Sociodemographic analysis of drug use among adolescent athletes: observations-perceptions of athletic directors-coaches.

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Through observations and perceptions of athletic directors/coaches, this study (1) broadly examined substance abuse of adolescent (high school) student-athletes; (2) made comparisons of substance abuse between student-athletes and students comprising the general student body; and (3) made selected comparisons of substance abuse between the regional data of this study and that of a national survey of high school coaches done by George H. Gallup International Institute (1991). Some comparisons were also made with the findings of a survey of drug use patterns among a sample of 10,883 public school students conducted by the Alcohol and Drug Defense (ADD) Section, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (1991; 1989; 1987a, 1987b) and a survey of drug use patterns among 2,685 high school student-athletes (Shields, 1988). The drug abuse problem for student-athletes was observed-perceived to be of lesser magnitude regionally than nationally and to be less for student-athletes with their peers in the general student body. In virtually every comparison of student-athletes with their peers in the general student body, the drug problem was seen to be less for student-athletes, and in some instances, dramatically less.

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