

---

---

## **SECTION 6.**

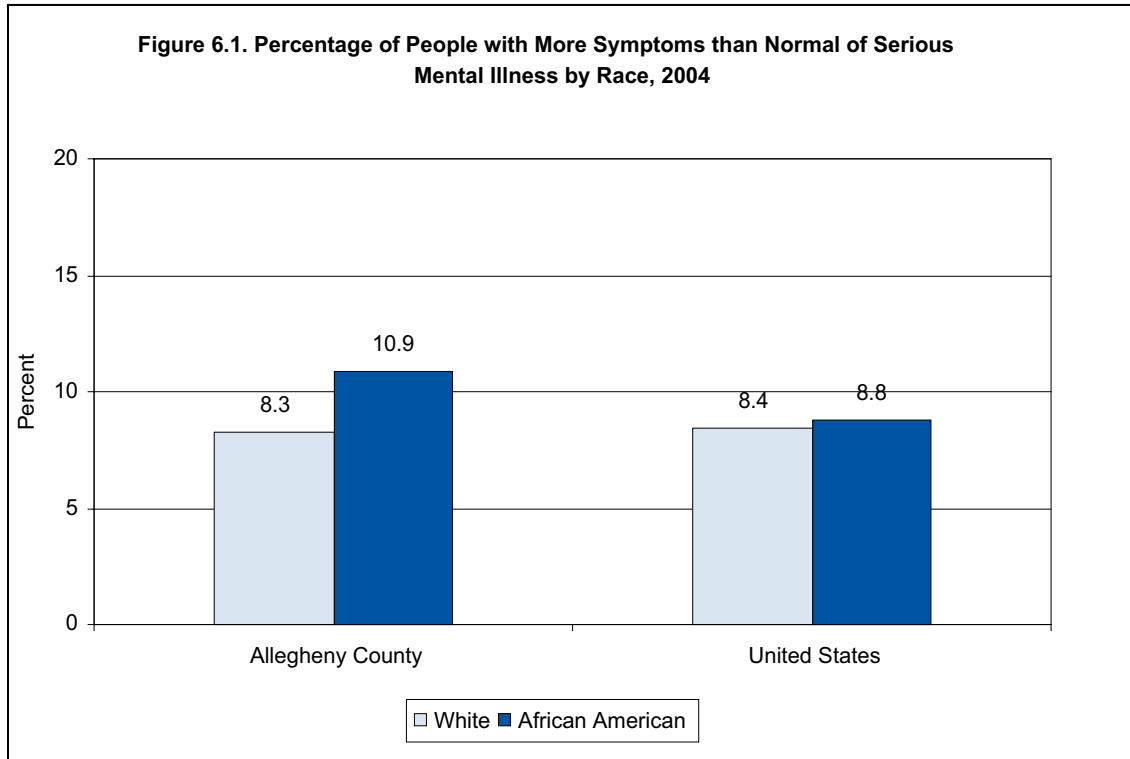
# **MENTAL HEALTH**

This portion of the report reviews discrepancies between Whites and African Americans in Allegheny County with regard to mental health. A plethora of studies have documented the correlation between mental and physical health, and even mental health and income (Ettner, 1995). In this section we will examine two main topics:

- Mental Health Status in Allegheny County
- Utilization of Services in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

