

Recovery-Oriented Justice Initiatives (ROJI):

A Paradigm Shift in Addressing Substance Use in
the Justice Systems

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DISCLAIMER

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Unique Moment in Time in the United States

The pandemic, coupled with the addiction epidemic, has raised awareness across the nation of the impact of isolation and the problems associated with addiction.



The Silver Linings: Truly a Turning Point


- Research over past 20 years has led to a much greater understanding of addiction as a chronic yet treatable and preventable condition
- Paradigm Shift – "RECOVERY-ORIENTED"
 - From Medical Model to Recovery Model
 - Addiction/recovery don't just happen inside the body
 - Social and community aspects to both



The Silver Linings:

- Prognosis for substance use disorders is quite good – majority of people who seek help do achieve sobriety.
- Juvenile and criminal justice reform are happening across the country.

Perfect Storm: ROJI and CJ/JJ Reform



RECOVERY- ORIENTED JUSTICE INITIATIVES (ROJI)

- Recognizing the chronic nature of addiction, we need to look at it just like we look at other chronic conditions.
 - Preventable
 - Earlier the intervention, the better the prognosis
 - Ongoing support and monitoring may be necessary for those with high problem severity and low recovery capital
- Juvenile courts can serve as unique opportunity for early interception: Problem lies in the duration between onset of problem and onset of recovery intervention and the significant harm that can accrue in the interim.

Surgeon General's Report—November 2016

*Facing Addiction in
America:*

*The Surgeon General's
Report on Alcohol,
Drugs, and Health*

The image shows the front cover of the Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health. The cover has a dark purple background. In the center, the title "FACING ADDICTION IN AMERICA" is written in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. Below the title, a thin white horizontal line separates it from the subtitle "The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health", which is written in a smaller, white, italicized serif font. In the background, there is a faint, circular seal of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, featuring an eagle and the words "DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES".

FACING ADDICTION IN AMERICA

*The Surgeon General's Report on
Alcohol, Drugs, and Health*



The Surgeon General's Report

- Alcohol and drug misuse cause devastating public health and safety consequences, including tolls on individuals, families, and communities.
- Alcohol/drug misuse are involved in all types of crimes, including interpersonal violence, and child abuse and neglect.

The Surgeon General's Report: Alcohol, Drugs, and Young People

- The earlier people try alcohol or drugs, the more likely they are to develop a disorder.
- People who first use alcohol before age 15 are four times more likely to become addicted to alcohol at some time in their lives.

Source: Dawson, D.A., Goldstein, R.B., Chou, S.P., Ruan, W.J., & Grant, B.F. (2008).




Source: Adobe stock image.

The Surgeon General's Report: Alcohol, Drugs, and Young People

- There is an overwhelming tendency for substance use to begin in adolescence and peak during young adulthood.
- **Preventing or delaying** young people from trying substances is important for reducing the likelihood of more serious problems later.



Why are Adolescence and
Early Adulthood Such Risky Periods?

