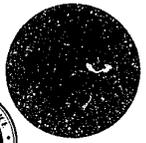


U.S. Department of Justice  
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## DRUG CONTROL AND USE SURVEYS:

A POTENTIAL TOOL FOR  
DEVELOPING STATE DRUG  
CONTROL STRATEGIES

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**Bureau of  
Justice  
Assistance**

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**SPECIAL ANALYSIS**

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# **DRUG CONTROL AND USE SURVEYS: A POTENTIAL TOOL FOR DEVELOPING STATE DRUG CONTROL STRATEGIES**

by

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February 1990

A Special Analysis Report of the  
Consortium for Drug Strategy Impact Assessment

Prepared by the

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**ACQUISITION**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of a multi-state effort to monitor and evaluate drug control strategies, the Consortium for Drug Strategy Impact Assessment sponsored statewide public attitude surveys in four states: the District of Columbia (referred to as a state in this report), Massachusetts, Ohio, and Utah. The surveys addressed two principal issues--drug and alcohol use and abuse among adults, college students, and high school students; and public opinions about various drug control policies. Two other states (Arizona and Texas) conducted state surveys with funding assistance separate from the Consortium, and contributed their findings to this report.

The states surveyed citizens on topics such as policy options for combatting drug abuse, appropriate responses to drug violations in schools, opinions about legalization and tax issues, age at onset of substance use, and recency of drug abuse.

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Citizen Attitudes and Perceptions About the Drug Problem

- o Household respondents in Arizona and Ohio view drug use as the most serious problem facing youth today followed by crime, alcohol use, and illiteracy.
- o In the District of Columbia, drug trafficking is seen as one of the most serious neighborhood problems. Citizens rank drug trafficking ahead of 11 other neighborhood problems (including rape, murder, handguns, auto thefts) and second to burglaries and break-ins.
- o Massachusetts household respondents overall rank drug trafficking as their third neighborhood concern behind burglaries, break-ins, and traffic congestion. Public housing respondents, however, rank drug trafficking as the top concern in their neighborhoods.
- o The majority of respondents in Ohio and Arizona feel that the best response to students caught selling drugs to other students is to let the police and courts handle it rather than leaving it up to the school system or the parents. In the District of Columbia, respondents favor counseling ahead of letting the police and courts handle the problem.

- o Arizona, the District of Columbia, and Ohio household respondents, and Utah college students favor both education and prevention and stopping the flow of illegal drugs as drug control options.

#### Drug Use Patterns

- o Forty-three (43) percent of the high school students surveyed in Arizona and 32% of the high school students in Texas report they have used marijuana. Seventeen (17) percent of the Arizona students surveyed and 12% of the Texas students report having used marijuana in the past month.
- o Thirty-three (33) percent of the Utah college students surveyed report ever using marijuana, and 18% report ever using cocaine.
- o In Arizona, the District of Columbia, and Ohio, over 30% of the household respondents report they know of someone who regularly uses illegal drugs. In those three states, less than 20% of the household respondents indicate they know of someone who regularly sells illegal drugs. In Utah 39% of college student respondents indicate they know of someone who regularly sells illegal drugs.

#### Methodological Considerations

The surveys described in this report exhibit variations in implementation, questionnaire design, sampling strategies, response rates, and margins of error. The impact of each of these variations on data analysis and interpretation is reviewed in Appendix A, Review of State Methodologies.

In the instances where the data provided from the states supports statistical comparisons, Chi Square and Difference of Proportion tests are conducted. The results of those tests are available in a technical appendix from the Criminal Justice Statistics Association (CJSA).

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## INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse is one of the most critical problems facing American society today. Statistical indicators -- use and abuse of drugs, law enforcement and public health statistics, and intelligence information -- show that various drug-related problems are on the rise. In response, states are surveying their citizens as one way to gather important data for defining the problem and forging effective solutions.

This report presents the findings of six statewide surveys on the drug problem conducted in 1987 and 1988 (Arizona, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Ohio, Texas, and Utah). The surveys were conducted as part of a multi-state drug control strategy assessment effort. These surveys covered such topics as: the nature and extent of substance abuse, perceptions of the seriousness of the drug problem in relation to other problems, attitudes about effective responses to drug problems, and willingness to support various drug control policy options.

The purpose of the surveys is to develop a set of general statewide indicators on a variety of drug policy issues. The surveys were designed with cooperation among states and the Federal government. By asking comparable questions in different jurisdictions, states are able to develop and refine drug control strategies with the best available information in hand, while also providing information to the Federal government to help develop and assess national drug control efforts.

The surveys are part of a larger multi-state effort, funded by the Bureau of Justice of Assistance (BJA) and coordinated by the Criminal Justice Statistics Association (CJSA), called the Consortium for Drug Strategy Impact Assessment. Working since January of 1988, BJA, CJSA, and representatives from 15 states have shared information regarding their drug control strategies and have developed common priority areas for data development and analysis. Thirteen states recently joined the Consortium project, bringing the total number of participating states to 28. The purpose of the Consortium is to assess the impact of State drug control strategies.

### The Consortium State Surveys

Six of the Consortium member states completed survey projects in the past year. They include:

1. **Arizona** - Conducted statewide surveys of high school, college, and adult populations on drug use, drug availability, and attitudes about drug use. The statewide adult population survey included 1,009 respondents and was conducted in October 1988. The high school survey was conducted in October 1988. The community college survey was conducted in November 1988, and the Northern Arizona University survey was conducted in March 1988.
2. **District of Columbia** - Conducted district-wide drug opinion survey that included 450 respondents in June 1988.
3. **Massachusetts** - Conducted a statewide drug and crime opinion survey, which also surveyed residents in public housing developments. The statewide survey included 401 respondents and was conducted in June 1988. The public housing survey included 139 respondents and was conducted in July 1988.
4. **Ohio** - Conducted a statewide drug opinion survey. The survey included 803 respondents and was conducted in November 1988.
5. **Texas** - Conducted a statewide household survey on drug use and abuse and a substance use survey of secondary schools. The household survey included 5,156 respondents and was conducted in the spring of 1988. The high school survey included 7,154 respondents and was conducted in the spring of 1988.
6. **Utah** - Conducted a drug use and opinion survey among college students. The survey included 389 respondents and was conducted in the Fall of 1988.

The Arizona survey was funded by the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. The Texas survey was funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the Drug-Free Schools and Communities grant program and was a collaborative effort between the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Public Policy Resource Laboratory of Texas A&M University. The four other states used

BJA funds, disseminated by CJSA through the Consortium project, for their surveys.

The Arizona high school and college surveys, and the Texas surveys were planned and conducted independent of the Consortium project, although the survey results are being shared. Five states (Arizona, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Utah) coordinated and shared ideas on the design and implementation of their statewide household surveys. To allow state comparisons on specific items, each state agreed to ask questions in the following areas:

1. Ranking the seriousness of five youth-related problems (illiteracy, crime, alcohol use, unemployment, and drug use).
2. Appropriate responses for students caught selling drugs to other students.
3. Effective methods for combatting drug abuse.
4. Knowledge of individuals who regularly abuse alcohol or illegal drugs, or who sell illegal drugs.

The surveys covered other issues such as legalization of drugs, and patterns and future projections of drug use.

This report reviews the major findings from the state surveys in a series of issue-oriented sections. For example, the first section is titled, "Future Projections of the Drug Problem" and reviews survey responses for each state that asks questions on this topic. Where appropriate (when the same question is asked and the same survey method is used), responses for more than one state will be included in the same table or chart. Otherwise, the findings are presented separately. At the end of each section is a summary of the states' findings.

The final section of this report contains a review of common themes that emerged from the findings across the states, a discussion of the usefulness of state survey data on drug control issues, a discussion of methodological considerations that addresses issues for future state survey efforts, and a survey instrument developed by the Consortium for states to use when conducting a survey. The instrument appears in Appendix A.

# FUTURE PROJECTIONS OF THE DRUG PROBLEM IN TWO STATES

Arizona and Ohio citizens believe the drug problem in the next generation will be at least as serious as it is today or worse.

Widespread or excessive fear about drugs, crime, and other community issues is a chief concern of policymakers. What are people's expectations concerning the extent of the drug problem in the future? How do they think the drug problem will change? To assess public perception on this issue, the states ask respondents where the U.S. drug problem will be in the next 20-25 years.

The Arizona and Ohio survey asks respondents the following question concerning the future of the drug problem:

"Which one of the following statements best summarizes your feelings about where the U.S. will be with the drug problem 20 to 25 years from now?"

- o Drug abuse will be out of control and seriously threaten our way of life.
- o It will increase somewhat becoming an even more serious problem than it is now.
- o Drug abuse will continue to be a problem, about as serious as it is now.
- o It will decline, but still be a problem.
- o Drug abuse will be eliminated as a social problem."

	AZ	OH
Drug abuse will be out of control.	14%	16%
Drug abuse will increase and become a more serious problem.	29	33
Drug abuse will continue to be a problem.	27	24
The drug abuse problem will decline.	23	21
The drug abuse problem will be eliminated.	3	3
Don't Know	3	2

\* Column percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

## Summary

The data in Table 1 suggest a current high level of concern among citizens regarding the future of the drug problem. More than 70% of Arizona and Ohio respondents believe that the drug problem will remain at its current level or will increase in seriousness over the next generation. Nearly half of all respondents believe that it will worsen. Virtually no one feels that the drug problem will be eliminated in that time period.

## RANKING THE SERIOUSNESS OF CITIZEN CONCERNS IN FOUR STATES

In Arizona and Ohio, drug use was most often seen as a very important problem facing youth, viewed more seriously than was crime, alcohol use, illiteracy, and unemployment.

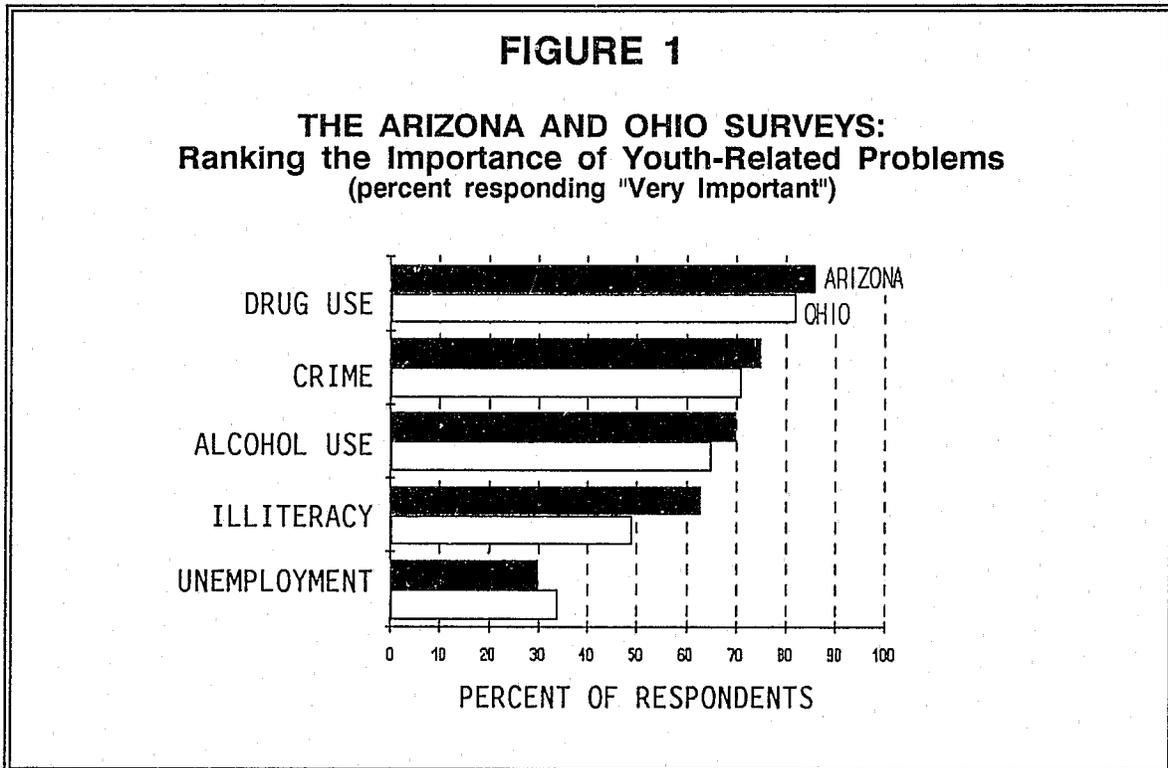
How serious do citizens view the drug problem in comparison to crime, illiteracy, alcohol use, unemployment, or other concerns? Three different approaches to this issue are employed by the states in their citizen surveys -- ranking the seriousness of youth-related problems, of neighborhood concerns, and of hypothetical drug-related incidents or situations. The findings from these inquiries are reviewed in this section.

