

FEATURE

Students are likely future Alcoholics

Students are the future victims of alcoholism and alcohol abuse. A trend seems to be developing that closely links heavy usage of alcohol with students. It begins when they are young and eventually leads to increased consumption when they enter the work field.

A Statistics Canada report found that 77 per cent of the student population use alcohol and that 16 per cent of those drinkers were heavy users. The only classes that surpassed student alcohol consumption were the professional/managerial class and retired/pension class.

The fact that students eventually progress into the professional and managerial classes is enough to tie the two groups together. The retired/pension class cannot be considered as a separate class since they are a synthesis of all classes.

The professional/managerial class ranked first in the total amount of alcohol users with 80 per cent, and second in the proportion of heavy users with 16 per cent.

The report also concluded that "the proportion of alcohol users directly increased with income," while there was some evidence of a direct relationship between income and the proportion of heavy drinkers among males, it was found that there was a higher

proportion of heavy drinkers among low income families.

Fourteen drinks per week was considered as a heavy drinker and the report concluded that within young adults, one in every five heavy users are male and one in every 20 are female. "On this basis the number of young adult heavy drinkers may have exceeded half a million in 1978, of which an estimated 430,000 were males and 110,000 females," reported Statistics Canada.

Staff Sergeant Malcolmson said the "shift is to alcohol away from drugs."

Mallway said that the youngest alcoholic he has ever worked with was 14 years old. Although he said he does not come across a lot of students at the Detox Center he admitted that there was heavy drinking among teenagers especially in one night binges or weekend binges.

Mallway explained that just because you are not an excessive drinker throughout the week, it does not mean that you are not an alcoholic. He referred to the people who limit their heavy drinking to the weekends as weekend alcoholics.

"A lot of the kids are the incidental type of drinkers. But it is a progressive disease - it only gets worse," he said.

females. Young adult women constituted 60 per cent of all estimated female heavy drinkers in Quebec, 50 per cent in the Atlantic region, 30-35 per cent in Ontario and British Columbia, and only as little as 15 per cent in the Prairies. Much of the female drinking in the Prairies is done by the older women.

Despite the growing problem of alcoholism, there are many established organizations to assist the alcoholic. The most prominent and most successful being Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).

But it is the Detox centers that often points the person suffering from alcoholism in the direction of these other programs.

The Hamilton Detox Center began in 1972 after the Ontario Government recognized that it made sense dollar-wise to establish detox centers rather than putting alcoholics in jail or in hospitals.

Rod McEwan, Assistant Director of Hamilton's Detox Center said that in 1972 it cost the government approximately \$50 to keep a man in jail overnight and \$50 in the hospital, whereas the Detox Center could provide the service for \$13.50.

Staff Sergeant Gerry Malcolmson of the Hamilton Wentworth police force, responsible for the Community services department said, "It is a matter of dealing with the victim (alcoholic person) as a human being. On the sidewalk they are often considered by people in the community to be repulsive, but locking them in jail accomplishes nothing."

Staff Sergeant Malcolmson explained that the Detox Center is one way to correct the problem. "The Detox Center treats the victim," said Malcolmson.

Before the government purchased the massive black building it was home for a family of Chinese and a headquarters for one of Hamilton's motorcycle gangs. Today, the center located at 152 Wilson Street in Hamilton's north end, is a temporary home, equipped with twenty beds for Hamilton's alcohol diseased men.

