

Fact Sheet: Substance Abuse and Society

Untreated substance abuse is a major contributor is the number one public health problem both nationally and in Oklahoma. Substance abuse is tied to crime, violence, accidents, child abuse and neglect, domestic assault, lost productivity and increased medical costs to society. These statistics illustrate the challenges we are facing:

- **Substance abuse costs Oklahoma more than \$6.8 billion a year** in lost productivity and cash expenditures (health care, public safety, social services and property loss). Oklahoma spends nearly \$2 billion annually on direct costs associated with substance abuse and \$5 billion on indirect costs. Substance abuse also is a primary factor in welfare dependence, the rising cost of illegitimacy, workplace injuries and a host of other problems in Oklahoma. *(Governor's Task Force on Substance Abuse, 1998)*
- **Substance abuse contributes to 85 percent of all homicides; 80 percent of all prison incarcerations; 75 percent of all divorces; 65 percent of all child abuse cases; 55 percent of all domestic assaults; half or more of all accidental deaths from fire, falls and drownings; half of all traffic fatalities; 40 percent of work-related fatal injuries; 35 percent of all rapes; and one-third of all suicides.** *(Governor's Task Force on Substance Abuse, 1998)*
- **Substance abuse and addiction contributes to seven of 10 cases** of child maltreatment and accounts for some \$10 billion in government spending on child welfare. *[Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA), Columbia University, 2001]*
- **Out of \$620 billion spent for state budgets in 1998, \$81.3 billion** – a whopping 13.1 percent – was used to deal with substance abuse and addiction. Of every such dollar spent, 96 cents went to shoveling up the wreckage of substance abuse and addiction and only 4 cents was used for prevention and treatment. *(CASA, 2001)*
- **Nearly 70 percent of men and women arrested in Oklahoma County** in 1999 tested positive for drugs at time of arrest. *[Oklahoma County Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) Program, 2001]*
- **More than 70 conditions requiring hospitalization** are attributable in whole or part to substance abuse. Of these conditions, more than half of all pediatric AIDS cases are attributable to IV drug use, 87 percent of lung cancers to smoking, alcohol is involved in 72 percent of all chronic pancreatitis cases, and 65 percent of strokes are related to either cigarettes or cocaine. *(CASA, 1993)*