

2006 ORANGE COUNTY (FL) HOUSEHOLD DRUG SURVEY

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Prepared for

The Orange County Office for a Drug Free Community
Orlando, Florida

August, 2006

Although Drs. Allgood and Maiden served as the principal investigators for the 2006 Orange County Household Drug Survey this study could not have been completed without the able assistance of a large group of MSW students. This group of students helped develop the survey instrument, made several thousand phone calls to Orange County residents to complete **565** surveys and also complete extensive data entry on a rather lengthy survey instrument. The Orange County Household Drug survey was one of several group research projects carried out in 2nd year MSW Integrative Research class.

Dr. Allgood's Research Class	Dr. Maiden's Research Class
Tamar Blaise	Katherine Allen
Tamata Cressman	Yvette Barahona
Teresa Fisher Bradshaw	Betsey Bell
Nike Gregory	Ronellie Borrromeo
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Ruth Hutchens	Natasha Corley
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*A special acknowledgement to Oscar who also served as our MSW graduate research assistant.

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INTRODUCTION

Ms. Carol Burkett, Director of the Orange County Office for a Drug Free Community solicited the assistance of the University of Central Florida, School of Social Work to conduct a survey of a statistically significant number of Orange County households to determine the prevalence of alcohol and other drug use and abuse. The survey also sought to determine parental attitudes towards the use of alcohol and marijuana by their adolescent family members.

METHODOLOGY

The goal was to secure a representative sample of telephone surveys. The researchers used random telephone numbers selected from the latest telephone book. It was determined that 365 completed surveys would achieve the necessary statistical power. From February through June, 2006 a total of **565** random and anonymous phone surveys were secured by UCF School of Social Work research assistants. The results presented here are for those that answered each question and percentages may not equal 100%.

THE SURVEY

The survey developed by the UCF School of Social Work researchers collected data in the following areas (see appendix A for the complete survey instrument):

- Core demographics
- Attitudes towards adolescent alcohol and drug use (with subsection exploring specific parental attitudes)
- Prevalence of alcohol use
- Prevalence of other substances
- Prevalence of alcohol and drug problems among the population sampled
- Prevalence of other behaviors and incidents related to alcohol and drug use
- Alcohol or drug treatment history
- Work place drug testing
- Disabilities and treatment

The following is a narrative summary of the data collected in these areas. Not all questions responses total 565 as respondents may have declined to provide requested demographic information or respond to all questions asked. A few responses exceed the total sample as

some respondents might have given more than one answer. All numbers are for those who responded with missing responses not considered.

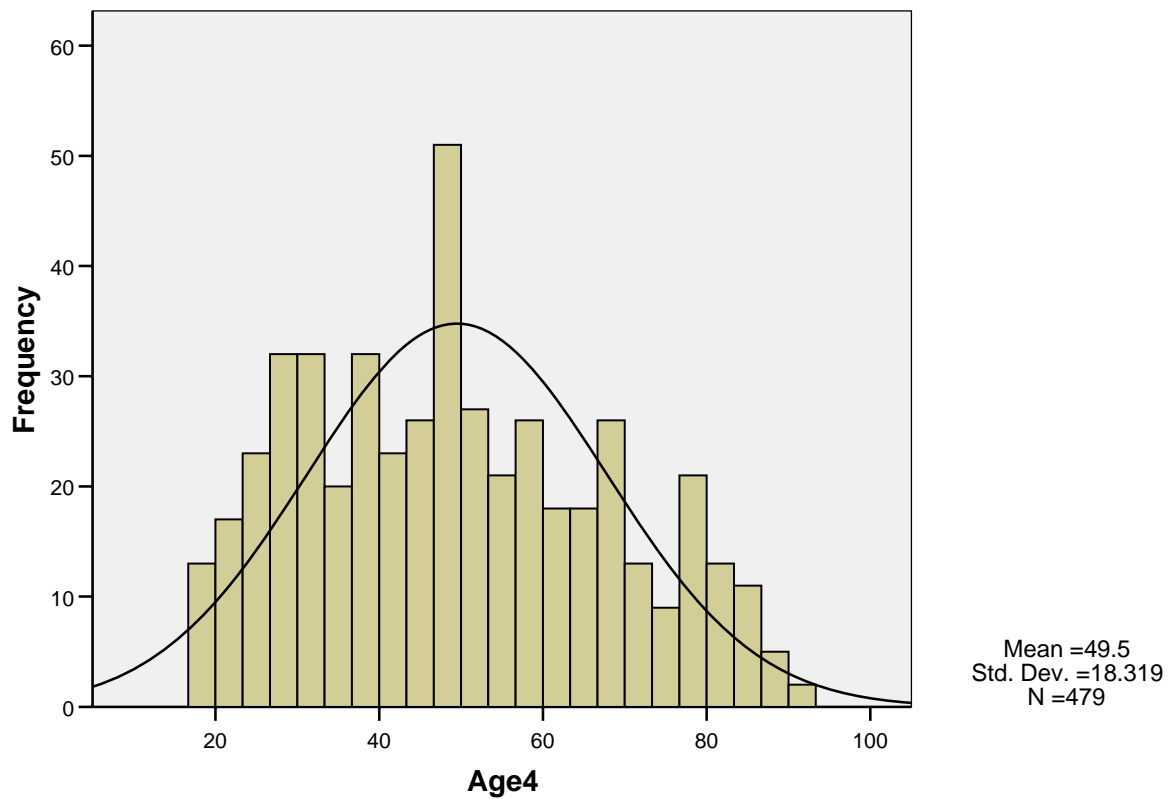
PART 1: SUMMARY DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS (n=565)**Gender**

