



COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

DAKOTA COUNTY, MN
FEBRUARY 2025



Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the 2020-2024 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), specifically in 2023 and 2024. It aims to give a straightforward understanding of how the initiative has adapted during the COVID-19 pandemic, staffing changes, and community capacity changes and stayed committed to community health goals throughout these transitions.

This report, the Dakota County Community Health Assessment, and the Dakota County Community Health Improvement Plan are posted on the Dakota County website at:

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/publiccommittees/CHA/Pages/default.aspx>

Healthy Dakota Initiative

The Healthy Dakota Initiative (HDI) is a comprehensive community health assessment and improvement process that engages representatives from a broad cross-section of partner organizations, including hospitals, clinics, schools, non-profits, businesses, and community members. The HDI aims to engage the community in a strategic planning process to improve the health and safety of all Dakota County residents, and to ensure that the priorities and strategies are shared by the partners in the county. The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is an integral step in addressing public health issues identified in the Community Health Assessment (CHA).

The CHIP is a community-driven plan that includes goals, measurable objectives, and action steps for each priority area. It is a cooperative effort among local health and partner organizations that are committed and supportive of priority areas. The plan is a call-to-action and a guide for all community members and organizations to improve health in Dakota County.

In 2023, Dakota County completed their newest CHA. This CHA will be a foundation for the 2025-2029 CHIP. The Health Dakota Steering Committee reviewed the vision and values of the initiative. The newly revised language follows and has been adopted by the 2019-2024 CHIP:

Vision:

Health and well-being for all in Dakota County.

Values:

- **Committed:** Collaborating partners speak with budgets and staff.
- **Trauma-informed:** We choose to build a safe community that reaches all populations, including those that are often not represented.
- **Collaborative:** Partners work together to break down siloes and share resources to ensure there is collective impact.
- **Connected:** Effective communication leads to strong community connections that promote optimum well-being.
- **Engaged:** Individuals, families, groups, and organizations actively participate in creating health for themselves and their communities.
- **Inclusive:** All who live or work in Dakota County – regardless of age, sex, race, color, creed, ethnicity, income, religion, national origin, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or disability - have multiple opportunities to maximize their health.

Introduction

Background Information

The HDI originally launched in April 2013 kicking off the first community health improvement process. The CHA and CHIP are essential components of public health strategy, mandated by Minnesota state statute (Minn. Stat. **§ 145.04**) to undergo thorough evaluation and renewal every five years, ensuring the ongoing relevance and effectiveness of community health initiatives.

The Dakota County CHA represents the first step in this iterative planning process and provides a basis for creating a CHIP. In addition to information about the health of the community, the CHA includes information about assets, challenges, barriers, and resources that the HDI Steering Committee used to develop the Dakota County CHIP. Dakota County Public Health (DCPH) convened, facilitated, and participated in the 2019-2024 CHIP process. Based on the data from the CHA, the HDI Steering Committee identified the following priority areas:

- **Adult Mental Health:** Improve mental health and prevent mental illnesses by identifying needs, providing education, and promoting access to mental health services for all adult residents of Dakota County.
- **Adolescent suicidal ideation:** Improve mental health and prevent suicide by identifying needs, providing education, and promoting access to mental health services for all adolescent residents of Dakota County.

DCPH formed the Mental Health Action Team (MHAT) for the priority areas to identify goals, measurable objectives, and strategies. This team was committed to implementation, evaluation, and reporting to the community and stakeholders.

Community Context: COVID Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented challenges for our community and slowed the progression of Dakota County's CHIP. In 2020-2021, Dakota County paused work on the CHIP and transitioned capacity to the pandemic response. During this time, there was a variety of transitions in staff, both within DCPH as well as community partner organizations involved in the HDI. In 2019, the CHIP included a third priority – Adult Physical Activity. When the CHIP efforts were re-launched in 2022, Adult Physical Activity was dropped in order to focus the final two years of the CHIP on the two mental health priorities.

