

Child and youth mental health

Advisory group meeting

August 21, 2025



VISION

Ohio is a model of health, well-being and economic vitality

MISSION

To advance evidence-informed policies that improve health, achieve equity, and lead to sustainable healthcare spending in Ohio.



Core funders









Thank you

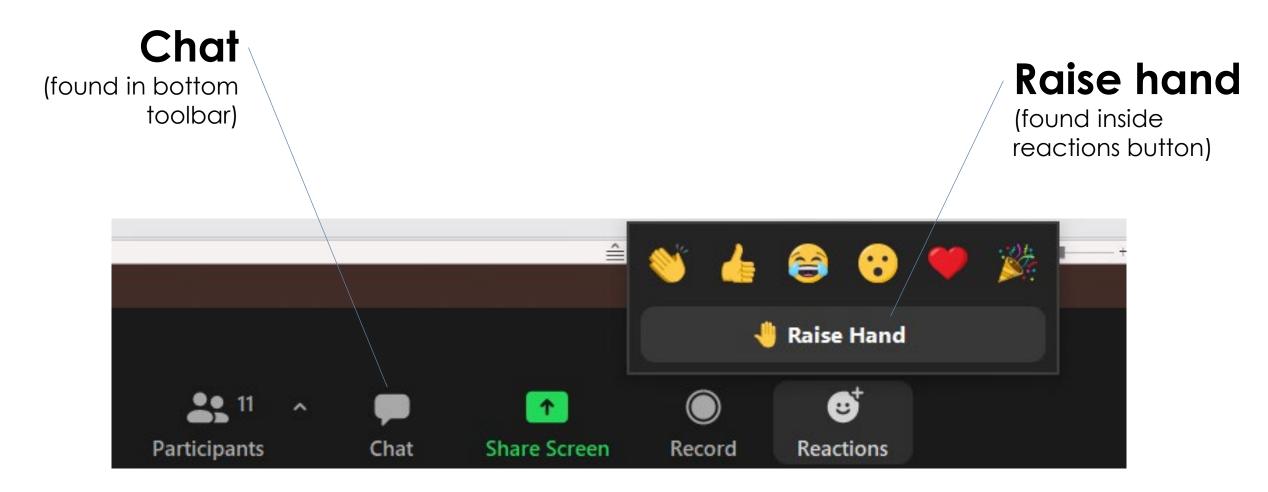
to the organizations that have generously supported HPIO's child mental health work



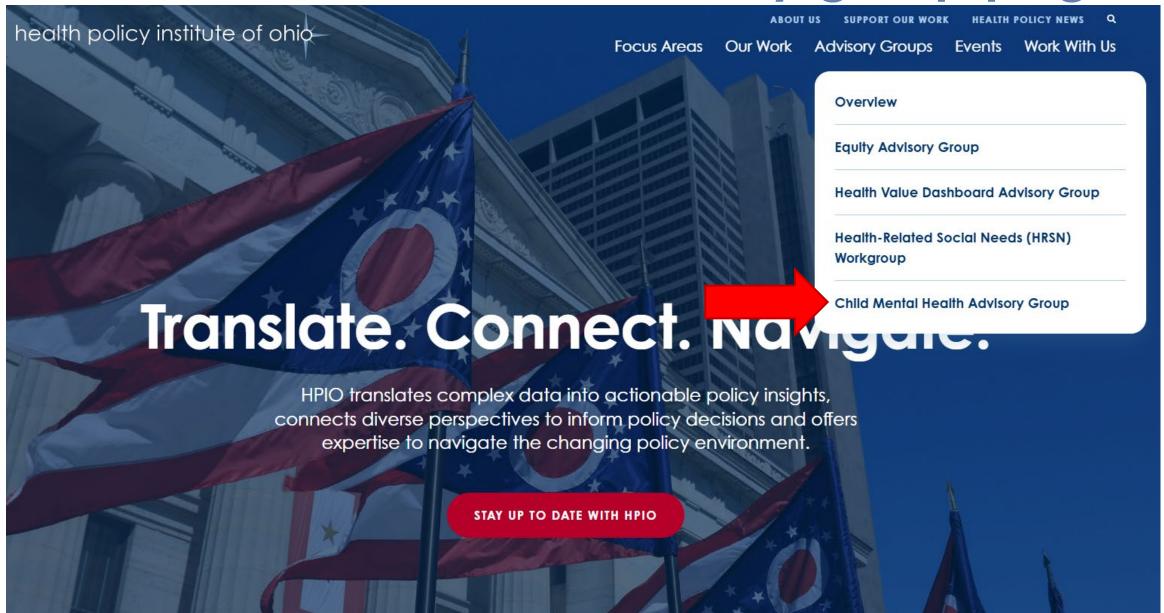




Participating in Zoom



Child mental health advisory group page



Access to mental health care among Ohio children and youth



Objectives

As a result of this meeting, the **Advisory Group will be aware of**:

- Data on access to care for Ohio children and youth
- HPIO's initial plan for the access to care publication(s)

As a result of this meeting, **HPIO** will have guidance from the Advisory Group on:

- The most important aspects of mental health care access in Ohio
- Objectives for the publication(s) and how to make the content digestible
- Policy recommendations for HPIO to consider

