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Exploring a possible linkage between drug addiction and school dropouts in a western Massachusetts urban school system.

Miguel A. Ayerve

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EXPLORING A POSSIBLE LINKAGE BETWEEN DRUG ADDICTION AND SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN A WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

A Dissertation Presented

By

MIGUEL A. AYERVE

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September 1988

School of Education
EXPLORING A POSSIBLE LINKAGE BETWEEN DRUG ADDICTION AND SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN A WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

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DEDICATION

To Teresita, Carmen Lucía, and José Ignacio, the most precious fortune God has given me, to bless my life.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study would not have been possible without the valuable cooperation of many people, such as school administrators, counselors, teachers, parents, and friends I talked to. My sincere thanks to all of you for sharing your time, experience, and professionalism so generously with me.

My deepest expression of gratitude to the members of the Dissertation Committee, Dr. Luis Fuentes, Chairman, Dr. Gloria Figueroa de Guevara, member, Dr. Harold Boudreau, member, for their direction, advice, encouragement, understanding, guidance, and recommendations.

A particular note of thanks to the Directors of the Drug Rehabilitation Centers in Springfield, who so willingly offered me their assistance and let me spend hours listening to the residents.

To you, dear drug-addicts, my thanks, many thanks, recognition and respect. Sharing with me your experiences, you gave me a valuable insight of what it means to be a drug-addict, for a better understanding of what you went through, and like you, so many thousands of young people. I wholeheartedly wish you a happy and courageous return to normal life, free of drugs.
ABSTRACT

EXPLORING A POSSIBLE LINKAGE BETWEEN DRUG ADDICTION AND SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN A WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEM, A CASE STUDY

SEPTEMBER 1988

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It is commonly accepted that drug abuse among people of different ages, economic classes and social levels is the number one concern in the nation now and that, during the last twenty years, this national problem has reached alarming proportions.

The epidemic of illicit drugs has reached American high-school students and is spreading rapidly.

On the other hand, recent studies show that 25 percent of all high-school students nationwide are dropping out of school. Many are the causes for this phenomenon. However, this research focused on one major possible cause for some students to quit school: drug abuse or drug addiction.

This study attempts to determine if the use of illicit drugs is the major reason some dropouts left school before graduation in a specific urban system.
This research was carried out through a case study approach and the main research instrument was a series of in-depth interviews. The subjects interviewed were residents of different drug rehabilitation centers in Springfield, Massachusetts. The researcher selected this option since a number of practical and legal difficulties existed in interviewing active students in the Springfield high schools.

The more important excerpts from the six interviews are presented in Chapter IV of the dissertation, followed by a conclusion of common characteristics and an analysis from an educational point of view.

Based on the facts contained in the interviews, the main conclusion of the research is that there seems to be, in fact, a strong linkage between drug abuse and dropping out of school, before getting a high school diploma.

Finally, a discussion on Drug Education and a Drug Prevention Program is presented as a means of assisting students in avoiding involvement with illicit drugs.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Background of the Problem

On September 14th, 1986, in the first nationally televised speech by Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Reagan, the President warned that "drugs are menacing our society. Drug abuse is a repudiation of everything America is. The destructiveness and human wreckage mock our heritage."

Drug abuse is the number one concern in the nation now. If it is true that drugs have always existed in our country in the modality of drug abuse, it is a common fact that, during the last two decades, this national problem has reached alarming proportions.

In the 1970s, the problem of drug abuse was defined with a new word: "crisis." A nationwide public-opinion survey in mid-1971 indicated that "drug addiction" occupied the third highest place with the public on a list of important national problems. Since then, crash programs have been introduced at the federal, state, and local levels.

It is clear that drug abuse exists among all different ethnic groups, Whites, Blacks, Latins, Asians, and Native Americans. Drug users are found among people of different social and economic
classes; low, middle, and upper social classes. It is interesting
to note that newspapers report cases of children of prominent people
apprehended using one drug or another (Glasscote, 1972). On April
26, 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education, after
assessing the current status of our public school system and
analyzing the problems our schools are confronted with, drug abuse
and dropouts included, issued the warning: "Our nation is at risk" (NEA Today, January 1988).

Drug Abuse in America Today

Statistical data will give us a better and deeper view of the
concrete problem of drug abuse in our nation.

Drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, now cause 30 percent of
all Americans to die prematurely. Drug use costs the national
economy over 100 billion dollars a year. Young adults ranging in
age from 18 to 25 are the segment of our population that use drugs
most heavily; 41 percent use marijuana; 20 percent use cocaine; and
84 percent use alcohol. Nationally, 57 million people have used
marijuana at least once; 20 million are regular users today. Nearly
2 million Americans will use marijuana or another heavier drug for
the first time this year, 80 percent of them 17 years of age or
younger. Twenty-two million Americans have used cocaine and, of
this number, about 4 million are regular, current users. Nearly 2
million more Americans will use cocaine this year for the first time
(DuPont, 1984).
In a George Gallup poll of 1987, America's teenagers were asked to name the leading threat to their generation. They indicated "Drug Abuse," as number one. This is a clear indication that teenagers are well aware of the danger of drug abuse in our society.

The media give us an alarming view of the drug problem in America. It is estimated by a CBS Television group of reporters who prepared the TV special "48 Hours on Crack Street" in 1987, that every day there are 5000 thousand Americans who get involved with drugs for the first time, the majority of them teenagers. Americans spend 220 million dollars daily on drugs. In an emergency room of a New York hospital, more than 10,000 cases of people intoxicated with drugs or in serious danger of dying because of use of illicit drugs were registered over a one-year period. Sixty percent of the world's drugs are used in the United States. Drug Enforcement agents seize 500 tons of drugs every year, mainly cocaine and marijuana. But this amount constitutes only 15 percent of the total volume of drugs imported to this country ("48 Hours on Crack Street," CBS TV, 1987).

President Reagan, in his televised speech of September 14th, 1986, indicated that "37 federal agencies are working together in a vigorous national effort to fight drugs. Last year alone, ten thousand drug criminals were convicted, 250 million dollars of their assets were seized by the Drug Enforcement Administration. Illegal cocaine is coming to our country at alarming levels and 4 or 5 million people are using it regularly."
The President also said that
500,000 Americans are hooked on heroin, 1 of 12 persons smoke marijuana regularly. The number of regular drug users is still higher between ages 18 and 25. Crack use is like an uncontrolled fire. Drug abuse costs 60 billion dollars a year to the government. This is a problem, a national crisis, that concerns everybody because it destroys the lives of sons and daughters of the United States.

Since this study intends to deal with dropouts who were using illicit drugs during their high school years, this researcher considers that it is important to give thought to the problem of drug abuse in American schools, specifically.

Drug Abuse in American Schools

The epidemic of illicit drugs has reached American schools at the junior and senior high school levels.

According to Newsweek Magazine, March 17, 1986, the "plain fact is that cocaine abuse is the fastest growing drug problem in America for adults and school-age children alike" (p. 58). It appears that coke is available at low prices, and sold even inside the schools.

At Cherry Hill East High School, Richard Minardi, undercover agent for New Jersey's Camden County Narcotics Strike Force, identified students who were selling all kinds of drugs, including cocaine. Camden County Prosecutor, Samuel Asbell, says that at "Cherry Hill East High School and nearby schools, almost half of the students used drugs" (Newsweek, March 17, 1986, p. 57).

Nowadays cocaine is the most common drug used by teenagers who are attending high school. The new coke, named "crack," is not
snorted but smoked; it is far more intense than snorting cocaine. Crack is quicker, much more euphoric, and more apt to addict. Mr. Arnold Washton, a psychopharmacologist at Fair Oaks Hospital in Summit, New Jersey, says that "crack is the most addictive drug known to man right now. It is almost instantaneous addiction" (Newsweek, March 17, 1986, p. 58). Crack is simply a variant on "freebasing" which is the conversion of sniffable cocaine crystals into a smokeable base from the drug.

There is no question that cocaine, in all its forms, is seeping into the nation's schools. An annual survey conducted by the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan shows the percentage of high school seniors who have ever tried cocaine has nearly doubled in the past 10 years, from 9 percent to 17 percent.

The use of all drugs -- marijuana, stimulants, depressants, etc. -- has leveled off or declined in recent years. Overall, marijuana remains the most widely used illicit drug among high school seniors: 49.6 percent say they have used it within the past year.

Predictably, because of the pattern of cocaine distribution from South America, school-age cocaine abuse is higher in the East and West coasts, but it has also increased in all areas of the country (Newsweek, March 17, 1986, p. 62).

Lloyd Johnston, Program Director of the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan, says that "there is no other industrialized nation in the world that has a comparable proportion of young people involved with illicit drugs" (Newsweek, March 17,
1986, p. 62). Cocaine abuse by school-age children is growing rapidly. Over the past ten years, according to Johnston, the "Michigan survey has recorded steady increase in the percentage of high-school students who say cocaine is available to them; the latest figure for 1985 is 49 percent" (Newsweek, March 17, 1986, p. 63).

The stunning fact is that the same junior high and elementary schools users are the drug traffickers. There are cases of 16-year-old students who make 300 dollars a day selling to their friends, the good customers.

Steve Havel is a detective for the Los Angeles Police Department. He says that "kids are living now a Miami Vice fantasy. What could be the monetary source for a teenage student who wears heavy gold chains, 200-dollar sweat suits, drives a 500SE Mercedes and is seen with 160-dollar Porsche sunglasses?" (Newsweek, March 17, 1986, p. 62).

A serious consequence of selling and using illicit drugs at so early an age is violence. Cocaine wars are now raging in big cities, such as New York, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, where young drug sellers and users are well organized into "gangs," causing daily disturbances in the streets, violence and death. These young dealers are armed heavily with pistols and automatic carbines. And their teenage guards carry weapons as well. An example of this terrible violence: in the past 3 years, 57 persons have been killed in drug-related violence in Oakland, California (Newsweek, March 17, 1986, p. 62).
Cases like the following are not unusual. The Catholic Observer, a monthly publication of the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts, mentions Miss Paula Cooper, a 17-year-old girl, as a receiver of a Christmas card from Cardinal Ugo Poletti, who writes: "Dear Paula, Italians are thinking of you. They would like to take your hand to give you courage and say, 'Merry Christmas!'". Paula Cooper was sentenced to death for stabbing a 78-year-old Bible teacher to death in 1985. She said she was under the influence of drugs when she committed the crime at age 15 (The Catholic Observer, Vol. 35, No. 1, January 15, 1988).

The conclusion is clear: drug abuse in American schools is the most serious social and educational problem confronting us.

The Dropout Problem

Drug abuse on the one hand; dropping out of school on the other. These are the two terms of the relationship the researcher is trying to study. It is also important to focus our attention briefly on the problem of dropouts in America, and then, more specifically, in the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, since the cases to be studied will be from this city (of 160,000 inhabitants) in western Massachusetts.

One of the most recent articles on the subject is the one written by Byron Kunisawa, Director of the Multicultural Prevention Resource Center in San Francisco, California. In reference to the warning made on April 26, 1983, by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, stating that "our nation is at risk,"
Byron Kunisawa replied: "when 25 percent of our students are dropping out and 14 million more are graduating functionally illiterate, we are not a 'nation at risk,' we are 'a nation in crisis'" (NEA Today, January 1988, p. 61).

In the same article, we read that 52 percent of dropouts are unemployed or receiving welfare; the annual cumulative cost of dropouts to American taxpayers is $75 billion dollars in welfare benefits and lost tax revenues; 60 percent of prison inmates are high school dropouts. (The annual cost of housing each inmate is $15,000 dollars, which is roughly the annual tuition for Harvard, Yale, or Stanford.) Eighty-seven percent of pregnant teenagers are high school dropouts.

The elimination of dropouts in America in 1988 would enable the United States to wipe out the entire national debt by 1990, according to Kunisawa (NEA Today, January 1988).

These statistics merely represent a sample of the devastating impact dropouts have on our society.

In the city of Springfield, the problem of dropouts deserves some consideration. In appendices G and H, numerical statistics of the dropouts rate in the Springfield Public School System are included. Statistics of dropouts by senior high school grades are available since 1973. This researcher considered it appropriate to present the number of dropouts in the most current five school years, for grades 9 to 12 (see Appendix G, page 150).
School Year | Total Dropouts | Percentage
--- | --- | ---
1982-83 | 468 | 8.6
1983-84 | 498 | 9.5
1984-85 | 384 | 7.7
1985-86 | 446 | 8.8
1986-87 | 521 | 10.9

These recent figures indicate that an average of 9.1 percent of students from grade 9 to grade 12 drop out of school every year.

The School System, Bureau of Pupil Services, has recorded by priority the reasons for leaving school:

1. Academic Problems
2. Economic Reasons
3. Family Pressure
4. Pregnancy
5. Behavioral Problems
6. Unknown

It is understood that, for the School Department, it is a very sensitive matter to be specific about the use of illicit drugs as a reason for students' leaving school. It would be an extremely difficult job, requiring students to confess their drug problem. Of course, they are not going to do so. In order to establish this fact, it is necessary to meet those students who are using drugs or who used drugs, in a different setting, as this research does. Then we can formulate objective conclusions.
It appears appropriate to indicate that dropping out of school is not a characteristic of a particular ethnic group or age level. While it is true that the grade with the higher number of dropouts is the tenth grade, students who drop out from senior high schools are White, Black, and Hispanic. The classification of dropout students by ethnic groups is not considered essential or important in this study. What is most important is the fact that each dropout is a sign of failure; the dropout alone is not fully responsible: family, church, society, school, television, among others, share, at least indirectly, the responsibility. Each dropout means a loss of human potential to our city and to our nation.

Statement of the Problem

It is a fact discussed daily in the newspapers, in all types of magazines, and also presented frequently on television, that nowadays the use of illicit drugs has reached all economic levels and social groups of our society. Unfortunately, this epidemic has reached the students in schools as well.

Among high school students, the use of illicit drugs has grown to alarming proportions nationwide.

This research intends to explore a possible linkage or relationship between the use of illicit drugs by students during their high school years and dropping out of school.

The magnitude of the problem necessitates some limitations. The study will concentrate on a western Massachusetts urban
school system. In the city of Springfield, an urban school system, we have a fact which, at the same time, is the effect of a cause: a significant number of senior high school students leave school every year before graduation, as has been already indicated with concrete data (see page 9). As an example, during the 1986-1987 school year, 521 high school students, grades 9 to 12, or 10.9 percent of a high school population of 4,759, quit school. The highest number is in the tenth grade.

It is obvious that there is no single cause of this phenomenon. There are many reasons why students quit school: among them, economic reasons, pregnancies, domestic calamities, behavioral and academic problems, peer pressure, etc.

Our attention is focused on one possible cause for students to quit school: drug abuse or drug dependence.

Andrew Hahn (1987) in his article, "Reaching Out to America's Dropouts: What to Do?", published in *Phi Delta Kappan*, December 1987, indicates that a variety of studies have identified 10 conditions as the major risk factors for students in danger of dropping out. These ten conditions are:

1. Behind in grade level and older than classmates;
2. Poor academic performance;
3. Dislike school;
4. Detention and suspension;
5. Pregnancy;
6. Welfare recipients and members of single-parent households;
7. The attractiveness of work;
8. The attraction of military service;
9. Undiagnosed learning disabilities and emotional problems;
10. Language difficulties.

It is interesting to note that Hahn makes no reference to drug abuse as a major risk factor for students dropping out of school.

This researcher will attempt to determine if the use of illicit drugs is one of the major reasons why some dropouts left school before graduation. The problem could also be stated in a question form: Is drug addiction a determining cause for some students to drop out of school before graduation?

This research will use a case study approach.

**Importance of the Study**

Using the case study approach, this researcher has in mind to study in depth the concrete and personal experiences of six dropouts who admitted to having used illicit drugs during their school years, in order to determine if this fact of drug use, was one, if not the only one, of the most decisive causes they had to, ultimately, leave school before graduation.

As the research progresses, it will be imperative to devote some attention to the reasons or motives the former students perceive to have led them to drug use.

Why did they go into drugs? This will be an essential question. In order to get an answer, it will become probably be necessary to make specific references to family and home structures, parental authority, moral standards, lifestyle, economic conditions,
school atmosphere, discipline, peer relationships, music, television programs, movies, etc.

More specifically, it will be very important to this study to find out what role drugs had in the life of these teenagers and the physiological and emotional outcome of using drugs; finally, how their lives were, ultimately, affected.

This study may show that there was an implicit responsibility, somehow, somewhere, of parents or guardians, school administrators, teachers, in the tragic consequences faced by those students now.

It is expected that this study will give parents, school administrators, counselors and teachers, social workers, and probation officers, an opportunity to get more deeply involved in and develop a policy that will help students to remain drug free by carrying out concrete action programs designed to help students who are experimenting with drugs.

The final outcome of this study will be that we can learn a lot from somebody else's painful experiences. The mistakes others have made can keep us from falling into the same tragedy.

If we say that high school students who do drugs periodically sooner or later will be leaving school, and we have no basis for that statement, our assumption will not be logically valid; but, if based on the research of case studies and the principles of sound logic, we can affirm that the use of illicit drugs by high school students leads them to drop out of school, this statement will be valid and acceptable. This could be a contribution.
Definition of Terms

For the content and purpose of this study it is appropriate to define the terms most frequently used in this research, as follows:

Cause: Anything that produces an effect or result.

Dropout: A high school student from grades 9 to 12, who leaves school before graduating.

Drugs: Any chemical, processed or natural substance used as a medicine and, normally, prescribed by a physician and dispensed by a drug store.

Drug Abuse: Uncontrolled and unnecessary use of illicit drugs.

Drug Addict: A person, young or adult, who has become a habitual user of illicit drugs.

Drug Education: Systematic and comprehensive instruction about drugs or illicit drugs, and their effects, normally imparted with the purpose of preventing their use.

Drug Prevention: Advice or practical means geared to help people to avoid the use of illicit drugs.

Effect: Anything brought about by a cause or agent.

High School: An educational institution, public or private, with grades 9 to 12, for boys and girls.

Illicit Drugs: Drugs sold, dispensed, or obtained through legally unauthorized markets.

Logical Induction: The process of mental reasoning from particular facts or individual cases to a general conclusion, through the essential characteristics of those facts.
Rehabilitation Centers: Public or private institutions that offer medical or psychological treatment, or combination of both, to drug addicts or people with a high degree of drug abuse.

