

Hispanics in Virginia

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INTRODUCTION

Hispanics are the second-largest and fastest-growing minority group in Virginia. The latest Census, conducted on April 1, 2010, counted more than 630,000 Hispanic residents in Virginia. With a total state population of just over 8 million, this means that 8 out of every 100 Virginians are Hispanic.

This report on Virginia's Hispanic residents explores demographic characteristics; citizenship and immigration; family and personal life; education and language; employment and economic well-being; and geographic location.ⁱ

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

According to the 2009 American Community Surveyⁱⁱ, the three largest ethnic groups among Virginia Latinos are Mexican, Salvadoran, and Puerto Rican.

Sixty percent of all Hispanics say their race is white, while thirty-five percent are black, and five percent report some other race.

The Hispanic population in Virginia has grown 92 percent since 2000, due to high birth rates (resulting in large increases in the U.S.-born Hispanic population) and an influx of Latino immigrants coming to the U.S. from Central and South America (resulting in large increases in the foreign-born Hispanic population). While both factors contribute to the significant growth in the number of Virginia

IMPORTANT NOTE

Many people consider Hispanic/Latino origin to be a race category, however, this report adheres to the U.S. Office of Management and Budget five standard categories for data on race: "White," "Black/African American," "Asian," "American Indian/Alaska Native," or "Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander;" and two categories for data on ethnicity: "Hispanic or Latino" and "Not Hispanic or Latino."

This report examines the Hispanic/Latino population – those who identify their ethnicity as "Hispanic or Latino," regardless of their race.

Virginia Hispanics at a Glance

Population size

630,000

Percent of the total population

8%

Percent increase since 2000

92%

Hispanic births as a percent of all 2009 births

13%

Percent of children living in poverty

21%

Percent in the labor force

85%

Percent of households containing two or more families

20%

Hispanics, native-born and foreign-born Hispanics are different in many ways. On a number of dimensions, the immigrant Latino population differs from the Virginia population as a whole and from native-born Hispanicsⁱⁱⁱ. This paper reports native- and foreign-born Hispanic population data separately to show the differences between these groups.

Age distribution is the most significant demographic difference between the U.S.- and foreign-born Latino populations. Demographers use population pyramids to show the distribution of age groups in five-year age cohorts. Typically, the age distribution is shaped like a pyramid - large at the bottom, where youth are represented, and smaller at the top, where older age groups are located.

FIGURE 1 shows the age pyramid for native-born and foreign-born Latinos in Virginia. The solid blue bars