Role of the advisory group

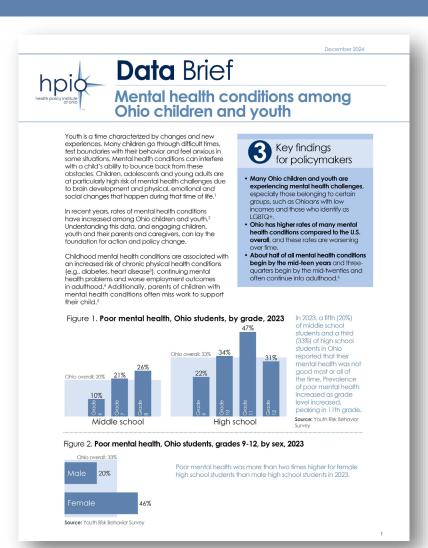
Input on policy brief content

- HPIO will convene a meeting for each brief
- Possible post-meeting follow-up requests

Feedback on draft policy briefs

Assistance with sharing and dissemination

First two briefs in the series





Policy brief

2 Factors contributing to child and youth mental health struggles

Strong mental health is essential for Ohioans to reach their full health potential. About holf of all mental health conditions begin by the mid-teen years, and three quarters begin by the mid-teen years, and three quarters begin by the mid-twenties and often continue into adulthood." A wide variety of factors can impact mental health in childhood. Addressing these factors early can prevent poor mental health outcomes for youth through adulthood."

Ohio children and youth are experiencing significant mental health challenges, with increases in overall rates of mental health conditions and higher rates compared to the U.S. overall in recent years. For certain Ohio youth, specifically, Ohioans with low incomes and those who are LGBTGA, these challenges are even more acute. Childhood mental health conditions can have long-term consequences, including an increased risk of chronic physical health conditions, continuing mental health problems and worse employment outcomes in adulthood.

Factors that influence mental health differ from one child to the next. Some factors present considerable mental health risks for only certain groups of children and youth, while others have more widespread effects. This brief facuses on three important contributing factors, identified based on research literature, feedback from HPIO's Child Mental Health Advisory Group and input from Ohio youth who participated in two focus groups facilitated by HPIO."

- Smart phones and social media
- Housing instability and homelessness
- Child protective services and foster care system involvement

This brief describes how each factor influences child and youth mental health, the extent to which it exists in Ohio and what the state is doing to address it. Finally, it presents a variety of policy options that could be implemented to address each topic.

Rey findings for policymakers

June 2025

- media have benefits for young Ohioans, but are also associated with numerous mental health risks, such as bullying, less face-to-face interactions and exposure to harmful content. Sixty-three percent of Ohio youth, ages 12-17, are spending three or more hours on screens per day.
- 2 Children without safe, stable and high-quality housing often experience mental health challenges. In 2023, 3,7% of Chilo high school students reported experiencing unstable housing: rates were higher among Black and Hispanic students.
- 3 Up to 80% of children and youth in foster care have a significant mental health need, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics², and these challenges generally continue into adulthood.

HPIO's Child and Youth Mental Health policy brief series released December 2024 This brief > Describes factors contributing to child and youth mental health challenges expected late 2025 expected Spring 2026 Will examine health insurance coverage, cost and affordability of care and how they influence access to mental health services

HPIO's Child and Youth Mental Health policy brief series

released December 2024



Mental health conditions among Ohio children and youth presents prevalence data

released July 2025



Factors contributing to child and youth mental health struggles describes factors contributing to child and youth mental health challenges





Focuses on access to mental healthcare services across levels of care

expected Spring 2026



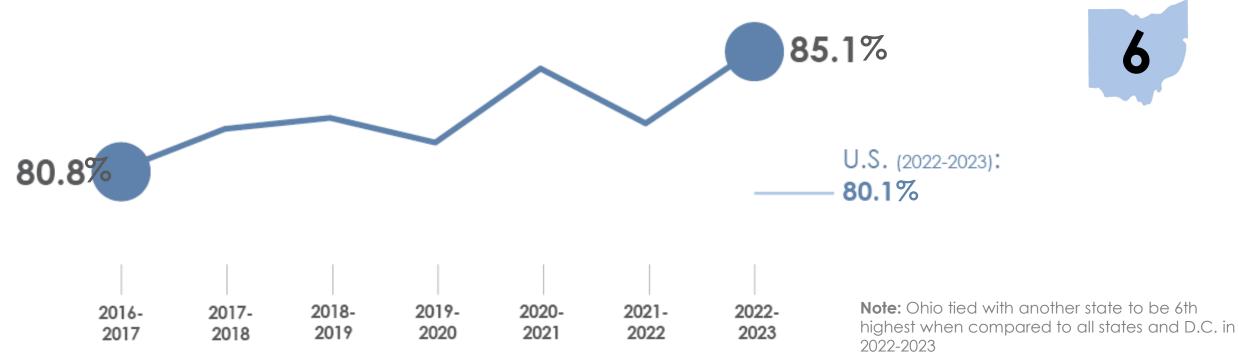
Will examine health insurance coverage, cost and affordability of care and how they influence access to mental health services

Draft objectives for mental health care access publication(s)

After reading the publication(s), the audience will understand:

- The extent to which Ohio children and youth are able to access mental health care services
- The groups of Ohio children and youth who experience more challenges accessing care
- Some of the biggest barriers to accessing child mental health care
- How frequently children are visiting the emergency department or accessing crisis services for mental health
- What Ohio can do to improve access to mental health care

