

# The Correlation between Mothers' and their Toddler's Oral Health Behavior in New Mexico

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## Background

The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) in New Mexico collects data on mothers' experiences including oral health behaviors. New Mexico PRAMS conducts a 2-year follow-up toddler study called Helping Us Grow Strong (HUGS). The question asks, "Has your two-year-old ever been to a dentist or dental clinic?"

New Mexico's 2023 Title V Block Grant's oral health measures include increasing the number of mothers who had a dental visit during their pregnancy and increasing the proportion of children aged 2-17 in Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment.

New Mexico's oral health barriers include lack of dental insurance, limited adult Medicaid, limited Medicaid dental providers, rural and frontier populations, and dental professional shortage (Title V Block Grant, 2023).

## Methods

### Data Sources

Participants were people who gave birth from 2018-2020 and participated in the PRAMS survey as well as the follow-up study, Helping Us Grow Strong (HUGS).

### Study Question

Is a child more or less likely to receive oral health care based on their mother's oral health behaviors before and during pregnancy?

### Analysis

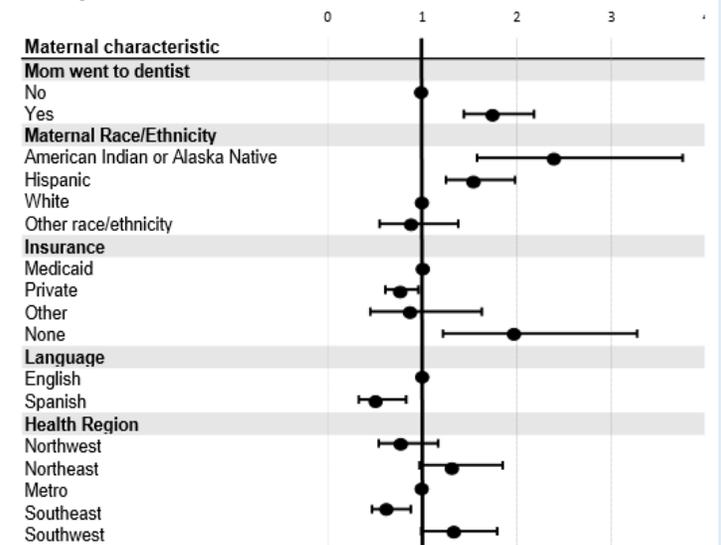
Using unweighted data from the New Mexico PRAMS and HUGS survey for birth years 2018-2020, the authors analyzed completed surveys from 1987 mother/child New Mexico resident pairs. The authors examined the prevalence and correlates of a toddler having had an oral health visit by the age of two (results not shown). Logistic regression analyses were then performed to predict factors associated with the outcome of interest, including the mother's having had an oral health visit during or in the year before pregnancy.

## Results

### Findings

- 60.7% mothers went to a dentist either during or twelve months before their pregnancy.
- Backward logistic regression showed that mothers' oral health seeking behavior, race/ethnicity, insurance coverage, primary language, and geography were associated with toddler dental visits ( $p > 0.05$ ).
- Toddlers with mothers who went to the dentist were 1.8 times **more** likely to have been taken to the dentist than the toddlers with mothers that did not go to a dentist.
- Compared to toddlers whose mothers were non-Hispanic White:
  - Native Americans were 2.4 times **more** likely to be taken to a dentist.
  - Hispanic toddlers were 1.5 times **more** likely to be taken to a dentist.
- Toddlers whose mothers had private insurance were **less** likely (0.8 times) to go to a dentist than toddlers whose mothers had Medicaid.
- Toddlers whose mother's primary language was Spanish were **less** likely (0.5 times) to go to a dentist than English speakers.
- Toddlers whose mothers live in the southeast health region of New Mexico were **less** likely (0.6 times) than those in the central region to go to a dentist.

### Adjusted Odds Ratio of toddler going to the dentist, New Mexico, birth years 2018-2020



## Conclusion

Medicaid coverage is correlated with toddlers having oral health check-ups.

## Acknowledgements

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PRAMS & HUGS Survey Respondents