



## Adolescent substance use and families

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### ABSTRACT

**BACKGROUND:** Impacts of substance use are related to changes in the brain and cognition which are associated with subsequent serious difficulties in adulthood.

**KEYWORDS:** substance use, adolescence, family risk factors, poor family management, parental attitudes.

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### INTRODUCTION

Heavy use during adolescence predicts numerous difficulties with substances later in life (1-3). Research showed that there is a strong relationship between adolescent's risk behaviors including drug and alcohol abuse and parenting behavior (4-6). Given their importance in adolescent health, it is important to study the relationship of different familial factors in substance use, especially during the adolescence years.

Previous studies have found that family environment plays an important role in adolescent's substance use by being an external monitor of their behavior that, in time, influence the use and outcome of substance use of adolescence (7, 8).

Findings revealed that family factors were associated to substance use. In both countries, children those who rated less satisfaction with their relationships with their parents and those who were less closely monitored, were also more likely to be heavy substance users than other students. Consequently, these results are important because it showed the critical role of parental relationships on substance use among

teenagers. The complex processes by which familial factors have the greatest influence on risk behavior in adolescents, in relation to substance use, are also crucial to understand.

Parental attitudes favorable towards drug use usually assessed as how wrong do parents feel it would be for his/her adolescent to drink beer, wine or hard liquor (i.e., vodka, whiskey or gin), how wrong do parents feel it would be for his/her adolescent to smoke cigarettes, and how wrong do parents feel it would be for his/her adolescent to smoke marijuana.

In a study, Licanin (2015) examined the association between parents-adolescent relationship and drug abuse (6). The main goal of the research was to demonstrate how specific aspects of parental behavior associated with drug abuse of their children. The results indicated that parental use of tobacco and alcohol support implicitly similar behavior their children.

In this sense, it is evident that there is a close relationship between family factors, and adolescents' substance use.

### DISCUSSION

The heavy substance use in adolescents was associated with familial risk factors such as poor family management and parental attitudes favorable towards substance use. The effects of each variable might have different implications, and this would be demonstrated by its impacts on heavy substance use that has been shown to be affected by these factors.

Future studies could investigate whether substance use in adolescents improve through intervention by targeting family management in high-risk families. Such studies would have long-term potential implications and would provide information for prevention and

intervention programs to reduce the adverse effects of substance use and improve the physical and psychological health of individuals. In this way, substance use education and

intervention programs aiming to help reduce substance use may address the role of family management and parental attitudes favorable towards substance use.

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