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Javarius Hodge
Murray State University

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Substance Abuse in a Rural Western Kentucky College Community

HEA 356: Health Promotion Programming Photovoice Research Project – Fall Semester 2016

Javarius Hodge; Under the supervision of Dr. Miranda Sue Terry, Assistant Professor

Department of Applied Health Sciences, Murray State University

The Problem:

- One of the biggest problems in our community is substance and drug abuse.
- The causes of this addiction and or people can become dependent on it. The causes of this can be from the social environment people live in. This impacts a lot of college students and older people in our community.
- This is a public issue because college students strive very hard to graduate or even complete time consuming assignments and they need to use Adderall or Vyvanse to help them focus and get things done. Therefore, they may become addicted or dependent to that substance.
 - According to the National institute on Drug Abuse, 1 in 5 college students admit to using Adderall without an ADHA diagnosis (Drugwatch.com, 2016)

Research Methodology:

Photovoice is “a process that allows community members to take pictures reflecting their unique perceptions of community needs and assets” (Wang & Burris, 1997).

“This method employs a participatory action technique that allows individuals to photograph their everyday realities and highlight factors that may enhance or diminish their individual health status or that of the community” (Doyle, et. al, 2010)

Photovoice Pictures and Descriptions:



Resources Available:

There is a substance and drug abuse clinic in the Murray community called the Behavioral Management, LLC which is great asset to the community. This place is located on 100N 6th St. Apt 14, Murray, KY, 42071. (pictured above)

Four Rivers Behavioral Health
1051 N 16th Street, Suite B
Murray, KY 42071

Counseling Services are available on campus but none of the counselors specialize in substance abuse, which is a major barrier at Murray State when dealing with college student health.

Conclusions & Recommendations:

We need to educate our community on the short-term and long-term effects of substance or drug abuse.

We need to encourage and show individuals various lifestyle modifications they can make for the behavior to better their health.

We need to debunk incorrect information. For example, students who take Adderall to “study” have the same or worse GPAs compared to peers who do not. Meaning, Adderall does not provide an advantage.

References:

Doyle, E. I., Ward, S. E., & Oomen-Early, J. (2010). *The Process of Community Health Education and Promotion* (2nd ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

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