



Together! Healthy Linn

Linn County Community Health Improvement Plan **2022-2024**



Activities and resources for the Linn County Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan are supported by the following funding sources:

- Linn County and Linn County Public Health
- Iowa Department of Health and Human Services: Local Public Health Services grant
- UnityPoint Health – St. Luke’s Hospital, Cedar Rapids
- Mercy Medical Center
- Eastern Iowa Health Center

To learn more about Together! Healthy Linn, visit

<http://www.linncountyiowa.gov/753/Together-Healthy-Linn>

How to use the Community Health Improvement Plan

What can you do as a resident of Linn County?

- **Communicate:** Share the information in this document with your friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers. Share the top health issues and social determinants of health. Challenge yourself to learn more about these issues and how they impact the health of our community.
- **Get Involved:** Think about ways you can become part of the solution, whether they are small or big changes. Every bit counts, and everyone should be inspired to be part of the conversation. Encourage others to work together to improve the health of our community.

What can you do as an organizational partner?

- **Align:** Reflect on how much of your strategic planning efforts align with the needs of the community you serve.
- **Innovate:** Challenge your organization to think about how they can come up with innovative solutions to improve the health of our community.
- **Partner:** Work done together is more impactful, and often reduces duplication. Find others that are willing to work together in new or different ways!
- **Advocate:** Lead your peers in advocating for actions that will improve the health of our community.

Suggestions By Sector

<p>Child & Adolescent Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote priority health issues by incorporating them as educational lessons Create opportunities for action at schools to support recommendations in this plan that impact students, faculty, staff, and parents <p>Community-Based Organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align activities and outreach efforts with health improvement needs Advocate for changes that improve health when interacting with policy makers and legislative officials <p>Community Planning & Transportation Agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify health challenges and recommendations in this plan related to community planning and development Work across sectors to employ the recommendations while planning and building areas of development <p>Employers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transform your work culture to support healthier employees Educate your management team and employees about the link between employee health and work productivity <p>Faith-Based Organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to members about the importance of wellness and connect them with resources Create opportunities for your organization and members to take action to support recommendations in this plan 	<p>Government Agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify barriers to health in the community and make plans for action Invest in programs, services, and policy changes that will support the health needs of the community <p>Health Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead your organization in responding to community health needs and incorporate recommendations into organizational strategic planning Identify important health issues and barriers that exist for your clients and use recommended practices to make changes <p>Higher Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and promote priority health issues and recommendations in this plan when designing research studies or projects with the community Create opportunities for action at institutions to support the recommendations in this plan that impact students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community <p>Legislators & Policy Makers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt policies that align with health improvement needs and recommendations in this plan <p>Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote consistent health messages related to priority health issues Understand and promote priority health issues among the audiences and stakeholders you serve <p>Philanthropy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the health issues and recommendations in this plan when considering allocation of funding resources
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Part 1: Introduction

Executive Summary

In October 2020, Linn County began the process of conducting a modified version of the Community Health Assessment to inform needed changes or updates to the 2019-2021 Community Health Improvement Plan. This process engaged 1,798 residents and 31 partnering organizations, working through the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) framework¹. Through this assessment and planning process, several health issues emerged; four of which were selected as priorities to address during the next three-year implementation period. These priorities include:

- Mental Health
- Food Security
- Equitable Opportunities for Physical Activity
- Prevention of Gun Violence

Additionally, the Community Health Assessment, fundamental to the development of the Community Health Improvement Plan, revealed several crosscutting themes, including policy, systems, and environmental change; housing; health equity; education and awareness; and active transportation.

This document outlines the process for how the community identified their strategic issues, and what the goals and strategies are to guide the community through the development and implementation of action plans for each of the priorities over the next three years. It also encourages a deliberate focus on health equity, examining root causes of health, and engagement of community members at all levels.

Background

Linn County, located in East Central Iowa, is the second most populated county in Iowa, with more than 228,000 individuals living in the county.² Linn County is comprised of urban and rural areas, including 18 incorporated communities. Linn County is one of the fastest growing counties in Iowa, with a predicted population increase of 8-11% each decade through 2040.

Linn County is Iowa's largest manufacturing center.³ A variety of industries, including agriculture and services also contribute significantly to the local economy. Linn County is one of the three counties that comprise the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Statistical Area, along with Benton and Jones counties. Cedar Rapids, the county seat, is the largest city in Linn County, and part of the Cedar Rapids-Iowa City Corridor.

¹ National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). (2013). *MAPP Handbook*. Retrieved from <https://www.naccho.org/programs/public-health-infrastructure/performance-improvement/community-health-assessment/mapp>

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *QuickFacts: Linn County, Iowa*. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/linncountyiowa_US/PST045217#PST045217

³ Linn County, Iowa. (2018). *2018 Popular Annual Financial Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.linncounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/9257/Linn-County-Popular-Annual-Financial-Report-FY18>

In October 2020, the Together! Healthy Linn Coalition began planning for the 2021 iteration of the Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) process. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the assessment and planning timelines were extended past what was originally anticipated as Linn County Public Health, hospital partners, and community partners continued to be engaged in COVID-19 response throughout 2021 and into 2022. The extended deadline also accounted for a need to re-engage, and in some cases re-establish relationships with partnering agencies due to changes in the workforce caused by the pandemic. The CHA and CHIP were led by Linn County Public Health and conducted in partnership with a multitude of community partners, including both Linn County hospitals, Mercy Medical Center and UnityPoint-St. Luke’s Hospital, Cedar Rapids, and Linn County’s Federally Qualified Health Center, Eastern Iowa Health Center. The alignment of the CHA and CHIP for all four entities in Linn County minimizes duplication and maximizes impact, as all aforementioned organizations are required under law or by funders to assess the health of the community and develop an implementation plan for meeting identified needs of the community. A wide variety of community members and partners within the local public health system were engaged to inform and guide the process. The 2022-2024 CHIP is a community-wide action plan for addressing strategic issues identified in the CHA over the next three years.

MAPP Framework

The Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) framework was selected due to the emphasis on engaging local public health system partners and community members in a collaborative assessment and planning process. Additionally, the MAPP framework allows for the community to consider social determinants of health and health equity as important factors which influence the overall health of the community.

