

HEALTH RISK FACTORS/HEALTH INDICATORS

Health Risk Factors

Health risk factors are the behaviors, characteristics, or exposures that increase the likelihood of a person developing a disease or health problem. They encompass many factors including a lack of physical activity, tobacco use, poor nutrition, homelessness, and adverse childhood experiences. Some risk factors are controllable while other risk factors are not. Having a risk factor does not always mean that a person will develop a given health problem, however, understanding these risk factors and identifying where they exist within the community is a vital component in health promotion and disease prevention.

Health Indicators

Health Indicators are measures that help provide a snapshot of the overall health of a population and the performance of the health system. These indicators help compare health outcomes in our community to those in California and to those in the United States. They provide an actionable assessment of community health and help identify which resources and efforts to prioritize to improve the health and well-being for all people in Sutter County. Health indicators may include measures such as life expectancy at birth, deaths from all causes, heart disease death rates, unintentional injuries, cancer death rates, and chronic lower respiratory disease death rates, among others.

The following health risk factors/health indicators will be discussed in this dashboard:

- 1) Accidents and Unintentional Injuries
- 2) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- 3) Deaths from All Causes
- 4) Mental Health
- 5) Nutrition and Access to Healthy Foods
- 6) Life Expectancy at Birth
- 7) Oral Health
- 8) People Experiencing Homelessness
- 9) Physical Activity
- 10) Tobacco Use



What We Are Doing:

The Sutter County Public Health Branch provides prevention and intervention strategies that target health risk factors through various programs. The Sutter County Health Education and Promotion Unit provides outreach and education to community members to decrease tobacco use and promote physical activity, healthy eating, and improve oral health in Sutter County. The Homeless Services Unit provides outreach, case-management, and housing navigation to assist vulnerable individuals who are experiencing homelessness in Sutter County. Also, the Maternal Child Adolescent Health (MCAH) Unit provides home visiting, promote healthy development, connect individuals and families with needed resources, and help address ACEs. In order to increase the health and well-being of our community it is essential to continue to provide effective health interventions and programs that target the risk factors that contribute to the development of disease and other health problems.

ACCIDENTS AND UNINTENTIONAL INJURIES

Why It Is Important:

Unintentional injuries are a major cause of death and disability. In the US, they are the leading cause of death among those younger than 45 years.¹ Unintentional injuries can be caused by a variety of accidents, such as motor vehicle crashes, bicycle and pedestrian traffic incidents, falls, drug overdoses, poisonings, burns, and drownings. Most unintentional injuries are preventable, and interventions should target groups at high risk for certain types of injuries.

Where We Are Now:

Accidents/unintentional injury rates are higher in Sutter County, compared to California and the US on average (Table 1).²⁻³ From 2019-2022, there was an upwards trend in accident/unintentional injury deaths in Sutter County and a slight decline in 2023.⁴ For Sutter County to address this issue, there needs to be a continuous effort to monitor these deaths and understand trends.

Table 1: Accidents/Unintentional Injury Death Rates Per 100,000 (2021-2023)²⁻³

Location	Death Rate Per 100,000 ▼
Sutter County	67.3
US	63.7
California	49.8

Those Most Affected:

In Sutter County, men are more likely to die of accidents/unintentional injuries (figure 1). Black and non-Hispanic White residents have the highest death rate from Unintentional Injuries (Figure 2).⁴ Unlike other leading causes of death in Sutter County, accidents and unintentional injuries mostly affect younger residents of Sutter County. The average age at death from accidents was 48.6 years in 2019-2023.⁴ Additionally, 25% of Sutter County residents who died from accidents and unintentional injuries were 31 or younger, and 10% were 22 or younger.⁴

Figure 1: Accidents/Unintentional Injury Deaths among Sutter County Residents , 2019-2023⁴

● Female ● Male

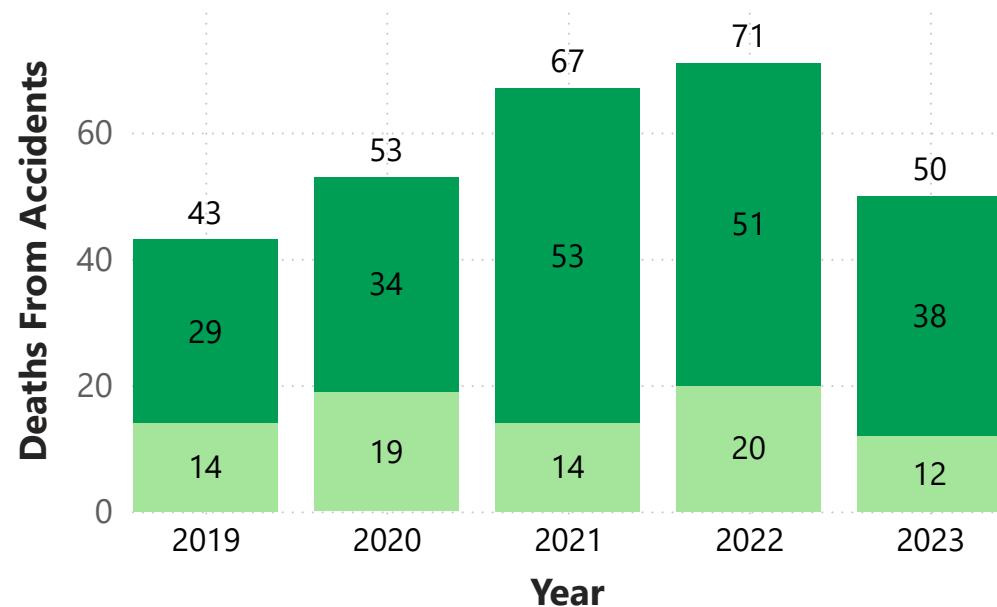
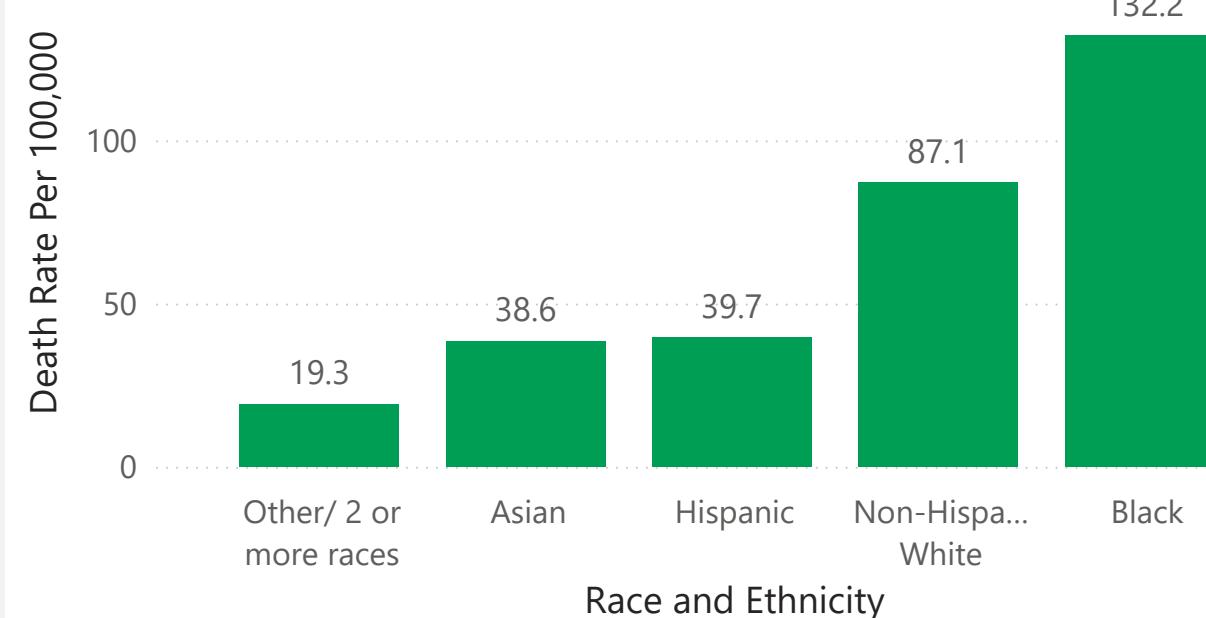


