

HEALTH OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY



A DATA BRIEF

BY HARC



HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH FOR COMMUNITIES

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About HARC

Health Assessment Resource Center (HARC) is the Coachella Valley's premier source for research and evaluation in the field of health and wellness.

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About this brief

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INTRODUCTION

About HARC

The Health Assessment Resource Center (HARC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, community-based organization developed by a collaboration of community agencies and individuals in response to a scarcity of objective, timely, and comprehensive health data for the Coachella Valley of California.

HARC conducts a regional community health survey every three years (2007, 2010, and 2013, to date). This data brief presents a sub-section of the most recent data from the 2013 Community Health Monitor. Where relevant, data are compared to the data provided in the 2007 and 2010 reports to provide data trends.

Young Children and Health

The first few years of a child's life are extremely important. During this time, their physical, intellectual and emotional development begins to occur. They are vulnerable as well as resilient. Unfortunately, not all children grow up in an environment that allows them to develop in a healthy way and thrive. This can be due to poverty, parent/guardian's lack of education, and lack of resources.

Poor upbringing in the first years of life is later reflected in feelings of dissatisfaction with life, impaired relationships, learning difficulties, eating disorders, high rates of crime and violence, addiction and other personal and social issues.¹ It is clear that parental involvement is crucial during these first few years of a child's life in developing habits that will benefit them in the future.

HARC's 2013 data shows that there are approximately 28,000 children between the ages of birth (0) to 5 in the Coachella Valley. HARC has created this data brief to highlight this population.

¹ First 3 Years are Most Important. UNICEF. <http://www.unicef.hr/show.jsp?page=159295>

METHOD

The data presented in this report are from the 2013 Community Health Monitor, a systematic survey of households in Coachella Valley to determine the health and social well-being of its adult and child residents. Telephone surveys were administered to individuals 18 years of age and older residing in randomly selected households in Coachella Valley between January and September, 2013. Surveys were conducted in English and Spanish.

Survey data were collected via a random digit dialing (RDD) sample of both landline and cellular telephones. Due to this method of phone data collection, the homeless, and persons in institutions including penal facilities, hospitals, and military barracks, are excluded from the sampling frame. The survey included two samples, representing adults and children. In the adult sample, adults were asked to answer questions about themselves. In the child sample, a parent, guardian, or other adult that was knowledgeable about the child's health and wellness were asked to answer questions about a randomly selected child within the household. This technique was used to obtain accurate information without an invasion of the child's privacy. Due to the subject of this data brief, only data from the child sample are included here. This sample contains responses from parents and guardians of 509 children, 137 of which are between the ages of birth (0) and 5 years old.

The information from these participants was "weighted" in a complex statistical method that allows the actual survey responses to more accurately reflect the entire population of Coachella Valley. Weighting techniques utilized in this survey are standard practice for other major surveys, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Thus, while the parents/guardians of 137 young children actually participated in this survey, the figures you will see in this report will be closer to 28,000, the estimated child 0 to 5 population of the entire Coachella Valley. Please contact HARC if you would like more detailed information about population estimates.

The survey instruments were modeled after the well-respected Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS). The instrument assessed topics such as access to and utilization of health care, health status indicators, health insurance coverage, and health related behaviors.

RESULTS

Data in this report are presented in graphs, tables and text. Pie graphs present the frequency distribution of one survey item. Tables present different responses to one survey item. The “Population Estimate” refers to the estimated number of children in the population (the Coachella Valley) based on HARC’s data. The “Weighted Percent” is the proportion of children that the population estimate represents (the population estimates for all response options are summed to arrive at the total population; this is the figure that serves as the denominator for the “Weighted Percent”).

