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# Kentucky Needs Assessment Project Brief Report

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## Employment and Substance Use among Kentucky Adults

### IN BRIEF

- Adult Kentuckians 18 to 44 years old who are employed full-time are more likely to have used alcohol in the past year, used illicit drugs in the past year, met criteria for a substance use disorder in the past year, and currently need treatment compared to 18 to 44 year old Kentuckians who are not working or are working part-time.
- Adult Kentuckians not currently working due to disability were less likely to have drunk alcohol in the past year but more likely to have used illicit drugs in the past year compared to adult Kentuckians who are not currently working due to retirement or other reasons.

**A**n estimated 61% of Kentucky adults are currently employed; 51% reporting full-time employment (at least 35 hours per week), and 10% reporting part-time employment. The Kentucky Needs Assessment Project (KNAP) 2007 Adult Household Survey asked adults age 18 and older about their current work status, alcohol use, and illicit drug use over their lifetime, past 12 months, and/or past 30 days, as well as other information about substance abuse and dependence. Illicit drug was defined as the unprescribed use of marijuana, cocaine, other stimulants, oxycodone or Oxycontin, other opiates, sedatives, hallucinogens, club drugs, inhalants, or any other substances used for their psychotropic effects, excluding alcohol and tobacco. Substance abuse and dependence were defined using Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fourth Edition, Text Revised (DSM-IV-TR) criteria. Abuse and

dependence should not be interpreted as formal clinical diagnoses. This report focuses on employment and alcohol and drug use by Kentucky adults age 18 years and older.

### STUDY OVERVIEW

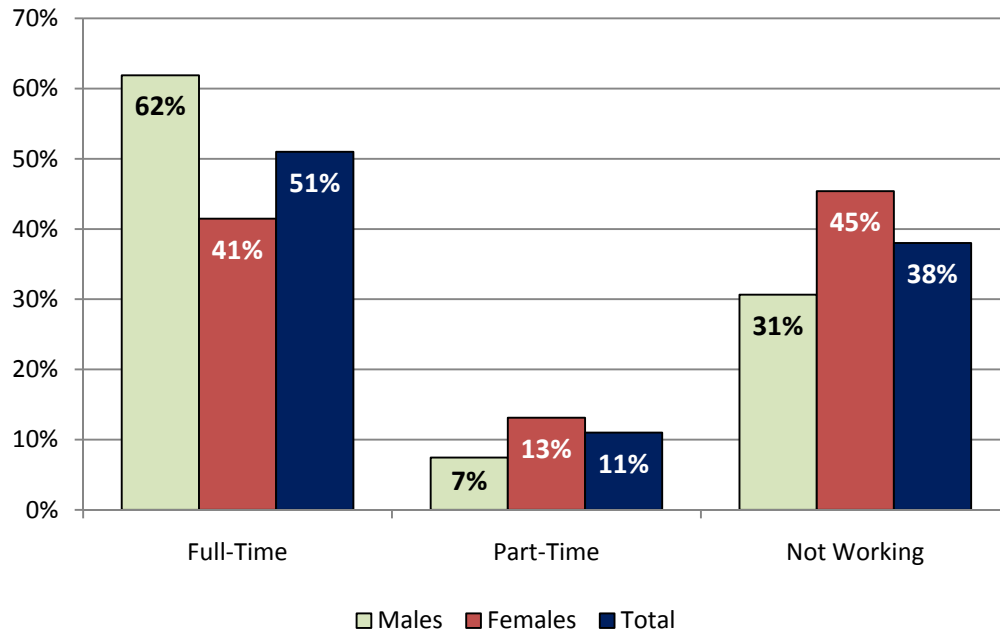
The Kentucky Needs Assessment Project (KNAP) is a series of studies designed to estimate substance use levels and substance abuse treatment need of Kentuckians. Data for this report were taken from the 2007 Adult Household Survey, a telephone survey of 3,312 Kentucky households using random digit dialing. Only respondents in residential households were sampled and included. The findings from this study can only be generalized to adults residing in Kentucky households, and not to those in institutional, dormitory or group home settings. Another potential source of bias is the understatement or overstatement of actual behaviors. The validity of self-report data depends on the honesty, memory, and understanding of the respondents. The detailed methodology of this study is described in the full report which can be viewed at <http://cdar.uky.edu>.

