Definition of Children with Special Health Care Needs

The federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau defines children with special health care needs (CSHCN) as:

“those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”

This definition is used to guide the development of family-centered, coordinated systems of care for children with special needs and their families served by the state Title V block grants administered by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

The National Survey of CSHCN (NS-CSHCN) and the National Survey of Children’s Health (NSCH) both use a validated, non-administered by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

The National Survey of CSHCN (NS-CSHCN) and the National Survey of Children’s Health (NSCH) both use a validated, non-administered by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Prevalence Profile: 2011/12 NSCH & 2009/10 NS-CSHCN

Source: 2011-12 NSCH
Source: 2009-10 NS-CSHCN

According to the 2011/2012 National Survey of Children’s Health:

- Approximately 14.6 million children ages 0–17 years in the United States (19.8%) have special health care needs.
- Prevalence of CSHCN ranges from 14.4% to 26.4% across the 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- About 65% of CSHCN experience more complex service needs that go beyond a primary need for prescription medications to manage their health condition.
- Compared to children not meeting CSHCN criteria (non-CSHCN), CSHCN are more likely to be male (58.1% vs. 49.4%) and older 12–17 years (43.2% vs. 31.8%).

Health Issues and Functional Difficulties that CSHCN Experience:

All CSHCN experience at least one type of ongoing health condition that results in an above routine need for health and related services. Across the list of 18 specific health issues asked about in the 2011/12 NSCH, 78.4% of CSHCN were reported to experience at least one of the conditions that was asked about; 41.1% experienced two or more from the limited list. Of the 18 health issues asked about, CSHCN most commonly were reported to experience ADD/ADHD (32.2%). Among those with ADHD, 71.8% also experienced at least one other health issue from the list of 18 asked about.

Prevalence Profile: 2011/12 NSCH & 2009/10 NS-CSHCN

According to the 2011/2012 National Survey of Children’s Health:

- Approximately 14.6 million children ages 0–17 years in the United States (19.8%) have special health care needs.
- Prevalence of CSHCN ranges from 14.4% to 26.4% across the 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- About 65% of CSHCN experience more complex service needs that go beyond a primary need for prescription medications to manage their health condition.
- Compared to children not meeting CSHCN criteria (non-CSHCN), CSHCN are more likely to be male (58.1% vs. 49.4%) and older 12–17 years (43.2% vs. 31.8%).

Health Issues and Functional Difficulties that CSHCN Experience:

All CSHCN experience at least one type of ongoing health condition that results in an above routine need for health and related services. Across the list of 18 specific health issues asked about in the 2011/12 NSCH, 78.4% of CSHCN were reported to experience at least one of the conditions that was asked about; 41.1% experienced two or more from the limited list. Of the 18 health issues asked about, CSHCN most commonly were reported to experience ADD/ADHD (32.2%). Among those with ADHD, 71.8% also experienced at least one other health issue from the list of 18 asked about.

Prevalence Profile: 2011/12 NSCH & 2009/10 NS-CSHCN

According to the 2011/2012 National Survey of Children’s Health:

- Approximately 14.6 million children ages 0–17 years in the United States (19.8%) have special health care needs.
- Prevalence of CSHCN ranges from 14.4% to 26.4% across the 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- About 65% of CSHCN experience more complex service needs that go beyond a primary need for prescription medications to manage their health condition.
- Compared to children not meeting CSHCN criteria (non-CSHCN), CSHCN are more likely to be male (58.1% vs. 49.4%) and older 12–17 years (43.2% vs. 31.8%).

Health Issues and Functional Difficulties that CSHCN Experience:

All CSHCN experience at least one type of ongoing health condition that results in an above routine need for health and related services. Across the list of 18 specific health issues asked about in the 2011/12 NSCH, 78.4% of CSHCN were reported to experience at least one of the conditions that was asked about; 41.1% experienced two or more from the limited list. Of the 18 health issues asked about, CSHCN most commonly were reported to experience ADD/ADHD (32.2%). Among those with ADHD, 71.8% also experienced at least one other health issue from the list of 18 asked about.

Prevalence Profile: 2011/12 NSCH & 2009/10 NS-CSHCN

According to the 2011/2012 National Survey of Children’s Health:

- Approximately 14.6 million children ages 0–17 years in the United States (19.8%) have special health care needs.
- Prevalence of CSHCN ranges from 14.4% to 26.4% across the 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- About 65% of CSHCN experience more complex service needs that go beyond a primary need for prescription medications to manage their health condition.
- Compared to children not meeting CSHCN criteria (non-CSHCN), CSHCN are more likely to be male (58.1% vs. 49.4%) and older 12–17 years (43.2% vs. 31.8%).

Health Issues and Functional Difficulties that CSHCN Experience:

All CSHCN experience at least one type of ongoing health condition that results in an above routine need for health and related services. Across the list of 18 specific health issues asked about in the 2011/12 NSCH, 78.4% of CSHCN were reported to experience at least one of the conditions that was asked about; 41.1% experienced two or more from the limited list. Of the 18 health issues asked about, CSHCN most commonly were reported to experience ADD/ADHD (32.2%). Among those with ADHD, 71.8% also experienced at least one other health issue from the list of 18 asked about.

Prevalence Profile: 2011/12 NSCH & 2009/10 NS-CSHCN

According to the 2011/2012 National Survey of Children’s Health:

- Approximately 14.6 million children ages 0–17 years in the United States (19.8%) have special health care needs.
- Prevalence of CSHCN ranges from 14.4% to 26.4% across the 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- About 65% of CSHCN experience more complex service needs that go beyond a primary need for prescription medications to manage their health condition.
- Compared to children not meeting CSHCN criteria (non-CSHCN), CSHCN are more likely to be male (58.1% vs. 49.4%) and older 12–17 years (43.2% vs. 31.8%).

Health Issues and Functional Difficulties that CSHCN Experience:

All CSHCN experience at least one type of ongoing health condition that results in an above routine need for health and related services. Across the list of 18 specific health issues asked about in the 2011/12 NSCH, 78.4% of CSHCN were reported to experience at least one of the conditions that was asked about; 41.1% experienced two or more from the limited list. Of the 18 health issues asked about, CSHCN most commonly were reported to experience ADD/ADHD (32.2%). Among those with ADHD, 71.8% also experienced at least one other health issue from the list of 18 asked about.
**Identifying CSHCN**

CSHCN are identified in the NS-CSHCN and the NSCH using the CSHCN Screener® – a five item, parent-reported tool designed to reflect the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau’s consequences-based definition of children with special health care needs.3,4

- The CSHCN Screener® operationalizes the MCHB definition of CSHCN by focusing on the health consequences a child experiences as a result of having an on-going health condition rather than on the presence of a specific diagnosis or type of disability.
- The screener assesses children's health care needs status by using questions that ask about need or use of services, prescription medications, specialized therapies, and having functional difficulties due to an ongoing condition.
- The non-condition specific approach used by the CSHCN Screener® identifies children across the range and diversity of childhood chronic conditions and special needs, allowing a more comprehensive assessment of health needs and health care system performance.

Developed by The Child & Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (CAHMI at www.cahmi.org); National Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health; Oregon Health & Science University, School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics

Visit the Data Resource Center to learn more about CSHCN in your state

www.childhealthdata.org