

community health improvement strategy update

2026-2029



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Introduction

This document is a summary of progress for each priority area and associated strategies identified in the 2023-2026 community health improvement strategy plan. These updates reflect the work completed during FY 26. Each strategy owner provided quarterly updates and participated in a quarterly meeting of the implementation strategy team. Through these documented updates both in metrics and narrative form, the following summary document was created. In each priority topic you will find updates by strategy with the goal, anticipated impact, action steps, priority outcome and indicators which are components that were identified in the initial implementation strategy plan. Access the 2023- 2026 community health improvement strategy plan here: <https://childrensdayton.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/chip-report-2023.pdf>. You can also find past updates and associated reports here: <https://childrensdayton.org/community/community-health/community-health-needs-assessment/>.

Priority Area: Mental Health and Addiction

Priority Topic: Mental health and addiction		
Strategy 1: Continue to spread the On Our Sleeves Movement throughout the Dayton Region		
Goal: Reduce mental health stigma		
Anticipated Impact: The On Our Sleeves Movement aims to reduce the stigma around children's mental health. Community-based mental health education is one prevention strategy that can improve rates of youth depression and mental health challenges.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Continue to spread the On Our Sleeves Movement, a childhood mental health campaign, throughout the Dayton region. Position this program as a community-based prevention program.	Priority Outcomes: Reduce depression treatment unmet need. Reduce mental health stigma. Priority Indicators: Percent of youth with major depressive episode who did not receive any mental health treatment (NSDUH¹) Baseline (MHA²-2022): 59.8% of youth with major depressive episode who did not receive any mental health treatment. The percentage of 7-12th graders in Western Ohio who saw a health care provider for a mental health problem in the past year.	The team delivered a high volume of presentations and strengthened partnerships with schools, nonprofits, and community organizations. Continued development of resources such as Kindergarten activity books and Kindness Kits, along with targeted outreach efforts, has helped deepen engagement. Outcomes demonstrate sustained community engagement and program growth, with community sign-ups remaining strong with over 300 new signups each quarter. Classroom Champions participation also increased significantly from 57 to 104. These trends reflect continued demand for mental health education and effective expansion of program reach.

¹ National Survey on Drug Use and Health

² Mental Health America

Priority Topic: Mental health and addiction		
Strategy 2: Integrate behavioral health throughout primary care		
Goal: Increase access to behavioral health services for patients		
Anticipated Impact: Behavioral health integrated within primary care is a best practice and has shown improved mental health, increased adherence to treatment, improved quality of life, increased patient engagement, and increased patient satisfaction.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Continue to integrate behavioral health into primary care practices by bringing mental health and/or substance abuse screenings and treatments into the primary care setting (ex: PHQ-9 depression screening). Explore efforts including coordination between primary care providers, case managers, and mental health specialists. Determine training needs or realignment of roles. Focus on best service for patient families and evaluation of outcomes.	Priority Outcome: Reduce mental health professional shortage areas Priority Indicator: Percent of Ohioans living in health professional shortage area (HRSA³) Baseline (HRSA- 2022): HPSA⁴ Facilities: 284 HPSA Geographic Areas: 71 HPSA Population Groups: 133 Total Count of HPSAs: 488	Progress has centered on expanding partnerships with community practices and strengthening onboarding and training for behavioral health clinicians. Staffing enhancements, including the hiring of new behavioral health clinicians. Patient reach remains strong, with over 600 families served each quarter. These volumes indicate consistent utilization and the ongoing importance of integrated behavioral health services.

