

# The NSDUH Report

January 5, 2007

## Substance Use in the 15 Largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas: 2002-2005

### In Brief

- Among the 15 largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), the San Francisco (12.7 percent) and Detroit (9.5 percent) MSAs had rates of past month illicit drug use that were significantly higher than the rate for the Nation as a whole (8.1 percent) during the combined years of 2002 to 2005
- Among the 15 largest MSAs, the Chicago (25.7 percent) and Houston (25.6 percent) MSAs had higher rates of binge drinking than the national average (22.7 percent)
- Among the 15 largest MSAs, only the Detroit (27.4 percent) MSA had a rate of past month cigarette use that was higher than the national average (25.3 percent)

Research has shown that rates of substance use vary across States and across areas within States.<sup>1,2</sup> The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) asks persons aged 12 or older to report on illicit drug use, binge alcohol use, and cigarette use in the month prior to the interview. *Illicit drugs* refer to marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), inhalants, hallucinogens, heroin, or prescription-type drugs used nonmedically.<sup>3</sup> *Binge alcohol use* is defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion (i.e., at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other) on at least 1 day in the past 30 days.<sup>4</sup>

This issue of *The NSDUH Report* presents estimates of illicit drug use, binge alcohol use, and cigarette use among the 15 largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) and compares estimates for each MSA with the Nation as a whole.<sup>5</sup> Only differences in estimates that are statistically significant are discussed in the text.<sup>6</sup> All estimates of substance use in this report are annual averages based on combined data from the 2002 to 2005 NSDUHs.

**Table 1. U.S. 2005 Population (in Millions) of 15 Largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	Annual Census Estimates of the Population (July 1, 2005; in Millions)*
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	18.7
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA	12.9
Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI	9.4
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	5.8
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	5.8
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, FL	5.4
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	5.3
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	5.2
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	4.9
Detroit-Warren-Livonia, MI	4.5
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH	4.4
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	4.2
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	3.9
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	3.9
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	3.2
<b>Total United States</b>	<b>296.4</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006

### The 15 Largest MSAs

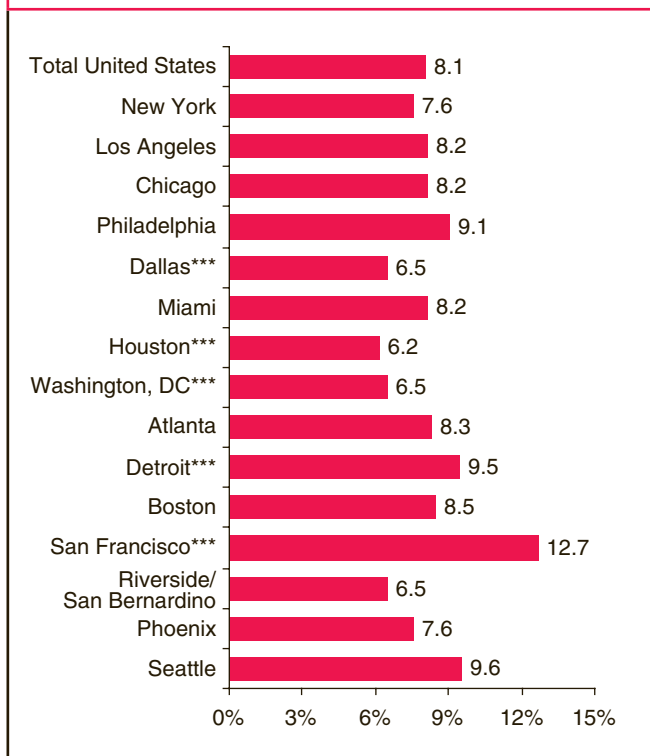
The 2005 U.S. Census population estimates were used to identify the 15 largest MSAs (Table 1).<sup>7</sup> One third (32.9 percent) of the total U.S. population of 296 million lived in the 15 largest MSAs in 2005.

The target population for the NSDUH survey, unlike the U.S. Census, is limited to the civilian non-institutionalized population aged 12 or older. In the combined 2002-2005 NSDUH data, the 15 MSAs represent approximately 77.2 million civilian, non-institutionalized persons aged 12 and older. This is approximately 32.2% of the national target population (an estimated 239.1 million) of the same group.

