



Center Spotlights

We're moving! Open house coming soon



We are excited to move to our new space on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and San Jacinto Blvd. We plan to be all settled by June!

The new space will feature:

- 31 faculty offices
- 13 classrooms
- A teaching kitchen
- Open collaboration spaces

- Student commons
- An exercise training metabolic room
- A wellness room
- A clinical lab and workroom
- and so much more!

You can catch sneak peeks of the new space [here!](#)

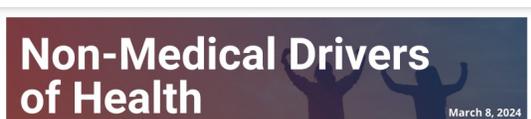
Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration (TX RPC) Project

TX RPC Project is a network of non-partisan health researchers in Texas that supports policymakers' legislative priorities in preparation for the Texas Legislative Session. Take a look at our newest resource:

- [Non-Medical Drivers of Health](#)
- [Congenital Syphilis](#)

Learn more about the TX RPC Project [here](#).

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. We can improve health by supporting community conditions that impact health (e.g. environment, education, access to care, and other factors) through laws, policies, and community partnerships.
2. In 2022, factors such as food insecurity and education were significant contributors to healthcare costs for Texans.
3. Healthcare plans, clinic and hospital systems, and other healthcare providers can integrate non-medical drivers of health into their delivery systems to improve health conditions and outcomes.

Background

Non-medical factors that influence health, collectively known as *social determinants of health, foundations or non-medical drivers of health (NMDOH)* are conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age that contribute to health outcomes.^{1,2}

- We can improve overall health by improving community conditions through laws, policies, and community partnerships.³
- The Non-Medical Drivers of Health Framework encourages collaborations with communities across sectors to improve community foundations and health benefits.



Figure 1. Non-Medical Drivers of Health Factors
Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion¹

Examples: Non-Medical Drivers of Health*

- Safe housing
- Transportation
- Food security and access to healthy foods
- Opportunities for physical activity
- Income level
- Educational Opportunities
- Early childhood experiences
- Social support
- Neighborhood crime rates and exposure to violence
- Access to safe drinking water
- Air quality
- Language and literacy skills

*References 5 & 6



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Texas has consistently had some of the highest reported cases of both syphilis and congenital syphilis in the country.^{1,3}
 - In 2022, approximately 25% of the nation's congenital syphilis cases came from Texas.¹
2. Congenital syphilis can have major health impacts on a baby, but the extent depends on
 - When syphilis was acquired
 - Whether the mother received adequate treatment.^{4,5}

Background

Congenital syphilis (CS) is a severe, disabling, and often life threatening disease seen in infants whose mothers were infected with syphilis during pregnancy and were not fully treated.

- The rate of syphilis among the general U.S. population began increasing more than a decade ago, with exponential annual increases since 2018, contributing to the rapidly increasing incidence of syphilis among pregnant women.^{4,5}



In 2022, **922 cases** of CS were reported in Texas.



This was **50% higher** than the next highest incidence of 616 in the state of California.¹

Implications

Approximately **40%** of babies born to women with untreated syphilis can be stillborn or die from the infection soon after birth.⁴

- Surviving infants may be affected by lifelong health issues including bone damage, severe anemia, enlarged liver and spleen, blindness, deafness, intellectual or developmental disabilities, or seizures.^{2,4}
- People infected with syphilis often do not have symptoms — known as latent syphilis — and thus may not be aware of their infection.⁵
- As a result, the lack of timely testing and adequate treatment during pregnancy are the main drivers of CS.⁷

TREATMENT FOR ACTIVE SYPHILIS IN PREGNANT WOMEN CAN REDUCE THE RISK OF STILLBIRTH BY ROUGHLY 80%, HIGHLIGHTING THE PREVENTABILITY OF THIS ISSUE.⁶



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MAY
22

Challenges and Opportunities in Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Families in the Perinatal Period

Darius Tandon, PhD

Professor, Department of Medical Social Sciences

Director, Center for Community Health, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine

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- Video Views: 9
- Top Attending States: TX, CA, NY



- Attendees: 148
- Video Views: 412
- Top Attending States: TX, NC, FL



- Attendees: 293
- Video Views: 107
- Top Attending States: TX, NC, FL

More Past Webinars

Faculty & Staff In The News



Leah Whigham, PhD, and a new obesity clinic opened by UTHouston School of Public Health in El Paso were featured in [City Beat Magazine](#).



