

Steuben County Public Health 2023 Annual Report



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Bath, NY 14810
steubencountyny.gov/Public-Health



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Letter from the Director



I am pleased to present to you Steuben County Public Health's Annual Report for 2023. The COVID years took a toll on our staffing capacities and 2023 has been a year of rebuilding so much of what was lost during the pandemic years. We are not yet fully staffed, especially in nursing, but have made great strides in promoting from within for career advancement as well as filling some key roles from community members and from our NYS Public Health Corps Fellows. Each Public Health employee brings a great deal of expertise and a passion for population health.

We have heavily focused our work on our Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan which will guide our goals and initiatives through 2024. We, in collaboration with our strategic partners, including our three hospital systems, have two key priority areas and associated strategies to work on with community organizations. One focus area is healthy eating and food security with an objective of decreasing the percentage of children with obesity. The other is to prevent mental, and substance use disorders with an objective of preventing opioid overdose deaths. For details on how we are coordinating these efforts, please follow this link, www.steubencountyny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3144/Steuben-CHIP-Chart-2022-2024-PDF?bidId=.

We continue to offer vaccination clinics every day of the week, Monday through Friday, in the clinics of our department. We attempt to make the immunizations as accessible and convenient as possible for school and COVID vaccines. Please give our office a call to make your appointment.

We distributed thousands of COVID rapid antigen home tests and masks last year throughout and across the county. Every library had a continuous supply for their communities as well as providing for community-based organizations that requested a supply. We will continue to do so in 2024.

Public Health's charge and our honor, is to keep our community as healthy as possible. Some of our other services that work towards that end include communicable disease investigations, rabies investigations and clinics, surveillance of elevated lead levels in children, maternal/child health visits, emergency preparedness planning, STI testing, special children's services, and jail health.

We pride ourselves on being as responsive, informative, and helpful as possible. Thank you for partnering with us in keeping Steuben County residents as healthy as possible.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Darlene R. Smith".

*Darlene R. Smith, MS, CPH
Public Health Director*

Who We Are

Since 1918, Steuben County Public Health has provided the community with quality health services. Over the years, services have been updated to meet the changing needs of our community, but our commitment remains to health promotion and disease prevention.

Our Mission

Steuben County Public Health will protect and promote the health and wellbeing of our community through education, collaboration and prevention efforts



Our Vision

Healthy people. Strong families.
Vibrant communities

Our Values



Quality.



Empowerment.



Responsiveness.

We are proud to be a nationally accredited Public Health Department!



We officially became accredited through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) in September 2020. According to PHAB:

Accreditation means excellence. It means that a health department is committed to continuous quality and performance improvement. Accreditation is a way to engage all staff in transformation and improvement efforts.

Steuben County Public Health became accredited as part of a Multi-Jurisdiction Application in partnership with Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates County Health Departments. Our six-county group is now working towards re-accreditation, which we will apply for in 2025.

A framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities.

PHAB uses the Ten Essential Public Health Services to structure the domains. The Essential Public Health Services aim to achieve optimal health for all, actively promote policies, systems, and services that enable good health, and seek to remove obstacles and systemic and structural barriers, such as poverty, racism, gender discrimination, and other forms of oppression, that have resulted in health inequities. The goal is for everyone to have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being.



Public Health Services

Here at Steuben County Public Health, we provide the following programs and services:

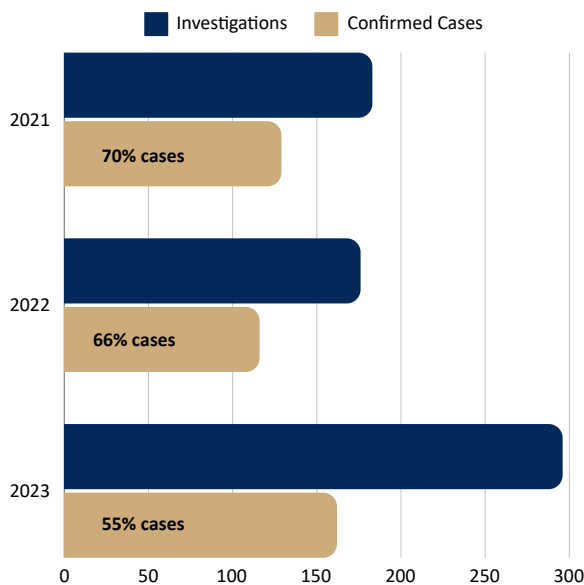
- Communicable disease investigations
- Immunization clinics
- Jail health
- STI Investigations
- Opioid Overdose Prevention Program
- Rabies Prevention
- Maternal & child health

- Lead poisoning prevention
- Special Children’s Services: Early Intervention & Preschool special education
- Emergency Preparedness and Environmental Health
- Community Health Assessment & Health Improvement Plan

Communicable Disease

One responsibility of Public Health is to investigate reports of communicable (infectious) diseases, determining whether they are actual cases and, if so, identifying the cause(s) of the disease or steps needed to prevent its spread to others. Here's a breakdown of the number of communicable diseases reported to Public Health and investigated. It's important to note that not all investigations result in confirmed cases. This data excludes COVID-19 cases and investigations.

