

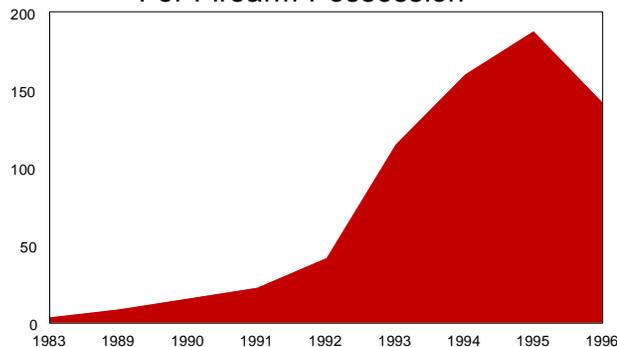
School Expulsions in Tennessee

Percent of Change Over Time, 1982-83 to 1995-1996

REASONS	1982-83	1995-96	Change
Firearms	4	142	3450%
Attendance	6	226	3667%
Fighting	4	151	3675%
Dangerous Weapons*	7	143	1943%
Conduct	12	317	2542%
Tobacco	2	23	1050%
Violent Behavior	19	403	2021%
Alcohol	17	13	-23.5%
Illegal Drugs	49	324	561%
Theft/ Gambling/Extortion	4	35	775%
Property Damage	7	21	200%
Other	8	290	3525%
TOTAL	139	2,088	1402%

Source: Tennessee Department of Education. * Excludes firearms

Students Expelled from Schools For Firearm Possession



Source: Tennessee Department of Education

DRUG ABUSE

The Tennessee Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Survey - a 1995 statewide study on the alcohol and drug use of high school students - revealed that 18.8 % of the respondents said they had had sex as a result of use of alcohol or drugs. The survey also reported that 11.4% of the respondents reported missing school or work due to alcohol or drug use.

The survey, commissioned by the Tennessee Department of Health, is one of the most extensive studies conducted in Tennessee on teenage drug use. The self-report survey gathered information from 76,000 ninth-through-twelfth grade students at 106 high schools throughout Tennessee.

Students revealed the average age for first use was: 12 years old for beer; 13 years old for heroin, inhalants, liquor, and wine; and 14 years old for cocaine, hallucinogens, and marijuana.

Other findings were:

- 68% drank alcoholic beverages;
- 62% smoked cigarettes;
- 43% were offered or given an illegal drug;
- 36% smoked marijuana;
- 9% used LSD;
- 8% used inhalants; and
- 6% used cocaine or crack.

SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Many schools have become unsafe places for children. From school years 1982-83 to 1995-96, there was a 3,450% increase in expulsions for firearms and an increase of 1,943% in the number of expulsions for possession of other weapons.

The leading cause of school expulsions in school year 1995-96 was violence directed against students, teachers, or other school personnel. Expulsions for violent behavior has increased 2,021% from school years 1982-83 to 1995-96. In 1995-96, 19.3% of the expulsions were due to violent behavior and was the leading cause of expulsions. Illegal drug possession was the second leading cause of expulsion in 1996 with 15.5% of all expulsions due to drug possession.

Other reasons for expulsion related to problematic student behaviors that have gotten worse over time include an increase of 2,541.7% in expulsions for conduct problems from school years 1982-83 to 1995-96, and a 3,675% increase in expulsions for fighting.

Expulsions for violence were most prevalent in two of the state's largest urban areas. Shelby County had the most school expulsions (38%) followed by Davidson County (23%) and Hamblen County (5%).

Overall, the total number of school expulsions have increased 1,402% from 1982-83 to 1995-96. In 1982-83 there were only 139 expulsions compared to 2,088 expulsions in 1995-96.