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# TRENDS & RECOMMENDATIONS ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S DRUG USE IN GLASGOW - FEBRUARY 1996

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This study is concerned with ascertaining trends of recreational drug use among young people. The focus of this study is primarily to determine the levels of young people's drug use in Glasgow, however, an overview of secondary research sources is provided in Appendix 2 in order to provide an outline of current issues related to drug use among young people.

Appendix 2 outlines recent research sources as well as considering contributory factors relating to young people who use drugs. Media handling of 'the drugs issue' is outlined and some research statistics on drug use among young people are illustrated. The constitution of 'dance drugs' is then considered and some results from pilot studies on the use of drugs at 'raves' are outlined. Finally, the views of young drug users are illustrated and some conclusions are drawn in relation to the type of drugs information that is being provided and the information that the young people involved in 'recreational' drug use require.

Primary research was carried out in the form of an anonymous questionnaire to a sample group of 738 people at nine different sites in Glasgow. The primary research aimed to ascertain the levels of drug use among young people in the city and outlined a demographic profile of the respondent group. The types of drugs used and the reasons for use were examined as well as levels of problematic drug use. The research also aimed to outline the likelihood of users participating in the four 'risk behaviours': injecting drugs; having unprotected sex whilst using drugs and/or alcohol; mixing alcohol and drugs and taking a mixture of drugs. Levels of knowledge of the respondent group in relation to Temazepam and Ecstasy were also examined and where people go to obtain information about drugs was ascertained.

The main findings of this research are that a significant majority of young people in Glasgow have used drugs (69%, N=501). Respondents aged between 16-30 have the highest levels of use and a significantly higher amount of men than women said they had used drugs (80% : 54%). A significant majority of users have never had problems related to their drug use (88%, N=635). Respondents who are not in education have a higher propensity to use than respondents who are in education.

Cannabis is the drug that is most widely used (52%, N=376), Amphetamine (Speed) is the next most popular drug (28%, N=201), LSD is used by 24% (N=174), Ecstasy by 22% (N=156), Temazepam by 15% (N=110), Cocaine by 8% (N=59), DF118s and Methadone (Opiates) by 6% (N=47), Heroin by 6% (N=47), and 19 people (3%) reported using drugs other than those outlined in the questionnaire. Cannabis, Speed, LSD and Ecstasy are most popular with working respondents while Heroin, DFs/Meth and Temazepam have higher use among non-working respondents. Cocaine has higher use among respondents who work but significant use is also apparent among those who do not work.

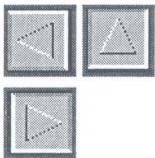
Cannabis and Temazepam are most popular with respondents aged 16-21 while Ecstasy, Cocaine, DFs/Meth (Opiates), and Heroin have highest levels of use among respondents aged between 22-30. LSD and Speed have similar levels of use in agebands 16-21 and among those aged between 22-30. Speed, Cannabis and Cocaine are most popular in the West End (on Byres Road and Great Western Road) while DFs/Meth and Heroin have highest levels of use in Castlemilk and Maryhill. LSD is popular among respondents from St. Enoch and Byres Road, while Ecstasy is widely used among those surveyed in Candleriggs and Byres Road. Temazepam has the highest reported use in Maryhill and the Eastend.

The primary reason stated for taking drugs is to socialise (49%, N=354). A majority have participated in risk behaviours especially in agebands 16-21 and 22-30. Men are twice as likely to take part in risk behaviours than women. A quarter of those surveyed had unprotected sex while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. The majority of problem users are male and the areas where drug use appeared to be most problematic are the Eastend, Maryhill and Castlemilk. Drugs information is ostensibly obtained from friends and knowledge levels are significantly higher in relation to Temazepam than they are in relation to Ecstasy (61% : 15%).

