

# The NSDUH Report

September 16, 2003

## Drugged Driving: 2002 Update

### In Brief

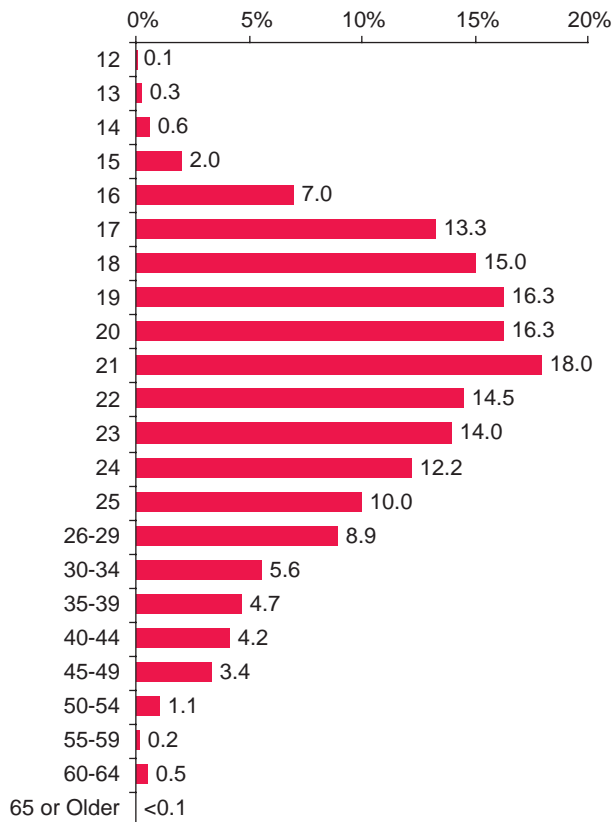
- In 2002, almost 11 million persons aged 12 or older drove under the influence of illegal drugs in the past year
- Past year drugged driving peaked at 18 percent among 21 year olds
- Among adults aged 26 to 49, those who were unemployed were more likely to have driven under the influence of illegal drugs in the past year compared with part-time or full-time workers

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), formerly the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA), asks respondents aged 12 or older to report their use of alcohol or illicit drugs during the 12 months prior to the survey. “Any illicit drug” refers to marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), inhalants, hallucinogens, heroin, or prescription-type drugs used nonmedically. Respondents who reported illicit drug use also were asked whether they had driven a vehicle during the past 12 months while under the influence of illegal drugs alone or in combination with alcohol. Responses were analyzed by gender, race/ethnicity, geographic location, county type, current employment, and education level for comparative purposes.<sup>1,2</sup>

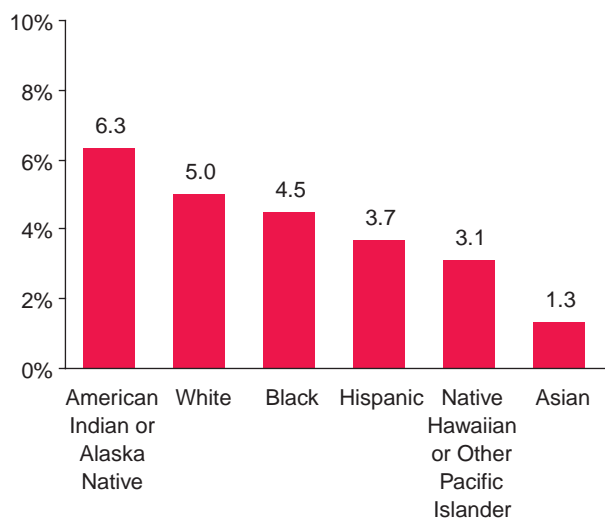
### Prevalence of Driving Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs

According to the 2002 NSDUH, over 35 million persons aged 12 or older had used

**Figure 1. Percentages of Persons Aged 12 or Older Reporting Driving Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs in the Past Year, by Detailed Age Categories: 2002**



**Figure 2. Percentages of Persons Aged 12 or Older Reporting Driving Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs in the Past Year, by Race/Ethnicity: 2002**



illicit drugs in the past year. Almost 11 million of these persons, or 5 percent of the total U.S. population aged 12 or older and 31 percent of past year illicit drug users, had driven under the influence of illegal drugs in the past year.

### Demographic Differences in Drugged Driving

In general, the rates of drugged driving in 2002 followed the same patterns as rates of past year illicit drug use. The rate of drugged driving increased with age to 18 percent among 21 year olds and decreased with increasing age among those aged 22 or older (Figure 1).

