

The DASIS Report

February 11, 2005

Substance Abuse Treatment Admissions among American Indians and Alaska Natives: 2002

In Brief

- American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) treatment admissions were more likely to report alcohol as their primary substance of abuse than admissions of other racial/ethnic groups (63 vs. 42 percent)
- Nineteen percent of AI/AN admissions were employed full-time at treatment entry compared with 24 percent of all other admissions
- Among AI/AN admissions, 40 percent were referred from the criminal justice system compared with 36 percent of all other admissions

According to the 2000 Census, 4.1 million Americans (1.5 percent of the U.S. population) reported their race as American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN).^{1,2} American Indians and Alaska Natives accounted for 2.1 percent of all admissions to publicly funded substance abuse treatment facilities.³ The percentage of AI/AN admissions entering treatment for illicit drugs increased from 23.6 percent of all AI/AN admissions reported to the Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) in 1994 to 37.1 percent of all such AI/AN admissions in 2002.⁴ Recent data show that AI/AN persons were more likely to have used an illicit drug in the past month compared with persons from other racial/ethnic groups.⁵

This report describes AI/AN admissions, aged 18 or older, to substance abuse treatment as reported to TEDS in 2002. TEDS is an annual collection of data on the demographic characteristics and substance abuse problems of those admitted for substance abuse treatment at publicly funded facilities.

Figure 1. Primary Substance of Abuse, by Race/Ethnicity: 2002

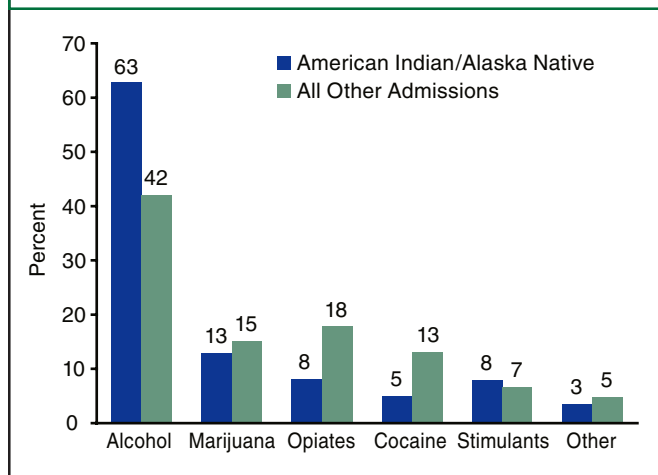
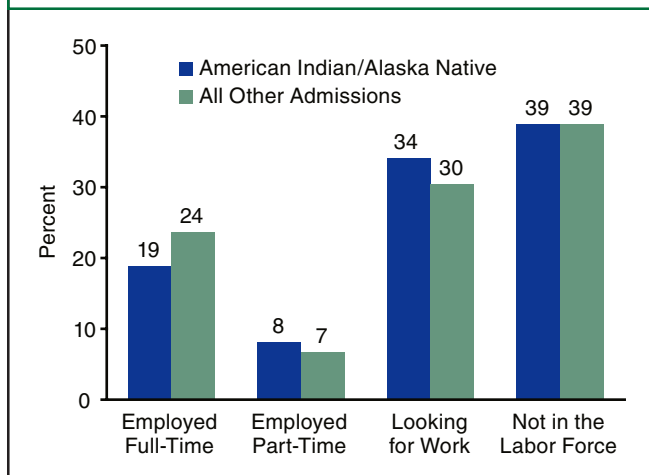


Figure 2. Employment Status, by Race/Ethnicity: 2002



Source: 2002 SAMHSA Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS).

In 2002, 39,463 AI/AN treatment admissions were reported to TEDS. Of these admissions, 34,324 (87 percent) were American Indians and 5,139 (13 percent) were Alaska Natives.⁶ These admissions occurred in 49 States and the District of Columbia.⁷ For the purposes of this report, admissions for these two groups have been combined.

Primary Substance of Abuse

AI/AN admissions were more likely to report alcohol as their primary substance of abuse⁸ than all other admissions (63 vs. 42 percent) (Figure 1). They were also slightly more likely to report stimulant use: 8 percent of AI/AN admissions reported this as their primary substance compared with 7 percent of all other admissions. AI/AN admissions were less likely to report marijuana, opiates, or cocaine as their primary substance than all other admissions.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics

A higher proportion of AI/AN admissions were female than admissions from other racial/ethnic groups (36 vs. 30 percent). The average age of AI/AN admissions (33.8 years) was similar to all other admissions (33.9 years).

AI/AN admissions were more likely to have less than 12 years of education (37 percent) compared with all other admissions (34 percent).⁹ There were also differences in employment: 19 percent of AI/AN admissions were employed full-time at treatment entry compared to 24 percent of all other admissions (Figure 2). A slightly higher percentage of AI/AN admissions reported being employed part-time (8 percent) than all other admissions (7 percent). More than one third (34 percent) of AI/AN admissions were looking for work compared with 30 percent of all other admissions. An additional 39 percent each of AI/AN admissions and all other admissions reported not being in the labor force.¹⁰

Age at First Use

AI/AN admissions appeared to initiate substance use at an earlier age compared with other racial/ethnic groups. The mean age at first use of their primary substance of abuse for AI/AN admissions was 15.9 years old compared with 18.6 years old for all other admissions. AI/AN admissions were also more likely to initiate substance use at ages 14 or younger (46 vs. 32 percent) (Figure 3). Thirty-eight percent of AI/AN admissions initiated substance use between ages 15 to 19 compared with 40 percent of all other admissions. Twelve percent of AI/AN admissions initiated substance use between ages 20 and 29 while 4 percent initiated use at age 30 years or older.

