

Louisiana's Uninsured Population

A Report from the 2011
Louisiana Health Insurance Survey

Kirby Goidel, Professor

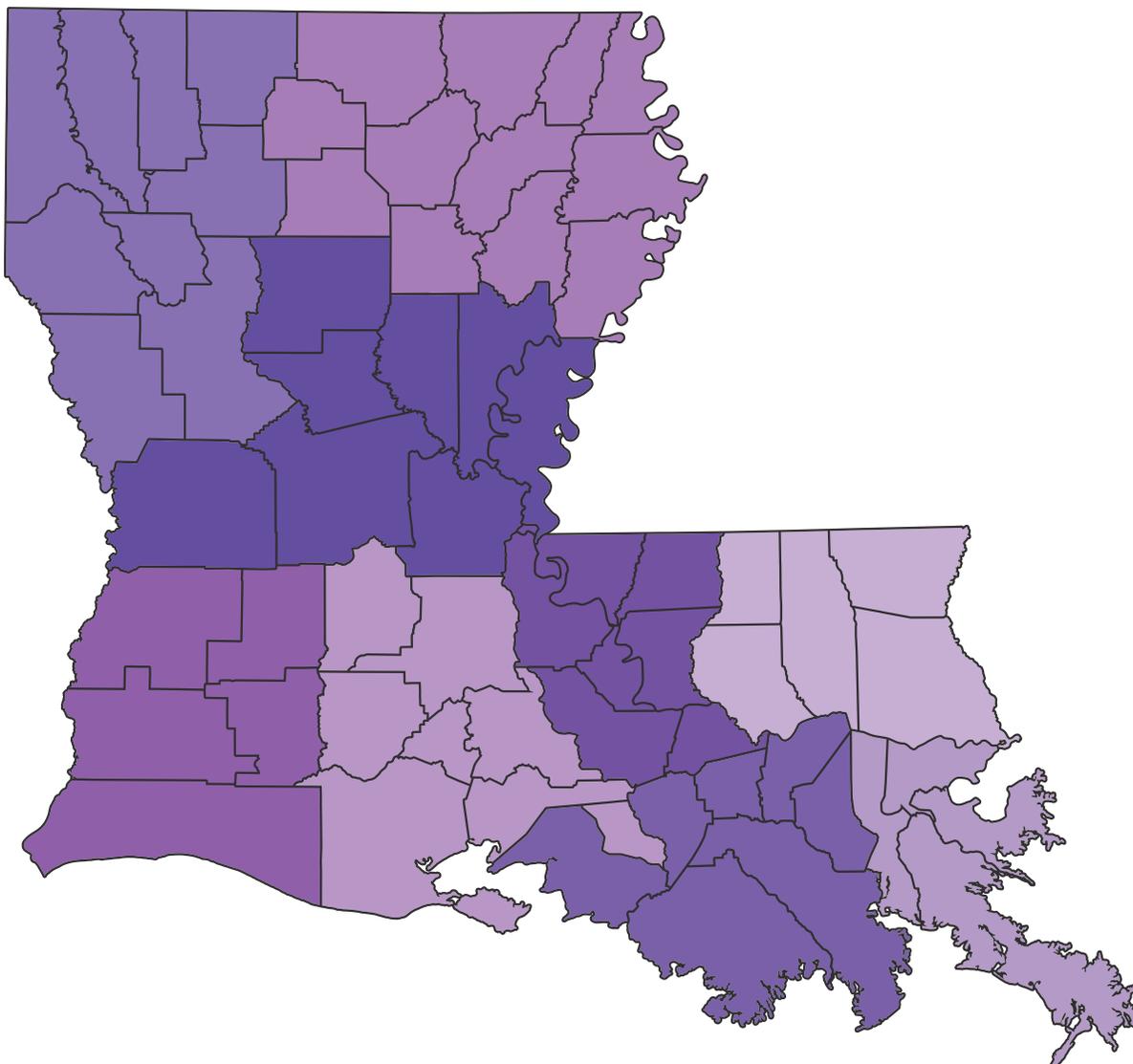
Director of Public Policy Research :: Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs
Manship School of Mass Communication :: Louisiana State University

Stephen Barnes, Assistant Professor-Research

Division of Economic Development :: Department of Economics
EJ Ourso College of Business :: Louisiana State University

Dek Terrell, Freeport-McMoran Professor

Director Division of Economic Development :: Department of Economics
E.J. Ourso College of Business :: Louisiana State University



Introduction

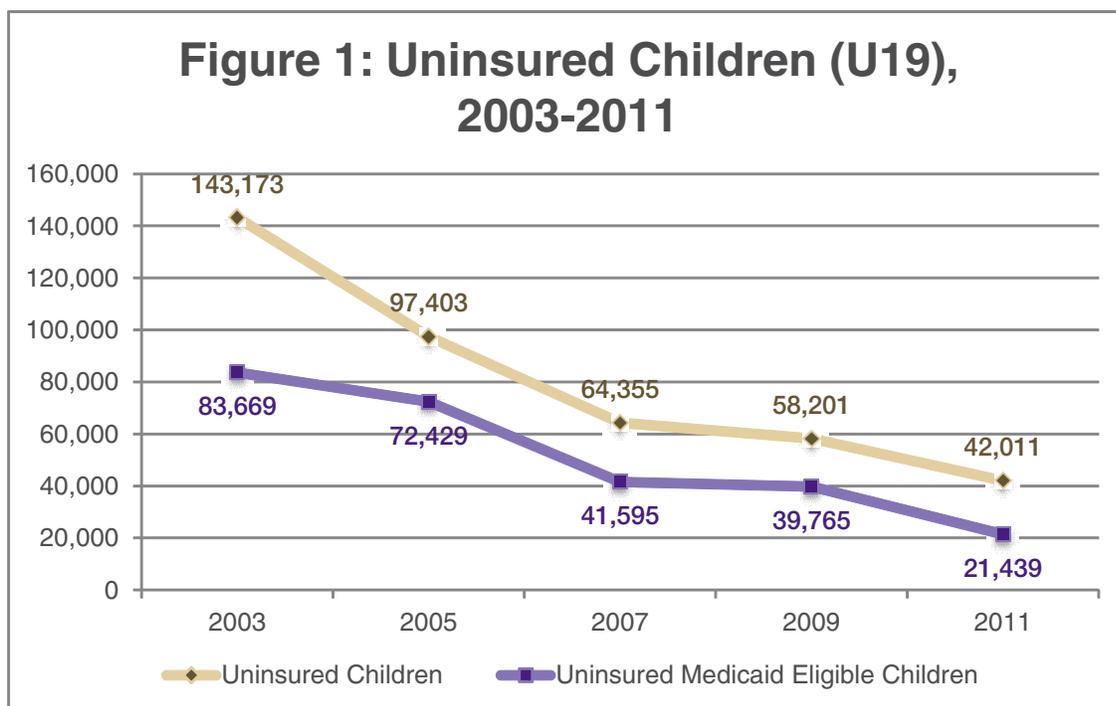
The 2011 Louisiana Health Insurance Survey (LHIS) is the fifth in a series of surveys designed to provide the most accurate and comprehensive assessment of Louisiana's uninsured populations possible. Each round of the LHIS has been based on over 10,000 Louisiana households and 27,000 Louisiana residents, thus allowing for detailed estimates of uninsured populations for each of the Department of Health and Hospitals' nine regions and for specific subpopulations (e.g. children under 200% of federal poverty). Each round of the LHIS has also incorporated methodological improvements to ensure that the survey results reflect our best understanding of how to estimate uninsured populations. The 2007 LHIS, for example, incorporated an innovative methodological tool to adjust uninsured estimates for the Medicaid undercount at the individual level.

The 2009 LHIS incorporated uninsured estimates from a cell phone sample to improve coverage of cell-only households. National surveys estimate the percent of cell-only households at 31.6% and growing while state-level estimates—based on econometric modeling—place the percent of cell-only households in Louisiana at 26.8%.¹ In addition, there is a growing cell-mostly population that continues to have a landline phone but primarily uses cell phones for personal communication. These groups may be missing from or underrepresented by traditional landline telephone surveys. In addition, prior research indicates that cell-only households are more likely to be younger, poorer, ethnic minorities, and uninsured. Recognizing this growing reality, the 2011 LHIS expands coverage of cell-only households by increasing the cell phone sample from 500 to 2,000 completed interviews.

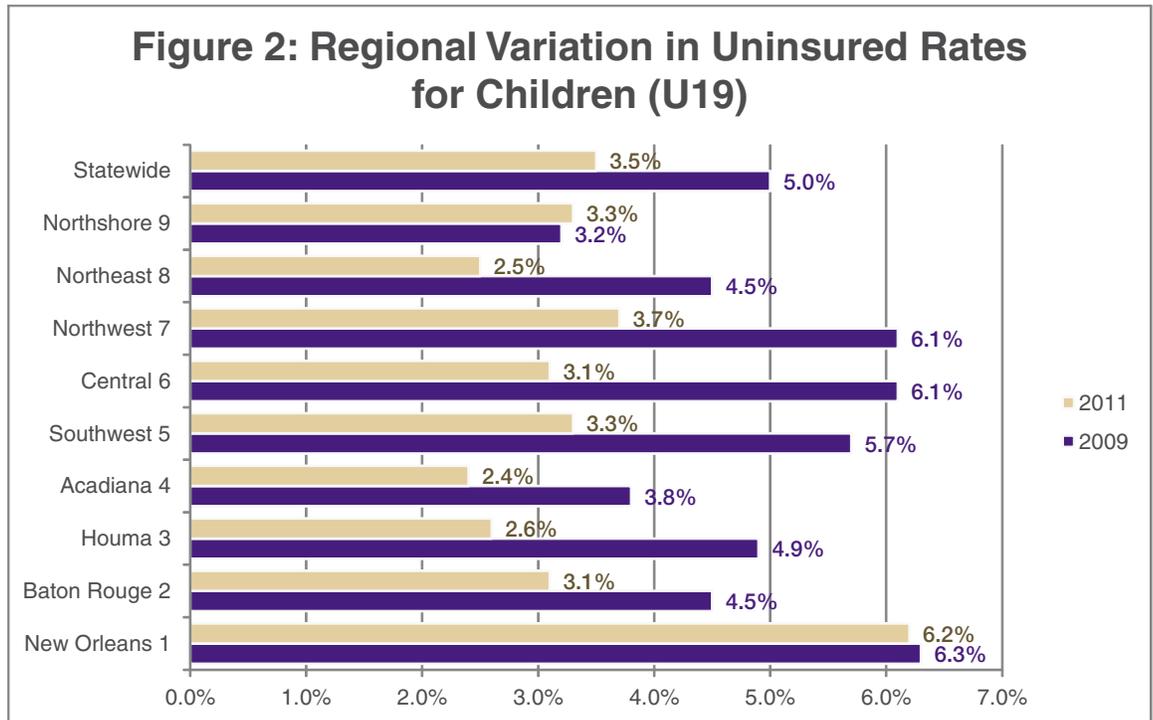
Aside from methodological improvements, the timing of the 2011 LHIS further adds to its significance as the survey allows a preliminary assessment of the effect of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act passed by Congress and signed into law in March 2010. The Act includes provisions that have already expanded coverage for young adults (up to 26 years of age) and that prohibit excluding children (under 19) for pre-existing conditions. These data provide a preliminary glimpse into how these changes may have affected uninsured rates for children and young adults.

¹Stephen J. Blumberg, Julian V. Luke, Nadarahasundaram Ganesh, Michael Davern, Michael Boudreaux, and Karen Soderberg. 2011. "Wireless Substitution: State-Level Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, January 2007 - June 2010." National Health Statistics Report, Number 39.

