



# Children's Oral Health and Use of Dental Services

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# Children's Oral Health Status



## Oral conditions in children

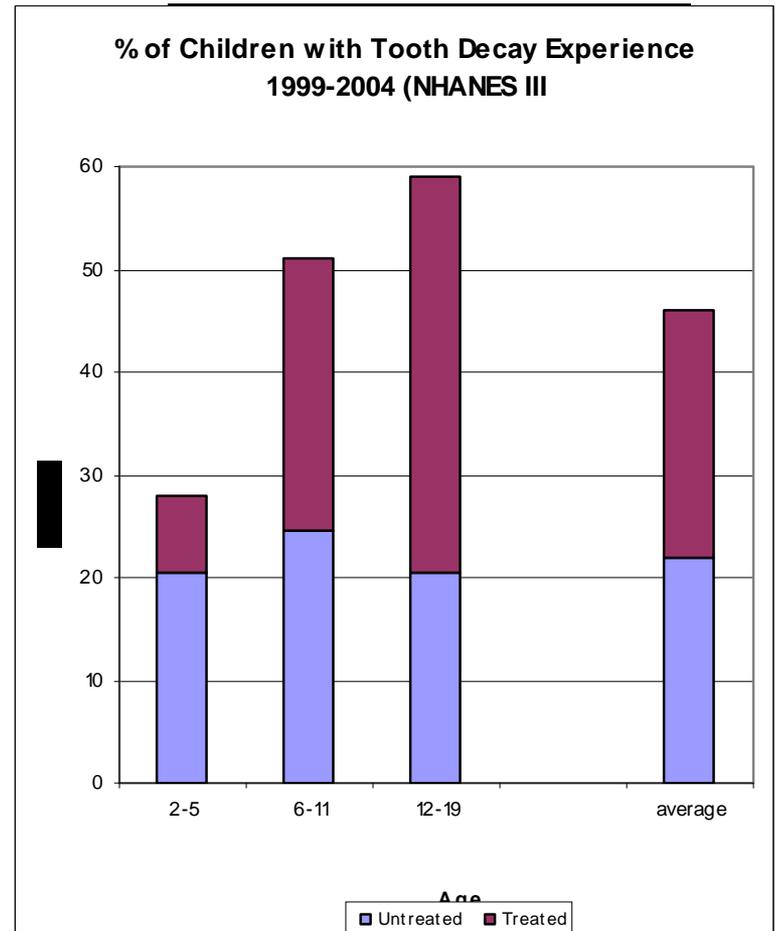
- Tooth Decay: most prevalent disease of US children
- Periodontal diseases
- Malocclusions
- Developmental disturbances
- Mucosal lesions
- Traumatic injuries
- Oral manifestations of systemic diseases

# Children's Tooth Decay Status

## What we know

- **Overall highly prevalent & increase with age**
- Disparities by race & income
- Disparities by special needs
- Long term trend may be negative