³ Health Resources and Services Administration

⁴ Health Professional Shortage Area

Priority Topic: Mental health and addiction		
Strategy 3: Spread comprehensive school-based “Student Resiliency Coordinator” program		
<i>Goal: Develop resiliency characteristics for children in Dayton Public Schools</i>		
Anticipated Impact: School-based mental health programs have been shown to increase resiliency skills, improve mental health, improve behavior, and improve academic achievement. Programs offered through schools also improve access to care.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Spread the comprehensive school-based mental health program in partnership with schools across the region. Provide a student resiliency coordinator within each school to connect and provide students with resources to address mental health needs. Continue evaluation of program and outcomes.	Priority Outcome: Reduce depression treatment unmet need. Priority Indicator: Percent of youth with major depressive episode who did not receive any mental health treatment (NSDUH⁵) Baseline (MHA⁶-2022): 63.3% of youth with major depressive episodes did not receive any mental health treatment.	The Student Resiliency Coordinator program has maintained a strong presence across 17 schools, delivering mental health screening, intervention, and education services. The program continues to adapt to funding changes while expanding screening tools and providing ongoing staff education. Enrollment has grown, and the program remains focused on early intervention and building resilience. There were 320 students served by the program in the 25-26 school year. The individual needs of students determine their engagement with SRC, so cumulative numbers include additions of new students throughout the school year.

⁵ National Survey on Drug Use and Health

⁶ Mental Health America

Priority Topic: Mental health and addiction		
Strategy 4: Spread comprehensive approach to suicide care (Zero Suicide)		
Goal: Reduce youth suicide for ages 12-18		
Anticipated Impact: Zero Suicide is a best-practice, quality improvement approach based on the realization that suicidal individuals often fall through cracks in the fragmented health system and therefore an approach to suicide prevention requires a system-wide approach to improve outcomes and close gaps. This quality improvement approach focuses on safer suicide care for high-risk patients ages 12 through 18.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Continue the expansion of the Zero Suicide concept of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention to pursue a reduction in suicide and improve care for those who seek help inside the hospital in ambulatory clinics and beyond the hospital into schools and community-based programs.	Priority Outcome: Reduce youth suicide deaths. Priority Indicator: Number of youth suicide deaths due to suicide per 100,000 population (ODH⁷) Baseline (ODH-2022): 11.0 youth deaths due to suicide per 100,000 population.	This initiative continues to expand suicide prevention practices by increasing use of standardized screening tools across ambulatory clinics. Implementation has grown steadily, with clinics engaged expanding from 13 to 17. Efforts have focused on overcoming systems, workflows, and staffing barriers. While implementation has improved, compliance remains variable across clinics. Continued focus is being placed on improving consistency.

⁷ Ohio Department of Health

Priority Area: Chronic Disease

Priority Topic: Chronic Disease		
Strategy 1: Implement healthy food initiatives to reduce impact of chronic disease		
<i>Goal: Increase access to healthy food</i>		
Anticipated Impact: <i>By providing nutrition and health education about food, healthy food consumption can be increased and food insecurity can be decreased</i>		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Continue healthy food initiatives led by Dayton Children's, for example: - Cooking demonstrations and recipe creation within the Demonstration Kitchen - Support for specific patient populations/families with chronic disease.	Priority Outcome: Reduce childhood obesity. Priority Indicator: Percent of children who were obese by BMI classifications. Baseline (NSCH⁸-2018): 19.3% of US children and adolescents aged 2-19 years have been diagnosed with obesity, including 6.1% with severe obesity, and another 16.1% are overweight.	Class counts with medical nutrition therapy⁹ increased (2 to 7) and over 120 cooking classes took place. Class field trips and specific programs/series developed in conjunction with other organizations assisted in keeping the class volume high. Additional types of classes will start in the summer related to constipation, diabetes, and picky eating for older kids.

⁸ National Survey of Children's Health

⁹ medical nutrition therapy is a nutrition-based treatment for many temporary and long-term health conditions

Priority Topic: Chronic Disease		
Strategy 2: Improve health disparities for children with asthma.		
<i>Goal: Implementing holistic strategies to improve asthma outcomes in underserved communities by minimizing allergen exposure and reducing hospital visits.</i>		
Anticipated Impact: <i>Strategies such as health home environment assessments, community health workers, environmental remediation and programs focused on improving asthma management will improve outcomes for children with asthma from the most in-need communities by reducing exposure to allergens and reducing hospital utilization.</i>		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Engage community partners through the Dayton Asthma Alliance to develop and implement collaborative, community-based strategies that support asthma management and reduce hospital utilization.	Priority Outcomes: Reduce childhood obesity. Reduce Child asthmas hospitalizations. Priority Indicators: Percent of children diagnosed with asthma. Emergency department visits for pediatric asthma, per 10,000 children ages 0-17 Baseline (CDC¹⁰ 2019): 7.8% children living with asthma in Ohio.	Planning sessions and collaboration with schools and families have supported early program development, including work toward stock inhalers in schools. Community partner engagement remained steady with 17 committed partners, along with early family engagement beginning. This work remains foundational with strong potential for future impact.

