



2025 Annual Report

VISION

The Getting Healthy Zone is a community-driven initiative working to increase infant vitality, improve the health of residents and create a community where people want to live, work and visit. The Getting Healthy Zone focuses on census tracts 17, 21 and 23 in the 43608, 43610 and 43620 zip code areas.

GOALS

INCREASE
INFANT
VITALITY

IMPROVE
HEALTH

IMPROVE
ECONOMIC
STABILITY

BEAUTIFY &
PRESERVE
THE
NEIGHBOR-
HOOD

INCREASE
SAFETY &
DECREASE
CRIME

INCREASE
POSITIVE
ACTIVITY,
CARE, &
SUPPORT

BACKGROUND

Concerned about the high infant mortality rate in the neighborhood, Mercy Health brought residents together in 2018 to share their insights, experiences, and perspectives on this issue. Infant mortality is not only a measure of the risk of losing a child during the first year of life—it is also widely recognized as a key barometer of a community's overall health and the well-being of its families. Through these community conversations, a plan was developed to support residents in addressing the social determinants of health, which are recognized as root causes of poor birth outcomes.

We believe in COLLECTIVE IMPACT—the understanding that real change happens when residents and partners from every sector of the community work together toward shared goals. The Getting Healthy Zone operates within this model and is a project of the Cherry Legacy Neighbors Group.

PARTNERS

- Anthem
- Buckeye Health Plan
- CareSource
- Central City Ministry of Toledo
- Children's Theatre Workshop
- City of Toledo
- Empowered Wellness Foundation
- Grace Community Center
- Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio
- Kent and Lagrange Branch Libraries
- LISC
- Lucas County Family and Children First Council- Early Head Start
- Lucas County Suicide Coalition
- Mercy College
- Mercy Health
- Minority Health Commission
- Moms Demand Action
- NAMI
- Nationwide Children's Hospital- Toledo
- Neighborhood Health Association
- Neighborworks- Toledo Region
- Ohio School Safety Center Region 1
- Old West End Association
- Pathway Inc. Brothers United
- Scott HUB



- Seaway Marketplace
- Toledo GROWS
- Toledo- Lucas County Health Dept
- Toledo Museum of Art
- Toledo Olde Towne
- Toledo Tomorrow
- United Health Care
- VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System
- Wayman Palmer Community YMCA
- Warren Sherman Council

Donors:

- The Anoar and Kathy Zacharias Fund
- Jared Kalb-Edward Jones

BSBH Champions for Children Sponsors:

- SSOE
- S & G Management
- Brenda Geiger
- Rosemary Yanik
- Lake Erie Electric
- Owens Corning

PROMOTING INFANT VITALITY

Mercy Health Infant & Family Support Programs

Mercy Health is committed to reducing infant mortality by supporting pregnant women and families with young children. Programs focus on improving birth outcomes, strengthening families, and connecting parents with essential community resources.

Pathways

Guides pregnant women through the healthcare system and helps them access housing, transportation, food, clothing, and baby items.

Help Me Grow & Early Head Start Home Visiting

Provides home-based support for expectant parents and families with children birth to age three, including developmental screenings, parenting education, and connections to community services.

Mother-Child Dependency Program

Supports pregnant women affected by opioid or stimulant use by connecting them with knowledgeable OB providers, encouraging sustained sobriety, and linking families with needed resources.



Community Outreach & Education

Community outreach efforts, including the **Love Your Baby** event at Seaway Marketplace, a **Community Baby Shower**, and the **Kids Don't Come With Instructions** event, engaged more than 100 parents and caregivers, supporting families in creating safe and healthy environments for their infants.



The Getting Healthy Zone supported pregnant and postpartum families by offering bi-monthly **Safe Sleep Ambassador training**. Fifty-four families received Safe Sleep Survival Kits with a cribette, fitted sheets, and a wearable blanket.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Getting Healthy Zone helped residents stay healthy by providing essential screenings, health education, and resources that empower informed choices and better outcomes.



Community Health Screenings- Mercy Health Community Health Nurses **screened 301 residents** during monthly events at the Wayman D. Palmer Community YMCA and the Lagrange Branch Library. Of those screened, **52% had abnormal blood pressure and 17% had abnormal blood glucose levels**, and were connected to needed medical care.

Ask the Expert- Residents joined Mercy Health's virtual Ask the Expert series to learn about glaucoma, Alzheimer's disease, kidney, heart, foot health, diabetes, and more—all from the comfort of home.

Help for Diabetes and Chronic Disease- Forty-one residents participated in Mercy Health's five-week Starting Fresh classes, learning strategies to manage diabetes and other chronic conditions. Participants received healthy recipes, fresh produce, and a complimentary membership to the Wayman D. Palmer Community YMCA, empowering them to take control of their health and wellness.



