2018 CALIFORNIA CHILDREN'S REPORT CARD

A review of
kids' well-being
& roadmap
for the future

CH1LDREN NOW

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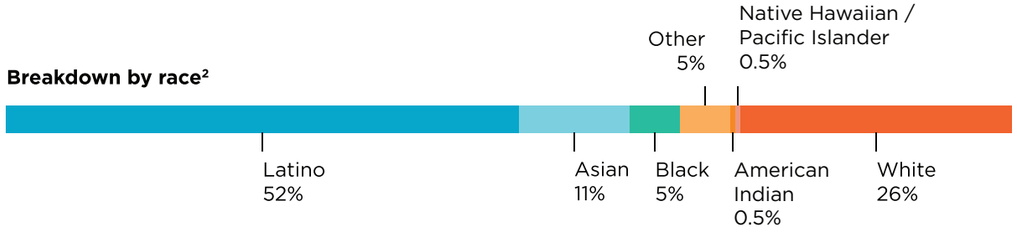
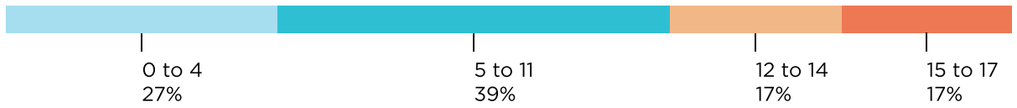
California is home to 9,092,863 children.[1]

Breakdown by race[2]



Breakdown by age[3]



43%
are low-income.[4]

20%
are in poverty.[5]

21%
are food insecure.[6]

4,367,000
are children from immigrant families.[7]

1,332,405
are English learners in TK-12 schools.[8]

5,217,677
are in Medi-Cal.[9]

55,983
are in foster care.[10]

9,092,863 need support.

Over the last year, our country and state have faced a number of challenges and tragedies. While the rhetoric of many leaders focuses on the importance of children to a better future, the reality is the rhetoric is too often just that.

Lack of progress for improving the lives of kids is unacceptable. All children need stability and a path to opportunity. This is true for nearly half of California's children who live in low-income families, where caregivers struggle to afford the quality support and services they need for their kids. This is also true for the approximately three-fourths of kids of color and just under half of kids growing up in immigrant families who face significant structural barriers to their stability and often highly stressful experiences that disrupt their healthy development.

As the *2018 California Children's Report Card* shows, the vast majority of our state's children face extraordinary challenges to reaching their full potential. Yet, the success of California's economy and civil society ultimately depends on policies that tear down these barriers and give all kids access to the quality support they need to succeed—from quality, affordable child care to a rigorous education to health coverage to safety. Public policy change is the fastest and most efficient way to scale innovative, high-impact programs, and secure the needed resources and reforms.

It's time to take action to improve the lives of California's kids. By connecting the thousands of organizations, businesses, and individuals who care about kids, we have the ability to be stronger than any other interest group, pushing kids to the top of the public policymaking agenda. So if you're

the leader of an organization or a business or a faith leader or a concerned resident, we're asking you and your group to join The Children's Movement (www.childrennow.org/themovement) to learn about and support children's needs. And if you're a policymaker, we're asking you to commit to prioritizing the Pro-Kid Agenda detailed in this report.

Together, we can do better to provide for our most vulnerable kids, and in turn, our state's economic and democratic future.

Sincerely,

Ted Lempert
President

Infant & Toddler Care

GRADE: D+

More than 1.5 million infants and toddlers live in California families. Most families struggle to find affordable, stable, quality child care. Healthy brain development and growth in the earliest years is fueled by responsive caregivers, consistent everyday interactions, and safe, enriching experiences.

Licensed child care is limited throughout the state.

There are currently only enough licensed child care spaces on average in California for

25% of children[1]

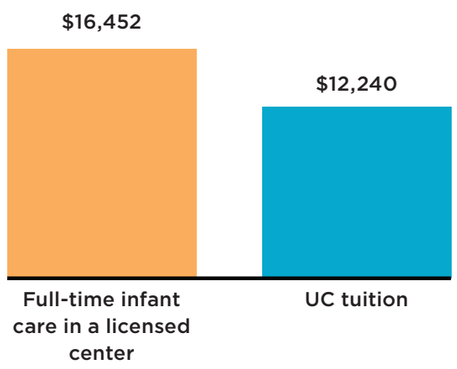
Only 1 county

has enough licensed child care spaces for the majority of its children.[2]

The cost of child care is out of reach for many families.

The average annual cost of child care for an infant in a licensed center is more than a year of UC tuition.

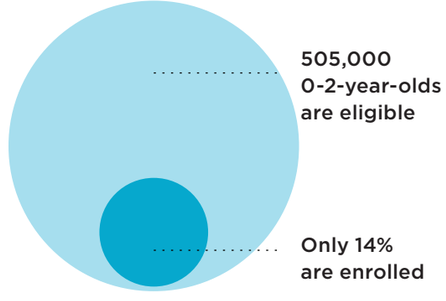
Annual Average Cost[3,4]



California low-income families with young kids need better access to quality child care programs.

Of California's infants and toddlers, 62% are born into low-income households,[5] yet only 14% of income-eligible infants and toddlers are enrolled in a publicly-supported child care program.

Low-Income 0- to 2-year-olds Served in Publically-Funded Early Learning Programs[6]



Progress Report

The state has been slow to expand child care assistance for struggling families. However, recent incremental increases to rates paid to child care providers, which is important to ensure a quality workforce, may contribute to further decline in available spaces. Updated eligibility guidelines will prevent low-income families from losing their subsidy because of a wage increase, and parental leave protection was recently expanded to include small businesses so that more parents can spend time with their newborns and look for child care with greater ease.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must ensure all families with infants and toddlers have access to enriching, stable, and affordable child care, including sufficient subsidies for low-income families, kids in foster care, and families experiencing circumstances of need or risk. In the near-term, investments in state-funded child care programs should be expanded so that more families with babies and toddlers have equitable opportunities from the very start.

Preschool & Transitional Kindergarten

GRADE: B

Quality early learning programs, such as preschool or transitional kindergarten, are critical to school readiness and to the long-term success of all children, especially children who may face systemic or structural inequities such as kids of color, kids from low-income families, kids in foster care, and dual language learners.

Too few California 3- and 4-year-olds have access to preschool.

High-quality early learning programs can yield positive, long-lasting effects, yet fewer than half of California's young children attend preschool.

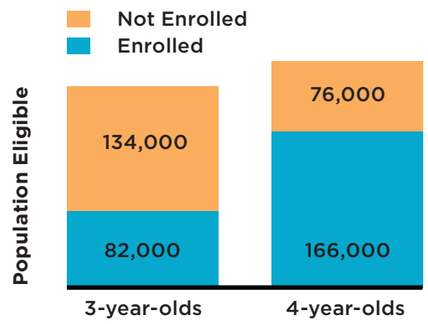
Only 49%

of all 3- and 4-year-olds in California attend preschool.[1]

Many of California's poorest kids do not have access to publicly-funded programs, despite being eligible.

High-quality early learning programs have been shown to narrow the achievement gap and can be especially beneficial to low-income children.[2]

California's Population who are Income-Eligible for Publicly-Funded Early Learning Programs[3]



Early learning programs help kids get ready to succeed in school.

Transitional kindergarten, a publically-funded early learning option for those four-year-olds not old enough to enter kindergarten in the fall, has been found to boost language, literacy, and math skills for children.

Benefits of transitional kindergarten for participating students include:[4]

- letter+word identification
- phonological awareness
- expressive vocabulary
- math problem solving
- math concepts and symbols
- class engagement

Progress Report

California has shown increased commitment to early learning by expanding investments in its State Preschool Program and establishing a transitional kindergarten program. However, transitional kindergarten is not designed to serve all four-year-olds or target services to the state's most vulnerable kids. Without significant additional resources, State Preschool and Head Start cannot fill this gap in access. Many working families and professionals seek to ensure they can provide developmentally-appropriate full-day options for their three- and four-year-olds.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must provide children with access to high-quality early learning programs and educators. In the near-term, the Governor and the Legislature must keep their commitment to continue to expand state-funded preschool and transitional kindergarten to four-year-olds, but must also begin to address the huge unmet need in early education services for three-year-olds.

Early Learning Workforce Compensation & Training

GRADE: C-

Teachers and caregivers are foundational to high-quality early care and education because young children develop and learn through enriching relationships and interactions. Still, California's workforce is highly underpaid, stretched thin, and lacks consistent professional development support.[1]

Early childhood educators are expected to be competent in a wide range of skills.

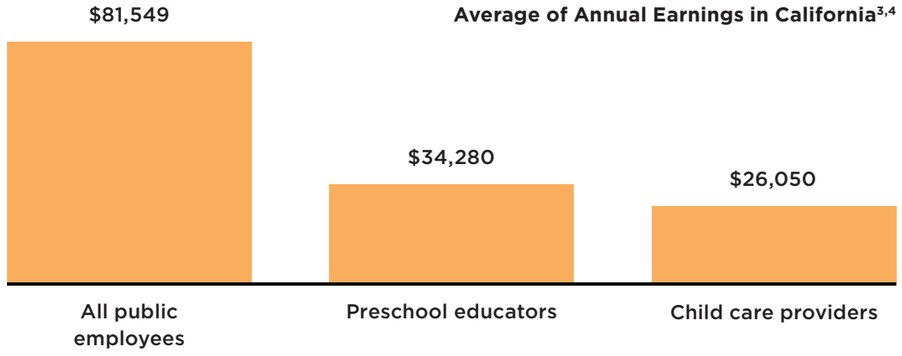
An effective early childhood educator must be knowledgeable about child development, skillful at observing and assessing learning, and intentional in planning experiences and environments to support children's learning, among other skills. **Yet, professional development requirements are inconsistent across early learning settings, and compensation is far too low for the expertise required.**[2]

Areas of Expertise:

- observation, screening, assessment, & documentation
- culture, diversity, & equity
- health, safety, & nutrition
- dual language development
- relationships, interactions, & guidance
- family & community engagement
- learning environment & curriculum
- special needs & inclusion

Early child care providers are responsible for kids during the period of their lives with the most rapid brain development, yet they are poorly compensated.

Preschool educators and child care providers get paid well below the average salary of other public employees.



Progress Report

Recent increases to provider reimbursement rates may translate to some higher wages, however, the state has yet to address the endemic economic insecurity facing the workforce. There have been sporadic steps to improve training and education levels, including recent recommendations to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to revise the child development permit needed for those that provide service in the care, development, and instruction of children in a child care and early learning programs. The Department of Education, state leaders, and experts also recently completed an extensive state-level plan to strengthen the state's workforce system.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California must fully scale its quality improvement and workforce development initiatives that support the knowledge, skills, professional opportunities, and economic well-being of the workforce. In the short-term, policymakers should proactively support the initial implementation of the state's ambitious plan to transform the early childhood workforce over time. This includes expanding the Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce Registry, a system designed to verify and securely store and track the employment, training, and education accomplishments of ECE teachers and providers, to gain a meaningful assessment of current challenges.

