



# ***Comprehensive Strategies for Reducing Underage Drinking***

*House Special Committee on Drug and Alcohol Abuse  
Annapolis, MD*

*September 23, 2008*

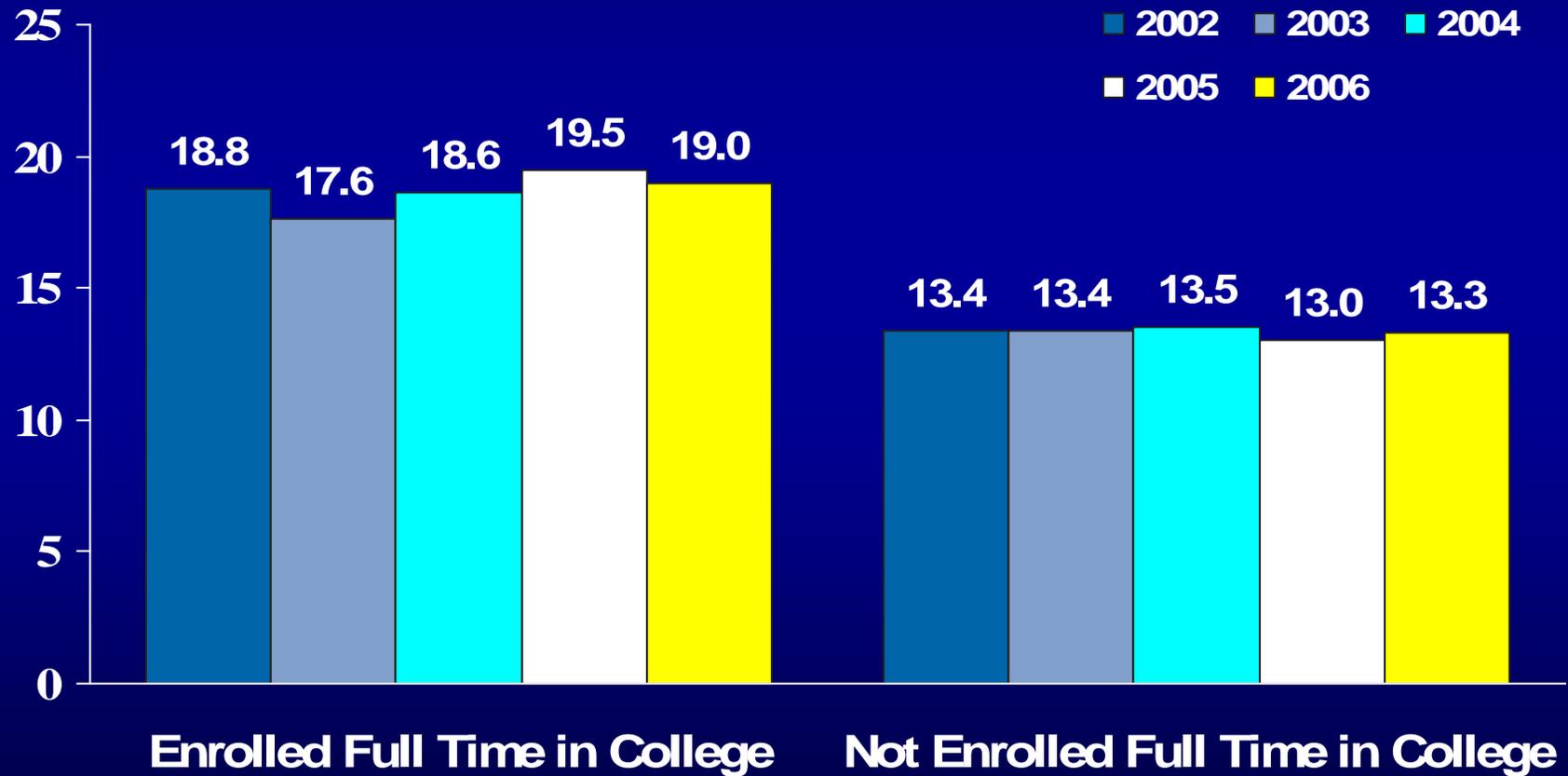
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How **big** is the problem?...

