A FAITH COUNTS STUDY: **Belief, Behavior, and Belonging:**

How Faith is Indispensable in Preventing and Recovering from Substance Abuse

This study reviews the voluminous empirical evidence on faith's contribution to preventing people from falling victim to substance abuse and helping them recover from it.

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Belief, Behavior, and Belonging: How Faith is Indispensable in Preventing and Recovering from Substance Abuse

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Abstract

Abstract This study reviews the voluminous empirical evidence on faith's contribution to preventing people from falling victim to substance abuse and helping them recover from it. We find that 73% of addiction treatment programs in the USA include a spirituality-based element as embodied in the 12-step programs and fellowships inifrom it. We find that 73% of addiction treatment programs in the USA include a spirituality-based element, as embodied in the 12-step programs and fellowships ini-tially popularized by Alcoholics Anonymous, the vast majority of which emphasize ov of faith_based substance abuse treatment facilities, recovery programs, and supreliance on God or a Higher Power to stay sober. We introduce and fiest out a typol-ogy of faith-based substance abuse treatment facilities, recovery programs, and sup-ter and the typology provides important background as we then move on to ogy of faith-based substance abuse treatment facilities, recovery programs, and sup-port groups. This typology provides important background as we then move on to make an economic valuation of nearly 130,000 congregation-based substance abuse recovery support programs in the USA. We find that these faith-based volunteer sup-port groups contribute up to \$316.6 billion in savings to the US economy every year at no cost to tax pavers. While negative experiences with religion (e.g., clergy sex port groups contribute up to \$316.6 billion in savings to the US economy every year at no cost to tax payers. While negative experiences with religion (e.g., clergy sex abuse and other horrendous examples) have been a contributory factor to substance abuse among some victime given that more than 84% of scientific studies show that abuse and other horrendous examples) have been a contributory factor to substance abuse among some victims, given that more than 84% of scientific studies show that faith is a positive factor in addiction prevention or recovery and a risk in less than 2% of the studies reviewed, we conclude that the value of faith-oriented approaches to substance abuse prevention and recovery is indisputable. And, by extension, we 2% of the studies reviewed, we conclude that the value of faith-oriented approaches to substance abuse prevention and recovery is indisputable. And, by extension, we also conclude that the decline in religious affiliation in the USA is not only a con-cern for religious organizations but constitutes a national health concern cern for religious organizations but constitutes a national health cor Keywords Substance abuse · Addiction · Faith · Valuation · Religion and spirituality 🖾 Brian J. Grim

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84% of studies find that faith reduces drug abuse risk.

86% of studies find that faith reduces alcohol abuse risk.

Up to 82% of clients who experience a spiritual awakening during substance abuse treatment and recovery were completely abstinent at a 1-year follow-up compared with 55% of non-spiritually awakened clients.

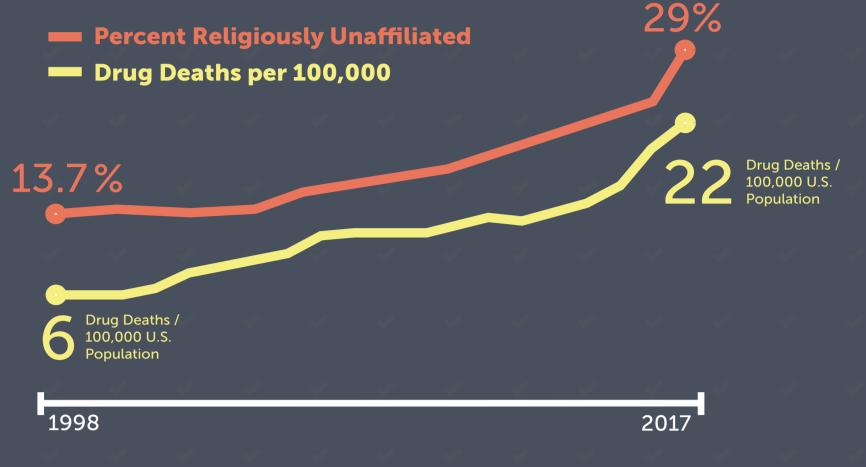
Declining religious affiliation is a national health concern.

