

Appendix I I

Annex I

List of mediating variables

A number of interventions and policies target children well before the age of onset of substance use (infancy or primary school years). Some of these have been evaluated in long term follow up studies showing effects in terms of preventing drug or substance use in adolescence or adulthood. However, some of these interventions and policies have not been evaluated through long-term follow up studies, and thus data on their effectiveness on preventing future substance use is not yet available. Moreover, data on their impact on important outcomes that have been shown in the scientific literature to be associated with the onset of substance use is available (mediating variables). Therefore, interventions and policies targeting young children and showing an impact on outcomes strongly linked in the scientific literature to the onset of substance use were also included in the Standards, although the strength of the evidence was classified as one step weaker. The following mediating variables were identified on the basis of consensus of the Group of Experts. No relative weight was identified and assigned to the variables.

Pre-natal period

- ✓ Maternal substance use.

Early Childhood

Parents

- ✓ Warm, responsive & supportive parenting that meets financial, emotional, cognitive, and social needs - especially successful attachment and bonding to the child.
- ✓ Parental substance use, parental mental health problems.

Children (from pre-school onwards)

- ✓ Age-appropriate language and numeracy skills (cognitive skills).
- ✓ Pro-social behaviours and attitudes (social skills, lack of uncooperative behaviour, lack of early aggressive behaviour, lack of externalizing behaviour).
- ✓ Emotional and mental health (absence of attention, conduct and behavioural problems).

Middle Childhood

Parents

- ✓ Warm, responsive & supportive parenting that meets the financial, emotional, cognitive, and social needs, including monitoring of the activities of the children.
- ✓ Parental substance use, parental mental health problems, parental attitudes towards substance use.

Children

- ✓ Age-appropriate language and numeracy skills.
- ✓ Impulse control and self control, goal-directed behaviour, decision making, problem solving.
- ✓ Pro-social behaviours and attitudes, social skills, lack of uncooperative behaviour, self-efficacy and self-esteem.
- ✓ Emotional and mental health: Absence of early aggressive behaviour, anxiety, depression, externalizing behaviour.
- ✓ Academic self-efficacy, commitment to school, school attendance, school dropout.

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