

# **Cook County Department of Public Health Quarterly Report**

***to the Cook County Board of Commissioners in their  
role as the Cook County Board of Health***

***Q1 2025 – Program and Policy initiatives serving  
youth in suburban Cook County***

***Item 25-1251***

**Presenter:**

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**Interim COO, Cook County Department of  
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# Overview

- Data
- Youth-serving initiatives
  - Early Childhood
  - K-12
  - Young adults



# Data- Focus on youth in Suburban Cook County



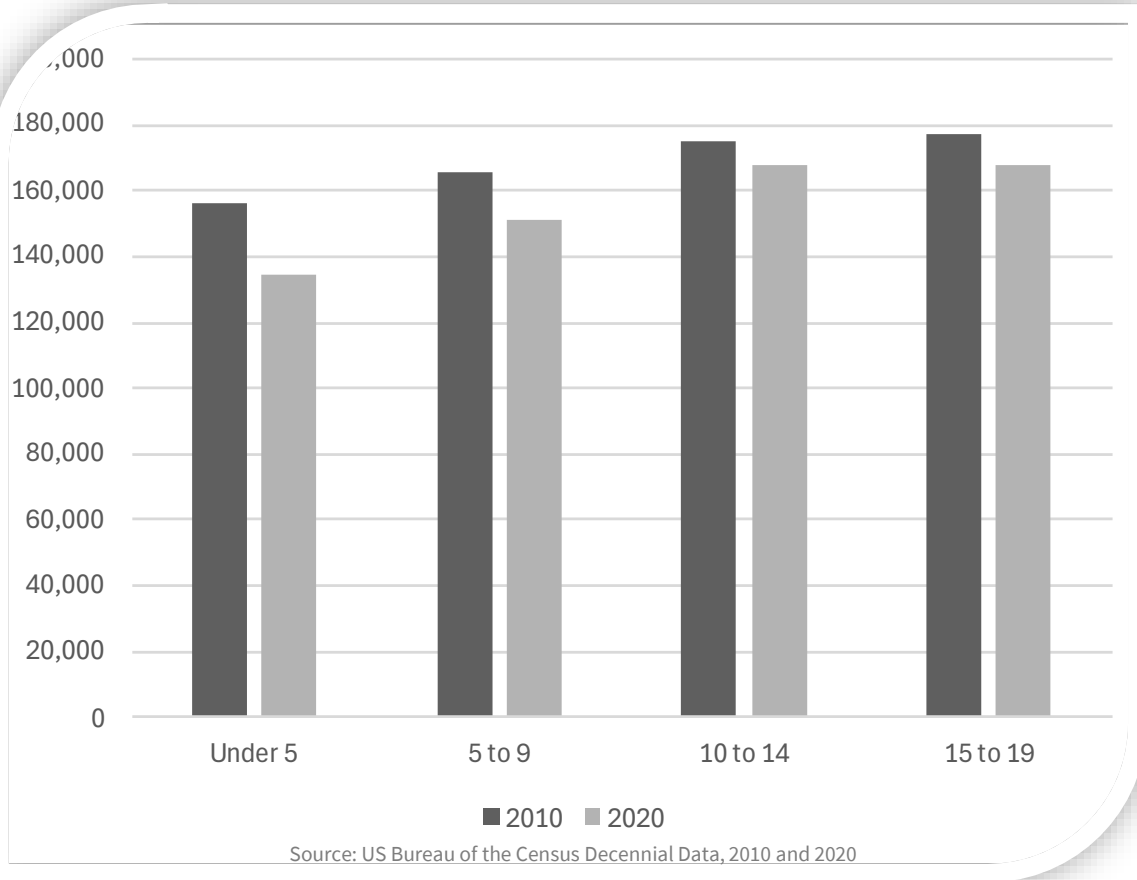
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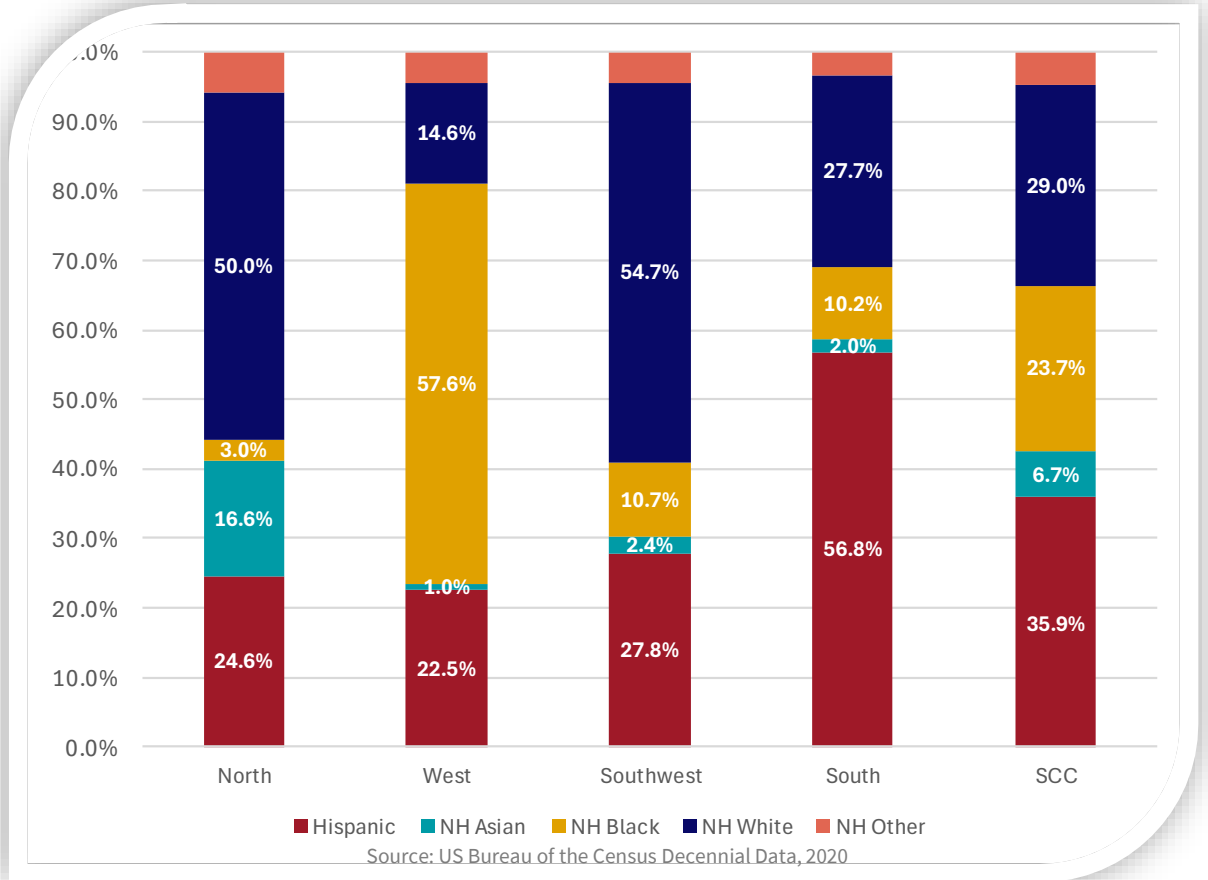
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# Age, Sex, Race & Ethnicity

