

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE (NCSA)**

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
AND  
VIOLENCE IN BARBADOS:  
A  
BARBadian COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE**

Analysis of data collected in a national survey during October 2000



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**BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

This study attempts to evaluate the occurrence of and association between drug use and violence among the youth in Barbados.

It is part of a wider programme of research and programme activity by the NCSA that will eventually:

- I. Investigate the social impact of drug use and its related violence on the community; and
- II. Implement strategies via a task force on drugs and violence which may effect positive changes in the community.

The need for such a study is predicated on the perception that increased violence being witnessed in Barbados might be in some way linked to substance abuse and moreover that young people suffer most from increased criminal activity. Such associations have been made internationally, but there is paucity of such research in Barbados and this exercise seeks to fill this void.

**METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS**

The study employed a quantitative technique, which was an interviewer-administered survey of 1200 young people residing in Barbados. It was purposively designed to produce data on the relationship between substance use, substance abuse and violence. In many instances therefore the demographic profile of the sample might not be representative of the population of young people in Barbados, based on community demographics.

Although the research design was substantially achieved, the study cannot identify trends, since it is the first of its kind in Barbados. Moreover the study treats involvement in violence purely from the perspective of the perpetrator and should not be seen as an attempt to discuss the extent to which substance abuse increases the likelihood that the user will become a victim of crime

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

In an effort to facilitate analysis involving a large number of factors that could possibly contribute to substance abuse and violence, or could assist in the identification of persons who are not susceptible to such conditions, a wide array of demographic characteristics were captured in the study. The major characteristics such as gender and age were used to "qualify" respondents who were interviewed.

Since interviewers were encouraged to capture the opinions of young people who were “at risk,” the sample was composed of slightly more males than females and respondents were largely unmarried and childless. This profile is less reflective of young people and more reflective of a mixture of “regular” young people and young people who regularly lime “on the block”. Most persons did, however, complete their secondary education and in that regard, would conform to the standard profile of young persons in Barbados.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Data on experimental, occasional and habitual use of substances was gathered and some effort was made to differentiate substance use, from abuse, although this was difficult to do in the case of alcohol. Generally, 63% of respondents had experimented with alcohol, while 29% experimented with Marijuana and 0.2% tried cocaine. In most cases this experimentation was not repeated and levels of habitual use and abuse were substantially lower. Here the quantity of alcohol dependent young people was conservatively estimated to be in the vicinity of 7%, while daily users of marijuana were 10% of those sampled. There were too few cocaine users to draw any conclusions on trends.

The analysis of alcohol use compared with demographic characteristics such as age and sex, demonstrate that there is no strong relationship between alcohol use and any of these variables. Hence we can determine that alcohol is a genuinely experimental drug and persons were no more, or less likely to have experimented with it based on their age or sex. The notable exception to this rule would be the fact that in all cases friends introduced the experimenter to alcohol.

Regarding alcohol abuse, it is clear that several factors influence abuse, but none can be said to cause it. Hence it was observed that up to 82% of habitual drinkers were men. In addition, abusers are more likely to be single, have no children and work in a “blue collar” job. These generalisations could, however, also have been influenced by the fact that the survey was biased towards respondents “on the block,” who would have been more likely to fit that profile.

Marijuana use and abuse was determined to have been related to similar influences, but religious denomination was a significant category added which appeared to have predisposed some respondents to use marijuana.

It was difficult to profile the users of cocaine in the study since they were so few, however the cocaine abusers were all male and single, with children and in blue-collar employment.

## **VIOLENCE**

The discussion which specifically focused on the respondents' admissions to the ownership and use of weapons indicates that generally where respondents did fight, it was only on one or two occasions and they appeared to have been more active in fighting in the past than they are currently.

"The block" emerged as the most popular place for fighting to take place, followed by the school environment. This "block" also emerges as the place where respondents felt most vulnerable since that was the most popular fighting spot for persons who carried weapons for "protection" mostly. This venue is, however, not compulsory and it prompts the question why respondents were inclined to visit this spot if they felt more vulnerable there.

The fact that a disproportionate number of people were interviewed from the block would have influenced the fact that the block was the most popular place for fighting to take place, however, this point also makes the vulnerability issue far more relevant.

Questions which relate to the ownership and carrying of weapons indicate that less than one third of respondents carried weapons at some time and 43% of those carrying weapons chose basic household items such as a knife, razor or pair of scissors. This pattern of armament starts most frequently at age 15 and is abandoned as respondents exit their teenage years. This section also established the unpopularity of gang membership since 94% of respondents were not ever involved in a gang, with 5% being former gang members and 1% being current gang members.

The analysis of factors that appeared to dispose respondents to violence suggests that there is no causal relationship between violence and any of the respondent's personal characteristics. However, age and sex emerged as factors, which heavily influenced the respondent's proclivity to violence, since 79% of fighters were men and where women did fight, it was only done on an occasional basis. The other significant factor influencing fighting was the extent to which the respondent thought of causing harm and it was observed that persons who had such thoughts were more likely to have fought before and indeed fought frequently.

## **VIOLENCE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Regarding the relationship between violence and substance abuse, it can generally be said that the study established clear associations between patterns of substance abuse and violent activity by participants in the survey, even though some of these relationships are weak and all of them casual.

Regarding alcohol use, which was “one-off” or occasional, there is no indication that usage increases the likelihood that the user will become involved in violent activity. When likely alcohol abusers are identified, however, relationships emerge and suggest that these persons are more likely to carry weapons for protection, than persons who only used alcohol casually, or not at all.

These relationships become more pronounced as we move from the analysis of alcohol use to the use and abuse of marijuana. In every single instance where comparisons were made between marijuana use and indicators of violence, there is a clear relationship suggesting that persons who used marijuana even casually, were more inclined to manifest violent attributes.

Persons who use marijuana were more likely to carry and use weapons, fight frequently and require weapons for protection. Moreover when marijuana users smoked more frequently, the user appeared more likely to have fought and used a weapon in the past, suggesting that the inclination towards violence is enhanced by more frequent marijuana usage. The impact that marijuana usage has on the age that persons carried and used weapons is curious and suggests that smokers started carrying weapons at an early stage

The analysis of locations where marijuana smokers fought indicates that they were more likely to fight outdoors and in public places. However marijuana use was not shown to be associated with the gang culture since there was a greater likelihood that smokers did not belong to a gang than those who did.

Few associations are possible with the data on cocaine use, due to the relatively small number of users. Nonetheless it is shown that there are very few relationships between cocaine use and violence. It was however noticeable that all cocaine users carried weapons, did so more frequently and owned and carried them for protection in large quantities. This finding should however be taken with substantial caution due to the low number of responses in the cocaine category

If the substances studied were ranked using occasional alcohol use as the most innocuous, it will be noticed that as the analysis moved from this stage to marijuana use and abuse, more persons were inclined to become involved in violent activity. This suggests that the use of marijuana on an occasional, or frequent basis is likely to result in a greater proclivity to violence. This relationship shifts, however, when reference is made to the frequency of fights, since alcohol is the only substance that appears to have influenced more frequent fighting.

Finally regarding the impact that these drugs had on the age profile of persons indulging in violent activity, we can see that indulgence in alcohol and marijuana seems to have influenced the ownership and carrying of weapons at a younger age, while the actual users of marijuana influenced the use of weapons earlier.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study therefore presents a relatively clear link between violence and the use and abuse of alcohol and marijuana. It demonstrates that persons who experimented with these substances were more likely to have been involved in violent activity and that this exposure to violence was increased when the substance moved from alcohol to marijuana.

Interestingly, the vast majority of respondents agreed that violence and crime has increased and moreover that such increases are related to drug activity, which is the major finding of this study. Several suggestions have also been offered by respondents to reduce these levels of violence and it is useful to note that there is agreement that increased violence represents a problem, which those involved are concerned about.

It would, however, appear that there is a common perception that the state ought to be strengthened to deal with these increases and that there should be more enforcement officers, stiffer penalties and the provision of more employment. These were the recommendations made by the top 30% of those who offered suggestions, however this approach pays little attention to the causes of such violence and presumes that these manifestations can be addressed unilaterally.

The study, however, established the fact that some violence is related to substance abuse and perhaps this introduces a more socio-psychological dimension to the problem that will require an examination of factors, which contribute to substance abuse. This approach therefore would address the root cause of increased violence and promises a more comprehensive reaction to the perceived increases in crime and violence nationally.

## BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The data, analysis and conclusions presented in this report, arise from a national study conducted by the NSCA during October of 2000, which is the central component of a NCSA initiative which intends to evaluate the occurrence of and association between drug use and violence among the youth in Barbados.

It is part of a wider programme of research and programme activity by the NCSA that will eventually:

- I. Investigate the social impact of drug use and its related violence on the community; and
- II. Implement strategies via a task force on drugs and violence which may effect positive changes in the community.

The study has been commissioned against the background of a perception that the level of violence in Barbados is growing and this growth is greatest among young people. Perceptions such as these have prompted government to explore strategies designed to retard or reverse this pattern. The success of such strategies therefore requires that the phenomena and factors, which contribute thereto be fully explored.

Prior to this study, the NCSA conducted a Rapid Assessment Survey (RAS), which identified several problems, which arise from drug activity and dependency. These problems affected the drug abuser, but also impacted negatively on the relationships that these persons maintained with their spouses or partners and other members of their family with which they resided. A significant problem identified was that of violence and other criminal activity engaged in to support drug habits. These problems were exaggerated among cocaine abusers especially because the culture associated with the marketing and consumption of that drug was a particularly violent one.

Police statistics substantiate the foregoing perceptions to some extent and also suggest other interesting perspectives from which the issue under consideration can be analysed. Initially it should be acknowledged that the crime statistics reveal an overall reduction in crime over the past five years. However it is noteworthy that between 1994 and 1998 there has been a 35% increase in the number of persons charged with drug offences and a recent report on "*Criminal Risk Factors*" published by the National Task Force on Crime Prevention confirmed that 23% of male inmates at Glendary prison stated that they committed crimes to support a drug habit. Cumulatively these observations suggest that while crime may be decreasing overall, the drug related component of crime is increasing.

These data also demonstrate the fact that the types of crime, which normally involve juveniles, are also increasing. Between the reporting months of January to September in the years 1995 through 1999, there has been a 124% increase in crimes that involved young people between the ages of 14 and 30. Specifically, this amounted to 37 cases in 1995, which rose to 83 cases in 1999.<sup>1</sup>

The identification of increases in drug related criminal activity and this apparent bias towards younger offenders prompts the enquiry concerning the link between violence and drug related activity, which is at the root of this study. Similar issues have already been considered in an international and North American context and established the existence of relationships between drug use and violence. In this regard the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) recently concluded "systematic crime and violence were becoming endemic in the countries worst affected by drug abuse and organised trafficking". Similarly, Dr. Ruth Edwards (1994) concluded that youth who use drugs are more likely to perpetrate violence and themselves become victims of violence. This evidence support the speculative belief that similar relationships exist in Barbados and this study therefore seeks to investigate the phenomena scientifically in the Barbadian context.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that data on juvenile crime are heavily influenced by the relative success of the Juvenile Liaison Scheme, which diverts potentially significant numbers of juvenile offenders away from the criminal justice system, thus affecting the number of offences that are recorded by the police.

The methodology chosen for this study was a quantitative one designed by the NCSA. It revolves around a national survey of approximately 1200 young persons who fall between the ages of 12 to 32. This sample represents the approximately 117,682 young people that reside in Barbados based on a 1997 estimate. The sample was specifically designed to be purposive and hence will not necessarily be representative of the national demographic profile. The intention here was to capture an “at risk” group, so that a pattern of the relationship between violence and drug abuse (if any) can be established. Interviewers were therefore directed to areas that were predetermined to have larger numbers of persons who were likely to have been involved in drugs, or who appeared to have a proclivity towards violence.

The Enumeration Districts (EDs) into which Barbados is divided were used as the unit from which the sample was drawn. The logic of this approach is related to the fact that these EDs are clearly defined contiguous areas in which between 150 and 450 persons reside. Moreover preliminary findings suggest that the burden of drug related problems is located at the community and social level, hence EDs in which persons reside would appear to be an appropriate division from which the sample for this exercise should be drawn.

The age group chosen for the study falls slightly outside the 14-30 year range that captures persons who normally commit crime, based on reported statistics. This extended net facilitates projections as the demographic groupings chosen evolve.

Data collection was done by way of an interviewer-administered questionnaire on substance abuse and violence. This questionnaire was administered to persons who fit the demographic profile of the study and respondents were selected either individually, or as a group where 3 or more were assembled. Interviewers were encouraged to interview persons living “on the block” since the NCSA was particularly interested in this group.

In as much as this study is seminal, it is static and cannot represent the relationship between the variables under study as they evolve. It is therefore confined to establishing the existence of relationships and cannot generate trends over time.

It is important to note that the study is confined to the examination of violence perpetrated by the respondent. It is therefore not possible to assess the extent to which the abuse of substances by young people contributes to their increased vulnerability as victims. This aspect of an inquiry into violence would have required a far more extensive research undertaking.

Finally, it should be noted that the study captured too little data regarding the abuse of substances such as Cocaine, Heroin, IV and orally administered substances, to make anything other than speculative associations. This shortcoming is directly related to the virtual absence of a substantial number of persons who abuse these substances in Barbados and infers the need to study these varieties of abuse with qualitative instruments instead.

**VI [a]****VARIABLES AND KEY TERMS**

In as much as the study intends to establish the existence, or extent of the relationship between substance abuse and violence, the critical variables in the study seek to identify the respondent as a substance abuser, establish the type of substances abused (if any) and the occurrence of violence in which the respondent is involved. In addition, the study also seeks to identify several demographic characteristics, which help to build a profile of substance abusers and identify factors that contribute to both abuse and violence.

