

Reducing Alcohol Use Among Adolescents: The Role of Family Values

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Abstract. This article examines the negative impact of alcoholism among youth on cognitive functions (memory, attention, decision-making) and the problem of preserving family values. It reveals how alcoholism leads to cognitive impairments and weakens family upbringing. The study proposes ways to prevent alcoholism by strengthening family values such as love, responsibility, and traditional upbringing. The article proposes practical measures at family, educational, community, and state levels to reduce youth alcoholism and promote a healthy, morally stable generation in society. Additionally, promoting awareness through continuous education and community engagement plays a vital role in shaping responsible attitudes toward alcohol among young people.

Keywords: youth alcoholism, cognitive functions, family values, family upbringing, mental health, prevention.

Introduction

In today's world, alcoholism (chronic alcohol abuse) among youth has become one of the most pressing social and public health challenges. The increasing spread of alcohol consumption among the younger generation poses a serious threat not only to individual well-being but also to family stability, national values, and the future development of society. According to the World Health Organization, millions of people worldwide suffer from alcohol-related diseases or die each year due to its harmful consequences. Alarmingly, the age of initial alcohol exposure is decreasing, and even students in grades 10–11 are becoming vulnerable to alcohol use, often without fully understanding its long-term effects [1]. This issue is further aggravated by rapid social changes, urbanization, and the influence of globalization, which expose young people to new lifestyles and behavioral patterns. The widespread promotion of alcohol through social media, movies, and online platforms often presents drinking as fashionable or socially acceptable. At the same time, factors such as peer pressure, academic stress, unemployment concerns, and lack of parental supervision significantly increase the risk of addiction among youth [2].

Moreover, adolescence is a critical period of psychological and neurological development. Alcohol consumption during this stage can negatively affect brain function, impair memory and attention, and hinder the formation of responsible decision-making skills. Consequently, youth alcoholism not only impacts individual health but also contributes to broader social problems, including family conflicts, crime, and moral decline [3].

Therefore, addressing youth alcoholism requires a comprehensive and multi-level approach involving families, educational institutions, communities, and state policies. Strengthening family values, promoting healthy lifestyles, and raising awareness are essential steps in preventing this growing problem and ensuring a healthier future generation [4].

Literature Review

Global statistics show that in 2000, approximately 140 million people worldwide suffered from alcoholism, rising to about 208 million by 2010. If this trend continues, the number of people affected by alcoholism may increase significantly by 2050. Due to the rise in alcoholism, one person dies every



ten seconds worldwide from its consequences. Alcohol-related deaths among people aged 25–39 account for about 3.5% of total mortality [5].

In Uzbekistan, according to 2024 statistical data, alcohol-related morbidity among the population aged 20–40 ranged as follows: 21% in 2020, 21.7% in 2021, 17.9% in 2022, 18.5% in 2023, and 17.3% in 2024. It remains the second leading cause among narcological diseases after drug addiction. In recent years, alcohol-related problems in our society have shown a relatively stable or slightly declining trend, while drug addiction indicators continue to rise [6-7].

Alcoholism is a chronic disease characterized by the development of physical and psychological dependence on alcoholic beverages among young people. The main reasons for alcohol addiction among youth in our society include:

- Influence of friends and social environment (starting with “trying it once for curiosity”);
- Family conflicts, indifference, or parents viewing drinking as “normal”;
- Stress, academic pressure, and difficulties in finding employment;
- Promotion through the internet and social media in the form of “fashion” or advertising.

Because the bodies of young people are not yet fully developed, they quickly become addicted to alcohol [8]. The main stages of addiction are:

1. First stage – pleasure and curiosity (enjoyment, forgetting problems);
2. Second stage – formation of dependence (anxiety when not drinking, increased consumption);
3. Third stage – chronic condition (physical disorders: liver, heart, mental illnesses).

In Uzbekistan, youth alcoholism often occurs alongside drug addiction and is linked to 30–40% of crimes committed under the influence of these substances. The state is implementing several reforms and laws to restrict the distribution and consumption of alcohol and tobacco products. Although overall alcohol consumption in Uzbekistan is relatively low (approximately 2.1 liters of pure alcohol per capita per year — one of the lowest in the world), young people aged 15–30 are the most affected. Addiction usually begins due to peer pressure, stress, and family problems [9].

At the same time, alcoholism destroys family values such as love, respect, child-rearing, and family stability. Below is a table of practical recommendations at family, educational, community, and state levels for preventing alcoholism among youth [10].

№	Level / Group	Recommendation (Practical Measures)	Responsible Persons / Organizations	Expected Result / Benefit
1	Family level	Parents should set a good example: do not treat alcohol as “hospitality” and avoid drinking in front of children	Parents, family members	Negative attitude toward alcohol forms; family love and respect strengthen
2		Solve stress and problems within the family; seek psychological help	Parents, psychologists	Prevents the habit of “forgetting problems” through drinking
3		Work with parents: they must not smoke or drink and should serve as role models	Mahalla leaders, psychologists, prevention inspectors	Negative attitude toward alcohol forms; family love and respect strengthen
1	Educational institutions	Activate sports, creative clubs, and youth	School/University administration, youth leaders	Free time filled with positive activities;



		organizations (Youth Union)		reduces risk of addiction
2		Establish psychological counseling rooms in every institution	University/School administration	Early intervention; problems do not escalate
3		Conduct moral-educational events in “Future Hour” classes, seminars, video clips, and competitions on “Healthy Lifestyle”	School/University administration, youth leaders, psychologists	Free time filled with positive activities; reduces risk of addiction
1	Mahalla and community level	Social media promotion: create content about healthy living through bloggers	Youth leaders, mahalla activists	Positive trends strengthen among youth
2		Limit alcohol at weddings and ceremonies; promote alcohol-free celebrations	Mahalla citizens, elders	Alcohol is no longer seen as “normal” at family events
1	State and legal measures	Strengthen prevention months and national strategies among youth	Ministry of Health, Youth Agency	Wide-scale awareness and control ensured
2		Mandatory seminars for parents: “Protecting Children from Alcohol”	Schools and mahallas in cooperation	Increases parental responsibility; improves family upbringing

Most of the recommendations in the table should begin at the family and educational levels, as strong family values (love, respect, responsibility) are among the most powerful factors in preventing alcoholism. When high-level measures complement each other, the results will be highly effective.

Alcoholism is one of the strongest factors that destroys families and family values. Its main effects on family members include:

- Increased family conflicts and violence (aggression, quarrels);
- Rise in divorces (families are ruined because of alcoholism);
- Problems in child-rearing: damaged parental role models, psychological trauma in children, and increased risk of suicide;
- Economic difficulties (job loss, disruption of family budget);
- Weakening of national values: the family, which should be a place of love and care, turns into a “house of enmity” because of alcoholism.

In Uzbek families, family values such as respect for parents, child-rearing, and love occupy a central place. Alcoholism destroys these values: children live in fear of their parents, and family stability disappears. As a result, deviant behavior (crime, drug addiction) develops in the next generation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, preventing alcoholism among youth is not only a medical but also a social and moral task. When family values are strong, children develop in a healthy mental and physical way. Every family, mahalla, and the state must actively participate in this struggle. A healthy generation is the foundation of strong families and a powerful nation. Fighting alcoholism today is the most important investment in our tomorrow. The future of every young person lies in family love and a healthy lifestyle!



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