

# South Los Angeles

## Health Profile

**Understanding the health of your community** can start with understanding the numbers. How many children have access to a safe park? How many adults have health insurance? To answer these questions, hundreds of residents in South Los Angeles participated in the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS). The survey was conducted to support *Building Healthy Communities (BHC)*, a 10-year plan of The California Endowment (TCE) to help 14 communities develop into places where children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn.

This Health Profile describes the health of adults, teens, and children living in South Los Angeles, one of the 14 *BHC* sites. It provides a snapshot of key survey findings prior to implementing the *BHC* plan and can be used to mobilize friends and neighbors, advocate for community change, secure greater resources, and guide community planning. To learn more about *BHC*, visit: [www.calendow.org/healthycommunities/](http://www.calendow.org/healthycommunities/)

### Selected Highlights

- ◆ 39% of adults in South Los Angeles are obese compared to 21% in both Los Angeles County and California.
- ◆ Parents in South Los Angeles are less likely to report that their neighbors get along, can be trusted, are willing to help each other, or look out for their children compared to parents in Los Angeles County and California.
- ◆ Adults in South Los Angeles are less likely than adults in Los Angeles County to eat fast food 3 or more times in the last week (16% v. 26%, respectively).
- ◆ 61% of children (age 1-17) in South Los Angeles feel safe in a nearby park or playground during the day compared 87% of children in Los Angeles County and 90% in California overall.



Demographics*	South Los Angeles %	Los Angeles County %
Latino	77	51
White	—	24
African American	22	8
Asian	—	15
Others**	1	2
Unemployed	29	13
Low-income households <sup>1</sup>	74	44
Limited English proficiency <sup>2</sup>	76	67

\* Among adults with children under age 18 and adults age 18-40.

\*\* Others include American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and two or more races.

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# ADULTS

Adults with children under age 18 and adults age 18-40 unless otherwise noted

South Los Angeles  
% (95% CI)      Los Angeles  
County %      California  
%

## Current Insurance Coverage

Uninsured	34 (20-48)	26	22
Insured by government program	41 (25-56)	18*	17*
Insured by private coverage/employer	26 (12-40)	56*	61*

## Health Care Access and Utilization

No doctor visit in the last year	26 (13-39)	23	24
Visited emergency department in the last year	18 (5-30)	17	18
Delayed getting prescription drugs or medical care in the last year	10 (4-16)	20*	22*

## Current Health Conditions

Obese <sup>3</sup>	39 (24-54)	21*	21*
Overweight <sup>3</sup>	28 (15-41)	30	32
Diagnosed with asthma	5 (2-7)	11*	14*
Fair/poor health	34 (19-49)	18*	16*
Serious psychological distress in the last year <sup>4</sup>	6 (2-11)	8	7
Binge drinking in the last year <sup>5</sup>	31 (17-46)	33	39

## Physical Activity and Nutrition

Regular physical activity in the last week <sup>6</sup>	24 (9-38)	22	24
Ate fruits and/or vegetables 3 or more times per day in the last week <sup>7</sup>	14 (8-20)	23*	24*
Ate fast food 3 or more times in the last week	16 (8-24)	26*	24
Drank soda 3 or more times in the last week	24 (12-37)	24	25

## Neighborhood Perceptions and Civic Engagement

Living at current residence for 5 or more years	70 (55-84)	57	50*
Neighbors get along <sup>^</sup>	68 (51-86)	83*	85*
Neighbors can be trusted <sup>^</sup>	43 (23-63)	80*	81*
Neighbors are willing to help each other <sup>^</sup>	47 (27-67)	78*	80*
Neighbors look out for children <sup>^</sup>	62 (44-81)	81*	83*
Participated in community service/volunteer work in the last year <sup>^</sup>	26 (10-43)	39	44

## Safety and Violence

Feel safe in the neighborhood	54 (39-69)	84*	88*
Ever experienced violence from an intimate partner	4 (2-6)	11*	13*

\* Denotes statistically significant difference from BHC site estimate. See Methods for more details.

<sup>^</sup> Only includes parents of children under age 18.

