

Family and Drug Abuse Prevention

- The goal of prevention science is to prevent, delay the onset of, or moderate problems such as substance abuse, associated disorders, and psychopathologies.
- In the area of drug abuse, prevention research has focused on the study of risk and protective factors that may identify at risk individuals or groups.

- Metaanalyses of prevention efforts with delinquent and drug-abusing youth suggest that the single most effective form of prevention involves working with the total family system.
- Interventions aimed at youth often have fewer lasting effects than family-focused prevention interventions.
- Meta-analytic studies suggest that the effect sizes for family interventions are among the largest of all interventions with high-risk and delinquent youth.

- Families are the primary institution for raising children who are the future of any society.
- Family socialization processes are the primary predictors of children's behavior.
- The importance of family risk and protective processes in the development of drug abuse and dependency is acknowledged in most empirically tested, multicausal etiological models of substance use.

- Interventions designed for the family target risk and protective factors specific to the family context as well as interactions between the family and other contexts that may involve the child or have an impact on the child.
- Research has identified a number of family-level risk and protective factors associated with initiation of drug use.

- Protective factors in the family include consistent and contingent discipline; a strong parent-child bond; high levels of supervision and monitoring; and parental warmth, affection, and emotional support.
- Research has demonstrated the importance of the family as an intervention context by showing, in longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses of prevention interventions, that enhancing parenting behaviors that have been shown to be protective can have a positive influence on the child.
- Specifically, they demonstrated that skill in parental monitoring can be taught and that this skill is a viable method of preventing early-onset drug use in children.

Additionally, research indicates that protective family factors can moderate the effects of risk factors.

Research has found that the risk of associating with peers who use drugs was offset by protective family factors such as parent conventionality, maternal adjustment, and strong parent-child attachment.

Research stresses the importance of the ongoing role of the family in the socialization of children well into the adolescent years.

Family prevention interventions have successfully used behavioral, affective, and cognitive approaches to target a variety of family behaviors.

Among them are parent-child interaction strategies, communication skills, child management practices, and family management skills.

A major factor that distinguishes family-based prevention interventions with positive outcomes from other parenting programs is that, similar to successful school-based programming, they concentrate on skill development rather than on simply educating parents about appropriate parenting practices.