

THE LEADER IN LIFE RESTORATION

Addiction and Poverty



ABSTRACT

The issues of Poverty are hunger, education, family, racial inequality, social inequality, disability and more. This month we look at addiction and its role in perpetuating poverty.

Mission Statement: *Partnering with the community to serve those who are in crisis to restore them to freedom and purpose through the transforming power of the Gospel.*

Addiction does not discriminate; it can affect the young as well as the older generations. The rich or poor can be affected. Many factors go into the reasons why people start abusing drugs, including genetics, mental health, psychological factors, and childhood experiences.

Pre-teen and teens are easily influenced sometimes by peer pressure or just experimenting, and many become addicted. This is a time when the brain has not fully developed. Some use to cover deep emotions they don't want to deal with. It is unclear why some can use and never touch it again and some get addicted.

According to INTEGRIS Arcadia Trails Center for Addiction Recovery, addiction has reached a crisis epidemic in Oklahoma. There are so many stories of devastating loss from addiction and overdose in our state. In 2018 there were nearly 600 Oklahomans on a statewide waiting list for residential substance abuse treatment services. When you consider one in four Oklahomans suffers from some sort mental illness it is easy to see the urgent need for more addiction and mental health services in our state. Integris Arcadia Trails center for Addiction and Recovery plans to open in the spring of 2019.

Addiction Statistics

Over 90% of those with an addiction began

Some have claimed that THC (Marijuana is the gateway drug.) A case could be made that it is actually tobacco is actually the gateway drug. Nearly everyone that has an addiction also smokes tobacco.

drinking, smoking or using illicit drugs before the age of 18. Over 20 million Americans over the age of 12 have an addiction (excluding tobacco) according to The Addiction Center.

Marijuana is the most common illicit drug used for the first time. In 2011 marijuana had the highest rates of dependence out of all illicit substances.

Notice: If we can stop addiction from starting in our children we can reduce the addiction rate by 90%

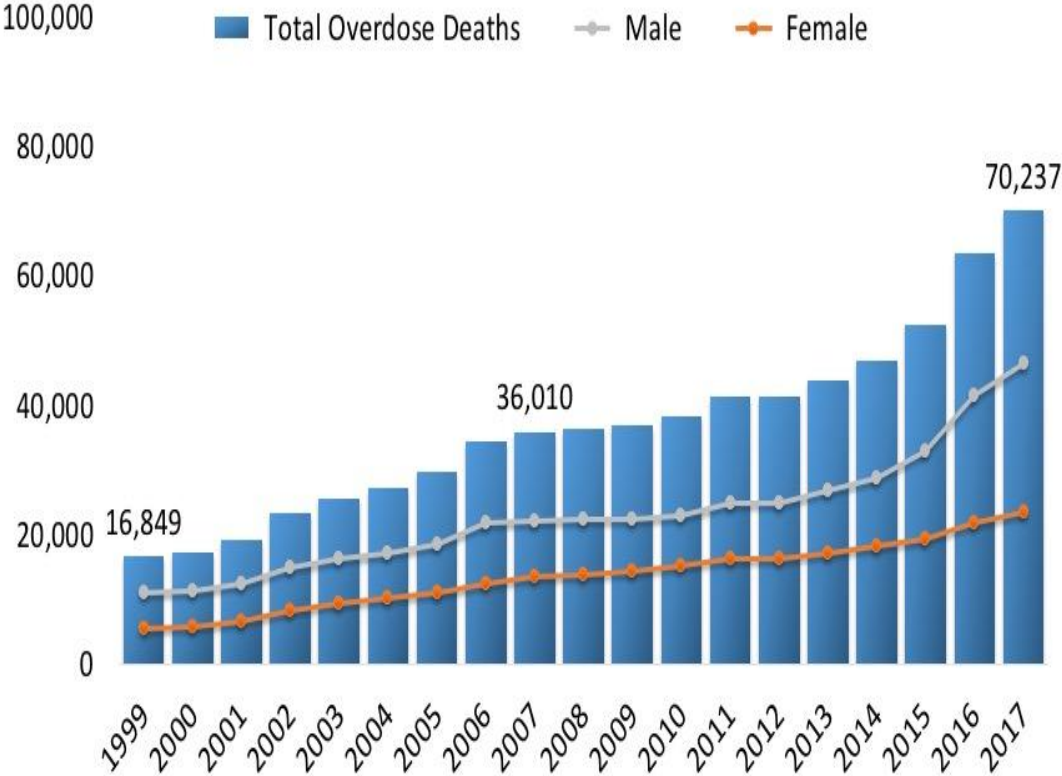
Even here at the GRM we encounter those that don't see a problem with smoking marijuana; they argue over it now being legal and even having a medical card for its use. Sadly, with that thought process it affects those guests that are not willing to quit using, whether it be that it limits them on obtaining any type of employment or climbing the ladder for a successful career. I have also seen many that come into the program that are receiving checks for disability that are not able to pass a UA for either marijuana or methamphetamine. We see a lot of substance abuse and those fighting to maintain sobriety, many times they want to be sober just have a hard time getting there. According to our Men's and Women's directors at GRM over half of the guests that check in have some form of addiction.

Drug Addiction and Poverty

Illegal activity that takes place at drug houses typically goes unreported to include rape, assault and theft. This makes sense. How can you call the police when you are in the middle of committing a crime.

Those living in poverty lack access to rehabs and have fewer choices than those that are financially able to pay for rehabs or have insurance that will pay for it. It can be hard for those in poverty to pass up the opportunity to sell drugs to make fast money. Also being unable to afford to move to better areas can make it difficult for those trying to recover. There are many AA, NA, Celebrate Recovery and Doorways of Hope that is accessible to anyone regardless of financial means.

