

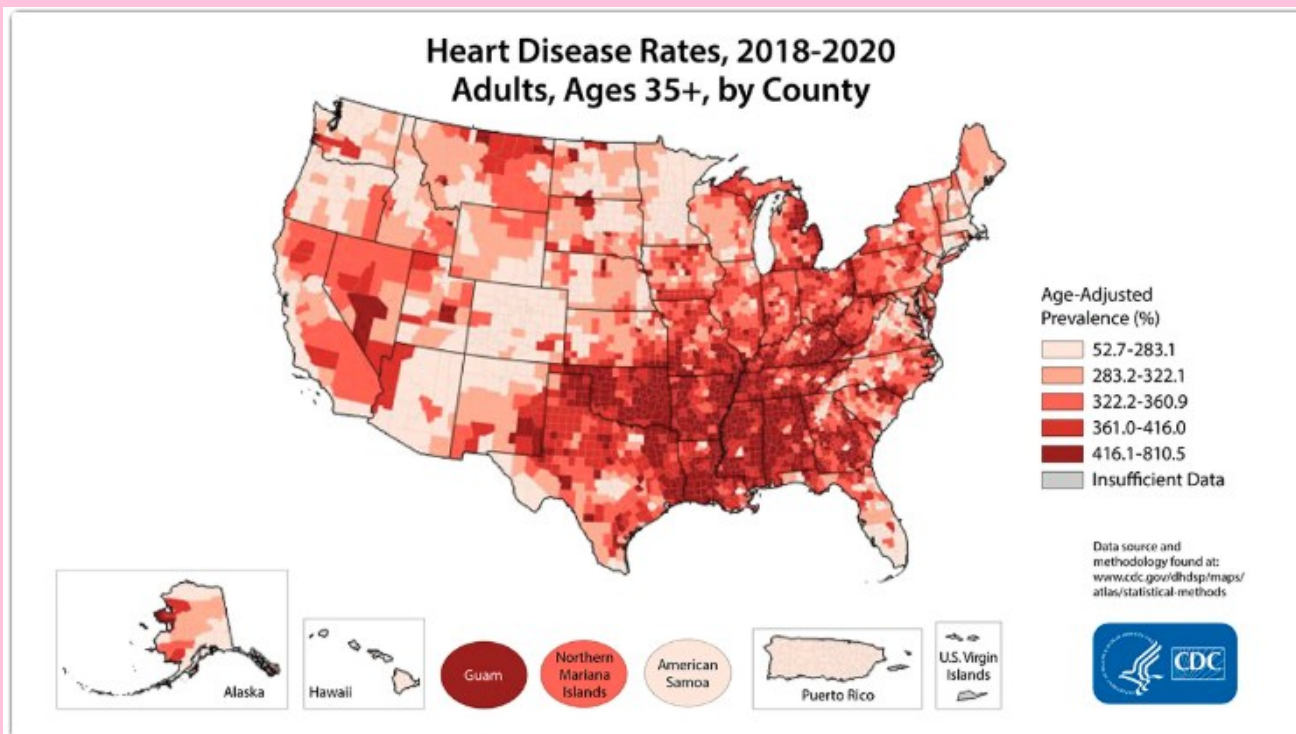
# TORRINGTON AREA HEALTH DISTRICT

350 Main Street, Suite A Torrington, CT 06790  
Phone (860) 489-0436 Fax (860) 496-8243

Providing local public health services for the Borough of Bantam, Bethlehem, Canaan, Cornwall, Goshen, Harwinton, Kent, Borough of Litchfield, Litchfield, Middlebury, Morris, Norfolk, North Canaan, Plymouth, Salisbury, Thomaston, Torrington, Warren, Watertown & Winsted.

## February 2026 Newsletter American Heart Month

In the United States heart disease is the **leading cause of death** for men, women, and people of most racial and ethnic groups. One person dies **every 34 seconds** from cardiovascular disease. In 2023, **919,032 people died from cardiovascular disease**. That's the equivalent of **1 in every 3 deaths**. Heart disease cost about **\$417.9 billion** from 2020 to 2021. This includes the cost of health care services, medicines, and lost productivity due to death.



Heart Disease Death Rates, 2018-2020 for Adults, Ages 35+, by County.



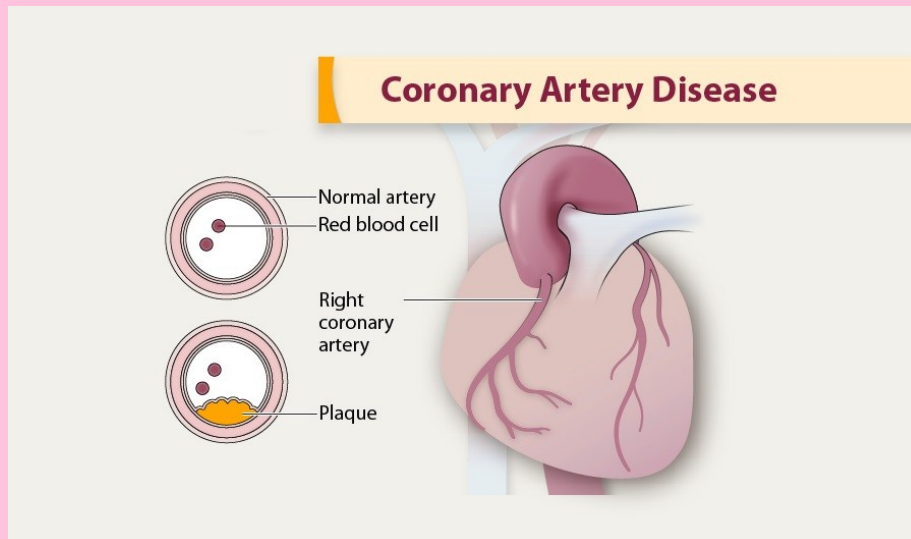
### Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 8:00am to 4:00pm.  
Wednesday: 8:00am to 6:00pm, Friday: 8:00am to 1:00pm.  
Follow us on social media and [www.tahd.org](http://www.tahd.org)



## CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE (CAD)

Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease. It killed 371,506 people in 2022. About **1 in 20 adults** age 20 and older have CAD (about 5%). In 2023, about 1 out of every 6 deaths from cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) was among adults younger than 65 years old.



