

Wallace, J. M., Jr. (1999). The Social Ecology of Addiction: Race, Risk, and Resilience. *Pediatrics*, 103(5), 1122-1127.

## Abstract

*Objective.* The purposes of this article are to inform pediatricians and other health professionals of key contextual risk factors that elevate black and Hispanic Americans' likelihood to use substances and to discuss selected protective mechanisms that may shield members of these populations against substance use.

*Method.* The article selectively reviews the literature on the epidemiology, etiology, and consequences of alcohol and other drug use among white, black, and Hispanic adults and youth.

*Results.* The extant research suggests that historical and contemporary racialized practices and ideologies influence racial/ethnic differences in substance use outcomes, both directly and indirectly, through their influence on the communities in which people of different racial/ethnic groups are placed, through their influence on the structure and process of people's interpersonal relationships, and through the impact that they have on individuals' psychology and behavior.

*Conclusions.* Although the emphasis of pediatricians' and many other helping professionals' work focuses on individuals and individual-level behaviors, these behaviors can only be properly examined, diagnosed, and treated when they are understood in light of the community and societal contexts in which they occur.