

# PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS & UPDATES

TEXAS RESEARCH-TO-POLICY COLLABORATION



May 2023

## 2023 TX RPC LEGISLATIVE BILL TRACKER

The TX RPC Project has updated the 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. The tracker is segmented into general categories such as food access and insecurity, maternal and child health, child behavioral health, healthcare access, school and after-school care, and more.

- **Bills tracked are selected based on the Center's vision/mission on child and adolescent health, research by our TX RPC researchers, and health priorities identified by TX RPC legislators during baseline interviews.**

USE THE BILL TRACKER

## TX RPC HEALTH POLICY RESOURCES

### **Impact of Technology Use on Adolescent Health - NEW!**

Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project

*Released April 25, 2022*

This report examines how technology use among adolescents impacts their overall health. Increased screen time has been associated with sedentary behaviors, and negative physical and mental health outcomes.

#### Key Takeaways:

- More than 60% of Texas 8th- and 11th-graders report spending more than 4 hours in front of a screen each day.
- Body dissatisfaction has been linked to risk-taking behaviors and mental health problems, with 40% of adolescents saying that images from social media have caused them to worry about their body image or weight.
- However, adolescents report that social networking has helped them to discuss and seek advice for mental health questions. Digital tools have also helped clinicians and researchers reach younger populations.

### **Doula Services - NEW!**

Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project

*Released March 27, 2023*

This report provides an overview of doula services and pilot programs testing the effectiveness of doula-Medicaid partnerships and maternal outcomes.

#### Key Takeaways:

- Medicaid cost-savings analyses have shown an average savings of \$986 per birth as a result of doula support.
- Doula services are associated with improved birth outcomes and fewer pregnancy complications, including shortened labor times, lower rates of cesarean births, decreased rates of low birthweight babies, and lower odds of postpartum depression in mothers.

### **Community Eligibility Provisions (CEP)**

#### **Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project**

*Updated August 30, 2022*

This report discusses Community Eligibility Provisions (CEP) benefits for families, schools, and school districts. CEP is one way to address food insecurity in children and families. School districts in lower-income areas can use CEP to provide breakfast and lunch to students at no cost to families.

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- Schools and districts that enroll in CEP help eliminate the stigma around food assistance, reduce food budget stress for families, and improve student outcomes by meeting students' nutritional needs.
- Administrators and school staff benefit from CEP participation with streamlined meal service operation, reduced paperwork and costs, and reduced tracking of unpaid meal charges.
- Schools that utilize CEP are reimbursed for meals served to students each day based on the percentage of students eligible for free meals.

## **TX RPC BRUNCH & LEARN EVENTS**

### **Texas' All Payor Claims Database: A New Resource for Advancing Public Health and Transparency**

**Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living**

*TX RPC Project Lunch & Learn Event - May 4, 2023*

This TX RPC Project Brunch & Learn presentation by Lee Spangler discussed Texas' All Payor Claims Database, a new resource to assist in health transparency in Texas.

**TX RPC has hosted four Lunch & Learn events since August 2022. View all TX RPC Lunch & Learn events [here](#).**

## **TX RPC MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Expert Advice: Finding the Best Health Insurance**

**Dennis Andrulis, PhD - UTHealth Houston School of Public Health in Austin**

Dr. Dennis Andrulis discusses how to determine the best health insurance and Health Savings Account (HSA) plans for you. Comprehensive health insurance plans that are sold in individual marketplaces or offered by employers are reputable options since they must comply with state and/or federal regulations. Read the article [here](#).

## **TX RPC PARTNER EVENTS**

### **Register for Upcoming Webinars**

- **Importance of Outdoor Play** (May 10, 2023, @ 11:30 a.m.)

### **View Past Webinar Recordings**

- [Michael & Susan Dell Center Lectureship in Child Health: What's for Lunch? The Past, Present, and Future of School Nutrition](#) (April 27, 2023)
- [Maternal and Child Health in Texas: A Continuing Crisis](#) (April 20, 2023)
- [What Changes Will This Legislative Session Have for School Health?](#) (April 13, 2023)

## SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES

### [Ambient Temperature Increases and Preschoolers' Outdoor Physical Activity](#)

Research from Dr. Courtney Byrd-Williams studies the effects of increasingly higher temperatures due to climate change on the physical activity of children. Read more about her findings [here](#).

Follow us on social media to stay up-to-date on reports, resources, and events.



## TX RPC RESEARCHER PUBLICATIONS

### Featured Publication

#### [Academic and Attendance Outcomes After Participation in a School Breakfast Program](#)

##### Key Takeaways:

- School breakfast programs that are utilized in large public school systems serving low-resource, ethnically diverse populations of students are associated with an increase in students' school attendance.
- Breakfast After the Bell (BATB) program students were 2.5 times more likely to attend school than students who did not participate in the program.
- Mean reading scores increased during the 2018-2019 academic year among BATB students.

### Texas Population Publications

#### Central Texas

[Dietary Psychosocial Mediators of Vegetable Intake in School Children from Low-Income and Racial/Ethnic U.S. Minority Families: Findings from the Texas Sprouts Intervention](#)

#### North Texas

[Efficacy of a Primary Care eHealth Obesity Treatment Pilot Intervention Developed for Vulnerable Pediatric Patients](#)

#### West Texas

[Nutrition and Health Programming and Outreach in Grocery Retail Settings: A Community Coalition in Action](#)

#### Southeast Texas

[Examining Neighborhood-Level Hot and Cold Spots of Food Insecurity in Relation to Social Vulnerability in Houston, Texas](#)

#### General Texas

[The Association Between Tobacco and Cannabis Use and the Age of Onset of Depression and Anxiety Symptoms Among Adolescents and Young Adults](#)

### General Publications

[Examining Bullying Victimization, Bullying Perpetration, and Positive Childhood Experiences](#)

[Examining Readiness for Implementing Practice Changes in Federally Qualified Health Centers: A Rapid Qualitative Study](#)

## 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

For more information, email [TXRPCNetwork@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:TXRPCNetwork@uth.tmc.edu).

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