Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
PolicyLab

PolicyLab Releases 2020 PA Family Support Needs Assessment

Date:

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PolicyLab, in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning, conducted a county-level needs assessment of the health of children, mothers and families, as well as the social and environmental conditions of communities across the state. The Family Support Needs Assessment categorizes Pennsylvania's counties as having low, moderate or elevated need across six domains: maternal and child health, socioeconomic status, substance use, child safety and maltreatment, community environment and child care. Additionally, the report spotlights local service providers who are making a difference in addressing the elevated needs of their communities.

The team conducted this assessment during the period of January 2019 to October 2020 utilizing numerous methods of data collection, such as community surveys and stakeholder interviews, to provide a comprehensive look at the well-being of children, families and communities in Pennsylvania. It's important to note that all data collection occurred prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we anticipate that the pandemic will exacerbate many areas of community need.

The overall findings from this report emphasize that substance use, mental health, economic needs (e.g., unemployment), and intimate partner violence are among the most pronounced issues facing families across urban and rural communities in Pennsylvania. However, the needs assessment also shows improvement across several maternal and child health outcomes—such as improved rates of preterm and teen births, infant mortality and childhood poverty—since the last report in 2014.

Be sure to read the full report, a summary document—which outlines the report's main findings as well as how local leaders can utilize the assessment to better support their communities—and view data specific to your county in the county profiles appendix by visiting Pennsylvania's Department of Human Services' website. You can also read our press release outlining overall findings from the assessment and our partner toolkit, which includes key messages, social media posts and graphics to share with your networks.

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