



# Maine Pediatrics

## December 2024 | Newsletter Highlights

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## A Message from Maine AAP's President, Brian Youth, MD, FAAP

December already- no way!

Happy post-Thanksgiving. I hope you had some time to spend with family or friends this week and take a break from the daily surprises in our ever-changing world. I want to share two reflections with you:

National AAP recently outlined the following public health and prevention policies that we will need to stay focused on as we enter 2025 and beyond. These themes will be no surprise to you and include supporting, as we always have, routine childhood and adolescent immunization efforts, gun violence prevention, nicotine and tobacco prevention, financing and access to health care, reproductive and confidential adolescent healthcare, child welfare, immigration, and school health, among others. Daunting as this may seem, one quote stood out to me from the presentation and that is that ***"although we are in a time of change and uncertainty, when we focus on children, we know what to do and what is effective, and we will stay true to our mission and values- pro-child, pro-science."*** I very much appreciated the AAP's advice on advocacy strategies and planning which include building partnerships and relationships, relying on messaging and storytelling, and finding shared values in a non-partisan way. We will focus on our credibility as pediatricians, and our mission, while recognizing when to lead, when to partner, and when to let other voices lead. Please join me in relying on our national organization of expert committees, councils and sections to guide us as we continue to focus on what's best for children.

My second reflection is a simple one. Sit on the floor. I have the privilege of teaching in the pediatric resident clinic at Maine Medical Center and I LOVE THE LITTLE CHAIRS that are in some of the exam rooms. I try to set a daily goal of sitting in one of those chairs, or right on the floor when a resident is wrapping up a visit- this gives me the opportunity to, in an unobtrusive way, watch the resident provide anticipatory guidance but also to evaluate the social skills of the child in the room. I gain so much insight as I watch them try to take my badge or a pen from my pocket, or bring a book over to me, turn around, and sit in my lap, pointing to the book and without words, clearly communicating- read to me.

Bringing myself into their world, on the floor, I leave those interactions with a smile on my face even on the most challenging days. I wholeheartedly recommend doing this daily if you don't already- and you may make a new friend along the way.

On behalf of the board and staff of the Maine AAP, I wish you and your family a beautiful holiday season!

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## Member Spotlight



Maine AAP Board Member and Advocacy Committee Chair, Dr. Joe Anderson, was awarded the "Stick Your Neck Out" Award at the 24th Annual Buzz Fitzgerald Awards. This award is bestowed by the Maine Gun Safety Coalition, and honors individuals who have done considerable work to prevent gun violence in Maine. Dr. Anderson has not only advocated tirelessly at the state level for gun safety legislation, but has also organized healthcare providers across the state, founding Maine Providers for Gun Safety. Dr. Laura Blaisdell presented the award at the annual event on November 20th. Thank you, Dr. Anderson for all the work you do to make Maine a safer place for all!

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## Chapter Highlight

*Operation Access: Diagnosing Autism in the Medical Home* launched and welcomed over fifty participants to the first of five sessions. This longitudinal collaborative learning experience, designed for primary care providers, is structured to teach updated diagnostic strategies for recognizing, evaluating, and diagnosing autism in early childhood in the primary care medical home and promoting more timely access for early intervention services. Dr. Victoria Dalzell was the lead presenter for the November 19th kick-off event!



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**We invite Pediatricians, School Health Advisors, School Nurses, Social Workers, Guidance Counselors, and anyone interested in the health of school-age children to join us the first Tuesday of each month!**

MAINE AAP SCHOOL HEALTH SERIES  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Erin Frazier

REGISTER AT:  
[HTTPS://WWW.SURVEYMONKEY.COM/R/SCHOOLHEALTHSERIES](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/schoolhealthseries)



SCHOOL NURSING  
IN THE PROVISION  
OF SERVICES TO  
STUDENTS WITH  
DISABILITIES

Tuesday,  
December 3rd  
3:30-4:30PM



View the Full Series Flyer and Register  
Here

Maine AAP's 2024-2028  
Strategic Plan

This past August, the Maine AAP Board of Directors and staff gathered for a Strategic Planning Session, during which our Board members discussed their priorities and goals for the next 4 years. We're excited to finally share our 2024-2028 Strategic Plan Dashboard with you and give a big shoutout to our Board members who helped with its development. **This strategic plan serves as a living document, designed to evolve as the Maine AAP progresses toward achieving the outlined goals.**

Strategic Plan Dashboard   2024-2028			
Goal #1	Objectives	Measures & Timeline	Status
<b>Healthy Mental Development</b>  <b>Improve the healthy mental development of pediatric patients and promote the Maine Pediatric and Behavioral Health Partnership program.</b>	1. Improve patient mental health focused behavioral health measures and integration with primary care specialty care	Evaluate current care delivery and alignment with sub-populations, and make updates such as using the Crisis and Safety 1-8 opportunities for improvement by end 2025.	
	2. Integrate and collaborate with OHSU colleagues and child psychologists	Develop strategic plan and timeline for projects and collaboration efforts by January 2025, with work plan or more formalized communication for completion by 2025.	
	3. Improve school-based mental/behavioral health	Working with partner organizations, identify gaps in services for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and advocate for solutions by early 2025.	
	4. Address lack of services for OHSU	Create a mental health resource guide and additional education to expand resources available for providers and families by mid 2025.	
	5. Evaluate early childhood support services	Evaluate current screening for high-risk behaviors & suicidal ideation across the four major health systems and identify potential improvement opportunities by end of 2024.	
	6. Standardize and improve Trauma Informed Care (TIC)	Increase number of child psychiatrist core members to a minimum of 6 members on the committee by early 2025 and collaborate with MHA and others on juvenile justice.	
Ongoing collaboration between child psychiatrists primary care providers and school-based health divisions will align with state efforts to improve school-based health services and strategies around youth mental health. Ongoing 2024-2028.			

