Oral Health Among Texas Children

National Survey of Children's Health, 2020-2021

73.5% of Texas parents reported their children had excellent or very good teeth.

Hispanic children were significantly less likely to have excellent or very good teeth.

15.9% of Texas children did not have a preventive dental care visit in the past year.

12.8% of Texas children had tooth decay or cavities in the past year.

The National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) provides national and state-level estimates on key health indicators and the well-being of children aged 0 to 17, their families, and communities, as well as information about the prevalence and impact of special health care needs. All data is parent or caregiver reported. DSHS combined data from multiple years to increase sample size.

For oral health of children aged 1 to 17, the prevalence estimates of four indicators were used: Tooth Condition, Oral Health Problems, Preventive Dental Visits, and Tooth Decay or Cavities, and their relationship with specific demographic variables.

Texas children aged 1-5 and children from higher income households were both significantly more likely to have excellent or very good teeth than their peers. Alternatively, Hispanic children were significantly less likely to have excellent or very good teeth.

There were significant differences in one or more preventive dental care visit per year by age. Texas children aged 1 to 5 were significantly less likely to have one or more preventive dental care visits per year compared to children of other age groups.

As reported by parents, the overall condition of teeth among Texas children aged 1-17 remained stable. For the combined years 2016-2017, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021, over 73% of Texas children had excellent or very good teeth. Data from 2020-2021 indicates that 85.1% of children in Texas exhibit no oral health issues within the last 12 months.

For more information, contact the Oral Health Improvement Program at dental@dshs.texas.gov.

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