Senior Student: A student from grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 who regularly attends school.

Basic Hypothesis of the Study

High school students who frequently use illicit drugs and become drug-addicts, tend to leave and, in most cases, leave school before graduation.

Delimitations

This research is intended to be carried out through a case study approach. The purpose of it, as previously stated, is to explore a possible linkage between drug abuse and dropping out of school among former senior high school students in a western Massachusetts urban school system. Attention will focus on the cause-effect relationship between the two terms of the research: drug abuse and dropping out of school.

In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, we have to say that the problem of drug abuse among teenagers is a very broad problem and that there are many reasons why students leave school before they get a high school diploma. We do not intend to state that drug abuse is the only cause of dropping out of school, but we intend to study only that particular cause.
The search for subjects will be from among former students of the Springfield Public Schools or from any other school system in western Massachusetts in order to be consistent with the original intent. This researcher expects to meet enough candidates from the rehabilitation institutions actually operating in the city of Springfield. It is considered that six cases would give an acceptable basis to pursue the aim of this study. Every effort will be made to gather candidates representing students from different ethnic groups and social levels, because the basic premise is that drug abuse is not something exclusive to a particular group or social class and school dropouts are not only from a particular extraction of the society.

Organization of Study

Chapter II is a review of the literature related to the problem of dropouts on national, state, and city levels, along with the presentation of significant articles since 1984, and a classification of major drugs and their effects. Chapter III contains the design of the study and methodology, the selection of subjects, the research instrument, and the questions that guide the study. Findings are presented in Chapter IV, as well as discussion and interpretation of data. A brief discussion on drug education and drug prevention, and recommendations are presented in Chapter V.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

After visiting the libraries of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst Campus, Western New England College, Westfield State College, and the City of Springfield Main Library, it is interesting to note that relatively few recent materials exist or have been published on the subject of high school dropouts. After a meticulous review of catalogs, infotrac, and microfiche resources, the most recent articles from periodicals since 1984 have been collected to the extent possible. Perhaps other researchers will find a bibliography that can be incorporated into this bibliography representing material available since the 1970s.

The review of the literature will be presented as follows:

The most recent publications on the issue of school dropouts -

1. on national level,
2. on state level,
3. on city level,
4. of significant articles dealing with the topic,
5. the description of some major drugs and their effects, and
On National Level

"What Works. School Without Drugs" is the title of an 80-page book published by the U.S. Department of Education, William J. Bennett, Secretary, in the last quarter of 1986. Nancy Reagan, in her letter printed on page iii of this book, says that "Schools Without Drugs' provides the kind of practical knowledge parents, educators, students, and communities can use to keep their schools drug-free." This statement represents fairly well the purpose of this publication: educate people and prevent the use of illicit drugs.

In the introductory page, we read some interesting quotations. Two give us a picture of the problem of drug abuse among teenagers:

It is a sad and sobering reality that trying drugs is no longer the exception among high school students. It is the norm. (1986, p. iv)

When 13- to 18-year-olds were asked to name the biggest problems facing young people today, drugs led the list. The proportion of teens with this perception has risen steadily in recent years. No other issue approaches this level of concern. (1986, p. iv)

William J. Bennett, the Secretary of Education, in his presentation of the book makes a reference to his conversations or discussions with school administrators and indicates that "their experience confirms the information reported in major national studies: drug use by children is at alarming levels. Use of some of the most harmful drugs is increasing. Even more troubling is the fact that children are using drugs at younger ages. Students today
identify drugs as a major problem among their schoolmates as early as the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades" (1986, p. v).

"School Without Drugs" provides a practical synthesis of the most reliable and significant findings available on drug use by school-age youth. It tells how extensive drug use is and how dangerous it is. It tells how drug use begins, how it progresses, and how it can be identified. Most important, it tells how it can be stopped.

This book is designed to be used by parents, teachers, principals, religious and community leaders and all other adults who want to know what works in drug use prevention.

The Secretary of Education finishes his presentation stating that his "purpose in releasing this hand-book is to help all of us - parents and children, teachers and principals, legislators and taxpayers - work more effectively in combating drug use . . . Because of drugs, children are failing, suffering and dying. We have to get tough and we have to do it now" (1986, p. vi).

The first part of this hand-book is devoted to children and drugs. It talks about the extent of drug use, and its dependence; how drug use develops. More specifically, it talks about the most terrifying modality of cocaine: crack. As a fact, it is indicated that crack is easily, extremely and far more addictive than heroin or barbiturates. One of the immediate effects is a feeling of extreme euphoria and the desire to repeat this sensation which causes addiction within a few days.
There is in the first part of this hand-book a comprehensive presentation of the effects of drug use.

Since this hand-book is designed to present a concrete plan to fight drugs, the second part deals with a plan of action. The plan has four subdivisions: (1) What Parents Can Do, (2) What Schools Can Do, (3) What Students Can Do, and (4) What Communities Can Do.

In a very specific way, in each subdivision are presented facts, concepts, recommendations and examples describing actions that can be taken by parents, schools, students and communities to stop drug use. The recommendations are derived from research and from the experiences of schools throughout the country. They show that the drug problem can be overcome.

As an example of this specific approach, we read about signs of drug use: memory lapses, short attention span, difficulty in concentration, poor physical coordination, incoherent speech, unhealthy appearance. About school performance, for instance, we read that there are dramatic changes in a student's grades. Not just from C's to F's, but from A's to B's and C's. Absenteeism increases.

The most extensive section of the hand-book is one that makes very appropriate recommendations to schools about assessing the problem of drugs and the setting of policies to stop the marketing and use of drugs within schools; and ways of enforcing policies adopted by the schools. This part deals with the legal questions of search and seizure, suspensions and expulsions. Finally, it presents a form of teaching drug prevention.
The book also states what students can do, suggestions on how students can learn about the terrible effects of drug use; reasons why drugs are harmful and ways to resist pressures to try drugs. Students not only have a responsibility to protect themselves from drugs, but they also have a social and school responsibility to help other students to fight drug use.

In another chapter, the author explains what communities can do "to help schools fight drugs by providing them with the expertise and financial resources of community groups and agencies" (1986, p. 37). Communities should also involve local law enforcement agencies in all aspects of drug prevention. Police Departments and courts should have well-established and mutually supportive relationships with schools.

The hand-book concludes with these words of encouragement in the battle against drugs:

We cannot expect the schools to do the job without the help of parents, police, the courts, and other community groups. Drugs will only be beaten when all of us work together to deliver a firm, consistent message to those who would use or sell drugs: a message that illegal drugs will not be tolerated. It is time to join in a national effort to achieve schools without drugs. (1986, p. 41)

At the end of this hand-book, we find special sections, discussing the teaching of drug prevention and how the law can help. There is a section with specific lists of drugs and their effects. This part certainly is going to be extremely helpful to parents and children who have limited knowledge about drugs. The special section ends revealing the sources of information and some excellent pages of references.
After reviewing this publication of the U.S. Department of Education, it seems appropriate to point to the fact that there is no mention of the dropout problem, which is a very good indicator that the topic of this dissertation is relatively unexplored in the literature.

On State Level

In November 1984, the Statewide Anti-Crime Council appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts published its first Report on Massachusetts High School Student Drug and Alcohol Use. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Drug Rehabilitation, conducted a survey of drug and alcohol use among secondary school students in Massachusetts. The results presented in the report were based on responses from 5,078 ninth through twelfth grade students in 67 schools across the Commonwealth.

The reason the survey was conducted is because there is a recognition by the Department that substance use and abuse among youth is a serious problem that needs to be addressed not only by the specialized services of the Department but also by other organizations and systems, including human service, educational, criminal justice, community, and family systems, which all influence young people. (1984, p. 2).

This report is rather technical and totally based on statistics. It covers drug use prevalence for all drugs, the over-all prevalence, the prevalence by school grade, by sex, and a comparison of Massachusetts and National drug use prevalence.
In a different section, the drug use prevalence for combinations of drugs is presented. It follows the pattern mentioned above, but also includes the prevalence by ethnicity and by population size.

Since it is impossible to enumerate all the items of the report, at least the most significant could be referred to briefly. Special attention may be given to the results of drug use in the schools and school behavior codes, as well as behavior and drug use.

This researcher considers it useful to make a particular reference to the first two paragraphs of the Discussion of the Report.

The data from the survey support the concern that alcohol and drug use among adolescents continues to be a serious public health problem. (1984, p. 20).

The extent of alcohol and illicit drug use among high school students in Massachusetts presents reason of concern. Of the students samples, 3 out of 5 (60%) had used illicit drugs at least once and, approximately, 1 out of every 3 (31%) had used illicit drugs in the month prior to the survey. Of particular concern is the evidence that substance use among Massachusetts high school seniors is higher than the national average, that females are using drugs at a level equivalent to males, that a large percentage of youth are trying drugs and alcohol at a very young age, that drugs are generally felt to be readily available, and that additional problem behaviors are associated with drug use. (1984, p. 20).

As we have read, this report also concludes with a challenge to make an "effective effort to seriously influence adolescent substance use and abuse that will require continued effort from many segments of the State's human service, education, and criminal justice systems and from the entire community" (1984, p. 22).
Part II of this report was published on February 15, 1985. It documents the general demographics and drug use prevalence for seventh and eighth grades, the frequency of use in grades nine through twelve and the relationship between frequency and type of substance use with problem and positive behaviors. In reference to this relationship, the report indicates that an analysis of incidents of problem behavior shows that 79% of those using alcohol more than 10 times a year reported 1 or more problem behaviors as opposed to 87% of those using marijuana, 88% of those using amphetamines, 94% of those using inhalants, and 91% of those using cocaine. This trend is also apparent when the amount of problem behavior is taken into consideration: 24% of those using alcohol less than 10 times a year report 2 or 3 occurrences of problem behavior as opposed to 28% of those using marijuana, 29% of those using amphetamines and inhalants, and 30% of those using cocaine. Of those using alcohol more than 10 times a year, 33% reported 4 or more occurrences of problem behavior as opposed to 44% of those using marijuana and amphetamines, 58% of those using inhalants, and 57% of those using cocaine (1985, p. 21).

The report focuses completely on drug use. All the results and tables of statistics presented show the use of drugs by grade and a comparison between grades. There is no other particular mention of any of the aspects related to education. And, once again, this researcher has been looking for a reference in the report to the topic of the present study without being able to find one. Nevertheless, the contribution of this survey to the facts of students using drugs in the State of Massachusetts is excellent.

It is time now to devote a few moments to a very interesting document published by the Community Health Education Council for Children and Adolescents, City of Springfield.
On City Level

In July 1984, a publication entitled, "For Parents Only" or "The Joy of Preventing Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse" was released. Members of the Community Health Education Council for Children and Adolescents included Jacklyn Harris, Reverend Warren J. Savage, and Richard E. Neal, Mayor of the city of Springfield. The content of this publication is presented in 96 pages. This is a practical book. It shows, for instance, the names of agencies, with addresses and phone numbers, that offer services to young people involved in alcohol or drug abuse. It also presents the type of services that each agency provides.

As the title indicates, the book is designed to help parents increase their knowledge of the drug and alcohol problem; to help them understand drug prevention; to make them alert to the signs and symptoms of substance abuse; and to provide them with an awareness of community services. Most of all, this book enables parents to do something for their families and communities, thereby preventing alcohol or drug problems of young people in Springfield.

In reference to the drug problem, the members of the community and the Council state that it is well known that alcohol and drug abuse among youth are major problems in the United States today. Statistics on the amount of use of illicit drugs are overwhelming and are approaching epidemic proportions in some areas. The youth of Springfield are no exception and are not immune to the factors and problems associated with substance abuse (1984, p. 2).
There is sufficient documentation about the problem. It says, for instance, that a survey conducted of 370 youths in Springfield, whose average age was 16, revealed that 55% drink alcohol at least once a week, 36% get drunk at least once a week, and 14 was the average age for beginning to drink regularly.

During the 1981-1982 school year, it was estimated by the Community Health Education Council for Children and Adolescents (CHECCA) that about 7,500 students in the Springfield Public Schools needed assistance in dealing with their families' drinking problems.

Being aware of the problem, the next logical step is what to do to solve it. One of the important steps to take is Drug Education and Drug Prevention, which is, as already indicated, the purpose of this book. The concept of education and prevention is then explained.

The aforementioned book presents a detailed study about alcohol, from definitions and facts to signs and symptoms of alcoholism, as well as directions to prevent the problem. This is truly a comprehensive study about the subject.

The next chapter of the book is dedicated to the topic of drugs. It follows the same pattern: definitions, facts, possible signs of drug abuse and a fact sheet about marijuana, the most popular drug during the last 15 years.

The book finally presents community resources available to the Springfield area residents, and invites parents to teach their children responsibility, discipline, and respect.
This researcher would like to point to the fact that no particular mention is made in this study of the causes of the problem of alcohol and drug abuse. It deals with raw data. In regard to any relationship between drug abuse and dropouts, nothing is mentioned.

**Significant Articles Dealing with the Topic**

It is the intention of this researcher to discuss in detail the different concepts, points of view and approaches to the topic of dropouts.

"A Nation in Crisis: The Dropout Dilemma" appeared in the magazine of the National Education Association (NEA), *Today*, Special Edition, January 1988, written by Byron Kunisawa. The article presents the problem of the dropouts, some of the causes, characteristics, and puts emphasis on the dysfunctional educational system that produces dropouts.

Kunisawa states that "we need to redesign our current Educational System to accommodate the personal, cultural, and economic needs of the students and to help them with their higher education and career aspirations" (Kunisawa, 1988). The author of the article also refers to the dropout problem as a social responsibility. It is in this context that solutions must be found.

"Cleveland Pays for its A's"; good grades bring cash. *Newsweek* magazine, in its issue of August 31, 1987, relates a new and very effective action taken by Alfred Tutela, School Superintendent, who
worried about the citywide dropout rate of 49 percent. With the cooperation of the Greater Cleveland Roundtable, an influential consortium of 70 business, civic, and religious leaders, they raised $5 million over the estimated $3 million budget needed for the first year, to pay, starting in January of 1988, students in grades seven to twelve who get good grades. Each student can earn $40 for every A in an academic class, $20 for a B, and $10 for a C. The money is deposited in a bank account and each student receives a personal bank statement. The money can be used after graduation for college or job training.

It is expected that this monetary motivation will decrease the high rate of dropouts and make those students better prepared citizens (1987, p. 66).

"The Burgeoning Educational Underclass" was published in U.S. News & World Report, issue of May 18, 1987. This article presents a national overview of the dropout problem. "Schools should open doors, but each year the door closes for 2 million students - most poor or minority - who drop out or join the ranks of illiterate graduates eligible for little more than low-paying jobs or welfare" (1987, p. 66).

"Finally, I decided to hang out on the streets. That was it. End of school." These words reflect a final decision taken by a dropout in New York City. Talking about the topic of dropouts, the article reveals that in Boston, in 1986, more students dropped out than graduated from high school. In parts of Detroit and rural
Louisiana and Alabama, fewer than a third of all teenagers get a diploma. Nationwide, nearly a million students graduate each year unable to read and write, and 1 in 4 never graduate at all. The problem has been getting worse.

The article focuses on the fact that most of these children are poor, Black or Hispanic, and makes an in-depth analysis of familiar, social, cultural, and economic situations of these minorities. It appears, according to the article, that minority students are not given the educational services they need. One minority student drops out of high school for every 2 who graduate, compared with 1 white dropout for every 5 who graduate. It also mentions that 60% of all high school dropouts come from families with incomes of less than $15,000, while only 16% come from families with incomes of $30,000 or more.

Miriam Horn, author of the article, states that critics continue to charge that the federal government is not doing enough to address inequities in education.

But, since some actions have to be taken to face the problem, states and local communities are way ahead of Washington in their efforts to keep kids in school. Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas has achieved the lowest dropout rate in the South with his Project SPARK - Services Provided for At-Risk Kids. And Governor Thomas Kean of New Jersey, calling the present system "an educational state of emergency," is pushing for state take-over of local districts with high dropout rates and low test scores (1987, p. 67).
Miriam Horn also indicates that around the country, business leaders, concerned about their future employees, are enticing students to stay in school with summer employment, college scholarships, and guarantee of jobs to students who get diplomas.

An example of an 18-year-old student, Juan Perez, from San Antonio, Texas, is mentioned in the article. Juan was chronically absent from school and, of course, getting bad or failing grades because of his poor attendance. But, when he was asked to tutor at a nearby elementary school, Perez's attendance changed dramatically and he is now getting passing grades. This is a true example of what motivation and a sense of responsibility can achieve.

This article also focuses on the costly consequences of the dropout rate for the whole nation. The National Education Association estimates that the cost to provide for dropouts and their families represents more than $75 billion dollars a year in lost tax revenues, crime and crime-prevention costs, unemployment, and welfare.

"American business will have to hire more than a million new service and production workers a year who cannot read, write or count," says Xerox Corporation Chairman David Kearns. "Teaching them how and absorbing the lost productivity while they are learning, will cost industry $25 billion a year for as long as it takes" (1987, p. 67).

It seems that over the next 14 years, the number of young people in the American work force will shrink by two fifths, at the
same time that industry will be demanding increasingly advanced skills from employees.

The *Phi Delta Kappan*, in May of 1987, published an article written by Genevieve H. Arnold and Vicki Biggers on "One Community's Response to the Dropout Problem." The basic premise, agreed upon by citizens of Erwin, a suburb of Asheville, North Carolina, was that the dropout problem is the responsibility of the whole community, which cooperates with the staff of Erwin Middle School. Confronted with some negative factors of the school population and a 9.5% rate of potential dropouts, the school staff decided to take action and address the problem properly. The community would have to become involved. The first year, the program was financed by state funds. The second year, state funds were provided and matched by local school system dollars.

The program included four main components: academic support, parent training and involvement, community service, and case management. The program was very well coordinated by competent people. Since 1982, when the program was implemented, the results are very encouraging. Court referrals have decreased by 60%, school attendance has increased by 40%, suspensions decreased by 50%, and training sessions on parenting skills have attracted 40% of the participating parents.

These facts attest to the success of the Erwin Middle school's dropout prevention program.