## How we know it

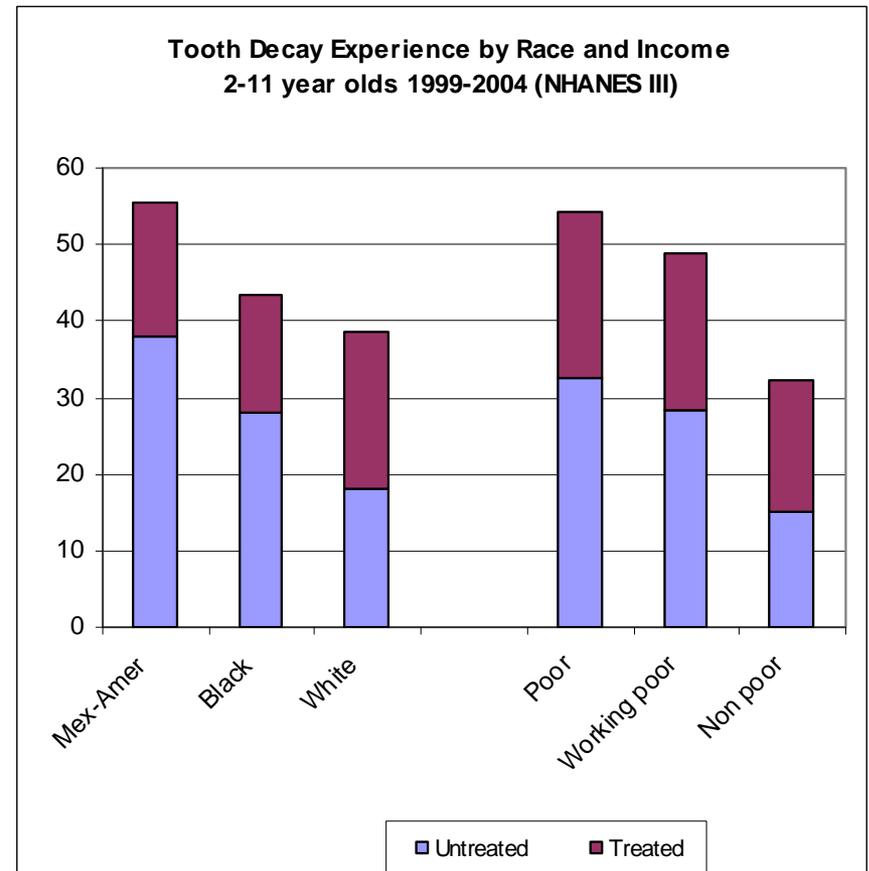


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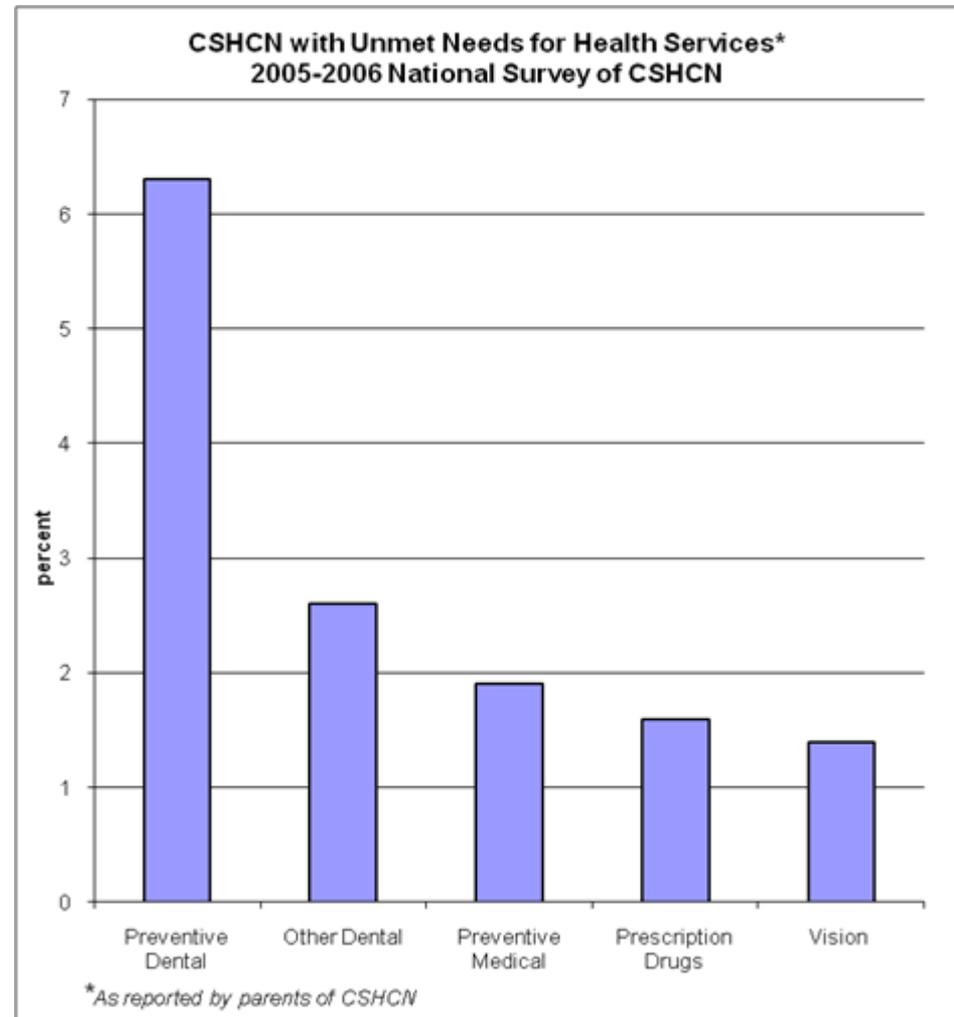


