



Fairfield County
Health
Department

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Fairfield County Health Department





From the Commissioner:

Dr. Mark Aebi, who served as Health District Medical Director for the past 29 years, retired on December 31, 2023. He also served as the Fairfield County Health Commissioner from 2011-2021. Dr. Aebi helped the department manage the H1N1 pandemic in 2009-10 and the COVID-19 pandemic which arrived in 2020. We wish Dr. Aebi all the best in his well-deserved retirement.

Steven Kapetansky, MD, assumed the role as FCHD Medical Director on January 1, 2024.

Highlights from the past year include:

- Our WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) program moved into new space at our offices at Sheridan Drive, Lancaster. WIC also saw their Farmers Market voucher program reach new heights, providing families with access to fresh, local foods.
- FCHD received a Project Dawn, Overdose Death Prevention Program, grant from the Ohio Department of Health. Our health educators provided information on overdose prevention and treatment programs and distributed over 1,500 naloxone kits to members of the public, businesses, and first responders.
- The 2023 Fairfield County Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement plans were finalized. These documents help us identify the health challenges in our communities and prioritize strategies to address those challenges.
- FCHD hosted a scrap tire collection event in Amanda, where used tires were collected for proper disposal or recycling.
- FCHD continued our commitment to building healthy communities by expanding our Health Promotion programs that prevent disease and injury and promote healthy lifestyles.

I visited almost every township and village during 2023, and I look forward to continuing to work with local elected officials and residents across the county to support their efforts to make Fairfield County a place where residents live in healthy and safe communities and where they are empowered to make informed decisions that allow them to achieve their optimal health potential.

Joe Ebel, Health Commissioner

Board of Health



Steven Kapetansky, MD, MPH



Brian Oliver



Tina Childers



Teresa Wood, PhD, RN



Michele Morrone, PhD, REHS

Health Department Leadership



R. Joseph Ebel, MS, MBA, REHS
Health Commissioner



Rachel Moresea, REHS
Director of Environmental Health



Gale Neville, RN, MSN
Director of Nursing



Jamie Ehorn, BBA
Director of Administrative Services



Mary Smith, LSW, DTR, CLC
Director of WIC

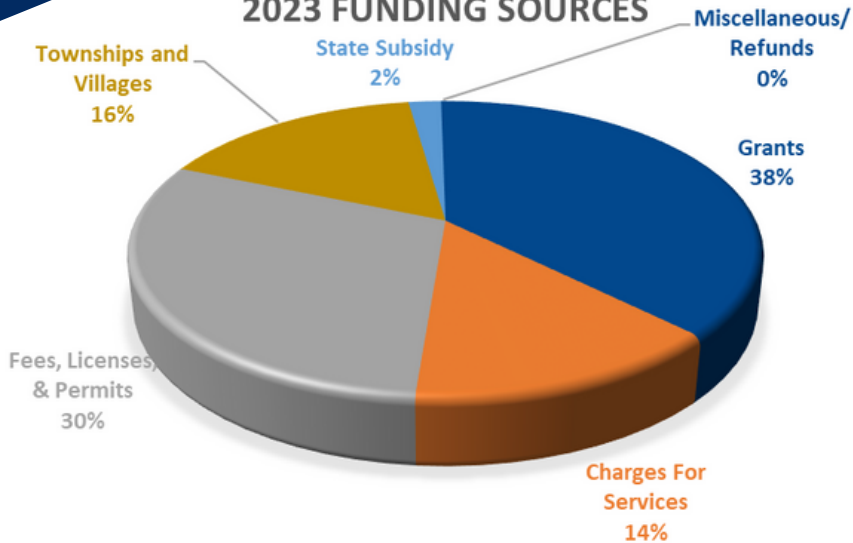


Baylie Blevins, BS
Director of Health Promotion

2023 Financial Report

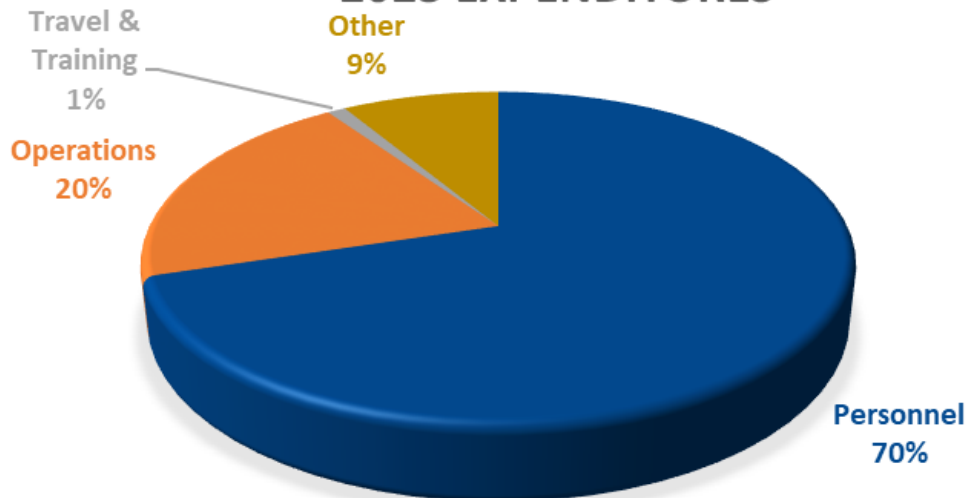
Jamie Ehorn, BBA | Director of
Administrative Services

