

PROVIDER UPDATE

News from your Local Health Department

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NEW STATE LAW STANDARDIZES CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH SCREENINGS

MDHHS has released the 2025 Michigan Oral Health Plan that outlines strategies to improve oral health through greater awareness, access, and integration of services. Michigan passed a law, Public Act 261, to ensure that children entering kindergarten have an oral health assessment prior to starting school. Similar to vision and hearing screenings, the program will link students to needed dental care to promote oral health as part of school readiness. The screening must be offered to every child enrolled in kindergarten, beginning in Fall 2023. Dental hygienists and therapists contracted through the local health department will be working with area schools to offer this new service.



Michigan Oral Health Plan:

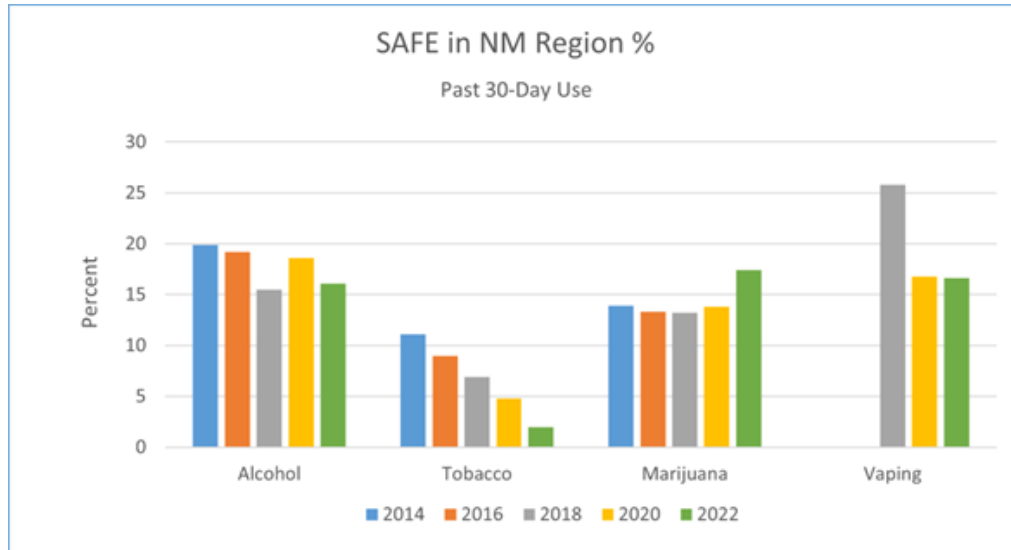
https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Folder50/Folder12/Michigan_State_Oral_Health_Plan_2025.pdf?rev=2dff57dbedc646c1a2bc12354b6ead25

Another action to help providers integrate medical and dental care is the recent AMA approval of a new procedure code for the application of silver diamine fluoride (SDF) by medical professionals. This simple procedure can arrest dental caries and provide temporary treatment until the individual can access dental care.



VAPING & PERINATAL TOBACCO USE

Although tobacco use in adolescents saw a decrease for many years, e-cigarette use is epidemic, with nearly 20% of high school students in Michigan reporting use. Most schools report serious issues with vaping among students. (<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/michigan>)



Adolescent tobacco use leads to dependence. In Northern Michigan, we see this reflected in perinatal smoking rates. In 2020 perinatal tobacco use in the region was at 27%—compared to state and national rates of 13% and 6.5%, respectively.

Reducing tobacco use clearly requires many different interventions, including:

- Increasing attention and funding for campaigns and initiatives to reduce tobacco use among current users, and
- Reducing the number of new tobacco dependent individuals.

Although e-cigarette use may be less harmful than combustible use, it leads to nicotine addiction and several studies have now established that among adolescents and young adults, having used e-cigarettes in the last month strongly predicted combustible cigarette use.

CANNABIS EDIBLES LEAD TO ACCIDENTAL INGESTION BY CHILDREN



As Cannabis products have become increasingly available through the legalization of medical and/or recreational marijuana use, there has been a significant rise in the number of exposures in children under 6 years of age. In a recent issue of *Pediatrics*, most exposures occurred in a residential setting. Seventy percent of the patients had central nervous system depression and 22.7% were admitted to the hospital. The study authors concluded that, “There has been a consistent increase in pediatric edible cannabis exposures over the past 5 years, with the potential for significant toxicity. It is important for providers to be aware of this in their practice and it presents an important opportunity for education and prevention.”



