
SOUTHEAST DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

2024-2025

ANNUAL REPORT

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I am pleased to present the Southeast District Health Department 2024-2025 Annual Report. This report highlights the significant strides made by the Department as we continue to fulfill our mission with excellence and dedication.

The past year has been one of progress and innovation for the Department. We have further expanded services across the district, enhancing and implementing programs to address the evolving needs of residents in Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, and Richardson counties. In alignment with our Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan, we have worked diligently to fill critical gaps in public health services across southeast Nebraska. Internally, we have streamlined processes to improve efficiency and ensure we are delivering services that meet the highest standards of public health practice. The tireless efforts and unwavering dedication of our staff remain at the heart of ensuring that every community has access to our services.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Board of Health, community partners, and the incredible staff of the Southeast District Health Department. Your commitment, expertise, and collaboration are essential to advancing the Department's mission and ensuring the well-being of our community.

Please enjoy this report and feel free to reach out to any of our team members with your questions or suggestions.



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In 2001, The Nebraska Legislature passed the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (LB 692), which established the system of local public health departments throughout the state. As a part of Nebraska Health Care Funding Act, Nebraska local health departments work to meet the Three Core Functions of Public Health.



Assessment: Collect and analyze information about health problems in Nebraska communities.



Policy Development: Work with partners to apply data, educate the public, and develop programs and policies — all to address and prevent illness, disease, and disability.



Assurance: Promote effective coordination and use of community resources to protect the health and well-being of Nebraskans.

The activities and programs of the Southeast District Health Department (SEDHD) are summarized under the 10 Essential Services of Public Health. The 10 Essential Services provide a working definition of the public health system and a guiding framework for the responsibilities of local public health partners.

The 10 Essential Services include:

1. Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems.
2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.
4. Mobilize community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems.
5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. Assure competent public and personal health care workforce.
9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

SEDHD is governed by the Southeast District Health Board of Health which includes one county commissioner from each county, one public spirited member from each county, a physician, a dentist, and a veterinarian.

Johnson County

Tim Weber - County Commissioner
Gina Kerner - Community Member

Nemaha County

Mike Hall - County Commissioner
Marvin Bohling - Community Member
Dr. Mike Speece - Veterinarian
Dr. Michael Zaruba - Medical Director

Otoe County

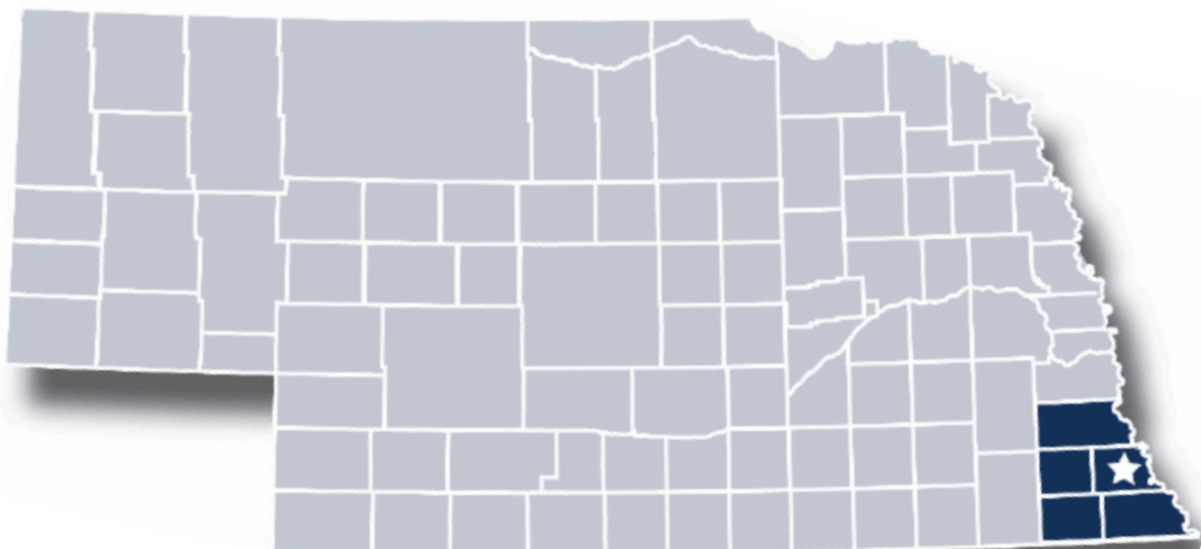
James Parsons - County Commissioner
John Groathouse - Community Member

Pawnee County

Jan Lang - County Commissioner
Karly Black- Community Member

Richardson County

Bob Campbell - County Commissioner
Beth Vonderschmidt - Community Member



MISSION

The mission of the Southeast District Health Department is to prevent disease and promote overall health through outreach services, and partnerships while educating and empowering all those who live, work, and visit Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, and Richardson counties.

