

One in six youth in the United States is obese

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(HealthDay)—The COVID-19 pandemic is associated with rising childhood obesity rates, according to a report released Oct. 13 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The report uses data from the National Survey of Children's Health (2019 to 2020), as well as a variety of local and state studies that were able to assess the impact of the pandemic.

The report, *From Crisis to Opportunity: Reforming Our Nation's Policies to Help All Children Grow Up Healthy*, shows that nationally, 16.2 percent of youth ages 10 to 17 years in 2019 to 2020 had obesity, a rate that has held steady for the last five years. Disparities persist, with significantly higher obesity rates seen among non-Hispanic Black (23.8 percent), Hispanic (21.4 percent), and non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native (28.7 percent) children versus White children (12.1 percent) and Asian children (8.1 percent). Geographic variation exists, with Kentucky having the highest youth obesity rate (23.8 percent) and Montana the lowest (10.0 percent). The report also provides [policy recommendations](#) for how federal nutrition programs, like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, expanded child tax credits, and Medicaid, can play a critical role in obesity prevention.

"Obesity is a symptom of deep-rooted challenges that have only been made worse by the pandemic and are a [warning sign](#) that our nation's policies are failing our kids," Jamie Bussel, the foundation's lead for [childhood obesity](#), said in a statement. "We must make real, systemic change to set kids on a path to better health."

More information: [More Information](#)

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