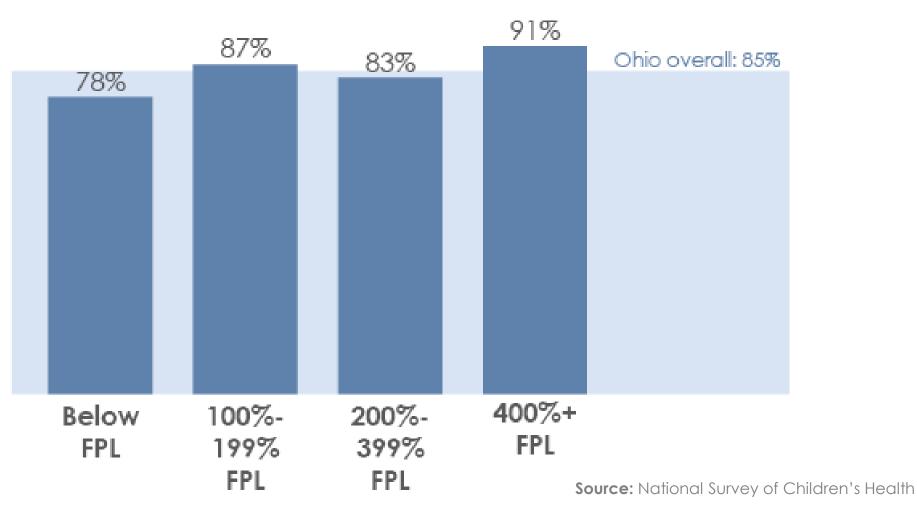
Percent of Ohio children (ages 3-17) who received needed mental health treatment in past year, 2016-2017 – 2022-2023



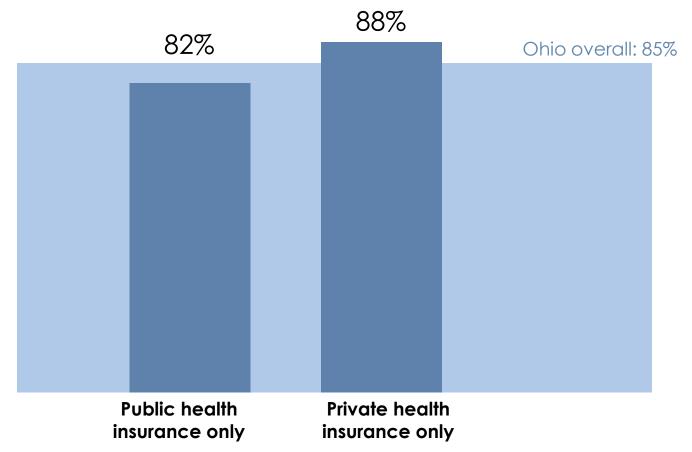
Source: National Survey of Children's Health as reported by the Commonwealth Fund

Ohio rank

Percent of Ohio children (ages 3-17) who received needed mental health treatment in past year, by income, 2022-2023

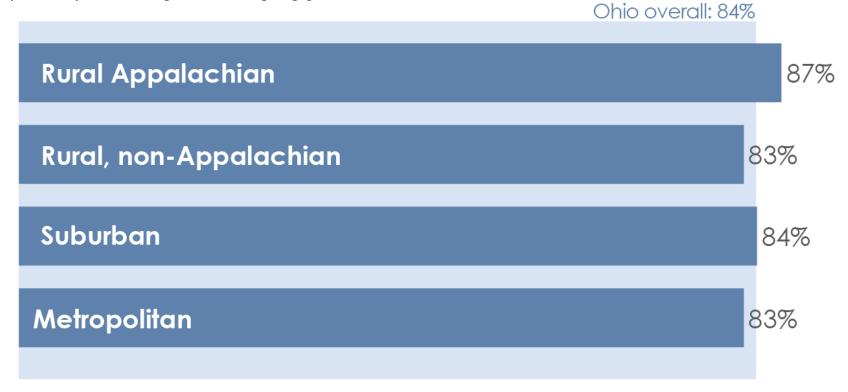


Percent of Ohio children (ages 3-17) who received needed mental health treatment in past year, by insurance type, 2022-2023



Source: National Survey of Children's Health

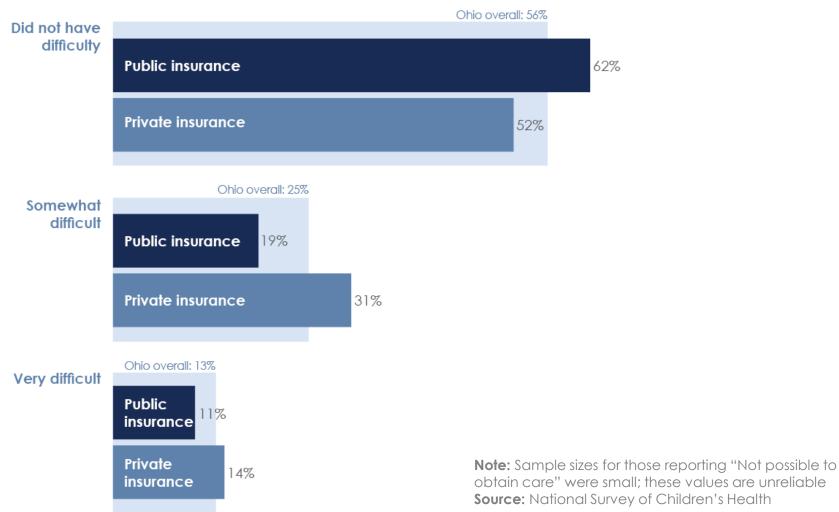
Percent of Ohio children (ages 12-18) who received needed mental health treatment in past year, **by county type**, 2023



