

## Top Community Health Concerns, 2024

Mercer County (n=2934)	Asian (n=222)	Black (n=384)	Latino (n=410)	White (n=1788)
Mental health issues (30%)	Diabetes (32%)	Diabetes (31%)	Diabetes (32%)	Mental health issues (34%)
Cancer (27%)	Heart disease (27.0%)	Affordable housing (26%)	Affordable housing (24%)	Cancer (29%)
Affordable housing (25%)	Mental health issues (25%)	Cancer (26%)	Overweight/Obesity (23%)	Affordable housing (27%)
Diabetes (24%)	High stress lifestyle (23%)	Mental health issues (25%)	Cancer (21%)	Overweight/obesity (26%)
Overweight/obesity (23%)	Aging-related health concerns (23%)	Heart disease (21%)	Having enough health & social services that people can use (19%)	Heart disease (23%)

SOURCE: Community Health Survey, 2024. Avery Davis



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## COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN OCTOBER 8TH, 2024

The GMPHP hired consulting firm Health Resources in Action (HRiA) to gather the data for a Community Health Assessment, and then work with our coalition partners to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan. The data collected from key stakeholder interviews, focus groups, Federal and State records were analyzed and formatted into a report that was presented to the partners on September 9th. The group then decided that the priorities for the next three years should focus on Mental Health, Chronic Disease, Housing/Built Environment, and Maternal/Child Health.

On October 8th, 70 representatives from the nonprofit organizations in Mercer County, assembled at the RWJ Fitness Center in Hamilton, to collaborate and create an improvement plan. This was a lengthy, all-day process, that involved creating a broad goal statement for each priority, and then debating and agreeing upon key objectives that would be realistic and achievable. The overarching work of our partners will always strive to include cultural competency, ACE awareness, and equity. See page 2 for more information about the priority groups. The four groups will continue to work out the strategies and actions this fall, and hopefully have a document fully completed by December. Strategies will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-oriented, and Time bound. (S.M.A.R.T.)

# MENTAL HEALTH

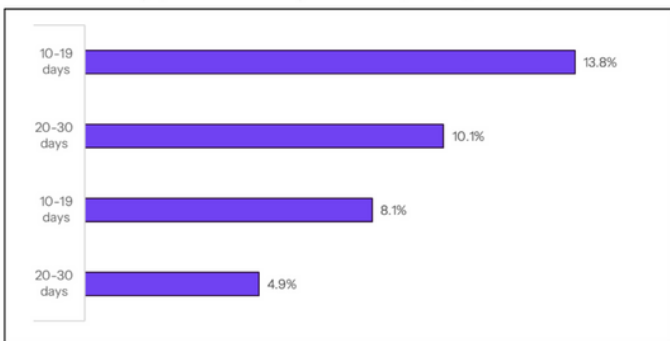


Mental health was identified as a community concern in multiple interviews and focus group. Community survey respondents rated mental health as the top health concern in 2024.

Survey respondents rated Mental Health and Bullying Concerns as the top health concerns in the community for children and youth.

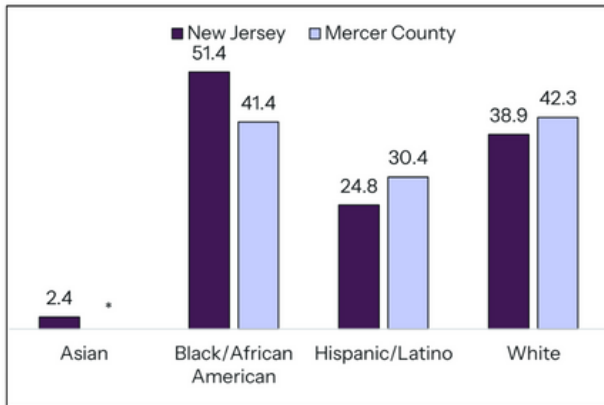
An interviewee notes, "We need to build capacity to address trauma and ACEs in every setting not just in hospitals but also in schools. The thing about trauma is that it's not about what is wrong with you, it's about what happened to you and how you are dealing with it..."