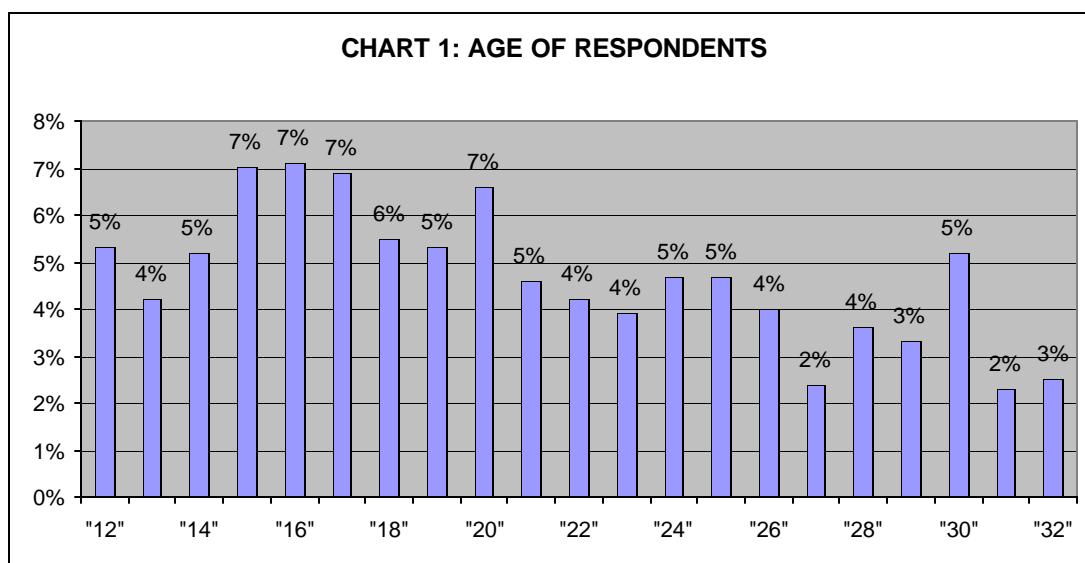
Substances were categorised and grouped into alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, other inhalants, IV and oral drugs, while abuse was defined as the use of a substance in such a way that both mental and physical health may be impaired. Violence is defined here as “the excessive or aggressive or physical force, leading to property damage and or injury to another persons.” In all cases the degree of indulgence which is considered excessive is not predetermined, but established based on a comparison of data collected from the sample population.

**VII [a] COMMUNITY OF INTERVIEWS:**

Appendix II lists the actual communities in which interviews were conducted. This information allows the communities in which interviewing was conducted to be identified. It should, however, be noted that respondent selection was done on the basis of EDs, hence the numbers within these demarcations are far more even and range between 15 and 30 respondents, in each instance.

**VII [b] GENDER AND AGE:**

The gender and ages of persons interviewed was designed to be representative of the “at risk” group and not the national demographic profile. Hence the survey captured the opinion of respondents that were 58% Male and 42% female, which reflects the higher proportion of men living “on the block” during the time that the study was conducted. Similarly the respondents were purposively selected to fall within the age range of young people and were between 12 and 32. The ages of respondents are presented diagrammatically in chart 01:



## VII [c] MARITAL STATUS RESIDENCE AND CHILDREN OF RESPONDENTS:

TABLE O1: MARITAL STATUS	
Single	88%
Married	7%
Common law	4%
Separated	0.3%
Divorced	0.2%
Engaged	0.2%
Co-habiting	0.1%
Widowed	0.1%

Table 01 shows the marital status of respondents and reflects the fact that the vast majority of respondents were single, while a total of 11% were either formally married, or considered themselves to be in common-law marriages. It is interesting to note that respondents differentiated "co-habitation" from "common law" marriages and engaged persons also sought to separate themselves from co-habitants. These unmarried persons who identified themselves by these slightly more official titles, all had children and in some cases had

several children as can be seen in Table 02. This relationship between the nomenclature used to classify the relationship and the existence of children implies that respondents were to some extent inclined to seek formal or official classifications for their co-habitation out of wedlock, especially in instances where children were produced. This table also demonstrates generally the relationship between the marital status of the respondents and the number of children that they had.

Most respondents who had children, had between one and two children as reflected in Table 03, while Table 04 shows the number of places that respondents lived during the 12 month period preceding the survey. This latter statistic demonstrates some amount of residential instability, since almost 30% of the respondents moved during the one-year period prior to the survey and in 1% of cases, respondents reported living in 12 different places over the year preceding the survey.

TABLE O2: MARITAL STATUS AND CHILDREN CROSSTAB

	"0"	"1"	"2"	"3"	"4"	"5"
Married	24%	31%	27%	10%	5%	2%
Common law	17%	28%	40%	11%	4%	0%
Single	77%	15%	5%	2%	1%	0%
Divorced	33%	0%	67%	0%	0%	0%
Separated	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%	0%
Co-habiting	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Engaged	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Widowed	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

**TABLE 03: NUMBER OF CHILDREN**

0	70%
1	17%
2	8%
3	3%
4	1%
5	1%

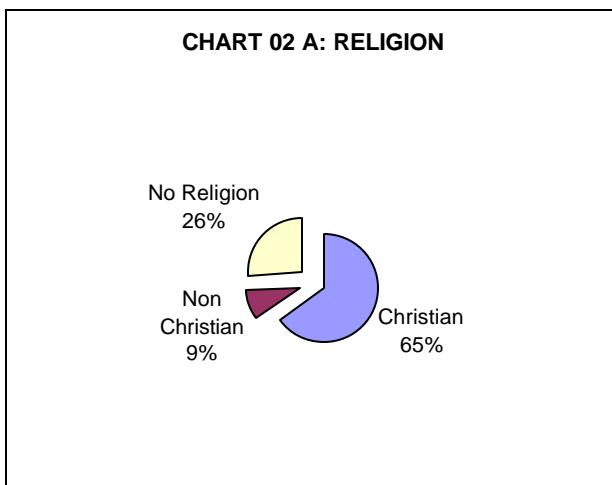
**TABLE 04: NUMBER OF PLACES IN THE 12 MONTHS PRECEDING THE SURVEY**

1	72%
2	23%
3	4%
12	1%

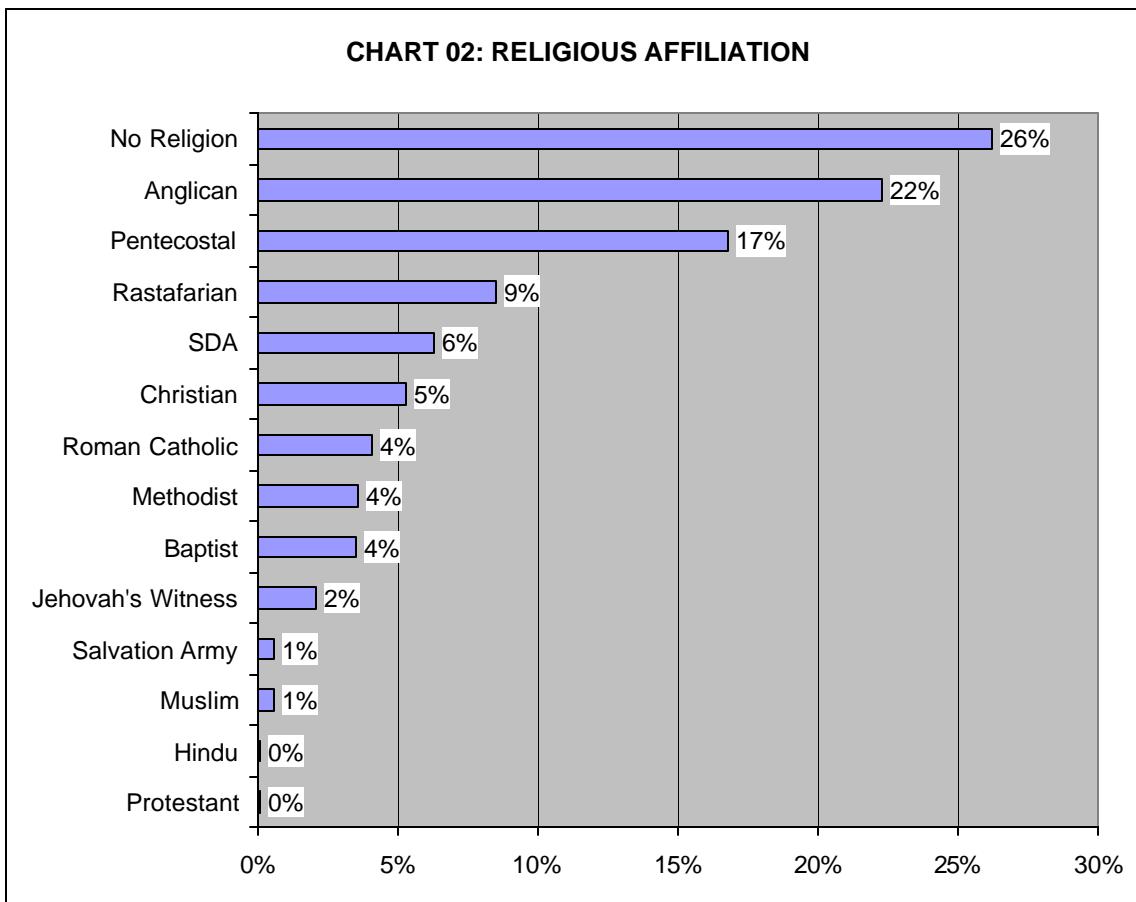
**TABLE 03 A: GENDER AND CHILDREN CROSSTAB**

	1 Child	2	3	4	5
Male	60%	24%	11%	4%	1%
Female	56%	30%	10%	4%	

## VII [d] RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION:



Charts 02 and 02A show the religious affiliation of the persons interviewed and it can be seen that the single largest group of people responding to the survey indicated they were Christian, while the second largest had no religious affiliation. Chart 02 presents this data in detail showing the various denominations identified by respondents.



## VII [e] EDUCATION AND OCCUPATION:

Information received from respondents on the highest educational level reached is consistent with national requirements that most Barbadians would have completed their secondary education, which ends in the Fifth Form. Table 05 shows that more than half of the persons sampled at least completed secondary school and in almost 20% of instances, went beyond Secondary School to a post-secondary technical institution, the Barbados Community College or proceeded to University (Undergraduate level). Less than 6% of those sampled completed their education at primary schools.

**TABLE 05: HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL REACHED**

Secondary Form 5	46%
Secondary Form 4	13%
Secondary Form 3	8%
Community College	7%
Post Sec/A Level/Undergrad/Postgraduate	6%
Polytechnic	6%
Primary	5%
Secondary, Form 1	4%
Secondary Form 2	4%
Skills Training/Vocational Training	1%
Composite	0.3%

**TABLE O6: STATUS OVER THE PAST YEAR**

In Full-Time Employment	44%
Student	21%
In Part-Time Employment	13%
Voluntarily Idle	11%
Genuinely Unemployed	10%
Other	1%

The survey also ascertained the occupational status of respondents both now and in the recent past. This was done by way of several questions that asked respondents to indicate their status over the past year and how many months they were employed. Table 06 and chart 03 summarise these data and reflect the fact that the

vast majority of respondents were either employed full or part-time or were students.

An effort was made to differentiate those who were not working due to the unavailability of a job from those not interested in working. The latter category was tagged as “voluntary idle” and amounted to 11% of those interviewed, while those genuinely unemployed totaled 10%. Those employed, however appeared to be steadily employed since in 65% of cases, employment was for the entire year.

