

Regular School Attendance Design Team

Work group: Child Health

Research tells us that children's health issues are a major cause of chronic absenteeism. Top health-related causes include:

- Asthma
- Oral health
- Mental health and anxiety/social-emotional health
- Food insecurity
- Diet, exercise
- Diabetes, obesity and related illness
- Acute illness, like flu
- Chronic illness and pain

Outcomes related to Child Health, as it impacts Regular School Attendance:

- Children receive regular well-child visits.
- Children have seen a dentist in the past year
 - Children have sufficient access to dentists
 - Children have sufficient access to dentists who accept Medicaid
- Children have healthy weight
 - Children over age 6 are physically active for 60 minutes/day, 5 days/week
 - Children eat the recommended dietary guidelines of fruits and vegetables

North Carolina has a lot of assets in place! There has been a lot of excellent work already done in North Carolina around these issues. Pathways would like to lift up and leverage these assets. We have talked with some of you and surveyed the larger Pathways Partners (stakeholders) group to learn about some of the great initiatives that are helping us move towards these outcomes. Here is what we have learned.

Child Health Asset Map, as related to Regular School Attendance:

- NC has high rates of children's health insurance coverage through Medicaid, Health Choice and private insurance.
- Some schools and pediatric practices are working closely together to improve access to care for students.
- The Smart Start network integrates children's health practices into early care and education settings.
- The NC School Health Alliance supports school health centers across the state.
- There is collaboration among Community Care for NC (CCNC), Early Prevention, Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) at the Division of Medicaid, Health Check Coordinators, and CCNC regional networks and practices.

- Fostering Health NC works across systems to implement medical homes for children in foster care.
- Medicaid and Health Choice help cover children's dental expenses.
- NC Oral Health Surveillance Plan provides strategic direction on children's oral health
- The Oral Health Collaborative provides advocacy around oral health issues.
- Into the Mouths of Babes (IMB)/Connecting the Docs program trains medical providers to deliver preventive oral health services to young children insured by NC Medicaid.
- the Carolina Dental Home Project initiated collaboration of dentists and pediatricians in a three-county area to ensure that the highest risk children had a dental home as early as possible. This was achieved through development and use of a Priority Oral Health Risk Assessment and Referral Tool (PORRT), including risk-based referral guidelines.
- The strong collaboration of organizations and agencies involved in efforts to reduce early childhood tooth decay in North Carolina includes, but is not limited to, the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, the UNC School of Dentistry, the N.C. Division of Medical Assistance, the N.C. Academy of Family Physicians, the N.C. Pediatric Society, the N.C. Oral Health Section, Community Care of North Carolina, Early Head Start, East Coast Migrant Head Start, the N.C. Dental Society and the N.C. Partnership for Children
- There are nonprofit Safety Net Dental Clinics in most NC counties.
- Eat Smart, Move More NC Initiative provides advocacy around healthy weight.
- NC's *Obesity Prevention Plan 2013-2020* provides strategic direction for the state around healthy weight.
- Green spaces, walking trails, parks and playgrounds provide opportunities for building exercise into North Carolinians' daily lives.
- *Move More North Carolina: Recommended Standards for After-School Physical Activity* provides guidance for after-school programs. The Move More After-School Collaborative is after-school providers, funders and community partners working together to promote more intentional physical activity opportunities for children and youth by advocating for and supporting best physical activity practices in North Carolina after-school programs.
- Action plans are being created to (1) develop an app that provides current information about local parks, trails, farmer's markets that accept EBT, events focused on activities and healthy living, etc., and (2) increase the number of local farmer's markets and farm stands that accept EBT as a form of payment.
- Shape NC: Healthy Starts for Young Children, An Initiative of Smart Start and BCBSNC Foundation is a multi-year initiative to increase the number of children starting kindergarten at a healthy weight and ready to learn.