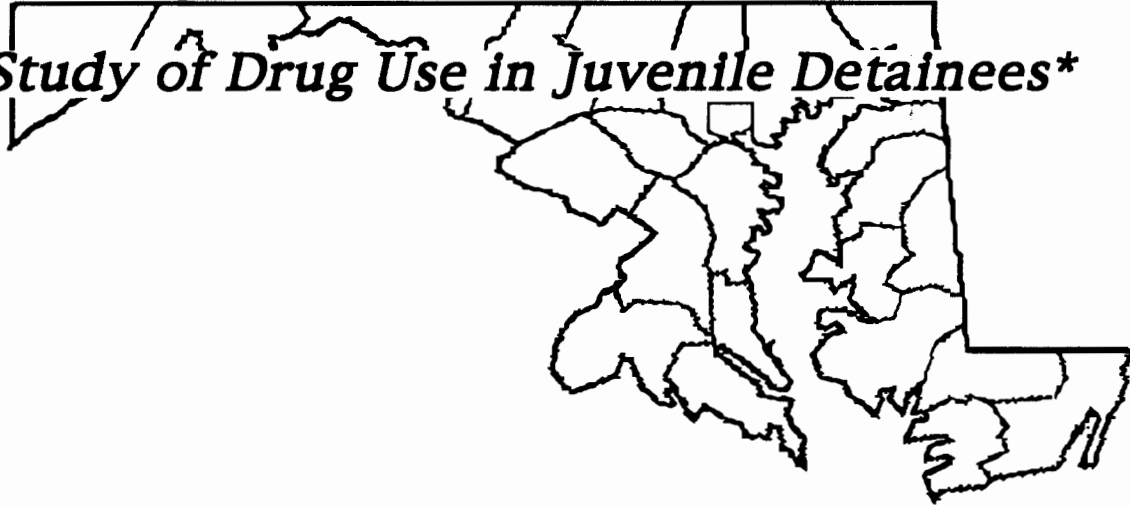


Maryland Youth at Risk:

A Study of Drug Use in Juvenile Detainees*



Study 1

**Thomas J.S. Waxter Children's Center
Laurel, Maryland**

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*Originally released as *Estimates of Drug Use in Juvenile Detainees in Maryland: A Summary Report of a Pilot Study Conducted at the Thomas J.S. Waxter Children's Center in Laurel, Maryland* in February 1993

INTRODUCTION

In conjunction with the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) and with funding from Governor Schaefer's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission (GDAAC), the Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR) developed and implemented a pilot data collection program at the Thomas J.S. Waxter Children's Center in Laurel, Maryland¹. The goal was to estimate the level of substance abuse in juveniles admitted to Waxter and to test the collection procedures that would be adopted in other DJS detention facilities. The study methodology was modeled after that used by the national Drug Use Forecasting (DUF) program operated by the National Institute of Justice. When the Maryland project is fully operational, voluntary and anonymous interviews and urine specimens will be collected from a sample of juveniles admitted to each DJS residential detention facility, on a periodic basis. This paper presents results from the 263 juveniles who provided a valid interview and urine specimen during the pilot study.

¹ We are greatly indebted to the Department of Juvenile Services, the staff at Waxter Children's Center and the youths who participated in this study.

METHOD

- **Three significant departures from national DUF program protocol: Data are collected by facility staff rather than external research staff, an abbreviated DUF interview is used (see Appendix), and specimens are also tested for alcohol.**
- **Trained DJS facility staff (mainly nursing staff and an addictions counselor) collect voluntary and anonymous urine specimens and interviews from all incoming male and female juvenile admissions, excluding transfers from other DJS facilities.**
- **Urines are analyzed by the laboratory used by the national DUF program for: alcohol, THC (marijuana), cocaine, opiates, methadone, methaqualone, benzodiazepines, propoxyphene, amphetamines, PCP, and barbiturates.**
- **The pilot study began September 16th, 1992 and concluded December 15th. This report describes the 263 youths who were interviewed and provided a testable urine specimen.**

