

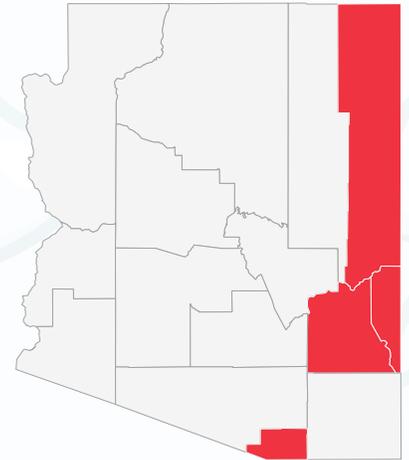


## Racial, Ethnic, and Economic disparities persist in access to Medicaid dental care for AZ kids

A study by [ASU's College of Health Solutions](#) looked at the availability of pediatric dental providers who treat children who have health coverage through Arizona's Medicaid system (known as the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, or AHCCCS). In most of Arizona, the survey found truly encouraging results: children able to access care quickly and near where they live, whether they participate in AHCCCS or have private health insurance.

Unfortunately, children living in four Arizona counties are not so fortunate. The ASU survey could not identify a single pediatric dental provider\* who serves children through AHCCCS in Apache, Greenlee, Graham, or Santa Cruz counties. For children living in these areas, inadequate access to quality pediatric dental care poses a significant barrier to achieving oral health equity.

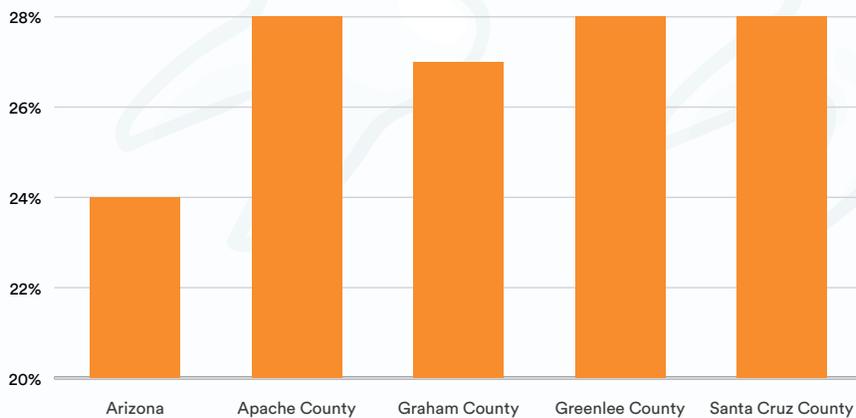
As the graphs below indicate, children living in these four areas are more likely to live in families with low-incomes, more likely to qualify for AHCCCS or KidsCare, and more likely to identify as American Indian / Alaska Native or Latinx. Without a robust network of pediatric oral health providers, these children face significant barriers to care, which in turn may impact their overall wellbeing, self-esteem, and performance in school well into the future. [\(source\)](#)



By improving access to oral health care, we can promote equity and realize a better future for all Arizona children.

### Children make up a higher percentage of the population in Arizona counties without Medicaid-contracted pediatric dentists.

Percent of population under 18

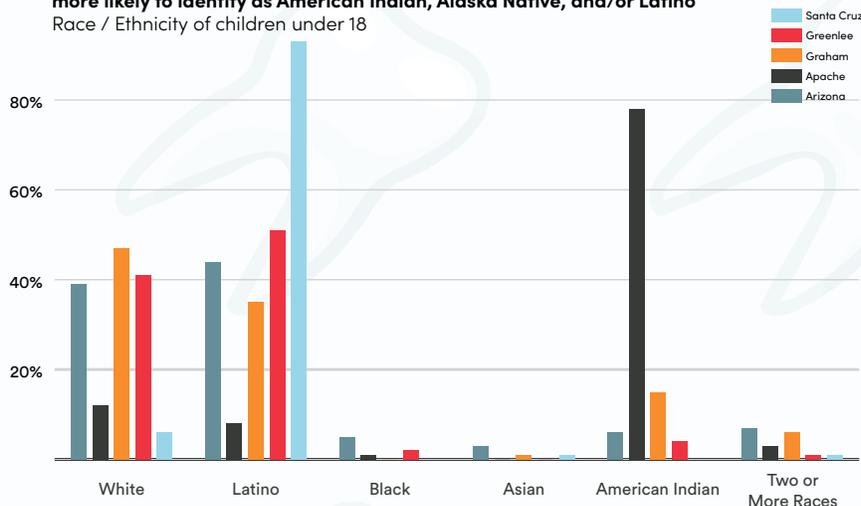


[U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey \(5 Year Estimates- 2018\); Table B01001 SEX BY AGE](#)

In the four counties without an AHCCCS-contracted pediatric dentist, children under age 18 make up a higher proportion of the population than in the state as a whole.

