

2020 - 2021
*Child Health
Advocacy and Outreach*
Community Report

Children's
HOSPITAL • ST. LOUIS
BJC HealthCare

WE HELP KIDS STAY
HEALTHY & SAFE





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OUR VALUES

St. Louis Children's Hospital (SLCH) has long been recognized as unparalleled for pediatric care within our region, as well as nationally and internationally. To continually improve the health and safety of our children locally, the Child Health Advocacy and Outreach (CHAO) department focuses on providing quality, health-related resources and education to the underserved.

CHAO works one on one with mothers, fathers, teachers, schools and, most importantly, children. We embrace SLCH's mission to "do what's right for kids" every day and strive to keep kids healthy, safe and strong. The programs outlined in this report offer effective community outreach on several levels, embracing both physical and mental wellness, and are vitally important to the families and children we serve daily.



HEALTHY KIDS

As one of the top-ranked children's hospitals in the country, St. Louis Children's Hospital goes beyond offering inpatient and outpatient medical care. Its Healthy Kids Express™ and Healthy Kids Healthy Minds™ community outreach services help ensure all children have access to quality health care and address medical barriers that affect school attendance and learning.

Healthy Kids Express (HKE) is the first dedicated pediatric mobile health program in the St. Louis area, providing health care services to underserved children and teens. About 20,000 young people are seen each year on one of three mobile health vans for dental, asthma or preventive care.

The Child Health Advocacy and Outreach (CHAO) Department of St. Louis Children's Hospital embarked upon Healthy Kids School-Based Asthma and Behavioral Health Virtual Care Services on March 3, 2020. The program takes the services from the Healthy Kids Express Asthma Program and the behavioral health portion of Healthy Kids Healthy Minds program thus creating Healthy Kids Virtual Care and expands the teams' footprint by providing them virtually. These school-based pilot programs provide direct care through partnership with the Hazelwood School District with continued expansion planned as a top area of growth as part of our strategic priorities.

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young people are seen each year on one of three mobile health vans for dental, asthma or preventive care.

HEALTHY KIDS EXPRESS ASTHMA

Asthma care repeatedly ranks high as a community need for children, youth and families, and it remains one of the top reasons for admission to the hospital as well as emergency department visits. To address this demand, the asthma program provides comprehensive asthma specialty visits and education to students and parents in medically underserved populations. Pediatric nurse practitioners, nurses and drivers work together on the mobile van to ensure each student is cared for with compassion. The program is unique, as students are seen on the van without parents during the school day, which decreases barriers of parents taking off work. Students are provided necessary equipment to use with inhalers for home and school. One-on-one education is done with each student in an age-appropriate manner. An in-depth asthma assessment is completed, working closely with the parent and primary care provider as needed. Assistance is given to help families in acquiring life-saving asthma medication for home and school. An individualized Asthma Action Plan is given to each student. In addition, staff work closely with school nurses.

During the 2020-2021 school year, HKE provided intensive asthma services to 16 schools in seven school districts. We enrolled 988 students in the intensive school-based asthma program, and 95 children received intensive asthma coach services. Asthma coaches worked with these families monthly to better manage the student's asthma. Of the students cared for by a coach, 96% followed up with their primary provider. A total of 1,083 children received 3,067 clinical encounters; 34 students were referred to Community Health Workers (CHW) related to varying social determinants of health needs.

While some students remained at home attending virtual school, practitioners were able to continue to care for them via telehealth and virtual visits. HKE continued relationships with these families and supported them during this trying time by providing education, equipment, action plans and prescriptions.

In 2020, 103 families received follow-up services from community health workers, including 85 students (82.5%) who received positive outcomes such as insurance coverage, medications or basic need assistance. In spring 2021, CHW participated in the Perspectives in Pediatrics panel to address Health Disparities: Social Determinants of Health and COVID-19. Thirty-five families were assisted with basic holiday needs during winter 2020. In addition, 96% of high-risk asthma patients who receive intensive coaching services attended a PCP/ specialist visit.

HKE provided intensive asthma services to **16 Schools** in seven school districts.

