

PLATFORM STATEMENT

The goal of MCAH is to protect, promote and improve the health and well-being of all Yolo County mothers, infants, children, adolescents and their families. We work to reduce disparity in health outcomes across racial/ethnic, geographic and socioeconomic groups. Health outcomes are a result of the complex interplay of biological, social and environmental factors that drive behaviors across the course of a person's life. The science of early childhood development recognizes the importance of early positive experiences as a foundation for future health. The social determinants of health are the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age, as well as the systems put in place to deal with illness. Efforts to improve health outcomes should focus on development of policies that support good health, systems that provide effective and accessible services, and environments that promote health behaviors.

WE SUPPORT AND ADVOCATE FOR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SYSTEMS IN THESE AREAS:

ORGANIZATION AND DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES

- Women, children and families must be provided with continuity of care, starting before pregnancy and continuing throughout all phases of life.
- All community members should be able to identify a primary medical and dental care provider and maintain care with that provider over time regardless of changes in income or jobs.
- Access to preconception, and inter-conception healthcare should be available to all women during their reproductive years in order to improve birth outcomes and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.
- Systems of care should be provided in a way that is culturally inclusive of the diversity of the community, including race, ethnic, and LGBT communities.
- Health services including preventive services should be accessible regardless of immigration status.

MATERNAL HEALTH

- Family planning services for adolescents and adults must be available in accessible, culturally competent, confidential settings and should encompass reproductive life planning, including screening, treatment and education about sexually transmitted infections (including HIV), pregnancy testing, and all forms of reversible and permanent methods of birth control. These services should be available for males as well as females.
- Comprehensive and sound medical practice in counseling pregnant women must include presentation of all options including pregnancy termination.
- Emergency contraception should be available to all women.
- All pregnant women should have access to quality prenatal care in the first trimester (12 weeks) and continuing through the postpartum period.
- Women at risk for tobacco, alcohol and other drug use and those with mood disorders must have access to treatment services prior to, throughout and following pregnancy.

ADOLESCENT HEALTH SERVICES

- Teen pregnancy prevention efforts should be based on science and not rely on abstinence-only education.
- The scope of teen pregnancy prevention should include the role of the father and include special populations such as children in foster care.
- Obesity treatment options at the appropriate level of intervention specifically for adolescents should be available.
- Adolescent health service providers should develop and sustain LGBT cultural competency goals, policies, training modules, and other tools in close consultation with LGBT community stakeholders.

INFANT AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES

- Breastfeeding support services and breastfeeding-friendly community and workplace environments should be available for all community members in order to promote exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and continued breastfeeding for at least the infant's first year of life.
- All infants and children should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Efforts to address overweight and obesity among children should focus on prevention, including improving nutrition and physical activity environments for all children and their families.
- Obesity treatment options at the appropriate level of intervention should be available to all children.
- Access to pediatric dental care must be available and accessible for all children as well as access to fluoridated water in all communities.

SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AND HOMES

"To eliminate health disparities, we need to take a more active role in improving the environments of young children"

- Neighborhood conditions such as crime, violence and environmental health hazards put children at risk. Resources should be directed to neighborhoods that put children at the highest risk.
- All neighborhoods should have access to healthy foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables and local availability of child nutrition programs for low income families.
- Safe walking, biking and open parks should be available in all Yolo County neighborhoods.
- New and infill development should incorporate designs for walk-ability and neighborhood markets.
- Meals, foods and beverages marketed to children should adhere to healthy guidelines in accordance with the best available evidence and national nutrition standards such as the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

STRONG FAMILIES

- Agencies that serve families should align practices with the strengthening families framework in an effort to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.
- Services should be offered in a way that reduces stigma and proactively offers a spectrum of essential services to families in times of need.
- Housing and energy assistance should be available to low income families with children.
- All young children should have the opportunity for safe, nurturing child care that provides stable relationships and a cognitively rich environment in the absence of the parent.
- Children that have been abused, neglected or exposed to substances should receive early intervention services including parenting education, home visitation, developmental screening, assessment, and treatment as indicated.