



2023-2026 YELLOWSTONE COUNTY

COMMUNITY HEALTH
IMPROVEMENT PLAN

30-MONTH
PROGRESS REPORT

July 1 – December 31, 2025 | Published January 31, 2026



The Yellowstone County Community Health Needs Assessment, Community Health Improvement Plan, and Healthy By Design Coalition are sponsored by Billings Clinic, RiverStone Health, and Intermountain Health St. Vincent Regional Hospital. These initiatives are intended as a resource for residents, organizations, and leaders. Learn more at www.hbdyc.org.

*All photos in this document are from Healthy By Design archives unless otherwise noted.
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Our Current Partners

Allies in Aging
AWARE Early Head Start
Best Beginnings Yellowstone County
Big Sky Economic Development
Billings Arts Association
Billings Chamber of Commerce
Billings City Council
Billings Clinic & Billings Clinic Foundation
Billings Family YMCA
Billings Industrial Revitalization District
Billings Community Foundation
Billings TrailNet
Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center
CASA of Yellowstone County
Chamber of Commerce
City of Billings
Community Crisis Center
Community Leadership & Development, Inc.
Continuum of Care
Dog Tag Buddies
DOWL
Head Start, Inc.
HomeFront
HRDC

Intermountain Health St. Vincent Regional Hospital
Living Independently For Today and Tomorrow
MET Transit
Montana Office of Rural Health and Area Health
Education Center
Montana Public Health Institute
Montana State University Billings
National Endowment for the Arts
North Park Neighborhood Task Force
Native American Development Corporation
Rimrock Foundation
Rimrock Neighborhood Task Force
RiverStone Health
Rocky Mountain College
Rocky Mountain Health Network
Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council
South Side Neighborhood Task Force
Suicide Prevention Coalition of Yellowstone County
St. John's United
Triia
United Way of Yellowstone County
University of Montana Center for Children, Families
and Workforce Development
Yellowstone County Behavioral Health Coalition

2023 – 2026 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Strategies



Healthy Neighborhoods



Healthy Connections



Healthy Investments

Strengthening Partnerships

Past 30 Months at a Glance

 Healthy Neighborhoods	• Celebrated the 15th season of the Gardeners' Market, generating over \$31,000 in sales • Collaborated with Mobilize the MAGIC City partners to launch a platform for mapping local art, successfully led the adoption of the City of Billings Public Art Policy in 2025, followed by the recruitment of a public art committee • The Complete Neighborhoods workgroup reviewed mapping efforts of key-quality-of-life resources for the South Side Triangle neighborhood, the North Park, and a combined Lower Rimrock and Midtown neighborhoods
 Healthy Connections	• The Age Friendly Billings workgroup continued to meet and plan educational materials and a social marketing campaign to address institutional, interpersonal, and internalized ageism in Yellowstone County by reshaping public perceptions and fostering a more age-friendly community environment • Developed the Good Neighbor toolkit and campaign in partnership with Grown in Billings and the Billings Public Library to support family-friendly neighborhood connections across Yellowstone County
 Healthy Investments	• Developed a community health worker (CHW) employer toolkit in partnership with Montana Public Health Institute • Launched a monthly meeting for local CHWs, peers, navigators, and similar positions to support connection, collaboration, and partnership building
 Strengthening Partnerships	• Held the final Collective Impact Series called Coffee Connect in coordination with Best Beginnings, Level Up Yellowstone, Suicide Prevention Coalition of Yellowstone County, and United Way • The Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) workgroup launched a second cohort of TIC 101 Train-the-Trainer • Participated in Grown in Billings, a community effort that aims to ensure families are connected to resources to raise their children in a stable, safe, supportive, and caring environment

Presentations & Media Coverage

Presentations & Posters

- Montana Family Medicine Residency
- Leadership Billings
- Combined Task Force Leadership
- Collective Impact Coffee Connect

Media Coverage

- Gardeners' Market open 4-6 p.m. Thursdays at South Park promotion through Desert Mountain radio advertisement, interviews, and television advertisement
- Billings Gazette Health Matters articles
- Live Well in Montana

2023-2026 Yellowstone County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Overview

Vision	A vibrant Yellowstone County where the healthy choice is the easy choice.	
Overall Goal	By 2026, increase proportion of Yellowstone County residents who self-report good or better overall health from 84.7% to 88.9%	
Priorities	Mental Health Substance Use (Misuse) and Safety	Access to Healthcare Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Weight

Priority Specific Objectives

Increase the proportion of Yellowstone County residents who self-report good or better mental health from 79.3% to 83.3%	Decrease the proportion of Yellowstone County residents who find it very/somewhat difficult to buy fresh produce from 27.4% to 26.0%
Decrease the proportion of Yellowstone County residents whose lives have been negatively affected by substance abuse (their own or someone else's) from 43.4% to 41.2%	Increase the proportion of Yellowstone County residents who are meeting physical activity guidelines from 29.3% to 30.8%
Decrease the proportion of Yellowstone County residents who experience difficulty accessing health care from 45.4% to 43.1%	Increase the proportion of Yellowstone County residents who are at a healthy weight from 26.7% to 28.0%

Initiative Assessment Criteria

Health Equity • Policy, Systems, Environment • Collective Impact
Evidence-Based • Community-Informed





Strategy I. Healthy Neighborhoods: 30-Month Update

Vision: All Yellowstone County residents have access to vibrant neighborhoods that are welcoming, accessible, and foster health.

