

Key Issues: Substance Use Disorders

eLearning Guide

As a child welfare social worker, you will work with families experiencing substance use disorders throughout your career. It is important to have some basic information to guide your work.

- Substance use disorders can be defined as mild, moderate or severe
- Substance use disorders occur when the recurrent use of alcohol and/or drugs causes clinically and functionally significant impairment, such as health problems, disability, and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home.
- An estimated 21.5 million (8.1%) of Americans ages 12 and older were classified with a substance use disorder in 2014.
- More than 8 million children nationwide live with parents who are substance abusers

In this training, you will hear the term substance use disorder in lieu of substance abuse. The reframing of this reference captures the spectrum of use, abuse, and dependence (otherwise known as addiction). Because some terms get over used, misunderstood and become linked to negative stereotypes, it is important to use more neutral language whenever possible. You will notice that some of the articles, videos and external resources use the term substance abuse rather than substance use disorder. The terms are used interchangeably. The intent of this course is to use strength-based family friendly language.

This eLearning guide was created for you to use in conjunction with the eLearning to take notes. You will bring this handout with you to the Key Issues classroom training, and the trainer will provide you with the correct responses.

1. Psychoactive drugs have the following types of names:

- _____ are used to describe the molecular structure of the drug.
- _____ are given by the pharmaceutical manufacturers.
- _____ are informal, change frequently, and may vary based on the region or culture of the area.

2. What are “uppers” and their effect?

3. What are “downers” and their effect?

4. What are “all arounders” and their effect?

5. What is the impact of substance use (by caregivers) on children?

6. What is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and its effect on children?

7. What are some of the principals of effective substance use disorder treatment?

8. What are some basic substance use disorder treatment options?

NOTES:

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