

## A Child is a Child: A Snapshot of California's Children's Health June 2022: Children in Immigrant Families Health Fact Sheet

### Definitions

- **Children in immigrant families** are all children, regardless of their own citizenship or place of birth, who have at least one parent who was born outside of the United States.
- **Mixed-status families** are families whose members have different citizenship or immigration status. For example, a child who is a U.S. citizen but whose parents are undocumented is considered part of a mixed-status family.
- **Non-citizen** means people who were born outside the United States and who are not citizens.
- **Foreign-born or immigrant** refers to anyone born outside of the United States.
- **Undocumented immigrants** are foreign-born people who are living in the United States without legal documentation.
- **DACA recipients** are people who came to the United States as children, meet certain program requirements, and have been granted administrative protection from deportation, a social security number, and a work permit for a period of two years.

### Population

#### California, 2022

- 4,082,000 or nearly half (46%) of California's 9 million children are part of immigrant families.<sup>1</sup>
- 1 in 5 (20%) live in mixed-status families. Almost all of these children are citizens (93%).<sup>1</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 3 (28%) children in immigrant families are 5 or under.<sup>1</sup>
- Children in immigrant families' ethnicity:<sup>1</sup>
  - 61% are Latinx

<sup>1</sup> <https://children-of-immigrants-explorer.urban.org/pages.cfm>

- 22% are Asian American
- 11% are white
- 5% are multi-racial
- 2% are Black
- Parents of children of immigrants' origin<sup>1</sup>:
  - 50% from Mexico
  - 15% from East Asia or the Pacific
  - 9% from Central American or the Caribbean
  - 9% from the Middle East or South Asia
  - 7% from Europe, Canada, Australia or New Zealand
  - 6% from Southeast Asia
  - 3% from Africa or the West Indies
  - 3% from South America.

### California, 2020-2021

- Immigrants are 40% of all parents of children ages 0 to 4 and 45% of all parents of children ages 5 to 10.<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 1 in 10 or 1,073,993 children in California have an undocumented parent.<sup>3</sup>
- 392,000 children in California were born outside of the United States and 290,000 are non-citizens.<sup>4</sup>
- 174,680 DACA recipients in California.<sup>4</sup>

### National

- Across the nation, 1 in 4 DACA recipients are parents to nearly 256,000 U.S. citizen children, and nearly every DACA recipient is part of a mixed-status family.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpi\\_nciip\\_parents-children-0-4-and-5-10-ca-2021\\_final.pdf](https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpi_nciip_parents-children-0-4-and-5-10-ca-2021_final.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nccp.org/immigration/?state=CA>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nilc.org/2019/10/02/daca-coalition-launches-home-is-here/>

## Protective Factors

- **Multilingualism:** Children who develop their native language and speak multiple languages have enhanced attention, working memory, planning, and problem-solving, and emotional regulation.<sup>6</sup>
  - Speaking and having access to curriculum in multiple languages can help prevent and close learning gaps for children in immigrant families.<sup>7</sup>
- **Family cohesion:** The emotional bonding that family members have toward one another protects against external stressors, including bullying, experienced by children in immigrant families, particularly those from Latinx communities.<sup>8</sup>
- **Connection to heritage/culture:** The transfer of cultural values from parents to their children has been shown to support children in immigrant families. For example, a strong sense of family obligation is common within immigrant families. This cultural value facilitates stronger family cohesion and youth ethnic identity.<sup>6</sup>

## Food Access

### California, 2022

- Nearly 2 in 3 (66,000 or 64%) undocumented children in California face limited access to the food necessary for a healthy life.<sup>9</sup>

### California, 2020-2021

- Immigrants make up 63% of workers in California's agricultural industries.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Zhou, Q., Tao, A., Chen, S.H., Main, A., Lee, E. Ly, J., Hua, M., Li, W. (2012). Asset and Protective Factors for Asian American Children's Mental Health Adjustment. Child Development Perspectives 6(3): 312-319. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-8606.2012.00251.x> ; <https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/ichess-21/125967322>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/04/bilingualism-can-help-close-learning-gaps-for-immigrant-students/430875/>

<sup>8</sup> Shah, S., Choi, M., Miller, M., Halgunseth, L.C., van Schaik, S.D.M., Brenick, A. (2021). Family cohesion and school belongingness: Protective factors for immigrant youth against bias-based bullying. New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development 2021(177): 199-217. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cad.20410>.

