherein the class cohorts that were in adolescence when the adverse consequences were most obvious. Meaning they were being replaced by cohorts who had heard much less about how harmful the drug is , but never the less the drug is still very harmful. Lastly the availability of crack did not change much ,but was followed by a steady decrease from 1995 through 2004 in 8th grade and a shaper drop among 10th and 12th grades starting in 1999 and 2000, then in 2007 , availability gas declined , mostly in the upper grades.

Unfortunately adolescence spread the word of the supposed benefits of using a drug opposed to the needed information about adverse consequences. The suppose benefits take a few face book posting, twitter, Instagram, a few rumors and a few testimonials. Indicating it takes much longer for evidence of adverse consequences (e.g. death, disease, overdose, addiction) to

cumulate and then be disseminated.

As parents of these children there is a need to understand prevention will have to occur drug by drug because the youth will have to share the bad stories or the adverse consequences of one drug to use another. The figures in this overview on the perceived risk: .disapproval for the various drugs attitudes and beliefs that we have shown to be important in explaining many drug trends over the years. One more point to keep in mind is it tends to be continues flow of new drugs into the reaches of our youth and old ones being rediscovered by the nation's teens and adolescents.

Developmental Tasks of Adolescents

There is a considerable literature about the characteristics of adolescents. The statement below used some of the literature as general background (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development,1995;Cobb,1994;Deyfoos,1990,Eccaleset.al.,1993;Erikson,1968,Hamburg,1974,Irvin,1996;Simons & Blyth,1987). Irvin's (1996) use of the term "developmental tasks" seemed especially useful because the central idea is to consider the challenges adolescents face rather than all adolescents develop in the same way. Irvin also cautions parents and professional caregivers to consider the "risks" adolescents face. Some of the risks in not meeting a developmental task may be drug use.

Before examining the tasks it is useful to talk in general about the problem of drug abuse among adolescents. Drug abuse among teens is a growing problem. Addiction may begin with experimental usage of substance at a young age. The average age if the first usage is between age 11 and 12 years, many teens began use as a result off peer pressure. Beginning in the 1990's, illicit drug use among American teens show a sharp decline, In 2009 and 2010 the decline hit a huge bump in the road. Marijuana use amongst teens in 2009 and 2010 began to increase.

Increase usage started to appear in other drug as well such as a prescription drugs. Research indications several reasons for drug extermination drugs are often available, they provide a quick, easy, and cheap way to feel good. They offer a means to accept in peer relationships , they also offer a means to modify unpleasant feelings , reduce disturbing emotions , alleviate depression , reduce tension and as an aid to coping with life's stressors(Drug War Facts.2014). So what are the developmental tasks that are sources of stress for adolescents?

Stable Identity: The major task facing adolescents is to create a stable identity and become complete and productive adults. Over time, adolescents develop a sense of themselves that transcends the many changes in their experiences and roles. They find their role in society through active searching which leads to discoveries about themselves.

The changes experienced during puberty bring new awareness of self and others' reactions to them. For example, sometimes adults perceive adolescents to be adults because they physically appear to be adults. However, adolescents are not adults. They need room to explore themselves and their world. Thus, as adults, we need to be aware of their needs and provide them with opportunities to grow into adult roles. A developmental task represents our culture's definition of "normal" development at different points in the life span. There are a total of eight developmental tasks that enable adolescents to create an identity.

When a youth is trying to achieving new and more mature relations with others, both boys and girls, in their age group this is a very important step in their life. If an adolescent is involved with drugs the youth cannot learn the experimentation which teaches the child how to interact with others. Adolescents learn through experimentation to interact with others in more adult ways. Physical maturity plays an important role in peer relations. Adolescents who mature at a slower or faster rate than others will be dropped from one peer group and generally will enter a peer group of

similar maturity. For early-maturing girls, entering into a peer group of similar physical maturity can mean a greater likelihood of early sexual activity. Monitoring by parents can be a useful boundary setting tool because it allows parents to place limits on the adolescent's outside activities. If the child is at least still in compliance with the house rules, when youth begin to engage in drugs the rules of the house tend to become obsolete the adolescent become very rebellious

Gender Identity: Achieving a masculine or feminine social role is yet again another developmental stage in which our adolescents will have to try and overcome. Adolescents develop their own definition of what it means to be male or female. However, most adolescents conform to the sex roles of our cultural view of male (assertive & strong) and female (passive & weak) characteristics. Yet, these roles have become more relaxed in the last twenty years. As adults, we need to provide adolescents with chances to test and develop their masculine and feminine social roles. For example, we need to encourage males to express their feelings and encourage females to assert themselves more than they have in the past. As we must remind our children of their self-worth to keep them from turning to drugs and always encourage them to be in the moment because life is full of lessons and being on drugs the moment will pass by without warning.

