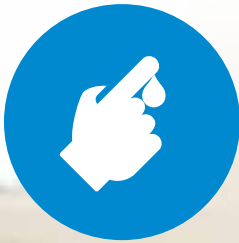




# YOUR HEALTH. OUR MISSION.

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2020-2021  
YMCA OF GREATER ERIE



# MAKING A HEALTHY IMPACT

COVID-19 has disrupted our society. But it's also created an opportunity to improve our lives — by transforming health and wellness — the primary weapon in our fight against disease.

In 2019, the Erie County Department of Health, through its Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), engaged and mobilized organizations and sectors to improve the health and wellness of Erie County residents. It focused on strong partnerships with community organizations like the Y, as well as non-traditional partners.

Reaching beyond our walls means that we are directly in neighborhoods partnering with community-based organizations like local churches and nonprofits to deliver health improvement programs focused on:

**Lifestyle behavior change**

**Disease prevention, early detection and control**

**Mental health and quality of life**

# COVID-19 EFFECTS

## ON OVERALL HEALTH



### PHYSICAL

Cancer, heart disease, diabetes – among the top 10 causes of death in the U.S. – **increased risk factors for severe illness** from COVID-19.

**73% of COVID-19 hospitalizations** had 1 underlying chronic condition.



### MENTAL

COVID-19 has contributed to social isolation and mental health challenges, such as **anxiety and depression**.

More than **1 in 3 high school students experienced poor mental health** during the pandemic, and nearly half of students felt persistently sad or hopeless.



### SOCIAL

**Vacant and deteriorating properties have a negative impact** on the health of neighborhoods. COVID exacerbated these issues, particularly in economically distressed areas.

**Chronic disease and COVID-19 disproportionately affect people** of lower socioeconomic status and minority populations.





# RECLAIMING HEALTH THROUGH PROVEN PROGRAMS



The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the need for community health improvement; the rate of chronic disease was already at an all-time high pre-pandemic. But now, as people have ignored routine healthcare, health experts are seeing even more of an increase in the incidence of chronic diseases. Our communities need Y programs now more than ever, and we're making them more accessible with scholarships and low-cost options.



In 2021, the Y provided hundreds of community members access to COVID-19 vaccine clinics, health workshops, screenings and blood drives. Four programs are now offered for those meeting qualifying income and health criteria.



### DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM

is a 12-month evidence-based behavioral change program aimed at reducing the risks of developing Type 2 Diabetes.



### BLOOD PRESSURE SELF-MONITORING

is a 4-month evidence-based program helping adults with hypertension to lower and manage their blood pressure through proper nutrition and stress management.



### MOVING FOR BETTER BALANCE

is a 12-week evidence-based group exercise program based on the principles of Tai Chi to reduce the risk of fall-related injuries.



### TOBACCO CESSATION/QUIT CLASS

is a 6-week class designed to provide support and goal-setting to quit tobacco within 4 weeks.

## THE ROBERTS FAMILY: LOOKING AT HEALTH CHOICES DIFFERENTLY

Dorothy and Ed Roberts, both 67, admit to trying several weight-loss programs and achieving minimal results. They also admit that they know they need to make lifestyle changes to enjoy the years ahead.

"For us, we've realized that it's important that we are unified in our approach to lifestyle changes. The Y's Diabetes Prevention Program provides a consistent framework and small-group accountability. Those are two aspects that have been missing in our previous attempts," said Dorothy.

Since beginning the program in January 2022, the Roberts have increased their activity to at least 700 minutes a week, reduced their A1C to 5.9 and lost a combined 68 pounds.





# ACTIVELY IMPROVING

OLDER ADULTS' MENTAL HEALTH

6.4K

active older adults

82K

visits

35

workshops, screenings,  
programs and classes

A new study of older adults asked which aspect of their health — physical, mental or social — COVID-19 impacted the most. 62% said their mental health took the biggest hit. Many turned to hobbies, socially distanced visits with friends and family, and exercise to help boost their mental health.



