

PORTAGE COUNTY

2026-2028 Community Health Improvement Plan



PORTAGE COUNTY
COMBINED GENERAL
HEALTH DISTRICT



University Hospitals

The Science of Health. The Art of Compassion.



Mental Health &
Recovery Board
OF PORTAGE COUNTY

CHNA Priority 1: Chronic Disease

CHNA Priority 1: Chronic Disease

Strategy 1: Provide programs and information related to tobacco, lung cancer, and smoking cessation; provide lung cancer screenings.

Goal: Reduce the lung cancer mortality rate.

Objective: By December 31, 2028, reduce the burden of tobacco use and tobacco-related disease in Portage County.

Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
<u>Activity 1:</u> Continue referring residents to the University Hospitals Portage Medical Center (UH Portage) smoking cessation program		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	68 referrals
<u>Activity 2:</u> Continue offering tobacco harm reduction items through vending machines at Portage County Health District (PCHD) and UH Portage		Josh Sexton, Portage County Health District	35 lozenge packs 51 gum packs \$1,241.89 of nicotine cessation products dispensed at no cost to consumers.
<u>Activity 3:</u> Continue providing Quit Kits to residents		Jalessa Caples, Kent City Health Department	29 kits distributed
<u>Activity 4:</u> Distribute tobacco cessation resource guide		Jalessa Caples, Kent City Health Department	No tobacco cessation resource guides were sent to partners, no social media posts created, no views on Canva.



<u>Activity 5:</u> Increase distribution of resources related to tobacco and lung cancer as part of the ACS Health Equity Program		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	159 people received information
<u>Activity 6:</u> Increase lung cancer CT screenings through UH Portage		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	Reported annually
<u>Activity 7:</u> Provide education about the dangers of and misconceptions about vaping		Jalessa Caples, Kent City Health Department	No educational events/talks were given.
<u>Activity 8:</u> Explore school-based tobacco programs and tobacco resources to share with youth. Understand what is currently being done and opportunities for expansion.		Sarah Gehring, Townhall II	
Collaborative Partners: UH Portage, PCHD, Kent City Health Department, Townhall II			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Access to smoking cessation programs/materials, Access to screenings, Health equity			
Target Population: Adults; youth; residents who smoke cigarettes, vape, and/or use other tobacco products			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Health behaviors, Chronic disease			

CHNA Priority 1: Chronic Disease

Strategy 2: Increase education about and improve access to colon cancer screenings and colon cancer prevention.

Goal: Decrease colon cancer rates.			
Objective: By December 31, 2028, reduce the incidence and mortality of colorectal cancer in Portage County.			
Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
<u>Activity 1:</u> Increase education about colon cancer screenings and colon cancer prevention, including information about nutrition and physical activity - Topic: Limitations of Cologuard - Topic: Screenings recommended starting at age 45 (for those with average risk) - Audience: businesses – when University Hospitals Portage Medical Center (UH Portage) provides biometric screenings - Audience: Geographic areas with high prevalence of colon cancer according to the (UH Portage) data; NAACP - Outlet: National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month (March)		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage Cowan Stevens, Axess Family Services	211 people educated on colon cancer
<u>Activity 2:</u> Improve access to colon cancer screenings - Bulk order and send out Cologuard		Cowan Stevens, Axess Family Services	

- Explore other ways to improve access to screenings			
Collaborative Partners: UH Portage, Axxess Family Services			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Access to screenings, Health equity			
Target Population: Adults, Adults 45+			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Health behaviors, Chronic disease			

CHNA Priority 1: Chronic Disease			
Strategy 3: Educate the community on chronic disease risk factors; increase access to preventive screenings and monitoring devices.			
Goal: Decrease atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease deaths.			
Objective: By December 31, 2028, reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease in Portage County by decreasing coronary heart disease mortality and reducing the prevalence of key risk factors, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and stroke/transient ischemic attack (TIA).			
Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
<u>Activity 1:</u> Educate the community on chronic disease risk factors and prevention and conduct the following screenings: blood pressure, body mass index, cholesterol, and pre-diabetes screenings (track separately)		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	Screenings: 290 bp 33 bmi 73 pre-diabetes 53 cholesterol PCHD: Total BP screenings at Thrive Together Farmers' Market - 27