¹⁰ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Priority Area: Maternal and Infant Health

Priority Topic: Maternal and infant health		
Strategy 1: Increase the use of safe sleep practices		
<i>Goal: Increase safe sleep education</i>		
Anticipated Impact: Through consistent education and modeling safe sleep within the hospital and community setting there will be a decrease in unsafe sleep deaths.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Develop a standardized approach for ongoing safe sleep education for hospital staff. Continue to raise awareness and promote the most up-to-date safe sleep practices through coordinated messages and programs such as the Safe Sleep Ambassador program.	Priority Outcome: Reduce infant mortality due to unsafe sleep conditions. Priority Indicator: Rate of infant deaths per 1,000 live births. Baseline (ODH¹¹ - 2020): 6.7 deaths per 1,000 live births.	Efforts have included pack-and-play distribution and updates to training materials. Equipment distribution was modest (10), but training increased. Training occurred for 261 staff and there were 10 community partner presentations.

¹¹ Ohio Department of Health

Priority Topic: Maternal and infant health		
Strategy 2: Increase human milk feeding breastfeeding and provide lactation support		
Goal: Increase breastfeeding duration - (understandable, simple, changing wording does not really expand to donor milk, etc.)		
Anticipated Impact: Increase breastfeeding duration for infants and children receiving care at regional primary care practices through increased availability of and targeted lactation support, partnership with pediatricians, and relentless efforts to reduce barriers to breastfeeding or providing breastmilk within our system and scope of influence.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Improve understanding of and develop solutions to overcome barriers to initiation and continuation of breastfeeding. Continue to provide health professionals with resources to help promote breastfeeding and lactation in the hospital and clinic setting. Provide equitable access to lactation support	Priority Outcome: Increase lactation duration. Priority Indicator: % of infants receiving breastmilk exclusively at 3 months % of infants receiving any breastmilk at 6 months Baseline (ODH¹²-2019): 42.7% infants exclusively breastfeeding at 3 months (Ohio) 45.3% infants exclusively breastfeeding at 3 months (National) 50.4% infants receiving any breastmilk at 6 months (Ohio) 55.8% infants receiving any breastmilk at 6 months (National)	Lactation services continue to demonstrate strong and consistent performance across inpatient and outpatient settings, reaching more than 95% of eligible families and maintaining steady clinic volumes. Eligible non-NICU inpatient receiving services during admission remained high (96–97%), with stable monthly lactation clinic visit averages (about 70), reflecting strong demand and consistent service delivery.

¹² Ohio Department of Health

Priority Topic: Maternal and infant health		
Strategy 3: Implement the Ohio Partnering for Change Initiative		
<i>Goal: Expand awareness of parenting programs and resources offered by Dayton Children's</i>		
Anticipated Impact: Health outcomes for mothers and infants will be improved through better collaboration between healthcare systems focused on quality improvement interventions across prenatal and perinatal periods.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Continue gap analysis to identify and prioritize specific maternal and infant health needs. Convene key partners to gain buy-in and support for project implementation. Build leadership infrastructure of key partners to support advancing the Ohio Better Birth Outcomes project. Involve key partners to develop a plan outlining goals, objectives, timelines, and quality improvement initiatives. Identify data needs and sources to support project plan and metrics at the regional level. Collaborate with existing providers to implement quality improvement initiatives. Monitor, track, and report outcomes.	Priority Outcome: Reduce infant mortality. Reduce Prematurity. Priority Indicator: Rate of infant deaths per 1,000 live births (ODH¹³) Baseline (ODH-2020): 6.7 deaths per 1,000 live births	This initiative continues to build a collective impact approach to improving maternal and infant health. Progress includes strong partnership development, community engagement, and funding pursuits. Stakeholder engagement remained robust, and planning efforts continue to build a strong foundation for long-term systems change.