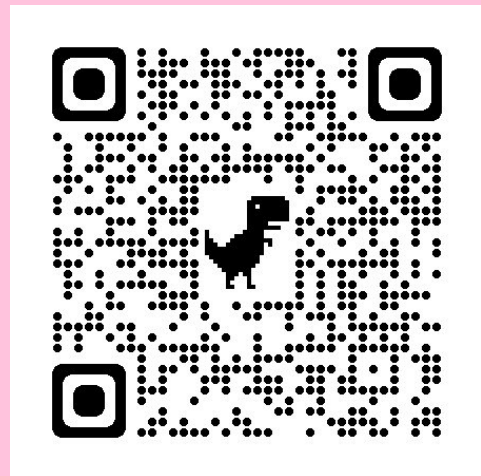
Coronary artery disease is caused by plaque buildup in the wall of the arteries that supply blood to the heart (called coronary arteries). Plaque is made up of cholesterol deposits. Plaque buildup causes the inside of the arteries to narrow over time. This process is called atherosclerosis.

## HEART ATTACK

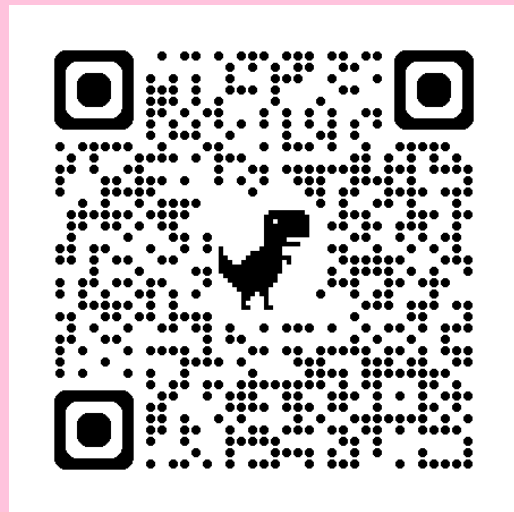
In the United States, someone has a heart attack every 40 seconds. Every year, about **805,000 people** in the United States have a heart attack. Of these, 605,000 are a first heart attack, and 200,000 happen to be people who have already had a heart attack. About 1 in 5 heart attacks are silent—the damage is done, but the person is not aware of it.



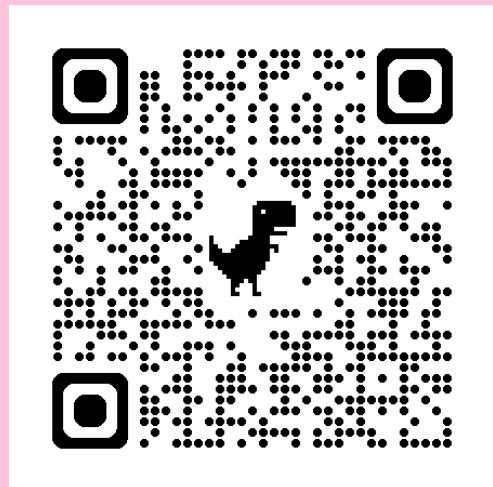
## About Heart Disease



## Know Your Risk for Heart Disease



## Prevent Heart Disease



## February is Children's Dental Health Awareness Month



**National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM)** is a *U.S. health observance held every February* to highlight the importance of good oral hygiene and dental care for children. It's sponsored by the **American Dental Association (ADA)** and brings together dental professionals, educators, parents, caregivers, and communities to promote healthy habits that can last a lifetime.

**Mission:** To educate families and the public about preventive oral health care — such as brushing, flossing, proper nutrition, and regular dental check-ups — and how these habits support overall health.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Healthy oral habits in childhood are foundational for a lifetime of good dental health. Tooth decay (cavities) is one of the *most common preventable chronic diseases* affecting kids, and early education and prevention help reduce pain, missed school days, and long-term dental issues.

### COMMON THEMES & ACTIVITIES

Communities, schools, dental offices, and families often mark the month with:

- **Educational campaigns and activities** about brushing, flossing, and nutrition.
- **Free resources** such as posters, coloring sheets, and activity guides for kids and teachers.
- **Classroom presentations, dental screenings, and health fairs.**
- **“Give Kids A Smile” events** offering free dental services to underserved children (part of ADA Foundation efforts).

### SIMPLE ORAL HEALTH TIPS FOR KIDS

Even outside official events, these habits support lasting oral health:

- Brush *twice a day* with fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss daily.
- Eat a balanced diet with limited sugary snacks/drinks.
- Visit a dentist regularly for check-ups and preventive care.

<https://www.ada.org/resources/community-initiatives/national-childrens-dental-health-month>

# Brushing Fights Cavities, Bruh



I brush my teeth twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste to keep my smile strong.

For more resources, visit: [MouthHealthy.org](https://www.MouthHealthy.org)



Place the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the gums and move the brush back and forth gently in short strokes.



Brush the outer surfaces, the inside surfaces and the chewing surfaces of all teeth.



To clean the inside surface of the front teeth, tilt the brush vertically and make several up-and-down strokes.



Brush your tongue to remove bacteria and keep your breath fresh.



## The what, why & how of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM)

### WHAT IS DATING ABUSE?

Dating abuse is a pattern of destructive behaviors that exerts power and control over a dating partner. While we define dating violence as a pattern, that doesn't mean the first instance of abuse is not dating violence. It just recognizes that dating violence usually involves a series of abusive behaviors over a course of time.

Teen dating violence is more common than many people think. One in three teens in the U.S. will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse by someone they are in a relationship with before they become adults. And nearly half (43%) of college women report experiencing violent and abusive dating behaviors. [Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month](#) aims to educate young people on the prevalence of dating violence and how they can prevent it.

This year's theme cuts through the noise by focusing on what real love should look and feel like. In a world full of mixed messages, this theme centers around one truth: respect is non-negotiable. It empowers youth to recognize harmful patterns early and to expect more from love. Because respect is everything, it's earned, it's honest, and it never makes you question your worth.

Remember: If it's real, it's respectful.