<u>Activity 2:</u> Maintain position for American Heart Association Rural at Heart Program Personnel will implement and promote use of blood pressure machines in libraries		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage Amy Cooper, Portage County Health District	Karli Franz, American Heart Association Rural at Heart Program personnel NEOMED free clinic distributes bp monitoring equipment to patients. Need numbers
<u>Activity 3:</u> Promote cardiac CT for cardiac calcium score tests		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	Reported annually
Collaborative Partners: UH Portage, Northeast Ohio Medical University Free Clinic, PCHD			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Access to screenings, Access to medical equipment, Health equity			
Target Population: Adults			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Health behaviors, Chronic disease			

CHNA Priority 1: Chronic Disease			
Strategy 4: Educate Portage County residents on healthy eating and active living.			
Goal: Improve nutrition and physical activity.			
Objective: By December 31, 2028, improve healthy eating and physical activity behaviors among adults and youth in Portage County by increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and increasing participation in regular physical activity.			
Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
<u>Activity 1:</u> Continue physical activity programming made available by University Hospitals Portage Medical Center (UH		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	18 participants

Portage) and Portage Parks (Parks Rx Program)		Jennifer White, Portage Park District	
Increase awareness of programs			
Include corporate connections			
Continue Portage Park District's community group hiking opportunities			
<u>Activity 2:</u> Continue community education on nutrition		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	959 people educated on nutrition and physical activity
Include corporate connections			
<u>Activity 3:</u> Provide community education on physical activity		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	PCHD: 15 participants attended mindfulness hike Yoga on the lawn every Tuesday approx.. 20 participants
Include corporate connections		Kim Plough, Portage County Health District	Sequoia: Yoga in the park 15 participants Tai chi in the park 12 participants
Continue Portage Park District's Junior Ranger program		Joan Seidel, Kent City Health Department	KCHD: no educational events/talks were given.
		Jennifer White, Portage Park District	
<u>Activity 4:</u> Continue providing Eating Smart Being Active, a nutrition and physical activity education program		Jeannie Yount, OSU Extension	
Collaborative Partners: UH Portage, Portage Park District, PCHD, Kent City HD, OSU Extension			

Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Access to physical activity opportunities, Access to nutrition education, Food equity
Target Population: Adults, Youth
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Health behaviors, Chronic disease

CHNA Priority 1: Chronic Disease				
Strategy 5: Increase access to and participation in community-based nutrition programs and opportunities such as farmers' markets.				
Goal: Reduce food insecurity.				
Objective: By December 31, 2028, improve food security and access to healthy foods in Portage County by reducing food insecurity among adults and children and increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables.				
Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Data Source	Target Data/Metric
<u>Activity 1:</u> Participate in and increase awareness of the Senior Nutrition Program.		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage Kate DeAngelis, Haymaker Farmers' Market in Kent	Because Senior Nutrition program transactions are processed directly between participating vendors and the statewide program, Haymaker does not receive or maintain market-specific redemption records any longer. SFMNP @ Thrive Together = 0	
<u>Activity 2:</u> Participate in and increase awareness of the Power of Produce kids' program		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage Kate DeAngelis, Haymaker Farmers' Market in Kent	581 participants in the Power of Produce program. PCHD: \$64 POP redeemed at Thrive Together Farmers Market	
<u>Activity 3:</u> Continue and expand referrals and participation addressing food insecurity and its impact on health at the University		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	581 individual visits 1303 people impacted from those visits.	

