

PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS & UPDATES

TEXAS RESEARCH-TO-POLICY COLLABORATION PROJECT

October 2024



Fall Back: Daylight Saving Time ends!



New TX RPC Project Health Policy Resources

Developmental Delays and Disorders

Released October 14, 2024

Developmental Delays and Disorders

October 14, 2024

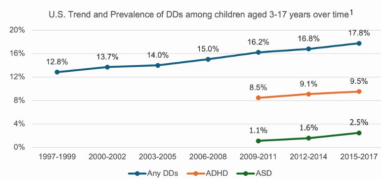
KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. There has been an increase in children in the U.S. being diagnosed with a developmental delay or disorder (DDs) since the late 1990s.
2. Early identification and intervention of DDs are crucial for children to thrive. Actions are needed to increase screening and developmental monitoring in order to support the development and health of Texas's children.

Background

The U.S. has seen a 39% increase in children between 3-17 years old who have been diagnosed with a developmental disorder or delay.¹

- About 25% of Texans are under the age of 18, and over 1.55 million are under 4 years old.²
- Timely tracking and interventions are needed to optimize the health and development of Texas children.



Defining Developmental Delays and Disorders (DDs)

- **Developmental Delays:** when children do not achieve the developmental milestones associated with peers of the same age range; delays can occur in social/emotional, communication, motor, and/or cognitive domains.³
- **Developmental Disorders:** a group of syndromes in which the typical patterns of development are disrupted due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behaviors areas; examples include Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), hearing loss, or vision impairment.⁴

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Early Childhood Intervention

Released October 14, 2024

Early Childhood Intervention

October 14, 2024

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Statewide Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services support children aged 0 to 3 with developmental delays or other disabilities by intervening early to reduce or eliminate the need for costly services later.
2. Timely recognition, screening, and access to ECI services are critical for children with developmental delays and disabilities.

Background

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) is a statewide program for families with children under the age of 3 who are experiencing developmental delays and disabilities, or certain medical diagnoses that impact development.¹

- Eligibility for ECI:¹
 - Developmental delay
 - Deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired
 - Medically diagnosed condition that is likely to cause a developmental delay and necessitates services
- Why intervene early?²
 - Interventions are likely to be more effective when provided **earlier**, rather than later, in childhood.
 - Early intervention can change a child's developmental path and improve their outcomes.
 - Families and communities benefit in the long term.
 - The need for and intensity of school-based services is reduced.

For kids who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), early intervention:^{3, 4}

- Improves social and communication outcomes
- Promotes greatest gains in IQ and reduction in ASD severity
- Improves behavior and reduces parent stress
- Promotes independent functioning via improved cognitive skills and adaptive behaviors

Early Childhood Intervention in Texas

Texas has more than 1.55 million children between 0-3 years old. It is estimated that 6% of the 0-3 population has a disability.⁵

- In 2022, 94,178 Texas children were referred to ECI services, with 65,584 children (70% of referrals) receiving comprehensive ECI services.⁶
 - Texas ECI served 3.7% of the 0-3 population.

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This report discusses the status of children's developmental delays and disorders (DDs), and provides recommendations to support the optimal development of children.

- 1 in 6 children between 3-17 years in the U.S. have at least one DDs.
- Racial/ethnic minority children with DDs are less likely to utilize specialty health services or have their health care needs met.
- Early identification and intervention of DDs are crucial for children's development and health.

This report covers the statewide Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program and recommendations to support children with developmental delays.

- ECI supports children aged 0-3 years old experiencing developmental delays, disabilities, or medical diagnoses that affect development.
- ECI treats rather than identifies DDs; therefore, their services are dependent on the quality of referrals they receive.
- Timely recognition, screening, and access to ECI services are crucial for kids with possible DDs.

TX RPC Project Researcher Publications

Feature Publication

[Free summer programming and body mass index among schoolchildren from low-income households: a randomized clinical trial](#)

Kids experience accelerated body mass index (BMI) gain during the summer months than when they are in school, where they have structured environments that promote healthy behaviors. During summer, programs such as summer day camps (SDCs) provide similar structures that help kids adhere to health recommendations and maintain a healthy body weight.

