Risk Prevention during Adolescence

Strategies aimed at parents for prevention practitioners and mediators









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What is empowerment?

Empowerment is the process in which people work together to accomplish changes in their communities and exert more power and influence over the issues that matter to them. The concept of power is central in social sciences as one of the pillars that underpin societies. Its definition is complex and integrates diverse meanings, which require contextualization and clarification. The definition proposed here is the one we consider is the best suited to the idea of family empowerment. This definition takes into account Weber's definition of power, understood as each opportunity or possibility in a social relationship that allows an individual to fulfill his own will; as well as Foucault definition, stating that power is not an institution or a structure, not a force with which we are endowed, but the name we give to a complex strategic situation in a particular society. Power is not essentially repressive, since power incites, provokes, and produces. It is exercised rather than hold, since it does not have a permanent form (Foucault, 1994).

THE EFE PROJECT - PRESENTATION

European Family Empowerment (EFE) is a project developed along 2010-2012 with EU funding. The main objective is to create the conditions for the empowerment of family organizations to prevent the risks that affect adolescents, mainly related to substance use. In a first stage, teams of experts from six European countries (Slovenia, Spain, Portugal, UK, Czech Republic and Sweden) have investigated the social reality of the families and their organizations in each country. To this effect, literature reviews, focus groups with parents and adolescents, a survey of more than 12,000 adolescents and their parents and the associations were parents participate have been explored while involving professionals close related to them. With all of them, results have been shared and analysis discussed. Results considered most relevant are presented here, with further analysis and information to deepen in each topic, as well as conclusions and recommendations. Professional seeking for additional information can check project presentations and published papers.

. We will present this information --on social and analytical reality-- and suggestions organized around five topics. Our purpose is to motivate, both professionals and interested parents, to empower and engage other parents in prevention work. To do so, we will provide information on: i) the logic that drug use has for adolescents; and, ii) how can their families, and the professionals working close to them, understand and prevent such consumption and risks. All of it supported by useful and updated information, based on scientific evidence.

Additional information on this project can be found on IREFREA's website as well as the project on-line platform:

> www.irefrea.org; www.prevecionfamiliar.net

To whom is it intended for

The sections of this report have been prepared as background material for professional drug prevention and organization leaders interested in developing family prevention programs. Understanding a problem is the first step to prevent it, but many parents are unaware of the problem or think they do not need to do prevention because their children do not consume or are not in the teen years yet. At the same time, many prevention professionals face the reduced family involvement in programs for parents. Therefore, one of the major challenges, both for professionals and those responsible for these associations, is to get the message that parents with 'normalized' children, meaning by normalized without serious risk behavior, are the best positioned to engage in prevention, since they start with an advantage in this course of obstacles.

KEY INFORMATION

First of all, parents should know that the use and abuse of drugs such as alcohol, tobacco or cannabis are a common practice in today's teenager lifestyles. This is because there are circumstances, often external to the family, which promote or facilitate that such consumptions occur. Here we'll understand some of those circumstances and see what we, as professionals or representatives of parents' organizations, can do to prevent such consumption and related risks. If parents are aware of this reality they can become the main active group to prevent risks affecting their children.

Goals/Objectives

This report complements and extends a guide for parents with basic and encouraging information towards prevention. It provides the scientific evidence that supports affirmations and proposals and, above all, intents to provide guidance for a more ambitious and innovative dimension of prevention, that gives leadership to families as a collective capable of acting, both within the family and at social levels, as the backbone for environmental prevention of the risks that affect their children. What's specific in the EFE dimension of prevention? Our aim is that it becomes a guide that encourages the constitution of parents' coalitions to enhance parents' skills and develop their roles more successfully. Parents need tools. We need knowledge but, above all, we need practical and concrete tools. When parents have a problem, you can not overwhelm them with the theory of adolescence. What you need is a speech they might understand, practical tools that allow them to act. Not that there aren't, but they do not reach the parents. (ES-Father-PS)

Professionals should know that a key to empowerment is access to knowledge, therefore:

- A first challenge is to provide data and analysis to involve all families in prevention and to help overcome the misconception that prevention is a matter of families with problems. Prevention means working to avert problems from
- **occurring.** If problems have occurred, then we are led to other forms of action that might be supplemented with treatment.
- A second challenge is to provide information that enables the development of **preventive strategies based on evidence**. That is, providing updated information on the social context, on research about risk and protection factors that affect target groups, and on evaluated preventive experiences.
- Another goal is to bring the family prevention beyond the domestic sphere. Enlarge the views of parents on their capabilities and potential for prevention. Many prevention programs are limited to the interactions of parents with their children but, when it comes to adolescents, this interaction is not sufficient. Consumption (and other risks) occurs mostly away from home, so parents should consider exploring, developing and applying their potential to operate in social spaces beyond the family sphere.
- Another challenge is overcoming the misconception that preventative programs are a compendium of

Professionals can facilitate processes such as encouraging family networking, developing interactive prevention strategies and, above all, mediating between parent organizations and supporting institutions. recipes designed to reorient parents' behaviours. Professionals involved in family prevention must **develop a more interactive pedagogy that allows parents themselves be the managers of their own training process**.

The role of professionals is that of facilitator and mediator

The family empowerment approach in the prevention of alcohol and others drugs use

Many authors agree that empowerment is essential in the processes for improving human life. This approach supposes changes in human interactions towards the achievement of social goals. The idea of 'family empowerment' is central on health promotion. People can improve their health if they are aware of potential threatening problems and have the ability to act to prevent them.

Among the risks that affect many European adolescents, alcohol and other drugs use is among those that arise most concern since it is related to other risks (Hibell et al 2007). Consumption affects basic dimensions of children lives (such as their health, safety, autonomy and freedom). Success in preventing such risks it's a task that requires social engineering and that requires being adapted to the technological and cultural conditions of our time, that shape the lifestyles of our youngsters (such as new technologies, greater mobility, more leisure time and entertainment offer, etc.). Parents are the ones best placed to understand the changes in the dimension their children experience them, therefore are also the better positioned to work towards the promotion of social measures to avoid those risks. This idea supposes a paradigm shift since places parents as the central element to promote change.

Since parents are the best placed to anticipate risks, government, administration institutions and experts should take into consideration parents' input and support and facilitate the implementation of programmes and strategies agreed with them. Families are the closest ones to youngsters, the ones being aware of youngsters needs and suffering the consequences when problems arise.

Empowering families integrates training in communication and management skills so that parents can create and communicate a vision, discover possibilities, make decisions, influence people and overcome problems and failures, to highlight a few. It is therefore necessary to capacitate them for leadership.

