

Straight called model drug abu

By Nancy Berlier

Post Staff Reporter

Straight Inc. will become the national model for drug abuse programs, according to a prediction made in Cincinnati Thursday by the president of the American Council on Marijuana.

"I am convinced it is the best drug treatment program in the country," Robert L. Dupont said in a press conference at the Westin Hotel.

Dupont, a psychiatrist from suburban Washington, D.C., whose credentials include heading the National Institute on Drug Abuse for five years and directing activities of the former White House Special Action office for Drug Abuse Prevention, was in Cincinnati to be guest speaker

at a Straight banquet.

STRAIGHT CELEBRATED its 10th month in the Cincinnati area and honored Indian Hill School Superintendent Robert E. Boston for his efforts to open the local Straight center in the Clermont County community of Mt. Repose.

"I think Straight has come pretty close to reinventing the wheel," Dupont said.

Straight differs from other teen drug abuse programs because it places youths in a drug-free environment for an extended period of time, emphasizes family and community involvement and treats the whole family of a chemically dependent youth, Dupont said.

Straight has taken its methodology from

several other drug programs, especially Alcoholics Anonymous, and organized a structured program geared to teenagers, Dupont said.

THE STRAIGHT program is highly structured, relying heavily on peer pressure and parental involvement. Youngsters in the early phases of the program are taken out of their home, school and work. They spend their days at the Straight center and their nights at the homes of youngsters in higher phases of the program. Youngsters earn the right to return home, to school or to work by changing their attitudes about drugs.

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Dupont said Straight does uphold "parental

tyranny," which dictates youngsters should not harm themselves with drugs but grow up and contribute to society.

DUPONT SAID HE believes some criticisms of Straight are based on misunderstandings of the program.

The program is tough and extreme, Dupont said, because "the problem is extreme."

Studies in high schools across the country have indicated that 7 percent of all seniors smoke marijuana daily, Dupont said.

Another 35 percent are regular marijuana users and at least 60 percent have tried the drug before becoming seniors.