Health and Developmental Status of Head Start Children: Data from FACES 2006

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FACES Study Design

- **Descriptive study of Head Start children, families and programs**
- **Regular periodicity: new cohort every 3 years (1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009)**
- **Nationally representative samples of 3- and 4-year-old children entering Head Start for the first time***
- **Longitudinal design: parent interviews, child assessments, and teacher-child reports at fall program entry, spring of 1 or 2 program years, spring kindergarten follow-up; management interviews in fall of first year**

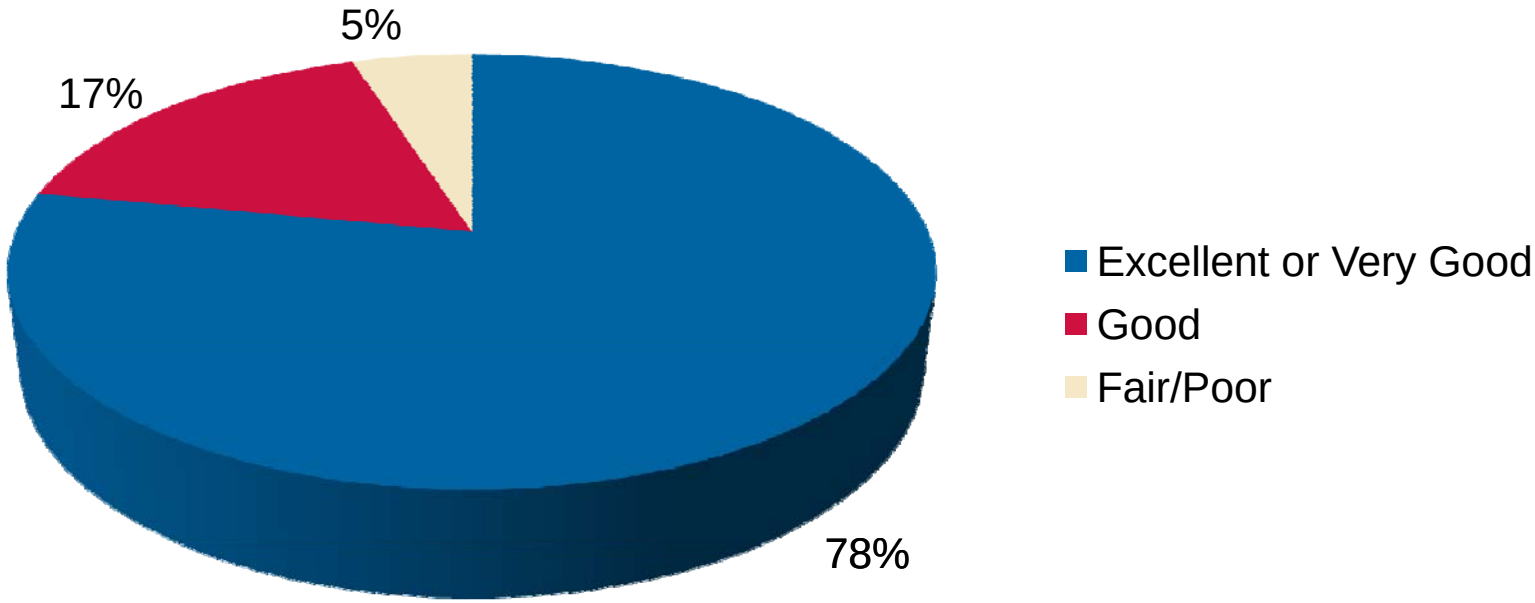
*The FACES sample does not include children served in Migrant/Seasonal or American Indian/Alaska Native programs, or programs in Puerto Rico or U.S. Territories

Focus on Child Health and Developmental Status

- **Children's Health Status**
  - **Parent report of health status for child and self**
  - **Reported health problems**
- **Children's Sleep Routines**
  - **Parent report of sleep habits**
- **Children's Risk for Obesity**
  - **Height and weight measurement and BMI**
  - **Nutrition, physical activity and screen time**
- **Children's Disability Status**

