

FREDERICK COUNTY

The OPUS intake project took place in Frederick County over 9 days between April 22, 2003, and May 2, 2003. Twenty parents and youths were approached to participate in the project. Of 20 parents approached, all agreed to allow their child to participate. Of 20 juveniles approached, all agreed to the interview, and 16 (80%) agreed to provide a urine specimen. Of the interviewed juveniles, 14 were male, 19 were Caucasian, and 1 was Hispanic. Their ages spanned from 12 to 18. Of the 16 juveniles who provided urine specimens, 4 tested positive for marijuana.

Marijuana

Interviewed youths reported that marijuana use began as young as age 11. Several different types of marijuana were reported to be available. Regular (also called “dirt” or “schwag”) was considered the cheapest and least potent marijuana. One youth reported that schwag “hurts your throat.” Interviewed youths reported that kind bud was “an expensive, good kind...Really big pot heads smoke that most of the time.” It was reported that because kind bud was more potent “you get less amount (than schwag) for the same price.” Other marijuana types included hydro (also known as “dro”), Arizona, chocolate Thai, Jamaican red hair, red Indian fire (which “people say it has red hairs”), “some type of thing with crystals,” and dank. One youth stated, “Dro is popular...it is grown under water.”

PCP/ Formaldehyde

Interviewed youths reported that PCP (phencyclidine) was available in Frederick County. One youth stated, “In the past month it’s become more popular.” Youths reported that it was available as a liquid, or in a form that “looks like parsley.” Youths reported that PCP was sprinkled on marijuana and smoked, or (in liquid form) it was smoked on cigarettes. Youths reported that when cigarettes were dipped in liquid PCP, they were called “dippers.” One youth, however, reported that a “dipper” referred to a cigarette dipped in liquid formaldehyde. Youths reported that a cigarette dipped in PCP or formaldehyde cost \$20 to \$30. One youth reported that formaldehyde was stolen from funeral homes. “Boat” was another slang term used by youths for either PCP or formaldehyde. (Confusion about what substances people dip cigarettes in occurred not only in Frederick County, but also throughout Maryland.)

Ecstasy

Frederick County youths reported that ecstasy was available in pill form. Different youths had different ideas about the availability of this drug. One youth stated, “It hasn’t been around in so long,” while another stated, “It’s getting pretty big.” Youths reported that “x” and “e” were popular slang terms for this drug. Juveniles said that ecstasy use began among youths as early as their freshman year of high school.

Crack and Powder Cocaine

Several youths reported that crack cocaine was easily accessible. Youths reported that crack was available in rock form and was smoked by users. Youths reported that marijuana or alcohol might be used with crack cocaine. One youth reported, “You take

[powder] cocaine and mix with a bunch of stuff and it comes out in a [crack] rock.” When asked how crack and powder cocaine were different this youth stated, “You get high in different ways; crack is more addictive.” This youth also reported, “Crack’s expensive. An 8-ball of crack is \$270, and an 8-ball of cocaine is \$150—that’s 3.5 grams.” Youths reported that powder cocaine was often snorted by users or put on marijuana and smoked. Although one youth reported having “never seen any young kids” use crack, other interviewees reported that crack or powder cocaine use might begin in high school.

Other Noteworthy Statements

Several youths reported that their neighborhood or community had a drug problem. Youths reported that the sale and use of drugs was highly visible on the streets. One youth stated, “Yeah, bunch of boys selling drugs and go back on the corner and smoke joints and stuff.” One youth reported that drug problems had led to an increase in gangs. While some youths suggested that an increased police presence might deter drug sales and use, others were more pessimistic, stating, “Nothing can be done. Police come by all the time and people just run into the woods.”