Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program: 35 years of creating access to health care for vulnerable children and families.

Since 1989, the Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP) has supported innovative, community-based interventions to improve maternal and child health and access to care. HTPCP is funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration’s Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), Division of Maternal and Child Health Workforce Development.

The HTPCP is a public-private partnership between MCHB and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), combining HRSA resources with the AAP’s pediatric expertise in child health issues to support HTPCP projects.

Over the past 35 years, the HTPCP reached over 1.8 million individuals in rural and other underserved communities through 355 projects in 49 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories. For more information about HTPCP, visit [www.aap.org/htpcp](http://www.aap.org/htpcp).

Success stories include:

**Pediatric Clinic of Denton County Texas (1991 Grantee)**

Pediatric Clinic of Denton County Texas was one of the first Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP) recipients in 1991, led by Mindy Mashburn. Mindy worked as the clinic coordinator and a pediatric nurse practitioner (PNP) for the Pediatric Clinic of Denton County in Texas. She identified a barrier to children receiving care in Denton County because no physicians accepted Medicaid. Because of that gap in access to care, she found families increasingly relying on the emergency room (ER) for all medical treatment. “The whole idea of this grant is to improve the access to care for children,” she said. The HTPCP funding allowed the clinic to expand and hire another PNP. Within the first year of the grant, non-emergency ER visits decreased by almost 50% in the county.

The HTPCP grant and the project’s success led to more funding for the clinic including the hiring of additional PNP’s, registered/vocational nurses, a social worker, and front desk staff. The clinic model started by the Pediatric Clinic of Denton County and Mindy Mashburn has been used as a model for several community clinics in Texas by staffing them primarily with PNP’s.
Ele’s Place in Lansing, MI (1999 & 2004 Grantee)

Ele's Place was awarded two Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP) grants under the leadership of Dr. Jane Turner. Ele’s Place is a non-profit organization that provides bereavement services for children and teens who have lost a family member or other loved one. HTPCP funded the FOCUS project (1999-2004), an initiative to serve children from diverse backgrounds, and the TLC project (2004-2009) for children with a seriously ill family member. Support from the HTPCP was instrumental in helping Ele’s Place grow and reach a much broader population. Ele’s Place now has four branches: Lansing, Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids and Flint, providing bereavement services to children ages 3 – 18 at no cost to families.

Dr. Turner stated, “Participation in Healthy Tomorrows programs had [a] significant impact on my career in general pediatrics. My role as director of the Consultation Service for Children with Chronic Illness eventually led to working for Michigan’s Title V program as Chief Medical Consultant for Michigan’s Children’s Special Health Care Services. And the projects supported by Healthy Tomorrows had a major impact on services for children in mid-Michigan.”
Healthy Eyes Healthy Futures Massachusetts (2013 Grantee)

The goal of the Healthy Eyes Healthy Futures (HEHF) Massachusetts Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP) project was to improve the visual health of children via medical home and community outreach initiatives in both Boston and Springfield, MA. The HTPCP funding supported improvements to pediatric developmental assessment tools to evaluate children’s vision; the use of medical home to promote healthy vision for school readiness; and introduced eye health education programs and vision care resources to early education staff and school nurses. These resources promoted awareness of eye health and linked vision services to high-risk children and hard to reach families. In addition, the results of the HEHF HTPCP project were used as guidance to develop a commission on childhood vision and eye health which resulted in formal recommendations for improvements in children’s vision statewide and a Children’s Vision Advocacy Day at the State House in 2017.

Virtua Health (2023 Grantee)

The Virtua Pediatric Mobile Services (VPMS) Oral Health and Nutrition Initiative provides underserved children, ages 0-6, in southern New Jersey access to healthy, nutritious food, enhanced oral healthcare, and connection to a dental home as early as possible. The Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP) project aims to reduce the likelihood of developing poor oral health conditions such as periodontitis, cavities, cracked or broken teeth, and other chronic diseases linked to poor oral health, like obesity and diabetes, utilizing VPMS mobile health van, the only one of its kind in New Jersey.

In the first years of the HTPTP project, almost 1,000 children have received oral health care including 380 who received fluoride varnish. Eighteen Virtua Family Medicine resident physicians were trained on the importance of oral health as a part of a child’s overall health and strengthened
existing community partnerships. In 2024, with the support of the Virtua Health Foundation and generous philanthropic partners, the project is expanding the VPMS to include a second vehicle in the 3rd quarter of 2024. Both vehicles will manage a full-time community schedule at least five days per week eliminating pauses of services.