



Community Needs Assessment

Issued December 2021

**Approved & Accepted by the
Community Action Commission
Board of Directors
December 20, 2021**

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Introduction.....	4
Executive Summary	7
Purpose of Report.....	8
Background	9
Methodology.....	12
Profile of Our Region by Identified Need.....	19
Demographic Profile of Our Region	26
Demographic Profile of TCCA Consumers.....	31
Key Findings.....	35
Next Steps.....	36

Acknowledgements

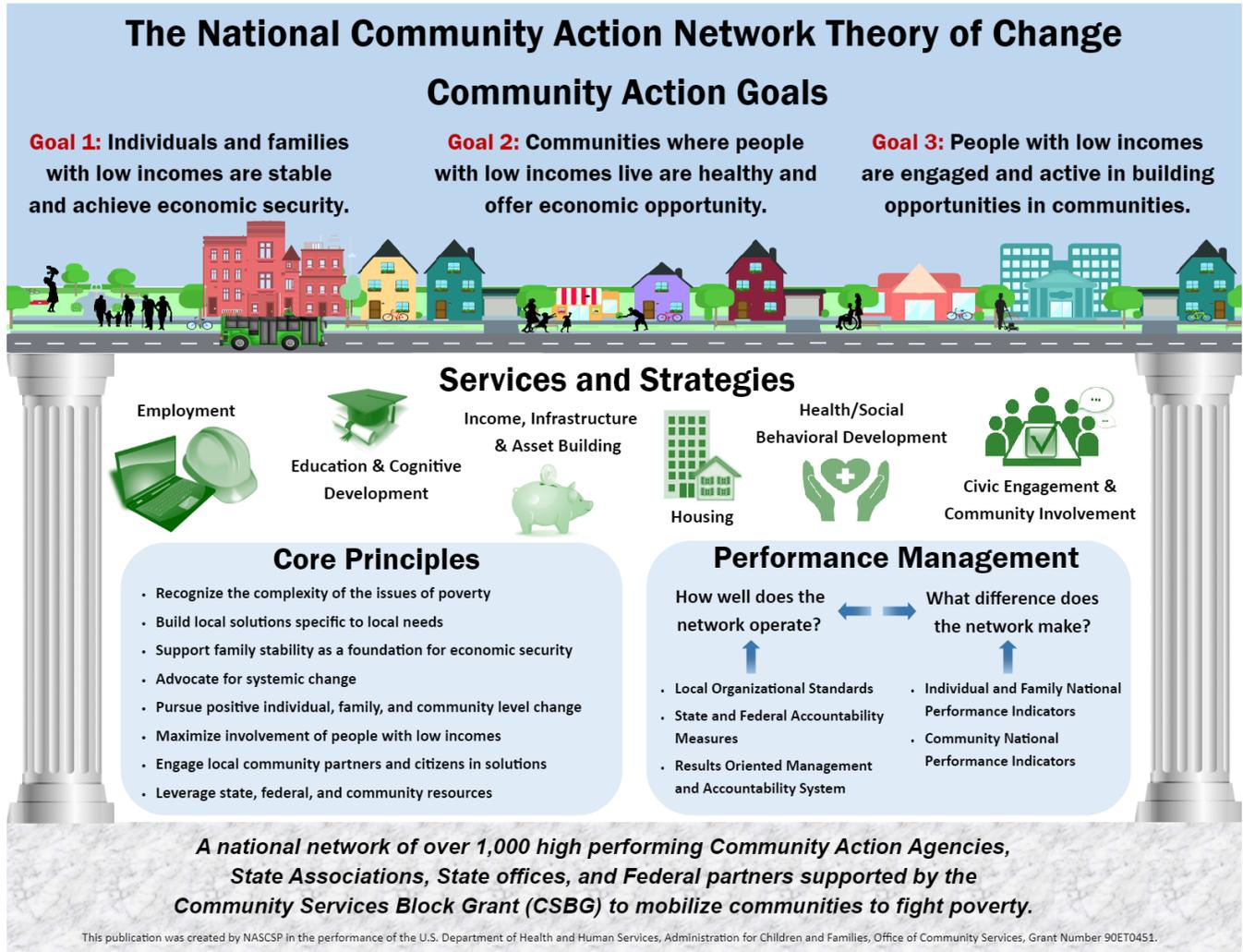
Tri County Community Action would like to recognize and thank the following individuals and organizations for their assistance in gathering, compiling and otherwise contributing to this needs assessment process:

Tri County Community Action Board of Directors' Planning & Evaluation Committee
The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
The Community Action Association of Pennsylvania

Community Action Commission, now doing business as Tri County Community Action, and this needs assessment process are funded in part through the Community Services Block Grant and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Introduction

Community Action agencies were created as a direct result of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, to **address the root causes of and ameliorate poverty** in our communities¹. In 2016, with the adoption of a National Theory of Change, Community Action agencies began to better articulate how the network’s unique flexibility allows it to tailor services to meet the unique needs of the communities we serve.



Today, there are approximately 1,000 Community Action agencies serving in every state and territory of the United States, and all are working towards the same national goals.

¹ http://www.communityactionpartnership.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=50

Community Action Commission (CAC) was incorporated in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on April 12, 1966 as a private, nonprofit, anti-poverty planning agency serving Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Counties. The purpose of the CAC is:²

- To study poverty in Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry Counties.
- To form strategies to reduce the causes of poverty.
- To involve meaningfully, neighborhood representatives and others in the resolution of community needs.
- To facilitate the delivery of services and resources.
- To evaluate programs and to change them as conditions warrant new approaches.
- To inform the community of problems of poverty.
- To act as the coordinating mechanism to receive and distribute funds necessary for the operation of the many services logistically allied to this effort.

January 2014, CAC began doing business as Tri County Community Action (TCCA) in order to better reflect its three county service area; Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry Counties, while also reinforcing Community Action's promise to change people's lives and improve communities.

The **mission** of Tri County Community Action is to build on the strengths and resources available, provide solutions for complex issues, and empower individuals, families, and communities to move out of poverty.

Our Promise, the Promise of Community Action, is to change people's lives, embody the spirit of hope, improve communities, and make America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other. **Our Vision** is that we all live in a community free from poverty. Our work creates strong families and thriving communities.

Tri County Community Action uses a results oriented and outcome focused approach to promote self-sufficiency, family stability and community revitalization to eradicate poverty, through empowerment and helping people help themselves. Historically, the agency mobilized funding and established an array of programs and services to address its stated mission, to create and maximize the resources necessary to address and eliminate barriers that individuals and families face in achieving economic self-sufficiency. Over fifty years after the organization was incorporated, it is still designated as the principle anti-poverty planning organization in the tri-county area.

² *Articles of Incorporation, filed April 12, 1966.*

In 2020, Tri County Community Action served **7,453** families representing **22,331** individuals in the region. These families received at least one of the myriad of services and programs available through Tri County Community Action, including:

- Community Development and Neighborhood Revitalization
- Family Center In-home and Group Parenting Education
- Fatherhood Programming
- Self Sufficiency Case Management
- Supportive Services for Residents of Low/Moderate Income Properties
- Information and Referral Services
- Budgeting and Financial Literacy Education
- Housing Counseling
- PPL's OnTrack Program
- E Power Wise Energy Savings Education

As we recognize **more than 50 years fighting the war on poverty**, we acknowledge that although the war is far from over, we have won many battles.

Executive Summary

Tri County Community Action has used the same methodology for conducting community needs assessments for several years, and has issued reports in 2015, 2018, and 2021.

Each of these assessments have identified needs in the areas of employment, housing, income, transportation, child care, crime, addiction and mental health, and community resources. These assessments have used a similar cross-section of community organizations and partners which includes the general public, our consumers, and staff; and while the priority of each specific need varies by location or time period, the overall needs themselves remain relatively unchanged.

The clients served by Tri County Community Action continue to be fairly representative of the citizens living in our tri-county region, and like the community at-large, the majority of participants served by Tri County Community Action are working but struggling to meet their household needs.

Generally, our region has less than state or national average unemployment and poverty, but has a high amount of cost-burdened home owners and renters. In addition, stagnant wages affect the ability to secure transportation, afford safe housing, obtain quality childcare, and treat mental/physical health issues. Structural inequities impact access to housing, education, food, health care, employment and social capital. Low education levels suppress upward social and economic mobility, and the lack of social capital, which is a support system, is a barrier to economic mobility. Social determinates of health also impact economic mobility.

Based on what we've learned from this assessment, and the comparison to the results from the 2015 and 2018 assessments, we can determine that the overall needs in our County have not changed much, but that our unique combination of direct services and community supports requires a local Theory of Change to increase the understanding of how our initiatives and programming connect our to mission and create our vision.

By defining our own local Theory of Change, we have realigned our initiatives and programming into four primary pillars. Each pillar is critical to carrying our mission forward. The pillars are:

- Early Childhood and Family Development
- Employment, Education, and Financial Empowerment
- Housing Security
- Community Development

Each pillar works towards our stated long-term goal of creating strong families and thriving communities where people are economically secure and communities are places of opportunity.

Purpose of Report

The 1998 Community Services Block Grant Reauthorization Act requires that Community Action agencies complete a comprehensive assessment of community needs which also assesses agency resources and identifies improvements and outcomes.

Additionally, Informational Memorandum 138, related to the Organizational Standards for Community Action agencies, requires a community assessment every three years, which includes relevant data, key findings and is accepted by the organization's governing board.³

As a result, the process utilized by the agency to complete the assessment was solely conducted by in-house staff and reviewed by the Board of Director's Planning and Evaluation Committee.

This assessment reports on the demographic profile of families living in Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry Counties, and the needs of our low-income residents.

It was approved and accepted by Community Action's Board of Directors on December 20, 2021.

Important to note that while the COVID-19 most certainly and significantly impacted our community, we did not include specific needs as a result of the pandemic in this assessment.

³ http://www.communityactionpartnership.com/storage/cap/documents/im_138_csbgs_organizational_standards_fy_2015.pdf

Background

Federal poverty thresholds were originally developed in the 1960's by the Social Security Administration. At that time, a study showed that families of three or more persons facing some short-term hardships, used about one-third of their total money (after taxes) on food. Using "three times the cost of food" methodology, poverty thresholds were developed for families of all sizes. Since that time, updates have only been made in relation to the Consumer Price Index, and no other factors.⁴

Annually, the updated Federal Poverty Guidelines are issued by the Department of Health and Human Services.

