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## Hallucinogens and Ecstasy Reported as Emerging Drugs by Carroll County Youth Processed by the Juvenile Justice System

Nearly 100 juveniles interviewed by OPUS staff from May to July 1999 at the Dept. of Juvenile Justice Intake Center in Westminster revealed contrasting sentiments about heroin use. Ecstasy and hallucinogens may be emerging drugs which are easy to acquire in the rave scene. The following is a brief description of specific drug use trends that the Carroll County youth reported. The reader is cautioned that drug trends reported by these high-risk youth may or may not reflect those among youth in general in this county.

- **Heroin:** Opinions about the level of heroin use varied from "People are scared" (17-year-old male) to "It's like an epidemic; everyone thinks it is cool" (19-year-old female). Urinalysis results show that two (3%) of the 71 specimens collected from these youth tested positive for opiates, while 17% tested positive for marijuana.
- **Ecstasy:** Ecstasy (also known as "X" or "E") was the most frequently reported emerging drug. This drug can be ingested as a pill or by crushing the pill and snorting the powder. A few respondents mentioned that ecstasy can be cut with a variety of drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and Ketamine (See DEWS Alert, June 1999). One-fifth of the youths said that they could obtain ecstasy easily. "A lot of people are using ecstasy, not just at raves" (17-year-old male). "It's making a bigger comeback than normal" (16-year-old female).
- **Hallucinogens:** The youths agreed that LSD is "big" and "very popular" (17-year-old male, 14-year-old female). A majority reported that they or their friends could obtain LSD or psychedelic mushrooms easily. The most common ways mentioned of using LSD included swallowing gel tabs, putting liquid drops on blotter paper or directly in the mouth or eyes, or eating sugar cubes dipped (or "double dipped") in liquid LSD.
- **Amphetamines:** Although very few of the youths mentioned amphetamines or methamphetamines during their interviews, 8% of the urine specimens tested to date were positive for amphetamines. These positive results could be related to the juveniles' reports of ecstasy use which has a chemical structure similar to methamphetamine and is often cut with amphetamines or methamphetamines. Research on ecstasy is continuing.
- **Other Drugs:** Other substances mentioned as new or emerging drugs included Ketamine (See DEWS Special Edition June 1999) and shrooms (psychedelic mushrooms).

SOURCE: Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR), Offender Population Urinalysis Screening (OPUS) program, Maryland Drug Early Warning System (DEWS), June 1999. For more information, contact Erin Artigiani of CESAR at 301-403-8329.

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### Juvenile OPUS: Intake/Probation Study

The Juvenile Offender Population Urinalysis Screening (OPUS) project was established to monitor drug use among Maryland's juvenile offenders through voluntary and anonymous interviewing and drug testing of youths at Maryland's Dept. of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) intake and detention facilities. OPUS began intake data collection in May 1999 with juveniles being seen by DJJ intake/probation staff in Carroll County. The intake data is intended to provide youths' perceptions of drug use by their peers.