Physique: Accepting one's physique is the beginning of puberty and the rate of body changes for adolescents varies tremendously. How easily adolescents deal with those changes will partly reflect how closely their bodies match the well-defined stereotypes of the "perfect" body for young women and young men. Adolescents who do not match the stereotype may need extra support from adults to improve their feelings of comfort and self-worth regarding their physique and with drugs being involved this could make or break an adolescent.

Achieving emotional independence from parents and other adult's children derive strength from internalizing their parents' values and attitudes. Adolescents, however, must redefine their sources of personal strength and move toward self-reliance. This change is smoother if the adolescent and parents can agree on some level of independence that increases over time. For example, parents and adolescents should set a curfew time. That time should be increased as the adolescent matures. This allows the parent to somewhat be involved in whatever the discussions the youth will make good or bad. With using the curfew it will help keep the parents in the loop of what is going on

Preparing for marriage and family life: Sexual maturation is the basis for this developmental task. Achievement of this developmental task is difficult because adolescents often confuse sexual feelings with genuine intimacy. Indeed, this developmental task is usually not achieved until late adolescence or early adulthood.

Preparing for an economic career. In American society, an adolescent reaches adult status when he or she is able to financially support him or herself. This task has become more difficult than in the past because the job market demands increased education and skills. Today, this developmental task is generally not achieved until late adolescence or early adulthood, after the individual completes her/his education and gains some entry level work experience.

*Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system as a guide to behavior .*Adolescents can think abstractly and about possible situations. With these changes in thinking, the adolescent is able to develop his or her own set of values and beliefs.

Desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior. The family is where children define themselves and their world. Adolescents define themselves and their world from their new social roles. Status within the community, beyond that of family, is an important achievement for older

adolescents and young adults. Adolescents and young adults become members of the larger community through employment (financial independence) and emotional independence from parents. It is very important as adults an adolescent is a person growing into manhood or womanhood. The average age is between 12 -19 years. Unfortunately drug abuse among teens is a daily growing problem. Addiction may begin with experimental usage of substance at a young age. This cycle of an adolescent life can start as early as 11 and 12 years old. Many teens do become addicted as a result of being peer pressured by a peer or as a result of see an adult in their life expose them to drugs.

Research has indicated several reasons for drug experimentation among today's adolescent (Boyse , 2014). Drugs are often readily available; they provide a quick, easy, and cheap way to feel good about ones' self. They offer a means to modify unpleasant feelings, reduce disturbing emotions, alleviate depression, reduce tension and they aid in coping with life's stressors. Identifying drug abuse among adolescents is an ongoing problem. Symptoms that are identifiable by most are normal adolescents' behaviors have been within the home. Parents are the most powerful role models that children could ever have.

Adolescents are more likely to emulate their parents' drinking or drug use patterns. Teens are responding in masses to the alluring promise of today's chemical culture. Drugs promise to provide quick relief, instant gratification, popularity, an attractive peer group, sexual powers and financial success. Most of these offers that seem appealing to the adolescents' population are enhanced

The Relationship between Adolescent Developmental Tasks and Substance Abuse

A recent article (Brown et.al. 2009, p41) focusing on adolescent use of alcohol, but inferred here as also applicable to drug use is worthy of quoting. Commenting on ages 16-20 the researchers say the following about physical, societal and cultural context and influences:

The period between ages 16 and 20 is characterized by major role transitions in almost every domain of life (Schulenberg et al. 1997). However, although all youth are moving toward greater independence, the timing, sequence, and occurrence of role changes differ greatly among adolescents (Hogan and Astone 1986). Compared with earlier developmental transitions, those that occur during late adolescence are less constrained by age and reflect the greater number of options available to older youth. Therefore, individual differences become increasingly important during late adolescence “(p.41).