Female: 69.9% (n=395)

Male: 29.9% (n=169)

Age

Mean age: 49.5 years old

Histogram

Language

English was the primary language:	96.3% (n=544)
Spanish or Creole was the primary language:	1.9% (n= 11)
Either:	1.8% (n= 10)

Race and Ethnicity

Caucasian:	67.8% (n=383)
Latino:	14.9% (n= 84)
African American:	9.4% (n= 53)
Native American:	.5% (n= 3)
Asian American:	2.1% (n= 12)
Haitian	.2% (n= 1)

Marital status

Married:	53.0% (n=297)
Living as married:	4.8% (n= 27)
Never married:	17.5% (n= 98)
Divorced or separated:	10.2% (n= 57)
Widowed:	12.1% (n= 68)

Family income**

\$5000 or less:	4.4%	(n= 21)
\$5001-10,000:	55.1%	(n=309)
10,001-15,000:	1.6%	(n= 9)
15,001-20,000:	2.5%	(n= 14)
20,001-25,000:	1.6%	(n= 9)
25,001-30,000:	5.3%	(n= 22)
30,001-35,000:	6.5%	(n= 27)
35,001-40,000:	5.3%	(n= 22)
40,001-50,000:	.2%	(n= 1)
50,001-75,000:	.4%	(n= 2)
Over 75.000:	.4%	(n= 2)

Educational level

First through 8 th grade:	3.9%	(n= 22)
Some high school (no diploma):	4.1%	(n= 23)
High school graduate/GED:	19.1%	(n=108)
Some college/no degree:	19.1%	(n=108)
Associate degree:	9.9%	(n= 56)
College graduate:	29.6%	(n=167)
Advanced degree:	10.6%	(n= 60)

Employment status

Employed full time:	44.1% (n=243)
Working part time:	11.1% (n= 61)
Not working currently:	40.8% (n=225)

Reason given for part time or not currently working:

Seasonal worker:	n= 4
Full time homemaker:	n= 53
In school:	n= 18
Retired:	n=119
Disabled:	n= 22

Reported general health

Excellent:	25.0%	n=141
Very good:	26.5%	n=150
Good:	28.1%	n=159
Fair:	10.8%	n= 61
Poor:	5.0%	n= 28

Reported mental health

Excellent:	35.8%	n=202
Very good:	24.6%	n=139
Good:	23.4%	n=132
Fair:	7.8%	n= 44
Poor:	0.9%	n= 5

PART 2: ATTITUDES TOWARD ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE USE

Respondents were asked 15 questions aimed at determining their attitudes toward adolescent alcohol and substance use. A five point Likert scale (1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree and 5=Strongly disagree) was used to measure their attitudes (see Appendix for complete survey instrument).