Using the following question, the Arizona and Ohio surveys ask respondents to rank the seriousness of five youth-related problems:

"If I have your permission, I would like to begin by reading to you a list of five problems currently troubling American youth. Please tell me if you think each problem is very important, somewhat important, slightly important, or not important at all.

- o Illiteracy
- o Crime
- o Alcohol Use
- o Unemployment
- o Drug Use."

Ohio and Arizona respondents rank drug use as the most serious problem facing youth today, followed by crime. Both states rank alcohol use as the third most serious problem facing youth today, followed by illiteracy and unemployment (Figure 1).



To further assess how the public views the drug problem, Arizona and Ohio present household respondents with a series of situations relating to drug or alcohol use. Respondents are asked, in the following manner, how they rank various circumstances:

"In the next section, I am going to describe a series of situations relating to drug or alcohol use. Please indicate whether you consider the problem raised in each incident to be very serious, somewhat serious, not very serious, or not at all serious."

Table 2 shows that respondents in both states rate the same situations as "very serious."

		Very Serious	Somewhat Serious	Not Very Serious	Not At All Serious
Two people fly a plane load of cocaine into the U.S.	AZ	96%	3%	1%	<1%
	OH	96	3	1	0
Two police narcotics offi- cers decide to keep and sell some illegal drugs seized during a raid.	AZ	95	4	1	<1
	OH	94	5	1	0
A person operates a secret drug lab, making and selling illegal drugs.	AZ	95	5	<1	<1
	OH	94	5	1	0
A married couple gives a party at which cocaine is made available to all of the guests.	AZ	87	11	2	<1
	OH	85	12	3	0
Parents allow their 15-year-old to host a beer party for some friends in their home.	AZ	71	20	7	2
	OH	67	27	4	2
A farmer receives payment for allowing someone to grow mari- juana in a cornfield.	AZ	67	26	6	2
	OH	60	30	8	1
A person gives six tablets from a valium prescription to a friend who is suffering from anxiety while on vacation.	AZ	56	30	12	2
	OH	52	34	12	2
Two 16-year-olds share a marijuana cigarette.	AZ	51	36	11	2
	OH	42	46	11	1

\* Row percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 3**

**The District of Columbia Survey:  
Ranking the Seriousness of  
Neighborhood Concerns  
(On a Scale of 1 to 100)**

	Average Score
Burglaries and break-ins	52
Drug trafficking and selling	48
Armed robberies and muggings	45
Vandalism	45
Traffic congestion	44
Number of people with handguns	43
Potholes	43
Rape	42
Murders	42
Purse snatching	42
Dirty streets and sidewalks	40
Auto thefts	39
Noise from public disturbances or fighting	37

**TABLE 4**

**The Massachusetts Survey:  
Ranking the Seriousness of  
Neighborhood Concerns  
(Percent Who "Worry Very Often")**

	Statewide	Housing Projects
Traffic	38%	37%
Burglaries and break-ins	31	51
Drug trafficking	26	68
Vandalism	25	49
Auto theft	22	43
Rape	19	30
Dirty streets/sidewalks	18	35
Public disturbance	17	46
Murders	16	30
Number of people with handguns	14	39
Mugging/armed robberies	13	35
Purse snatching	12	32

The District of Columbia and Massachusetts surveys ask the same question about neighborhood concerns but present the data in different manners (Tables 3 and 4). The District of Columbia survey ranks the seriousness of neighborhood concerns based on the average score each citizen concern received. The Massachusetts survey presents the percentage of respondents who worry very often about various neighborhood concerns. The question used by both states is stated below:

"Next, I'd like to know how big a worry or concern, if at all, each of the following things is in your neighborhood. Using a range of zero to 100, with zero meaning it does not bother or upset you at all and 100 meaning it bothers you so much that you never stop worrying or being very upset about it, please tell me how big a worry or concern each of the following is in your neighborhood."

In the District, drug trafficking is ranked as the second most serious neighborhood concern, compared to a third-place ranking in

Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, 68% of public housing residents worry very often about drug trafficking compared to 26% of statewide respondents.

**Summary**

While employing different questions to gauge citizens' rankings of the importance of the drug problem, the Arizona, District of Columbia, Massachusetts, and Ohio surveys established that drug use and drug trafficking rank among the top public concerns.

Arizona and Ohio citizens view drug use as a more important youth-related problem than alcohol use, crime, illiteracy, and unemployment.

Generally, citizens in Arizona and Ohio view the selling and importing of illegal drugs as a more serious problem than drug use. They also view marijuana use as less serious than parents allowing teenagers to use alcohol or friends sharing prescription drugs.

## PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE LEGALIZATION OF DRUGS IN THREE STATES

There is virtually no support for the legalization of drugs in Arizona and Ohio. Most District of Columbia citizens believe that legalizing drugs would not reduce the number of people selling or using drugs; although they believe it would reduce drug-related crime.

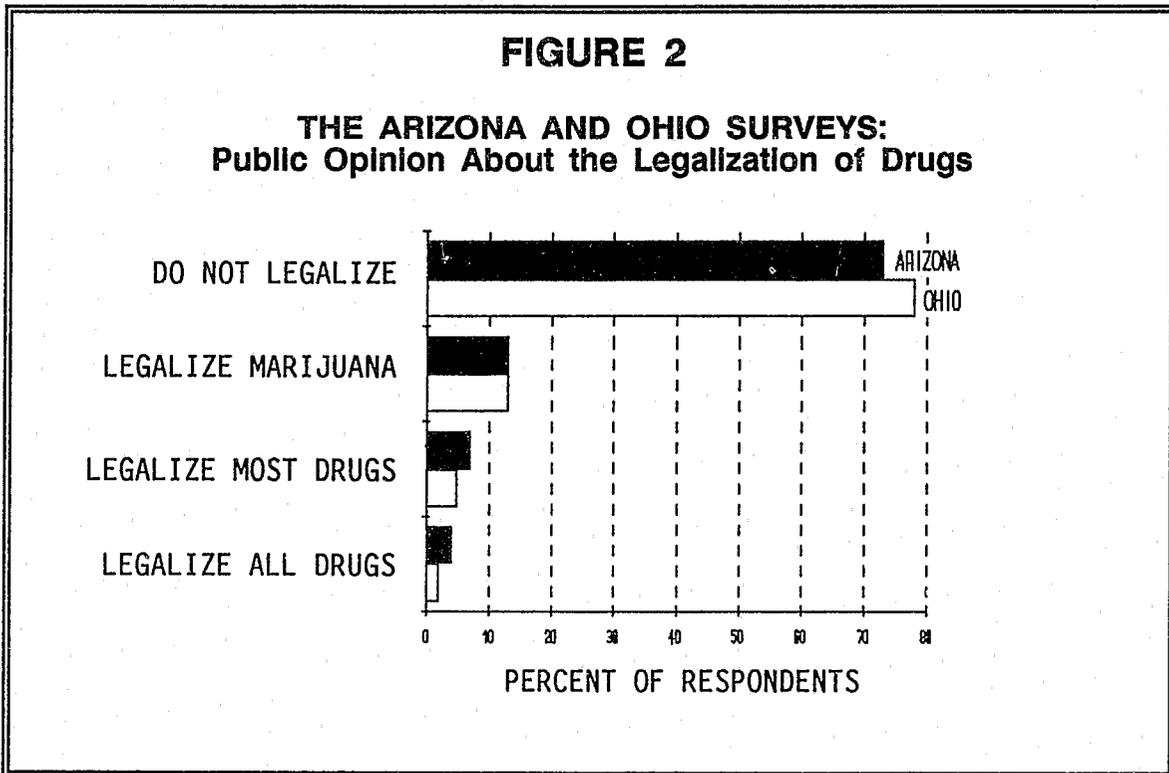
The legalization of drugs as a solution to the drug problem has been extensively debated. Should certain drugs be legalized? Would legalization reduce the use and sale of drugs? Arizona, Ohio, and the District of Columbia address this issue in their surveys.

The Arizona and Ohio surveys pose the following question regarding the legalization of drugs:

"Some people today say that we should legalize the use of all drugs in order to remove the trade from criminals and reduce the health hazards to users. Others argue that legalization would greatly increase the number of drug users and overload our

capacity to deal with them. Which one of the following statements best fits your own beliefs about legalization?

- All drugs which are now illegal should remain illegal.
- All drugs should remain illegal except marijuana.
- Most drugs should be legalized except the two or three most dangerous ones.
- All drugs should be legal for sale on the open market."

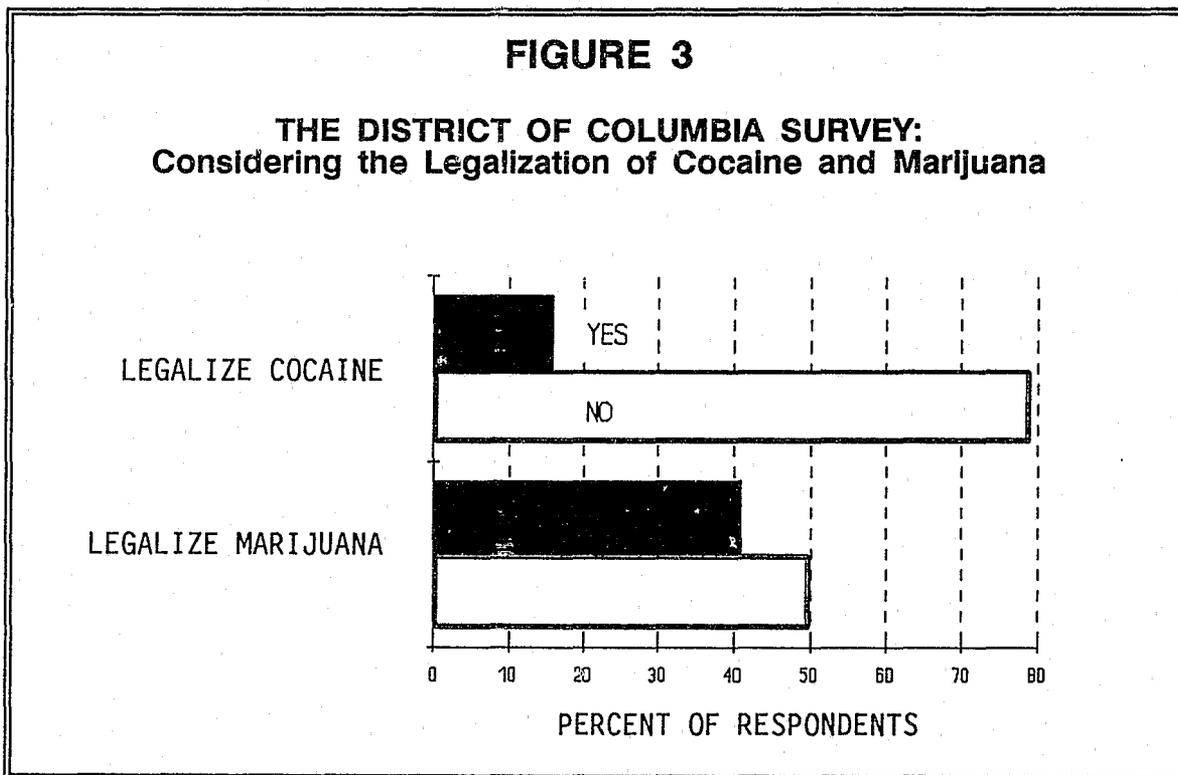


There is little support for the legalization of drugs in Ohio and Arizona, with 78% percent of Ohio respondents and 73% of Arizona respondents indicating that all currently illegal drugs should remain so (Figure 2).

