

Community Health Implementation Strategies (CHIS)

Three-Year Progress Report

Children's Hospital Colorado

Colorado Springs Campus

Time Period: July 2022- June 2025

Introduction

This report summarizes the three-year outcomes of the Community Health Implementation Strategies addressing community needs identified in the [2021 Community Health Needs Assessment \(CHNA\)](#) for the Colorado Springs Campus. In recognition that a multi-prong strategy is more likely to make a difference, our approach to addressing mental health was holistic and layered.

Executive Summary

Community Health Implementation Strategies beginning in 2022 focused on Mental Health. Mental Health has been a consistent priority for Children's Hospital Colorado and long-time, community-identified need. In 2022, Children's Colorado published two Community Health Implementation Strategy (CHIS) reports focused on mental health for our [Anschutz and South Campuses](#) as well as our [Colorado Springs Hospital](#). A CHIS for our [North Campus](#) followed in 2023. Since many strategies are applied across the Children's Colorado hospitals and systems of care, the goals and strategies below are often shared across our system and geographic regions; this can mean that strategies may be in different stages of development or that local initiatives may not yet be in place. This is also true of our growing work to address the social drivers of health – partnerships and strategies may differ by geographic area.

HIGHLIGHTS

Mental Health. The Building Resiliency for Healthy Kids Program, exclusive to Colorado Springs, provides direct mental health services and prevention support to children in schools. In the past year, the program was embedded into two Colorado Springs-area districts – Districts 11 and 8 – enrolled 172 unique patients and completed 2,125 visits.

Three-Year Progress Summary

Cross-Cutting Priority-Area Work

Several strategies and activities addressed multiple priority areas at once. This work included:

1. Policy and advocacy work to protect, advance, and enhance the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families.
2. Psychosocial screening, health and system navigation, and connection to resources and services.



Cross-Cutting Strategy 1: Policy and Advocacy

Policy and advocacy are important tools to improve children’s health. Our Government Affairs and Medicaid Strategy teams work closely together, with partners, and with elected officials to advocate for policies and legislation that will support healthy, happy, and thriving families and communities throughout Colorado and our region. In the past three years, over 8,500 advocacy letters or emails were submitted to elected officials or government agencies, 136 Children’s Colorado experts testified in public hearings, and 2,578 people became Child Health Champions (parents, caretakers, staff, patients and community members who, as part of our Child Health Champions advocacy network, raise their voices and advocate for issues impacting kids).

Strategy 1: Children’s Government Affairs, Medicaid Strategy, and Partners for Children’s Mental Health (PCMH) teams will advocate for and support funding, legislation, regulations, and policies that improve access to high-quality mental health services for Colorado youth.

Strategy 2: Children’s Colorado Government Affairs and Medicaid Strategy teams will promote access to care, including mental health care and health-related social needs, by supporting funding, legislation, regulations and other policies that improve access to high-quality care.

Note that Cross-Cutting Strategies 1 & 2 align closely with Access to Care – Goal 2: Improve systems of care and access to healthcare services, Strategy 1.

- In 2024, 341 Child Health Champions received child advocacy training.
- In 2024, the Pediatric Mental Health Institute (PMHI) Youth Action Board (YAB) was incorporated into the Youth Council on Mental Health (YCMH). The structure was built for youth, by youth. Over 45 Colorado youth applied to participate in the YCMH. The council holds 25 youth and two boards: the Community Action Team and the Program Innovation Team. The boards meet monthly to discuss mental health initiatives in schools and youth-led resource development.
- More than 140 people participated in the May 2025 Mental Health Action Day.
- Partners for Children’s Mental Health (PCMH) is a cross-system resource, training, and implementation hub designed to increase capacity, access, and quality of youth mental health services in Colorado. PCMH focuses on the startling increase in suicide rates among young people 10-24 years of age in Colorado and across the country. PCMH collaborates with hospitals, primary care practices (PCPs) and schools to raise awareness about the early signs of suicide risk, evaluates that risk and provides the best ways to intervene when necessary and provide appropriate resources.

