

Disparities in access to high-speed internet found among Chicago parents

August 29 2022

Table 2. Association of Digital Access With Child Health Status and Race and Ethnicity

Variable	Digital access, weighted % (95% CI)					
	Has reliable high-speed internet			Worried about paying for internet		
	Yes	No	P value	Yes	No	P value
Child health status						
All children had excellent or very good health	78.0 (74.8-81.2)	22.0 (18.8-25.2)	.09	23.2 (20.0-26.5)	76.8 (73.5-80.0)	.27
≥1 Child with good, fair, or poor health	70.0 (61.4-78.6)	30.0 (21.4-38.6)		28.1 (20.1-36.1)	71.9 (63.9-79.9)	
Race and ethnicity						
Asian or other race or ethnicity	87.8 (80.9-94.8)	12.2 (5.2-19.1)	<.001	16.3 (7.5-25.2)	83.7 (74.8-92.5)	<.001
Hispanic or Latinx	64.5 (58.8-70.2)	35.5 (29.8-41.2)		32.0 (26.5-37.5)	68.0 (62.5-73.5)	
Non-Hispanic Black	76.0 (69.5-82.6)	24.0 (17.4-30.5)		28.6 (21.4-35.7)	71.4 (64.3-78.6)	
Non-Hispanic White	88.8 (85.3-92.3)	11.2 (7.7-14.7)		13.1 (9.6-16.7)	86.9 (83.3-90.4)	
Federal poverty level						
<100%	53.2 (44.8-61.7)	46.8 (38.3-55.2)	<.001	NA	NA	NA
100%-399%	74.0 (69.3-78.6)	26.0 (21.4-30.7)		NA	NA	
≥400%	91.8 (88.8-94.9)	8.2 (5.1-11.2)		NA	NA	

Abbreviation: NA, not applicable.

Association of Digital Access With Child Health Status and Race and Ethnicity. Credit: *JAMA Network Open* (2022). DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.28992

Parents who identified as Hispanic/Latinx or Black were less likely to have reliable, high-speed internet than White parents, according to a survey from Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago published in the journal *JAMA Network Open*. However, after adjusting for income, the disparity in access to high-speed internet persisted for Hispanic/Latinx families but not for Black families. These differences may be attributed to residential segregation in Chicago, with broadband

resources potentially limited in minoritized neighborhoods.

"It is important to clarify which populations might have challenges accessing video-based doctor appointments and other digital health services that are becoming more widespread since the pandemic," said lead author Kristin Kan, MD, MPH, MSc, a pediatrician at Lurie Children's and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. "As we continue to develop these services, we need to make sure we provide equitable access to all families."

Dr. Kan and colleagues conducted a survey of 1,620 Chicago parents. More than 90% of parents reported having a desktop/laptop at home and 77% reported having reliable, [high-speed internet](#). Sixty-five percent of Hispanic/Latinx families had reliable high-speed internet, compared to 76% of Black families and 89% of White families.

Data was collected through the Voices of Child Health in Chicago Parent Panel Survey, a triannual survey of Chicago [parents](#) about child, adolescent, and family health and well-being. Parents in the panel are from all 77 neighborhoods in Chicago.

More information: Kristin Kan et al, Examining Access to Digital Technology by Race and Ethnicity and Child Health Status Among Chicago Families, *JAMA Network Open* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.28992](#)

Provided by Children's Hospital of Chicago

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