UNIT 3  SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you will be able to:
- define terms related to substance abuse;
- describe the problems of substance abuse;
- enlist factors leading to substance abuse;
- enumerate commonly abused drugs, their routes of administration and harmful effects;
- describe the prevention and management of substance abuse;
- identify myths and facts about substance abuse; and
- explain the role of teachers in prevention of substance abuse.
3.1 **INTRODUCTION**

Smoking, drinking and use of drugs like heroin, charas, and ganja is indeed a major worldwide problem. Drug addiction is non medical use of these drugs, which is called as substance abuse. It has become a matter of global concern because of its impact on individual health, family and social consequences. It leads to many criminal and legal problems. It also has bad effect on the national productivity and economy.

We are all aware of the fact that the percentage of adolescent using drugs is increasing day by day in spite of the action taken by government and voluntary agencies. In this unit, you will learn about substance abuse disorder and the magnitude of this problem. You will also learn about factors associated with substance abuse and recognition of this disorder. The content also includes commonly abused drugs, routes of administration and harmful effects of substance abuse. The content also discusses about prevention and management of substance abuse. Myth and facts about substance abuse and the role of the teachers is also included.

3.2 **DEFINITION AND MAGNITUDE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

3.2.1 **Definition of Terms**

There are various terms associated with the substance abuse which we may have to understand clearly to help us to deal with the issue. We should know drug/substance, substance abuse, substance dependence, tolerance withdrawal symptoms and addiction, we may discuss them one by one.

i) **Drug/Substance**

**Drug or substance is defined as** all substances including alcohol that when taken into the living organism, may modify one or more of its function. A drug is a chemical substance that changes the way our body works. When a pharmaceutical preparation or naturally occurring substance is used primarily to bring about a change in some existing process or state, it can be called a ‘drug’.

ii) **Substance Abuse**

You might have seen a number of people are addicted to various drugs or substance, even though they are not ill or advised by doctor or physician. We may define Substance abuse “as the use of illicit drugs or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs for purposes other than those for which they are indicated or in a manner or in quantities other than directed.” That is frequent or continuous consumption of a drug as a habit which may be harming a person socially, physically or mentally can be called substance abuse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance of abuse</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannabinoids (e.g., hashish and marijuana)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulants (e.g., amphetamines and cocaine, nicotine, tobacco)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressants (e.g., alcohol, barbiturates etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcotics (opioids and morphine derivatives, e.g., heroin, opium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallucinogens (e.g., LSD and mescaline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other compounds (e.g., steroids and inhalants)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
iii) **Substance dependence**

In your day to day life, you may seeing number of students are youngsters taking alcohol and other drug. They are dependent to substance abuse. We may see what is substance dependence.

- **Substance dependence**: It is defined as “compulsively seeking to use a substance, regardless of the potentially negative social, psychological and physical consequences.”

Substance abuse leads to substance dependence with the development of tolerance and withdrawal. A state of body and mind resulting from the use of drug characterized by urge to take the drug on a continuous or periodic basis to experience its effect and sometimes to avoid the discomfort of its absence.

iv) **Tolerance**: It is defined as a need for increased amounts of substance to achieve the same levels of intoxication or desired effect. Process whereby the effect of initial drug dose becomes ineffective, creating a need for markedly increased amount of the substance to achieve the desired effect.

v) **Withdrawal symptoms**: It is which occur when the user who is dependent on a substance stops using it. They range from mild tremors to convulsions, severe agitation and sometimes death. Withdrawal symptoms vary depending upon the substance abused, duration of the use of substance and the quantity abused.

vi) **Addiction**: Compulsive use of a psychoactive substance characterized by: tolerance, psychological dependence and withdrawal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gateway Drugs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The commonly abused substances among adolescents are tobacco and alcohol, which act as gateways to the use of other drugs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collect the name of drugs/Substance abused in your village/locality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.2 **Magnitude of Substance Abuse Disorders**

In our culture substance abuse is not a new thing.

The use of psychoactive substance is an old practice among people. Alcohol and drugs have been consumed in different societies for centuries. In more recent times, the number of people who consume cigarettes, alcohol and use illicit drugs have increased significantly.

According to a National Household Survey by Government of India (2004), there are 6.25 crore alcohol users, 87 lakh cannabis users and 20 lakh opiate users in the country.

There are certain high drug abuse regions in our country, such as Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
Analysis of Substance Abuse in Male Adolescents - 2009

Anees Ahmad, MD; Najam Khalique, MD; Zulfia Khan; MD (Iranian Journal of Pediatrics-2009; 19(4): 399-403).

