



# MAHONING COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

PREVENT · PROMOTE · PROTECT

Fall 2024

## Newsletter

### A message from Health Commissioner

*Ryan Tekac*

As we transition from warm, sunny summer days to the cooler, cloudier days of fall, we want to ensure our residents are informed about important tips to stay safe and healthy during this shift.

Proper maintenance of your septic system is very important and should be completed on an annual basis. Our Environmental Division can help guide you in this process as well as helping if there are any issues that arise. Maintaining a proper septic system not only keeps your family safe, but it also keeps the drinking water of those in our community safe from potential contaminants.

Our Sharps Disposal Program helps residents dispose of used medical needles safely, eliminating them from local landfill facilities. In conjunction with funding assistance from the Mahoning County Green Team, you can safely dispose of used needles, lancets, and other medical sharps by bringing a recommended FDA approved Sharps container or heavy-duty, puncture resistant plastic or metal containers to our lab for proper disposal.

For more information or for a complete list of the many programs and services we offer, visit [MahoningHealth.org](http://MahoningHealth.org).

## Childhood Trauma - The Lasting Effects & How to Help

Like the backpacks children carry for school, experiencing childhood trauma is a heavy burden to bear for those who have experienced it. In addition to the implications, imagine their feelings and emotions as physical objects with the stress, responsibility, expectations, and worries all weighing them down.

These emotionally heavy backpacks can become too much for anyone to carry. According to the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), more than two thirds of children reported at least one traumatic event by age 16.

Potential traumatic events include:

- Psychological, physical, or sexual abuse
- Community or school violence
- Witnessing or experiencing domestic violence
- Sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- Neglect
- Serious accidents or life-threatening illnesses

A single, time-limited traumatic event is called acute trauma. During this event, a child may experience a variety of emotions, thoughts, feelings, and physical responses which can be scary and contribute to feeling overwhelmed.

The experience of multiple traumatic events is referred to as chronic trauma. According to The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, children who have been exposed to trauma spend an enormous amount of emotional and mental energy processing the event which reduces their capacity to complete other age-appropriate, developmental tasks.

The impact of childhood trauma can last into adulthood. Child trauma survivors may experience learning, behavioral and mental health problems, increased involvement with child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and other health problems. Trauma is a risk factor for nearly all behavioral health and substance abuse disorders.

It's impossible to know exactly how trauma will affect a child, but keeping consistent and open communication, starting in their formative years throughout their teens, it's easier to recognize mental health red flags that emerge. It's also important to be in contact with the child's physician, as they can recommend resources for those who are struggling.

You can access a more in-depth article at [https://www.oacbha.org/docs/August\\_2023-Unpacking\\_Child\\_Trauma\\_Real.pdf](https://www.oacbha.org/docs/August_2023-Unpacking_Child_Trauma_Real.pdf).



## Program Spotlight

### PROPER MAINTENANCE FOR YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM

Household Sewage Treatment Systems, or septic systems as they are commonly referred to, are made up of a complex system of pipes, tanks and sometimes motors that are often buried underground. These systems are designed for each house, based on the soil makeup, lot size and the size of the home.

Anyone who is not connected to a municipal or private sewage line has one of these systems. In Mahoning County, there are over 14,000 properties with septic systems. In 2022 Mahoning County Public Health (MCPH) rolled out a county wide program to educate homeowners about these systems and to ensure the systems are properly maintained since these systems are typically not in the line-of-sight.

Due to the wide variety of system components and styles, MCPH recommends anyone who has a septic system in the county visit [MahoningHealth.org](http://MahoningHealth.org) or contact their Environmental Division to ensure they are meeting the requirements and understand what is needed to keep their system functioning properly. This helps extend the life of the septic systems while also helping to improve ground and drinking water quality in the region.



📍 Mahoning County Public Health  
50 Westchester Drive  
Youngstown, Ohio

🌐 [MahoningHealth.org](http://MahoningHealth.org)

☎ Main Office Number  
330.270.2855

☎ Toll Free in Mahoning County  
1.800.873.MCHD

🕒 Office Hours  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## Sharps Disposal Program

Mahoning County Public Health, with funding assistance from the Mahoning County Green Team, provides our county residents with a community sharps disposal program to safely dispose of used needles, lancets, and other medical sharps.

Used sharps can pose a significant health threat to recycling and sanitation workers. It is also beneficial to keep medical waste out of our local landfill facilities.

Residents of Mahoning County can bring their containers to our laboratory facilities for safe, no-cost disposal. Our program recommends using FDA approved medical Sharps containers for disposal, but we will also accept heavy-duty, puncture resistant plastic or metal containers with a tight fitting, puncture resistant lid.

Containers collected at our laboratory are picked up by Stericycle and taken for medical waste incineration.

The residential Sharps collection continues to be a popular and widely used program at Mahoning County Public Health. The lab regularly answers many calls about the program, and people stop in to drop off very frequently. Also, it seems there have become fewer and fewer alternative options for people to safely dispose of their Sharps containers.

By providing this program, residents can do the right thing and properly dispose of their medical waste. This keeps dangerous waste out of our landfills and helps protect sanitation workers that pick up residential trash.

Mahoning County residents can bring their FDA approved Sharps containers to Mahoning County Laboratory Services at 116 Westchester Drive in Youngstown, Monday - Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.


## Facts about Adolescent Trauma

**AT LEAST**  
  
**1 IN 7 CHILDREN**  
 HAVE EXPERIENCED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT IN THE PAST YEAR.

**EACH DAY MORE THAN 1,000**  
  
 YOUTH ARE TREATED IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS FOR PHYSICAL ASSAULT-RELATED INJURIES.

**IN 2019,**  
  
**ABOUT 1 IN 5**  
 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REPORTED BEING BULLIED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY IN THE LAST YEAR.

**8%** OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS HAD BEEN IN A PHYSICAL FIGHT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY ONE OR MORE TIMES DURING A 12 MONTH SURVEY TIME.

  
 EACH DAY, ABOUT **14 YOUTH** DIE FROM HOMICIDE, AND MORE THAN **1,300 ARE TREATED** IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS FOR VIOLENCE-RELATED INJURIES.

Source: Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

## Community Collaboration



### MCPH PARTNERED WITH CARESOURCE FOR HEALTH FAIR

Mahoning County Public Health (MCPH) partnered with CareSource to host a health fair at the Sebring Fire Station in September. Staff from MCPH's Community Health, Nursing, WIC, and HUB divisions participated in the health fair along with many of our dedicated community partners.

MCPH has been working on the Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL) project in Sebring over the past 12 months. As a culmination of those efforts, MCPH provided a variety of engagement activities surrounding healthy eating at the health fair to include distributing planting kits. Kits included a growing bag, soil brick, and seeds, they also provided samples of a healthy fall salad along with recipe cards. Sebring residents were also asked for their feedback on a future farmers' market in the community. The OSU Extension Office also provided a healthy eating engagement activity where they did a healthy recipe cooking demonstration with samples and ideas for utilizing the leftovers in a healthy way.

