



National Association
for Children of Addiction



TOOLS FOR EDUCATORS & STAFF

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND FOUNDATION

A MESSAGE TO ALL SCHOOL STAFF

In every school - public, private, charter, or other school settings - caring adults are responsible for the environment where students learn and grow. As a member of your school staff - whether you teach math, drive a bus, prepare meals, or maintain the building - you hold a unique and pivotal position in the lives of students affected by substance use disorders (SUDs) and addiction-related trauma. The consistent, caring relationship you can offer these students matters profoundly, having a positive effect on their lives now and for years to come. Research consistently demonstrates that supportive school environments serve as crucial protective factors for vulnerable students, with every adult interaction contributing to that protection.

Children raised in families affected by SUDs have markedly different life experiences than their peers. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, approximately 1 in 5 children in the United States live in households where a parent has a substance use disorder. The chaos and uncertainty that characterize homes affected by SUDs often cause conflict in parental and marital relationships, resulting in disruption of the child's development across multiple domains. Children growing up in these environments are at heightened risk for emotional and behavioral problems, including anxiety, aggression, academic struggles, and difficulty forming healthy peer relationships. Younger children, in particular, are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect, which can lead to long-term consequences such as involvement with the criminal justice system, chronic unemployment, and substance use in adulthood.

BOX TIP

Your consistent presence and understanding can be a powerful protective factor for students affected by family SUDs. Research shows that even one positive adult-child relationship can significantly impact a child's resilience (VanBronkhorst, Abraham, and Dambreville, 2023).]

The influence of family SUDs extends deeply into students' educational experiences, creating ripple effects across academic performance, attendance, and mental health. These challenges persist throughout a student's educational journey. Research consistently demonstrates that students from families affected by SUDs face significant academic challenges in their educational journey (APA, 2023). These challenges manifest across all domains of school achievement, with students showing higher risks for low academic performance and increased dropout rates (Arria et al., 2022).



The impact compounds over time - irregular attendance creates gaps in learning, making it increasingly difficult for students to maintain grade-level progress. Additionally, these students often face cognitive and behavioral challenges that can affect their academic success (NIDA, 2020).

Attendance emerges as a particular concern. Studies show these students have 25-30% higher absence rates than their peers, with 23.1% missing 10 or more days of school compared to 14.5% of their peers (CDC, 2021). This chronic absenteeism creates significant barriers to academic success, as students miss critical instruction and fall further behind in their coursework.

In early childhood, parents struggling with substance misuse often engage less in reading and provide limited learning-based stimulation for their infants and toddlers. As children grow older, these parents may be less available to help with homework, monitor academic progress, or keep track of school responsibilities. Children from these households frequently have trouble with attention and concentration, often stemming from heightened anxiety caused by a chaotic and unpredictable home environment. Irregular routines around meals and bedtime, exposure to domestic violence, and ongoing safety concerns further contribute to learning and behavioral challenges in the classroom. When a child's basic needs for safety and stability are unmet, focusing on academics and higher-level thinking becomes extremely difficult. Communication between parents with substance use disorders and schools is often limited, mirroring the lack of structure at home.

Throughout a student's educational journey, the impact of family SUDs manifests differently across grade levels. Elementary school students often struggle with fundamental developmental challenges, including difficulty regulating emotions, maintaining focus, and building peer relationships (Solis et al., 2012). Studies show children from families affected by SUDs demonstrate poorer problem-solving abilities and have higher rates of behavioral and emotional problems (Hawkins et al., 1992).

During middle and high school years, these challenges intensify. Research indicates that approximately 20% of middle school students and 25% of high school students have a parent with an SUD (Hser et al., 2022). These students face increased risk of dropping out, with graduation rates significantly lower (64.6%) compared to their peers (84.6%) (Smith et al., 2016).

UNDERSTANDING TODAY'S LANDSCAPE

Understanding the factors that influence substance use and the disease of addiction is crucial for effectively supporting students impacted by these issues. Recognizing the complexities of addiction and its effects enables school staff to provide better, more informed support, while also identifying when additional interventions may be necessary to address students' needs. This awareness allows educators to respond with greater empathy and offer timely assistance, ensuring students receive the help they require to succeed both academically and emotionally.

The opioid epidemic has profoundly affected not only individuals struggling with substance use disorders but also their children. This leads to significant development, emotional, and social challenges.

Parents with opioid use disorders often exhibit increased irritability, emotional ambivalence, and a lack of engagement with their children, making it difficult to interpret or respond to their children's emotional needs. This can result in disorganized attachment, where children are less likely to seek comfort or connection and instead become more avoidant or emotionally detached.

The foster care system has also felt the weight of this crisis. In 2016, approximately 92,000 children entered foster care due to drug-related issues—a 32% increase since 2012. The opioid crisis has been a major contributor to this surge, with many newborns being placed in care due to opioid withdrawal symptoms at birth, and older children entering the system as a result of parental overdose, incarceration, or incapacity. Children removed from their homes where parental substance use is a factor spend more time in out-of-home placement than other children. This can also cause a disruption in the educational structure for children when entering placement and when changing placements.



Between 2011 and 2021, more than 321,000 U.S. children lost a parent to drug overdose, with the annual rate of such losses more than doubling—from 27 to 63 per 100,000 children. This loss has been especially profound among non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native families, who have experienced the highest rates of parental death due to overdose. The loss of a parent in this context often leads to deep emotional trauma, which can manifest in the classroom as academic challenges, behavioral issues, and prolonged emotional distress. These children may struggle to focus, connect with peers, or feel safe in the school environment, which underscore the need for trauma-informed approaches and compassionate support systems within schools. These numbers and impact do not include the large amount of non-fatal overdoses that occur every year that can cause disruption and changes in the child life.

The current mental health crisis adds another layer of complexity. Children from families affected by SUDs experience significantly higher rates of mental health challenges, with 45.6% requiring support services compared to 15.6% of their peers (CDC, 2021). These challenges manifest differently across grade levels, with anxiety and depression rates increasing as students progress through school (Lund et al., 2022). Recent studies indicate that emotional distress and social withdrawal can significantly impact students' ability to engage in learning and interact positively with peers and teachers.

The increasing legalization and commercialization of THC products have led to greater availability of cannabis items, often with high and dangerous potency levels. These products include edibles (gummies, candies, etc.), vapes, tablets, resin, tinctures, drinks, topicals, capsules, concentrates, syrups, and more. Exposure to various forms of marijuana products can have serious and sometimes long-lasting effects on children.

The presence or influence of marijuana products in a school setting poses significant risks to the health, safety, and development of students. Edible marijuana products, which often look like candy or baked goods, can be easily mistaken for regular snacks and shared unknowingly among students, leading to accidental ingestion and serious health consequences. Concentrated THC products, such as vapes or oils, are discreet and can be used without detection, making them particularly dangerous on school grounds. These high-potency products can cause impaired thinking, anxiety, hallucinations, and even hospitalization in youth. Beyond physical health, marijuana use negatively impacts attention, memory, and learning—all critical to academic success. The normalization or casual exposure to marijuana in schools can also influence peer behavior and contribute to increased usage among students. Overall, the presence of marijuana products in a school undermines the safe and supportive environment that young people need to grow and succeed.

Over the past five years, there has been a sharp and consistent rise in pediatric exposures to edible cannabis products, many of which carry the risk of significant toxicity. From 2017 to 2022, reported cases increased by an alarming 1,375%, with 27% of those exposures requiring hospitalization. A CDC study highlighted that cannabis-related emergency department visits among children aged 10 and younger rose dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic—mean weekly visits jumped from 18.7 before the pandemic to 71.5 during the summer months. Compounding this issue is the growing trend of adults using THC products in child-friendly spaces, including cars and public sporting events. Such behavior not only increases the risk of accidental ingestion but also contributes to the normalization of substance use in environments where children are present. (CDC, 2023)

Learn more: *U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory: Marijuana Use and the Developing Brain.*

Another pressing concern for educators is the potential for marijuana to be laced with fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid. While some reports suggest that instances of fentanyl-laced marijuana are rare, the consequences of such contamination can be fatal. For example, the Michigan Poison & Drug Information Center issued a public health alert after identifying eight suspected cases of fentanyl-laced marijuana between June and November 2021. Given fentanyl's high potency, even minimal amounts can lead to overdose, posing severe risks to unsuspecting users, especially adolescents who may be experimenting without awareness of these dangers. This underscores the critical need for education, prevention, and harm reduction measures to protect youth from accidental exposure to lethal substances.

Learn more: *U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on Naloxone and Opioid Overdose*

The Surgeon General emphasizes that schools serve as crucial safe havens for vulnerable students, highlighting the vital role of consistent support from all school staff members. Schools are uniquely positioned to provide early identification and intervention through comprehensive screening programs and accessible mental health resources (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022).

A **School Naloxone Opioid Overdose Training** is available free of charge to assist schools in overdose prevention and response. **Narcan resources** help explain what it is, how it works, and why being prepared is essential.

BOX TIP

Remember - While your role may not be therapeutic, your consistent, caring presence provides crucial support for students navigating challenging family circumstances. Research shows that school staff can significantly impact student resilience through daily positive interactions (Werner & Johnson, 2020).]

