



Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Implementation Toolkit



Department of
Health



Table of Contents

Background and Acknowledgments	3
Data Links and Resources	4
Community Assessments	6
Community Engagement	7
Strategy Implementation	8
Healthy Eating	9
Active Living	13
Breastfeeding	17
WIC	18
Early Childhood Health	21
School Health/Wellness	22
Disability Inclusion	26
Worksite Wellness	26
Chronic Disease	27
Older Adults	29
Health Literacy	32
Communications	33

Background and Acknowledgements

Eating healthy and being physically active are known to improve overall health and reduce the risk of preventable disease. Local health departments can play a significant role in helping their communities create environments where the healthy choice becomes the easier choice by making healthy foods accessible and affordable and ensuring that physical activity is safe and convenient. This toolkit provides local health departments in Ohio with the resources needed to help implement sustainable, evidenced based local policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change strategies in their communities.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) promotes healthy eating and active living across the lifespan and administers programming through both the Bureau of Health Improvement and Wellness (BHIW) and the Bureau of Maternal, Child, and Family Health (BMCFH). This toolkit was developed by ODH staff in BHIW and BMCFH in collaboration with members of the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners (AOHC). Workgroup members are listed below.

ODH Members

- Jennifer Voit, Chief, BHIW.
- Sara Haig, Chief, BMCFH.
- Sarah Ginnetti, Creating Healthy Communities Program Manager. *
- Garen Rhome, Southeast Regional Officer.
- Nick Walters, Northwest Regional Officer.

AOHC HEAL Workgroup Members

- Brandon Fischer, Health Commissioner, Allen County Public Health.*
- Joe Mazzola, Health Commissioner, Franklin County Public Health.
- Andrew Henry, Health Commissioner, Jefferson County General Health District.
- Becky Lehman, Health Commissioner, Portage County Health District.
- Sherry Ellem, Administrative Director, Washington County Health Department.
- Kay Conley, Director of Administration and Support Services, Stark County Health Department.
- Dr. Kimberley Freeman, Director of Health Promotion, Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County.
- Bri Perkins, Director of Health Promotion, Licking County Health Department.
- Mary Ellen Knaebel, Health Promotion and Education Director, Hamilton County Public Health.
- Rachel Kinsman, Health Education Coordinator/PIO, Fulton County Health Department.

***Workgroup co-chairs**

Data Links and Resources

Census Data

United States Census Bureau:

- The Census Bureau is the federal government's main statistical agency, providing data about the American people, economy, and places. The Census Bureau collects data through a variety of methods, including the decennial census, which counts every resident of the United States; the American Community Survey (ACS), with more frequently updated estimates; and the Economic Census.
- Third Party Census Platforms.
 - [Census Reporter](#).
 - [Data USA](#).

General Health Data

- [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#).
- [Ohio Health Improvement Zones](#).
- [Ohio Department of Health Social Determinants of Health Dashboard](#).
- [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System](#).
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: PLACES](#).
- [Chronic Disease Data and Surveillance](#).

Healthy Eating/Food Insecurity Data

- [Feeding America Map the Meal Gap](#).
- [U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Access Research Atlas](#).
- [County Fact Sheets - Ohio Association of Foodbanks](#).

Active Living and Transportation Related Data

Map of Zero Car Households

This map displays the percentage of households with no vehicle available by census tract, according to the ACS. These data allow planners and professionals to consider which portions of their community may have a greater need for access to active transportation.

- [United States Census Bureau, Why We Ask Questions About... Vehicles Available and Electric Vehicles](#).
- [Map Viewer, Where are Households with No Vehicle Available?](#)

Transportation Information Mapping System (TIMS)

TIMS is the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)'s web-mapping portal where users can discover information about Ohio's transportation system, create maps, and share information. Some of the most useful pieces of information to use in active transportation (AT) planning are compiled in the [Active Transportation Map Viewer](#), including: State and US Bike Route System, AT Need and Demand Analyses, upcoming AT construction projects, bicyclist and pedestrian crash data, jurisdictional boundaries, and roadway information including speed limits and traffic volumes.

- Transportation Information Mapping System TIMS [Overview Webinar](#).

National Transit Database (NTD)

The National Transit Database is a repository of data on the financial operating and asset conditions of American transit systems. The NTD is maintained by the Federal Transit Administration and is used for a variety of purposes, including tracking the industry, providing public information, supporting planning, analyzing trends, and supporting funding. All public transit systems report data annually to the NTD which are displayed in [transit agency profiles](#).

ParkScore and ParkServe

Developed by the Trust for Public Land, ParkScore and ParkServe assess the availability and quality of parks in communities across the United States to help pinpoint park investments to address park need, climate, equity, and health.

- [ParkScore](#): Rankings of park access, quality, and equity in the 100 most populous US cities.
- [ParkServe](#): Maps access to parks in urban areas across the country to identify areas that are not within a ten-minute walk of a park.

Other

Ohio School Report Cards

The Ohio School Report Cards provide information on the demographic makeup of schools and school districts, as well as statistics on the economic needs of students. These data are required for inclusion in funding applications to [Ohio's Safe Routes to School program](#).

Community Assessments

In addition to monitoring current data and trends, it is important to assess both the physical environment of the community as well as the policies and systems in place that may impact the ability to eat healthy and be physically active. The assessments linked below provide guidance on and key considerations for choosing community priorities.

- **Healthy Eating Assessment**

- o [Local Foods Local Places Toolkit](#).
 - [See Appendix A, Community Self-Assessment](#).
- o [Voices for Food, Food Council Creation Guide](#).
 - [See Appendix C, Guide to Community Food Assessments](#). Recommended for communities with an existing local food council or interest in forming one.
- o [Policy, Systems, and Environmental \(PSE\) Assessment](#), Healthy Eating section.

- **Active Living Assessment.**

- o [Active Communities Tool](#).
 - Complete at least one module from 'Activity Friendly Routes' (Module 1-3) and at least one module from 'Everyday Destinations' (Module 4-6).
- o [Policy, Systems, and Environmental \(PSE\) Assessment](#), Physical Activity section.