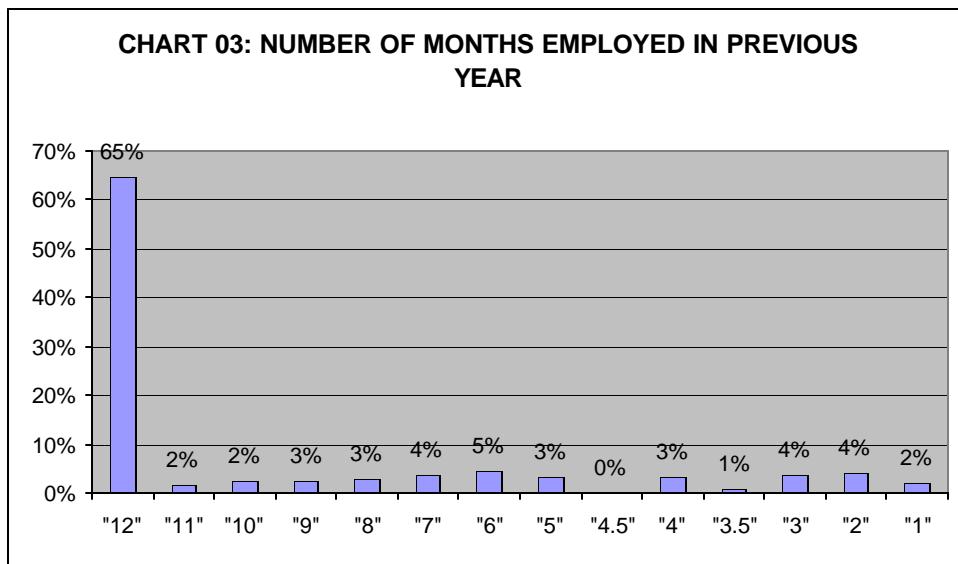


TABLE 07: SUBSTANCE USE PROFILE

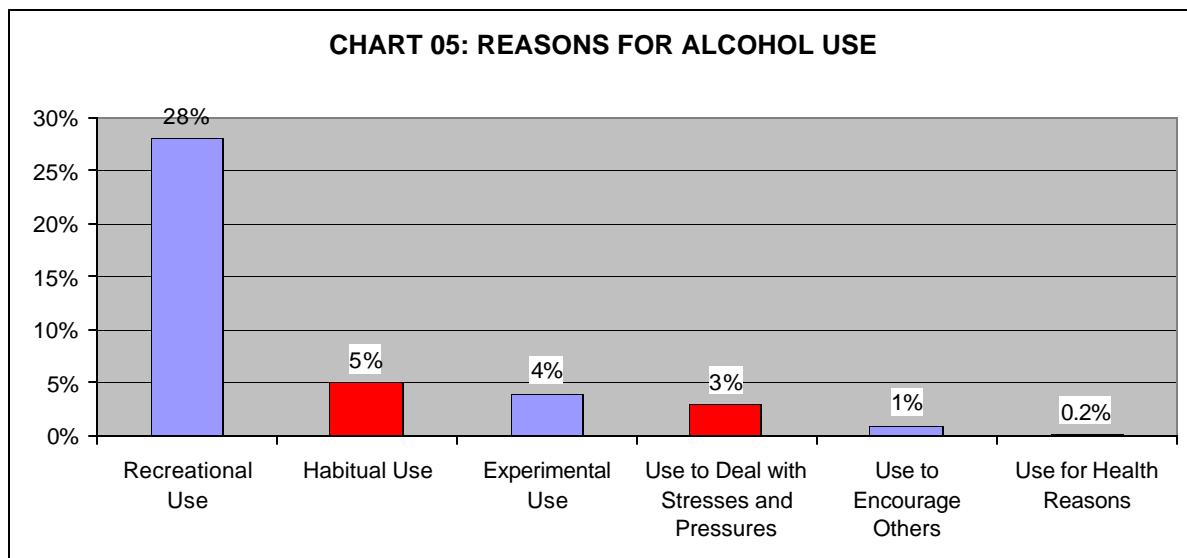
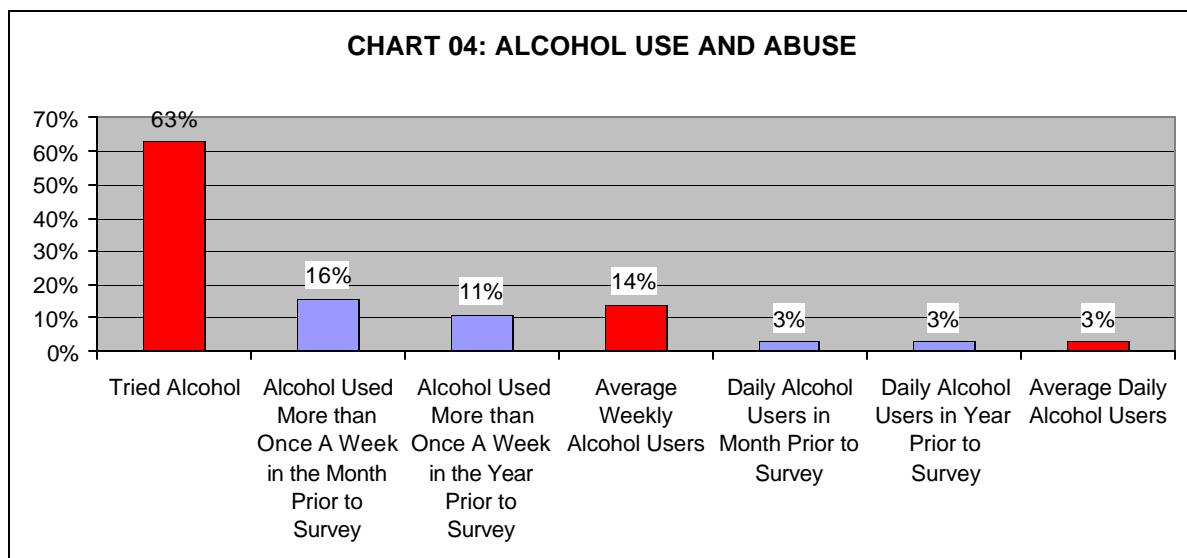
SUBSTANCE USED	Respondents Admitting Experimentation	Age of First Experimentation (Most Frequent)	Person Most Frequently Introducing Substance	Person Accompanying Abuser (Generally)	Frequency of Use Over Past Month (Generally)	Frequency of Abuse Over Past Year	Why Substance is Used (Generally)
Alcohol	63%	13 - 16	Friend	Friend	No Use	Once a Month or Less	Social Reasons
Marijuana	29%	14 - 16	Friend	Friend	No Use	Each Day	Habitual
Cocaine	0.2%	NR	Friend	Friend	No Use	No Use	Experimentation
Heroin					No Responses Recorded		
Other Intravenous Drugs					No Responses Recorded		
Other Inhalants					No Responses Recorded		
Other Orally Administered Drugs	0.1%	14	Family	NR	NR	NR	NR

Table 07 consolidates the basic information collected on substances used by respondents. The table captures data on the use of substances, which can be considered both experimental and habitual. Habitual use would be identifiable by reference to the frequency with which a substance was used over the month and year preceding the survey.

It is evident here that alcohol was the substance which was tried most by respondents and indeed the only substance that was used by more than half the persons interviewed, however, in most cases this use could not be categorised as habitual based on the infrequent use in the period preceding the survey period.

It can also be seen that the critical ages in relation to experimentation with substances would be 13 – 16 and these were in most cases introduced by friends of the respondents. There is also little evidence of experimentation with hard drugs, since respondents appeared most familiar with Alcohol and Marijuana and statistically insignificant numbers of persons admitted to having used cocaine, heroin, intravenous, orally administered drugs, or inhalants.<sup>2</sup>

## VIII [a] ALCOHOL USE AND ABUSE:



<sup>2</sup> .02% of respondents admitted to having used cocaine and no persons indicated that they used other orally administered, intravenous or injectable drugs.

In as much as alcohol is a substance that is legally available, it is more difficult to identify a person who is considered an “abuser” of this substance based on the above mentioned criteria, using an instrument such as this. Moreover the traditional and somewhat ambiguous term “alcoholic” seems no longer to be in-vogue and has been replaced by two categorisations which identify people as:

- Alcohol abusers; and
- Dependent on Alcohol<sup>3</sup>

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism newsletter No. 30, October 1995,<sup>4</sup> suggests that the criteria for abuse includes drinking despite recurrent social, interpersonal, and legal problems as a result of alcohol use and also suggests that an abuser would experience physical, psychological (including anxiety and depression), or occupational problems, or drink in dangerous situations, such as in conjunction with driving. Dependency on the other hand is based on the presence of physical symptoms of tolerance and withdrawal.

Other classifications of alcoholism allude to:

- Episodic excessive drinking;
- Habitual excessive drinking;
- Harmful use which implies alcohol use that causes either physical or mental damage in the absence of dependence; and or
- Alcohol addiction, which is characterized by the compulsion to drink and by withdrawal symptoms when drinking, was stopped.

Therefore in an effort to distinguish alcohol use we need to establish the presence of some or all of the above criteria, which is not possible based on the data available. We can nonetheless derive some indication of abuse from the various indicators used and these are represented diagrammatically in charts 04 and 05. Reference is drawn to the above statistic that reflects the fact that 63% of those sampled tried alcohol, however this would include what could be described as “one time” users and other users who cannot be said to be alcoholics, or habitual users. Various approaches can be taken towards the identification of habitual users, or abusers, hence the chart highlights those sampled who used alcohol more than once a week who can be considered possible abusers and those who used alcohol daily and could be considered abusers. It should, however be noted that this computation excludes those sampled who used alcohol, however frequently, for medicinal purposes.

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<sup>3</sup> National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (USA).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/>

Chart 05 presents the respondent's reasons for using alcohol which is a less reliable indicator of potential abuse, since it relies on the respondents preparedness to admit that they are essentially alcohol abusers. Nonetheless 5% of respondents indicated that were habitual users, while a further 3% indicated that they consumed alcohol to help them deal with the various stresses and pressures in life, which could also deem them substance abusers, depending on the frequency with which they claimed to have such pressures and stresses.

Both these analyses reflect the fact that there is substantial difference between the quantity of persons who use this substance and those who abuse it. The fact that alcohol is legally available means that the admission of frequent use alone is not sufficient to warrant categorisation as an abuser and the above approach seeks to isolate those persons who are either dependent on alcohol or abuse this substance. Moreover, it needs to be appreciated that alcohol consumption patterns are often culturally determined and frequent use may be related more to an individual's business commitments, or their proclivity to drink socially and socialise frequently. The "binge drinker" ought also to be given some special consideration, since that person may drink infrequently, but be unable to control the extent to which this substance is used on these occasions and hence would be a more ideal candidate for categorisation as a substance abuser than a person that drinks less frequently.

If therefore an average is taken of these possible categories, it would be determined that approximately 7% of those sampled use alcohol habitually, or are dependent on alcohol. Some amount of caution should, however, be used here, since this would include the large quantity of weekly alcohol users, who need not necessarily be alcohol abusers.

## VIII [b] PROFILE OF ALCOHOL USERS AND ABUSERS:

An attempt is made in this section to isolate the demographic and other personal characteristics that make the individuals interviewed more disposed to use and abuse alcohol. It should be noted that there are two types of relationship possible between two variables. The first is a "causal" relationship where the characteristic identified actually causes the person to use or abuse alcohol, while the weaker of the two relationships is "casual" and would suggest that such characteristics are likely to make a person more disposed to use or abuse, although it would not necessarily bring about that condition.

Table 08 presents various factors and characteristics, which could possibly have been related to alcohol experimentation. It can be seen that in only one instance there is a relationship evidenced in the data between any of these and a persons proclivity to try alcohol. This trend suggests that experimentation in relation to alcohol arises genuinely from curiosity, or is influenced by some other factor that the survey did not consider. It is entirely possible that one such factor is that of culture, which could have predisposed all persons surveyed to alcohol experimentation. Such factors were, however, beyond the scope of this study since it was not a cross-cultural exercise.

	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Number of Children	Occupation	Educational Level	School Drop Out	Religious Denomination	Relationship with Mother	Relationship with Father	Relationship with Siblings	Relationship with Friends	Frequency of Household Changes	Membership in Sports or Cultural Association	Substance Introduced by Friends
Causal Relationship															
Causal Relationship															•
No Apparent Relationship	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	

Notwithstanding the above comments, the data suggested that friends of the respondents were the people most likely to introduce alcohol. Chart 06 presents this relationship diagrammatically and shows that in the largest number of cases, friends of the respondents introduced them to alcohol, while the family introduced respondents in the second largest number of instances. It was interesting to note at the same time that the media provided the stimulus in less than 1% of cases and in 27% of instances, respondents made their own decisions to try alcohol.

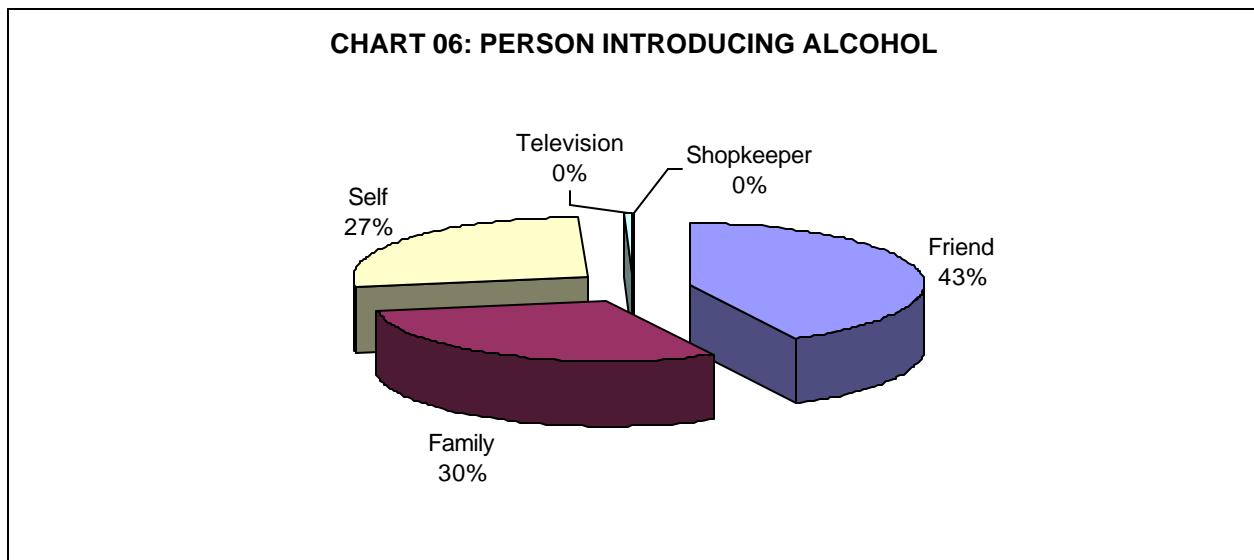


Table 09 presents the summary of relationships between alcohol abuse and the factors that could possibly have contributed to such abuse. It relies on the aforementioned approach to identifying abusers as persons who are at least daily users of the substance, or those who indicated that their use was habitual.

