

CHANGES IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTS IN TEXAS

Pediatric dentists play an important role in promoting the oral and overall health of children from infancy to adolescence. Their expertise in the unique dental needs of young patients, such as the prevention, early detection, and treatment of dental issues, is particularly important in managing care for children with special health care needs and promoting long-term oral health.¹

Table 1. Changes in the Pediatric Dentist Workforce in Texas, 2015 and 2024

2015	Pediatric Dentist Workforce	2024
648	Count of pediatric dentists ^{2,3}	944
9	Texas ratio of pediatric dentists per 100,000 children under 18 years old ³	12
748,000	Approximate count of children under 18 living in a county without a pediatric dentist ⁴	692,000
190	Number of counties without a pediatric dentist ³	182

In 2024, the top ten counties with the highest pediatric population had 68% of pediatric dentists and 61% of children under 18.³

Figure 1. Ratio of Pediatric Dentists per 100,000 Children, 2024

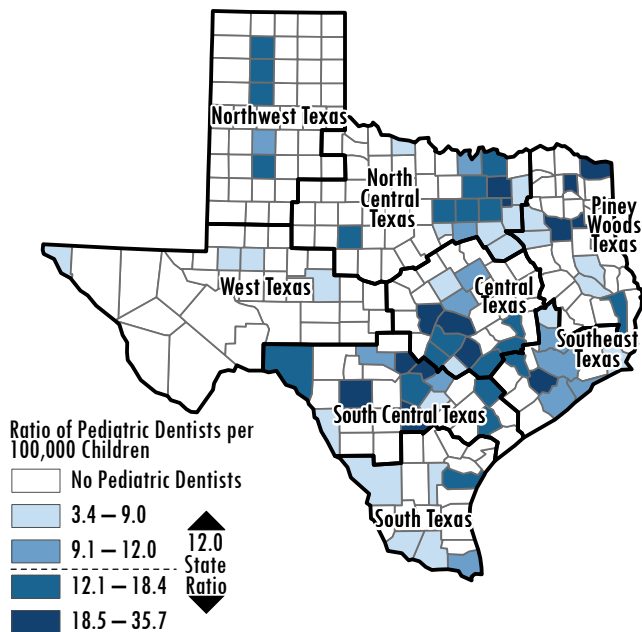


Table 2. Percent of Counties with No Pediatric Dentists by Public Health Region, 2015 and 2024³

Public Health Region (PHR)	2015	2024
Northwest Texas (PHR 1)	93%	89%
North Central Texas (PHR 2/3)	69%	67%
Piney Woods Texas (PHR 4/5N)	74%	74%
Southeast Texas (PHR 6/5S)	50%	50%
Central Texas (PHR 7)	67%	60%
South Central Texas (PHR 8)	64%	57%
West Texas (PHR 9/10)	88%	88%
South Texas (PHR 11)	74%	68%

¹ American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Overview. In: The Reference Manual of Pediatric Dentistry; 2024:7-9.

² Pediatric dentists include dentists with an active Texas license, a practice address (or mailing address if practice address not available) in Texas, and a primary or secondary specialty in pediatric dentistry.

³ Texas Department of State Health Services, Health Professions Resource Center (HPRC). 2015, 2024 Licensure Data from Texas State Board of Dental Examiners as Geocoded and Processed by HPRC, 2025. www.dshs.texas.gov/healthprofessions.

⁴ 2015 and 2024 Population Projections from the Texas Demographic Center (2018). Population for 2010-2050 for State of Texas and Counties. <https://demographics.texas.gov/Projections/2018/>.