Figure 2: Average Yearly Rates of Accidents/Unintentional Injury Deaths by Race/Ethnicity, 2019-2023⁴



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ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Why It Is Important:

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are the exposure to potentially traumatic events such as abuse, neglect, domestic violence, household instability, and parental mental illness or substance misuse during childhood.¹ The toxic stress from ACEs can affect brain development, it can change children's hormonal and immune systems and can lead to behavioral problems, learning difficulties and physical health issues.² Exposure to ACEs is also linked to mental health issues, substance use problems and increase the risk of developing 9 out of 10 leading causes of death in the US.³ ACEs are preventable - creating and sustaining safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for all children helps to prevent ACEs and ensures children can reach their full health and life potential.⁴

Where We Are Now:

Complex family stressors including poverty, unemployment, divorce and untreated mental health and substance use disorders are contributing factors. Nationally, White children are less likely to have ACEs than Hispanic or Black children. Nationally, ACEs are more prevalent among children in low-income families with 26.9% of children with family incomes under 200% of the federal poverty level having one ACE and 25.2% having 2 or more ACEs (data from 2022-2023).⁵ From 2018 to 2022, the incidence of child abuse and neglect (per 1,000) in Sutter County was higher than California's incidence rate (Figure 1).⁵ Figure 2 shows adult self-reported exposure to ACEs in Sutter County and California. In Sutter County, fewer adults report having one or three ACEs exposures compared to California.⁷ However, more adults reported having two or 4 or more ACEs exposures in Sutter County compared to California.⁷

Figure 1: Child Abuse and Neglect Incidence (per 1,000 children) in Sutter County and California (2018-2024)⁶

● California Child Maltreatment ● Sutter Child Maltreatment

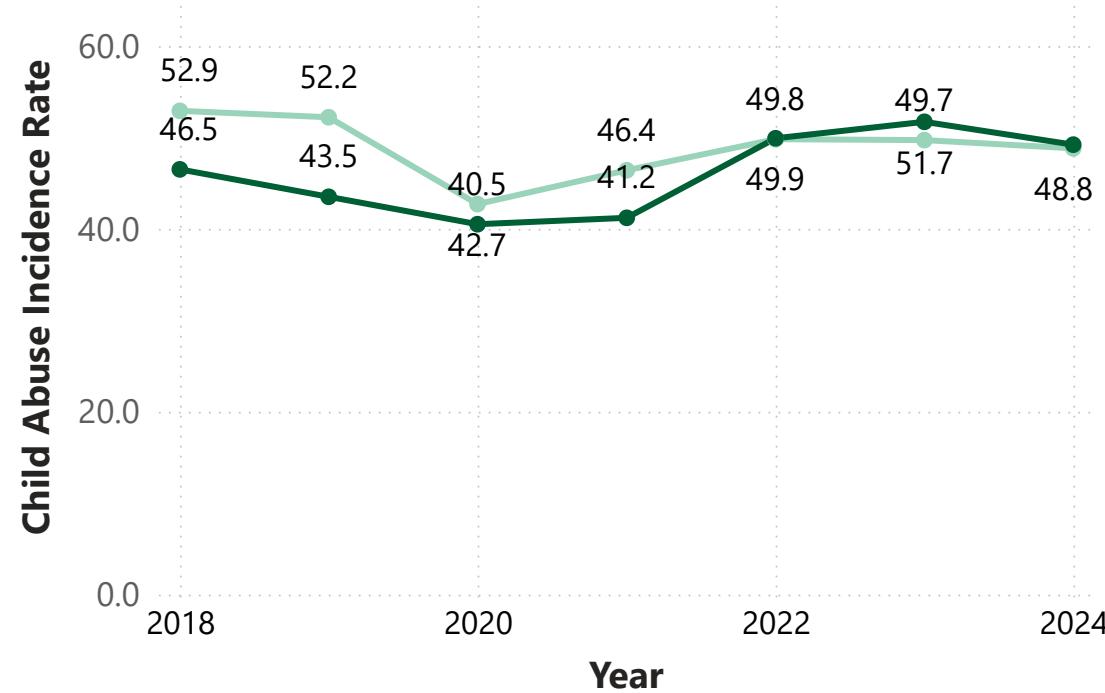
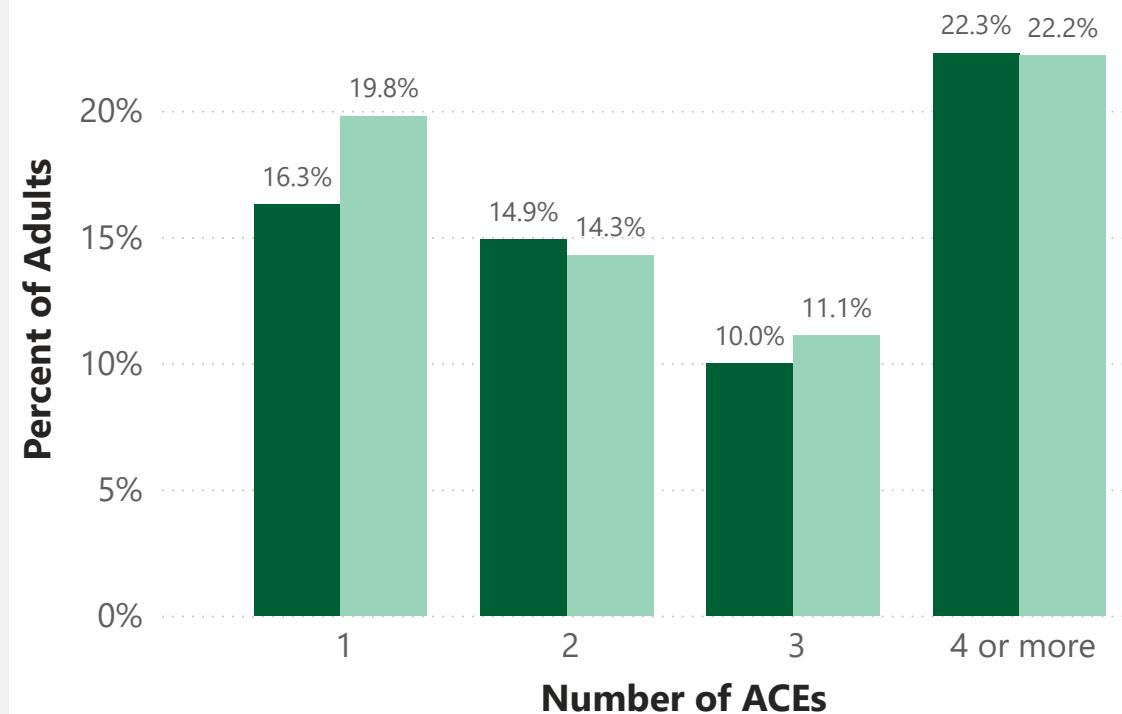


Figure 2: Number of ACEs Among Adults in Sutter County and California, California Health Interview Survey (2021-2024)⁷

● Sutter ● California



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DEATH FROM ALL CAUSES

Why It Is Important:

Deaths from all causes is the total number of deaths per year. It is another method to sum the many factors that influence health and wellness into one number. The lower the number of deaths per year, the healthier the population. Nationwide, deaths from all causes declined from 2022 (798.8 deaths per 100,000) to 2023 (750.5 deaths per 100,000).¹ In 2023, nationally, the 10 leading causes of death were the same as in 2022. Top 5 leading causes of death in 2023 were heart disease, followed by cancer, unintentional injuries, stroke, and Chronic lower respiratory diseases.¹

Where We Are Now:

Sutter County has a higher rate of deaths from all causes than California but lower than the U.S. (Table 1).^{1-2,4} Many of the same factors that reduce life expectancy at birth in Sutter County also increase the death rate. These include lower access to quality medical care, higher rates of tobacco use, lack of physical activity, and unhealthy diet. From 2019 to 2023, an average of 920 Sutter County residents died each year (Figure 1).³ There was a 19.1% increase in total deaths in 2021 compared to 2019 (pre-pandemic).³ Then, there was a notable 11.7% drop in total deaths in Sutter County in 2023 compared to 2021.³

**Table 1: All Cause Death Rates
Per 100,000 (2021-2023)^{1-2,4}**

Location	Deaths per 100K ▲
California	634.1
Sutter County	786.2
US	809.7

Those Most Affected:

The average age at death for Sutter County residents from 2019 to 2023 was 75.3 years.³ The top 5 causes of death in Sutter County (listed from highest to lowest) are heart disease, all cancers, stroke, unintentional injuries/accidents, and Alzheimer's disease.⁴ Figure 2 shows the average death rates from 2019-2023. Non-Hispanic Whites have the highest death rate.³ Other/2 or more races and Hispanic residents have the lowest death rate.³

Figure 1: Deaths from All Causes Among Sutter County Residents, 2019-2023³

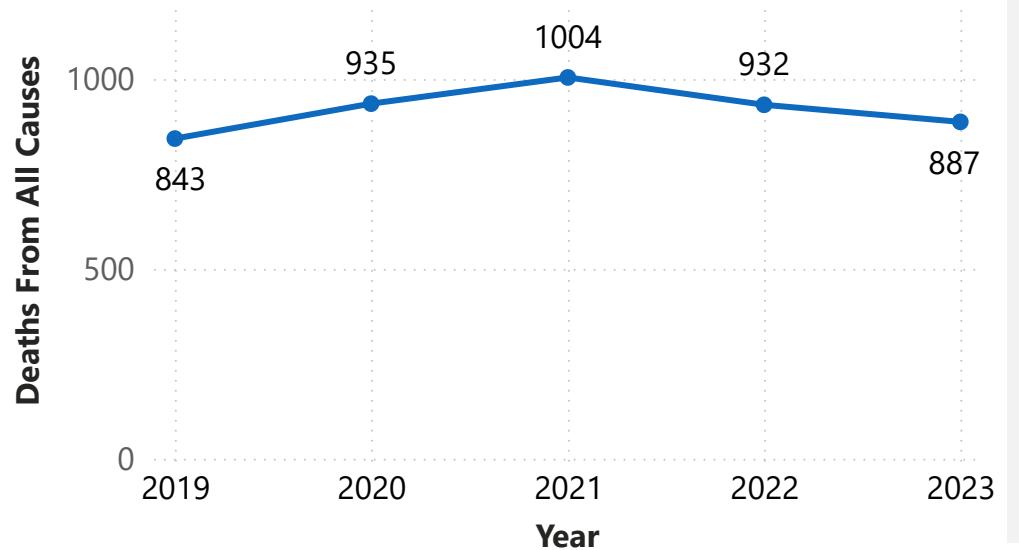
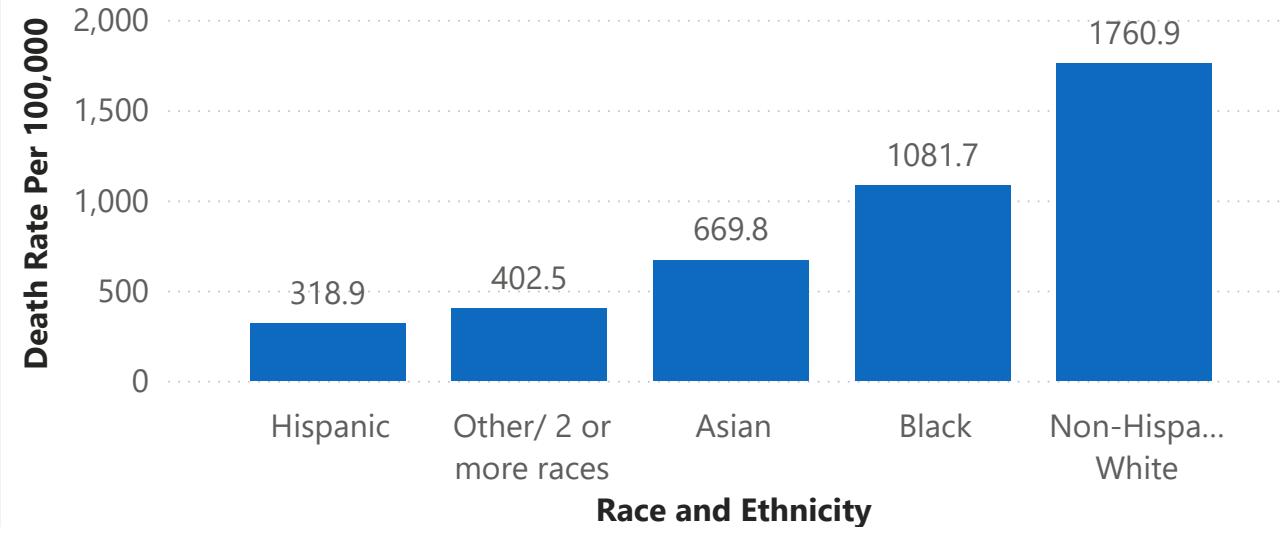


Figure 2: Average Yearly Rates of Deaths by Race/Ethnicity, 2019-2023³



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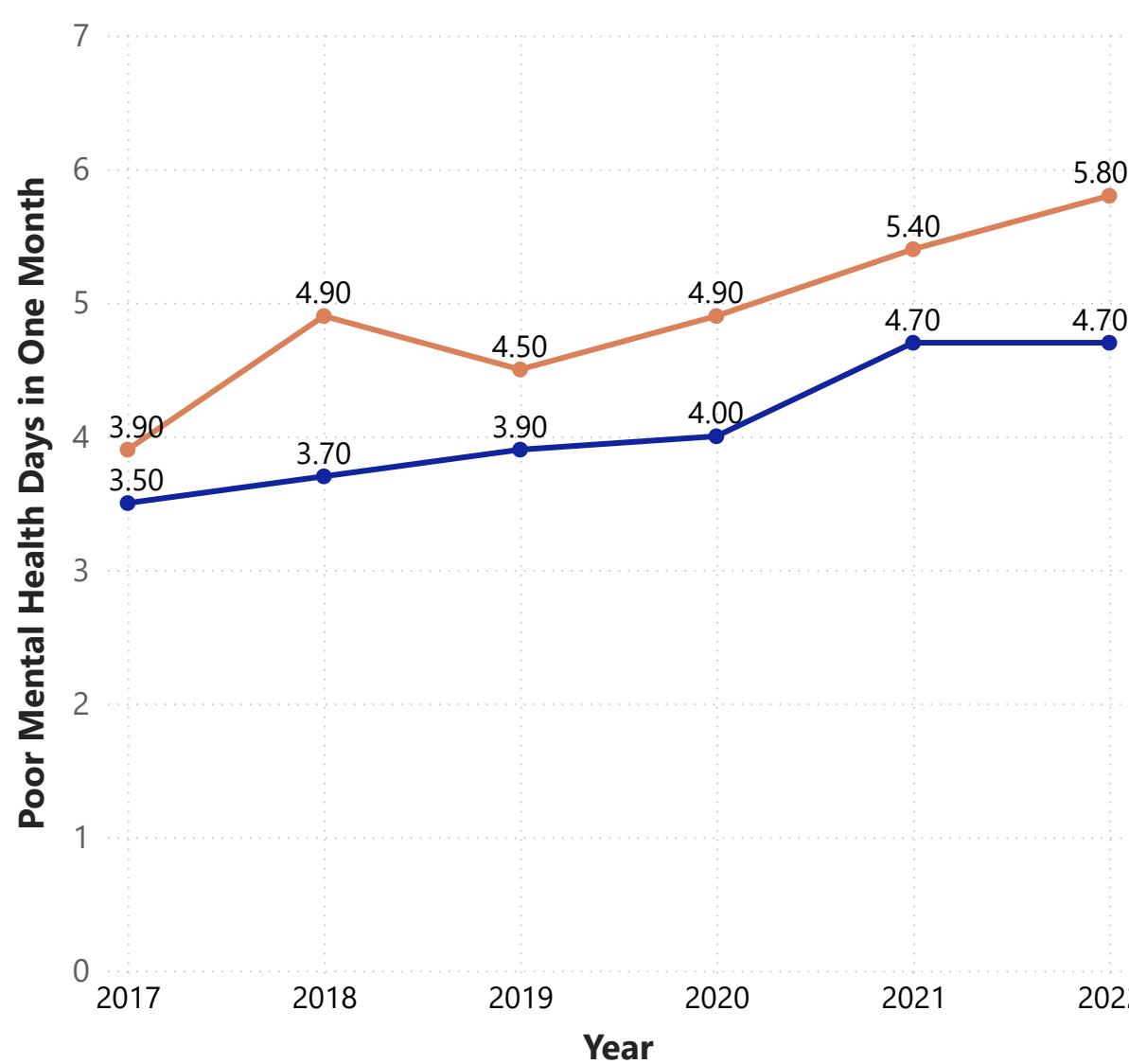
MENTAL HEALTH