Hospitals Portage Food For Life Market.			
<u>Activity 4:</u> Increase awareness of the Portage County Community Resource Guide ¹		Audrey Riley, Portage County Job and Family Services	
<u>Activity 5:</u> Continue implementing a Social Determinant of Health Screening Tool that includes food insecurity		Cowan Stevens, Axess Family Services	
<u>Activity 6:</u> Continue and expand school-based programs to address food insecurity Continue to partner and participate with Raven Packs which is a community wide initiative to feed food-insecure students in the Ravenna Schools and community. The bags are delivered directly to the schools Birdie bags - Birdie bags are delivered to participating Portage County schools to provide bags of food, snacks and pantry items for food –insecure children		Mindy Gusz, UH Portage Laura Wunderle, Raven packs Candice Curtis, Birdie Bags	Raven Packs 2242 packs of food distributed Birdie Bags 4352 packs of food distributed UH – June free lunch = 200+
<u>Activity 7:</u> Continue Axess Family Services efforts to reduce food insecurity through food pantry and other efforts		Cowan Stevens, Axess Family Services	
<u>Activity 8:</u> Host pop-up pantries in Portage County at least 4 times per month (PCHD, KCHD, NEOMED, KSU)		Sarah Meduri, Portage County Health District	PCHD: 752 families served

¹ <https://www.portagecounty-oh.gov/job-family-services/pages/resource-guides>

			KCHD: In May, 20 people were served. No pantries were held in June.
Collaborative Partners: UH Portage, Haymaker Farmers' Market in Kent, Portage Senior Center, Portage County Job and Family Services, PCHD, Axess Family Services, Raven Pack Program (Ravenna City Schools), Birdie Bags (Kent City Schools), Akron Canton Regional Food Bank			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Food equity, Access to healthy food options			
Target Population: Adults, Youth, Seniors, SNAP recipients			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Health behaviors, Chronic disease			

CHNA Priority 2: Mental Health and Substance Misuse

CHNA Priority 2: Mental Health and Substance Misuse			
Strategy 1: Conduct suicide prevention and mental health outreach to Portage County youth and analyze youth mental health data.			
Goal: Improve youth mental health.			
Objective: By December 31, 2028, improve youth mental health outcomes in Portage County by reducing mental health emergency department visits, suicide risk and ideation, and persistent feelings of sadness among youth.			
Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
<u>Activity 1:</u> Conduct suicide prevention and mental health outreach to individuals and community groups/organizations to increase awareness and address youth mental health Include prevention education for middle school and high school students (Townhall II)		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board Sarah Gehring, Townhall II	During the 2025-2026 School Year programming from Townhall II: 3460 students received drug prevention classes 1051 students received gambling prevention classes 152 students received online vaping education 2243 students received Signs of Suicide classes 4143 students received Personal Body Safety class

Include Signs of Suicide for middle school and high school students (Townhall II) Explore what other programs are being implemented in schools			
<u>Activity 2:</u> Continue Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) referrals and activities		Bill Russell, Coleman Health Services	29 served Avg # sessions 4.55 Most services for 1 fam – 15, least services for 1 fam – 1 Schools and Family self-referrals are by far the highest referrers. School referrals always trend down leading into summer. Summer is generally slower since no one is in school referring.
<u>Activity 3:</u> Track and report 988 data for Portage County youth		Sydney Butts, Townhall II	April 1, 2026-June 30, 2026 there were 353 calls into 988. Of those calls, 147 were from females, 125 males, & 6 transgender/binary. 21 calls were Priority 1s. There were 10 MRSS calls.
<u>Activity 4:</u> Track and report Portage County youth data for ED and urgent care for attempted suicides to identify possible trends		Olivia Artman, Portage County Health District	(ED visits mental health – youth 19 and younger) ☐ 77 visits for Q2 of 2026
<u>Activity 5:</u> Evaluate Coroner's Data Report (monthly) to determine number of deaths by suicide among youth to identify possible trends and/or prevention strategies		Olivia Artman, Portage County Health District Terra Howell-Muth, Mental Health & Recovery Board	No youth suicides reported by Coroner's Office to date in 2026