A study conducted by Anees Ahmad shows that substance abuse is prevalent among 19.5% of the mid and late adolescents and 5% early adolescents, which is a sizable number. Again when analysed on the basis of social class, the adolescents in the lower socio-economic strata having prevalence 20% & middle strata has 13% prevalence. The spread of prevalence is equal among rural and urban Adolescents. You may note that substance abuse is a great menace among adolescents.

3.3 FACTORS LEADING TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE

3.3.1 Some Common Causes of Substance Abuse

When you come across a person addicted to drug substance did you ever thought of why s/he is subjected to substance abuse. There may be various reasons for the same. Some of the common reasons are:

a) Desire to experiment
b) Sense of adventure
c) Wish for self-knowledge
d) Desire to escape from real life situations
e) Social and psychological maladjustment.
3.3.2 Risk Factors Associated with Substance Abuse

Various social and psychosocial situation may leads to a person to substance abuse, cutting across cultures or age groups. You analytically see the factors and may identify that the major risk factors for substance abuse are:

- Unemployment
- Living away from home
- Migration to cities
- Relaxed parental control
- School dropouts
- Broken families
- Single parent families
- Early exposure to drugs
- Living in areas where drugs are sold, traded or provided
- Living in areas of high rate of crime or where delinquency is common
- Certain occupation like tourism, truck drivers
- Culturally commonly as uses in hilly areas
- In sports to boost up the performance
- Body building, as in gym.

Psychosocial complications of substance dependence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychosocial complications of substance dependence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ <strong>Financial</strong> : Spending money on substance instead of essential needs; exhausting savings; borrowing money, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ <strong>Occupational</strong> : Inefficiency due to decreased performance; unpunctuality; fights, quarrels, thefts; absenteeism; accidents at work place; suspension, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ <strong>Familial</strong> : Arguments over substance use; neglect of family obligations; quarrels and physical violence; divorce; ostracization by family, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ <strong>Social</strong> : Peer alienation; arguments, fights; decreased social reputation, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ <strong>Legal</strong> : Violation of rules; thefts and petty crimes; arrests and court cases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.3 Factors Leading to Substance Abuse among Adolescent

As we already seen there are various reasons for adolescents responding to substance. The key factors leading to substance abuse can be classified as personally, behavioural, environmental and physiological factors.

i) Personal factors
- Beliefs and perceptions about the benefits of substance use.
- Lack of knowledge of consequences.
- Feeling of enhanced self-efficacy.
- Personality factors, e.g., depression, low self-esteem.
- False psychological well-being.

ii) Behavioural factors
- Teenagers tend to be heavier, more frequent users of substances than adults.
- Teenagers often use more than one substance.
- Teenagers with poorer academic achievement are statistically at higher risk for substance abuse.
- Teenagers tend to engage in more high-risk behaviours than adults.
- Teenagers may lack well-developed self-control and may behave more impulsively than adults.
- Teenagers experiment out of curiosity.

iii) Environmental factors
- Attitudes and values of parents and peers in support of substance use.
- Parental, sibling and peer use of substances.
- Advertising or media glamorization of substances.
- Easy accessibility of substances.
- Social and cultural norms accepting substance use.
- Factors such as low socio-economic status are statistically related to the tendency to use substances.

iv) Physiological factors
- Developing brains and bodies are more sensitive to drugs.

Activity 2
Prepare a case study do an adolescent/adult in your area who is substance addict and identify the reasons for substance abuse.
**Check Your Progress 1**

a) Match the Following:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column ‘A’</th>
<th>Column ‘B’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Substances when taken into the living organism, may modify one or more of its function.</td>
<td>i. Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Process whereby there is a need to increase the amount of initial drug dose to achieve the desired effect.</td>
<td>ii. Substance abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Group of symptoms which occur when the person does not take the substance to which he is dependant.</td>
<td>iii. Drug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Compulsive use of psychoactive substance characterized by tolerance, dependence and withdrawal.</td>
<td>iv. Craving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5. Frequent self-administration of a drug for non-medical Reasons which may result in social, physical and Environmental harm. | v. Addiction  
   vi. Tolerance |

b) List any four high prevalence areas of substance abuse in India:

1. .................................................................................................................
2. .................................................................................................................
3. .................................................................................................................
4. .................................................................................................................

c. Enumerate any four high risk factors associated with behaviour for substance abuse among adolescents:

1. .................................................................................................................
2. .................................................................................................................
3. .................................................................................................................
4. .................................................................................................................

