

## ***DEWS Fax Annual Volume***

### **Volume 5 2003**

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## **Acknowledgements**

CESAR is pleased to provide this 2003 Annual Volume of the *DEWS Fax*. To assist you in using this volume, the Table of Contents indexes the 2003 faxes by issue title and subject area.

The *DEWS Fax* was supported by a grant from the Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention. It was produced and maintained during the past year by Wanda Hauser, with the assistance of Cindy Boyle and Ben Falls. Other CESAR staff, including Erin Artigiani and Sarah Canham, provided valuable assistance in the selection and review of *DEWS Fax* topics. Special thanks to Jessica Woodruff for maintaining the *DEWS Fax* issues on our web site.

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Volume 5 (2003)**

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## Drug Scan Annual Report Reveals Problems with Ecstasy, Oxycodone, and Heroin Among Most Maryland Counties

Ecstasy, oxycodone products, and heroin were identified as a problem by drug abuse professionals in most Maryland counties, according to the most recent Drug Scan annual report. Each year, Drug Scan staff interview approximately 100 to 130 professionals, working in such areas as treatment, education, prevention, criminal justice, and emergency medicine, about emerging drug trends among the populations they work with. The qualitative Drug Scan information supplements other information gathered through the DEWS program to provide a more complete picture of local drug trends. Following are some of the findings from the 2001 Drug Scan interviews.

- County contacts expressed concerns with the increasingly common use of **ecstasy** and the fact that its use has moved beyond the rave scene. Contacts in Calvert County reported that “youth use ecstasy at home parties and in the context of ‘just hanging out’” (p. 8).
- Problems with **oxycodone** products were reported by contacts in more than half of the counties. Howard County contacts reported that “many youth are stealing oxycodone products from their parents or they are taking the drug from pharmacies where they are employed” (p. 17).
- While concerns about **heroin** varied by county, the shifts were noteworthy enough to be included in the emerging drugs section. Heroin continues to be a major part of the drug problem in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. Contacts in Charles County report that “heroin use has become more popular among those over 25” and is “frequently used at social events” (p. 12).
- Contacts in each county underscored the continued problems with **alcohol** and **marijuana** use among youth and adults and contacts in many counties expressed concern about the common use of powder and crack **cocaine**.

A copy of the report is available online ([www.dewsonline.org](http://www.dewsonline.org)) or by calling CESAR at 301-403-8329.

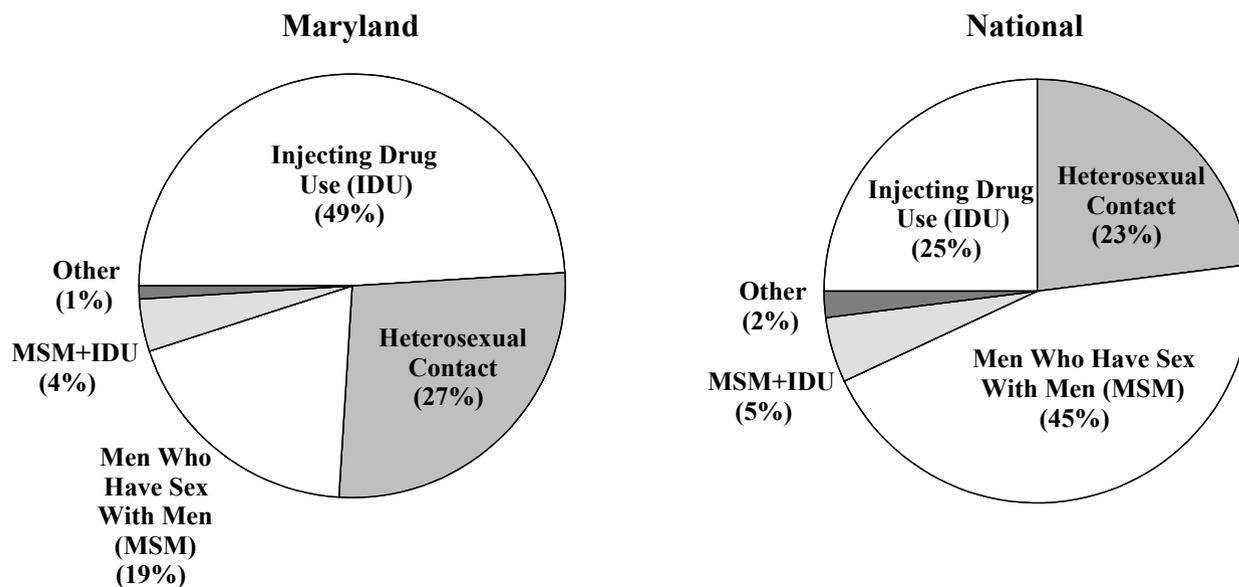
NOTE: Maryland Drug Scan, a project of Maryland’s Drug Early Warning System, is a snapshot of the perceptions of drug use in the State of Maryland by over 100 professionals working in treatment, education, prevention, criminal justice, and emergency medicine who are contacted yearly to obtain timely information about drug use and drug trends.