Communicable Disease Reports (Investigations) vs. Cases



In 2023, the most prevalent communicable diseases, apart from COVID, were Anaplasmosis, Campylobacter, Invasive Group B Strep, and Salmonella.

New York State experienced the circulation of three respiratory viruses in the fall of 2023; these included COVID, RSV, and flu. Steuben County saw a decrease in laboratory-confirmed flu cases from 2022, seeing approximately **388 flu cases** in 2023.

Steuben County Public Health continues to communicate appropriate information on COVID-related guidance as it becomes available from federal and state governing bodies. Public Health can provide COVID vaccines to VFA (Vaccines For Adults) and VFC (Vaccines For Children) eligible individuals. In 2023, Steuben County Public Health dispensed approximately **7,000** at-home COVID tests to the general public and community organizations.



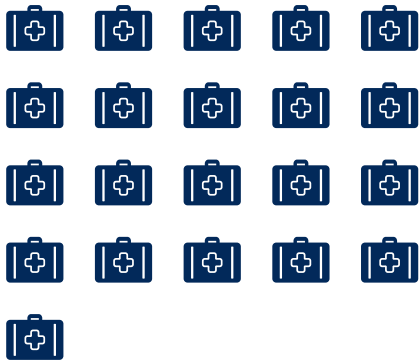
Immunization Clinics

Public Health has historically offered routine immunizations to the community, as well as COVID vaccines and Jynneos vaccines to guard against Mpox (formerly known as Monkeypox). Utilizing our Vaccines for Children (VFC) and Vaccines for Adults (VFA) funding, regular immunizations are provided to residents who are uninsured or underinsured. The table on the right displays the number of children and adults vaccinated by Public Health in 2023.

	2021	2022	2023
# of children vaccinated	50	45	153
# of adults vaccinated	205	67	42

Jail Health

Public Health conducts visits to the Steuben County Jail throughout the year, providing STI testing, education, and immunizations to keep inmates healthy. In 2023, there were...



21 Jail Clinics



56 Inmates Served



103 vaccines given



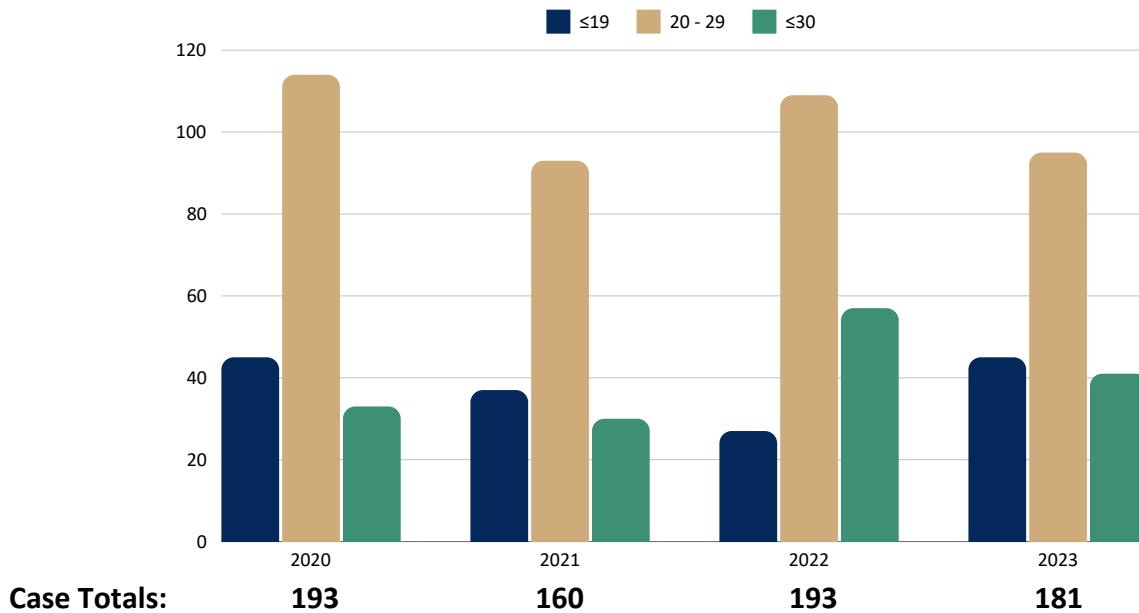
From the left: Kat Potter, RN; Terrah Jones, RN; Lisa White, RN; Brittany Pfuntner, RN

Steuben County Public Health recognizes the extraordinary impact our nursing staff has on the department and our community. Nurses make a difference—every day, anytime, anywhere, and always. Thank you!

