



OSAM-O-GRAM



DATE: January 2006
DATELINE: Dayton, Ohio

Wright State University & the University of Akron

Crack-Cocaine Abuse Remains a Serious Problem in Urban and Rural Areas of Ohio

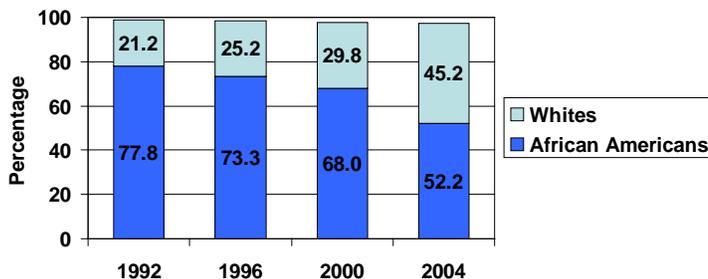
Long before the OSAM Network was initiated in 2000, crack cocaine was among the most prevalent drugs of abuse in urban areas in Ohio. Since 2004, previous OSAM reports have consistently identified increases in crack abuse in rural southeast Ohio. In addition, a Wright State research project in rural western Ohio indicates crack-cocaine abuse has been a growing problem since 2002. Currently, active and recovering users in urban and rural areas across the state consistently reported high availability and abuse of crack cocaine. For example, a 48-year-old female crack user from Dayton commented:

Now it [crack] is just so off the chain! It is just everywhere! Where I live at, you walk down the street, and you've got five different people coming up asking you if you alright, if you need something [crack].

According to the most recent OSAM Network reports, crack cocaine continues to sell for \$40-\$60 per gram, and \$100-\$150 per 1/8 ounce. Crime lab professionals reported high purity of crack (above 60%) in most reporting areas of the state.

Primary crack-cocaine admissions in Ohio have remained at similar levels since the early 1990s (14.6% of all admissions in 1992, compared to 14.2% in 2004), as indicated by the Treatment Episode Data Set (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration). Besides marijuana, crack remains the primary illegal drug problem associated with treatment admissions throughout the state.

Changes in ethnic composition of crack admissions (Treatment Episode Data Set)



Crack-cocaine abuse continues to be more commonly reported among middle-aged and older individuals of lower socioeconomic status, although there are reports of new user groups, including older individuals from suburban communities and adolescents. Even though crack use among whites has increased substantially in Ohio since the early 1990s, African-Americans remain overrepresented among primary crack-cocaine treatment admissions (Table).

Crack users and treatment providers continue to report that crack use has devastating consequences for abusers, their families, and entire communities. As a 27-year-old recovering crack user from Columbus commented, "It makes you steal, makes people not trust you. It goes right to the core of your being and just eats you alive." The OSAM Network findings indicate that crack-cocaine abuse remains among the most prevalent illegal drug problems in urban and rural areas across the state.

OSAM-O-GRAMS report key findings of the Ohio Substance Abuse Monitoring (OSAM) Network. Informants located throughout the state use qualitative and quantitative data to provide semiannual monitoring of substance abuse trends. The OSAM Network is funded by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services by contract to Wright State University and by subcontract to the University of Akron. This OSAM-O-GRAM is based on the January 2005 OSAM Network meeting.

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