1. Do you think it is harmful for adolescents to use alcohol?

Strongly agree:	65.4%	(n=369)
Agree:	25.7%	(n=145)
Neutral:	4.4%	(n= 25)
Disagree:	3.2%	(n= 18)
Strongly disagree:	1.2%	(n= 7)

2. Do you think it is harmful for adolescents to use marijuana?

Strongly agree:	70.2%	(n=396)
Agree:	23.4%	(n=132)
Neutral:	2.8%	(n= 16)
Disagree:	2.3%	(n= 13)
Strongly disagree:	1.2%	(n= 7)

3. Do you think it is harmful for adolescents to use other illicit drugs?

Strongly agree:	74.5%	(n=420)
Agree:	16.8%	(n= 95)
Neutral:	2.0%	(n= 11)
Disagree:	2.8%	(n= 16)
Strongly disagree:	3.9%	(n= 22)

4. I approve of parents supervising their adolescents to use alcohol on special family or religious occasions.

Strongly agree:	9.9%	(n= 56)
Agree:	22.4%	(n= 126)
Neutral:	9.8%	(n= 55)
Disagree:	22.0%	(n= 124)
Strongly disagree:	35.9%	(n= 202)

5. I approve of parents supervising their adolescents to use marijuana on special family or religious occasions.

Strongly agree:	3.9%	(n= 22)
Agree:	4.4%	(n= 25)
Neutral:	3.6%	(n= 20)
Disagree:	29.0%	(n=163)
Strongly disagree:	59.0%	(n=332)

6. I approve of parents supervising their adolescents using alcohol on a regular basis.

Strongly agree:	2.3%	(n= 13)
Agree:	2.5%	(n= 14)
Neutral:	3.7%	(n= 21)
Disagree:	28.9%	(n=163)
Strongly disagree:	62.6%	(n=353)

7. I approve of parents supervising their adolescents using marijuana on a regular basis.

Strongly agree:	2.5%	(n= 14)
Agree:	2.0%	(n= 11)
Neutral:	1.6%	(n= 9)
Disagree:	25.4%	(n=143)
Strongly disagree:	68.6%	(n=387)

8. I approve of adolescents using alcohol without parental supervision.

Strongly agree:	0.5%	(n= 3)
Agree:	1.2%	(n= 7)
Neutral:	3.4%	(n= 19)
Disagree:	27.7%	(n=156)
Strongly disagree:	67.2%	(n=379)

9. I approve of adolescents using marijuana without parental supervision.

Strongly agree:	0.9%	(n= 5)
Agree:	0.9%	(n= 5)
Neutral:	1.8%	(n= 10)
Disagree:	27.4%	(n=154)
Strongly disagree:	69.0%	(n=388)

PART 3: PARENTAL ATTITUDES TOWARD ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

1. I wish I knew better what to say to my child about the dangers of drug use.

Strongly agree:	9.8%	(n= 53)
Agree:	20.0%	(n=108)
Neutral:	25.0%	(n=135)
Disagree:	26.5%	(n=143)
Strongly disagree:	18.4%	(n= 99)

2. What I say will have little influence on whether or not my child uses alcohol or drugs.

Strongly agree:	4.1%	(n= 22)
Agree:	10.1%	(n= 55)
Neutral:	16.8%	(n= 91)
Disagree:	32.2%	(n=175)
Strongly disagree:	36.6%	(n=199)

3 Drug education is best handled by the schools, not the parents.

Strongly agree: 3.7% (n= 21)
 Agree: 6.8% (n= 38)
 Neutral: 22.1% (n=124)
 Disagree: 34.8% (n=195)
 Strongly disagree: 32.4% (n=182)

4. My community has people who can help me learn more about preventing my child from using drugs or alcohol.

Strongly agree: 18.5% (n=102)
 Agree: 32.7% (n=180)
 Neutral: 29.6% (n=163)
 Disagree: 12.5% (n= 69)
 Strongly disagree: 4.2% (n= 23)

5. Have you had a discussion with your child about the dangers of alcohol abuse?

Yes: 70.5% (n=373)
 No: 20.2% (n=107)