Overview: Healthy neighborhoods support and promote the physical, mental, and social well-being among residents. Such neighborhoods are structured in a way that provides easy access to essential resources and services, fosters social connectedness, and facilitates healthy choices.

Initiative Updates

Mobilize the MAGIC City, a partnership between the City of Billings, Billings Arts Association, Triia, and Healthy By Design, and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, has achieved notable progress in the past year. The initiative continued to emphasize the value of public art, community pride, neighborhood safety, and beautification.

The group launched a public art campaign to map local public art using Ushahidi. In July, Mobilize the MAGIC City leadership members presented a proposed public art policy at a City Council work session. In the fall of 2025, the City of Billings successfully adopted the Public Art Policy and launched recruitment of the public art committee. This policy will establish a clear, concise process for public art in public spaces, followed by the creation of a public art committee. A call for applications to serve on the public art committee began in the fall. The goal of this policy is to help create a welcoming, vibrant, and safe community where people want to live by providing the tools and resources to support public art and the associated process in Billings.



A vendor at the Gardeners' Market shares local, fresh produce with community members

During this reporting period, the **Complete Neighborhoods** workgroup continued their efforts to establish baseline mapping of key quality-of-life resources in Yellowstone County. Healthy By Design and the City of Billings worked together to create maps of the local neighborhoods. The Complete Neighborhood workgroup reviewed the complete set of maps for the South Side Triangle, North Park and a combined lower Rimrock and Midtown. This effort aims to ensure livable and accessible urban life across all neighborhoods and focuses on creating healthy and vibrant neighborhoods by identifying areas of improvement and supporting community needs.

The **Gardeners' Market Vendor Committee** worked together to promote the Gardeners' Market through outreach and promotion, contributing to over \$31,000 in vendor sales during the 2025 season. Vendors reviewed season highlights at the end of the market season to help identify areas of opportunity. This marketing project aims to enhance the economic and health outcomes of the broader community and promote resilient food systems in Yellowstone County.

Health needs addressed: mental health, access to healthcare, nutrition, physical activity and weight.



Strategy 2. Healthy Connections: 30-Month Update

Vision: All Yellowstone County residents have the social or emotional support to integrate into the community in a way that is relevant, accessible, and fulfilling across all life stages.

Overview: Healthy Connections refer to the social interactions or positive and beneficial ways in which individuals engage with others in various social settings. These connections contribute to the overall health and quality of life of individuals and communities.

Initiative Updates

The **Age Friendly Billings** group continued to focus on enhancing the quality of life for older adults by prioritizing strategies around 5 of the 8 American Association of Retired Persons' (AARP) Age Friendly Domains of Livability. These efforts align with fostering age-friendly practices, emphasizing outdoor spaces, transportation, housing, civic participation, employment, and respect and social inclusion.

Committee members continued to meet and focused on developing a social marketing campaign and age-friendly designated outdoor spaces and resources. The targeted age-friendly social marketing campaign aims to counteract institutional, interpersonal, and internalized ageism in Yellowstone County by reshaping public perceptions, promoting inclusivity, and fostering a more age-friendly community environment. The workgroup launched a survey for community members and shared this with the larger leadership group. The results of the survey helped guide the beginning development of social marketing campaign topics and activities.

The **Good Neighbor Toolkit** and campaign was developed and launched this fall in partnership with Grown in Billings and Billings Public Library. The toolkit is designed to encourage family-friendly neighborhood connections and foster meaningful relationships that promote health and well-being across Yellowstone County through neighborhood gatherings and block parties. Family-friendly neighborhood block parties can help promote safer communities, healthy eating, and active lifestyles, while also connecting children with caring adults outside of their immediate family who can serve as positive role models and mentors.

Health needs addressed: access to healthcare, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and weight



Healthy By Design, in partnership with Billings Public Library and Grown in Billings, launches the Good Neighbor Block Party kit at the library



Strategy 3. Healthy Investments: 30-Month Update

Vision: Enhance Yellowstone County's ability to respond to the demand for livability through investments in community development, policies, systems, and infrastructure that directly impact the health and well-being of area residents.

