

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2	CONCLUSION	22
ABOUT CHILDREN'S WISCONSIN	2	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	22
CHILDREN'S WISCONSIN VISION	2	REFERENCES	22
OUR COMMUNITY	3		
METHODOLOGY	4		
AN EQUITABLE APPROACH TO HEALTH	5		
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	7		
INFANT HEALTH	7		
MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	10		
SAFETY AND VIOLENCE	14		
SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH	17		
STRATEGIES THAT CROSS MULTIPLE PRIORITIES	20		



Kids deserve the best.

Introduction

Children's Wisconsin prides itself on providing the best care for kids, but to do that, we need to thoroughly understand the factors that shape children's lives and health before they ever enter our care. As part of the Milwaukee Health Care Partnership (MHCP) and Fox Valley Health Improvement Coalition (FVHIC), Children's Wisconsin teamed up with other area health systems to achieve a comprehensive health needs assessment in Milwaukee County and Fox Valley. You can find the full assessments at childrenswi.org/about/annual-reports.

The community health implementation strategy is our response to those identified needs. It will be our compass over the next three years, allowing us to pinpoint areas where we can make the most meaningful impact on kids' health and direct our programs, services and advocacy efforts accordingly. While we recognize that one organization alone cannot eliminate the community's biggest health challenges, Children's Wisconsin is uniquely positioned to be an advocate for children through our strong pediatric expertise and long-established community partnerships, programs and services. This report also highlights the many assets that we can leverage across the community to work collaboratively to improve and sustain the health and well-being of Wisconsin's kids.



ABOUT CHILDREN'S WISCONSIN

We are the region's only independent health care system dedicated solely to the health and well-being of children and adolescents. In Milwaukee, Fox Valley and throughout the state, we provide kids and their families with a wide range of care and support: primary, specialty, urgent and emergency care; community health services; injury and violence prevention services; foster care and adoption services; child and family counseling; child advocacy services; family resource centers and more. Every year, Children's Wisconsin invests more than \$151 million in community programs and services, including more than \$77.7 million in uncompensated care, with the long-term goal of keeping all children healthy, happy and safe.

CHILDREN'S WISCONSIN VISION

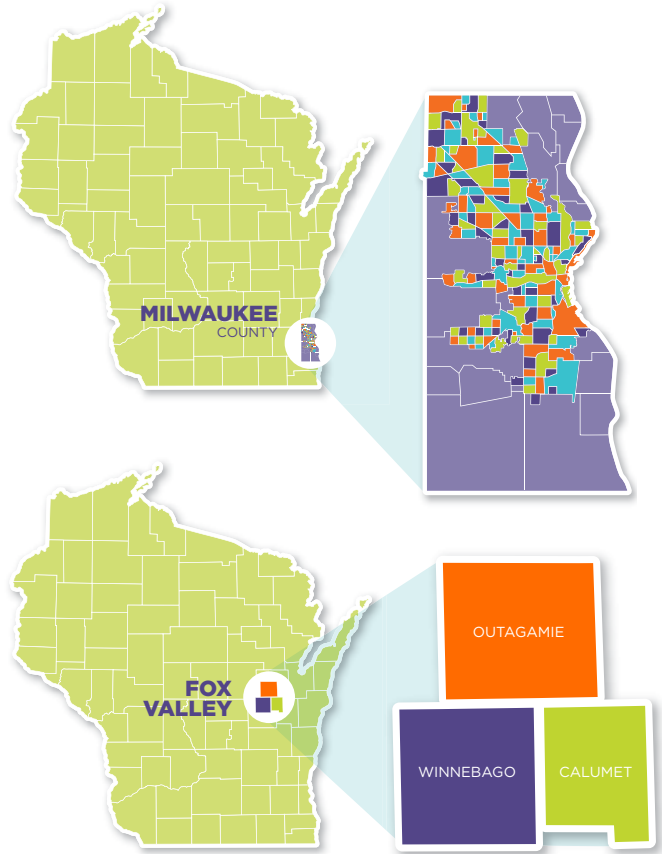
Our vision is that Wisconsin's kids will be the healthiest in the nation — physically, mentally and socially. That means collaborating with community partners because no organization can achieve such an ambitious goal alone, and it means putting kids' health at the center of every decision we make. We understand that in order to monitor our progress toward this vision, we need to identify areas of focus and measures that reflect the overall health and well-being of Wisconsin's kids.

Our Community

Children’s Wisconsin serves children and adolescents from across the state and beyond. However, for the purposes of this report, we defined our community as the children and adolescents living in Milwaukee County and Fox Valley.

Milwaukee County, which covers 241 square miles, sits on the western shore of Lake Michigan and is home to the state’s largest city. It is the most populous county in Wisconsin, with an estimated 2021 population of 928,059. Research shows that some of the highest levels of need are in this county, and we have invested significant resources to address health disparities in the most under-resourced neighborhoods.

Our Fox Valley campus is located in Neenah, Wis., and it primarily serves families from Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties in the Fox River Valley region in eastern Wisconsin. The tri-county area covers 1,390 square miles and is home to 406,039 residents. The demographics of the Fox Valley community are comparable to the rest of the state.





Methodology

Our process follows the Association for Community Health Improvement’s model. The community health needs assessment reflects results of Steps 1-6. The implementation strategy reflects the output of step 5 (prioritize community health issues) and directly focuses on steps 7-9 (plan implementation strategies, implement strategies and evaluate progress).

