Students Suspended from School: 2020; Showing Counties

Definition: Number of K-12 public school students suspended during the school year, per 1,000 students (e.g., in 2020, 24.5 per 1,000 California students were suspended from school).
Data Source: California Dept. of Education, Suspension Data (May 2021).

Students Suspended from School, by Disability Status

California

What It Is
Kidsdata.org offers the following measures of school absence and exclusionary discipline:

- The number and rate of K-12 public school students suspended and expelled from school, by county and school district, as recorded by the California Dept. of Education; also available are rates by disability status, foster youth status, homelessness status, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status

- Estimates of reasons for absence in the previous month and truancy in the previous year among students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs, derived from student reports; these data come from the California Healthy Kids Survey and are available by grade level, gender, level of school connectedness, parent education level, and sexual orientation

- Staff reports on the extent to which truancy or cutting class is a problem at their school; this indicator comes from the California School Staff Survey and is available for elementary, middle, high, and non-traditional school staff

Why This Topic Is Important
Regular school attendance is a predictor of academic success. Frequent absences for any reason are linked to negative school outcomes, including lower test scores and higher dropout rates, which can have lifelong effects on employment and earning potential. A child might miss school for many reasons, including excused absences (such as for health or personal reasons), truancy, and exclusionary punishment (suspensions and expulsions). Rates of chronic school absence tend to be higher among students who live in poverty, those with special health care needs or disabilities, youth of color, English learners, homeless students, and children in foster care.

Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely than their peers to have academic problems, drop out of school, and enter the juvenile justice system. In the 2015-16 school year, U.S. public school students lost more than 11 million days of instruction due to suspensions. Suspensions and expulsions disproportionately affect children of color (particularly African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native students), those...
Students Expelled from School, by Race/Ethnicity: 2018-2020

Definition: Number of K-12 public school students expelled from school per 1,000 students, by race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2018-2020, 0.7 per 1,000 Hispanic/Latino students in California were expelled from school).

Data Source: California Dept. of Education, Expulsion Data (May 2021).

Students Expelled from School

How Children Are Faring

Nearly 155,000 California K-12 public school students were suspended from school in 2020—25 for every 1,000. Suspension rates vary dramatically across regions with data, from 13 per 1,000 to 62 per 1,000 for counties and from fewer than 3 per 1,000 to more than 150 per 1,000 for school districts in 2020. Statewide, suspension rates by demographic group show disparate disciplinary treatment of students of color (particularly African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native youth), students with disabilities, homeless students, foster youth, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students. In 2018-2020, socioeconomically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities were suspended at more than double the rate of their peers, and foster youth were suspended at more than four times the rate of non-foster youth.

Exclusionary punishment also leads to significant social costs. For example, dropouts resulting from suspensions have been estimated to cost California approximately $2.7 billion over the lifetime of a single 10th grade cohort. Costs are due in part to lost wages and tax revenue, increased crime, and higher health care expenses.

View references for this text and additional research on this topic: https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/77/school-attendance-and-discipline/summary