

# Access to Care for Immigrant Children in California: 2001-2005

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# This Study Examines

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- Changes in child health insurance status by immigration status
- Whether trends in access to care vary by child immigration status
- Whether insurance changes explain any observed changes in access for children by immigration status.

# Data Sources

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- We analyzed data on 49,554 children between birth and 19 years from three rounds of the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS)
  - 2001 (n=19,771)
  - 2003 (n=13,544)
  - 2005 (n=16,239)
- CHIS is representative of California's non-institutionalized population and includes all major ethnic groups.

# Immigration Status

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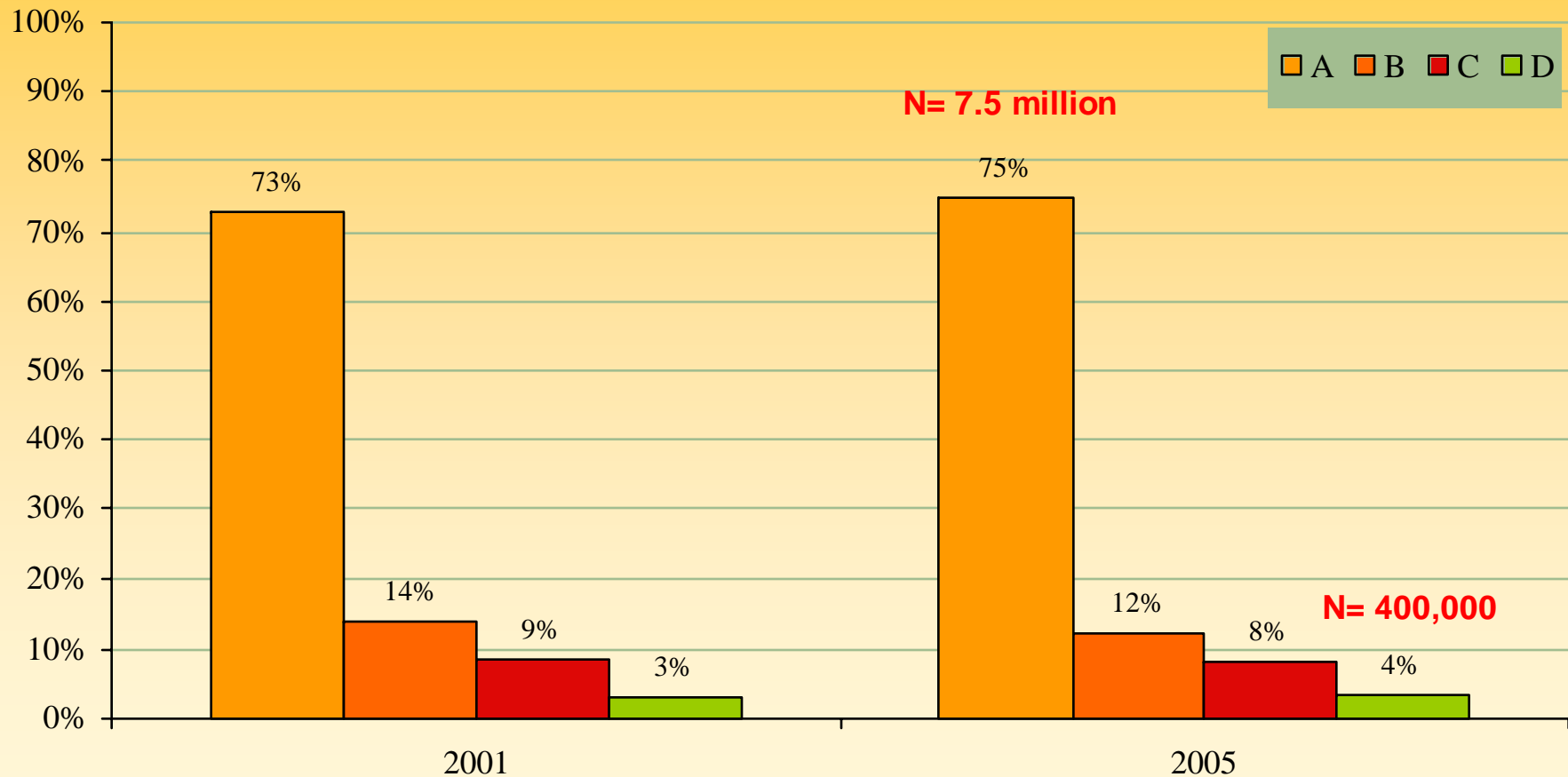
- Four groups were defined:
  - A:** Child and parent are citizens
  - B:** Child is citizen/legal resident (LR), parent is LR
  - C:** Child is citizen, parent undocumented
  - D:** Child and parent are undocumented

