

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS & SENIOR TRENDS

Social Isolation

Older Adults

&

Substance Use Disorder Trends

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PhoenixCenter

Prevent • Treat • Recover

The Phoenix Center

www.phoenixcenter.org

- ▶ 45 Years: Serving Greenville County
- ▶ 5,000: Treated yearly in primary treatment
- ▶ 10,000+: Yearly in prevention programs
- ▶ Inpatient Detox (Alcohol, Opioids, Benzos)
- ▶ 15-30 Day Residential Treatment
- ▶ Adult and Adolescent Outpatient Treatment
- ▶ IOP and MAT Programs
- ▶ Serenity Village: Inpatient women/children



Phoenix Center Clients Ages 55+

2022: 183 Detox (50% 55-59)

108 Alcohol

2022: 111 Outpatient (50% 55-59)

2022: 165 ADSAP (45% 55-59)

60-75%: Men



SUD Group Treatment

- ▶ Group Counseling, Family Counseling
- ▶ AA, NA, Celebrate Recovery, Church Groups

Vicarious Learning

Not Only One

Learn from Other's Experiences

Peer Support & Encouragement



2.5 Million Older Adults Alcoholism/Addiction

- ▶ Loss, isolation, loss of purpose/life meaning
- ▶ Isolation, one of few “pleasures” in life
- ▶ Sx of Addiction: Explained as signs of aging
- ▶ Pain of losing a loved one
- ▶ Widowers 75+: High rate alcoholism
- ▶ 17 million prescriptions tranquilizers yearly
- ▶ 60+ Generation: Don't discuss loneliness or struggles with alcohol



Seniors & SUD's

- ▶ Privacy, hides problems until issue presents
- ▶ Family Interventions
- ▶ Women: More likely to live alone than men and be content more often, while men report being lonely in old age.

10,000 Seniors Per Day: Turn 65 years old in our country

2030: 20% of Entire Population



National Poll Ages 50–80

[University of Michigan Health Lab](#) reports that in June 2020, just a few months after the start of the pandemic, “56 percent over age of 50 said they sometimes or often felt isolated from others: double the response of 27 percent in 2018.” Additionally, 46 percent of respondents said they “infrequently interacted with friends, neighbors, or family outside their household, doing so once a week or less, compared to 28 percent in 2018.”

While many older people had the ability to use social media and video chatting to connect with others, it actually reminded them how much they missed face-to-face interactions. As a result, many poll respondents were more likely to say they felt isolated, particularly those who live alone.



When COVID Hit....

- ▶ Groups discontinued
- ▶ Treatment / Counseling / Support Groups
- ▶ Telehealth support groups, IC sessions
- ▶ Medical, MAT Groups: Telehealth
- ▶ Church: Online, Social Distancing
- ▶ No hugging / Masking
- ▶ Limited Family Interactions / Grief / Loss



When COVID Hit....

- ▶ Family holidays cancelled
- ▶ Younger family scared to be around elders
- ▶ Alcohol deliveries at home
- ▶ Families disagreeing on vaccination status

All this, on top of normal stressors of aging.



Social Isolation Profiles and Older Adult Substance Use

- ▶ 2022 Study of 801 Seniors
- ▶ Connected/Active Group: Lowest risk
- ▶ Alone but Not Lonely Group:
Highest risk: Cigarette, Alcohol, Heavy Drinking
- Alone & Lonely Group: Highest risk non-medical drug use.
CBT Recommended: Enhance social networks

Reducing loneliness

Farmer AY, Wang Y, Peterson NA, Borys S, Hallcom DK. Social Isolation Profiles and Older Adult Substance Use: A Latent Profile Analysis. J

Gerontol B Psychol Sci Soc Sci. 2022 May 5;77(5):919-929. doi: 10.1093/geronb/gbab078. PMID: 33959768.



Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on individuals in recovery from substance use disorder. (2022 Study)

- ▶ 48 Adults in Recovery, 2 Interviews
- ▶ 1st 6 weeks of lockdown, then 6-12 mo. Later

Cancelled Support Groups Job Format Changes (Fired, Furloughed) Lack of Social Support

Coping: Hobbies/Activities, Self Care, Strengthen Personal Relationships

Worsening MH: Higher correlation between craving at 1st interview, to returned use at 2nd interview.

Taking Precautions Against Exposure: Higher rate of use at 2nd interview.

