Arresting Agency and Differences in Drug Use:

During 2007 data collection interviews were conducted with respondents who were arrested by 25 different agencies and booked in different facilities in Maricopa County. Phoenix Police Department, Glendale Police Department, Mesa Police Department, and the Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO) had the largest percentages of arrestees in the sample. Agencies represented in the “other” category were predominately other local police agencies, although about 8 percent of the total sample (n=1,601) were arrested by the Arizona Department of Public Safety (n=41), and Maricopa County Adult Probation officers (n=83).

The percent of arrestees testing positive for alcohol, marijuana, opiates, and methamphetamine is similar across all four predominant law enforcement agencies and the remainder of combined agencies. The graph illustrates a number of differences between agencies and drug types, but overall, there are no significant differences in the percent of arrestees testing positive for any given drug by arresting agency, except cocaine. The percent of arrestees who tested positive for cocaine was significantly different, and we can see that Mesa arrestees were 4 to 6 percent higher than MCSO, Glendale, and the combined Other agencies. Among Phoenix arrestees, a full 5 percent more than Mesa arrestees tested positive, 25.8 percent compared to 20.8 percent.

Of particular interest are the high percentages among Phoenix arrestees who tested positive for drug use, specifically, Phoenix arrestees had the highest rates for alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine. Conversely, Glendale arrestees had the lowest rates of testing positive for marijuana and cocaine, but recorded the highest rates for methamphetamine.

* Indicates significance at p < .05