



SAINT LOUIS COUNTY  
**2023 COMMUNITY  
 HEALTH ASSESSMENT**



**Public Health**  
 Present. Promote. Protect.  
 St. Louis County

**PURPOSE**

Community health assessments use data to determine priority health areas most impacting a community’s health. This includes assessing the conditions in which we live, learn, work, and play. Local health departments collaborate with community members and partners to select these priority health areas. The following three priorities, and associated indicators, rose to the surface for St. Louis County Public Health through analysis of the most recent community health needs assessment process and rising trends.

**PROCESS**

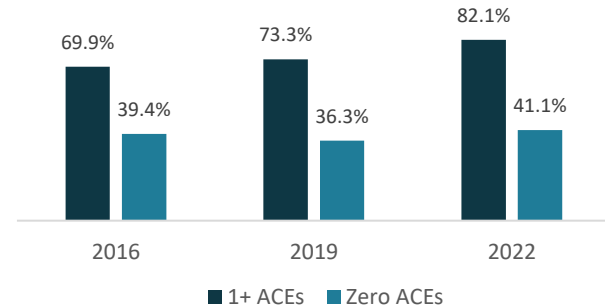
After St. Louis County Public Health and community partners reviewed data in the three priority areas, they worked together to assess potential strategies that could make an impact. Public health and partners are building a community health improvement plan to address priority health areas over the next 5 years.

**PRIORITY: MENTAL HEALTH**

Childhood trauma can impact how often students report having poor mental health days. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are events that occur in an individual's life before the age of 18. They include emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, witnessing domestic violence in the home, living with someone that abuses alcohol or drugs, living with a parent or guardian that is currently or has ever been incarcerated, or living with someone with mental health issues, among other experiences.

St. Louis County Public Health seeks to increase awareness of ACEs and how childhood trauma affects the wellbeing of adolescents.

**More than 8 in 10 female MSS participants with 1+ ACEs reported poor mental health days in 2022 in SLC.**



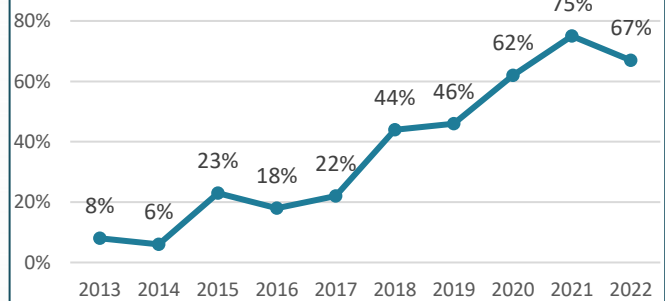
Source: 2016, 2019, 2022 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS)

**PRIORITY: SUBSTANCE MISUSE**

Synthetic opioids, like fentanyl, have increased overdose deaths in recent years in St. Louis County. There is also a need to focus attention on accidental drug ingestion in children under 5 years of age. Naloxone, the medication that reverses an opioid overdose, increases someone’s chance of surviving an opioid-involved overdose.

St. Louis County Public Health aims to increase outreach and education about risk factors for fatal opioid-associated overdoses.

**Overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids in SLC increased almost 200% between 2015 and 2022.**



Source: Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

St. Louis County Public Health has developed a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to address these health priorities.

**LEARN MORE** [www.stlouiscountymn.gov](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov)



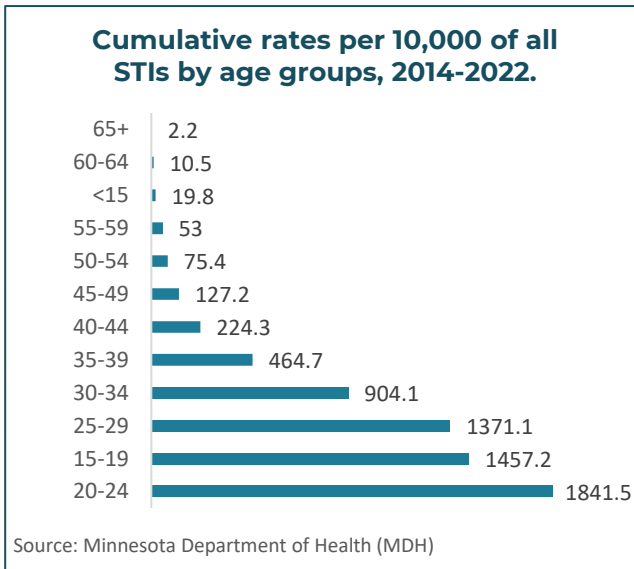
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**PRIORITY: SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)**

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can contribute to social stigma, discrimination, and impact health. We actively monitor select STI trends countywide. Age is a significant factor in community transmission of STIs. Public health has identified notable disparities in male sexual health amongst communities.

St. Louis County Public Health strategies are focused on increasing protections against syphilis, HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), gonorrhea, and chlamydia to decrease rates of new cases.



**CONCLUSIONS + NEXT STEPS**

Based on available data, community conversations, and analysis of recent community health needs assessments conducted by local hospital systems, St. Louis County Public Health chose mental health, substance misuse, and STIs as priority health areas. These three priority areas are not meant to be a comprehensive or exclusive representation of all the health concerns being addressed by St. Louis County Public Health.

With community partner input and subject matter expertise from internal staff, St. Louis County Public Health has developed a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) focused on outlining strategies and goals to improve mental health, substance misuse, and STIs over the next 5 years (2023-2027). Strategies may build upon current work or may include new and innovative approaches, and all are done in cooperation and collaboration with community partners. Over the next 5 years, St. Louis County Public Health will outline action steps for implementing programs to address the health priorities, as well as monitor progress towards goals and revise the CHIP to reflect current and changing circumstances.

Thank you to all the community partners who provided input throughout this assessment and planning process. We are excited to work collaboratively to promote health within St. Louis County.

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