

“Children’s Experiences”

Episode Overview

In this episode, I talk about people’s experiences of being a child with an SUD/overdose incident *and* of being the child to a parent with a SUD/overdose incident. I describe the challenges of being a child to a parent with SUD and of navigating complex grief after a parent dies from an overdose. I also discuss how parental SUD/overdose leads to reduced outcomes among children. I also touch on the experiences of children with SUD/overdose incidents.



- Over 8 million children in the United States live with a parent with a substance use disorder; from 2011 to 2021 over 300,000 children lost a parent to a drug overdose.
- By the time children have reached 12th grade, nearly 50% have tried illicit drugs. In 2021, more than 1,000 children died from a drug overdose.

TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Children believe that their parents, who misuse drugs, often do not meet their needs.
- ✓ Parental SUD/overdose is tied to reduced mental well-being, poorer social functioning, and maladaptive coping among children.
- ✓ Stigma from family is a barrier to children’s seeking support and treatment.

References & Future Reading

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