

How substance abuse effects parents and children

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A study conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration between the years 2004 and 2005 shows that the first trimester of pregnancy demonstrates the highest correlation between any sort of substance abuse with infants exposed. On the other hand, there is a decrease in abuse around the third trimester. In the first trimester 7% of any substance used by women has exposed 286, 510 infants, alcohol is the second highest contributors of substance abuse among pregnant women and following closely ahead in first place are cigarettes. 20. 6% of women have used alcohol, 23. 7% have used cigarettes which both affected 843, 158 with alcohol, 970, 041 with cigarettes. In the third trimester the use of alcohol and cigarettes decreased drastically to 6. 7% for alcohol, 13. 7% for cigarettes. The number of infants exposed still remain at a relative high number in the third trimester, alcohol has exposed 274, 321, cigarettes 560, 741 infants. The decrease in substance abuse still does not benefit the parent nor the child developing.

Abuse during pregnancy has more of an effect on the baby's brain because it is still developing. This abuse can still continue on to early childhood development between the parents and the child. It can be either a direct correlation of abuse or an indirect correlation but can cause conflicts for the child such as behavior changes, physical, mental, and sexual abuse or neglect. The final stage for the child is the late adolescent stage. This is where the child becomes a young adult by making many of their own choices. These decisions, however, can be deeply impacted due to the parental abuse and have many factors of health complications. Furthermore, it can push the adolescent to continue on substance abuse if the parents

have been using it as well. This has been a controversial issue ever since drugs have become a major epidemic due to Richard Nixon declaring “The war on drugs” during his presidency in the seventies. This brought an influx of drugs and increased users in the United States. Substance abuse has stayed a major contributor to the deaths in America due to variety of drugs that show up such as stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, etcetera. This is a process that has been repeating over several years because it is a much bigger picture. The ones that are consuming the drugs are not the only ones that are harmed because it ends up affecting all the future generations.

During pregnancy it is very essential for mothers to take care of their health, so their child develops correctly without any complications or birth defects. It has been proven that, “the use of substance effects the women’s fetus, and can cross the placenta” (Leonardi-Bee et al. , 2011). If substance abuse, such as alcohol, is used repeatedly, it can lead to many difficulties. “Mothers who drink more during pregnancy than before were more likely to have had abortions, negatively influence a child’s development and behavior” (Sundelin, Hallberg, Gunilla, Helander, Anders, 2017, p. 446-453). Alcohol also increases the likelihood of infants developing SIDS, which stands for Sudden Infant Death syndrome, that is caused by moderate or excessive drinking. It also causes other health issues such as behavioral problems, impaired attentions, possibility problems with language development, and learning. These effects are not concrete. They are some only possibilities out of many outcomes because it all depends on a variety of factors.

These factors may include whether or not the individual smoked or drank before pregnancy, how often they smoke and drink, if there are different substances or combined substances, the concentration of the substances such as comparing one bottle of beer to one bottle of liquor, etcetera. Once the baby is born during infancy there is a relationship established between the parent and the child. The outcome of substance abuse may cause a different temperament within in the child. The temperment of a child is how easy or hard they are to manage which could be affected later on during preschool when the child isn't able to cope with new situations and other children leading onto poor academic at a young age that may continue onto later years in education. If the child become flustered in negative feedback from peers and teachers they have more likely chance of using a substance, a study conducted in the 1960's with 1, 242 children in Woodlawn, Chicago about the substance abuse from parents may start within children at a young age with personality traits. The study was conducted by Dr. Margaret E. Ensminger, Dr. Sheppard G. Kellam and others at John Hopkins University. They've concluded that boys that are shy " have a lower chance of substance abuse, boys that are aggressive and shy have a much higher chance of substance abuse" (Ensminger, Kellam, 1982, 25-42). For girls it is the opposite they show no signs at a early stage however they are more likely to use substances but not as much as boy in their adolescent stage. Dr Hyman Hops a researcher at the Oregon research Institute said " A major factor that contributes of children using substances in the future is related to the father using alcohol or cigarettes, the father figure impacts the children much more greatly than the mother.

The mother has an impact on children under the age 14 before they enter high school. It is also shown that if the father does use alcohol or cigarettes the children are likely to develop using the same substance as the father but also have a higher risks of using other illicit drugs " (Hops, 1990, 239-258). The parent also abusing the substance can cause conflict among the family due to their judgment being impaired which effects their responsiveness to their child's needs. This could cause the child to be abused physically, mentally, emotionally, sexually, and be neglected. According to the Center on Addiction, it was said that 7 out of 10 child abuse cases involved the parents having an addiction to the substance to have children neglected. Other factors play a role for parents that they may have no control over such as poverty. Poverty is a main factor due to the materialistic value it provides among with basic necessities such as food, water, shelter, clothes. If a family is in a situation where they can't provide they might need to give time away to work in order to provide for things they can't purchase, which may lead to stressful situations, which may result in a coping mechanism for those stressful situations, which victimizes the children by being either abused or barely seeing their caregivers which prevents a child being taught from using substances.

Once the children are in their late adolescent stage they are becoming young adults between the ages of 13-19. Children during this stage they become more separated from their parents and more connected with peers so drug abuse might develop for experimental reasons or because the child's; personal life is at such a crisis, drugs are the only way helpful for the child. Drug use as never benefited anyone including prescription drugs. The

brain isn't fully developed yet until around the age of 25 so usage of substance may cause alterations in development of the brain.

According to Elinore F. McCance-Katz, M. D. , Ph. D has said “ three structures involved in drug/alcohol responses are the nucleus accumbens, amygdala, and prefrontal cortex” (McCance-Katz, p 7). The Nucleus Accumbens is essentially a reward circuit that gives off a chemical known as “ dopamine” which pleasures users when taking substances. The amygdala is the controller of emotion but in this case with drug use its “ responsible for explosive reactions rather than controlled responses” (McCance-Katz, p 8). The prefrontal cortex is the part of the brain that has yet to be fully developed until the age of 25, the prefrontal cortex basically makes judgment and reviews future consequences to a certain action. This can cause adolescent to substantial drug use because of previous family members and peers but not realize the consequences.