



# Child & Teen Checkups

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## Fast facts

- ▲ Who misses health screenings? A study conducted in the fall of 2002 shows that children in the following ethnic groups miss health screenings:
- African American – 24 percent
  - African Middle Eastern – 22 percent
  - Euro American – 16 percent
  - Hispanic – 13 percent
  - Asian – 9 percent
  - Eastern European – 1 percent

## What is the Child & Teen Checkups program?

Since 1978, Hennepin County has operated the Child & Teen Checkups program, which encourages and assists families with children up to age 21 and who are eligible for Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare to make use of preventive health care services.

Children enrolled in public assistance programs are at risk for sporadic medical attention, nutrition issues, elevated blood levels, delayed immunizations, developmental delays, and more. Health screenings can make a difference. Studies show that healthy children are more ready to learn and succeed in life. Also, the program helps families find a “medical home,” which sets the stage for continuing care and education about how best to use the health care system and keep costs down.

## Who does it serve and at what cost?

In 2007, more than 97,800 children were eligible for services; 73 percent of eligible children participated in the program. Hennepin received approximately \$2.4 million in 2007 from the Department of Human Services to provide outreach and assistance to eligible families.

The Child & Teen Checkups program tailors its education and outreach efforts to reach families at critical times when, according to the 2006 Child & Teen checkups Participation Report for Hennepin County, rates for screenings tend to decrease. These critical times beginning in the three-to-five year-age group and continue through the school-age years into young adult years. From face-to-face meetings, phone calls, direct mailings and more, staff provide information on how to navigate the health system and highlight the importance of health screenings.

## Screenings that are important for children include:

- Height and weight checks
- Hearing and vision screenings
- Developmental screenings
- Social-emotional mental health screenings
- Dental assessment and referral
- Immunizations
- Health information

## Ethnicity plays a role in missed checkups

Different cultures and ethnic groups value preventive health care differently. For example, Somali children tend to miss health screenings during their teenage years while Hispanic children tend to have more missed screenings at four months and 15 years of age.

Part of Hennepin’s outreach to parents and older children is to help accommodate – and sometimes challenge and encourage change in – cultural beliefs and practices about seeking preventive health care.