

Office of Public Health (OPH) Quarterly Report to the Developmental Disabilities Council
 Bureau of Family Health (BFH)
 Oct 7, 2022

Children’s Special Health Services (CSHS) works to ensure that children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) in Louisiana have access to health care services designed to minimize their disabilities and maximize their probabilities of enjoying independent and self-sufficient lives.

- [Children’s Special Healthcare Services](#) (CSHS) - Clinical Services offers direct care clinics for CYSHCNs in all regions, except 1 and 7, to meet specialty care needs in provider shortage areas. CSHS-Clinical Services (Genetics, Sickle Cell, and subspecialty clinics) transitioned to a hybrid appointment schedule. Decisions regarding in-person vs telehealth appointment visits are now being made at the Regional level depending upon staffing capacity, the infection positivity rate, and the ability to provide services safely.
- CSHS-Clinical Services Social Workers continue to provide behavioral health assessments to determine if families are in need of outpatient behavioral health referrals, as well as providing support and resources.
- CSHS-Clinical Services also provides nutritional services in Regions 2 and 6 and hopes to expand to other Regions as the need dictates.
- Any family of a child/youth with a special health need that requires peer support, system navigation, or resource linkage is referred to Families Helping Families network in their respective region or the Family Resource Center. CSHS-Clinical services also refers to other community-based organizations as appropriate.

The Family Resource Center (FRC) is a statewide virtual center designed to ensure CYSHCN, their families, and health care providers in Louisiana have access to resource and referral services. The FRC provides community referrals, health/education transition supports, and system navigation services. For resource and referral services contact the FRC team via phone (504) 896-1340 or email BFH-FamilyResourceCenter@la.gov, Monday-Friday 8 am-4pm.

FRC now provides outreach to families of children identified through the Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network to assist in linking to appropriate medical, educational, public health and peer support resources available in their region.

Family Resource Center June-August 2022	
New Referrals	180
Total clients served	109
Resource information and linkages provided to clients	434

Families Helping Families (FHF) – BFH Project aims to build a coordinated and family-centric statewide CYSCHN resource and referral service system utilizing the collaborative partnership between BFH-Family Resource Center and FHF Networks. FHF networks are Louisiana’s statewide parent-to-parent support organization serving individuals with disabilities and children/youth with special health care needs and their families.

CSHS Transportation Assistance Program provides needed transportation assistance for eligible families to attend medical appointments/procedures. Families must seek transportation assistance through their MCO before requesting assistance through CSHS. Families may contact the Family Resource Center (BFH-FamilyResourceCenter@la.gov) or their local [Families Helping Families](#) Center for more information.

Transportation Assistance Program	
July 2022-September 2022	Stipend expenditures \$317.01

Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network (LBDMN) tracks the occurrence of over 70 structural, functional, and genetic birth defects in Louisiana residents. This work helps to identify environmental conditions, pharmaceutical side effects, or behavioral risk factors threatening Louisiana’s newborns. By case definition, we include children diagnosed prior to their third birthday.

Genetic Diseases Program operates a comprehensive statewide newborn heel stick screening (NBS) program meeting national standards as well as ensuring access to genetic evaluation and counseling to residents of Louisiana. Currently the heel stick program screens for 28 genetic conditions. The Genetics Program also operates the Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) Program, which provides resources and information on how individuals diagnosed with sickle cell can receive assistance and care through the Sickle Cell Foundations and Clinics around the state.

Louisiana Early Childhood Risk & Reach: 2021 Report. The Early Childhood Risk and Reach in Louisiana report is a tool designed to be used by all early childhood stakeholders, governmental and nongovernmental, to better inform policy and funding decisions that impact the distribution of critical resources.

The [2021 Early Childhood Risk and Reach report](#) describes five categories of health challenges facing Louisiana kids and families: Economic Stability; Healthcare Access & Quality; Social & Family Context; Education Access & Quality; and Neighborhood & Built Environment. The report also describes the reach of key publicly-funded programs that address these risks and challenges. Data on program reach are overlaid onto maps of overall risk, which helps to illustrate which parishes may require additional services and investments to support children’s health and well-being.

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program is a national initiative that supports the early identification of infants who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH). The goals of the program are to complete screening before 1 month of age, complete audiologic evaluation before 3 months of age, and enrollment in early intervention before 6 months of age. The program works to ensure all children who are deaf or hard of hearing are identified early and

supported effectively in order to have the opportunities to develop the language skills they need to learn, grow and thrive.

- The EHDI Program staff present EHDI information to a variety of stakeholders. Recently, three separate presentations were given to audiology and speech-language pathology graduate students, and the LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and other Disabilities) trainees at LSU Health Sciences Center. EHDI Program staff have also presented at regional EarlySteps meetings around the state, and the statewide Part C Interagency Coordination Council. Presentations included EHDI 1-3-6 goals, successful results of EI PDSA quality improvement activities, and region-specific data regarding referrals to EarlySteps, the number of children enrolled in EI, and enrollment by 6 mo. Additionally, ways that EarlySteps can improve EI for DHH children were shared: 1) obtain hearing screening results for every child referred to EarlySteps, 2) obtain audiological testing results for every child with a Speech/Language delay, and 3) include required audiological testing on IFSP.
- The EHDI team presented at the 2022 Powering-Up Early Childhood conference. “Why is Early Childhood Hearing Screening Important?” The presentation focused on periodic early childhood hearing screening to identify children with hearing losses before they exhibit developmental delays. This session reviewed Evidence-based hearing screening practices for young children.
- A survey to obtain feedback from families enrolled in EI services is being conducted by phone. The 27 who participated thus far were compensated for their time with a gift card. The survey includes questions about Part C and Non-Part C EI Services, as well as family-to-family support. Early Intervention questions included information about timely contact, visit frequency, family-centered service provision, satisfaction, and whether or not services were biased. Families are also asked if they received information about communication choices, if they were interested in meeting with a deaf/hard of hearing adult, and they were also provided with an opportunity to offer suggestions for improvement.