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**3.4 COMMONLY ABUSED DRUGS, ROUTES OF ADMINISTRATION AND HARMFUL EFFECTS**

Now we may discuss about commonly abused drugs, its route of administration and harmful effects.

**3.4.1 Alcohol**

Alcohol abuse is one of the most serious public health problems. It depresses the function of brain. Examples of alcoholic beverages are wine, beer, toddy, arrack, whisky, brandy, rum, etc. It depresses the function of brain and continuous usage may affect nervous system also.
3.4.2 Opioids
Opioids are products extracted from the juice of poppy plant. They are highly addictive. They depress the function of brain. Examples of opioids include: morphine, opium, heroin, brown sugar (smack, shyan, and goli), etc.

route: Oral, injection, smoking, inhaling.

Ill Effects: Nausea, vomiting, insensitivity to pain, increased urination, constipation, slow breathing, lung diseases and death (especially when used in combination with alcohol).

3.4.3 Cannabis Product
These products are extracted from cannabis sativa and cannabis indica plants. For examples: marijuana, ganja, hashish, charas and bhang.

Route: Oral and smoking.

Ill Effects: cancer, infertility, tolerance, psychological dependence.

3.4.4 Sedatives or Hypnotics
This includes medicines prescribed for reducing anxiety and inducing sleep. These include barbiturates, benzodiazepines, e.g., calmpose, alprax, etc.

Route: Oral and injection.

Ill Effects: Physical dependence, psychological dependence, craning, addiction, death.

3.4.5 Cocaine
It is a while crystalline substance commonly known as ‘snow’. It is derived from a plant cocoa bush grown in South America. “Crack” is the most addictive form of cocaine.

Route: Oral, smoking.

Ill Effects: Fits, heart diseases, mental disorders, decreased breathing.

3.4.6 Stimulants
These drugs stimulate central nervous system. They decrease appetite. It includes amphetamine, caffeine.

Route: Oral

Ill Effects: Anxiety, agitation, restlessness, sleeplessness, heart diseases, weight loss, comphetamine can also cause circulatory collapse.

3.4.7 Hallucinogens
These drugs destroy senses and can cause hallucinations (i.e., person may hear voices or see certain objects which are actually not present). Examples are LSD, dimethyl tryptanise, etc.
Ill Effects: Memory impairment, extreme mood changes, anxiety, aggression, confusion, mental disorders.

3.4.8 Tobacco

All forms of smoking (e.g., cigarettes, piper, cigars and beedis) and pan, zarda, khaini, naswar, etc. contain tobacco. In the tobacco smoke there are different chemicals, out of which nicotine, tobacco-tar and carbon-monoxide are most damaging to health.

Routes: Smoking, oral.

Ill Effects: Cancer, lung diseases, heart diseases and Berger’s disease (decreased blood supply to legs leading to death of the cells of the affected part).

3.4.9 Inhalant Abuse

Inhalant abuse is prevalence and often overlooked form of substance abuse. Inhalant includes almost any house hold cleaning agent or propellant, paint thinner, glue and lighter fluid.

Route: Inhaled through nose.

Ill Effects: Kidney disease, liver disease, heart disease, nervous system disorders, bone marrow disease.

Activity 3
Discuss with your peers about the availability of substance drug items in your locality and the abuse among adolescents.

Check Your Progress 2

a) Enlist two drugs which are taken as injections:
   1. ..........................................................
   2. ..........................................................

b) Enlist two groups of drugs which may cause cancer:
   3. ..........................................................
   4. ..........................................................

c) Match the following:
   1. Smack  i) Cannabis
   2. Whiskey  ii) Tobacco
   3. Ganja  iii) Cocaine
   4. Crack  iv) Alcohol
   5. LSD  v) Opioid
   6. Beedi  vi) Hallucinogen
3.5 RECOGNITION OF SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

Substance use disorder causes lot of changes in the person. Certain changes in an individual which can help recognize substance use disorder includes:

- Loss of interest in hobbies, daily routine and sports
- Loss of appetite and body weight
- Tremors, difficulty in walking straight
- Reddening of eyes and puffiness, unclear vision
- Slurring of speech
- Nausea, vomiting
- Drowsiness, lack of sleep, feeling tired
- Profuse sweating, changing moods, depression
- Fresh numerous marks of injection on body and blood strains on cloths
- Presence of needles, syringes, packets and bottles of drug at home, bag, etc.
- Lying
- Disappearance of money or belongings.