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SECTION 2: CORE KNOWLEDGE AND UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES

A. UNDERSTANDING SUDS AND THE DISEASE OF ADDICTION

UNDERSTANDING ADDICTION: THE BRAIN DISEASE MODEL

The brain disease model of addiction, or the more clinical reference of substance use disorder (SUD), posits that addiction is a chronic, relapsing brain disorder characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences (Volkow et al., 2016). This model emphasizes that addiction is not a moral failing but a medical condition that affects brain function and behavior (Leshner, 1997; McLellan et al., 2000). Recent research has both supported and challenged this model, leading to a more nuanced understanding of SUDs.

KEY ASPECTS OF THE BRAIN DISEASE MODEL

- **Neurobiological Changes** Addiction affects brain areas related to reward, motivation, and impulse control, particularly the mesolimbic dopamine system. Functional neuroimaging has identified neural circuits involved in addiction, including networks related to reward, inhibitory control, stress, emotional processing, and learning/memory (Koob & Volkow, 2021).
- **Neurodevelopmental Impact: Dr. Bruce Perry's Lens** As we talk about how addiction impacts families, it's important to understand that children's brains are still developing — and that development is shaped by their relationships and environments. Dr. Bruce Perry, a leading expert in childhood trauma and brain development, explains that "the more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely they are to recover from trauma and thrive." Addiction in the family can create unpredictable, frightening, or disconnected environments — all of which affect a child's stress response system. Perry's work emphasizes that these experiences, especially if repeated over time, can disrupt brain development and increase the risk for emotional, behavioral, and physical health issues later in life. But — and this is key — healing is possible. Consistent, safe, and nurturing relationships can help regulate and rewire the brain. As educational support professionals, you can be one of those healing relationships.

- **Chronic Nature** Addiction is characterized as a chronic relapsing disorder, with neurobiological mechanisms rooted in both impulsivity and compulsivity. The addiction cycle involves three main stages: binge/intoxication, withdrawal/negative affect, and preoccupation/anticipation (craving) (Koob & Volkow, 2021).
- **Genetic and Environmental Factors** Both genetic predisposition and environmental influences contribute to the development of addiction. Recent studies have identified genetic markers and epigenetic changes that contribute to addiction risk (Volkow & Boyle, 2018).

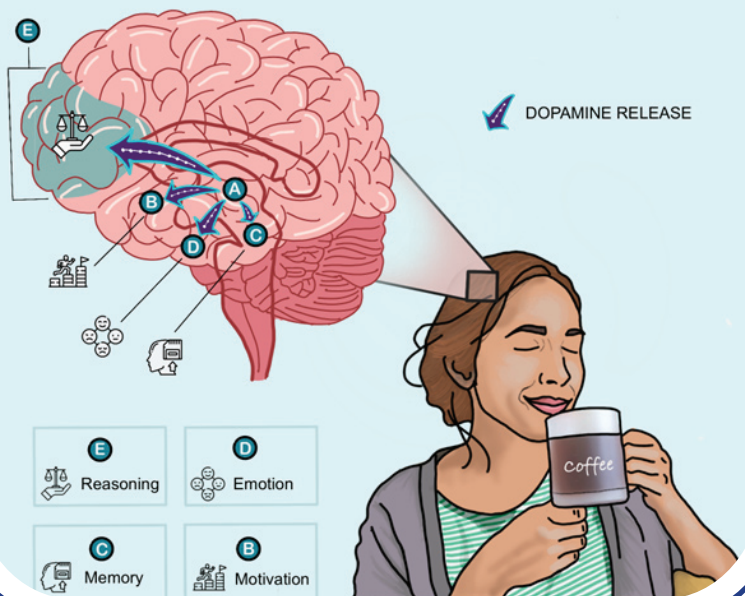
THE MESOLYMBIC DOPAMINE SYSTEM IMPACT FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

- Dopamine, a neurotransmitter, is released in this pathway, especially during rewarding experiences, leading to feelings of pleasure and motivation.
- This system is activated by both natural rewards (food, sex) and substances of abuse (alcohol, cocaine, etc.), leading to a surge of dopamine that reinforces the behavior.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR ADDICTION, ESPECIALLY IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS?

- **Vulnerability During Development** The brain, particularly the mesolimbic during childhood and adolescence, making this period more vulnerable to the effects of substance abuse.
- **Heightened Sensitivity** The dopamine system becomes more functionally active during adolescence, leading to heightened sensitivity to rewards and substances of abuse.
- **Reward-Seeking Behavior** Substances of abuse can hijack this system, causing a surge of dopamine that is much greater than that experienced with natural rewards, leading to compulsive drug-seeking behavior.
- **Long-Term Consequences** Repeated exposure to drugs can lead to long-lasting changes in the brain, including changes in the mesolimbic dopaminergic system, which can increase the risk of addiction and relapse later in life.
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences** Early adverse experiences, such as trauma or neglect, can also impact the development of the mesolimbic dopamine system, increasing vulnerability to addiction later in life.
- **Impulsivity and Decision-Making** Dysregulation of the mesolimbic dopamine system can lead to increased impulsivity and impaired decision-making, further contributing to addiction.
- **Ectopic Innervation** Misuse of addictive drugs in adolescence can lead to ectopic innervation of dopamine axons to unintended areas, with implications for the development of psychiatric disorders later in life, particularly those that have at their core deficits in impulse control.

The Dopamine Drive: Mesolimbic Reward Pathway



IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION AND INTERVENTION

- **Reducing Stigma** The brain disease model has been both praised and criticized for its impact on stigma. While it may reduce blame on individuals by framing addiction as a disease, some argue that it can also lead to perceptions of addicted individuals as fundamentally different (Wiers et al., 2021).
- **Promoting Preventive Education** Schools can implement programs that educate students and families about the risks of substance use and the long-term changes it can cause in the brain. These programs should integrate neuroscience education about the disease of addiction with information on environmental risk and protective factors (Volkow, 2020).
- **Supporting Affected Students** Educational institutions can develop support systems for students affected by addiction, including counseling services and peer support groups. These interventions should be based on the understanding of addiction as a complex brain disorder influenced by multiple factors (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2023).
- **Training of Faculty/School Leadership about COAs and how they may present in their classes and how they can help impacted youth.**
- **Linkage with community networks and resources for students, professional days where experts come to the school to support kids they know are COAs.**
- **Use of I AM ME wellness app for teens and young adults to support their mental health.**
- **Screening, referrals and parental/caregiver discussions when red flags appear, rather than waiting until a crisis presents itself for a student.**

B. THE ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES) FRAMEWORK

Adverse Childhood Experiences refer to potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (ages 0-17 years). ACEs are common. About 64% of adults in the United States reported they had experienced at least one type of ACE before age 18. Three in four high school students reported experiencing one or more ACEs, and **one in five experienced four or more ACEs. ACEs that were most common among high school students were emotional abuse, physical abuse, and living in a household affected by poor mental health or substance abuse.**

KEY POINTS ABOUT ACES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS (SUDS)

- **Cumulative Impact** Each additional ACE increases the likelihood of substance misuse, highlighting a dose-response relationship between the number of ACEs and the severity of substance use issues. Adults with any history of ACEs have a 4.3-fold higher likelihood of developing a substance use disorder (Hughes et al., 2020).
- **Strong Association** ACEs are strongly associated with a wide range of health problems, including SUDs. Exposure to ACEs is linked to increased use of alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs, particularly among young adults who have experienced multiple ACEs (Otten et al., 2021; Petruccelli et al., 2020).

- **Prevalence in SUD Populations** There is a higher prevalence of ACEs in populations with substance use disorders compared to the general population, suggesting a strong correlation between ACEs and the development of SUDs (Loudermilk et al., 2020).
- **Variability** The nature of the relationship between ACEs and SUDs can vary based on demographic factors such as gender and race/ethnicity. Recent studies emphasize the prevalence of individual and cumulative ACEs and their association with poor mental health and substance use (Merrick et al., 2024).

HOW ACES IMPACT CHILDREN

Adverse Childhood Experiences have a profound and lasting impact on children of parents with substance use disorders. These children are significantly more likely to experience multiple ACEs compared to their peers, and those experiences can deeply shape their development, behavior, health, and relationships across their lifespan.



EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS

- **Chronic stress response** Living in a household with parental alcohol misuse can lead to a constant state of “fight, flight, or freeze,” affecting brain development, especially in areas related to emotion regulation and executive functioning.
- **Anxiety and depression** COAs are more likely to develop mental health conditions, including depression, anxiety, and PTSD.
- **Low self-esteem** Constant exposure to chaos, neglect, or emotional unavailability may leave them feeling unworthy, invisible, or at fault for their parent's drinking.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS

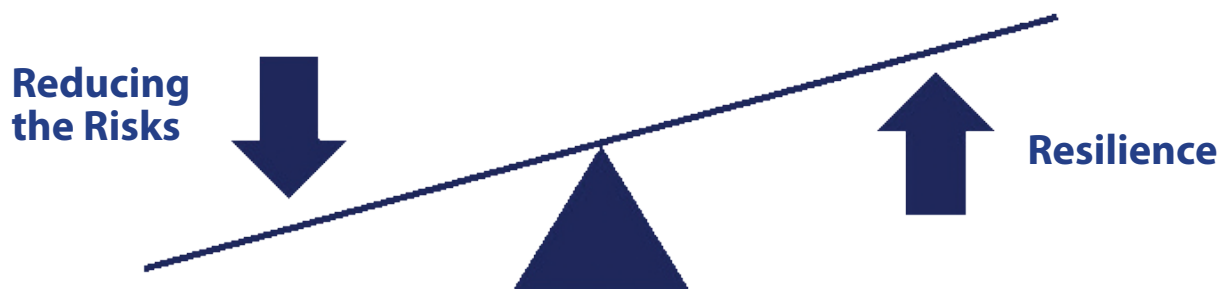
Risk factors are characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes for youth. Protective factors are characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or that reduce a risk factor's impact. Protective factors may be seen as positive countering events.

