Cen-Tex Family Services, Inc.

Hearts
of Texas
Head Start Program

Community Needs Assessment

2023

Bastrop, Colorado, Fayette,
and Lee Counties, Texas

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**Prepared by Spiridis Consulting LLC   www.SpiridisConsulting.com**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

Cen-Tex Family Services, Inc. conducts a Community Wide Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment at least every five years to find underlying causes and conditions of poverty within the communities served and to identify available resources to address the unmet needs of the communities' most vulnerable residents. A comprehensive Community Needs Assessment is often the first step of the planning cycle—grounding and guiding our work to develop, implement, and strengthen programs and services that lift children, families, and communities out of poverty. Annual updates to the Community Assessment are completed during the four years following the comprehensive Community Assessment.
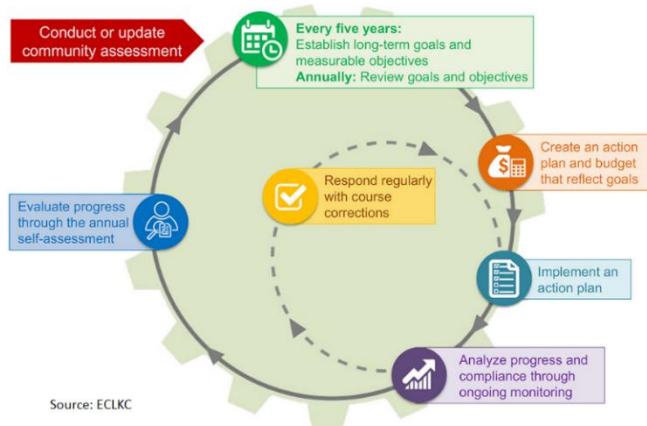
Cen-Tex Family Services' 2023 Community Needs Assessment highlights strengths, challenges, and barriers to self-sufficiency of families with young children that are at-risk and/or living in poverty in Bastrop, Colorado, Fayette, and Lee counties in Texas. The Assessment guides planning and programming to meet community needs, builds on strengths and resources of local communities, and aids in reducing identified barriers to self-sufficiency for families in poverty—particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic challenges. Leadership and governing bodies use quantitative and qualitative data from the Community Assessment to enrich services and to inform decisions including, but not limited to:

◆ Determination of long- and short-range program goals, objectives, and priorities;

◆ Types of services most needed for pregnant women, children, and families living in poverty;

◆ Gaps in service and geographic areas to be served, if additional funding is available, or if limitations for resources make it impossible to serve the entire service area;

◆ Locations of Head Start and Early Head Start services;

◆ Criteria to define special populations to be prioritized for recruitment and selection for services;

◆ Community collaborations to develop, strengthen, or provide needed services; and

◆ Identification of and reduction of inequities within communities.

METHODOLOGY

The Community Needs Assessment has been developed per Head Start Program Performance Standard (HSPPS) *1302.11 Determining Community Strengths, Needs, and Resources* (right) which outlines the information that must be included and analyzed about each grantee's Head Start and/or Early Head Start funded service area.

Cen-Tex Family Services, Inc. utilized the services of Spiridis Consulting LLC to facilitate the Community Needs Assessment process, including survey development, data collection and analysis, and compilation of the final report.

Methods utilized for data collection included:
- discussion with leadership staff;
- local, state, and federal data resources;
- internal data (Program Information Reports);
- data reflecting COVID-19 impacts;
- 2020 Census Bureau data; and
- American Community Survey, 2021 Five Year estimates*.

*The American Community Survey (ACS) collects and produces information on social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics about the U.S. population. The ACS is an official Census Bureau survey that is part of the decennial census program. Every year, the Census Bureau contacts over 3.5 million households nationwide to participate in the ACS. The survey is sent to a percentage of households monthly. These data are used to track shifting demographics and learn about local communities.[1]

Spiridis Consulting utilizes 5-Year ACS estimates due to smaller margins of error than 1-year estimates.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some Community Assessment data may be missing or may have been impacted.

HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARD

1302.11 Determining Community Strengths, Needs, and Resources

1. The number of eligible infants, toddlers, preschool age children and expectant mothers, including their geographic location, race, ethnicity, and languages they speak;

2. Children in foster care, children experiencing homelessness, and children with disabilities, including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to children by community agencies;

3. The education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of eligible children and their families, including prevalent social or economic factors that impact their well-being;

4. Typical work, school, and training schedules of parents with eligible children;

5. Other child development, child care centers, and family child care programs that serve typical work, school, and training schedules of parents with eligible children;

6. Other child development, child care centers, and family child care programs that serve eligible children, including home visiting, publicly funded state and local preschools, and approximate number of eligible children served;

7. Resources that are available in the community to address the needs of eligible children and their families; and

8. Strengths of the community.

Notes: Unless stated otherwise, a referenced year refers to a calendar year. A Program Year (PY) is reflective of 12-month data collected on the Program Information Report (PIR) that is submitted to the Office of Head Start annually in August. A School Year (SY) refers to the public-school year. Fiscal Year (FY) and Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) may also be utilized.

KEY FINDINGS

Throughout the Community Assessment process, data trends, strengths, and challenges have been identified. Key challenges for families in poverty are interwoven, meaning families must remove a multitude of barriers to move towards self-sufficiency. Cen-Tex Family Services' continued role in community advocacy and collaboration are crucial. The Governing Board, Policy Council, leadership, family service staff, and all staff can collectively focus on increased engagement in partnerships, community groups, and coalitions to break down barriers for children and families in poverty.

QUALITY CARE FOR CHILDREN

The four-county area has a critical need for added quality, affordable infant/toddler child care and Early Head Start, particularly for full working day child care. During SY 2021-22, the following four-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded preschool: Bastrop (760); Colorado (186); Fayette (147); and Lee (103). There is also a continued need for Head Start to serve three-year olds.

Following are the numbers of children in poverty by town/city: Bastrop (194); Cedar Creek (144); Elgin (161); Smithville (39); Columbus (37); Eagle Lake (44); Rock Island (40); La Grange (32); Schulenburg (52); Dime Box (37); and Giddings (44).

The average cost of infant care in Texas is $9,324, or $7777 per month, consuming 15.7% of a median family's income. Only 15.8% of Texas families can afford infant care. Child care for two children—an infant and a 4-year-old—costs $16,386—28.6% more than average rent in Texas. A typical family would have to spend 27.6% of its income on child care for an infant and a 4-year-old.

Young Children in Poverty by Age Group

County	Children Under Age 5			Infants and Toddlers		3 and 4 Year Olds	
	Total Children	# in Poverty	% in Poverty	Total*	In Poverty	Total*	In Poverty
Bastrop Co.	6,006	1,128	18.8%	3,604	676	2,402	452
Colorado Co.	1,216	120	9.9%	730	72	486	48
Fayette Co.	1,176	107	9.1%	706	64	470	43
Lee County	1,102	225	20.4%	661	135	441	90

*Estimated infants/toddlers (60%) and 3- & 4-Year-olds (40%)   Source: American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

While the intent of rising wages is positive, it also precludes low-income, working families from automatically qualifying for some assistance programs—such as Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS)—during an economically challenging period. The 2022 average monthly inflation was 8%—a 40 year high. By March 2022, food had increased by 8.5%, shelter by 8.2%, transportation services by 13.9%, and apparel by 3.3%. Working families need enhanced support as they navigate through this period of higher wages, reduced public assistance, and elevated costs.

The living wage needed to support one adult and one child is between $31.79 (Colorado) and $36.52 (Bastrop) in the four-county area. A full-time working adult with one child who is making minimum wage earns just 20-23% of the living wage in the four-county area.

The 2023 Texas minimum wage is $7.25/hour. Post-pandemic, employers have struggled to hire and retain employees, therefore, some employers have increased entry-level pay to $10-$12 or higher. The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for a family of two is $19,720/year; therefore, a single full-time (2,080 hours) working parent of one child who is making minimum wage earns $15,080; this is *below* the FPL. The FPL for a family of two is $19,720/year; therefore, a single parent of one child who is working full-time at $9.50/hour, or more is *above* the FPL. The FPL for a family of four is $30,000/year; therefore, a household of four with one full-time working adult earning $14.45/hour ($30,056) or more is *above* the FPL.

FOOD INSECURITY

Child food insecurity rates in 2021 ranged from 15% (Fayette) to 16.4% (Lee), compared to Texas (18.1%) and the U.S. (12.8%). From 2019 (pre-pandemic) to 2021, child food insecurity *decreased* by 2% - 4% in all four counties and Texas. Massive public/private response to hunger during the pandemic was successful in mitigating food insecurity rates across the country. While food insecurity improved for some sub-populations, it worsened for others. Focus groups also highlighted the struggles of families with food. There was a deepening divide across racial and ethnic lines. Among the overall general population in the four-county area:

o   Rates among the Black population ranged from 16% (Colorado) to 31% (Fayette);
o   Rates among the Hispanic population ranged from 12% (Bastrop/Fayette) to 14% (Lee);
o   Rates among the White, non-Hispanic population ranged from 6% -7%.

POVERTY AND INEQUITIES

Head Start programs have a long history of "anti-racism in action." can continue to ensure its systems and services advance racial and ethnic equity for children and families in poverty, particularly in areas noted throughout the Community Assessment. Examples include the following:

o   General population poverty rates range between 8.9% (Colorado) and 11.8% (Lee), lower than Texas (14%) and the U.S. (12.6%). Overall four-county poverty rates are highest among the Black population (22.6%) and the Hispanic population (17%).

o   The median incomes of Hispanic households are $3,000 - $17,000 lower than non-Hispanic, White households.

o   Following are populations without a high school diploma in the 4-county area by race and ethnicity: non-Hispanic, White (9.3%); African American (13.5%); Asian (16.2%); Native American or Alaskan Native (38.2%).

o   Infants with high weight-for-length are at increased risk of obesity in childhood and early adulthood. Prevalence is highest among Native American or Alaska Native infants (18.1%) and Hispanic infants (16.3%). Texas children ages 2 to 4 enrolled in WIC have 15.9% obesity. Obesity is the highest among Hispanic infants (16.3%).

o   Food Insecurity (see above)

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

In March 2020, Congress temporarily increased SNAP benefits via Emergency Allotments during the pandemic. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 passed by Congress ended such allotments. By March 2023, SNAP benefits returned to standard amounts.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) expanded its interpretation of public assistance to include SNAP, making children in SNAP households categorically eligible. Between April 2022 and April 2023, SNAP cases of children under age 5 changed as follows: Bastrop (+.8%); Colorado (+31.3%); Fayette (+2.5%); and Lee (-1.6%) counties. Of Cen-Tex HS/EHS families, 47.2% or 212 in PY 2021-22 were receiving SNAP upon enrollment, compared to 46.7% or 208 families in PY 2019-20. The data should continue to be monitored as it relates to eligibility for Head Start/Early Head Start.

FOSTER CARE

At the end of FY 2022, there were 133 children under age 5 who were in Substitute Care in the 4-county area; of these, 49 or 36.8% were under 1 year old, 32 or 17.3% were 1-2 years old, and 52 or 46% were 3-4 year olds. Substitute Care Placements by county were as follows: Bastrop (82); Colorado (10); Fayette (23); and Lee (18). During PY 2021-22, 4.7% or 23 Cen-Tex HS/EHS children were in foster care, compared to 5.5% during PY 2020-21 and 4.2% during PY 2018-19 (pre-pandemic). Increased collaboration to enroll more foster children should be explored.

DATA SUMMARY

The following is added data, not included in the Key Findings. For detailed information, refer to the full narrative. Not all Community Assessment data has been included in this summary. As available, data sources reflecting the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been included.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Between 2010 and 2020:
o Bastrop County's population increased by 23,045 or 31.1%, more than Texas (15.9%). Sizable population growth occurred in the city of Bastrop (+34.2%, +2,470 people), Camp Swift (+24.4%, +1,560 people), Elgin (+20.3%, +1,649 people), and Wyldwood (47.5%, +1,189 people).
o Colorado County's population decreased by 1.5%.
o Fayette County's population decreased by .5%. City and town populations decreased by 2% - 8%.
o Lee County's population decreased by 5.5%.

Of the population, 6.4% or 6,081 in Bastrop County; 6.5% or 1,336 in Colorado County; 4.9% or 1,186 in Fayette County; and 6.3% or 1,102 in Lee County are children under age five.

In the 4-county area, between 69.7% (Bastrop) and 86.6% (Fayette) of the population speak English only and between 6% (Fayette) and 28.3% (Bastrop) speak Spanish. In Fayette County, 7.4% speak Indo-European languages, Asian/Pacific languages, or other languages. Of Cen-Tex families during PY 2021-22, 73.3% spoke English and 26.7% spoke Spanish as their primary home languages.

In the 4-county area:
o The White population ranges between 62.2% (Bastrop) and 86.8% (Fayette).
o The Black population ranges between 6.2% (Fayette) and 12.5% (Colorado).
o Of all races, between 21.9% (Fayette) and 40.1% (Bastrop) are Hispanic.

Racial and ethnic demographics of enrolled Cen-Tex families during PY 2021-22 were White (67.9%); Black (17.1%); Multiracial (14.7%); and Asian (0.4%). Of enrolled children, 72.1% were Latino.

In the 4-county area between 2010 and 2020:
o The Hispanic population increased by 71.5% in Bastrop County, 9.9% in Colorado County, 13.8% in Fayette County, and 20.3% in Lee County.
o The White population decreased by 2% - 8%.
o The Black population decreased by 1% - 16%.

Between 17% (Fayette) and 31% (Lee) of children live in single parent-households. During PY 2021-22, 53.5% of Cen-Tex EHS families and 50.9% of HS families were two-parent households.

BIRTH OUTCOMES AND PREGNANT WOMEN

In 2020, live births by county were as follows: Bastrop (1,143); Colorado (221); Fayette (230); and Lee (209). Between 2018 and 2020, live births in Bastrop County increased (+7.7%), while they decreased in Texas (-2.1%) and in Colorado (-9.8%), Fayette (-5.7%), and Lee (-7.9%) counties. Based on poverty

rates and live births, the estimated EHS-eligible pregnant women in each county are as follows: Bastrop (206); Colorado (22); Fayette (21); and Lee (43).

Across the 4-county area, racial and ethnic demographics of birth mothers were as follows: non-Hispanic White (32% - 57%); non-Hispanic Black (5% - 10%); and Hispanic of any race (31% - 59%).

o   In Bastrop County in 2020, 8% or 91 births were to teenage mothers.

o   Of pregnant women in the 4-county area in 2020, between 61.5% (Colorado) and 74.4% (Fayette) received first trimester care. Between 7.4% (Bastrop) and 15.7% (Lee) received third trimester care or no prenatal care in 2020.

o   In the 4-county area, between 5.7% (Lee) and 8.3% (Fayette) of newborns had low birth weights.

DISABILITIES

The Office of Head Start (OHS) requires that grantees enroll 10% of children with disabilities. During PY 2021-22, Cen-Tex enrolled 17.6% or 43 EHS children and 12.9% or 32 HS children with disabilities, exceeding the OHS mandate. Of HS children with disabilities, 24 children were diagnosed with speech or language impairments, 4 with autism, 3 with non-categorical/developmental delays, and 1 child with a visual impairment.

During FY 2021, 61,240 children received Early Childhood Intervention across Texas; this was a 3.4% increase from 2020 (due to the pandemic, 2020 numbers were lower). Of Texas children receiving ECI services in FY 2020, 15.7% had a medical diagnosis; 82.9% had a developmental delay; and 1.3% had a hearing/vision delay. During FY 2021, 208 or 4.8% of children ages birth-three in Bastrop County; 74 or 6.7% in Colorado County; 39 or 2.8% in Fayette County; and 27 or 2.7% in Lee County received ECI, compared to 3.5% in the state of Texas.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and business closures, 2020 annual unemployment rates ranged between 6% and 10%. In March 2023, unemployment rates had dropped to 3.5% - 4.2% in the 4-county area, compared to Texas (4.2%) and the U.S. (3.6%). The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. Between Feb. 2020 (pre-pandemic) and Feb. 2023, the labor force increased by 12.8% in Bastrop County, 5.2% in Colorado County, and 1.8% in Fayette County, while the labor force decreased by 10.4% in Lee County.

Median household incomes in the 4-county area range between $55,945 (Colorado) and $78,339 (Bastrop), compared to Texas ($67,321) and the U.S. ($69,021). Of households, between 14.4% (Bastrop) and 21.1% (Lee) earn under $25,000. The median incomes of Hispanic households are $3,000 - $17,000 lower than non-Hispanic, White households.

The annual U.S. inflation rate was 5% ended March 2023. The 2022 average monthly inflation was 8%—a 40 year high. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the average change in prices paid by consumers for goods and services needed for daily living (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, gas).

Consumer Price Index—March 2023

	1-Month Percent Change (from February 2023)	12 Month Percent Change (from March 2022)
All Items	**0.1**	**5.0**
Food	0.0	8.5
Food at home	-0.3	8.4
Food away from home	0.6	8.8
Energy	-3.5	-6.4
Gasoline (all types)	-4.6	-4.6
Fuel oil	-4.0	-4.0
Electricity	-0.7	-0.7
Utility (piped) gas service	-7.1	-7.1
All Items Less Food and Energy	0.4	5.6
Apparel	0.3	3.3
Shelter	0.6	8.2
Transportation services	1.4	13.9
Medical care services	-0.5	1.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

In PY 2021-22, 2.7% or 12 Cen-Tex families were receiving SSI upon enrollment, compared to 2.4% in PY 2020-21 and 5.6% in PY 2018-19 (pre-pandemic).

