

Green Lake County



GREEN LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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2024 ANNUAL REPORT

To: The Residents of Green Lake County, The Honorable Board of Supervisors of Green Lake County and the Green Lake County Health & Human Services Committee.

We respectfully submit for your consideration the 2024 Annual Report for the Department of Health & Humans Services (DHHS).

DHHS provides a vast array of programs and services intended to protect individuals and the public. These services are provided within a framework of requirements and regulations developed at the State and Federal level. This funding does not keep pace with increased costs and demands for these services. DHHS would be unable to provide these mandated and needed services to the citizens of Green Lake County without the funding allocated by local officials.

DHHS is constantly challenged to adapt and find creative and innovative ways to deliver needed services to citizens and strengthening existing partnerships within the County and outside agencies. I am fortunate and humbled to work with a group of individuals who take pride in the services they provide while supporting each other and working as a team to deliver these services to the citizens of Green Lake County.

Attached you will find unit specific reports outlining services provided by the Department. Each unit has provided an excellent overview of their respective unit responsibilities, services provided and related data. Since it is not possible to include everything accomplished in this type of report, I would encourage each of you to visit Health & Human Services in Green Lake and Fox River Industries in Berlin for a tour and more detailed review of the services provided and programs available.

A few highlights in the report include:

- As the demand for services provided by the HHS Department grows so does the workload for our administrative support and financial staff to maximize revenue. Due to the diligence of all staff Health & Human Services have been able to report end of year budget surpluses the past seven years and will once again report a surplus at the end of 2024.
- In August, the Health Department pulled together various agencies, organizations, community groups and community members, to the "Call to Action on Substance Use Prevention." That meeting has now evolved into a substance use prevention coalition to

all work towards the same goal of making Green Lake County a place that fosters a thriving and safe drug free

- In 2024 FRI began a partnership with the Green Lake County Aging Unit to Manage the Senior Dining Meal site. This partnership has created a new work training opportunity to utilize this site and job tasks involved as an avenue to teach work related skills thru hands on experience. This mutually beneficial opportunity not only strengthens work skills and provides participants with new experiences; it also allows Fox River Industries to serve the community, which is in alignment with one of their core values.
- In 2025, due to unforeseen circumstances, most of the transportation program will have come in house. The Aging Department will be managing the 85.21 program. In 2024, the program had 5 service providers. The hope was for 3 of them to be condensed making the program more efficient and effective for the Community. Towards the end of 2024, this was not an option any longer. Starting in 2025, the Aging Department will begin providing more day-to-day oversight over the program. Trip rates, volunteer reimbursements, and type of rides will be explored in 2025. Discussions will be brought to Committees to receive feedback as Green Lake County attempts to maximize the program for the Community with the funding that is provided. The program will have 4 volunteer drivers that are able to provide transport for anyone living anywhere in Green Lake County.
- Youth Justice Staff, Claire Wendt, was recognized by the state and awarded the Frank J. Crisafi Recognition Award in 2024. This award is given out annually to recognize the hard work done by those in this profession.
- Clinical staff strive to stay up-to-date on practices that are innovative and relevant to the concerns presented by those we serve. The clinical team was able to offer services at an additional school-based site (Markesan Elementary) while also significantly reducing waiting list times at our office-based clinic.

Our ability to continue and provide quality services to the residents of Green Lake County is a tribute to the Health & Human Services Board, County Board and a very talented and dedicated staff of professionals.

We look forward to the challenges ahead and the opportunity to continue to provide services which best meet the needs of Green Lake County.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Jerome
Director

ADMINISTRATION SUMMARY

The Health and Human Services Administrative Department for 2024 consisted of the Director, Financial/Business Manager, Insurance Verification/Data Entry Specialist, Electronic Health Record Specialist, Billing Specialist, two Receptionist/Data Entry Specialists, and BHU Receptionist/Lead Worker. The Purpose of Health and Human Services Administration Unit is to support the seven different units within Health and Human Services.

Operating Highlights

In supporting the seven different departments in Health and Human Services the Administrative unit has provided excellent customer service and unit support throughout 2024. We have continued to streamline and create efficiencies within our day to day workflow.

Accomplishments in 2024

Administration is continuing to adapt to the workflow and need within Health and Human Services and the community. We have continued to learn and grow as a wonderful team that works great together while focusing on efficiencies and assisting the community along with Health and Human Services employees. The following are a few of our accomplishments we have achieved in 2024:

- In 2024 we moved our BHU Reception/lead worker to the Behavioral Health Unit to help with case management, along with continued administrative duties to streamline the flow between BHU and Admin.
- We are continuing to streamline and maximize usage of MyHealthPoint
- Accept Credit Cards for Behavior Health Unit Services

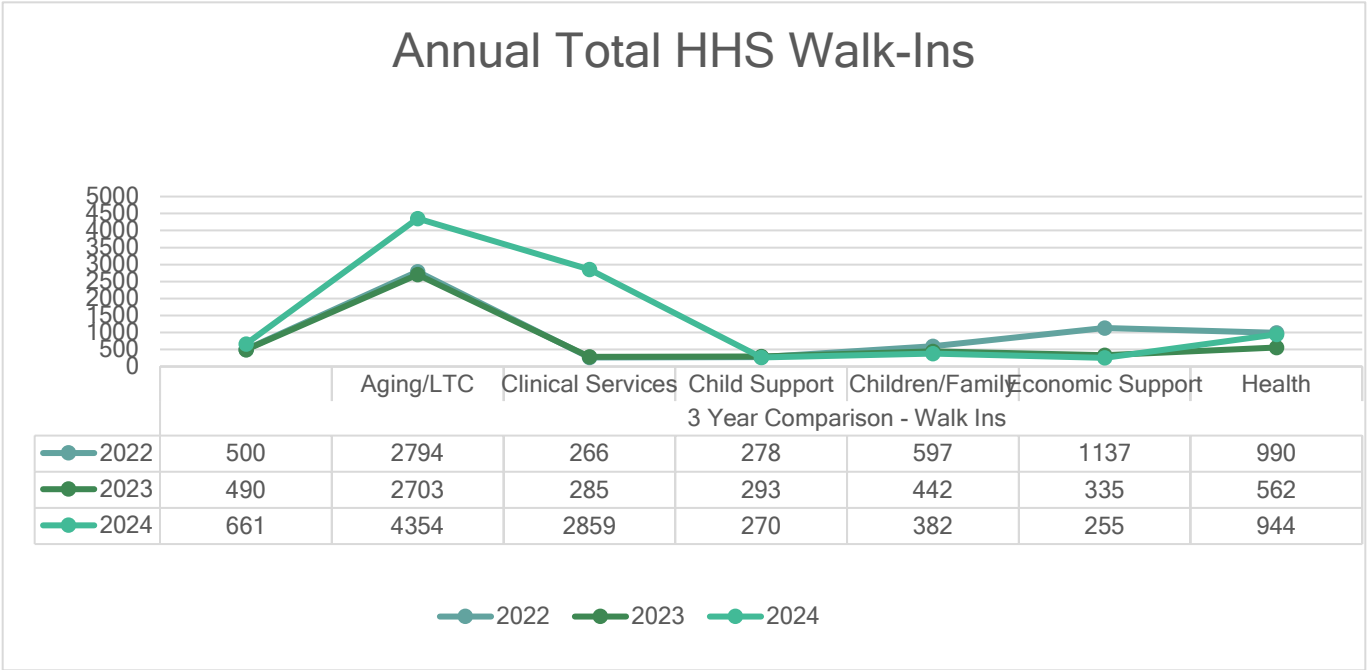
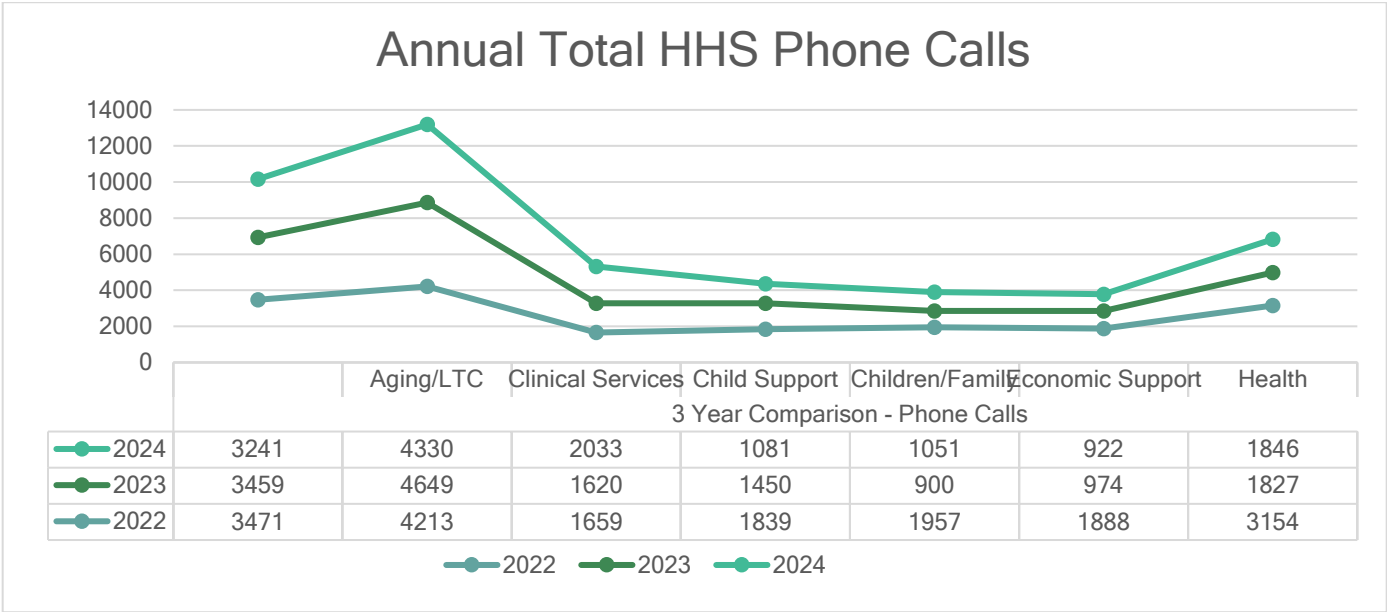
Looking forward to 2025

Admin is excited for the start of the new year, to modify the day-to-day workflow to best meet our consumer's needs. We are looking forward to 2024 and focusing on improving in the New Year. A few of our goals for 2025:

- Utilize client portal for health records to the fullest
- Provide great customer service to all Green Lake County residents.
- Streamline admin functions within the department.
- Maximize revenues within all departments.
- Maximize MyHealthPoint including reminder Text Messaging and access to client records.

ADMINISTRATIVE STATISTICS

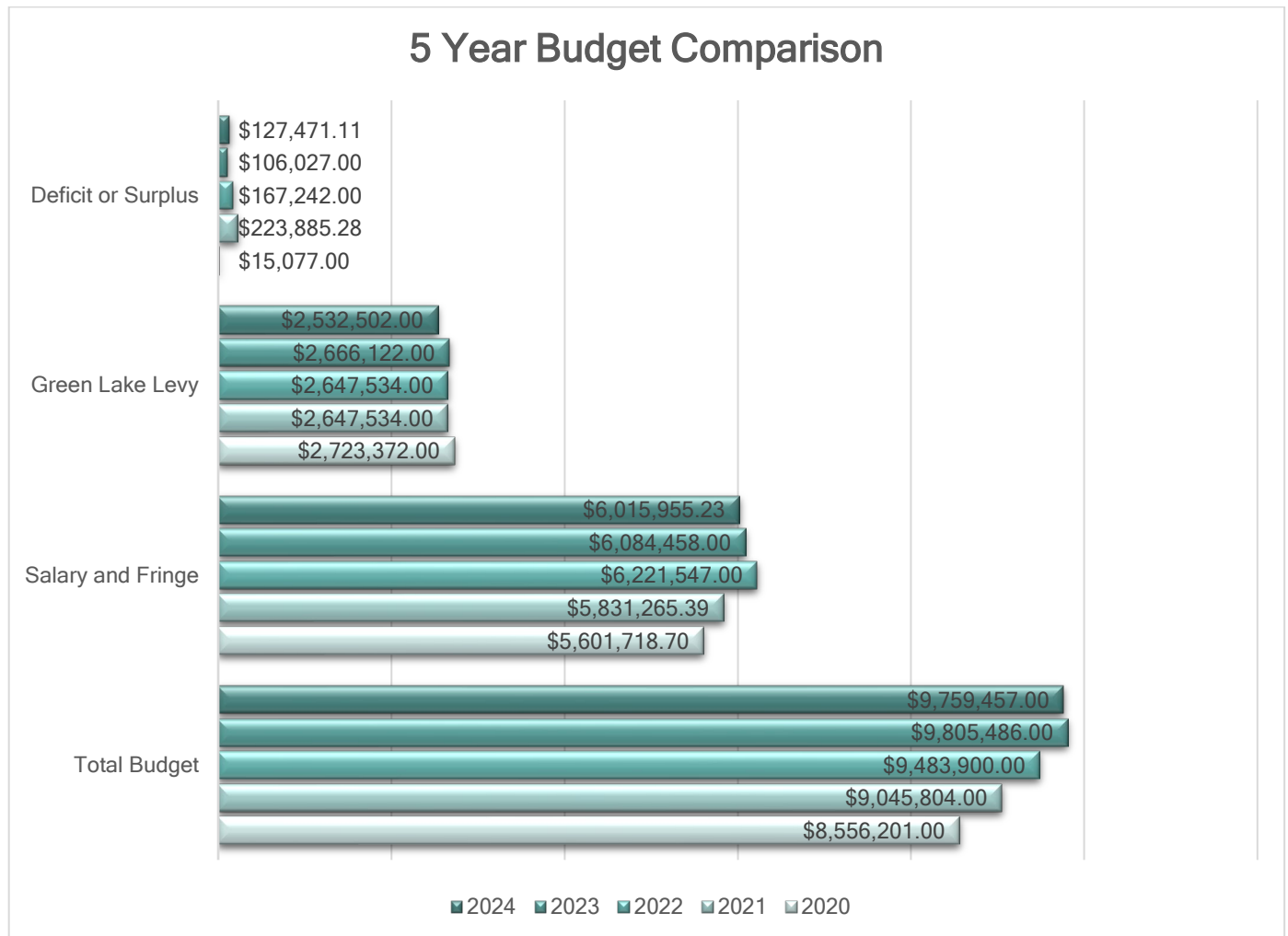
Public usage of Health and Human Services continues to be a high demand. Below are two comparison graphs displaying walk-ins and phone call contacts to the agency. The administrative department is often the first contact within Health and Human Services. We offer a friendly welcoming hand-off to the appropriate department that will meet the consumer’s needs. The administrative department continues to adapt to evolving demands and help ensure consumers have access to needed and appropriate services. In 2024 our walk ins have nearly doubled from the last two years and calls have remained consistent. This puts additional strain on front desk staff to continue to provide quality service while the demand for in person appointments rise for all units.



FINANCIAL STATISTICS

The financial staff is housed within the administrative department. Financial staff has also been affected by the increase demand and difficulty with the constant change in the financials to provide and bill services to clients in numerous different and new ways. As the demand for services continue to rise, the financial staff must work hard to utilize all available funding resources to provide quality services for an affordable price. As the demand rises, billing services continue to grow, putting pressure on the financial staff to accumulate as much revenue as possible to support our programs. Health and Human Services was able to financially report a surplus for Health and Human Services the past eight years.

**2024 Surplus Figure estimated as 2024-year end has not been completed*



Respectfully Submitted,

Kayla Yonke, DHHS Financial/Business Manager



Green Lake County
Health Department

2024 Annual Report



Prepared by:

Green Lake
County Health
Department Staff

Presented by: Rachel Prellwitz



Green Lake
County Health Department

Prevent. Promote. Protect.



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Message from the Health Officer

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share the progress being made in safeguarding the health of our community, particularly in addressing our top 3 health priorities as identified in our Community Health Assessment in 2023. Those top 3 health priority areas include: Access to Care (Medical and Dental), Mental Health and Substance Misuse.

This year we also began to implement activities listed in our strategic plan that we developed last year as we work towards the following goals:

- Goal 1: Become the area's trusted resource for health and wellness, creating a culture of health.
- Goal 2: Strengthen, expand and diversify partnerships.
- Goal 3: Build a strong, high-functioning team.
- Goal 4: Meet people where they are.

The Health Department also completed our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) as required by WI State Statute. After compiling data from the Community Health Assessment in 2023, we prioritized the top health concerns to create the 2023-2028 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The finished plan aims to improve the health and well-being of our residents.

The Green Lake County Health Department's Annual Report provides a snapshot of the health status of our community and the work we do to improve the overall health of Green Lake County. Community organizations and other stakeholders play a vital role in helping us to achieve our goals. I encourage all community members and stakeholders to actively participate in health promotion activities and to support public health initiatives.

Sincerely,



Rachel Prellwitz, RN



Meet Our Team



LAUREN OLSON
DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER

As Deputy Health Officer and Health Educator of Green Lake County I work on a variety of health topics; from tobacco prevention, physical activity and nutrition, car seat education, substance use prevention, community outreach, education on a variety of topics, working with our schools, and our community health improvement plan (CHIP).



ALLISON KRAUSE
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

Allison's focus is primarily on investigating all communicable diseases, work on our emergency preparedness plans and providing immunizations to adults and children. We carry most vaccines including flu, tetanus and all childhood vaccines. She also provides home visits to the Amish and provides a variety of health education individually and in classrooms. Allison is also now a Certified CPR Instructor and Stop the BLEED trained.



NANCY GIMENEZ
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

The areas that Nancy is primarily responsible for at Green Lake County are: Managing the Diabetes Prevention Program, coordinating the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, following up with new moms/families and assisting them to find resources and services to support them. She also provides 1:1 advance care planning, and assists the other PH staff with vaccinations, community events and more.

Meet Our Team



LISA ROLLIN
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

Lisa's focus was supporting Public Health with the COVID pandemic. Since the needs in COVID/pandemic management has reduced, her attention has shifted to being a Diabetes Prevention Lifestyle Coach and helping with our Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan.



