

border Kids count

THE ANNIE E. CASEY
FOUNDATION

A SNAPSHOT OF
CHILDREN LIVING ON
MEXICO'S NORTHERN
BORDER



Introduction

Border regions throughout the world possess their own cultural dynamics, which need to be taken into account when trying to understand a country's overall society and structure. This report provides a close look at the Mexico and U.S. border region as it pertains to the 2 million children living in Mexico's northern border region—defined as the 37 border municipalities within Mexico's six northern states of Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas. Specifically, we focus on the barriers, advantages, and opportunities facing border children and their families. The Mexican northern border region is a place where people's lives are straddled along both sides of the border; a place of bright social prosperity and terrible deprivation; a place of economic development and commercial risks; a place where there is a present and a future.

This report presents the characteristics of the border population on a state and municipality level, including information on:

- **Demographic Characteristics**
- **Family Life and Living Conditions**
- **Family Economic Well-Being**
- **Education**
- **Health**
- **Migration and Safety**

Data for the Mexican northern border region indicate that the area is generally better off than the rest of the nation. But as we explore the nature of this region as a center of migratory crossroads, its complexities in providing children with true opportunities will become quite apparent.

It is our hope that this publication will lead to a raised awareness of the condition of Mexico's border youth and become a positive tool for communities and organizations in promoting relevant public policy. Most important, we hope these findings will play a role in promoting a culture of data-based advocacy and an increased investment to improve the well-being and rights of Mexico's border children and their families.

Demographic Characteristics

Population

The border between Mexico and the United States extends more than 3,000 kilometers (1864 miles), from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. The border states are home to 16.6 million people representing 17 percent of Mexico's total population of 97.5 million people.¹

Today, approximately 6.2 million children² under the age of 18 live in Mexico's six northern states of Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas (representing 37 percent of the total six-state population). Thirty-seven border municipalities within these states are home to one-third of these children (2 million).

The northern population of Mexico is concentrated in Monterrey*, the state capital of Nuevo Leon and the following 11 border cities: Tijuana, Mexicali, Nogales, Piedras Negras, San Luis Rio Colorado, Agua Prieta, Ciudad Juarez, Matamoros, Nuevo Laredo and Reynosa.

* The city of Monterrey is located in Nuevo Leon, one of Mexico's six northern border states, but is not one of the 37 municipalities on the border.



Language on the border

Although there are no data on the Spanish-English bilingual population in Mexico, there are data indicating that the use of indigenous languages is still present among Mexican children (1.8 million) between the ages of 5-17.¹ Border states house 51,699 of these children and border municipalities are home to 8,244 of these children.²

Family Life and Living Conditions

Traditional family structure prevails

Similar to national trends, most of the estimated 4 million families in the northern border states (80 percent) maintain the traditional male-headed Mexican family structure. Sixteen percent² of children within the border states live in single parent homes, a slightly lower figure than the national average of 17 percent. Interestingly, this number rises to match the national average (17 percent) as we look at data within border municipalities.

Better housing infrastructure and less overcrowding

Overall, children in the border region (both border states and border municipalities) have access to far better housing infrastructure than children throughout Mexico. Superior infrastructure along the border is most evident when examining children with access to sanitary services (toilets). Approximately 3 percent of border state children and nearly 2 percent of border municipality children lack indoor sanitary service compared to 13 percent of children throughout Mexico. Almost 48 percent of children nationally do not have running water compared to only 29 percent of border state children. Sewage systems are also more readily available along the border with 19 percent of border state children and 18 percent of border municipality children lacking sewage systems compared to 28 percent nationally.

Electric service, generally, is the most abundant utility available to children throughout Mexico. Nationally, only 6 percent of Mexican children do not have indoor electricity.² Along the border this figure is improved with only 4 percent of border state children and 3 percent of border municipality children lacking this service.

In addition, while the number of children living in overcrowded dwellings (defined as more than three people per room) within the border municipalities is considerable, this percentage remains well below the national average at 31 percent compared to 43 percent nationally.² In fact, in the border municipality of Manuel Benavides, Chihuahua the overcrowding rate is as low as 15 percent.² Only the border municipality of Jiménez, Coahuila is close to the national level (42 percent).²

Lower rates of home ownership

There are approximately 4 million occupied housing units¹ located within the border states. Over 3 million of these units are owner occupied and the vast majority (more than 75 percent) are fully paid.³

However, the percentage of owner-occupied housing units is considerably lower in the border municipalities when compared to the national average (72 percent versus 78 percent nationally).