2023 FUNDING SOURCES



Funding Sources	2023
Grants	\$ 1,532,910
Charges For Services	\$ 565,992
Fees, Licenses, and Permits	\$ 1,234,428
Townships and Villages	\$ 667,621
State Subsidy	\$ 82,414
Miscellaneous/Refunds	\$ 10,912
Total	\$ 4,094,278

2023 EXPENDITURES



Expenditures	2023
Personnel	\$ 2,548,581
Operations	\$ 734,482
Travel and Training	\$ 36,191
Other	\$ 311,926
Total	\$ 3,631,179

Administrative Services Team:

Jamie Ehorn, BBA | Director
Kelly Brown | Account Specialist
Teresa Goddard | Clerical Specialist

Roxanne Harmon | Account Specialist
Kelly Donley | Account Specialist
Pauletta Krieger | Vital Statistics Registrar

Vital Statistics Report

Pauletta Krieger | Vital Statistics Registrar

2023 Vital Statistics		
Births for Fairfield County Residents	2022	2023
Total Births	1740	1717
Mother's age under 18	10 (0.6%)	12 (0.07%)
Mother's age 18 to 19	60 (3.5%)	52 (3.03%)
Deaths of Fairfield County Residents	2022	2023
Total Deaths	1692	1554
Deaths by Accident	113	115
Deaths by Alzheimer's Disease	60	48
Deaths by Cancer	327	319
Deaths by Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	104	72
Deaths by COVID-19	115	23
Deaths by Diabetes	51	51
Deaths by Heart Disease	297	304
Deaths by Homicide	5	2
Deaths by Stroke	75	83
Deaths by Suicide	22	27
All Other Causes	450	510
Top Baby Names	2023	
Boys	Oliver (15); Hudson (12); Owen (10); Henry (9); Theodore (8)	
Girls	Amelia (14); Sophia (9); Harper and Charlotte (8); Ava, Hazel and Olivia (7)	

PHN: Public Health Nursing

Gale Neville | Director of Nursing

Public Health Nursing Outreach

Fairfield County Health Department (FCHD) nursing staff provide a variety of educational presentations for the public. Onsite clinics offer individuals, families, and local businesses the opportunity to receive vaccinations, information, and services which promote health and wellness.

CMH: Children with Medical Handicaps

This program is a health care program through the Ohio Department of Health which links families of children with special health care needs to a network of quality providers, assists with costs associated with the medical condition identified, and has access to a Public Health Nurse to assist them through the process.

FCHD assisted **280** families throughout Fairfield County with CMH services in 2023.

Help Me Grow (HMG)

In partnership with the Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action, FCHD conducts regular home visits to families with children birth to three-years- old who may be experiencing special health care needs. Speech, occupational, and physical therapy evaluations are conducted. Early intervention processes are used to support entry into pre-school.

Tuberculosis Unit

FCHD is the appointed TB Unit for Fairfield County. This program provides TB skin testing which screens for TB. Screenings are required for many reasons such as school programs, employment, and medications. FCHD can obtain orders for testing and make referrals to physicians for immigrants moving to Fairfield County. FCHD provides case management for people who have active TB, ensures medication compliance, monitors for side effects of medications, do investigations, and screenings of close contacts to prevent the spread of disease.

Get Vaccinated Ohio Grant

FCHD has been part of the "Get Vaccinated Ohio" grant from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) for many years.

This grant focuses on improving immunization rates in Fairfield County while removing barriers that could prevent children from getting vaccinated. FCHD administered **2,244** vaccines in 2023.

Infections Disease Investigation and Control Program

Health departments are required to monitor and investigate reportable diseases. In Ohio reportable diseases are usually reported by, laboratories, physicians or their offices, hospitals daycares, and schools, however anyone aware of a reportable disease can make a report.

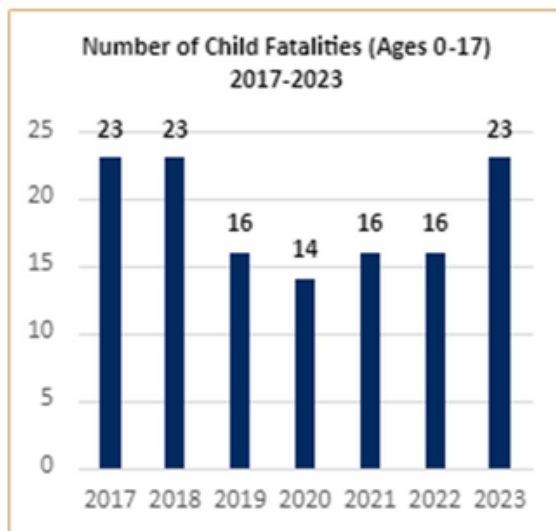
The Infectious Disease Program is also responsible for COVID-19 data and surveillance. In addition, guidance to the community, long-term care facilities, schools, and daycares is provided.

STI (Formerly STD) Clinics

FCHD has partnered with Family Health Services of East Central Ohio to provide a free, walk-in STI clinic. The clinic takes place every Second and Fourth Mondays of each month at our office located at 1550 Sheridan Dr. Suite 100 Lancaster, Ohio 43130. This clinic is open to anyone in need of or wanting testing.

Child Fatality Review Board

In 2000 the Ohio General Assembly created the Child Fatality Review Board (CFR). The board is chaired by the Health Commissioner and comprised of representatives from various community agencies. The mission of the board is to reduce the incidence rate of preventable childhood deaths. The CFR Board meets to review and assess all county-wide childhood (birth - 17) deaths and create a report annually for the National Childhood Death Registry and the Ohio Department of Health.



Public Health Nursing Team:

Gale Neville, RN, MSN | Director

Kimberly Yeager, RN, BSN | Infectious Disease Coordinator

Judy Tata-Scali, RN, BSN | Maternal-Child Health Coordinator

Aerial Duchon, RN, BSN | Immunization Coordinator

EH: Environmental Health

Rachel Moresea, REHS | Director of Environmental Health

Food Safety

FCHD provides education as well as inspections of all food service and retail food establishments including: restaurants, grocery stores, mobile food services, food vending machines, and temporary food establishments.

In 2023, a Gold Medal Food Program was started to recognize outstanding food facility operators in Fairfield County for creating and maintaining safe environments for people to eat with their friends and families.



Rabies Control

All reported animal bites are investigated by FCHD to determine if the animal has or is exhibiting signs of the rabies virus. FCHD encourages all pets be vaccinated and ensures all animals are quarantined and further action is taken when necessary.

Mosquito Control

Annually, FCHD environmental health specialists spray for, collect, identify and test mosquitoes at various sites throughout the county. All mosquitoes are tested for various diseases including West Nile Virus. FCHD collected **1,025** mosquitos during the 2023 season and sprayed **386** miles.

Recreational Safety

FCHD inspects and issues permits to all county campgrounds, residential camps, public pools and spas in an effort to protect the public from injury, the potential for disease transmission, and provide a safe and healthy recreational environment.

Plumbing

FCHD inspects and permits for all new homes and commercial buildings, existing home additions, and existing commercial building remodels.

Lot Splits

The Fairfield County Health Department will perform on-site evaluations of existing deeded lots to determine whether the lot can be developed for commercial or residential use. There were **48** lot split s completed in Fairfield County in 2023.

MS4 Program

As part of the U.S. EPA's effort to preserve, protect, and improve the nation's water resources from polluted storm water runoff, FCHD conducts Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) inspections on discharging aeration systems in Violet Township, Liberty Township (sections 6 and 30R), and the Village of Lithopolis.

Water Pollution Control Loan Fund

FCHD receives funds from the Ohio EPA through the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) to help low to moderate-income families repair or replace failing septic systems. FCHD helped **6** families with complete system replacements in 2023.

Solid Waste

FCHD is charged with regulating and facilitating the collection, storage, and final disposal of all solid waste in Fairfield County through the Ohio EPA Solid Waste Program.

Body Art Safety

Body art facilities are monitored and licensed to ensure safe and sanitary conditions. Body art establishments include businesses that offer tattoos, piercings, permanent makeup/cosmetics, and microblading.

Household and Small Flow Sewage Treatment Systems

FCHD investigate all sewage nuisance complaints as well as inspects and issues permits for all new residential and commercial small flow septic systems and existing systems that require alteration or repair to ensure proper design and installation.

Private Water Systems

To ensure safe drinking water, FCHD samples, inspects, and issues permits for homes served by a private water system including wells, cisterns, hauled water storage tanks, springs, and/or ponds.

School-Based Program

FCHD performs annual school facility inspections to help county school districts improve the environmental health of their buildings.

Environmental Health Team:

Rachel Moresea, REHS | Director
Jennifer Valentine, REHS | EHS Supervisor
Shelia Wolfe, REHS | EHS Supervisor
Breanna Boudinot | Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Claire Donley | Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Nick McConaughy | Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Kelsey Nein | Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Dennis Oliver | Plumbing Inspector
Katie Wasky | Environmental Health Specialist
McCray Wooten | Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Cindy Sharpe | Clerical Specialist
Marissa Daugherty | Clerical Specialist

EH: Environmental Health Inspections and Visits

Jennifer Valentine, REHS | Sheila Wolfe, REHS

Environmental Health Inspections for 2023

	Political Subdivision	Camp grounds	Public Pools	Mobile Home Parks	Animal Bites	Food Inspections	Sewage Permits	Well Permits	Nuisance Complaints	Complaints Abated	Total
Townships	Amanda	0	0	0	8	8	7	7	0	0	30
	Berne	2	5	5	10	25	10	15	3	3	78
	Bloom	1	4	0	17	7	35	30	1	1	96
	Clearcreek	0	0	2	10	6	13	9	0	0	40
	Greenfield	0	3	1	8	34	26	22	1	0	95
	Hocking	0	1	0	4	13	10	8	0	0	36
	Liberty	2	1	0	10	13	17	21	0	0	64
	Madison	0	0	0	0	2	7	6	0	0	15
	Pleasant	0	2	0	6	17	21	20	4	3	73
	Richland	0	0	0	4	7	2	2	0	1	16
	Rushcreek	0	0	0	8	9	10	13	0	0	40
	Violet	0	3	0	40	98	9	25	0	0	175
	Walnut	1	0	2	8	18	8	31	1	1	70
	Lancaster	1	19	0	96	845	1	0	0	0	962
Villages	Amanda	0	0	0	2	20	0	0	0	0	22
	Baltimore	0	1	0	4	74	0	0	0	0	79
	Bremen	0	2	0	0	23	0	0	2	1	28
	Carroll	0	0	0	1	31	0	0	0	0	32
	Lithopolis	0	0	1	0	22	0	0	0	0	23
	Millersport	0	0	0	0	51	0	0	0	0	51
	Pleasantville	0	2	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	9
	Rushville	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	1	0	7
	Stoutsville	0	0	0	2	8	0	0	1	0	11
	Sugar Grove	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Thurston	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	West Rushville	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
	Buckeye Lake	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Totals	7	43	12	240	1,347	176	209	14	11	2049

Health Promotion & Planning

Baylie Blevins, BS | Director of Health Promotion

Community Education and Outreach

To continue to promote health, wellness and safety, FCHD collaborated with multiple county organizations including but not limited to Pickerington Schools, Lancaster City Schools, Bremen Elementary, Destination Downtown Lancaster, United Way, ADAMH, Canal Winchester Chamber, and Fairfield County ECA. FCHD participated in **40** community-based health events in 2023.

Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation

FCHD continued efforts to reduce dependence on nicotine and support cessation efforts through the ODH Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation grant. A media campaign that encouraged residents to call the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line reached over **37,000** people. FCHD conducted **10** outreach events in 2023 that included a youth nicotine dependence training to Millersport School Administrators.



Division Highlights

- FCHD disseminated more than **9,000** free COVID-19 home test kits to Fairfield County schools, businesses, and residents in 2023.
- FCHD established a workgroup to address nicotine and vaping use in youth of Fairfield County.
- To promote healthier eating habits and increase access to fresh vegetables and fruits to the community, FCHD has created a committee to start the planning for a community garden.
- FCHD is working to increase public access to naloxone by strategically placing NaloxBoxes through the County.

Cribs for Kids

FCHD promoted safe sleep practices for infants and newborns and distributed **192** “*crib kits*” containing a cribette, fitted sheet, and sleep sack to parents throughout the county.

Project DAWN

The Fairfield County Health Department is part of the Project DAWN opioid overdose education and naloxone distribution network. Through this program, anyone in Fairfield County can receive a free Project DAWN Naloxone kit and training. FCHD works closely with the Fairfield County ADAMH Board and Project F.O.R.T. to distribute naloxone and training to best prepare the community. FCHD gave out a total of **1,598** Project DAWN kits and **101** of those kits were given to first responders. FCHD has provided training and naloxone to local schools, mental health and recovery centers, and private businesses throughout the county.

Promoting Mental, Emotional and Behavioral Health

With funding from the Ohio Center for Excellence in Behavioral Health Prevention and Promotion, FCHD partnered with county organizations including Lancaster City Parks, Fairfield County Parks, Geneva Hills, Destination Downtown Lancaster, Lithopolis Methodist Church, and Pickerington Parks to place suicide prevention messaging benches and street signs.

