

Perceived Neighborhood Fear and Drug Use Among Young Adults

Katherine P. Theall, PhD; Claire E. Sterk, PhD; Kirk W. Elifson, PhD

Objectives: To examine the association between perceptions of neighborhood safety and drug use, as well as mediation by depression and self-esteem. **Methods:** The sample included 210 inner-city young adults (18 to 25 years) recruited from the Atlanta, Georgia, USA. **Results:** Respondents who indicated greater fear of their neighborhood environment also had significantly greater levels of drug use than did those with lower

perceived fear. However, this relationship was not a result of lower self-esteem or higher levels of depressive symptoms. **Conclusions:** Exploratory results point to the need to consider the broader role of the community environment and its impact on drug use among young adults.

Key words: young adult, drug use, fear, neighborhood

Am J Health Behav. 2009;33(4):353-365
