

Data Spotlight

National Survey on Drug Use and Health

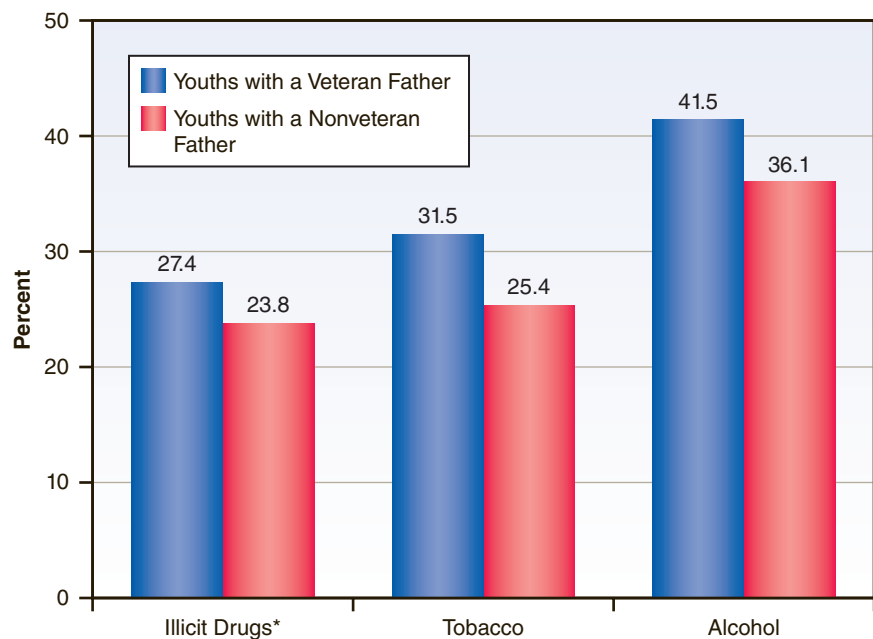
November 10, 2011

Youths Living with a Veteran Father Are More Likely to Use Illicit Drugs, Tobacco, or Alcohol

Prevention specialists have identified many factors that increase the risk of substance use by adolescents. Among these factors are parents' use of tobacco,¹ alcohol, or illicit drugs. In addition, some research has shown that veterans are more likely than nonveterans to use substances.²

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, from 2002 to 2010, an annual average of 2.8 million youths aged 12 to 17 lived with a father who had served in the Armed Forces (i.e., Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard). Compared with youths whose fathers were not veterans, children of veteran fathers were significantly more likely to have used illicit drugs, tobacco, or alcohol (Figure).

Lifetime Substance Use among Youths Aged 12 to 17 Living with Their Fathers, by Father's Veteran Status: 2002 to 2010



Note: Difference in estimates by father's veteran status for all substances is statistically significant at the .05 level.

* Illicit drugs include marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or prescription-type drugs used nonmedically. Nonmedical use of prescription-type drugs includes the nonmedical use of pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, or sedatives and does not include over-the-counter drugs.

¹ Ashley, O. S., Penne, M. A., Loomis, K. M., Kan, M., Bauman, K. E., Aldridge, M., Gfroerer, J. C., & Novak, S. P. (2008). Moderation of the association between parent and adolescent cigarette smoking by selected sociodemographic variables. *Addictive Behaviors*, 33(9), 1227-1230.

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. (November 10, 2005). *The NSDUH Report: Substance use, dependence, and treatment among veterans*. Rockville, MD. [Available at <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k5/vets/vets.htm>].

Source: The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The survey collects data by administering questionnaires to a representative sample of the population through face-to-face interviews at their places of residence.

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