



The need of brief preventive interventions for adolescent psychiatric patients

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Introduction

Young people with psychiatric disorders are highly vulnerable to problems related with alcohol and / or other drugs. In this at risk population, the recreational use of psychoactive substances can trigger or exacerbate psychiatric symptoms, facilitate suicidal behaviour or interact dangerously with medications. Also, development of drug tolerance and dependence is usually faster and more severe in psychiatric patients, especially in adolescents (1).

(1) Wilens TE, Biederman J, Abrantes Am, Spencer TJ. Clinical characteristics of psychiatrically referred adolescent outpatients with substance use disorder. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 36 (7), 941-947, 1997

Objectives

The aims of the PEEDRO project (2004-2006) are:

- a) To evaluate alcohol and other drugs consumption and associated risk factors in adolescent patients from a public mental health service, and
- b) To adapt and evaluate a brief preventive intervention to avoid or reduce alcohol and other drugs use in this specific population (2).

(2) McCambridge J, Strang J. The efficacy of single-session motivational interviewing in reducing drug consumption and perceptions of drug-related risk and harm among young people: results from a multi-site cluster randomized trial. *Addiction*, 99, 39-52, 2003

Methods and Materials

12 to 17 years old psychiatric patients consecutively admitted at the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychology (Hospital Clínic of Barcelona) were evaluated with psychiatric semi-structured interviews and several questionnaires; among them, the Teen Addiction Severity Index (Teen-ASI), the Child Behaviour Checklist (CBC) and the Youth Self Report (YSR).

Methods and Materials (II)

After randomization, 2/3 of alcohol or drug users were invited to participate in a preventive brief intervention with two components:

- 1) a 60 minutes motivational interview with the adolescent (McCambrigde and Strang, 2003) and
- 2) a psycho-educational session with parents.

Follow up of consumers immediately after intervention, and 6 and 12 month later is still being performed.

Results

From a preliminary analysis of 99 subjects, 13,1% presented a pattern of risk, abuse or dependence of alcohol, 26,7% met criteria of tobacco dependence, 13,2% probable abuse or dependence of cannabis and 9,8% were other drug recreational users (cocaine, design drugs, etc.) (Table 1). Alcohol and/or drug users had significant more externalized and severe psychiatric symptoms (Table 2) and also more school, legal and family problems than non users (Fig 1). Conduct and oppositional defiant disorders were the psychopathologies with more percentage of drug consumers (Table 3).

Table 1. Pattern of consumption for different drugs

	Alcohol	Tobacco	Cannabis	Other drugs
Non consumption	51,1 %	55,4 %	63 %	90 %
Ocasional consumption	17,4 %	7,6 %	13 %	1,1 %
Regular consumption	18,5 %	7,6 %	5,4 %	1,1 %
Risk consumption	9,8 %	3,3 %	5,4 %	6,5 %
Abuse or dependence	3,3 %	26,7 %	13,2 %	1,1 %

Table 2. Differences between drug consumers and non-consumers

	Non-consumers	Consumers	p (age controlled by ACOVAR)
CBC (internalized)	18,54 ± 9,39	22,06 ± 10,56	N.S.
CBC (externalized)	13,33 ± 8,29	20,03 ± 10,15	0,010
YSR (internalized)	17,72 ± 9,41	23,62 ± 13,03	N.S.
YSR (externalized)	12,00 ± 6,71	19,41 ± 10,32	0,002

Fig. 1 Severity of problems in different areas in consumers and non-consumers (Teen ASI)