Throughout 2023, the primary focus of the HDI's work shifted to acclimating the MHAT to the expectations of the CHIP and laying the groundwork for renewed action planning. The HDI took this approach to ensure the CHIP's alignment with evolving community needs and priorities. Recognizing the long-lasting mental health implications of traumatic events, the CHIP's efforts were channeled through the lens of COVID-19 recovery. As part of the HDI's commitment to ongoing improvement, they utilized information from the 2023 CHA to drive any necessary changes to strategies, ensuring that the CHIP remains responsive to the evolving needs and challenges of the community.

Process for Monitoring and Revision

The CHIP coordinator and the MHAT tracked the CHIP through regular updates, data collection, and quarterly meetings. During these meetings, members provided updates on various projects and gathered data when able to assess how well different strategies were working. Members collected data by following an Outcomes Based Accountability framework. Project evaluation focused on three main questions: What did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off? While many initiatives are still in progress and will continue, the current CHIP concluded in 2024. This report will share current data collected to show the impact of ongoing efforts. Projects often addressed more than one goal and strategy but will only be highlighted once in this report.

Community partners played key roles in shaping the CHIP. Partners conducted project and data reviews in workgroups or through larger group meetings, and those who could not attend were encouraged to respond to polls afterward. This consensus-driven approach allowed everyone to share ideas and feedback, ensuring shared responsibility for improving community health. Partners worked together to develop project action plans, and the MHAT provided regular progress updates during quarterly meetings. This process remained flexible, allowing changes to meet evolving community needs and partner capacities.

The CHIP aligns with Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) requirements and follows goals from [Healthy People](#) and [Healthy Minnesota](#). By meeting these standards, the plan ensures best practices for community health improvement. DCPH successfully leverages a variety of state, local, and grant funding to implement CHIP projects while meeting any requirements tied to those resources to create sustainable and effective change.

Progress on Priority Health Issues from 2019-2024 CHIP

Vision

Children, adolescents, adults, and families in Dakota County have opportunities to attain optimal mental well-being.

Mission

Identify needs, provide education, reduce stigma, and promote access to mental health services.

Youth Suicide Ideation

About This Priority

Adolescent suicidal ideation: According to the 2023 CHA, adolescent mental health and suicidal thoughts are serious issues in Dakota County.¹ In 2022, almost half (48%) of 9th graders said they felt down, depressed, or hopeless in the past two weeks.² This problem has been growing since 2019, with a large increase between 2019 and 2022. More girls (62%) reported feeling depressed than boys (36%). Older students had higher rates of depression, with 58% of 11th graders affected. Students of color also experienced high rates, especially multi-racial (59%) and Hispanic/Latino/a (57%) students. LGBTQ+ students (78%) and gender minority students (81%) reported even higher levels of depression.² Community members ranked youth mental health as a top concern, linked to issues like anxiety from switching between online and in-person school during the COVID pandemic, problems learning online for those with mental health challenges, substance use, and skipping school.¹ In 2022, 15 percent of Dakota County 8th graders, 13 percent of 9th graders, and 16 percent of 11th graders said they seriously considered attempting suicide during the past year. These percents are similar to the state for 8th graders, slightly below the state for 9th graders, and slightly above the state for 11th graders.²

Objective 1.1	Baseline	Data Source	Current Outcome
By December 31, 2024, reduce the percent of youth who seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year to 11% (10% improvement over baseline).	12% of 9th graders (2019) ³	Minnesota Student Survey	13% of 9 th graders (2022) ²

Progress

Goal 1: Community Partners in Dakota County will adopt mental health promotion strategies that emphasize protective factors and self-efficacy in youth.