The task of preventing risks is weakened when practiced at household level and its scope is very limited. By contrast, organized families have a huge potential. Empowerment is a change in approach in human interactions towards the achievement of social goals. Parents need to be reinforced in their capacity to act to achieve results in important issues such as preventing their children substance use. Empowering is to strengthen up individuals and organizations that feel weaken by themselves but that once empowered and organized get strength as a collective can contribute with results in the everyday life.

Franklin D. Roosevelt said, 'We cannot always build the future for our youth but we can build our youth for the future'. Empowered families are more likely to ensure that their children will grow up able to build their own future, freeing them from the influences that can damage children integrities; influences acting on behalf of other interests that not take into account health or safety or the freedom of making responsible decisions.

Keeping track of the conditions that desempower families

Many parents express difficulties understanding the new influences, codes, symbols and cultures that their children use to organize their lives. Societies are changing entities where contexts and circumstances continuously change such as the use of Internet or the new IT, the new leisure and entertainment styles or the new consumer needs, and the new learning requirements in a world that tends to globalization. In front of all this changes, some parents lack the skills or miss the opportunity to understand and manage them.

By contrast, the market and the industry, which are well organized in their endeavor for an economic gain, have learned to make youngsters their allies as consumers. There are many companies that through their products and by commercial purposes create identities and promote behaviors and lifestyles that are very attractive for young audiences.

Young people do act in organized networks with their peers. Young Europeans enjoy the physical, technological, cultural and economic conditions to act in an organized manner, giving them power in many ways, although not always oriented toward positive achievements for their wellbeing.

Administrations and some professionals have taken over a hierarchical role in front of families. This, in part, has led to a certain invisibility of families in decision making process on issues that directly affect them.

The conceptual map proposed is a tool to explore new territories in family prevention. The map is not the territory; the map is a guide with strategies and directions. Its examination should take into consideration the continuous changes in time, space, cultures and groups.

The risks during adolescence. The recreational use of addictive substances

Fun and leisure time have experienced among youth considerable changes in recent years. Mass consumption of alcohol on weekends (Hughes et al 2011) is a new phenomenon with unknown implications to most parents, which gives rise to a variety of interpretations amongst them. Therefore while some parents choose to forbid their children to participate in the events where addictive substance use is more common (e.g. partying at night) others act in a more permissive way allowing their children to decide it they want to go out or not, if they want to drink or no.

In general, parents excuse their children risk behaviors with arguments sometimes stereotyped such as 'everybody does it' or 'taking risks is part of being young', or remember their own youth: ' I

Professionals should support parents in promoting healthy leisure spaces, nocturnal or diurnal, free of substance use to counter-act the current recreational nightlife hegemony

did it too when I was young '. However, both prohibitionist and permissive parents lack arguments and critical information to develop a coherent and knowledgeable approach with their teenage children.

Leisure and fun constitute a central element of the lifestyles of today's youth and it's often the context where their identities and social capital are constructed. Although people have always had fun, recreational nightlife, being with friends, partying and social networks have become in the life of youth a new phenomenon that presents new features.

We therefore suggest that professionals continue to develop conceptual frameworks to guide them towards a new model of social Much of the leisure time is spent at night, and is associated with certain environments, musical styles and clothing as well as consumption of addictive substances; primarily alcohol but also other drugs. These substances exercise many functions in youngsters imaginary, such as feeling they belong to the group of friends, giving them certain prestige, experiencing new sensations, and providing access to a sexual partner amongst others.

In the last decade, in countries like Spain, more permissive and facilitator consumer contexts, such as *botellon* or popular festivals, have appeared where binge drinking is massively practiced without any control on legal age or opening times.

This hegemonic model, consolidated over the past 20 years, has facilitated the emergence of several problems (accidents, assaults, noise nuisance to the neighborhood, risky sexuality, driving under the influence, etc.) but also has seen the emergence of a strong recreational industry (Hughes et al, 2012). Although consumption is usually confined to the weekend, it increases the likelihood of developing problems of abuse among young people and affects their relationship with

Professionals should promote amongst parents a critical analysis of their beliefs. Educating their children as free people does not include being permissive with consumption, rather the opposite. Addictive substances act as a powerful element of

school, work, family, and future.

The use of substances as an ingredient for having fun is a major change and not just characteristic of young Europeans, since it is being exported to other developed or emerging economies, as another example of the growing homogenization in a globalized world.

Anyway, despite the fact that youthful fun is increasingly associated with drug use--whether it timely, occasional or frequent- - would be counterproductive and fake to associate drugs and youth. A large number of young people have fun without using substances, while they develop an appropriate control and self-control over many aspects of their lives.

But it should not be inferred that consumer behavior is an individual decision because the influences young people receive are of capital importance and need to be taken into account. Many of their beliefs are cultural transmissions that need to be addressed. For example, some believe that having fun is better than being healthy (Sumnall et al, 2010); and have assimilated that fun is intimately related to substance use, association favoured by the fact that the set of related substances used for fun is referred to as 'recreational drugs'. These substances are in great diffusion and are affordable. We could say that constitute a technology to enhance stamina, fun and new experiences.

Furthermore, in our environment, there is great permissiveness towards drugs. Access to legal drugs is regulated but restrictions not properly enforced; and the illegal market is much diversified by types of substances, through micro and macro supply channels. The great accessibility and availability are of great relevance, especially concerning the easy access adolescents have to alcohol (Gosell et al 2012).

Training the youngest to face pressure towards drug use is the main strategy adopted by many institutions working on drug prevention (Burkhart 2011). And, although it's already been said it's not enough, this is where family can play a crucial role. Parents can help establishing protective factors within and out the domestic context.

Families can set rules on nights out and alcohol (or other substances) use, and monitor the use of new technologies (web surf and social networks) where they can access harmful marketing strategies or contacts. Parents can also increase their knowledge on their children friends and their parents and establish common rules with them. Parents can create networks of mutual support with teachers and others parents, and encourage their teens to engage in healthy fun activities that sometimes the whole family can enjoy together.

Family as the main agent in substance use prevention

Young people use of legal and illegal drugs is a serious public health problem. Therefore, preventive interventions try to reduce the occurrence of new cases, delay the age of onset, or reduce the chances of this initial consumption becoming an addictive disorder. To achieve these goals, they try to reduce or eliminate the influence that risk factors might have on individuals' behaviors while enhancing the protective factors. Risk factors are defined as those personal, situational or contextual elements that increase the likelihood of drug use, both on the onset and regular use, while protective factors are those that reduce the risk in both stages (Calafat et al 2009).