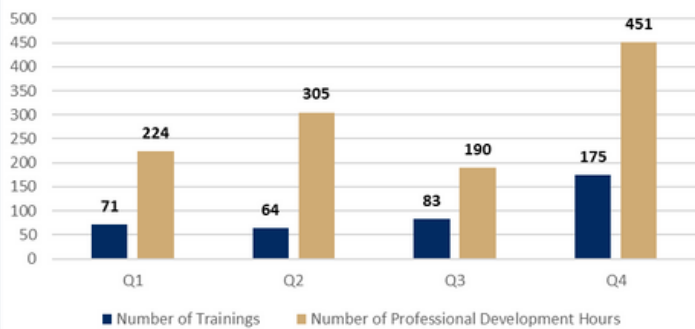
Healthy Eating and Active Living Program

In 2023, FCHD established the Healthy Fairfield County Coalition with a mission to ensure Fairfield County is healthy by promoting healthy eating and active living and a purpose to increase healthy eating and active living opportunities throughout the county. A result of the HEAL grant was placing healthier snacks in the vending machines and promoting drinking water first. FCHD conducted a safety walk audit in collaboration with community partners. FCHD engaged the community to determine what Healthy Eating or Active Living strategy they would like us to prioritize; they chose a community garden, which we will work on implementing in 2024. In preparation for that, we created a community engagement plan for the next grant year.

Health Promotion & Planning

Baylie Blevins, BS | Director of Health Promotion

2023 Staff Development Trainings by Quarter



Quality Improvement

FCHD is consistently seeking both internal and external feedback on processes to ensure our functions are serving the public and our staff as best as possible. FCHD conducts quality improvement projects using the Lean Six Sigma process. There are 20 staff members trained in the Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt and 8 staff members trained in Lean Six Sigma Green Belt.

FCHD staff participated in over **1,100** hours of professional development activities.

Public Health Accreditation

FCHD received national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board in 2020. To maintain the standards for certification, FCHD is expected to ensure staff are adequately trained, services are delivered effectively, and quality assurance is guaranteed. FCHD has begun the reaccreditation process and it will be completed in 2025.



Health Promotion & Planning Team:

Baylie Blevins, BS | Director
Riley Ernst, MPH | Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Mitchell McGuire, MPH | Epidemiologist
Megan Baker, BS, RA | Health Educator
Bethany Carson, MS, OCPA | Health Educator
Hannah Josefczyk, BS, CHES, OCPA | Health Educator

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Volunteers

The MRC is a group of non-medical and medical volunteers who assist in both emergency and regular activities. The Fairfield County MRC has **76** volunteers who spent **253** hours supporting public health efforts in 2023. Volunteers participated in emergency preparedness trainings, CPR certification classes, COVID-19 kit distribution and emergency response exercises.



Safe Communities Program

The Safe Communities program is a data-driven initiative to save lives and reduce injury by increasing seat belt usage, increasing impaired driving awareness, increasing motorcycle safety awareness, coalition building with community partners, and traffic fatality review. This program is implemented in collaboration with the Ohio State Highway Patrol and the National Highway Safety Administration.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness

FCHD is responsible for the Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Cities Readiness Initiative programs. This allows staff to engage community partners in response to public health emergencies in an effort to maintain business continuity, manage mass care events, and facilitate response to pandemics and other events that could impact the general public. There were **23** emergency preparedness activities conducted in 2023.

