

LiveWell Erie

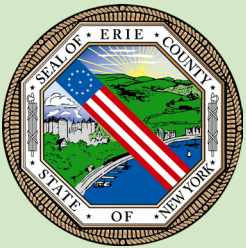
2022 ANNUAL REPORT

LiveWell
Erie



Data Sources

Give Every Child a Chance to Succeed	
Goal 1: Children will grow up in a stable, safe and supportive community	
Indicator	Data Source
Children in Indicated Reports of Abuse & Maltreatment	NYS Kids' Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse: https://www.nyskwic.org/get_data/indicator_profile.cfm?subIndicatorID=107
Firearm related index crimes, general population crimes	NYS Kids' Well-being Indicator Clearinghouse: https://www.nyskwic.org/get_data/indicator_profile.cfm?subIndicatorID=47
Goal 2: Children will achieve comprehensive health	
Indicator	Data Source
Students Overweight or Obese	NYS Department of Health: https://webbi1.health.ny.gov/SASStoredProcess/guest?_program=/EBI/PHIG/apps/chir_dashboard/chir_dashboard&p=ctr&ind_id=jg63&cos=14
Incidence of Preterm Birth	NYS Department of Health: https://webbi1.health.ny.gov/SASStoredProcess/guest?_program=%2FEBI%2FPHIG%2Fapps%2Fchir_dashboard%2Fchir_dashboard&p=ctr&ind_id=lb43&cos=14
Goal 3: Children will realize their greatest potential	
Indicator	Data Source
Grade 3 and 8 ELA Proficiency	NYS Department of Education: https://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php
Grade 3 and 8 Math Proficiency	
High School Dropout Rate	NYS Kids' Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse: https://www.nyskwic.org/get_data/indicator_profile.cfm?subIndicatorID=376
Empower Working Families	
Goal 1: Families in Erie County will have safe, affordable housing	
Indicator	Data Source
Families in Erie County who are considered housing cost burdened by income**	US Census Bureau – American Community Survey, Table S2503
Erie County Residents that are discriminated against when seeking housing	Erie County Fair Housing Board
Incidence of high blood level rate per 1,000 tested children aged < 72 months	https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/Childhood-Blood-Lead-Testing-and-Elevated-Incidenc/d54z-enu8/data
Goal 2: Families in Erie County will have greater financial security	
Indicator	Data Source
Households in Erie County living at the ALICE level	https://www.unitedforalice.org/Attachments/AllReports/2020ALICEReport_NY_FINAL.pdf
Goal 3: Families in Erie County will have access to quality, affordable childcare	
Indicator	Data Source
Capacity of Childcare Programs	Child Care Resource Network
Supporting Our Seniors	
Goal 1: Older Adults will be able to maintain an active and stimulating social life as they age	
Indicator	Data Source
Percent 65 and over with an independent living difficulty	US Census Bureau – American Community Survey, Table S1810
65 + living in same residence for one year or more****	US Census Bureau – American Community Survey, Table S0102
Goal 2: Erie County will be accessible to people of all ages	
Indicator	Data Source
AARP Overall Livability Score	AARP: https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/search/Erie%20County,%20New%20York,%20United%20States
Goal 3: Older adults will be able to maintain financial security throughout their lives	
Indicator	Data Source
65+ at or above 125% of the poverty level****	US Census Bureau – American Community Survey, Table S0102



Dear Erie County Residents,

Thank you for being interested in the work of Live Well Erie (LWE). Since establishing LWE five years ago, our vision of creating a community where no one gets left behind has only grown. Live Well Erie continues to work collaboratively to achieve greater health outcomes and improve the overall quality of life for our residents.

2022 was a challenging year for our community. We endured much last year, the COVID-19 pandemic, a terrible racially motivated shooting on May 14th, the November snowstorm, and the deadly Christmas blizzard that closed out the year but we worked together to overcome these challenges. The events of 2022 brought about changes to our community but these changes only renewed the focus of LWE and helped reshape some of our community strategies.

In this report, LWE working groups provide updates on their progress last year. Many of the working groups’ accomplishments focused on improving the social determinants of health. For instance, the LWE Emergency Childcare Task Force focused on addressing the main concern of the structure of childcare within New York State. In this report, you will learn how the task force as well as other LWE working groups are partnering with community organizations to enhance the lives of older adults, working families, and children.

