

Thesis: In choosing drugs over their child, children of parents who suffer from substance abuse continue to have behavioral issues and poor academic performance in school.

- I. Cognitive function in prenatal and postnatal cases is significantly lowered.
 - A. Neonatal abstinence syndrome
 1. Newborns have become addicted in the womb
 2. Symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, and slow weight gain
 - B. Smaller neuroanatomical volumes
 1. Volume of the brain is smaller
 2. Problems with thinking, memory, and performing everyday tasks
 - C. Lesser maturation of neural tracts
 1. Pathways in the brain are not fully developed
 2. Leads to numerous developmental delays
- II. Children of substance-abusing parents score lower overall in every subject in school.
 - A. Lower academic functioning
 - B. Lower grade point averages
 1. High-risk children performed worse on math in middle childhood and reading achievement in late childhood as compared to children from low-risk families, and high-risk children scored lower than low-risk kids in reading, spelling, and arithmetic.
 - C. Increased grade retention
 - D. Failure to pursue secondary education
- III. The behavioral functioning of these children is negatively affected.
 - A. Increased rates of anxiety, depression, & oppositional behavior
 1. Kids have many internalized symptoms (such as anxiety and depression) and then externalize these feelings into aggressive behaviors and delinquency.
 - B. Mood disorders in children of alcoholics are nearly double those of their peers
 - C. Lower rates of self-esteem and social competence
 - D. Development of ADHD
 1. thrown on medication without the ability to work through their issues professionally