



**Kids can tell us a lot** about how we're doing as a community.

With the goal of contributing to a unified approach to meeting the health needs of local children now and into the future, the Health District carried out the first-ever Larimer County Child Health Survey in 2014 with a grant from Kaiser Permanente Colorado.

Results from the survey will be used to help inform Larimer County Department of Public Health and Environment's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) and will serve as a valuable local data source for other community partners including University of Colorado Health, Team Fort Collins and the Partnership for Healthy Youth Coalition.

"The survey was initiated by the Health District in part because we recognized that we were lacking some data about the health of children in our community," says CHIP project manager Christy Bush. "We're most interested in the survey's measures that are related to mental health, nutrition and physical activity—and I'm very happy to see that we now have a larger sample size than the community has had in the past."

The 36-question survey gathered information on children under the age of 14 in homes of people who responded to the Health District's 2013 Community Health Survey and was completed by 336 parents.

Many of the results are positive, but anyone who works to improve the health of a community knows that their work is never truly done—not until 100 percent of kids are healthy, happy and safe.

**A few interesting findings:**

Ninety-five percent of respondents reported their child's overall health as excellent/very good and 5 percent rated their child's health as good. While this is great news, the survey also uncovered areas in need of improvement. For example, when asked how often it has been very hard to get by (i.e. cover basics like food and housing) on the family income since the child was born, 23 percent of respondents reported having difficulty somewhat or very often. ✨

**Oral Health**

- ☑ 88% reported that their child has a regular source of dental care.
- ☑ 13% of low-income respondents and 4% of those with higher incomes reported that their child has experienced oral health problems such as toothache, tooth decay or unfilled cavities in the past year.

**Access to Care**

- ☑ Only 1% reported that their child is without health insurance coverage.
- ☑ When it comes to having a regular health care provider, 81% of low-income respondents reported that their child has a personal doctor or nurse compared to 94% of those living in households with higher incomes.

**Safety/Environment**

- ☑ 85% reported that their child usually/always wears a bike helmet when riding a bike while 15% said their child sometimes/never wears a bike helmet.
- ☑ 94% of respondents feel they live in a supportive neighborhood where there is mutual trust and respect, while 6% do not.

**Mental/Emotional Health**

- ☑ 1 in 7 parents said their child has difficulty with at least one of the following: emotions, concentration, behavior and/or getting along with others.
- ☑ 8% reported that their child needed mental health care or counseling in the past 12 months and of those that needed mental health care, most but not all received the care they needed.

**Substance Use Attitudes**

- ☑ Most parents expressed unfavorable attitudes towards tobacco, marijuana and alcohol use, although 28% reported feeling that there are safe environments for underage drinking. Of those, more were parents of boys than girls.

**Physical Health**

- ☑ Only 37% of our county's kids are getting the recommended hour of physical activity per day. But, they're eating well: 84% are eating more than two servings of fruit each day and 65% are eating more than two servings of vegetables each day.
- ☑ 7% of kids are drinking more than two sugar-sweetened beverages per day. The overall average amount of sugar-sweetened beverages respondents' children consume is about half a beverage per day.

For more information and to view additional data from the Child Health Survey, visit [healthdistrict.org](http://healthdistrict.org).