

# Unmasking the Crisis: Exploring Intentional Substance Use Disorders

## Understanding the Factors Addressing the Crisis, and Promoting Resilience

Fernando J. González

Overdose Rapid Response and Prevention  
Program

UTHSC San Antonio/ Project Vida

July 12, 2023

# Substance Use Disorders

## SUD's

**Substance Use Disorders (SUDs)** are treatable, chronic diseases characterized by a problematic pattern of use of a substance or substances leading to impairments in health, social function, and control over substance use.

It is a cluster of cognitive, behavioral, and physiological symptoms indicating that the individual continues using the substance despite harmful consequences.

<https://www.cdc.gov/dotw/substance-use-disorders/index.html>

# What to Know About Substance Use and the Latinx Community

While some may believe that substance use disorders (SUDs) impact those living with the condition in similar ways, **the truth is that due to racial and ethnic disparities, historically marginalized communities may experience SUDs and access to treatment quite differently.**

The [2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health \(NSDUH\)](#) found that **12.7% of Hispanic or Latinx people ages 12 and older, or 6.2 million people, had a substance use disorder (SUD).** When looking at those over the age of 18, the prevalence was even higher, with **13.5%.**

Yet, [94.8%](#) of those ages 12 and older who were classified as needing SUD treatment in a specialty facility like a hospital, mental health center, or an inpatient or outpatient rehabilitation facility didn't receive such specialty care.

# Contextual Issues Related To Opioid Misuse And Overdose Use Disorders

According to the SAMHSA NSDUH, the **opioid misuse (heroin use and prescription opioid misuse) rate among Hispanic/Latinos** is similar to the national population rate, about 4 percent.

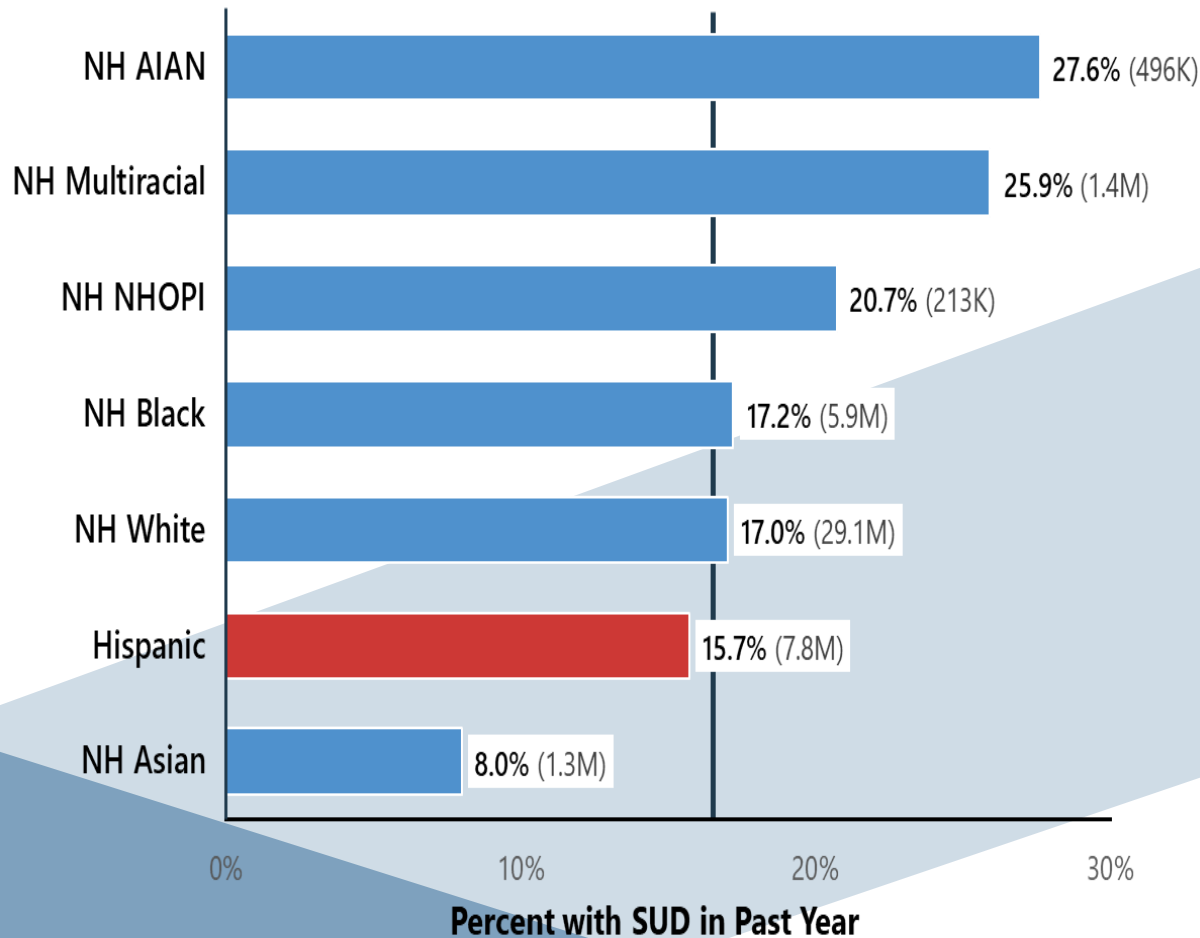
**In 2018, 1.7 million Hispanic/ Latinos and 10.3 million people nationally, aged 12 and older**, were estimated to have engaged in opioid misuse in the past year.

