Research Proposal:

The Effects of Substance Abuse on Family Relationships

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Relationships between members of an immediate family can be defined by a number of

characteristics such as levels of closeness, communication or respect. These characteristics

may be altered as a result of an internal influence within the family or an external influence

from outside the family structure. Substance abuse is and external factor that may have

serious ramifications on family relationships. Nuess (2007), found that substance abuse among

teens alone has risen by 3.6 percent in the last decade. Furthermore, nearly four percent of

North American families have a parent that is dealing with substance abuse issues

(Sorenesen, 2011). Given these statistics, the contemporary family unit may face the looming

challenges dealing with substance abuse. These challenges are not only affect the victim, but

also with family members who must also attempt to cope with the effects of the addiction.

Hence, the research question posed is, “what are the effects of substance abuse on family

Relationships?”

Families may differ on a variety of measures, however some consistent trends have

emerged. Lindley (2011), found that families that scored high in communications and empathy

measures also reported having healthy relationships. Furthermore, it was found that although

socio-economic status did not play a direct role in indicating success of family relationships,

levels of education in the family was a good predictor of healthy family relationships.

Families from………………………

*The third paragraph should introduce and present information about the second part of your topic.*

*The fourth paragraph should “knit” or connect to two aspects of the topic together in order to show how they are related to each other.*

The examination of this topic will be conducted using a survey questionnaire as the

primary measure and targeting families that are experiencing substance abuse issues with one

or more of its family members. Survey questions would assess the quality of the relationships

in terms of characteristics such as communication, empathy, respect and level of support.

Substance abuse would be examined in terms of the extent of the abuse, type of substance and

the family member(s) who are the victims. A major challenge of this study would be to

ascertain personal and sensitive information regarding abuse behaviours. To overcome this

potential obstacle, an anecdotal interview would be conducted with the victim which will

yield more descriptive and in-depth information over that of a questionnaire.