



# Central Michigan District Health Department

*Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities*



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## PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

**To: Local News Media**  
**From: Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD)**  
**RE: CMDHD Introduces REFRESH Program**  
**Release Date: Immediately (November 28, 2022)**

### CMDHD Introduces REFRESH Program

*REFRESH is a CMDHD initiative to address hygiene poverty for children in local schools.*

Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) is dedicated to reducing the effects of hygiene poverty in our district's schools. Hygiene poverty is the inability to afford basic hygiene and personal grooming products that most people take for granted. The sad truth is that some families can't afford deodorant or menstrual products because that money is used to pay for rent or utilities. Children affected by hygiene poverty may come to school without the opportunity to shower, brush their teeth, or dress in clean clothing.

During the 2021-2022 school year, the impact of hygiene poverty in the rural schools in our six counties became evident. Over 80% of schools identified that they have been using menstrual and personal hygiene items donated by school staff, purchased using their own personal finances, for their students when needed. This burden expands beyond finances. Hygiene poverty can lead to impacted children being bullied, which can affect their ability to learn.

CMDHD began an initiative, in collaboration with community partners, to help meet this need through **REFRESH: Rural Engagement Facilitating Resources and Education for School Hygiene**. Each elementary, middle, and high school in CMDHD's school districts received direct donations delivered by CMDHD Health Resource Advocates (HRAs). Those donations include deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, soap, and body wash, lotion, and menstrual pads. In addition, CMDHD HRAs provide their schools with hygiene and menstrual hygiene educational materials, including menstruation starter kit cards, handwashing posters and puberty/sex education parent packs.

In its first year, CMDHD's REFRESH initiative has distributed almost 55,000 supplies to 102 schools in our district:

*Please visit us at our website [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org)*

- 1,750 deodorants
- 3,200 shampoo and conditioner
- 1,520 Toothbrushes
- 1,520 Toothpastes
- 1,600 soap/body wash
- 45,100 menstrual pads

If your organization would like to collaborate with CMDHD to combat hygiene poverty in our schools, please call 989-314-7570 and ask to speak with an HRA. Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon County schools who need assistance to support children experiencing hygiene poverty should reach out to their CMDHD HRA for more information.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org) and follow [Central Michigan District Health Department](#) on Facebook.

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*To request an interview, please visit our website ([cmdhd.org](http://cmdhd.org)) and fill out the [Media Interview Request Form](#).*