



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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The 2024 Annual Report for Garfield County Public Health outlines significant initiatives, program highlights, and community health efforts undertaken throughout the year.

- Key Highlights:
 - Public Health Strategy & Community Engagement:
 - A rebrand and office renovation were completed to enhance accessibility.
 - A new website is under development for improved public engagement.
 - Launch of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), focusing on childcare, mental health awareness, and community engagement.
- Programs for Families & Children:
 - Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program helped families redeem over \$24,000 in food dollars, with a strong emphasis on fresh produce.
 - The Children with Special Health Care Needs program supported families with chronic health conditions.
 - ABCD Dental provided early dental care access for Medicaid-eligible children.
 - Childcare Navigator Program was launched to improve local childcare services.
- Health & Nutrition Initiatives:
 - The Food Bank & Second Harvest Mobile Market helped combat food insecurity.
 - The SNAP-Ed Program educated children on nutrition through school and summer gardening programs.
 - The Tobacco & Cannabis Program included policies banning smoking at public events and installing vape detectors in schools.
- Community Health & Wellness:
 - School Nursing services ensured student health needs were met.
 - Stay Active & Independent for Life (SAIL) program promoted senior fitness.
 - Farmer Appreciation Day and the Louise Munday Community Walk encouraged physical and mental health awareness.
- Disease Prevention & Emergency Preparedness:
 - Immunization promotion and monthly health screenings were emphasized
 - A \$56,000 opioid awareness grant was received for prevention programs.
- Heat & Smoke
 - Collaboration with emergency services included cooling centers for extreme heat and emergency preparedness training.
- Environmental Health & Safety:
 - Water quality monitoring, food safety regulations, and onsite septic system management were key priorities.
 - Algal bloom monitoring was conducted through a partnership with Whitman County.
 - New permit applications and forms were updated to align with the department's rebrand.
- Financial Overview:
 - Total revenue: \$1.26 million, sourced from federal, state, and local funds.
 - Investments focused on public health services, community programs, and infrastructure improvements.
- Conclusion:
 - Garfield County Public Health continues to evolve with community-focused initiatives, expanded health programs, and strategic partnerships. Their efforts emphasize accessibility, prevention, and education, ensuring a healthier and more resilient community.

Our New Mission

We aim to create a supportive, informed community in Garfield County by addressing resident needs, empowering individuals to make positive health choices, and accessing necessary resources for a healthy, fulfilling life through partnerships, education, and community engagement.

Our New Vision

Promote, protect, and enhance the well-being of all residents in Garfield County.

Our Focus

By fostering strong partnerships with local organizations and stakeholders, we ensure that every resident has the opportunity to thrive. Our programs are designed to address the diverse needs of our community, from providing essential healthcare services to offering educational workshops that empower individuals to make informed health decisions. Through a holistic approach, we aim to cultivate a vibrant and resilient community where every individual feels valued and supported. Together, we can build a healthier future for Garfield County, one step at a time.

- Educate and empower individuals on health topics and trends
- Track and comprehend community health trends.
- Create strategies and blueprints to enhance individual and community health initiatives.
- Ensure a skilled public health workforce.
- Engage community partners in addressing community health challenges.
- Connect community members with relevant services.
- Strategize and ready for public health emergencies.

Big Changes in 2024

In 2024 Garfield County Public Health went through a rebrand, office renovation, and started the process of a new website. These changes will allow Garfield Public Health to be more accessible to our community. It will ease the access to much needed documents, allow for the community to see a clear direction and allow for relevancy. With a modernized look and enhanced digital presence, we aim to strengthen our connection with residents and provide more efficient services.

The new website will feature user-friendly navigation and updated resources, making it simpler for community members to find information on health services, upcoming events, and educational materials. Our office renovation is designed to create a welcoming environment, where individuals can feel comfortable and supported when accessing health services.

These advancements are part of our commitment to fostering a proactive and inclusive approach to public health in Garfield County. As we embrace these exciting changes, we invite all residents to join us in our mission to promote a healthier, more informed community.

Community Data

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

In 2024, Garfield County Public Health launched a vital initiative aimed at improving the health and well-being of its residents through the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Partnering with Heidi Berthoud Consulting, this initiative seeks to create a strategic framework that will direct public health efforts for the next three to five years. The key focus areas emerged from the Community Health Assessment process, identifying childcare, mental health awareness, and community engagement as the following top concerns.

Goals of the CHIP

The CHIP aims to create a comprehensive plan addressing key health needs identified in the 2023 Community Health Assessment, focusing on:

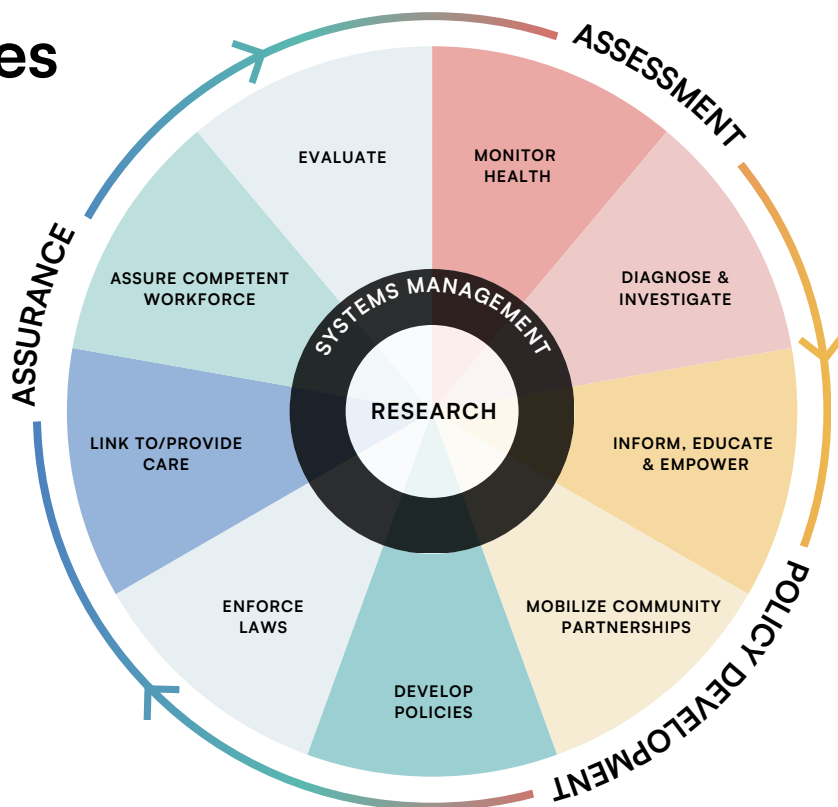
1. Prioritizing specific health challenges like chronic diseases and mental health.
2. Enhancing health equity for all community members.
3. Promoting partnerships with local organizations and stakeholders.
4. Implementing evidence-based strategies for effective health improvement.
5. Monitoring progress and adapting strategies to ensure success.

Community Engagement & Future Outlook

Active community engagement is crucial in the CHIP process, with Garfield County Public Health involving residents in planning and implementation to reflect their values and needs. Public forums, surveys, and focus groups will gather input, promoting ownership among stakeholders. The CHIP aims to improve health outcomes and quality of life by setting clear goals, fostering collaboration, and adapting to health challenges, ultimately creating a strong public health infrastructure.

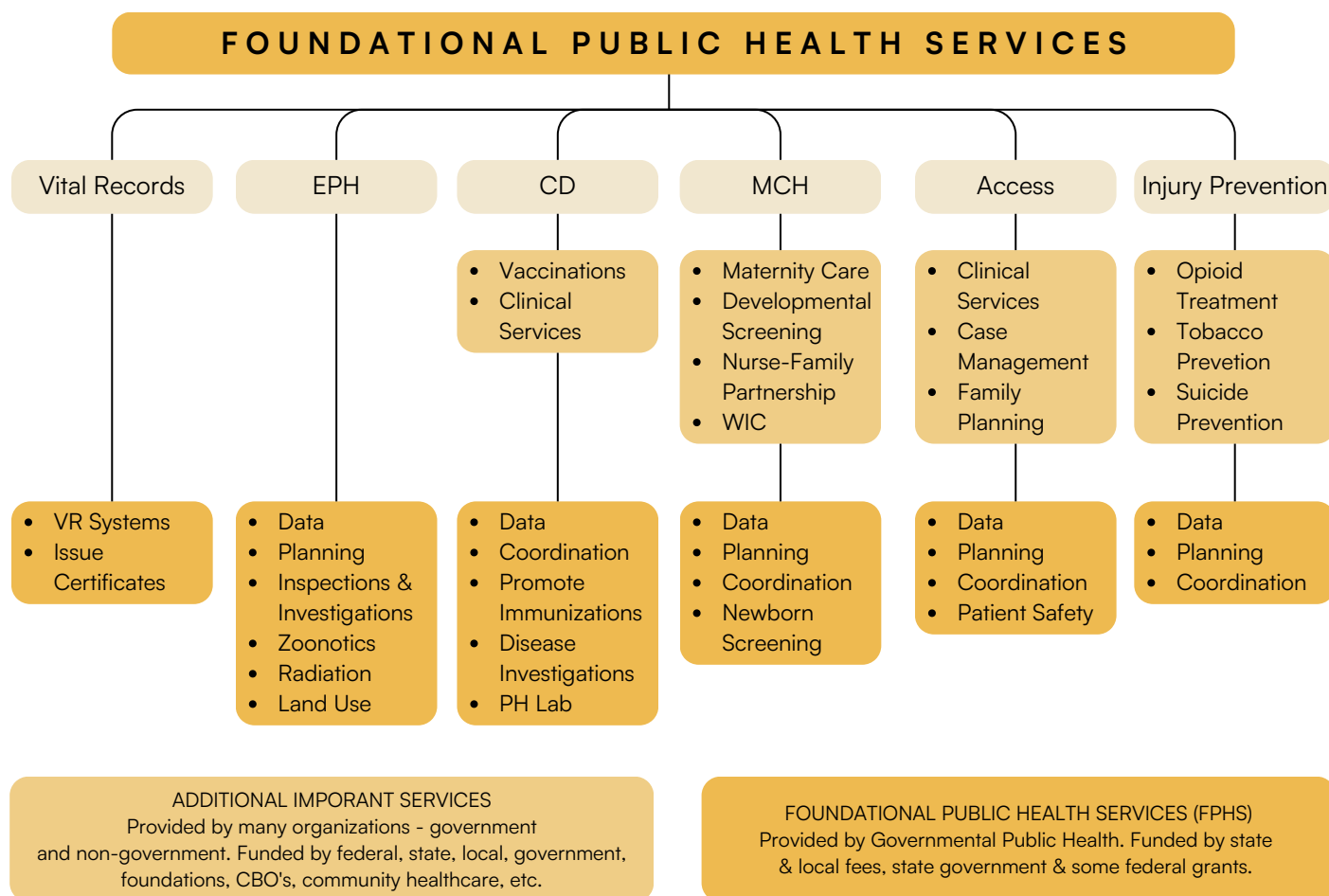
10 Essential Services of Public Health

The 10 Essential Public Health Services are a framework for public health professionals to protect and promote the health and wellness of people in the community equitably. Garfield County Public Health is dedicated to upholding the 10 essential public health services to ensure all members of the community achieve their health goals by removing systemic and structural barriers. In 2024, Garfield County Public Health highlighted these services in multiple ways which are shown to the right.



Foundational Public Health Services

Protecting the public's health across the state is a fundamental responsibility of the state and is accomplished through the governmental public health system. This system is comprised of the state department of health, state board of health, local health jurisdictions, sovereign tribal nations, and Indian health programs. Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) are core services which the governmental public health system is responsible for providing in a consistent and uniform way in every community in Washington.



Cross-Cutting Capabilities

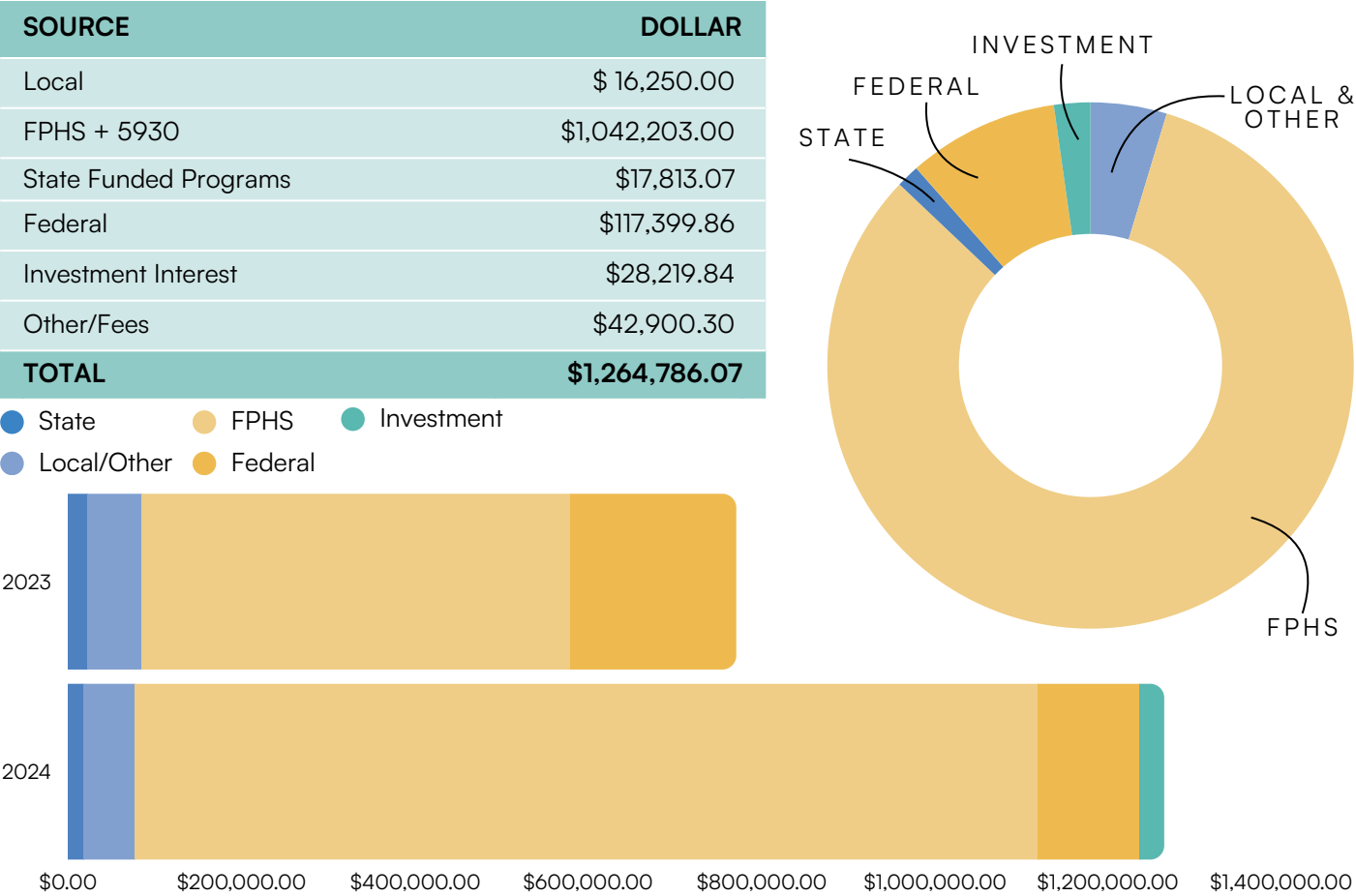
- ASSESSMENT - Collect & use data, community health assessments & improvement planning
- EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE - Plan, lead, mobilize, communicate
- COMMUNICATIONS - Media, strategy
- POLICY DEVELOPMENT - Recommendations, implement, cost-benefit
- COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS - Leadership, government role
- BUSINESS COMPETENCIES - Leadership, accountability, quality, technology, human resources, fiscal, facilities/operations, legal

Definitions

Foundational Public Health Services - Population-based, prevention oriented services that only/primarily government provides everywhere, in order for the system to function anywhere.

