

Monthly Update

FEBRUARY 2026

Are You Betting More Than You Can Afford to Lose?



Super Bowl LX (60) will take place on Sunday, February 8, at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California. Each year the game is accompanied by an increase in betting activity. The American Gaming Association estimated that approximately \$20 billion was bet on last year's game. According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, approximately 2 to 2.5 million U.S. adults (about 1%) meet the criteria for a severe gambling disorder annually, while another 4 to 8 million (2-3%) experience mild or moderate significant gambling problems. In total, nearly 20 million Americans reported at least one problematic gambling behavior in the past year.

In addition, gambling problems are often unrecognized, and many people may not be aware of them. In many people, a gambling addiction also coexists alongside other problems such as an alcohol disorder or substance misuse.

"As more states continue to legalize sports betting, the chances are even greater for individuals to develop a gambling addiction," said Madonna Marable, Recovery Services Senior Manager, Public Health - Dayton & Montgomery County. "The ease of mobile betting increases the temptation to bet more than you can afford to lose, which makes it easier to hide your betting from concerned loved ones."

Problem Gambling in Ohio:

Every five years since 2012, the Ohio Department of Behavioral Health, in partnership with Ohio for Responsible Gambling (ORG), has distributed the Ohio Gambling Survey, which is designed to gather information about how adults are gambling, how often they gamble, what characteristics they have, and what characteristics may relate to gambling behaviors.

This survey was completed most recently in 2022. It found an estimated 254,000 Ohioans are living with a gambling disorder, and 1.8 million Ohioans are at some risk of gambling disorder.

Recovery Services:

[Public Health's Recovery Services](#) program offers free help for gambling problems. To schedule an appointment with one of Public Health's counselors call 937-461-5223. To reach the National Council on Problem Gambling helpline, call 1-800-MY-RESET.

Warning Signs of a Gambling Problem

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Frequent Betting | 5. Financial Issues |
| 2. Chasing Losses | 6. Lying About Gambling |
| 3. Increased Bet Sizes | 7. Avoiding Responsibilities |
| 4. Preoccupation with Betting | 8. Emotional Distress |

Gamblers may take this [confidential self-assessment quiz](#) to help them understand if they may have a problem.

Take
the
Quiz!



FEBRUARY IS **AMERICAN HEART MONTH**

During February's **American Heart Health Month**, Public Health encourages you to learn more about heart health, and to take steps to prevent heart disease. Although heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the U.S., making small consistent lifestyle choices can make a big difference. Start by taking steps to [Know Your Numbers](#), blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar (A1C), and body mass index (BMI). These numbers help you understand your risk and take control of your heart health.

Follow these Tips for a Healthy Heart:

- Add one extra serving of fruits or vegetables each day.
- Take a brisk 10-minute walk after meals.
- Reduce sodium: choose fresh foods and read labels for hidden salt.
- Quit tobacco. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for help.
- Manage stress. Explore stress-reduction techniques such as meditation, deep-breathing exercises, or yoga to keep your mind and heart in harmony.
- Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night.

Take Advantage of Resources in the Community:

- Free blood pressure checks at participating pharmacies and clinics.
- Smoking cessation support groups meeting weekly.
- Heart-healthy cooking classes offered through community partners.

Talk With Your Healthcare Provider:

- Schedule regular checkups with your healthcare provider to monitor your blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and overall cardiovascular health. Early detection and management of risk factors can be key in preventing heart-related issues.



NATIONAL
Wear Red Day



February 6 is National Wear Red Day.

Wear Red because losing even one woman to heart disease or stroke is too many.

Join the fight against the #1 killer of women.





SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER



Boost Your Mood During the Winter Months

February can bring cold days and long nights, making it a challenging month for mental health.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) affects many people during late winter.

Ways to Support Your Mental Well Being

- Spend time outdoors during daylight hours.
- Stay social: make plans, join a club, or check in with a friend.
- Stay active: stretching or short indoor workouts help improve mood.
- Consider talking to a mental health professional if winter symptoms feel overwhelming.



If you need help, contact the 988 Lifeline. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, understands that life's challenges can sometimes be difficult. Whether you're facing mental health struggles, emotional distress, alcohol or drug use concerns, or just need someone to talk to, their caring counselors are there for you. You are not alone. The 988 Lifeline is available 24/7/365. Your conversations are free and confidential.

