




Public Health Pulse

Mercer County Health Department Newsletter





HEALTH NEWS

 The Mercer County Health Department would like to give a special shout out and thank you to the following:

- General Grind & Machine employees who helped unload our produce delivery on November 27th.
- Mercer County Credit Union for their donation of \$500 in November for our emergency food pantry.

These physical and monetary donations are extremely helpful and needed for the ongoing services that we provide for the people of Mercer County!

 Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that can happen during certain seasons of the year, usually fall or winter. Shorter days and less daylight are thought to contribute to a change in the brain chemistry, leading to signs of depression. Depression is different from feeling occasionally sad or down. It is a condition that can last weeks, months or years and requires therapy, medication, or a combination of the two for symptom relief. Signs of SAD include the following: increased sleep and daytime drowsiness, loss of interest and pleasure in activities normally enjoyed, withdrawing from friends and family, feelings of hopelessness, difficulties thinking clearly, changes in appetite, and physical health issues such as headaches and nausea. If you feel you could be experiencing SAD, please reach out to your medical or mental health provider. There are treatments for SAD including light therapy, counseling, and certain medications.

 Did you know? The Project of the Quad Cities visits MCHD every 4th Monday from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM to serve the Mercer County community. A full calendar and list of services can be found on page 6.

Upcoming Events

Certified Food Protection Manager's Course:

- February 11th, 2025
8 am - 5pm
at the Mercer County YMCA
Cost: \$150 - license is valid for 5 years

Impact Life Blood Drive

- January 30th, 2025
11 am - 2 pm
at MCHD

Health Jokes

Q: Why did the seatbelt marry the car?

A: They really clicked.

A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other.

MCHD Health Happenings

In addition to our day-to-day duties, here are some activities our staff have been up to!

Women and Families Health Conference

Our Office of Wellness Navigation staff attended the 2024 Illinois Women and Families Health Conference in October. All three staff members attended various break-out sessions to expand their knowledge in the fields of women's health, adolescent health, and breast cancer navigation.



PHEP Coordinator Activities

Todd Walthall, our Emergency Response Coordinator, attended the 2024 Illinois Tickborne Disease Conference in Champaign. This conference brought together clinicians, researchers, local health departments, and other leaders in the field of Lyme and tickborne diseases. Our Health Department is committed to keeping our community safe and informed about these hazards.



Coffee with Your Breast Friend

Our Breast Cancer Navigation Program, in partnership with the Mercer Foundation for Health, sponsored Coffee with Your Breast Friend this past October. This event encourages women to get a mammogram done with their "breast" friend and then get coffee afterwards at one of our local coffee shops. The Mercer Foundation for Health provides a gift card to the coffee shop of your choice, located in Mercer County. This is a great way to support local residents and businesses. We plan to repeat Coffee with Your Breast Friend again next October so get your friend and sign up early!



Ladies Night Out

Our Well Woman and Breast Cancer navigation programs participated in MercyOne Genesis Ladies' Night Out. We enjoyed interacting with the women of Mercer County in support of breast cancer awareness. We were able to provide resources and education to all who attended. Remember, if you or someone you know needs help along their healthcare journey, reach out to us today!

Women's Health Pop Up

The Well Woman and Breast Cancer Navigation programs were out this past November and "popped up" at the Mercer County YMCA. It was a great opportunity to interact with community members and share our program information and education. Be on the lookout to see where we may end up next!



Signs of Suicide (SOS)

On November 19th, our MHAP team assisted the Mercer County High School with SOS Signs of Suicide Training for their 10th-grade class. SOS is a crucial mental health education and screening tool, helping to connect students to resources they may need. The program reached 102 students on this day alone, resulting in 10 students requiring extra follow-up and screening. 8 of those 10 students were further referred for new or continued services with a mental health provider. This is a program we do yearly at the High School and Junior High level with both Mercer County and Sherrard School Districts.

More activities on the next page!



Mind Over Miles 5k

Our OWN and MHAP staff attended the Gray Matters Collective, Mind Over Miles 5k in October to share resources about the navigation services we offer for both mental and physical health.