SOURCE: Moore, J., Winters, C., Smoak, K., Artigiani, E., and Wish E.D. *Maryland Drug Scan 2001*, October 2002. For more information, contact Erin Artigiani at [erin@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:erin@cesar.umd.edu).

## Nearly One-Half of New Maryland AIDS Cases Reported in 2001 Associated with Injecting Drug Use, Compared to One-Fourth Nationally

Maryland AIDS cases diagnosed in 2001 were nearly twice as likely than U.S. cases to be associated with injecting drug use (IDU). Nearly one-half (49%) of the Maryland AIDS cases diagnosed in 2001 were associated with IDU, compared to one-fourth nationally. IDU has been the most common mode of exposure in Maryland since 1991, primarily due to the high percentage of IDU-related AIDS cases in Baltimore City (58%) and in Maryland correctional facilities (89%).

### Exposure Category of Maryland And National AIDS Cases Reported in 2001



NOTES: The category "Other" includes hemophiliacs, transfusion recipients, pediatric transmission, and occupational exposures. Maryland 2001 AIDS data are based on reports received through September 30, 2002. Percent distributions exclude cases with exposure category under investigation or risk not specified.

SOURCES: Adapted by CESAR from data from Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, AIDS Administration, *Maryland HIV/AIDS Epidemiological Profile: Third Quarter 2002-Data Reported Through September 30, 2002*, 2002 and *The Maryland 2002 HIV/AIDS Annual Report*, 2002. Available online (<http://dhmh.state.md.us/AIDS/epictr.htm#anchor1973760>).

### CESAR Needs Your Feedback

We are preparing funding proposals to maintain programs like the *DEWS FAX*. Please let us know what services have benefited you most. Write a letter to Dr. Eric Wish, Director, 4321 Hartwick Rd, Ste 501, College Park, MD 20740, 301-403-8342 (fax), [cesar@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:cesar@cesar.umd.edu). With your help, we can ensure that CESAR continues to provide the most current and complete information available with which to monitor drug trends and inform policy.

## St. Mary's County DEWS County Snapshot Released: *Alcohol and Marijuana Continue to Be Most Persistent Problems*

The recently released *DEWS County Snapshot: Substance Abuse Trends in St. Mary's County* provides an overview of current substance abuse trends by combining the results of interviews with Drug Scan contacts and juvenile offenders participating in the OPUS study with quantitative county indicators such as treatment admissions. The combination of the very recent DEWS interview results with the more extensive, but typically older, qualitative indicator data provides a rare opportunity to detect emerging drug trends. Following are some of the findings from this report.

- **Alcohol** and **marijuana** continue to be the most persistent problems in the county. The number of people entering treatment programs who mentioned both drugs have increased over the past four years. Over half of high school seniors reported current alcohol use and nearly one-quarter reported current use of marijuana. These findings are consistent with reports from both juvenile offenders and Drug Scan professionals interviewed in the county.
- **Cocaine** is primarily used by adults in the county. For example, in FY 2001 276 adults entering treatment programs mentioned cocaine, an increase of 27% from FY 1998. By contrast, few OPUS juveniles reported that cocaine was available and the youths did not appear to be familiar with the drug.
- Nearly one in ten high school seniors reported using **designer drugs** in the past 30 days and Drug Scan contacts report that typical ecstasy users are in their late teens or early twenties.
- OPUS juveniles in St. Mary's county reported that **prescription drugs** such as Adderall® and Percocet® could be obtained from friends who were prescribed the drugs at a cost of \$1 to \$5 per pill.

A copy of the St. Mary's County *DEWS County Snapshot*, as well as other *DEWS County Snapshot* reports and county drug data, is available online ([www.dewsonline.org](http://www.dewsonline.org)) or by calling CESAR at 301-403-8329.

SOURCE: Drug Early Warning System (DEWS), *The DEWS County Snapshot: Substance Abuse Trends in St. Mary's County* 2(1), March 2003. For more information, contact Erin Artigiani at [erin@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:erin@cesar.umd.edu).