The 2021 poverty guidelines are as follows⁵:

Family Size	100% of Poverty	150% of Poverty	200% of Poverty	250% of Poverty
1	\$ 12,880	\$ 19,320	\$ 25,760	\$ 32,200
2	\$ 17,420	\$ 26,130	\$ 34,840	\$ 43,550
3	\$ 21,960	\$ 32,940	\$ 43,920	\$ 54,900
4	\$ 26,500	\$ 39,750	\$ 53,000	\$ 66,250
5	\$ 31,040	\$ 46,560	\$ 62,080	\$ 77,600
6	\$ 35,580	\$ 53,370	\$ 71,160	\$ 88,950
7	\$ 40,120	\$ 60,180	\$ 80,240	\$ 100,300
8	\$ 44,660	\$ 66,990	\$ 89,320	\$ 111,650

Community Action agencies receive federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) dollars, designed to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income communities, and to empower low-income families to become self-sufficient.⁶ This funding supports agency operations and administration, and direct service programming impacting individuals and families. Prior to 2021, only those at or below 125% of the federal poverty limit could be supported by programming through CSBG. In 2021, the limit was increased to 200% of poverty.

However, in many of our communities, families earning even 200% of the federal poverty limit are not economically self-sufficient, and still require some supports to achieve that independence. In order to meet our mission to empower individuals, families and communities to move out of poverty we leverage CSBG dollars to secure private funding.

⁴ <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/faq.cfm#developed>

⁵ Calculations for all percentages and rates other than 100% were made by TCCA

⁶ <http://www.nascsp.org/CSBG.aspx>

Poverty Wage versus Minimum Wage versus Living Wage

A “one size fits all” flat percentage defining poverty does not provide enough of, or the right kind of guidance needed to determine what a specific family type will require in household income to be truly self-sufficient. The chart below reflects the differences in living wage, poverty wage, and minimum wage for Dauphin County⁷.

Wages								
Hourly Wages	1 Adult	1 Adult, 1 Child	1 Adult, 2 Children	1 Adult, 3 Children	2 Adults	2 Adults, 1 Child	2 Adults, 2 Children	2 Adults, 3 Children
Living Wage	\$12.84	\$27.07	\$33.93	\$43.61	\$21.25	\$25.39	\$28.81	\$31.03
Poverty Wage	\$6.13	\$8.26	\$10.44	\$12.60	\$8.29	\$10.44	\$12.60	\$14.75
Minimum Wage	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25

For the numbers above, living wage assumes that an individual is the sole provider and working full-time (2080 hours per year). For two adult homes, the figures assume only one adult is working.

While more difficult to calculate, living wage is more reflective of the minimum amount a family must earn and still be considered “self-sufficient” in our region. Living wage varies based on family composition, region, and specific needs related to that family. Living wage takes fair market rent or mortgage, child care costs, food costs, transportation costs, and other daily and monthly expenses into consideration, along with the receipt of tax credits available. However, living wage assumes that families are budgeting for those tax credits and are including them in their annual household income, and not using them for payment on credit card bills, past due payments or other major expenses that have been deferred over time. Living wage also does not consider the “extras”, such as costs of emergencies, holidays and gifts, travel or vacations, and other “normal expenses”.

In our region, living wage is significantly higher than minimum wage.

⁷ <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/42043>

Family – Community – Agency Level Needs

Using Community Action's ROMA (Results Oriented Management and Accountability) practices, needs identified in this assessment have been categorized as one of three levels; Family, Community, and Agency level.

Family level need is what human service or helping agencies are the most familiar with. These needs impact an individual or family, because a person has a barrier, challenge or deficiency that they are unable to resolve themselves. For example, someone who lacks job skills and therefore can't get a livable wage paying job, has a family level need. The resolution may be to provide the person with the job skills necessary.

But let's say that individuals living in our communities have the adequate skills, but there aren't enough employers for the available workforce. That's a community level need. The community has a barrier, challenge or deficiency that needs resolution.

An agency level need is the ability of the community organizations/partners to come together to resolve either a family level or community level need. For example, new collaborations may need to be formed or services may have to be funded differently to impact the need on an organizational level.

Many needs can be at least partially categorized on each level. In the example of jobs, we may have a workforce that needs to learn new skills, but we also may need to attract new employers, and to accomplish both, we may need to create an innovative partnership to secure creative funding. But, by defining the need by level, we are better able to see the difference between a cause and a condition, and therefore can implement better interventions and ultimately achieve better outcomes.

Community Action agencies are charged with not only understanding the conditions of poverty in our communities, but also the causes; and then providing the type of services and supports to eradicate those causes at the root.

Methodology

Focus Groups & Interviews

Tri County Community Action regularly facilitates and/or participates in community and key stakeholder conversations to determine what the most pressing needs are in our communities.

In addition, we also regularly survey clients and program participants, agency staff, and our Board of Directors regarding their perspective on needs in our communities.

Collectively, these groups identified a number of needs, however, analysis of responses clearly indicated five (5) core barriers to self-sufficiency:

- Employment/Workforce Development
- Early Childhood
- Untreated Physical or Mental Health
- Housing Stability
- Transportation

In order to learn more about these causes of poverty and the level of need (Family, Agency or Community), TCCA engaged in a comprehensive assessment, which included the following:

- Gathering of core regional demographic data
- GIS mapping of regional demographic data
- Analysis of program participant data in comparison to regional data
- Conducting of surveys of need for both partners/organizations and the general public/program participants
- Compilation of data and results into this report

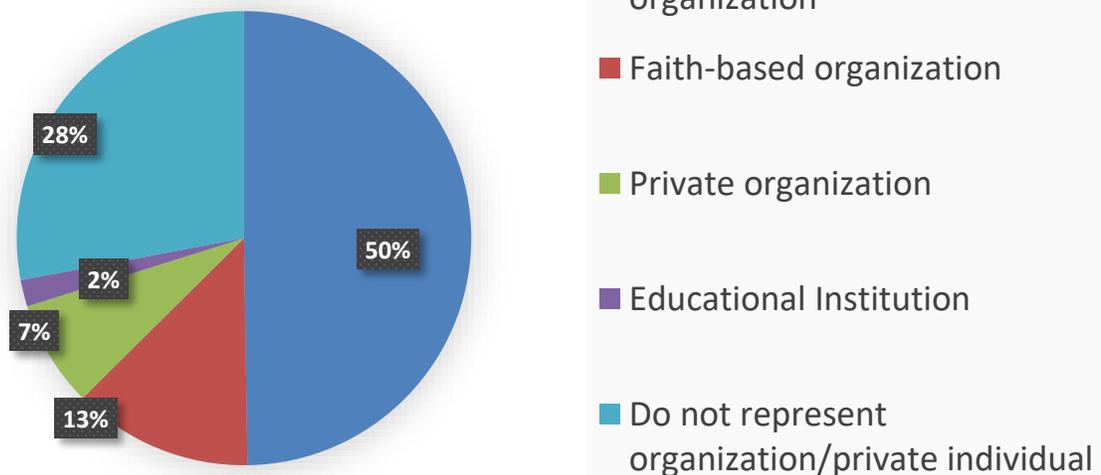
This evaluation allowed the agency to learn more about the impacts programs and services Tri County Community Action is making on the lives of individuals and families and provided a foundation of understanding that will help shape and mold initiatives to meet ongoing and/or future needs in our communities.

Community Organization/Partner Surveys

Surveys were electronically distributed across a broad cross-section of community organizations and partners. Distribution lists included focused outreach to educational and private organizations, human service organizations, and others over a course of several months.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in survey overload and fatigue for many of our partners and community organizations, 211 responses were received. Of those 11.4% represented Cumberland County, 31.8% represented Dauphin County, 22.3% represented Perry County, and 29.4% represented multiple counties, with the remaining not representing any area in our three-county region.

Percentage of Respondents by Type



Respondents were asked to identify their basic demographics:

- 13.9% identified as African American/Black
- 77.4% identified as White/Caucasian
- 0.7% identified as Asian or Asian American
- 2.2% identified as "more than one race"
- 5.8% preferred to not disclose their race

- 3.7% described their ethnicity as Latino or Hispanic
- 90.5% described their ethnicity as not Latino or Hispanic
- 5.8% preferred to not disclose their ethnicity

- 0 respondents were age 17 or younger
- 2 respondents were between the ages of 18-24
- 45 respondents were between the ages of 25-44
- 28 respondents were between the ages of 45-54
- 44 respondents were between the ages of 55-64
- 12 respondents were age 65 or older

- 6 respondents preferred to not disclose their age
- 71.5% of respondents were female
- 22.6% of respondents were male
- 0.7% of respondents were trans female
- 2.5% of respondents chose to not disclose their gender

Both Community Organizations/Partners and the General Public/Consumers were asked the same questions:

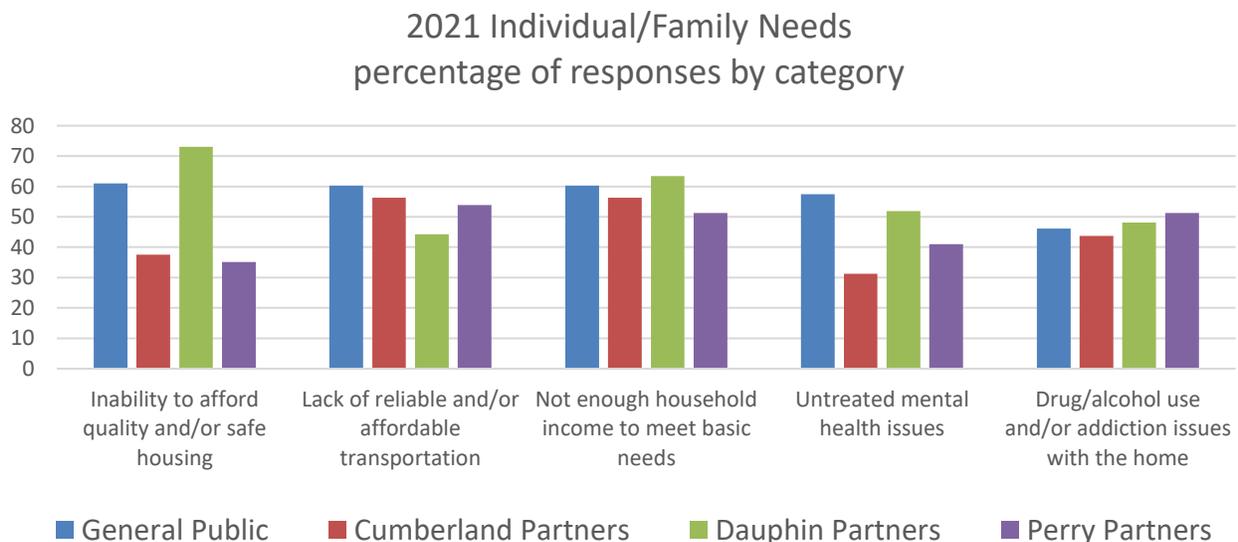
***What are the biggest challenges facing individuals or families?
What are the biggest challenges facing communities?
What are the biggest challenges facing agencies?***

Individual/Family Level Needs Identified

The general public/consumers surveyed in our region identified their top five family-level needs as:

1. Inability to afford quality and/or safe housing
2. Lack of reliable and/or affordable transportation
3. Not enough household income to meet basic needs
4. Untreated Mental Health Issues
5. Drug/alcohol use and/or addiction within the home

The following chart provides a comparison of the top five family-level needs identified by the general public/consumers in relation to how community organizations/partners prioritized them.