Louisiana Guide by Your Side (GBYS) is the lead family based organization for the LA EHDI program. GBYS is a program from Hands and Voices (H&V) that provides support and unbiased information from trained Parent Guides to families of newly identified children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- In an effort to increase family awareness of Hands & Voices (H&V) Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) guides, a flyer was created to inform families of D/HH Guide services. It explains that D/HH guides are available to provide support to families by sharing their invaluable perspective from their own personal lived experiences. Website and Facebook links are also included, as well as e-mail and phone contact information. A D/HH Guide flyer was mailed to each family currently enrolled in Guide By Your Side (GBYS). Additionally, each of the D/HH guides created a bio to share personal information about themselves. The bios were posted on the H&V website, which is linked to the EHDI website. They were also posted on social media platforms to increase awareness of the

resource of D/HH Guide support for families. Additionally, the bios are shared with families who have expressed interest in connecting with a D/HH guide.

- In 2021, 82 families gave permission for a referral to family-to-family support, one family moved out of state, and 81% (66/82) enrolled. 45 of these babies were identified as D/HH by 6 months of age, and therefore eligible for family-to-family support by 6 months of age. Enrollment by 6 months of age increased to 84% (38/45) in 2021. This is a 35% improvement over the 2018 baseline.

The Louisiana Commission for the Deaf (LCD) functions as the principal state program that provides information and services to and for individuals who are Deaf, DeafBlind, or hard of hearing on behalf of the State of Louisiana.

LCD's Mission, Vision, and Values:

Mission- To engage, empower, and enrich the lives and opportunities of Louisiana Deaf, DeafBlind and hard of hearing individuals

Vision- A Louisiana that embraces the inclusion of a diverse deaf community through full access to information, communication, and opportunities

Values- Advocacy, Accountability, Equality, Accessibility, and Sustainability

More information on the LCD can be found [here](#)

BFH Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program is a no-cost, voluntary program that supports the health and well-being of families with young children. MIECHV implements two evidence-based models, Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) and Parents as Teachers (PAT). MIECHV pairs families looking for additional support and mentoring with specially trained registered nurses or certified parent educators who partner with families and provide personal home visits.

NFP and PAT services:

- Health and developmental screenings for children, promoting early identification of developmental delays.
- Assistance with goal setting and life skills development.
- Parenting guidance on a variety of topics.
- Connections to available resources, including early intervention and early childhood special education services.
- Coordinated care and support once families are connected to needed services.

MIECHV teams transitioned from 100% telehealth services, during the work from home order, back to in-person and/or a hybrid schedule of services in May 2022. MIECHV annual client satisfaction survey data showed that families prefer in-person services and, as soon as it was safe to do so, the Program adjusted accordingly. Families have responded to the change with just 66% of visits occurring in-person in June to now 80% of visits occurring in-person in August.

For more information about Louisiana MIECHV's NFP and PAT services, including how to get in touch with a home visitor near you, you can reach out to Susannah.Boudreaux@la.gov or call

the Partners for Family Health toll free telephone line at 1.800.251.BABY or visit the Partners for Family Health website at <https://partnersforfamilyhealth.org> telephone line 1.800.251.BABY or visit the Partners for Family Health website at <https://partnersforfamilyhealth.org>.

Louisiana Healthy Homes and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

(LHHCLPPP) works toward the goal of eliminating childhood lead poisoning as a public health problem through initiatives to promote lead poisoning prevention and coordinate lead abatement projects for low-income families in high-risk areas of the state.

The Statewide Young Child Wellness Collaborative (YCWC) is a cross-agency advisory council, the purpose of which is to provide leadership and inform priorities/strategic planning across the continuum of supports/services within Louisiana's Early Childhood System. The YCWC serves as the State-Level advisory team for the MIECHV program and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant. The YCWC meets every other month on the second Tuesday of, the next convening is Oct 11, 2022 at 12 noon. The collaborative includes representation from BFH, EarlySteps, the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH), Medicaid, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), the Louisiana Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), LSU Human Development Center, the Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families, the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, and the Louisiana chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The YCWC is currently recruiting pediatric/perinatal health care providers and pregnant/parenting family leaders interested in participating and informing early childhood systems improvement. If you or someone you know may be interested in joining the collaborative, contact Patti.Barovechio@la.gov for more information.

The Bureau of Family Health's Developmental Screening Initiative created a Developmental Screening Toolkit to help medical providers integrate developmental screening services into their day-to-day practice. The virtual toolkit uses a quality improvement framework, which allows providers to systematically improve the way health care is delivered to the families they serve. It contains step-by-step information contained in webpages, instructional videos, and downloadable worksheets. Customized training to meet specific clinic needs is available at no cost to the practice through the Title V initiative. Locate the Toolkit at <https://ldh.la.gov/DevScreenToolkit> to learn more. The BFH, Louisiana Medicaid and the Louisiana Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics collaborated on summer-short provider trainings that will continue through the end of July, recordings of these trainings can be located on the toolkit website. For information on the Developmental Screening Initiative and provider training requests, contact Dr. Tresa Northington at Tresa.Northington@la.gov.

BFH Adolescent School Health Program (ASHP) has 57 ASHP-certified School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) across the state. These health centers are located in public and charter schools and offer comprehensive, primary, and preventive physical and mental health services for students enrolled in the school that houses the SBHC and surrounding schools. Information on the LDH Adolescent School Health Program website can be found [here](#).