Some risk and protective factors are fixed: they don't change over time. Examples are family history or ethnicity. Other risk and protective factors are considered variable and can change over time. Variable risk factors include income level, peer group, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and employment status.

Risk and protective factors can affect children at different stages of their lives. At each stage, risks occur that can be changed through prevention. Early childhood risks can be changed or prevented with interventions that focus on helping children develop appropriate, positive behaviors. If not addressed, negative behaviors can lead to more risks, such as academic struggles and social difficulties, which put children at further risk for later substance misuse or developing a SUD.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Adverse Childhood Experiences refer to potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (ages 0-17 years). ACEs are common. About 64% of adults in the United States reported they had experienced at least one type of ACE before age 18. Three in four high school students reported experiencing one or more ACEs, and **one in five experienced four or more ACEs. ACEs that were most common among high school students were emotional abuse, physical abuse, and living in a household affected by poor mental health or substance abuse.**



While ACEs increase the risk for SUDs, protective factors can mitigate these risks:

- Stable and supportive relationships with caregivers and educators (Bethell et al., 2020)
- School engagement and safety (Schofield et al., 2020)
- Positive childhood experiences (PCEs) such as nurturing relationships and community engagement (Crandall et al., 2020)
- Access to mental health services within schools (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2020)
- Community-based interventions to improve neighborhood safety and increase opportunities for youth engagement (Ellis & Dietz, 2020)

A NIDA-funded study has identified a number of protective factors that can help prevent high-risk youths from engaging in delinquency and drug use. An accumulation of these protective factors in different areas of an adolescent's life strongly predicts resistance to drug use and delinquency, the study indicates. "Having protective factors in multiple domains, such as family, school, peers, and neighborhood, is what is particularly important" in buffering adolescents from the effects of earlier circumstances that place them at risk, says Dr. Terence Thornberry of the State University of New York at Albany, who directed the study.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS	Parental Supervision Child's Attachment to Parent Parent's Attachment to Child Parent's Involvement in Child's Activities
FAMILY FACTORS	
EDUCATIONAL FACTORS	Success in School Commitment to School Attachment to Teachers Aspirations to Go to College Expectations to Go to College Parent's Expectation Parent's Values About Education
PEER FACTORS	Peers Have Conventional Values Parent's Positive Evaluation of Peers
OTHER RESOURCES	Child's Self Esteem Child's Involvement in Religious Activities Child's Involvement in Pro-social Activities Child Is Close to an Adult Outside the Family

The protective factors that are in bold consistently distinguished high-risk youth who remained substance-free from high-risk youths who used substances. The factors that are not bold did not have an impact on substance use among the high-risk youth in the study.

C. INTEGRATING THE BRAIN DISEASE MODEL AND ACES FRAMEWORK IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

By combining insights from the brain disease model of addiction and the ACEs framework, educators can develop more effective strategies for prevention, intervention, and support:

- **Comprehensive Education** Integrate neuroscience education about addiction with information on ACEs to help students understand the biological and environmental factors contributing to SUDs (Volkow, 2020; CDC, 2021).
- **Early Identification and Intervention** Train educators to recognize signs of both substance use and ACEs, enabling early intervention and support (SAMHSA, 2023).
- **Trauma-Informed Practices** Implement trauma-informed approaches in schools to create supportive environments for students affected by ACEs and/or SUDs (Oral et al., 2020).
- **Promoting Protective Factors** Focus on developing protective factors that can mitigate the effects of ACEs and reduce the risk of SUDs, such as stable relationships, school engagement, and access to mental health services (Bethell et al., 2020; Schofield et al., 2020).
- **Policy Development** Develop school policies that address substance use from a public health perspective, focusing on treatment and support rather than punishment (Volkow, 2020).
- **Parental Involvement** Educate parents about ACEs, positive parenting practices, and the brain disease model of addiction to create a supportive home environment (CDC, 2021).

By integrating these approaches, educators can create a more comprehensive and effective framework for addressing SUDs and supporting students affected by ACEs. This integrated approach recognizes the complex interplay between biological, psychological, and social factors in the development of SUDs and provides a foundation for more targeted and compassionate interventions.

D. THE EDUCATIONAL IMPACT OF FAMILY SUBSTANCE USE

The influence of family substance use disorders (SUDs) extends deeply into students' educational experiences, creating ripple effects across all aspects of their academic and social development. Understanding these impacts helps educators provide more effective, targeted support while recognizing when additional intervention may be needed.



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING CHALLENGES

Research has consistently demonstrated that students from families affected by SUDs face significant academic challenges. A study by Grogan-Kaylor et al. (2021) found that these students perform notably worse across all domains of school achievement, from reading comprehension to mathematics. This academic impact isn't simply a matter of effort or ability - it reflects the complex interplay between home environment, cognitive development, and learning opportunities. **poor mental health or substance abuse.**

The challenges these students face often manifest in their daily academic life. School attendance becomes a particular concern, with affected students showing absence rates 25-30% higher than their peers (Solis et al., 2022). This irregular attendance creates gaps in learning that compound over time, making it increasingly difficult for students to maintain grade-level progress. Beyond simple attendance, these students are also more likely to be retained in grade or referred for psychological evaluation, indicating deeper struggles with the learning process (Crum et al., 2021).

WHEN YOU NOTICE PATTERNS OF ABSENCE OR ACADEMIC STRUGGLES, CONSIDER THE BIGGER PICTURE. THESE MIGHT BE SYMPTOMS OF LARGER FAMILY CHALLENGES RATHER THAN SIMPLY ACADEMIC ISSUES.

THE HIDDEN COSTS OF FAMILY ADDICTION

The impact of family SUDs extends beyond academic performance into healthcare utilization and overall well-being. A study by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2021) reveals that children from families affected by addiction experience significantly higher rates of both physical and mental health challenges. Their inpatient admission rates for mental health disorders are almost double those of their peers, while their risk of injuries is 1.5 times greater. Perhaps most tellingly, these students incur healthcare costs that are 32% higher than average, reflecting the comprehensive toll that family addiction takes on child development and well-being.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH

The social and emotional challenges faced by students affected by family SUDs are particularly concerning. Students are more vulnerable to experience anxiety disorders and depression than their peers. This elevated risk for emotional disturbances often manifests differently across age groups, creating unique challenges for educators working with different grade levels.

- **Young elementary students** might express their distress through physical complaints, separation anxiety, or difficulty sleeping.
- **Middle school students** often internalize their struggles, sometimes manifesting as perfectionism or social withdrawal.
- **High school students** may develop more complex coping mechanisms, including risk-taking behaviors or extreme self-reliance, which can mask their underlying emotional needs.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING AND LEARNING PROCESS

One of the more subtle but significant impacts of family SUDs appears in students' executive functioning skills. These crucial abilities - including organization, time management, and planning - form the foundation for academic success. Students from families affected by addiction often struggle with these skills, not because they lack capability, but because their home environment may not provide the structure and modeling needed to develop these abilities naturally. This challenge affects not only their academic performance but also their ability to solve real-world problems and navigate social situations.



SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SUPPORT NEEDS

The need for specialized educational support among this population is significantly higher than among the general student body. Current data indicates that 24.5% of students affected by family SUDs require special education services, compared to 13.4% of the general population (SAMHSA, 2021). This heightened need for support reflects both the direct impact of family substance use on learning and development and the indirect effects of disrupted home environments on educational progress.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION CAN SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE OUTCOMES. WATCH FOR PATTERNS IN LEARNING DIFFICULTIES THAT MIGHT INDICATE A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT.

E. LONG-TERM EDUCATIONAL TRAJECTORY

Perhaps most concerning are the long-term educational outcomes for these students. Current research shows a significant gap in graduation rates, with only 64.6% of affected students completing high school compared to 84.6% of their peers (Solis et al., 2022). This disparity reflects not just academic challenges but the cumulative impact of family substance use on educational achievement and life opportunities.

F. THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS

Understanding these impacts helps educators recognize their crucial role in supporting affected students. While the challenges these students face are significant, research also shows that supportive educational environments can serve as powerful protective factors. By providing consistency, understanding, and appropriate academic support, educators can help mitigate the effects of family substance use and promote student resilience.

YOUR ROLE AS AN EDUCATOR ISN'T TO SOLVE FAMILY ADDICTION, BUT TO PROVIDE THE STABLE, SUPPORTIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT THESE STUDENTS DESPERATELY NEED.



