Alcohol Use Among Young Women and Girls

Worsham El, LCSW, CFTP
Meet Worsham EI

- Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Family Trauma Professional
- B.S in Psychology, Loyola University, AM in Social Work Administration, University of Chicago
- CEO & Co-founder of Lotus Trauma Care, LLC
- Trained in Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT), and Affect Regulation Competency (ARC).
- Credentialed with DCFS as Level 2 Practitioner
Learning Objectives

1. Understand the intersection of trauma and substance use among girls and young women

2. Learn and recognize the risk factors for substance use among girls and young women

3. Learn trauma-informed responses to common challenges impacting treatment engagement, retention, & progress
Literature Review of Early Use and Implications

Youth who initiate alcohol use prior to the age of 15 years of age are reported to be 4 times more likely to meet criteria for alcohol dependence.

Early use is associated with more frequent use, higher numbers of drinks, dependence in adulthood and more mental health and social harm.

(Marshall, 2014)
Substance Use Overview

Several scholars point to the correlation of PTSD or PTSD symptoms, following childhood traumatic experiences may be related to later substance use disorders, especially among girls and women.

US National Co-Morbidity Study-Adolescent Supplement surveyed youth ages 13 through 18 and found that 78.2% of adolescents had consumed alcohol by later adolescence and 15.1% met criteria for DSM-IV lifetime alcohol abuse. The median age of onset was 14 years of age.

(Marshall, 2014)
Three wave longitudinal study of Puerto-Rican youth in the South Bronx New York and San Juan Standard Metropolitan area in Puerto Rico

First, understand the relationship between childhood traumatic experiences and PTSD symptoms, and the following initiation of alcohol use and

Investigate whether the observed relationship of trauma and PTSD symptoms with alcohol use initiation can be explained by shared risk factors

(Wu et. al, 2009)
The Data Collection

Measured alcohol use, interviewed parents and youth, and measured trauma and PTSD Symptoms

• Parental interviews assessed parental mental health and substance use, parental monitoring, parental discipline, maternal warmth, and supportiveness

• Youth measures measured the sensation seeking behavior, antisocial behavior, church attendance, and sociodemographic factors.

(Wu et. al, 2009)
The Findings

• A presence of 5 or more PTSD symptoms were a stronger predictor than experiences of trauma itself

• Youth with experiences of trauma, but few PTSD symptoms had similar reports of initiation as those youth with no experiences of trauma

• At baseline, youth ages 10-13, 11.5 as the mean age

• No Gender Differences
Recognizing DSM PTSD Symptoms

• Re-experiencing (1)
• Avoidance (1)
• Change in Mood/Thoughts (2)
• Arousal and Reactivity (2)
Re-experiencing

- Flashbacks
- Distressing memories
- Bad dreams
- Intense or prolonged mental distress to a trigger
- Intense or prolonged body response to a trigger
Avoidance

• Staying away from places, events, or objects that are reminders of the traumatic experience
• Avoiding thoughts and feelings related to the traumatic event
Change in Mood/Thoughts

- Trouble remembering key features of the traumatic event
- Negative thoughts about oneself, others, or the world
- Distorted cognitions about the cause or consequence, leading to blame
- Distorted feelings such as guilt, anger, or shame
- Loss of interest in enjoyable activities
- Feeling detached from others
- Inability to experience positive emotions
Arousal

- Easily startled
- Feeling tense or on edge
- Difficulty sleeping
- Angry outbursts/irritability
PTSD
Symptoms

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Avoid Thinking of the Trauma
Avoid Talking of the Trauma
Easily Frightened
Negative Mood
Negative Thinking
Always on Guard

Avoiding Places
Avoiding Activities
Flashbacks
Cannot Concentrate
Aggressive Behavior

Loss of Interest
Feeling Guilt or Shame
Substance Abuse
Sleeping Difficulty
Bad Dreams

Stellate Ganglion Block for PTSD - Cornell Pain Clinic
**Types of Trauma**

1) **Acute trauma** results from a single incident with a start and end date.

