



The use of alcohol and drugs by young people brings many risks: personal, health, academic, safety, relationships and the risk of alcohol and drug addiction. One of the most significant risks is the connection between alcohol, drugs and crime. **For a young person, with your whole life in front of you, avoiding the legal risks associated with alcohol and drugs is extremely important.**

There are three types of alcohol or drug related criminal offenses:

- 1. Alcohol and Drug-Defined:** Violations of laws prohibiting or regulating the possession, use, distribution, or manufacture of alcohol or illegal drugs. **Examples:** Alcohol or drug possession or use. Cultivation, production, distribution or sales of illegal drugs. Providing alcohol to persons under the age of 21.
- 2. Alcohol and Drug-Related:** Violations of laws as a result of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or trying to get cash to pay for alcohol or drugs. **Examples:** Criminal behavior resulting from the effects of alcohol or drugs: DWI, fights, theft, vandalism, violence against friends and family. Stealing to get money to buy alcohol or drugs. Violence against rival drug dealers.
- 3. Alcohol and Drug-Using Lifestyle:** Violations of laws as a result of living a lifestyle where a person may not have a job or source of income and is exposed to situations and individuals that encourage crime. **Examples:** As a result of relationships developed through the use of alcohol or drugs, the individual has more opportunities to violate the law and learn criminal skills from other offenders.

**FACT--DRUG ARRESTS:** According to the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCRP) of the

## Alcohol, Drugs and Crime

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Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), there were almost 1.7 million state and local arrests for drug abuse violations in 2009.

**FACT—ALCOHOL and JAIL:** According to the Department of Justice (DOJ), 37% of almost 2 million convicted offenders currently in jail, report that they were drinking at the time of their arrest.

**FACT- DRINKING and DRIVING:** In 2007, over 1.4 million drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs which represents **less than 1% of 159 million self-reported incidents** of alcohol-impaired driving in U.S. each year.

### Victims of Alcohol or Drug Related Crime:

Even though you may not be the person using alcohol or drugs, or violating the law, you can certainly be a victim of an alcohol or drug-related crime. In fact, millions of people each year are victims of alcohol or drug related crime, including millions of young people.

- Each year, more than 600,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are assaulted by another student who has been drinking.
- 95% of all violent crime on college campuses involves the use of alcohol by the assailant, victim or both.
- 90% of acquaintance rape and sexual assault on college campuses involves the use of alcohol by the assailant, victim or both.
- Every day, 36 people die, and approximately 700 are injured, in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver. Drinking and drugged driving is the number one cause of death, injury and disability of young people under the age of 21.

**FACT:** The connection between alcohol, drugs and crime is clear. And, so is the connection between alcohol and drug **addiction** and crime. We need to **break the chain** that links drug addiction and crime.

**However, and not surprisingly, jail alone has had little effect on reduction of drug addiction or in promoting recovery.** Holding someone in jail, without access to alcohol and drug addiction

treatment, with no specific plans for treatment and recovery support upon release, is not only expensive, it's ineffective.

For many in the criminal justice system, preventing future crime and re-arrest after release is **impossible without treatment for and recovery from addiction to alcohol and drugs.**

### **Investing in The Solution--Not The Problem: Treatment and Recovery**

**Our nation's prison population has exploded beyond capacity.**

- 1 in 100 U.S. citizens is now confined in jail or prison.

**Most inmates are in prison, at least in large part, because of alcohol and drugs.**

- 80% of offenders abuse drugs or alcohol.
- Nearly 50% of jail and prison inmates are clinically addicted.

**Imprisonment has little effect on alcohol and drug abuse.**

- Approximately 95% of inmates return to alcohol and drug use after release from prison.

**Providing treatment without holding offenders accountable for their performance in treatment is expensive and ineffective.**

- Unless they are regularly supervised by a judge, 60 – 80% drop out of treatment prematurely and few successfully graduate.

Source: National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP)

**Balancing Accountability, Treatment and Recovery:** In response to the facts stated above, with some local NCADD Affiliates leading the local effort, Drug Court programs have been developed

across the country. Drug Courts are judicially-supervised court dockets that strike the proper balance between the need to protect community safety and the need to improve public health and well-being; between the need for treatment and the need to hold people accountable for their actions; between hope and redemption on the one hand and good citizenship on the other.

### **Long Term Recovery: Break The Chain:**

NCADD recognizes the serious impact of alcohol and drug use on crime across the nation. But, we also know, from decades of experience, millions of people who have been in the criminal justice system have **broken the chain through long-term recovery from alcohol and drug addiction.**

*“Nine years before I was elected to Congress for the first of nine terms, I woke up from my last alcoholic blackout in a jail cell, under arrest for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. I am alive and sober today--almost 30 years later--only because I had access to treatment for my alcoholism.”*

- Former U.S. Congressman Jim Ramstad (R-MN)

**For information on a DVD on the subject:** [Past These Walls: A Story of Alcohol, Drugs, Jail and Hope](#), featuring comedian Mark Lundholm and produced by NCADD's Richmond Affiliate, The McShin Foundation.