

Working Together to Identify Emerging Drug Trends in Maryland

Juvenile Offender Population Urinalysis Screening Program (OPUS)

Statewide Detention Study

February-May 1999

Report prepared November 1999 - Revised

CESAR

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Juvenile OPUS is a component of the DEWS Program. Juvenile OPUS and other findings are disseminated in DEWS faxes. The DEWS Fax is published monthly. To receive DEWS Faxes, please contact CESAR: 301-403-8329, 1-877-234-DEWS (toll-free), 301-403-8342 (fax), dews@cesar.umd.edu, www.cesar.umd.edu/dews.htm.

Supported by the Cabinet Council on Criminal and Juvenile Justice, Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Chair, and the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention.

Juvenile Offender Population Urinalysis Screening (OPUS)

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Juvenile OPUS is one component of Maryland's Drug Early Warning System (DEWS), an initiative of the Cabinet Council on Criminal and Juvenile Justice, Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Chair. DEWS is supported by a grant from the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention.

The Juvenile OPUS Study was implemented by the Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR) in June 1998 as a urinalysis monitoring program for juveniles processed by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The project goals are to monitor changes in drug use and to identify emerging drugs of abuse among the juvenile offender population.

The Juvenile OPUS Project takes place in two venues: Detention and Intake. Twice a year the Detention Study obtains urine specimens only from youths newly admitted to DJJ's five detention facilities. The Intake Study obtains interviews and urine specimens from youths being assessed in DJJ county offices.

This report presents results from the Detention Study conducted between February and May 1999.

OPUSisdesignedtoprovideinsightintoemergingdrugtrendsamongthejuvenileoffender population.ItshouldbenotedthatOPUSdrugusepatternsmaynotbetypicalofthegeneral youthpopulation.However,priorresearchhasindicatedthatoffenderurinalysisresults provideadvancewarningofdrugepidemicsinthegeneralpopulation.

METHOD

- Nurses obtained urine specimens from youths detained in Maryland's five DJJ detention facilities (Carter, Cheltenham, Hickey, Noyes, and Waxter).
- Only youths who had been admitted to the facility during the last 72 hours and who were not being transferred from another secure facility were included.
- After obtaining informed consent, the nurses obtained a voluntary and anonymous urine specimen. The specimen was sent to a laboratory and analyzed for 10 drugs: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, methaqualone, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), and propoxyphene.
- A candy bar was offered to respondents as an incentive for participation.

FINDINGS

Response Rates and Characteristics of Tested Juveniles

- In all but one facility, 80% or more of the youths who were approached provided a urine specimen (Total=545, see Table 1).
- The majority of youths tested were black (64%). Whites comprised 34% of the sample; Hispanics, 2% (See Table 2).
- About one-third (31%) of youths tested were charged with a violent offense (See Table 2).
- About one-half of the youths tested resided in Baltimore City (34%) and the D.C. Metro area (22%).

Facility	Number of youths approached	Percentage of youths who provided urine		
Carter	104	89%		
Cheltenham	473	53%		
Hickey	36	83%		
Noyes	86	85%		
Waxter	107	93%		
Total	806	68%		

Table 1Response Rates, by Detention Facility

Source: Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR), University of Maryland, College Park, Juvenile OPUS Detention Study Report, February-May 1999 - Revised.

Characteristic	<u>%</u>			
Gender				
Male	88%			
Race/Ethnicity				
Black	64%			
White	34%			
Hispanic	2%			
Age				
13 or younger	8%			
14	16%			
15	23%			
16	22%			
17 or older	31%			
Charge**				
Violent	31%			
Property	26%			
Drug-related	24%			
Other	19%			
Region of Residence***				
Baltimore City	34%			
D.C. Metro Area	22%			
Eastern Shore	15%			
Baltimore Surrounding Area	14%			
Western Maryland	7%			
Southern Maryland	3%			
D.C. and out of state	5%			

Demographic Characteristics of Tested Respondents (N=545)*

*Gender data were missing for 4 juveniles tested. Race data were missing for 4 juveniles tested. Age data were missing for 6 juveniles tested. Charge data were missing for 18 juveniles tested. Residence data were missing 18 juveniles tested.

**Property offenses include arson, breaking and entering, burglary, destruction of property, larceny/theft, stolen property, stolen vehicle, and trespassing. Violent offenses include assault, attempted murder, carjacking, homicide, manslaughter, robbery, sexual assault/rape, sex offense, and weapons. Drug-related crimes include drug, tobacco, and alcohol possession and sale, and DUI/DWI. Other offenses include unauthorized use of vehicles, truancy, and public peace.

***Baltimore Surrounding Area includes Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties. D.C. Metro area includes Montgomery, Prince George's, and Frederick counties. Eastern Shore includes Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties. Western Maryland includes Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties. Southern Maryland includes Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties.

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FINDINGS

Urine Test Results

- Marijuana was the drug most widely detected (38%, see Table 3).
- Statewide, 2% of youths tested positive for opiates or cocaine (See Table 3).
- One percent of the statewide sample tested positive for amphetamines. Amphetamine positives ranged from 0% in Southern Maryland and Baltimore City youths to 4% in Eastern Shore youths (See Table 3).
- The percentage of youths who tested positive for any drug increased with age; about 22% of youths 13 and younger tested positive compared with almost 50% of youths 17 and older (See Figure 1).

(N=502** juvenile detainees)

	Baltimore City (N=178)	Baltimore Surrounding Area (N=74)	D.C. Metro (N=117)	Eastern Shore (N=81)	Western Maryland (N=35)	Southern Maryland (N=17)	Total (N=502**)
Positive for: Marijuana Cocaine Opiates Amphetamines	<u>%</u> 47% 2% 2% 0%	<u>%</u> 37% 3% 5% 1%	% 36% 1% 0% 2%	<u>%</u> 35% 4% 0% 4%	<u>%</u> 37% 0% 0% 3%	<u>%</u> 0% 0% 0%	<u>%</u> 38% 2% 2% 1%
Any Drug (of 10)	48%	42%	39%	38%	40%	0%	41%

Note: Urine specimens were analyzed for 10 drugs: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, methaqualone, opiates, PCP, and propoxyphene.

*Baltimore Surrounding Area includes Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties. D.C. Metro area includes Montgomery, Prince George's, and Frederick counties. Eastern Shore includes Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties Western Maryland includes Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties. Southern Maryland includes Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties.

**Data for 25 juvenile detainees were omitted because they lived outside of Maryland and residence data were missing for another 18.

Source: Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR), University of Maryland, College Park, Juvenile OPUS Detention Study Report, February-May 1999 - Revised.



Figure 1 Percent Positive for Any Drug, by Age

Note: Urine specimens were analyzed for 10 drugs: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, methaqualone, opiates, PCP, and propoxyphene.

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