2026-TDVAM-Action-Guide



# Chicken and Fish Soup with Vegetables Recipe

Chicken and smoked mackerel replace beef and Kobi, a popular Ghanaian fish, in this version of light soup.

**Prep Time:** 20 minutes

**Cooking Time:** 35 minutes

## Ingredients

3 (3-ounce) trimmed, boneless, skinless chicken thighs  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1 large plum tomato  
2-inch piece peeled ginger root, cut in half lengthwise  
¼ small purple eggplant, peeled  
¼ small onion  
½ serrano chili pepper  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
1 teaspoon shrimp powder  
6 ounces smoked mackerel, diced (optional skin removed)  
1⅓ cup frozen cut okra  
⅔ cup fresh basil, chopped



## Directions

1. In a 3-quart saucepan over medium-high heat, add 4 cups water, chicken, salt, tomato, ginger, eggplant, onion and serrano and cover with lid.
2. Maintain a rapid simmer and cook 15 minutes or until eggplant is knife-tender and chicken is cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F (74°C).
3. Turn off heat and use tongs to remove chicken and place on a cutting board to cool.
4. Using tongs, place vegetables in a blender with tomato paste, shrimp powder and 2 cups water. Blend until smooth.

Dice chicken and add to saucepan with blended vegetables, smoked mackerel and okra. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook 10 to 15 minutes or until hot. Add most of the basil, keeping some out for garnish.

## Cooking Note

For a spicier flavor, substitute habanero pepper in place of serrano chili pepper. Dark miso can be used in place of shrimp powder.

## Nutrition Information

*Serves:* 5

*Serving Size:* 1⅓ cup (404 grams)

198 calories, 11g total fat, 3g saturated fat, 69mg cholesterol, 554mg sodium, 7g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 3g sugar, 18g protein, NA potassium, NA phosphorus

*This recipe originally appeared in Food & Nutrition Magazine®, published by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.*

**Source:** [https://www.eatright.org/recipes/soups-and-stews/chicken-and-fish-soup-with-vegetables-recipe?fbclid=IwY2xjawPTLPleHRuA2FlbQLxMQBicmlkETFqT09pOGFGc2VrWFhGRndpc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjIyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHkpMB7FyhMLipWf1GWSm3JF1BPUwelbxuWVhcnIjqdVXu5Fo6x9hfgpD9kOy\\_aem\\_uzshkGtMhqv-cssEaWvs8g](https://www.eatright.org/recipes/soups-and-stews/chicken-and-fish-soup-with-vegetables-recipe?fbclid=IwY2xjawPTLPleHRuA2FlbQLxMQBicmlkETFqT09pOGFGc2VrWFhGRndpc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjIyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHkpMB7FyhMLipWf1GWSm3JF1BPUwelbxuWVhcnIjqdVXu5Fo6x9hfgpD9kOy_aem_uzshkGtMhqv-cssEaWvs8g)

## Processed Foods: A Closer Look



Processed food has a bad reputation as a diet saboteur. It's blamed for obesity rates, high blood pressure and the rise of Type 2 diabetes. But processed food is more than instant meals, potato chips and drive-thru hamburgers. It may be a surprise to learn that whole-wheat bread, homemade soup or a chopped apple also are processed foods.

While some processed foods should be consumed less often, many actually have a place in your daily routine.

### What Is Processed Food?

"Processed foods" include those that have been cooked, canned, frozen, packaged or nutritionally altered by fortifying, preserving or preparing it in different ways. In other words, any time we cook, bake or prepare a food, we're creating a processed food.

Processed foods fall on a spectrum from minimally to heavily processed:

- Minimally processed foods — such as bagged spinach, cut vegetables and roasted nuts — often are simply prepared in advance for convenience.
- Other foods with less processing include those processed at their peak to lock in nutritional quality and freshness like canned tomatoes, frozen fruits and vegetables, and canned tuna.
- The next set of processed foods would be those with ingredients added for flavor and texture (which may include sweeteners, spices, oils, colors and preservatives), including items like pasta sauce, yogurt and cake mixes.

Ready-to-eat foods — such as crackers, cereal and deli meat — are more heavily processed.

### Shop Smart When Selecting Processed Foods

Certain processed foods can help you eat more nutrient-dense foods. Milk and juices may be fortified with calcium and vitamin D, and breakfast cereals may be fortified with iron and fiber. Canned fruit (packed in water or its own juice) is a good option when fresh fruit is not available. And minimally processed foods such as pre-cut vegetables and pre-washed, bagged spinach are quality convenience foods for busy people.

If you want to minimize your intake of processed food, aim to do more food prep and cooking at home. Base meals on whole foods including vegetables, beans and whole grains.

## Look for Hidden Sugar and Sodium

Some processed foods may contain higher amounts of added sugar and sodium, so it's always helpful to check the Nutrition Facts Label.

### Added Sugars

Added sugars are any type of sugar that is not naturally occurring in a specific food. Instead, these sugars are added during processing. Added sugars aren't just those in desserts or sodas. Sugars are added to bread to give it a golden brown hue, as well as many jarred pasta sauces and cereals. They can also show up in items that are already sweet — such as juice or canned fruit.

The Nutrition Facts Label specifies how many grams of added sugars are in a product, as well as the total amount of sugar. Another way to look for added sugars is to review a product's ingredient list and look for added sugars among the first two or three ingredients (these include sugar, maltose, brown sugar, corn syrup, cane sugar, honey and fruit juice concentrate). Ingredients are listed by weight so the first two or three ingredients are the most prevalent.

Learn more about the Nutrition Facts Label by visiting the [FDA website](#).

### Sodium

Processed foods also can be major contributors of sodium in our diets because salt is commonly added to preserve foods and extend shelf life. Most canned vegetables, soups and sauces have added salt. Choose foods labeled no salt added, low-sodium or reduced-sodium to decrease the amount of salt you're consuming from processed foods.

Source: <https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/diet-trends/processed-foods-whats-ok-and-what-to-avoid>

# LEAD RECALL

## IKM Recalls Product Because of Possible Health Risk

**Company Name:** IKM

**Brand Name:** IKM

**Product Description:** Metal Cookware Items

### Company Announcement

IKM of San Jose, California is recalling the following cookware items because they may be contaminated with significant levels of lead (Pb) which may leach into food.

