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New substance abuse treatment resources focus on teens

Guide on treating teen substance abuse and online education for healthcare providers now available

Resources to help parents, health care providers, and substance abuse treatment specialists treat teens struggling with drug abuse, as well as identify and interact with those who might be at risk, were released today by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). The release came before the start of National Drug Facts Week, an annual observance to educate teens about drug abuse. NIDA is part of the National Institutes of Health.



Adolescents' drug use, as well as their treatment needs, differ from those of adults. Teens abuse different substances, experience different consequences, and are less likely to seek treatment on their own because they may not want or think they need help. Parents can work with health care professionals to find appropriate treatment, but they may be unaware that the teen is using drugs and needs help. According to the [2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#), only 10 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds needing substance abuse treatments receive any services.

“Because critical brain circuits are still developing during the teen years, this age group is particularly susceptible to drug abuse and addiction,” said NIDA Director Dr. Nora D. Volkow. “These new resources are based on recent research that has greatly advanced our understanding of the unique treatment needs of the adolescent.”

A new online publication, [Principles of Adolescent Substance Use Disorder Treatment: A Research Based Guide](#), describes the treatment approaches. Highlights include:

- Thirteen principles to consider in treating adolescent substance use disorders
- Frequently asked questions about adolescent drug use
- Settings in which adolescent drug abuse treatment most often occurs
- Evidence-based approaches to treating adolescent substance use disorders
- The role of the family and medical professionals in identifying teen substance use and supporting treatment and recovery.

To increase early screening of adolescent substance abuse, the [Substance Use Disorders in Adolescents: Screening and Engagement in Primary Care Settings](#) educational module was created. The online curriculum resource for medical students and resident physicians provides videos demonstrating skills to use in screening adolescents at risk for or already struggling with

substance use disorders. Both the patient and physician perspectives are highlighted. Although created as a training tool, the resource is also free to anyone in the public seeking information on how to interact with teens at risk for addiction. The resource was developed by the NIDA [Centers of Excellence for Physician Information](#), in collaboration with Drexel University College of Medicine and the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, both in Philadelphia.

NIDA has many other resources that will be promoted during National Drug Facts Week, Jan. 27-Feb. 2, 2014. For more information on this observance, go to:
<http://drugfactsweek.drugabuse.gov/>.

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The National Institute on Drug Abuse is a component of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIDA supports most of the world's research on the health aspects of drug abuse and addiction. The Institute carries out a large variety of programs to inform policy and improve practice. Fact sheets on the health effects of drugs of abuse and information on NIDA research and other activities can be found on the NIDA home page at <http://www.drugabuse.gov>, which is now compatible with your smartphone, iPad or tablet. To order publications in English or Spanish, call NIDA's *DrugPubs* research dissemination center at 1-877-NIDA-NIH or 240-645-0228 (TDD) or fax or email requests to 240-645-0227 or drugpubs@nida.nih.gov. Online ordering is available at <http://drugpubs.drugabuse.gov>. NIDA's media guide can be found at <http://drugabuse.gov/mediaguide/>, and its new easy-to-read website can be found at <http://www.easyread.drugabuse.gov>.

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