BUILDING SUPPORTIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

Creating supportive educational environments is crucial for students affected by family SUDs. Recent studies have emphasized the importance of these environments in enhancing student health, well-being, and academic achievement (Child Trends, 2023). Supportive learning environments are foundational for academic success and mental health, which are particularly critical for students from challenging family backgrounds, including those with SUDs (Child Trends, 2023).

Schools should adopt prevention strategies that focus on fostering strong relationships and connections to school. This approach helps mitigate risk factors such as mental health challenges and enhances protective factors like positive student-adult relationships (Child Trends, 2023). By implementing trauma-informed practices, schools can create safe, supportive, and predictable environments that help mitigate the negative impacts of trauma on learning and behavior (Berger & Reupert, 2022).

THE POWER OF CONSISTENT RELATIONSHIPS



Consistent and supportive relationships play a vital role in providing stability and fostering resilience in students from families affected by SUDs. These relationships serve as key protective factors against poor mental health outcomes and help buffer the stress and trauma associated with living in a household affected by SUDs (Dillon et al., 2018). Schools should adopt prevention strategies that focus on fostering strong relationships and connections to school. This approach helps mitigate risk factors such as mental health challenges and enhances protective factors like positive student-adult relationships (Child Trends, 2023). By implementing trauma-informed practices, schools can create safe, supportive, and predictable environments that help mitigate the negative impacts of trauma on learning and behavior (Berger & Reupert, 2022).

Recent research indicates that students with strong, consistent relationships with adults, whether family members or educators, tend to have better academic and social outcomes. These relationships help students develop coping strategies and resilience, which are essential for navigating the challenges posed by their home environments (Dillon et al., 2018). Educators and school staff play a critical role in providing consistent support to these students by fostering a nurturing and stable environment (Understood, n.d.).

THE SEVEN Cs MODEL

The Seven Cs model, created by Jerry Moe MA, remains a validated and integral part of supporting children affected by family SUDs. The model emphasizes that children are not responsible for their parents' substance use and provides them with strategies to manage their feelings and maintain their well-being.

I didn't **CAUSE** it • I can't **CONTROL** it • I can't **CURE** it

I can help take **CARE** of myself by **COMMUNICATING** my feelings

Making healthy **CHOICES** and **CELEBRATING** me

Recent collaborations and integrations into educational resources demonstrate the model's continued relevance and effectiveness. NACoA and Jerry Moe have collaborated with community initiatives like Sesame Street to create developmentally appropriate messaging for children impacted by family SUDs. This ongoing advocacy and program development highlights the model's sustained relevance and application in supporting children from families with SUDs.

CREATING TRAUMA-INFORMED EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

Implementing trauma-informed practices in educational settings is essential for supporting students affected by family SUDs. These practices involve creating a supportive and understanding environment that acknowledges the impact of trauma on learning and behavior. Recent studies have shown that trauma-informed schools significantly improve student behavior and academic performance by reducing suspensions and expulsions and enhancing academic achievement (Berger & Reupert, 2022).

A whole-school approach to implementing trauma-informed practices has been found to yield better outcomes. This involves integrating these practices into every aspect of the school system, ensuring consistency and continuity in support for students (Berger et al., 2022). Key strategies for implementing trauma-informed practices include:

1. **Professional Development** Ongoing training for educators on trauma-informed care is essential. This includes understanding the impacts of trauma and learning how to create supportive classroom environments (Crisis Prevention Institute, 2023).
2. **Collaboration and Community Engagement** Schools that engage with community resources and collaborate with mental health professionals can provide more comprehensive support to students. This approach helps address the broader social and environmental factors affecting students from families with SUDs (Crisis Prevention Institute, 2023).
3. **Policy and Curriculum Integration** Incorporating trauma-informed principles into school policies and curricula ensures that these practices are not isolated efforts but are embedded in the school culture (Crisis Prevention Institute, 2023).

FOSTERING RESILIENCE THROUGH DAILY PRACTICES

Fostering resilience in students from families affected by SUDs is crucial for their long-term well-being and academic success. Current approaches to building resilience include:

1. **Evidence-Based Family Skills Training** Programs like "Family United" and "Strong Families" have shown positive outcomes such as decreased substance use, improved communication, and increased social competence among children (Global Coalition on Youth Mental Health, n.d.).
2. **Supportive Educational Environments** Creating safe and supportive spaces for students can help them develop resilience despite challenges at home. This includes implementing trauma-informed practices that recognize and respond to the effects of all types of trauma (Berger & Reupert, 2022).
3. **Consistent Relationships and Mentorship** Consistent relationships with caring adults, such as teachers and mentors, provide stability and support, helping students navigate the challenges associated with having a family member with SUDs (Dillon et al., 2018).
4. **Resilience Training Programs** Programs specifically designed for youths in substance-affected families often include components such as stress management, problem-solving skills, and emotional regulation, which are essential for building resilience (Zhao et al., 2022).

SUPPORTING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Recent evidence-based strategies for academic support of students impacted by family SUDs include:

1. **Structured Support Programs** Educational therapy and executive functioning coaching have been effective in helping students with organization, time management, and other executive function skills (Child Nexus, 2023).
2. **Classroom Strategies** Teachers can implement strategies such as making checklists, using visual aids, and providing repeated opportunities for guided practice to help students with executive function challenges (Parallel Learning, 2023).
3. **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)** Integrating SEL into the curriculum can help students develop resilience and improve their executive functioning. SEL programs focus on building skills such as emotional regulation, empathy, and decision-making (Parallel Learning, 2023).

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SUPPORT

Current approaches to supporting executive function in students affected by family SUDs include:

1. **Evidence-Based Interventions** Recent studies emphasize the importance of evidence-based interventions for students struggling with executive functioning. These interventions are rooted in rigorous research and have been shown to be effective in addressing executive functioning difficulties (Parallel Learning, 2023).
2. **Arts Programs** Incorporating arts in curricula can help develop executive function skills in students with a high level of ACEs. (Kuhn, Pepanyan, and Tallakson, 2021).
3. **Martial Arts and Mindfulness** Incorporating martial arts training, especially those with a mindfulness component, has shown promising impacts on executive functioning and self-confidence (Barkley, 2023).
4. **Interactive and Engaging Activities** Activities that promote cognitive flexibility, such as games and role-playing, can enhance executive function skills by allowing students to practice shifting attention and thinking in new ways (Child Nexus, 2023).

UNDERSTANDING PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES AND REFERRALS

RECOGNIZING WHEN TO REFER

Maintaining professional boundaries and making appropriate referrals are crucial aspects of supporting students affected by family SUDs. Current best practices include:



UNDERSTANDING PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Professional boundaries are essential in educational settings to differentiate between personal and professional relationships. They help ensure that interactions remain appropriate and professional, safeguarding both educators and students (National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 2020).

STRATEGIES FOR SETTING BOUNDARIES

- Maintaining professional distance by not sharing too much personal information
- Clear communication of the educator's role and the extent of their support
- Adhering to established institutional policies and procedures
- Respecting students' personal space and ensuring appropriate physical interactions
- Being cautious about connecting with students or parents on personal social media accounts (Lillio, 2023a, 2023b, 2023c)

REFERRAL PROCESSES

Educators should be familiar with the referral processes within their institutions to ensure students receive the necessary support. This includes understanding when and how to refer students to appropriate school or community resources (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2021).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When making referrals, educators must consider ethical standards and ensure that the referrals are in the best interest of the students. This involves maintaining confidentiality and respecting the student's and family's privacy (Virginia Institute for Education [VIE], n.d.).

BUILDING SUPPORT NETWORKS

Building effective support networks involves:

1. **Collaboration with Professionals** Working with other professionals, such as school counselors and social workers, can help in making informed referrals. This collaboration ensures that students receive comprehensive support tailored to their needs (NASW, 2021).
2. **Family and Community Engagement** Engaging families in meaningful ways can improve school climate and student outcomes, which is crucial for students dealing with family SUDs (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.).
3. **Documentation and Follow-up** Proper documentation of referrals and follow-up actions is crucial. This helps in tracking the student's progress and ensuring that the support provided is effective (VIE, n.d.).

COLLABORATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TEAM APPROACHES

Recent trends in collaboration for supporting students affected by family SUDs emphasize:

1. **Multidisciplinary Teams** Creating teams that include teachers, counselors, and social workers to address the diverse needs of these students (Jiang et al., 2023).
2. **Integrated Support Systems** Building comprehensive support systems that involve both school staff and community resources to provide holistic care for students (Jiang et al., 2023).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Current professional development initiatives focus on:

1. **Trauma-Informed Training** Equipping educators with skills to implement trauma-informed practices and foster resilience among students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2018).
2. **Evidence-Based Strategies** Incorporating evidence-based strategies in professional development to ensure that educators are using the most effective methods to support students (Antia et al., 2024).
3. **Technology Integration** Utilizing technology to enhance collaboration between families and schools, such as programs like TeleNGAGE, which facilitate better communication and collaboration (Antia et al., 2024).

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Recent trends in building community partnerships include:

1. **Collaborative Approaches** Emphasizing the importance of collaboration among educators, families, and allied health professionals to enhance access to necessary interventions and supports (Jiang et al., 2023).
2. **Family Involvement** Recognizing that family involvement is associated with improved school engagement and social-emotional development, which is significant for students affected by family SUDs (Boonk et al., 2024).
3. **Integrated Services** Developing partnerships that provide integrated services, addressing both educational and mental health needs of students affected by family SUDs (Hanover Research, 2023).