MAPP is a community-wide strategic planning tool for improving community health. It was developed in collaboration with the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The 2021 CHA and CHIP iteration was the third time the Linn County community used the MAPP framework to inform the CHA and CHIP.



FIGURE 1 MAPP ACADEMIC MODEL

The six phases of the MAPP framework include:

1. Organize for success and partnership development
2. Visioning
3. Conduct the four MAPP assessments
4. Identify strategic issues
5. Formulate goals and strategies
6. The action cycle

During this iteration, the Together! Healthy Linn Coalition, guided by the steering committee conducted a modified version of the six-phase process to prioritize continuous evaluation of potential changes in community needs in the short-term. This was particularly important following the emergence of needs highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic and in-land hurricane (Derecho) that impacted Linn County in 2020. This process built upon efforts that began in 2018 including the formation of the Together! Healthy Linn Steering Committee and selected vision.

Organizing for Success and Partnership Development

In January 2018, Linn County Public Health recruited 21 individuals to the Together! Healthy Linn Steering Committee to represent selected sectors of the local public health system. In 2021, this list was refined to 16 individuals representing the following sectors: elected officials, education, environmental/rural, faith, government, medical, mental health & aging, philanthropy, public health, and housing.

Visioning

In March 2018, the Together! Healthy Linn Steering Committee created a community-wide vision for the collaborative work. The vision represents what Linn County will look like with a successful public health system in place, when we reach our goals. The steering committee also identified values that are essential for supporting local public health system partners and the community during the CHA and CHIP process. The vision and values were reaffirmed in 2021.

Together! Healthy Linn

Vision

The local public health system is collaborative, engaged in the community, responsive to community needs, easy to navigate, focused on prevention, and creates access for all. The system is designed for a culture of health and promotes an active, safe, empowered, resilient, and connected community that embraces diversity and equity.

Values

Collaboration Open Communication Engagement with Community Accountability

Community Health Assessments

There are four assessments used in the MAPP framework. Due to the short period of time since the previous assessment was conducted, the decision was made to conduct a truncated assessment that would incorporate the voice of the community as well as the quantitative trends in health and social outcomes through implementation of two of the four assessments. Given the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 Derecho, priority was first placed on gaining feedback from the community. Community voice was then paired with quantitative data that informed social and population health trends overtime. From May to December 2021, the following assessments were completed:

1. [Community Themes and Strengths](#)
2. [Community Health Status](#)

The full reports are available at <https://www.linncounty.org/613/Reports-and-Publications>.

Strategic Issue Identification

Strategic issues are defined as issues that must be addressed for Together! Healthy Linn to achieve its vision. To assist with the updated strategic issue identification, the MAPP core group synthesized assessment findings and presented the leading categories of concern that emerged from the combined assessments at the March 2021 steering committee meeting. Ahead of the meeting, steering committee members were provided the assessment documents for individual review and to prepare for discussion. The following categories were identified:

- **Mental Health** – Encompassing increased mental health diagnoses and suffering, stigma to seeking care, and increased substance use (alcohol and drugs) and related overdoses.
- **Access to Mental Health and Healthcare Services** – Including length of wait times to service particularly when in crisis, limited providers, limitation in beds available for advanced care, cost of care, and insurance barriers.
- **Diet-related conditions** – Including increased rates of obesity and heart disease, access to healthy foods, and physical activity.
- **Community Safety** – Including interpersonal violence (child and domestic abuse), gun violence, drug activity, child and human trafficking; safety infrastructure such as street lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks, and parks; and social concerns (racism and discrimination).
- **Housing** – Including issues of decreased housing stock following the 2020 Derecho, increased rental costs, homelessness, continued impact of redlining on today's housing practices, and structural and health concerns of rental properties.
- **Additional Health Equity concerns** – Including poverty, geographic distribution of poorer population health outcomes, and lack of childcare availability (including limited hours, reduced options, and impact of the cost on families).

Given continued alignment of overarching issues with priorities selected for the 2019-2021 CHIP, the Steering Committee recommended an extension of the existing CHIP to 2024 with modifications to better reflect the issues described. Refinement of the strategic issues prioritized a root cause and health equity approach including identification of populations disproportionately impacted by the overarching population health outcome. While the mental health strategic issue was maintained, obesity was further broken down into the issues of food security and creating opportunities for all residents to engage in physical activity despite level of income, education, geography, or other contributing factors. Safety was defined as prevention of gun violence.

With the intent of reducing duplication of efforts and maximizing existing assets, housing and childcare were not selected as priority issues as efforts existed in the community to work toward address of these issues. Instead, the steering committee will support the work through connection to the [Alliance for Equitable Housing](#) and other community coalitions working to address social determinants of health. An additional steering committee member has since been added to act as the housing liaison between the steering committee and work of the Alliance for Equitable Housing.

Crosscutting Themes

The MAPP Core Group identified recurring themes that emerged across both assessments and throughout the strategic planning sessions. These were important considerations to be integrated into the CHIP as well as to invest time. The themes included policy, systems, and environmental change; housing; health equity; education and awareness; and active transportation.

Crosscutting Themes Across Health Assessments

- **Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change** – Incorporating efforts to change public policies, procedures, and practices, and fostering community environments that support healthy living.
- **Housing** – Barriers to find affordable housing that is structurally and environmentally safe for habitation.
- **Health Equity** – Promoting the opportunity for each person to achieve full health potential regardless of social position or other societal circumstances.
- **Education and Awareness** – Ensuring community members are informed and aware of assets and resources available to them to help attain healthy living.
- **Active Transportation** – Barriers to accessing care, services, employment, and other basic needs due to limited personal or public transportation and missing physical infrastructure such as sidewalks that limit one’s ability to be active as well as connect to needed resources locally including to public transportation.

The themes for policy, systems, and environmental change and health equity closely align with the bottom two tiers of the Health Impact Pyramid (Figure 2).⁴ The Health Impact Pyramid shows different types of interventions and the associated impact on the individual or the population. As you move toward the base of the pyramid, the impact to the entire population increases, which also means health equity is increased. As you move toward the top of the pyramid, an increasing amount of effort is needed by an individual to change a health-related behavior, which may or may not be possible, depending on the individual's environment or social situation. To maximize the impact to the entire population, reduce health inequities, and influence social determinants of health, interventions focused on the bottom two tiers of the pyramid are prioritized.