"MOP: A Strategy for Dropout Prevention," by Neill McDonald and Elizabeth Wright, is a two-page article which appeared in *The
Clearing House Magazine, for Contemporary Education in Middle and Secondary Schools, in April 1987.

D. N. Hix School in Oxford, North Carolina, is a ninth-grade school. Students go there for only one year and come from three different elementary schools and two orphanages. A year in this school for most students means a difficult adjustment to high school life. They often feel confused and alone. The adverse facts these students are confronted with caused a high percentage of dropouts. Principal Neill McDonald and Judy Melton, a counselor, planned the MOP program (Meaningful Other Person). The program included dropout prevention as one of the six critical objectives for the focus of the school system during the 1985-1986 school year. The basic philosophy of the program is to provide every student in the school with a contact person who is always accessible, who gets to know the student well, and who remains sensitive to the student's needs. Selected faculty and staff members served as student advisors to form the MOP team.

In August 1985, teachers and members of the team were prepared and trained through workshops in guidance skills. During 1985-1986, the advisors held daily or weekly meetings with their students. The support students received from MOP members was excellent. The goals were met. The article ends with three success stories that show the many benefits of the dropout prevention program for the students of the D. N. Hix School. In the first year, the dropout rate decreased by 50%.

Valdivieso focuses his attention on Hispanic and minorities. What can schools do to retain potential dropouts and help at-risk students achieve at the higher levels of which they are capable? This question can summarize the objective of the article: dictate some guidelines and principles that can be used for developing reforms to be implemented within the context of the whole school.

Valdivieso refers more specifically to the aspect of increased interaction between students and teachers as an effective measure to prevent dropouts. Gang influence in many positive ways at a catholic high school in Newark, New Jersey, reduced dropouts.

Potential dropouts need a well-defined academic program and smaller, more cohesive school units that integrate social support. Already, some local communities and school personnel are working together to change schools into small, humane societies in which respect, caring, learning, and effort are valued and practiced by everyone (1987, p. 31).

Another interesting article dealing with the topic of dropouts is the one written by Deborah Burnett Strother, published in Phi Delta Kappan, December 1986, entitled "Dropping Out."

Burnett Strother states that, in the 1960s, dropping out meant turning on, tuning in, growing into a new awareness of self. But nowadays this traditional meaning of two decades ago is completely different. People who drop out are losers, especially high school
students, who suffer tremendous disadvantages when they leave school without earning a diploma (1986, p. 325).

According to the article, the dropout problem is getting worse. In cities such as New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, the high school dropout rate exceeds 40%. In recent years, over 25% of potential high school graduates, more than one million young people, quit school before graduation. This means that more than a million young people join the ranks of Americans who are poorly equipped to face the demands of an increasingly complex society.

High dropout rates generate public alarm in the country to the point that national leaders refer to the dropout situation as a tragedy that the United States cannot afford. It estimates that dropouts cost the nation billions of dollars in welfare benefits and lost revenue. Talking about the concept or definition of a "dropout," Burnett Strother affirms that it varies according to school districts. She says that most of the U.S. School Districts monitor the enrollment and attendance of students until they graduate or dropout. These records suggest that dropping out is a serious problem, but that there is little agreement on the definition of a "dropout." She also says that school districts calculate the dropout rate in different ways. Some of the districts only count high school students and not elementary schools or junior high schools. And, since the definitions vary, estimates of the number of dropouts also vary. "Generally speaking," says Burnett Strother, "a dropout is an individual whose natural progression toward graduation from high school has been interrupted" (1986, p. 326).
Who drops out? According to "In High School and Beyond," a longitudinal study of U. S. high school students sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics, a disproportionate number of dropouts were male, older than average for their grade level, and members of racial or ethnic minorities. Most of them came from low-income families and often single-parent families with low educational expectations for their children. They had fewer opportunities than their classmates for learning outside of school; their grades and test scores were lower; they read less, did less homework (1986, p. 326).

According to the author of the article, the researcher who conducted this study also noted that students' home environments have a critical, but indirect, impact on their decision to drop out.

Many are the reasons why students drop out of school. The most commonly given by dropouts were: dissatisfaction with teachers, dislike of school in general, lack of credits, boredom and lack of interest, pregnancy and desire to attend an alternative education program or institution, family, social or economic obligations, or pressure from the school staff to leave.

Through the article, Burnett Strother presents some specific findings of previous studies and research done in particular school districts and points to the relationship between teachers and students, teachers' competency, and school organization as factors that cause, directly or indirectly, students to drop out of school. According to the "In High School and Beyond" study, "students are
more likely to drop out if school is a place where teachers are not particularly interested in all students, and the discipline system is perceived as neither effective nor fair, if school is a place where one gets into trouble" (1986, p. 327).

The final part of the article deals with policies and programs. It reports what a special task force on dropouts in Los Angeles recommended to the Board of Education in February 1985. The recommendation focused on the following: adopt a practical definition of dropout, identify successful local, state, and national efforts to retain potential dropouts and recover actual dropouts, and implement short- and long-range programs, practices, and organizational and instructional changes aimed at reducing the district's dropout rate and enticing dropouts to return to school.

The report of the Special Task Force on Dropouts of Los Angeles predicts that the number of dropouts will decrease if the schools are able to address four factors through policy, program development and fiscal enhancement. The factors are: (1) alienation from teachers, administrators, and peers; (2) poor attendance and high truancy rates; (3) low academic achievement, especially in reading; and (4) negative economic and social pressures at home or in school (1986, p. 328).

In The Journal of Drug Education, 15:4, 1985, A. S. Friedman, N. Glickman, and A. Utada wrote the article "Does Drug and Alcohol Use Lead to Failure to Graduate from High School?" They present the findings of a study done in two Philadelphia high schools among 526
high school students. The majority, 135 out of 265, who had been using drugs had dropped out of school, compared to one out of four non-drug-using dropouts.

This study indicates that, in some cases, the use of drugs among high school students may not be the main cause to drop out of school, suggesting that, in some other cases, the use of drugs may well be the cause of dropping out. But the study concludes that, in any case, it is clear that drug use has a negative effect on students' academic achievement.

As a conclusion of the presentation of these most recent articles on the topic of dropouts, it seems appropriate to indicate that no serious study has been undertaken on the linkage of drug abuse and dropping out of school among high school students. Therefore, it appears that the importance of the present research is unquestionable.

Some Major Drugs and Their Effects

Since we have already talked about drugs and we will continue talking about them through this study, it appears necessary to have a common understanding of the etymology, groups and main effects of drugs.

Drugs can be classified in many ways. We considered making a classification according to the most significant effects on the brain or on the central nervous system. The researcher would like to clarify that the following scheme on drug classification is not totally original. Three different sources have inspired it. The
first source is the publication of the U. S. Department of Education's "Schools Without Drugs," 1986; the second, Getting Tough on Gateway Drugs, a book written by Robert L. DuPont, 1984; and the third one, Drugs, Society and Human Behavior, the book written by Oakley Ray, M.D., 1983.

Drug Classification:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opioids</td>
<td>Heroin, morphine, methadone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressants</td>
<td>Barbiturates, methaqualone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulants</td>
<td>Amphetamines, cocaine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallucinogens</td>
<td>LSD, mescaline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcotics</td>
<td>Heroin, morphine, opium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabinoids</td>
<td>Marijuana, hashish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>Benzene, ethyl acetate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>Beer, wine, whiskey, gin, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Opioids**

Also called narcotic analgesics, these drugs are often used medically to alleviate pain. This class includes morphine and other alkaloids of opium. Narcotics, opium, its derivatives, or synthetic substitutes, are used medically to relieve intense pain, suppress coughs, remedy diarrhea, and induce a drowsy, euphoric state. These drugs are used non-medically for their intense euphoric effect, which is felt like a dream and a sense of well-being and relaxation.

Heroin is a typical opioid.

Users' names: Horse, boy, H.
Depressants

These drugs depress excitable tissues at all levels of the brain. The central nervous system depressants include almost all anti-anxiety drugs, such as Valium, and sleeping aids, such as Seconal. These drugs have been called "solid booze" because their effects are similar to alcohol. This characterization is more typical of barbiturates than of anti-anxiety drugs, such as Valium, because this latter group produces less generalized sedation in typical therapeutic doses. Depressants relax the body's muscles and bring on sleep by slowing down messages to the central nervous system. An example of this particular drug is barbiturates.

Users' names:  
downers  sleeping pills
reds  yellow jackets
barbs  red devils
beans  Christmas trees

Tranquilizers:

Valium  V's

Stimulants

The most prominent effect of these drugs is their ability to stimulate the central nervous system, producing euphoria, hypersensitivity, insomnia, and appetite suppression. The stimulants most commonly encountered are cocaine and the amphetamines, often taken to suppress sleep, tiredness, and appetite.

Stimulants increase a person's alertness, activity, and excitement by speeding up messages to the central nervous system. The
aftermath of stimulant use is depression - exhaustion of the drug - of the stimulated nervous system. The higher the high, the lower the subsequent low.

Amphetamines.

Users' names: uppers crank
speed dexies
black beauties black mollies
crossroads jelly beans
brownies wakeups
hearts greenies

Cocaine.

Users' names: coke snow
toot "C"
girl happy dust
flake ice

Hallucinogens

These substances produce hallucinations, usually of a visual nature, but sometimes of sound or smell. The hallucinogens, which have no accepted medical use, include LSD, mescaline, and psilocybin. Hallucinogens are natural or synthetic drugs which can produce great changes in the mind. To hallucinate means to misperceive reality, to see, smell, or hear things that really are not there and do not exist. This occurs because of the poisoning of the brain which produces profoundly abnormal thinking.
LSD.

Users' names: California Sunshine
Red, green, and orange dragon
acid purple haze micro-dots

Narcotics

These drugs also initially produce a feeling of euphoria that frequently is followed by some drowsiness, nausea, and vomiting. Users of the drug may experience watery eyes and itching. An overdose of the drug may produce slow breathing, convulsions, coma, and even death. The use of contaminated syringes may result in AIDS.

Heroin.

Users' names: horse brown sugar
junk big H
mud black tar

Methadone.

Users' names: methadose amidone

Cannabinoids

Marijuana and hashish, derived from the Cannabis sativa plant, as well as their principal active ingredient, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THO), produce an intoxicated state marked by altered time sense, euphoria, and - at high doses - hallucinations.

Marijuana and derivatives act most similarly to hallucinogens, but possess also the elements of stimulation and depression.
There are medical studies about the negative effect of the use of marijuana and how senses, memory, nervous system, mind, and brain are attacked by this substance. According to medical studies, there is a correlation between the use of marijuana and the stimulation of the brain at an abnormal speed. The dropping of Scholastic Aptitude Test scores during the last two decades has been attributed to the use of marijuana.

Marijuana, hashish.

Users' names: grass pot
weed Panama Red
joint herb
hash hashish oil

Inhalants

This class of drugs includes solvents that are widely used in cleaning compounds, aerosol sprays, fuels and glues. As drugs of abuse, inhalants are used to induce altered states of consciousness, primarily lightheadedness and confusion associated with general depression of brain functioning.

Nitrous Oxide.

Users' names: laughing gas nitrous
poppers snappers
locker room discorama
bolt rush

Alcohol

This drug is consumed in a variety of forms: beer, wine, and distilled spirits of liquor. The active agent in all of these forms
is ethanol, or ethyl alcohol, a general, nonspecific central nervous system depressant.

The foregoing classification of the major drugs and their effects is largely brain-based. The attention has been focused on the effects of these classes of drugs on the user's one target organ: the brain. The researcher considers this a useful classification for our purposes because it is the brain the drug user seeks to affect, and it is the particular drug's affect on the brain which produces dependence. However, it is also accepted that most of these drugs affect many parts of the body, in addition to the brain. Marijuana, for instance, produces severe lung damage after repeated use. Alcohol and marijuana have profound effects on reproduction and hormone levels. Thus the entire spectrum of the physical effects of each drug is often more widespread and varied than this brain-based classification suggests.

Crack

It is important to devote a few lines to the most popular drug nowadays, named "crack." This drug, known also as freebase rock, is extremely addictive, and its effects are felt within 10 seconds. The physical effects include dilated pupils, increased pulse rate, elevated blood pressure, insomnia, loss of appetite, tactile hallucinations, paranoia and seizures. The use of crack as well as cocaine can cause death by disrupting the brain's control of the heart and respiration.
Some "Street Talk" about Drugs and Drug Use

Dope: a slang term for marijuana and other drugs.

Joint: a marijuana cigarette.

Roach: the end or "butt" of a marijuana cigarette.

High: an intoxicated feeling or an altered feeling after taking a drug. When "high," a drug user's brain is impaired. Thinking is less effective. Some common slang descriptions for this state of intoxication: wasted, ripped, stoned, wired, buzzed, blown away, out of it, loaded, and spaced out.

Head: a person who uses drugs, such as "pot head" and "acid head."

Toke: a puff or "hit" of a marijuana cigarette. To "toke" means to smoke pot.

Burnout: a state of apathy, deadened perceptions, and reduced intellectual capacity that can result from regular or habitual use of marijuana and other drugs.

Space Cadet: the habitual marijuana user whose senses have become dulled.

Devices Used in Drug Abuse

These are the common tools used when taking drugs or preparing them. First those related to marijuana:

Rolling papers: paper used specifically for rolling marijuana cigarettes. Normally they are wider papers than those used to make tobacco cigarettes by hand. They are wider to permit looser packing of more material than is common in tobacco cigarettes.
Marijuana pipe: the pipe used for smoking marijuana or hash, with short stem, and metal bowl with an internal screen because marijuana burns hotter than tobacco pipes.

Bong: a water pipe to cool marijuana smoke in order to reduce lung irritation. Marijuana smoke is harmful to brain and lung tissue.

Roach clip: a clip that holds the end of the marijuana cigarette (the roach) to prevent burning the fingers of the smoker, so the joint can be smoked to its very end. Paper clips, keys, and pens are frequently used as roach clips.

Now, some of the tools used in connection with cocaine.

Cocaine spoons: known also in street language as "coke spoons." These are small utensils with the form of earrings, bracelets or other similar jewelry and are used to measure cocaine powder that the cocaine users are going to snort or sniff.

Tooter: a small tube used to snort or sniff cocaine from a flat surface into the user's nose.

Cutting kits: implements used to cut cocaine, such as a razor blade, a pocket knife, a polished surface, even a very small spoon.

Stash can: small portable container, such as Coca-Cola bottles, Campbell Soup cans, beer cans, Kodak film canisters, and similar containers in which drugs are concealed from police, parents, school authorities, employers, etc.

Free-base kits: a kit containing chemicals and solutions used to purify cocaine so that it can be smoked.
Summary of the Chapter

We have presented a review of the literature on drug abuse and dropouts since 1984. The most recent available documents on national, state, and city levels, as well as the most recent articles on the topic from periodicals focused on education, have been discussed. The chapter ended with the presentation of some major drugs, their effects, street talk on drugs and tools used in the consumption of drugs.

Each document or article has been presented in its essence of content, its particular philosophy, intent, point of view, or goal to be met.

The summary of this review of the literature does not mention any literature establishing a relationship between drug abuse and dropouts. Therefore, it is appropriate to conclude that the topic of this dissertation may be the object of a new educational research.
CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore a possible linkage between drug abuse and dropouts of senior high school students in a western Massachusetts urban school system. From public information received through local newspapers, television news, magazines, etc., it appears that there is a great number of high school students who are involved with drugs and quit school before they get a high school diploma. There is a common and broadly accepted assumption that many students leave school because of drugs. This study explores this assumption.

Using a case study approach, this researcher investigated that possibility. Through direct contact with at least six dropouts, we intended to carry out an in-depth individual study of each dropout, to investigate their individual situation before they got involved with drugs, the reason they had to start doing drugs, and the main factor that made them leave school. By a detailed interview and comprehensive analysis of each personal experience, we tried to find out what was in their cases the linkage between the fact that they were using drugs and the fact that they dropped out of school.
In order to pursue this investigation, it was essential to contact subjects who would accept being interviewed and would share their experience. The only place to meet these subjects was at the appropriate rehabilitation center for drug addicts. All the rehabilitation centers which were visited for the purpose of this study operate in Springfield. There was no way that subjects could be interviewed in their schools. They are minors and this fact could complicate the research for legal reasons. Besides, the researcher needed to deal with drug users, on one hand, and with dropouts, on the other, because this is the premise of the research. To interview subjects who were still in school would have been inappropriate.

**Selection of Subjects**

A letter of presentation was sent to the directors of some of the drug rehabilitation centers, addressing the purpose of this research and the need to find subjects who would accept voluntarily to be interviewed. All the directors answered the letter favorably and very graciously agreed to cooperate in this study.

After permission was granted, the next step was to talk to a group of possible subjects and select those who would meet the prerequisites according to the purpose of the study: to be a dropout from the Springfield Public Schools and a drug user, which was a given, since the subjects were already residents of a rehabilitation center.
It was intended to select subjects representing the different ethnic and social groups or levels of the Springfield population, because the literature overwhelmingly suggests that drugs reach all social, cultural, and socio-economic levels of society.

Before talking to the subjects, a personal identification, affiliation, and status at the University of Massachusetts, and other pertinent information about the researcher was given to the subjects. Each subject was presented with a written consent form to be mutually signed. The full text of the consent form can be found in Appendix I.

After these formalities were completed, the researcher proceeded to schedule the interviews, which took place in the following weeks.

It is important to point out that the interviews did not follow the strict order and pattern of questions planned in advance, because the subjects, when answering questions, did not limit themselves to the particular topic of the question. They did not answer "scholastico modo." When they started to talk, the subjects very easily connected their talking with other aspects related or unrelated, or with something they remembered. This researcher considered it very important for the success of the interviews to give the interviewees the freedom of expressing themselves, to let them talk, mainly at the beginning of the interview, since their personal experiences with drugs which they were sharing at the moment of the interview, were of great transcendence for this study. The questions constituted a basic guide for the interview.
On the other hand, after going over the transcript of the interviews, it appeared more appropriate to present those answers and even anecdotal sections of the interview that were more consistent with the purpose of the study. Grammatical and syntactical mistakes have not been corrected because we intended to respect the way the subjects spontaneously talked.

