Summary on rural and urban U.S. substance abuse (Karen van Gundy, 2006. Substance Abuse in Rural and Small Town American, University of New Hampshire, Carsey Institute, Vol 1, issue 2)

- Alcohol abuse in rural area far exceeds illicit drug abuse.
- Drug use in rural US was 7 percent less than in urban US from 1979 to 1985. However only two percent difference was observed since 1991. It seems clear that rural areas are by no means a “safe haven” (Fig. 1).
- Not much differences in underage alcohol use were observed among rural and urban U.S (fig. 2).
- The highest rates of alcohol abuse tend to be concentrated among most rural states (Fig. 4).

**Figure 1: Trends in Illicit Drug Use among Rural and Urban U.S. Residents Ages 12 and Older (NSDUH 1979-2003)**

**Figure 2: Trends in Alcohol Use Among Rural and Urban U.S. Residents Ages 12-17 (NSDUH 1979-2003)**
Figure 4: Alcohol Abuse among Persons Aged 12 or Older by State: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2002 and 2003 NSDUH (Source: Wright and Sathe 2005)