

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland at College Park

CEWG Reports on Status of Substance Use in U.S.

The report of the 40th meeting of the Community Epidemiology Work Group (CEWG), held this past June in New York City, has just been released by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). Following are some of the conclusions drawn from this meeting:

- “Crack cocaine maintains its dominance. However, most indicator data now support field reports that the crack epidemic may be stabilizing, but at high levels” (p. 3).
- “The growing cohort of younger recent [heroin] initiates face the threat of decreased heroin purity and increased tolerance: in Atlanta, some have begun shifting from intranasal use to injection” (p. 4).
- “The adverse effects of marijuana use continue to increase, especially among young males, as evidenced by elevated ED [emergency department], treatment, and law enforcement figures. . . Field reports corroborate the wide and often public use of the drug, often in ‘blunt’ form, across the country” (p. 6).
- “Methamphetamine mortality, ED, treatment, and criminal justice figures remain highest in the West, where all indicators have continued their upward trend . . . Figures remain low in the East” (p. 7).
- “Depressant users tend to fall into two distinct groups: adolescents and young adults who use flunitrazepam (Rohypnol), gamma hydroxybutrate (GHB), and ketamine (‘Special K’), often at nightclubs or other social gatherings; and whites over 30 who abuse pharmaceutical depressants, including diazepam, clonazepam (Klonopin), and alprazolam (Xanax)” (p. 8).

The CEWG is a network of drug abuse researchers and practitioners from major cities in the United States who meet twice a year to present and discuss qualitative and quantitative substance abuse research data. To obtain a copy of the report, contact the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) at 1-800-729-6686.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Community Epidemiology Work Group, “Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse: Highlights and Executive Summary,” June 1996.

CESAR FAX is supported by a grant from the Governor’s Office of Crime Control & Prevention.

CESAR FAX may be copied without permission. Please cite CESAR as the source.

• 301-403-8329 (voice) • 301-403-8342 (fax) • CESAR@cesar.umd.edu (e-mail) •