Activity 6: Collect and evaluate youth ACEs scores from behavioral health agencies in Portage County		Terra Howell-Muth, Mental Health & Recovery Board	Collecting ACE data from contract agencies monthly (Axess Family Services, Coleman Health Services, Children's Advantage, and Townhall II)
Activity 7: Evaluate trends in MRSS data in Portage County		Bill Russell, Coleman Health Services	Primary reasons for referral – Suicidality and aggressive behaviors (often the aggressive behaviors are threatening continued placement at their school) Areas of focus – managing symptoms, improving mood, reducing aggressive behaviors
Collaborative Partners: Mental Health & Recovery Board, Townhall II, Coleman Health Services, Portage County Health District			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Health equity			
Target Population: Youth			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Health behaviors, Mental health and addiction			

CHNA Priority 2: Mental Health and Substance Misuse

Strategy 2: Provide community-based activities and trainings to raise awareness about adult mental health and analyze adult mental health data.

Goal: Improve adult mental health.

Objective: By December 31, 2028, improve adult mental health outcomes in Portage County by reducing mental health emergency department visits, suicide and suicide ideation, and poor mental health days, while increasing access to social and emotional support.

Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
Activity 1: Conduct adult suicide prevention and mental health outreach		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board	5 adults completed Youth Mental Health First Aid class at Portage County JFS 15 adults completed QPR at Permco in Streetsboro

Trainings/education: - Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) trainings - Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) - Gun locks with educational information - Continue promotion of 988 Explore audiences to target (e.g., businesses, veterans, rural community)			33 adults completed AID at Kent State In May, MHRB distributed over 3,000 coffee sleeves coasters featuring information on 988 in local coffee shops, bars, and fraternal and veterans' organizations, including American Legion, VFW, and Eagles Clubs – focusing on the rural areas of Portage County.
<u>Activity 2:</u> Open and operate Coleman Crisis Center		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board	Ribbon cutting held on May 27. Crisis Stabilization Unit scheduled to open in September.
<u>Activity 3:</u> Track and report 988 data for Portage County adults		Sydney Butts, Townhall II	From April 1, 2026 – June 30, 2026 there were 353 calls to 988. Of those that disclosed their identity info: 147 females, 125 males, 6 transgender/non-binary. Most callers were between the ages of 13-24 (66), then 25-34 (59), then 35-44 (35). There were 15 callers between the ages of 65-84. 21 calls were Priority 1s, with May having the largest amount (12). There were 10 calls for MRSS.
<u>Activity 4:</u> Track and report Portage County adult data for ED and urgent care for attempted suicides to identify possible trends		Olivia Artman, Portage County Health District	Activity 4 (ED visits mental health – adults 20 and older) ☐ 134 visits for Q2 of 2026

<u>Activity 5:</u> Evaluate Coroner's Data Report (monthly) to determine number of deaths by suicide among adults to identify possible trends and/or prevention strategies		Olivia Artman, Portage County Health District Terra Howell- Muth, Mental Health & Recovery Board	8 suicide deaths in 2026: all white, ages range from 27-80, 7 males, 1 female, 4 deaths by gunshot, 3 deaths by asphyxia/hanging, 1 auto collision
<u>Activity 6:</u> Collect and evaluate adult ACEs scores from behavioral health agencies in Portage County		Terra Howell- Muth, Mental Health & Recovery Board	Collecting ACE data from contract agencies monthly (Axess Family Services, Coleman Health Services, Children's Advantage, and Townhall II)
<u>Activity 7:</u> Provide resources for suicide loss survivors		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board	From April 1, 2026 – June 30, 2026 MHRB mailed 6 letters to family members of people who died by suicide that includes a booklet and local grief resources.
<u>Activity 8:</u> Provide Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) de-escalation training for first responders		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board	14 first responders participated in one day Advanced CIT Training class in May.
Collaborative Partners: Mental Health & Recovery Board, UH Portage, Townhall II, Portage County Health District			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Health equity			
Target Population: Adults			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Health behaviors, Mental health and addiction			

