Issues Affecting Youth and Families in Today’s Society

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Adolescents Seeking Treatment

- Dual Diagnosis/Co-Occurring Disorders
  - Substance Use Disorder
  - Mental Health Disorder
    - ADHD
    - Depression
    - Anxiety
    - Trauma
- What’s the root of the problem? Substance use is a symptom.
Four Common Issues Facing Families & Youth:

➢ Technology
➢ Vaping
➢ Marijuana
➢ Boundaries
Technology
Not so fun facts about Gaming:

➢ Games are DESIGNED to be addictive
➢ Gaming lobby spends more money on lobbying than the NRA
➢ E-sports is now becoming officially recognized in high schools and universities
➢ Studies show that often the number of hours kids spend playing games are being matched per day by watching others play games
➢ Gaming Disorder has now been recognized as a mental health disorder by the World Health Organization
Social Media

- Messages and videos disappear offering no “paper trail” of activities
- Check the stories of those who are your child’s friends
- “My Eyes Only” section
Instagram

- Privacy Settings
- Stories
- Secret Instagram Accounts
- Addiction to Likes
- Negative self-image by comparison of false reality
DIRECTORY OF EMOJIS
Marijuana OR Drugs in General
Cocaine
Cocaine, Crack or Crystal Meth
Ecstasy/MDMA

OR

❤️ ⚡
Ecstasy/MDMA or Heroin
Xanax
High Potency
Taking a Puff
For Sale

$
Marijuana

- **Myth: It’s natural!**
  - Just because something is natural does not mean it is safe

- **Myth: I used to smoke it - it’s not that big of a deal**
  - Potency has increased 500-1200% in the last 10-15 years
  - 50-70% more carcinogenic than tobacco smoke

- **Myth: It’s not addictive or as bad as some other drugs**
  - 78% of the 2.4 million people who began using in the last year were adolescents (12-20)
  - Marijuana on the adolescent brain IS addictive
  - Growing number of cases of marijuana induced psychosis - this is irreversible! Mimics schizophrenia.
  - If no other option - at least make the case for delayed use until brain is further developed

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● Myth: No long term effects
  ○ For someone smoking regularly, it can stay in the brain over 100 days
  ○ IQ Drops
  ○ Emotional stagnation
  ○ Connectors in the brain become disconnected:
    → Enjoyment
    → Decision making/consequences
    → Emotional regulation
    → Memory

● Myth: It helps with anxiety or ADHD
  ○ Has proven to exacerbate anxiety and depression

● Myth: You can’t overdose or withdraw.
  ○ No cases of people dying from the overdose but you CAN overdose. Increase among children
  ○ Cannabis Withdrawal Syndrome is real. Flu-like symptoms, nausea, agitation, anxiety, body aches
Vaping

- Myth: It’s not as bad as cigarettes.
  
  - Yes, there’s some water. But there is also propylene glycol (anti-freeze), lead and other chemical liquid carriers for the nicotine or E-liquids.
  
  - Diacetyl, the cause of popcorn lung, is found in many popular flavors of E-liquid. In fact, 75% of flavored E-cigarettes and their refill liquids were found to have diacetyl.
  
  - E-cigarette vapor can contain cancer-causing formaldehyde at levels up to 15 times higher than regular cigarettes.
  
  - 70-90% of those who vape are “dual users” and the CDC reports that vaping doubles the odds that the user will advance to smoking traditional cigarettes.
Juul says that its products are for “adult” smokers who want to move away from traditional cigarettes.

E-Liquids are being named and marketed to target adolescents. From the packaging to the names, many are designed to attract a young, susceptible audience. Highest prevalence of vaping is in adolescents.

Flavors include:
- Strawberry Lemonade
- Bubble Gum
- Gummy Worm
- Sour Patch Kids
JUUL’s ad campaign targeting adults?
JUUL - Vape gone viral

- Device that’s “gone viral” on high school and college campuses and doesn’t look like a vaping device at all.

- The JUUL looks like a USB flash drive and charges when plugged into a laptop. It’s small enough to fit into an enclosed hand and comes with flavors like creme brulee, mango and fruit medley, all of which are “kid friendly.” The rise of gadgets like JUUL can fool teachers and be brought to school. Students plug it into their laptops during class to charge and fill the devices with marijuana, a homemade substance or flavored nic salts which can deliver more than double the nicotine of other vaping products.
Boundaries

➢ Technology
  o Supervision/monitoring is not an invasion of privacy. It is responsible parenting.
  o No technology in the bedroom. Ever. Not even TVs.
  o No technology at the dinner table.
  o No headphones while playing video games.
  o Computer use should always be in common areas.
  o Model responsible use to your children and grandchildren.

➢ Search rooms, cars and “private spaces” routinely, not just when suspicious.

➢ Do what you say you’re going to do. Set clear consequences and enforce them when the behaviors correspond.
SIGNS OF STRUGGLING

- Be observant!
- If it walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck....
Quick to anger or be defensive

- Are you walking on eggshells?
- Do they respond with disproportionate emotion to a situation?
Lying

- White lies count!
- Where they’ve been
- Who they’ve been with
- What they’ve been doing
- Why they didn’t make it to [fill in the blank]
Less interest in what they enjoyed

- Family time
- Sports
- Youth group
- Extracurriculars
Isolation

- Adolescents are by NATURE pack animals
- Whether they’re introverted or extroverted, they want to fit in a group somewhere
- If he/she just wants to be alone, spend time in their bedrooms, play video games alone in their rooms, this is an indicator that they’re acting outside of their normal developmental behavior
Highs and lows

- One day parents are convinced they need to get treatment for their child, THEN
- The next day the child comes in from a (dance), chats, acts "normal," seems more like themselves
- Keep in mind that if they are using, when they are on the drug, they may resume signs of calm, happiness, engagement, conversation, etc. and appear less edgy
Stealing

- It doesn't have to be grand larceny
- Could be small things
- Look at pill boxes and prescription containers
- They may not be taking the pills themselves but stealing them to sell to others so that they can purchase their own drug of choice
Aggression

- Punching walls
- Throwing things
- Defiance in arguments when this isn’t their normal nature
- Verbally abusive
Pop Culture

- What types of movies do they really enjoy?
- What types of music are they listening to?
- Advocates for marijuana use/legalization
Other Signs

- Change in friend group
- Decline in grades
- Missing/skipping school
- Asking for money frequently, even in small amounts
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep, more OR less
- Changes in personal upkeep
ADVICE - WHAT NOW?

- Be observant!
- Be objective!
- Have a *bias to action!*
- Dual diagnosis
Bias to Action

- I’m worried about you and I care about you
- Tough love
- Free, confidential consultation
  - Individual therapy
  - Group therapy
  - Intensive Outpatient Program
  - Residential Treatment Center
Q & A

Ask now! Don’t forever hold your peace.

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