

2021VieyraOlivia-abstract

## Abstract

This thesis is a research paper about the opioid crisis in America with a focus on how it is hurting our youth. Questions that the independent research centered around are: What is the opioid crisis and who is it mostly affecting; Who is raising the kids whose parents are addicted? Foster homes, grandparents, other relatives, or are they living in the homes with parents still; Does the crisis leave a financial burden on the economy? If so, how much and in what aspects; and what can Americans do to stop the crisis? Although I am not a child impacted by the opioid crisis, I am a child affected by drug addiction; so, this thesis has a personal connection to me, and I hope that connection and my education as a legal studies major will help me raise awareness that the U.S. opioid crisis is still relevant to Americans and propose a solution to the issue.

At first this thesis will look at the opioid crisis as a whole – looking at the impact it has and both the federal response as well as states' response to it. Then we will narrow the scope of the crisis to youth specific impacts; ending with a solution that not only governments can implement but all Americans can execute to minimize the impact of the epidemic.

In this thesis you will find that the medical and foster care systems take on much of the financial burden left by the epidemic, as well as that there is no one, clear solution to finding an end to this crisis that America is currently facing. These findings were revealed by qualitative data and analyzing secondary data.

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