The District of Columbia survey asks respondents a different series of questions about the legalization of drugs:

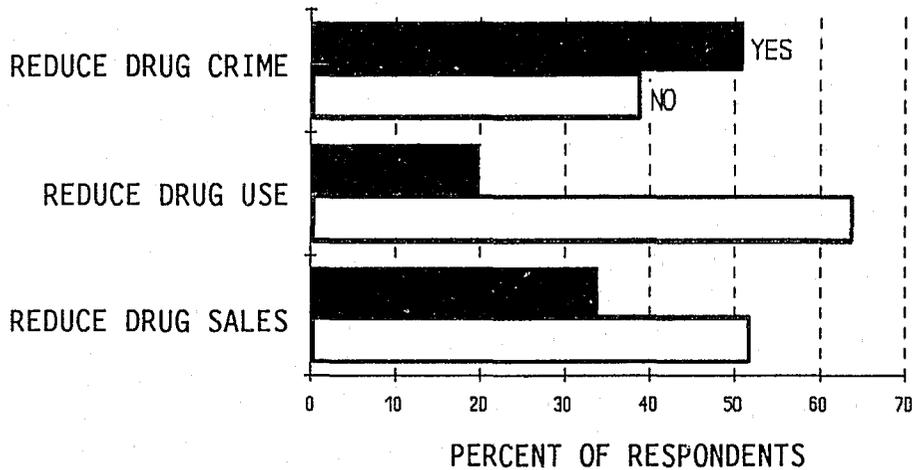
- o "Do you feel that lawmakers should consider the possibility of legalizing cocaine?"
- o "Do you feel that lawmakers should consider the possibility of legalizing marijuana?"

- o "Do you feel that legalization of drugs would in the long run reduce drug-related crime?"
- o "Do you believe that legalization of drugs would in the long run reduce the number of people using drugs?"
- o "Do you believe that legalization of drugs would in the long run reduce the number of people selling drugs?"



**FIGURE 4**

**THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SURVEY:  
Impact of Legalizing Drugs**



A large percentage of citizens in the District of Columbia (41%) feel that lawmakers should consider legalization of marijuana as a policy option, though much fewer (16%) feel that legalization of cocaine should be considered (Figure 3). District respondents feel that legalizing drugs would have a greater impact on drug-related crime (51%) and drug sales (34%) than on drug use (20%) (Figure 4).

**Summary**

Generally, these data indicate that citizens in the three states surveyed do not support the legalization of drugs and do not view legalization as a solution to the drug problem. These data also indicate that District residents closely associate crime with the drug trade.

# METHODS FOR COMBATting DRUG ABUSE IN FIVE STATES

In the five states surveyed, citizens exhibit nearly equal preference for drug interdiction and drug education and prevention methods for combatting drug abuse. The states' citizens vary regarding which of these two options is preferred.

What do citizens feel are the most effective methods for combatting drug abuse? The Arizona and Ohio surveys ask the following question concerning methods for combatting drug abuse:

"There are a number of possible methods of combatting drug abuse. Which one of the following do you think should receive the most money and effort?"

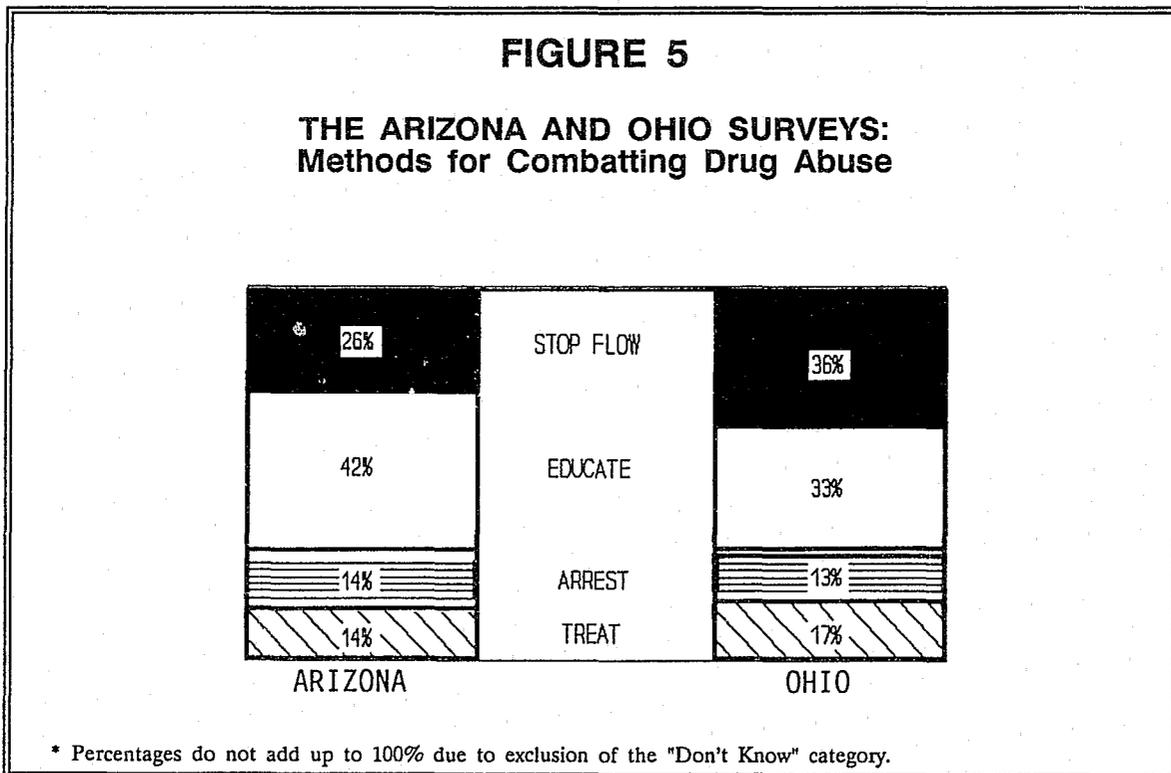
- o Drug treatment and rehabilitation.
- o Arrest and prosecution of drug law violators.
- o Drug abuse education and prevention.
- o Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the country."

Most residents of Arizona and Ohio feel that both education and prevention efforts and interdiction should receive priority attention in a drug control policy, and fewer favor stronger drug law enforcement or treatment and rehabilitation (Figure 5). The preference for prevention and education versus drug interdiction is higher in Arizona.

The Utah survey poses a similar question to college students:

"Rank the following in the order you feel would be most effective in combatting drug abuse:

- o More resources for drug treatment and rehabilitation.
- o More resources for arrest, prosecution, and detention of drug law violators.
- o More resources for drug abuse education and prevention.



- o More resources for stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the country."

Utah college respondents rank education and prevention (38%) as the most effective policy option for combatting drug abuse, followed by stopping the flow of illegal drugs (28%), arrest, prosecution, and detention (24%), and treatment and rehabilitation (10%).

The District of Columbia survey asks the question in a different manner:

"In general, which one of the following approaches do you feel would be most cost effective in combatting drug abuse?"

- o More resources for drug treatment and rehabilitation.
- o More resources for arrest, prosecution, and detention of drug law violators.
- o More resources for drug abuse education and prevention.
- o More resources for stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the country."

Thirty-nine (39) percent of District of Columbia respondents rank stopping the flow of illegal drugs as the most cost effective approach to combat the drug abuse problem. Other options are also ranked in the same order as Ohio's survey, with 26% choosing education and prevention, 15% choosing treatment and rehabilitation, and 13% choosing arrest, prosecution, and detention.

The Massachusetts surveys pose the following question concerning the effectiveness of policy options to combat drug abuse:

"Next, tell me how effective, if at all, you think each of the following would be in fighting drugs -- very effective, fairly effective, not too effective or not effective at all.

- o Life sentences, with no chance of parole, for convicted drug dealers.
- o Better drug education programs in the schools.
- o Putting more police on the streets.
- o Confiscating the property of convicted drug dealers.
- o The death penalty for convicted drug dealers.

- o Speedy eviction of people or tenants arrested on drug charges.
- o Requiring high school students to tour prisons to learn first-hand from inmates what drug abuse has done to them."

Table 5 presents the results of the Massachusetts surveys concerning the effectiveness of various policy options to combat the drug problem.

	State-wide	Housing Projects
Better drug education in schools.	88%	68%
Requiring high school students to tour prisons to learn from inmates about drug abuse.	82	82
Confiscating property of convicted drug dealers.	79	74
Life without parole for convicted drug dealers.	78	64
More police on streets.	77	84
Speedy eviction for tenants arrested on drug charges.	73	81
Death penalty for drug dealers.	66	47

\* Percentage totals not expected to add up to 100% since response categories for these items are not mutually exclusive.

Massachusetts respondents in the statewide survey most frequently choose drug education (88%) as the best policy option for combatting drug abuse, followed by requiring high school students to tour prisons to learn from inmates about drug abuse (82%) and confiscating property of convicted drug dealers (79%).

Public housing respondents feel the most effective policy options are more police on streets (84%), requiring high school students to tour prisons (82%), and speedy eviction for tenants arrested on drug charges (81%). The statewide respondents are more likely than the public housing respondents to view the death penalty for drug dealers (66% vs. 47%) and life without parole for convicted drug dealers (78% vs. 64%) as effective options for combatting drug abuse; but, this is seen as the least effective option by both groups.

## Summary

When given a choice, citizens indicate preferences for different drug control policies. In the Arizona, District of Columbia, Ohio, and Utah surveys, respondents indicate nearly equal preferences for policy options relating to education and prevention and drug interdiction.

The Massachusetts statewide household survey reveals a strong preference for education-oriented policy options, but the range of responses is not identical to the other surveys, thus limiting the comparison. The Massachusetts survey reveals differences of opinion between household and public housing respondents.

These data suggest that people are not limited in their opinions regarding effective policy options for controlling drug abuse, and that these opinions are fairly well formed. These data also indicate that public support exists for a range of policy alternatives.

## RESPONDING TO STUDENTS CAUGHT SELLING DRUGS IN SCHOOL IN FOUR STATES

Household respondents in Arizona and Ohio, and college respondents in Utah believe most strongly that the appropriate response for students caught selling drugs in school should be to let the criminal justice system handle the problem. District of Columbia household respondents indicate a slightly stronger preference for counseling as an appropriate response.

Drug use among school-age children is of primary concern to State, local and Federal policymakers. Four state surveys include questions on appropriate responses for students caught selling drugs in school.

