

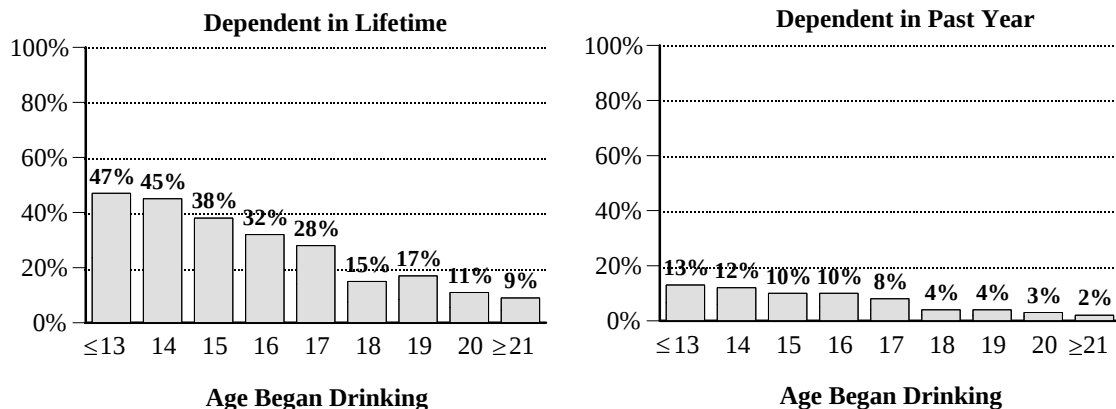
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Early Alcohol Users Five Times More Likely to Be Alcohol Dependent in Lifetime

Early alcohol use increases the likelihood of developing alcohol dependence at a later age, according to an analysis of data from the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC). Nearly one-half (47%) of persons who began drinking before age 14 were alcohol dependent at some point in their lifetime, and 13% were dependent in the past year, compared to 9% and 2%, respectively, of those who began drinking after age 20. Early drinking was also related to higher rates of dependence within 10 years of onset of drinking and dependence before age 25 (data not shown). These findings held after controlling for family history of alcohol and other relevant factors, suggesting that “this relationship may not be solely a by-product of greater risk-taking behavior among early drinkers reflected by tobacco or drug use or predisposing psychological characteristics or disorders” (p. 743).

Percentage of U.S. Adults Aged 18 and Older Dependent on Alcohol, By Age of Drinking Onset



NOTES: The NESARC was a face-to-face survey of a multistage probability sample of 43,093 adults age 18 years and older conducted in 2001–2002. Data in the figure are based on the 26,829 respondents who reported ever drinking alcohol.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Hingson, R.W., Heeren, T., and Winter, M.R. “Age at Drinking Onset and Alcohol Dependence,” *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 160(7):739-746, 2006. Available online at <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/reprint/160/7/739>. For more information, contact Dr. Ralph Hingson at rhingson@mail.nih.gov.

CESAR Seeking PhD-Level Candidate to Analyze Data on Alcohol Use Among College Students

CESAR is seeking a Research Associate to analyze and publish data from an ongoing, longitudinal prospective survey of alcohol use among college students. A PhD-level candidate with post-doctorate experience in public health and/or epidemiology is preferred. If you are interested in working in a supportive and stimulating, university-based team environment, please send a letter of interest and a resume to Dr. Amelia Arria at CESAR, 4321 Hartwick Rd, Ste 501, College Park, MD 20740; 301-403-8342 (fax); cesar@cesar.umd.edu.

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