Drug Use and Risk of HIV/AIDS on the Mexico-USA Border

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This study analyzes trends in treatment admissions and summarizes HIV/AIDS risk factors along the U.S.-Mexico border. Data are presented at the national level and at the state level for states along the border. Client data are also compared for treatment programs located in sister cities on the Texas-Mexico border. These data show that methamphetamine admissions are increasing nationally and it is a major problem in the western states on both sides of the border. Smoking Ice had increased significantly. Smoking crack cocaine is a growing problem on the border, and injection is the primary route for using black tar heroin in this area. Each of these drugs is a risk factor, either from drug-influenced risky sexual behaviors or from sharing injection equipment. In addition, the availability of drugs on the border and patterns of risky behaviors among migrants mean that drug users on the border are at risk of HIV/AIDS and this risk is expected to increase with the spreading methamphetamine epidemic and smoking of crack cocaine. Comparable data on HIV/AIDS are needed for further studies of the relationship of drug use and HIV/AIDS on the border.