The Arizona and Ohio surveys pose the following question about how to respond to students caught selling drugs in school:

"We are interested in what you think school officials should do with students caught selling drugs to other students. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following possible actions that school officials might take if they caught a student selling drugs to another student.

- o Let the police and courts handle it.
- o Expel the student from school.
- o Keep the student in school and provide counseling.
- o Keep the student in school, but let the parents handle any discipline."

The majority of respondents in Ohio (81%) and Arizona (76%) strongly agree or agree with the response option, "let the police and courts handle it", when students are caught selling drugs in school. In both states, 60% to 66% of respondents strongly agree or agree with two different response options -- "expel the student," and "provide counseling." Only 14% of respondents in both states strongly agree or agree with the option to let parents handle it (Table 6).

The District of Columbia survey asks the following question about options for students caught selling drugs to other students:

"For students found to be selling drugs to other students, what do you think should be the proper response by school officials?"

		OH	AZ
Let the police and courts handle it.	Agree	81%	76%
	Disagree	16	21
	Don't Know	2	4
Expel the student.	Agree	63	60
	Disagree	35	36
	Don't Know	2	4
Provide Counseling.	Agree	62	66
	Disagree	36	31
	Don't Know	3	3
Let parents handle.	Agree	14	14
	Disagree	83	83
	Don't Know	3	3

\* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.  
\*\* The "Agree" category includes the "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses; the "Disagree" category includes the "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" responses.

- o Let the police and courts handle the matter.
- o Expel the students from school.
- o Keep the students in school and provide counseling.
- o Keep the students in school, but let the parents handle and discipline."

District of Columbia respondents choose "provide counseling" (43%), most often followed by "let the police and courts handle it" (32%) as proper responses to students caught selling drugs to other students. Thirteen (13) percent choose expelling the student, while only 6% feel that the parents should handle it.

The Utah survey poses a similar question to college students:

"What do you think school officials should do when college students are caught selling drugs to other students?"

- o Let the police and courts handle the matter.
- o Expel the student from school.
- o Keep the student in school and provide counseling.
- o Keep the student in school and let parents handle any discipline."

The majority of the Utah college students surveyed believe school officials should "let the police and courts handle it" (59%). The next most frequently chosen response is "expel the student" (23%), followed by "provide counseling" (18%). Only one percent feel that school officials should "let the parents handle it."

## Summary

Data from these responses suggest that citizens and college students favor, to varying degrees, involvement of the criminal justice system as a response to the problem of students selling drugs in school. They also indicate that this is not the only preferred response option; treatment or expulsion are favored as well. The lack of support across the four states surveyed for tackling the problem within the family is most interesting.

When respondents are allowed to agree or disagree with each of the four response options, as in the Arizona and Ohio surveys, the highest percentage agree with the criminal justice system response for students caught selling drugs in school. However, they show significant support for two other options--one, punishment-oriented (expulsion from school) and the other, treatment-oriented (provision of counseling), and they show little support for leaving resolution of the issue up to parents.

Allowing respondents to choose only one of the four response options included in the state surveys, as was the case in the District of Columbia citizen survey and the Utah college survey, produces different results. When forced to make a choice, District citizens choose counseling somewhat over the criminal justice solution. Citizens in the District favor these two options over expulsion or letting parents

handle the problem. When college students in Utah are given the same options, they exhibit a clear preference for the criminal justice solution, with 59% choosing that option.

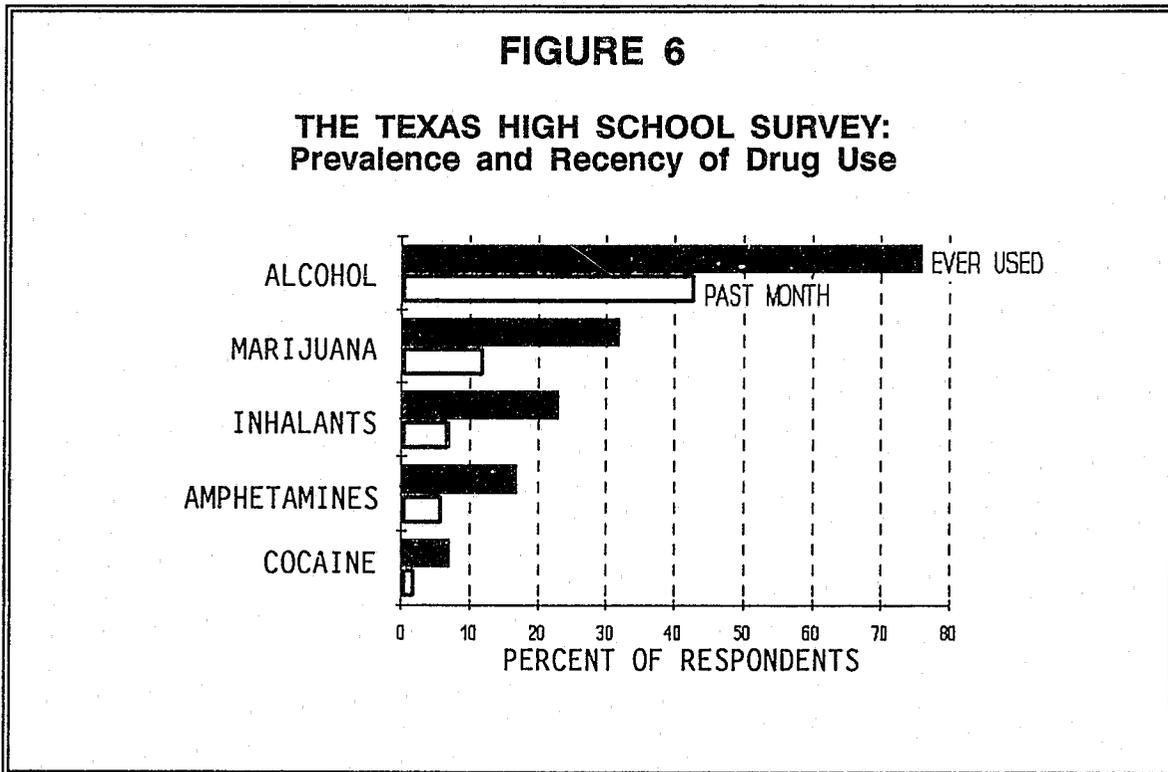
## DRUG USE PATTERNS IN SIX STATES

Among those reporting drug use, high school students in Arizona and Texas are more likely to have ever used marijuana and inhalants than cocaine.

The states ask high school and adult respondents about their substance use habits to help determine the degree of use and abuse and the availability of specific drugs.

Arizona and Texas surveyed their secondary school populations (grades 7 through 12). The surveys address the availability of drugs and drug use patterns of students.

Figure 6 shows that of the Texas high school students reporting substance use, the most prevalently used substances are alcohol and marijuana. Cocaine is the least often used substance.



**FIGURE 7**

**THE ARIZONA HIGH SCHOOL SURVEY:  
Prevalence and Recency of Drug Use**

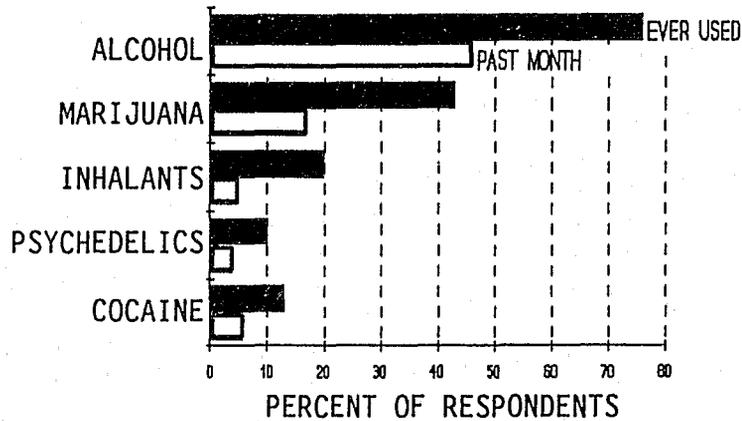


Figure 7 shows that of the Arizona high school students reporting drug use, alcohol and marijuana are most often used. Psychedelics and cocaine are the least often used.

Differences appear when the seniors in Arizona and Texas are compared with seniors nationwide. Table 7 shows current and lifetime use figures for five different drugs.

To examine how drug use among high school students in Arizona and Texas compares with high school students nationwide, data from the National Institute on Drug Abuse's national high school survey on drug use is presented below.

**TABLE 7**

**Prevalence and Recency of Drug Use Among Seniors in Arizona, Texas, and Nationwide\*\***

	Past Month			Ever Used		
	AZ	TX	Nation	AZ	TX	Nation
Alcohol	55%	58%	66%	85%	86%	92%
Marijuana	21	14	21	55	46	50
Cocaine	8	4	4	18	12	15
Psychedelics	4	4	3	15	12	11
Inhalants	4	3	3	25	17	19

\*\*Nationwide data in this table include reported results from the NIDA high school survey for the class of 1987.

Arizona and Texas high school seniors report a lower use of alcohol than the national figure for high school seniors. Texas seniors report lower use of marijuana for the last 30 days.

Cocaine use is more prevalent among Arizona seniors than among Texas seniors or seniors nationwide.

**College students in Arizona and Utah most frequently use alcohol, followed by marijuana and cocaine.**

Arizona and Utah survey college populations to determine the prevalence and recency of drug use.

Figure 8 shows that the substance most often used by Utah college students is alcohol. Sixty-seven (67) percent of the respondents report having used alcohol, and 39% report using it in the past month. The lifetime prevalence of marijuana use by Utah college students is 33%, and 13% report using it in the last 30 days. Eighteen (18) percent report ever using cocaine, and 5% report using cocaine in the past month.

In Arizona, reported use of drugs at the college level is high. It can be expected that almost all college students in Arizona have tried alcohol and three-fourths have used it in the past month. One-third to one-half of the students surveyed have used marijuana and at least three of every 20 students have used it in the last 30 days (Table 8).

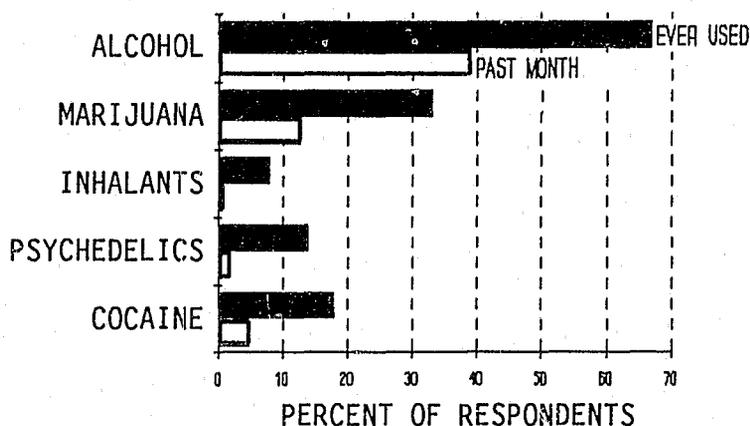
**TABLE 8**  
**THE ARIZONA COLLEGE SURVEYS:**  
**Prevalence and Recency of Drug Use Among College Students**

		CC**	NAU**
Alcohol	EVER USED	97%	95%
	PAST MONTH	71	76
Marijuana	EVER USED	50	56
	PAST MONTH	14	15
Cocaine	EVER USED	19	27
	PAST MONTH	11	8
Amphetamine	EVER USED	19	24
	PAST MONTH	4	2
Barbiturate	EVER USED	7	7
	PAST MONTH	7	4
Psychedelic	EVER USED	16	16
	PAST MONTH	3	<1
Inhalant	EVER USED	5	9
	PAST MONTH	9	<1

\* Percentages are not expected to add up to 100% since response categories for these items are not mutually exclusive.  
 \*\*CC= Community College; NAU=Northern Arizona University.