Family Economic Well-Being

The Mexican border region has become a final destination for internal migration primarily due to the fact that there is a high volume of transnational companies known as *maquiladoras* and significant industrial growth in the region. These employment opportunities often represent improved economic stability and the possibility of access to better services and products than those found throughout the rest of the country.

Lower unemployment rates

Ciudad Juárez, Mexicali, Nuevo Laredo and Tijuana were among the top ten cities nationwide to offer greater employment opportunities according to a study of unemployment in 48 Mexican cities.² However, it should be noted that the unemployment rate between urban and rural areas along the border varies greatly.

Lower rates of child poverty

The number of children living in poverty (defined as those living in households with less than twice the national average minimum wage) decreases by nearly half when examining poverty within the border states (24 percent vs. 43 percent nationally). When looking at border municipalities, the level of poverty generally decreases even further to 15 percent. However, it is important to note that four of the 37 border municipalities actually demonstrate higher rates of child poverty than the national average, reaching 48 percent in Saric, Sonora.

Education

Higher literacy rates and educational attainment

Collectively, Mexico's border states have one of the highest levels of literacy in the country (See table 1). Illiteracy rates in border states for ages 15 and over range from as little as 3 percent to 5 percent, compared to 9 percent nationally.

Border state secondary school completion rates (grades 7, 8, 9) also reflect improvement with approximately eight out of ten children who enter secondary school completing it. Moreover, school achievement rates (total number of years completed) in border states range from 8.1 to 9.2 years. These figures are well above the national average of 7.9 years of school completion.

Table 1.
Educational Attainment of Mexican Border States
2003-2004 school year

School year 2003-2004	Primary, 1-6 Grades			
	Coverage		Completing Once Began	
State	%	Rank	%	Rank
Baja California	90	26	93	13
Coahuila	91	24	90	20
Chihuahua	89	29	86	26
Nuevo León	90	27	95	6
Sonora	92	22	90	17
Tamaulipas	92	19	98	2
Mexico (Total)	94	.	90	.

School year 2003-2004	Secondary, 7-8-9 Grades					
	Coverage		Completing Once Began		Drop-Outs	
State	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Baja California	87	19	80	21	7	21
Coahuila	91	11	82	11	6	12
Chihuahua	81	30	77	25	8	25
Nuevo León	92	7	90	2	3	2
Sonora	87	18	80	20	6	20
Tamaulipas	90	12	83	10	5	9
Mexico (Total)	88	.	80	.	6	.

School year 2003-2004	High School, 10-11-12 Grades					
	Coverage		Completing Once Began		Drop-Outs	
State	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Baja California	44	25	60	17	16	14
Coahuila	48	16	59	18	18	25
Chihuahua	47	18	55	30	20	32
Nuevo León	39	30	60	16	19	30
Sonora	54	7	58	21	17	20
Tamaulipas	48	15	71	5	11	5
Mexico (Total)	48	.	62	.	15	.

School year 2003-2004	Pop. 15 and Older			
	School Achievement		Illiteracy	
State	# of years completed	Rank	%	Rank
Baja California	8.4	9	3	2
Coahuila	8.9	3	3	4
Chihuahua	8.1	12	4	8
Nuevo León	9.2	2	3	3
Sonora	8.5	6	4	6
Tamaulipas	8.5	7	5	9
Mexico (Total)	7.9	.	9	.

Source:
INDISEP, System of Indicators of the Education Department, General Direction of
Planning, Programming and Budget of the Education Ministry of Mexico, Mexico.

Note:
data is not available by region or municipalities.

Idle youth

Despite above average education rates, 12 percent of border state youth between the ages of 16 and 19 are not attending school and not working compared to a slightly lower national average of 11 percent.² Many border municipalities such as Tijuana (12 percent), Ciudad Juárez (12 percent), Mexicali (12 percent), Piedras Negras (14 percent) and Matamoros (14 percent) reflect this border state average while Manuel Benavides, Chihuahua with 35 percent of its children ages 16 to 19 not working or studying faces a much grimmer picture.²

Health

More favorable health conditions

Health conditions are relatively favorable along the border when compared to the rest of the country. Nationally, 6 out of 10 children ages birth to 19 do not have access to health services. This figure drops to approximately 4 out of 10 (children lacking access to health services) within border states.¹

Border states also demonstrate a similar life expectancy to the national average. The 2004 estimations show that in the border states life expectancy ranges between 75.6 years, in Tamaulipas, to 76.4 years in Baja California versus the national average of 75.2 years.⁴