VISION

Our vision is to utilize a community-centered approach to ensure all individuals have equal access to quality services to meet their needs and improve the overall health of population.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

Grant Brueggemann	Executive Director
Courtney Gerdes	Office Manager
Rosanne Rothfuss	Public Health Nurse
Christine Eltiste	Public Health Nurse
Brittany Rogge	Community Health Manager
Hannah Kirkendall	Emergency Response Coordinator
Alyson Steele	Program Coordinator
Emilee Lovell	Administrative Assistant
Megan Piper	HFA Program Manager
Jayne Vice	HFA Program Supervisor
Natalie Smith	Family Support Specialist
Melanie Aultz	Family Support Specialist
Kaleigh Beethe	Family Support Specialist

CORE VALUES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We actively seek the involvement of community members in our health initiatives, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration in improving health outcomes.

EMPOWERMENT

We provide individuals with the knowledge and resources necessary to take charge of their health, enabling informed decision-making and personal agency.

INTEGRITY

We operate with transparency and honesty, building trust with our community through ethical practices in all our services and outreach efforts.

INNOVATION

We embrace new ideas and approaches in public health, continually seeking creative solutions to address the evolving needs of our communities.

COMPASSION

We approach our work with empathy and understanding, recognizing and addressing the unique challenges faced by individuals and communities.

Revenue

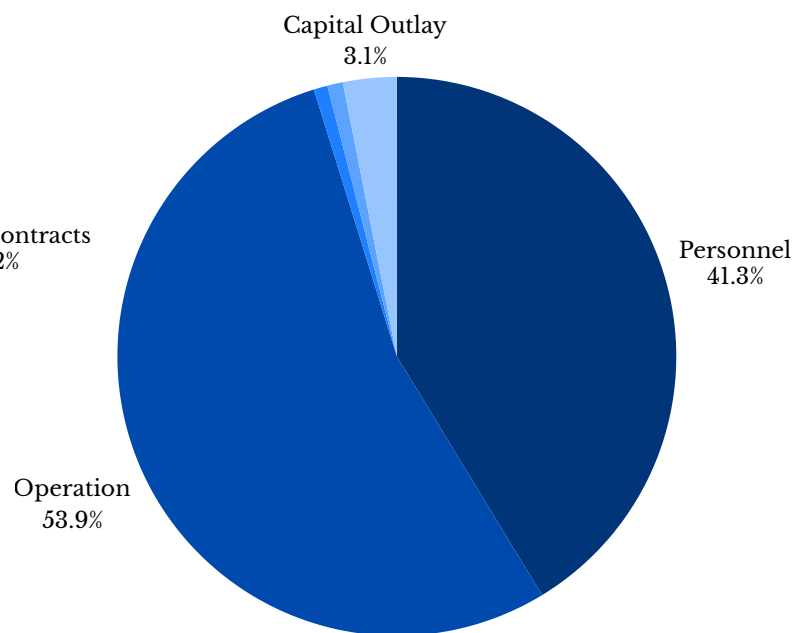
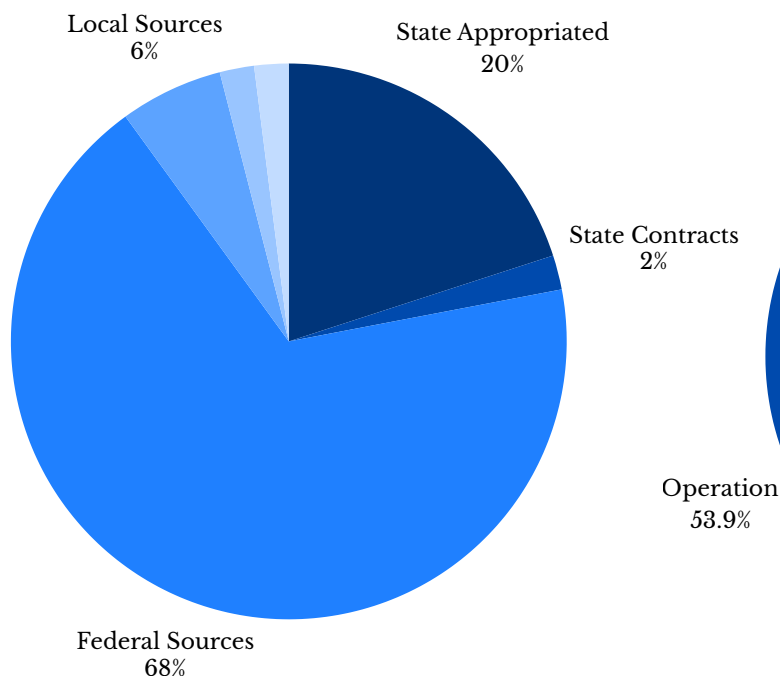
State Appropriated	\$ 505,850
State Contracts	\$ 40,293
Federal Sources	\$ 1,765,729
Local Sources	\$ 165,826
Services	\$ 50,036
Donations and Interest Income	\$ 54,222