Children’s Wisconsin engaged a cross-section of experts representing community, clinical, leadership and staff partners to review the data and priorities advanced by the MHCP and FVHIC processes and apply expertise and additional knowledge specific to pediatric health. After ranking community health needs assessment priorities based on several criteria (alignment with strategy, unique impact on children, clear inequities, and actionable and measurable nature), Children’s Wisconsin has committed to addressing four critical child and adolescent health issues that we believe will positively impact our community:

- **Infant health:** We will help infants not only survive, but thrive, through equitable support for all families and access to prenatal care, preventative health, developmental assessment and early intervention services.
- **Mental and behavioral health:** We will work to ensure that every child and teenager in Wisconsin receives the right support for their developmental, mental and behavioral health at the right time in order to grow up healthy and thriving.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT PROCESS



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- **Safety and violence:** We will set children up for success by identifying risks, connecting families with services, and partnering with others to ensure child physical and psychological safety at home, in school and in the community.
- **Social determinants of health:** We will partner with and support all families in understanding and addressing the health-related social needs that play a critical role in achieving optimal health.

STEP 7: Plan Implementation Strategies

The advisory committee assembled into action teams for each priority area and followed a public health problem-solving approach. This approach begins with defining the problem and its key determinants and follows through to identifying prevention and intervention strategies. Each action team consulted Children's Wisconsin's comprehensive portfolio of programs and service lines to inform our implementation strategy.

STEP 8: Implement Strategies

Many committees and work groups across Children's Wisconsin are engaged in developing and completing the action plans to meet these

objectives. Programs and services that Children's has invested in will continue over the next three years to meet the goals outlined in the community health implementation strategy. Together, this ensures a strong foundation for the resources that support these tactics.

STEP 9: Evaluate Progress

Over the next three years, Children's Wisconsin will use a variety of metrics to measure and evaluate our progress toward the goals. We will share the impact of these strategies with stakeholders and the community in many formats, including future community health needs assessments and the community benefits report.

An Equitable Approach to Health: Recognize, Understand and Innovate

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

To achieve our vision of Wisconsin kids being the healthiest in the nation, we must support all kids in meeting their full health potential, especially those at risk for poor health outcomes.

Our Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (ID&E) work helps us create an environment that is welcoming to all. This commitment is aligned with our values and guiding behaviors, and it is supported by four objectives that provide focus as we prioritize action, develop tactics and measure results.

- Ensure a respectful culture that is intentionally diverse, inclusive and anti-racist
- Increase the diversity of our workforce and leadership with a focus on underrepresented populations
- Advance our steadfast commitment to inclusion and health equity for the children and families we serve
- Advocate for and partner with the community to strengthen inclusion, diversity and health equity and to promote anti-racism



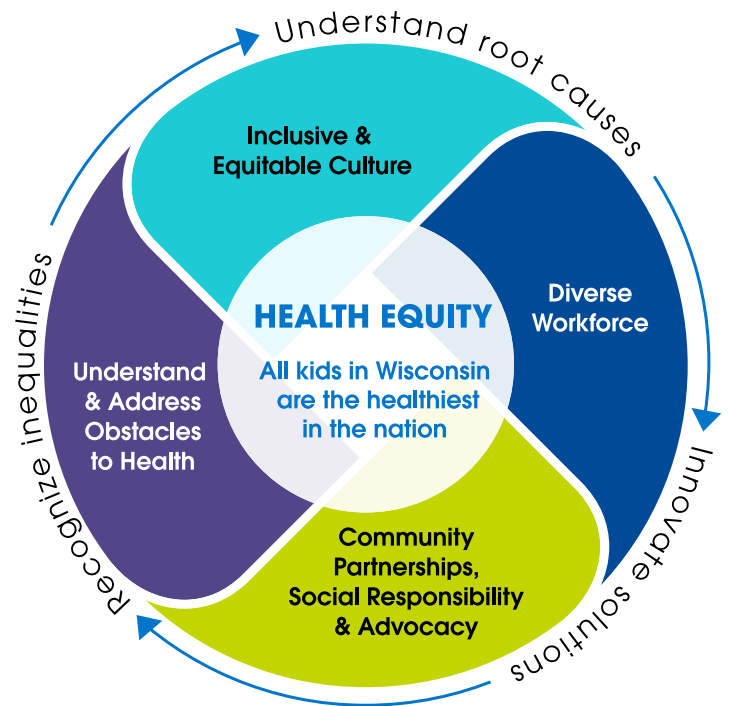
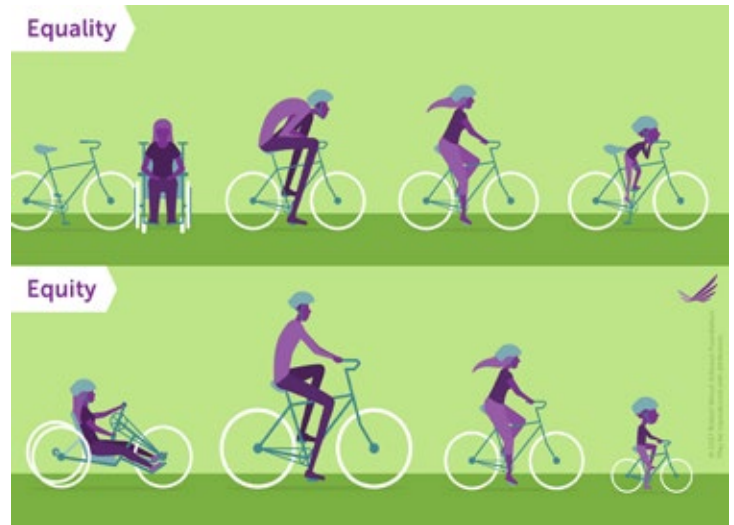
Health equity

An important component of Children's Wisconsin's overall commitment to ID&E is health equity. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy. Equity and equality in health are two different concepts. Equality means giving everyone the same thing, whereas equity means giving people what they need to reach their optimal health.

