

Ashley

Family – Ashley lives with her mom and dad, who are both busy attorneys. Two older siblings are in college on the East Coast.

School – Her parents are disappointed that she gets a mix of A's and B's. Ashley enjoys English and history. She doesn't like math or science, and she gets by in these subjects without working hard.

Friends – She is very popular and social. She was thrilled to get her driver's license a few months ago. She often drives to friends' houses after school and on weekends.

Hobbies – She enjoys socializing with friends most of all. She finds boys her age dull. She hopes to attract an older boyfriend.

Goals – She assumes she'll go to college. She has no career direction or goals. Her main goal is popularity and fun. She realizes the need not to anger her parents too much so she doesn't lose her freedom.

Substance use – She sometimes enjoys mixed drinks when she's at her friends' houses. Two weeks ago she had more than usual to drink – maybe 4 wine coolers. She got into a minor fender-bender with a parked car on the way home. The accident was not reported. Her parents were very angry. She was completely grounded through last weekend, and she is not permitted to use the car for another two weeks.

Some of her friends smoke pot and seem to enjoy it. She has avoided it so far, because she is afraid her parents would smell the odor, but she is curious to try it.

Cassie

Family – Cassie lives with her mom, dad and 2 younger brothers. Her mom works part-time as an nursing assistant at a nursing home. Her dad is an insurance claims adjustor.

School – Cassie tends to get B's in school.

Friends – She tends hangs out with girls who share her interests. They often gather at each others' homes. Occasionally they go shopping for clothes or music. Lately some boys are starting to mix into her crowd of girls.

Hobbies – Cassie is especially interested in drama and always has roles in school plays. She and her friends are always up to date with the music scene.

Goals – Cassie envisions going to college and majoring in theater arts.

Substance use – The boys who started mixing into Cassie's crowd are increasingly bringing pills to gatherings. The pills are of a variety of shapes, sizes and colors. They're out for anyone to take in a bowl where a nosy parent would not spot them. Cassie has had a pill or two on several occasions and enjoys the relaxing buzz.

More and more of Cassie's friends leave the gatherings with boys for an hour or so and come back drunk or stoned. Last month, when April, one of Cassie's friends, got overly intoxicated, the boy she was with, Bill, tried to take advantage, but another girlfriend interceded. That episode introduced quite a bit of tension in the group, with various factions blaming April, Bill or both of them. Cassie is curious to try drinking, smoking pot, and other drugs, and she'd love to have a boyfriend, but she is afraid to get into a situation like April did. She sometimes she wishes that her group of girlfriends could be how they once were before the boys joined them.

Derek

Family – Derek lives with his single mom, who has great difficulty with bipolar disease and alcoholism. His mom receives a disability check and mainly watches TV and drinks. His father, a well-to-do businessman, divorced her several years ago, and married a younger woman, Stacy. They have 2 children, ages 3 and 1. Derek wanted to live with them, but Stacy wouldn't allow it. Feeling quite guilty, Derek's dad pays all the monthly bills for Derek and his mom and provides Derek with a very generous allowance. Derek stocks the house with food and has lots of cash leftover for himself.

School – Derek did well in school through grade 5, when his parents split up. Since then, he has mainly gotten C's and D's.

Friends – Derek mainly keeps to himself and a few male friends. He and his friends enjoy playing video games, smoking pot and occasionally they drink beer.

Hobbies – Derek enjoys getting high and playing videogames.

Goals – At times, Derek wishes he had the drive to excel in math and computer science as needed to become a famous videogame designer. At other times, he envisions being content to do what he's currently doing for the foreseeable future.

Substance use – Derek smokes pot on most days, typically 2 to 4 joints. Once or twice a week, he and friends each have 2 to 4 twelve-ounce beers. He's curious to try some other drugs – perhaps OxyContin or cocaine – but he's content for now with marijuana and beer.

Earlier this year, Derek got caught smoking pot with his friends on the far side of the athletic field. They got suspended for a week. He and his parents promised the principal it would never happen again. Derek's dad made an appointment for him to have a drug assessment at Rogers, but Derek got sick, his dad got busy, and a make-up appointment never got arranged.

Frank

Family – An only child, Frank went to live with his aunt and uncle after his parents died in a car crash when he was 3 years old. His aunt died a few years later of cancer. Since then, Frank has been raised by his Uncle Joe, who has been disabled for 10 years with chronic back pain and alcohol dependence. Frank and Joe live on the inheritance from Frank's parents. Frank and Joe have an unstated agreement to leave each other alone as much as possible. Frank lives in the basement. Joe lives on the second floor. They only rarely meet in between.

School – Over the years, Frank has usually gotten C's and D's. Last semester, he failed two classes.

Friends – Frank had been a loner through most of elementary school. In middle school he started hanging out with a few other boys who smoked pot.

Hobbies – Frank prefers to hang out alone or with his friends listening to music or watching TV while high.

Goals – Frank has no long-term goals.