Education for Dual Language & English Learners

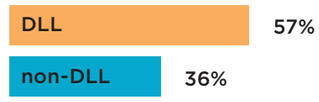
GRADE: D+

Children learning English in addition to their home language are considered dual language learners (DLL) before entering school, and designated English learners (EL) in TK-12 in California. California has the highest number of kids who are DLL (60%)[1] and EL (21%) in the country.[2]

Language learners are the growing majority of California's kids.

Language development is critical to overall educational success. Children who are dual language learners are more likely to be living in low-income families than children who are non-dual language learners, and consequently are less likely to have access to early learning opportunities that help with language development before school.

Percent living in low-income families by language learning status[3]

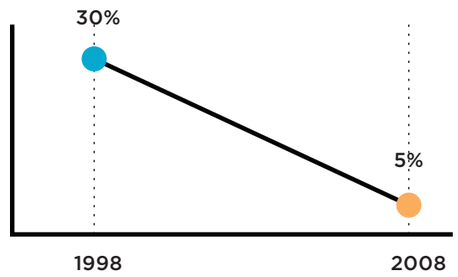


Percent enrolled in Pre-K by language learning status[4]

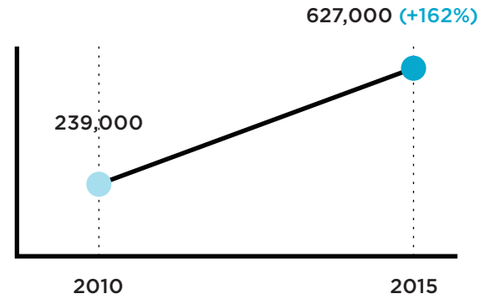
Demand for a bilingual workforce is increasing.

Students who are bilingual have an advantage in the workforce, yet fewer students are being served by bilingual programs in California.

Percent of English Learners Served by Bilingual Programs in California[5]



Number of Online Job Listings for Workers with Bilingual Skills in the US[6]



Progress Report

With the passage of Proposition 58 last year, California reversed harmful restrictions on bilingual education put in place via Proposition 227 in 1998. The state's recent adoption of the TK-12 English Learner Roadmap and the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework provide a good start for the state—in addition to $5 million in the budget to support the Bilingual Professional Development Program through 2019-20 – but much more needs to be done.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should ensure children who are dual language and English learners have the support needed to eliminate achievement gaps. The state should adopt a plan to ensure DLL and EL students graduate ready for college, career, and civic life. The state should also adopt a plan to promote bilingualism for all students.

TK-12 Funding

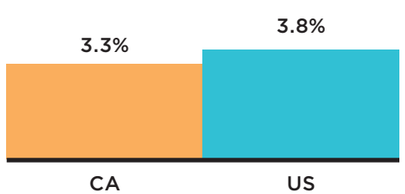
GRADE: C-

California has been underfunding its schools and shortchanging its students for decades. Without adequate funding, many districts struggle to hire qualified teachers and other trained adults and to keep class sizes small—two factors that contribute to student success.

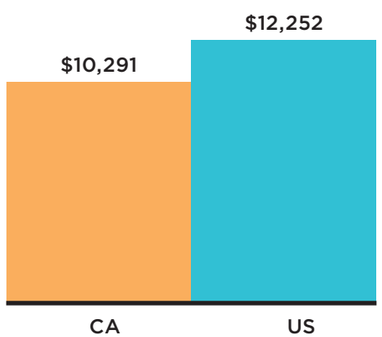
Despite California's high per capita income, the state lags behind the national average in school funding.

Among all states, California ranks 37th for percentage of personal income spent on education, and 41st in per-student spending.

K-12 Spending as a Percent of Personal Income[1]



Per-Student Spending (adjusted for cost of living)[2]



The ratio of teachers and other trained adults to students is a prominent factor in education quality.

Yet California ranks near the bottom among the 50 states on the most important trained-staff-to-student ratios.

CA's Staff to Student Ratios[3]

	National average	CA	CA rank
Total staff	1:8	1:11	48
Teacher	1:16	1:24	50
Librarian	1:1,128	1:7,783	50
Guidance counselor	1:482	1:760	49
Administrator	1:207	1:300	47

Progress Report

The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), California's new school finance system, is approaching its initial funding targets which guarantee that all districts will finally receive their pre-recession level of funding. But, this doesn't account for growing cost pressures such as pension obligations, health care, and special education. Funding remains inadequate to meet schools' needs, and as a result schools have fewer teachers and other caring adults to support students, especially students who need language development support, live in poverty, or face other risk factors.

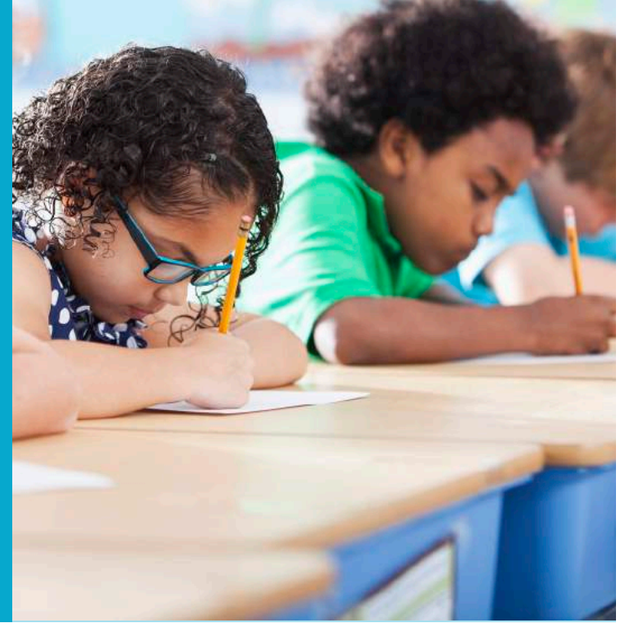
Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must create a long-term funding solution for TK–12 education to effectively address gaps in student achievement and provide every student with a high-quality education. In the near-term, policymakers should complete the initial LCFF implementation, and then grow the formula to reflect new cost pressures. Policymakers must also ensure that resources are used to improve education for low-income students, students of color, English learners, and kids in foster care, as the law intends.

Academic Outcomes

GRADE: D

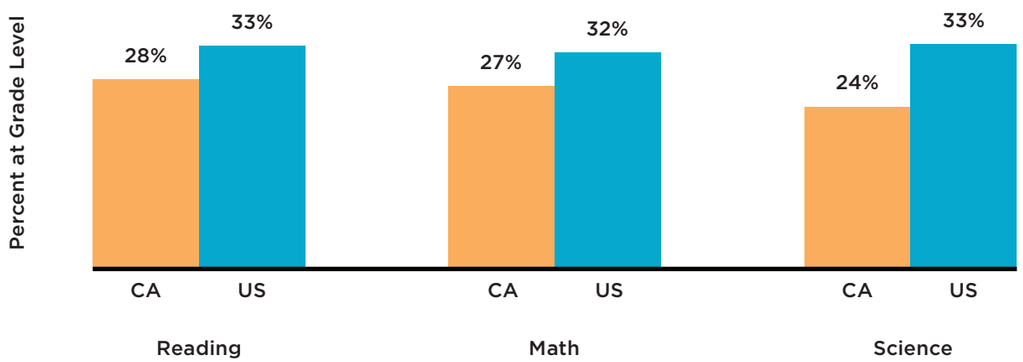
Every student needs a high-quality education, yet California lags behind the nation on academic measures. The State is accountable for ensuring that all of California's TK-12 students are graduating from high school ready for college, career, and civic life.



California ranks near the bottom nationally for performance in reading (40th), math (40th), and science (42nd).

Fewer than one-third of California students tested proficient in reading, math, and science, putting the state well below national performance.

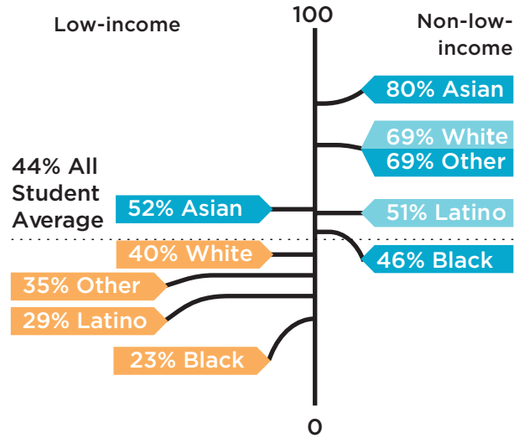
8th Grade Performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress[1]



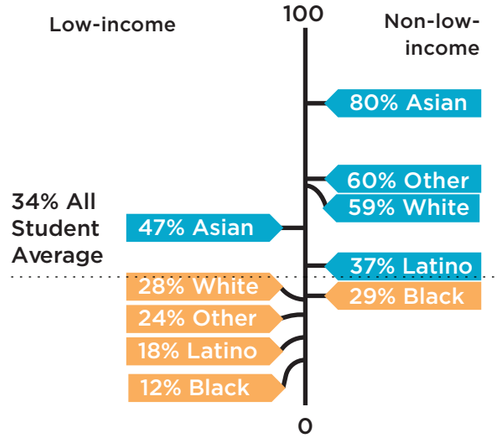
California has large disparities in academic achievement.

Achievement varies by income, and performance for children who are Black and Latino trails that of their peers who are Asian and White.

Percent of CA 3rd Graders at Grade Level in English Language Arts[2]



Percent of CA 5th Graders at Grade Level in Math[3]



Progress Report

California has created a foundation to support the success of all students. This includes adopting college- and career-aligned standards, implementing a finance system that invests in our most vulnerable kids, and launching a fledgling accountability system. While these structural pieces are important, there needs to be continued urgency to use these tools and others as intended, to ensure every California student has a high-quality education that helps close our achievement gaps.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must ensure that all K–12 students, especially the most vulnerable, graduate ready for college, career, and civic life. Our leaders should continue to use multiple measures in our state accountability system, not just achievement. This system must provide greater transparency on whether gaps in student achievement are closing or not. When improvement is needed, all schools, districts, charters, and county offices should have access to timely support to meet their unique needs.