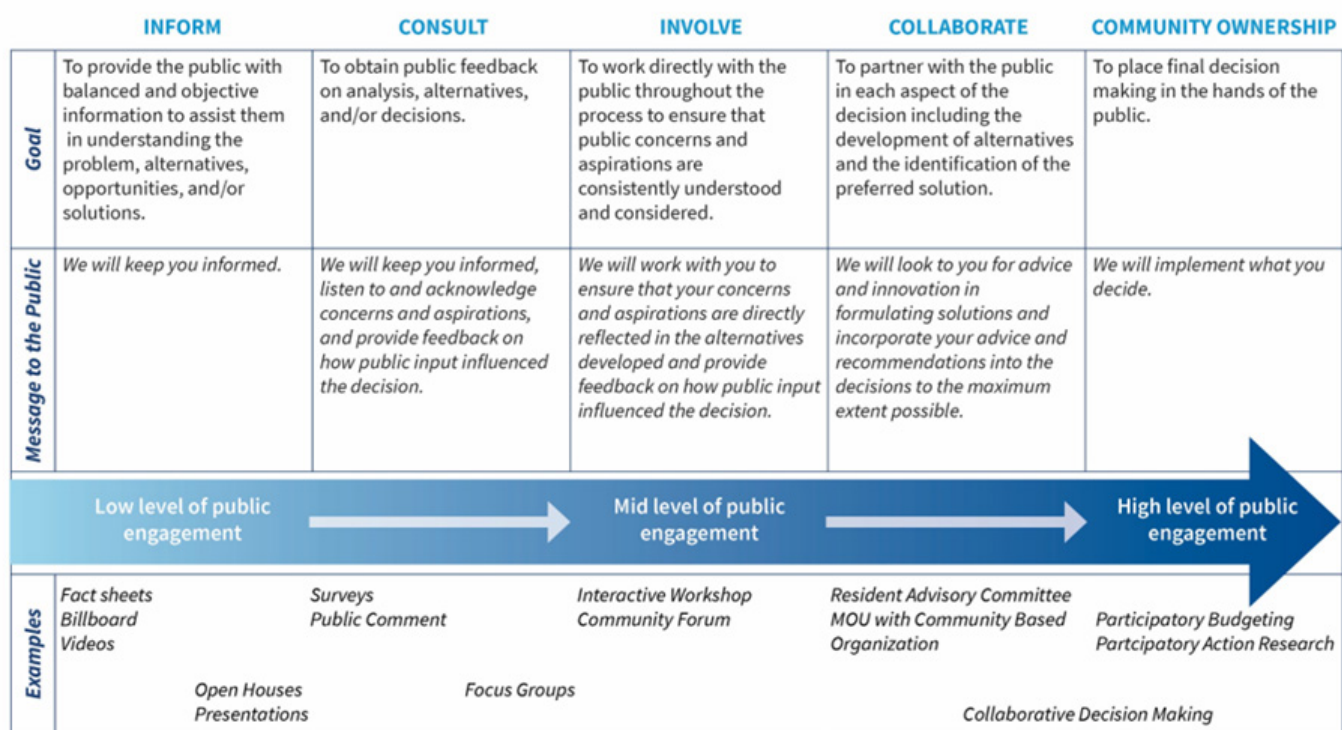


Community Engagement

Community engagement helps ensure that those most impacted by challenges have a voice in designing and implementing solutions. The active participation of residents and their families, local partners, and trusted leaders is an integral part of community engagement. Engaging community residents encourages ownership of solutions and leads to greater impact, sustainability, and ongoing civic engagement.

Impactful community health initiatives are grounded in meaningful and effective engagement. The template linked below is a resource for government and community-based organizations to develop a clear and thoughtful engagement approach as they work to promote and plan for active living and healthy eating in Ohio communities. It is a working document meant to provide a structured starting point for engagement and can be modified to suit the needs of individual strategies.

[Ohio Department of Health Community Engagement Plan Template](#)



Adapted from the International Association for Public Participation; Visit the [IAP2's website](#) for more on the community engagement spectrum.

Community Engagement Resources

- [Center for Wellness and Nutrition's Community Engagement Toolkit.](#)
- [Safe Routes Partnership: A Guide for Engaging Communities and Creating Change.](#)
- [Working Toward Food Security Through Community Engagement.](#)
- [Community Commons: Engaging People with Lived Experience Toolkit.](#)
- [Nemours: Lived Experience: The Practice of Engagement in Policy.](#)

Strategy Implementation

Policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change approaches go beyond programming and address the systems that create the structures in which we work, live, and play. These approaches often work hand-in-hand, and the process is not linear. PSE change strategies are designed to promote healthy behaviors by making healthy choices readily available and easily accessible in the community. PSE change strategies are designed with sustainability in mind.

Resources

- [Rural Health Info Hub: Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change.](#)
- [What is Policy, Systems, and Environmental \(PSE\) Change?](#)
- [Illinois Prevention Research Center: Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change.](#)

The following pages include guidance on a variety of strategies that can impact entire communities or focus on specific ages or populations. Before selecting which strategies to work on, it is important to review existing data, conduct assessments, and engage with community residents.

Population/Topic Area	Pages
Healthy Eating	9-12
Active Living	13-16
Breastfeeding	17
WIC	18-20
Early Childhood Health	21
School Health/Wellness	22-25
Disability Inclusion	26
Worksite Wellness	26
Chronic Disease	27-28
Older Adults	29-31

General Community

Healthy Eating		
Main Strategy	Strategy Suggestions (not an exhaustive list)	Resources
Community Gardens	Community gardens can take many shapes and forms. From a 50-by-50-foot church garden that supplies a local food pantry with produce to a vacant city lot divided into plots and gardened by neighbors, community gardens reflect the needs, and the desires of people directly involved in their management and upkeep. Strategy suggestions include: • Season extension (i.e., high tunnels/hoop houses). • Creating new or expanding/improving existing community gardens. • Ensuring gardens are inclusive to people with disabilities. • Developing gardens for specific populations (i.e. school gardens, gardens at shelters or facilities, teen gardening program, etc.). • Implementing hydroponic gardens for year-round use. • Implementing container/porch gardens.	• Food Safety in gardens. • Creating Community Gardens toolkit. • Worksheets for Creating a Community Garden. • Ohio Gardening Calendar. • Ohio State University (OSU) Extension: A Guide for Starting a Community Garden.
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)	A system that connects the producer and consumers within the food system more closely by allowing the consumer to subscribe to the harvest of a certain farm or group of farms. Consumers pay in advance for a weekly/bi-weekly share of the harvest through the growing season. CSA subscriptions can be set up to accept the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a form of payment. Strategy suggestions include: • Subsidized memberships. • Enable SNAP acceptance with CSA. • Connect farmers with organizations to promote CSA.	• Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Resource Guide for Farmers. • U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Community Supported Agriculture resources. • Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): What is in it for me?
Farmers Market	A farmers' market is a public and recurring assembly of farmers or their representatives selling the food that they produced directly to consumers. Implementing this strategy could include tasks such as: • Setting up Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) machine or Point of Sale (POS) system to accept SNAP, Produce Perks, WIC, and Senior Vouchers. • Creating a new market or expanding an existing one. • Establishing a mobile farmers' market (produce van). • Establishing a mobile ordering for farmers' market.	• Accepting SNAP Benefits at Ohio Farmers Markets. • Management of Nutrition Incentives at Farmers' Markets. • Types of Nutrition Incentives Offered at Ohio Farmers Markets and How They Are Funded. • Farmers' Market Coalition Resource Library.
Farm to Institution	Programs and policies that support sourcing local and regional foods for schools, hospitals, faith-based organizations, worksites, and other public service venues that can benefit institutional customers and their families, farmers, the local community, and the economy. Suggestions for strategy implementation include: • Farm to School. • Farm to Early Childcare Education (ECE) Centers. • Farm to Institution (worksite, hospital, etc.). • Farm to Pantry. • Establishing micro-farm onsite.	• U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm to School Fact Sheets. • Farm to Early Care Education State Resource Directory. • U.S. Department of Agriculture Procuring Local Foods. • Ohio Farm to School – Ohio State University Extension. • Growing Minds Farm to Preschool Toolkit. • Buying Local Foods for Early Care and Education. • Selling Local Foods to Early Care and Education Providers.