The preceding chart does not indicate what the top five family-level needs identified by the community organizations/partners in each county were, but instead only shows the comparison of the needs identified by the general public.

Therefore the top five family-level needs identified by community organizations/partners were as follows:

Cumberland County

1. Lack of reliable and/or affordable transportation
2. Not enough household income to meet basic needs
3. Drug/alcohol and/or addiction issues within the home
4. Inability to afford quality and/or safe housing
5. Inability to afford higher education/trade school

Dauphin County

1. Inability to afford quality and/or safe housing
2. Not enough household income to meet basic needs
3. Untreated mental health issues
4. Drug/alcohol and/or addiction issues within the home
5. Lack of skills needed for the jobs available

Perry County

1. Lack of reliable and/or affordable transportation
2. Not enough household income to meet basic needs
3. Drug/alcohol and/or addiction issues within the home
4. Untreated mental health issues
5. Inability to afford quality and/or safe housing

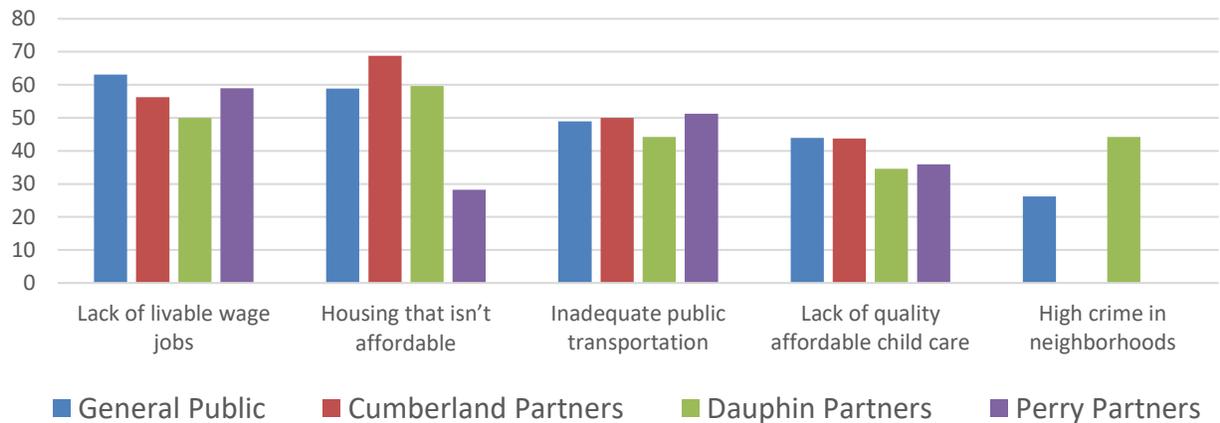
Community Level Needs Identified

The general public/consumers surveyed in our region identified their top five community-level needs as:

1. Lack of livable wage jobs
2. Housing that isn't affordable
3. Inadequate public transportation
4. Lack of quality affordable child care
5. High crime in neighborhoods

The following chart provides a comparison of these top five needs in relation to how community organizations/partners prioritized them.

2021 Community Needs percentage of responses by category



As with the individual/family chart, the above only represents the comparison of needs identified by the general public to the community organizations/partners. The top five community-level needs identified by community organizations/partners were as follows:

Cumberland County

1. Housing that isn't affordable
2. Lack of livable wage jobs
3. Inadequate public transportation
4. Lack of quality and/or affordable child care
5. Lack of recreational facilities

Dauphin County

1. Substandard housing
2. Lack of livable wage jobs
3. High crime in neighborhoods
4. Unsafe neighborhoods
5. Inadequate public transportation

Perry County

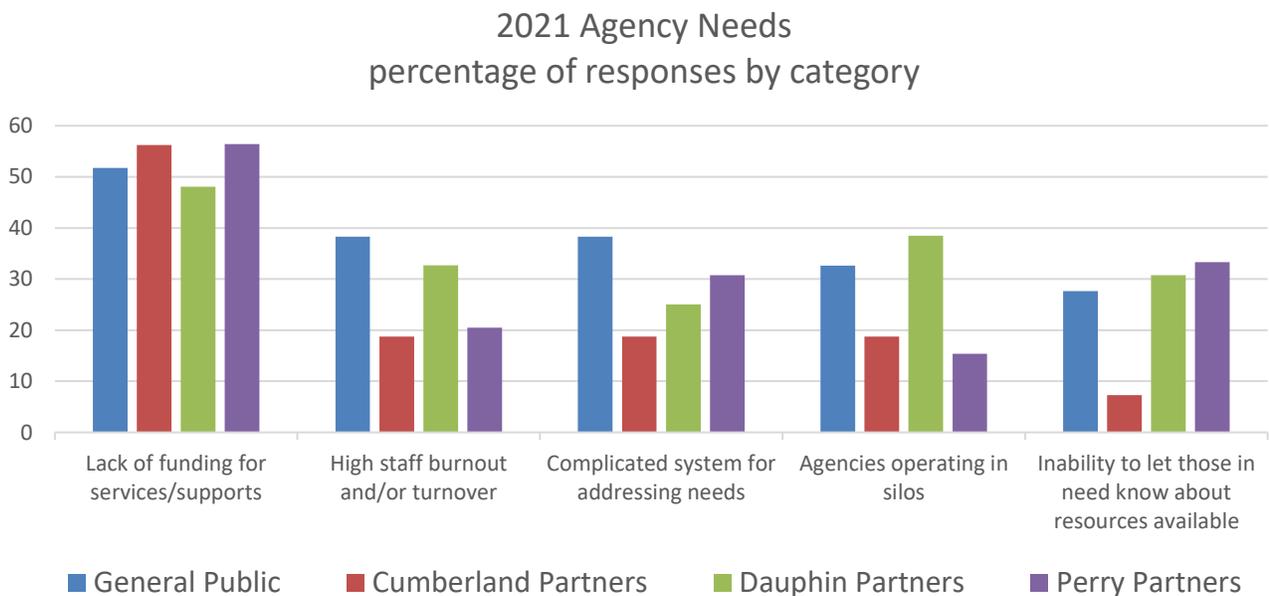
1. Lack of livable wage jobs
2. Inadequate public transportation
3. Lack of jobs available
4. Lack of quality and/or affordable child care
5. Housing that isn't affordable

Agency Level Needs Identified

The general public/consumers surveyed in our region identified their top five agency-level needs as:

1. Lack of funding for services/supports
2. High staff burnout and/or turnover
3. Complicated system for addressing needs
4. Agencies operating in silos
5. Inability to let those in need know about resources available

The following chart provides a comparison of these top five needs in comparison to how community organizations/partners prioritized them.



As with the community level chart, the above only represents the comparison of needs identified by the general public to the community organizations/partners. The top five agency-level needs identified by community organizations/partners are as follows:

Cumberland County

1. Lack of funding for services/supports
2. Agencies being limited to geographic regions for service
3. Agencies operating in silos
4. High staff burnout and/or turnover
5. Complicated system for addressing needs

Dauphin County

1. Lack of funding for services/supports
2. Agencies operating in silos
3. High staff burnout and/or turnover
4. Inability to let those in need know about resources available
5. Duplication of Services

Perry County

1. Lack of funding for services/supports
2. Inability to let those in need know about resources available
3. Complicated system for addressing needs
4. High staff burnout and/or turnover
5. "I don't know"

Core areas of identified need overlapped whether general public/consumer or community organization/partner responded. They are:

- Housing
 - Lack of affordable and/or unsafe housing
 - Inability to afford quality/safe housing
- Employment
 - Lack of livable wage jobs
 - Lack of skills for jobs
- Income
 - Not enough household income to meet needs
- Transportation
 - Lack of reliable and/or affordable transportation
 - Inadequate public transportation
- Child Care
 - Lack of affordable and/or quality child care
- High crime in neighborhoods
- Untreated Addiction and/or Mental Health issues
- Resources
 - Lack of funding for agencies
 - Inability to let people in need know of services
 - Complicated system for seeking assistance
 - Agencies operating in silos
 - Burnout and/or turnover of staff

Profile of Our Region by Identified Need

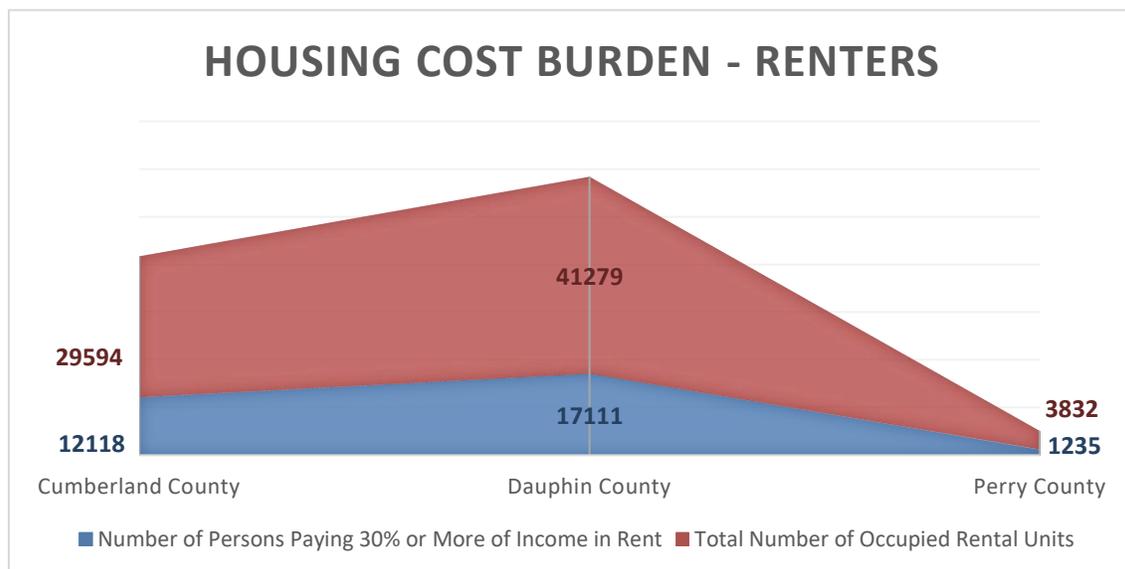
Working with Census data and demographics from the American Community Survey, core demographic data in identified key need areas was mapped.

Housing

Cost-burdened status is a key indicator for family stability and financial success. A household which spends more than 30% of its gross income on maintaining housing; including taxes, rent/mortgage, insurance, and basic utilities, is considered cost-burdened and therefore, has less income available for their other basic needs.

