

Division of Maternal and Child Health

Strategic Plan | January 2019–December 2021

Our vision: *Strong, healthy families power our world.*

Our mission: *We invest in people, relationships, communities and policies to build a healthier Vermont for future generations.*

The Division of Maternal and Child Health works across the life course to encourage optimal health and positive outcomes for all Vermonters. We support programs that provide direct services to pregnant people, children and families and build healthy communities. We provide leadership and guidance to professionals who work with children and families in a variety of settings including health care, early care and learning, schools and human service organizations. We respond to the needs of Vermont families by helping them connect to resources, improving access to quality health care and services, and ensuring that policies and systems are developed to allow all Vermont residents to achieve optimal health. Collaboration with local, state and national partners encourages a collective impact resulting in long-term positive outcomes.

Our guiding principles:

- We believe in a **strength-based approach** that promotes protective factors and recognizes that families have many strengths and the capacity to learn, grow and change.
- We believe in a **two-generation framework** that creates opportunities for, and addresses the needs of, both children and the adults in their lives.
- We believe there is a **fundamental need to partner** with state agencies, health care providers, human service organizations, and families to succeed at our vision.

Women's & Maternal Health

Priority area: Ensure optimal health prior to pregnancy

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	GOALS	KEY STRATEGIES	▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease
Tobacco use during pregnancy	▼	Work with local WIC offices and home visiting programs to ensure all clients have access to smoking cessation resources Conduct and evaluate a pilot program in a community-based obstetrical practice to improve rates of smoking cessation in pregnancy	
Advise against alcohol use during pregnancy	▲	Conduct a formative evaluation to determine Vermonters' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors related to the risk of substance use in pregnancy	

Perinatal & Infant Health

Priority area: Promote optimal infant health and development

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	GOALS	KEY STRATEGIES	▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease
Breastfeeding exclusively through 6 months	▲	Develop a strategic plan with partner and family input, to support all Vermont families in meeting their breastfeeding goals Reduce disparities in breastfeeding through peer and professional support	

Child Health

Priority area: Achieve a comprehensive and integrated system of state and community services for children

PERFORMANCE MEASURES **GOALS** **KEY STRATEGIES** ▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease

Young children receiving a developmental screening	▲	<p>Train health care providers, early care and learning providers and community partners in developmental monitoring, screening and use of the Universal Developmental Screening Registry</p> <p>Promote use of the Universal Developmental Screening Registry as an essential tool for monitoring the development of all young children</p>
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Priority area: Support programs to reduce the risk of chronic disease across the lifespan

PERFORMANCE MEASURES **GOALS** **KEY STRATEGIES** ▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease

Children ages 6–11 years who are physically active at least 60 minutes per day	▲	<p>Promote the 3-4-50 initiative to schools and early care and learning settings to include physical activity during the school day, and to parents and communities beyond the school day, for at least 60 minutes daily</p> <p>Promote American Academy of Pediatrics policies on the importance of recess and play for child development</p>
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Children ages 1–17 years who had a preventive dental visit in the past year	▲	<p>Promote Vermont’s new oral health guidelines to dentists, pediatricians, family medicine providers, parents and caregivers</p> <p>Implement a statewide school-based dental health program, building on our success with school-linked program</p>
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Priority area: Promote *Strengthening Families* protective factors and resiliency among Vermont’s families

PERFORMANCE MEASURES **GOALS** **KEY STRATEGIES** ▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease

Children ages 6 months–5 years who are flourishing	▲	<p>Pursue leadership support and investment in <i>Development Understanding and Legal Collaboration for Everyone</i> (DULCE), a model that embeds a family support specialist into a pediatric medical home to meet families at well-child checks, help them navigate resources and create optimal conditions for healthy development</p> <p>Promote <i>Help Me Grow</i> Vermont as a centralized access point to assist families and professionals in connecting children to resources, community-based programs and services that support healthy development</p>
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Children with Special Health Care Needs

Priority area: Achieve a comprehensive, coordinated, and integrated system of state and community services for children

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	GOALS	KEY STRATEGIES	▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease
Adolescents with and without special health care needs, ages 12–17, who received services necessary to transition to adult health care	▲	<p>Partner with OneCare Vermont to align care coordination services for children and youth with special health needs, including transition</p> <p>Partner with the statewide network of VocRehab Transition Counselors to ensure that youth with special health needs have access to the full range of transition supports</p>	

School Age & Adolescent Health

Priority area: Youth choose healthy behaviors and thrive

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	GOALS	KEY STRATEGIES	▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease
Adolescents ages 12–17 who had a preventive medical visit in the past year	▲	<p>Pilot test an evidence-based curriculum to teach high school students about their rights and responsibilities in the health care setting</p> <p>Endorse the <i>Bright Futures Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children and Adolescents</i> recommendation that all adolescents have an annual well-care visit</p>	
Adolescents who feel they matter to people in their community	▲	<p>Build opportunities for meaningful youth engagement through the creation and support of youth councils across the state, in partnership with Vermont Afterschool, Inc.</p> <p>Support ongoing participation in the <i>Getting to Y, Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Student Analysis Project</i></p>	

Priority area: Children live in safe and supportive communities

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	GOALS	KEY STRATEGIES	▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease
High school students who made a plan to attempt suicide in the past 12 months	▼	<p>Increase capacity of mental health providers to screen youth and young adults for suicide</p> <p>Conduct analysis of available data to better understand subpopulations of Vermont youth at risk for suicide and depression to better inform future programming</p>	

Crosscutting

Priority area: Promote an approach to our work that is integrated, strength-based, and mission-driven

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	GOALS	KEY STRATEGIES	▲ = Increase ▼ = Decrease
Maternal and Child Health (MCH) programs that partner with family members, youth, and/or community members	▲	<p>Represent all voices in MCH communications campaigns and outreach strategies — including parents, families, youth and consumers</p> <p>Convene and participate in advisory committees that demonstrate authentic family and consumer partnership</p>	
MCH employees who feel their supervisor gives them the opportunity to do their best work	▲	<p>Promote an Individual Development Plan for all MCH Division staff</p> <p>Convene a workgroup to assess and improve employee engagement across the division</p>	

