

Surname 1

ADDICTION TO OPIATES AMONG TEENAGERS: CAN ANYTHING BE DONE?

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(Course name)

(Date of submission)

Addiction to Opiates among Teenagers: Can Anything Be Done?

Opiates are a large group of depressants used for the central nervous system because of the narcotic effect. This group includes both natural opiates belonging to direct products of the opium poppy: opium, morphine, codeine, and synthetic opiate-like compounds such as heroin, methadone, and fentanyl. Modern youth often uses opiates for a certain narcotic effect and a sense of freedom. However, the effect of opiates is fatal to a young organism with frequent and constant use. The National Institute for Narcotic Addiction conducted a series of studies to determine the most effective ways to overcome this problem among teenagers. Thus, the implementation of the principle of the most remote, but at the same time effective, intervention in the dependence of young people on opiates consists of such measures as individual counseling, group therapy, family therapy, and academic support.

Young people are always tempted to live by their own rules. Teenagers, whose lives are marked by a complex psycho-physiological transition from childhood to maturity, are looking for those areas where they can realize their ambitions and adult needs. Often, bad social environments and a depressing family life can cause a negative influence on the consciousness of adolescents, provoking them to do inappropriate actions such as drug use. The methods of obstructing opiate dependency are often ineffective, as teenagers are a special group that is not subject to traditional preventive therapies. Thus, experts often try to apply methods that are effective for an adult audience. However, surroundings influence adults and teenagers in a different way, which causes effective reasons for a dependence on opiates. According to recent studies, opiates have become popular among teenagers due to the example of their peers and lack of educational work in the family, school, and local healthcare facilities.

Opiates are divided into the subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous, and oral use. The main physiological consequences of opiates on the body are analgesic and euphoric effects. The euphoria comprises drowsiness, a feeling of pleasant warmth, relaxation, and a sentiment of ease

throughout the body. Opiates also cause respiratory depression, and a lower body temperature. The most noticeable sign of their use is myosis (narrowing of the pupils). This sign is a typical feature that is considered the most reliable diagnostic tool for opiate intoxication. In fatal cases, the most common cause of death is respiratory failure. Deaths from overdose occur often among opium addicts when the lethal dose of heroin is large. The fact is that most victims of overdose, as revealed by autopsies, did not just exceed the dose, but combined opiates with alcohol or tranquilizers that potentiated their effect.

The main method of reducing opium addicts is the state system of strict control over the use of drugs and severe penalties for the illicit manufacturing, purchasing, sale, storage, and transportation of narcotic drugs, and the inclination of others to use, cultivate, and grow opium poppy. The legal component of this issue is a significant factor in the process of combating drug addiction. However, this indirect effect does not have a clear interaction with teenagers at the personal level and reduces the effectiveness of preventive tactics in working with narcotic addiction. However, researchers define this method as an additional element in the methods of working with teenagers.

Academic support in this area is a complicated problem, since the spread of precautionary statements about drugs can be reversed and causes unhealthy interest, and the desire to test their actions on themselves. On the other hand, ignorance of the harmfulness of drugs and the danger of the potential formation of dependence that is distributed among young people causes wrong images as "several times will not change anything," "everything needs to be done once in a lifetime," "you can refuse to use it when you want."¹ A distorted opinion about this type of abuse results in a lack of natural caution with respect to opiates and often leads to "trial" use, and accordingly, a further illness. Academic youth support should be the responsibility of a family doctor, and a person with medical experience, as parenting and teacher counseling often causes a

1 Komaromy, Miriam. "New Mexico Treatment Guidelines for Medical Providers who Treat Opioid Addiction Using Buprenorphine," *NM Behavioral Health Collaborative*, 10:1 (2012), 98-99.

protest.

In spite of the fact that preventive ways of working with teenagers who use opiates are not limited to conversations, this form of communication is the most effective. Individual counseling allows teenagers to hear reliable information and analyze it not in a group, but comprehending each fact on their own. As a result, specialists can see the awareness of young people and their process of memorizing, and make certain conclusions. Individual counseling is the most effective method in the case of a social grouping of an individual's environment, a strong influence of peers, and the lack of individual decision-making on health, recreation, and entertainment. Group therapy has the properties of a more general impact on a particular social group. Such a qualitative measure is effective if a therapist or a drug addiction specialist sees the need for a collective discussion on the negative effects of opiates on the human body. Group preventive therapy also allows expanding the spectrum of diagnostic methods. For example, someone in the group may have opiate abuse and has a characteristic change in behavior and psycho-physical condition. Specialists who communicate with teenagers can detect these changes and take the necessary measures for their treatment.

Family therapy is one of the most important ways of communicating with teenagers who are in a risk group, according to the Institute for Narcotic Addiction.² In accordance with research initiatives, co-dependence, or unconscious or conscious condolence, is a common occurrence among relatives and family members of a drug addict. A family can start on the right path with a teenager or show that a healthy life does not include drugs. Moreover, the family often has authority in the lives of teenagers, forming a vision of life path and goals. According to research, many parents still do not notice the problems in their children's lives until the issues cause serious illness. Opioid dependence has a number of social preconditions, but family relationships are also the foundation for understanding and recognizing the problem.

In conclusion, the opioid dependence of teenagers is a problem that should be addressed

by a number of interventions. Specialized therapies and methods of drug addiction may be effective. In addition, teenagers often do not accept the usual methods of preventive therapy (such as school conversations, booklets, and social videos). The personal definition of the goals and results of therapy will allow society to reduce the number of victims of opioid dependence each year.

Bibliography

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