Let's focus on college students

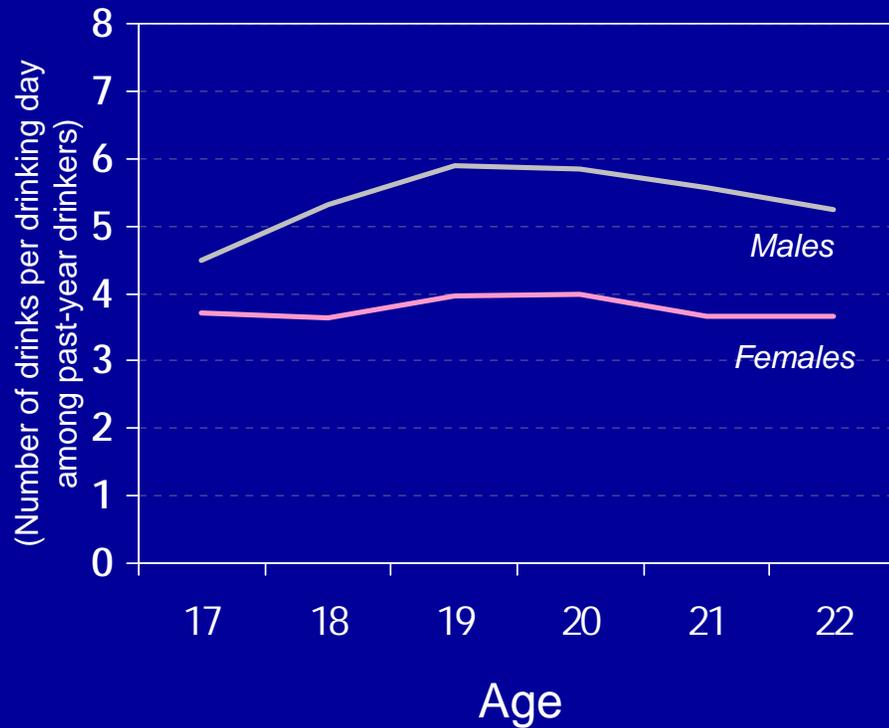
# Heavy Alcohol Use among Adults Aged 18 to 22, by College Enrollment: 2002-2006