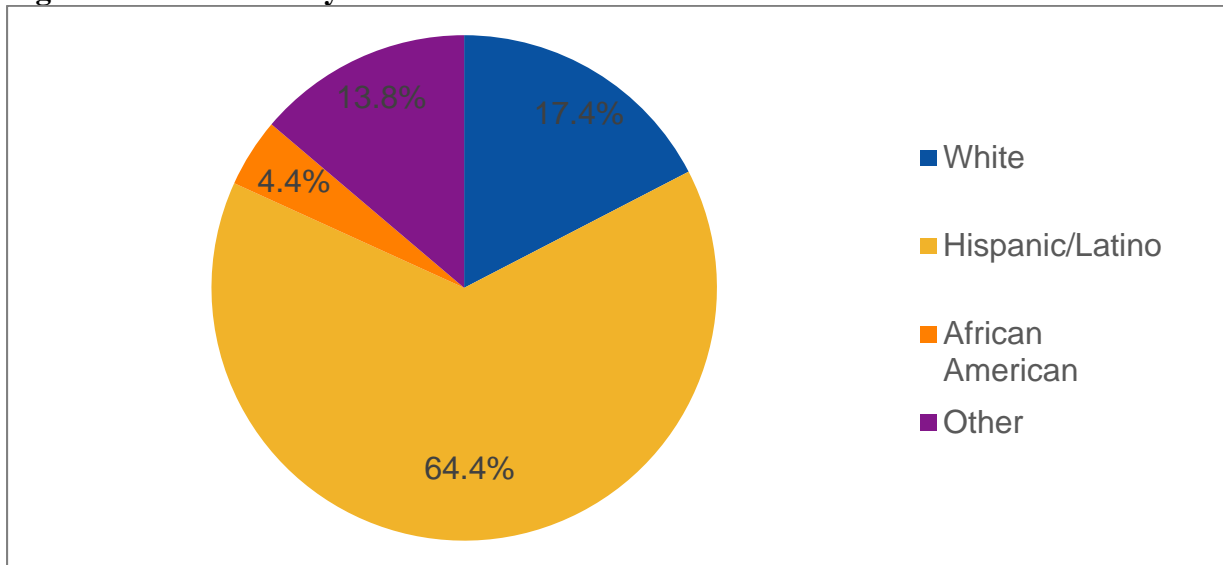
Demographic Profile

A demographic profile is provided here to describe children 0 to 5 in the Coachella Valley.

Race

As illustrated in Figure 1, the majority of children 0 to 5 are Hispanic/Latino (64.4%).

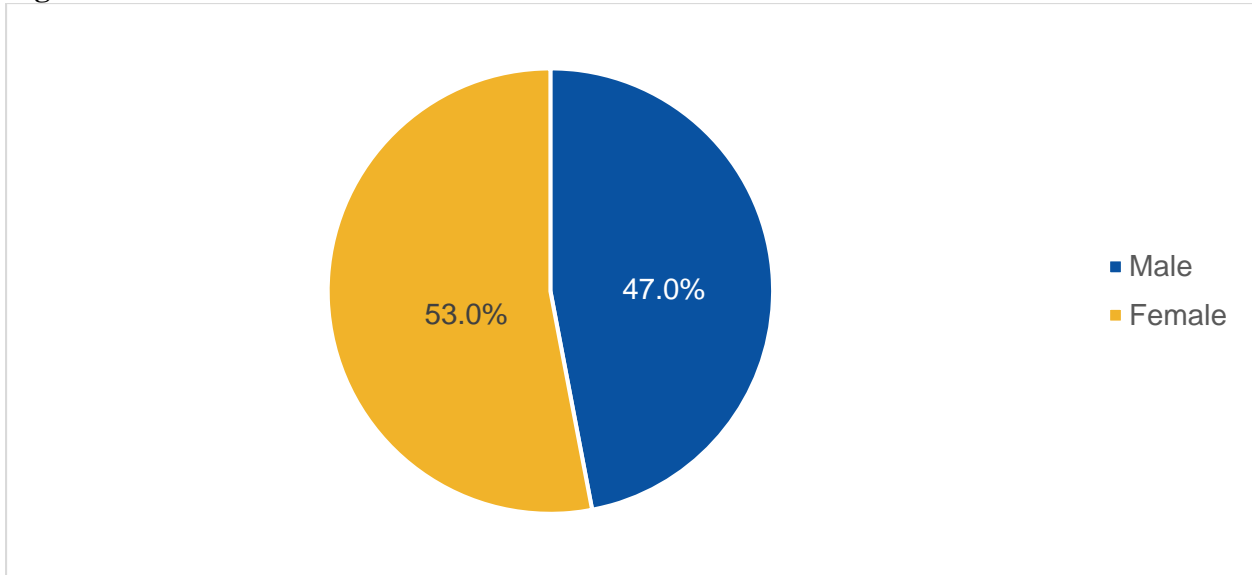
Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity



Gender

As illustrated in Figure 2, the gender of young children is fairly evenly divided; 47% are male and 53% are female.

Figure 2. Gender



Education

As illustrated in Figure 3, parental education is varied. Over a quarter of children 0 to 5 (26.7%) have parents with less than a high school education.

Figure 3. Parental Education Level

