

Editorial note on Substance Abuse

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Editorial

Journal of Child and Adolescent Health is an online open access peer-reviewed journal that encourages scientific innovation and advancement in the broad area of child and adolescent health and aims at improving the dissemination of original scientific knowledge. Journal is interested in publishing all kinds of original work in this multidisciplinary field of child and adolescent health that help in improving the complete health of people in the age range of infants to young adults.

Substance abuse, also known as drug abuse, is use of a drug in amounts or by methods which are harmful to the individual or others. It is a form of substance-related disorder. Differing definitions of drug abuse are used in public health, medical and criminal justice contexts. In some cases criminal or anti-social behaviour occurs when the person is under the influence of a drug, and long term personality changes in individuals may occur as well. In addition to possible physical, social, and psychological harm, use of some drugs may also lead to criminal penalties, although these vary widely depending on the local jurisdiction.

Drug misuse is a term used commonly when prescription medication with sedative, anxiolytic, analgesic, or stimulant properties are used for mood alteration or intoxication ignoring the fact that overdose of such medicines can sometimes have serious adverse effects. It sometimes involves drug diversion from the individual for whom it was prescribed.

Prescription misuse has been defined differently and rather inconsistently based on status of drug prescription, the uses without a prescription, intentional use to achieve intoxicating effects, route of administration, co-ingestion with alcohol, and the presence or absence of dependence symptoms. Chronic use of certain substances leads to a change in the central nervous system known as a 'tolerance' to the medicine such that more of the substance is needed in order to produce desired effects. With some substances, stopping or reducing use can cause withdrawal symptoms to occur. but this is highly dependent on the specific substance in question.

Impulsivity is characterized by actions based on sudden desires, whims, or inclinations rather than careful thought. Individuals with substance abuse have higher levels of impulsivity, and individuals who use multiple drugs tend to be more impulsive. A number of studies using the Iowa gambling task as a measure for impulsive behavior found that drug using populations made more risky choices compared to healthy controls. There is a hypothesis that the loss of impulse control may be due to impaired inhibitory control resulting from drug induced changes that take place in the frontal cortex. The neurodevelopmental and hormonal changes that happen during adolescence may modulate impulse control that could possibly lead to the experimentation with drugs and may lead to the road of addiction. Impulsivity is

thought to be a facet trait in the neuroticism personality domain (overindulgence/negative urgency) which is prospectively associated with the development of substance abuse.

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