Why It Is Important:

Mental health encompasses our total social, emotional, and psychological well-being and is a critical part, along with physical health, in achieving and maintaining optimal wellness.¹ Persons living with mental illness are at greater risk for substance use disorders, cardiovascular disease, and other chronic diseases. In 2024, 18.1% of people experiencing homelessness in the U.S. had a serious mental illness.² Additionally, 70% of youth in the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health condition.² Globally, lost productivity due to depression and anxiety alone costs \$1 trillion every year.²

**Figure 1: Poor Mental Health Days in One Month
(2017-2022)⁴**

● California ● Sutter



Where We Are Now:

Each year, 1 in 5 Americans experience a mental health condition, and more than 1 in 7 U.S. youth ages 6 to 17 live with a mental health disorder.² Per the CA Department of Public Health, Sutter County's suicide rate is higher than that of California overall, with Sutter County at 14.0 cases per 100,000 residents and California's rate at 10.2 per 100,000 in 2023.³ Figure 1 shows poor mental health days, measured by taking an average of mentally unhealthy days in the past 30 days among California and Sutter County residents. In 2022, Sutter County residents reported experiencing more poor mental health days in the past 30 days (5.8) compared to California (4.7).⁴

Those Most Affected:

19% of Sutter County residents reported experiencing 14 or more days of poor mental health in the past 30 days (frequent mental distress) compared to California (15%).⁵ Receiving services and treatment is an important component to recovery for those experiencing the signs and symptoms of mental illness, however Sutter County is designated as a mental health professional shortage area, making access to services difficult.⁶ In 2023, Sutter County's mental health provider ratio was 250 patients to 1 mental health provider, which is worse than the California average (220 patients to 1 provider).⁴

References

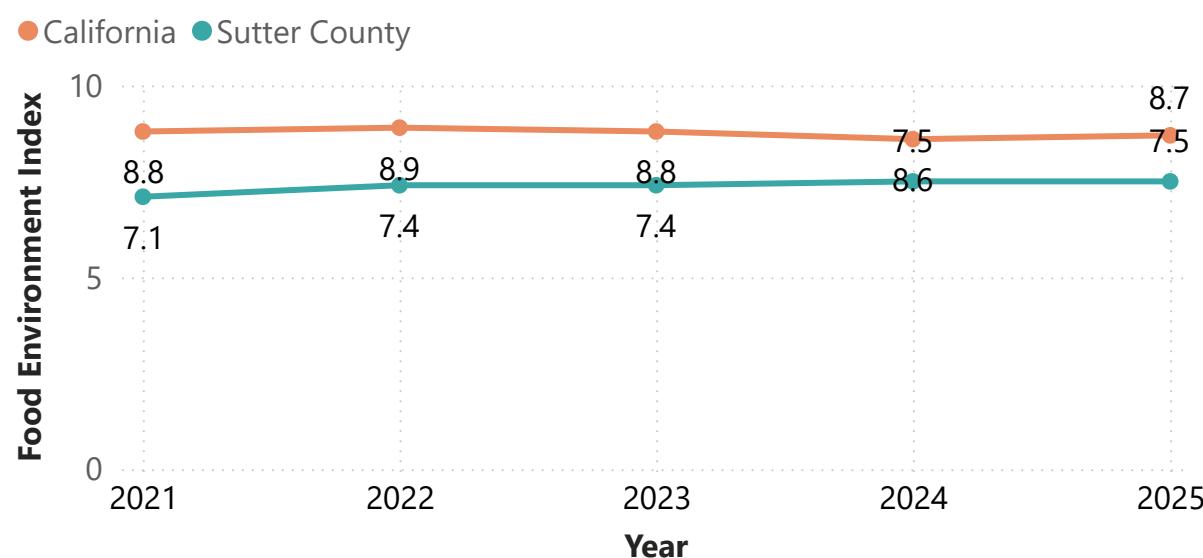
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NUTRITION AND ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS

Why It Is Important:

Good nutrition is essential in maintaining health and well-being across the lifespan. People with healthy nutrition and eating patterns live longer and are at a lower risk of developing serious health problems. Healthy nutrition is not just an individual problem, it is largely influenced by where we live and having access to sufficient and affordable food for a healthy life.^{1,2} Research has shown that communities with low access to healthy affordable foods and plentiful access to fast-food restaurants and high-priced convenience stores have higher risk of obesity and diabetes.²

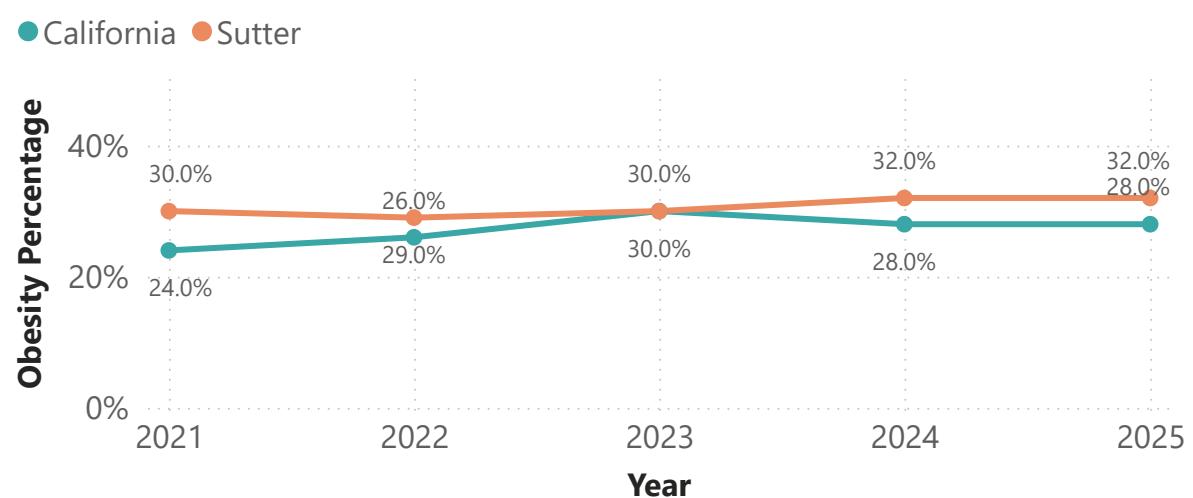
Figure 1: Food Environment Index for Sutter County and California (2021-2025)^{3*}



Where We Are Now:

The Food Environment Index measures food access by assessing residents proximity to healthy foods and income levels within a defined area.³ This index ranges from a scale of 0 (worst) to 10 (best).³ Figure 1 shows that Sutter County has a Food Environment Index score of 7.5, which is lower than California (8.7) and the U.S. (7.7),³ indicating that residents in Sutter County have less opportunities and face barriers in making healthy food choices compared to the state and nationwide. Low access to healthy foods may be a contributing factor in higher obesity rates in Sutter County (32%) than the state average (28%), as well as high chronic disease rates in our community (Figure 2).⁴

Figure 2: Obesity Prevalence of Sutter County and California (2021-2025)^{3*}



Those Most Affected:

In 2023, 15.9% of Sutter County residents experienced food insecurity, or the lack of access to enough food for an active and healthy life, compared to both California (13.7%) and the US (14.3%).⁵ Residents living in low-income, rural, and minority communities are more likely to experience poor access to foods that support healthy diets.² The California CalFresh Healthy Living Program builds partnerships with various community organizations to provide outreach, nutrition education classes, and works to improve upon the policies, systems, and environmental conditions that impact the health and well-being of Sutter County residents.

