

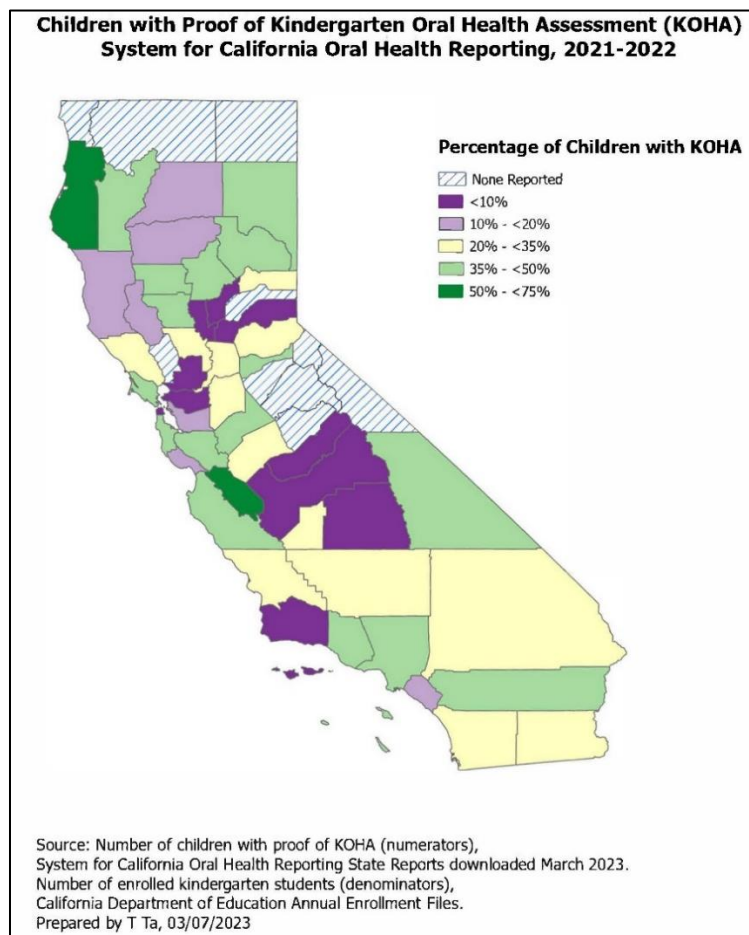
Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment (KOHA) Orange County Overview

Background

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) dental disease or cavities, is the most common chronic disease of childhood in the United States.ⁱ When looking further into the data, more than half of children in kindergarten and first grade have had at least one cavity in their primary or baby teeth.ⁱⁱ These kind of dental problems tend to continue as children get older. The same report shows that half of teenagers between 12 to 19 years have had at least one cavity on their permanent or adult teeth. This data shows that children and families that practice poor daily oral health habits early in childhood continue those bad habits into their teenage years and later in life. Studies also show that children and families that engage in regular dental care and receive prevention services such as fluoride and sealants are less likely to have cavities or tooth decayⁱⁱⁱ.

The California Department of Public Health – Office of Oral Health (OOH) and the Health Care Agency – Public Health Services/Local Oral Health Program have focused on addressing this chronic condition by implementing strategies that improve education, access, and prevention services. As Orange County has taken on the task of updating the oral health strategic plan, the data for kindergarten students in Orange County is lacking. In the 2021-22 school year, Orange County school districts reported oral health assessment data for 14.2% of all students enrolling in kindergarten. This is the lowest percentage among all counties in Southern California including Los Angeles (44.8%), Riverside (33.7%), San Bernardino (21.3%), Ventura (39.7%), and San Diego (30.1%).

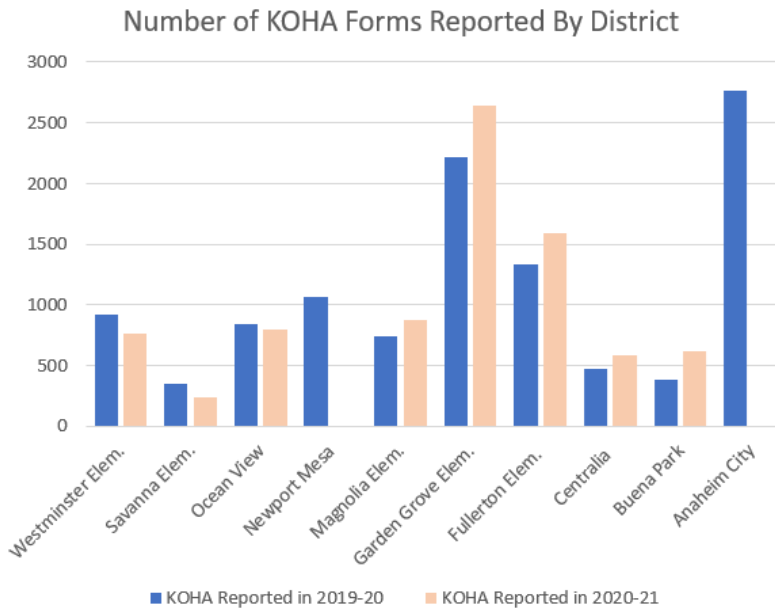
The surveillance data allows the County and providers to prioritize areas for linkage-to-care services, education initiatives, family engagement, and increased access initiatives.



Guidance

In California, pupils entering kindergarten are required under law—the California Education Code Section 49452.8 ([California Education Code Section 49452.8](#)) to receive and report, to the school in which they are enrolling, *proof* of having received an oral health assessment by May 31st. Under the same guidance, *school districts* are required to report the outcomes of these assessments to the State by July 1st of each year ([California Law Text](#)). To facilitate and standardize the data, the State of California uses the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment (KOHA) form. The form can be found on the California Department of Education (CDE) website in a variety of languages ([Oral Health Assessment Form & Information - CA Dept of Education](#)). In addition, CDE and Office of Oral Health support school districts submitting the required data under AB 1433 utilizing the System for California Oral Health Reporting (SCOHR) ([Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Requirement - Letters \(CA Dept of Education\)](#)).

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In Orange County, there are 27 school districts and charter schools that are required to report KOHA data. Over the last two reporting periods 2019-20 and 2020-21, only 10 school districts and two (2) charter schools reported KOHA data. The data can be found in the chart to the left.

School districts not listed in the chart have not reported KOHA data in the last five (5) years according to the SCOHR system.

Reporting in SCOHR

SCOHR was created in collaboration between the California Department of Public Health, Office of Oral Health, California Department of Education, San Joaquin Code Stack Department (SJOE), California Dental Association, Association of California School Administrators, and California County Superintendents. In addition, a tutorial video was created to assist school districts in knowing the requirements and how to enter data in the system. The system allows for data to be entered or uploaded at the student level data or an aggregate by school/district. Below are links to the system and training videos.

SCOHR Website: <https://www.ab1433.org>

Training Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RYtIF78MYgs>

Local Assistance

If you have questions or need help navigating the requirement and/or reporting system, please feel free to contact the Health Care Agency – Local Oral Health Program (LOHP@ochca.com).

ⁱ Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington. 2020. <http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare>. Accessed January 30, 2023.

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Oral Health Surveillance Report: Trends in Dental Caries and Sealants, Tooth Retention, and Edentulism, United States, 1999–2004 to 2011–2016. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2019.

ⁱⁱⁱ Community Preventive Services Task Force. Preventing Dental Caries: School-based Dental Sealant Delivery Programs. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, Community Preventive Services Task Force; 2016. <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/dental-caries-cavities-school-based-dental-sealant-delivery-programs>. Accessed February 19, 2018.