- A-cook Aluminum Kadai size 5 (43 pcs)
- Brass Tope (10 pcs)
- IKM 4-quart Pital brass pot (9 pcs)
- IKM Aluminum saucepan wooden handle 9" (56 pcs)

Lead is toxic to humans and can affect people of any age or health status, and there is no known safe level of exposure to lead. Even low levels of lead exposure can cause serious health problems, particularly in children and fetuses. Consuming food with elevated lead levels can contribute to elevated levels of lead in the blood. Children and babies are more susceptible to lead toxicity due to their smaller body size, metabolism, and rapid growth. At low levels, children may not have obvious symptoms but can still experience trouble learning, low IQ, and behavior changes. At higher levels of lead exposure, people may experience fatigue, headache, stomach pain, vomiting, or neurologic changes.

Products were distributed in California to grocery stores mainly in these cities: Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, Fremont, Hayward, Pittsburg, Milpitas, Tracy, Manteca, Dublin, El Cerrito, Richmond, Hercules, San Jose, Fresno, Pleasanton, Roseville and Sacramento

To identify these metal cookware items, begin by distinguishing them by their specific alloy and structural design. The A-cook Aluminum Kadai is a silver-toned, wok-style vessel characterized by its wide, curved basin and lacks a long handle, whereas the Aluminum Saucepan is easily recognized by its 9-inch diameter and the presence of a wooden handle attached to its silver aluminum body. The brass items are identifiable by their distinct golden hues: the Brass Tope resembles a standard stock pot with a bright, golden finish, while the 4-quart Pital Brass Pot features a more specialized deep body and a narrow mouth with a characteristic dull or matte gold appearance.



# LEAD RECALL

## Gusto Group Inc. Recalls Shrimp Paste (Klong Kone) '454 G. (1 LBS)' and '910 G. (2 LBS)' because of Possible Health Risk

**Company Name:** Gusto Group Inc.

**Brand Name:** Klong Kone

**Product Description:** Klong Kone Shrimp Paste

### Company Announcement

Gusto Group Inc. of Paterson, NJ is recalling [Klong Kone] Shrimp Paste (Klong Kone) '454 G. (1 LBS)' and '910 G. (2 LBS)' because it has the potential to be contaminated with elevated levels of lead.

Short term exposures to very low levels of lead may not elicit any symptoms. It is possible that increased blood lead levels may be the only apparent sign of lead exposure. Additional signs and symptoms of lead exposure are more likely with acute exposure to higher levels of lead or chronic exposure to lead. While lead can affect nearly every bodily system, its effects depend upon the amount and duration of lead exposure and age/ body weight. If a child is exposed to enough lead for a protracted period of time (e.g., weeks to months) permanent damage to the central nervous system may occur. This can result in learning disorders, developmental defects, and other long-term health problems. For adults, chronic lead exposure is associated with kidney dysfunction, hypertension, and neurocognitive effects.

The recalled product was directly distributed to the two retailers listed below, located IA and NJ , between April 2023 to December 2023 There were no online sales.

1. Golden Land (Des Moines)  
2740 Douglas Ave  
Des Moines IA 50310  
Tel: 515-468-8224

2. Terri Lee Oriental Groceries.  
225 Maywood Ave.  
Maywood NJ 07607  
Tel: 201-843-7919

The recalled [Klong Kone] Shrimp Paste (Klong Kone) "454 G. (1 LBS)" and "910 G. (2 LBS)," is packaged in a white plastic jar with a red cap. The product is a dark-colored paste with a salty flavor. The product was Packed and Distributed By: P. Prateepthong 2000, Product of Thailand.

### The recalled product was sold in two sizes:

[Klong Kone] Shrimp Paste (Klong Kone) '454 G. (1 LBS)' , with UPC: 8853142000313, Product Code: DPA159

[Klong Kone] Shrimp Paste (Klong Kone) '910 G. (2 LBS)' , with UPC: 8853142000320, Product Code: DPA161

To date, there has been one report of four children becoming ill, which involved diarrhea and elevated blood levels. This recall was initiated following this report of illness associated with consumption of the product. The FDA collected product samples from retail locations and lab analysis found that the finished products contained elevated levels of lead. The company has ceased distribution of this lot. The company is currently investigating the cause of the issue.

<https://www.fda.gov/safety/recalls-market-withdrawals-safety-alerts/gusto-group-inc-recalls-shrimp-paste-klong-kone-454-g-1-lbs-and-910-g-2-lbs-because-possible-health>





The CT WiZ Public Portal allows individuals who were vaccinated in Connecticut to access their own immunization records, while parents and guardians can also access their child's records. You have the option of getting a PDF copy of your full immunization record, or your COVID-19 vaccine record that contains your SMART Health card, which is a digital copy of your COVID-19 vaccine record that can be stored on your phone as a QR code. (Note: CT DPH does not issue replacement 'CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Cards' to the public.)

A Parent's Vaccine Guide is currently in review, with plans to soft launch in December. The guide is part of our *Protect Who Matters Most* campaign which will fully launch during World Immunization Week: April 24-30, 2026.

- Vaccine Educational Materials:



- Vaccine Guide
  - What are Vaccines
  - A-Z of Vaccines
  - Vaccine Schedules by Age
  - Myth-busting
  - Finding Reliable Sources
- Checklists, social posts, etc. will be created from the guide



# Important Update: Connecticut Guidance Regarding Federal Childhood Immunization Schedule Changes

This communication outlines key updates regarding the recently announced changes to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) childhood and adolescent immunization schedule and clarifies immunization practices, school requirements, and vaccine access in Connecticut.

## **Key Points:**

- Connecticut's childhood immunization schedule and school requirements remain unchanged and continue to be based on long-standing, evidence-based recommendations consistent with established standards of care.
- All childhood vaccines remain available and covered by insurance, including Medicaid and the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program; families should not delay vaccination due to concerns about access or cost.
- Shared clinical decision-making has long been standard practice, and the shift from universal to shared decision-making vaccine recommendations does not require a change in care. Providers should continue to make strong vaccine recommendations and provide patients and parents with reliable, accurate information on the benefits and risks of vaccination.

