

## HOW TO RECOGNIZE ADDICTION?

**Parents need to have more time for their children. They need to pay more attention to their behavior, especially during puberty and adolescence.**

### **Risk factors for drug use**

- Chaotic functioning of the family, especially if the parents themselves abuse alcohol, drugs or medications or gamble.
- Failure of parents to set rules of conduct in the family.
- Lack of attachment, warmth and good communication between children and parents.
- Extreme shyness or aggressive behavior of the child at home, school and environment.
- Poor school performance.
- Lack of communication skills in the company of peers.
- Socializing with children who are prone to socially deviant behavior.
- An environment that tolerates the use of drugs, alcohol, etc.

### **Signs and symptoms of the use of psychoactive substances (drugs, alcohol or medication) are:**

- sudden changes in behavior in relation to going to school or work, frequent absences,
- poorer work results or poorer grades,
- unusual behavioral outbursts or fits of anger, tension and irritability,
- greater irresponsibility towards obligations than before,
- major changes in attitudes and value systems,
- neglected appearance,

- wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times,
- wearing long-sleeved clothes even in warm weather,
- socializing with people who take drugs,
- unusual and frequent borrowings of money from friends, parents and relatives,
- stealing money at home or at work,
- socializing with people about whom parents know little or do not know at all,
- frequent mysterious telephone conversations,
- attempts to hide from parents the reasons for frequent short-term departures from the house or the arrival of strangers in the house, etc.

**Signs of marijuana abuse are:**

- talking too loud and fast with frequent laughing immediately after taking marijuana,
- drowsiness and slowness in the later stages of marijuana,
- forgetfulness in conversation,
- redness of the eyelids, pupils may be dilated,
- strong smell, like the smell of burning hemp,
- tendency to drive too slow,
- a feeling of slow passage of time,
- possession of unusual items such as pipes, cigarette wrapping papers, bottle necks, etc.

It is difficult to recognize people who consume marijuana when they are not under the influence of this drug. Marijuana has a characteristic, strong odor and can be the same color as regular tobacco or a little more green.

The most serious consequences of marijuana use are: loss of will and initiative, lung damage, brain atrophy, chromosomal damage, menstrual disorders and testosterone levels.

## **Signs of opiate abuse are:**

- slowness, drowsiness,
- narrow pupils,
- severe facial pallor,
- slurred speech,
- visible traces of a needle prick in a row, on the hands and other parts of the body,
- noticeable weight loss,
- neglected appearance,
- narrowing interest in everything but drugs,
- frequent borrowing of money or theft,
- change of character (lying, deception, selfishness),
- sudden changes in mood and behavior depending on whether he is under the influence of drugs or it has passed,
- manifestations of abstinence crisis: pain, sweating, shivering, nausea, diarrhea, anxiety.

\* Data from the website of the Institute for Addiction Diseases in Belgrade were used in drafting the text