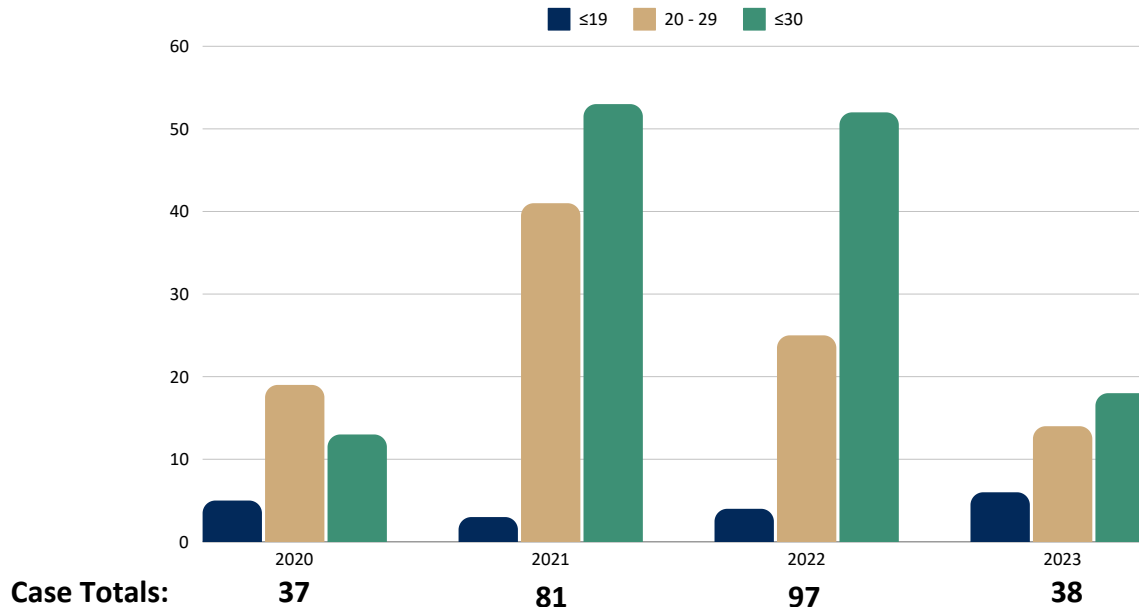
STIs

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are a category of communicable diseases that Public Health surveils. We check with healthcare providers to make sure patients are getting the appropriate treatment in an effort to slow or stop the spread. Below is a look at chlamydia and gonorrhea cases by age group over the past several years. Chlamydia cases are much more common than gonorrhea cases. The highest age group for chlamydia is 20-29 years, whereas gonorrhea is becoming more common in those age 30 and older.

Chlamydia Cases by Age



Gonorrhea Cases by Age



Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (OOPP)

Steuben County Public Health became an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program in 2018, allowing us to provide training on how to recognize an overdose, administer naloxone, and distribute free naloxone to residents. Trainings and distribution of naloxone are available through our [website](#).

	2021	2022	2023
# of Public Health Trainings	6	6	7
# of People Trained	16	30	95
# of Naloxone Kits Distributed	16	24	306

Rabies Prevention Program

Rabies is a fatal virus, so regulations and programs are in place to ensure pets are vaccinated and for Public Health to assess any bites that occur to prevent the potential for rabies infection.

Public Health provides rabies vaccines to local municipalities to host clinics throughout the year. Public Health also covers any costs that insurance does not for post-exposure treatment when needed. Below is a table that highlights the results of the rabies program over the last several years.

