

The Family's role in Preventing Children from Drugs.

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Abstract:

The family plays a fundamental role in the child's continuous upbringing and social development until adulthood, in accordance with sociocultural values and standards derived from customs, traditions, religion, law, and scientific knowledge. This child transforms from a biological being into a social being with a balanced personality that develops self-confidence. Her educational success is also determined by her keenness to provide a healthy family environment built on love, affection, positive interaction with others, respect, and the cohesion of social relations, through dialogue and constructive discussion, while maintaining open channels of communication from family to school, and the nature of the companions who come into contact with her, an environment that protects him from everything that corrupts his innocence and violates his legal and legitimate rights. Therefore, in this article, we will focus on the scourge of drug abuse and addiction, and the central role of the family in guiding the child (adolescent) and not crossing red lines, so that he does not fall into danger that harms his mind, health, body, femininity or masculinity. It is the first line of defense in protecting its children from all types of social diseases, including drugs, which have their own causes and serious effects on the individual, family and society. There is no doubt that the new challenges facing families in raising their children have affected their balance, requiring them to work as a team with other actors in society to find the necessary solutions to keep children away from the clutches of delinquency.

Keywords: Family, Prevention, Drug, Health, children, delinquency

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▪ **Introduction:**

This theoretical study is considered one of the foundational sociological studies for understanding the role of the family in protecting children from drug use. We have addressed the most important theories of deviance. The continuous efforts made by every family to provide sound social upbringing, free from deviation from social and human values, from the moment a child is born until they reach adolescence, often reflect its success in building a positive and balanced personality in all aspects, amidst the various changes that their society and the world are experiencing. This social upbringing serves as a strong shield against any deviation in their children's behavior. Given the crucial position of the family, it acts as the first line of defense protecting children from drug use and addiction, by creating a suitable family environment filled with strong and positive family relationships, characterized by love and support, and built on meaningful dialogue while maintaining continuous communication channels with their children regarding every issue they face.

Despite all these factors and the supportive environment that families provide for their children, there are new contemporary challenges in the nature of parenting methods and values. This is what various families face today in an era full of contradictions in every society, which has affected family balance and necessitates that the family work as a team to find the necessary solutions to keep their children away from the pitfalls of delinquency.

The family takes the lead in shaping children and instilling in them its social heritage, drawing upon its cultural resources through various educational mechanisms and functions.

For a child to receive the best possible care and attention, the family must make sufficient efforts to guide them to safety, avoiding any pitfalls that could jeopardize their future. It is no exaggeration to say that the family is subject to violent upheavals that threaten its stability and, in particular, hinder its educational mission towards its children. This is due to the alarming spread of drug abuse.

1. The Problematic:

We can ask the questions as bellow:

- Why does the family have a role in protecting its children from drugs,**
- What factors affect it, and how do we help it to perform its educational tasks.**

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2. Definition of Concepts:

▪ **The Family:** It is a social institution composed of a biological and social system, based on two pillars: the first is biological, represented by marital relationships and blood relations between parents and children and across generations; The second is socio-cultural, where kinship relations arise through marriage, and the marital bond is established according to personal status laws where it is recognized. (Hijazi Mustafa, (2015), p. 15).

- Operational Definition:

Family in our study is: Family is a social institution that includes two people, a man and a woman, from a blood relationship, kinship, or non-relative, who are legally and legitimately linked. They have biological children, or are cared for by them, or without children. They live under one residential roof and have rights and duties imposed by law, religion, customs and traditions. it has several forms according to the culture and customs of society and the changes that society is witnessing in the forms and sizes of families, such as: the nuclear family, the extended family, families with a single spouse, whether by divorce or death, and the composite family...etc. Family is the primary educational institution responsible for caring for the upbringing of the child and generations and providing them with all the knowledge and basics of life to protect its members from all social diseases including drugs.

▪ **Role:**

The word "role in Arabic (دور) "comes from the verb "to rotate" or "to revolve." The role is the turn or shift that an individual performs.

In terminology, a role is the expected behavior of an individual within a group, determined by the prevailing culture. (Al-Dughaish Muhammad bin Musfir (2010), p 07).