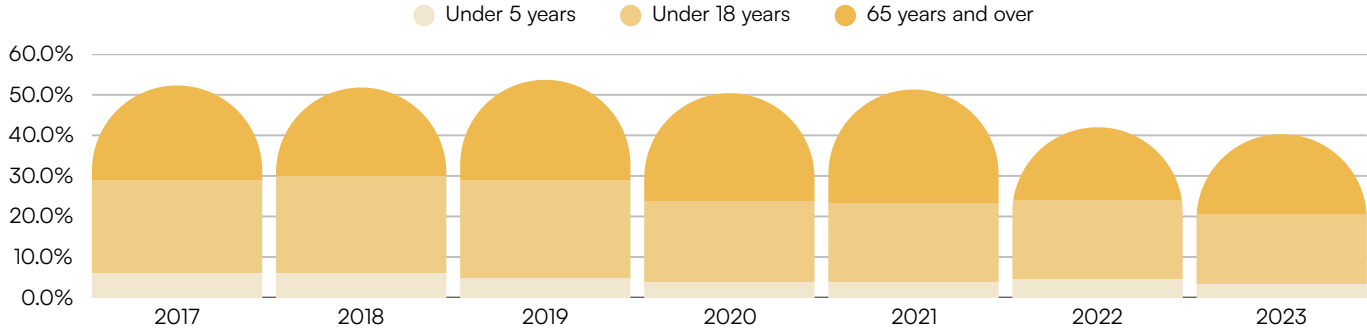
Governmental Public Health System - State Department of Health (DOH), State Board of Health (SBOH), Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJ's), Tribal Health and other programs.

2024 Revenue by Fund Source



Our Community

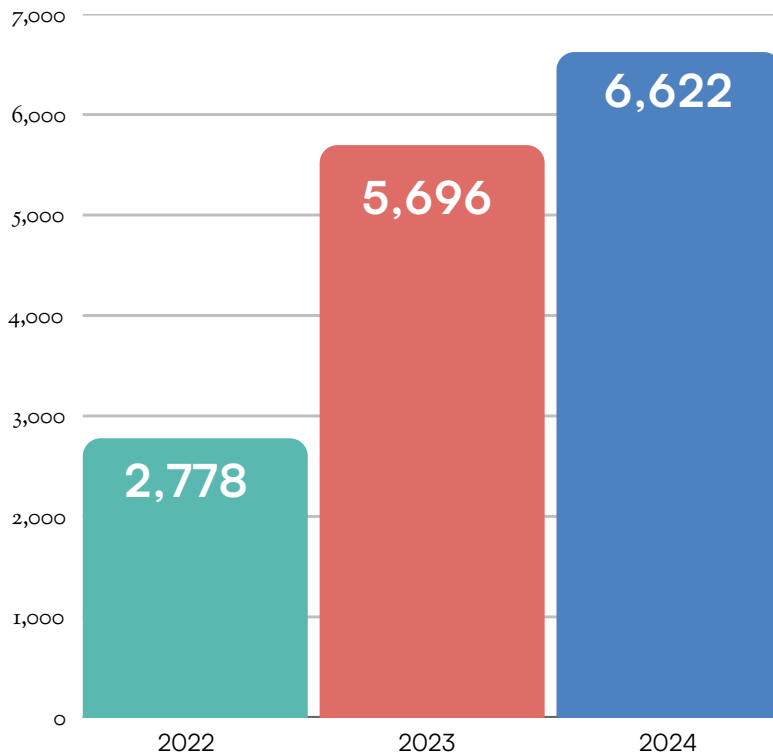
Garfield County, populated at 2,286 in 2020 and estimated at 2,363 in 2023, is the least populated county in the state and geographically one of the smallest counties. The chart below compares county and state data.



	2020 GARFIELD CO.	2020 WA STATE	2023 GARFIELD CO.	2023 WA STATE
High School Graduate or Higher	23.7%	21.8%	24.1%	21.7%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	15%	23.1%	26.8%	38.8%
Disabled Individuals 18 yo - 65 yo	20.4%	10.5%	12.1%	5.8%
Persons in Poverty	9.2%	9.9%	15.2%	11.5%
+65 Years Old Living Alone	11.3%	3.5%	20.0%	10.6%

Our Programs

Garfield County Public Health has successfully increased community participation in its events and programs since 2022, with over 3844 more contacts. This rise reflects the effectiveness of innovative programming and outreach efforts, demonstrating the community's commitment to health and wellness and enhancing overall community engagement.



- Children with Special Health Care Needs
- Community Engagement
- Communicable Diseases
- Community Health Assessment
- Community Health Improvement Plan
- COVID-19 Contact Tracing
- Dental Health Education
- Emergency Preparedness
- Environmental Health
- Food Permits & Inspections
- Hearing & Vision Screenings
- Marijuana and Tobacco Prevention
- Maternal Child Health
- Public Health Nursing
- Stay Active & Independent for Life
- School Nursing
- SNAP
- Vital Records
- WIC

EVENTS + PROGRAMS	2022 IMPRESSIONS	2023 IMPRESSIONS	2024 IMPRESSIONS
SAIL Program (per class)	8	8	8
Pomeroy Health Fair	25	28	27
Farm to School Program	15	40	45
Drug Take Back Day	35	43	40
Louise Munday Community Walk	75	130	150
Garfield County Fair	150	150	150
Senior Center Blood Pressures	0	96	100
National Night Out	300	300	200
Pomeroy Summer Market	1200	1200	1200
Main St. Trick or Treat	300	350	275
Garfield County Food Bank	320	720	720
Farmer Appreciation Day	0	25	45
2nd Harvest Mobile Market	0	1200	2162
Red Ribbon Week	350	1406	1500
TOTAL	2778	5696	6622

