

The Impact of Substance Use Disorder on the Family

Beth Bitler, MSA, CAAP, CFRS

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Topics for discussion:

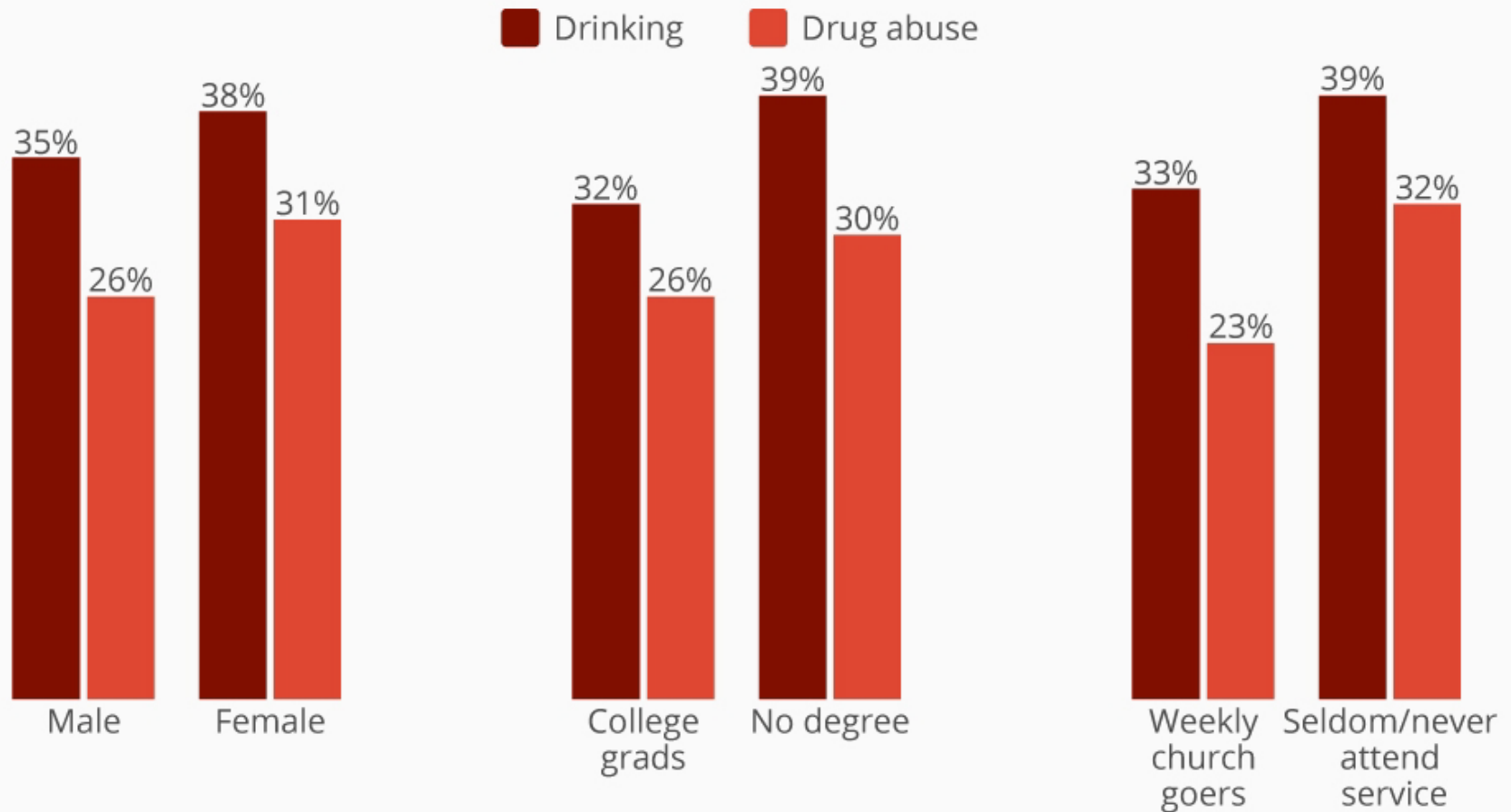
What families know
and don't know
about SUD and
recovery

How family
members are
affected by a loved
one's substance use
and recovery

Helping and
supporting families
in recovery

Substance Abuse Touches Around Half of U.S. Families

"Has drinking/drug abuse ever been a cause of trouble in your family?"



