

# SNAPSHOT

## What is the Health Value Dashboard?

The Health Policy Institute of Ohio's Health Value Dashboard is a collection of tools and resources that compare Ohio's performance to all other states on measures of population health, healthcare spending and the factors that influence health. The primary purpose of the Dashboard is to highlight Ohio's strengths and challenges and spark questions that lead to data-driven policy that improves health, health equity and the value of healthcare spending in Ohio.

## What drives health?

Health is influenced by many factors. For example, individuals seeking to improve their health may choose to change their habits (often called health behaviors). Health behaviors are a key contributor to good health, and are shaped by people's environments and experiences.

Communities with access to healthy food, affordable housing, job opportunities, quality education, safe infrastructure and accessible health care support healthier choices and better health.<sup>1</sup> The Dashboard measures Ohio's performance on the many factors that influence health.

### The many factors that influence the health of Ohioans



## USING THE DASHBOARD

Ohio policymakers and stakeholders can use the Health Value Dashboard to focus on what matters most for Ohioans' health. For example, they can:

- ▶ **Share information.** Disseminate Dashboard data and findings to build shared understanding about the health challenges facing Ohio
- ▶ **Advocate for policy progress.** Educate public and private decision-makers using Dashboard data to influence policy and funding decisions
- ▶ **Implement solutions.** Design and implement evidence-informed strategies that address urgent health and well-being challenges identified in the Dashboard
- ▶ **Expand opportunities for health.** Use the data to identify and remove barriers to health, especially for Ohioans with the greatest needs
- ▶ **Track change over time.** Measure the impact of policy change using Dashboard indicators

## MORE DASHBOARD RESOURCES

Visit the [2026 Health Value Dashboard web page](#) to access the following:

- 4-page key findings overview
- **Findings from the Dashboard** publication

- **Data from the Dashboard** publication
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Data appendix with descriptions, years, sources and Ohio data



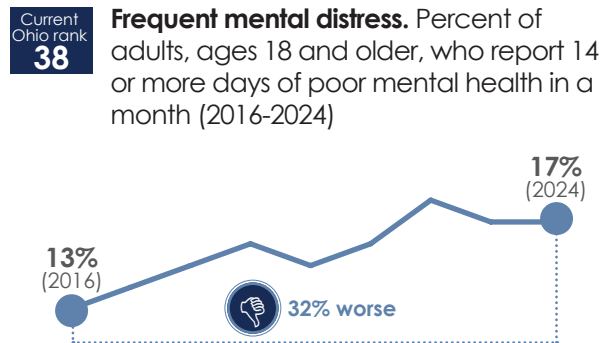
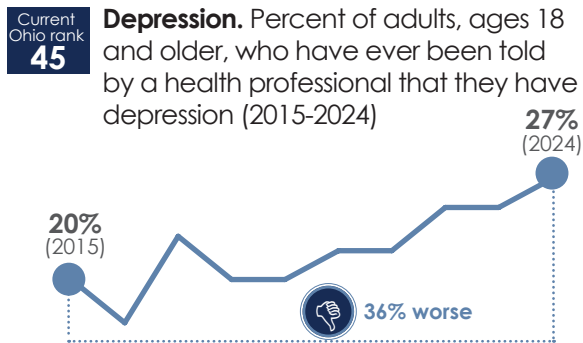
1. "Social Determinants of Health: Know What Affects Health." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Published Jan. 17, 2024. Accessed March 2026. <https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants>

KEY FINDING ▶

## Mental health outcomes are trending in the wrong direction

Mental health challenges continue to worsen in Ohio. An estimated 2.5 million Ohioans — more than 1 in 4 adults in the state — had depression in 2024. Many factors have contributed to this worsening trend over the past decade, including Ohio's performance on metrics of economic instability and social disconnection.

### Ohio performs worse than most other states on metrics related to mental health



Data sources are available in data appendices posted on the [2026 Health Value Dashboard web page](#).