Ensuring health equity requires removing and/or addressing the obstacles to health, such as poverty and discrimination and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments and health care. Health equity tells us that different kids and families may need more or different things to achieve the same health outcomes.

In alignment with The Joint Commission standards to reduce health care disparities, we continue to develop and strengthen our commitment to health equity. We are beginning with a deeper understanding by capturing and analyzing available data. By applying a health equity lens, we are developing new care practices and standards such as screening for social determinants of health or health-related social needs. We are executing new interventions including connecting families to community resources that align with their needs. And, we continue to reflect and learn with the feedback that we receive from patients, families, employees and our community. As we continue on this journey, we have adopted and applied this framework, we are continuously applying our learnings, and we are monitoring and measuring our improvements from patient experience to quality and safety measures for all patients.

We are still in early stages of data discovery as it relates to disparities. In our efforts to recognize, understand and innovate solutions to inequities, throughout this report you'll see this symbol as a way to connect the information. We are committed to approaching our work with a health equity lens through development, implementation, and evaluation.



Implementation Strategies

We recognize that Children’s Wisconsin cannot completely eliminate every challenge to children’s health. These issues are large and complex, and there are social, environmental, genetic and behavioral factors beyond our control. Nor can we solve these problems alone as there are multiple systems that intersect and influence health outcomes for children.

With that understanding, as a leader in pediatric health care and an advocate for the health of children across our community, we are committed to working with our community partners to make a difference for the kids who need us most. Through evidence-based programming, collaboration, education and advocacy, we can leverage available resources to ensure the best care for kids in our community.

As the following sections demonstrate, we are already implementing a variety of strategies to make strides toward these goals and, through this plan, are demonstrating a commitment to blend these strategies with bold goals serving as a catalyst to improving health outcomes for kids.



PRIORITY: INFANT HEALTH

Children’s Wisconsin endeavors to move our community’s infants beyond surviving infancy — still a challenge and issue of health disparities — to thriving as children and adults. Comprehensive infant health encompasses many factors through the first 24 months of age that can provide a child with a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Safe, affordable housing; transportation; and equity in access to high quality, affordable health care (including prenatal care) are all social drivers that can shape the health and well-being of our youngest residents.

Aspirational goal

Infants will not only survive but thrive through equitable support for all families and access to prenatal care, preventative health, developmental assessment and early intervention services.

Key concerns

- Too many infants die before their first birthday, with infants in Milwaukee experiencing double the mortality rate of infants statewide.
- Many families in Wisconsin are not receiving sufficient preventative care, specifically in oral health, vaccinations and lead testing.
- Families are not receiving the equitable support necessary for optimizing children’s development and educational readiness.

Strategic initiatives

- **Prenatal care:** Engage in purposeful partnerships to leverage and support prenatal services.
- **Preventative care:** Decrease the disparities in preventative services for oral health, vaccines and lead beginning in infancy by prioritizing community-specific, innovative solutions.
- **Access to care/early intervention:** Support families with culturally appropriate navigation and integration of care, with early intervention and services when needs are identified through developmental screening.



- **Health equity:** Advance our steadfast commitment to health equity for children and families that we serve.

Anticipated impact

We will increase access to prevention, intervention and treatment services for all children under the age of 24 months.

Programs and services

Children's Wisconsin will continue to implement the following strategies in alignment and partnership with our community:

Centralized lead care coordination

Children's Wisconsin uses population data to proactively identify kids who are at risk for elevated lead levels, and we test those kids in primary care via a finger prick. Kids with elevated lead levels are referred to the lab for a blood draw to confirm lead levels and are referred to specialty care if they need treatment. In addition, Children's Wisconsin refers kids with confirmed elevated lead levels to city and other community resources that offer families assistance in identifying and mitigating the source of the lead toxicity.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/medical-care/primary-care/lead-testing

Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin

Housed within Children's Wisconsin, the Alliance develops innovative child health initiatives in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and implements programs proven to impact access and outcomes. It is focused on six initiatives: emergency care, environmental health, grief and bereavement (including the Infant Death Center), injury prevention and death review, medical home and oral health.

Learn more: chawisconsin.org

Community Connectors

Children's Wisconsin community connectors work across Milwaukee County with expectant moms or parents who have children ages 0-5. They connect families with supports such as positive parenting education, stress management, family activities and other needed resources.

Learn more: dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/connectionscount

DREAM and HOPE clinics

The Developmentally Ready: Engagement and Achievement of Milestones (DREAM) Clinic addresses the needs of infants from Children's Wisconsin's intensive care units who have severe brain injuries. The Healthy Outcomes: Post-ICU Engagement (HOPE) Clinic supports babies and families once they go home from our hospital to address infants' changing needs over time.

Learn more: mcw.edu/departments/pediatrics/divisions/neonatology/patient-care



This was my first Triple P program. I feel so validated that I am not the only parent struggling. I am so happy to see that tools like this program and the staff exist. The tools were concrete things that I am going to try at home and am so happy to try ANYTHING different. I will absolutely be coming for more sessions. Such an incredible resource. Thank you for helping us be better parents and have happier and healthier children!

— Parent participant



Fetal Concerns Center of Wisconsin

A partnership between Children’s Wisconsin and Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin, the Fetal Concerns Center is a national leader in fetal care, recognized for innovative treatments that are guided by exemplary research to produce the best outcomes for a mother and her fetus.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/medical-care/fetal-concerns-center

Healthy Mom Healthy Baby

Chorus Community Health Plan’s Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby program helps pregnant women get the support and services they need to have a healthy pregnancy and baby. A health plan member may receive services in her home or over the phone from social workers or nurses who are specially trained in maternal/infant health. This

program also offers high-risk pregnancy services and breastfeeding support by certified lactation consultants.