Source: Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey

Difficulty accessing care

Difficulty accessing mental health care, Ohio children (ages 3-17), by insurance type



Other groups that had more difficulty accessing care:

- **Ages 6-11**: 50.5% reported that accessing care was somewhat or very difficult
- Income 200-399% FPL: 42.5% reported that accessing care was somewhat or very difficult
- Income 400% FPL and above: 47.3% reported that accessing care was somewhat or very difficult



Was care helpful?

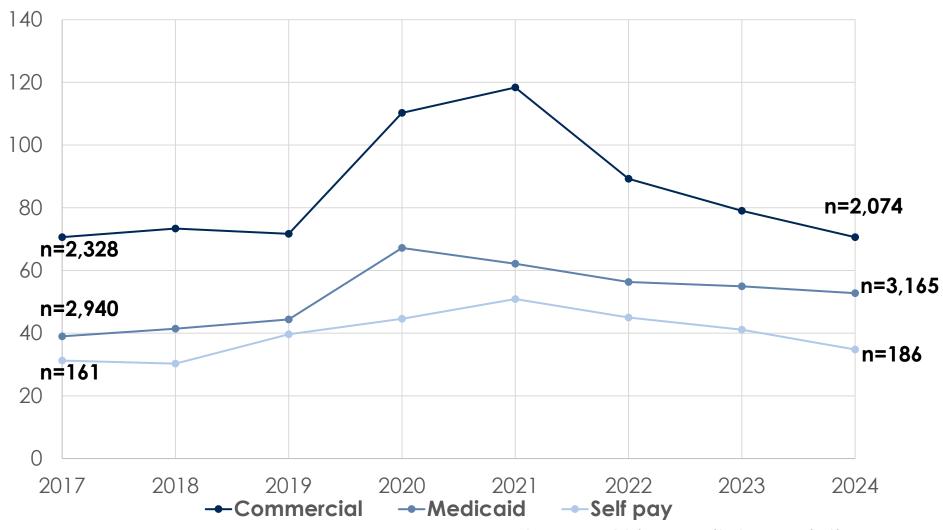
Percent of youth who had received mental health treatment or counseling in the past 12 months and reported that it helped at least "some", 2021-2022



Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health via "The State of Mental Health in America" 2024 edition

ED visits for suspected suicide

Number of emergency department visits for suspected suicide attempts per 10,000 emergency department visits, among Ohio children ages 0-17, by insurance type, 2017-2024



Source: Ohio Hospital Association

Discussion

- 1. Why does Ohio rank well relative to other states?
- 2. What stories does this data not tell?/What are we missing? (e.g., Timeliness of care, more challenges at certain levels of care or with specific conditions, quality of care, etc.)

Discussion

Based on the previous discussion and what you believe Ohio policymakers would benefit from seeing, what suggestions do you have to make the publication objectives more specific?

Draft objectives for mental health care access publication(s)

After reading the publication(s), the audience will understand:

- The extent to which Ohio children and youth are able to access mental health care services
- The groups of Ohio children and youth who experience more challenges accessing care
- Some of the biggest barriers to accessing child mental health care
- How frequently children are visiting the emergency department or accessing crisis services for mental health
- What Ohio can do to improve access to mental health care

HPIO proposal for child and youth access to care bundle of 3 publications

1. Overview of child and youth access to care in general

- Brief overview of the different levels of care
- Data on unmet need, level of difficulty accessing care, and whether care helped

2. Barriers to child and youth mental health care access

- > Parent/caregiver focus group findings and relevant quantitative data
- 3. Mental health emergency department visits and crisis services utilization
 - Data on ED visits for suspected suicides and with mental health primary diagnosis
 - > MRSS data
 - > 988 data
 - > Data on follow-up care after ED visit for mental health



Discussion

What are your reactions to the proposed bundle of 3 publications?



Discussion

What initial ideas do you have for policy recommendations to highlight in this brief?



Next steps

- Drafts should be ready to review in mid-October
- Brief 4 meeting likely to be in early 2026





Contact

Becky Carroll

Director, Policy Research and Analysis bcarroll@hpio.net

www.hpio.net

Mental health of system-involved youth





VISION

Ohio is a model of health, well-being and economic vitality

MISSION

To advance evidence-informed policies that improve health, achieve equity, and lead to sustainable healthcare spending in Ohio.



