

Healthiest

Safest

Most Prosperous



2017 Annual Report

Executive Summary

Published June 2018

Resiliency - The Gift of Hope

Have you encountered people who experienced a tragedy and bounced back from it? Do you wonder if you experienced something similar would you be able to do as well?

The ability to bounce back is dependent upon one's personality, their supportive relationships, and access to community resources. So why is it so important to be able to "bounce back"?

The ability to bounce back is referred to as being resilient. Resiliency provides hope and protects one in maintaining their emotional well-being. A person's emotional well-being is linked to their overall physical health. A lack of emotional well-being has been identified as a factor in developing chronic diseases.

It may seem too simple, that having supportive relationships and feeling connected are key ingredients in resiliency, the ability to bounce back. Some indications of how supported and connected residents of Marathon County feel can be found in the 2017-2019 LIFE Report:

- 95% of LIFE Survey respondents reported they had at least one person they could talk to if they had a personal problem.
- 72% of Marathon County high school students and 74.5% of middle school students reported having at least one teacher or other adult in their school they can talk to if they had a problem.
- Family/friends, organizations, and access to needed services were the top three ways LIFE Survey respondents felt connected to their community.

Community conversations have been underway to increase our understanding of the pressures facing youth that contribute to poor emotional health that can lead to chronic disease as adults. The Health Department has joined community partners to strengthen resiliency in our youth. Two new initiatives launched in the past year include:

- Marathon County Teen, a documentary video series based on the Youth Risk Behavior Survey that highlights what life is like for teens living in Marathon County. Students share their perspectives on the challenges they face, the ideas they have, and how they approach complex facets of their high school lives.
- Marathon County School-Based Counseling Consortium, an innovative model of care whereby mental health professionals partner with school districts to have mental health counseling available in every school in Marathon County.

It's hard to get through childhood and adulthood without experiencing adversity. So what can you do as an individual, family member or neighbor?

- Talk with children and teens
- Be supportive, listen to one another
- Share meals with family and friends
- Connect children, youth, families and adults to resources in your neighborhood and community
- Be accepting of difference

I am excited to continue our efforts to build resiliency and give the gift of hope to our youth, families and communities.

In good health,

Joan Theurer, Health Officer



Vision:

To be the healthiest and safest county in which to live, learn, work and play.

Mission:

To advance a healthy Marathon County community by preventing disease, promoting health, and protecting the public from environmental hazards.



Create Places Where it is Easy to Support Healthy Lifestyles

Chronic Disease Prevention

The 2017-2020 Marathon County Community Health Improvement Plan was released, and named six health priorities for the community to address. Three of these priorities already had community initiatives in place (Substance Abuse, Healthy Weight, and Behavioral Health), and three were new initiatives were started in 2017 (Oral health, Healthy Aging, Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACE's). Integrated into each health priority is Social and Economic Factors that Influence Health.

Tobacco Prevention and Control

Marathon County Health Department continues to serve as the lead agency to the Central Wisconsin Tobacco Free Coalition, covering Marathon, Portage, and Wood counties.

In 2017, efforts focused on retailer assessments of what new nicotine containing products are being sold. The tobacco industry is changing, with new products being sold that deliver nicotine in a variety of candy and fruit flavors and come in a wide range of shapes and styles. While cigarette use is dropping among Wisconsin's youth, newer tobacco products are gaining popularity. Fifteen meetings with leaders, six educational presentations, and eleven published media articles were conducted to educate the community about the new products.

The Wisconsin WINS program is a retail compliance program conducted in cooperation with local law enforcement and youth volunteers. In 2017, 72 compliance checks were conducted throughout the County, and 66 (91.7%) did not sell to minors.

