

## **ALCOHOL, OTHER DRUGS, AND VIOLENCE - THE LINK IN TENNESSEE**

**BY Community Health Research Group, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville for  
Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Services, Tennessee Department of Health**

In 1992, FBI Uniform Crime Reports data show Tennessee with 8300 arrests for violent crimes -- 380 for murder/homicide; 470 for rape; 1710 for robberies, and 5700 for aggravated assaults. An estimated 40% to 60%, amounting to 3300 to 5000 violent crimes, were alcohol-and-other-drug-related. Some of these crimes related to alcohol and other drugs (AOD) might have been prevented with effective and appropriate diagnosis, treatment and aftercare/relapse prevention for the perpetrators. With such intervention, the savings in economic terms as well as in human life would be immense, estimated in the millions of dollars for every year of productive life saved. These AOD problems go to the roots of crime and delinquency problems in our cities and rural areas. Research findings that shed light on some possible solutions are summarized below, and unique profiles of Tennesseans at very high risk of violence and AOD-related crime are provided.

### **NATIONAL RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The following facts and research findings come from two main sources -- **Eighth Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health** from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, September 1993. US DHHS: Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1993, and **Understanding and Preventing Violence**. Eds. Albert J. Reiss, Jr. and Jeffrey A. Roth. National Academy Press: Washington, DC, 1993.

**1. Studies find that perpetrators and/or victims have used alcohol immediately before more than half of all violent events, such as assaults.**

**2. The DUF (Drug Use Forecasting) study in 22 cities across the US found that about 60% of male and 53% of females arrested for violent crimes reported alcohol use within 72 hours prior to the event.**

3. Problem drinkers are more likely than others to have a history of violence, especially assaults.

4. Alcoholism has been diagnosed in 30% to 40% of convicted aggravated assaulters.

**5. Sixty percent of arrestees for violent offenses tested positive for at least one illegal drug.**