

Kennesaw State University

DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University

---

Symposium of Student Scholars

26th Annual Symposium of Student Scholars -  
2022

---

## Substance Use Disorders, Cognitive Dysfunction, and Neurodivergence in Emerging Adulthood

David Posada

Jordyn Hebert  
*Kennesaw State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/undergradsymposiumksu>



Part of the [Biological Psychology Commons](#), [Clinical and Medical Social Work Commons](#), [Cognitive Science Commons](#), [Developmental Psychology Commons](#), [Psychiatric and Mental Health Commons](#), and the [Substance Abuse and Addiction Commons](#)

---

Posada, David and Hebert, Jordyn, "Substance Use Disorders, Cognitive Dysfunction, and Neurodivergence in Emerging Adulthood" (2022). *Symposium of Student Scholars*. 226.  
<https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/undergradsymposiumksu/spring2022/presentations/226>

This Oral Presentation (15-min time slots) is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Undergraduate Research at DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Symposium of Student Scholars by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu).

## **Substance Use Disorders, Cognitive Dysfunction, and Neurodivergence in Emerging Adulthood**

**Posada, D., Herbert, J., Weingast, L., Holliday, E.**

Cognitive functioning in college students with substance use disorders (SUD) has been widely researched, however, discussions have largely concentrated on executive functions (EF) such as working memory, flexible thinking, and self-control. Literature on the relationship between cognitive dysfunction and SUD has largely underreported the influence of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADD/ADHD) and other neurodivergent characteristics. The current review explores the state of the literature on the relationship between neurodivergence, cognitive dysfunction, and SUD in emerging adulthood. More specifically, it speculates whether college students who are 18-25 years old with ADD/ADHD are at a higher risk of developing and maintaining an SUD. The field's understanding of emerging adults is evolving due to technological advances in research and the increasing awareness of neurodiversity. The current review will focus on the age bracket of emerging adults due to the critical neurological development that occurs during this developmental window. Methodology includes systematically searching several databases to ensure that the widest scope of relevant literature on these topics is reviewed including PubMed, Google Scholar, and Psych INFO. Keywords include terms selected to capture the specificity and depth of the areas of interest. It is hypothesized that there are critical gaps in the understanding of cognitive dysfunction and SUD in college students with ADD/ADHD. However, there may be preliminary literature that suggests there is a relationship between these phenomena. The current review aims to inform future practice and research through presenting the state of the literature on emerging adulthood, neurodivergence, and SUD.

**Key Words:** Cognitive Dysfunction, College Students, Emerging Adulthood, Substance Use Disorders, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, ADD, ADHD, Executive Function