Although we have made significant progress over the last year, there is still much to do. Therefore, we need your help in improving our community! If you have not done so already, please visit LiveWellErie.com and take the LWE pledge to become a partner. Get involved and make a difference. Only together can we achieve the vision of LWE: A community where no one is left behind.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz
Erie County Executive



May 14th Shooting Tragedy Response

Saturday, May 14, 2022 was a tranquil day tragically marred by a racist, hate-filled shooting spree at Tops Market on Jefferson Avenue that left ten dead, several wounded and a community shaken. On site within 40 minutes of the shooting, Erie County Executive Poloncarz immediately issued a call for mental health and social-emotional support for families and neighborhood community members, as well as responding to the creation of a “food asset” and activated numerous county departments to assist. In addition to the County Executive, the Deputy County Executive and Commissioner of Personnel responded while the Commissioner of Mental Health organized a team of community provider responders from Crisis Services, Spectrum Human Services, Endeavor Health and BestSelf Behavioral Health. This team immediately coalesced to provide on-site mental health first aid and multiple other measures of comfort and support.

The following day the County Executive and Deputy County Executive were on-site to lead a team of Live Well Erie responders, including the personnel mentioned above, with the invaluable addition of the Director of the Office of Health Equity and members of the County Executive’s administrative team. This group, with the support of the Erie County Health Department and Department of Social Services, opened the first post-shooting support center at the Johnnie B. Wiley Sports Complex on Jefferson Avenue. Supporting their efforts were local community-based organizations such as the American Red Cross Disaster team, the NYS Office of Victim’s Assistance (OVA), the NY Office of Mental Health, Say Yes Buffalo and Feedmore of WNY. In the weeks and months that followed, food distribution as well as social and emotional support flowed from that and other locations.

Community-driven self-help became an integral part of the healing journey in the affected neighborhood and the greater East Buffalo communities of color. Local and trusted health, mental health and support personnel emerged to partner with the Live Well Erie team to bring long-term relief and healing to the community impacted by this racist attack. Supported by federal, state and local resources, including the Erie County District Attorney’s Office of Victim’s Assistance, the Buffalo United Resiliency Center (BURC) was incorporated at the Resource Council to coordinate long-term healing initiatives that were community-driven and culturally-informed, providing economic, social, emotional and logistical supports in traditional and non-traditional ways. Now under the leadership of the Buffalo Urban League and the Community Health Center of Buffalo, the BURC continues to provide support to the families and communities affected by the shooting. Funding is provided by the OVA and NYS Office of Mental Health. A Steering Committee of community stakeholders working with Erie County, the City of Buffalo and NYS government partners ensures these supports are ongoing and tailored to the needs and wishes of local recipients.

Live Well Erie Data Snapshot – May 2023

Live Well Erie (LWE) launched in September 2019 and the baseline data below was the most current available at that time. Because there is often a significant lag in data availability, some of the 2023 updates cover time periods prior to the launch of LWE. Change indicates changes in indicators that have occurred after the LWE launch.



