



## **Maryland DEWS Initiates First Group Interviews with Juvenile Detainees-- Results Are Promising**

The Rapid Response Field Unit is part of the Drug Early Warning System (DEWS), a project being conducted by the Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR) for the Cabinet Council on Criminal and Juvenile Justice. On January 22, 1999, the Unit held the first group interview of 10 youth currently detained in a Department of Juvenile Justice facility, the Charles Hickey School in Baltimore.

The youth's participation was voluntary and anonymous. They were asked about their perceptions of local drug trends and practices. They were asked not to talk about their personal drug use, and identifying information was not recorded.

A wealth of information was obtained from the initial group interview. Specific topics covered included:

- Drug Dealing Practices, e.g., dealers are adulterating crack cocaine with yeast in order to increase size while keeping purity the same;
- New Drugs, e.g., vials of a blue-tinted liquid are being sold as "Liquid Coke" in open-air drug markets in Baltimore. The youth were unsure exactly what the substance was, but reported that it was being sold by dealers who traditionally sold crack cocaine; and
- New Slang Terms, e.g., "Woowies," used to describe a blunt cigar filled with marijuana and crack cocaine.

The Rapid Response Field Unit will hold group interviews on a monthly basis at DJJ facilities throughout the state. The goal of future interviews will be to obtain new information as well as to investigate drug trends and patterns reported in previous group interviews. Future findings will be reported through the DEWS Fax. For further information regarding the juvenile arrestee group interviews, please contact Brook Wraight of CESAR at 301-403-8329. For more information about the Rapid Response Field Unit or the Drug Early Warning System, visit the DEWS website at [www.cesar.umd.edu/DEWS.htm](http://www.cesar.umd.edu/DEWS.htm).