**In general, a higher percentage of Hispanic eighth and tenth grade youth reported opioid (heroin and prescription) misuse in the past year than Whites and African Americans**

<https://store.samhsa.gov/product/The-Opioid-Crisis-and-the-Hispanic-Latino-Population-An-Urgent-Issue/PEP20-05-02-002>

# Substance Use Disorder (SUD) in the Past Year by Racial and Ethnic Groups: Among People Aged 12 and Older

Overall, 16.5% (46.3M)



**Hispanic** people were **less likely** to have an SUD compared with American Indian or Alaska Native and Multiracial people

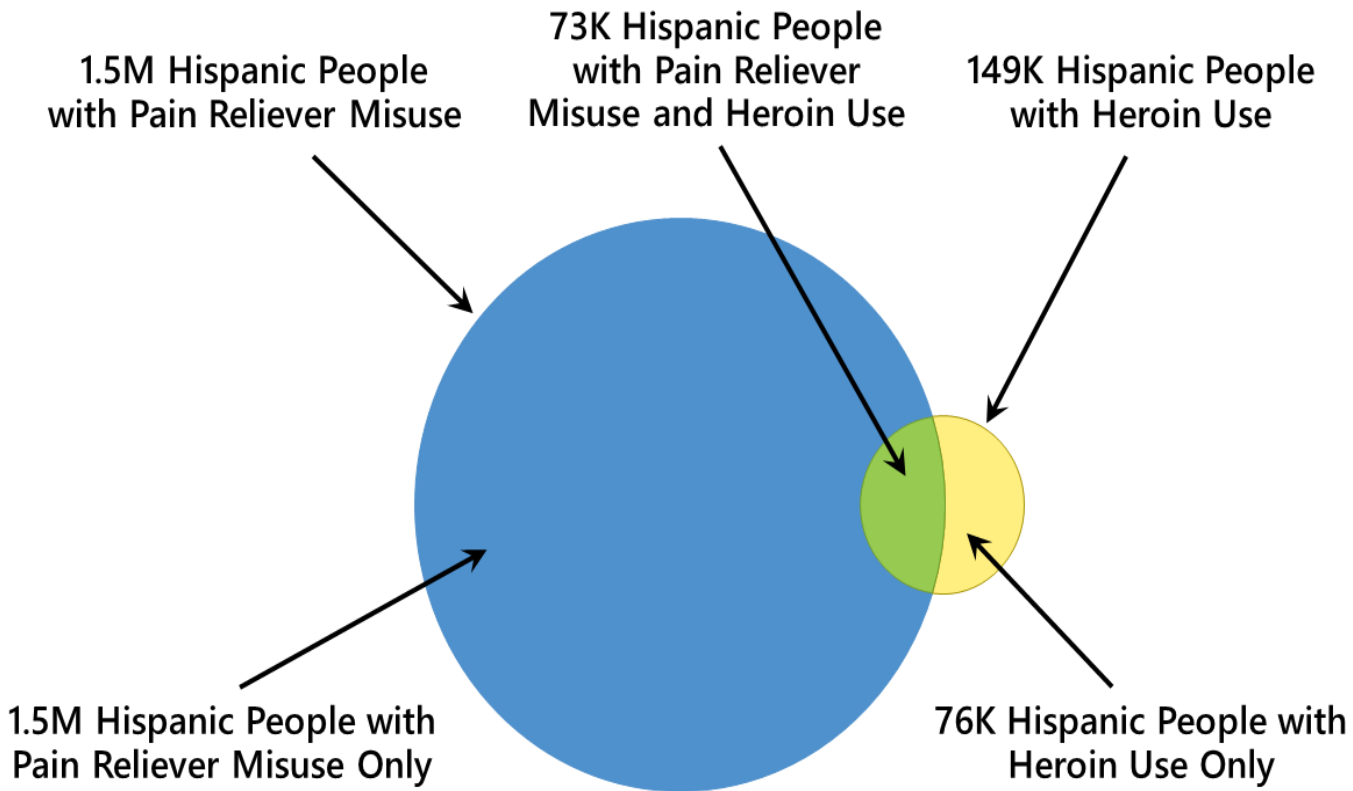
**Hispanic** people were **more likely** than Asian people to have an SUD