CHNA Priority 2: Mental Health and Substance Misuse

Strategy 3: Increase access to substance misuse educational programming and harm reduction items.			
Goal: Reduce adult and youth substance misuse.			
Objective: By December 31, 2028, reduce substance misuse and its associated health impacts in Portage County by decreasing substance-related emergency department visits and deaths, and reducing alcohol and marijuana use among adults and youth.			
Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
<u>Activity 1:</u> Continue distributing Narcan and educating Portage County residents on how and when to use Narcan		Josh Sexton, Portage County Health District Kent City HD Townhall II Mindy Gusz UH Portage	PCHD: 222 its distributed THII: 184 kits distributed KCHD: 51 boxes distributed UH: 707 boxes of Naloxone and 243 Fentanyl test strips distributed
<u>Activity 2:</u> Continue providing harm reduction items in the vending machines at PCHD, University Hospitals (UH) Portage Medical Center, Townhall II, and probation		Josh Sexton, Portage County Health District Mamie Sawyer-Brewer , Townhall II	PCHD: 3 drug deactivation pouches 8 packs fentanyl test strips 105 first aid kits 19 hygiene kits 31 boxes of Naloxone 20 sharps containers 82 packages of condoms 22 packages of dental dams 7 packages of internal condoms 17 packages of lubricant 55 pregnancy tests 35 packs nicotine cessation lozenges 51 packs nicotine cessation gum Total Cost estimates: \$2133.41 all provided to consumers at no cost.

<u>Activity 3:</u> Continue Operation New Beginnings – the Portage County Mental Health and Recovery Board sends a letter to each person arrested for a DUI in Portage County. A couple of weeks later Townhall II reaches out with a call offering their services		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board Townhall II	Apr-Jun 2026: 26 letters were sent to Portage residents who had an OVI charge from Ohio State Highway Patrol. Townhall followed up with 11 people.
<u>Activity 4:</u> Explore options for providing training to bartenders, especially those bartending during outdoor festivals		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board	No update
<u>Activity 5:</u> Continue and expand the “Drink Less, Be Your Best” CDC campaign		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board	Alcohol awareness flyers have been distributed at health fairs and summer festivals by the Mental Health & Recovery Board. Drink Less, Be Your Best campaign ads ran on social media and on paid publications in April.
<u>Activity 6:</u> Review all substance-attributable deaths (including alcohol) and develop strategies for prevention		Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board Olivia Artman, Portage County Health District	No updates, need to schedule 2027 meeting
<u>Activity 7:</u> Track use of safe needle exchange and disposal		Angela DeJulius, Axess Family Services	Program is suspended. Low participation, sizing of syringes are too large of a gauge making them undesirable, concerns over funding.

<u>Activity 8:</u> Provide education to adults and youth about the dangers of and misconceptions about marijuana		Jalessa Caples, Kent City Health Department	No educational events/talks were given.
<u>Activity 9:</u> Provide programs and wraparound services after criminal justice system involvement among those with a background of substance misuse; provide opportunities and prevent future substance misuse issues		Bridget Stuntz, OhioMeansJobs	On April 16 th OhioMeansJobs hosted the Annual Reentry Resource Fair. There were 57 justice-involved people that were helped by 57 community partners. Currently the Reentry Coalition of Portage is working with Dr. Stacy Barranger from NEOMED by conducting “Reentry Roundtables” asking justice-involved individuals to give their feedback regarding the local criminal justice system and what needs to be improved. Roundtables were held at PARC, Hope Town, and OUR Place. This information will help us develop our Strategic Plan.
Collaborative Partners: PCHD, Kent City HD, UH Portage, Townhall II, Mental Health & Recovery Board, OhioMeansJobs, Axess Family Services			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Access to harm reduction items, Workplace policies			
Target Population: Adults, Youth, Substance users, Residents arrested for DUI, Bartenders, Residents involved in the criminal justice system			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Health behaviors, Mental health and addiction			

CHNA Priority 3: Population Health and Safety

CHNA Priority 3: Population Health and Safety
Strategy 1: Provide educational programming about various unintentional injuries and distribute safety devices.
Goal: Reduce unintentional injury incidence.