Impacts

Marathon County Teen

Created and launched Marathon County Teen, a video series to open a window into the experience of youth – what they want each other to know, what they want adults to understand, what is on their minds as it pertains to the critical issues raised by the Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey. www.healthymarathoncounty.org

Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report

Developed the 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report, having information on the health of Marathon County youth representing all ten school districts. The report was released on January 12, 2018. www.healthymarathoncounty.org

Healthy Marathon County Pulse

Secured Healthy Community Institute, a nation-wide data platform, through funding partnership of nine organizations, and marketed as Healthy Marathon County Pulse. Healthy Marathon County Pulse is an online information resource for community members, organizations, and policy makers to learn about the health and community conditions of Marathon County. Website available to the community on January 12, 2018. www.healthymarathoncountypulse.org

Quality Improvement

Effective Meeting Facilitation

The role of the Community Health Educators in is increasingly dependent on staff being skilled in facilitating group processes. Those skills include establishing self-management for the facilitator, knowing how to make participants feel comfortable for maximum contribution, and generating flow in group process.



Find out more...

Marathon County Health Priorities:

www.marathoncountyhealthpriorities.org

Healthy Marathon County:

www.healthymarathoncounty.org

Healthy Marathon County Pulse:

www.healthymarathoncountypulse.org

Central Wisconsin Tobacco Free Coalition:

www.centralwitobaccofree.org

Wisconsin WINS:

www.wisconsinwins.com

Clear Gains—Wisconsin's Smoke Free Housing Initiative:

www.wismokefreehousing.com



Create Places Where it is Easy to Support Healthy Lifestyles

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

A new community work group focused on Adverse Childhood Experiences was formed in 2017. The group's vision is to reduce the impact of traumatic events that can have negative lasting effects on health and well-being. One of their goals is to increase community providers and the public's understanding of ACEs and wellbeing.

The group determined that there are needs for ACEs training for child care providers and police departments. A total of 12 trainings were completed by the Health Department staff and other trainers in the community reaching 144 individuals.

Behavioral Health

The Behavioral Health work group formed in 2017 consists of representatives of many sectors of the community, which have some association with the service and delivery of mental/behavioral health services. The workgroup meets quarterly for the purpose of sharing information between agencies on the changing needs and services being provided.

Marathon County Health Department was awarded the continuation into Phase II of the "Advancing Behavioral Health" in Wisconsin from the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin (AHW) endowment fund and the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW). This is an eight year grant project divided into three distinct phases. Phase II will be a 5 year period dedicated to implementing strategies and measuring outcomes. Three strategies being addressed in Phase II are:

- Increase accessibility and utilization of onsite mental health services at schools,
- Increase knowledge and awareness through data sharing with community and residents, and
- Utilize data to allocate resources to improve behavioral health outcomes.

The successes of these collaborative community efforts has resulted in ten mental health service clinics having agreements with school districts, providing on-site mental health counseling in ten school districts.

Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse and Abuse

Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse and Abuse is one of the community's top priorities identified in the 2017-2020 Marathon County Community Health Improvement Plan. The burden of alcohol and other drug abuse continues to have a negative impact on individuals, families, and communities within Marathon County. The Health Department provides staff support to the AOD Partnership and coordinates many community activities with their members and partnering agencies. The goal of the Alcohol and Other Drug program is to create culture in communities where alcohol is used responsibly, and other drugs (prescription or illicit) are not misused. Significant actions that occurred in 2017:

- Provided programs in the community including: *Trends in Addiction* – Approximately 100 people attended, *Drug Abuse Seminar* – Presented to over 50 business representatives, *Aspiring Women Event* – Presented to over 120 women, *Substance Abuse – It's Everyone's Business* – Presented in partnership with WIPPS and over 150 people attended.
- Provided Recovery Coaching training using the Connecticut Center for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) Model. Two trainings were held in Wausau with over 50 local persons trained.
- Facilitated meetings with Apricity (formerly STEP Industries) and community leaders (Chamber of Commerce, North central Technical College and Wausau's Community Development) to learn and plan for the development of workplaces supportive of recovery.
- Completed the Community Assessment on Prevalence & Perceptions of Medication Abuse. The results show an increase in awareness of the drop box locations, increase in concern about medication abuse, and a decrease in expired medications kept in the home. Secured funding for a new permanent location at the Village of Spencer Police Department.