Among the set of risk factors that have captured more clearly researchers attention, family factors stand out. Drug use is related to the socialization process of the individual, in which family influence is prominent, since it is in this sphere of influence where acquired beliefs, values and habits might have an influence in the likelihood of substance use.

The youngest the child the more remarkable is family influence since, when reaching adolescence, the so-called "peers" - colleagues and friends will gain influence in the child's behavior.

This does not mean there is a causal relationship between family influence and children drug use. But it is undeniable that parenting practices are central to the prevention of drug use risks.

The following sections provide theoretical information and updated data designed for professionals working near parents to help them developing strategies oriented to promote interactions between families and other intermediary organizations with the objective to prevent the use of substances that affects children.

KEY INFORMATION

Prevention strengthens and facilitates socialization. Socialization means transmission of accepted attitudes, norms, beliefs, and behaviors. Therefore, families must play this key role in children socialization.

Professionals working in coalition with social organizations can facilitate to develop this family role by creating and developing training strategies for families to get organized and strengthened in their preventive role.

Methodology of the sections

The following five sections include information from different backgrounds: qualitative and quantitative results from the EFE study, reviewed data from other researches and analysis prepared by professionals working in the project with the collaboration of representatives from parents' organizations and other technical partners.

The information is organized around two axes: i) what parents should know about substance use among adolescents, and ii) what can parents do to prevent it, taking into account both individual families as well as families organized in network.

These two dimensions are complementary, since from the knowledge provided from the first one arise the prevention actions suggested in the second one. The information describes social reality using empirical data, that is explained and complemented with other theories, strategies and resources, with a view to providing guidance on where and how to act.

Section 1. What knowledge do parents have on their children drug use?

• Risk factors on drug use

There is a set of problem behaviors associated with the consumption of alcohol and other drugs among young people, such as the risk of accidents and aggression, oppositional behaviors, school failure, crime and antisocial behavior, or risky sexuality, which have great impact on families, both in economic and personal terms, and cause great social concern. Therefore tackling them should be prioritized in prevention programmes. Given the high prevalence of alcohol and cannabis use in young people, prevention programs should try to reduce risk factors associated with such consumption while increasing the protective ones.

The results shown in **Table 1** clearly yield to a conclusion: Parents tend to underestimate their children's consumption.

If parents were aware the risks surrounding their children, probably would spent more time, interest and resources to address them. However, as data shows, parents' knowledge on their children substance use is extremely vague, in general terms, and tends to underestimate actual

The use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are highly correlated, which means that starting in one of these intakes may increase the likelihood that others also occur. Therefore, it seems that risk factors that might favour substance use could be, in general, common to all substances. In particular, drug abuse among adolescents is often associated with the presence of anti-social behavior and poor academic performance; and should be addressed as soon as possible, since it constitutes a serious health risk.

consumption. This might explain, in part, why parents do not easily participate in preventive activities or why there are practical difficulties in setting up early intervention.

Table 1: Adolescents consumption according to parents and adolescents responses

Adolescentes that	PARENTS %	ADOLESCENTS %
use alcohol	22 %	56%
have been drunk at least once during the last month	1,7%	14%
have used tobacco	3,1%	47%
smoke with a daily/weekly frequency	3,1%	11%
use cannabis	6.9%	23,4%

Professionals should be aware that parental knowledge about children risk consumption can be a determining factor for parents showing greater interest in participating in primary prevention or early intervention. La monitorización parental es importante que empiece en la niñez y se mantenga con la edad. En ocasiones, cuando los hijos llegan a la adolescencia los padres se relajan en su tarea de supervisar. La supervisión continuada es uno de los cambios principales que deben transmitir los profesionales a las familias.

Sometimes parents constitute by themselves a risk factor in their children substance use. Family risk factors to drug use with empirical support that can be divided into two main groups: direct and indirect factors (Secades Villa & Fernández Hermida, 2002).

Direct factors are parents' drug use and/or favourable attitudes towards consumption. Indirect or general factors are not primarily related to drug use but exercising an influence on the development of different patterns of disruptive behavior including drug use. Among the most commonly cited indirect factors comes what has been defined as "poor parenting." Such behavior is characterized by low parental involvement, poor supervision and monitoring and inconsistent application of discipline. What could be defined as "absence of monitoring." Several studies have documented the relationship between low parental supervision and monitoring and the development of behavioral problems in children (Crouter & Head, 2002)

Although family factors are particularly important, we should not forget other factors which are key to understand youth consumption. Factors arising from the neighborhood, school and friends with whom they interact; i.e. contextual factors such as norms, beliefs and social habits, economic determinants, social support received, drug availability and peer pressure can have a significant effect on children substance use.

What is parental monitoring?

Parental monitoring is defined as a set of correlated parental behaviors involving some knowledge and control over the behavior of their children, their contexts and determinants (Dishion & McMahon, 1998). Monitoring means having information and the capacity for actively structuring the context in which children develop life. Evidently, monitoring must adapt to the evolving characteristics of children behaviours. Thus, at infant stages monitoring should be limited more to the realm of home and school, while during adolescence the sphere to cover is wider, including networks of friends, entertainment settings or affective couples.

Going back to adolescents' consumption, parents seem a little bit naïve when appraising their children substance use although they have a greater perception of drug ease of access than their children.

So that, even though parents are aware that the access to substances is very easy don't seem to understand this might have an effect on their children consumption. Consequently they do not take into account a key factor which is that, what affects a community is likely to affect their our own children, by a certain contagion effect. Therefore, if we want to prevent these risks, we must act collectively.

Table 3: Ease of access to drugs (easy or very easy) according to parents and adolescents.

	Parents %	Adolescents %
Cannabis	65.5	58,3
Cocaine	32.1	26
Ecstasy	34.1	16,2
Amphetamines	34.8	12,6
Heroine	19.9	14,1
Mephedrone	19.2	6.2

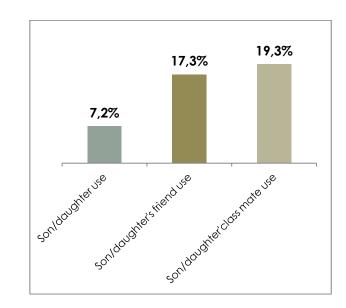
The accuracy in the perception of parents on the actual consumption of children is influenced by variables such as parenting style exerted, early problems in the child's behavior, the existence of a temperament 'resistant control' in the adolescent and the type of parent-child relationship.

