



# Oral Health

## Among Illinois Children with Special Health Care Needs

Illinois Disability and Health Program

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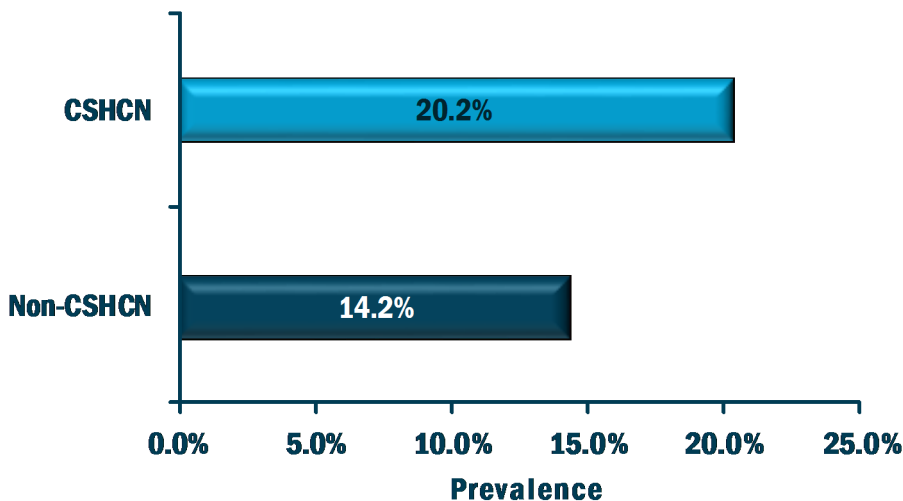
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In Illinois, one in five children with special health care needs (CSHCN) have oral health problems. CSHCN are defined by the Department of Health and Human Services as: “those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”<sup>1</sup>

Figure 1 shows the proportion of Illinois children, ages 1-17, whose parent or guardian reported their child having toothaches, decayed teeth and/or unfilled cavities in the past twelve months across two groups: children with and without special health care needs. The top bar in the figure shows that 20.2% of children with special healthcare needs had one or more aforementioned oral health problems. Shown in the bottom bar is the rate, 14.2%, for children without special health care needs. The difference between the two groups was not statistically significant.

Oral health is one of the areas where children with special health care needs frequently have unmet health care needs.<sup>2</sup> National data suggested that a significantly higher rate of children with special health care needs had oral health problems compared to children without special health care needs, 22.0% vs. 17.9%, respectively.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1: Percent of Illinois Children who have Oral Health Problems by the Presence of Special Health Care Needs



Data Source: 2011 National Survey of Children’s Health

### References

1. McPherson, M., Arango, P., Fox, H., et al. A new definition of children with special health care needs. *Pediatrics*, 102(1):137-140, 1998.
2. Lewis, C., Robertson, A. S., & Phelps, S. (2005). Unmet dental care needs among children with special health care needs: implications for the medical home. *Pediatrics*, 116(3), e426-e431.
3. National Survey of Children's Health. NSCH 2011/12. Data query from the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health website. Retrieved 06/01/15 from [www.childhealthdata.org](http://www.childhealthdata.org).