

# ORAL HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN MAINE

Autumn 2023

## Project Purpose

Disability Rights Maine and the Children's Oral Health Network of Maine partnered to collect data to better understand the oral health care needs of children with disabilities.

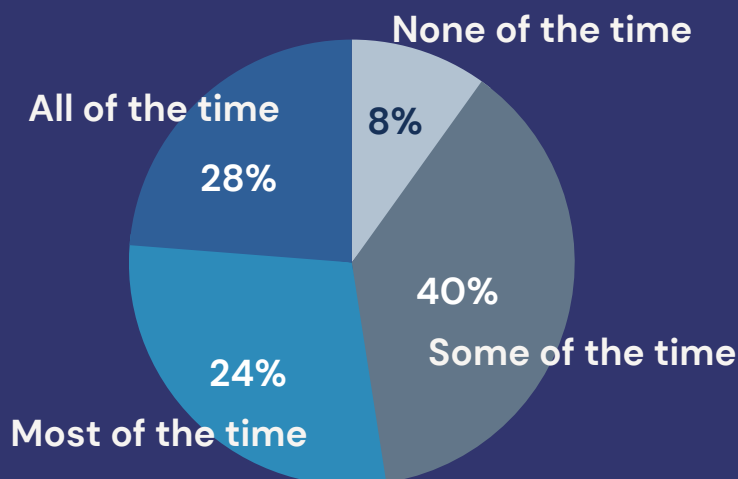


**69%** of children in families surveyed have an oral health care provider they see regularly. 31% do not.

## Why does your child not see an oral health care provider regularly?

- The providers do not provide the accommodations I need (56%)
- The provider does not feel able to meet my child's needs (56%)
- There are no providers in the area (33%)
- Some other reason (33%)
- My child's dental insurance does not cover the care they need (11%)
- I do not know how to find an oral health care provider (11%)

## Are the oral health care providers you see able to provide care and support to your child that meets their needs?



Children's Oral Health Network of Maine

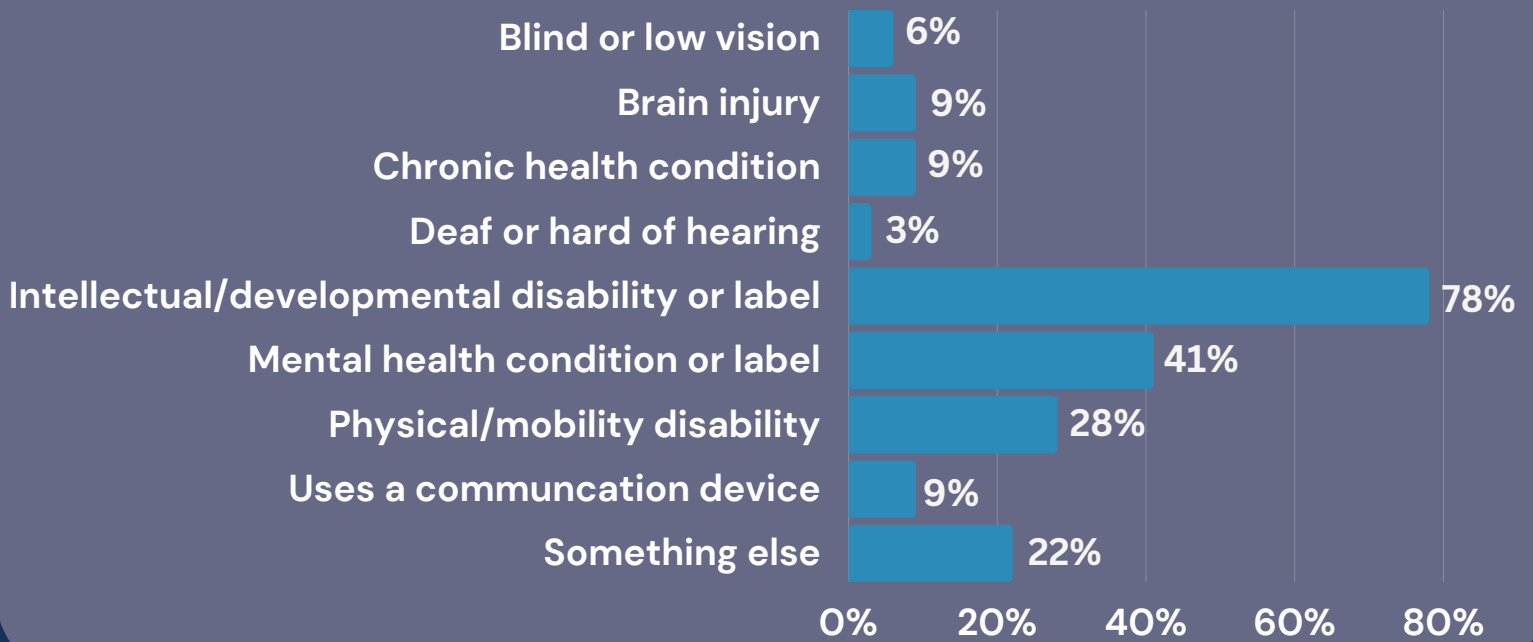




“  
A number of dentists stopped accepting  
MaineCare and it's incredibly difficult to  
find one who both takes our insurance  
and can offer sedation.  
”



### What type of disability does your child have? Please check all that apply.



### What type of dental insurance does your child have?

MaineCare



Other dental coverage plan



Private insurance



No dental insurance



## *What issues has your child experienced around oral health care?*

- Unable to get oral health care when needed (57%)
- Does not want to brush or floss (48%)
- Experienced tooth decay, gum disease, or cavities (43%)
- Needed sedation, but could not find a place to provide it (24%)
- Provider did not allow enough time for the visit (19%)
- Provider did not speak directly to my child (14%)
- Some other issue (14%)
- Misdiagnosed oral health issue as a behavioral issue (10%)
- Provider declined to provide needed accommodations (10%)
- Provider said my child needed sedation, but this is not true (5%)

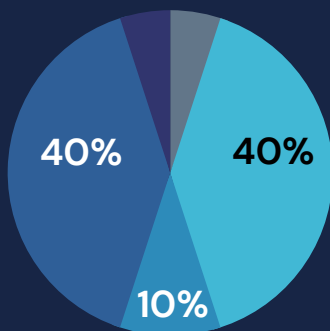


**[The] dentist means well but is frightened of folks with disabilities and high anxiety. In the past, dental hygienists have explained that they do not have a duty to treat – if a child or adult is having difficulty, they can stop treatment, “we never received training on patients with disabilities or autism.”**

## My child's age is:

18-21 years old 5%      0-4 years old 5%

15-17 years old



5-11 years old

12-14 years old



## My child's race/ethnicity is:

American Indian/Alaska Native 0%

Asian/Asian American 4%

Black/African American 8%

Hispanic/Latino 4%

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 0%

White 88%

I prefer not to answer 4%

## My child is currently living:

 At home with family (91%)

 On their own (6%)

 In an institutional placement or treatment facility/program (3%)

## The county we live in is:

 Received responses

 No responses