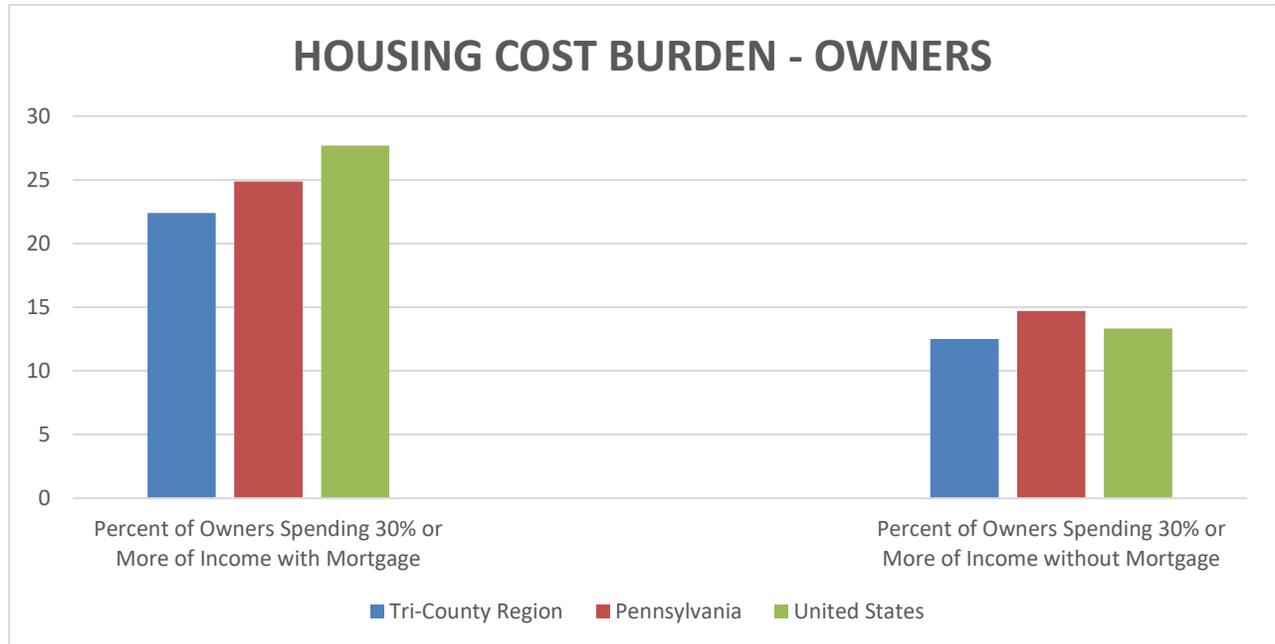
Cost-burdened status speaks to many of the needs identified in the survey process, including not having enough income to meet household needs, lack of affordable and/or quality housing, and inability to afford quality/safe housing.

The 2015-2019 American Community Survey shows that 40.78% of occupied rental units in our region have families paying rent at a housing cost-burden rate. Statewide, 44.05% of renters, and nationally 46%, are cost-burdened.⁸



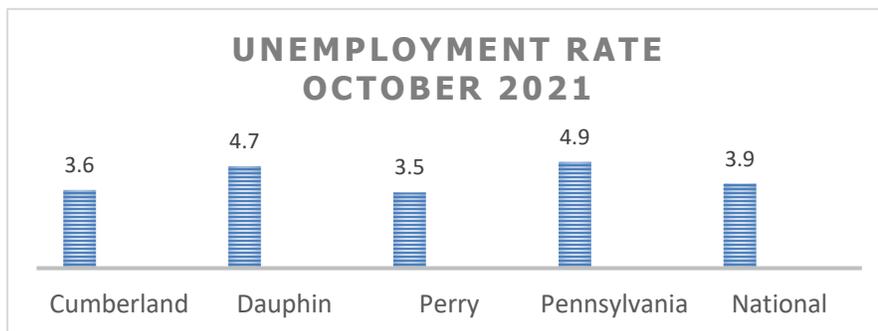
⁸ Us Census Bureau, America Community Survey. 2015-19. Source geography: tract.

Significant portions of the tri-county region have greater than 15% of homeowners categorized as cost-burdened, with many areas seeing greater than 30% of all homeowners being cost-burdened. Overall, 14.71% of all homeowners are cost-burdened.



Employment & Transportation

The living wage calculator helps us understand that poverty wage and/or minimum wage aren't sufficient enough to support families living in our region. Adequate employment is key to families having enough resources to meet their needs.



Our regions unemployment rates continue to be lower than Pennsylvania and comparable to the national averages⁹, which means that many of the families living in our region have a job.

⁹ United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2021- October. Source geography: County.

Additionally, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, unemployment for this one year period fell from 5.4% to 4.1% overall; which is a change of -1.3%.

While 80% of workers over the age of 16 drive alone to work, the number who use public transportation in the tri-county region are lower than state and national averages¹⁰.

2.1% of workers in Dauphin County use public transportation, versus .7% in Cumberland County and .2% in Perry County. State and national averages are 5.6% and 5.0%, respectively.

Average employment commute time is 22.5 and 22 minutes in Cumberland and Dauphin Counties. The state average is 27.2 minutes, and national average is 26.9 minutes. Over 58% of all Perry County workers commute more than 30 minutes daily, with 10% traveling over 60 minutes for work.

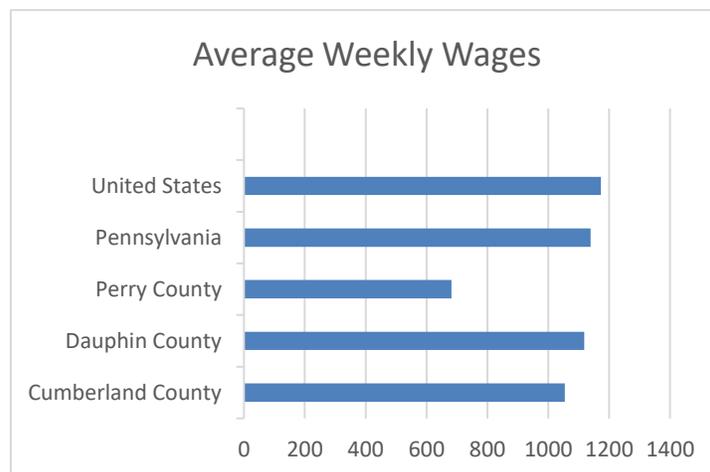
Nearly 95% of all workers travel by car to work. Regionally, according to the American Community Survey, 2015-19, only 5.2% of all workers worked from home.

There are a total of 7.8% households in our region without a motor vehicle, which speaks to the needs identified by our survey respondents: lack of reliable and/or affordable transportation, and inadequate public transportation.

Average wages in the tri-county region tend to be less than state and national averages, with Perry County having the lowest average weekly wage for the tri-county region¹¹.

In Perry County, average weekly wages are \$682. In Cumberland County, the average is \$1,054 a week, and in Dauphin County, \$1,118.

All three counties are below the state average of \$1,139 weekly, and national average of \$1,173 weekly.



¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey.

¹¹ United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In 2020, the top ten (10) employers in Cumberland County were:¹²

- Federal Government
- Amazon.com Services Inc.
- Giant Food Stores LLC
- State Government
- Penn State Health Life Lion LLC
- Select Employment Services Inc.
- United Parcel Service Inc.
- Wal-Mart Associates Inc.
- Chewy Inc.
- Cumberland Valley School District

The top ten (10) employers in Dauphin County are:¹³

- State Government
- Milton S Hershey Medical Center
- The Hershey Company
- UPMC Pinnacle Hospitals
- Hershey Entertainment & Resorts Co
- Federal Government
- United Parcel Service Inc.
- PHEAA
- Pennsylvania State University
- TE Connectivity Corporation

The top ten (10) employers in Perry County are:¹⁴

- H E Rohrer Inc.
- State Government
- West Perry School District
- Susquenita School District
- Perry County Commissioners
- Newport School District
- Specialty Bakers LLC
- Greenwood School District
- Giant Food Stores LLC
- Mutzabaughs Market Inc.

In Perry County, workers are traveling further than those living in Cumberland and Dauphin Counties. Across the region, public transportation use is lower than state and national averages, and average wages for those living in our region are at or below state and national

¹² Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 4th Quarter 2020.

¹³ Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 4th Quarter 2020.

¹⁴ Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 4th Quarter 2020.

averages; with workers in Perry County earning significantly lower than their counterparts in Cumberland and Dauphin Counties.

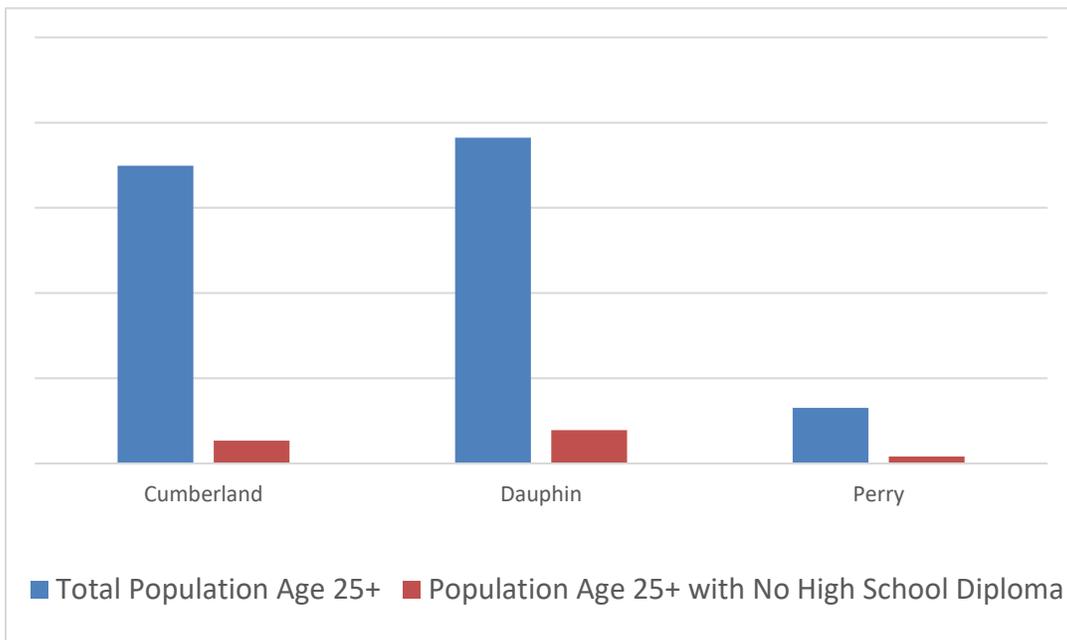
Education & Child Care

Core to obtaining employment that will earn a worker a livable wage, is education. For the 2019-2020 academic year, local school districts saw 933 students leave school before graduation without transferring to another school or institution, which is an increase of 2.3% from the prior school year¹⁵.

