



# Washington County Amish Health Fairs

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### Abstract

There are six different Amish communities in Washington County. Due to their religious and cultural beliefs the Amish do not seek out healthcare unless all other resources are exhausted. Because of this barrier, the Amish community does not receive appropriate healthcare, screenings, and prevention education. To reduce the healthcare disparities that Washington county's Amish were experiencing, IUS senior nursing students partnered with the Washington County Health Department to provide a mobile health fair to four Amish community schools. Ninety-two students were screened, ranging in ages from six to fourteen years old. In addition, nine teachers and parents/aids ranging in ages twenty-one to twenty-seven were screened. The health fair offered the different health services of measuring height and weight, blood pressure, heart rate, temperature, respirations, oxygen saturation, blood glucose, and hemoglobin. Additional testing offered included the Snellen eye chart, Ishihara eye chart, and a scoliosis screening. The screenings provided during the health fair identified at risk individuals that would benefit from further healthcare referral and information on resources available to them. Nine students were referred to follow up with the health department within one month for low hemoglobin levels. Nine students were referred to the community optometrist/health department for possible red/green or blue/green deficiency color blindness. The health fairs also provided education on basic preventative health maintenance such as handwashing and dental hygiene, which was done using interactive learning opportunities. After the teaching was completed, each participant screened received a brown paper bag with a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, band-aids, pencil, erasers, bubbles, play doh, stickers, and candy. This poster will present the logistics of how the four Amish community health fairs were performed and the positive applications for the future health of their entire community.

### Background and Objectives

The Washington County Health Fairs were developed to reach the unserved Amish community while creating a learning opportunity for the nursing students of IUS. Students were able to learn about a culture they had not previously had experience with. Each health fair provides the student an opportunity to practice basic nursing skills and patient education. Culture sensitivity was taken into consideration when preparing for health fairs. Each of the health fairs had set objectives.

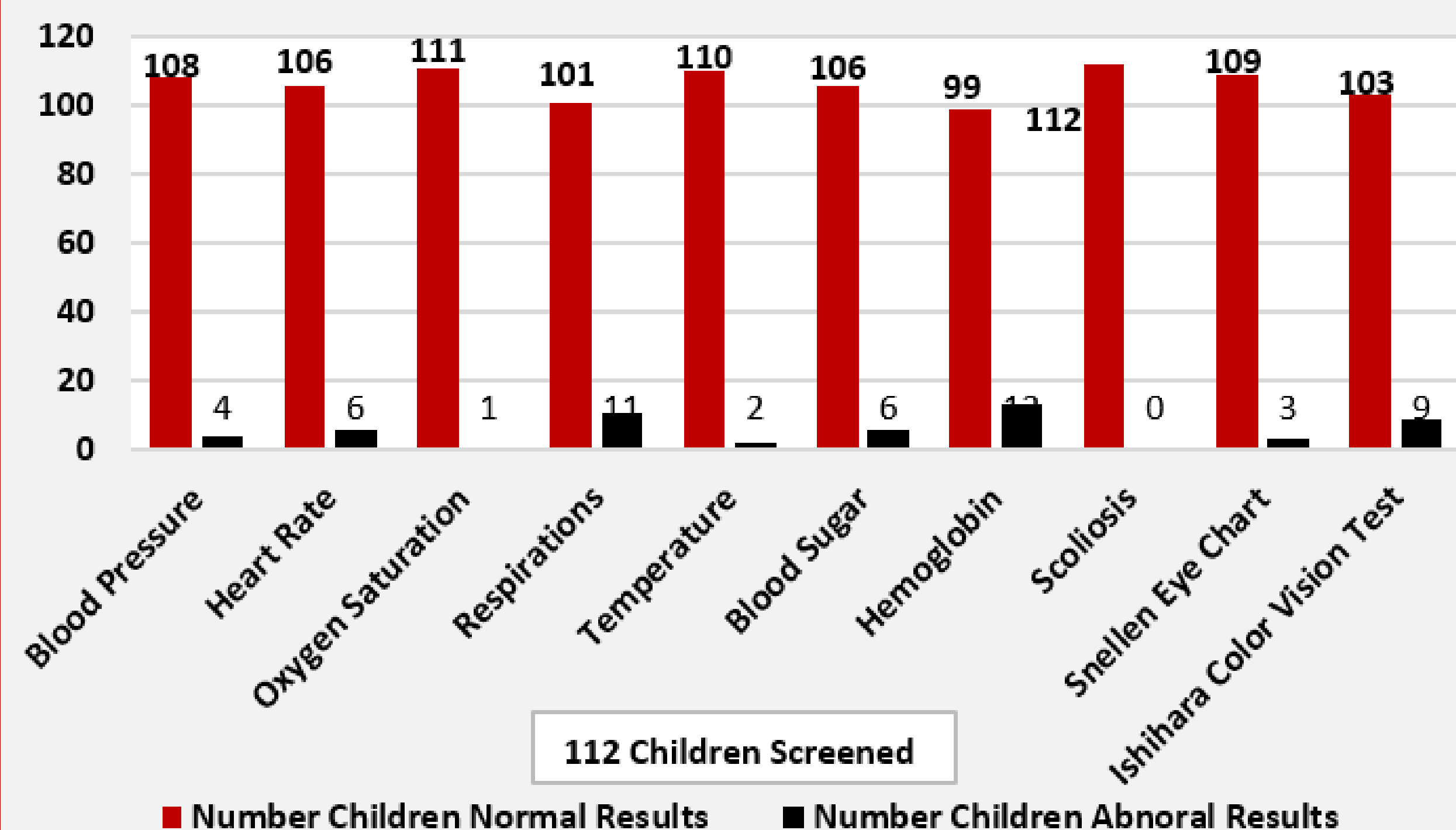
- Demonstrate culturally competent care
- Basic health assessment independently conducted
- Dental education performed effectively
- Maintained professionalism at all times
- Documentation accurate and thorough



### Cultural Considerations

The Amish are a traditional subculture of the Christian church  
They live by an unwritten set of rules, known as Ordnung  
They believe in simplicity; cars, electricity, and telephones are avoided  
Having their pictures taken is a violation of their religion  
They use three languages: English, Pennsylvania Dutch, and German  
Education takes place in a one-room schoolhouse up to the eighth grade  
They live in small, rural church districts with one bishop as the leader  
They do not participate in state benefits or insurance

### DATA AND RESULTS



### Health Assessment and Promotion

In order to assess the community health of the Amish children in Washington county, a health screening was done that included several different methods of health assessment. Education was provided to the students about handwashing and dental hygiene using large teeth models. The children were also asked questions about proper dental care such as when, how often, and how to properly brush their teeth. Every participant was given a gift bag containing dental care supplies and other gifts.

- **Height & Weight:** Height and weight were measured and compared to growth charts.
- **Blood Pressure/ Oxygen Saturation:** Measurement of blood pressure was done using an automatic blood pressure cuff and explained as the pressure the heart must overcome to pump. O2 saturation was measured with a pulse oximeter.
- **Vision Screening/ Scoliosis Screening:** Students stood 20 ft. away from the Snellen eye chart and tested visual acuity of their eyes. The Ishihara book was used to test for color blindness.
- **Blood Glucose/ Hemoglobin:** A finger stick was done to get samples for blood glucose and hemoglobin. Blood glucose was explained as the amount of sugar in their blood and hemoglobin was the ability for the blood to carry the oxygen they breath.