It is also important to see what happens outside home, especially in those areas where children are active. All we know of these areas will inform us about the influences exerted on the adolescents.

Our children consumption versus our children friends and peers consumption

Although 23% of teens say they have smoked cannabis occasionally and 1.4% have tried cocaine, only 6.9% of parents think or know that their son / daughter has consumed an illegal drug. But this naive perception of reality to the consumption of their children disappears when parents are asked about the drug use of the adolescents with whom their children are related.

Parents' perception on their children friends and peers consumption habits is closer to reality than when expressing their own children consumption. Given this, we should ask ourselves, why parents --despite being aware of the other children drug use—are so naive on the consumption of their own children?



Professionals should inform parents that social and individual factors are interrelated. What happens in the community has implications for the individuals who belong to that collectivity.

Educational style

Educational style is a concept related to monitoring.

The concepts of information and parental monitoring are closely related. Information can be understood as a cause or effect of the monitoring. Monitoring involves obtaining information on the places, companions and behaviors of their children whether parents are physically present or not. Information is the result of monitoring duties, but may also be an important element to explain its implementation (Racz & McMahon, 2011). The effect in the medium and long term may be paradoxical. Thus it has been shown that early conduct problems produce in the medium-term parental withdrawal effects, reducing both the knowledge on their children risk behaviors and their monitoring activities (Burke, Pardini, & Loeber, 2008; Kerr, Stattin, & Burk, 2010; Willoughby & Hamza, 2011). In other words, more information is not always related to fewer behavioral problems in children.

. An educational style is a kind of upbringing determined by factors within and outside the family context in which monitoring is one of the main components for prevention.

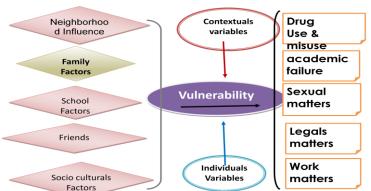
Parental Knowledge

Parental Knowledge refers to information obtained from the children or derived from the control exercised over them, on issues such as who their friends are or where are they when not in company of their parents and what do they do.

Generally, parental knowledge on their children risk behaviors, and associated factors, is analyzed based on the responses of young people themselves. Most works that speak of parental knowledge rely, therefore, on the perception young people have on their parents' knowledge (R. Laird, Marrero, & Sherwood, 2010).

Professionals should know that according to the EFE study more parental supervision and better knowledge of what children do, keeping a restrictive attitude towards consumption, adolescent school bonding, and development of extracurricular activities that involve an effort are associated with a lower risk of alcohol and other drugs use. By

contrast, young people with altered normative behavior, attending a school of high socioeconomic status and living in small towns are more associated with alcohol and other drugs use



Ilustration 1

Risk and protective factors are diverse and act as contextual variables on the vulnerability of young people by influencing their risk behaviors, among which is the use or abuse of drugs (see **Figure 1**). The action of these factors occurs in a complex structure of web or mesh, in which factors interact modulating their effects.

Section 2. Communication

Providing information and discussing drugs is important but parents need to know that this is not sufficient as a preventive action. Young people today have access to a myriad of information on substances, and about half of them talk about drugs and related risks with their parents. Parents need to be aware that the information they provide is going to be interpreted according to other powerful inputs (context, media, young cultures and life styles, formal and informal norms, etc.). Therefore parents must address those influences and be aware that their children are not immune to them.**The sources from which parents acquire knowledge on their children are three:**

• The first and foremost important source is the revelations that children themselves make, spontaneously and on their own initiative.

• The second source is the one resulting from parents' questions, when asking their children about their plans, friends or activities,

• The third source is the one arising from the control exercised by parents over their children, so that they may engage only on those activities that comply with the conditions previously established by the parents.

These sources are interrelated, being very possible that changes in one will lead to changes in the other. Thus it is known that an increase in demand of information by parents can reduce the voluntary reporting by children. Although the opposite may also happen, i.e. unwillingness by young people to provide information might lead to the establishment of a parental strategy to gather more information or increase control over the adolescents' behavior (Kerr, et al., 2010;

KEY INFORMATION

Giving children clear rules regarding alcohol consumption is more influential than talking to them about the risks of its use. (Van der Voorst et al 2005 and 2006) Willoughby & Hamza, 2011).

It has also been found that a too active role by parents in seeking information (parental solicitation) could have the paradoxical effect of worsening parental knowledge in the medium term since it reduces information disclosed by adolescents, and is associated with behavioral

`We [parents] worry about everything. About my 17 year-old son I worry about parties, going out... I think he does not do drugs but it would not surprise me if he had puffed a joint. I have not dared to ask him although we have a close relationship. He prefers to attend popular parties in small towns, he does not like clubs. He attends 'botellon' (but everybody attends 'botellon' either you like it or not. They have no choice but to attend 'botellon'. Everyone will pass that stage; it is unfortunate that we have to suffer it (ES-Mother-PS).

problems of children (Kerr, et al., 2010; Willoughby & Hamza, 2011).

There is a bidirectional relationship between children and parents that could explain the evolution of parental knowledge.

The source from which information is obtained is very important. Overall, it has been shown that a higher level of parents' knowledge is associated with a lower level of behavioral problems in children.

However, in the medium and long term (over a year) only spontaneous delivery of information by children improves the level of parental knowledge (Kerr, et al., 2010). It seems that the emergence of early behavioral problems "motivates" parents to undertake monitoring tasks, which may eventually become ineffective because they encourage the emergence of "anti-control" strategies by children reducing the amount of spontaneous information given to parents. This sequence, however, sheds

The information that parents voluntarily get from their children is fundamental and this fact should be addressed in prevention programs.

Already in a 2003 study (Fernandez Hermida, et al., 2003), which used a sample of parent-child dyads, it was found that parents of children who used alcohol and other drugs tended to underestimate children consumption while overestimating the control exerted on them. More specifically, 41.7% underestimated tobacco use and 46.7% alcohol use, while only 9% of parents whose children used cannabis where aware of this consumption. As seen in other studies, this relationship between overestimation of control and underestimation of consumption is not unusual or

Both a proactive parenting style, authoritative style, as a positive relationship parent-child facilitate

ephemeral (Kerr, et al., 2010).

light on an important fact. Since the perception that children are at a risk functions as a powerful incentive for parental participation in prevention programmes and implementation of monitoring tasks, prevention programs should include training in monitoring strategies to ensure the expected positive effects of such supervision.

