



Gender, Age, and Oral Health among Special Olympics Athletes

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Introduction

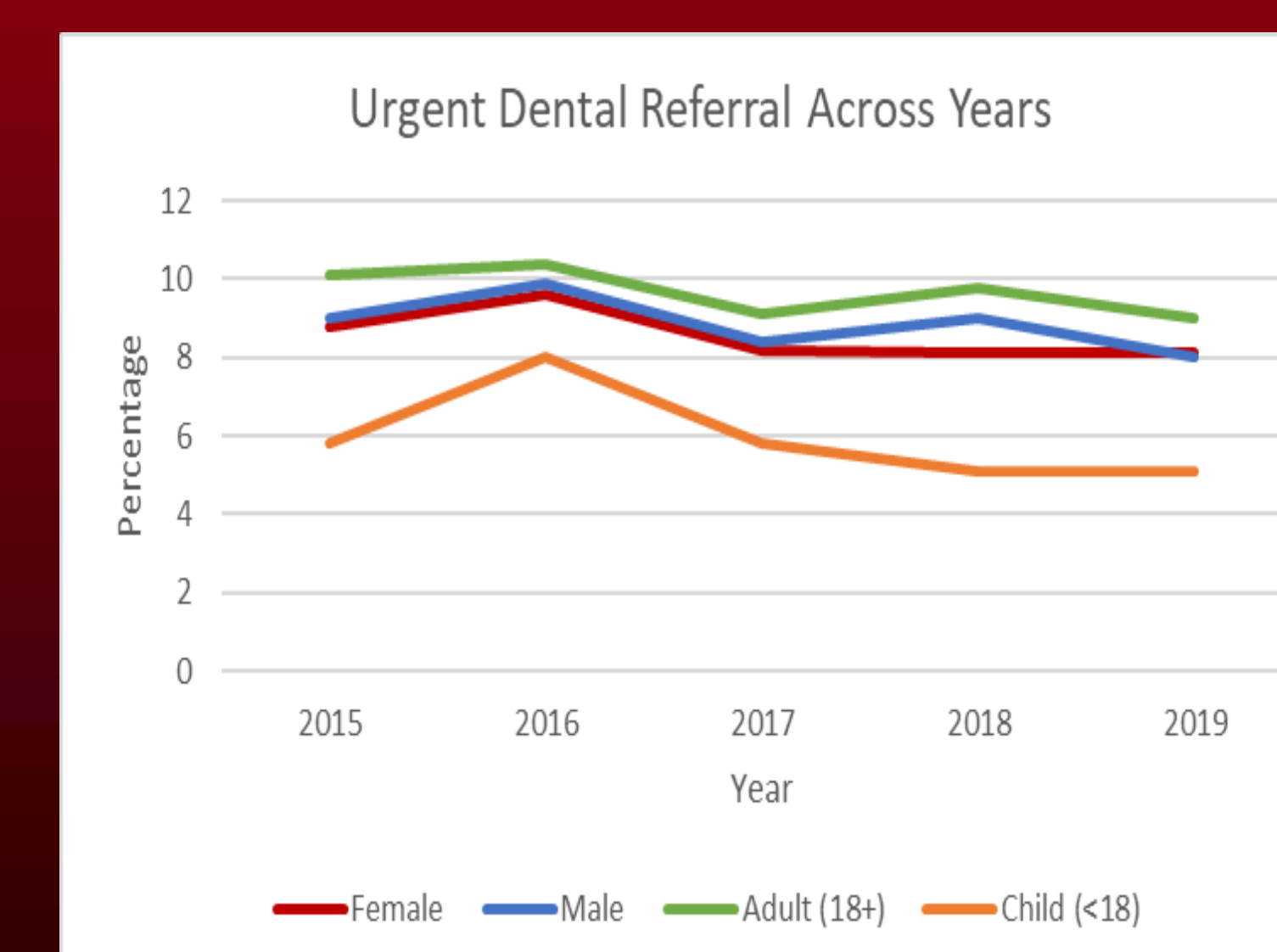
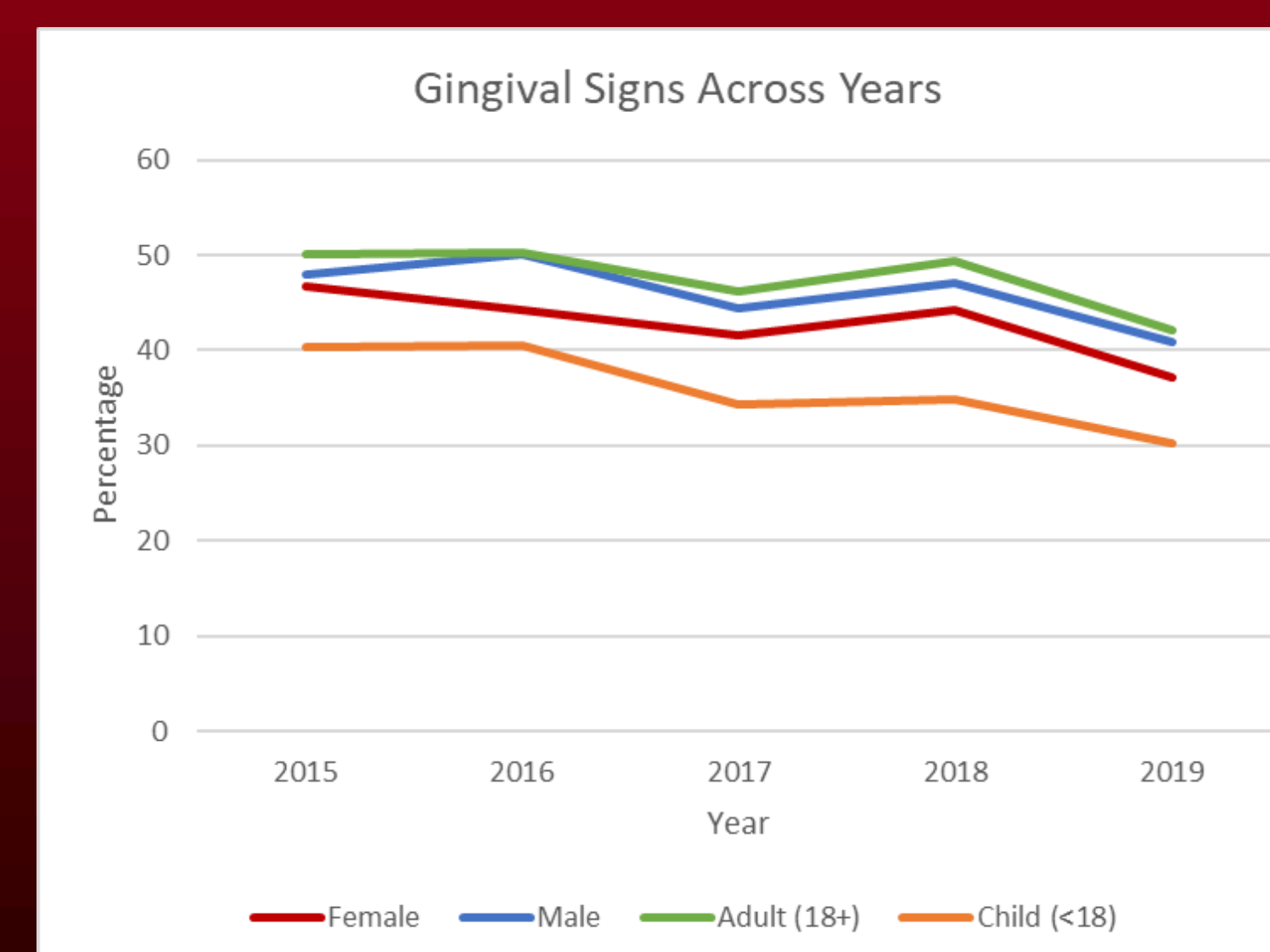
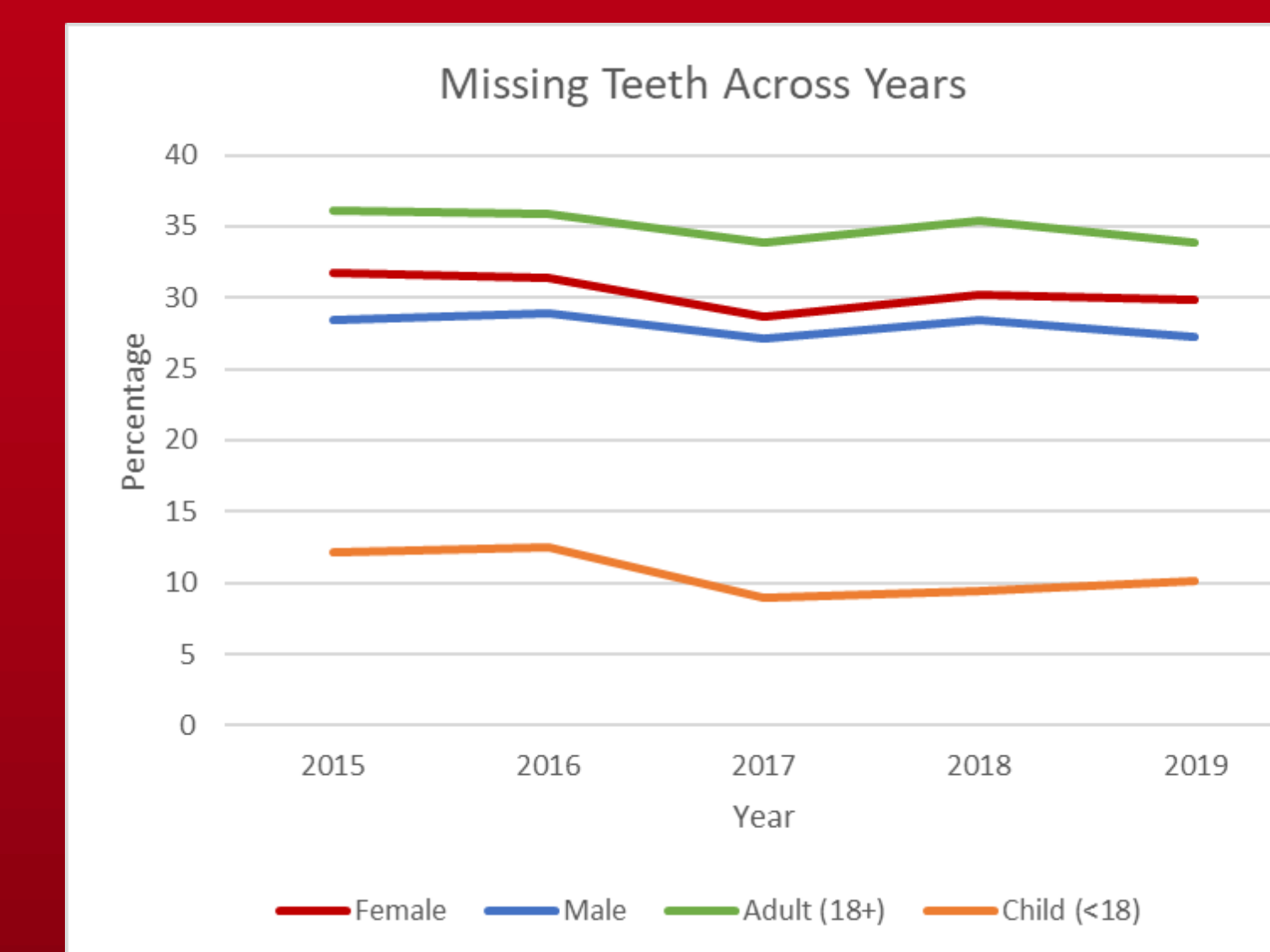
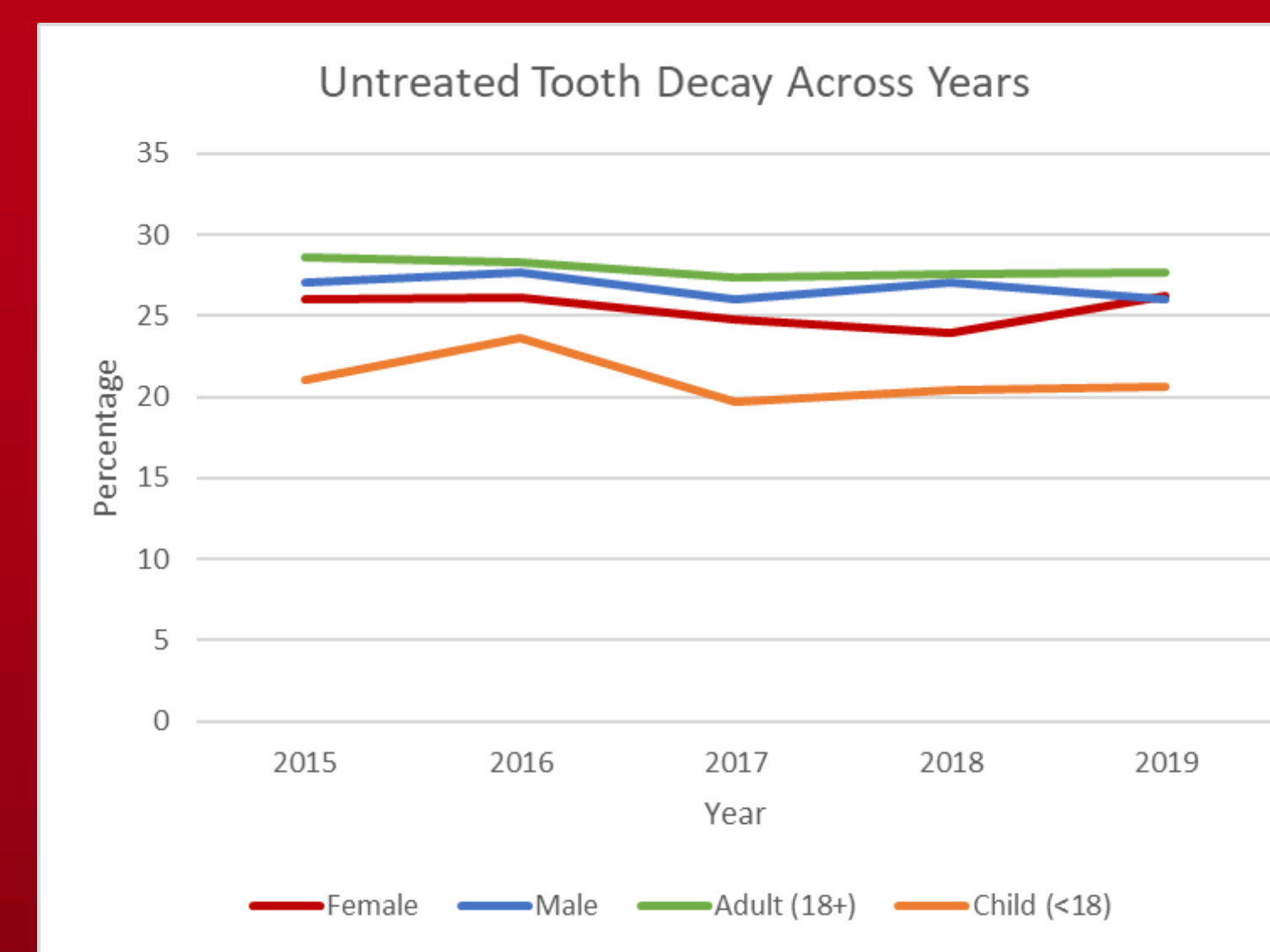
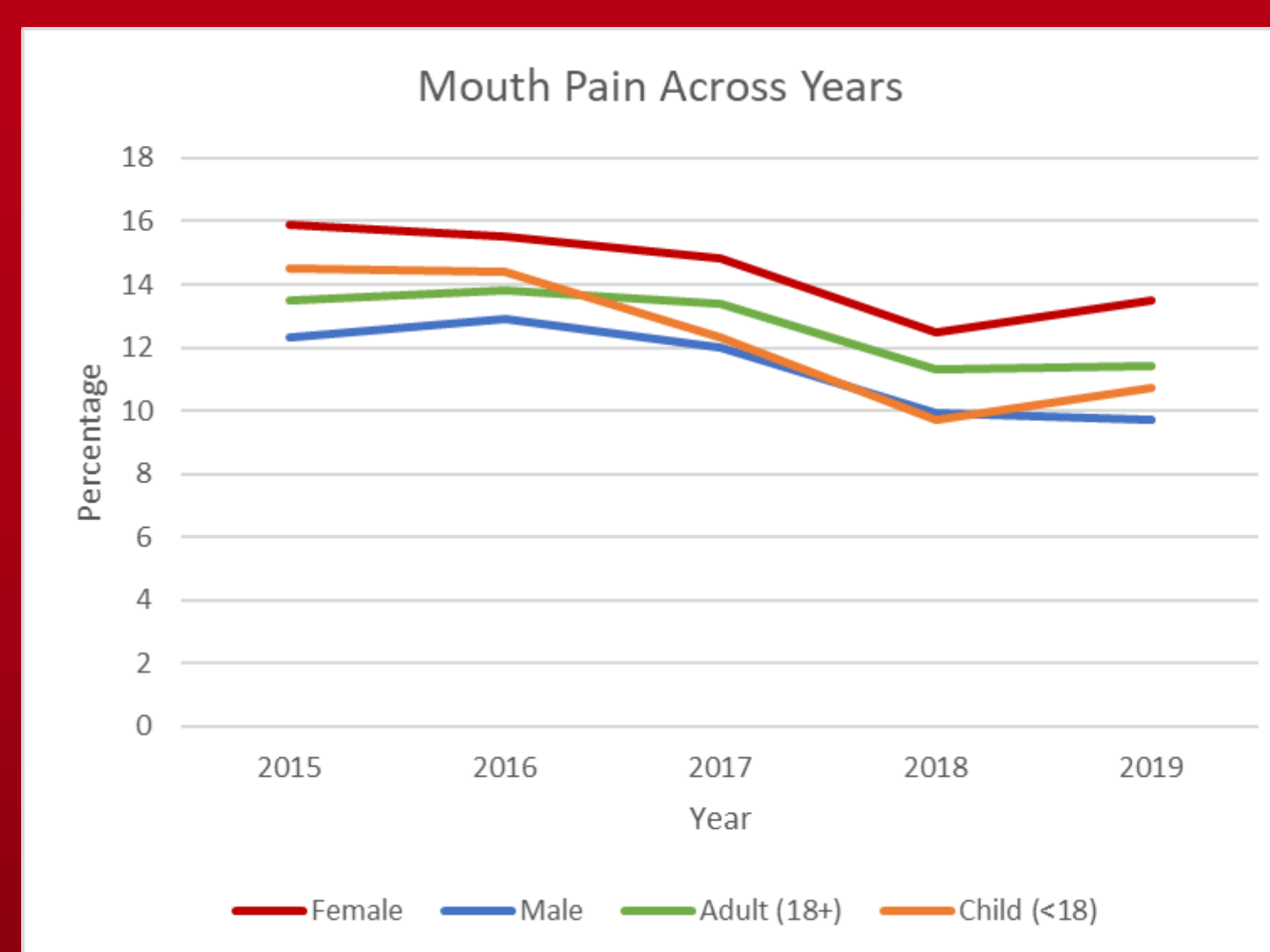
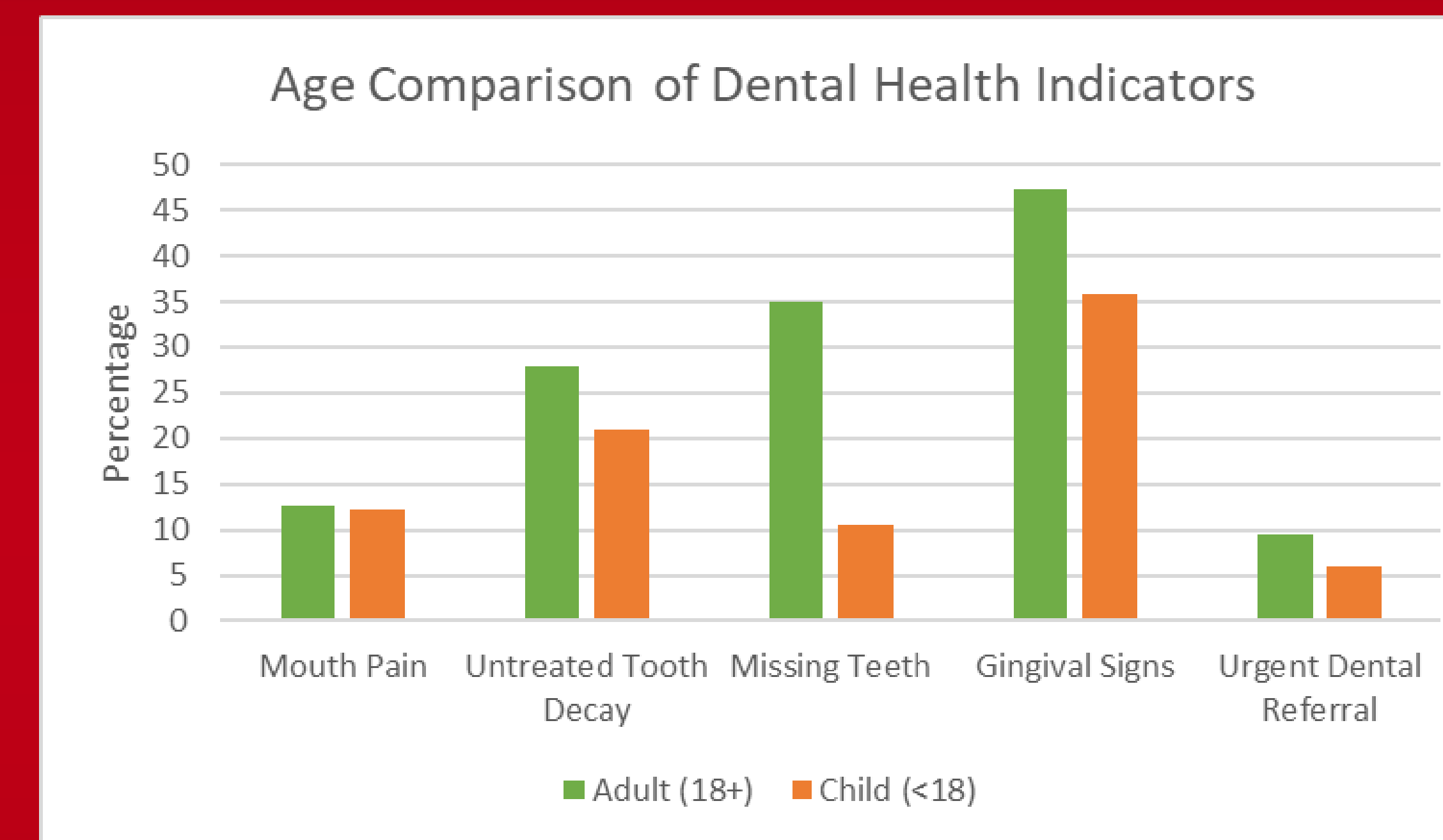