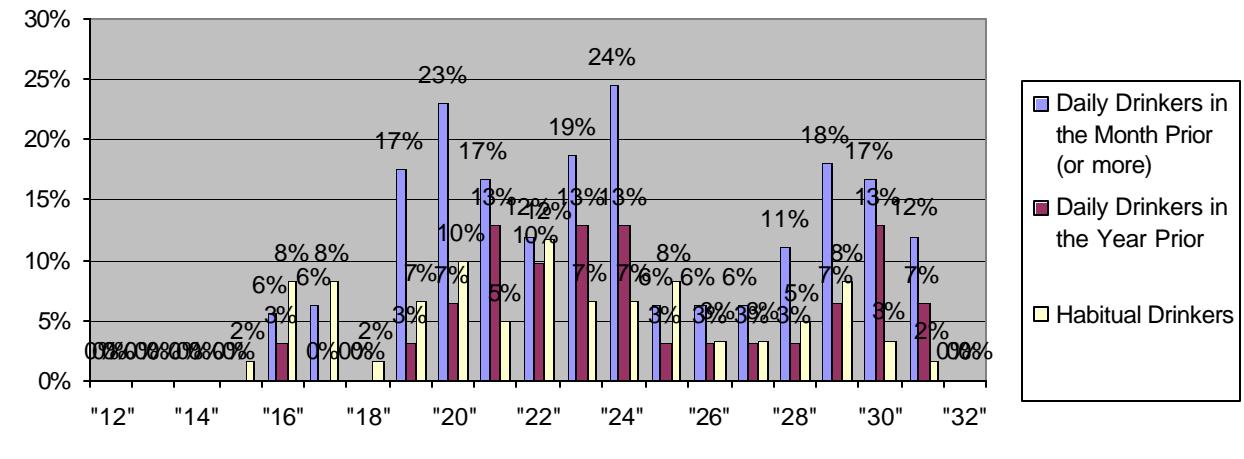
While no causal factors can be identified, it is apparent that several demographic factors are related to, or influence abuse patterns. The first two of these probed were the two main demographic categories and we can see that sex and age do influence abuse to some extent. 78% of respondents who consumed alcohol at least daily in the month prior to the survey were men and when persons who consumed alcohol more than once a day were isolated, it was seen that 100% of them were men. This pattern did not differ when drinking patterns for the year prior to the study were explored. Hence the study revealed that 90% of daily drinkers in the year prior to the study were men and moreover 82% of habitual drinkers were also men. These data demonstrate a clear trend, which supports the theory that men are more inclined to abuse alcohol than women.

TABLE 09: ALCOHOL ABUSE

	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Number of Children	Occupation	Educational Level	School Drop Out	Religious Denomination	Relationship with Mother	Relationship with Father	Relationship with Siblings	Relationship with Friends	Frequency of Household Changes	Membership in Sports or Cultural Association	Substance Introduced by Friends
Causal Relationship															
Casual Relationship	•	•	•	•	•										•
No Apparent Relationship							•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Chart 07 presents the somewhat complex relationship between age and alcohol abuse. Although the trend is somewhat erratic, it can nonetheless be seen that most abusers are clustered between 19 and 25 and then 29 and 31. These then would appear to be the vulnerable ages where abuse is concerned and moreover it should be noted that the trend in this instance is a consistent one, as it relates to the time frame of abuse and the admission of habitual use, lending support to the relationship between these variables and the age of vulnerability identified.

**CHART 07: AGE PROFILE OF ALCOHOL ABUSERS**



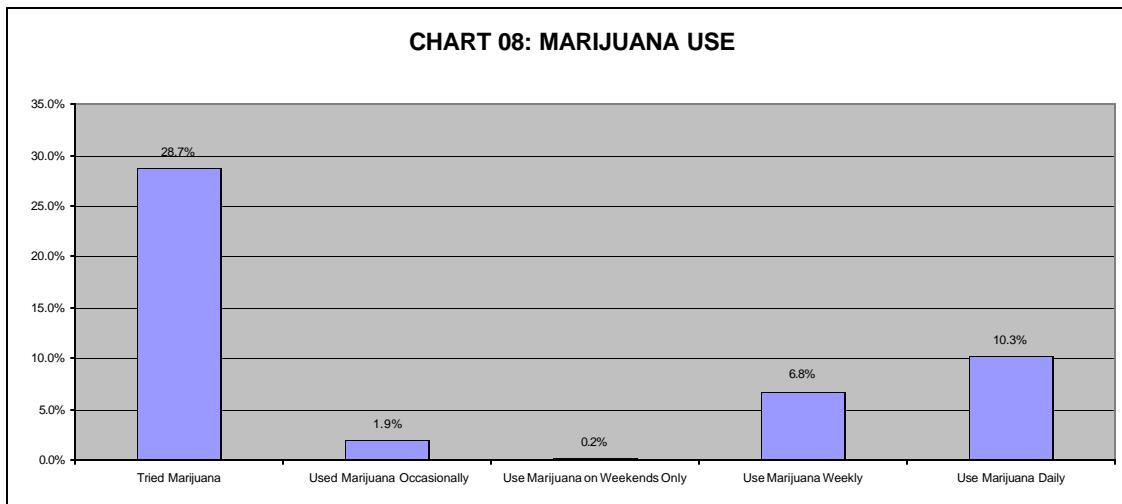
Marital status also presents an interesting influence to alcohol abuse since all of the daily and more frequent users (in the month prior to the survey) were either single or in common law relationships, with the greater proportion (89%) being single. Further in the year prior to the survey 94% of daily users were single. This trend is confirmed when a look is taken at the habitual users and it is revealed that 86% of them are single and moreover 84% of the persons who use alcohol to deal with stresses and pressures are also single. Comparatively, among the married respondents, 50% did not use alcohol at all in the month prior to the survey and 25% did not use in the year prior, moreover 8% of married persons indicated that they used alcohol habitually. This relationship was, however, affected by the fact that most of the respondents in the survey were single and a canvas of a larger number of married people might have yielded different results.

A similar type of relationship also exists between the occupation of the respondents and the proclivity to use alcohol frequently. The largest proportion of daily and more frequent drinkers was in the “blue collar” category, both skilled and unskilled (in the month prior to the survey). Here 67% of daily drinkers and 80% of more frequent drinkers were categorised as “blue collar” workers, while in the year prior to the survey, 71% of “blue collar” workers were daily users. This trend is supported by the fact that 67% of blue collar workers indicated that they consumed alcohol for habitual reasons, however it is also noteworthy that clerical workers were the single largest category of respondents who indicated that they used alcohol to deal with the “stresses and strains” of life. These observations should be viewed against the backdrop of a reality that the category known as “blue collar” is essentially an omnibus category and is likely to capture a large proportion of respondents, hence influencing the likelihood of a trend emerging.

Persons educated to the level of Secondary Form Five appear to be the ones most vulnerable to alcohol abuse based on the data since 57% or the largest proportion of daily users were educated to that level. However this situation cannot be categorised as a relationship since that educational level represents the point at which further education becomes optional. Hence it would be expected that most persons in every category would be educated to that level.

Finally, regarding persons who introduce the substance to abusers, a clear trend can only be observed in relation to daily users in the year prior to the study. Here friends introduced 52% of abusers, but the same cannot be said for abusers in the month prior to the survey. At this level alcohol was introduced by the family and experimentation also led to abuse. Moreover the habitual users seem not to have originated from any clear source; hence this relationship can be considered a relatively weak one.

## VIII [C] MARIJUANA USE AND ABUSE:



Although marijuana is an illegal substance and use on one occasion can be considered abuse, it is nonetheless important to distinguish experimental use of this drug from regular use. This is attempted in chart 08 which demonstrates that although close to one third of respondents experimented with marijuana, the numbers of persons who use marijuana on a daily basis or more frequently is considerably lower at 10%, with weekly users amounting to some 7%. Within this range there are also weekend and occasional users who total some 2%.

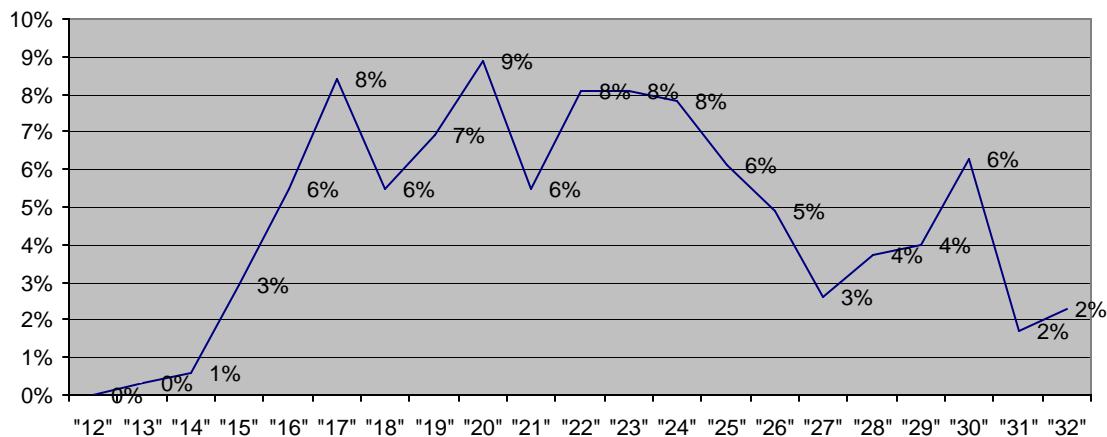
## VIII [d] PROFILE OF MARIJUANA USERS AND ABUSERS:

	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Number of Children	Occupation	Educational Level	School Drop Out	Religious Denomination	Relationship with Mother	Relationship with Father	Relationship with Siblings	Relationship with Friends	Frequency of Household Changes	Membership in Sports or Cultural Association	Substance Introduced by Friends
Causal Relationship															
Casual Relationship		•	•	•	•			•						•	•
No Apparent Relationship	•					•	•		•	•	•	•			

Table 10 examines the relationship between several factors that could influence the proclivity of the respondent to experiment with marijuana and presents a profile that does not differ significantly from that of alcohol abuse. It should be noted that there is no evidence here that any relationships between variables are so strong that we can say a causal relationship exists. It is noteworthy that in this sample gender was not a contributor to experimentation with Marijuana since both men and women experimented in equal proportions.

Chart 09 shows the ages of respondents who admitted to having experimented with marijuana and it can be seen that the youngest and oldest persons interviewed were less likely to have experimented with marijuana. Possibly the younger respondents have not started experimentation yet, which lends support to the theory that there is a critical age during which experimentation is popular.

**CHART 09: AVERAGE AGE OF MARIJUANA EXPERIMENTER**



Marital status appears to have some effect on experimentation with marijuana since the highest percentage of persons who experimented were single. Some 90% of persons who were single admitted to experimenting and the second largest category were in common law-marriages. Children appear to have had a similar effect since the percentage of experimenters who had no children is highest (57%) and persons who had 3, 4, or 5 children, admitted to experimenting in smaller numbers. This data should be analysed against the background of the fact that the survey captured larger numbers of single persons hence this observation could also arise from the extent to which the sample is skewed towards single persons.

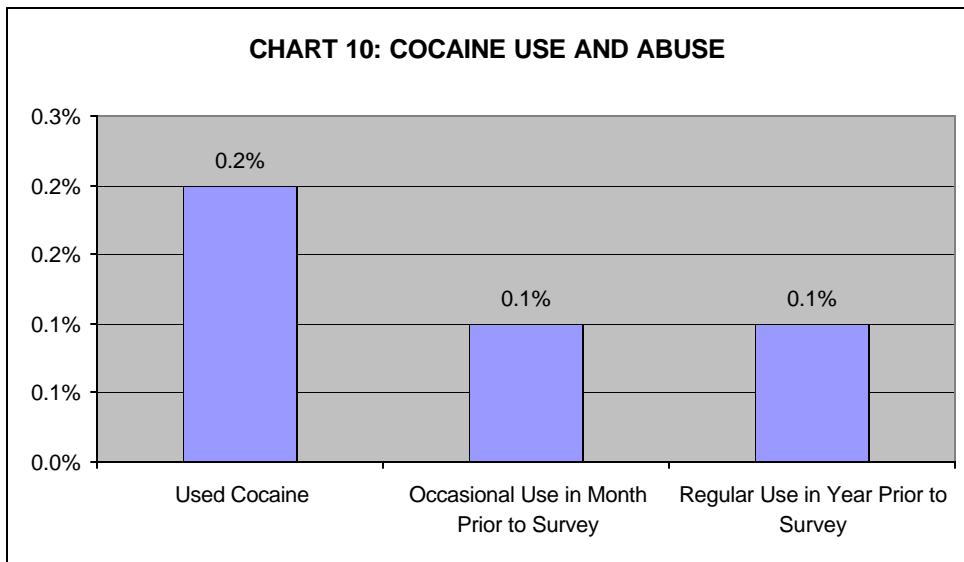
As was the case with alcohol use, the category of workers known as “blue-collar” retained the highest number of persons who admitted to experimenting with marijuana. In total some 61% of persons admitting to trying marijuana, were blue collar, however it must be acknowledged that this category is an omnibus category and as such it is likely that it would have been able to capture several respondents excluded by other job classifications.

Religion, or more specifically a religious belief can be said to contribute marginally to the proclivity of persons to experiment with Marijuana based on the data collected. In total 33% of persons experimenting with marijuana, indicated some religious belief (excluding Rastafarians), while 37% of experimenters indicated they had no such belief. Interestingly, the group of Rastafarians were no more disposed to experiment than any other religious group.

A similar pattern emerged with respect to involvement in sports and cultural groups, although the pattern was far stronger here. Hence among those experimenting, some 81% did not belong to sports and cultural groups suggesting that possibly experimentation might in some way be associated with idleness and the influence of peers who were similarly idle. This theory is supported by the finding that 74% of those experimenting with marijuana indicated that friends introduced them to it.

	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Number of Children	Occupation	Educational Level	School Drop Out	Religious Denomination	Relationship with Mother	Relationship with Father	Relationship with Siblings	Frequency of Household Changes	Membership in Sports or Cultural Association	Substance Introduced by Friends
Causal Relationship														
Casual Relationship	•	•	•	•	•			•					•	•
No Apparent Relationship						•	•		•	•	•	•		

Table 11 presents a profile of marijuana abusers, or persons who frequently use marijuana and this can be said to differ little from the profile of the more infrequent user of this substance. There is, however, one notable difference and this relates to the influence of religion and the extent to which this influences heavy use. Here the Rastafarian religion appears to be a far greater influence on heavy use than any of the other religions. Hence a total of 61% of all Rastafarian respondents used marijuana on a daily basis in the month prior to the survey, compared to other religions such as the Anglican respondents who were daily users at the level of 30%. In the year preceding the survey, respondent's recollections were little different and indicated that more than two-thirds (67%) of respondents who were Rastafarian used marijuana on a daily basis, compared to other religions such as the Anglicans who only amounted to 31% of daily users.