'I worry about not knowing, wondering if I will recognize when something is going wrong. There are many cases where you see parents that were unaware of what was happening until the situation has become serious. And it is not always because parents were neglecting. So, I do not know if I will be able to recognize a potential dangerous attitude of my daughter. '(Father)

accurately facilitate parental knowledge. If, as stated above, the primary source through which parents get most of the information about their children is children voluntary statement on what they consume, where do they consume it at, with whom do they consume it, etc., it cannot be surprising that a paternal attitude seeking to establish a good and positive relationship with the child produces the best results. Conversely, if the child exhibits, early, behavioral problems, negative attitudes at home or shows a disposition against control, then the quality of parental information deteriorates. Thus, children who begin in early ages to show extreme resistance to parental influence may lead parents to withdraw their duties or get over engaged with children, attitudes both extremely inefficient for collecting good information.

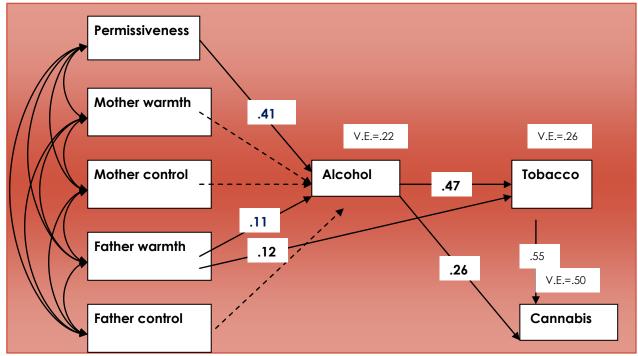
Section 3. Conflicts between parents and children

They [my parents] when I was 15-16 yearsold used to control me very much. I have had to earn it. I could see that my friends had the right [to go out] and I was always rushing to get back home. It overwhelmed me. Now this has changed. I can see that younger people now is allowed to go out (Women, 19 years-old). In my village I can see 13 year-old kids getting everywhere. That does not seem right to me, they are too little. The other day I found the daughter of my high-school teacher partying; she had run away from home to party. She begged me, completely drunk, not to tell her mother. And she is just 12 years-old... (Women, 18 years-old)

One of the most recurrent subjects when talking

with parents of adolescents is handling a situation of permanent conflict or confrontation. The information collected illustrates this issue and is aimed at helping parents to think about it.

Professionals should know that, according to EFE data, adolescents' bonding to school and practice of after-school activities involving some effort, along with greater parental supervision and a restrictive parental attitude towards consumption are associated with lower consumption of alcohol and drugs. Instead adolescents with conduct rules altered and / or attending a high socioeconomic level school and / or living in small towns are associated with increased consumption of alcohol and drugs.



Setting rules and limits involves a great effort on parents' side and some see it as never ending battle with their children. Discussions are typical during the period of adolescence, when young people start rebellions about everything; while going through a high sense of irascibility that increases the feeling of some parents of having become an ogre for their own children. Data in **Table 3** provides information of interest. It shows issues that parents and children discuss about according to parents and adolescents responses. All items show a higher perception of discussion on the parents' side. In some case, such as 'type of friends' the percentage of parents that points at it as an element of discussion is 6.7 higher than the percentage of adolescents. In any case, the issues less discussed between parents and children (with percentages that also differ) are 'sexual behaviours', 'tobacco use', 'alcohol use ' and 'cannabis use'.

Table 3: Issues discussed between parents andchildren (often/always) according to parents andadolescents responses.Majorca sample

Problems with	Parents	Adolesce nts
School performance	87,7%	36,3%
Type of friends	68,7%	10,3%
Housework	55,5%	29,5%
Use of internet	54,8%	25,4%
Use of television	44,9%	13,9%
Arriving home later than expected	42,4%	15,4%
Clothes chosen to wear	30,1%	8,6%
Use of cellular/mobile phone	29,4%	12,7%
Amount of money spent	26,2%	18,5%
Sexual behaviours	22,1%	3,9%
Tobacco use	22,0%	4,5%
Alcohol use	21,6%	3,8%
Cannabis use	18,9%	3,8%

Professionals should convey to parents that they should reconsider feeling guilty for continually discussing with their children.

Parents need to know that their children do not perceive the conflict as intensely as they do; children live it more normally, as being part of the relationship. Even more, adolescents appreciate (indirectly) discussions with parents as an indication of the concern, interest and involvement parents express towards them. In other words, adolescents interpret discussions maintained as a sign of affection parental care towards them.

Today, young people spend much of their leisure time away from home, developing extra scholar activities or in the company of their friends. Although being underage many go out at night during the weekend to party with friends. This early engagement in recreational nightlife activities leads to quitting other activities that take place at day time and to spend less time with the family that is progressively replaced by the group of friends. The peer group, as a reference group, reaches its maximum importance during adolescence and early adulthood.

It is in this period when first drug consumption begins. In general, youngsters begin trying legal substances, such as tobacco and alcohol, when they are 13-14 years of age, and might try other substances such as cannabis and other drugs when they reach 15-16 years of age (Botvin and Griffin, 2010; EMCDDA, 2011). After this initial use at an early age, some young people will continue to use drugs through adolescence and early adulthood or even prolong this consumption through adulthood. Therefore it is very important to delay the age of onset since it is associated with reduced future substance-related problems (Huurre et al., 2010; Spoth, Trudeau, Guyll, Shin and Redmon, 2009). Parental control is key when preventing exposure to opportunities. It is known that if parental supervision towards children is scarce or inexistent is more likely that children will use drugs. Hence the importance of parents knowing what their children do, both when at home and went out with friends, as well as the importance of establishing a good communication line parent-children to facilitate the provision of support when necessary.

A significant proportion of parents do not know what their children do when they go party or are running around with friends, or profess certain ingenuity since, although aware of the easy access to drugs and knowing that their children friends consume, do not think that their children may be doing the same.

Section 4. Preventive possibilities from the families. Parenting styles.

The way in which family ties are developed, attachment, constitutes the basis of the parentschildren relation. Attachment can be strengthened by developing parental skills to support children, the establishment of a good parent-child communication and greater parental involvement.

In many families are still mothers who are responsible for the education of children, a fact that should be taken into account since it is necessary to involve, as much as possible, fathers as well.

KEY INFORMATION

Parental monitoring is protective against binge drinking, alcohol and drug use, even under community violence experience (Lee 2012)

Practitioners should know

That parents who have clear attitudes towards drug use and control the type of friends that their children spend their time with succeed in reducing their children and their children peers' drug use. Therefore, we must discard the belief that parents cannot influence their children's behavior or cannot do anything for adolescents to change, as scientific evidence on the subject indicates otherwise (Copello et al., 2005). That is, parents have a direct and indirect incidence on the consumption or not consumption of drugs of their children as well as of their children peer group.

