Which of the risk factors for substance use are present in your community of origin, or a community in which you currently live or work? Are there other factors that were left off the list?

**Loujan Downs**

1 posts

**Re: Topic 1 DQ 1**

    In my local community, there are individual characteristic risk factors such as being near several densely populated urban areas. Social norms of family, friends, and peers contribute to substance use as the area I live in is emerged in sports culture, entertainment, and freestyle life where parents and caregivers willingly expose children to substance use. When adolescents see a certain pattern of substance use in the home as a social norm, they may be exposed to it outside of the home too and in a worse environment. For example, a teen who sees their parents under the influence or using, may try to handle it on their own in a peer environment which actually changes the possible outcomes. Due to the nature of adolescent development, it is easy to fall into a demographic category, social category, behavioral category, and individual category here. According to an older article, Beman, (1995) states that demographics are useful in determining what ages and genders may be susceptible to substance abuse. So, for addressing adolescent substance use, demographics are a big deal in my area even in present day 2018 considering how much the population has grown since 1995.

    It is important to not only think of these risk factors previously mentioned but negative risk factors which are much more prevalent in adolescents such as common high risk or multiple risk behaviors like unprotected sex, poor academic achievement, violent behavior, and poor role models. “Given that teen behavior is greatly influenced by peers and existing social relationships, role modeling and mentoring may be constructs of particular value in efforts to influence health-risk and health-protective behaviors among adolescents.” (Yancey, Grant, Kurosky, Kravitz-Wirtz, & Mistry, 2011, p. 2)

Beman, D. S. (1995). Risk factors leading to adolescent substance abuse. Adolescence, 30 (117), 201–208. Retrieved from https://lopes.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ofs&AN=508555974&site=eds-live&scope=site

Yancey, A. K., Grant, D., Kurosky, S., Kravitz-Wirtz, N., & Mistry, R. (2011). Role modeling, risk, and resilience in California adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *48*(1), 36-43. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2010.05.001

My response:

**Candice Beggs**

1 posts

**Re: Topic 1 DQ 1**

Risk factors can be “divided into four major categories: demographic, social, behavioral, and individual” (Beman, 1995). In our community, we see addiction hit all types of demographic areas. The rich, middle class and poor areas are affected by substance abuse of all types. We see several babies being born addicted to heroin and methamphetamine. This doesn’t only cause severe health care issue but could increase the risk of developmental problems, cognitive and behavioral issues. Many of the adult (parents) are struggling with addiction and we are seeing an increase in the teen use of MDMA drugs, heroin and methamphetamines. There is also an increase of violent crimes being committed with both adults and juveniles. One of the biggest problems in our community is there aren’t enough resources or resources are extremely limited for young offenders and young substance abuse users.

Beman, D. S. (1995). Risk factors leading to adolescent substance abuse. *Adolescene,*30 (117): 201-8. <https://lopes.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ofs&AN=508555974&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

My response:

**Sherri Galloway**

1 posts

**Re: Topic 1 DQ 1**

Risk factos increase a youth''s likelihood of abusing drugs (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2013). The more risk factors that a child is exposed to, the greater the chances are that they will abuse drugs. In the small community which I grew up in, some of the risk factors that were present include low income, peer pressure, drug abusing parents, undiagnosed mental health disorders, abuse, poor academic performance and poor social skills. Just because a person is exposed to risk fctors, it does not necessarily mean that they will actually abuse substances.  If there are protective factors present in the youth's environment, this decreases the influence that the risk factors will have in relation to drug abuse (NIDA, 2013).

When I worked as a residential substance abuse treatment volunteer, I discovered that many adolescents begin using drugs because their friends were using or because they witnessed their parents using drugs.  In a society in which being accepted is a high priority, teens give in to the pressure of their friends. The youth I worked with relayed that substances made them feel more sociable or more normal amongst their friends. Substance abuse is considered the norm with adolescents in my small community and the pressure is overwhelming for those who try to live a life free of substances. There are programs in place to support those who abuse substances; however, more resources could be put in place to help these who are struggling to maintain a drug free life.

National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2003, October 1). Preventing Drug Use among Children and Adolescents. Retrieved from https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/preventing-drug-use-among-children-adolescents-in-brief

My response