*Note: Year is based on "reported-year" from the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website.

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LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH

Why It Is Important:

Life expectancy at birth is roughly how long a group of infants would live based on their shared experiences.¹ It is a method to sum the many factors that influence health and wellness into one number. The higher the average life expectancy at birth, the healthier the population. Life expectancy can vary by neighborhood and influences how well and how long someone may live.¹

Where We Are Now:

From 2021-2023, the average life expectancy at birth in Sutter County was 77.6 years.² This is comparable to the national average of 77.6 years but is lower than California at 79.7 years.² The average life expectancy differed greatly based on where a person lives in Sutter County.³ Based on 2010-2015 data by census tract (most updated data), in Sutter County, the lowest life expectancy rates (77.9 years) for babies born in Yuba City are in census tract 501.01 (bounded by CA-20, CA-99, Queens Avenue and Market Street) and tract 503.01 (bound by Franklin Avenue, CA-99, Clark Avenue, and Lincoln Rd).³

Those Most Affected:

In Sutter County, on average, Hispanic and Asian residents have the highest life expectancy at 83.1 years, followed by Black residents (77.5 years), and non-Hispanic White residents (76.4 years).² Overall, women lived longer than men in Sutter County, California, and the United States (Female: 81.2 years, Male: 76.1 years).⁴

Figure 1: Sutter County Life Expectancy by Race/Ethnicity (2021-2023)²

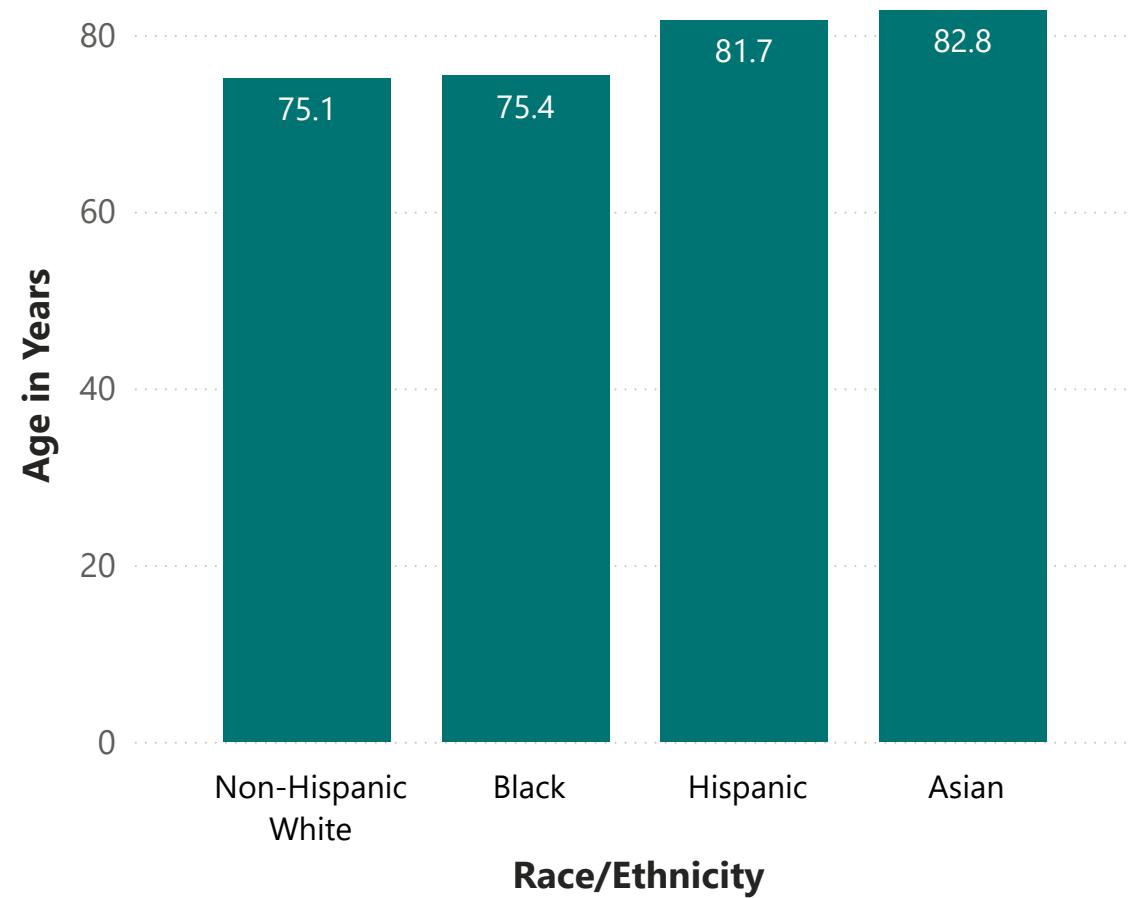
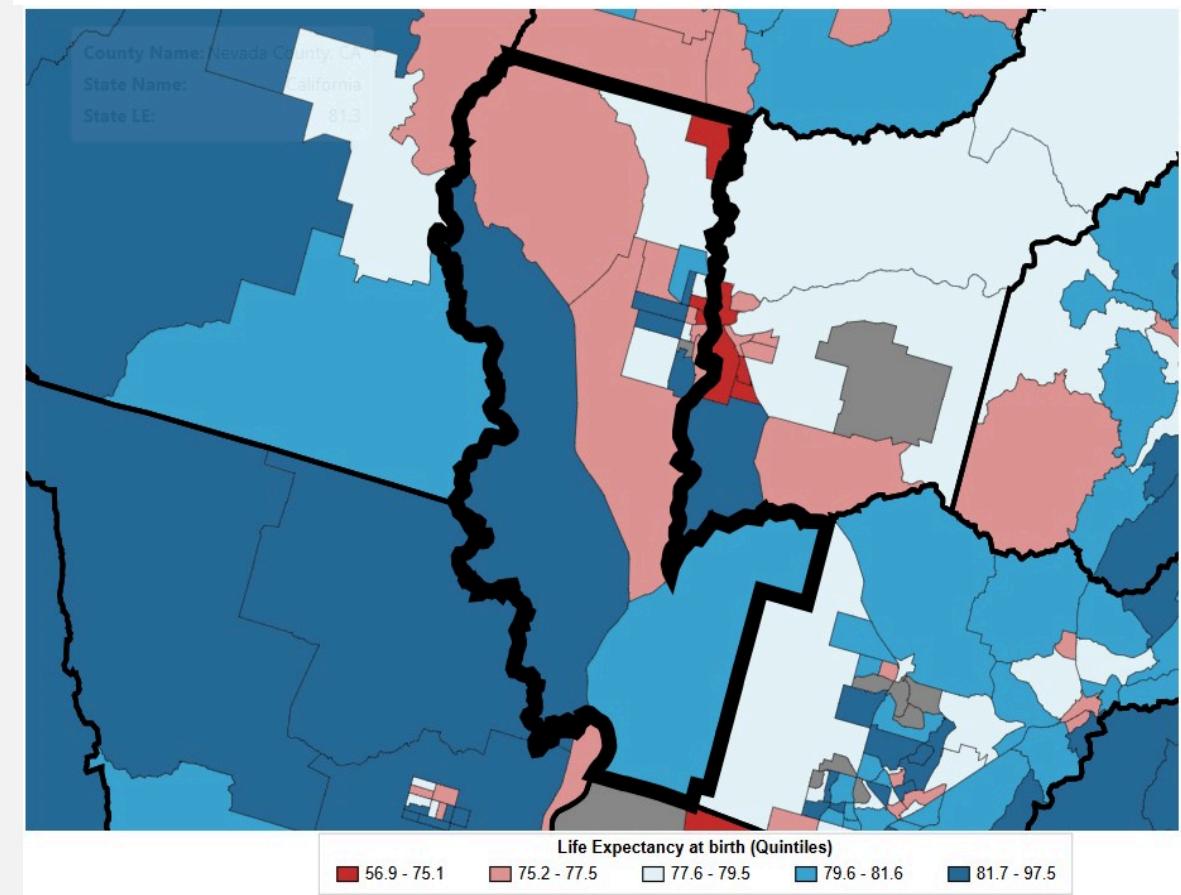