MENTAL HEALTH STATUS IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

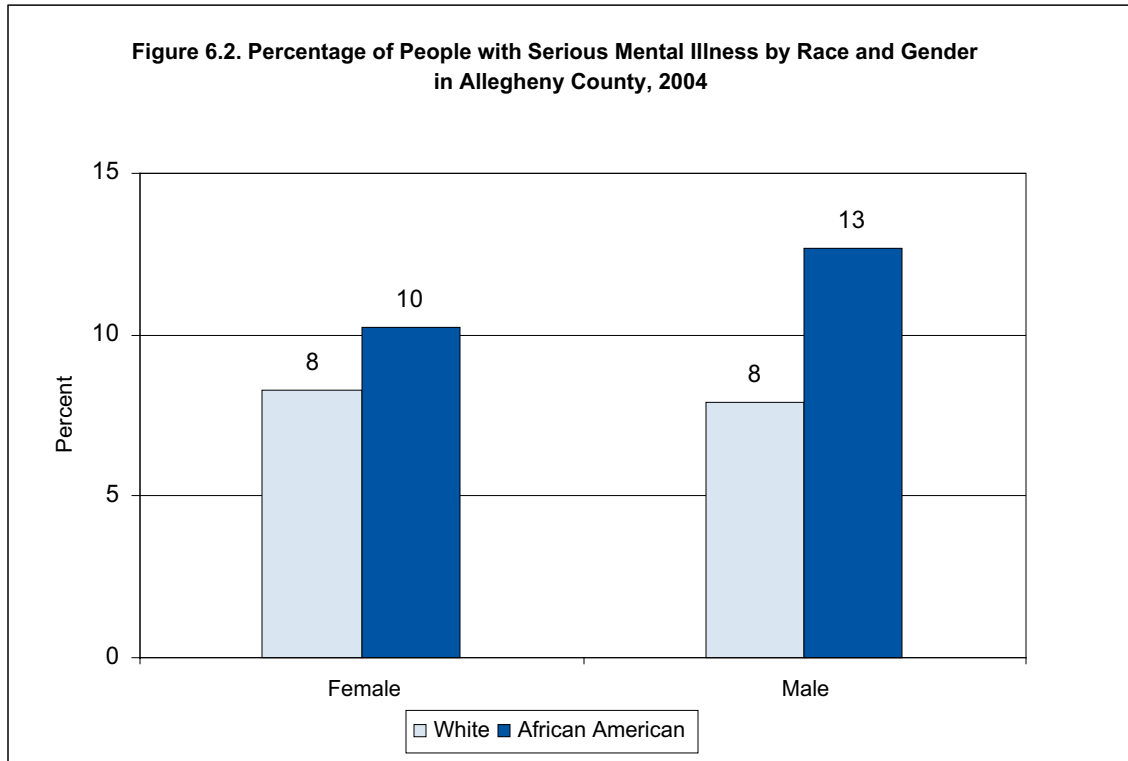
Figures 6.1-6.4 contain data from a 2004 Behavioral Risk Factor household survey in Allegheny County, which measured depression rates among Whites and African Americans by gender, income, and education. Figure 6.1 also contains comparable national data. Note that county data for a racial or ethnic group are provided only if the count is 10 or more cases.



Source: Appendix 6.1 and Ravi Sharma (Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh) and Joan Epstein, Peggy Barker, Michael Vorburger, and Christine Murtha. 2002. *Serious Mental Illness and Its Co-Occurrence with Substance Use Disorders*. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

- African Americans in Allegheny County have higher rates of serious mental illness than Whites in the county.
- Whites and African Americans in the nation have similar rates of serious mental illness.
- White rates of serious mental illness are similar in the county and the nation.
- The African American rate for serious mental illness in the county (10.9%) is higher than the African American rate (8.8%) in the nation.

