



**Information
Provided By:**



Deschutes County Mental Health Department
2577 NE Courtney Drive
Bend, OR 97701 (Ph) 322-7500

Stages of Adolescent Chemical Dependency

Misuse / Early Abuse	Harmfully Involved (Abuse)	Harmfully Dependent
<p>Patterns of Use: Weekend alcohol use Some pot use Low tolerance Regular use with pattern Uses primarily at parties No blackouts</p>	<p>Some weekday use Use of other drugs / hard liquor Increase in tolerance Rituals of use Use in smaller social groups Blackouts Buying drugs / Hiding drugs</p>	<p>Daily use Regular use of multiple substances Using harder drugs (e.g. crack, heroin) Increase in tolerance with withdrawal Compulsive use All night binges / use for several days Multiple blackouts Dealing / Maintain a supply</p>
<p>Attitudes Towards Use: Feels guilty about use Doesn't see it as a problem Justifies use as similar to peers</p>	<p>Protective of right to use Denial Compares self to "late stage" users to prove no drug problem</p>	<p>"I know it's hurting me, but I don't care" "I want to stop but I can't" May have periods of genuine desire to stop, with attempts at abstinence</p>
<p>Legal Issues: MIP for possession</p>	<p>Multiple MIP's DUII Non status offenses (runaway, shoplifting, stealing)</p>	<p>May have serious juvenile offenses (burglary, breaking/entry, jail-time) Anti-social behavior Drug dealing</p>
<p>School Problems: Mild decline in grades Remains involved in school activities May have been caught at school activity in possession with peers</p>	<p>Drop full letter grade or more Less involved in school activities Decline in attitude towards school Frequent skipping and absences</p>	<p>Grades drop 2 letter grades Failing most classes Drop out or expelled Enrolled in alternative school</p>
<p>Family Issues: Mild family conflicts (curfew, going to parties, fear of driving drunk) Still involved in family activities Irritable behavior</p>	<p>Increased family conflict Withdrawal from involvement with family Abusive behavior</p>	<p>Severe multiple conflicts (beyond parental control - runaways) Kicked out of the home Aggressive behavior</p>
<p>Peer Relationships: Same-aged friends Mainstream peer group A/D use not associated with sex</p>	<p>Mix of same-aged and older friends Separates self from "straight" peers - most time spent with "using" peers Uses alcohol or drugs along with sex</p>	<p>Many older friends Limited contact with non-using peers Sex strongly associated with A/D use</p>
<p>Emotional Well-being: Positive feelings from feeling close to peers outweighs any negative emotional effects from use</p>	<p>Experiences anxiety from negative life consequences Uses drugs to cope with emotions</p>	<p>Feelings when not using are black and negative Cynical and numb Depression / Hopelessness Suicidal thoughts Emotionally burned out</p>
<p>Spiritual: Decline in church involvement</p>	<p>Any previous involvement has been dropped completely</p>	<p>Disrupted spirituality Fascination with the occult</p>