## DEWS Website Provides Valuable Information Regarding Drug Trends in Maryland

If you are looking for information on emerging drug trends in Maryland, snapshots of current use, or actions the state has taken to respond to substance use and abuse, the Drug Early Warning System (DEWS) website ([www.dewsonline.org](http://www.dewsonline.org)) is the place to go. Listed below is a brief description of the types of information available on the DEWS website.

- **About DEWS:** Check out DEWS' accomplishments and press releases and learn more about our mission to help identify, understand, prevent, and respond to drug use in Maryland.
- **Regional Drug Information:** Use our searchable database to learn about the nature and extent of substance abuse in Maryland's counties. Statistics provided include overdose deaths and other injury related to drug and alcohol use, admissions to drug and alcohol abuse treatment clinics, and criminal justice statistics such as drug arrests.
- **Publications:** Access recent DEWS publications such as *DEWS County Snapshots*, *DEWS Fax*, OPUS and Drug Scan reports, and *DEWS News*. Special publications such as *Ecstasy in Maryland* and *Oxycodone in Maryland* can also be found on this page.
- **Methodology:** Learn about the methodologies used to conduct Drug Scan and OPUS studies. Review descriptions and caveats for each substance abuse indicator monitored by DEWS.
- **Multimedia:** View the "Heroin Kills" and "Stolen Dreams: The Reality of Ecstasy" videos to learn about the real effects of drugs on Maryland's youth. See samples of materials used in Maryland's public awareness campaign on ecstasy.

For more information about the DEWS website, contact Erin Artigiani at 301-403-8329 or email DEWS at [DEWS@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:DEWS@cesar.umd.edu).

## **Calvert County DEWS County Snapshot Released: *Alcohol and Marijuana Persistent Problems in County***

The recently released *DEWS County Snapshot: Substance Abuse Trends in Calvert County* provides an overview of current substance abuse trends by combining the results of interviews with Drug Scan contacts and juvenile offenders participating in the OPUS study with quantitative county indicators such as treatment admissions. The combination of the very recent DEWS interview results with the more extensive, but typically older, quantitative indicator data provides a rare opportunity to detect emerging drug trends. Following are some of the findings from this report.

- **Alcohol** use problems are high in the county. Alcohol is reportedly easy to obtain and popular among juveniles; nearly 60% of Calvert county 12<sup>th</sup> graders used alcohol in the past month. The majority (85%) of all adult and juvenile treatment admissions mentioned alcohol as a substance of abuse in FY 2002.
- **Marijuana** continues to be popular among youths. It is the substance most frequently cited as a problem by juveniles entering treatment (86%) and one Drug Scan contact describes it as “the number one illegal drug problem” in the county (p. 3). OPUS juveniles reported that marijuana is often laced with other drugs such as heroin, LSD, PCP, and cocaine.
- A perceived increase in the use of **oxycodone** was reported by Drug Scan professionals as well as OPUS juveniles. One Drug Scan contact described it as “the Valium of the new millennium” (p. 2). OPUS youths reported that pills are obtained “through friends, ‘doctor shopping,’ or even by printing prescriptions with a computer” (p. 1).
- Approximately one-fourth of Calvert county high school seniors reported having tried **LSD** at least once and 9% of seniors reported using the drug in the past month in 2001, compared to 4% of all Maryland seniors and 2% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders nationwide.

A copy of the Calvert County *DEWS County Snapshot*, as well as other *DEWS County Snapshot* reports and county drug data, is available online ([www.dewsonline.org](http://www.dewsonline.org)) or by calling CESAR at 301-403-8329.

SOURCE: Drug Early Warning System (DEWS), *The DEWS County Snapshot: Substance Abuse Trends in Calvert County* 2(2), April 2003. For more information, contact Erin Artigiani at [erin@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:erin@cesar.umd.edu).

## Montgomery County DEWS County Snapshot Released: *More Youths Entering Treatment Likely to Report Marijuana Than Alcohol As a Substance of Abuse*

The recently released *DEWS County Snapshot: Substance Abuse Trends in Montgomery County* provides an overview of current substance abuse trends in the county. The report combines the results of interviews with Drug Scan contacts and juvenile offenders participating in the OPUS study with quantitative county indicators such as treatment admissions. The combination of the very recent DEWS interview results with the more extensive, but typically older, quantitative indicator data provides a rare opportunity to detect emerging drug trends. Following are some of the findings from this report.