Recommendations have been identified as the following. Information on all types of drugs is needed, however, the following areas should be focused on. Drugs information should be available in schools, Job Centres, Youth Centres, Benefits Agencies, music shops and places where young people congregate. Information on LSD, Speed, Cocaine and Ecstasy should be available in the West End via student unions, clubs and pubs. Information on Ecstasy should be widely available with a focus in the Candleriggs area and information on Dfs/Meth and Heroin should be focused in Castlemilk and Maryhill. Information on Temazepam should be targeted at Maryhill and the Eastend while information on Cannabis should be widespread in all areas.

Information on services for intravenous drug users in Glasgow should be widely available, however, this information should be more closely targeted in Castlemilk, the Eastend and Maryhill. All agebands should have access to this information but there should be a focus on people in the 30+ ageband. Information on non-intravenous drug use should be widely available but the 16-21 ageband should be especially targeted. Given that the research shows that men are twice as likely to participate in the risk behaviours than women, this suggests the need for a new initiative targeting men in Glasgow and aiming to educate them on the dangers of injecting drugs, mixing drugs with alcohol, taking a mixture of drugs as well as education on safer sex precautions.

Given that the results of this study as well as other research indicates that Ecstasy is primarily taken to socialise in a Club environment, factual, accurate information on Ecstasy is recommended. This information should be available to all agegroups with a focus on the 16-30 ageband. The 'Guidelines for Good Practice at Dance Events' should also be observed in relation to the target group.



## 1. METHODOLOGY



In order to obtain an insight into drug use in Glasgow, and in order to discern which drugs are used, a study of both primary and secondary data sources was carried out.

The secondary research outlined drug use among young people in Scotland and more specifically Glasgow, determining the types of drugs most commonly used and the demographics of the user group (see Appendix 2).

The primary research ascertained which drugs were used by a sample of the population in Glasgow; reasons for use; levels of problematic use; participation in the risk behaviours; knowledge about drugs; where they obtain drugs information; and determined the demographics of the user group.

Research was carried out by Crew 2000 volunteers. Crew 2000 is an adolescent peer education project working with recreational drug users in the Edinburgh area. The method used was that of an anonymous questionnaire which was handed to respondents to fill in by themselves. This method was decided upon after careful consideration of the potential advantages as well as the potential drawbacks. The method was considered advantageous in that there were a number of personal questions such as question 10: 'Have you ever tried injecting your drugs?' and question 11: 'Have you ever had unprotected sex (without a condom) whilst on drugs and/or alcohol?'. It was thought that respondents would be more likely to answer honestly if they filled in the questionnaire by themselves than if they were asked by an interviewer. The drawback involved in the implementation of this method is that there is less control over the way in which the questionnaires are completed than there is when a questionnaire is administered by the face-to-face interview technique.

The questionnaire was carried out at nine different sites on Saturday 17 June 1995 on the streets of Glasgow (see page). The aim was to interview a cross-section of young people from different areas in Glasgow although the study recognises that the City Centre sample will most likely incorporate people from various other areas in Glasgow. The samples from the remainder of the sites are regarded as indicative of the population in these sites. The research was carried out on a Saturday in order to achieve an even sample profile of people who work and people who do not work.

Question 8 asked which drugs respondents used and how often they used them. A filter 'drug', simeron, was inserted in the questionnaire in order to achieve as accurate a response rate as possible. Given that simeron is a nonexistent drug, the 13 questionnaires which outlined simeron use were not recorded.

Results were analysed using the computer programme SPSS, which assimilated the information of 725 questionnaires (minus the 13 responses which outlined the use of simeron) and allowed for cross tabulation of results, for example, with question 6, 'Have you ever used drugs?' and question 5, 'What do you do during the week?'.

The following outlines the demographics of the sample of respondents surveyed and indicates the current levels of drug use among young people in Glasgow, their social grouping (whether they work or don't work; whether they are in education or not), their age and sex.



