

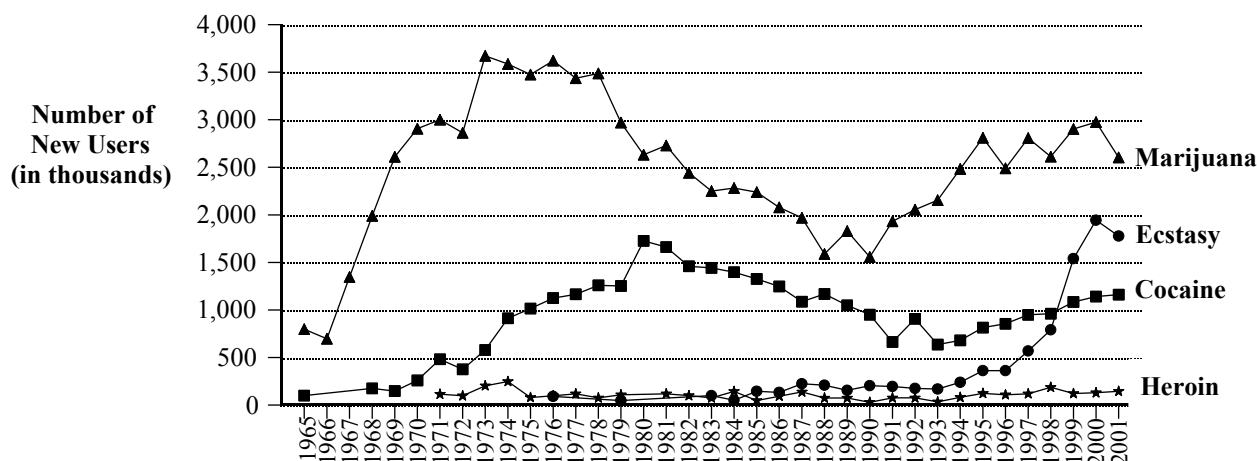
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Number of First Time Ecstasy Users in U.S. Has Increased Dramatically Since 1993; Now Surpasses Cocaine

There were more first time users of ecstasy than of cocaine in 2001, according to recently released data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). Nearly 1.8 million Americans tried ecstasy for the first time in 2001, compared to nearly 1.2 million new cocaine users. The number of both ecstasy and cocaine initiates has been increasing since 1993; the number of first-time ecstasy users has increased more than ten-fold (from 168,000) while the number of first-time cocaine users has nearly doubled (from 635,000). Despite these recent increases, marijuana continues to be the most prevalent drug among first-time drug users. From 1994 to 2001 the number of first time marijuana users has fluctuated between 2.5 and 3.0 million new users per year—2.6 million U.S. residents age 12 or older reported using the drug for the first time in 2001. First-time use of heroin has remained fairly constant since 1995 at around 120,000. According to the researchers, “increases and decreases in incidence usually have been followed by corresponding changes in the prevalence of use, particularly among youths” (p. 43).

Estimated Number in Thousands of New Users of Cocaine, Ecstasy, Heroin, and Marijuana Per Year, 1965-2001



NOTE: The number of new users is estimated based on retrospective reports of age at first use. The most recent year available for these estimates is 2001.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *Results from the 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings*, 2003. Available online (<http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/nhsda.htm#NHSDAinfo>).

CESAR Has a New Phone Number

Effective immediately, CESAR's new phone number is **301-405-9770**.

Our fax number (301-403-8342) and email address (cesar@cesar.umd.edu) remain the same.

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