Expenses

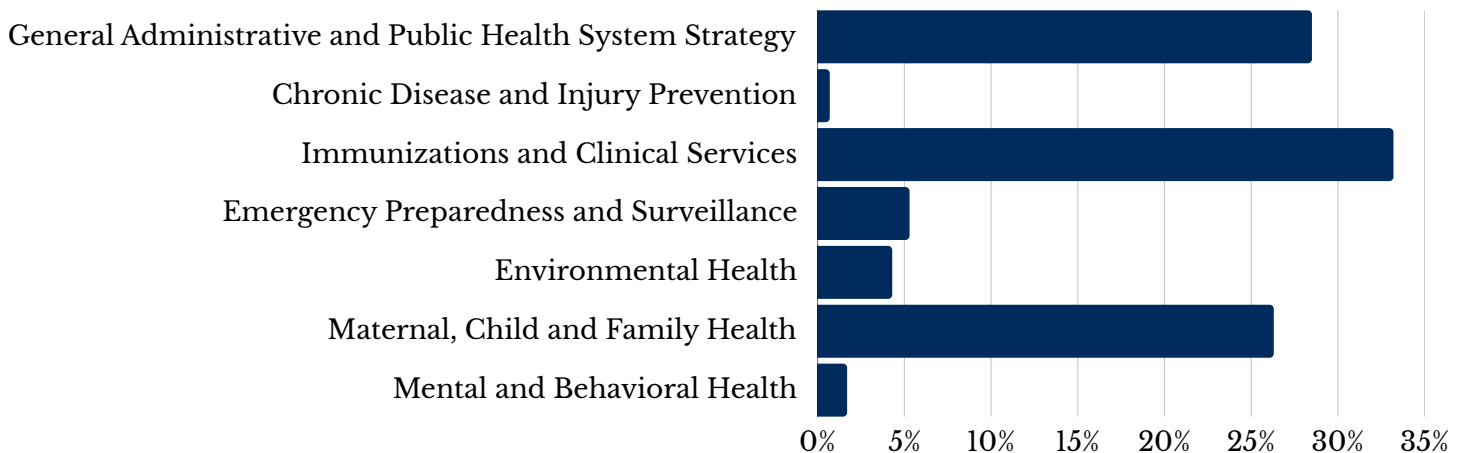
Personnel	\$ 879,962
Operations	\$ 1,146,204
Supplies and Materials	\$ 16,652
Office and Equipment Rental	\$ 19,860
Capital Outlay	\$ 65,420

Total Revenue: \$2,581,956

Total Expenses: \$2,128,098



EXPENSES BY PROGRAM



The Department promotes healthy behaviors and safe environments to prevent, detect early, and manage chronic conditions and injuries throughout southeast Nebraska. Chronic disease programming includes Living Well, the Diabetes Prevention Program, and Health Coaching for Hypertension Control, which support individuals in managing their health, reducing risk factors, and making sustainable lifestyle changes through physical activity, nutrition, and self-management education.