Learn more: chorushealthplans.org/for-providers/provider-resources/case-management

Healthy Start

This program through the Health Resources and Services Administration is designed to improve access to quality health care and services for women, infants, children and male partners through outreach, care coordination, health education and connections to health insurance. Healthy Start works to improve health outcomes before, during and after pregnancy, and reduce racial/ethnic differences in rates of infant death and adverse perinatal outcomes.

Learn more: milwaukeehealthystart.org

Helping parents be their best selves

School guidance counselor Wanda became pregnant with her third child during the pandemic. She was busy with work, raising her daughters and working on a post-master’s degree. But when she lost her own therapist, she felt overwhelmed.

“I am someone who wants to do it all myself, but my mental health was not in a good place,” said Wanda. “I don’t like to show weakness, but I also knew I needed help.”

Then Wanda recalled hearing about Healthy Start, which aims to eliminate perinatal health disparities for African American women, their children and male partners in Milwaukee County. Children’s Wisconsin administers the federal grant in partnership with the City of Milwaukee Health Department, Black Child Development Institute-Milwaukee, Easter Seals Southeast Wisconsin and MyNP Professional.

Wanda completed the online form, and within a few days, Tina Klos, a maternal child-health navigator with Healthy Start, reached out to her.

“The turnaround was fast, and we took off running,” said Wanda. “Tina was warm and welcoming and a good fit for my personality. She worked to understand my needs and help me where I was at.”

Over the months that followed, Tina coached Wanda through her challenges and connected her to other moms through Healthy Start’s Arts and Crafts Support Group. Even after Wanda’s baby girl, Nahariyah, was born in spring of 2021, Tina continued to check in to see how Wanda and the baby were doing.

“I knew I needed to be a better me so I could take care of the baby inside of me,” said Wanda. “She needed that, and I needed that. Tina and Healthy Start were a lifeline for me when I needed it most.”

For more information on the Healthy Start program: milwaukeehealthystart.org

Home Visiting

Trained parent educators provide in-home parent education, support, community resources and child development services to pregnant and parenting families. This program promotes safe sleep, positive child development and early school readiness using an evidence-based model that is family-centered, culturally sensitive and strength-based.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/families-and-clients/parenting-resources/home-visiting

Neonatology/Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

Children's Wisconsin is one of the region's top providers of care for unborn babies and newborns with complex medical and surgical needs. Our Milwaukee Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) — the state's first and largest Level IV NICU — cares for over 800 premature and critically ill newborns

every year. In addition, our hospital in Neenah has a 22-bed Level III NICU that serves the greater Fox Valley community.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/medical-care/neonatology

Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program

This statewide early intervention program offers services and supports for children under age 3 who have delays or disabilities.

Learn more: dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3

Partners in community health

Black Child Development Institute–Milwaukee
City of Milwaukee Health Department
City, county and state departments and agencies
Easter Seals
March of Dimes
Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care

PRIORITY: MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

At Children's Wisconsin, we believe caring for a child's developmental, mental and behavioral health is just as important as caring for their physical health. Kids across Wisconsin are facing a mental and behavioral health crisis — and the COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated children and adolescents' rates of anxiety, depression and behavioral problems.

This is a challenge that affects kids across demographics and in every zip code, but social determinants of health can also influence mental and behavioral health risks and outcomes. A family's financial stress, transportation challenges, unsafe living conditions or other factors can take a toll on a child's mental and behavioral health and make it more difficult for families to get timely and regular access to care. To address this urgent community need, Children's Wisconsin has made it a systemwide priority to detect needs sooner, reduce stigma, and improve access to care for kids with mental and behavioral health needs.

Aspirational goal

Every child and teenager in Wisconsin will receive the right support for their developmental, mental and behavioral health at the right time in order to grow up healthy and thriving.



Key concerns

- Families have difficulty navigating complex systems to obtain affordable, equitable, timely and culturally relevant mental and behavioral health services.
- Students are experiencing greater levels of stress, anxiety and depression.
- Children and adolescents report feeling disconnected from adults and peers.

Strategic initiatives

- **Early detection and prevention:** Grow and develop more ways to detect developmental, mental and behavioral health concerns at every connection. Provide kids the tools they need to achieve and sustain mental wellness.



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“I saw a flyer for the Triple P parenting class at our pediatrician’s office at Forest View Pediatrics...The class helped us reframe things and gave us some approaches to use with the girls. We’re focusing a lot more on praising positive behaviors and ignoring the little things. The girls are loving it and feeling so proud of themselves!” Mom says taking the class with other parents was powerful too. “It reminds you that we’re not alone in this.”

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- **Reduce stigma:** Change the conversation so that mental health is accepted as part of overall health. Promote policies that support kids and families in getting behavioral health care when and where they need it.
- **Increased and equitable access:** Meet kids and families where they are by integrating accessible, affordable and equitable developmental, mental and behavioral health care where they live, learn and play.
- **Research and education:** Influence and advance developmental, mental and behavioral health research to improve outcomes for kids and families. Educate and develop the next generation of the workforce to provide the best evidence-based care.



- **Health equity:** Advance our steadfast commitment to health equity for children and families that we serve.

Anticipated impact

Increased access to mental and behavioral health prevention, intervention and treatment services for all children.