### Illicit Drug Use

In the Nation as a whole, an annual average of 8.1 percent of persons aged 12 or older reported past month illicit drug use during the combined years of 2002 to 2005 (Figure 1). Among the 15 largest MSAs, the San Francisco (12.7 percent) and Detroit (9.5 percent) MSAs had rates of past month illicit drug use that were significantly higher than the rate for the Nation

**Figure 1. Percentages of Persons Aged 12 or Older Reporting Past Month Use of Any Illicit Drug,\*\* by Metropolitan Statistical Areas: 2002-2005**



Source: SAMHSA, 2002-2005 NSDUHs.

as a whole. The rates of past month illicit drug use were lower than the national average in the Houston (6.2 percent), Dallas (6.5 percent), and Washington, DC (6.5 percent) MSAs.

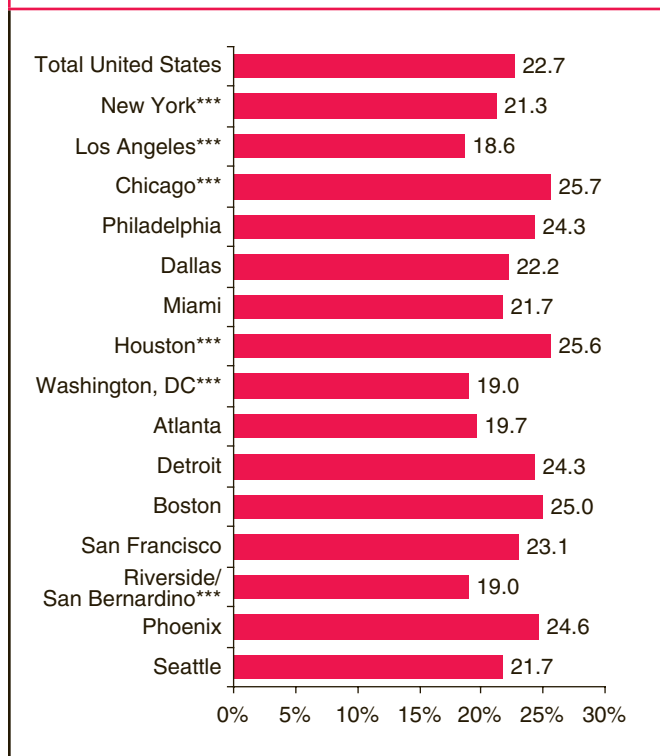
### Binge Alcohol Use

In the Nation as a whole, an annual average of 22.7 percent of persons aged 12 or older reported past month binge alcohol use during the combined years of 2002 to 2005 (Figure 2). Among the 15 largest MSAs, the Chicago (25.7 percent) and Houston (25.6 percent) MSAs had higher rates than the Nation as a whole. The rates of binge drinking were lower than the national average in the Los Angeles (18.6 percent), Riverside/San Bernardino (19.0 percent), Washington, DC (19.0 percent), and New York (21.3 percent) MSAs.

### Cigarette Use

In the Nation as a whole, an annual average of 25.3 percent of persons aged 12 or older reported past month cigarette use during the combined years of 2002 to 2005 (Figure 3). Among the 15 largest MSAs,

**Figure 2. Percentages of Persons Aged 12 or Older Reporting Past Month Binge Alcohol Use,<sup>+</sup> by Metropolitan Statistical Areas: 2002-2005**



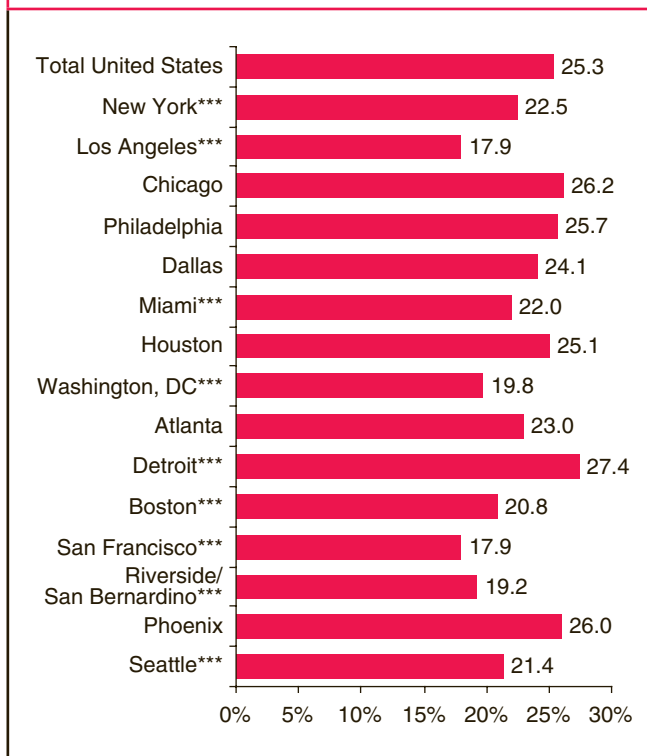
Source: SAMHSA, 2002-2005 NSDUHs.