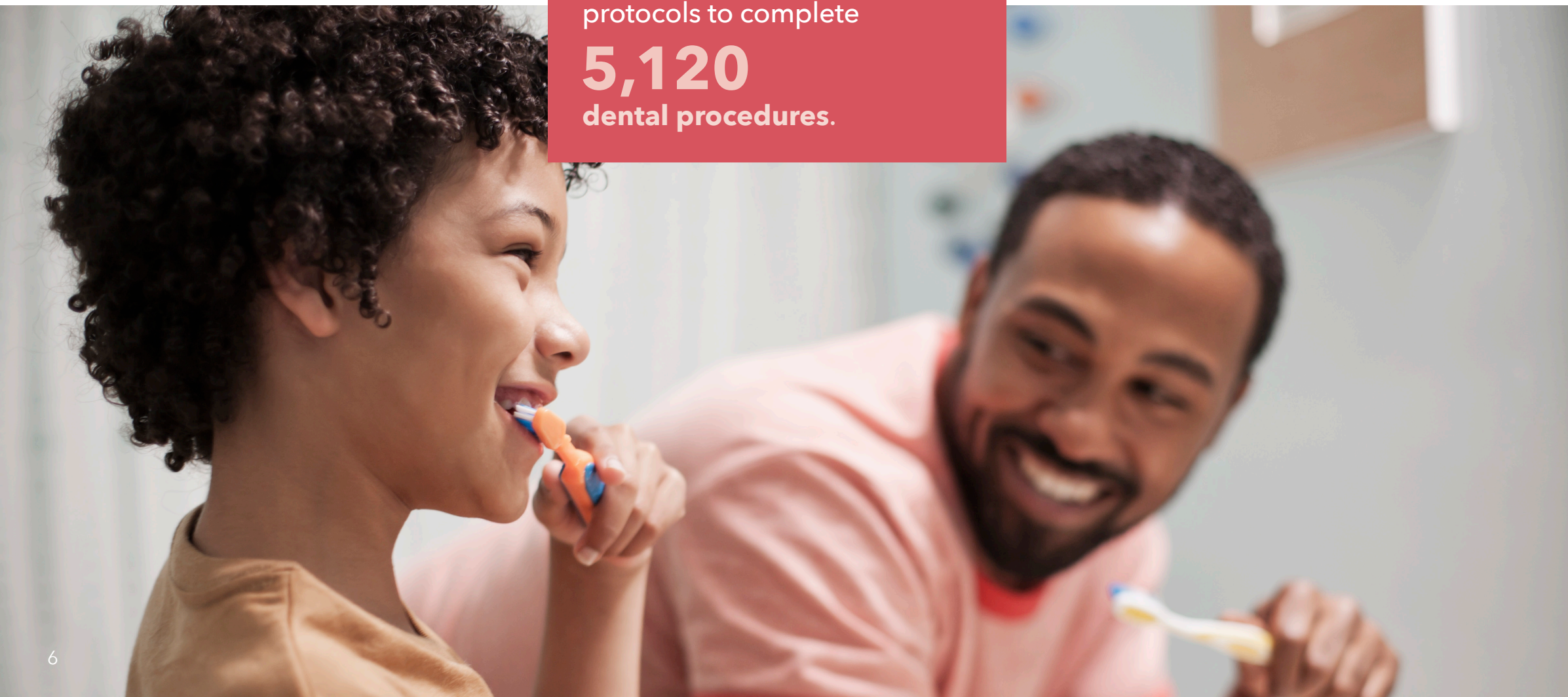


HEALTHY KIDS EXPRESS DENTAL

Tooth decay is one of the most common chronic diseases in children ages 6-19. Dental care is continually identified as a top need in underserved communities. Through HKE, access to dental health reduces health disparities in the communities we serve. The program provides dental education, cleanings, fluoride treatments, exams, x-rays and restorative care. In 2020, HKE dental services continued during the COVID-19 pandemic utilizing infection prevention and safety protocols to complete 5,120 dental procedures. More than half (54%) of the patients failed their initial exam. Despite higher fail rates and COVID-19 restrictions, 81% of cases from the previous year were closed during 2020. Educational outreach included 1,398 lessons on nutrition, injury prevention and oral hygiene that were completed during dental visits.

