



OKLAHOMA CHAPTER
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS



2019 Blueprint for Children **OKLAHOMA CHAPTER**

Priorities and recommendations to optimize lifespan outcomes, foster child health and well-being, strengthen families, support our communities, and enhance the position of Oklahoma as a leading state for children.



2019 Advocacy Agenda

Oklahoma Chapter | American Academy of Pediatrics

MEDICAID

In Oklahoma, SoonerCare (Medicaid and CHIP) provides health insurance to more than 719,000 children. Children make up about 65% of all SoonerCare enrollees, yet children account for only 19% of Medicaid spending. Oklahoma's pediatricians are committed to working with policymakers to develop and implement policy that:

- improve children's access to care in the Medicaid program,
- ensure that Medicaid work requirements do not create barriers to care for parents and other adult family members, which can affect children's enrollment as well, and
- increase access to mental health services.

IMMUNIZATIONS

67.3% of Oklahoma children ages 19-35 months are fully vaccinated against contagious diseases. Oklahoma's pediatricians are committed to working with policymakers to develop and implement policy that:

- works to remove any economic barriers to fully immunizing Oklahoma's children against vaccine preventable diseases in accordance with current AAP recommendations,
- ensures that families are provided with accurate, evidence-based information about the safety and efficacy of childhood immunizations,
- supports prevention of outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases in the environments in which children learn and play, and
- provides appropriate funding levels and public health infrastructure to support state immunization programs.

CHILDHOOD OBESITY

In our state 34% of adolescents are overweight or obese and 40% of children do not receive the AAP-recommended 1 hour a day of physical activity. Oklahoma's pediatricians are committed to working with policymakers to develop and implement policy that:

- require schools to provide a minimum of 1 hour of daily physical education for children in grades K-12,
- require that students K-6 receive 1 hour of daily recess, and
- reduce access to sugary drinks and foods of minimal nutritional value in schools.



2019 Advocacy Agenda

Oklahoma Chapter | American Academy of Pediatrics

MENTAL HEALTH & ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)

70% of children who have had major depressive episodes and 17% of children who have severe major depressive episodes in Oklahoma have lacked access to mental health services. Additionally, Oklahoma has one of the highest rates of ACEs in the nation. Oklahoma's pediatricians are committed to working with policymakers to develop and implement policy that:

- increases access to mental health services for children,
- funds the integration of behavioral health into pediatric primary care, and
- investigates options using telehealth care to expand access to mental health services, with appropriate linkages to the medical home.
- takes steps to overcome the high rate of Adverse Childhood Experiences that impacts Oklahoma residents

EDUCATION FUNDING

Per pupil funding in Oklahoma is just \$8,067, which includes teacher salary and benefits, pupil support, instructional staff support, general administration, school administration, and other education related services. This puts Oklahoma among the bottom 5 states for funding per pupil. Oklahoma's pediatricians are committed to working with policymakers to develop and implement policy that:

- fosters school-readiness through program funding for acquisition of general knowledge, physical health, language skills, social and emotional development, learning motivation, and play and creativity,
- supports adequate funding for education, including quality preschool, child care, and child development programs that promote developmentally appropriate activities in a stimulating, nurturing, and safe environment,
- supports schools in their work as partners with families and the medical community in teaching youth to maintain a healthy, active lifestyle and to help prevent obesity,
- promotes the connections between physical activity, good nutrition, physical education and nutrition programs, and academic performance and achievement,
- institutes a competitive salary schedule to attract and retain well-qualified teachers and education support staff,
- provides funding to improve school facilities, and
- provides funding to school districts to increase course offerings.



Building a healthy future

Policy Goals

PROMOTE HEALTHY CHILDREN

All children must have access to the highest-quality health care, so they can thrive throughout their lifespan. Policymakers must ensure that all children, regardless of their immigration status:

- have affordable and high-quality health care coverage,
- have insurance with comprehensive, pediatric-appropriate benefits,
- have access to needed primary and subspecialty pediatric care and mental health services, and
- receive comprehensive, family-centered care in a medical home.

SUPPORT SECURE FAMILIES

Together we can work to advance efforts to ensure that parents can give their children the best foundation for the future. Policymakers must ensure that all families have:

- work that provides a stable and adequate income and family-friendly benefits,
- safe and secure housing,
- affordable and safe child care,
- access to adequate, healthy, nutritious foods throughout the year, and
- resources that support positive parenting skills training.

BUILD STRONG COMMUNITIES

Strong communities are the building blocks for secure families and healthy children. Policymakers must ensure that communities:

- are safe from violence and environmental hazards,
- provide high-quality early education programs,
- support public health systems that protect children from infectious diseases and support maternal and child health, and
- respond effectively when disasters and public health emergencies occur.

ENSURE OUR STATE IS A LEADER FOR CHILDREN

Child health and well-being must be elevated and maintained as a priority in our state. Policymakers must develop and implement policy that:

- funds and supports public health and health services to help children grow into healthy adults,
- addresses environmental health and climate change issues that affect children, and
- addresses factors that make some children more vulnerable than others, such as race, ethnicity, religion, immigration status, sexual orientation or gender identity, and disability.