Substance use – About 6 months ago, Caz, one of Frank's friends, introduced Frank to OxyContin. Frank loved it from the start and kept on using with Caz. About 3 months ago, Frank switched to snorting heroin because OxyContin got too expensive. About a month ago, he and Caz started shooting up to get a better high with less heroin. Frank's monthly checks are now gone in a week, so he and Caz have been shoplifting and stealing. Frank has been losing weight and coming to school less and less. Two weeks ago, Caz was caught stealing. His parents placed him in a residential drug treatment program, leaving Frank all alone and feeling increasingly isolated and desperate. He knows if he keeps doing what he's been doing, he'll be caught, too, but he doesn't know where to turn.

Giselle

Family – Giselle lives with her mother, her aunt, and her two younger cousins, ages 13 and 12. Her mother and aunt have been single for as long as she can remember, and she never sees her father and uncle.

School – Giselle usually gets about half A's and half B's. She enjoys the logic of computers, the grace of dance, the competition of volleyball, and the stories behind history, especially the history of women.

Friends – Giselle is not at all interested in boys. She enjoys very close, emotional relationships with other girls, especially those on her volleyball team. She finds herself disappointed when other girls on the team end up in relationship with boys, feeling like she is losing friends. She is starting to wonder whether she is a lesbian but has not been physical with anyone.

Hobbies – She especially enjoys volleyball and dance. She prides herself on being healthy and active. For the past year, she has been a vegetarian to be healthy and to avoid cruelty to animals.

Goals – Giselle can imagine herself going to college, making money with a career and computers, but reserving lots of leisure time for her other interests.

Substance use – For the last couple of months, her closest friend, Jennie, has been bringing Ecstasy to parties. Giselle thoroughly enjoys the warm, exhilarating feelings and the closeness of doing E with Jennie. She has also been smoking cigarettes with Jennie. She totally enjoys the Ecstasy but she feels conflicted about smoking cigarettes, because she knows they're so unhealthy.

Irina

Family – Irina lives with her single mother and her 3 younger siblings, ages 15, 12 and 10, in the attic of a 3-story house. Her mother is increasingly disabled due to lupus, a disease that causes extreme fatigue, sore joints, rash and kidney failure. Her father lives out of state. The family is undocumented and is receiving no government assistance. Irina and her 15-year-old brother each work 20 hours a week to support the family. Irina also does the grocery shopping, cooking, and caring for the younger siblings.

School – When her mom was more able, Irina got nearly all A's in school. Now with more responsibilities, she usually gets B's.

Friends – She has a couple of friends whom she sees only in school. She is too busy to socialize outside of school.

Hobbies – She has no time for hobbies.

Goals – She hopes to be a nurse or a doctor someday to help her mother and others like her.

Substance use – A few months ago, Irina heard at school that medications for attention deficit disorder can help people stay awake and get more done. Her younger brother previously took such medications, and there is a large supply of unused medication at home. She has been taking a pill every now and then to help her stay awake to get homework or housework done when necessary. She has no idea that these medications could be addictive. She certainly doesn't want to become a drug addict, but she wants to do well at school and take care of her family.

James

Family – James lives at home with his parents and his 17-year-old brother. His parents both work at the same bakery – his father as a delivery truck driver and his mother as a sales clerk.

School – James does quite well in school, getting A's and B's. If he tried harder, he could do much better.

Friends and Hobbies – James is in a popular crowd of boys and girls. They like hanging out in a nearby youth center, playing basketball and other sports, listening to music and seeing movies.

Goals – James intends to go to college, but he's not sure what he wants to be – maybe something to do with the law or law enforcement.

Substance use – For the last year, James and his friends have often smoked pot when together on weekend nights. Nobody has gotten in trouble. Last month, one of James friends, Anthony, brought some crack and a pipe to a party. He and James left the party to smoke it. James loves the feeling from crack. He knows it can be addictive, but he feels he's too smart to get addicted. He's just been using it about once a week, and it hasn't caused him any problems.

Kellye

Family – Kellye lives at home with her single mother and 2 sisters in grades 7 and 12.

School – Kellye does very well in school, getting mainly A's with occasional B's. She has very high standards and is frustrated when she gets B's.

Friends and Hobbies – Kellye has a few friends – mainly other studious players in the school band. She focuses on schoolwork and practicing her flute. She occasionally goes over friends houses and plays music with them. She goes to church every Sunday and takes religion very seriously.

Goals – Kellye hopes she can go to college. She worries that finances are tight, and there might not be enough money to support her in college, especially if her older sister goes. She hopes she can qualify for an academic scholarship, which is why she gets very frustrated when she gets B's in school.

Substance use – A few months ago, when playing music at a friend's house, a friend brought marijuana, and everyone tried it. Kellye felt a strong, pleasant sense of relaxation and peace like she has never felt. Her pot smoking has continued at friends' houses. She has also brought pot home, hidden it in her closet, and smoked at home a couple of times a week without her mother or sisters finding out. She usually smokes 1 or 2 joints. The pot continues to be very pleasantly relaxing for her. She would be crushed if her mother, band teacher or minister ever found out, as they would be extremely disappointed in her. She also feels very guilty about smoking pot, especially when attending church. She feels that God is very disappointed in her.