The primary aims of the present study were to assess ADHD history as a risk factor for earlier initiation and current use of licit and illicit substances among a sample of drug using adults. It was hypothesized that ADHD history would accelerate the Gateway Theory of drug use. Participants included 941 drug-using African American and Caucasian individuals in Baltimore, Maryland. The sample consisted of 124 (13.2%) participants who reported a history of ADHD and 817 (86.8%) who reported no history of ADHD. The accelerated gateway hypothesis was supported, as a history of self-reported ADHD was significantly associated with younger ages of initiation for alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, and cocaine use. Participants with a history of ADHD were also more likely to engage in recent HIV-risk behavior, such as injection drug use and needle sharing. This study provides compelling data in support of an accelerated gateway model for substance use related to ADHD history and increased problem severity in adulthood. Targeted substance use prevention and intervention may be beneficial for those with ADHD.