Summary of Major Findings

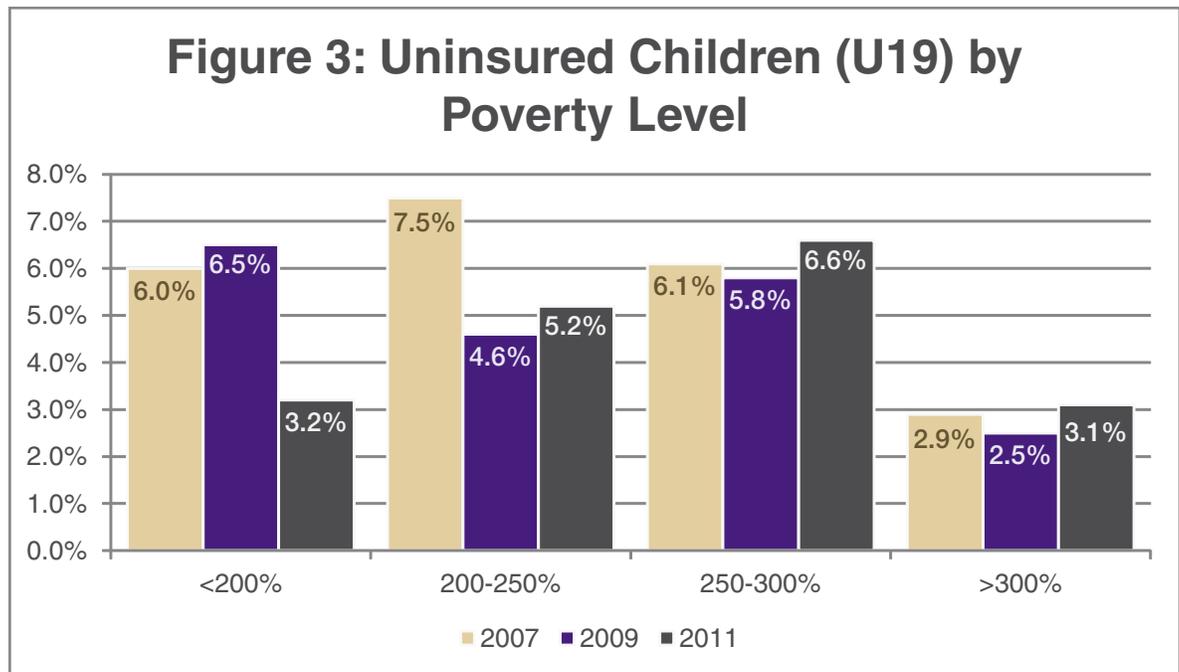


Declining Rates of Uninsured Children and Medicaid Eligible Children: The big news from the 2011 Louisiana Health Insurance Survey is a continuing decline in the percent and number of uninsured children. From 2003-2011, the percent of uninsured children declined from 11.1% to 3.5% translating into 101,162 fewer uninsured Louisiana children. There is a similar though even larger decline in the percent of uninsured Medicaid eligible children from 12.9% in 2003 to 2.9% in 2011. For the first time since we began tracking this data, the uninsured rate for Medicaid eligible children is lower than the rate for children overall. Compared to 2009, there are 16,190 fewer uninsured children in Louisiana. Perhaps even more remarkably, there are 18,326 fewer uninsured children who are eligible for Medicaid.



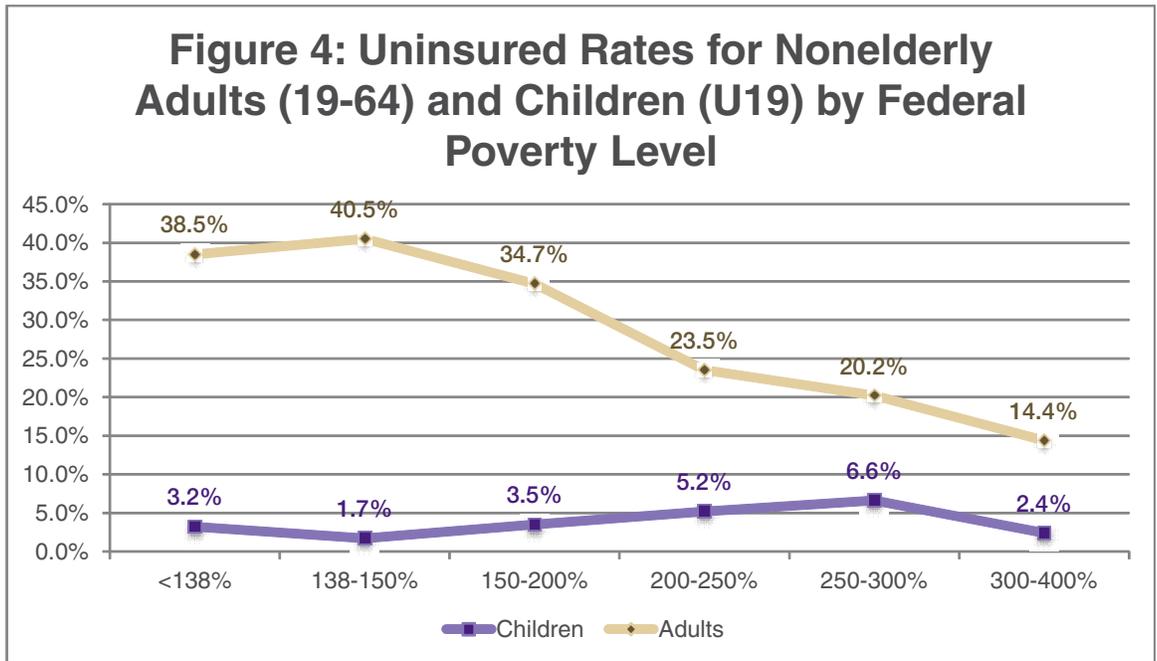
The regional variation in uninsured rates confirms this basic storyline. Uninsured rates went down in every region with the exception of a very minor increase (0.1 percentage points) in the Northshore region (Region 9). In the Northshore region, the percent of uninsured children increased from 3.2% to 3.3%. Because of population shifts, however, we estimate that there are slightly fewer uninsured children in the region despite the increase when measured in terms of percentages. In the New Orleans region (Region 1), the percent of uninsured children decreased slightly from 6.3% in 2009 to 6.2% in 2011. However, because of the overall increases in population, the number of uninsured children is estimated to have increased slightly from 12,111 in 2009 to 12,148 in 2011. Because these shifts are very small, we would conclude that the uninsured rates are essentially unchanged in the Northshore (Region 9) and New Orleans (Region 1) regions.

In the remaining seven DHH regions, the percent of uninsured children declined significantly. For example, the uninsured rate for children declined from 4.5% to 3.1% in Baton Rouge (Region 2) and from 6.1% to 3.1% in Central Louisiana (Region 6). A significant portion of these declines can be attributed to greater efforts by the state to enroll uninsured children who are eligible for public insurance in the Medicaid and LaCHIP programs.

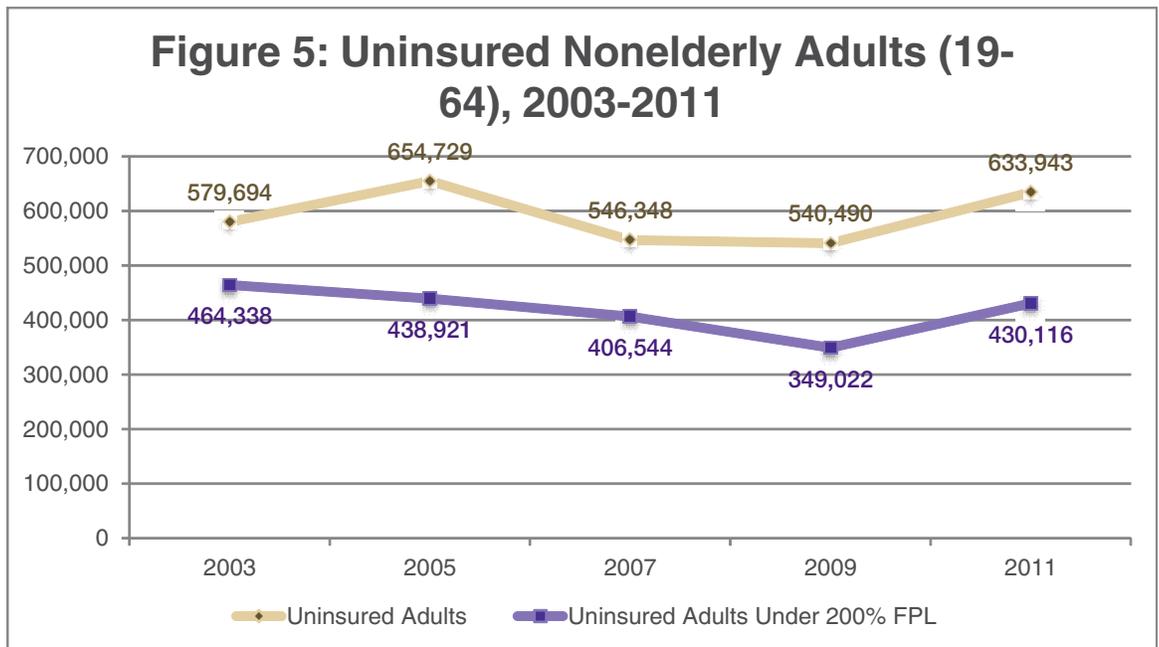


The Percent of Uninsured Children Under 200% of Federal Poverty Declines: The decline in uninsured children from 2009 to 2011 occurred primarily among children under 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). The uninsured rate for children under 200% FPL declined from 6.5% in 2009 to 3.2% in 2011. Breaking down the under 200% group further, we find that 3.2% of children under 138% FPL are uninsured compared to 1.7% between 138 -150% and 3.5% between 150-200%. These percentages imply that there are 17,141 uninsured children under 138% FPL, 462 uninsured children between 138% and 150% FPL, and 3,836 uninsured children between 150% and 200% FPL.

Uninsured rates went up for children between 200-250%, 250-300% and above 300% of FPL. Absent the LaCHIP Affordable Plan, uninsured rates for the 200-250% group may have increased further. In 2007, 7.5% of children between 200-250% of FPL were uninsured. This declined to 4.6% in 2009. The decline from 2007 to 2009 coincides with the implementation of the LaCHIP Affordable Plan allowing households between 200-250% of FPL to buy-in to LaCHIP coverage. In 2011, we see only a slight increase in uninsured rates for this group despite increased unemployment and adult uninsured rates. The 2011 data also show an increase in uninsured rates for children just outside of this range. Since 2009, the percent of uninsured children between 250-300% of federal poverty has increased from 5.8% in 2009 to 6.6% in 2011. Similarly, there has been a slight increase in the percent of uninsured children above 300% FPL due to higher unemployment and adult uninsured rates.