**FIGURE 8**

**THE UTAH COLLEGE SURVEY:  
Prevalence and Recency of Drug Use**



The older age groups in Arizona and Texas are more likely to use barbiturates and tranquilizers, while the younger ages are more likely to use drugs such as marijuana and cocaine.

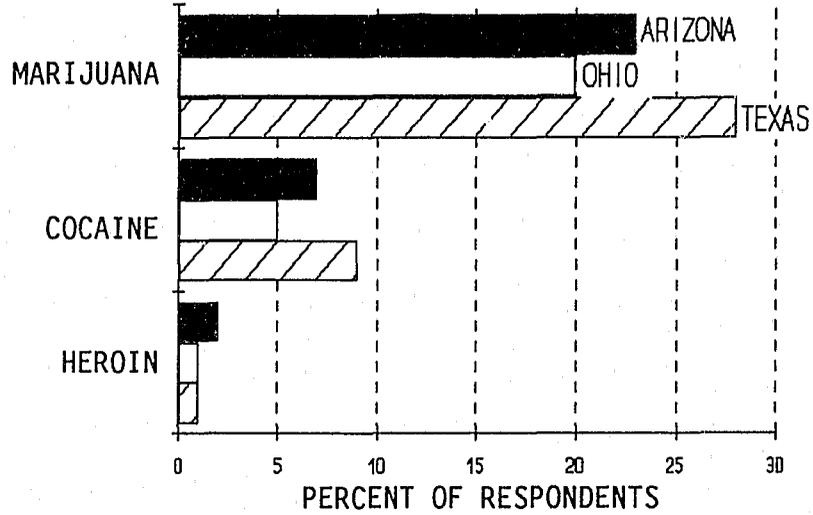
Arizona, Ohio, and Texas surveyed their adult population about the prevalence and recency of drug use. Arizona and Ohio ask respondents the following question:

"I would like to read you a list of different types of drugs and medications. Please indicate how often you have used any of these drugs during the last 30 days. If you have not used the medication in the last 30 days, please indicate whether or not you have ever used it."

With alcohol not considered, adults in all three states report marijuana as their most frequently used drug. Twenty percent of the respondents in Ohio, 23% of the Arizona respondents, and 28% of the Texas respondents report having ever used marijuana. Six (6) percent of the Ohio respondents, 4% of the Arizona respondents, and 3% of the Texas respondents report using marijuana in the past month (Figures 9 and 10).

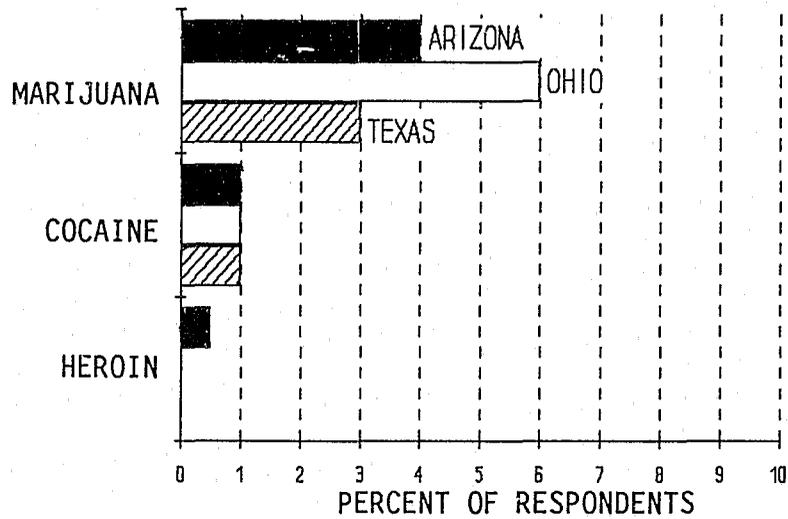
**FIGURE 9**

**THE ARIZONA, OHIO, AND TEXAS HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS:  
Drug Use - Percent Reporting "Ever Used"**



**FIGURE 10**

**THE ARIZONA, OHIO, AND TEXAS HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS:  
Drug Use - Percent Reporting "Used in Past Month"**



**TABLE 9**

**THE TEXAS HOUSEHOLD SURVEY:  
Prevalence and Recency of Use by Age**

	Ever Used	Past Month
<b>Tobacco</b>		
18-25	64%	23%
26-34	72	29
35+	73	26
<b>Marijuana</b>		
18-25	44	8
26-34	48	5
35+	15	1
<b>Cocaine</b>		
18-25	15	3
26-34	18	1
35+	4	<1
<b>Crack</b>		
18-25	1	<1
26-34	2	<1
35+	<1	0
<b>Heroin</b>		
18-25	<1	0
26-34	2	<1
35+	<1	0
<b>Barbiturates</b>		
18-25	7	<1
26-34	12	<1
35+	3	0
<b>Amphetamines</b>		
18-25	21	1
26-34	20	1
35+	8	<1

\* Percentages will not add up to 100% since this table presents data only for respondents who report drug use.

Table 9 shows that young adults (18-25 year olds) in Texas are those most likely to be current substance users. For lifetime use, the younger population is more likely to use such drugs as marijuana and cocaine, while the older population is more likely to use such substances as barbiturates.

**TABLE 10**

**THE ARIZONA HOUSEHOLD SURVEY:  
Prevalence and Recency of Use by Age**

	Ever Used	Past Month
<b>Marijuana</b>		
18-29	42%	10%
30-44	32	4
45-59	8	1
60+	5	<1
<b>Cocaine</b>		
18-29	17	5
30-44	8	1
45-59	2	0
60+	<1	0
<b>Heroin</b>		
18-29	3	0
30-44	3	<1
45-59	<1	0
60+	<1	<1
<b>Barbiturates</b>		
18-29	7	<1
30-44	10	1
45-59	8	1
60+	6	2
<b>Amphetamines</b>		
18-29	15	1
30-44	14	1
45-59	4	0
60+	6	2

\* Percentages will not add up to 100% since this table presents data only for respondents who report drug use.

Similar to the Texas findings, Table 10 shows that barbiturates and amphetamines have been used more often by the older population, while cocaine and marijuana have been used more frequently in the younger age groups. Adults aged 18-29 have the highest percentage of current users for three out of the five substances reported, including marijuana and cocaine.

### Summary

To repeat an important caveat, self-reported data on drug use should be viewed with some caution. Experts question whether such measures provide a reliable estimate of drug use among the various populations surveyed. Although opinion in the research community

is divided, self-report studies in this area as well as in others (e.g., Bureau of the Census surveys of incarcerated inmates, Rand, Inc. studies on criminal careers) are proving to be valuable.

The data presented in this section indicate that the incidence of drug use varies among age groups.

Unfortunately, the question of use versus abuse is not addressed by the surveys.

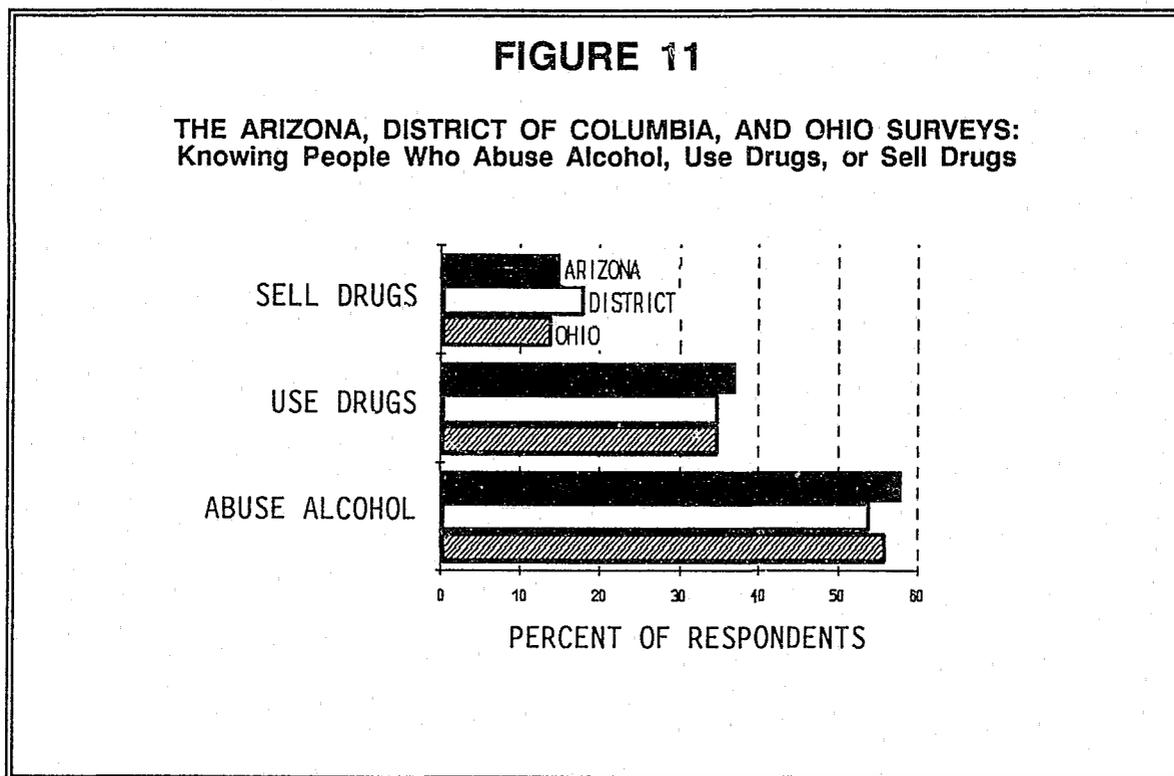
### Knowing People Who Use Drugs or Abuse Alcohol

Questions about knowledge of people who use drugs are designed to measure the use and availability of drugs, as well as the extent of the illegal drug market in a community. Three states -- Arizona, Ohio, and the District of Columbia -- use similar questions regarding this issue in their citizen surveys. In addition,

Utah college students respond to a similar item. The Massachusetts statewide citizen and public housing surveys pose a slightly different question, asking respondents whether they think teenagers and adults use drugs (versus knowing teenagers and adults who use drugs).

The Arizona, District of Columbia, and Ohio surveys ask respondents about their knowledge of people who abuse alcohol and drugs in the following manner:

- o "Do you personally know of an individual who regularly abuses alcohol?"
- o "Do you personally know of an individual who regularly uses illegal drugs?"
- o "Do you personally know of an individual who regularly sells illegal drugs?"



The extent of the drug and alcohol problem is viewed similarly by residents in Ohio, Arizona and the District of Columbia -- 35% to 37% of respondents report knowing an individual who regularly uses illegal drugs; 14% to 18% report knowing an individual who sells illegal drugs; and 54% to 58% report knowing an individual who regularly abuses alcohol.

The Utah survey poses similar questions to college students:

- o "Do you personally know of an individual who regularly sells illegal drugs?"
- o "Do you personally know of an individual who regularly uses illegal drugs?"