¹³ Ohio Department of Health

Priority Factor: Community Conditions

Priority Factor: Community Conditions		
Strategy 1: Outreach and advocacy to maintain or increase enrollment in federal food assistance, housing, and poverty reduction programs		
<i>Goal: Address social needs through resource connection</i>		
Anticipated Impact: Improving access through outreach and advocacy to anti-poverty programs for children and families reduces disparities and helps to address social determinants of health		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Thoroughly research best practices to connect families with anti-poverty programs. Establish and maintain partnerships with identified programs. Identify and implement processes to make referrals easier for hospital staff and community members.	Priority Outcomes: Reduce poverty. Priority Indicators: Children living in poverty. (American Community Survey) Baseline (Children's Defense Fund- 2021) 18.4% of children living in poverty	This work moved out of the updates for the 2025-2026 plan because it continues to be addressed through the hospital social needs screening. Additionally, the continued support of community-based organizations through community benefit grants ensure resource access in the community.

Priority Factor: Community Conditions		
Strategy 2: Launch collective impact initiative to address health and educational needs of children birth to five		
Goal: Connect children to kindergarten readiness programs		
Anticipated Impact: Birth to five are critical years for the long-term success of children. There are many systems and partners who serve families with this age group. Through better alignment, our community can improve outcomes for children through the first five years of life.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Convene group and obtain buy-in Develop charter, scope, and structure. Develop collective priorities, objectives and initiatives related to kindergarten readiness and preventative care. Measure and track progress. Report collective outcomes.	Priority Outcome: Improve kindergarten readiness. Priority Indicator: Percent of kindergarten students demonstrating readiness (Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment) Baseline (HPIO¹⁴- 2018-19) 40.9% of kindergarten students demonstrating readiness	The Imagination Library continues to support early childhood literacy and development through large-scale book distribution and community partnerships. Enrollment exceeded 21,000 children with consistent participation in target areas, reflecting strong community reach and sustained impact.

¹⁴ Health Policy Institute of Ohio

Priority Factor: Community Conditions		
Strategy 3: Continue development and execution of programs to address food insecurity		
Goal: Reduce Food Insecurity		
Anticipated Impact: Healthy food initiatives including food pantries and the Dayton Children’s “Food Pharm” combine hunger relief efforts with healthy eating opportunities and nutrition information for families. These programs can reduce food insecurity.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Enhance the “Food Pharm” program, which increases consumption and access to nutritious foods, including fresh produce. Expand the neighborhood food pantry at Connor Child Health Pavilion to serve more members of the Greater Old North Dayton neighborhood. Expand produce prescription program to pregnant women and Healthy Me Clinic.	Priority Outcome: Reduce food insecurity. Priority Indicator: Percent of households that are food insecure (Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap) Baseline (Feeding America- 2020): 22.7% of households in Montgomery County were food insecure.	Food access programs have experienced increased demand due to economic challenges. Efforts focused on expanding capacity and securing new funding. Participation increased across programs, including the Food Pharm (52 to 89) and pantry usage by families (average of 100 monthly), highlighting significant community need.

Priority Factor: Access to Care

Priority Factor: Access to Care		
Strategy 1: Promote connections to primary/preventive care		
Goal: Improve access to preventive care		
Anticipated Impact: Ensuring children have access to comprehensive and coordinated primary/preventive care can increase the likelihood of children obtaining preventive screenings, completing vaccinations, and obtaining quality outcomes.		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Promote preventive well-childcare and maintain continuity of care. Utilize community partnerships to promote messaging and marketing materials (ex: churches, hospitals, pharmacies, health departments, schools, childcare centers, media, etc.). Provide partners with educational materials and ways to support marketing campaigns and raise awareness of the importance of preventive health care.	Priority Outcome: Reduce unmet needs, medical care. Priority Indicator: Percentage of children who are up to date on preventive care. Baseline (HPIO¹⁵- 2019): 71% had access to medical and dental care.	Efforts have focused on expanding capacity and improving outreach. New providers and partnerships aim to reduce barriers to care. Days to new patient appointment remains above target of less than 30 days (average about 55 days) but are expected to improve with increased staffing.