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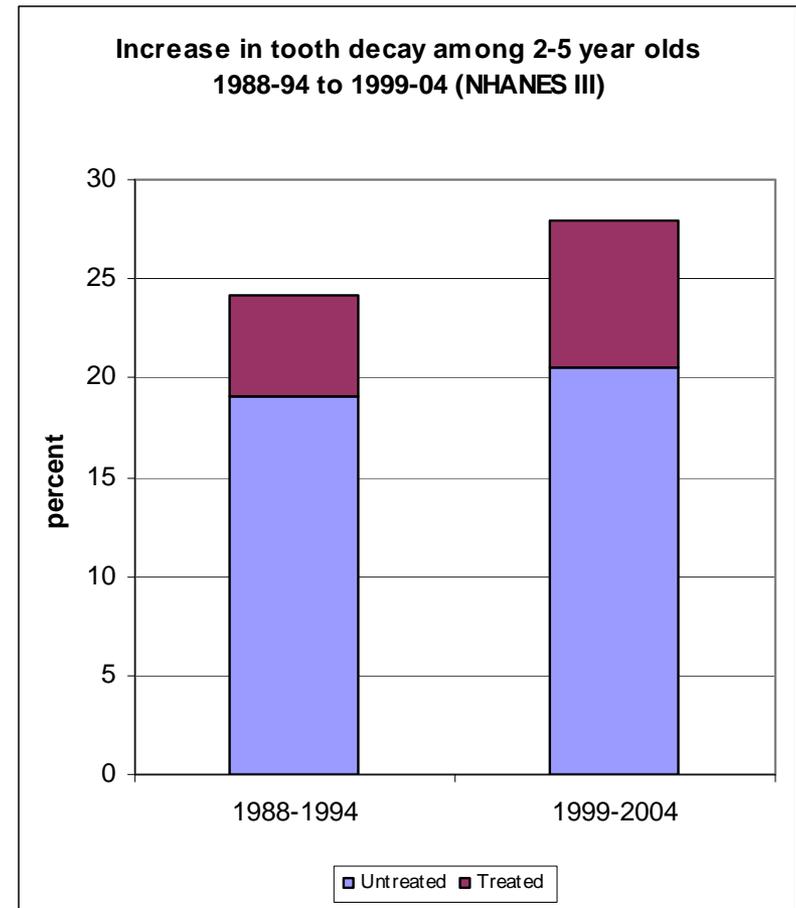