Find out more...

Behavioral Health:

www.marathoncountyhealthpriorities.org/priority-areas/behavioral-health/

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

www.marathoncountyhealthpriorities.org/priority-areas/adverse-childhood-experiences/

AOD Partnership Council:

www.aodpartnership.org

Western Marathon County Healthy Communities:

www.wmchc.org



Create Places Where it is Easy to Support Healthy Lifestyles

Healthy Weight

In 2017, the **Healthy Eating Active Living** coalition meeting format changed with quite dramatic results. The new Spark Series meetings were held every other month and featured a speaker or presentation on a subject of interest to members.

A new community initiative named **RISEUP** began as a result of a Spark Series meeting about the participatory art project in Philadelphia, named Mural Arts. Their goals are to foster equity, enhance resilience and improve physical and mental well-being. The group has formed a Board of Directors, received local funds for their efforts, and have two artists who will lead community groups in creating public art.

The **Walkability** subcommittee assisted with the organization and staffing of the Open Streets event held in Wausau. The event closed three miles of roadway to traffic around downtown Wausau, and opened it for other forms of activity (walking, rolling, biking, etc.). Staff organized 40 volunteers, and surveyed participants to gather information about their experience. One third of those surveyed realized places are closer by foot or bicycle than they thought, and two thirds purchased something from a local business.

The **Farm to School** initiatives continue within our school districts. Staff supported these efforts by organizing a Know Your Buyer Know Your Supplier training. This was coordinated with several partners, and 72 people attended. This opportunity allowed Marathon County school food service staff and farmers to network and make connections with one another.

Healthy Needs of Aging

A group focused on healthy aging was reestablished in 2017. The group adopted the name Partnership for Healthy Aging. Their goals include: establishing a means for providers to collaborate, centralized system for programs and services, and create community awareness of “planful aging.” Successes in the first year include strengthening relationships by sharing information and profiles of services provided by various partner agencies, and identifying and defining the critical milestones that have the largest impact on older adults (aged 60 and over) in Marathon County.

Oral Health

A new Oral Health workgroup was established in 2017 as a result of the 2017-2020 Marathon County Community Health Improvement Plan. The group’s goals include integrating oral health in to health care delivery and the expansion of oral health prevention programming. Successes in the first year include Health First sustaining their pilot Fluoride Varnish program for children enrolled in the WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) program. Second, the Emergency Room On-Call list process was reestablished. Aspirus and St. Clare’s call Bridge Community Health Clinic during businesses hours for consultation. This process increases access to care in a cost effective manner.



Find out more...

HEAL (Healthy Eating and Active Living):
www.facebook.com/HEALCoalitionMarathonCounty
Marathon County Local Food:
www.marathoncountylocalfood.org
Bicycle Wausau:
www.bicyclewausau.org



Prevent Unsafe Food and Water

Licensing

The Marathon County Health Department provides health inspections and licensing for a variety of establishments including: restaurants, groceries, convenience stores, lodging, campgrounds, recreational/education camps, swimming pools, mobile home parks, and body art facilities.

At the end of the 2016-2017 licensing year, 893 licenses were issued for public facilities such as taverns, restaurants, temporary food stands, hotels/motels/tourist rooming houses, bed and breakfasts, recreation and education campgrounds, swimming pools, retail food (groceries and convenience stores), body art facilities, and mobile home parks.

Food Safety

As part of the Licensing Program, the Marathon County Health Department works to identify and respond to health problems related to food safety, including foodborne outbreak investigations. In 2017, eight foodborne illness complaints were reported to the Health Department resulting in an inspection. Of the eight complaints received, one was identified as a foodborne illness outbreak.