**VIII [e]****COCAINE USE AND ABUSE:**

Comparatively, cocaine was a less popular substance among respondents. As noted above, 0.2% of respondents admitted to having used cocaine and it would appear that almost all of these persons have used this substance in the month and year prior to the study on an occasional basis. Naturally this pattern is due largely to the comparatively higher cost and addictive attributes of cocaine, as compared to other substances discussed above. It is noteworthy that although a clear pattern of addiction has emerged among this small group, these respondents offered no explanation for their use of the substance.

**VIII [f] PROFILE OF COCAINE USERS:**

Substantial caution ought to be exercised when making assertions regarding the profile of cocaine users since the numbers in the study are so small. Hence indulgence might be as a result of factors that are peculiar to the respondent and cannot be generalised for the entire population. Nonetheless some interesting observations emerge regarding cocaine users.

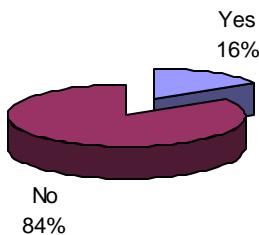
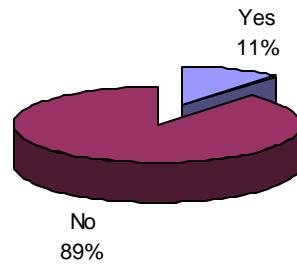
Firstly it should be noted that all the cocaine abusers in the study were male and single, however the ages showed no particular pattern. Contrary to the above pattern of substance abuse, more cocaine users had children than not and these persons were equally divided between students and blue-collar workers. None of the cocaine users dropped out of school and they were all drawn from different educational backgrounds. Regarding religious persuasion, two-thirds of users identified themselves as Rastafarian and a similar quantity did NOT belong to a sports or religious group.

Finally it was interesting to note that cocaine users all admitted to using alcohol and two-thirds of them admitted to using marijuana. These data would suggest that substances such as marijuana and alcohol are inclined to encourage cocaine use, but in reality the quantities of cocaine users are too small and the patterns too eclectic to indicate any clear pattern. Against this background, it would appear that cocaine users in the study were influenced by stimuli that were highly personal and hence qualitative instruments ought to be employed to study and profile these persons.

The indicators used for violence in this study relate to the individual's admission to owning and using weapons, the quantity of weapons owned and the frequency with which they are involved in fights where weapons are used.

**IX [a] FIGHTING WITH WEAPONS:**

Charts 11 and 12 present data on responses to the questions about the respondent's involvement in fights with weapons and the use of weapons generally. It is noticeable that more people admitted to involvement in fights with weapons than those who used weapons otherwise. This is consistent with the fact that persons could have been involved in a fight with weapons, even though they themselves were not carrying weapons suggesting that weapons were used against respondents, instead of by respondents.

**CHART 11: INVOLVED IN A FIGHT WITH WEAPONS****CHART 12: USED A WEAPON**

Respondents were asked how many fights with weapons they were involved in during the month prior to the survey and the year prior to the survey and the results are presented below. It can be seen that in most cases where respondents were involved in fights, it was on one or two occasions, since the number of respondents involved in several fights is comparatively lower. It is also noteworthy that many respondents were more active in fighting over the year prior to the survey than they were in the month prior, suggesting some amount of behavioural modification.

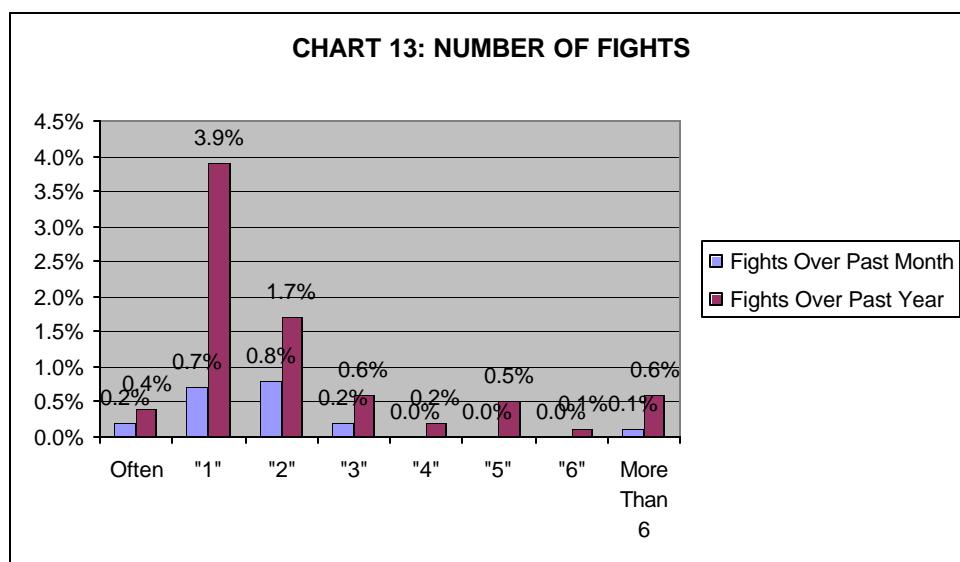
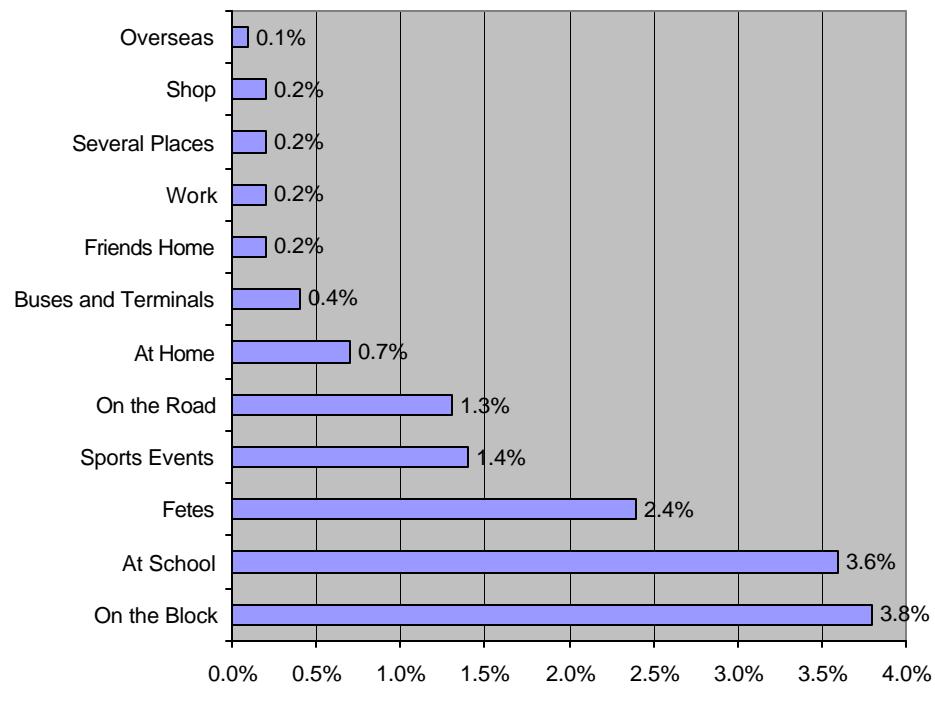


Chart 14 reveals the locations where fights took place and it can be seen that the proverbial “block” is the most popular location for fighting to take place, followed by the school environment. It is also noteworthy that little fighting took place in the home.

**CHART 14: FIGHT LOCATIONS**



#### **IX [b] OWNERSHIP AND CARRYING OF WEAPONS:**

A series of detailed questions regarding weapon ownership were put to respondents and the major finding is presented in chart 15, where it can be seen that less than a quarter of respondents carried weapons at some time. Subsequent questions forced respondents to define a weapon and it is noteworthy that 43% of those who carried weapons carried a knife or razor, which is a standard household item. Moreover, a substantial variety of other weapons were items such as machetes and pairs of scissors that are also present in most homes. Since this represents almost half of weapon carriers, the issue of ownership is of secondary importance and attention would need to be paid to the actual carrying of weapons.

**CHART 15: WEAPON CARRYING**

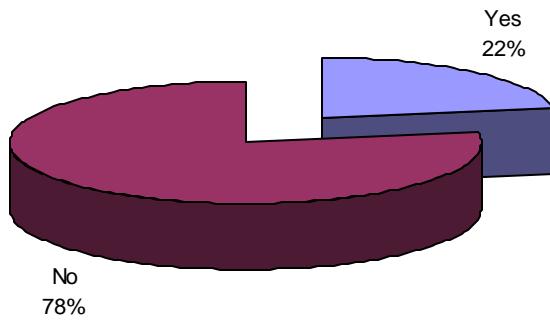
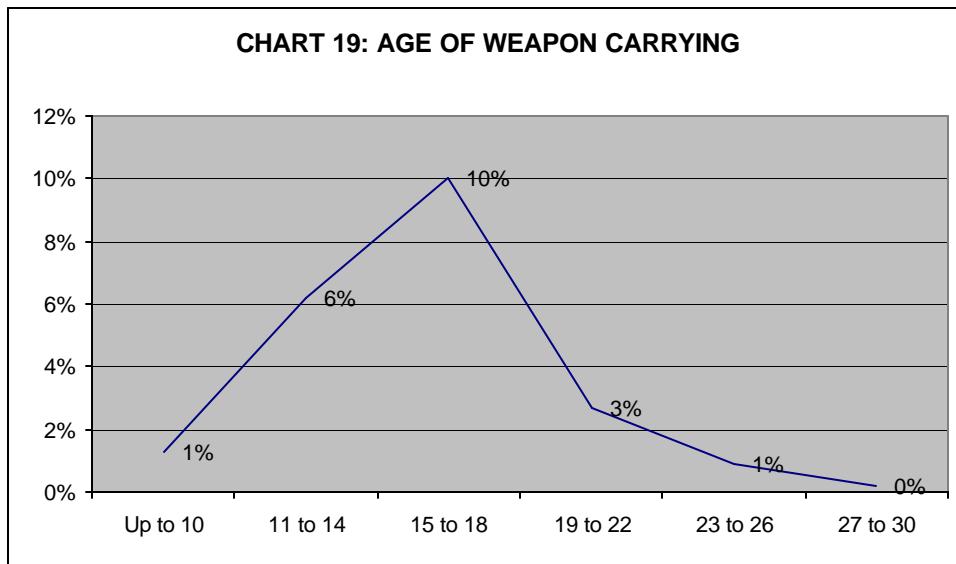


Chart 16 reflects the age when most persons started carrying weapons and a critical age range for carrying can be easily identified. Age 15 was the age when most respondents who carried weapons started doing so, but it is also evident that this behaviour commenced around age 11 and declined sharply as soon as persons exited the teenage years.

This age range says much about the apparent vulnerability that teenagers apparently face, since some 87% of persons carrying weapons indicated that they did so for protection. Further analysis, however, reveals that the largest number of persons fighting with weapons and carrying weapons for protection were involved in fights on the block. This suggests that this optional congregation spot known as "the block" is a place where young people in some instances feel vulnerable. The only other statistically significant reason offered for weapon carrying, was for work purposes among 7% of those carrying weapons, however only 4% of these persons had ever been involved in a fight with weapons.



Finally, the survey enquired whether respondents had ever been members of a gang and some 94% of respondents indicated that they never belonged to a gang. Some 5% were former gang members and only 1% of those sampled were active gang members.

### **IX [c] PROFILE OF PERSONS INDULGING IN VIOLENCE:**

TABLE 12: PROFILE OF FIGHTERS															
	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Number of Children	Occupation	Educational Level	School Drop Out	Religious Denomination	Relationship with Mother	Relationship with Father	Relationship with Siblings	Relationship with Friends	Frequency of Household Changes	Think About Hurting or Killing Someone	Membership in Sports or Cultural Association
Causal Relationship															
Causal Relationship	•	•			•									•	
No Apparent Relationship			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Table 12 presents a summary profile of the persons indulging in violence, which was compiled using a combination of indicators such as admission to fighting and frequency of fights over the month and year prior to the survey. At no time is there a relationship between variables that is so strong that it can be considered causal, however there would appear to be several factors which influence the respondents proclivity to indulge in acts violence.

Two major factors that influenced the proclivity to indulge in violence were age and sex. 79% of persons who were involved in fights with weapons were men and moreover 100% of women who did fight only did so once or twice. The obvious implication here is that men are more inclined to indulge in violence than women and where women do indulge, it is done on an occasional basis.

The relationship between age and fighting is less clear, nonetheless responses indicate that respondents who were 17, 18 and 22 were most likely to have been involved with a fight with weapons in the past. Regarding regular fighters, these were mostly over 24 years of age.

As was the case with substance abuse, occupational status appears to impact on the proclivity to indulge in violent activity. However, this statistic is heavily influenced by the size of the “blue collar” categorisation. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that 18% of those involved in fights with weapons at some time were students, which is a relatively substantial quantity of fighters. Interestingly, unemployment did not seem to impact too heavily on the proclivity to fight, since only 8% of presently unemployed persons recalled having fought at some time in the past.