- SDCs regularly operate on a fee-for-service model with a mean weekly enrollment cost ranging from \$120 to \$300 per child, which could be a substantial financial barrier for lower-income families and contribute to health disparities.
- This study investigated whether providing free access to an existing community SDC to elementary school-age children from low-income families can mitigate the accelerated BMI gain.
- This study found that children who received free access to SDC had a reduction in BMI compared to children in the control group (with no or limited SDC) who had an increase in BMI.
- Accessing readily available community SDC programming could be a viable intervention strategy to reduce unhealthy weight gain during the summer.

Texas

[Problematic social media use and vaping among Mexican-American college students](#)

General

[The impact of household dysfunction on dating violence perpetration among adolescents in the United States: a scoping review](#)

Upcoming Webinar

[Food as Medicine in Practice: From Study to Standard of Care](#)

November 6, 2024

11:30 AM-12:30 PM CST

Panelists will share key findings from their research, including:

- Communities that will benefit most from Food As Medicine
- Translation of insights from studies into practical applications
- Creation of systems that integrate this knowledge into continuous care
- How this care can be delivered via healthcare providers, clinics, or community-based organizations.



Learn more about the panelists and register!

Past Events & Webinar Highlights

[Food as Medicine in Pediatrics: A Necessary Responsibility](#)

[Inside TCHMB: A Conversation with Collaborative Leadership](#)



Keynote speaker Dr. Kofi Essel discussed how food-based interventions hold immense potential to prevent and manage chronic conditions, particularly when leveraging the reach of large healthcare organizations. The lecture underscored the critical responsibility of healthcare providers and partners in championing "food as medicine" initiatives and empowering families to harness the transformative power of nutrition as a cornerstone of primary prevention and population-based care.

Learn from Dr. Essel!

Inside TCHMB: A Conversation with Collaborative Leadership

Charleta Guillory, MD, MPH, FAAP
TCHMB Executive Committee Chair
Baylor College of Medicine

Manda Hall, MD
DSHS Representative, TCHMB Executive Committee
DSHS

Patrick Ramsey, MD, MSPH
TCHMB Chief Medical Officer
UTHealth San Antonio

Deanna Hoelscher, PhD, RDN, LN, CNS, FISBPNA
TCHMB Executive Sponsor
UTHealth Houston School of Public Health in Austin

The Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living and the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health hosted an engaging and insightful conversation with the leadership of the Texas Collaborative for Healthy Mothers and Babies (TCHMB) that took a deep dive into the heart of our collaborative efforts in perinatal healthcare. This panel highlighted key partnerships that are driving innovation and improving outcomes for mothers and babies across Texas.

Hear from perinatal experts!

Past Lunch & Learn Presentations

The most recent TX RPC Lunch & Learn presentation by Elena Marks, JD, MPH and Charles Mathias, PhD on Non-Medical Drivers of Health: A Solution to Healthcare Cost and Quality, highlighting a recent [report](#) released from Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy.



Access the slide deck.



See the full report.

Coming soon: We are looking forward to seeing you in our last Lunch & Learn this year in December! Details will be shared soon

Resource Corner

The TX RPC Project develops accessible and accurate public health policy-related resources from field experts. Links to specific resource categories on our website can be found below:

[TX RPC Project Health Policy Resources](#)

[Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living Webinar Series](#)

[TX RPC Project Newsletters Archive](#)

[Texas Legislative Bill Tracker](#)

[Texas Child Health Status Reports and Toolkits](#)

[Form: Newsletter Resource](#)

[COVID-19 Resources](#)

Request information on a public health topic.

About

The [Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration \(TX RPC\) Project](#) is a nonpartisan network that aims to bridge research and policy by supporting partnerships between child health researchers and legislators.

If you and your legislative office are interested in collaborating with our team to receive data-driven information at state, district, and local levels, please reach out to TXRPCNetwork@uth.tmc.edu.

Contact Our Team

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For more information about the TX RPC Project, please email: TXRPCNetwork@uth.tmc.edu.

This email was written and designed by Dr. Yuzi Zhang and Kirsten Handler.

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Texas Research-to-Policy
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