Objective: By December 31, 2028, reduce unintentional injuries and related deaths in Portage County by decreasing youth ingestions, fall-related emergency department visits among older adults, and motor vehicle crash fatalities.

Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
Activity 1: Continue distributing car seats, providing installations, and providing car seat checks		Rachel Belvin, Portage County Health District Sara Slanina, Kent City Health Department Akron Children's Hospital	PCHD: 25 installations 13 car seat checks Held 5 car seat check events 3 booster seats distributed KCHD: 4/21/22 hosted event at Tiny Town Daycare center with Akron Children's 11 checks were completed
Activity 2: Continue Safe Communities Grant: Click it or Ticket, Drive Sober Get Pulled Over, distracted driving (Phones Down) Continue "Save a Life" high school tours – use simulators demonstrating distracted driving risks (Safe Communities grant)		Kylee McCracken, Portage County Health District	Held 8 events this quarter Annual None for Under 21 event was held in April where approx. 1600 high school students attended
Activity 3: Promote bike safety for adults and children (e.g., helmets, safe cycling routes) Continue Safe Mobility Project, Put a Lid On It Campaign, Safe Bike Week, Safety Town		Kylee McCracken, Portage County Health District	Hosting water safety event at west branch state park beach 7.17.26, more life jackets were donated to the safe kids' coalition and those will be placed at the life jacket loaner station as the current supply slowly dissipates. Planning walk to school day for the fall at Aurora middle school.
Activity 4: Hold events to promote pedestrian safety among children including Safe Kids Portage County's Walk to School Day in October		Kylee McCracken, Portage County Health District/Safe Kids Coalition	

<u>Activity 5:</u> Distribute home safety checklists, flyers, and kits		Mario Marelos, Akron Children's Hospital Portage County Metropolitan Housing	
<u>Activity 6:</u> Distribute safety items received through Safe Kids (gun locks, carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, medicine boxes, lock boxes, and/or prescription disposal pouches) and other entities		Kylee McCracken, Safe Kids Portage County, PCHD Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board	No updates
<u>Activity 7:</u> Provide education to prevent unintentional ingestions (e.g., swallowing button batteries) - Expand unintentional ingestion education at Safety Town: Poison prevention education (event for kids entering kindergarten). Provide stickers and magnets to reinforce messaging. - Expand education at community fairs (i.e., through Portage Park District and Fire Dept). Provide stickers and magnets to reinforce messaging.		Kylee McCracken Portage County Health District/ Safe Kids Sara Slanina, Kent City Health Department	PCHD: 105 students KCHD: no updates at this time

- Child injury awareness month – extra social media promotions - Educate through Community Paramedicine			
<u>Activity 8:</u> Provide education to prevent unintentional ingestions of medicines and THC Explore possibilities and partnerships to provide this education.		Kylee McCracken Portage County Health District/ Safe Kids Karyn Kravetz, Mental Health & Recovery Board	No update.
<u>Activity 9:</u> Explore options for connecting with Townhall II, churches, and schools and partnering to enhance parent education and unintentional injury prevention through the teenage years		Kylee McCracken Portage County Health District/ Safe Kids	No update.
<u>Activity 10:</u> Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) program offered at senior centers and other locations in Portage County		Kim Plough, Portage County Health District Joan Seidel, Kent City Health Department Mindy Gusz, UH Portage	PCHD – 45 classes, 576 participants UH: 207 participants KCHD: Classes are paused due to lack of location. Looking to resume in the fall.
<u>Activity 11:</u> Provide safety awareness education for teen drivers (e.g., Safe Mobility Project,		Catie Noyes-Johnson, OSU Extension 4H	Safe a Life Tour is being scheduled for one school to be held in August or September.

