

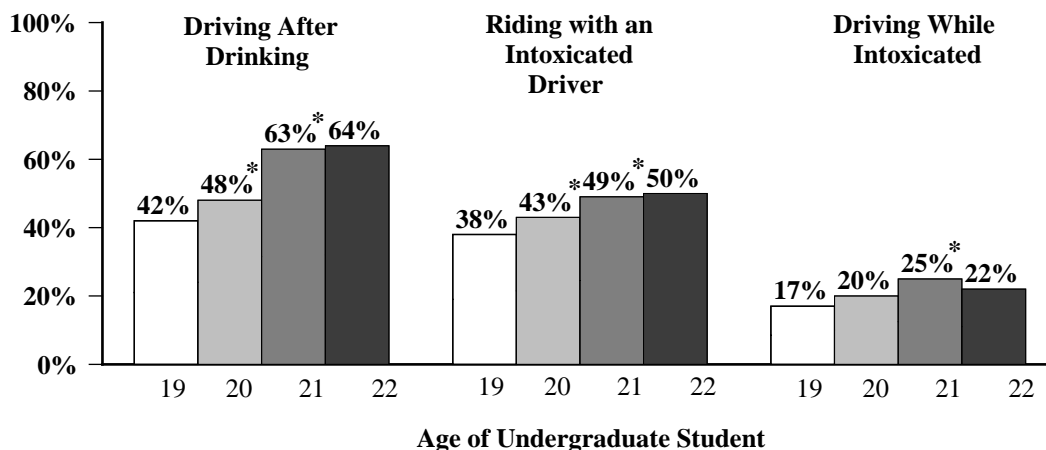
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Alcohol-Related Traffic Risk Behaviors Common Among College Students; Increase Significantly When They Reach Age 21

College students are significantly more likely to drink and drive after they turn 21, according to the College Life Study, a longitudinal study of undergraduate students attending a large mid-Atlantic university. Nearly one-half of underage students with access to a car admitted to driving after having had anything to drink. This percentage increased to 63% and 64% at ages 21 and 22 (see figure below). Similar increases at age 21 were found for riding with an intoxicated driver and driving while intoxicated. In addition, males were more likely than females to engage in any of these alcohol-related traffic risk behaviors. The authors suggests that it is time for “increased levels of high visibility enforcement to occur on or around college campuses” and that college campuses should “embrace and enforce zero tolerance policies that actively deter alcohol-related traffic risk behaviors” (p. 1477).

**Percentage of College Students With Access to a Car Reporting
Alcohol-Related Traffic Risk Behaviors in the Past 12 Months, by Age, 2005-2008**
(N=1,253)



*Denotes statistically significant change from the preceding year ($p < .05$).

SOURCES: Adapted by CESAR from Beck, K. H., Kasperski, S. J., Caldeira, K. M., Vincent, K. B., O’Grady, K. E., and Arria, A. M., “Trends in Alcohol-Related Traffic Risk Behaviors Among College Students,” *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*, 34(8):1472-1478, 2010; and The Center on Young Adult Health and Development, “Trends in Alcohol-Related Traffic Risk Behaviors Among College Students,” *Research Brief*, 2010. For more information contact Amelia M. Arria at aarria@umd.edu.