

# Can Lack of Parental Supervision Lead to Drug Addiction? A Wake-Up Call to Parents and Guardians

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## Opinion

Alex was a 19-year-old drug addict a College boy from a small town called Dira, who boasted of his drug-induced stimulation as an energizer for more focused study while regretting its spectacularly energizing effect to indulge in frenzy moments of sexual intercourse. Alex, a first-year student at AB University, used to live with his lorry driver uncle who financially supported his wife and their two children. Alex was a khat and cigarette addict even before joining the university. He covered the expenses for his addiction by doing small businesses like selling cigarettes, sweets, and petty stuff on a part-time basis. He was academically strong and managed to join the University. However, he never had sex before joining the University.

He said, "I am studying in a private college in Addis Ababa. Before joining the college, I was a regular student at Addis Ababa University. I was from a poor family in a rural town in the Eastern part of Ethiopia. Academically, I was one of the top student in my class right from primary school to my early College years. But then I had another commitment to stick to. That was the habit of chewing khat, a mildly stimulating local shrub that students often use to gain concentration. Addicted as I was to this stimulating drug, I felt virtually impossible to concentrate without it. Thanks to the abundant supply in my locality, I easily managed to get it when I was in high school. When I came to Addis Ababa, however, that experience of mine became a thing of the past. There were two challenges: "the tight search at the University gate as khat was prohibited and the unaffordable cost of the drug". To me, the second was so pinching - more than double the

price at home town. Anyway, I succeed in managing it until the end of my freshman year. Though not lavish, however, my monthly income from my parents was enough to keep me chewing khat during academic exigencies and exam time. But once I became a sophomore student and knew the atmosphere, the money was no longer enough. In the last days of my sophomore and early third year, however, khat became a luxury and I was unable to concentrate.

My results were declining from semester to semester. Deeply touched by my situation and, of course, understanding my inner potential, my dorm mates began to look for a possible way out. They proposed that I seek an opportunity to tutor students. My friend found me a first-year extension student in my department. The student was a well-known middle-aged woman whose style and routine of cosmetic make-up made her appear as someone between 30-35 age. After having a discussion, we agreed to study for two days a week (2 hours a day). In the first few days, I was afraid to tell the woman that I needed to chew khat. Instead, I checked it hours before going there. But when I became more familiar with her, I told her to chew a khat at home.

Contrary to my worry, she took the matter easily and consented to chewing it at home and while tutoring her. Further, she served me tea and coffee whenever I brought khat there. One Saturday afternoon, I was busy helping her finish a term paper on the deadline. We did the assignment in the afternoon but did not complete it. However, I set myself to go to my dorm but the woman insisted that I stay and help her finish the assignment. She promised to take me to the campus in her car. We then worked hard until midnight

and completed it. While thinking of going to my dorm at the University and resting, the woman suddenly brought a bottle of vodka. But I remained steadfast in telling her that I hadn't had a drinking experience throughout my life. I told her that though I was addicted to khat, I never drank alcohol and that I did not want to have one. Nevertheless, the woman persisted and eventually persuaded me to drink. First, I sipped a little and felt nothing except sour. But having glass after glass, I got virtually intoxicated. Realizing that I was getting hotter and hotter, the woman sat beside me and went on flirting. I then got myself offline and had sex with the woman. The way we made the sex was astonishing. We did it by watching

a hardcore Playboy film and applying every bit of the actors' performance. From that moment onwards, our relationship became that of sexual partners and not just that of tutor-student. Our contact also increased from two days a week to four days. Eventually, both of us received academic dismissal from our respective departments.

Markedly, hoping for a better tomorrow and being convinced to pass today's hurdles, parents and guardians should pay attention to their children at the very beginning of their childhood. As far as my research information goes, this is what it is.