Sixty three (63) percent of Utah college respondents report knowing someone who regularly uses illegal drugs. Thirty nine (39) percent of the Utah college students report knowing someone who regularly sells illegal drugs. These percentages are twice as high as those reported by adult populations in the District of Columbia and Ohio. This is an interesting finding, though it must be considered in light of several possible explanations. Most college students fall in the age group of highest drug usage (ages 18 to 29). College students live in "close" environments where the possibility of one student knowing about the personal life of another student is higher than would be the case resident to resident, or neighbor to neighbor. Higher proportions of any college population, then, would be expected to know about the activities of other persons in the same population (drug sellers, drug users) than you would find in a general population. Certain types of drugs (i.e., marijuana and amphetamines) may have a greater presence on college campuses than other types of illegal drugs. The surveys, however, did not account for drug types. These and other plausible hypotheses are suggested to account for the differences observed between the Utah survey and other surveys. The data available from these surveys do not permit an exhaustive analysis.

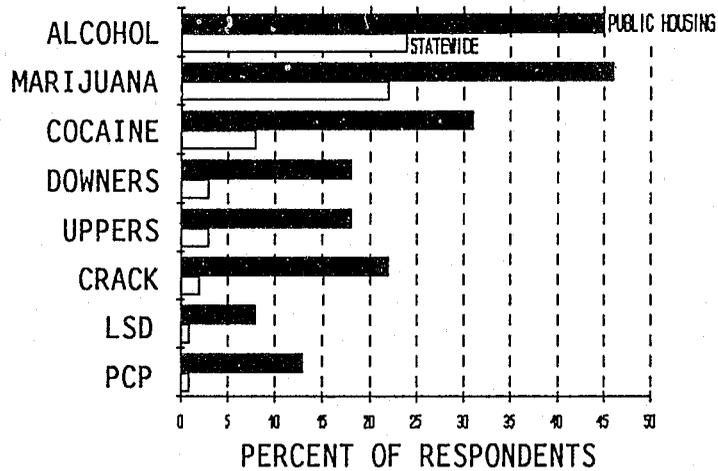
The Massachusetts surveys ask statewide household respondents and residents of public housing the following question concerning knowledge of teenagers and adults who use drugs:

"Next, for each of the following, please tell me how many teen-agers/adults in your neighborhood you think do that -- just about all, most, some, very few, or none. First, take....

- o Use illegal drugs of some kind.
- o Use marijuana.
- o Get drunk a lot.
- o Use cocaine.
- o Use downers.
- o Use crack.
- o Use uppers or speed.
- o Use PCP
- o Use LSD."

**FIGURE 12**

**THE MASSACHUSETTS SURVEY:  
Thinking That Teenagers Use Drugs and Alcohol**  
(Percent Responding "All" or "Most")



**FIGURE 13**

**THE MASSACHUSETTS SURVEY:  
Thinking That Adults Use Drugs and Alcohol**  
(Percent Responding "All" or "Most")

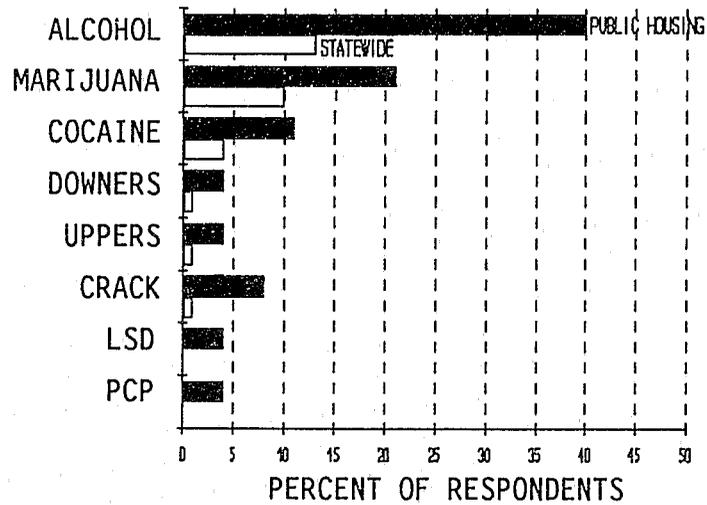


Figure 12 (above) shows that a larger percentage of residents in public housing think that all or most teenagers in their neighborhood use alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine than do citizens statewide. Figure 13 shows that a larger percentage of residents in public housing think that all or most adults in their neighborhood use alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine than do citizens statewide. Massachusetts public housing respondents think there is a higher incidence of drug use for teenagers and adults in their neighborhood than respondents statewide.

### Summary

When citizens in Arizona, the District of Columbia, and Ohio are asked if they know of an individual who regularly uses illegal drugs, strikingly similar results across the states are obtained. Over 30% of the respondents in those states say they know of someone who uses illegal drugs, and over 10% in each state say they know of someone who sells illegal drugs.

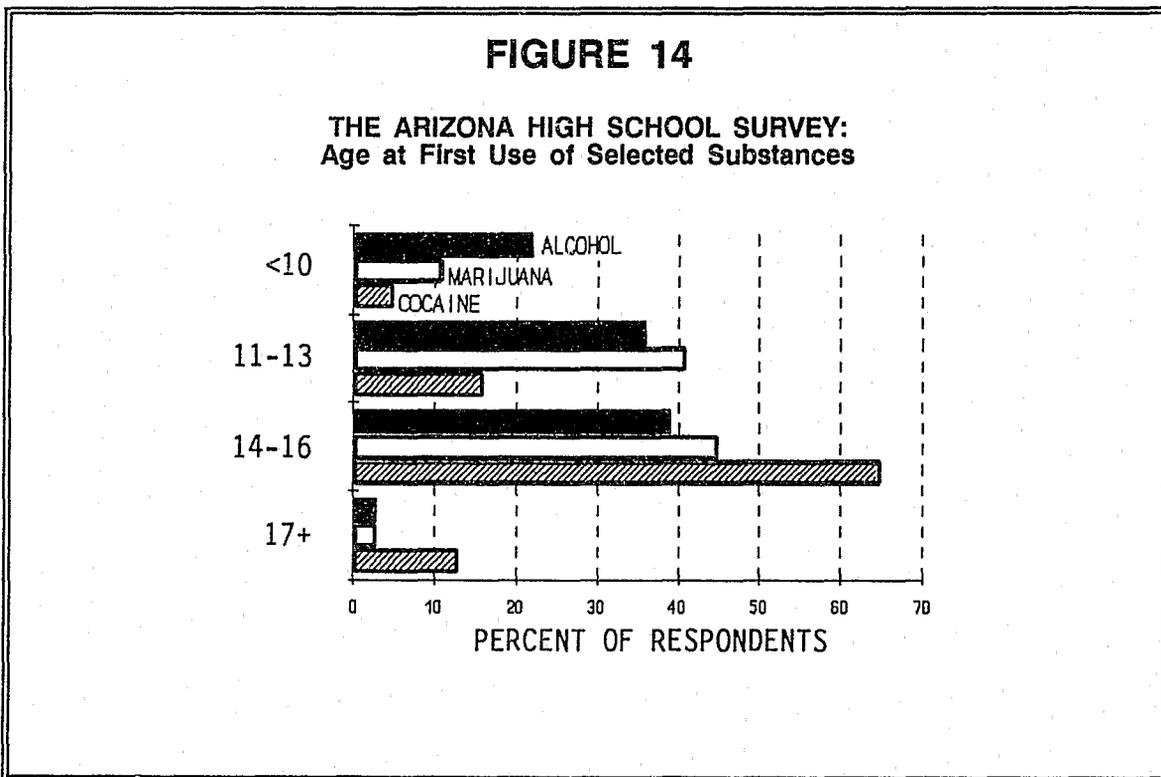
Public housing respondents in Massachusetts are more likely to think that all or most teenagers and adults in their neighborhood use illegal drugs than do citizens statewide. This item gauges perceptions of the drug problem, rather than actual knowledge of persons involved in illegal drug activity.

The results of the Utah survey suggest that knowledge of drug users and sellers is higher on college campuses than in the general population. Future surveys that delve into details regarding the relationship of the drug user or seller to the citizen, and regarding the types of drugs involved, will be necessary to help unravel this complex issue.

### Age at First Use of Selected Substances

Determining when people first use illegal drugs or alcohol is critical to forming effective policies. Policymakers also need to gauge if, over time, substance abuse is creeping into younger age groups. Education and prevention strategies can then be appropriately targeted.

For Arizona high school students, marijuana and cocaine were most likely to be tried between the ages of 14 to 16, followed by the age group 11 to 13 (Figure 14).



**FIGURE 15**

**THE UTAH COLLEGE SURVEY:  
Age at First Use of Selected Substances**

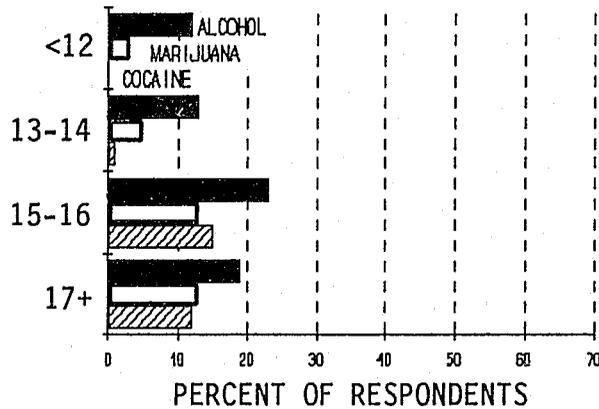


Figure 15 shows that, of those who report using drugs, most Utah college respondents report first using alcohol and other substances between the ages of 15 and 17. Twelve (12) percent report first using cocaine at the age of 17 or older.

The Texas high school survey reports the average age at first use of alcohol and other drugs by grade levels. The survey reveals that students' average age at first use of alcohol is between the ages of 11 and 13, and that they try other drugs at older ages.

For most Texas students, alcohol is the first substance they report experiencing. Students who use marijuana begin using it about one and one-half year later than the first use of alcohol. Students who use cocaine initiate use at an older average age than reported for any other substance.

### Summary

The validity of self-reported data is a much debated topic in the research community, especially in the case of high school surveys on drug abuse. While such skepticism may prevent analysts from pinpointing precisely when drug use begins, it should not bar them from observing and giving credence to general

trends and patterns like those exhibited here. Substance use among the high school students surveyed is most likely to begin between the ages of 11 and 16, and age of onset varies by drug type. Given their consistency across state lines, these findings should not be ignored. More in-depth research and analysis on these issues will aid policymakers in deciding how to target education and prevention strategies at specific age groups.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This six-state study marks significant advancement in efforts to monitor and evaluate the war on drugs. By asking comparable questions in drug-related surveys, the states have provided new data for definition of the drug problem and assessment of drug control strategies within their boundaries.

Surveys have been conducted in the past on drug-related issues at all levels of government; and researchers have corroborated, shared findings, and learned from each other. But the Consortium project, with its state and Federal collaboration model, brought the relevant state and Federal level researchers together to work jointly on survey and questionnaire design. The result is a set of state-level surveys that cover issues of importance to local, state, and Federal officials, and that also allow state-to-state comparisons on certain items.

As the state surveys are repeated over time, the findings will be useful in monitoring the impact of drug control strategies.

This report presents the initial findings from the Consortium project. Analysts and policymakers can use the data to help answer questions such as, "What is the nature and extent of the drug problem?" "How does concern about the drug problem compare to other public safety fears?" or "What is the mood of the public regarding various policy responses under consideration?" These issues are reviewed below, and the closing discussion suggests how the experience gained from this cooperative survey effort can be used to refine future efforts.

### Defining the drug problem:

Two types of questions were included on the state surveys that gauge the nature and extent of the drug problem among the population surveyed--questions that elicit self-reports about past drug use, and questions that elicit respondents' knowledge about individuals who use and sell drugs.

