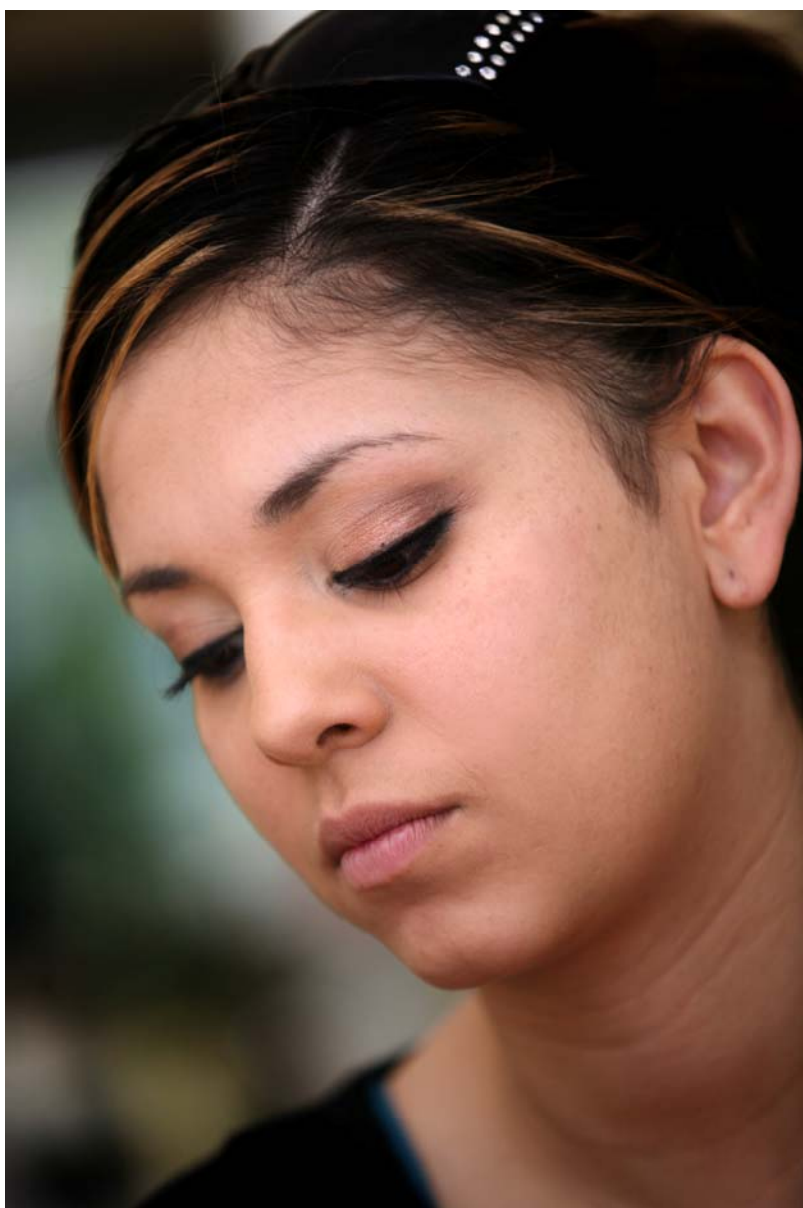


Living with an Active Substance Abuser: Effects on the Child

Age	Effects of Addiction
Infancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent parent responsiveness – child doesn't develop basic trust or secure attachment • If inadequately stimulated child may develop poor muscle coordination • Poor language development if neglected and not talked to • Dangerous physical environment may lead to injuries from normal exploration
Toddler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impaired impulse control • Impaired vocabulary development – can't put words to feelings • May develop fantasy life or show little imagination • Lack of consistent structure and routine at home may impair development of sense of time • Difficulty forming sense of self - child's uniqueness or preferences not honored or encouraged • Belief that parents behavior is because child was "bad"
School age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrepancy between values learning in school and they see modeled home • Difficulty developing problem solving skills due to lack of role models • Child may assume adult responsibilities for caring for younger children • Lack of consistent structure and routine in home may impair development of planning and follow-through skills • Child may not have learned social skills needed for school success and peer development due to lack of modeling of appropriate ways to act with peers and problem resolution • Social isolation because child is hesitant to bring friends home • No rules at home can make child feel lack of stability • Confusion about appropriate sexual behavior because of unclear boundaries • Child focuses on parent's needs versus developing sense of self and interests leading to lack of self-esteem • Difficulty focusing in school due to disruptions/crisis at home

Adolescence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience ambivalent feeling toward parent (loves parent but hates them at same time for their behavior)• Lots of anger and hurt feelings• May not have good self-care skills (nutrition, hygiene, sleep, managing time) depending on survival strategies learned• Difficulty tolerating frustration• Peers may substitute for family• Inability to trust gut instinct due to family secret• Difficulty forming intimate relationships• May have trouble separating from family if always took on the parent/caregiver role in the family
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