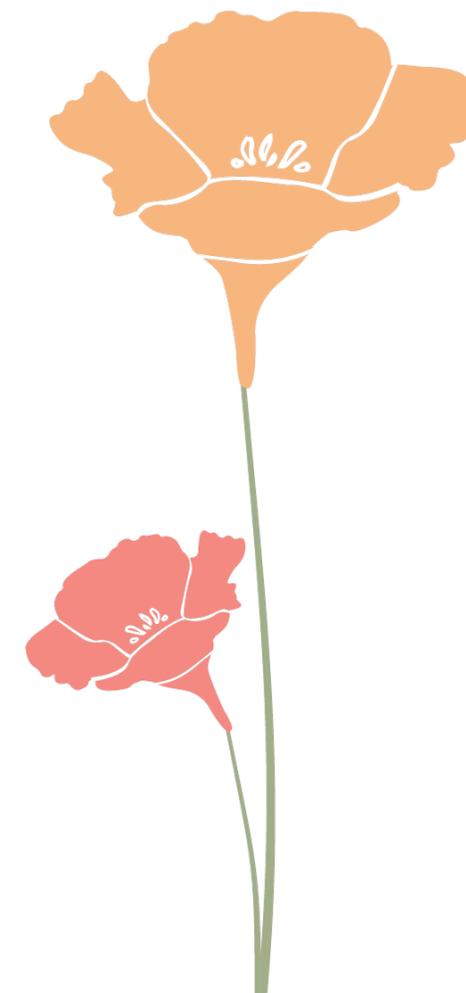




# Inclusion in California Early Learning and Care



## Data Quality During the Pandemic: Tracking Enrollment of Children with Disabilities in California

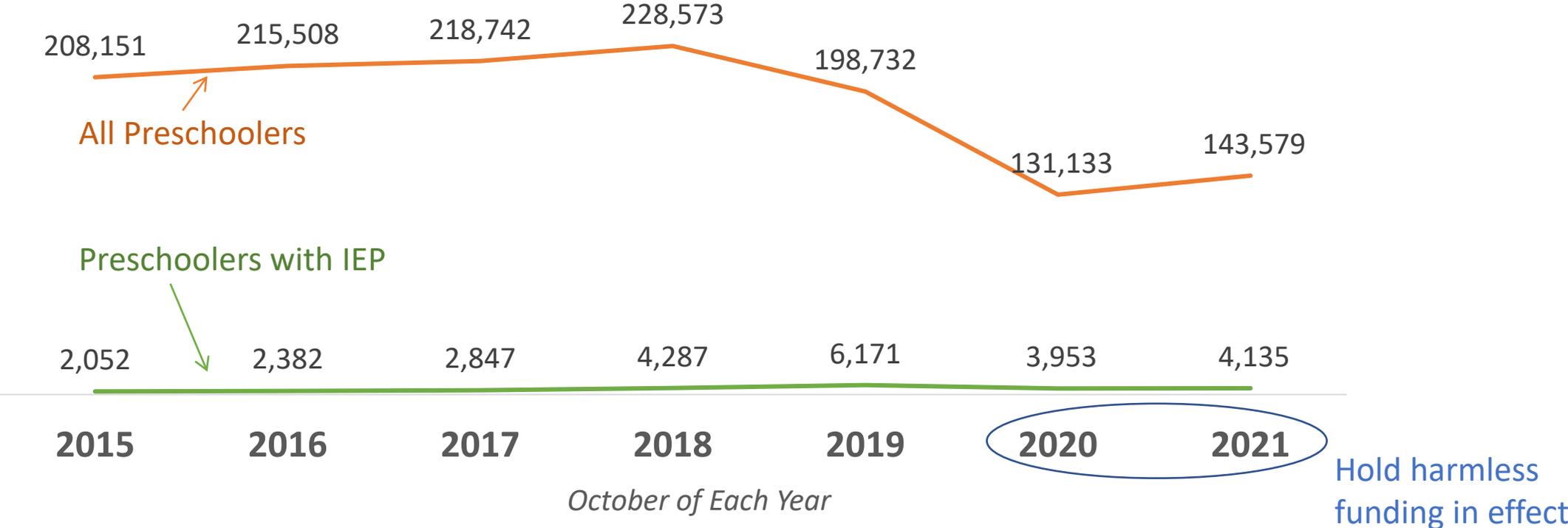
Nicholas Ortiz (SRI)

Kathleen Hebbeler (SRI)