RESPONSE RATES

- **98% of the approached youths agreed to be interviewed.**
- **96% (268 persons) of the interviewees provided a urine specimen; 263 specimens were tested, 5 of the provided specimens were of insufficient quantity for testing.**
- **61% of the interviews were conducted by medical or counseling staff.**
- **95% of the youths were off the street 24 hours or less prior to interview.**

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 263 INTERVIEWED
AND TESTED YOUTHS**
(see Table 1)

- 67% of the youths were males.
- The majority of the males were between the ages of 14 and 15. The majority of the females were between 15 and 16.
- 77% of the males and 66% of the females were African-Americans.
- 81% of the males and 57% of the females live in Baltimore City.
- 84% of the males and 71% of the females were attending school prior to admission.
- 15% of the males and 7% of the females live with both parents.

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF SAMPLE

(N=263 Interviewed and tested youths)

	Males (N=175)		Females (N=88)
<u>Age</u>			
<13	11		3
13	17		11
14	32	} 66%	18
15	34		24
16	5	} 52%	28
17+*	<u><1</u>		<u>15</u>
	100%		100%
<u>Ethnicity</u>			
Black	77		66
White	19		33
Hispanic	2		1
Other	<u>2</u>		<u>0</u>
	100%		100%
<u>County Of Residence</u>			
Anne Arundel	9		7
Balt. City	81		57
Balt. County	5		7
Charles	0		6
Prince George's	1		8
Other Counties	2		10
D.C.	1		0
Out of State	<u>1</u>		<u>5</u>
	100%		100%
<u>Education</u>			
In school now	84		71
Expelled	5		5
Suspended	8		6
Dropped Out	2		14
Graduated	1		0
Other	<u>0</u>		<u>4</u>
	100%		100%
<u>Lives With:</u>			
Mother and Father	15		7
1 natural parent	64		65
Other	<u>21</u>		<u>28</u>
	100%		100%

* Waxter usually does not admit males older than 16.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE CHARACTERISTICS

(see Table 2)

- **68% of the males and 52% of the females were emergency detentions, detained following arrest. The remainder were youth admitted by court order and detained after adjudication.**
- **The most frequent charge for males was for property offenses (38%). The most frequent charge for females was person offenses (30%).**
- **24% of males and 7% of females were charged with sale or possession of drugs.**

TABLE 2
CRIMINAL JUSTICE CHARACTERISTICS

(N=263 Interviewed and tested youths)

	Males (N=175)	Females (N=88)
<u>Admission</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Emergency Det.	68	52
Court Ordered	<u>32</u>	<u>48</u>
	100%	100%
 <u>Charge at Arrest*</u>		
Property	38	21
Person	17	30
Drug	24	7
Weapons	4	1
Public Peace	2	0
Sex Offense	5	2
Other	<u>10</u>	<u>40</u> **
	100%	100%

* Charge groupings:

Person: assault, homicide, robbery

Property: arson, burglary, vandalism, theft, auto theft

Drug: sale, possession

Public peace: trespassing, disorderly

Sex offense: rape, sex assault

Other: warrants, violation of probation, failure to appear (FTA), status,
and traffic offenses.

** These charges were mostly probation violations and failure to appear in court.

SELF REPORTED DRUG HISTORY

(see Table 3)

- **A majority of both males and females reported ever using alcohol; over one-fourth (28%) had used marijuana.**
- **7% reported ever using inhalants.**
- **Alcohol and marijuana were the drugs most likely to have been used in the prior month.**
- **About 6% reported using alcohol or marijuana in the three days prior to interview.**
- **13% of the males and 5% of the females said they were now dependent on alcohol.**
- **6% of the males and 10% of the females had already received drug or alcohol treatment.**