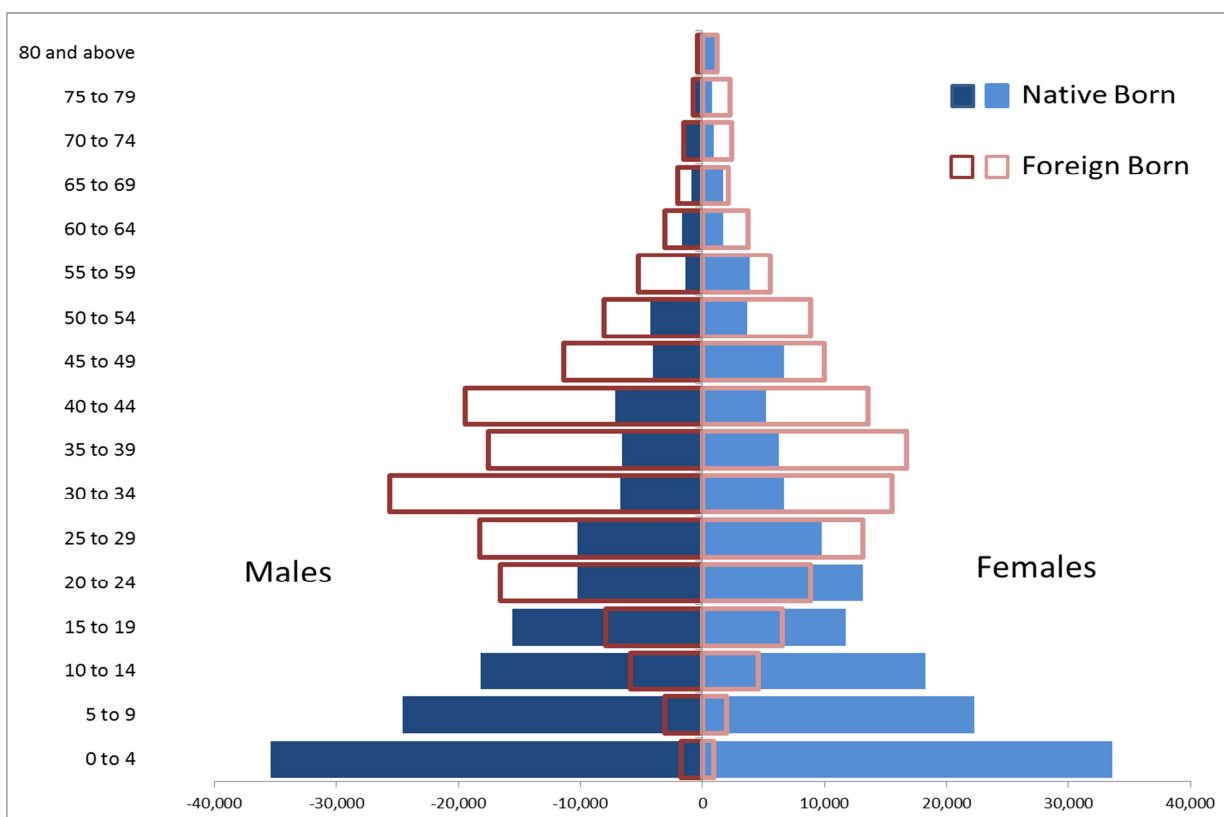


FIGURE 1 - AGE PYRAMID FOR VIRGINIA'S HISPANIC POPULATION

(representing native-born Hispanics) resemble a typical age pyramid, although the disproportionately large base of the pyramid shows that the young population is expanding rapidly.

In contrast, the age pyramid for foreign-born Hispanics (red and pink bars) does not look like a pyramid at all, and reflects Hispanic immigration trends. The widest bars on the pyramid occur at the prime working ages (25-44), because Latinos most often immigrate to the United States for employment opportunities. Though not illustrated directly, there is a connection between these age pyramids. When immigrants come to the U.S. at prime working age, they are also at prime childbearing age. Many foreign-born Latino women give birth to

children while they are living in the U.S. In turn, these children appear on the native-born age pyramid in the large youth cohorts. According to the American Community Survey, two-thirds of U.S.-born Hispanics under the age of 18 have at least one foreign-born parent, and almost half of all Hispanic children are first-generation Americans with both parents coming from outside of the United States.

The age pyramid also highlights other differences between native- and foreign-born Hispanics in Virginia:

- The median age of Hispanics in Virginia is 26 years old. The median age of native-born Hispanics is much younger (14) while the median age of foreign-born Hispanics is much older (35).
- Overall, Virginia's Hispanic population is 53 percent male and 47 percent female. Native-born Hispanics represent the genders equally at fifty percent each. In contrast, males comprise 56 percent of the foreign-born Latino population because they immigrate to the U.S. for employment opportunities at higher rates than females.

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

A little over half of the Hispanic population in Virginia was born in the U.S. The others are foreign-born immigrants. Among the foreign-born immigrants, roughly one quarter are naturalized citizens, and three quarters are non-citizen residents. As shown in **FIGURE 2**, 65 percent of non-citizen residents came to the United States within the last decade.

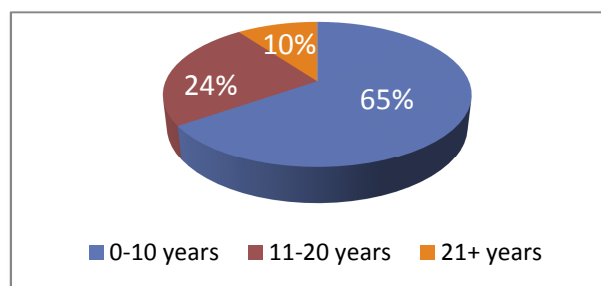


FIGURE 2 – YEARS LIVING IN THE U.S. (NON-CITIZEN HISPANICS)

FAMILY AND PERSONAL LIFE

American Community Survey data on Hispanic households provides information on the family life, relationships, and fertility of the Latino population. These data are useful in understanding the personal and cultural context for Hispanics' educational pursuits and employment.

