

Substance Abuse Remains a Major Public Health Concern in Texas

Substance Abuse Trends in Texas, published twice a year by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA), provides an overview of current drug use in the state. This report summarizes the latest data on characteristics of individuals presenting for treatment at publicly funded treatment facilities, drug-related deaths, drug-use detections among prisoners, emergency room mentions, street drug prices, poison control center reports, and AIDS cases due to injecting drug use. The December 2000 TCADA report is summarized below with emphasis on the two leading drug problems in Texas today: crack cocaine and alcohol abuse (Figure 1).

Cocaine remains the primary illicit drug abused by adult clients admitted to publicly funded treatment programs throughout Texas: 31% of all admissions to TCADA-funded treatment programs in the first 9 months of 2000 were for treatment for cocaine (crack and powder) abuse. Texas poison control centers reported 357 confirmed exposures to cocaine in 1999 and 675 from January through August 2000: 67% were among males, and the average age of those exposed was 28 years.

Although the rate of cocaine emergency room mentions per 100,000 population in Dallas was lower in 1999 than the peak in 1998, it was still higher than in earlier years, and the increases between 1997 and 1999 were statistically significant for persons 35 and over, for African Americans, and for persons seeking emergency room help for chronic effects. Statewide in 1999 there were 2,107 emergency room mentions of cocaine use, of which 51% were among persons aged 18 to 34 years and 44% among those ≥ 35 ; 43% were Anglo, and 41% percent were African American.

With a decline in crack cocaine treatment admissions for African-Americans, the proportion of Anglo and Hispanic admissions now totals 50%. The percentage of adult crack cocaine abusers admitted for treatment has dropped from 28% in 1993 to 23% in 2000. Powder cocaine abuse is responsible for 9% of admissions for treatment. Powder cocaine users are younger than crack cocaine users (31 years compared with 35 years) and are more likely to be male and Anglo. Users who inhale are the youngest, are most likely to be Hispanic, and are most likely to be employed. Powder cocaine inhalers tend to be Hispanic, and injectors, Anglo.

After marijuana, cocaine is the drug for which arrestees are most likely to test positive. Cocaine abuse is emerging as a significant problem on the border. The number of deaths in which cocaine was mentioned increased to a high of 413 in 1999. The average age of the decedents was 37.5 years in 1999; 43% were Anglo, 25% were Hispanic, and 31% were African American; the majority (75%) were male.

Alcohol

Although cocaine abuse leads abuse of other substances in terms of treatment admissions alone, alcohol surpasses cocaine as the primary drug of abuse in Texas when dependence, deaths, and arrests are also considered. Indirect deaths due to alcohol use, such as car wrecks or violent crimes where alcohol was involved, far outnumber all other substance-abuse related fatalities.

In 2000, 36% of adult clients admitted to all publicly funded programs in Texas had a primary problem with alcohol. They were the oldest clients (average age of 37); 59% were Anglo; 73% were male. Their income level was the highest of all clients at \$8,500.

More Texans are arrested for public intoxication (PI) than for any other substance abuse offense. However, the arrest rate per 100,000 for public intoxication is decreasing, while the rates for drug possession and liquor law violations (LLV) are increasing. Arrests for driving while intoxicated (DWI) dropped since the peak in 1994. Surveys done in 1998 of prison and state jail inmates at admission found

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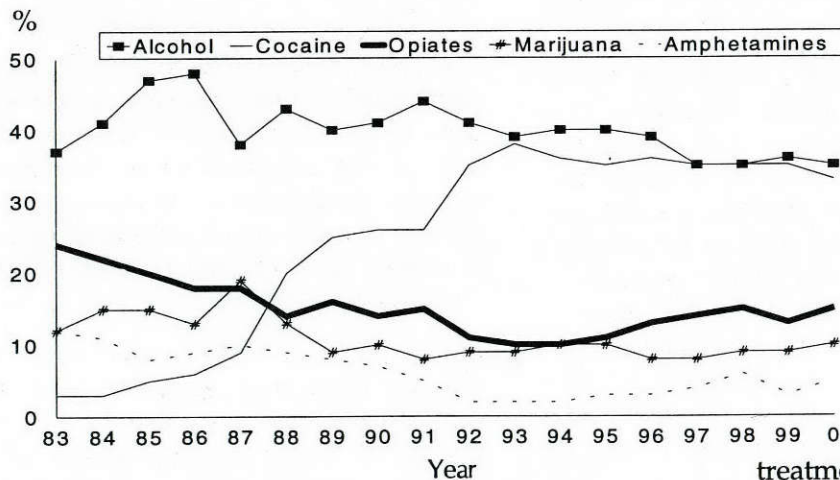
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Vaccine Preventable Disease Update