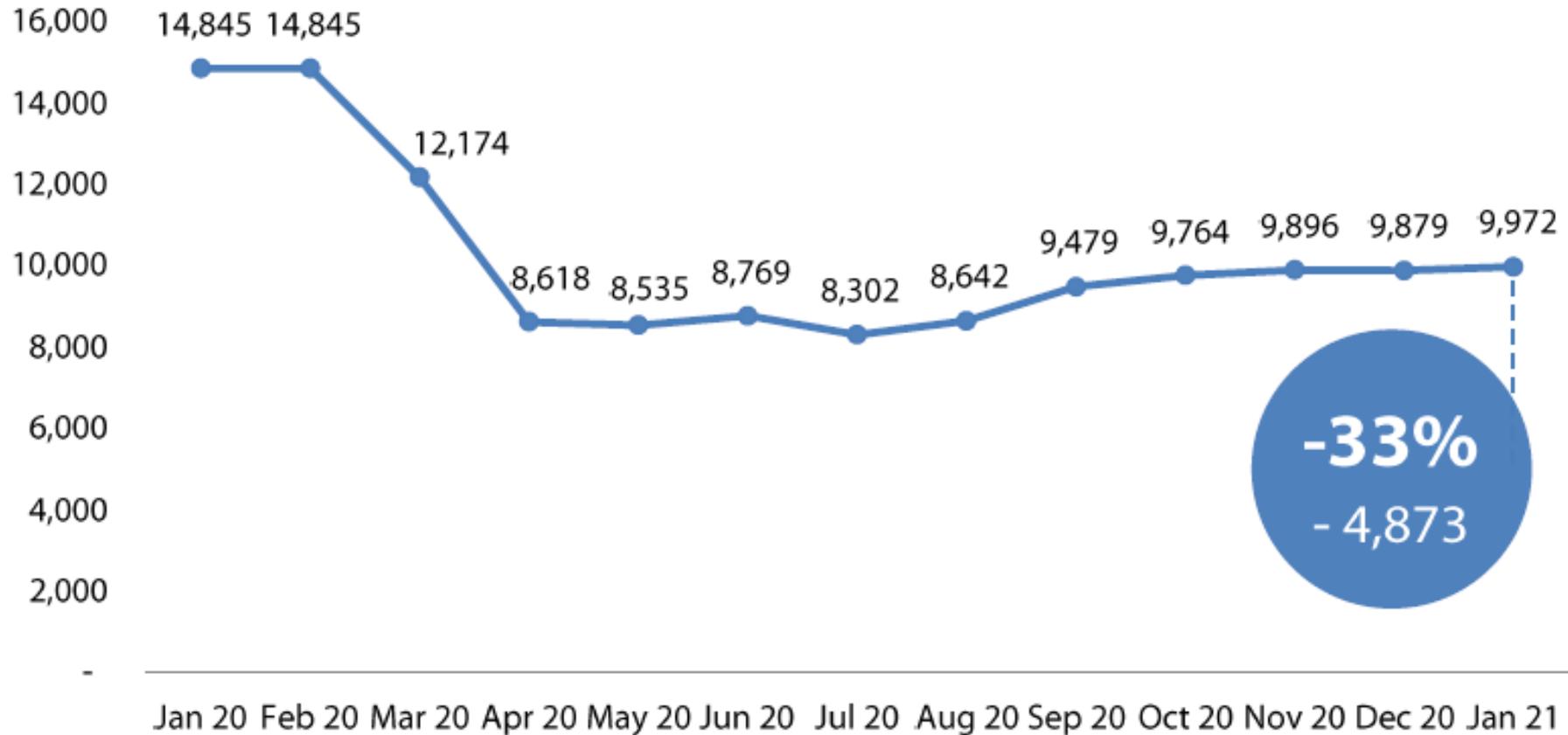
September 19, 2022

# How did subsidy enrollment change before and after the pandemic?

## Overall CA Subsidy Enrollment, Ages 3-5

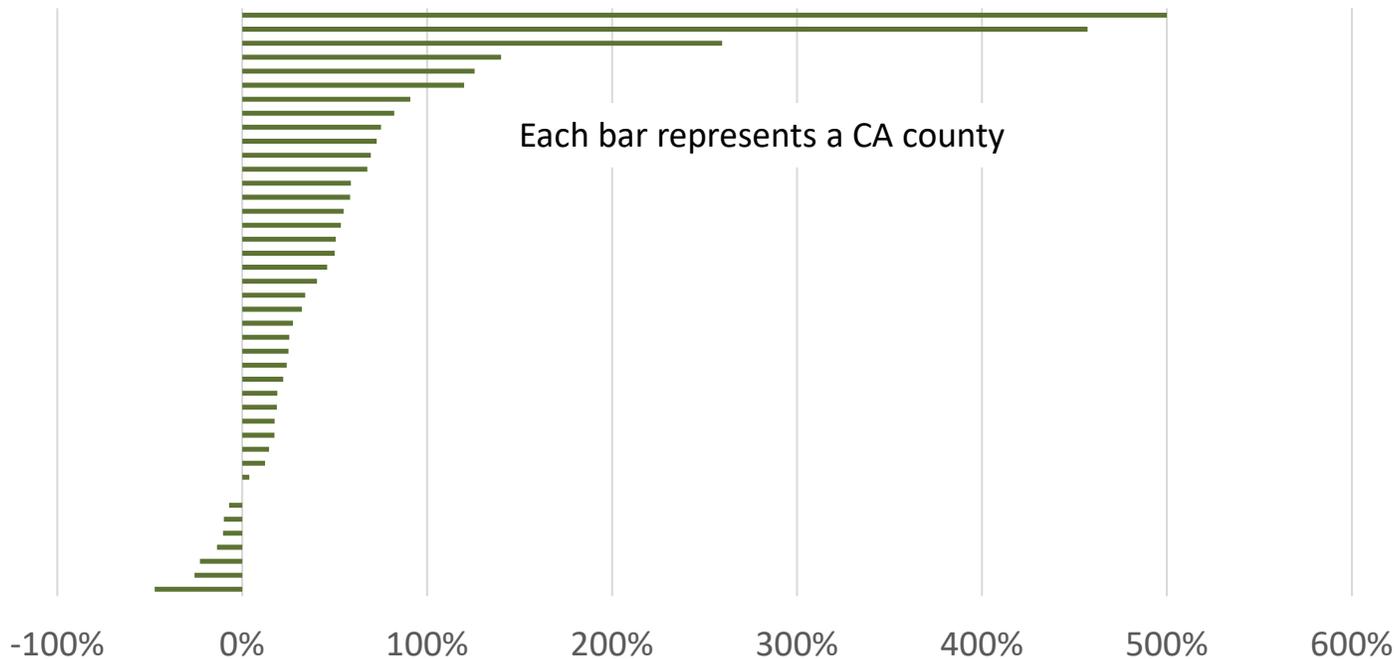


# California Statewide Total Center Licenses



# Was there variation across counties in subsidy enrollment change for preschoolers on IEPs? *Pre-Pandemic*

**Percent Increase in Children Ages 3-5 Receiving Subsidy Who Have an IEP\***  
March 2019 to March 2020