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND EMPLOYMENT

The percentage of Kentucky adults 18 years of age and older who reported current employment is an estimated 62%.

**Gender** – Adult male Kentuckians were more likely to report current full-time employment compared to adult female Kentuckians (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Current Work Status by Gender



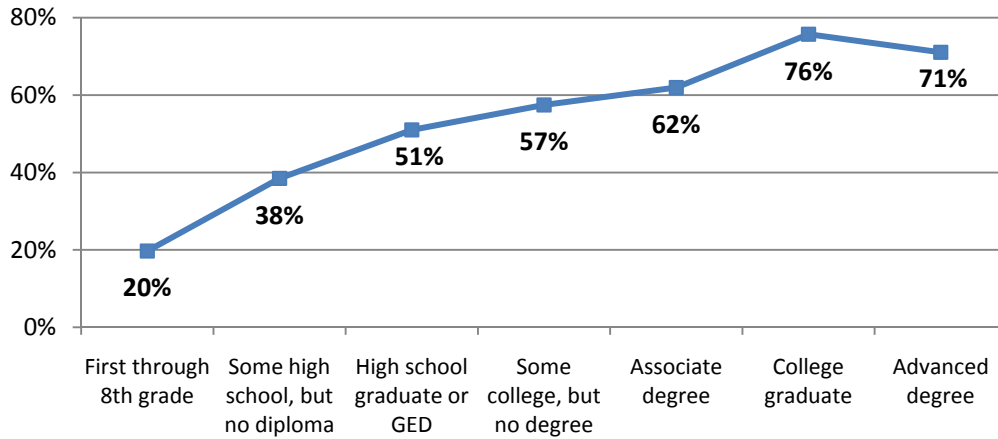
**Age** – Adult Kentuckians 65 and older were the most likely to report not currently working while younger adult Kentuckians (18 to 24) were most likely to report part-time employment (Table 1).

Table 1: Current Work Status by Age

	Full-Time	Part-Time	Not Working
18 to 24	38%	31%	32%
25 to 44	71%	8%	21%
45 to 64	54%	7%	39%
65 and older	7%	9%	83%

**Education** – Adult Kentuckians with more formal education were more likely to report full-time employment. Figure 2 presents the percent of Kentuckians 18 to 65 years old who reported current full-time employment by highest education completed.

Figure 2: Adult Kentuckians (18 to 65) Reporting Current Full-Time Employment by Highest Education Completed



## ALCOHOL USE, DRUG USE, TREATMENT NEED AND EMPLOYMENT

**Alcohol Use** – For adult Kentuckians 18 to 64 years old, those who were employed full-time or part-time were more likely to report drinking in the past year compared to those who reported they were not currently working (Table 2).

Table 2: Percent of Persons Who Drank in the Past Year by Current Work Status and Age

	Full-Time	Part-Time	Not Working
18 to 24	62%	61%	35%
25 to 44	59%	42%	32%
45 to 64	50%	44%	30%
65 and older	18%	30%	25%

**Drug Use** – Younger adult Kentuckians were more likely to report using illicit drugs in the past year than older age groups regardless of employment status. For 18 to 44 year old Kentuckians past year drug use was reported more by those working full-time than by those not currently working. Conversely, for 45 and older Kentuckians, past year drug use was reported more by those not currently working than by those working full-time or part-time (Table 3).

Table 3: Percent of Persons Who Used Drugs in the Past Year by Current Work Status and Age

	Full-Time	Part-Time	Not Working
18 to 24	31%	8%	18%
25 to 44	8%	4%	6%
45 to 64	3%	< 1%	5%
65 and older	< 1%	< 1%	1%

**DSM-IV-TR Criteria** – For 18 to 44 year old Kentuckians the percent of persons meeting criteria for substance abuse or dependence in the past year was higher for those working full-time than by those not currently working. Conversely, for Kentuckians 45 and older, the percent of persons not currently working who met past year substance abuse or dependence was higher compared to those working full-time or not currently working (Table 4).

Table 4: Percent of Persons Who Meet Past Year Substance Abuse or Dependence Criteria by Current Work Status and Age

	Full-Time	Part-Time	Not Working
18 to 24	22%	2%	11%
25 to 44	7%	2%	4%
45 to 64	2%	2%	4%
65 and older	< 1%	< 1%	1%

**Treatment Need** – For 18 to 64 year old Kentuckians current treatment need was higher for those working full-time than by those working part-time or not currently working. Interestingly, for Kentuckians 65 and older, the percent of those currently working part-time needing treatment was higher than by those working full-time or not currently working (Table 5).