Connecting Adults, Children and Families to Community Resources

Community Connections is a free regional referral program. It addresses social determinants of health, like food, housing, transportation, and physical and mental health. Healthcare providers may refer patients in need.

Once the referral is made, the staff will connect with the referred and talk with them about their various needs. Then, by using known and proven connections, the staff will assist in meeting a variety of individual and/or family needs. Ongoing support will be offered through phone calls, home visits, or office visits.

To learn more or make a referral, go to NorthernMichiganCHIR.org and click on your region.

IMMUNIZATION NEWS

With the onset of winter, we have seen the return of many respiratory illnesses, most notably **RSV** and Influenza, along with continued transmission of **COVID-19**. The best safeguard recommendation is for everyone 6 months of age and older to stay up to date on seasonal flu vaccines as well as COVID-19 boosters.

With the newer Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine now authorized for use in all age groups, most individuals can reduce their risk of infection and severe illness by getting a single dose of the bivalent vaccine. Although there are many good resources for immunization information, [I Vaccinate](#) is an excellent Michigan-based resource. It provides information and tools based on real medical science and research.

Also of note, we have received reports of **varicella** and confirmed pertussis in Northern Michigan this winter, and we may very well see an increase in these vaccine preventable diseases as well. Anyone who is 11 years of age and older should receive a single Tdap if they have



Measles virus is very contagious and up to 90% to unvaccinated people exposed will become infected.

not had one, and pregnant women should receive a Tdap with every pregnancy to reduce the risk of infection in newborns and infants.

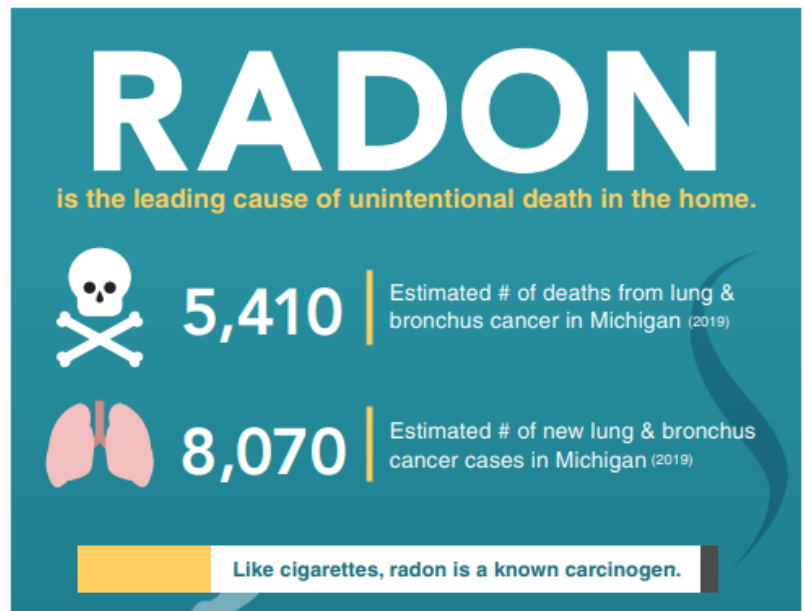
A **measles** outbreak in central Ohio has now infected at least 82 children. Most of those impacted by the outbreak have been under the age of 5 who were not up to date on immunizations. Since details of the first measles cases were announced last month by Columbus Public Health, 32 children have been hospitalized. The first four cases were in unvaccinated children with no travel history who were linked to a childcare in Franklin County, Ohio.

RADON EXPOSURE CAN LEAD TO LUNG CANCER

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, behind smoking, resulting in an estimated 21,000 deaths annually, according to the U.S. EPA. Radon exposure is highly preventable and can be mitigated at a relatively low cost to homeowners.

To help residents learn more about radon levels in their county, Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) has created a one stop website (<https://www.michigan.gov/egle/about/organization/materials-management/indoor-radon>). The site has a search-by-county function where providers and residents can learn about [average radon levels in their county](#), contact information for the local health department and state radon officer, and access more educational resources on radon.

Contact information for your local health department is also found on page 1.



THE PROBLEM

- Radon gas has no smell, taste, or color.
- The CDC states that it is the leading cause of death in the home.
- The only way to know if you have a radon problem is to test for it.