**TABLE 13: THOUGHTS OF HURTING AND KILLING AND THEIR IMPACT ON FIGHTING**

	Fought Before	Fought Once Or Twice In Past Month	Fought Frequently In Past Month	Fought Once Or Twice In Past Year	Fought Frequently In Past Year
<b>Almost Always</b>	68%	60%	40%	54%	46%
<b>Sometimes</b>	29%	73%	27%	69%	31%
<b>Seldom/Never</b>	7%	100%	0%	83%	17%

Table 13 seeks to establish a relationship between thoughts of causing harm and the respondent's proclivity to fight. It should be noted that only the first column is mutually exclusive and this will appear to distort the computations somewhat since the same persons could properly be allocated to all remaining columns. Nonetheless it can clearly be seen that persons who almost always thought of killing or causing harm, were more likely to have fought before and more likely to have fought frequently, while persons who seldom had such thoughts were inclined to fight only occasionally.

## VIOLENCE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

In this section an attempt will be made to establish relationships between the patterns of substance use and abuse outlined above and violent activity by participants in the survey. As before, these can either be relationships which are so strong that they can be said to be causal, or weak and casual. Essentially the difference between the two would mean that respondents who consumed substance were as a result driven to engage in violence, or simply that these consumers and abusers of substances were “more likely” to become violent. In this section the consumption of substances is treated as the independent variable and indicators of violence dependent in the first instance, however where trends do not emerge, efforts will be made to establish whether violence might influence the consumption of substances, although this is not the primary concern of the study.

### X [a] ALCOHOL USE AND VIOLENCE:

<b>TABLE 14: ALCOHOL USE AND VIOLENCE</b>												
	Weapon Usage	Age of Weapon Usage	Involvement in a Fight with Weapons	Frequency of Involvement in Fights with Weapons	Weapon Carrying	Age of Weapon Carrying	Frequency of Weapon Carrying	Reason for Weapon Carrying	Reason for Weapon Ownership	Age of Weapon Ownership	Fight Locations	Gang Membership
Causal Relationship												
Causal Relationship												
No Apparent Relationship	•	?	?	?	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	

Table 14 presents the relationship between alcohol use and violence. It refers to alcohol use that is one off, or recreational and indicates that such usage does not increase the users propensity to arm themselves, or engage in violent activity. In some instance the analysis is incomplete as indicated by the use of a "?". This refers to instances where it was impossible to asses the strength of the relationship using the chi square test because all of the respondents in that category used alcohol once or casually, hence the impact of a negative response cannot be established.

#### X [b] ALCOHOL ABUSE VIOLENCE:

TABLE 15: ALCOHOL ABUSE AND VIOLENCE												
	Weapon Usage	Age of Weapon Usage	Involvement in a Fight with Weapons	Frequency of Involvement in Fights with Weapons	Weapon Carrying	Age of Weapon Carrying	Frequency of Weapon Carrying	Reason for Weapon Carrying	Reason for Weapon Ownership	Age of Weapon Ownership	Fight Locations	Gang Membership
Causal Relationship												
Casual Relationship					•				•	•	•	
No Apparent Relationship	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	

In relation to the abuse of alcohol (based on the definition offered above) some relationships have emerged in relation to the impact that alcohol abuse has on the respondent's proclivity to indulge in violent activity. It should be noted, however, that in some instances such as the involvement in fights with weapons, an inverse relationship emerged which does not advance the central thesis of this study. Here it was observed that users of alcohol who considered themselves casual, were more inclined to become involved in fights than users who considered themselves habitual. Since relationships of this type were likely to have emerged from the large quantity of casual alcohol users, it was stated that there is no apparent relationship.

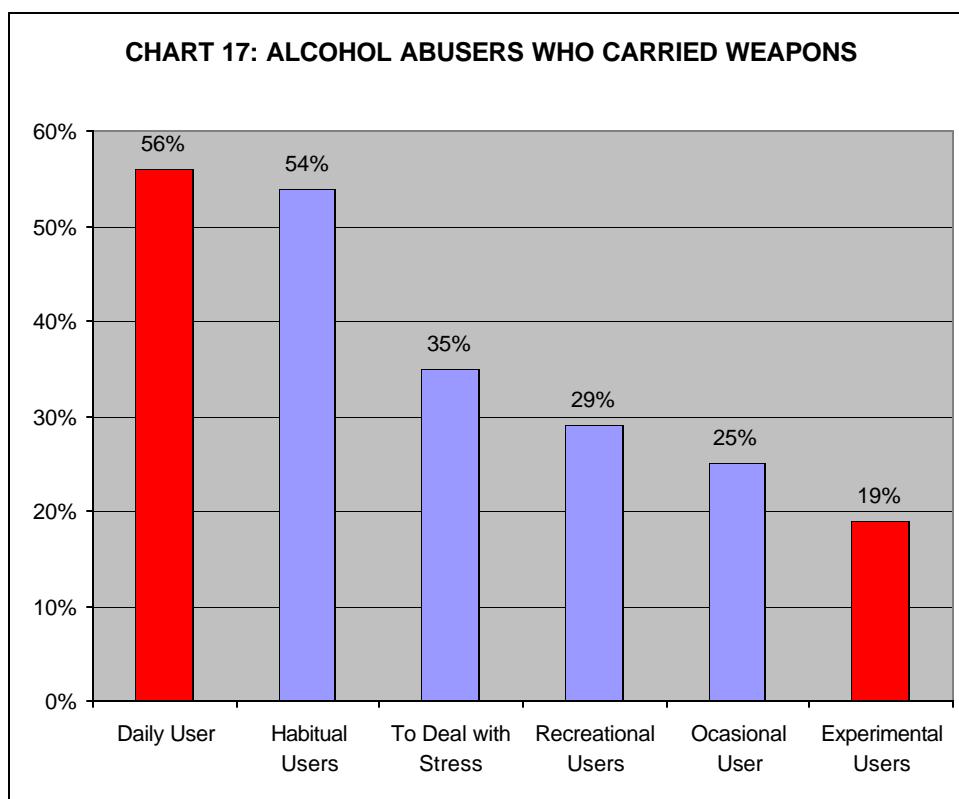


Chart 17 reflects the relationship between the abuse of alcohol and the carrying of weapons. It combines data from indicators that solicited information on the reasons for using alcohol and the frequency with which this substance is used. This relationship is not a terribly strong one, but nonetheless it is clear that persons who abused alcohol in the survey were more likely to have carried weapons, since almost three times as many persons who used alcohol frequently throughout the day carried weapons as those who experimented with alcohol.

A relationship, which is similarly weak, suggests that the alcohol abuser is more likely to own a weapon for protection. Some 94% of habitual users of alcohol who carried weapons, indicated that they did so for protection, compared to 81% of recreational users who argued they needed weapons for protection. The distance between these two categories widens to some extent if we add to the abuser category the number of persons who used alcohol to deal with the stresses of life. 75% of these persons, who owned weapons, indicated that they did so for protection, which would render an overall average of 85% of abusers who owned weapons for protection.

The ages when alcohol abusers acquired weapons presents an interesting trend, the reasons for which are uncertain. The data suggest that alcohol abusers acquired weapons between 13 and 20 and this acquisition was most pronounced between 15 and 18. The recreational user on the other hand, experienced the highest rate of acquisition around the same time, but started at age 10 and continued until age 27.

In as much as “the block” was identified earlier as the most popular place for fighting to take place, the fact that such a high proportion of persons who use alcohol to deal with the proverbial stresses and strains of life, indicated they fight on the block is a cause for concern. Since these persons are essentially alcohol dependent, it would appear that this particular variety of dependence that is stress related particularly predisposes those affected to fighting on the block. Table 15 presents this and other data on the places that habitual and recreational drinkers fought.

**TABLE 16: ALCOHOL ABUSE AND LOCATIONS FOR FIGHTS**

	Fêtes	Hanging on the Block	Sports events	On the road	School	Home	Bus Terminal/Bus	Work	Overseas	All of the above	Shop
Habitual Usage	42%	24%		10%	14%		5%			5%	
Recreational Usage	26%	25%	14%	4%	16%	7%	4%	2%			2%
Usage To deal with Stresses		60%	20%	20%							
Experimental Usage		50%	17%		17%	17%					
Do not use Alcohol									50%	50%	
Usage to Encourage Others			33%	33%	33%						
Usage for Health Reasons						100%					

## X [c] MARIJUANA USE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE:

**TABLE 17: MARIJUANA USE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE**

	Weapon Usage	Age of Weapon Usage	Involvement in a Fight with Weapons	Frequency of Involvement in Fights with Weapons	Weapon Carrying	Age of Weapon Carrying	Frequency of Weapon Carrying	Reason for Weapon Carrying	Reason for Weapon Ownership	Age of Weapon Ownership	Fight Locations	Gang Membership
Causal Relationship												
Casual Relationship	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
No Apparent Relationship												

Table 17 summarises the relationships between the use of marijuana and several indicators of violence and the pattern of influence is immediately obvious. In every single instance it is apparent that persons who used marijuana experimentally or recreationally were more inclined to manifest violent attributes to some extent.

The first indicator examined is weapon usage and here 26% of persons who tried marijuana carried or used a weapon at some point, compared to 6% of those who never tried marijuana. This establishes a relatively strong, although not causal relationship between marijuana indulgence and the use of a weapon. A similar relationship is seen in relation to marijuana users involvement in fights with weapons. Here 33% of persons who admitted having used the drug had been involved in a fight with a weapon, while only 8% of those who did not smoke were involved in a fight in the past. These data also suggest that marijuana users fought more frequently since most persons who did not smoke were involved in one or two fights, while the smokers fought more regularly.

**CHART 18: IMPACT OF FREQUENT USE ON FIGHTING AND THE USE OF WEAPONS**

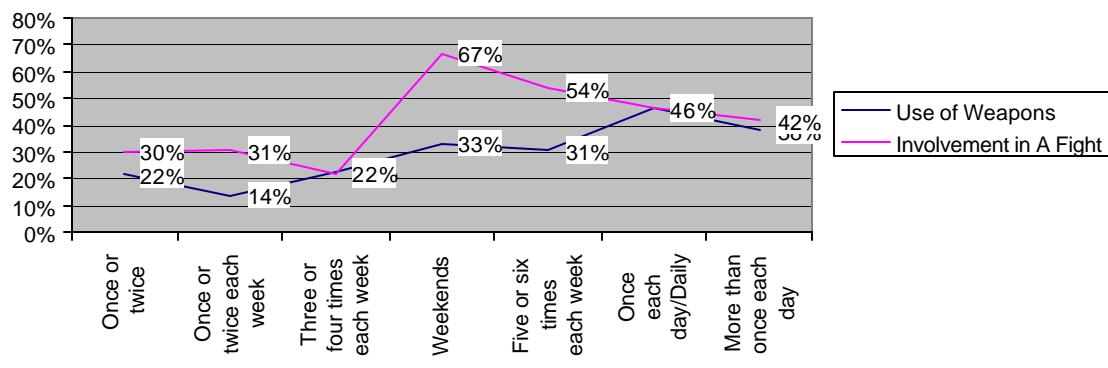
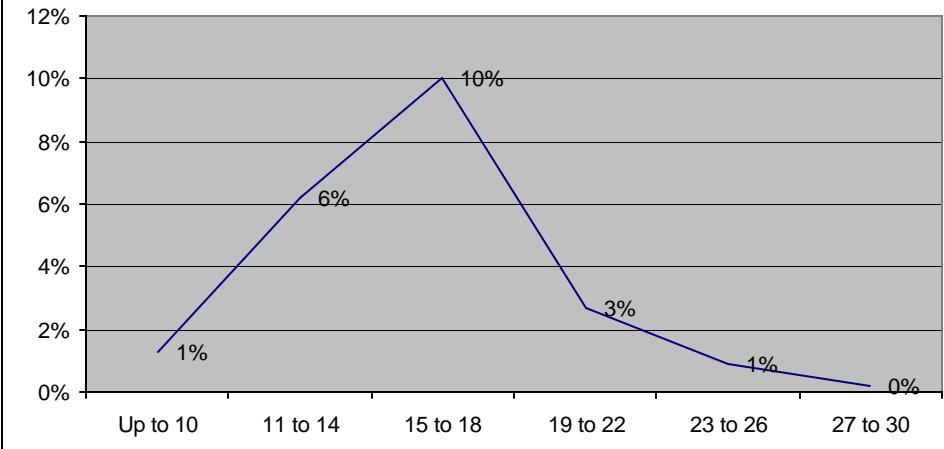


Chart 18 examines impact that frequent marijuana usage had on the inclination of respondents to fight and use weapons. It is evident here that as marijuana usage moved from a single use experiment, to a daily exercise, the user appeared more likely to have fought and used a weapon in the past. This helps to confirm the existence of a relationship between these two variables and moreover suggests that the inclination towards fighting and the use of weapons is enhanced by more frequent use of marijuana.

The relationship of marijuana experimentation to the age at which persons used weapons is less strong and somewhat more curious. Persons experimenting with marijuana appeared to begin carrying weapons later and the age group for carrying seems more concentrated. This information is presented diagrammatically in chart 19.

**CHART 19: AGE OF WEAPON CARRIAGE**



Marijuana users also appeared to have increased need for protection based on their responses to the question on the reasons for weapon ownership and carrying. In both instance persons who used marijuana indicated that they owned and used weapons for protection in larger quantities than persons who did not smoke. Some 87% of persons who smoked marijuana owned weapons for protection, while 72% of non-smokers indicated that they required such protection. When the issue was put to respondents from the perspective of actual weapon carrying, the quantity of smokers requiring protection with weapons moved to 90%, which was some 10-percentage points higher than that non-smokers.

The analysis of the locations where marijuana smokers fought is also quite interesting and reflects a greater inclination on the part of the smokers to fight outdoors or at public locations. This comparison is highlighted in Table 18, which shows comparative rates of fighting which are in some cases three times as high.