These survey items produce valuable indicators of both the drug problem and, if they are conducted repeatedly, the impact of drug control policies. If, for example, in 1988 30% of a state's population admits knowing of individuals who use drugs (as was found in the Arizona, District of Columbia, and Ohio surveys), this information helps define the drug problem for that state. The same may be said of information about the age of onset of drug or alcohol use. If repeated surveys reveal that

age of onset is increasing, this may be an indication that the nature of the drug problem is changing. As a single point of information, these findings may be of limited value. If, however, they can be examined along with other indicators of the drug problem (official statistics, special studies, other surveys, responses by age and population groups), then policymakers can begin to formulate concepts of the drug problem (and progress towards solutions) with increasing confidence.

### Level of concern about the drug problem:

Citizen fears and frustrations are a strong motivator. The general mood of the public can be a critical factor in the acceptance of any new policy initiative. Thus, policymakers need to know how people feel about various drug-related issues in order to make informed choices in a variety of areas relating to drug policy development and implementation.

Review of data pertaining to youth-related problems, neighborhood concerns, and projections of the drug problem over the next generation indicate the following:

- o In two of the states surveyed (Arizona and Ohio), household respondents express more concern about drug use as a problem troubling American youth than about crime, alcohol use, illiteracy, or unemployment.
- o In two other states (District of Columbia and Massachusetts), respondents who are given over ten neighborhood concerns to consider consistently rank drug trafficking in their neighborhood as one of their chief concerns.
- o Most citizens in the states surveyed (approximately 70%) feel that the drug problem will not abate in the next generation (20-25 years). Approximately half feel it will worsen.

### Identification of viable policy options:

If successful implementation of a policy is in some measure dependent upon public acceptance, it is imperative to know what the public views as viable policy options. In some instances, the salience of public perception may sway the decisions of policymakers, especially if survey findings indicate something that challenges their current thinking.

Citizens in the states surveyed express support for a variety of policy options. When presented with the hypothetical problem of students caught selling drugs in school, few respondents feel the problem should be turned over to parents; though, as a group they support other options such as providing counseling, expulsion, or letting the criminal justice system handle the problem.

Similarly, when asked which drug control policies they think are most effective, respondents exhibit support for both interdiction and education policies.

### **Usefulness of State Survey Data:**

State and local decisionmakers can benefit greatly from surveys of their constituencies. At the very least, such surveys provide additional data for decisions that take into account many sources of information. Few drug control policymakers would want to be without such data, though few can afford to collect them on a regular basis (The Consortium funded surveys cost less than \$17,000 each.)

State surveys allow policymakers and analysts to pursue a set of questions that have been suggested by other data sources or by national surveys, and for which data are scarce. For example, while state estimates of drug use can be made from national survey data, more precise state and local estimates can be made from state surveys that use probability samples. This is especially true if special populations are of interest. The comparisons between statewide and public housing respondents in the Massachusetts survey illustrate this point.

State survey data are useful at the national or regional level as well. When sufficient comparability across states in questionnaire design and survey methods can be achieved, as the Consortium states attempt to do, the ability to make specific state-to-state comparisons on questions of national interest is an immense benefit. If states report real differences (not statistical artifacts, and not due to questionnaire design or sample bias) on certain items (such as drug use patterns and drug availability), then more in-depth analyses can be pursued regarding the contributing factors to these differences (age, population group, and geographic location). For example, the similarity of responses by state citizens on the questions regarding knowledge of people who use and sell drugs will achieve greater significance if the findings are replicated and if future surveys delve into drug types and the relationship between drug user or seller and the respondent. This knowledge-generating process can further the battle against drug abuse. Cooperation among the states and across levels

of government can produce real benefits in this regard.

### **Methodological considerations for states conducting surveys:**

Some important lessons have been learned regarding how best to coordinate state survey projects, and which approaches (sampling, interview, and question design) produce the most useful data. A few final comments are offered here for the participating states and for other states or local jurisdictions that are contemplating drug control survey projects.

#### **Sampling Design and Techniques**

The surveys conducted by the states included mailout surveys, household telephone surveys, and surveys that used person-to-person interviewing techniques. Populations surveyed included secondary schools, college students, and adults. It is suggested that in the future, states survey households using random digit-dialing techniques. By using this technique, comparability of data across states would not be compromised. Also, surveying households provides a representative sample of the state's population, enhancing the usefulness of state survey data. States should also use special sampling techniques to better understand the specific concerns of citizens in their states. For example, states may sample their most populous county or they may over-sample in rural areas. States may want to sample their urban, suburban, and rural populations and compare survey results from the different populations.

It is recommended that states contract for survey design and implementation if they do not have survey experience. Survey work is a highly specialized field, and the best results come from trained, experienced survey practitioners. States that use private survey contractors are generally satisfied with the high quality of products delivered.

#### **Question Wording**

Slight differences in wording can negate a state-by-state comparison. For example, Arizona, Ohio, and Utah include questions about drug control policy options that respondents might describe as "effective," while the District of Columbia survey asks respondents about "cost effective" policy options. This prohibits a direct comparison of results across those states. It would be misleading to assume similar interpretations of effectiveness and cost effectiveness, especially since the responses between the District and the other states differed.

Similarly, some states ask respondents if they personally know of an individual who abuses alcohol, uses or sells drugs. The Massachusetts surveys, however, ask respondents if they think other people in their neighborhood use alcohol or drugs. The difference in these questionnaire items are significant enough to preclude any viable comparisons between Massachusetts and other states. Additionally, the use of the terms "abuse" and "use" needs to be clarified and made consistent across the states in their surveys, and attempts should be made to agree on the types of behavior that constitute use and abuse.

When asking respondents about their preferred drug policy options, some states allow a response to all options, while the District of Columbia and Utah surveys force respondents to choose between the same range of options. Two valuable findings emerge from this variation in questions--the Arizona and Ohio surveys, which allow responses to all policy options, demonstrate that public opinion supports different policy options; the District and Utah surveys show that, when forced to make a choice, differences among states become more apparent.

#### **Future Analyses and Questions**

Four states (Arizona, the District of Columbia, Ohio, and Utah) asked respondents to choose the best sanctioning option for students caught selling drugs to other students from a list of that included: let the police and courts handle it, expel the student, provide counseling, or let the parents handle it. Interestingly, in all four states respondents did not believe that the parents should handle it. This may suggest that respondents feel that the drug problem is so unmanageable that parents cannot handle it, or it may suggest that respondents view the drug problem strictly as a societal issue to be dealt with by the criminal justice and social service systems. Future surveys in the states need to ask questions that allow more in-depth analyses of citizens' responses to questions of this type.

State surveys also need to pose questions that address how citizens feel about the drug user versus the drug seller. There was some indication by the states conducting the surveys that citizens view the sale of drugs as a more serious problem than the use of drugs. Does this mean that citizens will tolerate drug use but not the sale of drugs? Future surveys should incorporate questions that gauge the citizens' opinions and perceptions about drug use versus the sale of drugs.

The state surveys in this report also suggest a need for exploring citizens' perceptions and opinions regarding alcohol use and abuse. For example, adults in Arizona ranked the drug problem as a top concern for youth today.

Yet, when high school seniors and college students were asked if they had ever used alcohol and four other drugs, or had used them in the past month, the percentages reporting alcohol use were much higher than the percentages reporting drug use. How is this disparity between perception of drug use and actual drug use to be interpreted?

Hopefully, policymakers at all levels will pursue state surveys, keeping in mind the surveys' benefits and limitations. Based on the experiences of the six state surveys presented in this report, a new survey instrument was developed by the Consortium to use in future survey projects. This survey instrument is presented in Appendix A, and any state may use these questions when conducting a survey. Specific questions may be addressed to CJSA or to the state representatives listed in Appendix C. More collaboration of this nature must occur to improve and augment the state drug survey efforts. The Consortium participants will continue to refine and augment this cooperative state survey program.

**APPENDIX A**  
**Consortium Survey Questions**

1990 Consortium Survey Questions on Drug Use  
and Drug Control Strategies

1. I would like to name seven issues which people may consider to be problem areas for America right now. Please listen to the seven problem areas, then tell me which three, in order, you consider to be the most serious (1st, 2nd, 3rd most serious problems):
  - Crime
  - Damage to the environment
  - Taking care of the needy
  - Drug abuse
  - Public education
  - Alcohol abuse
  - Problems relating to the economy
  
2. Which one of the following statements best summarizes your feelings about where the U.S. will be with the drug problem 20 to 25 years from now?
  - Drug abuse will be eliminated as a social problem.
  - Drug abuse will decline, but still be a problem.
  - Drug abuse will continue to be a problem, about as serious as it is now.
  - Drug abuse will increase, becoming an even more serious problem.
  - Drug abuse will be out of control and will seriously threaten our way of life.
  - Don't know
  - Refused
  
3. Which one of the following groups do you think can do the most to help in the fight against drugs?
  - Schools
  - Police and courts
  - Family
  - Churches
  - Treatment centers
  - Business and industry
  
4. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement: I would favor the use of taxpayer dollars to support drug treatment or education programs in churches, synagogues or other religious institutions.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
  - Don't know; No opinion

(The Consortium is not requiring the states to use this question.)
  
5. How much, if any, would you be willing to see your state or local income taxes increased in order to provide the money for the fight against drug abuse:
  - No increase
  - \$50 per year increase
  - Between \$50 and \$300 per year increase
  - More than a \$300 per year increase
  - Don't know
  - Refused

6. Which of the following statements best reflects your views on how to handle people who use illegal drugs?
- They should be arrested and prosecuted.
  - They should be treated medically, like any person with a physical or emotional problem.
  - They should be left alone unless they are bothering somebody.
7. For a student found to be selling drugs to other students, what do you think should be the proper response by school officials?
- Let the police and courts handle the matter.
  - Expel the students from school.
  - Keep the student in school and provide counseling.
  - Keep the student in school, but let the parents handle any discipline.
8. There are a number of possible methods of combatting drug abuse. Which one of the following do you think should receive the most money and effort?
- Drug treatment and rehabilitation.
  - Arrest and prosecution of drug law violators.
  - Drug abuse education and prevention.
  - Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the country.
  - Don't know
  - Refused
9. Some people today say that making drugs legal would remove the trade from criminals and reduce the health hazards to users. Others argue that this would greatly increase the number of drug users and overload our capacity to deal with them. Which one of the following statements best fits your own beliefs about this issue?
- The sale of all drugs should be legal on the open market.
  - The sale of most drugs should be legal, except the two or three most dangerous ones.
  - The sale of most drugs should not be made legal, except marijuana.
  - None of the drugs which are now illegal should be made legal for sale.
  - Don't know
  - Refused
10. How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways), if they . . . (Rate each response)
- |                       |  |       |
|-----------------------|--|-------|
|                       | 1 = No risk                              |       |
|                       | 2 = Slight risk                          |       |
|                       | 3 = Moderate risk                        |       |
|                       | 4 = Great risk                           |       |
|                       | 5 = Can't say                            |       |
|                       | 6 = Drug is unfamiliar)                  |       |
| <input type="radio"/> | Try marijuana once or twice              | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Smoke marijuana occasionally             | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Smoke marijuana regularly                | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Try cocaine once or twice                | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Use cocaine occasionally                 | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Use cocaine regularly                    | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Have an occasional drink at a party      | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Have 5 or more drinks each weekend       | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Have 1 or 2 drinks nearly every day      | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Have 4 or 5 drinks nearly every day      | _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | Have more than 5 drinks nearly every day | _____ |

11. Do you personally know of an individual who regularly abuses alcohol?
- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
  - Refused
12. Do you personally know of an individual who regularly uses illegal drugs?
- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
  - Refused
13. Do you personally know of an individual who regularly sells illegal drugs?
- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
  - Refused
14. Does anyone in your household have a drug abuse problem?
- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
  - Refused
15. May I please ask your age? \_\_\_\_\_
16. What is your race or ethnic origin?
- White
  - Black
  - Hispanic
  - American Indian
  - Asian
  - Other
17. What is your current marital status?
- Married
  - Divorced
  - Widowed
  - Separated
  - Never Married
18. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?
- Junior high
  - High school
  - College
  - Vocational training
  - Graduate training

19. What is your present employment status?
- Employed, full time
  - Student, but employed part time
  - Homemaker, but employed part time
  - Employed part time
  - Unemployed, seeking work
  - Unemployed, not seeking work
  - Not in labor force (full time student or homemaker, retired, disabled, etc.)
20. We need to know which one of the following categories reflects your current total family income:
- Less than \$5,000
  - \$5,000 - \$9,999
  - \$10,000 - \$14,999
  - \$15,000 - \$19,999
  - \$20,000 - \$24,999
  - \$25,000 - \$29,999
  - \$30,000 - \$39,999
  - \$40,000 - \$49,999
  - \$50,000 - \$74,999
  - \$75,000 - or more
21. How many telephone lines with separate numbers do you have in your home? \_\_\_\_\_
22. Are you male or female?
- Male
  - Female

**APPENDIX B**  
**Review of State Methodologies**

The surveys presented in this report were conducted under varied circumstances, and the comparability of findings is limited accordingly. Variations in survey development, questionnaire design, survey implementation, sampling strategies, and reported margins of error are reviewed below.

