
Parental Immigration Status is Associated with Children's Health Care Utilization: Findings from the 2003 New Immigrant Survey of US Legal Permanent Residents

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Our objective was to examine the association between parental immigration status and child health and health care utilization. Using data from a national sample of immigrant adults who had recently become legal permanent residents (LPR), children ($n = 2,170$) were categorized according to their parents' immigration status prior to LPR: legalized, mixed-status, refugee, temporary resident, or undocumented. Logistic regression with generalized estimating equations was used to compare child health and health care utilization by parental immigration status over the prior 12 months. Nearly all children in the sample were reported to be in good to excellent health. Children whose parents had been undocumented were least likely to have had an illness that was reported to have required medical attention (5.4 %). Children whose parents had been either undocumented or temporary residents were most likely to have a delayed preventive annual exam (18.2 and 18.7 %, respectively). Delayed dental care was most common among children whose parents had come to the US as refugees (29.1 %). Differences in the preventive annual exam remained significant after adjusting for socioeconomic characteristics. Parental immigration status before LPR was not associated with large differences in reported child health status. Parental immigration status before LPR was associated with the use of preventive annual exams and dental services. However, no group of children was consistently disadvantaged with respect to all measures.

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