Table 5: Percent of Persons Who Need Treatment by Current Work Status and Age

	Full-Time	Part-Time	Not Working
18 to 24	27%	12%	14%
25 to 44	16%	2%	11%
45 to 64	11%	9%	8%
65 and older	3%	6%	5%

## ADULT KENTUCKIANS NOT CURRENTLY WORKING

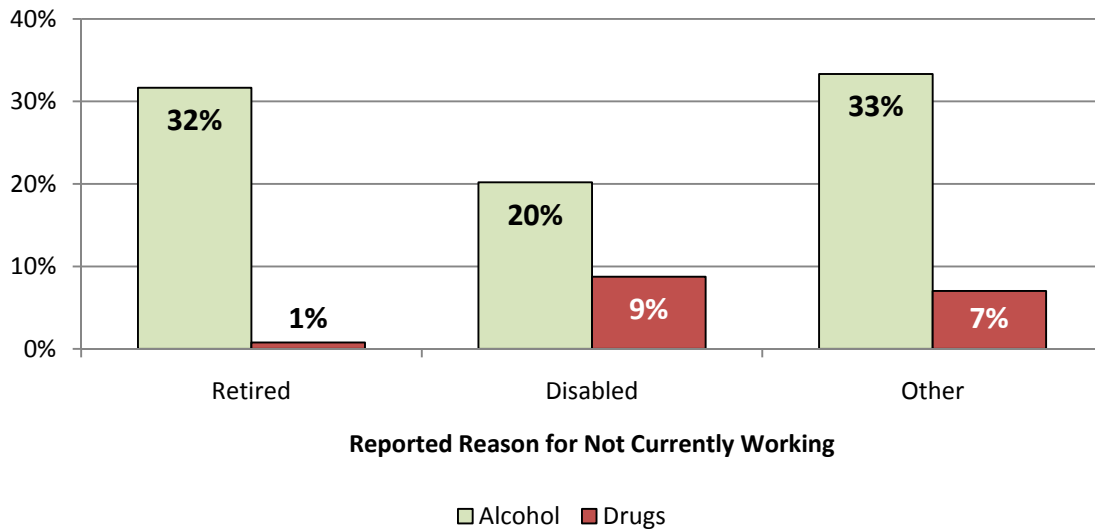
**Reason Not Currently Working** – For persons who reported they were not currently working full-time or part-time, older adult Kentuckians (65 and older) were most likely to report not currently working due to retirement while younger adult Kentuckians were most likely not currently working full-time due to being in school. Table 6 presents the two most commonly reported reasons for not currently working by age group.

Table 6: Most Commonly Reported Reasons for Not Currently Working by Age

18 to 24		25 to 44		45 to 64		65 and Older	
41%	In School	46%	Homemaker	44%	Disabled	82%	Retired
30%	Other/UNK	27%	Disabled	35%	Retired	7%	Disabled

**Past Year Alcohol and Drug Use** – Adult Kentuckians who reported they were not currently working due to disability were less likely to have drunk alcohol in the past year but were more likely to have used drugs in the past year compared to persons not currently working due to retirement or other reasons (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Adult Kentuckians Not Currently Working and Past Year Alcohol and Drug Use



## SUMMARY

Adult Kentuckians 18 to 44 years old who are employed full-time are more likely to have used alcohol in the past year, used illicit drugs in the past year, met criteria for a substance use disorder in the past year, and currently need treatment compared to 18 to 44 year old Kentuckians who are not working or are working part-time. This may be a result of full-time workers having more disposable income, greater access to transportation to obtain drugs and alcohol, or the correlations between age and employment and between age and alcohol/drug use.

Of adult Kentuckians not working, disability was one of the top reasons cited for persons 25 and older. Adult Kentuckians not currently working due to disability were less likely to have drunk alcohol in the past year but more likely to have used illicit drugs in the past year compared to adult Kentuckians who are not currently working due to retirement or other reasons.

### **Acknowledgements**

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### **Electronic Access to Publications**

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<http://cdar.uky.edu/>