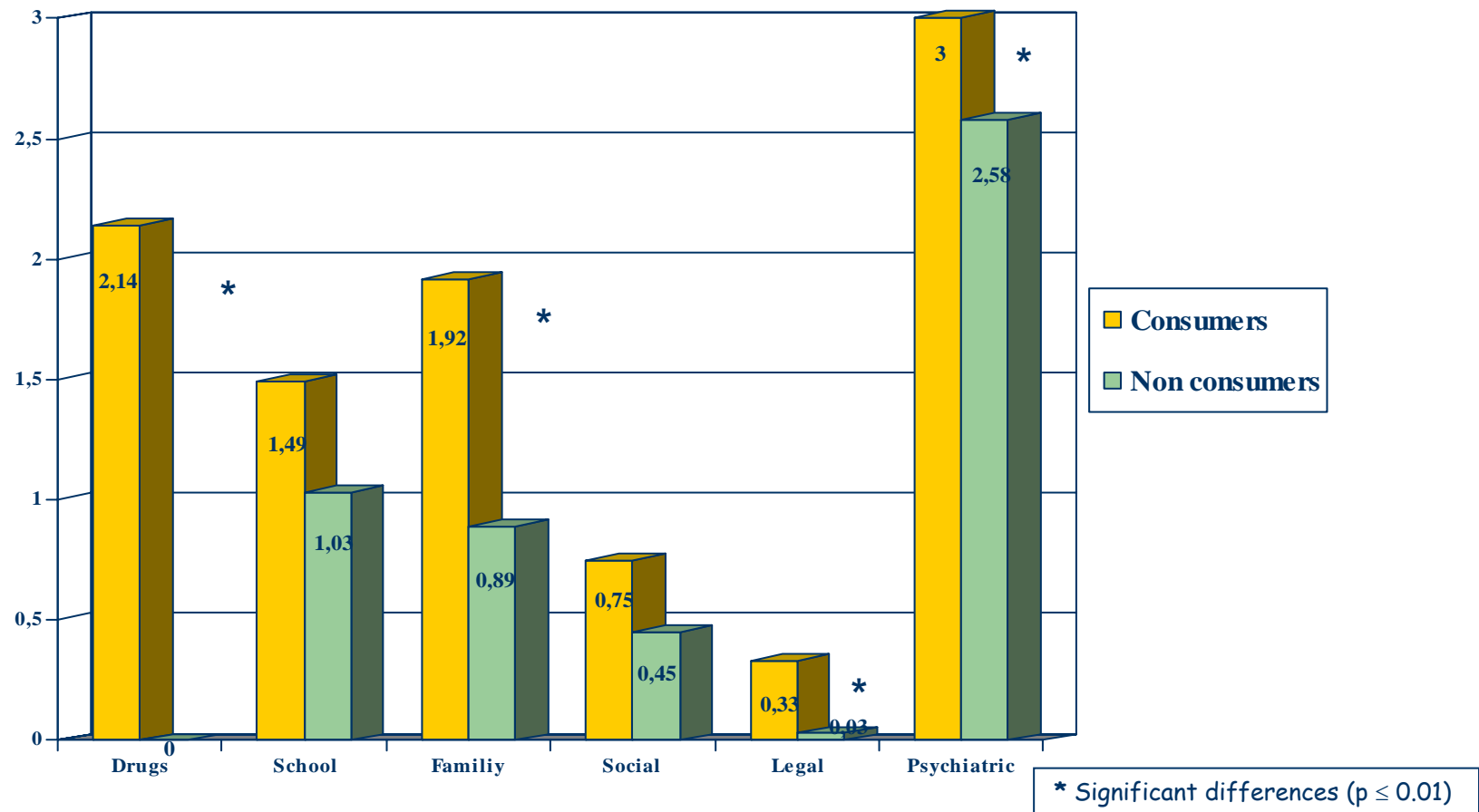


Table 3. Percentage of consumers in every psychiatric disorder

Disorder	Consumers
Depressive disorder	62,5 %
Anxiety disorder	37,5 %
Eating disorder	61 %
Attention Deficit Disorder / Hyperactivity	64,3 %
Conduct /Oppositional defiant disorders	85,7 %
Adaptative disorder	16,7 %

Conclusion

In view of the high prevalence of alcohol and other drug use and risks associated among psychiatric adolescent patients, we conclude that it is extremely urgent to implement prevention and treatment strategies in mental health youth services in our geographical area.

After the evaluation of the brief motivational intervention adapted for this study from McCambridge & Strang (2003) we will know if this kind of intervention could be a good solution to this problem.