

Children’s Colorado: Progress on 2019-2021 Community Health Action Plan

Time Period: June 2019 - May 2020

Summary

This document summarizes the progress Children’s Colorado has made on our Community Health Action Plan, which focused in five health areas – 1) mental health, 2) injury prevention, 3) prematurity, 4) obesity, nutrition, and physical activity, and 5) asthma and respiratory care – as well as a healthy neighborhood focus. Due to the impact of Covid-19 on community outreach and funding for community health initiatives, some of our initiatives have been reevaluated or redirected, which are noted in the “Progress” column of each focus area table, as appropriate.

Focus Areas:

- [Mental Health](#)
- [Injury Prevention](#)
- [Prematurity](#)
- [Obesity, Nutrition, and Physical Activity](#)
- [Asthma and Respiratory Care](#)
- [Healthy Neighborhoods](#)

Mental Health

	Goal	Description	Progress
1	<p>Advocate for a mental/behavioral health care system that prioritizes the needs of families.</p>	<p>Enhance care coordination between Aurora Public Schools (APS) and Children’s Hospital Colorado to ensure that shared patient population has timely access to appropriate level of mental health care.</p> <p>Advocate for a system of care approach that improves accountability for and coordination of mental health services and supports in Colorado by leading legislative efforts</p>	<p>In progress - Systems for referral and warm handoff between Children’s Colorado and APS have been established and are monitored during regular meetings.</p> <p>Completed - Through the Mental Health Advisory Council (MHAC), Children’s Colorado co-created educational materials with patients and families to be used clinically with patients presenting with psychiatric issues, emphasizing compassionate care and reducing stigma.</p> <p>Completed – Children’s Colorado helped form a diverse coalition to champion Senate Bill 19-195, a bipartisan measure that has the potential to transform our state’s mental health system to better serve Colorado children, youth and families and to reduce costly, unnecessary interventions. Children’s Colorado engaged in SB19-195 implementation activities through this period to ensure fidelity to the legislation. Unfortunately, during the 2020 session, state budget pressures led to the withdrawal of implementation funding.</p>

In Progress – Following the passage of Senate Bill 19-195, Colorado Governor Jared Polis appointed a staff member from Children’s Colorado to serve as a Co-Chair of Governor Polis’ Behavioral Health Task Force Children’s Subcommittee to develop statewide policy recommendations to improve the behavioral health system, from prevention and promotion to acute intervention, for children and youth.

In 2020, Children’s Colorado worked with a coalition on House Bill 20-1006 to strengthen an existing early childhood mental health consultation program that equips early childhood educators with the training and skills to support the behavioral and developmental needs of the children in their classroom. The program has successfully reduced burnout among educators and has reduced early childhood suspensions and expulsions. This bill was folded into an early childhood legislative package and ultimately passed.

Completed – Children’s Colorado co-drafted education materials to improve patient experience when presenting with psychiatric issues.

2	<p>Reduce the risk of youth suicide through targeted community engagement.</p>	<p>Reduce risk of youth suicide through enhanced care coordination between Aurora Public Schools and Children’s Hospital Emergency Department at the time of referral for safety assessment.</p> <p>Advocate for mental health resources, including suicide prevention programs, in school settings</p>	<p>Completed – Children’s Colorado developed streamlined warm handoff procedures so that communication between APS and Children’s occurs systematically (more than 80% of all referrals).</p> <p>In 2019, Children’s Colorado worked with coalition partners to pass Senate Bill 19-010, to expand access to a school health professional grant program by investing an additional \$3 million into the program. This grant program allows schools to hire mental health professionals to support the needs of students. In 2020, Children’s Colorado supported an effort, Senate Bill 20-001, to ensure that teachers and school professionals had greater access to professional development training opportunities in youth behavioral health. Unfortunately, due to funding challenges, the bill did not pass.</p> <p>As a result of federal funding the state received for COVID-19 response, HB 20-1411 will appropriate \$15.2 million for behavioral health programs, including suicide prevention in school-based health centers and other settings.</p>
3	<p>Improve the social emotional wellness of children and families through a combination of clinical and community-based efforts.</p>	<p>Integrate social emotional wellness content and messages in clinical and community settings</p>	<p>In progress - The Child Health Clinic and Young Moms Clinic are working to provide universal access to family social and emotional supports, aligning with</p>

		behavioral health integration (Project CLIMB), Healthy Expectations, Vroom, Healthy Steps and Mommy and Me. This is also part of our prematurity work.
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Injury Prevention

	Goal	Description	Progress
1	Implement and evaluate evidence-based, culturally relevant programs to reduce the incidence of unintentional injury.	Deliver programs focused in 1) car seat inspections and trainings, 2) teen driver safety education, 3) infant safe sleep education, and 4) home safety inspections	<p>In progress – Children’s Colorado provides a car seat voucher, inspection and education to Child Health Clinic patients and Women, Infant and Children (WIC) clients in a local Aurora office. In 2019, Children's Colorado trained and certified nine new car seat technicians.</p> <p>In progress – In the past year, 125 teen drivers participated in a safe driver curriculum, led by Children’s Colorado and Denver Metro Teen Drivers.</p> <p>In progress – Children's Colorado trained 15 Children’s professionals on infant safe sleep</p> <p>Redirected – The home safety inspection program is being re-evaluated to focus more on parent education on home safety practices.</p>