Health Literacy- MaryAnn Horst, from Ohio Literacy Partners, taught participants about the value of a medical home, choosing the right provider, preparing for appointments, understanding medical terminology, and navigating insurance benefits.

Accessible Mammograms- By visiting multiple neighborhood locations, the Mercy Health Mobile Mammography Van expanded access to preventive care by screening 177 women and helping residents access vital breast health services close to home.



PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING



Gold Star Market at 2123 Lagrange Street expanded its healthy food offerings through the Healthy Food Small Market Program, celebrating its kickoff on November 5, 2025. Funded by the City of Toledo's ARPA dollars and led by the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department, the program supports corner stores in neighborhoods with limited access to fresh food.

Residents participated in hands-on programs throughout the year to

promote healthy eating and wellness. CareSource and Toledo City Parks led **A Taste of African Heritage** and **Art of Eating Healthy**. Toledo-Lucas County Health Department, Toledo GROWS, and Mercy Health sponsored, **Take Care of You and the Earth Too**, sharing urban farming tips and strategies to reduce harmful pollutants.

Mercy Health funded six **healthy cooking classes**—three at Grace Community Center and three at the Friendly Center. Classes focused on affordable, healthy meals using common food pantry items. Participants received cooking tools and fresh produce.

Toledo GROWS supported **11 community gardens** in the Getting Healthy Zone and distributed over 15,000 seed packets to 1,300 attendees at the annual **Seed Swap** at Scott High School.

With funding from Mercy Health, Toledo GROWS made critical improvements to gardens at:

- Sherman School (four new beds, soil, plants, pathways, a composter, and student supplies)
- Glenwood School (two new beds, tools, watering equipment, and garden science materials)
- Collingwood Garden (pathway improvements, raised beds, trees, and a bike rack).

The funding also enabled Toledo GROWS to host educational and community events—including the **Colorful Bites Family Cooking Class**, a **Soil Health Workshop**, a **Honey Harvest Workshop**, **Fall Family Fun Day**, and a **Tea Tasting Experience**.

Food Distribution

- The Wayman D. Palmer YMCA provided food pantry assistance to **2,363 families**.
- Grace Community Center distributed **6,778 Food Boxes**.
- Grace delivered **1,267 produce bags to seniors**.
- An average of 50 residents attended Tasty Tuesdays each week at Grace Community Center.
- **202 residents attended Harvest Fest**, sampling fresh produce from the center's 10,000-square-foot garden.



PROMOTING HEALTH & RECREATION



The **new Wayman Palmer YMCA** officially opened in **March**. The 50,000-square-foot, \$28.6 million facility features a family-friendly indoor pool, an 8,000-square-foot gymnasium, an expanded fitness center with Peloton® equipment, and an outdoor splash pad. Programs include afterschool activities, youth and adult sports, swim lessons, grab-and-go meals, and Head Start classrooms, strengthening the YMCA's role as a welcoming hub for recreation, learning, and community connection.

The neighborhood celebrated the completion of **Inez Nash Park** in October, a \$2.5 million investment featuring walking trails, pickleball courts, a basketball area, playgrounds, an athletic field, and a nature-based play space. Toledo City Parks also demonstrated its commitment to active, healthy neighborhoods by hosting a “Let’s Get Moving” pop-up at Joe E. Brown Park, offering residents accessible, community-based activity opportunities.

Throughout the year, a variety of **wellness events** engaged residents and connected them to vital community resources:

- **Healthy Kids Day:** 200+ children and families explored resources, participated in hands-on activities, and received books, bike helmets, and wellness items.
- **Rise and Thrive:** 400+ residents received free health screenings; 700+ students received new backpacks and supplies; 50 children and adults received free haircuts.



- **Franklin Avenue Medical Center Health Fair:** 120 residents received health screenings.
- **Let’s Get a Healthy Start Back-to-School:** 385 families benefitted from backpacks, school supplies, and health resources thanks to a generous donation from SSOE.
- **Healthy Halloween:** 55 children received toothbrushes, healthy snacks, and health education materials.

PROMOTING ECONOMIC SECURITY

Financial Opportunity Center (FOC)

Housed at Franklin Avenue Medical Center, the FOC served 302 residents in 2025.

- 23% increased their monthly income an average of \$800.14.
- 22% increased their net worth an average of \$4,417.23.
- 15% increased their FICO credit score an average of 58 points.
- Those receiving tax prep services had an average tax refund of \$2,997.83

The FOC, in partnership with Harbor, launched a pilot **Benefits Bridge program** to support individuals transitioning off public benefits as their income increases. The program focuses on job retention and advancement through coaching, peer mentoring, financial literacy, training, and referrals to support long-term employment stability.

