

**S60.4**

Alcohol and the developing organism – fetus, child and youth

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The topic has a large impact but has also many aspects. We have reasons to pay attention to different ontogenetic aspects from genetics, epigenetics, developmental biology, endocrinology, toxicology, to child and youth psychiatry, and try to amalgamate knowledge from all these fields.

Our knowledge on mechanisms behind the fetal alcohol syndrome rapidly increase, as reported at many international meetings. However, several mechanisms of action have been suggested, such as influence on methylation of DNA, brain growth factors, IGF-1 and others. The reliable methods for diagnosis of the fetal alcohol syndrome are improved but still complicated and have been rarely available, with underdiagnosis as consequence. Longitudinal follow up of cases of fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects give frightening results.

An early mechanism related to alcohol is the hypoglycemia induced in small children who happen to drink alcoholic beverages. It is shown in animals that the effect of alcohol intake is different before and after puberty, related to dopamine turnover and measured activity. There must be an impact in man of this for the effects of debute of alcohol intake also in youth, but the area is too little studied yet. With increasing alcohol consumption in young people in many countries this task seems urgent.

**S60.5**

Background factors and consequences of teenage alcohol consumption

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From different prospective studies of teenagers covering the time period from the late 1950's up until the beginning of the 1980's and focusing upon the risk for teenagers to becoming high consumers, frequently relapsing into public drunkenness and showing delinquent behaviour, a hypothesis on background factors to predict later delinquency was proposed.

This hypothesis was tested in two different samples of 18-year-old boys from the general population. The results support the proposed hypothesis. Among teenagers, alcohol abuse if found together with abuse of drugs and criminality. Abusers were brought up in homes affected by emotional problems, and their biological parents also showed alcohol abuse and nervous problems. At school these boys had adjustment problems, they showed aggressive acting-out behaviour and were drunk for the first time at an early age. Their personality displayed psychopathic features. A pilot study of alcohol abusing teenage girls showed similar background factors, however also including histories of sexual abuse, teenage pregnancies and gynaecological disorders. The rise of alcohol consumption in Sweden from the 1970's and the changing patterns of alcohol consumption among Swedish teenagers may indicate that young alcohol abusers will become more and more frequent in numbers.

This group of young alcohol abusers, "sociopath-alcoholics", is most probably only one subgroup among alcohol abusers in common, but presumably they are the most vulnerable. Their treatment is a challenge to psychiatry and social authorities.

**S61. Training in psychiatry in different European Countries**

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**S61.1**

From specialist training to continuing medical education in Italy

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According to the statute of specialization schools in psychiatry, training in Italy is designed to provide a deep expertise in psychiatry through an harmonic integration between theory and practice in several fields, such as biological psychiatry, neuropsychopharmacology, psychiatric methodology, clinical psychiatry, psychotherapy, social psychiatry.

During the four-year training course, trainees should acquire evidence-based notions and practical skills in the above-mentioned fields. At the end of the training course, trainees get the diploma of specialist in psychiatry and psychotherapy after have discussed a thesis on clinical or research work.

In 1996, it has been constituted the "Conferenza Italiana per la Formazione in Psichiatria", the national association of psychiatric trainees and young psychiatrists. Aims of the Conferenza are: a) to promote life-long learning, considered in the recent reform of the Italian national health system within the Continuing Medical Education program; b) provide an update on issues related to psychiatric training; c) define guidelines for psychiatric training; d) organize events on relevant evidence-based psychiatric topics.

**S61.2**

Training in psychiatry in France. A national survey among psychiatric trainees

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In France, psychiatric training is currently being discussed. Issues include what is specific about psychiatric knowledge, how should theoretical and practical knowledge be passed on, and a concern regarding the lack of specialist trainees in France.

This survey, in which we have assessed the trainees' perception of their initial training, as organised in France, has been undertaken among 200 trainees. A comparison has been made between different sub-groups, in relation to location and training stage.

A response rate of 74.5% on a sample representing 22% of psychiatric trainees in France has been obtained. 65% of the trainees is satisfied by the subjects taught during the seminars. Trainees are more interested in psychotherapy, child and adolescent psychiatry, psychopathology and clinical supervision. 51% of the trainees has at least one optional academic diploma.

Conclusions of our survey are: a) the majority of the sample is satisfied of psychiatric training; b) psychotherapy training should be improved; c) training should include progressive and modular teaching, clinical supervision by a senior psychiatrist and long term follow up of patients.