

About the Data – Child Preventive Dental Visits

Indicator Description

The child preventive dental visits indicator is an estimate of the percentage of children aged 1 to 17 years who saw a dentist or other oral health care provider at least once for any kind of dental or oral health care during the past 12 months, including check-ups, cleanings, instruction on oral health care, X-rays, fluoride treatments, and dental sealants.

Data Sources

Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. [The National Survey of Children's Health \(NSCH\)](#), 2016–2023. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Data Analysis

The child preventive dental visits indicator is the estimated percentage of children aged 1–17 years who, based on parental report, had one or more preventive dental visits in the past year, which included at least one of the following items:

- Dental check-up
- Dental cleaning
- Instruction on oral health care
- Dental X-ray
- Fluoride treatment
- Dental sealant

The number of children who experienced preventive dental visits is an estimate based on state-level data weighted to represent children aged 1–17 years. These data were stratified by age, sex, race/ethnicity, household income, and type of insurance using three years of aggregated data, and the annual estimate shown is a three-year average.

Annual estimates should not be compared for overlapping time periods; for example, estimates for 2020–2022 and 2021–2023 should not be compared. Only non-overlapping periods can be compared; for example, 2018–2020 and 2021–2023 can be compared. Using overlapping time periods shows the general direction or slope of the trendline across the entire timeframe. That is, a smoothed line shows whether or not there has been steady improvement over time; it does not show year-to-year changes due to random fluctuations, data anomalies, or unstable rates — all of which distract

from the overall trend. Additionally, using rolling averages shows the most recent data, more data points for indicators that are less prevalent, and data points for smaller geographic areas.

The 95% confidence interval (CI) presented in the tooltips indicates there is a 95% chance that the range contains the true prevalence or rate in the population.

Denominators include the estimated three-year average number of children aged 1–17 years residing in California. See Category and Subcategory Definitions below for additional inclusion/exclusion criteria.

Weighted NSCH data were used to create this dashboard. The population estimates (numbers of children) may vary slightly due to rounding.

Data Annotation and Suppression

Rates or percentages should be interpreted with caution if 1) the absolute CI width is greater than 20% of the magnitude of the estimate, 2) the relative CI width is greater than 120% (1.2 times the magnitude of the estimate), or 3) the CI is inestimable due to no sample variance (estimate is exactly 0% or 100%).

In accordance with NSCH guidelines, data are not shown if the unweighted denominator is less than 30.

Category and Subcategory Definitions

Age: Child's age reported by the parent or caregiver at the time of the survey.

Household income: Ratio of the total parent- or caregiver-reported annual family income to the family poverty threshold established by the U.S. Census Bureau. Poverty thresholds are based on the number and age of adults and the number of children under age 18 in a family unit. Individuals in a family whose annual combined income, before taxes, is less than the poverty threshold for the family's size and composition are defined as living in poverty. Missing values were imputed. Poverty ratios are grouped into the following categories: 0–99%, 100–199%, 200–399%, and 400% or more of poverty (or the family poverty threshold). More information is available from: [How the U.S. Census Bureau measures poverty](#)

Race/ethnicity: Race and Hispanic or Latino origin are self-reported by the NSCH participant. Hispanic includes all persons of Hispanic or Latino origin of any race. The remaining groups are of non-Hispanic origin who reported a single race: Asian, Black or African American (Black), or White.

Type of insurance: Parent or caregiver was asked to indicate whether the child was currently covered by any kind of health insurance or health coverage plan.

Sex: Parent or caregiver was asked to indicate whether the child was male or female. Missing values were imputed.

Suggested Citation

California Department of Public Health, Center for Family Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division, Child Preventive Dental Visits Dashboard, Last Modified December 2024. go.cdph.ca.gov/Child-Preventive-Dental-Visits-Dashboard