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EARLY AND 'EARLIER' INTERVENTION IN YOUNG PEOPLE USING DRUGS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we meet. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present with us today.



DISCLOSURES

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OBJECTIVES

To describe:

- Barriers to early intervention for substance use problems in young people
- Introduce early and opportunistic ('earlier') approaches to engaging young people in treatment



BACKGROUND AND BARRIERS TO CARE

DRUG USE IN YOUNG PEOPLE

- Most substance use starts in adolescence

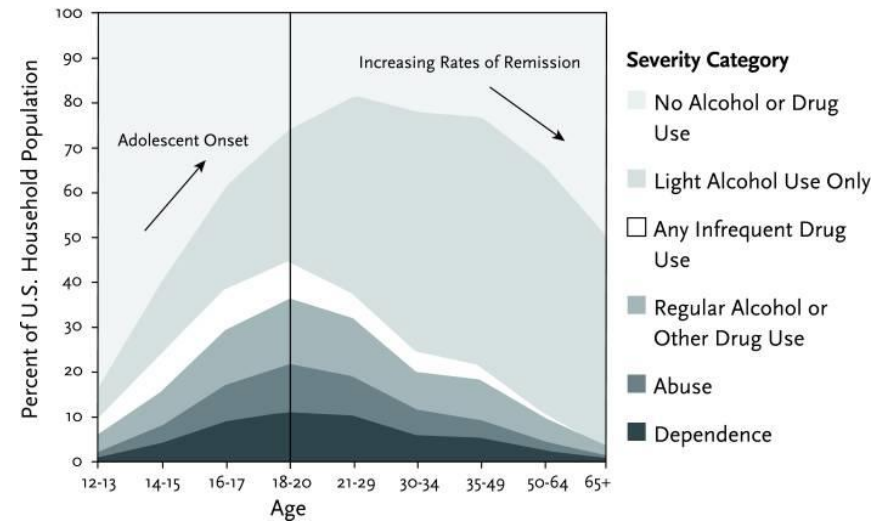
AIHW, 2017

- Peak onset of substance use disorder – 18 - 20 years old
Dennis & Scott, 2007

- Rates of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drug use ↓ in 18-24 year olds from 2001 to 2019

AIHW, 2021

- BUT – concentrating in vulnerable populations (justice, mental ill-health, rural)



SEEKING HELP

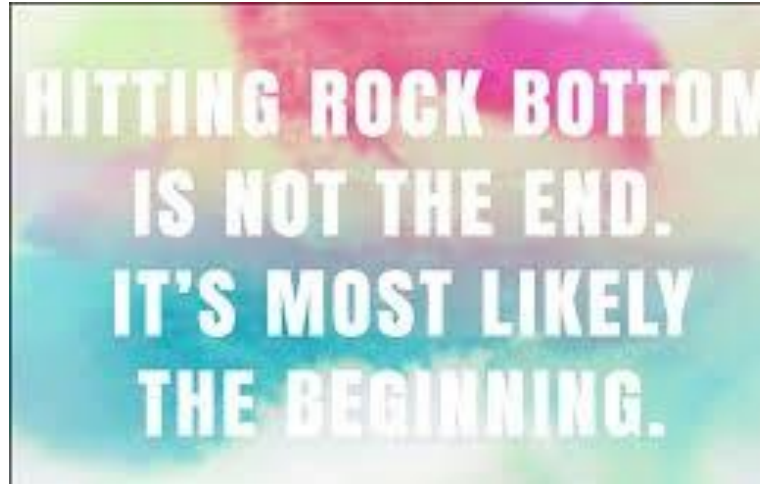
- Outcomes improved by early treatment Dennis et al, 2005
- Most people with substance use problems never seek help
Degenhardt 2017
- Wait \approx 15 years from first use to treatment, 27 years until 1st year of abstinence Dennis et al, 2005
- Australia – alcohol use disorder 18 years to first treatment contact Chapman et al, 2015
- WHO World Mental Health Survey (15 countries) – 6-18 years delay from onset to first treatment

SEEKING HELP – YOUNG PEOPLE

- Victoria - youth-focused AOD service system:
 - Young people from marginalized communities
 - High levels of mental ill-health
 - Structural/psychosocial needs YSAS Youth Needs Census, 2018
- Problematic cannabis (30%) and alcohol use (38%) common in *headspace* clients Purcell et al, 2015
- *headspace* - 3.1% identify substance use as primary concern Rickwood et al. 2015
- Reluctance to seek help

WHY?