**Research Instrumentation**

The main instrumentation used in this research was a personal interview which lasted, approximately, 90 minutes. Two or three interview-sessions were held with each candidate, based on field-tested questions.

Each interviewee selected for the study has been assured total privacy and confidentiality. Real names have not been made public; fictitious names have been used in this study.

The questions guiding the interviews follow:

1. What was the subject's family structure from childhood to teenager?
2. Did the subject live with both parents?
3. Did he/she receive any positive or negative influence from members of the family, such as brothers, sisters, cousins?
4. Did the subject's parents divorce? If so, has this fact affected his/her life? To what extent?
5. What was the subject's economic standard of family life? Middle class? Poverty level?
6. What was the degree of the subject's academic achievement in school, before beginning to deal with drugs?

7. What was the grade average of the subject before dealing with drugs?
   (This question was significant because it allowed us to determine the degree of negative effects of drugs on the academic performance of each subject.)

8. What was his/her attendance record before and after the use of drugs?

9. What was the real role of counseling from school, if any, in his/her personal experience?

10. To what degree was peer pressure related to drug use in his/her personal experience?

11. What were the immediate reasons why he/she went into drugs?

12. How did he/she initiate the use of drugs? First experiences, particular circumstances of those, etc.

13. What kind of drugs did he/she use?

14. What was the frequency of using those drugs?

15. What means did he/she use to get the money to buy drugs and support the habit?

16. What impact did drugs have on his/her school life?
   Attendance? Home assignments? School work? Grades? Participation in sports and extracurricular activities?
17. Did personal behavior begin to change? Was he/she aware of this fact by a comparison to previous behavior?

18. What was the main reason to drop out of school?

19. To what degree did drug abuse (the habit) motivate him/her to leave school?

20. Was the drug habit the only factor that made him/her leave school?

21. If the drug abuse habit was not the only factor that made him/her leave school, which one was it?

22. If the drug habit was not the only factor that made him/her leave school, was the drug habit the main factor to make that decision?

23. Was his/her education affected by the use of illicit drugs?

24. Did he/she get involved in any kind of illegal activities?

25. Did he/she face legal action or even terms in prison for stealing, carrying firearms without a license?

26. Did he/she receive a sentence after facing trial?

27. Why did he/she decide to consider the possibility of drug rehabilitation?

Data Collection

All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. With this material in hand, the researcher began to classify the data given by the interviewees within a pattern consistent with the
purposes of this dissertation. The presentation of the data was the subject matter of the center-chapter of this dissertation and has been followed by an analysis from an educational point of view, focusing on aspects such as attendance, interest in school, behavior, learning process and academic achievement, help from counselors, etc.

Only the researcher has access to the tapes.

Summary of the Chapter

In Chapter III, we have presented the design of the study and its methodology. Specifically, we have indicated how the researcher approached and selected the subjects to be interviewed as well as the criteria to follow. In order to be consistent with the purpose of the study, we have stated that the subjects had to be dropouts from the Springfield Public Schools. The instrumentation of the research consisted of in-depth personal interviews with at least six subjects. The questions that guided the interviews were clearly formulated and the data collection was carried out within a pattern consistent with the purpose of the dissertation.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore a possible linkage between drug abuse and dropping out of school among senior high school students in a western Massachusetts urban school system. The instrumentation implemented was a series of personal interviews with former Springfield Public Schools students, now residents in drug rehabilitation centers.

Most of the text of the interviews is presented in Appendices A through F. In this chapter, the researcher will summarize the findings of the interviews with six former students, following the same order of questions that guided the study. After the presentation of the findings, some common characteristics will be discussed, as elements that were found in all six subjects interviewed, and consistent with the main goal of the research.

Biographical Data

Age has never been a factor of consideration in the mind of the researcher to select the subjects. But it happens that all the
subjects are in their twenties. When the interviews took place, Frank was 20 years old, Robert was 25 years old, Peter was 21 years old, Jimmy was 22 years old, Tony was 27 years old, and Melissa was 23 years old. The average age of the interviewed subjects was 23. All the subjects were former students of the Springfield Public School System, with the exception of Tony, who was a dropout from a different school system in western Massachusetts.

Findings

Question 1: What was the family structure from childhood to teenager?

Two out of six subjects grew up in a home in which the mother divorced the father of the subject and then remarried.

Three out of six subjects grew up in a home in which parents were divorced. Each of them lived with the mother. The subjects did not give any further information as to whether their mothers remarried or not.

Only one out of the six subjects, according to the answers given in the interview, appeared to come from a home in which the parents were living together. Robert says at the beginning of the interview that "I am for the moment working on issues about drug abuse, about some past issues . . . also the death of my parents, death of other relatives that have occurred in the past three or five years. I had a lot of feelings of the death of my father." But it is not clear whether his parents were separated or not.
Frank was the only child in the family.

Melissa was the second child, the youngest in the family.

Four out of six subjects did not mention whether they had any brothers or sisters.

Question 2: Did the drug user live with both parents?

Question 1 and 2 are related. The answer to question 2 is that five out of the six subjects did not live with both real parents. In Jimmy's case, for instance, his parents separated when he was 2 years old, and Melissa indicated that her parents divorced when she was 3 years old.

Three out of six subjects did not indicate since what age they were not living with both real parents.

Only one out of the six subjects gave some clues to get to the conclusion that he was living with both real parents.

Question 3: Did he/she receive any positive or negative influence from members of the family, such as brothers, sisters, cousins?

Peter said that "one day my aunt's husband was over and I was cleaning his car. All of a sudden, I found three little sticks, it was marijuana. I took one and left two back . . . My friend told me that it gets you high and stuff like that and we started smoking the joint."
Tony indicated in the interview that "I started with beer and wine in a family party. Everyone was drinking ... and having good time."

According to what the subjects indicated in the interviews, there was not any positive or negative direct influence from members of the family in any of them.

Question 4: Did his/her parents divorce? If so, has this affected his/her life? If so, to what extent?

Through the interview, this question was not directly addressed to the subjects since they talked about their families when answering other questions. There are some indications to base the conclusion that the fact of parents' divorcing affected, at least indirectly, the lives of the subjects. When Melissa was talking about her mother's second marriage, she said, for instance, "anyway, I did not get along with my step-father." Since early age, she learned how to "be independent and get things done my way."

Question 5: What was the economic standard of family life? Middle class? Poverty level?

According to the text of the interview, it is appropriate to conclude that four out of six subjects came from middle class families; two out of six subjects came from poverty-level families.
Question 6: What was the degree of academic achievement of the drug user in school, before he/she began to deal with drugs?

Academic achievement can be measured by school grades. The researcher established this criterion to determine the degree of academic achievement of the subjects.

Frank indicated that "in school I did not do bad. I passed all my classes and I played sports. It did not slow me down at least in the beginning when I was going to Forest Park."

Robert said: "Some days I did good; some days I did real bad and I got in trouble. I did not care about anything. I felt my grades were below average. I managed to survive in junior high. I stayed back a couple of times in elementary school."

Peter said: "I was skipping school. My grades were not good and it did not make sense to me to stay in school. I was failing anyway."

Jimmy said: "I was alright. I never missed any days of school. I had good attendance. I was about average."

Tony said: "When I was doing marijuana, pcp, it was more difficult for me to keep my concentration up. I was falling asleep. I was not able to pay attention in class or do my work. At that time I was really bad." Tony provided no clear indication of his grade level of academic achievement.

In Melissa's case, she was in tenth grade when she started to do drugs. She said: "I went to Commerce High School. I was a good student. My grades were average."
The conclusion is that four of the subjects were average students before they started to experiment with drugs; two of the subjects were below the average level of academic achievement.

Question 7: What was the grade average of the drug user before dealing with drugs?

Question 7 relates to question 6. As already indicated, it is appropriate to state that four of the subjects were average students prior to any illicit drug experience and two of the interviewed subjects were below average, one of them academically failing.

We can conclude that at least four of the subjects had enough potential to be academically successful; nevertheless, they dropped out of school.

Question 8: What was his/her attendance record before and after the use of drugs?

Based on the text of the interviews, we come to the conclusion that five out of six subjects were attending school regularly. Only one of the six subjects had poor attendance. "I was skipping school," Peter said.

Jimmy said, for instance, "I never missed any days of school." And Melissa indicated after she started doing drugs, she began to skip school. It clearly means that before she started doing drugs, her attendance at school was good.
To the second part of the question, the answer is clear: all the subjects began to be absent from school after they started to do drugs.

Question 9: What was the real role of counseling from school, if any, in his/her personal experience?

In their personal experience, none of the subjects received any help from counselors or administrators. Referring to this question, Robert said: "I did not talk to anybody. Why should I? When I got in trouble I was given detention, I was sent home suspended."

This researcher explains the fact of lack of help from school administrators, teachers, and, even more, counselors, to these former students when they were using drugs, by saying that no communication existed between students using drugs and school administrators. By their own initiative, students were not going to confess their drug experiences to school administrators; on the other hand, school administrators were not aware of the fact that those students were using drugs.

Question 10: To what degree was peer pressure related to drug use in his/her personal experience?

Peer pressure was an evident cause of getting involved with drugs in five out of the six cases. Only Robert did not indicate if he started using illicit drugs because of peer pressure. According to the interview, it appears the contrary. Robert said in the
interview: "For myself, I started drinking at an early age, fifteen. I started drinking wine, beer; then I turned out to hard liquor. I came to the conclusion that the reason why I started drinking was that I was not basically satisfied with the way my life was going at the present time."

Frank, for instance, said that he started using drugs because "I was influenced by my peers. I hung around with other people, they were older than me. . . . They were getting high, so I started getting high also."

In regard to peer pressure as a reason for using drugs, Jimmy said, "I started riding bikes with my friends and sometimes they would say 'do you want to take this? It makes you feel good.' So I started smoking a joint and I started cocaine."

Tony also refers to peer pressure with these words: "From what they explained to me was that a friend of mine gave me some acid. It was called window panes or something like that and I took it."

Melissa relates her first experience with drugs, saying: "I started to do drugs maybe when I was sixteen. I started to drink beer with my friends. We used to get together on Fridays, weekends, vacation days and drink."

Question 11: What were the immediate reasons why he/she went into drugs?

This question also relates to the previous one. Five out of six subjects went into drugs because of peer pressure. Frank has
expressed that "I felt I could not have a good time, without getting high. I was young and I was easily led. People would do and I would be there right along with them and that is more or less what it was. I wanted to try and gain respect, I guess, from my friends and wanted to do it right along with them. My parents were divorced. I would see my father on the weekends...."

It is interesting to note that, when Frank was asked why he was doing drugs, he suddenly thought of his parents' divorce, possibly suggesting that unconsciously he thought of this fact as a cause.

Robert also indicated as an immediate reason why he started doing drugs that he "came from the country and starting school up here was a little bit different, different atmosphere and I ended up following other people because I was relatively new to this environment and so I started to use alcohol."

Tony indicated as a particular reason why he started doing drugs: "because it was available. More or less it was available."

Question 12: How did he/she initiate the use of drugs? First experiences, particular circumstances of those, etc.

The specific circumstances of the first drug experiences relate to the question about peer pressure, in five out of the six cases.

Melissa describes her first experience with cocaine this way: "I remember the first time I did cocaine. I was with some guys in Forest Park. It was already dark. A friend of mine asked me if I would like to try it. He showed us the stuff. Some of the guys
knew how to do it and they told us. So I did it. I liked it. I felt great. Some days later I tried it again."

Tony refers to his first alcohol experiences with these words: "After the party you help the mother to clean up the house. There is a half of a glass of Johnny Walker Red over there, run over here and so you taste it and see how it tastes. Sometimes you have grown-ups give it to you."

Jimmy started his first drug experiences within an atmosphere of sharing drugs with his friends: "My friends would say, 'Let's not go to school today. Let's go to my house and smoke a joint and get high. Nobody will call your house or your mother' and things like that."

Peter refers well to the effects of his first drug experience more than to the particular circumstances of it with these words: "I got real high, I couldn't even smoke the whole joint with him because I was so high. Actually, I got real lazy, tired and I was laughing a lot."

Robert said in regard to this question: "I was about sixteen when I first started smoking marijuana. I was a different type of addict. I felt like I was on a cloud."

Frank did not give any particular description of the circumstances surrounding his first drug experiences.

Question 13: What kind of drugs did he/she use?

According to the answers given in the interviews, it is clear that a common pattern exists in the process of becoming a drug user,
among all six subjects interviewed. All started by drinking wine or beer and smoking marijuana. Then they went into heavier drugs, such as cocaine, heroin, and, in two cases, crack.

Frank talked about the kind of drugs he used. "The first time I did marijuana and drank. I started to get high when I was eight years old. . . ."

As he was getting deeper into drugs, Frank relates his first experience with cocaine: "I used cocaine when I was 15 years old." Talking about the strongest drug, he said: "The strongest drug I have used most often would be cocaine."

Robert also talks about the process of getting involved with drugs: "I started off with alcohol and moved on up to marijuana. I was about sixteen when I first started smoking marijuana." Robert mentioned that he also did heroin. "When I was first offered heroin, I was in high school and a friend of mine just came to visit us. He said, 'I got some heroin. They called it dope. You want to try some?' I never will forget that day. We went to the woods and there we sat down. I tried it and it kind of sent me like flying. . . ."

Robert indicated through the interview that he continued doing heroin.

Peter started by doing marijuana. Then he tried cocaine, as we can read in the text of the interview, "... that is when I first saw cocaine. ... So I took a little bit. . . . I snorted a little bit."
Jimmy was thirteen when he started to drink. Then he talks about marijuana. He would say in the interview, "smoking joints and wasting time." He also said: "I tried mescaline, acid and marijuana. He also tried cocaine not intravenous, Angel Dust one time." He stated: "I never tried crack."

Tony is more explicit about the type of drugs he experienced. When asked what kind of drugs he went through, he answered: "Let me see, alcohol, reefer, cocaine, pcp, probably the one I have not tried was heroin. Coke once or twice."

Melissa expressed her progressive involvement with drugs this way: "When I was sixteen, I started to drink beer with my friends. We used to get together on Fridays ... and drink. I was smoking marijuana at the same time. Everybody did it. It was like a natural complement when you were drinking. ... I remember the first time I did cocaine."

Question 14: What was the frequency of using those drugs? The answers varied. However, it is clear that all six subjects were involved in an ever-increasing use of the drug or drugs until they became addicted to them.

Frank says about his personal experience: "I started doing it every day and I was doing every day anyway."

This is what Robert indicated about the frequency with which he was doing drugs: "Basically it started off like a weekend thing, but I constantly drank and kept on drinking beer, then kept on
smoking marijuana. It was three, four days a week. Every weekend. Some weeks I drank more frequently. You know, when you start, you can't stop. At least for me it was difficult."

Peter said: "Once you are doing it weekly, you are too used to it. First you start doing it one time a month, then once a week, then three or four days a week. Then, all of a sudden, you are doing it every day."

When Peter was asked about the frequency of doing drugs, he talked about the kind of drugs he did: "Other than that, I never did no other kind of drugs. I had never shot up. I have done pcp, I have done dust, I have done crack. But I hardly ever did nothing except cocaine. It was my favorite, it was the one that controlled me."

Jimmy said: "It was normal for me to use a drug."

Tony told the researcher this: "It began to increase. The first year I would do it during lunch, because these were people I would do it with in school. Then I was seeing my uncles and adults doing it. So I tried it."

Melissa suggested that she was doing drugs regularly when she said: "I was doing drugs for almost eight years." In a different section of the interview we read: "I was doing cocaine and stuff. Marijuana was already a habit."

The frequency in the use of illicit drugs caused the subjects to become drug addicts. Every single subject interviewed was a drug addict.
Question 15: What means did he/she use to get money to buy drugs and support the habit?

Three out of six subjects indicated that they were stealing and selling stolen objects to support their habit; two out of six were selling drugs for profit which was used to support the habit; one out of six indicated that he was given the drugs free at the beginning and then he used his own money to buy drugs and support his habit. This is what some of the subjects said:

"My friend used to work and at that time my parents used to give me some money and we chip in together (me and two or three other people) and we would buy a bag of marijuana and that would last us until the weekend." This is the way Frank referred to the question. In a different part of the interview, Frank expressed: "If I had $100, I would do $100. If I had $100 to do on coke, I would try to go and get more money. The last week I came in before I got arrested, I was doing anywhere from $100 to $300." Finally, Frank said the following: "I was getting a lot of it, taking it and cutting in half, mixing it with another substance and selling; that way I would have money and would also have the drug for myself."

Robert answered the question with these words: "I started using the job. I started stealing from the job. It started off lightly, doing small things, but then it ended up as I was taking hundreds of dollars a day worth of items to sell them so I could maintain my habit."

Peter said, "I would make more money selling drugs than going to work. I got the drugs from a friend of mine. I was distributing
the drugs for him." Jimmy indicated that he was stealing to buy drugs or getting drugs from friends who were selling them.

Tony said that "most of the time it was given to me. But also I was buying them. I worked to buy them. When you need it, you need it. I got drugs from a friend of mine. His brother-in-law was a police officer. He would give it to him at a cheaper price." And a little further in the interview, Tony said: "I became one of the drug dealers. Then I stopped selling."

Melissa is one of the subjects who was also selling drugs. She said, for instance, "I was selling drugs in the streets. Cocaine, crack, marijuana and stuff."

It appears from the interview that a common pattern among drug addicts of keeping up with the habit is to sell drugs for profit so they can have the drugs freely, or steal anything and sell it in order to have money to buy the drug.

Question 16: What impact did drugs have in his/her school life? Attendance? Home assignments? School work? Grades? Participation in sports and extracurricular activities?

Based on the answers given by the subjects in the interview, this researcher concludes that drugs had a direct negative impact on all the subjects as far as school and academic achievement is concerned.

Melissa is very explicit in this regard. She said: "I was in tenth grade when I started to do drugs. I went to Commerce High
School. I was a good student. My grades were average. After I started doing drugs, I began to skip school. And very frankly, I think I lost interest in school."

Absences from school were more frequent in four out of six subjects, after they started to use drugs. One subject indicated that his attendance "was the same because my mother worked in the schools. So she was like a teacher there." Another subject indicated that he "was already failing" as an excuse to be absent from school.

Talking about grades after he started doing drugs, Tony has indicated this: "My grades in school were always average. After I started doing drugs, they went down to some degree, yes."