Around 1,000 U.S. adults surveyed in July 2019, multiple answers possible

@StatistaCharts

Source: Gallup

statista

Family symptoms

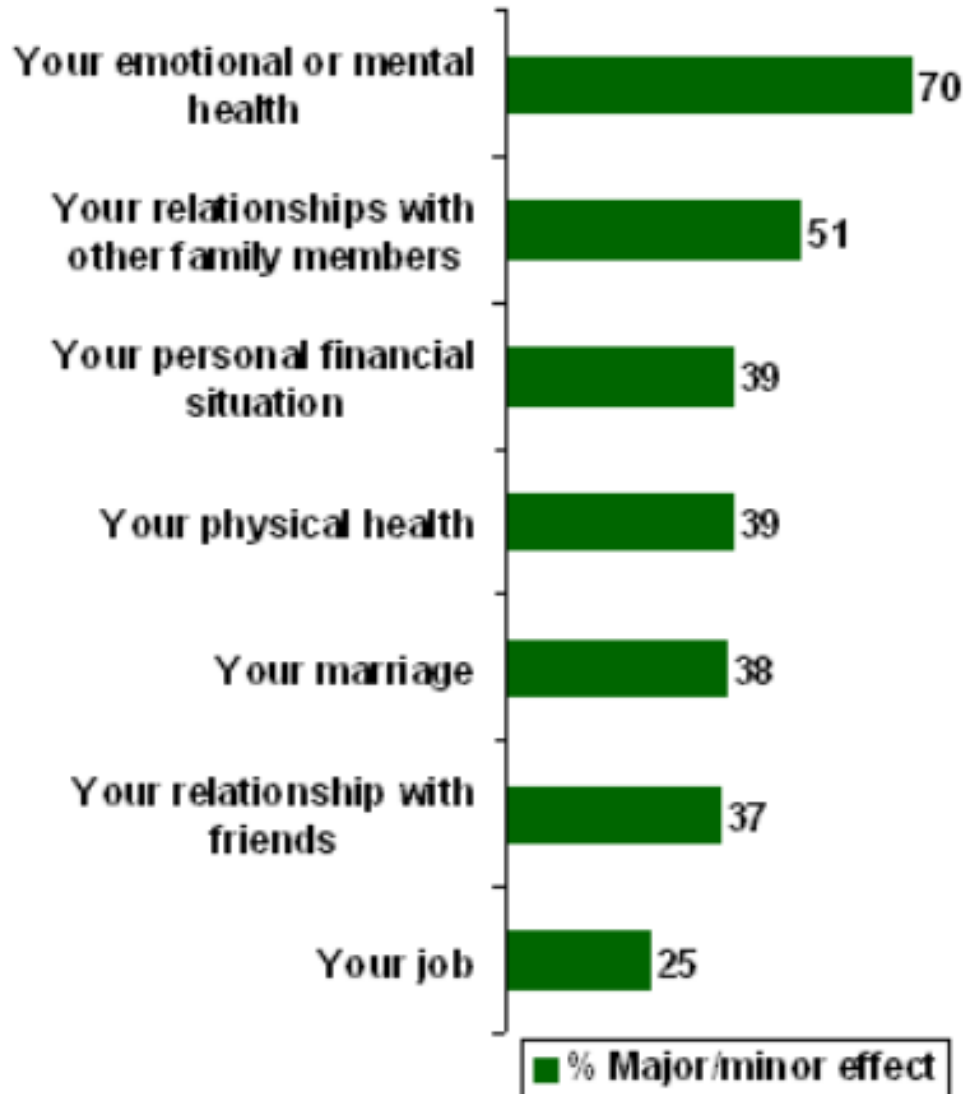
- Obsession with the loved one's substance use, whereabouts, etc.
- Compulsion- trying to control, force, protect, nag or otherwise change someone else's behavior
- Denial- minimizing use, rationalizing, lying
- Problems -health, relationships, job, money, legal



Family symptoms

- Withdrawal - feeling “at loose ends” when there is no one to take care of, worry about or control
- Relapse- returning to old behaviors and patterns of interacting with the addict
- Increased tolerance of unacceptable behavior - over time, unhealthy coping skills take over
- Progression - as loved one’s disease gets worse, so do problems for the family

“Has your family member’s SUD had a major or minor effect on these areas of your life?”



Gallup, 2016



Family belief systems

“If I had been a better parent/spouse this would not have happened.”

“We can only be a happy family if he stops using.”

“I won’t ever be able to trust or forgive them again. Period.”

“Treatment doesn’t work! As soon as he comes home, he starts using again.”



