

Health

Confidence in the Ability to Get Children Medical Care



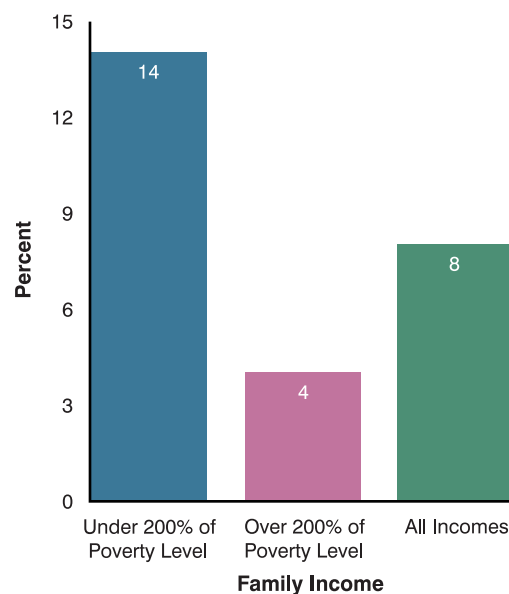
One way of assessing how well the health care system is serving children is by determining how confident parents are that they can get medical care for their children when they need it. If the persistent number of children lacking health insurance or the growing concern about the rights of patients in managed care has undermined parents' confidence, the system may not be meeting children's needs.

Parents were asked to rate their confidence about getting medical care for their children when needed by choosing the phrase that best described their feeling. Those who chose "not confident at all" or "not too confident" were classified as not confident.

At the national level, 8 percent of children under age 18 had parents who were not confident that they could get necessary medical care. However, there was a considerable difference in confidence between families with low incomes (below 200 percent of the federal poverty level) and those with higher incomes. Only 4 percent of children in higher-income families had parents who were not confident of their ability to obtain needed medical care, compared to 14 percent of children in low-income families. This is a statistically significant difference.

There was little variation in confidence among higher-income families across the 13 states surveyed, and few states differed from the national average. The one that differed most was Florida, where 8 percent of children from higher-income families had parents who were not confident about their ability to get needed care.

Children Whose Parents Are Not Confident of Getting Them Medical Care, by Family Income, 1997



Source: Urban Institute



Assessing the New Federalism

An Urban Institute Program to Assess Changing Social Policies



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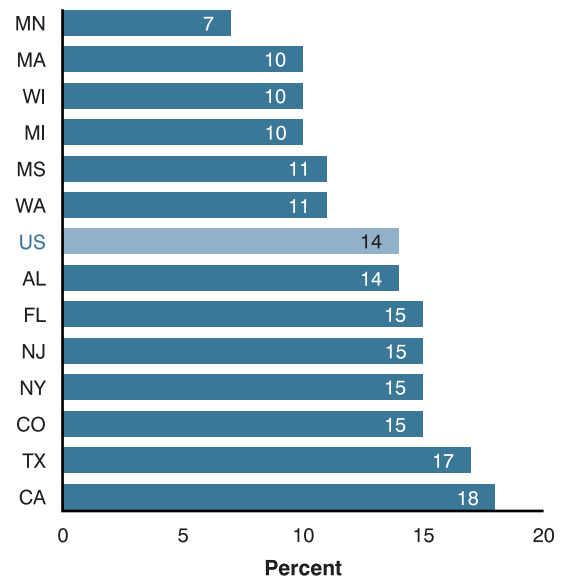


This *Snapshot* presents findings from the National Survey of America's Families (NSAF), a 1997 survey of 44,461 households with and without telephones that are representative of the nation as a whole and of 13 states. As in all surveys, the data are subject to sampling variability and other sources of error.

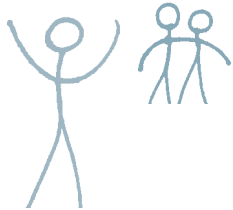
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Among low-income families, confidence in the ability to get needed medical care for children varied considerably more. In six states, low-income parents were less likely than the national average to lack confidence: Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Washington, and Wisconsin. In California, 18 percent of low-income children had parents with no confidence in their ability to get care, above the national average of 14 percent.

Low-Income Children Whose Parents Are Not Confident of Getting Them Medical Care, by State, 1997



Source: Urban Institute



Children (%) Whose Parents Are Not Confident of Getting Them Medical Care, 1997

Family Income	AL	CA	CO	FL	MA	MI	MN	MS	NJ	NY	TX	WA	WI	US
Under 200% of poverty level	14.1	18.5	15.5	15.0	9.6	10.5	6.8	11.5	14.7	14.6	16.9	11.5	10.1	14.2
Over 200% of poverty level	3.7	4.5	4.6	8.0	3.2	3.7	2.4	4.8	4.3	5.1	5.0	3.9	2.2	3.9
All incomes	8.7	11.5	8.3	11.3	5.1	6.0	3.7	8.6	7.3	9.2	10.9	6.6	4.8	8.3

Figures in color represent statistically significant differences from the national average at the .05 confidence level. Figures in black are not statistically significantly different from the national average. All figures in text, charts, and table are rounded.

Source: Urban Institute