



DWI Court: Making Your Community A Safer Place

A Publication by the  **NCDC**
NATIONAL CENTER
FOR DWI COURTS

April is National Alcohol Awareness Month

The **Hotsheet** is a NCDC publication to provide important information in a timely fashion.

It is published on an as needed basis.

If you have any suggestions or items to be disseminated for this publication, please contact David Wallace, Director, National Center for DWI Courts.

For 26 years, April has been Alcohol Awareness Month: a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of the health and social problems that excessive alcohol consumption can cause for individuals, their families, and their communities. A significant percentage of individuals will become dependent on alcohol during their lifetime; for men: 17 percent, for women: eight percent. More than 18 million individuals or 8.5 percent of Americans suffer from alcohol-use disorders. In addition, millions of individuals, family members and children experience the devastating effects of alcohol misuse and addiction by someone in their lives.

The economic cost of alcoholism and alcohol abuse for 2006 was recently estimated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to be \$223 billion (approximately \$750 per person) or about \$1.90 per drink. Researchers found the costs largely resulted from losses in workplace productivity,

health care expenses, law enforcement and other criminal justice expenses related to excessive alcohol consumption, and motor vehicle crash costs from impaired driving. Each year, more than 10,000 people are killed in crashes involving drunk driving, with 70 percent involving hardcore offenders, those with a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) above .15 or a previous DWI conviction.

DWI Courts Taking on the Challenge

DWI Courts have emerged as a critical solution to hardcore drunk driving due to their success at reducing recidivism and saving valuable criminal justice resources. This month, more than 550 DWI Courts will hold hardcore DWI offenders accountable for their behavior through a combination of intense supervision and treatment for alcohol addiction. As a result, hardcore DWI offenders leave the criminal justice system responsible, productive and law-abiding citizens. The National Center for DWI Courts (NCDC) is the only organization in the country committed to the implementation and support of DWI Courts, the most successful criminal justice response to hardcore drunk driving.

“Alcohol Awareness Month provides an important opportunity for DWI Courts to talk about the disease of alcohol addiction and how,

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THE PROBLEMS WITH PROBLEM DRINKING
Nearly 17.6 million Americans are alcoholics or have alcohol problems. The effects of alcohol abuse are wide-reaching, from health and safety to economic productivity - to death from abuse or drunk driving.

WHAT IS ALCOHOLISM?
ALCOHOLISM IS A DISEASE WITH FOUR MAIN FEATURES:

- CRAVING:** People with alcoholism often have a strong desire to drink.
- LOSS OF CONTROL:** People with alcoholism often drink more than they intend to.
- PHYSICAL DEPENDENCE:** People with alcoholism often experience withdrawal symptoms when they stop drinking.
- TOLERANCE:** People with alcoholism often need to drink more to feel the same effects.

WHO HAS ALCOHOL PROBLEMS?

MEN

- 62% Reported drinking in the past 30 days.
- 47% Of those men had binge drinking in the past 30 days.
- 12.5 million men have alcohol problems.
- 17% of men who reported drinking in the past 30 days are alcoholics.

WOMEN

- 5.3 million women in the U.S. who reported drinking in the past 30 days.
- 37% of those women had binge drinking in the past 30 days.
- 17% of women who reported drinking in the past 30 days are alcoholics.
- 8% of women who reported drinking in the past 30 days are alcoholics.

WOMEN WHO DRINK ARE MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP ALCOHOLIC LIVER DISEASE.
LIVER DISEASE IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG ALCOHOLIC LIVER DISEASE PATIENTS.

Click here for the full image or to download it.



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The Center is supported by a charitable contribution from Beam Global Spirits & Wine, Inc.

We're on the web
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ABOUT THE NCDC

The National Center for DWI Courts (NCDC), a professional services division of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), is the only dedicated advocacy, policy, training and technical support organization for DWI Courts in the nation.

Dedicated to delivering research-driven practices to reduce impaired driving recidivism nationwide, the NCDC is designed to: Expand DWI Courts nationwide; Improve DWI Court operations through training and technical assistance; and Maintain operational standards for DWI Courts.

Established in June 2007 through a partnership with Beam Global Spirits and Wine, the NCDC works toward eliminating the hardcore impaired driver through the expansion of DWI Courts nationwide. The NCDC is now bringing DWI Courts to the forefront of the repeat impaired driving problem. It is through that effort and the expansion of DWI Courts that NCDC's message of "Making Your Community a Safer Place" is coming true.

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with using intensive supervision and long-term treatment, we are able to turn a person's life around," said **David Wallace**, Director of the NCDC. "Addiction is not a moral failing; it is a treatable disease, one that DWI Courts are successfully dealing with on a daily basis."

DWI Courts Making a Difference

A recent evaluation completed in Georgia found that repeat DWI offenders participating in three DWI Courts were up to 65 percent less likely to be re-arrested for a new DWI offense than DWI offenders sentenced in a traditional format. A similar study in Michigan found that DWI Courts had better outcomes in nearly all

comparisons with traditional sentencing. In one county, the participants were up to 19 times less likely to reoffend. The finding also



noted that DWI Courts saved the criminal justice system time and money when compared to a traditional court. Orange County, California now has four DWI Courts in operation. Since

2004 when the first one there opened its doors, the DWI Courts have saved more than 109,000 jail bed nights and provided more than \$11 million in savings to taxpayers.

DWI Courts are a significant component of a comprehensive approach to ending drunk driving; they are also one more tool in the effort to reduce alcohol addiction for individuals across the country. **Mr. Wallace** noted: "DWI Courts are making a difference for individuals everywhere, restoring families, saving lives, and making our communities safer."

To download additional talking points for Alcohol Awareness Month and drunk driving, click [here](#).