

AIDS

Between 1982 and 2001, 9,825 cases of AIDS were identified in Washington. Nationally, two-thirds of new HIV infections each year are attributed to injection drug use.¹

Between 1993 and 1999, the state AIDS case rate had been in decline. However, between 1999 and 2000, the rate grew by about 2 cases per 100,000 population.¹

CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Adult drug arrests in Washington increased 38% between 1990 and 1997. Alcohol arrests decreased 24%.¹⁷

More inmates in Department of Corrections custody are convicted of drug offences than any other class of crime (20.5% in 2001). Between 60-80% of inmates are estimated to be in need of treatment.¹

More than 60% of homicide deaths in 2000 were either drug-related or committed under the influence of alcohol.¹

Of 6,003 arrests for felonious assault in the state in 1996, 1801 were associated with alcohol and 144 were drug-related.⁶

The number of illegal methamphetamine labs and dump sites has risen 45-fold since 1992 (from 40 to 1,886).¹

TRAFFIC SAFETY

In Washington, the percent of traffic fatalities that were alcohol-related dropped from 50% in 1990 to 44% in 1994.¹⁵

Though deaths and injuries resulting from alcohol-related crashes have been decreasing, 30 people in Washington were killed in drinking-driver crashes in 1997.¹⁶

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that drugs are used by approximately 10-22% of drivers involved in crashes, often in combination with alcohol.¹⁶

In 1996, 75% of fatalities caused by impaired driving were drivers who were not wearing seat belts.⁷

SOURCES

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³ Healthy Youth Survey, 2002. Washington State Department of Health. <http://www3.doh.wa.gov/HYS>.

⁴ 2000 Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behavior, RMC Research Corporation, Portland, OR.

⁵ "Malignant neglect: substance abuse and America's schools." National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 2001. ⁶ Economic Costs of Drug & Alcohol Abuse in Washington State, Div. Alcohol & Substance Abuse, 1993.

⁷ Impaired Driving in Washington. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1997.

⁸ Institute for Health Policy, Brandeis University. Substance Abuse: The Nation's Number One Health Problem. Princeton, NJ: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2001.

⁹ National Institutes of Health. Economics and the Prevention of Alcohol-Related Problems. NIH Publication No. 93-3513. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1993.

¹⁰ Washington State Vital Statistics, 2001. WA Department of Health, December, 2002.

¹¹ Tobacco, Alcohol, & Other Drug Abuse Trends in Washington State, Div. Alcohol & Substance Abuse, 1999 Report.

¹² F.A.S. Times, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Family Resource Institute Newsletter, Spring 1996.

¹³ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. State Resources and Services Related to Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Problems, Fiscal Year 1991. Rockville, MD: U. S. Dept. Health & Human Services, 1993.

¹⁴ 1993-94 Washington State Needs Assessment Household Survey, Div. Alcohol & Substance Abuse

¹⁵ Washington Focus, Div. Alcohol & Substance Abuse, Winter 1997, v. 7.

¹⁶ State Alcohol Estimates. Traffic Safety Facts 1997, U.S. Department of Transportation. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

¹⁷ Risk and Protection Profile for Substance Abuse Prevention Planning in Washington State, Washington State Department of Social & Health Services, May 2000.

¹⁸ Alcohol/Drug Treatment: Washington State's Untapped Resource. Fact Sheet. WA State Dept. of Social and Human Services, December 2002.

¹⁸ Chemical Dependency Treatment Reduces Crime in Washington State. Fact Sheet. WA State Dept. of Social and Human Services, December 2002.

Alcohol, Drugs & Tobacco in Washington State

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IN WASHINGTON STATE. . .