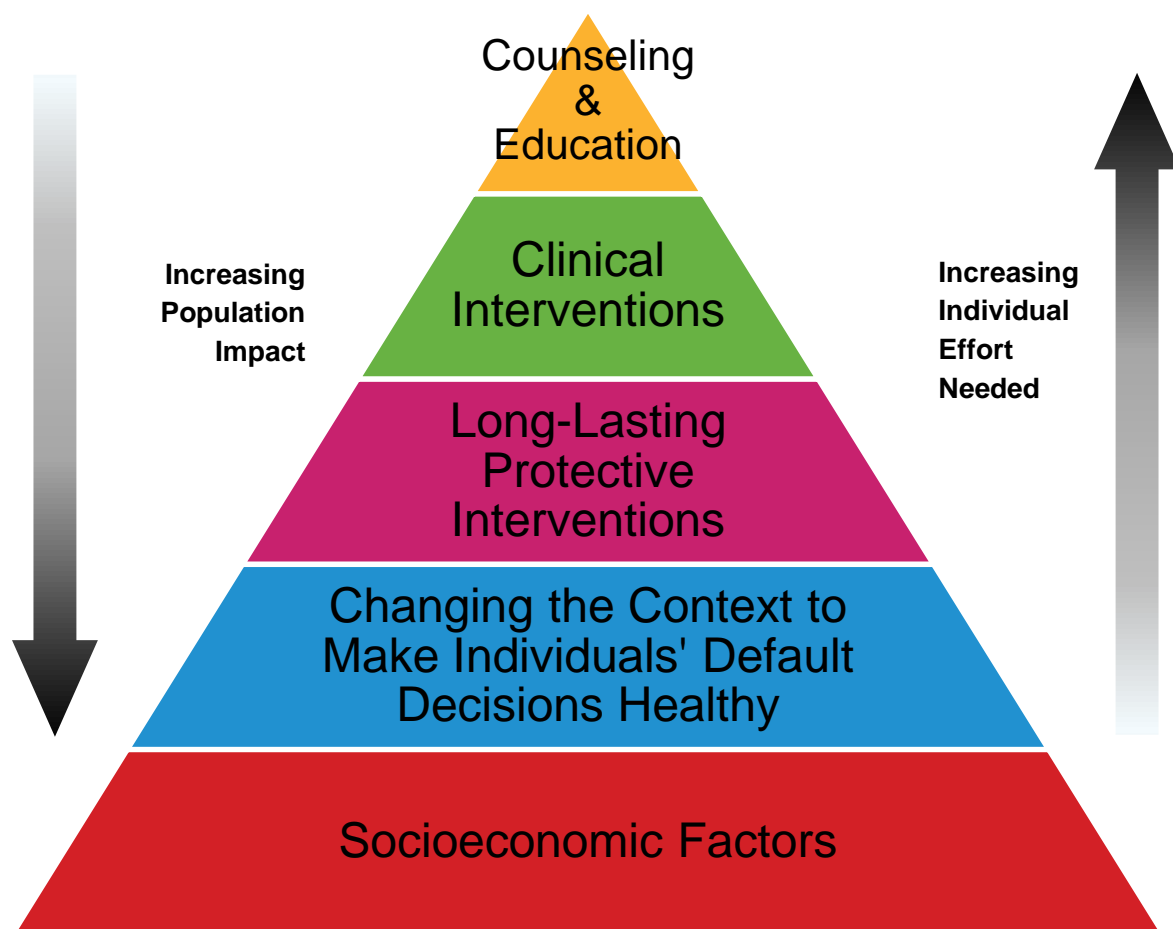
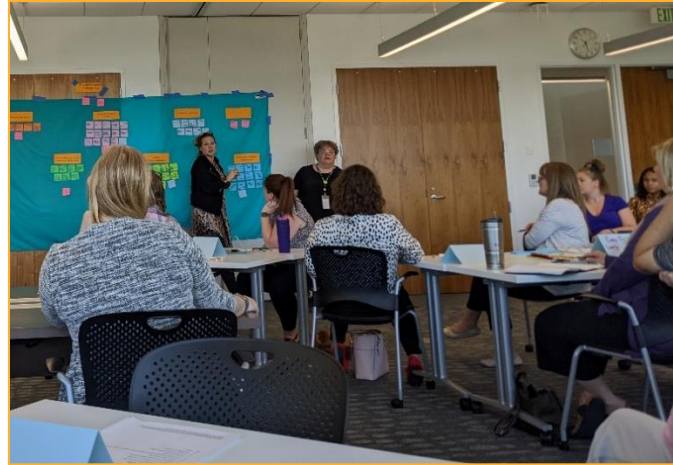


FIGURE 2 THE HEALTH IMPACT PYRAMID

⁴ Frieden, T. R. (2010). A framework for public health action: the health impact pyramid. *American Journal of Public Health, 100*(4), 590-5.

Formulate Goals and Strategies

From August through November 2022, community meetings were held for each strategic issue to identify goals and strategies (Table 1). Initial sessions began with framing the issue, defining the populations most impacted, and identifying existing agencies or collaboratives in the community already working to address the defined issue and for whom. Between meetings, the MAPP Core Team organized the brainstormed items into solution-based categories, which would guide the development of goals and strategies in the subsequent meetings.



The following criteria were used by the strategic issue groups to guide the development of goals and strategies. To establish consensus on the selected goal area, the facilitators provided each participant a single sticker for individuals to vote for the area they believe the collaborative would have greatest impact. Once identified, the group brainstormed what needed to be done to accomplish the goal and what outcomes would be achieved if successful.

