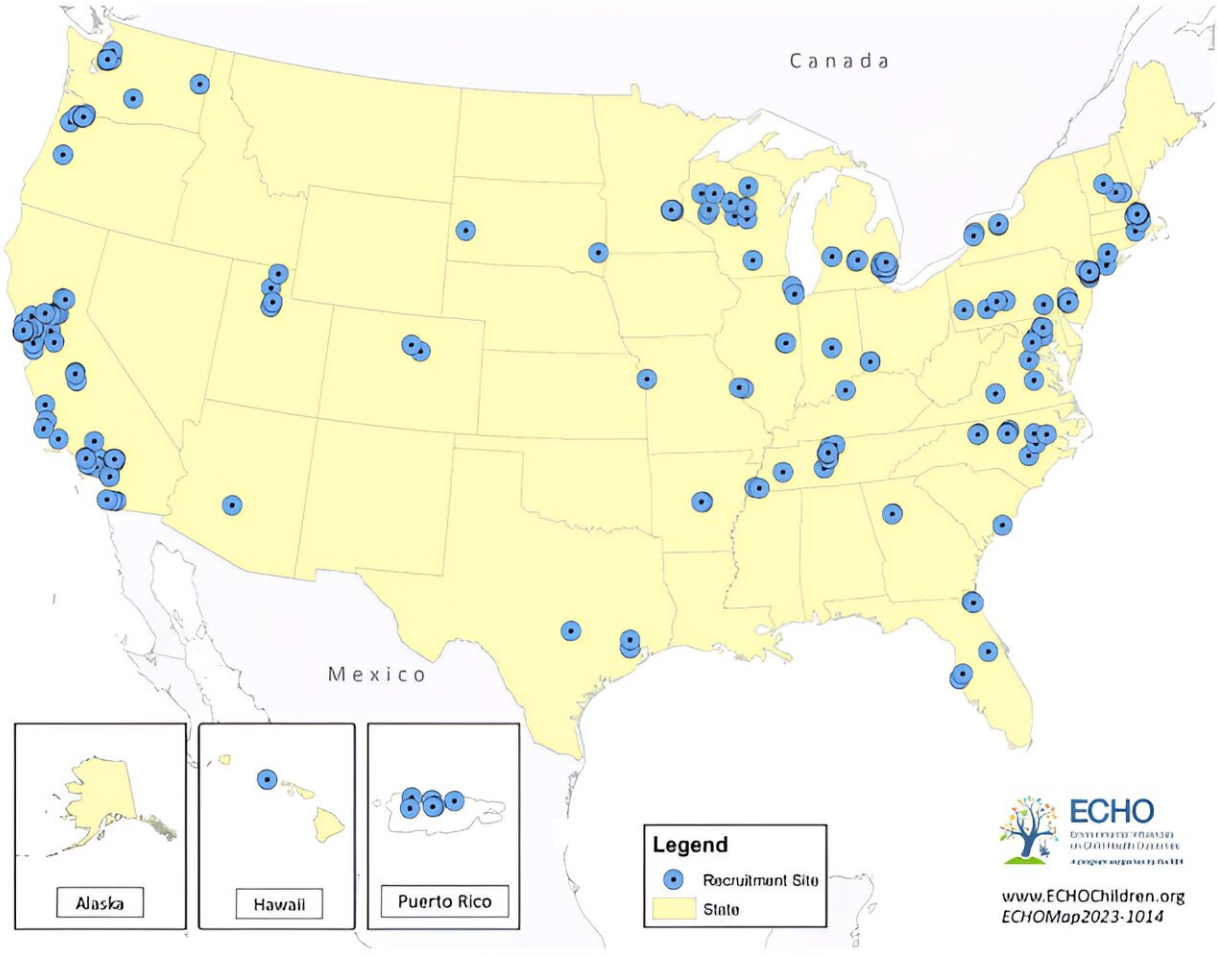
Research examines nutrition data's value from pregnancy to adolescence in understanding child health

December 4 2023



United States map of recruitment sites for the 66 Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) cohorts with publicly available dietary intake data as of 31 August, 2022.

Collaborative ECHO research led by Megan Bragg, Ph.D., RD and Kristen Lyall, ScD of the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute highlights the opportunity for researchers to access the large amount of diet information already collected from the ECHO Cohort. This research, titled "Opportunities for examining child health impacts of early-life nutrition in the ECHO Program: Maternal and child dietary intake data from pregnancy to adolescence," is published in *Current Developments in Nutrition*.

This study aimed to describe dietary intake data available in the ECHO Program as of August 2022, from pregnancy through adolescence, including estimated sample sizes, and to highlight the potential for future analyses of nutrition and child health.

As of that date, 66 ECHO Cohort Study Sites across the country had collected diet information using various methods, including dietary recalls, food frequency questionnaires, and questionnaires about supplement use. Diet information from these study sites is especially useful because it has been collected from a large group of diverse people and because many families provided information more than once over the course of pregnancy and childhood.

Often, data collected on diet provide only a snapshot that can't address how early-life diet affects later child health outcomes. The ECHO Cohort Consortium is addressing these challenges by gathering information over time about the dietary habits of individuals during pregnancy and childhood from a large, diverse group of participants.

"Researchers need information about what people eat during pregnancy and childhood from a large, diverse group of people in order to answer questions about nutrition," said Dr. Bragg. "ECHO is unique because

study sites have collected and continue to collect this information."

Information from over 33,000 pregnancies and more than 31,000 children in the ECHO Program is now accessible to researchers. This de-identified data is publicly available to researchers through the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Data and Specimen Hub (DASH) to encourage broad use to answer important questions about nutrition and child health.

More information: Megan G. Bragg et al, Opportunities for Examining Child Health Impacts of Early-Life Nutrition in the ECHO Program: Maternal and Child Dietary Intake Data from Pregnancy to Adolescence, *Current Developments in Nutrition* (2023). DOI: 10.1016/j.cdnut.2023.102019

Research summary: echochildren.org/research-summ … ancy-and-early-life/

Provided by Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes