



MAHA Commission Report on Children's Health Takes Aim at Ultra-Processed Foods and Medication Practices, Among Other Targets

May 23, 2025

Reading Time : 2 min

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Yesterday, the White House's Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission, led by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. released its inaugural health report titled, Make Our Children Healthy Again, delivering one of the first widely anticipated deliverables from the MAHA Commission Executive Order issued earlier this year and noted in our prior [alert](#). The [72-page assessment](#) examines the rising rates of childhood chronic disease in the country—including obesity, heart disease and diabetes—and explores potential contributing factors. Specifically, the report identifies and focuses on four potential drivers:

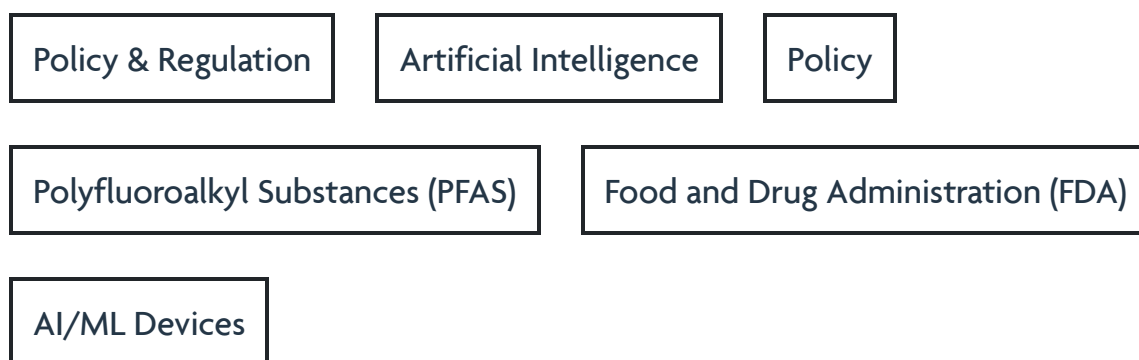
- **Ultra-Processed Foods (UPFs).** The report links the increased consumption of UPFs high in added sugars, chemical additives and saturated fats to poor health outcomes in children. The report also states that government programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) have contributed to the overconsumption of UPFs.
- **Exposure to Environmental Chemicals.** The Commission identifies a need for continued studies to better understand the impact of exposure to various substances including per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), fluoride, electromagnetic radiation and phthalates.
- **Lack of Physical Activity and Chronic Stress:** The report discusses the pervasive use of screens, increasing sedentary lifestyles and childhood mental health decline as areas of concern.

- **Overmedicalization:** The report states that “excessive medical intervention” including an overuse of prescription drugs and vaccines may exacerbate chronic childhood illness. The report calls for inquiry into the impacts of vaccine injury, links between vaccines and chronic disease, and conflicts of interest in the development of the vaccine schedule.

Next Steps

The report outlines ten proposed research initiatives, setting the stage for follow-on actions and potential policy changes as the MAHA Commission’s work moves forward. The report identifies ten areas for further research, including recommending several research initiatives to guide efforts to combat childhood chronic disease including evaluating self-affirmed GRAS (Generally Recognized as Safe) food ingredients, assessing the impact of whole-food, reduced-carb and low-UPF diets in children, and applying AI and machine learning to federal health and nutrition datasets for early detection of harmful exposures and childhood chronic disease trends. The report also proposes focusing on research replication, post-marketing surveillance, leveraging real world data to study childhood chronic diseases, drug safety studies, alternative testing models, and mapping gene–environment interactions affecting childhood disease risk. The MAHA Commission plans to release a strategy in August 2025. However, it is likely that the Commission will provide updates on some of these research items before August, and agencies such as FDA and NIH will likely start announcing initiatives based on this report.

Categories



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