2) **Chronic trauma** is repeated and prolonged, such as domestic violence or abuse.

3) **Complex trauma** is exposure to varied and multiple traumatic events, often of an invasive, interpersonal nature.

4) **Developmental Trauma** are the experiences of trauma prior to the age of six, often interpersonal in nature.

5) **Intergenerational Trauma** is the transmission of post-traumatic stress symptoms and adaptations to offspring.
Areas of Impact

- Health and Body
- Thoughts and Mental Health
- Relationships
- Dissociation
- Mood and Emotional Regulation
- Behavior Control
- Self Concept
Recognizing Trauma Risk Factors

Safety Types

Physical
The integrity of the physical body. Is your body safe? Is there shelter, food, and clothing?

Social
The integrity of the self in the social context. Can you express yourself freely?

Moral
The integrity of values and basic needs. Are your values aligned with your interactions and actions?

Psychological/Mental
The integrity of thoughts and opinions about your self and/or situation. Are your thoughts and opinions helpful, encouraging, and compassionate?
Risk and Protective Factors

Family Interaction Theory is often used to understand the pathways of abstinence and use of alcohol.

1. Combination of intrapersonal characteristics, social influences from peers and environment, and emotional attachment to parents
2. Parent child attachment-supervision vs warm, nurturing relationships
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents frequently use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parental emotional disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low levels of parental monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor parent child relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child sensation seeking tendencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct problems and antisocial behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer use and/or promotion</td>
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<tr>
<td>High stress environment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Protective Factors

- Maternal warmth and supportiveness
- Monitoring
- Structured activities
- Family rules
- Encouraged abstinence
- Knowledge of refusal skills
- High level of anti-drinking attitudes
In the chat box please add your response to:

What is an intervention that promotes protective factors?
In the chat box please add your response to:

What is a method, activity, or technique that promotes protective factors?
Protective Factors have power

Fewer risk factors correlated with lower frequency of use

Those with higher protective factors drink less frequently than those with fewer protective factors
Case Study

Susan is a 13-year-old referred by her mother after the adolescent was caught at a party drunk. Susan told her mother that she was at her best friend’s house for a sleep over. Her mother reports that she has smelled alcohol on Susan twice before.
Case Study

When you meet with Susan, she proclaims, “I don’t have a problem, I don’t know why I am here. My mom is overreacting.” She reports that her mother works a lot, but they are close. Susan explains that her best friend is dating a high school freshman and he invited them to the party. He is on the football team and his cousin got the alcohol for the party. Susan believes attending the party was a good way to make friends so when she joins clubs, she will know people.
Case Study

Susan reports having three drinks and that this was her second time drinking. She states that she wishes her body was more like her best friend’s figure who is always getting all the cute boys. Susan reported that she and her mother attend religious services 2-3 times a week.

Susan’s father and mother divorced due to her father’s abuse of alcohol. Her mother has a diagnosis of depression.
In the chat box please add your response to:

What protective factors are present?
In the chat box please add your response to:

**What risk factors are present?**
In the chat box please add your response to:

What questions can you ask to explore risk and protective factors further?
Components of Trauma Informed Care

Realization of widespread impact and pathways for recovery

Recognizes signs of trauma of all people involved in the system

Responds with integration of knowledge of trauma

Resisting traumatization is an active goal
Engagement and Rapport Building

Authenticity

Validation and Agency

Activities and Media
Trauma-Informed Techniques

• Create Predictability-explain the process of your services and rules
• Agency-promote choices where possible
• Use open-ended questions to guide critical thinking, problem solving, and expression
• Engage parents through survey, phone call, bringing into session, parent session, resources, etc.
• Target protective factors and provide resources and skills to address risks
Resources

Alcohol Use Among Girls and Young Women: A Worrying Trend
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Risk and Protective Factors
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
Resources

Stop Alcohol Abuse
The federal Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking

Talk. They Hear You. Substance Use Prevention Campaign
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)


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