Total Population by Age, 2010 & 2020

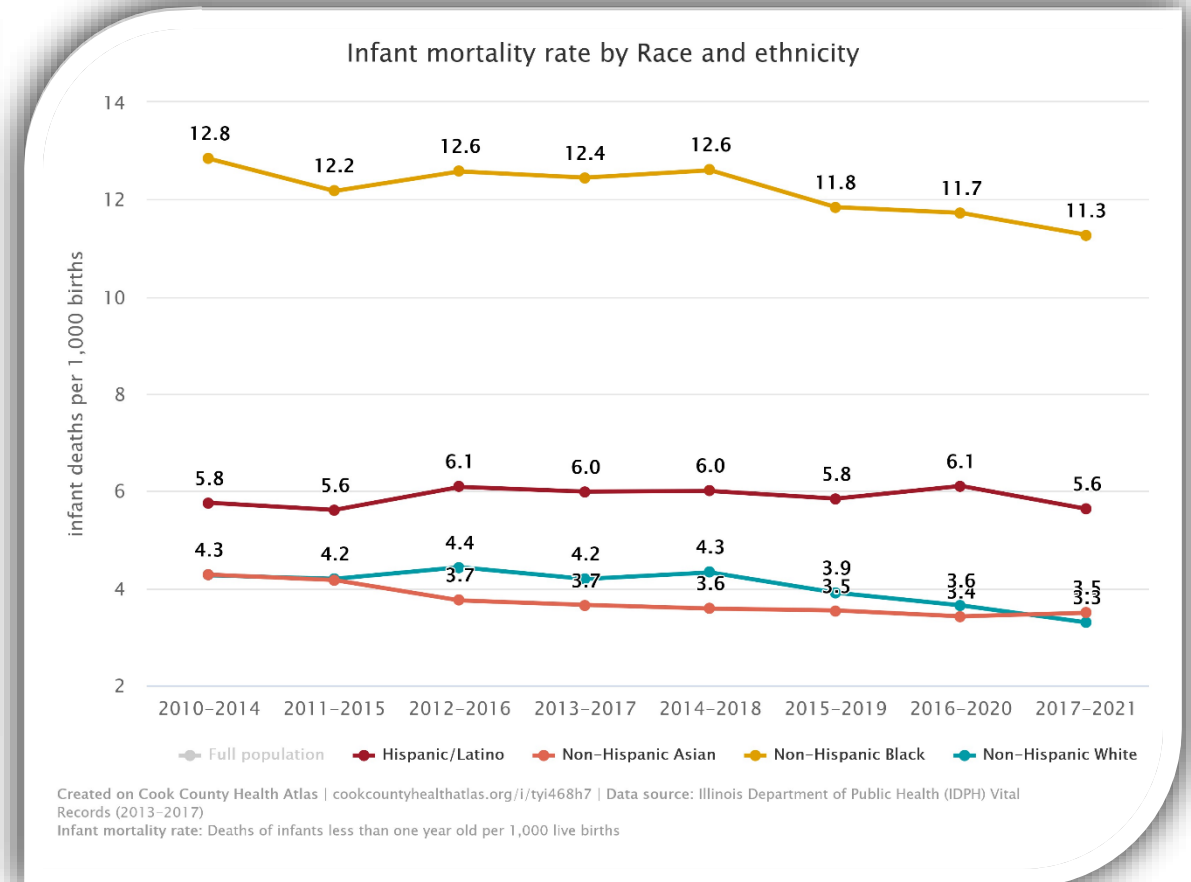
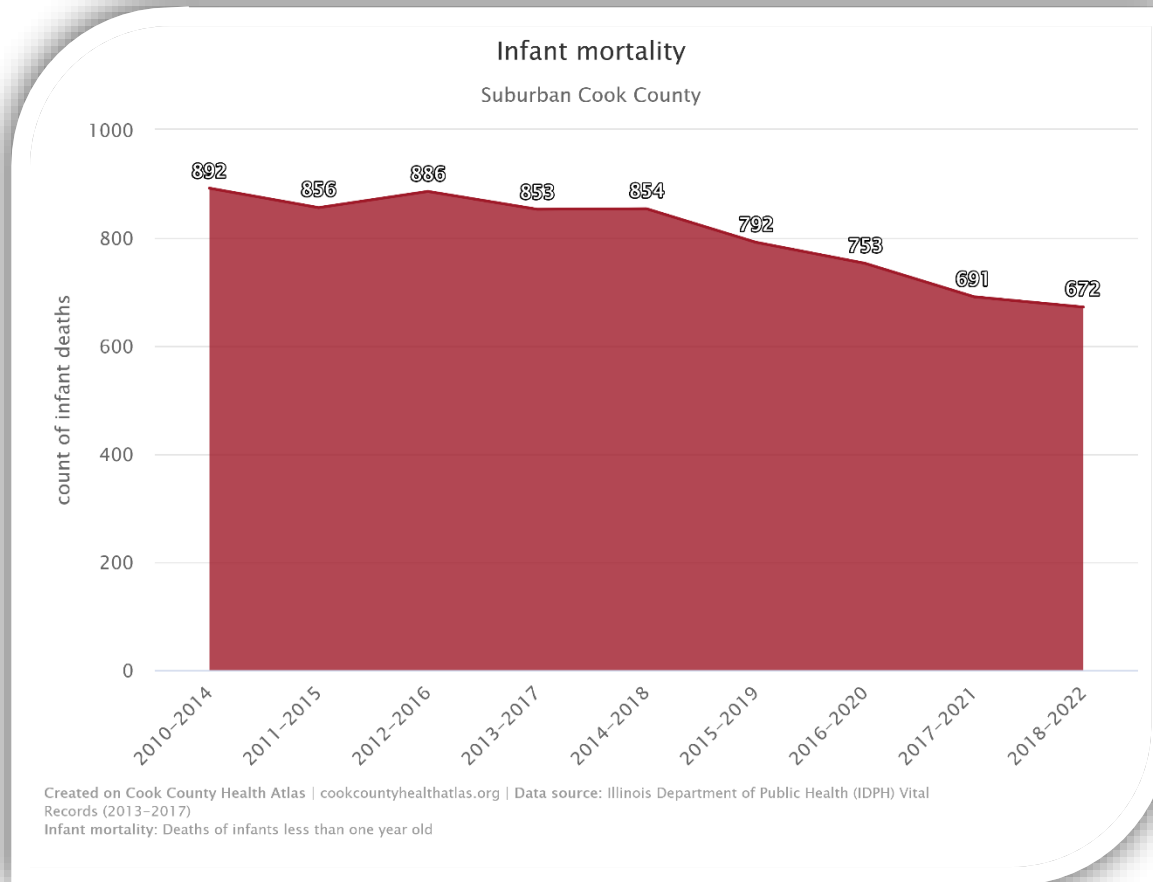


Share of Population Under Age 20 by Race & Location, 2020



# Infant Mortality

Between 2017-2022, the infant mortality rate for the Non-Hispanic Black population was **3.4 times higher** than that of the Non-Hispanic White population.



[Infant mortality - Cook County Health Atlas](http://cookcountyhealthatlas.org)



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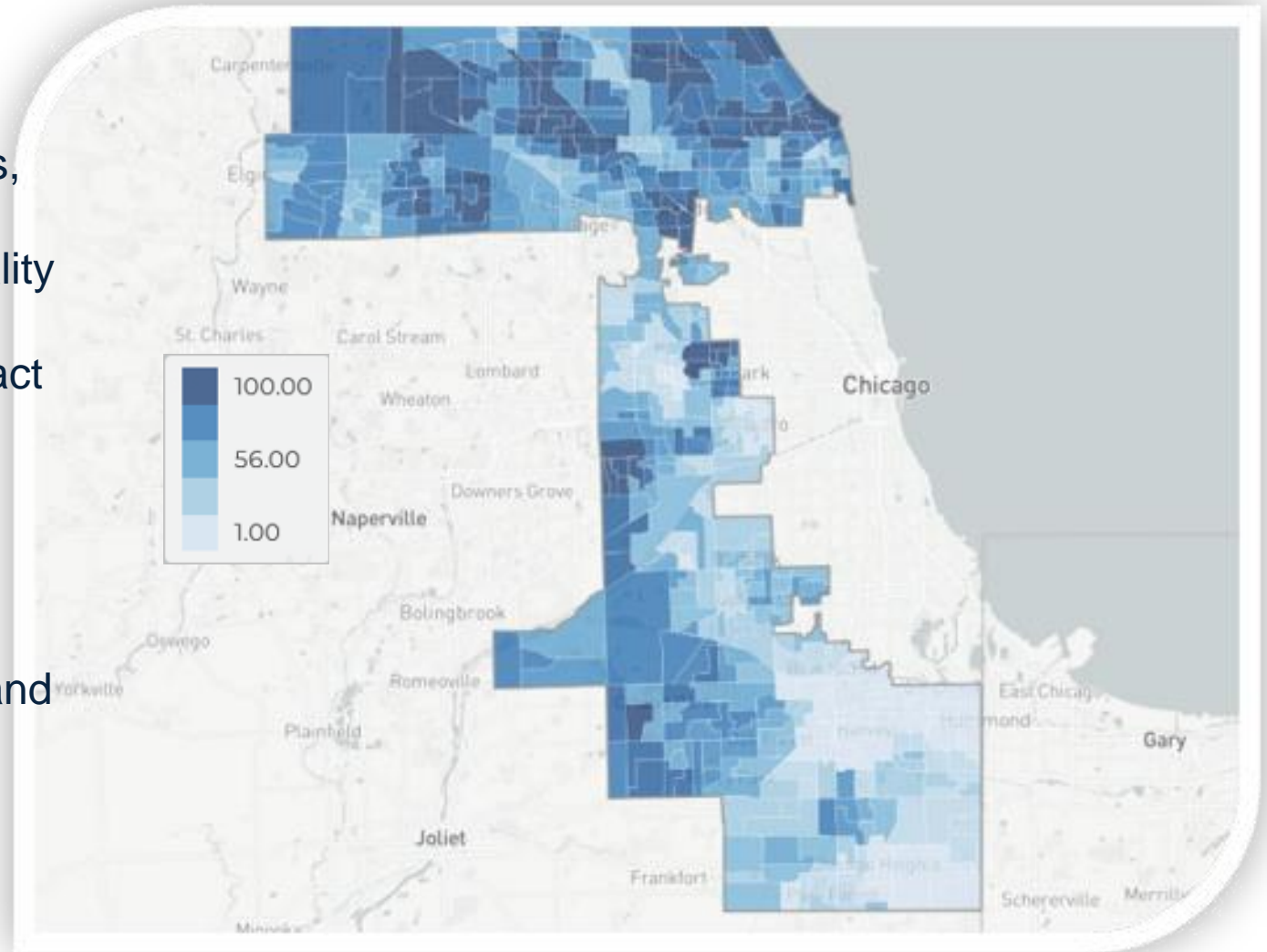
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# Childhood Opportunity Index

The index combines multiple data indicators—e.g., access to good schools, health resources, and safe environments—to gauge the overall quality of opportunities for children within suburban Cook County at the census tract level.