- As in other Maryland counties, **alcohol** continues to be the most persistent problem. Nearly three-fourths of all juvenile and 78% of adult clients admitted to treatment in Montgomery County mentioned alcohol as a substance of abuse in fiscal year 2002. One Drug Scan contact reported that “kids find it at home or go to friends’ homes to drink” and that the attitude is that “it’s only alcohol” (p. 3).
- **Marijuana** is the most popular illicit drug among youths in the county. Slightly more than one-fifth of high school seniors reported using marijuana in the past month and 43% reported using it in their lifetime. More Montgomery County juveniles entering treatment mentioned marijuana (95%) as a substance of abuse than alcohol (74%).
- While the number of juvenile treatment admissions citing **hallucinogens** as a substance of abuse decreased from 13% in fiscal year 1998 to 6% in fiscal year 2002, there were limited reports that LSD and mushrooms were available and popular in the county. For example, a Drug Scan contact reported an increase in mushroom use, particularly in the Olney area. One OPUS youth described the practice of placing drops of liquid acid on pieces of Listerine mint gel sheets.
- OPUS youths report that **OxyContin** has become increasingly popular because it is considered a “cleaner form of heroin” (p. 2). One Drug Scan contact reported having seen cases of prescription forging and illegal use of Medicaid cards to obtain the drug.

A copy of the Montgomery County *DEWS County Snapshot*, as well as other *DEWS County Snapshot* reports and county drug data, is available online ([www.dewsonline.org](http://www.dewsonline.org)) or by calling CESAR at 301-403-8329.

SOURCE: Drug Early Warning System (DEWS), *The DEWS County Snapshot: Substance Abuse Trends in Montgomery County 2(5)*, June 2003. For more information, contact Erin Artigiani at [erin@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:erin@cesar.umd.edu).

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## **Ecstasy-Using UMCP Students Report Polydrug Use; Frequent Ecstasy Users More Likely to Report Illicit and Prescription Drug Use**

Ecstasy-using college students also use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, according to preliminary results from focus groups conducted at the University of Maryland College Park (UMCP). Thirty students age 18-25, who reported using ecstasy at least once, completed an anonymous survey and participated in a focus group about their experiences with ecstasy and other drugs. Following are some of the findings from the focus groups.

- All of the ecstasy-using students reported also using marijuana at least once in their lifetime and most also reported using alcohol (97%) or tobacco (70%).
- Students who had used ecstasy five or more times were more likely to have used cocaine, LSD, or mushrooms than those who had used ecstasy less than five times. For example, six (40%) of the students who reported using ecstasy five or more times in their lifetime also reported using cocaine, compared to only one (8%) of those who reported using ecstasy less than five times.
- Approximately one-third of the students reported using the painkiller, oxycodone, at least once in their lifetime. Those with a history of more frequent use of ecstasy were more likely to report oxycodone use, often for the stated purpose of "easing the comedown."
- Over one-half of the students reported using the attention deficit disorder drug, Adderal®; more frequent ecstasy users were slightly more likely to use this drug.
- Students commented that they typically did not know exactly what substances were in their ecstasy pills. For some, testing the pills added a bit of reassurance, as indicated by one student's remark, "There are ways to test pills to see if they are real MDMA and that has provided incentive, in some respects, to use it."

These findings are consistent with previous research findings of poly substance use among ecstasy-using rave attendees and students (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 11, Issue 13 and Volume 10, Issue 19).

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from unpublished data from a 2003 study conducted by Kira Levy, M.A. and Kevin O'Grady, Ph.D. at the University of Maryland College Park. For more information, contact Erin Artigiani at [erin@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:erin@cesar.umd.edu).

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### **New Drugs in Maryland Report Now Available**