Criteria for Goal and Strategy Development

1. One goal per strategic issue
2. Must be achievable within 3 years
3. Two strategies to three strategies that encompass multiple levels of the Social Ecological model (see Figure 3)
4. Requires collaboration by multiple agencies/organizations working on the strategies
5. Data driven and measurable
6. Aligns with the Together! Healthy Linn vision
7. Selected strategies and goal are within the control of the collaborative to make changes and resources are available
8. Prioritizes specific population(s) affected

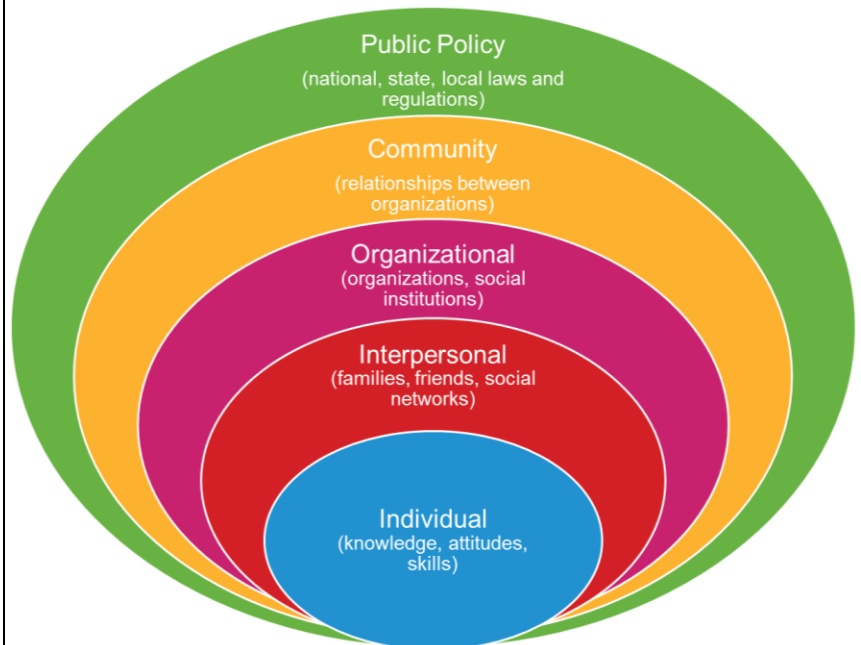


FIGURE 3 SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL

TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF CHIP DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

<p>Phase 4: Identify Strategic Issues</p> <p>March 10, 2022</p>	<p>Activity: Together! Healthy Linn Steering Committee reviewed data from the two assessments conducted in the 2021 Community Health Assessment. Recommendation was made to extend the 2019-2021 CHIP to 2024 with refined priorities that captured the root cause of the issues selected.</p> <p>Purpose: To identify the issues critical to the success of the local public health system.</p> <p>Participants: 10 steering committee members</p>
<p>Phase 5: Formulate Goals and Strategies – Mental Health</p> <p>August 18, 2022 August 30, 2022 September 21, 2022 November 17, 2022</p>	<p>Activity: Community partners reviewed assessment data related to mental health and identified a goal and strategies through small and large group discussion and multi-voting.</p> <p>Purpose: To identify long-term results associated with the mental health strategic issue and identify strategies the community can take to reach those goals.</p> <p>Participants: 51 community partners</p>
<p>Phase 5: Formulate Goals and Strategies – Food Security</p> <p>August 9, 2022 September 20, 2022 November 8, 2022</p>	<p>Activity: Community partners reviewed assessment data related to food security and identified a goal and strategies through small and large group discussion and multi-voting.</p> <p>Purpose: To identify long-term results associated with the food security strategic issue and identify strategies the community can take to reach those goals.</p> <p>Participants: 28 community partners</p>
<p>Phase 5: Formulate Goals and Strategies – Equitable Access to Physical Activity</p> <p>September 29, 2022 November 17, 2022</p>	<p>Activity: Community partners reviewed assessment data related to equitable access to physical activity and identified a goal and strategies through small and large group discussion and multi-voting.</p> <p>Purpose: To identify long-term results associated with the equitable access to physical activity strategic issue and identify strategies the community can take to reach those goals.</p> <p>Participants: 17 community partners</p>
<p>Phase 5: Formulate Goals and Strategies – Prevention of Gun Violence</p> <p>September 1, 2022</p>	<p>Activity: Community partners reviewed assessment data related to gun violence and identified a goal, strategies, and related actions steps through a large group planning session.</p> <p>Purpose: To identify long-term results associated with the gun violence strategic issue and identify strategies the community can take to reach those goals.</p> <p>Participants: 13 community partners</p>

The Action Cycle

Planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the CHIP occurs during the last phase of the MAPP framework. Action teams convene to adopt strategic plans and implement activities. They incorporate evidence-based strategies for impacting the health priorities and consider health disparities and social determinants of health when developing the action plan. Activities for each strategic issue are planned through 2024.

Alignment of Strategic Issues

Linn County's strategic issues align with and complement health improvement efforts at the state and national levels, as shown in Table 1. All three strategic issues align with Healthy Iowans 2017-2021 at the state level and Healthy People 2030 and the National Prevention Strategy at the national level.^{5,6,7}

TABLE 2 ALIGNMENT WITH STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS

	Linn County	State of Iowa	National
Strategic Issues	Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Iowans 2017-2021: Mental Health, Illness, & Suicide⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy People 2030 Leading Health Indicators: Suicide, Drug Overdose Deaths, Adolescents with major depressive episodes (MDEs) who receive treatment⁶ Healthy People 2030: Mental Health and Mental Disorders National Prevention Strategy: Mental and Emotional Well-Being⁶
	Food Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Iowans 2017: Chronic Disease⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy People 2030 Leading Health Indicators: Household food insecurity and hunger⁶ Healthy People 2030: Nutrition and Healthy Eating⁶ White House National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health⁷
	Equitable Opp. for Physical Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Iowans 2017: Chronic Disease⁵ Obesity Statewide Strategic Plan⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy People 2030 Leading Health Indicators: Adults who meet current minimum guidelines for physical activity⁶ Healthy People 2030: Physical Activity, and Obesity White House National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health⁷ National Prevention Strategy: Active Living⁹
	Prevention of Gun Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Iowans 2017: Injury and Violence⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy People 2030: Injury and Violence Prevention⁶ National Prevention Strategy: Injury and Violence Free Living⁹
Crosscut	Health Equity, Housing, Active Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Iowans 2017: Health Equity/Social Determinants of Health⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy People 2030: Social Determinants of Health, Housing and Homes, Public Health Infrastructure, Heart Disease and Stroke, Neighborhood and Built Environment⁶

⁵ Iowa Department of Public Health. (July 2018). *Healthy Iowans 2017-2021*. Des Moines: Iowa Department of Public Health. Retrieved from Healthy Iowans Website: <http://idph.iowa.gov/healthy-iowans/plan>

⁶ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. *Healthy people 2030*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <https://www.healthypeople.gov/>

⁷ White House. (2022). *White House national strategy on hunger, nutrition, and health*. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/White-House-National-Strategy-on-Hunger-Nutrition-and-Health-FINAL.pdf>

⁸ Iowa Department of Public Health. (July 2017). *Obesity Statewide Strategic Plan 2017*. Retrieved from https://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/138/Obesity%20Statewide%20Strategy%2C%20Final_v7_17_17.pdf

⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General National Prevention Council. (2011). *National Prevention Strategy*. Washington, DC.

