

The Early Emergence of Narcotic Addict Types

Providing retrospective self-reports of their activities, perceptions, and experiences during their early adolescent years (ages 12 to 14), 255 narcotic addicts were classified into four distinct types on the basis of a clustering technique applied to risk factor information derived from five major descriptive domains: family; peer deviance; personal deviance; psychological status; and protective factors. Differentiations among the types largely involved the extent of early drug and other behavioral deviance and family dysfunction. The predictive utility of the typology was examined in terms of outcome over the first ten years of the addiction career, including age at first narcotic addiction, amount of time incarcerated, and percentage of time addicted while in the community. The implications of the typology for both substance abuse prevention and treatment are discussed.