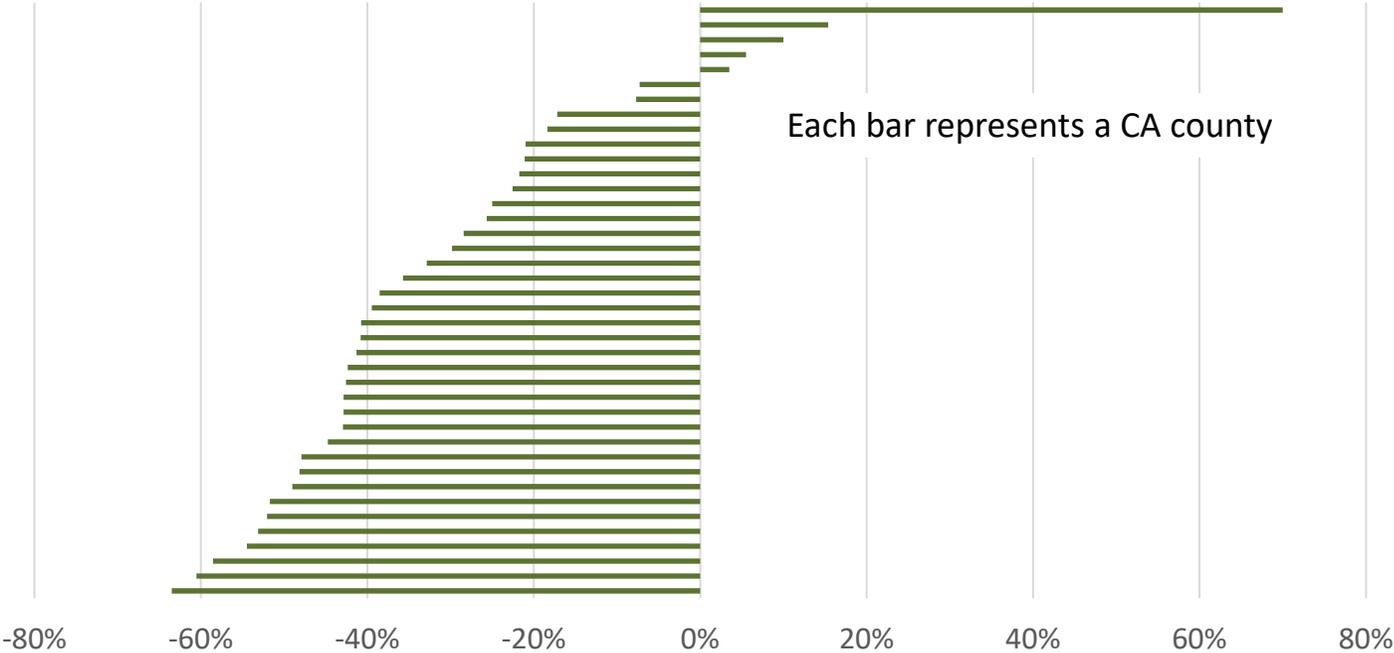


- **Yes, there was variation, but most counties (71%) enrolled more children** with an IEP within the 801 subsidy programs in 2020 compared to 2019, in the period leading up to the pandemic.
- **40% increase** in children ages 3-5 with subsidy *with* an IEP versus **1% increase** *without* an IEP.

\*Counties with at least 10 children on IEP in March 2020 (17 counties excluded)