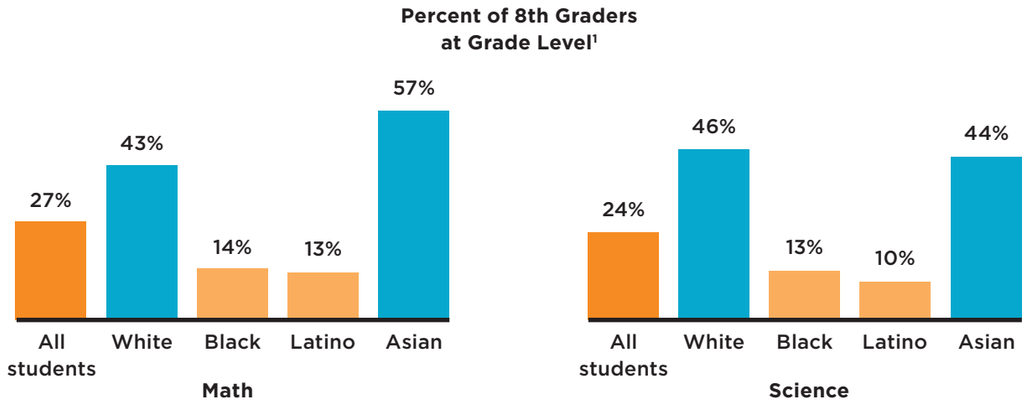
STEM Education

GRADE: C

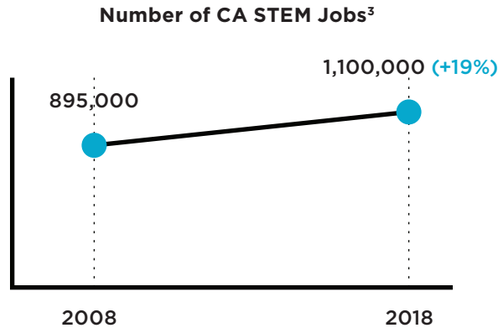
STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education equips students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in a world that's becoming increasingly complex—from the hard skills needed to succeed in STEM-related jobs, to soft skills like asking important questions and testing multiple solutions.

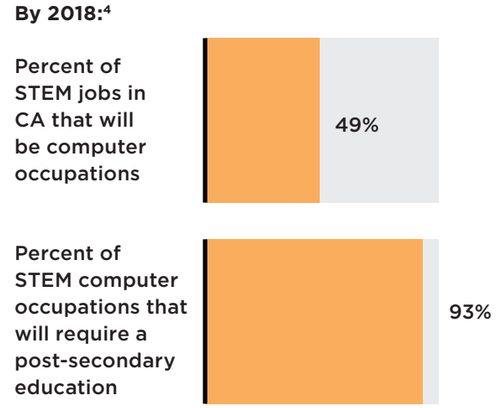
California students are not meeting grade-level expectations in math and science, and the performance gap is most pronounced for students who are Black and Latino.

Due to multiple factors, including systemic barriers and significant educational disparities, students who are Black and Latino perform well below the statewide average and below their peers who are White and Asian in math and science on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).



As demand for STEM jobs continues to grow, California ranks 40th in student performance in math,[1] and 42nd in student performance in science.[2]





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California's adoption of the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) raised expectations in science and math to be consistent with the evolving world. The state is developing computer science education standards and has invested in the training and recruiting of new STEM teachers. While these developments are important, California isn't doing nearly enough. The state needs to address a severe STEM teacher shortage, and uneven and inequitable access to quality STEM learning.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should make high-quality STEM instruction a core element of every child's education, especially for kids of color and girls. In the near-term, policymakers must build the capacity to prepare and support teaching to the new math and science standards, and expedite an assessment that is aligned to the NGSS; meanwhile, district leaders must plan for, and increase, their investments in multi-year implementation of NGSS-based teaching and learning.

Teacher Pipeline, Preparation, & Placement

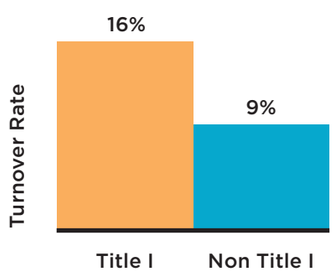
GRADE: D+

Students deserve to be taught by high-quality and well-prepared teachers. Yet recent research shows significant declines in the number of teachers entering the profession, and growing disparities in teacher preparedness, retention, and faculty diversity, negatively affecting low-income schools.[1,2,3]

Students who are low-income are more likely to have under-prepared teachers.

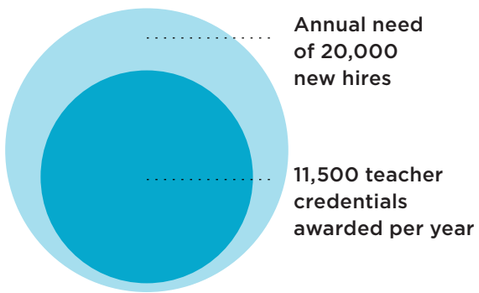
Experienced teachers are nearly two times more likely to leave Title I schools, which have higher percentages of students who are low-income, than non-Title I schools.

Turnover Rate for Teachers with 4 or More Years Experience[4]



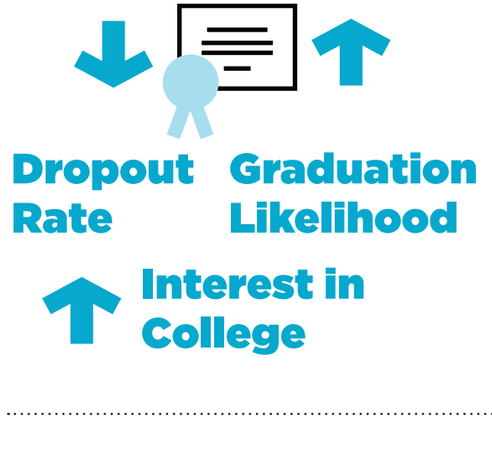
California is experiencing a severe shortage of teachers.

Fewer Teachers are Credentialed Than Meet Schools' Needs[5]

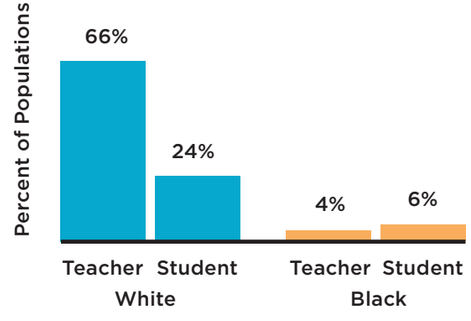


Teacher diversity matters.

Research has shown that male students who are low-income and Black who have at least one teacher who is Black in grades 3-5 have a 39% lower chance of dropping out of school and a 29% increased interest in pursuing college.[6]



Comparison of White Teachers and Student Populations and Black Teachers and Student Populations in CA Schools[7]



Progress Report

California students deserve qualified and effective teachers in every classroom, but this is not the reality for many students. Shortages continue to inequitably impact student groups based on race and income and must be addressed—which is also required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act provisions to ensure equitable distribution of effective, experienced and qualified educators. We must do a better job of recruiting, training, and supporting effective educators, including recruiting from a more diverse pool of candidates, as well as conducting a deep review of the laws yielding inequitable access to effective educators.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must address the diminishing pipeline of new educators, improve preparation, training, and support—including providing new teachers with meaningful and objective feedback that helps improve their teaching—and ultimately ensure that kids of color and low-income kids are not disproportionately served by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers. In the near-term, policymakers should increase investments in improving the pipeline and quality of new teachers, make improvements in evaluation, tenure and support, and monitor the equitable distribution of educators.

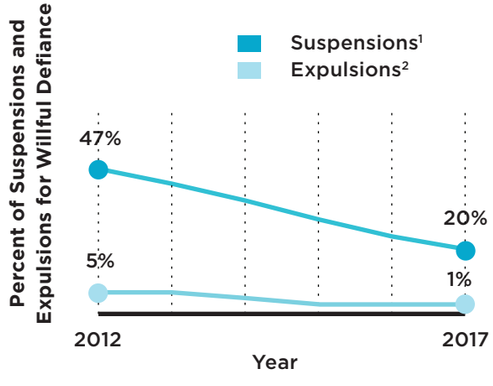
School Climate & Discipline

GRADE: B-

Students should feel safe at school, connected to peers and supported by caring adults. Unfair, punitive discipline policies negatively impact school climate and disproportionately affect students of color. Inclusive, student-centered, and restorative practices promote positive school climate.

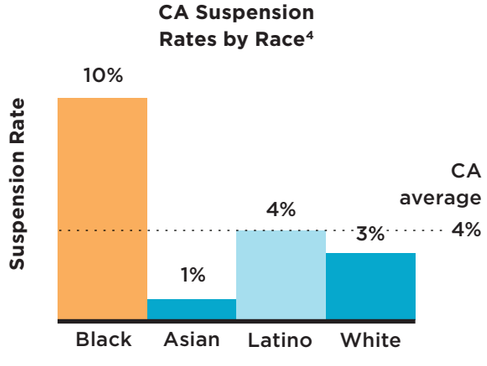
Student suspensions and expulsions in California are declining.

The decline is due in part to state law banning suspensions for willful defiance (a subjective category of overly broad and minor offenses) for kindergarteners through third-graders and expulsions for willful defiance for all students.



Suspensions disproportionately affect kids of color.

Research on implicit bias shows that teachers are more likely to associate challenging behavior with boys who are Black relative to their peers who are not Black.[3] As a result, suspension rates are highest among students who are Black.



86% of teachers report needing more training on positive discipline practices.[5]

Teachers need more support to incorporate alternatives to punitive discipline policies in the classroom. These alternatives help to encourage respect, strengthen relationships, and hold students accountable.

Practices that promote positive school climate:

- dismantling racism and bias
- trauma-informed practices
- social-emotional learning
- restorative justice
- positive behavior supports
- culturally-responsive practices

Progress Report

State law currently bans suspensions for defiance/disruption in transitional kindergarten through third grade, and prohibits defiance/disruption expulsions in all grades. While some districts have banned willful defiance suspensions for all grades, to ensure California kids don't miss out on valuable class time for minor offenses, more training and stronger efforts to eliminate defiance/disruption suspensions in the upper grades is still needed, and surveys must monitor progress on school climate and engagement.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must make sure that preparation, training, and ongoing professional development activities for all teachers and administrators are based on restorative, trauma-informed, and culturally-responsive practices. Suspensions and expulsions for defiance/disruption should be eliminated for all students. Policymakers should also develop and require common surveys to measure school climate and student engagement, and continue to make substantial investments in research-based practices through the Multi-Tiered System of Support framework and the Proposition 47 grant program.