<sup>9</sup> <https://nourishca.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Food4All-FoodInsecurityBrief-April2022.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cato.org/blog/immigrants-are-about-1/3-californias-essential-workers>

- 1 in 3 (34%) families with children in California reported avoiding public benefits programs due to immigration concerns.<sup>11</sup>

#### California, 2016-2019

- Between 2016 and 2019, 276,000 U.S. citizen children with non-citizen parents in California lost access to critical food benefits.<sup>12</sup>

#### National

- 3 out of 4 immigrant families were unaware that the harmful public charge rule had been reversed when surveyed in September 2021.<sup>13</sup>

### Healthcare Coverage and Access

#### California, 2020-2021

- 53% of non-citizen children (~138,000) have Medi-Cal health coverage and 40% have employment-based coverage compared to 35% and 58% of all children, respectively.<sup>14</sup>
- Currently, 2% (128,360) of Medi-Cal's 5 million children are enrolled through SB 75.<sup>15</sup>

#### California, 2016

- In 2016, when CA enacted SB 75 and expanded Medi-Cal to include all children regardless of immigration status, 121,522 children enrolled in the first year.<sup>15</sup>
- 250,000 children had been estimated to enroll through SB75 after its implementation.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> <https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/publications/Documents/PDF/2021/publiccharge-policybrief-mar2021.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/news/anticipated-chilling-effects-public-charge-rule-are-real>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.nokidhungry.org/blog/new-report-shows-fear-immigrant-communities-kept-children-getting-food-they-needed>

<sup>14</sup> 2020 California Health Interview Survey, Type of Health Insurance Coverage, <https://ask.chis.ucla.edu/AskCHIS/tools/layouts/AskChisTool/home.aspx#/results>

<sup>15</sup> <https://data.chhs.ca.gov/dataset/sb-75-full-scope-medi-cal-for-all-children-enrollment/resource/8d27e04c-a706-4721-9aa5-5d1c57c09878>

<sup>16</sup> [https://childrenspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/TCP\\_Children\\_and\\_the\\_ACA\\_Report\\_2016\\_1.pdf](https://childrenspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/TCP_Children_and_the_ACA_Report_2016_1.pdf)

- Only 28% of foreign-born children with special health care needs (CSHCNs) and 37% of CSHCNs with a foreign-born parent have a medical home, compared to 49% among CSHCNs with U.S.-born parents.<sup>17</sup>
- Only 37% of foreign-born CSHCNs have care coordination compared to 56% of CSHCNs with U.S.-born parents.<sup>17</sup>

### National

- Nationally, children in immigrant families are twice as likely to lack health coverage compared to children whose parents were born in the U.S.<sup>18</sup>
- Across the U.S., nearly 1 in 3 (28%) undocumented children lack coverage – double the national average (14%).<sup>19</sup>

### Definitions:

- Medical home: A medical home is primary care for children that is child and family-centered, team-based, coordinated, accessible, responsive and high-quality.<sup>17</sup>
- Care coordination: it is a patient-centered approach that connects children & families to services and resources that meet their needs.<sup>20</sup>

## Digital Equity

### California, 2021

- Approximately 20% and 36% of children in immigrant families with low-incomes do not have access to the internet or to a computer/laptop, respectively, compared to 12% and 28% of children whose parents were born in the U.S.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Immigrant Families, Children With Special Health Care Needs, and the Medical Home <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article-abstract/137/1/e20153221/52855/Immigrant-Families-Children-With-Special-Health?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/immigrant-families-pandemic-frontlines/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/fact-sheet/health-coverage-of-immigrants/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.nashp.org/policy-chronic-and-complex-populations-care-coordination/>

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpi\\_nciip\\_parents-children-0-4-and-5-10-ca-2021\\_final.pdf](https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpi_nciip_parents-children-0-4-and-5-10-ca-2021_final.pdf)

## Oral Health

### California, 2021

- Nearly 1 in 5 or 18% of children in immigrant families have experienced oral health problems such as toothaches, bleeding gums or decayed teeth.<sup>22</sup>

## Mental Health

### California, 2020

- 13% of non-citizen children said they needed help for emotional or mental health issues. Yet, 91% never received any psychological or emotional counseling.<sup>23</sup>