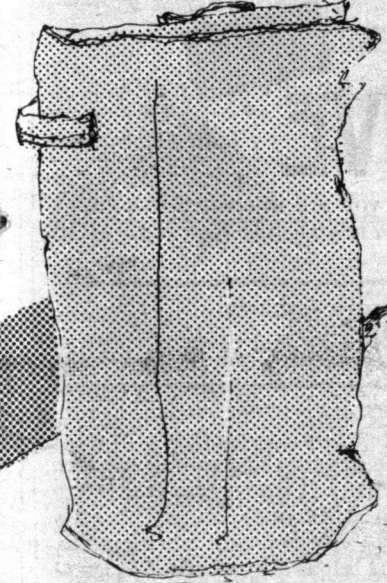
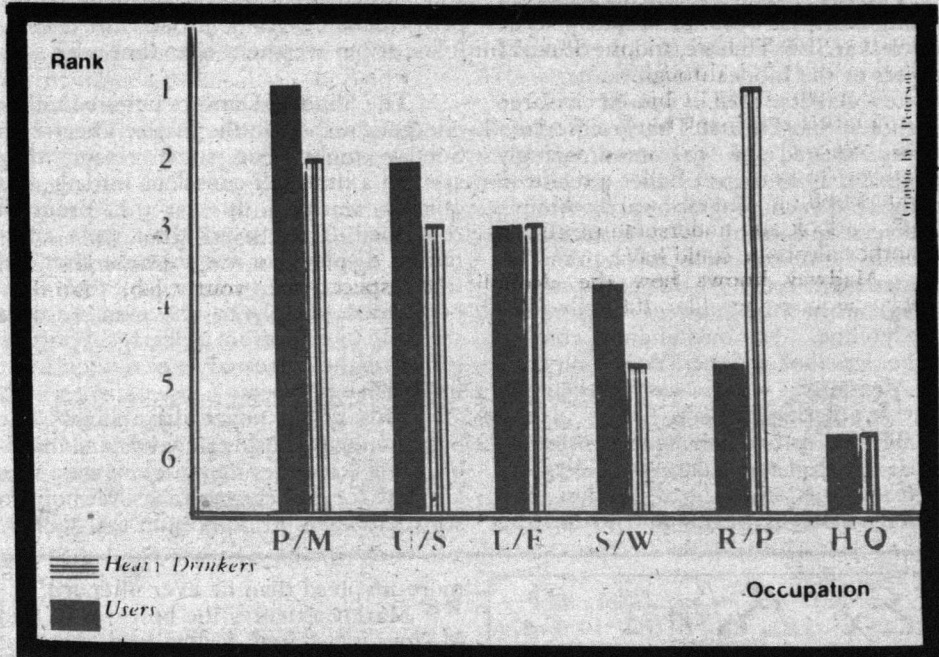
"The main thing is to give them plenty of sleep and juices," said Mallway. The residents also get three meals a day during their three to four day stay.

At present, besides the Center, there are three halfway houses, three missions, a one month live-in center that involves an intensive course on alcohol offered at Chedoke Hospital, and a drop in center for alcoholics who are looking for friendship throughout the day.

"The fellas need support, they don't have any outside. The only friends they have are alcoholics," said Mallway.

These are the facts

	Proportion of users (%)	Rank	Heavy Drinkers Proportion	Rank
1. Professional/Managerial	80	1	16	2
2. Unemployed/Students	77	2	16	3
3. Labourers/Farmers	77	3	16	3
4. Sales/White Collar	73	4	9	5
5. Retired/Pension	71	5	18	1
6. Homemaker Only	59	6	4	6



MALCOLMSON Gateway '82

... works if they want it

They send you to a... They give you the... that is needed and they... there to help you... you are and whenever help... Alcoholics are lonely... they call alcoholism "the... ease," said Mallway... eight years I have not... thing better," said one... "It's one guy helping... with these same problems."



... deaths are on the rise

Canada The Statistics... report stated that "deaths... rrhosis of the liver was... 978, versus 1799 in 1970... period the mortality rate... 100 increased by nearly... for males (from 11.3 in... 6.6 deaths in 1978) and... ird in females (from 5.6

It was noted that between 1976-78 male cirrhosis rates have stabilized while female rates have increased.

Motor vehicle accidents accounted for the majority of alcohol related deaths. Heart condition was described as another related cause of death when mixed with alcohol.

It was noted that the earliest vulnerable age for alcohol poisoning and toxic effects causing death was 30 years.

Males experienced cirrhosis most often at age 35. Alcoholism and alcohol psychosis became noticeable at the age of 40.

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