### In the four Arizona counties without Medicaid-contracted pediatric dentist, children are more likely to identify as American Indian, Alaska Native, and/or Latino

Race / Ethnicity of children under 18



[U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey \(5 Year Estimates-2018\); Table B17024<sup>1</sup>](#)

American Indian/ Alaska Native and Latinx Arizonans continue to face systemic discrimination and other barriers to accessing health care.

\*Though dentists in these areas may see children enrolled in AHCCCS health plans, researchers identified no dentists in these counties that specialize in pediatric dentistry according to the AHCCCS plan directories. Current medical guidelines advise that children see a dentist regularly starting at the time their first tooth appears or by age 1. Dentists without a pediatric specialty may be unable or unwilling to serve very young children.

**In most counties without an AHCCCS–contracted pediatric dentist, children are most likely to live in low-income households.**

Median family income for households with children under 18

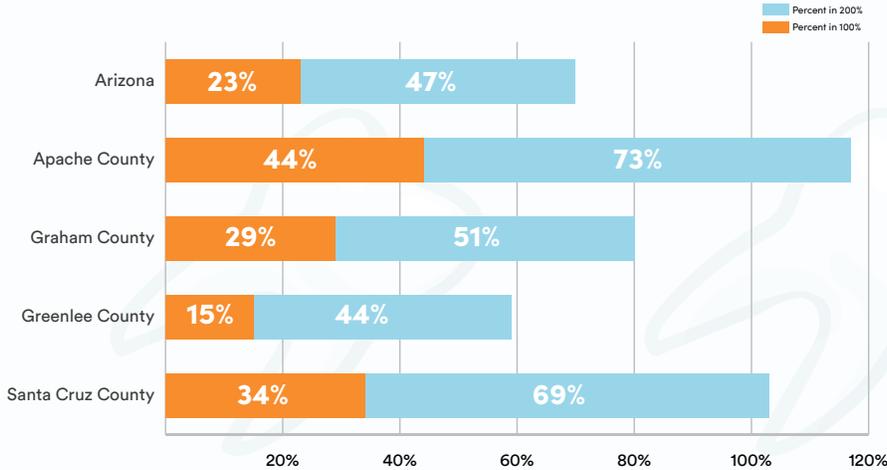


[U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey \(5 Year Estimates-2018\); Table B19126<sup>2</sup>](#)

Children in most counties without an AHCCCS–contracted pediatric dentist are more likely to live in households that earn less than the median yearly income for households across Arizona. Families in Apache and Santa Cruz counties earn significantly less than the median.

**Based on family income, children in most counties without an AHCCCS–contracted pediatric dentist are likely to qualify for health coverage through Medicaid or CHIP.**

Percent of children under 18 living below 100% & 200% of the federal poverty line.

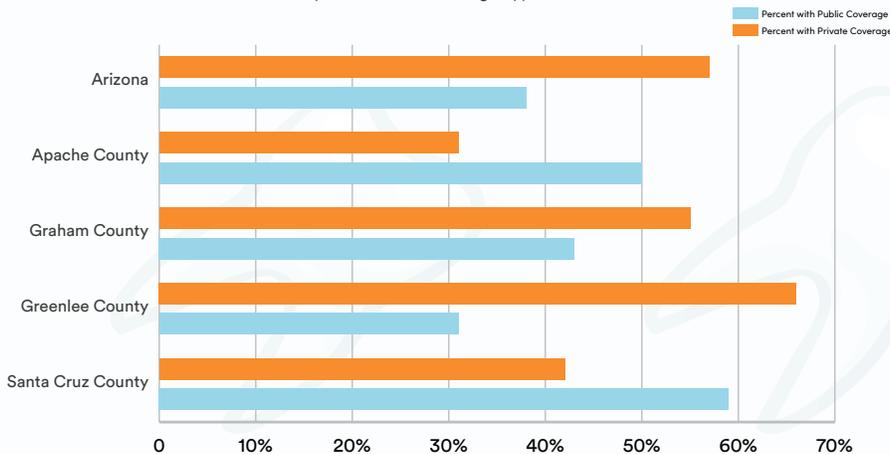


[U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey \(5 Year Estimates-2018\); Table B17001](#)

Children living in most of the identified counties are likely to qualify for health coverage through Medicaid or CHIP (AHCCCS / KidsCare) based on family income as a percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

**AHCCCS and KidsCare cover a large proportion of children living in regions without an AHCCCS–contracted pediatric dental provider.**

Percent of children under 18 by insurance coverage type



[U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey \(5 Year Estimates-2018\); Table S2704](#)

Public insurance programs like Medicaid and CHIP cover a large proportion of children living in regions without Medicaid–contracted pediatric dental providers.