# Insurance Coverage

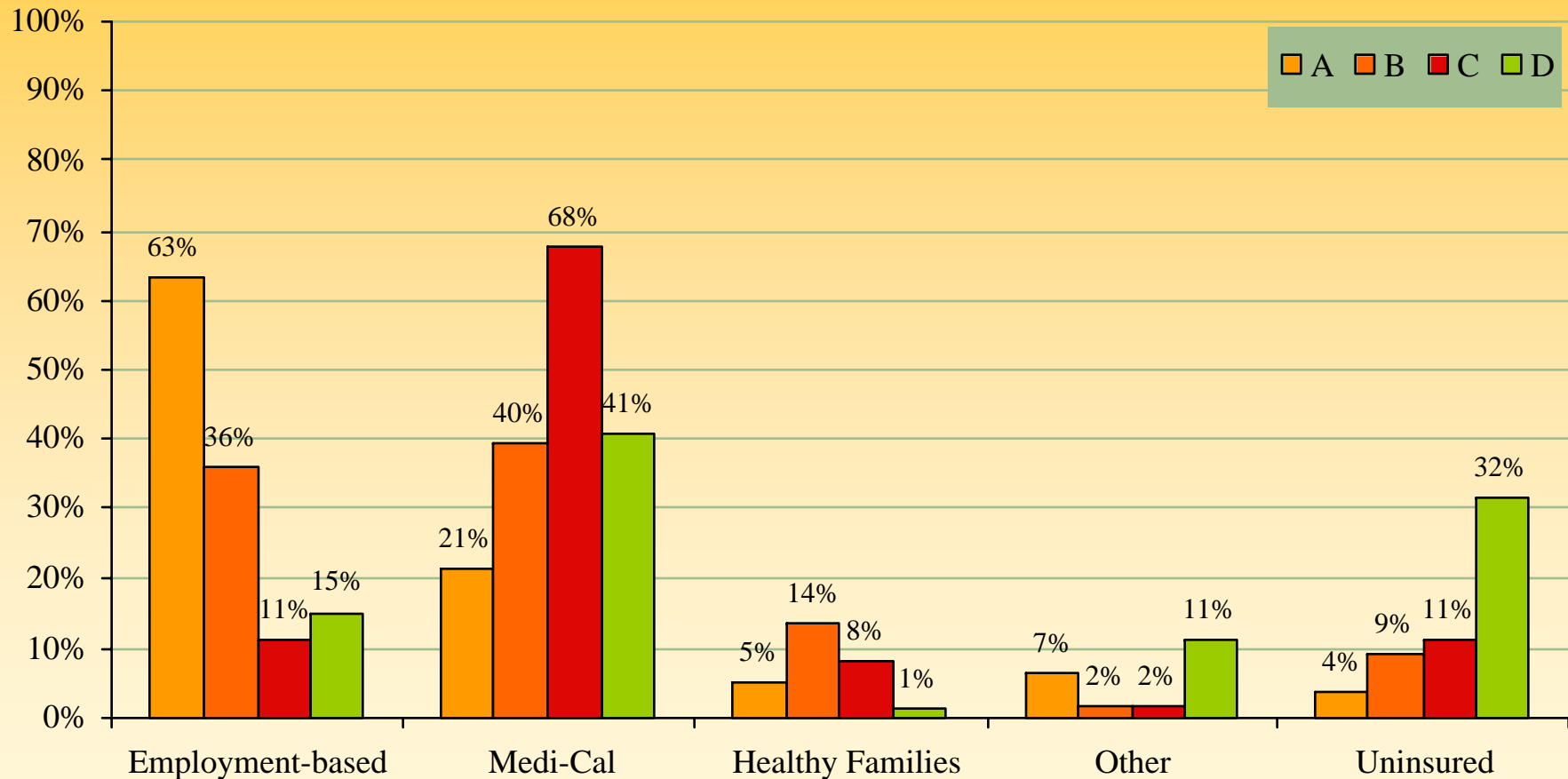
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- Parent-reported child coverage:
  - Private or employer-sponsored
  - Medi-Cal (Medicaid)
  - Healthy Families (SCHIP)
  - Other
  - Uninsured
- Parent-reported child access:
  - Physician visit in the past year
  - Dental visit in the past year (2001 and 2003 only)