Strategy	Description	Status	Lead
1.1.1	Qualitative data gathering specific to 18–26-year-olds to better understand needs and how to address them.	In Progress	NAMI, DCPH
1.1.2	Train and educate Dakota County partners on healthy coping skills/strategies for youth.	In Progress	SHIP
1.1.3	Equip educators and parents with evidence-based mental health and trauma intervention trainings to serve children within schools and at home.	In Progress	DCPH

1.1.1 Qualitative data gathering specific to 18–26-year-olds to better understand needs and how to address them.

From 2021-2023, Dakota County Public Health (DCPH) participated in the Think Tank initiative, a collaboration with other counties, the state, and the University of Minnesota Extension. The group focused on researching and developing best practices for measuring community well-being, going beyond traditional mental illness prevalence to include human flourishing and community assets that support mental health. While the Think Tank is currently on hiatus, its innovative approach has influenced DCPH’s work on community-specific public health responses.

During 2023 and 2024, DCPH partnered with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) MN to assess the mental health needs of young adults aged 18-26, a largely unstudied group. The team, alongside a Dakota County epidemiologist, developed a survey informed by literature reviews and Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) frameworks. In 2025, DCPH will finalize the survey, implement it with community partners, and prepare a report summarizing findings by year-end.

1.1.2: Train and educate Dakota County Partners on healthy coping skills/strategies for youth.

Project 1- CredibleMind: Behavioral Health 360

As part of its COVID-19 recovery efforts, Dakota County has partnered with CredibleMind: Behavioral Health 360, a digital mental health platform, to expand access to behavioral self-care resources. Launching in 2025, the platform will empower individuals and families to manage mental health independently, addressing provider shortages and promoting early intervention.

CredibleMind’s “no wrong door” approach connects users to local services when needed while providing self-guided tools and interim support during service delays. It also serves as a referral resource for community organizations, offering vetted mental health resources to enhance care plans and well-being.

This initiative is a critical step in Dakota County's strategy to improve mental health literacy for all ages and foster resilience in the wake of the pandemic.

Project 2-Tobacco-Free Alliance 2023-2024 SHIP Year Youth Engagement Summary

During the 2023-2024 school year, Tobacco-Free Alliance (TFA) conducted 13 "train the trainer" vaping prevention workshops with 145 Developmental Psychology (DP) students across four ISD 196 high schools. DP students teach healthy life skills and chemical prevention curriculum to 6th graders once a week, and TFA's workshop helps them create age-appropriate lesson plans to educate their 6th graders about vaping. DP students taught over 2,000 6th graders using TFA's model. Evaluations showed over 86.3% of DP students agreed they learned something new from TFA's workshop, and 83% agreed the workshop gave them new skills or tools to talk with 6th graders about vaping. This work continues during the 2024-2025 school year.

1.1.3. Equip educators and parents with evidence-based trainings like trauma informed care, suicide prevention, etc.

Project 1: Professional Development

Through a collaborative partnership between DCPH, BrightWorks, and funding from the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), many professional development initiatives were implemented to support school staff in creating equitable and trauma-responsive learning environments. These efforts targeted capacity building, leadership development, and policy enhancements to promote mental well-being and equity in schools across the county.

A BrightWorks training, Principal Coaching Series, provided school leaders with individualized coaching to strengthen their leadership skills in creating supportive and effective learning environments. Three school administrators from one district participated in ten coaching sessions focused on strategic leadership, using data to inform decisions, and setting and monitoring goals. This series helped principals develop actionable strategies to foster equitable, trauma-responsive schools.

Another BrightWorks opportunity, Equity-Focused Leadership Training, offered 16 staff members from seven districts the opportunity to build their capacity in advancing educational equity. Through this training, participants explored five key equity practices designed to identify and address systemic barriers, promote inclusive school cultures, and implement long-term improvements that benefit all students.

Through SHIP, Dakota County was able to create school staff professional development awards. These awards provided financial support for four school staff members to pursue specialized training in areas critical to student well-being, including Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Tier 1 Mental Health Promotion, Trauma-Informed Practices, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Over the course of three school years, SHIP has been able to fund 13 staff at \$500 each to participate in learning opportunities that helped them integrate these practices into their schools, ultimately strengthening the support systems available to students.