only the Detroit MSA (27.4 percent) had a rate of past month cigarette use that was higher than the national average. The Los Angeles (17.9 percent), San Francisco (17.9 percent), Riverside/San Bernardino (19.2 percent), Washington, DC (19.8 percent), Boston (20.8 percent), Seattle (21.4 percent), Miami (22.0 percent), and New York (22.5 percent) MSAs all had lower rates of past month cigarette use than the Nation as a whole.

**End Notes**

- <sup>1</sup> Wright, D., & Sathe, N. (2006). *State estimates of substance use from the 2003-2004 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 06-4142, NSDUH Series H-29). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. [Available at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/states.htm>]
- <sup>2</sup> Office of Applied Studies. (2006). *Substate estimates from the 2002-2004 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health*. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. [Available at <http://oas.samhsa.gov/metro.htm>]
- <sup>3</sup> NSDUH measures the nonmedical use of prescription-type pain relievers, sedatives, stimulants, or tranquilizers. Nonmedical use is defined as the use of prescription-type drugs not prescribed for the respondent by a physician or used only for the experience or feeling they caused. Nonmedical use of any prescription-type pain reliever, sedative, stimulant, or tranquilizer does not include over-the-counter drugs.
- <sup>4</sup> A "drink" is defined as a can or bottle of beer, a glass of wine or a wine cooler, a shot of liquor, or a mixed drink containing liquor.

**Figure 3. Percentages of Persons Aged 12 or Older Reporting Past Month Cigarette Use, by Metropolitan Statistical Areas: 2002-2005**



Source: SAMHSA, 2002-2005 NSDUHs.

- <sup>5</sup> An MSA is a city or urbanized area with 50,000 or more inhabitants, together with surrounding communities that have a high degree of economic and social integration with that city or urbanized area. See the U.S. Census Bureau. (2003, June 12). *About metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas*. Retrieved October 26, 2006, from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/aboutmetro.html>.
- <sup>6</sup> For some MSAs, the difference from the national estimate may appear larger than some of those noted in the text and figures; however, because of the larger variances in these MSAs, the differences are not statistically significant.
- <sup>7</sup> The 2005 population estimates are from the U.S. Census Bureau. (2006, August 21). *Table 1. Annual estimates of the population of metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005 (CBSA-EST2005-01)*. Retrieved October 26, 2006, from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/metropop/2005/cbsa-01-fmt.xls>.

**Table and Figure Notes**

- \* The NSDUH population includes the civilian, noninstitutionalized population aged 12 or older. The U.S. Census resident population represents all persons, including persons aged 11 or younger, individuals in the military, and persons living in institutional settings.
- \*\* Illicit drugs refer to marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), inhalants, hallucinogens, heroin, or prescription-type drugs used nonmedically.
- \*\*\* Difference between estimate for MSA and estimate for the nation as a whole significant at  $p < .05$ . For some MSAs, the difference from the national estimate may appear larger than some of those noted in the text and figures; however, because of the larger variances in these MSAs, the differences are not statistically significant.
- + Binge drinking is drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion (i.e., at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other) on at least 1 day in the past 30 days.

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Research findings from the SAMHSA 2002-2005 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health (NSDUHs)

## Substance Use in the 15 Largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas: 2002-2005

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The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Prior to 2002, this survey was called the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA). The combined 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 data are based on information obtained from 271,978 persons aged 12 or older. The survey collects data by administering questionnaires to a representative sample of the population through face-to-face interviews at their place of residence.

*The NSDUH Report* is prepared by the Office of Applied Studies (OAS), SAMHSA, and by RTI International in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. (RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.)

Information on NSDUH used in compiling data for this issue is available in the following publications:

Office of Applied Studies. (2006). *Results from the 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 06-4194, NSDUH Series H-30). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Office of Applied Studies. (2005). *Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 05-4062, NSDUH Series H-28). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Office of Applied Studies. (2004). *Results from the 2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 04-3964, NSDUH Series H-25). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Office of Applied Studies. (2003). *Results from the 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 03-3836, NSDUH Series H-22). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Also available online: <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov>.

Because of improvements and modifications to the 2002 NSDUH, estimates from the 2002 to 2005 surveys should not be compared with estimates from the 2001 or earlier versions of the survey to examine changes over time.



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