Hispanics are more likely than non-Hispanics to live in family-based households – those where the individuals are related by marriage, birth, or adoption. Three-quarters of Hispanic households contain families, while only

two-thirds of non-Hispanic households are family-based. Additionally, Hispanic households are bigger on average than non-Hispanic households; the average non-Hispanic household contains 2.3 people, while the average Hispanic household contains 3.0 people. At the same time, single parent households are more common among Hispanic families.

Hispanic households often include more than one family. Fourteen percent of U.S.-born Hispanic households and 24 percent of foreign-born Hispanic households contain two or more families, in contrast to 9 percent of non-Hispanic households. Regression analysis shows that family income is a significant predictor of the number of families living in a single household, but additional reasons for multi-family household arrangements may include culture, age, language, and privacy preferences.

Hispanics and non-Hispanics marry at about the same rate, although a higher proportion of married Hispanics' households are absent one spouse. This may be a result of Hispanics coming to the United States to work, leaving their families behind in their home countries.

Among families where the householder is 20 – 55 years old, 34 percent of Hispanic families and 23 percent of non-Hispanic families have children under the age of 5. Likewise, the birth rate among Hispanics exceeds that of non-Hispanics. The total fertility rate, which is the average number of children born to a woman in her lifetime, is 1.8 for non-Hispanic white women and 2.7 for Hispanic women^{iv}.

These aspects of Latino life are changing somewhat as U.S.-born Hispanics become a larger part of the population. Among Hispanic youth ages 16 to 25 (who are mostly U.S.-born), the marriage and childbirth patterns are becoming more like those of native non-Hispanics. Nationwide, over the past 40 years, young women ages 16 to 25 have been less likely to marry and become mothers during their youth. This trend is reflected among young Hispanic women as well. In 1970, 35 percent of young Hispanic females in the U.S. were mothers. By 2007, this percentage had dropped to 21 percent.^v Research has shown that a decrease in fertility is correlated with increased educational attainment^{vi}.

EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE

Among adults ages 25 and above, Hispanics have lower educational attainment. As shown in **FIGURE 3**, this difference in educational attainment is attributable in large part to Hispanic immigrants, who typically come to the U.S. with low educational attainment^{vii}. In contrast, the educational attainment of U.S.-born Hispanic adults is similar to the educational attainment of non-Hispanic adults.