Farm to Institution	Programs and policies that support sourcing local and regional foods for schools, hospitals, faith-based organizations, worksites, and other public service venues that can benefit institutional customers and their families, farmers, the local community, and the economy. Suggestions for strategy implementation include: • Farm to School. • Farm to Early Childcare Education (ECE) Centers. • Farm to Institution (worksite, hospital, etc.). • Farm to Pantry. • Establishing micro-farm onsite.	• U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm to School Fact Sheets. • Farm to Early Care Education State Resource Directory. • U.S. Department of Agriculture Procuring Local Foods. • Ohio Farm to School – Ohio State University Extension. • Growing Minds Farm to Preschool Toolkit. • Buying Local Foods for Early Care and Education. • Selling Local Foods to Early Care and Education Providers.
Food Access Policy and Planning	Transforms the local food systems by working on the following: identifying and filling gaps in local food system infrastructure and promoting a policy landscape that cultivates sustainable, equitable local food systems. Strategy ideas include: • Develop a local food coalition/council. • Community food assessments. • Local food plan development. • Local food policy implementation.	• Columbus & Franklin County Local Food Action Plan. • Local Food Council Formation Planning Guide: Ohio State University Extension. • Voices for Food, Food Council Creation Guide. • Municipal Implementation Tool – Food System Planning.
Food Banks/ Pantries	A food pantry is an individual site that distributes food directly to those in need who reside in a specified area. A food pantry often is a member agency of, and obtains food from, a food bank. The client choice pantry model allows clients to select their food from the pantry's food stock instead of receiving a pre-packed or standard bag of groceries. Strategy ideas include: • Expanding food availability through purchase of refrigeration/freezers, produce stands/baskets, shelving. • Converting an existing pantry to a client-choice model. • Establishing a new client choice food pantry. • Developing a food bank nutrition policy (see FSG strategy). • Developing a pantry for designated populations (i.e. students, seniors). • Establishing travel/Pop-up pantry/Blessing boxes.	• Healthy Eating Research (HER) Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System. • Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP). • Feeding America. • Ohio Association of Foodbanks. • Consider Community and Regional Food Preferences. • Guidelines to Help Categorize Food. • Nutrition Environment Food Pantry Assessment Tool Plus.
Food Rescue	Food rescue is the process of collecting fresh, surplus food that would have otherwise gone to waste from restaurants, grocers, manufacturers, etc. and redistributing it to people experiencing food insecurity. Strategy ideas include: • Building partnerships (i.e., with solid waste districts, food rescue organizations, schools, food pantries, and others) to develop, support, and sustain food rescue efforts. • Working with health inspectors to provide information to food businesses on best practices for donating foods and encourage participation in food rescue efforts. • Implementing policies at city/county-sponsored events that facilitate safely donating excess foods. • Implementing a food donation policy at an organization or business. • Support the development of a rescue kitchen to repurpose donated food into meals.	• Engaging Health Departments: Overview Guide. • Food Donation Guidelines template brochure. • Tackling Food Waste in Cities: A Policy & Program Toolkit. • Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Wasted Food Scale. • La Soupe Rescue Kitchen Network. • Ohio Food Donation Liability Fact Sheet. • Federal Liability Protection for Food Donation. • Franklin County: Save More Than Food Resources.

Food Service Guidelines (FSG)	Improving food and beverage offerings in vending machines, catered meetings, cafés, cafeterias, snack carts, micro markets, or charitable food system procurement in various settings through adoption of food and beverage guidelines policies. • Healthy vending options in worksite or community setting (libraries, parks & recreation facilities, higher education campuses, museums, hospitals, city & county buildings, etc.). • Nutrition standards in correction facilities (commissary, vending). • Nutrition standards at concession stands (sporting events, pools, etc.). • Healthier catering or healthy meetings. • Nutrition standards at food banks/pantries.	• Ohio Department of Health: Good Food Here (GFH) Toolkits. • Food Service Guidelines for federal facilities toolkit. • A Roadmap for Comprehensive Food Service Guidelines. • Center for Science in the Public Interest. • American Heart Association Healthy Food and Beverage Toolkit.
Healthy Food Retail	A retail store that sells nutritious food such as fruits and vegetables (fresh, canned, and frozen), whole grains, lean meats, and low-fat dairy. Healthy food retail interventions can include: • Expanding food availability through purchase of refrigeration or freezer units, produce stands/baskets, shelving, etc. • Setting up EBT machine or POS system to accept SNAP. • Developing a sustainable method for distribution of fresh produce at corner stores. • Implementing a healthy checkout lane. • Increasing accessibility to store (awnings, doors to accommodate wheelchairs, etc.). • Assisting in opening a new grocery store (grant writing, community engagement, partnership development, etc.). • Working with stores to set up nutrition incentives.	• Bringing Nutrition Incentives to Corner Stores. • Sell Healthy Guide. • CDC's Healthy Food Retail Action Guide. • PRCHN Healthy Food Retail Implementation Guide. • Public Policy and the Grocery Store: Improving Access to Healthy Foods - A Toolkit for Advocates.
Nutrition Incentives	Nutrition incentives provide extra food dollars to help low-income shoppers purchase more fruits and vegetables. In Ohio, the nutrition incentive program is Produce Perks, managed by Produce Perks Midwest (PPM). Produce Perks provides a \$25 match on SNAP/EBT purchases of fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets and grocery stores across the state. Example strategies include: • Work with farmers' market(s) and PPM to establish the Produce Perks program at the farmers' market. • Work with brick-and-mortar store(s) and PPM to establish the Produce Perks program at the store.	• Introduction to Nutrition Incentives. • Marketing and Promotion of Nutrition Incentives. • Management of Nutrition Incentives at Farmers' Markets. • Types of Nutrition Incentives Offered at Ohio Farmers Markets and How They Are Funded.
Produce Prescriptions	Produce Prescription Programs leverage clinical care systems to improve the health of patients diagnosed with chronic diet-related disease (i.e., diabetes, cancer, etc.) by increasing access to healthy foods and providing healthy eating and nutrition counseling. The program allows practitioners to "prescribe" fruits and vegetables for select patients, redeemable at participating farmers' markets and grocery retail.	• Rural Produce Prescription Toolkit. • Wholesome Wave. • Produce Perks Midwest PRx.
Safe Routes to Healthy Food	Helping communities become places where it is easy and safe for people to walk, bike, or use public transit to buy and obtain healthy food. Example strategies include: • Work with local transit agencies to improve healthy food access (improved routes, etc.). • Additions of grocery stores or markets in walkable/bikeable areas • Improvement to walkability and/or bikeability to a grocery store. • Transportation to farmers' markets.	• Safe Routes to Healthy Food FAQ. • Safe Routes to Healthy Food overview. • Safe Routes to Healthy Food Report and Action Agenda.

