

WE HELP KIDS STAY  
**HEALTHY  
& SAFE**

**2022 - 2023**

*Child Health*

*Advocacy and Outreach*

***Community Report***

ST. LOUIS  
**Children's**  
HOSPITAL  
BJC HealthCare



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## OUR VALUES

St. Louis Children's Hospital (SLCH) has made a commitment to advocacy beyond the hospital setting by investing human and fiscal capital for health care services and education for families and children in need. The Child Health Advocacy and Outreach (CHAO) department provides health-related resources and education to families and communities in the St. Louis region to help keep them healthy and safe. Our commitment to a region that values equal access and quality services is the driving force for our programs.

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 School-Based Virtual Care on March of 2020. By 2022, virtual care programs evolved to two schools focused on asthma care and partnering with four school districts for virtual behavioral health services.

# ~20,000

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



- HKE Community Health Workers (CHWs) focus on addressing social determinants for vulnerable pediatric population for HKE asthma, dental, diabetes, and screening service lines. During the 2021-2022 school year there were 613 needs indicated at the time of referral to CHWs of which 67.5% of those needs were met.
- In 2022, CHWs piloted the Community Information Exchange to utilize the Unite Us platform to provide centralized access to over 100 community based resources which address various social needs.
- We continue to partner with the Integrated Health Network Community Referral Coordinator to connect patients/families to primary care provider.

## 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, CHWs, asthma coaches, administrative staff 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 2022-23 school year, HKE provided intensive asthma services to 16 schools in seven school districts. We enrolled 709 students in the intensive school-based asthma program, and 59 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, 80% followed up with their primary provider. A total of 709 children received 9,674 clinical encounters. Each child received an average of 14 encounters.

- Albuterol was administered 107 times on the asthma van to students during their visit.
- To assist in establishing a rapport, asthma coaches complete at least one home visit with the client's permission.
- All asthma team members participated in Crisis Prevention Intervention training which provided hands on de-escalation activities to enhance community preparedness.
- 72% of patients with an asthma coach attended at least one return visit to PCP/ Specialist during 2022.
- In 2022, 49 students with asthma were referred to CHWs related to varying social determinants of health needs, of which 73.5% resulted in a positive outcome when connected to resources to address the barrier.

## 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, exams, x-rays and restorative care. In 2022, HKE dental services were provided to over 1,000 youth by completing a total of 8,295 dental procedures, including exams, which contributed to closing 75% of cases from the previous year. HKE dental focused on increased educational outreach that resulted in more than 4,300 dental care lessons and a 10.3% change in pre/post test assessments.

In 2022, primary languages serviced included English, Spanish, Arabic, and Somali. HK Community Health Workers (CHWs) partnered with 42 HK dental families to assist with insurance coverage, educate on existing Medicaid plans or arrange transportation.

**8,295**  
total dental procedures, including exams, were provided in 2022 by HKE dental services to over 1,000 children.



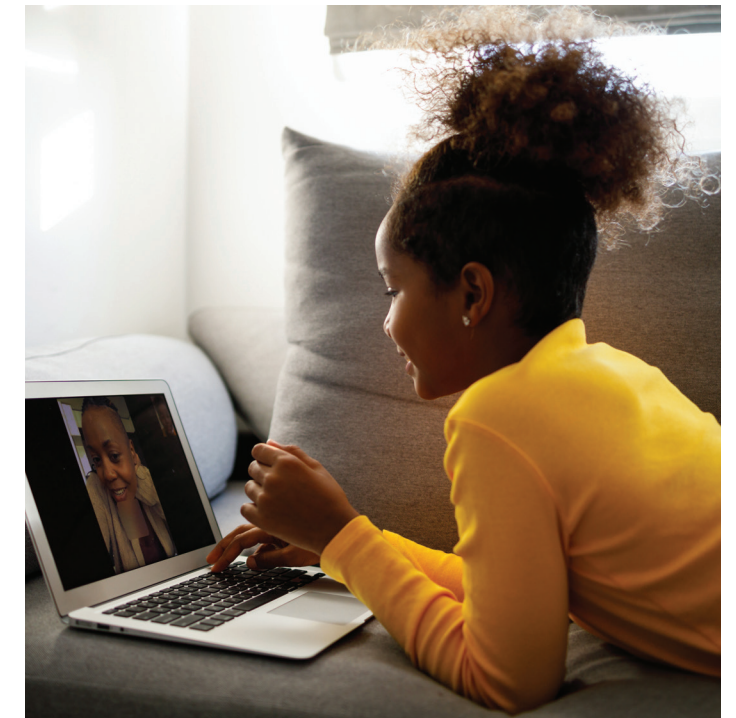
## HEALTHY KIDS VIRTUAL CARE

Licensed Mental Health professionals are providing behavioral health care to students in the following schools: Hazelwood: Southeast Middle, McNair, Armstrong, East High, Central Middle, Northwest Middle, Barrington Elementary, West Middle, West High, East Middle; Jennings: Jennings Junior High and Jennings High School; Ritenour: Hoech Middle and Ritenour Middle; Riverview Gardens: District overflow max 25 students. Visits take place from 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. During the 2022-23 school year, 166 students were provided services. A total of 1,593 sessions were held. 78.8% of students had goal progress.