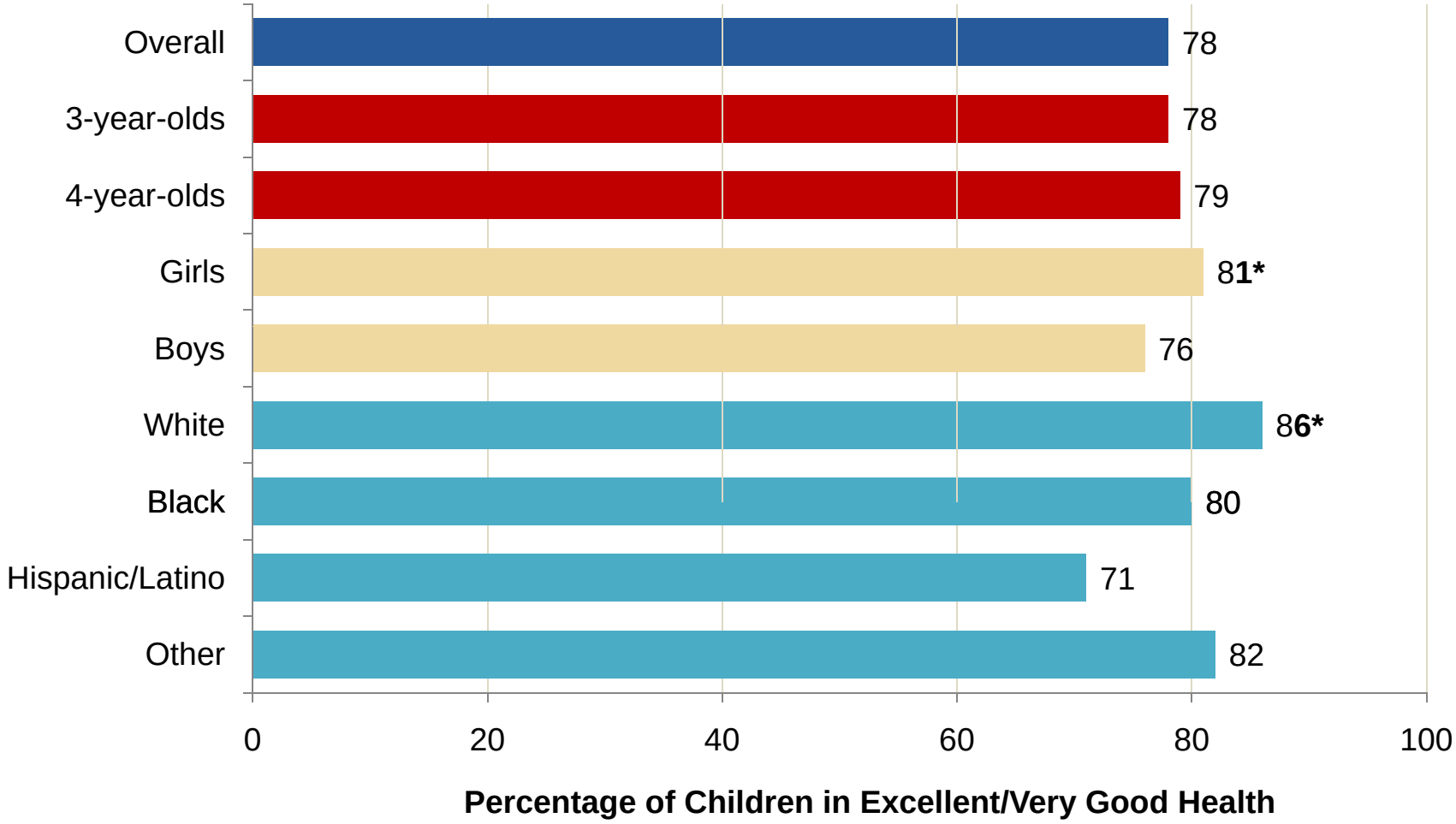
Children’s Health and Developmental Status

Parent Report of Children's Health Status in Spring



Source: FACES Spring 2007 Parent Interview

Parent Report of Children's Health Status by Subgroups



Source: FACES Spring 2007 Parent Interview

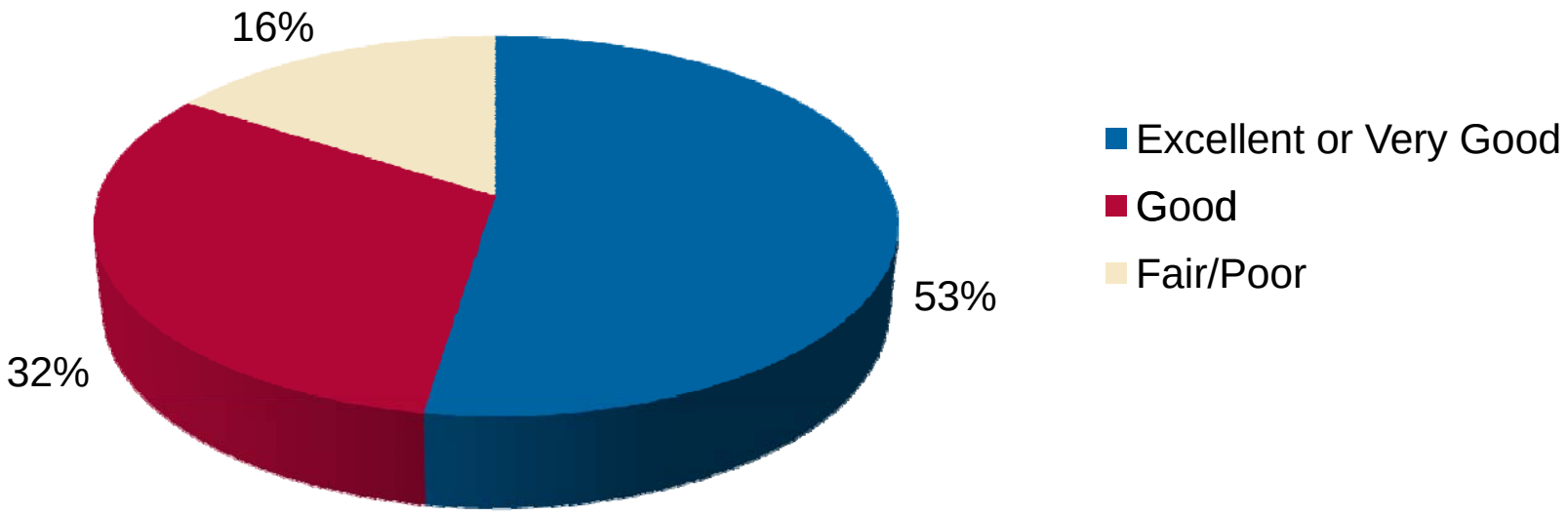
Parent Report of Children's Health Conditions in Fall

- **Parents of only 2% of children report that a health condition has restricted their child's activities**
- **Parents report on whether their children have experienced these conditions:**
  - **Ear infections: 23%**
  - **Asthma: 16%**
  - **Non-food allergies: 15%**
  - **Respiratory/breathing illness: 12%**
  - **Lactose intolerance: 3%**
  - **Other food allergy: 3%**