Higher rates of births to teenagers

Generally, women in the border states first become mothers at a younger age than those living elsewhere in Mexico. In fact, teenage women between the ages of 12 and 19 in the border states demonstrate higher rates of live child birth. For example, 7 percent of teenagers between the ages of 15 and 17 in border states have given birth to a live child (vs. 6 percent nationally). The percentage rises further to 8 percent within border municipalities reaching a peak of 19 percent in Guerrero, Coahuila.²

Additionally, 28 percent of young women living in border municipalities between the ages of 18 and 19 have given birth to a child versus 22 percent nationally. When examining additional municipalities within the border states, this figure increases, reaching an astounding 51 percent in Guadalupe, Chihuahua.²

Drug use

Increased drug use in the border region also heightens the risk of poor outcomes for children. According to a 2000 epidemiological study, heroin, is recorded to be used most frequently in the border municipalities of Tijuana and Mexicali (in Baja California), Nogales and Agua Prieta (in Sonora), Ciudad Juárez (in Chihuahua), and Nuevo Laredo and Matamoros (in Tamaulipas). Also noted was a growing use of ecstasy among border children.⁵

Of the children using drugs in border states, the most frequent users (75%) are children ages 10-14. The two border municipalities with the highest incidence of drug use in this age group are the municipalities of Chihuahua (48%) and Tijuana (47%). This group is followed by adolescents between the ages of 15 and 19 who show similar averages, 47% in the city of Nuevo Laredo.

Migration and Safety

When one thinks of the Mexico/U.S. border region, the persistent parallel movement across the border is likely to come to mind, and for good reason. The northern Mexican border is host to one of the largest migratory flows in the world (approximately 310 million crossings per year⁴). The Tijuana-San Diego crossing alone has a flow of 40,000 Mexican residents who cross the border daily to study, work, visit the doctor and shop.⁶

Who is crossing?

Our data reveal that, contrary to popular belief in the United States, residents of the border region are generally not those migrating permanently to the United States. More than half of the permanent emigrants from Mexico to the United States come from states in the interior of the country. Traditionally, the interior states of Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacán, Zacatecas, Durango and Nayarit⁷ demonstrate high migratory trends to the United States.

While the data reveals that the border region is not an area that generally produces permanent migrants to the United States, there are, however, a significant number of border region residents who cross the border into the United States and return to Mexico on a daily or regular basis for work, medical, educational or other personal reasons.

Dual citizenship

The regular commuting between Mexico and United States is in part due to the significant number of individuals living along the border that hold dual citizenship (Mexico/United States). There are nearly 100,000 children living in border municipalities who were born in the United States.² Three municipalities along the border, Guadalupe and Manuel Benavides in Chihuahua and Guerrero in Tamaulipas, count 12 and 10 percent of their children as having been born in the United States.² In densely populated cities such as Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez, approximately 6 percent of children were born in the United States; in the cities of Mexicali, Nogales, Matamoros and Piedras Negras, the percentage is 4 percent or less.² Dual citizenship allows these individuals to access services and benefits in both Mexico and in the United States.

Table 2.
Number of ordered returns from the U.S.A. to Mexico,
of children less than 18, by place of return, 2002- 2004

State	Total returns of children under 18			% of total returns that are of children under 18		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Baja California	3,908	5,494	7,954	2	3	4
Coahuila	2,347	1,583	1,486	10	12	11
Chihuahua	6,936	10,007	8,092	7	12	9
Nuevo Leon	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sonora	32,635	34,008	20,782	18	17	11
Tamaulipas	1,759	1,443	1,376	3	3	3
Total Northern Border	47,585	52,535	39,690	8	9	8

Source:
"Instituto Nacional de Migración" (National Institute of Migration), Mexico, www.inami.gob.mx.

The border region: A final destination for many

The high volume of transnational companies, the establishment of sweatshops and industrial growth can be viewed as benefiting border and migrant families—giving them access to services and products that they might not otherwise have. For this reason, at least in part, the border region has become a desired internal migratory destination. The 2000 data confirm that nearly 26 percent of all border residents were not born in the border state in which they reside.³

However, it is important to note that the same economic entities that can improve outcomes for border children and families have also contributed to dangerous environments for children.

Unaccompanied migratory children: A dangerous journey

The Northern Border Migration Surveys (*Encuestas de Migración de la Frontera Norte*) report that more than 40,000 youth between the ages of 15 and 19 attempt to cross the border each year without legal documents. This coincides with the number of adolescents under the age of 18 who are reported to be returned "in an orderly manner" or officially by immigration agents: 47,585 in 2002; 52,535 in 2003 and 39,690 in 2004 (according to data from the *Instituto Nacional de Migración*). (See table 2)

However, between 1998 and 2002, only an average of 8,000 children⁸ annually were placed in community-based and government-run shelters, where youth are supposed to remain until they are returned to their place of origin. This severe shortage of safe havens potentially exposes these children to additional dangers and heightened levels of vulnerability.