Epidemiology Report

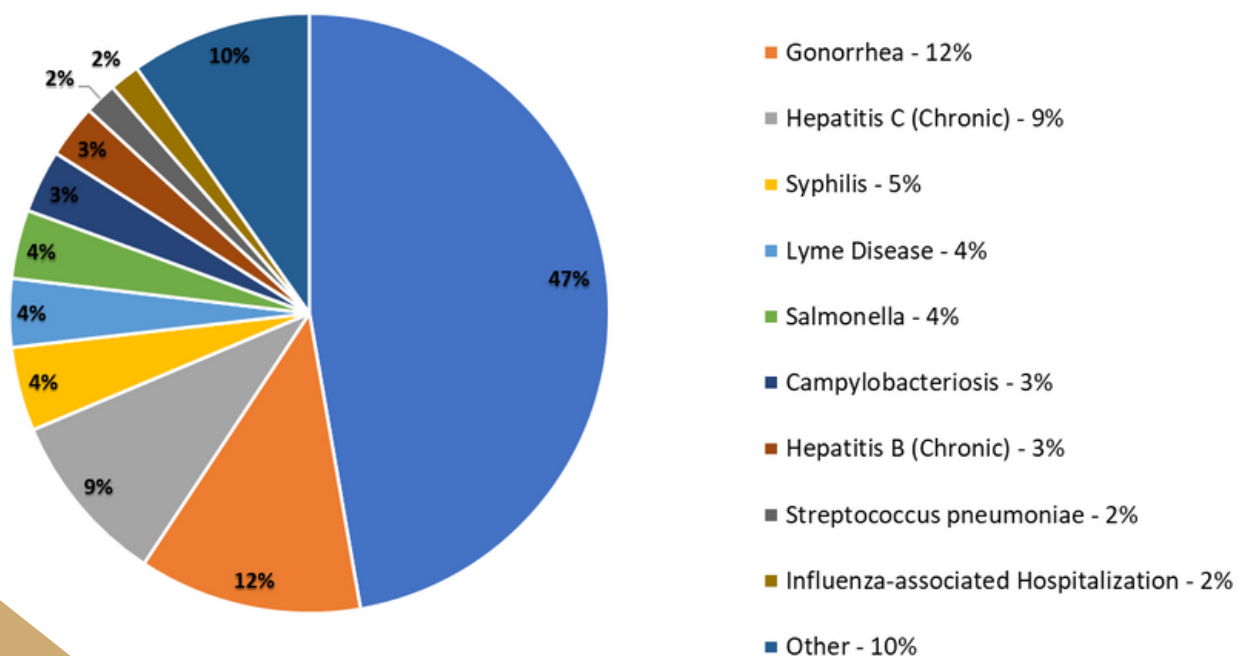
Mitchell McGuire, MPH | Epidemiologist

The Fairfield County Health Department investigated **973** reported disease cases in 2023, excluding COVID-19 investigations. Chlamydia remained the most frequently reported disease accounting for **47%** of all cases. Gonorrhea and Hepatitis C cases were the next most frequently reported diseases. (Note: Not all diseases are required to be reported to local health departments. In Ohio, there are about 90 diseases that are considered reportable infectious diseases.)

2023 Infectious Diseases Report (Excluding COVID-19 Investigations)

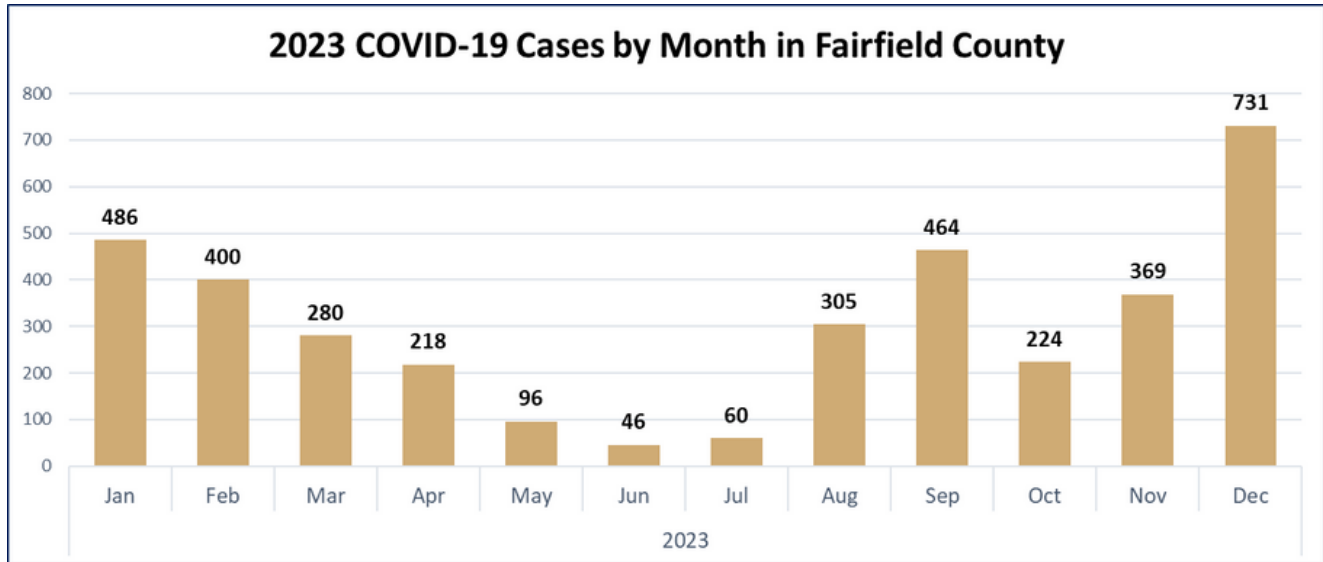
Flu	2021 Cases	2022 Cases	2023 Cases	2023 Incidence Rate (per 100,000)
Hospitalized Flu Cases	8	66	16	58.3
STDs	2021 Cases	2022 Cases	2023 Cases	2023 Incidence Rate (per 100,000)
Chlamydia	338	401	460	282.4
Gonorrhea	91	140	117	71.8
Hepatitis (A-C)	2021 Cases	2022 Cases	2023 Cases	2023 Incidence Rate (per 100,000)
Hepatitis A	4	0	0	0
Hepatitis B - chronic	28	44	28	17.2
Hepatitis C - chronic	106	137	91	55.9
Top 5 Diseases 2022	2021 Cases	2022 Cases	2023 Cases	2023 Incidence Rate (per 100,000)
Chlamydia	338	401	460	282.4
Gonorrhea	91	140	117	71.8
Hepatitis C - chronic	106	137	91	55.9
Syphilis	35	23	44	27.0
Lyme Disease	7	30	36	22.1