Give Every Child a Chance to Succeed					
Goal 1: Children will grow up in a stable, safe and supportive community					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
Children in Indicated Reports of Abuse & Maltreatment	↓	25.1/1,000 children (2017)	21.4/1,000 children (2020)	↓	14.7% decrease from baseline; no new data available for 5/23
Firearm related index crimes, general population crimes	↓	10.1/10,000 population (2017)	13.1/10,000 population (2020)	↑	30.7% increase from baseline
Goal 2: Children will achieve comprehensive health					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
Students Overweight or Obese	↓	33% (2014-2016)	31.9% (2017-2019)	↓	No new data available for 5/2023. Latest data available pre LWE
Incidence of Preterm Birth	↓	10% (2016)	10.1% (2019)	↑	1% increase from baseline
Goal 3: Children will realize their greatest potential					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
Grade 3 ELA Proficiency	↑	48% (2017/18)	40% (2021/22)	↓	16.7% decrease from baseline
Grade 8 ELA Proficiency	↑	41% (2017/18)	42% (2021/22)	↑	2.4% increase from baseline
Grade 3 Math Proficiency	↑	51% (2017/18)	42% (2021/22)	↓	17.6% decrease from baseline
Grade 8 Math Proficiency	↑	23% (2017/18)	19% (2021/22)	↓	17.4% decrease from baseline
High School Dropout Rate	↓	7.1% (2017/18)	4.6% (2020/21)	↓	35.2% decrease
Empower Working Families					
Goal 1: Families in Erie County will have safe, affordable housing					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
Families in Erie County who are considered housing cost burdened by income	Below \$20,000	86.6% (2018)	86.8% (2021)	↓	Over the past decade the % of housing cost burdened families is increasing for those with incomes under \$50,000. The 2021 data shows increases for all income groups
	\$20,000-\$34,999	60.9% (2018)	67.6% (2021)	↑	
	\$35,000-\$49,999	26.3% (2018)	33.9% (2021)	↑	
	\$50,000-\$74,999	11.9% (2018)	14.7% (2021)	↑	
	\$75,000+	1.9% (2018)	3.6% (2021)	↑	
Erie County Residents that are discriminated against when seeking housing	↓	213 (2018)	418 (2022)	↑	Number nearly doubled from baseline
Incidence of high blood level rate per 1,000 tested children aged < 72 months	↓	15.1/1,000 (2018)	13.7/1,000 (2019)	↓	Data was updated but for time period prior to LWE launch
Goal 2: Families in Erie County will have greater financial security					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
Households in Erie County living at the ALICE level	↓	27.49% (2018)	No new data available	↓	No new data available
Goal 3: Families in Erie County will have access to quality, affordable childcare					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
Capacity of Childcare Programs	↑	29,495 (2018)	27,788 (3/2023)	↓	5.8% decrease from baseline
Supporting Our Seniors					
Goal 1: Older Adults will be able to maintain an active and stimulating social life as they age					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
Percent 65 and over with an independent living difficulty	↓	13.7% (2017)	12.3% (2021)	↓	10.2% decrease from baseline
60 + living in same residence for one year or more*	↑	94.7% (2017)	95.1% (2021)	↑	Slight increase from baseline
Goal 2: Erie County will be accessible to people of all ages					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
AARP Overall Livability Score	↑	57 (2018)	57 (2022)	↓	No change in the score
Goal 3: Older adults will be able to maintain financial security throughout their lives					
Indicator	Goal	Erie County Baseline	2023 Update	Change	Comment
60+ at or above 150% of the poverty level*	↑	82.7% (2017)	83.2% (2021)	↑	Slight increase

