

Global Tuberculosis in Children and Adolescents

Accessible Link cdc.gov/global-hiv-tb/php/resources/pediatric-tb-factsheet.html

1.2 million

children (aged 0-14)
became sick with TB
worldwide in 2024.

42%

of children go undiagnosed,
untreated, or unreported.



Every year:

Nearly 175K

children die from TB.

71%

die before the age of five.

96%

of the children who die from TB do
not receive TB treatment.

Challenges in addressing child and adolescent TB:



Difficulties in diagnosis

TB in children is difficult to diagnose with traditional diagnostic tools, but consistent use of child-friendly specimens and increasing access to chest x-rays can improve case finding among children.



TB preventive treatment remains low

Provision of TB preventative treatment (TPT) to young children in contact with someone with TB remains low, with less than half of those eligible receiving TPT every year. However, TPT for all household contacts, including older children, adolescents as well as adults, has risen from **5%** in 2019 to **25%** in 2025.



HIV-associated TB

In 2023, an estimated **33%** of deaths among children living with HIV were due to TB.

CDC's efforts:



Diagnose

Working with Ministries of Health (MOHs) to promote use of child friendly approaches and diagnostics, CDC is supporting countries to test and diagnose TB in children. In Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda, CDC is working with MOHs and Baylor College of Medicine to evaluate the latest screening and diagnostic methods to determine the most effective and efficient ways to diagnose TB among children.



Treat

By linking every child screened for TB at HIV services to diagnostic evaluation and treatment, CDC is enabling timely, lifesaving TB care. In 2024, **approximately 290,000** children living with HIV were screened for TB and **approximately 3,600** were started on TB treatment through CDC support.



Prevent

CDC is supporting countries in scaling-up TPT to all eligible children, including household contacts of people with TB and children living with HIV. In 2024, CDC newly initiated **nearly 34,000** children on TPT, a critical intervention to prevent development of TB in children living with HIV.



Sustain

CDC is providing leadership and technical expertise to help countries identify and address gaps that hinder childhood TB elimination. CDC and the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease have established a Centre of Excellence, providing a global, virtual platform with twelve MOHs to provide a community of learning and practice for child and adolescent TB in countries hardest hit by the epidemic.

Responding to child and adolescent TB

- **Less invasive diagnostic methods** have been developed, simplifying the diagnosis of TB in children.
- **Shorter treatment regimens for drug-susceptible TB among children** are available, reducing burden on children and their families to improve treatment outcomes.
- **Nearly all TPT and TB treatment regimens** are available in dispersible, pediatric formulations, improving adherence and ensuring correct dosage.

Despite significant progress, more work is needed to end childhood TB.

- **Slow adoption and uptake of child-friendly diagnostic tools** hinder diagnosis of TB in children.
- **Shorter treatment regimens for children require capacity** to differentiate severe TB disease from uncomplicated, non-severe disease, slowing uptake of access to this preferred treatment.
- **Persistent coverage gaps of TPT** leave children living with HIV and household contacts of people with TB at risk of developing TB infection.