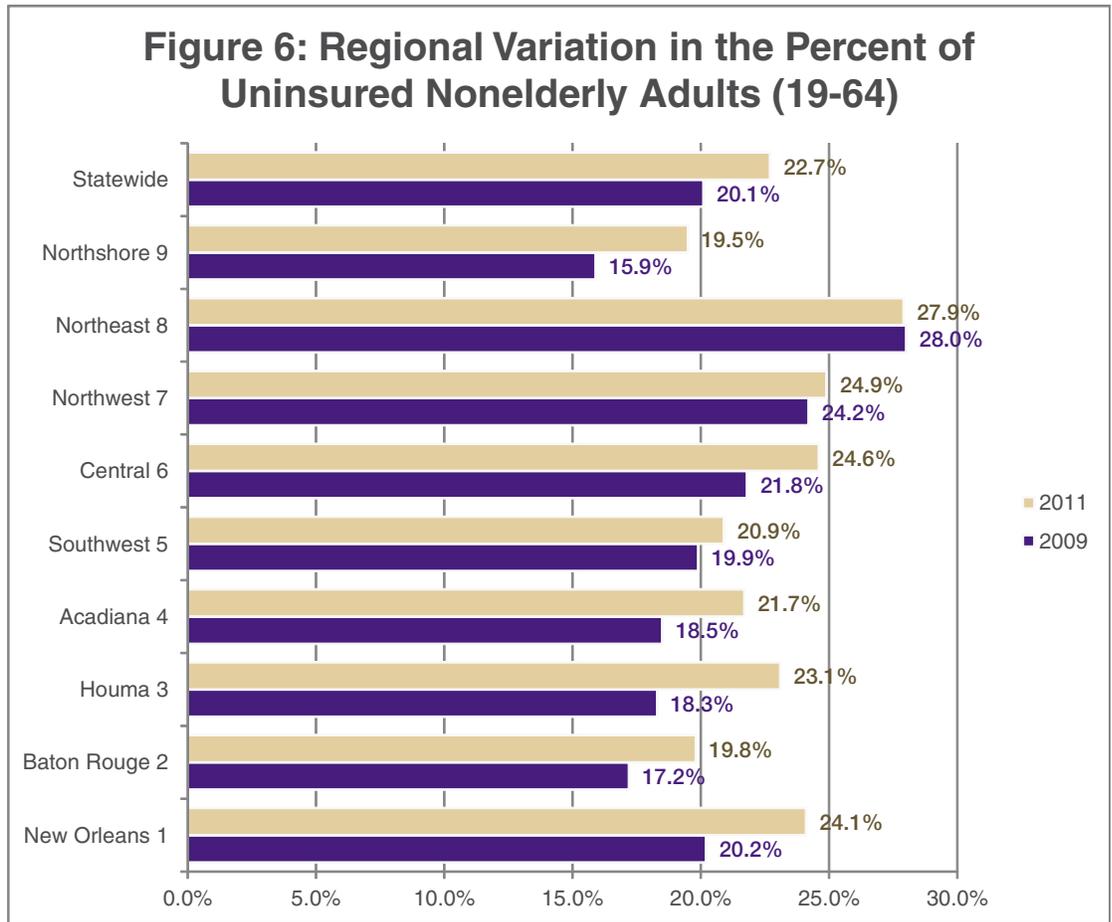
Medicaid/LaCHIP Reduces Income and Racial Disparities in Health Coverage: Figure 4 presents disparities in health coverage for adults and children by poverty level. For adults, the disparities in the prevalence of being uninsured are highly correlated with differences in income. For example, approximately 4 in 10 adults at or below 150% of the federal poverty level are uninsured while less than half that many are uninsured in the income range of 300-400% of the federal poverty level. For children, differences across income (poverty) are much smaller. This difference across children and adults directly reflects the success of the Medicaid/LaCHIP program in enrolling and covering lower income children. Indeed, children at the greatest risk for being uninsured are those kids just outside of the eligibility thresholds for Medicaid/LaCHIP. In this respect, the Medicaid/LaCHIP program helps to shield children from the effects of poverty.



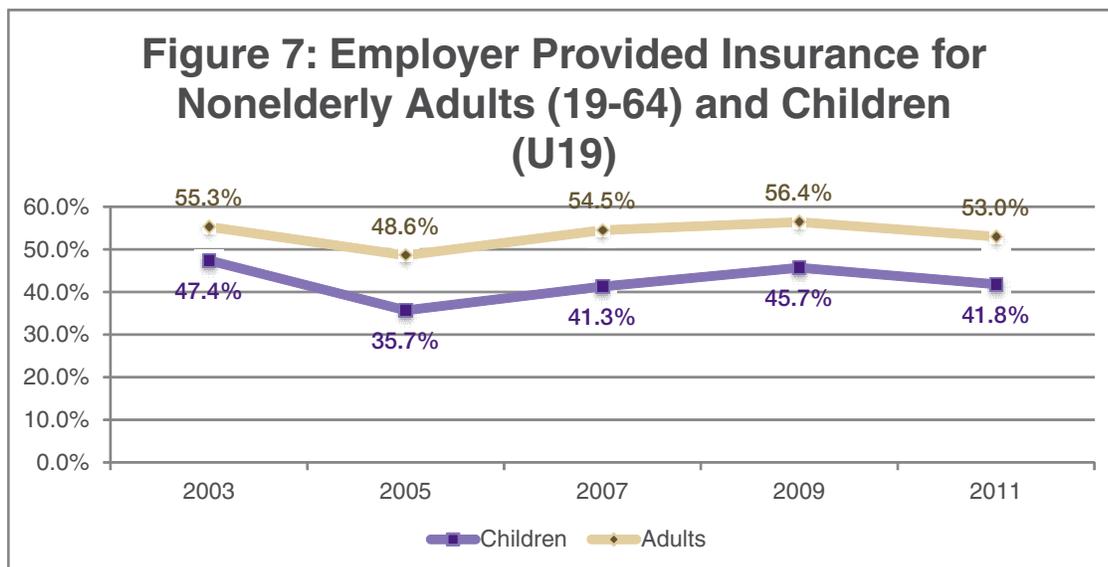
Increasing Number of Uninsured Adults and Adults Under 200% of Federal Poverty:

While the number of uninsured children has consistently declined, the number of uninsured adults has increased significantly since 2009 from 540,490 to 633,943. Or perhaps stated differently, there are 93,453 more uninsured adults in 2011 than there were in 2009 even as the number of uninsured children has declined. This reflects both an increase in population and an increase in uninsured rates for non-elderly adults from 20.1% in 2009 to 22.7% in 2011.

We see a similar trend among uninsured adults under 200% of federal poverty. Since 2009, the number of uninsured adults under 200% of FPL has increased from 349,022 to 430,116. The uninsured rate for adults under 200% of FPL has likewise increased from 37.1% in 2009 to 37.7% in 2011. Because adults do not have the same social safety net as children, uninsured rates show a much stronger relationship to the worsening economic conditions after 2009.

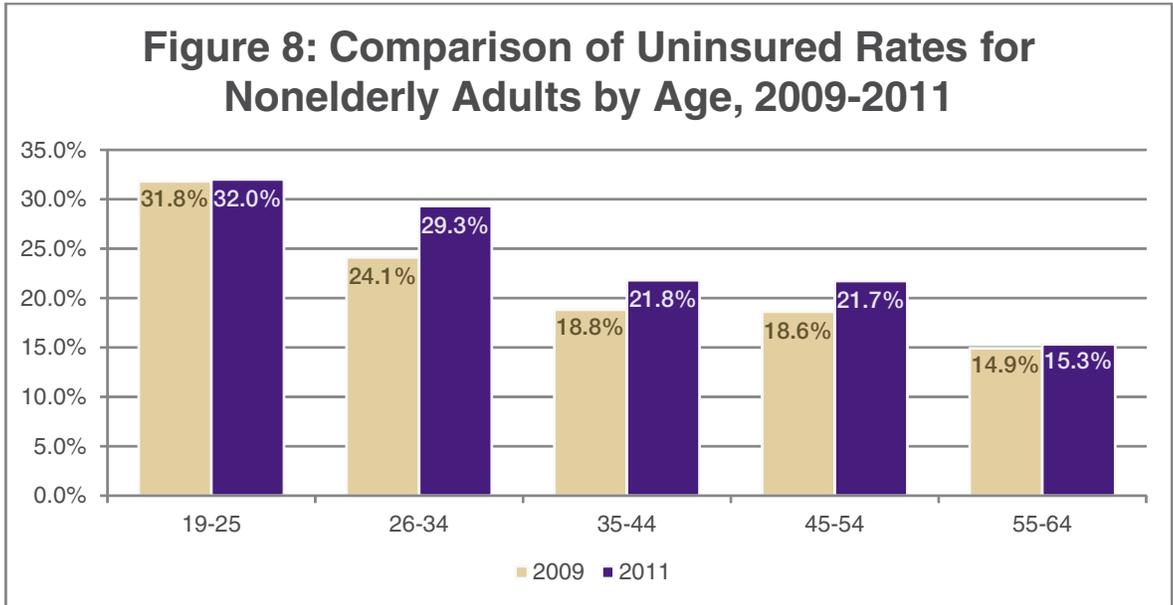


Regional Variation in Uninsured Adults: Uninsured rates for adults increased in every region with the exception of a slight (0.1 percentage point) decrease in the Northeast region (Region 8), which previously had the highest uninsured rate in the state. Increases were modest (1 point or less) in the Southwest region (Region 5) and Northwest region (Region 7). In the remaining six regions, there were significant increases in the number and percent of uninsured adults. The Houma-Thibodaux region (Region 3) experienced the largest increase in adult uninsured rates from 18.3% to 23.1%, reflecting an additional 14,169 uninsured adults. The largest increase in terms of the number of uninsured adults occurred in the New Orleans region (Region 1) where the number of uninsured adults increased from 100,222 to 126,101, which caused uninsured rates increased from 20.2% to 24.1%. In the remaining four regions, increases in uninsured rates ranged from 2.6 percentage points in the Baton Rouge region (Region 2) to 3.6 percentage points in the Northshore (Region 9) region.

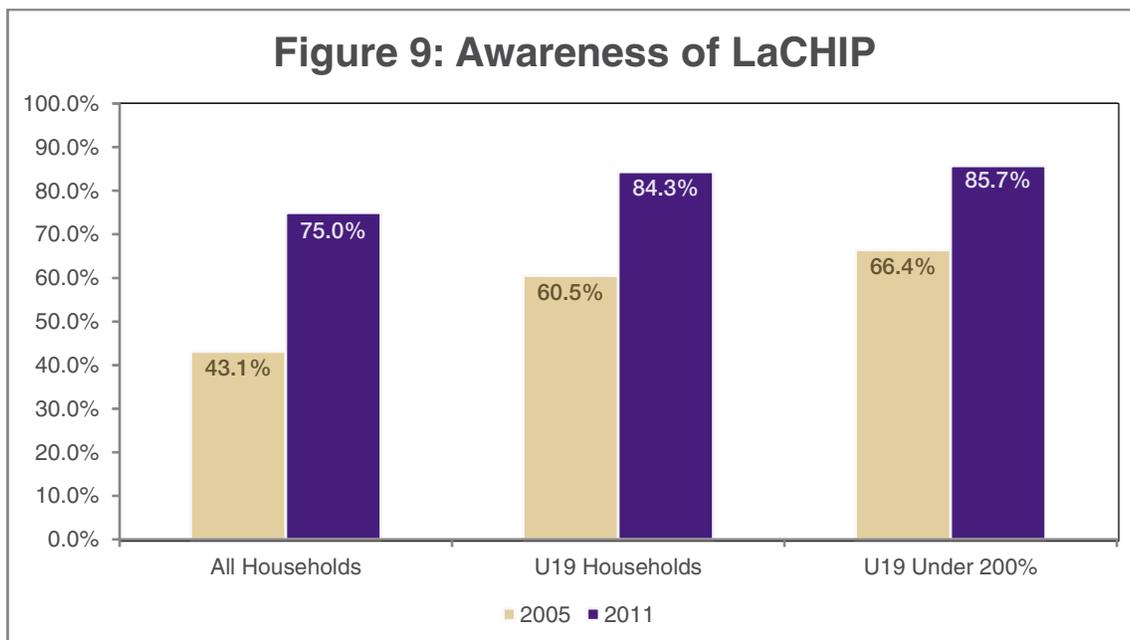


Declines in Employer Sponsored Insurance Reveal the Importance of Medicaid/LaCHIP in Covering Children: In last year's report, we noted an increase in employer provided insurance for both children and adults. The percent of children covered by an employer had increased from 35.7% in 2005 to 45.7% in 2009 while the percent of adults covered by an employer increased from 48.5% to 56.4%. This year's estimates show that the percent of adults covered by an employer declined from 56.4% to 53.0% while the percent of children covered by an employer declined from 45.7% to 41.8%. For adults, much of this difference translated into a higher uninsured rate. For children, this shift was absorbed by an increase in Medicaid/LaCHIP coverage. The percent of children covered by Medicaid/LaCHIP increased from 43.4% in 2009 to 47.6% in 2011.

