

Human Development and Disability



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# DHDD Newsletter – October 2022



## A Note from the Acting DHDD Director

Dear DHDD Partners,

I am honored to join CDC's Division of Human Development and Disability (DHDD) as Director and am excited to be a member of the visionary leadership team. DHDD's science and programs are essential to promote optimal health of the 61 million Americans living with a disability, and to countless others at risk of disability. Recently, COVID-19 has highlighted long-standing inequities among people with disabilities. As a state health official during the pandemic, I became more concerned than ever about the poor quality of our data and the challenges of our interventions to reach persons with disabilities.

Through my many years in public health, one thing that has remained clear to me is that no meaningful impacts occur by going it alone. Partnerships and collaboration are critical to making sustainable changes to protect and improve health outcomes. Together, we can impact the health – and lives – of people with disabilities. I am so excited to use my experiences as a public health official, pediatrician, and mom to focus on early identification and brighter futures for individuals at risk of or with disabilities.

I look forward to working with you to help ensure that individuals of all abilities thrive.

Sincerely,

Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, FAAP  
DHDD Director



Dr. Karyl Rattay, DHDD Director

# In the Spotlight

## DHDD Announces New Director

CDC's Division of Human Development and Disabilities (DHDD) is pleased to announce Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, FAAP, joined as the new division director on October 24th. Dr. Rattay has served as a public health leader at state and federal levels for over 20 years. Most recently, she served as director of the Delaware Division of Public Health, where she led 1,000 public health scientists and practitioners in surveillance and program efforts to achieve public health impact state-wide. Under her leadership, the state reduced:



Dr. Rattay (right) helps children with a fun learning activity

- cancer mortality rates by 14% and eliminated disparities for colorectal screening and mortality
- infant mortality rates by nearly 30% from 2015-2019
- unintended pregnancies by 25% through Delaware's Contraceptive Access Now initiative

In collaboration with the University of Delaware and the Delaware Community Foundation, Dr. Rattay also launched the Healthy Communities Delaware, which is a community-driven initiative to reduce health disparities through partnerships and multi-sector collaboration.

Prior to working at the Delaware Division of Public Health, Dr. Rattay helped establish a new division at Nemours Children Health focused on disease prevention and health promotion for the children and youth of Delaware. She also served in the HHS Office of the Secretary Office of Public Health and Science, where she worked with the Assistant Secretary of Health and the Surgeon General on issues related to child health, clinical health, and more.

Not only does she enhance the division with her medical expertise and management acumen, Dr. Rattay brings to the division and to our agency the perspective of a recognized public health leader at all levels of government. She has repeatedly demonstrated her ability to translate science into policy and programs for the public, and used the principles of performance management to monitor, measure and evaluate remarkable public health outcomes to improve the lives of the people she serves.

Dr. Rattay looks forward to connecting with DHDD partners and will provide opening remarks at the upcoming Quarterly DHDD Partner Meeting. Please find an important reminder about this meeting and point of contact for related questions below.

## Quarterly DHDD Partner Meeting

Mark your calendar! DHDD invites you to a virtual partner meeting on **November, 1 – 2pm ET.**

The meeting will feature DHDD updates, including remarks by Dr. Karyl Rattay, and partner successes related to disability integration at federal and state levels. We look forward to seeing you there!



If you did not receive the calendar invitation, or have topics you would like to discuss on future Quarterly DHDD Partner Meetings, please email [sarah.lewis@cdc.gov](mailto:sarah.lewis@cdc.gov)

## New Resources

### Online Article Features ADHD Awareness Month

In recognition of ADHD Awareness Month, DHDD has published a special feature and the resources available to parents and caregivers. Children with ADHD may be overly active, have trouble paying attention, or may act impulsively. Early diagnosis and treatment can help manage ADHD symptoms and improve a child's behavior at home and school. Children with ADHD who receive behavioral and medication treatment have better relationships with classmates and family than children who do not receive this combined treatment. For additional information and links to valuable resources about diagnosis and treatment, [read the special feature](#) on DHDD's website.



## Publications

### State-Level Estimates of the Prevalence of ADHD Diagnosis and Treatment Among U.S. Child and Adolescents, 2016–2019

A [new CDC study](#) provides state-level estimates of the number of U.S. children and teens aged 3–17 years that have had or currently have Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). According to the 2016–2019 National Survey of Children's Health, about 1 in 10 U.S. children and teens have been diagnosed with ADHD. However, about 1 in 5 diagnosed with ADHD did not receive any kind of treatment. States with more children with an ADHD diagnosis had a higher percentage receiving medication treatment, but a lower percentage receiving behavioral treatment. Public health practitioners, healthcare providers, and policymakers can use the study findings to help meet the needs of children with ADHD in their states.



### The Role of Intellectual Disability with Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Documented Co-occurring Conditions: A population-based study

A [recent CDC study](#) published in *Autism Research* looked at the association of reported co-occurring conditions (CoCs) among 8-year-old children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and intellectual disability (ID) as identified by CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network during surveillance years 2012 and 2014. ID plays a key role in how children with ASD may experience other CoCs. In this study, children with both ASD and ID, as compared to children with ASD but without ID, were more likely to have documented histories of nonspecific developmental delays and neurological disorders but were less likely to have behavioral and psychiatric disorders.



CoCs are common among children with either ASD or ID, which can complicate diagnosis and treatment decisions. Understanding the pattern of CoCs in children with ASD both with and without ID can inform ways to assess and manage children in order to help develop interventions to reduce possible CoCs or CoCs-related impairment.



# Infants with Suspected Hearing Loss May Not Receive Timely Diagnosis or Early Intervention

A new article published in the *American Journal of Perinatology* describes barriers to identifying and following up with infants with hearing loss and suggests strategies to increase the number of children with hearing loss identified early. The article reports on findings from interviews with 56 healthcare providers in Texas along the hearing care continuum, which were conducted by CDC in collaboration with the Texas Department of State Health Services. [Read the full article](#) or [read a summary of the key findings](#).



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DHDD’S mission is to lead inclusive programs to optimize the health and development of children and adults with, or at risk for, disabilities.

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

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