that at least 89% had ever drunk alcohol, and at least 37% had drunk alcohol in their last month on the street. Males were more likely to meet the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) criteria for abuse or dependence on alcohol than were their female counterparts.

Adolescents comprised 9% of all clients admitted for treatment of alcohol abuse. About 74% of adolescent users were male; 55% were Hispanic, 34% were Anglo, and 11% were African American. Seventy-five percent were involved with the juvenile justice or legal systems. Use among secondary school students, particularly younger ones, declined from 1998 to 2000.

Figure 1. Percentage of Adult Admissions to Publicly Funded Treatment Programs, by Primary Drug of Abuse: 1983-2000



The *Texas School Survey of Substance Abuse: Grades 7-12* found that in 1998, 72% had ever drunk alcohol and 38% had drunk in the last month, compared with 71% and 36%, respectively, in 2000. Students on the border in 2000 reported higher levels of use, with 74% percent having ever drunk alcohol and 41% having drunk in the past month.

Other Drugs of Abuse

Heroin addicts entering treatment are primarily injectors and are most likely to be Hispanic or Anglo males. Emergency room mentions of heroin in Dallas decreased from 1998 to 1999. Overdose deaths in 1999 did not increase.

The proportion of youth admitted to treatment reporting **marijuana** as their primary drug problem remains high. Dallas emergency room mentions of marijuana dropped in 1999.

There 994 confirmed exposures associated with **stimulants** reported to Texas poison control centers in 1998 and 802 by September 1999. Stimulants comprised 5% of adult admissions for treatment in 2000. The average age of persons admitted for a primary stimulant-abuse problem rose from 26 in 1985 to 31 in 1999. The proportion of Anglos rose from 80% in 1985 to 92% in 2000, while that of Hispanics dropped from 11% to 5% and of African Americans from 9% to 1%. Slightly more than half of clients treated for methamphetamine abuse are female.

Diversion of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine continues, and more methamphetamine is coming into Texas directly from Mexico.

Depressants continue to be a problem because of their availability in Mexico. **Rohypnol** treatment admissions are increasing. **Gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB)**, **gamma butyrate lactone (GBL)**, and similar precursor drugs remain a problem, with dependent users now entering treatment.

Ecstasy is more prevalent, and treatment admissions and poison control centers have confirmed that ecstasy exposures are up. Abuse of **phencyclidine (PCP)** and **lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD)** also continues to increase, as evidenced by emergency room admissions and drug treatment and poison control centers.

Total treatment admissions for abuse of the drugs depicted in Figure 1 more than doubled from 1985 through 2000: from 15,000 to 32,000.

To obtain the full TCADA report, Substance Abuse Trends in Texas, December 2000, go to <http://www.tcada.state.tx.us/research/>, which also contains a new report on GHB detoxification protocols.



Bimonthly Statistical Summary of Selected Reportable Diseases: Provisional Cumulative Data