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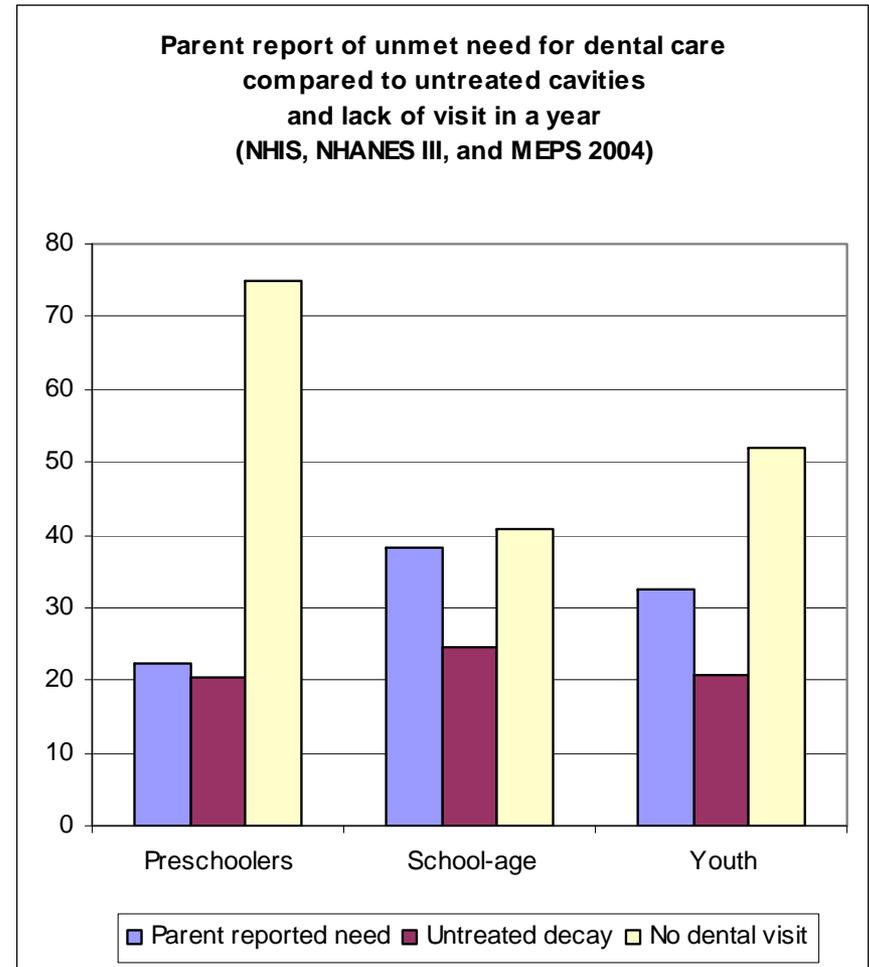
# Accuracy of Parental Reports of Oral Health Status

Parents are good-to-optimistic reporters of their children's oral health status

- Children: "A parent questionnaire is less effective than visual screening for evaluating oral health status in children."  
Beltran et al JPHD 1997

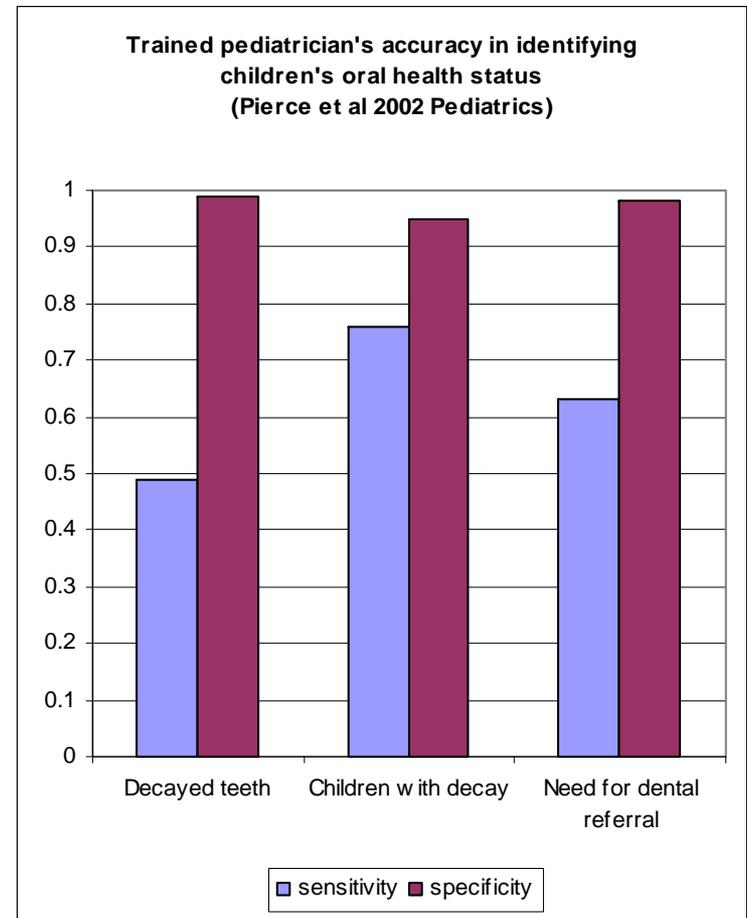
- Teens: "Parents and adolescents exhibited only modest concordance on ... adolescent's oral health status and need for ...treatment. Parents tended to rate their adolescent's oral health ...as better than did the adolescent."