The map highlights stark differences in resources available to children across suburban Cook County, with greater opportunity for those living in the north and southwest and comparatively less opportunity for children residing in the south and west.



[Child Opportunity Index \(COI\) - Cook County Health Atlas](#)



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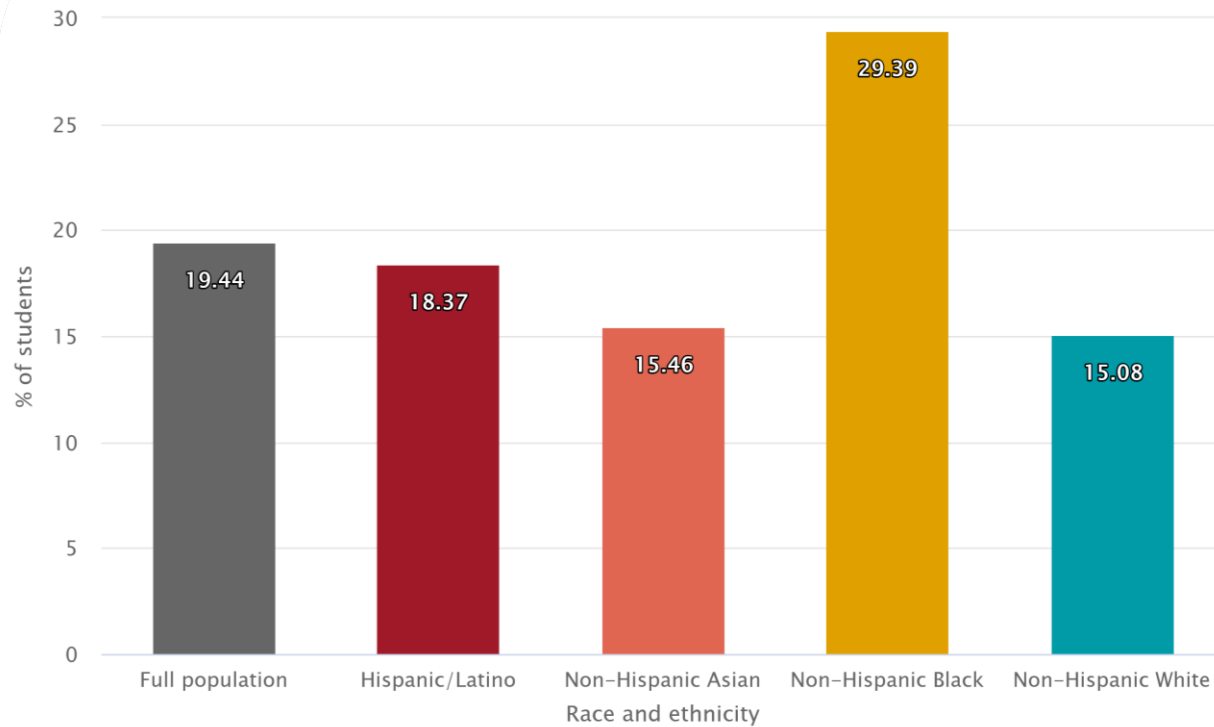
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# Asthma

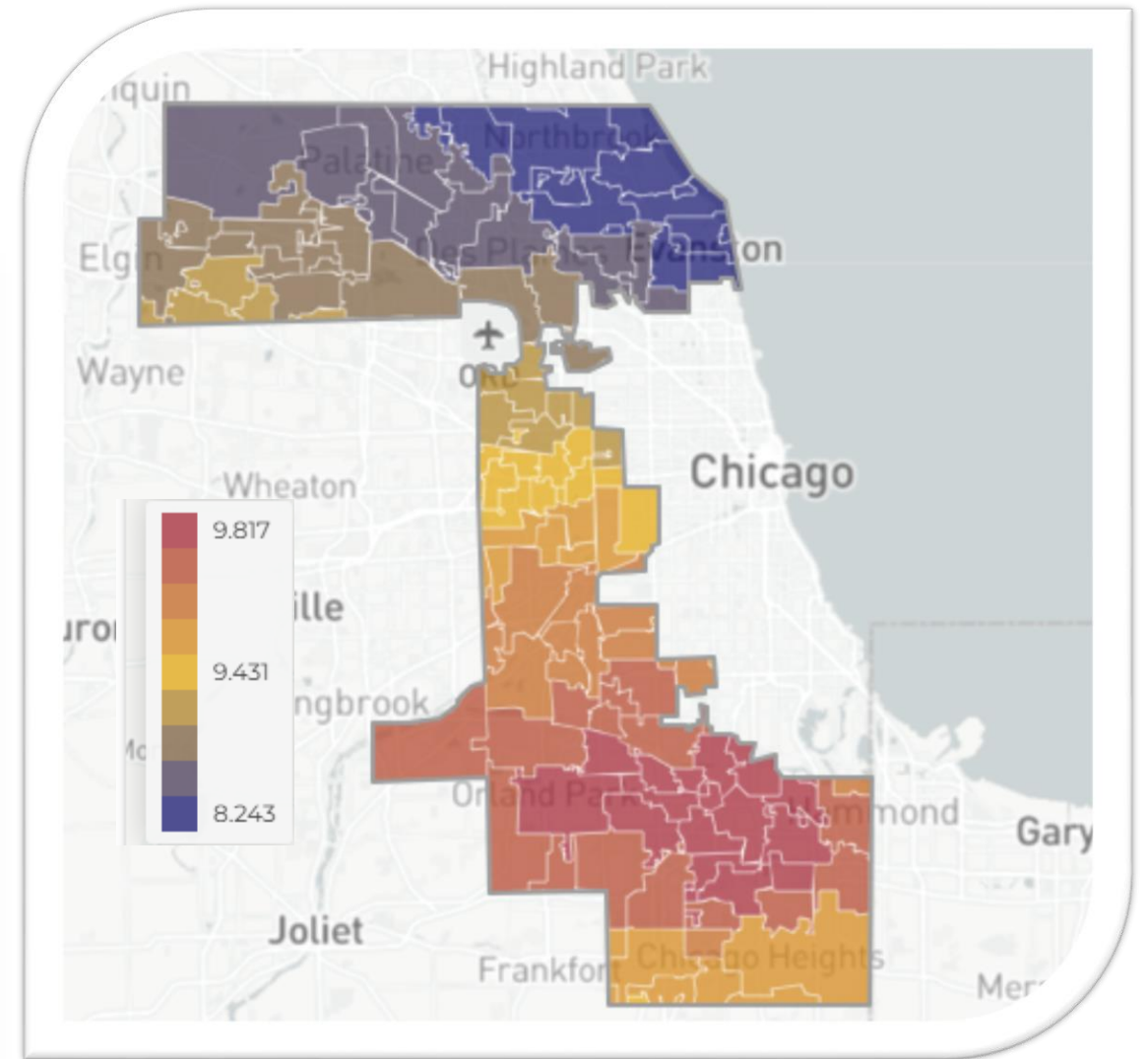
High school asthma rate (YRBS) by Race and ethnicity, Suburban Cook County

2020



Created on Cook County Health Atlas | [cookcountyhealthatlas.org](http://cookcountyhealthatlas.org)

High school asthma rate (YRBS): Percent of public high school students who report being diagnosed with asthma.



