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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*Ready. Set. Action! Essex County Health Department Celebrates National Public Health Week.*

**Elizabethtown, N.Y.** In recognition of **National Public Health Week**, April 6-12, the Essex County Health Department (ECHD) is proud to highlight the essential work happening every day to protect and improve the health of our community. This year's theme, "Ready. Set. Action!" recognizes through daily observances how public health has improved our lives, safeguarded our families, expanded our life spans, and strengthened our communities. This week is also a chance to honor the public health workers who show up for us - and to advocate for policies and practices that promote good health for all.

Serving a geographically large and mostly rural area, ECHD delivers a wide range of programs and services that address both immediate health needs and long-term wellness. From preventing chronic disease to responding to emergencies, the department plays a critical role in keeping residents safe, informed, and healthy.

"Public health is often most visible during emergencies, as we saw first-hand with the COVID-19 pandemic. But, our work happens every day in ways both big and small," said Linda Beers, Director of Public Health for ECHD. "In a rural community like ours, access, trust, and partnerships are key—and we're committed to meeting people where they are."

**Supporting Health Across the Lifespan**

ECHD provides comprehensive programs and services that touch every stage of life, including:

- **Chronic Disease Prevention:** Implementing engaging community-based campaigns to reduce risk factors such as tobacco use, poor nutrition, cancer screenings, and physical inactivity.
- **Communicable Disease Prevention & Control:** Monitoring, investigating, and responding to infectious diseases to prevent spread and protect community health.
- **Immunizations:** Offering routine and seasonal vaccines to children and adults as a safety net provider, helping prevent serious illness and outbreaks.
- **Reproductive Health Outreach & Education:** Providing education and resources to support informed decision-making and healthy outcomes.

**Investing in Families and Future Generations**

Recognizing that early support leads to lifelong health, the department also offers:

- **Universal Home Visiting Program:** Connecting families welcoming new babies to trained professionals who provide guidance, resources, and support during the critical early months of life. This includes referrals to other services, like WIC and Early Intervention.
- **Lead Poisoning Prevention:** Educating families about lead testing, exposure risks and promoting safe, healthy home environments.
- **Car Seat Safety:** Ensuring children travel safely through car seat education, inspections, installation support, and distribution programs.



### **Prepared for What Comes Next**

Emergency preparedness is a cornerstone of public health. ECHD works year-round to plan for and respond to public health emergencies, natural disasters, and other crises - coordinating with local, regional, and state partners to ensure a rapid and effective response when it matters most.

### **Data-Driven Community Health Improvement**

Through our **Community Health Assessment (CHA)** and **Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)** processes, the department collaborates with our hospitals and community partners to identify priority health needs, address disparities, and implement strategies that improve overall health outcomes.

### **Communication**

One of the most important and overarching ways we accomplish all of this is through continued communication and engagement with our residents, partners, and stakeholders – and it is a two-way street. We strive to provide timely, accurate, and actionable health information through the lens of staff who live and raise families in the communities we serve. We seek input and feedback - from praise to suggestions...to areas we can do better - we are listening and we work to improve!

### **A Commitment to Rural Health**

Rural communities face unique challenges, including limited access to healthcare services and greater distances to care. ECHD is dedicated to overcoming these barriers through innovation, partnerships, and a deep understanding of local needs.

“Public health is about prevention, equity, and community,” added Jessica Darney Buehler, Deputy Director/Director of Health Planning & Promotion for ECHD. “During National Public Health Week, we celebrate not only *our* work but the partnerships and people who make a healthier community possible.”

### **Learn More**

Residents are encouraged to learn more about available programs and services by visiting [health.essexcountyny.gov](http://health.essexcountyny.gov).

To learn more about National Public Health Week, go to <https://nphw.org> and be sure to visit our social media pages - Facebook and/or Instagram - for daily highlights throughout National Public Health Week @essexcountynyhealth.

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