APPENDIX A - Work Group Partners

<p>Every Child Deserves a Chance to Succeed 211WNY American Heart Association of WNY Best Self Western New York - Child Advocacy Center BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York Buffalo and Erie County Public Library Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network Buffalo String Works Buffalo Urban League Catholic Charities Child & Family Services Child Care Resource Network City of Buffalo Community Action Organization of WNY Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo Compass House Compeer Crisis Services Erie County Department of Environment and Planning Erie County Department of Health Erie County Department of Purchasing Erie County Department of Senior Services Erie County Medical Campus Envision Wellness Erie 1 BOCES Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, Inc Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse FeedMore WNY Front Seat Life Gateway-Longview Health Foundation for Western and Central New York Healthful Living Healthy Community Alliance Help Me Grow Western New York Homeless Alliance of Western New York Homespace Corporation Inclusive Theatre of Western New York Independent Nursing Care, LLC International Institute of Buffalo Jewish Family Services John R. Oishei Children's Hospital Justice Bus Initiative Kaleida Health/Children's Hospital/UBMD) Karen Society of Buffalo Learning Disabilities Association of WNY Metro Community Development Corp. (Delavan Grider Community Center) NYS Courts John R. Oishei Foundation Open Buffalo Parent Network WNY Peace of the City People Against Trafficking Humans - PATH Population Health Collaborative Read to Succeed Say Yes to Education Buffalo Seneca-Babcock Community Association, Inc. Temple Beth Zion The Belle Center The Foundry Buffalo The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care The Trading Post UB/MD UB School of Public Health and Health Professions United Way of Buffalo and Erie County Univera Healthcare West Side Community Services WNY Independent Living, INC WNY Women's Foundation YMCA Buffalo Niagara Envision Wellness</p>	<p>Empower Working Families 1199 SEIU 211WNY American Diabetes Association American Heart Association Belmont Housing Resources for WNY Buffalo and Erie County Public Library Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Development Consortium Buffalo Niagara Manufacturers Alliance Buffalo Niagara Partnership Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network Buffalo Urban League Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation Cancer Care of WNY Catholic Charities Child & Family Services Child Care Resource Network Community Action Organization of WNY Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo* Compeer Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Buffalo Crisis Services CWA 1133 CWA- District 1 EC DISS Envision Wellness Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, Inc Erie County - Environment and Planning Erie County Medical Center Erie County Office for the Disabled Erie County Office of Mental Health Erie County Office of Senior Services Erie County Parks Department Erie County Personnel Office Erie County Probation Office Erie County Purchasing Office FB Community Land Trust Feedmore WNY Fidelis Care Front Seat Life Grassroots Gardens WNY Healthful Living Healthy Community Alliance Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Western New York Homeless Alliance of WNY Homespace Corporation Inclusive Theatre of Western New York Independent Health Independent Nursing Care, LLC Jewish Family Service John R. Oishei Foundation Justice Bus Initiative Karen Society of Buffalo Learning Disabilities Association of WNY Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo Literacy NY Buffalo-Niagara Local Initiatives Support Corporation M&T Bank Metro Community Development Corp. Delavan Grider Community Center NAACP Buffalo Branch Near East and West Side Task Force Neighborhood Legal Services Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc. Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority - NFTA- Metro Northland Training Center Olmstead Center for Sight Open Buffalo Partnership for the Public Good PATH Enrichment Center Peace of the City Population Health Collaborative Rural Outreach Center Say Yes to Education Buffalo SEIU Seneca-Babcock Community Association Start with Sleep SUNY Erie Temple Beth Zion The Foundry Buffalo The Trading Post UB Community Justice Clinic United Way Univera Healthcare University at Buffalo University at Buffalo School of Law Wellness Institute of Greater Buffalo West Side Community Services Western New York Area Labor Federation/ New York State AFL-CIO Western New York Independent Living YMCA Buffalo Niagara</p>	<p>Supporting Our Seniors 211WNY Aging with Purpose American Diabetes Association American Heart Association Amherst Senior Center Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Development Consortium, Inc. Buffalo and Erie County Public Library Buffalo Urban League Cancer Care of WNY Catholic Charities Center for Elder Law and Justice Child & Family Services Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo Compeer Crisis Services D'Youville College Department of Occupational Therapy Envision Wellness Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, Inc Erie County Department of Health Erie County Department of Environment Planning Erie County Department of Mental Health Erie County Department of Senior Services Erie County Department of the Executive Erie County Medical Center; Front Seat Life Erie County Office for the Disabled FB Community Land Trust Feedmore WNY Fidelis Care Grassroots Gardens WNY Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) Healthful Living Healthy Community Alliance High Mark Blue Cross Blue Shield of WNY Inclusive Theatre of Western New York Independent Health Independent Nursing Care, LLC Jewish Family Services John R. Oishei Foundation Kaleida Health Learning Disabilities Association of WNY LISC WNY Mobility Development Group Open Buffalo Parent Network WNY Population Health Collaborative Rural Transit Service, Inc. Seneca-Babcock Community Association, Inc. Shared Mobility, Inc. Temple Beth Zion The Foundry Buffalo Tivity Health- Silver Sneakers Town of Aurora Senior Center UB Center for Successful Aging, School of Medicine UB Center of Excellence UB Center of Excellence for Alzheimer's Disease: UB School of Medicine UB School of Public Health and Health Professions Univera Healthcare West Side Community Services WNY Independent Living YMCA Buffalo Niagara</p>
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2022 Live Well Erie Implementation Team

<p>Marie Cannon, Commissioner of Social Services, Live Well Erie Co-Chair Maria Whyte, Deputy County Executive Karen King, PhD., Commissioner of Public Advocacy Julie Barrett-O'Neill, Executive Director, LISC Western New York Jacqueline Hall, Executive Director, Social Services Family Independence Angela Marinucci, Commissioner of Senior Services, Karen Nicolson, Executive Director, Center for Elder Law & Justice</p>	<p>Kelly Wofford, Director of Health Equity Mark O'Brien, Commissioner of Mental Health Brian Bray, Commissioner of Personnel Amy Rockwood, Director of Planning and Evaluation, Mental Health Kelly Sullivan, Assistant to the County Executive</p>
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Strategic Working Group Updates:

1. Give Every Child a Chance to Succeed

Co-Chair:
Jacqueline Hall, Executive Director of Social Services Family Independence (2022 Title)

Mission Statement:

To give every child the chance to succeed in a community that is safe/supportive and values the child’s comprehensive health needs, so they can realize their greatest potential.

Activity Summary Section:

The Children’s Working Group has been continually working on three distinct strategies that directly address the goals and indicators highlighted within Live Well Erie’s framework and model.

The first activity has been helping develop a survey that will assess if and how community agencies offer training on: trauma; trauma-informed care; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; and mental health first aid in the community.