## **Federal Immunization Schedule Update**

On January 5, 2026, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced revisions to the CDC's childhood immunization schedule, reducing the number of vaccines universally recommended for children from approximately 17 diseases to 11. This change occurred without the introduction of new scientific evidence supporting a change in vaccine safety, effectiveness, or disease risk.

Read [Governor Lamont's Statement on Trump Administration Overhaul of Childhood Vaccine Schedule](#)

Read [Statement from CTDPH Commissioner Juthani on federal change to the US vaccine schedule](#)

## **Connecticut Immunization Policy and Standard of Care**

Connecticut's childhood immunization schedule and school immunization requirements have not changed.

Under Connecticut law (CGS § 19a-7f), the Commissioner of Public Health determines the immunization standard of care based on evidence-based recommendations from CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP).

In the absence of new scientific evidence supporting a change, Connecticut will continue to follow the previously approved, evidence-based immunization schedule. This version of the schedule has been endorsed by the AAP and AAFP and should continue to be followed by providers.

AAP Immunization Schedule: <https://publications.aap.org/redbook/resources/15585/>

AAFP Immunization Schedule: <https://www.aafp.org/family-physician/patient-care/prevention-wellness/immunizations-vaccines/immunization-schedules/birth-through-age-18-immunization-schedule.html>

## School and Childcare Requirements

Immunization requirements for childcare, youth camps, and pre-kindergarten through grade 12 remain fully in effect under Connecticut law (CGS § 10-204a) and corresponding regulations. There are no changes to required vaccines for school enrollment or attendance.

## Childhood Vaccine Availability and Access

There are no changes to the Connecticut Vaccine Program (CVP). CVP providers will continue to be able to order all recommended childhood vaccines according to the standard of care in Connecticut.

Vaccines remain covered by public and private insurance plans, including Medicaid and the VFC Program, consistent with federal and state law. Families should not delay or forgo vaccination due to concerns about coverage or availability.

**Read the full guidance on Connecticut's Childhood Immunization Schedule and School Requirements [here](#).**

## Shared Clinical Decision-Making

The evidence supporting the safety and effectiveness of childhood vaccines has not changed. While some vaccines are now categorized at the federal level as “shared clinical decision-making” or risk-based, it is important to emphasize that every vaccine decision has always involved discussion between providers, parents, and patients.

Providers play a critical role in helping families understand:

- the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases,
- the benefits and safety of vaccination, and
- how individual risk factors may apply to their child.

For the purposes of shared clinical decision-making, a healthcare provider should discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination with a patient and their family. The CDC defines a healthcare provider as anyone who provides or administers vaccines: primary care physicians, specialists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and pharmacists.

**Get additional information about shared clinical decision-making [here](#).**

Vaccines that may prompt additional discussion, such as the hepatitis B birth dose, hepatitis A, meningococcal vaccines, and influenza—are safe, remain strongly recommended, and continue to be essential for protecting children's health.



## Resources

Here are some resources that may help when responding to vaccine related questions:

[Communicating with Families and Promoting Vaccine Confidence](#), AAP

[Connecting the Dots: Vaccine Confidence](#), Association of Immunization Managers

[Standalone Immunization Counseling](#), AAP

[All About the AAP Recommended Immunization Schedule](#), healthychildren.org

[Vaccine Resources](#), Common Health Coalition

[Preparation: Routine Childhood Vaccination Schedule and Denmark Announcement](#), The Evidence Collective

[Viewpoint: The myth of an over-vaccinated America: The US DOES follow global consensus](#), Vaccine Integrity Project Staff and Advisers, CIDRAP, University of Minnesota, December 22, 2025

## TOP NEWS

### **Vaccination Trends through the CDC (as of January 16, 2026):**

- Percentage who reported receipt of 2025–26 COVID-19 vaccine: 7.6% children and 17.3% adults age 18+
- Percentage who reported receipt of flu vaccine: 44.2% children and 45.5% adults age 18+
- Percentage of adults age 75+ who reported ever receiving the RSV vaccine: 42.7%

Learn more at [Vaccination Trends | Respiratory Illnesses | CDC](#)

### **Respiratory Virus Activity Levels through the CDC (as of January 16, 2026):**

- COVID-19 Activity: nationally is increasing from low levels
- RSV Activity: elevated in many areas of the country
- Flu Activity: remains elevated across the country

Acute respiratory illness causing people to seek health care: moderate

Learn more at [Respiratory Virus Activity Levels | Respiratory Illnesses | CDC](#)

## TAHD EMPLOYEE/INTERN NEWS



**Kevin Patraw**  
Sanitarian

**Carmen Neale**  
Trusted Community  
Messenger & Public  
Health Interpreter



**Phyllis Amodio**  
Registered Sanitarian

# Meet Your Local Health Department



On January 22, Torrington Area Health District hosted a *Meet Your Local Health Department* event that brought together state legislators, including representatives and senators, members of the TAHD Board of Health, and TAHD staff.

The event highlighted TAHD's Environmental Health and Community Health programs, Emergency Preparedness responsibilities, and the successes and challenges facing local health departments across Connecticut.

We were pleased to welcome elected officials and community leaders Tim Waldron, William Hudock, Thomas Breakell, Louis G. Timolat, Henri Martin, Maria Horn, John Piscopo, Paul Honig, and Joe Canino.

TAHD leadership and staff in attendance included Robert Rubbo, Patricia Miglowiec, Justin Rompre, Brien Laforge, and Anastasiya Domnich-Kovalevsky.

The event highlighted the scope of local public health work and the role of local health departments in protecting community health.

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

# No Cost Treatment for Alcohol and Drug Use!

Mass General Brigham IRB  
APPROVAL EFFECTIVE DATE  
3/14/2025

## Ages 14-21

This is an opportunity to receive online or in-person treatment at no cost, plus up to \$250 for research participation.