These disorders make the persons self-esteem very low and leads to withdraw from the mains streams activities in the society.

**Key Signs and Symptoms**

Have you ever observed the persons regularly taking drugs. If you observe, we may find certain signs and symptoms of dependence in the regular users. Dependence on any substance may include these general characteristics:

- Feeling that one needs the substance on a regular basis to have fun, relax or deal with one’s problems.
- Giving up familiar activities such as sports, homework or hobbies.
- Sudden changes in work or school attendance and quality of work or marks.
- Doing things that a person normally wouldn’t do to obtain the substance, such as frequently borrowing money or stealing items from employer, home or school.
- Taking uncharacteristic risks, such as driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or sexually risky behaviour.
- Anger outbursts, acting irresponsibly and overall attitude change.
- Deterioration of physical appearance and grooming.
- No longer spending time with friends who don’t use substances and/or associating with known users.
Engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviours such as frequent trips to the toilet, keeping room and things locked, always going out of the house at particular hours, excessive resistance to give an account of his/her movements etc.

- Needing to use increasing amounts of the substance of choice to achieve the same effects.

- Talking about the substance all the time, and pressuring others to use it.

- Feeling exhausted, depressed, hopeless, or suicidal.

**Activity 4**

Substance use disorder changes the hesitation to the hesitations to the personal. Discuss with your friends.

### 3.6 PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

You might be aware about the proverb “prevention is better than cure”. In case of substance abuse it is more true. We should be in position to understand that same and create awareness the adolescents, teachers and parents. Some users step to follow are discussed below:

Can we prevent substance abuse and can the people who are addicted to substance abuse can rehabilitated and help them to lead a normal life. We can see the possibility in this session and following measures are required.

#### 3.6.1 Prevention

- Examine your own attitude towards drugs.
- Avoid experimentation with abusive substances in any form at any age.
- Appreciate people who do not abuse substances.
- Learn to say ‘No” to substance abuse.
- Do not accept any abusive substances offered to you.
- Keep yourself busy with useful activities.
- Develop hobbies like painting, games, etc.
- Parents and teachers must set examples for children.
- Vigorous drug laws reduce availability of illicit drugs.
- Additional should be trained in life skills especially in effective communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6.2 Management

Management to the addicted persons are the responsibility to the society in which they belong to in our locality, there may be many addicts who may be really want to come out from its menace.

Substance abusers need treatment. The treatment of substance abuse is aimed at identifying substance abusers and motivating them for the treatment. Treatment aims at reducing the withdrawal symptoms, helping the person to achieve and maintain abstinence. It also aims at treatment of complications and improving the social and psychological functioning and preventing relapse.

Strong motivation and regular treatment is essential. Social support and participation of family members in the treatment are very essential for treatment of substance abuse.

The clients are taught methods to release tension and improve self-image without the use of drugs.

The treatment of substance abuse is available in all government hospitals. AIGOS like alcoholic anonymous groups are important component of treatment of substance abuse. Self-help groups are the voluntary small-groups formed by coming together of people with similar problems. They can work as peer educator to solve the problem.

3.6.3 Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of former drug users is a long and difficult task. The activities involved in rehabilitation are:

- Planning of leisure time activities.
- Regular exercises, going for a walk.
- Vocational training.
- Sheltered work opportunities.
- Self-motivation is essential.
- Family support is very important.

Activity 5

Strong motivation regular treatment and sizal support are the essential factors per rehabilitation to substance abuses: Discuss with your colleagues.

Treatment and rehabilitation

- Interventions are multimodal and planned.
- Treatment goals
• Achieve and maintain abstinence from the drug.
• Relieve him/her of adverse health and psychosocial consequences of substance use.
• Prevent relapse into the habit.
• Adequate support and participation of family members is a must to help recovery and maintain a drug free lifestyle.

Drug addicts are prone to addiction even after treatment they should not hesitate to go for treatment again.