The second strategic activity is working on a collaboration between the NFTA and the Erie County Parks and New York State Parks systems. This strategy explores various elements of obesity and is trying to examine the desired goal in a comprehensive approach, such as the social and mental health aspects associated with children’s obesity. Live Well Erie partners helped contribute resources and support to achieve a successful project. This will be accomplished through the collaboration of the NFTA project: Parks Explorer Bus which supported children and families with access to public parks throughout Summer 2022.



The third activity is the development of a community resource map that includes high-quality, evidence-based reading support, and programs for math and Social Emotional Learning.

The Children’s Working group spent a significant amount of time discussing the evolution of the group outcomes and expectations. Several group surveys were administered to collect the groups feedback and suggestions for goal and outcome development in 2023.

List of Priorities for 2023:

- Improve services by implementing evidence-based models including trauma-informed care and strengthening families
 - Examine the use of early childhood screenings
- Specifically, the model of Help Me Grow which is a nationally recognized evidence based model that improves outcomes and reduces disparities in early developmental health and family well-being.





Partner Highlights:

Center for Elder Law & Justice:

The Center for Elder Law & Justice (CELJ) is a non-profit law office incorporated in 1978 with sole support from Erie County Senior Services through a grant of \$100,000. At the time, CELJ was part of The Legal Aid Bureau and Erie County saw the benefit of creating a legal services agency to focus exclusively on the issues impacting older adults. CELJ now has offices in Buffalo, Dunkirk, Olean, and Lockport, providing direct services in eleven WNY counties and policy and impact litigation benefiting older adults throughout New York State. Although their free services helped 23,000 people last year (through direct services, legal clinics, outreach and help from our volunteer attorneys), the vast majority of their clients and community partners reside in Erie County. They work within both the aging and legal services advocacy communities and their mission is to use the legal system to allow their clients to age independently and with dignity.

Karen Nicolson, CEO of CELJ, serves as the Live Well Erie Co-Chair for Older Adults and continues to be an integral part of Live Well Erie. They have been a proud partner since inception and are eager to continue to help every resident of Erie County achieve his or her full potential.



Partner Highlights:

Belmont Housing Resources:

Belmont Housing Resources (BHR) of Buffalo is a vital agency in our community providing housing related assistance to the residents of Erie County. They focus on providing safe and affordable housing opportunities to first time homebuyers through their housing redevelopment projects and homebuyer workshop programs. Building financial capacity helps families and individuals to achieve their long-term goals. Its multiple educational offerings include finding affordable rental opportunities, buying a home, financial management, foreclosure prevention, home maintenance, and energy efficiency. This knowledge empowers, energizes, and boosts individuals on their path to financial security.

Through Belmont's administration of both the HUD Section 8 voucher program, and the VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) vouchers, they help secure affordable rental housing for families, seniors, and veterans. They also professionally manage 21 rental properties throughout Western New York for seniors, families, and individuals with disabilities. They strive to help empower individuals with the knowledge they need to keep their homes healthy and safe. Through the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative, they are able to provide free education programs to qualifying households. They are also committed to our partnership with the City of Buffalo in implementing the Lead Hazard Control Program here in WNY. Erie County partners with BHR's to provide Housing Counseling services to low income residents.

Sandy Becker is the Senior Housing Programs Manager at Belmont and serves as the Live Well Erie Co-Chair for Working Families. Belmont Housing Resources are a proud partner of Live Well Erie and will continue to work hard to make sure no one is left behind in Erie County.

The study findings were presented in the form of a weekly gap—i.e. the gap between the existing subsidy rate (set by NYS and paid to providers on behalf of qualifying families) and the actual cost of care. You can see this gap in the charts below:

The top chart reports the approximate gap between current subsidy rates and current costs of care.

The bottom chart reports the approximate gap between current subsidy rates and costs of care if all workers earned \$25/hour for full-time and \$20/hour for part-time work.

This scenario would allow providers to begin implementing their number one priority of raising staff wages, and could begin to address worker shortages in child care.