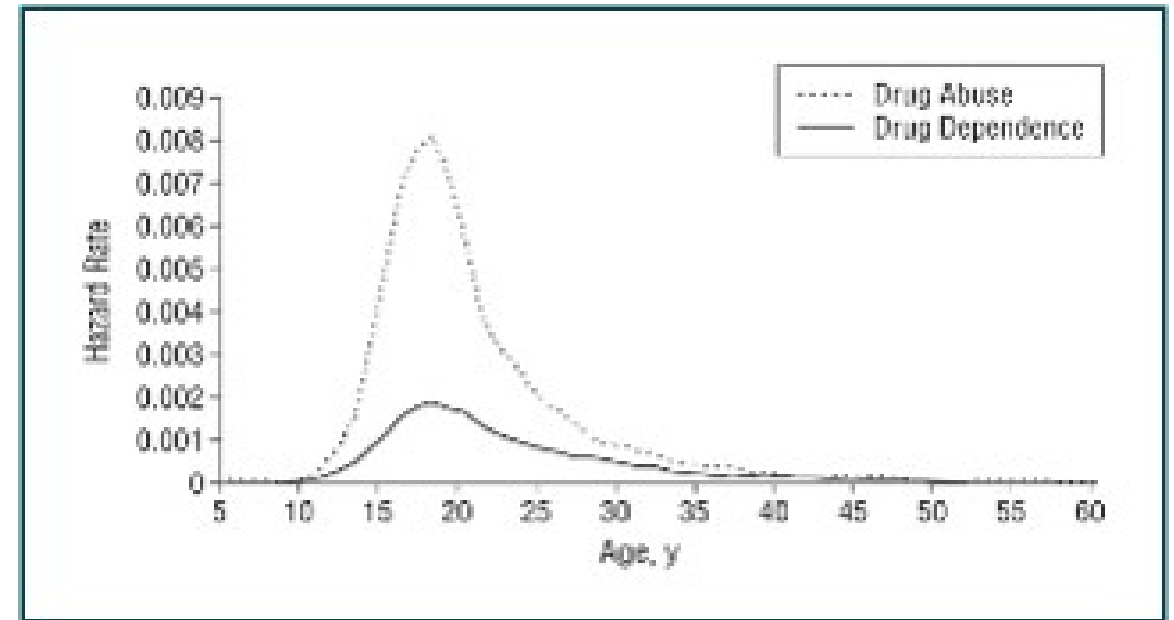


Young Brains are Different From Older Brains

- Alcohol and drugs affect the brains of adolescents and young adults differently than they do adult brains.
 - Adolescent rats are more sensitive to the memory and learning problems than adult rats.
 - Conversely, they are less susceptible to intoxication (motor impairment and sedation) from alcohol.
- These factors may lead to higher rates of dependence in these groups.

Source: Hiller-Sturmhofel, S., & Swartzwelder, H.S. (2004/2005). Alcohol's effects on the adolescent brain: What can be learned from animal models. *Alcohol Research & Health*, 28(4), 213-221.

Addiction is an Adolescent Disease




Source: Compton 2007.

The Reality of Addiction in the United States

The links between
substance use disorders
and criminal offending
are well-documented.



Source: [This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#).



Juvenile Justice System Plays Key Role

- Juvenile Justice System has **untapped potential to serve as an early interception and turning point for youth with substance use issues.**
- As the gatekeeper to this system, prosecutors must be aware of the research and latest developments within this field.

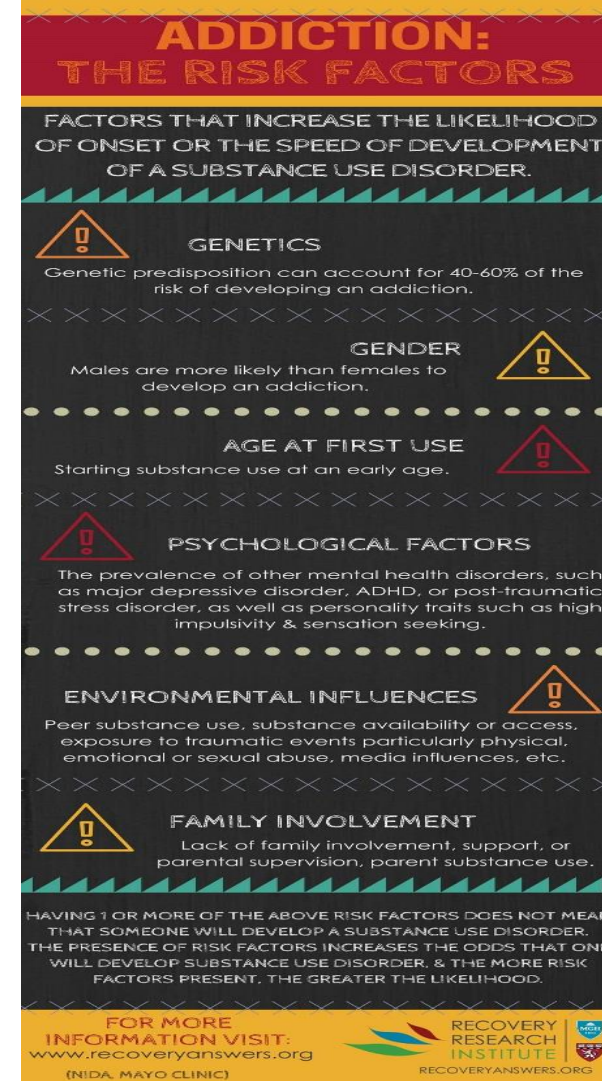


Prevention

- Raise awareness within your community.
- Target the predictors:
 - Decrease the risk factors.
 - Increase the protective factors.

