



Valley  
Children's  
HEALTHCARE



# ANNUAL REPORT AND PLAN

for Community Benefit Fiscal Year 2024

(October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024)

**Submitted to:**

California Department of Health Care Access and Information Healthcare Information Division  
Accounting and Reporting Systems Section - Sacramento, California



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## I. INTRODUCTION

In 1949, our five founding mothers had a dream to build a hospital in the Central Valley just for children. From a 48-bed facility that opened in 1952 on a corner lot in a Fresno neighborhood, Valley Children's Healthcare (Valley Children's) has grown today into a state-of-the-art pediatric healthcare system where providing the best care for our children has been at the core of our organization for more than 70 years.

Valley Children's is Central California's only high-quality, comprehensive healthcare network dedicated to children, from before birth to young adulthood, as well as to high-risk pregnant women. Valley Children's plays a vital role in meeting the healthcare needs of some of our region's sickest and most medically vulnerable children.

Valley Children's network spans a 12-county service area and is anchored by Valley Children's Hospital, a 358-bed stand-alone children's hospital located on over 450 acres in Madera. Included in the 358 beds are 28 regional neonatal intensive care unit beds located in Fresno, Hanford and Merced. With the support of more than 670 physicians and 3,500 staff, Valley Children's offers highly specialized medical and surgical services through an integrated network that includes 31 specialty care centers, 7 primary care practices, plus maternal-fetal medicine/women's health services across the Valley.

Valley Children's consistently ranks at the top of its peer group for safety and quality patient outcomes as evidenced by the following:

- Beacon Award for Excellence™ in critical care.
- Extracorporeal Life Support Organization (ELSO) recognition as a Designated Platinum Center of Excellence, the highest level of international recognition that can be achieved for an extracorporeal life support (ECLS) program.
- Leapfrog Group recognition as one of the nation's Top Children's Hospitals for excellence in patient safety and quality.
- U.S. News and World Report recognition in 2024-2025 as one of the nation's best children's hospitals in Pediatric Orthopedics, Pediatric Pulmonology & Lung Surgery and Pediatric Urology.

### Our Vision

Our vision is to provide the nation's best healthcare for kids and to become the nation's best children's hospital.

### Our Mission

The mission of Valley Children's is to provide high-quality, comprehensive healthcare services to children, regardless of their ability to pay, and to continuously improve the health and well-being of children.

### Our Values

The following values guide every decision and define our commitment and the action supporting it:

**Excellence:** We are dedicated, disciplined and demonstrate high standards as we strive to be the best. We take ownership and empower ourselves to deliver an exceptional experience, with every interaction, every time.

**Compassionate Care:** We are present in every interaction and respond to others with warmth and kindness.

**Integrity:** We are honest and ethical, demonstrate high standards of personal conduct, keep our word and take responsibility for our actions.

**Innovation:** We always look for ways to learn and make things better and are problem solvers.

**Collaboration:** We contribute to, support and respect decisions that are made by our teams and the organization. We build and promote positive working relationships and teamwork.

**Stewardship:** We are accountable for effectively managing our time and the organization's resources. We share resources to achieve the best outcome.

## Our Commitment to the Community

While providing exceptional healthcare is the single greatest contribution Valley Children's makes to children and their families, our mission calls us to continuously improve the health and well-being of children well beyond the "four walls" of our hospital. To help advance our community-based work, Valley Children's launched *The Guilds Center for Community Health* in November 2019.

The Guilds Center, the first of its kind in the Central Valley, purposefully bridges the exceptional care kids receive within our network and the health impacts our children experience where they live, learn and play. Valley Children's recognizes that the health of our children is impacted by social drivers such as the physical environment, health behaviors and economic status. According to research, of all the factors that influence our health, only 20% are linked to the clinical care we receive – and 80% are related to social drivers. The Guilds Center for Community Health is an investment in that 80%.

This Community Benefit Report summarizes the contributions provided by Valley Children's to its community for fiscal year 2024 (October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024) consistent with Internal Revenue Service regulations. In addition to the community benefit efforts detailed in this report, Valley Children's contributes to the community in other ways as well including through its commitment to renewable energy and environmental sustainability with the planned installation of the largest pediatric healthcare-based renewable energy microgrid in the country. Additionally, Valley Children's is the largest employer in Madera County and as a result makes a significant contribution to the economic vitality of the region. We also sponsor many community-based events like county fairs that provide children and families opportunities to spend time together.

