

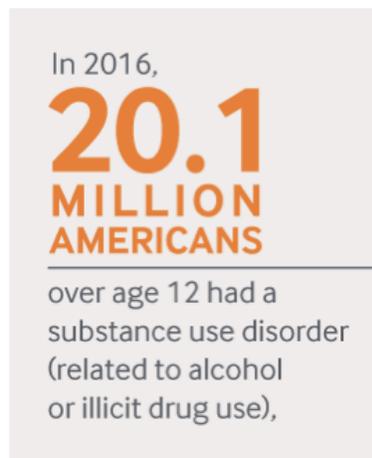
# Preventing Substance Use Disorders in Members and Their Families

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## ***The Issue***

There is an abundance of research that has found that peoples' early experiences in their lives influence their future decisions (NIDA, 2018). All people present with protective and risk factors that begins at birth. Furthermore, these factors can be derived from genetic influences and environmental influences. Prevention begins with being aware of these factors that influence individuals' risk levels of Substance Use Disorder (SUD). Prevention of SUD in members and their families involve evidence-based practices that provide a variety of benefits.

## ***Why is Prevention Important?***



**Figure 1.** Retrieved from <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/newsletter-article/2017/sep/focus-expanding-access-addiction-treatment-through-primary>

According to SAMHSA (2018) there was an estimated 22.5 million Americans ages 12 and over who self-reported that they needed treatment for alcohol and/or drug use in 2014. Substance Use Disorder involves significant costs to the families, employers, and economy. Furthermore, SUD can lead to other major chronic health diseases, including heart disease and diabetes. SAMSHA(2018) notably stated, “By 2020, mental and substance use disorders will surpass all physical diseases as a major cause of disability worldwide.”

Prevention serves a crucial role in regards to substance use disorders in members and their families. Specifically, research has found significant relationship between children who have parents diagnosed with SUD having an increased risk of developing a SUD (Lander, Howsare, & Byrne, 2013). Additionally, individuals who use drugs often began using during their adolescence (NIDA, 2018).

## ***Preventing Substance Use Disorders***

Research related to evidence-based prevention for SUD is readily available. The Surgeon General (2016) defined five findings related to preventing substance use disorders, which included:

- 1. Both substance misuse and substance use disorders harm the health and well-being of individuals and communities. Addressing them requires implementation of effective strategies.**
- 2. Highly effective community-based prevention programs and policies exist and should be widely implemented.**
- 3. Full integration of the continuum of services for substance use disorders with the rest of health care could significantly improve the quality, effectiveness, and safety of *all* health care.**
- 4. Coordination and implementation of recent health reform and parity laws will help ensure increased access to services for people with substance use disorders.**
- 5. A large body of research has clarified the biological, psychological, and social underpinnings of substance misuse and related disorders and described effective prevention, treatment, and recovery support services. Future research is needed to guide the new public health approach to substance misuse and substance use disorders.**

The family plays a key role in prevention of SUD. Lander et al. (2013) stated, “Treating the individual without family involvement may limit the effectiveness of treatment for two main reasons: it ignores the devastating impact of SUD’s on the family system leaving family members untreated and it does not recognize the family as a potential system of support for change” (p. 195). By engaging in a prevention, there is a collaborative approach that has proven to be effective in being proactive versus reactive to substance use in individuals.

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## ***References***

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