Percent Using Heavily in Past Month

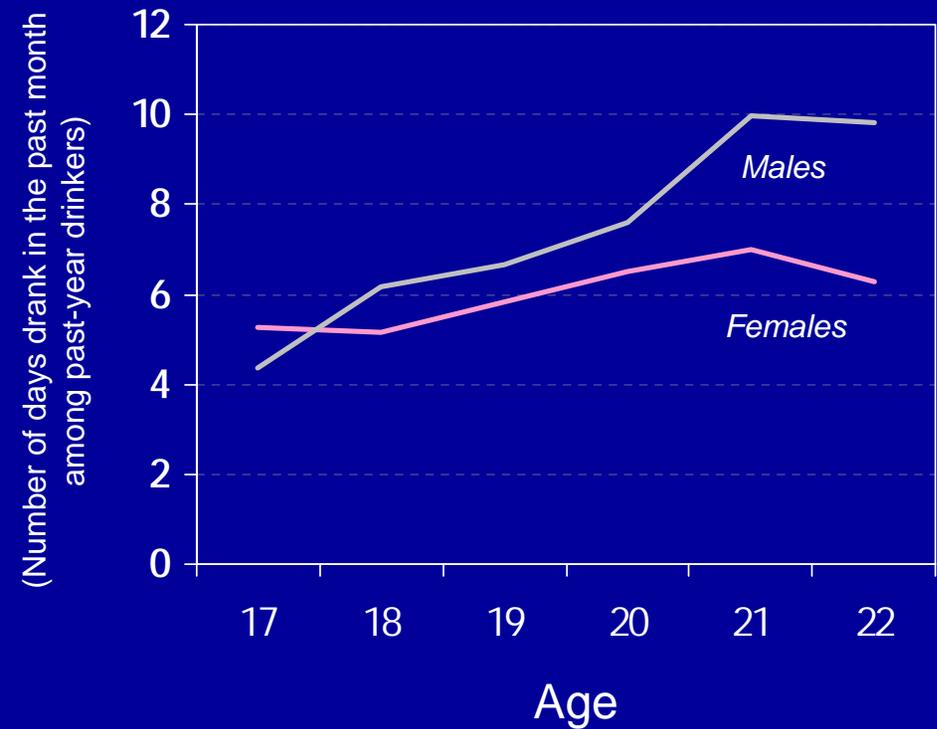


# Alcohol Consumption across college: Findings from the College Life Study

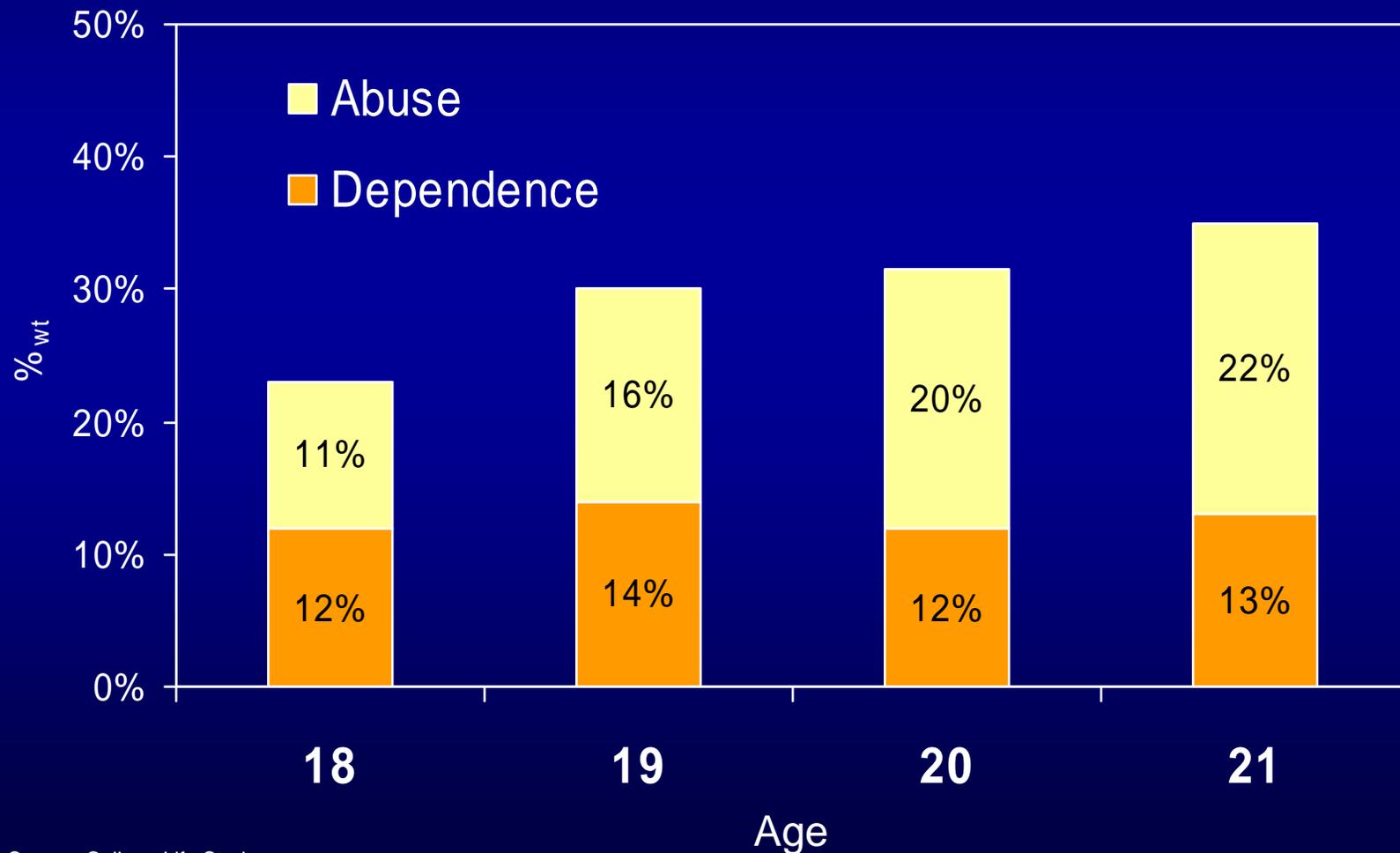
## Quantity of Alcohol



## Frequency of Consumption



# Alcohol Abuse and Dependence