

WASHINGTON, DC (September 28, 2022) -- Kara Odom Walker, MD, Chief Population Health Officer and Executive Vice President; and Daniella Gratale, MA, Director, Office of Child Health Policy and Advocacy, both of Nemours Children's Health, today participated in the [White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health](#). More than 50 years after the last conference on this topic, Nemours Children's will help address the goals outlined during the event through a four-part comprehensive commitment across its multi-state operations.

Nemours has a rich history of advocating for and implementing nutrition programs and policies. Like many social determinants of health (SDOH), lacking access to nutritious food can significantly impact overall health and wellbeing. Children are particularly vulnerable to the impact of hunger and food insecurity because they are rapidly growing and developing.

"We are honored to work in collaboration with the [White House Conference on Hunger and Nutrition](#) on policies and initiatives that will help Nemours and other providers create the healthiest generations of children," said Dr. Walker, who is also a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians. "Healthy kids make healthy learners at school, so it is important that we ensure children and families have access to nutritious foods. Our work to go well beyond medicine will help more children across the country access the resources they need to live healthier lives."

To help in addressing hunger, nutrition, and health, Nemours made a comprehensive four-part public commitment. The commitment identifies how Nemours will help children and families access healthy food and learn about nutrition and physical activity, as well as how the organization will disseminate tools and resources to other health systems. Specifically, the commitment states that Nemours will:

- Publish an SDOH Implementation Guide to help other health systems detect and address SDOH, such as food insecurity, and utilize SDOH data to enhance primary prevention efforts and policy work.
- Scale the existing Nemours SDOH screening tool to new Nemours specialty care practices in Delaware and to additional Nemours primary care practices in Florida.
- Leverage Nemours [KidsHealth.org](#), the #1 source of pediatric content in the US, to develop and publish at least 10 new articles and share 10 videos, in English and Spanish, with health and nutrition-related content.
- Expand the Nemours Cares Closets to more Nemours primary care locations to provide food and other items to families in need, and work with community partners to expand their backpack program, which provides children access to nutritious meals outside of school hours.

The USDA [reports](#) that in 2020, 10.5% of households were food insecure for at least some time during the year. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [reports](#) that fewer than 1 out of 10 adolescents and adults eat enough fruits or vegetables and that 20% of young people and 42% of adults have obesity.

"Food insecurity and diet-related diseases disproportionately affect people living in low-income communities as well as people of some racial and ethnic backgrounds," Dr. Walker added. "Part of the cause for these disparities is a lack of community access to convenient places that have affordable, nutritious food. Our goal at Nemours is to go well beyond medicine to help children reach their full potential by creating wellness for a strong foundation as youth grow into adulthood."

Additionally, as part of the system's ongoing efforts to support building healthy habits early on, Nemours will promote its [Wellness Workbook](#). This is a free web-based assessment tool that helps early care and education providers, families, and community partners collaborate to raise healthy children. Nemours will also promote its Better Together Family Café Toolkit, providing resources to support engagement with families about nurturing their children's healthy growth and development.

To learn more about how Nemours is going well beyond medicine, visit <https://www.nemours.org/well-beyond-medicine.html>.

Nemours social determinants of health (SDOH) screening tool

To date, the Nemours SDOH screener has been deployed in:

2021

- 20 Pediatric Primary Care Sites in Delaware & Pennsylvania
- 34,600 patients/families screened

2022

- Expanded into 1 Florida Inpatient Unit, and 1 Florida Primary Care to assist in determining workflows for future expansion throughout the Enterprise
- 20, 000 patients/families screened through July 2022

Findings include:

- 13.5% of screens have at least one identified need
- 35% of those with a need wanted resources

Top 3 needs identified:

1. Access to reliable and affordable internet
2. Concerns about neighborhood with safety, gun violence, cleanliness, or crime
3. Food Insecurity

The Nemours KidsHealth.org site

Nemours Children's maintains its position as the most-trusted resource for family health information through KidsHealth.org and its strategic provider and payor partnerships worldwide.

2021 Accomplishments:

- 325 million page views (including >45 million page views to COVID-19 content)
- 260 million visitor sessions (#1 site worldwide for children's health information for parents, kids, and teens)
- 770K referrals to Nemours.org through relevant links and targeted ads
- 800K KidsHealth patient instructions used by Nemours clinicians
- 200+ syndicated content partnerships (including nine of the top 10 children's hospitals according to *U.S. News and World Report* 2021-2022)

The Nemours Better Together Family Café Toolkit provides resources to support engagement with families about nurturing their children's healthy growth and development. In the initial pilot of the toolkit:

- 33 Participating Family Café early childhood education (ECE) programs
- 52 Number of sessions offered
- 50% Participants were family members
- 34% Staff
- 16% Staff with children at program
- 95% Café participants joined virtually
- 5% In-person

Healthy Kids Healthy Future Technical Assistance Program (TAP) promotes healthy eating and physical activity as an essential component of quality childcare.

- From 2018-2021, Nemours and partners reached more than 7,100 child-care sites and 260,000 children.
- 422 ECE programs in communities
- 21,504 children served by programs
- 1,078 ECE professionals trained

 **[Download the Fact Sheet](#)**
(151 KB)

<https://nemours.mediaroom.com/2022-09-28-Nemours-Childrens-Health-Commitment-to-Nations-Youth-Highlighted-at-White-House-Conference-on-Hunger-and-Nutrition>