6. Have you had a discussion with your child about the dangers of drug use?

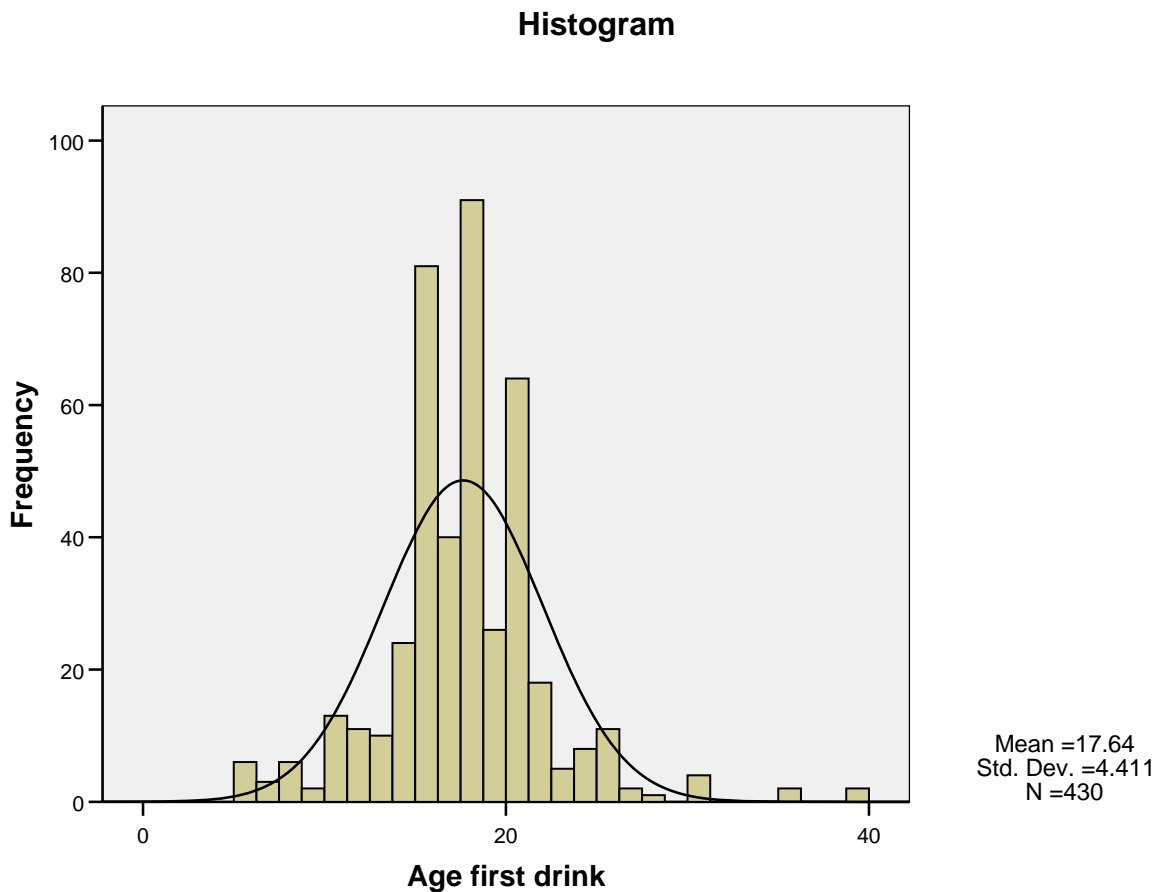
Yes: 71.1% (n=374)
 No: 20.0% (n=105)

PART 4: ALCOHOL PREVALENCE

1. Have you ever, even once had a drink of any type of alcoholic beverage?
 (excluding a sip or two)

Yes: 87.9% (n=493)
 No: 11.4% (n= 64)

2. How old were you the first time you had a drink of an alcoholic beverage?



3. Have you ever had 12 or more drinks in the same year?

Yes: 64.1% (n=331)

No: 27.3% (n=141)

4. When was the last time you had alcohol to drink?

Within the past 30 days: 49.5% (n=253)

More than 30 days but less than 12 months: 21.9% (n=112)

More than 12 months ago: 23.9% (n=122)

6. At any time did you have 4, 5 or more drinks within 24 hours?

Yes: 61.8% (n=255)

No: 38.2% (n=158)

7. How long has it been since you had 4, 5 or more drinks within 24 hours?

More than 12 months ago:	56.8% (n=146)
More than 30 days but within the past 12 months:	18.3% (n=47)
Within the last 30 days:	23.7% (n=61)

8. Have you ever binged on alcoholic beverages for several days without sobering up?

Yes: 7.1% (n=33)
No: 93.3% (n=421)

9. When did this last binge occur?

More than 12 months ago: 27.6% (n=24)
More than 30 days (within last year): 60.9%(n=53)
Within the last 30 days: 2.3% (n=2)