None 4 Under 21, 4-H CARTEENS)		Kylee McCracken Portage County Health District/Safe Communities	
<u>Activity 12:</u> Provide unintentional injury awareness education to first year Kent State students Explore options for expanding to other colleges/universities and high schools		Dr. Marie Walters, UH Portage ED Physician	
Collaborative Partners: PCHD, Kent City Health Department, Akron Children's Hospital, Portage County Metropolitan Housing, UH Portage, OSU Extension 4H			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Access to child safety equipment, Access to unintentional injury education			
Target Population: Youth, Adults, Seniors			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Community conditions, Access to care, Maternal and infant health			

CHNA Priority 3: Population Health and Safety

Strategy 2: Monitor communicable and vector-borne disease rates, increase access to vaccines, and offer educational programming.

Goal: Reduce communicable and vector-borne diseases.

Objective: By December 31, 2028, reduce the burden of communicable diseases in Portage County by decreasing flu hospitalizations and cases of priority infectious diseases, increasing vaccination uptake, and strengthening surveillance for emerging diseases.

Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
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<u>Activity 1:</u> Provide immunization clinics throughout Portage County		Morgan Cole, Portage County Health District Joan Seidel, Kent City Health Department	PCHD: 3 clinics – Hattie Lahrlam, PC Jail, Garrettsville back to school, 216 vaccines total KCHD: 1 adult MMR vaccine given in April 2026
<u>Activity 2:</u> Continue with Get Vaccinated Ohio Grant – Educate providers about vaccine coverage disparities using the IQIP tool, which identifies under-vaccinated groups and supports targeted provider outreach to increase vaccination rates		Morgan Cole, Portage County Health District	ODH is now taking over IQIP, Received GV27 grant
<u>Activity 3:</u> Monitor flu, measles, and pertussis vaccination rates		Morgan Cole, Portage County Health District	ODH made a dashboard for vaccination rates. Sent out to all schools in Portage County
<u>Activity 4:</u> Continue monitoring STI rates		Olivia Artman, Portage County Health District Joan Seidel, Kent City Health Department	PCHD: (Confirmed cases of STIs) Q2 of 2026: ☐ 61 Chlamydia cases ☐ 16 Gonorrhea cases ☐ 0 HIV cases ☐ 0 Syphilis cases KCHD: Chlamydia (A= 8 M=12 12 June=7), Gonorrhea (A= 1 M=2 June=1), Gonococcal (A=1 M=2 June=1)
<u>Activity 5:</u> Continue Sexual Health Educational Program – Provide condoms and other safer sex items to (a) individuals and (b) organizations. Offer classes at different facilities covering anatomy, menstrual health, and healthy relationships		Josh Sexton, Portage County Health District	13 Sexual health educational events attended 975 safer sex items distributed

Activity 6: Offer tick and vector-borne illness education and events. Monitor (e.g. mosquito trapping) - Park RX - Tick walk and talk - Kent City Health Department – conduct case interviews and pass out tick information. - Portage Park District work with PCHD – educates residents to wear bug spray, check for ticks, etc. - Tick stations – signs and collection of ticks at park entrances. QR code to provide information. Passive tick surveillance (goes to PCHD)		Olivia Artman, Portage County Health District Natalie Menke, Portage County Health District Jennifer White, Portage Park District Joan Seidel, Kent City Health Department	PCHD: 3 confirmed cases of Lyme Disease. 25 total cases for 2026. Hosted tick education event with OSU extension office on May 21st. Approx. 30-40 participants attended Educated participants of Mindfulness walk on how to properly check for ticks. About 15 people educated. KCHD: 4/7 KSU Wellness Health Fair provided tick and vector-borne illness education, EH staff gave talk about ticks to KSU Childcare Center, Mosquito trapping has started and spraying will begin soon.
Collaborative Partners: PCHD, Kent City Health Department, Portage Park District			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Health equity, Access to vaccines, Access to sexual health education, Access to vector-borne disease education			
Target Population: Adults, Youth			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Community conditions, Access to care, Maternal and infant health			

CHNA Priority 3: Population Health and Safety

Strategy 3: Track maternal, fetal, and child health outcomes; provide support to families.