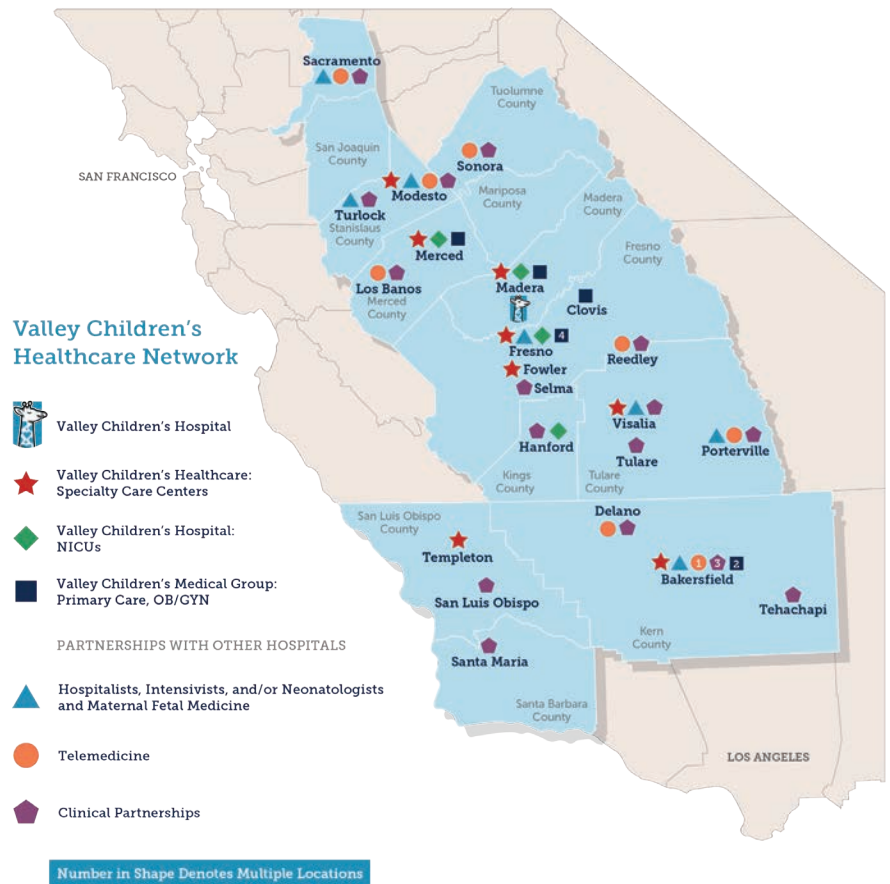


## II. SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS AND PATIENT VOLUME

### Service Area Demographics

Valley Children's service area extends from Sacramento County in the north to Kern County in the south, and serves much of the Central Coast and eastern Sierra as well. The map below illustrates Valley Children's service area, service locations and clinical partnerships.

For purposes of this Community Benefit Report, Valley Children's service area is focused on the seven counties that collectively account for more than 90% of Valley Children's inpatient and outpatient volume. Those counties are Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus and Tulare. Children in these counties face many challenges when it comes to living healthy productive lives. For example, according to [www.kidsdata.org](http://www.kidsdata.org), as much as 30% of children living in these seven counties live in poverty, approximately 1 in 5 is food insecure and close to 50% of 5th graders are at an unhealthy weight.



With respect to Valley Children's patient population, approximately 80% are an ethnicity other than Caucasian and close to 20% live in households with a language preference other than English.

### Valley Children's Patient Volume

The table below lists Valley Children's patient volume in 2024.

Valley Children's Patient Volume in 2024	
Inpatient Admissions	10,348
Emergency Department Visits	97,144
Hospital-Based Outpatient Specialty Care Center, Regional Specialty Care Center and Primary Care Center Visits	283,463

Medi-Cal covered 75.7% of Valley Children's total inpatient discharges and 72% of outpatient visits in 2024.

### III. ASSESSING COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS

The community benefit activities summarized in this report are based on Valley Children's Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) completed in 2022 and its Implementation Strategy for 2023 – 2025. Valley Children's Healthcare Board of Trustees approved the most current CHNA on September 19, 2022, and the Implementation Strategy on November 17, 2022.

To see the 2019 and 2022 CHNAs and the associated Implementation Strategies, visit [www.valleychildrens.org/services/guilds-center-for-community-health/our-commitment](http://www.valleychildrens.org/services/guilds-center-for-community-health/our-commitment).

Valley Children's 2022 CHNA was based on a joint needs assessment for Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties and separate needs assessments for Kern, Merced, and Stanislaus counties. For Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties, Valley Children's partnered with area hospitals and public health departments to assess health needs for children and adults. The CHNA was coordinated by the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California and included a review of secondary data as well as significant community engagement of key stakeholders through surveys, focus groups and interviews.

To assess the needs of children and families in Kern, Merced and Stanislaus counties, Valley Children's reviewed secondary data sources and worked with community partners to conduct one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders and focus groups with organizations representing low income, underserved communities.

Additionally, Valley Children's staff engaged regularly with community-based organizations and participated in initiatives that ensured the organization remained close to the issues impacting the health and wellbeing of children in the region. See pages 14-16 for a partial list of organizations and initiatives in which we were involved in 2024.

### IV. ADDRESSING HEALTH PRIORITIES IN 2024

From high rates of obesity and child abuse to inadequate access to affordable healthy foods, children and their families throughout the seven-county service area face many challenges to living healthy and productive lives. The implications of these challenges are significant. For children and their families, it means high rates of chronic illness, frequent visits to hospital emergency rooms, missed days at school, and missed days at work for parents or caregivers. For healthcare providers, it means carefully considering the many needs that exist and determining which needs are the most critical and which needs they are best equipped to address.

In 2024, Valley Children's engaged in activities and programs that addressed the priority health needs identified in the 2023-2025 Implementation Strategy. Valley Children's is committed to community benefit efforts that address: access to care, chronic disease prevention, maternal and infant health, mental health, and violence and injury prevention.

#### Access to Care

##### Access to Primary and Preventive Care for At-Risk Children

Pediatric physician residents participating in Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program provided primary and preventive healthcare services to at-risk children in Fresno County as part of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools' Mobile Health Unit (MHU). Designed to help ensure that children are able to start school on time and access their education, the MHU held 43 clinics in 2024, including many located in rural and low-income communities. As a part of those clinics, 1,014 childhood vaccinations were administered, and 256 sports physicals were performed.

