



# County of Santa Cruz

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## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 Emeline Ave., SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0962

TELEPHONE: (831) 454-4000 FAX: (831) 454-4488 TDD: Call 711



## Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Monica Nicholas

Date: September 1, 2023

(831)359-8450

### **INTRODUCING THE ORAL HEALTH ACCESS - LOCAL PROGRESS PAGE: A ONE-STOP RESOURCE FOR SANTA CRUZ COUNTY DATA**

*Accessible, comprehensive and reliable resource for oral health access data at your fingertips*

**Santa Cruz, Calif. – August 22, 2023** – The Oral Health Access Steering Committee is excited to announce that the Local Progress Page is now live on DataShare Santa Cruz County. This platform provides a comprehensive database of Santa Cruz County residents' wellbeing, making it an invaluable resource for local collaborative programs, initiatives, agencies, and organizations that aim to increase equity and achieve specific wellbeing goals in the area.

According to Monica Nicholas, Project Director of the Local Oral Health Program in the County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency, sharing up-to-date data in a timely manner has been a challenge. To overcome this obstacle, the Data Share Progress Page was created to enhance transparency, data sharing, and progress tracking among multiple partners. The page focuses on a few chosen oral health population data trends, comparing them to local, state, and national data, to provide an overview analysis of residents' oral health outcomes by age, race and ethnicity, insurance type, and pregnancy.

The data shows that children's dental visits for Medi-Cal patients is significantly lower than the overall average for children's dental visits who have private insurance in Santa Cruz County. Additionally, it reveals that only 52% of children who utilize Medi-Cal visited the dentist in 2018, compared to the 97% overall average for children in Santa Cruz County who visited the dentist during the same year. Moreover, the data highlights that children living in South County zip codes are the least likely to visit a dentist.

The Oral Health Access Local Progress Page is an invaluable resource for data-driven action on oral health access. It empowers advocates to include data in presentations, grant applications, and program plans. Residents, businesses, agencies, and students can now access, share, and use information to better understand the oral health of Santa Cruz County residents.

“As the Local Oral Health Program, our goal is to leverage our community assets and connect key stakeholders to enhance our impact on the health and well-being of our community. We look forward to the evolution of this Progress Page by working with our coalition members to use best practices with a focus on being data-driven” concludes Nicholas. Over the next twelve months, DataShare SCC will work with the committee to educate the community on oral health advocacy.

To view the Oral Health Local Progress Page, visit:

[https://www.datasharescc.org/stories/index/view?alias=OralHealthAccess\\_SantaCruzCounty&pid=60270877849](https://www.datasharescc.org/stories/index/view?alias=OralHealthAccess_SantaCruzCounty&pid=60270877849).

### **About DataShare Santa Cruz County**

DataShare SCC is led by a Steering Committee with representatives from 15 organizations, businesses, and county agencies. An administrative partnership with the CORE Investments, County Health Services Agency and County Administrative Office, Pajaro Valley Health Trust, Santa Cruz County Office of Education and United Way of Santa Cruz County, provides coordination and facilitation towards project goals; County Health Services Agency provides backbone support and staffing. Mission: DataShare Santa Cruz County provides an accessible, comprehensive, and reliable resource for local, regional, and national data available to everyone.

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