In addition to investigating illness complaints, the food safety program provides:

- On-site informal education to food service employees;
- Inspection of food service facilities, including 51 schools in the Federal School Lunch/Breakfast Program;
- Food sampling; and
- Respond to product recalls and consumer complaints.

The Health Department's inspectors use every interaction as an opportunity to inform and assist establishment operators to meet regulations, with a common goal of ensuring food safety.

Impacts

Licensing

- Licensed 893 facilities in Marathon County
- Identified and addressed 474 food safety risk violations among the 514 restaurant and tavern inspections.

Quality Improvement

Licensing

- Started using Constant Contacts as tool to provide monthly information to pool operators .
- Successfully completed the State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Food Safety Audit.

Water Testing Lab

The Marathon County Health Department Water Testing Laboratory provides convenient, reliable, and reasonably priced water testing services to the residents of Marathon County and surrounding counties with the goal of safer drinking water. The lab performs tests for public and private drinking water systems in addition to recreational waters, such as swimming pools and beaches, testing for several microbiological and chemical parameters. In addition, lab personnel interpret results for well owners, and provide education concerning water safety issues.

In 2017, 7% of public drinking water samples were bacteriologically unsafe (7% in 2016), as were 28% of private public drinking water samples (17% in 2016).

Marathon County has 85 licensed public recreational water facilities, which include water attractions, swimming pools, and whirlpools. In 2017, 96% of the recreational water samples tested safe.

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department:
www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org
Wisconsin Department of Health Services:
dhs.wisconsin.gov



Protect against Health Hazards

Human Health Hazards

Impacts

Human Health Hazards

- Completed 56 human health hazard investigations.
- Kept mercury waste from waterways by collecting and properly disposing of 274 pounds of dental amalgam from area dental offices.
- 136 radon tests were provided to residents of Marathon County.

Water Testing Lab

- Assured safe drinking water by testing 2,603 public drinking water samples and 2,021 private samples.

Quality Improvement

Water Testing Lab

- Successfully completed the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Nitrate Audit.
- Implemented a new Lab Information Management System. Water test results and invoices are now able to be provided by email, having customers receive their results the same day the water sample is read out.

The Human Health Hazard program responds to reports or concerns from the public, or other agencies about potentially hazardous situations. The goal of the program is to reduce exposure to substances, activities, or conditions that can negatively impact health, thus minimizing the health impacts of such exposures.

Mercury Reduction

The Mercury Reduction program is a partnership with Wausau Water Works and Rib Mountain Metropolitan Sewerage District. The program continues to demonstrate success in keeping mercury waste from waterways. In turn, this reduces the level of mercury in the fish caught from those waters. Marathon County Health Department's role is to outreach to dentists, schools, automotive repair, and other businesses on proper disposal of mercury-containing products.

Northcentral Radon Information Center

The Health Department operates the regional Northcentral Radon Information Center (RIC), an 11-county consortium to educate individuals and promote testing for radon. Counties participating in the consortium include Florence, Forest, Langlade, Marathon, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Shawano, Vilas, and Waupaca. The Radon Information Center provides radon information and test kits to individuals, private businesses, and government agencies.



Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department:
www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources:
dnr.wi.gov

Drinking Water:
dnr.wi.gov/topic/DrinkingWater/
Wisconsin Department of Health Services:
dhs.wisconsin.gov
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection:
datcp.wisconsin.gov



Prevent Infectious Disease Threats to the Public

Communicable Disease

Investigation and Control

The health department performs surveillance of certain diseases reported in the county in order to be able to identify patterns and trends of communicable disease occurrences. On a weekly basis, infection control practitioners from area hospitals and clinics receive a report of communicable disease occurrences in Marathon County.

In 2017, Marathon County Health Department received 885 confirmed and probable reports of 32 different communicable diseases. The most commonly reported disease in Marathon County in 2017 was Chlamydia at 365 cases.

