



Startling Addictions Research Available

Innovative forms of online research provide new insight into the prevalence of addictions and addiction concerns.

Chertsey, Quebec – A new era for addictions treatment has arrived. Thanks to the Clear Haven Center, freshly released studies that explore the hearts and minds of those touched by addictions is now available to help understand, and ultimately prevent and combat, all forms of addiction.

High-tech social research by the Clear Haven Center of Chertsey, Quebec recently explored over a million queries typed into search engines by people around the globe that included references to addiction, exploring variations of over 45 concepts such as “alcoholism”, “detox”, “rehabilitation” and, of course, “addiction”. Although startling trends were revealed, most startling was the sheer prevalence of searches for addiction information, help and other addiction-related concerns.

For example, one topic explored was the prevalence of cocaine related searches, over 120,000 searches per year. Considering that Neilson/NetRatings estimate the number of English speaking active Internet users at around 200 million, this suggests that approximately 1 in 1500 Internet users search cocaine-related concepts every year. Add to that the over 450,000 drug addiction related searches that don’t specify the substance and there could be as many as 1 in 500 Internet users searching to just understand or resolve cocaine addiction each year.

This addictions research explores the question, “What are people searching online about addictions?” More important is the question “What can we learn by studying these online searches?”

Cocaine addiction, at 25%, ranks far behind heroin addiction, at 53%, in the prevalence of substance abuse in the United States. Yet, when it comes to the online search frequencies of these two specific phrases, the term “cocaine addiction” is typed into search engines more often - over 115,000 times per year; compared to some 74,000 searches for “heroin addiction”. Do the more prevalent middle class cocaine users vs. heroin users simply have more access to the Internet, and the first stage of help, than the more poverty-stricken heroin users and their families?

Also surprising were the number of searches that indicated the presence of or concern about multiple addictions; searches like “Xanax and heroin addiction”. Of the 74,000 searches that contained the word “heroin”, 15,000 also contained the words “Xanax”, “Vicodin” or other addictive drugs. This represents a significant challenge for professionals as multiple addictions are, by far, the most difficult to treat.

Besides addiction, top concerns surrounding other side effects of specific drugs surfaced and were ranked by prevalence, for example Xanax (49,962 searches referring to various



side effects), Vicodin (29,190), oxycontin (27,950), alcohol (26,803) and methadone (26,448). These searches provide a unique perspective to the other dangers surrounding various addictive drugs.

Their study of all addictions (extending beyond alcohol, prescription drugs and narcotics), showed that the plague of addictions is not limited to the expected substances, but included plentiful searches for games (1,326,314), sex (505,353), the Internet (231,922), porn (178,975), gambling (131,336), shopping (32,680) and caffeine (32,722).

Statistics like these highlight the prevalence of addictions in our culture and the need for increased awareness, education, and prevention. Hopefully, knowing what people are searching for online will soon help educators, parents and addictions professionals understand and respond to addiction issues more effectively.

For full access to all published research, including printable posters, please visit:
<http://www.clearhavencenter.com/addictions-research/>

Let us all renew the fight against substance abuse by sharing information and supporting those in need of assistance.