Weyant et al CDOE 2007



# Accuracy of Pediatrician Reports of Oral Health Status

Small study of pediatricians showed that after a 2 hour training course they accurately identified good oral health but were less able to identify problems

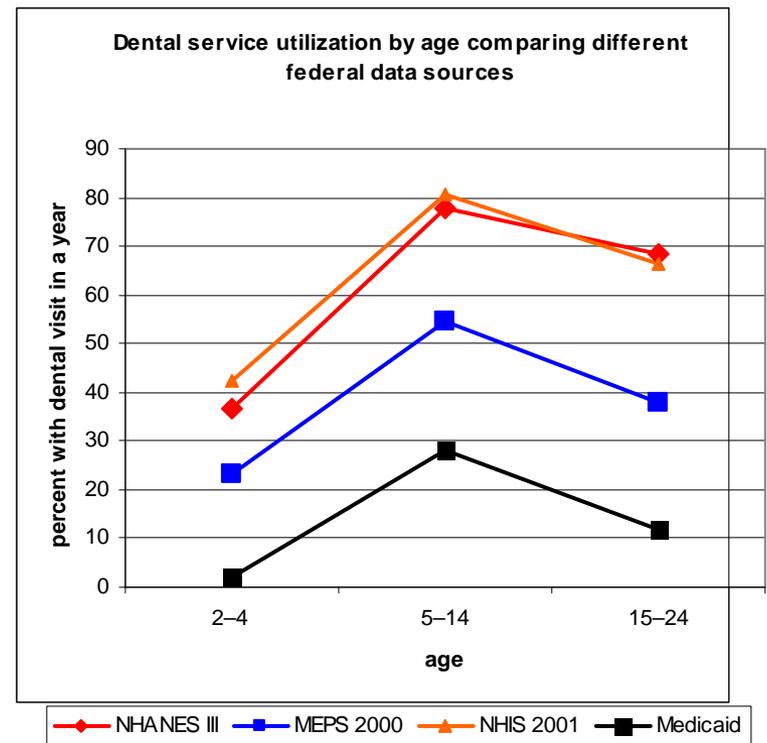


# Children's use of dental services

## What we know

- **Overall about half of children receive a dental visit in a year**
- Disparities by race & income
- Disparities by special needs
- Parents overstate dental visits