The role of Community Health Worker (CHW) continues to grow as an integral part of all Healthy Kids programs. The CHWs address social determinants of health (SDOH) to allow patients and families to focus on improving their health outcomes. Nearly one quarter (24%) of dental patients who self-identified as having no insurance resulted in the CHWs assisting 46 dental families with insurance or connecting patients/families to an applicable resource. We were able to address these needs for several children/families with limited English proficiency.

In 2020, HKE dental services continued during the COVID-19 pandemic utilizing infection prevention and safety protocols to complete **5,120 dental procedures.**



HEALTHY KIDS EXPRESS SCREENINGS

Ensuring students' physical health and well-being are essential back-to-school preparation activities – just as important as gathering much-needed school supplies.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that about 11 million Americans over age 12 need vision correction. Hearing and vision screenings can head off problems that may have a negative impact on language and speech development as well as academic performance. Additionally, screenings monitor growth to assure students develop as expected and collect information that would be helpful to a child's health care provider.

During 2020, to support the BJC/SLCH strategic mission in addressing COVID-19 vaccinations, CHWs were cross-trained to perform patient registration at community-based vaccination clinics. In addition, CHWs partnered with HK nursing staff, BJC interpretive services and Kaizen Health Inc., to arrange transportation for 82 patients in need of immunizations. Of this number, 85% successfully obtained immunizations. When no primary provider is identified, assistance is available to locate a community health center or other setting of choice.

Community Health Workers help break down social determinants of health factors that assist with keeping students in school. The goal is to catch any problems early.

The Screening program identifies barriers to learning through:

- Hearing screenings
- Vision screenings
- Administration of required immunizations for school attendance

During 2021, 6,495 children were served and 31,206 screenings were provided at schools and early childhood facilities. COVID-19 affected being able to see the students due to rooms inside the schools not being available. HKE screenings evaluated 4,497 immunization records and provided 4,393 children with 6,683 immunizations.

6,495 children were served during 2021.

31,206 screenings were provided at schools and early childhood facilities during 2021.

HEALTHY KIDS **VIRTUAL CARE**

Licensed Mental Health professionals are providing behavioral health care to students at Southeast Middle School via secure virtual visits. Students are seen for behavioral counseling for a variety of reasons on an individual basis, with permission of a caregiver. The program uses pre- and post-surveys to measure student attitudes about therapy and their ability to handle their emotions. The therapist sets treatment goals with students and tracks their progress while they receive services. The program's goals are to improve student knowledge and the use of healthy coping skills while decreasing behavioral referrals to the office.

Offered to Twillman Elementary School students, the Asthma Program provides assessment, education, equipment, prescriptions, Asthma Action Plans and communication with caregivers as well as the child's community primary care provider. Care is provided by pediatric nurse practitioners and registered nurses with Asthma Educator certification and either an Asthma Coach or a Community Health Worker to act as a virtual care presenter two days per week.

The Virtual Care program's success necessitated expansion from one to six schools. Two of the schools include the Asthma Program, and 32 students received services during the 2020-2021 school year.

During the pilot year of 2019-2020, 17 students were provided services. Due to constraints of COVID-19, services were provided to 18 students in the 2020-2021 school year. Those who obtained services were grateful for the services and were successful in their goals.

HEALTHY KIDS **HEALTHY MINDS**

The National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs has determined that 11.2 million children in the U.S. are at risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions.

Children with unmet health needs have a difficult time engaging in the educational process. Healthy Kids Healthy Minds (HKHM) launched in 2017 with the hiring of four school nurses to address students' unmet health needs in four Saint Louis Public Schools. In February 2018, the team expanded to include four behavioral health therapists and a trauma-informed care trainer.

In the 2019-2020 school year, HKHM expanded to four St. Louis charter schools with the launch of an HKHM "bridge" program that provides subsidized services to schools for the first three years of partnership. Providing subsidized services during the first critical start-up years allows schools the time to build a financial bridge into secure, long-term, sustainable funding to support the services full time starting in year four. The program continues to expand yearly by one school as part of the subsidized services model.

Each child's needs are assessed by a team composed of the student, parent, health care provider and school staff to reduce learning barriers and increase graduation rates.