TABLE 3
SELF REPORTED DRUG USE AND DEPENDENCE

	Males (N=175)	Females (N=88)
<u>Ever Tried</u>		
Alcohol	53%	58%
Marijuana	28%	28%
Inhalants	7%	7%
LSD	5%	10%
PCP	2%	7%
Cocaine	2%	9%
Heroin	<1%	3%
<u>Used Last Month</u>		
Alcohol	26%	23%
Marijuana	18%	10%
Cocaine	<1%	3%
Heroin	0	3%
Inhalants	1%	1%
LSD	0	1%
PCP	0	0
<u>Used in Last 3 Days</u>		
Alcohol	5%	7%
Marijuana	6%	6%
Glue	0	1%
Cocaine	0	1%
Heroin	0	2%
Amphetamines	0	1%
<u>Now Dependent</u>		
Alcohol	13%	5%
Marijuana	9%	2%
Cocaine	1%	2%
Heroin	0	1%
Inhalants	1%	2%
LSD	2%	1%
PCP	1%	1%
Ever Received Treatment:	6%	10%

URINE TEST RESULTS

(see Table 4)

- **17% of the males and 10% of the females tested positive for any drug.**
- **The most frequent drug detected in males was cocaine (9%), followed by marijuana (8%)*.**
- **Cocaine was the drug most often detected in females (6%).**
- **Using a lower cutoff for marijuana, 20 ng/ml, marijuana positives almost tripled from 6% to 16%.**

* These results are based on the tests with a high cutoff level of 100ng/mL. We retested 94 specimens using a lower cutoff of 20ng/mL. These findings showed 18% of males and 9% of females as positive for marijuana.

