

Truth within the Unknown

With every tip of the glass or inhale that is taken, the life of that person is shortened. Drugs and alcohol are one of the biggest problems the world is having with teens. The world needs to understand why, so it can help the struggling teens around the world.

Within my community, drugs and alcohol are an extremely big effect. We have mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters who turn to drugs and alcohol when something goes wrong. Many high school students in today's society take either drugs or they drink alcohol. For many it is because they believe that it will help with the problems that they are facing. They believe that if they can't feel what is happening, then it isn't and that it will all just go away. They think that if they can get to that top high, then life will be okay. If they get totally wasted it's all good. The truth however is that the high or buzz that they have will only last for a few minutes to a few hours. People today will do anything that they can in order to feel good about themselves or others even if they know that it's temporary.

People are easily influenced by other people or advertisements. With ads, if you see a plain folk on it, and they are drinking then you will want to do it also. People do things that others do, if they look like them. If there is a smoking or drinking ad, they will find average people to put on the ads, because they know that it will get the attention of us. It is the same for people. We can persuade people extremely fast. If they have a friend that is like them, and they see them smoking or drinking, then they think that they can do it. Also if their friend tells them that it helps with everything, why would they say no? So the person takes a shot or a hit. So they get a buzz or a high, and they feel better. However they don't feel better for that long. People realize that they high or buzz doesn't last all that long, that is why they keep doing it. In the beginning, they say that they will only do it once, but then once turns into twice, then three times, and so on. People cannot control themselves. People will do what ever it takes so that they won't have to feel the pain any longer. It's hard to say no to something, when you know that it will take away the pain, even if it's just a few moments.

Resisting drugs is very easy for me. I have seen first hand what they can and will do to a family. At first everything is fine. Then things are starting to happen, however no one says anything because they don't want to rock the boat. Then you can't hold it in any longer, then the yelling and arguing begins. Then before you know what is happening, your family is being torn apart from each other. When drugs are in the picture, you never know what is going to happen. I myself have not done drugs, but I have been hurt by them. With every inhale that the person took, it was like a burn to my skin. The pain hurts more than you will ever know. As for alcohol, I have never had a true experience in my life dealing with it. However I am sure that the results end the same way. Misery, loss and heart ache.

If I were to cross paths with another student who was doing drugs or alcohol, I would simply tell them the truth. Yes, at first everything seems all good. When you first smoke or drink, you start thinking that this is the life. You think that your life is finally starting to make sense. However as the days turn into weeks, you will find out the drinking and smoking isn't as satisfying as it was the first few times. You find that you have to drink or smoke more to get to that better place. It still helps some, but not as much as you want it to. For the final thing that I tell them, is that if you drink or smoke, no matter what, you have to deal with your problems. You can run if you want, but they will just wait for you, no matter how high or drunk you are. What I never understand, is why people never pick the easy path. People like to take to road block, but in the end, they end in the same place.

If we could just reduce the inhalers taken or the sips that are drunk, then will be saving many lives. We have to learn to work together and fix this problem. Instead of picking up the bottle to help yourself, pick it up and help someone else.

Laura Mersereau Scholarship Essay

Alcohol and substance abuse is one of the biggest problems in the world today. These addictions affect not only the individual, but their friends and family as well. Many things affect why a person will start abusing substances or alcohol; genetics, home life, geographic location, surroundings, and many other factors. Many times, kids get bored, or the pressures of society cause them to experiment. However, for whatever a person's reasoning, abuse of any substance affects many people and ultimately society as a whole. The list is endless of how many people die, or are hurt from substance abuse. Dealing with the pain of seeing friends and kids your age die, is something that people shouldn't have to go through at such a young age. Parents shouldn't outlive their kids, and yet so many people still abuse substances that are killing them, and hurting their friends and family. Living in a small farming community, these problems are especially huge. Banks is a small, rural town, where everyone knows not only your name, but everything about you as well.

Living in Banks is a huge challenge when it comes to dealing with alcohol and substance abuse due to the size, and geographic factors. Social groups are small, so peer pressure is very strong. Also, seclusion from urban areas causes boredom, and ultimately kids experiment with alcohol and substances. Avoiding substance abuse in the environment I've grown up in is extremely challenging.

In the last 5 years, Banks has become known for how many teen deaths we have each year. Some of them involved substance abuse directly, and the

ones that didn't were related to some type of abuse. A 16 year old boy drowned while swimming intoxicated. The whole community was in shock. It was one of the first teenage deaths that had happened in Banks in years. Twenty days later, a teenage girl hydroplaned in her car and was pronounced dead on the scene. This left the community shocked and distraught, yet again. A year later, the first best friend I ever had committed suicide, and a year after that, there was another fatal car accident. The pressures in the community since then have dramatically increased, which has increased the amount of alcohol consumption and drug use. Also, this causes people to become secluded and separate from friends and family.

The most important thing to me is my family, my two brothers, my sister and my mom. My dad was an alcoholic and left when I was three. My mom has been the glue that has held our family together, and has made us stronger than imaginable. The fact that my dad was, and still is, an alcoholic is engraved in my mind, and for that, I can thank him. I know that I will never abuse drugs or alcohol because of him, and what he's done to our family.

For me, it is no longer a challenge to avoid alcohol and drugs. I've seen and felt the effects of deaths of friends, and would never want to inflict that pain on my friends, community, and especially my family. It is hard to say there are certain steps to take to prevent a friend or peer from abusing substances; however, my hope is that in time, people will see that I don't drink, smoke or do drugs, and they will also see that I am well liked, I have incredible friends, and I couldn't ask for a better life. If they see this, then maybe they will admire me and

learn they don't need to abuse substances to fit in. I pray that people don't have to feel the pain of loss before they understand the negative affects that can occur from their substance abuse. The pain of losing close friends has scarred me, but has also made me stronger. Alcohol and substance abuse has affected me throughout my whole life, which makes it that much easier to avoid and resent. These addictions affect everyone in some way, and I believe that family is the most important thing to avoiding an addiction. I'm extremely blessed to have a supportive family who would do anything for me, and vice versa. If it weren't for my family supporting me and urging me to be strong and succeed in life, I wouldn't have gotten as far in life as I am today.