## How we know it

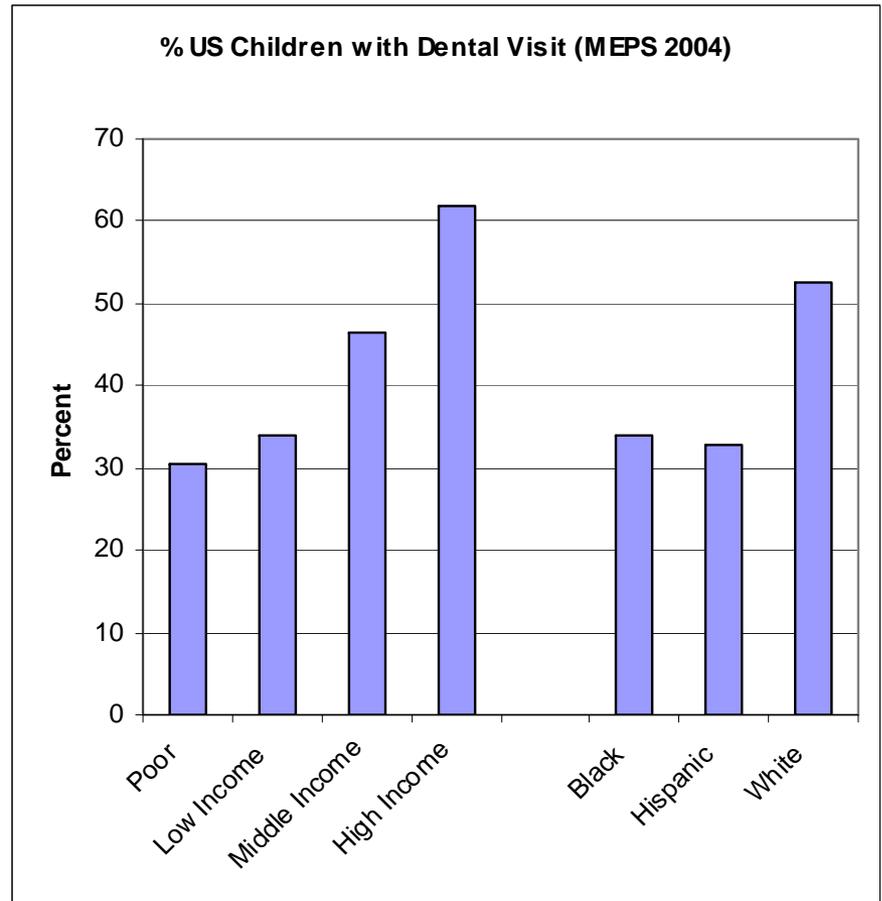


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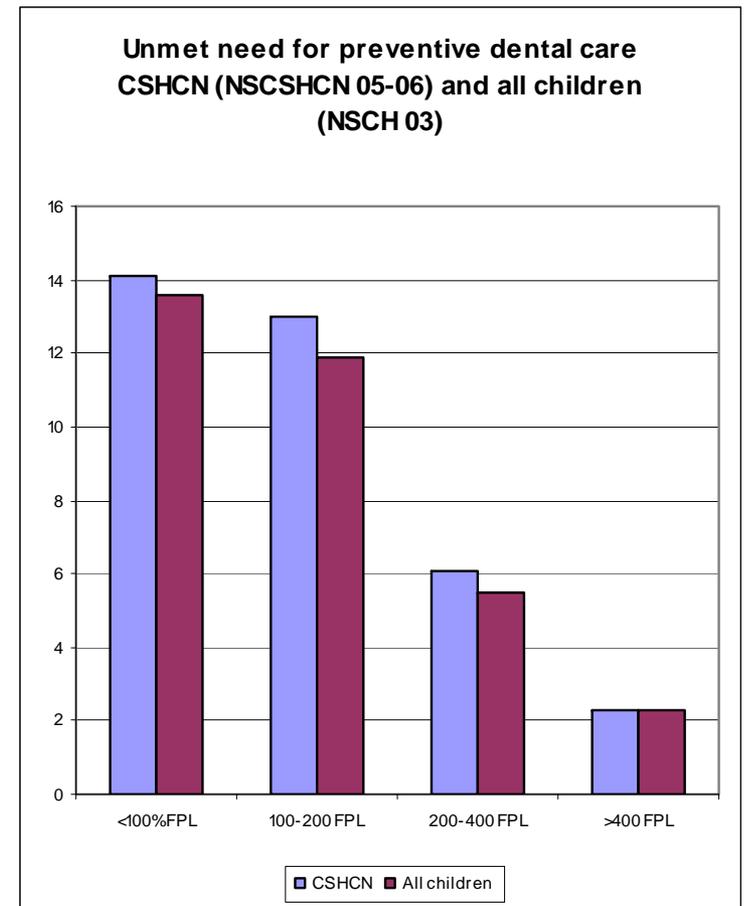


