



Akron  
Children's  
Hospital



# Ensuring our children's future



*Photos used in this report were taken before the COVID-19 pandemic.*

At Akron Children's Hospital, we believe that children are our future, and our mission to improve the health and well-being of every child, whatever their circumstances, underlines that belief. With many people facing economic instability, we understand the challenges that hinder a family's ability to provide adequate food, secure housing and access the care, education and resources children need to develop physically, emotionally and socially.

Since our founding, Akron Children's has responded to the needs of our community's children, and we value our role as an anchor institution providing vital support and services to families in our region. To that end, we conduct regular Community Health Needs Assessments to help us identify the areas of greatest need and focus our resources on the most vulnerable and underserved populations.

In 2019, we partnered with the Center for Community Solutions to assess the health of children in a 10-county area. While the data collected highlighted many significant needs, we prioritized the following critical areas: mental health and the impact of adverse childhood experiences, infant mortality and birth outcomes, and asthma and respiratory care. In February 2020, we finalized our implementation strategy and are working on initiatives that we expect to have a positive, measurable impact over the next three years.

In this report, we highlight a few of the programs and partnerships helping us to fulfill our mission of service. This report also details our complete community benefit investment, including the losses we incur in caring for children regardless of their families' ability to pay.

Akron Children's remains dedicated to providing the full continuum of care to our patients and increasing access to families throughout the region. We are committed to finding innovative solutions that will help families overcome socioeconomic challenges and systemic inequities many face in their daily lives. We are also cognizant of the additional threats to children brought on by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we will continue to respond to these evolving challenges.

As a community-governed, pediatric health care organization that has been caring for children as we would our own since 1890, we remain committed to ensuring all children have the opportunity to fulfill the promise of their future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Grace Wakulchik".

**Grace Wakulchik**

President and CEO  
Akron Children's Hospital

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bennett L. Williams".

**Bennett L. Williams**

Vice President of External Affairs  
Akron Children's Hospital

# What is Community Benefit?

Community benefit is a means of measuring the investments we make in the health and well-being of children and families within the communities we serve. As a not-for-profit hospital with a commitment to addressing the needs of our most vulnerable, Akron Children's engages in a variety of activities that go above and beyond the traditional, core functions of a health care organization.

Through community benefit reporting, we document costs we incur to support efforts that:

- Improve health care access
- Enhance community health
- Advance medical or health knowledge
- Reduce the burden on government and community-based efforts

*We exclude from community benefit reporting any activities designed for marketing or fundraising purposes.  
We remove external grants and contributions that support community benefit efforts.*

## Our Community Benefit Investment includes:

### Community Programs & Services

- Community health education, outreach programs, and support services that do not generate revenue
- Initiatives that address identified health needs

### Research, Advocacy & Community Partnerships

- Nonproprietary research supported by internal or eligible grant funds
- Efforts to further policies that improve children's and/or community health
- Financial and in-kind donations to community organizations with missions that align with our own

### Health Professional Education

- Costs of education and training for community practitioners as well as future medical and allied health professionals

### Unreimbursed Medicaid & Uncompensated Care

- The unreimbursed portion of services for Medicaid patients and financial assistance for families unable to pay for all or part of medical expenses

For questions or more information, please contact:  
[ExternalAffairs@akronchildrens.org](mailto:ExternalAffairs@akronchildrens.org).





# Keeping kids healthy at home and school

## MATH Program adds up to better asthma control

Asthma has played a defining role in the young life of 14-year-old Kiniaya Parham, often resulting in sleepless nights for her and her mom, Eugenia Davis. Although she uses several medications to control her symptoms, Kiniaya has made numerous trips to Akron Children’s Emergency Room (ER) and has also been hospitalized due to her asthma.



Dr. Starla Martinez examines Kiniaya Parham, who is considered a high-risk asthma patient. Image at right: Summit County Public Health Healthy Homes Coordinator Sue Cummings is a resource for families like Eugenia Davis and her daughter.

Because she is considered high-risk, Kiniaya qualified for a new program that is a collaboration between Akron Children’s and Summit County Public Health. Managing Asthma Triggers at Home (MATH) is a year-long program that bridges the divide between hospital and home, helping families of high-risk asthma patients in Summit, Medina and Portage counties identify and address potential asthma triggers in the home.

