

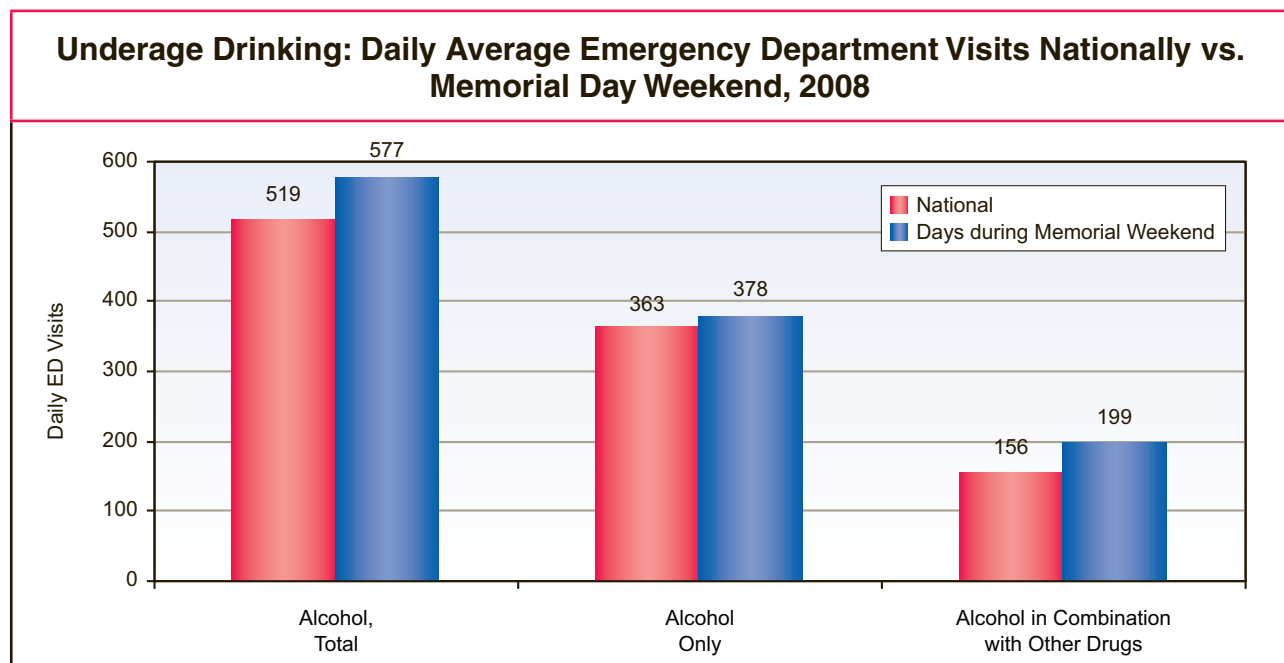
# OAS Data Spotlight

## Emergency Room Visits for Underage Drinking Increase over Memorial Day Weekend

Memorial Day weekend traditionally marks the beginning of summer. Spring fever has ended, but many young adults are eager to “celebrate” the start of summer vacations. The consumption of alcohol by those younger than the legal drinking age of 21 too often results in a trip to a hospital emergency department (ED).

The 2008 Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) estimates that on an average day, there were 519 ED visits involving underage alcohol use. For the 3-day Memorial Day weekend, however, the number of daily ED visits jumped to 577, an increase of 11 percent. Figure 1 provides some additional details concerning underage alcohol consumption. Of particular note is the fact that alcohol in combination with other drugs for young adults younger than 21 resulted in an ED visit 27 percent more often during this holiday weekend. While all underage alcohol consumption is of concern, consumption that leads to an ED visit should be of particular concern to adults and to health care professionals.

For everyone interested in preventing underage drinking, SAMHSA offers a variety of educational and other materials at: <http://www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov/>.



Source: The Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) is a public health surveillance system that monitors drug-related hospital emergency department (ED) visits and drug-related deaths to track the impact of drug use, misuse, and abuse in the United States.

