

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Over 9.6 Million U.S. Children Live with Alcohol Abusing or Dependent Adults

An estimated one in seven children in the United States live in households with one or more adults who abused or were dependent on alcohol in the past year, according to an analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Alcohol Survey (NLAES). The majority of these children are the biological, foster, adopted, or stepchildren of the adults (70.4%). Just over one-third of the children--an estimated 3.5 million--were 5 years old or younger. The author warns that "unless comprehensive and intensive interventions are provided to address the full range of needs of children exposed to abuse and dependence, . . . the potential costs to human services, health, education, social services, and correctional services will quickly become overwhelming" (p. 114).

Characteristics of Children Living with an Alcohol Abusing or Dependent Adult, 1992

(n=an estimated 9,667,473 children living in households with one or more adults who abused or were dependent on alcohol in the previous year)

Characteristic	Percentage
Sex	
Male	49%
Race/Ethnicity	
Black	11.9%
Non-Black	88.1%
Age	
Five years old and younger	36.3%
Six to 11 years old	33.7%
Twelve to 17 years old	30.0%
Relationship to Abusing/Dependent Adult	
Child	70.4%
Sibling	11.6%
Other Biological Relative	8.8%
Non-Relative	6.3%
Unspecified Relationship	2.9%

NOTE: Abuse and dependence diagnoses were based on DSM-IV criteria.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from Grant, B.F., "Estimates of U.S. Children Exposed to Alcohol Abuse and Dependence in the Family," *American Journal of Public Health*, 90(1):112-115, January 2000.

Thursday, April 6th is National Alcohol Screening Day (NASD)

To locate a screening in your area, have your 5 digit zip code ready and call 1-800-405-9200 (for rotary phone users only, call 1-800-969-6642).

• 301-403-8329 (voice) • 301-403-8342 (fax) • CESAR@cesar.umd.edu • www.cesar.umd.edu •

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