



Healthy Children & Families

Healthy people build strong communities. We know conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes. Poverty, especially, limits access to social and physical environments that promote good health for all.

In order to make true improvements in the health and productivity of Ohioans, lawmakers must invest in programs and implement policies that support a multi-sector approach to improving health and well-being. Access to quality and affordable health care, housing, food and early education opportunities benefit all Ohioans and are fundamental building blocks of healthy, thriving communities that are attractive to families and businesses.

The following public policies will make our children and all Ohioans healthier and more competitive:

- **Maintain Medicaid expansion** which provides access to comprehensive health care coverage, including addiction and mental health services, to hundreds of thousands of Ohioans each year.
- **Increase access to school-based health and mental health services** and take steps to move all of Ohio's schools toward the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Model. By investing \$500,000 each year of the next biennium, Ohio can develop a grant program to provide opportunities for community and school partnerships that provide a range of services for students and families.
- **Fully fund a comprehensive continuum of care system for behavioral health services that includes prevention and treatment and addresses issues of parity.** Adequate investments in behavioral health and addiction services across the continuum of care lead to better outcomes for individuals and healthier communities and save taxpayer dollars.
- **Triple investments in evidence-based home visiting to serve more children and families and leverage local and federal investments in programming to reach Ohio's most at-risk parents and children.** Increased investments in home visiting would support system infrastructure and build capacity to serve more families over time.
- **Engage with community leaders and organizations across sectors to align strategies, mobilize and target supportive resources and interventions in neighborhoods that have the highest identified risk and opportunity for improving infant and maternal mortality.** Additionally, the following statewide policies will improve infant and maternal health outcomes:
 - **Require the reporting of information on pregnancy-associated deaths be submitted to Ohio's Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review (PAMR) in a timely and complete manner.**
 - **Allow pregnant minors to consent to prenatal through delivery and follow-up health care in order to have the best health outcomes for mothers and their unborn babies.**
- **Implement and fund a comprehensive approach to address food insecurity and direct state dollars to Ohio families who need it most.** An annual \$30 million dollar allocation and bringing programs under one funding umbrella is a fiscally responsible solution that will provide flexibility in delivering real hunger relief to over 2 million different Ohioans, more than 1 in 6 of our hungry friends and neighbors across Ohio.

Advocates for Ohio's Future

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