

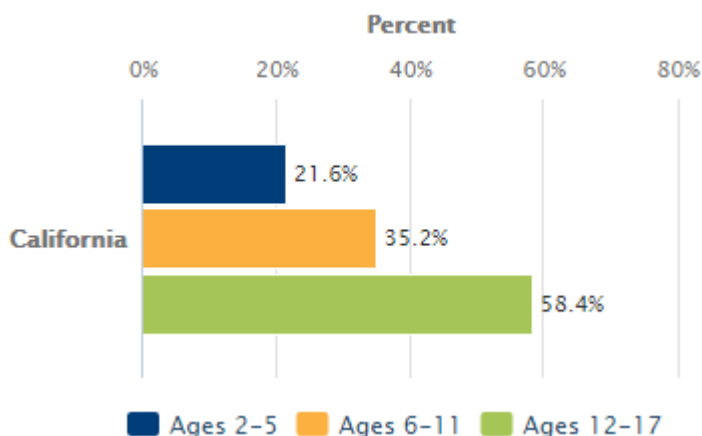
Children's Nutrition in California

Children Who Drink One or More Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Per Day: 2015-2016

Locations	Percent
California	40.4%
Alameda County	18.8%
Contra Costa County	29.5%
Fresno County	53.4%
Kern County	44.0%
Los Angeles County	41.6%
Orange County	33.1%
Riverside County	50.7%
Sacramento County	40.2%
San Bernardino County	49.1%
San Diego County	36.5%
Santa Clara County	39.2%

Definition: Estimated percentage of children ages 2-17 who drink one or more sodas or other sugar-sweetened beverages per day (e.g., in 2015-2016, an estimated 40.4% of California children drank at least one sugar-sweetened beverage per day).
Data Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, [California Health Interview Survey](#) custom tabulation (Mar. 2018).

Children Who Drink One or More Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Per Day, by Age Group: 2015-2016



Definition: Estimated percentage of children ages 2-17 who drink one or more sodas or other sugar-sweetened beverages per day, by age group (e.g., in 2015-2016, an estimated 58.4% of California children ages 12-17 drank at least one sugar-sweetened beverage per day).
Data Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, [California Health Interview Survey](#) custom tabulation (Mar. 2018).

Students Who Ate Breakfast in the Past Day: 2013-2015

What It Is

Kidsdata.org offers the following nutrition-related indicators:

- Children ages 2-17 who drink one or more sodas or other sugar-sweetened beverages per day, who eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day, and who ate fast food two or more times in the previous week
- Students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs who ate breakfast in the previous day
- School staff reports on the extent to which their school provides students with healthy food choices

Why This Topic Is Important

Proper nutrition in childhood and adolescence promotes healthy growth and development. A nutritious diet over the life course can help reduce the risk of developing conditions such as dental cavities, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, heart disease, osteoporosis, and cancer.

Eating breakfast can promote proper nutrition. Children who eat breakfast have higher daily intakes of key vitamins/minerals and tend to make healthier food choices throughout the day. Eating a nutritious breakfast also is associated with improved mood, cognitive functioning, and school attendance.

Children in low-income households are at higher risk of poor nutrition, which can have long-term, negative health consequences. For example, undernourishment can adversely affect children's cognitive development, and consumption of unhealthful foods (e.g., fast food and sugar-sweetened beverages) is linked to weight gain and obesity.

How Children Are Faring

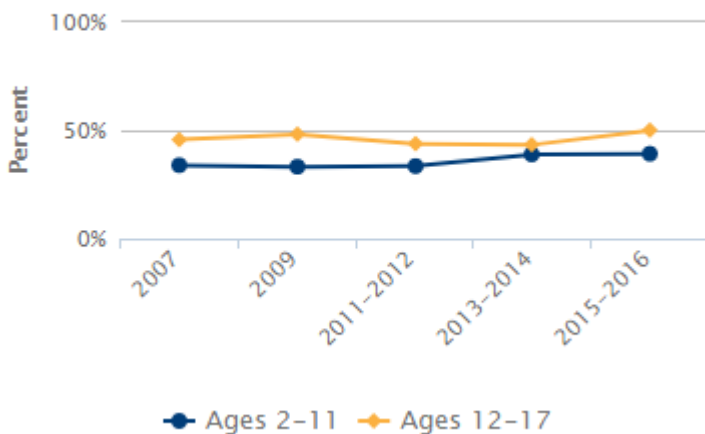
According to a 2015-2016 California survey, 40% of children and youth drank sugary beverages on a daily basis, with county-level figures ranging from 11% (Santa Cruz) to 62% (Merced and Napa) across regions with data. Sugary drink consumption also differed by age and race/ethnicity. For example, among youth ages 12-17, 58% reported drinking at least one sugar-sweetened beverage in the previous day,

California	Percent	
	Female	Male
Grade Level	Yes	Yes
7th Grade	62.3%	72.0%
9th Grade	58.0%	65.8%
11th Grade	59.4%	64.0%
Non-Traditional	42.9%	41.7%

Definition: Estimated percentage of public school students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs who ate breakfast in the previous day, by gender and grade level (e.g., in 2013-2015, an estimated 58% of female 9th graders in California had eaten breakfast in the previous day).

Data Source: WestEd, *California Healthy Kids Survey*. California Department of Education (Jul. 2017).

Children Who Ate Fast Food at Least Twice in the Past Week, by Age Group California



Definition: Estimated percentage of children ages 2-17 who ate fast food two or more times in the previous week, by age group (e.g., in 2015-2016, an estimated 39.2% of California children ages 2-11 ate fast food two or more times in the previous week).

Data Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, *California Health Interview Survey* (Mar. 2018).

while parent reports for younger children were much lower, at 35% for ages 6-11, and 22% for ages 2-5. Among racial/ethnic groups with data, an estimated 66% of multiracial and 64% of Hispanic/Latino youth ages 12-17 consumed sugary beverages daily, compared to 55% for African American/black, 53% for white, and 43% for Asian youth.

According to the same survey, more than one-third (35%) of children ages 2-11 ate five or more servings of fruits and vegetables (excluding juice and fried potatoes) daily, compared to about a quarter (26%) of youth ages 12-17. The survey also found that 43% of children and youth ages 2-17 ate fast food two or more times in the preceding week, similar to previous years. Among counties with data, estimates of children and youth consuming fast food at least twice weekly ranged from 7% (Marin) to 62% (San Benito) in 2015-2016.

According to 2013-2015 estimates, 67% of California 7th graders and 62% of 9th and 11th graders had eaten breakfast in the past day. Across grade levels statewide, boys were more likely than girls to report having breakfast. By comparison, only 43% of girls and 42% of boys in non-traditional programs had eaten breakfast in the past day. In general, estimates of eating breakfast were lowest for students with low levels of school connectedness and those whose parents did not finish high school (52% and 55%, respectively), and increased as levels of school connectedness and parent education improved. In 2013-2015, fewer than half of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students in California ate breakfast in the past day, compared with more than 60% of students in other groups.

During the same period, 28% of responses by elementary school staff in California indicated strong agreement that their school provided students with healthy food choices. Strong agreement was lowest among responses by high school staff (18%), followed by middle school and non-traditional school staff (22%).

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:

<https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/57/nutrition/su>
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