▪ **Prevention:**

As "**Martin Bloom**" indicated, it refers to the set of measures taken to protect individuals or citizens in society from physical, psychological, social, and cultural aspects that threaten them, as in the case of drug abuse. It aims to strengthen and enhance their existing and potential capabilities, improve health levels, and achieve the desired goals of society (Abdul Latif Rashad Ahmed, (2007), p. 6).

- Operational Definition:

It refers to the set of proactive measures and steps taken to prevent deviation from accepted social norms, or to establish specific frameworks to protect children from any disruption to their behavioral well-being.

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▪ **Drugs:**

These are any substances that people use to change the way they feel, think, or behave. This description includes alcohol and tobacco, as well as other natural or manufactured drugs. (Al-Mushrif Abdul Ilah bin Abdullah and Al-Jawadi Riyad bin Ali (2011), p. 25).

▪ **Operational Definition:**

Drugs or mind-numbing effects have serious effects on: - The person himself (child, teenager or adult) harms his body (such as damaging brain cells, body movement and activity, and its organs (heart, liver...) And the deterioration of his daily life (depression, anxiety, turmoil, lack of feeling of pain, suicide...) on his family and those closest to him neighbors ... (violence in all its forms, and deviance that reaches crime and murder), or on the educational or professional institution (such as lack of concentration and comprehension, forgetfulness, and academic and professional failure), which is divided into two parts: the first, from a natural plant source (such as cannabis (opium (hashish)- (the opium poppy flower (Heroin is made from it), and coca (Cocaine is made from it), and khat) - while the second, They are made as drugs extracted from plants (such as morphine and heroin, sedative-hypnotic tablets, dangerous red or blue, white hallucinogenic tablets).

Drugs are also classified according to color: blackish-brown (hemp, opium, and poppies, which have a sticky substance, are considered among the most dangerous plant drugs, and their leaves are dark green (after chewing they become brown), while white drugs (such as cocaine, which is extracted from the green coca plant, heroin, codeine, and hallucinogenic tablets, and are as powders or liquids that are taken as injections or drinks. Other types of mind-altering agents: solvents and sprays: spray paints, glues, and cleaning fluids that depress the nervous system, alcohol: a widely used legal substance that impairs judgment and motor skills.



Types of narcotic natural plants and their names
From left to right: khat -cannabis (poppy)- Coca — Bangou-

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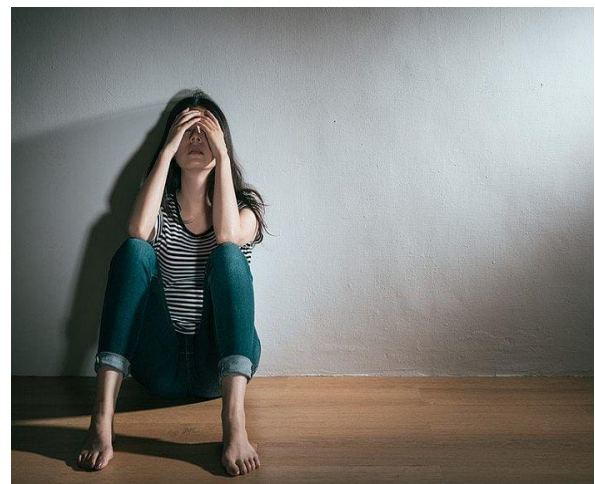
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Cocaine



Hallucinogenic pills



**Pictures of Adolescents both sexes under the influence of drugs
(suffering and risks)**

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The following table shows the number of drug users across Algerian national territory:

Summary of recruitment and treatment activities for addicts during 2024

Number of people	Family Status			Gender		Ages				Occupational status			Drugs consumed			
	Married	Single	Other Case	Females	Males	15 years	25-16 years	26 -35 years	Over 35	a student	worker	Without the work	cannabis	psychotropic substances	multi-addiction	Other conditions
31905	9331	19885	2689	24659	7246	2165	11459	11102	7179	5601	12246	14058	7792	8246	11558	4309

National Office for Combating Drugs and Addiction

Report on Drug and Addiction Control Activities - Annual Summary 2024

3. The Most important Theories of Criminology:

✓ **The Biological Theory:**

Proponents of this theory place great importance on the genetic aspect of human beings. According to Lombroso, a child carries predispositions to delinquency and crime, and the criminal possesses certain characteristics that distinguish him from other members of society. **Lombroso** also believed that crime is a phenomenon that afflicts many societies, an inevitable phenomenon, despite the preventive mechanisms that society enacts to eliminate it. Despite the harsh criticism this theory faced, it opened the door to many subsequent studies. Therefore, this theory can be considered pioneering in shedding light on one of the most prominent pathological phenomena that still attracts the attention of many scientists and thinkers.