“When we talk about social determinants of health, we’re talking about all of those things in our lives and in our environments that can impact our health,” said P. Cooper White, MD, medical director of Locust Pediatric Care Group, who co-leads Akron Children’s Asthma Program with Starla Martinez, MD, director of the Robert T. Stone Respiratory Center.

Families participating in the MATH Program receive a home assessment from a Healthy Homes specialist. Based on the findings, they are offered free services, such as professional home cleaning, an air purifier for the child’s room and pest control services. Families also receive clean home kits that include a HEPA vacuum and filter unit, dehumidifier, new furnace filter, and mattress and pillow covers.

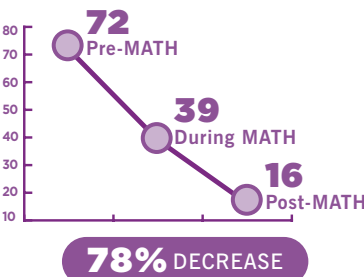
Through the MATH Program, Eugenia is now able to rest easier, knowing she’s providing a healthy home environment for her daughter.



### MATH Program

**50 patients**

#### Hospital Usage\*



\*Number of ER/hospitalization events



SYSTEM-WIDE ASTHMA  
ADMISSIONS DECREASED FROM

**1,145**

IN 2018 TO

**877**

IN 2019

# School-based health centers expand our reach

Recognizing that many school-age children do not have a primary care provider, Akron Children's piloted the expansion of health care services in two northeast Ohio school districts.

"We are trying to meet students and families where they are, and children are in schools," said Michele Wilmoth, director of School Health Services at Akron Children's.



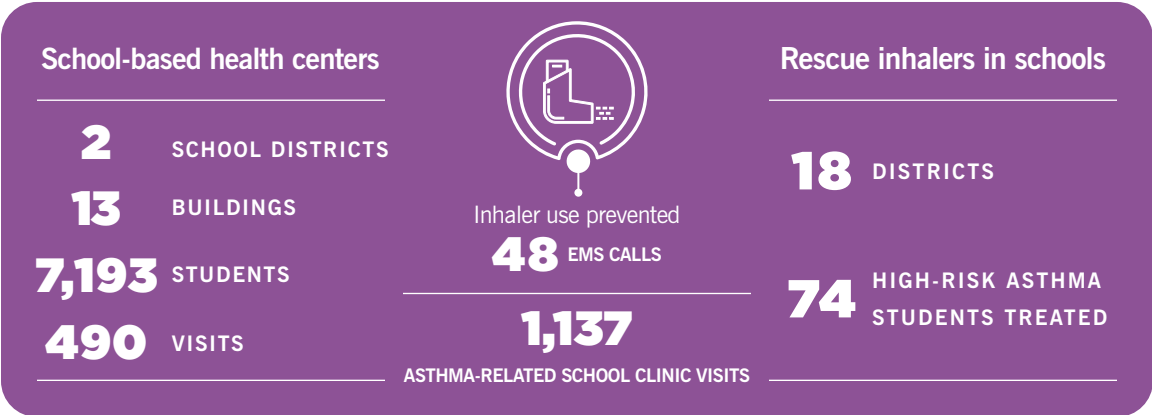
Nurse practitioner Camilla Giallourakis talks to Lilly Armstrong about her diet and dental hygiene as part of her school-based wellness exam.

These school-based health centers were piloted in the Kenmore-Garfield cluster of Akron Public Schools for grades K-12 and in Warren City Schools for Pre-K-8. Participating families receive in-person well-child exams and telehealth evaluations for minor illnesses with a nurse practitioner. Other services include hearing and vision tests, screenings for depression, sports physicals, and proactive discussions with teens regarding drug, alcohol and tobacco use.

School-based health centers are a natural extension of our Division of School Health Services, which covers 39 school districts and more than 300 school buildings across the region, reaching nearly 100,000 students.

"We want to be a safety net for children who come to school sick because their families have no other options," said Wilmoth. "They may lack transportation or have workplace policies that make it difficult to leave their jobs to take their children to the doctor."

