ARKids 1st A

A PROGRAM OF THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,
DIVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES

2026 Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey Results



DATA COLLECTION
AND ANALYSIS BY

afmc℠

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



Arkansas Medicaid's ARKids First program is one of the most successful children's healthcare programs in the United States. ARKids First was seen as an innovative program when it was implemented and later became a model for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). ARKids First A is Medicaid for children under the age of 19 living in low-income households. There are no deductibles, premiums, or copayments charged to children covered by ARKids First A. ARKids First A has provided for the healthcare needs of approximately 260,000 Arkansas children in State Fiscal Year 2026.

About the Survey

ARKids First A continuously strives to improve its quality. To this end, AFMC, an independent nonprofit healthcare quality improvement organization, has surveyed the parents and caregivers of ARKids First A beneficiaries on behalf of the Arkansas Department of Human Services. The results will be used to examine beneficiary satisfaction with the ARKids First A health program.

AFMC used the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®)* with Children with Chronic Conditions (CCC) Measure tool and followed its surveying protocol. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) designed CAHPS as a scientific tool to measure and report the experiences that form consumer healthcare satisfaction. AFMC conducted the latest survey by mail from January 2026 to April 2026. All individual responses and comments were kept confidential.

**CAHPS® is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).*

Who Was Surveyed and How They Responded

All ARKids First A beneficiaries who had been enrolled for at least six months prior to the survey were eligible to participate. From this group, AFMC mailed surveys to the parents or caregivers of **4,809** randomly selected beneficiaries. After excluding those with invalid addresses or who no longer met eligibility criteria, **4,281** beneficiaries received a survey.

AFMC received **700** surveys from the parents or caregivers of beneficiaries before the data collection cutoff date. Of these, **674** were eligible for analysis, resulting in an analyzable rate of **15.7%**.

Sample size, survey disposition, and response rate	2026
Total mailing sent	4,809
Ineligible: According to population criteria*	22
Ineligible: Language barrier*	0
Ineligible: Mentally or physically incapacitated*	0
Ineligible: Deceased*	1
Invalid address*	505
Analyzable sample size	4,281
Eligible: Incomplete (3 of 5 questions not answered per NCQA specifications)***	4
Refusal	0
Nonresponse**	3,603
Analyzable surveys returned	674
Analyzable response rate	15.7%

** Excluded from response rate denominator*
***Does not include invalid addresses*
****An eligible but incomplete disposition code is assigned to received surveys that have not answered at least 3 of 5 specified questions as indicated in HEDIS MY 2025 Volume 3 Specifications for Survey Measures. These surveys are not included in the analyzable surveys returned.*

Self-Reported Utilization Rates

The ARKids First A questionnaire contained several questions about whether beneficiaries used various healthcare services in the last six months. The table below presents the percentages of respondents who answered the utilization questions.

Percentage of respondents who reported:	General Child	CCC
Visiting the doctor*	**61%**	**78%**
Getting medical care for regular/routine health care needs*	**62%**	**81%**
Getting medical care for illness/injury	**32%**	**41%**
Talking to a specialist	**15%**	**44%**
Getting information or help from customer service	**13%**	**19%**
Getting prescription medicine	**40%**	**77%**
Seeking treatment or counseling	**6%**	**40%**
Having a high number of doctor visits (3 or more visits*)	**24%**	**44%**

**Visits include in person, by phone, or by video*

Overall Quality and Satisfaction

Survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the following on a scale from 0 ("worst possible") to 10 ("best possible"). The scores below represent an average of all responses received.

Overall Satisfaction Mean	General Child	CCC
Personal doctor	**9.3**	**9.0**
Specialist	**9.3**	**8.9**
Health plan	**9.3**	**8.6**
Health care	**9.3**	**8.9**

The percentage of ARKids First A beneficiaries who indicated a high degree of satisfaction (a score of 9 or 10) is listed below:

Overall High Satisfaction Percentage	General Child	CCC
Personal doctor	**79%**	**78%**
Specialist	**85%**	**78%**
Health plan	**82%**	**67%**
Health care	**79%**	**68%**

Service Access and Availability

The percentage of ARKids First A beneficiaries who indicated a high degree of satisfaction ("usually" or "always") is listed below:

85% of respondents in the general child sample reported no problem seeing a doctor or nurse in the last six months, **compared similarly with 90%** of respondents in the CCC sample.