Chronic Absence

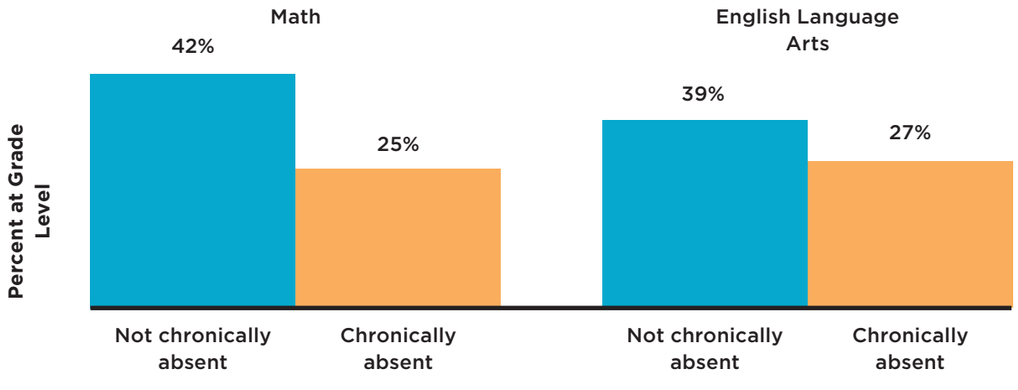
GRADE: B-

School attendance is a key predictor of students' future academic performance. When students miss ten percent or more of the school year, they are considered chronically absent. Students who are chronically absent are more likely to fall behind in school and drop out.

Students who are chronically absent have a hard time catching up.

For example, only one-fourth of students who were chronically absent in kindergarten and first-grade met or exceeded state standards in third grade.

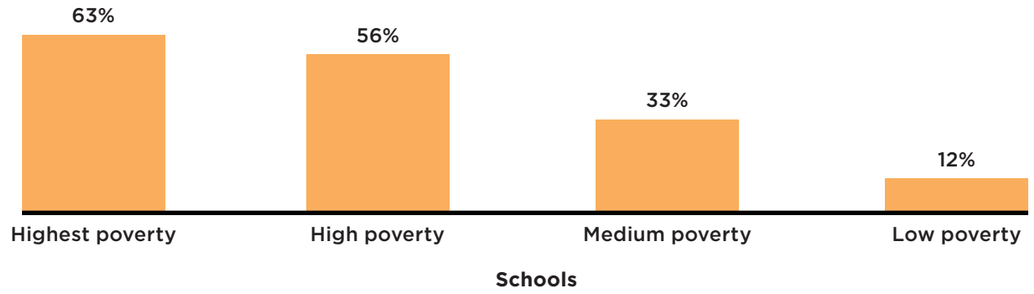
Percent of 3rd Graders Performing at Grade Level Based on Attendance in K-1st Grade[1]



Low-income schools have higher rates of chronic absence.

Barriers such as unstable housing, lack of transportation, poor health, and greater exposure to environmental hazards can disproportionately affect low-income communities and contribute to higher rates of students who are chronically absent in high-poverty schools.[2]

Percent of Schools with High Rates of Chronic Absence[3,4]



Progress Report

Seven years after the passage of SB 1357 (Steinberg), student attendance data was finally collected and released to the public for the first time in California in 2017. This was an important first step in addressing chronic absence. However, more needs to be done to help students who are chronically absent. Districts need to enable early warning systems to keep students on course for success, and the state must fully integrate chronic absence as a meaningful measure of school performance into the new state accountability system and dashboard.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers and district leaders should monitor chronic absence closely at the state and local levels. Chronic absence data should be counted for accountability purposes and used by schools as an early warning sign for systemic and individual student needs. The Governor and Legislature should fund the California Department of Education's data collection, reporting, and system development to provide districts, researchers, and the public with useful, timely, transparent, and actionable information.

Afterschool & Summer Learning Programs

GRADE: B-

Afterschool and summer learning programs have been proven to help prevent the achievement gap from growing between students who are low-income and non-low-income.[1] There is a high need for these programs, yet the necessary funding to meet this need remains inadequate.

Despite recent investments, afterschool funding remains insufficient.

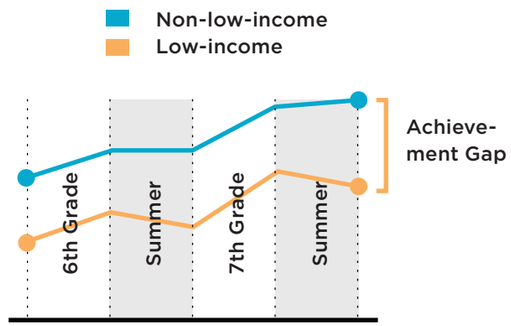
In the 2017 budget, Afterschool Education and Safety Programs (ASES) benefitted from an increased investment of $50M dollars from the state. With increasing cost of living in California, this investment is welcomed but far below what is needed.

49%

of students who would benefit continue to lack access to state funded afterschool programs.[2]

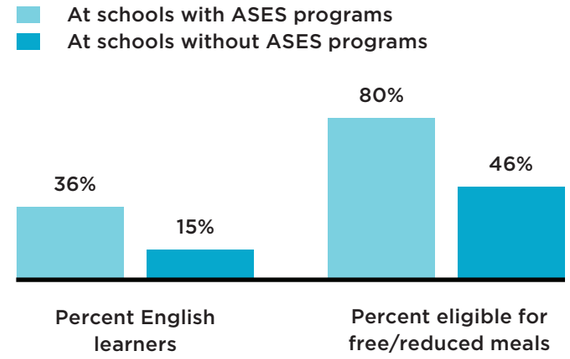
Summer learning programs stop the loss of academic gains.

Each summer, students who are low-income and lack access to quality summer learning programs have been shown to fall behind by nearly two months in reading by the time they start school in the fall.[3]



ASES funding is essential to supporting high-needs kids.

ASES funding, which funds California's afterschool programs, is targeted to schools with a higher number of English learners and low-income students.[4]



Progress Report

In 2017, afterschool reimbursement rates which had been stagnant for nearly a decade were increased. This increased investment was required because the already-existing gap between programs' needs and funding would only widen as a result of the rising minimum wage and cost of living pressures. California must find ways to increase investments further to ensure quality, access, and preparedness to face threats of federal cuts to funding.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should sustain and build on proven afterschool and summer programs so all kids, particularly those who face poverty, racism, or other systemic barriers, have access to safe environments that allow them to be active and engaged in afterschool and during the summer. In the near-term, policymakers should support quality improvement efforts to increase investments in afterschool and summer programs, and to ensure students continue to have access.

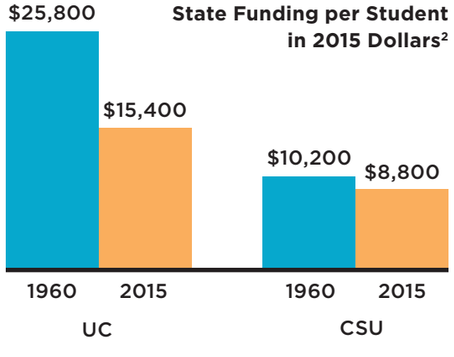
Access to Higher Education

GRADE: C

While more California high school graduates are prepared for college, enrollment at the University of California and California State University has not kept pace with demand. A shortfall of 1.1 million college graduates is predicted by 2030.[1]

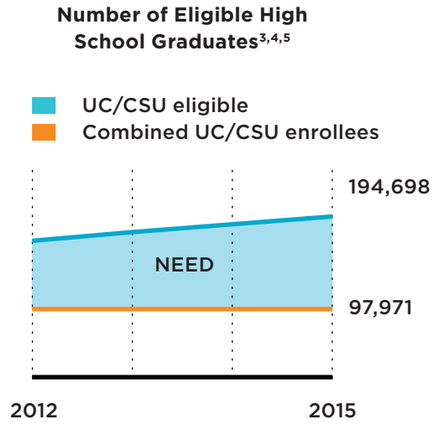
State investment in public higher education has dropped.

The lack of state support means students are paying more out-of-pocket for attending school. This burden discourages students from attending college and makes it less likely they will graduate.



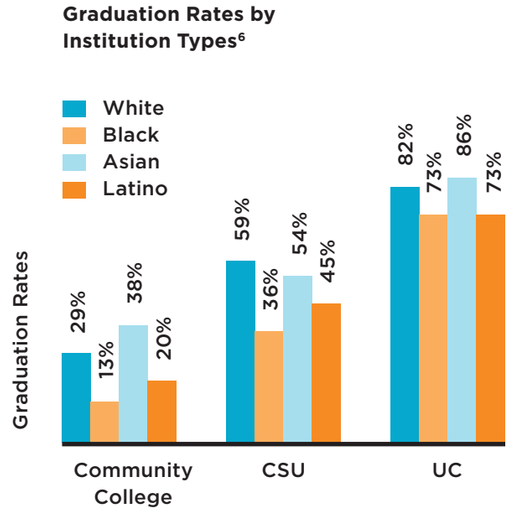
California needs to expand college access for high school graduates.

California has succeeded in preparing more high school graduates for higher education, but the gap between those prepared for UC/CSU and those actually enrolled is growing.



Racial disparities in postsecondary graduation rates persist.

Due to educational and other inequities, students who are White and Asian are more likely than their peers who are Black and Latino to graduate from all types of public higher education institutions.



Progress Report

While overall state funding for higher education has been declining, in recent years California has begun to reinvest in public higher education to help students defray the rising costs of attending college, and to further the expectation that higher education leaders will make their institutions accessible to all who are eligible. The transition between K-12 and higher education has improved, and more students are moving into college-level courses faster. Technology is being integrated in new ways to improve learning, and curriculums have been redesigned to create seamless pathways to degrees and credentials. Although these are significant steps forward, the state must do more to address college affordability, diversity, student readiness, and student success and completion.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must make good on the promise of an accessible and affordable system of public higher education. Our leaders need to reinvest in the UC, CSU, and community colleges, and remove the, often insurmountable, barriers of attending college, such as the high cost of tuition and housing, food insecurity, and limited access to childcare for students with children. Our state leaders should also develop long-term plans to accommodate more students, close the attainment gap, stabilize funding, increase graduation rates, and create accountability through transparency and measuring performance.

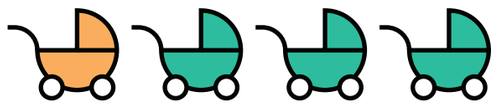
Developmental Screenings

GRADE: C-

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children under the age of three be screened routinely to monitor their development and identify potential delays. Screening is the first step to connecting children with the supports they need for healthy development.

Of California's 2.5 million young kids,[1] 1 in 4 are at risk for developmental, behavioral, or social delays.[2]

Developmental, behavioral, or social delays can impact a child's school readiness and affect their overall well-being. The earlier children begin receiving support, the better.



Too few California kids are receiving the health screenings they need.

Screenings can help detect delays earlier, which is essential for initiating interventions that help prevent or mitigate future challenges. Yet, California ranks near the bottom among states for the rate of young kids who receive screenings (21%), falling 13 places in recent years.