KYLE ALT
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

As the health inspector Kyle licenses and inspects food facilities, lodging facilities, campgrounds, pools and rec-ed camps. The other large part of his job is responding to human health hazards in the community. Kyle uses chapter 154, health and sanitation, of Green Lake County's code of ordinances to address these concerns."

Our Organization

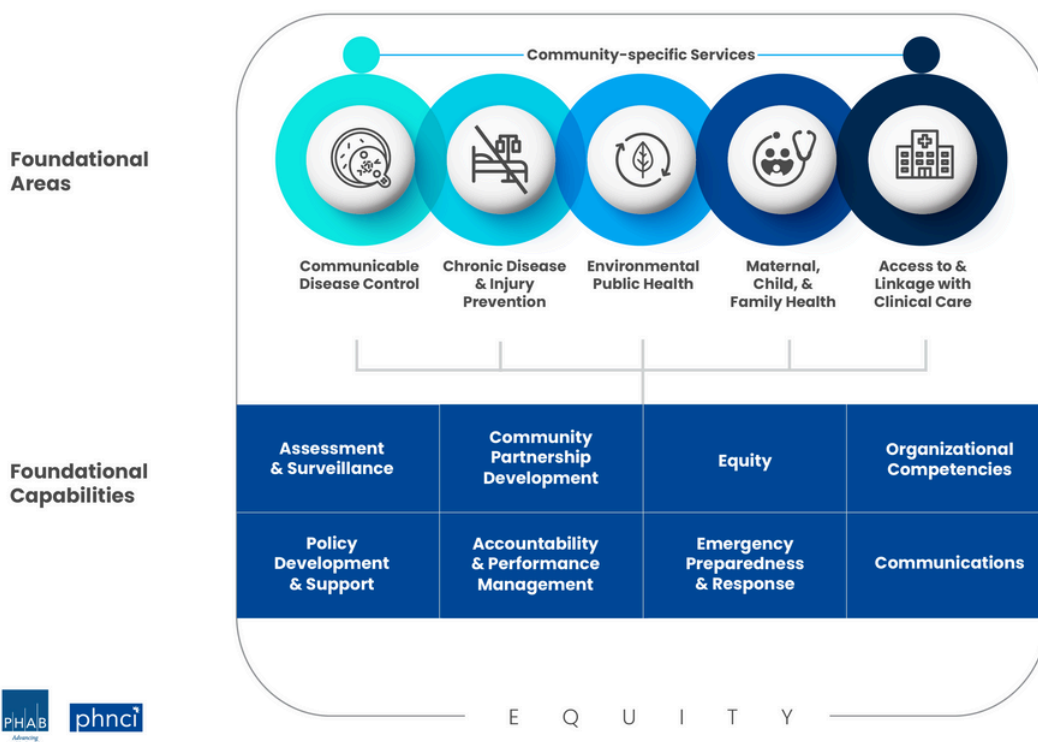


Mission

The mission of the Green Lake County Health Department is to promote and protect health and prevent disease.

Vision

We will become a leader in public health in Green Lake County promoting healthy people, thriving communities and safe environments.



Health Equity

In order to create social and physical environments that promote good health for all we must approach problems through a health equity lens. The Green Lake County Health Department is committed to ensuring health equity for all residents. In the past year, we continued to make improvements in addressing health disparities and promoting health equity through our programs, partnerships, and initiatives.



Equality gives us all the same resources.

Equity gives us what we need.

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)



Every 5 years, Green Lake County Health Department, pulls together organizations, agencies, and community members, to gather information about the health needs of our county and make a plan with strategies to address any gaps. A description of these strategies is shown below with an update of what was completed during the first year.



Access to Care-Medical

Improve access to health care, including medical and dental services in Green Lake County.

- Developed outreach materials aimed to bring awareness to free or discounted preventative medical services available to Green Lake County Residents.



Access to Care-Dental

Improve access to health care, including medical and dental services in Green Lake County.

- Partnering with Bridging Brighter Smiles to host dental clinics for postpartum or pregnant mothers and children ages 1-4 that are on Medicaid/BadgerCare.



Substance Misuse

Prevent or reduce substance misuse among youth and adults in Green Lake County.

- A **substance use prevention coalition** with the vision of *Green Lake County fosters a thriving and safe drug free community*, was developed. The coalition has representatives from healthcare groups, government agencies, non-profits, and community groups.

- In partnership with Berlin EMS, a Narcan Leave Behind program was implemented. This project enables EMS staff to leave naloxone on-site with patients that experience a suspected overdose and their support network.
- Through a partnership with Unity Recovery Services and Waushara SHINES, Green Lake County offers Peer Support Services, with walk-in hours, one day a week.

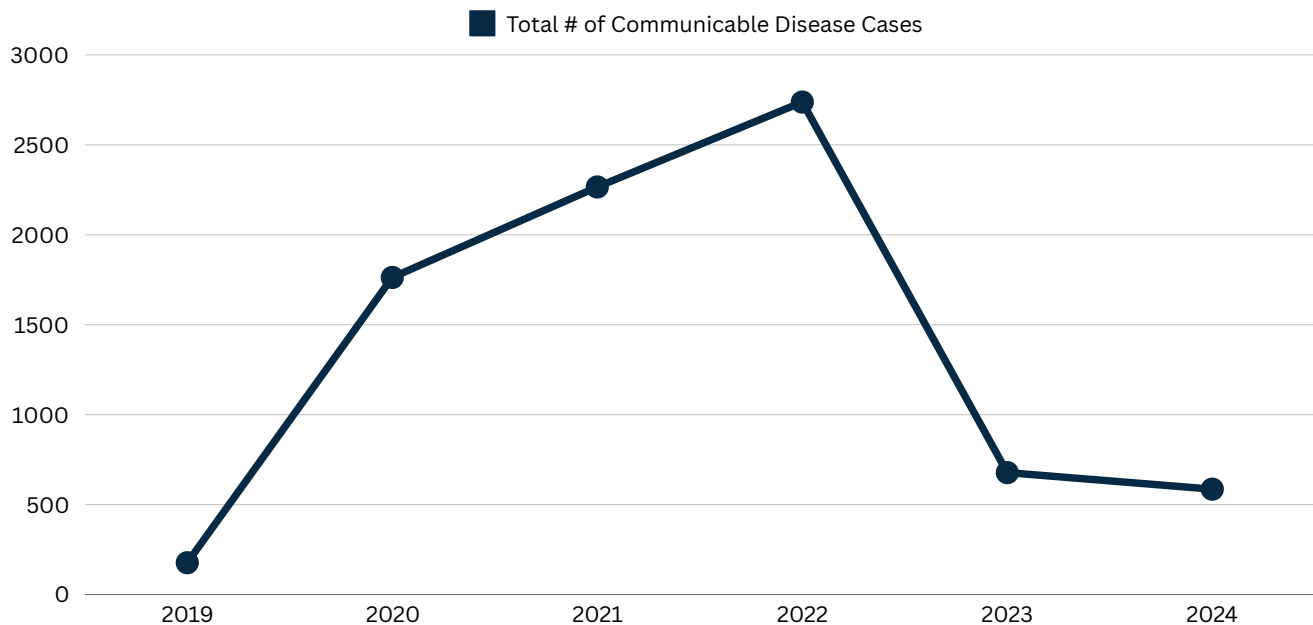


Mental Health

Build a culture of mental wellness throughout Green lake County.

- Green Lake County HHS continues its efforts of Zero Suicide and work towards system wide transformation towards suicide prevention.
- Working with schools and school-based therapists to create efforts of positive mental health and mental health awareness among youth.

Disease Control and Prevention



Public Health is required by state statute to follow up on acute and communicable diseases. Using the WI Electronic Disease Surveillance System (WEDSS), we are able to monitor trends and track outbreaks as they occur. The above graph shows total number of cases reported to Green Lake County Health Department over the last 6 years.

In 2023, Wisconsin had 51 confirmed cases of Pertussis. At the end of December 2024, Wisconsin has had over 2,300 confirmed cases. By comparison in 2024, Green Lake County had 66 potential cases of Pertussis with 8 of those being positive.

Other high communicable diseases for Green Lake County continue to be COVID-19, Influenza and Chlamydia.

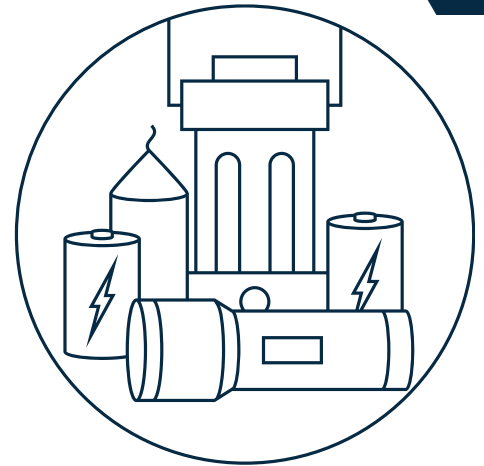
The Health Unit again partnered with the Green Lake Association (GLA) and Green Lake Sanitary District (GLSD) on the Blue Green Algae and E. Coli beach monitoring program. The GLA & GLSD tested water samples at locations around Green Lake for the presence of blue-green algae toxins and E. Coli. Results were used to inform the community of potential beach advisories or closures by the health department. Throughout this testing season, five beach advisories/closures were issued. Once conditions improved, beach closures were lifted. Communicable disease funding was used to support this effort.

Pictured: Andrew Jeanetta (GL Association) Lisa Reas (GL Sanitary District), Rachel Prellwitz (GLC Health Dept.), Kyle Alt (GLC Health Dept.), Stephanie Prellwitz (GL Association)



Public Health Preparedness

Allison Krause is our Public Health Preparedness Program Coordinator for Green Lake County. We continue to be an active member in the Region 6 Healthcare Coalition attending monthly meetings and participating in various preparedness exercises throughout the year. In addition, we are also active partners in the Local Emergency Planning Committee with Emergency Management.



This year, Allison attended the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) on scholarship for a day long Rural Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) workshop in Cleveland, Ohio. Approximately, 65 PHEP coordinators from across the country in rural settings met to discuss their challenges in preparedness and how NACCHO can help coordinators with their preparedness plans. This group of coordinators still continues to meet virtually once a quarter.

Allison participates in several emergency preparedness workgroups and coalitions.

- The bi-monthly Fox Valley Healthcare Emergency Response Coalition (FVHERC) meetings, along with the Fox Valley Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) meetings.
- The Association of Public Health Nurses Emergency Preparedness & Response Committee is preparing a paper on the importance of nurses in emergency preparedness.
- The Wisconsin Public Health Emergency Management (WPHEM) advisory group. The purpose of this group is to create a Wisconsin professional certification program to be recognized as a professional field of practice among public health and emergency management.

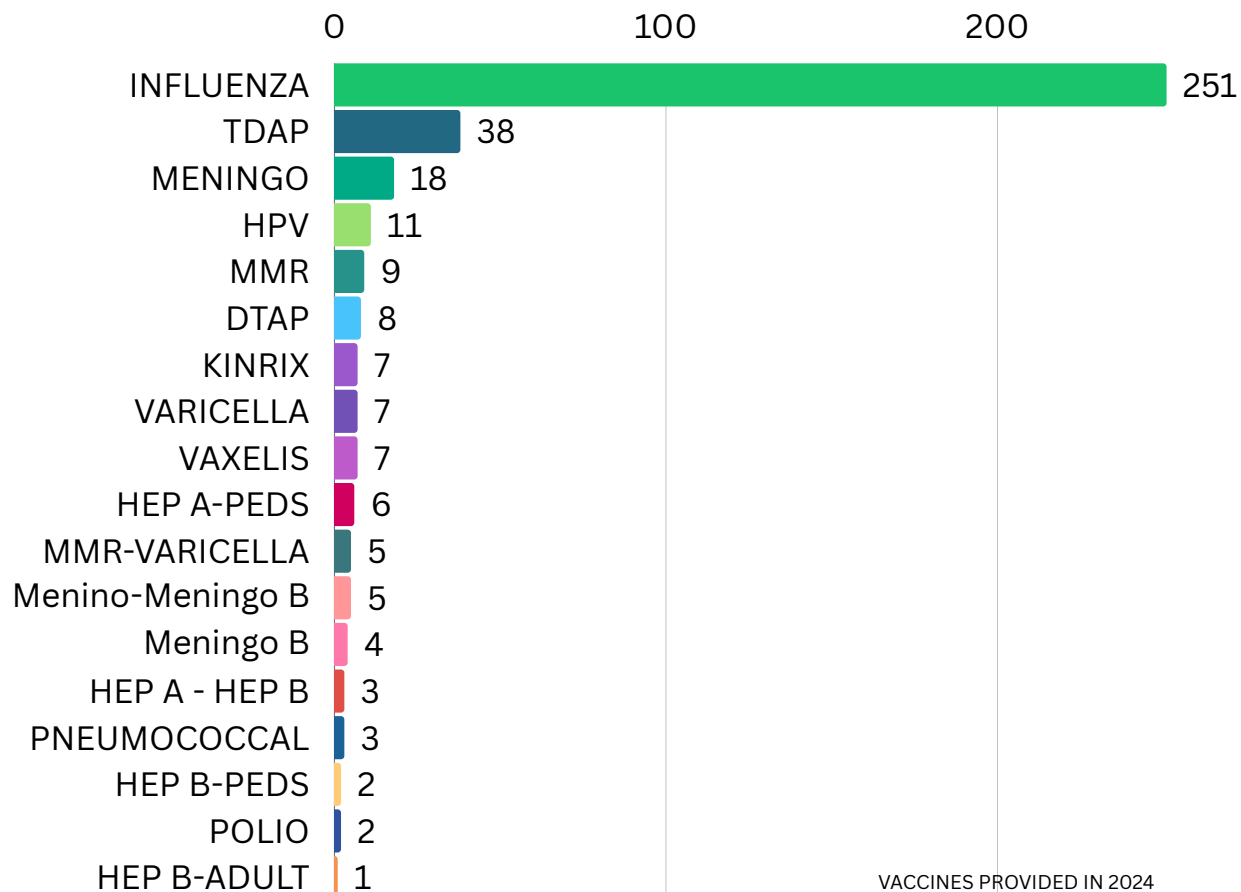
In partnership with Emergency Management and many other county partners, a full-scale preparedness exercise was held on October 15th focusing on Cybersecurity.

The purpose of this exercise was to improve the core competencies of cybersecurity, situational assessment, intelligence and information sharing.

Right: Picture of Green Lake County Cybersecurity Exercise held in October.



Immunizations



For 2024, we decided not to host monthly immunization clinics as our numbers each month were extremely low and have changed to accepting appointments that better meet persons' schedules. We have continued our home visitation program to provide immunizations to the Amish community and have observed an uptake in vaccine acceptance. The Health Department is also focusing efforts to increase vaccination rates in all communities with adding new locations for vaccination. This fall we provided vaccinations in a variety of locations throughout the county for both back-to-school and influenza vaccines, including a Saturday clinic.

60%

Green Lake County
children
appropriately
immunized by the
age of 2



Right: Picture of Green Lake County staff providing vaccines in schools.



Dental

We contract with Carrie Knurowski, Dental Hygienist, to provide services to Head Start and school age children for dental cleanings. Carrie provides services in Marquette and Fond du Lac counties as well. Carrie also provides sealants for school aged children through the Seal-A-Smile program. In 2024, Carrie was able to bill over \$60,000 to MA and Badgercare for dental services.



367

Total number of children who were screened and provided fluoride treatments

163

Total number of children that had prophylactic cleanings performed

86

Total number of children that had sealants placed

94

Number of referrals given for further care and treatment

This program provides dental needs in our county that are greatly unmet due to providers not accepting patients with MA/Badgercare.

NUTRITION/WIC



WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children – offering nutrition education, healthy foods, breastfeeding support, and referrals for healthcare providers and community services to those participating.

2024 WIC Participation

All served by Noble Community Clinics formerly Family Health La Clinica

987

Total number of individuals served

57

Pregnant women served

180

Infants under 12 months

211

Postpartum women

539

Children ages 1-4

\$10,112

Spent on fruits and vegetables at local farmers markets from June-October with the Farmers Market Nutrition Program

WIC CLINIC UPDATES AND OUTREACH

Green Lake County WIC has continued operating hybrid under ARPA waivers. WIC continues to have monthly clinics at the Tri County Boys and Girls Club and the Green Lake County Government Center. They also have a clinic in Princeton every other month at the library.

Unfortunately, WIC was not able to add a bilingual breastfeeding peer counselor last year. The breastfeeding peer counselor continued supporting all WIC families with breastfeeding though. She supports families from the prenatal period all the way through weaning.

WIC continues to build connections with local healthcare providers to optimize referrals and sharing of health screening data (height, weight, hemoglobin).

Lastly, WIC continues to partner with Jake's Network of Hope/The Hub/Eastern WI Diaper Bank to provide families in need with diapers or pull ups on a recurring basis.



New this year, WIC has been successfully offering dental screenings for children through the Noble mobile dental team in Wautoma. The first clinic was held in July, and held another in December. Green Lake County residents who participate in WIC are eligible to participate at no charge regardless of insurance status.

Childhood Lead

Lead assessment and education is a service provided by Green Lake County Health Department. A partnership of a Public Health Nurse and an Environmental Health Specialist with our Tri-County Consortium.

*In 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated the blood level reference value to 3.5 mcg/dL (Previous value was 5mcg/dL). Any child with a venous blood lead level of 3.5mcg/dL or higher is considered lead poisoned.

At Green Lake County Health Department, all families who have a child with a blood lead level of 3.5 mcg/dl or over (venous or capillary),

- **are contacted by phone to perform an assessment and provide education.**
- **followed by an e-mail containing supplemental educational handouts and county contact information.**

Families that the nurse is unable to contact, have letters sent to their home, and the health care provider is notified.

For children presenting with a capillary test above 3.5 mcg/dl, parents are instructed about the need for confirmatory venous blood lead testing and instructed when to obtain this.