By implementing these updated strategies and approaches, you can provide more effective support to students affected by family SUDs, fostering their resilience, academic success, and overall well-being.

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SECTION 3: GRADE-LEVEL FRAMEWORK

Supporting students affected by family substance use disorders (SUDs) requires a nuanced, developmentally appropriate approach. The impact of family addiction manifests differently across grade levels, necessitating targeted strategies to address the unique needs of elementary, middle, and high school students. This section outlines the key challenges, considerations, and support strategies for each developmental stage.



A. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

CHALLENGES:

- Early identification of students affected by familial addiction
- Communication barriers with younger students
- Managing emotional and behavioral issues
- Training in trauma-informed practices
- Strategies for parental engagement
- Access to mental health resources

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

At the elementary level, the effects of family SUDs often present through age-specific manifestations. Young students may express their distress through physical complaints, separation anxiety, or difficulty sleeping (Lipari & Van Horn, 2020). Their learning patterns may be disrupted, with gaps in foundational skills and challenges maintaining grade-level progress. Socially and emotionally, these students often struggle to regulate their emotions, form healthy peer relationships, and navigate the expectations of the classroom environment. Understanding the family dynamics at play is also crucial, as many elementary students may still be heavily dependent on their caregivers and sensitive to changes in the home.

TRANSITION SUPPORT

The transition from home to school can be particularly difficult for elementary students affected by family SUDs. They may have difficulty adjusting to the structure and expectations of the classroom, as well as navigating new peer relationships (Solis et al., 2012). Providing targeted support during this transition, such as mentorship programs and social-emotional skill development, can help these students adapt more successfully.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Effective academic support for elementary students impacted by family SUDs combines targeted interventions to address skill gaps, as well as strategies to build executive functioning and study skills. This might include one-on-one tutoring, instruction on time management and organization, and test-taking anxiety reduction techniques (Lipari & Van Horn, 2020).



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Socially and emotionally, elementary students affected by family SUDs often require support in areas like emotional regulation, peer relationships, and building resilience. Strategies may include teaching coping skills, facilitating social skills development, and providing access to counseling services (Grogan-Kaylor et al., 2021).

PROVIDING AGE-APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Focus on messages that provide safety, reassurance, and emotional validation. Emphasize that the student is not responsible for their parent's addiction and that the school is a place of stability and support.

B. MIDDLE SCHOOL

CHALLENGES:

- Increased risk of substance experimentation
- Identity development and peer influence
- Emotional volatility Support Needs:
- Implementation of peer support programs
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs
- Ongoing professional development

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The shift from elementary to middle school can be particularly challenging for students affected by family SUDs. They must adapt to having multiple teachers, increased independence and responsibility, and more complex peer relationships. This developmental stage often brings heightened social-emotional needs, as students grapple with identity formation and navigate the complexities of adolescence (Solis et al., 2012).



TRANSITION SUPPORT

The transition to middle school can exacerbate the challenges faced by students impacted by family SUDs. They may struggle to adjust to the increased academic demands, shifting social dynamics, and greater independence required (Crum et al., 2021). Providing mentorship programs, study skills workshops, and social-emotional support can ease this transition.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

As students progress through middle school, academic support must evolve to address subject-specific needs, executive functioning deficits, and study skill weaknesses. Strategies may include subject-area tutoring, instruction on time management and organization, and test-taking anxiety reduction techniques (Lipari & Van Horn, 2020).

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Socially and emotionally, middle school students affected by family SUDs may need proactive support in areas like identity development, healthy peer relationships, risk prevention, and mental health needs. This could involve social skills training, counseling services, and opportunities to build resilience (Grogan-Kaylor et al., 2021).

PROVIDING AGE-APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Emphasize messages that promote self-care, the establishment of personal boundaries, and awareness of available resources. Help students understand that they cannot control their parent's addiction but can take care of themselves.

C. HIGH SCHOOL

CHALLENGES:

- Direct impact of substance use on academic performance
- Complex social dynamics involving substance use
- Preparing students for post-secondary life Support Needs:
- Comprehensive prevention programs
- Access to counseling and support services
- Collaboration with community resources

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

At the high school level, students affected by family SUDs face increased responsibilities, future planning demands, and changing family dynamics. They may need to take on more household duties, manage complex emotions related to their family situation, and navigate the path to college or career. Support must address these advanced needs while also fostering independence and self-advocacy.

TRANSITION SUPPORT

The transition to high school can be particularly daunting for students impacted by family SUDs. They must adapt to a larger campus, more advanced academic expectations, and the social complexities of adolescence (Crum et al., 2021). Providing mentorship programs, self-advocacy training, and guidance on navigating post-secondary options can help facilitate a successful transition.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

High school academic support focuses on credit completion, college and career planning, and accessing alternative educational pathways when necessary. Strategies may include credit recovery programs, college exploration opportunities, and guidance navigating financial aid and the application process (Solis et al., 2012).

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

At the high school level, students affected by family SUDs may require support in areas like managing increased responsibilities, developing independence, and preparing for life after graduation. This could involve teaching independent living skills, facilitating family counseling, and connecting students with post-secondary support services (Grogan-Kaylor et al., 2021).

PROVIDING AGE-APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Highlight messages that foster resilience, encourage students to pursue their future goals, and empower them to break generational cycles of addiction. Provide information about support services and pathways to success.



ACROSS ALL GRADE LEVELS, THE OVERARCHING GOAL IS TO PROVIDE A SUPPORTIVE, TRAUMA-INFORMED ENVIRONMENT THAT EMPOWERS STUDENTS TO DEVELOP RESILIENCE, ACHIEVE ACADEMIC SUCCESS, AND ENVISION A FUTURE BEYOND THE CHALLENGES OF THEIR FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS REQUIRES A COLLABORATIVE, WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH INVOLVING CLASSROOM TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND SUPPORT STAFF.

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SECTION 4: **PROFESSIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Supporting students affected by family substance use disorders requires a collaborative, whole-school approach. Recent research demonstrates that when school staff across all roles work together cohesively, students show improved outcomes in both academic performance and emotional well-being (Lander et al., 2023)

A. CLASSROOM TEACHERS

As a classroom teacher, your consistent presence serves as a crucial protective factor. Research by Park & Thompson (2022) shows that teachers who understand the impact of family addiction and implement supportive strategies can significantly influence student resilience and academic success. This influence extends beyond academic achievement to include social-emotional development and long-term outcomes.



This relationship becomes particularly significant when we consider that approximately one in four students may be affected by family substance use disorders (National Association of School Psychologists, 2023).

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ROLE

Research shows that teachers who understand the impact of family addiction are better equipped to provide effective support (Hser et al., 2022). However, it's crucial to maintain appropriate professional boundaries, as your role is to support the student's educational success rather than solve family addiction issues.+

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Creating a Safe, Predictable Environment:** Consistent routines, clear expectations, and reliable transitions help counter the chaos many students experience at home (Lambert et al., 2020).
2. **Supporting Academic Success:** Providing flexible deadlines, alternative ways to demonstrate learning, and structured support for long-term projects can help these students overcome unique academic challenges (Lipari & Van Horn, 2020).
3. **Observing and Documenting:** Noting changes in academic performance, behavior, social interactions, and attendance patterns can help identify students who need additional support (Crum et al., 2021).

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Maintain a balance of structure and flexibility and focus on building resilience through daily interactions. Consistent, calm responses to student behaviors can help these students develop self-regulation skills (Werner & Johnson, 2000).

COLLABORATING WITH SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Effective collaboration with school counselors, social workers, and other support professionals can enhance your ability to support students effectively while respecting professional boundaries and confidentiality (Rodriguez et al., 2023).

B. SPECIALIST TEACHERS (ART, MUSIC, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND OTHERS)

Specialist teachers occupy a unique and valuable position in supporting students affected by family addiction. Your classes often provide opportunities for emotional expression, stress relief, and resilience-building that may not be available in traditional academic settings (McCauley & Roberts, 2022). Research shows that engagement in arts, music, and physical activities can serve as significant protective factors for students experiencing family stress.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR UNIQUE ROLE

Engagement in arts, music, and physical activities can serve as significant protective factors for students experiencing family stress (Thompson et al., 2021). Your position allows you to observe students in less structured environments and witness behaviors or abilities that might not emerge in traditional classroom settings.

KEY AREAS OF IMPACT:

- **Creative Expression and Emotional Processing** Arts and music programs offer safe spaces for students to process complex emotions. Recent studies indicate that creative expression can help students develop healthy coping mechanisms and emotional regulation skills [Smith et al., 2024; Johnson & Brown, 2023; Wilson et al., 2020].
- **Physical Activity and Stress Management** Physical education provides crucial opportunities for stress relief and body awareness. Regular physical activity has been shown to improve stress levels, mental health, and academic performance in students [Anderson et al., 2023; Thompson et al., 2022; Rodriguez et al., 2023; Garcia et al., 2022]



CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR EXPRESSION

Maintain supportive, non-judgmental environments while following appropriate reporting protocols if concerning themes emerge in student work or behavior (Chen et al., 2022; Anderson & Wright, 2021; Thompson & Garcia, 2022).

