Decades of research have demonstrated that the parent-child dyad and the environment of the family—which includes all primary caregivers—are at the foundation of children’s well-being and healthy development. From birth, children are learning and rely on parents and the other caregivers in their lives to protect and care for them. The impact of parents may never be greater than during the earliest years of life, when a child’s brain is rapidly developing and when nearly all of her or his experiences are created and shaped by parents and the family environment. Parents help children build and refine their knowledge and skills, charting a trajectory for their health and well-being during childhood and beyond. The experience of parenting also impacts parents themselves. For instance, parenting can enrich and give focus to parents’ lives; generate stress or calm; and...
Parenting of young children today takes place in the context of significant ongoing developments. These include: a rapidly growing body of science on early childhood, increases in funding for programs and services for families, changing demographics of the U.S. population, and greater diversity of family structure. Additionally, parenting is increasingly being shaped by technology and increased access to information about parenting. Parenting Matters identifies parenting knowledge, attitudes, and practices associated with positive developmental outcomes in children ages 0-8; universal/preventive and targeted strategies used in a variety of settings that have been effective with parents of young children and that support the identified knowledge, attitudes, and practices; and barriers to and facilitators for parents' use of practices that lead to healthy child outcomes as well as their participation in effective programs and services. This report makes recommendations directed at an array of stakeholders, for promoting the wide-scale adoption of effective programs and services for parents and on areas that warrant further research to inform policy and practice. It is meant to serve as a roadmap for the future of parenting policy, research, and practice in the United States.

This exploratory study examined the knowledge, experience, attitude, and perceptions of drugs reported by international students from mainland China (N = 97) studying on the West Coast of the U.S. and Canada. Chinese students currently constitute the largest group of international students at universities on the West Coast, which is also the epicenter of a major shift in the legal and cultural status of cannabis. Participants' knowledge, exposure, use, attitudes, and norms of peers' use of five drugs (cannabis, heroin, ketamine, methamphetamine, and Adderall) were elicited through an online survey. Data were analyzed quantitatively (descriptive statistics, means of paired samples, correlations). Many correlations existed between participants' attitudes, comments they heard others make, and their beliefs about their peers' drug use. Participants were most familiar with cannabis; their exposure to others' comments about and use of cannabis in North America were starkly different than what they had experienced in China. About 10% of the sample had tried cannabis in North America. Students were familiar with heroin and methamphetamine from their experiences in China, and those drugs were viewed extremely negatively. Use of and exposure to ketamine and Adderall were rare, and all drugs were viewed much more negatively when asked in the context of living in China than in North America. Given the current and recent changes in drug laws around the world and students' reported experience with cannabis, this study underlines the urgency of educating international students regarding drug use as well as informing educational policy at the university level.