Jan-Apr 2001

Selected Diseases/Conditions	HHSC Region											Selected Texas Counties								Cumulative(1)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Bexar	Dallas	El Paso	Harris	Hidalgo	Nueces	Tarrant	Travis	2000	2001
Sexually Transmitted Diseases(2)																					
Syphilis, primary and secondary	2	6	42	2	4	42	11	22	0	2	3	19	35	2	38	0	0	5	3	137	136
Congenital Syphilis	0	0	3	4	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	0	0	2	0	28	12
Resistant Neisseria gonorrhoeae	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Enteric Diseases																					
Salmonellosis	34	8	80	19	4	39	54	33	12	12	55	9	32	12	8	25	13	26	27	594	355
Shigellosis	21	3	57	10	4	32	55	27	3	7	116	8	36	7	10	43	16	7	21	713	336
Hepatitis A	15	8	98	9	4	24	117	14	4	9	12	1	46	9	14	7	2	18	36	580	317
Campylobacteriosis	17	5	32	1	2	5	51	17	4	2	48	6	17	1	4	24	7	3	32	358	184
Bacterial Infections																					
H. influenzae type b, invasive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Meningococcal, invasive	0	0	7	0	3	22	0	1	0	0	0	1	6	0	7	0	0	0	0	63	33
Lyme disease	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0
Vibrio species	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	1
Other Conditions																					
AIDS(4)	18	5	257	19	29	251	102	48	18	34	33	41	186	34	223	11	7	46	69	1053	850
Hepatitis B	15	5	35	3	9	65	16	9	5	5	9	2	13	5	51	0	4	10	8	309	176
Adult elevated blood lead levels	0	1	234	8	39	20	2	0	0	5	1	0	31	5	13	1	0	1	1	605	310
Animal rabies - total	7	35	214	21	8	100	57	18	10	0	18	6	1	0	21	2	0	55	3	320	488
Animal rabies - dogs and cats	0	1	5	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	11	10
Tuberculosis Disease (2) (4)																					
Children (0-14 years)	1	0	7	0	0	13	5	1	0	0	4	1	6	0	12	3	0	1	5	6	31
Adults (>14 years)	3	6	89	15	2	148	38	28	4	9	36	21	63	9	132	12	6	20	18	40	384
Injuries(2)																					
Spinal Cord Injuries (5)	12	9	43	13	8	49	68	13	2	12	8	7	24	11	31	0	5	10	27	345	285

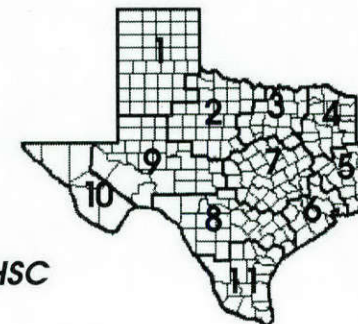
1. Cumulative to this month. 2. Data for the STD's, Tuberculosis, and spinal cord injuries are provided by date of report, rather than date of onset. 3. Voluntary reporting. 4. AIDS + TB totals include reported cases from Texas Department of Corrections, which are not included in the regional and county totals. 5. 6 reports were missing PHR identification.

Call 1-800-705-8868 to report

1999 POPULATION ESTIMATES

HHSC REGIONS			
1	770,440	4	971,877
2	533,633	5	690,501
3	5,366,008	6	4,557,450
7	1,989,767	10	784,287
8	2,076,931	11	1,687,473
9	567,058		
STATEWIDE TOTAL		19,995,428	

SELECTED COUNTIES	
Bexar	1,360,411
Dallas	2,172,486
El Paso	755,339
Harris	3,268,099
Hidalgo	528,300
Nueces	315,965
Tarrant	1,506,790
Travis	647,366



HHSC



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**Vaccine-Preventable Disease Update
 Reported Cases with Onset From 03/01/01 - 04/31/01**

Condition	County	Number of Cases	Date of Onset	Condition	County	Date of Cases	Date of Onset
Mumps	Denton	1	3/21	Pertussis	Dewitt	1	4/1
	Travis	1	4/28		Galveston	1	3/13
Pertussis	Bexar	1	3/10		Hidalgo	1	3/1
		1	3/20		Hidalgo	1	3/12
	Cameron	1	3/13		Hunt	1	3/20
	Collin	1	3/7		Palo Pinto	1	4/16
	Dallas	1	3/5		Sarr	1	3/1
		1	3/10		Travis	1	3/1
		1	3/19			3	3/12
		1	3/23			1	3/31
		2	4/9		Williamson	1	3/8
YTD	Measles	Mumps	Pertussis	Rubella	Tetanus		
	1	3	44	0	0		