## 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PRIMARY RESEARCH



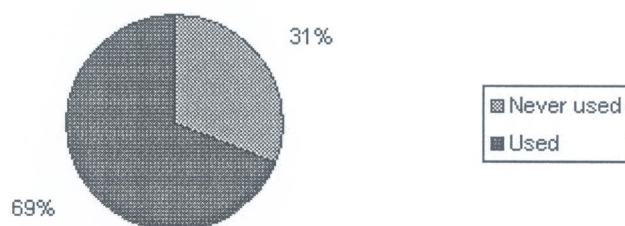
- To discern the drugs that are used in different sites in Glasgow
- To outline a demographic profile of the respondent group determining the age, sex and social grouping
- To identify the determining reasons for young people's drug use
- To determine levels of problematic drug use
- To outline the likelihood of users participating in the following four 'risk behaviours':
  - \* injecting drugs
  - \* having unprotected sex
  - \* mixing drugs with alcohol
  - \* taking a mixture of drugs
- To ascertain the levels of knowledge of the sample group in relation to Ecstasy and Temazepam
- To determine where people are most likely to obtain information on drugs

## 3. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



3.1 Of the 725 respondents, 10% (N=73) were aged between 12-15 years old, the majority of 44% (N=316) were aged between 16-21, 42% (N=305) were aged between 22-30 and 4% (N=30) were in the 31-and-over age bracket. In total, 69% (N=501) of respondents said they had used drugs while 31% (N=224) said they had never used drugs; this was ascertained by question 6: 'Have you ever used drugs?'

PIECHART 1: 'HAVE YOU EVER USED DRUGS?'



Respondents in the age band 22-30 reported the highest level of drug use with three quarters (N=225) saying they had used drugs. Of the respondents in the 16-21 age bracket, 71% (N=225) reported they had used drugs while 70% (N=21) of those who were 31-and-over had used drugs. Respondents in the 12-15 age group had the lowest percentage of drug usage with 34% (N=25) saying they had used drugs while 66% (N=48) said they had never used drugs. These results are further illustrated in the following table (Chisq 47.9, df3, p=.0000):

Age	12-15		16-21		22-30		31+	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>Never used Drugs</b>	48	66%	91	29%	75	25%	9	30%
<b>Used Drugs</b>	25	34%	225	71%	230	75%	21	70%

TABLE 1: AGE X EVER USED DRUGS?

3.2 Of the total respondent sample, 58% (N=419) were men while 42% (N=304) were women. There was a significantly high percentage of male respondents who reported that they had used drugs at some point - 80% (N=336) - while 54% (N=165) of female respondents said that they had used drugs (Chisq 55.6, df1, p=.0000).

3.3 Question 8A, 'Have you used drugs in the last six months' aimed to identify more recent levels of drug consumption with 56% (N=404) of the total sample reporting that they had used drugs in the last six months and 44% (N=318) saying they hadn't used.

A higher amount of female respondents, 59% (N=178), reported that they had not used drugs in the last six months than said that they had, 41% (N=123). However, of the male respondents in the sample group, over two thirds (N=281) said they had used drugs in the last six months while a third (N=138) hadn't (Chisq 48.8, df1, p=.0000).

Of the respondents aged 12-15, under one third (N=23) said they had used drugs in the last six months while over two thirds (N=49) said they hadn't used drugs in the last six months. Of those in age band 16-21, the majority of three fifths (N=187) said they had used drugs in the last six months while two fifths (N=127) said they hadn't. Of those between 22-30 the same result was identified with 60% (N=182) using over the last six months and 40% (N=123) saying that they hadn't used. Of the respondents in the 31-and-over category, more hadn't used drugs in the last six months, 60% (N=18), than had, 40% (N=12), (Chisq 23.3, df3, p=.0000).

