

Public Health News & Updates

from the Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project



Texas Research-to-Policy
Collaboration Project

June 2022

Resource Reminders

Public Health Policy Rapid Response Requests

The Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration (TX RPC) Project continues to develop accessible and accurate public health policy-related resources from experts in the field. Please complete the following form if you would like to request information on a public health topic.

[ACCESS FORM
HERE](#)

Public Health Policy Rapid Response Requests

The Texas RPC Project health policy resources are available on our website. See below for links to specific categories of resources.

- [TX RPC Health Policy Resources](#) (resources available to legislators to provide data-driven information on health-related topics)
- [Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living Webinars](#)
- [TX RPC Newsletters Archive](#)
- [Texas Legislative Bill Tracker](#)
- [Texas Child Health Status Reports and Toolkits](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources](#)

Texas Research-to-Policy Updated Reports

Texas Child Health Status Report: Child Physical Activity
The Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living

[MAY WAS NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH](#)

The Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living develops a series of reports, *Healthy Children*, *Healthy State*, to raise awareness of child health risk factors to develop new programs and actions, and build on current Texas initiatives. The Child Physical Activity in Texas one-pager showcases the current state of physical activity for children in Texas.

Key Takeaways:

- Approximately 80.4% of Texas youth do not meet the national guidelines of 60+ minutes of physical activity each day.
- Only 14.7% of 11th-grade girls receive 60+ minutes of physical activity each day.
- Less than half of middle schools allow students to use gym facilities and equipment outside of school hours.

[VIEW THE REPORT](#)

UPDATED REPORT: Impact of COVID-19 on Child Mental Health Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project

MAY WAS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

During Fall 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the Children's Hospital Association declared a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health. As a result of changes at home, school, and in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic, a significant number of children have faced social, emotional and academic challenges, increasing their risk for depression, anxiety, suicide, sleep disorders, and substance use. **This report was updated on March 16, 2022**

Key Takeaways:

- Globally, between January 2020 and mid-February 2021, symptoms of depression and anxiety doubled among youth compared to pre-pandemic estimates.
- Mental health-related emergency department visits increased 24% among U.S. children aged 5-11 years and 31% among those aged 12-17 years between mid-March and October 2020 compared to the same time period in 2019.
- Emergency department visits for suspected suicide attempts increased 51% among U.S. adolescent girls and 4% among adolescent boys in early 2021 compared to early 2019.

[VIEW THE UPDATED
REPORT](#)

Resources from TX RPC Members and Organizations

Is it a GO, SLOW, or WHOA food?

Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living and CATCH

Follow the path to learn how to make healthier food choices – try to eat more GO foods than SLOW foods, and eat WHOA foods in small amounts. Use the infographic below to determine which types of foods you are eating. This is a great tool to help children learn how different foods affect their bodies.



[VIEW THE INFOGRAPHIC](#)

Highlights from TX RPC Network Members Conducting COVID-19 Research

Houston is hailed as a national success for fighting homelessness, but the reality isn't quite as rosy

Catherine Troisi, PhD - UTHealth School of Public Health - Houston Campus

After being determined a “priority community” by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 2011, Houston has partnered with Coalition for the Homeless (CFTH) to help house people within the county who are experiencing homelessness. While the number of people experiencing homelessness has decreased within the past ten years, the process of housing people is troubled. Most who experience homelessness do not fit the HUD’s definition of being unhoused. Houston has a long history of having one of the highest numbers of evictions of cities tracked, which makes obtaining adequate housing difficult. TX RPC Research Member Dr. Catherine Troisi, who helps to certify CFTH Houston

data, says “our biggest limitation is simply our geographic area.” With Houston spanning three counties, it takes more than 400 volunteers to cover 3500 square miles of roads, alleys, and parks for three-day data collection. Dr. Troisi mentions that even though the number of homeless individuals has decreased, a high number of individuals in the county jails report being unhoused. While there are barriers when working around HUD’s definition of homelessness, the City of Houston and CFTH have worked to successfully house as many individuals as possible.

Key Takeaways:

- CFTH reports a 54% decrease in homelessness in Houston from 2011 to 2021. They report the number of homeless people decreased from 8,500 people to 3,055 people within the 10 years.
- Per HUD’s definition, to qualify for permanent housing, one must be “chronically homeless” by living outside for a minimum of 12 months and have a physical or mental disability.

[READ THE ARTICLE](#)

CDC green-lights 4th dose boosters for most Americans over 50
Katelyn Jetelina, PhD, MPH - UTHealth School of Public Health - Dallas Campus

In late March 2022, the CDC approved an additional COVID-19 booster vaccine for older adults across the United States. The fourth dose of either Pfizer or Moderna vaccines is for immunocompromised people over the age of 50 and for all people 65 years of age. Research suggests younger adults do not need an additional booster at this time because their immune systems respond better to vaccinations, but protection is waning in older adults. Experts have discussed how to move forward with vaccinations, saying vaccines need to be tailored to the circulating variants or created to protect against multiple strains of the virus. TX RPC Research Member Dr. Katelyn Jetelina said, "We really need to figure out our next move," noting that vaccines are just short-term strategies for fighting COVID-19.