among college students by age



Source: College Life Study

**38%**

of first-year college students  
who drink  
experience blackouts

Why do most 16-year-olds  
drive like they're  
*missing a part of their brain?*

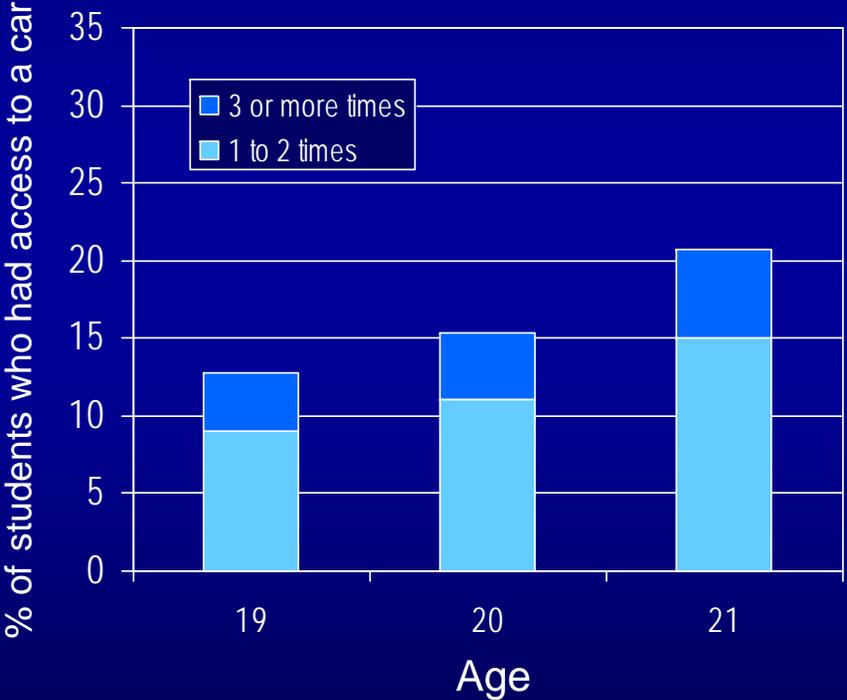


BECAUSE THEY ARE.

