

## **YOUTH AND ADULT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER DRUG USE IN TENNESSEE, 1991 AND 1993-1995**

### **Prevalence of ATOD Use and Abuse in Tennessee Among Adults Aged 18 and Over, 1993**

#### Lifetime Use

- In 1993, 64% of Tennessee adults had drunk alcoholic beverages at least once in their lifetimes. Two-thirds of them had drunk alcoholic beverages in the past 12 months (were recent drinkers), and one-quarter of recent drinkers had at least one episode of heavy drinking in the past 12 months. That translates into 393,000 Tennessee adult heavy drinkers.
- The average age of drinking onset among adults was 19 years.
- Two consequences most often experienced by adult drinkers were being asked not to drive when drinking (24%) and having arguments or fights while drinking alcohol (23%).
- 6% of adult drinkers had been arrested for DUI in the past.
- After alcohol, cigarettes were the most commonly used drug (58%), followed by painkillers (41%), tranquilizers (17%), sedatives (13%), and other kinds of tobacco (13%). Marijuana had been used by 14%, cocaine by 3.5%, hallucinogens by 2.5%, and inhalants and heroin by less than 1% of adults.

#### Recent Use

- In terms of recent use (during the 12 months preceding the survey), alcohol was again the most popular drug, used by 44% of adults.
- Cigarettes were used recently by 31% of adults. Tennessee smokers smoked an average of 18 cigarettes or close to a pack a day. This matches the national average use of the approximately one-third of U.S. adults who smoke.
- About 6% of adults used other kinds of tobacco in the past year.
- Painkillers, such as Darvon, Demerol, Percodan, and codeine, were reportedly used in the past 12 months by 17% of adults.
- 6% of adults used tranquilizers, such as Valium, Librium, Xanax, and Dalmane, in the past 12 months, and another 5% of respondents used sedatives, such as barbiturates, sleeping pills and Seconal.
- Recent use of one or more psychoactive drugs for non-medical purposes was reported by 7% of users.
- Adults were less likely to have recently used illegal drugs than both alcohol and prescription drugs, with 3% of adults reporting recent marijuana use and 0.4% reporting cocaine or crack use in the past 12 months. These are undoubtedly underestimates of users of these drugs representing as they do, respectively, 110,000 adults using marijuana recently and 15,000 recent cocaine-using adults in Tennessee.