Between March 2020 (beginning of pandemic) and March 2023, TANF cases declined in Bastrop County by 57.6%. In PY 2021-22, 1.1% or 5 Cen-Tex HS/EHS families were receiving TANF upon enrollment, compared to 1% in PY 2020-21 and 1.8% in PY 2019-20 (pre-pandemic).

Between 2019 and 2021, WIC recipients under age five increased by 17.1% in Bastrop County and decreased in Colorado (-5.6%), Fayette (-2.4%), and Lee (-10%) counties.

EDUCATION

Between 11.5% (Fayette) and 15.6% (Bastrop/Colorado) of adults aged 25+ do not have a high school diploma, compared to Texas (15.2%)and the U.S. (11.1%). In PY 2021-22, 25.4% of Cen-Tex HS/EHS families had no high school diploma, 64.1% had a high school diploma or G.E.D. only, and 10.3% had some college or a degree.

2021 graduation rates were 90% or higher in all school districts in the four-county area except Elgin ISD (82.4%) and Dime Box ISD (80%).

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health Outcomes represent a county's current health and reflect the physical and mental well-being of residents through measures representing length and quality of life. Lower rankings indicate healthier counties. Of Texas' 253 counties in 2023, Bastrop (#49) and Fayette (#43) counties are ranked among the healthiest. Colorado (#123) and Lee (#103) counties are ranked in the mid-range.

Adult obesity (36%-40%), adult smoking (18%-19%), uninsured people under age 65 (21%-23%), and elevated ratios of primary care physicians to patients are areas that most negatively impact health.

In 2020, between 16.8% (Bastrop) and 21.1% (Fayette) of children at or below 200% of the FPL were without insurance, compared to children with no insurance at all income levels (13% - 16%) in the four-county area.

All 4 counties have Health Professional Shortage Areas designations.

Adult obesity rates in the 4-county area are as follows: Bastrop (36%); Colorado (40%); Fayette (37%); and Lee (37%). During PY 2021-22, 50.6% of Cen-Tex Head Start children were at a healthy weight, while 2.8% were underweight, and 16.5% were overweight. Of Cen-Tex HS children, 17.7% had obesity, compared to Texas HS children (17.1%) and HS children nationally (18.2%).

HOMELESSNESS

During PY 2021-22, 17% or 74 Cen-Tex HS/EHS children were experiencing homelessness, compared to 12.9% during PY 2020-21 and 21.2% during PY 2018-19 (pre-pandemic).

HOUSING

Of households in the four-county area, between 17.6% (Colorado) and 23.3% (Bastrop) are cost burdened, compared to Texas (29.9%). Cost-burdened rental households are even higher, ranging from 25.9% (Colorado) to 38.2% (Lee County), compared to Texas (45.5%). The 2023 monthly FMR for a two-bedroom rental in the service area ranges from $891 (Colorado) to $1,626 (Bastrop), with corresponding housing wages from $17.14/hour to $31.27/hour.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

More than 107,000 Americans died of overdoses in 2021, a 15% increase from 2020. Overdose deaths involving fentanyl and other synthetic opioids surpassed 71,000 in 2021, up 23% from 2020. Experts say the COVID-19 pandemic worsened the opioid epidemic as lockdowns and other restrictions isolated those with addictions and made treatment harder to access. In addition, there has been an increased presence in the country of the synthetic opioid fentanyl.

Between 2019 and 2020 in Texas, accidental drug-related deaths:
- increased by 34.6% (from 2,764 to 3,721).
- increased from 9.5 to 12.5 per 100,000 population.
- accidental opioid-related deaths increased by 44.5% and synthetic opioid-related deaths (e.g. fentanyl) increased by 158%.

TRANSPORTATION

Between 2.6% (Bastrop) and 5.8% (Colorado) of households do not have a vehicle, compared to 5.2% in Texas and 8.4% in the United States. Following are *rental* households without vehicles by county: Bastrop (6.5%); Colorado (15.7%); Fayette (16.8%); and Lee (9.8%).[2]

DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION

Between 2010 and 2020, Bastrop County's population increased by 23,045 or 31.1%, more than growth in Texas (15.9%). Sizable population growth occurred in the city of Bastrop (+34.2%, +2,470 people), Camp Swift (+24.4%, +1,560 people), Elgin (+20.3%, +1,649 people), and Wyldwood (47.5%, +1,189 people).[3]

Population Density[4]

Location	Total Estimated Population, 2021	Total Land Area (Square Miles)	Population Density (Per Square Mile)
Texas	28,862,581	261,268.21	110
Bastrop County	94,887	888.23	107
Colorado County	20,559	960.29	21
Fayette County	24,445	949.93	26
Lee County	17,393	629.04	28

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

2010-2020 Population Changes, Bastrop County

Location	Location Type*	Population		Change 2010-2020	
		2010	2020	Count	Percent
Bastrop County	**County**	**74,171**	**97,216**	**23,045**	**31.1%**
Bastrop	City	7,218	9,688	2,470	34.2%
Camp Swift	CDP	6,383	7,943	1,560	24.4%
Cedar Creek	CDP	Not Available	3,154	-----	-----
Circle D-KC Estates	CDP	2,393	2,588	195	8.1%
Elgin	City	8,135	9,784	1,649	20.3%
McDade	CDP	685	720	35	5.1%
Paige	CDP	Not Available	278	-----	-----
Red Rock	CDP	Not Available	410	-----	-----
Rosanky	CDP	Not Available	1,473	-----	-----
Smithville	City	3,817	3,922	105	2.8%
Wyldwood	CDP	2,505	3,694	1,189	47.5%

*Census Designated Place (CDP) is a statistical geographic entity equal to an incorporated place with concentrated population, housing, and commercial or nonresidential structures that is identifiable by name but not within an incorporated place. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

Between 2010 and 2020, Colorado County's population decreased by 1.5%.[5]

2010-2020 Population Changes, Colorado County

Location	Location Type*	Population		Change 2010-2020	
		2010	2020	Count	Percent
Colorado County	**County**	**20,874**	**20,557**	-317	-1.5%
Columbus	City	3,655	3,699	44	1.2%
Eagle Lake	City	3,639	3,442	-197	-5.4%
Garwood	CDP	Not Available	510	-----	-----
Glidden	CDP	661	741	80	12.1%
Nada	CDP	Not Available	231	-----	-----
Rock Island	CDP	Not Available	228	-----	-----
Sheridan	CDP	Not Available	520	-----	-----
Weimar	City	2,151	2,076	-75	-3.5%

*Census Designated Place (CDP)   Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

Between 2010 and 2020, Fayette County's population decreased by .5%. City and town populations decreased by 2% - 8%.[6]

2010-2020 Population Changes, Fayette County

Location	Location Type*	Population		Change 2010-2020	
		2010	2020	Count	Percent
Fayette County	**County**	**24,554**	**24,435**	-119	-0.5%
Carmine	City	250	244	-6	-2.4%
Ellinger	City	Not Available	175	-----	-----
Fayetteville	City	258	246	-12	-4.7%
Flatonia	Town	1,383	1,308	-75	-5.4%
La Grange	City	4,641	4,391	-250	-5.4%
Plum	CDP	Not Available	366	-----	-----
Round Top	Town	90	87	-3	-3.3%
Schulenburg	City	2,852	2,633	-219	-7.7%

*Census Designated Place (CDP)   Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

Between 2010 and 2020, Lee County's population decreased by 5.5%.[7]

2010-2020 Population Changes, Lee County

Location	Location Type*	Population		Population Change 2010-2020	
		2010	2020	Count	Percent
Lee County	**County**	**11,561**	**10,924**	**-637**	**-5.5%**
Dime Box	CDP	Not Available	207	-----	-----
Giddings	CDP	4,881	4,969	88	1.8%
Lexington	Town	1,177	1,217	40	3.4%

*Census Designated Place (CDP)   Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

AGE

Of the population, 6.4% or 6,081 in Bastrop County; 6.5% or 1,336 in Colorado County; 4.9% or 1,186 in Fayette County; and 6.3% or 1,102 in Lee County are children under age five.[8]

Population by Age Groups

	0-4	5-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Texas	6.8%	19.0%	9.7%	14.5%	13.8%	12.4%	11.3%	12.5%
Bastrop County	6.4%	19.2%	8.8%	11.5%	12.3%	12.8%	13.9%	15.0%
Colorado County	6.5%	17.4%	8.3%	10.7%	9.6%	11.2%	14.5%	21.8%
Fayette County	4.9%	15.4%	6.5%	10.2%	10.2%	11.4%	16.2%	25.3%
Lee County	6.3%	15.6%	7.3%	11.3%	12.9%	12.0%	15.0%	19.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Population Under Age 5

Location	Count	Percent of Population
Texas	**1,959,223**	**6.8%**
Bastrop County	6,081	6.4%
Colorado County	1,336	6.5%
Fayette County	1,186	4.9%
Lee County	1,102	6.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

PRIMARY LANGUAGE

In the 4-county area, between 69.7% (Bastrop) and 86.6% (Fayette) of the population speak English only and between 6% (Fayette) and 28.3% (Bastrop) speak Spanish. In Fayette County, 7.4% speak Indo-European languages, Asian/Pacific languages, or other languages.[9]

Of PreK children in 2020, approximately 363 children in Bastrop County, 25 in Colorado County, 36 in Fayette County, and 25 in Lee County were Emergent Bilingual/English Learners.[10]

Of Cen-Tex families during PY 2021-22, 73.3% spoke English and 26.7% spoke Spanish as their primary home languages. [11]

Languages Spoken at Home

	English Only	Spanish	Indo-European	Asian/Pacific Islander	Other Languages
Texas	65.1%	28.3%	2.4%	3.0%	1.1%
Bastrop County	69.7%	28.3%	1.4%	0.6%	0.1%
Colorado County	77.7%	21.1%	1.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Fayette County	86.6%	6.0%	3.4%	2.3%	1.7%
Lee County	81.1%	16.7%	1.0%	1.2%	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five Year Estimates

Emergent Bilingual/English Learners (EB/EL)

School District	Pre-K Children 2020	Grades K-12 2021	School District	# of Pre-K Children	Grades K-12 2021
Bastrop County			**Fayette County**		
Bastrop ISD	230 (51%)	33.8%	Fayetteville ISD	0 (0%)	5.1%
Elgin ISD	127 (51%)	35.9%	Flatonia ISD	5 (14%)	6.7%
McDade ISD	5 (38%)	19.0%	La Grange ISD	22 (42%)	15.1%
Smithville ISD	*	8.0%	Round Top-Carmine	*	11.5%
			Schulenburg ISD	8 (22%)	12.3%
Colorado County			**Lee County**		
Columbus ISD	18 (22%)	14.4%	Dime Box ISD	0 (0%)	13.1%
Rice CISD	6 (11%)	8.0%	Giddings ISD	24 (40%)	22.3%
Weimar ISD	*	19.0%	Lexington ISD	*	3.4%

*Suppressed   Source: Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (TPEIR)

RACE AND ETHNICITY

In the 4-county area:[12]

o The White population ranges between 62.2% (Bastrop) and 86.8% (Fayette).

o The Black population ranges between 6.2% (Fayette) and 12.5% (Colorado).

o Of all races, between 21.9% (Fayette) and 40.1% (Bastrop) are Hispanic.

Racial and ethnic demographics of enrolled Cen-Tex families during PY 2021-22 were as follows: White (67.9%); Black (17.1%); Multiracial (14.7%); and Asian (0.4%). Of enrolled children, 72.1% were Hispanic/Latino.

Population by Race Alone

Location	White	Black African American	Asian	Native American	Native Hawaiian	Other Race	Multiple Races
Texas	64.3%	12.1%	5.0%	0.5%	0.1%	7.0%	10.9%
Bastrop County	59,039	6,975	777	953	0	17,904	9,239
	62.2%	7.4%	0.8%	1.0%	0.0%	18.9%	9.7%
Colorado County	14,047	2,576	143	47	0	3,205	541
	68.3%	12.5%	0.7%	0.2%	0.0%	15.6%	2.6%
Fayette County	21,228	1,511	134	14	0	879	679
	86.8%	6.2%	0.6%	0.1%	0.0%	3.6%	2.8%
Lee County	13,848	1,939	208	12	0	321	1,065
	79.6%	11.2%	1.2%	0.1%	0.0%	1.9%	6.1%

Source: Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Population By Hispanic Origin

Location	Hispanic Population		Non-Hispanic Population	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Texas	11,479,932	39.8%	17,382,649	60.2%
Bastrop County	38,071	40.1%	56,816	59.9%
Colorado County	6,381	31.0%	14,178	69.0%
Fayette County	5,344	21.9%	19,101	78.1%
Lee County	4,247	24.4%	13,146	76.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

In the 4-county area between 2010 and 2020:

o The Hispanic population increased by 71.5% in Bastrop County, 9.9% in Colorado County, 13.8% in Fayette County, and 20.3% in Lee County.

o The White population decreased by 2% - 8%.

o The Black population decreased by 1% - 16%.

2010-2020 Population Change by Race

County/ Location	Non-Hispanic							Hispanic or Latino
	White	African American	Asian	Native American	Native Hawaiian	Other Race	Multiple Races	
Texas	1.6%	19.3%	64.6%	6.0%	55.4%	234.2%	177.3%	20.9%
Bastrop Co.	7.8%	-1.4%	59.9%	-1.0%	16.7%	262.6%	182.2%	71.5%
Colorado Co.	-5.9%	-15.7%	6.7%	-45.8%	-100.0%	64.0%	198.0%	9.9%
Fayette Co.	-5.5%	-13.5%	9.8%	-27.5%	0.0%	188.0%	250.9%	13.8%
Lee Co.	-1.7%	-8.0%	9.6%	6.8%	-94.1%	428.6%	210.1%	20.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

2010-2020 Population Change by Race

County/ Location	Non-Hispanic							Hispanic or Latino
	White	African American	Asian	Native American	Native Hawaiian	Other Race	Multiple Races	
Bastrop Co.	3,304	-75	269	-3	9	302	1,944	17,292
Colorado Co.	-735	-414	5	-11	-15	16	299	538
Fayette Co.	-997	-216	6	-19	0	47	429	631
Lee Co.	-186	-141	5	3	-16	30	416	755

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

2010-2020 Population Change by Hispanic Origin

Location	Hispanic Population Change		Non-Hispanic Population Change	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Texas	1,980,797	20.9%	2,019,141	12.9%
Bastrop County	17,292	71.5%	5,750	11.5%
Colorado County	538	9.9%	-855	-5.5%
Fayette County	631	13.8%	-750	-3.8%
Lee County	755	20.3%	111	0.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

According to the American Community Survey subject definitions, "A family household is any housing unit in which the householder is living with one or more individuals related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption. A non-family household is any household occupied by the householder alone, or by the householder and one or more unrelated individuals."

Of households, between 67.9% (Fayette) and 75.8% (Lee) are family households, compared to Texas (68.9%). Of total households, 23.2% (Fayette)to 36% (Bastrop) have children.[13]

Household Composition

Location	Total Households	Family Households		Non-Family Households	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Texas	10,239,341	7,055,810	68.9%	3,183,531	31.1%
Bastrop County	31,271	23,150	74.0%	8,121	26.0%
Colorado County	6,999	4,811	68.7%	2,188	31.3%
Fayette County	8,720	5,923	67.9%	2,797	32.1%
Lee County	6,148	4,661	75.8%	1,487	24.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five Year Estimates, S2501

Households with Children by Composition and Relationship to Householder
Percentage of Total Households

Location	All Household Types	Married Families	Single-Male Families	Single-Female Families	Non-Family Households
Texas	36.2%	24.1%	2.9%	9.0%	0.2%
Bastrop County	36.0%	25.4%	2.5%	7.9%	0.1%
Colorado County	24.7%	16.6%	2.5%	4.0%	1.6%
Fayette County	23.2%	18.4%	1.3%	3.5%	0.0%
Lee County	36.5%	22.0%	5.3%	9.1%	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five Year Estimates, S2501

As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, a family household is any housing unit in which the householder is living with one or more individuals related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption. Of children, between 17% (Fayette) and 31% (Lee) live in single parent-households, compared to Texas (25%).[14]

Children in Single-Parent Households

	Single-Parent Households
Texas	25%
Bastrop County	22%
Colorado County	20%
Fayette County	17%
Lee County	31%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 Five Year Estimates

During PY 2021-22, 53.5% of Cen-Tex EHS families and 50.9% of HS families were two-parent households.[15]

Structure of Cen-Tex HS/EHS Families

Source: Program Information Reports, PY 2021-22

■ Early Head Start   ■ Head Start

	Two-Parent Households	Single-Parent Households
Early Head Start	53.5%	46.5%
Head Start	50.9%	49.1%
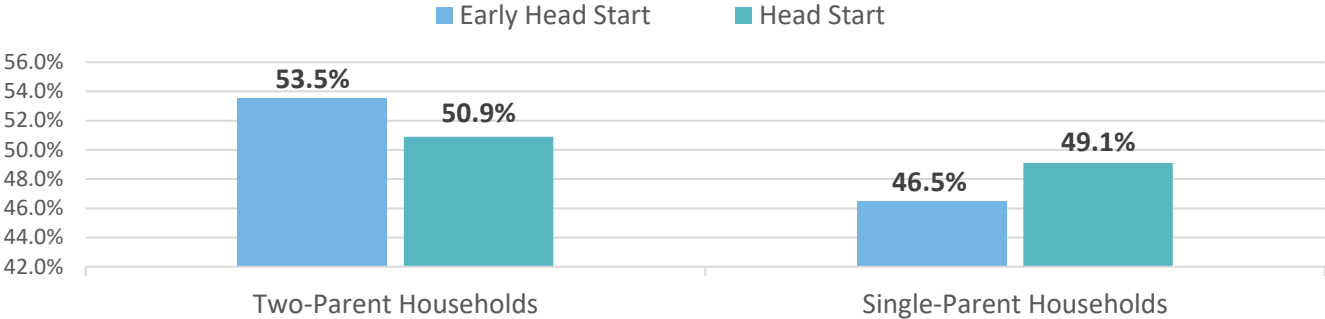
EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Cen-Tex is funded for 204 HS children and 247 EHS children (237 center-based /10 home- based).

