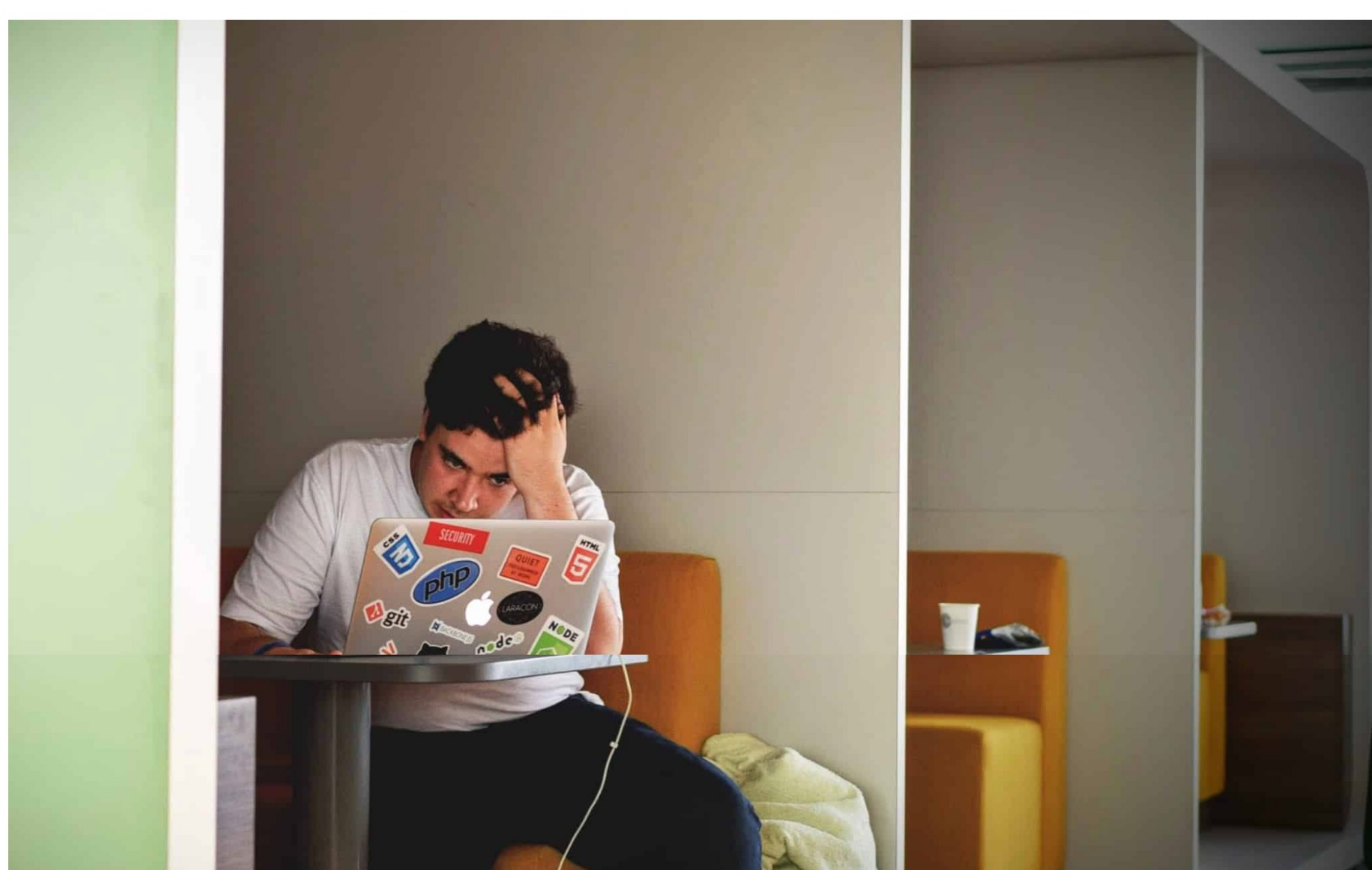


# 10 Warning Signs Of Substance Abuse Among College Students

by Robert Alexander Center | Aug 15, 2022 | Blog | 0 comments



Spotting the signs of substance abuse in college students isn't always easy- many of the changes below can be normal for students or may point to other problems (such as mental health issues).