The shifts in employer provided insurance for adults are closely tied to changes in unemployment rates. In October 2007, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.7%. By October 2009, the unemployment rate had increased to 7.1%. The unemployment rate in Louisiana peaked in May 2011 at 8.2% before falling back to 7% by October 2011. Importantly, increased unemployment in Louisiana is associated with declines in employer sponsored insurance and increases in uninsured rates for adults but not for children.



The Affordable Care Act and Uninsured Rates for Adults by Age: Despite an increase in the overall uninsured rate, uninsured rates for younger adults remained largely unchanged. The uninsured rate for 19-25 year olds increased only slightly from 31.8% in 2009 to 32.0% in 2011 while the uninsured rate for 26-34 increased dramatically from 24.1% to 29.3%. The stability in the uninsured rates for younger adults may reflect provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that allow young adults up to age 26 to remain covered under a parent's plan. Further evidence on this point can be gleaned by examining the shifts from 2009-2011 within the 19-21 and 22-29 age ranges. In 2009, 31.2% of 19-21 year olds were uninsured compared to 31.7% in 2011. In the 22-29 age range, 31.9% were uninsured in 2009 compared to 30.6% in 2011. This is the only age group among adults in which uninsured rates declined. Finally, source of coverage also provides important clues about the impact of the Affordable Care Act. Specifically, the percent of adults 19-25 covered by an employer declined only slightly from 42.3% in 2009 to 41.8% in 2011 while coverage for adults ages 26-34, in contrast, declined by nearly 6-points from 56.0% in 2009 to 50.2% in 2011. This suggests that while this provision of the Act did not completely insulate adults in this age group from the broader economic conditions, it appears to have offset what might have otherwise been a significant reduction in employer provided insurance (and an increase in uninsured rates) for that age group.



Outreach Efforts Succeed in Increasing Awareness of Louisiana Children's Health Insurance Program (LaCHIP): Since 2005, awareness of LaCHIP has grown significantly from 43.1% in 2005 to 75.0% in 2011. This trend shows the effects of marketing sponsored by DHH as well as outreach efforts taken by the agency to enroll uninsured but eligible children. Since 2009, awareness has increased only slightly from 73.8%. Awareness is higher in households with children (84.3%) and households with children under 200% of federal poverty (84.9%).

Uninsured Estimates for Children (Under 19) by Region

Since we began collecting data in 2003, the headline story from the LHS has been the declining number of uninsured children in Louisiana. This is a remarkable story. Since 2003, the number of uninsured Louisiana children has dropped from 143,173 to 42,011. The percent of uninsured children has likewise declined from 11.1% to 3.5%. In the 2009 report, we noted that the shift from 2007-2009 was relatively minor, from 5.4% to 5.0% reflecting stability in the number of uninsured children. Indeed, we questioned whether Louisiana had effectively hit a floor where further reduction in uninsured rates for children would be difficult to achieve. This year those questions were answered as the 2011 LHS estimates another significant decline in the number and percent of uninsured children. Relative to 2009, there are 16,190 fewer uninsured children in Louisiana.

The regional variation in uninsured rates confirms this basic storyline. Uninsured rates went down in every region with the notable exception of the Northshore region (Region 9), a region that already had the lowest uninsured rate in the state, where the shift in uninsured rates was barely perceptible (0.1 percentage points). Because of population shifts, this slight increase leads to a very small decrease in our estimate of the number of uninsured children. Similarly, in the New Orleans region (Region 1), the change since 2009 is very small; a slight decrease in uninsured rates - from 6.3% to 6.2%. Again because of population shifts, this change is associated with a slight increase in the number of uninsured children. In neither the Northshore region nor the New Orleans region would we conclude that uninsured rates had changed meaningfully since 2009.

In the remaining regions, uninsured rates have unambiguously declined. We see the largest decline in the Central region (Region 6) where the uninsured rate dropped from 6.1% in 2009 to 3.1% in 2011. The smallest decline occurred in the Baton Rouge region (Region 2) where uninsured rates dropped from 4.5% in 2009 to 3.1% in 2011.

:: Table 1: Uninsured Estimates for Children (Under 19) by Region ::

Region	2003		2005		2007		2009		2011	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
New Orleans 1	9.6%	25,169	7.4%	19,376	9.0%	15,845	6.3%	12,111	6.2%	12,148
Baton Rouge 2	10.8%	17,862	8.3%	13,705	4.3%	8,134	4.5%	7,727	3.1%	5,303
Houma-Thibodaux 3	11.4%	14,070	8.4%	10,353	4.1%	4,635	4.9%	5,100	2.6%	2,857
Acadiana 4	11.0%	19,056	9.8%	16,985	5.2%	8,801	3.8%	6,365	2.4%	3,870
Southwest 5	15.7%	12,009	4.2%	3,194	5.8%	4,384	5.7%	4,452	3.3%	2,629
Central 6	6.3%	6,220	10.2%	10,107	4.6%	3,804	6.1%	4,844	3.1%	2,747
Northwest 7	15.2%	22,991	3.8%	5,764	4.6%	6,777	6.1%	8,891	3.7%	5,418
Northeast 8	11.1%	12,096	7.2%	7,865	5.0%	4,741	4.5%	3,855	2.5%	2,190
Northshore 9	10.4%	13,538	7.7%	10,055	4.7%	7,234	3.2%	4,857	3.3%	4,850
Statewide	11.1%	143,173	7.6%	97,403	5.4%	64,355	5.0%	58,201	3.5%	42,011

:: Table 2: Uninsured Estimates for Children (Under 19) Eligible for Medicaid ::

Region	2003		2005		2007		2009		2011	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
New Orleans 1	13.2%	16,337	9.3%	16,320	8.7%	9,297	7.8%	9,841	4.3%	5,420
Baton Rouge 2	17.6%	14,616	10.2%	9,958	3.4%	4,171	3.7%	3,663	3.1%	3,066
Houma-Thibodaux 3	13.1%	6,736	9.7%	6,849	4.8%	3,148	5.3%	3,237	2.0%	1,263
Acadiana 4	6.6%	6,064	10.8%	11,641	6.3%	6,785	4.2%	4,359	2.6%	2,531
Southwest 5	15.7%	5,835	3.8%	1,670	6.5%	3,135	6.7%	3,291	3.9%	1,889
Central 6	7.7%	4,139	10.8%	7,109	4.8%	2,795	6.0%	3,274	2.2%	1,270
Northwest 7	24.8%	24,144	3.4%	3,647	4.3%	4,233	6.1%	6,317	3.1%	2,926
Northeast 8	9.2%	5,587	3.7%	2,728	4.7%	3,027	4.0%	2,497	1.5%	913
Northshore 9	16.5%	8,164	9.3%	6,383	5.4%	5,005	3.9%	3,286	2.5%	2,161
Statewide	12.9%	83,669	8.9%	72,429	5.5%	41,595	5.3%	39,765	2.9%	21,439

Children Eligible for Medicaid/LaCHIP: We see similar declines when we narrow our focus to Medicaid- or LaCHIP-eligible children under 200% FPL. The uninsured rate for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children declined from 5.3% in 2009 to 2.9% in 2011 and the number of Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children declined from 39,765 to 21,439. Looking at the long term trends, the decline in uninsured rates for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children is staggering, declining from 12.9% in 2003 to 2.9% in 2011. In terms of raw numbers, this translates into 62,230 fewer uninsured children who are eligible for Medicaid. Moreover, differences across regions have narrowed over time. In 2003, the lowest uninsured rate for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children (the Acadiana region) was 6.6%, while the highest uninsured rate (the Northwest region) was 24.8%—a difference of 18.2 percentage points. In 2011, the difference between the region with the highest and lowest uninsured rates for Medicaid eligible children is just 2.8 percentage points.

Notably, the definition of eligibility for Medicaid or LaCHIP used here is broader than simply 200% of the federal poverty level and accounts for foster children, children being raised by grandparents, income adjustments to account for children in step families, income deductions for working parents, child support, and child care expenses. According to these estimates, there are approximately 741,098 Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children in Louisiana.

There is an additional and remarkable shift evidenced in the data this year. For the first time since we began collecting data in 2003, the uninsured rate for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children is lower than the uninsured rate for children overall. The uninsured rate for children overall is 3.5% while the uninsured rate for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children is 2.9%. In each of the previous years, the uninsured rate for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children was higher than for children overall, reflecting differences in income and poverty. Thanks to outreach efforts on behalf of the Medicaid and LaCHIP programs, children who are eligible for public insurance are now less likely to be uninsured even when compared to statewide results across all income levels.

Regional changes over time mirror the trends for children overall with a couple of notable exceptions. Specifically, uninsured rates for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children are down in every region, including the New Orleans and Northshore regions. In the New Orleans region (Region 1), uninsured rates for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children declined from 7.8% in 2009 to 4.3% in 2011. This translates to 4,421 fewer Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children in the New Orleans region. The overall uninsured rate for children in the New Orleans region remained relatively flat despite a significant decrease in uninsured rates for Medicaid eligible children. Without increased enrollments in Medicaid and LaCHIP, uninsured rates in the New Orleans region would have almost certainly increased significantly.

As with children overall, the largest shift in uninsured Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children occurred in the Central region (Region 6) where uninsured rates dropped from 6.0% in 2009 to 2.2% in 2011. As a result, there are approximately 2,004 fewer uninsured children in the Central region. In many of the regions we may have reached a floor for the uninsured rates for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children. In the Northeast region (Region 8), for example, the uninsured rate for Medicaid/LaCHIP-eligible children is now just 1.5% and the uninsured rate in the Houma/Thibodaux region is 2.0%.

Table 3: Uninsured Estimates for Children (under 19) in Relation to the Federal Poverty Limit

FPL Category	Percent	Number
0% to 138% FPL	3.2%	17,141
138% to 150% FPL	1.7%	462
150% to 200% FPL	3.5%	3,836
200% to 250% FPL	5.2%	5,076
250% to 300% FPL	6.6%	4,548
300% to 400% FPL	2.4%	2,775

Uninsured Rates for Children by Federal Poverty Level: Table 3 presents estimates of the percent and number of uninsured children by income as a percent of the Federal Poverty Level. Results from the 2011 LHIS confirm that the Medicaid and LaCHIP programs play a significant role in reducing the percent of uninsured children from low income families. While children in families with the lowest incomes continue to face higher uninsured rates than those with higher incomes, the benefits of public insurance in bringing down those rates is clear with those just above the eligibility threshold of 250% showing the highest uninsured rate in the table.

