

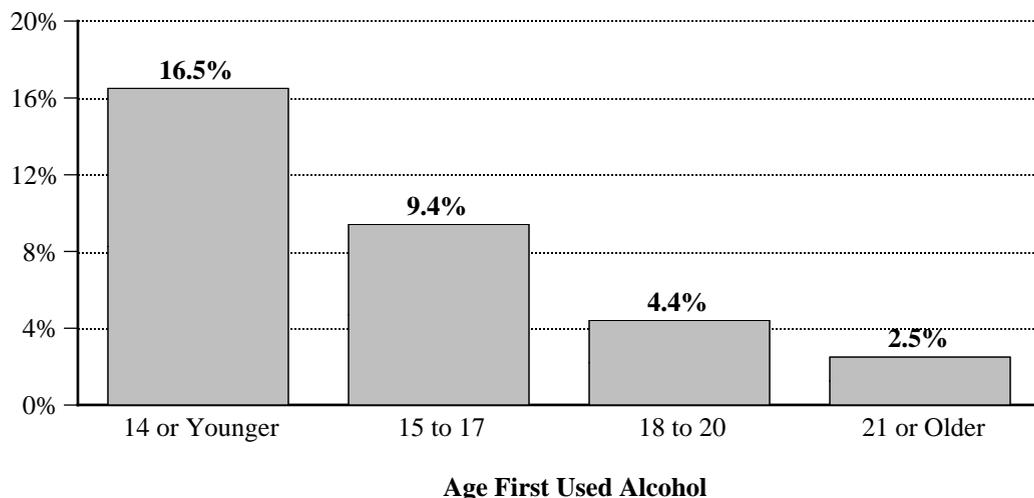
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Adults Who Initiate Alcohol Use Before Age 21 More Likely to Abuse or Become Dependent on Alcohol

Early onset of alcohol use is associated with a greater likelihood of developing alcohol abuse or dependence at a later age, according to data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). Those who first used alcohol at or before the age of 14 were nearly four times more likely to meet the criteria for past year alcohol abuse or dependence than those who started using alcohol between the ages of 18 and 20 (16.5% vs. 4.4%) and more than six times more likely than those who started using alcohol at or after age 21 (16.5% vs. 2.5%). These findings illustrate the need for alcohol education and prevention efforts as early as middle school.

Percentage of Adults (Ages 21 or Older) Who Abused or Were Dependent on Alcohol in the Past Year, by Age of First Alcohol Use, 2009



NOTE: Abuse or dependence are defined using DSM-IV criteria.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*, 2010. Available online at <http://oas.samhsa.gov/WebOnly.htm#NSDUHtabs>.

🌀 In Memoriam: Dr. David F. Musto 1936 - 2010 *🌀*

The substance abuse field lost a valued scientist with the death of Dr. David F. Musto on October 8, 2010. Dr. Musto was a renowned expert in drug control policy who had a long and distinguished career in the field. His New York Times obituary can be found on line at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/14/us/14musto.html>.