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# Addiction: Its Impact on Oklahoma and Our Criminal Justice System

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**ODMHSAS**

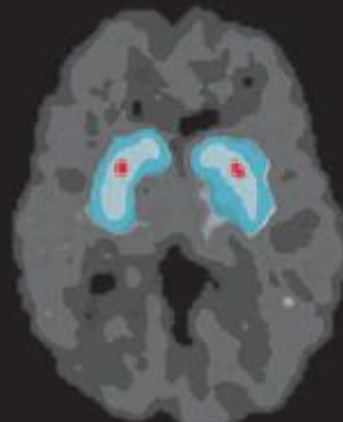
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# The Science of Addiction

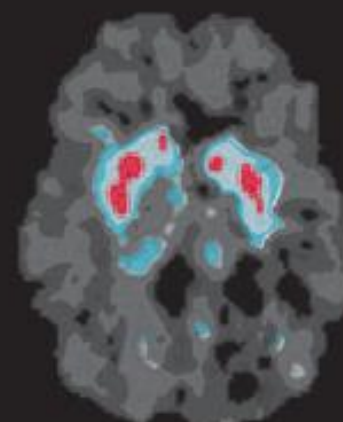
## Recovery of Brain Dopamine Transporters in Chronic Methamphetamine (METH) Abusers



Normal Control



METH Abuser  
(1 month abstinence)



METH Abuser  
(24 month abstinence)

Source: Volkow ND et al., *Journal of Neuroscience* 21:9414–9418, 2001.

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# Addiction is a Disease of the Brain

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- Addiction is a real medical condition, just like diabetes, cardiovascular disease and heart disease. All of these illnesses disrupt the normal, healthy functioning of the underlying organ, have serious harmful consequences, are preventable, treatable and, if left untreated, can last a lifetime.

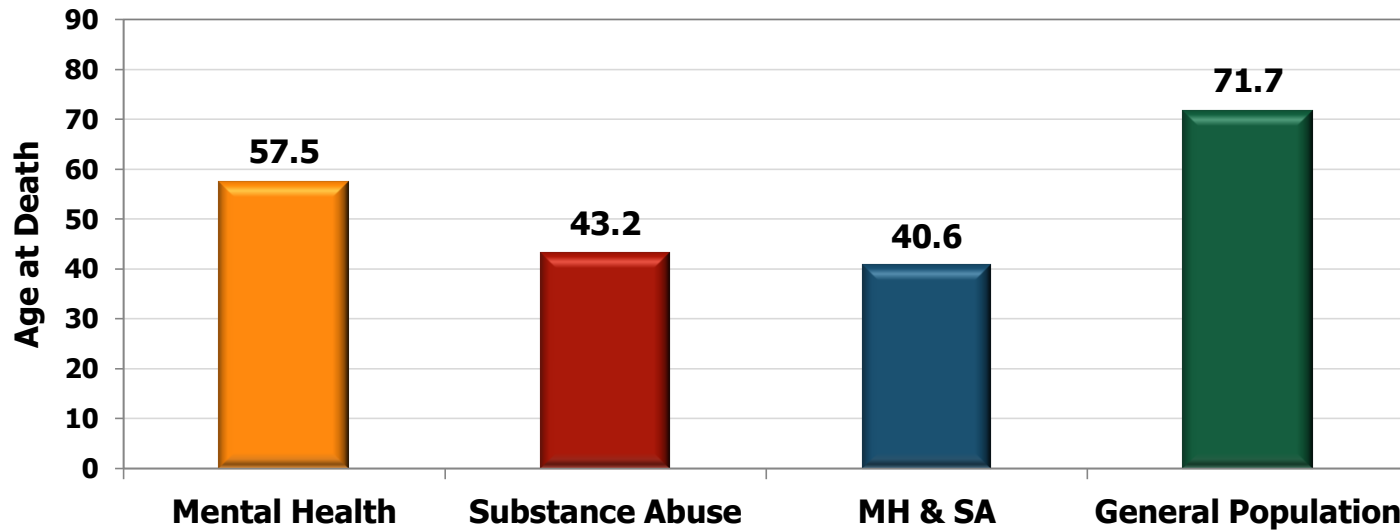
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# Oklahomans – Especially Those With Addiction or Mental Illness – Die Too Soon

As most people know, mental and addictive disorders can be deadly, but the average lifespan of Oklahomans with these diseases is far shorter than the average Oklahoman.

**Mortality**  
Average Age at Death by Cohort





# Major Diseases Related to Substance Abuse

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Some chronic diseases related to substance abuse include:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Alcohol-induced liver diseases
- Cancer



# Cancer Statistics

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Heavy drinking is associated with higher incidence of:

- Esophageal
- Breast
- Liver
- Colon
- Stomach
- Pancreas and
- Lung cancers

*(Alcohol and Cancer Alcohol Alert From NIAAA)*

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# Without Proper Treatment, Many Turn to Self-Medication

- Of the approximately 250,000 Oklahoma adults meeting criteria for needing addiction treatment, many initiated their substance abuse as children. In fact, more than 31,640 state youth also need substance abuse treatment.
- Oklahomans start young. One out of every four high school students has consumed alcohol before the age of 13 and one in 10 has tried marijuana.
- Children who drink before age 15 are **five times** more likely to have problems with alcohol as adults than those who wait until the legal age of 21.
- Abuse of over-the-counter and prescription drugs also is increasing, with 23% of state 12<sup>th</sup> graders and 21% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders reporting they had used prescription drugs without a prescription.