Those practicing self-care: Has lower rates of relapse at follow up interview

Shircliff K, Liu M, Prestigiacomo C, Fry M, Ladd K, Gilbert MK, Rattermann MJ, Cyders MA. Mixed methods prospective findings of the initial effects of the U.S. COVID-19 pandemic on individuals in recovery from substance use disorder. PLoS One. 2022 Jul 1;17(7):e0270582. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0270582. PMID: 35776699; PMCID: PMC9249176



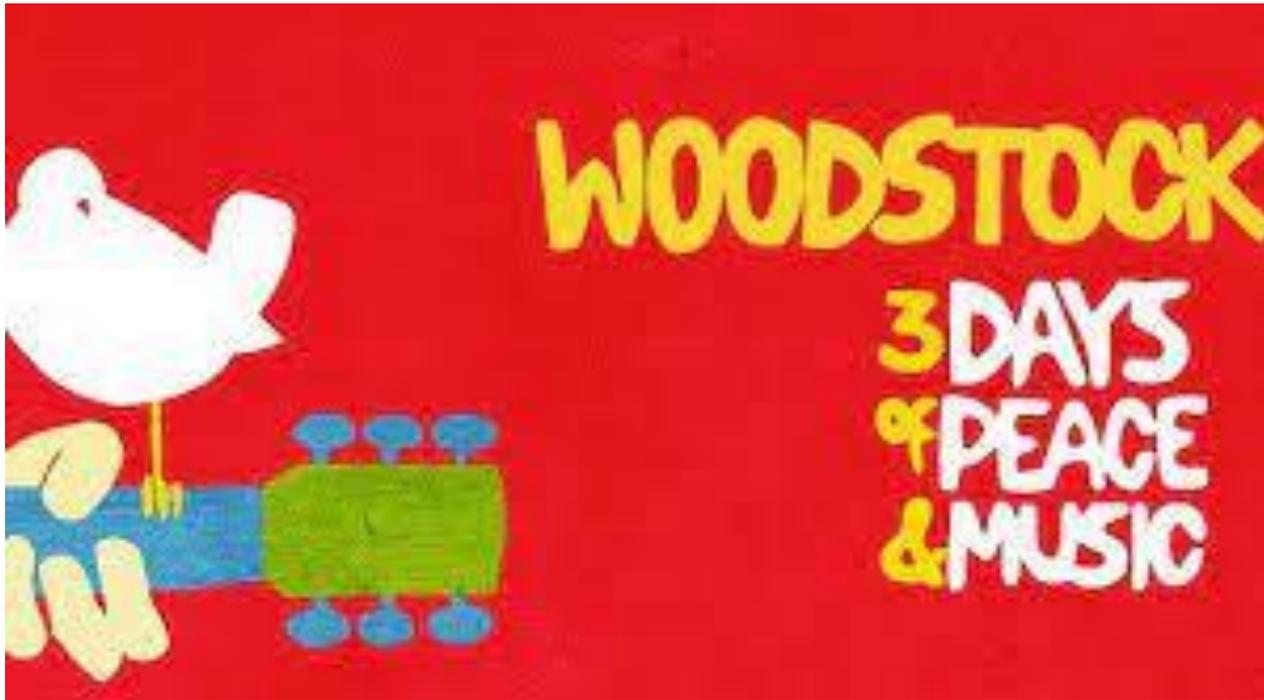
PERSON WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

- ▶ Many feel strong guilt/shame for pain caused to spouses, kids, friends, business associates.
- ▶ May not want to stop using
- ▶ Resentment and anger from family=user
- ▶ Resentment/Anger from user=family, for placing pressure on them to stop using.
- ▶ Involuntary Commitment: Doing for our loved one what they are unable to do for themselves



WOODSTOCK AUGUST, 1969

Teens “then” are now 60’s and 70’s Today



BABY BOOMERS / ELDERLY

- ▶ Increasing problems with addiction
- ▶ Grew up in period of nation=substance use was acceptable
- ▶ Social use alcohol
- ▶ Medical Problems: Pain / Anxiety Meds
- ▶ Changes in Life: Grief, Physical Decline

Retirement, Lower Finances



SAMHSA 2021 National Survey Drug Use & Health

- ▶ Ages 50+ 10.1 % reported suicidal thoughts
due to COVID stressors
- 47.1% Illicit drug use lifetime
- 13.5% Past year illicit drug use
- 8.7% Past month use
- 12% Ages 50-64



SAMHSA 2021 National Survey Drug Use & Health

- ▶ THC: Ages 50-64

 - Past Year: 13-15% used

 - Past Month: 9-10% used

- ▶ Alcohol: Ages 50+ 50% used last month

 - 20% binge use

 - 5% heavy use



Importance of Social Support Counseling & 12 Step Groups

VIDEO CLIP



Phoenix Center

How Can We Help?

- ▶ Collaborative Partnerships / Referrals
- ▶ Training / Grant Partner
- ▶ State Funding Requests: Partnerships
- ▶ MAT: Medicaid, BCBS, Uninsured/Low Income
- ▶ Leadership Training / Addiction 101 Training
- ▶ Agency/Program Tours
- ▶ Family Consultation



Here to Serve

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