Part 2: Community Health Improvement Plan

Strategic Priority: Mental Health

Overview

Mental health is an important part of overall health and well-being, and a vital component for healthy communities. Mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being and occurs on a continuum, much like physical health, and the two are closely interrelated.¹⁰ Physical health conditions can influence mental health status, and vice versa.

In Linn County, diagnoses of mental health conditions are increasing among youth and adults especially in the aftermath of COVID. Suicide rates have increased over time, noted as the tenth leading cause of death in Linn County. In 2021, 20.4% of Linn County youth reported suicidal thoughts, an increase of nearly 10% from 2018. According to community members, mental health is the top health concern for Linn County. This was consistent among all demographic groups and across all assessment methods in the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment. Anxiety was also noted as a concern among residents who participated in the assessments. Access to mental health services and supports were identified as a significant need in Linn County. The Community Health Assessment findings reflect a need for more providers who accept Medicaid, the availability of timely appointments, and a need for more mental health care facilities.

MENTAL HEALTH
In Linn County, diagnoses of mental health conditions are increasing among youth and adults.

Suicide is the **10TH** leading cause of death in Linn County

1 out of 5 Linn County youth reported **suicidal thoughts** in 2021.

Mental Health was the **top health concern** voiced among all demographic groups in the Community Themes and Strengths assessment.

"The Community Health Assessment findings reflect a need for more providers who accept Medicaid, the availability of timely appointments, and a need for more mental health care facilities."

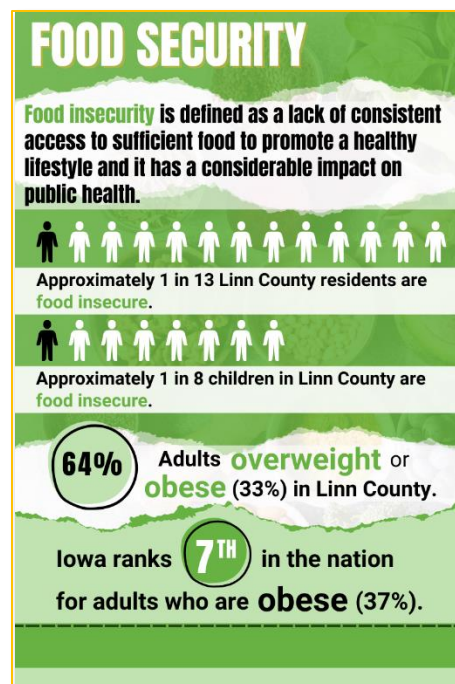
Goal	Increase mental health supports in Linn County through engagement of community members, leaders, and non-clinical partners, to develop solutions that enhance a culturally responsive and trauma-informed ecosystem. Connection to Vision: <i>The local public health system is collaborative, focused on prevention, and creates access for all.</i>			
Objective	By December 31, 2024, there will be a 5% reduction in Linn County adults who report experiencing 14 or more days of poor mental health in the previous 30 days and adolescents who report feeling sad or hopeless in the previous 12 months.			
Measure	Adults	Baseline Year: 2020 Value: 12.6%	Goal Year: 2024 Value: 7.6%	Source: BRFSS
	Adolescents	Baseline Year: 2021 Value: 27.5%	Goal Year: 2024 Value: 22.5%	Source: Iowa Youth Survey
	Strategy 1:	Identify and leverage non-clinical partners to provide mental health supports		
	Strategy 2:	Increase awareness of mental health and available resources through a messaging/marketing plan		

¹⁰ United Way of East Central Iowa. (May 2018). *Condition of Mental Health in Our Community*. Retrieved from: <https://www.uweci.org/what-we-do/our-community/united-way-reports/>

Strategic Priority: Food Security

Overview

Food insecurity is defined as a lack of consistent access to sufficient food to promote a healthy lifestyle, and it has a considerable impact on public health.¹¹ Food insecurity may be influenced by “racial and ethnic disparities, household composition, employment status, the built environment, access to transportation, and participation in assistance programs”.¹² There is a strong correlation between food insecurity, physical inactivity, and diet-related diseases with underserved communities (ex: communities of color, households with children, and rural communities) being disproportionately impacted. Much of this disparity can be traced to food deserts (regions with limited access to healthy affordable foods) and food apartheid (history of policies that contributed to the creation of low-income and low food access areas).¹¹



Over time, rates of obesity have increased across the nation, Iowa, and Linn County. As of 2020, the state of Iowa ranked seventh in the nation for obesity, with 36.5% of adults identified as obese. As of 2021, 70.3% of adults in Linn County are overweight or obese (37% obese, 33.3% overweight). The underlying contributor to the obesity issue noted among residents was access to food, particularly healthy food, as well as opportunities for physical activity. Despite income, residents note barriers to healthy food access due to lack of affordability or distance to obtain foods. In 2019, 7.9% of all Linn County residents and 12% of children were food insecure. Following COVID-19 and Derecho, the percentage has increased in the community.