Programs and services

Children’s Wisconsin will continue to implement the following strategies in alignment and partnership with our community:

Child Psychiatry Consultation Program

To help address the statewide shortage of child psychiatrists, this on-call mental and behavioral health consultation service provides ongoing education and consultation to primary care providers on behavioral health issues. This helps primary care providers treat kids with mental and behavioral health issues in their medical homes so that kids can more quickly get the treatment they need.

Learn more: wicpcp.org

Craig Yabuki Mental Health Walk-In Clinic

A first-of-its-kind in the state, the clinic is open seven days a week to provide immediate support to kids ages 5-18 with urgent mental health needs. The clinic helps serve a growing population — since 2020, Children’s has seen a 40 percent increase in emergency visits for mental health reasons. Emergency cases are still referred to the hospital’s Emergency Department and Trauma Center, where a behavioral health crisis team is available to help kids in crisis 24/7.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/location-directory/locations/urgent-care/craig-yabuki-mental-health-walk-in-clinic

Early childhood mental health services

Even infants and young children can have behavioral or emotional problems, but early intervention can be the start of good mental health and well-being for the rest of their lives. The Children’s Wisconsin team includes specialists who are trained to work with infants and children under age 5, offering services such as early childhood mental health assessments, child-parent psychotherapy, play therapy and parent-child interaction therapy.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/medical-care/mental-and-behavioral-health/ways-we-can-help/early-childhood-mental-health

Integrated mental and behavioral health care

Children’s Wisconsin has embarked on the largest-scale implementation of integrated mental and behavioral health in any pediatric setting. With fundraising support from the Change the Checkup Challenge, Children’s hired new therapists who work side by side with our pediatricians, integrating mental and behavioral health into routine visits at Children’s locations across the region. When fully staffed by the end of 2023, this program has the potential to reach every child in our care — 1 in 3 kids in southeastern Wisconsin.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/newshub/stories/integrated-behavioral-health

Mental and behavioral health workforce development

Children’s Wisconsin is transforming our organizational structure and training models to create a robust pipeline of new integrated mental and behavioral health providers to alleviate wait times, meet the growing needs of the community, and detect mental and behavioral health problems before they escalate. The Therapist Fellowship Program is one example: it supports master’s-level therapists with pay and benefits while they complete their required clinical hours, significantly decreasing the time it takes them to achieve licensure.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/newshub/stories/therapist-fellowship-program-mariska



I loved this program so much. It’s so helpful! It helped me be a nicer person to my siblings. Half the time I yell at them ‘cause they yell at me. I loved that it helped me not to do that anymore. I learned how to be healthy and safe and that I can walk away, talk to a parent or teacher, and last I can talk it out with the person who is being mean or is not happy.

— Student who participated in the Healthy Minds e-course

School and Family Mindfulness and Healthy Minds E-Learning

Children's Wisconsin's fun and engaging e-learning programs inspire students and their families to lead healthier lives, both physically and emotionally. Offered at no cost to schools across Wisconsin, these programs meet national health education standards and were developed using evidence-based research and community input. Topics include bullying prevention, substance use and mental and emotional health.

Learn more: healthykidslearnmore.com

School-based mental health services

Children's Wisconsin supports school-based mental health in nearly 70 schools throughout Wisconsin. During the pandemic, this program adopted digital tools to allow staff to continue to support kids through digital visits. This approach increases access to early intervention by treating kids quickly in a comfortable, accessible setting that families already know and trust.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/medical-care/mental-and-behavioral-health/ways-we-can-help/school-based-mental-health

Shine Through campaign

To reduce stigma, Children's Wisconsin has worked to raise awareness of the mental and behavioral health crisis facing our kids. Children's created the Shine Through website with resources to educate and support families, and we leveraged media and advertising — and Children's strong platform of trust as a community leader — to start a public conversation around pediatric mental and behavioral health.

Learn more: shinethrough.childrenswi.org

Universal screening for mental health

Mental health screening at routine appointments is crucial to identifying issues before they become a crisis. Depression screening has been integrated into standard practices at all Children's Wisconsin primary care offices, with nearly 85 percent of all eligible kids age 12 and older screened. All kids whose screens are positive are referred for follow-up care. The

Supporting kids at school

For Takiya, kindergarten was rough, plagued by daily emotional outbursts and social struggles.

"Every day the teacher would call me," her mom said. "It got to where the phone calls would be like three or four times a day. I had days I cried, wondering, 'What is wrong? What am I doing wrong?' But her teacher was like, 'I think putting her in counseling will help.'"

With counseling through Children's Wisconsin's school-based mental health program, Takiya got the care she needed just down the hall from her classroom.

"Putting mental health treatment right in the school makes it so much easier for these kids," said Kristine Jacobs, a Children's child and family therapist.

Now starting 2nd grade, Takiya is growing and thriving.

"That whole year of counseling my baby gave her a totally different perspective on life," her mom said. "I see her future being really, really bright."

Children's Wisconsin Emergency Department and Trauma Center (EDTC) also uses a suicide screening tool.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/newshub/stories/mental-health-depression-screening

Partners in community health

Catalpa Health (Fox Valley)
City, county and state departments and agencies
Milwaukee Health Care Partnership
Rogers Behavioral Health (Milwaukee County)
School Community Partnership for Mental Behavioral Health (Milwaukee County)
Schools and school districts
Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health

PRIORITY: SAFETY AND VIOLENCE

Every child deserves to be safe and secure from physical, mental and emotional harm. Unfortunately, that's not the reality for every child — abuse and neglect, bullying, community violence and accidental injuries can threaten a child's health and well-being. Some injuries require physical healing over a shorter period of time, while others set the stage for long-term trauma, creating compounding adverse outcomes for a child's physical and mental health.