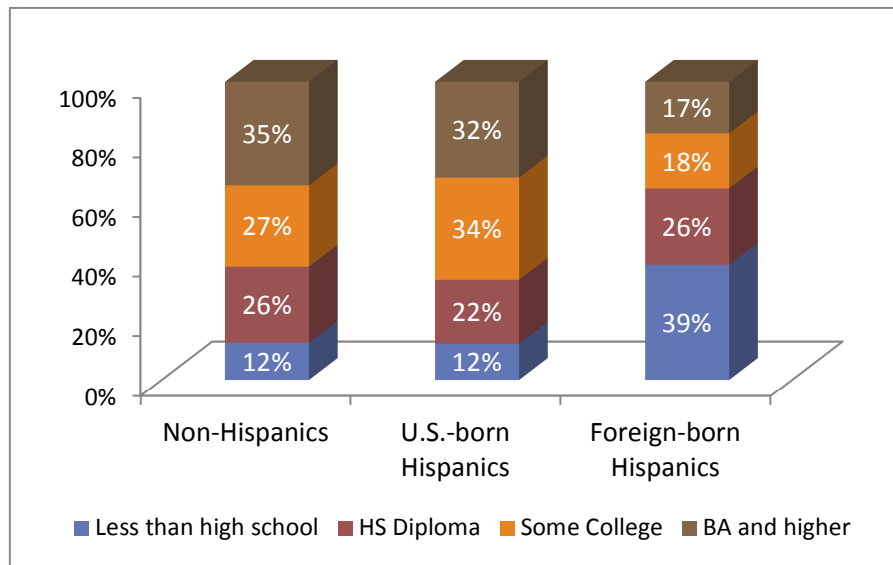


FIGURE 3 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ADULTS 25+

Hispanic youth are less likely to be enrolled in school than non-Hispanic youth. In 2009, 34 percent of Hispanic three- and four-year-olds were enrolled in pre-school, compared to 52 percent of non-Hispanics. Data also show that 30 percent of Hispanics ages 19 to 24 were enrolled in school, compared to 47 percent of non-Hispanics. Among youth for whom school attendance is compulsory, the high school dropout rate is high for Hispanics. In Virginia, 18 percent of Hispanics in the class of 2010 dropped out of high school between 9th and 12th grade, compared to 5 percent of whites, 12 percent of blacks, and 4 percent of Asians. The 2009 National Survey of Latinos revealed that the reasons for dropping out of high school most often given by Latino youth, ages 16 to 25, are

- financial pressure to support a family
- poor English skills
- dislike of school
- belief that they do not need more education for the careers they plan to pursue.^{viii}

One quarter of Hispanic households are linguistically isolated, meaning all adults in the household have some limitation communicating in English. Three-quarters of all Hispanic people report that they speak Spanish at home, and a little more than 5 percent report that they have no English skills (FIGURE 4). However, more than one-half of all Hispanics report that they speak only English or speak English very well.

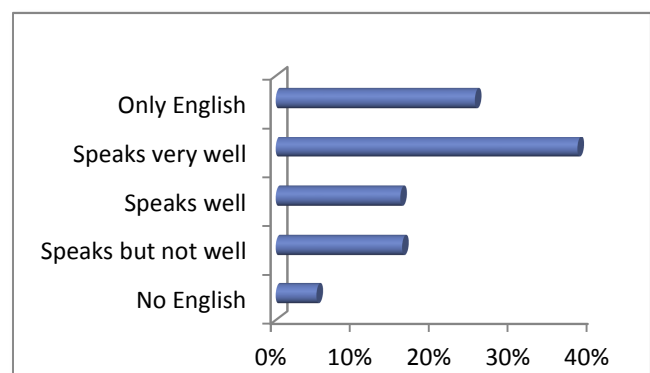


FIGURE 4 - ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY FOR HISPANICS AGES 5+

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Educational attainment and language skills tie directly into the employment and economic well-being of Hispanics in Virginia.

Hispanics ages 16 to 65 have higher labor force participation and lower wage occupations than non-Hispanics in the same age range. Roughly 79 percent of non-Hispanics in this age group and not in school participate in the labor force, meaning they are working or actively seeking work. This number is 86 percent for U.S.-born Hispanics and 84 percent for foreign-born Hispanics. In 2009, Hispanic labor force participants, who were hit especially hard by the recession, had a higher unemployment rate (9 percent) than non-Hispanics (6 percent). This is likely due to the loss of jobs in the construction sector, in which many Hispanics are employed^{ix}.

In 2009, the five largest occupations in Virginia were

Non-Hispanics

1. Cashiers
2. Managers
3. Secretaries and administrative assistants
4. Elementary and middle school teachers
5. Retail salespersons

U.S.-born Hispanics

1. Cashiers
2. Retail salespersons
3. Military personnel
4. Managers
5. Secretaries and administrative assistants

Foreign-born Hispanics

1. Maids and housekeeping cleaners
2. Cooks
3. Construction laborers
4. Carpenters
5. Janitors and building cleaners

These lists show that several of the largest occupations in Virginia require relatively little educational attainment. Additionally, the occupations of U.S.-born Hispanics are not radically different than those of non-Hispanics. Top occupations of foreign-born Hispanics, however, are notably different in that these occupations pay less and require lower levels of English speaking ability than the leading occupations of non-Hispanics and U.S.-born Hispanics.

Household income and poverty statistics follow patterns found in educational attainment and employment. The median income in 2009 for households headed by a non-Hispanic person, or by a U.S.-born Hispanic person, was \$60,000, in contrast to \$50,000 for foreign-born Hispanic households.

Hispanics are more likely than non-Hispanics to rent their homes. Among householders ages 25 to 44, 60 percent of foreign-born Hispanics rent homes, compared to 54 percent of U.S.-born Hispanics and 42 percent of non-Hispanics. These statistics do not change significantly for adults living in metropolitan areas, where renting is more common.