1 person dies every
33 seconds from
cardiovascular
disease

1 in every 5 deaths
is from heart
disease

38.4 million people
have diabetes (11.6%
of the U.S.
population)

22.8% of adults with
diabetes are
undiagnosed

A close-up photograph of a hand gently cupping a bright red heart. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

The Department leads Safe Kids Southeast to prevent childhood injuries—the leading cause of death among children in the United States. Through community partnerships and education, the Department promotes child passenger safety, home safety, safe sleep practices, and other injury prevention efforts. These initiatives help ensure every child has a safer, healthier start in life.

A photograph of a light brown teddy bear sitting in a grey car seat. A grey seatbelt strap crosses diagonally over the bear's chest. The bear has a white snout and black eyes.

The Department provides essential clinical services to protect and promote community health across southeast Nebraska. Immunization programs safeguard individuals of all ages against vaccine-preventable diseases. As a Vaccines for Children (VFC) provider, the Department offers free or low-cost vaccines to eligible children and provides vaccinations for adults and families, including seasonal flu and COVID-19. Services are available at Department offices and can also be arranged on-site for schools, long-term care facilities, and local businesses.

460 children and adult vaccinations administered.

153 individuals referred to clinical care.

The Department also supports preventive oral health through Brighter Smiles, which brings dental services to local schools, Head Starts, nursing homes, and childcare centers. A Registered Public Health Dental Hygienist conducts screenings, applies fluoride varnish and silver diamine fluoride (SDF) when appropriate, and provides oral health education. Participants receive free dental care supplies, and results are shared with parents or facility staff. These efforts enhance oral health protection between dental visits and encourage lifelong healthy habits.

2,376 children served through oral health program.

43% of children served received flouride varnish applications.

2% reduction in decay rate in children served by oral health program.

the Department provides mental and behavioral health support to promote well-being and resilience across southeast Nebraska. Through CredibleMind, a free and confidential online platform, individuals can access 24/7 mental health resources, complete self-assessments, and receive personalized guidance on topics such as stress, anxiety, burnout, and depression. Users can track their progress, save preferred materials, and utilize evidence-based tools to support ongoing wellness.

Suicide & crisis
lifeline

There is hope

Call, chat or text

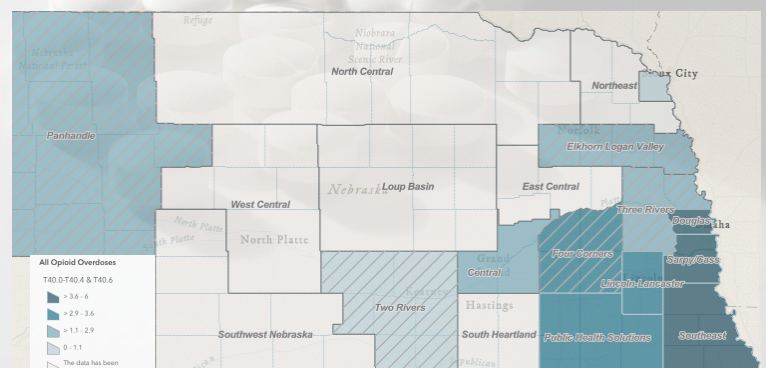
988

Free & confidential

The Department also leads the Southeast Nebraska Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors (LOSS) Team, providing immediate, compassionate assistance to those affected by suicide. Trained volunteers respond at the scene or soon after, offering emotional support, resources, and guidance in a respectful, non-intrusive manner to help families and communities begin the healing process.

In addition, the Department works to prevent opioid misuse, reduce overdose deaths, and support recovery. Initiatives include expanding access to naloxone (Narcan), promoting safe overdose response, connecting individuals to treatment and recovery services—including Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)—and providing education to reduce stigma and promote hope, healing, and recovery for individuals and families affected by substance use. s begin the healing process.