“Physical Contexts: Although virtually all younger children attend school, for older adolescents this is not the case. For example, 86 percent of adolescents complete high school, but only 62 percent of those enroll in college the year after their high school graduation; others enter the workforce or join the military. Compared with younger adolescents, the living situations of older adolescents are more diverse, reflecting academic and vocational choices as well as family and other circumstances “(p. 41).

“Societal and Cultural Influences: The salience of social and cultural influences increases during late adolescence. Their impact on academic achievement, dating and finding a romantic partner, leaving the parental home, becoming a parent, and many other contexts and transitions differs in complex ways by gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, neighborhood, and country of origin, in part because of the diversity of available options and supports” (p.41).

They (Brown et al, 2009 p. 41) go on to discuss a multiple domains of development and to paraphrase they say the following about brain maturation, cognitive development, working memory and self-regulation:

Brain Maturation “Contrary to what scientists once thought, the brain continues to develop throughout adolescence and into young adulthood, and different regions mature at different times in development” processing.” Furthermore ... “this period of active brain development appears to make the brain more vulnerable to neurotoxic processes, including those attributable to heavy alcohol exposure”

Cognitive Development “Executive functions mediate the complex interplay between thinking, emotion, and social judgment. They include goal directedness, independent initiation of behavior, inhibition of inappropriate behavior, flexibility, abstract reasoning, reward appraisal (i.e., evaluating reward likelihood and using reward appraisal to guide behavior), and social appraisal (i.e., understanding social norms and incorporating social information into decision-making).” They also note that “studies have revealed differences between boys and girls in executive function development. Whereas girls may develop flexible control of verbal processing more quickly than boys, who may not achieve mature verbal control until their late teens, girls generally lag behind boys in development of the abilities to perform certain nonverbal tasks”.

Working Memory “The term “working memory” refers to a set of interrelated cognitive processes that result in the ability to temporarily maintain and manipulate information”

Development of Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation “Self-regulation is the ability to control emotion and behavior, plan behaviors, and resist the impulse to engage in behaviors that

result in immediate or delayed negative consequences”’. Furthermore...” Individuals with poorer self-regulation tend to have problems in adolescence and adulthood”. The ability to regulate behavioral impulses is especially important during adolescence, when exposure to risk situations increases. Interestingly, by age 15, adolescents appear to be as capable as adults at logically assessing the likelihood of risk and their own vulnerability to risk; however, adolescents are more likely than adults to engage in risky behaviors “.(Brown,et. al., 2009, p.41.)

If all of these developmental problems can be present from alcohol and drugs as assumed here the challenges of parents and caregivers are considerable.

CHAPTER THREE CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

There are several conclusions and implications for parents and caregivers based on the literature reviewed in chapter two that include the following:

The potential for physical and social and cognitive damage to young adolescents may be considerable as noted in the article by Brown et al. However, early interventions are significant. A summary statement of conclusions and implications is offered below.

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1995). *Great transitions: Preparing adolescents for a new century*. New York: Carnegie Corporation.

Irvin, J.L. Developmental tasks of early adolescence: How adult awareness can reduce at-risk behavior. *The Clearing House* (1996) vol.69.220-24.

Johnston, L.D., O'Malley, P.M., Bachman, J.G& Schulenberg, J.E. *Monitoring the future: National survey of the drug use 1975-2012* (2012). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan:

Institute for Social Research.

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APPENDIX

Sample Resources

Adolescent Development:

A useful website is

<http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/growing/adolescence.html>

Adolescent Alcohol and Drug Use and Abuse

Useful websites include:

1. **Risk Factors for Adolescent Alcohol and Drug Use/Abuse...**

www.familyimpactseminars.org/pl_techreport_10.pdf

- 2. **WISCONSIN YOUTH FUTURES ...** University of **Wisconsin**-Madison/**Extension ...** Young people in the United **States** have the highest rates of illicit **drug use ... families**, and jobs, society also pays a price in the high cost of such related material in an alternative format, contact Cooperative **Extension Publications** at.

3. **Get The Facts Drug War Facts –**

<http://www.drugwarfacts.org/cms/adolescents>

Commercial Publications:

There are many useful commercial publications. An example is

[www://www.edcation.com/print/Milestone/](http://www.edcation.com/print/Milestone/)