Males aged 12 or older (6 percent) were twice as likely as females aged 12 or older (3 percent) to have driven under the influence of illegal drugs. The rate of past year drugged driving was lower among Asians than among whites, blacks, or American Indians/Alaska Natives (Figure 2).

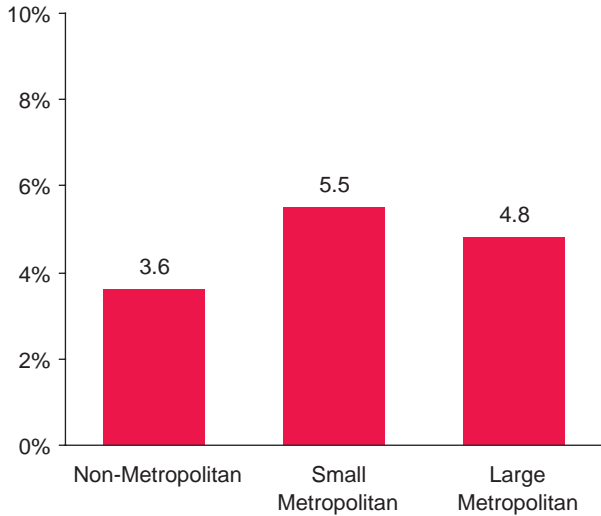
### Geographic Differences

Among adults aged 18 or older, past year drugged driving was more common in the West (5.5 percent) and Midwest (5.2 percent) regions compared with the Northeast (4.5 percent) and South (4.2 percent) regions. Adults in non-metropolitan counties (4 percent) were less likely than those in large metropolitan (5 percent) or small metropolitan (6 percent) counties to have driven under the influence of illegal drugs in the past year (Figure 3).

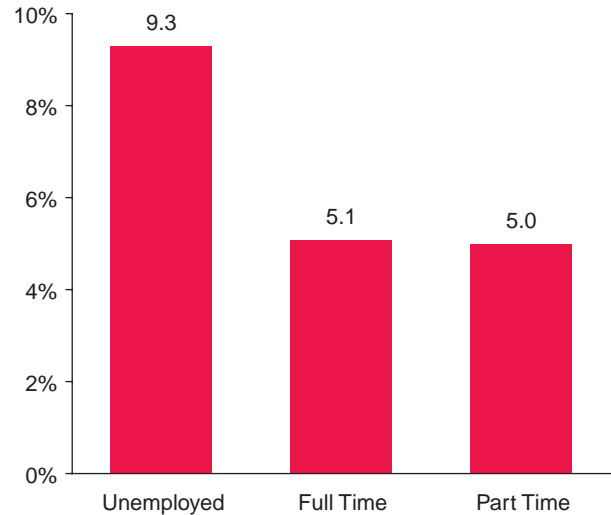
### Education and Employment

Among young adults aged 18 to 22, those who were full-time college undergraduates (18 percent) were more likely than their counterparts of the same age (14 percent) to have driven under the influence of illegal drugs in the past year. Among adults aged 26 to 49, those with some college (6 percent) or high school graduates (5 percent) were more likely than college graduates (4 percent) to have driven under the influence of illegal drugs in the past year. The rate of past year drugged driving was 5 percent among adults aged 26 to 49 who had less than a high school education.

**Figure 3. Percentages of Adults Aged 18 or Older Reporting Driving Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs in the Past Year, by County Type: 2002**



**Figure 4. Percentages of Adults Aged 26 to 49 Reporting Driving Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs in the Past Year, by Current Employment Status: 2002**



Among adults aged 26 to 49, those who were unemployed were more likely to have driven under the influence of illegal drugs in the past year compared with part-time or full-time workers (Figure 4).

**End Notes**

- Regions consist of the following groups of States:  
**Northeast Region:** Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania.  
**Midwest Region:** Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri.  
**South Region:** West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas.  
**West Region:** Idaho, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, California, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, Alaska.
- Large metropolitan areas have a population of 1 million or more. Small metropolitan areas have a population of fewer than 1 million. Non-metropolitan areas are outside metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), as defined by the Office of Management and Budget.

**Figure Notes**

Source (all figures): SAMHSA 2002 NSDUH.

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 2002 data are based on information obtained from more than 68,000 persons aged 12 or older, including approximately 25,000 youths aged 12 to 17. 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 in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.

Information and data for this issue are based on the following publication and statistics:

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

Also available on-line:

<http://www.DrugAbuseStatistics.samhsa.gov>.



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