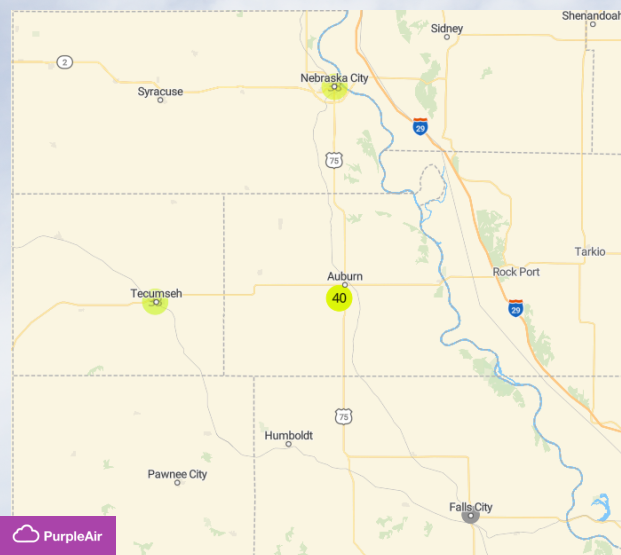
Southeast Nebraska has the second highest Opioid Overdose Death Rate in Nebraska



The Department protects residents from environmental hazards in homes, workplaces, and communities. Services include education and monitoring related to radon, West Nile virus, and other vector-borne diseases, as well as efforts to ensure safe water and air quality and prevent lead exposure. These activities promote healthier living environments and safeguard community well-being throughout southeast Nebraska.

SEDHD has provided several PurpleAir Monitors throughout the district to expand testing range for outdoor air quality in southeast Nebraska. These monitors measure real-time PM2.5 concentrations.

Visit www.purpleair.com to view real time air quality measurements.

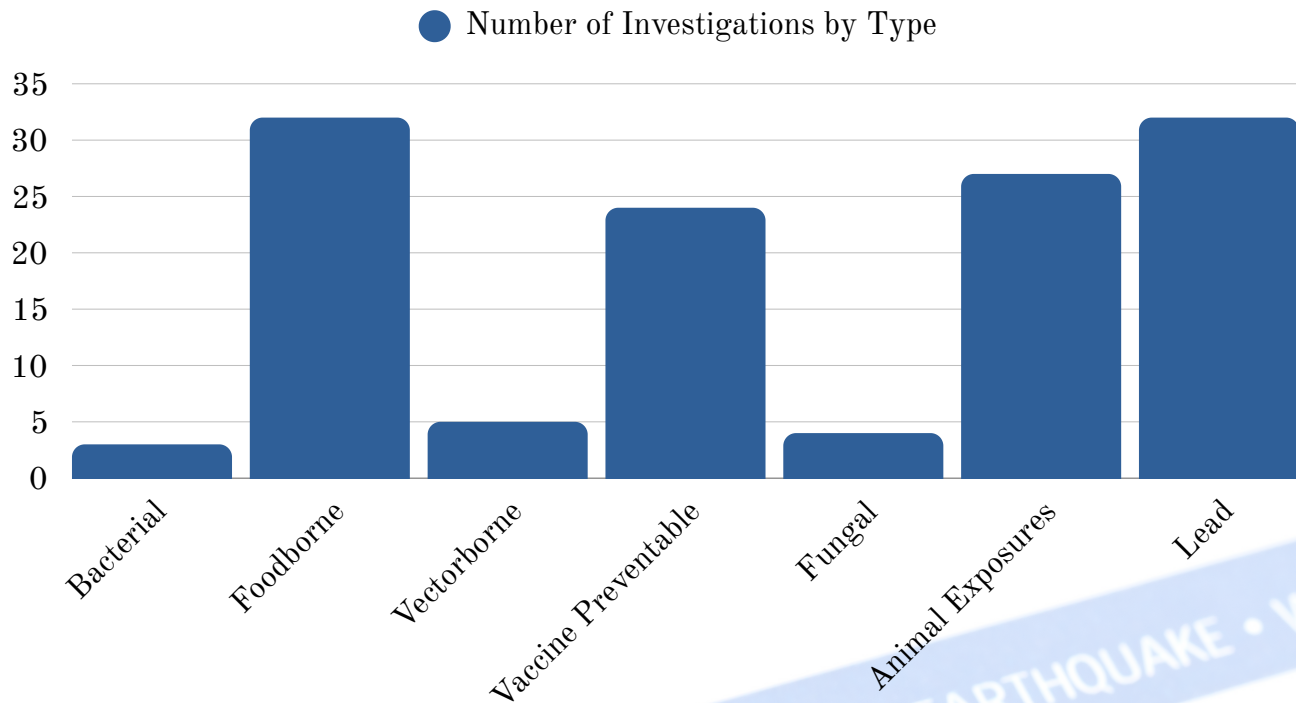


Radon is a radioactive gas that forms naturally when uranium, thorium, or radium break down in rocks, soil, and groundwater. People can be exposed to radon primarily from breathing radon in air that comes through cracks and gaps in buildings and homes.