**“One of the Y’s top priorities is helping people who experienced hardships during the pandemic reclaim their health.”**

Nancy Jo Foor, YMCA of Greater Erie  
Healthy Living Director



## **LIMJADI SAMTOSO: MAKING MOVES TOWARD BETTER MENTAL HEALTH**

Limjadi Samtoso, 88, wants to be able to continue to mow his own lawn. He comes to the Y for Zumba Gold®, a 55-minute movement class. And while he admits he doesn’t catch all the choreography, he loves the active movement and the music. “As I get older, it’s important to move and work my muscles. I love the music,” he says. The music, he says, makes him happy.

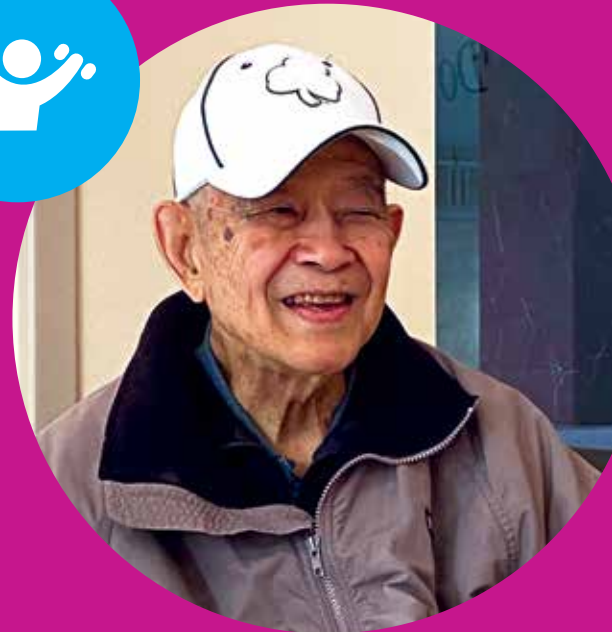
Like most older adults, Samtoso stayed home during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and

has returned while taking the necessary precautions to protect himself and others. “When I couldn’t come to the Y, I missed my teacher, Olga, and the music.” Samtoso is a classically trained musician and a retired physician. “I come to the Y so that I can mow my own lawn. I have to keep moving.”

On any given day at the Y, classes and gathering spaces are full with members. “Our senior programs are designed for men and women in their 50s,

and older, to promote fitness and well-being while fostering friendships and camaraderie,” said Foor.

While Samtoso admits that at his age he’s less interested in making friends, he does look forward to the friendly and welcoming atmosphere. And that music!





# SETTING THE STAGE

## FOR BETTER HEALTH

**5**

projects

**100K**

total investment

**500+**

in attendance for  
Healthy Kids Day

An abundance of research links neighborhood conditions to health, including socialization, physical activity, safety, access to food, employment and more.





# GLENWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION

The Glenwood neighborhood is recognized in the City of Erie's Refocused plan as a regional assets anchor. It has solid areas of well-maintained properties and is a central hub for family recreation.

Glenwood is regarded as a middle neighborhood — healthy enough to not require emergency intervention, but still in need of support to improve home values and create a sense of belonging for young professionals with families.

The Y, joined by Glenwood neighborhood residents, the Erie Zoo and the Erie Federal Credit Union, partnered to award a \$50,000 Renaissance Block

Grant, made available by the Erie County Gaming and Revenue Authority for neighborhood, recreational and home improvements on Shunpike Road.

"Based on Refocused, this effort works to give neighborhood residents financial support for exterior projects, such as façade improvements, porches, windows, landscaping and more — all in an effort to keep this area of Glenwood vibrant," said Jim McEldowney, YMCA of Greater Erie Chief Operating Officer. "Along with neighbors, we see a larger vision of defining this region of Glenwood as a destination for quality of life, livability and recreational amenities."

McEldowney cited the Erie Zoo, Flo Fabrizio Ice Center, Horseshoe Courts at Glenwood, JMC Golf Course, green spaces and the Y as examples of neighborhood anchors that add to quality of life and healthy residential experiences. "These amenities bring neighbors together, and create a sense of community and place."

Five projects were completed by homeowners ranging from porches and windows to foundation and garage repair. Homeowners were each awarded up to a \$5,000 grant that was matched dollar for dollar by the homeowner, with a total investment of nearly \$100,000 on Shunpike.