View Strategic Plan



Connect with the Maine AAP on  
Social Media!

Join us in using the power of social media to spread good messages, share new clinical info or pertinent articles on platforms such as Twitter/X, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. <https://linktr.ee/maineaap>

Gifts to Maine AAP during this campaign season



directly benefit members and trainees by helping to support attendance at educational and legislative conferences!



Please consider making a gift today - [click here](#)

Did you know?

## Ronald McDonald House Charities of Maine Increases Access to Medical Care

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Maine increases access to medical care for families with sick children by providing free lodging, meals, and support – serving as a vital bridge to healthcare when families need it most. Our Houses in Portland and Bangor offer comfort and care to upwards of 700 families each year, and our Family Rooms at Maine Medical Center and Eastern Maine Medical Center serve thousands of families daily. We keep families close to their child's medical team – improving health outcomes, focusing on care, and saving families thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket, health-related costs. Please visit [RMHC Maine's website](#) to support our families, explore our wish list, and discover volunteer opportunities that make a difference for Maine families in need.

Make your end of year, tax deductible, donation & find out how to get involved and volunteer at [rmhcmaine.org](http://rmhcmaine.org)



*A family-centered approach to healthcare leads to better health outcomes for children.*



Ronald McDonald House Charities®  
Maine

**#KeepingFamiliesClose**



## Upcoming Maine AAP Programs

**December 3rd | 3:30-4:30PM:** Maine AAP School Health Series in Partnership with the Maine Department of Education. The next session is *School Nursing in the Provision of Services to Students with Disabilities* by Erin Frazier, State Director of Special Services. Be sure to [register!](#) Download the flyer [here](#).

**December 17th | 6:30-7:30PM:** Maine AAP, along with MPHA, MMA, and NEPHTC are hosting a webinar titled, *Cannabis Use in Adolescence: What Parents Need to Know*. Speakers include experts on pediatric psychiatry and mental health, social work, education, and a youth speaker. Register [here](#).

**The Maine AAP & Maine Medical Association's Center for Quality Improvement Offer Ongoing Substance Use Treatment Education.** View our [TREAT ME Learning Series](#), broken down into 12 Units, now available on the Maine Medical Association's Center for Quality Improvement [website](#).

## In the News

**The AAP Board of Directors** is soliciting nominations to fill member vacancies in the several AAP National Committees for terms beginning July 1, 2025. [Read more here.](#)

**Call for Proposals: Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) Program – Due January 21, 2025.** The CATCH [call for proposals](#) is now open to pediatricians in training and in practice from AAP chapters in the US, its territories, and Canada. [Learn more.](#)

**"HEALTHY CHILDREN": A Podcast for Parents from the AAP - Episode 20 - School Suspension & Expulsion: How These Punishments Affect Learning and Long-term Health.** Susanna Jain, MD, joins host Dr. Edith Bracho-Sanchez to talk about suspension and expulsion from school. The number of children being removed from classrooms is on the rise, and it's affecting not only their learning but also their long-term health. (For resources go to [healthychildren.org/podcast](https://healthychildren.org/podcast).)

**National AAP offers opportunities for engagement for Early Career Pediatricians.** The Section on Early Career Physicians (SOECP) is a great place to grow leadership and advocacy skills! There are also opportunities to receive grants and awards to help you in your career as a pediatrician. [View their brochure for more information.](#)

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## Upcoming Partner Programs

**December 3rd | 12:00-1:00PM:** Helping Children Thrive: Strategies to Support Children's Mental Health. [Learn more.](#)

**December 3rd | 3:30-4:30PM:** Maine's Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Monthly Learning Series - Childhood Lead Poisoning and Prevention. [Learn more.](#)

**December 9th & 10th and December 11th & 12th | 8:00AM-5:00PM:** Maine EMS for Children (EMS-C) is sponsoring two Free Pediatric Disaster Response and Emergency Preparedness Training. [Learn more.](#)

**December 11th | 12:00-1:00PM:** ME SUD Learning Community Adolescent and Young Adult ECHO: Adolescent Specific Care and Addressing SUD Prevention and Treatment. [Learn more.](#)

**December 14th | 1:30PM:** Come Together to Remember Lives Lost to Gun Violence. UU Church of Brunswick, One Middle Street. [View the flyer.](#)

**December 19th | 12:00-1:00PM:** The RMOMS Maternal Mental Health ECHO Series for 2024-2025. [Register here.](#)

**January 15, 2024 | 1:00-2:00PM:** Eating Disorders in Transgender, Gender Diverse & Intersex Populations. [Learn more and register.](#)

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