Particulate Matter (PM 2.5) Concentration ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ), 2020



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[High school asthma rate \(YRBS\) - Cook County Health Atlas](http://cookcountyhealthatlas.org)

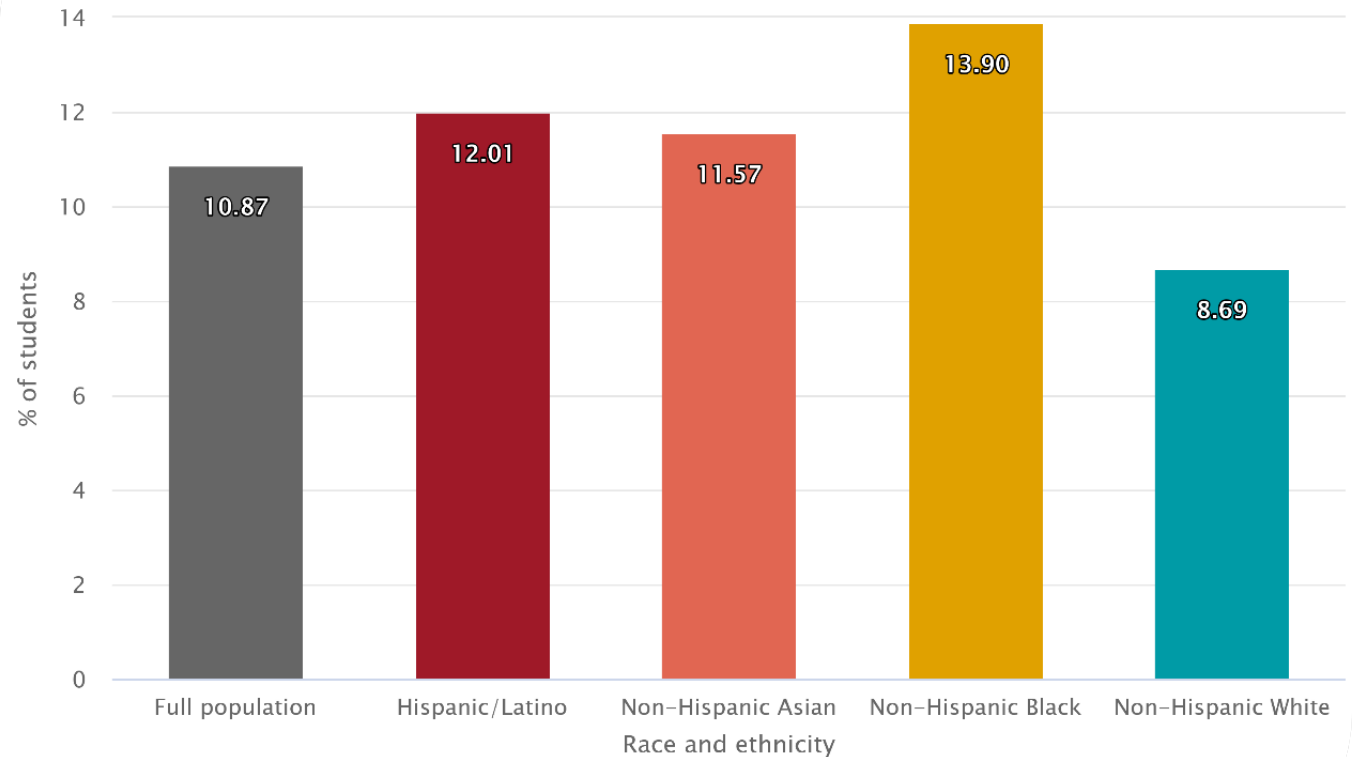
[Particulate matter \(PM 2.5\) concentration - Cook County Health Atlas](http://cookcountyhealthatlas.org)

# Fresh Food Consumption

- Bars show percentages of high school students who report no consumption of fruits during the past seven days
- Data was collected from students through the Youth Risk Behavior Survey

High school no fruit consumption rate (YRBS) by Race and ethnicity, Suburban Cook County

2022



Created on Cook County Health Atlas | [cookcountyhealthatlas.org](https://cookcountyhealthatlas.org)

High school no fruit consumption rate (YRBS): Percent of public high school students who report not eating fruit during the past seven days.

Atlas link: <https://cookcountyhealthatlas.org/insights/i8vpcnp6>



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# E-cigarette use

**In 2022, fewer students reported ever trying electronic vapor products compared to students in 2020.**

In 2022, **28.5% have used electronic vapor products** and 71.5% students have never used electronic vapor products. The percentage of students who used electronic vapor products has *decreased* since 2020.

**The use of electronic vapor products varies by sex and sexual orientation.**

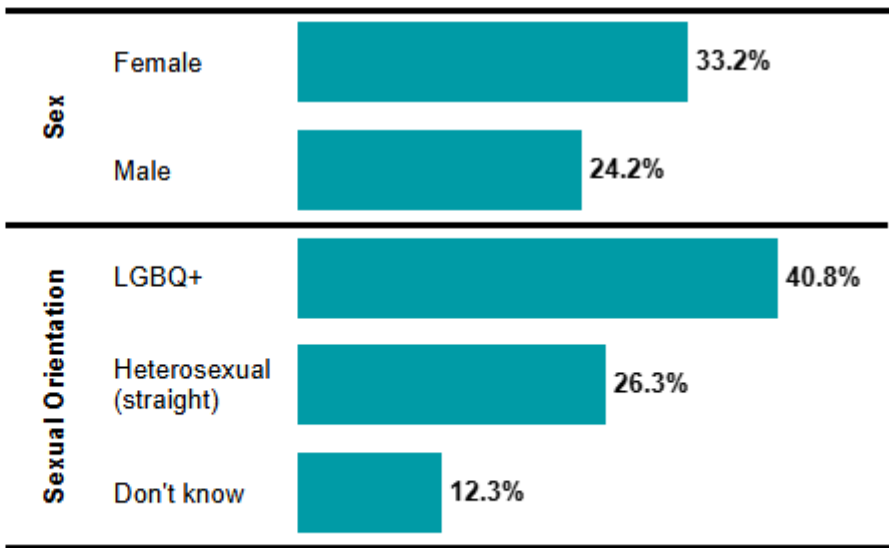
More females (33%) than males (24%) have used electronic vapor products.

About 41% of LGBTQ+ students reported using electronic vapor products.

