

NIDA Releases New Guide on Treating Teen Substance Abuse



The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is releasing new resources to help parents, health care providers and substance abuse treatment specialists treat teens who are struggling with drug abuse.

The resources also provide advice on identifying and interacting with teens who may be at risk.

The resources are being released in advance of National Drug Facts Week, January 27 to February 2, when communities and schools around the country will host events to allow teens to learn how drugs affect the brain, body and behavior.

One of the new resources is an online publication, [Principles of Adolescent Substance Use Disorder Treatment: A Research Based Guide](#). The guide includes principles to consider in treating adolescent substance use disorders; frequently asked questions about adolescent drug use; evidence-based approaches to treating adolescent substance use disorders; and the role of family and medical professionals in identifying teen substance use and supporting treatment and recovery.

NIDA notes that teen drug use and treatment needs differ from those of adults. Teens are less likely to seek treatment on their own, because they may not want or think they need help. Only 10 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds needing substance abuse treatment receive any services, according to the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

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