Percent of Community Survey Respondents with Poor Mental Health in the Last 30 Days, Mercer County Residents, 2024 (n=2152)



DATA SOURCE: Community Health Needs Assessment Survey, 2024

Unintentional Overdose Mortality Rate per 100,000, Age-Adjusted, by Race/Ethnicity, State, and County, 2020



# ACCESS TO WELLNESS

Top 5 Health Care Access Barriers, Mercer County Residents, 2024

1. Hard to schedule an appointment at a convenient time of day/evening/weekend (33.1%)
2. Wait times at doctor's office or clinic are too long (26.3%)
3. Doctors not accepting new patients (24.8%)
4. Insurance problems (22.4%)
5. Cost of care (20.5%)

DATA SOURCE: Community Health Needs Assessment Survey, 2024

- Trenton (14.5%) and Hightstown (10.7%) had the highest percentage of uninsured residents.
- One-third of Latino survey respondents indicated being uninsured (30.3%); insurance was the top access to care barrier for Latinos

- Among community survey respondents in Mercer County:
- 29.3% reported being worried that their food would run out before they got money to buy more
  - 22.1% relied on food assistance
- Among Latino survey respondents:
- 63.1% worried that their food would run out before they had more money to buy more
  - 53.4% of them relied on a food assistance program

- Cancer (26.5%) and diabetes (23.6%) were top concerns for survey respondents
- Overweight/obesity (24.8%) was a top concern among children and youth by survey respondents

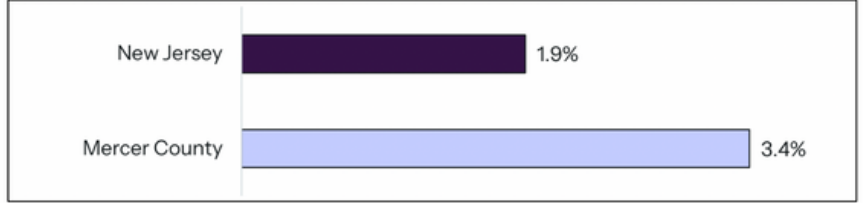
- Populations Most Impacted:
- Latino residents
  - Black residents
  - Housing unstable population
  - Low-income people, the working poor
  - Immigrants
  - Older adults
  - Young people



# HOUSING/BUILT ENVIRONMENT

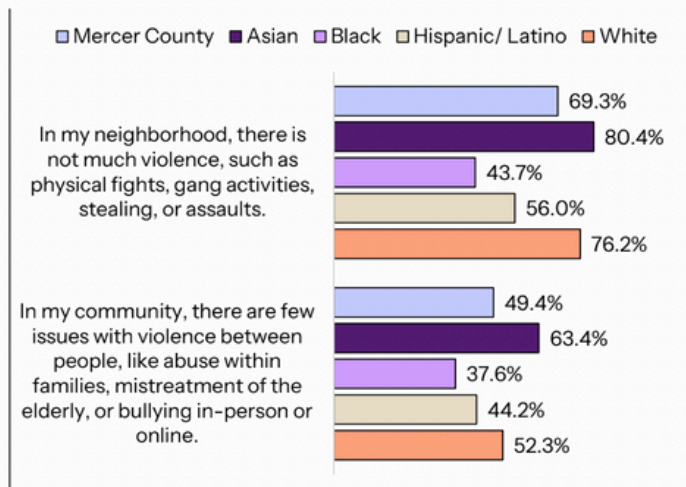


Percentage of Children Aged 1-5 with Elevated Blood Lead Levels, by State and County, 2022



DATA SOURCE: Childhood Lead Exposure in New Jersey Annual Report Department of Public Health, Office of Local Public Health, Childhood Lead Program, State Fiscal Year 2022

Percent of Mercer County Survey Respondents Who Agreed/Strongly Agreed with the Statements Related to Community Safety, by Race/Ethnicity, 2024



DATA SOURCE: Community Health Needs Assessment Survey, 2024  
NOTE: The first statement was answered by 2568 residents the second by 2088.