Parent Report of Health Care and Insurance

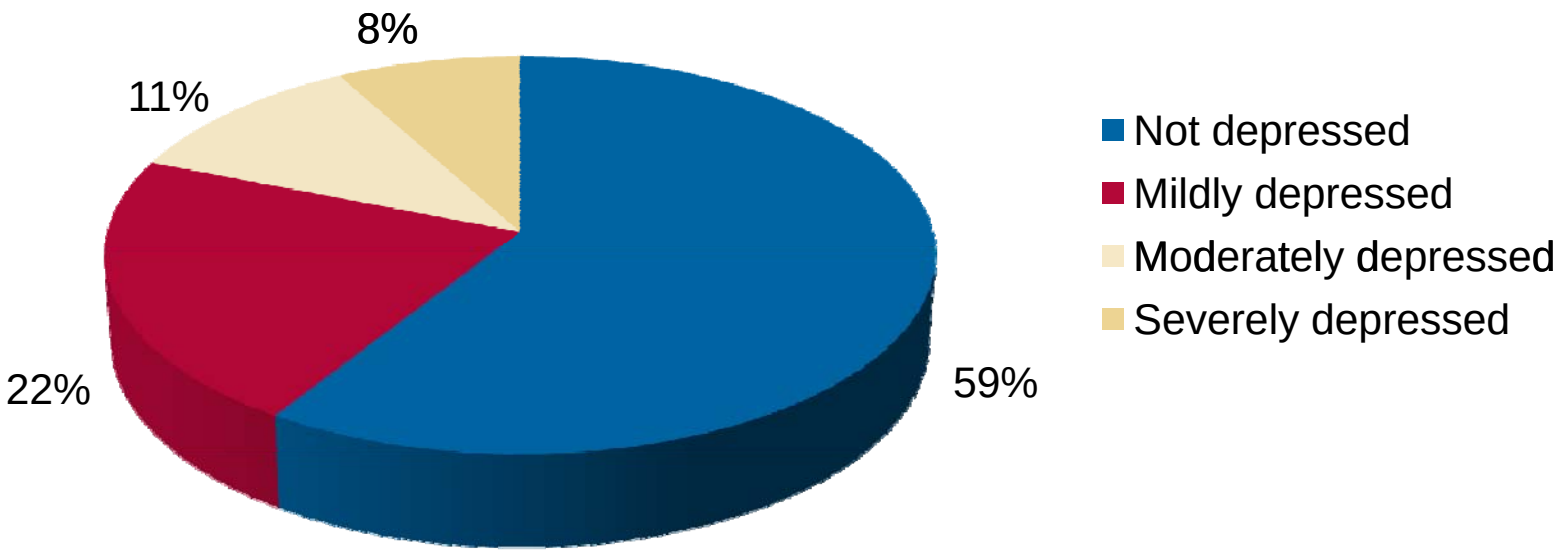
- **By spring of their first year in Head Start, 98 percent of children had received a medical checkup in the past year (no change from fall)**
- **By spring, 94 percent of children had received a dental checkup (up from 89 percent in fall)**
- **By spring, 95 percent of children had health insurance; of those, 17% had only private insurance, 46% had only government insurance, and 37% reported both.**

Parent Self-Reported Health Status



Source: FACES Spring 2007 Parent Interview

Parent Report of Depressive Symptoms



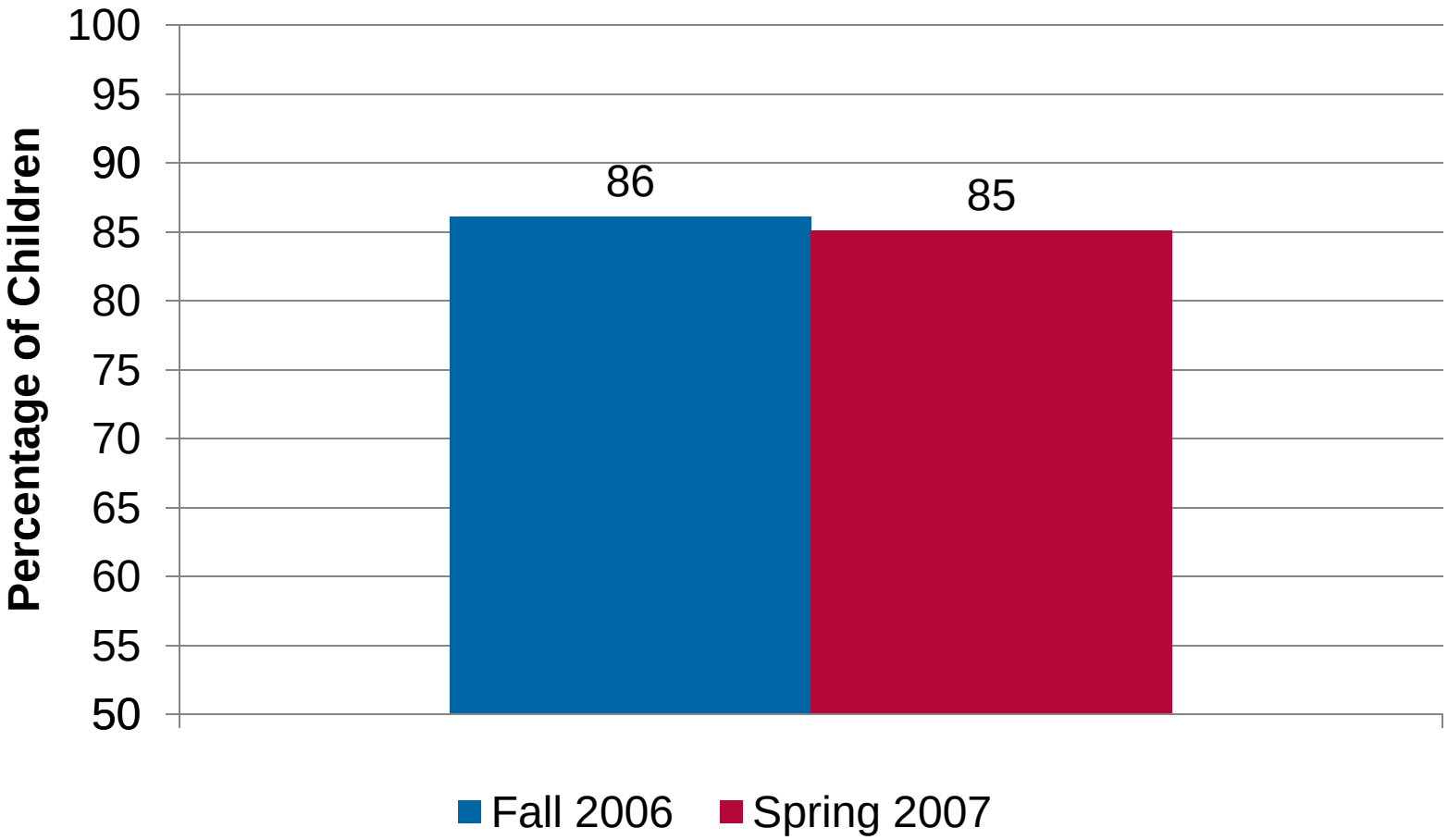
Source: FACES Spring 2007 Parent Interview