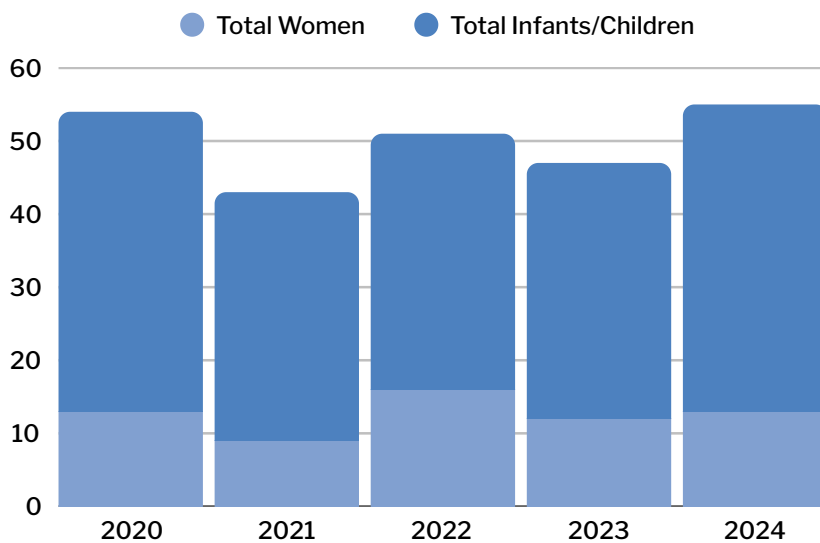


Healthy Families

Healthy Kids

Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

Garfield County Public Health reported impressive results for the WIC program in 2024. The most recent WIC data showed that they were able to redeem \$24,190 in food dollars. Of that total, \$5,504 was redeemed specifically on fruits and vegetables. In fact, 24% of all WIC food dollars were spent on produce, indicating a strong emphasis on nutritious foods. This data demonstrates Garfield County Public Health's commitment to promoting healthy eating habits and ensuring that families participating in WIC have access to affordable, high-quality fruits and vegetables. The high percentage of WIC dollars going towards produce is a positive sign that the program is effectively meeting the nutritional needs of the women, infants, and children it serves. Garfield County Public Health's WIC program is playing a vital role in supporting the health and wellbeing of vulnerable populations within the community.



I really enjoy connecting with this population and being able to help hook them up with a way to get nutritious foods and spend time discussing ways to get them into their children's routines.

-Elizabeth Stringer

Children with Special Health Care Needs

The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program, a vital component of the Department of Health's Office of Family and Community Health Improvement, is dedicated to supporting infants, children, and youth up to age 18 who face chronic health conditions requiring specialized care. Funded through the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, the program undertakes comprehensive annual planning to implement initiatives that enhance nutrition, safety, and accessibility to essential resources. By collaborating with local organizations and healthcare providers, the program not only facilitates workshops but also actively advocates for inclusive health policies that address the unique needs of these children and families.

ABCD Dental

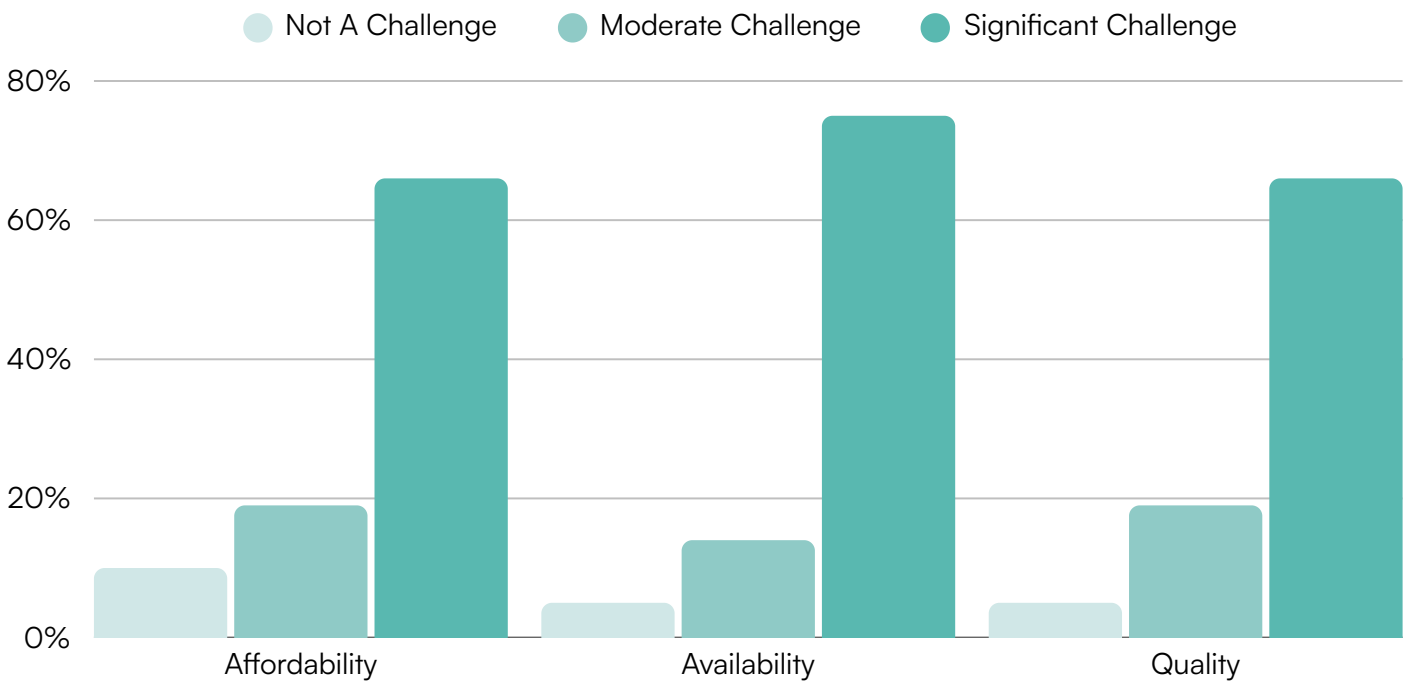
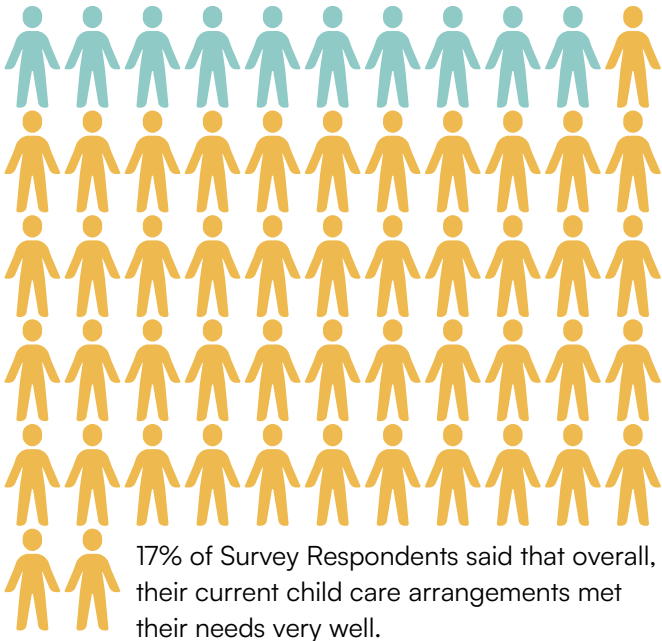
Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) aims to improve dental care access for Medicaid-eligible children in Washington state, emphasizing early visits by age one to promote positive dental habits and reduce future treatment needs. The ABCD coordinator focuses on community outreach, distributing dental supplies and information at events like elementary schools, Trick or Treat, National Night Out, and summer markets. Garfield County Public Health also holds the regional contract which serves both Garfield County and Asotin County.

Healthy Kids

Childcare

In 2024, Garfield County Public Health appointed Alesia Ruchert as the dedicated Childcare Navigator, a role that has proven vital in the county's initiative to enhance childcare services. Alesia and her team have been actively engaged in comprehensive research and planning to establish new childcare facilities tailored to the community's needs. Garfield County Public Health's multifaceted approach includes conducting a pre-design assessment, forming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and investigating immediate support options, all while exploring family home care possibilities. Additionally, Garfield County Public Health has strengthened regional partnerships and conducted outreach efforts, such as participating in the Southeast Learning Coalition Summit. By analyzing survey results and feedback, researching funding sources, and securing a commerce grant, Garfield County Public Health has laid a solid foundation for the upcoming childcare initiatives.