Figure 2: Life Expectancy at Birth for U.S. States and Census Tract, 2010-2015 (Most Updated Data)



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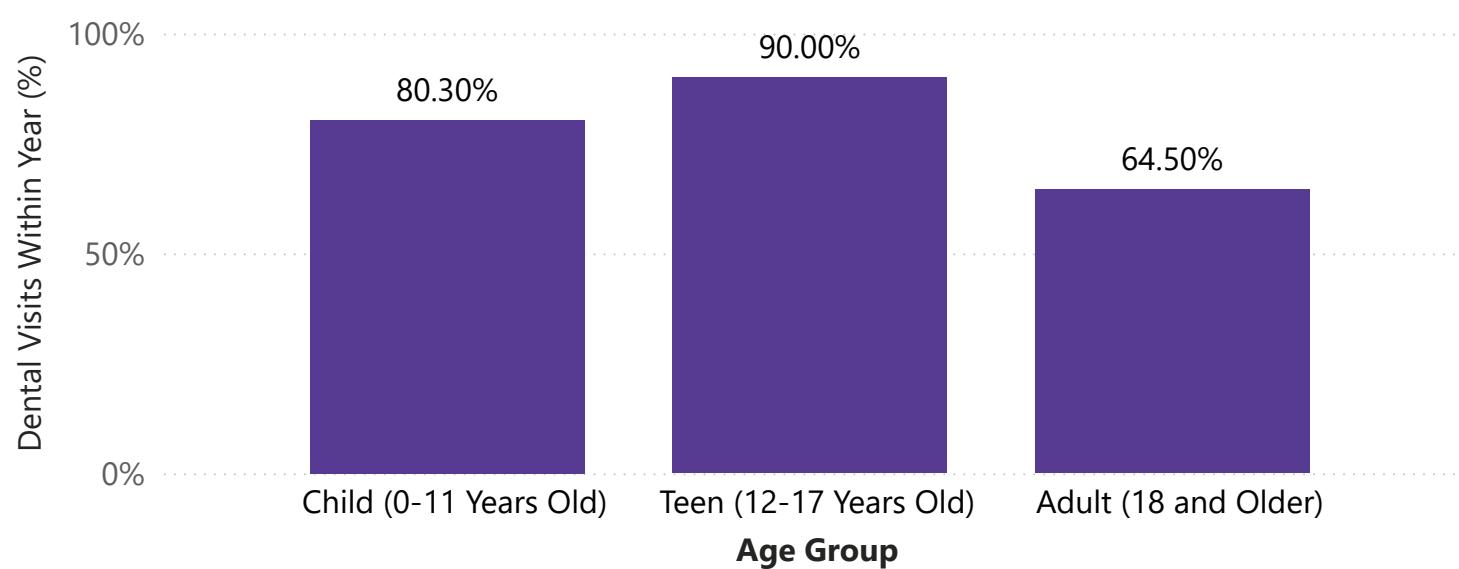
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ORAL HEALTH

Why It Is Important:

Oral health is an essential component of general health and well-being for all ages and can affect the ability to eat, smile, show emotions, and communicate effectively.¹⁻² Oral health is much more than healthy teeth. It encompasses the health of the entire mouth including the throat, tongue, lips, salivary glands, and jaw.² The most common diseases and conditions that most affect overall oral health and quality of life are cavities and severe gum disease, oral cancers, and tooth loss.² Factors that contribute to poor oral health and gum disease include tobacco use, sugar consumption, and poor oral hygiene.¹ Poor oral health is also associated with other chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.²

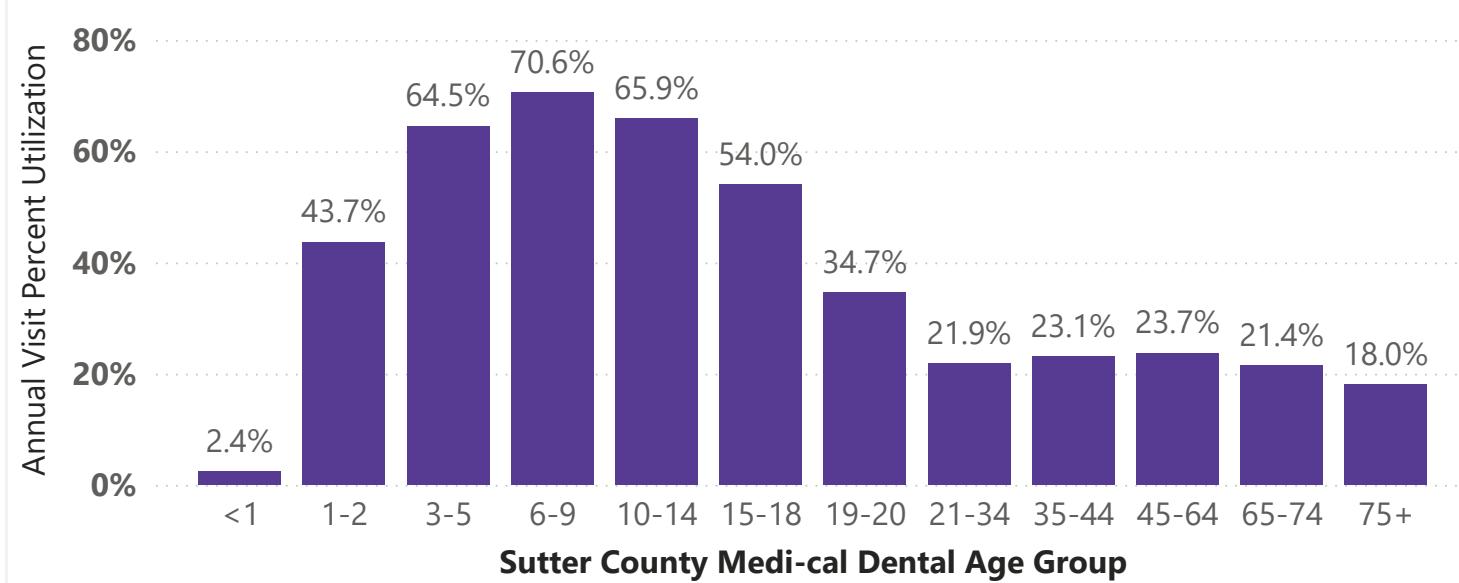
Figure 1: Visited the Dentist in the Last Year By Age Group, Sutter County 2019-2023³



Where We Are Now:

In the United States 1 in 5 adults aged 20 to 64 have at least one untreated cavity.¹ From 2019-2024, data from the UCLA California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) shows that in Sutter County, 80.3% of children (ages 0-11), 90.0% of teens (ages 12-17), and 64.5% of adults (18 and older) that were interviewed visited a dentist within the last year (Figure 1).³ Additionally, 16.2% of teens and 26.1% of adults that were interviewed had Fair/Poor teeth condition in 2022.³

Figure 2. Sutter County Medi-Cal Dental Utilization For Annual Dental Visits By Age Group, 2023⁴