Project 2: School Community Partner Awards (CPAs)

DCPH, through SHIP community partner awards, funds school district initiatives that support policy, systems, and environmental changes to improve student health. School CPAs are made available every year that SHIP has been active and occurred every year of the 2010-2024 CHIP. As part of CHIP requirements, policy changes are a necessary strategy to move community health forward in a sustainable way. The CPAs offer an opportunity to provide funding and technical assistance to implement new policies. What follows is a unique example of addressing well-being through policy work.

South St. Paul Middle School implemented a schoolwide cell phone policy in the 2022–23 school year to address learning disruptions, phone misuse, attention challenges, and social-emotional impacts. The policy required students to secure phones in a Yondr pouch during school hours, with enforcement through confiscation and parental retrieval.

Data from the first year of implementation showed an 18.5% reduction in offenses that could result in suspension, a 22% decrease in fights and assaults, and an 11% decline in tardiness. Academic proficiency also increased, with math scores rising from 12.1% in 2021 to 19.7% in 2024 and reading scores from 30.3% to 36.3%. In the second year, phone confiscations declined significantly, from at least one per day in the first year to a total of eight in September of the second year. Staff reported increased student engagement, improved communication, and more on-time assignment submissions. One teacher noted, “I see happier kids!”

This policy change, supported by SHIP funding, demonstrates measurable improvements in student behavior, academic performance, and classroom engagement.

Project 3: Cultural Liaisons and Partnerships

Strong partnerships with school district cultural liaisons through the South of the River Collaborative enhanced schools' ability to meet the needs of diverse student populations. Liaisons provided direct support and facilitated culturally responsive engagement between families, schools, and the community. DCPH helps provide infrastructure support to facilitate ongoing professional development and connection opportunities for these staff. Much of the learnings of this group are centered around mental health, well-being, and trauma responsive practices. SHIP provides an infrastructure for South of the River Collaborative meetings throughout the year and convened the inaugural South of the River Collaborative retreat on October 25, 2024.

These combined initiatives highlight Dakota County’s ongoing commitment to creating equitable, trauma-informed educational settings. By integrating leadership development, training, partnerships, and supportive policies, schools have strengthened their capacity to promote whole-person health and student success.

Adult Mental Health

About This Priority

Adult mental health in Dakota County is a growing concern, with significant increases in reported mental health challenges. In 2023, 14% of adults experienced poor mental health for 14 or more days in the prior month, more than doubling since 2019.¹ Depression diagnoses rose to 24%, with disparities among adults assigned female at birth (30%), those aged 45-54 (33%), and individuals living below 200% of the poverty level (46%).¹ Anxiety prevalence reached 30%, highest among young adults (41%) and those in poverty (57%).¹ Social and emotional support has declined to 71%, down from 77% in 2019, and feelings of isolation have increased to 9%.¹ These trends highlight the pandemic's lingering mental health impacts and the need for targeted strategies to address disparities and promote well-being.

While suicide rates in Dakota County have declined over the past decade, reflecting progress in this space, public health prevention is still important for the community's well-being.

Objective 2.1	Baseline	Data Source	Current Outcome
By December 31, 2024, reduce the average number of mentally unhealthy days for adults in the past 30 days to 2.7 days (10% improvement over baseline).	3.0 days (2016) ⁴	County Health Rankings	4.2 days (2021) ⁵

Progress

Goal 2: Community Partners in Dakota County will increase community awareness and knowledge to improve mental well-being and prevent suicides in adults.

