

CALIFORNIA Latino Children's Health Coverage Facts

State officials' decisions about coverage options, especially in times of crises, have a profound effect on children. California has demonstrated leadership by opening the doors to coverage to children and many of their family members. As a result, the uninsured rate for children overall (3.1%) is well below the national average (5.2%). California was the only state to see a statistically significant decrease in the uninsured rate for Latino children in 2018. Nevertheless, Latino children in California are still almost 1.5 times more likely to be uninsured than other children.

Latino Kids' Coverage



California is home to over **182,000** uninsured Latino children



The uninsured rate for Latino kids in California is **3.7%**

1.5x

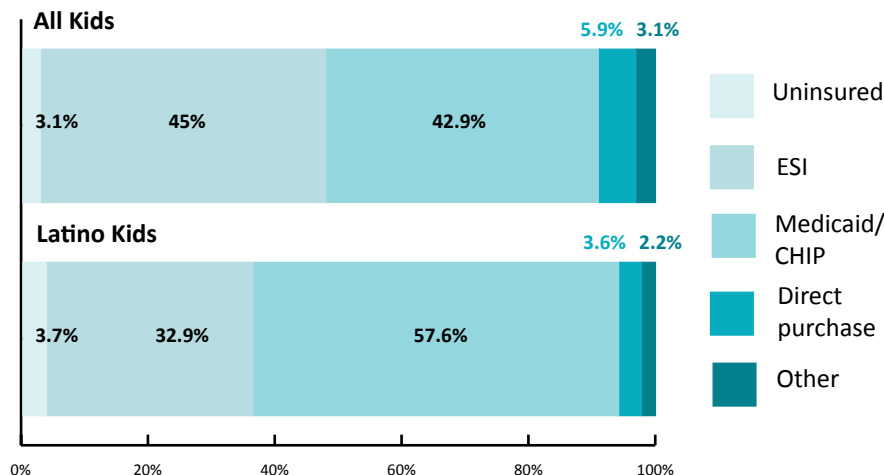
Latino kids are almost 1.5 times more likely to be uninsured compared to other kids

Medi-Cal and Latino Kids

While Medi-Cal is an important source of coverage for all children in California, it is especially important for Latino children. Latino families have a higher labor force participation rate than others in the country, but are more likely to work in industries that do not offer employer-sponsored insurance (ESI). Medi-Cal fills an important gap by providing affordable health coverage to these working families.

Medicaid/CHIP is the Largest Source of Coverage for Latino Kids

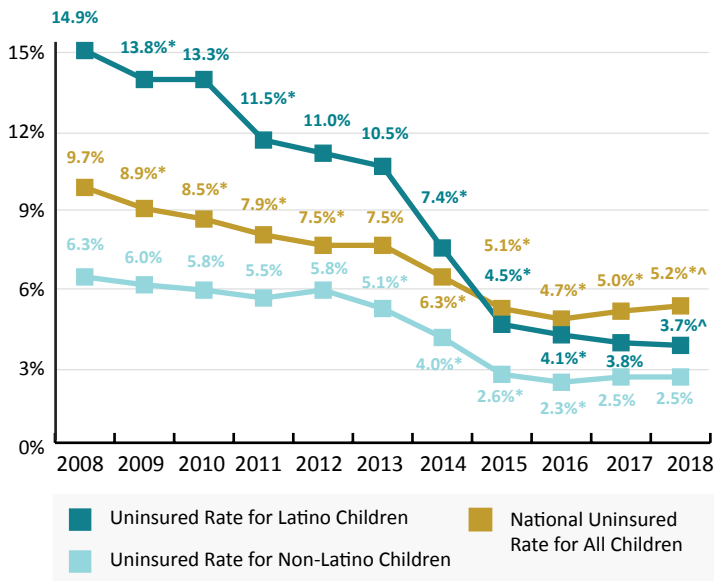
Coverage Sources for Kids in California, 2018



Covering Parents Helps Children

Having health insurance like Medi-Cal improves families' health and economic security. When adults' health care needs are met, they are better equipped to support their children as they grow and learn.

Latino Child Trends Over Time



Coverage Disparities Persist

Child Uninsured Rates, 2008-2018

All children in California are significantly less likely to be uninsured compared to the national average. More than half (52%) of all children in California are Latino. Over the ten-year period from 2008 to 2018, California officials enacted policies to cover more children and narrow coverage disparities for Latino children. Beginning in 2015, uninsurance rates for Latino children in California dipped below the national average for all children for the first time. However, Latino children in California are still more likely to be uninsured than other kids, so more work remains to be done.

Note: * Change significant at the 90% confidence level and relative to prior year. ^ Change significant at the 90% confidence level (2016-2018).



