

Social Work Announcement

Family-Focused Interventions to Prevent Substance Use Disorders in Adolescence

August 2022

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) recently held a 2-day hybrid conference on *Family-Focused Interventions to Prevent Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) in Adolescence*. NASW participated in the conference where key comments were shared regarding the integration of care for substance use in primary care settings that offered health services to children and adolescents. Recommendations included, but were not limited to the following:

- States should invest in health equity seeking grant funding for programs in substance use, and sustaining the services developed when funds cease.
- As trusted sources of information, physicians should engage parents and their children in conversations centered around substance use especially during wellness visits.
- Health care systems should include multidisciplinary teams with social workers who have the skills to educate and counsel patients who may be subject to substance use.
- Health care professionals should encourage resilience using strength-based perspectives when working with children and adolescents.
- Since students spend many hours at school, it can be a valuable resource in addressing the problems of substance use.

Social workers have the skills to educate, prevent, and treat substance users in settings such as primary care. Utilizing screening, advocacy, case management and counseling tools, they make a positive impact in the prevention and treatment of substance use. NASW will keep its members abreast of any follow-up information made available from NASEM on the prevention of SUD in adolescence. The association will also continue to advocate for policies and legislations to protect and help children and adolescents who engage in substance use.

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