## Adaptive Sports Program

Valley Children's Adaptive Sports Program provides free recreational and athletic experiences for children, adolescents and young adults with disabilities, regardless of whether they have been or are currently patients at Valley Children's. The program, the only one of its kind in Central California, is designed for individuals with physical impairments and conditions ranging from cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries and amputations. Disabled youth, up to age 21, are especially encouraged to attend. In 2024, about 70 children participated in a variety of activities including wheelchair basketball, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair soccer, canoeing/kayaking, rock climbing, track and field, and snow and water skiing.

## Enrollment in Health Insurance

Valley Children's identified and provided enrollment assistance to uninsured and under-insured patients who qualified for Medi-Cal, California Children's Services Program or Valley Children's Financial Assistance Program. Once eligibility was determined, Valley Children's staff assisted the families with completing necessary applications and submitting them to the appropriate agencies.

## Expanded Access to Pediatric Primary and Specialty Care

Valley Children's made cash contributions for the purchase of capital-related items to be used to increase access to healthcare services for children throughout the region.

## Transportation

Given the Central Valley's largely rural landscape and high concentration of poverty, transportation has long been a challenge for many families. Valley Children's Social Work Department assisted families with transportation by providing gas cards, taxi vouchers, and funding transportation/ride sharing expenses, Amtrak tickets and bus tokens. Valley Children's also subsidized bus and other public transit services from the City of Fresno and Kings County.

## Vision Screenings

Through a partnership with the Tzu Chi Medical Foundation and its See 2 Succeed initiative, Valley Children's helped make possible vision screenings for 14,409 school aged children in Fresno County across 18 school districts and 51 school sites. As a result of the screenings, 1,353 full eye exams were conducted, and 1,167 pairs of glasses were provided to children.

## Chronic Disease Prevention

### Blue Zones Project Bakersfield

Blue Zones Bakersfield supports interventions and initiatives that empower people, incentivizes different organizations and businesses to enhance the ways they promote health and wellness, and implements policies that transform the environment.

In 2024, Valley Children's provided financial support for Blue Zones Project Bakersfield, supported its advocacy efforts, and participated on the initiative's Steering Committee and School Wellness Committee. With the help of Valley Children's, a total of 20 schools had become certified as Blue Zone Project Approved schools at the end of 2024. To become an Approved site, schools sign a pledge committing to pursue specific policies and programs that support student health and wellbeing. Valley Children's support also helped make possible "Wellness Walks to School" and a book vending machine at McKinley Elementary School in Bakersfield.

## Food for Families

Valley Children's dietary department provided meal coupons to breastfeeding moms whose infants were at Valley Children's. Additionally, Valley Children's social work team provided patients' families who were not prepared for a long stay at the hospital with meal coupons when the need was determined. The social work team also worked closely with the California Children's Services program to provide food for eligible families.

## Food Security - Central California Food Bank Partnership

In March 2022, Valley Children's entered a three-year partnership with the Central California Food Bank to support access to healthy and nutritious food for children and families across our service area.

Through this partnership, Valley Children's Home Care staff, as part of their regular home visits, are bringing qualifying families a specially assembled food box every month that aligns with the family's cultural preferences. In the partnership's first two years, Valley Children's distributed 19,512 pounds of food (the equivalent of 16,259 meals) to 83 families, including 197 children.

Another component of our partnership includes support for food distribution at West Fresno Elementary School where over 90% of the students during the 2023 – 2024 school year qualified for free and reduced-priced meals. During the partnership's first two years, 94,900 pounds of food were distributed (the equivalent of 79,083 meals) to 1,293 families including 4,388 children.

A third feature of the partnership includes Valley Children's support for the First Fruits Market that opened in Fresno in September 2023. Inside the Fresno Rescue Mission's City Center, a full service 'hub' for kids, families, runaway youth, and unhoused adults, the Market provides a variety of fresh produce, protein, culturally appropriate food and shelf-stable food items to anyone in need of food assistance in an environment designed just like any grocery store where 'customers' can choose items most useful and most culturally appropriate for them. Through January 2024, the Market distributed close to 500,000 pounds of food to over 11,000 households.

## Food Security - Merced Partnership

In Merced County, Valley Children's Olivewood Pediatrics Practice continued its partnership with Community Initiatives for Collective Impact and the Merced County Food Bank to help needy families access food at local grocery stores. Through the partnership, Valley Children's providers screen all children enrolled in Medi-Cal and their families for food insecurity. If a family screens positive for food insecurity, the providers give the family a coupon that can be used at any grocery store that accepts food coupons to help with the purchase of staples such as fruits, vegetables and dairy products. In 2024, 23% of families screened positive for food insecurity. Nearly 14% of those who screened positive had private health insurance, and 73% of identified as Hispanic and Latino individuals.

## Food Security - FoodLink for Tulare County Partnership

In 2024, Valley Children's continued its partnership with FoodLink for Tulare County in support of the organization's Smart Pack program. Through the Smart Pack program, Foodlink provides food insecure students and their families with a backpack of healthy food each Friday during the school year so that children have food over the weekends when they are not able to access free or reduced-price school breakfasts and lunches. With Valley Children's financial support, FoodLink provided 1,184 backpacks to 51 families for the school year ending June 2024.