In 2024 Wisconsin DHS recommended universal lead testing for:

- All children at age 1
- ALL children at age 2
- Any children between ages 3-5 without a previous test



220

Total blood level tests completed for children residing in Green Lake County

5

Children with elevated confirmatory venous blood lead levels (VBLL) ranging from 3.7- 15.2 mcg/dL*

*One home visit was made with the nurse and environmental specialist to identify potential lead sources which resulted in a rapid reduction in the child's lead level

Mother, Child and Family

To help support healthy family development, Green Lake County Health Department provides outreach and education to all families when a baby is born. Outreach is done through phone support and mailings.



207

Births in 2024
vs. 194 in 2023

4.83%

Smoked during
pregnancy
vs. 4.6% in 2023

4.83%

Babies born low
birthweight
vs. 6.7% in 2023

61.35%

Women received
prenatal care
beginning in the first
trimester vs. 58.76%
in 2023

Programs and resources that families have been referred to because of our outreach include Children's Wisconsin Program, First Breath, Wisconsin Works, Well Badger Resource Center, various lactation consultants, dental services and WIC.

"Women who receive early and regular prenatal care are more likely to have healthy infants," (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Guidelines for Perinatal Care, eighth ed., 2017).

CAR SEAT PROGRAM

The Green Lake County Health Department offers car seat checks to anyone in Green Lake County free of charge. The Health Department has two certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) who educate caregivers on the proper selection, installation, and use of car seats and booster seats. This program allows eligible, low-income caregivers to receive car seats and booster seats for free. It is supported by local and state grant funds and/or donations.



2024 ACTIVITIES/OUTREACH

- Secured Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) grant funds to help sustain the program
- Provided parents with education on car seat safety at Berlin Family Night
- Provided booster seat education to all kindergarten and first grade students at Clay Elementary in Berlin.

38

Total number of car seats
were given to families
along with education.

94%

Of those who had a car
seat installation check
reported having an
increase in knowledge of
proper car seat use.

Mother, Child and Family

PLAIN COMMUNITY HOME VISITING

The Green Lake County Health Department has been providing home visiting to the Plain Community since 2018. During the pandemic, home visiting was stopped until 2022. The health department has been working for the last two years to re-build a relationship with the Plain Community.

Currently, Lauren and Allison provide bi-monthly home visits to the Plain Community. They provide immunizations, free car seats, water testing, well baby checks, resource information and answer any health questions. Many times, they go to a home expecting to provide one service and end up providing others as well.

CENTRAL WISCONSIN PUBLIC HEALTH PLAIN COMMUNITY COALITION

The Central Wisconsin Public Health Plain Community Coalition started several years ago with Green Lake County, Columbia County and Marquette County public health. All three counties provide home visiting and services in the same Plain Community. In 2024, as the Plain Community is growing, the coalition has invited Waushara County, Adams County, Juneau County, Dodge County and Fond du Lack County to join.

This coalition meets quarterly throughout the year. We coordinate education topics and share the knowledge and information we learn in the Plain Community during our home visiting.

For the last two years, the Central Wisconsin Public Health Plain Community Coalition has been invited by the Plain Community to showcase Public Health's knowledge and offered services at the Tri-County Auction in June. Each county had staff available throughout the day. Pictured is some of the information available at this event in 2024.

53

Home Visits

23

Water Tests

20

Immunizations

19

Carseats

9

High Nitrates

2

Bacteria positive



Diabetes Prevention Program

Diabetes and prediabetes remain overwhelming problems in our county like the rest of the country. It is estimated that 1 of every 3 adults now has prediabetes.

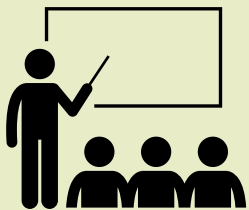
When left unnoticed, prediabetes generally becomes diabetes within 5 years. It is well known that when diabetes is not well controlled, it can lead to serious complications including heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, limb amputation, blindness and more. The best strategy is prevention. In 2022, Green Lake County Health Department initiated a CDC recognized diabetes prevention program (DPP), which has positively impacted **82 individuals!**



Green Lake County DPP continues to maintain Full Plus CDC Recognition through the Diabetes Prevention Recognition Program (DPRP)

Attained Medicare supplier status in 2024, supporting sustainability of the program!

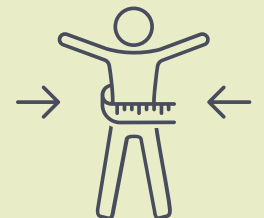
2024 Program Highlights



Eight, year-long cohorts have been started since 2022. 4 cohorts have completed the program with a combined weight loss of **623 pounds!**



"I have completed the wonderful program over a year ago and I am still reaping the benefits. I've lost over 60 pounds and maintaining my weight because of the habits I've learned over the past year. My food choices, portion control and of course continuing getting 150 minutes of exercise in a week is now routine. My lifestyle coach was awesome ...understanding, informative and always there for us whenever we need additional guidance." -Cookie T.



Average weight loss per participant is 14.7 pounds!

Tri-County Environmental Health

The Tri-County Environmental health Consortium makes sure that the food we eat, the water we drink, and the conditions of our homes are safe by:

- Inspecting and licensing establishments
- Monitoring beaches and well water testing
- Investigating home lead hazards and providing radon test kits
- Performing human health hazard and nuisance investigations
- Monitoring rabies cases

During the calendar year of 2024, the following was completed in Green Lake County:

FACILITY INSPECTIONS

27

Pre-inspections

204

Routine inspections

9

Re-inspections

11

Complaint investigations

OTHER ACTIVITIES

38

Animals Quarantined

5

Number of animal samples processed

4

Housing complaints

1

Sewage issue

10

Nuisance/Other

2

Well water concerns/investigations

36

Radon test kits distributed

72

Water test kits distributed

To raise awareness around radon in homes, the Health Department sells home radon test kits for \$7. During Radon Action Month in January, test kits are discounted to \$5.

Radon Test Kits Available

Why test for radon?

- Radon is an odorless, invisible gas
- Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers
- Radon is present in 10% of Wisconsin homes

Short Term test kits are available for purchase at the Green Lake County Health Department for: **\$7**

Visit dhs.wisconsin.gov/radon to learn more!

JANUARY IS RADON ACTION MONTH

TEST KITS AVAILABLE

Green Lake County Health Department
571 County Road A, Green Lake
Questions? Call 920-294-4070

Available during normal business hours
Monday-Friday 8:00am to 4:30pm

Short-term test **Only \$5**
January 1 Through January 31, 2024

The Health Department again participated in the annual well water testing project in collaboration with the Land Conservation Dept. distributing 150 free water test kits to residents, with focus on wells located in the Townships of Princeton and Dalton. A community meeting was held on June 10th to go over results and provide education/resources on remediation for wells that tested over public health standards.



Community Health and Prevention

TRI-COUNTY DEATH REVIEW TEAM

Green Lake County, in partnership with Marquette and Waushara Counties, formed a joint death review team in August of 2023. The Joint Death Review Team's purpose is to examine the circumstances surrounding a death, typically focusing on preventable factors, to identify systemic issues and recommend changes in policy or practice to prevent similar deaths from occurring in the future.

→ Cases Reviewed in 2024: 5

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG PREVENTION

Green Lake County supports and promotes community-based efforts to prevent alcohol and other drug misuse.

189 lbs of medication gathered from permanent drug drop box locations during spring and fall take back events.

Throughout the year, various outreach materials are promoted to bring awareness to substance misuse and resources in the community, including billboards.

National Drug Facts Week 2024

Excessive Alcohol Use Awareness

DID YOU KNOW?

Per the CDC, binge drinking is defined as consuming 5 or more drinks on one occasion for men, and 4 or more for women.

Green Lake County

According to the 2023 County Health Rankings, in Green Lake County 26% of adults reported binge or heavy drinking.

Excessive alcohol use is linked with a number of short- and long-term health issues, including cancers, mental health concerns, injuries, violence, and more.

For information about cutting down on drinking, visit Drink Less, Be Your Best at: www.cdc.gov/drinklessbeyourbest/

MEDICATION DROP BOX LOCATIONS In Green Lake County

Green Lake County has several permanent medication drop box locations where citizens can safely dispose of unused or expired medication. This is a great way to protect our loved ones, community, and environment.

Drop-off Guidance

- 1 If able, empty all pills into a clear, sealed ziplock style bag that is sandwich size or smaller.
- 2 Keep all liquids, creams, and powders in original packaging.
- 3 Recycle empty pill containers and paper boxes in home recycling bin. Remove all identifying information.
- 4 Drop off liquids, creams, powders, and bags of pills at designated locations.

Do Bring:

Pills	Capsules	Inhalers	Filled Syringes
Liquids	Powders	Ointments	(no needles)
Drops	Visits	Pet Meds	
		Creams	Sprays

Don't Bring:

Sharps	Lancets	Mercury Devices
Needles	Biological Waste	Illegal Substances

Green Lake County Government Center
513 County Rd A, Green Lake
Located in lobby
Access 24/7

Berlin Police Department
108 North Capron, Berlin
Located in lobby
Access Mon-Fri 7:30am-4:30pm

Princeton Police Department
633 S. Fulton St, Princeton
Located in lobby
Access Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:00pm

Markesan Police Department
150 S. Bridge St, Markesan
Located in City Hall Lobby
Access Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:00pm

TheaCare Medical Center-Berlin
229 Memorial Dr, Berlin, WI
Access 24/7



In August, the Health Department pulled together various agencies, organizations, community groups and community members, to the “Call to Action on Substance Use Prevention.” That meeting has now evolved into a substance use prevention coalition to all work towards the same goal of making Green Lake County a place that fosters a thriving and safe drug free community.



Community Health and Prevention



TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Green Lake County is a member of the East Central Alliance for Nicotine Prevention. This multi-jurisdictional coalition is made up of Green Lake, Marquette, Waushara and Fond du Lac Counties, with Fond du Lac being the lead.

The Tobacco Coalition Coordinator and Lauren met with two schools to work on reviewing their tobacco policies and handbook protocols regarding tobacco and nicotine use and possession on school grounds.



EAST CENTRAL ALLIANCE
for Nicotine Prevention



19

Tobacco Compliance Checks were completed

5

Public and media outreach activities completed

WI WINS

The Wisconsin Wins (WI Wins) campaign is a science-based, state-level initiative designed to decrease youth access to tobacco products. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services contracts with local partners to conduct investigations to establish retailer compliance with the law. Direct outreach is done with tobacco retailers and the community throughout the year.

CATCH MY BREATH

CATCH My Breath is an evidence-based youth vaping prevention program for grades 5-12 that has been proven to substantially reduce students' likelihood of vaping.

246

5th- and 7th grade students have received vaping prevention education.



In February, we partnered with **Rise Together**, a team of national advocates, whose mission is to educate, engage, and empower young people to use their voices for change. Their focus is on preventing substance use and promoting positive mental health.



All middle school students in Green Lake County participated in a school event and heard Rise Together's message. Over 40 community members joined Rise Together for an evening event.



Community Health and Prevention

ADVANCED CARE PLANNING (ACP)

Advance Care Planning helps adults at any age or stage of health understand and share their personal values and preferences regarding future medical care. It is a gift you give your loved ones to help them make choices about your care.

ACP is a partnership of our Public Health Nurse, Nancy Gimenez and Kristen Dorsch in the Aging Unit, who are both certified Advance Care Planning Facilitators through Respecting Choices.

Kristen and Nancy continue to offer ACP community presentations to increase awareness and encourage creation of ACP documents before they are needed. One on one training is also available, includes all material needed, and is **FREE!**



GENERAL OUTREACH

The Health Department continues to work to educate the public through news, social media outlets, and our website.

Content published on Facebook reached **44,500** accounts in 2024.

Articles published in local newspapers totaled **32** in 2024.

Let's Get Our Flu Shots!

Green Lake County Health Department offering both regular and high dose (for 65+) vaccines!

Call 920-294-4070 today to make an appointment.

Adults on Medicare or Medical Assistance can receive their vaccine with no upfront cost. You MUST bring your Medicare card & Supplement Card or Forward Card. Adults with private insurance can receive the vaccine for a cost of \$40.00. Adults with no insurance, please call our office to discuss eligibility. ALL school aged children (3-19) are eligible to receive their flu vaccine for no cost.

Flu Vaccine is recommended for everyone age 6 months and older.



**HEALTHY PEOPLE
THRIVING COMMUNITIES
SAFE ENVIRONMENTS**

Chronic Disease Prevention IS Public Health.



WHAT DOES PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF DO?

Our staff provides:

Vaccinations	Blood Pressure Checks
Water testing	Diabetes Prevention
Disease Investigation	Tobacco Prevention
Overdose Prevention Training	Restaurant Inspections
Advanced Care Planning	Car Seat Checks & Education

AND SO MUCH MORE!

Questions? We are here to help!
Our regular business hours are Monday through Friday 8:00am-4:30pm.
Give us a call at 920-294-4070



 www.facebook.com/glcdhhs



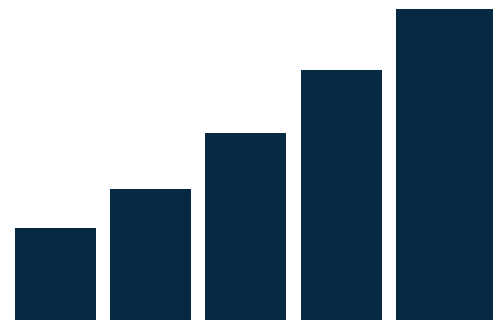
Contact Us



920-294-4070



<https://www.greenlakecountywi.gov/departments/health-human-services-health-unit/>



2024 Annual Report

Aging/ADRC Unit

The Aging/ADRC Unit provides services to Elderly and Disabled residents of Green Lake County. The staff are divided into program areas largely defined by funding source; however, the programs overlap in many areas, and the combined unit can maximize these resources to the advantage of all the people we serve.

During 2024 Staff included the Unit Manager, two Resource Specialist Social Workers, the Adult Protective Services Worker, three Meal Site Managers, the Nutrition/Volunteer Coordinator, the Elderly Benefit Specialist, the Disability Benefit Specialist, and the Aging Disability Resource Center Coordinator.

Staffing changes occurred primarily with the Nutrition Program for 2024. Meal Sites were combined to improve efficiency and better-quality services for the Community. For many years, Green Lake County had 3 Meal Sites which included Berlin Senior Center, Princeton Senior Center, and the Markesan Calvary Church. The hope was participation from the Community would continue to increase at each site. Unfortunately, participation at the sites have not returned to the numbers that were being seen prior to COVID. This has been a Statewide issue and not just a local County issue. Due to changes in the way the Community wants to socialize and receive their meals, the Nutrition Program explored ways to make the most impact with programs. This included combining 2 Meal Sites. The Princeton Senior Center was closed and shifted to Markesan Calvary Church. Individuals are still able to receive a meal at the Princeton Senior Center. Meals can be dropped for anyone that makes a reservation. Combining Meal Sites eliminated 1 Meal Site Manager.

The Nutrition Program explored ways to help make the Meal Site Manager and volunteer positions more efficient at the Sites. During the last part of 2024, the Nutrition Program partnered with Fox River Industries. Fox River Industries provided 3 full-time staff that would operate as the Meal Site Manager. Along with Staff, FRI would bring over FRI participants to act as the volunteers at the site. This provided consistent volunteers at the meal site every day and allowed for job skills training for FRI participants. This partnership will continue moving into 2025.

Moving into 2025 more Staffing changes will have occurred as part of a Unit Structure change. For the past 2 years, the ADRC Tri-County (Waushara, Adams, and Green Lake County) have met to discuss the possibility of separating and becoming a single ADRC for each County. Towards the spring of 2024, the Tri-County decided the best decision for each ADRC would be to apply to become a single ADRC. The Department of Human Services (DHS) approved the application for Green Lake County to become a single ADRC starting in 2025. Part of the restructuring meant eliminating the ADRC Coordinator position. The ADRC Coordinator provided support to all 3 Counties. Those responsibilities for the ADRC in Green Lake County would be absorbed by the Aging/ADRC Manager. The benefits of having a stand alone ADRC in Green Lake County allows for more customizable programming and targeted outreach to meet the specific needs of individual in Green Lake County.

Continuing with restructuring the Aging / ADRC Unit in 2025, the Adult Protective Services and Elder Abuse services will have been shifted to the Behavioral Health Unit. Through discussions and explorations, Consumers would receive the best services by making this shift. This transition allows one

Unit to maximize the resources and tools to provide best services to Consumers. Consumers would not be impacted as they would still reach out to the same phone number. Internally, this would allow referrals to be transferred to one Unit seamlessly. Collaboration between multiple Units will continue to occur. The ultimate goal is to utilize all resources and tools available to assist Consumers. This will continue to occur. With the shift, the APS position in the Aging Unit will be restructured to an Aging/ADRC Coordinator. This position will allow flexibility to provide support in many programs in the Aging / ADRC programs that only have 1 Staff person like Food Pantry and Nutrition Program.

2024 Highlights include – Hosted 2nd Health and Wellness Fair. This Fair included 35 plus vendors with 4 presentations. The event included food and music for social engagement for the participants. Over 250 people attended the event. The Health and Wellness Fair will look to continue in 2025. The Senior Newsletter was rebranded in 2024. The purpose of the rebranded was to expand the targeted audience. The hope would be to target individuals from 17.5 to elderly to read the newsletter. The hope would be more friends, family, neighbors, etc. would read the newsletter and be informed of resources and activities occurring in the Community. The newsletter was rebranded to be named “The Bridge”. Every 2 months the newsletter is published and over 1300 copies distributed throughout the Community. The Leaf Collection Program continued in 2024. This year the program expanded to rake and remove leaves for more individuals. This was possible by the partnership with Fox River Industries. Participants with Fox River Industries completed majority of the leaf cleanup for Community members that reached out.