Strategy	Description	Status	Lead
2.1.1	Build opportunities to increase social connection and reduce social isolation.	In Progress	DCPH
2.1.2	Train and provide communication to non-clinical people on the topics of mental health, trauma responsiveness, and suicide prevention.	In Progress	DCPH

2.1.1. Build opportunities to increase social connection and reduce social isolation.

Project 1: The Healthy Neighborhoods Projects

The Healthy Neighborhoods Projects, supported by SHIP, prioritized improving health equity in Dakota County through initiatives targeting mental health, access to healthy food, and opportunities for physical activity. In 2023, nine projects received \$3,000 grants, selected from 24 applicants.

A significant focus of the projects was on enhancing community mental health and well-being. Initiatives included increasing access to culturally responsive mental health resources and improving mental health literacy, particularly for underserved populations. These efforts aimed to create welcoming spaces and

reduce barriers to mental health support. Other projects also complemented mental health goals, such as addressing food insecurity and promoting physical activity, both of which are critical to overall mental health. By building partnerships with culturally specific organizations and ensuring sustainability, these projects reinforced Dakota County's commitment to addressing mental health needs as part of creating healthier, more equitable neighborhoods. [More information about the 2023 Healthy Neighborhood Grants can be found in the final report.](#)

The 2024-2025 Healthy Neighborhoods Community Partner Award is currently funding 10 projects, each receiving \$3,000 to \$8,000 to improve community health and wellness. Awards focused on mental health and wellbeing during this cycle included Restoration for All, Rise Up Recovery, the YMCA of Burnsville, and the City of Hastings Parks and Recreation. Restoration for All, Inc. received support to improve mental health literacy for immigrant and refugee families through trauma-informed outreach. Rise Up Recovery utilized funds for staff training on trauma-informed practices. The YMCA of Burnsville supported the implementation of community-informed health and wellbeing programming that supports family and community socialization and engagement, with emphasis on Burnsville's growing African resident population. The City of Hastings Parks and Recreation secured funds for outdoor recreation equipment to increase community engagement.

Project 2: Mothers and Babies Program

Almost one in five individuals will experience a mental health condition during pregnancy or within the first year after giving birth, and of those, one in five will experience suicidal thoughts or undertake acts of self-harm.⁶ Family home visiting programs monitor clients in this population for mental health conditions using validated screening tools and provide appropriate follow-up interventions and referrals for those experiencing depression, anxiety, or other mental health conditions. Mothers and Babies is a stress reduction intervention administered through nine sessions that incorporate cognitive behavioral therapy, attachment theory, and mindfulness. Initially developed for the prenatal and postpartum periods, the program can also be adapted for individuals beyond 12 months postpartum.

In 2024, the Dakota County Mothers and Babies program served 46 parents—8 prenatal and 38 postnatal. Of those, 26 clients completed all nine sessions. The program demonstrated effectiveness in reducing signs and symptoms of mental health conditions. Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) scores, a measure of depressive symptoms ranging from 0-27, decreased by an average of 7 points, from 12.2 to 5.2, after program completion. This reduction highlights a significant improvement in participants' mental health.

Evaluation data further emphasized the program's impact. Among participants who completed evaluations (n=9):

- 100% agreed the visits and handouts were useful in recognizing and dealing with their stress (Mean score: 4.89/5).
- 100% reported they were likely to use the strategies learned in the program to manage stress in the future (Mean score: 4.78/5).
- Participants felt completely comfortable sharing with the home visitor (Mean score: 5.0/5).
- 100% were highly likely to recommend the program to a friend (Mean score: 5.0/5).

To support further implementation of the program, Dakota County staff held two trainings for internal staff and external partners, equipping additional home visitors to expand Mothers and Babies in the community. Staff also presented program outcomes at the annual NACCHO360 conference in Detroit,

sharing success stories with a national audience. Recognizing its innovative approach, the program received the prestigious 2024 NACo Achievement Award.