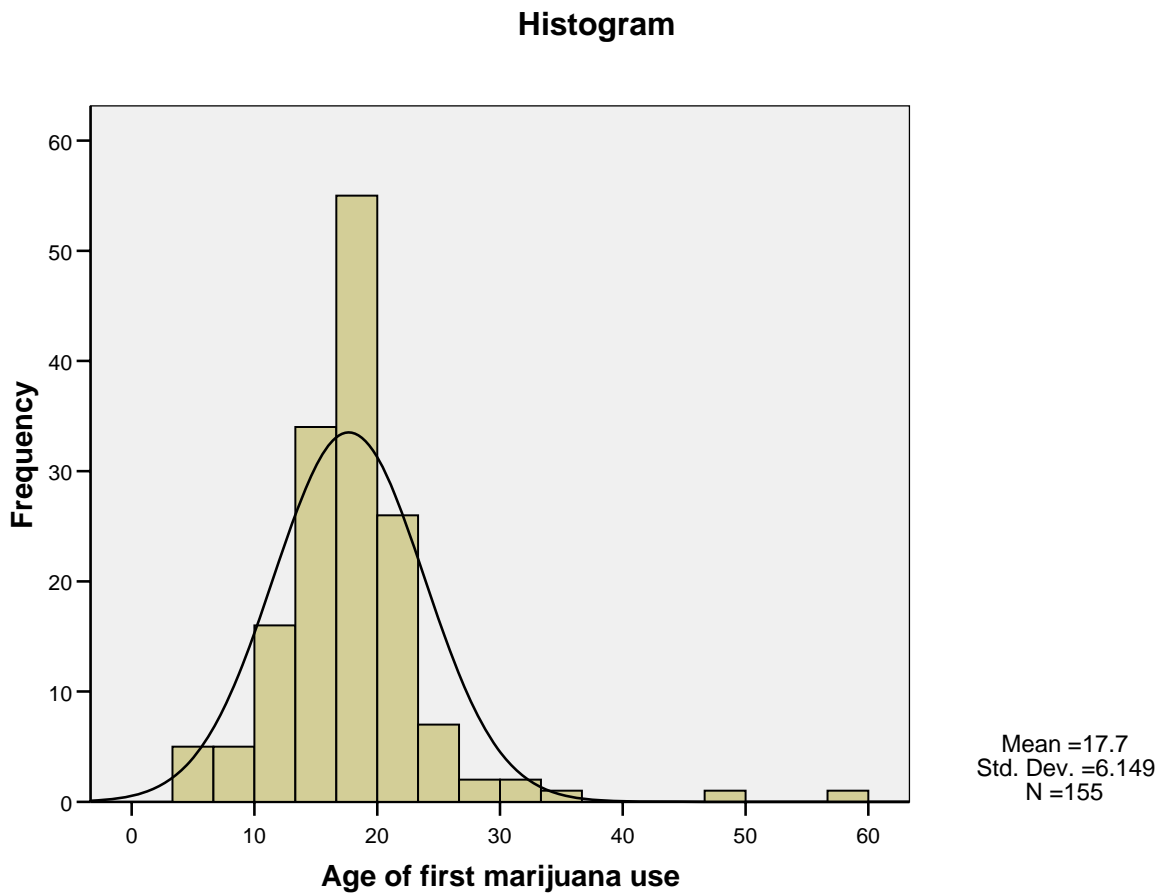
10. Have you ever thought you had an alcohol problem?

Yes: 8.4% (n=44)
No: 90.0% (n=451)

PART 6: PREVALENCE OF OTHER SUBSTANCES

1. Have you ever used marijuana?

Yes: 27.5% (n=148)
No: 69.5% (n=374)

2. How old were you when you first used marijuana?

3. Have you ever used powdered cocaine?

Yes: 7.1% (n=38)

No: 91.7% (n=488)

4. Have you ever used crack cocaine?

Yes: 1.9% (n=10)
No: 97.2% (n=515)

5. Have you ever used heroin?

Yes: 0.6% (n=3)
No: 92.6% (n=523)

6. Have you ever used opiates without medical permission?

Yes: 6.8% (n=36)
No: 91.9% (n=489)

7. Have you ever used metamphetamines?

Yes: 1.5% (n=8)
No: 97.4% (n=518)

Are you aware of a treatment facility for methamphetamine use?

Yes: 62.5% (n=5)
No: 37.5% (n=3)

Are you aware of the dangers associated with methamphetamine laboratories?

