

The NHSDA Report

November 19, 2002

Drugged Driving

In Brief

- In 2001, over 8 million persons aged 12 or older reported driving under the influence of illegal drugs during the past year
- Rates of drugged driving increased from 2000 to 2001 for young adults aged 18 to 34
- Among adults aged 18 or older, those who were unemployed were more likely than full- or part-time workers to report driving under the influence of illegal drugs during the past year

The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) asks respondents aged 12 or older to report whether they had driven a vehicle during the past 12 months while under the influence of illegal drugs alone or in combination with alcohol. Respondents aged 15 or older were asked about their current employment status.

Prevalence of Driving Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs

In 2001, over 8 million persons aged 12 or older, or 3.6 percent of the U.S. population, reported driving under the influence of illegal drugs during the past year. This was an increase from the rate of 3.1 percent in 2000.

Demographic Variations in Drugged Driving

In 2001, rates of drugged driving generally followed the same patterns as rates of overall current illicit drug use. The rate of drugged driving increased with each year of age to 16 percent among 19 year olds and generally decreased with increasing age among those aged 20 or older (Figure 1).¹ Rates of drugged driving increased

Figure 1. Percentages of Persons Aged 12 or Older Reporting Driving Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs During the Past Year, by Detailed Age Categories: 2001

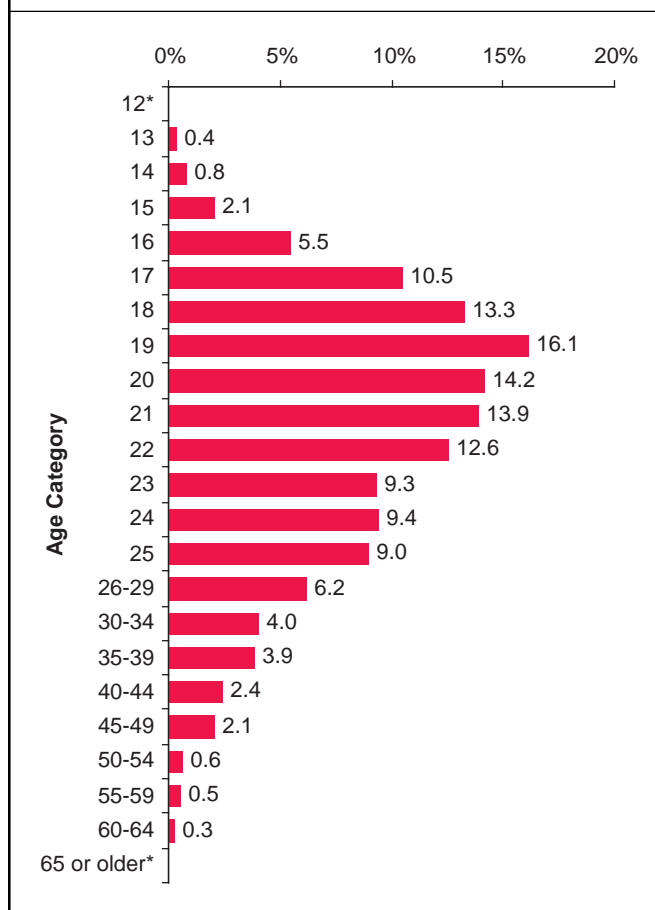
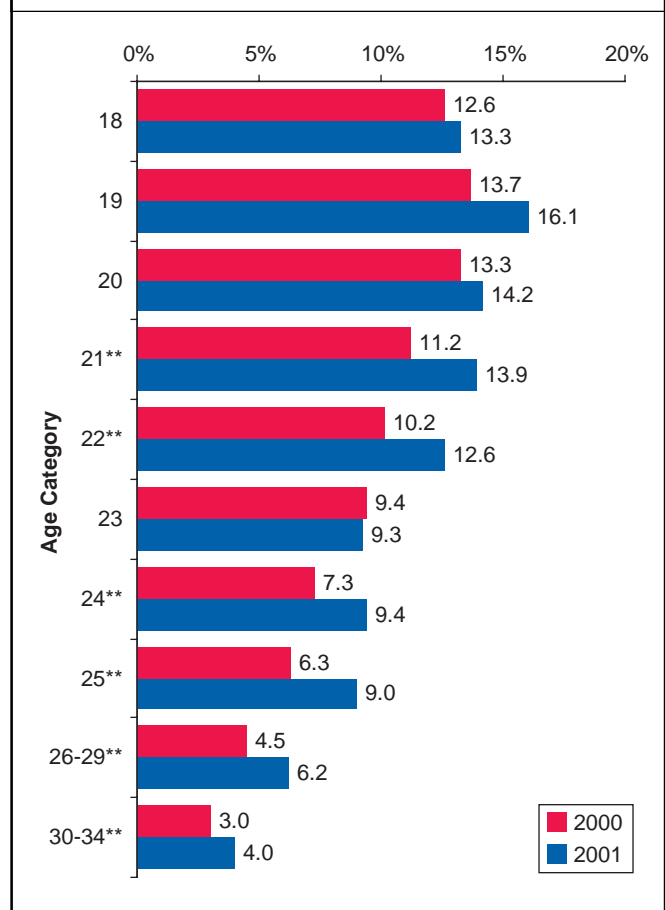


Figure 2. Percentages of Persons Aged 18 to 34 Reporting Driving Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs, by Detailed Age Categories: 2000 and 2001



from 2000 to 2001 for most ages from 18 years to 34 years of age (Figure 2).