Project 3: Little Moments Count Partnership

Dakota County has become an official Little Moments Count partner, reinforcing its commitment to supporting early childhood development and family support through everyday interactions. In 2024, the county began integrating Little Moments Count messaging and resources into the Family Home Visiting program. This initiative included the purchase of 495 books in English, Spanish, and Somali, which Dakota County staff distributed to parents along with Little Moments Count bookmarks. These bookmarks provided information about the Parent Powered Text program, offering valuable tips and support for new families. Additionally, efforts are underway to update lactation spaces with Little Moments Count and Maternal Mental Health messaging and resources, with this project scheduled for completion in 2025. Dakota County is eager to build on this progress and expand initiatives that support families across the community in the coming years.

2.1.2. Train and provide communication to non-clinical people on the topics of mental health, trauma responsiveness, and suicide prevention.

Project 1: Place to Go Evaluation

In 2025, Dakota County will open its highly anticipated Crisis and Recovery Center, including the “Place to Go,” a critical component of the crisis response continuum. As part of the CHIP strategies, an MHAT developed an evaluation framework to ensure the program meets the needs of the community. This includes the purchase of three iPads and the creation of a satisfaction and evaluation survey in collaboration with Public Health and Social Services. The iPads will be used to implement the survey during the initial six months of operation, with findings intended to guide and refine service delivery. This effort reflects Dakota County’s commitment to leveraging data to align services with community needs and improve outcomes.

Project 2: Faith Community Partnership

DCPH and MHAT recognize the vital role faith communities play in fostering community connection and advancing public health. In 2024, the department reinvigorated its partnerships with faith-based organizations by establishing an internal workgroup to update its contact list and better understand opportunities for collaboration. DCPH sent a survey to faith leaders to gather feedback on preferred ways to partner, and while response rates were limited, the department remains committed to strengthening these relationships. In 2025, the goal is to establish partnerships with at least 10 faith communities through more targeted outreach and prioritizing in-person connections to build trust and explore meaningful opportunities for collaboration. This renewed focus underscores the department’s dedication to leveraging the unique strengths of faith communities in promoting health and well-being across Dakota County.

Project 3: Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training

Under Dakota County’s CHIP, a key focus has been promoting suicide prevention through gatekeeper training. To advance this goal, the county partnered with SAVE (Suicide Awareness Voices of Education) to provide training for Dakota County staff. As of 2024, 162 employees registered on the SAVE platform, with 79 completing the training. This initiative underscores the county’s commitment to empowering staff with tools to recognize and respond to suicide risk. Beyond SAVE, the county promotes and

connects individuals and organizations to training opportunities, utilizing resources such as the NAMI-created website that lists all Minnesota-trained suicide prevention trainers: [Minnesota Suicide Prevention Training & Resources](#).

Project 4: Emergency Department Mental Health Training

MHAT identified a significant need to support emergency department staff with mental health education training, addressing both their well-being and their ability to effectively support patients. The MHAT formed a dedicated workgroup to explore the best approaches to developing and implementing this training. In 2025, the next steps include hosting a roundtable discussion with emergency department leaders to better understand their current training curricula and identify gaps where Dakota County and community partners can provide support. This comprehensive effort demonstrates a commitment to equipping professionals with the knowledge and resources needed to foster mental health and suicide prevention within the community.

Project 5: Communication Strategies

In recent years, Dakota County Public Health has implemented numerous impactful communication initiatives to promote mental health and well-being throughout the community. By combining educational campaigns, strategic collaborations, and resource distribution, these efforts have reached thousands of residents, normalized mental health conversations, and provided essential support. Below are some highlighted campaigns along with key outcome metrics from 2024.

Mental Health Awareness Campaign (2023 and 2024)

- Facebook: Over 10,600 combined reach, 65 clicks, and 12 shares.
- Instagram: 1,600+ reach and 69 likes.
- Twitter: approximately 1,450 impressions with a 1.6% engagement rate.
- 161 views of the Mental Health Awareness page, reflecting a 435% increase from prior months.
- Distribution of 4,160 resources and 529 green light bulbs to the community through the "Light it Up Green" campaign in collaboration with Dakota County Parks and Libraries.
- Annual proclamation to the County Board to recognize May as Mental Health Month.