Goal: Improve maternal, child, and infant health.

Objective: By December 31, 2028, strengthen maternal and child health outcomes in Portage County by increasing participation in WIC and family support programs, promoting healthy growth and development for infants and children, and expanding community engagement in child abuse prevention and family relationship support services.

Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress
<u>Activity 1:</u> Increase enrollment in WIC program		Amy Cooper, Portage County Health District	Average monthly caseload = 1,757
<u>Activity 2:</u> Track initial birth weight and growth/development of WIC participants		Amy Cooper, Portage County Health District	Born early = 165, Low birth weight = 50 infants
<u>Activity 3:</u> Track breastfeeding rates of mom WIC participants		Amy Cooper, Portage County Health District	77% initiation rate
<u>Activity 4:</u> Provide PRC (Prevention, Retention, Contingency) Family Support Services – child development, safety, nutrition education and material goods for infants/children birth to age 3		Rachel Belvin, Portage County Health District	11 milestone education sessions were given
<u>Activity 5:</u> Juvenile Detention Center - track child absenteeism and provide specific outreach to those parents		Jessica Tamba, Juvenile Detention Center	534 at risk truancy cases 160 HB410 truancy cases 694 total cases HB96 changed how truancy cases work and will allow Juvenile Detention to receive these cases quicker.
<u>Activity 6:</u> Offer Parenting Classes (Triple P)		Sarah McCully, Townhall II Lori Pamer, Children's Advantage	No classes scheduled at this time, and the position is currently vacant. Children's Advantage is looking to hire.

Activity 7: Offer Nurturing Families program – one-on-one sessions with prenatal and age 0-5 categories		Heather Trnka, Akron Children's Hospital	
Activity 8: Provide presentations on child abuse prevention/awareness		Leanne Biltz, Children's Advocacy Center	55 presentations given.
Collaborative Partners: Portage County WIC, PCHD, Juvenile Detention Center, Townhall II, Children's Advantage, Akron Children's Hospital, Children's Advocacy Center			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Food equity, Juvenile justice policy			
Target Population: Adults, Youth, Families, Pregnant people, WIC participants			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Community conditions, Access to care, Maternal and infant health			

CHNA Priority 3: Population Health and Safety			
Strategy 4: Raise awareness of and educate on online safety.			
Goal: Improve cybersecurity and internet safety for youth and adults.			
Objectives: By December 31, 2028, promote youth safety and digital well-being in Portage County by reducing electronic bullying, increasing youth awareness of online safety risks, and expanding community participation in cybersecurity and sextortion prevention education programs.			
Action Step:	Timeline	Lead Person or Organization(s)	Progress

Activity 1: Explore partnerships and best practices for improving cybersecurity. - What is happening in the state/other geographies? - What is Townhall II doing? - What is CAC doing? - Incorporate the Do It For James Foundation? - What is JFS doing? - Partner with Kent State students - Incorporate 50+ Support Committee - Explore how to delay time when youth start using social media - Partner with We Care Seniors - Mental Health and Recovery Board can provide information about cybersecurity with its senior substance use education		Portage County Health District Townhall II Children's Advocacy Center Mental Health and Recovery Board Kent State University	PCHD: Olivia Artman, overseeing one KSU master's student June-Aug who is developing a cybersecurity behavioral risk assessment for seniors which will be administered by PCHD staff. kyleeThe youth version of the survey will be developed by a master's student during the fall semester
Activity 2: Provide community education on cybersecurity and sextortion.		Leanne Biltz, Assistant Director, Children's Advocacy Center	55 presentations given.
Collaborative Partners: PCHD, Townhall II, CAC, Mental Health and Recovery Board, Kent State University			
Specific Opportunities to address Policy, Equity or Access: Cybersecurity policy			
Target Population: Adults, Youth, Seniors			
Ohio SHIP Alignment: Community conditions, Access to care			

