

# Center Projects Menu

The Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living has a robust portfolio of research projects that are fueled by our faculty members' varied interests. At each project's core is a strong motivation to positively impact infant and child health behaviors and outcomes via evidence-based interventions.



MICHAEL & SUSAN DELL  
CENTER for HEALTHY LIVING

## Coordinated Approach To Child Health (CATCH)

**Drs. Steven Kelder, Deanna Hoelscher, Shreela Sharma, Andrew Springer, and Dale Mantey**

School-based health program that promotes physical activity and healthy food choices, and prevents tobacco use, with outreach managed under the CATCH Global Foundation.



## CATCH Healthy Smiles

**Dr. Shreela Sharma**

Hands-on curriculum that teaches students how brushing, flossing, dentist visits, and healthy dietary choices impact oral health.



## Exploring the Activation of Environmental Supports for Child and Parent Physical Activity in Partnership with the Acres Home Community in Houston, Texas

**Dr. Andrew Springer**

Explores the barriers, facilitating factors, and opportunities for promoting out-of-school time physical activity among elementary school-aged children and their parents.

## Driver Safety Media Program Planning

**Drs. Steve Kelder and Dale Mantey**

Identifies audiences and implements behavior change strategies for the new traffic safety mass communications campaign in collaboration with the TxDOT internal marketing team.

## Leveraging a Natural Experiment to Determine the Effects of Integrated Palliative Care on Health Service Outcomes and Disparities in Parkinson Disease and Lewy Body Dementia

**Dr. Adriana Pérez**

Evaluates neurology-led palliative care at U.S. Movement Disorders Centers to determine its impact on quality of advanced patient care.

## Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Training Program

**Dr. Courtney Byrd-Williams**

Addresses geographic disparities in access to training for rural MCH professionals in the target areas of HRSA Region VI (TX, NM, OK, AR, and LA) and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

## Perinatal Quality Collaborative CDC Grant

**Dr. Divya Patel**

Strengthens the capacity of the Texas Collaborative for Healthy Mothers and Babies to substantially impact perinatal health in Texas and the United States.



## Brighter Bites

**Principal Investigator: Dr. Shreela Sharma**

Routinely distributes fresh produce and nutritional education to predominantly low-income families, aiming to change eating habits and ultimately curb childhood obesity.



## CATCH My Breath

**Principal Investigator: Dr. Steven Kelder**

E-cigarette prevention program for middle schoolers, developed as a rapid response to emerging vaping trends among teens.

## Coordinated State Evaluation for Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting

**Dr. Dorothy Mandell**

Evaluates federally funded home visiting programs in Texas to understand the impact of mental health screenings and referrals by home visitors on families.

## Double Up Food Bucks (DUFEB) Texas Expansion Project

**Dr. Sandra van den Berg**

Measures customer attitudes & behaviors and management & staff practices to evaluate DUFEB statewide expansion's impact on nutritious food consumption and healthy food access.

## Economic Evaluation of Austin Public Health Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Projects

**Dr. Shelton Brown**

Determines the cost-benefit and/or cost-effectiveness of DSRIP projects in which Austin Public Health has participated.

## Pediatric Cardiovascular Health: Improving Prediction & Causal Inference Models

**Dr. Augusto César Ferreira De Moraes**

Uses data from the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study to assess the impact of social determinants on trajectories of various cardiovascular health components across adolescence.

## Routes to Environmental Justice

**Dr. Kevin Lanza**

Studies the relationship between built environment changes from national program Safe Routes to School, children's heat stress, and their active commuting to school behaviors.



School-Based Health Programs Physical Activity Nutrition, Food Access, Obesity Family & Child Health



Tobacco & Alcohol Abuse Prevention



Health Policy



Community Development



## Nourish

Drs. Deanna Hoelscher and Shreela Sharma



Encourages lifelong health with hands-on, evidence-based classes taught across its garden, kitchen, clinic, and community.

### Nourishing the Community Through Culinary Medicine

Dr. Natalia Heredia

Supports healthy eating through culinary medicine education.

### Teaching Kitchen Multisite Trial

Drs. Deanna Hoelscher and Natalia Heredia

Implements a teaching kitchen intervention for adults with obesity.

### Pediatric Cardiovascular Health: Improving Prediction & Causal Inference Models

Dr. Augusto César Ferreira De Moraes

Uses data from the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study to assess the impact of social determinants on trajectories of various cardiovascular health components across adolescence.

### Produce Prescription Program Implementation Strategies

Drs. Nalini Ranjit and Shreela Sharma

Evaluates how an AI-supported chatbot impacts dietary habits and produce consumption among pregnant women enrolled in a home-delivery based Produce Prescription program.

### Safe TRavel Environment Evaluation in Texas Schools (STREETS)

Dr. Deanna Hoelscher

Evaluates the Safe Routes to School Program implemented by the City of Austin to determine health and safety effects of infrastructure changes.



### Safe Babies

Dr. Dorothy Mandell

Supports positive parenting through evidence-based tools, including the Father's Playbook App, Parenting Action Plan, Family CARE Portfolio, and Pediatric Brain Health Network.

### Social Media, Acculturation, and E-cigarette Use Among Mexican-American College Students in Texas (Project VAMOS)

Dr. Anna Wilkinson

Examines social media related to e-cigarettes and the subsequent use of these devices among Mexican-American college students while considering the explanatory and modifying factors.

### Texas Collaborative for Healthy Mothers & Babies (TCHMB)

Dr. Deanna Hoelscher



Texas Collaborative for Healthy Mothers & Babies

Improves birth outcomes in Texas through collaboration with providers, scientists, birthing hospitals, and other community stakeholders seeking to advance healthcare quality, equity, and patient safety.

### Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite Technical Assistance and Support Program

Dr. Courtney Byrd-Williams

Provides Texas workplaces with the support and infrastructure needed to become a designated Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite.



### Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration (TX RPC) Project

Dr. Deanna Hoelscher



Texas Research-to-Policy Collaboration Project

Optimizes the use of Texas research, data, and resources to assist legislators in developing effective health policies.

### Texas School Physical Activity (TX SPAN) Project

Dr. Deanna Hoelscher

Monitors health trends (diet, physical activity, sedentary behavior, oral health) in Texas school children at statewide, border county, and non-border county levels.



### Texas SNAP-Ed Evaluation

Dr. Nalini Ranjit

Evaluates the effectiveness of SNAP-ed nutrition education and obesity prevention programming activities in Texas.

### Young Adult and Midlife Transitions in Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior with Heart Failure Risk and Progression: Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults (CARDIA)

Dr. Baojiang Chen

Assesses the relationship between changes in reported physical activity from young adulthood to midlife and the prevalence of heart failure risk during midlife.