Additional 2022-2024 Campaigns:

- Holiday Resilience Campaign (2022): Addressed seasonal stressors with social media outreach and coping strategies.
- Suicide Prevention Campaign (September 2023 and September 2024): Delivered educational trainings, community outreach, and messaging to identify warning signs and foster support.
- Veterans' Mental Health Campaign (November 2023 and November 2024): Focused on the unique challenges faced by veterans, providing targeted resources and collaborating with veteran organizations.

In addition to digital and social media campaigns, the department implemented a crisis response messaging initiative, creating posters in English, Spanish, and Somali. These posters are displayed in restrooms across county buildings and community partner spaces, ensuring that critical resources are accessible in discreet and private settings. This suicide prevention and mental health care strategy highlights Dakota County's commitment to reaching diverse populations with essential information about crisis intervention and support.

Project 6: Trauma-Responsive Department

In September 2023, Dakota County Public Health contracted Greenleaf Integrative, a trauma-responsive consulting firm based in Washington, D.C., to support the department in becoming trauma-responsive.

By June 2025, Greenleaf will provide a comprehensive Trauma Informed Organization Assessment, a written initiative workplan with strategies and progress measures, focus group facilitation, and a final report documenting the pilot project.

Since April 2024, Greenleaf has conducted listening sessions with department staff, reviewed strategic documents, and gathered feedback through follow-up surveys and debrief meetings. Findings were presented in August and November 2024, followed by Trauma 101 training in December 2024 to build foundational knowledge. In January 2025, a two-part leadership training introduced trauma-responsive principles, including shared responsibility, transparency, and psychological safety. This initiative is building capacity for sustainable trauma-responsive practices to promote staff well-being and improve community services.

Next Steps for the HDI

Continued work on 2024 Projects.

As the CHIP concludes in 2024, any unfinished projects will extend into 2025. Mental health remained a priority in the 2023 CHA and will be part of the next five-year CHIP cycle. DCPH and the relevant workgroups will continue to oversee these efforts, ensuring they stay on track and move forward. This ongoing collaboration will allow the community to build on the progress made so far and support continued improvements in health outcomes.

Development of the 2025-2029 CHIP

The HDI Steering Committee reviewed the findings from the 2023 CHA, analyzing the data on multiple dimensions, including extent of the problem, trends, comparison to benchmark, and health disparities.

Following the process, the Steering Committee identified eight issues as top health priorities in Dakota County: mental health, substance use, food insecurity, chronic school absenteeism, access to dental care, access to health care, high housing costs, and physical inactivity.

DCPH and its partners will develop a new decentralized CHIP based on these eight priorities. The Dakota County Board of Commissioners identified the CHIP as a board priority. If you are interested in participating in the 2025-2029 CHIP, please send an email to public.health@co.dakota.mn.us.

Minnesota Community Based Substance Misuse and Suicide Prevention Coalition

The Minnesota Community-Based Substance Misuse and Suicide Prevention Coalition Grant presents an exciting opportunity for impactful, collaborative work. This four-year grant, funded by the Minnesota Department of Health, focuses on reducing substance misuse and suicidal experiences among youth aged 10-24. Through the formation of a multi-sector coalition, this initiative will facilitate the development of a Mental Health and Substance Misuse Data Addendum, action planning, and evaluation efforts. By prioritizing youth voice, leveraging both qualitative and quantitative data, and addressing shared risk and protective factors, the coalition will directly inform a coordinated community response linked to the CHIP. With a focus on community asset mapping, gap analysis, and strategic collaboration, this coalition will build on the foundation laid by MHAT, while charting a path for innovative approaches to promote mental health and prevent suicide. For more information or to join this vital effort, please send an email to public.health@co.dakota.mn.us.

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