



2025 Maryland Legislative Session Wins

Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Guided by strategic policy priorities, the Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) made meaningful progress during the 2025 Maryland Legislative Session. These victories reflect a shared commitment to creating a healthier, more equitable Maryland where every child has the opportunity to thrive. This document outlines our pre-session goals and highlights the legislative wins on bills the MDAAP actively supported and engaged with. For a comprehensive list of all bills discussed, whether enacted or not, please contact Loretta I. Hoepfner, MDAAP Executive Director, at loretta@mdaap.org.

Insurance Coverage Reform and Access To Care

Protect Medicaid payment rates for physicians

- ✓ *Maintained Medicaid Evaluation and Management payment rates at the current level.*

Support efforts to address unreasonable step therapy and utilization review policies

- ✓ *Passed House Bill 995/Senate Bill 776, establishing a workgroup to study the rise in adverse decisions in the State health care system.*
- ✓ *Passed Senate Bill 474/House Bill 848, providing the Maryland Insurance Administration with greater enforcement authority over carriers and added additional transparency requirements to denials.*
- ✓ *Passed House Bill 1301, prohibiting insurance carriers, Medicaid, and the MCHP from requiring prior authorization to transfer to a State 'special pediatric hospital'.*

Protect policies that address access to care for immigrants

- ✓ *Passed House Bill 1222, requiring the Attorney General to provide guidance to help the public and state agencies navigate immigration enforcement at sensitive locations, which includes healthcare facilities and public schools in its' definition.*

Protect policies that ensure access to reproductive services and gender-affirming care

- ✓ *Passed House Bill 930/Senate Bill 848, establishing a Public Health Abortion Grant Program fund to help uninsured or underinsured individuals access abortion care making MD the first in the nation to pass the law.*

Behavioral Health

Advocate for expansion of access to infant and early childhood mental health services

- ✓ *Passed House Bill 1083/Senate Bill 790, requiring the Behavioral Health Advisory Council and the Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access, to develop recommendations on how the state can implement federal EPSDT requirements.*

Support expansion of youth residential treatment facility capacity and streamline the placement process

- ✓ *Passed House Bill 962/Senate Bill 696, requiring MDH and the Department of Human Services to establish a pediatric hospital overstay coordinator in each department. The bill establishes a Workgroup on Children in Unlicensed Settings and Pediatric Hospital Overstays staffed by the State Council on Child Abuse and Neglect.*

Address workforce shortages and other challenges that affect access to behavioral health services. *ONGOING ADVOCACY*

Advocate for expanded youth crisis response services and separate youth areas in crisis response facilities *ONGOING ADVOCACY*

Strengthen policies that aim to reduce youth firearm violence, suicide, and unintentional injury by limiting access to firearms and by addressing root causes of violence and injury. *ONGOING ADVOCACY*

Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Reform

Support investing in a continuum of community-based services and supports specifically designed to prevent maltreatment, divert youth from justice involvement and reduce youth detention.

- ✓ *Passed House Bill 814, requiring the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to report to the Maryland General Assembly annually, on (1) efforts by DJS to promote predelinquent programs, including youth service bureaus (YSB); (2) efforts by DJS to collaborate with and provide technical assistance to local governments regarding the establishment, use, and funding of YSBs; (3) an assessment of the programs and activities conducted by YSBs; and (4) any other efforts to prevent youth offenses.*

Enhance the accountability of schools with respect to training on the identification of child abuse and neglect, policies on prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation and background check requirements for staff that interact with students. *ONGOING ADVOCACY*

Improve statewide access to expert medical evaluations for children with suspected abuse and neglect. *ONGOING ADVOCACY*

Education Policy

Support the Development of a Comprehensive Health Education Curriculum

- ✓ *Passed House Bill 161 equips the State Superintendent of Schools with stronger oversight authority and practical enforcement mechanisms when local school districts fail to align with MSDE's curriculum standards. It creates a clear process from identifying discrepancies and mandating corrective action, to requiring full adoption of state-approved curriculum and, if necessary, imposing financial penalties.*

Address the use of cellphones during school days. *ONGOING ADVOCACY*

Support the expansion of school-based health centers. *ONGOING ADVOCACY*