Yes: 100% (n=8)

8. Have you ever used stimulants?

Yes: 3.4% (n=18)
No: 95.5% (n=507)

9. Have you ever used hallucinogens?

Yes: 4.7% (n=25)
No: 94.2% (n=501)

10. Have you ever used tranquilizers without medical authorization?

Yes: 4.1% (n=22)
No: 94.5% (n=503)

11. Have you ever used sedatives without medical authorization?

Yes: 7.1% (n=38)
No: 91.5% (n=487)

PART 7: ALCOHOL OR DRUG TREATMENT HISTORY
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1. Have you ever received treatment or counseling for alcohol and other drugs?

Yes: 3.0% (n=14)
 No: 95.7% (n=449)

2. If you have been in treatment or counseling for alcohol or drugs, when was the last time?

Within the past 30 days: n=1
 More than 30 days/within 12 months: n=4
 More than 12 months: n=10 (Although 14 respondents said they have received counseling, 15 responded to when was the last time they received treatment.)

3. What kind of facility do you go to for treatment or counseling?

Residential drug or alcohol rehab program: n=4
 Out patient drug or alcohol program: n=3
 Private therapist or doctors office: n=4
 Some other place/unknown: n=3

4. The last time you received treatment, was it for?

Alcohol use only: n=9
 Drug use only: n=2
 Both alcohol and drugs: n=5 (Although 14 respondents said they had received counseling, 16 responded to this question.)

5. How did your treatment end?

Still in treatment: n=1
 Successfully completed: n=13
 Left treatment before completing: n=1

6. If you did not complete treatment, what was the main reason for not completing treatment?

Relapsed while in treatment: n=1

7. Treatment was paid for by?

Private health insurance: n=10
 Medicaid: n= 15
 Own savings: n=2 (Although 14 respondents said they had received counseling, 27 responded to this question.)

8. Over the past 12 months have you felt need for treatment but not received it?

Yes for alcohol: n=2

Yes for drugs: n=2

9. Have you tried to get treatment?

Yes for alcohol: n=1

Yes for Drugs: n=4 (Although 2 respondents said they felt they needed treatment for drugs and did not receive it, 4 respondents report having tried to get treatment.)

10. Do you have a disability?

Yes: 13.4% (n=69)

No: 85.4% (n=439)

11. If you have a disability, have you ever been denied treatment because of your disability?

Yes: None responded affirmatively

Part 8 Drug Free Workplace**1. Does your employer say they are a drug free workplace?**

Yes: 65.9% (n=240)

No: 39.0% (n=39)

Don't know: 7.1% (n=26)

2. Does your employer do drug testing?

Yes: 42.9% (n=151)

No: 33.5% (n=118)

Don't know: 5.7% (n=20)

3. Does your employer do pre-employment drug testing?

Yes: 58.5% (n=127)

No: 13.8% (n=30)

4. Does your employer do random drug testing?

Yes: 27.5% (n=47)

No: 26.9% (n=46)

5. Does your employer drug test any time an accident happens?

Yes: 20.5% (n=36)

No: 29.0% (n=51)

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

This survey produced several interesting findings. Some of these were predictable and expected and while others were unexpected.

Gateway Drugs

One of the more predictable findings was age of onset in the use of alcohol and marijuana, commonly referred to as the *gateway drugs*. The notion of gateway drugs suggests that one of these substances is the first “drug of choice” most often used by adolescents in the introduction or experimentation stage of substance use. No information was gathered on tobacco use, but tobacco use is also seen as a “gateway drug” by most researchers. Age of onset is most commonly 12-13 years as reported by this sample. The concept of “gateway” also suggests that once introduced to substance use in early adolescence or before, it becomes more likely that the user will move from one of these three substances, try the other two and are at risk of progressing to more substantial drug involvement such as rave drugs (ecstasy, GHB, etc.), methamphetamines, prescription drug abuse, cocaine, heroin, etc.

Aging Out and Social Using

While many respondents report early use of alcohol and other drugs, it is clear that some move from the experimentation stage into the social using stage with no further progression. This study (as well as others elsewhere in the literature) supports the notion that most early users tend to “age out” of high substance usage patterns. This aging out process is most pronounced at the college level where binge drinking is more the norm than the exception particularly in the first two to three years of college. Many individuals reach a point where graduation is on the horizon, classes give way to work and career, “the party ends” and they adopt more socially responsible usage behaviors. However, there is a subgroup of these students who do not “age out” and who do not adhere to social use patterns but rather progress into the latter stages of problem use and addiction. Many of these individuals arrived on campus with substantial, and as of yet, undetected and/or untreated substance abuse problems that began in middle or high school. Others develop the problem while at college.