Many social and environmental factors can affect a child's safety, including family financial stress, adult substance abuse, adult mental health and neighborhood violence. Children's Wisconsin is committed to preventing violence and accidental injuries wherever children and adolescents live, learn and play — and delivering trauma-informed care and expanded community-based services to help kids recover and thrive after a challenging experience.

Aspirational goal

Children's will set children up for success by identifying risks, connecting families with services, and partnering with others to ensure child physical and psychological safety at home, in school and in the community.

Key concerns

- Young children experience the highest rates of child maltreatment compared to children of older ages, with children in Milwaukee victimized at consistently higher rates than the rest of the state.
- One in three middle school students in Milwaukee and the Fox Valley report experiencing bullying at school.
- Firearms are among the five leading causes of death for children and adolescents in the Fox Valley and Milwaukee, with Milwaukee firearm homicides tripling between 2019-2020.

Strategic initiatives

- **Early detection:** Establish systematic screening to facilitate early detection of child safety risks.
- **Family support:** Connect families to internal and external holistic services that strengthen family relationships and social support systems.
- **Community partnerships:** Strengthen community partnerships to enhance the safety of youth and families.



- **Health equity:** Advance our steadfast commitment to health equity for children and families that we serve.

Anticipated impact

Increased access to safety and violence prevention, intervention, treatment and supportive healing services for all children.

Programs and services

Children's Wisconsin will continue to implement the following strategies in alignment and partnership with our community:

Anti-sex trafficking

Children's Wisconsin is an active partner with the Healthcare Collaborative Against Sex Trafficking, and our staff have led online trainings through the Wisconsin Child Abuse Network on sex trafficking in minors and developing community and survivor-informed responses to human trafficking.

Learn more: wchildabusenetwork.org and hcastmilw.org

Awareness to Action

This statewide program educates and advocates for adults to take action to prevent child sexual abuse. Education includes resources for adults on healthy sexual development and how to discuss sexual development with children.

Learn more: a2awisconsin.org



Child Advocacy Centers (CAC)

These centers bring together multidisciplinary partners in child maltreatment investigations to provide comprehensive, on-site medical, forensic interview and advocacy services for children and families through ten statewide locations. By bringing together professionals from law enforcement, criminal justice, child protective services, victim advocacy agencies and the medical and mental health communities, CACs provide comprehensive services for child victims and their families. The comprehensive review process minimizes trauma and helps to break the cycle of abuse as well as increase prosecution rates for perpetrators.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/community-partners-professionals/child-advocacy-and-protection/child-advocacy-centers

Children's Safety Center

This center provides education and resources to families to keep kids and teens of all ages safe from injury, with information on cars and booster seats, teen driving, bikes and helmets, pedestrian safety, play and sports safety, poison prevention, fire safety and more.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/families-and-clients/safety-center

Period of PURPLE Crying

Period of PURPLE Crying is an evidence-based infant abuse prevention program that educates parents and caregivers about normal infant crying and the dangers of shaking an infant. Parents and caregivers are reached through Children's Wisconsin Neonatal Intensive Care Units, Emergency Room, primary care clinics and urgent care locations.

Learn more: purplecrying.info and childrenswi.org/newshub/stories/newborn-crying-what-is-normal

Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin

A program of Children's Wisconsin, Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin builds community resources, provides training and public awareness, and carries out advocacy activities in order to strengthen child abuse prevention efforts in the state. It also hosts the annual Together for Children Conference.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/community-partners-professionals/child-abuse-prevention/prevent-child-abuse-wisconsin

Project Ujima

Since 1996, Project Ujima has worked to stop the cycle of violent crimes through crisis intervention and case management, social and emotional support, youth development and mentoring, mental health, and medical services for young people and their families who have been affected by violence. Project Ujima provides crime victim advocates, nurses, mental health coordinators and therapists who help patients and their families process the trauma they've experienced and connect them with resources and supports.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/families-and-clients/family-support-services/violence-prevention-counseling

School and Family E-Learning (Act Now!)

Children’s fun and engaging e-learning programs inspire students and their families to lead healthier lives, both physically and emotionally. Offered at no cost to schools across Wisconsin, these programs meet national health education standards and were developed using evidence-based research and community input. Act Now! increases awareness about bullying among students, educators and families and gives students the grade-appropriate skills they need to prevent and stop it.

Learn more: healthykidslearnmore.com

Wisconsin Poison Center

This Children’s Wisconsin-based center provides 24-hour, toll-free poison information to children and adults across the state, as well as online sources to support poison prevention.

Learn more: wisconsinpoison.org

Partners in community health

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board
Child Protective Services
City, county, and state departments and agencies
Milwaukee County District Attorney’s Office
Milwaukee Health Care Partnership
Milwaukee Homicide Review Commission
Milwaukee Police Department
Safe Kids Wisconsin
Schools and school districts
Sojourner Family Peace Center



Summer camp helps kids impacted by violence heal and thrive

Project Ujima’s Summer Camp is a six-week experience where kids come together in a safe and stable environment to develop relationships, build unity and self-esteem, and heal.

“At Camp Ujima, kids don’t have to worry about being safe,” said Brooke Cheaton, Project Ujima manager. “They can just be kids without fear or anxiety, and they can be around other kids who have had similar experiences. When summer camp starts, the kids are all quiet and don’t talk to each other, but by mid-summer, you can’t get them to get on the bus to go home because they don’t want to leave each other.”

Melissa, a mom of three children who recently attended the camp, shares: “For me, it was a safe place that my children could go to with other kids who might be going through some of the same things. They met friends that they still talk to and are able to build new relationships. As a parent, I am very thankful for the program as it has been a shining star in some of the hard roads we have come across. I don’t know what I would do without the team and what they have been able to help my family accomplish.”

