Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
PolicyLab

Antipsychotic Prescribing to Children: An In-Depth Look at Foster Care and Medicaid Populations

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This Evidence to Action brief provides an in-depth look at antipsychotic medication prescribing to children on Medicaid and in foster care.

At PolicyLab, our research portfolio on psychotropic medication prescribing grew from clinical concern that an increased number of children in foster care were being prescribed antipsychotics for behavioral challenges that likely stemmed from past traumatic experiences, which the medications themselves could not address. To unpack these trends, PolicyLab began a number of studies focusing on the use of antipsychotic medications by children enrolled in Medicaid – and specifically by children in foster care.

This brief: (1) reviews what we've learned, (2) explains why it matters, and (3) provides suggestions about what can be done. Our hope is that policymakers can use our research to inform policy and practice change that will strengthen children's behavioral health services.

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