## Epilepsy Support Program

Valley Children's Epilepsy Program continued its community-based outreach work in 2024 by providing the following education and training to key stakeholders.

1. School Health and Wellness
  - Provided Seizure Safe Training to more than 600 staff across 15 school districts.
2. Community Resources
  - Hosted 36 support groups.
  - Filmed and made available 10 educational videos on administering seizure rescue medications with more than 174,000 views.
  - Distributed 100 comfort care backpacks to school nurses.

### 3. Community Events

- Hosted Art for Epilepsy, Summer Safety Water Splash Day, and Epilepsy Awareness activities, reaching more than 1,000 individuals.

### 4. Legislative Advocacy

- Continued to support the work of the Congressional Epilepsy Caucus, advocating for epilepsy awareness and research funding.

## Maternal and Infant Health

### Clinical Partnership Program

Valley Children's Clinical Partnership program brings together institutions focused on enhancing neonatal and pediatric care, regardless of whether the ill or injured child becomes a Valley Children's patient. Through the program, Valley Children's physicians and staff provide education and other resources for partnering healthcare facilities. This support helps minimize children being transferred or referred unnecessarily to Valley Children's and helps to quickly identify when a child needs advanced pediatric care. Additionally, with improved communication and tools, the program decreases stress for patients and families, increases provider confidence, and enhances performance at Valley Children's and the partnering provider.

In 2024, Valley Children's supported 18 inpatient and four outpatient clinical partners and, as a part of that support, convened more than 30 training and education events that drew more than 750 attendees. The average investment of time for each healthcare partner was more than 200 hours annually.

### Meeting Families' Basic Needs: Diapers

According to research results released by the National Diaper Bank Network in June 2023, nearly half (47%) of U.S. families with young children struggle to afford diapers. Based on that same research, a lack of adequate diapers "is associated with physical, emotional, and economic hardship to children and families." Across our service area, where up to 30% of children are living in poverty, there is a clear link between family income and a family's inability to cover basic needs for their children, including purchasing diapers. In recognition of this reality, Valley Children's donated 49,312 diapers to community-based organizations to distribute to families in need. Organizations receiving diapers included First 5 Madera County, Saint Rest Baptist Church and West Fresno Family Resource Center.

### Safe Sleep for Infants

The Guilds Center for Community Health continued to support the Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition that represents more than 50 members in nine counties across the Central Valley. The Coalition, co-chaired by Valley Children's and First 5 Fresno County, has a vision that every parent and caregiver of an infant will have access to culturally appropriate risk reduction education and resources on infant sleep, keeping all Central Valley infants safe from preventable causes of death. Coalition members include representatives from local public health departments, County First 5 offices, the California Health Collaborative, county offices of education, county community action partnerships, the Black Wellness and Prosperity Center and Cultural Brokers, Inc.

In 2024, the Coalition hosted its second-annual safe sleep conference that focused on educators and included a panel of community health workers (CHW) and parents who lost a child to sudden infant death syndrome to tell their stories. Also, the Coalition distributed 66 cribettes including 35 through our community partners to infants identified as having no safe sleep environments and conducted virtual trainings on safe sleep basics to nearly 300 childcare providers, healthcare staff and community members.

The Coalition continues to work with Fresno HOPE and their CHW network to provide culturally appropriate safe sleep education and resources to parents in need.

## Mental Health

Mental health is one of the most pressing needs facing children in California. Children living in Valley Children's service area are particularly underserved due to the geography, provider shortages and limited community-based services. In 2024, Valley Children's demonstrated its commitment to meeting the mental health needs of children in a number of ways, including those listed below.

### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

In spring 2024, Valley Children's Olivewood Pediatrics Practice in Merced concluded work on a \$622,000 grant from the California's ACEs Aware Initiative to address ACEs through increased community partnerships, expanded education and broadened screening and referrals.

Through the grant, Valley Children's helped to identify patients and families at risk for poor health outcomes because of ACEs and toxic stress; educated providers, staff and community members around ACEs and toxic stress and how to intervene; connected families to needed resources; and built resilience to break the cycle.

Screening and referrals for ACEs has expanded beyond our Merced practice and is now being implemented across our primary care sites from Merced to Bakersfield. In 2024, Valley Children's primary care practices screened more than 2,600 children for ACEs, with nearly 11% screening positive for high risk of toxic stress.

### Youth Health Ambassadors

In May 2023, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced the Child and Youth Resilience Challenge, looking for innovative, community-led initiatives to promote resilience in children and adolescents. Valley Children's submitted a proposal in conjunction with the Fresno Community Health Improvement Partnership Youth Leadership Council and was awarded funding to support the work of the Partnership.

With the funding, Valley Children's facilitated the development of a novel, youth-driven curriculum titled, "Youth Health Ambassadors" that combines an evidence-based approach to combat toxic stress, with youth-led community education and service.

The program was selected as one of 14 finalists from more than 500 applications from across the U.S. and culminated in eight Valley youth from underserved and under-resourced communities presenting their work to HHS in Washington, D.C. The program is now a two-year, longitudinal curriculum focused on leadership development skills and training.

### Community-Based Collaboration and Education

In 2024, Valley Children's continued its participation in the Zero Suicide Initiative, a national collaborative aimed at preventing youth suicide through improved hospital screening, internal systems of care and regional community collaborations. Regional collaboratives, in which Valley Children's participated, included the Fresno Suicide Prevention Collaborative and the Madera County Suicide Education and Awareness Collaborative. They addressed issues of mental health, homelessness and the impact on families.

