

# Butler County Drug & Alcohol Program

## Fact Sheet: Substance Abuse - Recovery

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- 22.5 million Americans aged 12 or over were classified with substance dependence or abuse in 2004 (US Dept. of Health & Human Services/Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration-SAMHSA/Center for Substance Abuse Treatment-CSAT).
- 74% of Americans in 2005 said addiction to alcohol has had some impact in their lives (SAMHSA).
- The estimated number of Americans in 2004 ages 12 or older needing treatment for an alcohol or illicit drug use problem was 23.48 million (9.8 % of the total pop.). Of this group, an estimated 2.33 million received drug treatment services leaving 21.5 million persons without needed treatment services (SAMHSA).
- Of the 2.3 million youths aged 12-17 needing treatment for an alcohol or drug use problem (2004), only 185,000 youth received treatment leaving an estimated 2.1 million youths without services.
- Total expenditure for the treatment of substance use disorders in the U.S. was \$18 billion (2001). Total economic costs (medical, lost earnings, lost productivity, motor vehicle crashes, crime, etc.) were \$184.6 billion for alcohol use disorders and \$143.4 billion for drug use disorders (1998).
- Recovery from a drug or alcohol problem is a process of change through which an individual achieves abstinence, health, wellness, and quality of life. Treatment is a path toward recovery entailing many interventions and attempts at abstinence, and can occur in a variety of settings, in different forms, and for different periods of time (SAMHSA/CSAT).
- People seek drug treatment at loved ones or employer urgings, because they are court ordered to do so, or because they recognize they have a problem. No one necessarily wants drug treatment.
- Those who attempt to surmount their addiction by entering drug treatment programs with "high pressure" confrontative treatment strategies, do comparatively better in treatment, regardless of the reason they sought treatment (National Institute on Drug Abuse - NIDA, 1999).
- Treatment does not have to be voluntary. People coerced into treatment by the legal system can be just as successful as those who enter treatment voluntarily; sometimes better (NIDA).
- Studies (2000-Journal of the American Medical Association) found that treatments for drug use disorders are just as effective as treatments for other chronic conditions (high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes...).
- As in other chronic disorders, drug addiction typically requires longer-term treatment and, in many instances, repeated treatments.
- Long-term drug use changes brain functioning; causing drug cravings and difficulty quitting; especially for adolescents. Intervention and/or treatment is important as adolescents become addicted to drugs much faster than adults and risk greater physical, mental and psychological harm from illicit drug use.

- **The best predictor of success in all recovery programs is the length of treatment. Patients who remain at least a year, are more than twice as likely to remain drug free. Adolescents who met or exceeded the minimum treatment time were over one and a half times more likely to abstain from drug and alcohol use.**
- **Completing a treatment program is merely the first step in the struggle for recovery that can extend throughout a person's entire lifetime.**
- **Occasional relapses do not mean failure. Psychological stress can easily trigger a relapse. Recovery is a process and frequently requires multiple treatment attempts before complete and consistent sobriety can be achieved.**
- **Treatment for drug and alcohol addiction cuts drug use in half, reduces criminal activity up to 80%, increases employment, decreases homelessness, improves physical and mental health, reduces medical costs and risky sexual behavior (Nat'l Clearinghouse for Alcohol & Drug Info.).**
- **The positive facts about the effectiveness of treatment are not widely known, making stigma (detracting from one's character or reputation) and discrimination (acts of prejudice that may deny employment, housing, accommodation and other service opportunities), powerful barriers for people wishing to access treatment for substance use disorders.**
- **Two "Faces & Voices of Recovery" surveys (2001 & 2004) of people in recovery found that 40% cited embarrassment or shame as their biggest obstacle to accessing treatment, and 19% feared discrimination at their job.**
- **Other barriers to recovery include limited availability of treatment programs designed to meet young people's needs, cost, insurance difficulties, absence of family supports, substance users are not ready to quit, and/or feel they do not need treatment.**
- **Each individual's recovery differs. However, successful D&A abstinence and recovery generally includes the following steps:**
  - **Acknowledge there is a problem**
  - **Seek and accept help and support from reliable resources outside your own ego and will-power**
  - **Use that help to do whatever it takes to become abstinent**
  - **With guidance, discover workable plans that will lead toward recovery**
  - **Integrate the details of those plans into daily living**
  - **Keep the process alive through consistent attention and effort**
  - **Find and utilize resources that deepened the recovery experience by encouraging physical, mental, and spiritual growth and change**
  - **Become a resource for others who need help**
- **Educating the general public about substance use disorders is crucial to decreasing societal stigma. This will enable a greater number of people to seek treatment, gain recovery and have a positive influence on communities.**