The Snow Ball Dance returned for a 2nd year as well. The Town Square received a grant to host a social event. Town Square reached out to the Aging / ADRC Unit to assist with creating the event. 75 people attended the event. The main purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for individuals to engage socially with others. An individual shared their personal experience with the event to Staff. He stated he came to the Dance the first year because he did not have many friends in the area and thought it would be a good way to meet people. He returned the 2nd year and brought 2 people with him. He said the event helped him to interact with people more and to meet more people. If funding allows, the Dance will occur in 2025 as well.

Starting in 2025, the Nutrition Program will have entered a contract for a new Caterer for the Nutrition Program. The contract was signed in 2024 with the start date Jan 2025. For many years, the Nutrition Program contracted with Feil’s Caterer Services to provide food for the Nutrition Program. For the past 2 years, the program has explored new Caterer options as the program wanted to explore more local options. The Nutrition Program entered a contract with the Markesan Resident Home. The benefits of this partnership is mainly the proximity of location. The Markesan Resident Home is located right across from the Meal Site in Markesan.

Aging and Disability Resource Center

During 2024, DHS worked to improve the statewide database ADRCs used for data management. The system that was being replaced was called Wellsky. The new system that was implemented is called PeerPlace. PeerPlace was implemented statewide in October 2024. Due to the transition of the new system, annual data for 2024 is not available for the ADRC. For the past 2 years, the Tri-County leaders met to discuss the benefits of remaining a Tri-County or if dissolving the Tri-County would be more beneficial. In 2024, the Tri-County made the decision to dissolve and started the process with the State to become single ADRCs. The State approved the application. Effective Jan 1, 2025, Green Lake County ADRC was established. This decision included leaders with the previous Tri-County and discussions with

Green Lake Committees and Boards. Looking into 2025, Green Lake ADRC hopes to bring more awareness to the Community about resources and services that are available to people. The hope is to reach people before they need the ADRC. The ultimate goal of the ADRC is to reduce the amount of crisis the Community faces. The way this is accomplished is by reaching out to more people in the Community and engaging with people have not interacted with the County before. 1 way the ADRC hopes to meet this goal is by incorporating the ADRC Roadshow. The ADRC will have Staff more present in the Community. Staff will have tables at different businesses, libraries, hospitals, restaurants, etc. The idea behind having tables in these spots is to meet with people in the Community where people frequent often. The hope is people will stop by the ADRC table and ask questions and Staff will share resources and contact information. Data will not be reported in this section. Part of the transition of becoming a single ADRC, the APS and Elder Abuse program transitioned to Behavioral Health. The Staff person who ran those programs was restructured to be an Aging / ADRC Coordinator. Part of that Staff person's role will be to improve education and resources to professionals and individuals in the Community. The Coordinator will also provide support to all areas in the Aging / ADRC. Most positions in this Unit are staffed with only 1 person. By creating the Coordinator position, more support will be provided to each staff person who previously did not have any support.

What is an ADRC? The ADRC is funded by the State to provide a single point of entry to Long Term Care Services and Information and Assistance for residents of Green Lake County. Aging and Disability Resource Centers are the first place to go to get accurate, unbiased information on all aspects of life relating to aging or living with a disability. The ADRC provides information on a broad range of programs and services, helps people understand the various long-term care options available to them, helps people apply for programs and benefits, and serves as the access point for publicly funded long-term care. ADRC staff are employed by each county and duties are shared across county lines.

HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMS/TITLE III-D

The ADRC offers community health and disease prevention education programs, with an emphasis on falls prevention, physical activity and chronic disease self-management. These programs are funded by a combination of ADRC, Title III-D, and grant funding. In 2024, 5 classes were offered in Green Lake County (See more detail below). Green Lake County will continue to contract with Waushara County Health Promotion Staff to offer programming in 2025.

Green Lake County (5 in-person classes offered)

- Healthy Living with Chronic Pain – Berlin – canceled
- PALS – Green Lake – 11 participants
- Stepping On – Green Lake – 7 participants
- Tai Chi Prime – Markesan – 17 participants
- Mind Over Matter – Berlin – 4 participants
- Home Falls Assessments – 1

TEFAP – (THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM)

The Food Pantry is operated by the Aging/Long Term Care Unit of the Department of Health and Human Services and is available to any indigent person/family in an emergency. The Food Pantry is funded by TEFAP and private donations from fundraisers and local donors. For the 2024 year the Food Pantry was able to raise over \$103,000 dollars in Grants & Donations. The Food Pantry attempted to bring more awareness to their services by continued outreach activities.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program/Food Pantry operates every Tuesday from 10:00-12:00 as well as the first Thursday of the month between 4:00-6:00 p.m. (June – October). The Food Pantry currently has 37 volunteers who assist with food pantry distribution, donation drops off, deliveries and pick up of donations.

Eligible residents of Green Lake County may attend once each month. Throughout 2024, the Food Pantry served an average of 226 households per month, and 505 individuals per month. Each household was provided an average of 108 pounds of food for a month totaling almost 293,000 pounds of food given for the year.

Food Pantry	2024	2023	2022	2021
Average households served monthly	226	221	196	164
Average number of individuals	505	492	444	369

ELDER ABUSE AND NEGLECT PROGRAM

The County Aging and Long-Term Care Unit has been designated as the lead Agency in the Elderly Abuse Reporting System. Services provided to elders in crisis include Relocation and Shelter costs, medical care, Legal Services, Supportive Homecare, Guardianship evaluations, and Outreach. These services are offered to older adults to help them resolve abusive or neglectful situations. The Adult Protective Services Social Worker investigates abuse and neglect referrals.

There was a total of 72 Elder Abuse investigations in 2024, with 17 Elder Abuse cases substantiated. The remaining cases were either unsubstantiated or unable to be substantiated for a variety of reasons. The most frequent concern was self-neglect, followed by material / financial abuse.

In 2007, a parallel system for Abuse and Neglect investigation and reporting for Vulnerable Adults was instituted by state law. The Adult Protective Services worker is the lead for this system also. The reporting requirements are very similar to the Elder Abuse system. In 2024, there were 9 reports of abuse to Vulnerable Adults; 4 were substantiated.

	2024	2023	2022
Elder Abuse Investigations	72	78	49
Elder Abuse Cases Substantiated	17	22	12
Vulnerable Adults Abuse Reports	8	10	9
Vulnerable Adult Abuse substantiated	4	5	0

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES/GUARDIANSHIPS

The Adult Protective Services Social Worker performed 10 guardianship studies for adults in 2024. (2022 – 25). In addition, 21 Protective Placement reviews were completed. (2022 – 25). All reviews require a summary hearing on each of these placements to ensure that the continuation of the placement is appropriate, least restrictive, and most integrated into the community. The Adult Protective Services worker submits a report to the court and attends each review hearing. Placements are monitored in nursing homes, Community Based residential Facilities (CBRF), State Centers for the Developmentally Disabled, Adult Family homes, and private homes or apartments. In addition, Power of Attorney documents and advanced planning information is regularly requested, and assistance provided as needed.

The APS Unit is part of a Community Group that includes individuals who would have some resources and/or services that could benefit an individual. The purpose of this group is to discuss referrals and community resources that would help benefit Consumers. 2 meetings were held last year and have plans to meet quarterly in the future.

AGING PROGRAMS

The County Aging Unit is the Agency designated by the County Board and authorized by the Older Americans Act to continue to develop, support, assist, and evaluate County-based programs for older adults (over age 60) with the purpose of fostering independence and enhancing the quality of life for older adults in the county.

All Federal money from the Older Americans Act, Title III, is distributed to the state, which gives it to the regional Area Agency on Aging and then to the Counties. The amount each County receives is determined by a set formula. Included in the formula is the number of elderly, low-income elderly and isolated elderly individuals within the County.

Federal Title III-B money is used for various service programs such as elderly health screening, transportation, the elderly benefit specialist, and program development for Senior Centers. Matching local funds and required In-Kind assistance provides the rest of the resources for the Aging programs. Federal Title III C-1 & 2 must be used for elderly nutrition. See below for more information on the elderly nutrition and matching In-Kind amounts.

The Aging plan was updated in 2024. Aging plans are required by the State for each Aging Department receiving funding. These plans are active for 3 years. The goals created in the plan will be reviewed on a regular basis at Committee meetings. The plan can be accessed online and/or requested at anytime. People could reach out to the ADRC to ask for a copy of the Aging plan.

Aging Funding including IIIB, III-E, and AFCSP -

Under the Federal Older Americans Act, Green Lake County Aging Unit is provided funding to provide services to individuals 60 and older who need services. Some examples of services provided: respite care, light cleaning, yardwork, small home-repairs, and chore services. The Aging Unit continued to look to expand the number of Consumers we provided services to in 2024. These options included finding natural supports, other grant opportunities, and partnering with local Organizations to provide volunteer opportunities for some of the services provided. Aging was able to partner with Fox River

Industries to assist with setting up and taking down a few events throughout the year. FRI also assisted with leaf cleanup for Consumers in the entire Green Lake County area. This was a change as in 2023, FRI just focused on Berlin area. Other agencies, including churches, assisted with leaf pickup throughout Green Lake County. The Aging program was able to provide supplemental respite care services to more consumers by offering them information to apply for grants through Respite Care Association of Wisconsin. The Aging program acted as a referral source and helped Consumers get connected with individuals with the Association to apply to receive more hours of respite. In total Green Lake County was able to provide assistance to 30 Consumers / Families which was an increase from previous years.

CONGREGATE NUTRITION PROGRAM (C-1)

The Nutrition Program assists older individuals to live independently by promoting better health through improved nutrition. It reduces the isolation of older individuals through nutrition related and supportive services. It prevents malnutrition and promotes good health through nutrition education, screening, and intervention. The Aging Unit Nutrition/Volunteer Coordinator is trained as a certified ServSafe Professional Food Manager/Nutrition Director and oversees both the Congregate and Homebound Meal Programs.

In 2024, 4,846 meals were served at three Meal sites: Princeton Senior Center, Markesan - Calvary Chapel Church, and Berlin. Volunteers play a vital role in all our Congregate and Homebound Meals Programs. In 2024 we partnered with FRI to provide job work experience to FRI participants. Participants were able to work at the Markesan Meal Site as a volunteer. This provided job skills training to participants and allowed the meal site to have consistent volunteers daily. Suggested Donation Contribution was increased to \$5.00. The program received \$14,919.82*

	2024	2023	2022
Meals served at meal sites	4,846	4,700	2,793
Congregate Meal Donation Dollars	\$14,919.82	\$10,653.52	\$7,322
Homebound meals delivered	20,813	22,973	17,594
Homebound meal donation dollars	\$83,763.60	\$69,643.10	\$66,392

HOMEBOUND MEAL PROGRAM (C-2)

In 2024, 20,813 meals were served throughout the County to persons who are unable to go to the meal sites for health-related reasons. Requests for Homebound meals come from hospital discharge planners, meal site managers, units of Health and Human Services, doctors, and families and enable the older person to remain in his or her own home if possible. Requests are referred to the Nutrition Coordinator who meets with each new enrollee to conduct a thorough nutritional assessment; these are updated annually. The meal delivery program is also a part of a support system that checks on the elder person four to five days per week depending on their location. Drivers are trained to watch for changing needs and to alert Nutrition Coordinator as necessary. Green Lake County relies on volunteer drivers to provide these meals. The program is only able to provide as many meals as the drivers can distribute. As more community members look to be added to receive HDMS, more volunteers will need to be added. In 2024, the program had 1 volunteer leave and 3 new drivers were added.

TRANSPORTATION

One of the greatest needs for the elderly and/or handicapped person is transportation. The Aging Unit receives and administers the 85.21 State Grant monies, \$79,889.00 in 2024. Service priorities are MEDICAL TRIPS, NUTRITION-RELATED ACTIVITIES, WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES, and SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. Handicapped and older adults were provided 35,755 which was an increase from 2023 when it was 29,764. One of the biggest challenges throughout the year was recruitment and retention of volunteer drivers. Insurance Companies across the board changed policies and were not covering drivers if they were being paid to transport individuals. The State is aware of this ongoing issue and is currently working with Legislators to change policies.

In 2025, due to unforeseen circumstances, most of the transportation program will have come in house. The Aging Department will be managing the 85.21 program. In 2024, the program had 5 service providers. The hope was for 3 of them to be condensed making the program more efficient and effective for the Community. Towards the end of 2024, this was not an option any longer. Starting in 2025, the Aging Department will begin providing more day-to-day oversight over the program. Trip rates, volunteer reimbursements, and type of rides will be explored in 2025. Discussions will be brought to Committees to receive feedback as Green Lake County attempts to maximize the program for the Community with the funding that is provided. The program will have 4 volunteer drivers that are able to provide transport for anyone living anywhere in Green Lake County.

DISABILITY BENEFIT SPECIALIST

The Disability Benefit Specialist (DBS) position aids people ages 18 to 59 who have any kind of disability, in applying for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The DBS assists people with Medicare, to find the best Medicare Part D prescription drug plans for their individual needs. The DBS also assists individuals applying for Medical Assistance and the MAPP program.

Data is not available to report for the Benefit Specialist. DHS implemented a new data management system in quarter 3 of 2024. Data has been locked for 2024.

ELDERLY BENEFIT SPECIALIST PROGRAM

The Elderly Benefit Specialist coordinates information and counseling regarding public benefit programs to individuals sixty years of age and older. The Elderly Benefit Specialist assists people aged sixty and over to apply for Social Security, Social Security Disability, Medicare, Medicare Part D, Medical Assistance, and Senior Care.

Data is not available to report for the Benefit Specialist. DHS implemented a new data management system in quarter 3 of 2024. Data has been locked for 2024.

OTHER PROGRAMS

Social Media –

Green Lake County ADRC / Aging programs starting in 2023 has created a bigger presence with Social Media. Events, Resources, Information, and Activities are being posted more on Social Media pages in hopes of reaching more people. This includes connecting with other local agencies and resources in the area to help share material that is relevant to Green Lake County residents. In 2024, the social media page had over 92,000 views. The social media page is 35,000 people. This means, on average, each posting is being viewed by 35,000 people. Social Media has had a positive impact for the ADRC / Aging department in reaching the Community.

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES UNIT

The Unit is comprised of the Unit Manager and eleven (11) staff members. There is one (1) Initial Assessment Worker for Child Abuse/Neglect Investigations, and one (1) Juvenile Court Intake Worker, three (3) Dispositional Social Workers, four (4) Wraparound Case Managers/Coordinated Service Team facilitators and of those four staff, two (2) are also In-Home Therapists. Then we have one (1) Alternate Care Coordinator and one (1) Birth to Three Coordinator/Children's Community Options Coordinator. See attached flow chart.

In 2024, the Children and Family Unit remained the same as the year prior with positions and employees. There has been consistency and no turnover. Below is a list of activities that the unit has completed above and beyond their daily duties.

The Child Protective Staff and Youth Justice Staff completed the Tailored Dispositional Orders Training with the state and our county legal team, which included Judge Slate, DA LaSpisa, Corporation Counsel, Jeffrey Mann, and private attorneys.

Ongoing worker, Kate Thompson, was trained and certified in Love 146, Not a Number Child Trafficking Prevention Curriculum. She has been providing trainings to DHHS staff and we hope to begin to bring this to the schools in our district.

Youth Justice Staff, Claire Wendt, was recognized by the state and awarded the Frank J. Crisafi Recognition Award in 2024. This award is given out annually to recognize the hard work done by those in this profession.

The Children and Family Unit also worked hard this year putting together the Angel Tree Program which helps provide toys and gifts for children in need in Green Lake County. We partner with numerous area businesses to make this wonderful program continue. Breana Seuffer leads the program.

The Children & Family Services Unit is responsible for the provision of several programs and services available to individuals and families in the community. The following is a summary highlighting activity in 2024.

Access/Child Abuse Neglect/Child Welfare

The ACCESS staff for the Unit receive referrals that are logged into the eWiSACWIS system. These numbers include the Child Abuse/Neglect Reports, and Child Welfare Intakes, and other Service requests. 238 total referrals were received. They were as follows: 186 total reports of Child Abuse/Neglect and 52 services reports. 40 reports were screened in for a response from the Initial Assessment Worker; 146 reports were screened out. The screened in reports had a total number of 67 children that were identified as potentially being child victims. The total victims in all reports were 251. The screened in reports by maltreatment type were 11 - Physical Abuse; 43 -Neglect; 13 -Sexual Abuse; 2 -Emotional Abuse and 0 – Unborn Child Abuse. 52 Service Reports were received. These were comprised of 23 screened in for response and 29 screened out. There were 11 Children in Need of Protection and Services (CHIPS) petitions filed in 2023. We continue to prioritize family first and to utilize Protective Plans and In Home Safety Plans more often.

CPS staff are on-call twenty-four hours a day for the purpose of Juvenile Intake/Detention, Child Abuse/Neglect and Energy Assistance.

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Number of Access Reports	238	287	264	323	336
Number of Child Abuse/Neglect Reports	186	231	218	261	211
Number Screened in	40	55	59	80	64
Number Screened out	146	176	158	181	147

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Physical Abuse	11	27	22	35	13
Neglect	43	43	36	40	59
Sexual Abuse	13	7	9	9	20
Emotional Abuse	2	3	1	2	1
Unborn Child Abuse	0	2	2	4	4
Service Reports Received	52	56	46	62	74
# Screened Out	29	25	22	37	25
Child Welfare Screened in Reports	23	31	24	35	46
Youth Justice Referrals	38	49	67	85	54
Kinship Care Applications	4	12	0	1	6
Court Ordered Study	0	0	0	0	0
Adoption Related	0	0	1	0	0
Re-open closed care	0	0	0	1	1
Drug Affected infants	0	0	0	0	1
Inter-state Compact	2	1	0	1	1

Juvenile Court – Delinquency/Youth Justice

In 2024, the Youth Justice staff received 38 referrals. This number continues to be in a decline over the past few years and again is a trend across Wisconsin. There may be multiple reasons for the lower referrals, however we do not have the data to show the reason. 12 new delinquency petitions were filed in 2024. Nineteen (19) YASI pre-screens were completed. Six (6) full screens were completed. Seven (7) re-assessment was completed.