Those Most Affected:

Children from low-income families are twice as likely to have cavities as children from higher-income families.¹ Among Medi-Cal recipients in Sutter County, children 6 to 9 years old utilized annual dental visit benefits the most (70.6%) among all age groups (see Figure 2).⁴ For reporting year 2025, Sutter County had a dental provider to patient ratio of one dentist for 1,150 patients.⁵ Sutter County overall fares slightly worse when compared to CA average of one dentist for 1,050 patients but slightly better than the U.S. average of one dentist for 1,340 patients.⁵

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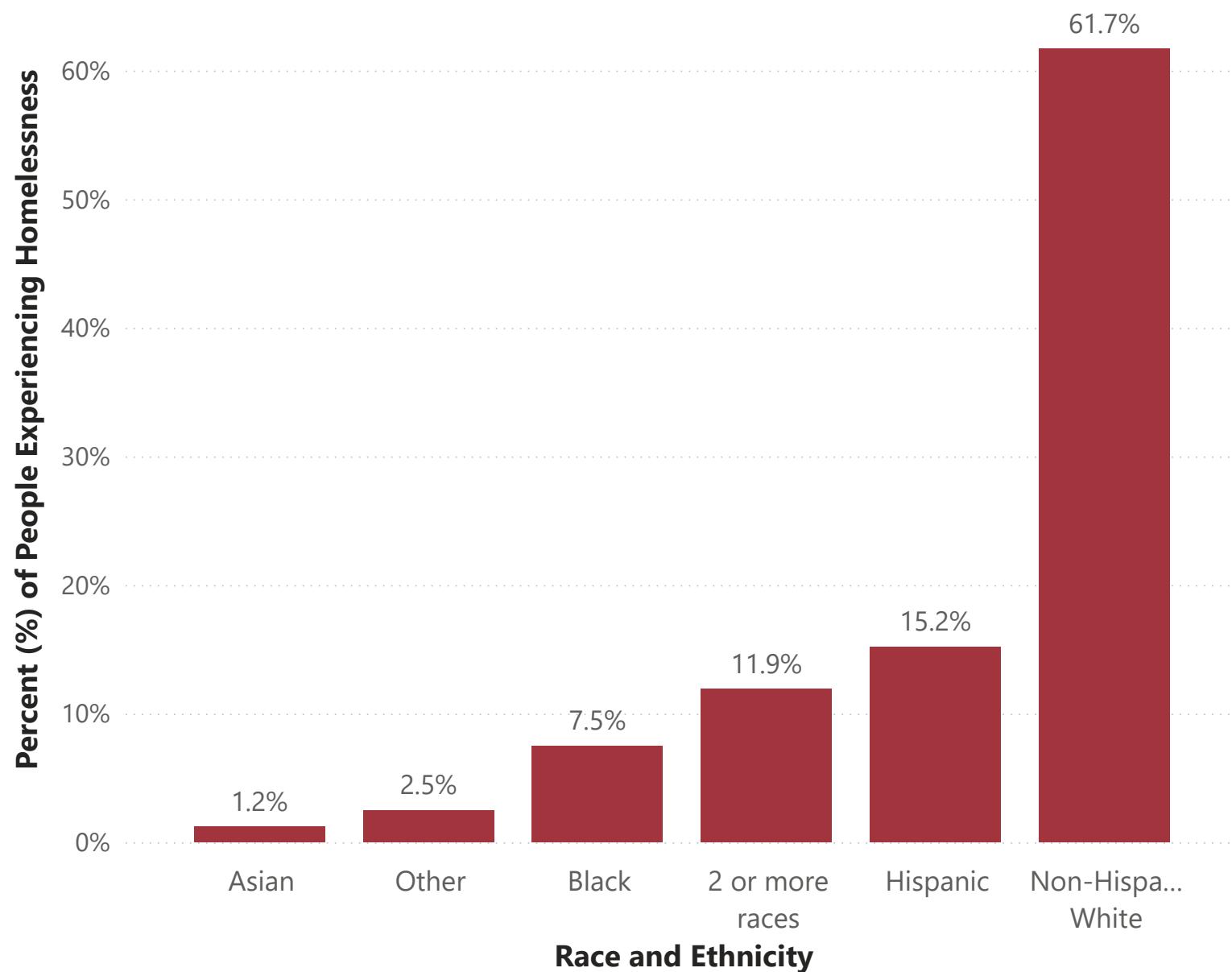
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PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Why It Is Important:

"Experiencing homelessness" is defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a "person who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence".¹ Individuals experiencing homelessness are at a significantly higher risk of developing chronic illnesses, communicable diseases, substance use disorders and becoming victims of violence. People experiencing homelessness are also more likely to be hospitalized and stay longer in the hospital.²

Figure 1: Sutter County's Point-in-Time Sheltered and Unsheltered Population Experiencing Homelessness By Race/Ethnicity (2025)³



Where We Are Now:

In 2025, 393 people were experiencing homelessness in Sutter County based on the Sutter-Yuba Homeless Consortium Point In Time Count (PIT), a count of all unsheltered and sheltered people experiencing homelessness in Sutter County.³

Those Most Affected:

People experiencing homelessness in Sutter County are more likely to have behavioral health conditions, physical disabilities, or chronic medical conditions than Sutter County residents who are housed. Non-Hispanic White residents in Sutter County are more likely to be homeless than people from any other race or ethnic group (Figure 1).³ The Sutter County Homeless Services program provides outreach, case management, housing navigation to those experiencing homelessness in Sutter County, and operates the county's 40 bed emergency shelter.

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Why It Is Important:

Physical activity is important in building and maintaining health. Active people generally live longer and are at less risk of developing health problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and some cancers. People who are insufficiently active have a 20-30% increased risk of death compared to those who are sufficiently active.¹ Only 1 in 4 US adults meet the physical activity recommendations to help prevent chronic illnesses, which contributes to the \$192 billion in annual health care costs associated with inadequate physical activity.² Increasing physical activity is a larger societal issue, not just an individual problem; therefore, creating more opportunities for people to access programs and places for physical activity and safe routes to walk, run, bike or move is essential.

Where We Are Now:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends children and adolescents age 6-17 years participate in 60 minutes or more of physical activity per day and adults participate in either 150 minutes of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity per week.^{3,4} In 2025, more Sutter County adults (27%) reported physical inactivity compared to California (22%) and the United States (23%).⁵

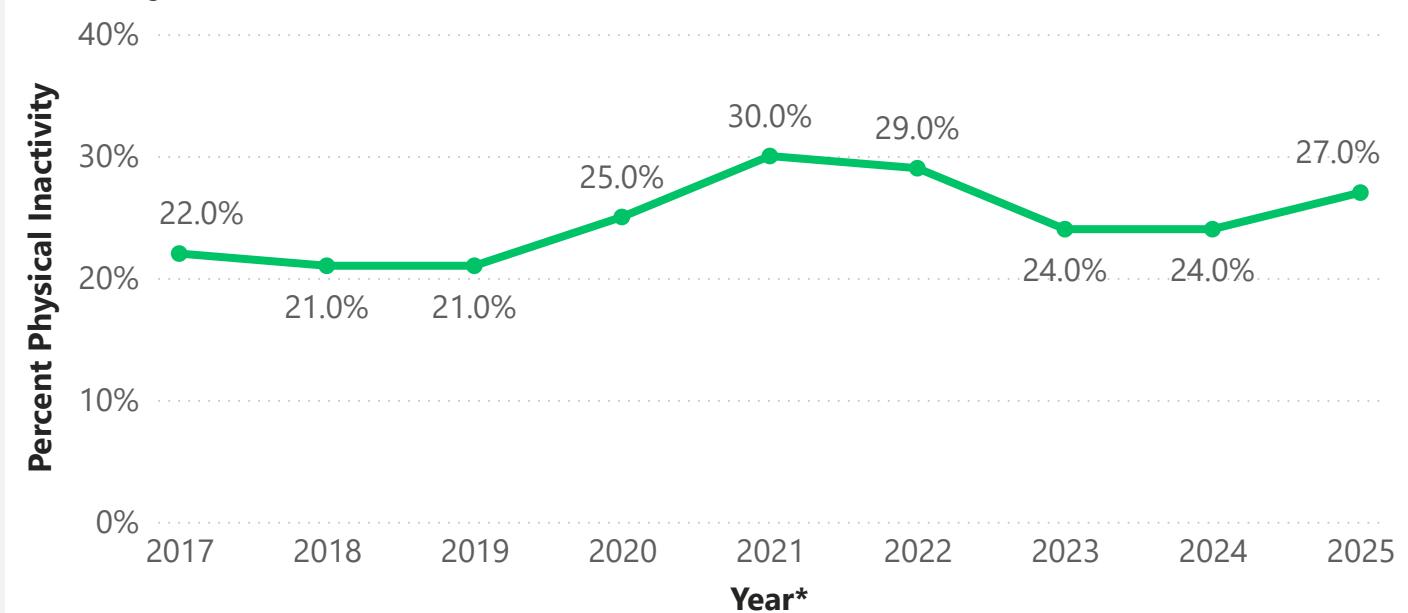
Benefits to regular and adequate physical activity:^{1,2}