Sources of Coverage for Children: The LHIS asks questions about insurance coverage for each member of the household and results for children are provided in Table 4. The possible responses are that a person is covered through employer insurance held by someone in the household (Employer), through an insurance policy purchased privately (Purchased Coverage), through a plan that was provided by a previous employer of someone in the household (Former Employer), through an insurance policy held by someone not in the household (Not in Household) or through one of three groups of government coverage (Medicare, Military, or Medicaid). Individuals are considered to be uninsured only after confirming that they do not have any type of coverage.

When it comes to health insurance for children, children are primarily covered either through employer-provided coverage (41.8%) or through Medicaid/LaCHIP (47.6%). Since 2009, there has been a decrease in the percent of children covered through employer-provided insurance from 45.7% to 41.8%. The number of children covered through an employer likewise decreased from 536,937 in 2009 to 496,625 in 2011. This decrease in employer-provided insurance is compensated by a corresponding increase in coverage through Medicaid/LaCHIP from 43.4% in 2009 to 47.6% in 2011.

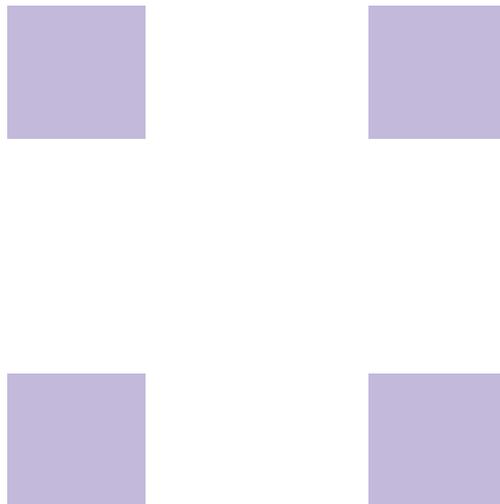
:: Table 4: Sources of Coverage for Children (Under 19) by Region ::

Region	Employer		Purchased Coverage		Former Employer		Not in Household	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
New Orleans 1	35.2%	68,883	3.7%	7,240	1.0%	2,055	2.5%	4,989
Baton Rouge 2	48.1%	82,240	3.6%	6,186	1.3%	2,249	5.1%	8,677
Houma-Thibodaux 3	45.7%	49,479	5.9%	6,375	0.9%	921	4.3%	4,712
Acadiana 4	41.6%	66,212	6.9%	10,942	1.0%	1,534	5.1%	8,094
Southwest 5	50.1%	39,921	4.0%	3,198	1.4%	1,124	5.7%	4,551
Central 6	40.6%	36,510	5.0%	4,528	1.9%	1,697	4.5%	4,004
Northwest 7	37.7%	55,643	5.6%	8,283	1.0%	1,418	5.7%	8,473
Northeast 8	35.6%	31,653	4.8%	4,239	0.8%	693	4.0%	3,579
Northshore 9	44.7%	66,083	7.4%	10,943	1.0%	1,423	2.6%	3,890
Statewide	41.8%	496,625	5.2%	61,934	1.1%	13,114	4.3%	50,969

Region	Medicare		Military		Medicaid		Uninsured	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
New Orleans 1	1.2%	2,258	1.9%	3,782	52.2%	102,261	6.2%	12,148
Baton Rouge 2	0.9%	1,508	1.0%	1,793	44.9%	76,787	3.1%	5,303
Houma-Thibodaux 3	0.9%	929	3.7%	3,958	43.5%	47,142	2.6%	2,857
Acadiana 4	1.6%	2,566	1.2%	1,835	46.9%	74,773	2.4%	3,870
Southwest 5	1.7%	1,357	3.4%	2,705	43.1%	34,324	3.3%	2,629
Central 6	0.6%	521	10.9%	9,764	44.0%	39,489	3.1%	2,747
Northwest 7	1.1%	1,660	7.9%	11,635	51.9%	76,704	3.7%	5,418
Northeast 8	0.9%	815	2.7%	2,443	60.0%	53,290	2.5%	2,190
Northshore 9	1.3%	1,883	3.5%	5,155	41.5%	61,280	3.3%	4,850
Statewide	1.1%	13,497	3.6%	43,070	47.6%	566,050	3.5%	42,011

Coverage through Medicaid/LaCHIP increased in seven of nine regions. The Southwest region (Region 5) and Central region (Region 6) stand as notable exceptions. In the Southwest region, coverage through Medicaid/LaCHIP decreased from 44.4% in 2009 to 43.1% in 2011, while in Central Louisiana Medicaid/LaCHIP coverage decreased from 44.7% to 44.0%. In each of the remaining regions, Medicaid/LaCHIP coverage increased by three or more percentage points with particularly large increases in the New Orleans and Baton Rouge regions. In the New Orleans region, coverage through Medicaid/LaCHIP increased from 45.8% in 2009 to 52.2% in 2011. Similarly, in the Baton Rouge region, Medicaid/LaCHIP coverage increased from 38.0% to 44.9%.

We see corresponding decreases across regions in terms of employer provided insurance. In the New Orleans region, for example, employer provided insurance decreased from 42.3% in 2009 to 35.2% in 2011. Employer provided insurance increased in only two regions: the Southwest region where coverage through an employer increased from 46.5% to 50.1% and Northeast Louisiana where coverage through an employer increased from 35.4% to 35.6%. These results correspond very closely to changes in unemployment rates across regions between 2009 and 2011. For children, decreases in employer provided insurance were offset by increases in Medicaid/LaCHIP enrollments.



Uninsured Estimates for Nonelderly Adults (19-64) by Region

While uninsured rates for children have declined, uninsured rates for adults have increased. The uninsured rate for adults has increased from 20.1% in 2009 to 22.7% in 2011 while the number of uninsured adults has increased from 540,490 to 633,943. This translates into 93,453 more uninsured adults. This increase in adult uninsured rates corresponds with increased unemployment in the state. In October 2007, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.7%. By October 2009, the unemployment rate had increased to 7.1%. It reached its peak in May 2011 at 8.2% before falling back to 7.0% in October 2011.

Adult uninsured rates increased in every region with the notable exception of the Northeast region (Region 8). In Northeast Louisiana, the uninsured rate decreased slightly from 28.0% in 2009 to 27.9% in 2011. Uninsured rates increased in each of the remaining regions with fairly minor increases in the Southwest and Northwest regions and more substantial increases in the remaining regions. The number of uninsured adults increased most notably in the New Orleans region where uninsured rates increased by 4-points from 20.2 in 2009 to 24.1% in 2011. The shift in this one region resulted in approximately 25,880 more uninsured adults relative to 2009. The largest increase in uninsured rates occurred in the Houma/Thibodaux region where the percent of uninsured adults increased from 18.3% in 2009 to 23.1% in 2011 resulting in an increase in the number of uninsured adults from 44,656 to 58,825.

We see also see significant increases in uninsured rates for adults in the Baton Rouge region (from 17.2% to 19.8%), Acadiana region (from 18.5% to 21.7%), and Central region (from 21.8% to 24.6%).

:: Table 5: Uninsured Estimates for Nonelderly Adults (19-64) by Region ::

Region	2003		2005		2007		2009		2011	
	Percent	Number								
New Orleans 1	20.9%	128,240	23.2%	142,414	21.2%	89,963	20.2%	100,222	24.1%	126,101
Baton Rouge 2	19.2%	65,778	20.1%	68,822	17.3%	66,978	17.2%	67,490	19.8%	81,563
Houma-Thibodaux 3	21.3%	51,493	23.4%	56,578	19.6%	47,042	18.3%	44,656	23.1%	58,825
Acadiana 4	23.1%	78,624	21.8%	74,360	19.7%	66,504	18.5%	65,917	21.7%	78,980
Southwest 5	20.4%	37,147	29.2%	53,097	27.8%	46,703	19.9%	34,724	20.9%	37,488
Central 6	21.6%	40,220	30.0%	55,946	21.1%	37,542	21.8%	39,553	24.6%	45,187
Northwest 7	21.6%	70,219	26.4%	85,929	23.8%	78,641	24.2%	78,307	24.9%	84,048
Northeast 8	27.3%	60,399	26.2%	57,979	23.6%	51,324	28.0%	59,987	27.9%	57,622
Northshore 9	17.3%	47,573	21.7%	59,604	20.7%	61,652	15.9%	49,635	19.5%	64,129
Statewide	21.1%	579,694	24.0%	654,729	21.2%	546,348	20.1%	540,490	22.7%	633,943

**Table 6: Uninsured Adults
by Federal Poverty**

FPL Category	Percent	Number
0% to 13% FPL	32.1%	101,618
13% to 100% FPL	47.3%	112,279
100% to 138% FPL	38.3%	77,291
138% to 150% FPL	40.5%	31,695
150% to 200% FPL	34.7%	93,039
200% to 250% FPL	23.5%	54,780
250% to 300% FPL	20.2%	41,814
300% to 400% FPL	14.4%	52,721

Uninsured Rates for Adults By Federal Poverty Level (FPL): In Table 6, we present the uninsured rates for adults by level of poverty. As can be seen, uninsured rates are highest for adults making between 13% and 100% of federal poverty. Nearly half (47.3%) of adults between 13% and 100% of federal poverty are uninsured. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act includes a provision to expand coverage for adults with incomes up to 133% FPL, which corresponds closely to adults in the first three rows of this table. According to our estimates, this has the potential to benefit approximately 290,000 Louisiana adults who are currently uninsured.

Since 2009, the uninsured rate for adults under 200% of federal poverty has increased from 33.9% to 37.7%. Similarly, the number of uninsured adults under 200% of FPL has increased from 349,022 to 415,922, meaning that there are approximately 66,900 more uninsured adults under 200% of FPL in 2011 than in 2009. Or perhaps stated differently, approximately 2 out of 3 uninsured adults are below 200% of FPL.

:: Table 7: Uninsured Estimates for Adults (19-64) Under 200% Federal Poverty ::

Region	2003		2005		2007		2009		2011	
	Percent	Number								
New Orleans 1	46.5%	117,480	45.3%	114,649	33.5%	58,224	34.2%	66,171	37.5%	80,359
Baton Rouge 2	40.3%	47,192	35.8%	41,956	29.6%	45,420	30.4%	41,594	36.5%	52,305
Houma-Thibodaux 3	41.5%	38,482	40.3%	37,439	31.9%	32,516	32.3%	30,329	36.1%	32,598
Acadiana 4	43.5%	62,914	32.8%	47,451	34.0%	47,472	31.8%	40,029	38.0%	49,769
Southwest 5	37.4%	27,337	46.6%	34,073	40.9%	28,172	33.3%	21,433	33.1%	24,330
Central 6	39.7%	30,915	43.4%	33,832	32.8%	25,432	34.9%	25,435	41.3%	33,782
Northwest 7	45.1%	65,176	41.4%	59,842	40.0%	57,863	40.1%	54,986	39.2%	58,663
Northeast 8	47.0%	43,700	40.1%	37,294	31.6%	33,186	38.5%	36,246	42.4%	42,498
Northshore 9	35.9%	31,143	37.3%	32,385	34.1%	40,458	29.1%	32,799	35.1%	41,620
Statewide	42.5%	464,338	40.5%	438,921	34.0%	368,744	33.9%	349,022	37.7%	415,922

Uninsured rates for adults under 200% of FPL increased in every region with the exception of the Southwest (Region 5) and Northwest (Region 7) regions. In these two regions, there was a slight decrease in uninsured rates for adults under 200% of FPL. Outside of these two regions, we see particularly large increases in adult uninsured rates under 200% of FPL in the Baton Rouge (Region 2), Acadiana (Region 4), Central Louisiana (Region 6), and the Northshore (Region 9) regions. In each of these regions, the uninsured rate for adults under 200% of FPL increased by approximately 6 percentage points. In the Baton Rouge region, for example, the uninsured rate increased from 30.4% to 36.5%, while the uninsured rate increased from 31.8% to 38.0% in the Acadiana region.