Additionally, Valley Children's continued its collaboration with California State University Fresno in support of *Healthy Kids. Healthy Futures.* focusing on the health and well-being of kids in the Central Valley. *Healthy Kids. Healthy Futures.* provides resources to students and families on healthy eating tips, back to school advice for parents, and other useful resources.

## Violence and Injury Prevention

### Child Abuse Prevention

Valley Children's Guilds Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center's mission is to provide comprehensive services to children, dependent adults and their families through a multidisciplinary, trauma-informed program, and to meet the physical and emotional needs of victims with abuse considerations.

The Center is recognized in Central California and around the state as a leader in advocacy, injury prevention and academic training. The Center prides itself on working collaboratively with prevention and intervention groups throughout the state to ensure they are addressing child maltreatment to the best of their ability. The Center is currently a member of the Child Advocacy Centers of California, Central California Coalition of Child Abuse Prevention Councils and the Ray E. Helfer Society for child abuse pediatrics.

The Guilds Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center includes the Child Advocacy Clinic, which operates five days a week and sees approximately 800 children each year. The Center's providers are also available seven days a week, 24 hours a day for emergency coverage. The Center includes an inpatient component that evaluates an additional 100 children annually in the pediatric emergency department, acute-care and pediatric intensive care units. In addition to the medical services offered, the Center has a team of social workers and a licensed mental health clinician that provide psycho-social assessment, linkages to community services and trauma therapy.

In 2024, the Center worked closely with law enforcement, Child Protective Services and district attorneys' offices in their investigative efforts of child maltreatment. Collaborative efforts included case consultation and monthly Suspect Child Abuse and Neglect meetings facilitated by our Child Advocacy Clinic in an effort to track, monitor and advocate for the health and safety of at-risk children throughout the Valley.

For prevention education, the Center continued to collaborate with internal and external partners to provide education to parents, caregivers, healthcare personnel, teachers and mandated reporters. These partners included Rape Counseling Services (RCS) of Fresno, Child Abuse Prevention Councils of California, Child Protective Services, District Attorney's Offices, local Law Enforcement Agencies, Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART), victim advocacy groups, school districts throughout the Central Valley and county public health departments. In addition, the Center hosted its Fourth Annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference in April 2024 bringing experts in the field of child abuse to provide education and information on best practices to child protection professionals throughout the Central Valley.

## Injury Prevention Program

Unintentional injury is the number one killer of children across the United States and around the world. Safe Kids Central California is one of 400 coalitions that are part of Safe Kids Worldwide, an extensive network of coalitions and partners in the United States and around the world dedicated to reducing injuries from motor vehicles, sports, drownings, falls, burns, poisonings and more. As the lead agency for Safe Kids Central California, Valley Children's is a leader in supporting pediatric injury prevention efforts throughout Central California and is committed to providing resources toward these efforts. Safe Kids Central California is a coalition of 30 agencies made up of healthcare, law enforcement, social services, education, media and other organizations that are dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children.

In 2024, Valley Children's Injury Prevention Program recorded 6,177 contacts with community members during 15 community-based teaching events on the following topics: ATV safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, child passenger safety, concussions, gun storage safety, Halloween safety, home safety, poison prevention, railroad safety, safe infant sleep, teen driving, toy safety, vehicle safety, vehicular heat stroke prevention and water safety.

To ensure that children were safe at home, Valley Children's distributed safety equipment, including the following, to families in need.

- 2,235 reflector flashlights
- 296 infant safe sleep sacks
- 284 bicycle helmets
- 76 car seats
- 62 gun safety locks

## Disaster Preparedness

Valley Children's donated space to the California Department of Public Health to store pharmaceuticals to be used in regional disasters or medical emergencies.

## Poison Control

The Central California Poison Control Center is located on the Valley Children's campus and received a donation of office space in 2024 from Valley Children's.

The Center answers calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week and provides expert advice and information regarding exposure to potentially harmful substances.

## V. OTHER COMMUNITY BENEFIT SERVICES

Valley Children's provided community benefit services in addition to those programs focused on addressing Valley Children's identified priority health needs.

### Health Professions Education

Valley Children's is committed to promoting an adequate supply of highly trained professionals to meet our region's demand for pediatric healthcare services. Activities supported by Valley Children's in 2024 included the following.

#### Pediatric Physician Training

Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program, in affiliation with the Stanford University School of Medicine, offers comprehensive pediatric training within a dynamic, tertiary care environment. The program emphasizes quality and patient safety, inter-professional education, scholarship, and community partnerships. Residents gain diverse clinical experiences by rotating through Valley Children's Hospital—a 358-bed, state-of-the-art facility. They collaborate closely with a multidisciplinary team, including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, administrators, and other healthcare professionals, alongside local hospital and medical group partners. The program's commitment to scholarly activity is evident through resident-led research and quality improvement.

In July of 2023, Valley Children's launched its first Fellowship Program, the Pediatric Hospital Medicine Fellowship. This program was created with the mission to train innovative physician leaders in the care of hospitalized children. Each year we train four fellows and will graduate our first class of two fellows in June of 2025.

In 2024-2025, Valley Children's facilitated training for 290 physician residents and fellows, including 41 pediatric residents enrolled in its Pediatric Residency Program. Additionally, 109 medical students from 18 different medical schools received training across various disciplines such as general pediatrics, cardiology, emergency medicine, family medicine, pediatric surgery and orthopaedic surgery.