**CONSIDER RACIAL EQUITY**  
Homeownership is the primary way people build wealth in the U.S. In 2021, the median White household in the U.S. had 9 times the wealth of the median Black household (\$250,400 vs. \$27,100) Pew Research Center

- Populations Most Impacted:
- Latino residents
  - Black residents
  - Housing unstable population
  - Low-income people, the working poor
  - Immigrants
  - Older adults
  - People with substance use disorders and mental health conditions

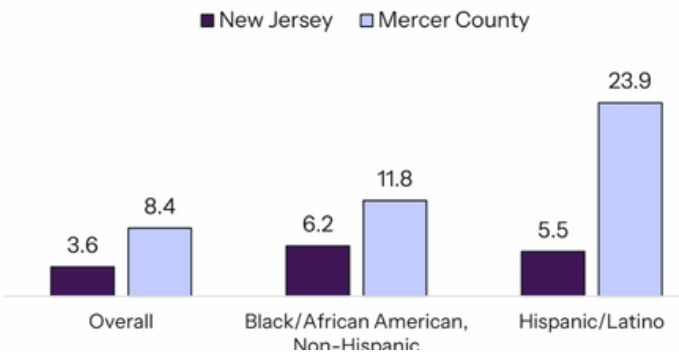
# MATERNAL/CHILD HEALTH



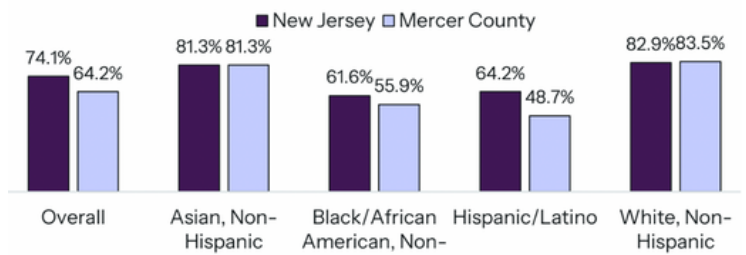
- Prenatal care is a critical evidence-based strategy to prevent and manage pregnancy complications and reduce poor birth outcomes.
- Teen pregnancy is a marker of access to sexual and reproductive health care, and may indicate those not able to access comprehensive sexuality education and contraception

- Populations Most Impacted:
- Latino residents
  - Black residents
  - Housing unstable population
  - Low-income people, the working poor
  - Immigrants
  - Older adults
  - People with substance use disorders and mental health conditions

Births per 1,000 Female Population Aged 15-17, by Race/Ethnicity, State and County, 2018-2022



Percent Receiving Prenatal Care in First Trimester, by Race/Ethnicity, by State



DATA SOURCE: Birth Certificate Database, NJSHAD, 2024

CAB member **Mercer Council on Alcohol and Drug Addiction and the Prevention Coalition of Mercer County (PCMC)** organized the 7th International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) at Hamilton Veterans Park, August 29th. It is crucial to acknowledge the profound grief felt by families and friends of those who have lost loved ones to drug overdose. Grief is real; it is raw, it is painful. But it is also an intrinsic part of the human experience, and has been for as long as we have existed. IOAD provides the unique opportunity for those affected by overdose to mourn publicly, perhaps for the first time, in a safe environment that is free from guilt or shame. Mercer Council's event is an all-important reminder that no one must endure the pain and suffering of loss alone. Dr. Kaitlan Baston, the NJ Department of Health Commissioner gave a heartfelt, moving speech based on her experience as an integrated pain, addiction, and behavioral health provider at Cooper Hospital. Guests gathered valuable resources from local treatment and recovery organizations; were able to memorialize loved ones at our Memorial Table and Candlelight Vigil; and had a chance to be supported in their grief, by professional resources and fellow members of the community that have shared in their mourning.