- The long shadow of 'rock bottom'
- Minority (43%) with substance use disorders recognize a problem Degenhardt et al, 2017
- Of those, 61% visit a service provider Degenhardt et al, 2017
- Stigma
- The solution, not the problem
- Lack of integrated, accessible care
- Problems less obvious in youth?



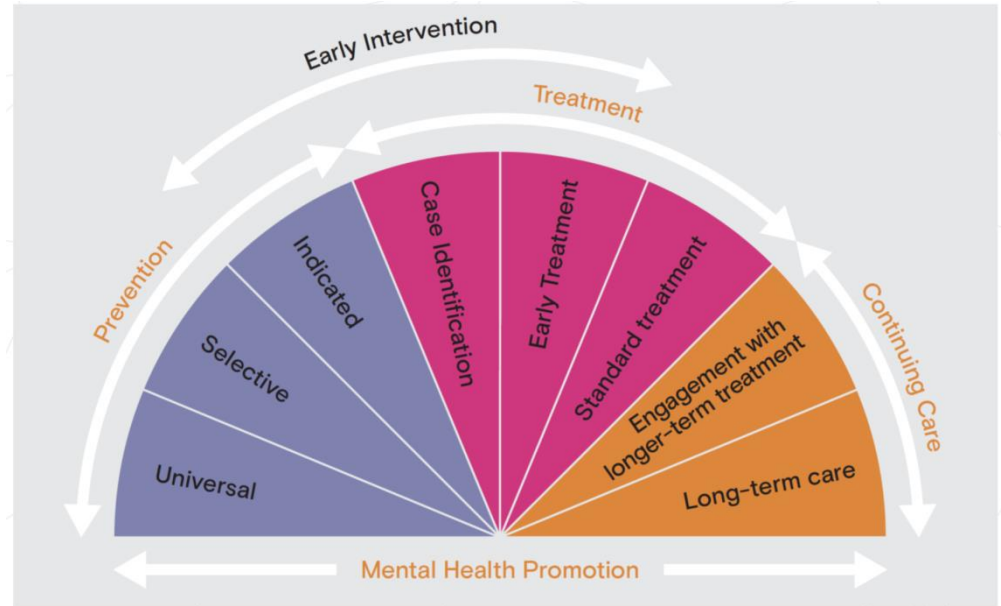


EARLY AND OPPORTUNISTIC INTERVENTION

EARLY INTERVENTION

- Intervention to ↓ substance use or improve function for those already using substances but not meeting criteria:
 - Indicated prevention
 - Early treatment

Mzarek & Haggerty, 1994



'EARLIER' INTERVENTION

- Intervention to engage a young person in treatment before they otherwise would receive care:
 - Opportunistic
 - Can be at any stage of substance use disorder
 - Recognition of delayed care/failure to present for care for substance use disorders

EARLY AND 'EARLIER' INTERVENTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- Lack of evidence-based approaches Stockings et al., 2016
- Outreach approaches – common in Youth AOD system Hallam et al, 2018
- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral – later session
- Personality-based brief intervention
- Levering presentation at headspace – the INTEGRATE study
- 'Quik-Fix' – alcohol-related presentations at ED Hides et al, 2021
- Community Reinforcement Approach Family Therapy Miller et al, 1999
- What are the windows of opportunity for engagement in treatment – more research needed



QUESTIONS

**REVOLUTION
IN MIND** *ory
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THANK YOU
