A Child is a Child: A Snapshot of California’s Children’s Health
September 2022: Latinx Children’s Health Fact Sheet

Terminology

**Latinx:** We use the term “Latinx” instead of Hispanic or Latino in order to be inclusive of diverse language, culture, and gender identities within the Latinx community. Defined as “relating to Spain,” the term Hispanic excludes indigenous cultures and languages, people from Brazil and other Latin American countries that do not speak Spanish but instead speak various indigenous tongues or Portuguese, as well as Black Latinx people. Additionally, Latinx also makes room for people who are trans, queer, agender, non-binary, gender nonconforming or gender fluid. While most of the sources used in this fact sheet use the terms “Hispanic or Latino,” we report “Hispanic or Latino” as Latinx individuals who may be of any race.

**Children and youth:** Children and youth are defined as those individuals under age 19 (0 to 18 years).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>California 2016-2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.6 million, or more than half (52%), identify as Latinx¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>634,692 identify as mixed race (two or more races)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36,540 as Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42,675 as Native American</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ 2016-2020 American Community Survey California Residents - Hispanic by Age and Race - Estimates. Estimates provided by the CA Department of Finance September 2022.
• 3,660 as Pacific Islander
• 26,983 as Asian American
• 2,345,019 as white
• 1,526,887 as Other races

California 2019 & 2020

• Over half (56.2%) of California’s Latinx children have at least one parent who was born outside of the United States.
• The vast majority of Latinx children are U.S. citizens (97%) and 50% are fully bilingual.
• About 17% (~604,500) Latinx children and youth have special health care needs, which makes up nearly half (49.8%) of all of California’s children with special health care needs.

---

2 Note 14.73% margin of error for Pacific Islander children from 2016-2020 American Community Survey California Residents - Hispanic by Age and Race - Estimates. Estimates provided by the CA Department of Finance September 2022.
3 OMB requires that race data be collected for a minimum of five groups: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. OMB permits the Census Bureau to also use a sixth category - Some Other Race – that is not included in the Census/ACS. Respondents may report more than one race.
https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/note/US/RHI625221
5 The Urban Institute. Data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2019 and 2020 American Community Survey.
6 Indicator 1.11: Does this child have special health care needs (CSHCN) based on the CSHCN Screener? https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8520&r=1&g=914&r2=6
Protective Factors

**Familismo:** Emphasizes dedication, commitment and loyalty to family, including a life-long commitment to provide economic and emotional support for family members.⁷

**Personalismo:** Prioritizes people and relationships over disagreements, personal benefit, or other competing priorities.⁸

**Respeto:** The belief that every person deserves to be treated with respect and courtesy. Exposure to role models and mentors can promote resilience among Latinx youth.⁹

**Biculturalism/Bilingualism:** Highlights the strength of having the experience of maintaining one’s heritage culture and language while also becoming part of and learning another distinct language and culture.¹⁰

Food Insecurity

**California 2019-2020**
- About 1.5 million Latinx households with children (43%) are experiencing food insecurity and are not able to afford enough food.¹¹

California 2016-2018

---

⁷ FOSTERING SOCIAL–EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE AMONG LATINO YOUTH JAZMIN A. REYES AND MAURICE J. ELIAS Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey the prioritization of people and relationships over disagreements, personal benefit, timeliness, or other competing priorities.
⁸ Ibid.
⁹ Ibid.
¹⁰ [https://www.csba.org/-/media/CSBA/Files/GovernanceResources/GovernanceBriefs/201810FactSheet-LatinoStudents.ashx?la=en&rev=622775fcd01341248494f7ec7a6206d6](https://www.csba.org/-/media/CSBA/Files/GovernanceResources/GovernanceBriefs/201810FactSheet-LatinoStudents.ashx?la=en&rev=622775fcd01341248494f7ec7a6206d6)
¹¹ 2019-2020 Pooled CA Health Interview Survey accessed August 2022
- 20% (43,400) of Latinx mothers experience food insecurity during pregnancy, compared to 9.8% white mothers.\textsuperscript{12}

**Oral Health**

### California 2019-2020

- Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) of Latinx children and youth have had oral health problems such as toothaches, bleeding gums, or decayed teeth or cavities - the highest of any racial/ethnic subgroup.\textsuperscript{13}
- Latinx children in California are significantly more likely to have a history of tooth decay (72%) and untreated tooth decay (25%) than non-Latino white children (40% and 14%, respectively).\textsuperscript{14}
- 19% of Latinx children have never had a dental visit compared to 14% of white children.\textsuperscript{15}