However, they can be telling of potential substance abuse, so it's worth keeping an eye out if you're concerned or have reason to believe that drugs or alcohol are being used.

## Grades dropping

If a once well-performing student's grades have taken a nosedive, this could be a cause for concern. There are of course many reasons a person's grades can change; perhaps they've missed lectures due to illness, they could be having relationship or family issues, be suffering with mental health or maybe they're just not enjoying the topics this semester as much (and as a result, haven't performed as well). But it's something to bear in mind, especially if the changes have been drastic or unexpected. Or if they're continuing to get worse or perform badly over time.

## Physical changes

Substance abuse comes with many physical changes. They may be minor at first so aren't always obvious. But things like weight loss, sallow skin and dental issues can all be signs. In the case of drugs that are injected, you will often see bruises and track marks on the limbs, particularly in the inner elbows.

## Hygiene issues

Some people are just more hygienic and care about their appearance more than others. Many college students are unkempt and this isn't anything out of the ordinary. However, if the student was once well-maintained and these standards have started to drop drastically then it might ring some alarm bells.

## Financial problems

College students are broke, that's nothing revolutionary. However, if the student seems to be particularly struggling to the point they're unable to buy food, are running up debts and never seem to have anything to show for the money that they do get, then it's a potential sign of drug and alcohol abuse.

## Sleeping more

Another issue that isn't necessarily anything to worry about on its own, but sleeping more combined with other red flags may be a sign to look out for. Some drugs cause the user to become more relaxed and sleepy, whereas stimulant types will cause them to stay awake for days at a time and result in them needing to catch up on sleep afterwards. While sleep issues can be something simple such as being in a bad sleep cycle due to staying awake at night for too long, long periods of sleep can also indicate drug use or mental health conditions so is one to watch out for.

## Breaking rules

If a student was previously a stickler for the rules but this has recently gone out of the window then you may want to work out the reasons why. A shift in attitudes like this can be worrying, drugs and alcohol can lower inhibitions and can lead to rule breaking and even trouble with the law.

If substance abuse is to blame, getting the student enrolled onto an [outpatient rehab](#) course, or even an [intensive outpatient](#) rehab course depending on the severity can help to get them back onto the straight and narrow.

## A new friendship group

Students are at a stage in their lives where they're highly influenced by the people around them. A new friendship group combined with other changes that indicate substance abuse might hint that they've been swayed by the people they're hanging around with.

## Mood changes

Drugs seriously impact a person's mood. While under the influence they may seem energetic, talkative or loved up, or they may be quiet, spaced out and withdrawn depending on the substance. During the withdrawal period they may be angry, snappy and irritable in a way

## Suspicious symptoms

Bloodshot eyes, runny nose, frequent stomach issues and glazed eyes can all be symptoms of drug use for a variety of different substances. There are a number of allergies and other health issues that can cause these symptoms, but in combination with other red flags they could definitely be a sign of drug use.

## Family history

Family history can unfortunately be a predictor of drug use in young people. If you know there has been drug use in the person's family and they're showing some of the other worrying signs listed above then your suspicions may be correct. Setting up an intervention can help them to get access to the help they need, such as counseling or a detoxification center.

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The Robert Alexander Center for Recovery is a brand new, state-of-the-art addiction treatment center in Kentucky, offering evidence-based treatment for substance abuse.