Fairfield County Top 10 Infectious Diseases 2023

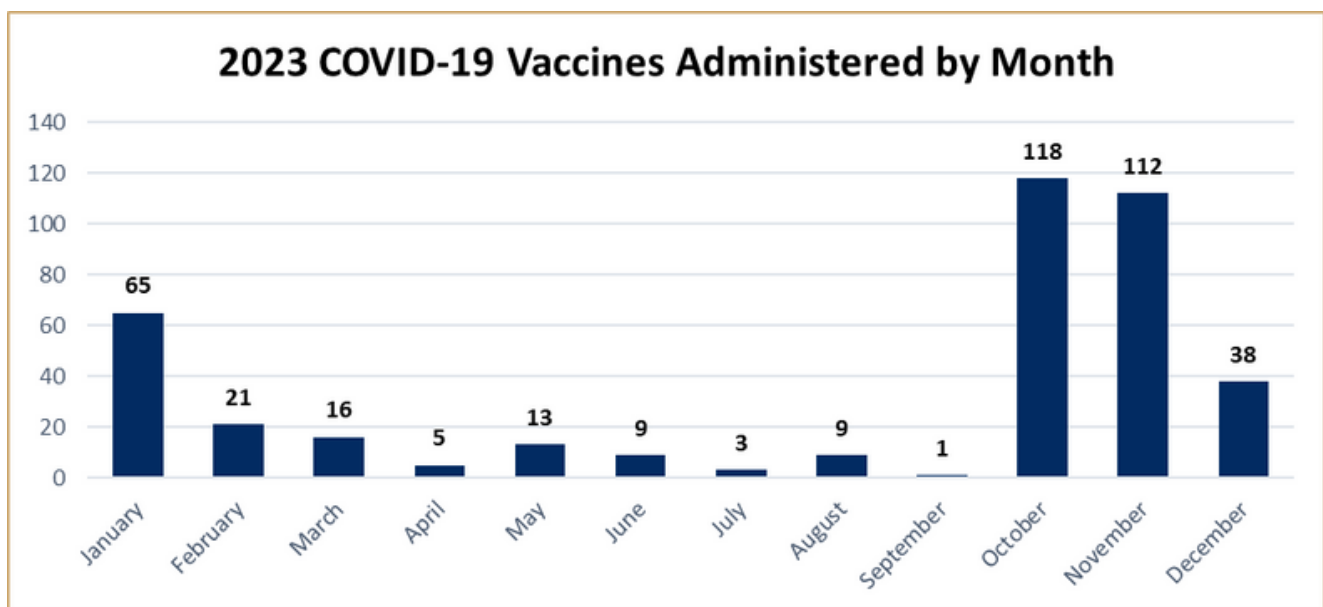


2023 COVID-19 Update

Mitchell McGuire, MPH | Epidemiologist



In 2023, there were **3,679** COVID-19 cases for Fairfield County residents. The highest months of reported COVID-19 cases were January and December of 2023, with a total of **1,217** reported positive cases. There were **23** Fairfield County resident deaths that were attributed to COVID-19. **410** COVID-19 vaccinations were administered by the FCHD Nursing Staff in 2023, including both Moderna and Pfizer. As a measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19, FCHD distributes free at-home tests to members of the public. FCHD distributed approximately **9,000** COVID-19 at-home test kits throughout 2023. These test kits are still available to be picked up at FCHD.



WIC: Women, Infants, and Children

Mary Smith, LSW, DTR, CLC | Director of WIC

WIC Overview

WIC is a nutrition education program. WIC provides nutritious foods which promote good health for pregnant women, women who just had a baby, breastfeeding moms, infants, and children up to age five.

Nutrition Program

FCHD provides nutrition education and healthy foods which promote overall wellness. After enrollment, WIC clients can receive information on healthy eating, referrals to specialty health care professionals, and general parenting education at the two countywide locations in Lancaster and Pickerington.

Fairfield County had \$2,235,380.30 in WIC food benefits redeemed to support healthy families in Fairfield County in 2023.

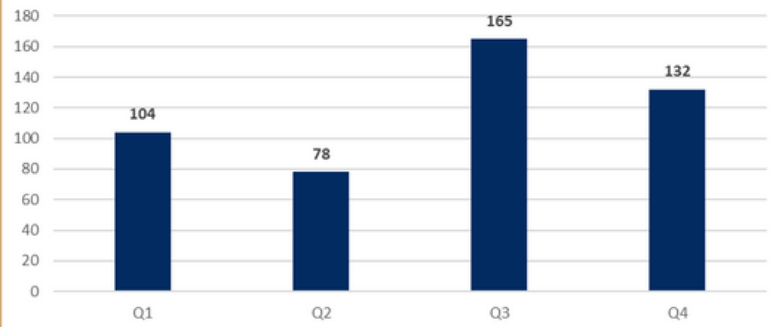
Farmer's Market Coupons

FCHD promotes healthy eating by partnering with local Farmer's Market vendors and offering fresh fruit and vegetable options for WIC clients. 1,014 Farmer's Market Coupons were issued and 592 were redeemed totaling \$2,960.00.