In regard to the question formulated, Frank mentioned the following: "I would say that because of drugs you get to the point that it is impossible to keep up with your school work or going to school every day. That is what happened to me."

In another part of the interview, Frank said: "I went back to evening school. . . . and I ended quitting school, because it was interfering with my getting high."

This statement seems to confirm the premise that it is impossible to keep up with school work while doing drugs.

Robert had these words: "I was heavily involved with drugs and doing real bad in school. Some friends of mine also quit school."

This is what Peter said about the negative impact that drugs had on his education: "I was skipping school. My grades were not
good, and it did not make sense to me to stay in school." He also said: "I missed too many school days. I wasn't interested in school, I was not doing my work in school."

It appears that even sports and extracurricular activities were affected by the use of drugs. Frank describes it with the following words: "And as I progressed it took a lot out of me. I was not able to run as fast. I could not keep up with the other people. My reactions were slowing down. I was not on top of myself."

Question 17: Did personal behavior begin to change? Was he/she aware of this fact by comparison to previous behavior?

Due to the use of drugs, behavior did change in all six subjects. In the interviews, the subjects have indicated how they began to skip school, to lose interest in school; their ability to perform school work declined. And also their behavior outside the school changed. Some of the subjects started to sell drugs, to steal in order to support their habit. As Frank said, "every time I was in jail it was because of drugs, it was because I was stealing to get money or because I was breaking and entering, to get drugs."

Robert referred to the consequences of behavior change with his own words: "Most of the time I got arrested was for the use of drugs."

Jimmy made the following statement: "Lives can be affected with drugs. You don't think about what you're gonna to do, you are more impulsive. Like you just do it more spontaneously, and you
don't think of the consequences. I'd have to get high to break into a house."

Tony said about change of behavior: "It really changed. . . . Drugs really make you change."

Melissa was a good student before she did drugs. After she started doing drugs, her behavior changed completely, she began to skip school, used drugs more frequently, and, finally, quit school.

Question 18: What was the main reason to drop out of school?
Four of the six subjects indicated that the immediate cause why they dropped out of school was drugs.

Two of the six subjects indicated that the indirect cause why they dropped out of school was drugs.

Frank explained this way: "It was my senior year. The days I used to go to school high I was in trouble. I was not interested in doing anything but feel good. The days I did not go to school 'cause I wanted to get high and if I was in school it would take away from the time. I had to support my habit. So I quit school."

When the researcher asked Frank if it would be appropriate to say that he quit school during his senior year because of the drug habit, Frank replied: "That is the only reason."

Robert answered the question making this statement: "I was heavily involved with drugs and doing real bad in school. Some friends of mine also quit school and I used to hang around with them. We needed money to support our habit. So I thought that
going to work the best I could, it was the best thing to solve the problem."

Peter said: "It was more fun to do drugs than to go to school. This is one of the reasons I think I dropped out." Peter did not explain the other reasons. At least it is clear that drugs were one of the reasons he dropped out of school.

Jimmy simply stated the following: ". . . because I was dealing with drugs."

Tony said: "I was really bad. I felt the need of supporting my habit, so it was like natural to leave school and look for a job. That is what I did it."

This is what Melissa said in regard to the reason why she dropped out of school: "I dropped out of school. I did not want to study anymore. Why should I go to school when I could be making money, and good money, selling drugs?"

When the researcher asked Melissa what was the main reason why she left school, she replied: "Because I wanted to be independent and make money. I needed it. The only way of making money for me at that time was selling drugs."

Question 19: To what degree did drug abuse motive him/her to quit school?

In all six cases the degree of influence that drugs had in the subjects to drop out of school was significant. Through the text of the interview presented, we could see that, directly or indirectly,
drugs had a significant impact on the decision of dropping out of school. After the subjects interviewed became drug addicts, they got to the point that it was impossible for them to stay in school and perform well academically.

Frank said in the interview: "I would say that because of drugs you get to the point that it is impossible to keep up with your school work or going to school every day. I quit school because I wanted to get high."

Question 20: Was the drug habit the only factor that made him/her leave school?

From a comprehensive point of view, the researcher concludes that the drug habit was not the only factor that made them leave school. The drug habit was related to other factors.

Question 20 is connected with questions 21 and 22.

Question 21: If the drug abuse habit was not the only factor that made him/her leave school, which one was it?

The need of selling drugs, stealing and looking for a job.

Question 22: If the drug habit was not the only factor, was it the main factor that made him/her leave school?

Drug abuse among the six subjects was the main factor that caused them to leave school. Because of the drug habit, they decided either to start selling drugs, looking for a job, or stealing in order to support their habit. These were the other factors considered in the decision to quit school. It is appropriate to
indicate that selling drugs, stealing and looking for a job were factors derived from the drug-use factor.

Question 23: Was his/her education affected by the use of illicit drugs?

The answer is affirmative in all six cases. If we consider their education as the years of high school with the immediate goal of getting a high school diploma, it is obvious that none of the subjects interviewed completed high school. Therefore, their education was affected by the use of drugs. "I went back to evening school... and I ended quitting school," Frank said.

Melissa responded directly to the question: "Yes - education has been affected because of drugs - but not only because of drugs. For many other reasons my education has been affected. I did not have a real family life."

Question 24: Did he/she get involved in any kind of illegal activities?

All the subjects were selling illicit drugs at one point or another of their years of drug experience. We have seen this in different sections of the interviews. As an example, this is what Frank said: "... I was getting a lot of it, taking it and cutting it in half, mixing it with another substance and selling; that way I would have profit and would also have the drug for myself."

Four out of six subjects indicated that they were stealing in order to support their habit.
One of the six declared: "I was breaking and entering to get drugs."

Question 25: Did he/she face legal action or even terms in prison for stealing, carrying firearms without a license?

Four out of six subjects clearly indicated that they faced legal action or were arrested because they were stealing or breaking into houses.

Robert would say in this regard: "I started stealing from the job. . . . it ended up I was taking hundreds of dollars a day worth of items. Most of the time I was arrested for the use of drugs."

One out of six subjects indicated that he was arrested for carrying a rifle. These are his own words: "Then a third time they got me for carrying a rifle. The rifle gave me six months in jail."

There are other cases in which subjects interviewed were arrested for selling drugs. This is, for instance, Melissa's case. When the researcher asked Melissa why she was caught by the police the second time, she answered, "I was selling drugs in the street."

Question 26: Did he/she receive a sentence after facing trial?

Five out of the six subjects interviewed indicated that they were sentenced to jail because of an action directly related to illicit drugs.

Frank, for instance, indicated the following: "... with me I have court charges hanging, cases hanging, with me I have three years in the House of Correction."
Robert, again, indicated that "most of the times (he) got arrested, was for the use of drugs." When talking to the researcher, Robert said that he also had cases pending in court.

Peter at least once stayed in jail "sixteen and a half months. It was the first time doing a crime," he said.

Jimmy said that he was in jail "once. I got arrested one time and got probation another time."

Melissa was also sent to jail. These are her own words: "I had no option. To come here and enter the program or to stay in jail. It was the second time I was sent to jail. The first time I was in jail for a couple of months. Then I was sent out on probation."

Question 27: Why did he/she decide to consider the possibility of drug rehabilitation?

Only one out of the six subjects interviewed considered, by himself, the possibility of entering a drug rehabilitation center.

The other five subjects were given the option by court decision of entering a rehabilitation program or staying in jail. They entered the rehabilitation center, as Melissa's statement illustrates.

And, once again, Frank clearly stated that he had no option. "If I leave this program I would have to go to jail for three years, along with four years of probation."
When Peter was interviewed, it was already the third day since his release from jail. He was on probation and ordered by court decision to seek help for his drug problem. The counselor contacted Peter in jail.

Jimmy also was sent to a rehabilitation center to seek help for his drug addiction.

Tony is the only subject who, in the context of the interview, took by himself the decision of stopping drug use. This is the way Tony expressed his decision: "I stopped one day and looked into the mirror. I started wondering what if they were right. I was always knowledgeable and so sure of what I was doing. What if I am wrong? And so I put it into my mind and maybe it is time to stop."

Summary of the Chapter

After the presentation of the findings of these six case studies, this researcher has identified some common characteristics of the subjects interviewed.

1. Peer pressure was the main cause in five out of six cases for their initial involvement with drugs; family circumstances could be considered the main cause in the remaining case.

2. There is a common pattern in the process of becoming a drug user, mainly in the beginning of drug use. The six subjects started by using soft drugs, such as tobacco, beer, wine, at different age
levels, but the same first step. Then, they went into heavier
drugs, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and, in two cases, crack, the
most addictive drug.

3. All the subjects felt a need for continuing drug use with
an increasing frequency, without being able to stop.

4. Drug use became an addiction in all six subjects, in a
matter of months and lasted from 6 to 11 years, according to the
cases presented in this study, before the subjects looked for help
voluntarily or went to the rehabilitation centers because of a court
order.

5. The drug habit created a need for money in all six subjects
interviewed, in order to support their habit, which forced them to
sell drugs, to steal, to break into houses, and, in Melissa's case,
to become a prostitute.

6. With the exception of Tony, who did not mention so in the
interview, all the subjects got into trouble with the police,
committed social offenses, and went to jail because of illicit
drugs.

7. At least five of the subjects indicated that their parents
were divorced or separated, in most cases during their early
childhood.

8. Two out of the six subjects clearly suffered permanent
speech problems related to the abuse of illicit drugs. One subject
suffered cardio-respiratory problems for the uncontrolled use of
heavy drugs, specifically, cocaine.
9. All the subjects of this case study paid a high physical price for getting into the world of illicit drugs: their brain, memory, and health were damaged. Psychologically, they suffered from serious depressions.

Talking about the effects of illicit drugs, Frank Michael Cortina (1972) says

... a drug addict consciously suspends his reason, his spirituality, his involvement with life. Drugs permit dissociation, suspension. Nothing is more basically opposed to man's life force. Drug addiction is a renunciation of life (1972, p. viii).
CHAPTER V

EDUCATIONAL ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After the presentation of the findings, it seems necessary to proceed with the educational analysis, giving particular consideration to the most important aspects of the educational process of the subjects. And then, the researcher will discuss drug education and drug prevention, to end the chapter with some suggested guidelines for a possible teachers' workshop on drug abuse.

Educational Analysis

From the educational point of view, it is possible now to state the following:

1. When the subjects were in school, junior or senior high, and they became involved with drugs, a symptomatic fact occurred: they all started to be absent from school. It was not unusual, as some of them said, that the same day they were skipping school, they were doing drugs. It is appropriate to say, based on this fact, that they skipped school to do drugs.

2. As the drug involvement progressed, the interest in school decreased, and absenteeism from school was a daily, or if not daily, certainly a frequent, fact.
3. Personal behavior changed during school hours. Some of the subjects have indicated that they "got in trouble in school," precisely when they were high. They also added that what really counted was "to feel good."

4. Academic grades went down during the period of time the subjects were doing drugs.

5. According to the subjects interviewed in this study, none of them received any help from school administrators, counselors, or teachers, those in direct daily contact with students.

It appears that the drug-user-students received no help, perhaps because they did not ask for it or because school staff members were unaware of their condition. It is also legitimate to state, based on the facts of the interview, that a complete lack of communication existed between school personnel and these drug users. It is true that, at the time these subjects were junior or senior high school students, programs on Drug Education or Drug Prevention were not fully developed. Nevertheless, this lack of communication was a serious deficiency that needed to be mentioned.

6. The learning process was also affected because of the effects of drugs on the brain, as well as the nervous system. This fact is obvious. As President Reagan said in his March 24, 1988 address to a group of high school students in Virginia, "Students who use drugs don't learn anything."

7. All of the subjects dropped out before getting high school diplomas.
According to the interviewees, the main reason they dropped out of school was because of a heavy involvement with drugs, directly, as a drug user, and/or indirectly, as a drug seller. Their academic education was seriously damaged while they were involved with drugs. They all regretted not having been able to finish at least high school. Four out of the six subjects indicated a willingness to continue their education during or after the rehabilitation time.

Doctor Duke P. Fisher, a Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California School of Medicine and a physician with extensive experience with drug users, states in regard to LSD users:

Many young people, after using LSD, have a dramatic change in their value systems. We have talked to high-school students and college students who dropped out of school after using the drug (Hyde, 1986).

Doctor Fisher's testimony corroborates the findings of this case study: there is a linkage between the use of illicit drugs and dropping out of school, among high school students, whether they use cocaine, crack, or LSD, or any other addictive drug.

Margaret O. Hyde (1986) relates a case quite similar to those of this research in her book, Mind Drugs. She tells that Kate, a 17-year-old junior in high school, was making plans for college. She needed to improve her grade average in order to get a scholarship. She worked hard. She got tense. Her friend Bill encouraged her to relax. He and Kate often smoked marijuana. Bill invited Kate to try cocaine because it "would boost Kate's self-confidence." Kate hesitated for a while, but then she agreed to
attend a cocaine party with Bill. When Kate tried crack she decided "it was the most wonderful feeling in the world." But this feeling did not last long. She felt depressed, lost her energy, and was told she had "crashed." After a few more experiences, Kate and Bill could barely wait until they managed to get enough money to go to a crack house. Kate gave up her idea of going to college. This is just one of a growing number of young people who are, according to Margaret O. Hyde, big-time losers in the cocaine epidemic (Hyde, 1986).

9. Their education, as far as academic achievement is concerned, has been very seriously damaged. No benefits from using drugs, unless we would think that their present tragedy is already a good base for starting to rebuild their lives.

As some of the subjects stated in the interview, "drugs are really bad."

The cases presented in this study are not isolated cases. They can be used logically, as common patterns of what happens or may happen to high school students when they get involved with drugs and become drug addicts. It is not the intention of the researcher to conclude that every single high school student who gets hooked on drugs is going to drop out necessarily before he or she finishes high school, but, based on these case studies, to state that school becomes secondary after developing a drug dependence, and that there is in fact a linkage between drug abuse and dropping out of school, with serious consequences to the drug user's life.
The reason for this statement is the principle of logical induction: a student who gets involved with drugs and becomes a drug addict follows a process of predictable steps. These steps constitute the essence of the process. At a certain point in time, one of the many steps is to feel compelled to drop out of school. However, if someone who starts getting into the process of drug addiction gets off the process, s/he may well experience the success of becoming free of drugs and go all the way to the completion of his/her high school education. This could be the basis for a complementary research plan.

Through this study, we have also seen that it is very difficult to use drugs and, at the same time, be academically successful.

No one will accept drugs as a positive sign in schools. The educational process of individuals and groups could be seriously impaired if students use drugs. Young people without a formal education will not be prepared to find jobs. Young people will not be able to contribute to society; on the contrary, they will pose more problems to communities, families, institutions, and to the whole nation.

An obvious question now is: How to prevent this problem from worsening? Drug Education and Drug Prevention seems to be the right answer. This is the subject of the next part of the chapter.
Recommendations

1. Drug Education and Drug Prevention.

Nowadays there is a national awareness of the danger that alcohol and drug abuse pose to the country. It is important not just to say no to drugs, but to educate elementary and secondary school children on the danger of illicit drugs.

To educate children on drug abuse means to give them comprehensive information, according to their level of understanding, on what drugs mean, the types of drugs, their effects, costs, places where people can get or buy them, and, most important, the danger of becoming a drug addict with all the negative consequences for the drug addict, his family, community, and nation.

Drug education is primarily, like any other education, a parental responsibility. But it appears that schools are, in many instances, in a better position to offer this education to the students. Schools have also a derived responsibility from the parents to educate their children. That is why schools are also entitled to impart this information.

It is up to school administrators to organize the way these sessions on drug information should be carried out.

But, regardless of the means in which this information is imparted, this researcher believes that some basic guidelines should serve as a frame to the information:

It is essential that schools promote a drug-free lifestyle as a valuable goal for the students. Schools should emphasize to the
students that a drug-free life is always much better and more productive than a drug-involved life. Students must understand that expressions like "everybody does it" are not valuable any longer, because a negative role model can't be accepted.

Schools should tell parents to take an active part in the drug education process, supporting school policies and programs, and also refer to the school any facts that make them believe that their child could possibly be doing drugs, so that the school can offer immediate help.

Schools should establish clear, appropriate, and effective policies made known to parents and students as well. When the policies have been already adopted, schools should implement them consistently.

As a final guideline, schools should give the students some ethical norms and sound moral principles. Personal convictions are the most valuable means that a human being has to act responsibly in life.

The researcher would like to suggest some short but concrete points that the drug education should contain:

a. It is important for children to resist peer pressure to use drugs. Peer pressure is one of the leading factors why youngsters initiate the use of drugs.

b. Make youngsters understand that school policies and specific rules are established with positive intentions, to help students. Students should learn how to obey those school
regulations so that they will be able to respect and obey the
government laws also. Students, in particular, tend to react
negatively when confronted with a rule or a specific regulation.
Decisions reached with student input are the most palatable.

c. Impress upon students that the present crisis of drug
abuse is a common responsibility. We have to help each other. And
students in real life have many opportunities to practice this
responsibility, making those who are getting involved with drugs or
those who offer them drugs understand that with the use of drugs
they will not get anywhere.

d. Tell students that the best way to stay free of drugs is
never to try them for the first time.

As far as Drug Prevention is concerned, it would be appropriate
for schools to implement a comprehensive drug prevention curriculum
for all the grades, emphasizing that drug use is wrong.

As a means of drug prevention, schools should promote specific
activities that students will have a chance to join, so that they
may use their time in something positive and keep away from drugs.

Schools should also maintain close contact with police and law
enforcement officers, as well as community agencies devoted to anti-
drug programs. It is a recognized fact that schools alone can't
solve the drug problem. It is always better to seek the support of
the whole community.

Schools can invite local professionals such as lawyers, nurses,
and physicians, to share their experiences in dealing with drug abuse
and young drug addicts.
Schools may promote concrete programs to prevent drug abuse and ask local businesses to support the program.

These are only a few examples of what can be done or what schools can do to prevent drug abuse, which means to stop a drug problem before it begins.

Facts prove that, despite all the preventive measures taken by school officials, there are always some students who start experimenting with drugs. In order to help these students, the researcher would like to make a second recommendation.