	2020	2021	2022	2023
# of Rabies Vaccination Clinics	14	29	31	61
# of Pets Vaccinated	1,628	2,003	2,139	2,414
# of Animals Tested Positive for Rabies	6	5	5	6
# of People Treated for Rabies Post-Exposure	57	57	50	80

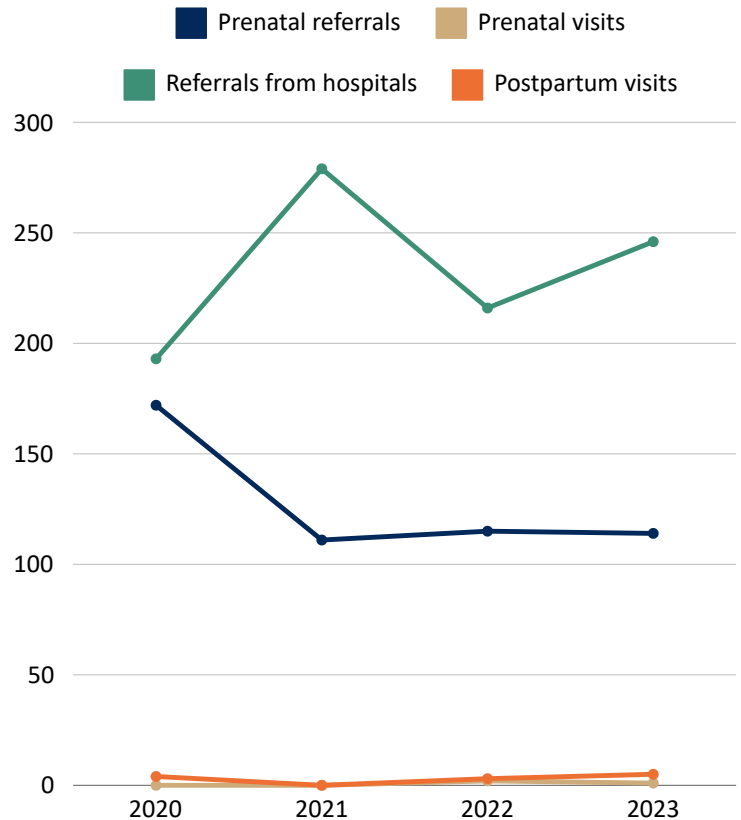
Maternal & Child Health (MCH)

Our MCH program provides free educational home visits to all expecting and postpartum moms in Steuben County. These visits cover a range of topics from feeding to car seats to baby proofing and more. Additionally, the nurse conducting these visits is also a Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC), capable of offering in-depth breastfeeding support.

In 2023, there was an uptick in the number of MCH hospital referrals and postpartum visits through the Public Health department. There was a small decline in prenatal referrals and prenatal visits.

Maternal and child health is crucial to public health as it can predict future health challenges, determine the health of the next generation, and identify existing health conditions and risky behaviors. The health of mothers can also influence the well-being of future generations, and ensuring that mothers have access to adequate health care can significantly impact the health of the entire community.

MCH Referrals and Visits





Moms & Babies

Free in person or virtual visits are available to all expecting, postpartum, or breastfeeding moms in Steuben County, with a nurse / Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC).

Visit topics include:

- Feeding (breast / bottle)
- After-delivery care for both mom & baby
- Safe sleep
- Answers to all questions!
- Car seat safety
- Developmental milestones

To schedule or with questions, call or text a nurse / CLC:

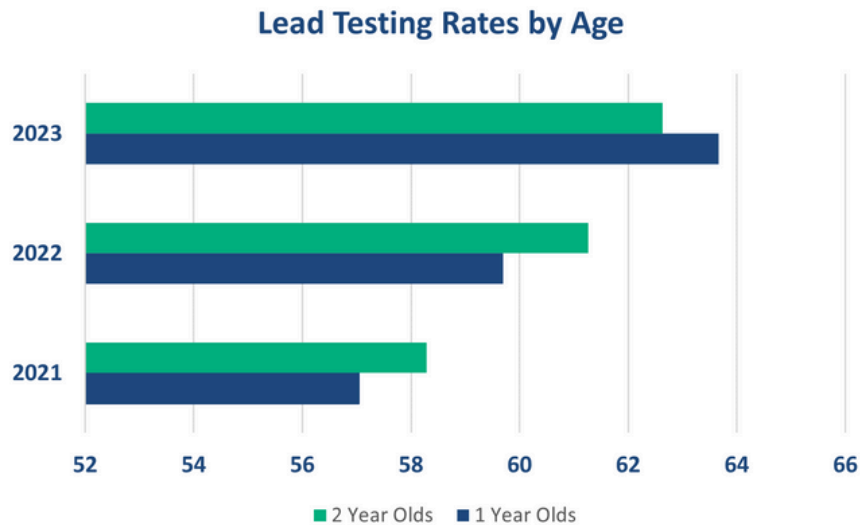
Kat: 607-329-6823

Or call the Public Health office: 607-664-2438



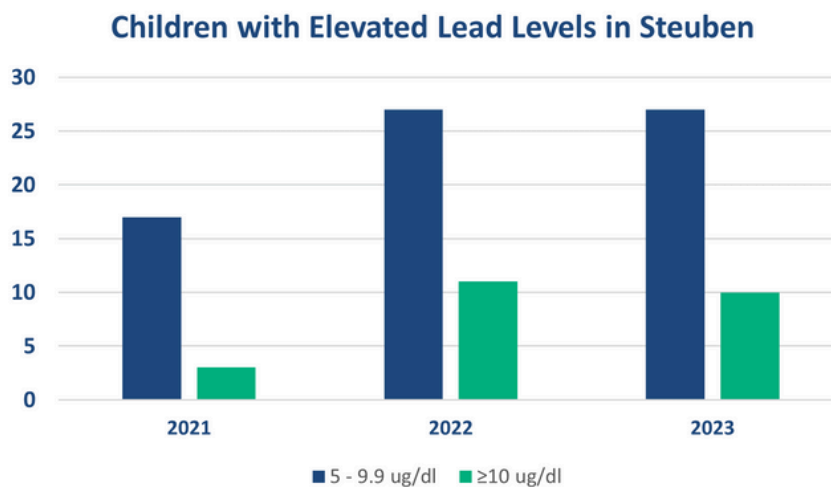
Lead Poisoning Prevention

In New York State, all children are expected to undergo lead testing at the age of 1 and then again at the age of 2. In Steuben County, the lead testing rates for 2023 were 63.66% for 1-year-olds and 62.63% for 2-year-olds, showing an improvement compared to previous years, as depicted in the graph below.



All children with a lead level of ≥ 5 ug/dl require environmental investigation, further screening, educational intervention, and case management.

In 2023, the rate of children being tested and the number of cases of elevated lead levels remained relatively the same from 2022, as depicted in the graph below. This increase in testing and cases could be attributed to several factors. During the pandemic, children may not have been routinely tested, making it hard to establish a comparison point. Spending more time at home, where lead exposure is common, could also have contributed. As COVID restrictions started to ease in 2022, children may have resumed their regular screenings and healthcare visits, potentially leading to the rise in testing and stability of identified cases in 2023.



Annually, we revise [a housing map](#) of the county, pinpointing areas with elevated lead levels, as well as identifying fair and poor condition homes constructed before 1978 when lead paint was phased out. This map also encompasses data on WIC participation levels and socioeconomic status levels.

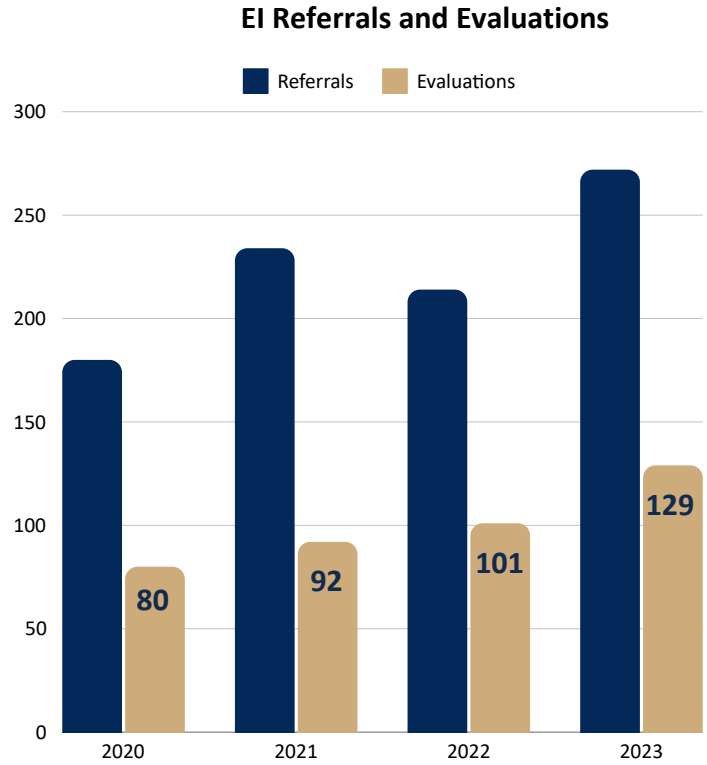
Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program

The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program seeks to improve the system of care for children and youth with special health care needs from birth and up to 21 years of age and their families. The Program helps to shape public policy so families can get the best health care for their children.