Impacts

- Protected the public from further spread of disease by investigating 885 reports of 32 different communicable diseases.
- Investigated 326 animal bites to ensure animals were properly quarantined
- Contributed to 80% of children being fully vaccinated through the age of two.
- Provide weekly updates to area infection control practitioners so they were aware of diseases occurring in Marathon County

Quality Improvement

- Conducted mass flu clinic exercise to assure the department is ready to respond to a influenza epidemic.
- Transition documentation of STD clinic services from paper to electronic.

Immunizations

The Healthy People 2020 goal is that 80% of children are fully vaccinated through age two. Marathon County Health Department supports this goal by providing immunizations to eligible residents at a minimal cost and through public health nurse follow up of those children who are behind on their immunizations. In 2017, the immunization rate for children between the ages of 24 and 35 months in Marathon County was 83% (includes late up-to-date), exceeding the Healthy People 2020 goal.

Sexually Transmitted Disease

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) represent a large percentage of all reportable diseases in Marathon County. In an effort to provide accessible screening, treatment, and partner follow up, the Marathon County Health Department provides STD clinic services weekly at two sites: Aspirus Wausau Family Medicine (AWFM) and the Marathon County Jail.

As a result of the clinic, individuals who may not seek care due to barriers such as cost, concerns about confidentiality, or not having a health care provider are screened and treated, reducing further transmission of STDs/HIV in the community.

In 2017, there were a total of 646 client visits for STD services, and 212 vaccines were given.

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department:
www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org
Wisconsin Department of Health Services:
dhs.wisconsin.gov



Prevent Infectious Disease Threats to the Public

Communicable Disease

Tuberculosis

Marathon County Health Department's Tuberculosis (TB) program follows up with individuals who have latent (non-infectious) TB to assure treatment, and individuals with active (infectious) TB disease to prevent spread of TB in the community.

In 2017, 13 persons were diagnosed with latent TB and started treatment coordinated by the Marathon County Health Department. The goal is for individuals who receive TB treatment to complete the full treatment. In 2017, 71% of those scheduled to complete TB treatment for latent TB completed treatment.

When a case of active TB disease is reported to the health department, immediate action is taken to isolate the person with the disease, initiate appropriate treatment, and conduct a contact investigation to determine exposure of other individuals. Marathon County had 2 new cases of active TB disease diagnosed in 2017. In 2017, 2 individuals with active TB disease received DOT.

Rabies Control

The Rabies Control Program goal is to prevent humans from contracting rabies as the disease is nearly always fatal. The program accomplishes this goal by:

- Investigating reports of animal bites by hospitals, clinics, and law enforcement agencies,
- Ensuring animals are properly quarantined,
- Arrange for testing for rabies of animals, and
- Recommending when prophylaxis is needed.

Thirty specimens were submitted to the State Lab of Hygiene for rabies virus testing. Specimens included 10 dogs, 10 cats, 8 bats, a cow, and a rabbit. For 2017, one of the bat specimens was indeterminate, meaning test results could not confirmed negative or positive for rabies.

Public Health Preparedness

The emergence of new infectious diseases and natural disasters requires a coordinated community response. Marathon County Health Department works closely with area health care organizations, Marathon County Emergency Management, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, United Way of Marathon County, and Marathon County Department of Social Services to develop and exercise plans to close national preparedness capability gaps.

In 2017, efforts focused on the following Centers for Disease Prevention (CDC) public health preparedness capabilities: Community Preparedness, Medical Surge, Volunteer Management, Mass Care, and Fatality Management.