0-5 years old

2016	2018
2.8%	2.3%

6-12 years old

2016	2018
3.5%	3.3%

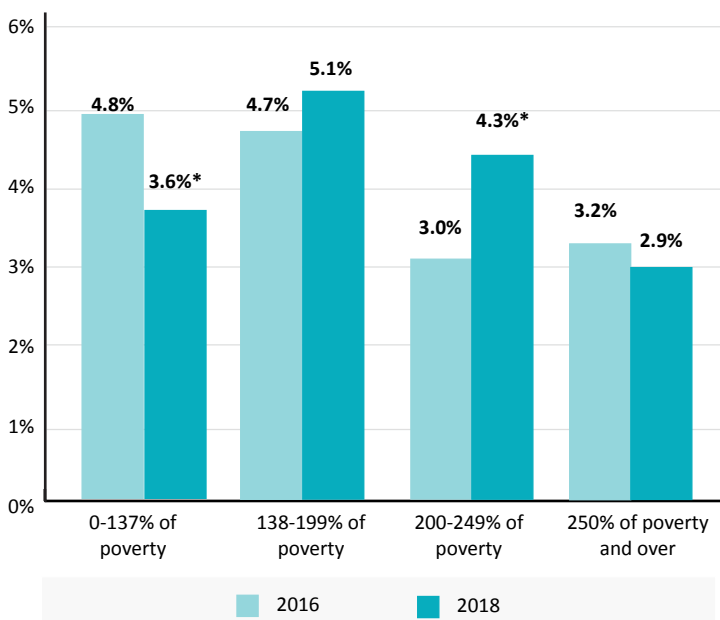
13-18 years old

2016	2018
6.1%	5.4%*

Older Children are More Likely to be Uninsured

Latino Child Uninsured Rates in California by Age, 2016 and 2018

The uninsured rate for Latino children in California decreased across all age groups between 2016 and 2018, with the sharpest decrease for teens ages 13 to 18. However, the uninsured rate rises as children age. Latino teens still have the highest uninsured rate by age at 5.4%.



Families in All Income Groups Struggle to Access Coverage

Latino Child Uninsured Rates in California by Census Poverty Threshold, 2016 and 2018

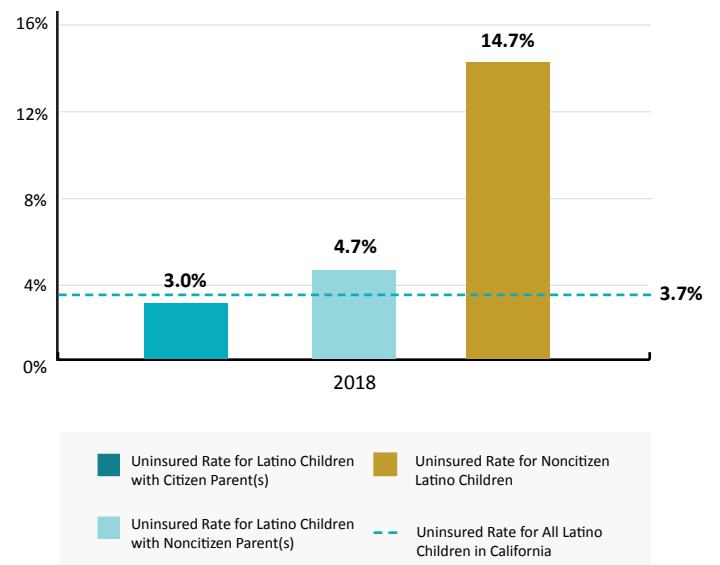
The uninsured rate for Latino children in California decreased for children in the lowest and highest income groups studied between 2016 and 2018. However, for children in families with income between 138 to 249% of the poverty thresholds (about \$28,100-50,400 for a family of three) the uninsured rate went in the wrong direction. The disproportionate job losses among Latinos during the COVID-19 pandemic could result in even more coverage losses.

Noncitizen Children and Children in Mixed Status Families are More Likely to be Uninsured

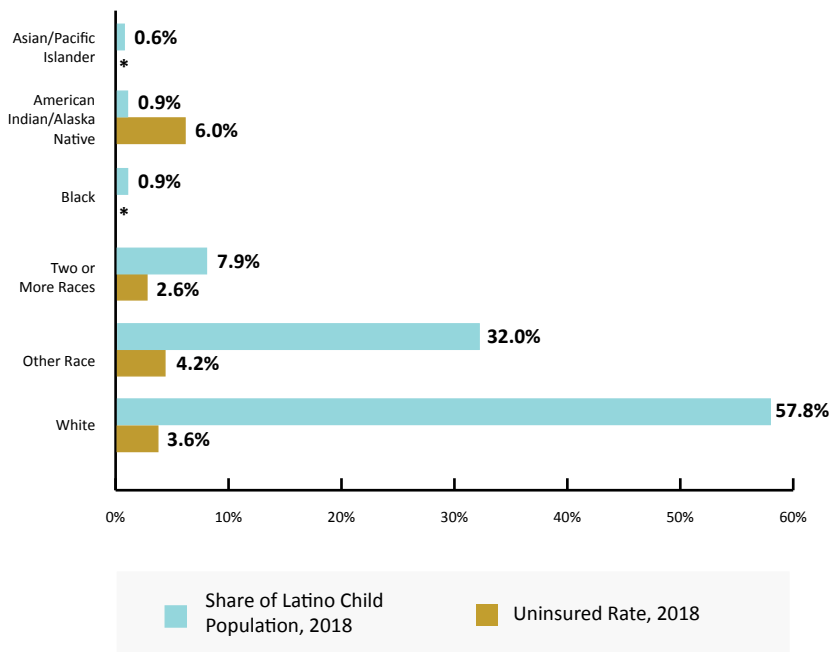
The vast majority of Latino children in California are U.S. citizens (96.5%) with citizen parents (72.2%). Though the share of Latino children living in mixed status households and noncitizen Latino children is small by comparison, the coverage rates for these groups reveal disparities. The uninsured rate for Latino children with 1 or more noncitizen parents is 4.7% compared to 3% for Latino children with citizen parents. The uninsured rate is even higher for noncitizen Latino children in California at 14.7%.