HEALTHY KIDS **HEALTHY MINDS**

HKHM services include:

- Identifying and providing case management of students' chronic health care needs (e.g., diabetes, asthma, life-threatening food allergies, sickle cell disease)
- Providing parents with referrals and health care resources
- Offering trauma-informed care training for school staff members
- Providing individual, group and family therapy for students who exhibit chronic behavior and emotional needs

HKHM behavioral health therapists served 31 students and provided **595** individual therapy sessions

In 2020-2021, many schools were still virtual or using a hybrid model for students due to the pandemic. HKHM behavioral health therapists served 31 students and provided 595 individual therapy sessions. Nearly three-quarters (72%) of those goals were partially or fully met by the end of the school year. HKHM school nurses played a pivotal role in the COVID-19 pandemic, performing COVID-19 contact tracing while keeping the students and staff safe. The program leveraged infectious diseases expertise by partnering with Wash. U's infectious diseases division. Jason Newland, MD, served as a consultant to the schools, developing protocols to keep children in schools while answering staff questions during the pandemic. Nurses had a total of 3,919 clinic visits and achieved an 88.4% return-to-class rate. Asthma was the No. 1 reason that students came to the school nurses. The school nurses provided 30 health education activities for students. Our nurses were successful with immunization compliance ranging from 90-97%: Polio and DTP - 90%, Varicella - 91%, MMR - 92% and Hep B. - 97%.

HEALTHY KIDS **WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY DIABETES PARTNERSHIP**

According to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, in 2016 there were 15,494 emergency room visits for diabetes-related illnesses. In 2019, Healthy Kids announced a partnership with the Washington University Division of Endocrinology and Diabetes at St. Louis Children's Hospital and Christian Hospital to address the surge in diabetes emergencies.

The diabetes partnership launched in 2020 and was designed to decrease in-hospital admission rates and diabetic emergencies and improve self-management through education and direct care to students in school or at home. As an early pilot, HKHM began home visits and hosted educational support group meetings in the community in 2019.

RAISING ST. LOUIS

BJC and St. Louis Children's Hospital recognize the disparities of infant and maternal health outcomes among black and white community members and the need to provide opportunities to families to eliminate barriers to health care and social determinants of health to create the best start possible.

Raising St. Louis is a home visitation program that uses a multi-discipline team to address needs related to social determinants of health while focusing on the entire family unit. Pregnant women or women with a child/children up to age 4 who live in one of our 21 identified ZIP codes in north St. Louis City or North County can enroll for free.

891 Total clients served in 2020-2021

66 Total births in 2020-2021

64 Community Hub events held in 2020-2021

RAISING ST. LOUIS

Our multi-discipline home-visitation team includes nurses, parent educators, licensed clinical social workers and community health workers. Our partner, Nurses for Newborns, provides nursing care visits, screenings, education and resources. Our certified Parents as Teachers parent educators provide child development lessons and screenings for children ages 0-5 and help parents build skills to foster growth and development in their children. Our licensed clinical social workers provide screenings and individual and group talk therapy sessions. Our community health workers meet with families to set goals, provide skill building opportunities and eliminate barriers to health care.

In 2020, we launched a weekly women's support group that transitioned from in-person to virtual during the pandemic. Our male engagement component partnered with the St. Louis Justice Center and provided 24/7 Dads, a national evidence-based curriculum, to men about to be released back into the community. In 2021, our Parents as Teachers affiliate program was deemed Blue Ribbon, the highest rating presented by the national Parents as Teachers office to affiliate sites. Raising St. Louis collaborated with a faith-based partner and opened a community hub in the New North Side Family Life Center. We also worked closely with Kaizen Health to provide non-emergency medical transportation for our clients.

Our male engagement component partnered with the St. Louis Justice Center and provided 24/7 Dads, a national evidence-based curriculum, to men about to be released back into the community.



TEEN OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Teen Outreach Program® (TOP) promotes the development of adolescents through a combination of engaging curriculum and community service learning. It is an evidence-based program supported by trained facilitators, giving teens essential tools to lead successful lives and contribute to building strong communities. Specifically designed for sixth- to 12th-grade students, TOP is a nationally recognized program that delivers real results.

