

Transforming Child Health Care Through an Anti-Racist, Family-Centered Focus



The pediatric field can better support the health and well-being of children and families throughout the lifespan by taking steps to transform care and involving patients and families in the process.

The Need to Transform Child Health Care

Pediatric care should provide the conditions to help children thrive, particularly Black, Indigenous, Latino, and other children who are often marginalized by health care systems.



When Black providers care for Black newborns, **the mortality rate of Black infants is cut in half and other racial disparities are reduced.**



When providers promote the value of safe, stable, and nurturing relationships between children and their caregivers, **children are more likely to manage stress over the long term and less likely to be at risk for chronic disease.**



When providers examine their bias and mistrust of patients and families of color, **the likelihood of providers wrongly reporting suspected abuse to child protective services can be reduced.**

Strategies to Transform Child Health Care

These three strategies can improve children's health care beyond medical care. Adoption of these strategies requires time, resources, leadership buy-in, and commitment. Financial and accountability levers can help sustain these enhanced approaches to care.



Adopt anti-racist practices and policies to advance health equity.



Co-create equitable partnerships between patients, families, community partners, and providers.



Identify family strengths and address health-related social needs.

Engaging Patients and Families to Inform Transformation

For providers seeking to transform their practices, below are ways to meaningfully involve patients and families in the transformation process and decision-making.



Engage patients and families meaningfully throughout the transformation process so they can inform improvements and understand how their contributions are used.



Value patients' and families' time by compensating them for time spent providing feedback and sharing their expertise.



Support patients' and families' ability to engage by providing necessary resources, training, and flexibility.



Disrupt existing power dynamics by enabling patients and families to co-lead transformation work.



Listen to youth voices by developing opportunities to hear from child and adolescent patients directly.