

Recent Relevant Research Findings

Information Key to Lowering Teen Drug Use

Furnishing adolescents with information about risks of drugs is why the U.S. is seeing its largest decline in teen drug use in years. School-based programs help to inform students about the drug's impact on the brain.. *Christian Science Monitor* 12/26/03.

RAND Says School-Based Prevention Programs Work

School-based anti-drug programs reduced alcohol use, cigarette smoking, cocaine, opiate, marijuana and other drug use. "While we commonly think of these anti-drug programs as targeted at street drugs, it turns out that most of the benefits that society receives are due to the cuts in the use of legal substances. Taking this work into consideration, it may make sense to view school-based drug-education programs as health-promotion efforts generally." *Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Weekly* 12/16/02.

Chemical Dependency is complex genetic disease

with multiple genes in different effect sizes and different combinations. 80% of severe alcoholics have a family history; the risk of becoming chemically dependent is seven times greater with a first degree relative; there is a greater concordance in twins; but family history does not preordain alcoholism. Genes put one at risk -- one inherits some but not all of the risk. If you avoid high risk environments and make healthy choices you are not predestined. 10/4/02 Stanford Addicted Brain Conference, Ting-Kai Li, MD, Director of NIAAA.

Women and Children's Treatment Improves Health.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) studies show 84% reduction in risk of low birth weight among infants; 70% risk reduction for premature delivery; and a 76% risk reduction for infants born to women who have participated in treatment programs. Physical custody of children increased from 54% to 75%; the number of participants with children living in foster care dropped from 28 to 19%. More than 60% of participants reported being completely alcohol and other drug free 6 months following discharge. White Paper, The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.

Evaluation Finds Lower Recidivism, Higher Employment Rates at Half the Cost of Incarceration.

Drug-addicted, non-violent felony offenders with five prior drug arrests and an average of four years behind bars achieved significantly lower recidivism rates and higher employment rates through a drug treatment program. White Paper, released by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.

Industry hammered for marketing to kids, binge drinkers, alcoholics.

"The alcohol industry understands alcoholism better than anyone," Jean Kilbourne, Ed.D. visiting scholar at Wellesley College and a national expert on alcohol and tobacco advertising. "No matter what you're selling, the heavy user is your best customer. The alcohol industry needs alcoholics and binge drinkers on campus. Whenever someone recovers, someone loses money, whether it's the drug dealer on the street or the pusher in the boardroom. **10% of consumers drink 50% of the alcohol. Without them, the alcohol industry would dry up like a prune.**"

More Americans Binge Drinking. A new study shows that the number of Americans who binge drink has increased by 35% since 1995

According to the report, men account for 81% of binge drinking episodes and that 70% of binge drinkers are over the age of 25. The CDC study found that binge drinking is responsible for nearly half of the 100,000 alcohol-related deaths each year; binge drinkers are 14 times more likely to drive than those who drink but not to excess. The report linked binge drinking to sexual assaults, domestic-violence incidents, and other crimes. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 1/1/03.

Alcohol Prevalence Among Women & Girls:

Girls today are four times more likely to begin drinking before age 16 than their mothers were. 20% of 8th grade girls had a drink in the last 30 days; 12% reported binge drinking in the past two weeks. Binge drinking has increased 125% at women's colleges. Women metabolize alcohol differently than men and develop alcohol-related health problems after drinking smaller cumulative amounts of alcohol. The USDA Dietary Guidelines prescribes no more than one drink a day for women. 2002 The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth.

Many Women Still Consume Alcohol During Pregnancy. A new study shows that at least 10% of women consume alcohol during pregnancy, 6% binge drink one or more times. 15% said they didn't consume any alcohol. Drinking during pregnancy puts the fetus at risk for premature birth, mental and physical retardation, and other medical problems. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* 1/03.

Binge Drinking During Pregnancy Increases SIDS Risk. A new study shows that pregnant women who drink five or more alcoholic drinks at one time during their first trimester are eight times more likely to have their infant die of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. SIDS is also six times more likely among women who consume alcohol three months before or during the first trimester of pregnancy. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 288: 2717-2723.

The Little Hoover Commission recognized that the abuse of alcohol and drugs has an enormous impact on the health and well-being of Californians and is imposing fiscal costs on government. The study documents that the majority of child abuse and domestic violence cases involve drugs/alcohol and calculated the addiction-related losses to government agencies and private enterprises in California at \$32 billion a year. *For Our Health & Safety: Joining Forces to Defeat Addiction*, 3/11/03.

Violence Exposure and Substance Use in Adolescents: Findings from Belgium, Russia, and US of reported levels of smoking, alcohol, marijuana, and hard drug use showed increases with adolescent exposure to violence. *Pediatrics* Vol. 111 No. 3 March 2003.

Marijuana Can Trigger Depression, Research Says. Three separate studies show that frequent use of marijuana can lead to depression and other mental illness. Doctors in Australia showed that those who used marijuana every day were five times more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. Girls who used the drug at least once every week were twice as likely to develop depression. A study by Swedish researcher found that 30% of the more than 50,000 men who smoked marijuana in the late 1960s developed schizophrenia. A third study, by British researchers, found that schizophrenia is more likely in people who start using the drug as teenagers. *British Medical Journal* 11/02.

Teen Drug Use Linked to Later Psychological Disorders. New research indicates that alcohol and other drug use at a young age increases the risk of psychological disorders later in life. The latest study determined that frequent use of alcohol, marijuana, and other illegal drugs during adolescence and early adulthood is linked to episodes of major depressive disorders, alcohol dependence, and substance-use disorders in the late 20s. *Archives of General Psychiatry*. 11/02.

Researchers Say Ritalin Not a Catalyst for Later Drug Use. New research confirms previous studies that found no evidence that giving Ritalin to children leads to drug misuse later in life. . *Pediatrics*, 1/03.

Study Says All Drugs Stimulate Brain in Same Manner. Stanford University researchers say that all types of drugs, including alcohol, cocaine, amphetamines, morphine, and nicotine, affect neurons in the same part of the brain. Dr. Malenka of Stanford University Medical Center. *Neuron*. 2/20/03

Putin tells Russian government to get serious about drugs and ordered the creation of a new state drug enforcement agency to fight drug abuse due to "great social costs, including a decline in life expectancy and increase in child neglect and crime". Government experts believe between 3-4 million are addicted, 72% of addicts are below age 30. Putin described the ravages of drug addiction in Russia as "like a cataclysm." Agence France-Presse, 2002 MOSCOW, Sept 25 (AFP).

Arab States Battling Addiction In the past decade, drug dependency has increased across the Middle East. "There is a perception among many Muslims, who are prohibited from using alcohol, that other drugs are OK since the Koran does not specifically forbid them. For young Arabs, there is a growing sense of economic discontent combined with a sense that Westerners are having more fun," said Mohamed Hassan, a recovering addict. *Christian Science Monitor*, 8/21/02.