**"My wife and I think that the completed work in our neighborhood is already helping with the surrounding homeowners' attitudes towards their own homes and property. We feel that this plan is important and has a strong, positive impact on the quality of life for the residents."**

– Joe, property owner

# FOSTERING LEARNING

## BY CREATING CONNECTION

Routines create connection by adding structure to promote mental, physical and emotional health. Routines help children feel safe, develop life skills and build healthy habits. Routines help reduce stress. Routines are an important way to establish norms, set expectations and otherwise build positive relationships in the classroom (and the workplace). They help everyone involved be on the same page.



# BUILDING A SCHOOL FAMILY

Y educators are embracing a new approach to behavioral strains in childcare classrooms by applying research-informed and evidence-based behavior practices known as Conscious Discipline, and introducing behavior consultation services for parents and educators.

Conscious Discipline is a classroom management program that provides solutions for social and emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation. One of its primary principles is creating a school family.

"Conscious Discipline is rooted in connection. It's the foundation of everything we do. We understand that when children aren't connected, they can't learn. If students don't feel safe, if they don't feel loved, then they are not going to listen to any instruction that we give them," said Heather Clark-Celio, YMCA of Greater Erie Training Coordinator & Compliance Specialist.

Each morning, the Hess family looks forward to their drop-off ritual of a special hand clap, song and a quick kiss. This gets the day started with a smile, where Emily is greeted in the classroom with the good morning ritual and she tells the teacher how she'd like to be greeted.



"In my classroom, building my school family was extremely important to me. We created a school family name, chant and greeting," said Pre-K Counts Lead Teacher Jen Sikora. "Creating a strong connection with all the children helped build a willingness to be helpful in the classroom and kind to each other. We created a safe, loving environment for the children to grow in and learn."

Throughout the day, children use routines and rituals to communicate their emotions and tools to regulate them. Classrooms use rituals to transform everyday discipline issues into teachable moments, equipping children

with the social-emotional and communication skills needed to manage themselves, resolve conflict and develop healthy behavior.

"We believe that supporting children's caregivers, through increasing awareness, confidence, knowledge, and skills in caregiving and child development, can help children learn to solve conflicts, express their needs and manage their emotions enough to focus and learn," said Clark-Celio.



# EMPOWERING OUR TEENS



## TOWARD HEALTHIER OUTCOMES

**30** teens completed the  
Get Cooking program

**5** teens are involved in career  
exploration at Wegmans

Investing in our young people, particularly those who are farther from opportunity, is key to Erie's economic mobility and breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty.



# THE Y'S TEACHING KITCHEN: COOKING UP SOMETHING GOOD

A \$15,000 Community Center grant from the Erie County Gaming and Revenue Authority provided the main ingredient to construct a Teaching Kitchen, where Erie County teens, under the direction of professional culinary teachers, experience youth-centered, hands-on culinary education, career exploration and healthy cooking.

"More than \$4,600 in donations from Y members and community partners helped us equip the kitchen with bowls, pots, pans and cooking utensils," said Joey Evans, YMCA Teen Center Program Director.

"Then, Wegmans granted us gift cards to purchase food ingredients, and is providing career exploration opportunities for teens. A partnership with Mercyhurst University enables us to grow fresh produce year-round in Tower Gardens."

The teens get cooking on Mondays, and for 14-year-old Kenny Brewton, it's a chance to express his creativity. He says generations of family members sparked his interest in cooking. His favorite family recipe to prepare — Grandma's meat pie!

## Topics include:

- Kitchen safety
- Etiquette and manners
- Meal presentation/table setting
- Proper food handling
- Proper food preparation techniques
- Cooking and baking techniques

On the menu this Monday: a breakfast brunch with salmon, bacon, eggs and grits. The students first observe, then practice, whisking, measuring, cracking, seasoning, searing, monitoring — and then, finally tasting.