Under this perspective, parents can act facilitating diverse preventive possibilities:

 Exercising an appropriate parenting style. It has been found that parenting styles have an influence on children's behavior. Two variables play a key role in parenting styles: control and warmth. Control refers to restrictions and obligation set by parents, while warmth refers to the degree of affection and approval that parent shown to children. According to these two variables, experts consider four different parenting styles.

Parenting styles are related to prevention of the consumption that affects children. Although it must bear in mind that parenting styles by themselves are not sufficient if practiced in isolation and restricted to the domestic sphere. EFE data will allow us to illustrate how they work:

- Parental permissiveness is the main risk factor for consumption.
- Parental control is a preventive factor if exercised effectively and, especially, outside home.
- To prevent consumption, clear rules on what is not allowed are essential.
- Some gender differences need to be addressed on prevention. Although parenting styles seem to exert a greater preventive influence on girls, if problems arise boys overcome them more easily than girls.

According to EFE data parenting styles work in the same direction in the six surveyed countries. The authoritative-democratic and the understandingdialoging styles are associated with a reduction of the problems, contrary to what happens with the authoritative-repressive and the negligent styles. Also, a recent review (Becoña et al., 2012) shows that the democratic parenting style is associated with lower consumption of substances, both legal and illegal, in the children. While the negligent style is related in most of the studies reviewed with substance use. As for the authoritative and

Los estilos parentales (según García & Gracia)

- Authoritative parenting style. Parent who is both demanding and sensitive, who accepts and encourages the progressive autonomy of their children. Maintains flexible rules and an open communication with children. Takes good care of the children and shows them affection. When applying a punishment, it is reasonable; and exerts firm control. Applies an inductive discipline, explaining the purpose of the rules and shows openness to discuss the arguments about them.
- Authoritarian parenting style (repressive). Parent who establishes norms with little participation of the child, expecting his orders will be fulfilled. Exerts a discipline based on the claims of his/her power and his/her demands are often inadequate or unreasonable. Failure to comply with the rule entails severe punishment, often physical. Communication is poor, rules are inflexible, and independence is limited. Therefore, the child tends to be withdrawn, fearful, timid, and irritable and maintains little social interaction, lacking spontaneity and internal locus of control. During adolescence, while girls tend to be passive and dependent boys become rebellious and aggressive.
- Understanding parenting style (the so-called permissive or indulgent). Parent characterized by his willingness to reasoning when transmitting rules to children, shows affection and communicates well with the children promoting a trusting relationship. The demands towards children are reasoned, uses dialogue to reach agreement and get the children to meet their obligations. Children are required a mature and responsible behavior. In exchange tends not to use coercive or enforcement strategies when the children misbehave. Fosters independence, individuality and a high degree of self-esteem.
- Neglectful parenting styles (indifferent). Parent who neither sets limits nor provides affection. Focusing on the tensions of his/her own life has no time to devote to the children. If the person is also hostile to the children, then they might tend to show destructive impulses and criminal behaviors.

comprehensive (indulgent) styles, published studies do not allow to conclude whether or not are associated with increased substance use for children.

There are three reasons to explain why comprehensive and authoritative style are best suited for parenting: i) allow a proper balance between control and autonomy of the youngster; ii) the communicative exchanges promote both intellectual development and psychosocial competence; and, iii) warmth and affection facilitate parents socialization attempts making children more receptive.

2) Knowing at all times what children do. The education of children is the responsibility of the parents, as well as making sure they have the basic necessities covered and ensure that eventually children will become adults adapted to the environment in which they live. This requires knowing which are the stages in children development and the related behaviors to be expected in each stage. To do this, parents need to learn to differentiate between "control" and "interference". Parents should exercise some control, greater or lower depending on child age and problems faced, respecting the privacy of the adolescent. Hence the importance of parents being familiar with the various stages of a children life.

Research indicates that when parents monitor children's behavior, children show lower levels of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis use (Alati et al., 2010; Chassin et al., 2005; Choquet, Hassler, Morin, and Falissard Chau, 2007; Moore, and Segrott Rothwell, 2010). This works both to prevent as well as to delay age onset (Velleman et al., 2005). In any case, it is important to keep in mind the moderating effect that level of control on way it is exercise can play. It is known that when control is excessive, or is exercised in a very coercive way and limits are too restrictive; it can generate rebellion and behavior problems. This is where affection comes into play. Although during adolescence many boys and girls reject expressions of affection, they still need to feel the closeness of their

3) Maintaining an active concern about what children do. This means showing interest, care, warmth, empathy and understanding for what children do and feel, taking into account their doubts and concerns, and facilitating communication. This will make it easier for them to ask parents for support or assistance if needed. Family performs the functions of deterring the social factors that influence children drug use (Botvin and Griffin, 2010). Therefore, although excessive parental control over children behaviors is not appropriate nor is insouciance.

For example, good school integration, greater involvement with school studies and learning and the effort they demand, along with supervision of the activities they carry out are all of them protective factors of alcohol and other drugs use.

4) Setting limits. Adolescents must achieve autonomy and identity, an inevitable process that develops along different stages. It is up to parents to facilitate this transition, while imposing certain limits. In recent decades there has been a change in recreational styles that favour young people going to party until the wee hours of the morning. This increases the risks of intoxication, driving under the influence of alcohol and / or other drugs, road accidents, unsafe or unwanted sex, etc. Parents should know that the development of the adolescent's autonomy and identity should be accompanied by adequate control, i.e. setting appropriate norms and limits.

Percentage of students who	Have gotten ***		n drunk	drunk Have used cannabis***	
	%	Yes	No	Yes	No
Are happy at their school	68,8	58.1	70.5	58.5	72.1
Have trouble paying attention in class	19,7	34,1	17,0	30,2	16,2
Have problems forgetting things	17,5	24,1	16,4	23,9	15,7
Have problems keeping up with school tasks	10,7	21,4	9,0	18,1	8,1

Table 4: School bonding and students drunkennes (last month) or cannabis use (life time)

5) Facilitate the development of self-control in children. Self-control conducts are necessary in human functioning. This requires learning to resist temptation and to delay gratification. Self-control, learned within the family, is a kind of social intelligence that allows a better adaptation to the environment, in such a way that greater self-control and less impulsivity lead to lower drug use.