Teens meet weekly throughout the school year with TOP facilitators for lessons on emotion management, problem solving, decision making, goal setting, health and wellness, self-understanding, empathy, communication, healthy relationships, and community involvement. They engage in community-service projects throughout the year, which help build life skills, confidence and a connection to their communities. As a result of the curriculum and community service, teens are better able to navigate challenges during their teenage years – and are more capable of making critical decisions about their lives.

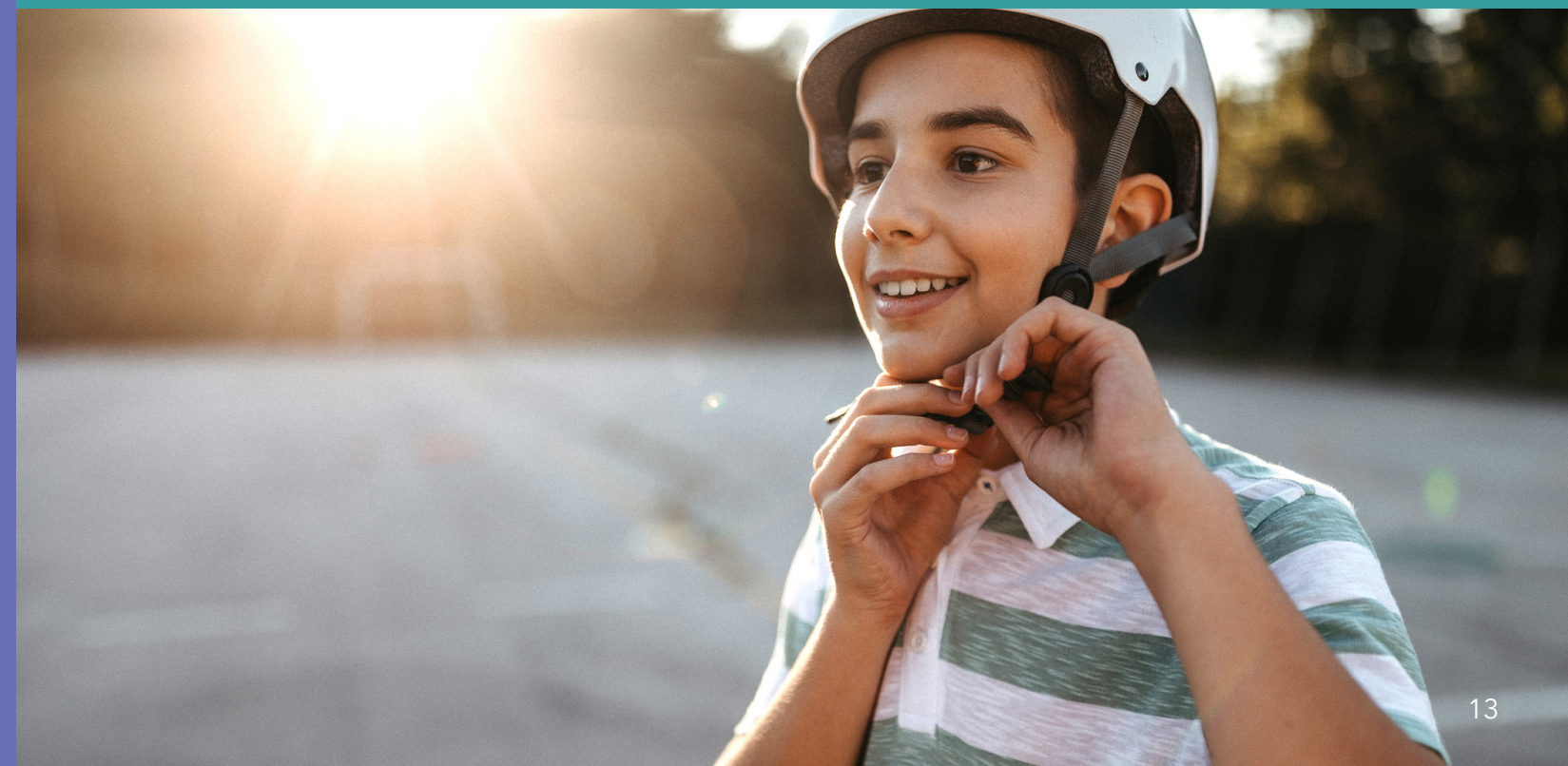
In the 2020-2021 school year, TOP served 791 students in 36 TOP clubs; those students provided 7,466 hours of community service. Due to COVID-19, TOP was offered virtually during this school year. In the 2021-2022 school year, TOP served 767 students in 34 TOP clubs; those students provided 9,028 hours of community service.