**Health Coverage and Access**

### California 2020-2021

- Coverage
  - 95.6% of Latinx children have health insurance, leaving 210,706 children who remain uninsured.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{12} MIHA Data Snapshots, California, 2016-2018 MIHA Survey. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnibpapbgkkocjaidmladldc//https://files.constantcontact.com/68d497bd201/96d65000-863e-4220-ac60-2ae158d0a74.pdf?rdr=true
\textsuperscript{13} 2019-2020 National Survey Children's Health Indicator 1.2a: During the past 12 months, has this child had oral health problems such as toothaches, bleeding gums or decayed teeth or cavities, age 1-17 years? https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8448&r=1&g=914
\textsuperscript{15} https://ask.chis.ucla.edu/AskCHIS/tools/_layouts/AskChisTool/home.aspx#/results
\textsuperscript{16} https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=health%20insurance%20coverage%20age%20race%20hispanic%20&g=0400000US06&tid=ACSDT1Y2021.C27001
Latinx children and youth from Guatemalan, Salvadoran, and Mexican backgrounds have the highest uninsured rates (7.5%, 4.8%, 4.6%, respectively).\(^\text{17}\)

Over one in two (59%) Latinx children, youth and young adults under 21 receive health coverage through Medi-Cal, compared to 49% of all people in these age groups.\(^\text{18}\)

### Access and Quality

- Only 23% of Latinx children in Medi-Cal were screened for risk of developmental, behavioral, and social delays during their first three years of life.\(^\text{19}\)
- Nearly one in three (31%) or 1,476,122 Latinx children do not have health insurance coverage that is continuous or adequate for their health care needs.\(^\text{20}\)
- About 24% of Latinx children did not receive a preventive check-up in the last year compared to 16% of white children.\(^\text{21}\)
- Nearly 1 in 4 (24.5%) of Latinx children do not receive family-centered care where their provider spends enough time with them, listens carefully to their family, is sensitive to their values and culture, and makes their family feel like a partner in their health care.\(^\text{22}\)
- Less than 1 in 3 (32.5%) Latinx children receive care within a medical home compared to over 1 in 2 (56.8%) of white children.\(^\text{23}\)
- Over 1 in 3 (37.9%) Latinx children do not receive needed care coordination - the highest of any racial and ethnic subgroup.\(^\text{24}\)

---

17 [https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2021/06/08/health-coverage-trends-for-latino-children/](https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2021/06/08/health-coverage-trends-for-latino-children/)
20 [https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8206&r=6&q=832](https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8206&r=6&q=832)
21 [https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8604&r=1&q=914](https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8604&r=1&q=914)
22 Indicator 4.12c: If this child received care during the past 12 months, did they receive family-centered care? [https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8635&r=1&q=914&r2=6&a=15985](https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8635&r=1&q=914&r2=6&a=15985)
23 Indicator 4.12: Did this child receive coordinated, ongoing, comprehensive care within a medical home? [https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8632&r=1&r2=6&g=914&a=15731](https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8632&r=1&r2=6&g=914&a=15731)
24 Did this child receive effective care coordination? [https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8644&r=1&q=914&r2=6&a=16014](https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8644&r=1&q=914&r2=6&a=16014)
### Housing and Economic Well-Being

**California 2018-2019**

- About 1 in 5 (20.4%) Latinx children live in families whose income falls below the federal poverty level, higher than the state average (15%).\(^{25}\)
- Over one in two (52%) households with Latinx children are burdened by housing and utility costs.\(^{26}\)
- 57% of Latinx children live in families that do not own their homes compared to 48% of all children in our state.\(^{27}\)
- Latinx children and youth are over three times more likely to experience homelessness than white students.\(^{28}\)
- 73% of students experiencing homelessness are Latinx (149,115).\(^{29}\)

### Digital Access

**California 2022**

- 37% Latinx households with children still do not have full digital access to both the internet and a device.\(^{30}\)
- 28% of Latinx teens live in households that do not have high speed internet or connection.\(^{31}\)

---

\(^{25}\) Total number of Latinx children based on 1-year estimates. 

\(^{26}\) The Urban Institute. Data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2018 and 2019 American Community Survey.

\(^{27}\) Ibid.


COVID-19

California 2022
- Latinx children face COVID-19 cases and deaths at rates higher than their share of the population: they currently make up 53% (798,931) of COVID-19 cases and 53% of deaths.\(^{32}\)
- 1% of Latinx children under 5, 24% of Latinx children ages 5-11 and 52% of Latinx children ages 12-17 have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, lower than the state averages for these age groups (3%, 37%, and 67%, respectively).\(^{33}\)

Environmental Pollution

California 2016-2020
- In California, 81% of children living in communities with the highest environmental pollution are Latinx.\(^{34}\)
- Water Pollution:
  - Over half of students enrolled at CA schools impacted by unsafe drinking water are Latinx.\(^{35}\)

---


\(^{35}\) Community Water Center El Centro Comunitario Por El Agua, Environmental Justice Coalition For Water, “Are we providing our school kids safe drinking water? An Analysis of California Schools Impacted by Unsafe Drinking Water,” May 2016 Available at: [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/communitywatercenter/pages/824/attachments/original/1462656752/CWC_MCL_05.07.16a.pdf?1462656752](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/communitywatercenter/pages/824/attachments/original/1462656752/CWC_MCL_05.07.16a.pdf?1462656752)
Latinxs are more likely to live in communities where drinking water supplies are contaminated with elevated levels of nitrate, a toxic chemical which is linked to increased risk of cancer and other diseases. In California’s majority-Latinx communities, 5.25 million people drink tap water contaminated with nitrate at levels at or above the federal limit.