Public Health covers two parts of the CYSHCN program; Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education.

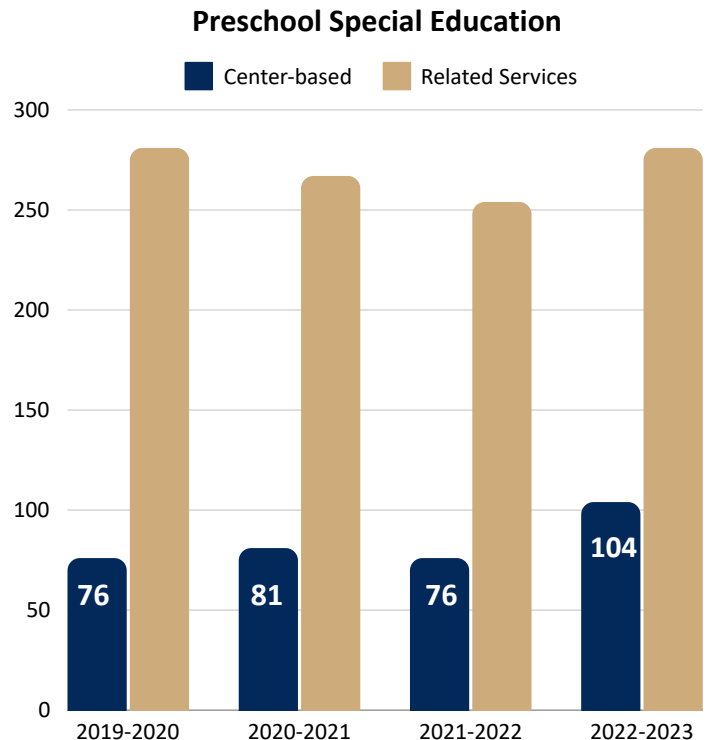
Early Intervention (EI)

EI is a free, statewide program that provides early identification, screening, evaluations, special services, and service coordination for infants and toddlers at risk for developmental delays from birth to 3 years old. Service Coordinators at Public Health work with families to meet the needs of their children and provide a link to community services, including special instruction, speech therapy, physical therapy, psychological services, social work, occupational therapy and, nutrition services.



Preschool Special Education

Children ages 3 - 5 years old with suspected disabilities are eligible for referral to their school district for preschool special education. Evaluations are conducted and individual education plans are developed that recommend either center-based programming or community-based related services. Services may include physical, speech or occupational therapies, social work, or psychological services. Transportation is provided to center-based programs, and there is no cost to families for any of the services.



Emergency Preparedness

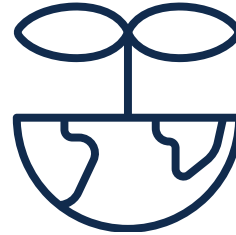
Our Emergency Preparedness efforts revolve around trying to educate residents on how to prepare themselves for any emergency events that may occur in the future. We also respond to emergency events to help mitigate the impact.

When not involved in an ongoing and active emergency, there are other events that are tracked, and education and awareness are provided to the community as appropriate. Below is a look at what non-COVID emergency events were tracked in 2023.



Winter Storms

2



Environmental

2



Severe Weather

4



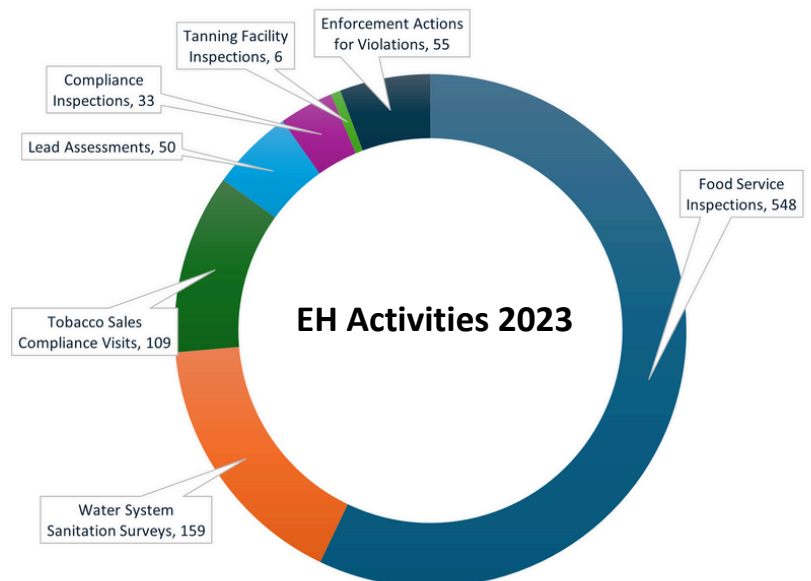
Floods

1

For anyone interested in offering volunteer services in the future, we welcome you to [sign up for our ServSTEUBEN MRC](#) or contact our Emergency Preparedness Coordinator by calling 607-664-2438 or [email](#).