Provider Type	Weekly Gap Per Child	Monthly Gap Per Child	Annual Gap Per Child
DCC and SACC	\$53	\$230	\$2,756
FDC and GFDC	\$107	\$464	\$5,564

Provider Type	Weekly Gap Per Child	Monthly Gap Per Child	Annual Gap Per Child
DCC and SACC	\$141	\$611	\$7,332
FDC and GFDC	\$240	\$1,040	\$12,480

In January 2022, the ECTF held a press conference and released the Phase I study findings. The study findings were sent far and wide and members of the Task Force vehemently advocated for a dramatic increase in the NYS subsidy rate. The advocacy worked and good news was unveiled with the rollout of the new State budget! Victories in the state budget included:

- Increased eligibility for the childcare subsidy such that parents could now earn up to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level and still be eligible
- \$300 million budgeted for stabilization grants to childcare providers to support increased wages and other operational expenses
- Increased capital funding for providers
- And, perhaps most significantly, an increase in the subsidy rate from the 69th percentile to the 80th.

See below:

NYS Child Care Market Subsidy Rates for Erie County: 2021-2022 (Effective June 1, 2022)

Weekly rates per subsidized child (attending full-time)

AGE OF CHILD	DCC AND SACC 2021 SUBSIDY	DCC AND SACC 2022 SUBSIDY	FDC AND GFDC 2021 SUBSIDY	FDC AND GFDC 2022 SUBSIDY
Infant	\$280	\$340	\$190	\$300
Toddler	\$264	\$320	\$185	\$285
Pre-K	\$245	\$300	\$180	\$269
School-Aged	\$215	\$265	\$175	\$240

Day Care Center (DCC) | School-Age Child Centers (SACC) | Family Day Cares (FDC) | Group Family Day Cares (GFDC)

In late 2022, the pivot away from the pandemic emergency continued and the ECTF was formally dissolved, bringing its members under the umbrella of the LWE Working Families Working Group, which has access to safe, affordable childcare as a goal. A subcommittee exclusively focused on this goal was formed and is chaired by former members of the ECTF.

List of Priorities for 2023:

- Increase the production of affordable housing units in Erie County Families will have greater financial security
- Increase federal Home Investment Partnership (HOME) funding from HUD to continue to build new units of affordable rental housing
- Educate municipal Planning Boards on strategies to increase affordable housing in their municipalities
- Undertake a new study in partnership with Cornell University to explore research questions addressing issues related to both providers and parents as an essential component in ensuring NYS childcare policy meaningfully addresses the childcare challenges in NYS
- Redefining walkability, mobility and access through the lens of racial equity and the social determinants of health
- Partner with the Buffalo Together Community Response Fund to respond to the 2022 Buffalo shooting with a long-term investment strategy for East Buffalo



3. Supporting Our Seniors

Co-Chairs:

Angela Marinucci, Commissioner of Erie County Senior Services

Karen Nicolson, Executive Director, Center for Elder Law and Justice

Mission Statement:

The Older Adults Working Group is dedicated to making life more accessible and healthier for the older adults of Erie County. Together we want to work to expand options for older adults able to continue living full and independent lives, and that they are able to participate more fully in the community and feel better doing it.

Activity Summary Section:

The Older Adults Working Group consists of subcommittees focused on: transportation, financial security, and a broader wellness subcommittee that includes mental health and nutrition. In support of our mission, in 2022 the Older Adults Working Group focused on evaluating our Priorities and Strategies to ensure that we were meeting the needs and interests of Older Adults in Erie County.

We held an open Town Hall meeting with nearly 200 older adult community members to solicit feedback, and then worked within our subcommittees to ensure that we were responding to the needs expressed. The Transportation Subcommittee found that even with some on-demand transportation options, older adult transportation needs were still not being met due to driver shortages and lack of sufficient options.

The Financial Security subcommittee expanded financial literacy courses in the Department of Senior Services University Express catalog and began exploring options for re-skilling and up-skilling older adults for continued employment.

Finally, the Wellness Subcommittee continues to find older adults seeking connection and sought to build community connections with smaller groups focused on specific areas of compatibility, including new Fantasy Football leagues, hybrid life-long learning classes, and mental health awareness.

List of Priorities for 2023:

- Explore options for a more efficient and cost-effective transportation model to allow older adults to move freely among the County in conjunction with the Department of Senior Services' Transportation Consultant's finding
- Additional Live Well Erie host Town Hall Meetings in urban, suburban, and rural communities to collect data, understand the issues, and find solutions for current older adult concerns
- A forthcoming social media campaign encouraging all community members to reach out and connect with an older adult in their community and increase awareness of services available to them
- Increase education on opioid addiction and reduce stigma of seeking mental health and addiction-related treatment
- Seek funding to create and distribute emergency preparedness boxes for older adults as a precaution for future weather events