Child Sleep Routines and Related Health Conditions

Background

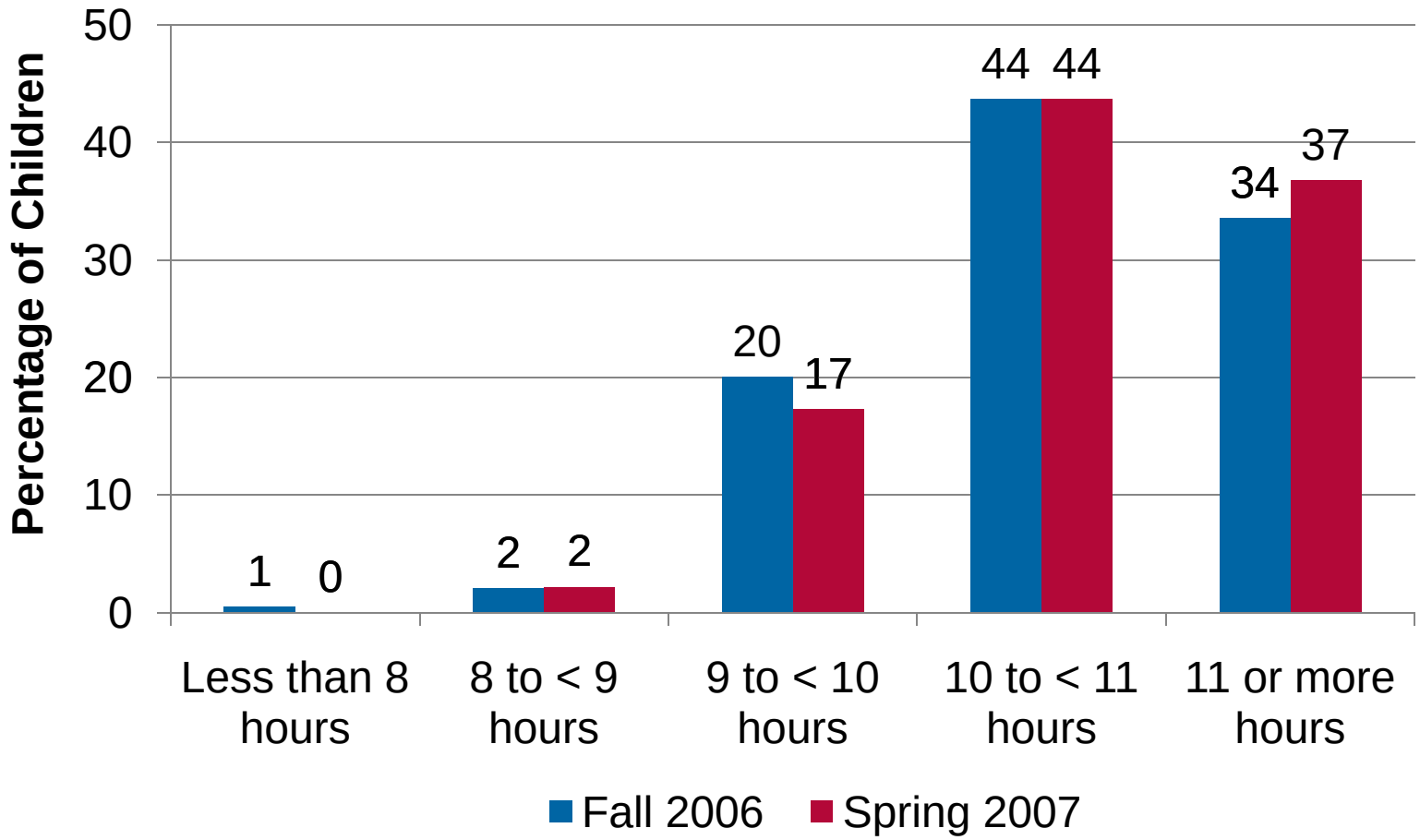
- **Children's sleep quantity and quality have been linked to:**
  - **Cognitive functioning**
  - **Physical health, risk for obesity, and injuries**
  - **Behavioral problems**
  - **Ability to attend**
- **We provide descriptive information on:**
  - **Sleep patterns and bedtime routines for children in their first year of Head Start**
  - **Health conditions related to sleep**

