

# Washtenaw County Public Health

## 2008 Annual Report





***Public Health ~  
making a difference***

## Vision

*A healthy community in which every resident enjoys the best possible state of health and well-being.*

## Our Mission

*To assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.*

## Our Values

*We will emphasize prevention to increase community health and safety.*

*We will lead the development and delivery of effective public health interventions in partnership with the community.*

*We will promote social justice by reducing inequalities affecting the health of all in Washtenaw County.*

*We will abide by ethical principles and use the public's resources wisely.*

## Department Overview

*The Washtenaw County Health Department works locally to prevent disease, promote health, prolong life, and protect communities. One of 45 Local Health Departments in Michigan, we share a two-century-old national public health mission to enhance sanitary conditions, protect the environment, prevent and control disease, and promote healthy lifestyles—objectives that have resulted in improved quality of life and increased life expectancy for our country's citizens. We're proud of our heritage and continue to nurture an organizational culture that supports and encourages continual improvement.*

*The Health Department consists of five major divisions: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Family Health Division, Disease Control, Emergency Preparedness, and Environmental Health. Health Officer Ellen J. Clement leads the organization and Dr. Diana Torres-Burgos, M.D. is its Medical Director.*

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# Disease Control

## focus on Tuberculosis

TB disease is caused by a bacterium called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but TB bacteria can attack any part of the body such as the kidney, spine, and brain. TB is spread through the air from one person to another when a person with active TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, speaks, or sings. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected. Not everyone infected with TB bacteria becomes sick. As a result, two TB-related conditions exist: latent TB infection and active TB disease.

**Latent TB infection (LTBI).** In most people who get infected, the body is able to fight the bacteria to stop them from growing. This is known as latent TB infection and the person does not feel sick and has no symptoms. The only sign of TB infection is a positive reaction to the tuberculin skin test or special TB blood test. People with latent TB infection are not infectious and cannot spread TB bacteria to others.



**TB disease.** When TB bacteria are active (multiplying in the body), this is called TB disease. People become sick and develop symptoms such as fever, fatigue weight loss, night sweats, chills, and coughing up blood. People with TB disease are infectious and can spread TB bacteria to people they spend time with every day. People with weakened immune systems are more at risk to develop TB disease.



The **Washtenaw County Public Health Tuberculosis (TB) Control Program** has the legal responsibility for preventing and controlling Tuberculosis in the community by: 1) Identifying and treating persons who have suspect/active TB and ensuring they complete appropriate therapy 2) Identifying and screening contacts of persons with TB to determine whether they have latent TB infection or active disease and providing appropriate treatment 3) Screening high-risk populations to detect persons with latent TB infection and providing appropriate treatment to prevent progression to disease.

### Washtenaw County TB Statistics

Year	# Active TB Cases	# Pulmonary Cases	# Multi-drug resistant cases	% Foreign-borne	Washtenaw TB rate (all types) per 100,000	Washtenaw TB rate (pulmonary) per 100,000
2002	10	6	0	70%	3.1	1.9
2003	7	4	0	57%	2.2	1.2
2004	8	5	1	88%	2.5	1.5
2005	10	3	0	60%	3.1	0.9
2006	7	5	0	57%	2.2	1.5
2007	6	5	1	83%	1.9	1.5
2008	10	7	0	50%	3.1	2.2

### STI/HIV/TB Service Statistics

Service	2005 clients served	2006 clients served	2007 clients served	2008 clients served
STD clinic examinations/counseling	2871	2664	2798	2732
HIV testing/counseling	1409	1415	1060	819
TB screens and/or treatment	FY 2004/05 = 1292	FY 2006/07 = 1411	FY 2007/08 = 1105	FY 2008/09 = Not available at time of publication

# Family Health

## focus on Hearing and Vision

The Michigan Department of Community Health Hearing and Vision Screening Programs are mandated by law and provide services in all counties in Michigan. By law, all children must be screened for hearing at least once between the ages of 3 and 5 years old, in kindergarten, second and fourth grades. Vision screening takes place at least one time between the ages of 3 and 5 years old, first, third, fifth, seventh, and ninth grades (or in conjunction with driver training). These services are available to all Michigan children through the local health department the family resides in and are free of charge.

**Eligibility for services:** Free hearing and vision screenings are provided to all Washtenaw County children under the age of 21 (age 26 for special education students). Screening is done in the schools (public, private, charter, and preschool) and in the office by appointment.

The program also provides a free Otology Clinic by appointment only for those children identified during screening as having a hearing difficulty.

### **Vision Screenings:**

- **Preschool**
- **Kindergarten**
- **Grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9**
- **Students new to Michigan**
- **Special education students**

### **Hearing Screenings:**

- **Preschool**
- **Kindergarten**
- **Grades 1, 2, 4,**
- **Students new to Michigan**
- **Special education students**

	FY 2007/08	FY 2006/07
Hearing screenings	13,987	12,500
Vision screenings	22,395	22,600

**Early identification of hearing and vision problems can prevent developmental delays that relate to speech and language development, social and emotional development, academic achievement, and permanent vision**



# Emergency Preparedness

## Protecting the Public's Health from Disease, Disasters, and Bioterrorism

The Washtenaw County Public Health Emergency Preparedness division is responsible for coordinating the public health response to a natural or man-made disaster or emergency. In 2008, Pandemic Influenza, Community Mitigation, Mass Prophylaxis, and Natural Disaster planning were the primary focuses for preparedness activities.