Environmental Health (EH)

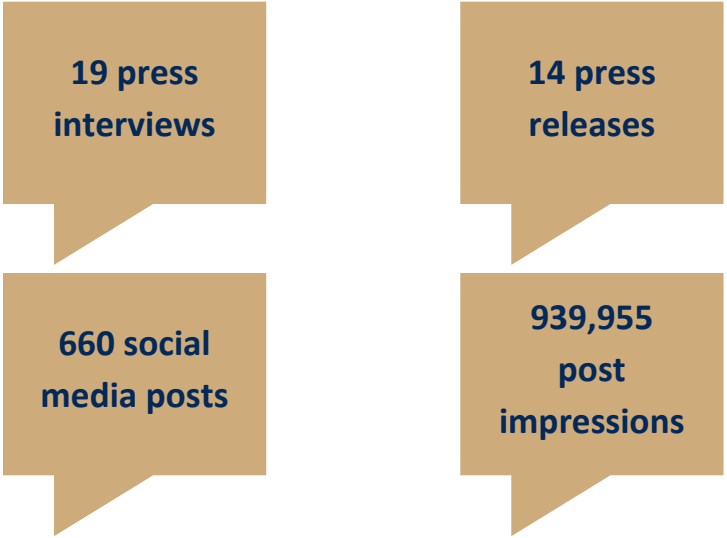
Steuben County Public Health operates as a partial service health department, meaning that environmental health services are managed by the New York State Department of Health Hornell District Office (HDO). The HDO's responsibilities include issuing permits to regulated facilities, conducting inspections and investigations for licensed and permitted facilities, outbreaks of food or waterborne illnesses, conditions related to elevated lead levels, and monitoring tobacco sales compliance, among other duties.



The graph on the right illustrates HDO activities in 2023.

Public Health Education and Outreach

Education on all health topics is a top priority for Public Health. To reach a wide audience quickly, Public Health regularly utilizes social media platforms such as [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). We also issue press releases for traditional media outlets like radio, newspapers, and TV, and include information on our [website](#). Additionally, staff attend in-person events to share information about their programs.



Community Health Improvement

The [Prevention Agenda](#) of New York State serves as a blueprint for state and local initiatives designed to enhance the health and well-being of all New Yorkers. It aims to promote health equity across all populations experiencing disparities.

Every three years, Steuben County Public Health collaborates with local hospitals and community partners to assess the community's health needs. This team of partners, known as Smart Steuben, uses the results of the Community Health Assessment (CHA) to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHIP aims to address the most pressing health needs and improve the health of county residents by utilizing the resources available through the partner organizations. Smart Steuben completed the [CHA](#) and the 2022-2024 CHIP in December 2022.

SMART Steuben Coalition Members

- Steuben County Public Health
- Arnot Health
- Guthrie Corning Hospital
- UR St. James Hospital
- Catholic Charities of Steuben / Livingston Prevention Services
- Common Ground Health
- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Steuben
- Corning Community College
- Finger Lakes Community Health
- Hornell YMCA
- Oak Orchard Health
- Pivotal Public Health Partnership
- ProAction of Steuben & Yates, Inc.
- Southern Tier Library System
- Southern Tier Tobacco Awareness Coalition (STTAC)
- Steuben County Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (SCASAS)
- Steuben County Community Services / Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Steuben County Legislature
- Steuben Prevention Coalition and Opioid Committee
- Steuben Rural Health Network (IHS)
- Tri-County Family Medicine
- VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System
- Wegmans in Corning



Staff in Action

Steuben County Public Health is grateful and honored to have dedicated group of professionals working at the department. Public Health staff engages in trainings, workshops, and community outreach events that address public health priority areas. Our staff works hard to enhance our collective well-being, ensuring longer and healthier lives for everyone. We extend our thanks to the outstanding personnel and MRC volunteers at Steuben County Public Health for their daily contributions.



