



# Adolescent Substance Abusers Who Deal Drugs

## Clinical and Developmental Considerations

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# What We Know

- Adolescent substance abuse remains a public health problem
- Adolescents are using drugs with highly addictive pharmacological properties
- The influx of “technically legal” designer drugs (i.e., bath salts) further compromises future functioning
- Drugs are easy to get / a growing proportion of adolescents are “drug suppliers”



Found via <http://www.visionsteen.com>

# Adolescent Drug Suppliers

- 6% - 9% of youth in urban settings involved
- 12% of high school students deal at school
- 25% of students report that someone deals on school grounds



Found via <http://uwire.com>

# What about adolescent substance abusers who deal drugs?

- Limited if any work looking at the clinical population of adolescent substance abusers who also deal drugs
- They are in our treatment programs and are we ready to clinically and developmentally respond?



Found via <http://www.narcanon.org>

# Purpose

- Assess the proportion of adolescent substance abusers receiving substance abuse treatment who deal drugs
- Examine whether there are drug and psychosocial differences between those who do and do not deal drugs
- Examine predictors of drug dealing using a developmental framework
- Discuss clinical and developmental implications

# Methods

As part of a larger psychometric study:

- Adolescents from 2 Philadelphia-region treatment programs were recruited
- Obtained parental consent & adolescent assent
- Self-report data, urines, and breathalyzers collected at baseline (within one week of treatment entry) and at 1, 3, 9 months post treatment discharge

# Measures

- Comprehensive Adolescent Severity Inventory (CASI) \*
- Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI)
- Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children (DISC)
- Family Adaptability And Cohesion Scale (FACES-IV)

# Subject Demographics (N=159)

Mean Age	15.6 years (SD = 1.1)
Male	72.7%
Minority	49.6%
Deals Drugs	46.5%



# Subject Demographics (N=159)

Not in school	37%
AOD onset	11.8 years (SD = 2.5 )
Clinical disorder	12.9 years (SD = 1.8 )
First illegal behavior	13.6 years (SD = 2.7)

# Type of Substances Used by Frequency

<b>% Used _____ At Least Weekly</b>	<b>Non-Dealers</b>	<b>Dealers</b>
Alcohol	31%	39%
Marijuana*	67%	93%
Cocaine*	5%	16%
Opiates	7%	16%
Hallucinogens*	11%	27%
Amphetamines	4%	10%
Inhalants	2%	5%
<b>Mean Days Used Month Prior to Treatment Admission</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>

\* Denotes significant differences

# Substances Use Severity Indicators

% Endorsing Items Indicating _____	Non-Dealers	Dealers
Narrowing of Behavioral Repertoire*	56%	86%
Negative Consequences	59%	70%
Loss of Control*	30%	78%
Physical Dependence*	41%	66%
Steals for Substances*	20%	49%
Sex for Substances	4%	5%

\* Denotes significant differences

# Delinquency and Violence Exposure

	Non-Dealers	Dealers
Illegal Behavior Prior to Age 13	37%	38%
Spent Time in Detention*	17%	55%
Crimes Against People	82%	87%
Crimes Against Property	84%	90%
Witnessed the Murder or Attempted Murder of Someone	30%	32%
Witnessed Shootings, Stabbings, or Other Forms of Severe Violence*	40%	62%
Witness Arrest of Family or Friend	76%	76%
Domestic Violence*	33%	57%
Victim of Crime *	23%	40%

\* Denotes significant differences

# Household Dynamics

	Non-Dealers	Dealers
Parental Monitoring	16%	13%
Inconsistent Consequences*	29%	53%
Household Member Conflict / Chaos	37%	46%
Difficulty Communicating	37%	46%
Repeated Insults / Criticism	26%	29%
Ignored / Silent Treatment	20%	22%
Household Drugs or Crime (active)*	48%	76%
Parentified / Subsistence Issues*	49%	85%
“Loathes” someone in household	20%	28%

\* Denotes significant differences

# Psychosocial Status

	Non-Dealers	Dealers
Friends Use Drugs	99%	99%
Friends in Trouble With Law	88%	89%
Friends not Loyal / “Dissed”*	63%	80%
Initiates Fights	28%	37%
Life Lacks Purpose	70%	80%
Low Self Esteem*	21%	41%
Impulse Control Issues	65%	52%
Mood Disorder	63%	61%
“Severe” Disorder	8%	11%
Mental Health Tx History	59%	42%

\* Denotes significant differences

# Key Developmental Issues

- Role development (and its timing)
- Identity development / Community vs. Societal approval
- Identity development / Sense of self / Sense of belonging
- Peer influences
- Future orientation / Conventional success
- Social & behavioral development / Need for respect
- Self-regulation (impulse and affect control)

# Developmental Risks

	Non-Dealers	Dealers
<b>Timing of Role Formation:</b> Parentified Child*	49%	85%
<b>Identity / Community Approval:</b> Household Crime (active)*	48%	76%
<b>Peer Influences:</b> Problem Friends	99%	99%
<b>Future Orientation/Conventional Success:</b> In school or working	37%	37%
<b>Identity: Developing Sense of Self:</b> Low Self Esteem*	21%	41%
<b>Social/Behavioral Development &amp; Need for Respect:</b> Lacks Respect From Others*	47%	63%
<b>Self Regulation:</b> Impulse Control	65%	52%

\* Denotes significant differences



# Developmental Predictors of Drug Dealing

Independent variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>OR</i>	[95% CI]
<b>Developmentally Anchored Risks</b>				
<i>Timing of Roles:</i> Assumes Adult Role in Family	1.99*	0.45	7.30	[3.01, 17.70]
<i>Identity Formation / Community Approval:</i> Household Crime	.91*	0.43	2.48	[1.07, 5.77]
<i>Peer Influences:</i> Friends use / engage in illegal activity	-0.17	0.79	.85	[0.25, 2.89]
<i>Future Orientation / Conventional Success:</i> Not in School / Not Employed	0.27	0.37	1.31	[0.63, 2.74]
<i>Developing Sense of Self:</i> Low Self Esteem	0.93*	0.39	2.54	[1.19, 5.43]
<i>Social/Behavioral Develop. &amp; Need for Respect</i> Lacks Respect from Others	0.88*	0.44	2.42	[1.02, 5.70]
<i>Self Regulation</i> Impulse Control Issues	-.66	0.45	.52	[1.02, 5.70]

# Summary of Findings

## Adolescent substance abusers who deal:

- Have more serious substance use profiles
- Have extensive histories of violence exposure
- Experience household subsistence issues
- Assume role outside of developmental period
- Possess a low sense of self
- Lack respect / denied social standing
- Have many criminal role models



Found via <http://www.newbeginningsshc.com> 5/30/2013

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# Moving Forward

- Substance abuse treatment alone will be insufficient to sustain sobriety and abstinence
- Consideration of developmental issues must be front and center when designing and implementing treatment plans and interventions:
  1. Gain legitimate access to success
  2. Gain a favorable sense of self through traditional sources (e.g., volunteer opportunities, service learning)
  3. Gain access to pro-social groups rather than dealer businesses, addict groups

## Moving Forward (cont.)

- Consideration of developmental issues must be front and center when designing and implementing treatment plans and interventions:
  4. Develop social network of appropriate role models (e.g., certified peer recovery specialists, young people in recovery)
  5. Utilize trauma-informed care with an emphasis on trauma-informed CBT
    - a. violent behavior to mask fears
    - b. identity of “someone not to be messed with”
    - c. vendetta mentality

# Always Remember...These are still KIDS

## Thank you!

## Questions?

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Image found via [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)