



# TEEN *SEX* AND SUBSTANCE USE

The following is a summary of a report, ***Dangerous Liaisons: Substance Abuse and Sex***, issued by Dr. Joseph A. Califano, Jr., Chairman and President of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University. The report represents a two-year study of national data set analysis of more than 34,000 teenagers, as well as review of more than 800 books and articles and interviews with over 100 experts in relevant fields and other studies in the prevention field.

Before graduating from high school, every teen in America will have to make a conscious choice—most on numerous occasions—whether to use alcohol or other drugs and whether to have sexual intercourse. Many children face these choices in middle school when they are 10-to-13-years old.

**Those children who choose to use alcohol or other drugs are much more likely to have sexual intercourse to have it at younger ages and – while still teens – to have sexual intercourse with several individuals.**

## ***Key findings of the report:***

- ❖ Teens who drink are seven times likelier than those who don't to have sexual intercourse.
- ❖ Teens who use other drugs are five times likelier than those who don't to have sexual intercourse.
- ❖ Adolescents are initiating sex at earlier ages. In 1997, 38% of 15-year-old girls and 45% of 15-year-old boys reported having had sexual intercourse.
- ❖ Teens who use alcohol are twice as likely as non-using teens to have sex with four or more people.
- ❖ Teens who use drugs are three times as likely as non-using teens to have sex with four or more people.
- ❖ Teens under 15 who have ever had a drink are twice as likely as nonusers to have had sex.
- ❖ Teens under 15 who ever used drugs are almost four times as likely as nonusers to have had sex. Alcohol use—by the victim, the perpetrator, or both—has been implicated in up to 75% of date rapes of college women.
- ❖ Alcohol is implicated in more incidents of sexual violence—including rape and child molestation—than any other single drug.

In another study conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, teens who are sexually active reported two reasons why they did not use contraceptives: ***pressure from partners and alcohol.***