No (0) new youth were placed in the Severe Juvenile Offender Program in 2024. No (0) youth were placed in residential care facilities. One (1) youth was placed in a group home setting for a few months, and she was discharged from their facility due to her behavior. This youth is currently in juvenile secure detention as staff are eagerly looking for an appropriate residential facility for her to be placed in.

Below are the numerous groups that were offered to youth in our community from the staff of the Children and Family Unit. Half of the staff members are involved in facilitating one or more groups throughout the year.

- Boys summer group. Six (6) youth were served in the boys group.
- The Girl Boss group was conducted in conjunction with local businesses that a female owned. This group averaged four (4) females per week.
- Girls Circle group, four (4) girls attended.
- Drugs, Alcohol & Vaping Curriculum- we served 17 youth.
- Social media & Sexting Curriculum, no youth were referred.
- Truancy group, no youth referred to this group, Law enforcement opted to send citations for the youth.

Juvenile Court staff are on-call twenty-four hours per day for the purpose of Juvenile Intake/Detention, Child Abuse/Neglect and Energy Assistance.

Electronic Monitoring/GPS Monitoring

2 youth were on electronic monitoring in 2024. This consisted of one (1) male. And one (1) female. The monitors are used in lieu of secure detention.

Parent Training/Education

The Family Training program provided services to twelve (12) families with a total of 21 children in 2024. They provided both parent training and education and parent aide services. In 2024 Crisis Intervention slots were continued. These slots are primarily utilized in an effort to return children to their parental homes post removal or prevent the removal in an emergency. Progressive Parenting LLC also provided parent-mentoring services in addition to Comprehensive Community Services team facilitation. Green Lake County continued their contract for additional parenting services with the Professional Services Group (PSG) in 2024. PSG did not serve any families for parenting in 2024.

In-Home Therapy/Targeted Case Management/Comprehensive Community

Services/Coordinated Services Teams:

There were 14 children referred to the wraparound program in 2024 through the school districts that we serve. In addition to these referrals, we had 69 child/youth teams (TCM/CST/CCS) active during calendar year 2024. The agency now has five (5) staff working in two (2) units (Children & Families & Behavioral Health) as well as two (2) contract staff that work facilitating teams in the TCM/CST/CCS wrap-around programs. One (1) additional facilitator carries a limited caseload.

Foster Care/Kinship Care

Foster Care, Kinship Care, Group Homes and Residential Care facilities are used for children who are unable to reside in the home of their parents or guardians. All the unit staff is certified to perform the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS). In 2021, the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) rolled out in Wisconsin. This is an effort to keep families together and reduce the use of out of home care.

In 2024, three (3) children were placed into non- relative foster care/treatment foster care. Five (5) children were placed into a relative foster home or home. One (1) child is in secure detention. There are three (3) children remaining in out of home foster care that were removed in 2023. At the end of 2024, we currently have nine (9) children in court ordered placements.

The number of subsidized guardianships was one (1) in 2024. No (0) cases closed during the year.

In 2024, one (1) child was subject to Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) petitions. This case went to trial and the TPR grounds were not found. This child remains in foster care as the parent is still incarcerated and unable to be reunified at this time.

In 2024, eight (8) children were in voluntary Kinship Care placement(s). All cases completed an annual re-assessment of eligibility.

The total unduplicated count of all children placed in either voluntary or involuntary removal from their parental homes in 2024 was 9. This is significantly lower than years past and is a testament to the hard work of the staff and their ability to provide prevention services in our community. Green Lake County had 0 children re-enter out of home care once returned home. The state average is 8.78% percent re-entry, and we have 0%.

Licensing

Green Lake County has three (3) Level 2 foster homes. The coordinator has been working with relatives that have taken placement of their grandchildren. In 2024, only one (1) relative completed the process to become a licensed foster home.

Courtesy Supervision/Interstate Compact

Courtesy Supervision for both Child in Need of Protection and Services as well as Juvenile Justice Cases was performed for other Wisconsin Counties. In addition to courtesy supervision, home checks to confirm safe environment (CSE) for other counties. Our agency requested one (1) Interstate Compact on Juveniles (ICJ) to Arizona and there is a male youth placed with family in Arizona. We received one ICJ request for a male youth from Indiana and his supervision in Green Lake County was closed as successful. One (1) case with five children was supervised for the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) for the State of Minnesota. The agency was also asked to complete an ICPC home study for Illinois.

Contractual Services

The unit in home therapists served families through Mental Health Crisis planning and services. These two therapists worked in conjunction with an Independent Contractor, Wellhoefer Counseling to provide in-home therapy services to youth and their families and KD Counseling Services. The Unit also contracts for parenting services from both the Family Training Program, Progressive Parenting LLC. and the Professional Services Group (PSG).

Birth-3

The Birth-3 position supports families in the home with children who have developmental delays and diagnosed conditions who are under the age of 3. The children must demonstrate a delay or have a diagnosed conditions to be eligible for services. The coordinator and one of the therapists on her team (one speech therapist, one occupational therapist, and one physical therapist) complete the evaluation. Once a child is eligible for the program then the coordinator writes the Individualized Family service Plan (IFSP) with the family to determine goals and frequency of services. These services are based in the home and/or the community. Since the end of 2023, we have been without a physical therapist, this position has been impossible to fill. The team has done an amazing job of still meeting the needs of all the children even with the vacancy.

2024:

There were 62 new referrals to the program in 2024. There was a total of 77 children served in the calendar year due to some of the children still eligible from the previous year. 7 of the children were found not eligible as they were age appropriate in all areas of development. 15 children were found eligible and an IFSP was written to receive support from Birth-3. 9 children were screened out at an intake appointment and did not move forward for further evaluation. 5 children are still scheduled for evaluations and the remaining children's families either declined evaluation, declined services once eligible or had no further contact.

CCOP

This is the Children's Community Options Program. This program is run by the Birth-3 Coordinator and moved to the Children and Family Unit as stated above. This program is a payment for support and services that a family can't get through their insurance or Medicaid and the child is under 22 years old, have a disability and live in the home and meet eligibility on the functional screen that is completed by the coordinator.

One (1) child was served through CCOP in 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Schiessl

Children & Family Services Unit Manager

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

ECONOMIC SUPPORT UNIT

~ Providing and Coordinating Resources to Strengthen Families ~

Access to resources and quality customer service are the focus of the Economic Support Unit. Our goal is to provide accurate, timely, and effective financial and case management support services for all our participants.

Economic Support provides eligibility services for people who are applying for or are enrolled in programs like Medicaid, Badger Care Plus, Food Share, Childcare, and Energy Assistance. These eligibility services include:

- Helping participants apply for or renew benefits.
- Processing:
 - Applications
 - Renewals
 - Information provided as verification or proof
 - Changes to a case
- Conducting Food Share and Childcare interviews
- Answering questions participants have about their eligibility and case.

Four Economic Support workers, an Economic Support Lead Worker and a Unit Manager make up the Economic Support Unit for Green Lake County.

County agencies have joined together to form eleven consortiums across the state. Green Lake County Economic Support is part of the Consortium, East Central Income Maintenance Partnership (ECIMP). This “partnership” consists of eight other counties: Calumet, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marquette, Outagamie, Waupaca, Waushara, and Winnebago.

ECIMP currently serves 67,093 cases amongst the nine counties. This is a 4% increase from last year.

Each consortium operates a call center to help with eligibility services. Each county in ECIMP is responsible for “staffing” the call center. Green Lake County is scheduled 52+ hours per week in the call center. ECIMP’s call center receives approximately 15,765 calls per month. ECIMP saw a 11% increase in calls for 2024. The time scheduled increases as the call volume increases. ECIMP have maintained the required performance standards.

ECONOMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS

~ The Economic Support Programs serve to provide financial stability for low-income households and those experiencing a financial loss~

Economic Support partners with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) to help participants apply for or enroll in programs such as: Badger Care Plus, Medicaid and FoodShare.

County agencies were mandated in 2012 to join to form consortia. There are 11 consortia, or groups of these agencies, across the state. They help participants:

- Answer questions about eligibility and benefits.
- Apply for benefits.
- Conduct FoodShare interview.
- Process applications, benefits changes, provide services that are necessary to meet an emergency need such as homelessness or medical needs. Each program serves a specific population and has different income guidelines and requirements. The self-sufficiency of Green Lake County households and its participants is the program goal.

Requests for program assistance are made by contacting either the call center at 1-888-256-4563, through www.access.wi.us, contacting Green Lake County Health and Human Services asking to speak to the intake worker, or by coming into the agency. Participants can manage their benefits on the MyACCESS Mobile App.

The caseload for Green Lake County was stable for 2024. Green Lake County has seen an increase in applications requesting Long Term Care services this year. Long Term Care services include Community Waivers (Family Care) and Nursing Home.

Medicaid in Wisconsin

Wisconsin Medicaid is a joint federal and state program that helps more than 1 million residents get:

- High-quality health care coverage.
- Long-term care.
- Other services that promote physical and mental health and well-being.

There are many types of Medicaid Programs. Each has certain requirements that must be met if a participant wants to enroll.



Children



Older adults



Adults



Pregnant people



People with disabilities

In November 2024, 3967 individuals (20.51% of residents) were enrolled in Medicaid, BadgerCare Plus, and other state-funded programs that provide health care insurance coverage.

Food Share Wisconsin

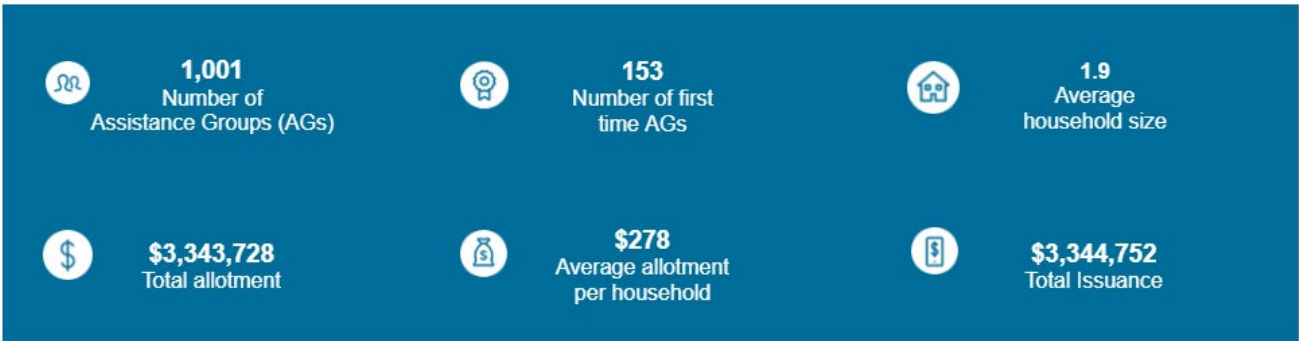
You’ve probably heard of food stamps or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). In Wisconsin, we call the program FoodShare. The goal of this programs is to stop hunger.

You can use Food Share benefits at most stores. They can also be used at many farmers markets, to buy fresh fruit and vegetables.

People all over Wisconsin get help from FoodShare. We help people of all ages who:

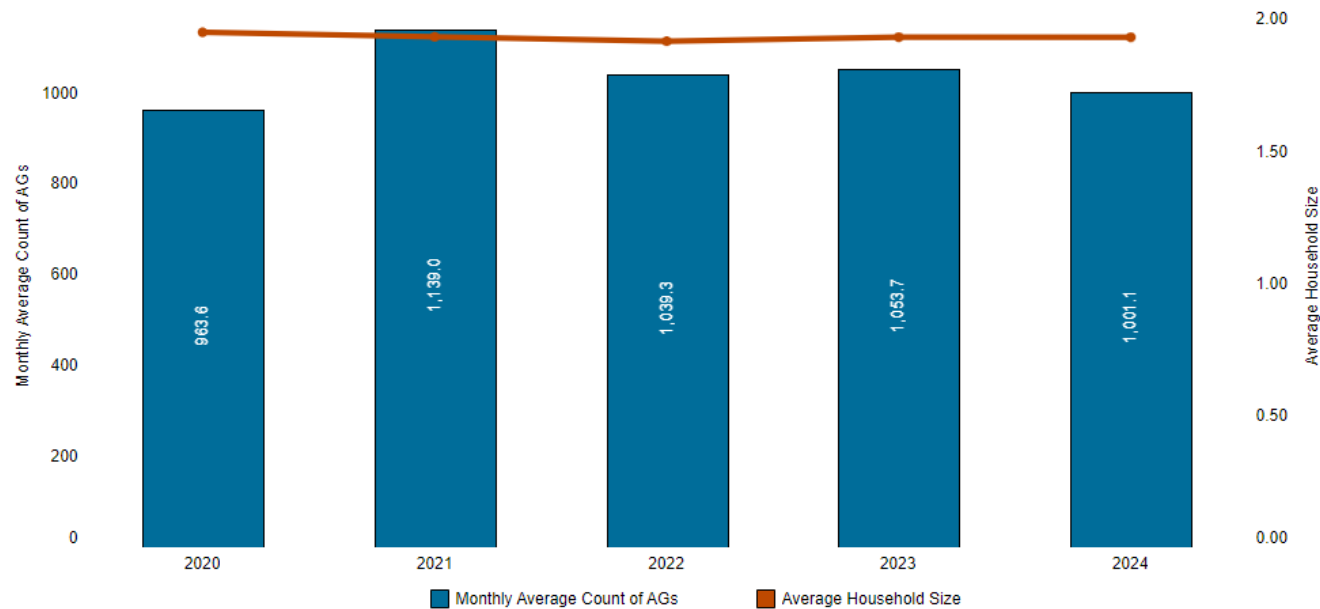
- Have low-income jobs.
- Live on a small or fixed income.
- Are retired.
- Have lost their jobs.
- Are disabled and cannot work.

Who received FoodShare benefits in Green Lake County in 2024?



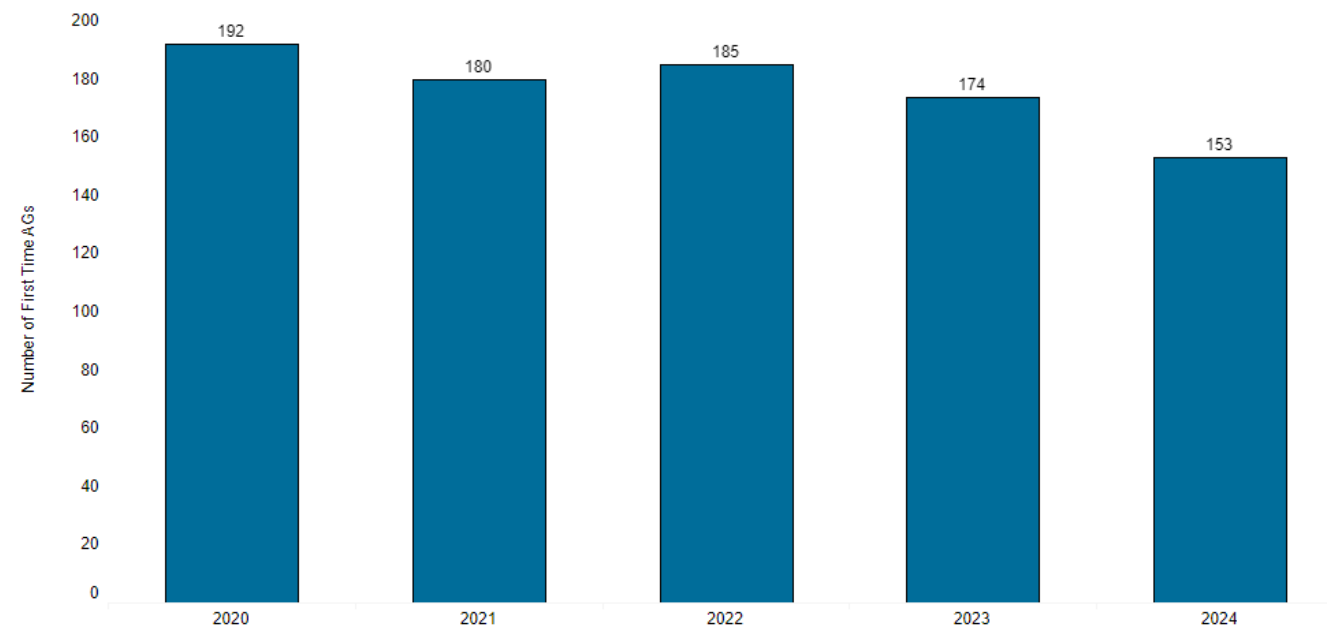
What was the FoodShare AGs household size?

The average number of distinct AGs per month was **1,039** and the average household size was **1.9** in the last 5 years.



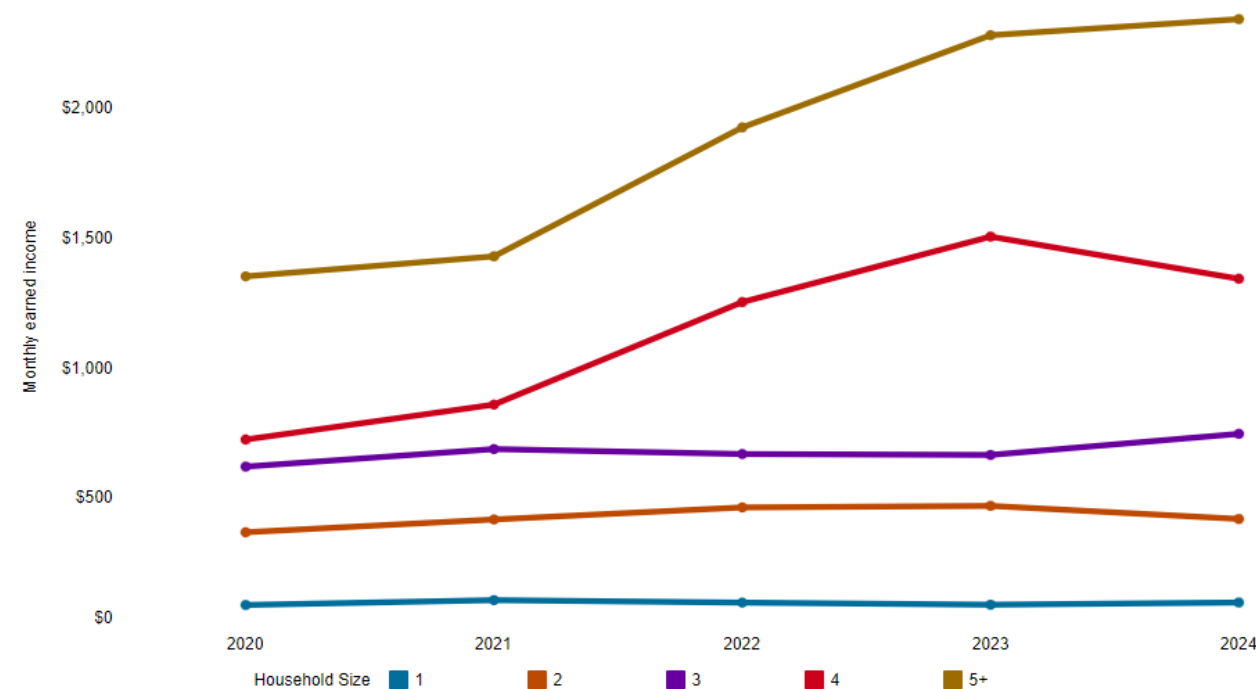
How many FoodShare AGs were first-time recipients?

