




# How Can Medicaid Integrate Community Health Workers into Children's Health Care?

Community health workers (CHWs) are trusted, frontline professionals who connect children and families with the resources and services they need. Medicaid, which covers nearly half of U.S. children, can play a vital role in expanding this evidence-based workforce.

## Challenges in Child Health Care

Today's child health system can fall short for families, especially those served by Medicaid, due to:

-  **Workforce shortages** that limit time and support during visits.
-  **Access barriers** that make navigating health and social care difficult.
-  **Fragmented systems** that lead to missed opportunities for early intervention.



## What CHWs Provide

CHWs help bridge gaps in access, engagement, and coordination by:



**Promoting preventive care** through timely screenings, education, and immunization support.



**Coordinating complex care needs** across specialists and linking families to needed resources.



**Meeting families where they are** to make health and social services easier to access.

## Medicaid Action Steps to Integrate CHWs into Pediatrics

Medicaid and its partners can take the following steps to advance CHW integration:

- 1 Reimburse for CHW services.** Cover services for children and families to expand access and support program sustainability.
- 2 Offer pediatric training for CHWs.** Provide education on child development, family-centered care, and care coordination.
- 3 Place CHWs in schools.** Embed CHWs in school-based health centers to meet students' health needs and reduce staff workload.
- 4 Align CHW programs across partners.** Coordinate efforts across agencies to reduce administrative burdens, improve data sharing, and sustain programs.
- 5 Assess children and families' needs before implementation.** Use needs assessments to determine where CHWs can help most.
- 6 Engage CHW stakeholders.** Gather CHWs' insights on successes and challenges to better support children and families.

