



SAMHSA'S PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE WELLNESS

Incorporating Wellness Into Recovery

Treating Illicit Drug & Opioid Use in Youth and Young Adults

SAMHSA's Program to Achieve Wellness

Among Young Adults Aged 18-25:ⁱ

- 1 in 4 — or 8 million — have used illicit drugs in the past month
- 7.3% — or 2.5 million — have misused opioids in the past year
- 7% — or 2.4 million — currently have an illicit drug use disorder

For these categories, the percentage of users proportionate to the size of the group was the highest for the young adult group (when compared to ages 12-17 and ages 26 or older).

- Youth who have substance use disorders are more likely to have a psychiatric disorder.ⁱⁱ
- Youth and young adults who meet criteria for an opioid use disorder are three times as likely to have generalized anxiety disorder, and those who use cocaine are almost four times as likely to have post-traumatic stress disorder.ⁱⁱⁱ

Take Action

(for medical, mental health and substance use disorder providers):

- Implement screening to identify substance use concerns^{iv}
- Consider technology-based interventions^v
- Ensure smooth process for referral to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) providers and substance use disorder counseling^{vi}
- Practice safe opioid prescribing systems with clearly defined protocols and procedures^{vii}
- Be aware of the impact of co-occurring psychiatric diagnoses in the adolescent population^{viii}
- Use youth-driven treatment plans to strengthen the influence of current interventions^{ix}
- Educate patients on the health risks of sharing syringes and other drug preparation equipment^x
- Involve the parents (or caregivers) in the treatment process^{xi}
- Support workforce training for providers to develop the skills and knowledge needed to work with youth and young adults and their families

ⁱ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2017). Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-FFR1-2016/NSDUH-FFR1-2016.htm>

ⁱⁱ Welsh, J. W., Knight, J. R., Hou, S. S., Malowney, M., Schram, P., Sherritt, L., & Boyd, J. W. (2017). Association Between Substance Use Diagnoses and Psychiatric Disorders in an Adolescent and Young Adult Clinic-Based Population. *The Journal Of Adolescent Health: Official Publication Of The Society For Adolescent Medicine*, 60(6), 648-652. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.12.018

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Marshall, B. L., Green, T. C., Yedinak, J. L., & Hadland, S. E. (2016). Harm reduction for young people who use prescription opioids extra-medically: Obstacles and opportunities. *The International Journal On Drug Policy*, 3125-31. doi:10.1016/j.drugpo.2016.01.022

^v Marsch, L. A., & Borodovsky, J. T. (2016). Technology-based Interventions for Preventing and Treating Substance Use Among Youth. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 25(4), 755–768. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.chc.2016.06.005>

^{vi} Medication-assisted treatment of adolescents with opioid use disorders. (2016). *Pediatrics*, (3).

^{vii} Thienprayoon, R., Porter, K., Tate, M., Ashby, M., & Meyer, M. (2017). Risk stratification for opioid misuse in children, adolescents, and young adults: A quality improvement project. *Pediatrics*, (1).

^{viii} Welsh, J. W., Knight, J. R., Hou, S. S., Malowney, M., Schram, P., Sherritt, L., & Boyd, J. W. (2017). Association Between Substance Use Diagnoses and Psychiatric Disorders in an Adolescent and Young Adult Clinic-Based Population. *The Journal Of Adolescent Health: Official Publication Of The Society For Adolescent Medicine*, 60(6), 648-652. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.12.018

^{ix} Ibid.

^x Zibbell, J. E., Hart-Malloy, R., Barry, J., Fan, L., & Flanigan, C. (2014). Risk factors for HCV infection among young adults in rural New York who inject prescription opioid analgesics. *American Journal Of Public Health*, 104(11), 2226-2232. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2014.302142

^{xi} Cerdá, M., Bordelois, P., Keyes, K., Roberts, A., Martins, S., Reisner, S., & ... Koenen, K. (2014). Family ties: Maternal-offspring attachment and young adult nonmedical prescription opioid use. *Drug And Alcohol Dependence*, 142231-238. doi:10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2014.06.026