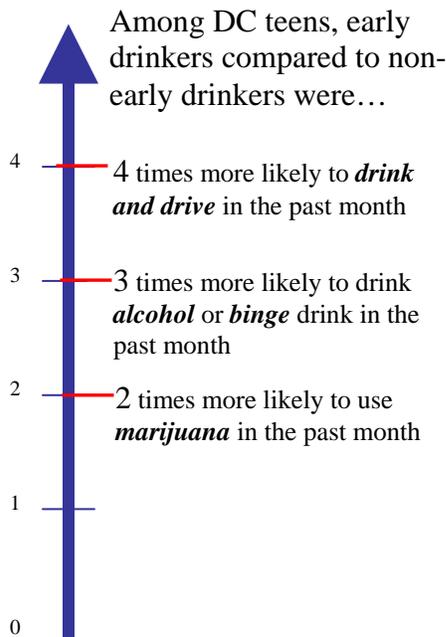


## Is Early Alcohol Use (Before Age 13) Among DC Teenagers Associated With Other Risky Behaviors?<sup>1</sup>



Approximately one-quarter of all DC teens were early drinkers. Males were more likely than females to be early drinkers. Early drinkers were more likely than non-early drinkers to have:

- Drank and drove in the past month
- Drank alcohol in the past month
- Used marijuana in the past month
- Carried a weapon in the past month
- Physically fought in the past year
- Had sex in the past three months.

### Did You Know...?

- As of 2007, there were more than 1,400 licensed alcohol retailers in DC—a 68-square mile area. That's approximately 21 alcohol retailers per square mile in the District.
- Underage drinking cost DC \$153 million in 2005. These costs included medical care, work loss, and pain and suffering associated with the use of alcohol by youth.<sup>2</sup>

### Drinking Puts Teens At Risk

- When young people drink it can result in harm to self and others, including: risky sexual behavior; physical and sexual assaults; potential injurious effects on the developing brain; problems in school, at work, and with the legal system; various types of injury; motor vehicle crashes; homicide and suicide; and death from alcohol poisoning.<sup>3</sup>
- It is illegal in DC for persons under age 21 to possess, drink, purchase, attempt to purchase an alcoholic beverage, or to use a fake ID. Violations of this law may result in suspension of driving privileges for up to one year and a fine of up to \$1,000 (DC Code § 25-1002). It is also illegal for persons under age 21 to operate any vehicle when their blood, breath, or urine contains any measurable amount of alcohol. Violations may result in imprisonment of 10 days to one year, a fine of \$2,000 to \$10,000, and at least 60 days of community service (DC Code § 50-2201.05).
- Between 2 and 5% of DC residents aged 12 to 17 (900 to 1,800 DC teens) abused or were dependent on alcohol in the past year.<sup>4</sup>

Data Notes & Sources: <sup>1</sup>Percentages are from a weighted sample of public charter and public high school students. Early drinkers unweighted n=959. Non-early drinkers unweighted n=2,719. Drinking and driving refers to teens that are age 16+ only. Bingeing is drinking five or more alcoholic drinks on any occasion in the past month. Adapted by CESAR from data from the DC Youth Risk Behavior Survey, DC Public Schools, 2007.

<sup>2</sup>Produced by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) in July 2007, available from the Underage Drinking Enforcement Training Center at [www.udetc.org](http://www.udetc.org).

<sup>3</sup>National Institute of Health (NIH) fact sheet *Underage Drinking* <http://www.nih.gov/about/researchresultsforthepublic/UnderageDrinking.pdf>

<sup>4</sup>2005 & 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.