Healthy Eating Success Stories

[2023-2024 Creating Healthy Communities and Healthy Eating Active Living \(HEAL\) Capacity Building Success Stories](#)

- Page 7- Farmer Jones Market Helps Prevent Food Insecurity in Maple Heights.
- Page 8- Partners Growing Together: Combatting Food Insecurity.
- Page 11- Nourishing New Straitsville Families.
- Page 13- How a Community Garden Cultivated Success for Those in Need.
- Page 22- Food Pantry Takes Steps to Encourage Healthier Eating.
- Page 25- Innovative Produce Prescription Program Addresses Food Insecurity.

[2020-2024 Creating Healthy Communities Evaluation Report](#)

- Page 21- Building Health and Community at the Richwood Farmers Market.

[Miami Township does healthy food access with a twist - WeTHRIVE!](#)



Active Living		
Main Strategy	Strategy Suggestions	Resources
Active Commute Support	This strategy focuses on supporting and encouraging active commute (walking, biking, rolling, public transit) to everyday destinations such as work, retail, or services. Suggestions for strategy implementation include: • Travel Ambassador Program. • Convenient, covered, and secure bicycle parking. • Bicycle repair stands, tools, and tire pumps. • Access to changing rooms, lockers, and showers. • Sidewalks, pathways, and bicycle routes leading to the worksite. These should focus on connecting to existing infrastructure to make it easier and safer for active commute. • Worksite-specific bike share programs. • Create an active commute policy with the employer. This can include flexible start times, allowing bicycle parking indoors, or other employee-sponsored incentives for active commute. • Create an Emergency Ride Home program, which can guarantee a ride home, at no extra cost, for an employee that walked, biked, or used transit to get to work but is unable to do so on the way home.	• Active Commute Support. • Bicycle Parking Guidelines, Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals. • Gohio Commute Emergency Ride Home program. • Travel Ambassador Toolkit.
Active Transportation Planning (ATP)	ATPs are a tool to help communities determine current gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle network and determine short and long-term improvements to the network. ATPs can be created at the local, county, or regional level. ATPs are also typically required to apply for many transportation grants. There are other types of plans, listed below that also address safety and the bicycle and pedestrian network in your community. Strategies include the following: • Create an ATP which includes existing conditions, community engagement, and recommendations for both infrastructure and non-infrastructure. • Master Plan development (including feasibility studies, focus groups, reports, forecasting, etc.). There should be a section focusing on AT planning. • Vision Zero Plan. • Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan.	• Active Transportation Planning. • Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Active Transportation Development Guide. • Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Active Transportation Academy. • Fostering Healthy Communities through Planning and Public Health Collaboration. • Newark-Heath Active Transportation Plan. • Knox County Active Transportation Plan. • Huron County Active Transportation Plan. • Dayton Active Transportation Plan. • Mt. Healthy Active Transportation Plan. • Village of Lincoln Heights Active Transportation Plan.
Bike Share	This strategy is focused on creating a bike share system within your community. There are several different bike share models, so it's recommended to research each and work with your community to pick the right fit. Models include: • 'Book a Bike' - typically run by a local library or other partner. • Docked systems. • Dockless systems.	• Bike Libraries. • Better Bike Share Partnership.
Complete Streets (CS) Policy	Policies can be at the local, county, or regional level and are created to ensure that all current and potential future users of a road are considered when newly constructing or performing maintenance projects. Complete Streets policies are sensitive to the local context. Voices that should be included in developing the policy include residents, city staff (engineering, public works, planning/development), elected officials, people with disabilities, and people who have been traditionally left out of decision-making.	• Complete Streets. • A Guide to Building Healthy Streets. • National Complete Streets Coalition. • Complete Streets Policy Evaluation Tool.

Land Use Policy	Land use and zoning can impact the built environment of an area, thus making it either easier or more difficult to walk and bike places or access amenities such as parks. These strategies may take several years to fully complete, including: • Developing a Comprehensive Plan or a full zoning code update. • Reviewing existing code to assess the impact on active living and health. • Implementing zoning code changes that prioritize compact, walkable development. • Updating parking codes to be more pedestrian and bike friendly. • Addressing ordinances or codes, such as subdivision or downtown districts, to ensure compliance with a CS Policy. • Developing new design standards for development.	• Zoning 101 fact sheet. • Fostering Healthy Communities through Planning and Public Health Collaboration.
Multiuse trails	Multi-use trail projects should focus on areas that enhance connectivity to everyday destinations, enhance opportunities for physical activity at destinations, or help make trails more accessible and easier to use or navigate. Specific activities can include: • Grant application assistance for multi-use trails. • Assessment of existing trail network, usage, and identification of where gaps exist. • Identification and installation of trail supportive infrastructure (i.e. benches, water fountains, wayfinding signage).	• Ohio Department of Transportation Multi-Modal Design Guide-- Ch. 5: Shared Use Paths.
Parks and Playground	A public space within the local community for people of all ages to enjoy outdoor recreation. Specific activities may include: • Establishment of a new park or playground which could be for specific use (i.e. bike or skateboard park, basketball court). • Completing updates to an existing park or playground. This can include new playground equipment, surfacing, lighting, or sunshades. • Focus on enhancements that are inclusive of all ages and abilities.	• Park Access and Inclusion. • National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Recommended Measures to Evaluate Park Use and Quality.
Public Transit	The public transit strategy can cover the traditional fixed-route system, paratransit, or on-demand public transportation. Strategies should work to increase access to transit, whether that's impacting the supporting infrastructure or working to make routes more accessible. Activities include: • Demonstration projects for safe access to transit. • Bus stop improvements. • Bus stop audits and improvement plans. • Bus route improvements to increase access or increase the destinations reached (i.e. food, healthcare, workplace). • Convenient, comfortable public transit with accommodations for taking bicycles on the bus.	• Public Transit. • Transit Center: From Sorry to Superb: Everything You Need to Know about Great Bus Stops. • Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines. • Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Public Transportation Facilities. • Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Multi-Modal Design Guide Ch.10: Transit Facilities.
Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS)	SRTS strategies are focused specifically on addressing barriers to walking or biking to school. Typically, these consist of infrastructure (safe crossings, sidewalks, lighting, etc.) and non-infrastructure programs (walking school bus or bike train). Activities may include: • Assistance with the development of a School Travel Plan (STP). • Assisting with an application to the ODOT SRTS funding for either infrastructure or non-infrastructure projects. • Infrastructure change—crossings, road diet, designated bike parking.	• Safe Routes to School. • Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) – Safe Routes to School website. Please visit the information page on ODOT's website for more information about the program and their funding assistance.

