

How Alcohol/Drug Abuse Can Lead to Violent Crimes

By Miranda Valdez and Karla Garcia

In the recent years, the prison population exploded beyond capacity because of two of the most dangerous substances in the world: alcohol and drugs. Eighty percent of offenders abuse drugs or alcohol. Drugs and alcohol can lead to violent crimes.

About sixty percent of inmates tested positive for illegal drugs at arrest. Three million drug related crimes occur each year such as murder, assault, child and spousal abuse and rape. Many offenders leave a trail of crimes such as burglary and theft “to feed the habit.”

Thirty seven percent out of two million offenders that are currently in jail confessed they were drunk at arrest. Alcohol is pervasive and legal, therefore it plays a strong role in crimes and other social problems. One out of many cases was in Texas, where America’s “affluenza” teen, named Ethan Couch, had his case transferred to an adult court system where he could face decades behind bars for violating his probation. At the age of sixteen Ethan killed four people and seriously wounded two others while driving drunk on the freeway. After the incident, he fled to Mexico to avoid jail time for the fatal 2013 DUI wreck. “Couch had been serving a sentence of 10 years' probation for the deadly crash. The Associated Press reports that now, "if he violates his probation during that time, he could get up to 10 years in prison for each of the four people killed in the accident.” Today, alcohol is involved in forty percent of all violent crimes. Two thirds of victims were attacked by a close friend, family member, or partner, and thirty one percent of victimizations by strangers are alcohol related. Nearly twelve thousand occur with families or former spouses. Seven hundred forty four thousand incidents happen with acquaintances.