

Children and Youth with Special Health Needs News

October 2026

Program updates

Missed an Ages and Stages Questionnaire Online open office hour?

If you weren't able to join a recent Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ®) Online open office hour, you can easily catch up on the topics covered. These sessions provide guidance, troubleshooting support, and demonstrations specifically for Follow Along Program staff transitioning to electronic screening. Recordings from previous office hours are available any time in the children and youth with special health needs (CYSHN) [Local Public Health](#) Vimeo library.

Upcoming webinars, trainings, and events

October is Down syndrome awareness month



October is a time to celebrate the abilities and contributions of people with Down syndrome and promote inclusion in every community. Local public health partners can help raise awareness by sharing resources, highlighting community stories, and supporting organizations working toward equity for individuals and families.

Learn more from the [National Down Syndrome Society](#) and from the [Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota](#).

Oct. 8 – Children's Environmental Health Day



Children's Environmental Health Day takes place on the second Thursday of October each year. It's based on the idea that, together, we can create a healthier, safer, more equitable world for all children— where fewer children suffer from preventable health issues.

Focused on action and equity, the goal of Children's Environmental Health Day is to collectively increase the visibility of children's environmental health issues while empowering individuals and organizations to take action on behalf of children nationwide. You can learn more about the environmental risks children face from the [Children's Environmental Health Network](#) or the Minnesota [Toxic Free Kids Program](#).

Regional systems gatherings

Join the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) for a series of in-person regional gatherings across Minnesota for [Supporting Well-Functioning Systems for CYSHN and Families](#). These conversation-based gatherings will bring together partners from across health and related systems to reflect on what helps systems work well within each region, where families experience challenges or disconnection, and how systems can become more coordinated and supportive for CYSHN and their families.

Next regional gathering dates

All gatherings will take place from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. and will include lunch.

- **Thursday, Oct. 8:** Southeast (Rochester)
- **Thursday, Oct. 29:** Metro North (Brooklyn Center)

Complete the [Regional Systems Gatherings Registration](#) form to attend.

Dec. 2 – CYSHN condition follow-up community of practice

Please register for the next virtual, optional [CYSHN condition follow-up community of practice](#) on Wednesday, Dec. 2 from 9 – 10:30 a.m. The purpose of these meetings is to provide routine opportunities for local public health nurses who provide follow-up for children referred by CYSHN programs (birth defects, hearing loss, heritable conditions, congenital CMV) to learn condition-specific information and discuss nursing practice.

December's session will include a presentation about congenital CMV updates. If you have any questions you would like to submit in advance, email them to health.cyshn@state.mn.us with "local public health" in the subject line.

Dec. 3 – Introduction to using the Ages and Stages Questionnaires

Mark your calendar! Family home visiting is offering a combined ASQ-3® and ASQ:SE-2® training on Thursday, Dec. 3, from 12:30 - 3:30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. This training is open to Follow Along Program contacts who want an introduction to understanding the use and purpose of these developmental and social emotional screening tools.

To register, visit [training and professional development](#) webpage underneath "current trainings."

Resource corner

Supporting families impacted by incarceration

The Washington County Public Health and Environment Jail Parenting Program has provided parenting education and support within the county jail since 2013, reaching more than 900 participants and most recently transitioning to a Circle of Security Parenting model. Recognized through the Local Public Health Association's Program Spotlight Award and featured by the National Home Visiting Resource Center in [Beyond the Home: Strengthening Parent-Child Relationships During Incarceration - National Home Visiting Resource Center](#), this work highlights the important role local public health can play in supporting parents and families affected by incarceration.

Invoicing

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Jan. 1 – March 31	April 1 – June 30	July 1 – Sept. 30	Oct. 1 – Dec. 31

Condition Follow-up

Complete nursing follow-up documentation in MEDSS by the end of the quarter after the one in which the referral was made. For example, if the date the event was sent to local public health is July 15 (in quarter 3), the follow-up documentation should be submitted by Dec. 31 (the end of quarter 4).

Invoice letters are sent to local public health by MDH in the month following the end of the quarter in which documentation was submitted, or training was completed. So, in the example, the invoice letter would be sent to local public health some time before Jan. 31 (the month following the end of quarter 4).

Follow Along Program

Follow Along Program semi-annual data reports are due every 6 months. Data for quarters 1 and 2 are due annually on July 31. Data for quarters 3 and 4 are due annually on January 31. Invoices for quarters 1 and 2 are due each year on August 20. Invoices for quarters 3 and 4 are due each year on February 20. Semi-annual data reports must be received prior to the invoice being paid.

About the CYSHN newsletter

Children and Youth with Special Health Needs (CYSHN) section staff at MDH work together to champion the health and well-being of people living in Minnesota with special health needs and disabilities, from the earliest states of life through transition to adulthood.

As the Child and Family Health Division works to coordinate and collaborate on communication, this newsletter may evolve to include a broader focus, but the following CYSHN programs are the primary focus: Birth Defects; Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI); Heritable Conditions (HC); Congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV); Critical Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD); Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS); and the Follow Along Program.