Risk Factors for Addiction

- Genetics.
- Gender.
- Age at first use.
- Psychological.
- Environmental:
 - Family, home, neighborhood, peers.
- History of physical or sexual abuse.





3 Key Points on Risk Factors

- No single factor is determinative.
- Most risk factors can be modified.
- Adolescence and young adulthood are particularly critical at-risk periods.
 - Majority of those suffering from addictions *started using as adolescents and met clinical criteria by age 20-24.*



Marijuana

- No matter what state you are from, it is not legal for adolescents.
- Increasing evidence base around the dangers of marijuana to the developing brain.

Source: Dr. Nora Volkov (2019), National Institute of Drug Abuse.

“Love, Hope, and Random Drug Testing”

Using the leverage of
the justice system to
turn lives around in a
positive way.





Source: Adobe stock image.

An arrest can be a window of opportunity – creates willingness to change.

DR. DAVID BEST:

- RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION PARALLELS DESISTANCE FROM OFFENDING:
 - Both involve changing inside and out




Recovery Capital

Personal: Skills, Traits, Resilience,
Financial

Social: Networks, Connections,
Mentors

Community: Community,
Housing, Jobs, Recovery Support



Recovery capital: Linking personal, social, and community assets

- One thing we know for sure: cannot do it alone and that recovery is **an intrinsically social process.**
- Personal capital grows through the support of the groups we belong to and the nurturance of the context and environment.
- Supporting recovery growth requires engaging the positive components of the social networks and the broader community.
- The more you use, the more you gain.

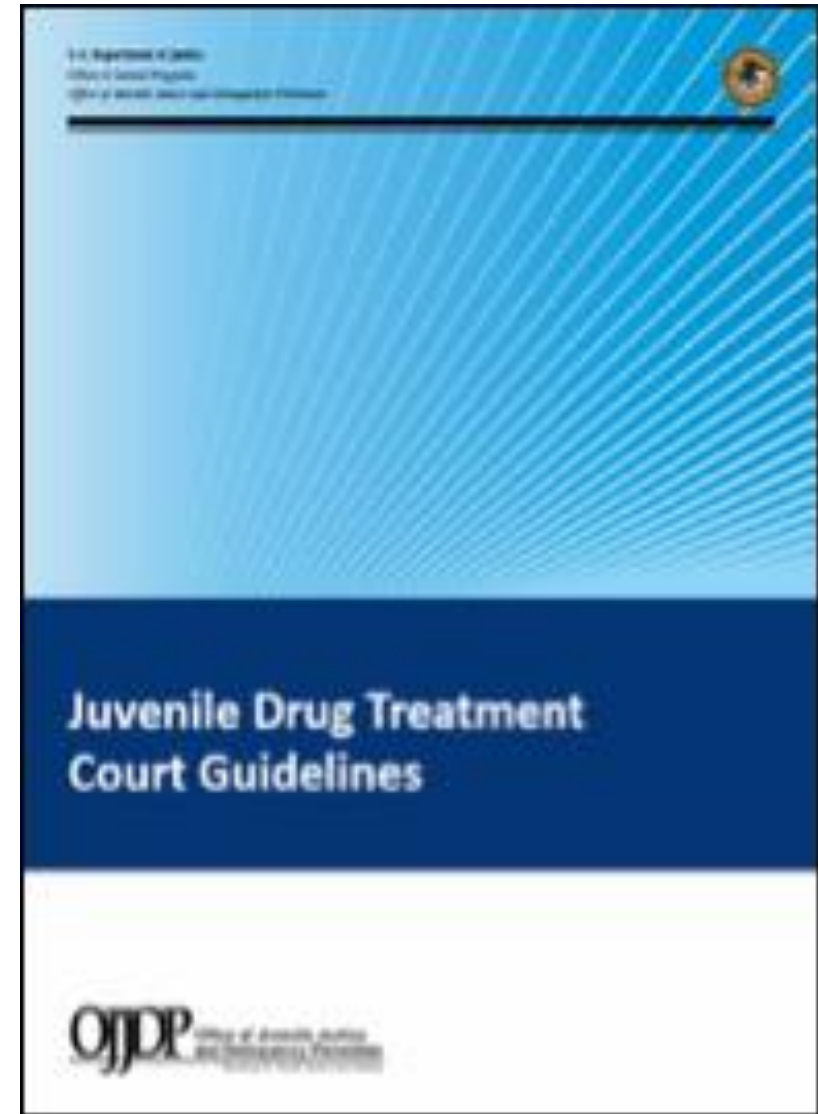


DIVERSION:

The Pivotal Role of the Prosecutor

Juvenile Drug Courts


<https://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/250368.pdf>





Adolescent SUD Treatment

- Family therapy.
- Individual counseling.
- Generic group counseling programs.
- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).
- Motivational interviewing/enhancement therapy.
- 12-step facilitation.
- Medication Assisted Treatment for alcohol and opioid dependence (in conjunction with behavioral treatment).