Cen-Tex Head Start and Early Head Start

Center	Head Start	Early Head Start
Bastrop County	**136**	**145**
Bastrop—Emile	17	40
Cedar Creek	17	8
Elgin Child Development Center	34	16
Elgin—New Beginnings	0	31
Bastrop—Lost Pines	34	0
Smithville	17	16
Del Valle—Stoney Point	17	24
Home-based	---	10
Colorado County	**34**	**54**
Eagle Lake Child Development Center	34	30
Eagle Lake—New Beginnings	0	24
Fayette County	**17**	**24**
La Grange Child Development Center	17	24
Lee County	**17**	**24**
Giddings Jeff Dock Child Development Center	17	24

During PY 2021-22, Cen-Tex HS/EHS enrollees were eligible as follows: Income (62.9%); Public Assistance (1.8%); Foster Care (3.2%); Homelessness (16.9%); Other Type of Need (4.8%); and 101-130% of Poverty (10.4%).[16]

Head Start/Early Head Start Enrollment by Eligibility Category
Source: Program Information Report, 2021-2022

Category	Percentage
Income Eligible	62.9%
Public Assistance	1.8%
Foster Care	3.2%
Homelessness	16.9%
Other Type of Need	4.8%
101-130% of Poverty	10.4%
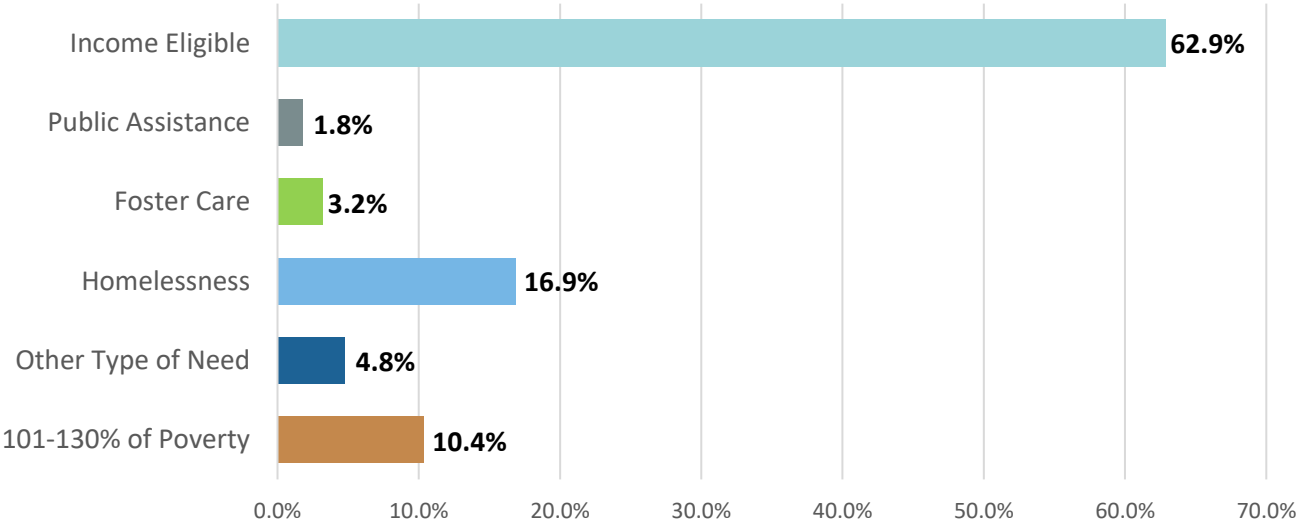
CHILD CARE

There are just 11 Family Child Care (FCC) Homes in the four-county area; of these, just 2 FCC Homes (24 slots) in Bastrop County accept child care subsidy.

There are 23 Child Care Centers serving children ages 0-5 in Bastrop County, 10 centers in Colorado County, 10 centers in Fayette County, and 7 centers in Lee County. Of the 50 child care centers, 42 or 84% enroll infants, 49 or 98% enroll toddlers, and 49 enroll preschoolers. Of child care centers in the four-county area, 35 or 70% accept child care subsidies.

Licensed and Registered Family Child Care (FCC) Homes, Overview

County	# of Family Child Care Homes	Capacity *	Accepts Child Care Subsidy	Child Care Subsidy Capacity	# of FCC Homes Providing Care		
					Infant	Toddler	Preschool-Aged
Bastrop Co.	3	36	2	24	3	3	3
Colorado Co.	1	6	0	0	1	1	1
Fayette Co.	5	60	0	0	5	5	5
Lee Co.	2	24	0	0	2	2	2

*Includes school age capacity   Source: Texas Health and Human Services, May 2023

Licensed Child Care Centers Serving Birth – Age 5, Overview

County	# of Child Care Centers*	Capacity (All Ages)	Accepts Child Care Subsidy	Child Care Subsidy Capacity	# of Centers Providing Care		
					Infant	Toddler	Preschool-Aged
Bastrop Co.	23	1,883	19	1,681	20	22	23
Colorado Co.	10	755	8	734	9	10	9
Fayette Co.	10	570	4	339	7	10	10
Lee Co.	7	556	4	335	6	7	7

*Excludes Head Start/Early Head Start and after school programs
Source: Texas Health and Human Services, May 2023

Licensed Child Care Centers, Bastrop County

City/Town	# of Child Care Centers*	Capacity *	Accepts Child Care Subsidy	Child Care Subsidy Capacity	# of Centers Providing Care		
					Infant	Toddler	Preschool-Aged
Bastrop	12	1,089	9	955	10	11	12
Cedar Creek	4	195	4	195	4	4	4
Smithville	2	198	2	198	2	2	2
Elgin	5	401	4	333	4	5	5

*Excludes Head Start/Early Head Start and after school programs
Source: Texas Health and Human Services, May 2023

Licensed Child Care Centers, Colorado County

City/Town	# of Child Care Centers*	Capacity*	Accepts Child Care Subsidy	Child Care Subsidy Capacity	# of Centers Providing Care		
					Infant	Toddler	Preschool-Aged
Columbus	3	399	4	476	2	3	3
Eagle Lake	3	225	2	150	3	3	3
Weimar	2	108	2	108	2	2	2

*Excludes Head Start/Early Head Start and after school programs
Source: Texas Health and Human Services, May 2023

Licensed Child Care Centers, Fayette County

City/Town	# of Child Care Centers*	Capacity*	Accepts Child Care Subsidy	Child Care Subsidy Capacity	# of Centers Providing Care		
					Infant	Toddler	Preschool-Aged
Fayetteville	1	27	0	0	1	1	1
Flatonia	2	76	1	34	2	2	2
La Grange	6	403	2	241	3	6	6
Schulenburg	1	64	1	64	1	1	1

*Excludes Head Start/Early Head Start and after school programs
Source: Texas Health and Human Services, May 2023

Licensed Child Care Centers, Lee County

City/Town	# of Child Care Centers*	Capacity*	Accepts Child Care Subsidy	Child Care Subsidy Capacity	# of Centers Providing Care		
					Infant	Toddler	Preschool-Aged
Giddings	5	409	3	288	4	5	5
Lexington	2	147	1	47	2	2	2

*Excludes Head Start/Early Head Start and after school programs
Source: Texas Health and Human Services, May 2023

Cost of Child Care

According to the Economic Policy Institute: [17]

- The average annual cost of infant care in Texas is $9,324, or $7777 per month. Child care for a 4-year-old costs $7,063, or $589 each month.

- Infant care for one child would take up 15.7% of a median family's income in TX. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, child care is affordable if it costs no more than 7% of a family's income. By this standard, only 15.8% of TX families can afford infant care.

- Child care for two children—an infant and a 4-year-old—costs $16,386—28.6% more than average rent in Texas. A typical family in Texas would have to spend 27.6% of its income on child care for an infant and a 4-year-old.

Of children birth to age 12 during FY 2019, the following numbers and percentages received state subsidized child care: Bastrop (598, 4%); Colorado (55, 1.5%); Fayette (62, 1.5%); and Lee County (98, 3.4%).[18]

Child Care Subsidy, 2019

Location	Count	Percent
Bastrop County	598	4.0%
Colorado County	55	1.5%
Fayette County	62	1.5%
Lee County	98	3.4%

Source: Texas Workforce Commission

STATE PREKINDERGARTEN

The Texas Legislature established free, public prekindergarten to provide early learning experiences to students who are most at risk for school failure. Therefore, eligibility is limited. A district must have a prekindergarten program if it identifies 15 or more eligible children who are at least four years of age by September 1 of the current school year. A district may offer prekindergarten classes if the district identifies 15 or more eligible children who are at least three years of age. To be eligible for prekindergarten enrollment, a child must be at least three years of age and unable to speak and comprehend English; or is educationally disadvantaged; or is considered homeless.

During SY 2021-22, the following four-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded preschool: Bastrop (760); Colorado (186); Fayette (147); and Lee (103). Of all pre-k slots, 100 percent were filled by four year olds. Of children enrolled, 94.6% were enrolled in in full day sessions.[19]

2021-2022 Pre-K Enrollment Funding

School District	Pre-k Slots	Half Day Enrollment	Full Day Enrollment	3 Year Olds Enrolled	4 Year Olds Enrolled
Bastrop County	**760**	**13**	**747**	**0**	**760**
Bastrop ISD	454	0	454	0	454
Elgin ISD	237	0	237	0	237
McDade ISD	13	13	0	0	13
Smithville ISD	56	0	56	0	56
Colorado County	**186**	**0**	**186**	**0**	**186**
Columbus ISD	82	0	82	0	82
Rice CISD	53	0	53	0	53
Weimar ISD	51	0	51	0	51
Fayette County	**147**	**51**	**96**	**0**	**147**
Fayetteville ISD	13	0	13	0	13
Flatonia ISD	35	14	21	0	35
La Grange ISD	53	0	53	0	53
Round Top-Carmine ISD	9	0	9	0	9
Schulenburg ISD	37	37	0	0	37
Lee County	**103**	**0**	**103**	**0**	**103**
Dime Box ISD	10	0	10	0	10
Giddings ISD	60	0	60	0	60
Lexington ISD	33	0	33	0	33

HOME VISITATION PROGRAMS

"Studies show that maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting can be effective at improving maternal and child outcomes and yielding strong returns on investment for states and communities. Voluntary home visiting strengthens families with young children by meeting with families in their homes and directly providing or connecting families with health, mental health, parenting, and other supports and services, depending on each family's unique needs."[20]

Families are eligible if the parent/primary caregiver is expecting or parenting a young child, from birth until kindergarten entry. Families must reside in the specified service delivery area county or unified service area and exhibit Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) priority characteristics to be eligible.

- **Texas Nurse Family Partnership (TNFP)**—TNFP is a model where a nurse regularly visits the home of first-time mothers or families with children under age two. Families start TNFP by their 28th week of pregnancy and can receive supports until the child reaches two years of age. Currently TNFP is the only model directly funded by the Texas legislature.

- **Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)**—MIECHV is a federal grant that supports a combination of the following evidence-based home visiting models: Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), Parents as Teachers (PAT), Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), and Healthy Families America (HFA). Additionally, these funds support the coordination of local and state early childhood coalitions to build comprehensive early childhood systems.

- **Healthy Outcomes through Prevention & Early Support (HOPES)**—HOPES is existing PEI program that provides a variety of innovative community-based initiatives and support for families with children 0-5 years of age.

Home Visitation Model/Program[21]	Counties Served	Eligibility
Early Head Start	Colorado Fayette Lee	Pregnant mothers, and children 0-5 meeting EHS income or at-risk guidelines
Texas Home Visiting (THV)	Bastrop	THV is a free, voluntary program through which early childhood and health professionals regularly visit the homes of pregnant women and families with children under 6 years of age.
Texas Nurse-Family Partnership (TNFP)	Bastrop	Nurses partner with first-time mothers by the 28th week of pregnancy and can receive support until the child reaches 2 years of age.
Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES) Stanzel Family Foundation Schulenburg/Weimar Area Parents as Teachers	Colorado Fayette	Project HOPES funds innovative initiatives and supports for families with children 0-5 years of age, including home visiting services, parent support groups, maternal depression screening, early literacy promotion, case management, and parent education.

DISABILITIES

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) is a program within the TX Health and Human Services Commission. Part C services under IDEA are provided for children birth up to age 3 who have: a medical disability that is likely to cause a developmental delay; an auditory or visual impairment as defined by the Texas Education Agency (TEA); A developmental delay of at least 25% in one or more areas of development –social emotional, self-help, communication, motor functions or cognitive skills. If the only delay is expressive language development, there must be a 33% delay to qualify. Texas' LEAs provide Part B services under IDEA to students, ages 3 – 21.

During FY 2021, 61,240 children received ECI across Texas; this was a 3.4% increase from 2020. Of Texas children receiving ECI services in FY 2020, 15.7% had a medical diagnosis; 82.9% had a developmental delay; and 1.3% had a hearing/vision delay. During FY 2021, 208 or 4.8% of children ages birth-three in Bastrop County; 74 or 6.7% in Colorado County; 39 or 2.8% in Fayette County; and 27 or 2.7% in Lee County received ECI, compared to 3.5% in the state of Texas.[22]

Early Intervention Services, Birth-Three

Location	Birth-Three Population*	Children Received Comprehensive Services	% of Birth-Three Population Served
Texas	1,733,788	61,240	3.5%
Bastrop County	4,373	208	4.8%
Colorado County	1,103	74	6.7%
Fayette County	1,400	39	2.8%
Lee County	988	27	2.7%

*Based on calculation method, data may vary from other Birth-3 data in this report.
Source: Texas Health and Human Services, FY 2021

### Children/Students Receiving Disabilities Services, 2021-22[23]

School District	Pre-K	Grades K-12	School District	Pre-K	Grades K-12
Bastrop County			**Fayette County**		
Bastrop ISD	33 (7%)	11.6%	Fayetteville ISD	0 (0%)	7.7%
Elgin ISD	17 (7%)	11.9%	Flatonia ISD	0 (0%)	12.7%
McDade ISD	0 (0%)	14.5%	La Grange ISD	*	12.0%
Smithville ISD	8 (14%)	12.4%	Round Top-Carmine	*	8.5%
			Schulenburg ISD	0 (0%)	12.3%
Colorado County			**Lee County**		
Columbus ISD	*	14.3%	Dime Box ISD	0 (0%)	16.9%
Rice CISD	5 (9%)	11.3%	Giddings ISD	*	10.8%
Weimar ISD	*	11.3%	Lexington ISD	*	11.2%

*Fewer than 10   Source: Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (TPEIR)

The Office of Head Start (OHS) requires that grantees enroll 10% of children with disabilities. During PY 2021-22, Cen-Tex enrolled 17.6% or 43 EHS children and 12.9% or 32 HS children with disabilities, exceeding the OHS mandate. Of HS children with disabilities, 24 children were diagnosed with speech or language impairments, 4 with autism, 3 with non-categorical/developmental delays, and 1 child with a visual impairment.[24]

Cen-Tex Head Start/Early Head Start Children with Disabilities
Source: Program Information Reports
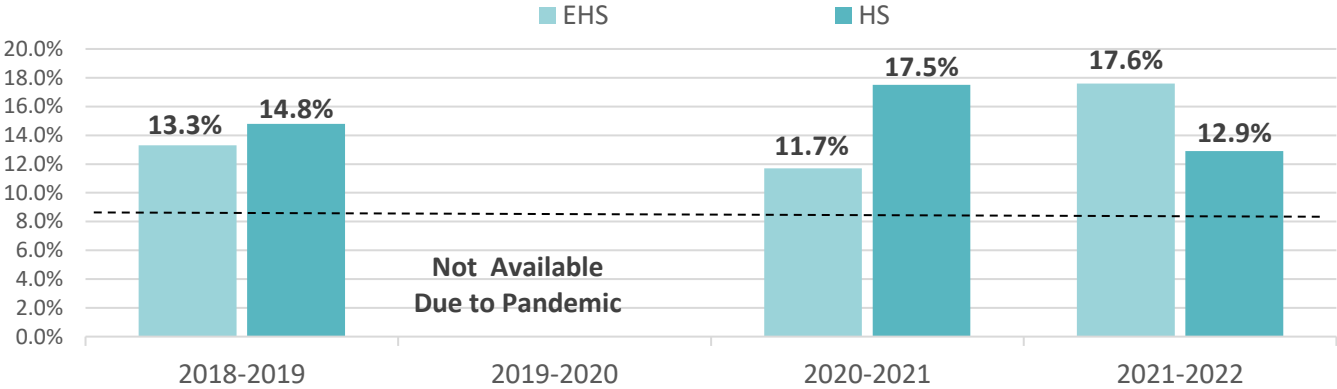
------ OHS Mandate

BIRTH OUTCOMES AND PREGNANT WOMEN

In 2020, live births by county were as follows: Bastrop (1,143); Colorado (221); Fayette (230); and Lee (209). Between 2018 and 2020, live births in Bastrop County increased (+7.7%), while they decreased in Texas (-2.1%) and in Colorado (-9.8%), Fayette (-5.7%), and Lee (-7.9%) counties. Based on poverty rates and live births, the estimated EHS-eligible pregnant women in each county are as follows: Bastrop (206); Colorado (22); Fayette (21); and Lee (43). [25]