Tooth Mobile

On December 13th, the Tooth Mobile visited Apollo Elementary School and cleaned the teeth of 27 kids. Thank you to the wonderful staff that day!

- Dr. Lucas Lower
- Hygienists:
 - Shannon Miller, RDH
 - Nicole Connell, RDH
 - Jesse McKee, RDH
- Dental Assistants:
 - Tara Nelson
 - Brooke Kane
- Special Helpers:
 - Liberty Miller
 - Stephanie Retherford



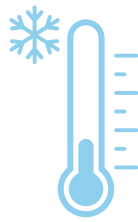
3RD ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE AND BAKE SALE

December 4th, 2024

All of the monetary proceeds from this event went towards our client assistance fund to help our clients in need. The food collected was donated to our local food pantries, and the diapers were donated to Loving Bottoms Diaper Bank. THANK YOU to those who donated and attended our event! We are so thankful to service this wonderful community! A full event summary can be found on page 5.



READINESS REMINDER



Frostbite vs Hypothermia

Extremely cold air comes every winter and affects millions of people across the State of Illinois. The arctic air can be dangerous combined with brisk winds and dangerously cold wind chill values. People exposed to extreme cold are susceptible to frostbite and can succumb to hypothermia in a matter of minutes.

Frostbite

- Areas most prone to **frostbite** are uncovered skin and the extremities (hands and feet).
- Signs/Symptoms include loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes.
 - Treat by going to a warm room.
 - Soaking in warm (not hot) water.
 - Using body heat rather than a heating pad.
 - Or massage to get warm.
 - Slowly warm the affected areas and seek medical help if needed.

Tips to Avoid Frostbite/Hypothermia

- Avoid overexertion, such as shoveling heavy snow or walking in deep snow can cause a heart attack for any age.
- Loose fitting, warm clothing worn in layers will insulate better and keep you warmer.
- Keep your feet and hands as dry as possible.
- Stay covered.
- Wear mittens or gloves.
- At least half of your body heat is lost if your head is not covered... so wear a hat.

For more information please visit ready.illinois.gov.

Hypothermia

- **Hypothermia** is an unusually low body temperature and often includes shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, or drowsiness. Seek medical attention IMMEDIATELY!
- Hypothermia occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it.
- If hypothermia is suspected, go to a warm room and warm the center of the trunk of the body first, using warm blankets on the whole body (including head) to stay dry and increase core temperature.
- Do NOT give hypothermia victims hot beverages or alcohol.



OTHER INFORMATION

Scan our QR code!

The Mercer County Health Department offers many programs that provide resources to those who are in need of various health services. In order to connect you with the resources you might need, please fill out the survey to the best of your ability!



DECEMBER 4, 2024

EVENT SUMMARY

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE AND BAKE SALE



15

GIFT BASKETS DONATED

by local businesses and MCHD employees



157

COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED

- 53 were children
- 209 gift basket entries - 143 punch tickets from visiting program tables and 66 tickets for either wearing holiday apparel, diaper, or food pantry donations

\$1,353

PROCEEDS

- Bake Sale: \$844
- Potato Bar: \$509
- Diaper Drive: 658 diapers donated
- Food Pantry Drive: 1 grocery cart full of food items



*All proceeds went toward our client assistance fund



Santa made a visit and was available for pictures



Cindy Lou Who and The Grinch were also available for pictures



ROE #33 Early Childhood Program provided a children's activity



2025



At Mercer County Health Department
From 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

All services are walk in

The services offered are:

- No Cost HIV, Hepatitis C, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, and Syphilis testing with individual risk reduction counseling
- Free safer sex supplies
- Free Harm Reduction Supplies: Narcan, Fentanyl test strips, disease reduction substance use supplies
- Telehealth PrEP services with labs to reduce the risk of HIV

JANUARY							MAY							SEPTEMBER							
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FEBRUARY							JUNE							OCTOBER								
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