

Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention Resources

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02/10/18

HSC 301

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SAMHSA, which stands for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, is a website for their agency that focuses on the prevention and treatment of not only substance abuse but also mental health. Substance abuse greatly affects one's mental health, and in many cases, the abuse of a substance begins because of mental issues. They provide resources for both to find the root of the problem and combat both hand in hand. Substance abuse, as defined on Healthy People 2020, is "a set of related conditions associated with the consumption of mind- and behavior-altering substances that have negative behavioral and health outcomes" (Healthy People 2020, n.d.). This agency was created by the US Department of Health and Human Services and is led by the Assistant Secretary and a team of Directors and Regional Administrators; they provide a list of contributors with their contact info and short biographies. As a public agency, they are powered by budget requests from the House and Senate Appropriations Committee, and they distribute their funds in the form of grant funds to smaller programs for substance abuse and mental health. According to SAMHSA, their mission is "to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities" (SAMHSA, 2016).

Upon first visiting the website, the viewer is presented with lots of places to explore. As a substance abuse and mental health website, they highlight resources to find immediate help, such as placing big images on the left which include a National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, a National Helpline, a Disaster Distress Helpline, and a Behavioral Health Treatment Locator. The tabs listed at the top of the page are: Find Health and Treatment, Topics, Programs and Campaigns, Grants, Data, About Us, and Publications. The Find Health and Treatment tab relists the hotlines and locator, highlighting resources for immediate help, for when people are dealing with things such as relapsing or dealing with mental health issues. The other tabs are more

informational; students can look for information, data, and articles in specific subcategories of the Topics tab, such as marijuana abuse, tobacco abuse, prescription drug abuse, and etc. They also include their publications on other websites with links to visit them. If someone were to visit the website looking for help, they are presented with immediate help through the hotlines, but also include several treatment options such as counseling and medication, while also highlighting the fact that prevention is as important as treatment.

SAMHSA includes all the information necessary to make their website credible and trustworthy. As mentioned before, they list all of their contributors with their contact information and short biographies. Their contributors are in reach for the viewer to contact, and are professionals with their credentials listed, who have a position in office or have a PhD, MD, MPM, and etc. Their content is reviewed and includes review dates by their contributors. They also list a hotline and email for further questions not answered on their website or Frequently Asked Questions subcategory, which is ran by their Office of Communications. For their articles, they separate them by subtopics regarding substance abuse and mental health that a student may be looking to research or for someone who is seeking help for a specific drug/illness. Students can easily find specific articles and campaigns that you can search by the topic of interest. They include reference lists in every article, or whenever necessary, such as in their Data tab.

This agency clearly separates all the information any researcher may need by categories and further dissecting those categories into subcategories. They can find credible information that is fact checked and reviewed by their contributors and ran by professionals from US Department of Health and Human Services. You can directly contact those professionals or the agency's Office of Communications with any questions. A researcher may use this website to find resources for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse and mental illness, look at the

data with the option of filtering them by publication date, and find articles specific to the substance abuse topic they are researching. SAMHSA presents a researcher with the resources needed to investigate their topic of interest and help the people around them and themselves improve their quality of life with the resources presented.

### References

Substance Abuse. (n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/substance-abuse>

SAMHSA. (2013, May 13). *Who We Are*. Retrieved from

<https://www.samhsa.gov/about-us/who-we-are>