Family belief systems

“I can’t do anything to help my loved one until he hits rock bottom.”

“What I do does not affect what my loved one does.”

“My loved one didn’t stand a chance. We have addicts on both sides of the family.”

“If she would just stay away from that boyfriend of hers, she’d be fine.”

See handout FAQs for Families



Recovery

Recovery is not an event; it's a process!

- Is accomplished one day at a time
- Is a lifelong commitment
- Means making changes in virtually every aspect of life
- Requires sustained decisions and actions
- Is most “successful” when family is also recovering

See handout “Ways to Help Your Loved One in Recovery.”



Recovery for the family

Learn about

Learn about SUD and recovery:
•read, attend open meetings, talk to recovering people

Focus on

Focus on your own needs and self-care

Attend

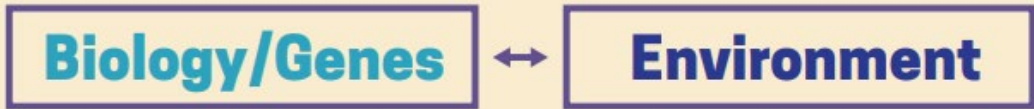
Attend support meetings like Al-anon, Nar-anon or SMART Recovery Friends and Family meetings

Find

Find supportive friends or family members

Stay

Stay positive and keep good boundaries with recovering family member. Practice healthy communication.



Genetics
Gender
Mental disorders

Chaotic home and abuse
Parent's use and attitudes
Peer influences
Community attitudes
Low academic achievement

DRUG

Route of administration • Effect of drug • Early use • Availability • Cost



From: "Drugs, Brains and Behavior," NIDA

Risk and Protective Factors for Drug Use, Misuse, and Addiction

RISK FACTORS

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Aggressive behavior in childhood ^{13,14} ⊗	Self-efficacy (belief in self-control) ¹⁵ ✓
Lack of parental supervision ^{14,16} ⊗	Parental monitoring and support ¹⁶ ✓
Low peer refusal skills ^{13,17,18} ⊗	Positive relationships ^{17,19} ✓
Drug experimentation ^{14,20,21} ⊗	Extracurricular Activities ^{17,22} ✓
Availability of drugs at school ^{21,23} ⊗	School anti-drug policies ¹⁷ ✓
Community poverty ^{24,25} ⊗	Neighborhood resources ²⁶ ✓

From: "Drugs, Brains and Behavior," NIDA

Supporting
families
impacted by SUD



Thoughts on working with families

Encourage families to attend counseling, support groups and practice recovery strategies whether or not their loved one is in recovery.

Teach families the three C's:

You didn't CAUSE it.

You can't CONTROL it.

You can't CURE it.

Like their recovering loved ones, families benefit from trauma-informed care and communication.

Remember that family members can each have very different memories and experiences with the person with SUD. Try to see their point of view.

Support families in setting boundaries with their recovering loved one.

Avoid shaming and stigmatizing language.

When talking with families, balance discussions of hope with realistic expectations.

Act as a listening ear for family members, help them practice good communication, and validate feelings throughout the recovery process.



Resources

► Websites:

SMART Recovery www.smartrecovery.org/family. Find meetings, download or purchase materials, watch videos.

12-Step Programs: www.al-anon.org and www.nar-anon.org. Find meetings, download or purchase materials, watch videos. Daily readers are especially helpful to many families.

National Institute on Drug Abuse: www.nida.nih.gov. Families can get information on drugs of abuse, treatment, prevention and the latest research.

Shatterproof: www.shatterproof.org. Learn about stigma and language, the science of addiction, how to find treatment and other topics.

Resources

- ▶ Handouts: *10 Ways to Support Your Loved One in Recovery and FAQs for Families* (for families) and *Talking to Your Family About Recovery* (for clients).
- ▶ Books:
 - “*Beyond Addiction: How Science and Kindness Help People Change*,” Jeffrey Foote et al.
 - “*Family Strategies*” and “*It Will Never Happen to Me*,” Claudia Black.
 - SMART Recovery Family and Friends Handbook*.
 - “*Loved One in Treatment? Now What!*” Lisa Fredericksen.
 - “*Everything Changes*,” Beverly Conyers
 - “*Tending Dandelions: Honest Meditations for Mothers with Addicted Children*,” Sandra Swenson

Contact information:

Beth Bitler

bbitler@outlook.com

717-982-9676

www.familyrecoverytraining.com