Cumberland school districts had 124 total dropouts, for a 0.9% dropout rate. Dauphin school districts saw 774 students dropout, for a 3.3% dropout rate. Perry school districts had 35 students leaving during the year for a 1.3% dropout rate.

Cumberland school districts had 71.2% of their students' college bound, Dauphin had 62.9%, and Perry school districts had 61.2% of their students go to college. State average for college bound students is 69.5%

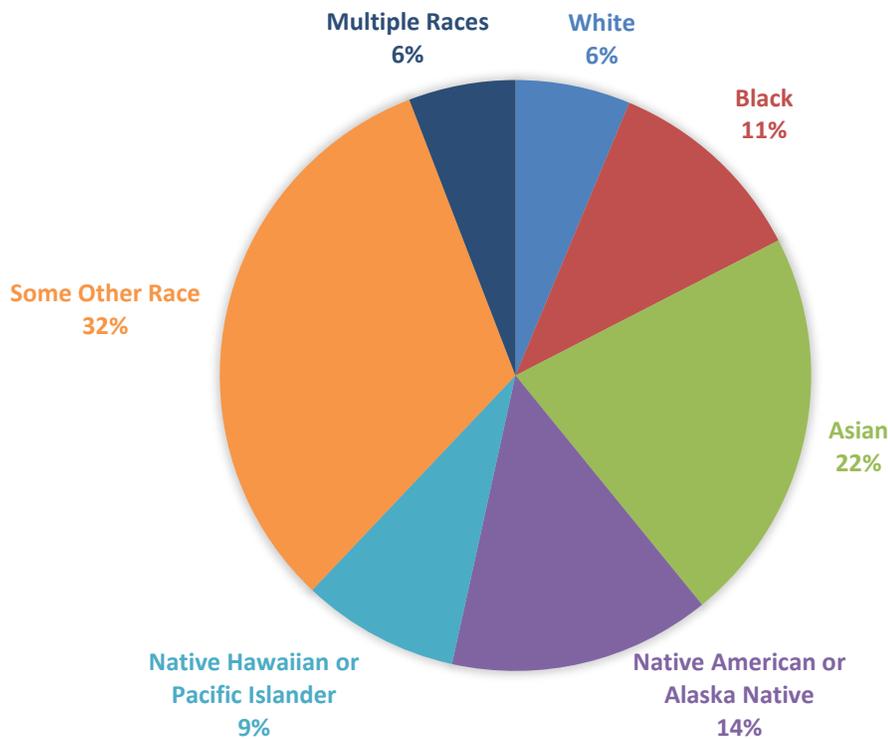
The chart below represents the percentage of people without a high school diploma in our tri-county region¹⁶:



¹⁵ Dropouts Public by School 2019-2020, the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

¹⁶ United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019.

PERCENTAGE WITH NO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA BY RACE



The national average of adults over the age of 16 with low literacy skills is 14.6%. In Pennsylvania, 13% of adults over the age of 16 have low literacy skills. In our region, the percentages are as follows¹⁷:

- Cumberland County – 10% lack literacy skills
- Dauphin County – 13% lack literacy skills
- Perry County – 13% lack literacy skills

Persons of color or persons belonging to traditionally marginalized races are more likely to have no high school diploma, versus their white counterparts.

Crime

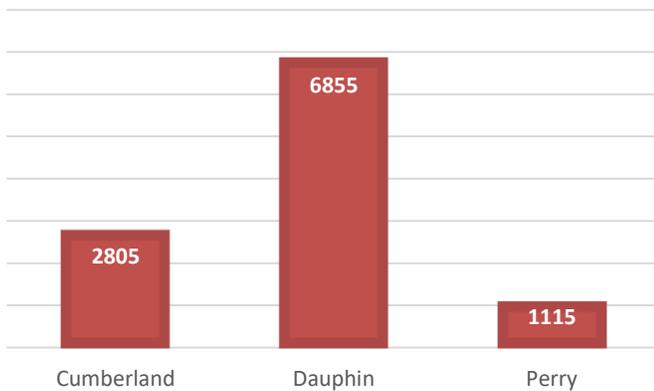
Survey results referenced high crime in some neighborhoods. Only Dauphin County identified the same need as one of their top five priority areas. Neighborhood trash and/or illegal dumping was also identified as a need, and only in Dauphin County as well. This is likely due to a high concentration of responses from Tri County Community Action's main office located

¹⁷ United States Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, State and County Estimates of Low Literacy, 2003.

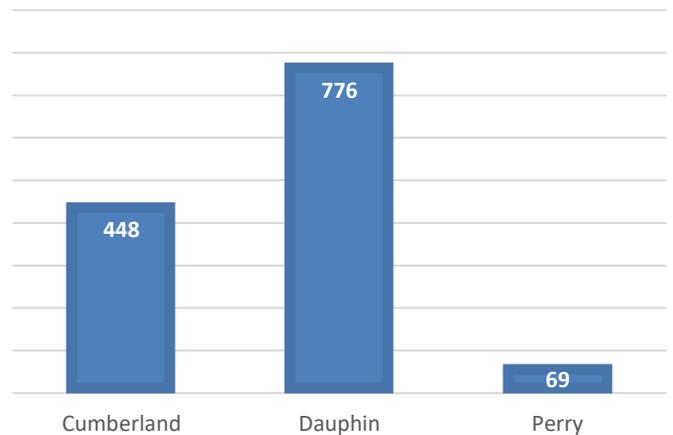
in the City of Harrisburg. However, all communities in the tri-county region do experience crime.^{18 19}

The chart below acknowledges that crime is universal across our region by highlighting the number of persons on probation or parole overall, and the number of juveniles referred to the court system.

NUMBER OF PERSONS ON PROBATION/PAROLE

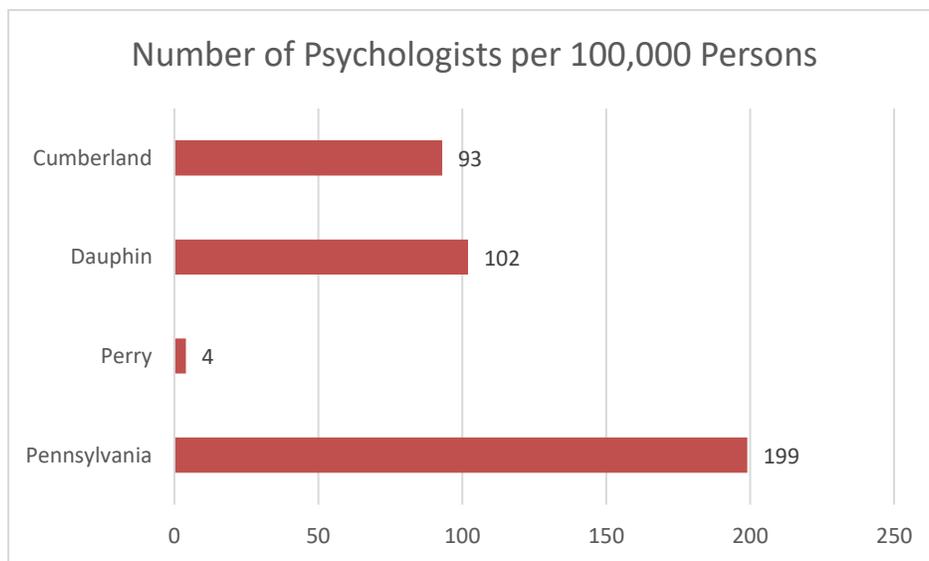


JUVENILE COURT REFERRALS



Mental Health/Addiction

While the need for mental health services continues to grow, the number of mental health professionals in our region remains at or below state averages²⁰.



¹⁸ Office of Juvenile Justice and delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

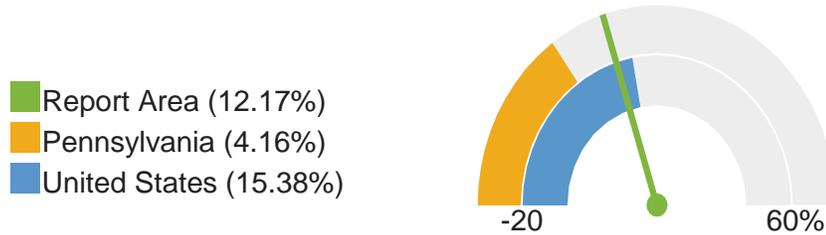
¹⁹ Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

²⁰ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. Pennsylvania Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs.

Demographics of Our Region

According to the US Census Bureau and the American Community Survey (ACS), from 2000-2018 our region grew by 12.7%, increasing from 509,074 persons to 571,013.

Percent Change in Population²¹



Report Area	Total Population, 2019 ACS	Total Population, 2000 Census	Population Change from 2000-2019 Census/ACS	Percent Change from 2000-2019 Census/ACS
Cumberland	249,328	213,674	35,654	16.69%
Dauphin	275,632	251,798	23,834	9.47%
Perry	46,053	43,602	2,451	5.62%
Pennsylvania	12,791,530	12,281,054	510,476	4.16%
National	324,697,795	281,421,906	43,275,889	15.38%

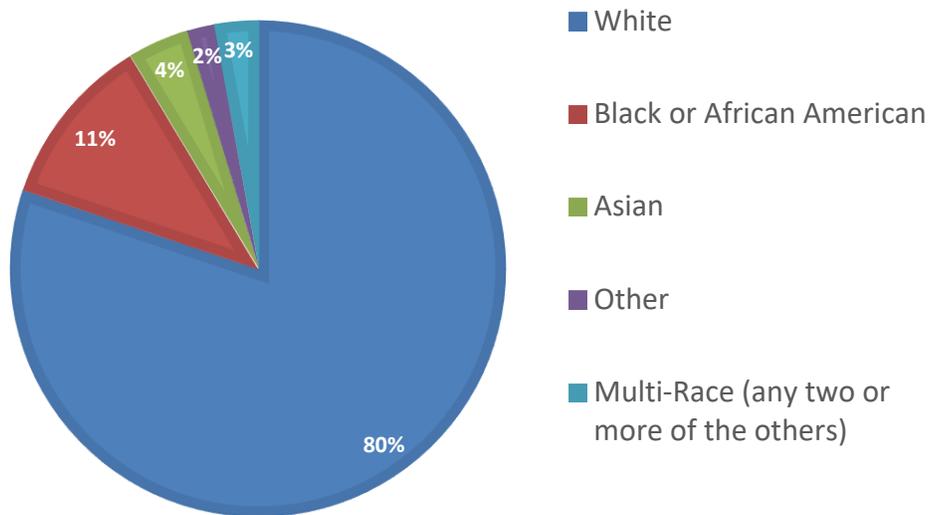
Cumberland County is the fastest growing county in our region.

²¹ United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, US Census Bureau, Decennial Census. 2015-2019.