## The Arizona Surveys

Arizona administered six separate surveys, four of college student populations. Surveyed groups included:

1. Statewide high school students in grades 9-12,
2. Adults statewide, by telephone,
3. Community college students in one community college district,
4. Students in English classes at Northern Arizona University,
5. The general student population at Arizona State University, and
6. The general student population at the University of Arizona (not included in this report).

### High School Survey

#### Sample and Method

The high school survey used a probability sample derived from a stratified cluster sample. Six regional strata were defined with large and small schools identified in each, resulting in twelve strata overall. One or two schools were chosen randomly from each stratum for a total of 21 schools. For example, large urban areas may have had two large schools chosen, where a rural area would only have had one. Each school chosen then administered the survey to the population of available students in grades 7 through 12.

The surveys were anonymous and were administered by teachers in classrooms on designated days for each school without advance knowledge of the students.

#### Response Rate and Margin of Error

The high school survey attained a response rate of 96%, with a reported  $\pm 1\%$  margin of error on statewide estimates.

The usable responses (18,238) represented 10.27% of the population of high school students statewide (177,572). The demographic

characteristics of the sample obtained were compared with the known demographic profile of the student population. Overall, the proportion of males to females in the sample correspond to that of the student population. The sample contained more Hispanic respondents than the student population with a commensurate lower representation of whites, blacks, and Indians.

### College Surveys

#### Sample and Method

The Arizona State University survey consisted of a mailout survey of a stratified sample of 1,200 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the 1985 Fall semester.

The Northern Arizona University was an adaption of a Dartmouth College survey. This survey was done in English classes and included 1,152 respondents. A non-random sampling technique was employed. The technique involved administering the survey to those students who were in attendance the day the survey was done.

A community college district population that included both urban and rural students was also surveyed. The population contained 76,751 students. A sample of 1,000 was chosen randomly from computer files of active students for a mail survey.

#### Response Rate and Margin of Error

The Arizona State University mail survey reported a 50% response rate, with a  $\pm 4\%$  margin of error.

Response rate for the Northern Arizona University survey was 100% because the survey was administered to all students who attended English class the day the survey was done.

The survey of community college students reported a 36% response rate with a  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error. The profile of demographic characteristics of the sample was compared with that of the population from which it was drawn. There was a higher proportion of caucasian respondents than is found in the population. There was also a higher proportion of women in the sample and the over 35 age group was disproportionately represented.

## **Adult Population**

### **Sample and Method**

A telephone survey using random digit dialing statewide was the method used to interview Arizona's adult population. The sample was also stratified by county to ensure representation throughout the state.

The survey instrument used was one developed by the Ohio Governor's Office of Criminal Justice Services, designed primarily to obtain opinion data from the adult population. This survey was administered to 1,009 individuals over the age of 18 by the Media Research Program of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunications at Arizona State University, under contract.

The response demographics were compared with the projected population characteristics produced by the Arizona Department of Economic Security. The sample showed a slightly higher proportion of female respondents than the population. In addition, the sample respondents included somewhat fewer in the 18-29 age group and somewhat more in the 30-44 age group, compared with the population at large.

### **Response Rate and Margin of Error**

Interviews were conducted until 1,009 completed responses were recorded. The reported margin of error is  $\pm 1.6\%$ . (The margin of error was calculated using a statistical technique for sampling proportions.)

## **The Utah College Survey**

### **Sample and Method**

Six colleges in Utah were chosen as representative of the Utah colleges. Those six schools were Brigham Young University, Dixie College, Salt Lake Community College, University of Utah, Utah State University, and Weber State College. Dixie and Salt Lake are two-year colleges, Weber is a four-year college, while Brigham Young, Utah, and Utah State are universities.

It was not possible to get a complete listing of all students at each college early in the fall of 1988, as complete enrollment figures were not yet tabulated. Therefore, sampling was done by geographic area. The housing office of each college was called to determine enrollment figures for 1988 and a demographic profile of the student body. Detailed maps of each campus and the surrounding area, as well as

information about the geographical location of students, were also obtained.

In the fall of 1988, Brigham Young University had 28,001 students. Dixie College had 2,200 students, and 391 lived on campus. Salt Lake Community College had an enrollment of 9,655 and no on-campus housing. At the University of Utah there were 25,000 students and 2,327 lived on campus. The enrollment at Utah State University was 11,793 and 2,500 were living in on-campus housing. Finally, Weber State had 12,002 students.

Sixty (60) students at each of the six schools were interviewed. Using the detailed maps, blocks were identified in the areas adjacent to each campus. At each block a random start was taken and two residences were approached. If the person who answered the door was not a college student or refused to be interviewed, the next residence on the block was chosen. Using this procedure, two students from each geographical block were interviewed. If a large apartment complex was on a block, three students from the complex were interviewed, taking random apartment numbers. A sample of students living on campus that was proportional to the percentage of off-campus students was obtained. Residence halls and room numbers were chosen randomly and approached until the required number had been interviewed.

This procedure was followed at all the colleges except Salt Lake Community College. It has no on-campus housing and students do not live in identifiable geographical areas. It would have been very expensive and time consuming to conduct a survey of Salt Lake students using sampling methods that rely on geographical boundaries. Therefore, interviewers went on the Salt Lake campus during school hours and approached students in and around the student union building. For this reason, the sample from Salt Lake was not a random sample, although the students interviewed were typical Salt Lake students.

These procedures produced a total sample of 392 students. The sample was typical in terms of percent female and percent white. The sample was younger and fewer are married than is the case among the student populations at these six colleges. The primary interest of this study was the single student in his/her early college years, so, it was expected that the sampling procedures would oversample among this group.

### **Response Rate and Margin of Error**

The response rate for the Utah college survey was 98%, and the reported margin of error was  $\pm 3\%$ .

## The Ohio Survey

### Sample and Method

The Ohio Governor's Office of Criminal Justice Services contracted with Ohio State University, Polimetrics Laboratory, to survey citizen attitudes about drug use and abuse with a forty-nine item questionnaire in November 1988. The sample was selected using random digit dialing, and telephone interviews were conducted.

### Response Rate and Margin of Error

Eight hundred and three (803) citizens were interviewed for a 90% response rate. The reported sampling error was  $\pm 4\%$ .

## The District of Columbia Survey

### Sample and Method

The District of Columbia's Office of Criminal Justice Plans and Analysis contracted with Development Research Associates, Inc., a Washington, D.C.-based research firm, to conduct a household survey. Between June 11 and June 21, 1988, adult respondents 18 years or older from 450 District households completed this telephone survey. A random digit dialing method, with randomization by neighborhood, age, sex, income, and ethnicity, was used to draw the sample.

### Response Rate and Margin of Error

The response rate for this survey was 90%, with a reported margin of error of  $\pm 5\%$  for district-wide estimates.

## The Texas Surveys

### *Adult Phone Survey*

#### Sample and Method

In the spring of 1988, adult Texans were surveyed to measure their use of alcohol and other psychoactive substances. The survey, a joint effort between the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA) and Texas A&M University's Public Policy Resources Laboratory (PPRL), was funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the Drug-Free Schools and Communities grant program. While TCADA was responsible for the overall design of the study and the data analysis, PPRL designed the sample and conducted the telephone interviews. The questionnaire, though

designed specifically for the present survey, was based on previously tested instruments and was compatible with other national and state surveys regarding questions about the types and levels of drug and alcohol use.

The sample of 5,156 adults, 18 years of age and older, selected from randomly generated telephone numbers, was stratified for three racial and ethnic groups, three age groups, and eight geographical regions. A Spanish version of the questionnaire was administered, as needed, by bilingual interviewers.

### Response Rate and Margin of Error

A 75% response rate was reported for this survey, with a  $\pm 2\%$  margin of error for statewide estimates.

### *Secondary School Population*

#### Sample and Method

The Texas public secondary school population was sampled using a multi-stage population density probability design. The sample did not include private school students or secondary school dropouts. Using this procedure, 38 school districts were identified as Primary Sampling Units. Within these districts, a total of 96 schools were selected into the sample, and within these schools a total of 286 classrooms were selected for sampling. A full report on the survey implementation procedures and limitations may be obtained through the Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council (see Appendix B).

The 7,154 questionnaires were evenly distributed by grade. Slightly more females than males were included in the sample because of the validity check procedure. The validity check procedure consisted of listing pseudo drugs in the questionnaire. If a respondent reported use of a pseudo drug, he/she was termed an "exaggerator" and his/her responses were not valid. The large majority of "exaggerators" were male and thus the validity check procedure favored retention of female respondents. The "exaggerators" were also disproportionately white, and thus validity check procedures tended to favor retention of responses by minority students. Because of sample design and differences in class size, students in large urban areas were over-sampled.

A multi-stage weighting procedure was used to adjust the sample to reflect more accurately the actual demographic composition of the Texas secondary school population. The first stage consisted of decreasing the values of responses received from students in large metropolitan areas and increasing the values of responses of

students living in other areas of the state. This procedure simultaneously increased the white representation in the sample such that further weighting on the basis of race or ethnicity was deemed unnecessary. Then, for purposes of producing estimates for the secondary school population as a whole, each grade was weighted on the basis of its representation in the Texas secondary school system. The adjusted sample was used to estimate the drug use of Texas secondary students in grades 7 through 12.

#### **Response Rate and Margin of Error**

A response rate was not reported for this survey, though it was reported that 95% of the surveys were judged to be "completed surveys," and usable for analysis. A +/- 1.5% margin of error is reported for statewide secondary school population estimates.

### **The Massachusetts Surveys**

#### **Sample and Method**

The Massachusetts Committee on Criminal Justice contracted Harrison and Goldberg, Inc. to conduct a statewide telephone survey. The sampling technique used was a stratified cluster design. The Boston population and residents in public housing developments in Springfield and Somerville were surveyed separately. There were 401 respondents in the state-wide survey, and the sample was selected using random digit dialing. The public housing sample consisted of 139 respondents.

#### **Response Rate and Margin of Error**

The response rate for the Massachusetts surveys was 60%, with a reported margin of error of +/-7%.

**APPENDIX C**

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