High youth arrest rates

Another alarming concern along the border is the higher incidence of police arrests for youth. Five of the border states (with Coahuila being the exception) are home to the top eight states in the nation with the highest number police arrest rates for children under 18.⁹

Murder of women and girls in Ciudad Juárez

The unsolved murders of 370 women in Ciudad Juárez between 1993 and 2003¹⁰ have had profound legal, social and political implications along the border. What is even more jarring is the young age of these victims—more than one third were less than 19 years of age.

	DEMOGRAPHICS						Population under 18 in single parent homes** 2000	% population under 18 in single parent homes*** 2000	Population under 18 without sanitary service (toilet) in the home
	Total Population 2000	Population under 18* 2000	% Population under 18, 2000	Population under 18 born in U.S.A. 2000	% Population under 18, born in U.S.A. 2000	Population 5-17 that speaks indigenous language 2000 (1)			
BAJA CALIFORNIA	2,487,367	885,457	36	39,749	4	9,292	154,531	17	14,156
Mexicali	764,602	270,775	35	10,252	4	1,331	47,168	17	2,939
Tecate	77,795	28,505	37	1,578	6	138	4,671	16	561
Tijuana	1,210,820	428,343	35	24,114	6	3,073	75,028	18	7,032
COAHUILA	2,298,070	881,265	38	6,088	1	398	123,687	14	31,431
Acuña	110,487	43,816	40	1,095	2	39	6,649	15	1,173
Guerrero	2,050	732	36	28	4	-	60	8	25
Hidalgo	1,441	570	40	30	5	-	68	12	16
Jiménez	9,724	3,911	40	133	3	-	360	9	146
Nava	23,019	10,095	44	115	1	1	962	10	197
Ocampo	12,053	5,100	42	32	1	-	651	13	412
Piedras Negras	128,130	50,471	39	1,750	3	16	7,518	15	634
CHIHUAHUA	3,052,907	1,158,645	38	33,405	3	28,295	194,113	17	77,914
Ascension	21,939	9,619	44	499	5	35	1,223	13	311
Guadalupe	10,032	4,067	41	490	12	14	605	15	116
Janos	10,214	4,629	45	115	2	16	503	11	108
Juarez	1,218,817	439,677	36	24,152	5	1,505	77,323	18	7,918
Manuel Benavides	1,746	598	34	69	12	1	55	9	84
Ojinaga	24,307	9,024	37	795	9	68	1,457	16	430
Praxedis G. Guerrero	8,905	3,640	41	327	9	7	594	16	109
NUEVO LEON	3,834,141	1,357,497	35	6,785	0	2,772	177,676	13	24,958
Anahuac	18,524	7,129	39	259	4	2	1,032	14	208
SONORA	2,216,969	850,937	38	11,162	1	8,854	146,792	17	36,895
Agua Prieta	61,944	25,515	41	1,367	5	80	4,595	18	554
Altar	7,253	2,845	39	20	1	18	488	17	249
Caborca	69,516	27,503	40	225	1	187	4,363	16	1,103
Naco	5,370	2,313	43	218	9	8	419	18	50
Nogales	159,787	61,581	39	2166	4	322	11,528	19	1,722
Puerto Peñasco	31,157	12,509	40	216	2	110	1,993	16	282
San Luis Rio Colorado	145,006	57,416	40	3,618	6	159	9,899	17	1,123
Santa Cruz	1,628	642	39	13	2	3	76	12	42
Saric	2,257	873	39	57	7	2	173	20	139
General Plutarco Elias Calles	11,278	4,688	42	226	5	31	721	15	270
TAMAULIPAS	2,753,222	1,022,557	37	23,598	2	2,088	169,795	17	21,481
Camargo	16,787	6,195	37	354	6	21	946	15	108
Guerrero	4,366	1,659	38	167	10	-	206	12	50
Gustavo Diaz Ordaz	16,246	5,923	37	461	8	4	835	14	109
Matamoros	418,141	160,250	38	6,317	4	349	27,375	17	1,469
Mier	6,788	2,460	36	125	5	-	363	15	14
Miguel Aleman	25,704	9,684	38	646	7	27	1,462	15	147
Neuvo Laredo	310,915	118,482	38	7,438	6	209	19,877	17	2,126
Reynosa	420,463	155,750	37	4,582	3	349	25,289	16	2,153
Rio Bravo	104,229	40,821	39	1,288	3	119	6,192	15	533
37 Municipalities	5,473,440	2,017,810	37	95,337	5	8,244	342,727	17	34,662
6 Border States	16,642,676	6,156,358	37	120,787	2	51,699	966,594	16	206,835
Mexico	97,483,412	38,710,777	40	250,722	1	1,838,254	6,588,858	17	4,872,280

