

The DASIS Report

August 16, 2002

Asians and Pacific Islanders in Substance Abuse Treatment: 1999

In Brief

- ? Asian and Pacific Islander substance abuse treatment admissions increased by 37 percent between 1994 and 1999
- ? Nearly 19 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions were for stimulant abuse compared with 5 percent in the total treatment population
- ? In 1999, the average age at admission was younger among Asian and Pacific Islander admissions (30) than in the total treatment population (33)

Although Asians and Pacific Islanders made up almost 4 percent of the U.S. population in 1999, less than 1 percent of all admissions to substance abuse treatment facilities in the 1999 Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) involved Asians and Pacific Islanders. There were approximately 13,400 Asian and Pacific Islander admissions in TEDS in 1999, more than half in California and Hawaii.

The number of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions increased by 37 percent (from 9,800 to 13,400) between 1994 and 1999 (Table 1), while the number of total treatment admissions reported in TEDS decreased by 3 percent during the same time period (data not shown).

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. TEDS records represent admissions rather than individuals, as a person may be

admitted to treatment more than once.

Primary Substance of Abuse

Alcohol abuse accounted for 34 percent of all Asian and Pacific Islander admissions in 1999, followed by marijuana (19 percent), stimulants (primarily methamphetamine/amphetamine; 19 percent), opiates (15 percent), and cocaine (11 percent) (Table 1).

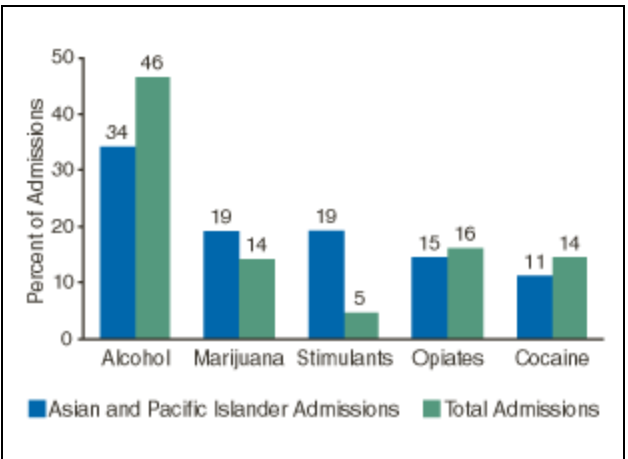
The proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions for stimulant abuse was nearly four times that of the total treatment population (19 vs. 5 percent) (Figure 1). The proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions for marijuana abuse was also higher than in the total treatment population (19 vs. 14 percent), but the proportion for alcohol admissions was lower (34 vs. 46 percent).

The proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions for stimulant abuse increased from 11 percent in 1994 to 19 percent in 1999. Similarly, admissions for marijuana abuse increased from 13 percent to 19 percent over the same time period.

Table 1. Asian and Pacific Islander Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment: 1994 and 1999

	1994			1999		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Admissions	9,832	6,970	2,854	13,435	9,480	3,951
Primary Substance (Percent)						
Alcohol	42.5	46.0	34.0	34.3	37.3	27.0
Marijuana	13.3	13.5	13.0	19.1	20.2	16.6
Stimulants	10.5	8.3	15.8	18.5	15.9	24.8
Opiates	17.8	17.6	18.4	14.6	14.2	15.6
Cocaine	12.5	11.7	14.6	11.2	10.5	12.7
Other/Not Reported	3.3	3.0	4.1	2.3	2.0	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 1. Asian and Pacific Islander Admissions and Total Admissions, by Primary Substance of Abuse: 1999



Source: 1999 SAMHSA Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS).

Sex Differences

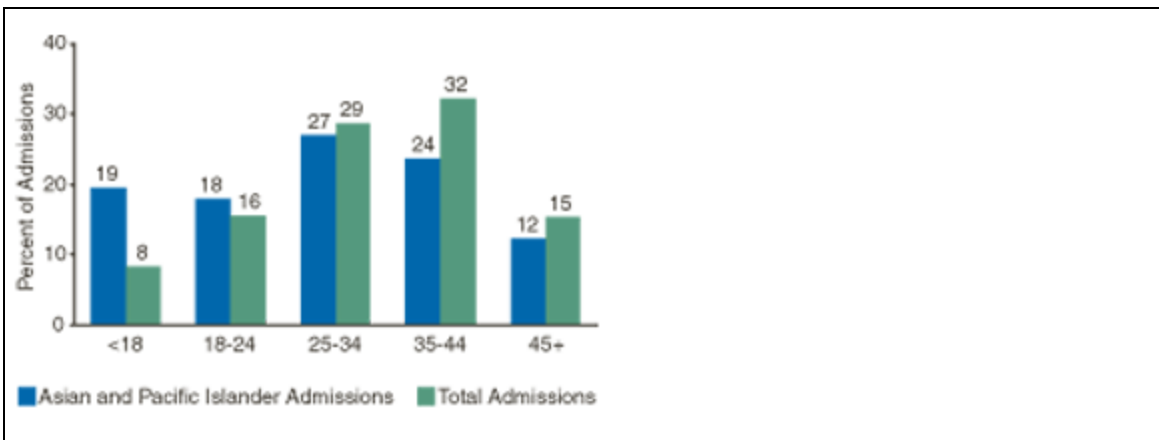
Alcohol was the leading primary substance of abuse for both male and female Asian and Pacific Islander admissions in 1999, although the percentage of male admissions for primary alcohol abuse was higher than the percentage for female admissions (37 vs. 27 percent) (Table 1). The percentage of admissions for primary marijuana abuse among Asians and Pacific Islanders was higher for males than females (20 vs. 17 percent), but the percentage of stimulant abuse admissions was higher for females than males (25 vs. 16 percent).