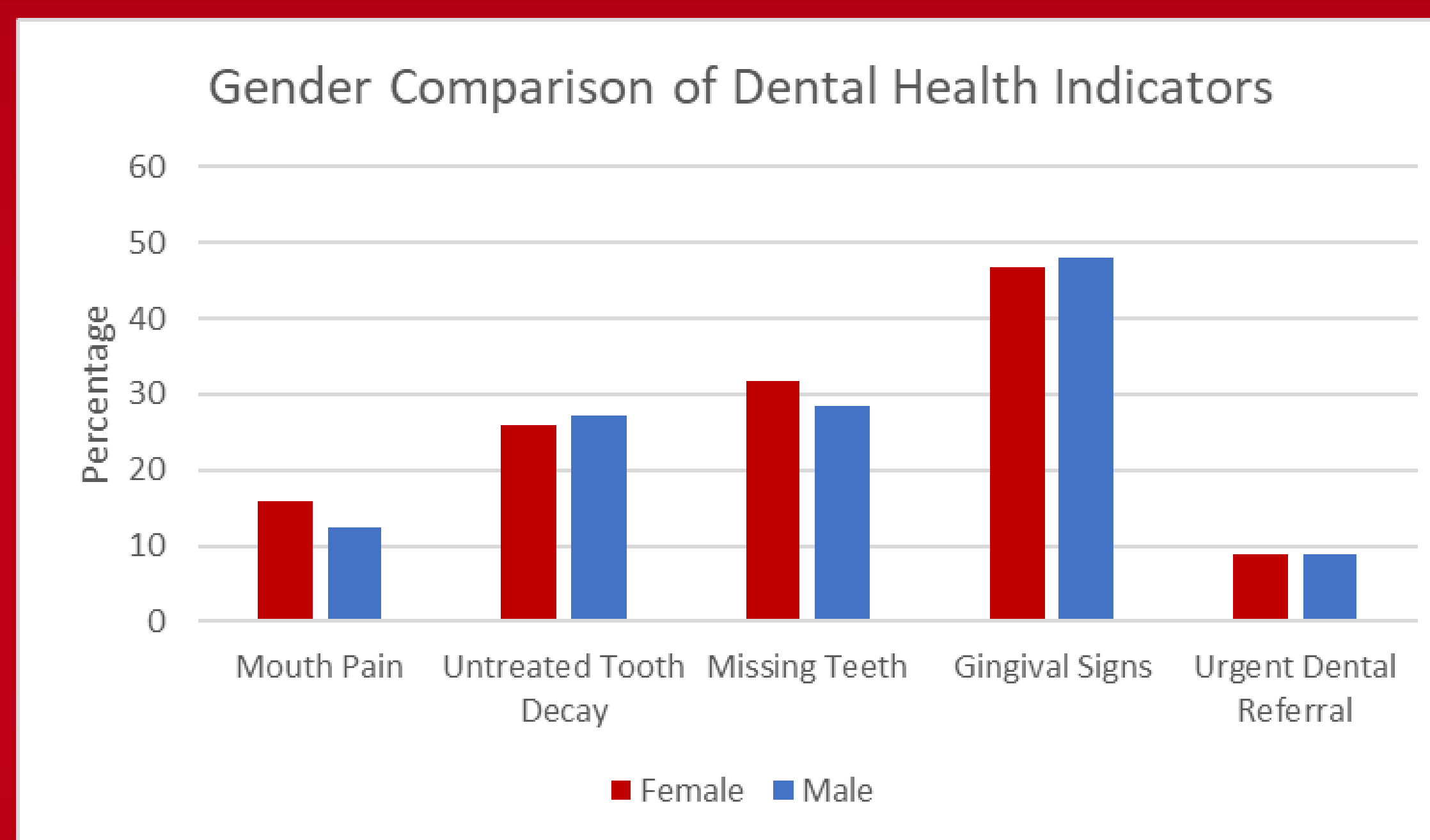
Few studies have shown the disparity status among individuals with disabilities[1],[2]. The purpose of this study is to provide significant data analysis about differences in oral health needs among these individuals based on age and gender variables, and to support policies that reduce the oral health needs inequities for people with disabilities.