✓ **The Social Theory:**

Proponents of this theory believe that deviance or crime is a result of the social environment in which the individual lives. Addiction is usually a result of withdrawal behavior or what is known as deviation from the prevailing norms and values in society. It is the result of societal pressures, or a set of interconnected

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factors. Family disintegration, poverty, and idleness are among the most important causes of drug use. The sociologist Emile Durkheim almost certainly asserted the impossibility of eliminating crime, as it has existed since the beginning of humanity. Crime itself is considered a mirror reflecting the type of prevailing culture and social level.

✓ **The Deviance Theory:**

This theory means that a group of individuals deviate from the prevailing social norms in society, and their behaviors become unacceptable and abnormal to the rest of society. Merton argues that individuals tend to pursue certain goals through legitimate means. However, these groups encounter obstacles that prevent them from achieving their objectives, leading them to resort to illegal and socially unacceptable methods. Sutherland, on the other hand, believes that individuals acquire certain norms through early interaction with their families. Within the family environment, individuals develop specific habits based on daily interactions and kinship ties. Alongside this continuous interaction with their families, individuals sometimes acquire certain behaviors that do not conform to the group's norms, such as language patterns. All of this is a product of the cultural and social capital that the individual absorbs from the group to which they belong.

✓ **Social Construction Theory:**

This theory posits that the decline in standards and values in society is caused by the social structure, and therefore, the focus should be on the latter. Its argument is that many social problems are complex and not superficial. The introduction of certain external influences into society has created a significant gap in its structure. When studying a social problem, we must understand the true roots of its prevalence. We may often discover that a conflict of values was a real cause of its emergence, which is what we call social change.

4. Psychological and Social Causes of Addiction:

A. Psychological Factors: Many scientists and thinkers have focused on the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency, as it is a thorny pathological phenomenon that erodes society and leads to the loss of entire generations. Many young people fall into the trap of drugs due to a defect in their personality structure, or what is known as a pathological personality that lacks maturity or the necessary preparation to face life's challenges. This type of addict, who falls victim to drugs to escape from confronting pressures, is classified as having a weak personality. Many interested in the subject of personality believe that the personality of the drug user or addict is either normal and socially well-adjusted, but they used drugs under severe

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environmental pressures or circumstances, or it is neurotic, psychotic, or psychopathic. (Al-Taifi Abdo Kamel (2015), pp. 66- 67)

▪ **Personality as a crucial factor in the phenomenon of addiction:**

Anxiety and fear of the future result in behavioral disorders and disturbances, leading some young people to resort to drugs hoping for an improvement in their circumstances and as an escape from their current reality. Several psychological factors can drive a drug user to addiction, including:

- The conflict between aspirations and ambitions and the available resources.
- Failure to resolve conflict through legitimate means.
- Feelings of alienation and social oppression.
- The desire for psychological stability

(Abdul-Ilah bin Abdullah and Al-Jawadi Riyad bin Ali (2011), p. 93).

Undoubtedly, there are other psychological factors that can contribute to addiction. A depressed person might believe that feelings of satisfaction and mood changes can be achieved by using drugs. Some individuals experience internal conflict or anxiety due to certain disorders, such as fear of the future or repeated failures, which leaves them in an unstable psychological state.

B) Social Factors:



Social factors contribute to providing the appropriate conditions for drug use. It is worth noting that it is impossible to definitively identify a single direct cause of drug use, as several factors and circumstances often intertwine, creating fertile ground for the emergence of addiction.

The factors that lead to drug use in societies vary depending on the society and its lifestyle. Arab societies tend to have a social life based on a fundamental family structure, making the family the most important link in the process of socialization and social integration. In contrast, Western societies are built on individualism and a tendency towards independence in decision-making, which drives individuals to

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seek success at the personal level without regard to moral or religious aspects, whose influence is weak in these societies.