STUDENTS USING ELECTRONIC VAPOR PRODUCTS

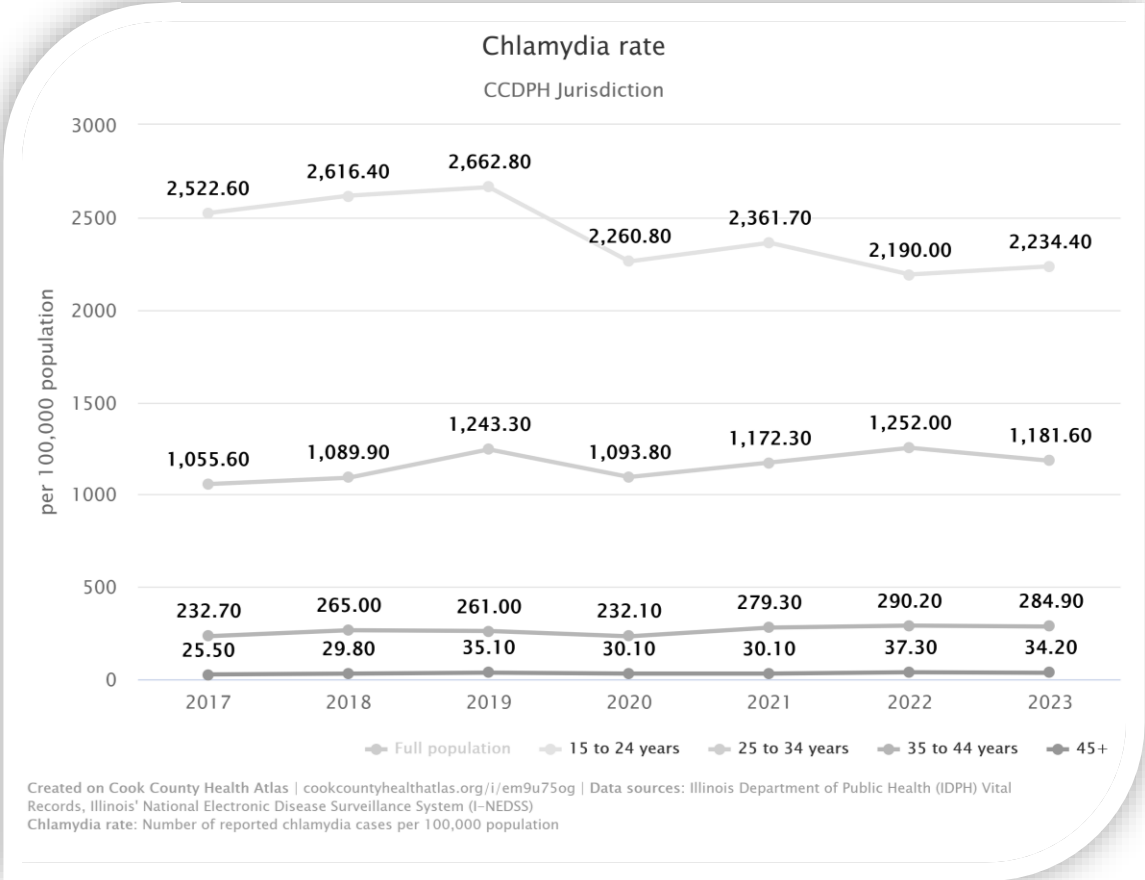
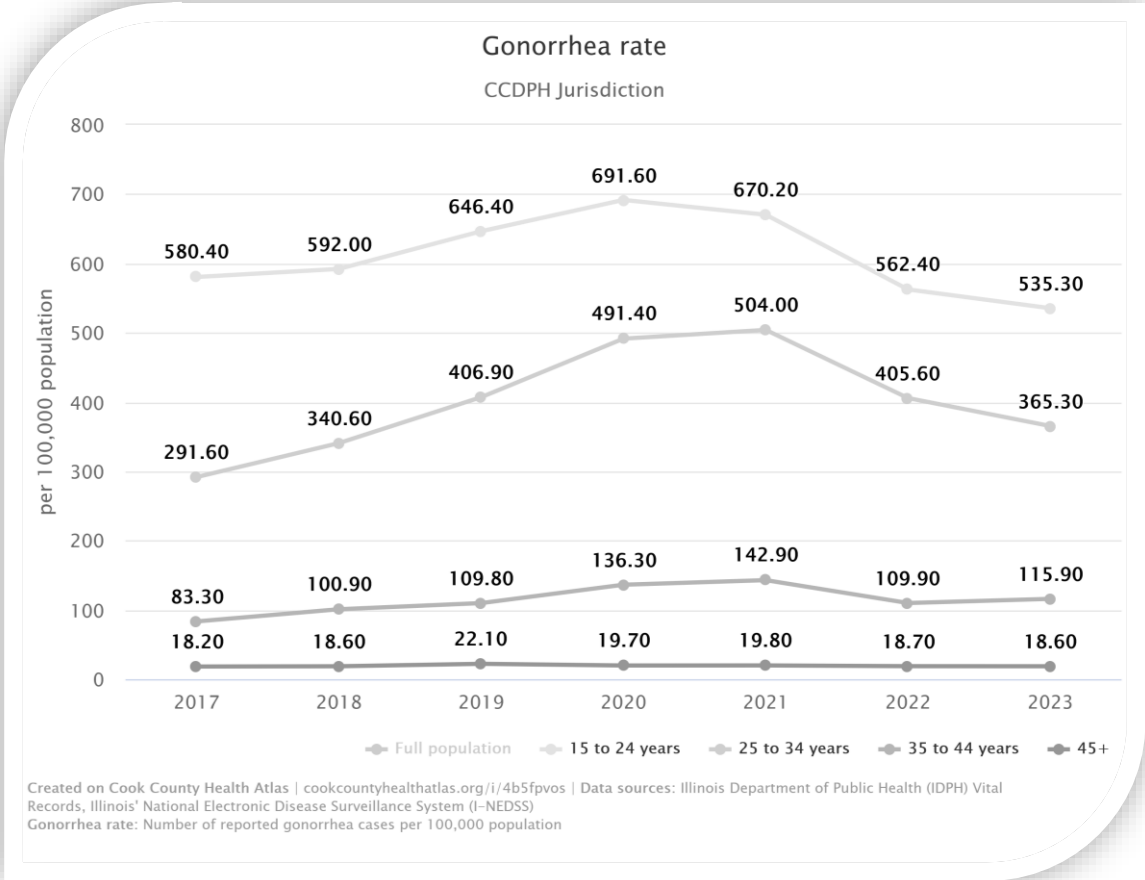


BY DEMOGRAPHICS IN 2022



# Gonorrhea and Chlamydia

Chlamydia rates are highest among 15–24-year-olds and remain a major public health concern.



[Chlamydia rate - Cook County Health Atlas](#)  
[Gonorrhea rate - Cook County Health Atlas](#)



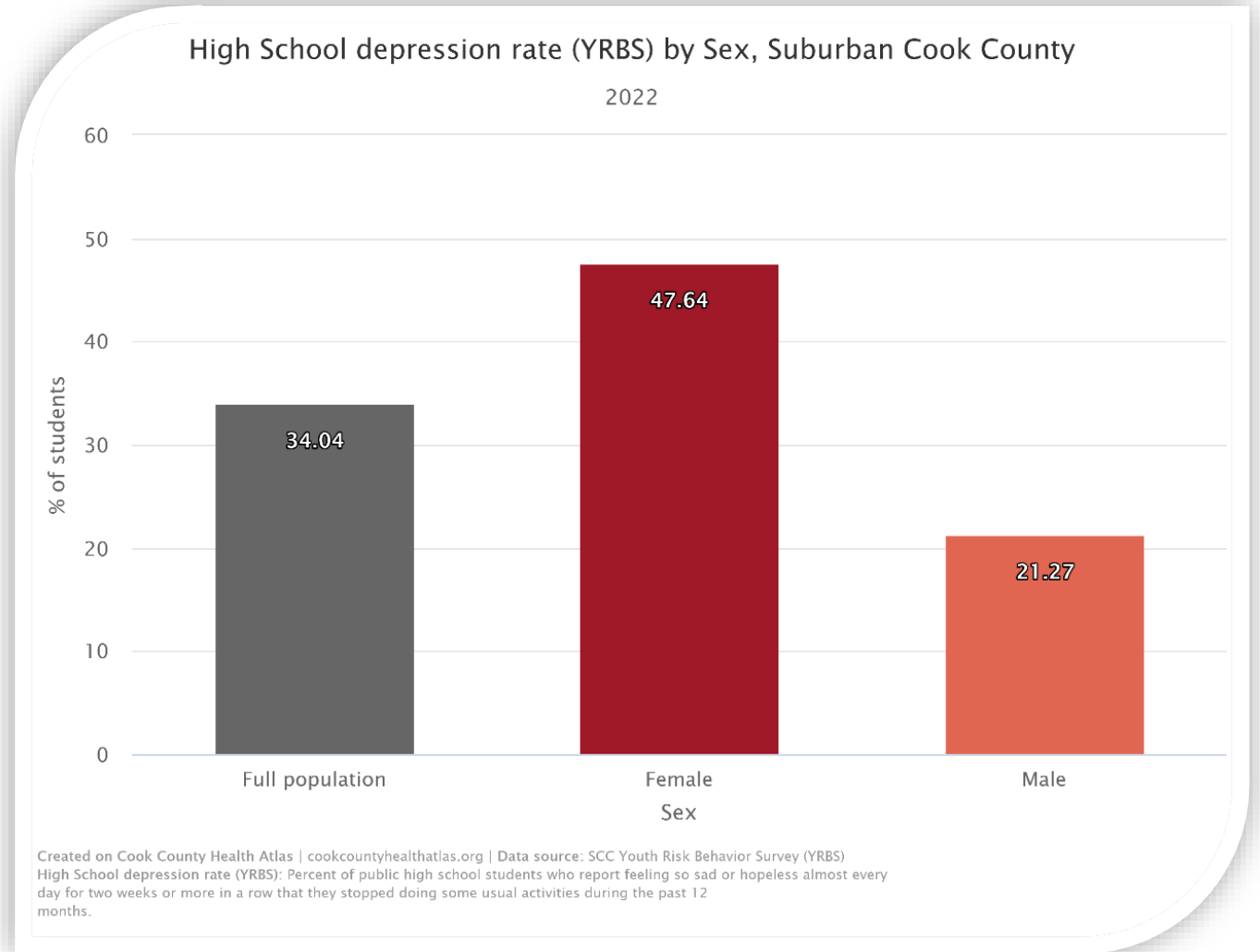
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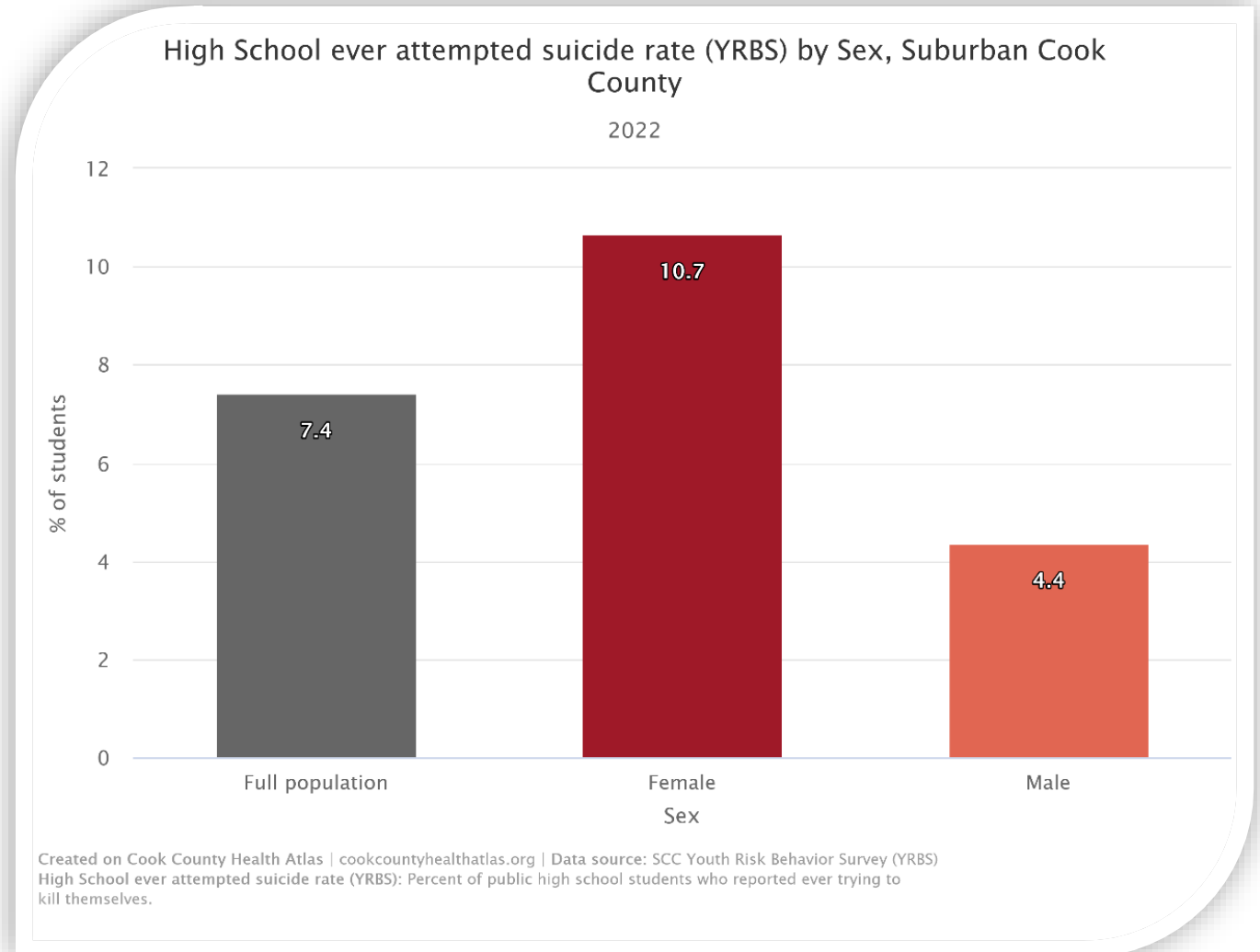
# Depression