## 10 Talk Therapy Sessions | No Medications



The study includes:

- Quick phone screen for eligibility
- Baseline research assessment
- 2 individual treatment sessions
- 8 group sessions
- 3, 6, 9, 12 month follow-up assessments

**If interested, please call study staff at 959-529-4538  
or email [youthrecoveryprogram@uchc.edu](mailto:youthrecoveryprogram@uchc.edu).**

All calls and emails are confidential

[h.uconn.edu/youth-recovery-program](http://h.uconn.edu/youth-recovery-program)

**UConn**  
**HEALTH**

Principal Investigator: Yifrah Kamtner, M.D.  
IRB# 024-054-1



## COMMUNITY UPDATES

# Town of **WINCHESTER** *Connecticut*

## PRESENTS: SARAH TOOMEY Winsted Cares Coordinator



**Sarah Toomey**

Community Outreach & Recovery Navigator at  
Greenwoods Counseling & Referrals, Inc.

Email: [stoomey@greenwoodsreferrals.org](mailto:stoomey@greenwoodsreferrals.org)

Call/text: (860) 309-3845

Strengthening Winsted's response to substance use, mental health challenges, social service referrals, and emergency services support.

### SERVICES

- Navigating recovery options
- Social service referrals
- Addressing barriers to care
- Care coordination
- Community outreach
- Supporting vulnerable populations
- Supporting businesses and first responders

### WINSTED OFFICE HOURS

Town Hall: Fridays 8:00 - 11:00

Soup Kitchen: Wednesday & Friday 11:15 - 12:30

Community outreach: Friday 12:30-4:00

Winsted Town Hall: Wednesdays 8:30-11:00, 12:30-4:30

By appointment M, T, TH



**GREENWOODS**  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

# COMMUNITY UPDATES



## RECOVERING TOGETHER

*A support group for families caring for a loved one with a substance use disorder.*

Substance use disorders affect the entire family—spouses, children, siblings, other relatives, and friends. This group offers support and guidance for anyone caring for a loved one, whether they're actively using or in any stage of recovery.

**Every Wednesday from 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

Attend in person or join us on Zoom.

**Trained counselors will help you learn about:**

- The stages of addiction, recovery, and change.
- Codependency, enabling, and their impact on recovery.
- The science of addiction and how it affects the brain.
- Understanding and preparing for return to use.
- Family roles, addiction within a family, and family rules.

**To RSVP, contact:**

Ewa Szura, LMSW, Residential Clinician



“

*“It was helpful to hear other people’s perspectives on the situation. I learned skills that I wish I knew years ago, which would have reduced my stress level.”*

”

*“We get support by sharing our own personal experiences with peers. We learn about ourselves and how our loved one’s disease has affected us. We develop skills to handle our issues and cope better.”*

# COMMUNITY UPDATES



Susan B. Anthony Project  
SAFETY • HEALING • GROWTH



## TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Join us in supporting survivors of teen dating violence by spreading awareness this February.

Read on to learn how you can get involved!

Wear **ORANGE** in support of survivors of Teen Dating Violence on **February 10th, 2026**



Host a free screening of "The Last Drop", a sci-fi film about relationship abuse. This film follows a couple who use new technology to relive past experiences together. This film demonstrates how survivors may not recognize patterns of abuse during the initial stages of a new relationship.

Invite our Outreach and Prevention Education team to speak with your students. We offer many fun, age-appropriate lessons with the goal to equip students with skills to reduce harmful behavior and increase their safety. Visit <https://sbaproject.org/school-programs/> to view our course offerings.



Host a registration table for "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes". "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" is an international men's march where men and boys lead the way on the road to end sexual and domestic violence. Our team will help students find their iconic red heel size and register their teams for the walk occurring on May 17th, 2026. Any shoes you choose, all are welcome at Walk a Mile in Her Shoes.

**CONTACT US**

**EMAIL: [OPE@SBAPROJECT.ORG](mailto:OPE@SBAPROJECT.ORG) CALL: 860-489-3798**

# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## Start Here for Community Health – February 2026



### Urgent Care Needs

- Rashes, burns, cuts
- Infections and wound care
- Cough, runny nose, ear pain
- Sexually transmitted infection
- Back pain
- AND MORE!



### Basic Health Maintenance

- Blood pressure check
- Blood sugar check
- Cholesterol check
- Cancer screening referrals
- Family planning
- Primary care, dental, mental health referrals
- AND MORE!



### Vaccines

- Seasonal flu/Covid
- Pneumonia
- Shingles
- Tdap (tetanus)
- Hepatitis B
- Gardasil (HPV)
- AND MORE!

February 5	11am-3pm	Winsted Senior Center
February 12	9am-2pm	New Opportunities 60 Commercial Blvd. Torrington
February 13	9am-1pm	Community Soup Kitchen of Torrington (FRIDAY)
February 29	10am-2pm	Torrington Towers



We are here for you! Walk-ins welcome. Open to all ages. Insurance accepted but not required.

#### For more information:

📞 Call 860.986.3078 📧 Email [neighborhoodhealth@hhchealth.org](mailto:neighborhoodhealth@hhchealth.org)

🌐 Visit [hartfordhealthcare.org/health-wellness/neighborhood-health](http://hartfordhealthcare.org/health-wellness/neighborhood-health) or scan the QR code



Hartford HealthCare's *Neighborhood Health* program brings essential health services directly into local communities through regularly scheduled mobile clinics. These clinics offer free or low-cost preventative care, basic health screenings, vaccinations, chronic disease support, and connections to community resources. Neighborhood Health is designed to meet people where they are, reducing barriers to care and supporting overall community wellness.

# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## FREE NARCAN AND HANDS ONLY CPR TRAINING

**MONDAY, FEB 9, 2026  
THE ZEN DEN  
58 MAIN ST WINSTED  
5:00PM - 6:00PM**

### **DURING THIS TRAINING YOU WILL**

- **Receive a free Narcan kit**
- **Learn hands only CPR, rescue breathing**
- **Learn how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose**

**For more info on this class**

**Call/Text  
860-309-3845**



THE  
**ZEN**  
CENTER



## COMMUNITY UPDATES

Join us for our Overdose Prevention

# SPEAKER SERIES

Presented as part of the Recovering Together Support Group

The following Wednesdays from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Attend in person or join us on Zoom.



