

A communication periodical for our clients, staff & the community at large

The Chronicle

A Paterson Counseling Center Newsletter

Special points of interest:

- PCC has been a mainstay of the community for nearly 4 decades
- PCC has assisted students and interns in building skills that have led to very successful careers in other fields
- Did you know that PCC invest more time and resources into providing the most comprehensive communication around its services and offering relative to other facilities.

Rural Teens and Rx Abuse

Adolescents living in rural areas are significantly more likely to abuse prescription drugs than their counterparts in urban areas, according to a study published online Nov. 1 in the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*.

Jennifer R. Havens, Ph.D., of the University of Kentucky College of Medicine in Lexington, and colleagues analyzed data on 17,872 adolescents from the 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. The researchers compared the prevalence of non-medical prescription drug use, including pain relievers, sedatives, stimulants, and tranquilizers, among adolescents (aged 12 to 17) living in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

The researchers found that adolescents living in rural areas were 26 percent more likely than those in urban areas to have used prescription drugs non-medically. In comparison, suburban adolescents were 4 percent more likely to have used prescription drugs non-medically than those in urban areas. Non-medical prescription drug use among rural adolescents was associated with diminished health status, having had a major depressive episode, and use of alcohol or other drugs, such as marijuana, cocaine, hallucinogens, and inhalants. However, among rural adolescents, school enrollment and living in a two-parent household were factors protective against non-medical use of prescription drugs.



"Rural adolescents were significantly more likely than urban adolescents to report non-medical prescription drug use. However, these results suggest there are multiple potential points of intervention to prevent initiation or progression of use among rural adolescents, including preventing school dropout, increased parental involvement, and increased access to health, mental health, and substance abuse treatment," the authors write.

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Drinking & Acceptance For Teens

Many young people consider getting drunk an important part of being accepted as part of a social group, a factor that needs to be considered when creating anti-drinking campaigns, a British researcher says.

"Extreme inebriation is often seen as a source of personal esteem and social affirmation among young people. Our detailed research interviews reveal that tales of alcohol-related mishaps and escapades are key markers of young people's social identity," Christine Griffin, of the University of Bath, said in a British Psychological Society news release.

Griffin and her colleagues analyzed drinking advertisements and conducted interviews with young drinkers in a major city and in two towns in semi-rural locations. The researchers presented their findings Sept. 9 at a British Psychological Society conference.

"The 'culture of intoxication' has become a normalized and all but compulsory aspect of many young people's social lives. Getting very drunk with friends often insulates young people from viewing their level of alcohol consumption as a potential problem, deepening bonds of friendship and cementing group membership," Griffin explained in the news release. "Campaigns that aim to change young people's drinking habits need to take the social importance of drinking into account, as well as the pervasive availability of 'cheap deals' on alcohol," she added.

Engaging Teens A Different World Today

The world has changed and for parents who are on the brink of the edge when trying to figure out how to deal with their teenage children it can certainly be overwhelming at times. Life was simple even 30 years ago, we didn't have the maniacal fearful parents who limited us from growing up and figuring out some things for ourselves. As parents today those fun loving teenagers of yesteryear have grown up with the idea that we have to save our children from themselves.

Granted, we have the internet and our kids are exposed to all sorts of unimaginable information that we didn't have, combined with what seems like a pedophile of the week report either within our schools or some national story that drives panic and fear into the minds of parents, all sense of rationality is being thrown out of the window.

Recall the peer pressure that we dealt with years ago and multiply that times 10 plus add to it parenting that can be over the top and it becomes overwhelming for teens who are struggling to find themselves. Maybe its time that parents place themselves in a bit of a timeout, perhaps taking a step back and trusting that the unpredictable crazy process of life has some method to its uncertainty that will help our teens move into adulthood just as effectively as most of us did. Establishing the right balance between supporting our teens and managing our fears can go a long way towards establishing a healthy relationship with our teens.