

# Sandusky County

## Public Housing Complex Gets a Playground Facelift

Playground Improvement Provides Opportunities for Physical Activity

### Challenge

According to the 2019 Sandusky County Community Health Assessment, 20% of children were classified as obese and 14% were classified as overweight by body mass index (BMI) calculations. In the United States, obesity is a significant public health issue, and rates in both adults and children have steadily risen during the past few decades. Being obese can increase the risk of developing health conditions like type 2 diabetes and heart disease at a younger age. A strong recommendation to prevent or reduce the incidence of childhood obesity is to be physically active on a regular basis. Providing opportunities for children to be physically active contributes to the improvement of health-related quality of life.

### Approach

A lack of an accessible area for children to be physically active at the Day Woods public housing complex in Fremont was a concern identified by the Sandusky County Creating Healthy Communities (CHC) Coalition staff in 2018. Years of collaborative efforts between the Sandusky County CHC staff and the Sandusky Metropolitan Housing Authority to improve health outcomes at Day Woods set the stage to begin discussions for the project. A committee was formed and data was collected by completing a site audit of the existing playground equipment and conducting a survey with residents. Thirty-eight percent of 30 respondents rated the playground “very poor” and 90% reported they would use the playground more if improvements were made. Planning was set in motion to design a playground where children living in the area could play in a safe environment.

### Results

This playground facelift was possible with funding from the Sandusky Metropolitan Housing Authority and the Creating Healthy Communities program. Several setbacks related to the COVID-19 pandemic did not stop the project from reaching completion in late 2020. Improvements included soft surfacing and installation of new playground equipment for children ages 2 to 12 years. Those items included a swing set with two regular seats, a toddler seat and an accessible swing seat, two motion play spring riders, two seesaws, a spin cup that allows young children of all abilities to sit in the cup while other spin them, and an upright spinning whirl that accommodates multiple children. These free-standing pieces of equipment challenge and stimulate children to be more active. In addition, a bench and trash receptacle were installed on site to support parent involvement and encourage a clean and safe play area. The official opening will be in 2021.



### At A Glance

In Fremont, the Sandusky County Creating Healthy Communities (CHC) Coalition and Sandusky County Public Health collaborated with Sandusky Metropolitan Housing Authority to provide opportunities for young residents at the Day Woods housing complex to be physically active. The playground at Day Woods was in need of improvements to meet safety standards. The renovation included replacing existing unsafe equipment with new free-standing structures, adding soft surfacing, and making the playground inclusive.



### Contact

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