Physicians often choose to practice in regions where they train. In June 2024, Valley Children's program graduated its fifth cohort of pediatricians, with 38% remaining within Valley Children's service area. This retention is vital for addressing the Central Valley's pediatric healthcare needs, where there are 10.1 pediatricians per 100,000 population compared to 19.6 in the Greater Bay Area. Through its comprehensive training, research opportunities and community engagement, the Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program plays a crucial role in preparing pediatricians equipped to meet the evolving healthcare needs of children in Central California and beyond.

#### Continuing Medical Education

In 2024, Valley Children's hosted six separate continuing medical education sessions for community-based physicians with a combined attendance of 452 providers. Pediatric subspecialty physicians from Valley Children's served as featured faculty, providing community-based physicians with critical guidance on a

number of pediatric conditions including Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, common pediatric behavioral and developmental issues, atopic dermatitis, hernias, irritable bowel syndrome, Kawasaki disease, obstructive sleep apnea, preventative screening of sudden cardiac death in young athletes and seizure mimickers.

## **Nursing and Other Health Professions Students**

Valley Children's partnered with health professions education programs throughout the state and around the country to provide students with a variety of educational opportunities to observe or participate in the care of pediatric patients. In 2024, Valley Children's provided 43,910 hours of clinical instruction for 810 nursing students from 12 different nursing programs. Valley Children's also hosted 223 non-nursing students, representing 14 different clinical disciplines, for 19,055 hours of clinical instruction.

## **Pharmacist Training**

Valley Children's supported a pharmacy residency program in 2024 that provided training to nine residents and one fellow.

## **School Health Personnel**

Valley Children's clinical education team partnered with the California School Nurse Organization – Central Valley Section as well as with individual school districts to provide education to school health personnel on important topics related to student health and wellness.

In total, Valley Children's conducted 16 separate sessions for county offices of education and school districts in Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa and Tulare counties. Topics covered included caring for children with autism and sensory needs, common gastroenterology conditions and special considerations for school-aged children, common genetic disorders, diabetes management and treatment, gastrostomy tube and tracheostomy tube training, pediatric cancers, mental health, technology dependent students and issues specific to LGBTQ students.

## **Research**

The research program at Valley Children's consists of national multi-center clinical trials and locally generated, physician-initiated research studies. The focus is to participate in studies that are tailored to meet the varied needs of our patient population. More than 235 studies are available to children and their families. Studies include Phase II through Phase IV clinical research, as well as qualitative research.

Valley Children's oncology research program is a member of the Children's Oncology Group, an international network of clinical trials, which is federally funded by the National Cancer Institute. In 2024, Valley Children's providers continued to work together to improve surgical outcomes for children, adolescents and young adults with cancer through a multi-institutional collaborative investigation. Valley Children's contributed valuable data to review surgical outcomes and treatments options, and advance evidence-based medicine in areas of rare renal tumors, adrenocortical carcinoma and other solid tumor treatment management. Valley Children's interprofessional research team worked on a qualitative research project to identify and eliminate barriers including health literacy, comprehension of types of research projects and modalities of clinical trial information and its impact on clinical trial enrollment for Valley Children's patients and families.

Valley Children's Hematology Treatment Center participates in various national and regional programs focused on improving the care of children and young adults with bleeding and clotting disorders. In 2024, Valley Children's hematology department initiated a study to examine the use of a specialized type of echocardiography for early detection of heart dysfunction due to iron overload in patients with Sickle Cell Anemia. Valley Children's also participated in a multisite registry collecting longitudinal data of people living with Sickle Cell Disease to better understand how clinical characteristics predict outcomes and collaborated on a study titled "Role of Screening for Heavy Menstrual Bleeding in Women and Girls with Sickle Cell Disease." This research helped shed light on the prevalence of menstrual pain and the underutilization of hormonal therapy, initiating progress toward improved care.

Valley Children's endocrinology team worked on a research initiative to comprehensively analyze Type 1 diabetes (T1D) trends in Central Valley children. The findings highlight significant demographic trends in T1D diagnoses and will help inform healthcare providers and guide targeted interventions to improve outcomes for children with T1D, emphasizing the necessity of educational initiatives and resource allocation in high-prevalence areas.

One of Valley Children's pediatric surgeons initiated a multi-site retrospective chart review project where Valley Children's serves as the primary site. The purpose of the research, which is ongoing, is to provide a better understanding of the proportion of pediatric trauma whole body CT scans conducted prior to transfer to regional pediatric trauma centers that meet best practice guidelines for imaging with the goal of reducing unnecessary imaging of injured children.

## Cash and In-Kind Contributions

### Cash Donations and Sponsorships

Valley Children's participated as a financial sponsor of community-based organizations whose purpose aligns closely with Valley Children's mission and community benefit priorities. Some of the organizations receiving financial support in 2024 included the Center for Human Services in Stanislaus County, the Central California Food Bank, Community Action Partnership of Madera County, Exceptional Parents Unlimited in Fresno, FoodLink Tulare County, Garden Pathways in Bakersfield and West Fresno Family Resource Center.