:: Table 8: Uninsured Estimates for Parents and Childless Adults ::

Region	Parents (Child Currently in Household)			Adults without child in household		
	Parent Population	Number Uninsured	Percent Uninsured	Childless Adult Population	Number Uninsured	Percent Uninsured
New Orleans 1	142,874	27,920	19.5%	379,602	98,181	25.9%
Baton Rouge 2	123,605	20,405	16.5%	287,320	61,158	21.3%
Houma-Thibodaux 3	79,023	13,113	16.6%	175,214	45,713	26.1%
Acadiana 4	115,936	21,920	18.9%	248,746	57,060	22.9%
Southwest 5	58,053	9,644	16.6%	121,303	27,844	23.0%
Central 6	67,468	13,161	19.5%	116,371	32,026	27.5%
Northwest 7	104,009	21,717	20.9%	232,867	62,331	26.8%
Northeast 8	55,614	12,338	22.2%	151,129	45,283	30.0%
Northshore 9	113,604	18,749	16.5%	214,496	45,381	21.2%
Statewide	860,185	158,967	18.5%	1,927,047	474,976	24.6%

Uninsured Parents: Starting in 2009, the LHIS has ascertained the uninsured status of parents. Before reporting on the numbers, it should be noted that the definition here focuses only on parents with children under age 19 in the household. The measure is limited in its ability to identify parents in households with more than one family (e.g., a household where an adult brother or sister has moved into the home with their children adding a second family) though open ended relationship responses and guardianship indicators identify some of these relationships. With those caveats in mind, approximately 18.5% of parents in Louisiana are uninsured, reflecting 158,967 uninsured parents. This is a slight increase from 2009 when we estimated that 18% of parents were uninsured. The uninsured rate for parents is highest in the Northeast where 22.2% of parents are uninsured and lowest in Baton Rouge where 16.5% of parents are uninsured. Notably, parents are more likely than adults in general to be insured. The uninsured rate for adults without a child in the household, on the other hand, is 24.6%. And overall, there are more than three times as many uninsured adults without children as there are uninsured parents.

Sources of Coverage for Non-Elderly Adults: The LHIS asks questions about insurance coverage for each member of the household and results for adults are provided in Table 9. The possible responses are that a person is covered through employer insurance held by someone in the household (Employer), through an insurance policy purchased privately (Purchased Coverage), through a plan that was provided by a previous employer of someone in the household (Former Employer), through an insurance policy held by someone not in the household (Not in Household) or through one of three groups of government coverage (Medicare, Military, or Medicaid). Individuals are considered to be uninsured only after confirming that they do not have any type of coverage.

From 2005-2009, there was a steady increase in the percent of adults covered by an employer. In the 2011 LHS, we see a decrease in employer-provided insurance as the percent of adults covered through an employer declined from 56.4% to 53.0%. Employer-sponsored insurance decreased in every region ranging from a fairly small decrease in the Northeast region (from 45.6% to 44.9%) to a fairly large decrease in the New Orleans region (from 56.4% to 50.1%). We also see declines in the percent of adults who purchased coverage on their own (from 9.3% to 7.8%) or were covered through a former employer (from 6.3% to 5.1%).

As with children there is an increase in the percent of adults covered through Medicaid, though the increase is not as large as for children and is not nearly large enough to offset the reduction in employer-provided coverage. In 2009, 7.4% of adults were covered through Medicaid. In 2011, this increased to 8.1%. As a result, the most important consequence of declining employer provided insurance coverage is an increase in the percent of uninsured adults.

Employer-sponsored insurance coverage is most common in the Southwest (58.4%) and Baton Rouge (56.8%) regions and is least common in the Northeast (44.9%). Military coverage is most common in the Central region (10.2%) where Fort Polk is located and the Northwest region (7.7%) where Barksdale Air Force Base is located.

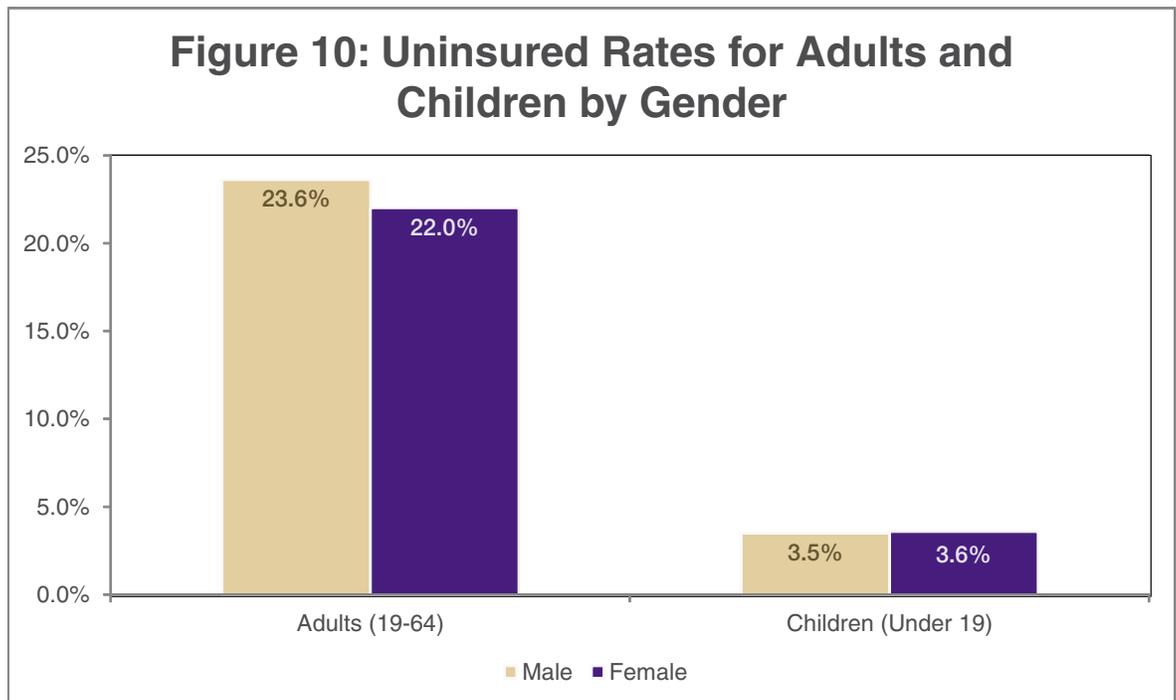
:: Table 9: Source of Coverage for Adults (19-64) By Region ::

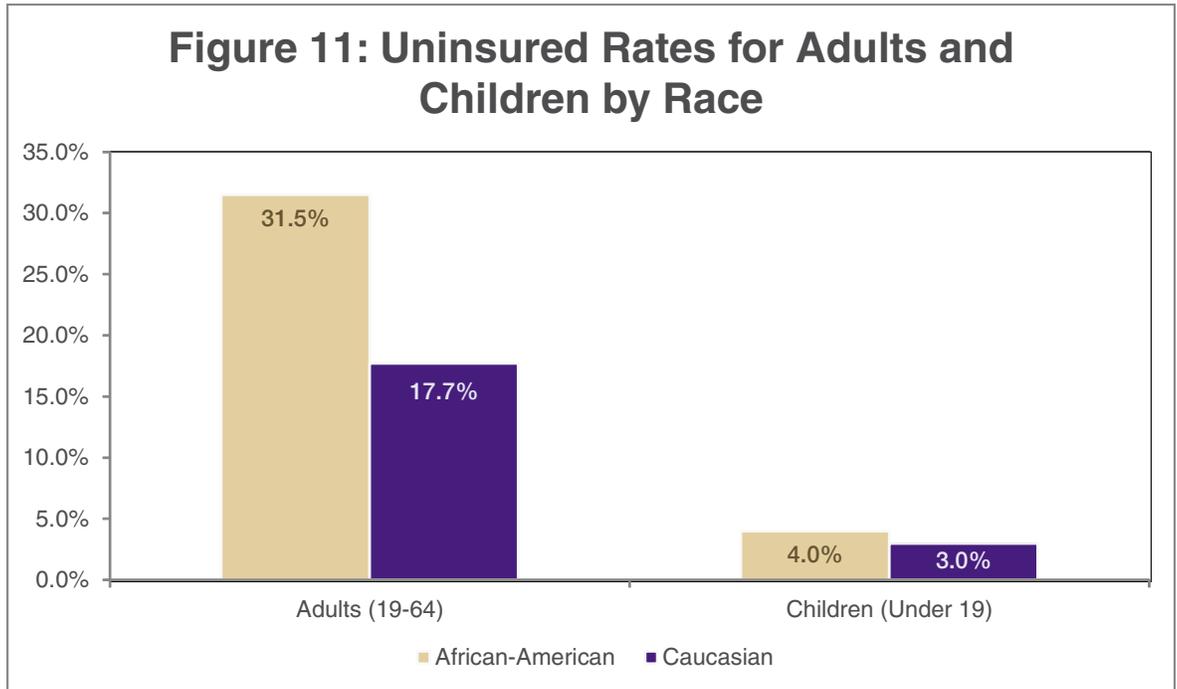
Region	Employer		Purchased Coverage		Former Employer		Not in Household	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
New Orleans 1	50.1%	261,834	7.6%	39,489	4.4%	22,803	1.3%	6,819
Baton Rouge 2	56.8%	233,594	7.4%	30,270	6.1%	24,979	1.9%	7,755
Houma-Thibodaux 3	56.4%	143,330	6.7%	17,097	4.7%	11,842	1.0%	2,426
Acadiana 4	55.6%	202,893	9.1%	33,213	4.7%	17,180	1.1%	3,928
Southwest 5	58.4%	104,774	7.4%	13,220	3.9%	6,912	1.3%	2,396
Central 6	48.7%	89,490	6.4%	11,698	7.0%	12,804	0.4%	795
Northwest 7	49.6%	167,104	7.7%	25,892	5.0%	16,677	1.3%	4,518
Northeast 8	44.9%	92,922	8.9%	18,491	4.8%	10,001	2.0%	4,062
Northshore 9	55.0%	180,320	8.7%	28,513	5.8%	19,018	1.3%	4,328
Statewide	53.0%	1,476,260	7.8%	217,883	5.1%	142,216	1.3%	37,027

Region	Medicare		Military		Medicaid		Uninsured	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
New Orleans 1	4.5%	23,416	3.7%	19,218	10.4%	54,107	24.1%	126,101
Baton Rouge 2	4.8%	19,723	2.7%	11,024	6.7%	27,604	19.8%	81,563
Houma-Thibodaux 3	5.2%	13,171	2.7%	6,870	7.1%	18,012	23.1%	58,825
Acadiana 4	5.0%	18,226	2.8%	10,379	7.2%	26,192	21.7%	78,980
Southwest 5	5.4%	9,718	3.9%	7,059	7.5%	13,375	20.9%	37,488
Central 6	5.5%	10,103	10.2%	18,677	7.4%	13,611	24.6%	45,187
Northwest 7	5.7%	19,034	7.7%	26,072	8.9%	29,895	24.9%	84,048
Northeast 8	5.6%	11,678	3.2%	6,617	10.4%	21,413	27.9%	57,622
Northshore 9	5.4%	17,719	5.2%	17,071	7.0%	22,831	19.5%	64,129
Statewide	5.1%	142,789	4.4%	122,987	8.1%	227,038	22.7%	633,943