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Advocacy letters or emails submitted to elected officials or government agencies	3,479	809	4,405	8,693
Advocates trained through Resident Advocacy Trainings	256	232	569	1,057
Bills monitored	396	213	160	769
Children's Colorado experts who testified in public hearings	41	32	63	136
Coalitions in which policy and advocacy team participated	41	35	32	108
Served in a lead advocacy role for priority policies impacting children's health	8	9	3	20
New Child Health Champions	1,534	406	638	2,578
New coalitions built across policy priority areas	11	5	2	18



Cross-Cutting Strategy 2: Psychosocial Screening and Navigation Services

Screening and referral for psychosocial and basic needs has been increasingly recognized as a critical complement to health care. Health care services alone are insufficient for healthy families; our teams also support children and families by screening for many different needs – including food security, housing, mental health, and many more – and providing navigational support in accessing available resources and services. We are part of a network of partners connecting families to care and providing important supports. Universal social needs screening has been standard practice in our primary care settings since 2016 and was launched for inpatient units in August 2023: each year, a greater percentage of inpatient families have been screened. Over the past three years, nearly 8,000 families were served by Community Health Navigators at the Colorado Springs Hospital. In 2024, 7.2% of patients screened positive for a social need – the most common of which was food insecurity (Figure 1).

Strategy 1: Expand social needs screening to inpatient settings.

- Social needs launched for inpatient units in August 2023.

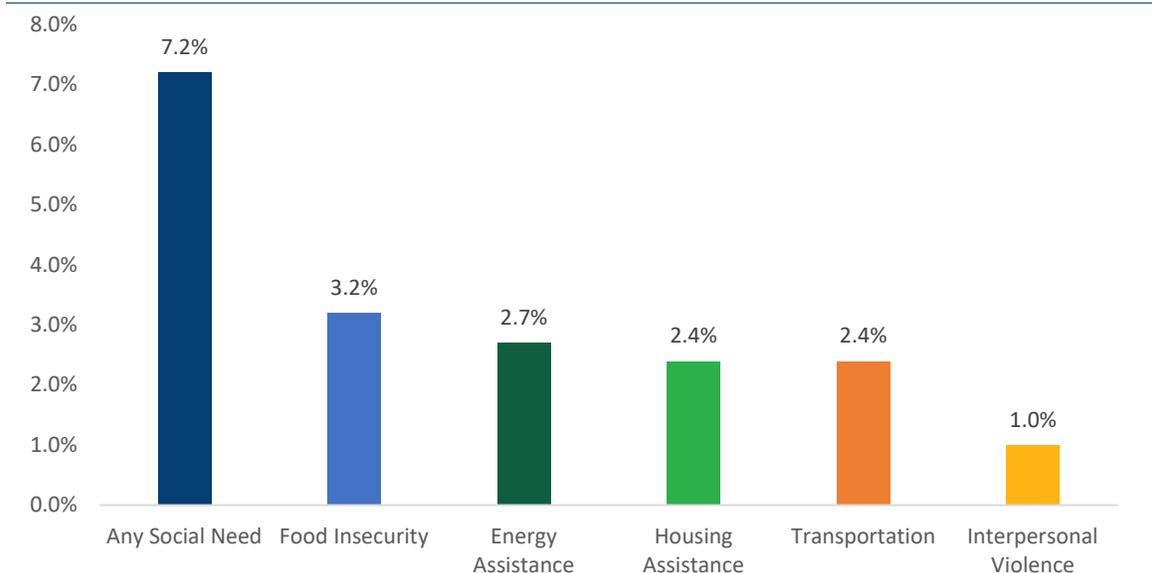
Strategy 2: Address social barriers to care by providing supports, education and referrals.

Please note these two strategies are the same as two of the strategies in Goal 3: Promote protective factors and reduce risk factors for mental health conditions.

- Our health navigation teams play a critical role addressing needs like housing, food, benefits enrollment and navigation, transportation, and more. In 2024, in the Colorado Springs region, we completed 6,294 in-patient social needs screenings with 453 (7.2%) patients screening positive for social needs.
- We partnered with Calhan High School’s Family, Care, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) students to support their Safety Day, bringing and providing over 200 helmets, giving and fitting them for elementary and middle school students while educating them on the importance of helmet use. We offered child passenger safety checks to caregivers during the and connected with 15 caregivers at a Back-to-School event to talk about booster seat safety, providing 2 free booster seats to families whose child did not have a safe seat belt fit.
- We held a child passenger safety check in Cripple Creek, CO in Teller County.