Live Births

Location	2018	2019	2020	Change from 2018-2020
Texas	376,354	377,710	368,317	-2.1%
Bastrop County	1,061	1,090	1,143	7.7%
Colorado County	245	247	221	-9.8%
Fayette County	244	228	230	-5.7%
Lee County	227	192	209	-7.9%

Source: Texas State Department of Health Services

Across the 4-county area, racial and ethnic demographics of birth mothers were as follows: non-Hispanic White (32% - 57%); non-Hispanic Black (5% - 10%); and Hispanic of any race (31% - 59%).[26]

Births by Race and Ethnicity of Birth Mother, 2020

Location	Non-Hispanic			Hispanic, Any Race
	White	**Black**	**Other**	
Bastrop County	364 (31.8%)	52 (4.5%)	57 (5.0%)	670 (58.6%)
Colorado County	97 (43.9%)	23 (10.4%)	4 (1.8%)	97 (43.9%)
Fayette County	131 (57.0%)	16 (7.0%)	12 (5.2%)	71 (30.9%)
Lee County	92 (44.0%)	14 (6.7%)	7 (3.3%)	96 (45.9%)

Source: Texas State Department of Health Services

In Bastrop County in 2020, 8% or 91 births were to teenage mothers.[27]

Births to Teenage Mothers, 2020

Location	10-14 Years		15-17 Years		18-19 Years		Total Teen Births	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Bastrop County	0	0.0%	23	2.0%	68	6.0%	91	8.0%
Colorado County	*	*	*	*	*	*	<10	*
Fayette County	*	*	*	*	10	4.4%	<15	*
Lee County	0	0.0%	*	*	11	5.3%	<15	*

*Suppressed Due to Low Count Source: Texas State Department of Health Services

Of pregnant women in the 4-county area in 2020, between 61.5% (Colorado) and 74.4% (Fayette) received first trimester care. Between 7.4% (Bastrop) and 15.7% (Lee) received third trimester care or no prenatal care in 2020.[28]

In the 4-county area, between 5.7% (Lee) and 8.3% (Fayette) of newborns had low birth weights.[29]

Prenatal Care and Low Birth Weight, 2020

Location	Prenatal Care				Low Birth Weight	
	First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester	No Prenatal Care	Count	Percent of Births
Bastrop County	816 (74.2%)	213 (19.4%)	40 (3.6%)	31 (2.8%)	83	6.7%
Colorado Co.	136 (61.5%)	57 (25.8%)	17 (7.7%)	11 (5.0%)	15	6.8%
Fayette County	171 (74.4%)	32 (13.9%)	27 (11.7%)		19	8.3%
Lee County	132 (63.2%)	44 (21.1%)	33 (15.7%)		12	5.7%

Source: Texas State Department of Health Services

In the 4-county area, infant deaths were suppressed due to low counts.[30]

Infant Mortality, 2019

County	Under 1 Day	1-6 Days	28-364 Days
Bastrop County	-----	0	-----
Colorado County	-----	-----	0
Fayette County	-----	0	-----
Lee County	0	0	-----

*Suppressed Due to Low Count   Source: Texas State Department of Health Services

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Labor Force

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. Between Feb. 2020 (pre-pandemic) and Feb. 2023, the labor force increased by 12.8% in Bastrop County, 5.2% in Colorado County, and 1.8% in Fayette County, while the labor force decreased by 10.4% in Lee County.[31]

Civilian Labor Force

Location	Feb. 2020	Feb. 2021	Feb. 2022	Feb. 2023	Change 2020-2023
Bastrop County	43,657	44,327	47,648	49,234	12.8%
Colorado County	9,847	9,880	10,175	10,355	5.2%
Fayette County	11,888	11,824	12,036	12,102	1.8%
Lee County	9,383	8,871	8,647	8,409	-10.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Unemployment

People are classified as unemployed if they do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the prior 4 weeks, and are available for work." Those with no job and not looking for one are not part of the labor force (e.g., going to school, retired, taking care of family responsibilities.[32]

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and business closures, 2020 annual unemployment rates ranged between 6% and 10%. In March 2023, unemployment rates had dropped to 3.5% - 4.2% in the 4-county area, compared to Texas (4.2%) and the U.S. (3.6%).[33]

Monthly Unemployment (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Location	Mar. 2022	Apr. 2022	May 2022	Jun. 2022	Jul. 2022	Aug. 2022	Sep. 2022	Oct. 2022	Nov. 2022	Dec. 2022	Jan. 2023	Feb. 2023	Mar. 2023
Bastrop Co.	3.8%	3.5%	3.6%	4.2%	4.0%	3.9%	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	3.5%	4.2%	4.5%	4.2%
Colorado Co.	3.2%	3.0%	3.1%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%	2.9%	3.5%	3.9%	3.9%
Fayette Co.	3.6%	3.2%	3.3%	3.7%	3.4%	3.5%	3.3%	3.5%	3.4%	3.0%	3.7%	4.1%	3.5%
Lee County	3.3%	3.1%	3.3%	3.8%	3.6%	3.5%	3.4%	3.5%	3.4%	3.1%	3.7%	4.0%	3.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Average Annual Unemployment Rate, 2011-2021

Location	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Texas	4.5%	4.6%	4.3%	3.9%	3.5%	7.7%	5.6%
Bastrop County	3.9%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%	3.1%	6.0%	4.5%
Colorado County	4.0%	4.7%	4.0%	3.3%	3.1%	5.6%	4.8%
Fayette County	3.3%	3.7%	3.2%	2.8%	2.6%	4.7%	4.3%
Lee County	3.6%	3.8%	3.3%	3.1%	2.6%	5.0%	4.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

WAGES

Minimum Wage

The 2023 Texas minimum hourly wage is $7.25/hour. Post-pandemic, employers have struggled to hire and retain employees, therefore, some employers have increased entry-level pay to $10-$12 or higher.

- The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for a family of two is $19,720/year; therefore, a single full-time (2,080 hours) working parent of one child who is making minimum wage earns $15,080; this is *below* the FPL.

- The FPL for a family of two is $19,720/year; therefore, a single parent of one child who is working full-time at $9.50/hour, or more is *above* the FPL.

- The FPL for a family of four is $30,000/year; therefore, a household of four with one full-time working adult earning $14.45/hour ($30,056) or more is *above* the FPL.

Living Wage

Living wage is the hourly rate that a full-time (2,080 hours annually) working individual must earn to support the family and cover daily expenses. The living wage needed to support one adult and one child is between $31.79 (Colorado) and $36.52 (Bastrop) in the four-county area.[34] A full-time working adult with one child who is making minimum wage earns just 20-23% of the living wage in the four-county area.

Living Wage

1 Adult				2 Adults (1 Working)				2 Adults (Both Working)			
Number of Children				Number of Children				Number of Children			
0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
Bastrop County											
$18.35	$36.52	$46.16	$60.30	$28.81	$35.17	$39.94	$44.58	$14.41	$20.18	$25.17	$30.08
Colorado County											
$14.88	$31.79	$40.89	$53.56	$24.44	$30.65	$35.42	$39.01	$12.22	$17.81	$22.69	$26.97
Fayette County											
$15.03	$32.22	$41.53	$54.71	$24.60	$30.86	$35.63	$39.42	$12.30	$18.03	$23.01	$27.50
Lee County											
$15.78	$33.22	$42.58	$55.32	$25.92	$31.87	$36.64	$39.98	$12.96	$18.53	$23.51	$27.78

Notes: 1) For this model, the assumption is the sole provider is working full-time (2080 hours/year). 2) For two-adult families where one adult is not in the labor force, one adult is assumed to be employed full-time while the other non-wage-earning adult provides full-time childcare for the family's children. Source: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

INCOME

Median household incomes in the 4-county area range between $55,945 (Colorado) and $78,339 (Bastrop), compared to Texas ($67,321) and the U.S. ($69,021). Of households, between 14.4% (Bastrop) and 21.1% (Lee) earn under $25,000. The median incomes of Hispanic households are $3,000 - $17,000 lower than non-Hispanic, White households.[35]

Mean/Median Household Income

Location	Total Households	Average (Mean) Household Income	Median Household Income
Texas	10,239,341	$94,115	$67,321
Bastrop County	31,271	$92,057	$78,339
Colorado County	6,999	$82,577	$55,945
Fayette County	8,720	$85,580	$66,624
Lee County	6,148	$70,328	$60,750

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Median Household Income by Race / Ethnicity of Householder

Location	Non-Hispanic White	Black	Asian	Native American Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Other Race	Multiple Races	Hispanic/ Latino
Texas	$82,254	$50,916	$96,961	$62,393	$63,991	$50,990	$60,120	$54,786
Bastrop	$79,415	$66,542	$104,420	$34,248	No data	$73,365	$79,535	$76,493
Colorado	$62,679	$44,333	$14,083	No data	No data	$63,990	No data	$47,829
Fayette	$70,628	$16,688	No data	No data	No data	No data	$57,031	$67,071
Lee	$67,239	$29,400	No data	No data	No data	$24,673	No data	$50,399

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Household Income Levels

Location	Under $25,000	$25,000 - $49,999	$50,000 - $99,999	$100,000 - $199,999	$200,000+
Texas	17.2%	20.2%	29.9%	23.9%	8.8%
Bastrop County	14.4%	17.9%	31.6%	28.9%	7.3%
Colorado County	20.2%	23.1%	31.7%	19.1%	5.9%
Fayette County	19.9%	20.4%	32.1%	21.3%	6.3%
Lee County	21.1%	18.6%	37.7%	19.7%	2.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

INFLATION

The annual U.S. inflation rate was 5% for the 12 months ended March 2023. The 2022 average monthly inflation was 8%—a 40 year high.[36]

U.S. Inflation Rate

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
2023	6.4	6.0	**5.0**										
2022	7.5	7.9	8.5	8.2	8.6	9.1	8.5	8.3	8.2	7.7	7.1	6.5	8.0
2021	1.4	1.7	2.6	4.2	5.0	5.4	5.5	5.3	5.4	6.2	6.8	7.0	4.7
2020	2.5	2.3	1.5	.3	.1	.6	1.0	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.2
2019	1.6	1.5	1.9	2.0	1.8	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.8	2.1	2.3	1.8

Source: U.S. Department of Labor

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the average change in prices paid by consumers for goods and services needed for daily living (e.g., food, shelter, gas). Prices are collected monthly in 75 urban areas nationwide from approximately 6,000 housing units and 22,000 retail establishments (e.g., department stores, supermarkets, gas stations).[37] The annual inflation rate was 5% for the 12 months ended March 2023. Between February 2023 and March 2023, there was a .1% increase in "all items."[38]

Consumer Price Index—March 2023

	1-Month Percent Change (from February 2023)	12 Month Percent Change (from March 2022)
All Items	**0.1**	**5.0**
Food	0.0	8.5
Food at home	-0.3	8.4
Food away from home	0.6	8.8
Energy	-3.5	-6.4
Gasoline (all types)	-4.6	-4.6
Fuel oil	-4.0	-4.0
Electricity	-0.7	-0.7
Utility (piped) gas service	-7.1	-7.1
All Items Less Food and Energy	0.4	5.6
Apparel	0.3	3.3
Shelter	0.6	8.2
Transportation services	1.4	13.9
Medical care services	-0.5	1.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

POVERTY

General population poverty rates range between 8.9% (Colorado) and 11.8% (Lee), lower than poverty rates for Texas (14%) and the U.S. (12.6%). Overall four-county poverty rates are highest among the Black population (22.6%) and the Hispanic population (17%).[39]

General Population in Poverty

Location	Count	Percentage
Texas	**3,965,117**	**14.0%**
Bastrop County	10,089	10.9%
Colorado County	1,780	8.9%
Fayette County	2,369	9.8%
Lee County	2,003	11.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Population in Poverty by Race/Ethnicity

Location	White	Black	Asian	Native American	Pacific Islander	Other Race	Multiple Races
Texas	**12.4%**	**18.6%**	**9.7%**	**14.8%**	**17.9%**	**20.0%**	**16.6%**
Bastrop	7.8%	19.7%	0.5%	2.4%	No data	15.9%	15.9%
	4,476	1,323	4	22	0	2,815	1,449
Colorado	7.4%	12.5%	80.4%	0.0%	No data	5.5%	31.1%
	1,013	319	115	0	0	170	163
Fayette	8.1%	32.9%	28.2%	0.0%	No data	12.3%	8.3%
	1,690	483	37	0	0	103	56
Lee	7.2%	39.2%	0.0%	0.0%	No data	14.5%	24.9%
	974	725	0	0	0	44	260

Population in Poverty by Ethnicity Alone

Location	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	% Hispanic or Latino	% Not Hispanic or Latino
Texas	2,177,111	1,788,006	19.3%	10.5%
Bastrop County	4,894	5,195	13.2%	9.3%
Colorado County	489	1,291	8.0%	9.3%
Fayette County	647	1,722	12.2%	9.2%
Lee County	751	1,252	18.4%	9.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Young Children in Poverty by Age Group

County	Children Under Age 5			Infants and Toddlers		3 and 4 Year Olds	
	Total Children	# in Poverty	% in Poverty	Total*	In Poverty	Total*	In Poverty
Bastrop Co.	6,006	1,128	18.8%	3,604	676	2,402	452
Colorado Co.	1,216	120	9.9%	730	72	486	48
Fayette Co.	1,176	107	9.1%	706	64	470	43
Lee County	1,102	225	20.4%	661	135	441	90

*Estimated infants/toddlers (60%) and 3- & 4-Year-olds (40%)   Source: American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Children Under 5 in Poverty, Bastrop County

Location	2016 Five-Year Estimates			2021 Five-Year Estimates		
	# Under Age 5	# in Poverty	% in Poverty	# Under Age 5	# in Poverty	% in Poverty
Bastrop Co.	**4,892**	**1,129**	**23.1%**	**6,006**	**1,128**	**18.8%**
Bastrop	642	149	23.2%	804	194	24.1%
Camp Swift	247	79	32.0%	413	34	8.2%
Cedar Creek	N/A	N/A	N/A	449	144	32.1%
Circle D-KC Ests	132	0	0.0%	37	0	0.0%
Elgin	882	489	55.4%	589	161	27.3%
McDade	34	12	35.3%	410	47	11.5%
Paige	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0.0%
Red Rock	N/A	N/A	N/A	31	0	0.0%
Rosanky	N/A	N/A	N/A	113	113	100.0%
Smithville	198	53	26.8%	214	39	18.2%
Wyldwood	263	24	9.1%	64	12	18.1%

N/A = Not Available   Source: American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Children Under 5 in Poverty, Colorado County

Location	2016 Five-Year Estimates			2021 Five-Year Estimates		
	# Under Age 5	# in Poverty	% in Poverty	# Under Age 5	# in Poverty	% in Poverty
Colorado Co.	**1,296**	**172**	**13.3%**	**1,216**	**134**	**11.0%**
Columbus	183	10	5.4%	178	37	21.0%
Eagle Lake	230	79	34.3%	182	44	24.2%
Garwood	N/A	N/A	N/A	33	12	36.3%
Glidden	54	5	8.6%	42	5	12.9%
Nada	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0.0%
Rock Island	N/A	N/A	N/A	52	40	76.9%
Sheridan	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0.0%
Weimar	115	14	12.2%	241	16	6.5%

N/A = Not Available   Source: American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Children Under 5 in Poverty, Fayette County

Location	2016 Five-Year Estimates			2021 Five-Year Estimates		
	# Under Age 5	# in Poverty	% in Poverty	# Under Age 5	# in Poverty	% in Poverty
Fayette County	**1,247**	**172**	**13.3%**	**1,176**	**107**	**9.1%**
Carmine	4	0	0.0%	4	3	75.0%
Ellinger	N/A	N/A	N/A	12	0	0.0%
Fayetteville	4	0	0.0%	6	0	0.0%
Flatonia	43	9	20.4%	78	7	9.0%
La Grange	364	70	19.1%	263	32	12.3%
Plum	N/A	N/A	N/A	61	2	3.1%
Round Top	0	0	-----	0	0	-----
Schulenburg	201	21	10.4%	252	52	21.7%

N/A = Not Available   Source: American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Children Under 5 in Poverty, Lee County

Location	2016 Five-Year Estimates			2021 Five-Year Estimates		
	# Under Age 5	# in Poverty	% in Poverty	# Under Age 5	# in Poverty	% in Poverty
Lee County	**1,296**	**172**	**13.3%**	**1216**	**120**	**9.9%**
Dime Box	183	10	5.4%	178	37	21.0%
Giddings	230	79	34.3%	182	44	24.2%
Lexington	N/A	N/A	N/A	33	12	36.3%

N/A = Not Available   Source: American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Public-school students whose households meet federal income eligibility guidelines for free and reduced-price meals are classified as economically disadvantaged students. Children from families with incomes at or below 130% of the FPL are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 131% and 185% of the FPL are eligible for reduced price meals. Income Eligibility Guidelines can be found here.

Children Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (SY 2021-22)

Location	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Texas	**60.7%**	**60.2%**	**60.2%**
Bastrop County	70.7%	69.3%	72.0%
Colorado County	67.5%	66.5%	62.9%
Fayette County	53.5%	47.5%	52.0%
Lee County	60.0%	61.2%	62.4%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

SNAP is a federal program administered locally by Texas Health and Human Services. SNAP enables low-income families to use the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system (Lone Star Card) to access food benefits and buy eligible food in authorized retail food stores and/or online. Most households must pass a gross income limit less than or equal to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. To qualify for SNAP, non-citizens must meet one of the following criteria: have lived in the U.S. for at least 5 years; be receiving disability-related assistance or benefits; or be children under 18.