Source of Referral

AI/AN admissions were more likely to be referred by the criminal justice system (40 percent) than all other admissions (36 percent) (Figure 4). The remaining AI/AN admissions were self- or individually referred to treatment

Figure 3. Age at First Use of Primary Substance, by Race/Ethnicity: 2002

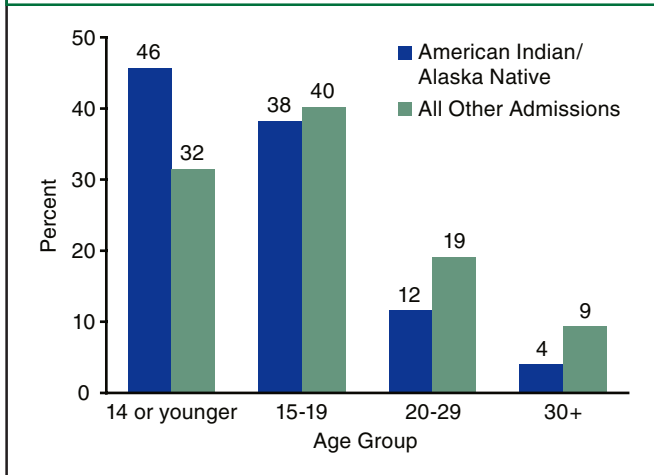
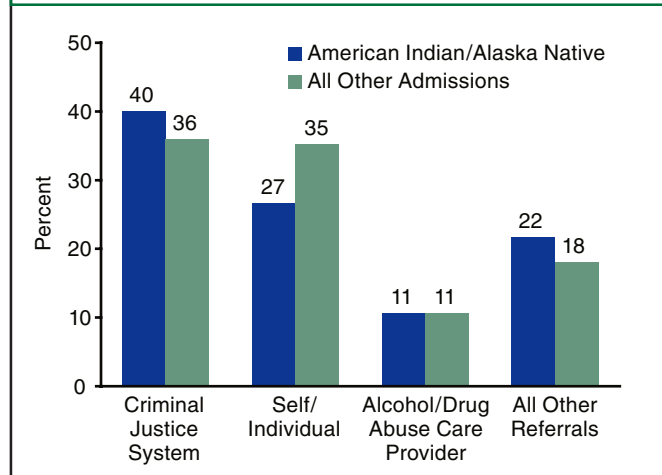


Figure 4. Source of Referral, by Race/Ethnicity: 2002



(27 percent), referred from other alcohol or drug abuse care providers (11 percent), or referred by all other sources (22 percent).

State Admissions

Most AI/AN admissions took place in Western States (Table 1). Colorado and Washington each had more than 4,000 admissions. Alaska, where 46.7 percent of its TEDS admissions were AI/AN in 2002, was the State with the highest percentage of AI/AN admissions.

Table 1. States with Largest Numbers and Largest Percentages of American Indian and Alaska Native Admissions: 2002

States with Largest Number of AI/AN Admissions		States with Largest Percentage of AI/AN Admissions of All TEDS Admissions	
	Number		Percent
Colorado	4,292	Alaska	46.7
Washington	4,039	New Mexico	29.5
California	3,561	South Dakota	24.4
Minnesota	2,924	North Dakota	21.1
New York	2,664	Montana	17.4

End Notes

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (February 2002). *The American Indian and Alaska Native Population: 2000*. Retrieved October 26, 2004 from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/c2kbr01-15.pdf>

² The U.S. Bureau of Census includes in their statistics all persons who give American Indian/Alaska Native as their race (or one of their races) regardless of ethnicity.

³ Data on admissions to treatment facilities funded solely by the Federal Indian Health Service are not included in this report. This report is limited to facilities receiving State funds (including Federal Block Grant funds).

⁴ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. (February 1, 2002). *The DASIS report: American Indians and Alaska Natives in substance abuse treatment: 1999*. Rockville, MD.

⁵ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. (May 16, 2003). *The NHSDA report: Substance use among American Indians or Alaska Natives*. Rockville, MD.

⁶ Four States (AZ, CT, OK, and WY) reported all AI/AN admissions as AI admissions. Four other States (GA, NC, TX, and WI) reported AI admissions but had no code for AN so any AN admissions were included in "other."

⁷ AL reported no AI/AN admissions in 2002.

⁸ The *primary substance of abuse* is the main substance reported at the time of admission.

⁹ *Education* is evaluated only for admissions 19 years or older.

¹⁰ *Not in the labor force* includes those not looking for work during the past 30 days or a student, homemaker, disabled, retired, or an inmate of an institution. Analysis of *employment status* includes admissions 19 to 64.

The Drug and Alcohol Services Information System (DASIS) is an integrated data system maintained by the Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). One component of DASIS is the Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). TEDS is a compilation of data on the demographic characteristics and substance abuse problems of those admitted for substance abuse treatment. The information comes primarily from facilities that receive some public funding. Information on treatment admissions is routinely collected by State administrative systems and then submitted to SAMHSA in a standard format. TEDS records represent admissions rather than individuals, as a person may be admitted to treatment more than once. State admission data are reported to TEDS by the Single State Agencies (SSAs) for substance abuse treatment. There are significant differences among State data collection systems. Sources of State variation include completeness of reporting, facilities reporting TEDS data, clients included, and treatment resources available. See the annual TEDS reports for details. Approximately 1.9 million records are included in TEDS each year.

The *DASIS Report* is prepared by the Office of Applied Studies, SAMHSA; Synectics for Management Decisions, Inc., Arlington, Virginia; and by RTI International in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina (RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute).

Information and data for this issue are based on data reported to TEDS through March 1, 2004.

Access the latest TEDS reports at: <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/dasis.htm>
 Access the latest TEDS public use files at: <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/SAMHDA.htm>
 Other substance abuse reports are available at: <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov>



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