

## ***New Study Finds Released Youth Underreport Cocaine Use in Research Interviews Conducted in the Community***

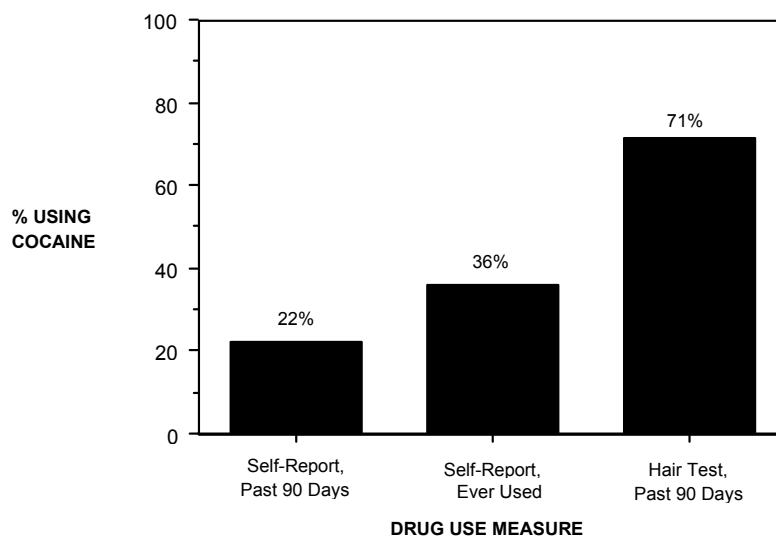
*"Valid estimates of cocaine use among criminally-involved, inner-city youth cannot rely on interviews, even when conducted under conditions of confidentiality by street-wise indigenous interviewers for a research study.."*

This is one of the provocative conclusions from a research study presented at the October 1993 annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in Phoenix. The study obtained interviews for 121 male youths (mean age of 18 years) who had been released from the Rikers Island Adolescent Reception and Detention Center (ARDC) in New York City. Respondents were interviewed in the community an average of five months after release from ARDC. Drug use was assessed using information from personal interviews and analyses of hair specimens.

The study found that 71% of the respondents tested positive for cocaine by hair analysis, using a hair segment sensitive to drug use in the prior 90 days. However, only 22% of the respondents reported using cocaine in the prior 90 days--and only 36% reported ever using the drug.

Research subjects interviewed while under the supervision of the criminal justice system have been found repeatedly to conceal their recent illicit drug use. This study joins the growing number of studies that have found that even subjects interviewed outside of the criminal justice system may underreport their use of cocaine. (See CESAR Fax Vol. 1, Issue 6, "New Study Shows Medical Patients Unlikely to Report Recent Illicit Drug Use," for another example.)

**Estimates of Cocaine Use from Self-Reports and Hair Analysis  
(N=121 Male Youths Released from ARDC)**



SOURCE: Stephen Magura et al., "Measuring Cocaine Use by Hair Analysis Among Criminally-Involved Youth," National Development and Research Institutes, Inc. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Phoenix, Arizona, October 27-30, 1993. Dr. Magura can be reached at (212) 966-8700, ext 503.

For more information about today's topic or to be placed on the distribution list, please call CESAR at 301-403-8329.

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