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Car seat education materials distributed/presentations	13	14	14	41
Car seats distributed	89	142	105	336
Participants in Shaken Baby Syndrome education program	54	discontinued	N/A	54
Families served by Community Health Navigators, Colorado Springs Hospital (CSH)	1,816	2,661	3,512	7,989
Percentage of inpatients screened with a psychosocial screening tool, CSH	go-live	92.4%	98.8%	N/A
Of patients who screened positive for a psychosocial need, the percentage who wanted an intervention and received one, CSH	go-live	97.7%	91.4%	N/A

Figure 1. Percentage Patients Screening Positive for a Social Need, by Type, 2024-2025, Colorado Springs Hospital



Priority Area: Mental Health

Mental health includes a person’s emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It can be strengthened by social supports and environments but also put at risk by traumatic events and stressors. Social and environmental factors, often called social drivers of health, play a significant role in mental health outcomes. While not all mental health conditions are preventable, there are approaches to reduce risk, promote mental health resiliency, and better prepare families, healthcare professionals, teachers, and peers to support children and youth with mental health conditions.

Our approach to improving mental health focuses on four areas:

1. Improve mental health awareness and reduce the risk of suicide
2. Improve systems of care and access to mental health services
3. Promote protective factors and reduce risk factors for mental health conditions
4. Promote community voices and engagement to inform, advise and shape mental health priorities and systems of care

Goal 1: Improve mental health awareness and reduce the risk of suicide

Strategy 1: The Building Resiliency for Healthy Kids Program will provide a community-responsive and research-based, upstream approach for youth through 1:1 coaching, peer coaching, and community collaborations.

- The Building Resiliency for Healthy Kids Program, exclusive to Colorado Springs, provides direct mental health services and prevention support to children in schools. It includes the Resiliency Coaching Program, which helps students build coping skills and emotional resilience, and the Behavioral Health Navigator Program, which provides individual and group therapy to students. The school-based team provides individual and group therapy services in a confidential space

within the school setting. This team works with children and adolescents who are struggling with a variety of mental health issues, most often including depression, anxiety, and trauma. The program evolved into a 2.0 version during the 2024-2025 period (note the phasing out and in of various measures in the table below).

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
1:1 coaching sessions completed for Building Resiliency for Healthy Kids (1.0)	2,700	0	N/A	2,700
Schools participating in Building Resiliency for Healthy Kids (1.0)	4	24	N/A	N/A
Students served by Building Resiliency for Healthy Kids (1.0)	485	1,414	N/A	1,899
Districts served in Building Resiliency 2.0 adapted program	N/A	N/A	2	2
Initial assessments conducted in Building Resiliency 2.0 adapted program	N/A	N/A	169	169
Visits through Building Resiliency 2.0 adapted program	N/A	N/A	2,125	2,125
Unique patients in Building Resiliency 2.0 adapted program	N/A	N/A	172	172

Strategy 2: Partners for Children’s Mental Health will train trusted adults to meet child and youth mental health needs and provide implementation support in schools, clinical settings and communities. PCMH plans to expand trainings, including the diversity of trainees and regions served.

- We actively participated through attendance, facilitation, and/or financial support in three monthly school meetings that addressed mental health, including suicide prevention. This included Colorado Schools Community of Practice, Colorado Alliance for School Health, and the School Climate Coalition.
- We became an active part of the conversations with schools and other organizations that serve in the school setting, to identify needs and gaps that we can target with our future trainings. We created a fact-base of information to inform our future work in schools.

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Professionals who received PCMH training	777	573	1,402	2,752
Professional contact hours for PCMH training	3,458	925	37	4,420
Community members who received PCMH training	209	268	171	648
Community member contact hours for PCMH training	484	14	5	503
Colorado counties reached by PCMH	62	49	24	N/A*
School districts engaged by PCMH	23	5	5	N/A*
Improvement in satisfaction, knowledge, confidence, and intention scores among school trainees (out of 5)	1.9 to 3.6	2.1 to 3.6	N/A**	N/A
Improvement in knowledge and fidelity scores to program implementation among clinic trainees (out of 5)	2.1 to 3.4	2.6 to 3.9	N/A	N/A
Improvement in knowledge and fidelity scores to program implementation among community trainees (out of 5)	3.6 to 4.7	N/A	N/A	N/A

*As we are unable to validate unique entities, three-year totals are not included.