# Was there variation across counties in subsidy enrollment change for preschoolers on IEPs? *During Pandemic*

**Percent Increase in Children Ages 3-5 Receiving Subsidy Who Have an IEP\***  
March 2020 to March 2021

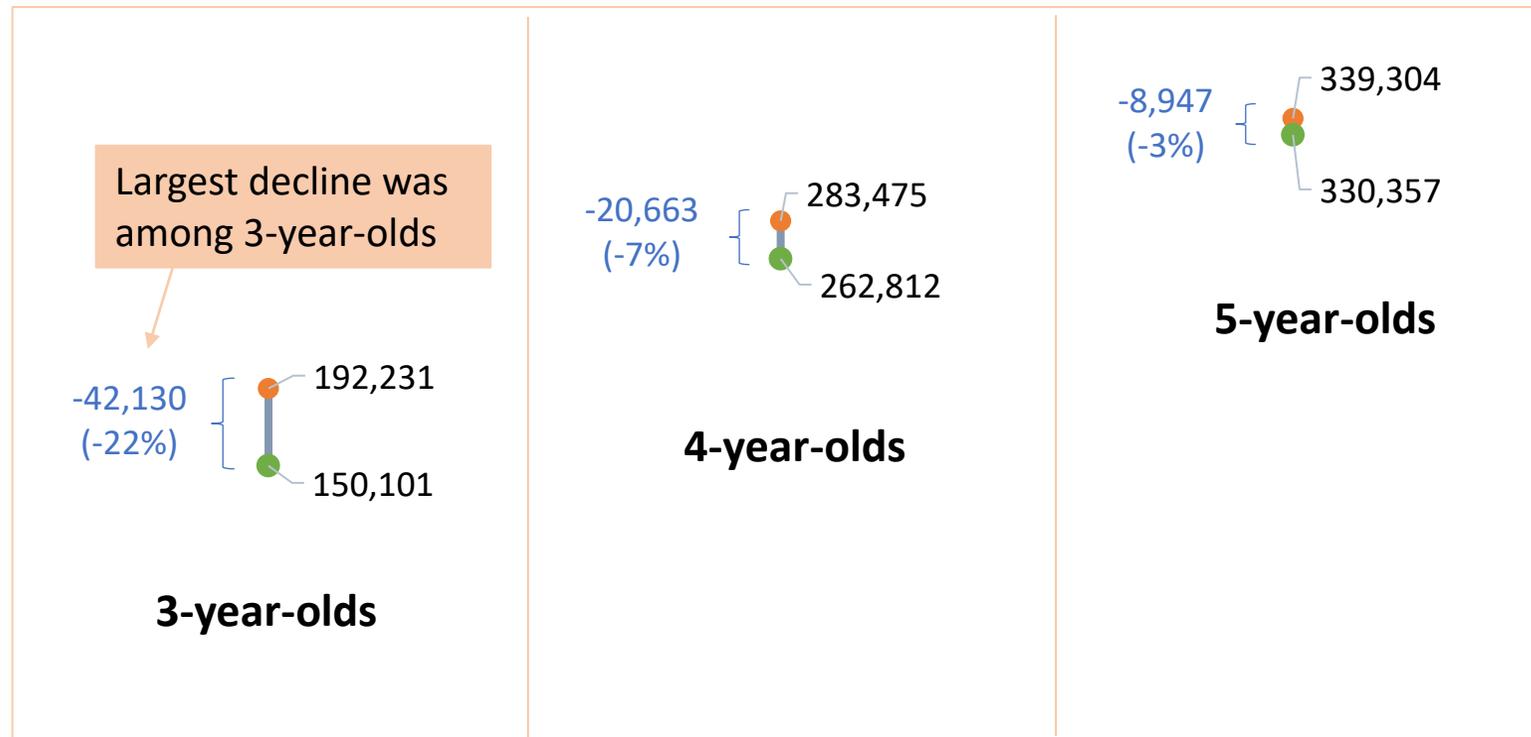


- **Yes, there was variation, but most counties (73%) enrolled fewer children** with an IEP within the 801 subsidy programs in the year following the pandemic's onset.

\*Counties with at least 10 children on IEP in March 2020 and March 2021 (19 counties excluded)

# How has overall enrollment in preschool special education changed over the last few years?

The nationwide count of preschoolers with disabilities declined between 2018-19 and 2020-21 in every age bracket.



# Swirling factors making interpretation of administrative data difficult in recent years

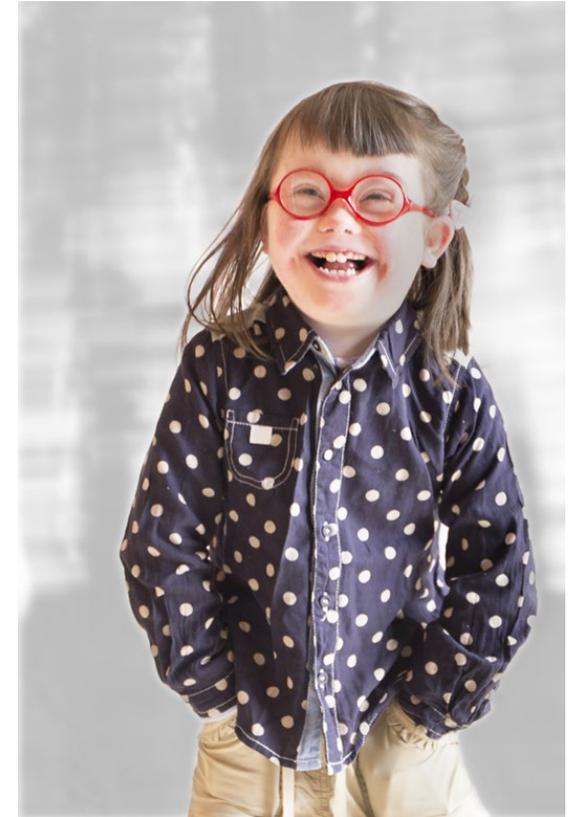


- Fluctuating **quality of data on whether a child has an IEP** in child care subsidy database
- **Hold harmless** provisions continue
- CA **State Preschool** Program scaling up to ensure **10% of enrollment** filled by **preschoolers with disabilities**
- Subsidized child care **database** and program **administration transitioned** from Education to Social Services department
- **Fewer children identified for special education services** on the heels of the pandemic

Will we know whether inclusion of children with disabilities in subsidized child care is improving from here on out?

# Opportunities

- **Regain momentum of greater inclusion** of preschoolers with disabilities in subsidized child care
- **Visibility** of the data **deepens collective understanding** of current data and data quality issues
- Lay the groundwork for **future data integration**
- **Raise awareness** of data available on the inclusion of children with disabilities
- Pinpoint **areas of improvement** in data collection
- **Commitment from state leaders** to promote inclusion
- Round out our interpretation of data on inclusion with forthcoming **qualitative data**



# Thank you

This project is made possible by Grant No. 90YE0218 from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation ([OPRE](#)) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of these institutes. We are committed to providing access to our web pages for individuals with disabilities. If for any reason you are having difficulty accessing any of our resources, please [contact us](#).

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