

SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING:

BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION'S EFFORTS



Like many other communities, Bloomington, Edina, and Richfield face growing mental health concerns:

- In 2022, more than 30% of adults said that they sometimes, usually, or always feel lonely or isolated, yet less than half of respondents received prompt, if any, treatment. ⁱ
- Twenty percent of 9th and 11th graders reported missing school because of feeling sad, hopeless, anxious, stressed or angry. More than 35% reported that they would not feel comfortable speaking to a counselor or social worker. ⁱⁱ

Given findings like these, Bloomington Public Health (BPH) has prioritized mental health as a focus for its 2024-2028 Strategic Plan and Community Health Assessment. **We do this work on three levels:**

INDIVIDUAL

- Early childhood development screenings
- Family home visits that include mental health screenings
- Health concern assessments for older adults
- Connections to community resources



COMMUNITY

- Psychological First Aid trainings
- Mental health “pop-up” events
- Funding for organizations that offer mental health and well-being services



POLICY

- Seek community input
- Analyze and use data to prioritize work
- Use a Health in All Policies approach



HOW DATA INFORMS OUR APPROACH

BPH is conducting a Community Health Assessment (CHA) in 2024. Minnesota’s community health boards are required by statute to complete a CHA at least every five years. The focus of the CHA is mental health, which is driven by data indicating a decline in mental well-being.

ⁱ Hennepin County Public Health, SHAPE 2022 Adult Data Book, Survey of the Health of All the Population and the Environment, Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 5, 2023

ⁱⁱ Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team. Minnesota Student Survey 2013, 2016, 2019 & 2022. Roseville, MN: Minnesota Department of Education, 2013-2022. Minnesota Student Survey data provided by public school students in Minnesota via local public school districts (or alternative education programs) and managed by the Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL



BPH supports the mental health and well-being of community members by providing direct services. These services include prenatal, postpartum, and parenting support such as early childhood development screenings, evidence-based family home visiting sessions, and connections to local resources. Home visits, health assessments, and resource connections are also available to older adults.

2023 BY THE NUMBERS



- Our family home-visiting program made 1,391 visits, offering education and support for pregnant people, new parents and families.
- *“They gave me the strength to carry on...I am such a happy mom and my kids are doing wonderfully.”*
— Eva, a Bloomington resident who received support from the Family Home Visiting program.
- Our community resources team made 557 client visits to assess home safety and assist older adults.

COMMUNITY LEVEL



Statewide Health Improvement Partnership

BPH supports the work of community organizations in Bloomington, Edina and Richfield through funding opportunities to improve the well-being of their staff or who they serve in the community. The Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) is one way community partners can apply for financial support. SHIP integrates mental health into its mission of improving community health and focuses on creating resilient, healthy communities through trauma-informed activities and addressing the social factors of health.

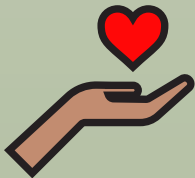


Providing healing through art

BPH and Bloomington's Creative Placemaking Division recently commissioned a COVID-19 Art Memorial. The memorial, designed by artists Aaron Squadroni and Leah Yellowbird, is a metallic quilt created to honor lives lost and the resiliency of residents during the pandemic. The artists led community engagement sessions where individuals helped create pieces of the artwork.

“It felt like this experience was both honoring and memorializing.”

— Feedback from participant of community engagement sessions



Supporting rapid help with the Bloomington Police Department

In December 2023, the City of Bloomington launched an innovative pilot program that embeds two licensed marriage and family counselors within the Police Department. The therapists are supervising four students who are completing their clinical practice requirements. Students are gaining valuable experience while helping to close mental health care gaps in the community.

POLICY LEVEL



BPH advances policies that support mental health by highlighting the social factors that contribute to overall health, and using community feedback and CHA data to inform the health policies it advocates for, creates, and implements.

BPH uses the Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach, which emphasizes the importance of considering health outcomes in all areas of policymaking, such as transportation, housing, education, and environmental policy. Bloomington's City Council unanimously approved an earned sick and safe time ordinance for workers at Bloomington businesses on June 13, 2022. The ordinance went into effect July 1, 2023. A statewide statute went into effect on January 1, 2024. Earned sick and safe leave allows workers time to care for themselves and family members and helps ensure their protection and well-being.