

# [Alcoholism’s impact on family life](https://assignbuster.com/alcoholisms-impact-on-family-life/)

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Throughout history, alcohol has taken many different forms. Its strong taste, ability to alter the mind, and capacity to make people more sociable is favorable among adults who wish to have a good time after a long work week. Although alcohol has its positive aspects, it can inflict serious physical, mental, and emotional damage when used in excess.

Also, it can cause people to commit certain acts that they would never do while sober. In the novel, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie and modern sources, the authors demonstrate how alcoholism affects family life. In the article, “ Children of Alcoholics and Adolescence: Individualization, Development, and Family Systems” by Tony D. Crespi and Ronald M. Sabatelli and in the novel, the authors display how alcoholism can damage the emotional bonds between parents and children. In the article, the authors analyze how having alcoholic parents can cause myriad emotional issues for children, and how this can lead to emotional detachment in the future.

When highlighting the social issues children of alcoholics may possess, the article states, “ Some children from alcoholic family systems cut odd from the family in an attempt to purge themselves of the residual influences… that makes reconciliation with the alcoholic parent, even if the parent attains sobriety, unattainable” (Crespi and Sabatelli 414). This shows that children of alcoholics become forced into a situation where they must break off from their parents in order to be socially successful. This causes the family to become emotionally severed, which means that a normal family lifestyle becomes almost completely nonexistent. Additionally, the author of the novel supports this argument with evidence from Junior’s life. During the holiday season, Junior’s father emotionally devastates him when he leaves his house on an alcoholic excursion: “ He took what little money we did have and ran away to get drunk. He left on Christmas Eve and came back on January 2.

‘ It’s okay,’ I said. But it wasn’t okay… for some reason, I was protecting the feelings of a man who had broken my heart again” (Alexie 150-151). Junior’s sheer disappointment in his father’s actions depicts the emotional trauma alcoholism can cause in children. If his father had resisted his urges to drink his struggles away, Junior would have built a stronger bond with his father over the holidays instead of having to withstand their bond weakening immensely. Although Junior displays trust in his father throughout the novel, these sudden instances of alcoholic spurs weaken his trust with every recurrence.

In both sources, the authors confirm and support the fact that alcoholism damages the emotional bonds between parents and children. In both the article, “ Alcohol’s Involvement in Recurrent Child Abuse and Neglect Cases” by Paul Dietze et al. and the novel, the authors demonstrate how alcoholism can cause parents to physically abuse their children. When summarizing the results of a study on the effects alcohol has on child abuse, the article says that “ as the percentage of children with families with care-giver alcohol abuse increased, so did the proportion of children affected by recurrent child abuse” (Dietze et al. 1792). This shows that not only does alcoholism cause single instances of abuse but also that the chances of multiple instances of abuse are higher when alcohol is added to the equation.

Alcohol is known for being a depressant drug, but this proves that it can still enrage parents enough to inflict physical harm on their children. Supporting this claim, the author of the novel displays alcoholism’s influence on child abuse through Rowdy’s family. While describing Rowdy’s family life, Junior speaks of one instance when “ his father was drinking hard and throwing hard punches, so Rowdy and his mother are always walking around with bruised and bloody faces” (Alexie 16). In most families, child abuse rarely occurs, but the connection that the author makes between Rowdy’s abuse and his father’s drinking shows how there is a correlation between the two. Also, the statement that Rowdy and his mother are always walking around with physical injuries relates back to the article’s findings that children of alcoholic parents are more likely to suffer from multiple recurrences of abuse. Overall, the authors of both sources clearly identify that one of the main problems caused by alcoholism is child abuse.

In the article “ Family Communication Patterns, Family Environment, and the Impact of Parental Alcoholism on Offspring Self Esteem” by Lynne Kelly and Sripriya Rangarajan, and in the novel, both authors establish how alcoholism can cause parental neglect and emotional distance from their children. In the article, the authors test many different aspects of the family life in alcoholic families, and from this study, they concluded that “ parental alcoholism— paternal and maternal is significantly and negatively related to participants’ self-esteem. Second, parental alcoholism is related to family stressors and parental disregard of the child” (Kelly and Rangarajan 667). From this conclusion, one can infer that while alcohol allows parents to relax and forget about their problems, continuous alcohol abuse can cause them to forget about what matters most: their children. One of the most important aspects of family life is parental interaction and bonding, and if this aspect is not taken care of, the child can suffer from self-esteem issues as mentioned in the article.

To continue, in the novel, the author uses Junior’s references to his dad’s alcohol abuse to support the fact that alcoholism causes neglect. When talking about how the parents at Reardon can sometimes be absent, Junior adds, “ I mean, yeah, my dad would sometimes go on a drinking binge and be gone for a week,” which is a radical and unacceptable instance of parental neglect, even in comparison to parents who never show up to their children’s sports (Alexie 153). When Junior says this, he mentions that these weeks of parental neglect have happened multiple times, which shows that the neglect that comes with alcoholism is recurring and not just a simple coincidence. Alcoholism causes one of the key aspects of family life to be destroyed, which means that the rest of this important feature of life is set to fall apart soon after. In general, the authors of both sources support the fact that alcoholism causes parental neglect with substantial amounts of evidence.

By utilizing the Native American families in his novel, the author of The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian and the articles show how alcoholism impacts family life. Throughout their childhoods, people spend most of their time at home with their families, and this can have a large impact on the people they grow up to be. This time spent with family, known as family life, needs to have a certain array of aspects to ensure that the person grows up to be a healthy and functional individual, and if one or more of these aspects is missing, this can impact how the child will function in society. Anything can cause problems, but specifically, instances of neglect, abuse, and emotional distance can destroy a child’s well-being. The most important action a parent can make for their children is to pay attention to and encourage them, which will grant them the self-esteem they need to make it in the harsh reality of modern society. ?