Adolescent Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care (AROSC) Project

**Dr. Jacqueline van Wormer,
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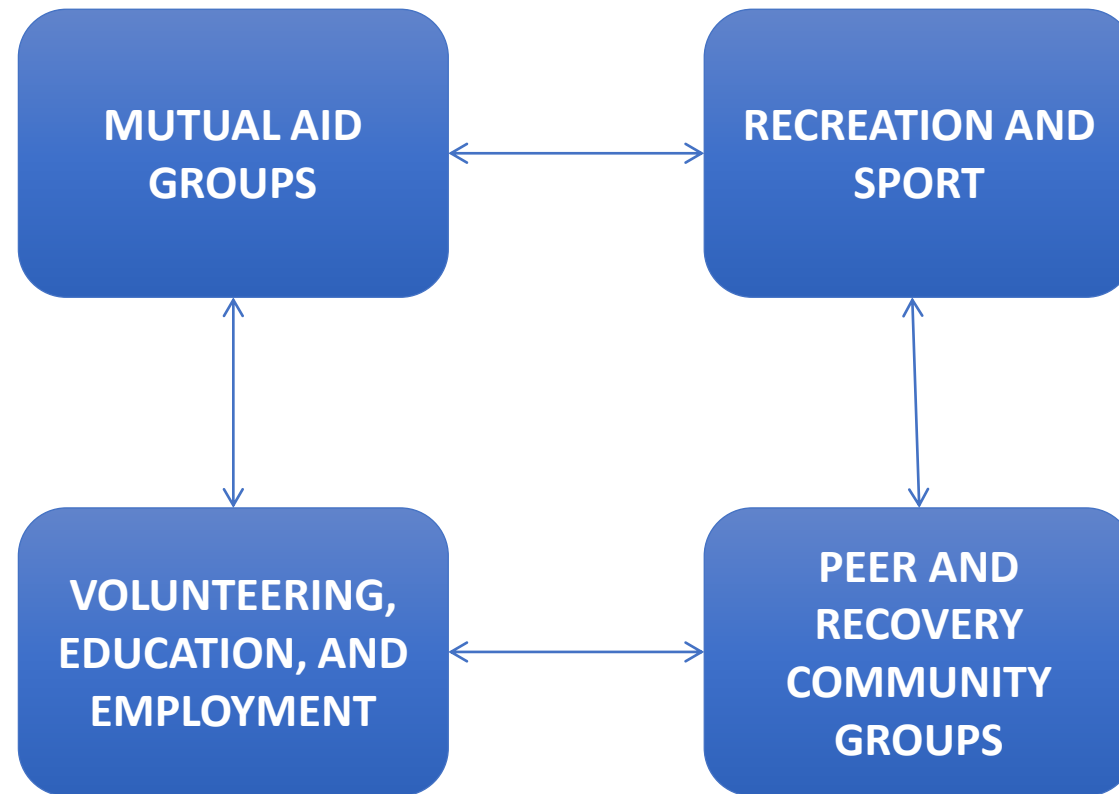
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What to link to



Second Chance Study

- Diversion program for substance misusing offenders.
 - Voluntary engagement in regular coached sports sessions and participation in football teams.
- Landale and Best, 2012.



Source: Adobe stock image.



Second Chance Study

- Significant beneficial impact on both substance use and offending, underpinned by a number of mechanisms:
 - Developing a **positive sense of identity**, including a sense of self-efficacy (addict to athlete).
 - Perceived improvements in **physical health** and **well-being**.
 - Developing **positive social networks**.
 - Identifying **role models** in recovery, so that participants had a chance to observe successful recovery and learn from it.
 - A **sense of hope and positive vision** for the future.



Take-Away Points

- Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to impact of drugs and alcohol.
- Prevention and early intervention are critical for this population.
- For those with severe substance use issues, what happens after treatment can be more important than what happens during treatment.

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

