

# DEWS COUNTY SNAPSHOT

## FREDERICK COUNTY

JULY 2003

### DRUG USE IN FREDERICK COUNTY: OVERVIEW

- Current use of marijuana, LSD, PCP, methamphetamines, designer drugs, heroin, amphetamines, barbiturates and narcotics by 10<sup>th</sup> graders in Frederick County in 2001 was at higher levels than among 12<sup>th</sup> graders. (This may have been a reflection of high school senior dropout rates in the county.)
- The percentage of substance-related suspensions (n=5,566) in the county was lower (approximately 7 percent) in 2001 than any of the previous 4 years.
- The number of AOD-related fatal crashes in the county was greater than any year since 1995. There were 33 fatal crashes in 2001; 27 percent were AOD-related.
- Total drug arrests for Frederick County adults (n=953) and juveniles (n=213) were greater in 2001 than the previous 3 years (1998-2000).

### NOTEWORTHY FINDINGS

#### Alcohol in Frederick County

##### *The Data*

- Alcohol was the most frequently cited drug of abuse mentioned by Frederick County residents (adults and juveniles combined) entering treatment in fiscal year 2002.
- Seventy-eight percent of all county residents reported abuse of alcohol on admission to treatment in 2002, down from 86 percent in 2000 and 84 percent in 1998.
- Among adults in the county, 78 percent mentioned abuse of alcohol on admission to treatment in 2002, down from 87 percent in 2000 and 85 percent in 1998.
- Among Frederick County juveniles entering treatment in 2002, 76 percent cited alcohol as a substance of abuse, down from 82 percent in 2000 and 79 percent in 1998.
- Forty-seven percent of county high school seniors reported current use of alcohol in 2001, down from 56 percent in 1998.
- Among Frederick county 10<sup>th</sup> graders in 2001, 45 percent reported current use of alcohol.
- Slightly over 34 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders and 30 percent of 10<sup>th</sup> graders reported current binge drinking.
- Five percent of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 23 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of alcohol in 2001.

- Among 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the county, current binge drinking percentages ranged from 1 percent to 10 percent (respectively).

#### *What OPUS Juveniles are Saying*

- OPUS juveniles reported that Frederick County youth drink “anything they can get their hands on” and that they used “beer bong” to consume beer.
- Some youth started drinking as early as age 10, according to interviewed OPUS juveniles.
- One OPUS youth reported that people in the county made and consumed moonshine.

#### *What Drug Scan Professionals are Saying*

- Drug Scan contacts reported that juvenile alcohol use occurred mostly during weekend parties.
- According to professionals interviewed by Drug Scan staff, alcohol was perceived as “safer” to use than other substances.
- There was a general consensus among those interviewed that youthful alcohol users were “mainstream,” college-bound, and affluent.
- Drug Scan contacts reported that alcohol was used by middle school as well as high school students—and that even school athletes used alcohol.
- High school athletes sometimes appeared to feel that they needed to be the “biggest drinkers,” according to interviewed Drug Scan contacts; reportedly, many of the “best” athletes used alcohol.

### **Marijuana in Frederick County**

#### *The Data*

- Marijuana was the second most frequently cited drug of abuse (after alcohol) among county residents admitted to treatment in fiscal year 2002.
- Thirty-five percent of Frederick County adults entering treatment in fiscal year 2002 mentioned marijuana as a substance of abuse (the same percentage as fiscal year 1998).
- Frederick County juveniles entering treatment in fiscal year 2002 mentioned marijuana as a substance of abuse more than any other substance.
- Eighty-five percent of county juveniles cited abuse of marijuana on admission to treatment in 2002, down from 92 percent in 2000.
- Among county 12<sup>th</sup> graders, 23 percent reported current use of marijuana in 2001, the same percentage reported in 1998.
- Twenty-six percent of Frederick County 10<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of marijuana in 2001, a 6 percent increase since 1998. Use of marijuana among 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the county ranged from less than 1 percent to nearly 8 percent.

#### *What OPUS Juveniles are Saying*

- One juvenile reported that marijuana was “everywhere” in Frederick County.