**Collaboration** — *We collaborate with our community partners to determine preparedness priorities at the state, regional and local levels.*

- Ensuring the public can quickly and safely receive medications during a major health emergency is one of the most serious challenges facing public health officials. In the fall of 2008 our department, working in conjunction with Huron Valley Ambulance, held a very successful drive-thru flu vaccination clinic at the HVA headquarters in Ann Arbor. More than 280 people enjoyed the ease of the county's first drive-through flu shot clinic.
- If a disease outbreak or other emergency required vaccination of the entire county population, a drive-through clinic is one option Public Health may use to provide vaccines quickly and safely. Events like the drive-through clinic give Public Health an opportunity to practice and to work with community partners all while providing appropriate services. Partners, like HVA, are a critical part of any emergency response in the community.

**Training**— *We are the liaison between Public Health staff, area health care providers, and other partners to ensure they receive the training required to respond to emergency situations.*

**Responsibilities** — *We are also responsible for increasing awareness of:*

- Emergency preparedness at home and at work
- Everyone's role in an emergency response
- The education and training of the entire Public Health staff



### Comments on the 2008 Drive Thru Clinic:

"Price was a very big plus ... and this was just a really convenient thing to do," said Natasha York of Ann Arbor

"I think that HVA and WCPHD have got something going here!.."

# Health Promotion/Disease Prevention

## Substance Abuse Prevention Program

Through the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) project, Washtenaw County Public Health's Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Division has engaged professional and grassroots communities to collect data on underage drinking, build community coalitions, and implement best practice programs. Concerning trends in Dexter and Pinckney, including high youth driving under the influence (DUI) crash rates, led to intense community effort in these two communities and the formation of the Dexter and Pinckney Coalitions to Reduce Underage Drinking.

The Dexter and Pinckney Youth Photovoice projects, held in the fall of 2008, sought to empower high school youth to become actively involved with community change efforts around underage drinking. Youth Photovoice is an innovative public health method used internationally to empower youth and foster dialogue and awareness. A Washtenaw County Public Health staff person worked with Dexter and Pinckney High Schools to recruit a total of 13 high school students and coordinate the program. The program included after-school sessions on defining photo subject matter, the ethics of Photovoice, photography techniques, and training on group facilitation. Students photographed aspects of community life that they felt influenced youth drinking and related traffic crashes, discussed the photos and made selections for the exhibit. Each community hosted a public exhibit of the photos, drawing over 100 community members; at the events, students facilitated conversations about how their photos captured the issue of underage drinking. The photos are being featured at local businesses and establishments around the two communities and on-line.

For more information about the Dexter and Pinckney Coalitions to Reduce Underage Drinking or to view the Youth Photovoice pictures, please visit [www.ewashtenaw.org/stopunderagedrinking](http://www.ewashtenaw.org/stopunderagedrinking) and click on the Photovoice image.



***This photo is showing how the companies are directing their attention to young teenagers. Some children see this and think they are so cute! So they drink them!! To fix this we must teach our children to ignore them and not fall for***

# Special Project for 2008

## ***Unnatural Causes: Is Health Inequity Making Us Sick?***

**UNNATURAL CAUSES** is the acclaimed documentary series, originally airing on PBS, was shared with our community by WCPHD staff. It tackled the root causes of our alarming socio-economic and racial inequities in health and suggests there is much more to our health than bad habits, health care, or unlucky genes. The social circumstances in which we are born, live, and work can actually get under our skin and disrupt our physiology as much as germs and viruses.

The **UNNATURAL CAUSES** series and accompanying impact campaign aim to enlarge our public discourse about health through the following objectives:

- (1) Increase public awareness of our alarming socioeconomic and racial/ethnic inequities in health and their human and financial costs;
- (2) Promote understanding of the various ways in which class, racism and disempowerment can get under the skin and influence health outcomes;
- (3) Illustrate how well-being is not just a matter of making good choices and having access to quality care; our outcomes are inextricably linked - for better and worse - to the social conditions that surround and shape our lives;
- (4) Demonstrate that health inequities affect all of us. On average, the bottom 80% of us have worse health than the rich and powerful. We all bear the financial burden for disease and disability: increased medical costs, lost economic activity, lowered business productivity;
- (5) Move health discussions "upstream" - beyond the individual-focused "repair shop" model of disease and illness to a preventive approach that looks to change the underlying conditions that shape whole group outcomes;
- (6) Link health discussions to social and economic policies - e.g., housing, racism, education, jobs and wages, community development, social supports and tax policy. Evaluate social and economic policies by their health impact, and press for more health-promoting measures;
- (7) Communicate hopeful solutions that draw public and policy maker attention to innovative and community-based initiatives for health equity.

Washtenaw County Public Health staff held several community viewings and discussions on this groundbreaking documentary. Here are some comments people made after watching *Unnatural Causes*:

**"I can tell you first hand that it is hard to stay healthy when the closest stores are "corner stores" that carry a few canned goods, ridiculously high priced bread and milk, along with liquor and lottery tickets. We lived miles away from a grocery store and did not own a car. We walked (to save bus fare) once or twice a month and dragged mostly vegetables (fruit was too high) home in a cart. These vegetables were not pristine."**

**"I am 38 years old and I have high blood pressure and diabetes. I have these conditions because of the ridiculous amounts of cortisol that flow through my body on a daily basis. My husband used to have a good paying job with the post office. Due to a geographical move, he switched jobs. Things just got worse from there and now we are among America's working poor with six kids to take care of."**