Asthma management is an important focus of our school-based services, as it's the number one reason for missed school days. By keeping an emergency supply of rescue inhalers at the schools for high-risk asthma patients, we have prevented emergency medical services (EMS) calls and trips to the ER, while allowing more kids to stay in school.



# Advancing pediatric orthopedic training through research



Dr. Mark Adamczyk (right) conducts training with residents in orthopedic surgery.

As a teaching hospital, Akron Children's is committed to educating future physicians and other health care providers. Along with our pediatric residency program, we provide educational opportunities to residents from other training programs. This includes specialized training in pediatric orthopedics to orthopedic surgery residents from seven area programs.

As these future orthopedic surgeons are exposed to pediatric orthopedic surgery, they have the opportunity to participate in research projects with the support and guidance of our staff.

Our long history of pediatric orthopedic research grew under the direction of our former chair of Pediatric Orthopedic Surgery, Dennis Weiner, MD, who mentored many of our orthopedic surgeons in research projects during their own residencies. Today, our pediatric orthopedic surgeons continue that decades-long tradition of mentorship, guiding residents in publishing studies, including many that have garnered national and regional awards.

These studies have explored diverse topics in the surgical repair and treatment of orthopedic injuries and conditions, such as the genetic differences in ruptured anterior cruciate ligaments (ACL) between boys and girls, the use of Gore-Tex versus traditional cast padding materials, the use of electrical stimulation to promote bone growth, and a comparison between two different screw configurations used in scoliosis surgery.

## ORTHOPEDIC RESIDENCY AFFILIATIONS

Allegheny General Hospital  
Aultman Hospital  
Cleveland Clinic  
Cleveland Clinic Akron General  
Cleveland Clinic South Pointe  
Summa Health System  
Western Reserve Hospital

**45** RESIDENTS  
IN 2019

## 2019 Resident Research in Orthopedics



**2** PUBLICATIONS

**6** PRESENTATIONS

## Resident Research Awards in Orthopedics 2006-2019



**11** NATIONAL

**5** REGIONAL

# Helping our residents become advocates for children and families

Training to become a pediatrician is more than learning how to diagnose and treat illnesses. It's also about getting to know the community and recognizing when patients and families could use the support of local agencies.

During a four-week rotation in community pediatrics, our first-year residents spend each day visiting a different community agency or program. The rotation exposes them to a variety of local resources that are meeting the diverse needs of children and families, such as support for developmental or cognitive delays, literacy, housing and food insecurity.

"We schedule as many experiences as we can, so our residents can learn about the purpose and function of a broad range of agencies, while exploring their own interests in child advocacy," said Lisa Miyatake, DO, an Akron Children's pediatrician who coordinates community pediatrics residency education. "Spending time in the neighborhoods where families are raising their children gives them a deeper understanding of the challenges many families face."

Spending time in the community helps our pediatric residents gain insight into the needs of families.



2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

**22**  
residents



COMMUNITY PEDIATRIC  
ROTATION PARTNERS

## ACCESS Shelter

Akron Children's Dental Clinic

Akron Children's Lead Clinic

Akron Children's School Health

Akron International Institute

Akron Summit Community Action

CARE Center at Akron Children's

Community Legal Aid

Hartville Migrant Ministry Clinic

Locust Pediatric Care Group

New Leaf Clinic for Special Children

Summit County Children's Services

Summit County Public Health





# Supporting moms and babies every step of the way



NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

**5 nurses**

**80**

CLIENT FAMILIES

Although infant mortality rates in Mahoning County are among the highest in Ohio, especially for African-American babies, a new program is giving vulnerable families the support they need.

The Nurse-Family Partnership is a national model of care that pairs trained pediatric nurses from Akron Children's Home Care Group with expectant mothers in Mahoning County who are at the greatest risk. The nurses are contracted by Mahoning County Educational Service Center to make regular home visits starting at 28-weeks gestation until the child is 2 years old. In the process, the nurses form close bonds with these first-time moms and their babies.