The poverty rates are similar for households headed by non-Latinos and U.S.-born Latinos and much higher for foreign-born Latino-headed households. **FIGURE 5** shows that 10 percent and 9 percent of non-Latinos and native-born Latinos, respectively, are living in poverty. For foreign-born Latinos, that rate jumps to 15 percent. Additionally, in Virginia, the average household needs to earn more than 200% of the federal poverty line to

approach income adequacy – a concept broader than that captured by federal poverty statistics. A household is “income inadequate” when they do not earn enough money to meet regular monthly expenses, such as rent/mortgage payments, child care, food, transit, health care, taxes, and utility bills^x. In 2009, the federal poverty line was \$21,756 for a family of four (two adults and two children). This means that \$43,512 was needed to avoid “income inadequacy.” As shown in **FIGURE 5**, an estimated 24 percent of non-Hispanics, 22 percent of U.S. born-Hispanics, and 44 percent of foreign-born Hispanics are income inadequate and at risk of significant economic distress.

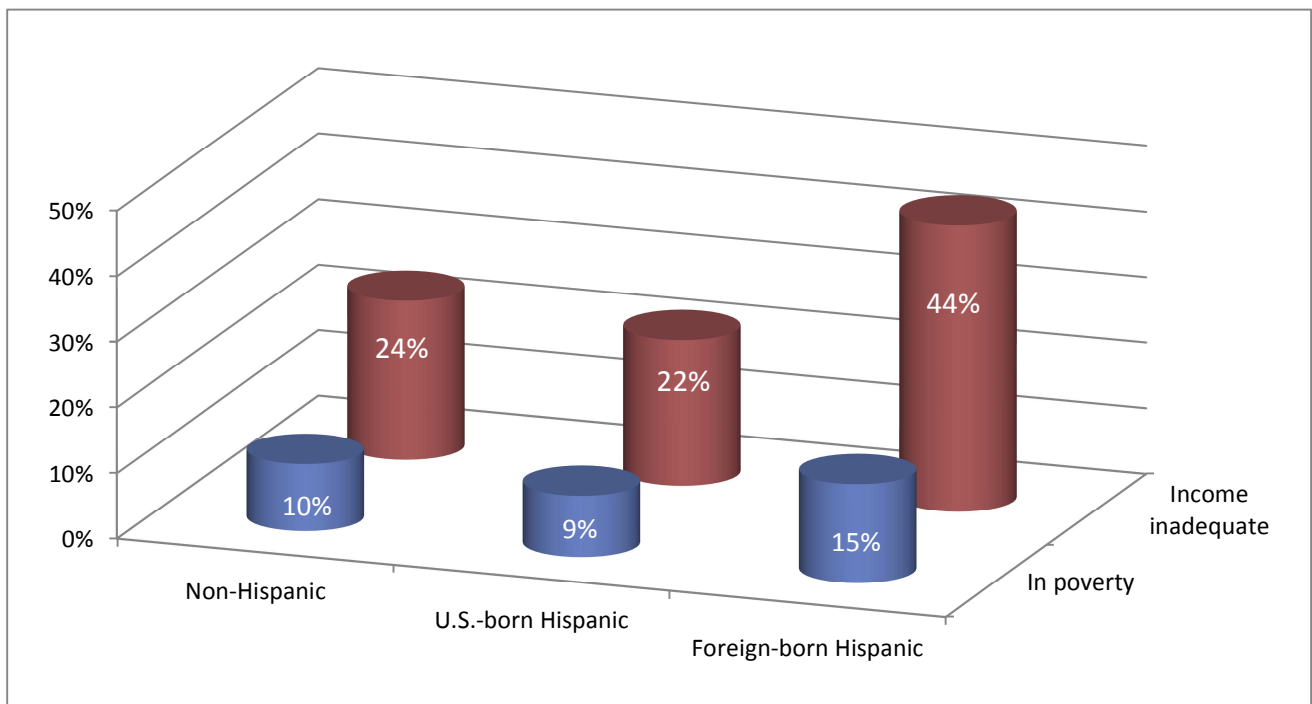


FIGURE 5 - ECONOMIC STATUS OF VIRGINIA HOUSEHOLDS

Hispanic children ages 17 and younger are more likely than non-Hispanic children to live in or near poverty. In 2009, 44 percent and 54 percent, respectively, of U.S.-born and foreign-born Hispanic children lived in or near poverty, compared to 31 percent of non-Hispanic children.