Percent of Children with Regular Bedtime



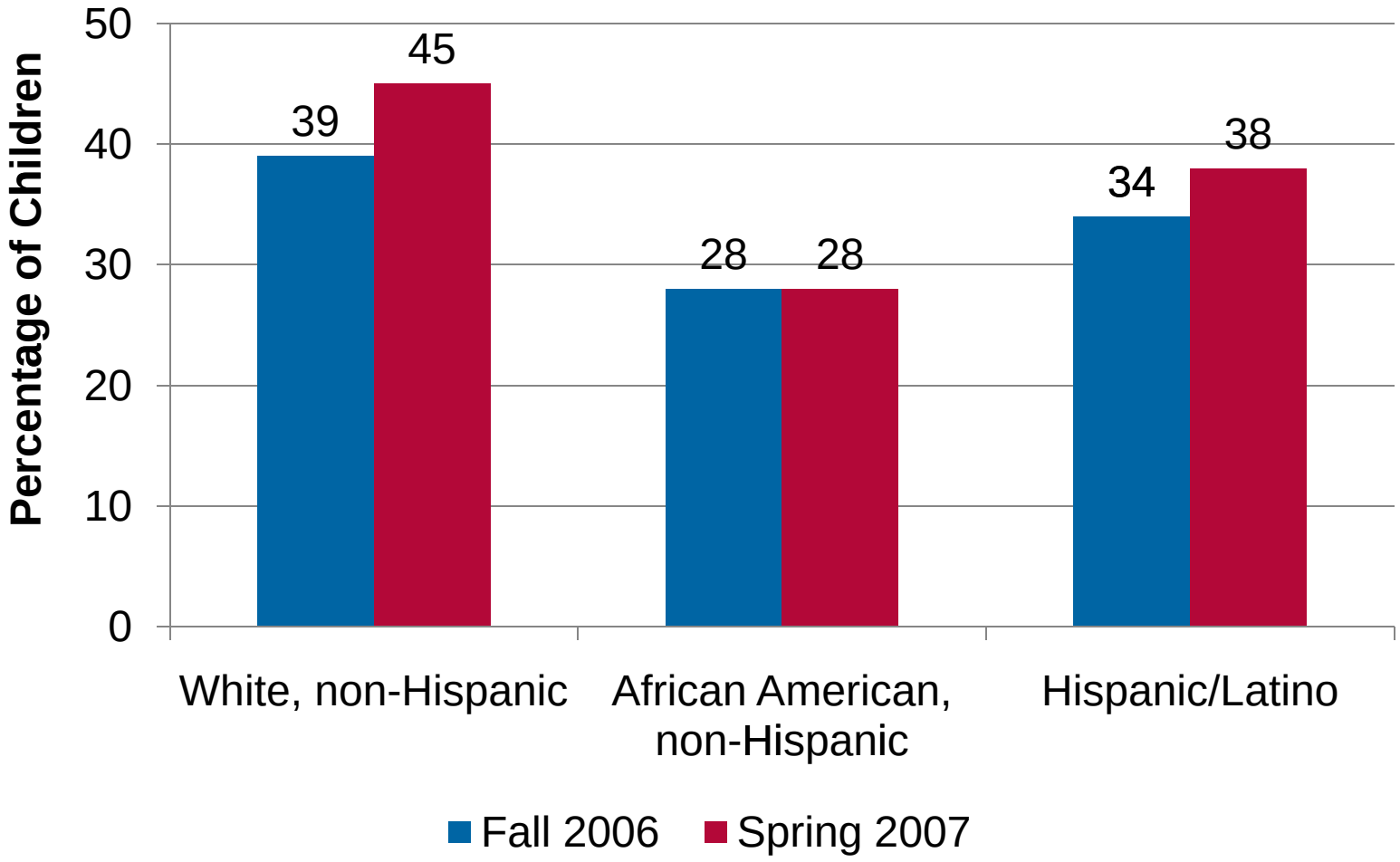
Source: FACES 2006 Parent Interview

Variation in Number of Hours of Sleep



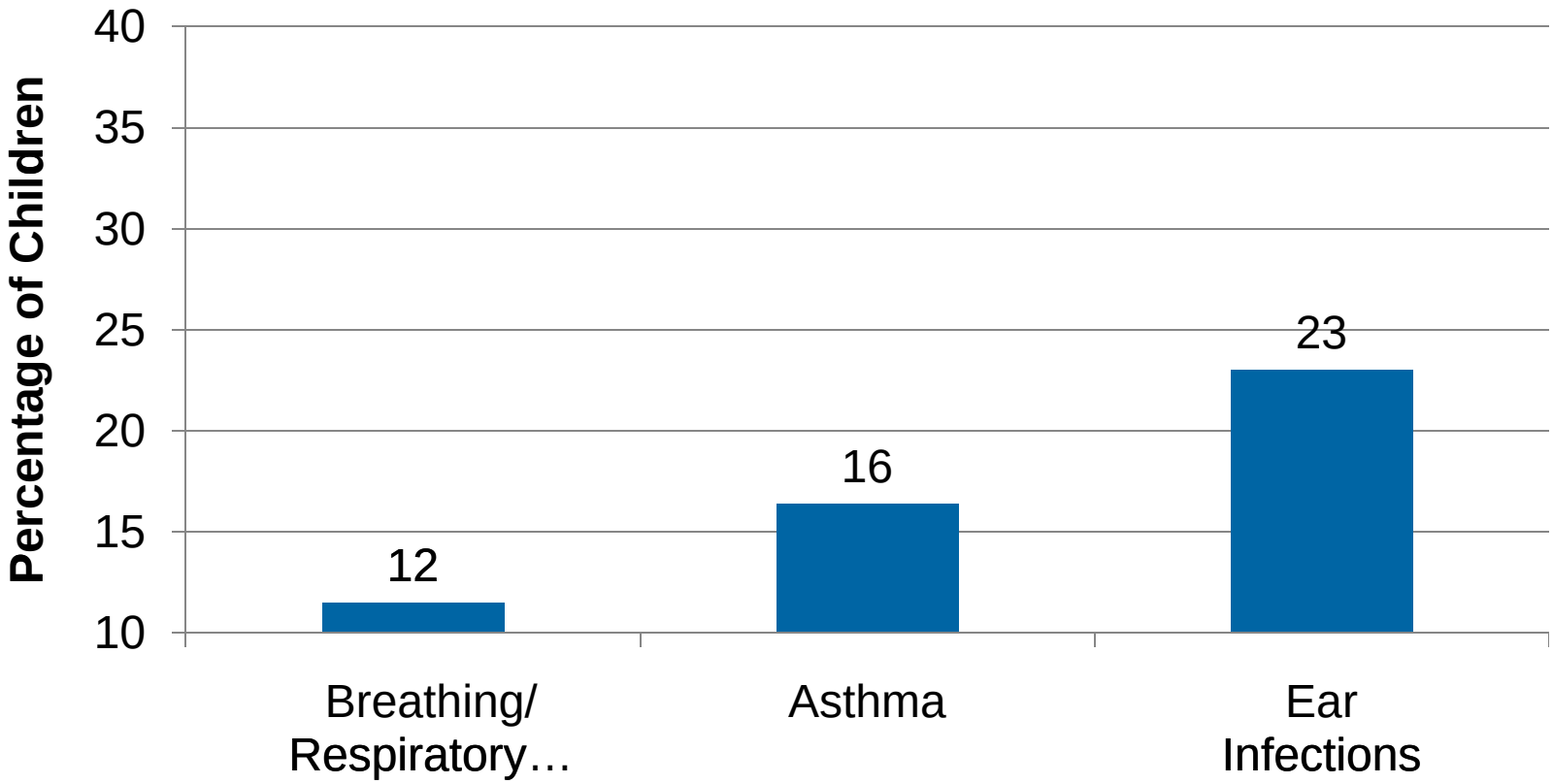
Source: FACES 2006 Parent Interview

Children Getting 11 or More Hours of Sleep Per Night by Race/Ethnicity



Source: FACES 2006 Parent Interview

Percent of Children with Sleep-Related Health Issues



Source: FACES 2006 Parent Interview

Child Risk of Overweight/Obesity and Related Nutritional and Activity Data

Sources of Measures Used in Analysis