"Developing one-on-one relationships with families and helping them deliver a healthy, beautiful baby is incredibly fulfilling for our nurses," said Tina Gearhart, MSN, RN, nurse manager, Skilled Nursing Department. "It's amazing to witness the impact these nurses are making on a daily basis."

Families partner with the same nurse throughout their journey into motherhood. The nurses become trusted resources and confidantes, alleviating concerns and answering questions without judgment. They ensure expectant moms receive essential medical care for a healthy pregnancy and delivery. After the babies are born, they help the new moms gain confidence in caring for their babies.

The nurses often link families to community resources, such as transportation vouchers for prenatal visits, or assistance with formula, diapers, toys, furniture and other needs.

"We want to equip at-risk moms with the knowledge they need to have a healthy baby and give their child the right start," said Gearhart. "When you know better, you do better."



# Academy of Health and Human Services

## High school students blossom during summer internship

Every morning as Nsenga Hakizimana got dressed for his summer internship at Akron Children's, the North High School student was proud to put on his hospital ID badge. Working in a hospital was a dream come true and a great honor for Nsenga, a native of Uganda.

The teen was one of eight Viking Scholars chosen to participate in an eight-week summer internship program, as part of our Academy of Health and Human Services at North High School in Akron. We were the first northeast Ohio organization to partner with Akron Public Schools in the formation of college and career academies that allow high school students to explore various careers and prepare for life after graduation.

Each of the interns worked in a variety of hospital departments, based on their career interests. They also conducted research on a health disparity or social determinant of health. As the academy's first group of Viking Scholars, they gained valuable experience, while earning money during the summer break.

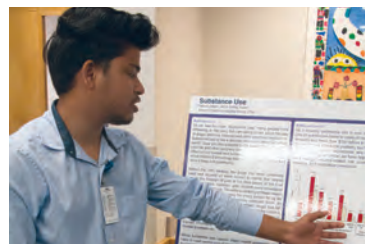


First class of Viking Scholars

"Our goal with the summer internship program is to provide students with real-world work experience, while also promoting skills in professional development, leadership and basic research," said Thomas Jefferson, PhD, the hospital's career academy liaison and coordinator for special projects.

At a closing program, the students presented their research projects, which included the history of type 1 diabetes, LGBTQ+ health, suicide and motor vehicle accidents. After seeing the students' presentations, Bennett Williams, Akron Children's vice president of External Affairs, was filled with pride.

"You have been great models for our program," Williams said to the students. "I'm so proud to see how much you have blossomed. I know you will carry these lessons for a lifetime."



ACADEMY OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**300 students**

**1000+**  
EMPLOYEE HOURS

**20+**  
JOB SHADOWING EXPERIENCES  
FOR STUDENTS



# Bringing behavioral health services closer to Mahoning Valley families

Akron Children's opened the doors to a new Behavioral Health Center in December 2019 at our Beeghly campus in Boardman. The new facility increases access to essential mental and behavioral health services that address a growing need, while also providing a partial hospitalization program for children and teens in the region.



The center's open house event offered art therapy demos as part of its scavenger hunt-themed tour.

The \$2.3 million renovation created space for art, group and family therapy, as well as nine individual therapy rooms.



Capacity to  
**double**  
patient visits in  
**Year 1**



*"My son struggled to cope after losing his dad and benefited from the partial hospitalization program at the hospital's Akron campus...it absolutely saved his life. I can tell you first-hand that having access to this program in Mahoning Valley is huge."*

**PAIGE SCHANTZ**

AKRON CHILDREN'S EMPLOYEE AND MOM

# Investing in Communities - 2019

Our community benefit activities align with our promise to care for every child, regardless of financial circumstance. Beyond our primary mission, we engage in and support causes that foster meaningful and sustainable change in the communities we call home – all with the paramount goal of enhanced quality of life for children and families.

**\$128.4 million\*** in total community benefit

\*Unaudited



**Community  
Programs & Services**

**\$7.0  
million**

**Research, Advocacy  
& Community  
Partnerships**

**\$8.5  
million**



**Health Professional  
Education**

**\$9.0  
million**

**Unreimbursed  
Medicaid &  
Uncompensated  
Care**

**\$103.9  
million**







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