To make matters worse for Hispanic families, who often deal with low-wage occupations, high unemployment, and high poverty levels, health insurance coverage for Hispanics of all age groups is significantly lower than for non-Hispanics (**FIGURE 6**).

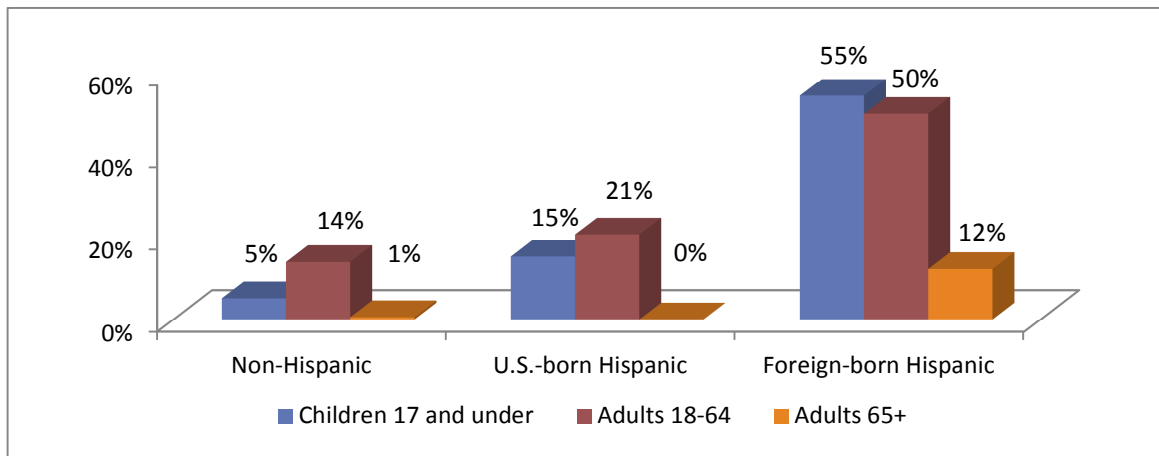


FIGURE 6 – PERCENT OF VIRGINIANS WITH NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Hispanic children especially fare poorly. Five percent of non-Hispanic children have no health insurance coverage, compared to 15 percent of U.S.-born Hispanic children and 55 percent of foreign-born Hispanic children (FIGURE 6). The sources of health insurance coverage for children may illuminate the reasons for these disparities.