The Office of Head Start has expanded its interpretation of "public assistance," as used in the Head Start statute, to include SNAP for eligibility determination. Young children in SNAP households are categorically eligible for HS/EHS.

Between April 2022 and April 2023, the number of SNAP cases increased in Bastrop (4.8%), Colorado (.7%), Fayette (5.5%), and Lee (4.6%) counties. SNAP cases of children under age 5 changed as follows: Bastrop (+.8%); Colorado (+31.3%); Fayette (+2.5%); and Lee (-1.6%) counties.[40]

SNAP Cases and Persons

Location	April 2022			April 2023		
	# of Cases	# of Eligible Individuals	Individuals Ages < 5	# of Cases	# of Eligible Individuals	Individuals Ages < 5
Texas	1,546,380	3,518,186	500,029	1,554,274	3,423,156	469,758
Bastrop Co.	4,506	10,561	1,644	4,723	10,670	1,657
Colorado Co.	1,057	2,384	275	1,064	2,343	361
Fayette Co.	836	1,756	243	870	1,840	249
Lee Co.	777	1,752	256	813	1,782	252

Note: FY 2020 data not available Source: Texas State Department of Health

Of Cen-Tex HS/EHS families, 47.2% or 212 in PY 2021-22 were receiving SNAP upon enrollment, compared to 46.7% or 208 families in PY 2019-20 (pre-pandemic).[41]

Cen-Tex HS/EHS Families Receiving SNAP Upon Enrollment
Source: Program Information Reports

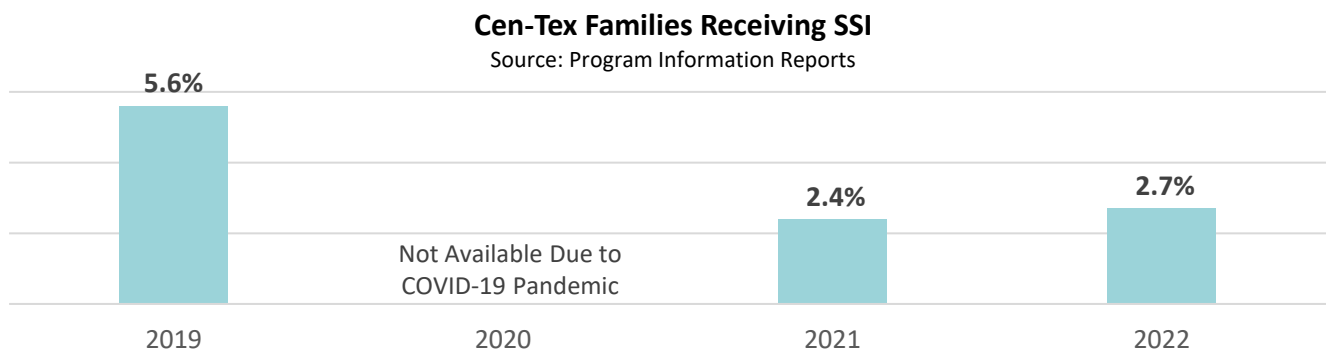| 2019	2020	2021	2022
46.7%	Not Available Due to COVID-19 Pandemic	45.6%	47.2%
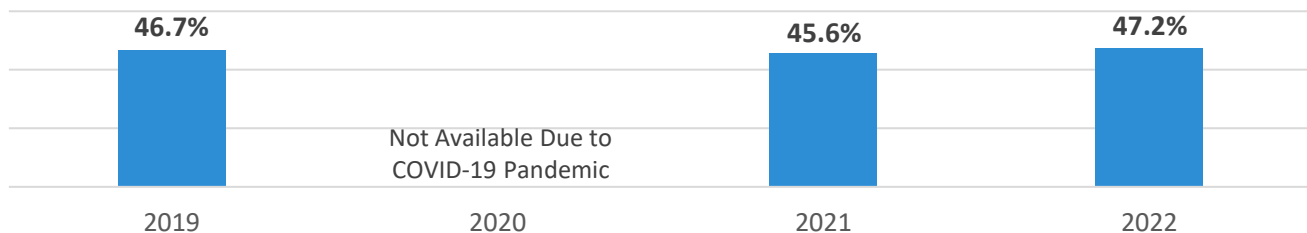
SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI)

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) pays monthly benefits to people with limited income and resources, including those who are disabled, blind, or age 65 or older. Children who are disabled may also receive SSI.

SSI payments increase with the cost-of-living increases that apply to Social Security benefits. The latest such increase, 8.7% became effective January 2023. The monthly maximum Federal amounts for 2023 are $914 for an eligible individual, $1,371 for an eligible individual with an eligible spouse, and $458 for an essential person.[42]

In PY 2021-22, 2.7% or 12 Cen-Tex families were receiving SSI upon enrollment, compared to 2.4% in PY 2020-21 and 5.6% in PY 2018-19 (pre-pandemic).[43]

Cen-Tex Families Receiving SSI
Source: Program Information Reports

Year	Percentage
2019	5.6%
2020	Not Available Due to COVID-19 Pandemic
2021	2.4%
2022	2.7%

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

Texas Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal program that provides cash assistance to needy families with dependent children. To qualify, the applicant must be either pregnant or responsible for a child under 19 years of age. Also, the applicant must be a U.S. citizen or legal immigrant; have low or very low income; and be under-employed (working for very low wages), unemployed or about to become unemployed. A family can be parents and their children, or relatives caring for related children.

Between March 2020 (beginning of pandemic) and March 2023, TANF cases declined in Bastrop County by 57.6%. [44]

TANF Cases, 2020-2023

Location	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023
Texas	16,276	13,210	7,808	1,765
Bastrop County	33	31	16	14
Colorado County	5	2	4	1
Fayette County	4	2	1	0
Lee County	4	7	5	5

Source: Texas Health and Human Services

In PY 2021-22, 1.1% or 5 Cen-Tex HS/EHS families were receiving TANF upon enrollment, compared to 1% in PY 2020-21 and 1.8% in PY 2019-20 (pre-pandemic).[45]

Cen-Tex HS/EHS Families Enrolled in TANF Upon Enrollment
Source: Program Information Reports

1.8%	Not Available Due to COVID-19 Pandemic	1.0%	1.1%
2019	2020	2021	2022
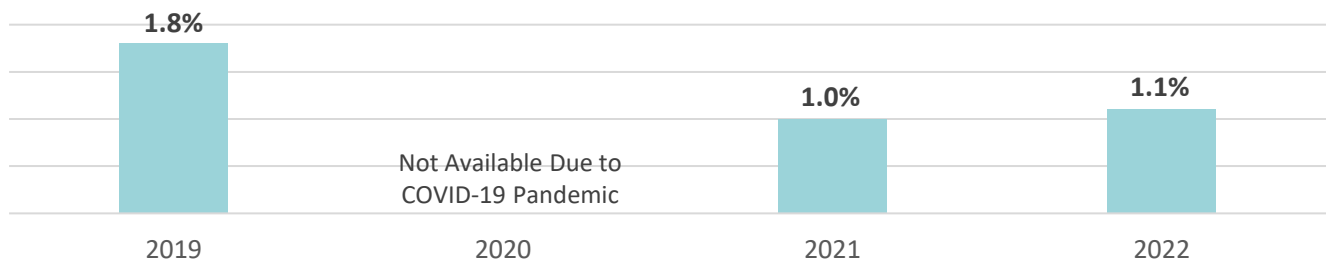
WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

WIC Texas (Women, Infants and Children) is a supplemental nutrition program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered locally by Texas Health and Human Services. The program provides education on making nutritious choices, building positive eating habits, and improving health. Eligible participants are provided a Texas WIC card (EBT card) to purchase WIC-approved foods at authorized WIC grocery stores.

Between 2019 and 2021, WIC recipients under age five increased by 17.1% in Bastrop County and decreased in Colorado (-5.6%), Fayette (-2.4%), and Lee (-10%) counties. Between 2019 and 2021, women (pregnant, postpartum, and/or breastfeeding) receiving WIC services increased by 25.9% in Bastrop County and decreased or remained stable in Colorado, Fayette, and Lee counties.[46]

WIC Recipients

	Year	Under Age 1	Age 1 – 4	Total Under Age 5	Women*
Bastrop Co.	2019	486	1,036	1,522	537
	2020	519	1,143	1,662	605
	2021	590	1,192	1,782	676
Colorado Co.	2019	140	254	394	151
	2020	102	191	293	100
	2021	126	246	372	137
Fayette Co.	2019	110	192	302	102
	2020	108	197	305	106
	2021	103	192	295	103
Lee County	2019	92	194	286	94
	2020	86	159	245	90
	2021	90	170	260	93

Source: Texas State Department of Health * Pregnant (during pregnancy and up to 6 weeks), Postpartum (up to six months after the birth of the infant or the end of the pregnancy), Breastfeeding (up to the infant's first birthday)

Cen-Tex HS/EHS Families Receiving WIC At Enrollment
Source: Program Information Reports

Legend: Early Head Start, Head Start

- 2019: Early Head Start 66.0%, Head Start 41.8%
- 2020: Not Available Due to COVID-19 Pandemic
- 2021: Early Head Start 61.1%, Head Start 43.3%
- 2022: Early Head Start 57.1%, Head Start 49.9%
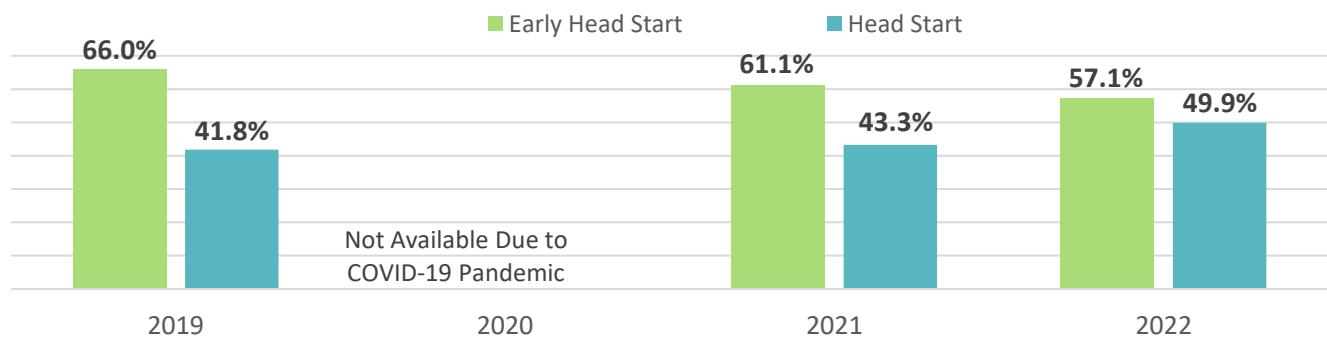
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Between 11.5% (Fayette) and 15.6% (Bastrop/Colorado) of adults aged 25+ do not have a high school diploma, compared to Texas (15.2%)and the U.S. (11.1%).[47] Following are populations without a high school diploma in the 4-county area by race and ethnicity: non-Hispanic, White (9.3%); African American (13.5%); Asian (16.2%); Native American or Alaskan Native (38.2%);; those identifying as "Other Race" (41%); Multiracial (31.1%); and Hispanic of any race (35.9%).[48]

Education Levels

Location	No High School Diploma	High School Only	Some College	Associate Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate Degree+
Texas	15.2%	24.5%	21.3%	7.5%	20.4%	11.2%
Bastrop Co.	15.6%	31.3%	22.9%	7.0%	15.9%	7.3%
Colorado Co.	15.6%	35.8%	21.9%	6.0%	15.4%	5.3%
Fayette Co.	11.5%	38.8%	19.8%	6.9%	16.6%	6.5%
Lee Co.	12.9%	40.3%	25.2%	7.4%	9.9%	4.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community, 2021 Five Year Estimates

Population with No High School Diploma by Race/Ethnicity

Location	Non-Hispanic						Multiple Races	Hispanic
	White	Black	Asian	Native American Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Other Race		
Texas	13.0%	9.2%	22.5%	11.9%	11.1%	37.9%	24.0%	31.0%
Bastrop County	8.5%	11.1%	42.1%	12.9%	No data	41.8%	30.4%	35.2%
Colorado Co.	11.9%	16.8%	0.0%	26.8%	No data	34.3%	24.5%	41.5%
Fayette County	9.1%	21.1%	0.0%	42.0%	No data	47.6%	15.4%	36.1%
Lee County	10.2%	11.3%	0.0%	0.0%	No data	39.4%	50.6%	33.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community, 2021 5-Year Estimates

2021 graduation rates were 90% or higher in all school districts in the four-county area except Elgin ISD (82.4%) and Dime Box ISD (80%).[49]

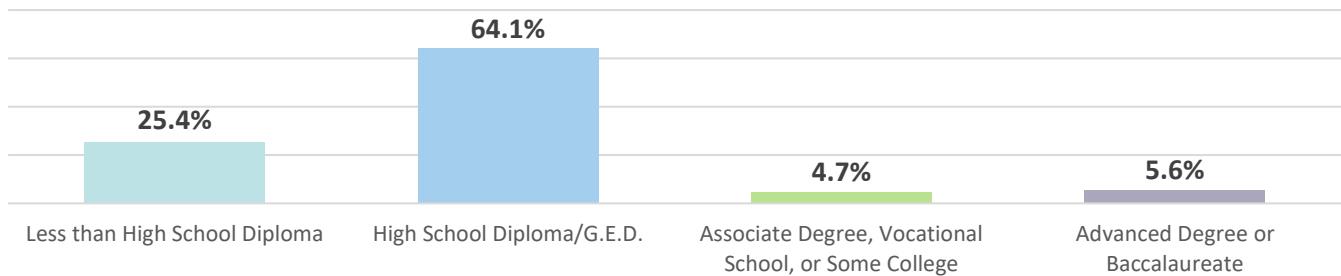**Dropout and Graduation Rates, Class of 2021**

School District	Dropout Rate Grades 9-12	Graduation Rate	School District	Dropout Rates Grades 9-12	Graduation Rates
Bastrop County			**Fayette County**		
Bastrop ISD	0.3%	94.9%	Fayetteville ISD	0.0%	100.0%
Elgin ISD	2.7%	82.4%	Flatonia ISD	0.5%	97.5%
McDade ISD	0.0%	92.3%	La Grange ISD	0.8%	97.5%
Smithville ISD	1.6%	90.0%	Round Top-Carmine	0.0%	100.0%
			Schulenburg ISD	0.4%	94.0%
Colorado County			**Lee County**		
Columbus ISD	1.0%	95.4%	Dime Box ISD	4.8%	80.0%
Rice CISD	2.5%	95.5%	Giddings ISD	1.4%	97.7%
Weimar ISD	0.0%	100.0%	Lexington ISD	1.5%	95.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (TPEIR)

In PY 2021-22, 25.4% of Cen-Tex HS/EHS families had no high school diploma, 64.1% had a high school diploma or G.E.D. only, and 10.3% had some college or a degree.[50]

Level of Education, Cen-Tex HS/EHS Families

Source: Program Information Report, 2022

Less than High School Diploma	High School Diploma/G.E.D.	Associate Degree, Vocational School, or Some College	Advanced Degree or Baccalaureate
25.4%	64.1%	4.7%	5.6%

CHILD WELFARE

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The 2022 rate of confirmed child abuse and neglect reports for children ages birth – two years old was 3.2 per 1,000 children (68 infants/toddlers) in Bastrop County, higher than 2.5 per 1,000 children in Texas. The 2022 rate of confirmed child abuse and neglect reports for children ages three – four years old was 1.5 per 1,000 children (32 preschool-aged children) in Bastrop County, higher than 1.01 per 1,000 children in Texas. [51]

Confirmed Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect (Ages 0-4)

County	Birth - Age 3 (Count)	Birth - Age 3 (per 1,000 children)	Ages 3 - 4 (Count)	Ages 3 – 4 (per 1,000 children)
Texas	19,224	2.51	7.676	1.01
Bastrop County	68	3.20	32	1.51
Colorado County	7	1.40	1 -5	-----
Fayette County	16	2.67	8	1.33
Lee County	12	2.81	1 -5	-----

Source: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), 2022

SUBSTITUTE CARE

Substitute Care Placement or Foster Care is the temporary placement of children outside of the home due to abuse, neglect, or dependency. Substitute Care Placement protects the child, with the goal of returning the child to the parents once they can provide a safe and stable home environment.

At the end of FY 2022, there were 133 children under age 5 who were in Substitute Care in the 4-county area; of these, 49 or 36.8% were under 1 year old, 32 or 17.3% were 1-2 years old, and 52 or 46% were 3 - 4 year olds. Substitute Care Placements by county were as follows: Bastrop (82); Colorado (10); Fayette (23); and Lee (18).