Core funders









Thank you

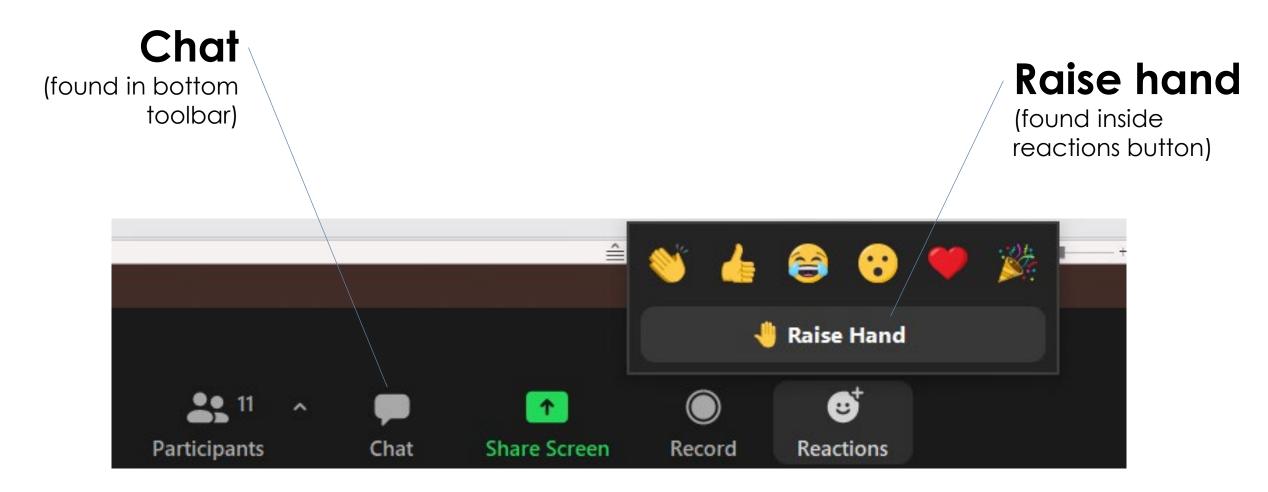
to the organizations that have generously supported HPIO's child mental health work



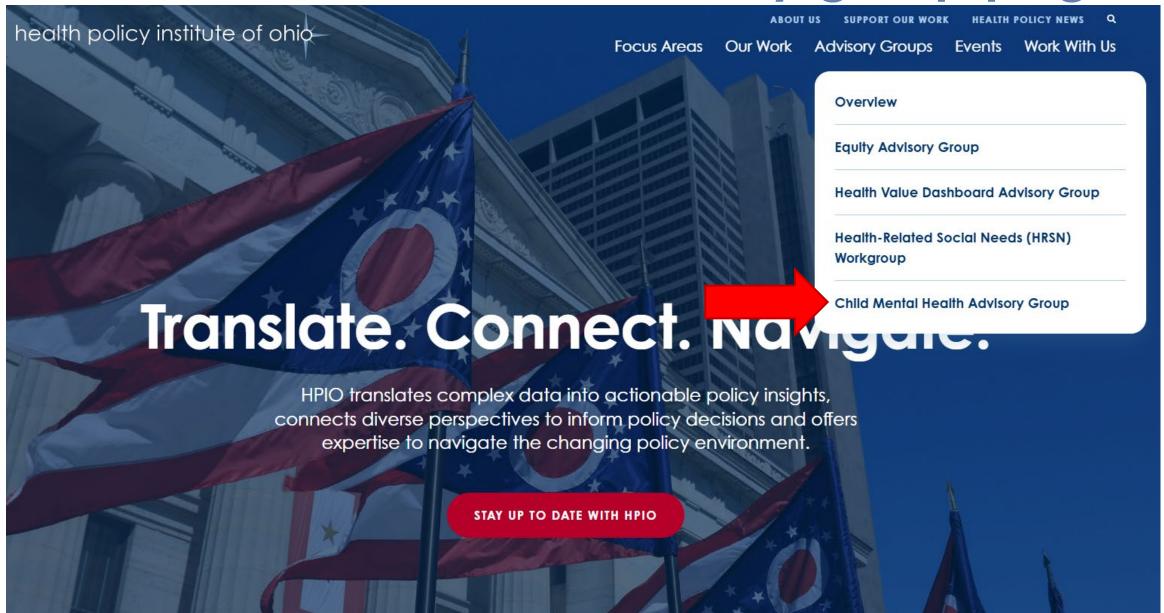




Participating in Zoom



Child mental health advisory group page



Agenda

- Background and foundation setting
- Discussion: scope and purpose
- Next steps



Objectives

- As a result of participating in this meeting:
 - Advisory Group members will be familiar with HPIO's upcoming brief on the mental health of system-involved youth
 - HPIO will have guidance from the Advisory
 Group on the scope and purpose of the brief
 on the mental health of system-involved
 youth



Introductions



Background and foundation setting





Health Policy Brief

Connections between criminal justice and health

Overview

According to the HPIO Health Value Dashboard, Ohio ranks 47 out of 50 states and D.C. on health value a composite measure of population health outcomes and healthcare spending, Incarceration, arrest and crime contribute to Ohio's poor health value rank.

This brief summarizes research on the complex connections between criminal justice and health (see figure 1), with a focus on the impact of criminal justice involvement on health and well-being. The brief also outlines policy options that state policymakers and other community leaders can take to reduce incarceration and improve the health of Ohioans at highest risk for criminal justice involvement.

The research evidence is clear that poor mental health and addiction are risk factors for criminal justice involvement and that incarceration is detrimental to health. Obstacles to health and well-being are particularly striking for Chicans who are at highest risk of criminal justice involvement.