We have chosen to highlight the most important social institutions and factors that play a direct role in deviance. The first of these formative institutions is the family, which has always been and remains the most important institution concerned with raising children and shaping their most important initial behaviors.

▪ **The Family:**

Family relationships are characterized by ups and downs. They often experience fluctuations and events that require patience and dialogue based on active listening. Deviance is often an escape from a turbulent family environment, where individuals seek out other people or friends as substitutes for their family members in search of psychological comfort. However, this does not always end well, as these individuals may fall in with deviant people who provide them with opportunities for delinquency and crime. The socialization process within the family may be flawed, lacking the teaching of proper social norms, roles, and social responsibility, or it may be based on negative parenting attitudes such as authoritarianism, cruelty, overprotection, pampering, neglect, rejection, discrimination in treatment between males and females, between older and younger children, and between siblings and non-siblings, and inconsistent treatment. (Al-Sadhan Abdullah Nasser (1994), p.78).

The family system is in dire need of performing its roles properly, as any shortcomings on its part lead to a significant degree of disturbance in the child's personality or the emergence of signs of deviance.

Many studies have shown that a lack of communication between parents and the child leads to behavioral problems, and even excessive discipline and strictness, in the absence of a balanced educational parenting strategy, contribute to the emergence of behavioral disorders in the child and increase the risk of drug abuse and delinquency. (Richard, D.B Velleman (2005), pp. 95-96)

- The danger of drug use or addiction by one or both parents to children:

In addition to what we mentioned previously, We have noticed that drug abuse and addiction by parents or one of them has a serious impact on children, and this phenomenon exists in all societies affected by drugs, and it is one of the hidden reasons in families, which we do not reveal as family sociologists, or psychologists except after our scientific study, which searches for the circumstances behind the deviation of children, who are the deviants, and their resorting to drug abuse and addiction in adolescence and young adulthood.

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as we find SUDs (substance abuse disorder) “affect families and children in every area of their development. Social workers have opportunities to intervene and change the trajectory of these potential problems at many junctions. When assessing any client is it essential to inquire about substance use history in the family, in the individual, and current use. There is a way to do this that is sensitive and does not put the person on the defensive. Motivational interviewing strategies can be employed to build rapport, increase motivation for change, and decrease resistance” (Miller & Rollnick, 2002; W. R. Miller & Rose (2010)).

▪ **The School:**

In school, the child acquires a great deal of knowledge and friendships through interaction with their peer group. Thus, the school becomes a space that influences the child's behavior. The educational staff can observe any undesirable behaviors; frequent absences and violations of the school's rules require those in charge of the institution to investigate the reasons for these violations and try to understand the background of these negative behaviors, in order to address them before the child drops out of school and perhaps joins delinquent groups that lure them into the world of drugs. An important fact is that signs of deviance appear among adolescents at school, especially regarding violations of internal rules and regulations. The school is expected to perform some tasks that are fundamentally within the absolute purview of the family, because the adolescent's inappropriate behavior can be noticed by the teacher before anyone else (Al-Omari, Saleh bin Muhammad Al-Rafie (2002), p. 86).

▪ **Peer Group:**

Through interaction and forming friendships with schoolmates and neighbors, the child develops aspects of their personality, and finds an outlet within this group. Daily contact with peers enables the child to discover themselves and achieve their social identity. Children tend to imitate their peers freely. Due to the strong influence of the peer group on their peers through daily interaction and attempts to imitate their behaviors, and in the absence of continuous family supervision, the child becomes like a feather in the wind, easily drawn into deviance.

This is because deviant peer groups serve as role models for their friends and other companions, leading them down the path of deviance and drug use, and acquiring this culture from them through temptation, pressure, or trying drugs for the first time out of curiosity, a desire to prove themselves, and the ability to keep up with their peers in their shared behaviors and cultures. (Al-Saad, Saleh, (1999), p. 13).

▪ **The Residential Neighborhood:**

The family lives in a residential environment where social relationships contribute

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to providing its inhabitants with a set of attitudes and behavioral norms. The nature of the neighborhood and the daily behaviors prevalent within it generally affect its residents, and particularly its children. Children's exposure to deviant behaviors and the absence of healthy standards make them victims of this corrupt environment. Although a child's personality is shaped by their family and they learn certain traits from them, the influence of the residential neighborhood can either reinforce the values and educational methods provided by the family or undermine what the child has been taught. A corrupt neighborhood, rife with deviant behaviors and where criminals are portrayed as heroes and role models, leads those who live there to become accustomed to and accept these deviant behaviors, prompting them to imitate them, believing that they are values that do not conflict with normal standards.

