

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

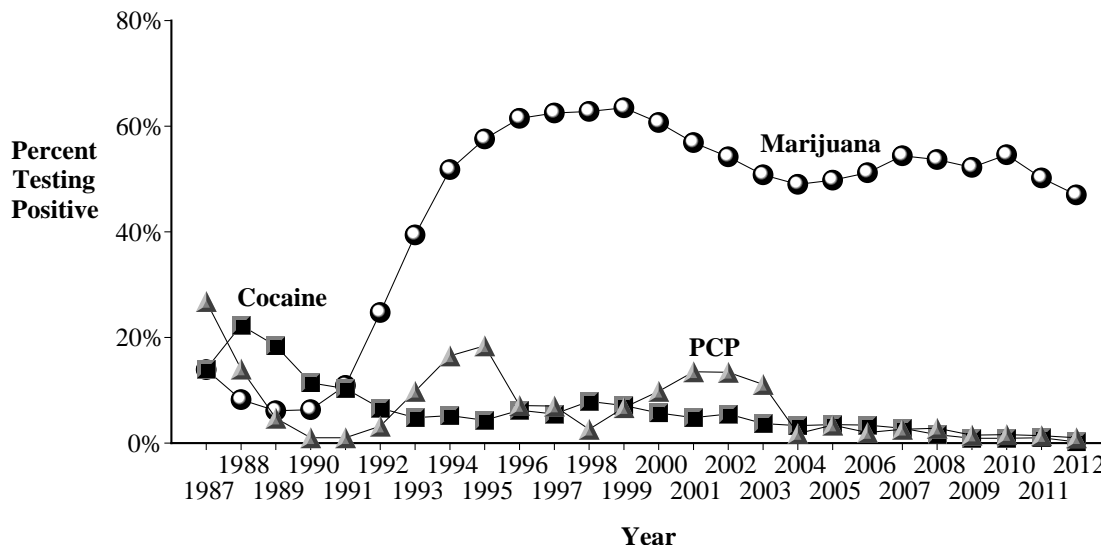
Marijuana Remains Drug Most Commonly Detected Among D.C. Juvenile Arrestees; 1% or Less Test Positive for Cocaine or PCP

While marijuana remains the drug most commonly detected among Washington, D.C. juvenile arrestees, marijuana-positive rates have decreased in the past few years. According to data from the D.C. Pretrial Services Agency, the percentage of juvenile arrestees testing positive for marijuana decreased from the most recent peak of 55% in 2010 to 47% in 2012. The percentage testing positive for cocaine has also been gradually decreasing since the late 1990s, and is now virtually nonexistent at 0.2%. PCP-positive rates, which have fluctuated greatly in the past, declined to 1% in 2012, a rate not seen since 1990 and 1991.

Editor's Note: It is possible that D.C. juvenile arrestees are using drugs other than the four (marijuana, PCP, cocaine, and amphetamines) for which they are currently being tested. For example, the prevalence of nonmedical use of prescription opioids among youth and young adults in other populations suggests that juvenile arrestees may also be misusing these drugs. Synthetic marijuana is another substance that juvenile arrestees may be using. The 2012 national Monitoring the Future survey found that 11% of 12th graders, 9% of 10th graders, and 4% of 8th graders reported using synthetic marijuana in the past year.

Percentage of Washington, D.C., Juvenile Arrestees Testing Positive by Urinalysis for Cocaine, Marijuana, and PCP, 1987 to 2012

(The annual number of specimens tested ranged from 1,896 in 2002 to 4,449 in 1988.)



NOTE: D.C. juvenile arrestees have also been tested for amphetamines since August, 2006. The percentage testing positive for amphetamines was 0.6% in 2006; 2.7% in 2007; 1.8% in 2008; 0.9% in 2009; 0.4% in 2010; 0.9% in 2011; and 0.6% in 2012.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from the District of Columbia Pretrial Services Agency. Available online at <http://www.dcpa.gov/home/drug-stats.html>. For more information, contact Jerome Robinson, Director of Forensic Research, D.C. Pretrial Services Agency, at jerome.robinson@csosa.gov.