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Study Objectives:

The aim of this paper was to review literature concerning the relationship between suicide and substance abuse behaviours among adolescents, focusing on epidemiology, comorbidity and prevention programs. Materials and Methods: we performed a Pubmed/Medline, Scopus, PsycLit, and PsycInfo search to identify to identify all papers and book chapters during the period between 1980 and 2013.

Results:

Adolescents with substance abuse disorder who attempt or complete suicide can be characterized as having mood disorders, stressful life events, interpersonal problems, poor social support, lonely lives, and feelings of hopelessness. The research supports the existence of a strong relationship between suicide and substance abuse.

Conclusions:

Preventive programs should be based on risk factors associated with both suicide and substance abuse disorder. Management programs should combine different therapeutic strategies such as peer-to-peer education, school-based programs, psychotherapy and pharmacological treatment. Evidence suggests that targeted suicide prevention programs can be delivered which reduce the burden associated with substance abuse and suicide in youths.