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SUBSTANCE ABUSE (DRUGS AND ALCOHOL) ON TEENAGERS.

Substance abuse is an over indulgence and dependence on a drug or other chemicals. Substance abuse is more prevalent than commonly realized, with up to 25% of teens using illicit drugs .

Substance abuse is more common among teenagers than among the general population. The average teenagers will take four or five drugs during summer or winter, with 82% of substance, including illicit drugs.

Substance abuse is difficult to detect because the signs and symptoms of this behaviour are often subtle, self-reports of substance use may be misleading or infrequently elicited physicians may fail to routinely screen for use, and substance abusing teens may seek little or no medical care.

The incidence of substance abuse among teenagers has continued to increase thus contributing to the growing problem of substance abuse in teens. The highest rate of alcohol and drugs use in the north among teenagers, with 6 hundred boys experiencing alcohol problems.

Africa has huge young and vulnerable population which has become the target market for the illicit drugs

industry . The threat of increasing consumptions of illicit drugs among young people and youths.

The four general categories of substances abused by teenagers are central nervous system depressants, including alcohol, sedatives, anxiolytics and hypnotics; stimulants including cocaine and amphetamines; opiates and hallucinogens/psychotomimetic, including lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) and phencyclidine (pcp) ,these substance are associated with both abuse and dependence disorders. Alcohol use in teenagers is a major public health problem and the focus of wide spread media attention .

Use of alcohol , illicit drugs and other psychoactive substances in teens can lead to multiple health and social problems for both boys and girls .

Substance abuse in teenagers is also universal problem, and it exists in all major cities and towns drugs of choice may refer to illegal drugs.

The Impact of substance use on their personal health is a public concern. Generally the teenagers use different types of drugs such as alcohol, cocaine, cannabinoids, opiates, amphetamines, benzodiazepines and methadone.

The teratogenic effects of alcohol are well established .One of the most widely chronicled problems attributed to alcohol is drowsiness.

In development countries, self medication is not uncommon, but the practice is guided because people are enlightened and could derive adequate information from various sources.

One major consequence of self medication that has not been properly given serious attention is substance abuse. This could be a problem especially in rural communities such as in Nigeria , particularly among the youths , where native concoctions mixed with alcohol in form of palm wine and locally made gin are consumed on regular basis .

Although efforts aimed at reducing substance abuse and its associated health hazard are intensified in many countries. It is still a major problem especially in developing countries. Because of its adverse social-economic and health impact.

In Nigeria , official corruption and increasing political instability have resulted in defective functional health institutions. Though largely empirical and observational evidence suggests that the practice may be high in rural areas with poor terrain health facilities , high illiteracy level and poverty . Some of the substance used are locally formulated mixtures with ingredients capable of resulting in abuse with serious health Hazards on their personal self .

Global health risk report, psychoactive substance use is among the top 20 risk factors for death and disability world wide . There is an increasing trend of people to use multiple substances, either together or at different times, further increasing risks. Psychoactive substance use is now common among Nigerian teenagers and is now a major public health issue.

Despite this alarming fact, it has been reported that health care providers do not routinely check for psychoactive substance used among teenagers .

Although the etiology of substance abuse remains under at the present time, studies have revealed a significant genetic basis for alcoholism , with a re-entrance of 50% to 60%. Other factors that may be involved in increasing one's susceptibility to substance abuse problems include life stressors or with poor coping skills, limited social support systems, easy access to alcohol and illicit substance, previous traumatic crisis, and identify/self esteem problems .

Those teenagers with mental health disorder, eating disorder. Appear more likely to develop substance abuse problem. Teenagers should be well educated on substance abuse to curb this problem and reduce the percentage of teenagers consuming the illicit drugs.