

## **CESAR FAX: May 1, 2006 (Vol. 15, Issue 17)**

### ***Web Surveys May Be as Reliable as Mail Surveys in Estimating Secondary Effects of Substance Use in College Populations***

Web surveys can effectively collect data on consequences associated with substance use by college students, according to a study of students attending a large Midwestern public university in 2001. A random sample of 7,000 undergraduate students were randomly assigned to participate in either a mail-or Web-based survey that asked about the consequences they had experienced in the past year as a result of other people's drinking or drug use. Both the mail and Web surveys provided nearly identical results (see figure below). In addition, the Web survey had a higher response rate (63%) than the mail survey (40%). A previous analysis of data from this study found similar results for prevalence of drug use among undergraduate students (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 14, Issue 21). The authors note that since "college students are a unique sector of the U.S. and international populations as they have near-universal use of, and access to, the Internet" (p. 165), Web surveys may not be a feasible alternative to mail surveys in other populations.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from McCabe, S.E.; Couper, M.P.; Cranford, J.A.; and Boyd, C.J. "Comparison of Web and Mail Surveys for Studying Secondary Consequences Associated with Substance Use: Evidence for Minimal Mode Effects," *Addictive Behaviors* 31(1): 162-168, 2006. For more information, contact Sean Esteban McCabe at [plius@umich.edu](mailto:plius@umich.edu).

## **CESAR FAX: May 8, 2006 (Vol. 15, Issue 18)**

### ***Decline in Marijuana Use Among D.C. Juvenile Arrestees May Be Abating***

The recent declines in the percentage of Washington, D.C. juvenile arrestees testing positive for marijuana may have subsided, according to data from the D.C. Pretrial Services Agency. While marijuana remains the drug most commonly detected among this population, the percentage of juvenile arrestees testing positive had been declining from a peak of 64% in 1999 to 49% in 2004. In 2005, however, 50% of juvenile arrestees tested positive for marijuana.\*The percentage of D.C. juvenile arrestees testing positive for cocaine and PCP also remained relatively stable at low levels between 2004 and 2005. Other national measures of drug use among youth, including the Monitoring the Future survey and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, have shown similar stabilization of youth drug use in recent years.

\*The most recent data from the D.C. Pretrial Services Agency shows that marijuana use remained around 50% in the first three months of 2006.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from the District of Columbia Pretrial Services Agency. Available online at <http://www.dcpsa.gov/foia/foiaERRpsa.cfm>. For more information, contact Jerome Robinson, Director of Forensic Research at the D.C. Pretrial Services Agency at [jerome.robinson@csosa.gov](mailto:jerome.robinson@csosa.gov).

## **CESAR FAX: May 22, 2006 (Vol. 15, Issue 20)**

### ***Majority of U.S. Youths and Young Adults Who Have Used Club Drugs Have Used Three or More Types of Illicit Drugs***

The majority of club drug users are multiple drug users, according to a recent analysis of data from the 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Overall, 20% of youths and young adults ages 16 to 23 reported ever using at least one or more of the club drugs methamphetamine, MDMA, LSD, GHB, ketamine, or flunitrazepam. Nearly one-fifth (17%) of these lifetime club drug users reported using two different types of illicit drugs and 82% reported using three or more different types of drugs in their lifetime.\* Users of GHB, ketamine, flunitrazepam, and methamphetamine were most likely to be multi-drug users—between 96% and 100% reported have ever used three or more types of illicit drugs. These findings are consistent with those of a study of multiple drug use among Maryland public high school students (see *CESAR FAX*, Volume 14, Issue 35), which found users of less common drugs were more likely to use multiple drugs.

\*Drug types: cocaine, inhalants, marijuana, heroin, hallucinogens, sedatives, tranquilizers, pain relievers, and stimulants.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Wu, L.-T.; Schlenger, W.E.; and Glavin, D.M. Concurrent Use of Methamphetamine, MDMA, LSD, Ketamine, GHB, and Flunitrazepam Among American Youths, *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, In Press, 2006. For more information, contact Dr. Li-Tzy Wu at litzywu@yahoo.com.

**CESAR FAX: May 29, 2006 (Vol. 15, Issue 21)**

***Aging Baby-Boom Generation May Result in Increased Number of Older Adults Using Drugs***

The number of older adults using drugs will increase dramatically as the baby-boom generation ages, according to an analysis of data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. The number of adults ages 50 and older using illicit drugs in the past year is projected to increase from 1.6 million in 1999–2001 to 3.5 million in 2020. Even larger increases are projected for past year marijuana use and the nonmedical use of prescription psychotherapeutics (i.e., analgesics, tranquilizers, stimulants, or sedatives; see figure below). The projected increases are due to “an anticipated 52% increase in population in that age group and a projected increase in the rate of past-year use as more persons from younger higher-drug-using cohorts reach the age of 50 years” (p. 262). According to the authors, these findings suggest a “need for improved knowledge of the biomedical and psychosocial effects of nonmedical drug use on aging and elderly individuals” (p. 257).

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Colliver, J.D.; Compton, W.M.; Gfroerer, J.C.; and Condon, T. “Projecting Drug Use Among Aging Baby Boomers in 2020,” *Annals of Epidemiology*16(4):257-265, 2006. For more information, contact Dr. Wilson Compton at [wcompton@nida.nih.gov](mailto:wcompton@nida.nih.gov)