- In 2022, approximately 34% of high school students in suburban Cook County reported experiencing persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness.
- Female students reported higher rates of these feelings compared to their male counterparts.
- In 2022, over 2 in 5 teen girls experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, which is over double the rate of boys.



# Suicide

- While suburban Cook County has lower suicide rates compared to the national average, disparities by sex remain evident, with males at significantly higher risk.
- High school-age females, however, are nearly 2.5 times as likely as males to have ever attempted suicide.
- National data shows a staggering 78% increase in suicide rates among Black youth ages 10 to 19 between 2000 and 2020.



# CCDPH's Approach

## INFORMED BY DATA

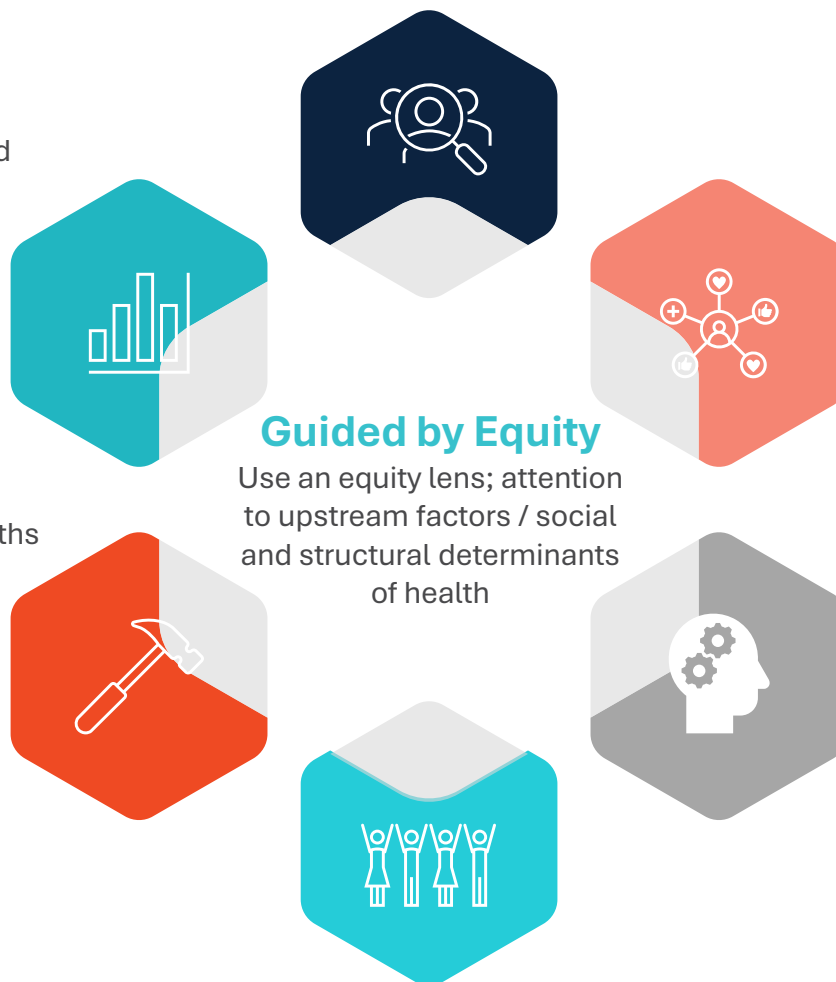
CCDPH works to make surveillance and health indicator data available to guide planning

## COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY

Initiatives are informed by community experiences, desires, needs and strengths

## BUILDING CAPACITY

Focus on learning and resource development internally and externally



## Guided by Equity

Use an equity lens; attention to upstream factors / social and structural determinants of health

## BOTH BROAD AND FOCUSED

Population level initiatives coupled with attention to priority areas and populations for biggest impact.

## POLICY. SYSTEMS & ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

In addition to providing services to meet immediate needs, CCDPH focuses on PSE change to affect upstream drivers of health inequities.

## BEST PRACTICE & LIVED EXPERIENCE

Work is informed by evidence, public health best practices and experience of community.



# CCDPH's youth-serving initiatives



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# Early Childhood



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# Early Childhood

## WHAT WE DO:

A mix of direct service for families, technical assistance for ECE partners, public education, data and surveillance, and PSE change

## WHY IT MATTERS:

The first few years of a child's life are critical for their brain development and lay the foundation for their future physical, social, and emotional well-being,

- Nurse home visits to provide developmental screenings, health education, and connections to medical and support programs to help children and families thrive
- Lead poisoning prevention through home inspections and hazard remediation at no cost
- Hearing and vision screenings in early childhood programs in schools and community settings to prevent delays
- One-on-one infectious disease consultation and TA to prevent or address outbreaks
- Policy advocacy centering on:
  - Access to healthy meals and food access programs
  - Funding for early childhood care and education programs 0-5
  - Paid time off and minimum wage policies
  - Strengthening policies to support vaccination and reduce spread of vaccine-preventable disease
  - Maternal and child health



# Early Childhood – Community Engagement and Public Education



Healthy Homes  
for Healthy Families

A Cook County and Elevate Initiative

- CCDPH nurses created [Every Mother, Every Child](#) a website with information and resources for people who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, their partners, and their families, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Funded community partners work to bring information on lead poisoning and child development to young children and their families, and assist families with healthy homes program application.

**Every child deserves  
a healthy start.**



Get tips from our nurses before, during and after pregnancy.

**EveryMotherEveryChild.org**



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# Spotlight – Keeping young children in child care safe from infectious diseases

- The CCDPH Communicable Disease Unit provides individualized consultation in early care and education (ECE) settings to control prevent and outbreaks
- CD staff investigates reports of infectious diseases, gathers information, conducts key interviews, and arranges testing when necessary
- Prevention and control guidance on exclusion (quarantine/isolation), environmental cleaning and disinfection is tailored for each site and each outbreak
- CD staff ensures accurate, fact-based communication between parties—for example providing a template letter for a daycare to send to parents
- Monitoring of cases or clusters continues, and guidance is provided, until it is safe to resume normal operations



# Spotlight – Surveillance data to inform practice beyond Cook County

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report

## *Notes from the Field*

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### **Measles Outbreak — Cook County, Illinois, October–November 2023**

Kelley Bemis, MPH<sup>1</sup>; Mabel Frias, MPH<sup>1</sup>; Sheila Giovanni, MPH<sup>1</sup>; Tarek Shackour, MSHC<sup>1</sup>; Heather D. Reid<sup>2</sup>; Jodi Morgan<sup>2</sup>; Michael TeKippe, MD, PhD<sup>3</sup>; Demian Christiansen, DSc<sup>1</sup>

On October 10, 2023, the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) in Illinois was notified by hospital A, a large pediatric facility, of a suspected measles case in a child aged 2 years (patient A) who had immigrated from Yemen on September 29 and who had no history of receipt of measles,

vaccine within 72 hours of the exposure, and 13 received immune globulin.

