

# Foreword

We are pleased to present the 2009 Allen County Community Needs Assessment.

Since the late 1980s a variety of Allen County agencies have prepared and administered individual needs assessments and community health assessments. This report marks the second community assessment undertaken by a broad group of community agencies, with the first being completed in 2002. Over the years, these assessments have shown that **individual health is closely linked to community health** – the health of the community and environment in which individuals live, work, and play. Likewise, the community is profoundly affected by the collective behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of the people who live there. This assessment was designed to identify the **community issues, behavioral health issues, and physical health issues** that residents of Allen County currently face, and to track the progress from previous assessments, where applicable. A new feature of this 2009 assessment is the inclusion of data from an Allen County youth survey. These youth will be our young adults for the next community needs assessment. Needs assessments are generally time and money consuming projects and so, are only completed periodically. Consider this report a “snapshot” of where the county stands in 2009 on the identified issues.

We invite individuals, agencies and communities to take an active role in creating a better Allen County.

<b>Individuals</b> can and must do more to <b>promote their own health:</b>	Individuals can also <b>get involved</b> in their <b>community:</b>
• maintain an active lifestyle	• volunteering for /attending neighborhood events
• choose healthy foods	• volunteering for /attending community events
• avoid tobacco alcohol and drugs	• volunteering for /attending church events
• spend time with family and children	
• be a good role model in the community	

**Community agencies** can use this data to:

- develop action plans,
- seek funding to address the issues identified, and
- measure their impact on the community.

This report would not have been possible without the assistance of a number of community leaders and organizations. We thank them for their support in making this health assessment a reality. We especially thank the residents of Allen County who responded to our community survey.

Through individual and group efforts, as well as partnerships, we can continue to make Allen County a better, healthier place to live. Let’s expand on achievements in the community, address the concerns identified, and reverse unfavorable trends. Community support is critical both now, and in the future, as we address the issues in this report, and long-term, as we evaluate our progress through future needs assessments.

Sincerely,

The Allen County Health Risk and Community Needs Assessment Committee

# Acknowledgements

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Allen County Healthy People 2010  
The Allen County Health Department  
Lima Memorial Health System  
Mental Health and Recovery Services Board  
The Ohio State University at Lima  
St. Rita's Medical Center  
United Way of Greater Lima

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