



# HEALTH EQUITY

A SNAPSHOT OF A POLICYLAB RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

**WE'RE  
INVESTIGATING  
HOW POLICIES  
AND PROGRAMS  
CAN IMPROVE  
THE HEALTH OF  
MARGINALIZED  
CHILDREN AND  
ADOLESCENTS.**

Child health outcomes are often determined by factors outside of the health care system. At PolicyLab, our vision for **health equity** is that all children have the opportunity to achieve the best possible health outcomes, regardless of their race, ethnicity, preferred language, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and any other factors that can impact their health.

Our team of social, behavioral, and physician scientists aims to better understand factors that contribute to disparate health outcomes and develop and evaluate solutions that promote child health equity.

*While health equity is the focus of this research portfolio, it is also a driving tenet of all PolicyLab research. By applying an equity lens to all of our work, we aim to evaluate programs, practices and policies to ensure that they ideally mitigate, and at minimum, do not exacerbate inequities in health outcomes for children and families.*

## POLICYLAB'S FOCUS ON HEALTH EQUITY ISSUES



### Equitable Access to Services and Support

**One critical reason for disparate health outcomes across populations of children is that many parents and caregivers have difficult or insufficient access to essential health care services and may lack economic resources needed for their children to live safe and healthy lives.**

PolicyLab researchers are exploring ways to increase access to financial resources among marginalized children and families through a portfolio of projects focused on supporting **economic security**, **reducing administrative burdens** and improving access to public benefit programs.

We are also investigating strategies to reduce disparities in access to health care, for example, improving equity in **diagnosis and treatment** of children with autism spectrum disorder, improving **access** to evidence-based treatment for pregnant and postpartum people with opioid use disorder, and improving equitable access to **telehealth**.



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## Minority & Immigrant Communities

**One-quarter** of children living in the United States have at least one parent who is an immigrant. Supporting the health of immigrant populations is critical to achieving optimal health outcomes for all children, families and communities.

At PolicyLab, our experts explore how federal, state, and local policies impact health care access for immigrant families; how health coverage and care can best meet the needs of these families; and best practices in care delivery and research to ensure immigrant populations are reached and their voices heard.

Our *research* has explored the prenatal care experiences of immigrant Latiné birthing people who had babies after more restrictive changes to the “public charge” rule. PolicyLab researchers have also *uncovered inequities* in access to outpatient behavioral health appointments for children in Spanish-speaking families. And we’re *examining* the prevalence of underinsurance on children in immigrant families.



## Social and Environmental Determinants of Health

**Population-level social determinants of health, such as access to education and neighborhood safety, and household level social needs, such as food insecurity and housing instability, can profoundly impact children’s health and well-being.**

PolicyLab researchers have studied *best practices* for identifying and addressing social needs in pediatric clinical settings, highlighting key considerations for ensuring social needs screening and support programs are family-centered and effective. In collaboration with our *Population Health Sciences Portfolio*, our team has also *examined* key considerations for documenting and sharing information about families’ social needs.

We’re also working with experts in our *Family and Community Health Portfolio* to address food insecurity, including through research to *understand* the impact of subsidized produce boxes for families in the clinical setting.

Our experts also have a particular interest in advancing sustainable funding for community health workers and other allied health professionals. PolicyLab research has shown that community health worker programs can *improve health outcomes* and *help parents and caregivers feel supported* in caring for their children’s medical and social needs.



## Centering Health Equity in Research Methodology

**Our researchers are dedicated to ensuring that research is inclusive of all communities and does not create or perpetuate racist beliefs. PolicyLab researchers led an *initiative* focused on identifying and disseminating best practices for conducting anti-racist pediatric research.**

In addition, PolicyLab researchers lead a *program* focused on equipping researchers with the sensitivity, skills, and knowledge needed to effectively recruit and engage children, youth and families who prefer a language other than English in health-related research.

PolicyLab’s *Community Partnerships in Research Program* aims to foster meaningful collaboration between researchers and community leaders, and advance health equity through community-driven research.

Through these efforts, we aim to engage and train researchers across a wide range of disciplines to center health equity in their work, in a way that allows for improved generalizability and applicability and ultimately, stronger science.



**VISIT [POLICYLAB.CHOP.EDU/OUR-RESEARCH/HEALTH-EQUITY](https://policylab.chop.edu/our-research/health-equity)**

for full reference list and to learn more about all of our health equity research.

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