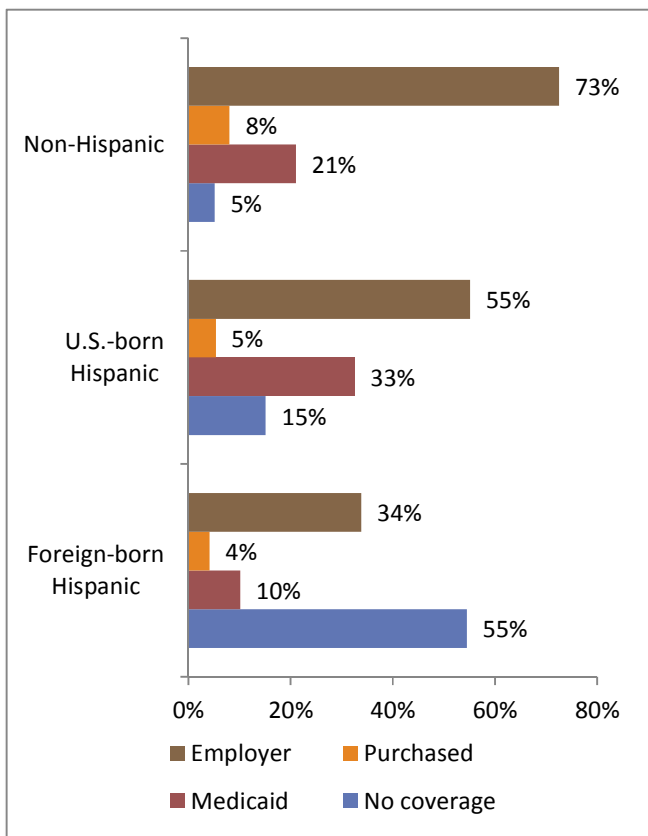
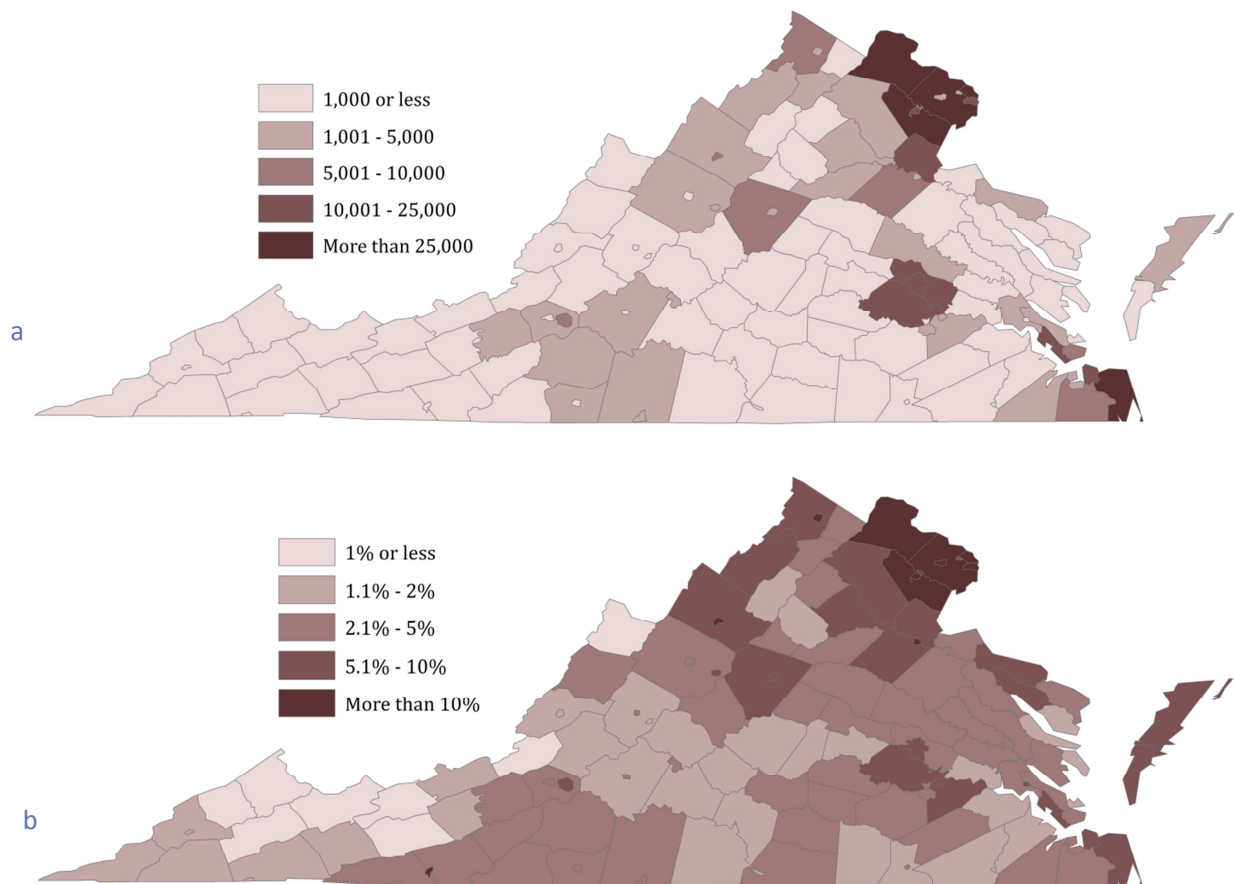


FIGURE 7 - TYPE OF HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR VIRGINIA CHILDREN