**January 14**

**Narcan Administration**

with **Kyle Fitzmaurice**, Harm Reduction Coordinator  
McCall Behavioral Health Network



**January 28**

**Overdose Prevention Strategies**

with **Kyle Fitzmaurice**, Harm Reduction Coordinator  
McCall Behavioral Health Network



**February 11**

**Safe Spot Hotline**

with **Kimber King**, Operations Coordinator  
Boston Medical Center



**February 25**

**Peer Perspective**

with **Cameron Breen**, Street Outreach Case Manager  
Liberations Programs



**RSVP Required:** Contact Ewa Szura, LMSW, Residential Clinician

✉ [ewa.szura@mccallbhn.org](mailto:ewa.szura@mccallbhn.org) ☎ 860.496.2100 ext. 1143

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

*TriCircle Presents:*

# Memorial Quilt Square Project

*Hosted by the McCall Behavioral Health Network,  
in memory of Sean-Michael Shepherd.*

**Saturday, March 7**

**10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Join us at the McCall Whole Health Center  
969 West Main Street, Waterbury  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Unit 3A Conference Room

**Light refreshments will be provided.**

**Supplies will be made available at no cost.**

*This event is open to anyone who has lost a loved one to substance use.  
The memorial quilt honors those lives, transforming grief into awareness, and  
will travel to community events so their memory can live on.*



**Let us know you're coming! Email Seth Goldfarb at  
[Seth.Goldfarb@mccallbhn.org](mailto:Seth.Goldfarb@mccallbhn.org)**

# COMMUNITY UPDATES



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program is looking for volunteers to join our team to provide FREE Tax Preparation in YOUR community!

*Join us today for the upcoming 2026 tax season!*



### VOLUNTEER ROLES:

- Intake Volunteer
- Tax Preparer
- Site Coordinator
- Virtual Volunteer (Get Your Refund)

### FREE TRAINING!

Get IRS trained & certified. Sign up now by scanning the code or visit [act-ct.org/vita.html](https://act-ct.org/vita.html)



**Advancing  
Connecticut  
Together**

For more information [visit our website](https://act-ct.org) or contact our VITA Program Coordinator:

**NICK BRUNDAGE**

Email: [nbrundage@act-ct.org](mailto:nbrundage@act-ct.org)  
Phone: 860-951-2212 x238

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

# Drug Checking Report

## December

6 Samples were tested

### BOUGHT AS: DOPE

- Location Bought: Waterbury
- Results:
  - Mannitol - Major
  - Fentanyl - Major

### BOUGHT AS: FENTANYL

- Location bought: Waterbury
- Results:
  - Mannitol - Major
  - Fentanyl - Minor
  - Medetomidine - Trace
  - Xylazine - Trace

### BOUGHT AS: XANAX

- Location Bought: Dark web
- Results:
  - Microcrystalline Cellulose - Major
  - Dicalcium Phosphate - Major
  - Another unidentified substance

### BOUGHT AS: FENTANYL

- Location bought: Waterbury
- Results:
  - Mannitol - Major
  - Heroin - Minor
  - Medetomidine - Minor
  - Fentanyl - Trace

### BOUGHT AS: DOPE

- Location Bought: Unknown
- Results:
  - Mannitol - Major
  - Fentanyl - Major
  - Inositol - Minor
  - Another unidentified substance

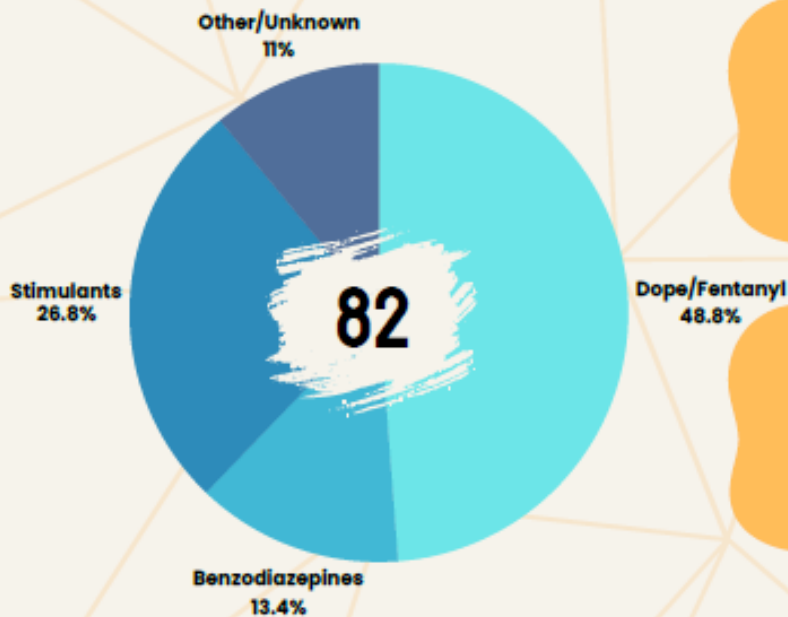
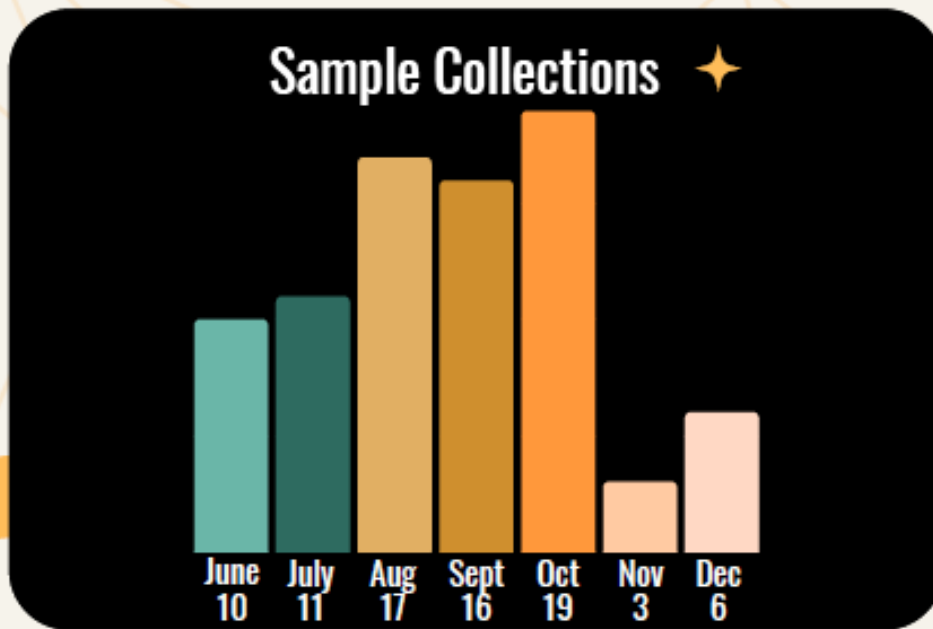
### BOUGHT AS: ADDERALL