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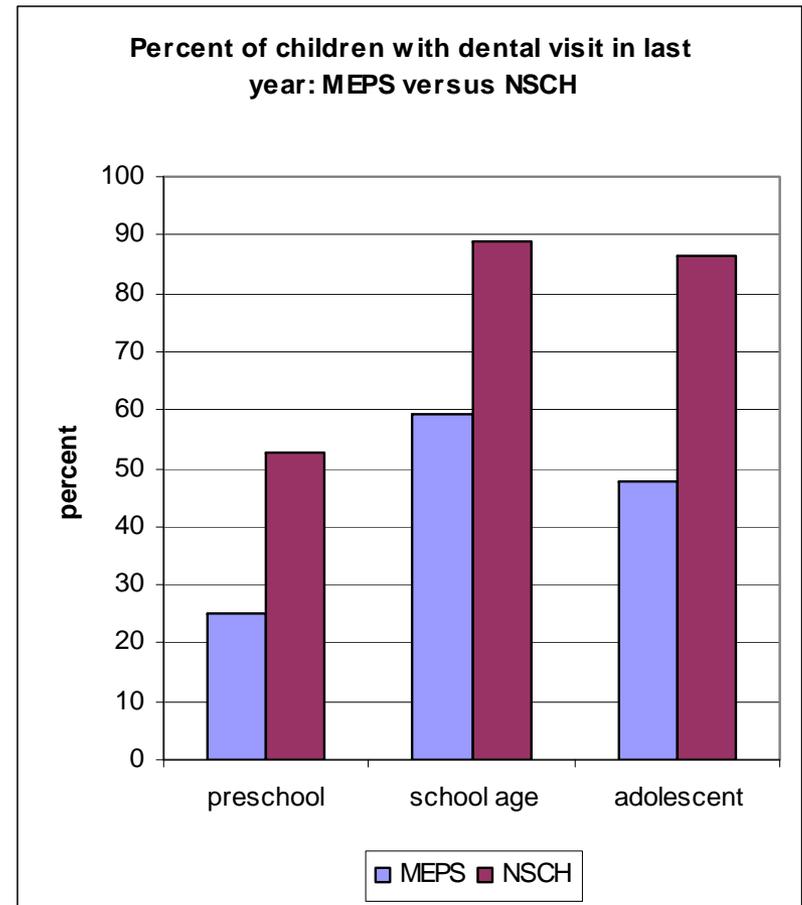


