

What You Need To Know About SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Brought to you by INFONET, a subsidiary committee of the Metrocouncil of Community Mental Health Centers and Associations.

Alcohol and other drug abuse and addictions are major health and safety concerns in the United States, with costs running into the billions of dollars annually for health care, related injuries and loss of life, property destruction, loss of productivity and more. The information in this fact sheet will help you to recognize risk factors and symptoms of substance abuse and where you can go locally to get help.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE FACTS

- ◆ An estimated 14.8 million Americans are current users of illegal drugs, while 3.6 million people are dependent on illegal drugs.
- ◆ An estimated 8.2 million adults and 3 million youth suffer from alcoholism, although many more drink to excess.
- ◆ About 45 million people, including 6.8 million under age 21, had “binged” (taken 5 or more drinks) once during the past 30 days. More than 12 million individuals, including 2.1 million youth, have taken 5 or more drinks for 5 or more days.
- ◆ There are more deaths and disabilities each year in the U.S. from substance abuse than from any other cause.
- ◆ One-quarter of all emergency room admissions, one-third of all suicides, and more than half of all homicides and incidents of domestic violence are alcohol-related.
- ◆ Heavy drinking contributes to illness in each of the top three causes of death: heart disease, cancer and stroke.
- ◆ Almost half of all traffic fatalities are alcohol-related.
- ◆ Alcohol and drug abuse costs the American economy an estimated \$276 billion per year in lost productivity, health care expenditures, crime, motor vehicle crashes and other conditions. Every American adult pays nearly \$1,000 per year for the damages of addiction.
- ◆ Untreated addiction is more expensive than heart disease, diabetes and cancer combined.

* Statistics from the National Mental Health Association and National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency.

INFONET AGENCIES

COMPREHENSIVE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

10901 Winner Road, Independence, MO 64052
816-254-3652
www.thecmhs.com

JOHNSON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

6000 Lamar, Mission, KS 66202
913-831-2550
www.jocogov.org/mentalhealth

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOC. OF THE HEARTLAND

739 Minnesota Ave., Kansas City, KS 66101
913-281-2221
www.mhah.org

REDISCOVER (formerly Research MH Services)

901 NE Independence, Lee's Summit, MO 64086
816-246-8000
www.rediscovermh.org

SWOPE HEALTH SERVICES BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

3801 Blue Parkway, Kansas City, MO 64130
816-923-5800
www.swopehealth.org

TRI-COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

3100 NE 83rd Street, Kansas City, MO 64119
816-468-0400
www.tri-countymhs.org

TMC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NETWORK

2200 Charlotte Street, Kansas City, MO 64108
816-404-5700
www.trumed.org

WESTERN MO MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

600 E. 22nd Street, Kansas City, MO 64108
816-512-4558

WYANDOT CENTER

7840 Washington Ave., Kansas City, KS 66112
913-328-4600
www.wyandotcenter.org

RISK FACTORS FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS

The causes of alcohol or other drug abuse and addiction are complex, with heredity, environment, and social factors all playing a part. However, some specific risk factors are associated with substance abuse by youth. These *risk factors* are:

- ◆ Children of alcohol and other drug-abusing parents are at higher risk for developing substance abuse, mental health and related problems
- ◆ Poor parenting skills
- ◆ A lack of positive relationships
- ◆ Poor social skills
- ◆ Gets easily frustrated
- ◆ Poor school performance
- ◆ Excessively shy and/or aggressive behavior
- ◆ Socializing with others who abuse drugs and/or alcohol
- ◆ The belief that parents, teachers, and other key adults in the community approve of drug abusing behavior

It is particularly important to address risk factors early. The younger a person starts drinking or using drugs, the more likely that person is to develop an addiction. In fact, young people who begin to drink or use drugs before the age of 15 are four times more likely to become addicted than if they wait until they are 21 to drink, regardless of other hereditary or environmental factors

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE AND ADDICTION

This self-administered tool can help you decide if you or a loved one needs substance abuse help. Ask these four questions:

C – Have you ever felt the need to **C**ut down on your drinking/drug use?

A – Do you get **A**nnoyed at criticism by others about your drinking/drug use?

G – Have you ever felt **G**uilty about your drinking/drug use or something you have done while drinking or using other drugs?

E – **E**ye-opener: Have you ever felt the need for a drink early in the morning?

Although denial may be a problem for some people, one positive answer provides an indication that the person may be at risk for developing a problem with alcohol or other drugs.

GETTING HELP

Effective substance abuse prevention programs teach skills and support the development of a healthy lifestyle that includes:

- ◆ Having good relationships with family and friends
- ◆ Involved parents who set and enforce rules
- ◆ Success in school
- ◆ Involvement with family, school and religious organizations
- ◆ A belief that illegal drug use is unacceptable

Your local healthcare or mental health professional can suggest ways to cope and better understand substance abuse problems. There is a network of mental health facilities in the Kansas City metro area that can help with these problems. The Community Mental Health Centers listed on the front of this flier provide a network of treatment, referrals and support. For more information, visit our website at www.mentalhealthkc.org.