HEALTH OF ALASKA CHILDREN
2018 Kids Count Report

INSURANCE & ACCESS

- 90% of Alaska children under 19 years of age have INSURANCE COVERAGE.
- 1/3 of children do NOT have a regular HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

- 94% of children are in EXCELLENT or very good health.
- 79% of children have teeth in EXCELLENT or very good condition.
- 26% of children (10 to 17) are OVERWEIGHT or obese.

- 19% of CHILDREN (ages 2 to 17) had a doctor who said they had autism, developmental delays, depression or anxiety, ADD/ADHD, or behavioral/conduct problems.

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)

- 56% of children have 0-1 ACE.
- 21% of children have 2+ ACE.

RISK BEHAVIORS

- 13% of high school students reported USING TOBACCO during the past month.
- 23% of high school students reported DRINKING ALCOHOL during the past month.
- 22% of high school students have used MARIJUANA one or more times during the past month.

- 10% of Alaska high school students reported having SEX with 4 OR MORE PARTNERS during their lifetime.
ALASKA CHILDREN

Children make up 25 percent of Alaska’s total population.

CHILD POPULATION

0 to 4 = 54,115 (16%)
5 to 11 = 73,401 (29%)
12 to 14 = 29,721 (16%)
15 to 17 = 30,090 (39%)

187,300
CHILDREN between the ages of 0 and 17 LIVE IN ALASKA

PERCENT OF CHILD POPULATION (0-19), BY REGION

- Anchorage: 81,772 (39%)
- Gulf Coast Region: 21,027 (9%)
- Interior Region: 31,041 (15%)
- Matanuska-Susitna: 31,704 (15%)
- Northern Region: 9,424 (5%)
- Southeast Region: 18,054 (7%)
- Southwest Region: 14,109 (10%)

RECOMMENDATIONS

PRIORITIZE PREVENTION
Preventing, or limiting health issues from occurring, minimizes or eliminates overall health and cost impacts.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO BIRTH CONTROL OPTIONS
Most employers’ healthcare plans cover well-baby care, whereas less than half cover contraceptive devices or drugs to prevent unplanned pregnancies. Unplanned or unwanted pregnancies have a direct relationship with the risk of a child experiencing child abuse and neglect.

PREVENT ACEs AND BUILD RESILIENCE
A powerful body of research shows that what a child experiences during the early years (starting in utero) lays the foundation for their whole life. Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences and building resilience in children and families will have long term social and health benefits.

PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS
The Alaska Maternal and Child Death Review (MCDR) aims to identify causes and contributing factors to maternal, infant, and child deaths in Alaska and develop recommendations to prevent future deaths. MCDR’s recommendations to ensure the long life of all children should be followed.

CONTAIN COSTS
Increasing the tax on high risk substances can lead to a significant decrease in utilization and lessen health impacts. Tax revenue can be dedicated to prevention, outreach, and education.

SUPPORT MEDICAID
Alaska should evaluate changes to the structure, capacity, and financial stability of Medicaid to support the health care needs of the uninsured and other vulnerable populations. Any change that results in lower coverage should be viewed as a cut to children’s health care.

INCREASE INSURANCE COVERAGE
All children need reliable and comprehensive health insurance. Alaska has the highest rate of uninsured children in the country, 11%.

COORDINATE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM REFORM
Expanding coverage and reforming health care payment/delivery must happen together. Coverage expansion is critical to fully address the underuse of effective care. Successful payment and delivery reform is needed to improve the quality of care and slow cost growth.

Sources: 1) Alaska Section of Health Analytics and Vital Records. 2) PRB analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data: National Center for Health Statistics, CDC Wonder 2016 birth data. 3) U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2016 Small Area Health Insurance Estimates using the American Community Survey (ACS) Data; Retrieved April 2018. 4) National Survey of Children’s Health. 5) Alaska Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey (CUBS) for 2008-2016. 6) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Childhood combined 7-vaccine series coverage report. 7) Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBISS). 8) U.S. Census Bureau. 9) Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

All data included in this brief reflects the most recent year available, usually 2016, and can be found at http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#AK/. The content is described in detail in the report 2018 Kids Count Education available at http://www.voicesakchildren.org/publications/. Compilation and analysis of the data was completed by the McDowell Group.