Goal	Create a centralized communications system to increase understanding and coordination of food resources among food system partners and the community. <i>Connection to Vision: The local public health system is collaborative, responsive to community needs, easy to navigate, focused on prevention, and creates access for all. The system is designed for a culture of health and promotes an empowered community.</i>			
Objective	By December 31, 2024, there will be a 3% reduction in the percent of Linn County residents who are food insecure.			
	Measure	Baseline Year: 2019 Value: 7.9%	Goal Year: 2024 Value: 4.9%	Source: Feeding America
	Strategy 1:	Utilize data to improve coordination of food resources in the community		
	Strategy 2:	Deploy a centralized food resource website and information system		
	Strategy 3	Increase understanding of food assistance eligibility and utilization		

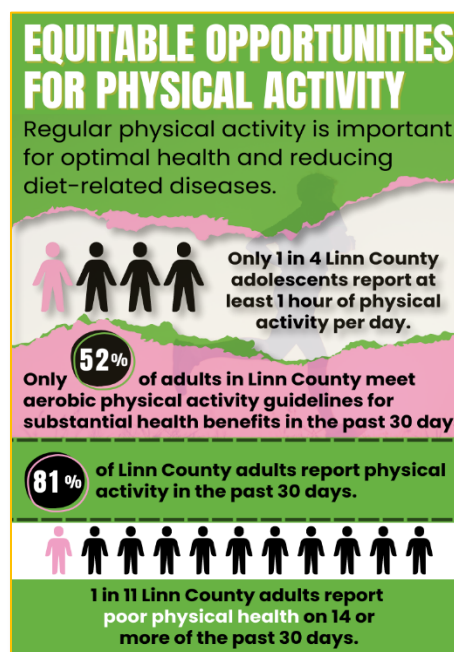
¹¹ American Public Health Association. (2022). *Creating the Healthiest Nation: Food Justice*. Retrieved from <https://www.apha.org/Topics-and-Issues/Health-Equity>

¹² Iowa Department of Public Health. (2021). *Extent of Food Insecurity among Iowa WIC Participants in 2021*. Retrieved from <https://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/204/Food%20Security/Final%20Food%20Security%20Survey%20Report%202021.pdf>

Strategic Priority: Equitable Opportunities for Physical Activity

Overview

Regular physical activity is an important component of optimal health and crucial in reducing diet-related diseases. Food insecurity together with lack of regular physical activity can contribute to diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, arthritis, and some types of cancer. In Linn County, only 26% of adolescents report that they get at least 1 hour of physical activity per day, with a rate of 17.1 per 100,000 population. Among adults, 81.6% report they were physically active in the past 30 days, with only 52.1% meeting aerobic physical activity guidelines (150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise a week) for substantial health benefits.



Barriers exist for many residents of Linn County to engage in exercise, especially individuals who are low-income, have a disability, chronic pain, or existing medical condition. More than nine percent of Linn County adults report their physical health was not good 14 or more of the past 30 days. Residents have identified a feeling of unsafety due to physical attributes of communities including incomplete/missing sidewalks and missing streetlights.¹³ Additionally, many trails and bike lanes are not connected or are difficult to access or navigate. However, many Linn County organizations are working to provide accessible physical activity for all Linn County residents by exploring free or low-cost options and making necessary improvements to already existing resources.

Goal	Increase accessibility to, and utilization of, programs and existing community assets for all residents to have the opportunity to be physically active. <i>Connection to Vision: The local public health system is collaborative, responsive to community needs, focused on prevention, and creates access for all. The system promotes an active community.</i>			
Objective	By December 31, 2024, there will be a 5% increase in the proportion of adults who report they are physically active in the previous 30 days and adolescents who report 7 days with 60 minutes of physical activity daily.			
Measure	Adults	Baseline Year: 2020 Value: 81.6%	Goal Year: 2024 Value: 86.6%	Source: BRFSS
	Adolescents	Baseline Year: 2021 Value: 27.3%	Goal Year: 2024 Value: 32.3%	Source: Iowa Youth Survey
	Strategy 1:	Identify gaps in available opportunities to be physically active across Linn County		
	Strategy 2:	Increase opportunities for all residents to access free or low-cost programs and services		
	Strategy 3:	Increase engagement in available options to be physically active through joint messaging and information sharing		

¹³ Community Themes and Strengths Assessment. (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.linncountyiowa.gov/>

Strategic Priority: Prevention of Gun Violence

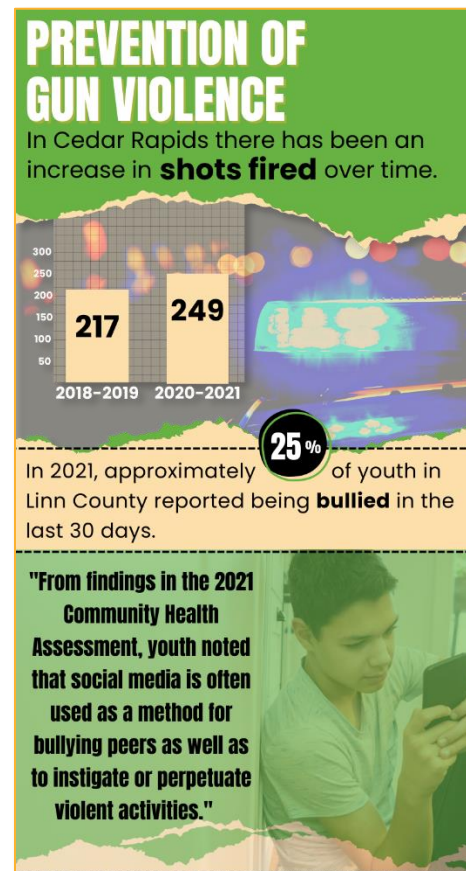
Overview

Gun violence emerged as a leading health concern for Linn County. This issue was identified in the 2018-2021 Community Health Improvement Plan, but broadly noted as a concern of community safety. Safety is a broad term for a variety of concerns, including domestic and interpersonal abuse, bullying, and violence within the community. Digging deeper into the specific safety issues, community members noted that while there is a general feeling of safety in Linn County, there is also an increased concern of gang and drug activity, human trafficking, and shootings in the area, contributing to a reduction in the feeling of safety. Overall, gun violence emerged as the issue of greatest concern.

The violent crime rate in 2020 was 313.7 per 100,000 population in Cedar Rapids. During this time there were 434 violent-crime incidents. In Linn County there has been an increase in shots fired over time. From 2018-2019 there were 217 shots fired reported by the Cedar Rapids Police Department, and from 2020-2021 there were 249 shots fired reported. Violence or injury contribute to the leading causes of death in all age groups for Iowans.¹⁴

In 2021, approximately 25% of youth in Linn County reported being bullied in the last 30 days. Bullied youth are more likely to be younger (in 6th grade vs. 9th or 11th grade), and a higher percentage of bullied youth are female versus male. According to the 2018 Community Health Assessment, youth noted that social media is often used as a method for bullying peers as well as to instigate or perpetuate violent activities.