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

Provide flexible approaches, such as alternative performance options or adjusting participation requirements, while maintaining high expectations (Martinez et al., 2023).

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Maintain consistent safety protocols while being alert to student stress levels, and modify activities as needed to ensure student safety (Martinez et al., 2023).

WORKING WITH CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Share relevant observations about student abilities and challenges through appropriate channels to enhance support for vulnerable students (Wilson & Anderson, 2022).

C. SUPPORT STAFF (OFFICE, HEALTH SERVICES, LIBRARY/MEDIA, FOOD SERVICE)

Support staff members often serve as unsung heroes in creating a supportive school environment. Your daily interactions with students, while seemingly routine, can provide essential stability and connection for vulnerable students (Velleman & Templeton, 2023)

OFFICE STAFF: CREATING WELCOMING FIRST IMPRESSIONS

As the first point of contact for students and families, your warm, friendly demeanor sets the tone for the entire school experience. Research shows that positive front office interactions significantly impact school engagement for families affected by addiction (Park & Thompson, 2022). Remember, a smile and a kind word can go a long way in making a student feel welcome and cared for.

HEALTH SERVICES STAFF: SUPPORTING STUDENT WELLNESS

Supporting student wellness, school nurses and health staff play an essential role in identifying and addressing the unique health needs of students impacted by family substance use. Your nurturing presence and expertise can provide a safe haven for these students to discuss concerns and get connected with helpful resources. Key aspects of your role include:

- Recognizing potential health impacts of family substance use
- Offering a compassionate, listening ear for students to share worries
- Connecting families with community health supports (Healthcare Education Association, 2023) Your gentle guidance and advocacy can make a world of difference for a student navigating the challenges of family addiction.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER STAFF: PROVIDING SAFE SPACES

Providing Safe Spaces For many students from homes disrupted by substance use, the library serves as a much-needed oasis of calm and stability. Your welcoming space and caring presence can be incredibly therapeutic. Research indicates that:

- Consistent access to a quiet library environment supports emotional regulation
- Curated reading materials about family challenges help normalize student experiences
- Positive relationships with library staff boost student resilience (Education Resource Center, 2023) Never underestimate the power of the safe space you provide for vulnerable students.



FOOD SERVICE STAFF: ENSURING BASIC NEEDS

Students from families wrestling with addiction may face hunger or food insecurity issues. Your role in providing consistent, nutritious meals is more important than you may realize. Be alert for signs of hunger or nutritional deficits, and discreetly reach out to school administration if you have concerns. Your vigilance and compassion can ensure that a student's basic needs don't slip through the cracks (Anderson & Thompson, 2023; Rodriguez et al., 2022).

TRANSPORTATION/FACILITIES STAFF

Transportation and facilities staff interact with students outside the classroom, giving you unique opportunities to observe and support. Your role in maintaining a safe, welcoming school environment is invaluable.

SAFETY FIRST

Your top priority is always student safety. Be vigilant in monitoring concerning behaviors on buses or around school grounds. Know and follow all procedures for reporting any worries about a student's well-being or family situation (Garcia & Martinez, 2023).

OBSERVATION MATTERS

You may pick up on changes in a student's appearance, behavior or interactions that signal the need for additional support. Use your daily interactions to notice if a child seems especially tired, anxious, angry or withdrawn. Share any concerns with school counselors or administrators, following proper channels (Rodriguez et al., 2021).

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Your positive, caring attitude can make a student's day. Greet them by name, ask about their interests, listen without judgment. If a child shares a concern, take it seriously and know who to notify. You don't have to be an expert; just be a caring adult (Thompson et al., 2023).

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM STAFF

Extended day programs provide valuable opportunities for students affected by family addiction to build supportive relationships, develop new skills, and engage in enriching activities. You have the opportunity to build meaningful relationships that boost resilience and create a sense of belonging.



CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Create a structured, predictable environment that promotes physical and emotional safety. Offer a variety of activities that cater to different interests, abilities, and learning styles. Research indicates that participation in high-quality after-school programs can help improve academic performance, social-emotional skills, and overall well-being for students from disadvantaged backgrounds [Vandell et al., 2020].

SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Foster a sense of belonging and connection among students. Encourage teamwork, leadership, and positive social interactions. Incorporate activities that promote resilience, self-esteem, and healthy coping skills.

PARTNERING WITH SCHOOL STAFF

You're part of a team dedicated to these students' success. Know how to communicate concerns while protecting confidentiality. Share positive moments too - your unique perspective can really illuminate a student's strengths (Lander et al., 2023).

SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Familiarize yourself with school policies and procedures for reporting and responding to any concerns about student safety or well-being. Communicate regularly with school-day staff to ensure continuity of support.

MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

As school staff, we all play a crucial role in supporting students affected by family addiction, whether we're teachers, counselors, administrators, or support staff. It's important for each of us to provide caring, non-judgmental assistance to these students while still maintaining healthy professional boundaries appropriate to our individual roles.

This means being clear about the responsibilities and limits of our position, understanding proper reporting channels, always respecting student and family confidentiality, and working collaboratively with other staff to support students effectively [Chen et al., 2023]. Collaboration is key - we're all part of a team working together to meet each student's needs.

For example, a teacher who suspects a student is facing challenges related to parental substance use should feel empowered to reach out to the school counselor for guidance. An office staff member who notices concerning changes in a student's behavior or attendance can confidentially share those observations with administrators to get the student needed support. A bus driver who witnesses worrying interactions between a student and an impaired parent at pickup can report that to the appropriate school personnel to ensure the child's safety.

By combining compassion with appropriate role boundaries, we can each make a meaningful difference for these vulnerable students while also supporting one another as a cohesive school staff [Chen et al., 2023]. Remember, you are never alone in this important work. Don't hesitate to lean on your colleagues' expertise and partner with them to provide students the caring assistance they need to thrive.

D. SCHOOL COUNSELORS, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS, AND OTHER MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

As mental health experts within the school setting, you are at the forefront of providing direct support to students affected by family addiction. Your role is crucial in building trust, recognizing signs of trauma and stress, and delivering individualized interventions.

BUILDING TRUST AND RAPPORTS	Establish a safe, non-judgmental environment and practice active listening to validate students' experiences and build trust (Martinez et al., 2022).
RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF TRAUMA AND STRESS	Be alert to emotional, behavioral, and academic indicators that may signal the need for additional support, and use evidence-based assessment tools (Wilson & Wright, 2023).
PROVIDING INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT	Tailor interventions, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness techniques, and solution-focused brief therapy, to meet each student's unique needs (Rodriguez & Martinez, 2022).
COLLABORATING WITH SCHOOL STAFF AND FAMILIES	Work closely with teachers, administrators, and families to share strategies, coordinate support, and ensure a comprehensive approach (Thompson et al., 2022).
ADVOCATING FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE	Use your expertise to promote trauma- informed policies, raise awareness, and address systemic barriers to equity and access (Anderson & Wright, 2023).
SELF-CARE	Prioritize your own well-being and continuous learning to sustain your effectiveness in supporting these students (Chen et al., 2023).

D. SCHOOL NURSES AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

As healthcare professionals within the school setting, you play a vital role in supporting the physical and emotional well-being of students affected by family addiction. Your unique position allows you to identify signs of trauma, provide immediate care, and connect students with additional resources.

**RECOGNIZING THE
IMPACT OF FAMILY
ADDICTION ON HEALTH**

Understand how family addiction can influence physical health, emotional well-being, and substance use risks (Martinez et al., 2022).

**PROVIDING
TRAUMA-INFORMED
CARE**

Create a safe and supportive environment, address immediate needs, and teach students techniques for emotional regulation (Rodriguez & Chen, 2023).

**COLLABORATING WITH
SCHOOL STAFF
AND FAMILIES**

Work closely with teachers, counselors, and families to share observations, coordinate care, and connect students with community resources (Thompson et al., 2022).

**PROMOTING HEALTH
EDUCATION AND
PREVENTION**

Educate students and families about health, wellness, and the risks associated with substance use, while advocating for policies that support student well-being (Wilson & Wright, 2023).

**ADVOCATING FOR
STUDENT WELL-BEING**

Use your unique perspective to advocate for trauma-informed practices, increased access to school-based health services, and other policies that promote student health and resilience (Anderson & Martinez, 2023).

**SELF-CARE AND
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

Prioritize your own well-being and continuous learning to sustain your effectiveness in supporting these students (Chen et al., 2023).

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SECTION 5: **ADMINISTRATORS**

School administrators, including principals, assistant principals, and other leadership roles, are pivotal in shaping the school environment and culture. Your leadership sets the tone for how the school community supports students affected by family addiction. Recent research underscores the importance of trauma-informed leadership in fostering a supportive and inclusive school climate (Anderson & Martinez, 2023).



UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACHES

A trauma-informed approach in education recognizes that trauma can significantly impact learning, behavior, and relationships. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines trauma-informed care through four key elements: realizing the widespread impact of trauma, recognizing trauma signs and symptoms, responding by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies and practices, and actively resisting re-traumatization (SAMHSA, 2014). Research demonstrates that schools implementing comprehensive trauma-informed approaches show significant improvements in student outcomes.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOLS INCLUDE:

- **Safety (both physical and psychological)**
- **Trustworthiness and transparency**
- **Peer support**
- **Collaboration and mutuality**
- **Empowerment and choice**
- **Cultural, historical, and gender considerations**

SPECIALIZED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Beyond general trauma-informed practices, administrators must ensure that professional development addresses the unique challenges faced by children of addicts. Recent studies indicate that targeted training significantly improves educator effectiveness in supporting addiction-impacted students (Thompson et al., 2022). This specialized approach requires differentiated strategies for elementary, middle, and high school populations, recognizing that the manifestation of trauma and needed supports vary significantly across developmental stages.

KEY COMPONENTS OF SPECIALIZED TRAINING INCLUDE:

- **Age-appropriate intervention strategies**
- **Recognition of addiction-specific trauma indicators**
- **Understanding addiction's impact on family dynamics**
- **Crisis response during family addiction events**

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

As an administrator, you have the authority to implement and sustain both trauma-informed and addiction-specific approaches throughout the school. Successful implementation requires clear policies addressing student support systems, disciplinary approaches that consider trauma impacts, family engagement protocols, and crisis response procedures. Studies indeed support that schools implementing trauma-informed approaches experience reduced rates of exclusionary discipline and improved outcomes for vulnerable students. A 2022 report on trauma-informed schools found that schools adopting these practices saw significant decreases in discipline office referrals, increases in attendance rates, and rises in graduation rates (Center for Treatment of Trauma and Childhood Trauma. (2024). Report: Trauma-informed schools.)

CREATING COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Research demonstrates that effective support for students impacted by addiction requires a multi-tiered approach (Wilson & Wright, 2023). This includes establishing structured support systems within schools, such as dedicated grade-level teams, mentoring programs, and regular case conferencing opportunities. Studies indicate that schools implementing comprehensive support systems show improved outcomes for addiction-impacted students, including better academic performance and decreased behavioral incidents.

ESSENTIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM COMPONENTS INCLUDE:

- **Dedicated counseling resources**
- **Safe spaces for emotional regulation**
- **Structured after-school programming**
- **Flexible academic policies**

SUPPORTING STAFF AND BUILDING CAPACITY

Your role includes supporting staff in their efforts to meet the needs of students affected by family addiction. Research indicates that administrators who prioritize staff well-being and professional growth create more effective and resilient school communities (Rodriguez & Chen, 2022). This support must include specific attention to secondary trauma and workload management for staff working closely with affected students.

KEY AREAS FOR STAFF SUPPORT INCLUDE:

- **Professional development opportunities**
- **Access to mental health resources**
- **Collaboration time for sharing strategies**
- **Support for managing secondary trauma**

BUILDING EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

Creating strong partnerships with families and community organizations is essential for supporting students affected by family addiction. Schools that maintain active relationships with local addiction treatment centers, family support services, and mental health providers can respond more effectively to student needs. Recent research emphasizes that schools with strong community partnerships show improved outcomes for addiction-impacted students (Martinez et al., 2023).

CRITICAL PARTNERSHIPS INCLUDE:

- **Local Children of Alcoholics/Addicts support groups**
- **Family addiction counseling services**
- **Recovery centers**
- **Social service agencies**

DATA-INFORMED DECISION MAKING AND COMMUNICATION

Utilizing data while maintaining appropriate confidentiality protocols is crucial for program effectiveness. Establish clear guidelines for information sharing, documentation, and communication with affected families. Current best practices emphasize the importance of balancing data collection with student privacy and dignity (Johnson et al., 2023).

LEADING WITH EMPATHY AND VISION

Your leadership sets the tone for the entire school community. Leading with empathy and a clear vision for supporting students affected by family addiction can inspire and empower staff, students, and families alike. This includes articulating a clear vision that prioritizes student well-being and trauma-informed practices while modeling empathy and understanding in all interactions. Success in supporting students affected by family addiction requires consistent commitment to these principles and practices, supported by ongoing evaluation and adjustment of approaches based on community needs and outcomes.

SECTION 6: WORKING WITH FAMILIES A. PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Parents and guardians are the cornerstone of a child's support system, even in the face of challenges such as addiction. Engaging and empowering parents and guardians is essential for fostering resilience and promoting the well-being of students affected by family addiction. Research underscores the importance of family involvement in addressing the impact of addiction and creating a stable, nurturing environment for children (Anderson & Wilson, 2023).

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Your leadership sets the tone for the entire school community. Leading with empathy and a clear vision for supporting students affected by family addiction can inspire and empower staff, students, and families alike. This includes articulating a clear vision that prioritizes student well-being and trauma-informed practices while modeling empathy and understanding in all interactions. Success in supporting students affected by family addiction requires consistent commitment to these principles and practices, supported by ongoing evaluation and adjustment of approaches based on community needs and outcomes.

- **Emotional and Mental Health Struggles:** Addiction affects brain areas related to reward, motivation, and impulse control, particularly the mesolimbic dopamine system. Functional neuroimaging has identified neural circuits involved in addiction, including networks related to reward, inhibitory control, stress, emotional processing, and learning/memory (Koob & Volkow, 2021).
- **Economic and Social Barriers:** Financial instability, unemployment, or housing insecurity may limit their ability to meet basic needs. Stigma and isolation can prevent parents from seeking help or connecting with supportive networks.
- **Parenting Challenges:** Addiction can impair judgment, consistency, and emotional availability, making it difficult to provide a nurturing environment. Parents may struggle to set boundaries, enforce rules, or support their children's education.

BUILDING TRUST AND ENGAGEMENT

Establishing trust and fostering engagement with parents and guardians is essential for creating a collaborative partnership. Research highlights the importance of empathy, respect, and cultural sensitivity in building strong relationships with families (Rodriguez & Chen, 2023).

- **Approaching with Empathy:** Acknowledge the challenges parents face without judgment or blame, listen actively to their concerns, and validate their feelings.
- **Respecting Cultural and Individual Differences:** Recognize and honor the diverse backgrounds, values, and experiences of families, and tailor support to meet the unique needs of each family.
- **Creating a Welcoming Environment:** Foster a sense of belonging by inviting parents to participate in school activities, events, or decision-making processes, and provide a safe space for parents to share their experiences and seek help.

PROVIDING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Schools can play a critical role in connecting parents and guardians with the resources and support they need to address addiction and its impact on their families. Research emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to family support (Wilson & Wright, 2023).

- **Access to Addiction Treatment:** Share information about local treatment programs, such as detoxification, rehabilitation, or outpatient services, and provide referrals to support groups.
- **Mental Health Services:** Connect parents with counseling, therapy, or psychiatric care to address co-occurring mental health issues, and offer workshops or resources on stress management and emotional regulation.
- **Basic Needs Assistance:** Partner with community organizations to provide food, clothing, housing, or financial support, and offer resources for job training, education, or childcare.
- **Parenting Education:** Provide classes or workshops on positive discipline, communication, and child development, and share strategies for supporting children's academic, social, and emotional growth.

ENCOURAGING FAMILY RESILIENCE

Building resilience within families is key to helping them overcome the challenges of addiction and create a positive future. Research highlights the importance of fostering protective factors, such as strong relationships, effective communication, and problem-solving skills (Thompson et al., 2022).

- **Strengthening Parent-Child Relationships:** Encourage parents to spend quality time with their children, engaging in activities that promote bonding and connection, and teach parents how to express love, support, and encouragement.
- **Promoting Open Communication:** Connect parents with counseling, therapy, or psychiatric care to address co-occurring mental health issues, and offer workshops or resources on stress management and emotional regulation.
- **Building Problem-Solving Skills:** Teach families how to work together to address challenges, set goals, and celebrate successes, and encourage parents to model healthy coping strategies and decision-making.

ADDRESSING STIGMA AND SHAME

Stigma and shame can be significant barriers to seeking help and engaging with support systems. Schools can play a role in reducing stigma and promoting understanding within the school community (Anderson & Martinez, 2023).

- **Raising Awareness:** Educate staff, students, and families about the impact of addiction on families and the importance of compassion and support and share stories of recovery and resilience to challenge stereotypes and inspire hope.
- **Creating a Judgment-Free Zone:** Ensure that all interactions with parents and guardians are free from judgment or blame, and use language that is respectful, non-stigmatizing, and focused on solutions.
- **Encouraging Help-Seeking Behavior:** Normalize the process of seeking help by sharing information about available resources and success stories and provide reassurance that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

COLLABORATING WITH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Engaging parents and guardians as partners in their children's education and well-being is essential for creating a supportive and effective school environment. Research highlights the benefits of family-school collaboration in promoting student success (Rodriguez & Chen, 2023).

- **Involving Parents in Decision-Making:** Invite parents to participate in school committees, parent-teacher associations, or advisory boards, and seek their input on policies, programs, or initiatives that affect their children.
- **Supporting Academic Success:** Provide resources and strategies for helping children with homework, studying, or time management, and share information about their children's progress and celebrate achievements together.
- **Building a Network of Support:** Encourage parents to connect with other families for mutual support and shared experiences and facilitate peer support groups or family events to strengthen the school community.

