

RADARS[®]

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| Title: | Is drug source a predictor of severity of non-medical prescription drug use among college students? Do source predictors vary by gender? |
| Authors: | Wheat A, Davis J, Buchholtz C, Dart RC |
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Abstract:

Background: Prescription drug abuse among college students is a growing public health problem.

Objective: To assess the relationship between source of prescription drugs and severity of drug abuse among college student non-medical drug users (NMDU).

Methods: Respondents included in analysis reported taking one or more prescription opioid or stimulant drug(s) non-medically in the prior 3 months on the RADARS[®] System 2010 College Survey (N=948), a web-based survey asking about college student NMDU. Respondents reporting NMDU were asked to specify drug source(s) (“doctor”, “friend”, “family”, “someone other than friend or family”, “purchased”, “stole”, or “other”) and complete a validated drug abuse screening questionnaire (DAST-10). Logistic regression was used to test the odds of being a more severe drug abuser (defined as a DAST-10 score ≥ 3) associated with each drug source.

Results: For females, compared to those reporting source as “other”, more severe drug abuse was predicted most notably when the source was “friend” (OR 2.7: 95%CI 1.8, 4.2), “purchased” (OR 4.0: 95% CI 2.5, 6.6), or “stole” (OR 5.6: 95% CI 2.3, 13.9) after controlling for age. For males, compared to those reporting source as “other”, severe drug abuse was predicted most notably when the source was “family” (OR 3.4: 95%CI 2.0, 6.1), or “purchased” (OR 2.6: 95% CI 1.5, 4.5) after controlling for age.

Conclusion: There is a relationship between source and severity of drug abuse among college student NMDU.

Learning Areas:

Public health or related research

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify sources of abused prescription drugs.
2. Compare different sources of prescription drugs associated with more severe drug abuse among college students.
3. Discuss ways to reduce prescription drug abuse among college students that incorporate the knowledge of how sources may relate to severity of drug use.