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department:
www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org

Wisconsin Department of Health Services:
dhs.wisconsin.gov

Wisconsin Tuberculosis Program:
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tb/index.htm

Ready Wisconsin:
www.readywisconsin.gov



Promote Strong Healthy Families During the Early Years

Start Right

Start Right provides support and parent coaching for families throughout Marathon County from pregnancy to age five. The overall goal of the program is to prevent child abuse and neglect. Start Right focuses on developing safe, healthy, nurtured and school-ready children and parents who are connected to community resources to support healthy parenting. Start Right is a partnership program between the Marathon County Health Department and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

Start Right program goals are:

- Children will experience nurturing relationships with their parents
- Children will be healthy
- Children will be safe in their homes
- Children will be "school ready" when they begin school

Start Right

Impacts

124 pregnant women received health teaching, information and referrals to assist them in having a healthy baby

- 81% of women who reported smoking stopped or decreased smoking
- 70% of women initiated breastfeeding
- 83% of infants slept in a safe sleep environment
- 100% of parents responded appropriately to their infants hunger and crying cues

211 families received in-home parenting education and information on community resources

- 93% of children up-to-date on immunization at 2 years
- 87% of homes had a decrease in an identified safety hazard
- 80% of parents scored 80% or higher on post parenting knowledge test
- 98 % of children with a potential developmental delay was referred and accepted services or were already receiving services

Quality Improvement

- Expanded onsite outreach for Start Right to the Women's Community and Bridge Clinic.
- Started partnering with United Way's 211 so that families calling in for basic needs related to infant/small children/pregnancy received a warm handoff to enroll in Start Right
- Piloted evidence base practice for screening for Intimate Violence
- Trained in Motivational Interviewing

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department:
www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org

Start Right First Steps :
www.facebook.com/StartRightFirstSteps/

First Breath:
www.wwhf.org/programs/first-breath

My Baby and Me:
www.wwhf.org/programs/my-baby-me

Early Years Coalition:
www.RaiseGreatKids.org

Be a Superhero:
www.raisegreatkids.org/be-a-superhero/
www.beachildssuperhero.com



Promote Strong Healthy Families During the Early Years

Childhood Lead

Lead is toxic to everyone, but especially to children under the age of six. The goal of the childhood lead program is to identify and lower elevated blood lead levels in children. The actions taken by Marathon County Health Department to lower a child's blood lead include: 1) Educate parents and caregivers on lead hazards and ways to reduce the child's blood lead level, 2) Provide nursing case management to ensure the child receives follow-up medical care and treatment, and 3) Conduct an environmental lead hazard investigation to identify sources for lead hazards, along with recommendations for addressing identified hazards. The Health Department monitors children until their blood lead level drops below 5 ug/dl.

In 2017, 24 children had a blood lead test result greater than 5 ug/dl. Eighteen properties received lead hazard investigations. One property completed lead hazard reduction in 2017.

Children's Hearing and Vision Screening

In the 2016-17 school year, hearing and vision screening was provided to children in four-year-old Kindergarten (4K) through grades 3 and 5. Children were screened in 62 locations including all public, private, and parochial school districts in the county. Four-year-old Kindergarten is offered in various locations, including daycare facilities and community based organizations, in addition to the neighborhood schools, resulting in the high number of screening sites.

During this school year 8,958 children were screened 175 children were referred for further evaluation of their hearing. In addition, 8,939 children were screened for vision, with 822 children being referred to providers for further evaluation of their vision.

Impacts

- One property completed lead hazard reduction
- 96% of children referred for hearing difficulties received follow up care
- 92% of children referred for vision difficulties received follow up care
- Provided information and referrals to more than 150 parents or professionals on community services for children and youth with special health care needs
- Furthered working partnerships between the Northern Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs and Tribal Health Centers

Northern Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program works to improve systems of care for children and youth from birth through 21 years of age with a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional illness or condition that requires specialized health or educational services.

The Northern Regional Center assist in improving health outcomes for children and youth, including those with chronic conditions by: improving the quality of health care through established medical homes; and assuring a smooth transition from child health services to adult health care.



Northern Regional Center
Children and Youth with
Special Health Care Needs

Find out more...

Lead Safe Wisconsin:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lead/

Marathon County Special Education:

www.mcspecialeducation.com

Prevent Blindness America:

www.preventblindness.com

Northern Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs:

www.northernregionalcenter.org





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