### In-Kind Donations

Valley Children's owns the land on which the Ronald McDonald House (RMH) of Central California is located and leases the land to the RMH for \$1 per year. The lease arrangement helps the RMH offer services to families whose children are hospitalized or receiving treatment, including:

- 18 guest suites featuring two queen beds, satellite television, WiFi and a private bathroom
- Three wings equipped with shared spaces including a kitchen, laundry room and dining area
- Fully stocked pantry and private refrigerators for each room
- Home-cooked meals
- Playroom for siblings
- Large communal living area with small reading room
- Outdoor dining and play area
- Toddler beds available for each room if indicated for siblings

### Leadership in Community Health

The Valley Children's team is active throughout our service area working to address a number of issues critical to child health and wellness. Members of the hospital's leadership team and clinical staff support many healthcare related initiatives through an in-kind donation of time and resources, including:

### Child Maltreatment

- Central California Coalition of Child Abuse Prevention Councils
- Children's Advocacy Centers of California
- County Child Abuse Prevention Councils, Fresno, Madera and Tulare counties
- County Pediatric Death Review and Child Maltreatment Teams, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa and Merced counties
- Fresno County Human Trafficking Task Force
- Madera County Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Multi-Disciplinary Team

- Sexual Assault Response Teams, Fresno, Kings, Madera and Merced counties
- Statewide Child Death Review Team Network
- Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Team, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera and Merced counties
- Tulare County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Review Team

### **Community Health Improvement**

- Blue Zones Project – Bakersfield
- California School Nurse Organization – Central Valley Section
- California State University Fresno / Valley Children’s Healthcare Policy and Advocacy Steering Committee
- Clovis Unified School District Healthy Start Collaborative
- Cradle to Career, Fresno County
- Cradle to Career, Stanislaus County
- Epilepsy Alliance America
- Fresno County Community Health Improvement Partnership including the Youth Leadership Council and Project HOPE
- Fresno Unified School District Health and Human Services Subcommittee
- Live Well Madera County Steering Committee
- Merced Maternal Wellness Coalition
- National Epilepsy Council
- Stanislaus County Health Coalition

### **Developmental Disabilities**

- Help Me Grow Regional Initiative
- March of Dimes California Advocacy and Government Affairs Committee

### **Mental Health**

- California Children’s Hospital Association Behavioral Health Work Group
- Central California Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative
- Clovis Unified School District Comprehensive Wellness Committee
- Fresno County Community Conversations on Mental Health
- Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
- Fresno County 5150 Task Force
- Fresno County Rape Crisis Services, Resource Center for Survivors
- Fresno County Suicide Prevention Collaborative
- Fresno County Survivors of Suicide Loss
- Fresno County Trauma and Resiliency Network
- Hospital Council of Northern and Central California’s 5150 Work Group
- Kern County Trauma Informed Care Collaborative
- Kings County ACEs Network of Care

- Madera County Department of Behavioral Health Cultural Competency Advisory Committee
- Madera County Suicide Prevention Collaborative
- Merced County Trauma and Resilience Network

## Unintentional Injury

- California Coalition for Children's Safety and Health Advisory Board
- California Water Safety Coalition
- California Unintentional Injury Prevention Strategic Plan Project
- Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition
- Clovis Unified School District Healthy Start Collaborative
- Fresno Unified School District Health and Human Services Career Technical Education Subcommittee
- Fresno Unified School District Career Technical Education Advisory Board
- Fresno Unified School District Stop the Bleed Program
- National Drowning Prevention Alliance
- Regional Trauma Audit Committee – Unintentional Injury Subcommittee
- Safer California Planning Committee
- Safe Kids California
- Safe Kids Central California
- Safe Storage Coalition for Firearms Safety, Fresno County
- Tribal Child Passenger Safety Committee
- Water Safety Council of Fresno County
- Water Safety USA

## Community Benefit Operations

### Reported costs include:

- Community benefit staff salary, benefits and expenses
- Administrative support for community benefit
- Community benefit consultants



## VI. FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Valley Children's financial summary of community benefit for FY24 (October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024) is summarized in the table below. Valley Children's provides financial assistance and community benefit services, programs and activities that serve children and their families. The costs of providing these services are not fully reimbursed. Valley Children's community benefit costs comply with Internal Revenue Service instructions for Form 990 Schedule H.

Community Benefit Categories	Net Benefit
Charity care <sup>1</sup>	\$117,077
Unpaid costs of Medi-Cal <sup>2</sup>	\$75,853,510
Unpaid costs of Other Means Tested Programs	\$143,590
Education and research <sup>3</sup>	\$16,435,342
Other for the broader community <sup>4</sup>	\$3,280,304
<b>Total quantifiable community benefit prior to unpaid cost of Medicare</b>	<b>\$95,829,823</b>
Unpaid costs of Medicare	\$40,284
<b>Total quantifiable community benefit</b>	<b>\$95,870,107</b>

<sup>1</sup>Charity Care - In keeping with its Mission, Valley Children's continues to accept all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. This amount represents costs associated with patients who meet certain criteria under the organization's charity care policy without charge, or at amounts less than its established rates in relation to the cost of these services. Charity care includes indigent and free care, which is based on the patient's inability to pay for services.

<sup>2</sup>Unpaid costs of Medi-Cal were \$251,409,096 in fiscal year 2024. Valley Children's spent \$42,926,883 in fiscal year 2024 to secure federal funding of \$218,482,469 to help fund the cost of care beyond that covered by Medi-Cal. This net funding has been offset against the total unpaid costs of Medi-Cal to arrive at the reported net amount of \$75,853,510.