CA's rank has dropped 13 places for the rate of young children who received screenings:[3,4]

Ranking in 2012

#30

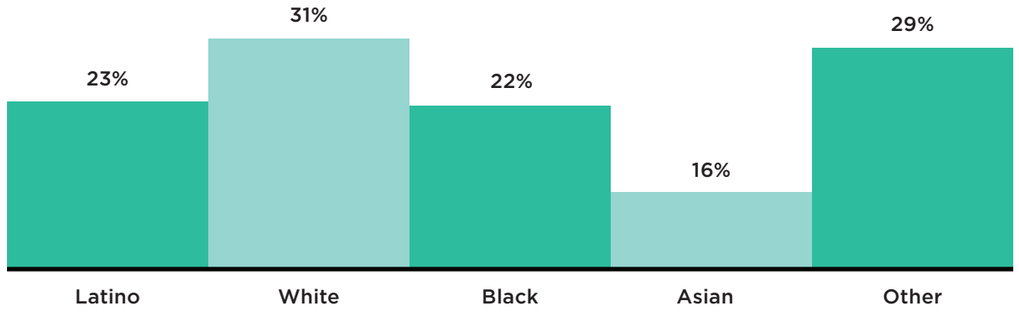
Ranking in 2016

#43

Screening rates are even worse for kids of color.

Children of color are less likely to receive developmental screenings, largely because fewer providers ask families of color about their child's development.[5]

Rate of Parent-Completed Developmental Screenings[6]



Progress Report

Due to the unacceptably low rates of developmental screenings for young California kids, the California Department of Health Care Services has begun to investigate how to increase screening rates. There are inconsistent, and often insufficient, levels of cross-sector health and early childhood collaboration, shared data, and parent and provider education and outreach to ensure that kids receive screenings and get connected to needed early intervention services.

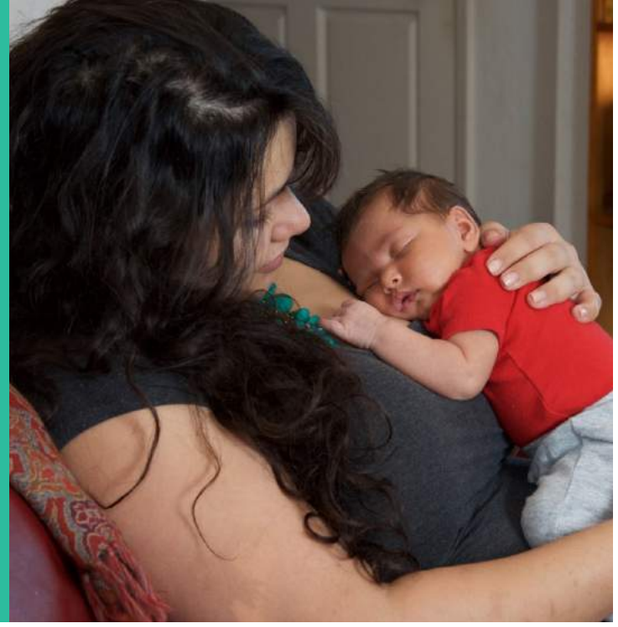
Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should ensure that kids under age three receive routine developmental, behavioral, and other health screenings at the intervals recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and invest in robust referral and early intervention systems to connect kids with services they may need for supporting their healthy growth and development. In the near-term, the California Department of Health Care Services should leverage all available data to improve the rate of kids receiving developmental screenings.

Home Visiting

GRADE: D+

Voluntary home visiting programs match new and expectant parents with trained professionals who provide one-on-one support and education during the critical early years. Home visiting programs reinforce parent-child relationships, equip parents to nurture children's health and learning, and can have a positive impact on families.



Many California families with very young kids face challenges that have the potential to undermine their well-being in the short- and long-term.

62%

of babies are born into low-income households.[1]

Over 1 in 6

women report prolonged depression while pregnant or after their baby is born.[2]

41%

of parents report having one or more concerns about their young child's physical, behavioral or social development.[3]

Over 40,000

infants are born preterm, making them susceptible to health and learning difficulties throughout childhood.[4]

Home Visiting programs reach fewer than 3% of California families.[5,6]

Despite research proving the benefits of voluntary home visiting programs, and data indicating two-thirds of families with babies and toddlers could potentially benefit from them,[7] home visiting is not reaching enough California families with infants and toddlers.

Home visiting programs:

- **support health of mom & baby**
- **help parents understand child development**
- **promote positive parenting**
- **help families set future goals**

Progress Report

Home visiting works for families, communities, and taxpayers by boosting the health and well-being of both parents and children, and also preventing downstream costs related to unaddressed learning delays, child maltreatment and involvement with the juvenile justice system. Yet California is not one of the 30-plus states dedicating general funds to home visiting, nor one of the many states directing Medicaid and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds to home visiting. Current federal and local funding for home visiting through county First 5 Commissions, Early Head Start, and the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant is fragmented and falls far short of meeting the need.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

Policymakers should expand voluntary home visiting programs for new and expectant parents in California. The state must identify sustainable funding, prioritize families most in need of support, and ensure that programs are effective, high-quality and responsive to the diverse needs of families.

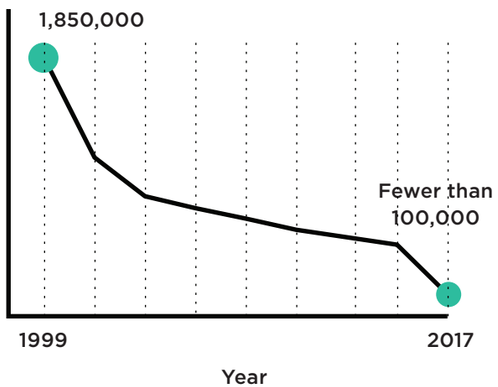
Health Insurance

GRADE: A

Quality affordable health insurance helps kids access timely, comprehensive health care, and supports their overall well-being. All California kids are now eligible for affordable health coverage through private insurance, or through Medi-Cal, a program which is the cornerstone of kids' health coverage and must be protected against federal cuts. Medi-Cal provides health coverage to 5.2 million California kids.

California is making steady progress toward ensuring all kids have health insurance.

Number of Uninsured Children in California[1,2,3]



Kids covered by Medicaid experience a host of benefits.

do better in school and miss fewer days[4]

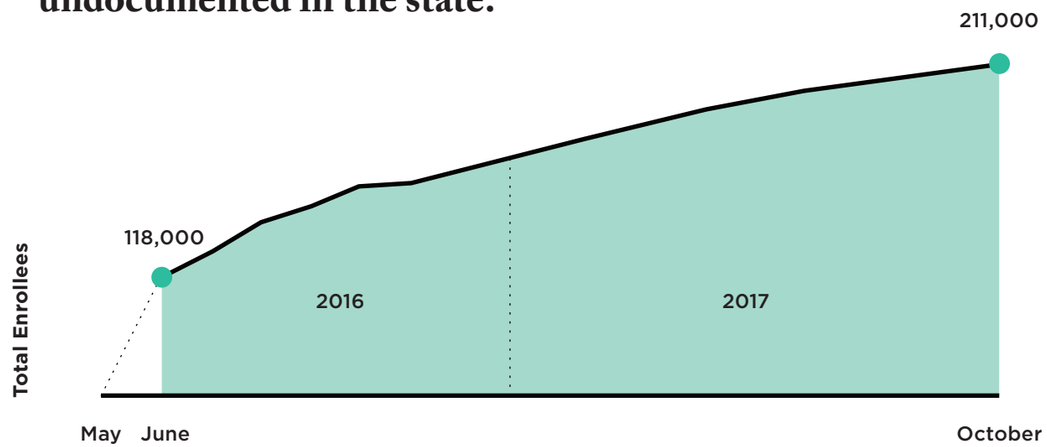
are more likely to graduate from high school and go to college[5]

have fewer emergency room & hospital visits as adults[6]

earn more money as adults[7]

Health4AllKids expanded Medi-Cal to kids who are income-eligible and undocumented in the state.

Health4AllKids implementation has been a huge success. More than 200,000 children have enrolled since May 2016, when the law took effect.[8]



Progress Report

California has made incredible progress toward ensuring affordable health coverage for every child, with nearly all California kids covered today. The successful implementation of Health4AllKids extended Medi-Cal to more than 200,000 kids who are undocumented. However, threats to federal funding for Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the Covered California marketplace established by the Affordable Care Act may jeopardize the health coverage that the majority of California's kids depend upon.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should ensure that every single kid is enrolled in health coverage and is receiving comprehensive and consistent benefits across public and private insurance carriers, so that all families can access high-quality, affordable care for their kids. In the near-term, the California Department of Health Care Services should work to enroll all 100,000 eligible-but-currently-uninsured California kids in Medi-Cal. It is also critical to California kids' well-being that federal investments in Medicaid, the CHIP, and Covered California remain strong.

Health Care Access & Coordination

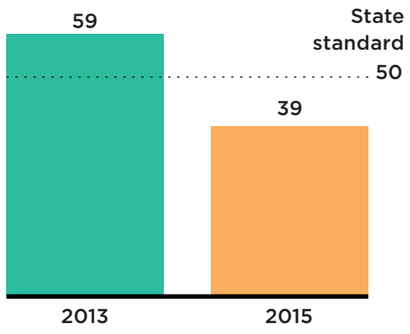
GRADE: C-

Accessible, quality health care and seamless care coordination are critical to achieving positive health outcomes for children and to promoting efficient care through prevention, early detection and disease management. Care coordination is especially critical for children with special health care needs.

Nearly half of California kids are covered by Medi-Cal, but there aren't enough doctors to ensure everyone is getting quality preventive care, and the problem is getting worse.

There are only 39 doctors who accept Medi-Cal for every 100,000 patients, which is well below the standards set by the state.

Medi-Cal Physicians per 100,000 Medi-Cal Patients[1]



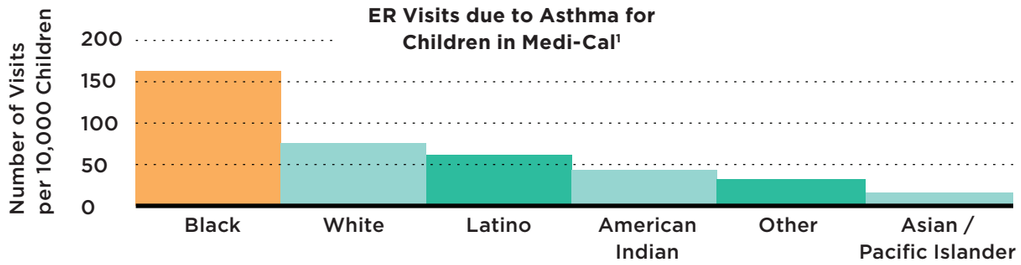
California provider reimbursement rates are well below the national average. **California ranks among the bottom 2 states for Medicaid provider rates.**

California only reimburses providers at 66% of the national average.[2]

Due to poor access, more kids end up in the ER for chronic health conditions, like asthma.

Children who lack access to quality preventive care resort to using emergency services. Large racial disparities exist in accessing healthcare.[3] For example, children who are Black were eight times more likely than children who are Asian/Pacific Islander to visit the ER for asthma-related complications.

