

# U.S. News' Best Children's Hospitals

US News releases their list of the best children's hospitals annually, usually in June

## Categories

The annual list includes two components:

**1 The Honor Roll:**  
Lists the top 10 children's hospitals that deliver high-quality care across many specialties

**2 Specialty Rankings:**  
Ranks the top 50 hospitals with specialized programs in:

- Pediatric oncology
- Pediatric cardiology & heart surgery
- Pediatric orthopedics
- Pediatric diabetes and endocrinology
- Pediatric gastroenterology & gastrointestinal surgery
- Neonatology
- Pediatric nephrology
- Pediatric neurology & neurosurgery
- Pediatric pulmonology
- Pediatric urology

## Eligibility

Hospitals are included for consideration if they are either members of the Children's Hospital Association or are nominated by a team of expert advisers. U.S. News then adds other hospitals that express interest in public reporting, after considering the size and scope of each hospital's pediatric program.

All considered hospitals are asked to submit data through the Pediatric Hospital Survey. In the 2019-2020 rankings, of the 191 hospitals qualified for inclusion, 125 (65.4%) provided enough data to be considered for ranking in at least one specialty.

Hospitals also must meet one of these descriptions:

- A freestanding children's hospital
- A "hospital within a hospital" that functions autonomously within the larger medical center
- A specialty pediatric hospital

## Specialty-Specific Eligibility

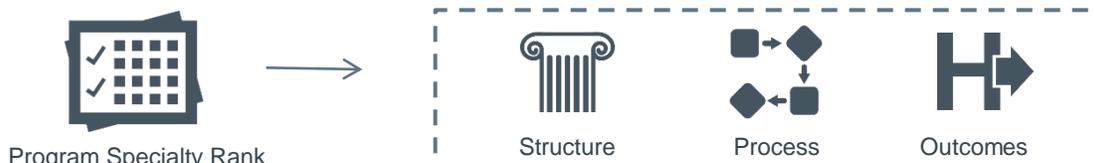
- Hospitals must verify that the necessary specialty services are available (a list of necessary services is provided by US News). In neonatology, a hospital must have a Level IV neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)
- Hospitals must have a FTE of at least 1.0 attending physicians in the specialty category (ex. to be specialized in pediatric neurology & neurosurgery, must have at least 1.0 FTE pediatric neurologist or neurosurgeon).

## Survey Process

U.S. News works with market research firm **RTI** to complete their Pediatric Hospital Survey. The survey was initially created in 2007 by a panel of experts from across health care (ex. pediatric physicians, nurses, hospital quality experts, coding experts, etc....). Panel members convene each year to discuss revisions and improvements to the previous year's survey.

Updated surveys are provided in draft form to hospitals in December, finalized in January, and responses are accepted until mid-March.

The survey assesses three main components of pediatric programs: their structure, process and outcomes.



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## Survey Process, cont.

The three main survey components are weighted equally, with three included process measures:

Measure	Details	Weight
<b>Structure</b>	Measures program structure and resources directly related to patient care such as the ratio of nurses to patients, specialized programs available, EMR functionality and external certifications. Points for each component are tallied and then weighted according to their importance.	33.3%
<b>Process</b>	Measures commitment to best practices (ex. hospitals gain points for distributing patient education materials about the side effects of certain medications)	9.2%
	Measures the ability to prevent infections (ex. hospitals gain points for auditing hand hygiene compliance rates)	9.2%
	Expert opinion of pediatric specialists*	15.0%
<b>Outcomes</b>	Measures specialty-specific clinical outcome measures from data obtained through the survey. Allots points based on factors such as the number of adverse events, surgical outcomes and transplant survival rates.	33.3%**

\*Using the platform Doximity and an outside survey, RTI identifies approx. 12,000 physicians eligible in one of the 10 pediatric specialties. They are sent an email invitation to a survey which asks them to identify up to 10 hospitals in their specialty that provide the best care. Mentions in all surveys are tallied and results are adjusted based on respondents demographics and region.

\*\* Outcome measures are different for cardiology & heart surgery specialty scoring as risk-adjusted mortality measures are used as they are more accurate with cardiac measures than the observed outcome measures used in the other specialties

## Honor Roll Scoring

In the 2019-2020 rankings, 84 different hospitals were ranked in at least one pediatric specialty. To determine the "Honor Roll" list, the number one-ranked hospital in each specialty received 25 Honor Roll points, the number two-ranked hospital received 24 points and so on, and all hospitals ranked number 21-50 received 5 points. The ten hospitals that earned the most points out the possible 250 among all specialties are then recognized as the "Honor Roll."