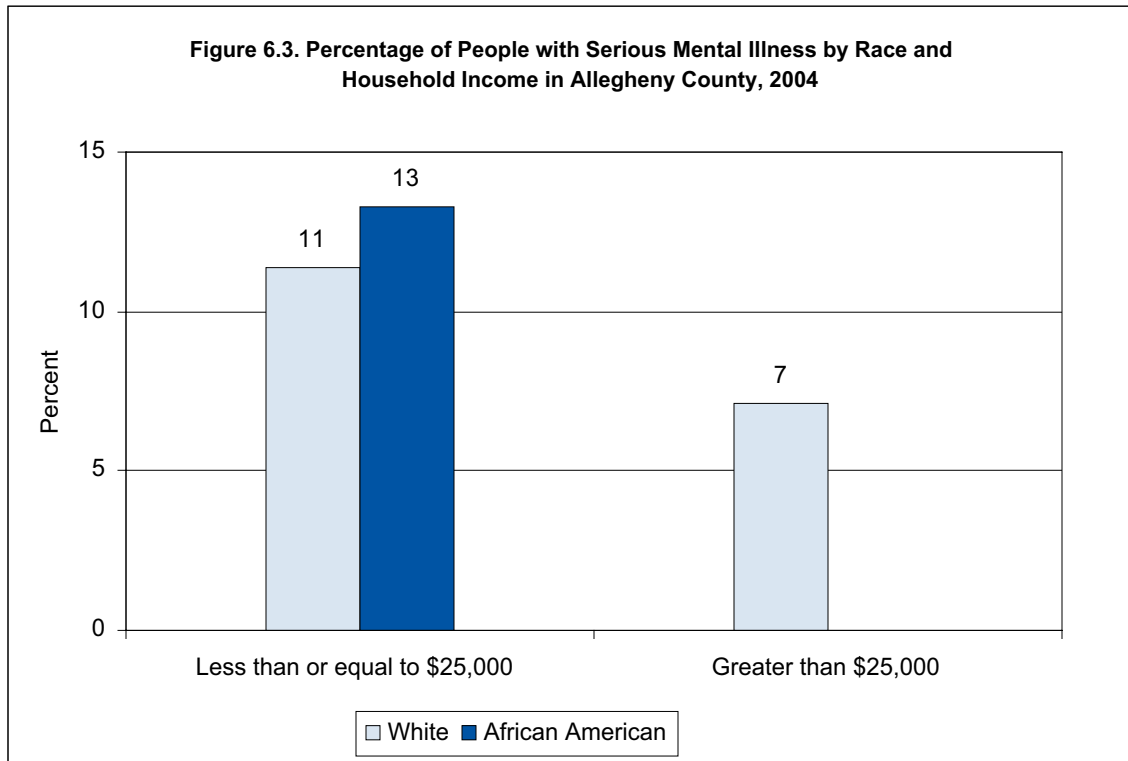
MENTAL HEALTH STATUS continued



Source: Appendix 6.1

- African American women and men are more likely than White women and men to have serious mental illness.
- White female and male rates of serious mental illness are similar in the county.

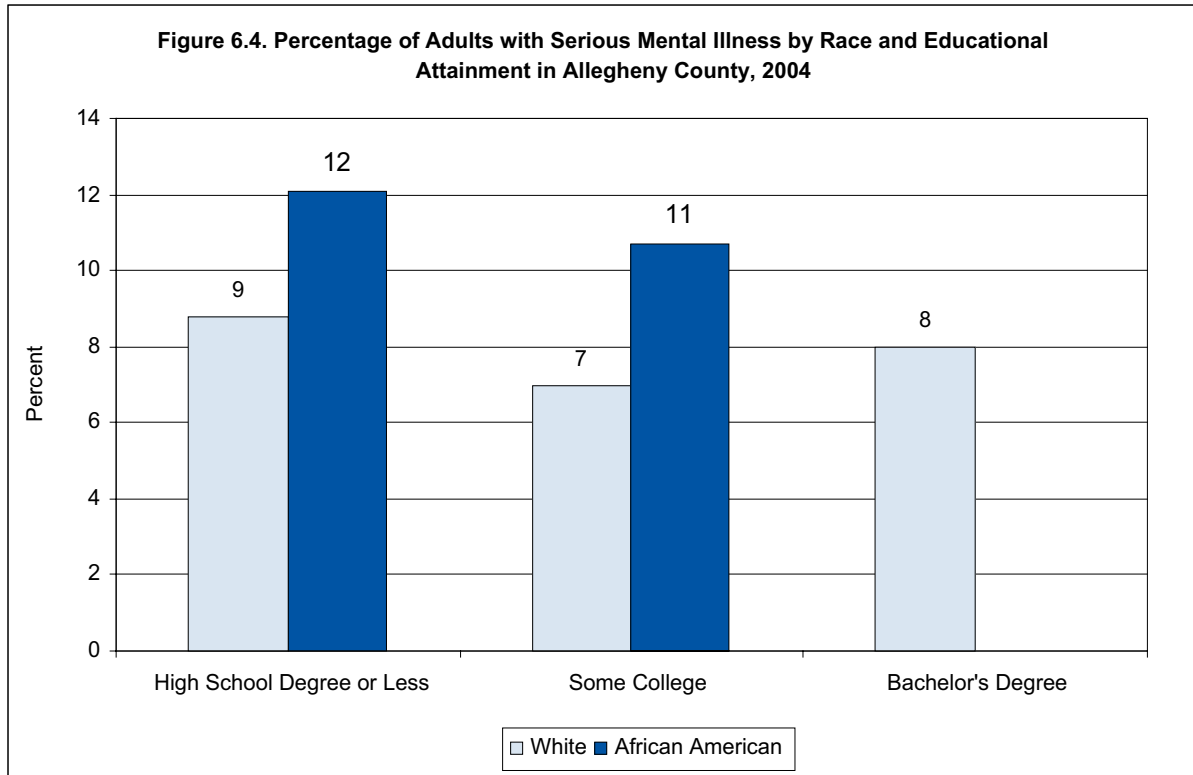
MENTAL HEALTH STATUS continued



Source: Appendix 6.1. Note that the percent for African Americans with household incomes greater than \$25,000 is not shown because the number of cases with serious mental illness is less than ten.

- African Americans with household incomes of \$25,000 or less are more likely than Whites at the same income level to have serious mental illness.
- Whites with household incomes of \$25,000 or less are more likely than higher income Whites to have serious mental illness.