Public Health staff, 2023 POD exercise



Kat Potter, RN; 2023 NYS Immunization Conference



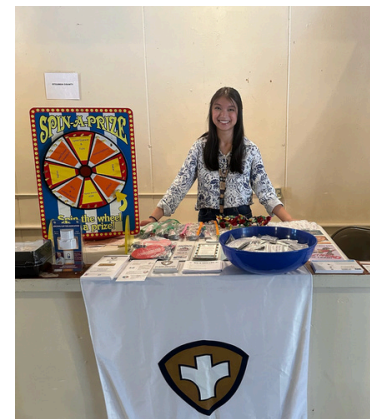
Public Health staff, Rabies Program Orientation training



Public Health staff, 2023 Memorial Day



Public Health staff



Mealea VanDenburg, Steuben County Fair

New York State Public Health Corp (NYSPHC) Fellowship Program

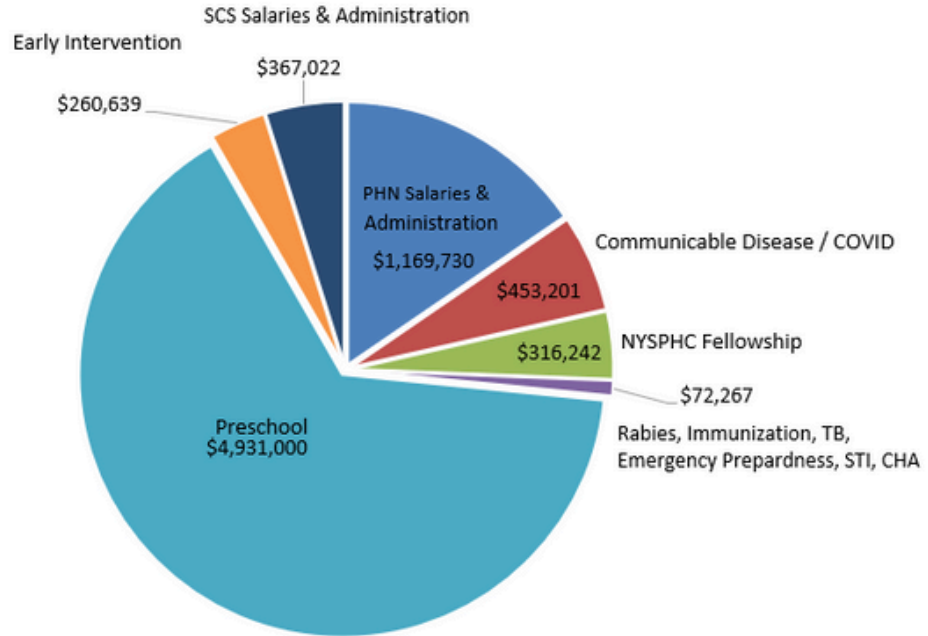
In the 2021 State of the State address, the Governor announced the establishment of the first and best in the nation [New York State Public Health Corps](#) (NYSPHC) to build public health capacity to support COVID-19 response and recovery efforts and to increase preparedness for future public health emergencies.

Since then, the fellowship has expanded to include a variety of disciplines in the public health sector. In 2023, Steuben County Public Health hosted fellows addressing areas in emergency preparedness, special children's services, and health education.

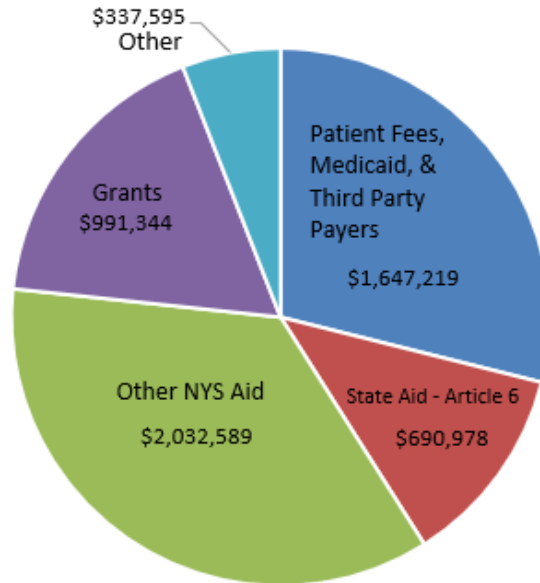


From the left: Justin Hall, Ryan Stryker, Terence O'Shea, Kathy Wille; Local Coordinator, Haley Finch, Mealea VanDenburg, Louise Sullivan-Blum, Matthew Marmor; Deputy Director

Budget Summary 2023 *Expenditures*



Revenue Sources



	2021	2022	2023
Total Expenses	6,486,517	8,174,478	7,570,100
Total Revenue	4,781,613	6,494,019	5,699,725
County Cost	1,704,904	1,653,459	1,870,375