

# American Drug Testing

*Drug-Free Workplace Programs*

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## DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ADVISOR

AN ONGOING SERIES TO PROTECT YOUR COMPANY BY HELPING TO KEEP DRUGS OUT OF YOUR WORK-

### Baby Boomers Continuing Drug Use in Later Years, II

Almost 60 percent of past year marijuana users in 1997 reported using marijuana to relax, suggesting that illicit drug use may be a coping mechanism to deal with personal problems and related stress. New prevention and treatment strategies are needed to target stress regulation and impulse control among chronic drug users and to help them develop effective coping mechanisms. The results of this report indicate that regular attendance at religious services may contribute to the prevention of illicit drug use in the past year among lifetime illicit drug users. This link may reflect the effects of cohesive social networks and social support help cope with stress and deter illicit drug use.

The prevalence rates of past year illicit drug use presented in this report are likely to be underestimates because respondents may be influenced by the need for

social desirability in responding to survey questions, which may lead to underreporting of illicit drug use. Second, this study could not examine whether other factors, such as per-

*“..they point to a need to develop effective illicit drug use screening instruments.”*

sonality (neuroticism), lifetime SUD, social support, and self-efficacy, are associated with past year illicit drug use among past year users aged 50 to 59 because these variables are unavailable in the existing NSDUH data. Finally, although NSDUH can provide suggestive evidence regarding changes in drug use, the cross-sectional nature of the data it collects cannot provide full information on relapse and remission of illicit drug use over the lifespan. Longitudinal studies are needed to fully under-

stand the trajectory of illicit drug use among persons aged 50 to 59 following drug initiation. Despite these limitations, this is the first report to examine trends in illicit drug use among persons aged 50 to 59 in the United States using the most recent nationally representative samples. Our results highlight current and anticipated future increases in the numbers and proportions of aging adults using illicit drugs; they point to a need to (1) develop effective illicit drug use screening instruments for primary care settings; (2) improve primary care physicians' training in illicit drug use screening, intervention, and treatment; (3) promote integrated care



combining medical and behavioral health services to fully address the spectrum of problems that patients bring to the primary care settings; and (4) expand substance abuse treatment programs specially for the new generation of older Americans. These changes in clinical practice will be necessary to improve illicit drug use screening and provide appropriate treatment for the baby boom generation and

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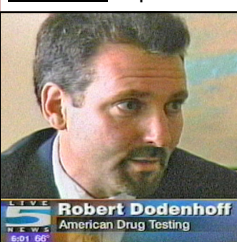
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subsequent cohorts as they enter the later stages of life.

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### The Drug-Free Workplace Advisor



Robert Dodenhoff, President  
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