General Adult Population and Parental Attitudes toward Adolescent Substance Use

A remarkable finding in Part 2 of the survey: *Attitudes toward Adolescent Substance Use* was that, as in the previous 2003 survey, men were found to be more permissive in their attitudes toward adolescent substance use than women. This was found to be the case in eight out of nine questions asked related to adolescent use of alcohol and marijuana. This finding is troubling and warrants the attention by the Orange County Office for a Drug Free Community and other community educators. It appears that men are continuing to make erroneous assumptions about the lack of harm resulting from adolescent alcohol and marijuana use.

Another interesting finding was parental indication that it was more their responsibility than it was the school systems responsibility to educate their children about the dangers of substance use and abuse (Drug education is best handled by the schools, not the parents – Strongly disagree: 28.4%; Disagree: 41%; Neutral 20.1%). Furthermore, some 43% of the respondents indicated a neutral or negative response to the query: *My community has people who can help me learn more about preventing my child from using drugs or alcohol*. Both of these responses suggest a lack of information or a lack of confidence on the part of parents in the school system

or community agencies to provide adequate information to their children regarding the dangers of drug use.

Substance Use Among Survey Respondents

The survey sample (n=565) ranged in age from 18-85. The mean age was 47. When controlling for age in data analysis, prevalence and usage was universally higher among the 18-39 age subgroup when compared to the age group 18-69. The survey examined use and abuse of a wide range of prescription and illegal drugs as well as alcohol use and abuse. There was varying degrees of confirmation in all drug categories from marijuana, metamphetamines, to cocaine and heroin (see Part 5 – Alcohol Use and Part 6 – Prevalence of Other Substances).

Marijuana was by far the most commonly reported first used drug and age 16 was the most common age for first use of marijuana although there were numerous reports of first use at a younger age and a noted upswing in use beginning at age 13. First time alcohol use most commonly occurred between ages 16-18 but there was also a notable upswing beginning at age 12. The later onset of alcohol use also suggests that adolescents have easier access to marijuana at an earlier age than they do to alcohol. In any event, access to both gateway drugs was found to be readily accessible during the adolescent years as reported by the sample surveyed for this study.

Drug Free Workplace

A new series of questions was included in this survey that were related to prevalence of employment in a drug free workplace and types of drug testing programs administered by the respondents employer. The survey revealed that 65.9% (n=240) of the respondents indicated that they worked in a drug free workplace as indicated by their employer. Of these 42.9% (n=151) reported that their employer did drug testing, 58.5% (n=127) did pre-employment testing, 27.5% (n=47) conducted random drug testing and 20.5% (n=36) engaged in for-cause and post-accident testing.

CONCLUSIONS

This study helped profile the attitudes towards and incidence of alcohol and other drugs use and abuse in Orange County. Survey findings indicate that Orange County residents have had exposure to and experience with a wide range of substances encompassing use and abuse of legal, controlled and illegal drugs. Responses suggest that substance use and abuse is not a minor problem.

While the random sample was diverse and included a wide range of ages and ethnic groups, about two thirds of the respondents were female. This may have occurred for several reasons. Phone surveys were conducted in both day and evening times and there is a greater likelihood that more women than men were home during the day time hours. Women are also more likely to respond to, and answer, telephonic phone surveys.

One limitation of the phone surveys is that it does not represent Orange County residents who do not have a residential phone. The survey was also restricted to individuals 18 and over. Consequently responses to early adolescent drug use is dated by at least 5 years and longer based on the age of the respondent. However, it does reinforce what has now become common knowledge in the substance abuse literature - first hand experience with alcohol and

marijuana typically occurs in early adolescence. Further, alcohol and other drug experimentation will continue to occur throughout adolescence and into early adulthood until it begins to taper off where users adopt “social use” patterns. This study showed that most respondent’s alcohol and other drug use patterns were established by the age of 20 and that very few had their first encounter after the age of 20.

The literature supports the notion that the earlier the onset of any substance use the greater the likelihood of progression to problem use and eventual addiction. This study reminds us that we must maintain our vigilance of the problems of substance use and that we must be particularly aggressive in our prevention and education efforts aimed at early adolescents and younger.

This study is the second “household” survey of Orange County residents and provides baseline data of alcohol and other substance use and abuse in Orange County. This study can also serve as a benchmark for subsequent household surveys that should be conducted every two to three years in Orange County in order to gauge alcohol and other drug using and abusing behaviors patterns and shifts.