Alesia's work has not only revolved around planning but also community engagement. The team has finalized critical details regarding planning grants, met with the Blue Room, LLC to discuss the new facility, and established bylaws for the Pomeroy Community Connections organization. Alesia has also been proactive in keeping the community informed about childcare initiatives through a bi-monthly newsletter titled "Childcare Share." Recently, the team's focus has shifted towards surveying the community to better understand the needs related to after-school hours and care. Through her dedicated efforts, Alesia has been instrumental in advancing Garfield County's mission to expand and improve childcare options, ensuring families have access to the resources they need.



Healthy Kids

Safe Kids - Bike Rodeo

Garfield County Public Health emphasizes car seat safety and education. In spring 2023, Chelsey Eaton became a Certified Passenger Safety Technician, followed by Laura Dixon in spring 2024. Their certifications enable monthly car seat check events on the first Thursday, where they inspect car seats, ensure proper installation, and educate parents on age-appropriate car seat use. This initiative promotes child passenger safety and serves as an important community service.

Garfield County Public Health recognized the need to educate the community on street safety, particularly when it comes to bikes, scooters, and skateboards. In the fall of 2024, Garfield County Public Health re-energized the bike rodeo program at the Pomeroy School District. Approximately 35 participants attended the event, which provided education and training on the rules of the road. The bike rodeo also focused on ensuring proper helmet fit, with attendees receiving new helmets if their current ones did not fit correctly. In addition to the hands-on training, the event also provided information to parents about the car seat and pack-and-play resources available through Garfield County Public Health.

“

What I find most rewarding about my work is the community involvement and promoting a healthier Pomeroy. I love our outreach activities like Main Street Trick or Treat and the community walk. Bringing a positive view of Public Health is something that makes me happy and I hope I make others feel that as well.

- Laura Dixon

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By partnering with the Whitman County Safe Kids Coalition, the public health department was able to offer booster seats, convertible car seats, and other safety equipment to support families in the community. The bike rodeo was an impactful way for Garfield County Public Health to promote street safety and equip both children and parents with the knowledge and tools to travel safely.

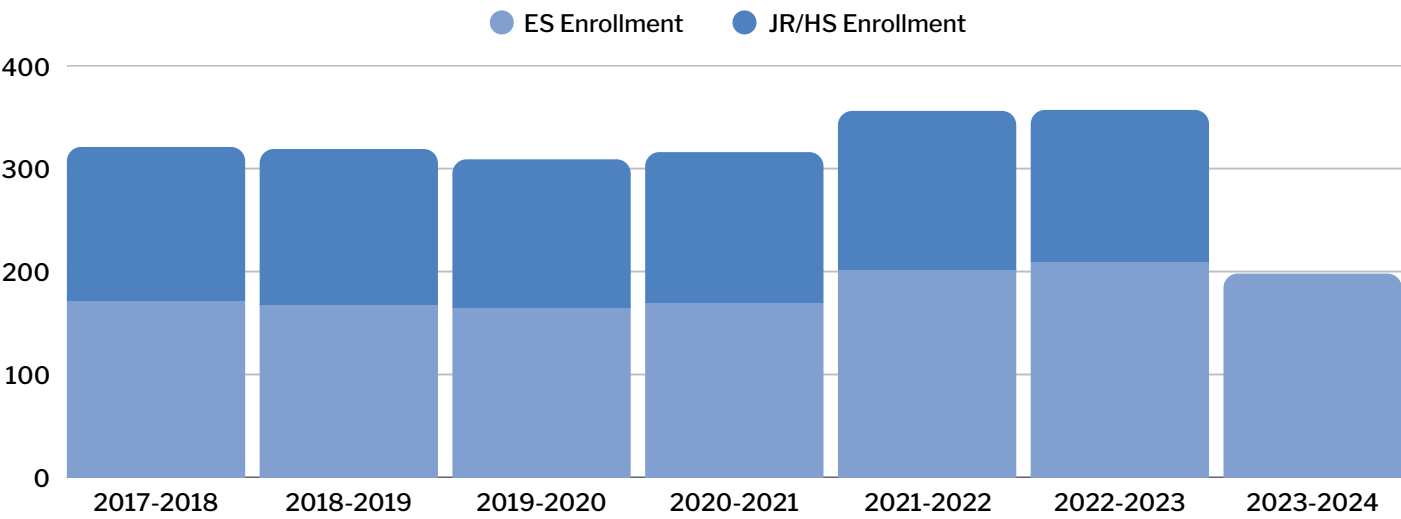


Healthy Kids

School Nursing

At Garfield County Public Health, public health nurses serve as school nurses at both Pomeroy School District and Starbuck School District, vital for promoting student health. Their responsibilities include health screenings, chronic condition management, implementing public health programs, and providing emergency care. They collaborate with families, educators, and community resources to address health issues and promote preventive practices, fostering a safe environment. By linking healthcare and education, Pomeroy's school nurses support both public health principles and the academic success of local youth.

Through dedicated care and attention, we ensure that every child has access to the medical support they need to thrive academically and socially. Our school nurses play a crucial role in identifying health issues early, allowing for timely interventions that can make a significant difference in a child's life. By working closely with teachers, parents, and healthcare providers, we create a cohesive support system that addresses both the immediate and long-term health needs of our students.



In addition to medical care, our nurses are committed to educating students about healthy habits, empowering them to make informed choices that promote well-being. From nutrition guidance to stress management techniques, we equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead healthy, balanced lives. By fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment, we aim to ensure that every child feels supported and valued, paving the way for a successful and fulfilling educational journey.

Our ongoing commitment to student health is reflected in our collaborative efforts to adapt and enhance our services. As we continue to evolve, our focus remains on building a resilient and healthy school community where every student has the opportunity to excel and reach their full potential. Together, we are shaping a brighter, healthier future for all.

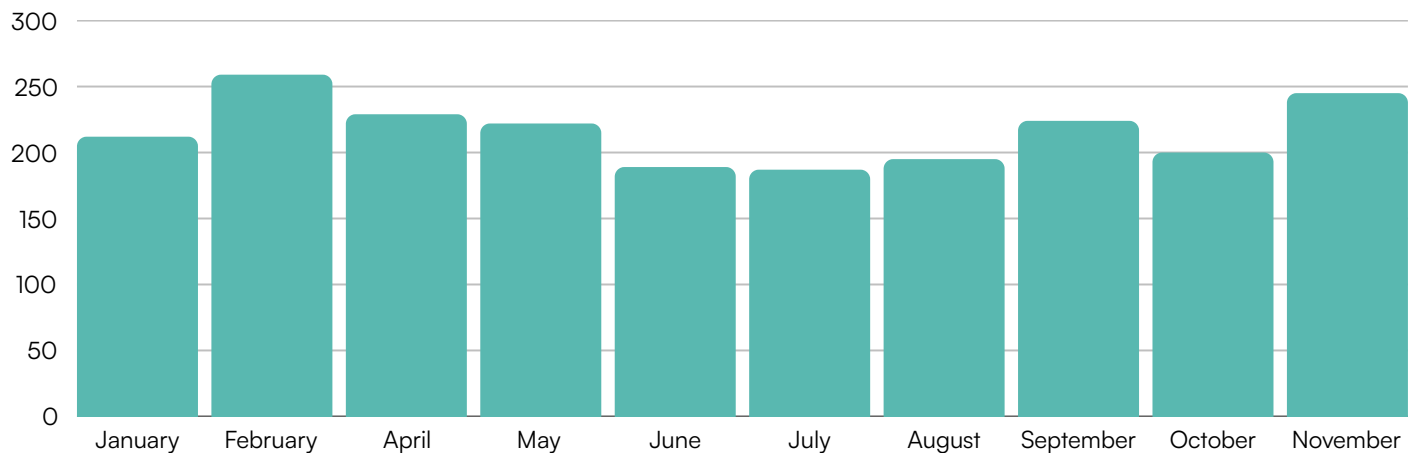
Basic Food Benefits

Food Bank & Second Harvest Mobile Market

Public Health staff plays a key role in Garfield County Public Health's efforts to ensure food access for all community members. As part of the monthly Food Bank program, Chelsey Eaton and Laura Dixon deliver food directly to families who face barriers in reaching the distribution sites. This includes individuals with transportation challenges, disabilities, or work commitments that prevent them from physically attending the Food Bank.

