



Community Health Improvement Plan Update 2025

Andrew County, Missouri



Overview

In 2024, baseline data was collected across Andrew County to assess progress on community health priorities, focusing on mental health, maternal and child health, and healthy living. At that time, only one school had lessons on suicide prevention and all medical providers were checking people for mental health concerns. All school districts were working with Family Guidance. There were a few exercise and cooking classes, and a new School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) group that was just getting started and not very active.

The most significant change over the past year was the community coalition securing funding through the Drug-Free Communities grant program, which expanded Andrew County's resources and assets to support multiple CHIP strategies and activities.

As of summer 2025, more people and groups are working together. Schools, local organizations, and the health department are teaming up to improve health in the community.

Goals

Healthy Living Priority

Goal: Increase community events promoting healthy living by 20% by 2029 through stronger partnerships.

Maternal & Child Health Priority

Goal: Establish School Health Advisory Councils (SHACs) in all school districts by 2029 to address student health and wellness through collaboration among educators, parents, healthcare providers, and community members.

Mental Health Priority

Goal: By 2026, increase standardized mental health screening protocols by 50% across schools, workplaces, and primary care settings.

Healthy Living Progress Highlights

- City of Savannah: Installed sidewalks along Business 71, received a grant for pollination plots and fishing in two ponds, and has applied for other grants that would remove some trees and add walking trails.
- Andrew County Ministries (ACM) & Partners: Provided food pantry cooking samples and healthy eating displays; hosted 3 food preservation workshops.
- ACHD: Purchased a greenhouse for the food pantry to assist with their garden.
- Inspirations Dance Academy: Held 40 classes for 180 students; included leadership training for 10 youth.
- University of Missouri (MU) Extension: Offered multiple programs:
 - Stay Strong, Stay Healthy: 16 senior strength sessions (19 participants)
 - Home Food Preservation: 5 sessions (29 participants)
 - Cooking Matters: 1 session (16 participants)
- ACHSC (Jessica Bledsoe):
 - 35 yoga classes (8–10 attendees each)
 - Chair yoga for seniors (12 attendees)
 - 2 New Year wellness events (10 attendees)
 - Line dancing (avg. 16 participants)
- Community Events:
 - Savannah Block Party (625 attendees), partially funded by DFC
 - Avenue City Block Party (125 attendees), partially funded by DFC
 - Docudrama (400 attendees), partially funded by DFC
 - Seatbelt Check (139 participants)
- Youth Programs:
 - Jr. Deputy (225 total students across 6 schools), partially funded by DFC
 - Drug Free Super Star (435 students), partially funded by DFC
 - Catch My Breath (37 students), partially funded by DFC
 - Too Good for Drugs (239 students), partially funded by DFC
 - 4th Grade Challenge (135 students, including new site)

Barriers

- Workshop costs limit participation
- Fluctuating food supply from Second Harvest
- High cost of healthy food supplements
- Limited staffing across multiple counties

Recommended Strategies

- Continue expanding the food pantry garden
- Encourage food drives and community donations
- Seek grant funding to reduce cost and staffing limitations

Mental Health Progress Highlights

North Andrew R-VI School District:

- Reached 175 students through programming:
- Signs of Suicide
- Erika's Lighthouse
- Red Ribbon Week
- How Full is Your Cup (mental wellness)

ACHSC (Jessica Bledsoe):

- Held 5 school counselor meetings (5–6 attendees)
- Held 2 sound bath events and a Women's Self-Care Workshop (5 attendees)

ACHD:

- Started mini mental health screenings for WIC and HIV clients
- Shared a mental health standard operating procedure with Savannah Chamber members

Schools:

- All districts continue connecting students to external mental health professionals

Barriers

- Limited funding
- Shortage of mental health providers in the area

Recommended Strategies

- Formalize partnerships with external mental health providers
- Integrate mental health into school curriculum
- Expand access to low-barrier wellness activities
- Bundle wellness events to increase participation

Maternal Child Health Progress Highlights

- 4-H: Gave 8 free programs through schools and libraries (200 people attended).
- Andrew County Health Department (ACHD): Was a part of the SHAC and held 10 childcare provider trainings (avg. 4 attendees).
- Parents as Teachers: Held 23 events, including open gyms and library nights (100+ attendees).
- Savannah R-III SHAC: Held 5 meetings (5–10 attendees each); promoted events and supported ACHSC.
- Andrew County Health & Safety Coalition (ACHSC) (Jessica Bledsoe): Organized Boy Scout events (80 attendees) and Storytime & Movement (33 attendees).

Barriers

- Changes in administrative personnel and duties
- Limited funding and staffing
- Leadership turnover within SHACs
- Reduced participation and inconsistent communication

Recommended Strategies

- Expand SHACs beyond SR3
- Clarify member roles and strengthen communication
- Reassess co-chair model to ensure leadership balance
- Increase collaboration across districts and partners

Conclusion

The 2025 update shows real progress in all three priority areas. Thanks to strong teamwork and new programs, Andrew County is doing more to support mental health, child wellness, and healthy living.

There are still challenges, like not enough staff or funding, but local groups are finding creative ways to move forward.

To keep this progress going, we'll need to stay in touch, measure what's working, and stay flexible. With teamwork and good leadership, Andrew County can reach its CHIP goals and build a healthier future for everyone.