In 2001, males (5 percent) were more than twice as likely as females (2 percent) to report driving under the influence of illegal drugs.¹ The 2001 rate of drugged driving among males was an increase from 4 percent in 2000.

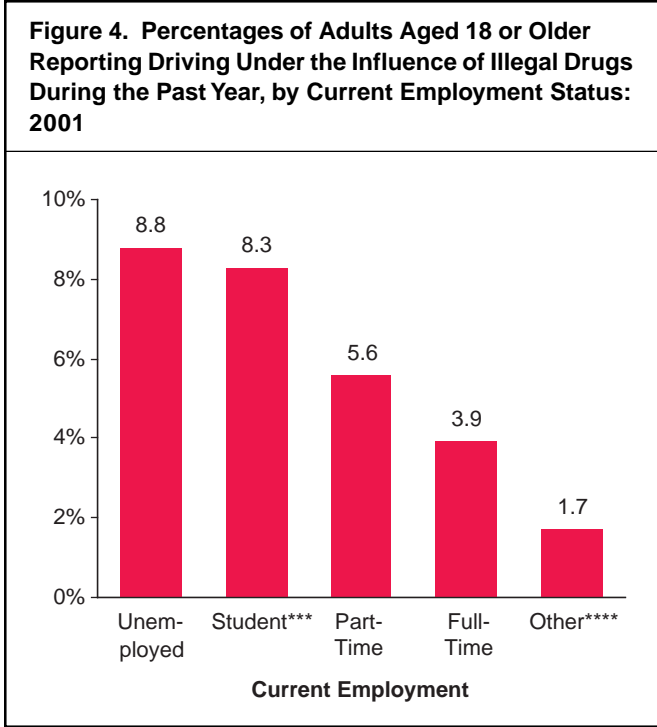
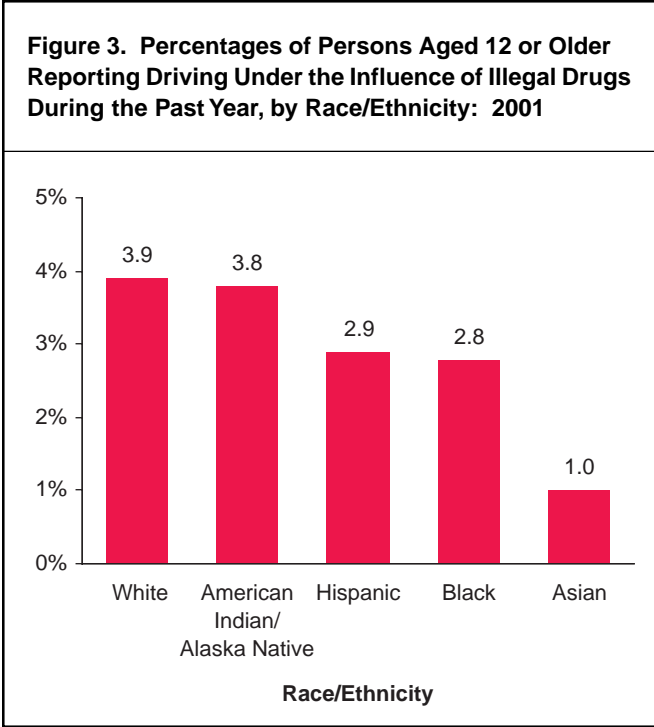
In 2001, the rate of drugged driving was higher among white persons than among Hispanic, black, or Asian persons (Figure 3).

The 2001 rate of drugged driving among white persons (4 percent) increased from 3 percent in 2000.

Employment Status and Drugged Driving

Among adults aged 18 or older, those who were unemployed or classified as full- or part-time students were the most likely to report driving under the influence of illegal drugs in the past year, followed by part-time workers and

full-time workers (Figure 4). Drugged driving rates were lowest among persons not in the labor force, such as retired or disabled persons, and homemakers.



End Note

1. This pattern of drugged driving parallels the pattern of abuse or dependence on alcohol or illicit drugs. For more information about abuse and dependence in the NHSDA, see: J. Epstein. (2002). *Substance abuse, dependence, abuse, and treatment: Data from the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse* (NHSDA Series: H-16, DHHS Report No. SMA 02-3642). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Figure Notes

* Small sample sizes prevented analyses of 12 year olds and of persons aged 65 or older.
 ** Difference between 2000 estimate and 2001 estimate is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.
 *** Those persons who were not classified as part of the labor force (full-time, part-time, or unemployed) and answered yes to being a full- or part-time student were classified as student.
 **** Retired, disabled, homemaker, or "other."
 Source (all figures): SAMHSA, 2000 and 2001 NHSDAs.

The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The 2001 data are based on information obtained from 69,000 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 NHSDA 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. (2002). *Results from the 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse: Volume I. Summary of national findings* (NHSDA Series H-17, DHHS Publication No. SMA 02-3758). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Also available on-line: <http://www.DrugAbuseStatistics.samhsa.gov>.

Additional tables available on request.



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