2. Creation of an Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Office.

Based on the personal experience of the subjects interviewed, we can state that there was a complete lack of communication between school administrators, counselors, teachers, and all the subjects when they were in school. The formal setting in which schools operate does not facilitate that communication. This lack of communication exists also between parents and young drug addicts in many cases. Youngsters who are dealing with drugs do not dare to talk to anybody but peers because they trust each other. Trust appears to be the clue for the approach between school personnel or administrators and drug addicts. If the schools could offer a more appropriate atmosphere to students who are dealing with drugs or are already drug addicts, this researcher estimates that the number of dropouts would decrease significantly.

This researcher recommends the creation, in each junior and senior high school, of an Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Office,
if not full time at least part time. The same professional staff could rotate accordingly through different schools, depending on the needs of the school.

These Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Offices should operate without any interference of school disciplinarians, unless a particular behavior has been a public fact. That being the case, school disciplinarians should exercise their authority.

Through this channel, students with drug problems could have access to the services provided by the schools or could be referred to other professional services on drug abuse by specialized agencies.

**Suggested Outline for a Workshop**

As a concrete contribution, this researcher would like to suggest an outline for a possible workshop designed for school personnel:

1. Purpose of the workshop. The purpose could vary according to the particular needs of the school or the needs of the participants in the workshop. The purpose should be clearly stated. Along with the purpose, what is expected from the participants should be specified.

2. Reason for the workshop. This also could vary according to the particular needs of the school or the group.

   It could be: awareness of the drug problem among teenagers; finding and implementing school policy against illicit drugs.
Some basic definitions should follow, such as the concept of drugs, illicit drugs, drug abuse, etc.

3. Reasons why youngsters get involved with drugs. The most common ones: peer pressure, role model, curiosity, home structure, individual depression, etc.

4. Presentation of the most current and popular drugs: cocaine, marijuana, crack, alcohol, etc. Drugs by groups. Immediate effects of those and other drugs. Drug dependency.

5. The problems caused by the use of illicit drugs. Individual problems: health, academic achievement, etc. Family and school problems. Social problems.

6. Specific means to solve the particular problem the participants are confronted with in school. As an example, it could be: absenteeism, school academic level, referrals from local police, etc.

7. Guest speakers. The presence of people competent on drug matters always represents positive input to the participants in the workshop. Speakers could be former drug addicts or even those who are residents in drug rehabilitation centers.

8. Film presentations as a complement or reinforcement of what has been said in the workshop.

A widely accepted film, for instance, is How to Talk to Your Kids About Growing Up Without Drugs and Alcohol. The film is
distributed in video cassette by the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth (Silver Springs, Maryland).

9. On-site visits to Drug Rehabilitation Centers. Direct contact with people receiving treatment for drug abuse could prove very beneficial.

In most of the large towns and cities there are local drug rehabilitation centers. These centers normally accept on-site visits from people who would like to contact former drug addicts on the premise of seriousness and respect.

10. Legal implications of drug abuse program.

- Procedures of the criminal justice system.
- Discussion of the alternative of searching for drugs within the schools.

- Suspension and expulsion of students possessing or using drugs within the school grounds.
- Identification of students possibly in need of assistance, intervention of school authorities and referrals to parents, specialized agencies, police, etc.

11. Community resources. Information to the workshop participants about the community resources: names, their purpose, their programs, their philosophy, their procedures and means, and their accomplishments.

12. The workshop could end with the planning of specific drug education goals, some prevention policies, etc.

13. Implementation of recommendations. Flexibility in the direction of the workshop is strongly suggested. This is one of the
reasons why the researcher was not more specific on details of the proposed outline.

Summary of the Chapter

In this final chapter, we presented a comprehensive analysis of how the educational process of the subjects interviewed was affected by the use of drugs, namely, their attendance, interest in school, personal attitude and behavior, and academic grades as well. The main reason the subjects dropped out of school was their heavy involvement with drugs.

Based on the data collected from the interviews, it appears that there is in fact a linkage between drug abuse and dropping out of school. It appears very difficult for a student to use drugs and, at the same time, be academically successful.

Drug education and drug prevention seem to be the most effective means schools have now to stop drug abuse among students. Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Offices in schools could prove beneficial.

At the end of the chapter, a suggested outline for a drug prevention workshop has been presented.

Every effort should be made in the schools nationwide to prevent drug abuse by American youth. Only negative consequences derive from drug abuse; it will always be better for students not to try drugs. The painful, expensive, and sometimes long treatments in Drug Rehabilitation Centers do not guarantee a full recovery for every drug addict.
APPENDIX A

Interview with Frank
I. FRANK

Frank (not his real name) is a 20-year-old male. He came to Springfield from a small town in Connecticut some years ago with his mother and step-father. He was the only child in the family. His drug experience began at a very early age. His mouth moved slowly when talking. He had noticeable difficulty moving his lips. His speech was indistinct and his diction unclear. Frank cooperated extremely well with the researcher. When asked if his speech problem was something congenital, he said that "it was a consequence of what drugs did to me."

The first question was a breaking-silence question.

- How long have you been here?

"I have been in the program a little over three months. I came in July 24," Frank said.

- What are you doing in this program?

"The main issue that I have been working on is discovering why I did drugs when I was on the streets, and that brings you back like not being able to accept responsibility which is taught here. Maybe something went wrong or you got upset or had a problem and went for a drink or a drug. Here you have to deal with it like we should have been able to, but we just were not able to. I feel like that anyway. All the other residents here also."

Frank felt more relaxed after he started talking. After a few seconds of silence, with his head down, he continued:
"It was like a back door, an escape. Different ways you, you would not have to deal with things. Get high and forget about time and then you would come down. It would still be there. Now here you learn how to deal with it. You have problems with other residents -- get into an argument -- sit down and talk about it, instead of carrying on with it. You just realize what the problem is. You try and straighten it out and you go on with your life without having a drink or take a drug," explained Frank.

- At what age did you start to get involved with drugs?
  "I am twenty years old now. The first time I did drugs, I was eight years old."

- What kind of drugs did you do?
  "The first time I did marijuana and drank," tells Frank in a very simple manner. "I come from a little town. Drugs were only in the big cities. I started to get high when I was eight years old, and along with that I was also getting into trouble."

- Why did you start using drugs?
  "I was influenced by my peers. I hung around with other people, they were older than me. My friends were all a couple of years older than me, two or three years older. They were getting high, so I started getting high also. At first I did not start doing it all the time. But then I felt I could not have a good time without getting high."
- With what frequency were you using drugs?

"When I first started I did not like to drink. I drank once. I got drunk and was sick. So I just started off by smoking marijuana maybe twice a week, mostly on the weekends and maybe once during the week after school or in the evening with my friends, but it was not regularly."

- Any other reason for using drugs or getting high?

"I do not feel that there was. I was young and I was easily led. People would do and I would be there right along with them and that is more or less what it was. I wanted to try and gain respect, I guess, from my friends and wanted to do it right along with them. My parents were divorce. I would see my father on the weekends and I had no resentment toward them."

So far, it is clear that, in Frank's case, the first reason he started doing drugs was peer pressure. Frank did mention it twice. It is interesting to notice that, when he was asked for the second time why he was doing drugs, he suddenly thought of his parents' divorce, suggesting that, unconsciously, he thought of this fact as a cause. To the next question:

- Do you think that if you were living with your father and mother you would have also been involved with drugs?

"Maybe no. Sometimes I wanted to do things on a different level, in a different way."
- Do you have any brothers or sisters?

"No, I am the only child. I always did whatever I wanted, kind of spoiled."

- Did your mother know you were using drugs?

"No and she did not know until probably five years later. I was twelve years old, because I would not get into trouble behind the marijuana. They threw me out of the town I was living in because I was high on marijuana and I was doing vandalism and things like that, to go along with the crowd and I told my mother I was doing this and we had to move."

- Were you attending school when you were smoking marijuana?

"Yes, I was in elementary school."

- Do you remember the grades?

"Fifth and sixth grade."

Frank began to talk about his personal experiences on marijuana, sensations, evasion of reality, etc. This is what he said:

"When I was smoking marijuana, it made me feel like I was better than other people, at least I was equal. I would feel the conceitedness in me more or less cause I was high. I did not worry about anything. I was high and that is all that mattered. I was happy. I was not thinking about anything that I had to do or should be doing or anything like that. All I did was get high. If I was supposed to be home to help my father or do
something like that I did not worry about it. I had no problems at that time. I felt I was on top of myself and that went on and on. I smoked marijuana up until I entered the program here, until I went to jail. In jail you could still smoke - cause they had it in jail. I smoked up probably until I was 16 years old and then I got turned on to some cocaine and I started off snorting that. A lot of people make you nervous, jittery like someone is watching you everything you do, you turn around it brings out paranoia in you and make you real nervous and with me it was not really like that. It was a care-free mood, I did not care. I was high. I felt good. When I say I felt good, it took me away from reality. I did not have to face reality. But after it used to make me tired and drowsy after smoking. You would be high for a while and you would start coming off of the drug and it would take a lot out of you or it took a lot out of me making me tired and drowsy."

- How did you get the marijuana? Did you buy it?

"Yes, me and a friend of mine. My friend used to work and at that time my parents used to give me money and we chip in together (me and two or three other people) and we would buy a bag of marijuana and that would last us until the weekend and we all would to to school; during the week, some times we smoked in the morning outside the school or in the streets nearby."
- How did you perform in school?

"In school I did not do bad. I passed all my classes and I played sports. It did not slow me down at least in the beginning when I was going to Forest Park Junior High. I played basketball, baseball, soccer. I played all kinds of sports and it didn't slow me down then. And as I progressed it took a lot out of me. I could not run as fast. I could not keep up with the other people. My reactions were slowing down. I was not on top of myself. I really was not aware of the things that I was doing. I would do something and leave it some place and come back an hour later and say where did it go? I could not remember what I did an hour ago."

- Frank, what about cocaine?

"I used cocaine when I was 15 years old. I was going to school. I was in junior high school. It was with an older friend of my brother. I started to hang around with. He was smoking marijuana. I started skipping school. I went with my friend. He was driving around all day. He was doing coke, so I was doing coke with him, say three days out of the week. He was paying for this. I did not know the value of it at that time. We were doing it from 9:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. at night. I would not be hungry. I would not want to eat. When I was doing coke, I would not eat at all. Six days out of seven I would not eat. Orange or juice of some kind."
- Any effect on your health?

"I am only 20 years old like I said, but I had to go to the hospital because of blood vessels around the heart. I do not know what the name of that is. The doctors and nurses that I talked to said it was a sign of a heart condition and I am only 20 old years and they said it was a minor heart attack. I found that hard to believe. I have not used it in like four months now and I feel a lot better. I have more energy. A lot of things happen now that I never had before, like some self confidence. My awareness was picking up. I was not on edge about myself. I was not worried about impressing other people. Everything I did was more or less for other people. I finally did things for myself and I felt good."

Frank is a young man who really feels what he says. It is the personal sincerity of this young man that gives a deep value to his answers and personal stories. This is another reason why it became extremely difficult to interrupt him or omit paragraphs. He continued saying this about his cocaine experience:

"I started doing it every day and I was doing every day anyway. All the money I had a day I would do on coke. If I had $100 I would do $100. If I had $100 to do on coke, I would try to go and get more money. The last week I came in before I got arrested, I was doing anywhere from $100 to $300."
- Were you doing coke during your high school years?

"Yes, I did coke. When I was in my junior year at Putnam (Roger L. Putnam Vocational Technical High School) I was doing it more frequently."

- Did you get any help from your counselor?

"I did not get any help until I came to this program."

- Why did you quit school?

"It was my senior year. I was not doing bad. I maintained good grades. The days I used to go to school high I was in trouble. I was not interested in doing anything but feel good. The days I did not go to school - cause I wanted to get high and if I was in school it would take away from the time. I had to support my habit. So I quit school."

- Is it appropriate to say that you quit school in your senior year because of your drug habit?

"That is the only reason. I regret not graduating and not being able to improve myself. I am awfully thankful that there is a program like this, giving a lot of opportunities to prove myself all over again. To start off on the right foot. I know I was not making my choice, drugs were making up all my decisions. I needed drugs and drugs kept telling me I needed more drugs. Who was I to tell myself that I did not need them? I told myself that three times a day but I still used drugs."
- What did you do after you quit school?

"I worked on and off. I worked on production lines, a plastic company. I went back to evening school for welding and metal and I ended quitting school, because it was interfering with my getting high. I liked getting high and that is all I wanted to do. I would work for a week, maybe two weeks at a job just to pay off my bills, that is the bills I owed while I was doing coke."

And talking about how he managed himself to pay off his bills, Frank simply stated:

"I owed it to people in the surrounding towns of Springfield, the people I owed to that let me borrow it and they would give it to me, say like today (they call it fronting) and I would tell them I would pay them in three days down the road. And even now I still owe money; they started off at low prices; the first couple of times they would sell it to me cheap and once I started getting hooked on it, then I started paying the regular price. As I was starting to pay regular price I was getting more quantity and it got to the point I was getting a lot of it, taking it and cutting in half, mixing it with another substance and selling; that way I would have money and would also have the drug for myself. At first I started snorting it, I started into free-basing it which is smoking it just like smoking marijuana. The strongest drug I have used most often would be cocaine. But besides
cocaine, the strongest of drugs that I did not like because I did not know how I was going to react from it, would be LSD, would be acid and that it affects you in many different ways."

[Frank described the effects of that drug with these words:] "It could affect you in one way, you would feel fine, you would see different colors, different visions and then, other days you would like to fly or you could stop traffic. It just makes you fantasize and it makes you believe that you can do these things, and that is the worst drug that I could think of. It was not really addicting to me because I did not enjoy it. My best choice was cocaine and marijuana and drinking because I could handle myself."

- Frank, why did you go to jail?

"I never got arrested for drug use or for possession of drugs but every time I was in jail it was because of drugs, it was because I was stealing to get money or because I was breaking and entering, to get drugs. Most of the things I got arrested for, it was for carrying a pistol because I was using drugs and I wanted protection, I felt insecure. If it wasn't for drugs, I would have never got into trouble."

- Did your education suffer because of drugs?

"I would say that because of drugs you get to the point that it is impossible to keep up with your school work or
going to school every day. That is what happened to me. I quit school because I wanted to get high. More than my education, my health suffered, my heart, my brain, my nervous system. And besides that, I have court charges hanging, cases hanging, with me I have three years in the House of Correction. If I leave this program, I would have to go to jail for three years, along with four years of probation."

- Did you separate from your family?

"It took me to get arrested for the third time. The third time I got arrested I finally decided that I thought about all the drugs did to me. They got me high for a little while, they separated myself from my family. I separated myself from my family because of drugs. I turned to stealing from my best friends because of drugs. I was not thinking of anyone but myself; I was only thinking about getting high, and if it was money hanging around I picked it up and took it. I was two days out of jail before I came into the program. Two days I was with my parents. I sat down and ate supper with them for the first time in about three years. I sat there and I was kicking myself in the butt, more less because I never took the time out when I was on drugs to get close to my parents. I missed a lot of things that I could have done with my family."
With a very sad face, as if he had forgotten something important, Frank said this:

"whereas here I get mood swings I would stop to think what drugs did for me. Drugs got me into trouble. If I did not abuse drugs I would have never had a court record. Drugs tore me away from my family. They made it hard for me to keep relationships going with girls. I have a son who is one and a half year old whom I had never seen. My girlfriend and I broke up over my using of drugs and a lot of things that I have lost because I wanted to get high. Nothing I ever did while I was using drugs meant anything to me at all."

- What is your advice to high school students who feel tempted to use illicit drugs?

"Stop and really think about it before they do pick up any kind of drug or drink, because at that time they think it is not going to harm you. There are no two ways about it, unless you just pick up and put down. I myself don't know many people that can do that. I just feel the younger children are going to go along with their friends. Live your life for yourself; don't live it for anyone else. Don't try to impress anyone else. Make yourself happy first. Don't surrender to peer pressure. That's a part of drug use: peer pressure. Two ways out of it: go with your friends and do it or you can say no. If they accept you for saying no, fine. If they don't, they are not your
friends. They were only drug partners. I realize that now. I had twenty-five good friends at least when I was out on the streets before I came into the program and now that I have been here, I narrowed it down to one good friend that was not drug related. He is the only that cares about how I am doing now. My real friend never did drugs.

In the next paragraph, Frank is going to mention that he talks in school. While he was in the rehabilitation center, he was allowed to attend STCC (Springfield Technical Community College) two or three mornings a week. That is what he refers to.

"I feel a lot better being straight. I feel respectable, something I never felt before in school. I talk to all the people I can in school. I am going for my GED because I dropped out of school. I look around and see sixteen-, seventeen-year-old kids doing the same stuff that I was doing but they don't think they are going to get into any trouble. I did not think so either but here I am. I am twenty years old convicted of two felonies and suspended three to seven year sentences. I am only twenty years old."

- How do you feel in this program now?

"I feel a lot better now. I've been drug free for this long period of time. At least in the last six years I have not been this free. I feel like I would like to get out and start talking to people, telling them my
experiences with drugs and try to persuade people any way that I can."

- Do you feel more satisfied now?

"I don't have to get high to feel on top. I talk to like seven people in school now. Four out of seven are using drugs. They don't understand what is going and stuff. But I hate to see anyone get caught up in it. It is too hard to get untangled."

[His last words at the end of the interview:]

"... I think about everything that drugs did to me and they got me into trouble, they ruined a big part of my life. ... I hope I won't ever allow that to happen again."
APPENDIX B

Interview with Robert
II. ROBERT

Robert is a friendly tall man in his mid-twenties. Most of the time when he was talking on his own or answering questions, he kept his head down. Robert always walked slowly and talked with a soft voice, but with solemnity. His drug experience began when he was an adolescent. This researcher met with Robert three times for long sessions of interview and he always expressed in his face some deep sadness. He appeared extremely concerned for his past years of heavy use of illicit drugs.

Four months before this interview took place, Robert entered Marathon House for drug rehabilitation treatment.

Robert explained what he was doing in the program:

"Basically, I am for the moment working on issues about drug abuse, about some past issues, some past relationships that I had with prior fiances, girlfriends and so on, and also the death of my parents, death of other relatives that have occurred in the past three or five years. I had a lot of feelings of the death of my father.