Since its 2015 inception, St. Louis Children's Hospital TOP club students have provided more than 50,000 hours of service in the St. Louis community.

SAFETY STREET

The goal of Safety Street is to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities in the community by educating kids on how to safely navigate their environment. The program provides an evidence-based interactive learning initiative for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. Using a life-sized cityscape module that is assembled at a demonstration school or community site, children navigate through potential street hazards in a safe, controlled environment. They receive safety education instruction and practice specific navigation behaviors for pedestrian safety, stray animal and stranger danger, water hazards, home and playground safety, and car or trunk hazards. In other settings, children engage with a life-size board game, SafetyLand, to learn safety practices.

Due to COVID-19, Safety Street did not operate during 2020-2021. A virtual program was developed.



HEAD TO TOE

Overweight and obese children are more likely to stay obese into adulthood and develop illnesses like diabetes and cardiovascular diseases at a younger age. The good news is that combating childhood obesity can be fun and engaging through the Head to Toe intervention program for kids and teens ages 8 to 17 and their families. Its 17 sessions are highly interactive and include fitness, nutrition and social well-being classes that focus on adopting healthier lifestyles through goal setting, daily exercise and proper nutrition. Participants are referred by physicians, word-of-mouth and through the Healthy Start weight management clinic at St. Louis Children's Hospital. The BJC Total Rewards program for hospital employees also offers participation as a benefit.

47 families participated in virtual Head to Toe sessions during 2020-2021.

Program staff had more than **2,300** encounters with participants and families during 2020-2021.

HEAD TO TOE

The program is facilitated by a registered dietitian, a licensed clinical social worker and an exercise specialist. Each week, one of these three disciplines is taught. In social work classes, topics include family communication, body image, media literacy, stress and coping skills. Portion size, reading nutrition labels and eating away from home are all taught in the nutrition classes. And the exercise classes include topics such as energy balance, aerobic exercise, strength training and flexibility.

During 2020-2021, 47 families participated in virtual Head to Toe sessions. Program staff had more than 2,300 encounters with participants and families. Overall, participants increased their knowledge by approximately 18%; 63% had an increase in self-esteem and 75% improved nutrition behaviors as demonstrated by pre- and post-tests.

Head to Toe has increased healthy lifestyle knowledge and skills among program participants and their families. A readiness-to-change assessment and a behavior assessment show that even through a short-term program, lifestyle changes begin. These changes in Head to Toe participants provide a foundation for building a healthy future lifestyle.

Head to Toe is deemed an evidence-based program by Healthy Communities Institute, a national organization that reviews and certifies that public health programs meet national, evidence-based practices and standards. In 2018, the evidence-based categories met by Head to Toe expanded to include mental health and mental disorders.



SAFETY STOP

Accidents and unintentional injuries are by far the leading cause of death of children in the United States. Motor vehicle crashes have been at the top of the list, only recently overtaken by firearm injuries. In addition, accidental sudden unexplained infant deaths affect Black babies at three times the rate of white babies in St. Louis. Safety Stop is a free service that educates parents and caregivers about car seat, helmet, home and sleep safety for young children. Safety Stop has three permanent locations including the main campus on Kingshighway, the Children's Specialty Care Center West and the Children's Specialty Care Center South. In addition, limited appointments are available at Progress West Hospital and The Magic House. Certified safety technicians provide hands-on education for conventional and special-needs car seats, as well as for bicycle helmets and home and sleep safety products. The technicians teach caregivers how to install and use equipment correctly. Parents and caregivers also learn about the risk of leaving a child alone in a car through the Sophie's KISS program. Through this evidence-based program, 451 memory devices were distributed to help reduce this risk in 2020-2021.

