



Research Update



Pediatricians report 18.5% of patient families have limited proficiency with English from AAP Research

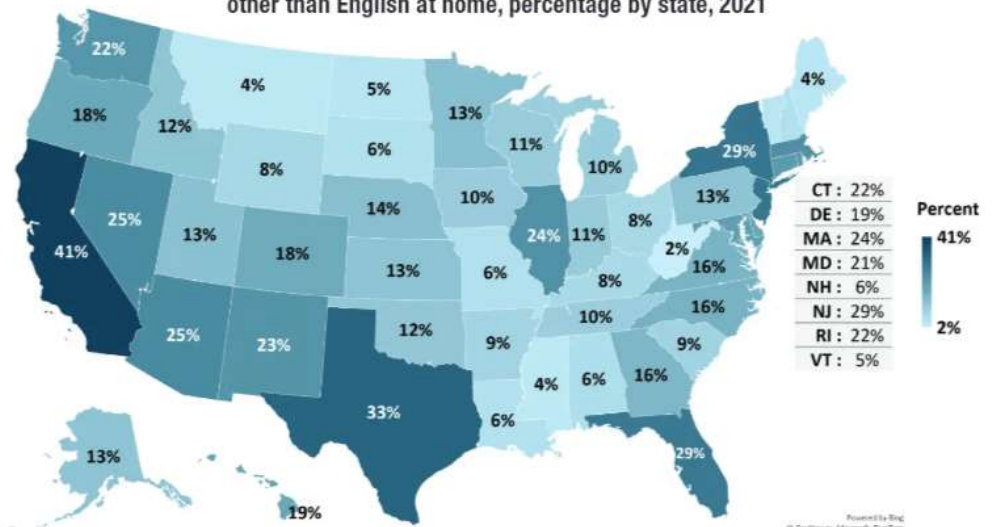
One in five U.S. children is in a family where a language other than English is spoken at home, according to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey. They reflect the increasingly diverse patients pediatricians care for every day.

The percentage of children who speak a language other than English at home increased from 8.5% in 1979 to 21.3% in 2021, according to the Census Bureau survey. Substantial variations were seen among states, from a high of 41% of children in California to a low of 2% in West Virginia (see figure). The most common language spoken at home beside English was Spanish, which was reported for 69% of children living in households that spoke a language other than English at home.

Many pediatricians report they care for children in families where languages other than English are spoken, according to a 2021 AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study (PLACES) survey. PLACES participants estimated that 18.5% of their families have limited proficiency with English.

To communicate with these families, four in 10 primary care pediatricians reported using telephone interpreter

U.S. children ages 5-17 who speak a language other than English at home, percentage by state, 2021



Percentage of U.S. children (ages 5-17) who speak a language other than English at home: 21.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates (<https://data.census.gov>)

services and professional medical interpreters very or fairly often (43.9% and 41.6%, respectively). Three in 10 reported using bilingual staff (31.2%), bilingual physicians (30.2%) and family members (29.7%) very or fairly often.

PLACES tracks pediatricians' career and life choices and experiences across their careers. The data were collected in summer 2021 from 897 primary care pediatricians, hospitalists and subspecialists who graduated residency in 2016-'18, 2009-'11 and 2002-'04.

RESOURCES

- The AAP Council on Immigrant Child and Family Health provides resources and support to advance the care of children in immigrant families through practice, policy, education and advocacy. For more information or to join, visit <https://bit.ly/3ozYUA9> or contact Ngozi Onyema-Melton at immigranthealth@aap.org or 630-626-6184.
- For more information on PLACES, visit <https://www.aap.org/places> or contact Liz Gottschlich at aapresearch@aap.org or 630-626-6627.