Methods

The dataset was obtained from the Special Smiles program in the US. Health indicators measured were: Urgent dental referral, Mouth pain, Untreated tooth decay, Missing teeth, and Gingival signs. Total number of 51,632 subjects with information on the health indicators were considered for analysis, and data were summarized across gender and age groups. Logistic regression models estimated odds ratios between groups with significance set at 0.05.

Results

Females have increased mouth pain and missing teeth compared to males by 4%, and 3%, respectively. Males have 1% higher rate in untreated tooth decay, and gingival signs compared to females. Compared to children, adults have 7% higher rate for untreated tooth decay, 24% higher rate in missing teeth, 12% higher rate in gingival signs, and 4% increase in urgent dental referral. P-value is < .001 for all mentioned health indicators.



Conclusions

Data show that improved oral health care is needed, particularly for adults. Males need to improve their oral hygiene, while females need to address their mouth pain and missing teeth issues. This study will help support policies to reduce the oral health needs inequities for people with disabilities and to improve their oral health.

References

- [1] Krahn, Gloria L et al. "Persons with disabilities as an unrecognized health disparity population." American journal of public health vol. 105 Suppl 2, Suppl 2 (2015): S198-206. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2014.302182
- [2] Connick, C M et al. "Gender differences in special needs populations." Dental clinics of North America vol. 45,3 (2001): 541-53.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Special Olympics Athletes Organization for the dataset.