-excerpt"

- Since what age did you start to get involved with drugs?

"For myself, I started drinking at an early age, fifteen. I started drinking wine, beer; then turned out to hard liquor."

- Just liquor?

"Yes, just liquor. I came to the conclusion that the reason why I started drinking was that I was not basically
satisfied with the way my life was going at the present time. I started to find out that I had a little bit of a problem when I came from the country and starting school up here was a little bit different, different atmosphere and I ended up following other people because I was relatively new to this environment and so I started to use alcohol."

- What kind of drugs did you use?

"Presently, I started off with alcohol and moved on up to marijuana. I was about sixteen when I first started smoking marijuana. I was a different type of addict. I felt like I was on a cloud. In reality that is the way I felt, it was a totally different high and I thought it was different. Basically it started off like a weekend thing, you know, but I constantly drank and kept on drinking beer, moved away from the wine a little bit, then kept on smoking marijuana; that went on until I was almost seventeen."

- You said you constantly drank. What do you mean by that?

"Three, four days a week. Every weekend. Some weeks I drank more frequently. You know, when you start, you can't stop. At least for me it was difficult."

- Did you drink during school hours?

"A couple of times, but small drinks. And that was after lunch when we were allowed to go outside. Most of the time I was drinking after school hours, with friends, in
the streets, or in my house or a friend's house, when parents were not home."

- How did you perform in school?

"Some days I did good; some days I did real bad and I got in trouble. I did not care about anything. I liked to feel high. I felt my grades were below average. I managed to survive in junior high. I stayed back a couple of times in elementary school."

Robert quit school twice. The first time was in seventh grade. He finished junior high at Kiley Junior High School. Then he went to Technical. He explained this way:

"The highest grade I really completed was ninth grade at Kiley Junior High. Then I went to Technical (Technical Senior High School in Springfield). I stayed there approximately seven months. After I got out of there (second time he quit school) I tried to go back to school but they would not accept me there. I was too old, almost nineteen to start again tenth grade. So I went to work and continued drinking up to that point, then smoking marijuana and eventually doing heroin, snorted the heroin."

- Why did you leave school the second time?

"I was heavily involved with drugs and doing real bad in school. Some friends of mine also quit school and I used to hang around with them. We needed money to support our
- Did you get any help from school? Counselors? Teachers?
  "I did not talk to anybody. Why should I? When I got in trouble I was given detention, I was sent home suspended. When I got suspended I drank more, I could smoke marijuana more during the day. At that time to feel high was for me better than to go to school."

At this point, it would appropriate to summarize the last two answers: Robert left school because he was so heavily involved with drugs that it was impossible for him to continue with his studies. The second reason, it seems clear, was peer pressure. It is also important to bring our attention to the fact that, in order to support the drug habit, addicts feel the need to work. Keeping up with school and with drugs, at a certain point, is impossible.

Through the interview, Robert mentioned that he also did heroin. This is how he described the first time he approached heroin:

"When I was first offered heroin, I was in high school and a friend of mine just came to visit us. He was staying in upstate New York and just came back from the city and said 'I got some heroin. They called it dope. You want to try some?' I said, 'How do you do it?' I will never forget that day. We went to the woods and there we sat down; he
showed a couple of fellows - showed us what we had to do. I tried it and kind of sent me like flying and the drip came down from my nose into my throat and the sensation, you know, gave me more like a dry mouth for the first time. I wanted some liquid to drink behind it, so anyway we snorted, I guess maybe a bag or two. It was pretty cheap then. I was feeling good, and feeling real good."

- What do you mean by saying real good?
  "I felt like I did not have a care in the world. That is just the way I felt. I was like walking on clouds, like rocking and it was totally different from the marijuana high and the alcohol high, totally different."

- Did you continue doing heroin?
  "Yes I did. I was smelling it up the nose. That went on until my nose started to bleed a lot. I would lose a lot because they were burning my membranes out."

- With what frequency were you using the heroin?
  "Basically sometimes I would use it every day or every other day."

Robert explained in detail how his nose got very sensitive because of the use of heroin. This condition forced him to stop for a short time using drugs. But he went back actively to his bad habit. After he quit school, he was confronted with more problems. He got arrested many times because of drugs, he was stealing at the job. He explains these facts with his own words:
"Most of the times I got arrested was for the use of drugs, for the sale of narcotics, a felony. Before that it was basically a petty thing that happened just basically following the crowd; as the time passed I got into selling drugs, just keeping me up with drugs to buy more drugs. At that time, I felt the need of keep going on this stuff. I guess I was already addicted."

About some of his recent job experiences, he said:

"Before I came into the program here, I would say in the past eighteen months, I held a job and I was on drugs. Sometimes I did foul up my duties but sometimes I did cover them up. It really did get kind of bad, I started using the job. I started stealing from the job. That is when I felt I really had to do something about this. It started off lightly, doing small things, but then it ended up as I was taking hundreds of dollars a day worth of items."

- To sell them?

"To sell them so I could maintain my habit."

- Do you regret the time you spent involved with drugs:

"Yes. It has been a long and very painful experience for me and for my close family. I feel very good about myself now. I feel I started working on my issues; there have been things I would not have accepted in the past, plans for my educational part, my educational part alone is a big issue. I want to complete that. It is just the
beginning, master that there opportunities will begin. I will be able to go on because I want to take some college courses."

Robert was a kind of person who would keep talking for hours about many aspects and topics of his life. One aspect he felt strongly about was how positive the program has been for him. Feeling for some time drug free was something he was proud of. And that gave Robert a deep sense of self-confidence. He was cautiously optimistic about his future.

As in the first case of this data presentation, the last question was also posed to Robert:
- What would you advise teenagers in regard to drug abuse?

"Don't do it. Resist peer pressure and don't ever start the first time. If you do drugs once, no matter what type or stuff you use, you are going to feel like doing it again. Basically this happened to me."

Robert at the time of this interview had ten year of history of drug abuse. There were some indications that his health has been affected, mainly the sensitivity of his nose; his basic instructional education never completed, his personal record with the police is not brilliant.
APPENDIX C

Interview with Peter
When Peter was interviewed it was already the third day since his release from jail. He was on probation, ordered by court decision to seek help for his drug problem. Two days prior to this interview, he was contacted by his counselor who met him in jail a month before and asked if he would be willing to be interviewed in relation to his drug experience. Peter accepted that invitation. When this researcher met Peter in one of the conference rooms of the rehabilitation center, Peter looked extremely quiet and somewhat uncomfortable. His answers were very short, he appeared to be withdrawn with an anxious mood. There was very little eye contact with the interviewer. As the interview progressed, he appeared to relax and was willing to share more of his personal experiences.

- How old are you, Peter?
  "I am twenty-one."

- Did you attend school here in Springfield?
  "Yes. First I went to Carew Street School, then to New North and then to Chestnut Junior High School. Then I was going to Putnam High School."

- How did you get into drugs?
  "When I was in Puerto Rico I was staying in my aunt's house, right so the first time I smoked cigarettes was in Puerto Rico, too. My friend used to invite me to the plaza sometimes he used to take out a cigarette. One day, my aunt's husband (they had already broken up) was over and I was cleaning his car. All of a sudden, I find three
little sticks -- it was marijuana. There were three little joints in a little envelope so I thought it was cigarettes. I took one and left two back. When my friend came to pick me up to go to the plaza, it was like 10 o'clock at night and he took out a cigarette and he came out with a joint. He said 'Oh, where did you get that?' I told him that I had just found it, and asked, 'What does it do?' My friend told me that it gets you high and stuff like that and we started smoking the joint. I got real high, I couldn't even smoke the whole joint with him because I was so high."

- What do you mean really high?

"Actually, I got real, real lazy, tired and I was laughing a lot. He would say or do something and I would start to laugh. ... it was even a joke. I felt happy and comfortable."

- Relaxed?

"Happy, comfortable, relaxed and real tired. It was my first time smoking marijuana. I was fifteen and a half, and I stayed nine months in Puerto Rico and I had to come back because I missed the place where I grew up, so I came back because I couldn't live without it. I tried to get a job. I went to thousands of places to get a job, but I couldn't find one. It was hard for me to find a job at sixteen years old. We were walking one day and I seen
this sign that says 'Job Corps' so I went in the house and filled out an application. Six months later they called me. So that is when I was still smoking marijuana and when I went in to Job Corps, that is when I first saw cocaine. One of my friends from Boston had brought a little bit cause it was the thing to do. I used to live at Job Corps and go back to my house on weekends and one day I was in his room (cause we all had separate rooms) and he took out a paper that had white powder so that was it -- Cocaine. In Spanish, that was Coca."

- What does it do?

"It keeps you up."

- This brings you like to paradise . . .

So I took a little bit, and it did nothing to me. I snorted a little bit and thought it wasn't gonna do nothing to me so I took two more and in three or four minutes, I went up. My eyes opened real wide and my heart started beating real hard. It made me a little nervous and I felt a little drowsy too! Like when the first time you do any kind of drug, you are going to feel the high. Once you're doing it weekly, you're too used to. First you start doing it one time a month, then once a week, then three or four days a week. Then all of a sudden you're doing it every day."
And that is the frequency you were doing?

"Other than that, I never did no other kind of drugs. I had never shot up. I've done PCP, I've done dust, I've done crack. But I hardly ever did nothing except cocaine. It was my favorite, it was the one that controlled me."

Control you from what?

"It was like when I first started doing it, I could have stopped and I didn't stop. I got deeper and deeper into it and than I couldn't stop. It was like I got hooked on it. People were telling me that cocaine never hooked you. They were telling lies. And I didn't get hooked on it. Until the day I went into jail."

What was the reason you went to jail?

"The reason I went to jail was that one day I was driving down St. James Ave., and I was driving without a license. I was driving my friend's car and taking him to work. He used to let me use the car while he was working, and he never told me whether or not the car was registered or inspected. I didn't think I needed a license cause I used to drive so good. One day, I was going by a street and a cop stopped me. The cop stopped me for no reason. It was snowing real hard and it was real cold. Maybe the only reason the cop stopped me was that I was wearing a hat and a lot of gold chains. I got hooked on cocaine that day. The day the cop arrested me, they gave me a $300 fine and
I said how can I get $300 when I'm not working? So I had to do something about it. I started getting deeper into selling drugs. I needed to sell drugs in order to pay that ticket"

- Did you do well selling drugs?

"I did cover that ticket, until they caught me. If I sell this cocaine I'm going to make more than I'm going to at work. I came to the conclusion that I did not want to go to work. I would make more money selling drugs than going to work. I got the drugs from a friend of mine. I was distributing the drugs for him."

- How long have you been selling drugs?

"It is not long. I got involved before I went to jail, it had been two years."

- How long did you stay in jail?

"I can remember well, sixteen and a half months. It was my first time doing a crime. It was my first time in everything."

- Did you do drugs when you were in jail?

"I only smoked one little joint one day. Yes, there were drugs in jail. Drugs are everywhere, you can find them everywhere. I am ordered to stop. Cause sooner or later I am going to get into deeper trouble. It might cost my neck, or it might cost my family's neck."
When did you stop doing drugs?

"Since I went to jail. I haven't done any cocaine or nothing. I had so much pressure on me in jail because they were accusing me of selling drugs in jail. I wasn't doing it; it wasn't true. I was working hard in order to get out of jail. I was doing what I was supposed to do. I was doing everything by the rules so one day, I got a seventy-two hour furlough."

What does that mean - furlough?

"They let you come out of jail and visit with your family. That day was Christmas Eve and I was thinking about burning myself. Cause I had told them that I wanted to go back to the maximum security. That way, I could come out in February on parole. If I did some kind of drugs, I wouldn't come out in February for parole. I would have been there longer. I chose to do drugs cause I had so much pressure. I had the pressure of jail, the pressure of my family. They were pushing me to do well, and I was pressuring myself too. I had three kinds of pressures and suddenly they all exploded and it came all up to me doing drugs. I did do drugs on Christmas and I drank. And I did a little bit of cocaine. So the next day (the 26th) I had to go to work. I felt like sick. It had been a long time since I had done drugs and I had a hangover from the liquor. So I woke up feeling fucked up with a hangover."
I didn't go to work and I stayed over this girl's house. If I was sick, I was supposed to go back to jail. You are in jail, this is your home, you sleep here, if you're sick -- you come here. Which I thought, on a furlough you could stay out. So I was at my girlfriend's house and I called and they called back trying to tell me that I was supposed to go back if I was sick. I wasn't in my mom's house and I wasn't in my house so they had a big case that I had to turn up within six hours. They said I had escaped from jail, and I didn't understand this since I was on furlough. They said my urine was dirty from cocaine. But I didn't do enough cocaine for my urine to be dirty. My urine was dirty from liquor. They took me and took four other guys and told me I was selling drugs to them."

- Do you come here on your own?

"No, cause I'm on parole. They gave me like a special parole. I go to see my PO* every month - once a month - which is giving me trouble too.

- Do you feel better now?

"Oh, yeah. They gave me a drug counselor who used to go and visit me every week. We used to have a meeting and stuff like that. When I'm with this counselor, I can relate. We both relate and we can talk you know, and that has really helped me."

*Parole Officer
- Will you be considered clean?

"Yes, not enough really clean. I'm free, I'm sober!
Since I live in the North End, I live where the drugs are at. I'm more than surrounded. That's what I mean when I said I can find drugs in my bed. I have a little brother that is involved in drugs. He started off right there where I was at, and in order to prevent anything from happening to him, I'm helping him. It's a temptation, though. When you see it, you remember."

- You were doing it for five years?

"No. I was doing it for two years and a half. Two days and you create a habit. Most of the people who recover from drugs are scared to death of people who are on drugs."

- Peter, let's go back to your school years. You mentioned that you were going to Putnam. Did you graduate from high school?

"I dropped out of high school when I was in 10th grade at Putnam."

- Why did you drop out of school?

"I was skipping school. My grades were not good and it did not make sense to me to stay in school. I was failing anyway."

- Why were you doing poorly in school?

"I missed too many school days. I wasn't interested in school, I wasn't doing my work in school."
What was your main interest?

"It was more fun to do drugs, than to go to school. This is one of the reasons I think I dropped out. Then my mother took me to Puerto Rico."

If you had a friend who was sixteen or seventeen years old, would you advise him to be into or out of drugs?

"I have a seventeen-year-old brother involved in drugs. I'm not trying to stop him because you can't stop him. He has to do it himself. You help him and back him up. You give him the strength to stop. That is what my counselor is giving me, strength. And I have to give that to my little brother."

What kind of work do you do now?

"I just changed my job. I used to work in a restaurant. I was the only Puerto Rican there so I figured they were using me for something. So I laid back and I have another kind of job: mass redemptions. It's a little less money but more hours. I figure I'm more comfortable there cause I am not the only Puerto Rican."

Do a lot of your friends deal with drugs?

"I have a lot of Puerto Rican friends. Some of my friends are involved with drugs. It is like I used to be there. I'm still there but I'm not doing drugs, but it's not like I'm going to forget them. Once in a while, I have to go there just to clear my mind."
APPENDIX D

Interview with Jimmy
IV. JIMMY

Jimmy is a young man in his early twenties, who clearly stated that his family was not involved with drugs. He has lived in Springfield for the last three years, after moving with his family from Holyoke, Massachusetts. They had lived for three years in Holyoke before moving to Springfield. His parents separated when he was two years old. Jimmy finished his elementary school in Springfield. He went to Florida where he began junior high school. Two years later, he came back to Massachusetts.

- When did you start dealing with drugs?
  "I was about fifteen years old. I was in Junior High."

- Why did you start doing drugs?
  "I started riding bikes with my friends and sometimes they would say 'Do you want to take this, it makes you feel good.' So, I started smoking a joint and I started cocaine."

- Is it because your friends started to invite you to do drugs or was it because you wanted to do it?
  "I really didn't think about it. I just did it. I drank beer, wine. But in the beginning, the only time I would drink would be Christmas and New Year's."

- How old were you when you started to drink?
  "I was thirteen."

- Did you get drunk at that age?
  "No, I never got drunk at that age, just a little bit. I did not drink that much."
Your family was in a good economic situation?

"No, it was a little difficult -- they had problems."

When you were in school before you started to deal with drugs, how was your achievement in school?

"I was alright. I never missed any days of school, I had good attendance. I was about average."

Before you started to deal with drugs, do you think that it is fair to say that you had good attendance and also you were getting fair grades, right? What happened to your grades after you started to deal with drugs?

"My friends would say 'let's not go to school today. Let's go to my house and smoke a joint and get high. Nobody will call your house or your mother' and things like that."

So you started to skip school, went to your friends' homes to smoke joints. Is there something else that you did?

"Smoking joints and wasting time."

Was there too much pressure from your peers and friends to use drugs? Did they pressure you?

"Not much."

And what is the degree of your involvement in drugs? Was it worsening?

"As the time went on, I was smoking one or two joints and then we were smoking a bag or two. It got to a serious degree."
- How long have you been involved with drugs? How many years?
  "Maybe three or four years."
- What kinds of drugs did you use?
  "I tried mescaline, acid, and marijuana."
- What else?
  "Cocaine."
- What modality of Cocaine?
  "Not intravenous. I sniffed it one time and that is it."
  "I did Angel Dust one time."
- What about crack?
  "I never tried crack."
- What were the effects of some of those drugs? What happens to you when you smoke a joint?
  "You want to get away from your problems. You get high, you're dizzy and in another world. I feel like I had more confidence."
- How did it affect your body? Did you feel high or depressed?
  "If you sat down too long you could feel a hangover from yesterday."
- What was the frequency of using drugs? Did you try once, twice, or did you want to try more?
  "It was normal for me to use a drug."
- How did you obtain money to buy drugs?
  "I stood on the corner with a whole mess of guys and we all used to smoke it. You take a little bit of herb out
of the house and you sell it. When you're standing on the street corner getting high, people come by in the car and buy it off you."

- Did you cause family problems when you were using drugs?
  "Yes, like not coming home early. I used to come home late and my mother would yell at me every day. I was also arrested."

- What was the relationship between you and your mother?
  "I never used to get mad. I would go into the house and hide."