**TABLE 18: LOCATION FOR MARIJUANA USER'S FIGHTS**

	Fetes	Hanging on the Block	Sports events	On the road	School	Home	Friends house	Bus Terminal/Bus	Work	Overseas	All of the above	Shop
Never Tried Marijuana	4%	17%	8%	7%	40%	8%	4%	4%	3%	0%	1%	3%
Tried Marijuana	24%	32%	10%	10%	13%	5%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%

Finally, the extent to which marijuana use contributed to involvement in a gang was tested and here also there is a strong relationship between the use of marijuana and membership of a gang. Among the persons who currently belong to a gang, we have a situation where there is a greater likelihood that a marijuana smoker will NOT to belong to a gang, since 54% of current gang members did not smoke marijuana. The situation is, however reversed when we consider past gang members. Some 68% of these persons once smoked marijuana presenting an interesting contrast.

## X [d] COCAINE USE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE:

TABLE 19: COCAINE USE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE													
	Weapon Usage	Age of Weapon Usage	Involvement in a Fight with Weapons	Frequency of Involvement in Fights with Weapons	?	Weapon Carrying	Age of Weapon Carrying	Frequency of Weapon Carrying	Reason for Weapon Carrying	Reason for Weapon Ownership	Age of Weapon Ownership	Fight Locations	Gang Membership
Causal Relationship													
Casual Relationship									•	•	•		
No Apparent Relationship	•	•	•	•		•					•	•	•

Table 19 consolidates the relationship between cocaine use, abuse and violence. This consolidation is severely handicapped by the fact that a small percentage of respondents actually used or abused cocaine. As a result the conclusion derived there from should be treated with scepticism since these cannot reflect any trend in the wider population. Nonetheless it can be seen that there is very little relationship between any of the indicators of violence and the use of cocaine. This should however, not be interpreted to mean that there are no such associations, but instead that no such associations were evident in the sample chosen.

It was noticeable that all of the cocaine users carried weapons which would imply a causal relationship if the quantity of users were a more significant component of the population. Further it was observed that weapons were carried frequently, owned and carried for the purposes of protection. This frequency is interesting largely because it compares so unfavourably with the other categories of substance users such as marijuana users, 35% of whom carried weapons some or all of the time. In contradistinction, 100% of cocaine users carried weapons some or all of the time.

## X [e] GENERAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE:

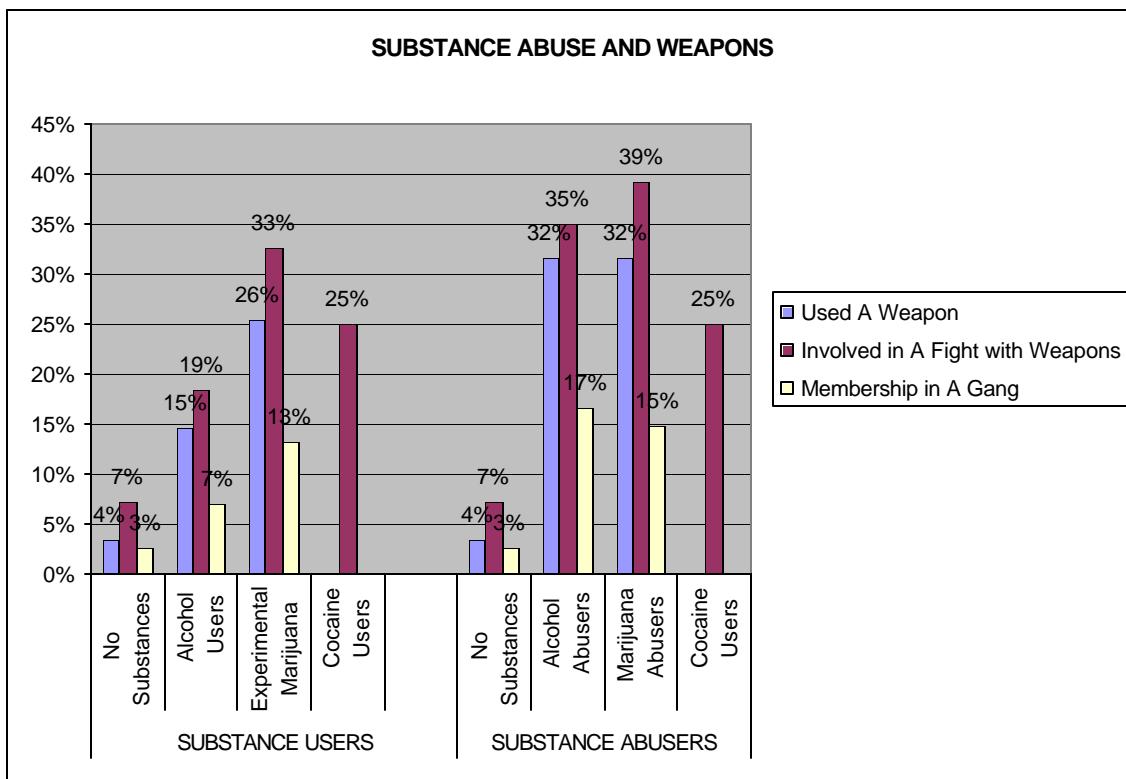


Chart 20 presents an analysis of the impact that the use and abuse of three substances had on the inclination to use weapons and join gangs. These data refer to respondents who used weapons and were involved in gangs, but at the same time satisfied the profile desired. As such the analysis represents a microanalysis of those persons who manifested violent traits, to establish the quantity of substance abusers that comprised each characteristic of violent behaviour.

It is immediately evident that marijuana and alcohol have differing impacts on the proclivity of persons to fight, use weapons and join gangs, hence the "No Substance Used" category was added to facilitate comparison between those who indulged in substances and those who did not experiment with any of the substances. Evidently marijuana abusers accounted for the most significant component of those who were involved in violent activity, while experimental users lagged behind slightly. Data presented for cocaine is inconclusive since the quantity of people admitting to using this substance is too small to allow for comparison, hence the imputation that there were more cocaine users among those involved in violent activity, ought to be treated with some caution.

**CHART 21: SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND FIGHTS**

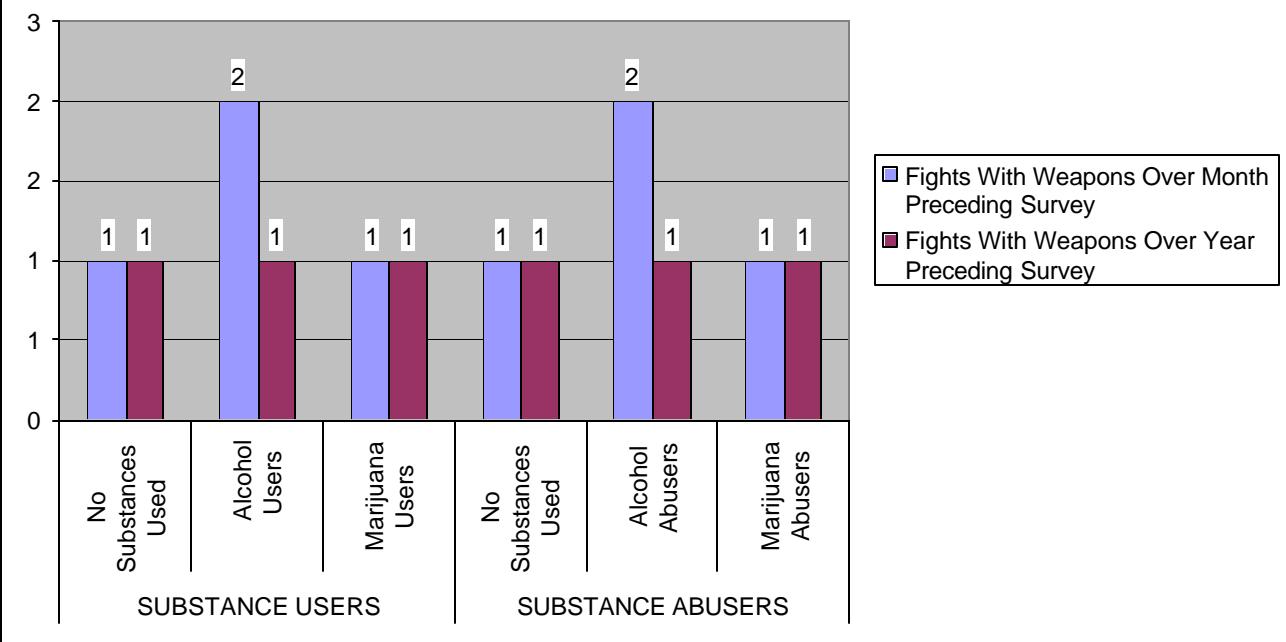
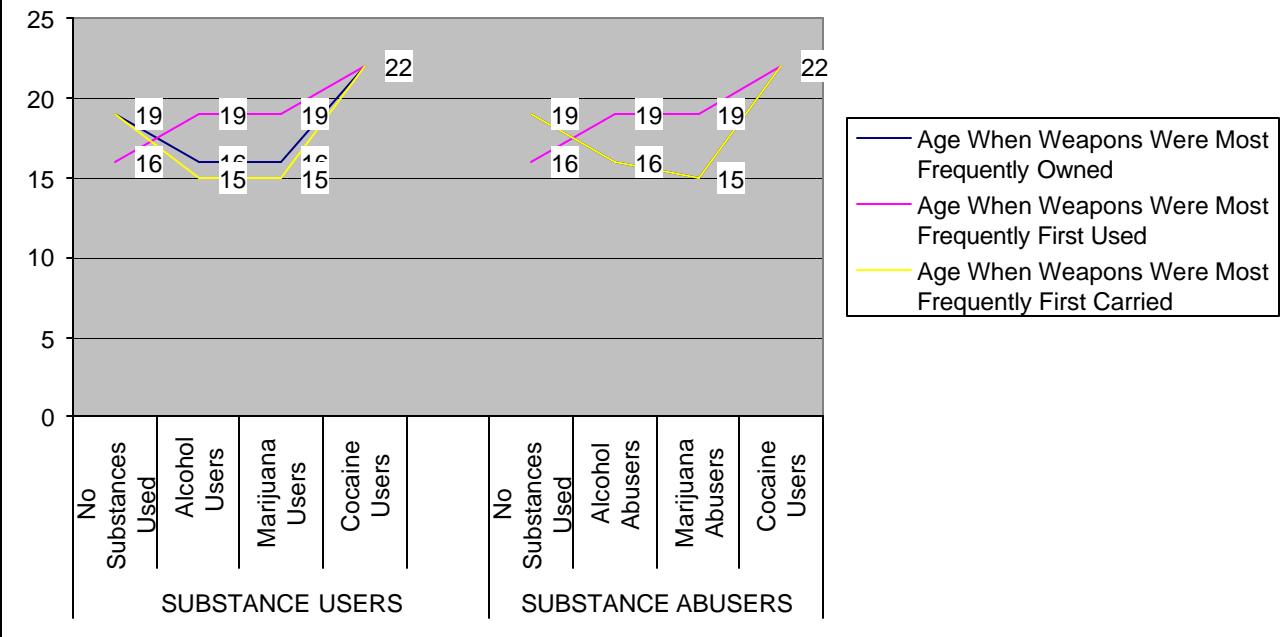


Chart 21 attempts to demonstrate the impact that substance abuse has on the age of persons who fought in the period which the survey studied. It therefore shows the modal number of fights that persons who used these substances had. It should be noted that most respondents did not actually fight, hence this analysis seeks to dissect the group that did fight to establish what substances might have contributed to this behaviour. Hence we can see that generally persons who fought did so on one or two occasions and the only substance that appears to have resulted in more fights is alcohol. It is noteworthy here that there was little difference between use and abuse as it relates to the quantity of fights.

Chart 22 facilitates a comparison of the ages of persons when they procured carried and used weapons. As with other areas in this section, most people did not own, carry or use weapons, so these data speak to the persons who did so and highlights the most common age where this happened. We can see that there is little difference between the most common ages for users and abusers, however indulgence in alcohol and marijuana seems to have influenced the ownership and carrying of weapons carrying of weapons at a younger age, while actual use of weapons was higher among marijuana users.

**CHART 22: SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND THE AGE OF ACQUISITION**



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The preceding document presents a relatively clear link between violence and the use and abuse of alcohol and marijuana. It has been demonstrated that persons who experimented with these substances were more likely to have been involved in violent activity and that this exposure to violence was increased when the substance moved from alcohol to marijuana.

Interestingly, 86% of respondents, which is the vast majority, agreed that violence and crime have increased and moreover that such increases are related to drug activity, which is the major finding of this study. Several suggestions have also been offered by respondents to reduce these levels of violence and while these suggestion would better be analysed in a qualitative study, it is useful to note that there is agreement that increased violence represents a problem, which those involved are concerned about.

It would however appear that there is a common perception that the state ought to be strengthened to deal with these increases and that there should be more enforcement officers, stiffer penalties and the provision of more employment. These were the recommendations made by the top 30% of those who offered suggestions. Interestingly enough this approach pays little attention to the cause of such violence, but presumes that the manifestations can be addressed unilaterally. The foregoing, however, has established the fact that some violence is related to substance abuse and perhaps this introduces a more socio-psychological dimension to the problem that will require an examination of factors which contribute to substance abuse. This approach therefore would address the root cause of increased violence and promises a more comprehensive reaction to the perceived increases in crime and violence nationally.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE USED FOR NATIONAL SURVEY**

#### **Substance Use and Violence in Barbados Survey: A Community Perspective**

*Introduction: The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) is conducting a survey to determine the level of substance use and violence in the community, risk factors for substance use and violence, and the extent to which the two are related. The interviewers wish to record your responses to the questions that they will ask you. Your responses will be anonymous and confidential and we are therefore urging you to be as truthful as possible. Thank you for your co-operation.*

Community.....  
no.....

ED no.....

Survey

The following are general questions about yourself.