## Considerations for policy progress

To improve the factors that support mental health, Ohio policymakers can:

- **Increase opportunities for employment** through academic programs such as **Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP)** and **sector-based workforce initiatives**
- **Support social connection** for older adults through increased investment in **activity programs for older adults** and **community centers**, such as senior centers
- **Improve access to mental health treatment** such as by **strengthening the behavioral health workforce** and maintaining current Medicaid eligibility categories

### Focusing attention

Ohio's progress relies on intentional efforts to reduce barriers for Ohioans with the greatest needs. For example:

If disparities were eliminated, there would be **600,407 fewer** Ohioans with disabilities who have frequent mental distress and **678,438 fewer** Ohioans with disabilities who do not participating in the labor force

KEY FINDING ►

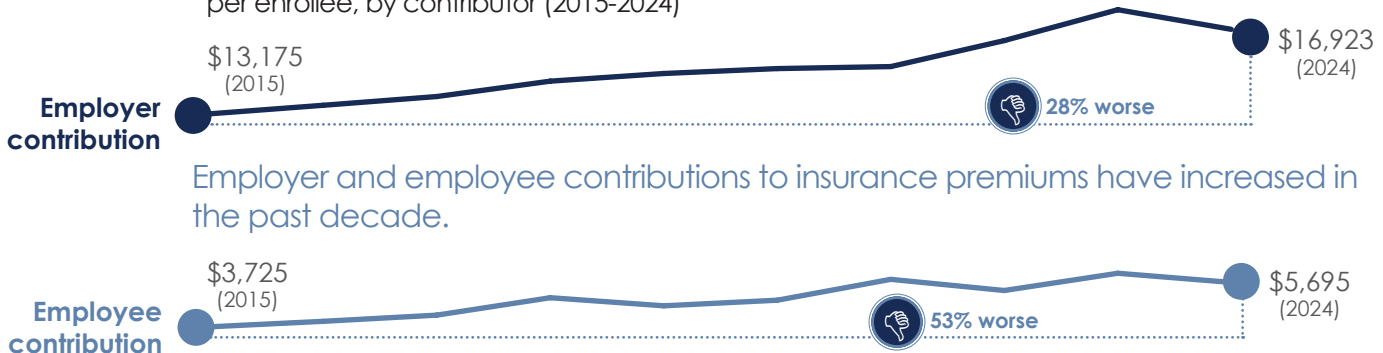
## Rising healthcare costs strain Ohioans, employers and the healthcare system

Healthcare costs are rising, leaving Ohioans with less room in their budgets and increasing financial pressure on businesses. Higher healthcare costs can make it harder for people to access care and for employers to offer affordable health insurance. Rising costs also strain health systems, leading to, for example, reduced services or closed hospitals in rural areas.

Current Ohio rank  
**6**

### Average premium for employer-sponsored health insurance, family coverage.

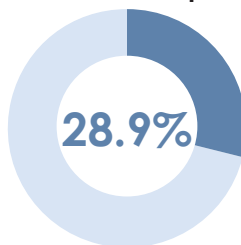
Average total annual family premium for employer-sponsored health insurance per enrollee, by contributor (2015-2024)



Employer and employee contributions to insurance premiums have increased in the past decade.

### Ohioans reporting difficulty paying for usual household expenses

More than 1 in 4 Ohioans had trouble paying expenses in 2023



Source: Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey, 2023

Data sources are available in data appendices posted on the [2026 Health Value Dashboard web page](#).

### ► Learn more

Recent federal health policy changes are likely to affect healthcare access and affordability. For more information, see HPIO's [Healthcare Access and Affordability series](#).

## Considerations for policy progress

To improve healthcare affordability and access, Ohio policymakers can:

- **Strengthen data collection** to understand state-level healthcare spending drivers and identify priorities through initiatives like **all-payer claims databases**
- **Contain rising health care costs** by pursuing payment reforms that are associated with significant spending reductions in other states, including **targeted reference pricing** for specific insurance markets (e.g., state employee health plans)
- **Monitor and respond to anticipated funding and coverage losses** to health programs, including Medicaid, from the federal reconciliation bill HR 1, which will reduce care access and increase costs for many Ohioans

### 🔍 Focusing attention

Ohio's progress relies on intentional efforts to reduce barriers for Ohioans with the greatest needs. For example:

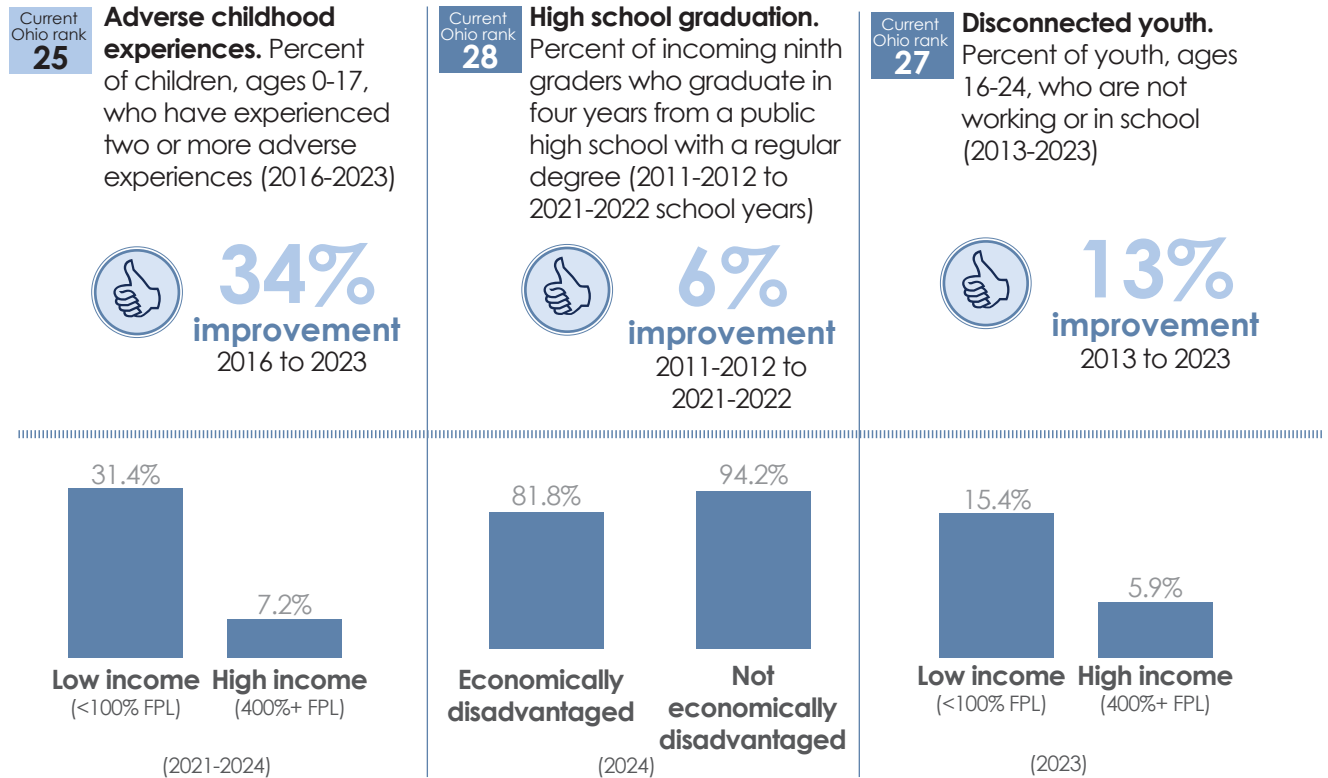
If disparities were eliminated, **60,116 fewer** Hispanic Ohioans would be unable to see a doctor due to cost

KEY FINDING ►

# Policy action is leading to improvement in child well-being, but challenges remain

In recent years, Ohio policymakers have dedicated effort and resources to improving child health and well-being. Families are realizing those gains, with Ohio performing well and/or trending in the right direction on metrics related to adverse childhood experiences, high school graduation and disconnected youth. However, some children are still experiencing barriers, including children in families with low incomes.

Ohio has made progress on child well-being metrics, but disparities persist



**Note:** Ranked graduation data is reported by the U.S. Department of Education and the disaggregated data is reported by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. For more information, see the data appendices.

Data sources are available in data appendices posted on the [2026 Health Value Dashboard web page](#).

## Considerations for policy progress

To improve child well-being, Ohio policymakers can:

- **Improve high school graduation rates** for students at risk of dropping out through **dropout prevention/high school completion programs** and/or **alternative high schools for at-risk students**
- **Continue placing more children in foster care with kinship caregivers** and provide more support for these caregivers
- **Support families**, such as through connecting them to needed social support and services through **family resource centers** or **schools with wraparound services**

### Focusing attention

Ohio's progress relies on intentional efforts to reduce barriers for Ohioans with the greatest needs. For example:

If disparities were eliminated, **72,447 fewer** Ohio children with low incomes would experience adverse childhood experiences

► **Suggested citation:** Health Policy Institute of Ohio. 2026 Health Value Dashboard. April 2026.