NH = Not Hispanic or Latino; AIAN = American Indian or Alaska Native; Black = Black or African American; Hispanic = Hispanic or Latino; NHOPI = Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

**Hispanic** people were **less likely** to have an SUD compared with American Indian or Alaska Native and Multiracial people

**Hispanic** people were **more likely** than Asian people to have an SUD

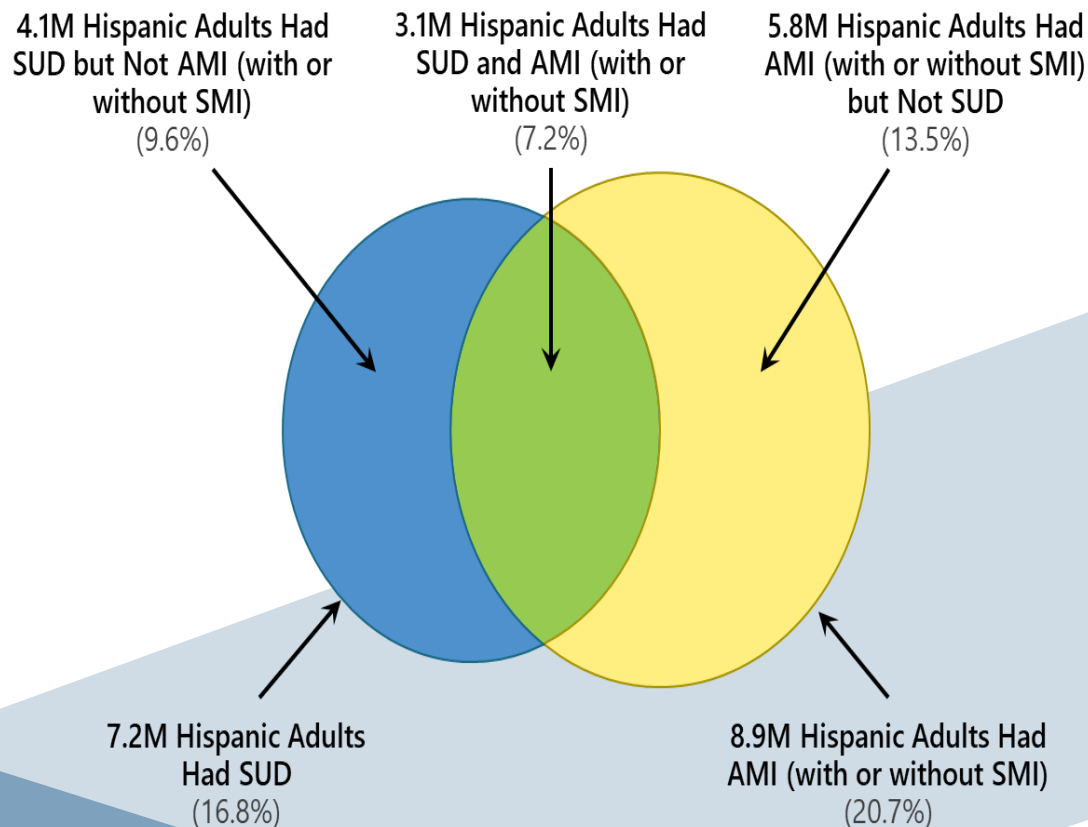
# Past Year Opioid Misuse: Among Hispanic People Aged 12 or Older



**1.6 Million Hispanic People Aged 12 or Older with Past Year Opioid Misuse**



# Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder and Any Mental Illness: Among Hispanic Adults Aged 18 or Older



- **3.1 million (7.2%) Hispanic adults aged 18 or older had co-occurring SUD and AMI**
- **2 in 5 (40.5%) of all Hispanic young adults aged 18 to 25 had SUD or AMI**

