



Put In Your 2¢ Worth...
**About 2¢ a drink yields \$44 million annually
to reduce the impact of
alcohol problems in Missouri.**

Question:

If alcohol is a drug, isn't it inappropriate to refer to "drugs and alcohol" or "alcohol and drugs" -- combinations which we see in print frequently?

Answer:

Yes, those formulations continue to be used, even among those who know very well that alcohol is a drug. To make sure that the relationship is properly understood, prevention professionals recommend consistent use of the phrase "alcohol and OTHER drugs." A number of reasons and considerations can be cited for other usage, some of which are presented below.

MISSOURI ALCOHOL IMPACT FACT #26

- We are not always concerned about accurate, precise or systematic use of language. It is usually enough for us to "feel" that what we say will be understood by others.
- Choice of language is not necessarily the result of careful selection or clear thinking, with objects in classifications or categories. It may simply reflect usage by others, which is adopted uncritically. A 2/20/05 Google search yielded about 2,940,000 results for "alcohol and drug," and about 488,000 results for "alcohol and other drug."
- The desire to include "alcohol" in the subject (rather than leave it silent) may outweigh other considerations. Or the desire to distinguish between alcohol and "illicit" or "street" drugs may outweigh the risk of inviting an "apples and fruit" comparison.
- Some usage is inspired by public relations or politics. For example, promoters and advertisers want to emphasize the pleasures rather than the problems associated with their products, i.e. intoxicating "adult" beverages. They do not want them to be associated with the undesirable characteristics of other mood-altering drugs. For this reason, they oppose the reference to "other drugs."
- The "Parents: The Anti-Drug" media campaign urges parents to "learn the signs of drug and alcohol use." At the same time, Alcohol becomes #1 in the alphabetical list with the heading: "Find out more about drugs ..."

***For more information call one of the
Missouri's Alcohol Impact Coalition members below:***

Alicia Ozenberger
Missouri's Youth Adult Alliance
573/635-6669
aozenberger@actmissouri.org

Gerrit DenHartog
Community Activist/Alcohol Policy Consultant
573/893-5448
gdenhartog@sprintmail.com

Angela Hirsch
MADD-Jefferson City
573/636-2460
madd-ed@earthlink.net