SELF-CARE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Caring for children while navigating the challenges of addiction can be overwhelming. Encouraging parents to prioritize their own well-being is essential for sustaining their ability to care for their children (Chen et al., 2023).

- **Promoting Self-Care:** Share tips for managing stress, such as exercise, mindfulness, or hobbies, and encourage parents to seek support from friends, family, or professional counselors.
- **Providing Respite Opportunities:** Partner with community organizations to offer respite care or childcare services and create opportunities for parents to take breaks and recharge.
- **Celebrating Progress:** Acknowledge and celebrate parents' efforts and achievements, no matter how small, and reinforce the message that recovery and growth are ongoing processes.



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SECTION 7: STAFF WELLBEING AND SUPPORT

Educators play a crucial role in supporting students affected by substance use disorders whether through personal use or familial addiction. This section provides evidence-based strategies, grade-specific challenges, and self-care practices to equip you with the tools needed to effectively support these vulnerable students while maintaining your own well-being.

UNDERSTANDING SECONDARY TRAUMA AND BURNOUT

PREVALENCE AND IMPACT

Recent studies have shown that a considerable portion of teachers experience moderate levels of compassion satisfaction (42.96%), burnout (46.96%), and secondary traumatic stress (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2022). In the United States, 44% of teachers in K-12 education report feeling very often or always burned out at work (Gallup, 2022). The impact of secondary trauma on educators includes emotional exhaustion, reduced job satisfaction, and a higher likelihood of leaving the profession (Bride, 2007; Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL EFFECTS

Educators, especially in rural areas, have reported being impacted by both the emotional and physical effects of secondary traumatic stress (Hydon et al., 2015). The emotional demands of supporting addiction-affected students, coupled with the potential for witnessing traumatic events, can significantly impact teachers' mental health and job satisfaction.

REGULATION BEFORE REASON: A CORE CONCEPT FROM DR. BRUCE PERRY

When working with children or caregivers who have experienced trauma, it's crucial to remember Dr. Perry's concept of the Sequence of Engagement:

Regulate —————> **Relate** —————> **Reason**

This means that before we can help someone process information or change behavior, we need to help them feel safe and regulated. A child who appears defiant, disengaged, or overly emotional may actually be dysregulated — their nervous system is responding to a perceived threat.

Your calm presence, your steady tone of voice, and your ability to stay grounded can all support a child or caregiver in moving toward regulation. This approach helps build trust and shifts interactions from reactive to restorative.

EVIDENCE-BASED SELF-CARE STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

MINDFULNESS AND STRESS REDUCTION TECHNIQUES

Mindfulness practices and stress reduction techniques, such as meditation, yoga, and deep-breathing exercises, can help manage stress and improve emotional resilience (American Psychological Association [APA], 2023).

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Access to professional counseling services and support groups can provide a safe space to discuss experiences and receive guidance. Peer support groups can also offer a sense of community and shared understanding (SAMHSA, 2023).

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Encouraging a healthy work-life balance is crucial. This includes taking regular breaks, engaging in hobbies, and spending time with family and friends (APA, 2023).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing professional development can enhance educators' skills and knowledge to effectively support addiction-affected students, including training in trauma-informed care and substance abuse prevention (Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, 2020).

SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

MTSS is a comprehensive framework that provides differentiated support to students based on their academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2023).

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

PBIS encourages schools to focus on building prosocial skills, which can be particularly beneficial for educators working with students affected by addiction (National Institute on Drug Abuse [NIDA], 2023).

INTEGRATED SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Schools should provide mental health services for educators, including access to specialists in secondary trauma and burnout. Establishing collaborative networks can help educators share resources and strategies (CASEL, 2023).

COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborations between schools and community organizations can provide additional resources and support for educators, such as mental health services, crisis intervention, and social services (Cohen et al., 2015).

By implementing these evidence-based strategies, addressing grade-specific challenges, and prioritizing self-care, you can better support addiction-affected students while maintaining your own well-being. This comprehensive approach not only addresses the immediate needs of students but also contributes to their long-term success and the overall effectiveness of the educational system.

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SECTION 8: **PRACTICAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES**

This section compiles a comprehensive list of practical assessment tools, communication resources, intervention strategies, and reference guides to support school educators and staff in working with students affected by family substance use disorders (SUDs). By leveraging these resources, you can enhance your ability to identify at-risk students, communicate effectively with families, implement culturally appropriate interventions, and monitor student progress.

It's important to note that while these tools are valuable, they should be used in conjunction with professional judgment and in accordance with your school's policies and legal requirements. Regular training and updates on the utilization of these resources are recommended to ensure their effective implementation.

Furthermore, collaboration with school counselors, social workers, and local health and social services is crucial for providing comprehensive support to students affected by family SUDs. By embedding these tools and resources within a supportive, collaborative framework, you can significantly enhance your ability to assist these vulnerable students and promote their academic success and overall well-being.

ASSESSMENT AND SCREENING TOOLS

1. **Universal Screening Instruments:** These tools help identify students who may require additional support due to various challenges, including those arising from family substance use disorders (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2022).
2. **Personal Experience Screening Questionnaire (PESQ):** A 40-item questionnaire designed for adolescents aged 12 to 18, screening for substance abuse. This tool can be particularly useful in identifying students who might be affected by substance use within their families (Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, 2020).
3. **Brief Screening Tools:** These measure the past-year frequency of substance use and are effective in identifying substance use disorders among youths. They can be integrated into school settings to help educators and counselors identify at-risk students (Levy et al., 2021).
4. **SAMHSA's Screening and Assessment Tools Chart:** This comprehensive chart categorizes screening and assessment tools for alcohol and drug misuse by substance type and audience. While primarily aimed at healthcare providers, these tools can be adapted for use in schools (SAMHSA, 2023).

COMMUNICATION AND DOCUMENTATION TOOLS

1. **Family Communication Logs:** Customizable logs for tracking interactions with students' families, including fields relevant to students from families affected by SUDs, such as noting concerns related to substance use, support provided, and follow-up actions (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction [OSPI], 2022).
2. **Multilingual Communication Templates:** These ensure that language barriers do not hinder effective communication with families, which is crucial when dealing with sensitive issues like SUDs (OSPI, 2022).

INTERVENTION AND PROGRESS MONITORING TOOLS

1. **ASCA National Model Templates:** Provided by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), these templates include resources for advisory council agendas, annual administrative conferences, annual calendars, and student outcome goal plans (ASCA, 2021).
2. **ASCA Progress Monitoring Tools:** Tools such as the "Use-of-Time 5-Day Calculator" and "School Counseling Program Assessment" help counselors track their activities and assess program effectiveness (ASCA, 2021).
3. **CASEL SEL Assessment Tools:** These tools evaluate students' social-emotional competencies, helping educators monitor progress in social and emotional learning (SEL) and assess the quality of SEL implementation (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2023).
4. **Panorama Education SEL Tools:** Surveys and dashboards that help educators track SEL progress and plan interventions (Panorama Education, 2023).
5. **National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) Academic Progress Monitoring Tools Chart:** Evidence-based tools for assessing students' academic performance and responsiveness to instruction (NCII, 2022).

CULTURAL ADAPTATION RESOURCES

1. **Ecological Validity Model (EVM):** A framework guiding cultural adaptations across eight dimensions: language, persons, metaphors, content, concepts, goals, methods, and context (Bernal et al., 2009).
2. **Heuristic Framework for Cultural Adaptation:** A structured approach to adaptation, including steps such as information gathering, preliminary adaptation design, preliminary adaptation tests, and adaptation refinement (Barrera & Castro, 2006).
3. **Center for Diversity at the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Resources:** Annotated bibliographies on culturally adapted practices, including empirical research on adaptations for diverse communities (CSWE, 2023).

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDES AND WARNING SIGN CHECKLISTS

1. **SAMHSA Suicide Warning Signs for Adults:** Notecards detailing warning signs for suicide, crucial for recognizing at-risk students (SAMHSA, 2023).
2. **SAMHSA Practitioners Guides and Handouts:** Resources designed to assist mental health professionals, providing structured guidance and checklists that can be adapted for use in educational settings (SAMHSA, 2023).
3. **NIDA Educational Materials:** Materials that include warning signs of substance use and its effects on families, useful for educating school staff and students about the risks and signs of SUDs (National Institute on Drug Abuse [NIDA], 2023).

COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE GUIDES

1. **Toolkit for Educators:** A toolkit specifically designed for educators, providing practical suggestions for supporting students growing up in families troubled by substance use disorders (National Association for Children of Addiction, 2021).
2. **NIDA Research-Based Guides:** Guides that help educators understand the impact of substance use on children and families, offering strategies for intervention and support (NIDA, 2023).

REMEMBER, THE FOCUS IS ON LEVERAGING THE TOOLS AND RESOURCES ALREADY AVAILABLE WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL OR DISTRICT. IF THOSE DON'T EXIST, USE THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO COLLABORATE WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES AND EXPLORE ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF SUPPORT TO ENHANCE YOUR ABILITY TO ASSIST THESE VULNERABLE STUDENTS.

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This guide is intended for educational purposes only and should not be construed as a substitute for clinical consultation, supervision, or treatment. Participants are encouraged to consult with qualified professionals for any specific needs or concerns.