

## Preliminary List (Continued)

- Only 1 obstetrician in Franklin and 1 in Brentwood will accept TennCare recipients. Perhaps the Health Department needs an OB and provisions for delivery?
- Williamson County has a high divorce rate (TN is one of the highest in the country). This is a leading source of emotional and mental health problems for youth.

## Priority Problems List

The Williamson County Health Council reviewed data related to the health status of its residents during 1996. Members combined and condensed their list of priority health problems, after reviewing the primary and secondary data, to reduce the number of major health problems in the county to ten.

Dr. Kerry Gateley, Williamson County Medical Center, offered the following assumption as the council undertook the ranking process.

*“The Williamson County Health Council should identify the problems upon which we can have the most impact with the limited resources that we have available. ...The highest impact interventions are those which affect the largest number of people and have the potential for creating the most dramatic improvements in health. Because of their lifelong impact, interventions aimed at teens often have the greatest potential.”*

Members chose not to use a scientific method in ranking the priority problems in the county. They chose to gain an informal consensus on the rank order of the problems. All agreed on the number one problem based upon their perception of the size, seriousness, and impact of the problem on the county. The council agreed to prioritize three of the remaining nine major problems from the preliminary list. This rationale for this action was an attempt to focus on one issue rather than dilute the energy of the council. Also, the council elected not to assign a rank to the three additional priority problems. The council believes the three remaining priority problems along with many other issues will be affected in a positive manner. The priority problems selected by the council are as follows:

### 1. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs

- Substance Usage by students exceeds the 1996 National Average. The Pride Survey indicates especially elevated levels of Tobacco, Marijuana, and Cocaine use by Middle and High School students.
- 10% of the 1996 Juvenile Court cases were Alcohol & Drug related. Statewide, 8% of Juvenile Court cases were Alcohol & Drug related.
- The 1992-1994 Motor Vehicle Accidental Death Rate for the 15-24 age group is 36% higher than the state rate for this age group. In 1995, 40% of all motor vehicle deaths were alcohol related.