Overview: Investing in quality of life has become crucial for communities seeking to not only sustain their existing workforce and population but also attract and retain new residents. The livability and desirability of a community is intrinsically connected to the availability of certain life necessities, including trails, parks, walkability, safety measures, access to healthy foods, family-friendly destinations, quality schools, and employment opportunities.

Initiative Updates

Healthy By Design continued to work with partners locally and across the state to determine how to better communicate the value of **community health workers** (CHWs), their work in the non-clinical setting, and better understand similar positions in the workforce. An environmental scan of CHWs, care coordinators, peer support specialists and similar positions continued to identify local positions in Yellowstone County and to better understand their roles in addressing the many different social drivers of health.

In the summer, Healthy By Design relaunched a local office hour meeting for CHWs and similar positions. The aim of this meeting is to provide a dedicated space for partnership building, collaboration, and networking.

As part of sustainability efforts, Healthy By Design partnered with Montana Public Health Institute and University of Montana Center for Children, Families and Workforce Development to develop an employer toolkit to help educate others in the state about their roles, value, and impact of CHWs in public health and community-based organizations. Efforts to launch and educate employers on the toolkit have been started and Healthy By Design continues to explore sustainability models for the CHW profession.

The **Healthy Worksite Toolkit** began its second relaunch to better reflect the evolving needs of workplaces across the region. This updated version moves away from recognition-based efforts and individual organization spotlights and instead takes a broader, more inclusive approach that supports small, medium, large, and remote employers across a variety of industries. The toolkit serves as a practical and adaptable resource, highlighting real-world examples of policies, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes that promote employee well-being and positive workplace culture. By emphasizing locally informed, evidence-based strategies related to healthy eating, physical activity, mental health, and organizational culture, the toolkit provides actionable guidance to help employers create healthier, more supportive work environments.

Health needs addressed: access to healthcare, mental health, substance misuse, nutrition, physical activity, and weight.



Strategy 4. Strengthening Partnerships: 30-Month Update

Vision: Advance collective action to make Yellowstone County a healthier, more vibrant community.

Overview: Yellowstone County is confronted with a number of intricate and long-standing health challenges, including mental health concerns, substance misuse, public safety, health conditions related to poor diet or inactivity, and limited access to affordable, healthy foods. By strengthening partnerships, the community can leverage collective expertise, resources, and shared responsibility to improve health outcomes for residents. In doing so, these partnerships will enhance the effectiveness of interventions, foster innovation, and promote a comprehensive approach to addressing community health needs.

Initiative Updates

The **Impact Coordinators** group, comprising of backbone staff from various coalitions, met monthly to enhance collective impact practices. They focused on reviewing best practices, fostering collaboration, and resource sharing. This group's efforts emphasize the importance of coordinated initiatives in strengthening community well-being through comprehensive strategies. In 2024, the group hosted the inaugural Collective Impact training for Yellowstone County coalitions aimed at strengthening their collective leadership and better equipping them to move knowledge into action. Attendees requested more opportunities to learn about collective impact. In August 2025, the group held their fourth Coffee Connect session. Participants explored two of the five conditions of Collective Impact in greater depth.



Impact Coordinators host Coffee Connect for community members and local leaders to learn more about collective impact

This past spring, the **Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)** workgroup continued to strengthen community capacity by advancing the TIC Train-the-Trainer initiative. This fall, a second cohort was launched to complete the Train-the-Trainer process, building on prior TIC 101 efforts. Participants in this cohort will learn how to create engaging and dynamic training environments, assess learner needs, and apply innovative tools to enhance the TIC learning experience. The training equips participants to share TIC principles and best practices with their own teams and partner organizations, expanding the reach of trauma-informed approaches and fostering supportive environments that respect diverse lived experiences across the community.

Health needs addressed: access to healthcare, substance misuse, and mental health.

2023 – 2026 CHIP Metrics

Key

- ★ Initiative completed or target met
- ★ In progress, improvement over baseline, but target has not yet been met
- ★ Stopped/not started

In-Progress 2023 – 2026 CHIP Metrics

Healthy Neighborhoods

Metric	Status	
By June 2025, foster equitable opportunities for residents to live and thrive by using workgroup-defined Complete Neighborhoods criteria to evaluate 3 neighborhoods to inform the next steps	★	
By June 2025, an inventory of public art and community gardens in Yellowstone County will be completed	★	
By June 2026, strategic marketing opportunities to increase attendance are developed and launched for the 2026 Gardeners' Market season	★	
By June 2026, strategic marketing opportunities to increase vendor recruitment and retention are developed and launched for the 2026 Gardeners' Market season	★	
	2023 CHNA	2026 Goal
% of residents who are meeting physical activity guidelines	29.3%	30.8%
% residents who feel they can help make their community a better place to live	89.4%	93.9%
% adults who feel safe walking alone in neighborhood	84.6%	88.8%
% of children who are physically active 1+ hours daily	58.7%	61.6%

