

To gather additional data on the health status of children entering the school system and to better track student health status, the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP), in partnership with the Clark County School District, Nevada school district superintendents, the Nevada Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Comprehensive Services Office, and the Nevada State Health Division, conducted a health survey of children entering kindergarten in Nevada. In the fall of 2009, NICRP distributed questionnaires to all public elementary schools in the state, with the exception of schools in Esmeralda and Clark counties. Esmeralda County, a rural county with 5 kindergarteners enrolled in the 2009-2010 school year, chose not to participate in the survey, while the Clark County School District requested that only a sample of their schools be included in the survey.

The survey had an overall response rate of 39.2 percent, with a total of 9,504 surveys received from parents in 16 school districts statewide. Survey respondents from Clark County comprised 59.0 percent of the sample, while 17.6 percent of respondents were from Washoe County and 23.4 percent were from the remaining rural counties. Some of the key findings from this survey include:

**Household Income:** 30.2 percent of respondents had an annual household income of less than \$25,000, while 52.5 percent of respondents had an annual household income of less than \$45,000.

**Exposure to Pre-School or Early Childhood Education:** 38.2 percent of kindergarteners had not attended a pre-school or early childhood education program in the previous year.

**Insurance Status:** 17.8 percent of kindergarteners were not covered by health insurance. Over half (52.1 percent) of these uninsured children lived in households with an annual household income of less than \$25,000. Of the kindergarteners with health insurance, 58.5 percent had private insurance, while 27.9 percent were covered by either Medicaid or Nevada Check Up.

**Access to Health Care:** 79.6 percent of respondents indicated that they had not experienced barriers when accessing health care. Of those who did experience barriers, most barriers were related to either a lack of health insurance or a lack of funds necessary for health care services. Just 3.9 percent of respondents have tried to access mental health services for their kindergartener, but of those that had, 32.2 percent reported having trouble accessing services.

**Routine Care:** 83.7 percent of kindergarteners had received a routine medical check-up in the twelve months prior to the survey, while 80.5 percent of kindergarteners had a primary care provider. Of the kindergarteners that did not have a primary care provider, 48.4 percent have also not had a routine check-up in the last year. Nearly 30 percent of kindergarteners have not seen a dentist in the past twelve months.

**Health Status:** 19.6 percent of kindergarteners have a medical condition requiring special treatment. Approximately 42 percent of respondents provided information on their kindergartener's weight, height, age, and gender; of these kindergarteners, 47.8 percent were of a healthy weight, while 25.3 percent were considered obese.

*For the full report, please visit the NICRP website at <http://nic.unlv.edu>.*

*Data for specific counties (and/or schools for Washoe and Clark Counties) may also be available upon request. Please contact NICRP at (702) 895-1040 for additional information.*