ER Visits due to Asthma for Children in Medi-Cal[1]



Progress Report

Though most California kids have health insurance, access to timely and coordinated care continues to be a challenge. While the California Department of Health Care Services has elevated concerns about kids' access to health care, more must be done to ensure that kids can access appointments in a timely way, preventive care and services are readily available, and health plans and providers are held accountable for delivering quality care.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must collect and report data on kids' access to care; increase public insurance program funding; establish robust provider network standards on serving kids; promote quality improvement of health care services delivery; and address language access, transportation, and regional provider shortages that exacerbate racial and socioeconomic disparities. In the near-term, the California Department of Health Care Services should implement state and federal regulations to increase transparency and accountability in Medicaid managed care services.

Mental Health & Building Resilience

GRADE: D+

Children need access to quality, affordable mental health care and supports that monitor and treat mental illness, help kids build positive relationships, assist kids who have experienced trauma, and give kids the ability to face typical stressors with resilience.

Traumatic events can lead to a lifetime of mental and physical health consequences.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are physical, emotional, or social events that are stressful or traumatic. **Of California children, 42% experience one or more ACE.**[3] Proper treatment and support for these children can help build resilience.

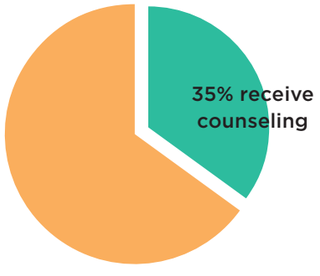
Examples of Adverse Childhood Experiences include:

- abuse
- neglect
- incarcerated relative
- household dysfunction

California kids aren't getting the mental health services they need.

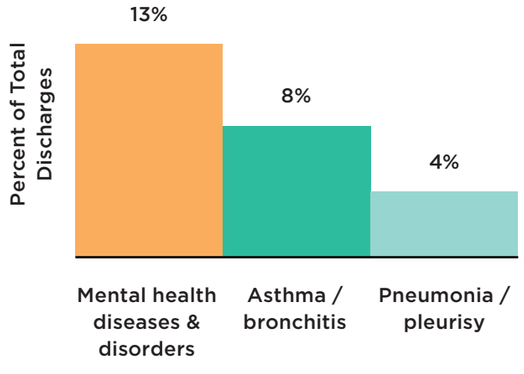
Only 35% of California children who reported needing help for emotional or mental health problems received counseling.

All Children Who Report Needing Mental Health Care[1]



Mental illness is the #1 reason California kids are hospitalized.

Hospital Discharges for CA Children[2]



Progress Report

California's current patchworks of kids' mental health and trauma services are deficit-based, often built for adults, and under-resourced to address the level of need. Efforts to build awareness of childhood trauma, improve school climate and teacher training to support student wellness, and increase screening and referral for mental health and trauma services are moving California in the right direction, but more must be done to develop a system of care that meets kids' needs.

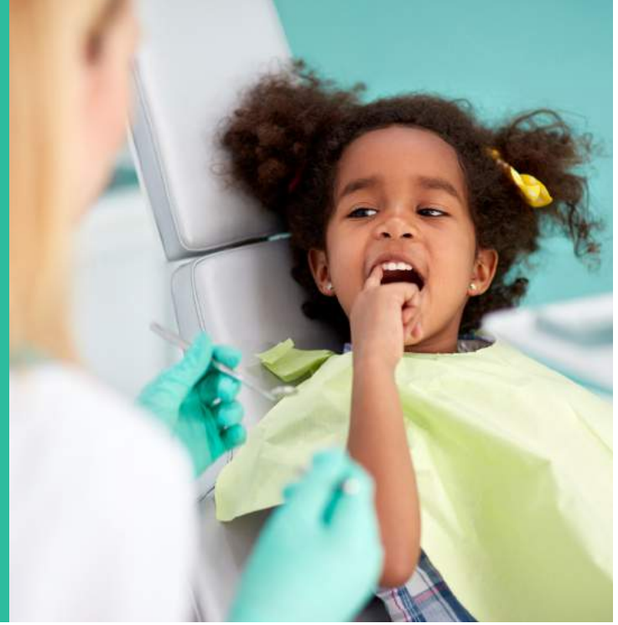
Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should increase access to mental and behavioral health services for all kids that need them, especially for those who have experienced trauma. Additionally, policymakers should reform the Medi-Cal mental health system, improve coordination between physical and mental health care, and expand the reach of school-based mental health services so that mental health screenings and basic services are provided at all early education and TK–12 sites.

Oral Health Care

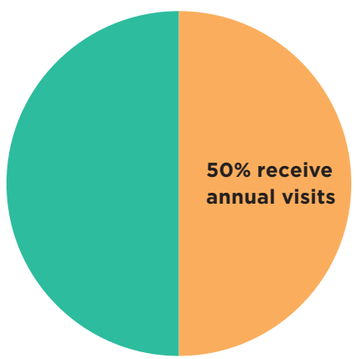
GRADE: C-

Tooth decay is the most common chronic illness among children.[1] Timely preventive dental services and treatment are essential to pregnant women's and children's overall health. Denti-Cal provides coverage for 5.2 million California children,[2] yet few of these children receive the services they need.



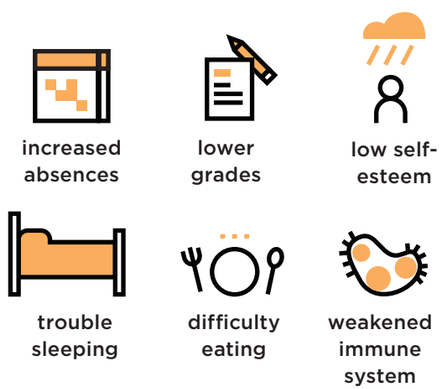
Kids are not receiving the recommended annual dental visits.

All Children 0-20 on Denti-Cal[3,4]



Oral health affects kids' overall health and academic success.

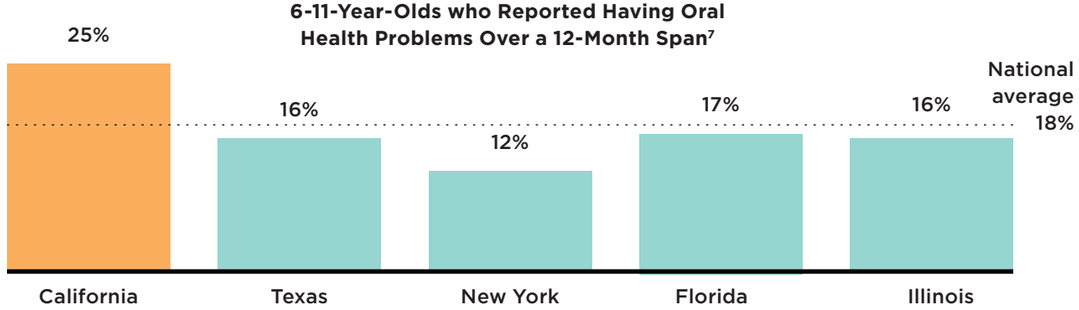
When oral health problems go untreated, children are at risk for experiencing negative academic, physical, and social-emotional consequences.[5]



While cavities, tooth decay, and associated tooth pain are nearly 100% preventable, poor oral health is one of the leading causes of school absences.[6]

California has the second worst rate in the nation when it comes to oral health problems in elementary aged children.

6-11-Year-Olds who Reported Having Oral Health Problems Over a 12-Month Span[7]



Progress Report

Little progress has been made to improve oral health outcomes for kids enrolled in Medi-Cal, who make up more than half of California's kids. The Dental Transformation Initiative, an effort by the California Department of Health Care Services, supports local pilot projects aimed at increasing access to preventive services and creating sustainable systems of care for kids in their communities. Also, a state oral health plan being implemented by local health departments includes the collection and reporting of kindergarteners' oral health status, which could help improve outcomes.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should ensure all kids have access to timely dental care and should invest in preventive services to treat kids where they are, including screenings in schools and early learning programs that can identify problems and refer kids to dental providers for treatment. Policymakers should also monitor promising local models like data-sharing agreements between a kid's doctor and dentist, using community health workers to help parents and caregivers make and keep appointments, and using virtual dental homes to bring care to areas where there is limited access.

School-Based Health Services

GRADE: D+

Children with access to school-based health services are more likely to receive health care and do better in school.[1] Services range from primary care and mental health, oral and vision screenings, to full-scale school-based health centers.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends one nurse per school, but California is far from hitting that goal.

CA Needs More Nurses for its Students[2,3]

6,228,235
TK-12 students

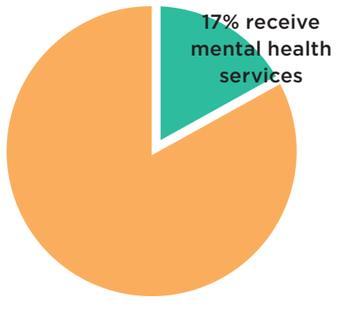
10,477
schools

2,630
nurses

Kids are not receiving the mental health care they need as part of their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

About 700,000 California children have a serious mental or behavioral health need, but only approximately 17% receive therapy or counseling as part of their IEPs.

Children with Serious Mental or Behavioral Health Needs[4]



Only 2% of California schools have school-based health centers (SBHCs).[5,6]

Children with access to SBHCs are more likely to receive critical physical and mental health services.

SBHCs offer the following services:

- medical
- health education
- dental prevention & treatment
- mental health
- youth engagement
- reproductive health screenings & clinical care

Progress Report

California has seen slow growth in school-based health services, and the state as a whole has failed to invest sufficient public resources in prioritizing care for students. Bright spots include passage of SB 379 (Atkins), which will strengthen the kindergarten oral health assessment process, and a limited ($30 million) state budget investment in the Scale-Up Multi-Tiered System of Support Statewide Initiative, which helps local educational agencies implement comprehensive tiered systems of support to address students' mental health, academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. A state-funded Los Angeles County pilot program to provide Medi-Cal-enrolled students with mobile vision services at their school site is also showing promising results.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should provide more school-based health services and increase the number of school-based health centers so that more kids are able to access physical, mental, vision, and dental health services at their schools. This will improve kids' well-being, increase their access to preventive care and lighten the load for families. In the near-term, the California Departments of Education and Health Care Services should work together to streamline financing for school districts that want to provide health care services to their students.

Food Security

GRADE: C-

Children who are food insecure may go to bed hungry. Food insecurity is paradoxically related to both hunger and obesity.[1] Children who are food insecure are more likely to develop serious and costly health conditions.[2,3]

More than 20% of California's kids are food insecure.[4]

Children who are food insecure are more likely to:[5]

repeat a grade in elementary school

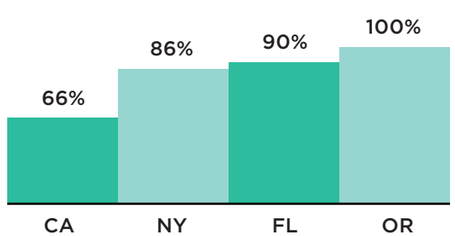
experience developmental delays

have more social and behavioral problems

California ranks among the bottom of the 50 states in federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participation.

