

Long Term Consequences of Well-Child Visits

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Abstract: This paper uses the rollout of mother and child health care centers starting in the 1930s to study the long-term consequences of increasing access to well-child visits. These well-child visits included a physical examination and the provision of information about adequate infant nutrition. Our results indicate that access to mother and child health care centers has a positive effect on education and earnings: access to well-child visits in the first year of life increases the completed years of schooling by 0.12–0.18 years and earnings by 1–2 percent. In addition, we analyze potential mechanisms and find that both nutrition and health examinations were important. In particular, we present evidence that men are less obese and suffer less from cardiac events when they had access to mother and child health care centers and that centers, which offered extra health care services affected infants to a larger extent.