**This program changed over time; not all data were collected every year.

Strategy 3: Children’s Colorado will screen for suicidal ideation and depression in various clinical settings.

- In August 2023, universal suicide and depression screening was implemented within all the inpatient units of the Children’s Colorado system.

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Clinics that implemented formal suicide screenings	6	6	2	14
Providers that implemented formal suicide screenings	78	127	5	210

Strategy 4: Pediatric Mental Health Institute (PMHI), Speakers Bureau (SB), and Corporate and Community Development (CCD) will educate and raise awareness of child mental health needs, resources, supports, and skill building.

- Activities during 2024 included a strong focus on targeted activities in the local community. Our team hosted and attended over 50 meetings with local school, government entities, and community mental health centers.

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Attendees at PMHI community presentations on mental health	503	123	N/A	N/A*
Mental health-related media events	2	4	2	8
Community health presentations on mental health	14	1	6	21
Events with mental health resources distributed	22	1	10	33
Media stories about youth mental health featuring Children's Colorado experts	1,622	331	531	2,484
PMHI department pageviews	71,758	67,760	73,396	212,914
Mental health website pageviews	5,285	6,924	13,858	26,067
Continuing Medical Education (CME) presentations related to mental health	2	9	4	15
Non-CME presentations related to mental health	13	4	55	72
NewsNow articles related to mental health	14	6	12	32

*As we are unable to validate unique individuals, a three-year total is not included.

Goal 2: Improve systems of care and access to mental health services

Strategy 1: Children’s Government Affairs, Medicaid Strategy and PCMH teams will advocate for and support funding, legislation, regulations, and policies that improve access to high-quality mental health services for Colorado youth.

Note that Strategy 1 is similar to Cross-Cutting Strategy 1: Policy and Advocacy, Strategies 1 & 2.

- A team of Medicaid, government affairs, and mental health experts advocated for early childhood mental health and Regional Accountable Entities (RAE) 3.0 reforms on integrated

behavioral health. Highlights from 2023 include efforts on House Bill 23-1269 to improve outcomes for kids with complex mental health needs by increasing access to services and strengthening accountability for children and youth who end up boarding or staying in hospitals for an extended period of time. Notably, the team supported the passage of Senate Bill 23-002 to enable community health workers to be reimbursed by Medicaid to improve patient health outcomes, address health disparities, and reduce healthcare costs while also expanding and diversifying the healthcare workforce.

- In 2024, we continued to build relationships with community partners. The collective effort focused on creating a pediatric alternative payment methodology, mitigating the impact of Medicaid disenrollment on children and families (caused by the unwind of the public health emergency coverage), and advocating for child health priorities in the Accountable Care Collaborative (ACC) 3.0 contracts. All eight of our child health priorities were advanced in these final contracts.

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Amendments secured on legislation and/or regulations impacting children's mental health	14	14	12	40
Media stories generated with an advocacy focus on children's mental health and/or Social Drivers of Health	34	3	33	70

Goal 3: Promote protective factors and reduce risk factors for mental health conditions

Strategy 1: Expand social needs screenings to inpatient settings.

Strategy 2: Address social barriers to care by providing supports, education, and referrals.

Please note that these two strategies are the same as those included in Cross-Cutting Strategy 2: Psychosocial Screening and Navigation Services.

- Our Injury Prevention Program offered lock boxes to patient families who have suicidal or self-harm risks that can store items including medication, cannabis, firearms, and other weapons.
- Wheeled activity injury remains a top-5 cause of traumatic injury treated at the Colorado Springs hospital. We offered free helmets to our in-patient population through our Emergency Department and included educational handouts. Additionally, we provided and fit free helmets at appropriate community outreach events and provided approximately 300 helmets in 2024.