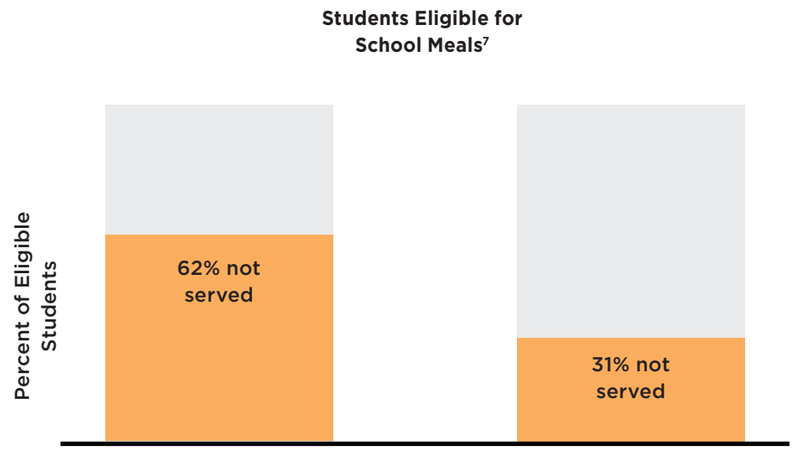
CalFresh, California's SNAP, helps families afford the food they need, yet many eligible families are not enrolled.

SNAP Participation Rates of Those Eligible[6]



For many kids, free and reduced-price school meals provide them with the food they need to make it through each day, yet these meals aren't reaching all eligible kids.

Students Eligible for School Meals[7]



Progress Report

California is not doing enough to ensure that kids have access to healthy food. The state has demonstrated the importance of improving school meal and CalFresh participation rates by reaching out to Medi-Cal participants and streamlining their enrollment in nutrition programs. However, participation rates are still very low, with too few kids and families served by nutrition assistance programs, federal funding left on the table, and missed opportunities to bolster kids' well-being.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California's policymakers should do whatever it takes to increase our state's low participation rates in child and family nutrition support programs. Policymakers should also focus on increasing access to healthy food choices for kids in and out of school, and supporting kids' physical activity. In the near-term, policymakers should reduce the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages by implementing a statewide soda tax.

Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention

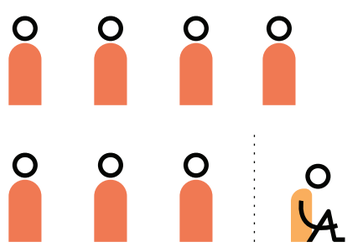
GRADE: D

Child abuse and neglect present serious threats to children's well-being. Providing prevention services, such as home visiting, can help prevent child maltreatment.[1]

Too many kids are victims of maltreatment.

In the US, 1 in 100 children are confirmed victims of child abuse and neglect each year.[2]

1 in 8 U.S. children will be a victim of maltreatment by age 18[3]



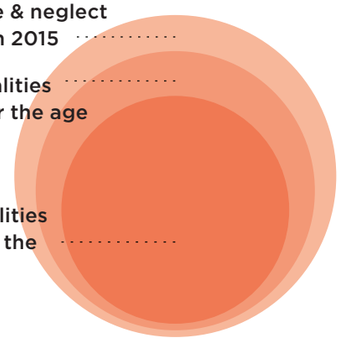
Kids who die from abuse and neglect are overwhelmingly very young.

Child abuse and neglect can be fatal, especially for young children[4]

1,585 child fatalities from abuse & neglect in the US in 2015

75% of fatalities were under the age of 3

50% of fatalities were under the age of 1



Programs that support parents and caregivers can help prevent child abuse and neglect.

For example, voluntary home visiting programs match new and expectant parents with trained staff who provide one-on-one support and education during the critical early years. Home visiting programs reinforce parent-child relationships, equip parents to nurture children's health and learning, and can have a positive impact on children.

Home visiting reduces:

child maltreatment[5]

later juvenile justice involvement[6]

family violence[7]

Home visiting improves:

school readiness[8]

maternal & child health[9]

family economic self-sufficiency[10]

Progress Report

The kids and youth of California deserve a more robust system of abuse and neglect prevention, including targeted support services for kids and families at risk of abuse and neglect. For example, home visiting programs have shown to reduce the occurence of child maltreatment, yet fewer than three percent of kids receive home visiting services.[11,12]

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must support a statewide prevention program for kids at risk of abuse and neglect. The program should support families, promote prevention services, keep kids safe from maltreatment, expand early identification and intervention services and, when possible, work to keep kids and families together.

Placement Stability & Permanent Connections

GRADE: C

A child that has a stable placement or finds a permanent home, through reunification with parents, guardianship or adoption, is more likely to receive the services and supports they need to heal and thrive.

Too many kids in foster care experience frequent placement changes, adding to their trauma.

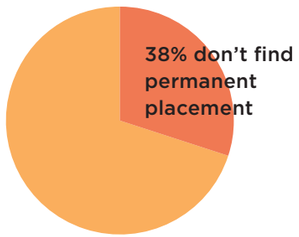
Providing more training and supports for foster parents as well as improving children in foster care's access to services in home-based settings can improve placement stability for children.

3+ **Nearly 28% of children in foster care for 12 months or longer experience 3 or more placement moves.[1]**

Too few kids in foster care exit to a permanent home.

Caregivers need services such as child care, social support, and ongoing therapeutic assistance to make permanency possible and successful.

Percent of children in foster care who don't find permanent placement within 12 months of care.[2]



Placement instability has adverse consequences for kids in foster care.

Different factors can contribute to the stability or instability of a placement, including how prepared foster families are to care for children in foster care and the effectiveness of matching foster families with children and youth.[3]

Multiple placement changes can negatively impact:[4]

ability to form healthy relationships

mental health and brain development

academic achievement

Progress Report

The state is implementing Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) to reduce the number of youth in institutional care and to ensure stable family placements for kids in foster care. To this end, the state is initiating many new efforts like the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children and Parenting Foster Youth. Included in the 2017-18 state budget, this innovative program addresses a huge barrier to stability: access to affordable child care. The state must promote more creative, targeted approaches like this in order to stabilize placements for kids in foster care, particularly for older kids, who have a more difficult time securing stable placement.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must ensure caregivers receive support and kids in foster care receive the services they need to thrive in a family setting, and should develop and implement policies to minimize both placement instability and youth institutionalization. The California Department of Social Services must carefully implement CCR to develop an improved system of supports and services and monitor outcomes for our state's kids in foster care.

Health Care for Kids in Foster Care

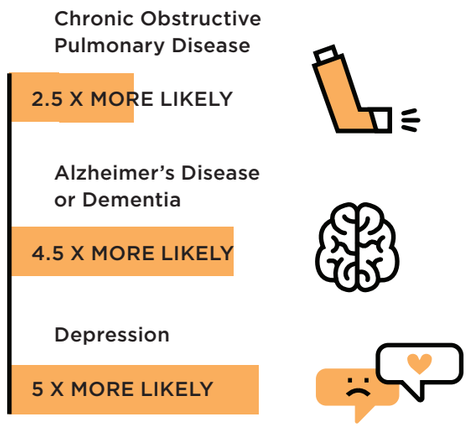
GRADE: C-

Children in foster care have experienced abuse, neglect, and other traumas, which can cause serious, ongoing physical and mental health difficulties.[1] Yet, there are barriers to accessing needed services, including lack of trauma-informed providers and limited availability.

Half of kids in foster care have endured four or more adverse childhood experiences.[2]

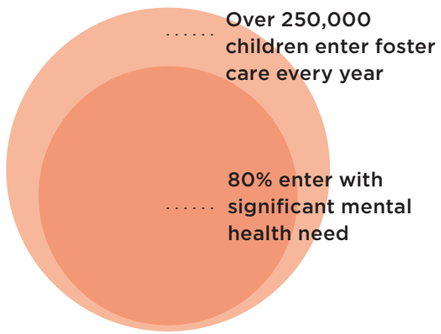
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) negatively impact the mental and physical health of youth in foster care. Children who endure multiple ACEs are more likely to develop negative health behaviors, chronic diseases, and depression in adulthood.

An adult with four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences is more likely to suffer from:[3]



Many kids in foster care need mental health services to heal from trauma.

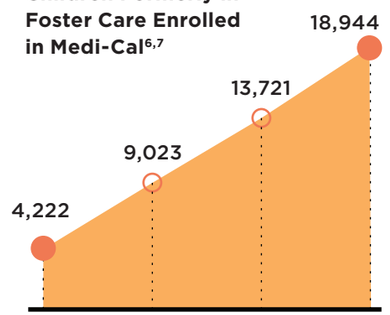
Percent of Children in Foster Care With a Significant Mental Health Need[4,5]



Health coverage helps ensure critical supports for kids aging out of care.

The number of children formerly in foster care covered by Medi-Cal until age 26 has more than quadrupled since the Affordable Care Act took effect.

Children Formerly in Foster Care Enrolled in Medi-Cal[6,7]



Progress Report

Kids formerly in foster care have increased access to health care due to ACA outreach and policy implementation efforts, but more work is needed to ensure kids receive timely, coordinated services while in foster care. Continuum of Care Reform and recent changes in state law provide an opportunity to improve timely access to mental health services for kids in foster care living in family settings, including kids who move across county lines.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should ensure that kids in foster care—who may experience a myriad of health difficulties due to their past trauma—have appropriate access to comprehensive health care, including the mental health services they need to heal from trauma. In the near-term, policymakers should increase state oversight and accountability to ensure kids in foster care have timely access to the full continuum of physical, mental, and oral health services.

Education Support for Students in Foster Care

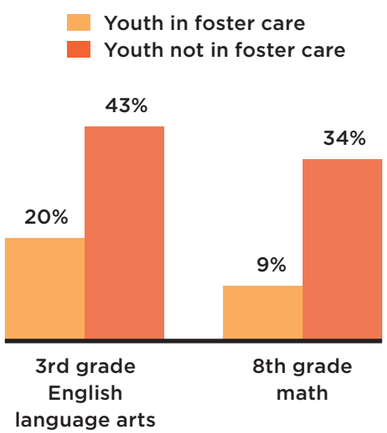
GRADE: D+

Due to multiple moves and school changes, missed school days, and trauma, youth in foster care face unique challenges to academic achievement. Targeted services and supports can help youth in care succeed in school and prepare for college and career attainment.