The index patient's household contacts included two siblings with no history of MMR vaccination and with serologic testing indicating measles susceptibility. One sibling, aged 4 years, (patient B) arrived in the United States at the same time as the index patient (September 29). The second sibling, aged 9 years, (patient C) had arrived in the United States in January 2023. Both siblings developed measles while in quarantine with rash onsets on October 22 (patient B) and November 1 (patient C). Patient B also reported fever, cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis;

# School-aged Youth K-12



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# School-aged youth – K-12

## WHAT WE DO:

Technical assistance for partners, public education, media campaigns, data and reports, and PSE change

## WHY IT MATTERS:

Working to advance equity for school aged children in the places they live, learn, and play supports healthy environments and the development of healthy habits, which can significantly impact their physical and mental well-being throughout their lives

- Host virtual monthly meetings designed for school administrators, nurses, staff in K-12 schools to stay updated on the latest health guidance, vaccine requirements, upcoming events, grants, and more.
  - Average 100 Participants (teachers, administrators, nurses) from 53 municipalities in suburban Cook County
  - Public and parochial schools
- One-on-one consultation and TA with school nurses and other staff to prevent and respond to outbreaks
- School lunch program facility inspections
- Policy advocacy focused on:
  - changes in state law to provide enhanced reimbursements to schools so all children can access free breakfast and lunch
  - Evidence-based school funding
  - Flavored tobacco sales restrictions
  - Strengthening policies to support vaccination and reduce spread of vaccine-preventable disease



# School-aged youth – K-12

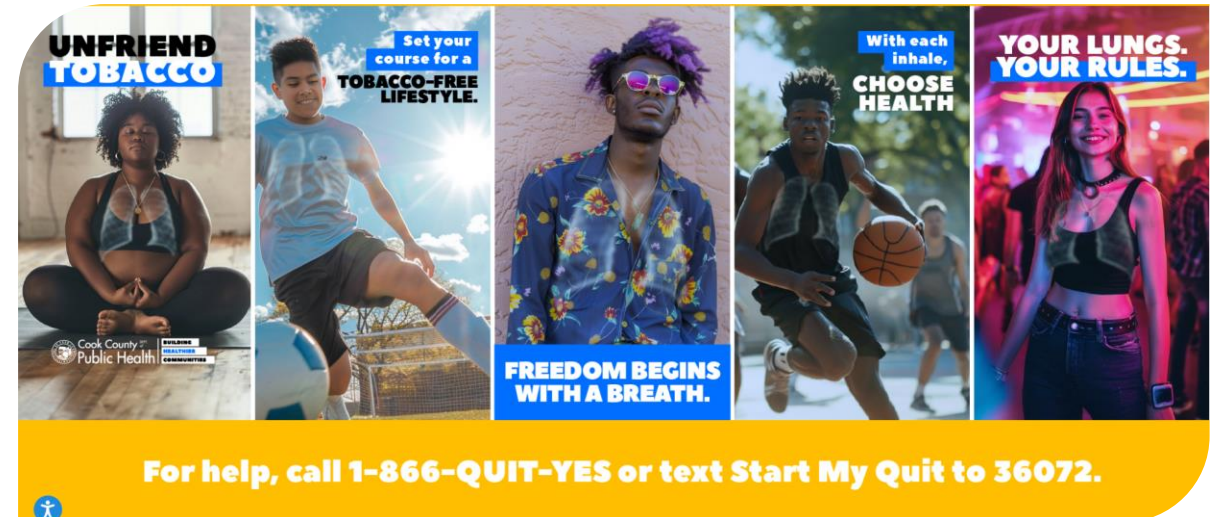


- Provide vape prevention education for middle and high schools, decreasing youth use and connection to evidence-based cessation, in partnership with RHA
- Increase the number of schools adapting smoke-free policies to include e-cigs, reducing use/exposure of these dangerous products.
- Enforce the Cook County Youth Tobacco Control Ordinance to restrict the sale of tobacco products to those over 21 years old
- Support and promote adoption of local complete streets policies to promote walking and biking
- Collaborate with sister agencies to design new processes for equitable resource allocation – additional resources for safe roads for kids
- Improve equitable access to allergy and asthma medication in schools to prevent and reduce life-threatening emergencies for students, staff and visitors
  - standing orders and
  - Prescriptions
  - Connections to free epi-pens



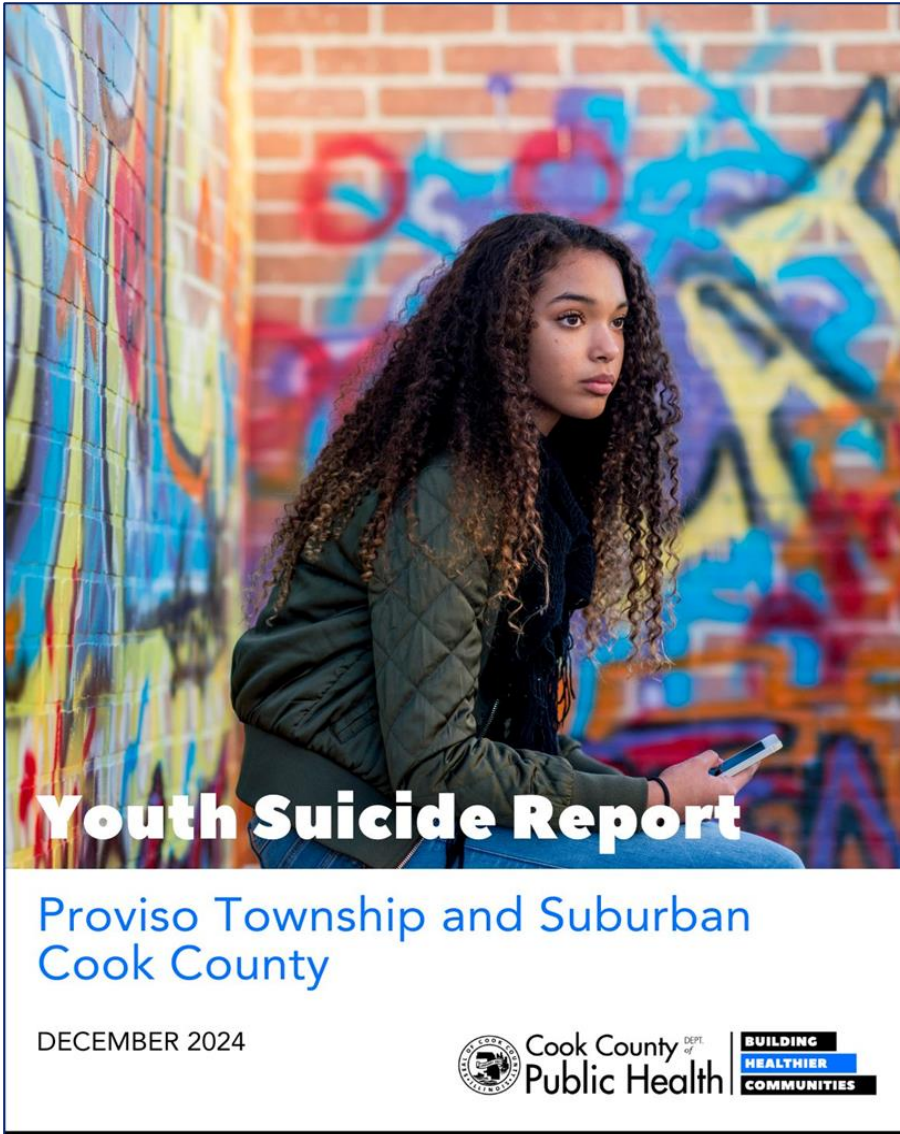
# K-12 Community Engagement and Public Education

- Fund community-based organizations through two grant programs to provide positive youth development and substance use initiatives in communities with great need
- Launch “Unfriend Tobacco: Your Lungs, Your Rules” tobacco use prevention and cessation campaign to raise awareness among youth and young adults about the harmful effects of using flavored vape and other tobacco products
- Promote health observances on social media
- Gather, update, and provide data specific to school-age people through public dashboards, webpages, and the Cook County Health Atlas