Despite California’s forward-leaning posture toward covering children regardless of status, national anti-immigrant rhetoric can lead parents to not enroll their eligible children out of fear. Targeted, community-based outreach to enroll more children with immigrant parents and noncitizen children would help.

Latino Child Uninsured Rates in California by Citizenship Status, 2018



Coverage Disparities by Race



*Note: The uninsured rates for Latino children identifying as Asian/Pacific Islander and Black are suppressed due to poor reliability.

AI/AN Latino Children Have Highest Uninsured Rate

Share of Population and Latino Child Uninsured Rates by Race, 2018

The Census Bureau reports race and Latino ethnicity as separate variables, and Latino children may be of any race. In California, the majority of Latino children identify as White (57.8%) or Other (32%). Only a small share of Latino children identify as American Indian/Alaska Native (0.9%), but this group has the highest uninsured rate at 6%. Targeted outreach to tribal communities may help reduce this coverage disparity.

The terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to refer to persons of Hispanic descent; they may be of any race. “Latinx” may also be used to respect various gender identities and expressions.

Top 10 California Counties and Congressional Districts with the Most Uninsured Latino Children, 2018

Counties and Congressional districts with large Latino child populations are more likely to have large numbers of uninsured Latino children, but state and local policies have an impact on the coverage rates.

Number & Rate of Uninsured Latino Children by County in California

County	Number of Uninsured Latino Kids	Latino Kids Uninsured Rate
Los Angeles County	76,651	5.2%
Riverside County	22,982	5.8%
San Diego County	22,023	6.3%
San Bernardino County	18,759	4.9%
Orange County	16,610	4.7%
Kern County	7,247	4.2%
Ventura County	6,076	5.1%
Fresno County	5,934	3.2%
Sacramento County	4,845	4.0%
Santa Clara County	4,684	2.9%

Number & Rate of Uninsured Latino Children by Congressional District in California

Congressional District (Geographic reference point)	Number of Uninsured Latino Kids	Latino Kids Uninsured Rate
District 35 (Pomona)	11,083	6.4%
District 41 (Riverside)	10,113	6.2%
District 40 (East Los Angeles)	9,762	5.1%
District 44 (San Pedro)	7,040	4.1%
District 51 (San Diego)	6,742	4.1%
District 46 (Santa Ana)	6,130	3.9%
District 34 (Central Los Angeles)	5,618	5.0%
District 24 (Santa Barbara)	5,553	6.1%
District 29 (Pacoima)	5,535	4.1%
District 43 (Inglewood/Torrance)	5,494	4.8%

Policy Recommendations

Health coverage is more important than ever. Any prior gains must be preserved especially as the economy falters. California is a leader, showing that it is possible to cover nearly all children but clear gaps remain. Policymakers in California could cover more children by targeting outreach and enrollment programs for specific groups of children, simplifying enrollment processes and continuing efforts to expand health coverage to as many people as possible.



Identify and enroll children in mixed status families and undocumented children



Identify and enroll AI/AN children



Take up Express Lane to enroll children in Medi-Cal based on enrollment in other public benefit programs like SNAP



Expand coverage to all adults regardless of citizenship status



UnidosUS, formerly the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), is the nation's largest Latino civil rights and advocacy organization. Through our unique combination of research, advocacy, programs, and a national network of nearly 300 community-based Affiliate organizations across the country, we simultaneously challenge the social, economic, and political barriers that affect Latinos in the United States.



The Georgetown University Center for Children and Families (CCF) is an independent, nonpartisan policy and research center. As part of the McCourt School of Public Policy, CCF provides research, develops strategies, and offers solutions to improve the health of America's children and families, particularly those with low and moderate incomes.

Most uninsured children are eligible but not enrolled in Medi-Cal. **To find out if your child is eligible for free or low-cost health coverage, go to www.insurekidsnow.gov.**

For more information about the methodology and sources, visit: <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2020/06/29/fact-sheets-latino-childrens-health-coverage/>