In addition to the Food Bank, Second Harvest plays a vital role in addressing food insecurity. Public Health collaborates with Southeast Washington Alliance for Health and Second Harvest to source additional food resources, ensuring that families receive a variety of nutritious options. By leveraging Garfield County transportation services, Public Health is able to bring the necessary food resources from both the Food Bank and Second Harvest to those in need, addressing accessibility issues that some residents may face.

● FAMILIES SERVED AT 2ND HARVEST IN 2024



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)

The SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education) program is an important nutrition education initiative implemented by Jessica Nelson. Through this program, Jessica educates the community, especially youth, on the importance of fresh fruits and vegetables. A key component is the Farm to School program, where students in grades 3-4 plant and grow various vegetables which are then harvested and used in the school lunches. Jessica also runs a summer gardening program, in partnership with the Master Gardeners and the WSU Extension Office for around 30 students, covering topics like pollination, weeds, watering, and germination. In addition to the gardening activities, Jessica provides nutritional education, has students try new fruits and vegetables, and makes recipes with them. She creates sampling platters and related crafts to reinforce the educational lessons. Jessica also puts together a bulletin board in the school cafeteria to highlight a "Fruit/Vegetable of the Month" and educate students on its importance. Overall, the SNAP-Ed program led by Jessica aims to improve nutrition knowledge and habits among the youth in the community.

Healthy Living

Tobacco & Cannabis

In 2024, Chelsey Eaton with Garfield County Public Health took significant measures to tackle tobacco use and exposure within the community. The department enacted a policy that designated the Pomeroy Summer Market as a smoke-free event. This ordinance banned smoking in public areas of the market, fostering a healthier atmosphere for all attendees. By enforcing this smoking ban, Garfield County Public Health showcased its commitment to minimizing secondhand smoke exposure and advocating for clean air during community events.



Garfield County Public Health tackled youth substance use by installing vape detectors in the local high school, following requests from the Pomeroy School District. Led by safety officer Jim Nelson, this initiative enables early identification of vaping among students, allowing for timely intervention. It reflects Garfield County's commitment to student health and proactive measures against adolescent health challenges.

Maternal Child Health

In 2024, Chelsey, Laura, and Jackie supported 26 Creative Kids in activities aimed at enhancing both physical and mental well-being. In November, the youth crafted thankful banners and baked healthy pumpkin muffins. December was dedicated to holiday stress relief, where the youth prepared hot chocolate mixes and gingerbread ornaments. In January, the focus shifted to protein nutrition, leading to the creation of protein peanut butter cookies and tracking water intake. February featured a dishwashing and table-setting activity while making Tamale Pie. In March, the youth engaged in a budgeting lesson through a jelly bean game and baked Irish soda bread. April revolved around understanding nutritional labels with orange peel bird feeders and McGriddle bites. Finally, in May, the youth explored the significance of bees and gardening, creating milk and honey bites along with DIY seed bombs. Public Health enjoyed connecting with these kids and introducing them to community resources.

“A recent success I had from work that had a significant impact on community health was in our creative kids group this month we are talking about self-care and I love hearing the kids talk about how they can take care of themselves in different ways and not feel bad about it.

- Laura Dixon”

Healthy Living

Mental Health - Farmer Appreciation Day

The public health department underscored mental health as a vital concern and organized the second annual Farmer Appreciation Day in conjunction with the Pomeroy Summer Market. This event provided an opportunity to engage with the agricultural community and stress the significance of mental health support. By addressing both tobacco use and mental health, Garfield County Public Health is embracing a comprehensive strategy to improve the overall wellbeing of its residents. These initiatives demonstrate the department's commitment to addressing diverse public health challenges within the community.



Physical Health - Louise Munday Community Walk

In May, individuals of all ages come together to walk or run a route that goes throughout our community, celebrating health and wellness while paying tribute to the legacy of Louise Munday, a lifelong resident, caring nurse and dedicated community servant. The Louise Munday Community Walk not only promotes physical activity but also nurtures a sense of community and raises awareness about mental health challenges. Various stations along the way provide resources and information on healthy living practices, including nutrition advice and stress-relief strategies.

The event wraps up with a community picnic hosted by Garfield County Memorial Hospital, where participants can free meal, engage in positive discussions, and take part in door prize giveaways. By uniting in this manner, we reinforce our community connections and support one another's journeys toward healthier, happier lives. This annual walk exemplifies the strength of collaboration and community spirit in fostering a comprehensive approach to health and well-being.



Healthy Living

Aging Adults - Stay Active and Independent for Life

The Stay Active and Independent for Life program is an evidence-based exercise initiative for seniors, led by certified instructor. It promotes fitness, balance, and strength to help seniors live independently while fostering community and support. The program accommodates various fitness levels, focuses on reducing fall risks, and creates a welcoming atmosphere for participants. Instructors encourage a sense of community and celebrate milestones, aiming to reach more seniors and inspire healthier lifestyles.

In 2024 Elizabeth String hosted two separate events, both lasting for 10 weeks where participants met once a week for healthy physical activities. There were eight participant spots in which four to eight attendees participated in each class which was held and hosted by the Pomeroy Senior Center.

Senior Center Activities

At the close of 2023, Garfield County Public Health recognized that it was not effectively reaching a significant segment of the community. To address this, Garfield County Public Health allocates 30 minutes each month to present specific topics to the senior center before their lunch. These presentations cover a range of subjects tailored to the interests and needs of the senior population, such as nutrition tips, simple exercises to maintain mobility, and information on managing chronic conditions. By integrating these sessions into the senior center's schedule, they aim to enhance the participants' knowledge about health and well-being in a supportive and engaging manner.

Furthermore, these monthly sessions provide an opportunity for seniors to ask questions and share their experiences, fostering a sense of community and mutual learning. As a result, Garfield County Public Health hopes to empower more seniors to take charge of their health, stay informed about new health initiatives, and ultimately enjoy a more active and fulfilling life.

Pomeroy Summer Market

Garfield County Public Health is actively involved in and proudly sponsors the Pomeroy Summer Market. This event offers a wonderful chance for us to connect with community members we don't often see in the office. We offer educational activities, such as demonstrating how to create your own emergency box with essential materials for emergencies. The market also features a wide variety of local vendors showcasing fresh produce, handmade crafts, and delicious homemade goods. It's a vibrant hub of activity where families can enjoy live music, participate in fun games, and explore numerous booths dedicated to health and wellness.

In addition to the educational activities, Garfield County Public Health provides free health resources, aiming to raise awareness about preventive care and healthy living. The Pomeroy Summer Market is more than just a shopping destination; it's a community gathering where friendships are forged, knowledge is shared, and a collective spirit of well-being is nurtured. Whether you're looking for fresh ingredients for your next meal or seeking advice on maintaining a healthy lifestyle, the market is the perfect place to find inspiration and support.