FAMILY LIFE AND LIVING CONDITIONS

% Population under 18 without sanitary (toilet) in the home	Population under 18 without running water in the home	% Population under 18 without running water in the home	Population under 18 without sewage system in the home	% Population under 18 without sewage system in the home	Population under 18 without indoor electricity	% Population under 18 without indoor electricity	Population under 18 living in overcrowded dwellings (3+ per room)	% Population under 18 in overcrowded dwellings (3+ per room)	
2	260,678	30	190,429	22	24,163	3	251,980	29	BAJA CALIFORNIA
1	62,658	23	59,252	22	2,851	1	68,720	25	Mexicali
2	9,313	33	4,948	17	1,528	5	8,441	30	Tecate
2	135,652	32	78,022	18	9,963	2	124,737	29	Tijuana
4	240,635	27	159,260	18	13,334	2	238,871	27	COAHUILA
3	16,722	38	12,956	30	1,551	4	16,915	39	Acuña
3	436	60	397	55	35	5	287	39	Guerrero
3	433	76	398	70	34	6	219	38	Hidalgo
4	3,273	84	3,169	82	330	8	1,646	42	Jiménez
2	3,622	36	3,343	33	273	3	3,252	32	Nava
8	2,855	56	1,799	36	526	10	1,721	34	Ocampo
1	9,152	18	6,277	12	650	1	13,897	28	Piedras Negras
7	303,213	26	202,436	18	87,039	8	343,119	30	CHIHUAHUA
3	3,456	36	3,243	34	781	8	3,328	35	Ascension
3	1,919	48	1,733	43	111	3	1,454	36	Guadalupe
2	1,424	31	1,972	43	424	9	1,420	31	Janos
2	94,526	22	32,977	8	4,355	1	142,276	32	Juarez
14	293	49	149	25	27	5	91	15	Manuel Benavides
5	1,842	20	908	10	495	5	2,001	22	Ojinaga
3	2,103	58	1,704	47	112	3	1,293	36	Praxedis G. Guerrero
2	237,806	18	135,266	10	15,261	1	353,921	26	NUEVO LEON
3	2,766	39	2,347	33	527	7	2,680	38	Anahuac
4	279,179	33	197,477	23	28,945	3	282,016	33	SONORA
2	5,010	20	1,986	8	1,592	6	8,201	32	Agua Prieta
9	1,158	41	976	34	124	4	1,098	39	Altar
4	11,363	42	9,170	34	692	3	9,785	36	Caborca
2	311	14	228	10	88	4	606	27	Naco
3	20,734	34	7,457	12	3,089	5	19,690	32	Nogales
2	3,361	27	2,077	17	514	4	3,828	31	Puerto Peñasco
2	14,139	25	13,414	23	1,739	3	18,511	32	San Luis Rio Colorado
7	113	18	116	18	43	7	135	21	Santa Cruz
16	252	29	188	22	57	7	279	32	Saric
6	1,668	36	1,389	30	314	7	1,803	39	General Plutarco Elias Calles
2	430,005	42	303,451	30	58,381	6	372,256	36	TAMAULIPAS
2	1,641	27	1,668	27	138	2	1,934	31	Camargo
3	344	21	370	22	65	4	516	31	Guerrero
2	1,932	33	1,672	28	316	5	1,444	24	Gustavo Diaz Ordaz
1	68,186	43	40,058	25	7,905	5	57,500	36	Matamoros
1	437	18	474	19	22	1	608	25	Mier
2	1,898	20	1,197	12	111	1	2,478	26	Miguel Aleman
2	31,835	27	15,174	13	4,632	4	39,986	34	Neuvo Laredo
1	54,604	35	38,346	25	7,505	5	51,591	33	Reynosa
1	19,681	48	14,736	36	3,797	9	15,301	38	Rio Bravo
2	591,110	29	366,290	18	57,316	3	629,672	31	37 Municipalities
3	1,751,516	29	1,188,320	19	227,123	4	1,842,160	30	6 Border States
13	18,727,558	48	10,630,400	28	2,254,100	6	16,441,000	43	Mexico

