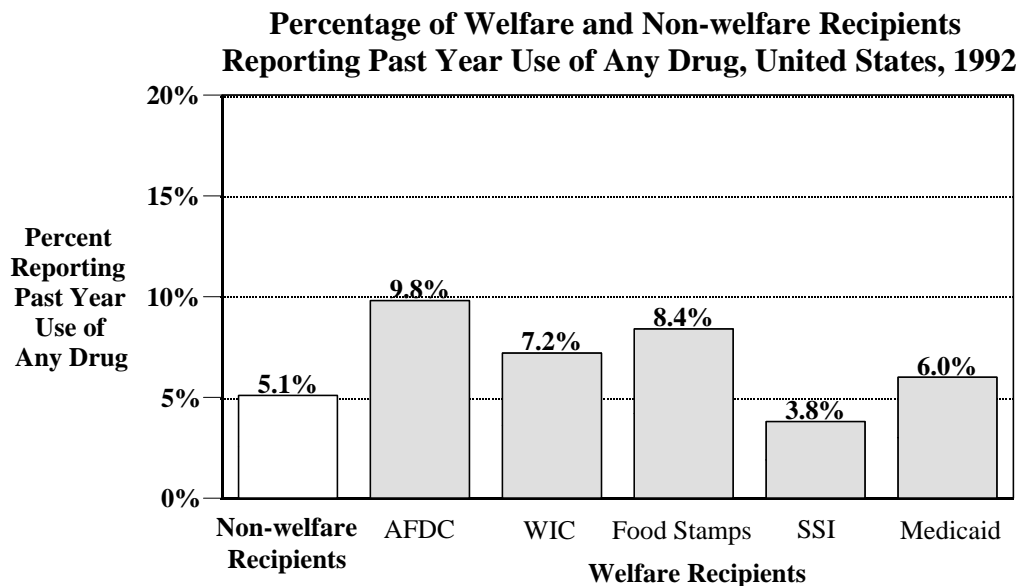


A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland at College Park

Are Welfare Recipients More Likely to Use Alcohol and Other Drugs?

A recently published report concluded that rates of alcohol and drug use and dependence among welfare recipients are comparable to rates among persons who do not receive welfare benefits (see figure below). However, it should be noted that these estimates are based solely on self-reported data obtained from in-person interviews and could be misleading if welfare recipients are less likely than others to admit to substance use and symptoms of dependence. Research utilizing both self-report and urinalysis or hair analysis results has found high rates of underreporting among disadvantaged populations.[□] To accurately assess the level of substance use and dependence among the welfare population, researchers need to use biological-based measures of use in addition to self-reports.



[□]For example, see Philip W. Appel, "Substance Abuse among Adults in Transient Housing in New York State: Validation of Self-Report by Use of Hair Analysis," New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services and Research Institute on Addictions, March 1995 and Sonia Alemagno et al., "Assessing Substance Abuse Treatment Needs among the Homeless: A Telephone-Based Interactive Voice Response System," American Journal of Public Health, 1996, 86 (11): 1626-1628.

SOURCES: Adapted by CESAR from data from Bridget Grant and Deborah Dawson, "Alcohol and Drug Use, Abuse, and Dependence among Welfare Recipients," American Journal of Public Health, 1996, 86 (10):1450-1454. For more information, contact the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism at 301-443-3860.

UPS FOUNDATION OFFERS GRANTS TO HELP HOMELESS SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

The United Parcel Service Foundation has a \$10 million annual budget to fund human services programs for the homeless, including substance abuse services. A two-page letter of inquiry is required to apply for a grant. For more information, contact the UPS Foundation at 404-828-6374.

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