Gun violence is a complex and multifaceted problem that requires evidence-based, multifaceted solutions including a diverse partnership of community agencies, law enforcement, and community members. One such partnership in the Cedar Rapids metro area is the Safe, Equitable, and Thriving (ReSET) coalition, which includes collaboration among county and city government, grass roots and non-profit organizations, healthcare, law enforcement, community members, and the Cedar Rapids Community School District.



¹⁴ Iowa's Injury and Violence Prevention State Strategic Plan 2021-2024. (2022). Retrieved from <https://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/32/IVP/ELECTRONIC%20508%20Iowa%27s%20Injury%20and%20Violence%20Prevention%20State%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf>

Goal	Increase the effectiveness of community partnerships to target evidenced-based strategies to reduce gun violence. <i>Connection to Vision: The local public health system is collaborative, engaged in the community, responsive to community needs, and focused on prevention. The system promotes a safe, empowered, resilient, and connected community that embraces diversity and equity.</i>			
Objective	By December 31, 2024, there will be a 30% reduction in firearm-related deaths in Linn County			
	Measure	Baseline Year: 2020 Value: 13.7 per 100K*	Goal Year: 2024 Value: 9.6 per 100K*	Source: CDC WONDER
	Strategy 1:	Align community partnerships to address gun violence		
	Strategy 2:	Develop public engagement and education campaign to shift social norms related to violence		
	Strategy 3:	Identify evidenced-based practices currently used in Linn County, and consider opportunities for expansion or addition		

*Age-adjusted rate

Next Steps

Action Teams

During the action phase, action teams convene to develop collaborative action plans related to each strategic issue. Action teams consist of experts in the field, community-based organizations, and community residents. Action teams will align action plans with current community initiatives as much as possible or form new groups if necessary. Together! Healthy Linn will work together with other regional and state partners to implement common strategies as they align with regional and state health improvement efforts.

Monitoring progress

The MAPP Core Group monitors action plan progress and publishes performance dashboards annually. During the action phase, continued engagement and communication with community partners will continue. The CHIP will be revised as appropriate. Action plan updates and progress reports will be available at <http://www.linncounty.org/753/Together-Healthy-Linn>.

Part 3: Together! Healthy Linn

About Together! Healthy Linn

Together! Healthy Linn is a community collaborative that informs and oversees the CHA-CHIP process for all of Linn County. Together! Healthy Linn is made up of many different organizations, including hospitals and clinics, not-for-profit agencies, and governmental organizations. Figure 4 depicts the relationship of Together! Healthy Linn efforts within the broader Linn County community.

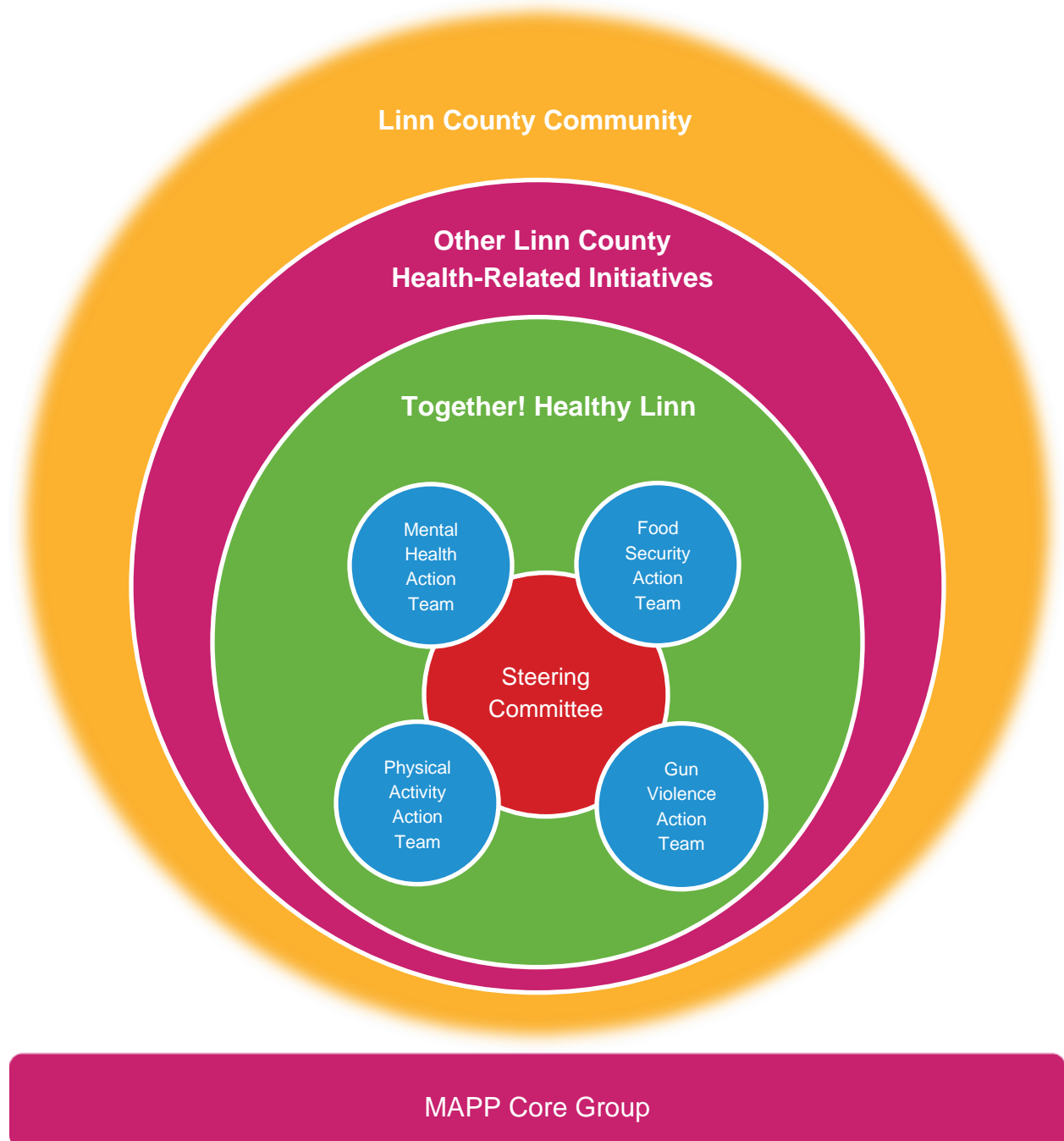


FIGURE 4 TOGETHER! HEALTHY LINN ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL

Acknowledgements

The Community Health Improvement Plan, prepared and presented by Together! Healthy Linn, reflects the contributions of many of the participating groups and individuals, but does not necessarily reflect the position of any particular organization or individual. In addition to members, various boards, committees, and subject matter experts within the community also provided input on plan development activities. The following individuals and organizations have dedicated their time and expertise to the identification of strategic issues and development of the CHIP.