The 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse estimates that in Washington State:

- 7.51% of the population used an illicit drug in the past month.²
- 23.87% smoked cigarettes in the past month.²
- 17.76% engaged in binge drinking in the past month (5 or more drinks in one sitting).²
- 6.94% were dependent on or abusing alcohol or illicit drugs in the past year.²

CHILDREN & ADOLESCENTS

By the time Washington's students complete high school, 75% of them have tried at least one drink of alcohol, half have experimented with marijuana, and 60% have smoked cigarettes.¹

Fewer than half of Washington 12th graders perceive great risk from heavy alcohol use and only 22.4% believe occasional marijuana use is dangerous.¹

Additionally, recent studies have reported that:

- Though the rate of binge drinking decreased slightly in 2000, the numbers are still alarmingly high — 31.8% of seniors, 23.2% of 10th graders, and nearly 5% of 6th graders reported binge drinking within 30 days of being surveyed.⁴
- In 2002, 5% of 8th graders reported daily cigarette smoking over the past 30 days. 10.5% of 10th graders and 16.4% of 12th graders also reported regular cigarette use.³
- More than 13% of high school seniors reported having used party/club drugs in 2000.¹
- Two-thirds of high school students and one-third of middle school students attend schools where illegal drugs are kept, sold, and used. Among 10th graders surveyed, 87% said it was easy to get tobacco, 88% to obtain alcohol, and 78% to get marijuana.⁵

FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

In 1999, 11% of mothers in Washington drank alcohol beverages during the last three months of their pregnancies.¹¹

10-15% of all Washington births are to women who used alcohol or other drugs while pregnant.¹¹

In Washington, between 79 and 137 new cases of FAS are likely to occur each year.¹¹

The Governor's FAS Panel conservatively estimated there were approximately 5,000 people with FAS living in Washington as of 1995. Research estimates that for each person with FAS there are three people with alcohol-related neuro-developmental disorders (ARND), or 15,000 individuals with ARND in our state.¹²

MORTALITY

Substance abuse is the number one preventable cause of disabilities and deaths in the United States.⁸

Of the two million U.S. deaths each year, one in four is attributable to alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drugs.⁹

Deaths due to substance abuse in Washington, 2001:

- 605 alcohol-induced¹
- 506 drug-induced¹

Cirrhosis of the liver, largely attributed to alcoholism, was the tenth leading cause of death among Washington residents between ages 25 to 54 in 2001. The rate of death from liver disease increased by 10% between 1995 and 2001.¹⁰

Washington state had a higher drug-related death rate than the U.S. as a whole during the years 1985 through 1997.¹¹

ECONOMIC COSTS

The total economic costs to society from alcohol and drug abuse were estimated at **\$276 billion** nationally in 2001. Untreated addiction is more expensive than heart disease, diabetes, and cancer combined.⁸

In a 1996 University of Washington study, the cost of alcohol and drug abuse to our state was estimated to be \$2.54 billion. Alcohol abuse accounted for 59% of this amount. Mortality accounted for the largest proportion, (\$929 million), followed by crime (\$541 million), and morbidity (\$368.7 million). Treatment of substance abuse accounted for only 6%.⁶

According to a Columbia University study, Washington State spent \$1.51 billion on services related to the impacts of substance abuse in 1998. In that same year, the state spent \$2.65 billion on higher education, \$1.46 billion on Medicaid, and \$1.09 billion on transportation.¹⁸

TREATMENT

Of the more than 15 million Americans in need of treatment for alcohol problems at any given time, fewer than 1.2 million receive it.^{13 14}

12% of women of child-bearing age in Washington currently need chemical dependency treatment.¹⁵

In 2002, 9.9% of all Washington State adults living in households and 8.7% of youth (12-17 years old) had a current need for drug and/or alcohol treatment.^{1, 18}

A recent study of almost 6,000 Washington State youth, ages 14-17, revealed significant declines in convictions between the year before treatment and the year after: a 56% decline in felonies and a 30% decline in misdemeanors.^{1*}

Studies have estimated that every dollar spent on prevention can save seven dollars in costs due to substance abuse.

For most individuals, substance abuse treatment pays for itself in reduced medical and social service costs in less than three years.