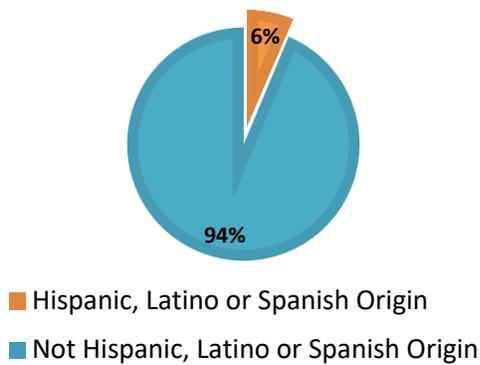
Population by age within the report area is shown below²². According to ACS 2015-2019 5-year population estimates for the report area.

Report Area	0 to 4	5 to 17	18 to 64	Over 64
Cumberland	13,357	37,200	153,541	43,126
Dauphin	17,203	44,866	168,014	43,478
Perry	2,645	7,297	27,818	8,050

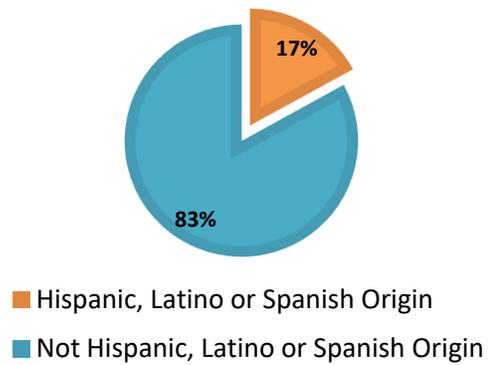
TRI-COUNTY REGION CHARACTERISTICS - RACE & ETHNICITY



TRI-COUNTY REGION



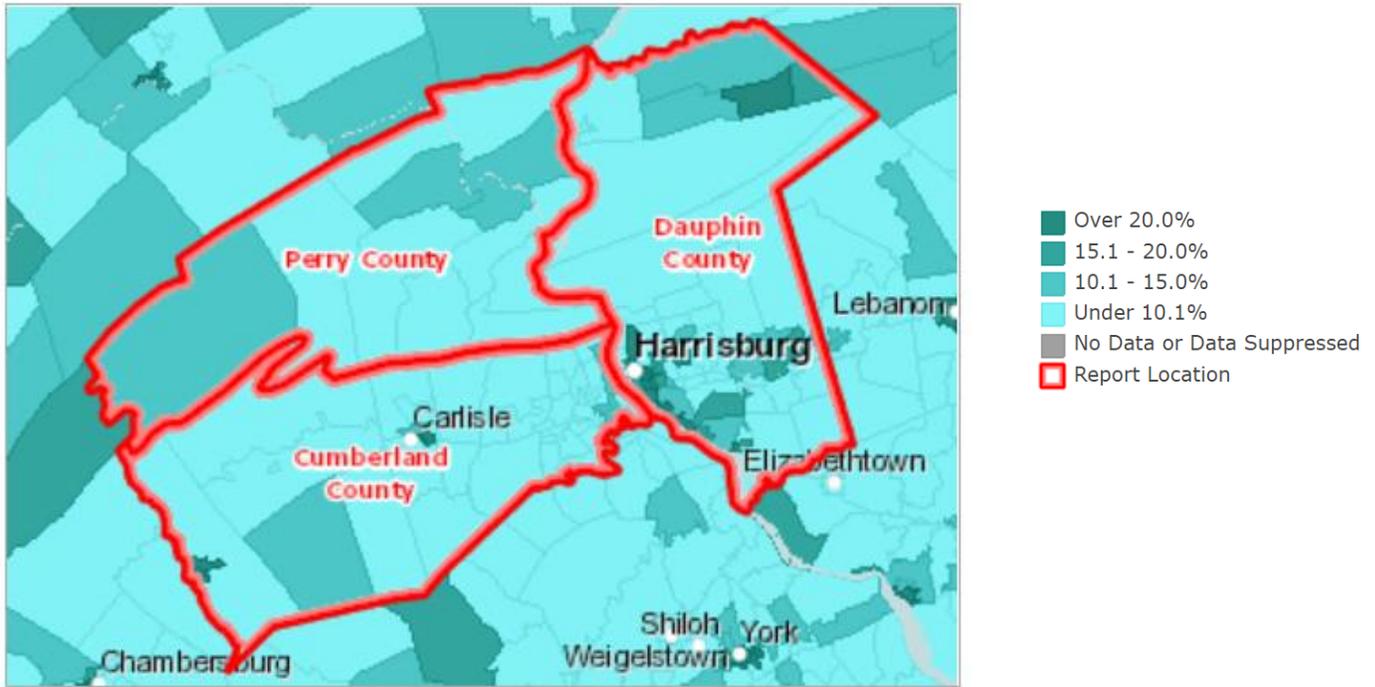
TCCA CLIENTS



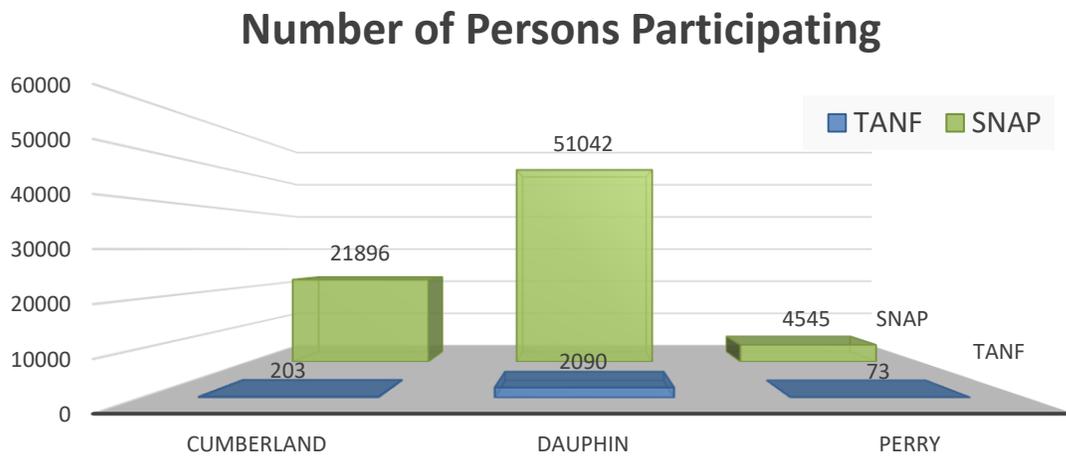
²² United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019.

Our tri-county region has an overall poverty rate of 9.16%, which is a decrease from 9.4% reported in 2018. Cumberland County at 7.2% Dauphin County at 11.3%, and Perry County at 8.9%. The state poverty rate is 12%, and nationally is 12.16%²³.

The map below highlights concentrations of poverty in our communities.



In our tri-county region, only a small portion of our residents participate in the Department of Human Service’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). As of October 2021, the total number of individuals in these programs were²⁴:

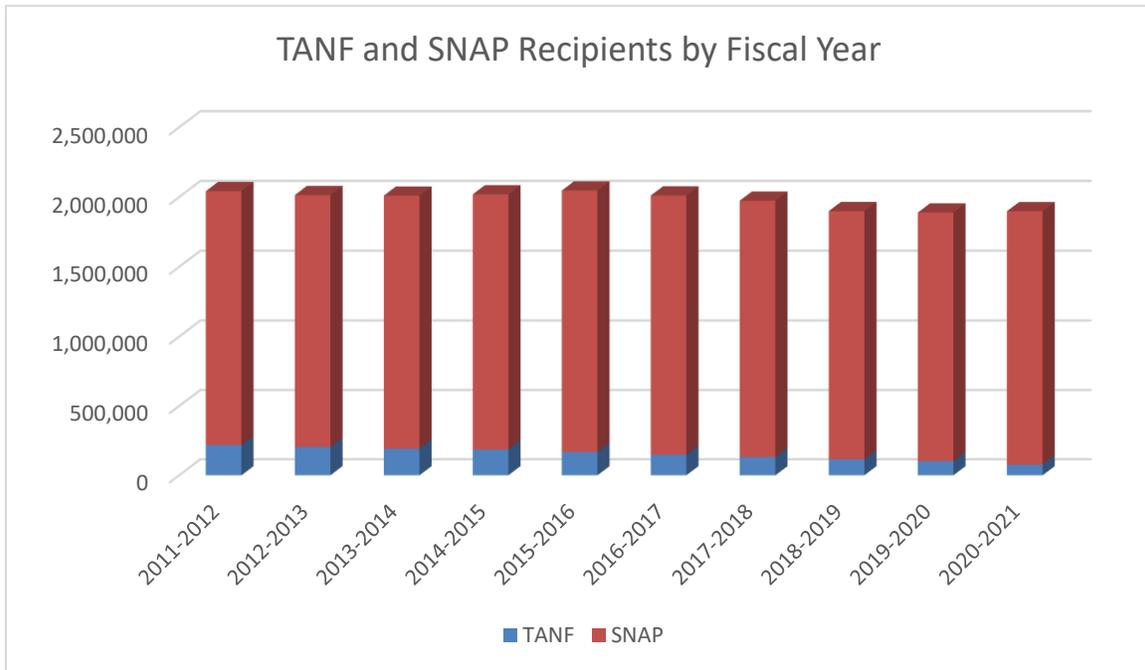


²³ United States Census Bureau, *Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates*. 2019..

²⁴ Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, *Data Release 11/09/2021*.