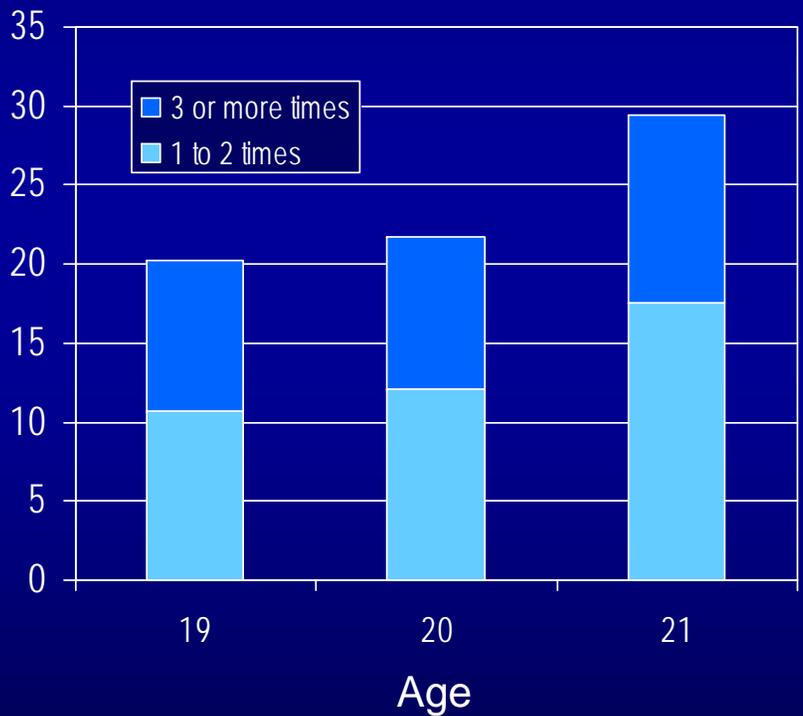


# Drunk Driving in the Past Year

## Females



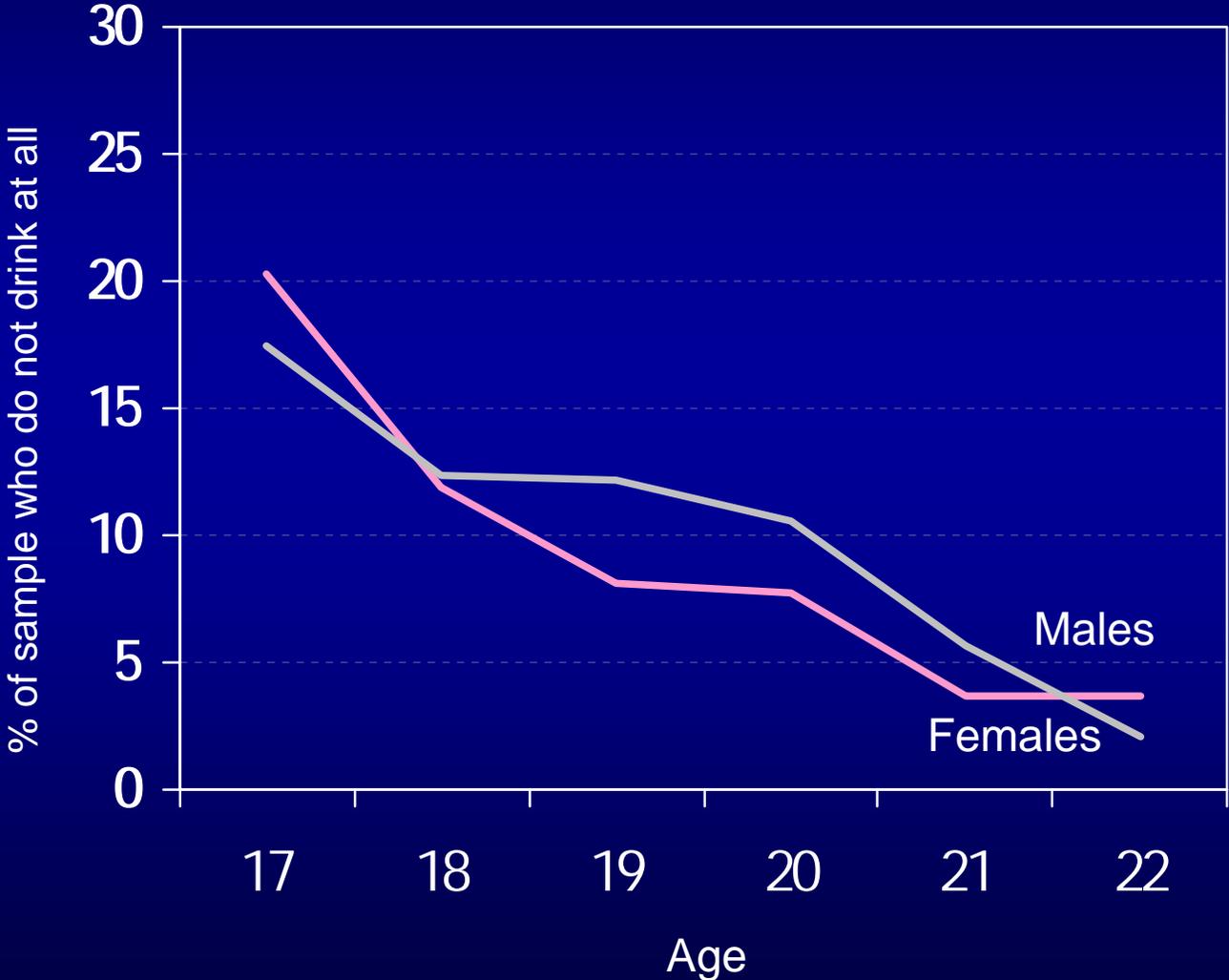
## Males



Source: College Life Study

*How much and how often  
college students drink  
is a function of  
what type of drinker they are  
when they enter college.*

# What proportion of college students DO NOT DRINK at all?



Source: College Life Study

Among first-year drinking college students...



(1 to 2 drinks/drinking day)

= "light" drinker  
= 25%



(3 to 5 drinks/drinking day)

