

2023-2026

STRATEGIC PLAN

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VISION

All children, teens, and their families will have access to evidence-informed, sustainable programs and policies that address their unique needs and allow them to be their healthiest selves.

At PolicyLab, our care for children and families drives our research, informing practice and policy to improve child health. Our innovative model pairs researchers with communications and policy professionals to deliver research into the hands of decision-makers and advocates.

Children and youth showed tremendous resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and other adversities in recent years, and at PolicyLab, we are motivated to do all we can to support them and improve the systems and programs that serve them. Still, youth and their families continue to face significant challenges to their health and well-being. For example, the number of children who experienced symptoms of depression or anxiety rose significantly [during the pandemic](#). Racial, socioeconomic, and geographic disparities in health outcomes were exacerbated by COVID-19 for many youth and their families. And today, from recent [work](#) with youth in our region, we know that youth in our community believe violence and safety, lack of access to healthy foods, and mental health are the greatest barriers to health in their communities.

Since 2008, PolicyLab's mission has been to achieve optimal child health and well-being by informing program and policy changes through interdisciplinary research. PolicyLab, based at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, is a unique academic research center grounded in clinical care and driving impact. We have grown to include more than 30 faculty and 80 staff who are experts in medicine, public health, social work, psychology, law, biostatistics, health services research, population health,

policy and communications. PolicyLab's interdisciplinary work is organized into five strategic research portfolios:

- *Adolescent Health & Well-being,*
- *Behavioral Health,*
- *Health Care Coverage, Access & Quality,*
- *Health Equity, and*
- *Intergenerational Family Services.*

This model and our [2019-2022 strategic plan](#) priorities were a successful roadmap for our center as we sought to address the drivers of child and family health challenges that were both caused and intensified by the pandemic. Our research and evidence-informed policy recommendations have shaped city-level interventions for youth and families, statewide program design in the fields of home visiting and child welfare, federal pandemic response plans, and much more. In order to ensure we can have the greatest impact on the lives of youth and families, we're doubling down on the priorities that guided us the last three years, focusing on equity and inclusion in our research and operations, and increasing our engagement with partners for the 2023-2026 calendar years.

At PolicyLab, we research, develop, and implement evidence-based solutions that are responsive to community needs and relevant to child health policy priorities.

VALUES THAT DRIVE OUR WORK

Every youth should have access to high-quality physical and mental health care.

Every youth should have the opportunity to live in a safe and nourishing community that fosters healthy lifestyles for families.

Every youth should receive patient-centered and family-centered care.

THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



HIGH-IMPACT RESEARCH

Create an environment that allows the next generation of child health researchers to successfully conduct high-impact research that helps policymakers, health systems, and advocates make better-informed decisions on the programs that children and families need

WHAT WE'RE DOING:

We are working to ensure our talented researchers can meaningfully collaborate with community partners and experts from many disciplines to push forward innovative projects. We are also funding pilot grants and providing our teams with a variety of training opportunities that will give them the diverse skill sets they need to conduct impactful, meaningful, policy-relevant research.

HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER:

- *Identify research questions that are responsive to community needs and relevant to policy priorities*
- *Collaborate on research that better engages multidisciplinary partners around shared, meaningful goals*



EQUITY FOCUS

Foster a more inclusive, equitable working environment, diversifying the perspectives that can contribute to our mission and operations

WHAT WE'RE DOING:

We are taking a hard look at our patterns of hiring, retention, promotion, and leadership opportunities and creating plans to address disparities we find. We are also organizing learning and training opportunities for our team members to expand the viewpoints that inform our research, policy work and professional goals.

HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER:

- *Provide learning and training opportunities that foster a more equitable workforce*
- *Spread the word about job opportunities to communities not reached by current means*



MEANINGFUL POLICY CHANGE

Increase PolicyLab's capacity to create meaningful policy change on behalf of youth and families

WHAT WE'RE DOING:

We seek to advance policy priorities that reflect our values for youth and family health and are grounded in our research and patient care. At the same time, we are pursuing strong collaborations with key partners and allies in ways that can influence and contribute to accomplishing our policy goals.

HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER:

- *Finance projects that measurably impact or sustain evidence-based programs and policies focused on children's health*
- *Ensure the translation of child health research reaches policy audiences and is clear and action-oriented*



STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

Establish and maintain strong engagement with important partners throughout the community

WHAT WE'RE DOING:

If we are to accelerate achieving our vision, our research and policy work must be in partnership with important stakeholders across our own institution and within the community. We hope to engage in more community collaborations focused on bettering child health, target our communications in ways that provide key updates to partners, and organize more opportunities to bring together physicians, researchers, community organizations, funders, and policymakers to have meaningful, actionable conversations about the needs of youth and their families.

HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER:

- *Identify thought leaders in the community who can inform our work*
- *Develop co-branded policy briefs, events, or other resources that increase visibility of our collaborative projects and priorities*



Collaboration drives our work. We partner with practitioners, families, communities and policymakers because we know we cannot achieve improved child health outcomes alone.

Will you join us in the pursuit of this vision?

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The mission of PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) is to achieve optimal child health and well-being by informing program and policy changes through interdisciplinary research. PolicyLab is a Center of Emphasis within Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Research Institute, one of the largest pediatric research institutes in the country.

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