Note: Estimates for Current Insurance Coverage may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

# CHILDREN

Children age 0-11 and teens age 12-17 unless otherwise noted

South Los Angeles  
% (95% CI)      Los Angeles  
County %      California  
%

## Current Insurance Coverage

Uninsured	19 (0-44)	6*	5*
Insured by government program	62 (39-86)	45	38*
Insured by private coverage/employer	18 (1-35)	49*	57*

## Health Care Access and Utilization

No doctor visit in the last year	18 (3-32)	11	10
Visited emergency department in the last year	23 (0-46)	18	18
Delayed getting prescription drugs or medical care in the last year	9 (3-14)	9	9
Visited the dentist in the last year (age 2-17)	75 (49-100)	87	87
Received flu vaccine in the last year (age 6 months-11)	32 (13-51)	45	50

## Current Health Conditions

Teen overweight and obesity <sup>3</sup>	55 (26-83)	34	29
Diagnosed asthma (age 2-17)	10 (2-17)	15	15
Fair/poor health	17 (3-30)	8	7*

## Physical Activity

Physically active at least 60 minutes per day in the last week (age 5-17) <sup>8</sup>	14 (2-26)	18	18
Walked, biked, or skate-boarded home from school at least once in the last week (age 5-17)	77 (62-93)	49*	42*

## Nutrition

Ate 5 or more servings of fruits and/or vegetables yesterday (age 2-17) <sup>7</sup>	17 (4-30)	20	22
Drank soda or sugar sweetened beverage yesterday (age 2-17)	65 (48-82)	44*	40*
Ate fast food 3 or more times in the last week (age 2-17)	39 (16-62)	20	18*

## Park and Neighborhood Safety

Feels safe in the neighborhood	51 (30-71)	81*	87*
Lives near a park or playground (age 1-17)	76 (53-99)	83	84
Used the park in the last month (age 1-17)	60 (40-81)	80*	79*
Nearby park or playground is safe during the day (age 1-17)	61 (38-84)	87*	90*
Nearby park or playground is safe at night (age 12-17)	21 (1-42)	41	48*

## Civic Engagement

Participated in community service/volunteer work in the last year (age 12-17)	52 (23-81)	53	59
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\* Denotes statistically significant difference from BHC site estimate. See Methods for more details.

Note: Estimates for Current Insurance Coverage may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

## Methods

The California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) is an ongoing comprehensive public health survey that provides health data for the state and counties in California. To gather meaningful health data for *Building Health Communities (BHC)*, The California Endowment supported a CHIS 2009 oversample in 14 *BHC* sites.

Households in each *BHC* site were randomly selected to participate through random digit dial (RDD) telephone sampling. Given the focus of *BHC* efforts on children and families, **adult eligibility included being a parent of a child under age 18 or an adult age 18 to 40. Children age 0 to 11 and teens age 12 to 17 were also eligible.** For children, interviews were administered with the adult most knowledgeable about that child; for teens, interviews were administered with the teen after obtaining parent's permission. County and state estimates come from CHIS 2009 and maintain the same eligibility criteria as the *BHC* site. Over 500 interviews were completed in each of the 14 *BHC* sites between April and September 2010. In South Los Angeles, 360 interviews were conducted with eligible adults and 249 with children and teens.

Results provided in this health profile represent estimated values for the *eligible* population of the designated *BHC* site, its respective county and California. Estimates are based on the selected sample of the overall *eligible* population and thus have a degree of uncertainty. The data provided display 95% confidence intervals (CIs) indicating that we are 95% confident that the actual value of the health outcome lies between the lower and upper CI range. *Estimates with wide CIs should be interpreted with caution.*

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Households whose income falls below 200% of the federal poverty level are considered low income.
- <sup>2</sup> Respondents who reported speaking a language other than English at home and speak English less than "very well" are considered to have limited English proficiency.
- <sup>3</sup> Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measure used to assess overweight and obesity. It is calculated by dividing weight in kilograms by height squared in meters. Adults with a BMI greater than or equal to 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> are obese and a BMI greater than or equal to 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and less than 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> are overweight. Teens with BMI-for-age and sex greater than or equal to the 85th percentile are considered overweight and obese.
- <sup>4</sup> Serious Psychological Distress (SPD) is often used as a proxy measure for serious mental illness in a population. Adult respondents were asked 6 questions, known as the "Kessler 6", to assess symptoms of distress during a 30-day period in the last year.
- <sup>5</sup> Males are considered binge drinkers if they consumed 5 or more alcoholic drinks on at least one occasion in the last year and females were considered binge drinkers if they consumed 4 or more alcoholic drinks on at least one occasion in the last year.
- <sup>6</sup> Regular physical activity for adults is defined as those who reported at least 30 minutes of moderate activity (excluding walking) for 5 or more days in the last week or those who reported at least 20 minutes of vigorous activity for 3 or more days in the last week.
- <sup>7</sup> Fruit and vegetable consumption does not include fruit juices or fried potatoes. Measures may not be comparable to previous CHIS questionnaires.
- <sup>8</sup> Physical activity among children and teens who attended school last week, excluding physical education (PE).



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The California Endowment, a private, statewide health foundation, was established in 1996 to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and communities and to promote fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians. Learn more at: [www.calendow.org](http://www.calendow.org)



The **California Health Interview Survey (CHIS)** is the nation's largest state health survey and one of the largest health surveys in the United States. Learn more at: [www.askchis.com](http://www.askchis.com)