



MAINE AAP

2024

Year End Summary



From the President and Executive Director

2024 was a year of celebration! Maine AAP won the AAP Outstanding Chapter of the Year award, and experienced incredible growth! We successfully completed a new four-year strategic plan, onboarded new staff, forged new collaborations with partners across our state and navigated challenges by recognizing and leveraging the strength of our pediatric and broader medical community.

We are unique in having a diverse and robust Board of Directors, composed of 30 pediatricians, pediatric subspecialists, residents, and students. The leadership, passion and dedication of this group is inspiring. They lead our committee work, testify and advocate during the legislative session, engage with community organizations and DHHS departments, rally for causes, and bring passion and a breadth of knowledge to our work.

We benefit from having a talented hardworking staff with three full-time employees and two contracted employees. We have the added benefit of solid multi-year relationships with skilled contractors such as Mooseridge Associates, who help us with legislative work.

Our success comes not just from our internal strength, but from collaboration with Maine Medical and Osteopathic Associations, statewide coalitions, like-minded child health organizations, state programs and departments, and hospital systems. When we align our work and efforts for the benefit of Maine children and families, successful projects and outcomes happen.

We hope you enjoy reading about the Chapter's growth and some of the key projects we've focused on this past year. To those who were part of our journey, we thank you!

Brian Youth, MD, President
& Dee Kerry, Executive Director



Photo: Dr. Brian Youth and Dee Kerry accepting the Outstanding Small Chapter Award at AAP Headquarters, August 2024

Introduction to Maine AAP

Our Work

The Maine AAP is a membership organization of pediatricians and subspecialists who are dedicated to fulfilling the Chapter's mission: to improve the lives of children and adolescents in Maine.

- We believe all children and adolescents deserve access to quality mental and physical health care.
- We believe that pediatricians must provide leadership in promoting excellence in health care for children and adolescents.
- We believe in advocacy for the well-being of children and adolescents, their caregivers, and other adults important in their lives.
- We believe that maximizing the health and wellness of children and adolescents is a sound investment in the future of families and communities.

Our Committees

- Advocacy and Legislation
- Career, Leadership, Mentorship
- Communications & Member Engagement
- Conference & Education
- Executive/Nominating
- Foster Care
- Gun Safety
- Healthy Mental Development
- Professional Sustainability
- Public Health & Environmental
- School Health
- Telehealth



2024 Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Brian Youth, MD, FAAP – President, Co-Chair, Public Health & Environmental Committee
Anne C. Coates, MD, FAAP – Vice President, Co-Chair, Career, Leadership, Mentorship Committee
Genevieve Whiting, MD, FAAP – Secretary, Chair, Professional Sustainability Committee
Chris Motyl, DO, FAAP (outgoing) & Jeffrey Stone, DO, FAAP (incoming) – Treasurer
Laura Blaisdell, MD, MPH, FAAP – Immediate Past President

Board Members

Joe Anderson, DO, FAAP – Chair, Advocacy Committee
Rebecca Brakeley, MD, FAAP
Amy Buczkowski, MD, FAAP – Chair, Member Engagement & Communications Committee
Melissa Burch, MD, FAAP
Adrienne Carmack, MD, FAAP
Gabriel Civiello, MD, FAAP
Alyssa Goodwin, MD, FAAP – Chair, School Health Committee
Dan Hale, MD, FAAP
Deborah Hagler, MD, MPH, FAAP – Co-Chair, Mental & Behavioral Health Committee
Jennifer A. Jewell, MD, MS, FAAP – Co-Chair, Education/Conference Committee
Stephanie Joy, MD, FAAP – Co-Chair, Education/Conference Committee
Emily Keller, MD, FAAP
Alton Kremer, MD, PhD, FAAP – Co-Chair, Career, Leadership, Mentorship Committee
Michele LaBotz, MD, FAAP – Chair, Member Engagement & Communications Committee
Larry Losey, MD, FAAP
Valerie O'Hara, DO, FAAP – Chair, Telehealth Committee
Sydney Sewall, MD, FAAP
Andrea Tracy, MD, FAAP – Co-Chair, Foster Care Committee
Lara Walsh, MD, FAAP
Margaret Zamboni, DO, FAAP