The proportion of admissions involving female Asian and Pacific Islanders admitted for primary stimulant abuse increased from 16 percent in 1994 to 25 percent in 1999, while the proportion of male admissions increased from 8 to 16 percent.

Age at Admissions

In 1999, the average age at admission was younger among Asian and Pacific Islander admissions (30) than in the total treatment population (33) (data not shown). The largest numbers of admissions involving Asian and Pacific Islanders were aged 25 to 34, while in the total treatment population, the largest numbers were aged 35 to 44 (Figure 2). The proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions younger than age 18 was more than twice the proportion of total treatment admissions in that age group (19 vs. 8 percent).

Figure 2. Asian and Pacific Islander Admissions and Total Admissions, by Age Group: 1999



Source: 1999 SAMHSA Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS).

Prior Treatment Episodes

In 1999, more than half of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions were first treatment episodes (data not shown). The proportion of admissions involving Asian and Pacific Islanders admitted for a first treatment episode was higher than the proportion of first admissions among the overall treatment population (51 vs. 36 percent).

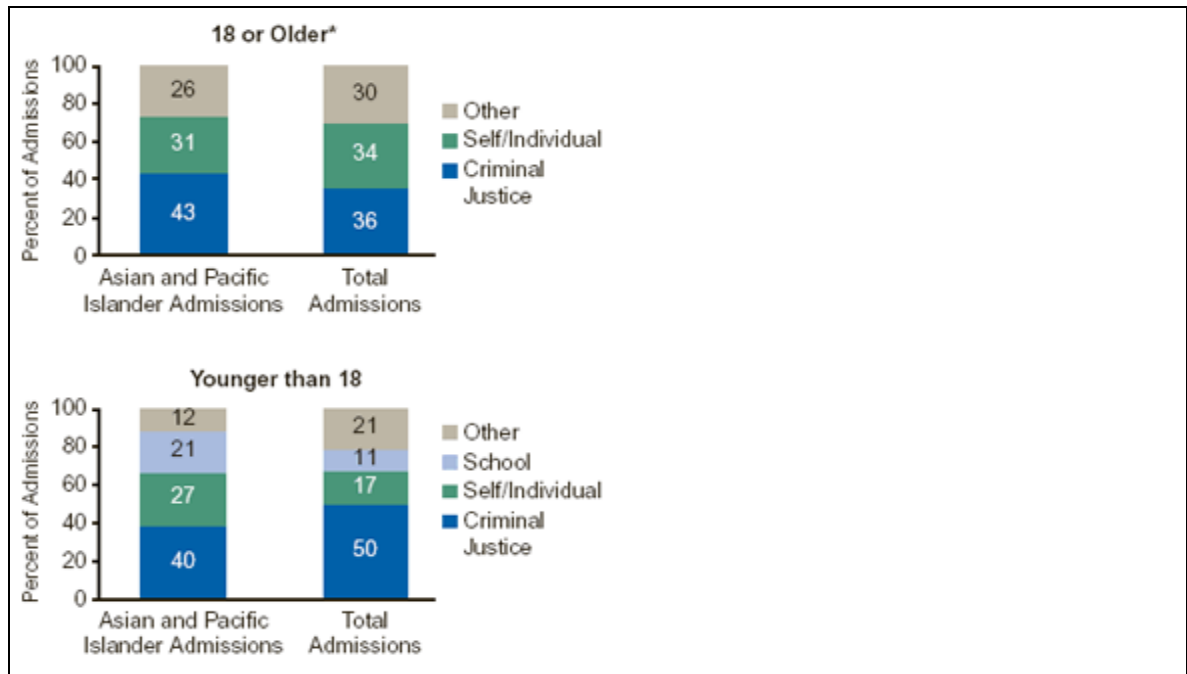
First treatment episodes are associated with younger age,¹ and Asian and Pacific Islander admissions tended to be both young and to be entering treatment for the first time. A previous *DASIS Report* addresses the issue of adolescent Asian and Pacific Islander admissions to substance abuse treatment.²

Referral Source

The criminal justice system was the leading referral source for admissions involving Asian and Pacific Islanders in 1999 (41 percent), followed by self or individual referral (29 percent) (data not shown).

The proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions younger than age 18 referred for treatment through the criminal justice system was smaller than the comparable percentage of total treatment admissions (40 vs. 50 percent), while the proportion aged 18 or older referred through the criminal justice system was larger than among total admissions (43 vs. 36 percent) (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Asian and Pacific Islander Admissions and Total Admissions, by Referral Source and Age Group: 1999



Source: 1999 SAMHSA Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS).

End Notes

¹Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2002, April 26). *The DASIS Report. New and Repeat Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment*. Rockville, MD: Author.

²Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2002, July 5). *The DASIS Report. Asian and Pacific Islander Adolescents in Substance Abuse Treatment: 1999*. Rockville, MD: Author.

Figure Note

*The percentages of admissions aged 18 or older referred to treatment by school, school system, school employee, or any other educational agency in 1999 are not shown because they were very small: 0.4 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander admissions and 0.2 percent of total admissions.