Key Takeaways:

- The CDC and FDA authorized an additional booster shot for older Americans in the US in late March.
- People over the age of 60 with underlying medical conditions and adults over 65 are eligible for the 4th booster.
- Adults who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine are also eligible for a second booster, but the only vaccines authorize for boosters are Moderna and Pfizer.

[READ THE ARTICLE](#)

WEBINAR RECORDING: Healthy Journeys CATCH Global Foundation

In April, CATCH Global Foundation took a peek at *Health Journeys*, a comprehensive K-8 health education curriculum launching for the 2022-23 school year. The curriculum covers national and state-level health standards with data from more than 120 peer-reviewed scientific articles. CATCH is a national leader in providing data-driven nutrition, physical activity, and vaping prevention programming. Health Journeys will add physical health and hygiene lessons, mental health, violence & injury prevention, and safety to the mix. **This webinar took place on April 13, 2022.**

[WATCH THE RECORDING](#)

WEBINAR RECORDING: 150 Miles: Health in the Borderlands Children at Risk

This virtual summit explored the needs, barriers, and best practices surrounding children's health in the US-Mexico border region. Health experts and leaders in medicine, public policy, and social justice provided recommendations on how state and national policymakers can support children's health and wellbeing. TX RPC member Dr. Deanna Hoelscher presented on child health border data from the Texas SPAN study. Conversations examined best practices in health access and discussed the innovative care strategies of communities living near the border. This discussion was presented in partnership with The Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living, United Way of Southern Cameron County, and the Texas Family Leadership Council. **This webinar took place on April 7, 2022.**

[WATCH THE RECORDING](#)

WEBINAR RECORDING: Food+Tech: Driving Food Innovation Through Technology Processes Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living

April was National Nutrition Month and Joi Chevalier, Founder of "The Cook's Nook," discussed Food+Tech, the food sector focused on bringing technology processes around product and market management to the food product development process. Instead of only valuing the creative cook and "unicorn" success, food+tech looks to offer the food entrepreneur an achievable path to product iteration, market launch, and sustainable business growth, whether bootstrapped or funded. It allows the entrepreneur to create a business that more profoundly reflects their values, food, and community impact in the process. **This webinar took place on March 24, 2022.**

[WATCH THE RECORDING](#)

WEBINAR RECORDING: Advocating for School Health Action for Healthy Kids

Are you intimidated by speaking to school board members and state legislators? Do you feel like you can't be effective in stating your case about the importance of child health? If you want to learn how to communicate with decision makers, we have a learning session for you!

James Gray, American Cancer Society Senior Government Relations Director for Texas, and Joel Romo, Vice President of Governmental Affairs/The Cooper Institute & Legislative Chair, Partnership for a Healthy Texas shared Who-How-Why techniques to state your case effectively! **This webinar took place on March 24, 2022.**

WATCH THE RECORDING

Recent Publications by TX RPC Researchers

Texas Population Publications

General:

Walker, T. J., Szeszulski, J., Robertson, M. C., Cuccaro, P. M., & Fernandez, M. E. (2022). Understanding implementation strategies to support classroom-based physical activity approaches in elementary schools: A qualitative study. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 92, 102051. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2022.102051>.

Central:

Hoelscher, D. M., Ganzar, L. A., Salvo, D., Kohl, H. W., 3rd, Pérez, A., Brown, H. S., Bentley, S. S., Dooley, E. E., Emamian, A., & Durand, C. P. (2022). Effects of Large-Scale Municipal Safe Routes to School Infrastructure on Student Active Travel and Physical Activity: Design, Methods, and Baseline Data of the Safe Travel Environment Evaluation in Texas Schools (STREETS) Natural Experiment. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3), 1810. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031810>.

Sharma, S. V., Kelder, S., Yamal, J. M., Chuang, R. J., Byrd-Williams, C., Bona, G., Bajaj, N., Brito, F., & Neumann, A. S. (2022). Development and Feasibility Testing of CATCH Healthy Smiles, an Oral Health Promotion Intervention for Prevention of Dental Caries Among Elementary School Children. *The Journal of School Health*, 92(1), 20–30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.13100>.

Springer, A. E., Castro, V., Ruiz, F., Luna, E., Martinez, K., McGhee, S., Ranjit, N., Bjornaas, D., Sturup, A., McNeely, K., McGeady, A., & Harrell, B. (2022). Interweaving Adult Fitness Classes Into Community Settings Via Stronger Austin's Community Partnership Model: Increasing Access to Physical Activity and Positive Social Connectedness in Underserved Communities. *Family & Community Health*, 45(2), 125–135. <https://doi.org/10.1097/FCH.0000000000000321>.