Another virtual care program is the HK Asthma Program. Offered to Twillman Elementary and Larimore Elementary School students, the Virtual Care 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 a pediatric nurse practitioner. The Program Coordinator acts as the presenter. During the 2022-23 school year, 77 students had an average of four encounters per student.

**1,593**  
total session sessions were held during the 2022-23 school year. 78.8% of students had goal progress.



## 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 act as an early intervention in discovering language and speech issues that can lead to poor 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 2022, to support the BJC/SLCH strategic mission in addressing COVID-19 vaccinations, HK non-clinical staff were cross-trained to perform patient registration at community-based vaccination clinics. In addition, Community Health Workers (CHWs) addressed social determinants of health by partnering HK team members, BJC interpretive services, and transportation vendors to arrange 241 rides, of which 95% resulted in a positive outcome. CHWs utilized interpretive services assistance with six languages (Arabic, Dari, Pashto, Spanish, Swahili and Tigrinya). 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.

# 31,768

screenings were provided at schools and early childhood facilities during 2022.

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 2022, 6,660 children were served and 31,768 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 4,757 immunization records and provided 4,596 children with 5,508 immunizations.



## 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.



### 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
- Providing individual, group and family therapy for students who exhibit chronic behavior and emotional needs

HKHM nurses had 9,670 clinic visits from January - July 2023. August - December 2023 there were 15,241 clinic visits, totaling 24,911 for the 2023 calendar year. The data shows that after being evaluated and treated by the school nurse 94% of clinic visits resulted in students returning to class (RTC) ready to learn.

HKHM Embedded Behavioral Health Therapists for the 2023 calendar year (Jan-Dec, 2023), there were 2,151 sessions completed. There was 118 active clients January - July and 118 active clients August - December 2023. For the 2022-2023 school year, there were 2,390 sessions completed for the embedded therapists.

By December of 2023 HKHM immunization compliance rate was as follows: DPT 93%, Polio 93%, MMR 94%, Hepatitis B 95% and Varicella 94%.

# 2,390

sessions completed by HKHM embedded therapists in 2022-2023.

## 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 22 identified zip codes in north St. Louis City or North County are eligible to enroll for free.



## RAISING ST. LOUIS

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

In 2022, Raising St. Louis moved into their fourth Community Hub at the Delmar Divine and hosted their first open house in collaboration with BJC HealthCare Career Connection. The event aimed to connect families with employment opportunities and discuss the soft skills needed in today's workforce.

In 2023, Raising St. Louis celebrated its first graduation since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with eight families graduating. We also partnered with the BJC Community Health Improvement team to reduce maternal and child health mortality rates in the St. Louis region by improving access to doula care. This initiative involves issuing scholarship funds to partner organizations specializing in community-based doula care, providing a pathway for individuals who might not otherwise afford these services. The goal of the doula scholarship fund is to increase the use of doulas among our community members by removing financial barriers and reducing the infant mortality rate of our most vulnerable population.

# 665

Total clients served in  
**2022 - 2023**

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# 31

Total births in  
**2022 - 2023**

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# 88

Community Hub events  
held in **2022 - 2023**

## 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.

# 1,603

For the 2022-2023 school year, three sites were visited and 1,603 children experienced the program.



## TEEN OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Teen Outreach Program® (TOP) promotes the development of adolescents through a combination of engaging curriculum and Community Service Learning (CSL). 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 2022-2023 school year, TOP served 906 students in 41 clubs, these students provided 14,297 CSL hours.



# 906

Students served in 41 TOP clubs during the 2022-2023 school year.

# 14,297

Community Service Learning (CSL) hours provided by students during the 2022-2023 school year.

## 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.

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.

# 1,909

Program staff encounters with participants and families in 2022-2023.

During 2022-2023, 44 families participated in virtual Head to Toe sessions. Program staff had 1,909 encounters with participants and families.

Overall, participants increased their knowledge and self-esteem, and showed improved nutrition behaviors. 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.



## COMMUNITY AND FAITH ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

**Andre Alexander**, Founder and CEO  
*Tabernacle Church and The HUB*

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**Wray Clay**, Vice President, Diversity & Inclusion (Retired)  
*United Way of Greater St. Louis*

**Kendra Copanas**, Executive Director  
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**Marcus Creighton**, Vice President  
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**Ghazala Hayat**, MD  
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Islamic Foundation of Greater St. Louis*

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*Interfaith Quest*

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*West Side Missionary Baptist Church*

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**Ron Tompkins**, Chief Nursing Officer  
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**Cynthia Williams**, Asst. Dean for Community Partnerships, Social Work - Administration  
*Washington University*

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





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