#### **A. General**

A1. Gender                    1. male    2. female

A2. What is your date of birth:...../...../.....  
(dd/ mm/ yyyy)

A3. How old were you on your last birthday? .....years

A4. At present, what is your marital status?

1. Married
2. Common-Law
3. Single
4. Divorced
5. Separated
6. Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A5. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

\*A6. Which of the following best describes what you have mostly done during the past month?

1. Attending School (Secondary)
2. Attending SJPP or any other vocational/trade/technical school
3. Attending Barbados Youth Service
4. Only studying for GCE/CXC at private/evening classes
5. Only working full-time
6. Only working part time
7. Working full-time and studying
8. Working part-time and studying
9. Not working, not studying
10. Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A7. What is your current occupation?\_\_\_\_\_

\*A7a. Over the last 12 months have you been

1. unemployed and not seeking employment
2. unemployed but seeking employment
3. in part-time employment
4. in full-time employment
5. other \_\_\_\_\_

A7b. How many months have you been employed over the last 12 months?

.....month(s)

A8. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

1. None, no school
2. Primary
3. Secondary: (**please circle form level**)       1    2    3    4    5
4. Post Sec A'level, Undergrad, postgrad
5. Polytechnic
6. Community College
7. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A9. Have you ever dropped out of school (including polytechnic, college, university)?

1. Yes      2. No      **If 'no' go to A 11**

A10. When did you drop out of school? (**state level**)

---

A10a Why did you drop out of school?

---

A11. Do you have any vocational skills? (**carpentry, masonry etc**)

1. Yes      2. No

A12. What is your religion?

1. Anglican
2. Baptist
3. SDA
4. Jehovah's Witness
5. Methodist
6. Pentecostal
7. Roman Catholic
8. Muslim
9. Rastafarian
10. None
11. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A13. Do you live in this neighbourhood?

1. Yes, I have lived here all my life
2. Yes, I have lived here for at least one year
3. Yes, I have lived here for at least one month
4. No, but I lived here at least one month ago
5. No, but I lived here at least one year ago
6. No, I have never lived here

A14. With whom do you currently live? (**tick all that apply**)

1. Mother
2. Father
3. Brother
4. Sister
5. Spouse
6. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A15. How would you best describe your relationship with your.....

Mother

.....

Father

.....

Brother(s)/Sister(s)

.....

Spouse

.....

Friend(s)

.....

A16. How many times have you changed households over the past 12 months?

\_\_\_\_\_ times

A17. Are you a member of any group? (**e.g. sports, cultural, religious**)

1. Yes
2. No

**If “no” go to A18**

A17a If 'yes', please state the groups

---

A17b. What do you like most about being in a group? \_\_\_\_\_

A17c. What do you like least about being in a group? \_\_\_\_\_

**The following questions seek to determine how you feel about yourself in general.**

A18.a. Do you feel good about yourself? 1.

Yes 2. No

b. Do you have a lot to be proud of? 1. Yes

2. No c. Do you think you are a person  
of worth? 1. Yes 2. No d. Do you think  
you are "no good"? 1. Yes 2. No e.  
Do you think you are able to do most things as well as other people? 1.

Yes 2. No

A19. How would you rate your health?

1. excellent 2. very good 3. good 4. fair 5.  
poor

\*A20. In general, you see your self as a person who is.....  
**(tick one)**

1. happy
2. content
3. peaceful
4. sad
5. angry
6. irritable
7. depressed
8. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\*A21. Do you ever think about hurting or killing someone?

1. never/ hardly ever
2. some of the time
3. almost always/ always

A22 Do you have difficulty sleeping?

Yes                    No

## B. Substance Use

These following questions will seek to determine which, if any, of a list of substances you have ever used, how often you use them and why.

Substance	a. Have you ever tried:	b. How old were you when you first tried:	c. Who first introduced you to:	d. With whom do you usually use:
B1. Alcohol				
B2. Marijuana				
B3. Cocaine				
B4. Heroin				
B5. Other _____				
B6. Other _____				

Substance	e. Over the past month how often have you used:	f. Over the past 12 months how often have you used	g. In general, why do you use:
B1. Alcohol			
B2. Marijuana			
B3. Cocaine			
B4. Heroin			
B5. Other _____			
B6. Other _____			

### KEY:

- a:** 0 – no; 1 – yes
- c:** 0 – self; 1 – friend; 2 – family; 3 – other (specify)
- d:** 0 – self; 1 – friend; 2 – family; 3 – other (specify)
- e:** 0 – no use; 1 – once or twice; 2 – once or twice each week; 3 – three or four times each week; 4 - five or six times each week; 5 - once each day 6 - more than once each day;
- f:** 0 – none in the last 12 months; 1 – once a month or less often; 2 – two or three times a month; 3 – once a week; 4 – two or three times a week; 5 – four or five times a week; 6 - everyday;

\*B7. Do you think that using these substances makes a person

1. More appealing    2. The same    3. Less appealing    4. Do not know

## C. Violence

These following questions will seek to determine your exposure to weapons and/or violence.

\*C1. Have you ever carried a weapon?

1. No
2. Yes(past month)
3. Yes (past 12 months)

**If “no” go to C2**

C1 a. How old were you when you first carried a weapon? \_\_\_\_\_ years

C1 b. Who first encouraged you to carry a weapon?\_\_\_\_\_

\*C1 c. How often do you carry a weapon?

1. All the time
2. most of the time
3. sometimes
4. special occasions (fete, dub fete, hanging on the block, sports events)
5. never
6. other \_\_\_\_\_

C1 d. With whom do you usually carry a weapon?

1. Alone
2. Friends
3. Family (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
4. Never
5. Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

C1 e During the past year, what kind of weapon did you carry most often?  
**(tick all that apply)**

1. A handgun
2. Other guns such as a rifle, shot gun or pipe gun
3. A knife or razor
4. A machete (**collins**)
5. A club, stick bat or pipe
6. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
7. I did not carry a weapon in the last month

C1 f. Why do you carry a weapon?

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C2 What type of weapons do you own?

1. A handgun
2. Other guns such as a rifle, shot gun or pipe gun
3. A knife or razor
4. A machete (**collins**)
5. A club, stick bat or pipe
6. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
7. I do not own a weapon - **go to C3**

C2 a. How old were you when you first owned a weapon? \_\_\_\_\_ years

C2 b. Who first encouraged you to own a weapon? \_\_\_\_\_

C2 c. Why do you own a weapon?

---

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---

C3. Have you ever been involved in a fight where a weapon was used?

1. Yes      2. No      **If “no”, go to c4**

\*C3a How many times have you been involved in a fight where weapons were used?

\_\_\_\_\_ times in the past month

\_\_\_\_\_ times in past 12 months

C3b. Where did the fight(s) occur?

1. Fete
2. dub fete
3. hanging on the block
4. sports events
5. other \_\_\_\_\_

C4. Have you ever used a weapon?                    1. Yes            2. No            **If**  
**"no", go to c5**

C4a. How old were you when you first used a weapon? \_\_\_\_\_ years

\*C5 Do you think that carrying or using a weapon makes a person.....

1. More appealing
2. The Same
3. Less appealing
4. Do not know

\*C6 Have you ever belonged to a gang?

1. No
2. Yes, but not anymore
3. Yes, I still do

\*C7 Have you ever experienced any of the following at home?  
**(tick all that apply)**

1. Actual or threatened physical harm
2. Withholding money or being prevented from getting or holding a job
3. Isolation from family or friends
4. Verbal abuse (cursing, swearing, shouting)
5. Substance use by a parent. (**alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, other**)

C8 There seems to have been an increase in violence and violent crimes in the recent past. Do you agree with this statement?

1. Yes      2. No

C9 Give reasons why(**refer to answer given in c8**)

---

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C10 If yes, (**refer to answer given in c8**) what do you think needs to be done in order to stop this violence from occurring?

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**APPENDIX II**  
**COMMUNITIES IN WHICH INTERVIEWS WERE CONDUCTED**

COMMUNITY	NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INTERVIEWS
Kingsland Terrace	25	2.1
West Terrace	25	2.1
Bush Hall	25	2.1
Coach Hill	20	1.7
Melrose/Edgehill	19	1.6
Dalkeith	17	1.4
Baywoods	16	1.3
Bridge Road	16	1.3
Collymore Rock	15	1.2
Edgehill Terrace	14	1.2
Ellerton Housing Area	14	1.2
Bay Street	13	1.1
Culloden Road	13	1.1
Forde's Road	12	1.0
Bosc belle	12	1.0
Gall Hill/ Kingsland	12	1.0
Walkers Road Workman's	11	.9
Arthur Seat – Edgehill	11	.9
Kingsland Crescent	11	.9
Josey Hill	11	.9
Brighton Ten	11	.9
Frankly/Doughlin Road	11	.9
Rendezvous Hill	10	.8
Eastmont	10	.8
Bowmanston	10	.8
Rockhampton Road	10	.8
Alkins	10	.8
Goodland	10	.8
Greame Hall	10	.8
Downey Gap	10	.8
Rendezvous	9	.7
Husbands	9	.7
Kendal Hill	9	.7
Belle View Gap	9	.7
Lower Burney	9	.7
Kings Street	9	.7
Jessamy Lane	9	.7

Sugar Hill	9	.7
Four Roads	9	.7
Sergeant Village	9	.7
Highway C	8	.7
Perogative St, Judes	8	.7
Bowling Alley Road	8	.7
Nelson Street	8	.7
Deacons Road	8	.7
Holders Land	8	.7
Bays Water	8	.7
Bakers	8	.7
Mullins	8	.7
Richmond	8	.7
Brereton	8	.7
Top Rock	8	.7
Pasture Road	8	.7
Clapham	8	.7
College Savannah	8	.7
Belle Road	7	.6
Harmony Cottage	7	.6
Castle	7	.6
Wildey	7	.6
Parkinson Field	7	.6
St. Stephen's	7	.6
Boarded Hall	7	.6
Woodbourne	7	.6
Clover Crescent	7	.6
Meadow Vale Clermont	7	.6
Yearwood Road	7	.6
Amity Lodge	7	.6
Worthing View	7	.6
Cutting Road	7	.6
Bank Hall Main Road	7	.6
Britton's Road	7	.6
Club Morgan	7	.6
Trents	7	.6
Water Hall	7	.6
Kirton	7	.6
Flint Hall	7	.6
Redman Road	6	.5
Mc. Kullocks	6	.5
CH-WH	6	.5

Wh Terrace	6	.5
Free Hill	6	.5
Kendal Hill Park	6	.5
Dash Valley	6	.5
Six Road	6	.5
Bridge Gap	6	.5
Belair	6	.5
Shorey Village	6	.5
Roebuck Street	6	.5
Haynes Hill	6	.5
Sk.Pav Cross Dw Gap	6	.5
South Road	6	.5
My Lords Hill	6	.5
Hope Plantation	5	.4
Hope	5	.4
Middleton	5	.4
St. George Church Road	5	.4
Retreat Highway x	5	.4
Peter's Road	5	.4
St. Clements	5	.4
Chance Hall	5	.4
Farm	5	.4
Diamond Corner	5	.4
St. Lucy Church	5	.4
Factory Avenue	5	.4
Union Hall	5	.4
Brecon Road	5	.4
JL Number 1	5	.4
Wh Road 2	5	.4
Stanmore	5	.4
Ellerslie	5	.4
Silver Hill	5	.4
Silver Hill Village	5	.4
Station Hill	5	.4
Bank Hall/Eagle Hall	5	.4
Warrens Terrace South	5	.4
Kingsland South	5	.4
Union Hall Development Road	5	.4
Skeete's Road	5	.4
Britton's New Road	5	.4
Observatory	5	.4

Bank Hall Corner & Main Road	5	.4
Sergeants Ten.	5	.4
ABC Highway	4	.3
Belle View Group	4	.3
Bulkeley Road	4	.3
Jackman's Alley	4	.3
St.George	4	.3
Emmerton Lane	4	.3
Lakes Folly	4	.3
Kensington New Road	4	.3
St. Mary's Row	4	.3
Mason Hall Street	4	.3
Horse Hill	4	.3
Wellington Street	4	.3
Cherry Tree	4	.3
Gibbs	4	.3
Ealing Road	4	.3
Wh/Ch	4	.3
Wotton Housing Area	4	.3
Dean's Village	4	.3
Hampton	4	.3
Boscobelle Road	4	.3
Alkins Gap	4	.3
B'town/Black Rock	4	.3
Savannah Road	4	.3
Layne's Bridge Road	4	.3
Country Road	4	.3
Blades Hill	4	.3
Supers Road	4	.3
Mangrove Junction	4	.3
Kingston Terrace	4	.3
Licorish Village	3	.2
Rendezvous Terrace	3	.2
Tudor Street	3	.2
Friendly Hall	3	.2
Wh/Ch Road	3	.2
Carmichael	3	.2
Hanschell Road	3	.2
Maxwell Hill	3	.2
Advent Avenue	3	.2
Fortesure Road	3	.2

Blades Hill Number 2	3	.2
Blades Hill Number 1	3	.2
Apes Hill	3	.2
Old Railway	2	.2
Plantain Walk	2	.2
Chapman Lane	2	.2
Easy Hall	2	.2
Harrison's Point	2	.2
1st Avenue Free Hill	2	.2
St. Clements Road	2	.2
Rock Road	2	.2
Pumpkin Road	2	.2
Greave's Land	2	.2
Warrens Heights	2	.2
Coral Glade	2	.2
Plumgrove	2	.2
Perry Gap	2	.2
Licorish New Road	1	.1
Exmouth Gap	1	.1
Pine	1	.1
Wh Terrace 2	1	.1
Wh Road	1	.1
Broomefield	1	.1
Chance Hall	1	.1
Prior Park	1	.1
Rotund Avenue	1	.1
Wotton Housing Area	1	.1
Flagstaff	1	.1
Total Selected	1211	100.0