PRIORITY: SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Across our community, children and adolescents can live just blocks apart from one another and have very different experiences with factors that directly impact their health and well-being. The physical environment, access to health care, quality of care, family and social support, and socioeconomic factors — what we call the social determinants of health — play a significant role in shaping a child's health in the short term and over their lifetime. When a child has regular access to nutritious food, a safe living environment, quality education and more, it improves their physical, mental and behavioral health.

At Children's Wisconsin, we recognize that we cannot achieve our vision of making Wisconsin kids the healthiest in the nation unless we address the social determinants of health and their role in driving health inequities. We continue to work with our community partners and families to remove barriers to health and well-being and ensure that all Wisconsin kids have the resources they need to thrive.

Aspirational goal

Children's Wisconsin will partner with and support all families in understanding and addressing the health-related social needs that play a critical role in allowing kids to reach their full potential.

Key concerns

A family's social barriers to reaching their full health potential are not fully understood or addressed.

- Families have difficulty navigating to community-based resources, which can significantly enhance quality of life and health outcomes.
- Children and adolescents with food insecurity, housing instability and transportation barriers experience increased risk of poor health outcomes.

Strategic initiatives

- **Early detection:** Implement universal screening for all families so we can identify social needs as soon as possible.
- **No wrong door:** Leverage a system-wide response to connecting families to social and basic needs by integrating and expanding Children's Wisconsin's existing programs.
- **Partnerships:** Build intentional community partnerships with community resources addressing three prevalent social needs for children — food, housing and transportation.



- **Health equity:** Advance our steadfast commitment to health equity for children and families that we serve.

Anticipated impact

Increased access to screening and connection to prevention, intervention and social needs services for all children.

Programs and services

Children's Wisconsin will continue to implement the following strategies in alignment and partnership with our community:

Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin's Medical Home Initiative

Housed within Children's Wisconsin, the Alliance develops innovative child health initiatives in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and implements programs proven to impact access and outcomes. The Medical Home Initiative works to ensure more Wisconsin children and youth with special health care needs are served within a medical home, with programs dedicated to developmental screening, mental health screening, care coordination, family engagement and learning communities.

Learn more: chawisconsin.org/initiatives/medical-home/

Community Health Navigators and Connectors

Children’s Wisconsin is partnered with five neighborhoods across Milwaukee, aligning our resources with community needs. As certified community health workers, community health navigators and community connectors help families to meet basic needs and support them as they work toward self-sufficiency, focusing on housing, safety, financial management, education, social support, parenting and health.

Learn more: dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/connectionscount

Daniel M. Soref Family Resource Center

Located at our Milwaukee campus, this center offers parent-to-parent support, information, referrals and help connecting to community resources. Staff are trained to help children, young adults and their families find answers to questions about local resources, support groups, funding options and more.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/patients-and-families/milwaukee-campus/inpatient-visit/during-your-stay/hospital-points-of-interest/family-resource-center

Housing is Health

The Milwaukee Health Care Partnership launched a Housing is Health initiative for homeless patients receiving care in four Milwaukee hospitals, including Children’s Wisconsin. The initiative incorporates social workers or navigators who help patients secure temporary housing, provide case management and aid in their ultimate transition to permanent housing stability.

Learn more: mkehcp.org/care-coordination/housing-is-health-care-navigation-for-homeless-patients/

Nourishing Partners Program

The Nourishing Partners Program includes a variety of initiatives supported by Children’s Wisconsin in partnership with community-based organizations, volunteers and donors to address food insecurity in the communities we serve. Initiatives include screening Children’s Wisconsin families for food insecurity and partnering with Upstart Kitchen in Milwaukee’s Sherman Park neighborhood to distribute healthy meals to families at our Midtown and Next Door Pediatrics primary care clinics, among our many other community partnerships to address food insecurity issues.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/families-and-clients/nourishing-partners-program



Regional Centers for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

Children’s Wisconsin facilitates the grant for the state’s southeast and northeast centers for children and youth with special health care needs. This program aims to collaborate with national, state and community-based partners to link children to appropriate services, close service gaps, reduce duplication and develop policies to better serve families.

Learn more: southeastregionalcenter.org and northeastregionalcenter.org

Social health needs screenings

Children’s Wisconsin has been actively engaged in shared learning with Milwaukee Health Care Partnership and other health care providers about the best practices and opportunities for implementing system-wide screening for determinants of health. We have already implemented screenings in many of Children’s Wisconsin’s community-based programs, the Emergency Department and Trauma Center, Community Health and Primary Care programs, and mental and behavioral health services. With an understanding that unmet basic needs can be barriers for a child to reach their full health potential, we will continue to learn and scale our screening and response to a child and family’s social needs.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/newshub/stories/food-insecurity-program

Partners in community health

Be Well Fox Valley
City, county and state departments/agencies
Community based organizations
Food banks and food pantries
IMPACT Connect – Unite Us
Imagine Fox Cities
Milwaukee Health Care Partnership
Social service agencies

Housing navigator program transforms families’ lives

This was not the home Aminata pictured for her family of 10. Cramped into a relative’s dark, leaking basement, surrounded by rats, roaches, bed bugs and mountains of wet, moldering laundry. Although Aminata paid \$450 a month in rent, handed over her FoodShare benefits to stock the kitchen and cleaned the house, her relative often locked the door to the basement, denying the family access to food and the bathroom for long stretches.