The lack of sound practices in the neighborhood and the prevalence of social ills within it compel other institutions such as the family, school, and mosque, etc., to take action and tighten their grip on the upbringing of children, emphasizing their role in protecting young people from falling into error and guiding them back to the right path.

▪ **Weak Religious Conscience:**

The family strives to provide the child with all the correct knowledge and values through educational supervision and continuous care. Parents also try to instill the teachings of Islam and its noble meanings, such as the prohibition of alcohol and drugs. From a young age, the child learns to perform religious duties by imitating their parents, and then progresses through different stages of life until they acquire, through conviction, various religious rituals. They thus grow up loving virtues and rejecting all forms of vice and forbidden acts. The child's lack of proper religious upbringing deprives him of true guidance, making him easily influenced and susceptible to straying, believing that drugs are not forbidden by Islamic law due to his weak faith. This increases the likelihood of the child becoming involved with drugs and their various forms, as a result of his ignorance of the fundamentals of true Islamic religion.

▪ **Free Time:**

Young people suffer from a serious problem that permeates their daily lives, making them easy prey for drug dealers and falling into their destructive circle. This means succumbing to the lure of drugs out of curiosity and a desire to experiment. Free time remains a deadly weapon that destroys the future of our children, especially in the context of weak or often non-existent family supervision. This terrible void, without proper investment and strategic planning, becomes a means of

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committing transgressions, turning time into a curse instead of a blessing. Therefore, it is essential to give great importance to the activities and vitality of young people and utilize them in ways that benefit both the individual and society, such as joining sports clubs, youth associations, and other activities that protect young people from the scourge of drugs. The current situation clearly shows us that young people are suffering from a crisis of free time, causing them to lose their moral compass and be influenced by alien cultures that contradict the values of the Islamic religion and the customs of Arab societies.

5. Social and Psychological Causes of Addiction:

Drug addiction is considered an epidemic phenomenon that is difficult to control and limit its spread, and its causes are countless. The causes vary to include psychological, social, religious, and educational aspects. Drug use may indicate a personality disorder, the essence of which centers on the user's suffering from feelings of anxiety, depression, lack of self-confidence, despair, inability to cope with frustration, loss of self-identity and self-esteem, and lack of purpose. Here, drugs play an important role for the addict, which is to satisfy their need for self-awareness, achieve their identity, and alleviate feelings of inadequacy, loss, and alienation (Qamar Essam Tawfiq et al., p73).

From the above, it is clear that drug addiction is the result of the interaction of several factors and causes, and it is impossible to attribute drug use to a single cause. This phenomenon has become one of the most dangerous epidemics that is difficult to control, despite the strenuous efforts made by security agencies. However, its scope is still expanding, and it continues to attract many young people whose circumstances have led them to engage in deviant behavior. Those involved in promoting these poisons invent new tricks and schemes to evade the grasp of security agencies, reaping huge profits from this trade at the expense of innocent lives that have fallen victim to drugs.

6. The Family's role in preventing drug addiction:

It is essential for upbringing institutions, especially the family, to fulfill their responsibility by instilling correct values and moral standards and imbuing children with their culture. This plays a significant role in determining the child's future behavior. No other institution can perform this task except the family, which is capable of caring for the child and providing them with fundamental guidance. The family is the soil in which the seeds of values and standards are sown, and it is capable of nurturing and caring for those seeds.

Al-Samari et al. (2009) stated that the family plays a vital role through its

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guidance, supervision, and monitoring duties, especially when the child exhibits any deviant behavior (Awad Al-Anzi, Iman Ghazi (2014), p 30).