Breastfeeding Program

FCHD provides breastfeeding education and consultation to women who are pregnant or recently gave birth. Certified Lactation Consultants, Specialists, and breastfeeding peer helpers support new moms as they embark on the journey of breastfeeding.

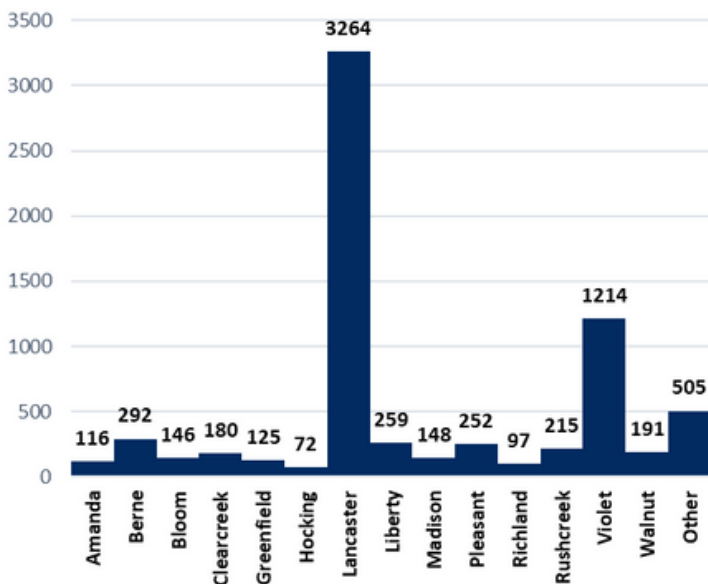
Number of Women that Initiated Breastfeeding in 2023



The Connection

In 2023, WIC began an education program called The Connection for in office learning, nutrition promotion through online learning, as well as sending out a Quarterly Resource Newsletter.

2023 WIC Participants Served by Township



WIC Team:

Mary Smith, LSW, DTR, CLC | Director
Cheryl Hopkins, RD, LD, CLS | WIC Dietitian
Jordan Miller, MS, RDN, LD, CLS | Breastfeeding Coordinator and Dietitian
Kaleigh Pulsinelli, BFA | Breastfeeding Peer Helper
Lucinda Robinson, CLC | WIC Nutrition Assistant
Denise Roudabush | WIC Nutrition Assistant
Kari Saunders, MS, RD, LD | WIC Dietitian

FCHD in the Community



FCHD conducted a walk audit of East Main Street. We reviewed the safety conditions of local sidewalks, crosswalks, bus stops, and more as part of our efforts to promote active transportation across Fairfield County.

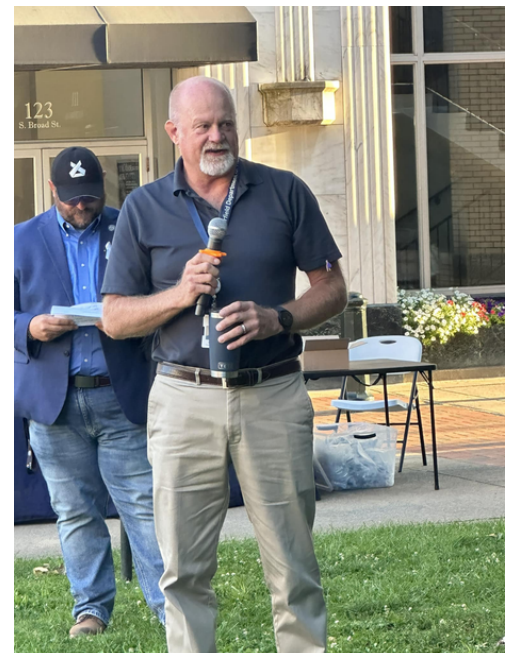


The Board of Health Monthly meetings went on the road in 2023! In March the meeting was held at the Millersport Elementary School.



Delivering a 988 bench to the Village of Pleasantville. FCHD placed 15 Suicide Prevention 988 throughout Fairfield County.

Health Commissioner, Joe Ebel, spoke at Overdose Awareness Day in Downtown Lancaster.



FCHD in the Community

WIC nutrition coordinator, Cheryl Hopkins for being recognized as a 2023 Firefly Award recipient from our friends at FACFC.



Our all staff training day was held at the Wagnall's library and ended with a trip to the Rock Mill Bridge.

FCHD staff participated in a United Way Day project to support the Harcum House.



The health department booth at the 2023 Fairfield County Fair.



Fairfield County
**Health
Department**

1550 Sheridan Dr. Ste.100
Lancaster, OH 43130