MENTAL HEALTH STATUS continued



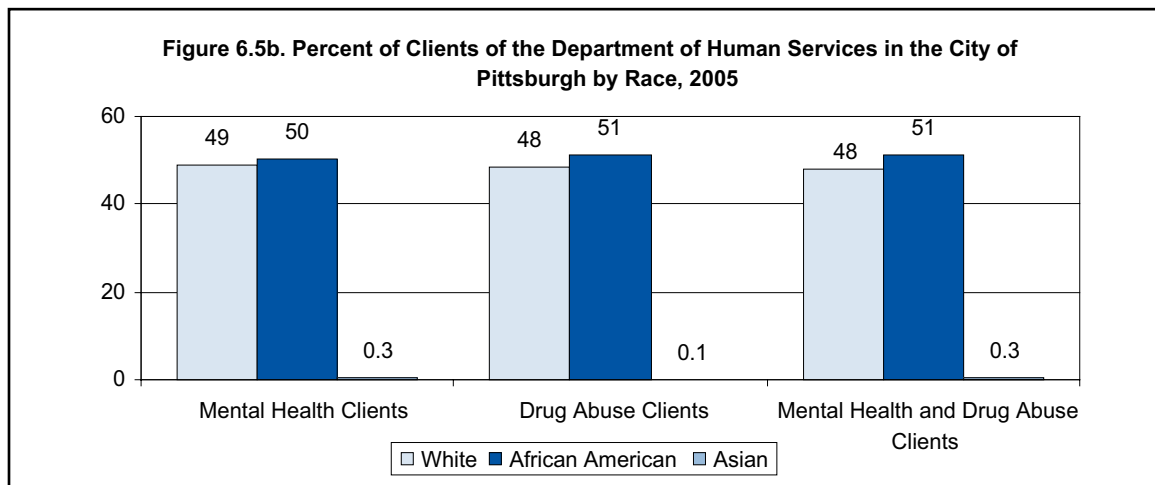
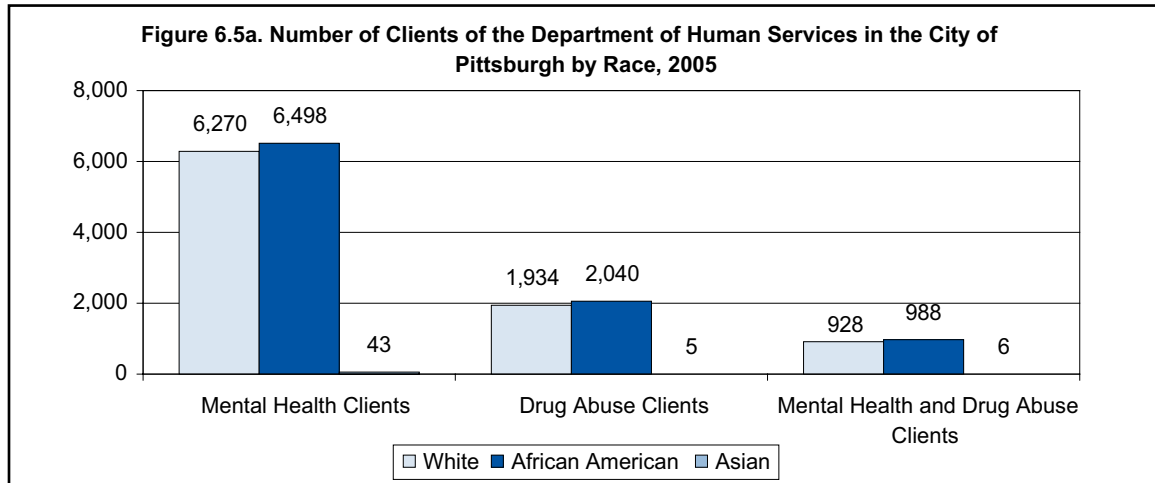
Source: Appendix 6.1. Note that the percent for African Americans with college degrees is not shown because the number of cases with serious mental illness is less than ten.

- African Americans with a high school diploma or less and African Americans with some college are more likely than Whites with similar educational attainment to have serious mental illness.