Figure 1. National Drug Overdose Deaths Number Among All Ages, by Gender, 1999-2017



Source: : Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2017 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released December, 2018

Finding Possible Solutions

From conversations with those at the Gospel Rescue Mission in Muskogee, Oklahoma as well as conversations with other addiction recovery groups we hear consistently the following motivations to get clean:

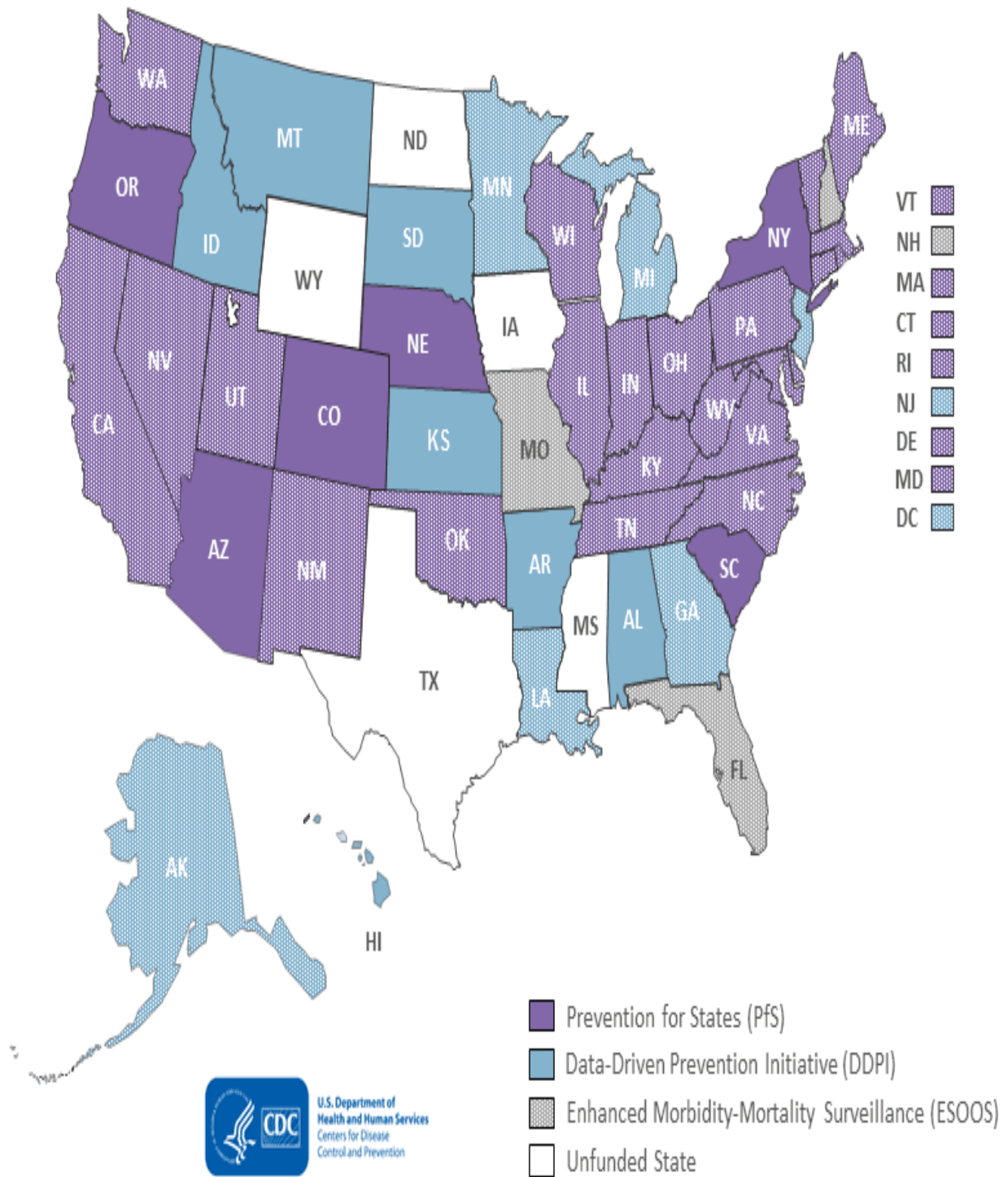
- Jail
- Health Issues (Must be serious and scary enough to drive a new life)
- Women often get clean to get their children returned to them.
- New Friends

When men and women are ready for recovery we suggest the following:

- **More opportunity:** Having more Rehabs available for those in poverty would do remarkable things. Most rehab facilities are expensive. Additionally regardless of cost there are typically waiting lists. The window where someone is ready to accept help for their addiction is fairly short. We must offer the help at that moment or they will return to the life that they know.
- **Employment:** Jobs willing to hire felons to give those meaning in life, a reason to get up daily and jobs that provide the opportunity for people to move above the poverty line. The felony label often creates a sense of hopelessness.

- **Bridges out of Poverty and Getting out while Getting Ahead** courses in your community can make a difference. In this class they make new relationships and learn new skills.
- **Education** to build strong families including single family homes.
- **Strong family role models** from church or other organizations.
- **Laying the foundation for today's children:** This must be done in the media where drug and alcohol abuse are often glorified.

Overdose Prevention in States (OPIS)



Sources

Cdc.gov/ addiction

Opioid overdose cdc

The Recovery Village

Monarch Shores

INTEGRIS the drug overdose crisis in Oklahoma

Addiction Statistics

Doorways of Hope

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