

Title

Illicit peyote use among American Indian adolescents in substance abuse treatment: a preliminary investigation.

Author(s)

Fickenscher,A., Novins,D.K., & Manson,S.M.

Source

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Abstract

Few studies to date have addressed illicit (i.e., nonceremonial) peyote use among American Indians (AIs). Participants were 89 AI adolescents admitted to a tribally operated residential substance abuse treatment program (RSATP) between 1998 and 2001. The RSATP is designed to provide specialized treatment of patients with substance use and other comorbid psychiatric disorders and is infused with a culturally sensitive approach to treatment. The participants completed a series of interviews that collected information on psychiatric diagnostic status, history of substance use, and ethnic identity. The majority of participants were male (65%), did not come from a two-parent household (75%), reported a mean use of 5.4 substances, and met full criteria for a median of 2.9 substance use disorders. Of 89 clients, 10 (11.2%) reported illicit use of peyote. The vast majority of these youth (n = 8) reported using peyote only once or twice in their lifetime. Illicit peyote users did not differ from nonusers in terms of age, gender, other substance use, prevalence of either other substance abuse/dependence or other nonsubstance use psychiatric disorders. However, illicit peyote users were more likely to report low levels of social support, low levels of self-esteem, and low identification with AI culture yet comparable involvement in AI traditional practices. The results of this exploratory study suggest that illicit peyote use is uncommon among AI adolescents with serious substance abuse problems.