Shared Use	Agreements with a school, church, or other entity that allow for public use of recreation facilities such as playgrounds, sports fields, or gymnasiums. The policy outlines the rules around shared use, including eligible activities and times the facilities are open to the public. Activities may include: • Creating MOU with a school, church, or other entity that owns the shared use property. • Create a “lending library” of equipment to use at the shared-use facilities.	• Change Lab Solutions Shared Use Playbook.
Supportive Bicycle Infrastructure	Smaller-scale additions that supplement larger trail or bike infrastructure projects that are already constructed or underway. Strategy ideas include: • Bike racks, or safe and convenient bicycle parking. • Striping bike lanes. • Signage and wayfinding. • Fix-it Stations. • Demonstration projects. • Assisting with grant applications that fund bicycle infrastructure projects.	• Bicycle Infrastructure. • Wayfinding Frequently Asked Questions. • Bicycle Parking Guidelines – Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.
Supportive Pedestrian Infrastructure	Smaller-scale additions that supplement larger sidewalk or other pedestrian projects that are already constructed or underway. Strategy ideas include: • Wayfinding and signage. • Demonstration project. • Shoulders or pedestrian lanes. • Shared streets. • Streetscapes. • Road crossing safety- crosswalks, pedestrian signs, flashing beacons, traffic signals, curb extensions, pedestrian crossing islands, and raised crosswalks. • Assist with applications for grants that fund pedestrian infrastructure improvements other improvements for ADA accessibility.	• Pedestrian Infrastructure. • Wayfinding Frequently Asked Questions. • Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Multi-Modal Design Guide-- Ch. 4: Pedestrian Facilities.

Active Living Success Stories

[2023-2024 Creating Healthy Communities and Healthy Eating Active Living Capacity Building Success Stories](#)

- Page 6- Transit Improvement Grows Ridership and Provides Shelter.
- Page 9- Paving the Way to Increased Walkability for a Rural Community.
- Page 12- Cycle Sandusky County Bike Share Provides Access to Free Bikes.
- Page 14- Small Village, Big Heart: Economic and Outdoor Recreation Development Boost Health.
- Page 23- Walk, Bike, or Roll using School Pathways.
- Page 24- Taking the Ankle Express: Walk Audits and Planning.
- Page 26- Everyone Swings at State Street Park.
- Page 27- New Public Transit Policy Paves the Way for Transit Stop Upgrades.

[2020-2024 Creating Healthy Communities Evaluation Report](#)

- Page 11- Activating Community-Led Solutions in Jewett Park.
- Page 14- Investing in Pedestrian Safety Improvements in Amesville.
- Page 18- Increasing Access to Active Living Opportunities in Washington County.

[Clyde, OH: The small city championing big ideas \(Best Complete Streets Policies 2025\) - Smart Growth America](#)

[Active transportation: A roadmap to safer, healthier, more connected communities - WeTHRIVE!](#)



Breastfeeding

- [Ohio Workplace Providing Lactation Upgrades and Support \(PLUS\) Toolkit.](#)
 - o In partnership with Every Mother, Inc., the Ohio Workplace Providing Lactation Upgrades and Support (PLUS) Toolkit was created in 2020.
 - o This is a free, comprehensive resource for human resource professionals, supervisors, and employees. It can help businesses establish or enhance existing lactation accommodations.
- [Ohio Breastfeeding Workplace Award Guide.](#)
 - o In association with the Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance (OBA), the Ohio Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Award Program began in 2022.
 - o This program recognizes Ohio businesses that offer lactation support to their employees. This includes:
 - Having a breastfeeding policy established.
 - Offering break time to employees to pump in the workplace.
 - Having a space that is private, accessible, comfortable, and is not a bathroom for nursing employees' use.
- [Ohio 24 Hour Breastfeeding Hotline.](#)
 - o Launched in 2020, available 24/7 including weekends and holidays.
 - o Operated by live, trained lactation professionals.
 - o Provided free of charge to all callers, including mothers, their families and partners, expectant parents, and healthcare providers.
 - o Includes a team of International Board Certified Lactation Consultants, two mental health specialists, and one dietitian.
 - o [Free hotline promotional materials.](#)
 - o To access services, call 888-588-3423 or text BFHOTLINE to 220-201-5477.
- **Sample Infant at Work Policy Information:** Sample documents are available upon request. Please contact: Heather.Kristofzski-Raizor@odh.ohio.gov.

Breastfeeding Success Stories

[Planting Seeds for Workplace Lactation Support.](#)

[Presenting on Lactation Accommodations at a City Council Meeting.](#)

Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Program Overview:

- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) operates in all of Ohio's 88 counties. The WIC program serves income-eligible pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women; infants; and children up to age five who are at risk due to inadequate nutrition, health care, or both.
- The goal is to improve health/nutrition status among women, infants, and children. This is accomplished through:
 - Provision of a health and diet screening.
 - Individual and group nutrition education sessions.
 - Breastfeeding education and support.
 - Referral to prenatal and pediatric health care and other maternal and child health and human services programs.
 - Provision of supplemental, highly nutritious foods, and, if a non-breastfed infant, iron-fortified infant formula.

WIC Works:

- WIC reduces fetal deaths and infant mortality.
- WIC reduces low birthweight rates and increases the duration of pregnancy.
- WIC improves the growth of nutritionally at-risk infants and children.
- WIC decreases the incidence of iron deficiency anemia in children.
- WIC improves the dietary intake of pregnant and postpartum women and improves weight gain in pregnant women.
- Pregnant women participating in WIC receive prenatal care earlier.
- Children enrolled in WIC are more likely to have a regular source of medical care and have more up-to-date immunizations.
- WIC helps get children ready to start school: children who receive WIC benefits demonstrate improved intellectual development.
- WIC significantly improves children's diets.

Ways to Promote WIC in Local Health Departments:

- Promote participation in the WIC Program to eligible staff—every county in Ohio has at least one WIC clinic.
- Share nutrition education messaging with staff. WIC employs dietitians and nutritionists!
- Highlight March as National Nutrition Month®.
- Create a breastfeeding-friendly environment. WIC employs lactation professionals!
- Support breastfeeding staff and families.
- Highlight August as Breastfeeding Awareness Month.
- Promote local farmers markets.
 - The Farmers Market Nutrition Program is a voluntary program that aims to provide fresh, unprepared, and locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants.

WIC Success Stories

[Success Stories](#) – WIC Strong.

[Faces of Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#) – WIC Research, Policy, and Practice Hub.



