

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

1999 "Keeping Score" Report Focuses on Effects of Alcohol on Society

While alcohol-related health, crime, and productivity problems cost \$167 billion each year, there has been relatively little concentrated Federal response, according to the 1999 report, *Millenium Hangover: Keeping Score on Alcohol*. The report explores drinking among youth and adults and the effects of alcohol on families and communities. Below are some of the findings:

- "Alcohol is the drug of choice among youth.." Alcohol related traffic accidents alone account for twice as many deaths among teenagers and young adults as illicit drug use. Despite the high rate of accidents and death due to alcohol, teens perceive it as less dangerous than other drugs (p. 2).
- Sixty percent of tardiness, absenteeism and poor quality work as a result of alcohol consumption is caused by light and moderate drinkers. Heavy drinkers and alcoholics cause the remaining 40 percent (p. 8).
- Fifty-two percent of college students in a 1997 nationwide study reported that they drank to get drunk, an increase from 39 percent in 1993. Two in five college students reported binge drinking, and one in five reported doing so once a week (p. 9).
- "According to the Bureau of Justice statistics, many more violent crimes are committed under the influence of alcohol than all other drugs." In addition, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reports that drinking is involved in more than half of all sexual assaults (p. 18-19).

The report also highlights alcohol prevention, treatment, and criminal justice programs nationwide. To obtain a copy of *Millenium Hangover*, please fax a request, along with your name and mailing address, to Drug Strategies at 202-414-6199. You may also visit the Drug Strategies website at www.drugstrategies.org.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Drug Strategies, *Millenium Hangover: Keeping Score on Alcohol*, Washington, D.C., 1999.

Alcohol Awareness Month: Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous provides support services for alcoholics. To find an Alcoholics Anonymous group in your state, go to www.aa.org, click on "English," then "U.S./Canada Central Offices, Intergroups, and Answering Services."

•• 301-403-8329 (voice) •• 301-403-8342 (fax) •• CESAR@cesar.umd.edu •• www.cesar.umd.edu ••
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