FIGURE 7 shows that almost three quarters of non-Hispanic children have health insurance coverage through a parent’s employer and 8 percent have privately purchased health insurance coverage. An additional 21 percent have public health insurance coverage in the form of Medicaid. Among U.S.-born Hispanic children, more than half have insurance through a parent’s employer, 5 percent have privately purchased insurance, and 33 percent are covered by Medicaid. Foreign-born Hispanic children have very different coverage, with 34 percent having health insurance through a parent’s employer, 4 percent having privately purchased insurance, and 10 percent being covering by Medicaid. Many of the uninsured foreign-born children would qualify for Medicaid coverage based on poverty, but may be ineligible due to their parents’ immigration status, or may be unaware of the program as a result of poor English comprehension.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS

Overall, Hispanics, like most Virginians, are concentrated in Virginia's largest metropolitan areas (**FIGURE 8**). Sixty-two percent of Virginia's Hispanics live in Northern Virginia alone. However, many areas which had few Hispanics in 2000 such as Culpeper, James City, and Orange counties, and Suffolk city, now have a sizable Hispanic population.



**FIGURE 8 - (A) NUMBER OF HISPANIC RESIDENTS IN EACH LOCALITY
(B) PERCENT OF RESIDENTS IN THE LOCALITY WHO ARE HISPANIC**

CONCLUSION

These statistics from the 2010 Census and the 2009 American Community Survey illuminate where and how Hispanics live in Virginia. The major findings of this analysis are:

1. Hispanics are the second-largest minority group in the Commonwealth, and the population continues to grow rapidly. The latest national population projections from the U.S. Census Bureau predict that the Hispanic population will grow from 50 million (16 percent of the U.S. population) in 2010 to 133 million (30 percent of the population) in 2050.^{xi} It is likely that Virginia's Hispanic population will continue to grow and that their share of the total population will continue to rise in the future.
2. Regardless of population size and rate of growth, the issues associated with a growing Hispanic population vary significantly according to the relative growth of the foreign-born and U.S.-born Hispanic population. In general, U.S.-born Hispanics more closely resemble non-Hispanics on a variety of dimensions. Foreign-born Hispanics have more significant needs and barriers to success, including lower educational attainment, poor or absent English skills, and lower wages.
3. Despite similarities between non-Hispanics and U.S.-born Hispanics, some elements of Hispanic life in Virginia are consistent throughout the population and also distinct from the lives of non-Hispanics. Children are, and will continue to be, a significant portion of Virginia's Hispanic population due to high fertility rates among Hispanics. Optimizing these children's potential to become productive and successful holds the greatest promise for their futures and for strengthening Virginia through the talents of her citizens.

ⁱ American Community Survey estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.

ⁱⁱ Ruggle, Steven, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Schroeder, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis, MN, Minnesota Population Center [producer and distributor], 2010.

ⁱⁱⁱ Saenz, Rogelio. "Latinos in America 2010," *Population Bulletin Update*, December 2010.

^{iv} Hamilton, Brady E., J.A. Martin, S.J. Ventura. "Births: Preliminary Data for 2009," *National Vital Statistics Reports* 59, Vol. 3, Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, December 21, 2010.

^v Fry, Richard. "The Changing Pathways of Hispanic Youths Into Adulthood," Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, 2009.

^{vi} Parrado, Emilio A. and S. Philip Morgan. "Intergenerational Fertility among Hispanic Women: New Evidence of Immigrant Assimilation," *Demography*, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 651-671, August 2008.

^{vii} Heckman, James J., and Paul A. LaFontaine. "The American High School Graduation Rate: Trends and Levels," Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) Discussion Paper No. 3216, December 2007.

^{viii} Pew Hispanic Center. "Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America," Washington, D.C., December 11, 2009.

^{ix} Kochhar, Rakesh. "Unemployment Rises Sharply Among Latino Immigrants in 2008," Pew Hispanic Center, Washington, D.C., February 12, 2009.

^x Tippet, Rebecca. "Building Economic Security for Virginia Families: Income and Asses Adequacy," *Numbers Count*, Demographics & Workforce Group, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia, February 2011.

^{xi} U.S. Census Bureau. "Projections of the Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: 2010 to 2050," accessed at www.census.gov/population/www/projections/summarytables.html, on April 6, 2011.