First-time AGs are households where no one received benefits in the past 60 months. The average number of first-time AGs per year was **176.8** in the last 5 years.



What was the average monthly earned income of an AG?

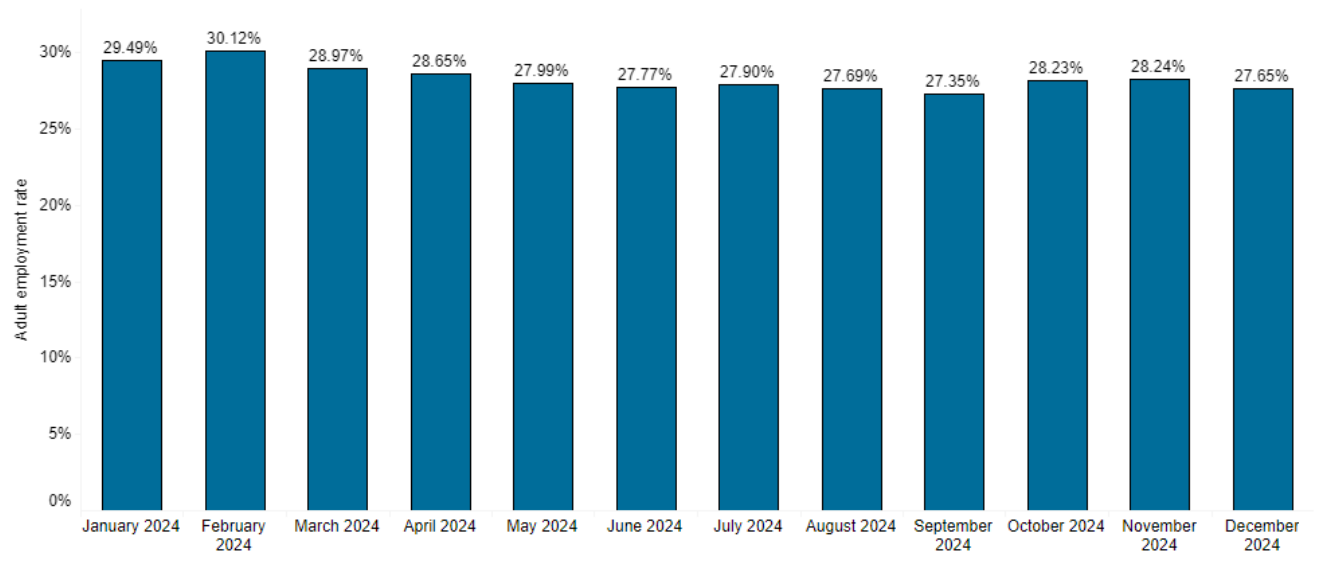
In the last 5 years, the average income of AGs, regardless of employment status, was **\$388** each month.



One-Year Trend

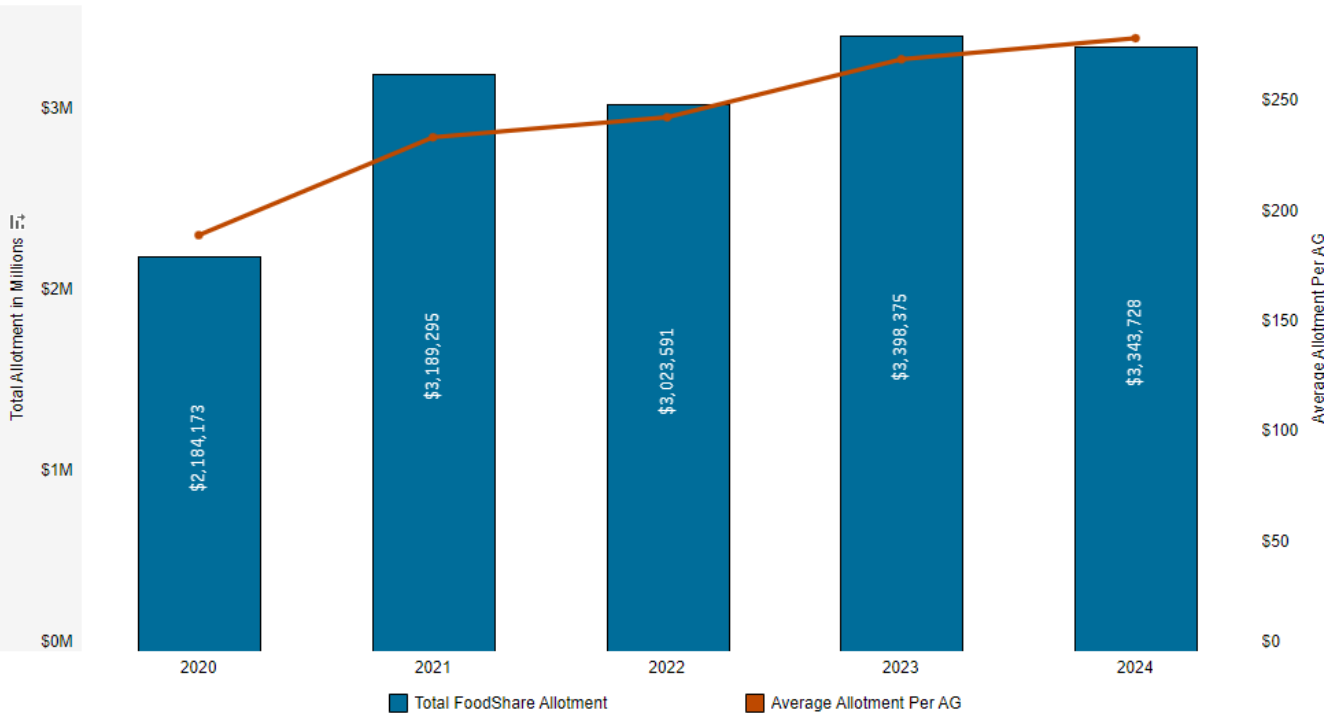
In the past 12 months, **27.65%** of adult FoodShare recipients were employed. The average monthly earned income of employed FoodShare members was **\$1,840**.

FS Adult Employment Rate



What was the allotment in the past 5 years?

In the past 5 years, the average total allotment amount per year was **\$3,027,832**. The average monthly allotment for AGs was **\$243** in the past 5 years.



What was the issuance in the past 5 years?

In the past 5 years, the average benefit issuance per year was \$4,526,153.



Wisconsin Shares-Child Care

The vision of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) is that all children have access to high-quality early care and education. We reinforce that vision with our mission to support low-income working families by sharing the cost of a childcare and promoting the social well-being of all children and families through safe, high-quality early education experiences.

In 2024 Green Lake County provided Childcare assistance to 27 families / 19 children. Average monthly benefit per child was \$4,590.93. Total benefits received was \$123,955.08. 73% of the children receiving Wisconsin Shares – Child Care are between two to six years of age.

Energy Assistance

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) aids with heating costs, electric costs, and energy crisis situations. Operating with federal and state funding, the program aids households across the state to help lower the burden incurred with monthly energy costs. Most types of fuel are eligible to receive assistance. Whether a participant uses wood, propane, natural gas, electricity, or fuel oil to heat your home, Energy Assistance is available if the participant qualifies. Energy Assistance is a one-time payment during the heating season, October 1 – May 15. The funding pays a portion of the heating costs, but the payment is not intended to cover the entire cost of heating a residence. The amount of the benefit varies depending on a variety of factors, including the participant's household size, income, and energy costs. In most cases the Energy Assistance benefit is paid directly to the participant's energy supplier.

Green Lake County ended the contract for Energy Assistance in September 2024. ADVOCAP is the bearer of the contract.

Submitted by: Shelby Jensen
Economic & Child Support Unit Manager

Department of Health and Human Services, Fox River Industries Unit



MISSION:

NAVIGATE POSSIBILITIES IN ORDER TO REACH
FULL CAPABILITIES

VISSION:

To Provide Programming Options
that
Assist Participants in Fostering
Meaningful Community Relationships
that
Lead to Increased Independence

CORE VALUES:

Compassion
Collaboration
Community
Choice

SERVICE ARRAY:

DAY SERVICES
FACILITY BASED PREVOCATIONAL SERVICES
COMMUNITY BASED PREVOCATIONAL SERVICES
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE SERVICES
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Fox River Industries, often referred to as FRI, is a unit of Green Lake County, Health and Human Services and a provider agency of Long-term Care Services in day programming, vocational training, and representative payee services.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services set of policies titled "The Home and Community-Based Services Settings Rule" which allowed provider agency access to waiver dollars, providing the financial support needed to provide services for the aging and disabled. Funds allow for individuals to receive supports in their own home or community rather than in more restrictive settings or institutions.

Our services are intended to assist adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities overcome barriers that limit a person's independence and ability to do the things that are part of our daily routine, such as personal care, going to work, paying bills, and living a meaningful life in the community. The ultimate goal is avoiding costly institutional living. Services rendered are determined by the participant and the care team in the ongoing member-centered planning process.

Fox River Industries, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)3 with a board of directors that meets twice a year and serves as advisory to functions related to the employment of our clientele and the subcontract work related aspects of the Fox River Industries, Inc. business.



FEDERAL AND STATE UPDATES

HIGHLIGHTS

- Re accreditation with Molina (MyChoice)
- Increased contracted services with Inlusa
- On site visit with our trade association, Disability Services Provider Network (DSPN). DSPN exists to support and be a resource for member providers through advocacy and education resources so they can provide the highest quality and full array of services for those with disabilities throughout Wisconsin.
- Starting in January 2025, Family Care members in Green Lake County will have more choices in who helps manage their long-term care and will be able to choose from four managed care organizations (MCOs) for Family Care. That's an increase from the two currently available. Green Lake County will also all have the option to participate in Partnership; a program that mixes health and long-term support services in home.

THREATS

- Under a proposed per capita cap, the federal government could pay states a fixed amount of funding per Medicaid enrollee, resulting in a reduction of financial support to Medicaid programs at the state level. It is speculated that this would result in a shifting an even higher financial responsibility on to the states and result in a reduction in services available to recipients. Cuts to the Home and Community Based Settings Services would be detrimental to our revenue stream and in worst case scenario, could result in re-institutionalization of developmentally disabled individuals who receive support under Medicaid funded programs.

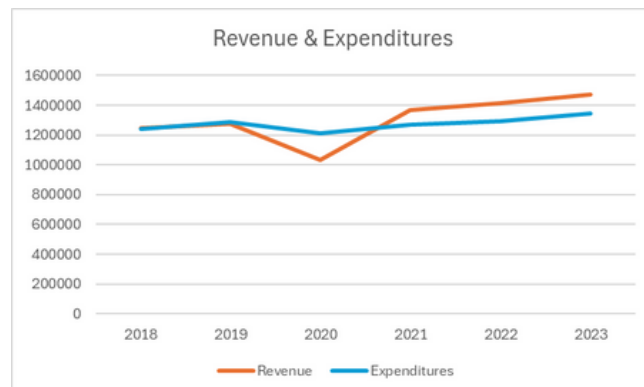
THREATS CONTINUED -

- DHS is proposing the requirement that Community Based Day Service be completed 100% outside of any provider "walls." In other words, you cannot go inside of any facility, or it's not considered community based. This poses challenges with transportation, providing cares, and other program logistics. We are watching this to see how it may be enacted in other community-based services. (Our day service program is not classified as community based, although we have received pressure from funders to consider this in order to justify higher reimbursement rates.)
- The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) has created and launched a minimum fee schedule for community-based services. This defines the lowest rates managed care organizations can pay providers of adult long term care services in the Family Care System. They have started implementing this structure with Supportive Home Care and residential facilities. We are watching this close to see how it might affect our rates in the future.

AGENCY UPDATES

Service Budget:

- Goal to continue to look for ways to increase revenue thru increased enrollment.
- Goal to continue to look for lower cost alternatives and ways to combat inflation.



PROGRAM UPDATES

DAY SERVICE PROGRAM

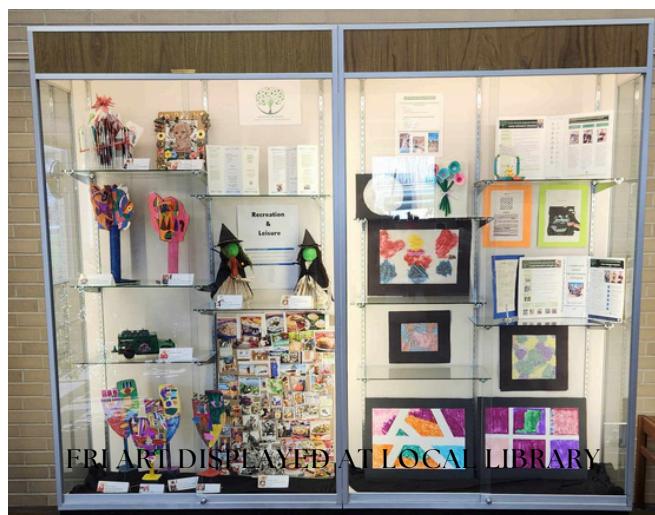
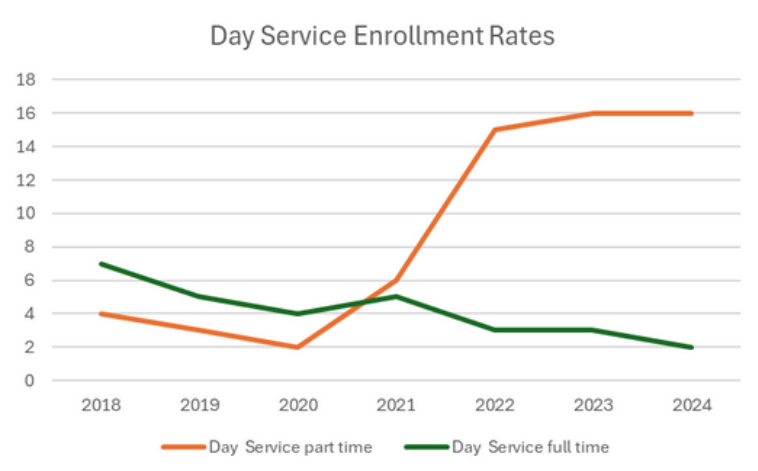
ADULT DAY SERVICES ARE PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THOSE WE SERVE THROUGH AN INDIVIDUAL PLAN OF CARE THAT IS STRUCTURED, COMPREHENSIVE, AND PROVIDES A VARIETY OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SUPPORTS. OUR PROGRAM OFFERS SAFETY AND SUPERVISION, ASSISTANCE WITH PERSONAL CARE, ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING, SKILLS BUILDING, RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES BOTH IN-HOUSE AND IN THE COMMUNITY, AS WELL AS EXERCISE AND RANGE OF MOTION EXERCISES. THIS SERVICE IS ALSO CREDITED WITH PROVIDING RESPITE FOR FAMILIES.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

- Chris Shaw filled aide vacancy in January.
- First full year of expanded day program proved very successful and sought after by program participants, allowing those who are aging or lack interest in employment to transition into day programming with a schedule that is tailored to their preference.
- Volunteerism and Community partners rebounded to precovid numbers.

LOOKING FORWARD

- We are making incremental changes over time to combine our two programs, melding to one larger program. This will allow for increased community connections, participant choice, and diverse program options.
- Implementation of monthly activity calendars to meet HCBS expectations.
- Maximizing revenue thru continued evaluation of available openings.



FACILITY
BASED
PREVOCATIONAL
PROGRAM

PREVOCATIONAL SERVICES INVOLVE THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION AND WORK
EXPERIENCES THAT DEVELOP GENERAL, NONJOB-TASK-SPECIFIC STRENGTHS
AND SKILLS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO EMPLOYABILITY. THIS IS ACHIEVED THRU
SUBCONTRACTS AS WELL AS EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS AND EXPERIENCES

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

- Reduction in the number of full-time enrollees by offering other services; opening up resources to serve individuals off the wait list.
- Increased opportunities to gain skills thru a variety of approaches.
- FRI sold the Freightliner Box Truck in October to raise funds toward a replacement truck as the International is no longer safe for use due to rusted frame.
- Prevailing wages are the wages paid to experienced workers in a particular job, while subminimum wages are wages paid to employees of Fox River Industries Inc. based on their rate of productivity, earning them a percentage of the prevailing wage. Fox River Industries Inc. prevailing wage for 2024: \$17.65 for all packing jobs (Nelson Miller), \$16.12 for corn production (A Squirrels Dozen), \$17.00 for sewing (JP Luther Co.) and \$18.65 for all assembly jobs (Milsco).