Substitute Care Placement by Age Group

County	Under Age 1	Ages 1 - 2	Ages 3 - 4	Total Under Age 5
Bastrop County	35	19	28	**82**
Colorado County	3	4	3	**10**
Fayette County	3	6	14	**23**
Lee County	8	3	7	**18**

Source: Texas Human Services, Annual Report Tables, End of FY 2022

During PY 2021-22, 4.7% or 23 Cen-Tex HS/EHS children were in foster care, compared to 5.5% during PY 2020-21 and 4.2% during PY 2018-19 (pre-pandemic).[52]

Cen-Tex HS/EHS Children in Foster Care
Source: Program Information Reports
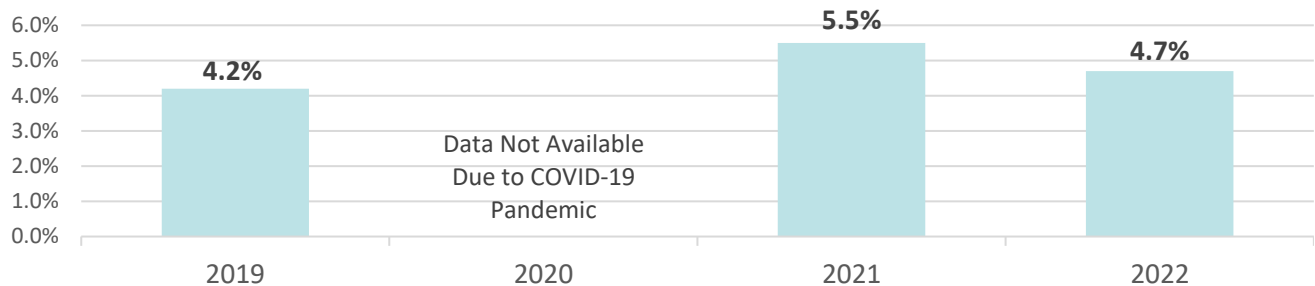
COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS

Health Outcomes represent a county's current health and reflect the physical and mental well-being of residents through measures representing length and quality of life experienced in the community. Health Factors (health behaviors, clinical care, social & economic factors, physical environment) represent issues that, if modified, can improve length and quality of life. They are predictors of how healthy communities can be in the future.[53]

Lower rankings indicate healthier counties. Of Texas' 253 counties in 2023, Bastrop (#49) and Fayette (#43) counties are ranked among the healthiest. Colorado (#123) and Lee (#103) counties are ranked in the mid-range. The Food Environment Index (access to healthy foods) is a strength in each county. Adult obesity (36%-40%), adult smoking (18%-19%), uninsured people under age 65 (21%-23%), and elevated ratios of primary care physicians to patients are areas that most negatively impact health.[54]

2023 County Health Rankings

Areas of strength / Areas to explore	Bastrop County	Colorado County	Fayette County	Lee County	Texas
Health Outcomes Ranking	**49**	**123**	**43**	**103**	
Length of Life	55	139	47	98	
Quality of Life	55	118	57	94	
Health Factors Ranking	**79**	**90**	**47**	**100**	
Health Behaviors	80	82	45	152	
Clinical Care	115	173	73	91	
Social & Economic Factors	78	87	27	96	
Physical Environment	154	118	174	105	

	Bastrop County	Colorado County	Fayette County	Lee County	Texas
Poor or Fair Health	18%	19%	16%	16%	16%
Adult Smoking	18%	19%	18%	18%	13%
Adult Obesity	36%	40%	37%	37%	36%
Food Environment Index	7.8	7.8	7.7	7.7	5.9
Physical Inactivity	26%	28%	25%	25%	25%
Exercise Opportunities	47%	63%	65%	55%	82%
Excessive Drinking	21%	20%	22%	22%	19%
Income Inequality	4.0	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.8
Uninsured	22%	23%	21%	21%	20%
Primary Care Physicians	3,820:1	2,160:1	4,260:1	4,260:1	1,640:1
Dentists	3,000:1	4,130:1	1,760:1	1,760:1	1,610:1
Mental Health Providers	1,570:1	4,130:1	3,530:1	3,530:1	340:1
Severe Housing Problems	16%	13%	11%	11%	17%
Air Pollution	9.5	9.3	9.3	9.3	8.6

Source: countyhealthrankings.com

INSURANCE

Children in poverty fare worse than those at higher income levels and are less likely than insured children to have a regular health care provider and receive care when needed. They are likely to begin receiving treatment after their condition has worsened, putting them at greater risk of hospitalization.[55]

In 2020, between 16.8% (Bastrop) and 21.1% (Fayette) of children at or below 200% of the FPL were without insurance, compared to children with no insurance at all income levels (13% - 16%) in the four-county area.[56] Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provide healthcare coverage for low-income children. CHIP covers children in families that earn too much money to qualify for Medicaid but cannot afford to buy private insurance.

Uninsured Children, 2020
Source: Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

■ All Children   ■ Children at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Level

Location	All Children	Children at or below 200% FPL
Texas	11.6%	14.6%
Bastrop County	14.7%	16.8%
Colorado County	15.6%	18.3%
Fayette County	15.7%	21.1%
Lee County	13.0%	16.9%
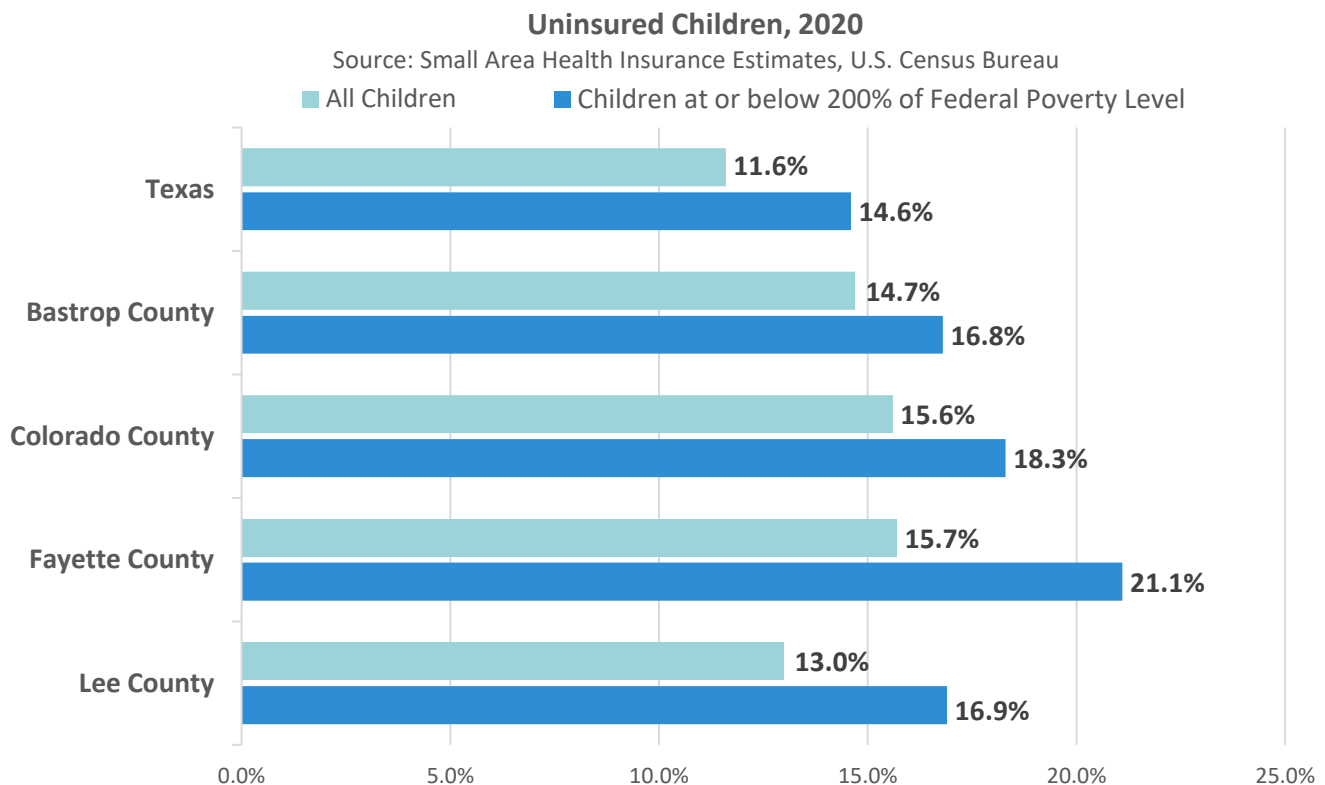
CHIP Enrollment (Birth To Age 18)

Location	2019	2020	2021	Change 2019-2021*
Bastrop County	1,512	1,337	838	-44.6%
Colorado County	251	253	158	-37.1%
Fayette County	252	238	152	-39.7%
Lee County	226	191	118	-47.8%

*Many children were moved from CHIP to Medicaid during the pandemic
Source: Texas Health and Human Services Commission

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREA

According to the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), some geographic areas (county or service area), populations (e.g., low income or Medicaid eligible), and facilities (e.g., federally qualified health center—FQHC—or other state or federal prison) have too few primary care, dental, and mental health providers and services. HRSA works with state partners to determine which of these should have shortage designations known as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), and are, therefore, eligible to receive certain federal resources.

The 4-county area has the following HPSA designations:[57]

Health Professional Shortage Areas

Discipline	Designation Type	HPSA Name	HPSA Score*
Bastrop County			
a. Primary Care	Geographic HPSA	Bastrop County	a. 10
a. Primary Care b. Dental Health c. Mental Health	Bastrop County—Federal Correctional Institution	Correctional Facility	a. 18 b. 12 c. 12
a. Mental Health	Low Income Population HPSA	Low Income—Bastrop County	a. 18
Colorado County			
a. Primary Care b. Mental Health	Low Income Population HPSA	Low Income— Colorado County	a. 13 b. 14
Fayette County			
a. Primary Care b. Dental Health c. Mental Health	Federally Qualified Health Center	Tejas Health Care	a. 18 b. 23 c. 20
a. Dental Health	High Needs Geographic HPSA	Fayette County	a. 8
a. Mental Health	Geographic HPSA	Fayette County	a. 15
Lee County			
a. Primary Care b. Mental Health	Geographic HPSA	Lee County	a. 14 b. 12

* HPSA Score developed by the National Health Service Corps in determining priorities for assignment of clinicians. Scores range from 0 to 26 where the higher the score, the greater the priority. Source: Bureau of Health Workforce

OBESITY

Childhood obesity is a serious health problem in the U.S. where 1 in 5 children and adolescents are affected. Many factors can contribute to excess weight gain including behavior, genetics, taking certain medications, and insufficient sleep. The conditions in which children live, learn, and play are called social determinants of health (SDOH). Differences in SDOH affect chronic disease outcomes and risks, including obesity among racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups as well as in different geographies and among people with different physical abilities. Societal and community factors matter, including child care and school environments, neighborhood design, access to healthy, affordable foods and beverages, and access to safe and convenient places for physical activity.[58]

Infants[59]

Infants with high weight-for-length are at increased risk of obesity in childhood and early adulthood.

* Nationally, high weight-for-length among infants 3 to 23 months enrolled in WIC declined to 12.3% between 2010 and 2020. The decrease ranged from 1.5% for infants aged 6 to 11 months to 2.1% for infants aged 18 to 23 months. Prevalence was highest among Native American or Alaska Native infants (15.8%) and lowest among Asian or Pacific Islander infants (8.8%).

* Between 2010 to 2020, Texas reported a drop in high weight-for-length among infants from 16.2% to 15.4%. Prevalence is highest among Native American or Alaska Native infants (18.1%) and Hispanic infants (16.3%).

Ages 2 to 4[60]

* From 2010 to 2020, the national obesity rate among children ages 2 to 4 enrolled in WIC dropped from 15.9% to 14.4%. Rates of overweight and obesity combined dropped from 32.5% in 2010 to 29.8% in 2020. The prevalence of obesity was higher among young children who were Hispanic (17.4%) and Native American or Alaska Native (18.4%), than among those who were non-Hispanic White (12.3%), non-Hispanic Black (11.9%), or Asian or Pacific Islander (10.7%). The largest drops in subgroups were among boys, 4-year-olds, and Native American or Alaskan Native children.

* Texas children ages 2 to 4 enrolled in WIC have 15.9% obesity, a decrease from 16.9% in 2010. Obesity is the highest among Hispanic infants (16.3%).

Adults

* Texas has a 36.1% adult obesity rate, up from 30.4% in 2010. Obesity is highest among the Black (43.5%) and Hispanic (42.5%) populations. For adults earning under $15,000 in Texas, the 2021 obesity rate was 44.8%, compared to 37.8% for adults earning $75,000 or more.[61]

* Adult obesity rates in the 4-county area are as follows: Bastrop (36%); Colorado (40%); Fayette (37%); and Lee (37%).[62]

According to the Centers for Disease Control, "Body Mass Index (BMI) is commonly used to determine childhood weight status. BMI is calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by the square of height in meters. For children, BMI is age- and sex-specific and is often referred to as BMI-for-age. A child's weight status is different from adult BMI categories. Children's body composition varies as they age and varies between genders. Therefore, BMI levels among children need to be expressed relative to other children of the same age and sex."[63]

Child—Weight Status Category	Child—Percentile Range
Underweight	Less than the 5th percentile
Healthy Weight	5th percentile to less than the 85th percentile
Overweight	85th to less than the 95th percentile
Obesity	95th percentile or greater

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

During PY 2021-22, 50.6% of Cen-Tex Head Start children were at a healthy weight, while 2.8% were underweight, and 16.5% were overweight. Of Cen-Tex HS children, 17.7% had obesity, compared to Texas HS children (17.1%) and HS children nationally (18.2%).[64]

Body Mass Index (BMI) Cen-Tex Head Start Children
Source: Program Information Reports, 2021-2022
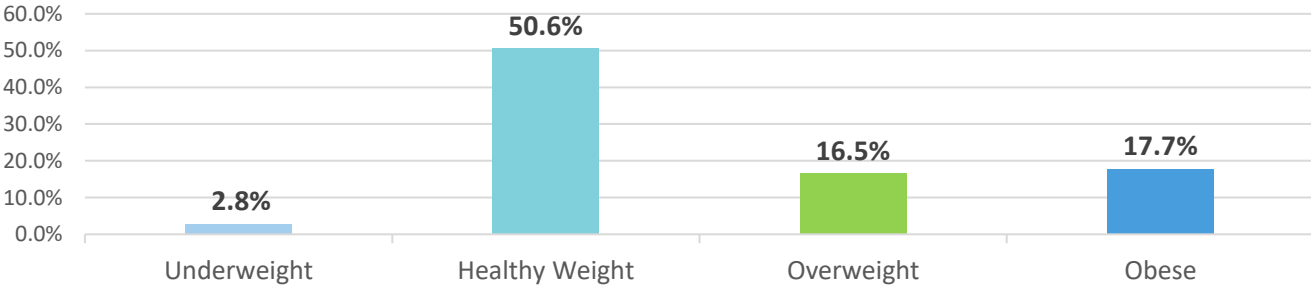
HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness jeopardizes the health, early development, and educational well-being of infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children and creates unique barriers to enrolling and taking part in early childhood care and education.[65] The McKinney-Vento Act refers to children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes those who are sharing the housing of other persons due to housing loss, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; and children who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus stations, or similar settings.

Pre-K Children Experiencing Homelessness, SY 2021-22

School District	# of Pre-K Children	Pre-K Children Experiencing Homelessness	School District	# of Pre-K Children	Pre-K Children Experiencing Homelessness
Bastrop County			**Fayette County**		
Bastrop ISD	454	19 (4%)	Fayetteville ISD	13	0 (0%)
Elgin ISD	237	12 (5%)	Flatonia ISD	35	0 (0%)
McDade ISD	13	*	La Grange ISD	53	0 (0%)
Smithville ISD	56	*	Round Top-Carmine	9	0 (0%)
			Schulenburg ISD	37	0 (0%)
Colorado County			**Lee County**		
Columbus ISD	82	*	Dime Box ISD	10	0 (0%)
Rice CISD	53	7 (13%)	Giddings ISD	60	0 (0%)
Weimar ISD	51	*	Lexington ISD	33	0 (0%)

*Suppressed   Source: Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (TPEIR)

During PY 2021-22, 17% or 74 Cen-Tex HS/EHS children were experiencing homelessness, compared to 12.9% during PY 2020-21 and 21.2% during PY 2018-19 (pre-pandemic).[66]

Cen-Tex HS/EHS Children Experiencing Homelessness
Source: Program Information Reports

	2019	2020	2021	2022
	21.2%	Data Not Available Due to COVID-19 Pandemic	12.9%	17.0%
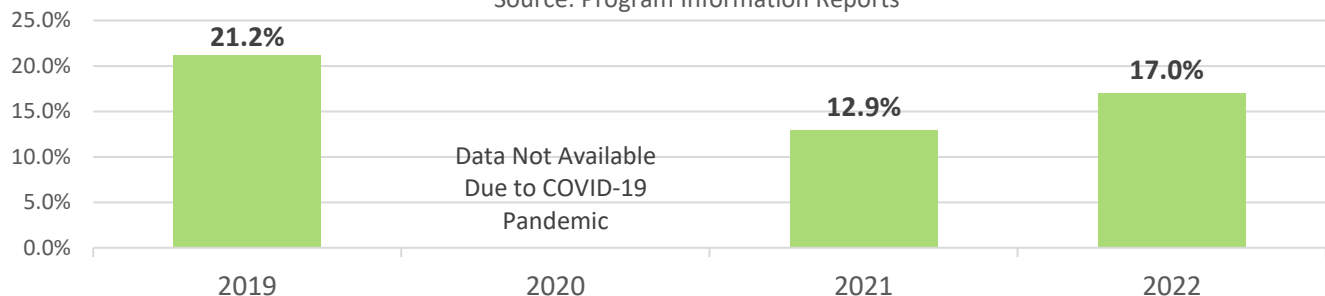
HOUSING

Cost Burdened Households

Cost burdened households have costs exceeding 30% or more of total household income. This indicator offers a measure of housing affordability and excessive shelter costs. The data also serves to aid in the development of housing programs to meet the needs of people at different economic levels. Of households in the four-county area, between 17.6% (Colorado) and 23.3% (Bastrop) are cost burdened, compared to Texas (29.9%). Cost-burdened *rental* households are even higher, ranging from 25.9% (Colorado) to 38.2% (Lee County), compared to Texas (45.5%)[67]

Cost Burdened Households

Location	Cost Burdened Households	Cost Burdened Rental Households	Cost Burdened Owner-Occupied	
			Households w/ Mortgages	Households w/o Mortgages
Texas	29.9%	45.4%	26.6%	12.5%
Bastrop County	23.3%	32.2%	26.0%	14.0%
Colorado County	17.6%	25.9%	32.2%	8.6%
Fayette County	19.9%	35.7%	23.9%	12.7%
Lee County	22.0%	38.2%	23.4%	13.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Fair Market Rent

The Fair Market Rent rate (FMR), established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, (HUD) is used as a basis for paying federal housing assistance programs like the Housing Choice Voucher Program (often called "Section 8"). Fair Market Rent is determined by conducting a nationwide survey each year. FMR prices are gross rent prices, meaning they include utilities.

