**IDENTIFYING EARLY WARNING SIGNS: Addressing youth substance use**

Many factors influence whether a young person tries alcohol or other drugs.

**Teen years: The critical time of vulnerability**

Young people who use alcohol or other drugs before age 15 are five times more likely to develop a substance use disorder.

**Screening and early intervention: A practical, proven approach**

Advancing the approach: Our strategic initiative

**Goals**

**AVAILABILITY**

Ensure health and other youth providers have knowledge and skills for screening and early intervention services.

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Screening and early intervention practices for accessibility and advance implementation of intervention services.

**APPLICATION**

Conduct research and advance screening and early intervention services.

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Screening and early intervention:

**time of vulnerability**

Teen years: The critical time of vulnerability

**Many factors influence whether a young person tries alcohol or other drugs.**

- **Cost:** Young people who try alcohol or other drugs are at a higher risk of developing a substance use disorder. Early use increases the likelihood of continued use and progression to more severe disorders.

- **Peer influence:** Peer pressure is a significant factor in substance use. Young people may feel pressure to use substances to fit in or avoid rejection.

- **Dealing with stress:** Substance use can be a coping mechanism for stress, anxiety, and other emotional challenges.

- **Family history:** A family history of substance use disorders can increase the risk of developing a disorder.

**Stages of development**

- **Childhood:** This is a time of growth and development. Early trauma and stress can cause lasting harm.

- **Adolescence:** Substance use and experimentation are common causes of injury and death. More than 90% of adults with addiction developed the problem between the ages 12 and 20.

- **Young adulthood:** This group has the highest rate of injury and death from substance use. Of those ages 18 to 25, almost 19% have use disorders, compared to 7% of adults age 26 or older.

**Identifying early:**

The Hilton Foundation partners with healthcare and other professional associations, educators, advocacy organizations, and others to advance screening and early intervention.

**Goals**

- **Improve funding for, access to, and implementation of intervention practices**

- **Conduct research and advance screening and early intervention services**

- **Increase funding for, access to, and implementation of screening and early intervention services**

- **Improve screening and early intervention services**

**Screening**

- **Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**

- **Anxiety, ADHD, and bipolar disorder**

**Intervention**

- **Adolescents and adults with addiction**

- **A range of influences affect development and resilience, making it hard to predict who will develop substance use disorders.**

**Prevention and early intervention**

- **Repeated use poses serious social and health problems.**

- **Changes in behavior can provide opportunities to intervene.**

- **This screening reveals any alcohol use and risk for excitement and experimentation.**

- **This group has the highest rate of injury and death from substance use.**

- **Of those ages 18 to 25, almost 19% have use disorders, compared to 7% of adults age 26 or older.**

**Youth are especially vulnerable to developing substance use disorders, which may occur any time during the early intervention.**

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