## The Healing Power of Coming Together



## CJFHC WINS AWARD!

### MATERNITY MORBIDITY RISK ALGORITHM



**CJFHC's** Cheryl McFarland and Lauren Manley were awarded second place in NIH's Connecting the Community for Maternal Health Challenge for their project **Can It Happen to Me? Developing a Pre-Pregnancy Maternal Morbidity Risk Algorithm**. Using a national dataset of over 1 million births, their team created an algorithm to predict severe pregnancy-related complications with 84% accuracy, focusing on early intervention to prevent morbidity before pregnancy. This innovation is a significant step toward improving maternal health outcomes and reducing preventable pregnancy complications. According to Maternal Mortality Review Committees, more than 80% of these deaths were preventable. For every maternal death, it is estimated that another 50 people will experience serious pregnancy-related complications<sup>3</sup>. These estimates are alarming because they appear to be growing, not waning, over time" She said. "After serving as evaluator for the New Jersey Maternal Mortality Review Committee for several years and working with some of the leading experts in the field, I had a desire to look beyond recommendations for preventing death to attempting to prevent morbidity before the birthing person even arrives at the hospital."





*Connections Matter is a healing-centered curriculum that teaches adults how to use the power of connections to help develop healthy brains and supportive relationships, prevent and heal from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), promote Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs), and strengthen communities.*

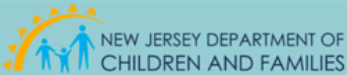
Participants who attend this training will learn:

- + how ACEs adversely affect development and brain outcomes.
- + how caring connections serve as a primary buffer against the negative effects of trauma.
- + how to build more resilient, compassionate, and healing-centered communities.

Virtual Training Options:

- September 10th and 11th 10am-12pm
- October 22nd and 23rd 10am-12pm
- October 9th and 10th 10am-12pm
- November 13th and 14th 1pm-3pm

Register: <https://www.preventchildabuse.nj.org/connections-matter/>



## TRAUMA INFORMED CARE TRAINING

The Office of Resilience has designed an 8-hour training to promote trauma awareness, as well as introduce some key concepts of resilience, trauma informed approaches and healing centered cultures. The prevalence and effects of trauma on children and adults will be explored. The training will discuss the impact of Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences (PACES) and how Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) can help mitigate the impact to promote healthier outcomes. Participants will be introduced to trauma informed approach principles and implementation domains as presented by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), as well as a model for creating healing centered cultures. The training is being piloted within some DCF offices and will then be made available to the

community at large beginning in the late fall/early winter of 2024. After initial trainings, a train-the-trainer model will be introduced beginning in 2025, with the goal of sharing these foundational principles across New Jersey. To start, we are looking for upstream organizations that can convene representatives from networks of organizations in order to maximize reach and impact. If you are part of such a network of organizations and would like more information on receiving the foundational trauma training, please contact [dcf.officeofresilience@dcf.nj.gov](mailto:dcf.officeofresilience@dcf.nj.gov) for more information.

**COLLEGE CAREER FAIR**

SPRUCE STREET CLUBHOUSE | 1040 SPRUCE STREET LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ, 08648

College Information - Career Information - Workshops

Register your College, Technical School, or Company for a table at the event!

**Wednesday, October 16th, 2024**  
**5PM-7PM**

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF MERCER COUNTY

GREAT FUTURES START HERE.

MERCER JOB & CAREER FAIR

Wednesday October 16, 2024  
3:30 P.M. – 6 P.M.  
CURE Insurance Arena  
Entrance at Gate A, Parking Lot 2  
(South Broad St.)

Career Industries & Trades Representation

JOBSEEKER REGISTRATION LINK:  
<https://mercercounty.nj.seamlessdocs.com/f/1stopjobfairregistration>

Scan the QR code to register for the Job Fair & to opt in for future notifications.



