



Peer Health Educators

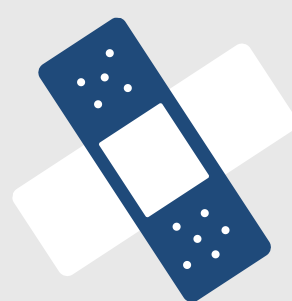
A LOOK AT ADDICTION

Addiction is one of the top public health issues in the US today.



1 ADDICTION IS A DISEASE

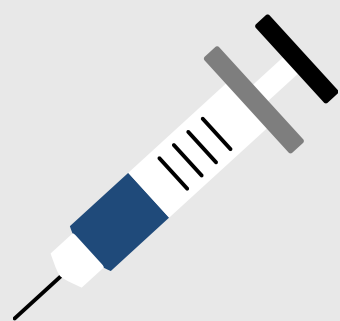
Addiction is a disease just as diabetes and cancer are diseases. It is not a weakness. People of all ages, classes, and ethnic backgrounds can get an addiction. Drug addiction is a brain disease because the abuse of drugs leads to changes in the structure and function of the brain.



2 IT CHANGES THE BRAIN

"Drug addiction is a chronic disease...drugs change the brain. Physically changes it. And these changes are very long lasting, and persist for a long period of time after the person stops taking the drug."

~ Nora D. Volkow, MD, Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse



3 ACCORDING TO THE U.S. SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA), IN 2017:

21 MILLION

People 12 or older who needed substance use treatment. That's about 1 in 13 people.

4 MILLION

People 12 or older who received any substance use treatment at a specialty facility

19%

People who needed substance use treatment who ACTUALLY received the care the needed



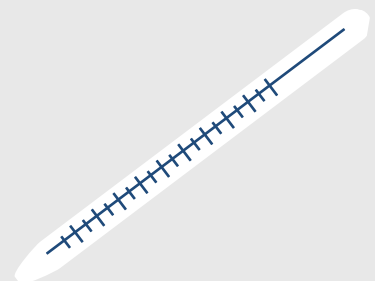
4 \$78.5 BILLION A YEAR

Annual economic burden of prescription opioid misuse in the U.S, including costs of healthcare, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice



5 DRUG OVERDOSE

Drug overdose is the leading cause of death in people under the age of 50. Overdose deaths are higher than deaths from HIV, car crashes, or gun violence at their peaks.



6 SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Signs:

- Problems at school or work
- Physical health issues
- Neglected appearance
- Changes in behavior
- Money issues

Symptoms:

- Feeling that you have to use the drug regularly – daily or even several times a day
- Over time, needing more of the drug to get the same effect
- Failing in your attempts to stop using the drug
- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms when you attempt to stop taking the drug



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