

EFFECTS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE ON ADOLESCENTS.

JACQUILINE WOSYANJU

Introduction/overview.

Approximately 1.1 million adolescents in the united states are dependant on illegal drugs. A further 915,000 are addicted to alcohol.55% oh high school seniors have tried illegal drugs and 29% of these have tried a harder drug than marijuana. In Kenya the issue isn't any different as reports suggest that children as young as eight years old are using drugs.22.7% of elementary school children drink alcohol,68% of university students drink alcohol and 37% of youths aged 10 to 14 years have been introduced to psychotropic drugs. With this statistics we realise that something needs to be done urgently

.

METHODS USED

The methods used for the paper were literature review from
magazines,
internet,
Newspapers
and journals.

Results/Finding

The results show that substance abuse have far more reaching effects to individuals abusing drugs and to their immediate family members.

It also shows that continuous use of substances kills, destroys families, disrupts life at all levels from home to school.

It also robs the poor their chances of escaping poverty and plunges financially secure people into debts.

Effects of substance abuse on adolescents

They are

Traffic accidents

Risky sexual behavior

Juvenile delinquency

Sub-par academic performance

Development problems in the adolescent brain

And finally subsequent death or permanent
injury or disability

- Effects of substance abuse in the family
- Family members suffer as much as the addict and some of the effects are as follows;-
- Financial instability
- Impairment of work abilities
- Reputation
- Interruption of normal life activities
- Greater risk of health problems due to stress

Intervention/prevention measures

School level-Schools should employ school counselors to help the young ones cope with the problem of substance abuse and also educate them about the dangers of using drugs and their consequences.

- Family: The family also is the most important force for any successful initiative on drug abuse prevention, parents can help their children by
 - Striving to be role models
 - Supervising their children's activities
 - By showing love and providing basic necessities
 - By knowing the whereabouts, activities and their children's friends
 - By maintaining and improving family communication through listening
 - By discussing drugs and substance abuse with their children.

- Religious institutions

- make and prepare a drug and substance abuse educational materials available to their members.
- Organize, publish and announce drug and substance abuse prevention campaigns targeting different segments of society.
- Create and provide recreational activities like choirs, concerts and youth camps as positive diversions.
- By assisting substance abuse victims to access treatment centres.

Conclusion.

There is a need for parents, healthcare workers, religious leaders and teachers to be good ambassadors and to enlighten the teenagers/adolescents about the dangers of drug and substance abuse. Also the government needs to focus on suppressing the supply of drugs by securing the country's exit and entry points and should provide cheap treatment and rehabilitation centres.