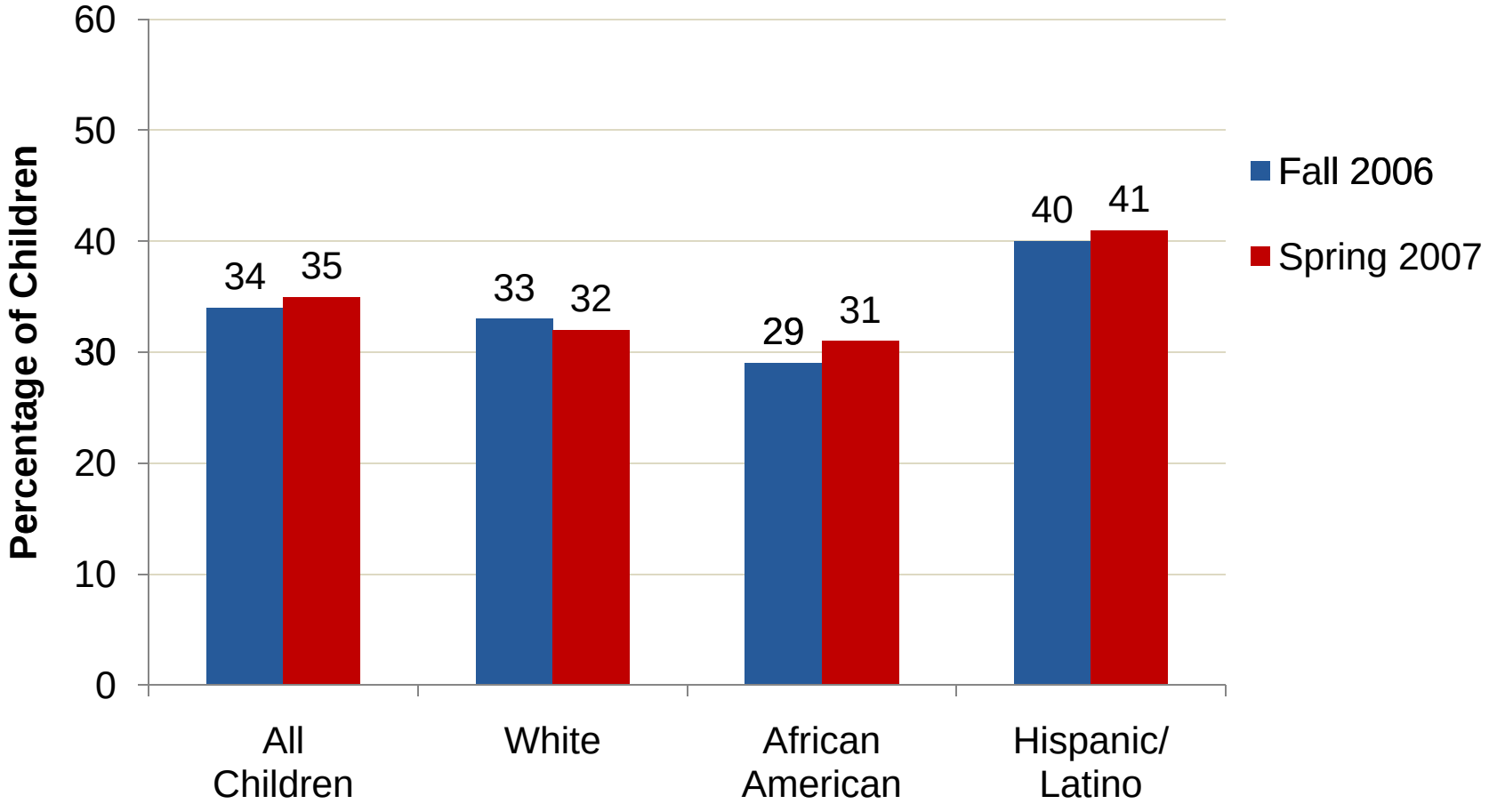
- **Children's height and weight are measured at each time point using a Shorr Board and digital scale**
- **Height and weight measurements are used to construct BMI scores for each child.**
- **The BMI category of overweight is defined by the CDC as being in the 85th-94th percentile for age and gender and obese defined as 95th percentile or above.**
- **The spring 2007 or 2008 parent interview provides information about child's nutrition, physical activity, and screen time**