MAPP Core Team

The MAPP Core Team designs and plans the CHA-CHIP process according to the MAPP framework.

Lynne Abbott	Linn County Public Health
Cindy Fiester	Linn County Public Health
Amy Hockett*	Linn County Public Health
Jacque Montoya*	Linn County Public Health
Robin Rajjean	Linn County Public Health
Katie Reasner*	Linn County Public Health
Christie Rossi*	Linn County Public Health

**Lead authors of the 2022-2024 Together! Healthy Linn Community Health Improvement Plan*

Steering Committee

The steering committee guides and oversees the CHA-CHIP process.

Name	Organization	Sector
Chelsea Lensing	Coe College	Education
Drew Westberg	Coe College	Education
Liz Mathis	State of Iowa Senator	Elected Officials
Art Staed	State of Iowa Representative	Elected Officials
Ashley Vanorny	Cedar Rapids City Council	Elected Officials
RaeAnn Gordon	Iowa State University Extension & Outreach	Environmental Organization
Ronda Anderson	Bethany Lutheran Church	Faith Community
Pramod Dwivedi	Linn County Public Health	Public Health
Sandi Fowler	City of Cedar Rapids	Government
Melissa Dean	Mercy Medical Center	Medical Providers
Joe Lock	Eastern Iowa Health Center	Medical Providers
Lori Weih	UnityPoint Health: St. Lukes Hospital and Jones Regional Medical Center	Medical Providers
Kathy Horan	AbbeHealth	Mental Health & Aging
Ashley Balius	Linn County Community Services	Housing
Karla Twedt-Ball	Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation	Philanthropy
Karey Chase	United Way of East Central Iowa	Philanthropy

Goal and Strategy Teams

Goal and Strategy Teams were identified and invited to participate in the Formulate Goal and Strategy phase by steering committee members and the MAPP Core Group.

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Amy Hockett	Linn County Public Health
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Anne Harris Carter	Linn County Public Health
Ashley Turner	Four Oaks – DEI Program Coordinator
Ayoub Idriss	Catherine McAuley Center
Chad Colston	Linn County Sheriff's Office
Christie Rossi	Linn County Public Health
Cindy Fiester	Linn County Public Health
Circe Stumbo	West Wind Education Policy
Crystal Hall	Tanager Place
Danielle Day	Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
Danielle Pershing	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
David Thielen	Linn County Community Services
Debbie Craig	Four Oaks
Diana Strahan	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
Dustin Peterson	Linn County Veteran Affairs
Elizabeth Yusko	Reading Into Success
Emily Blomme	Foundation 2 Crisis Services
Erin Foster	Linn County Mental Health Access Center
Hannah Wagamon	Eastern Iowa Health Center
Hilary Hershner	Corridor MPO
Jacque Montoya	Linn County Public Health
Jade Jackson	Area Substance Abuse Council
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Jessica Kelly	Tanager Place
Jody Bridgewater	East Central Iowa Region MHDS
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Katie Reasner	Linn County Public Health
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Kim Guardado	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
Kimathi Johnson	West Wind Education Policy
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Lori Weih	UnityPoint
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Amy Hockett	Linn County Public Health
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Karla Doty	Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
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Kerry Kilker	College Community Schools
Kim Guardado	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
Mary Lukes	Linn County Public Health
Melissa Dean	Mercy Medical Center
Monica Miranda	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
Paula Wood	Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
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Stephanie Schrader	City of Cedar Rapids
Sunshine McDonald	City of Cedar Rapids – GIS

Tracy Ehler

State of Iowa (State Legislator)

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Erin Raftery	Eastern Iowa Health Center
Haley Sevening	City of Cedar Rapids
Heather Suh	University of Iowa - intern
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Katie Reasner	Linn County Public Health
Kesha Billings	City of Marion
Kim Guardado	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
Naomi Winder	NewBo City Market
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Ryan Schlader	Linn County Conservation Department
Seth Staashelm	City of Marion

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Christie Rossi	Linn County Public Health
Erin Langdon	Foundation 2
Hayley Hegland	My Care Community Contractor
Lisa Jordan	Foundation 2
Karla Twedt-Ball	Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation
Katie Reasner	Linn County Public Health
Melissa Neleman	Foundation 2
Rachel Rockwell	Central City Development Corporation
Renee Koth	Foundation 2
Tony Wilson	Central City Development Corporation

*In alignment with the ReSET coalition, which includes community members, law enforcement, grass-roots organizations, non-profit agencies, elected officials, and many more.

Part 4: Appendices

Glossary

Health Equity

Promoting the opportunity for each person to achieve full health potential, regardless of social position or other social circumstances.

Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change

Incorporating efforts to change public policies, procedures, and practices, and fostering community environments that support healthy living.

Populations Disproportionately Impacted

Inequities or differences in incidence, prevalence, mortality, burden of disease, or other health conditions among certain populations.

Sector

An area of the community or economy that shares a related product or service or similar operating characteristics.

Social Determinants of Health

Conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes.

Violent Crime Rate

Composed of four offenses including murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Additional Resources

Healthy People 2030

<https://www.healthypeople.gov/>

MAPP Assessments: <http://linncounty.org/613/Reports-and-Publications>

- [2021 Community Themes and Strengths Assessment](#)
- [2021 Community Health Status Assessment](#)

Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP)

<https://www.naccho.org/programs/public-health-infrastructure/performance-improvement/community-health-assessment/mapp>

National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)

<https://www.naccho.org/>

White House National Strategy on Hunger Nutrition and Health

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/White-House-National-Strategy-on-Hunger-Nutrition-and-Health-FINAL.pdf>

The State of Obesity

<https://stateofobesity.org/>

Together! Healthy Linn

<http://linncounty.org/753/Together-Healthy-Linn>

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