

# PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS & UPDATES

TEXAS RESEARCH-TO-POLICY COLLABORATION

*Happy Holidays!*



December 15, 2022

The TX RPC Project wishes all of you a healthy and happy holiday season. We look forward to providing resources and information to legislative offices when the new session begins in January.

- The TX RPC Project Team

## 2023 TX RPC Legislative Bill Tracker

The TX RPC Project is launching a new legislative bill tracker! Since the 2013 session, the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living has hosted an online legislative bill tracker that identifies proposed bills related to child and adolescent health and to research taking place at the Center and the expertise of the faculty. The tracker is segmented into general categories such as early childhood education, food policy, school/after-school care, tobacco/e-cigarettes, nutrition, and more. **Bills tracked are selected based on the Center's vision/mission and health priorities identified by TX RPC legislators during baseline interviews.**

[USE THE BILL TRACKER](#)

## TX RPC HEALTH POLICY RESOURCES

### [College Students and SNAP Utilization](#) – **NEW!**

Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project

*Released December X, 2022*

This report examines the impact of food insecurity on students in higher education as well as highlighting legislation in other states to combat food insecurity in college students. Approximately 71% of post-secondary students are considered "non-traditional students" and are more likely to be financially independent, work full time, be enrolled in college courses, and care for a child or other family member. According to a 2020 survey, around 22% of college students reported experiencing food insecurity. **Current policies, especially policies around college student enrollment in work-study, prohibit student enrollment in SNAP.**

### [Data Brief: Food Access in Texas and Texas Legislative Districts](#)

Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project

*Released January 11, 2021*

This interactive map provides local data on food insecurity, including communities with low resources and low access to supermarkets, in all Texas House and Senate districts. **In 2015, approximately 9% of Texas individuals had both low income and low access to healthy food sources. Within Texas Senate Districts, this proportion ranges from 3% to 23.3%, while it ranges from 0.2% to 34.6% in Texas House Districts.**

## [Double Up Food Bucks: A SNAP Produce Incentive Program](#)

Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project

Released October 4, 2021

This report provides an overview of Double Up Food Bucks, its impact on families, and its impact on farms, grocers, and local economies. In Texas, more than 3.5 million Texans rely on SNAP benefits to provide food for their families. **Models show that Double Up has the potential to lower rates of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, as well as reduce healthcare spending, by supporting healthy eating.**

## TX RPC MEMBER & ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

### [Child Mental Health in Texas](#)

Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living

TX RPC Project Lunch & Learn Event - October 27, 2022

This TX RPC Project Lunch & Learn presentation by Dr. Taiwo Babatope provided an overview of mental health in youth, health access and workforce shortages, as well as what legislators can do to support mental health. Approximately 50% of all lifetime mental health problems begin by age 14, and around 1 in 6 U.S. youth ages 6-17 experience mental health disorders yearly. Texas ranks last in the U.S. for youth access to mental health care, which the pandemic has exacerbated. **Recommendations for supporting youth mental health in Texas include supporting school-based mental health care, integrating mental health care in primary care pediatrics, and community-based systems of care that connect families to data-driven information.**

[VIEW THE LUNCH & LEARN SLIDES](#)

### [Aligning Systems for Health Equity Starts in Texas](#)

Texas Health Institute

*An Evaluation of Aligning Systems for Health in Texas*

The Texas Health Institute announced the release of their reports to align public health, health care, and social service sectors to advance the health of all. **These reports explore what works, for whom, and under what circumstances to advance health equity.**

[VIEW TEXAS HEALTH INSTITUTE'S REPORTS](#)

### [Priorities for the 88th Texas Legislative Session](#)

Partnership for a Healthy Texas

*Partnership for a Healthy Texas Legislative Briefing - November 15, 2022*

Earlier this month, the Partnership for a Healthy Texas, a coalition dedicated to reducing the burden of obesity in Texas, announced policy priorities for the upcoming Texas Legislative Session. These priorities are aimed at positively impacting the high rates of obesity in Texas, where more than 1 in 5 children and 1 in 3 adults live with obesity by modernizing Texas SNAP to increase access to healthy foods, ensuring healthy school environments so students can develop healthy habits, and encouraging Texas Medicaid to cover cost-effective interventions to treat obesity.