**SERVICES**

# THE PRIDE CENTER

**FALL 2024 UPDATES!**

**CURRENT SERVICES BEING OFFERED FOR FREE BY THE PRIDE CENTER:**

**STRONGER TOGETHER**

## NEW: GROUPS!

The Pride-Center is proud to announce the launch of the following in-person groups in Mercer County:

- Kaleidoscope, a peer-to-peer support group for LGBTQ+ teens (12-17) and young adults (18-24).
- Colorful Connections: a counseling group geared for teens navigating the intersection of being LGBTQ+ and neurodivergent.

## TRAININGS

LGBTQ+-specific trainings on a wide range of topics that is highly tailorable for specific needs and audiences.

## COUNSELING

Mercer County Residents who are 24 years old and younger qualify for free counseling with a clinician with expertise in LGBTQ+-affirming practices.

## MENTORING

LGBTQ+ Youth and their Mentors spend 4-6 hours a month together to work on goals while participating in social activities, leadership skills, academic or career development, and more.

**TO LEARN MORE OR TO GET CONNECTED WITH THESE SERVICES, CLICK THE EMBEDDED LINKS OR EMAIL US AT:**

[PRIDE-CENTER@CENTERFFS.ORG](mailto:PRIDE-CENTER@CENTERFFS.ORG)



**Attendees Tell Us:**  
 "This is such an important program for helping others in our community."  
 "I feel more confident helping my loved ones who have cancer."

## BECOME A HEALTH CHAMPION TODAY!

### AS A HEALTH CHAMPION

Join us on our mission to take on the cancer journey together with all those facing a cancer diagnosis or the diagnosis of a loved one.

When you become a Health Champion, you are seen as a trusted person in your community who can provide immediate help and hope to someone facing cancer.

Take the first step and let us know if you want to participate in a Health Champion Workshop.

### HEALTH CHAMPION WORKSHOP

To enroll and receive health champion workshop updates:

[Click Here](#)

- 3 Crossroads Dr. Bedminster NJ 07921
- 908-658-5400
- [programteam@crossroads4hope.org](mailto:programteam@crossroads4hope.org)
- [www.crossroads4hope.org](http://www.crossroads4hope.org)

### BECOME A HEALTH CHAMPION

1. Learn about cancer and how to talk about it
2. Improve your confidence in supporting someone you know who is facing cancer
3. Refer people to resources in a timely manner
4. Get access to information that helps people maintain their nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.
5. Connect people to resources like Crossroads4Hope's "My Voice Matters, Taking Control of My Cancer Care" so that people can talk with their doctor about their treatment.
6. Stay updated on new topics and trends in cancer.

**You will help ensure that no one faces cancer alone.**

**INTERFAITH Caregivers**  
 GREATER MERCER COUNTY

## Join us for a FREE transportation information session

A discussion panel with Mercer County's transportation providers will include representation from:  
**Ride Provide, TRADE and Access Link**  
 Information will also be available from EZ Ryde4Life and Hamilton Senior Center

## A Workshop for Adults & Caregivers

# CANCER THRIVING & SURVIVING

**6-WEEKS ON THURSDAYS**  
 Dates: October 3, 10, 17, 24 (no session on 10/31) and November 7, 14, 2024  
 Time: 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM  
 Place: Online via Zoom  
 Registration required and space is limited.

**REGISTER TODAY!**  
 For this free, 6-week virtual workshop designed to provide the skills needed to address the challenges to thriving.

**JOIN & EXPERIENCE**  
 Developed by Stanford University, this licensed program in self-management is proven to help cancer patients, survivors and caregivers learn to better manage the challenges of thriving. The curriculum covers issues experienced by many such as managing fatigue; pain and sleep; dealing with difficult emotions and relationships; staying active and communicating with providers, family and friends.