	FAMILY LIFE AND LIVING CONDITIONS					FAMILY ECONOMIC WELL-BEING		EDUCATION
	Occupied Housing units 2000	Owner-occupied housing units 2000	% Owner occupied housing units	Fully paid and owner-occupied housing units	% Fully paid and owner-occupied housing units	Children living in poverty (households earning 2x mexican minimum wage or less) 2000	% of children living in poverty (households earning 2x mexican minimum wage or less) 2000	Population 16-19 2000
BAJA CALIFORNIA	559,402	402,325	72	288,867	72	104,762	12	177,686
Mexicali	179,368	140,511	78	104,038	74	30,183	11	55,026
Tecate	17,080	11,527	68	9,050	79	3,607	13	5,672
Tijuana	265,683	181,440	68	122,367	67	39,183	9	85,243
COAHUILA	539,169	420,206	78	322,173	77	245,210	28	180,087
Acuña	25,211	17,906	71	10,553	59	9,462	22	9,129
Guerrero	549	331	60	321	97	285	39	137
Hidalgo	374	249	67	240	96	254	45	126
Jiménez	2,331	1,988	85	1,890	95	1,567	40	689
Nava	5,251	3,923	75	2,557	65	2,420	24	1,818
Ocampo	2,825	1,818	64	1,611	89	2,186	43	910
Piedras Negras	30,637	21,905	72	14,402	66	9,705	19	9,508
CHIHUAHUA	733,379	568,660	78	433,476	76	260,617	22	232,230
Ascension	5,305	3,743	71	3,491	93	2,960	31	1,752
Guadalupe	2,520	1,726	69	1,412	82	1,061	26	703
Janos	2,415	1,946	81	1,780	92	1,576	34	852
Juarez	274,822	199,318	73	126,763	64	52,195	12	89,379
Manuel Benavides	491	415	85	351	85	233	39	115
Ojinaga	6,520	4,594	71	4,068	89	2,575	29	1,733
Praxedis G. Guerrero	2,252	1,674	74	1,444	86	1,141	31	644
NUEVO LEON	878,600	706,321	80	519,587	74	273,690	20	303,456
Anahuac	4,642	3,543	76	3,156	89	2,706	38	1,469
SONORA	527,427	429,713	82	321,823	75	231,986	27	173,964
Agua Prieta	14,762	10,653	72	7,777	73	5,213	20	4,800
Altar	1,737	1,329	77	1,129	85	929	33	609
Caborca	16,373	12,252	75	10,451	85	6,468	24	5,817
Naco	1,245	982	79	861	88	440	19	412
Nogales	37,545	27,865	74	17,708	64	7,639	12	12,218
Puerto Peñasco	7,383	5,948	81	4,550	77	2,133	17	2,593
San Luis Rio Colorado	35,127	26,695	76	20,073	75	10,578	18	11,002
Santa Cruz	435	343	79	283	83	309	48	102
Saric	590	508	86	470	93	423	48	157
General Plutarco Elias Calles	2,678	2,050	77	1,788	87	1,425	30	922
TAMAULIPAS	677,489	505,865	75	400,530	79	334,805	33	218,533
Camargo	4,350	3,163	73	2,675	85	1,871	30	1,300
Guerrero	1,199	791	66	663	84	493	30	365
Gustavo Diaz Ordaz	4,187	3,057	73	2,580	84	2,078	35	1,269
Matamoros	101,915	73,365	72	57,064	78	32,750	20	32,258
Mier	1,843	1,342	73	1,237	92	609	25	488
Miguel Aleman	6,458	4,140	64	3,243	78	2,160	22	2,012
Neuvo Laredo	73,020	51,502	71	39,458	77	22,486	19	23,865
Reynosa	101,557	73,135	72	50,594	69	32,508	21	34,089
Rio Bravo	24,789	19,500	79	15,710	81	13,445	33	8,173
37 Municipalities	1,265,469	917,177	72	647,808	71	307,256	15	407,356
6 Border States	3,915,466	3,033,090	77	2,286,456	75	1,451,070	24	1,285,956
Mexico	21,513,235	16,836,377	78	14,099,141	84	16,478,600	43	7,902,101