Check Your Progress 3
a) List any five changes which can help recognize substance abuse:

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b) Enumerate the aims of management of substance abuse:

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3.7 MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT SUBSTANCE ABUSE

People from different walks life especially youngsters carry lot of misconception about substance abuse, we should be in a position to clarify their myths and make them aware about facts. Some of the myths and facts are listed below in the table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Myths</th>
<th>Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>People who drink too much only hurt themselves.</td>
<td>It is not the quantity which you drink matters. If you drink less also will hurt you mentally, socially, financially, physically and in all spheres of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Beer cannot permanently damage you.</td>
<td>Continuous usage of Beer can damage digestive system, heart liver and other organs as in the case of other liquors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Alcohol gives you energy.</td>
<td>It is a depressant. It slows down ability to think, speak and move over a period of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Switching between bear, wine and liquor will make you drunk then sticking to one type of alcohol.</td>
<td>Your blood alcohol concentration is what determines how drunk you are, not the flavors selected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Cocaine is not addictive unless you use it frequently.</td>
<td>Cocaine is both physically and psychologically addictive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Drugs are a bigger problem than alcohol.</td>
<td>Alcohol and tobacco kill more than 50 times the number of people killed by other drugs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>A drink or two will not interfere with my driving.</td>
<td>Small amount of alcohol also can impair your judgement and result in accidents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.8 ROLE OF TEACHER

Teachers can play a major role in preventing drug abuse among adolescents, since they work upon teacher as role models. Some roles can be:

- Talk to the children. Give them the confidence that you care for them and will help them sort out their problems.
- Encourage children and develop hobbies like game, painting, etc.
- Keep children engaged in lot of activities.
- Educational programs should aim at strengthening individual’s self-esteem and resistance to peer pressure.
- Provide a supportive environment to the students.
- Do not be over suspicious, which may lead to the problem.
- If you are able to identify any child who is addicted, talk to the child and encourage him for treatment.

Check Your Progress 4

a) Encircle ‘T’ if the statement is true and ‘F’ if the statement is false:

i) Substance abuse may lead to HIV. T/F
ii) Overdose of some of the drugs can cause death. T/F
iii) Beer cannot damage individuals. T/F
iv) Alcohol is not a big problem. T/F
v) Cocaine is not addictive. T/F

b) Explain the role of teachers in prevention of substance abuse.

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3.9 LET US SUM UP

The commonly abused substances among adolescents are tobacco and alcohol, which act as gateways to the use of other drugs. Factors which make adolescents vulnerable to serious substance abuse are poor self-esteem, family history of substance abuse, low achievement at school, family instability, history of abuse and aggressive / impulsive personality.

Substance dependence involves tolerance, withdrawal and the disruption of psychological, occupational and social functioning. There are severe financial, occupational, familial, social and legal consequences of substance dependence.

No one starts taking substances with the aim of getting addicted. However, these substances have such brain-altering properties that after a point of time, a person loses his control and becomes an addict.
3.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

a) 1. iii
   2. vi
   3. i
   4. v
   5. ii

b) Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Utter Pradesh, West Bengal.

c) 1) Teenagers tends to be more frequent user of substance than adult.
   2) They may use more than one substance
   3) Teenagers tend to engage in more high risk behaviour.
   4) They experiment out of curiosity.

Check Your Progress 2

a) 1. Opioids
   2. Sedatives or Hypnotics

b) 1) Cannabis
   2) Tobacco

c) 1. v
   2. iv
   3. i
   4. iii
   5. vi
   6. ii

Check Your Progress 3

a. Substance use disorder causes lot of changes in the person. Certain changes in an individual which can help recognize substance use disorder includes:

   - Loss of interest in hobbies, daily routine and sports.
   - Loss of appetite and body weight.
   - Tremors, difficulty in walking straight.
   - Reddening of eyes and puffiness, unclear vision.
   - Slurring of speech.
   - Nausea, vomiting
Drowsiness, lack of sleep, feeling tired.
- Profuse sweating, changing moods, depression.
- Fresh numerous marks of injection on body and blood strains on clothes.
- Presence of needles, syringes, packets and bottles of drugs at home, bag etc.
- Lying
- Disappearance of money or belongings.

b) The aims of treatment of substance abuse are:
   i. Reducing the withdrawal symptoms.
   ii. Helping the person to achieve and maintain abstinence.
   iii. Treatment of complications.
   iv. Improving the social and psychological functioning
   v. Preventing relapse.

Check Your Progress 4

a) i. T
   ii. T
   iii. F
   iv. F
   v. F

2) Role of teacher in prevention of substance abuses are as follows:
   - Talk to the children. Give them the confidence that you care for them and will help them sort out their problems.
   - Encourage children and develop hobbies like game, painting, etc.
   - Keep children engaged in lot of activities.
   - Educational programmes should aim at strengthening individual’s self-esteem and resistance to peer pressure.
   - Provide a supportive environment to the students.
   - Do not be over suspicious, which may lead to the problem.
   - If you are able to identify any child who is addicted, talk to the child and encourage him for treatment.

3.11 REFERENCES