### National

- Children whose parents have been detained or deported are at an increased risk of experiencing depression, anxiety, suicide and severe psychological trauma.<sup>24</sup>
- For families and communities, living in constant fear of separation often leads to mental health conditions, including separation anxiety, insomnia and post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>24</sup>

## Language

### California, 2022

- Nearly 3 in 5 (57%) children in immigrant families are bilingual compared to just 12% of children with only U.S.-born parents.<sup>1</sup>
- Over 60% of children from birth to age 5 are dual language learners.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>22</sup> 2019-2020 National Survey of Children's Health Indicator 1.2a <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey>

<sup>23</sup> Source: 2020 California Health Interview Survey "Teen needed help for emotional/mental health problem" <https://ask.chis.ucla.edu/AskCHIS/tools/layouts/AskChisTool/home.aspx#/results>

<sup>24</sup> <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Safe-Spaces-Immigrant-Children-Families.pdf>

- Children in California's public schools speak 88 languages:<sup>25</sup>
  - Spanish (82%)
  - Vietnamese (2.1%)
  - Mandarin (Putonghua) (1.8%)
  - Arabic (1.5%), Cantonese (1.2%)
  - Filipino (Tagalog) (1.02%)
  - Punjabi (.81%)
  - Russian (.78%)
  - Farsi (Persian) (.74%)
  - Korean (.7%)

### School/Education Success and Safety

#### California, 2021-2022

- Pre-K-12 public schools estimated students who are undocumented: 300,000<sup>26</sup>
- Pre-K-12 public schools estimated students who live with a parent or guardian who is undocumented: 1,000,000<sup>26</sup>
- 27,000 undocumented students graduate from high school each year.<sup>27</sup>
- A recent California study showed that the likelihood of a student repeating a grade increases by 6% when there is an increase in interior immigration enforcement, which also increases their likelihood of leaving school early by 25%.<sup>28</sup>
- 118 school districts and local county offices of education in CA have declared themselves Safe Havens, meaning they are protected from immigration enforcement actions.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/cefelfacts.asp>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/safehavens.asp>

<sup>27</sup> <https://collegecampaign.org/undoc-coalition/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/23328584211039787>

## COVID-19

### California, 2020-2021

- Immigrants make up 1 in 3 of CA's essential workers, including growing, making and distributing food, producing pharmaceuticals, and caring for the sick, and face a higher risk of contracting COVID-19.<sup>29</sup>
- The \$2.2 trillion CARES Act excluded 1,050,000 California children who are U.S. citizens and documented immigrants (e.g., green card holders) from \$500 each in stimulus payments solely because they were the children or spouses of immigrants without social security numbers. Many of these children remained without federal economic relief until passage of the American Rescue Act in March 2021.<sup>30</sup>
- 75% of adults in immigrant families report they would definitely or probably get a COVID-19 vaccine compared to 68% of adults in non-immigrant families.<sup>31</sup>

## Community and Family Well-Being

### California, 2021

- More than 231,000 persons who reported having at least one citizen child in the United States were deported by ICE between 2013 and 2018.<sup>32</sup>

### California, 2019

- In 2019, ICE was responsible for the deportation of 27,980 parents of U.S. born children.<sup>32</sup>

## Economic Well-Being

### California, 2021-2022

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.cato.org/blog/immigrants-are-about-1/3-californias-essential-workers>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/news/cares-act-excluded-citizens-immigrants-now-covered>

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/103973/covid-19-vaccine-attitudes-among-adults-in-immigrant-families-in-california\\_1.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/103973/covid-19-vaccine-attitudes-among-adults-in-immigrant-families-in-california_1.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/us-citizen-children-impacted-immigration-enforcement>



- Undocumented workers contribute an estimated \$3.7 billion in annual state and local tax revenues.<sup>33</sup>
- More than 61% (1.2 million) of children living with non-citizen workers live in households earning less than a living wage, compared to 36% of other children in worker households, facing chronic and severe housing and food insecurity.<sup>33</sup>
- 56% of non-citizen children with only non-citizen parents live in a household that is burdened by housing and utility costs.<sup>1</sup>
- 77% of non-citizen children with only non-citizen parents live in families that do not own their home.<sup>1</sup>