

Developmental disability diagnosis more likely in rural children

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(HealthDay)—Children living in rural areas are more likely to be

diagnosed with a developmental disability compared with those living in urban areas, according to a study published online Feb. 19 in *National Health Statistics Reports*, a publication from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Benjamin Zablotsky, Ph.D., and Lindsey I. Black, M.P.H., from the National Centers for Health Statistics in Hyattsville, Maryland, used data from the 2015 to 2018 National Health Interview Survey to examine the prevalence of 10 parent- or guardian-reported [developmental disability](#) diagnoses among children aged 3 to 17 years.

The researchers found that the likelihood of being diagnosed with a developmental disability was higher for children living in rural versus [urban areas](#) (19.8 versus 17.4 percent). Specifically, the likelihood of being diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (11.4 versus 9.2 percent) and cerebral palsy (0.5 versus 0.2 percent) was increased for children living in rural versus urban areas. Among those with a developmental disability, the likelihood of having seen a [mental health](#) professional or therapist or having a well-child checkup visit in the last year was significantly lower for children in rural versus urban areas.

"Additional research may elucidate mechanisms that may contribute to alterations in developmental differences and use of services by urban or rural status, including lack of resources to pay for health care and educational services and access to trained specialty providers that may vary by geographic location," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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