6) Achieving a smooth transition between adolescence and adulthood. Early development is a risk factor that needs attention. Substance use interferes with the physical and emotional development and results in the emergence of problems in important areas of life. At the same time, this drug consumption may be associated both with early development as a psychosocial dysfunction, which could be responsible for the above mentioned problems.

.7) Maintaining adequate communication with children. A clear protective factor for children drug use is to keep a good line of communication with them. This supposes keeping a good transmission of family norms as well as maintaining consistency between what is said and what is done. During adolescence communication between parents and child tends to deteriorate because they spend less time together. This often leads to a reduction in the establishment of norms and in the compliance of rules as well as in the leisure time enjoyed by the family, which would allow a better mutual understanding and would favour shared values. Parents can train and improve their communication skills through preventive programs that address the topic which results in enhancing their preventive capacity.

EFE data indicates that in the Spanish sample just 46.9% of parents from Majorca stated to participate in preventive activities organized at school.

8) Influencing the peer group (friends and classmates of children). For adolescents, the peer group constitutes a reference group of great importance. They spend most of their time with the peer group and jointly acquire a worldview different from the one they receive from parents and school. Among the peer group adolescents feel safe and understood and develop a sense of belonging as an important part of a whole. However, both the family and school have a great impact, both directly and indirectly, on the peer group as the relationship between peer group, family and school is more relevant than previously thought (Kandel, 1996).

9) Detecting and treating, if necessary, certain risk factors. Disorders such as the attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), conduct disorders, school failure, or isolation, among others, should be treated since such disorders are sometimes associated with drug use in adolescence, or the extension of use into adulthood (Copello et al., 2005). Other risk factors associated with education and school performance must be addressed too. It is not a coincidence that Spain, the European Union Member State showing the highest index of academic failure is also the country where adolescents consume more cannabis and other illegal drugs.

10) Addressing aspects of the evolutionary development and maturation of the child at school and community level. Good academic management and learning skills are also key in prevention. It is important to consider academic performance, since a poorer school performance may be related to drug consumption (Bachman et al., 2008). Also, ensure that the school conducts an adequate drug prevention programme (Faggiano et al., 2008) and that social norms, formal and informal, do not facilitate the use of drugs, whether legal or illegal. Hence the importance of addressing prevention from and environmental perspective (Burkhart, 2011).

11) Problems affecting parents. Sometimes it is the parents who need help. Parents may face relationship problems, depression, drug use, or other type of employment or economic problems. In particular, and related to the topic at hand, it is very important to analyze marital adjustment problems or drug use that could model children consumption. If these problems are reduced likewise would be reduced the risk factors of drug abuse on children.

Section 5. Preventive possibilities from the families. External supervision

Networked parents

Parent network collaboration is key as a support system since it allows parents to share concerns and solutions to common problems in parenting. In addition, this network collaboration enhances parental supervision, because if parents share strategies children cannot use friend as an alibi or an excuse to cover activities parents would not allow. Better collaboration

> between parents improves parental knowledge and enhances

KEY INFORMATION

Initiation in substance use is a social process (\rightarrow this is in relation to environmental strategies, inside universal prevention)

Parenting style in adolescents' friends' homes plays an important role (Cleveland 2012)

'Ellos [los hijos] tienen que aceptar pequeñas frustraciones, tienen que aceptar que los padres les digan que aun no les dejan beber alcohol. Pero el problema está en que los padres tienen ese control en casa pero ¿y fuera de casa? ¿Qué pasa fuera de casa? Allí no sabemos qué hacen.' (padre)

knowledge on children while enhancing the support network.

In occasions this contact is favoured through the meetings and activities organized by the school parents' associations. Also the encounters at school, while waiting for the children, or the development of extracurricular activities, that allows parents to talk to other parents with children of the same age range. But although parents share nearby spaces very few of them establish a 'strategic' relationship with other parents losing the chance to exercise an effective supervision to prevent the risks that affect adolescents.

Collaborative networking between parents brings multiple benefits. Parents gain more knowledge about the care and upbringing of children, they feel accompanied and supported

when dealing with conflicts, expands the possibilities of finding solutions to the problems presented, etc. But this is an unexploited resource nor virtually (through websites and blogs) or physically (school, family organizations and recreational activities).

Table 5: Parents who call other parents when children go to a friend's house					
Total	<13	14-15	>16	Drunkenness	Cannabis
65,4%	80.1	66.4	52.0	**	***

Only 65% of parents are actively in contact with the parents of their children's friends with a view to monitoring. These percentages vary according to the age of the children, tending to decrease as children grow. That parents' keep in touch has been shown to be a protective factor on both intoxication and consumption of cannabis. A simple call when the child is in another family home proves to be useful for many purposes: it ensures that the child is there, allows to find the activities that will be performed and whether if they will be supervised by parents; also, to show the rules and limits set at home and see if they are established in the other house as well. When dealing with external supervision we must also take into account the supervision of the new information technologies, to prevent children from viewing pages or undesirable content or to avoid overexposure in their contributions in the social networks.

Parents in school

It is important that parents maintain a fluid relationship with the school to help children adjustment and enhance children socialization and personal development. Teachers and professors are nowadays a basic element of the children socialization process. Hence, the need for parents to interact with teachers, together with students, to constitute an educational community that would allow the development of a shared project. Although this approach has been shown very beneficial in experiences in other countries, in Spain is still seen as a utopia.

It is often said that parents do not have free time to spend with their children, much less to meet regularly with their school teachers, unless there is a special case that requires a greater presence. By contrast, young people spend much of their time in school and that is where they get most of their friends. It is therefore very important to maintain regular contact with youngsters' school tutors and teachers as they can be the first to detect behavioral problems, substance use, or the company of inadequate friends.

Parents in the community

Adolescents, besides attending school activities, perform many other activities in their free time. At these ages they need to be physically active and show a huge capacity for learning; while experiencing physical and emotional changes that must learn to interpret and accept.

The activities that young people develop are key to prevention. Many of these activities take place in a community setting where parents could exert their influence. Through leisure activities and fun young people communicate between them, relate and create group identities, sharing cultures and stimuli. These activities are a learning experience and provide them new skills that, although contravening those received in school or at home, exercised great influence on their assessment and management of risk behaviors; depending on either they question them or adopt them as part of their lifestyle.

Parents should know that getting involved in their children activities works as a preventive factor. This involves both creating the habit of engaging in activities for the whole family, as knowing what they do, where and with whom when children are not home. Obviously, we cannot pretend to know what someone else does all the time, but, as mentioned above, can be achieved by establishing a proper communication with the child, inviting his/her friends to spend time at home and establishing a close relationship with friends' parents and school. This is not difficult to do nor threatens the freedom and independence of children. In fact, in practice, when the parent-child relationship is open and parents' know to friends, friends' parents and teachers, fluency in communication is greater. Also, setting norms and limits greatly facilitates the relationship with children, who then know where they stand.

Table 6: Main activities practiced regularly (daily/weekly) by adolescents for fun outside school time	Total %
Use internet for leisure activities (chats, music, electronic games, etc.)	84,4
Actively participate in sports or athletic activities	72,9
Hanging out with friends (shopping malls, streets, parks, etc.)	69,3
Artistic hobbies (playing an instrument, singing, drawing, writing)	44,8
Play electronic/computer games	43,3
Reading books for enjoyement (other than school books)	36,9
Go out at night (bar, pub, club, party)	31,0
Play on slot machines (to win money)	2,2

According to EFE research findings some leisure activities are associated to substance use while others are **not**. This does not mean that these activities might work as risk or protective factors but parents should be aware of it and control those activities associated with substance use while promoting the activities not associated with drug.

Leisure activities associated with substance use:

- Use of the internet for leisure activities (chats, music, games)
- Hanging around with friends
- Go out in the evening (club, café, party, etc.)
- Play on slot machines

Leisure activities not associated with substance use:

- Participating in sports or athletic activities
- Artistic hobbies (play an instrument, sing, draw, write)
- Read books for enjoyment

The incidence of parents over children is clear, not only in childhood but also in adolescence, and even on the values and goals that young people will have in their future lives as adults (Velleman et al., 2005).

What should practitioners convey to parents?

- That parents play an important role in the election of their children companions and friends (Velleman et al., 2005).
- That although it might seem complicated, supervision tactics such as maintaining contact with parents of their children friends (to share strategies, experiences and monitor together) works. While most parents use that resource at children early ages, it is mostly abandoned when children reach adolescence, period when is most needed since then they begin or increase consumption. Therefore, practitioners must encourage parents to continue monitoring.
- Parents who act as a group, sharing rules and limits and strategies, gain security in their actions and ensure better learning in the acquisition of strategies adapted to the age of children.

The external supervision actions that parents can develop are part of what is known as environmental prevention. This dimension is the most ambitious, complex and important of prevention. Advancing in this area would corroborate the role to be played by the family in the construction of society. Put simply, environmental prevention is to intervene in the factors that promote or facilitate the use of drugs, such as certain advertising and marketing campaigns, pro-drug speeches in the media and youth programs, laxity in law enforcement, lack of citizen participation in the management of recreational contexts where youngsters participate to ensure this contexts meet health and quality criteria, and poor promotion of pro-social values, among others.

The new information technologies (IT)

One of the qualitative leaps in the historical discourse in recent years has been the emergence of new technologies, also known as information technologies (IT). Adolescents have grown up with technologies like the mobile phone and the Internet that are already part of their everyday lives. These technologies, that facilitate a speedy and immediate contact, have advanced greatly in recent years, causing that some parents feel years behind in management skills, while their children have been incorporated them into all areas of their lives: school, leisure time, relationships with friends, etc. Therefore, proper management of IT has become a basic requirement for parents. These technologies, in addition to facilitating the networking of families, bring parents closer to the reality experienced by their children and how they understand the world and relate to it.

Having children raises the challenge of having to move into the future with them, if not they are left alone and unprotected. This involves incorporating new technologies, not just to avoid that children misuse them, but to communicate and interact with them as well. New technologies also facilitate the access to information on children or to prevention programs that might help to understand what to do before

'We opened a facebook account not to control our children but to learn about it. A group of parents thought that if our daughter wanted to be there, we should anticipate and explore what was going on. So we created an account for the group. We did it to learn about it, to explore what it was about, because in other issues –such as alcohol and drugs—we, more or less, know things; but on new technologies we were forced to learn about them'. (Parent, ES, PS)

problems arise, help detect consumption or deal with unexpected behaviors.

A relevant aspect that is still underdeveloped is the use of IT for prevention, or that parents use IT to develop social support and mobilization networks with a view to prevention. Information technologies offer

a unique opportunity to share information immediately so that allows parents to consult with other parents in no time in case of doubts or problems. Here professionals play a key role as facilitators of that process.

Confidence deposited in the environment. The experience of belonging into a community.

Parents should teach their children the dual experience of developing as individual entities while being part of a group. Each of these dimensions reinforces the other and both are essential. In adolescence the group dimension becomes very important and it is necessary to find a balance in this process between being an individual and becoming a citizen. The trust we place in others helps to indicate the degree integration of an individual with his environment as it allows seeing how the individual interacts with that environment.

Trust in institutions

During the EFE study adolescents were surveyed about their confidence on several professionals related to their wellbeing (doctor, teacher, police, and parliament members) as well as about the people in their community. The findings show that relating consumption (drunkenness and cannabis use) and trust, there are significant differences between those who consume and those who not, being the most trusting ones those with less consumption.

It is important that parents and prevention professionals take into account this information as an element to be incorporated in the range of prevention. Confidence is related to both recognition and respect for social norms of coexistence as well as in the defense of collective goods.

Table 7: Adolescents con	Total %	
Table 7: Adolescents confidence level. I can trust my doctor		79,5
als	my teachers	72,3
sion	the police	64,1
Professionals	Members of Parliament (MPs)	28,4
po	People in this neighbourhood can be trusted	54,9
irho	I live in close-knit neighbourhood	47
Neighbourhood	People around here are willing to help their neighbours	58,2

In conclusion: If prevention is so important why are not there more families participating in the program?

Family prevention programs usually offer modules specifically designed to promote the implementation of monitoring and showing strategies to supervise more effectively. However, the lack of parental involvement in these programs is often one of the main problems (Alhalabí-Diaz et al., 2006). Parents are often reluctant to participate in prevention programs, being parents' of children presenting more problems those least involved (Hill, Goates, & Rosenman, 2010). As we have seen, precisely the parents of children with consumption problems are those which usually have less accurate sense of reality.

Other parents show no interest in preventing drug use (or other related risks) because they think it is a

problem that does not affect their children or family, but to others children and families, and therefore see no need to engage or act. These parents should be informed of two things:

The likelihood that children consume is lower among the children of parents who do care to prevent these risks and engage in preventive actions.

1. To find out what our children do we just need to take a look at the group of adolescents with whom our children interact. To protect and monitor them effectively requires actions in the collective and the individual spheres, both at home and outside the house.

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