EDUCATION		HEALTH							
Idle youth 16-19 ** 2000	% Idle youth 16-19 2000	% Population 0-19 without access to health care 2000	Population 12-14 who has given birth to a live child 2000	% Population 12-14 who has given birth to a live child 2000	Population 15-17 who has given birth to a live child 2000	% Population 15-17 who has given birth to a live child 2000	Population 18-19 who has given birth to a live child 2000	% Population 18-19 who has given birth to a live child 2000	
21,864	12	45	458	1	5,076	8	12,040	27	BAJA CALIFORNIA
6,606	12	39	159	1	1,554	8	3,559	26	Mexicali
649	11	44	10	1	147	7	409	29	Tecate
10,545	12	48	226	1	2,324	8	5,781	26	Tijuana
21,270	12	31	247	0	4,670	7	10,788	24	COAHUILA
1,064	12	25	18	1	377	12	776	35	Acuña
26	19	47	-		9	19	5	16	Guerrero
27	21	79	-		7	16	12	35	Hidalgo
105	15	44	1	0	25	10	52	29	Jiménez
211	12	21	2	0	77	11	149	34	Nava
139	15	46	1	0	25	8	47	29	Ocampo
1,294	14	28	14	0	288	8	708	30	Piedras Negras
30,660	13	44	413	0	6,683	8	15,974	28	CHIHUAHUA
288	16	69	1	0	88	13	157	40	Ascension
103	15	59	3	1	31	12	93	51	Guadalupe
134	16	81	1	0	12	4	42	23	Janos
10,487	12	36	200	1	2,705	9	6,805	31	Juarez
40	35	88	-		5	12	11	39	Manuel Benavides
272	16	60	-		84	12	132	34	Ojinaga
138	21	57	1	0	37	16	46	33	Praxedis G. Guerrero
33,409	11	35	289	0	5,856	5	14,243	19	NUEVO LEON
232	16	59	1	0	49	9	118	33	Anahuac
21,309	12	45	292	0	4,368	7	10,337	24	SONORA
821	17	53	7	0	181	10	417	36	Agua Prieta
118	19	71	2	1	33	15	58	38	Altar
519	9	53	11	0	175	8	401	28	Caborca
77	19	66	4	2	28	17	38	42	Naco
1,579	13	32	29	1	355	9	1,008	31	Nogales
328	13	46	6	1	96	10	175	29	Puerto Peñasco
1,434	13	55	25	1	347	8	770	28	San Luis Rio Colorado
23	23	81	-		4	11	11	34	Santa Cruz
46	29	92	1	1	9	17	13	37	Saric
176	19	70	-		39	11	75	34	General Plutarco Elias Calles
25,843	12	51	274	0	4,985	6	12,040	22	TAMAULIPAS
203	16	58	3	1	49	10	85	31	Camargo
51	14	75	1	1	22	17	39	42	Guerrero
149	12	57	4	1	60	12	75	27	Gustavo Diaz Ordaz
4,522	14	43	60	1	894	8	2,091	25	Matamoros
58	12	74	1	1	19	11	40	39	Mier
239	12	65	3	0	52	7	151	32	Miguel Aleman
3,312	14	48	40	0	724	9	1,684	28	Neuvo Laredo
3,556	10	44	32	0	730	6	1,942	21	Reynosa
1,079	13	57	15	0	230	8	515	26	Rio Bravo
50,650	12	-	882	1	11,891	8	28,490	28	37 Municipalities
154,355	12	-	1,973	0	31,638	7	75,422	24	6 Border States
846,902	11	63	9,687	0	176,219	6	436,036	22	Mexico

Exploitation of Border Children— An Area Needing Special Attention

While there are a number of advantages for children living in the border region when compared to the rest of Mexico, critical areas of child well-being such as police arrest rates, school drop out rates, teenage births and the presence of idle youth in the border region remain markedly under par. These disparities, and those described below, have the potential and likelihood of offsetting some of the advantages of living along Mexico's northern border.

Sexual and commercial exploitation of border children remains a dangerous yet undocumented reality. Such exploitation can take on many faces, including undocumented adoptions, sexual tourism and human trafficking. Initial studies such as *Stolen Childhood*,¹¹ point to the border cities of Tijuana and Ciudad Juarez as magnets for the child sex industry. These high-risk areas are known to attract a high volume of international tourists and transients that partake in illegal activities—the extent of which is not documented.

Other detrimental factors affecting border children include environmental degradation, a burgeoning infrastructure, traffic,

and a significant presence of organized crime and drugs. These factors all need to be more closely examined to determine the extent of their effects on child well-being in this region.

Moving Forward

The Annie E. Casey Foundation and its partners invite you to view this report as an important first step toward broader and deeper research efforts, especially those that include local scholars and increased collaboration with U.S. researchers. It is our hope that this report can stimulate a data-driven dialogue with community residents and other grantmakers, so that informed decisions about how to promote strategies and approaches for well-being along the border can be made.