- Reduces the risk of hypertension, coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, breast and colon cancer, depression and the risk of falls;
- Improves bone and functional health; and
- Critical in achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

Those Most Affected:

Low-income communities are most affected by the lack of access to physical activity and exercise opportunities due to the absence of no-cost or low-cost sporting activities; fitness classes; public transportation; and insufficient infrastructure such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and paved shoulders to access these activities. To address physical inactivity in Sutter County, health education programs encourage opportunities to be physically active and provide community outreach and educational classes on the benefits of regular physical activity and strategies to get moving.

Figure 1: Percent of Adults Who are Physically Inactive in Sutter County (2017-2025)⁵



*Note: Year is based on "reported-year" from the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website.

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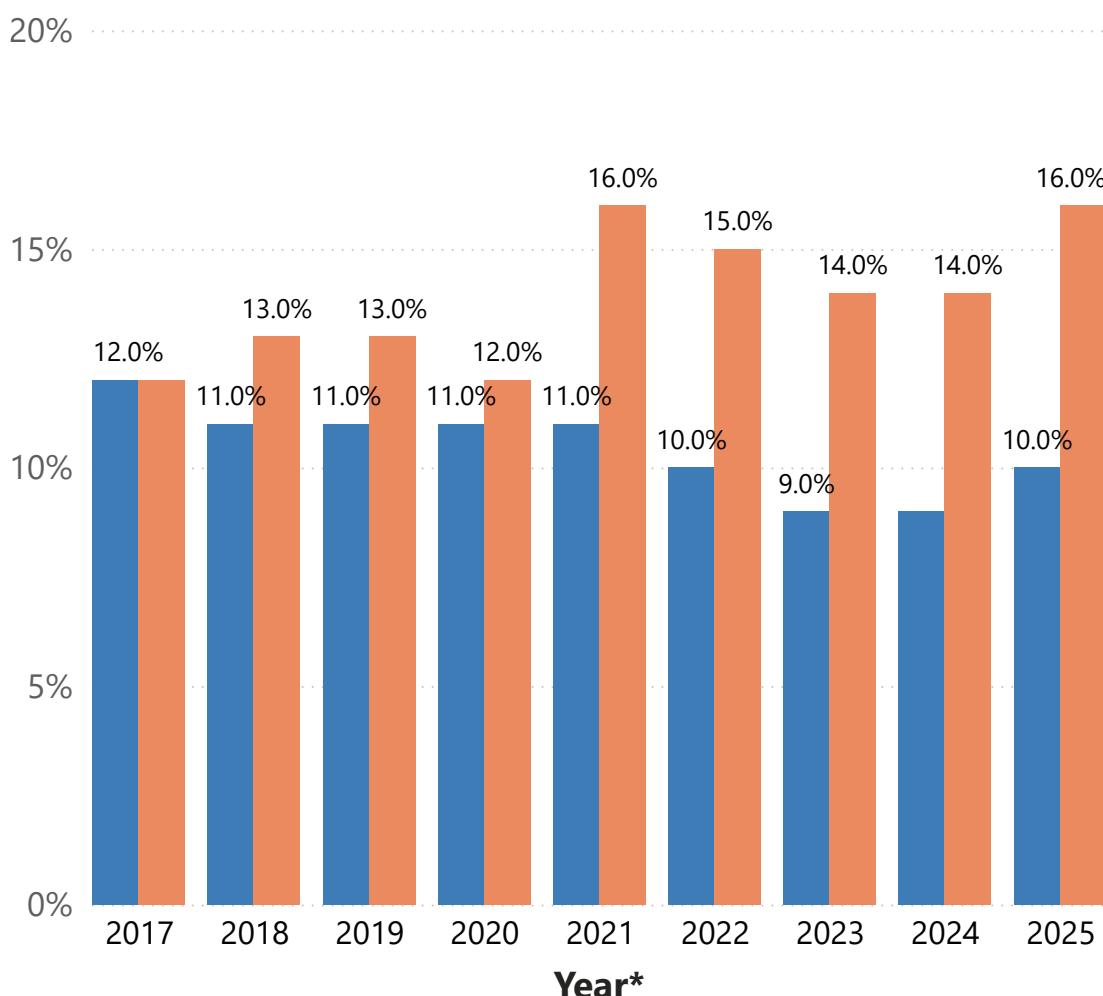
TOBACCO USE

Why It Is Important:

Tobacco use includes cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, pipes, hookahs, smokeless tobacco such as Zyn and electronic devices (or vaping). Tobacco use is a major risk factor for multiple chronic diseases, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and chronic lower respiratory disease.² Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of disease, death, and disability in the United States.² More than 16 million Americans are living with a disease caused by smoking and more than 480,000 Americans die every year from tobacco related diseases.² It is estimated that 90% of adult smokers first tried smoking by age 18.³ Young people are more vulnerable to the consistent presence of tobacco products in their environment, including offers from peers, exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke, e-cigarette vapor, and predatory marketing by the tobacco industry. Tobacco companies target youth by flavoring, packaging, and pricing it similar to candy. In 2024, of the youth who reported e-cigarette use in the past 30 days, 88.2% of high school users and 85.7% of middle school users indicated they used flavored e-cigarettes.³

Figure 1: Smoking Rates in Sutter County and California (2017-2025)⁴

● California ● Sutter



Where We Are Now:

Overall, adult tobacco use is decreasing in California but increasing in Sutter County.⁴ Figure 1 shows a decline in smoking rate from 2017 (12% adult tobacco use) to 2024 (9%) in California.⁴ During the same time period, Sutter County had an average increase in smoking rate from 2017 (12%) to 2024 (14%).⁴ From 2024 to 2025, adult smoking rates increased by 1% in California (10.0%) and by 2% in Sutter County (16%). The Annual National Youth Tobacco Survey for 2024 showed a significant drop in the number of U.S. middle and high school students who reported current (past 30 days) e-cigarette use – a decrease from 2.13 million (7.7%) youth in 2023 to 1.63 million (5.9%) youth in 2024.⁵ Overall, youth tobacco use remains relatively high nationally, with 8.1% (2.25 million) of all students reporting current use of any tobacco product.⁵ The most recent data from the California Healthy Kids Survey (2021-2023) indicates 10% of grade 9 and 9% of grade 11 students in Sutter County reported current e-cigarette use compared to 5% and 7% respectively in California.⁶

Those Most Affected:

On average Sutter County has higher adult smoking rates than California (Figure 1). Sutter County Tobacco Control and Tobacco Education Programs aim to reduce smoking rates, increase awareness of the health risks of tobacco use, and address the policy, systems, and environmental changes necessary to decrease tobacco use and exposure in Sutter County.

*Note: Year is based on "reported-year" from the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website.

References

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