Correlates of Uninsured Status

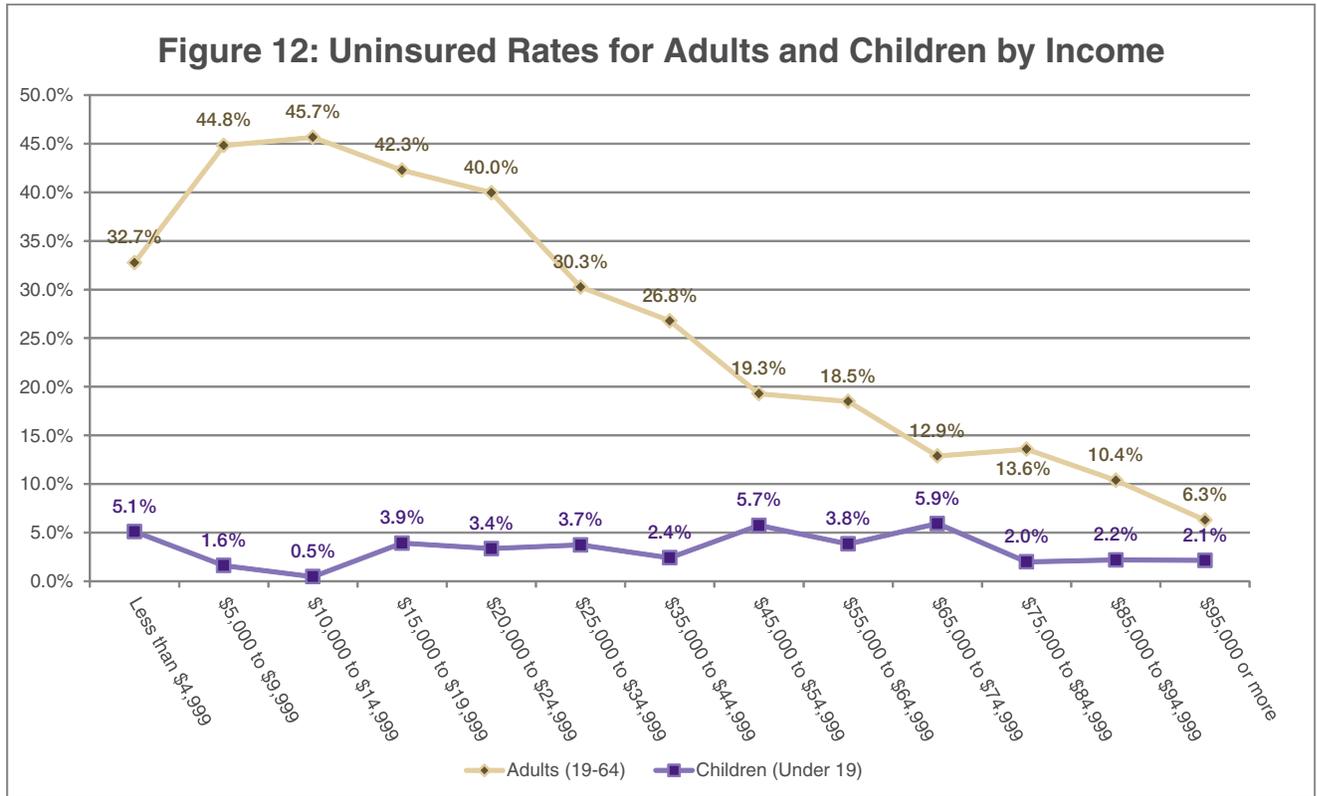
Uninsured status is correlated with race, income, poverty, education, and age, such that the uninsured are more likely to be African American, poorer, less educated, and younger adults. In this section, differences in uninsured status across gender, race, income, poverty, age, and education are presented, beginning with gender (displayed in Figure 10). There are only minor differences in insurance status depending on gender, with adult males and female children slightly more likely to be uninsured. The gender-based differences in insured status for both adults and children, however, are small.





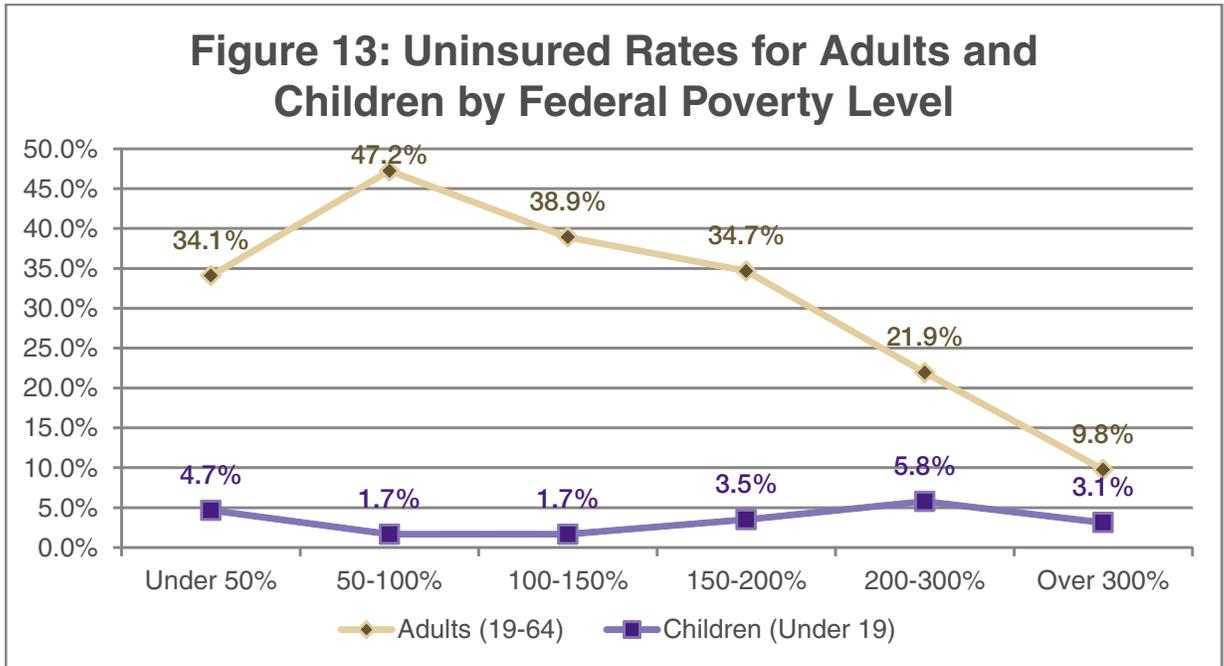
Considerably larger differences emerge when examining race (Figure 11). Thirty-two percent of African-American nonelderly adults are uninsured compared to 17.7% of Caucasians. Notably, uninsured rates for African-Americans have increased more dramatically than for Caucasians. In 2009, 27.6% of African-Americans were uninsured compared to 15.8% in Caucasians.

These differences are more muted among children as 4.0% of African American children and 3.0% of Caucasian children are uninsured. Uninsured rates for African American and Caucasian children have steadily declined since 2005 when 7.9% of African American children and 6.4% of Caucasian children were reported as uninsured. In 2009, 5.2% of African American and 4.0% of Caucasian children were uninsured. Similar patterns emerge for income and poverty where sharp differences in uninsured rates for adults do not affect children because of the availability of Medicaid/LaCHIP programs.

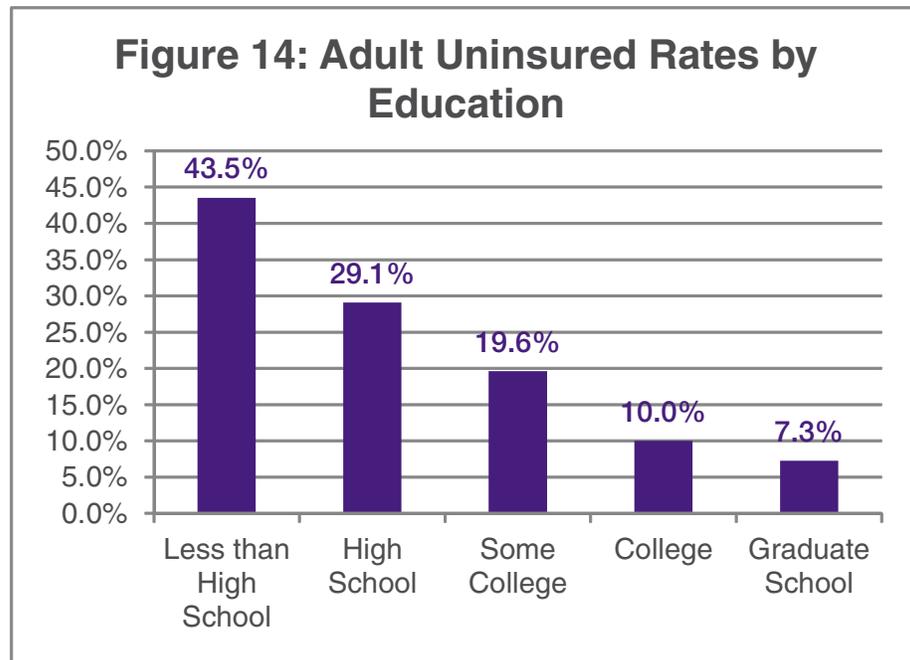


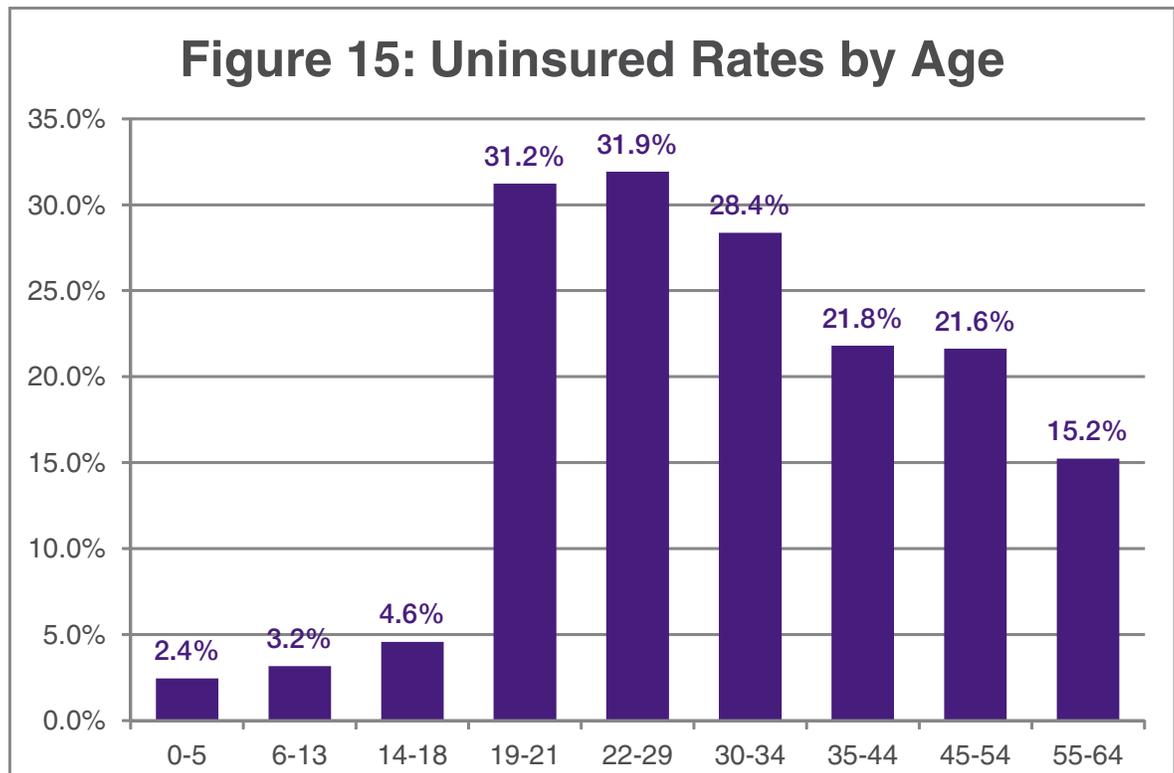
As can be seen in Figures 12 and 13, income is also an important predictor of uninsured status for adults, either when measured as household income or in relation to federal poverty guidelines. There are clear relationships between income and insurance status for adults, but much less clear relationships for children. Indeed, the highest uninsured rates for children occur in income ranges between \$65,000 and \$74,999, which is high enough to be ineligible for public assistance but perhaps still low enough that budget constrained families are less likely to purchase insurance. Just below six percent of children in this income range are uninsured. For adults, being uninsured is strongly related to income. Forty-six percent of adults earning between \$10,000 and \$14,999 are uninsured compared to 6.3% of adults earning \$95,000 or more.

