



ASSISTANCE IN RECOVERY

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Adolescent Interventions

Intervention services are the most immediate and effective way to help your struggling child access recovery. Assistance in Recovery's clinicians recognize that behavioral health crises can be frightening, confusing and debilitating when dealing with an adolescent and that sometimes families and parents need to be rescued as much as the child does.

Increasing Abuse Among Adolescents

There is growing concern across the United States that adolescents and young adults are increasingly vulnerable to the effects of drugs of abuse and substance abuse disorders. The National Institute on Drug Addiction (NIDA) has found that peer relationships, family, school, and social or cultural norms can act as protective factors while early intervention with risk factors (e.g., aggressive behavior and poor self-control) often has greater impact on changing a child's life path away from problems and toward positive behaviors.

What are the risk factors for adolescents and addiction?

Many factors have been identified that help differentiate those more likely to use and abuse drugs from those less vulnerable to addiction or mental health behaviors. Factors that are associated with greater potential for drug abuse are referred to as "Risk Factors." Please note, however, that many young adults at risk for abuse of drugs and alcohol or eating disorders do not start using drugs or become addicted. Also, addiction risk factors for one adolescent may be quite different than those for another.

Risk factors for addiction in young adults in the United States today include: early aggressive behavior, lack of parental supervision, substance abuse, drug availability and poverty. Risk Factors for drug abuse among youth and adolescents represent challenges to an individual's emotional, social, and academic development.

For young children already exhibiting serious risk factors, delaying intervention until adolescence will likely make it more difficult to overcome risks. By adolescence, children's attitudes and behaviors are well established and not easily changed. (NIDA, Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents)

What does it mean to be an addicted youth?

Addicted children and young adults are trapped in their behaviors and cannot simply quit on their own. They have an illness that requires biomedical treatment. For youth ages 12 to 17, an estimated 1.1 million persons (4.9% of this population) needed substance abuse treatment in 2002. It is essential to understand when dealing with



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children and adolescents suffering from addiction that their brains have been altered by alcohol, drug or behavioral abuse. They need addiction treatment.

How does addiction affect the adolescent body?

Warning signs of adolescent drug use include a drop in school performance, irritability, apathy, mood change (including depression), poor self-care, weight loss, over-sensitivity to questions about drinking or drugs, and sudden changes in friends.

Screening devices should include routine medical examinations and the use of urine analysis to confirm a diagnosis when necessary.

Adolescent drug and alcohol abuse results in higher risk of suicide because of the mind-altering affects of the substances – often in combination with the reasons that the young person may have begun experimenting with drugs in the first place. Clearly, many young people with emotional conflicts begin using drugs to “medicate” their emotional distress, but quickly find themselves in more trouble due to poor decisions, lower grades and conflicts with family. Still worse, many of the drugs that young people initially take to “feel better” tend to deplete the brain of the chemicals that provide for mood regulation.

Help! I have a loved one that needs help with his or her addiction.

Although a small percentage of young adults are able to recover from addiction without help, the majority of individuals need assistance. With treatment and support, many individuals are able to rebuild their lives. It may be helpful when talking with your child or young adult, to have a third party present that is professionally trained and knowledgeable about addiction.

The Solution: A Family Intervention and Youth Intervention

Assistance in Recovery (AiR) specializes in helping families deal with adolescent alcohol and addiction concerns, mental health issues and eating disorders. Early intervention in high risk and substance abuse behaviors is essential when helping children and young adults realize their incredible potential.

1. Get out of crisis

AiR will meet with the family to assist in making a healthy decision about their fears for the child and what is and what is not acceptable behavior or circumstances within their family. AiR takes the time to educate the family about the disease and provide a variety of individualized care options and resources, as appropriate to their specific situation.

Together, AiR and the family will create a plan that will both offer options for the individual as well as set up healthy boundaries. Your family can stop being affected by the disease of addiction and its and disruptive behaviors.



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2. Into the solution

Once AiR and the family members have created their boundaries and agreed on the options they will offer, together you will immediately address the young adult. A family meeting will be called and usually begins by addressing the addict by each member of the intervention explaining their concerns and how the behaviors are affecting them personally. Once the family has shared, the interventionist will lay out the agreed upon set of options for the individual and facilitate an entrance into an appropriate treatment center.

Call us at 800-561-8158 today and tell us about your situation, learn more about how to initiate an intervention and **what to expect** from the process.