

**ECHO IDAHO**

**Counseling Techniques for  
Substance Use Disorders**

# **Generational Trauma from Substance Use**

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None of the planners or presenters for this educational activity have relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.



**University of Idaho**  
School of Health and Medical  
Professions



# Learning Objectives

1

Understand the concept and impact of generational trauma

2

Recognize the effects of trauma on children and families

3

Explore intervention strategies and resources

# Review

- Person-first language.
- Addiction vs physical dependence.
- Addiction is a treatable chronic medical disease.
- It involves complex interactions between neurobiology, genetics, environment, and life experience.
- It is defined as a “chronic, relapsing disorder characterized by compulsive drug-seeking and use despite adverse consequences”.
- Prevention and treatment approaches are about as successful as methods for other chronic diseases.

# Words are Important

## Words to Use

Person with a substance use disorder

Person with alcohol use disorder

Substance use disorder

Drug misuse, harmful use

Substance use

Not actively using

Testing negative for substance use

Actively using

Testing positive for substance use

Person in recovery, person in long-term recovery

## Words to Avoid

Addict/drug abuser

Alcoholic

Drug problem, drug habit

Drug abuse

Substance abuse

Clean

A clean drug screen

Dirty

A dirty drug screen

Former/reformed addict/alcoholic

# Introduction to Generational Trauma

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Definition of generational trauma

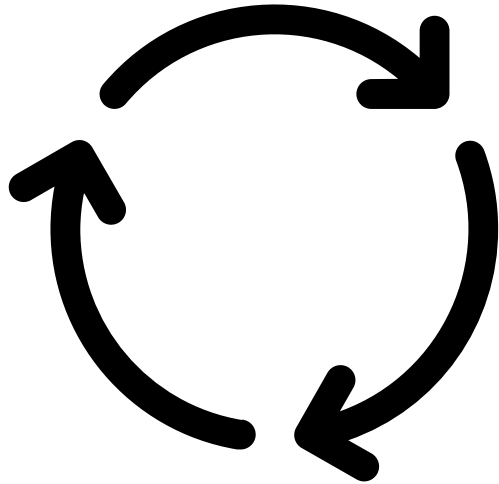
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Transmission through families

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Impact on mental health and behaviors

# The Cycle of Substance Use and Trauma



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Trauma as a risk factor for  
substance use

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Substance use exacerbates  
family stress

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Reinforcement of unhealthy  
coping mechanisms

# Impacts on Children and Adolescents



EMOTIONAL NEGLECT AND  
INSTABILITY



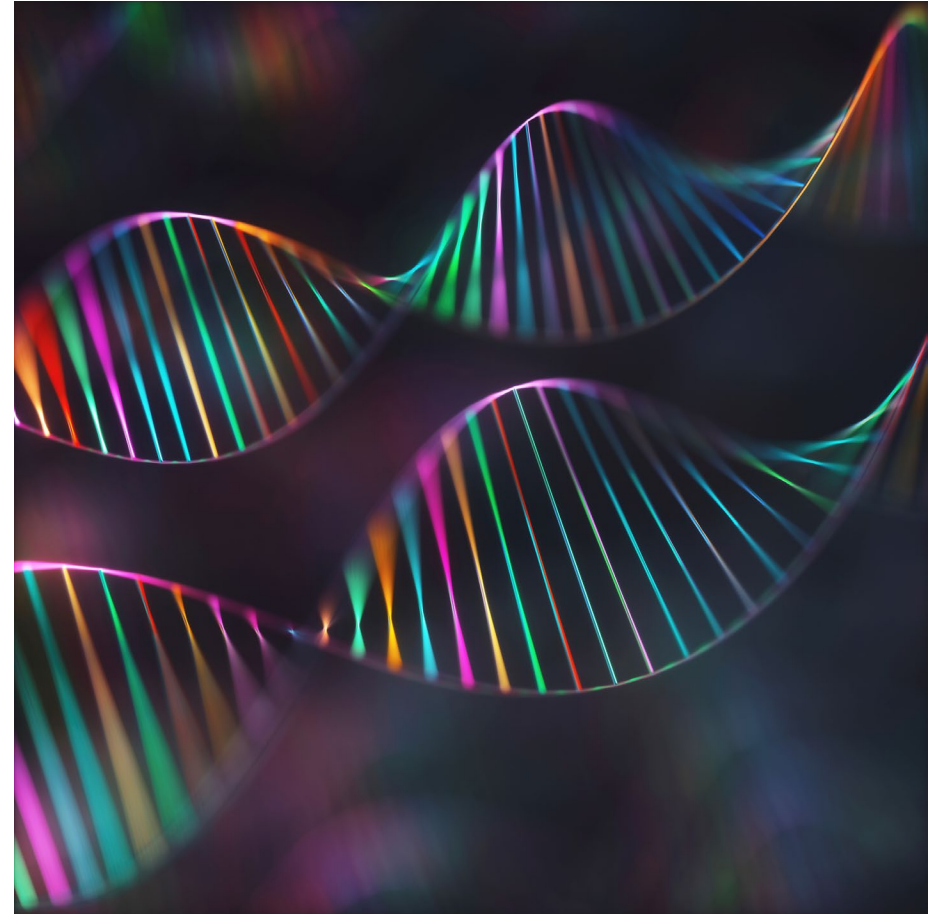
INCREASED RISK OF MENTAL  
HEALTH DISORDERS



LEARNED BEHAVIORS AND  
MALADAPTIVE COPING  
STRATEGIES

# Epigenetics and Generational Trauma

- Trauma's impact on gene expression
- Intergenerational transmission through epigenetics
- Studies linking substance use and altered genes





# Cultural and Societal Factors



Stigma and silence surrounding substance use



Economic and systemic inequities



Cultural attitudes towards trauma and healing

# Breaking the Cycle

Importance of  
early intervention

Role of therapy  
and support  
systems

Building  
resilience and  
healthy coping  
mechanisms

# Resources for Families and Professionals



NATIONAL RESOURCES  
(E.G., SAMHSA)



LOCAL COUNSELING AND  
SUPPORT GROUPS



EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS  
AND WORKSHOPS

# Conclusion and Call to Action

01

Recognize and address trauma's role in substance use

02

Advocate for systemic change and community support

03

Empower families with tools to heal

# References

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) - [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

Van der Kolk, B. (2015). *The Body Keeps the Score*. Penguin Books.

Yehuda, R., et al. (2014). "Epigenetics of Trauma and PTSD." *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) - [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

Family Systems Theory Resources - [www.thebowencenter.org](http://www.thebowencenter.org)