North:

Jetelina, K. K., Lee, S. C., Booker-Nubie, Q. S., Obinwa, U. C., Zhu, H., Miller, M. E., Sadeghi, N., Dickerson, U., & Balasubramanian, B. A. (2022). Importance of primary care for underserved cancer patients with multiple chronic conditions. *Journal of Cancer Survivorship : Research and Practice*, 10.1007/s11764-021-01159-8. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11764-021-01159-8>.

General Publications

Akinlotan, M. A., Ferdinand, A. O., Maxey, H. L., Bolin, J. N., & Morrissey, M. A. (2022). Dental hygienists' scope of practice regulations and preventable non-traumatic dental emergency department visits: A cross-sectional study of 10 U.S. states. *Community Dentistry and Oral Epidemiology*, 10.1111/cdoe.12737. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdoe.12737>.

Bansal, B. B., Mathew, M. S., Booker-Nubie, Q., **Messiah, S. E.**, & Wang, V. J. (2022). Retiring From Pediatric Emergency Medicine Too Soon? A Survey to Discover the Reasons and Start a Conversation About Solutions. *Pediatric Emergency Care*. *Pediatric Emergency Care*. https://journals.lww.com/pec-online/Abstract/9000/Retiring_From_Pediatric_Emergency_Medicine_Too.97416.aspx.

Bourassa, M. W., Abrams, S. A., Belizán, J. M., Boy, E., Cormick, G., Quijano, C. D., Gibson, S., Gomes, F., Hofmeyr, G. J., Humphrey, J., Kraemer, K., Lividini, K., Neufeld, L. M., Palacios, C., Shlisky, J., Thankachan, P., Villalpando, S., & Weaver, C. M. (2022). Interventions to improve calcium intake through foods in populations with low intake. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 10.1111/nyas.14743. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14743>.

Fernandez, A., Lozano, A., Lee, T. K., **Messiah, S. E.**, & Prado, G. (2022). A Healthy Lifestyle Intervention for Hispanic Families: Moderating Effects of Education, Income, Nativity. *Journal of nutrition education and behavior*, 54(2), 125–134. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2021.05.001>.

Hoelscher, D. M., Brann, L. S., O'Brien, S., Handu, D., & Rozga, M. (2022). Prevention of Pediatric Overweight and Obesity: Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Based on an Umbrella Review of Systematic Reviews. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 122(2), 410–423.e6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2021.11.003>.

Jetelina, K. K., Molsberry, R., Malthaner, L., Beauchamp, A., Cannell, M. B., Hall, T., Fowler, E., & Anderson, L. (2022). Acceptability of a real-time notification of stress and access to self-help therapies among law enforcement officers. *BMC Public Health*, 22(1), 32. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-12423-y>.

Koepp, A. E., & Gershoff, E. T. (2022). Amount and type of physical activity as predictors of growth in executive functions, attentional control, and social self-control across 4 years of elementary school. *Developmental Science*, 25(1), e13147. <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.13147>.

Morales-Marroquin, E., Khatiwada, S., Xie, L., de la Cruz-Muñoz, N., Kukreja, S., Schneider, B., Qureshi, F. G., & **Messiah, S. E.** (2022). Five Year Trends in the Utilization of Robotic Bariatric Surgery Procedures, United States 2015-2019. *Obesity Surgery*, 10.1007/s11695-022-05964-7. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11695-022-05964-7>.

Pfeifer, C. M., Xie, L., Atem, F. D., Mathew, M. S., Schiess, D. M., & **Messiah, S. E.** (2022). Body mass index as a predictor of sonographic visualization of the pediatric appendix. *Pediatric Radiology*, 52(1), 42–49. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00247-021-05176-8>.

Siembida, E. J., Loomans-Kropp, H. A., **Tami-Maury, I.**, Freyer, D. R., Sung, L., Crosswell, H. E., Pollock, B. H., & Roth, M. E. (2021). Barriers and Facilitators to Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Trial Enrollment: NCORP Site Perspectives. *JNCI Cancer Spectrum*, 5(3), pkab027. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jncics/pkab027>.

Vujanovic, A. A., Webber, H. E., Wardle, M. C., Green, C. E., **Lane, S. D.**, & **Schmitz, J. M.** (2022). Nonjudgmental acceptance: Associations with substance-related cue reactivity in adults with substance use disorders and posttraumatic stress. *Addictive Behaviors*, 126, 107211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2021.107211>.

Zhao, X., Lee, R. E., Ledoux, T. A., **Hoelscher, D. M.**, McKenzie, T. L., & O'Connor, D. P. (2022). Harmonizing Ratings From Different School Environment Assessment Methods: A Simplified Approach. *The Journal of School Health*, 92(1), 92–98. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.13108>.

About the TX RPC Project

The Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration (Texas RPC) Project is a non-partisan network that aims to bridge research and policy by supporting partnerships between child health researchers and policymakers. The TX RPC Project team and overall network are available to support Texas policymakers with informational requests or resources related to health topics, during the interim and throughout the 2023 Legislative Session.

[Learn more online.](#)

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