

# Farmworker Facts, Migrant & Community Health Centers and Migrant Head Start Quick Facts

## Quick Farmworker Facts

- There are approximately 3-5 million farmworkers in the U.S.
- In 2000, the median annual income for farmworker families stood at \$6250, one seventh the median annual income for all families.
- Majority of farmworkers are Mexican, Spanish-speaking, foreign-born, and have an average age of close to 30 years old
- Half of farmworkers in the U.S. are “migrant”
- Approximately 250,000 children migrate with their parents each year
- Note that the Department of Education (Migrant Ed), Health and Human Services (Migrant Health, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start), and Department of Labor have slightly different definitions of activities that qualify as “farm work”

## Farmworker Health Background/Overview

- Few farmworkers able to take advantage of Medicaid and other benefits (constant movement/migration prevents enrollment in State-administered public health insurance programs)
- More than 90% of migrant and seasonal farmworker children are without any health insurance coverage (compared with 22% of children nationwide)
- Cost and time are most common barriers to receiving proper oral health services
- Migrant and seasonal farmworkers experience dental decay and periodontal disease twice as often as the general population
- Farmworker children’s exposure to pesticides, infectious disease, sub-standard living make them susceptible to poor health and malnutrition
- Studies have shown that migrant school children have significantly higher rates of decay and lower rates of treatment compared to the general U.S. school population.

## Migrant and Community Health Centers

(also known as “Federally Qualified Health Centers,” (FQHC) or M/CHC)

- Approximately 154 Migrant/Community Health Centers nationwide
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers and dependents are also seen in Community Health Centers without a Migrant Health Center designation
- Provide care to underserved populations
- Approximately 35% of M/CHC patients have Medicaid
- Approximately 35-40% are uninsured
- Farmworker” criteria for migrant health: principle employment (at least 51% of the time) is in agriculture on a seasonal basis within the past 24 months (and, for migrant farmworker, establishes a “temporary abode” for work purposes)
- Served just over 750,000 migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families in 2006 (approximately 20-25% of total farmworkers)
- M/CHCs provide “culturally appropriate” care
- Offer a range of services (sometimes have oral health, sometimes do not)
- Have outreach programs and often do outreach to farmworkers
- Some have formal/informal agreements with Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and/or Migrant Education

# Farmworker Facts, Migrant & Community Health Centers and Migrant Head Start Quick Facts

## **Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS)**

- There are 26 grantees that operate 475 centers in a total of 38 states
- MSHS grantees provide free services to approximately 36,000 children
- Approximately 97 percent of families are migrant
- Eligibility Criteria:
  - Income: Falls within poverty guidelines (100–130 percent Federal poverty guidelines) and 50 percent of annual family income must come from agricultural work
  - Farmworker status: Must work with field crops
    - *Migrant farmworkers*: move within 2 years
    - *Seasonal farmworkers*: have stayed to work in the same location for more than 2 years
  - Age: MSHS serves children from birth until mandatory school age

## **How to Find a Migrant/Community Health Center**

- Migrant and Community Health Center list <http://ask.hrsa.gov/pc/>
- The Clinicians Migrant Health Directory: order at Migrant Clinicians Network 512-327-2017 or [www.migrantclinician.org](http://www.migrantclinician.org)
- Migrant Health Referral Directory: Order it by calling National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc. at 1-800-531-5120 or [www.ncfh.org](http://www.ncfh.org)