Testimonials from Ohio WIC participant survey

- “I value the WIC program very much. WIC has provided groceries when we wouldn’t have had anything to eat. WIC has provided me with much needed breastfeeding support in the past. WIC has also educated us on shopping and healthy meal prep.”
- “WIC has been a lifesaver since I was pregnant and even now that my son is one.”
- “I am grateful for the help. The WIC program has taken a big burden off my family.”
- “WIC has saved my family from starvation on a couple of occasions.”
- “WIC has been a huge blessing to our family! Our children love all the fresh fruits and veggies that weren’t always an option before!”
- “WIC has been so helpful to us, and we are able to get some things we couldn’t afford to eat on monthly basis.”
- “WIC has greatly helped my family. We don’t usually qualify for snap benefits as I make just over the income limit, but the food provided by WIC takes a lot of stress off of me about being able to provide meals for my kids. I especially love the produce allowance.”
- “The food we get from work really helps us out because we do not get any food stamps and we really have no money for food because it’s either we pay our bills or we don’t eat or eat and don’t pay our bills and things get shut off and we lose things.”
- “Very appreciative for WIC. As a struggling young adult, I’m able to make sure my child is always taken care of food wise. Thank you for all you do.”
- “We absolutely love it, especially the farm market program. We are very sad that we will be done after this year because my daughter will be five.”
- “The WIC program helps me out tremendously! I don’t know what I would do without it!”
- “I am very grateful for the services you provide, and I think it’s a wonderful thing you do for women and children.”
- “I’m so grateful for my WIC benefits and all the resources and opportunities provided by everyone at my Marion WIC office. Thanks for all you do!”
- “I love the information you share about health/nutrition.”
- “WIC has been amazing for my family! Especially in the times when money is tight! I know my kids will always have fruit/veggies, breakfast, and lunch and my husband and I just have to focus on dinners!”

Early Childhood Health

Ohio Healthy Program (OHP)

- Early care and education (ECE) and out-of-school time (OST) programs can become recognized as an Ohio Healthy Program by implementing changes within their program to create a healthy environment for children to live, learn, and grow.
- The overall goal of OHP is to deliver consistent messaging to adults who care for children to prevent obesity in early childhood and reduce the risk of physical and mental health problems in childhood and adulthood.
- Free Ohio Approved trainings for early care professionals are available on the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRA) website.
- Visit the Early Childhood Health webpage to find resources including lesson plans, family engagement materials, sample policies, and sample menus.
 - [Ohio Department of Health Early Childhood Health Program, Ohio Healthy Program.](#)
 - [Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association \(OCCRA\).](#)

Farm to School and Early Care and Education (ECE)

- Farm to School and ECE enriches the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and early care and education sites.
- Students gain access to healthy, local foods as well as education opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons, and farm field trips. Farm to School/ECE empowers children and their families to make informed food choices while strengthening the local economy and contributing to vibrant communities.
 - Find resources for farmers, schools, cafeterias, and early care and education programs at [Ohio State University's Farm to School site.](#)

[Parenting at Mealtime and Playtime \(PMP\)](#)

- Partnership with the [Ohio Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics.](#)
- This initiative assists various healthcare providers in optimizing obesity risk assessment, prevention counseling, and family support for children 0-18 years of age and their families.
- The PMP curriculum offers providers developmentally appropriate guidelines on nutrition, healthy activity, and sleep to share with families within the context of building resilient family-child interactions that support healthy habits.
- Parenting at Mealtime and Playtime App.
 - Available on Android and Apple.
 - Free app for parents, caregivers, and children.
 - Information on nutrition, physical activity, and positive parenting for children ages 0-18.

School Health/Wellness

Partnering with schools to create environments where all students can learn and thrive helps to improve the health of not only the child, but the staff, family, school, and community.

- [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child.](#)
- [Ohio's Whole Child Framework, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.](#)

School Wellness Policies and Teams

Schools participating in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program are required to have school wellness policies. These policies should include:

- Specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.
- Standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages.
- Policies for regulating food and beverage marketing.
- A description of public involvement, public updates, policy leadership, and evaluation plans.

Source: [U.S. Department of Agriculture School Wellness Information.](#)

School wellness teams can be created at the district or individual school level to implement strategies related to health and wellness for both students and staff. Members of school wellness teams can include, but are not limited to:

- Food Service Director.
- School Nurse.
- School Counselor/Psychologist.
- Physical Education/Health Education Teachers.
- Grade level teachers.
- Administrative staff.
- Superintendent/Principal.
- Students.
- Parents/Families.
- Community Partners.
- Transportation Director.

[Sustainability Planning for Student Wellness.](#)

Assessment Tools

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – School Health Index](#): A self-assessment and planning guide to help schools identify strengths and weaknesses of health and safety policies and programs.
- [Wellness School Assessment Tool \(WellSAT\)](#): WellSAT is a web-based assessment that allows schools to score written district wellness policies and rate the district's implementation of the school wellness practices.

School HEAL Strategies

Nutrition

- Farm to School (see Farm to School/Early Care and Education information above).
- School Gardens.
 - [Kids Gardening](#).
 - [Ohio State University Extension Ag in the Classroom](#).
- Smarter Lunchroom Techniques- looks at the placement of items within the cafeteria and other nudges to encourage students to choose the healthiest options within the cafeteria.
 - [Smarter Lunchroom Movement – California Department of Education](#).
- Guidelines for not using food as reward or punishment.
 - [Healthy and Active Non-Food Rewards](#).
- Marketing within schools.
 - [Food and Beverage Marketing at School](#).
 - [Change Lab Solutions Marketing Matters](#).

Physical Activity

- Safe Routes to School (refer to the strategy guide on page 14).
- Guidelines for withholding physical activity/recess as a punishment.
 - [Alternatives to withholding recess as punishment](#).
- Incorporating movement into classrooms (movement breaks/brain breaks).
 - [Brain Breaks for Elementary Schools](#).
- Staff wellness.
 - [School Employee Wellness](#).

Resources

- [Action for Healthy Kids](#).
- [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#).

School-Based Health Center (SBHC)

A SBHC can act as a community HUB for healthcare and resources. ODH supports SBHCs through planning, start-up, and operational/expansion projects. Many SBHCs offer universal food insecurity screening, and some have on-site food pantries. During SBHC visits, some assist families with SNAP and WIC enrollment. Clinically, well child visits can include nutrition education and chronic disease management too. To find a SBHC near you: [Ohio School-Based Health Center Census](#).

Resource Links

- [Ohio School-Based Health Alliance](#). Offers a variety of guides and resources on their website.
- [Implementation guide: Screening for food security in school-based health centers](#).
- [Ohio Department of Education and Workforce](#) houses resources and data including the [Ohio Healthy Students Profiles](#).
- [No Kid Hungry Toolkit](#) includes emerging models and resources to address food insecurity in School-Based Health Centers.
- [Nationwide Children's Hospital School Health Services](#).
- [Diabetes and School Health \(DASH\) Program](#).

