

# Hispanic, Black youths represent disproportionate percent of COVID hospitalizations

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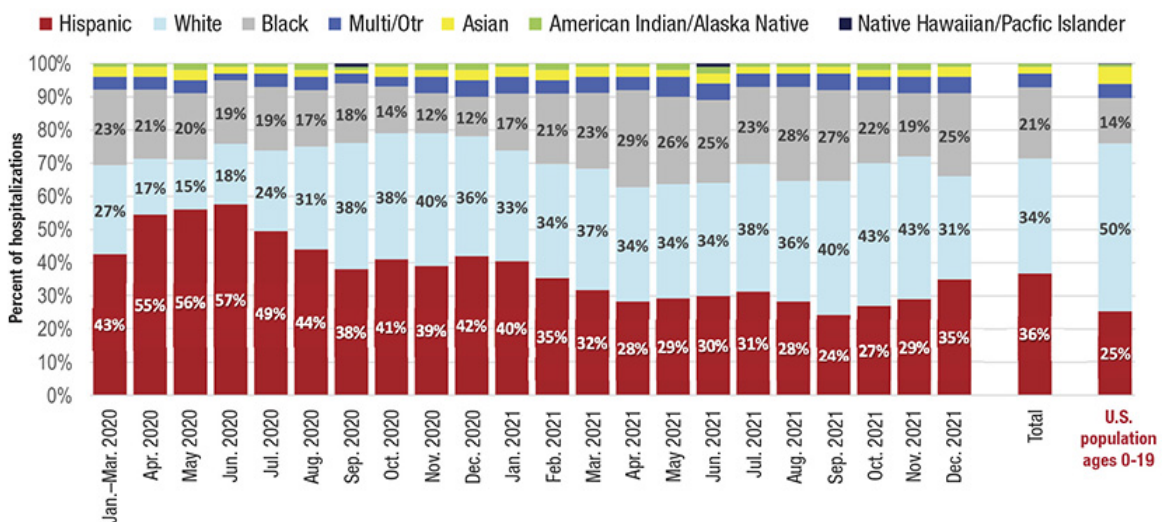
The surges in the spread of COVID-19 have impacted U.S. children from all races, ethnicities and geographic areas. However, Hispanic and Black children made up a disproportionate percentage of youths hospitalized for COVID-19, according to an analysis of 2020-'21 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

From January 2020 through December 2021, 63,619 child hospitalizations were recorded. Hispanic children made up 36% of the hospitalizations, but only 25% of U.S. children are identified as Hispanic.

A similar disparity was seen among children identified as Black, who made up 21% of the hospitalizations and 14% of the population.

In the earliest months of the pandemic, Hispanic children were hospitalized for COVID-19 at rates twice as large as their portion of the child population. For Black children, the largest difference was found in August 2021 during the delta surge when they made up 28% of hospitalizations compared to 14% of the population. In no month was the percentage of hospitalizations among White children higher than their population percentage.

**Child COVID-19 hospitalizations by race and ethnicity**



Source: CDC COVID-19 Case Surveillance Data

“The national data from the CDC provide important evidence of the disparate effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on Hispanic and Black children, with hospitalizations substantially above their portion of the population,” said Nathan T. Chomilo, M.D., FAAP, a member of the AAP Section on Minority Health, Equity and Inclusion Executive Committee. “Child racial health disparities have long been noted in the U.S., and during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen the impact on outcomes related to underlying chronic illness and structural inequities like barriers in access to testing and the ability to shelter in place. While these data alone cannot tell us why such disparities occurred, they do provide a window for further needed action to address the known social drivers of health that contribute to the longstanding child racial health disparities in the U.S.”

This analysis was based on a CDC dataset that provides case-level data that combines positive and probable cases (<https://bit.ly/3JYYZmt>). Children were defined as those ages 0-19. They accounted for 9.1 million (20%) of the 45.5 million reported COVID-19 cases through Dec. 31, 2021. Age was missing in 1% of cases.

The race and ethnicity categories were determined by the CDC, and data were missing in 33% of child cases.

The data are provided to the CDC from state, local and territorial health departments using the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System. Population data were collected from the U.S. Census Bureau.

### **Resources**

- For more information about these analyses, contact William Cull, Ph.D., at [wcull@aap.org](mailto:wcull@aap.org) or 630-626-6628.
- [Children and COVID-19: State-Level Data Report from the AAP and Children’s Hospital Association](#)
- [Information from the CDC about COVID-19 for health care professionals](#)
- [Information about COVID-19 from the AAP](#)