- OPUS youth reported that marijuana was sometimes laced with other drugs, including crack (called “chronic”), Quaaludes, opium, PCP, embalming fluid and acid.
- Juveniles interviewed by OPUS staff reported that use of marijuana began as early as age 11.
- It was reported that blunts (cigars), bonges, bowls (pipes), and “one-hitters” (that look like cigarettes) were used to smoke marijuana. One youth reported that “blunts are the most popular.”
- Another stated, “a lot of people make bowls in wood shop.”
- A quarter of the OPUS juveniles (n=16) who provided urine specimens tested positive for marijuana.

#### *What Drug Scan Professionals are Saying*

- Drug Scan contacts who work with adolescent drug abusers reported that “there is rampant marijuana use.” Their reports are consistent with OPUS reports that juveniles use a variety of paraphernalia to smoke marijuana, including blunts, joints, bowls, bonges and soda cans.
- Drug Scan contacts also reported that marijuana dipped in PCP (“dippers”) was common among some youth, and that many added formaldehyde to the joints.
- Contacts interviewed by Drug Scan staff said that kids often did not know whether other substances were in the marijuana they used. A law enforcement contact reported that amphetamines and cocaine sometimes showed up in urine results—although juveniles denied using them—despite admitting marijuana use.
- Drug Scan contacts in education reported that youth felt “bulletproof,” and saw the harm associated with marijuana use as equal to or less than the harm associated with alcohol.
- Drug Scan contacts reported that marijuana was used by African Americans and Caucasians, ages 20 to 50. One contact commented, “Seems like everybody is smoking pot.”

### **Cocaine in Frederick County**

#### *The Data*

- Cocaine was the third most prevalent substance mentioned by county residents (adults and juveniles) entering treatment in fiscal year 2002.
- Thirty-one percent of adults mentioned abuse of cocaine on admission to treatment in 2002.
- A Drug Scan contact in law enforcement reported that crack cocaine “seems to be the drug of choice” among the adult criminal population in the county. Users in this group were reportedly in their 20s and 30s.
- Eight percent of juveniles mentioned cocaine abuse on admission to treatment in 2002, up from 4 percent (a 5-year low) in 2001, and down from 9 percent in 2000 and 11 percent (a 5-year high) in 1998.

- Among county 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> graders, reported current use of crack and other forms of cocaine ranged from less than 1 percent to 4 percent.
- Among county 10<sup>th</sup> graders, reported lifetime use of crack was 5 percent, and lifetime use of other forms of cocaine was 8 percent, compared to 4 percent and 7 percent, respectively, of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reporting lifetime use of crack or cocaine.

#### *What OPUS Juveniles are Saying*

- Several OPUS youth reported that crack cocaine was easily accessible.
- One juvenile reported, “You take [powder] cocaine and mix with a bunch of stuff and it comes out in a [crack] rock.”
- The same youth reported “(C)rack’s expensive. An 8-ball of crack is \$270, and an 8-ball of cocaine is \$150—that’s 3.5 grams.”
- A few OPUS juveniles reported that cocaine use sometimes began in high school (None of the 16 OPUS youth who provided urine specimens tested positive for cocaine.)

### **Heroin and Other Opiates in Frederick County**

#### *The Data*

- Heroin was the 4<sup>th</sup> most frequently cited substance abused by county residents (adults and juveniles combined) in fiscal year 2002. Thirteen percent of all county residents entering treatment mentioned heroin as a substance of abuse, an increase of nearly 5 percent since 1998, when approximately 8 percent of admissions cited heroin.
- More than 14 percent of Frederick county adults admitted to treatment in 2002 mentioned heroin abuse, a 6 percent increase from the 8 percent who mentioned heroin abuse in 1998.
- Nearly 4 percent of juveniles entering treatment in the county mentioned heroin abuse in 2002.
- Nearly 2 percent of county 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported current heroin use in 2001, while current use of the substance among 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders was less than 1 percent.
- Slightly over 6 percent of county adults and slightly over 1 percent of juveniles cited abuse of “other opiates” on admission to treatment in fiscal year 2002.
- Slightly over 6 percent of Frederick County 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 4 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of narcotics (e.g., codeine, morphine, methadone, Percodan) in 2001.
- One in ten of county 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported having tried narcotics at least once in their lifetime.
- Among county 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, current narcotics use was under 1 percent.

#### *What OPUS Juveniles and Drug Scan Professionals are Saying*

- Several OPUS juveniles reported that heroin was available in Frederick County.

