

Abstract:

Latino Border Town Communities and Autism: An Analysis on Access to Resources for Children with Autism in Nogales, Arizona

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it is estimated 1 in 68 children have autism. There is a documented continuous trend of higher prevalence of autism among white, non-Hispanic populations. As a result of this, there is a large discrepancy between available research on white communities in contrast to areas with primarily Hispanics and non-whites. This under-representation for Latino children and families is an ongoing issue that must be resolved in order to provide better health care and support services. Though this health disparity may be evident in many cities across the United States, one specific area where research on autism is lacking even more is for small border towns. In Arizona, for example, there are about fifteen cities that border Mexico and are potentially at a disadvantage in terms of receiving health care services, specifically for children with autism and their families. Of particular interest is one city, Nogales, Arizona, which is home to the largest border crossing in Arizona. Due to a lack of representation of Latino children in health care and in research for small border towns, communities like Nogales are suffering the consequences. In this paper I will attempt to bridge this gap, and suggest solutions for eliminating the disproportionate representation for areas like Nogales, Arizona.