**"This program is helping me be independent and teaching me how to improvise with ingredients I have in the cupboard and refrigerator. I am eating less fast food, and we're throwing out less food at home."**

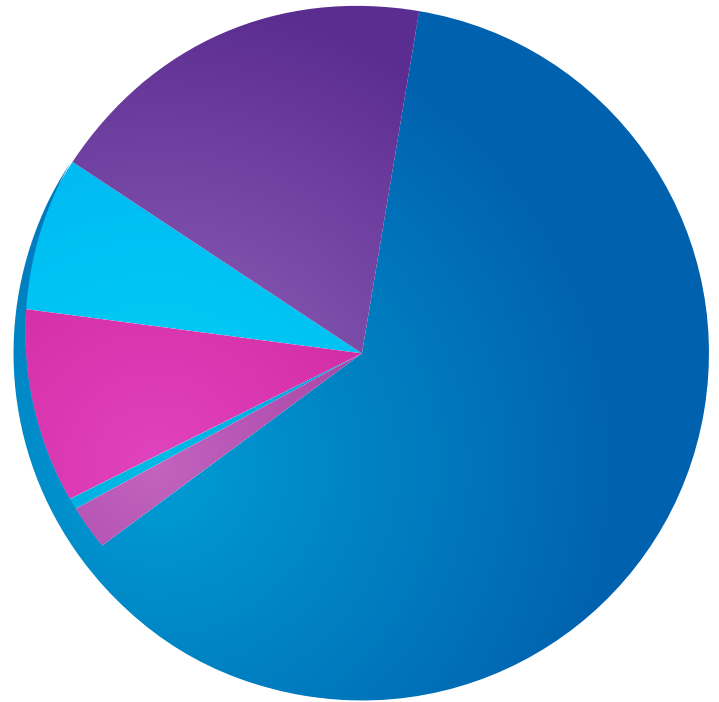
– Kenny Brewton



# 2020 FINANCIALS

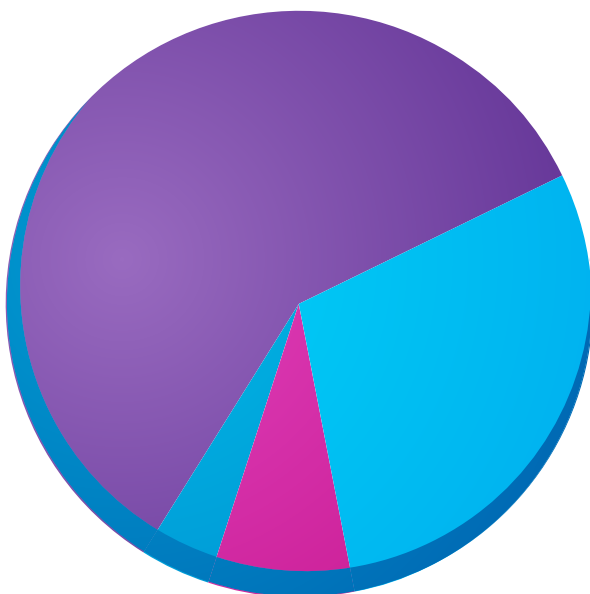
## REVENUES

Membership .....	\$2,873,455
Childcare .....	\$9,616,180
Program .....	\$334,964
United Way .....	\$90,938
Community Support .....	\$1,449,931
Other .....	\$1,095,155
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$15,460,623</b>



## SCHOLARSHIPS

Membership .....	\$513,524
Childcare .....	\$50,764
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$564,288</b>



## EXPENSES

Personnel Costs .....	\$8,689,040
Childcare and Membership Subsidies .....	\$564,289
Depreciation .....	\$1,181,293
Other .....	\$4,342,662
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$14,777,284</b>



# RECOGNIZING OUR DONORS

## YMCA HERITAGE CLUB MEMBERS

The following individuals have made a lasting investment in our community through their commitment to the YMCA Endowment Fund. Below is a partial list of members, as some prefer to remain anonymous.

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*\*denotes deceased*

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Recognition of donors contributing \$500 or more to the Y during calendar year 2021.

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## OUR MISSION

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

## OUR FOCUS

Youth Development, Healthy Living and Social Responsibility

## OUR CAUSE

To strengthen community

**YMCA OF GREATER ERIE**  
31 W. 10th Street  
Erie, PA 16501  
[ymcaerie.org](http://ymcaerie.org)



The YMCA of Greater Erie has earned a 100/100 score on Charity Navigator, achieving a 4-star ranking.

**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®**  
**FOR HEALTHY LIVING**  
**FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**