- Drug Scan contacts reported that juvenile users—although relatively few in number—tended to come from rural areas in the northern part of the county, and were often older than most students.
- An OPUS youth reported that heroin users were 18 or older. (None of the 16 OPUS juveniles who participated in urinalyses tested positive for heroin or other opiates.)
- OPUS juveniles reported that codeine, OxyContin and other painkillers were popular in the county.

### **Hallucinogens in Frederick County**

#### *The Data*

- Nearly 12 percent of county juveniles mentioned abuse of hallucinogens on admission to treatment in fiscal year 2002, down from the 17 percent who mentioned hallucinogens in 1998.
- Eight percent of Frederick County 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 5 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of LSD in 2001, compared to less than ½ of 1 percent of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 2 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders who reported current use of the substance.
- Six percent of 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of other hallucinogens (e.g., mescaline, ‘shrooms), while less than ½ of 1 percent of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 1 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of other hallucinogens.

#### *What OPUS Juveniles are Saying*

- OPUS juveniles interviewed in Frederick County reported that LSD (acid) was available in pill form, as microdots, on (blotter) paper or sugar cubes, or in eyedropper bottles.
- Juveniles also reported that psychedelic mushrooms (‘shrooms) were available in the county, obtained either from dealers or picked directly from cow fields.
- Juveniles reported that users either smoked the ‘shrooms or ate them often with another food, like pizza, to disguise the flavor, which according to one youth, “taste(s) like poop.”

### **Designer Drugs, Amphetamines and Barbiturates in Frederick County**

#### *The Data*

- Nine percent of county 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 7 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of designer drugs (MDMA, ecstasy) in 2001.
- Eight percent of 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of amphetamines (uppers, bennies, speed, dexies). Current use of amphetamines among 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders ranged from slightly above 1 percent to approximately above 3 percent.
- Nearly 5 percent of 10<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of methamphetamines (meth, speed, crank, ice), compared to less than 3 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders. Among 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, current methamphetamines use was 1 percent or less.

- Five percent of 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 4 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported current use of barbiturates and/or tranquilizers (downers, reds, Valium) in 2001. Current use of barbiturates by 8<sup>th</sup> graders was less than 1 percent, and 6<sup>th</sup> graders reported zero use.

#### *What OPUS Juveniles are Saying*

- OPUS youth interviewed in Frederick County reported that ecstasy was available in pill form.
- Juveniles reported that ecstasy use might begin in the freshman year of high school.
- Youth reported a variety of types of ecstasy available in the county, including *Mitsubishi* and *Doublestack Pink Superman*.

#### *What Drug Scan Professionals are Saying*

- Drug Scan contacts described ecstasy as an emerging drug in Frederick County. The consensus was that use of ecstasy in the past 12 months had increased.
- Contacts described users of the substance as age 15 or older, male and female, middle to upper class, and white—although one contact reported that more blacks were beginning to experiment with ecstasy.

### **PCP & Formaldehyde in the County**

#### *The Data*

- MAS data for 2001 revealed that nearly 4 percent of 10<sup>th</sup> graders in Frederick County reported current use of PCP, and nearly 7 percent reported having tried PCP at least once in their lifetime. Among 12<sup>th</sup> graders, 2 percent reported current PCP use, and 5 percent reported lifetime use. Use among 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders ranged from less than ½ of 1 percent to 2 percent for current and lifetime use.

#### *What OPUS Juveniles are Saying*

- OPUS juveniles reported that PCP was available in Frederick County. “In the past month, it’s become more popular,” one youth said.
- OPUS youth stated that when cigarettes are dipped in liquid PCP, they are called “dippers.” (One youth said that a “dipper” referred to a cigarette dipped in formaldehyde.)
- Another OPUS juvenile said that formaldehyde was stolen from funeral homes.

#### **Key Terms**

**OPUS** (Offender Population Urinalysis Screening)—Staff conduct interviews with juvenile offenders at county intake centers.

**Drug Scan**—Staff conduct interviews with professionals in education, criminal justice, prevention, and public health.

**MAS** (Maryland Adolescent Survey)—A bi-annual survey of drug use by 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

**Current use** is the use of a drug at least once in the past 30 days.

**Drug Mentions**—The Substance Abuse Management Information System (SAMIS) is maintained by the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration to monitor treatment admissions. Up to three drugs of abuse are noted