Child and Youth Health Care in California

What It Is

Kidsdata.org's health care measures include:

- Children ages 0-18 for whom needed health care was delayed or not received in the previous 12 months
- Youth ages 12-17 by the length of time since their last routine health check-up
- Children ages 0-17 who visited the emergency room in the previous 12 months, by type of insurance coverage
- Children ages 0-17 uninsured at any point in the previous 12 months
- The usual source of health care for children ages 0-17, by income level and race/ethnicity
- Children ages 0-18 with and without health insurance, by type of coverage (public or private), age group, and race/ethnicity
- Children ages 0-18 with Medicaid (Medi-Cal), CHIP, or other means-tested public health insurance (see list); also, for California and U.S. only, coverage by age group and race/ethnicity
- Total yearly enrollment in Medicaid (Medi-Cal) and CHIP among children ages 0-18 (California and U.S. only)
- Average monthly enrollment in Medi-Cal among children and youth ages 0-20 by age group and, for California only, by race/ethnicity and most common written languages
- Children ages 0-17 who receive care within a medical home
- The number of school-based or -linked health centers serving public schools
- The extent to which students are provided adequate health services at school, as reported by staff

Why This Topic Is Important

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, every child should receive high quality health care that is accessible, family centered, culturally competent, coordinated, continuous, compassionate, and comprehensive. This care is best offered through a medical home, an ongoing family-
Yearly Medicaid and CHIP Enrollment Among Children Ages 0-18

Definition: Unduplicated percentage of children ages 0-18 ever enrolled in Medicaid and/or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) during the federal fiscal year (e.g., in the 2018 federal fiscal year, 47.8% of California children were enrolled in Medicaid).


Monthly Medi-Cal Enrollment Among Children Ages 0-20: 2018

Definition: Average percentage of children and youth ages 0-20 enrolled in Medi-Cal per month, by race/ethnicity (e.g., on average, 57.2% of Hispanic/Latino children and youth in California were enrolled in Medi-Cal per month in 2018).


Not surprisingly, children without health insurance are less likely to access needed care than those with coverage. While the percentage of uninsured children has decreased in recent years, many remain without coverage, and many insured children are at risk of losing coverage if investments in public insurance programs are not maintained.

How Children Are Faring

In 2017, 97% of California children ages 0-18 were estimated to have some form of health insurance coverage—up from 90% in 2009—yet gaps remained. For example, nearly 8% of American Indian/Alaska Native children were uninsured in 2017, compared with less than 4% for all other racial/ethnic groups with data.

More than two-thirds (68%) of California children ages 0-18 were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP at some point in the 2018 federal fiscal year. This estimate is more than 15% higher than the share of children enrolled nationally (59%). On average, 50% of California children and youth ages 0-20 were enrolled in Medi-Cal per month in calendar year 2018, with figures ranging from 28% (Placer) to 76% (Lake) across counties with data. Statewide, average monthly Medi-Cal enrollments among African American/black (59%) and Hispanic/Latino (57%) children/youth were more than double the enrollment rates for their Asian/Pacific Islander (28%) and white (22%) peers.

Parent reports from 2016-2017 show that 43% of the state's children received care within a medical home, compared with 49% nationwide. Across California regions, estimates of children receiving care within a medical home ranged from 32% (Imperial County) to 55% (Placer County).

View references for this text and additional research on this topic: https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/51/health-care/summary