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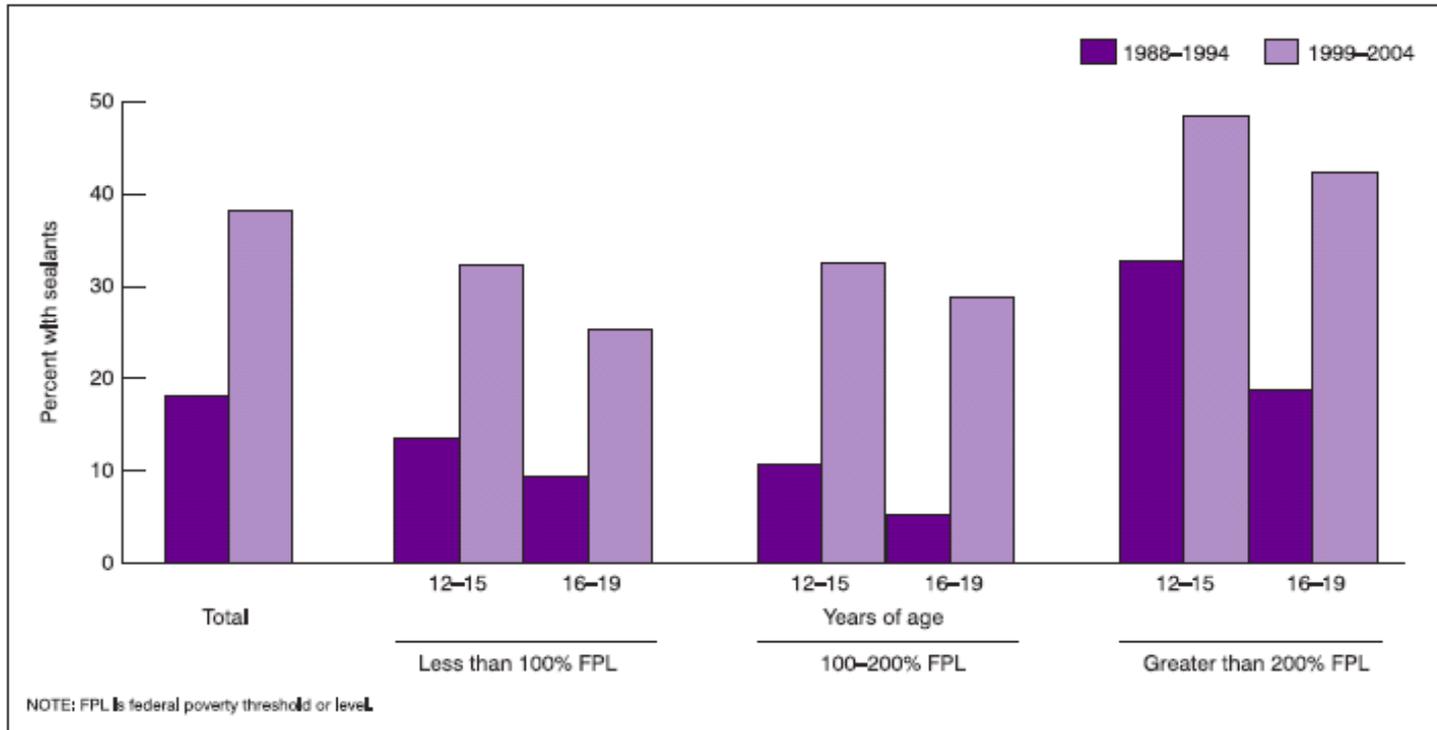
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# National sealant prevalence



Sealant rates are increasing nationally for all children.

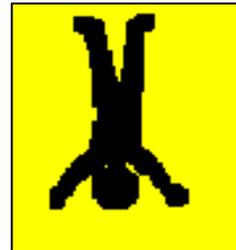
Rates are lowest for poor children who experience the most cavities.

Fewer than 50% of US children have sealants by time they are teens.

# Subpopulations of interest

## Take Home Messages

- Children with greatest oral health needs have least access to dental care
- Particularly impacted are the poor, very young, & CSHCN
- Early prevention intervention is the key to reducing disease burden



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# Data use in policymaking and programming



Sound data presentations are a necessary but not sufficient argument for progressive MCH oral health programming & policymaking

# Making oral health data useful for program management & policymaking

1. Identify data most useful for program/policy issue under consideration
2. Identify data most relevant to the particular managers/policymakers involved
3. Present the data clearly, succinctly, & accurately
4. Frame the data in terms most useful to support the program/argument and most defensible to challenge by opponents
5. Never, ever, even remotely stretch the data to support the program/cause

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