Since 2011, there have been significant declines in the number of persons utilizing TANF assistance, while overall SNAP numbers have remained fairly stable.²⁵

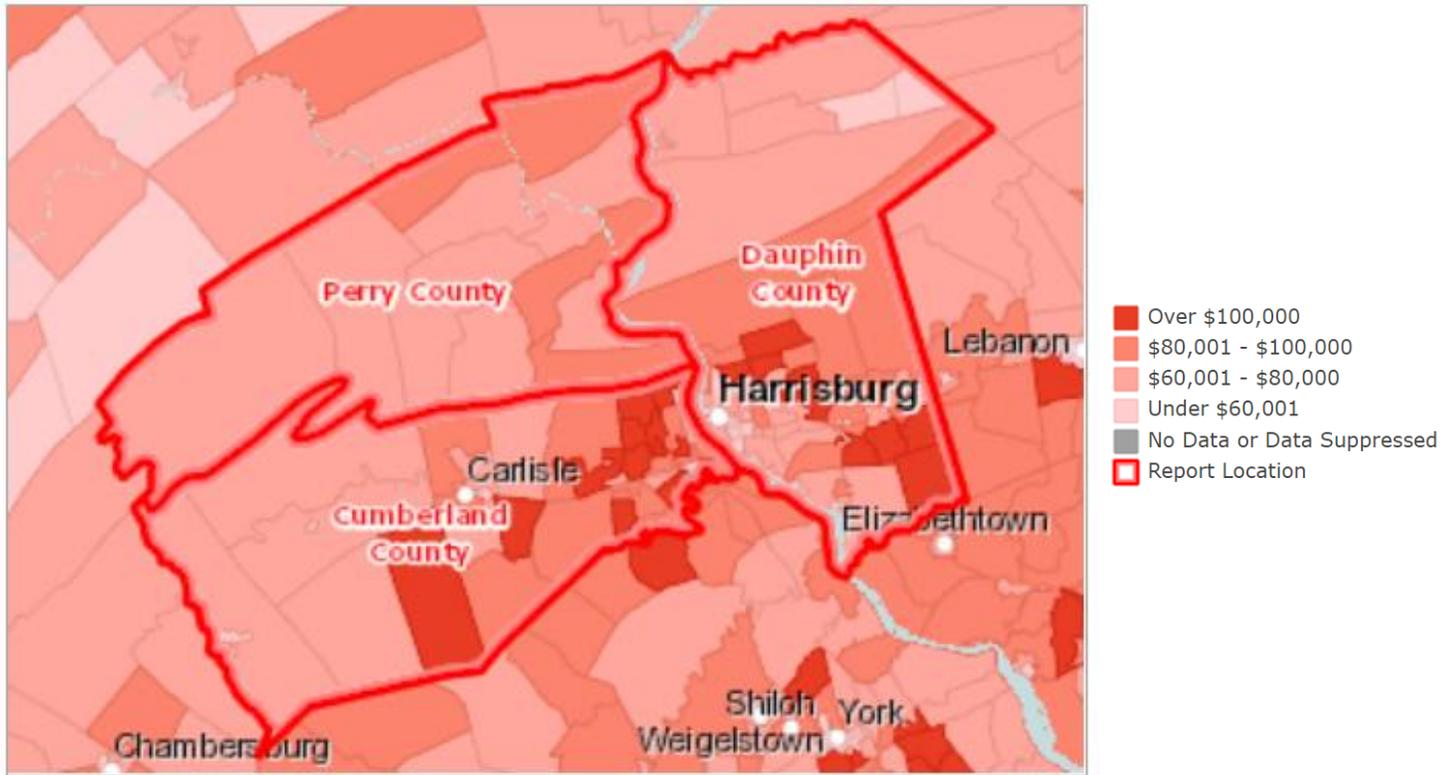
The chart below reflects the number of recipients for the fiscal years between the periods of July 2011 to present.



²⁵ Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. Data Release 11/09/2021.

Average household income does not reflect if a family is living in poverty, because it does not take family size into consideration. However, in general, a family with low household income may be less likely to meet ongoing or unexpected needs due to limited resources.

The following charts map average household income by census tract in our region, and family sizes.



Report Area	Married-Couple Families without Children	Married-Couple Families with Children	Single-Males without Children	Single-Males with Children	Single Females without Children	Single Females with Children
Report Location	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
Cumberland County, PA	\$93,180	\$110,725	\$75,511	\$46,038	\$58,146	\$37,661
Dauphin County, PA	\$88,156	\$98,643	\$63,351	\$41,906	\$52,747	\$26,398
Perry County, PA	\$80,742	\$93,685	\$64,938	\$48,935	\$52,431	\$32,468
Pennsylvania	\$86,285	\$105,032	\$61,103	\$46,685	\$51,196	\$29,017
United States	\$87,825	\$99,977	\$60,918	\$45,116	\$51,144	\$28,993

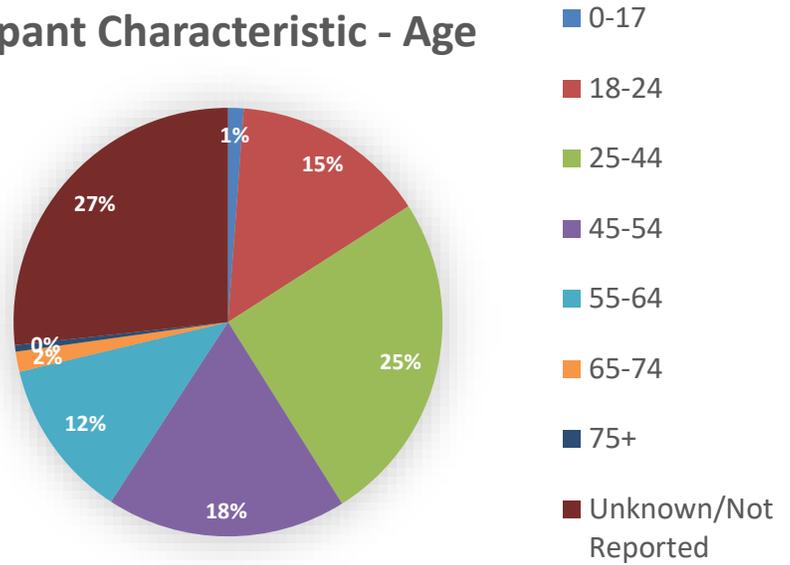
Demographic Profile of TCCA Consumers

In 2020, Tri County Community Action directly interacted with 7,453 identifiable families, representing 22,331 individuals. For each identified person, at least one identifiable characteristic was collected.

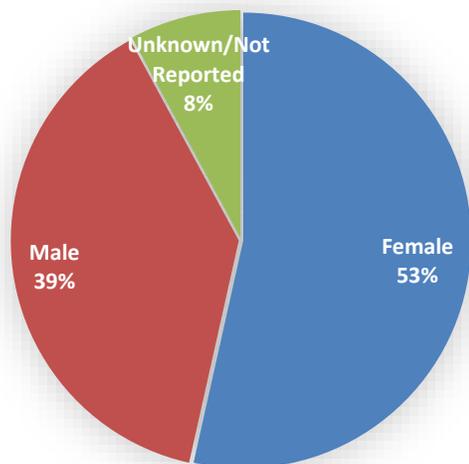
Of those who reported their age, 59% of individuals Tri County Community Action served in 2020 were between the ages of 25-54; typically referred to as "working age".

Despite not having targeted or focused senior programming, 20% of those served were individuals who reported their age as 55 or older.

Participant Characteristic - Age

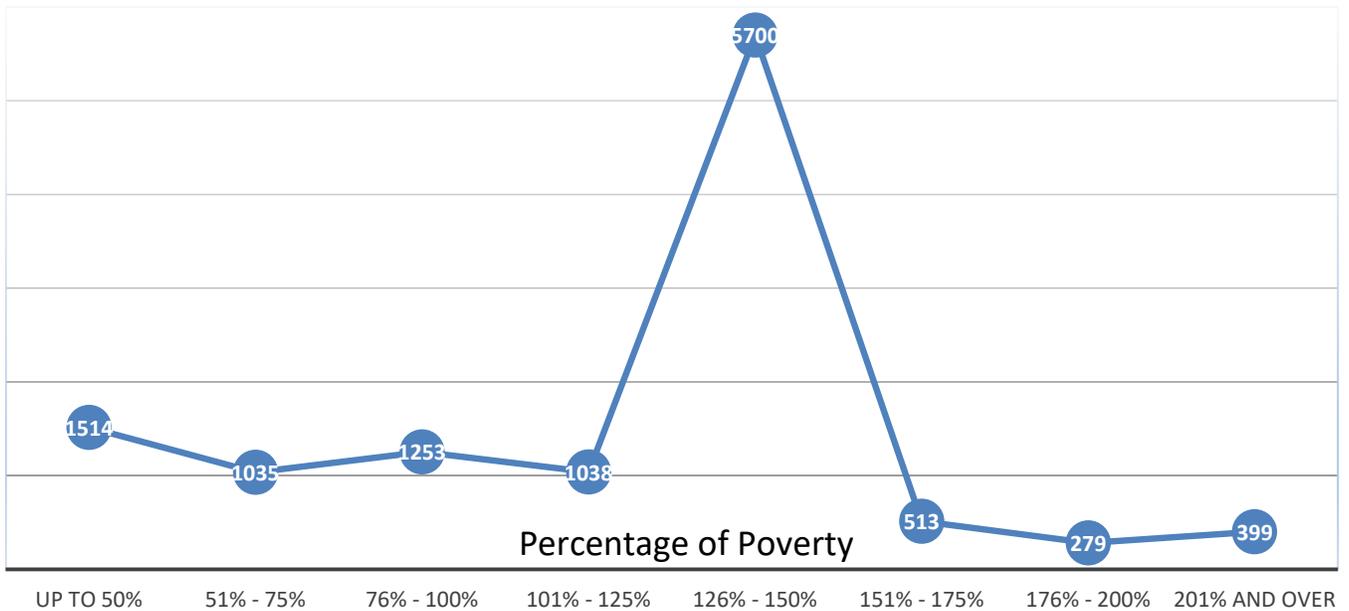


Participant Characteristics - Gender



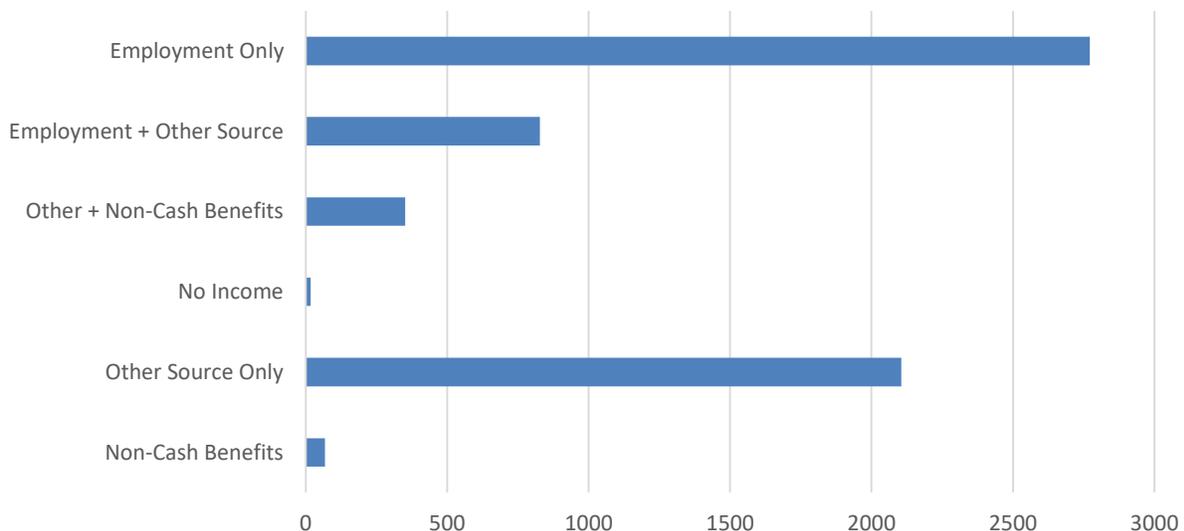
While not every family served provided verification of household income, of 11,731 families that did provide the information, 90% are at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Participant Characteristic - Household Income