School Nursing

[Ohio Department of Health School Nurse Survey](#)

The National Association of School Nurses has statements, resources, and journal articles to support the role of the school nurse in obesity prevention.

- [Childhood Obesity](#).
- [Nurse-Involved Policy, Systems, and Environmental School-Based Interventions for Supporting Healthy Nutrition and Obesity Prevention Among Children and Adolescents: A Systematic Review](#).
- [Leveraging School Nurse Expertise to Meet Children's Health and Nutrition Needs in Afterschool Programs](#).
- [Engaging the School Community in a Nutrition and Physical Activity Program: The Role of the 21st-Century School Nurse](#).

School Health Success Stories

[Microfarm an Outdoor Classroom for River Valley Students, Ohio Department of Health.](#)

[Winton Woods Food Service takes it to the next level - WeTHRIVE!](#)

[Fridays in the garden with North College Hill - WeTHRIVE!](#)



Disability Inclusion

Including people with disabilities in everyday activities and supporting them to have roles similar to their peers without a disability is disability inclusion. Disability inclusion requires making sure that adequate policies and practices are in place within a community or organization. Inclusion should lead to increased participation in socially expected life roles and activities—such as being a student, worker, friend, community member, patient, spouse, partner, or parent. Socially expected activities may also include engaging in social activities, using public resources such as transportation and libraries, moving about within communities, receiving adequate health care, having relationships, and enjoying other day-to-day activities. (CDC: [Disability Inclusion](#)).

- [Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities](#).
- [Ohio Disability and Health Program](#).
- [Ohio Inclusive Sports](#).
- [Ohio Department of Health: Accessible Design and Disability Inclusion Fact Sheet](#).
- [Ohio Department of Health: Inclusive Playgrounds Fact Sheet](#).
- [Ohio Department of Health: Park Access and Inclusion Fact Sheet](#).
- NACCHO [Guidelines for Disability Inclusion in Physical Activity, Nutrition, & Obesity Programs and Policies](#) (requires membership log-in).
- [Inclusive Nutrition Strategies for SNAP Settings](#).

Success Story:

[Strouds Run State Park Celebrates New Inclusive Playground and Accessible Beach Path, Ohio Department of Natural Resources](#).

Worksite Wellness

Worksite wellness programs have health, business, and economic benefits. They benefit workers by promoting healthy behaviors (like physical activity, health screenings, immunizations, and follow-up care) for improved health and quality of life. Employers benefit by having increased worker productivity and lower health care and workers' compensation costs.

Strategies and resources:

- Food Service Guidelines- see page 9.
- Active Commute Support- see page 12.
 - o [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) Work@Health Program.
 - [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Worksite Health ScoreCard Manual](#).

Chronic Disease Programs

- [Diabetes Prevention Program](#).
 - o The National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) is a structured lifestyle change program for patients at risk for diabetes. The program helps participants make sustainable healthy behavior changes and achieve weight loss.
 - o [Ohio Diabetes Prevention and Management Program Spotlight](#).
- Diabetes Self-Management Education.
 - o Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSMES) gives patients with type 2 diabetes the knowledge, skills and support to manage diabetes. It provides the foundation to help navigate daily self-care and is provided by a diabetes care and education specialist, an experienced healthcare professional such as a registered nurse, registered dietitian, pharmacist, and others who have gone on to specialize in diabetes.
 - o Programs can be found throughout Ohio:
 - ADA-recognized [Diabetes Education Programs](#).
 - ADCES-accredited [Diabetes Education & Support Programs](#).
- [Diabetes Action Plan Report, 2024](#).
 - o As of 2017, in accordance with Ohio House Bill 216, the Ohio Department of Health is required to convene with representatives from the Ohio Department of Medicaid, Ohio Department of Administrative Services, and Ohio Commission on Minority Health, known as the Diabetes Action Plan Committee, to develop an Ohio Diabetes Action Plan (DAP) every three years. The DAP Committee is tasked with the following:
 - Assessing the prevalence of all types of diabetes in this state, including disparities in prevalence among various demographic populations, local jurisdictions, and state employees.
 - Providing updates on current and future diabetes initiatives within each appointed agency.
 - Monitoring initiatives to reduce the prevalence of all types of diabetes, improve diabetes care, and control complications associated with diabetes among the populations of concern to each agency.
 - Developing policy and program recommendations to decrease diabetes prevalence in Ohio.
 - Developing proposed costs to implement policy and program recommendations.
 - Identifying how to measure progress achieved toward attaining established policy and program recommendations.
 - Convening external stakeholder meetings for recommendation/progress review and feedback.

- [Ohio State University Extension Dining with Diabetes.](#)

- o Dining with Diabetes is a series of four classes conducted by Ohio State University Extension Family and Consumer Sciences and community health partners.
- o The program includes live cooking demonstrations, menu planning, diabetes management, carbohydrate-counting, insights on portion control, label-reading, and healthy recipe taste-testing.



Older Adults

Older adults represent a significant and growing population in Ohio, with more than 2.8 million residents aged 60 and older. Supporting healthy eating and active living among older adults helps promote independence, reduce chronic disease, and improve quality of life. The programs and resources below can help local agencies implement or promote evidence-based initiatives that increase access to nutritious foods, safe and inclusive physical activity, and social connection opportunities for older adults.

Healthy Eating

- [Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Department of Aging.](#)
 - Eligible participants receive \$50.00 a year to use at participating farmers markets, farm stands, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs.
- [Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Food and Nutrition Service.](#)
 - Aims to improve the health of persons with low income at least 60 years of age, by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA foods.
- [Older Wiser Learners Series \(OWLS\), Aging Smart, Ohio State University Extension.](#)
 - Four-week program conducted by OSU-Extension Family and Consumer Sciences.
 - Focuses on the needs of individuals over the age of 65 including aging in place, proper nutrition, cooking and shopping for one or two, maintaining personal safety and identifying scams, and communicating end-of-life issues with family members.
- [National Council on Aging](#), Congregate Meal Programs.
 - Provides meals in an accessible group setting at least once a day.
 - Typical settings: senior centers, churches, schools, and senior housing facilities.
- [Meals on Wheels.](#)
 - Senior nutrition program providing home-delivered meals to the door.
- [Nutrition Programs for Seniors.](#)
- [Eldercare Locator.](#)
 - Find services for older adults and their families in your community.

Active Living (*cost associated with program)

- [Falls Prevention, A Matter of Balance.*](#)
 - Designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels in older adults.
 - Eight two-hour classes guided by trained coaches.
 - Includes group discussion, problem solving, role-play, exercise practice, assertiveness training, and home activities.