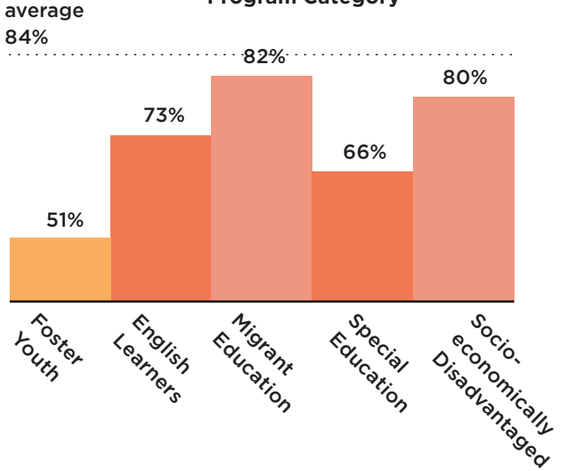
School transitions and trauma cause students in foster care to struggle to stay on track in school and graduate on time.

Students in foster care change public schools **an average of 3.5 times during the first four years of high school.**[1]

Percent of Students at Grade Level[2]



Graduation Rates of Traditionally Underserved Populations by Program Category[3]



While 80% of kids in foster care want a college degree, due to many barriers, only 24% actually enroll.[4]

Top Barriers to Enrollment for Youth in Foster Care[5]

Progress Report

The California Department of Education now releases academic achievement data for kids in foster care. This newly accessible data will ensure that the key levers of the Local Control Funding Formula (California's new school finance system)—transparency, targeted support, and accountability—will result in more attention and support for kids in foster care, a traditionally underserved population.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers must ensure that kids in foster care, who face unique educational barriers related to school instability, and trauma that can impair their ability to focus, receive the supports they need to succeed in school. In the near-term, policymakers can ensure that the new school finance system benefits students in foster care as intended, by keeping schools accountable to their success.

Youth Justice

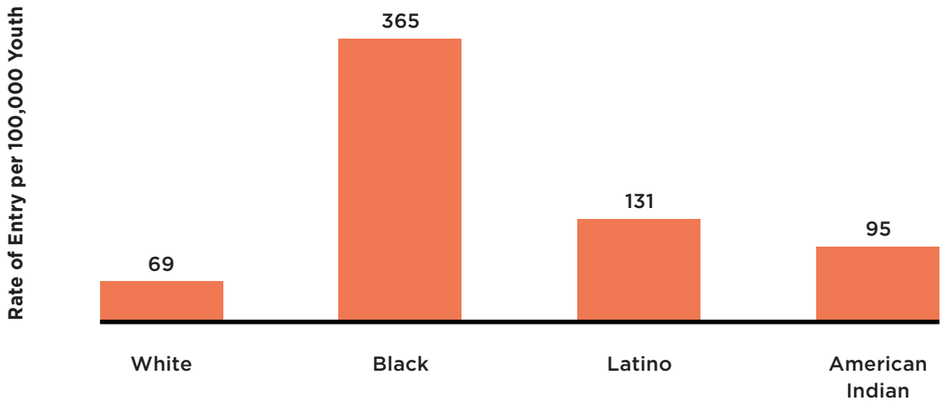
GRADE: D

Due to systemic inequities and racial bias, there is disproportionate representation of children of color and youth with child welfare involvement in the juvenile justice system.[1] Incarceration can often retraumatize youth, further jeopardizing their health and future success.[2]

Youth of color are over-represented in the juvenile justice system.

Systemic racial, and other inequities persist in the juvenile justice system resulting in disproportionate treatment for children of color for the same crimes committed by children who are White, from arrest through incarceration.[3]

Rate of Entry into the CA Juvenile Justice System[4]



Juvenile justice systems must become trauma-informed to help youth improve their outcomes.

Youth who are incarcerated with unaddressed trauma can be traumatized further. Outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system can be improved if efforts to screen, assess, treat, and prevent trauma are instituted.

Youth who are incarcerated are more likely to:[5]

- suffer from depression
- not further their education
- have suicidal thoughts
- be incarcerated as adults

Progress Report

While California's juvenile justice system is intended to rehabilitate youth, too often youth are only punished and retraumatized. Many youth enter the juvenile justice system having a prior history of trauma and involvement with the child welfare system; research shows that the juvenile justice system exposes them to further trauma.[6] Later health outcomes are also impacted, with youth who were formerly incarcerated demonstrating worse physical and mental health in adulthood compared to adults with no prior juvenile justice system involvement.

Pro-Kid® Agenda

California policymakers should incentivize evidence-driven investments and increase oversight of juvenile justice agencies. Trauma-responsive justice systems grounded in adolescent development yield better outcomes for youth, reduce racial inequities and increase public safety more effectively than punishment alone.

Endnotes

Demographics

1 Kids Count Data Center (2016). Child population by age group, 2016. Retrieved on December 5, 2017, from http://datacenter.kidscount.org

2 Kids Count Data Center (2016). Child population by race, 2016. Retrieved on December 5, 2017, from http://datacenter.kidscount.org

3 Ibid, 1.

4 Kids Count Data Center (2016). Children below 200 percent poverty, 2016. Retrieved on December 5, 2017, from http://datacenter.kidscount.org

5 Kids Count Data Center (2016). Children in poverty (100 percent poverty), 2016. Retrieved on December 5, 2017, from http://datacenter.kidscount.org

6 Feeding America (2017). Map the Meal Gap 2017: Child Food Insecurity in California by County in 2015. Retrieved from http://www.feedingamerica.org/research/map-the-meal-gap/2015/MMG_AllCounties_CDs_CFI_2015_1/CA_AllCounties_CDs_CFI_2015.pdf

7 Kids Count Data Center (2015). Children in immigrant families, 2015. Retrieved on December 5, 2017, from http://datacenter.kidscount.org

8 California Department of Education (2017). Facts about English Learners in California- CalEdFacts. Retrieved from https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/cefelfacts.asp

9 California Department of Health Care Services (2017). Medi-Cal Statistical Brief: Medi-Cal's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Population. Retrieved from http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/statistics/Pages/RASD_Statistical_Briefs.aspx

10 Kids Count Data Center (2015). Children in foster care, 2015. Retrieved on December 5, 2017, from http://datacenter.kidscount.org

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1 Kidsdata (2014). Availability of Child Care for Potential Demand, child care needs of working parents for children ages 0-12 in California. Retrieved on November 30, 2017, from http://www.kidsdata.org/

2 Ibid, 1.

3 California Department of Education (2016). 2016 Regional Market Rate Survey of California Child Care Providers Final Report. Retrieved from https://cappa.memberclicks.net/assets/CDE/2016-17/2016%20ca%20market%20rate%20survey%20final%20report%202.pdf
The yearly rate for full-time infant care in a licensed care center is from the mean monthly rates for full-time infant care in a licensed child care center from Table 4-5: 2016 Mean Child Care Rate Responses with Conversions, Weighted by Enrollment.

4 Office of the President, Budget Analysis and Planning (2015). 2015-16 Tuition and Fee Levels. Retrieved from http://ucop.edu/operating-budget/_files/fees/201516/documents/2015-16.pdf
The annual UC tuition rate is based on full-time undergraduate rates for California residents for annual system wide charges for tuition and student service fee for the 2015-16 school year.

5 California Health Care Almanac (2016). Maternity Care in California: Delivering the Data. Retrieved from http://www.chcf.org/~/media/MEDIA%20LIBRARY%20Files/PDF/PDF%20M/PDF%20MaternityCareCalifornia2016.pdf

6 Melnick, H., Tinubu Ali, T. Gardner, M., Maier, A., & Wechsler, M. (2017). Understanding California's early care and education system. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Understanding_CA_Early_Care_Education_System_REPORT.pdf"
Based on LPI analysis of 2015 ACS population data. More recent LPI analysis suggests that the percentage of eligible children served in 2017 was similar to 2015. When the Legislature updated the income eligibility guidelines in July 2017 more children became eligible, yet more children were also served in 2017.

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1 U.S. Census Bureau (2016). American Fact Finder, Table: S1401. Retrieved on December 7, 2017, from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t

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3 Melnick, H., Tinubu Ali, T. Gardner, M., Maier, A., & Wechsler, M. (2017). Understanding California's early care and education system. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Understanding_CA_Early_Care_Education_System_REPORT.pdf

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2 Melnick, H., Tinubu Ali, T. Gardner, M., Maier, A., & Wechsler, M. (2017). Understanding California's early care and education system. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Understanding_CA_Early_Care_Education_System_REPORT.pdf

3 Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016). U.S. Department of Labor, May 2015 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates California. Retrieved from https://www.bls.gov/oes/2015/may/oes_ca.htm

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2 California Department of Education (2017). Facts about English Learners in California- CalEdFacts. Retrieved from https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/cefelfacts.asp

3 Ibid, 1.

4 Ibid, 1.

5 Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Addressing California's growing teacher shortage: 2017 update. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/addressing-californias-growing-teacher-shortage-2017-update-report

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3 National Center for Education Statistics (2014). Tables 203.40 and 213.20. Retrieved on November 15, 2017, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/2016menu_tables.asp
Children Now analysis of National Center of Education's 2016 Digest Tables for Fall 2014.

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1 The Nation's Report Card (2015). State Profiles: State Performance Compared to the Nation. Retrieved from https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/profiles/stateprofile?chort=2&sub=SCI&sj=AL&sfj=NP&st=MN&year=2015R3

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"Asian" includes the weighted average of number of students who were proficient and number of students with scores of both "Asian" and "Filipino" subgroups. "Other" includes the weighted average of number of students who were proficient and number of students with scores of subgroups from 2 or more races.

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White and Black populations compared to the overall population for teachers or students, excluding the "no response" or "none reported" categories.

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3 Okonofua, J. A. & Eberhardt, J. L. (2015). Two Strikes: Race and the disciplining of young students. Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25854276

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5 Adams, J. (2017). Most teachers in California say they need more training in alternatives to suspensions, survey finds. Retrieved from https://edsource.org/2017/most-teachers-in-california-say-they-need-more-training-in-alternatives-to-suspensions-survey-finds/581195

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1 Office of the California Attorney General (2016). In School and On Track. Attorney General's 2016 Report on California's Elementary School Truancy & Absenteeism Crisis. Retrieved from https://oag.ca.gov/truancy
Children Now graphic combined Level 3 Standard Met and Level 4 Standard Exceeded to determine the percent of students at grade level on the 2014-15 SBAC.

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Categories corresponded to enrollment thresholds of highest poverty is 75%-100%, high poverty is 50-74%, medium poverty 25-49%, and low poverty is 0-24%. Low-income enrollment was determined through Free and Reduced Meal Program Eligibility and total enrollment. Preschools and nonpublic, nonsectarian schools were excluded from this analysis.

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Children Now is dedicated to ensuring every California child, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, can reach his or her full potential. The organization conducts nonpartisan, whole-child research, policy development, and advocacy to improve children's health, education, and well-being in California.

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PRO-KID

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