Americans simultaneously identifying with religion less and suffering from substance abuse more.

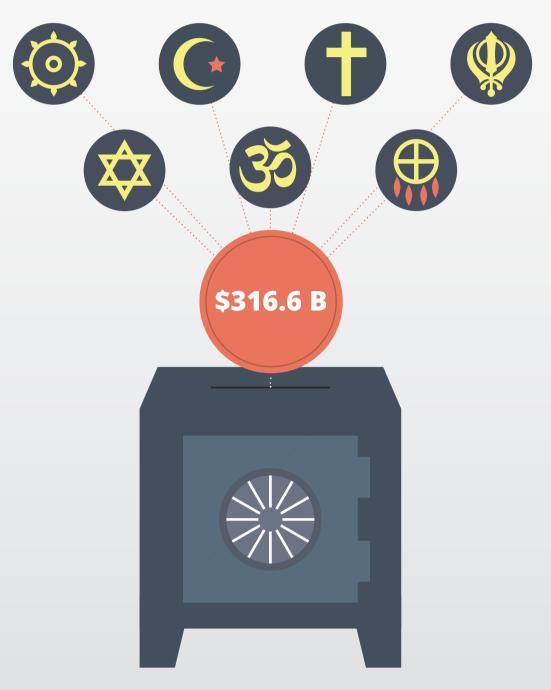
of all substance treatment programs have a faith component, as typified

by 12-Step Programs pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous.

20 million Americans suffer from substance use disorder (SUD).



\$316.6 Billion in annual savings to the U.S. Government



More Importantly 20,000+ lives saved every year

Parent Alert

Religious youth are three times less likely to binge drink.

Religious youth are four times less likely to use illegal drugs.

For teens with SUD, 62% cite staying connected with God as the top reason for staying sober after rehab.

The Faith Factor

Extensive evidence-based research on addiction shows that the efficacy of faith includes not only the behaviors people engage in (or don't engage in) because of their faith and the support people find in belonging to faith communities, but also people's religious and spiritual beliefs themselves.



Medical & psychological intervention is life-saving and necessary with or without faith.



Faith is significantly beneficial in **prevention**.



The faith community is uniquely effective in mobilizing crisis response.



Faith communities offer ongoing emotional and social support.



Faith is significantly beneficial in long-term recovery.

PERCEPTION VS. REALITY

Only 46% of Americans think that religion can answer today's problems. However, religion answers one of our biggest problems—preventing and recovering from addiction.

Faith in Action

Nearly 130,000 congregations of all faiths provide recovery assistance. A few examples:



Teen Challenge USA.

Adult & Teen Challenge is a worldwide network of Christian faith-based corporations intended to help teenagers, adults, and families with problems such as substance abuse or self-destructive behavior.



For My Baby and Me. Launched by Trenton Catholic

Charities in 2017 to meet the critical needs of pregnant, addicted women.



Beit T'Shuvah. A 140-bed Jewish treatment center using psychology, Judaism, and a synagogue community.



The Wellbriety Movement. A 12-step program incorporating NativeAmerican cultures and spirituality.



Salvation Army.

Provides the most free residential recovery programs, such as Harbor Light, a 136-bed center with 85% completion rate.



Millati Islami World Services. A 12-step program founded in Baltimore that incorporates Islamic principles.



Training.

In Tennessee alone, in a partnership with the state government, about 250 congregations have been certified to meet recovery needs.



Addiction Recovery Program. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints runs a program that is unique in that it helps those struggling with any addiction.

OPIOID CRISIS BREAKTHROUGH

CHI St. Gabriel's Health Opioid Program. A Catholic hospital

network treatment and recovery program nationally recognized for leading a faith-based charge against opioid abuse.





All sourcing information can be found at FaithFacts.com