Prematurity

	Goal	Description	Progress
1	Advance policies to support families and mitigate prematurity at the organizational, local, and state level through education and advocacy	Promote family-friendly workplace practices within Children’s Colorado and advocate for policies that contribute to the reduction in pre-term births	<p>In progress – (Organizational) The Family Friendly Workplace workgroup is partnering with Children's Human Resources department to align efforts in reviewing internal policies and making improvements toward more family friendly practices.</p> <p>In progress – (State) In 2019, Children’s Colorado worked on regulatory updates with the state public health department to the state’s newborn hearing screening program to ensure young children receive early intervention services and supports. In 2020, Children’s Colorado providers worked with the state Department of Regulatory Agencies to provide feedback regarding workforce issues related to newborns who are delivered at home by direct-entry midwives. Additionally, Children’s Colorado helped advance home visiting legislation, Senate Bill 20-144, to expand funding opportunities for programs that support parents and caregivers with less resources and exposure to risk factors that could lead to poor developmental outcomes. Unfortunately, the bill was not passed by the legislature this year.</p>
2	Increase awareness about the contributors of pre-term birth through community and clinical outreach	Raise awareness in clinical settings and across the broader community about the prematurity, particularly for populations disproportionately affected such as Black and African American infants	<p>In progress – In partnership with CAPE (Center for Advancing Professional Excellence), Children’s Colorado plans to launch a Provider Bias Training in late 3rd quarter of 2020</p> <p>Continued planning - The Black Health Initiative (BHI) will conducted a series of focus groups with Black /African American women in the fall of 2020 within the focus targeted area zip codes. As a result of the focus group findings to date, two community-led workgroups were formed focused on education/access and behavioral support working to increase clinical input, pending the outcome of a grant proposal submission.</p>

3	Improve access to care and supports for families through strengthening community and clinical connections and pathways.	Promote access to programs and services that promote social-emotional well-being among families	In progress - The BHI education workgroup is focusing on increasing access to healthcare services and joint bias training In progress - The Child Health Clinic and Young Moms Clinic are working to provide universal access to family social and emotional supports, aligning with behavioral health integration (Project CLIMB), Healthy Expectations, Vroom, Healthy Steps and Mommy and Me. This is also part of our mental health work.
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Obesity, Nutrition and Physical Activity

	Goal	Description	Progress
1	Reduce obesity rates of children in Aurora through a combination of clinical and community-based efforts.	Improve how families are referred to community healthy lifestyle supports and resources	Redirected – Due to the impact of Covid-19, Children's Colorado is exploring telehealth options for treatment modules and connecting families to healthy lifestyle resources, tailoring needs to what families are most comfortable with.
2	Increased knowledge about and access to quality physical activity options for kids in Aurora.	Promote physical activity policy and advocacy and increase access to physical activity options in Aurora through community partnerships and trainings	<p>Completed – Children’s Colorado worked with coalition partners to advance House Bill 19-1161, legislation that encourages children to be active by boosting access to comprehensive physical education in schools across Colorado.</p> <p>Redirected – Due to the impact of Covid-19, Peak Champions, Children’s Colorado’s weight management summer camp, has been converted into an online camp, primarily among children in Aurora Public Schools.</p> <p>Discontinued – A pilot program focused on clinicians prescribing physical activity has been discontinued.</p>
3	Increased knowledge about and access to healthy food and quality nutrition service for kids in Aurora.	Promote healthy eating and access to healthy foods for patients and families in Aurora. Healthy Roots/mobile distribution in partnership with APS	<p>Completed – Children’s Colorado opened Healthy Roots food clinic in October 2019 and has served 725 families between October 2019 and May 2020.</p> <p>Completed – During the peak months of Covid-19 in spring 2020, Children's Colorado converted the Healthy Roots Food Clinic into a mobile food distribution program, distributing more than 110,000 pounds of food in 7,600 bags to roughly 6,000 families.</p> <p>In progress – Children’s Colorado co-leads the Aurora Healthy Kids’ Meals Coalition, a group of local and statewide stakeholders advocating to improve access to healthy kids’ meals beverages in restaurants through a proposed ordinance with the City of Aurora.</p>

			<p>Completed – Children’s Colorado joined a coalition of anti-hunger organizations to support House Bill 1171, a measure that will reduce the cost of school lunches for low-income high school students.</p>
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Completed – In summer 2020, Children’s Colorado became a designated Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) open to the public.

Redirected – Due to the impact of Covid-19, Children's Colorado is providing virtual nutrition education to children in Aurora Public Schools.

In progress – Children’s Colorado Food Security Council actively participates in several initiatives to improve food security, including participating in the Colorado Health Foundation’s Blueprint to End Hunger Steering Committee and associated activities.