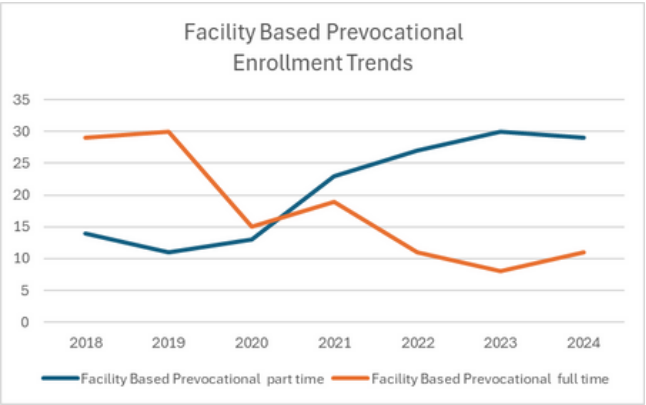
LOOKING FOWARD -

- Goal of wait list elimination, allowing individuals to access services at the moment they need them.
- Creation/Implementation of monthly activity calendars that meet HCBS expectations, balance inconsistent work demands with the need to always provide educational programming, and a focus on offering choices in how and where services are experienced.

- Goal toward increased success in meeting the benchmark of increased percentage of participants involved in prevocational services that are engaged in community integrated employment. 2024 average success rate was 39%.
- Implementation of Group Employment Program. Group Employment provides a “group” of participants the opportunity to receive continuous onsite support from a staff at community-based job site thru contracts held with a local business.

PRESSURES

- Need for a replacement box truck.
- The U.S. Department of Labor has proposed a rule that would phase out the ability to pay workers with disabilities less than the federal minimum wage for the work they perform.



COMMUNITY BASED PREVOCATIONAL PROGRAM

COMMUNITY BASED PREVOCATIONAL SERVICES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS TO RECEIVE EMPLOYMENT TRAINING IN AN INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SETTING VERSUS IN A FACILITY. THIS IS ACHIEVED THRU EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS, TOURS, VOLUNTEERISM, AND INCREASING COMMUNITY RESOURCE AWARENESS.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

- Partnership with Green Lake County Aging Unit to Manage the Senior Dining Meal site, creating a new work training opportunity. This partnership makes it possible to utilize this site and job tasks involved as an avenue to teach work related skills thru hands on experience. This mutually beneficial opportunity not only strengthens work skills and provides participants with new experiences; it also allows Fox River Industries to serve the community, which is in alignment with one of our core values!
- Attended Advocacy Day at the WI State Capital

LOOKING FOWARD -

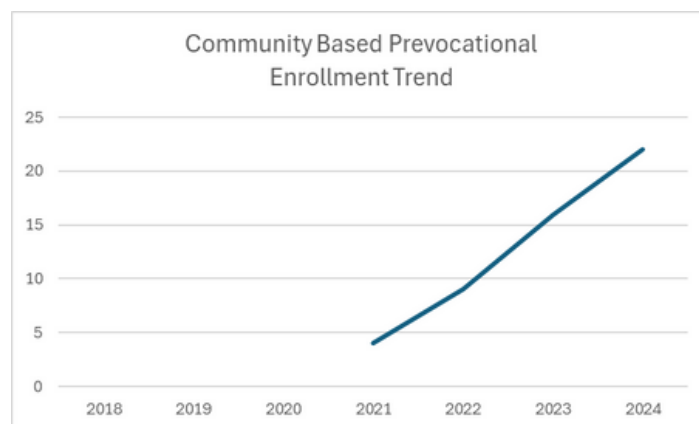
- Exploring Youth Opportunities
- Implementation of monthly activity calendars to meet HCBS expectations
- Re-exploring Group Supported Employment
- Continued partnership with other HHS units to create new learning opportunities for those served.

PRESSURES

- Threat of mandated lower staff to client ratios in order to qualify for reimbursement.



ADVOCACY DAY AT THE STATE CAPITAL



SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT REFERS TO SERVICE PROVISIONS WHEREIN PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE ASSISTED WITH OBTAINING AND MAINTAINING EMPLOYMENT IN A COMMUNITY SETTING. COMMUNITY INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT IS VIEWED AS THE GOAL OF PREVOCATIONAL SERVICES WHEN SERVICES ARE FUNDED BY STATE MEDICAID WAIVER DOLLARS.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

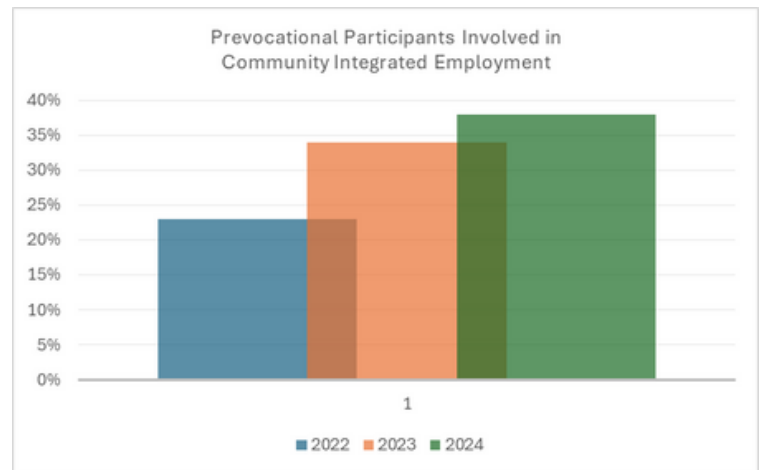
- 10 individuals were hired in community jobs.
- Continued rise in referrals to DVR as we strive to improve our ratio of individuals in prevocational services who are engaged in finding employment or are employed. This is an indicator of successful prevocational services.
- Meal Site Manager, Amy Burdick was hired as a Supported Employment program aide. She continues to also assist with management of the meal site.

LOOKING FOWARD -

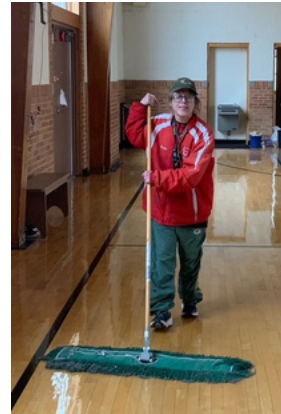
- Exploring Partnership with Behavioral Health Unit to support individuals with mental health diagnosis as primary barrier to employment in finding and maintaining employment

PRESSURES

- Need for long term support for those working leaves little room to take on new referrals without an increase in staff resources.



SEIRRA WORKING AT HER NEW JOB



REPRESENTATIVE
PAYEE
SERVICES

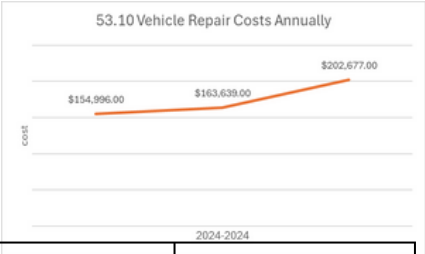
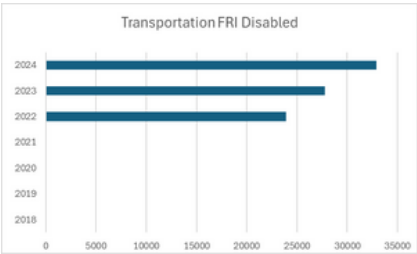
Representative Payee Services provides benefit management for Social Security beneficiaries who are incapable of managing their Social Security or Supplemental Security Income payments. This is managed thru the use of a collective account.

- HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024
 - Finished year with 77 beneficiaries, showing an increase annually in 2023 and 2024 after consistent trend down years prior.
 - High demand by Long Term Care due to the provision of high quality services.
- LOOKING FOWARD -
 - Continued implementation of the use of TrueLink Debit cards in order to reduce administrative costs.
- PRESSURES
 - Low reimbursement rates
 - Waushara County ceased providing this service leading to increased referrals.

TRANSPORTATION
SERVICES

WITH THE DSI FLEET OF VEHICLES THE GOAL IS TO ENSURE ACCESS TO SERVICES AND THE COMMUNITY FOR THE INTELLECTUALLY AND DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED ADULTS IN AND AROUND GREEN LAKE COUNTY, MINIMIZING ISOLATION AND ENSURING ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT, RECREATION, AND OTHER MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES.

- HIGHLIGHTS 2024
 - Provided 32,886 rides to disabled individuals in 2024; an 18% increase from 2023.
 - Experienced a 23% increase in cost of repairs from 2023.
- LOOKING FOWARD -
 - Partnership with HHS Aging Unit to provide Senior Transportation Services
 - Creating infrastructure to support Disability transports funded by Long Term Care
 - Increased participation on the Transportation Committee



INVENTORY

Alternate Tag	LV Make	LV Model	LV Model Year	Acquisition Date	notes
Production Pick up Truck	GMC	SIERRA 2500 TRUCK	2003	7/23/2014	
Production Box Truck	FREIGHTLINER	BOX TRUCK	2004	2/9/2011	disposed 10/03/24 - auction sale
Production Box Truck	INTERNATIONAL	4300	2005	3/5/2008	
I12	CHEVY	ELDORADO AEROLITE	2011	10/6/2011	
I14	STARCRAFT	MINI BUS	2010	3/1/2010	pending disposal
I16	FORD	STARCRAFT E350 MINI BUS	2013	8/19/2013	disposed 10/25/2024 - sold
I17	CHEVY	STRATRANS SUPREME	2011	11/16/2011	
I18	FORD	STARCRAFT E350 MINI BUS	2013	7/23/2013	
I21	FORD	TRANSIT STARCRAFT W/LIFT	2018	5/8/2018	
I22	FORD	TRANSIT STARCRAFT W/LIFT	2018	5/8/2018	
I23	DODGE	BRAUN GRAND CARAVAN	2013	7/23/2013	disposed 12/24/24 - scrap
I24	FORD	STARCRAFT E350 MINI BUS	2020	3/20/2020	
I25	DODGE	MINIVAN (BRAUN)	2016	12/7/2016	
Leased to SGLCST	CHRYSLER	VOYAGER	2022	4/5/2023	
Leased to SGLCST	DODGE	MINIVAN (BRAUN)	2019	1/17/2020	
County Lease Vehicle @ FRI #3	CHEVY	MALIBU	2021	10/26/2021	
County Lease Vehicle @ FRI #7	CHEVY	MALIBU	2022	3/1/2022	

DISABILITIES SERVICES, INC. **DISABILITIES SERVICES INC. (DSI) IS A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION WITH A MISSION OF REDUCING TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS FOR AGING AND DISABLED POPULATIONS. DSI ACCESSES FEDERAL GRANT DOLLARS TO ASSIST WITH THE SECUREMENT OF VEHICLES AND LEASES THEM OUT TO AGENCIES WITH A SIMILAR FOCUS ON DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS. DISABILITIES SERVICES INC. ALSO IS THE OWNER OF 222 LEFFERT ST., BERLIN, THE HOME OF FOX RIVER INDUSTRIES SERVICES.**

BUILDING AND LAND UPDATES

- Derleth Family built a storage unit next to the 222 Leffert Street property, which we had occupied for parking for decades. In august all property was asked to be removed.
- Rear loading dock improvement project completed in October, funded by a grant.
- Rear parking project completed in partnership with GLC Highway Department to compensate for lost parking on Derleth Property.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Continued partnership with Green Lake County Food pantry, which utilizes DSI vehicles to pick up food from local grocers.
- Mark Wilton of Green Lake Transportation Services took over Green Lake County Senior Transport DSI updated lease agreement to represent the newly created non-profit. We were informed in December that the entity was not interested in carrying on the lease into 2025.

LOOKING FORWARD

- Discussion on Dissolution of Disabilities Services Inc. and transferring ownership of assets to Green Lake County
- GLC applying for 53.10 grant funds versus DSI
- Leasing senior transport minivans to FRI/GLC
- Disposal of 114 minibus
- Exterior Doors Replacement
- Front Bathroom Updates



VEHICLE UPDATE

- Mid-year began an upward trend in needed vehicle repairs leading to a higher-than-average expense to maintain the 10-vehicle fleet of grant funded vehicles. Operating grant funds were depleted earlier in the year than we historically experience.
- Disposed of a 2016 minibus, and a 2013 minivan utilized by Fox River Industries due to age and mechanical issues.
- Cycle 47 minibus arrived December 2024, leased to Fox River Industries. 2025 Ford E450 Diamond.



- Cycle 48 minibus expected delivery is mid 2025. It is expected to be identical to the Cycle 47 bus. This too will be leased to Fox River Industries.
- Cycle 49, 53.10 Grant Application was completed and successful for operating expenses and a minivan. This vehicle is expected late 2025. WisDOT reported they were "only able to award first choice replacement vehicles with 75% of the cost paid by the grant". The remaining 25% local match required will be funded by the proceeds of sales of disposed vehicles & DSI funds. Any remaining balance will be budgeted for by FRI/GLC. (DOT reports vehicle prices have remained high, mobility management and operating costs have increased, and this grant has continued to be highly competitive.)



FOOD PANTRY

LEFT - Weekly, FRI participants volunteer at the food pantry, assisting with any tasks needed to help the pantry run smoothly.

RIGHT - Tokens of appreciation have been given to food pantry recipients for Mothers Day and Fathers Day, and special birthday packages assembled thanks to a grant from Thrivent.



SENIOR FAIR

RIGHT - FRI Meal Site Volunteer rides the senior dining float in the Markesan Parade.

Below - Manager, Dawn Brantley, assists with handing out meals at the annual Senior Fair in Green Lake.



NEXTREK CHALLENGE

ABOVE - 1000 pounds of plastic was collected and recycled, earning Fox River Industries a weatherproof bench to enjoy in the learning garden.

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

THRASHER OPERA HOUSE

RIGHT - Day Service participants delivered a Christmas time surprise to our friends at the Thrasher. The gnome on the left was made by the group with LOVE and APPRECIATION for the relationship made with the Thrasher Opera House.



RIPON 2.0

BELOW - Community Based Prevocational Groups assist with preparation for Riponfest 2.0.



FRI TEAM 2025



FOX RIVER INDUSTRIES

Fostering Relationships for Independence
thru
COMPASSION, COLLABORATION, COMMUNITY, & CHOICE

2024 Annual Report Behavioral Health Unit

The Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) provides a spectrum of mental health and substance use services to residents of Green Lake County across the lifespan. Behavioral Health topics, including youth in crisis, trauma-related issues, and substance use disorders have been identified as critical concerns impacting the Green Lake County population in Green Lake County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Additionally, the Green Lake County community continues to experience MH impacts of economic stress, increases in individuals presenting with opioid, methamphetamine, and alcohol use disorders, and increases in student mental health concerns in local school districts that mirror trends seen in the rest of Wisconsin as well as across the nation.

The team includes 13 full time staff, 1 part time therapist, 1 contracted Intoxicated Driver Program assessor, and 1 part-time contracted psychiatrist. Many staff currently work across multiple programs within behavioral health and are included in the structure for each program that they work in. All unit staff receive cross-training in several of the unit programs including 24/7 on-call mobile crisis intervention.

BHU includes a range of programs, collectively serving 981 county residents (consistent with the past 3 years, representing a 2% increase over the last 7 years). Clients served in multiple programs are counted only once here.

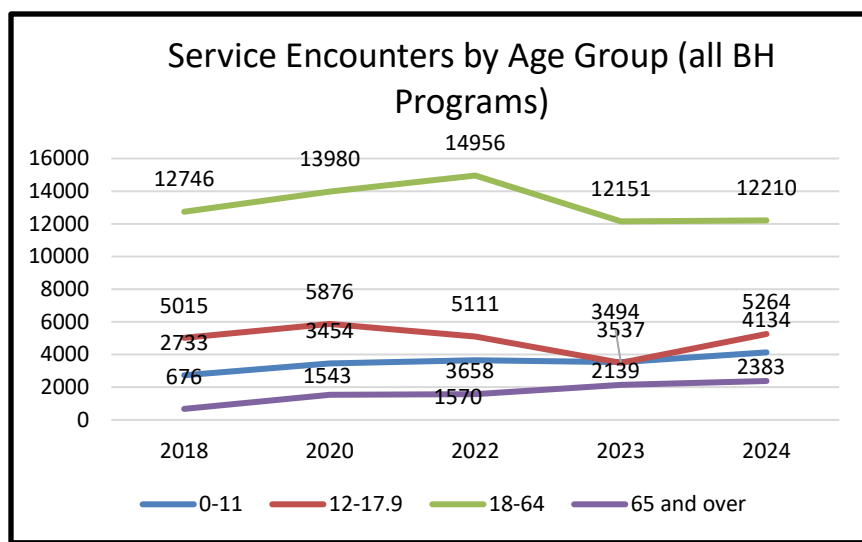


Table 1: The Behavioral Health clinic provides services that serve individuals across the lifespan. We have seen a general trend towards increases in services, across age groups, but especially amongst youth and older adults.

2024 Highlights

- Crisis team revised unit construct to dedicate 3 full time staff (rather than 1) to crisis services in preparation to assume responsibilities for Adult Protective Services (APS) in 2025
- Internship program continues to grow in partnership with several area Counseling and Social Work programs which has helped with recruiting and training new counseling staff, and ultimately contributed to a reduction in waiting list time achieved in 2024
- Opening of an additional school-based service site at Markesan Elementary School
- Movement of Admin/ BH Lead position from Admin Unit to a position within Behavioral Health Unit with some case management capacity within CSP and crisis programs

Outpatient Counseling and School Office

BHU providers take a whole-system approach to serving residents and understands how each aspect of a person's life can affect quality of life. During 2024, 684 individuals were served across the outpatient programs. Green Lake County has been designated a rural area with provider shortage in psychiatric care, however we are fortunate to have an on-site prescriber for adults on a part-time basis.

Outpatient Clinic Highlights: Clinical staff strive to stay up-to-date on practices that are innovative and relevant to the concerns presented by those we serve. The clinical team was able to offer services at an additional school-based site (Markesan Elementary) while also significantly reducing waiting list times at our office-based clinic.