ChatBot Safety



Public Health reminds you that as you seek help and advice regarding Seasonal Affective Disorder or other health conditions, you should be cautious when interacting with AI chatbots. A chatbot is a software application designed to simulate human conversation through text or voice interactions, commonly used for customer service, virtual assistance, and task automation. While chatbot tools can provide quick information about health issues, they are not a replacement for a therapist or medical professional.

In October 2025, OpenAI released data indicating that more than a million ChatGPT users each week show “explicit indicators of potential suicidal planning or intent” during conversations with an AI chatbot. Using AI in place of a therapist or medical treatment can be potentially harmful to an individual and the people around them.

Here are key points about using AI chatbots to consider:

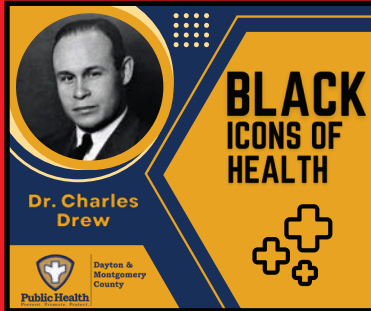
- Therapists offer professional, tailored care; a conversation with AI is not a substitute for trained mental health services which can diagnose, reduce harm, and create specific health plans.
- AI can be dangerous in a crisis, potentially reinforcing harmful behaviors instead of offering healthy coping mechanisms.
- Chatbots generate responses, not treatment, pulling information that may be false or out of context from the internet. They may also be designed to create a harmful reliance.
- AI is one-size-fits-all, engineered to give general answers rather than relying on education, experience, and training to tailor treatment to your unique needs.
- Doctor-patient confidentiality does not exist with a chatbot, your privacy is not guaranteed.
- Chatbots are not telehealth professionals. Explore virtual therapy options for professional remote support instead.

If you need immediate mental health support call or text the 988 Lifeline. For ongoing support, research professional support or ask your doctor for a referral.



Celebrating **Black History Month**

Public Health celebrates Black History Month paying tribute to these “Black Icons of Health.” These individuals have contributed to society in monumental ways and made significant contributions to the field of health during their lifetime.



Charles Richard Drew (June 3, 1904 – April 1, 1950)

Charles Richard Drew was an American surgeon and medical researcher. He researched in the field of blood transfusions, developing improved techniques for blood storage, and applied his expert knowledge to developing large-scale blood banks early in World War II. Public Health’s Drew Health Center is named in his honor.



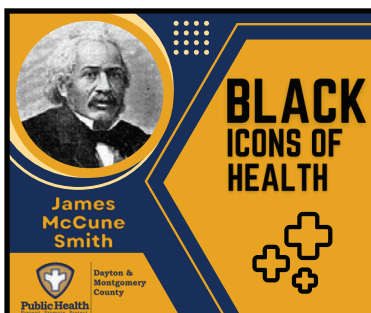
Minnie Joycelyn Elders (born August 13, 1933)

Minnie Joycelyn Elders is an American pediatrician and public health administrator who served as Surgeon General of the United States from 1993 to 1994. A vice admiral in the Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, she was the second woman, second person of color, and first African American to serve as Surgeon General.



Mae Carol Jemison (born October 17, 1956)

Mae Carol Jemison is an American engineer physician, and former NASA astronaut. She became the first Black woman to travel into space when she served as a mission specialist aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour. Jemison was a doctor for the Peace Corps in Liberia and Sierra Leone from 1983 until 1985 and worked as a general practitioner.



James McCune Smith (April 18, 1813 – November 17, 1865)

James McCune Smith was an American physician, apothecary, abolitionist, and author who was born in Manhattan. He was the first African American to hold a medical degree from the University of Glasgow in Scotland. After his return to the United States, he became the first African American to run a pharmacy in the nation.

National Children's Dental Health Month

NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
DENTAL HEALTH
MONTH
— FEBRUARY —



Tooth decay remains the most common chronic childhood disease.

February is [National Children's Dental Health Month](#) (NCDHM). During the entire month of February, the American Dental Association (ADA) honors and recognizes dental professionals and all who are passionate about children's healthcare. Take this time to increase awareness about pediatric dental hygiene – and find out how you can best support your child's dental care.

Educational programs and prevention awareness will help motivate more parents and other adults to recognize the seriousness of children's dental disease.

Why is Children's Dental Health Month Important?

NCDHM raises awareness of the importance of teaching children good oral habits early to ensure a lifetime of healthy smiles. Parents or caregivers are essential and can promote children's dental health this month and throughout the year. Support children's dental health by working with dental professionals on specific topics such as:

-  *Tooth decay*
-  *Getting your child familiar with their dentist's office*
-  *Preventing crowded teeth*
-  *Healthy gums in later years*

Keeping up with daily oral care and visiting the dentist at least twice a year for an oral examination and professional cleanings are steps you can take towards a happier and healthier mouth! Setting the foundation for your child earlier in life will set your child up for success in the future.