Healthy People

Disease Prevention

Public Health Nursing

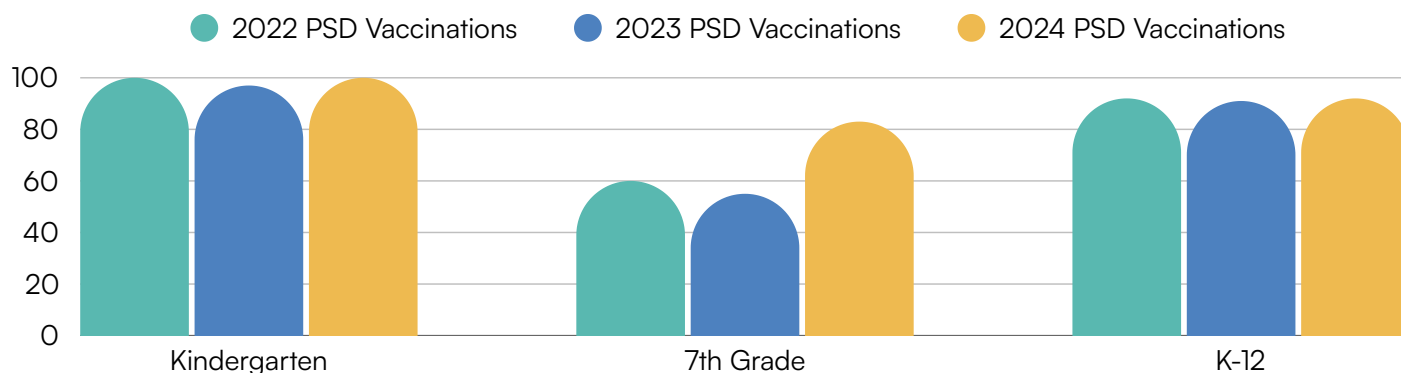
The Public Health Nursing Team, comprised of Jackie Tetrick and Elizabeth Stringer, works in collaboration with our community partners in delivering preventive care to individuals and families in Garfield County. This includes supporting childhood development; prevention, detection, and response to infectious diseases and/or emerging outbreaks; providing support, immunization, and other necessary measures to protect the health and wellness of the entire population.

The Nursing Team works to decrease illness in the community by preventing diseases that spread from person to person, animal to person, and environment to person. In an effort to make the community more prepared for being healthy, Garfield County Public Health convenes monthly meetings with local health partners to strengthen our community's ability to quickly and effectively communicate important health information.

Garfield County Public Health nurses conduct monthly blood pressure screenings at the Pomeroy Senior Center to promote health among seniors, addressing hypertension and preventing more severe conditions. Offering screenings in a familiar setting encourages participation and provides education on managing blood pressure. The initiative demonstrates a proactive approach to community health, emphasizing preventive care, early intervention, and raising awareness about regular health check-ups for a stronger, healthier community.

Immunization Promotion

This grant program is designed to help promote the uptake of children's vaccines by using a plan throughout the year. It is useful for tracking data and progress. Activities include contacting families, collecting records, updating tracking systems, and using materials to promote and educate families regarding vaccines and the requirements for school. "This program goes right along with duties as a school nurse as I promote vaccines for the students' families," said nurse, Elizabeth Stringer. By collaborating with Pomeroy School District and healthcare providers, we aim to streamline the immunization process and ensure every child receives the necessary vaccinations on time.



Our initiatives aim to eliminate access barriers like language and transportation by providing tailored resources and support for communities. We conduct informational sessions for parents to address vaccine concerns and promote their importance in disease prevention. By fostering open dialogue and trust, we empower families to make informed health decisions. Our commitment is to enhance student well-being and achieve high vaccination rates, ensuring a safe future for all children in the community.

Harm Reduction

Preventing Drug Overdoes

At the conclusion of 2024, Garfield County Public Health received funding dedicated to injury and violence prevention, with a specific focus on the opioid campaign. The opioid abatement settlement account supports jurisdictions in raising awareness about opioid and fentanyl issues through prevention and education initiatives. The performance period runs from November 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, covering events such as the Friends for Life campaign, billboards, newspaper advertisements, radio spots, creating a community resource guide, organizing a drug take-back day, and fostering partnerships with the recovery navigator program at Quality Behavioral Health. A total of \$56,000 has been allocated for this new funding effort.

Emergency Preparedness

Being Prepared for any Emergency

This year the county hired a new emergency manager, and we were able to start attending Local Emergency Preparedness Committee (LEPC) meetings, we will be supporting the counties efforts in redoing the County Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). "I enjoyed putting together an emergency go kit and handing out flyers at our summer market. We also had DIY box fan air filters available, and I showed the seniors at the senior center how to make them." said Laura Dixon.

These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to improving community resilience and emergency readiness. By participating in the County Emergency Management Plan, we prioritize resident safety and needs. Our role in the Local Emergency Preparedness Committee fosters collaboration with stakeholders to enhance response capabilities.

Hands-on workshops, like those led by Laura Dixon, empower individuals with practical skills, such as creating DIY box fan air filters to combat poor air quality. Promoting emergency go kits and distributing educational materials at local events promotes a culture of preparedness, encouraging residents to proactively safeguard their homes and families.



The background is a solid dark blue. Overlaid on this is a repeating pattern of light blue geometric shapes. The pattern consists of squares and semi-circles arranged in a grid-like fashion. Some squares are solid, while others are divided into two halves by a vertical line, each half containing a semi-circle. The semi-circles are oriented in different directions (up, down, left, right) across the pattern.

Healthy Places

Hazards & Toxins

Garfield County Public Health is essential in identifying and mitigating risks to community well-being, such as environmental hazards. Garfield County Public Health implements strategies to protect residents through educational programs that raise awareness and empower informed health decisions. By collaborating with local organizations, they promote sustainable practices and innovative solutions to reduce toxin exposure, fostering a safer and healthier future for the community.

Land Development & Water Quality

Garfield County Public Health and their land development responsibilities include assessing the potential impacts of proposed projects on the environment and community health. This involves evaluating plans to ensure the community align with health and safety standards, as well as environmental regulations. By conducting thorough reviews and offering guidance, Garfield County Public Health helps to balance growth with sustainability, ensuring that development projects do not compromise air and water quality or increase exposure to hazardous substances.

Garfield County Public Health is responsible for monitoring and protecting the county's water quality to ensure safety for consumption. Garfield County Public Health conduct regular testing of local water sources to identify contaminants and collaborate with agencies to address any issues. The department also educates the community on water conservation and the importance of maintaining water quality. Garfield County Public Health's efforts aim to preserve water resources for current and future generations, ensuring residents have access to safe, clean water to support community health and well-being.