**FROM PARTICIPANTS**  
 "I am extremely grateful to have been part of this experience, as it has helped to lighten what is a very heavy load and highly recommend it."  
 "This was a wonderful program and gave me the empowerment I needed."

**REGISTER HERE:**  
[https://www.elixirfund.org/events/cts\\_registration/](https://www.elixirfund.org/events/cts_registration/)

**FROM US TO YOU**  
 All participants receive a complimentary copy of the book *Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*. This is a great self-management reference guide that provides valuable information to support your journey.

**For more INFORMATION**  
 CALL 908-237-2328

This workshop is provided by:

LIFE • LOVE • HEALING  
 CANCER COMFORT CARE





The Latin American Legal Defense and Education Fund and MECHA present:



### UTILITY ASSISTANCE CLINICS

LALDEF, in collaboration with MECHA, can assist **eligible** Mercer County families with the application for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) during the following dates and times **by appointment only**:

**In Trenton**  
(716 S. Clinton Ave.)

Sat., Oct. 5, 2024  
9am-2pm  
&  
Sat., Nov. 16, 2024  
9am-2pm

**In Princeton**  
(61 Nassau St.)

Tues., Oct. 22, 2024  
12pm-4pm  
&  
Tues., Nov. 12, 2024  
12pm-4pm

**To schedule an appointment or for more information:**

Call: (609) 688-0881 ext. 100

Email: [apoyo@laldef.org](mailto:apoyo@laldef.org)

Visit us at: 716 S. Clinton Ave, Trenton, NJ 08611

## UPCOMING PARTNER PROGRAMS



### BUDGET LISTENING SESSION



This is an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to provide verbal and written testimony to help shape the New Jersey Department of Health State Fiscal Year 2026 budget.

#### WHEN

October 24, 2024  
11 AM TO 2 PM

#### WHERE VIRTUAL

RSVP by October 18

[bit.ly/NJDOHBudgetListeningSession26](https://bit.ly/NJDOHBudgetListeningSession26)

- Remarks limited to 5 minutes.
- Participants are encouraged to RSVP by October 18.
- Caption services will be available on Zoom.
- Written testimony highly encouraged.



To learn more and/or provide written testimony, email: [BudgetFeedbackFY2026@doh.nj.gov](mailto:BudgetFeedbackFY2026@doh.nj.gov)

## Get the Lead Out of Trenton



### Trenton's 2nd Annual Lead Awareness Day and Community BBQ

Learn more at [www.leadfreenj.org](http://www.leadfreenj.org)



**Saturday, October 12, 1-4 pm**  
GEORGE PAGE PARK N. Clinton Ave. & Lawrence St.



Hosted by  
**EAST TRENTON COLLABORATIVE**  
[east-trenton.org](http://east-trenton.org)

### 3RD ANNUAL HEY BLACK DAD

## FALL FEST

MILL HILL PARK, TRENTON N.J. NOV. 2ND 12-4PM

Hey Black Dad focuses on improving the trajectory of maternal healthcare outcomes by way of paternal preparation and education.

Partner with us to bring a family friendly and unique fall fest to the greater Trenton area. It will include themed areas such as The Dad's Den for fathers, Mamas Cove for mothers with nursing babies, The Little Village for children 5 and under and much more!



For Sponsorship and Donations information please contact us at [HEYBLACKDAD@GMAIL.COM](mailto:HEYBLACKDAD@GMAIL.COM)

**RWJ** ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON  
FITNESS & WELLNESS CENTER

**20 Year Anniversary  
Celebration**  
*Celebrating 20 Years of Health in Hamilton*

Join us for a **FREE DAY** of  
wellness, fitness, food, and fun!