Data Table References

Source:

All table data with one exception (see below) is derived from the XII Census of Population and Housing 2000, INEGI, National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics, Mexico.

⁽¹⁾ XII General Census of Population and Housing, National Institute of Statistics Geography and Informatics (INEGI), Basic tabulations.

Data Table Notes:

* Population less than 18 and population 18 and older does not add up to the total population because of the small group of Not specified age in the Census 2000. For the 37 municipalities not specified age group was of 272,409 persons.

** According to the week before the Census 2000, Mexico. Activity the previous week was captured, as well as assistance to school. The possible classifications are: Work, Looking for a job, Home domestic tasks, Permanently disabled to work, Student, Not working, Retired or receives any pension, not specified. The percentage shown is about the population not working and that also answered not going to any school.

*** Children under 18 that live in household where there is a head of household and no spouse nor partner.

- : Not available at this level.

References:

¹ National Institute of Statistics Geography and Informatics, (“Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática”, INEGI), XII Census of Population and Housing 2000, Mexico.

² National Institute of Statistics Geography and Informatics, (“Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática”, INEGI), XII Census of Population and Housing 2000, Mexico. Calculations by the Children’s Rights Network in Mexico.

³ National Institute of Statistics Geography and Informatics, INEGI, Mexico. (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, INEGI). “Información Referenciada Geoespacialmente Integrada en un Sistema” (IRIS), Versión 2.0, Based on the XII Census of Population and Housing 2000.

⁴ National Population Council “Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO)”, Socio-demographic indicators, Projection 2004 based on XII Census of Population and Housing, INEGI, 2000. www.conapo.gob.mx.

⁵ Health Ministry of Mexico , Statistics Direction (DGE, SSA by the initials in spanish) “Monitoring System of Epidemics and Addictions” (SISVEA, Sistema de Vigilancia Epidemiológica de las Adicciones) General Overview of the North Border of Mexico, Non-Government Centres of Treatment (Centros de Tratamiento No Gubernamentales, ONG’s). 2000.

⁶ International Community Foundation, “Blurred Borders”, March 2004, pg. 9

⁷ López Villar Darío, Antonio, (2002), Migration in Mexico. Data from 1990 to 2000. (“Migración en México. Datos de 1990 al 2000”) , *Notas. Revista de Información y Análisis*. Num 19.INEGI. México.

⁸ Interinstitutional Attention to border minors Program , Health and support for the migrant, <http://www.saludmigrante.salud.gob.mx/directorios/resumen.htm> , consulted on March 6, 2005.

⁹ Public Safety Ministry of Mexico (“Secretaría de Seguridad Pública”). Minors Council (“Consejo de Menores”), Register of minors breakers of law (“ Registro de Menores Infractores”).

¹⁰ International Amnesty. Report “10 years of disappearing and murders of women in Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua”, (“10 años de desapariciones y asesinatos de mujeres en Ciudad Juárez y Chihuahua”), Publisher on August 11, 2003.

¹¹ Azaola, Elena, “Stolen Childhood: Girl and Boy Victims of Sexual Exploitation in Mexico (Mexico City: UNICEF/ DIF/ CIESAS, 2000).

This report is a result of the collaboration between the Red por los Derechos de la Infancia en Mexico (Children's Rights Network in Mexico) and the Annie E. Casey Foundation's South-west Border KIDS COUNT project in the United States. The collaboration hopes to offer a joint view of the millions of children living along both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border region.

KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a nationwide and state effort to track the status of children in the United States. By providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks of child well-being, KIDS COUNT seeks to enrich local, state, and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children. This report, if successful, adds to a more accurate view of the diversity and vulnerability of children living in Mexico's northern border.

About the Red por los Derechos de la Infancia en Mexico

Who we are

We are a group of organizations and institutions of the Mexican civil society that develop different programs in favor of children and adolescents; particularly for those who are vulnerable or living in disadvantaged conditions.

We represent a wide range of ideas, experiences, methodologies, techniques and useful tools in the field of protection, promotion and defense of Children's Rights.

We maintain a serious commitment to childhood and adolescent Rights; we also seek to promote the equitable, transparent, professional and democratic and joint responsibility relations among the social and political actors that influence the lives of all children.

Our mission

To promote a social and cultural movement so that the children and adolescents know, practice and enjoy their Rights.

Our Values

We believe in the joint work, the complementary effort, the joint responsibility of the actions and decisions built within an open dialog, in the interest of giving and sharing knowledge and experiences as a base of a civil society with equitable relations.



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