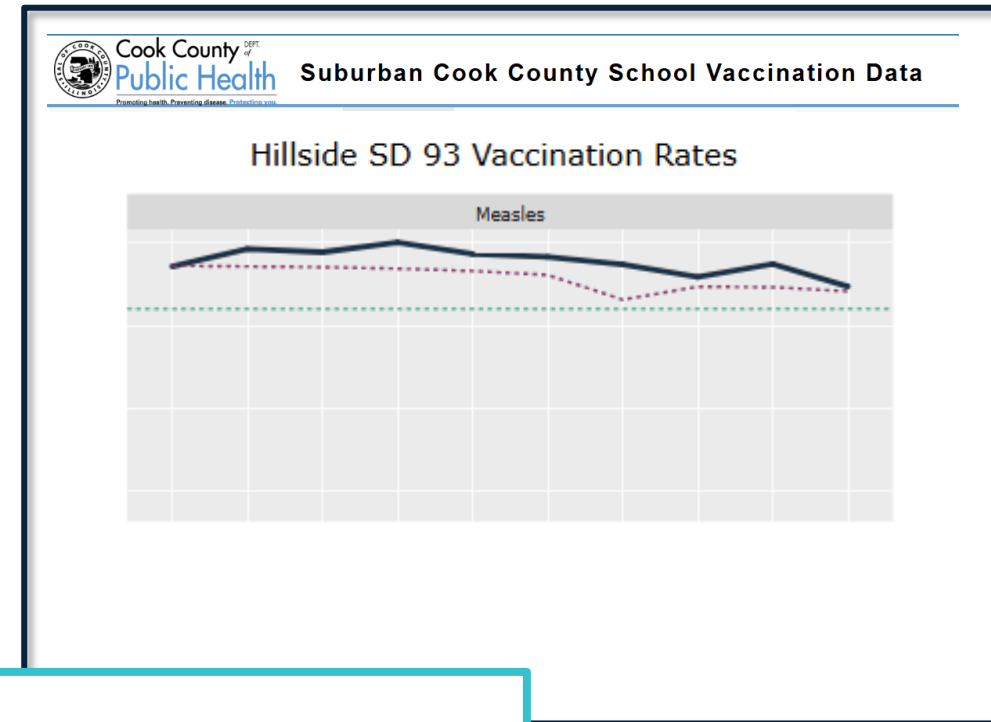
# Spotlight – Working with community to address youth suicide



- The Proviso Township Youth Services Department's Navigating Mental Wellness Committee requested data on youth suicide to help inform and enhance their suicide prevention efforts.
- CCDPH extracted and analyzed data on the scope of youth suicide in Proviso Township and suburban Cook and presented the findings to the committee.
- CCDPH's report found that:
  - **15% of suburban Cook County high school students reported seriously considering suicide in 2022.**
  - The youngest person to attempt suicide was 9 years old.
  - 36 Proviso youth died from suicide between 2006 and 2020
- The report is being shared with community groups in the West suburbs by CCDPH and community partners.
- Throughout suburban Cook, CCDPH funds 27 community organizations to provide mental health and resilience programs and services.

# Spotlight: Youth Data

- CCDPH maintains a public data dashboard (<https://ccdphcd.shinyapps.io/schoolvaccines/>) on immunization rates at suburban Cook County schools
  - Vaccination rates for 2023-2024 school year
  - School vaccination Trends
  - School and district specific data
- Many health indicators on the Cook County Health Atlas provide information specific high schoolers through CCDPH's work on the Youth Risk and Behavior Survey, which gathers data on conditions and behaviors that can lead to poor health in high school students
  - Data available for schools, decision-makers, youth organizations, advocates



# Young Adults



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# Young Adults

## WHAT WE DO:

Technical assistance for partners in two-years institutions and CBOs, public education, media campaigns, data and reports, and PSE change

## WHY IT MATTERS:

Poor health during young adulthood can lead to long-term consequences like chronic disease, reduced employment opportunities, and increased healthcare costs later in life; it's also a time when many risky behaviors are prevalent, making preventative measures particularly impactful.

- Fund community-based organizations through two grant programs to provide positive youth development, behavioral health, and substance use initiatives in communities with great need
- Conduct STI and HIV surveillance and publish reports that help CBOs plan services and advocate for fair policies
- Provide one-on-one technical assistance with medical providers to inform treatment
- Coming soon: at-home STI test kit initiative to support easy, confidential testing
- Distribute free condoms to individuals [through our website](#)
- Collaborate with community colleges to develop programs to support career development
- Consult with administrators to guide infectious disease institutional policy development
- Policy advocacy focused on:
  - Strengthening career pathways
  - Improving access to nutrition programs (SNAP)



# Young Adults - Community Engagement and Public Education

- Media campaigns:
  - Don't Guess, Get a Test - STI awareness and prevention
  - Here to Hear You - Mental Health
  - Life be Life'n - Mental health with special focus on black and Latine men



Life be Life'n, but you are not alone (a conversation with Hispanic men)



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Here to Hear You Mental  
Health Awareness for Men

# Spotlight – Building opportunities for health-related careers



CCDPH: Is working to strengthen the public health workforce and increase representation of people of color in the allied health field, particularly CHWs, by providing training, academic support, and resources needed to succeed in health-related careers to residents and students.

CCDPH: is working with training partners South Suburban College (SSC) and Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI) to provide Community Health Worker (CHW) training, dual college credit hours, and certificates to residents and high school students.

Outcomes: South Suburban College provided training to 87 residents and 8 HS students. Sinai Urban Health Institute provided basic skills training and certificates to 51 residents and 12 high school students.



# CCDPH's Approach

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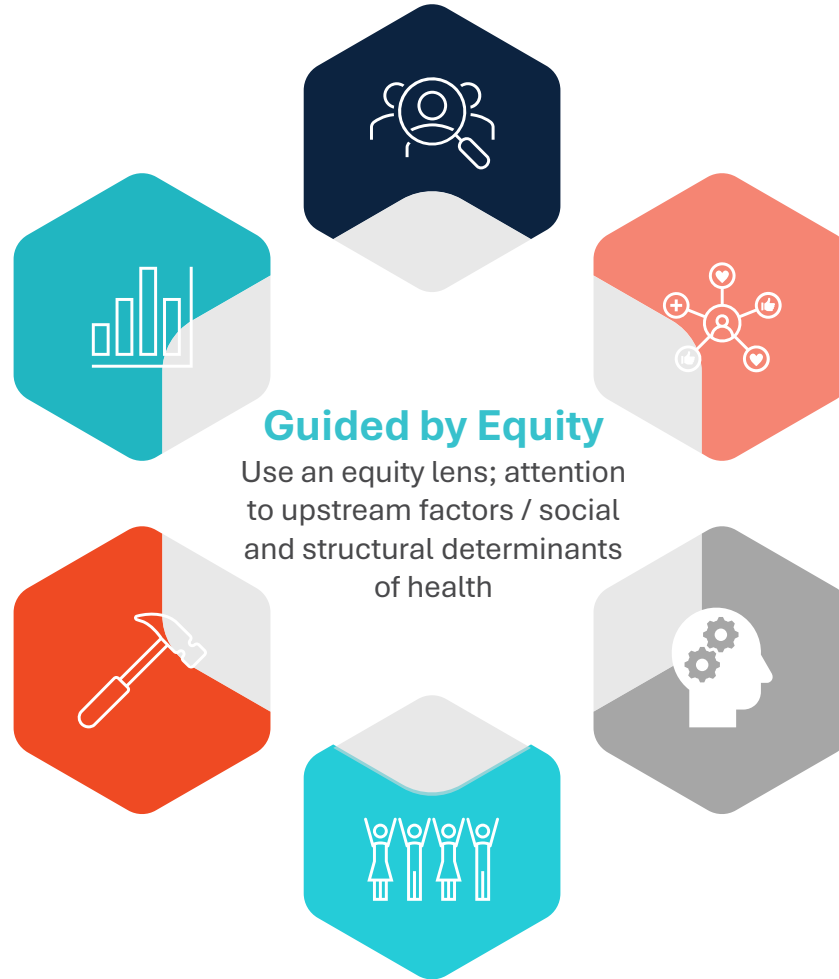
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## BOTH BROAD AND FOCUSED

Population level initiatives coupled with attention to priority areas and populations for biggest impact.

## POLICY. SYSTEMS & ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

In addition to providing services to meet immediate needs, CCDPH focuses on PSE change to affect upstream drivers of health inequities.

## BEST PRACTICE & LIVED EXPERIENCE

Work is informed by evidence, public health best practices and experience of community.





# Summary

- CCDPH works to improve the conditions where youth live, learn, and play and support healthy physical, social and mental health
- CCDPH works across the lifespan – youth initiatives focus on Early childhood, School-aged youth (K-12), and Young adults
- Partners include childcare providers, schools, teachers, administrators, medical providers, community-based organizations, and advocates
- We do our work by providing direct services, program development, individual education, public information campaigns, and policy, systems, and environmental changes
- We work to address current conditions as well as social and structural determinants of health; equity is at the center of all we do
- Data is gathered to both inform CCDPH's work and to be shared out to support community and school initiatives



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# Thank you