The results of more than half of radon tests in Nebraska are above the action level of 4.0 pCi/L.

Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers.

The Department works to protect community health by monitoring, investigating, and responding to public health threats across southeast Nebraska. Through ongoing disease surveillance, staff track reportable conditions, collaborate with healthcare providers, laboratories, and state partners, and provide timely public education to identify emerging health risks, control outbreaks, and prevent the spread of infectious diseases.



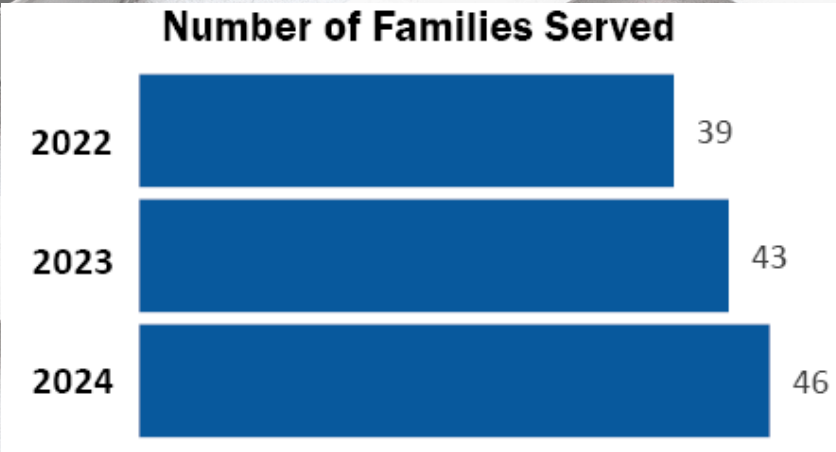
In addition, the Department leads emergency preparedness efforts to ensure the district is ready to prevent, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. Staff develop and update emergency response plans, conduct training exercises, and coordinate with local and state partners to protect residents during disasters, outbreaks, and other health threats. These efforts ensure a rapid, effective response and clear, accurate communication with the public when emergencies occur.

SEDHD participated in 15 seminars, trainings, drills, and exercises to strengthen public health preparedness for the district.

The Department provides home visitation services through Healthy Families America’s accredited Growing Great Kids (GGK) model. The program helps families create healthy, safe, and nurturing home environments where children can thrive. Through regular home visits, families receive individualized guidance on child development, safety, and overall well-being, supporting positive parenting and strong parent-child relationships.

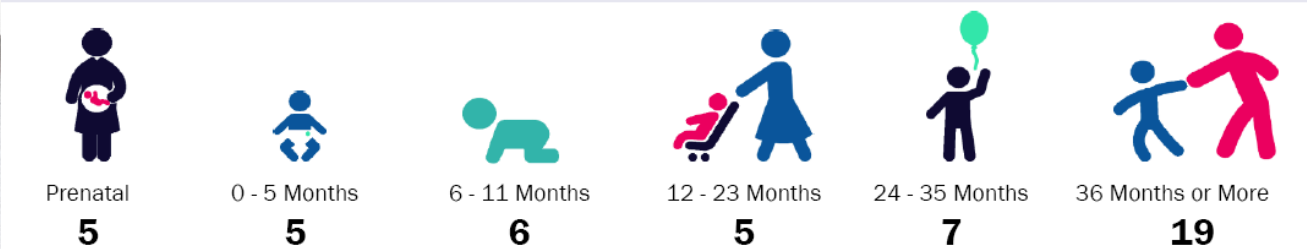


In addition to improving individual and family health, home visitation programs have a broader impact on public health. They contribute to lower rates of infant mortality, preterm births, and childhood injuries while fostering better long-term educational and health outcomes.



526 visits completed
46 families served
43 focus children

Focus Child Age at Last Home Visit of 2024:





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