



## Iowa Chapter

Our mission is to support the optimal health of children by addressing the needs of children, their families, their communities, and their health care providers.

**What is the Iowa AAP?** We represent 370 General Pediatricians and Pediatric Specialists in supporting the optimal health of children by addressing the needs of children and their families, communities, and health care providers.

**How can we help in the policymaking process?** As experts in child health, we can help policymakers, professionals, and advocates identify policies, strategies, and resources to:

- ◆ Promote universal health care access for children, including their mental health
- ◆ Support early identification and follow up for children with delays or disabilities
- ◆ Reduce the impact of childhood trauma and incorporate trauma-informed practices
- ◆ Expand childhood obesity prevention, assessment, and treatment
- ◆ Reduce the incidence and impact of infectious diseases
- ◆ Safeguard teen physical and sexual health and reduce the risk of substance abuse
- ◆ Respond to COVID-19 and address overall health as we emerge from the pandemic.

# Iowa AAP 2021 Legislative Priorities

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We urge Iowa policymakers to act in these four areas to ensure the healthy physical and mental development of children:

**Children's Mental Health:** Sufficiently and sustainably fund the comprehensive children's mental health system to ensure greater access to crisis services, early identification, and prevention efforts. Expand the 1st Five Healthy Mental Development initiative, which has only grown in importance as a resource during COVID-19, statewide.

**Child Immunization:** Improve Iowa immunization rates through ready access to childhood vaccines, education about their safety and effectiveness, and strengthened school vaccination policies. Strongly oppose efforts to weaken Iowa's immunization standards or spread misinformation about the safety and efficacy of immunizations. Educate policymakers and families about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine; support efforts to both equitably distribute the vaccine and safely address the declines in routine vaccinations that occurred during the pandemic.

**Child Health Access:** Ensure children's access to health care including access to a stable, comprehensive Medicaid program that maintains Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefits, ensure all babies are born healthy. Address barriers to care Iowa children including the social determinants of health impacting maternal-child health and the provider workforce shortage limiting services in many areas of our state.

**Childhood Trauma:** Expand protections and community resources to maintain childhood safety and respond to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES). This includes limiting risks from firearms, increasing the use of face coverings to protect against COVID-19, maintaining resources to support the 5-2-1-0 pediatric obesity initiative, ensuring sufficient resources to assess and ameliorate child abuse, and sustaining the Poison Control Center.

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