

Substance Abuse Treatment Guidelines for PCPs

1 in 4 twelfth graders, 1 in 5 tenth graders, and 1 in 10 eighth graders say they have vaped in the last month.

Due to the prevalence of substance abuse among teens screening and education about substance use should start early. Click [HERE](#) to visit the national institute on drug abuse to see the trends among high school teens. Remember that prevention and treatment of comorbidities can be part of the best defense in the battle against substance abuse.

Evidence based treatments for substance abuse among adolescents includes multisystemic therapy, multidimensional therapy, CBT, motivational interviewing and 12 step groups. Pharmacotherapy can help support in certain situations, however, data of its use with teens is limited.

First step is screening! Boston children's hospital has some great resources: Use the S2BI as a screening tool. Click [HERE](#) for the Screening to brief Intervention (S2BI)

Clear treatment steps for any situation can then be outlined in the SBIRT tool. Click [HERE](#) for Adolescent Screening, brief intervention, referral for treatment (SBIRT) tool. This includes the CRAFFT screening and pointers about motivational interviewing.

Commonly used substances among teens:	Facts and treatment pearl
Marijuana	Is the most frequently used drug among teens. Short term use has shown impaired short-term memory, paranoia, impaired motor coordination and decision-making capacity. Heavy/chronic use is correlated with decreased IQ, and increased risk of psychosis in vulnerable adolescents.
Alcohol	1:3 Student's report drinking by 8th grade. Withdrawal prevalence is low amongst teens and should be managed within an inpatient setting.
Vaping	Overall cigarette use amongst youth has decreased over the past 10 years; however, e-cigarette use has spiked. Click HERE for a good overview of vaping mechanisms and terminology. Click HERE for Boston Children's Hospital treatment tips for smoking and vaping.

Opiates

Abuse and diversion of prescription opiates has been increasing amongst youth ages 12 and up relative to other substances of abuse.

Overdose can be deadly due to respiratory failure.

In addition to a UDS, remember to assess for STI. Also look for signs of injection including track marks, erythema at the injection site, bruising, abscesses, and scarring.

Relapse prevention medications: Buprenorphine/naloxone, Methadone, Naltrexone XR. Best long-term outcomes are with monitored use of opiate substitutes.

Additional Useful Resources

- https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Resource_Centers/Substance_Use_Resource_Center/Home.aspx?hkey=9972e034-df05-4f58-985a-b2b345a2f01d
- <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/substance-use-and-prevention/>
- Teen [drug abuse](#)