- [Bingocize](#).^{*}
 - o Program combining the game of bingo, exercise, and/or health education.
 - o Twenty lessons conducted twice a week for 10 weeks.
- [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#).^{*}
 - o Evidence-based program incorporating exercises that improve muscular strength, flexibility, and fitness.
 - o Classes are offered as a series and build upon one another.
 - o Other programs include Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention and Tai Chi Prime.
- [Geri-Fit](#).^{*}
 - o Health promotion program for older adults focusing on strength training workouts.
 - o Initially set up as a 12-week term (24 classes total), however, the program is intended to be an ongoing physical activity program.
- [Stay Active and Independent for Life \(SAIL\)](#).
 - o An evidence-based strength, balance, and fitness program for adults 65 and older.
 - o There is a cost associated to be trained as an instructor.
- [Find an Evidence-Based Program, National Council on Aging](#).
- [Ohio Department of Health: Age Friendly Communities Fact Sheet](#).

Social Connectedness

Social connectedness is the extent in which an individual feels they belong, have support, and are valued. Social connectedness is important among older adults because many face higher risks of isolation due to transportation barriers, mobility issues, limited social opportunities, etc.

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Information for Older Adults, Still Going Strong](#).
- [Connect2Tools to Overcome Social Isolation](#).

Many local YMCAs, community centers, and older adult agencies offer opportunities for social interaction, including fitness classes, card clubs, and art and skill (i.e., crochet) classes.

- [Active Older Adults](#).

Resources/Referrals

- [National Council on Aging.](#)
- [National Institute on Aging.](#)
- [Local Area Agencies on Aging.](#)

Older Adult Success Stories

[2023-2024 Creating Healthy Communities and HEAL Capacity Building Success Stories.](#)

- Page 10- New Community Gardens and Walking Path Spark Connections for Seniors.

[WeTHRIVE! communities help older adults stay on their feet - WeTHRIVE!](#)



Health Literacy

What is Health Literacy (Healthy People 2030)

Personal: The degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

Organizational: The degree to which organizations enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

How to Address Health Literacy (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion- National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy)

1. Develop and disseminate health and safety information that is accurate, accessible, and actionable.
2. Promote changes in the health care system that improve health information, communication, informed decision-making, and access to health services.
3. Incorporate accurate, standards-based, and developmentally appropriate health and science information and curricula in childcare and education through the university level.
4. Support and expand local efforts to provide adult education, English language instruction, and culturally and linguistically appropriate health information services in the community.
5. Build partnerships, develop guidance, and change policies.
6. Increase basic research and the development, implementation, and evaluation of practices and interventions to improve health literacy.
7. Increase the dissemination and use of evidence-based health literacy practices and interventions.

Resources

- [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(AHRQ\), Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit.](#)
- [Advancing Health Literacy Franklin County](#) (Health Literacy and Resources).
- [Healthy People 2030.](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.](#)
- [National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy.](#)

Communications

ODH Toolkits and Resources

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) stands ready to help you educate your local community on public health information, services, and resources. ODH has resources and toolkits posted online to aid in the promotion of this work. There are social media toolkits, marketing materials, digital resources, fact sheets, and much more. These resources cover a variety of topics such as healthy eating, active living, safe swim tips, immunizations, and many more. Additionally, these toolkits are regularly updated, and new topics are added on an ongoing basis throughout the year. These resources can be found on the [Ohio Department of Health Resources for Local Health Departments page](#) under “Communications Toolkits.”

These toolkits and resources are distributed on an ongoing basis to the local health department (LHD) public information officers (PIO). All local PIOs, health commissioners, and other staff are welcome to receive these toolkits and emails with other information.

Please email Public Relations Manager Megan Smith (megan.smith@odh.ohio.gov) to subscribe. Megan is the main point of contact for LHDs for all communications needs whether it be assistance with communications planning, news releases, marketing communications assets, or other items, and coordination between ODH and LHDs on media relations.

National Observances

	Month	Week	Day
Jan	- National Soup Month. - Veganuary. - National Oatmeal Month.	- Healthy Weight Week. - Sugar Awareness Week.	- Jan 11: National Milk Day. - Jan. 20: Talk a Walk Outdoors Day.
Feb	- National Heart Month. - National Children’s Dental Health Month. - Limiting sugary snacks/drinks tips.	- Random Acts of Kindness Week - Cook a healthy meal for loved ones, take a walk with a neighbor.	- Super Bowl Sunday. - Healthy game-day snacks.
March	National Nutrition Month.	- National School Breakfast Week. - Salt Awareness Week.	- Registered Dietitian Nutritionists Day. - March 30: Take a Walk in the Park. - National Wear Red Day. - World Health Day. - Diabetes Alert Day (fourth Tuesday).
April	- Move More Month. - TV Turn Off Month.	- Public Health Week. - Every Kid Healthy Week.	April 4: Carrot Day.
May	- Older Americans Month. - Employee Health & Fitness Month. - National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. - Mobility Awareness Month. - National Bike Month.	Bike to Work Week.	- Bike to School Day (first Wednesday in May). - National Fitness Day (first Saturday).
June	Dairy Month.	Men’s Health Week.	- Family Health and Fitness Day. - June 23: National Hydration Day. - World Bicycle Day.
July	- National Grilling Month. - National Picnic Month. - National Watermelon Month. - Parks and Recreation Month.		- July 3: National Eat Your Beans Day. - July 8: National Blueberry Day.

	Month	Week	Day
Aug	Breastfeeding Awareness Month.	National Farmers Market Week.	Aug. 29: National More Herbs, Less Salt Day.
Sept	- National Cholesterol Education Month - National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month - National Fruit and Veggies Month. - Whole Grains Month. - Healthy Aging Month. - National Wilderness Month.	- National Folic Acid Awareness Week. - Malnutrition Awareness Week.	- Sept. 21: National Dance Day. - Sept. 22: Car-Free Day. - Sept. 25: National Women's Health and Fitness Day. - Sept. 29: World Heart Day.
Oct	- Health Literacy Month. - National Apple Month. - Vegetarian Awareness Month.	- National Health Education Week (third week of October). - National School Lunch Week. - Walk to School Week.	- National Walk to School Day (first Wednesday). - Oct. 10: World Mental Health Day. - Apple Crunch Day. - World Food Day.
Nov	- National Diabetes Month. - National Gratitude Month.		- Thanksgiving. - World Diabetes Day.
Dec	Root Vegetables Month.		- Winter Solstice. - Staying active during shorter, darker days. - Tips for overcoming winter inactivity.

Social Media Toolkits

- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Social Media Toolkits.](#)
- [American Cancer Society Healthy Eating and Active Living Awareness Employer Toolkit 2025.](#)
- [Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Move Your Way Campaign Materials.](#)
- [National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Mental Health and Physical Activity Social Media Sample Messaging.](#)
- [Toolkits & Inspiration - Have A Plant.](#)

Sample Post Ideas

- [Seasonal Produce Spotlight](#): Highlight local in-season fruits/vegetables; Include simple tips for how to use them in meals or snacks.
- Local Outdoor Recreation: Local trails, lakes, and parks; Family-friendly hiking guides; Dog-friendly location.



Please take this quick survey to provide feedback on the HEAL Implementation Toolkit.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VBKMWM9>