Figure 1. The relationship between criminal justice

Engagement with the crim

impacts health, safety an

levels of soc

Health

Health, including substance use and mental health, can Impact criminal justice outcomes, such as:

- · Pretrial detention Incarceration
- . Community and collateral sanctions

Community conditions are foundational drivers of outco community conditions include income, employment, educa-

key findings for policymakers

There is a two-way relationship between criminal



crime.

and the significant

r effective policy

arceration and ba

On ave

\$7

cost of b

defendan

higher the

res, including bigs in crir

than bail amounts for

d reforms to the

ust now look

tices in other

gove health,

and criminal

Every Ohioan wants to live in a community that is safe, provides opportunities for good health and where their families can flourish. This policy brief examines the impact of pretrial incarceration and the money ball system on the health, safety and well-being of Ohioans and their

o have been money bail nd justice in Ohio Health **Policy** Brief fions between ates that ball ealth and well olicy change Connections between criminal justice and health le continue to be

Insights on justice and race

Public and private leaders across Ohio work to build and support safe, just and healthy communities where every Ohioan can thrive. Criminal justice partners.

including law enforcement, courts and corrections, play an important role in that effort. Goals of the criminal justice system include preventing crime and improving community safety. However, these worthy goals are not achieved under current criminal justice policies.

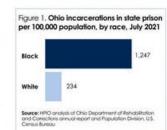
involvement with the criminal justice system has wide-ranging, negative effects on physical and mental health for Ohioans At the same time, justice involvement creates trauma, barriers to employment, education and housing, and may increase a person's likelihood of re-offending. Communities of color in particular have been disproportionately impacted by our criminal justice system.

Building upon HPIO's policy brief, Connections Between Criminal Justice and Health, this brief takes a closer look at the role of race within criminal justice policy. The two-way relationship between criminal justice and health is influenced by racism and other forms of discrimination, which can drive poor outcomes in both sectors (see in figure 2). Ohioans of color are often negatively impacted by unjust biases. policies and structures in the oriminal justice system. This results in stark racial disparities in criminal justice outcomes, such as incarceration (see figure 1), Improvements within the criminal justice system can lead to safer, healthier and more vibrant communities in Ohio.

key findings for policymakers

- Disporities in the criminal justice system are not. inevitable, and although unjust biases, policies
- and structures exist, improvement is possible. Ohioans of color experience barriers to justice stemming from a long history of racism in the criminal justice system that casts a shadow
- over modern policymaking.

 Public and private stakeholders can take meaningful action to eliminate racism in the criminal justice system and improve health. safety and well-being for every Ohioan.



- The relationship between the criminal justice system and race
 Barriers to justice at the individual, institutional and structural levels that lead to poor outcomes for

key findings for policymakers

Health Policy Brief

Connections between criminal justice and health

Impacts on children and families

Health **Policy** Brief

Criminal Justice and Health Social drivers of violent crime

Everyone deserves to live in a safe and healthy environment, free from violence. Yet, violent crime occurs across Ohio communities, with more than 30,000 crimes. including homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault, reported in 2023.

Even with laws and penalties such as arrest and

nunity

· Community conditions can perpetuate or prevent violence.

health and safety

Community factors including social norms, exposure to racism, income inequality and access to quality housing, education, employment and health care impact violence.

key findings

There are evidence-informed policy

and program solutions to improve

community conditions, prevent

violence and improve community

for policymakers

 Violence is a public health problem and is detrimental to the physical and mental health of individuals and communities.

sal drivers of violence, including racism, income ocial norms, education and employment, health

changes that may have an impact on community

ations and implementation examples that Ohio

07-2023

There are evidence-informed policy and program solutions to prevent and break generational cycles of justiceinvolvement, support children and families who have an incarcerated parent, and improve community

key findings

Parental justice involvement

incorperated later in Me.

negatively impacts the health.

and families and increases the

Ohio has a strong foundation for

supporting children and families

including several policies, programs

and practices that connect parents

with their children during re-entry from

incarceration, SNI, more can be done

to prevent and mitigate the impacts

of parental justice involvement.

well-being and stability of children

likelihood that children will become

for policymakers

Figure 1. Generational cycle of justice involvement

Safe, stable environments and nurturing relationships

are essential for healthy child development. Criminal

justice involvement disrupts family stability and strains

Incarceration of a household member is an adverse

childhood experience (ACE) that can cause serious

and communities. These harms include increased

likelihood of future justice involvement of children

At the same time, children need to grow up in safe

a balance between community safety, family

communities, free from crime and violence, requiring

stability and child well-being in Ohio's criminal justice

Though Ohio ranked near the bottom (40° out of

Value Dashboard, Ohioans are resilient and have a

strong framework to support children whose family

members are justice involved. Policymakers and

prevent future involvement with the justice system

other leaders can build upon this framework to

50 states) on incarceration in HPIO's 2023 Health

and long-lasting health and economic harms

across generations and for individuals, families

relationships, exposing children to adversity and

trauma at no fault of their own.

(displayed in figure 1).1

Generational effects

* * * * * Exposure to parental justice involvement, and resulting negative outcomes and trauma, increases risk of future justice involvement for children throughout their lives, including juvenile justice involvement.

criminal justice

and mitigate ham.