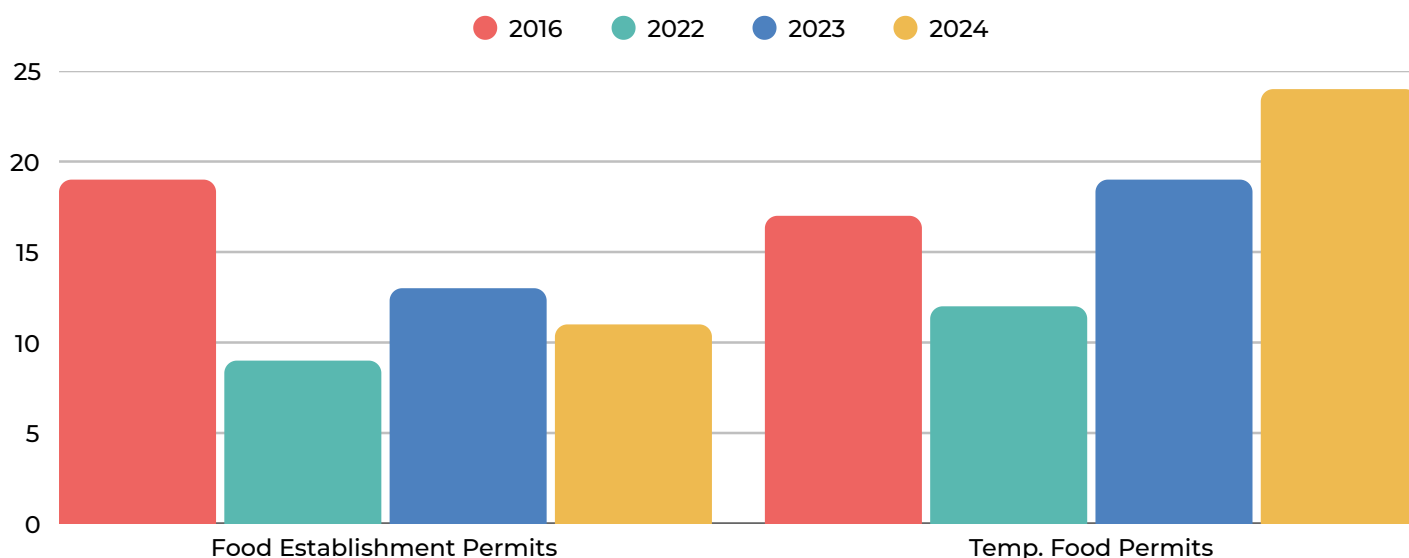
Algal Blooms

Garfield County Public Health has taken steps to address the issue of algal blooms in the region. In 2024, the department reported that they contract with Whitman County to conduct evaluations on algal blooms in the Snake River. While Garfield County does not directly perform these evaluations themselves, Garfield County Public Health has leveraged the expertise and resources of our neighboring county to monitor the algal bloom situation.

This collaborative approach allows Garfield County Public Health to stay informed about water quality issues and environmental hazards that could impact the health of our community. By working with Whitman County on this initiative, Garfield County is able to gain valuable data and insights without having to dedicate staff and resources to conducting the algal bloom assessments. This partnership demonstrates Garfield County Public Health's commitment to addressing environmental concerns and leveraging regional partnerships to efficiently gather the information needed to protect public health.

Food Safety

Garfield County Public Health aligns local food practices with state regulations to ensure food safety and public health standards are met. Recent review focuses on new Washington State Department of Health food regulations to prevent foodborne illnesses and maintain safe food service operations. Three new vendors applying for catering permits in Garfield County indicate growth in the local food industry, which is much needed locally. Garfield County Public Health reviews applicants to ensure compliance with food safety laws, promoting a competitive market and ensuring safe, clean food prepared to high health standards. Garfield County Public Health takes proactive steps to ensure food safety by monitoring and enforcing regulations, ensuring vendor compliance, and preventing foodborne illnesses. These actions strengthen public trust, support a healthier community, and balance economic development with public health protection.



Extreme Heat

In the summer of 2024, Garfield County Public Health partnered with the Garfield County Fire District to implement a cooling center program. This initiative was designed to provide a safe and comfortable space for individuals with limited or no access to air conditioning or shade during periods of extreme heat. The cooling center would be activated based on a forecast of two or more consecutive days with temperatures exceeding 95 degrees for four or more hours. By working with the fire department, Garfield County Public Health was able to leverage existing facilities and resources to establish this vital community service. The cooling center allowed vulnerable residents, such as the elderly or those without adequate home cooling, to escape the dangerous heat and find relief. This collaborative effort between the public health department and the fire district demonstrates Garfield County's commitment to protecting the health and wellbeing of its community members, especially during environmental crises like heatwaves. The cooling center was an important public health intervention that enhanced the community's resilience and access to essential services.

Permit Application & Forms

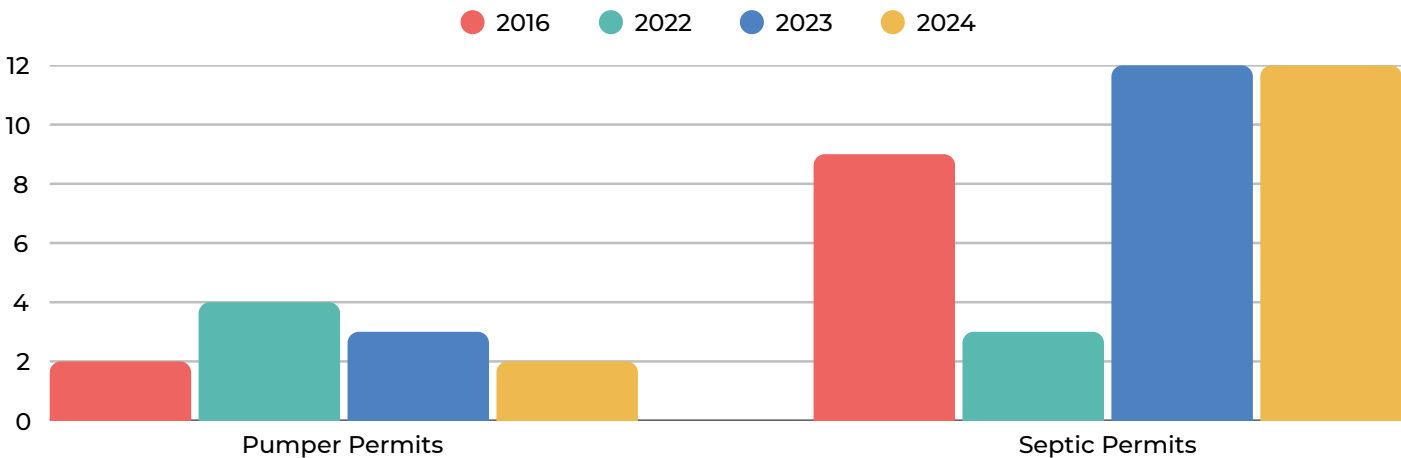
In 2024, Garfield County Public Health refreshed their branding with new logos, a color palette, signage, and various other materials. As part of this update, permit applications and forms were revised to align with the new standards. Once our website is fully updated and operational, the public will have access to these resources online. This initiative aims to streamline processes and enhance user experience, making it easier for residents and businesses to find and complete necessary paperwork. The updated branding reflects our commitment to transparency, accessibility, and community engagement, reinforcing our dedication to serving the public efficiently and effectively.

Our team has worked diligently to ensure that the new materials are not only visually appealing but also intuitive and user-friendly. By incorporating feedback from community members, we have tailored our resources to better meet the needs of those we serve. This collaborative approach underlines our focus on continuous improvement and responsiveness to community needs.

As we move forward, we are excited to explore further opportunities for digital innovation, such as online portals for permit applications and virtual consultations, which will provide even greater convenience for our residents. By embracing technology and modern design, Garfield County Public Health aims to set a benchmark for public service that is both forward-thinking and deeply rooted in the values of our community. Together, we are building a future where access to health services and information is seamless, empowering everyone to lead healthier lives.

Onsite Septic

Garfield County Public Health manages onsite septic systems to handle wastewater in areas without centralized sewer systems, protecting public health and the environment. Garfield County Public Health provides guidelines for the design, installation, and maintenance of these systems, along with resources for homeowners on inspections and maintenance to prevent failures and groundwater contamination. Garfield County Public Health's efforts promote water quality preservation and sustainable living in rural communities.



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