

**Natureza do trabalho:** Resumo

**TÍTULO**

*CRACK COCAINE: THE IMPACT OF EARLY TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES*

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**RESUMO**

**Introduction:** Crack consumption is increasing in Brazil and becomes an emergency public health problem, due to the impulse to come on surface and the urgent answer it requires. Family is identified as one of the main areas able to influence people to initiate and reach problematic consumption patterns. To research childhood and adolescence traumatic life experiences history is important for intervention in treatment of crack cocaine users. Studies suggest that drug addicts diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder choose the abuse substance to relieve symptoms related to the traumatic event and to suppress the distressing memory. **Objective:** To comprehend violence and losses early experiences impact on crack cocaine users. **Material and Methods:** Qualitative research, conducted through semi-structured interviews, with 20 family members of crack cocaine addicts registered at Alcohol and Drugs Psychosocial Care Center (CAPS AD) in Ponta Porã/ MS, in a convenience sampling. Data were analyzed following the Discourse of the Collective Subject (DSC) method, whose substantiation is the Social Representation Theory. **Results:** The crack cocaine users profile of this study is: low education (70%), disadvantaged socioeconomic status (85% income less than one minimum wage), living in suburbs (90%), coming from remarried families (80%) with 02-05 unions. All interviewees reported experiencing loss – via abandonment, death or negligence - and physical or psychological violence, before the consumption of crack. **Discussion and Conclusion:** It has been found in 100% of the sample a traumatic event followed by the feeling of abandonment prior to the consumption of crack cocaine. Failures on building emotional ties and poorly performed relational exchanges bring the feeling of abandonment. Drug consumption appears attractive because offers a coping compensation to current conflicts. The unmeasured and inappropriate way to approach drug seems to follow the model of family learned emotional exchanges. Dysfunctional family dynamics permeated by traumatic experiences has a fundamental role in the initiation and maintenance of crack cocaine consumption.

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