## Section 6. Mental Health

### UTILIZATION OF SERVICES IN PITTSBURGH AND ALLEGHENY COUNTY

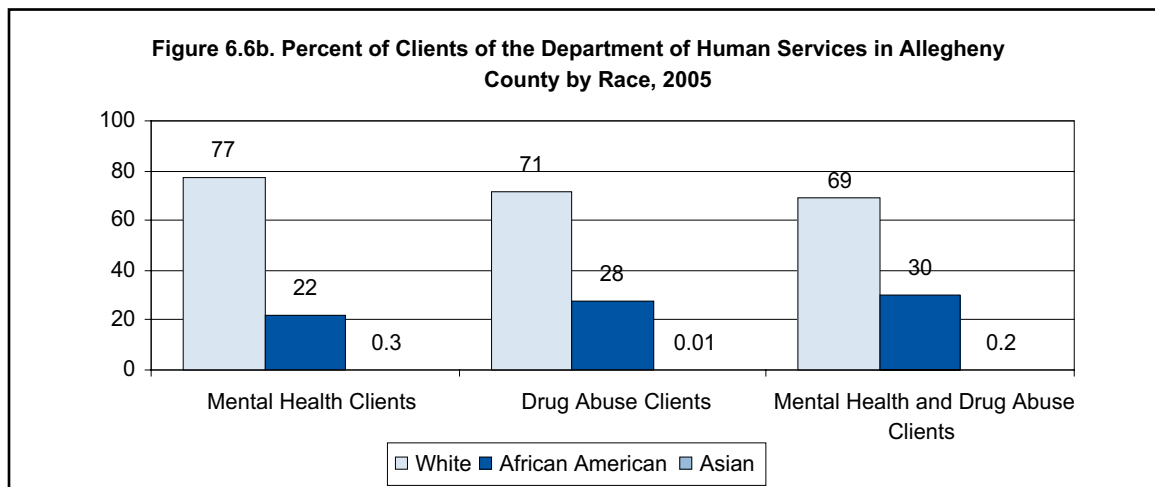
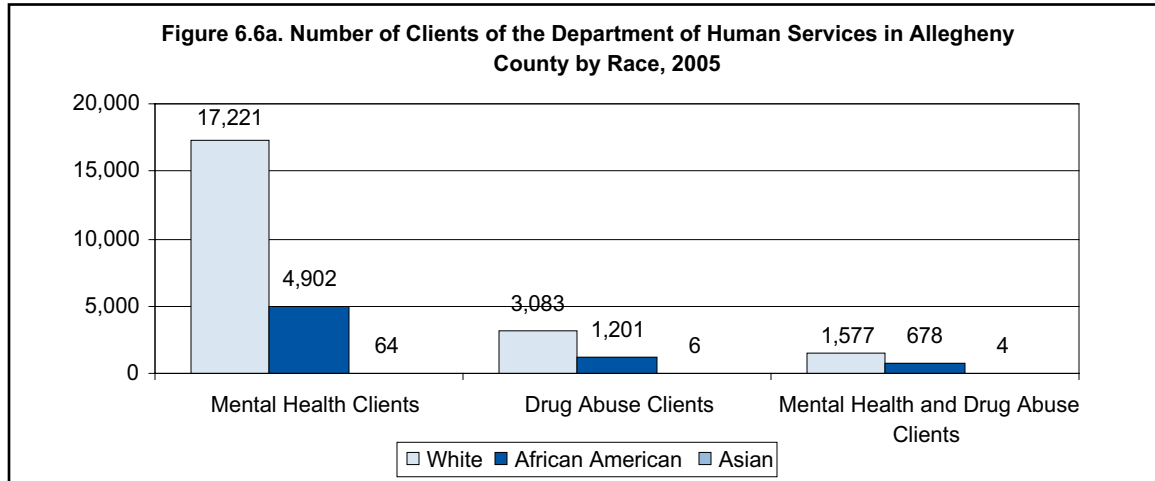
Local data on the utilization of mental health services are important since little local information on mental health status is available. The data below reflect the utilization of mental health services from the Department of Human Services (DHS) in 2005 by race for the city of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. The data include persons who received mental health services, drug abuse services, and both mental health and drug abuse services.



Source: Appendix 6.2

- In the city of Pittsburgh African Americans and whites are each about half of the mental health, drug abuse, and mental health/drug abuse clients who receive services provided by DHS.
- African Americans are overrepresented in the utilization of DHS services in the city of Pittsburgh since African Americans make up 50% or more of the clients but only 27% of the population.
- Only a small portion of mental health and drug abuse clients in the city of Pittsburgh who use the services provided by DHS are Asian.

UTILIZATION OF SERVICES continued



Source: Appendix 6.2

Note: Data for Allegheny County excludes data for the city of Pittsburgh.

- More than three times as many Whites as African Americans are treated for mental illness in the county each year. Since Whites make up 83.8% of the population in Allegheny County and African Americans only make up 12.4%, African Americans are overrepresented among those treated for mental illness.
- Whites represent 71% of clients receiving drug abuse treatment in the county, while African Americans account for 28% of the clients. African Americans are overrepresented among clients that receive treatment for drug abuse in the county.
- 69% of clients in the county receiving both mental health and drug abuse services are White, while 30% are African American.
- Asians are a small portion of mental health and drug abuse clients in the county.