

Division of Specialized Care for Children

Social Determinants of Health Fact Sheet

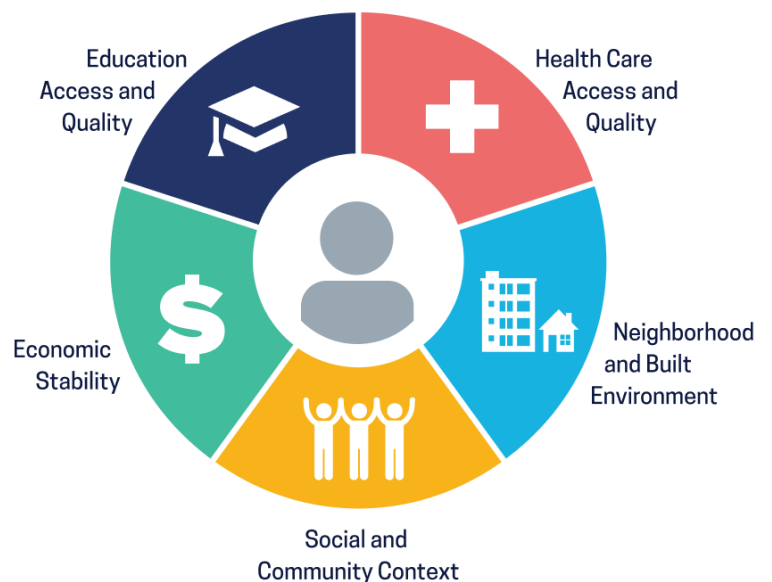
What are Social Determinants of Health?

Social determinants of health (SDoH) are the conditions in which people, including children, are born, grow, live, learn, play, work, and age. SDoH dramatically affect a person's health, well-being, and quality of life.

Examples of SDoH include:

- Income, employment, and poverty
- Education, preferred language, and literacy
- Racism and discrimination, including gender/sexual orientation, disability status, etc.
- Environment health, including pollution, water quality, air quality
- Safe housing, transportation, and neighborhoods
- Access to health care, affordable and nutritious food, and physical activity opportunities

Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health
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Healthy People 2030

Researchers estimate that SDoH contribute to 40 percent of health outcomes for the general population. Meanwhile, access and quality of health care only account for about 20 percent of health outcomes.

Why Do Social Determinants of Health Matter for Children?

For children, their SDoH status is connected with their parents or caregivers. For example, a family living in poverty has more distress related to the high burden of meeting their basic needs for daily living (food, electricity, transportation). These stressors negatively impact the quality of the parent-child relationship and the child's healthy development. A child's brain develops during the first five years of life. If a child experiences negative SDoH, they are at risk for experiencing long-term impacts on their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. Due to this strong connection between SDoH and childhood development, the American Academy of Pediatrics *Bright Futures* guidelines recommend providers talk about SDoH at most childhood health visits. These conversations can help connect families with available social programs for support.



The Need to Address Social Determinants of Health

Addressing SDoH is crucial not only for improving overall health but also for reducing health disparities and healthcare costs often rooted in social and economic disadvantages.

Not addressing SDoH can affect a population's:

- Unemployment rates
- Homelessness
- Marital and parenting problems
- Domestic violence
- Suicide rates
- Drug and alcohol misuse

The Role of UIC's Division of Specialized Care for Children

Parents and caregivers of children with special healthcare needs should have a strong support system. The University of Illinois Chicago's Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) is here to coordinate that support.

DSCC is a statewide program that partners with Illinois families and communities to help children with special healthcare needs connect to the services and resources necessary to reach their full potential. Each state receives federal funds to improve the health of children and youth with special healthcare needs. DSCC has been the designated program for Illinois since 1937.

DSCC guides families through their child's journey with a medical condition and works with doctors, schools and community groups to create a seamless support system. Our staff works together with families to develop a plan of care that addresses a child's medical, social, behavioral, educational and financial needs. This process is called care coordination. It is free for all children with eligible medical conditions, regardless of their family's income level.

**One out of
five children
have a special
healthcare need**



We tailor our care coordination to each family's unique needs and goals. Our care coordination can include finding specialized medical care, helping families understand their child's diagnosis and medical treatment plan, explaining insurance benefits and attending school meetings. DSCC also helps medically fragile children remain in their family home rather than in a hospital or skilled nursing facility.

Our assistance empowers families to feel more confident and organized in the care of their child and become well-prepared for the transition to adulthood. Find out more about our programs and how we help on our website at dsc.uit.edu/. You can also contact us at dsc@uit.edu or (800) 322-3722.