Getting Your Business Rolling is an eight-week, no-cost entrepreneurship program that builds economic stability by teaching business planning, marketing, finance, and operations. Each graduate receives a free laptop. In 2025, 29 neighborhood residents completed the program, and 90 residents have graduated since its inception in 2022.



Toledo Tomorrow

- Worked 1-on-1 with 200+ Woodward students
- Connected Woodward students with \$250,000+ in college scholarships
- Tutored 160+ elementary students in literacy skills

Mercy College

Enrolled 36 residents

Mercy Health

Employed 110 residents

PROMOTING SAFETY

Mercy Health and Toledo Police Department joined forces to relocate the Toledo Police Department's Sylvania Avenue substation to the Mercy Health- St. Vincent campus enhancing neighborhood safety and accessibility. This move allows officers to respond more quickly to emergencies in the neighborhood, maintain a visible presence to deter crime, and build stronger connections with residents. Officer Schwab, from the Toledo Police Department regularly attended Cherry Legacy Neighbors Meetings to inform residents about neighborhood crime and share strategies for personal and community safety.

Responsible gun ownership was promoted through the **Be SMART Campaign**. Over 500 gun locks, donated by the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System, were distributed.

BEAUTIFYING & PRESERVING THE NEIGHBORHOOD

NeighborWorks® & Lathrop Service Project

Approximately **70 volunteers**, including Toledo residents, employees from NeighborWorks Toledo Region, The Lathrop Company, and LISC Toledo, came together to support the Toledo Olde Towne neighborhood. Volunteers worked on **10 homes**, providing general landscaping services such as laying mulch, pulling weeds, and planting fresh flowers and greenery. One home on Warren Avenue received a complete porch rebuild, while several others benefited from repairs to fascia, soffits, porch railings, and sidewalks. These collective efforts helped enhance curb appeal, safety, and pride throughout the neighborhood.



The **Core City program**, run by LISC, rehabilitates vacant single-family homes to expand safe, stable homeownership. This year, the program completed a home at **2537 Fulton St.** and has two additional properties currently in progress.

Toledo Olde Towne- Throughout the year, Toledo Olde Towne meetings provided residents with timely information, access to community leaders, and opportunities to shape the neighborhood's future. Topics included scheduled demolitions, guidance on challenging property valuations, and updates on city code compliance. Residents heard from city officials, council leadership, and community partners about neighborhood beautification, tree conditions, and redevelopment plans for key sites.

PROVIDING POSITIVE ACTIVITY, CARE & SUPPORT

Getting Healthy Zone Partners offered a variety of events to build community through care, support, and positive activity. The Toledo Museum of Art hosted **weekly art classes** at the Kent Branch Library, engaging 2–20 children each Tuesday.

In Spring, Mercy Health held a **Health and Hygiene Drive** for local junior and senior high schools.



In December, Warren Sherman Council hosted a **Homecoming Reunion** for 40 residents. The Empowered Wellness Foundation distributed rough **500 coats**. Mercy Health-St. Vincent Medical Center hosted its annual **Tree Lighting Ceremony**, featuring holiday music by the Central Catholic High School Glee Club and a special visit from Santa Claus. The celebration also marked St. Vincent's 170th anniversary of delivering care to the community.

The season of giving continued at Seaway Marketplace, where **Santa distributed 750 toys**—many donated by Mercy Health employees—and at a **holiday Breakfast with Santa** at the Wayman Palmer YMCA, attended by 176 residents.



Summer activities included a **Movie Night** at Glenwood Park hosted by Toledo City Parks, which drew 115 residents. Over 300 youth participated in a **Football Camp** at Central Catholic HS, and nearly 300 youth attended a **Basketball Camp** at Scott High School, both sponsored by CareSource.

Fall events included Toledo GROWS' **Fun on the Farm** for 45 youth, an indoor **Trick-or-Treat** at Woodward High School for 400 children, the Scott High School **Trunk-or-Treat** for over 150 youth, and Wayman Palmer YMCA's **Harvest Fest**, which welcomed over 300 participants.



CELEBRATING PROGRESS



In 2018, the 43608, 43610, and 43620 ZIP codes accounted for 12% of all infant deaths in Lucas County. By 2024, that number had dropped dramatically to just 2.5%, based on preliminary data from the Toledo- Lucas County Health Department. This remarkable improvement reflects the collective efforts of families, community partners, and health organizations working together to create safer, healthier environments for mothers and babies.

As we await the release of 2025 data from the Ohio Department of Health, the momentum generated by these efforts and the sustained engagement of the community give us strong confidence that continued prevention, education, and support initiatives will further strengthen maternal and infant health outcomes.

GET INVOLVED

Attend Cherry Legacy Neighbor Meetings

2nd Thursday from 11:30 to 1:00
Bimonthly at Wayman Palmer YMCA
(February, April, June, August,
October, December)

Contact:

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WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

