Notes/Local Resources:

References

1 Schuckit, M.A., An overview of genetic influences in alcoholism. Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 36(1); S5-14, 2009

2 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Data spotlight: More than 7 Million Children Live with a Parent with Alcohol Problems, 2012. Available at: http://media.samhsa.gov/data/spotlight/Spot061ChildrenOfAlcoholics2012.pdf

Resources

DoD and VA Specific Resources

Military Crisis Line
800-273-8255, service members and veterans, press 1

Military One Source
www.militaryonesource.mil
800-342-9647

My HealtheVet
www.myhealth.va.gov

inTransition Program
http://intransition.dcoe.mil
800-424-7877
Outside the US collect: 314-387-4700

DoD Deployment Health Clinical Center
www.pdhealth.mil/clinical/resources-4

External Resources

National Institute on Drug Abuse
www.drugabuse.gov

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
www.niaaa.nih.gov

SAMHSA's National Helpline
Provides 24-hour free and confidential information and treatment referrals in English and Spanish;
Call 800-662-HELP (4357) or 800-487-4889 (TTY)

SAMHSA's "Behavioral Health Treatments and Services" Website
www.samhsa.gov/treatment

VA/DoD Evidence-Based Practice

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Substance Use Disorder Affects Families

Resilience

Reintegration

Recovery

Facts on substance use disorder

- One of the most important signs of a substance use disorder is using drugs or alcohol even when using them causes severe physical, psychological and emotional pain
- Substance misuse can get worse over time, hurting the person using drugs or alcohol and the entire family
- Substance abuse/dependence is a serious problem:
  - It affects people of every race, ethnicity, gender and location
  - In 2014, about 8 percent of people in the United States were affected by a substance use disorder
  - Excessive alcohol and illicit drug use cost the United States approximately $416 billion per year in crime, lost work productivity, foster care, medical care and other social problems
- Substance abuse/dependence is an illness that can be treated; millions of Americans and their families are in healthy recovery from substance use disorder

Does your family member have a substance abuse/dependence problem?

When your family member has been drinking or using drugs does he or she do any of the following (check all that apply):

- ❑ Embarrass you?
- ❑ Blame you for things?
- ❑ Break promises?
- ❑ Drive under the influence?
- ❑ Make bad decisions?
- ❑ Behave badly?

If one or more of these are true for your family member, he or she may be misusing drugs or alcohol.

1. Are the men in your family drinking more than 14 drinks a week or four drinks on one occasion?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No

2. Are the women in your family drinking more than seven drinks a week or three drinks on one occasion?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No

If one of these is true for your family member, talk to him or her about contacting a health care provider.

Help is available and possible for your loved one!

What are the possible effects of substance abuse/dependence on my family?

Substance abuse/dependence causes stress on the family, which can lead to many family problems.

- Health effects: Substance abuse/dependence can increase the risk for HIV, fetal alcohol syndrome, premature death, injury and increased risk taking
- Effects on children: Children whose parents have a substance use disorder have an increased risk of the following problems:
  - Alcohol misuse: They are about four times more likely than the general population to develop alcohol problems[1]
  - Conduct problems: They may feel frustrated and have an increased risk of aggressive behavior and crime
  - Academic problems: Learning difficulties, lower concentration and disruptiveness
  - Emotional problems: Anger, poor self-esteem, withdrawal and sadness
- Marital problems: When a family member has alcohol use disorder, there is an increased chance of divorce
- Legal problems: Problems such as unpaid bills, driving under the influence, and crime
- Financial problems: Loss of a job and money; a family member may forget to pay or ignore bills because of substance abuse/dependence

Reminders for families

- Substance use disorder affects the entire family and close friends, even if only one person has it
- **It's not your fault!**
  - It is a disorder
  - You need and deserve help for yourself and your family members
  - Your family member with the disorder is responsible to make it stop
- People with a history of substance use disorder in their families are more likely to have a substance use disorder
- **You are not alone!**
  - More than 10 percent of U.S. children live with a parent who misuses or is addicted to alcohol[2]
  - Thousands live with parental drug abuse
  - A lot of people come from families with a substance use disorder

ACTION STEPS

1. Ask for help: If someone close to you misuses alcohol or drugs, the first step is to be open about the problem and ask for help
   - Children who have alcohol or drug abuse/dependence in the family can get help by talking with adults and peers such as teachers, doctors, school counselors and support groups
2. Support your loved one's efforts to seek help: Finding services for your family also supports your loved one's next steps toward recovery
   - Family support and motivation are important for successful treatment
   - Treatment works
3. Find out about treatment options: There are many treatments that work for addiction; the final step to recovery is when alcohol or substance abuse/dependence stops
4. Talk with children: It is important to talk with children about what is happening in the family and to help them talk about their fears and feelings; children need to trust the adults in their lives and to believe that they will support them