*** School-Based Satellite Offices:** BHU presently maintains satellite school-based offices in Markesan MS/HS and Elementary, Green Lake, and Berlin Middle/High Schools. Services to all school offices are equipped to utilize telehealth or in-person services as appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

*** Upgraded electronic health record:** In 2023, the clinic's electronic health record expanded to include access via an electronic patient portal. This allows clients registered on the portal to view upcoming appointments, bills, medication/ diagnosis listings, and some medical records directly from their device. Clients can also request appointments or refills directly through the portal. This year, we continued to promote and expand usage of portal features to streamline some administrative functions and reduce no-shows.

*** Evidence-based clinical practices:** All staff are required to participate in training in evidence-based treatment models. We currently offer treatment including Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT), brain spotting, clinical hypnosis, and more.

*** Grant Funding for Substance Use Disorders Tx Needs:** This year, our team received grant funding to support the costs of residential treatment for individuals with opioid use disorders. In late 2024, we received a SOR grant for Unmet Treatment Needs (opioid and methamphetamine use) that will be used throughout 2025 to assist in the development of recovery supports for individuals waiting for or stepping down from residential levels of care.

Substance Use Disorders (SUD) Data

Treatment for SUD in rural communities continues to be a challenge around the nation. In Green Lake County, outpatient counseling is available at DHHS. More intensive levels of support such as intensive outpatient, day treatment, Medication Assisted Treatment, or residential care are available by referral to private sector providers.

Substance Use Concerns:

- Alcohol: 45.8%
- Opioids: 18.5%
- Marijuana: 21.2%
- Amphetamines: 14.5%

Living Arrangement-admission:

- Adults in independent living situation: 91%
- Youth living at home: 6%
- Homeless: 3%

Employment Status- Admission:

- Working full time: 40.1%
- Working part time: 15%
- Seeking work: 28%
- Retired/homemaker: 5.6%
- Receiving disability: 6.9%
- Student: 4.4%

Education- Admission:

- College: 11.3%
- High School Graduate: 52.8%
- Less than High school: 11.1%

Criminal Justice System Involvement:

60% have CJ involvement

Community Support Program (CSP)

CSP Program Goals

- 1. Increase engagement in community-based programming and reduce social isolation.**
 - Focused wellness goals and activities in 2024 focused on client-specific goals.
- 2. Address accessibility barriers in engaging with healthcare and mental healthcare resources.**
 - Crisis support plans shared with crisis team at each update
 - All staff offer tobacco cessation assistance
- 3. Outreach to potentially eligible community members.**
 - Outreached 5-6 potential cts via crisis and outpatient referrals
 - Presentations at wide variety of community events

The CSP program provides intensive community-based services to people with severe and persistent mental illness who may otherwise require hospitalization or residential care. Treatment is individualized and based on the person's needs and goals. Staff provide psychiatry, counseling, transportation assistance, case management, medication management, crisis services, social opportunities, assistance with activities of daily living, and assistance with vocational rehabilitation. CSP provides services almost exclusively in the community. CSP served 22 consumers throughout 2024.

CSP highlights

- Social opportunities are designed to offer peer interaction and facilitated social skills training, involving a combination of community-based outings and onsite activities.
- The Community Support Program client census has increased drastically over the course of 2024. Additional staff time has been allocated to

ensure that clients can receive the needed intensity of services.

Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) The Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) program is a strength-based consumer driven psychosocial rehabilitation recovery program. This program utilizes the consumer's identified strengths to support their goal-directed recovery process. CCS receives Medicaid funding and requires each individual enrolled in the program to have Medicaid, have a mental health and/or substance use diagnosis, be motivated to work on self-identified recovery goals, and utilize a collaborative team based model emphasizing natural supports in recovery.

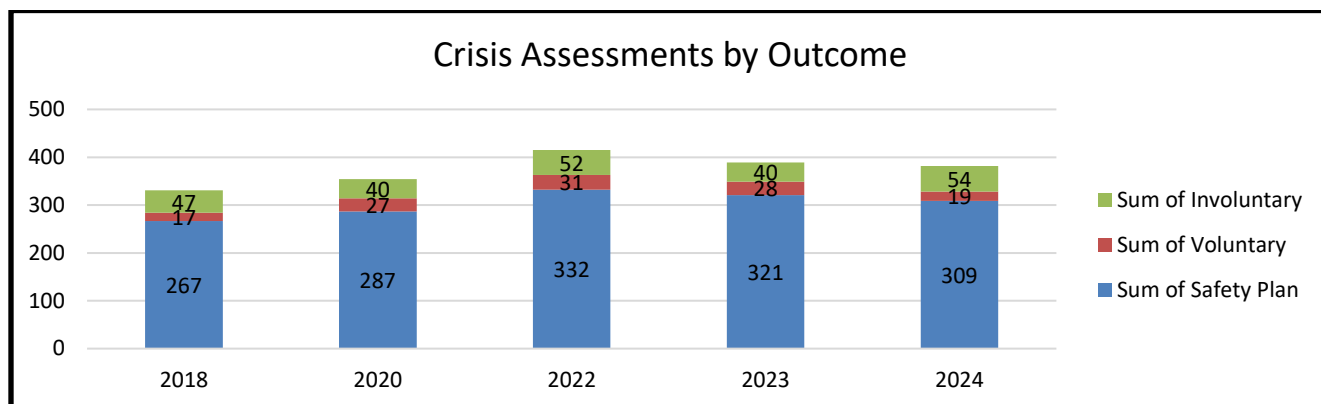
Basic Needs	Community Living Skills	Crisis Prevention and Management
Education	Employment	Finances and Benefits
Housing	Legal Status	Life Satisfaction
Medication Management	Mental Health	Physical Health

CCS provides community-based services, working to support people in their communities rather than in hospitals or residential treatments. CCS works closely with the Children & Family Unit to help provide services to keep children in their homes instead of foster care placement and to help return a child back to their home with the proper supports. In 2024, CCS served 65 consumers, consistent with recent years and a significant increase over the past 5 years. CCS supports a variety of treatment modalities including flexible options such as in-home family systems therapy, which allows clients to find a true array of services

and receive the types of therapy that best meet their needs. CCS staff are committed to providing consumer-driven care. The Behavioral Health Unit/ CCS program actively participates in our Regional CCS Consortium, approved by the state of Wisconsin. The consortium includes six surrounding counties working together. Due to consortium efforts, medically necessary services provided to CCS consumers can be reimbursed at a rate of 100% for the services we provide CCS consumers.

Crisis Intervention

During 2024, crisis intervention responded to **382** initial crisis assessments and many additional follow up contacts. Crisis intervention services on average comprise 24% of the mental health services provided by clinical staff. Crisis workers provide crisis counseling on a walk-in basis or respond mobile to the most appropriate location (e.g. Emergency Rooms, schools, police departments) to provide assessment and intervention. BHU adheres to the philosophy that when a counselor engages face-to-face with an individual, they develop an understanding of the individual's needs and can create a safe response plan in the least restrictive environment. When determined that the most appropriate level of care is a psychiatric hospitalization, crisis workers first work for voluntary admission. Crisis workers and law enforcement initiate an emergency detention after all other options have been exhausted or determined unsafe. Crisis service linkage and follow up support continuity of care, provide critical and timely interventions for stabilization and referral as well as offer support in navigating complex systems of care.



Crisis Highlights:

- **Crisis Program Restructure:** The crisis program now contains 3 full time positions: a MH case manager/ Licensed Social Worker, a Substance Use specialist, and a court work specialist. These three positions may work across other BHU programs to link clients to the correct supports. They cover mobile response and follow up during all regular business hours. After-hours coverage continues to rely on other Behavioral Health Unit staff to help support an on-call rotation.
- **Adult Protective Services:** Throughout 2024, the crisis team engaged in training opportunities to prepare the team to assume responsibility for Adult Protective Services (APS) response in 2025. Many situations do not fit neatly into one category or the other and contain elements of both Behavioral Health and APS, and having staff trained to provide both responses available on a 24/7 basis will increase the effectiveness of the mobile crisis response.
- Additionally, increasing staff with a focus specifically on the crisis program has allowed follow up case management to be consolidated to several staff specializing in crisis and risk assessment while reducing

the time staff from other BH programs are spending on crisis. This has improved waiting time for services across multiple BH programs.

- **Zero Suicide:** In 2023, BHU applied for and was accepted into a learning collaborative on the Zero Suicide model for quality improvement in suicide prevention. In 2024, we focused on increasing outreach and awareness (community-wide outreach efforts occurred in both May and September) while also focusing on increasing screening and support for individuals who are waiting for an initial visit for ongoing counseling services.

Children's' Long Term Support Waiver

The Children's Long Term Support Waiver (CLTS) is a Medicaid Waiver program for children with developmental or physical disabilities or Severe Emotional Disturbances (SED). Families develop a person-centered ISP together with their caseworker in which they identify specific supports that are not ordinarily covered by Medicaid. Examples include: accessible home modifications, sensory supplies/ therapeutic aids, respite care, and service coordination.

In 2017, the State of Wisconsin announced the dissolution of the CLTS waitlist, requiring counties to develop strategies to service families presently on the state-wide waitlist. BHU presently has one case worker who is dually trained in CCS and CLTS service coordination as well as unit manager who is certified in waiver services. In order to meet the growing population of this program, three additional caseworkers have been cross-trained in CLTS and carry partial caseloads. At the start of 2018 there were 10 families enrolled in CLTS, and as the process of waitlist elimination has continued, the program now serves 71 families. All families who were on the waitlist at the time that the waitlist elimination was announced are now being served, however new families continue to be added to the state waiting list. Typically, once a youth is opened within this program, they will continue to receive services from the program until they transition into the adult Long Term Care system (between the ages of 18-21).

Targeted Case Management (TCM)

In 2018, Behavioral Health added a Targeted Case Management (TCM) program tier. TCM is a Medicaid-funded case management program that offers support to individuals with mental health or substance abuse issues who may benefit from case management at a less intensive level or as a step-down from more intensive program option. TCM has historically been offered outside of BHU for other target populations. There are presently 12 consumers being served within the Behavioral Health TCM program.

Behavior Health Unit 2025 program development areas:

Continued community and county-level support, dedication from staff, and collaboration with community partners allow the Behavioral Health Unit to continue to grow. The Behavioral Health unit identifies development areas for 2025 that build our capacity to provide innovative, community-based services and improve outcomes for individuals, families, and communities:

- ◆ Expansion of evidence-based practices for mental health and substance use disorders, specifically focusing on acute treatment of suicidality
- ◆ Central Wisconsin Health Partnership
- ◆ Continued expansion of mobile response crisis services including the addition of Adult Protective Services (APS) to the crisis response umbrella
- ◆ AODA and Mental Health Awareness and prevention
- ◆ Provision of crisis debriefing services to mitigate community impact and secondary traumatic stress of critical incidents
- ◆ Reduce waiting time for enrollment into appropriate level of care for ongoing services

- ◆ Expand services available to address issues related to social/ community connectedness that specifically impact the rural community
- ◆ Partnership with school districts to leverage school-based services options and address mental health presentation at the early childhood and elementary school levels
- ◆ Focus on recruitment and retention of qualified treatment professionals to maintain staffing of programs and reduce waitlist time for individuals seeking services

Respectfully submitted by: Nichol Wienkes, LPC
Behavioral Health Unit Manager

2024 ANNUAL CHILD SUPPORT UNIT REPORT

~Protecting Children, Strengthening Families, Building Communities~

The Wisconsin Child Support Program helps parents get court orders for financial and medical support for their children. It also enforces these support orders when needed and makes sure that all money collected is paid out correctly.

Two Child Support workers and a Unit Manager make up the Child Support Unit for Green Lake County.

The Green Lake County Child Support Unit has 868 cases. Close to 90% of those cases are participants that are receiving some assistance that require the Child Support Agency to enforce support orders. These assistance programs may include Medical Assistance, Child Care, Wisconsin Works, and /or children in Foster Care or Kinship Care services.

Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 Green Lake County Child Support collected \$1,645,723.16 in Child Support.

Child Support formulated our scanning procedures into Laser Fiche, an electronic case file system, of our current paper files beginning 2020. We started the scanning process. At present we have 75% of the Child Support files scanned.



Overview of Child Support Services provided to parents

All families paying and receiving child support, family support or maintenance get “financial management” services. These services include:

- Entering the information about the court case and support orders into the Wisconsin child support computer system.
- Working with employers to withhold income and support payments.
- Processing payments.
- Collecting, recording, and sending payment and/or fees.
- Providing monthly account statements.
- Providing payment coupons.
- Providing different ways to pay for customers.
- Providing payment information by phone and online.
- Correcting errors on account balances.

Case management services are available for both the parent paying child support as well as the parent getting child support. Case management services are provided by county child support agencies and can be obtained by applying for services. These services include:

- Locating the other parent and his or her financial assets.
- Scheduling genetic tests for the child and the potential father(s) of the child.
- Preparing the papers and taking the case to court to legally identify the father and set up a support order.
- Ensuring that one or both parents provide health insurance for the child(ren).
- Using all available and appropriated enforcement tools to collect support owed.
- Reviewing the support order, when necessary, in case it needs to be changed.
- Ending the support order, when necessary.

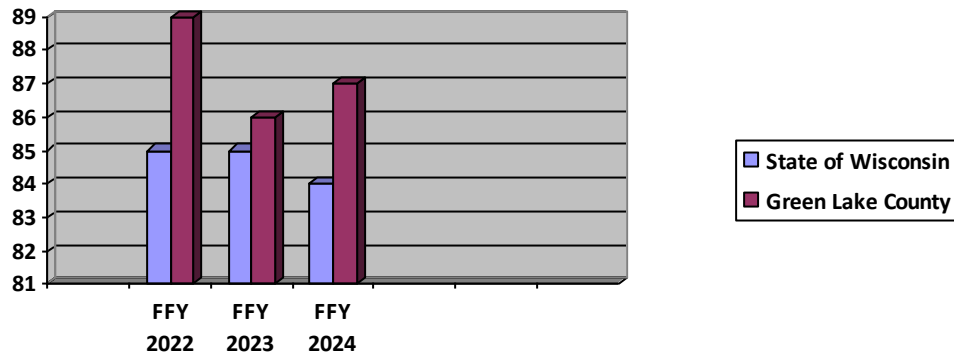
FFY 2024 Green Lake Child Support Performance

Green Lake County continues to surpass the Statewide Performance Standards average.

The following charts represent the percentage rates of the four Federal Performance measurements Statewide versus Green Lake County for the last four Federal Fiscal years. (FFY)

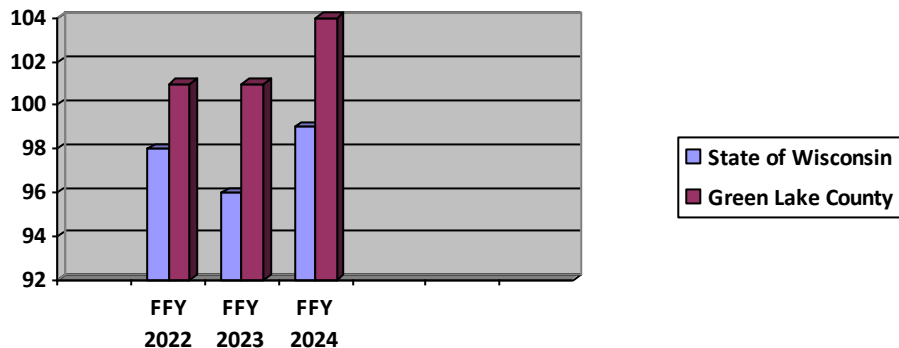
Court Order Establishment Rate

(Number of IV-D cases with Support Orders divided by the number of IV-D cases as of the last day for Federal Fiscal Year, September 30th.)



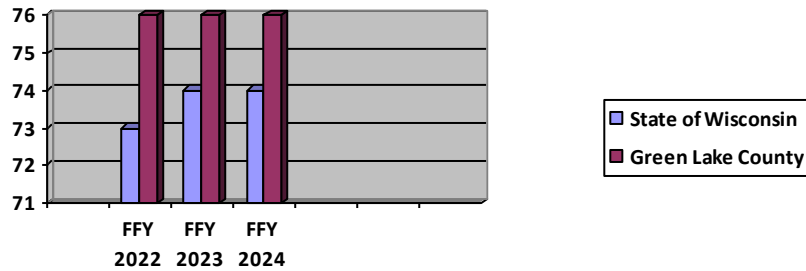
Paternity Establishment Rate

(Number of children in the caseload in the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) or as of the end of the FFY who were born out-of-wedlock with paternity established or acknowledged divided by the number of children in the caseload as of the end of the preceding FFY who were born out-of-wedlock.)



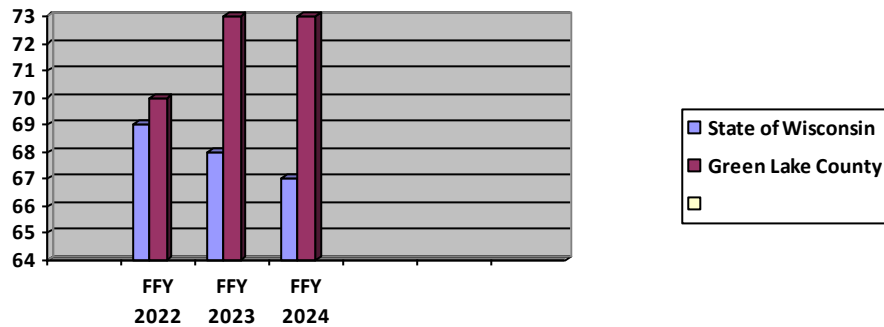
Current Child Support Collection Rate

(Amount collected for the Current Support in IV-D cases divided by the amount owed for Current Support in IV-D cases)



Arrears Collection Rate

(Number of IV-D cases paying toward arrears divided by the number of IV-D cases with arrears due)



IV-D cases = these cases originate from public assistance programs. As a condition of eligibility, recipients in the programs of W-2, Child Care, Caretaker Supplement, Badger Care, foster care, and kinship care must be referred to and cooperate with their child support agency for purposes of establishing paternity and establishing and securing child support.

Arrears = Past Child Support that is owed and should have been paid earlier.

Submitted by: Shelby Jensen
Economic & Child Support Unit Manager