Outstanding Outreach Quick Response Team



[Public Health's Recovery Outreach](#) Quick Response Team was recognized for the second year in a row as the Outstanding QRT Team – Public Safety Led by the Ohio Deflection Association for the work they do in our community. This team, led by Randy Carmack, partners with local hospital systems, law enforcement, courts and fire/EMS to provide linkage to care for those identified as having a substance use disorder, and has connected thousands to care and support since 2017.

Team members include Robert Bailey, Lisa Nunn, Cleave Baker, Kevin Jackson, Jeremy Edmondson, William Buchanan, Redina Counce, John Scannell, and Jermaine Hawkins.



Randy Carmack, Recovery Outreach Supervisor
Public Health - Dayton & Montgomery County



National Condom Week

2026

February 14-21

National Condom Week highlights the significance of condoms in sexual health. In addition to providing protection, condoms contribute to responsible and consensual relationships, making this week an important reminder to prioritize our well-being through safe practices.

Condoms act as a barrier, preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). This week emphasizes the importance of consistent condom use for reducing the risk of common infections. They are also an effective contraceptive method, acting as a barrier to sperm and reducing the chances of unplanned pregnancies. They play a crucial role in managing reproductive health responsibly.

National Condom Week encourages open communication between partners about sexual health and the use of condoms. Discussing these matters fosters trust and ensures both individuals are on the same page regarding protection and contraception. This week underscores the importance of making reliable protection available to everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or relationship status.

National Condom Week is an opportunity to empower individuals to make informed choices about their sexual health. This week is a chance to prioritize well-being, promote awareness, and ensure everyone has access to the tools they need for a healthy and fulfilling intimate life.

[Learn more about condoms and sexual health.](#)

Public Health Chosen for NACCHO's Immunization Community of Practice

Only 15 applicants were chosen to participate from across the United States.



Wendy Owen, Public Health's Nurse Supervisor in the [Immunization Clinic](#) has been selected to participate in the National Association of County & City Health Officials' (NACCHO) Immunization Community of Practice (CoP).

Only 15 applicants from across the United States were chosen to participate in this exciting opportunity. Public Health is the only agency represented in Ohio. Public Health was chosen to participate because of its capacity as an agency to uniquely contribute to the national dialogue on immunization programs and practices, and Wendy's immunization experience and expertise.

In addition, Public Health has been chosen to participate in the Sentinel Network. Public Health will provide insight into local immunization practices, priorities, and challenges which will in turn educate the NACCHO and serve as a guide to opportunities in assisting their members, and better target future work.

The CoP focuses on deep-dive training and strategy development, while the Sentinel Network gathers broad local insights through surveys and meetings, often overlapping for comprehensive support.



Wendy Owen, Public Health Nurse Supervisor preparing vaccine in the Immunization Clinic.



Help Us Make a Difference

Public Heath - Dayton & Montgomery County, is dedicated to public service and committed to quality relationships with one another and the community we serve.

Current Job Openings

Accounting Services Supervisor

Disease Prevention Specialist

Substance Use Mental Health Counselor

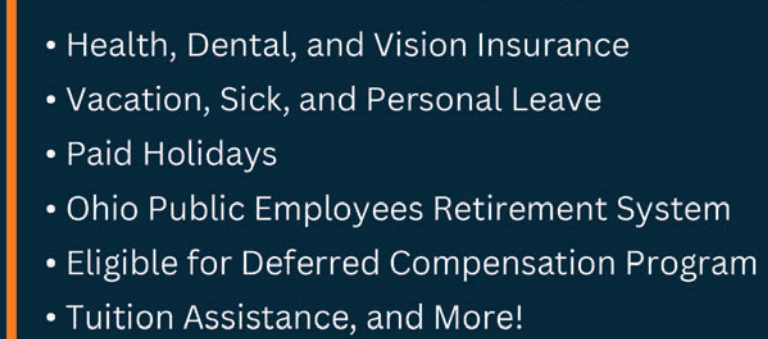
Accounting Specialist

Director Administration

Director Health Services



APPLY NOW



- Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance
- Vacation, Sick, and Personal Leave
- Paid Holidays
- Ohio Public Employees Retirement System
- Eligible for Deferred Compensation Program
- Tuition Assistance, and More!



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