



FAITH & FACTS

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Health and Wholeness

What does the Bible say?

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God **he created them.** (Genesis 1:27)



Do not be among winebibbers or among gluttonous eaters of meat; for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe them in rags ... Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger late over wine, those who keep trying mixed wines. Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder.

(Proverbs 23:20-21 and 29-32)

I came that you might have life and have it abundantly. (John 10:10)

What does The United Methodist Church say?

We affirm our long-standing support of abstinence from alcohol as a faithful witness to God's liberating and redeeming love for persons. We support abstinence from the use of any illegal drugs. Since the use of illegal drugs, as well as illegal and problematic use of alcohol, is a major factor in crime, disease, death, and family dysfunction, we support educational programs as well as other prevention strategies encouraging abstinence from illegal drug use and, with regard to those who choose to consume alcoholic beverages, judicious use with deliberate and intentional restraint, with Scripture as a guide. (Social Principles ¶162 J)



We commit ourselves to assisting those who suffer from abuse or dependence, and their families, in finding freedom through Jesus Christ and in finding good opportunities for treatment, for ongoing counseling, and for reintegration into society. (Social Principles ¶162 J)

What do the facts say?

The younger a person begins using alcohol, the greater the chance of developing alcohol dependence or abuse some time in their life. If a person waits until age 21 before taking his or her first drink, these risks decrease by over 60%.¹

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death. More than 6.3 million children under the age of 18 will eventually die of smoking-related illnesses unless current rates are reversed.²

On an average day in 2006, youths used the following substances for the first time: 7,970 drank alcohol for the first time, 4,348 used an illicit drug for the first time, 4,082 smoked cigarettes for the first time, 3,577 used marijuana for the first time, and 2,517 used pain relievers nonmedically for the first time.³

¹Grant, BF and DA Dawson, "Age of Onset of Alcohol Use and Its Association with DSM-IV Alcohol Abuse and Dependence: Results from the National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiologic Study," *Journal of Substance Abuse*, 9:103-110, 1997.

²Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 2006.


³SAMHSA, A Day in the Life of Adolescents: Substance Abuse Facts, 2007.

What do you say?

Take action for justice ...

- Remind your member of Congress that alcohol and tobacco, currently legal substances are the leading causes of addiction. Encourage them to uphold and further restrict access to alcohol and tobacco by underage youths. Actively discourage members of Congress from taking contributions from the tobacco and alcohol industries. Take action today at www.umpower.org.
- Learn more about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs by visiting the following Web sites: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (www.samhsa.gov), the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (www.tobaccofreekids.org).
- Make a commitment to value health for others and for yourself equally.





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