“My babies kept getting sick, I kept getting sick all the time because there was always water coming down from the ceiling and it was so wet in there,” she said. “But we had no choice — we couldn’t stay outside on the streets. We didn’t have anywhere to go.”

The situation seemed so bleak that Aminata battled depression and suicidal thoughts. But a sliver of hope, like a light shining from under the crack of the basement door, emerged when Chorus Community Health Plans (CCHP) learned of the family’s abysmal living conditions. CCHP, a Wisconsin-based nonprofit health insurance organization owned by Children’s Wisconsin that

serves more than 140,000 people in the state, created a housing navigator program in 2019 to help members with this sort of situation.

“When you look at Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, shelter is part of the base of the pyramid. It’s a basic human need,” said Carly Mikkila, a community intervention specialist.

And that’s especially important for children. “For kids, when that basic need of shelter isn’t met, it’s tremendously stressful and traumatizing,” she said. “Those kinds of adverse childhood experiences affect mental health and anxiety, school work and health long term.”

CCHP quickly mobilized to find the family a temporary place to stay, and then Carly began her nearly year-long odyssey to find the family a more permanent home they could finally call their own. With Carly’s help, Aminata and her kids finally found a five-bedroom home and moved in September 2020.

“Carly was a godsend,” said Aminata. “She was really good. She helped us a lot. She kept a lot of the stress off of us.”



Strategies that cross multiple priorities

Some of Children’s Wisconsin’s strategies cut across the priority areas. These strategies and collaborative initiatives also play an important role in improving children’s overall health and well-being.

Children’s Advocacy Network

Through federal, state and local advocacy, Children’s Wisconsin focuses on public policies that improve the health of children and have a significant impact on our communities. Along with valuable partner organizations, Children’s Wisconsin advocates for several policies related to the identified priorities and other important topics to improve the health and well-being of Wisconsin kids and families. Children’s Wisconsin also offers opportunities to take grassroots action to contact lawmakers through our Children’s Advocacy Network.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/ways-to-help/advocacy/childrens-advocacy-network

Children’s Research Institute

The pioneering physician-scientists, nurse-scientists, researchers and technicians at Children’s Research Institute (CRI) work collaboratively to seek answers to the toughest questions in pediatric medicine and pursue discoveries to improve care and quality of life. Since its inception in 2003, CRI has grown to include more than 150 researchers in over 15 specialties. Together, they represent the largest concentration of pediatric research in the region.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/medical-professionals/research

Chorus Community Health Plans

Created by Children's Wisconsin, this insurance offering serves more than 130,000 children and adults who are covered by BadgerCare Plus, ensuring that more families get access to high-quality health care. CCHP facilitates a variety of health promotion initiatives for families, including a Healthy Moms Healthy Babies prenatal care program, asthma outreach, out-of-home care and healthy shopping education.

Learn more: chorushealthplans.org

Community Partnerships

Community partnerships are key to Children's Wisconsin's overall strategy. We regularly work with elected officials, community leaders, families, philanthropic partners and more. We will continue to improve our collaboration with our community partners, advancing their capacity, sharing best practices and data, and regularly seeking their feedback so we can continue to engage effectively and meaningfully for the communities we serve.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community and giving.childrenswi.org

Family Case Management

Children's Wisconsin has a contract with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, through the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services, to provide ongoing case management services for families whose children have been determined to be unsafe and subsequently removed while parents work on enhancing their ability to parent safely. One of the services our case managers provide is a newborn safety bundle, which includes education and screening for safe sleep environments.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/community-partners-professionals/child-welfare-services/family-case-management

Institute of Child and Family Wellbeing

The mission of the institute is to improve the lives of children and families coping with an overload

of stress by implementing effective programs, conducting cutting-edge research, engaging communities and promoting systems change. The institute is a unique community-university partnership between Children's Wisconsin and the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Learn more: uwm.edu/icfw

School nursing

It's not always easy for children to get the health care they need. School nurses fill a critical gap by making sure kids get vision and hearing screens, care for chronic conditions such as diabetes and asthma, and health and wellness education. The full-time school nurses work within 10 partner schools in Milwaukee and help coordinate care with physicians, social workers and other community resources.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/medical-care/primary-care/primary-care-access/school-nurse-program

Trauma-informed care

Trauma-informed care is about understanding how trauma affects people, their behavior, and quite often, their health. We consider the impact that trauma has on kids, families and our workforce, and we provide the tools and resources to understand how chronic stress and trauma impact individuals and teams.

Learn more: childrenswi.org

Triple P

Short for Positive Parenting Program, Triple P is a universal access, evidence-based program for caregivers of children ages 0-12. It aims to increase parent and caregivers' knowledge of positive parenting techniques. Triple P reaches parents and caregivers through five Children's Wisconsin primary care clinics and Community Services locations in Milwaukee and Racine.

Learn more: childrenswi.org/medical-care/primary-care/triple-p

Conclusion

Children’s Wisconsin is committed to improving the health of our community. As noted early in this report, Children’s Wisconsin’s vision is that Wisconsin’s kids will be the healthiest in the nation — physically, mentally and socially. And, we recognize that we cannot eliminate every challenge, prevent every illness or injury nor provide for all social needs. We can, however, have a positive impact on the health and well-being of our patients, families and communities.

While this report does not encompass all of Children’s Wisconsin’s health initiatives that support children and adolescents, families and community partners, it demonstrates a multitude of current strategies that we use to address the most critical child and adolescent needs identified by our community for our community: infant health, mental and behavioral health, safety and violence, and social determinants of health. Each of these needs are significant health priorities that require long-term work and strong partnerships. With the support of patients, families and community partners, we are making progress, and we won’t give up until Wisconsin kids are the healthiest in the nation.

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