We see a similar pattern when we examine uninsured status relative to federal poverty, which accounts for family size in determining the sufficiency of available financial resources. For adults, being uninsured is strongly correlated with poverty. For example, nearly 47.2% of adults between 50-100% of FPL are uninsured. For children, the greatest risk for being uninsured is to fall outside the range of Medicaid eligibility: 5.8% of children between 200-300% of federal poverty are uninsured compared to just 1.7% between 150-200% of FPL. Relative to 2009, uninsured rates for children only increased for children in households above the 200% poverty level. For children in the 200-300% poverty level, for example, uninsured rates increased from 5.2% to 5.8%. Uninsured rates for children in households above 300% increased from 2.5% to 3.1%.



Education is likewise strongly associated with uninsured rates for adults as less educated respondents are considerably more likely to be uninsured. As reflected in Figure 14, there is a steady decline in uninsured rates as education increases. Forty-four percent of respondents with less than a high school education were uninsured, 29.1% with a high school education, 19.6% with some college, 10.0% with a college degree, and 7.3% with a graduate degree.





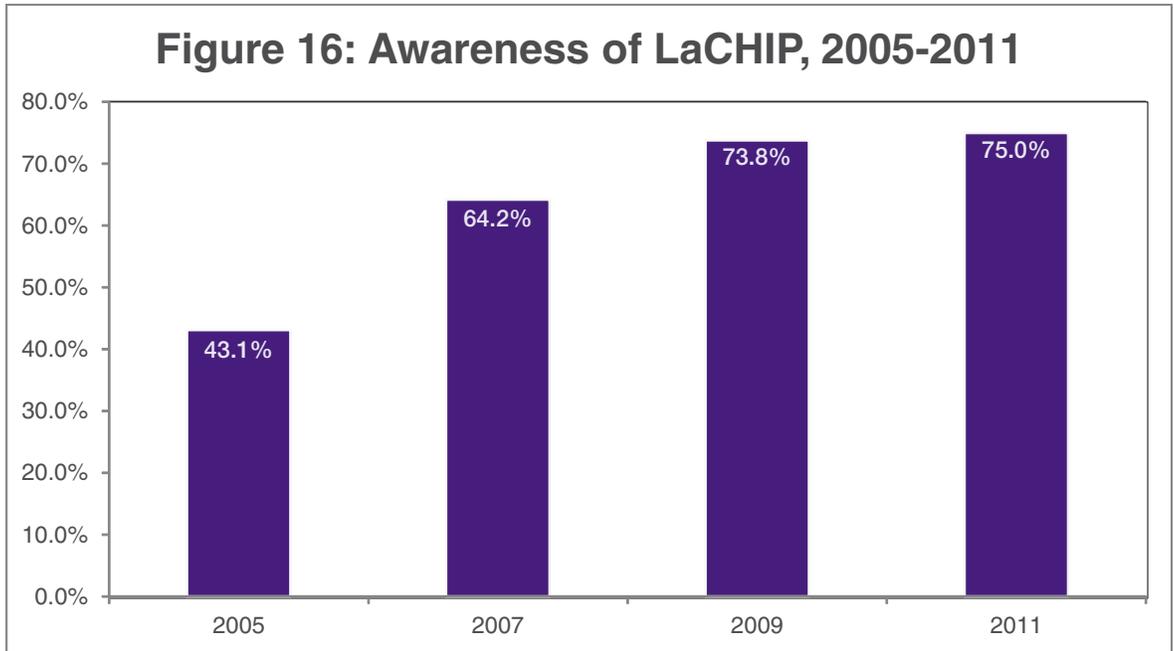
Age is also associated with uninsured status as young children are least likely to be uninsured. Younger adults (19-29) are most likely to be uninsured. Thirty-one percent of 19-21 year olds are uninsured as are 31.9 percent of 22-29 year olds. Overall, uninsured rates for adults decrease as age increases.

Relative to 2009, however, uninsured rates have increased significantly for adults 30 and older while they have remained relatively stable for adults from 19-29. This stability may reflect the impact of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act as younger adults are able to remain covered through a parent's employer-sponsored insurance policy through age 26.

Largely because of Medicaid/LaCHIP programs, young children (0-5) are least likely to be uninsured. Only 2.4% of children 0-5 are uninsured as are 3.2% of children between 6-13 and 4.6% of children between 14-18. Uninsured rates for each of these age groups declined relative to 2009 but the decline has been most notable for the 14-18 year olds (from 6.6% to 4.6%). The uninsured rate for children 0-5 years old in 2009 was 3.5% while the comparable rate for children 6-13 years old was 4.7%.

Awareness of LaCHIP

Since the first time it was measured in 2005, there has been a remarkable increase in awareness of LaCHIP. Among all households, awareness has increased from 43.1% to 75.0%. The increase likely reflects the efforts of Medicaid/LaCHIP outreach, including advertising, walker-talker programs, and contact through public schools and doctors' offices. Awareness is higher among households with children (84.3%) and households that are eligible for Medicaid (85.7%).



Appendix: Survey Methodology

The LHIS Survey gauges uninsured status through a household-level approach in which individual respondents are asked to report on the health insurance status of each member of the household. To assure reporting is as accurate as possible, initial respondents are screened to make sure they are the most knowledgeable person in the household about family health care and health insurance. Once the most knowledgeable person in the household has been selected, respondents are asked to identify all members of the household and to respond to a series of questions asking whether each member of the household is covered by particular types of insurance including employer sponsored insurance, privately purchased insurance, Medicaid or LaCHIP, Medicare, or military insurance. Respondents are asked to verify uninsured status for any individual in the household not identified as having some form of insurance coverage. Only household members who are identified as not having any form of insurance coverage and who are verified as uninsured are included in the final estimate of the uninsured population.

The initial sampling strategy was designed to generate responses from 11,000 Louisiana households with at least 65 households from each parish and 800 households from each DHH region. To account for a growing cell only population, 2,000 interviews were completed on cell phones. The number of households and individuals sampled by DHH region are presented below in Table 10 and Table 11.

:: Table 10: Comparison of Households Sampled by Region ::

Region	Total Households					U19 Households				
	2011	2009	2007	2005	2003	2011	2009	2007	2005	2003
New Orleans 1	1,223	1,356	1,371	1,292	1,880	482	536	554	471	691
Baton Rouge 2	1,429	1,197	1,353	1,097	1,636	569	545	609	446	739
Houma-Thibodaux 3	1,151	1,033	920	893	1,381	498	489	438	427	611
Acadiana 4	1,399	1,308	1,032	1,463	1,581	590	597	480	645	687
Southwest 5	1,035	962	792	1,019	926	412	427	338	425	420
Central 6	1,228	1,104	880	988	624	541	474	356	452	283
Northwest 7	1,450	1,312	1,181	1,242	592	589	562	495	476	240
Northeast 8	1,201	1,079	1,370	1,018	622	442	431	573	417	263
Northshore 9	1,430	1,299	1,152	1,087	787	634	635	527	476	339
Statewide	11,546	10,650	10,051	10,099	10,029	4,757	4,696	4,370	4,235	4,273

:: Table 11: Comparison of Individuals Included in Sample by Region ::

Region	Total Individuals					U19 Individuals				
	2011	2009	2007	2005	2003	2011	2009	2007	2005	2003
New Orleans 1	3,302	3,711	3,771	3,287	4,680	897	962	1,056	849	1,190
Baton Rouge 2	4,030	3,438	3,828	2,896	4,401	1,093	1,011	1,176	822	1,291
Houma-Thibodaux 3	3,354	3,030	2,772	2,576	4,059	899	861	846	755	1,236
Acadiana 4	4,028	3,747	2,955	3,988	4,412	1,161	1,129	945	1,183	1,368
Southwest 5	2,954	2,717	2,182	2,753	2,515	822	808	620	769	722
Central 6	3,482	3,089	2,371	2,715	1,656	1,028	885	687	829	452
Northwest 7	3,965	3,573	3,219	3,204	1,574	1,100	1,057	923	855	430
Northeast 8	3,222	2,855	3,704	2,707	1,630	863	769	1,064	767	455
Northshore 9	4,188	3,771	3,336	3,003	2,199	1,190	1,168	1,022	851	650
Statewide	32,525	29,931	28,138	27,129	27,126	9,053	8,650	8,339	7,680	7,794

Distribution of Survey Data and Census

	LHIS Survey	2010 ACS
Income		
Less than \$15,000	17.3%	17.3%
\$15,000 to \$34,999	24.5%	24.5%
\$35,000 to \$74,999	31.5%	31.5%
\$75,000 to \$149,999	21.0%	21.0%
\$150,000 or more	5.6%	5.6%
Age		
0-5 years	8.3%	8.3%
6-15 years	13.6%	13.6%
16-18 years	4.3%	4.3%
19-64 years	61.5%	61.5%
65 or over	12.3%	12.3%
Race		
White	60.3%	60.3%
Black	31.8%	31.8%
Other	7.9%	7.9%
Gender		
Male	49.0%	49.0%
Female	51.0%	51.0%
DHH Region		
New Orleans 1	18.4%	18.4%
Baton Rouge 2	14.6%	14.6%
Houma-Thibodaux 3	9.0%	9.0%
Acadiana 4	12.9%	12.9%
Southwest 5	6.5%	6.5%
Central 6	6.8%	6.8%
Northwest 7	12.0%	12.0%
Northeast 8	7.8%	7.8%
Northshore 9	11.9%	11.9%

Because of the sampling design employed, the probability of being selected into the final sample was dependent on the parish in which the respondent resided. To account for this, the results were weighted to adjust for sampling differences across parishes. Specifically, the sampling weight was constructed as the parish population according to the 2010 Census divided by the number of individuals sampled in the parish. Because differences in response rates among different segments of the population may also result in biased estimates of uninsured rates, the data were weighted to match demographic characteristics as estimated by the most recently available U.S. census data. A comparison of weighted sample estimates to census data is provided in Table 12. As can be seen in Table 12, the estimates provided by the 2011 LHIS nicely match the population estimates from the U.S. census.

As a final adjustment, uninsured estimates are adjusted to account for the widely-noted Medicaid bias. A long line of empirical research has demonstrated that Medicaid recipients often misreport their insurance status. Our primary concern in the current report is the extent to which they misreport as uninsured. In this situation, estimates of uninsured populations would be biased upward and estimates of Medicaid populations would be biased downward. The results presented in this report have been adjusted to account for this bias using an econometric model to estimate individual-level probabilities of misreporting.