The 2023 monthly FMR for a two-bedroom rental in the service area ranges from $891 (Colorado) to $1,626 (Bastrop),[68] with corresponding housing wages from $17.14/hour to $31.27/hour.[69]

2023 Fair Market Rent

County	Efficiency	One-Bedroom	Two-Bedroom	Three-Bedroom	Housing Wage for 2-Bedroom
Bastrop County	$1,253	$1,386	$1,626	$2,088	$31.27
Colorado County	$672	$677	$891	$1,115	$17.14
Fayette County	$688	$726	$912	$1,253	$17.54
Lee County	$814	$896	$1,079	$1,313	$20.75

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research

FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity refers to the USDA's measure of lack of access to a sufficient amount of food for an active, healthy life for all household members, and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. According to Feeding America, "Food insecurity can cause serious health issues when families have to choose between spending money on food or on medicine and healthcare, as well as choosing between food and rent, bills, and transportation. Further, food insecurity can make it more difficult for a child to properly learn and develop.[70]

Child food insecurity rates in 2021 ranged from 15% (Fayette) to 16.4% (Lee), compared to Texas (18.1%) and the U.S. (12.8%). From 2019 (pre-pandemic) to 2021, child food insecurity *decreased* by 2% - 4% in all four counties and Texas. Massive public/private response to hunger during the pandemic was successful in mitigating food insecurity rates across the country.[71]

While food insecurity improved for some sub-populations, it worsened for others. There was a deepening divide across racial and ethnic lines. Among the overall general population: [72]

o 2021 food insecurity rates among the Black population ranged from 16% (Colorado) to 31% (Fayette) in the 4-county area.

o 2021 food insecurity rates among the Hispanic population ranged from 12% (Bastrop/Fayette) to 14% (Lee) in the 4-county area.

o 2021 food insecurity rates among the White, non-Hispanic population ranged from 6% -7% in the 4-county area.

Overall Food Insecurity by Race/Ethnicity, 2021

Location	Black (All Ethnicities)	Latino (Hispanic)	White (Non-Hispanic)
Texas	23%	16%	8%
Bastrop County	17%	12%	7%
Colorado County	16%	13%	7%
Fayette County	31%	12%	6%
Lee County	27%	14%	6%

Source: Feeding America, 2021   Note: Information unavailable for other races and ethnicities

Food Insecurity

Age*	2019	2020	2021
United States			
Child (<18 years)	14.6%	16.1%	12.8%
Overall	10.9%	11.8%	10.4%
Texas			
Child (<18 years)	19.8%	18.9%	18.1%
Overall	14.1%	13.0%	13.7%
Bastrop County			
Child (<18 years)	16.8%	17.8%	15.0%
Overall	12.1%	12.0%	11.3%
Colorado County			
Child (<18 years)	18.1%	17.6%	14.8%
Overall	11.7%	11.2%	10.0%
Fayette County			
Child (<18 years)	18.5%	15.8%	14.0%
Overall	13.3%	12.4%	11.7%
Lee County			
Child (<18 years)	18.0%	17.6%	16.4%
Overall	12.7%	12.0%	12.0%

Note: "Overall" refers to all individuals, including children, regardless of race or ethnicity   Source: Feeding America

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

One hundred thousand Americans died from a drug overdose between April 2020 and April 2021, a 30% increase from the prior one-year period.[73] More than 107,000 Americans died of overdoses in 2021, a 15% increase from 2020.[74] Overdose deaths involving fentanyl and other synthetic opioids surpassed 71,000 in 2021, up 23% from 2020. There was also a 23% increase in deaths involving cocaine and a 34% increase in deaths involving methamphetamine and other stimulants.[75] Experts say the COVID-19 pandemic worsened the opioid epidemic as lockdowns and other restrictions isolated those with addictions and made treatment harder to access. In addition, there has been an increased presence in the country of the synthetic opioid fentanyl.[76]

Texas[77]

Between 2019 and 2020 in Texas, accidental drug-related deaths:
- increased by 34.6% (from 2,764 to 3,721).
- increased from 9.5 to 12.5 per 100,000 population.
- accidental opioid-related deaths increased by 44.5% and synthetic opioid-related deaths (e.g. fentanyl) increased by 158%.

Texas: Accidental Drug-Related Deaths by Any Drug per 100,000 Population

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
8.8	9.0	8.9	9.5	12.5

Source: Texas Health and Human Services Commission

County Level Opioid Emergency Department Visits[78]

Year of Visit	County	Demographics	Opioid type				
			Any Opioid	Fentanyl	Heroin	Non-Heroin Opioid	Synthetic Opioid
2019	Bastrop	Total Opioid ED Visits	24	0	--	21	--
	Colorado	Total Opioid ED Visits	--	0	0	--	--
	Fayette	Total Opioid ED Visits	--	0	0	--	0
	Lee	Total Opioid ED Visits	0	0	0	0	0
2020	Bastrop	Total Opioid ED Visits	24	0	--	22	--
	Colorado	Total Opioid ED Visits	--	0	0	--	--
	Fayette	Total Opioid ED Visits	--	0	0	--	0
	Lee	Total Opioid ED Visits	--	0	0	--	0
2021	Bastrop	Total Opioid ED Visits	34	--	--	29	--
	Colorado	Total Opioid ED Visits	--	0	--	--	0
	Fayette	Total Opioid ED Visits	--	0	--	0	0
	Lee	Total Opioid ED Visits	--	0	0	--	0

TRANSPORTATION

Between 2.6% (Bastrop) and 5.8% (Colorado) of households do not have a vehicle, compared to 5.2% in Texas and 8.4% in the United States. Following are *rental* households without vehicles by county: Bastrop (6.5%); Colorado (15.7%); Fayette (16.8%); and Lee (9.8%).[79]

Households with No Motor Vehicle

Location	Total Occupied Households	Households with No Motor Vehicle (Count)	Households with No Motor Vehicle (Percent)
Texas	10,239,341	533,515	5.2%
Bastrop County	31,271	815	2.6%
Colorado County	6,999	404	5.8%
Fayette County	8,720	397	4.6%
Lee County	6,148	295	4.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Household with No Motor Vehicle by Tenure

Location	Owner-Occupied Households		Renter-Occupied Households	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Texas	132,809	2.1%	400,706	10.4%
Bastrop County	379	1.5%	436	6.5%
Colorado County	219	3.8%	185	15.7%
Fayette County	146	2.0%	251	16.8%
Lee County	170	3.5%	125	9.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

Public Transit:[80]

The Capital Area Rural Transportation System CARTS District is the entity responsible for transit services in a 7200 square mile nine-county area surrounding Austin. The District includes the non-urbanized areas of Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Travis and Williamson counties.

Colorado Valley Transit District (CVTD) is a rural transit entity responsible for transit services in a 3,200 square mile four-county area surrounding Houston. CVTD rural area includes Austin, Colorado, Waller and Wharton Counties.

SURVEYS

FAMILY SURVEY

As part of the Community Assessment process, English and Spanish surveys were distributed to Cen-Tex Head Start and Early Head Start families. Ninety-three (93) families responded.

1. In which county do you live?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Bastrop County	50.5%
Colorado County	26.9%
Fayette County	11.8%
Lee County	10.8%

2. In which program(s) is your child or children enrolled?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Both Head Start and Early Head Start	25.8%
Head Start Only	37.6%
Early Head Start-Center Based Program Only	29.0%
Early Head Start-Home Based Program Only	7.5%

3. Do the hours of the Early Head Start program meet the needs of your family?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Not applicable. I do not have a child enrolled in Early Head Start.	14.0%
Yes	75.3%
No	10.8%
Unsure	0.0%

Comments:
- No, because my work is 8 hours long.
- Yes, since I am a full-time sub currently, but no because I cannot find a full-time job because the hours of other jobs don't line up and [I am having] trouble finding someone who is willing to work with me.
- It's difficult having a full-time job with the hours.
- My schedule changed. I work from 8 to 5 now so it's difficult to get someone to pick her up at 2:45.
- Yes, it does but no it doesn't because it's hard for me to find a job with the hours.
- Wish it was a little longer like school.
- I leave my job later [than ending hours] and see who can pick up [my child].

4. Do the hours of the Head Start program meet the needs of your family?

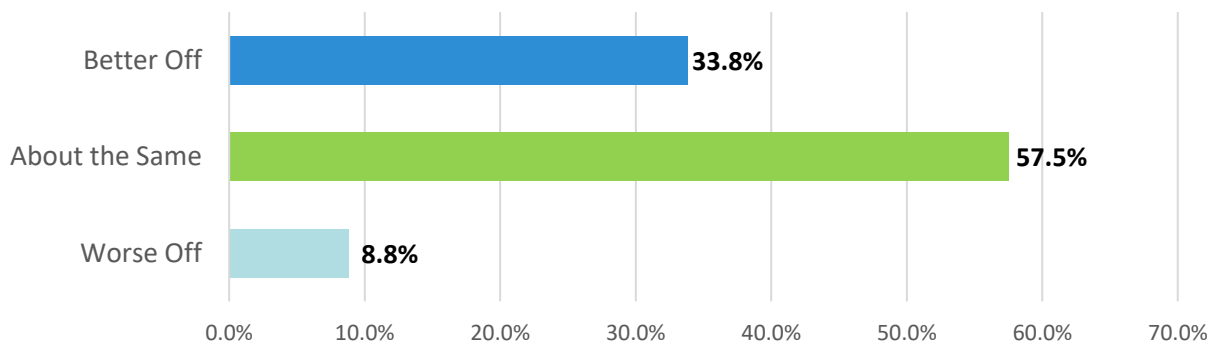| Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Not applicable. I do not have a child enrolled in Head Start.	15.1%
Yes	73.1%
No	11.8%
Unsure	0.0%

Comments:
- I wish they got out [of school] a little later.
- It's difficult with a full-time job.
- The hours are okay but since I work full-time, it's hard to find after school care for him while we work.
- The entrance is not convenient for drop off.
- Not really, my work schedule changed so it's hard to find someone to pick my daughter up at 2:45.
- Yes and no, only because again it's hard with the hours of the jobs.
- We have full time jobs. Leaving at 2:15 to pick up kids at 2:45 is unrealistic.
- Wish it was a little longer like school.
- I had to cut my hours back at work.

5. Has your family recently experienced any of the following challenges? (within last 12 months)

Indicators	Never or Rarely	Sometimes	Always or Often	Not Applicable
Having or Finding Affordable and Safe Housing	51.3%	10.0%	2.5%	36.3%
Having or Finding a Job with a Wage to Support my Family	40.0%	25.0%	11.3%	23.8%
Paying for Utilities (electricity, water, heat)	51.3%	22.5%	8.8%	17.5%
Access to Affordable Mental Health/ Behavioral Health Services	45.0%	15.0%	6.3%	33.8%
Support for My Child with Disabilities	37.5%	2.5%	7.5%	52.5%
Immigration Concerns	38.8%	10.0%	1.3%	50.0%
Access to Quality, Affordable Child Care for my Infant/Toddler	37.5%	30.0%	12.5%	20.0%
Access to Quality, Affordable Child Care for my Preschooler	41.3%	20.0%	13.8%	25.0%
Dealing with my Child's Behaviors	52.5%	13.8%	10.0%	23.8%
Access to Adult Education Options (e.g., GED, college)	40.0%	11.3%	7.5%	41.3%
Family Member in Jail/Prison	38.8%	5.0%	1.3%	55.0%
Lack of Language Translation Services	48.8%	10.0%	1.3%	40.0%

6. Compared with one year ago, is your family financially:

Better Off	33.8%
About the Same	57.5%
Worse Off	8.8%

7. Which of the following best describes your employment?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
I (or the head of household) am employed.	71.1%
I am temporarily laid off.	1.3%
I am unemployed and I am looking for a new job.	18.4%
I am unemployed and I am NOT looking for a job.	6.6%
I am retired or on disability.	2.6%

Comments:
- I am a full-time sub with center but once position is filled, I'll be out of work.
- Need surgery.
- I have a part time job.
- In school.
- I am a volunteer with a non-profit.

8. Including yourself, how many adults in your home are currently employed?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
2 or more	37.3%
1	54.7%
0 (All adults are currently unemployed)	5.3%
Retired/On Disability	2.7%
Other (please specify)	0.0%

9. What hours does the head of household work?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Day Shift/First Shift (typically 8:00/9:00 to 5:00)	71.1%
Afternoon Shift/Second Shift (typically 4:00 to midnight)	1.3%
Midnight Shift/Third Shift (overnight hours)	0.0%
Variety of Schedules/Swing Shift	21.1%
Not Applicable/Not Working	6.6%

10. Do you have a vehicle?

Yes	96.1%
No	0.0%
My vehicle currently needs repair	3.9%

0.0%   20.0%   40.0%   60.0%   80.0%   100.0%   120.0%
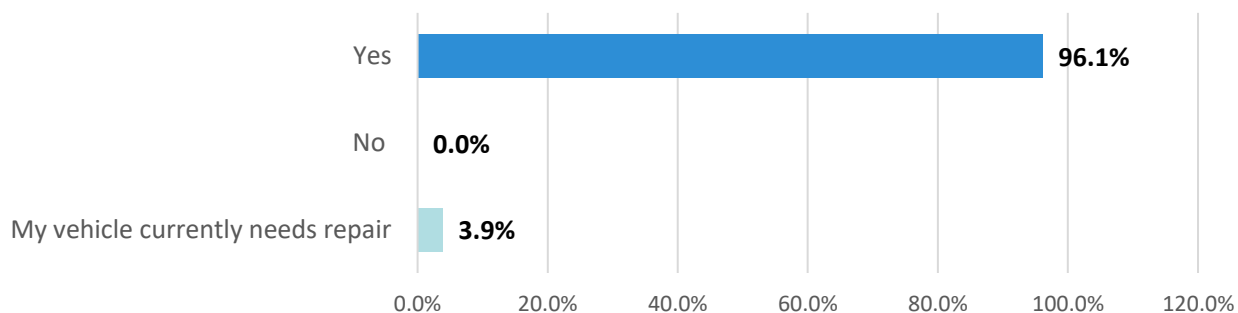
11. Which of the following best describes your current housing situation?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
I have safe and affordable housing.	89.2%
I haven't been able to pay my rent or mortgage, but I still have housing.	1.4%
I have housing, but the house is unsafe.	1.4%
I have been evicted or am facing eviction.	0.0%
I am living with family or friends because I am unable to afford housing.	6.8%
I am struggling with homelessness.	1.4%

Comments:
- It's very difficult.
- Would like something less [expensive] and better.

12. To what extent has your stress level and/or wellness been affected in the past 2 years? (Choose ALL that apply.)

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
My stress level and wellness have remained the same as before the pandemic.	61.5%
I experienced general feelings of depression and/or anxiety, but am now feeling better.	25.0%
I continue to experience general feelings of depression and/or anxiety.	15.4%
I visited a counselor or a doctor to assist with my anxiety and or depression.	9.6%
The level of violence has increased in my home.	0.0%
The use of substances (drugs, alcohol) has increased in my home.	0.0%
Other	3.9%

Comment: I've been recently diagnosed with Lupus.

13. Within the past year, has your family received different treatment due to your race, language, or religion? (treated differently, treated unfairly, excluded from activities)


Yes 0.7%
No 95.7%
Prefer Not to Answer 3.6%
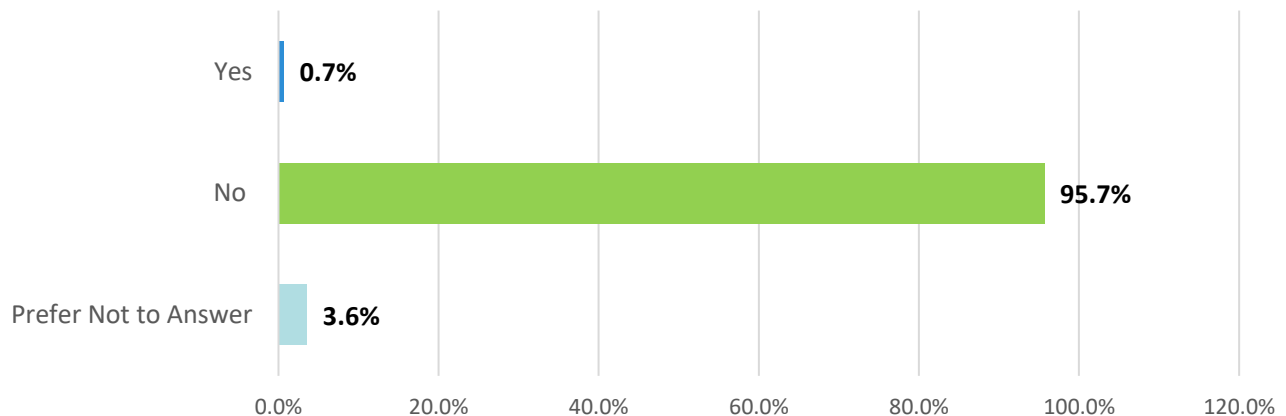
14. Has your family experienced challenges with the following within the last 12 months?