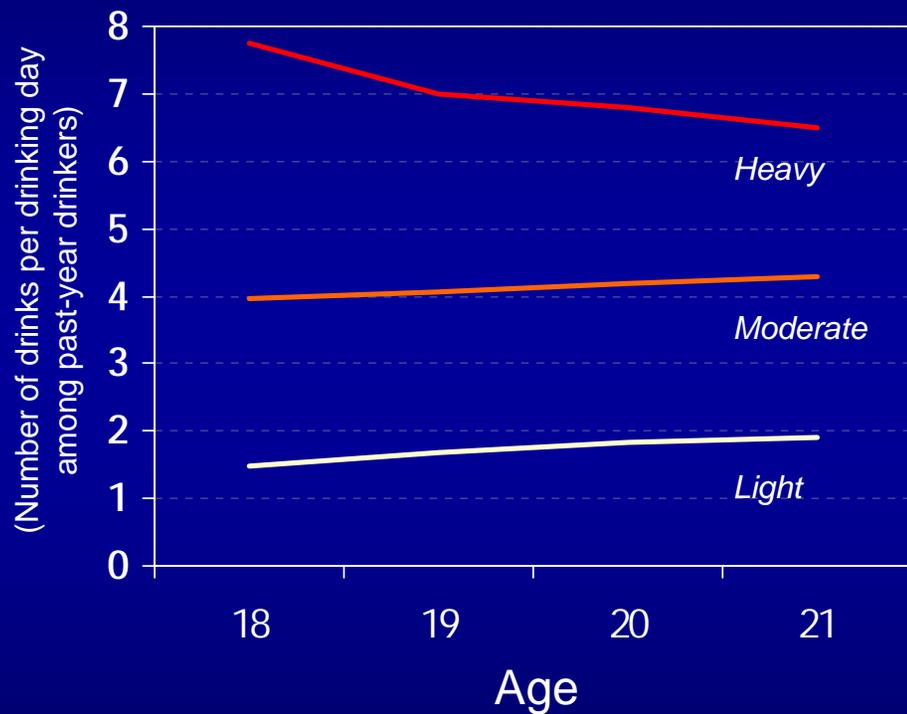
= "moderate" drinker  
= 46%



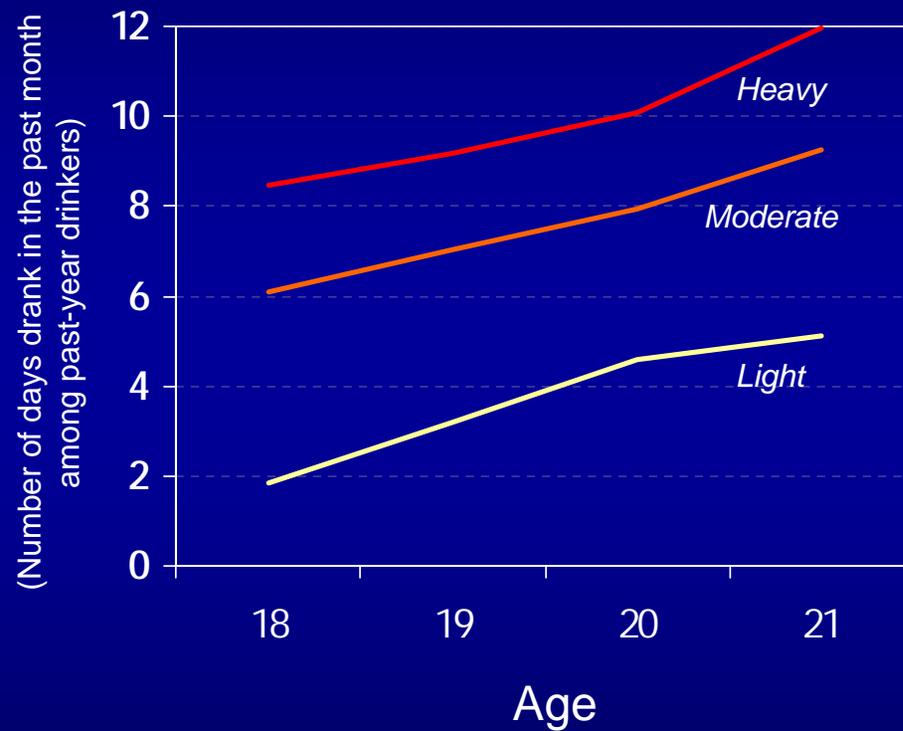
(6 or more drinks/drinking day)