FACES 2006 Child Height and Weight Data

		Head Start Entry	Head Start Exit	Spring Kindergarten
	Number of Cases	Mean	Mean	Mean
Percent Children Overweight	1610	17.9	21.1	19.3
Percent Children Obese	1610	17.1	16.8	16.8
Height (in inches)	1724	40.2	43.0	45.5
Weight (in pounds)	1688	38.4	44.1	49.9
Body Mass Index (BMI)	1614	16.5	16.5	16.7

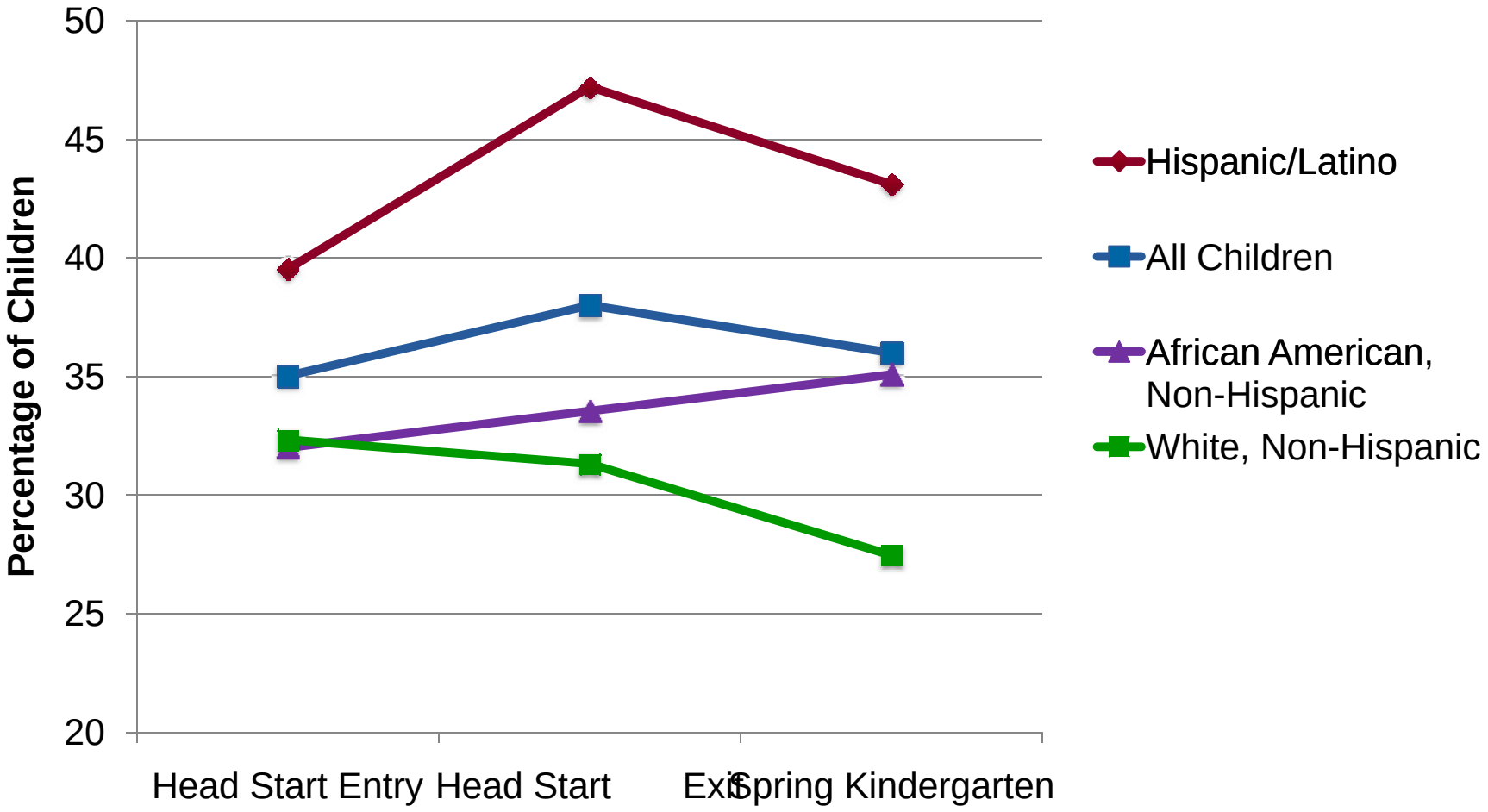
Source: Fall 2006 and Spring 2007, 2008, and 2009 FACES Direct Child Assessment.

Hispanic/Latino Children are More Likely to be Overweight/Obese



Source: FACES Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Direct Child Assessment (Height and Weight)

Percentage of Children Overweight or Obese by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Fall 2006 and Spring 2007, 2008, and 2009 FACES Direct Child Assessment.

Child's Nutrition During Past Week, Head Start Exit

	Percent of Children			
	All Children	White, Non-Hispanic	African American, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic/ Latino
Drink milk at least twice a day	67.7	71.3	61.6	70.6
Type of milk child drinks				
whole milk	44.9	35.0	56.9	40.9
low fat milk	55.1	65.0	43.1	59.1
Drink no soda, sports drinks, or non-100%-juice drinks	24.5	27.3	24.1	21.2

Source: Spring 2007 or 2008 FACES Parent Interview.

Child's Nutrition During Past Week, Head Start Exit, Cont'd

	Percent of Children			
	All Children	White, Non-Hispanic	African American, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic/ Latino
Ate no fast food	23.4	28.8	20.9	18.3
Ate sweets less than once a day	69.0	64.7	70.5	70.7
Ate salty snacks less than once a day	78.3	81.6	75.7	77.7

Source: Spring 2007 or 2008 FACES Parent Interview.