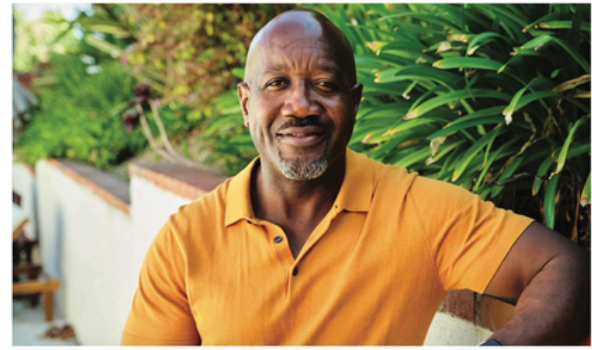
**Saturday, October 26**  
9:00am-1:00pm

**3100 Quakerbridge Road**  
Hamilton, NJ 08619

**EXCITING FREE THINGS AWAIT YOU!**

- Enjoy complete access to our state-of-the-art center, featuring an expansive fitness floor and comprehensive Aquatics Center.
- Health screenings and wellness information from Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton (RWJUH Hamilton).
- Partake in various special group fitness classes designed to help you dance, sweat, and unwind.
- Take advantage of a complimentary InBody Assessment for a detailed analysis of your body composition and overall health.
- Engage in a range of fun and exciting activities, classes, and demos designed especially for kids.
- Join in on special cooking demos with Novo Nordisk spokesperson and celebrity chef, Doreen Colondres.
- Shop local vendors, enjoy self-care stations, and more!
- And plenty of surprises!**

To register or learn more about the event, call us at 609.584.7600, scan the QR code, or visit us online:  
<https://bit.ly/HAM-20YearCelebration>



**Preventing Colon Cancer:  
What You Should Know**

**Wednesday, October 23, 2024 | 6 p.m.**  
Location: Zoom Meeting



Take charge of your health. Join **DR. JOHN BERRY**, a board certified colorectal cancer surgeon at the Capital Health Surgical Group, who will discuss the risk factors for colon cancer, options for screening, and how screening reduces the risk for colon cancer.

This event will be taking place virtually using Zoom. Register online at [capitalhealth.org/events](http://capitalhealth.org/events) and be sure to include your email address. Zoom meeting details will be provided via email 2-3 days before the program date. Registration ends 24 hours before the program date.



**LIVE WEBINAR**

**LEAD FREE** Preventing Lead Exposure  
in your Community  
Bright Futures Begin Lead Free

Many communities in NJ face a high risk of lead exposure primarily due to old housing stock and historical contamination. Learn about actions that municipalities and community advocates can take to not only comply with state laws, but also go above and beyond in pursuit of Sustainable Jersey action items. Hear how collaborative efforts can advance lead exposure prevention in your neighborhood.

**DATE** 10.23.2024 **TIME** AT 3:00 PM

**REGISTER NOW**  
[tinyurl.com/Oct23LeadFree](http://tinyurl.com/Oct23LeadFree)

**SUSTAINABLE JERSEY**  
CERTIFIED  
*A Better Tomorrow, One Community at a Time*

**Lead In Free KIDS**  
for a Healthy Future

Join the discussion during Lead Poisoning Prevention Week.

[cbolinger@njfuture.org](mailto:cbolinger@njfuture.org)

**MERCER COUNTY NEW JERSEY** **THE HUB**  
THE TRENTON CENTER FOR HEALING, UNITY & BELONGING

**SAVE THE DATE: HUB GRAND OPENING**

**October 29th @ 11am-2pm**

Trenton Center for Healing, Unity and Belonging (The Hub)  
16 W. Front St, 3rd Floor, Trenton, NJ 08608

You are invited to the grand opening that marks the exciting journey inspiring youth and community through hope and creative change.

**TO RSVP:**

**For More Information:** [thehub@creativechangeinc.org](mailto:thehub@creativechangeinc.org)  
[youbelongatthehub.org](http://youbelongatthehub.org)

The GMPHP would like to sincerely thank all of our partners who over the last 12 years have helped to build a strong supportive coalition that is improving the health of Mercer County residents. We could not have done the Community Health Assessment or Improvement Plan without your wholehearted support for which we are truly grateful.

**Thank you!**