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Research Question

Drug addiction is one of the most common public health problems in the United States. Over 20 million people are current or former drug addicts in the States. It is a significant factor in health and disease issues, incarceration rates, vehicle accidents, employment and financial burden. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) drugs cost the community in excess of $18 billion annually due to the impact on health and productivity. Drugs harm society in more significant ways however. Family breakdowns, domestic violence, child abuse, vehicle accidents, education problems and loss of employment are all linked to drug addiction.

The United States struggles with drug addiction as a serious public health issue. Access to appropriate care, prison populations with high drug use rates and socio-economic and racial inequality continue to be major hurdles for treating drug addiction. Rates for drug use have remained relatively stable over the past 2 years despite an increasing focus of governments on drug use and trafficking.

While some people can use recreational and prescription drugs without becoming addicted, many individuals who start using drugs become physically and emotionally dependent on them. Drug abuse causes vary greatly, depending on each individual and the extent of his or her addiction. The extent of a person’s vulnerability to his or her addiction depends on their social environment, their mental and physical health, and their genes. There are countless other factors that contribute to drug addiction as well. Once a person is addicted to drugs, he or she generally needs professional help and support to overcome their addiction.

However, the question remains as to why drug abuse and addiction have grown to the degree they have. The societal causes of drug abuse are linked to many of the same consequences they feed into. Many individuals seek out drugs because of things such as familiar discourse, peer pressure, mental health disorders, loneliness, and poor self-esteem. Unfortunately, these same causes that drive people to feed their habit are often also the consequence of drug abuse. An individual who uses and abuses drugs is more likely to experience the negative consequences of loss of support networks, family drama, risk of abuse, and aggravation of existing mental disorders.