Resident Board Members

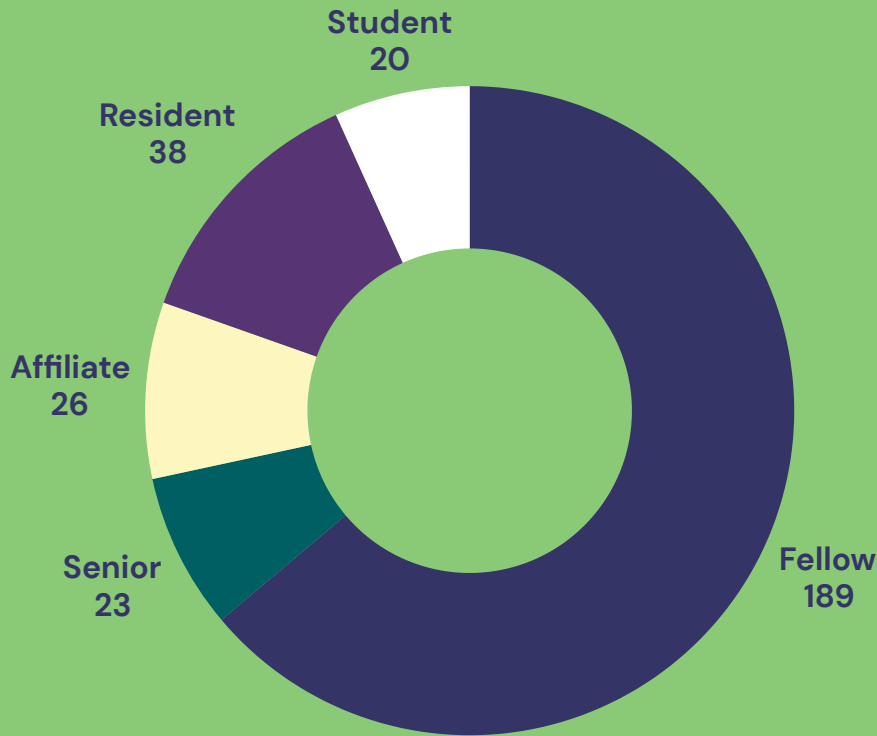
Allison Grover, MD
Calvin Schaffer, MD

Student Board Members

Austin Steward – Tufts School of Medicine
Jyotika Vallurupalli – UNE College of Medicine



Chapter Membership



In 2024, our membership grew to

296

members.

Our membership represents:

All major hospital systems in Maine.

All 16 Counties in Maine.

The Chapter supports the achievement of our mission and success of our members by:

- Providing members with the best tools, skills and knowledge to remain the best qualified health professionals who deliver care to infants, children, adolescents and young adults. Participating in forums in which issues of importance to children and pediatricians are addressed.
- Working with individuals, government, and non-governmental organizations to secure access to and delivery of high quality care in a medical home for all children.
- Monitoring the effect of changes to the health care delivery system on children and pediatricians.
- Providing opportunities for members to get involved in committees, programs and initiatives at national AAP.

Serving our members

2 new committees:

Healthy Mental Development

focusing on youth mental health, substance use treatment, access to key services, and more.

Professional Sustainability

focusing on increasing provider wellness and sustainability in practice around financial security, payment equity and parity, and workplace support to address burnout and other issues.

1 new staff member for a total of

3 full-time employees **2** contract employees

Madeleine DesFosses joined Maine AAP to serve as the Advocacy and Public Health Manager. She is a fantastic addition to the team and organizes our legislative and advocacy work, manages social media campaigns, and staffs multiple committees.

In 2024, we awarded

1,030

continuing medical education (CME) hours to

405

learners.

Advocating for our community

We testified and worked on dozens of key bills in 2024, but Maine AAP's direct advocacy was instrumental in getting the following bills passed!

2 pieces of legislation passed

to protect children and families:

LD 2224, "An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and Mental Health System"

&

LD 2238, "An Act to Address Gun Violence in Maine by Requiring a Waiting Period for Certain Firearm Purchases."

Together these bills strengthen background checks & implemented a 72-hour waiting period for firearm purchases.

1 bill passed to protect our providers & patients:

LD 227, "An Act Regarding Legally Protected Health Care Activity in the State."

This legislation provides legal protections from out-of-state actions against providers and patients when it comes to gender-affirming and reproductive health care.

Our 2025 priorities seek to:

- Promote gun safety
- Prevent youth cannabis & tobacco use
- Protect Maine's immunization requirements
- Ensure access to gender-affirming care & reproductive healthcare
- Improve adolescent mental health
- Provide more equitable access to healthcare.

Together with our members & partners, we look forward to continuing our advocacy work to help make Maine a safer & healthier place for kids.

2024
-
2028

4-Year Strategic Priorities

The Maine AAP's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan outlines key priorities to advance pediatric healthcare in Maine.

The plan focuses on four strategic areas:

- **Provider Wellness**
- **Healthy Mental Development**
- **Substance Use**
- **Health Equity & Diversity**

Readers appreciate
accurate information

These priorities guide the organization's efforts to support pediatric providers, address mental and behavioral health needs, improve substance use screening and treatment, and ensure equitable access to healthcare for all children and families in Maine.

2024–2028 Strategic Priorities

Maine AAP's priorities will guide our work over the next few years and be continuously evaluated and adjusted to meet emerging challenges in healthcare to ensure that Maine's pediatricians and young patients receive the highest quality care.

Healthy Mental Development

- Expand behavioral health integration with primary and specialty care.
- Strengthen school-based mental health services & trauma-informed care.
- Improve access to services for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Provider Wellness

- Advocate for pediatric payment reform, pay equity, and workforce retention.
- Identify gaps in stakeholder representation and engage community leaders.
- Develop initiatives to increase diversity in the workforce & board leadership.

Substance Use

- Address maternal substance use disorders, including fetal alcohol exposure.
- Expand rapid assessment and treatment programs for teen substance use.
- Strengthen partnerships with organizations like Day One and healthcare providers to improve treatment access to care and support systems.

Equity & Diversity

- Promote diverse representation among educators & leadership including background, career length, ethnicity, & geographic location.
- Address social determinants of health, including childhood poverty & housing instability, & mitigate the impact on access to care.
- Partner with New Mainer and Tribal communities to address healthcare needs.

Youth Substance Use Disorder Treatment Program Expands

Maine AAP is working together with Day One and other partners to expand the TREAT ME (Treatment Recovery Education Advocacy for Teens with Substance Use Disorder In Maine) project that started as a year-long learning collaborative funded by Maine Health Access Foundation (MEHAF).

TREAT ME started in 2022 as a statewide learning collaborative to teach the identification and treatment of youth with Substance Use Disorder (SUD). Maine AAP and Day One led the initiative in partnership with Maine Department of Health and Human Services Office of Behavioral Health, Maine Medical Association – Center for Quality Improvement (MMA-CQI), the Governor's Office of Opioid Response, and the National Opioid Response Network.



Based on the success of the learning collaborative, MEHAF granted us an additional year of funding that allowed us to begin 'TREAT ME Now,' a low barrier rapid assessment system to evaluate youth ages 13–19 struggling with substance use and misuse. In this expanding pilot program, youth are referred to our team, based at Day One, by schools, emergency departments, family, community members, and primary care clinicians.

Treatment may include case management, counseling, assistance with medical-assisted treatment and medications for opioid use disorder, referrals to primary care, specialist care or emergency services and if appropriate, residential care.

TREAT ME Now partners with emergency departments and primary care offices around the state and is a recipient of the Maine's Recovery Council funds, which will help fund our future work.

Maternal SUD Support Success

Maine AAP participated in a multi-state collaborative to increase services and education around maternal opioid use and to support the mental health of the mother while promoting safe sleep and infant wellbeing.

The Maine AAP closely collaborated with the MMA-CQI, which oversees the Perinatal Quality Collaborative for Maine (PQC4ME) and affiliated programs, including the Maine Rural Maternity and Obstetrics



Management Strategies Network (RMOMS) – Maternal Mental Health ECHO, Maine Maternal Opioid Misuse (MaineMOM) Project, and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (ME DHHS), to create 'Mom Bags' that included safe sleep recommendations and baby book, nasal syringe, newborn swaddle wrap, pacifiers, drug deactivation and disposal kit, and information from MaineMOM.

We worked with the Maine Children's Trust to distribute the Mom Bags across the state to public health nurses, so they could provide them to new mothers who had treatment services prior to or at the time of their infant's birth.

Maine AAP is proud to support new mothers and infants to ensure a healthy start to life.

Oral Health Advances in Primary Pediatric Care Services

For nearly a decade Maine AAP Board Member and Treasurer, Jeff Stone, DO, served as Maine AAP's oral health champion and advisor to the Children's Oral Health Network of Maine (COHN). Within COHN, Maine AAP Executive Director, Dee Kerry, serves on the Advisory Group and helps lead the Health Integration Action Team (HIAT), a group of stakeholders dedicated to increasing oral health services in primary care.

HIAT, which includes public health, medical and dental providers and other statewide professionals, acts in an advisory, co-design, and implementation capacity to collaborate on grant proposals, yearly work plans, and statewide education opportunities. Their current focus is to educate and promote the use of Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) by primary care providers when a dental professional is not available or accessible.

SDF integration in primary care settings includes compiling implementation tools, sharing lessons learned and resources, and working with health systems to create a process and procedures for adding to workflow and billing for services. In 2024, Maine AAP oversaw the successful integration of SDF in pediatric practices around Maine, providing critical care to children with limited access to dental services.

Provider shortages have left many areas of the state without access to dental services and many children needlessly suffering, making our SDF initiative a crucial component of eliminating barriers to healthcare. Integration efforts through pediatric offices help to increase screening, ensure fluoride varnish application to prevent caries and allow for early intervention when disease is present and access to dental care is not within reach.

We look forward to working with COHN and expanding on the success of our early SDF efforts thanks to this collaboration and early adopters including Drs. Brian Youth, Laura Blaisdell & Melissa Keepert.



Gun Safety Progress Keeps Kids and Teens Protected

Since the tragic mass shooting in Lewiston in 2023, Maine AAP, led by the efforts of Maine AAP Board Member and Advocacy Committee Chair, Joe Anderson, DO, FAAP, and the Maine Gun Safety Coalition, advocated for firearm safety to reduce accidents, injuries, and harm to children and their families due to firearms.

In 2024, we began a significant project to prevent firearm violence among Maine children that focuses on interventions in health care settings that reduce access to potentially fatal firearms through an education and lock box distribution project. Our project expands a pilot program conducted with one medical practice to practices across the state, including rural providers and those serving refugee communities.

The project includes creating educational resources and teaching best practices in lethal means counseling to providers who interact with parents of higher-risk youth in pediatric primary care offices, upon a youth's admission for psychiatric care in an emergency department, and for new parents leaving the maternity ward or NICU.

We will also provide firearm lock boxes for distribution throughout medical facilities in Maine to reduce teen access to lethal means. Our organizations will be working with healthcare systems to align parent education and coordinate purchase, distribution of lock boxes, and evaluation of this project.

Funding for this project is made possible by Project Safe Neighborhood and the Bingham Foundation with the goal of preventing future firearm violence among Maine's children.

Dr. Joe Anderson Recognized for Gun Safety Work

After his tireless advocacy work, in October, Joe, was awarded the "Stick Your Neck Out" Award at the 24th Annual Buzz Fitzgerald Awards. This award is presented annually by the Maine Gun Safety Coalition, and honors individuals who have done considerable work to prevent gun violence in Maine.

Joe 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. He has also been active on federal legislation that has an impact on Maine families and key issues Maine AAP is focusing on including gun safety.

We congratulate Joe on the recognition of his work to make Maine a safer place for children and teens.



Photo: Drs. Joe Anderson and Laura Blaisdell at the Maine Gun Safety Awards Dinner, November 20, 2024..

The Maine Immunization Coalition Joins the Maine AAP

In September 2024, Maine AAP became the administrative home for the Maine Immunization Coalition (MIC). MIC is a statewide network of associations, health care systems, and providers dedicated to creating a safer, healthier Maine through increased immunization. MIC's mission is to protect Maine people across their lifespan against vaccine-preventable diseases, by increasing immunization rates through information sharing, fostering collaboration, and advocacy.

Our partnership with MIC allows us to rise to the challenge of providing accurate information about immunizations and vaccine-preventable diseases during a time when medical misinformation and distrust of healthcare runs rampant. We look forward to continuing to be a trustworthy source of information on immunizations and preventable diseases, and are excited to support the incredible work that the MIC will continue to accomplish.



Thank you to our 2024 Donors, Sponsors, and Partners

January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Maine AAP operates on a small budget of less than \$400,000 a year, of which 90% is dedicated to directly supporting our programs and advocacy work. A significant portion of our yearly budget is supported by grants, sponsors, and donors. We greatly appreciate our generous individual and corporate donors, foundations, nonprofit organizations, and partners whose support allows us to continue our mission of improving the lives of children and adolescents in Maine. We thank the following:

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Amy Buczkowski
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Network of Maine
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Norma Dreyfus
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Fiore
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Maine Health Access
Foundation
Maine Recovery Council
MaineHealth
Martin's Point Healthcare
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Mead Johnson Nutrition
Christopher Motyl
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Valerie O'Hara
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Project Firstline
Katherin Rockefeller
Victoria Rogers
Jessica Rosenthal
Iris Silverstein
Clota Snow
Jeffrey Stone
Carolyn Stwertka
Tobacco Free Kids
Andrea Tracy
Lara Walsh
Genevieve Whiting
Brian Youth
Margaret Zamboni

**Thank you for taking the
time to read about our
work!**

**We look forward to
sharing more with you
next year!**

2024



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