	Never or Rarely	Sometimes	Always or Often
Managing and Budgeting Money	32.4%	63.4%	4.2%
Access to Banking Services	74.6%	15.5%	9.9%
Access to Affordable Medical Care/Insurance	50.7%	29.6%	19.7%
Access to Affordable Dental Care	50.7%	32.4%	16.9%
Drug Abuse or Alcoholism in my Home	94.4%	5.6%	0.0%
Feelings of Anxiety and/or Depression	66.2%	26.8%	7.0%
Violence in my Neighborhood	95.8%	4.2%	0.0%
Verbal or Emotional Abuse in your Home	94.4%	5.6%	0.0%
Having Enough Food to Feed My Family	70.4%	15.5%	14.1%
Access to Affordable Food/Produce	64.8%	21.1%	14.1%
Access to Phone Service	70.4%	14.1%	15.5%
Access to Computer/Internet	60.6%	28.2%	11.3%
Fear of Violence in your Home (hitting, threats, fighting)	97.2%	2.8%	0.0%
Lack of Reliable Transportation	85.9%	12.7%	1.4%

15. Has your family been directly affected (past or present) by a drug problem in the community?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Yes	5.6%
No	91.5%
I prefer not to respond.	2.8%

16. Which best describes your family?
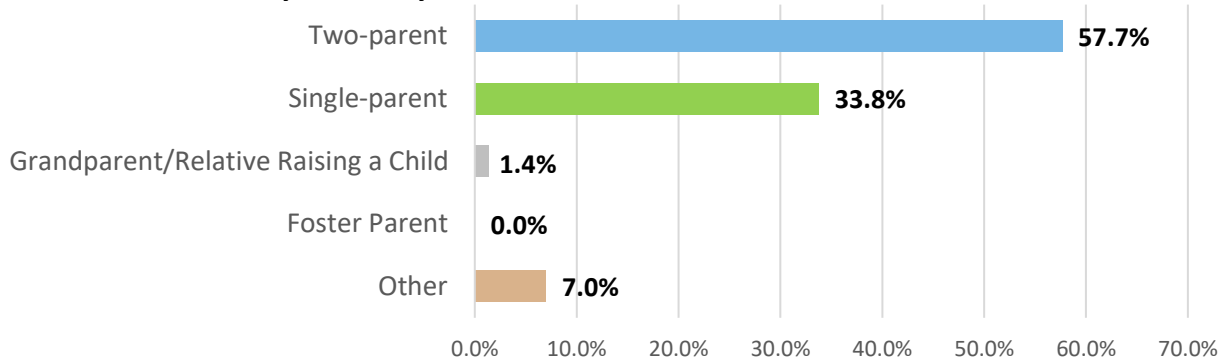
Comments:
- I have help with my children due to my schedule work. My family members help out in this area.
- Grandparent, [I] assist daughter with raising children.
- Both parents are involved in her life.

17. Which race/ethnicity best describes you?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.0%
Black or African American	12.7%
Hispanic, White	71.8%
Native American/Alaskan Native	0.0%
White, Non-Hispanic	9.9%
Multiple Races/Ethnicities	2.8%
Prefer not to respond	2.8%

18. In what language(s) do you speak most often?

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
English	52.1%
Spanish	26.8%
Both English and Spanish	19.7%
Other	1.4%

19. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your family's needs?
Comments:

- Help caring for my little girl.

- Formula for my newborn.

- It's hard to find a babysitter, it's really hard.

- Head Start hours are hard to accommodate. Also, activities during the week are hard to be at. Rodeo or meetings during the day are putting a strain on my employment. I'm having to choose between keeping my job or being active in my child's school. I feel like I have to keep her home on days where they "need a parent present to walk child to and from stations" because I work full-time and can't be there. I'm thankful for the program but it places hardship on me with pickup and activity schedule.

KEY INFORMANT SURVEY (COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS)

A survey was distributed to community organizations across the 4-county area. Special thanks to the 14 organizations and agencies that participated in the Community Assessment process.

1. **In which of the following counties do you provide services? (select all that apply)**

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Bastrop County	78.6%
Colorado County	21.4%
Fayette County	28.6%
Lee County	28.6%
None of the Above	0.0%

2. **Consider families living in poverty in your community, including those to whom you provide direct services. Select the response that best describes to what extent each item is, or is not, CURRENTLY a challenge for families in poverty.**

Indicator	Never or Seldom	Sometimes	Often or Consistently	No Opinion or Unsure
Access to Affordable Housing	0.0%	14.3%	78.6%	7.1%
Housing Eviction Concerns	7.1%	42.9%	28.6%	21.4%
Unemployment Resulting from COVID Shutdowns	7.1%	50.0%	28.6%	14.3%
Availability of Jobs which Pay a Living Wage	0.0%	21.4%	64.3%	14.3%
Access to Public Transportation	7.1%	28.6%	57.1%	7.1%
Access to Adult Education (e.g., GED, college)	7.1%	57.1%	28.6%	7.1%
Access to Job Training	7.1%	50.0%	28.6%	14.3%
Access to Affordable Medical Care/Insurance	7.1%	35.7%	50.0%	7.1%
Depression/Anxiety	0.0%	50.0%	42.9%	7.1%
Access to Mental Health Services	7.1%	50.0%	28.6%	14.3%
Access to Affordable Dental Services	7.1%	64.3%	21.4%	7.1%
Illegal or Prescription Drug Abuse	7.1%	50.0%	7.1%	35.7%
Immigration Concerns/Needs	15.4%	30.8%	38.5%	15.4%
Cultural Oppression (race, ethnicity, religion)	14.3%	50.0%	28.6%	7.1%
Access to Healthy Foods	7.1%	42.9%	42.9%	7.1%
Access to Services for Children with Disabilities	14.3%	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%
Access to Affordable Child Care (Infants/Toddlers)	7.1%	35.7%	50.0%	7.1%
Access to Affordable Preschool/Child Care (3-5)	7.1%	35.7%	50.0%	7.1%
Community Violence	14.3%	50.0%	7.1%	28.6%

3. **Please choose the five (5) Causes of Poverty or Barriers to Self-Sufficiency that you believe are currently the most significant in the 4-county area (Bastrop, Colorado, Fayette, and Lee).**

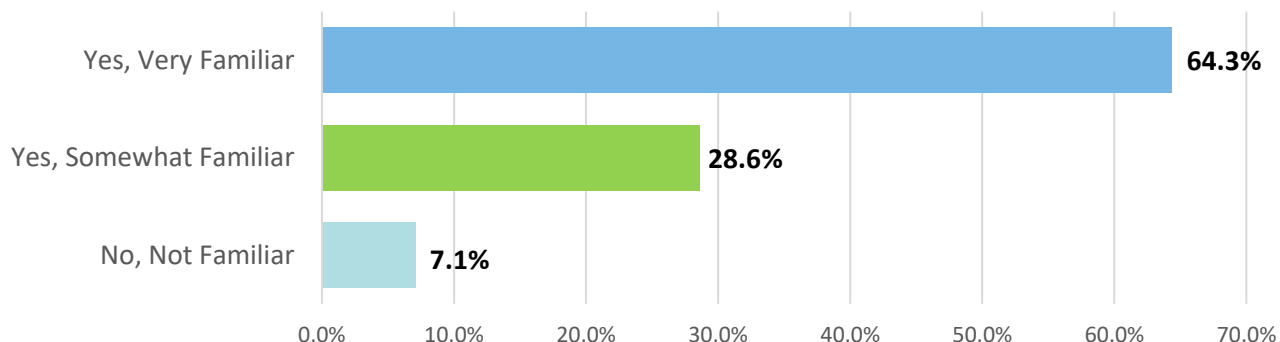| Indicator	% of Respondents
Demand for low-cost safe housing exceeds supply	42.9%
Employment wages do not meet needed living wage	85.7%
Limited amount of formal education and/or job skills	21.4%
Demand for low-cost child care exceeds available slots	57.1%
Active addiction	7.1%
Systemic or structural racism	14.3%
Domestic violence	21.4%
Personal life choices	21.4%
Inflation	28.6%
Generational poverty	21.4%
Debt	42.9%
Gentrification	14.3%
Dependency on governmental services	14.3%
Lack of governmental services	14.3%
Immigration status/undocumented status	21.4%
Untreated mental illness	14.3%
Community violence	0.0%
Social injustice (e.g., racial, gender, religious discrimination)	0.0%
Inadequate, limited or poor access to healthcare	7.1%
Lack of reliable transportation	28.6%
Food insecurity	21.4%

Comment: SDOH is an issue.

4. **Choose the top 5 critical services that do not meet the current demand of the low-income population. Choose up to 5.**

Indicator	% of Respondents
Adult Education Options (G.E.D., ESL)	7.1%
Affordable Infant/Toddler Child Care	57.1%
Affordable Preschool	21.4%
Child Disabilities Services	7.1%
Dental Services that accept Medicaid or State Insurance	7.1%
Quality Medical Care	14.3%
Financial Literacy Services	14.3%
Mental Health Services	7.1%
Healthy, Affordable Food/Food Banks	35.7%
Immigration Services	35.7%
Internet Services	50.0%
Job Training/Career Pathways	35.7%
Housing Assistance	57.1%
Homelessness Support Services	21.4%
Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing	14.3%

Language Translation Services	7.1%
Mental Health Services	14.3%
Public Transportation	21.4%
Safety/Violence Prevention	14.3%
Substance Abuse/Misuse Treatment	0.0%
Utility Assistance (e.g., electricity, water)	28.6%
Weatherization Assistance (e.g., roof, electrical)	21.4%

5. **Are you familiar with our Head Start & Early Head Start programs?**

Yes, Very Familiar — 64.3%
Yes, Somewhat Familiar — 28.6%
No, Not Familiar — 7.1%

0.0% 10.0% 20.0% 30.0% 40.0% 50.0% 60.0% 70.0%

6. **Have you referred a parent and/or family to our Head Start & Early Head Start program within the past year?**

Yes — 78.6%
No — 21.4%

0.0% 10.0% 20.0% 30.0% 40.0% 50.0% 60.0% 70.0% 80.0% 90.0%
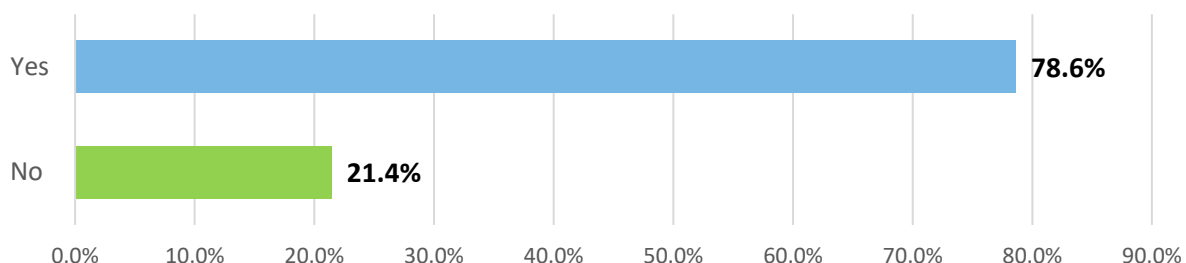
7. **Please choose the response that BEST describes your current relationship with our organization.**

	% of Respondents
Collaboration: Formal and interdependent system of working together for a common purpose; decision making is shared; roles and responsibilities are formalized.	41.9%
Partnership: Actively working together, (and possibly with another organization) toward one or more common community goals, which each member maintains an individual organizational agenda.	21.4%
Networking: Engaged in informal ways such as community meetings, events and/or referrals for the common purpose of community action.	28.6%
None: Would like to explore and develop a relationship.	7.1%

8. **Select the type of industry or service that best describes your organization's mission.**

Answer Choices	Percentage of Respondents
Addictions Treatment or Counseling	0.0%
Adult Education Provider/College/University	0.0%
Business	0.0%
Chamber of Commerce	0.0%
Church/Faith Community	0.0%
Child Care/Early Childhood	15.4%
Child Welfare/Advocacy	0.0%
Domestic Violence Shelter or Services	0.0%
Early Intervention/Disabilities Services	0.0%
Emergency Assistance (e.g. food, shelter, utilities)	0.0%
Financial Institution	0.0%
Government	0.0%
Health Care	7.7%
Health Department	0.0%
Homeless Shelter/Transitional Housing	0.0%
Immigrant, Migrant, or Refugee Services	0.0%
Mental Health Services	7.7%
Public Assistance (e.g., SNAP, TANF, SSI, WIC)	15.4%
Public Housing/Section 8	0.0%
Public School District	15.4%
Public Safety (Police, Fire)	0.0%
Transportation Services	0.0%
Volunteer/Community Member	0.0%
Weatherization	0.0%
Workforce Development/Career Counseling	7.7%
Other Non-profit/Social Service Agency	15.4%
Other	7.7%

9. **Please share any additional comments about your experience with our organization and/or the needs of children and families living in poverty in the community.**

Outreach programs for families with children living in Mobile Home Parks. Due to high cost of living, more families are now living in mobile trailers with children.

KEY INFORMANT SURVEY (STAFF, BOARD, POLICY COUNCIL)

Thirty-seven people participated.

10. In which of the following counties do you provide services? (select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Percent of Respondents
Bastrop County	70.3%
Colorado County	37.8%
Fayette County	40.5%
Lee County	37.8%

11. Consider families living in poverty in your community, including those to whom you provide direct services. Select the response that best describes to what extent each item is, or is not, CURRENTLY a challenge for families in poverty.

Indicator	Never or Seldom	Sometimes	Often or Consistently	No Opinion or Unsure
Access to Affordable Housing	8.1%	5.4%	73.0%	13.5%
Housing Eviction Concerns	16.7%	44.4%	13.9%	25.0%
Unemployment Resulting from COVID Shutdowns	35.1%	37.8%	8.1%	18.9%
Availability of Jobs which Pay a Living Wage	5.4%	24.3%	67.6%	2.7%
Access to Public Transportation	8.1%	21.6%	59.5%	10.8%
Access to Adult Education (e.g., GED, college)	29.7%	40.5%	16.2%	13.5%
Access to Job Training	21.6%	56.8%	8.1%	13.5%
Access to Affordable Medical Care/Insurance	8.1%	43.2%	35.1%	13.5%
Depression/Anxiety	10.8%	32.4%	43.2%	13.5%
Access to Mental Health Services	13.5%	27.0%	48.7%	10.8%
Access to Affordable Dental Services	16.2%	37.8%	37.8%	8.1%
Illegal or Prescription Drug Abuse	16.2%	35.1%	29.7%	18.9%
Immigration Concerns/Needs	8.1%	48.7%	24.3%	18.9%
Cultural Oppression (race, ethnicity, religion)	25.0%	44.4%	13.9%	16.7%
Access to Healthy Foods	18.9%	54.1%	18.9%	8.1%
Access to Services for Children with Disabilities	32.4%	37.8%	18.9%	10.8%
Access to Affordable Child Care (Infants/Toddlers)	2.8%	22.2%	63.9%	11.1%
Access to Affordable Preschool/Child Care (3-5)	16.2%	29.7%	46.0%	8.1%
Community Violence	35.1%	43.2%	10.8%	10.8%

12. Please choose the five (5) Causes of Poverty or Barriers to Self-Sufficiency that you believe are currently the most significant in the 4-county area (Bastrop, Colorado, Fayette, and Lee).

Indicator	% of Respondents
Demand for low-cost safe housing exceeds supply	59.5%
Employment wages do not meet needed living wage	81.1%
Limited amount of formal education and/or job skills	29.7%
Demand for low-cost child care exceeds available slots	59.5%
Active addiction	16.2%
Systemic or structural racism	0.0%
Domestic violence	10.8%
Personal life choices	35.1%
Inflation	29.7%
Generational poverty	24.3%
Debt	2.7%
Gentrification	5.4%
Dependency on governmental services	37.8%
Lack of governmental services	0.0%
Immigration status/undocumented status	10.8%
Untreated mental illness	13.5%
Community violence	2.7%
Social injustice (e.g., racial, gender, religious discrimination)	2.7%
Inadequate, limited or poor access to healthcare	10.8%
Lack of reliable transportation	37.8%
Food insecurity	5.4%
Other (please specify)	

Comments:

- Basic education is available, but a poor outlook on it (likely generationally passed down) and poor school systems make the offered education less effective.

- There is no affordable housing available.

13. Choose the top 5 critical services that do not meet the current demand of the low-income population. Choose up to 5.

Indicator	% of Respondents
Adult Education Options (G.E.D., ESL)	16.2%
Affordable Infant/Toddler Child Care	64.9%
Affordable Preschool	29.7%
Child Disabilities Services	21.6%
Dental Services that accept Medicaid or State Insurance	10.8%
Quality Medical Care	32.4%
Financial Literacy Services	8.1%
Mental Health Services	18.9%
Healthy, Affordable Food/Food Banks	16.2%
Immigration Services	24.3%

Internet Services	10.8%
Job Training/Career Pathways	24.3%
Housing Assistance	56.8%
Homelessness Support Services	21.6%
Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing	10.8%
Language Translation Services	8.1%
Mental Health Services	24.3%
Public Transportation	32.4%
Safety/Violence Prevention	8.1%
Substance Abuse/Misuse Treatment	13.5%
Utility Assistance (e.g., electricity, water)	18.9%
Weatherization Assistance (e.g., roof, electrical)	8.1%

Comment: Rural areas have to go to big cities to get medical care

FOCUS GROUPS

x

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

For additional community resource information, visit https://www.unitedwayaustin.org/

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