As for Sabah Ayachi (2009), she believes “that the educational process poses several sociological problems due to its strong connection to the envelope of contemporary changes: socio-economic changes, especially living and housing conditions), political, security, technological, and cultural changes in their broad sense. The success of educational performance in families requires what I called the concept of comprehensiveness in education that cares about all aspects, not a specific aspect at the expense of another aspect. Also, any defect in one aspect may expose children to dangers, and thus this comprehensiveness is determined by: creating the necessary material conditions (decent housing, food, treatment, clothing...), exchanging emotions, and indoctrinating aesthetic rules that develop good taste Establishing national education that develops the national spirit in the soul, setting broad outlines for moral and religious controls, and warnings...All of this should be understood by everyone who practices education or socialization, especially with the rapid changes that societies are experiencing, especially our Algerian society” (Sabah, Ayachi (2009), p. 10) She notes also, the importance of the effect of the censor on the child and adolescent of both sexes is related to the complementarity and similarity between spouses in the criteria for choosing marriage (Sabah, Ayachi (2009), p23) .

Parents have a prominent role in protecting their children from falling into the trap of drug addiction by providing a calm family environment free from violence and conflict. Parents' mastery of sound educational skills and methods, and their agreement on the same approaches and goals, largely shape a healthy personality in an atmosphere of psychological security without deviating from the established boundaries of normal behavior. This is because both excessive indulgence and excessive harshness harm the child's psyche and his social behavior

✓ **Primary Prevention:**

This involves social and health immunization against drug abuse and misuse and preventing its occurrence at the community level.

✓ **Secondary prevention:**

This involves treating cases of drug abuse and misuse at the local community level.

✓ **Tertiary prevention:**

This involves preventing the spread and escalation of drug abuse and misuse at the family, school, or individual level. (Al-Badayneh Dhiab Musa (2011), p 101). Drug prevention requires caution and a deep understanding of the phenomenon to enable

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young people to live fulfilling lives and propel the nation forward. The infiltration of this phenomenon among young people isolates them from society, leaving them at the mercy of the drugs they constantly abuse. This makes these young people, who have experienced addiction, unable to achieve their desired goals. The lethargy and laziness that accompany their daily lives have led many young people to waste their talents and occupy themselves with trivialities instead of utilizing their abilities and energies.

“Abdul Rahman Attiyat” defines the concept of prevention from drugs and dangerous substances as based on five main axes, including the measures that must be taken as a basic condition for achieving prevention. These can be summarized in the role of parents, schools and educational institutions, health institutions, and the media (Al-Asfar Ahmed Abdul Aziz (2012), p. 273).

Many types of drugs have begun to surface in many societies, perhaps the most important and most widely circulated among young people being synthetic pills, which are becoming increasingly popular despite the restrictions imposed by security authorities through their various agencies. The European Union's Early Warning System on New Psychoactive Substances, managed by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), has identified more than 500 new synthetic psychoactive substances. Some of these are marketed as alternatives to illegally produced plant-based drugs. In 2023 alone, 34 countries and territories reported 44 newly identified psychoactive substances to the Early Warning System on New Psychoactive Substances of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The largest group of these consists of synthetic cannabinoids. (International Narcotics Control Board Report 2024. United Nations Vienna (2025), p. 04)

■ **Conclusion:**

Social and Psychological factors contribute to creating the conditions conducive to drug use. It is noteworthy that it is impossible to definitively identify a single direct cause of drug use. Rather, several factors and circumstances interact, providing fertile ground for the emergence of addiction.

The family, given its primacy over other socialization institutions, bears a great responsibility in preventing early signs of deviance and providing its children with sound educational tools.

● **Practical suggestions by the authors of this article:**

1. Enhance children's self-confidence and prepare them to face difficult

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Situations rationally, without succumbing to destructive temptations and all forms of discouragement.

2. Establishing a fertile ground of family relationships based on affection, dialogue, and consultation, while educating children about the consequences and penalties of drug use.
3. Reporting cases of deviance to security authorities and enacting deterrent laws against drug dealers to serve as a lesson to others.
4. Organizing training courses under the supervision of social specialists in family to prepare those about to get married.
5. Guide and continuously monitor children, observing their behavior and the places they frequent in their free time, and help them choose their friends wisely.
6. The importance of expanding the employment of social workers in family, childhood and social work in hospitals and addiction treatment centers, given their effective role in social treatment, guidance, awareness and teaching social skills to all family members and students in schools, while at the same time coordinating with health care specialists, including doctors and psychologists, so that efforts are integrated and we reduce drug addiction and its dangers to the individual, family, institutions and society.

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