The majority of those who said they had used drugs in the last six months were between the ages of 16 and 30. This is still significant, even though agebands 16-21 and 22-30 represent the highest percentage of respondents from the sample group. These results are further illustrated in the following table:

Age	12-15		16-21		22-30		31+	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>Not used in last 6mths</b>	49	68%	127	40%	123	40%	18	60%
<b>Used in last 6mths</b>	23	32%	187	60%	182	60%	12	40%

TABLE 2: AGE X USED DRUGS IN LAST 6 MONTHS

#### 4. RESEARCH SITES



4.1 The research was carried out in nine different sites in Glasgow which broadly encompassed five different areas as outlined:

CITY CENTRE

- 1. Sauchiehall Street
- 2. George Square
- 3. St. Enoch (by the Centre & Underground)
- 4. Candlerriggs

EAST END

- 5. The Forge Shopping Centre

WEST END

- 6. Byres Road
- 7. Great Western Road

MARYHILL

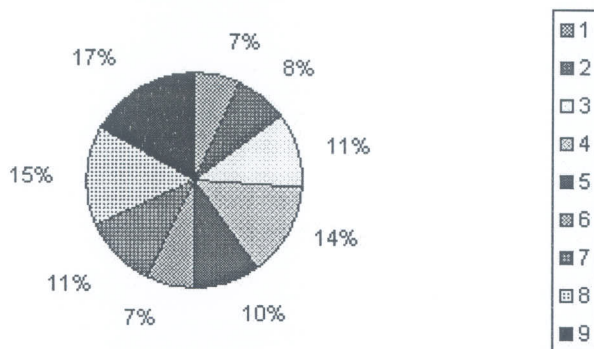
- 8. The Shopping Centre on Maryhill Road

CASTLEMILK

- 9. The Shopping Centre

As illustrated on the next page, the piechart shows the percentage of respondents in each site. The majority of respondents were interviewed in Great Western Road; this was 17% (N=124) of the total sample, the next highest group of respondents were in Byres Road with 15% (N=112) of the sample. Lower samples were recorded from Maryhill, Castlemilk and Candlerriggs with 7% (N=50), 8% (N=56) and 8% (N=55) of the total sample respectively. Again it should be remembered that the City Centre sample will most likely incorporate people from various other areas in Glasgow. The samples from the remainder of the sites are regarded as indicative of the population in these sites.

PIECHART 2: SITE



4.2 Of the respondents in the City Centre, a majority of 63% (N=49) were interviewed between the ages of 16-21 in Sauchiehall Street, St. Enoch Centre, 62% (N=43) and Candlerriggs, 56% (N=30). The majority of respondents in George Square were between the ages of 22-30, 55% (N=56). In the East End of the city, 40% (N=32) of respondents fell into age-bracket 12-15, while 35% (N=28) were between the ages of 22 and 30. The West End saw a majority between the ages of 22-30 with 50% (N=56) of respondents in Byres Road falling into this ageband as well as 57% (N=71) of the Great Western Road respondents.

These results are further illustrated in the following table:

Age	12-15	16-21	22-30	31+
Site	No.	No.	No.	No.
1	16	49	13	0
2	3	38	56	4
3	7	43	19	0
4	3	30	21	0
5	32	17	28	3
6	4	46	56	6
7	2	40	71	11
8	2	24	19	5
9	4	29	22	1

TABLE 3: AGE X SITE

4.3 Male respondents predominate in all sites (see table 4) except for respondents in the East End, at the Forge Shopping Centre (site 5), where the male to female percentage is 48% (N=38) to 52% (N=41) and in Maryhill (site 8), at the shopping centre, which yields the same result of 48% (N=24) to 52% (N=26).

Sex	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
1	52	67%	26	33%
2	62	61%	39	39%
3	40	58%	29	42%
4	31	57%	23	43%
5	38	48%	41	52%
6	67	60%	45	40%
7	75	61%	49	39%
8	24	48%	26	52%
9	30	54%	26	46%

TABLE 4: SEX X SITE

4.4 In all sites, more people said they had used drugs than hadn't. This result was reached by crossing question 6, 'Have you ever used drugs?' with the site variable. (As outlined on page 6,