¹⁵ Health Policy Institute of Ohio

Priority Factor: Access to Care		
Strategy 2: Further integrate community health workers (CHWs) into clinical services		
<i>Goal: Increase the use of community health workers to advocate for at-risk populations</i>		
Anticipated Impact: <i>The use of community health workers has the expected benefits of increased patient knowledge, improved access to care, an increase in healthy behaviors and improvement in preventive care.</i>		
Action Step	Priority Outcome & Indicator	2026 Update
Continue referral process and data collection on CHW outcomes. Ensure training opportunities for standardized messaging across clinical settings when utilizing community health workers. Specific focus on utilization of CHWs for asthma patients with greatest health disparities.	Priority Outcomes: Increase local access to healthcare services. Priority Indicators: Health Professional Shortage Areas Baseline (HRSA¹⁶- 2022) Ohio has 182 Health Professional Shortage Areas, covering 47.87% of the population.	CHW integration has focused on improving workflows, expanding referrals, and strengthening data tracking systems. Pilot programs and staffing increases support continued growth. Enrollment rates varied, reflecting ongoing process improvements and program maturation.

¹⁶ Health Resources and Services Administration

Place-Based Strategies (Northwest & West Dayton)

Geographic Priority Area: Northwest and West Dayton		
Priority Factors/Areas Identified by the Community		
Infant Mortality	Access to Care	Mental Health
Strategy 1: Integrate Hope Center Primary Care Practice/Dayton Children's Pediatrics Northwest into Promise Zone initiative.		
Anticipated Impact: Leveraging the programs and resources housed in Dayton Children's Pediatrics Northwest and throughout Dayton Children's, support the goals of the Promise Zone initiative which aims to support a cradle-to-career continuum of services centered on creating measurable improved outcomes in education, economic stability, health and well-being and community growth.		
Action Steps	Hospital Resources	Planned Collaborations
Define Dayton Children's role in the health/wellness group. Use neighborhood data gathered through the Community Health Needs assessment to define possible interventions and initiatives. Prioritize possible initiatives. Implement prioritized initiatives.	Dayton Children's Pediatrics Northwest clinical programs. Project management and in-kind support for program planning, implementation, quality improvement, and evaluation of community-based initiatives.	Omega Community Development Corporation, Mini University, Promise Neighborhoods, Learn to Earn, Miami Valley Child Development Centers
2026 Update		
Construction of the West Dayton Urgent Care remains on track for opening, with operational planning well underway. The location is set to open for service on May 27th.		

Geographic Region: West Dayton		
Priority Factors Identified by the Community		
Infant Mortality	Access to Care	Mental Health
Strategy 2: Define and implement targeted interventions in 45417 to reduce health disparities and improve access to pediatric primary care.		
Anticipated Impact: Improved access to preventative and primary health care can impact long-term health outcomes for children in this neighborhood.		
Action Steps	Hospital Resources	Planned Collaborations
Scope services to be offered and begin facility development. Identify strategic partnerships. Identify additional strategies to reduce health disparities within neighborhood.	Project management and in-kind support for program planning, implementation, quality improvement, and evaluation of community-based initiatives. Investment in facility development and operations.	CityWide Development Corporation
2026 Update		
See updates under access to care, CTRL+Click HERE: Strategy 1: Promote connections to primary/preventive care.		

Geographic Region: West Dayton		
Priority Factors Identified by the Community		
Infant Mortality	Access to Care	Mental Health
Strategy 3: Improve access to built-environment amenities for children.		
Anticipated Impact: Improved access to parks, sidewalks and other recreational amenities can improve health and wellness outcomes for children.		
Action Steps	Hospital Resources	Planned Collaborations
Define Dayton Children’s role within existing initiatives within the neighborhood. Leverage data and input from community feedback to enhance programs.	Project management and in-kind support for program planning and implementation.	Bike Miami Valley, The Miami Valley Urban League, CityWide Development, Carillon and Edgemont Neighborhoods, City of Dayton, Center for Health Equity Community Advisory Board
2026 Update		
Partnership efforts continue to support improvements in recreational access and active transportation, with gradual growth in engagement. Support of the City of Dayton’s Active Transportation Plan has been key to this work. The Active Transportation Plan can be viewed here: https://www.daytonohio.gov/1078/Active-Transportation-Plan .		