= "heavy" drinker  
= 29%

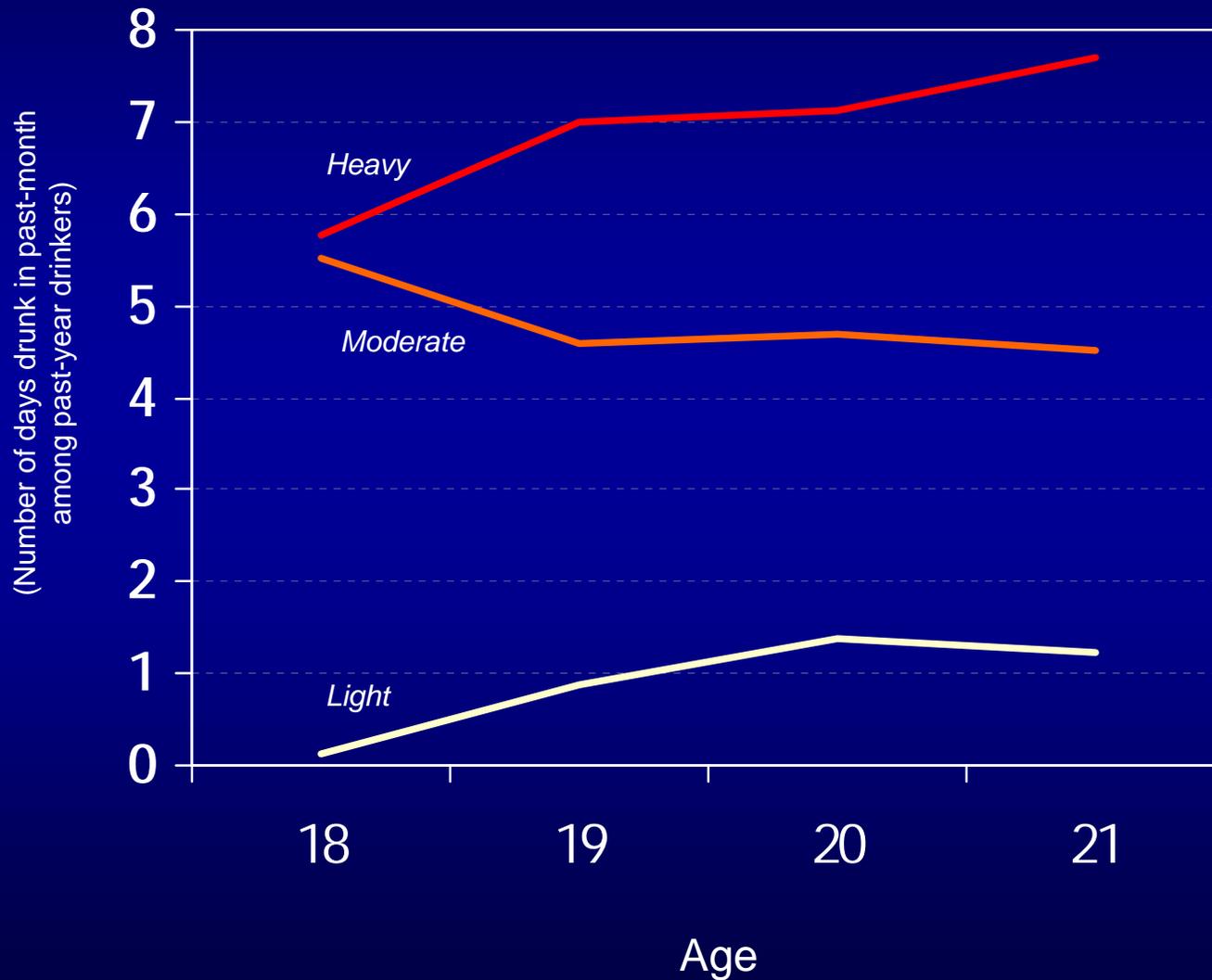
## Quantity of Alcohol



## Frequency of Consumption



# Number of times drunk in past month



## *What have we learned about these high-risk underage drinkers?*

- They **can be identified** early, some as young as high school.
- They are **different** on a number of personal and behavioral characteristics.
- They **escalate** their use of other drugs once they enter college.
- They rarely seek or receive **treatment**.

46% of the 106 arrests

and

46% of the 85 emergency department visits

and

36% of the 55 academic dismissals

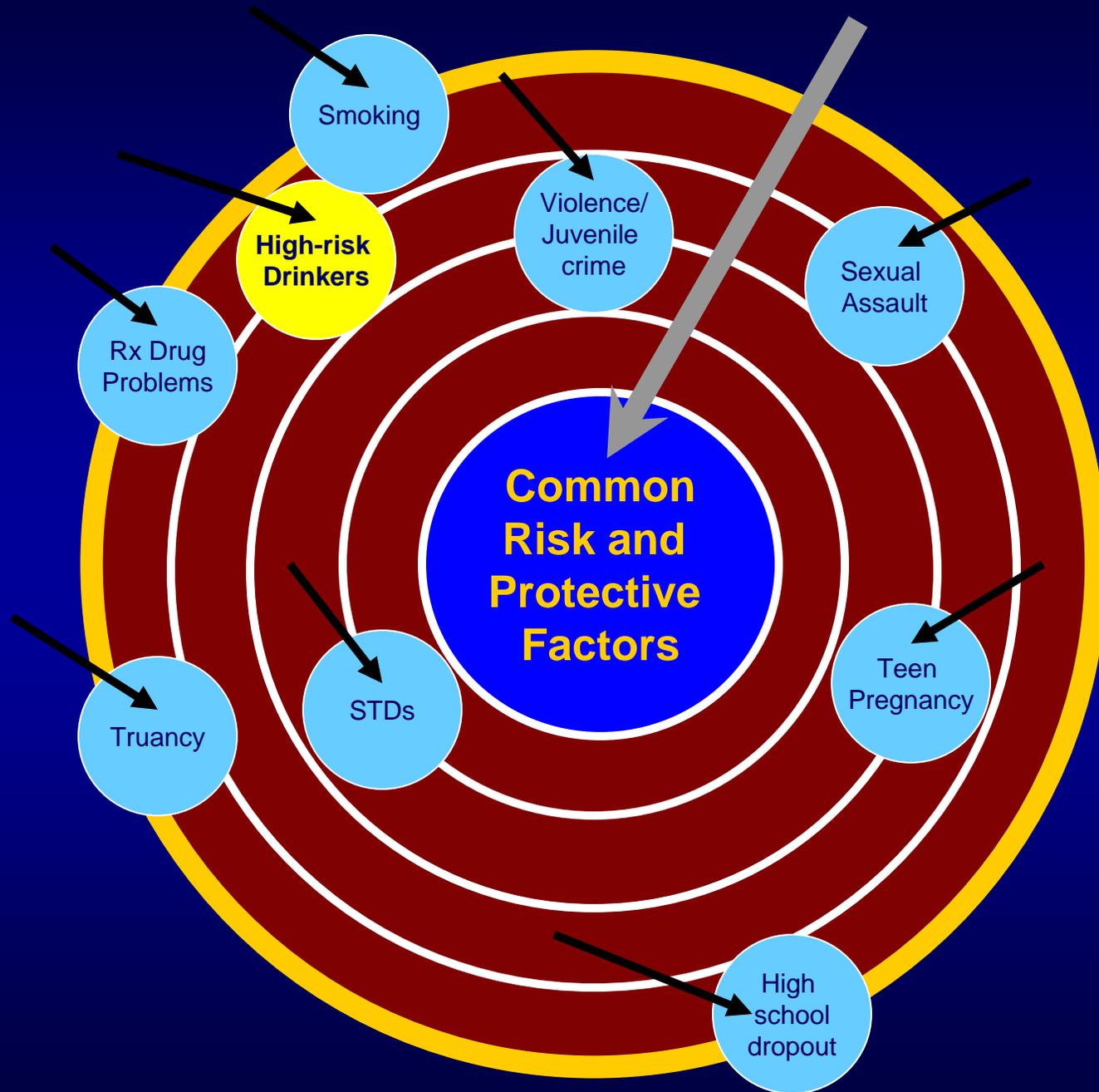
were attributable to the 24% of the sample who were labeled “heavy drinkers” at age 18.