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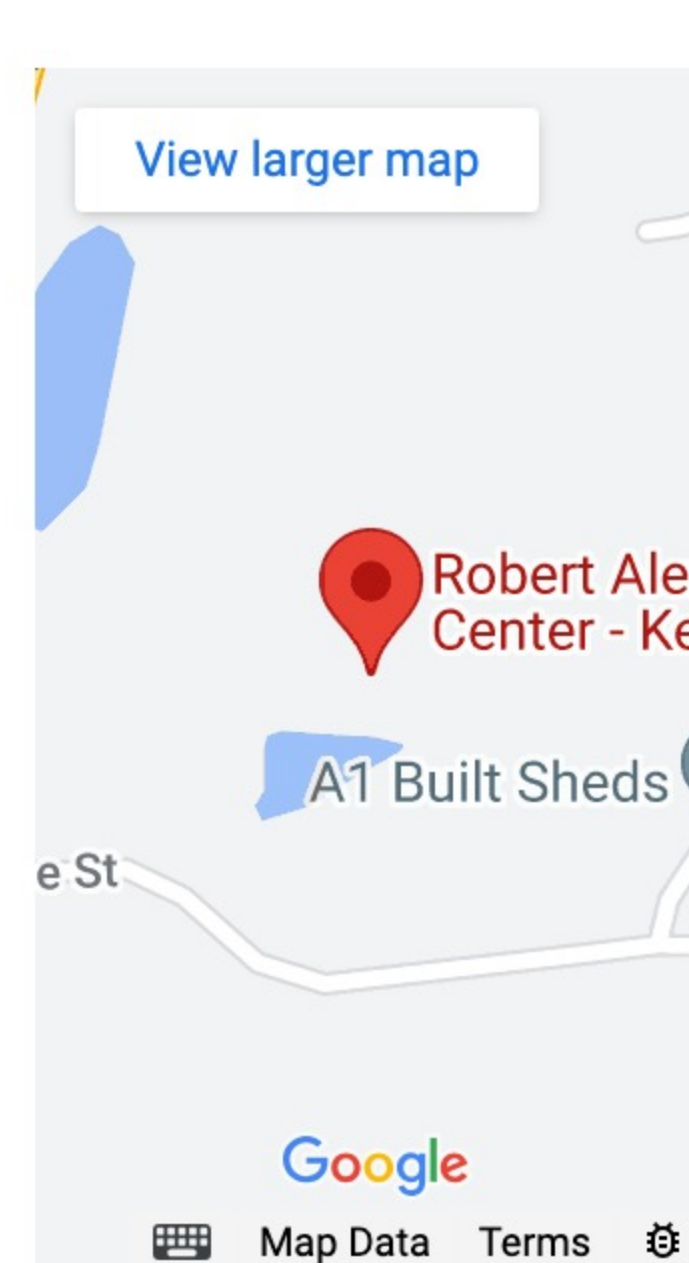
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- [Tour](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Blog](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)

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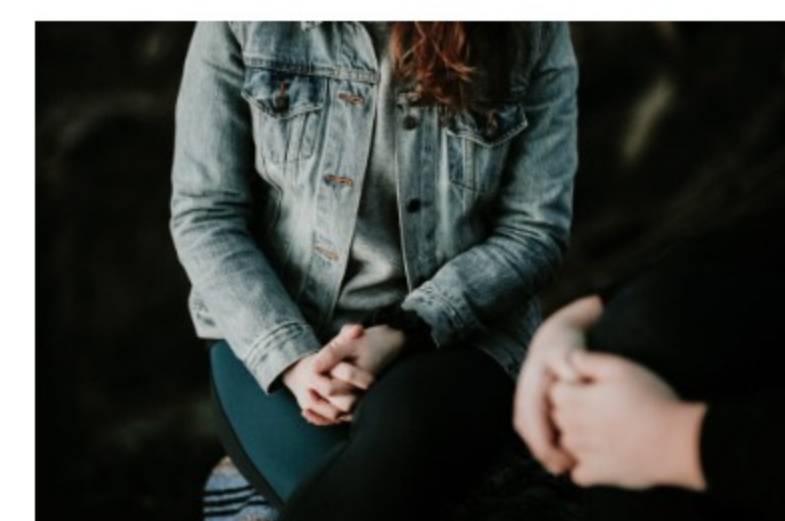
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- Tour
- Treatment
  - Detox
  - Residential
  - Partial Hospitalization
  - Intensive Outpatient
  - Outpatient
  - Family Program
  - Aftercare Program
- Reviews
- About
- Admissions