The goal of the safe sleep education is to help reduce sleep-related infant deaths in the St. Louis area. During 2020-2021, 141 safe sleep consultations were provided to inpatient and community families. In addition, 87 portable cribs were donated or provided at a reduced cost to families in need. Home safety consults include education on the safe storage of firearms, addressing the most recent data showing that firearm injuries are now the leading cause of death in children in the United States. In 2020-2021, 92 home safety consults were provided.

SAFETY STOP

Many consultants on the Safety Stop team have received additional training to assist in providing consultations regarding safe travel for children with special health care needs. Through 2020-2021, 194 consultations were provided for children with special health care transportation needs.

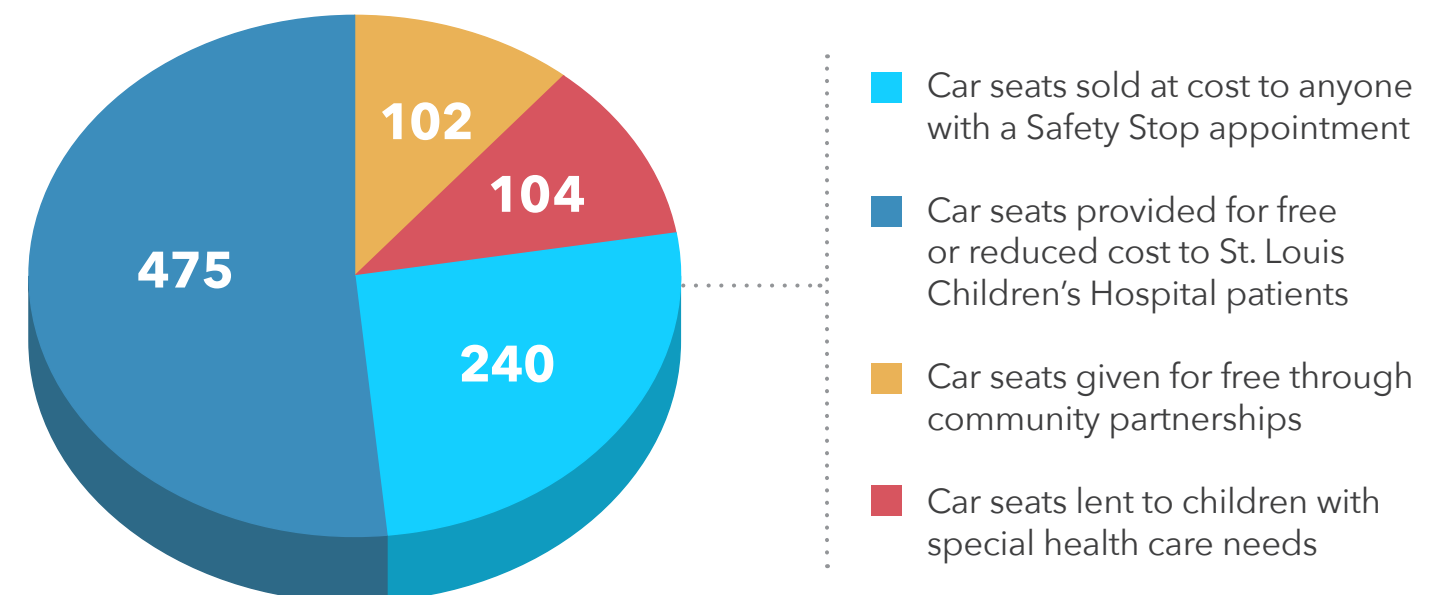
During the COVID-19 pandemic, out of concern for infection prevention and safety, the full operations of Safety Stop were suspended for part of 2020. Operations have now fully resumed. As a way to continue to provide this needed service, the Safety Stop team began providing virtual consults for car seat safety, home safety and sleep safety. A total of 202 virtual appointments were completed in 2020-2021.

Safety Stop provides free or reduced-cost car seats to inpatients who qualify and at-cost car seats for inpatients and community members to purchase. In addition, Safety Stop lends car seats to patients with special health care needs.

141 safe sleep consultations were provided to inpatient and community families during 2020-2021

87 portable cribs were donated or provided at a reduced cost to families in need during 2020-2021

Car Seats Distributed 2020-2021



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)

St. Louis Children's Hospital (SLCH) is a national leader in pediatric health that treats patients from across the St. Louis region and more than 80 countries. To serve diverse populations, the hospital has committed to a comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusion plan, which is central to its goal of providing equitable, accessible health care for all patients.