[The Atlantic](#) interviewed **Courtney Byrd-Williams, PhD**, about the prevalence and nutritional impacts of baby food pouches.



Steven Kelder, PhD, MPH, talked to the [Dallas Morning News](#) for a story about new vaping laws in Texas.



Diana Guevara, RD, was interviewed by [KHOU-TV Channel 11](#) about the teaching kitchen study at UTHealth Houston School of Public Health.



Dolores Woods, RDN, was interviewed by [City Cast Houston](#) for a podcast about eating healthy. Woods was also quoted in a [Washington Post](#) article about seven energy-boosting foods.

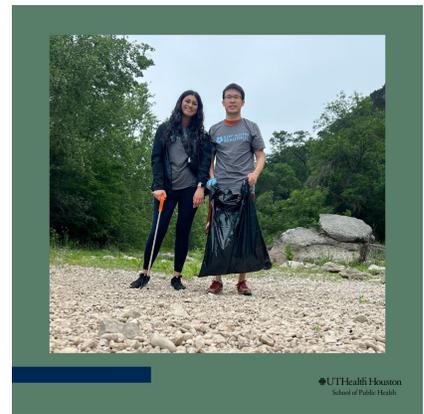
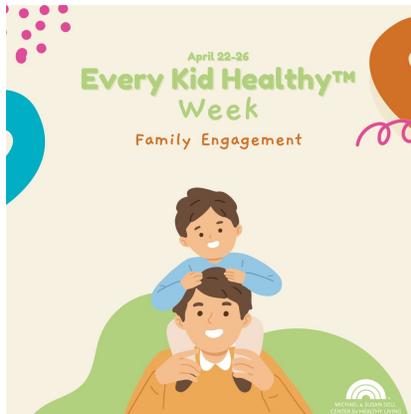


In collaboration with local and national partners, **Shreela Sharma, PhD**, has risen to the White House Challenge to End Hunger and Build Healthy Communities. Read more in [UTHealth Houston News](#).

Connect with us on social media!



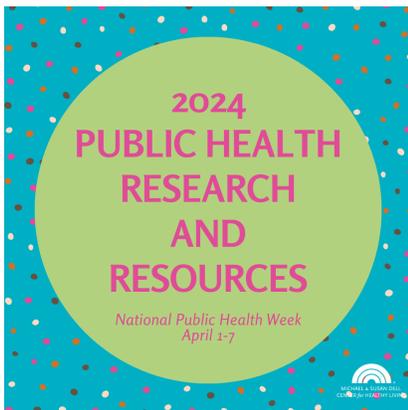
Andrew Springer, DrPH
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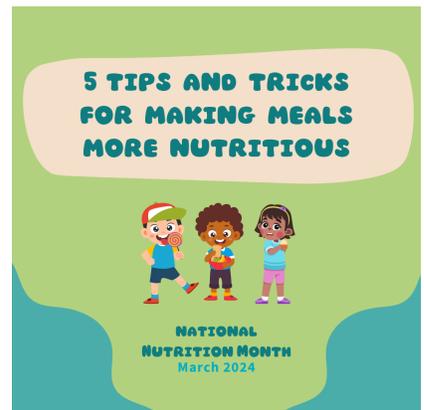
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Austin Location

AUSTIN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATION CLASS OF 2024



UTHealth Houston
School of Public Health

Lady Bird Johnson Auditorium

2313 Red River St
Austin, TX 78712

May 16, 2024, 3:00 p.m.

A momentous occasion to celebrate the achievement of Austin's School of Public Health graduates.

Reception to follow immediately after ceremony.

Donate



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