Measure (Count or Percentage)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Families served by Community Health Navigators, Colorado Springs Hospital (CSH)	1,816	2,661	3,512	7,989
Percentage of inpatients screened with a psychosocial screening tool, CSH	go-live	92.4%	98.8%	N/A
Of patients who screened positive for a psychosocial need, the percentage who wanted an intervention and received one, CSH	go-live	97.7%	91.4%	N/A

Strategy 3: Create a culturally responsive, equitable and inclusive environment by training, mentorship and workforce development with staff and community members. (Please note that some of these efforts are system-wide and may not have local initiatives yet in place.)

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Center for Advanced Pediatric & Perinatal Education (CAPE) simulation trainings	20	7	9	36
Children’s Colorado policies and procedures consultations with the Experience Different Teams	120	66	168	354
Community advocates represented in the CAPE simulation trainings	34	21	26	81
Healthcare providers trained in the CAPE simulation trainings	35	24	38	97
Mental health-related education events and opportunities sponsored within communities	35	18	54	107
Mental health-related education events and opportunities sponsored within the organization	175	76	78	329
Team members participating in Team Member Resource Groups	1,590	1,599	1,804	4,993
Team members trained as Captains of Inclusion	43	42	42	127

Strategy 4: Provide community-based asthma programs to strengthen the circle of support for patients with asthma to improve health outcomes. These programs plan to expand geographically and potentially add direct mental health support.

- In 2024, asthma programs began to expand into the Colorado Springs region. During the first year, the programs focused on getting established and relationship building.
- Two patients were enrolled and received home visits during the first year.

Strategy 5: In partnership with local schools, increase access to both behavioral health resources and clinical services in school settings.

Please note that this strategy is closely related to Goal 1: Improve mental health awareness and reduce the risk of suicide, Strategy 1: The Building Resiliency for Healthy Kids Program.

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Participants in Colorado who have enrolled in Unstuck and On Target	1,815	1,255	1,146	N/A*
Participants who have received executive functioning resources from Unstuck and On Target	86,618	36,542	48,746	N/A*
People who have visited Unstuck and On Target website	64,231	27,525	29,619	N/A*

**As we are unable to validate unique individuals, three-year totals are not included.*

Goal 4: Promote community voices and engagement to inform, advise, and shape mental health priorities and systems of care

Strategy 1: Develop and participate in coalitions and councils with people with lived experience, community advocates and governmental agencies to ensure community voices shape mental health policies and systems of care health policies and systems of care.

- Children’s Colorado believes in health care access for all and recognizes that this can be especially difficult in rural and frontier counties. In 2024, we strengthened our outreach to more rural communities within El Paso and Teller Counties. We successfully partnered with the town of Calhan, CO, in eastern El Paso County, to provide and fit free helmets at their Summer Fest and reach over 40 children and adults.
- In 2024, we reached our greater Colorado Springs and El Paso County community through over 40 outreach and educational events and opportunities, reaching over 1,900 adults and children to promote awareness of child safety including pedestrian safety, motor vehicle safety, firearm safety, fire and burn prevention, helmet safety, infant safe sleep, poison prevention, fall prevention, and other home safety topics.

Measure (Count)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Total (All 3 Years)
Youth participating on Partners for Children’s Mental Health youth committee	23	22	17	62

Next Steps

In 2024, Children’s Hospital Colorado - Colorado Springs conducted its most recent triennial [Community Health Needs Assessment \(CHNA\)](#). Through a robust data collection and community engagement approach that included both qualitative and quantitative, primary and secondary data sources – we identified six critical issues for children’s health. The priorities have been divided into two primary categories: Health Priorities, including Mental Health (a continued priority), Injury, and Preventive Care – and Social Drivers of Health, including Access to Care, Nutrition Security, and Housing. The CHNA was approved by the Children’s Colorado Board of Directors on December 19, 2024. Children’s Hospital Colorado will address these community-driven priorities, building upon work completed through the 2022-2024 CHIS, through a commitment of resources and with specific programs and services as outlined in the [2025 Community Health Implementation Strategies](#) report. We approach this work in the spirit of collaboration and will continue to work with and grow our partnerships with community and community-based organizations as we work towards common goals.

Questions or Comments? Please contact us at communitybenefit@childrenscolorado.org.