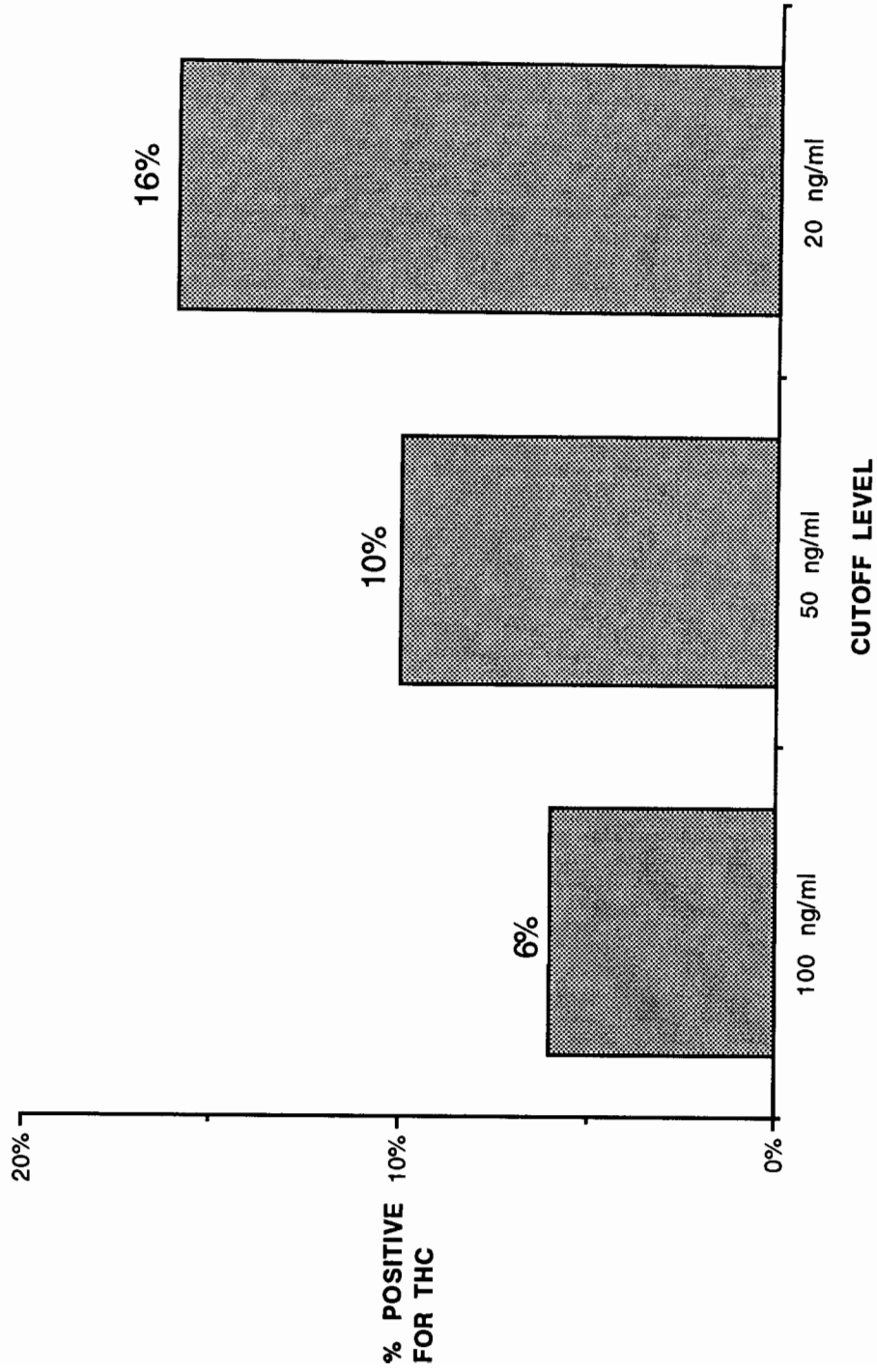
TABLE 4
URINE TEST RESULTS

	Males (N=175)	Females (N=88)
<u>Positive For:</u>		
Marijuana*	8%	3%
Cocaine	9%	6%
Opiates	<1%	3%
Alcohol	<1%	1%
PCP	0	1%
Any Drug	17%	10%

* Cutoff: 100ng/mL.

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTHS TESTING POSITIVE FOR MARIJUANA (THC) ALMOST TRIPLED WHEN THE TEST CUTOFF WAS LOWERED TO 20ng/ml

(Urines from 89 youths tested at 3 different cutoffs)



SOURCE: Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR), University of Maryland at College Park.

SELF-REPORT VS. URINALYSIS

(see Table 5)

- **Only 29% of the youths who tested positive for marijuana indicated using the drug 3 days prior to the interview.**
- **5% of the youths who tested positive for cocaine and 50% of the youths who tested positive for heroin (n=4) reported using those drugs in the 3 days prior to the interview.**
- **Only 15% of the youths positive for cocaine reported using the drug anytime in the past month.**
- **These findings are consistent with those from the national DUF program that show gross underreporting of recent use of illicit drugs by adults and juveniles detained by the criminal justice system.**

TABLE 5
PERCENTAGE OF YOUTHS WHO TESTED POSITIVE, THAT
REPORTED RECENT USE OF THE DRUG

	<u>Persons Positive For:</u>			
	Alcohol (N=2)	Marijuana (17)	Cocaine (20)	Opiates (4)
Percent Who Reported Using Detected Drug In:				
Last 3 Days	50%	29%	5%	50%
Last Month	50%	65%	15%	75%

CORRELATES OF DRUG USE

- **Persons charged with sale or possession of drugs were most likely (40%) to test positive for a drug (see Table 6).**
- **Drug use increased with age. By age 16 more than one fifth tested positive for a drug (see Figure 1).**