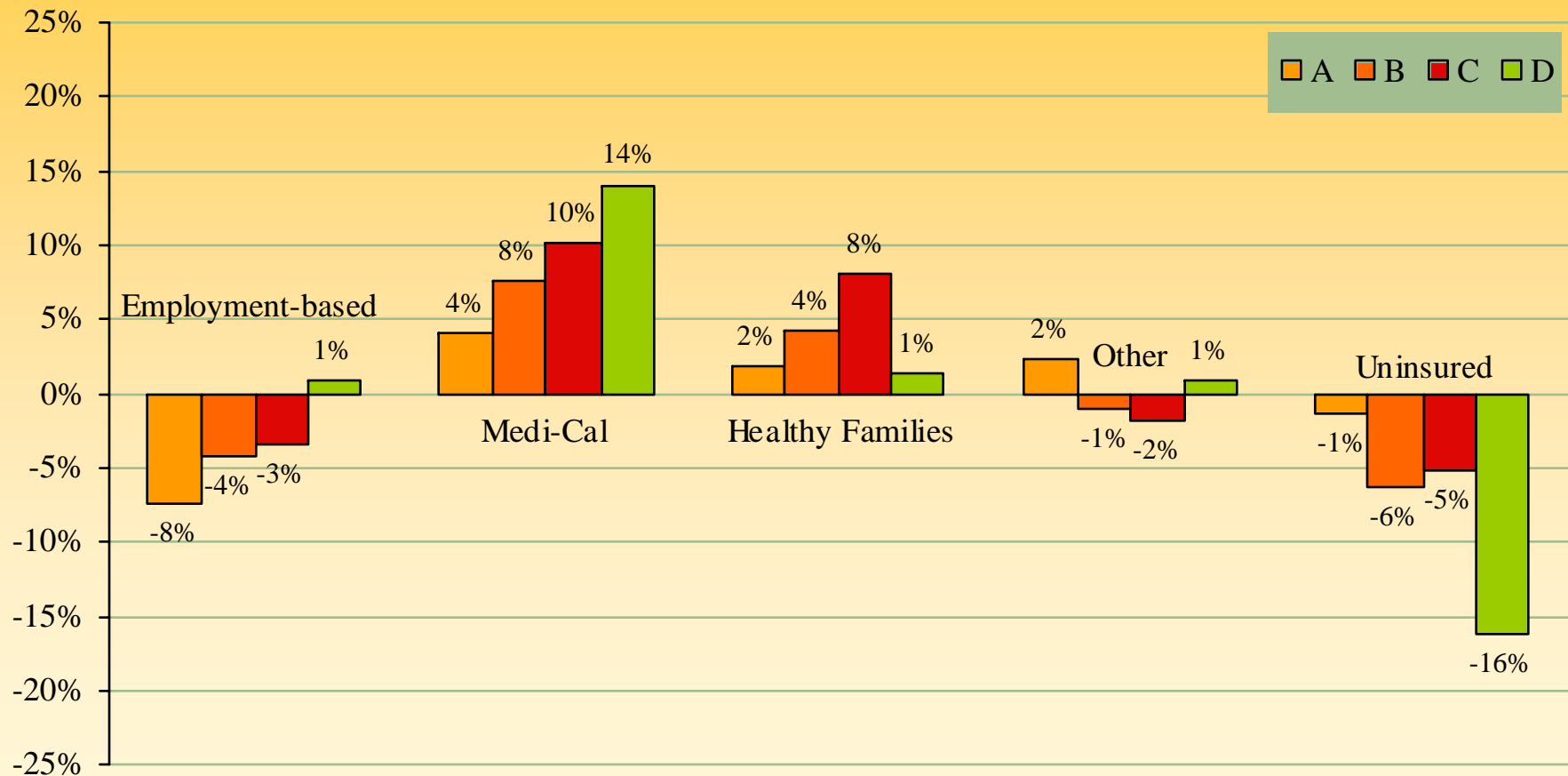
# Immigration Status: 2001-2005



# Child Insurance Status: 2005



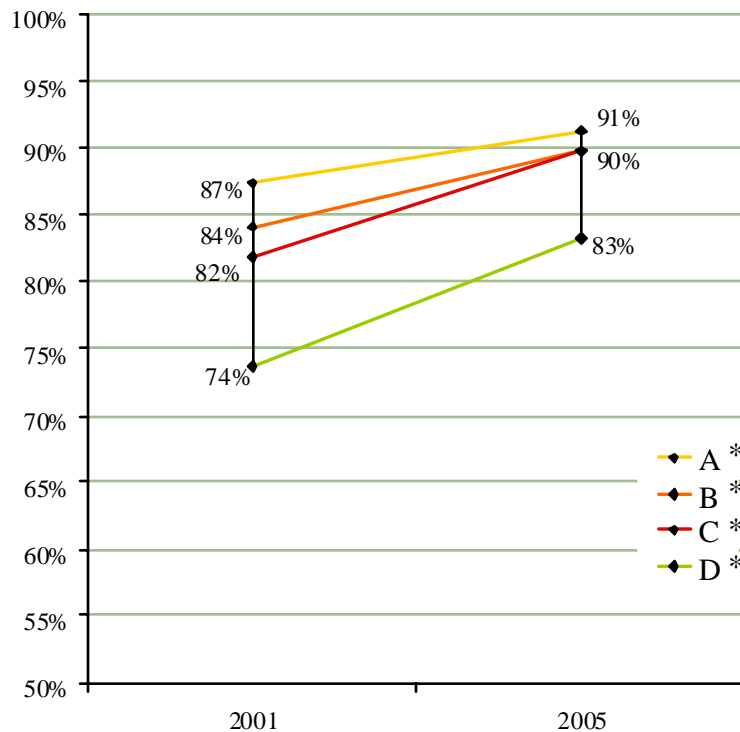
# Trends in Insurance: 2001-2005



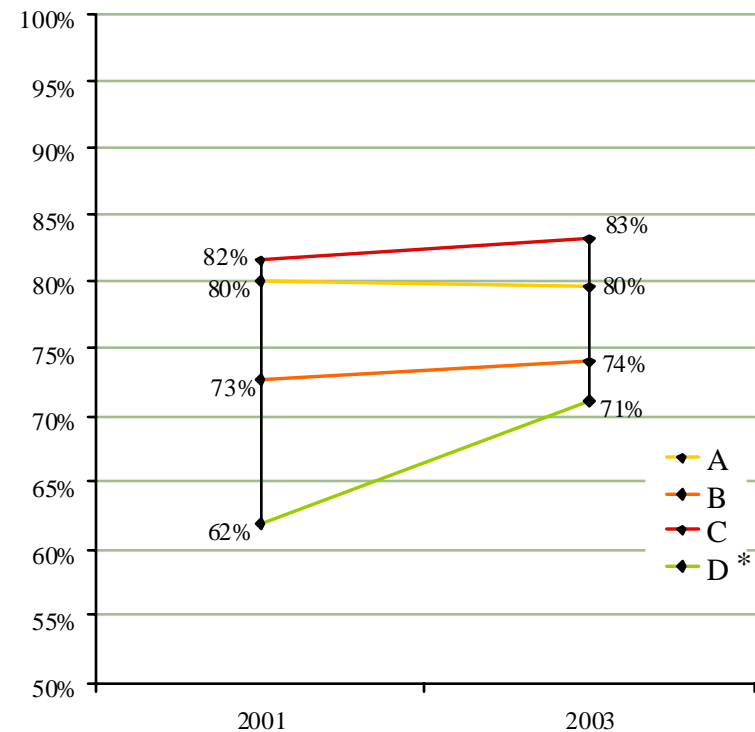


# Changes in Access: 2001-2005

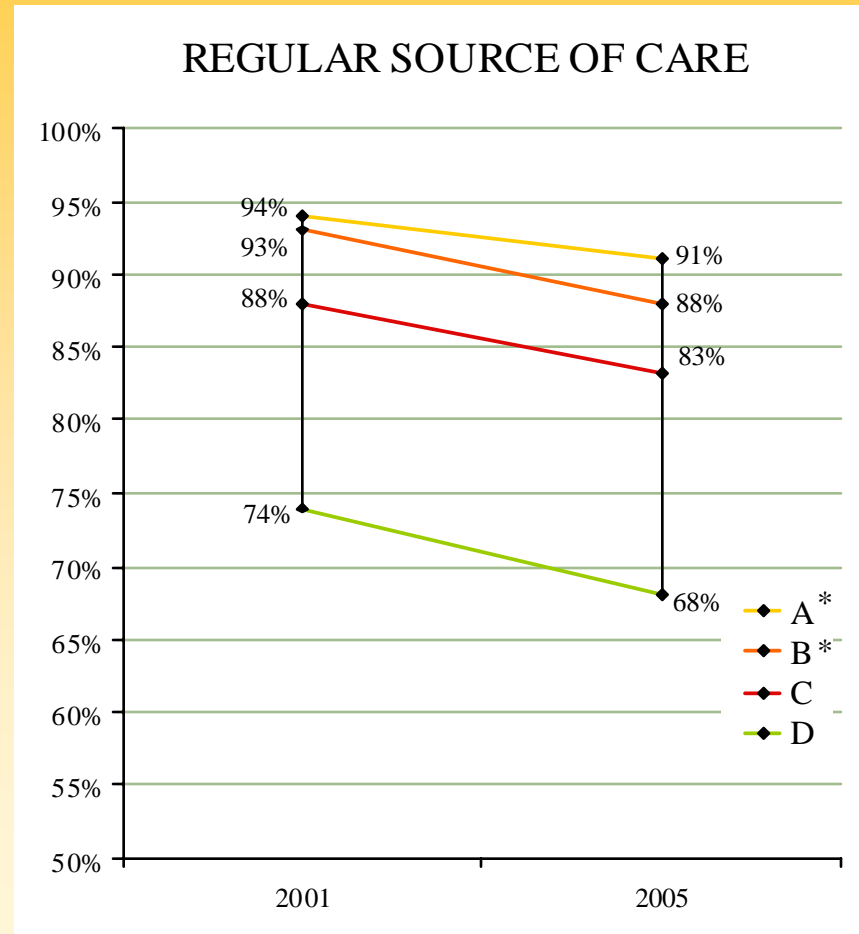
## PHYSICIAN VISIT IN PAST YEAR



## DENTAL VISIT IN PAST YEAR



# Changes in Access: 2001-2005



# Summary

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- Some significant improvements in insurance coverage and access to care for immigrant populations.
- Undocumented children appeared to gain the most with regard to physician and dental visits.
- Achieved in a state with ongoing high levels of poverty, decreases in employer coverage, and rising immigration.

# Limitations

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- Some differences in response rates across years that may contribute to differences despite CHIS adjustments.
- Undocumented children are likely to be undercounted and thus may represent a unique population of those willing to respond openly to a health survey.
- Possibly some regression to the mean for regular source of care variable.

# Policy Implications

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- Contrary to our expectations, changes in access were not clearly attributable to the changes in insurance coverage over time.
- Changes in access might have been due to non-insurance health system changes that have occurred alongside changes in the health insurance system.

# Two Recent Policy Changes

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- County-based efforts, known as Children's Health Initiatives (CHIs), that aim to assure that all children, including the undocumented, have access to care.
- Increased monitoring by the CA Dept. of Health Services of Medi-Cal managed care regarding initial health assessments with a primary care physician.



# Thank You

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