- Location Bought: Dark web
- Results:
  - Microcrystalline Cellulose - Major
  - Dicalcium Phosphate - Major
  - d,l-methamphetamine HCL - Minor

# COMMUNITY UPDATES

June - December 2025

## LITCHFIELD COUNTY DRUG CHECKING DATA



### Samples Bought as Dope

- 40% Tested positive for Fentanyl
- 52.5% Tested positive for Xylazine & Fentanyl
- 7.5% Tested positive for neither

### Overall Percentages

- 20.7% Tested positive for Fentanyl
- 1.2% Tested positive for Xylazine
- 25.6% Tested positive for Xylazine & Fentanyl
- 52.4% Tested positive for neither

# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## December Harm Reduction Report

### An update from the harm reduction subcommittee: Areas of interest for 2026

- Targeted outreach- data shows gaps in populations we are accessing
- Highlighting humanity- individual stories, drug user perspectives, and capturing the need
- Outreach workers- Create spaces where the mystery is removed from the work, and staff faces are common place (Ex. adding photos to new flyers)
- Data in tangible forms- graphs, stories, report outs on action steps
- Something missing? Ideas? Email or call Kyle!

### Resource Highlight: ShareWell

At over 150 support groups available, ShareWell offers a space free of charge for a variety of online topics from parenting to spirituality to mental health. Trained clinicians host groups daily!



Founder Cece Chang recalls her own experience trying to find support groups after an abusive relationship- sharing that resources online were fragmented and difficult to come by. "It was challenging to have a genuine exchange of empathy and to build a sense of connection."

Check out ShareWell!: <https://sharewellnow.com/about-us>

### Overdose Data

There were 9 reports of a total of 10 witnessed or experienced overdoses, 6 of the reported overdoses occurred within homes. 911 was not contacted for any of the overdose events. All parties survived.

### Harm Reduction Data:

In the month of December, the task force had 217 harm reduction interactions, passed out 76 IDU kits, 174 smoking kits, 54 sniffing kits, 34 boofing kits, and 18 wound care kits. We also passed out 6555 alcohol pads, 893 sterile waters, and 90 test strips (42 fent, 48 Xyl).

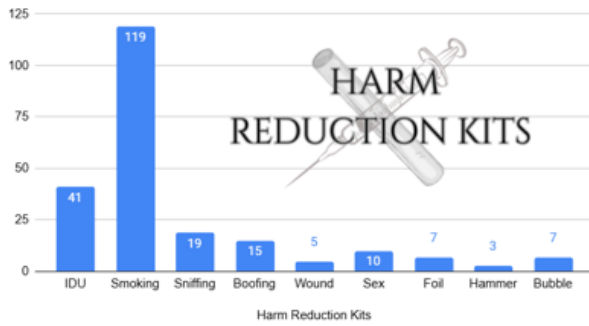
Our return rate for syringes was at 90% this month.

The Naloxone Saturation Rate from DHMAS for 2022 was 1,270 kits per population of 100,000 people. Litchfield County has roughly 185.19k people. Meaning our Naloxone Distribution rate would be 2,286 kits. As of December, we have passed out **2472** kits. Based on all our partnerships, our Naloxone Saturation Rate is as follows.

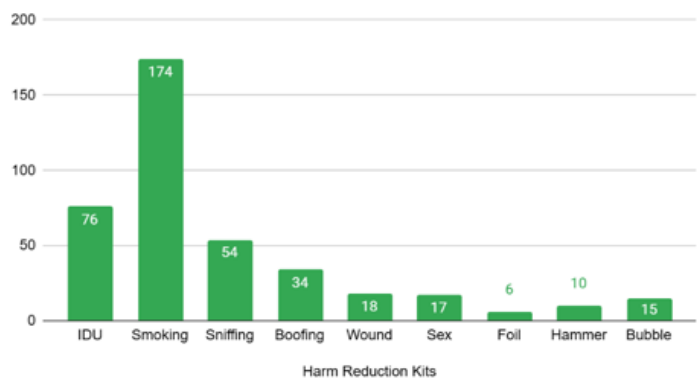
# COMMUNITY UPDATES

**Naloxone saturation is at 108% of our yearly goal.**

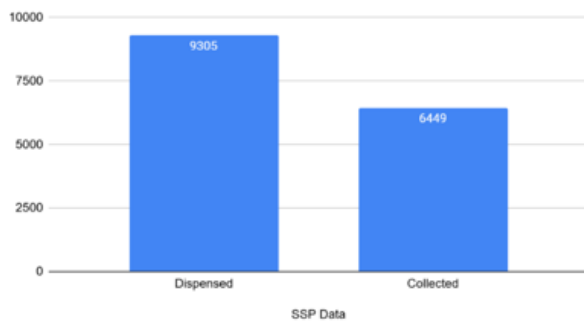
November Harm Reduction Kits



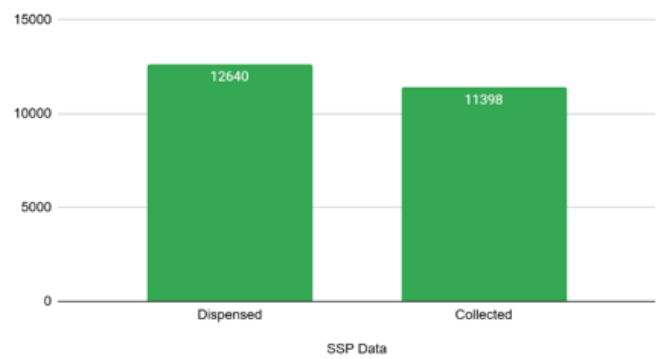
December Harm Reduction Kits



November SSP Data



December SSP Data



**Quotes from program participants:**

“I’m so tired of the way people treat people who use drugs, it has nothing to do with who I am”