· Increased risk of poverty

- · Reduced family stability · Increased exposure to
- ACE · Worsened educational
- outcomes Increased housing instability

Negative effects on the health and well-being of children and family members

- mental health
- Increased substance use · Increased risk of delayed
- child development
- Increased risk of children

Foundational drivers of criminal justice involvement

Poor community conditions (e.g., limited economic and educational opportunities, inadequate housing) and exposure to racism and discrimination increase the risk of criminal justice involvement. drive poor health outcomes and create disparities and inequities in both

2014 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023*



Goals and purpose

- Describe the connections between health and justice involvement, including drivers of poor outcomes in both sectors
- Highlight barriers to justice by race at the individual, institutional and structural levels
- Examine the impacts of pretrial incarceration and parental justice involvement
- Describe the community drivers of violent crime
- Elevate policies that improve health and well-being for people who are justice-involved, support families and prevent crime

Health

Health, including substance use and mental health, can impact criminal justice outcomes, such as:

- Arrest
- Pretrial detention
- Incarceration
- Community and collateral sanctions

Engagement with the criminal justice system impacts health, safety and well-being at all levels of society



Criminal justice

Involvement in the criminal justice system can impact health outcomes, such as:

- Infectious disease
- Chronic disease
- Mental health conditions and addiction

Racism is a systemic and ongoing crisis with serious consequences for the health and well-being of Ohioans inside and outside of the criminal justice system. Racism, ableism, classism and other forms of discrimination drive **disparities** and **inequities** in criminal justice and health outcomes.

Community conditions are foundational drivers of outcomes in both criminal justice and health. Examples of community conditions include income, employment, education, housing, exposure to trauma and family well-being.

First two briefs in the series



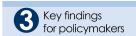
Data Brief

Mental health conditions among Ohio children and youth

Youth is a time characterized by changes and new experiences, Many children ao through difficult times. test boundaries with their behavior and feel anxious in some situations. Mental health conditions can interfere with a child's ability to bounce back from these obstacles. Children, adolescents and young adults are at particularly high risk of mental health challenges due to brain development and physical, emotional and social changes that happen during that time of life.1

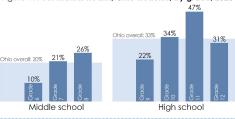
In recent years, rates of mental health conditions have increased among Ohio children and youth.2 Understanding this data, and engaging children, youth and their parents and caregivers, can lay the foundation for action and policy change.

Childhood mental health conditions are associated with an increased risk of chronic physical health conditions (e.g., diabetes, heart disease3), continuing mental health problems and worse employment outcomes in adulthood.4 Additionally, parents of children with mental health conditions often miss work to support their child 5



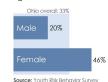
- · Many Ohio children and youth are experiencing mental health challenges. especially those belonging to certain groups, such as Ohioans with low incomes and those who identify as
- Ohio has higher rates of many mental health conditions compared to the U.S. overall, and these rates are worsening
- · About half of all mental health conditions begin by the mid-teen years and threeauarters beain by the mid-twenties and often continue into adulthood.6

Figure 1. Poor mental health, Ohio students, by grade, 2023



In 2023, a fifth (20%) of middle school students and a third students in Ohio reported that their mental health was not good most or all of the time. Prevalence of poor mental health increased as grade level increased, peaking in 11th grade Source: Youth Risk Behavior

Figure 2. Poor mental health, Ohio students, grades 9-12, by sex, 2023



Poor mental health was more than two times higher for female high school students than male high school students in 2023.

June 2025



Policy brief

2 Factors contributing to child and youth mental health struggles

Strong mental health is essential for Ohioans to reach their full health potential. About half of all mental health conditions beain by the mid-teen years, and three quarters begin by the mid-twenties and often continue into adulthood.3 A wide variety of factors can impact mental health in childhood. Addressing these factors early can prevent poor mental health outcomes for youth through adulthood.4

Ohio children and youth are experiencing significant mental health challenges, with increases in overall rates of mental health conditions and higher rates compared to the U.S. overall in recent years.5 For certain Ohio youth, specifically, Ohioans with low incomes and those who are LGBTQ+, these challenges are even more acute. Childhood mental health conditions can have long-term consequences, including an increased risk of chronic physical health conditions, continuing mental health problems and worse employment outcomes in adulthood.6

Factors that influence mental health differ from one child to the next. Some factors present considerable mental health risks for only certain groups of children and youth, while others have more widespread effects. This brief focuses on three important contributing factors, identified based on research literature, feedback from HPIO's Child Mental Health Advisory Group and input from Ohio youth who participated in two focus groups facilitated by HPIO:7

- Smart phones and social media
- · Housing instability and homelessness
- Child protective services and foster care system involvement

This brief describes how each factor influences child and youth mental health, the extent to which it exists in Ohio and what the state is doing to address it. Finally, it presents a variety of policy options that could be implemented to address each topic

- Smart phones and social media have benefits for young Ohioans, but are also associated with numerous mental health risks, such as bullying, less face-to-face interactions and exposure to harmful content.1 Sixtv-three percent of Ohio youth, ages 12-17, are spending three or more hours on screens per
- Children without safe, stable and high-quality housing often experience mental health challenges. In 2023, 3.7% of Ohio high school students reported experiencing unstable housing; rates were higher among Black and Hispanic students.
- Up to 80% of children and youth in foster care have a significant mental health need, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics², and these challenges generally continue into adulthood.

