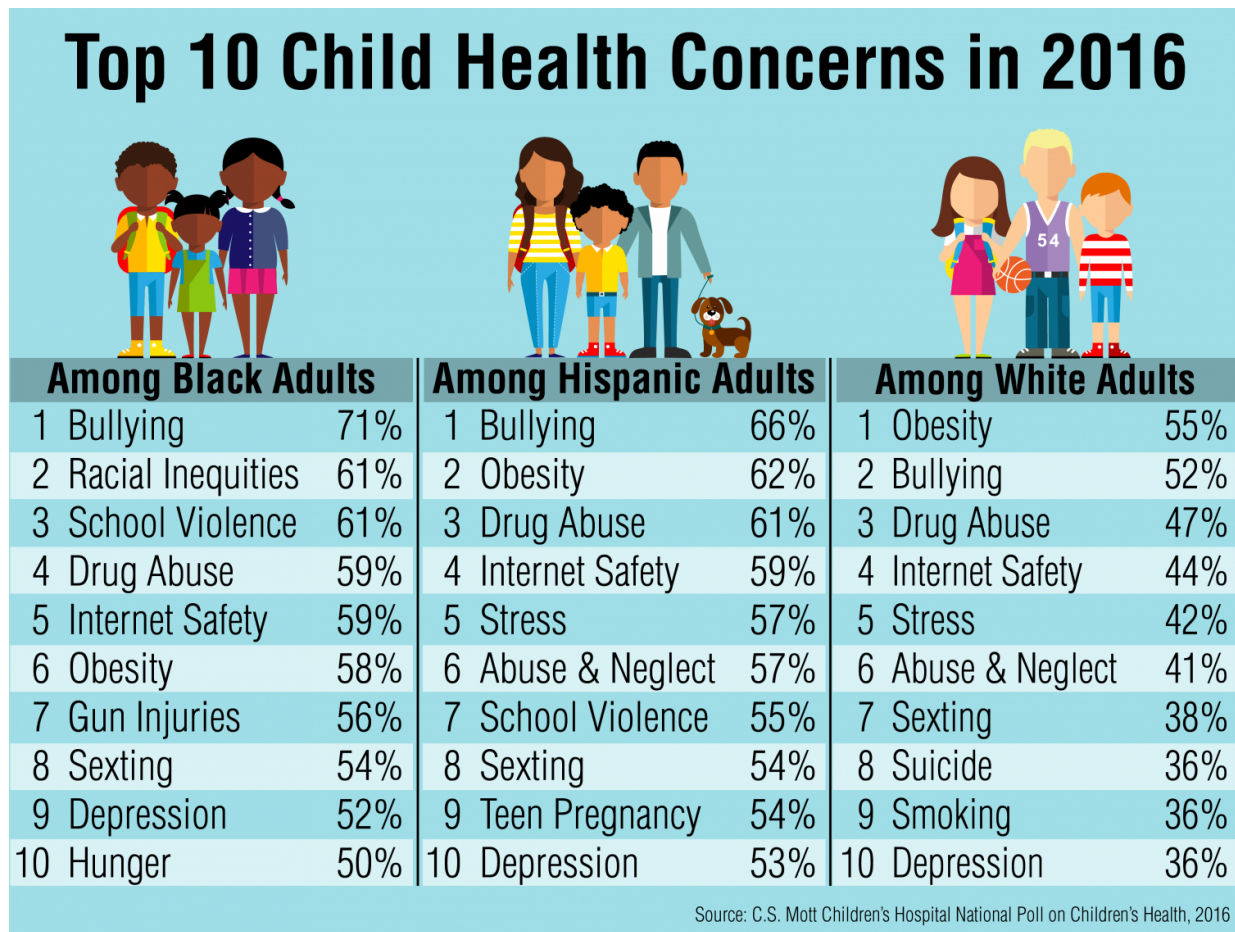


# Racial inequity, violence climb list of child health concerns for black adults

August 15 2016, by Beata Mostafavi



Mental health and racial inequities lead the 2016 top 10 child health concerns. Credit: C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health.

Black adults rate school violence and racial inequities higher on their list of children's health concerns than other groups, a new national poll says.

Among black adults, 61 percent believe racial inequities are "a big problem" for children in the U.S., compared to 17 percent of white adults and 45 percent of Hispanic adults, according to the 2016 annual survey of top children's [health](#) concerns by the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health.

Racial inequities and [school violence](#) were No. 2 and No. 3 on the list of child health concerns among black Americans. Gun injuries—which did not make any other group's top 10 list—ranked seventh.

The findings come in the wake of a series of high-profile news events regarding racial inequities and safety among black youth.

"This year's survey taps into some key differences across racial and ethnic groups on which issues are viewed as the biggest problems for children in our country," says poll co-director Gary Freed, M.D., M.P.H., professor of pediatrics at U-M's C.S. Mott Children's Hospital and founding director of the Child Health Evaluation and Research (CHEAR) Unit.

"One of the most striking differences was seen in how black and white respondents viewed racial inequity: black adults, but not their white counterparts, recognize unequal treatment as a child health concern. In addition, the top 10 rating among black adults for school violence and gun-related injuries mirror national attention regarding the safety of black youth."

Mental health was also a dominant concern for [black](#), white and Hispanic parents. Overall, 7 of the Top 10 concerns reflect children's [mental health](#): either specific mental health problems (depression, stress

and suicide) or issues that often have an underlying mental health component (bullying, obesity, drug abuse, school violence). Bullying was the overall #1 child health concern.

"We continue to see increasing concern for children's mental health. There is a great need for children to have access to [mental health professionals](#) who can diagnose and treat stress, depression and other [mental health conditions](#) as well as prevent suicide," Freed says.

"We know [mental health issues](#) can increase children's risk for obesity, drug abuse and other critical health issues. The broad recognition of mental health as a key [child health](#) concern supports the importance of ensuring access to mental health services for all U.S. children."

For the first time in the NPCH survey, suicide made the top 10. With teen suicide now the second-leading cause of death among adolescents, new guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics also recently called for teen check-ups to include suicide risk screening.

The high concern for mental health issues among youth is consistent with previous Mott poll findings. An April 2016 poll found more than half of adults perceive the mental/emotional health of kids today to be worse than when they were kids. The public pointed to several factors, including higher stress and diminished quality family time.

Bullying, obesity and [drug abuse](#) remained the top concerns for a third year in a row overall. Other [health concerns](#) in the Top 10 included internet safety, child abuse and neglect and sexting.

This is the tenth year adults were asked to rate their concerns for kids' health in the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital Poll.

**More information:** [mottnpch.org/reports-surveys/m ... child-health-](http://mottnpch.org/reports-surveys/m...child-health-)

[concerns](#)

Provided by University of Michigan Health System

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