<sup>3</sup>Costs related to the medical and health professions education programs and research that the hospital supports.

<sup>4</sup>Includes non-billed activities, such as health education, community health improvement, health support services, community benefit operations, cash and in-kind donations and community building.

### Significant Needs Valley Children's Intends to Address

The 2022 CHNA served as a resource document for the review of health needs based on the primary and secondary data collected across Valley Children's seven county service area. In addition to the collection and analysis of data, the 2022 CHNA included a process by which community-based stakeholders were asked to help identify the most pressing unmet needs of children and pregnant women in the region. Using the data collected and the community's input regarding priority needs, Valley Children's will address the following needs as detailed in the FY23-FY25 Implementation Strategy:

- Access to healthcare
- Chronic diseases
- Maternal and infant health
- Mental health
- Violence and injury prevention

#### Access to Healthcare

**Goal:** Increase access to healthcare and preventive care services in the community.

##### Strategies

1. Provide financial assistance through free and discounted care and government health programs for low-income patients, consistent with Valley Children's financial assistance policy.
2. Provide transportation services to help children and their families access healthcare services, routine appointments and diagnostic tests.
3. Provide education to community providers including school nurses, primary care providers and others on key issues impacting child health and wellness.
4. Provide education and preventive healthcare services to at-risk children in Fresno County through the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools' Mobile Health Unit (MHU).
5. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations that address access to healthcare and preventive care services.

#### Chronic Diseases

**Goal:** Reduce the impact of chronic diseases on the health and well-being of children.

##### Strategies

1. Partner with food banks to increase access to health foods for children and families. This includes the partnership with the Central California Food Bank and the food distributions to Valley Children's Home Care patients and the food distributions at West Fresno Elementary School plus the addition of support for food distributions at George Washington Elementary School in Madera, as well as the partnership with FoodLink for Tulare County and the food distributions at Stone Corral Elementary School in Visalia.
2. Partner with Blue Zones Project Bakersfield to support policies and practices that promote health and wellness for residents, including children, in targeted communities.
3. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations dedicated to addressing chronic diseases and obesity, nutrition and physical activity.

## Maternal and Infant Health

**Goals:** Improve health of newborns and young children through education, screening and treatment.

### Strategies

1. Facilitate the Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition to reduce the number of infant deaths from unsafe sleep.
2. Implement the Help Me Grow Central Valley initiative that will provide a regional approach to promoting developmental and social-emotional screenings and services for young children.
3. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations that address maternal and infant health.

## Mental Health

**Goal:** Improve the mental health of children and their families.

### Strategies

1. Participate in community initiatives to reduce the incidence of suicide amongst children and adolescents.
2. Conduct screenings for ACEs in primary care settings and work to strengthen partnerships among clinics, community-based organizations, and Medi-Cal managed care plans to identify and fill gaps in services needed to respond effectively to ACEs and toxic stress in the community.
3. Continue collaboration with California State University Fresno in support of *Healthy Kids. Healthy Futures.* focusing on the health and well-being of kids in the Central Valley. *Healthy Kids. Healthy Futures.* provides resources to students and families on healthy eating tips, back to school advice for parents, and other useful resources.
4. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations that address access to mental healthcare and supportive services.

## Violence and Injury Prevention

**Goal:** Improve the health of children through violence and injury prevention.

### Strategies

1. As part of the Safe Kids Coalition, implement evidence-based programs, such as car-seat checkups, safety workshops and sports clinics, that help parents and caregivers prevent childhood injuries.
2. Provide education and outreach that focus on safety and injury prevention.
3. Work with law enforcement, Child Protective Services and district attorneys' offices in their investigative efforts of child maltreatment and collaborate on case consultations and monthly Suspect Child Abuse and Neglect meetings facilitated by the Child Advocacy Clinic to track, monitor and advocate for the health and safety of at-risk children throughout the Central Valley.
4. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations dedicated to addressing violence and injury prevention.

## Evaluation of Impact

Valley Children's will monitor and evaluate the programs and activities outlined above. Valley Children's has a system that tracks the implementation of the strategies. The reporting process includes the collection and documentation of tracking measures, such as the number of people reached/served and collaborative efforts to address health needs. An evaluation of the impact of Valley Children's actions to address these significant health needs will be reported in the next scheduled Community Health Needs Assessment.

## Fostering Community Partnerships

Valley Children's is committed to fostering partnerships with community-based organizations, community clinics, government agencies, schools and school districts, the faith community, public health and public safety agencies. The organization's community benefit plan includes maintaining current partnerships and exploring opportunities to engage with new partners.

## Significant Needs Valley Children's Does Not Intend to Address

Knowing that there are not sufficient resources to address all the community health needs, Valley Children's chooses to concentrate on those health needs that can most effectively be addressed given the organization's areas of focus and expertise. Valley Children's will not directly address the remaining health needs identified in the CHNA, including economic insecurity, housing and homelessness, and substance use. Also, as pointed out earlier, this report is not exhaustive of everything Valley Children's does to enhance the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve. Valley Children's will continue to look for opportunities to address community needs where it can appropriately contribute to addressing those needs, either directly or in collaboration with others.

## VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION

### Address of Hospital Campus

Valley Children's Hospital  
9300 Valley Children's Place  
Madera, CA 93636

### Web Address

[valleychildrens.org](http://valleychildrens.org)

### Community Benefit Contact

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