Owen Franken / PNI

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# Addiction and Oklahoma's Criminal Justice System

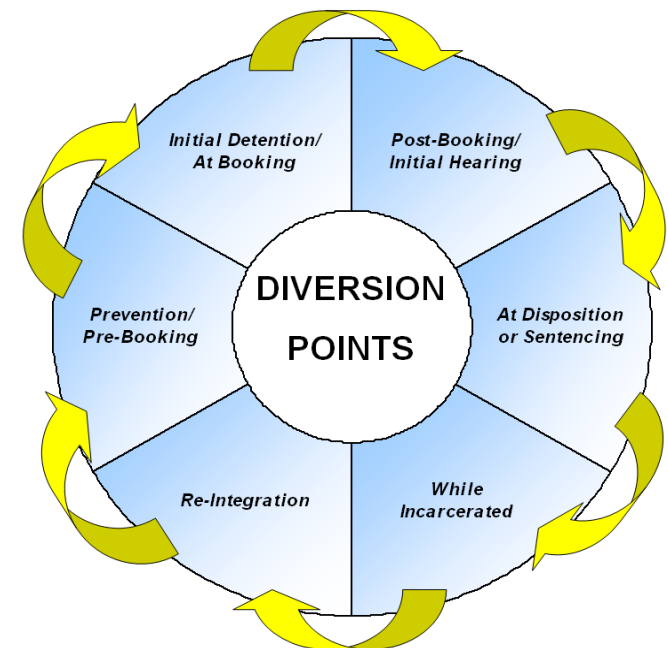
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- A huge expense related to untreated addictive disorders exists in our criminal justice system.
- In terms of substance abuse, 33% of inmates were imprisoned for drug and alcohol offenses, and at least 50% were incarcerated for a crime related to substance abuse.
- Among offenders, distribution of drugs is the top offense and the possession of drugs is the second most frequently occurring offense.

# Oklahoma's Proposed 'Smart on Crime' Package – Sound Policy

ODMHSAS is advocating a 'Smart on Crime' package at the state level. The components of the package include programs to address mental illness and addiction at a number of diversion points:

- Prevention/Pre-Booking
- Initial Detention/At Booking
- Post-Booking/Initial Hearing
- At Disposition or Sentencing
- While Incarcerated
- During Reintegration into the community





# Treatment, As Opposed to Incarceration, Is Much More Cost-Effective

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- The average cost to maintain an inmate in prison is \$48 per day. For someone on a prison mental health unit, the cost jumps to approximately \$175 per day.
- Providing appropriate substance abuse services to someone in the community to keep them from entering the criminal justice system costs less than \$15/day.

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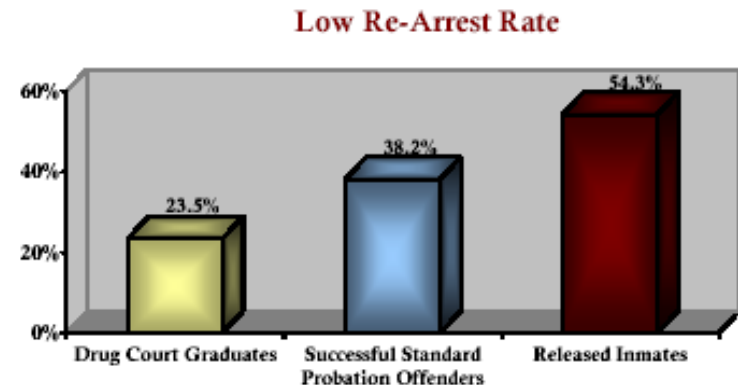
# Drug Courts: One Example of a Successful Diversion Program

## Drug Courts:

- Drug courts redirect certain, non-violent drug offenders into a highly structured, judicially monitored treatment program rather than sending them to prison.
- In 1995, Oklahoma had 1 drug court. Now, 53 drug courts serve 62 counties, with 4,500 active participants.

## Outcome Data:

- Between entry and graduation
  - Unemployment dropped by nearly 87%
  - Monthly income rose 82%
  - Children living with parents increased 50%
  - Re-arrest rates decreased significantly (see chart at right)



Fewer offenders being recycled into the criminal justice system.



# Recovery is Possible

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- Recovery from addiction is possible. It is a disease of the brain that can be treated.
- Recovery has no age limit. Help is available for people across the lifespan.
- Additionally, it is possible to meet the needs of those with addictive disorders at virtually any stage of involvement (**and, ideally, before involvement**) in the criminal justice system – and divert them into more effective, less expensive alternatives.
- The question isn't whether or not we can afford to treat people who have addictive disorders. It's, "Can we afford not to?"
- The issue is not going away. The past decade has brought about a dramatic increase in the number of people seeking services for substance abuse disorders.
- If you or someone you love is in need of services, please call the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services' **"Reachout" hotline at 1-800-522-9054.**

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