

Dental Health and Access to Care among Rural Children: A National and State Portrait

Although children's dental health in the U.S. has improved over recent decades, a subset of children continues to suffer dental disease severe enough to constitute a public health problem. This report examines dental health status, use of preventive services, and dental insurance among rural and urban children and provides information specific to rural children, and in particular rural minority children, not available in similar detail from other sources. Key findings include:

Condition of Teeth:

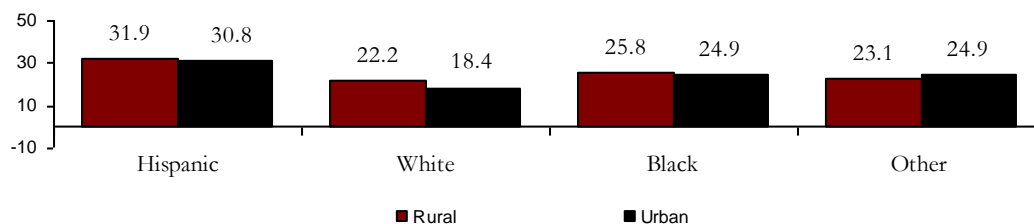
- Overall, rural children were less likely than urban children to have excellent teeth, as described by their parents (41.0% versus 42.9%).

Children with No Dental Visits in the Preceding Year:

Across the US, 22.5% of parents reported that their children had received no dental care in the preceding year.

- Hispanic children were at greatest risk for having no dental care during the preceding year. Among rural children, 31.9% of Hispanics had no dental visit, followed by 25.8% of rural black children, 23.1% of "other" children, and 22.2% of white children.

No Dental Visits by Race for Rural and Urban Children,
in percents



Preventive Dental Care:

- Preventive visits varied sharply with insurance status, with only 58.1% of rural uninsured children receiving this service, versus 75.9% of rural insured children.

Dental Insurance:

- Among rural children, black children were most likely to have dental insurance (77.0%), followed by other race/ethnicity children (75.3%), white children (74.7%) and Hispanic children (64.9%).

A full copy of the report can be obtained
from the SC Rural Health Research Center website.
<http://thr.sph.sc.edu>



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