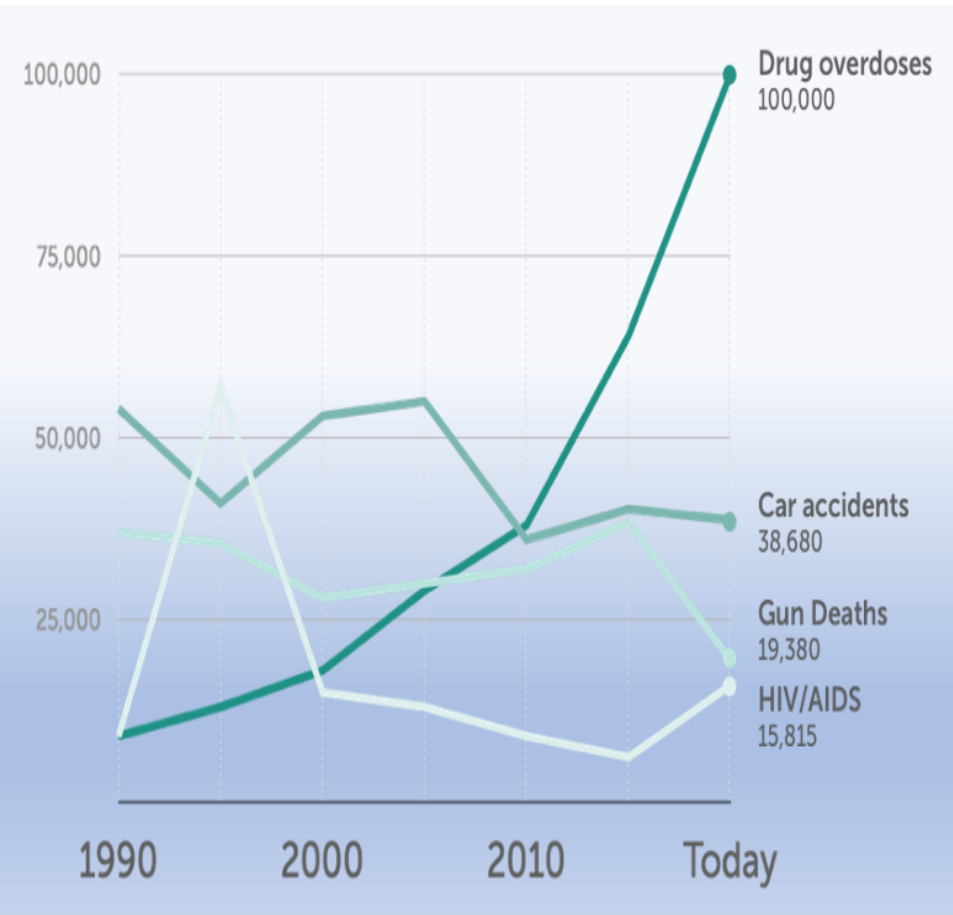
**13.1 Million Hispanic Adults Had Either SUD or AMI (with or without SMI)**

**AMI = any mental illness; SMI = serious mental illness; SUD = substance use disorder.**

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/release/2021-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-releases>



# The Facts of the epidemic



Provisional data from CDC's National Center indicate there were an estimated 107,622 drug overdose deaths during 2021, an increase of nearly 15% from the 93,655 deaths estimated in 2020.

**Researchers found a staggering 110,236 people died in a single 12-month period, a stunning new record. Dec 31, 2022**

The 2021 increase was half of what it was a year ago, when overdose deaths rose 30% from 2019 to 2020.

Drug overdose death rates increased for each race and Hispanic-origin group except non-Hispanic Asian people between 2020 and 2021.

<https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/basics/epidemic.html>



# What to Know About Substance Use and the Latinx Community

Even when treatment is accessible, research suggests that — compared with white people — Hispanic Americans may face:

- less successful treatment outcomes
- lower satisfaction with treatment
- shorter stays in SUD programs

While the barriers mentioned above may explain some of the disparity, suggests a cultural mismatch between clinicians and clients may be at work as well.

Some evidence indicates a clash in values, beliefs, and practices between Latinx cultural traditions and how treatment programs are structured.



**ATTC**

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

## The ATTC Network Mission & Vision

- Accelerate the adoption and implementation of evidence-based and promising addiction treatment and recovery-oriented practices and services;
- Heighten the awareness, knowledge, and skills of the workforce that addresses the needs of people with substance use or other behavioral health disorders; and
- Foster regional and national alliances among culturally diverse practitioners, researchers, policy makers, funders, and the recovery community.

## CONNECT WITH US



<https://attcnetwork.org>



[ATTC Virtual Booth](#)



[ATTC News](#)



**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration