



# COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Fiscal Year 2021

## About Children's Hospital Los Angeles

Children's Hospital Los Angeles is at the forefront of pediatric medicine, offering superior clinical care to children from across the world, the country and the greater Southern California region. Founded in 1901, Children's Hospital Los Angeles is the largest provider of care for children in California, the No. 1 pediatric hospital in the Pacific region and California, and among the top 10 in the nation on U.S. News & World Report's Honor Roll of Best Children's Hospitals. Clinical expertise spans the pediatric care continuum for newborns to young adults, from everyday preventive medicine to the most complex and advanced cases. Inclusive, child- and family-friendly clinical care is led by physicians who are faculty members of the Keck School of Medicine of USC, and proven discoveries reach patients faster through The Saban Research Institute of Children's Hospital Los Angeles—among the top 10 children's hospitals for National Institutes of Health funding. The hospital also is home to one of the nation's largest pediatric residency training programs.

### Our Mission:

We create hope and build healthier futures.

**As a leader in pediatric academic medicine, we fulfill our mission by:**

- Caring for children, teens, young adults and families
- Making discoveries and advances that enhance health and save lives
- Training those who will be the future of child health
- Supporting our communities, especially underserved populations

## Beyond Well – Community Impact at Children's Hospital Los Angeles

We believe that stronger communities create healthier, more resilient children. As we endeavor to create hope and build healthier futures, Children's Hospital Los Angeles broadens the scope of our commitment to include the communities surrounding us.

To do this, we leverage the hospital's significant health care expertise, as well as its purchasing and employment power, to help build communities where "wellness" goes beyond health care.

Team members and leaders come together with community partners in three distinct yet integrated efforts:

### Well Families

**Goal:** Improve infant, child, adolescent and young adult health outcomes.

### Working Well

**Goal:** Enhance access to employment and training opportunities for underrepresented individuals.

### Well Communities

**Goal:** Spur local economic growth and champion environmental sustainability.

# A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Children’s Hospital Los Angeles is proud to be a place that creates hope and builds healthier futures because we know that healthier children build strong communities. The challenges faced by so many during the pandemic have guided CHLA to new approaches in community impact efforts as the local health system of choice for children, as a neighbor and as a partner.

Beyond the century-long commitment to delivering the highest-quality pediatric patient care, CHLA proudly continues to come together to support the surrounding community through local food distributions, neighborhood beautification events, workforce development programs, health and wellness initiatives and more. In this report, you will read about the impact of this work.

This year, we had the good fortune to convene a great many community representatives as part of the triennial Community Health Needs Assessment. Hundreds of nonprofit organizations, businesses and individuals shared the benefit of their perspectives on the health and social needs of the community with our grateful team. As a children’s hospital, a specific focus for this assessment included benefiting from the understanding and integrating the experience of local youth. Their voices were amplified through an innovative virtual photovoice project, which you will read about in this report. For all who joined this effort, I want to convey CHLA’s deep gratitude—your feedback and perspectives continue to inform and shape the character and direction that CHLA’s community impact work takes.

Working together with you and the community, CHLA remains steadfast in its mission to create hope and build healthier futures. As every individual and family strives to recover and renew from the impact of the pandemic, rest assured that Children’s Hospital Los Angeles continues to pursue efforts that create stronger, healthier communities for youth and their families in this generation and generations to come.

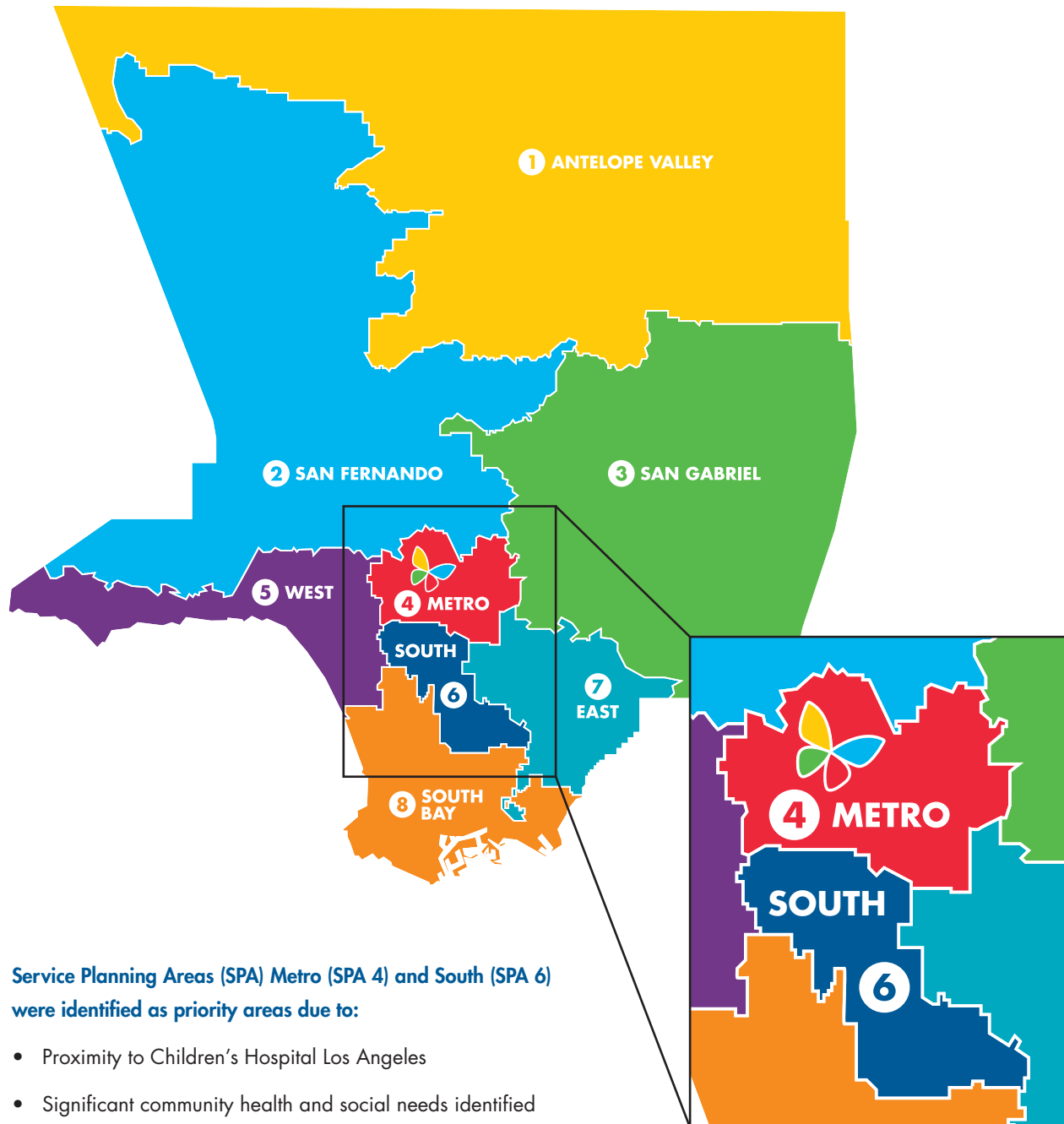
Warmest regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul S. Viviano".

**Paul S. Viviano**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

# DEFINING OUR COMMUNITY



**Service Planning Areas (SPA) Metro (SPA 4) and South (SPA 6) were identified as priority areas due to:**

- Proximity to Children’s Hospital Los Angeles
- Significant community health and social needs identified in CHLA’s 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment
- Percentage of CHLA patients from these areas (40% of L.A. County in FY21)

# COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

All nonprofit hospitals, such as Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, must conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and develop an implementation strategy every three years as mandated by state and federal law. The CHNA provides us with a deeper understanding of the health and social needs of the community and informs our community benefit program planning.

During the assessment process, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles collects and reviews qualitative and quantitative data on community health and social needs, with the understanding that health is influenced by where individuals live, work and play. We look at health conditions and behaviors, socioeconomic factors, physical environment and availability of health services—in all, more than 300 data points.

For the 2022 CHNA, we engaged key leaders of organizations, service providers, community members, parents and youth. Stakeholder convenings with community leaders and health providers increased awareness and invited broad input and sharing.

Surveys also helped to identify issues that most affect the health of the community.

## Top 8 Community Needs: CHNA 2022

- Mental Health
- Homelessness/Housing
- Economic Security/Poverty
- Communicable/Infectious Diseases (including COVID-19)
- Patient- and Family-centered Health Care
- Health Services Communication
- Obesity
- Food Security

We share our findings on the CHNA Dashboard—an interactive resource for community leaders, organizations and residents. In this way, stakeholders can visualize how the community has been geographically impacted by various health issues and, together, we can advocate for policies and programs that improve quality of life in local communities.



## CHNA Dashboard

The Community Health Needs Assessment Dashboard is a resource for patients, families and caregivers to learn about the challenges and opportunities in their Los Angeles neighborhoods. By understanding trends across education, employment, housing and other domains, stakeholders are better positioned to advocate for policies and programs that improve their quality of life.

Visit the 2022 Dashboard at [CHLA.org/2022CHNAdashboard](https://chla.org/2022CHNAdashboard)

# COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT (continued)

## Photovoice: Seeing is Believing

Forget the stereotypes about teens and young adults. They're not all selfie makers or celebrity influencers. They have influence all their own—especially the young Angelenos who participated in CHLA's 2022 CHNA Youth Photovoice Project.

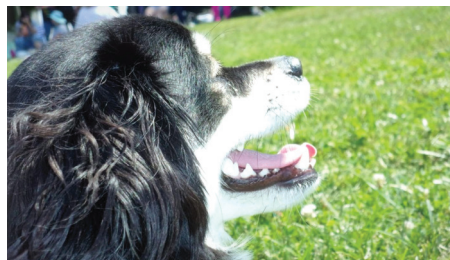
Photovoice is a visual way to collect data about a community and decode its personality, strengths and needs from the inside out. It's also "an amazing way to amplify the voices of our youth," says Susana Gantan, MPH, Senior Program Manager, Community Affairs and Governmental Relations at CHLA.

Photovoice 2022 gave youth across Los Angeles County cameras to document their view of the social and environmental factors that affect health. The project brought unique insights into the lived experiences of youth and their families to the CHNA. Youth from fifth graders to college age, representing

all eight county Service Planning Areas, were recruited from 13 youth-serving organizations, including multiple Boys & Girls Clubs, Heart of Los Angeles, John Marshall High School, After-School All-Stars Middle Academy #7 and #12, and the Long Beach LGBTQ Center.

More than 150 photographers submitted over 900 photos depicting youth perspectives about their communities. "Being a part of this project was great," one wrote. "I loved ... really looking closely at the resources present and absent at my school."

"Through Photovoice, I learned what social determinants of health are and how we have them all around us," one 17-year-old-photographer said. "I learned to appreciate what resources I have but also what we can improve as a community." 🦋



*A selection of photos from the 2022 CHNA Youth Photovoice Project*

# WELL FAMILIES

As one of the nation's leading pediatric institutions, Children's Hospital places a priority on health outcomes, education and research.

## COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics

Throughout 2021, Children's Hospital team members and community partners discovered that a vaccine clinic is about more than prevention; it's about the future, too. In February 2021, CHLA's COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force opened a regular three-day-a-week vaccine clinic on site, reflecting the hospital's role as an official county "point-of-dispensing" site.

Hospital officials worked with L.A. County to identify neighborhoods and groups in need of better access to COVID-19 vaccines. One of the first: early childhood educators, who had largely been left to their own devices to get appointments, at a time when supplies were limited.

In concert with other organizations, CHLA set up multiple pop-up vaccine clinics in the community, including in Palmdale and Watts for early-ed teachers and other local residents. These and other efforts reflect our determination to branch out beyond hospital walls.

## Telehealth: Expanding Connections

From the start of the pandemic, the use of telehealth skyrocketed at Children's Hospital and nationwide. CHLA fast-tracked plans already in the works, developing hospital-wide virtual care capabilities through our Connected Care program. By mid-2020, more than 700 clinicians were providing virtual care in over 35 specialties.

Helping to lead the way was Jennifer Raymond, MD, MCR, Chief of the Center for Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, who has been using virtual visits for several years to connect with her adolescent and young adult patients who have Type 1 diabetes.

In addition to expanding telehealth within her center, Dr. Raymond chairs the Virtual Care Committee at CHLA and creates how-to videos and webinars on telehealth. The technology isn't for every disorder or visit. "Sometimes you will see your doctor online and sometimes in person," says Dr. Raymond. "Either way, you'll get the same excellent care."

## Period Poverty Packets

About 1 in 5 girls leave school early or miss school entirely every month in the U.S. because they lack access to menstrual care products. The cost of these products adds to the financial strain in low socioeconomic households, which must prioritize basics like rent and food. Girls with heavy periods—including some with underlying bleeding disorders—are especially impacted by the emotional, physical and financial burden.

In March 2022, CHLA's Hematology-Adolescent Medicine Clinic responded to this growing public health crisis, known as "period poverty," by distributing "period packs" to new and established patients. Response to the period packs from patients has been overwhelmingly positive.





# WELL FAMILIES (continued)

## Vision Screenings

The gift of eyesight is priceless but, for some families, comprehensive vision health can be financially out of reach. To broaden access to essential care, Children’s Hospital held a free vision screening event in November 2021 for Los Angeles families, in partnership with Helen Keller International (HKI) and Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA).

Available were onsite testing for refractive errors (such as nearsightedness or farsightedness), prescription glasses and, when needed, referrals to an eye care specialist. The screening event met the needs of families who have limited access to such services outside of the beginning of the school year.

Families could make appointments with CHLA specialists and with HOLA, then pick up their new glasses a short time later. Every child who attended the screening also went home with a bag of school supplies.

CHLA is proud to partner with such stellar organizations to bring health services to local communities.

HKI, which was co-founded by American author and disability rights advocate Helen Keller in 1915, helps emerging communities overcome longstanding cycles of poverty by delivering key components of

good health, complete nutrition and clear vision. HOLA gives underserved kids equitable opportunities to succeed through comprehensive after-school academic, arts, athletics and wellness programs.

## Research on Best Starts to Life

Children who are born prematurely, who come into the world in poor health or who are at risk for any reason for health issues can face challenges throughout their entire lives.

Research in this area is bringing together programs across CHLA and USC that focus on prenatal, postnatal and early childhood. The aim is to identify the earliest risk factors, address the impact of health and community disparities and deploy science-based interventions from fetal through early childhood development—all to promote healthy futures for children everywhere.

These studies fall into four main areas: early risk factors and interventions, innovative approaches on the horizon, personalized prevention and care, and underlying causes of pediatric disease that could spark inventive strategies and cures. By focusing on the most critical problems at a formative age, investigators anticipate being well-positioned to deliver the greatest possible impact over the entire lifespan.

## Fast Facts: 2022 CHNA

**Nearly 1 in 5** youth in LA County lives in poverty (**16.7%**).

**97%** of youth **0-17** years old in Metro L.A. (SPA 4) and **79.6%** in South L.A. (SPA 6) have to forgo needed health care.

**Nearly 2/3** of teens (**ages 12-17**) with depression did not receive care last year.





## Fast Facts: 2022 CHNA

**Over 2.8 million** confirmed cases of COVID-19 in L.A. County (as of April 2022)

**1 in 5** youth **under 18** infected

**20.4%** of SPA 6 (South) had difficulty paying bills because of COVID-19 and **18.3%** lost their jobs

### COVID-19 Research Advances

The pandemic hit pause for many industries, including medical research, with many scientists working remotely and investigations on hold. Meanwhile, research at CHLA into the origins and impact of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 ramped up and are still growing. These studies have already resulted in major findings in 2021 and 2022, including:

#### **SARS-CoV-2 damage to insulin-producing cells:**

Endocrinologists noted that more patients had new-onset Type 2 diabetes at an advanced stage, including diabetic ketoacidosis, a serious complication in which the body produces high levels of blood acids called ketones. Then they found the reason: SARS-CoV-2 invaded the pancreas, where beta cells that make insulin showed signs of metabolic stress, even after COVID-19 symptoms were gone. Although these findings don't fully explain the trend, they shed some light on what might be occurring.

**Adolescents reducing risk:** A national study at The Saban Research Institute of Children's Hospital Los Angeles, called the ABCD Study, was three years into monitoring social and emotional changes in adolescents when COVID-19 hit. The study, which is following 11,000 children at 21 sites, expanded to monitor effects of the pandemic. Investigators found that families overall were making an effort to talk to their kids about COVID-19 risk—and those

kids demonstrated more risk-reduction behaviors like handwashing and masking.

**Household exposure:** What happens when one member of a household gets infected with SARS-CoV-2? CHLA infectious disease specialists studied 150 local households and 600-plus individuals and found the chances of other family members getting infected are more than 70%. Also, children were the source of the virus being brought into the home nearly 50% of the time.

**Stress and early brain development:** Plans for a national study on children's brain development from infancy until school age took a new direction in 2021. Investigators gave online surveys to pregnant women or women who had recently given birth during COVID-19. Women shared their experiences, their health and wellness and their child's development—grateful for a chance to break their COVID-19 isolation.

**The virus keeps changing:** While the world wondered at a brand-new virus, bioinformatics experts at the CHLA Center for Personalized Medicine were busy developing a suite of informatic tools to study it. The novel tools can compare genetic blueprints of the virus, providing a mechanism for tracking the ever-changing virus. 🦋

# WORKING WELL

Children's Hospital Los Angeles promotes positive futures with programs that provide training, mentorship and a glimpse at new careers.

## LA-HIP Builds Futures

Despite the ongoing pandemic, the Samuels Family Latino and African American High School Internship Program (LA-HIP) continued to offer its biomedical science internships at Children's Hospital Los Angeles in 2020-2021. The 14 students of the Class of 2020-21 performed exceptionally in the yearlong program, even though they had to complete their original research projects remotely due to COVID-19.

LA-HIP provides students who have a strong interest in a career in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) with the opportunities to learn hands-on laboratory-based research. The students, all rising seniors (current juniors), perform cutting-edge biomedical project experiments under the mentorship of scientists at The Saban Research Institute prior to their final year of high school.

The program also supports the LA-HIP participants in their quest to become basic or clinician scientists with intensive college counseling workshops, academic enhancement and Princeton Review SAT preparatory curriculum.

The 2020-2021 participants presented their projects and findings to their mentors, fellow participants and scientists from The Saban Research Institute at a virtual Science Symposium in August 2021. Armed with résumés strengthened by their CHLA research, the LA-HIP students worked with the college counseling team from Mosaic College Prep to get their college applications polished and submitted. Many had prestigious universities on their acceptance list.

In January 2021, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, which has generously supported LA-HIP

for more than seven years, awarded three more years of funding to the program.

The new grant also supports the Chuck Lorre Research Scholars Program, the college summer research extension program for LA-HIP alumni who have completed their freshman or sophomore years in college. The Chuck Lorre Research Scholars Program received renewed support as well from the Chuck Lorre Family Foundation, a long-standing supporter that awarded another three years of funding starting in summer 2020.

CHLA held the Chuck Lorre Research Scholars Program summer program in 2021 with six participants. The students worked full-time for 10 weeks, either in person or virtually with a mentor. Each chose a research project relevant to human health. The program provided a \$5,000 stipend to each participant.

The Samuels Family LA-HIP has changed the lives of more than 200 students since 2006. All alumni have graduated from high school and matriculated to college.



*“Through seven weeks in the lab I have had the opportunity to experience something unique in my life. This experience has offered me equal amounts of discovery and growth.”*

**—LA-HIP Alum**

## Community Ambassador Training Partnership

Having a sick child who is hospitalized or needs multiple medical appointments is hard enough. The challenge is only compounded if you also have difficulty paying for food, housing and other basic needs.

Social workers at Children’s Hospital work to inform families about government and community programs, but many families are still overwhelmed and unsure where to start when faced with a complex system of government and community assistance.

A desire to help underserved families inspired a pilot initiative that debuted in 2021 —Abrazos Community Ambassador Resource Navigation Program—the latest initiative of Children’s Hospital and Para Los Niños (PLN), a Los Angeles nonprofit that empowers underserved children and families. For 10 years, we and PLN have shared the same goal: to break through barriers and improve the health of children and families in L.A.

Children’s Hospital provided community impact funding for the Abrazos Program to Para Los Niños, which hired and trained four Ambassadors in collaboration with CHLA. Each was recruited from PLN’s Best Start Metro Los Angeles community leadership program. Abrazos is the newest extension of CHLA Salud, the hospital’s first promotora program, which launched in 2016 to promote community health education.

The Community Ambassadors—also called promotoras, Spanish for health promoter—reach out to candidate families by phone and, for a few weeks or months, serve as expert guides to walk them through the process of accessing useful local resources. All Ambassadors speak fluent Spanish



and are themselves parents. Assistance can take many forms, from finding a stroller to get to doctor appointments to connecting families to food bank groceries to identifying sources of much-needed financial help.

The Ambassadors have been teaching a virtual Spanish-language version of a 10-week workshop on “Nurturing Parenting®” offered by the Helen and Bill Close Family Resource Center at CHLA. The free classes on parenting a child with special or complex medical needs have proven so popular the hospital is already offering more. 🦋

### Fast Facts: 2022 CHNA

**40%** of households have income below that needed to meet basic needs with dignity.

**22%** of L.A. County’s population **over 5 years old** speaks English “less than very well.”

# WELL COMMUNITIES

Children's Hospital Los Angeles uses its resources to promote economic and environmental well-being for the community.

## United in a Community Garden

Increasing access to fresh, healthy food and teaching people about nutrition and diverse food cultures is all part of fostering food security—one of Children's Hospital's prime community objectives.

On Earth Day, April 22, 2022, CHLA and Los Angeles City College (LACC) co-hosted a celebration at "The City's Garden" on the LACC campus. The garden opened a year ago with initial funding from the hospital but had to delay an opening event due to COVID-19.

For more than a decade, the hospital has partnered with LACC on community impact initiatives. The City's Garden—sparked by the efforts of students in the Re/Generation Garden Club and LACC faculty—combines the goals of increasing access to fresh produce in neighborhoods often considered "food deserts" and providing educational opportunities for students and community members.

"Our garden will build stronger, safer communities by connecting citizens to each other and their local food systems," says LACC President Mary Gallagher, PhD, MBA.

"Fresh foods, clean air and green spaces are important contributors to healthy, vibrant communities," says Paul S. Viviano, President and CEO of Children's Hospital Los Angeles. "Our institution and our volunteer team members have made a commitment to support initiatives leading to good health throughout our local community."

The City's Garden, which occupies about 5,000 square feet on the LACC campus, has been designed to include 38 planters growing culturally diverse fruits and vegetables. Other plans call for an outdoor kitchen and experiential learning workshop for local school children on cooking, nutrition and gardening.

Produce grown in the garden is donated to local schools and food banks and supports programs and food services at Children's Hospital.



## Fast Facts: 2022 CHNA

**38.3%** of L.A. County adults have incomes **less than 200%** of the federal poverty line.

**38.9%** of teens in L.A. County eat **5 or more** servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

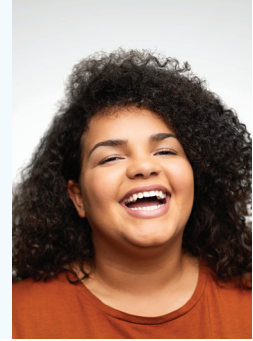
**21.8%** of adults with children **17 and younger** say their community's access to fresh fruits and vegetables is not good.

## Fast Facts: 2022 CHNA

**46.5%** of CHNA survey respondents identify nutrition as a major issue.

**1/3** of L.A. teens are overweight (**14.3%**) or obese (**20%**).

**37.2%** of youths drink **one or more** sodas a day.



### Creating a Food Hub

Studies show that nearly a quarter of children in L.A. County are food insecure. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has developed several categories to define ranges of food insecurity, but it “basically means there isn’t enough food to feed everyone in the family and live a healthy life,” says Susana Gantan, MPH, Senior Program Manager, Community Affairs and Governmental Relations at CHLA.

The COVID-19 pandemic—with children not attending school in person for a long period—exposed gaps in L.A.’s food access. Even children who qualified for a free lunch program could not get their meals. For some, being out of school meant missing both breakfast and lunch.

Parental job losses and childcare complications worsened food insecurity for many families in CHLA’s broader community.

Even before the pandemic, the hospital began exploring food reclamation to leverage unused or excess food supplies to benefit families and prevent food waste. COVID-19 intensified these efforts. Food unused in CHLA operations or already prepared but unneeded on any given day was shared with the community. The hospital’s community partners, including the Hollywood Food Coalition, helped ensure the food was distributed to those most in need.

### Community Impact Champions Network

The Community Impact Champions Network (CICN) brought employee volunteerism to Children’s Hospital’s commitment to community in 2021. Through CICN, hospital team members volunteer in local good neighbor programs and projects that promote food access, sustainability, neighborhood safety and environmental issues.

More than 350 team members across 100 hospital departments are driven by the knowledge that CHLA isn’t simply a hospital; it’s a collection of compassionate individuals who want to help improve the lives of children and families.

The CICN volunteers have taken part in neighborhood cleanups with the Los Feliz Neighborhood Council and the Friends of the LA River’s Great LA River CleanUp. They also helped seed and nurture The City’s Garden at Los Angeles Community College and spent their Sunday mornings supporting the East Hollywood Neighborhood Council’s fresh produce distribution with L.A. City Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell’s office and Rick’s Produce Market.

“Providing healthy food for those in need really hit home with our team members,” says Chuck Pickering, Vice President of Facilities and Support Services at CHLA, and a dedicated CICN volunteer.



# WELL COMMUNITIES (continued)

## Community/Hospital Partnership Spotlight

**Rick's Produce Market** at 755 N. Virgil Avenue in the Virgil Village of Los Angeles has been providing the community with exceptional farm produce for more than a decade. Starting in June 2020 and throughout 2021, the growing pandemic made food access problematic for some families in the East Hollywood/Virgil Village neighborhood near Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

As a family farm and farmer-owned produce market, Rick's understands the importance of food access. So, Rick's joined with CHLA, the East Hollywood



Neighborhood Council and the office of L.A. City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell to provide boxes of fresh produce to families in need.

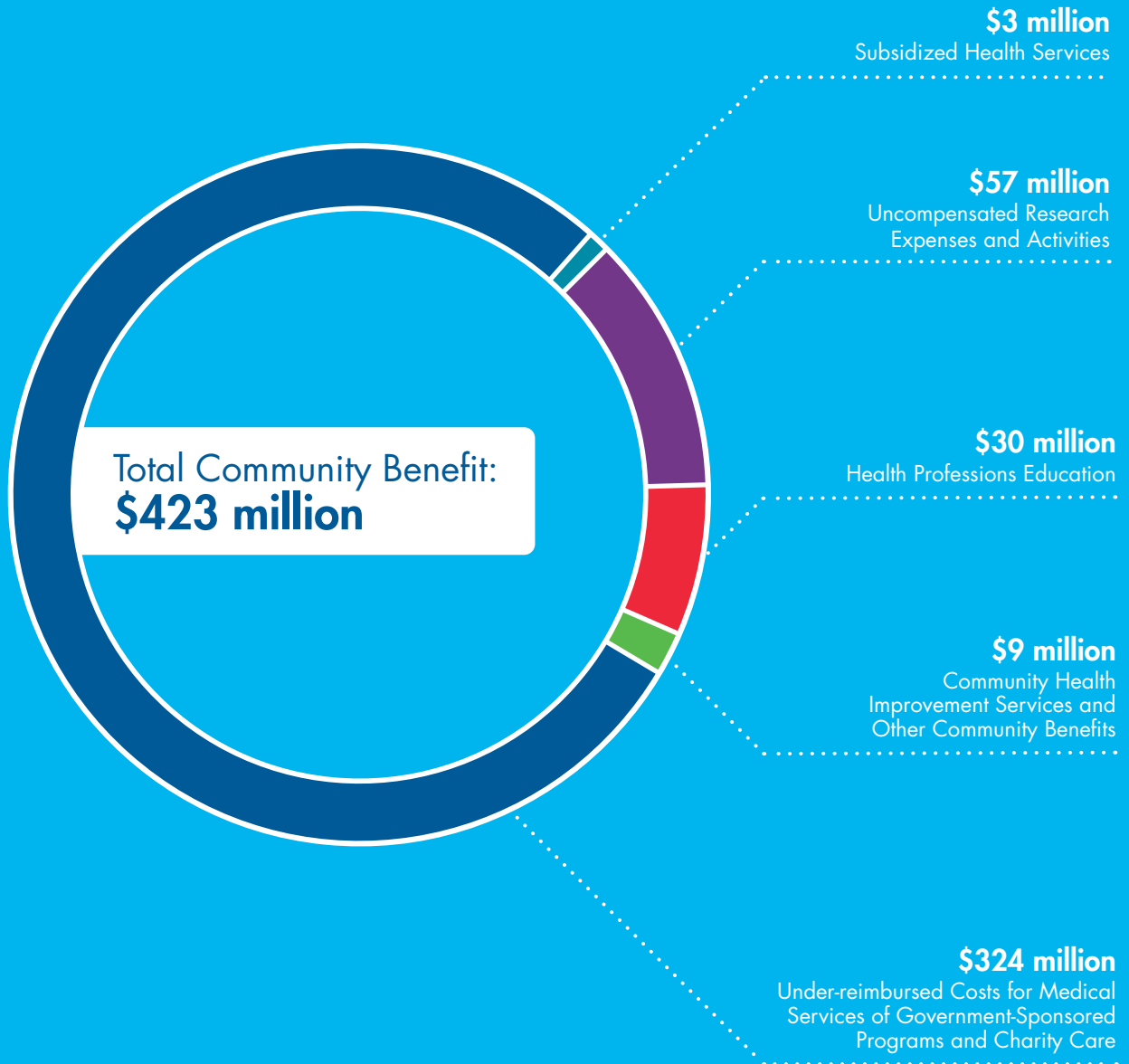
As a result, Rick's Produce Market was named Council District 13's Good Food Champion of the Year in 2020. "As the pandemic amplifies food insecurities and reinforces the need for healthy, nutritious and affordable food options, Rick's Produce has leaned in to help our most vulnerable residents," said Councilmember O'Farrell in announcing the award.

Children's Hospital is honored to have such committed partners in our shared community mission. 🦋



# COMMUNITY IMPACT

Fiscal Year 2021







Community Impact Report 2021  
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See more  
Photovoice  
projects on  
**page 4.**

# WE VALUE YOUR INPUT.

Share your ideas and stories related to our community's health—or request our Community Health Needs Assessment—by emailing us at [communitybenefit@chla.usc.edu](mailto:communitybenefit@chla.usc.edu).

You can also access the report at [CHLA.org/community](http://CHLA.org/community) or open your camera and scan the code.