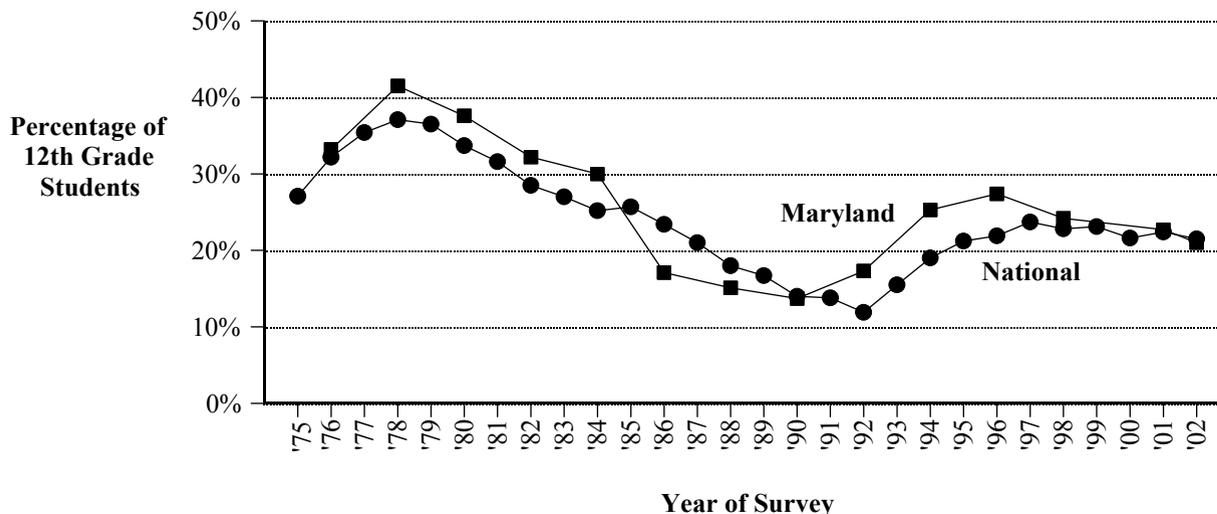
The report "Drugs in Maryland: 2003 Update" provides a summary of the current status of drug use in Maryland, including problem areas and recommendations for actions. It is available online ([www.cesar.umd.edu](http://www.cesar.umd.edu)) or by contacting CESAR at 301-403-8329 or [cesar@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:cesar@cesar.umd.edu).

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## Marijuana Use Among Maryland High School Seniors Continues to Decline; Results Reflect National Trends

Marijuana use by Maryland high school seniors has been declining since 1996, according to data from the 2002 Maryland Adolescent Survey. Current use\* of the drug among 12<sup>th</sup> graders peaked in 1978 at 42%, then declined over the following years, reaching a low of 14% in 1990. During the 90s, current use of marijuana among seniors once again increased, reaching a second peak in 1996 (27%). Since that time marijuana use has been gradually decreasing—21% of high school seniors reported current use of the drug in 2002. These trends have mirrored those found by the national Monitoring the Future high school survey.

**Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Reporting Current\* Use of Marijuana,  
Maryland and National, 1975-2002**



\*The 1976-1988 MAS surveys defined current use as use on a monthly or more frequent basis. The 1990-2002 MAS surveys and the 1975-2002 national Monitoring the Future surveys defined current use as any use within the past 30 days.

NOTE: The 12<sup>th</sup> grade sample size for the 2002 survey was N=7,997 for the MAS and N=12,900 for the national MTF survey.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from Maryland State Department of Education, 2002 Maryland Adolescent Survey, August 2003. For more information, contact Erin Artigiani of CESAR at 301-405-9794 or erin@cesar.umd.edu. The report is available online at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us) under Reports & Data/Special Reports.

### Compendium of Maryland Substance Abuse Indicators Now Available

CESAR's "Compendium of Maryland's Substance Abuse Indicators" presents and analyzes data from six state-wide substance abuse indicators: 1) student drug use, 2) drug-related student suspensions, 3) treatment admissions, 4) overdose deaths, 5) substance-related traffic crashes, and 6) drug-related arrests. The report is available online ([www.dewsonline.org](http://www.dewsonline.org)) or by contacting CESAR by phone (301-405-9770), fax (301-403-8342), or email ([cesar@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:cesar@cesar.umd.edu)).

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## Submit Nominations for the DEWS Catalog of Innovative Local Substance Abuse Programs

Do you know of a substance abuse program that deserves recognition? Please send us your nominations! We are developing a new DEWS online feature, Communities in Action, which will include a weekly feature article and a catalog of drug prevention, intervention, treatment, and law enforcement programs. To get this information, we need you to nominate programs that have implemented creative or unique methods for collecting, developing, and/or using substance abuse information. Not only will you be helping us with our new feature, this is also an opportunity to tell local substance abuse professionals and policymakers about programs you think are effective.

Once we receive nominations, our staff will call the contacts for selected programs and prepare a short article to post on the DEWS website. If you would like to nominate a program please fill out the form below. For best consideration, submit your nominations by December 15 by faxing this form to 301-403-8342, emailing your nomination to [dews@cesar.umd.edu](mailto:dews@cesar.umd.edu), or submitting it online at [dewsonline.org](http://dewsonline.org). Our goal is to include as many promising programs and as much useful information as possible in this new DEWS online feature, so please nominate as many programs as you wish.

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### Nominated Program:

Program Name \_\_\_\_\_

Location (City and/or County) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Submitted by:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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