Healthy Connections

Metric	Status
By June 2025, expand awareness of and access to social opportunities for older adults by engaging Age Friendly Billings members in the completion of two domain work plan initiatives	★
By December 2025, a social marketing campaign, educational materials, and handouts to address stereotypes and perception around ageism is developed	★

Yellowstone County Indicator	2023 CHNA	2026 Goal
% adults 65+ who spend three or more hours on screen time for entertainment on an average day	38.5%	36.6%
% adults who feel isolated from others (sometimes or always)	43.7%	41.5%
% adults who get the social and emotional support needed	91.8%	96.3%

Healthy Investments

Metric	Status
By December 2025, an environmental scan of local community health workers (CHWs), care coordinators, peers, and like professions is completed	★
By June 2025, update the Healthy Worksite Toolkit and share updated evidence-based strategies and healthy worksite initiatives	★

Yellowstone County Indicator	2023 CHNA	2026 Goal
% of residents who feel they can help make their community a better place	89.4%	93.9%
% of residents who get the social and emotional support needed	91.8%	96.3%
% of women who experience difficulty accessing health care	54.4%	51.7%

Strengthening Partnerships

Metric	Status
By June 2025, ensure 100% of active HBD workgroups include, at a minimum, at least 2 individuals with lived experience relevant to the workgroup's focus	★
By June 2026, plan the third annual TIC 101 community training in partnership with the TIC trainer workgroup	★

Yellowstone County Indicator	2023 CHNA	2026 Goal
% of residents who feel they can help make their community a better place	89.4%	93.9%

% of people of color who have experienced symptoms of chronic depression	61.0%	58.0%
% of low-income residents who report having “no impact” on improving life in the community	15.7%	14.9%

Completed 2023 – 2026 CHIP Metrics

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

Metric	Status
By June 2024, enhance neighborhood safety, strengthen community identify, and foster health by completing 90% of Mobilize the MAGIC City workgroup deliverables	★
By June 2024, enhance neighborhood safety, strengthen community identity and foster health by completing 90% of Mobilize the MAGIC City workgroup deliverables	★
By June 2025, a marketing plan to increase attendance to the Gardeners’ Market will be identified and finalized	★
By June 2025, a marketing plan to increase Gardeners’ Market vendor recruitment and retention will be identified and finalized	★
By December 2025, strategic marketing opportunities to increase attendance are evaluated to inform recommendations for the 2026 Gardeners' Market season	★
By December 2025, strategic marketing opportunities to increase vendor recruitment and retention are evaluated to inform recommendations for the 2026 Gardeners' Market season	★

Healthy Connections

Metric	Status
By June 2024, improve access to healthy worksite resources by publishing an updated Healthy Worksite Toolkit using evidence-based strategies and local Healthy Worksite recipient examples	★
By December 2025, develop a Good Neighbor Toolkit to enhance education and opportunities around social connection and community engagement	★

Healthy Investments

Metric	Status
By June 2024, support 100% of Resilient Yellowstone CHW sites in developing sustainability action plans to retain CHW practices that address health disparities among populations hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic	★
By June 2024, advance civic engagement to support an equitable, thriving community by engaging at least three partners in sharing community plan fact sheets	★
By June 2025, advance civic engagement to support an equitable, thriving community by engaging at least two partners in sharing community plan fact sheets	★
By June 2025, support reimbursement opportunities for CHWs by finalizing a local employer toolkit for organizations focusing on non-clinical CHW work	★

Strengthening Partnerships

Metric	Status
By June 2025, build community capacity to lead systems change by establishing 3 collective impact-based learning structures and opportunities	★
By June 2025, hold a TIC 101 community training in partnership with the TIC trainer workgroup	★
By December 2025, spring TIC 101 attendees from the spring will have the opportunity to become a community TIC super trainer in partnership with the TIC workgroup	★
By December 2025, launch a local community of practice with opportunities to collaborate, network, and establish partnerships for local care coordinators, CHWs, peers, and like professions from various local organizations	★

Looking to get involved with Healthy By Design?

We have a variety of engagement opportunities, including:

- ✓ Join a strategy working group
- ✓ Share your feedback and experiences
- ✓ Advocate for policies or programs that improve health
- ✓ Connect with us (@HBDYellowstone on Facebook and Instagram or receive our monthly newsletter!)
- ✓ Make the healthy choice, the easy choice where you live, work, learn and play



Healthy By Design staff share information and resources to community members at the Gardeners' Market



A community member enjoys public outdoor spaces



www.hbdyc.org



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