Physical Activity and Screen Time, Head Start Exit

	Percent of Children			
	All Children	White, Non-Hispanic	African American, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic/ Latino
Amount of time child spent watching television or a video or DVD on a typical weekday				
1.5 or more hours	45.3	50.5	50.8	38.8
less than 1.5 hours	54.7	49.5	49.2	61.2
Amount of time child spent playing computer games on a typical weekday (if child has access)				
1.5 or more hours	12.3	12.3	17.3	8.1
less than 1.5 hours	87.7	87.7	82.8	91.9
Amount of time child spent playing outside on a typical weekday				
1.5 or more hours	74.8	74.7	73.1	77.2
less than 1.5 hours	25.2	25.3	26.9	22.8

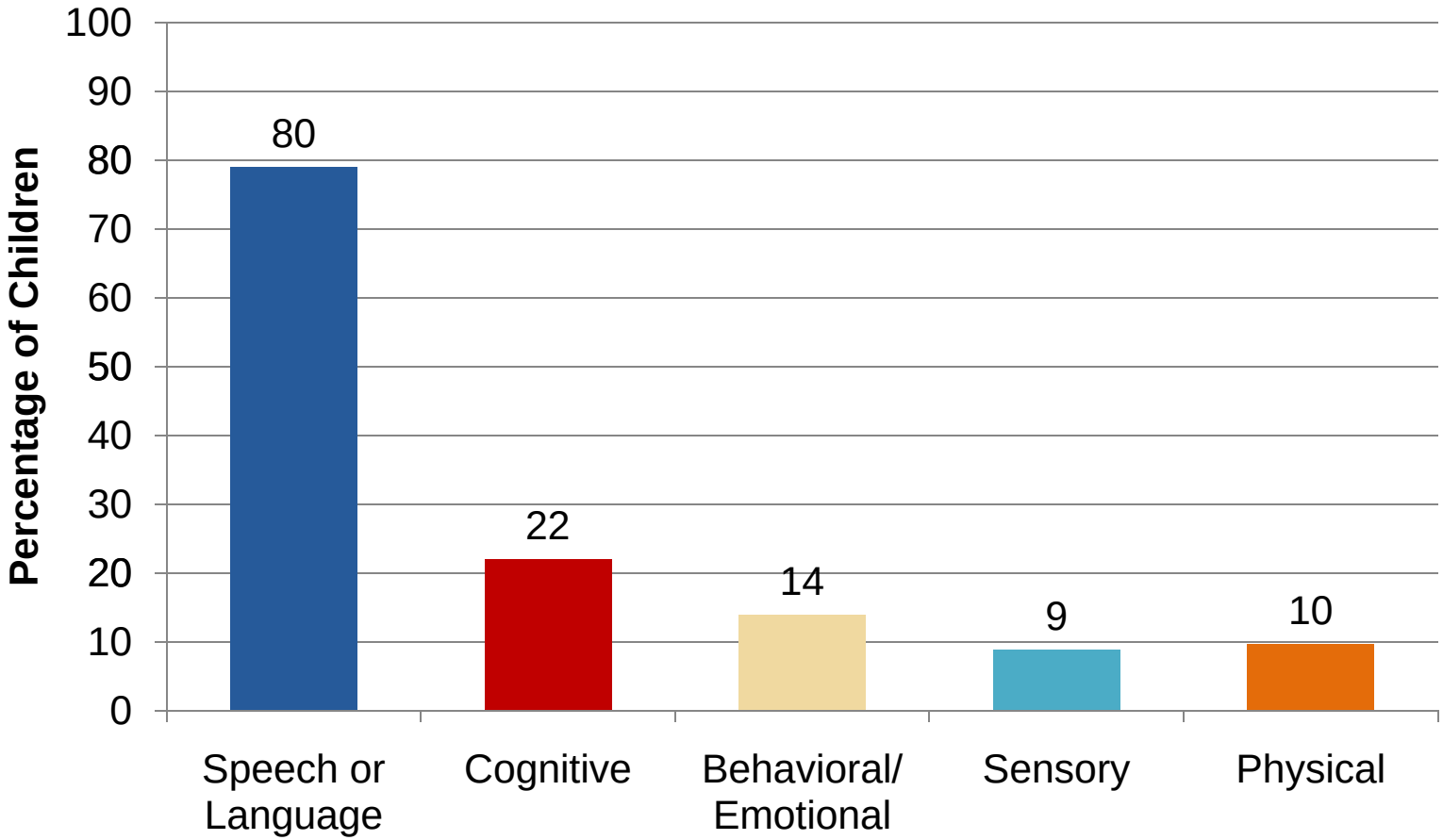
Source: Spring 2007 or 2008 FACES Parent Interview.

Characteristics of Groups with Higher Rates of Overweight or Obesity

- **Hispanic children, compared to White children**
  - **Are more likely to eat fast food**
  - **Watch fewer hours of TV/DVD**
  - **Spend fewer hours playing computer games**
- **African American children, compared to White children**
  - **Are more likely to drink whole milk**
  - **Are more likely to eat fast food**
  - **Spend more hours playing computer games**

Child Disability Status

Most Children with a Disability Have a Speech or Language Impairment



Source: FACES Spring 2007 Teacher-Child Report

Summary

- **Although Head Start children are generally reported to be in good health, a number have health conditions like asthma, ear infections or allergies**
- **Head Start children are likely to receive medical and dental checkups, and to be covered by health insurance**
- **Children's sleep habits, risk of overweight or obesity, and nutritional habits vary by race/ethnicity**

RECENT FACES REPORTS AND DATA

- FACES 2006 Study Design
- Beginning Head Start: Children, Families and Programs in Fall 2006
- A Year in Head Start: Children, Families and Programs
- A Second Year in Head Start: Characteristics and Outcomes of Children Who Entered the Program at Age Three
- Head Start Children Go to Kindergarten
- FACES 2009 Study Design
- *A comprehensive set of data tables is available with each report
  - http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/hs/faces/index.html
- FACES data are available through Research Connections:
  - http://www.childcareresearch.org/childcare/welcome