99% of respondents in the general child sample reported no problem getting prescription medicines in the last six months, **compared with 92%** of respondents in the CCC sample.

97% of respondents in the general child sample reported no problem getting urgent care from a doctor's office or the emergency room in the last six months, **compared with 95%** of respondents in the CCC sample.



Quality of Care

Getting the Care You Need:

69% of respondents in the **general child sample** indicated that it was "always" easy:

- Getting appointments with a specialist.
- Getting health care services, tests, or treatment through ARKids First A.

62% of respondents in the **CCC sample** indicated that it was "always" easy:

- Getting appointments with a specialist.
- Getting health care services, tests, or treatment through ARKids First A.

Getting Care without Long Waits:

79% of respondents in the **general child sample** said they "always":

- Received an appointment for regular or routine health care as soon as they wanted.
- Received immediate care for an illness or injury as soon as they wanted.

77% of respondents in the **CCC sample** said they "always":

- Received an appointment for regular or routine health care as soon as they wanted.
- Received immediate care for an illness or injury as soon as they wanted.

Customer Service

Courtesy, Respect, and Helpfulness of the Customer Service Staff:

84% of beneficiaries' parents or caregivers in the **general child sample** said that ARKids First A customer service staff "always":

- Treated them with courtesy and respect.
- Was as helpful as they thought the staff should be.

65% of **CCC sample** beneficiaries' parents or caregivers surveyed said that ARKids First A customer service staff "always":

- Treated them with courtesy and respect.
- Was as helpful as they thought the staff should be.



Provider/Patient Communication

Doctors Who Communicate Well:

82% of respondents of the **general child sample** agreed that their doctor "always":

- Listened carefully to them.
- Explained things in a way they could understand.
- Showed respect for what they had to say.
- Spent enough time with their child.
- Explained things in a way their child could understand.

79% of respondents of the **CCC sample** agreed that their doctor "always":

- Listened carefully to them.
- Explained things in a way they could understand.
- Showed respect for what they had to say.
- Spent enough time with their child.
- Explained things in a way their child could understand.

Beneficiary Satisfaction

ARKids First A Program:

9.3 is the **general child sample's** average rating for ARKids First A health plan based on a scale of 0 to 10.

82% of the respondents for the **general child sample** gave the ARKids First A health plan a rating of 9 or above.

8.6 is the **CCC sample's** average rating for ARKids First A health plan based on a scale of 0 to 10.

67% of the respondents for the **CCC sample** gave the ARKids First A health plan a rating of 9 or above.



Children with Chronic Conditions Specific Composites

The CCC sample has a set of composites and components specific to this group of beneficiaries. Only the beneficiaries identified as children with chronic conditions were included in the following summary rates. The percentage of ARKids First A beneficiaries who indicated a high degree of satisfaction ("always" or "yes") is listed below.

CCC Measures Composites/Components	2026
Access to specialized services	
Getting special medical equipment or devices (Q15)	75%
Getting therapy (Q18)	67%
Getting treatment or counseling (Q21)	53%
Access to prescription medicines	
Getting prescription medicine (Q51)	73%
Family centered care: personal doctor who knows child	
Doctors talking about child's feelings, growth, or behavior (Q33)	87%
Doctors understanding how your child's condition affects your child's life (Q38)	93%
Doctors understanding how your child's condition affects your family's life (Q39)	90%
Family centered care: getting needed information	
Doctors answering questions you had (Q8)	78%
Coordination of care for children with chronic conditions	
Doctors contacting your child's school or daycare (Q13)	87%
Doctors or staff coordinating child's care among other providers (Q24)	70%

About AFMC

AFMC provides utilization review and quality assurance services for Arkansas Medicaid's ARKids First A, ARKids First B, and other waivered managed care programs.

As a community-based and clinically-focused organization, AFMC collaborates with healthcare providers, physicians, specialists, and other professionals to identify opportunities for improvement and encourage innovation. AFMC strives to ensure healthcare quality in a meaningful and effective way by initiating quality improvement projects and disseminating information about best practices.

For more information, contact:

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