

United States Census Bureau

Measuring America

The Young and Uninsured in 2012

In 2012, young adults aged 19 to 34 years old had the highest uninsured rates of any other group (26.9 percent). Historically, many young adults lost access to health insurance when they moved away from home or graduated from college. Young adults transitioning into entry-level or part-time jobs may not have access to employee-sponsored health plans. Eligibility for public health plans, such as Medicaid, is determined by factors such as income level, disability, and citizenship status.

This infographic highlights statistics about uninsured young adults from the 2008 to 2012 American Community Surveys (ACS). The ACS collects data on health insurance coverage to enable federal agencies to more accurately distribute resources and better understand state and local health insurance needs.

Percent Uninsured by Single year of Age 0 to 64 (Graph)

The 18 million uninsured 19- to 34-year-olds in 2012 accounted for 40 percent of the uninsured population under the age of 65.

Change in Uninsured Rates 2008-2012 (Graph)

Since the implementation of the September 23, 2010 policy change that allows dependents to remain on their parents' health insurance plan until their 26th birthday, the trend in health care coverage for the 19- to 25-year-old age group has seen a significant shift, while the trend for 26- to 34-year-olds has remained relatively stable.

Characteristics by Health Insurance Coverage

19- to 25-year-olds

26- to 34-year olds

Uninsured (U) – 8 million

Uninsured (U) – 10 million

Insured (I) – 22 million

Insured (I) – 27 million

Example: 57.8 percent of uninsured 19- to 25-year-olds were employed in 2012.

Example: 64.9 percent of uninsured 26- to 34-year-olds were employed in 2012.

Employed

Employed

U 57.8 %

U 64.9 %

I 62.5 %

I 79.8 %

Non-Hispanic White Alone

Non-Hispanic White Alone

U 39.1 %	U 43.2 %
I 62.7 %	I 63.6 %
Lives with Parents	Living With Parents
U 45.0 %	U 22.7 %
I 46.3 %	I 14.1 %
Enrolled in College	Enrolled in College
U 26.4 %	U 10.8 %
I 47.7 %	I 13.1 %
At or below or poverty	At or below poverty level
U 31.7 %	U 27.3 %
I 22.8 %	I 12.0 %
Not a citizen	Not a citizen
U 18.4 %	U 26.7 %
I 5.2 %	I 8.8 %
Married	Married
U 11.9 %	U 31.7 %
I 10.7 %	I 49.7 %
Disabled	Disabled
U 4.6 %	U 5.0 %
I 5.8 %	I 5.1 %

Where They Live

The uninsured rate of young adults ranged from about 7.8 percent in Massachusetts and the District of Columbia to 38.7 percent in Texas.

The national average for 19- to 34-year-olds was 26.9 percent.

Of the largest 25 metro areas, Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH had the lowest uninsured rate (7.9 percent) and Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL had the highest (41.0 percent).

State Level (Map)

Map Key

Percent uninsured

32.0 to 38.7

26.9 to 31.9

20.0 to 26.8

7.8 to 19.9

U.S. Average 26.9 percent

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (Map)

(Population 65,000 or more)

Map Key

Percent uninsured

32.0 to 60.5

26.9 to 31.9

20.0 to 26.8

7.1 to 19.9

U.S. Average 26.9 percent

United States Census Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce

Economics and Statistics Administration

U.S. Census Bureau

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey

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