- What about problems with the police? Can you tell me why you were arrested?
  "I got arrested because my friend was breaking into a store and told me to give him a ride to the store. I had some of the stuff in my car so I got taken in. Another time I got arrested: these kids came from South Hadley with a brand new '86 car. It was a stolen car that they told us they were going to sell and they wanted us to find somebody to buy it. So we check out the car, took it around the block for a quick ride and the cops were chasing us. I got away from the cops and I passed a STOP sign and crashed and then they got me. Then a third time, they got me for carrying a rifle in the trunk of the car. Eight guys in one car and the biggest one had a rifle. The rifle gave me six months in jail."
- How many times have you been in jail?

"Once. I got arrested one time and got probation another time."

- What do you think about being in jail?

"It's not a good place to be because you feel like an animal. Like in a cage, what am I going to do here?"

- Were you in a cell or were you free to move?

"I was in a cell. Then they moved me to a two-room dormitory. From there I signed out to go to a school there. I went to a training program for the first month. I finished that program, then went to an inside drug program then they changed me to a skill unit and took me into the machine shop."

- Now you just came back from jail two days ago. Correct? What kind of educational instruction did you receive in jail?

"I tried to get my GED, I learned how to fill out job applications, I got some counseling. They had a lot of positive groups when I was there. My counselor told me to call the college to sign up for an associate's degree. So I am trying to go to college for two years."

- How do you feel now?

"I feel better, I've gained more weight. I gained 25 pounds in jail."

- Do you really think that drugs affected your education?

"Yes. Because with drugs you tend to lose a certain amount of awareness. You lose interest. You have a short
attention span. Your mind wanders here and there. You think about anything that is going except what is going on in front of you."

- So, would you say that your education was affected because of drugs?

"Yes, and lots of concentration."

- What was your advice to your friends?

"I was telling them a lot of good advice. They got court cases. One friend has two court cases. I advised him not to sell drugs."

- Jimmy, did you do drugs while you were in jail?

"The first week that I got there, I smoked. Then I said no more."

- When you are high, do you do more crazy things?

"Yes, more foolish things. You don't think about what you're gonna do, you're more impulsive. Like, you just do it more spontaneously, and you don't think of the consequences. I'd have to get high to break into a house."

This interview took place in the presence of Jimmy's counselor who further commented on this subject:

"This boy who just walked out lost like sixty pounds in a matter of months. He was just in detox. He was already in a place where they tried to help him stop. He is twenty years old and he looks like an old man already. He
uses heroin, cocaine, he uses whatever. He used drugs today. He needed them to wake up. When you are addicted, you need it all the time, every day. You need it to put you to sleep, to talk to people, to have sex, whatever, you need it for everything. His mental capabilities right now are more or less foggy." In Jimmy's case, it appears obvious that his involvement with drugs (whether selling them or using them) was the main cause for him to be out of school. In his own words, in jail he tried to make up some of his educational instruction.
APPENDIX E

Interview with Tony
V. TONY

After one of the interviews, this researcher was introduced to one of the counselors on drug abuse at the rehabilitation center. Through the conversation, this counselor mentioned that it was evident that "crack has increased from the time I had my problems. It has increased ten times over." The counselor himself was a former drug addict. He volunteered to answer some questions and talk about his drug experience. He was a high school dropout from a different school system in western Massachusetts. Tony will mention this aspect of his life in his conversation.

There is an important aspect that should be pointed out. Tony's knowledge of drug abuse and experience in dealing with teenage drug addicts are unique. His comments on the problem of drug abuse are very valuable. That is why this researcher is pleased to present some excerpts of the interview with Tony, of course, once again, a fictitious name.

- How many years have you been here?

  "I have been here as a counselor one year."

- How many years have you been involved with drugs?

  "Ten to fifteen years. That is something I have been doing since maybe I was ten years old. I started with wine, beer, this was something like maybe the fifth grade."
- Any particular reason why you started using drugs?

"Because it was available, more or less it was available."

- Were you aware of the danger?

"At ten years old, no. It was just there and it was portrayed as being honorable; at that time, it was referred to like cigarettes. I started with beer and wine in a family party. Everyone was drinking, you see everyone partying and having a good time. Maybe, I guess, in your mind you wonder what is it that is making them so happy; they are so excited and so, you know, hyper and so alive. After the party, like I said, you help the mother clean up the house. There is a half of a glass of Johnny Walker Red over there, rum over here, and so you taste it and see how it tastes. Sometimes you have grown-ups give it to you. They call themselves having fun, try it just to see your reaction and your expression."

- So, what kind of drugs did you go through?

"Let me see, alcohol, reefer, cocaine, pcp, probably the one I have not tried was heroin. I have experimented with it intranasally, but I never liked it. So I never did it anymore. Coke once or twice."

- With what frequency did you use drugs?

"It began to increase. The first year I would do it during lunch, because these were people I would do it with in school. We did not see each other after school. We
lived in different neighborhoods and whatever. Let's say that it started in school. Then I was seeing my uncles and adults doing it. So I tried it. So when I went to school one day we went to the park and tried it. It was different. And my uncles were living with me at the time and they would do it. Sometimes we were sitting watching TV and they would say, 'What are you guys doing, what is it? You want some? You want to try it?' So out of my own curiosity I did it. What I have ever tried was out of my own curiosity, as opposed to peer pressure and I have never myself gotten into that as far as peer pressure. It was my own curiosity."

- What about your own personal behavior? Your daily life?

"It really changed but not too much. I was still in the Boy Scouts, going to church every week, doing everything I was supposed to be doing. But not like before. Drugs really make you change. My grades in school were always average. After I started doing drugs, they went down to some degree, yes. My attendance to school was the same, because my mother worked in the schools. So she was like a teacher there."

- In what grade were you at that time?

"Fifth grade, sixth grade."
- How was your academic performance during your junior and senior years?

"All depends. When I was doing marijuana, pcp, it was more difficult for me to keep my concentration up. I was falling asleep. I was not able to pay attention in class or do my work. At that time, I was really bad. I felt the need of supporting my habit, so it was like natural to leave school and look for a job. That is what I did it."

- Any significant consequences with your experiences with drugs?

"From what they explained to me was that a friend of mine gave me some acid. It was called window panes or something like that and I took it. The time that I took it had smoked some PCP, also Angel Dust, which that was the last thing that I remember. I was at my sister's house. I was yelling 'stop it! stop it! stop it!' She told me I kept looking at the window so she was afraid I was going to jump out of the window. It was like seventeen stories up. She told me I slapped her around and everything. But I was not aware of that. First time I had ever had anything like that happen!

I had another experience where a so-called friend of mine. One day I was outside and he came over to me and he was like hey, you are you doing? Do you want to try this? He said come on. We went to the top of this building on top of the roof, and he took it out and started to inhale
it and I didn't know what it was. All I could remember is that I had to get home, get this thing out of my system whatever it was. So some friends of mine took me home and I went to sleep. They told me I was moving real slow, walking very slowly. I walked over to a group of people who were talking. They were walking away and I was telling them to come back. But then my friend told me he took me home. I was not aware of that. I did not have any control as to what was happening."

- Any psychological effects?
  "It depended which drug. Like cocaine like would make me very paranoid."

- Can you explain what you mean like paranoid?
  "Paranoid in a sense that it made you feel nervous, because your system is like in a small shock. We did the coke. I did not like to be in a crowd. we wanted to be in a private room. You are nervous, you think someone is coming, you watch if someone is knocking at the door, something like that. With the freebase, I did not want to go nowhere. If you did a 1,000 of freebase, you want to do 1,000 more of the same. Because at that time I was into it we had quantities of it, no matter, we always wanted more."
- Did you buy drugs?

"Most of the time it was given to me. But also I was buying them. I worked to buy them. When you need it, you need it. I got drugs from a friend of mine. His brother-in-law was a police officer. He would give it to him at a cheaper price."

- For how many years have you been free of drugs now?

"About three years."

- What made you change your mind?

"When I finally got into the thing of freebase, really it had a lot to do with my wife. At that time, we were not married. She was my girlfriend. My sister told me one time that she thought I was getting carried away into it. I stopped one day and looked into the mirror. I started wondering what if they were right. I was always knowledgeable and so sure of what I was doing. What if I am wrong? And so I put it into my mind and maybe it is time to stop."

- Did that require a big effort on your part?

"Like for me once I put it in my mind that I had to stop, I did not do it any more. It was not like some of the other things. As a matter of fact, the day I said I was not going to do it any more, I think it was like that day or the next day. We used to sell it. People knew that they could come by, etc. I began to fear it. I was very scared of being addicted."
- Did you continue with your education after that?

"It never really dawned on me to become a counselor. It was not until I came here. I was angry because everyone was doing it. I would come home from work and find someone in front of my door laid out from heroin or whatever. It was just so pitiful and this was not the environment that I wanted to be in. I was not worried so much about me anymore, as I was just tired of seeing it, seeing the way everyone was destroying themselves."

- Do you see any advantages of using drugs?

"I feel it is just bad because you lose a certain amount of awareness. In terms of continuing my education like once, with the drugs I was not able to finish even high school. After I gave away drugs I was able to educate myself in terms of the dangers of drugs, what it was really doing to me and to people, like with the freebase. I was selling freebase. I started out selling it. So many people would come, two, three, five, six in the morning. I am doing this. They are having all the fun. I was always tired. I noticed myself feeling bad, like them. I always wanted to make something for myself, make money and things. But I started to look at my friends. I knew I was going down. I was doing a lot of it. I knew I did not have to pay for it. I was doing everything that I always was against, against drugs and selling them. I
became one of the drug dealers. Then I stopped selling. Then I was able to continue my education because I educated myself about drugs. I educated myself about what was happening in the area. I was working with some people that were living in buildings, low-income housing. So I started getting into more community work. Counseling with drugs never occurred to me until I came here, because I have always worked with people, in programs serving guys coming out of jail. I learned a lot more from here."

- Those teenagers you work with, where do they get the money to buy drugs?

"Anywhere they can. They steal from the stores. They sell whatever they steal from the stores. They steal from your car. They steal your radio, they rob the people. They sell themselves, they sell anything."

In regard to the mental effects of drugs, Tony commented:

"I noticed that drugs would have you like in a foggy atmosphere. It is like you put yourself in a mental prison and you really don't grow. You are not aware of a lot of things happening around you. You lose a certain amount of awareness. Your thinking is never straight. You try to rationalize many things into a way which is not good, like stealing because you need to use drugs.

Crack is a modality of cocaine. A lot of people don't inhale it anymore. They use it intranasally. Crack is just like shooting cocaine intravenously but without
the needle mark. So now they don't have needle marks, they smoke it. Crack is like a rush and is like a veil that came over like a mask. All of a sudden you are a totally different person. Crack is easier to get addicted to than it is with heroin or even inhaling cocaine. You get addicted much quicker."
APPENDIX F

Interview with Melissa
VI. MELISSA

Melissa is a tall, attractive woman, with a naturally impressive beauty, somewhat neglected inside the rehabilitation center. Her appearance was of a serious person with an expression of sadness in her green eyes. She would be smoking with deep inhalations and walking around nervously. She gladly accepted to be interviewed when she knew the purpose of these individual talks.

Melissa grew up with her mother and an older sister. Her parents divorced when she was three. Her mother remarried, but the second marriage did not last too long. "Anyway, I did not get along with my step-father," Melissa said. Melissa remembers that her mother always worked two jobs. Her second job was as a waitress in a cocktail-lounge restaurant. Melissa used to stay at home with her older sister. Since early age, she learned how to "be independent and get things done my way."

- What made you come up here, Melissa?
  "I had no option. To come here and enter the program or to stay in jail. It was the second time I was sent to jail. The first time I was in jail for a couple of months. Then I was sent out on probation."

- Why were you caught the second time?
  "I was selling drugs in the street."

- What kind of drugs?
  "Cocaine, crack, marijuana and stuff. I sold some bags to three guys who stopped the car in front of me. I knew
them because they bought stuff from me. They left and a police car approached the corner where I was standing. They took me to the police headquarters here in Springfield. The following day I was brought to court."

- Did you use drugs?

"I was doing drugs also, I was doing cocaine and stuff. Marijuana was already a habit. In the beginning, some years before, when I started doing drugs, I used to buy them. But when I was selling drugs, I used to do drugs for free because I was making profit."

- When did you start to do drugs?

"I don't know. Maybe when I was sixteen. I started to drink beer with my friends. We used to get together on Fridays, weekends, vacation days and drink."

- What about marijuana?

"I was smoking marijuana at the same time. Everybody did it. It was like a natural complement when you were drinking."

- Do you remember when you were introduced to cocaine?

"I remember the first time I did cocaine. I was with some guys in Forest Park. It was already dark. A friend of mine asked me if I would like to try it. He showed us that stuff. Some of the guys knew how to do it and they told us. So I did it. I liked it. I felt great. Some days later I tried it again."
For how long did you continue doing drugs?

"For almost eight years. I am 23 now."

Were you doing drugs when you were in school?

"I was in tenth grade when I started to do drugs. I went to Commerce High School. I was a good student. My grades were average. After I started doing drugs, I began to skip school. And very frankly, I think I lost interest in school. I finished tenth grade. When I was in my junior year, something new happened to me. I was going out with a guy one year older than me. He was doing drugs too; I got pregnant. I had to leave school. My mother did not let me abort the baby. She said I would rather think of giving him for adoption. That is what I did. I gave my daughter for adoption."

Did you go back to school, Melissa?

"I went back to Commerce and I started eleventh grade again. But I was feeling so depressed because of the baby, because we broke up my boyfriend and me before the baby was born, and also because I went back to drugs. When I was pregnant I smoked marijuana only but not like before I used to."

Did you finish your junior year?

"I never did it. I dropped out of school. I did not want to study anymore. Why should I go to school when I could be making money, and good money, selling drugs?"
What is the main reason why you left school?

"Because I wanted to be independent and make money. I needed it. The only way of making money for me at that time, was selling drugs. I had good connections and I knew how to do this business."

In fact, Melissa left school after she started the junior year a second time. Like her mother, she got a job as a waitress in one of the finest restaurants in Springfield. She did not get any significant help from her sister who became a successful secretary and mother herself. But for Melissa, in order to sell drugs, it was necessary to have a good amount of cash, as she said. At the same time that she was selling some drugs, but not in the amounts she dreamed in order to make significant profits, she was doing drugs and became a prostitute. For a couple of years, she went to Nevada, California, and later returned to Springfield. At the present time, she has a court case pending and has to stay in the program for drug rehabilitation.

As in other cases (including Melissa's), the resources that the school could offer her were not implemented because of a complete lack of communication between the student and teachers, counselors, or school administrators.

Melissa, do you think that your education has been affected because of drugs?

"Yes, but not only because of drugs. For many other reasons my education has been affected. I did not have a
real family life. My mother was a hard worker, but had little time for us. When we were leaving home in the morning to go to school, my mother was sleeping. I still resent this. I never say my father. He moved to another state. I grew up kind of lonely. And this affected me a lot in my life."

- Melissa, were drugs good or bad to you?

"Something really bad. Because of drugs I am here, because of drugs I have court case pending, because of drugs I became a prostitute. Drugs make you happy for a short time. You get high, you escape reality, but when the effect of the drug is gone, you feel tired, depressed, you feel miserable. Drugs can't do any good to you. If somebody tells you this, that is a lie, a big lie."

- What would be your advice to young people?

"Only to young people? (She smiles) Keep away from drugs, don't do drugs. If you do, look for help as soon as possible. Drugs will only cause you serious trouble."

Melissa is happy with the program. She expects to finish the program and continue her education. One of her goals in the future is to study and become a counselor to help young drug addicts.
APPENDIX G

Springfield Senior High Pupil Drop Out Report
### Senior High Pupil Drop Out as Reported by the Bureau of Pupil Services

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<th>Gr. 11</th>
<th>Gr. 12</th>
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<th>F</th>
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*All students enrolled in the High Schools and Alternatives (VAL21) as of October 1 of the School Year. Junior High School drop outs are not included.
APPENDIX H

Springfield Junior High Drop Out Report
### Junior High Drop Out Report

(Annual Report)

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#### 1986 - 1987

Reason for Leaving:

1. Family Pressure
2. Economic Reasons
3. Pregnancy
4. Behavioral Problems
5. Academic Problems
6. Unknown/Other

*No racial breakdown on Kennedy Jr. High Report.*
WRITTEN CONSENT FORM

To the participants in this study:

I am Miguel A. Ayerve, a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts, School of Education, in Amherst, Massachusetts. I am in the process of preparing my doctoral dissertation. The subject of my research is: "Drug Abuse Among Drop-out Students in a Western Massachusetts School District. A Case Study."

This research requires that some in-depth interviews be carried out, to adults with a personal history of drug addiction who did not finish high school and are, at the present time, involved in a drug abuse rehabilitation program. I intend with this research to present real cases of drug addiction as a preventive mean to young people who have not been introduced to this very scary and dangerous world of illegal drugs.

You are one of six adults to be asked to participate in a very few (two or three) in-depth interviews. Each interview will last approximately 90 minutes. During the interviews, you will be asked about the initiation process of drug addiction: causes for it, types of drugs used, frequency, means of getting drugs, description of personal, physiological, psychological effects. In particular, you will be asked about drug abuse and academic achievement, drug abuse and school attendance, drug abuse and family relations.

My goal is to analyze the materials from your interviews in order to understand better your experience and that of other young people who are involved with drugs. I am very interested in your personal experience, in concrete details of your experience with drugs.

In order to be objective in the use of the material collected, it is intended to tape record the interviews, knowing in advance that nobody but me will have access to these taped materials. Your real name will not be used and never publicly disclosed. Therefore, you are assured that your privacy and confidentiality will be always protected.

The materials recorded will be used in my dissertation, perhaps in possible articles and professional talks.

I would like to state that you may, at any time, withdraw from the interview process. You may withdraw your consent to have specific excerpts used, if you notify me at the end of the interview sessions. If I were to want to use any materials in any way not consistent with what is stated above, I would ask for your additional written consent.
In signing this form, you are also assuring me that you will make no financial claims for the use of the material in your interviews; you are also stating that no medical treatment will be required by you from the University of Massachusetts should any physical injury result from participating in these interviews.

I, ____________________________________________, have read the above statement and agree to participate as an interviewee under the conditions stated above.

__________________________________________
Signature of participant

__________________________________________
Date

__________________________________________
Signature of Interviewer
BIBLIOGRAPHY