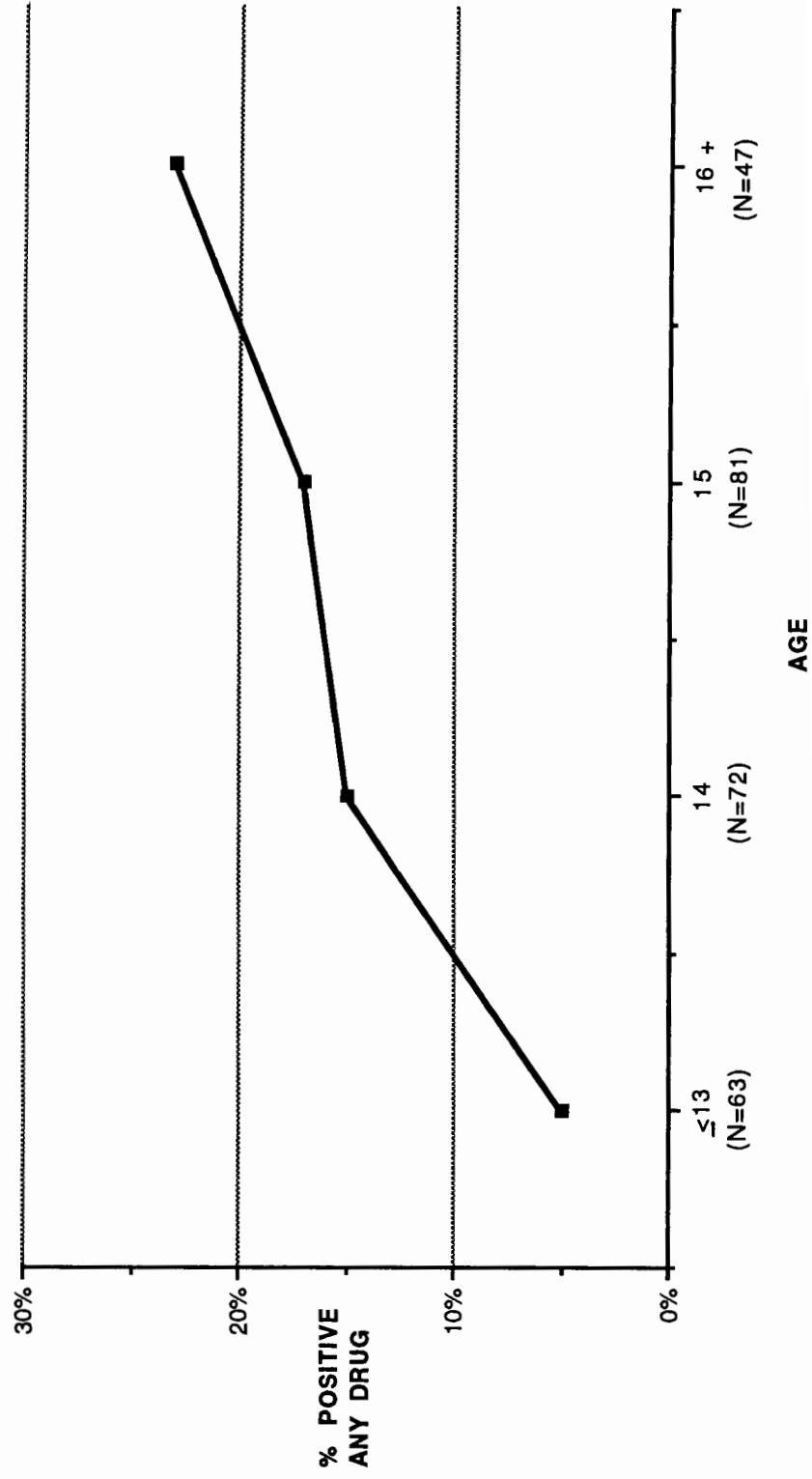
**TABLE 6
PERCENTAGE POSITIVE FOR ANY DRUG, BY CHARGE
AT ARREST**

Charge

Drug Offense(47)	40%
Person (55)	7%
Sex Offenses (10)	10%
Property (83)	6%
Weapons (7)	0
Peace Offenses (4)	0
Other* (57)	18%
TOTAL (263)	15%

*** Other - Primarily failure to appear or probation violations.**

FIGURE 1
PERCENT POSITIVE FOR ANY DRUG, BY AGE
(N = 263 Interviewed and tested youths)



CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The new model using on-site medical staff to obtain interviews and urine specimens was very successful.**
- **Significant drug and alcohol problems are present in adolescent admissions to Waxter.**
- **13% of the boys feel that they are currently dependent on alcohol.**
- **Youths consistently underreport their recent use of illegal drugs, even in interviews conducted by the nursing staff.**
- **By age 16, over 20% of the youths test positive for a drug, suggesting the need for early prevention.**
- **Urine testing programs for youth may want to use the 20 ng/ml cutoff in order to identify more marijuana using youths.**
- **Most of these high risk youths were still attending school and may be accessible to school-based drug prevention and intervention programs.**

APPENDIX

A. Interview Instrument

B. Responses to "New Drugs on the Street"

Maryland Juvenile DUF Interview

COMPLETE SHADED AREA BEFORE APPROACHING YOUTH

SURVEY DATE: ___ / ___ / ___

ID# _____ INTERVIEWER: _____

SEX (circle one): Male _____ Female _____

CLIENT ETHNICITY (circle one)

Black _____ White _____ Hispanic _____ Other _____

YEAR OF BIRTH (last 2 digits of year) _____

ZIP CODE OF RESIDENCE _____

COUNTY (circle one) Balt. City _____ Balt. Co. _____ P.G.

Anne Ar. _____ Howard _____ Other County: _____

Out of state or D.C. (specify): _____

JURISDICTION: _____

(check one)

COURT ORDER _____ EMERGENCY DETENTION _____

CHARGE: _____

AGREED TO INTERVIEW: No _____ Yes _____

1. How many hours has it been since you were on the street? _____

2. What is the highest grade you have completed? (0-12)? _____

Are you in school now? No _____ Yes _____

If No: Have you...

- _____ Graduated
- _____ Expelled
- _____ Suspended
- _____ Dropped out
- _____ Other (SPECIFY) _____

3. Who do you live with (check all that apply)

- _____ Mother
- _____ Brother/Sister
- _____ Stepparent
- _____ Relatives
- _____ Friends
- _____ Father
- _____ Grandparent
- _____ Institution/Foster
- _____ Alone
- _____ Other _____

4. Ever received drug/alcohol treatment?

- _____ No
- _____ Yes, just drug
- _____ Yes, just alcohol
- _____ Yes, drug and alcohol

For what problem/drug? _____

5. Ever tried:	# Days used in past 30 days	Now dependent?	
___ Alcohol	___ ___	No	Yes
___ Marijuana	___ ___	No	Yes
___ Cocaine/Crack	___ ___	No	Yes
___ Heroin	___ ___	No	Yes
___ Sniff glue/ other drugs	___ ___	No	Yes
___ LSD	___ ___	No	Yes
___ PCP	___ ___	No	Yes

6. In the last three (3) days have you used any drugs (those mentioned above or any others)?

No _____ Yes _____

Specify drugs: _____

7. Heard of any new drugs on the street?

No _____ Yes _____

Specify (use back of sheet if necessary): _____

8. Ever injected drugs?

No _____ Yes _____

Age first injected: _____

Number of times injected: _____

URINE: Provided _____ Not Provided _____ (Rev.9/16/92)

"NEW DRUGS ON THE STREET"

A Sample of Responses From the Interview Question:

"Heard of any new drugs on the street?"

- Ice
- Dope
- Skunk Bud
- Elvis
- China White
- "Smurfs" (Valium)
- Ready Rock
- Killer Bee
- ZX
- Psybin
- Final Fight
- Stoppy Lord
- Clear Tops
- Ecstasy
- Tango & Cash
- Pink Sperm Cells
- Purple Formation (Ready rock)
- Morphine
- Fatal Affair (heroin)
- Speed
- Exodus
- Boat Rock
- Strip Back Dope
- Pink Top and Black Top
- Bart Simpson,
- Carbon Dioxide
- Robo Cop (speed)
- Green
- Move the Crowd
- Unforgettable
- Angel Dust
- Acid