THE SOLUTION

- Radon testing is easy and inexpensive.
- If high levels of radon are found they can easily be reduced.

Communicable Disease Report

Health
Departments of
Benzie-Leelanau,
District #4, and
Northwest
Michigan

COUNTIES INCLUDED

Antrim
Charlevoix
Emmet
Otsego
Cheboygan
Alpena
Presque Isle
Montmorency
Benzie
Leelanau

Disease	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome	0	0	1	2	0
Novel Coronavirus COVID-19	0	0	8064	24160	19303
Amebiasis	0	1	1	0	0
Campylobacter	50	31	47	37	38
Cryptosporidiosis	5	14	15	13	13
Giardiasis	15	11	15	19	11
Listeriosis	0	1	1	0	0
Norovirus	2	29	0	19	48
Salmonellosis	15	30	27	20	20
Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli --(STEC)	2	2	0	3	9
Shigellosis	3	0	0	3	3
Yersinia enteritis	2	2	4	5	15
Flu Like Disease*	8644	8159	5923	3922	8180
Influenza	252	162	287	31	725
Meningitis - Aseptic	8	1	2	3	4
Meningitis - Bacterial Other	2	0	1	0	4
Meningococcal Disease	0	1	0	0	0
Streptococcus pneumoniae, Inv	19	21	17	10	20
Blastomycosis	4	1	4	3	4
Brucellosis	1	0	0	0	1
CP-CRE	0	1	2	2	4
Coccidioidomycosis	1	2	0	4	9
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease	1	1	1	0	0
Cryptococcosis	0	0	0	1	0
Cyptosporiasis	0	0	0	2	3
Encephalitis, Post Other	0	0	0	1	0
Encephalitis, Primary	0	0	0	2	0
Gastrointestinal Illness	118	40	247	37	135
Guillain-Barre Syndrome	0	3	0	1	0
Head Lice	384	315	140	123	134
Histoplasmosis	1	3	2	6	14
Kawasaki	0	0	0	1	0
Legionellosis	6	5	3	2	1
Q Fever*	0	1	1	0	1
Staphylococcus Aureus Infect.*	1	0	2	1	0
Strep Throat	820	502	343	115	258
Streptococcal Dis, Inv, Grp A	7	8	2	6	3
Streptococcus pneumoniae, Drug Resistant	0	0	0	0	1
Unusual Outbreak or Occurrence	1	13	0	6	24
VISA	1	0	0	0	0
Vibriosis - Non Cholera	2	2	0	1	0
Rabies Animal	5	2	2	0	1
Rabies: Potential Exposure & PEP	155	137	169	124	167
Chlamydia (Genital)	416	412	333	407	362
Gonorrhea	37	36	44	62	34
Syphilis - Early Latent	1	1	4	3	1
Syphilis - Primary	2	3	0	1	1
Syphilis - Secondary	5	2	1	1	1
Syphilis - Unknown Duration or Late	2	3	6	3	1
Latent Tuberculosis Infection	4	3	1	6	14
Nontuberculous Mycobacterium	10	11	7	14	17
Tuberculosis	0	2	1	3	2
Chickenpox (Varicella)	13	13	4	1	5
H. influenzae Disease - Inv.	5	7	3	3	9
Mumps	1	0	2	0	0
Pertussis	10	19	2	0	1
Shingles	12	7	10	9	3
VZ Infection, Unspecified	29	34	13	19	6
Babesiosis	0	0	0	0	1
Dengue Fever	0	1	0	0	1
Ehrlichiosis, Anaplasma phagocytophilum	0	0	0	6	6
Ehrlichiosis, Ehrlichia chaffeensis	0	0	0	1	0
Encephalitis, California Serogroup	0	0	0	1	0
Lyme Disease	7	14	19	10	42
Malaria	0	2	0	1	0
Rickettsial Disease - Spotted Fever	1	0	0	1	0
West Nile Virus	0	1	0	0	0
Hepatitis A	3	8	1	0	1
Hepatitis B	6	10	9	7	11
Hepatitis C	212	135	84	71	64
Hepatitis C, Perinatal	2	0	0	0	0



Dr. Joshua Meyerson serves as the Medical Director for three local health departments in northern Michigan -- Health Department of Northwest Michigan, Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department, and District Health Department #4. His duties also include leading two grant-funded, school-linked Child and Adolescent Health Centers in underserved rural school districts.

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