HPIO's Child and Youth Mental Health policy brief series

released Brief Mental health conditions among Ohio children and youth presents prevalence data

expected late 2025 a will focus on access to mental healthcare services across levels of care

expected Brief will examine health insurance coverage, cost and affordability of care and how they influence access to mental health

Discussion: Scope and purpose



Research questions

- How does involvement in the juvenile justice system affect youth mental health?
- How does youth mental health affect juvenile justice system involvement?
- How do community conditions affect youth mental health and contact with the juvenile justice system?
- What effect does juvenile justice involvement have on mental healthcare access?
- What strategies prevent juvenile justice involvement and/or support the mental health of justiceinvolved youth?

Mental health

Mental health and substance use can impact and are affected by involvement with the juvenile justice system, such as:

- Arrest
- Detention



Juvenile justice

Involvement in the juvenile justice system is affected by and affects the mental health and well-being of youth, such as:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Drug use

Racism, classism and other forms of discrimination can affect the health and well-being of Ohio youth inside and outside of the juvenile justice system. These forms of discrimination drive disparities and inequities in juvenile justice and health outcomes.

Underlying drivers of juvenile justice involvement and poor mental health

Involvement with children services, parental incarceration, school discipline policies, experiences of poverty, community violence, neglect and other ACEs negatively affect the mental health of young Ohioans and can increase involvement with the juvenile justice system.

- What is most relevant to this part of the framework that HPIO needs to discuss?
- What is happening across Ohio (either statewide or locally) to which HPIO should align on this topic?
- What role does mental health care access play as it relates to the connection between mental health and juvenile justice?
- What relevant data exists? What analysis would be helpful in conversations with policymakers?



Mental health

Mental health and substance use can impact and are affected by involvement with the juvenile justice system, such as:

- Arrest
- Detention



Involvement in the juvenile justice system is affected by and affects the mental health and well-being of youth, such as:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Drug use

Racism, classism and other forms of discrimination can affect the health and well-being of Ohio youth inside and outside of the juvenile justice system. These forms of discrimination drive disparities and inequities in juvenile justice and health outcomes.

Underlying drivers of juvenile justice involvement and poor mental health

Involvement with children services, parental incarceration, school discipline policies, experiences of poverty, community violence, neglect and other ACEs negatively affect the mental health of young Ohioans and can increase involvement with the juvenile justice system.

- What does HPIO need to discuss in the brief that is most relevant to the mental health portion of the framework?
- What efforts are happening across Ohio (statewide or locally) to which HPIO should align on mental health outcomes for justice-involved youth?
- What treatment gaps and outcomes exist for justice-involved youth both in community and in DYS facilities?



Mental health

Mental health and substance use can impact and are affected by involvement with the juvenile justice system, such as:

- Arrest
- Detention

Juvenile justice

Involvement in the juvenile justice system is affected by and affects the mental health and well-being of youth, such as:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Drug use

Racism, classism and other forms of discrimination can affect the health and well-being of Ohio youth inside and outside of the juvenile justice system. These forms of discrimination drive disparities and inequities in juvenile justice and health outcomes.

Underlying drivers of juvenile justice involvement and poor mental health

Involvement with children services, parental incarceration, school discipline policies, experiences of poverty, community violence, neglect and other ACEs negatively affect the mental health of young Ohioans and can increase involvement with the juvenile justice system.

- What does HPIO need to discuss in the brief that is most relevant to the juvenile justice side of the framework?
- What efforts are happening across Ohio (statewide or locally) to which HPIO should align on juvenile justice involvement and its impact on youth mental health?

Mental health

Mental health and substance use can impact and are affected by involvement with the juvenile justice system, such as:

- Arrest
- Detention

Juvenile justice

Involvement in the juvenile justice system is affected by and affects the mental health and well-being of youth, such as:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Drug use

Racism, classism and other forms of discrimination can affect the health and well-being of Ohio youth inside and outside of the juvenile justice system. These forms of discrimination drive disparities and inequities in juvenile justice and health outcomes.

Underlying drivers of juvenile justice involvement and poor mental health

Involvement with children services, parental incarceration, school discipline policies, experiences of poverty, community violence, neglect and other ACEs negatively affect the mental health of young Ohioans and can increase involvement with the juvenile justice system.

- What does HPIO need to discuss in the brief that is most relevant the underlying drivers of justice involvement and poor mental health, including experiences of discrimination?
- What efforts are happening across Ohio (either statewide or locally) to which HPIO should align on reducing disparities and inequities and/or improving community conditions?
- What role does mental health care access play as it relates to the connection between mental health and juvenile justice?

Potential data

- Youth residing in juvenile detention, correctional and/or residential facility, Ohio
- Students who reported feeling sad or hopeless
- Youth poor mental health
- Out of school suspensions or expulsions
- Parent/guardian went to jail
- Received needed mental health treatment, children
- DYS admissions data



- What other relevant data exists?
- What analysis would be helpful in conversations with policymakers?



Next steps



Next steps

- Reconvene advisory group in late October to discuss key findings
- Advisory group review of brief in late October



Save the date



THURSDAY OCTOBER 9

Prioritizing what works

A focus on policies with the greatest return on investment



The Event Center at Mitchell Hall

250 Cleveland Avenue Columbus, OH 43215

Registration open:

www.hpio.net/events



Contact

Jacob Santiago

Senior policy analyst jsantiago@hpio.net

www.hpio.net

Thank you!