Place-Based Strategies (Old North Dayton)

Geographic Region: Old North Dayton		
Priority Factors Identified by the Community		
Infant Mortality	Access to Care	Mental Health
Strategy 1: Implement Kinship Housing Project in Greater Old North Dayton		
Anticipated Impact: The purpose of the Kinship Care Housing Project is to provide safe and affordable housing to kinship caregivers so they can best care for children in their care. By providing appropriate housing to kinship caregivers, significant health disparities can be addressed while keeping children in stable home environments and giving them the opportunity to thrive.		
Action Steps	Hospital Resources	Planned Collaborations
Finalize funding and financing for the project. Partner with neighborhood and kinship caregivers to design space and support services. Break ground on housing project. Define program support services.	Project management and in-kind support for project planning and program implementation.	Greater Old North Dayton Neighborhood Association, CityWide Development, Model Group, Kinship Caregivers, Davinci Investors, City of Dayton, Center for Health Equity Community Advisory Board
2026 Update		
The Kinship Housing project is now operational , with families beginning to move in and recruitment ongoing. More information about this housing, Vermillion Place, can be found here: https://www.vermillionplace.com/ .		

Geographic Region: Old North Dayton		
Priority Factors Identified by the Community		
Infant Mortality	Access to Care	Mental Health
Strategy 2: Build community network to support families in Old North Dayton.		
Anticipated Impact: Greater coordination of services and improved communication for families can decrease isolation and ensure families can connect to the assets in the neighborhood. Special attention will be paid to families who are new to the United States and often choose Old North Dayton as their home and families who are served by Kiser Neighborhood Schools Center.		
Action Steps	Hospital Resources	Planned Collaborations
Assess existing resources within the Old North Dayton neighborhood. Identify information and communication needs of families. Identify strategic partners to address the needs of families.	Project management and in-kind support for project planning and program implementation.	Welcome Dayton, El Puente, Kiser Neighborhood Schools Center, Kroc Center, E.C. Doren Library, Center for Health Equity Community Advisory Board, Catholic Social Services
2026 Update		
The Greater Old North Dayton Healthy Way Collaborative, which is a community-led initiative, met to establish its mission, vision, and objectives. The group aims to promote holistic health through community partnerships and inclusive programs. It focuses on improving food security by increasing access to nutritious and culturally appropriate foods . The collaborative also plans to encourage active living and remove barriers to health services through multilingual education. These efforts seek to build a healthier, more connected Greater Old North Dayton. Collaborative efforts have begun but face challenges related to participation and leadership, slowing progress.		

Place-Based Strategies (East Dayton)

Geographic Region: East Dayton		
Priority Factors Identified by the Community		
Infant Mortality	Access to Care	Mental health
Strategy 3: Improve access to built-environment amenities for children and families.		
Anticipated Impact: Improved access to parks, sidewalks and other recreational amenities can improve health and wellness outcomes for children. Specific attention should be paid to neighborhood maintenance which was identified as a need of the community.		
Action Steps	Hospital Resources	Planned Collaborations
Define Dayton Children's role within existing initiatives within the neighborhood. Leverage data and input from community feedback to enhance programs.	Project management and in-kind support for project planning and program implementation.	Burkhardt/Springfield Neighborhood Association, City of Dayton, East End Community Services, Center for Health Equity Community Advisory Board, Mike's Bike Park, Five Rivers MetroParks, Walnut Hill's Neighborhood Association
2026 Update		
Ongoing work focuses on improving recreational access through partnerships and safety infrastructure initiatives, with increasing partner engagement. Support of the City of Dayton's Active Transportation Plan has been key to this work. The Active Transportation Plan can be viewed here: https://www.daytonohio.gov/1078/Active-Transportation-Plan .		