Asthma and Respiratory Care

	Goal	Description	Progress
1	Reduce exposure to tobacco smoke and e-cigarette vapor among children in Colorado.	<p>Pilot a cessation clinic for tobacco and other nicotine products with 50 patients or caregivers by 20</p> <p>Update the Clean Indoor Air Act to include e-cigarettes by 2021.</p> <p>Support the reversal of local pre-emption laws related to tobacco by 2021.</p> <p>Advocate for increased tobacco tax including e-cigarettes and vape products by 2021.</p>	<p>In progress – A pilot cessation clinic opened in 2019, serving adult parents and caregivers who smoke or vape. To date, 8 caregivers have been seen for assistance with smoking cessation and 22 additional caregivers are scheduled to be seen. Planning is underway for an adolescent patient vaping cessation clinic.</p> <p>Completed – House Bill 19-1076 updated the Colorado Clean Indoor Air Act and was signed into law 5/29/19. Children’s Colorado, with other members of the Colorado Tobacco-Free Alliance, championed this legislation and provided expert testimony.</p> <p>Completed – House Bill 19-1033 was signed into law on 3/29/19. The bill authorizes local governments to enact tobacco control policies without penalty from the state. Children’s Colorado, as a member of the Colorado Tobacco-Free Alliance, provided expert testimony in support of the bill. Several Children’s Colorado providers also took part in media interviews to educate the public.</p> <p>In progress – Cigarette Tobacco and Nicotine Products Tax (House Bill 20-1427) was passed during the 2020 Colorado legislative session, putting this measure on the ballot in November 2020. If voters adopt it, vaping products will begin to be taxed (beyond the current sales tax) and cigarettes and other tobacco products will see a tax increase. All new/increased taxes will be incremental over several years. Revenue collected from the taxes will support tobacco cessation efforts, education, and affordable housing.</p>

2	<p>Increase access to community-based respiratory health education and care coordination in Colorado.</p>	<p>Expand asthma home visit program by adding 1-3 community-based referring partners and integrate/connect with other school-based healthy lifestyle supports by 2020.</p> <p>Expand school-based asthma program to 5 new districts by 2020.</p> <p>Pilot a community-based program to prepare asthma patients to return to school with 20 patients in Fall 2019.</p>	<p>In progress – Additional staff have been hired to expand the home visit program and referrals began in June 2020. Children’s Colorado has six community-based referring partners: pediatric practices (3), a pulmonary hospital (1), Tri-County Health Department (1), and Aurora Public Schools (1). Both home and school-based programs have moved to telehealth due to COVID-19.</p> <p>In progress – Planning for StepUp school-based asthma program expansion has been put on hold due to Covid-19 but will continue in the fall 2020 academic year.</p> <p>Completed – A community-based program for asthma patients (Back to School Asthma Olympics) returning to school was piloted in two communities: Aurora and Colorado Springs. In a pre/post survey, 67% of participants showed improved understanding in at least one area of asthma education. A virtual version will be held in August 2020 due to Covid-19.</p>
3	<p>Increase awareness of respiratory health and ways to mitigate respiratory threats in Colorado.</p>	<p>Conduct 25 media interviews related to respiratory and sleep health by 2021.</p> <p>Conduct 25 educational sessions on respiratory and sleep health for community residents or health professionals by 2021.</p> <p>Incorporate respiratory and sleep health into at least three new and existing community-based education programs by 2021.</p>	<p>In progress – There have been 209 media stories related to health education or advocacy featuring our respiratory and sleep health experts.</p> <p>In progress – Breathing Institute experts have provided education at 35 sessions for health professionals and community residents across Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region.</p> <p>Redirected – Community-based education work is being re-evaluated.</p> <p>Children’s Colorado received the Environmental Protection Agency's National Environmental Leadership Award in</p>

			Asthma Management for our asthma program, primarily our school and home program.
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Healthy Neighborhoods

	Goal	Description	Progress
1	Develop the architecture for a data exchange system that allows key community partners with shared goals and populations to track how families are accessing community resources and facilitates tracking of outcomes.	Develop mechanisms to send resource-related referrals between clinical and community settings to address social-related health needs among Children’s Colorado patients and families	In progress - At Resource Connect ¹ (opened in October 2019), we developed a tracking mechanism to capture end-to-end resource referrals from clinic to Resource Connect partner. Since opening Resource Connect, 1,218 families have been seen for one or more resource need between October 2019 and May 2020. In June 2020, Children’s Colorado launched a referral tracking mechanism from clinic to community-based organizations.
2	Develop a community-driven engagement process that leads to an effective Community Network co-designed by the communities it serves.	Build a community network with partners focused on coordinating referrals for resource needs for patients and families	Redirected - The goal of the Community Network is to enhance community-based care coordination of resource needs for patients and families. Due to the impact of Covid-19 on our community engagement efforts, we are focusing our Community Network work on our Resource Connect partnerships, community health navigation, and food insecurity for the foreseeable future.

¹ Resource Connect is a centralized location connecting Children’s Colorado Health Pavilion patients and families with community-based services to meet non-medical health needs, such as benefits and food