

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910969354403321
Titolo	Focusing on children's health : community approaches to addressing health disparities : workshop summary / / Theresa M. Wizemann and Karen M. Anderson, rapporteurs ; Roundtable on Health Disparities, Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice, Board on Children, Youth, and Families ; Institute of Medicine and National Research Council of the National Academies
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, D.C., : National Academies Press, c2009
ISBN	9780309144520 0309144523 9780309137867 0309137861
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (132 p.)
Altri autori (Persone)	WizemannTheresa M AndersonKaren <1948->
Disciplina	362.1989200097
Soggetti	Child health insurance Child health services Child health services - Finance Federal aid to child health services
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references.
Nota di contenuto	""Reviewers""; ""Contents""; ""Tables, Figures, and Boxes""; ""Preface""; ""1 Introduction""; ""2 Disparities in Children's Health: Major Challenges and Opportunities""; ""3 Investing in Children's Health""; ""4 From Policy to Practice: How Policy Changes Can Affect Children's Lives""; ""5 Community Development Approaches: Overcoming Challenges, Striving for Change""; ""6 Do Businesses Have a Role Improving Communities or Improving Children's Lives?""; ""7 Closing Comments""; ""Appendix A: Workshop Agenda""; ""Appendix B: Biosketches of Presenters and Authors"" ""Appendix C: Resources""""Appendix D: Special Presentation: Unnatural Causes""; ""Appendix E: Clinical Health Care Practice and Community Building: Addressing Racial Disparities in Healthy Child Development""

## Sommario/riassunto

Socioeconomic conditions are known to be major determinants of health at all stages of life, from pregnancy through childhood and adulthood. "Life-course epidemiology" has added a further dimension to the understanding of the social determinants of health by showing an association between early-life socioeconomic conditions and adult health-related behaviors, morbidity, and mortality. Sensitive and critical periods of development, such as the prenatal period and early childhood, present significant opportunities to influence lifelong health. Yet simply intervening in the health system is insufficient to influence health early in the life course. Community-level approaches to affect key determinants of health are also critical. Many of these issues were raised in the 1995 National Academies book, *Children's Health, the Nation's Wealth*. The present volume builds upon this earlier book with presentations and examples from the field. *Focusing on Children's Health* describes the evidence linking early childhood life conditions and adult health; discusses the contribution of the early life course to observed racial and ethnic disparities in health; and highlights successful models that engage both community factors and health care to affect life course development.

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