*College may be too late for  
primary prevention...  
therefore intervention is the key*

The most promising approaches for reducing heavy drinking among college students are **individualized approaches** involving screening and consistent long-term feedback.

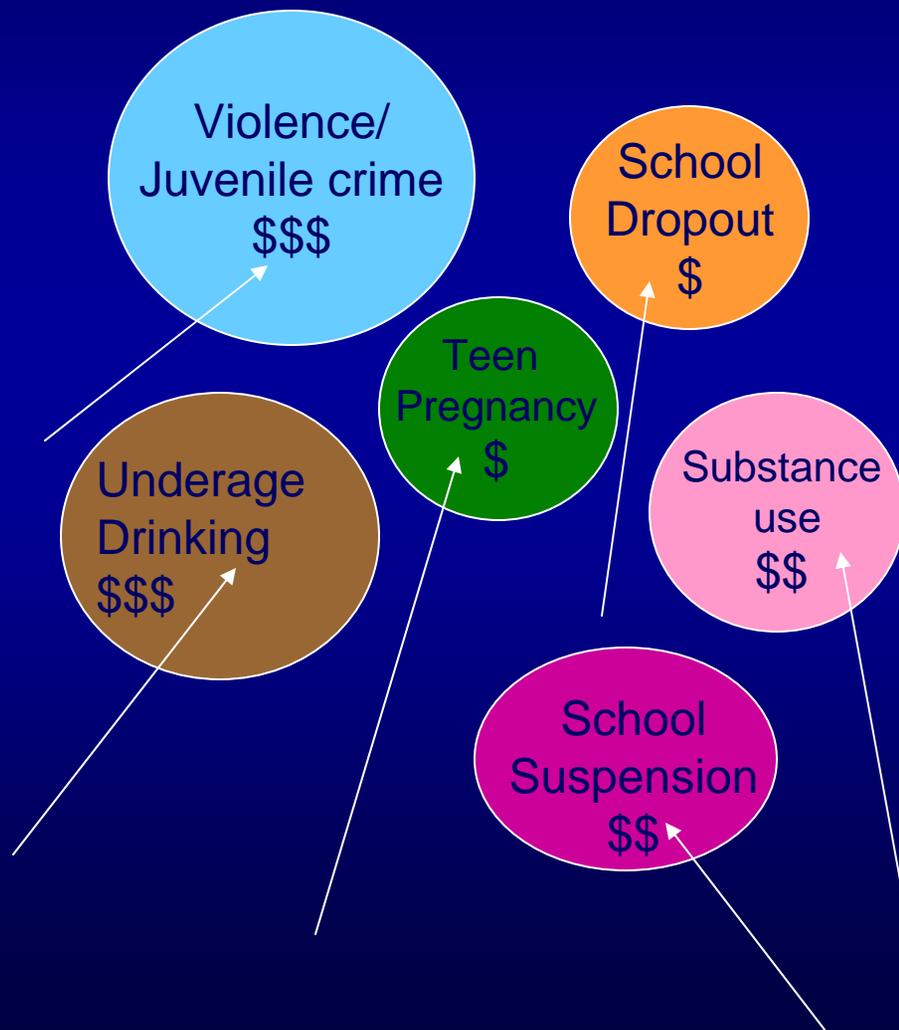
*But all states have a bigger problem...*

*How do we spend prevention  
dollars wisely?*



# OLD

Existing Resources Allocated to Prevention Programs



# NEW



# Top Three Action Items

- **Coordinate** prevention activities so that common risk and protective factors are targeted, and targeted early.
- Develop and utilize regular, confidential **screenings and brief interventions** for high-risk adolescents and young adults.
- **Translate** research findings on risk and protective factors into practical solutions to reduce underage drinking.