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Young Adult Workers Have Highest Rate of Illicit Drug Use; Least Access to Workplace Drug Education and Employee Assistance Programs

Young adult workers are more likely to use illicit drugs than older workers, according to a recent report from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Nearly one-fifth of full-time workers ages 18 to 25 reported using illicit drugs in the past month, compared to 10% or fewer of workers ages 26 to 64. At the same time, these youngest workers are least likely to have access to drug and alcohol education, prevention, and treatment resources in their workplace. One-third of workers ages 18 to 25 reported that their employer offered educational information about drug and alcohol use, compared to 40% to 49% of older workers. And 40% of young adults reported that they had access to an employee assistance program, compared to 56% or more of older workers. Employers of young adults should take into consideration the higher rate of drug and alcohol use among this population when planning their workplace substance abuse programs.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from the Office of Applied Studies, SAMHSA, *Treatment Episode Dataset (TEDS) Highlights—2005, National Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment Services*, 2007. Available online at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/dasis.htm#teds2>.