- **Air Pollution:**
  - 44% of Latinx people live in communities with poor air quality.
  - In L.A. County, air pollution has been linked to a heightened risk of obesity and Type 2 diabetes in Latinx children.

- **Lead and Mercury Poisoning:**
  - Latinx children make up 51% of the children with blood lead levels high enough to make them eligible for full case management services.

**National 2020**
- Nationally, Puerto Rican children have higher rates of asthma and more severe asthma than any other racial/ethnic group in the United States.

---

Latinx children overall are 70% more likely to be admitted to the hospital due to asthma attacks and 2x as likely to die from asthma than white children.\(^\text{42}\)

Compared with white children, Latinx children experience higher rates of lead and mercury poisoning.\(^\text{43}\)

### Mental Health

**California 2019**

- Over 1 in 2 (52%) Latinx teens feel sadness or hopelessness, compared to 42% of white children.\(^\text{44}\)
- Nearly 1 in 3 (31%) have seriously considered attempting suicide compared to 23% of white children.\(^\text{45}\)
- 88% of Latinx teens (1.1 million) did not receive psychological or emotional counseling.\(^\text{46}\)
- 62% of Latina teens felt chronic sadness or hopelessness in the last year.\(^\text{47}\)

---

\(^\text{42}\) California, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Accessed August 29, 2022

\(^\text{43}\) California, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Accessed August 29, 2022

\(^\text{44}\) California, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Accessed August 29, 2022

\(^\text{45}\) California, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Accessed August 29, 2022

\(^\text{46}\) California, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Accessed August 29, 2022

\(^\text{47}\) California, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Accessed August 29, 2022
• 34% of Latina teens have considered suicide and 13% have attempted suicide, compared to 27% and 9% of all high school youth, respectively.  

• For lesbian, bisexual and queer Latina youth, the reality is even worse: nearly half (48%) have considered suicide, and one in three (33%) lesbian, bisexual and queer Latina youth have attempted suicide.

• 79% of Latina teens did not receive psychological or emotional counseling in the last year.

California 2020
• Only 17% of Latinx youth enrolled in Medi-Cal have been screened for depression.

School/Education Success and Safety

California 2022
• California has the largest Latinx student population in the U.S.: 56% (3,291,260) of CA’s 5.8 million public K-12 students are Latinx.

• Spanish is the most common language spoken by English learners in California (82%).

48 California, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Accessed August 29, 2022
49 California, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Accessed August 29, 2022
50 Received counseling in the last year https://ask.chis.ucla.edu/AskCHIS/tools/_layouts/AskChisTool/home.aspx#/results
52 California Public Schools. https://www.ed-data.org/state/CA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>California 2020-2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98% of CA’s migrant students are Latinx (47,663).&lt;sup&gt;54&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57% of Latinx students attend schools in neighborhoods that have less access to resources including the most experienced teachers, modern facilities, and libraries.&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**California 2020-2021**

- 17% (572,947) of Latinx public school students missed more than 10% of the 2020-21 school year compared to 10% of white children.<sup>56</sup>

**California 2018**

- Nearly one in three (31 percent) Latinx students are English learners.<sup>57</sup>

---

### Community and Family Well-Being

**California 2019-2020**

- 20% of Latinx children do not have a park or a playground in their neighborhood and 25% do not have a library - the highest rates of any racial and ethnic group.<sup>58</sup>

---


56 Data collected by the California Department of Education (CDE) through the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). Accessed through https://www.ed-data.org/state/CA 2020-2021 School Year Chronic Absence Rates


58 2019-2020 National Survey of Children's Health In your neighborhood, is there a library or bookmobile?

[https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8799&r=6&g=914](https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8799&r=6&g=914)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Latinx children in immigrant families are significantly less likely to experience a high number of ACEs (16%) than Latinx children in nonimmigrant families (30%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nearly 1 in 4 (23% or 521,000) of Latinx households with children avoided government benefits due to concerns over self or family member's disqualification from receiving a green card.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

59 Latino Students in California’s K-12 Public Schools. October 2018. [https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/9729-children-who-have-experienced-two-or-more-adverse-experiences-by-race-and-ethnicity?loc=1&loct=2#detailed/2/6/false/1696,1648,1603/10,11,9,12,1,13/18990,18991](https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/9729-children-who-have-experienced-two-or-more-adverse-experiences-by-race-and-ethnicity?loc=1&loct=2#detailed/2/6/false/1696,1648,1603/10,11,9,12,1,13/18990,18991)