The Child Health Advocacy and Outreach department manages the hospital's DEI initiatives through education, training, data analysis and consultation to help reduce disparities in the health care system around many identities of diversity, particularly race.

100%

of new hires participated in DEI training as part of new employee orientation

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

There are four areas of concentration for impacting diversity, equity and inclusion goals: Workforce, Health Disparities, Patient Satisfaction and Cultural Competency. 2020-2021 highlights include the following:

Workforce

By creating more inclusive teams of providers, the SLCH workforce will be more reflective of the communities we serve, providing better patient experiences and higher quality care, which in turn better serves the community and closes gaps, especially those experienced along racial lines. Diversity in the workplace includes setting hiring goals. Our partners in human resources and talent acquisition formed aggressive targets for improvement.

Retention is as important as recruitment. The BJC Connections groups support retention, community outreach and engagement, providing opportunities for team members to network and form social associations. The groups are: Blended Connections (people of color), Disability, Diverse Nurses, Global Connections, Spectra (LGBTQ+), Veterans, Women's and Young Professionals.

The Campus Council on Equity and Inclusion provides opportunities for staff to engage in DEI work, promoting inclusion, retention and engagement. One subcommittee focuses on analysis of human resources policies through a racial equity lens, as recommended by the Ferguson Commission report. Another subcommittee promotes "Humans of BJC" as a campaign of acceptance and inclusion. A third subcommittee plans and promotes a week-long series of events during the month of September each year, a celebration of Diversity Week on the campus. Another partnership with Washington University School of Medicine led to the creation of the Taskforce on Teamwork and Cultural Competence (T2C2), which has focused on teamwork and respect across multi-disciplinary providers.

Health Disparities

SLCH was one of the inaugural signers of the American Hospital Association Health Equity pledge as far back as 2015. One of the promises of the pledge is to disaggregate outcomes data by race and other factors, to bring health care disparities to light. BJC first piloted a disparities dashboard developed internally, and in 2018 adopted the commercial disparities dashboard that is now included monthly with the hospital's dashboard of other quality indicators through Vizient.

The Human Rights Commission ranked St. Louis Children's Hospital as a Healthcare Leader in its Health Equity Index survey that evaluates health care facilities' policies and practices related to the equity and inclusion of LGBTQ patients, visitors and employees. SLCH was one of only two hospitals in the St. Louis region to be highlighted in this survey.

Patient Satisfaction

In collaboration with human resources, organizational development and family partners, the DEI team is actively working to create an easily accessible patient experience data dashboard related to racial disparities. These data will enable leaders to create actionable strategies that improve the patient and family experience tremendously, as well as ensure equity.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Cultural Competency

Starting in 2019, the DEI team began developing a strategic plan, outlining what each staff member and leader should know and do with regard to cultural competence. Cultural competence advances with continued and intentional professional development. It starts with basic knowledge and awareness, and advances to skills in applying an equity lens to systems, policies and procedures. It advances to working in interdisciplinary teams to support unit leadership for increased long-term inclusion goals.

This planning will allow the hospital to be more proactive than reactive.

- DEI coaching and leader development, along with a comprehensive DEI plan, was initiated for 17 specific departments.
- Education and training objectives were drafted to more clearly define cultural competency and expected behaviors for leaders.
- 100% of new hires participated in DEI training as part of new employee orientation.

All people leaders at the level of manager and above were required to participate in training on systems of oppression and racism in collaboration with external partners, Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training and NCCJ St. Louis.

A new, ongoing agenda item was added to monthly Patient Care Services Directors Meetings to analyze real-world case studies regarding issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. These case studies were facilitated by SLCH team members who are trained NCCJ Certified FaciliTrainers.

COMMUNITY AND FAITH ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

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Cynthia Williams, Assistant Dean for Community Partnerships, Social Work Administration
Washington University

Keith Willis, Director of Sales and Marketing
Who's Who Diversity In Color

Child Health Advocacy and Outreach is engaged in the community throughout the year.





StLouisChildrens.org

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 [stlchildrens](https://www.instagram.com/stlchildrens)

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