

PREVENT DISEASE AND INJURY. PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELLNESS. PROTECT YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY.

## What's in This Month's Issue:

- National Public Health Week
- Child Passenger Safety Program
- Alcohol Awareness Month: How does alcohol affect the teen brain?
- What Impacts Health Survey
- Relax 4YourMentalHealth
- Talking Points Content Survey

## National Public Health Week

During the first full week of April each year, National Public Health Week is observed to recognize the contributions of public health and highlight issues that are important to improve the health of our communities.

### What is public health?

Health starts where we live, learn, work, and play. The vision of public health is healthy people living in healthy communities. Public health is the combination of science, practical skills, and beliefs, which are designed to give everyone a chance to live a healthy life. Such efforts include keeping you safe from the spread of contagious diseases, providing programs and advocating for policies to promote healthy lifestyles and opportunities, inspecting restaurants for sanitary food handling procedures, monitoring drinking water so it remains free of sewage or pollution, and upholding public health laws to protect the health of populations.

The core functions that are important to achieving the main goals of public health include policy development, assessment, and assurance. We assess health conditions and risks within our community to help find health trends and weaken their impacts on our community. We educate our community on important issues and support policies that support our community's health. Finally, we make sure policies, programs, and health services are effective and accessible.

The Williams County Health Department has accomplished many things over the past 100+ years so that everyone can have a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health and wellbeing! As public health progresses over the next 100 years, we will continue to pursue our vision to shape the healthiest and safest community in the lives of Williams County's residents.



## Child Passenger Safety Program

Williams County Health Department's Child Passenger Safety program works to improve the safety of all youth while in motor vehicles. Our certified technicians provide FREE educational sessions and car seat checks to any individual transporting children in car seats. These checks typically take between 30-60 minutes and take place at our Montpelier office. This program is funded by the United Way of Williams County.

The WCHD also has a Ohio Buckles Buckeyes (OBB) Program that provides free car seats to income-eligible families.

To make an appointment to check your child's car seat, call 419-485-3141.



## Alcohol Awareness Month: How does alcohol affect the teen brain?

Source: NIDA

When teens drink, alcohol affects their brains in the short-term - but repeated drinking can also impact it down the road, especially as their brains grow and develop.

### Short-Term Consequences of Intoxication:

- An intoxicated youth has a harder time making good decisions.
- A youth is less aware that his/her behavior may be inappropriate or risky.
- A youth may be more likely to engage in risky behavior, including drinking and driving, sexual activity (like unprotected sex) and aggressive or violent behavior.
- A youth is less likely to recognize potential danger.
- The likelihood a "blackout" occurs.
- Alcohol Poisoning induced by binge drinking may occur.

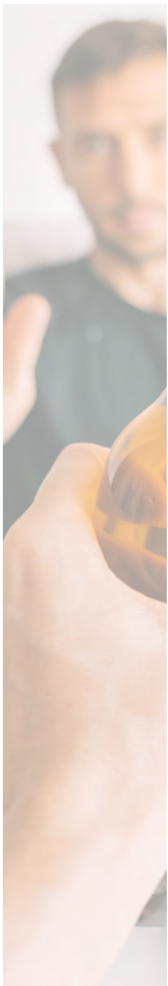
### Long-Term Consequences of Alcohol Use on the Developing Teen Brain:

Research shows that drinking during the teen years can interfere with normal brain development and change the brain in ways that:

- Have negative effects on information processing and learning.
- Increase the risk of developing an alcohol use disorder later in life.

For information on how to talk to your kids about drugs and alcohol - visit the Educating Communities on Healthy Opportunities (ECHO) Coalition website at [echocoalition-wc.com](http://echocoalition-wc.com) or use these resources:

- Talking with teens about alcohol and other drugs: [bit.ly/40h02pQ](http://bit.ly/40h02pQ)
- How to Connect with Your Teenager to Prevent Drug Use: [bit.ly/40h0hkK](http://bit.ly/40h0hkK)
- How To Tell If Your Child Is Drinking Alcohol: <https://bit.ly/3Z0eotG>



## WILLIAMS COUNTY YOUTH & ALCOHOL

**27%** of Williams County youth have tried more than just a few sips of alcohol.



The average age of onset for drinking alcohol is



Where do youth get access to alcohol?

For 33% of youth drinkers, a parent provided the alcohol.

11% of youth drinkers bought it in a liquor/ convenience/ supermarket/ gas station or store.

Data from the 2022 Williams County Health Assessment  
Learn more at [bit.ly/WC2022CHA](http://bit.ly/WC2022CHA)  
Visit ECHO's Website at [echocoalition-wc.com](http://echocoalition-wc.com)

## What Impacts Health Survey

The Williams County Health Department would like to learn more about what you think impacts the health of Williams County residents. Share your perspective by taking our What Impacts Health survey. The survey should take only 7 minutes and all responses are anonymous.

Survey: [bit.ly/WhatIsHealthWC](http://bit.ly/WhatIsHealthWC)



## Relax 4YourMentalHealth

Everyone can benefit from taking time to relax. Relaxation decreases the effects of stress on your body & mind, helps you cope, and alleviates long-term consequences of stress. Use these tips to find new, simple ways to relax.

### Relaxation Techniques:

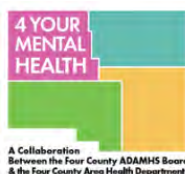
- **Practice Relaxation Breathing:** Learn some basic breathing exercises like box breathing or pursed lip breathing. Learn more: [Mindful Breathing Exercise](#)
- **Stretch Your Muscles:** During times of stress, our muscles become tense. Stretching can help relieve that tension. Learn different stretches to help relieve tension: [Mindful Stretching Guide](#)
- **Mindfulness:** Mindfulness is an intense awareness of the moment you are experiencing. For example, drinking a warm cup of coffee: take the time to notice your fingers curved around the cup and the warmth of the cup, breathe in the smell of your coffee before taking a sip, feel the way the liquid warmth travels down your throat. Mindfulness helps us slow down and live in the moment. [Mindfulness Exercises](#)
- **Relax In Nature:** There are undeniable benefits for your mental health when you spend time in nature. Take time to savor the scenery, wander in the wilderness, look up at the sky, and even sleep beneath the stars.

This will allow your mind to slow down and relax. [10 Ways to Relax in Nature and Stress Less](#)

- **Reach Out for Help:** It's okay to ask for help. Maybe it's a chat with a friend over something that you are struggling with, or scheduling time with a therapist to find new ways to conquer negative thinking or learn new coping skills. Reaching out for help is an important step to help you balance your mental health. Find local mental health resources: [Resource Guide](#)

For a little insight on your mental health & stress knowledge, take this quiz: [Stress Test -- How Much Do You Know?](#)

Click here [Relax \(4yourmentalhealth.org\)](https://4yourmentalhealth.org) to learn more about relaxing #4YourMentalHealth.



**#4YourMentalHealth**  
**Take Care. Connect. Relax.**

## Talking Points Content Survey

We would like to hear from you. What would you like to learn about in future Community Talking Points? Share your feedback by taking the following survey: [bit.ly/CTPInputSurvey](https://bit.ly/CTPInputSurvey)



WCHD Community Talking Points are published on a monthly basis and posted on our website and social media. If you would you like to receive the community talking points directly, sign up by completing this form: [bit.ly/WCCCommunityTalkingPoints](https://bit.ly/WCCCommunityTalkingPoints)

For more information on WCHD programs and services, visit: [williamscountyhealth.org](https://williamscountyhealth.org)

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