

Data Spotlight

Treatment Episode Data Set

February 7, 2012

Nearly Half of College Student Treatment Admissions Were for Primary Alcohol Abuse

Many students, and the public in general, believe that drinking alcohol is a normal part of the college experience.¹ Unfortunately, students' efforts to "be sociable" or "fit in" can escalate into substance use behavior that puts their health and well-being at risk: One in four full-time college students have experienced past year alcohol abuse or dependence.²

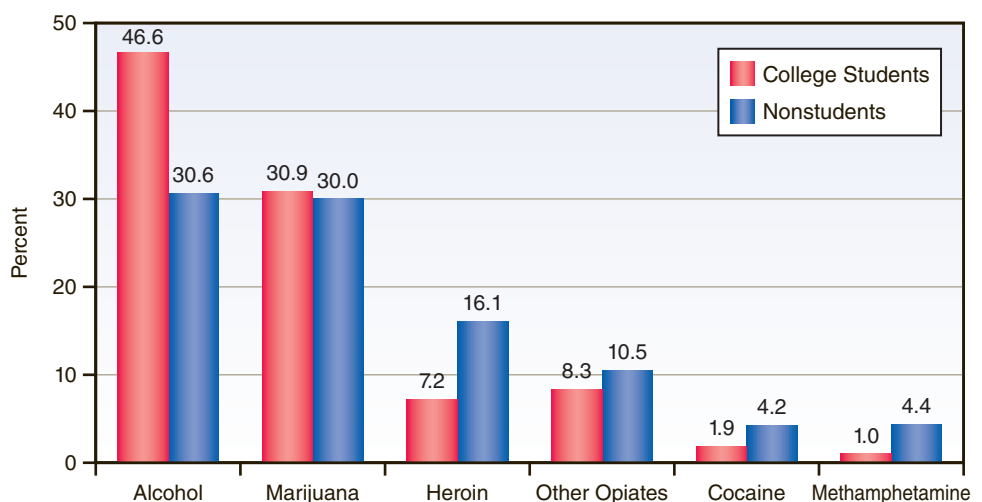
In 2009, there were approximately 374,000 substance abuse treatment admissions aged 18 to 24. Nearly 12,000 of these admissions were college or other postsecondary school students.³ College student admissions were more likely than nonstudent admissions to report alcohol (46.6 vs. 30.6 percent) as their primary substance of abuse (Figure). College student and nonstudent admissions were equally likely to report marijuana as their primary substance of abuse (30.9 vs. 30.0 percent), and college student admissions were less likely than nonstudent admissions to report heroin (7.2 vs. 16.1 percent), other opiates (8.3 vs. 10.5 percent), cocaine (1.9 vs. 4.2 percent), or methamphetamine (1.0 vs. 4.4 percent) as their primary substance of abuse. For more information on the prevention and treatment of alcohol use and misuse by college students, please visit <http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/>.

¹ National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2006). Young adult drinking. *Alcohol Alert*, 68. [Available at <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/aa68/AA68.pdf>]

² Office of Applied Studies. (2003, October 31). *The NSDUH Report: Alcohol use and risks among young adults by college enrollment status*. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. [Available at <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/nsduh/2k4mrb/ShortRptCollege.pdf>]

³ College student admissions are of individuals aged 18 to 24 who are not in the labor force due to being students and who have completed 12 or more years of school. Nonstudent admissions are of individuals aged 18 to 24 who are either in the labor force or are not in the labor force for reasons other than being a student. Admissions of students with less than 12 years of education or admissions of individuals in this age group with missing employment/not in labor force information were excluded from analysis.

Substance Abuse Treatment Admissions among College Students and Nonstudents Aged 18 to 24, by Primary Substance of Abuse*: 2009



*Admissions for primary abuse of other stimulants and other substances, and admissions with no reported primary substance of abuse, are not shown.

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), 2009, based on data received through November 3, 2010. TEDS is a compilation of data on the demographic characteristics and substance abuse problems of those admitted for substance abuse treatment in the United States, primarily at facilities that receive public funding. TEDS is one component of the Drug and Alcohol Services Information System (DASIS), an integrated data system maintained by the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, SAMHSA. For more information on TEDS, see <http://www.dasis.samhsa.gov/teds09/teds2k9nweb.pdf>.

