## What sorts of treatments are available?

* Adolescents who are treated earlier for their substance abuse are more likely to have success in their treatment.
* Younger adolescents (middle school age) are more active in their recoveries than older adolescents (high school age).

Curry, J., Silva, S., Rohde, P., Ginsburg, G., Kennard, B., Kratochvil, C., . . . March, J. (2012). Onset of alcohol or substance use disorders following treatment for adolescent depression.*Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 80*, 299-312.

* A systemic substance abuse program consisted of hourly once a week meetings with a counselor, two parent meetings, action learning lessons, and guest speakers.
* The use of a systemic substance abuse program by school counselors for adolescent females proves to decrease substance abuse, provide less favorable attitudes towards substance abuse, increase the knowledge of consequences in substance abuse.
* Active involvement in school activities promotes the progress of students in their treatment for substance abuse.
* Group solution-focused therapy is most helpful for students dealing with issues of substance abuse.

Froeschle, J. G. (2007). The efficacy of systematic substance abuse program for adolescent females. *Professional School Counseling*, *10*, 498-505.

## Implications for School COunselors

* Increase staff awareness of the potential for their support of the students in regards to substance abuse.
	+ Emotional support from school staff decreases the chance of adolescent substance abuse.
* Increase education of staff and parents about the signs of depression and the potential for substance abuse as a result of that depression.
	+ Depression can be a predictor for substance abuse.
* Remain aware of family problems and the potential issues of substance abuse based on those problems.
	+ Family alcohol use can be a predictor for substance abuse.
* Stay up to date on the school policies of reporting behaviors to administrators and parents.
	+ School districts have different policies on when to report.
* Remain aware of the resources in your area.
	+ Areas can provide different treatment facilities for students with issues of substance abuse.
* In order to ensure that the relationship with the administrators is strong, counselors should constantly communicate with administrators to see their perspectives and desired responses to certain situations.
	+ Positive relationships with administrators can ensure the success of the relationship.

By: Blair L. Staton

# School Counselors and Adolescent Alcohol Abuse

Date of publication

## What causes and contributes to adolescent substance abuse?

* Adolescents with separation anxiety are less likely to abuse substances because of their intense connection to their parents.
* General and social anxiety are not connected to substance abuse.
* Depression may be a consequence of early substance abuse as well as a risk factor for substance abuse early in adolescence (early middle school aged).
* Adolescents that report perceiving high emotional support from teachers were less likely to participate in substance use.

McCarty, C. A., Rhew, I. C., Murowchick, E., McCauley, E., & Vander Stoep, A. (2012). Emotional health predictors of substance use initiation during middle school.*Psychology of Addictive Behaviors, 26*, 351-357.

* Adolescents are more likely to abuse alcohol when they are exposed to alcohol in their social environments.
* Abuse of alcohol decreases when the parent supervision increases.
* Family alcohol use increases the likelihood that adolescents will abuse alcohol.

Browning, A. R. (2008, November 14). Friends, family, schools, and neighborhoods contribute to adolescent alcohol misuse. *Society for Research in Child Development.*

## When should confidentiality be broken?

* Confidentiality can be tricky. Breaking confidentiality should be based on professional judgment, ethical and legal standards, and professional and personal values and morals.
* There is no true consensus among school counselors about when to break confidentiality.
* Counselors should update administrators and supervisors about the ongoing research on confidentiality and factors that go into the decisions on when to break the confidentiality.

Lazovsky, R. M. (2008). Maintaining confidentiality with minors: Dilemmas of school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, *11*, 335-346.

## When should a counselor notify the administrator?

* When behaviors are observed, counselors are more likely to report to administrators.
* In order to ensure a strong relationship, counselors should communicate with administrators to see their perspectives.
* Counselors should ensure that they are receiving supervision from other counselors.

Moyer, M. S. (2012). When is it ethical to inform administrators about student risk-taking behaviors? Perceptions of school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, *15,* 98-109.

INTERVIEW WITH A HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR

* How often do students come in and talk about alcohol use?
	+ The scenario I have more often is for a student to come to talk about a loved one who struggles with alcohol abuse.
* Have you seen students who have had to go to rehab centers or seek treatment for alcohol abuse?
	+ In the county, when a student has substance violations, they are suspended and have to go through the Virginia Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program.
* If a student reports to you that he/she is using alcohol, what is the policy for reporting to the parents?
	+ We have to report anything that is potentially harmful, which this is.
* How often do students talk about alcohol in comparison to other substances?
	+ The substances I hear most about are marijuana and pills; alcohol would be a third.
* Is there a school policy for alcohol reporting?
	+ Yes, if the student is suspected to be using in that instance, it has to be immediately reported to the administration.

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