## [Texas American Heart Association Priorities for the 88th Texas Legislative Session](#)

Texas American Heart Association

*Texas American Heart Association Legislative Priorities - December 8, 2022*

The American Heart Association (AHA)'s Texas office has provided its 2022-2023 Texas Public Policy Agenda. The policy priorities are aimed at positively improving the health of all Texans. AHA seeks to improve school CPR training, nutrition security, maternal health, hypertension control, tobacco control, access to care, and many more priorities.

[VIEW TEXAS AHA'S PRIORITIES](#)

## [Policy Implications of Food Insecurity and Food Access in Texas](#)

Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living

*TX RPC Project Lunch & Learn Event - August 25, 2022*

This TX RPC Project Lunch & Learn event presentation by Dr. Alexandra van den Berg discussed the implications of food insecurity and food access in Texas. Food insecurity has adverse health and academic outcomes and disproportionately affects low-income households, households with children, Black and Hispanic populations, and college students. **Recommendations to assist individuals experiencing food insecurity include providing funding or increasing sustainability efforts for effective, proven initiatives:**

- produce prescription programs
- increasing geographic access to healthy foods

[VIEW THE LUNCH & LEARN SLIDES](#)

## TX RPC MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

### [Staying Healthy During the Holidays](#)

Catherine Troisi, PhD- UTHealth Houston School of Public Health

Fox 26 News spoke to Dr. Catherine Troisi about ways to stay healthy during the holidays with the rise of flu, COVID-19, and RSV.

[VIEW THE INTERVIEW HERE](#)

## TX RPC PARTNER EVENTS

### Upcoming Events

- [Maternal and Child Health: A TX RPC Project Lunch and Learn Event](#) (January 4th, 2023)
- [It's Time Texas' Community Challenge](#) (January 9 - March 5, 2023)

### Past Event Recordings

- [TX Action for Healthy Kids Summit - Day 1](#) - [VIEW THE PRESENTATION HERE](#)

(November 15-16, 2022)

- [TX Action for Healthy Kids Summit - Day 2 - VIEW THE PRESENTATION HERE](#)

(November 15-16, 2022)

## Webinar Recordings

- [Cost-effectiveness Calculators for Substance Use Disorder \(SUD\): A Pilot of Peer Recovery Support Services and Bystander Naloxone Distribution](#) (October 25, 2022, @ 12:00pm CT)
  - This webinar discussed the Recovery Research Institute's pilot grant program, as well as a cost-effective analysis of long-term, post-treatment peer recovery support services for substance use disorder (SUD).
- [Improving Health Through Nature](#) (November 2, 2022, @ 12:00 pm CT)
  - This webinar examined the relationship between improved health and wellbeing and time spent in nature, as well as interventions to address health disparities and increase time in nature.

## TX RPC RESEARCHER PUBLICATIONS

### Featured Publication

[Association between e-cigarette use behaviors and perceived harmfulness of e-cigarettes and anxiety/depression symptoms among Black/African American Adults](#)

#### Publication Key Takeaways:

- Moderate or severe anxiety and depression symptoms were positively associated with current e-cigarette use.
- Individuals who perceived e-cigarette use as more harmful than smoking cigarettes were less likely to use e-cigarettes daily.

### Texas Population Publications

#### General Texas

[Design for a cluster randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effects of the CATCH Healthy Smiles school-based oral health promotion intervention among elementary school children](#)

#### Central Texas

[Association between Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Consumption and Purchasing Behaviors, Food Insecurity Status and Geographic Food Access among a Lower-Income, Racially/Ethnically Diverse Cohort in Central Texas](#)

### General Publications

[Summary of the joint NIH and FDA workshop titled “Exploring the Science Surrounding the Safe Use of Bioactive Ingredients in Infant Formula: Considerations for an Assessment Framework”](#)

[Impact of the e-cigarette era on cigarette smoking among youth in the United States: A population-level study](#)

[Digital screen time and suicidality during high school: How important is cyberbullying? A mediation analysis using the Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance Survey, 2011–2019](#)

[Effect of adding probiotics to an antibiotic intervention on the human gut microbial diversity and composition: a systematic review](#)

## RESOURCE REMINDERS

The TX RPC Project develops accessible and accurate public health policy-related resources from experts in the field. If you would like to request information on a public health topic, please complete the following form:

[Access Form](#)

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](#)
- [Newsletter Resource Sharing Form for Publication](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources](#)

## ABOUT THE TX RPC PROJECT

The **Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration (TX 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.

If any legislators are interested in collaborating with us to receive state-, district- and local-level data-driven information, please reach out to [TXRPCNetwork@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:TXRPCNetwork@uth.tmc.edu).

## CONTACT US

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