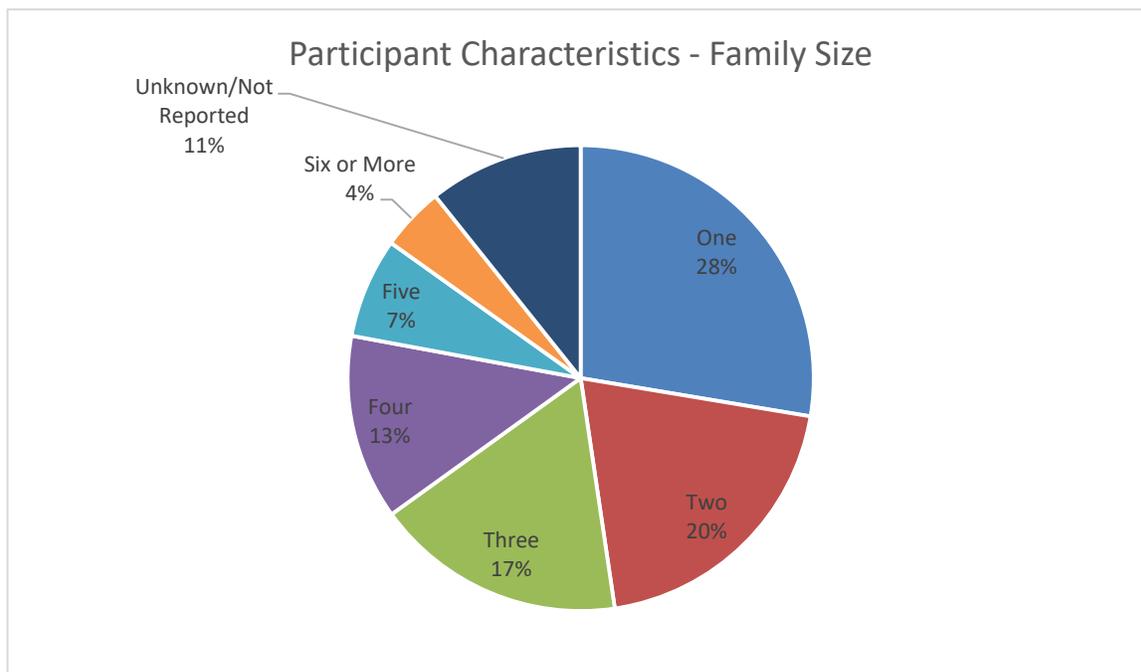
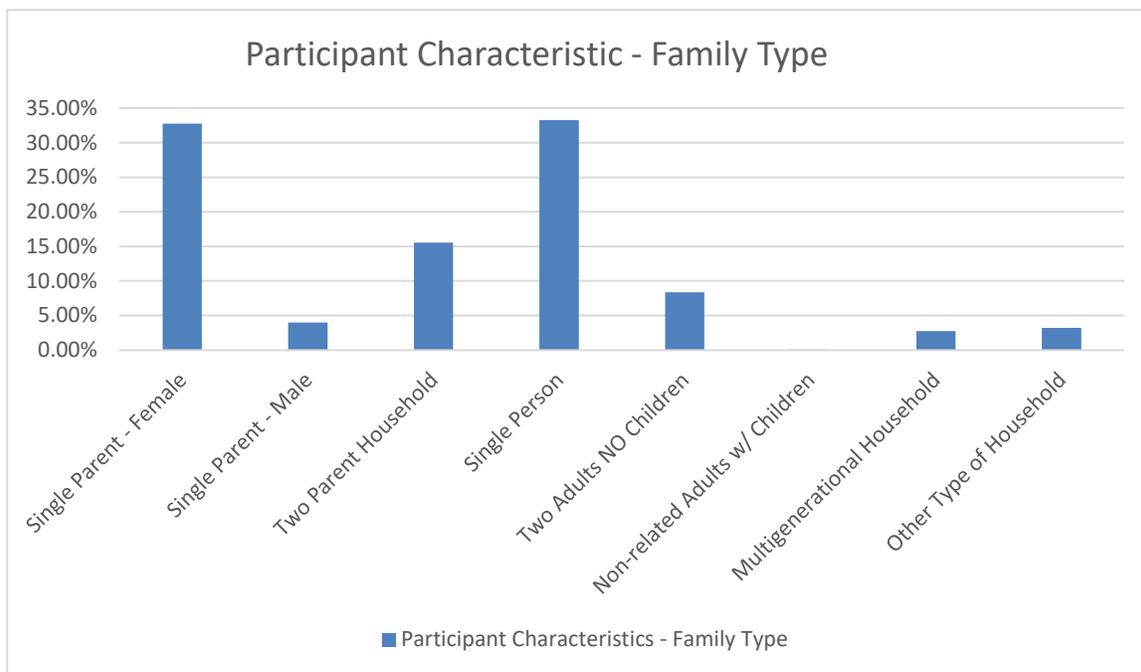


Of those families that provided income information, most families only source of income was from employment, with the next largest group being other. "Other" indicates some other combination or source of income not listed below, such as Social Security Retirement, Unemployment benefits, Spousal support, etc.

Participant Characteristic - Sources of Family Income



Average families were single individuals or single-parent females; and most households had four or fewer members.



Key Findings

Based on the data and what we believe to be true in our community, several conclusions can be made.

In many of our communities, families earning even 200% of the federal poverty limit are not economically self-sufficient, and the living wage required to support a family is significantly higher than minimum wage. Survey respondents ranked “not enough household income to meet basic needs” as one of the top five needs in all counties in our region. Workers earn less in Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Counties than the statewide and national averages. While workers in Cumberland and Dauphin Counties commute approximately 22 minutes for work, more than half of those living in Perry County community more than 30 minutes a day. In addition, nearly every worker travels by car, with most driving alone.

The combination of low and stagnant wages affect the ability to secure transportation, afford safe housing, obtain quality childcare, and treat mental/physical health issues.

Core to obtaining employment that will earn a livable wage is education. However, at least 10% of our population over the age of 16 have low literacy skills, with many adults having no high school diploma. While 80% of our overall population is white, only 6% of all adults without a high school diploma are white. Everyone else is a person of color, or a person belonging to a race traditionally marginalized. Not only do low educational levels suppress upward economic mobility, but structural inequities impact access to many basic needs, including education and employment.

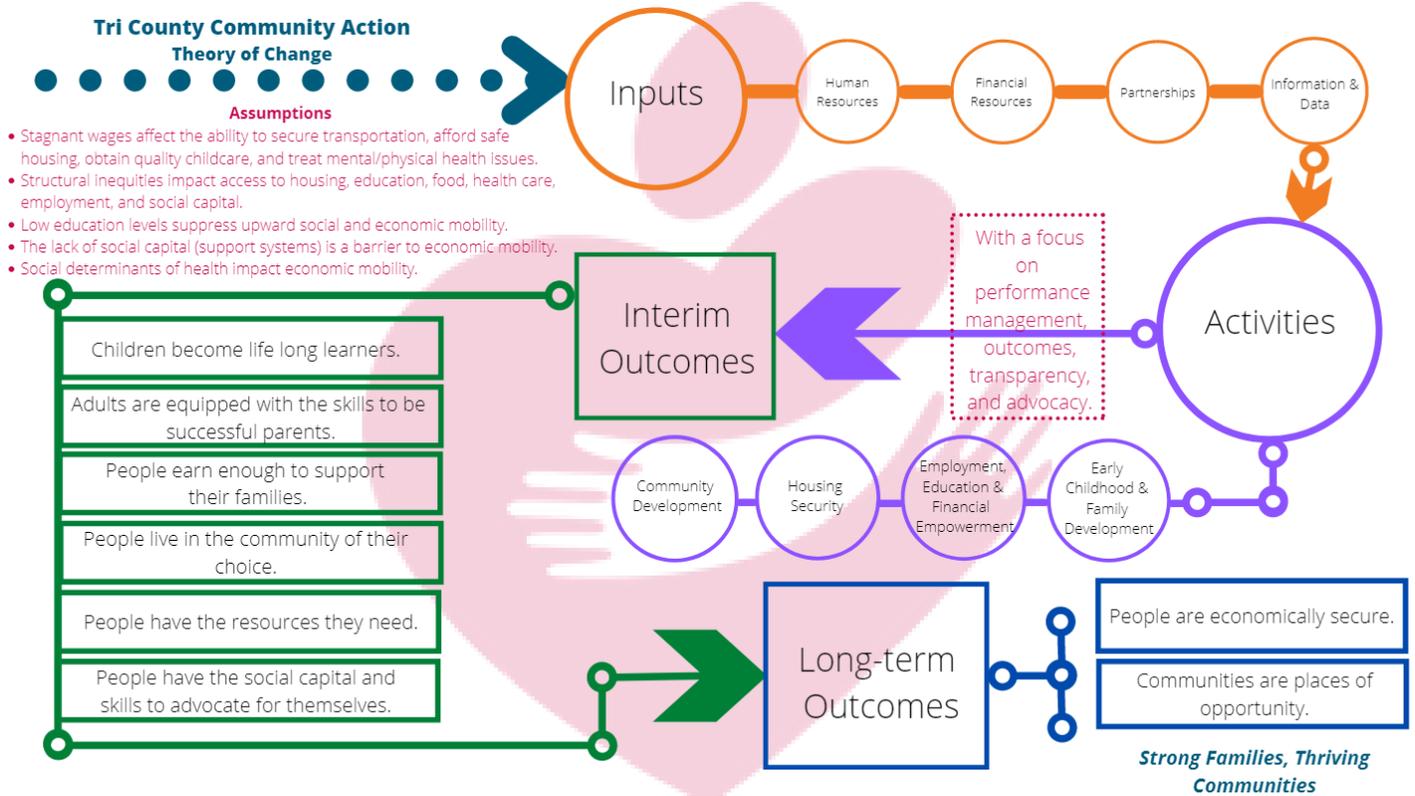
Higher poverty rates are also disproportionately concentrated near the urban areas in our tri-county region, specifically Harrisburg.

Most of the families touched by Tri County Community Action in 2020 were family sizes of three or less, and were either single person or single parent homes. Families of this size can have limited social capital, or support systems. The lack of social capital is a barrier to economic mobility. Without strong social capital, these families risk having one incident or unplanned event catapult them into crisis.

Finally, untreated mental health issues consistently ranked as of the top five needs by survey respondents. Our region has less than state or national average mental health professionals, and social determinates of health – whether they be inadequate housing, unemployment, lack of income, or other basic needs – impact the ability for individuals to seek and receive health supports, and impact economic mobility.

Next Steps

To better connect our community conditions with the services and supports necessary to disrupt and permanently break the cycle of poverty in our region, Tri County Community Action has developed a local Theory of Change.



The resources necessary to achieve the long-term outcomes of people being economically secure, and having communities be places of opportunity are a highly skilled and trained staff, a committed pool of volunteers, diversified and regular funding to support long-term efforts, along with partnerships, data and information.

Four primary pillars of interventions are:

- Early Childhood and Family Development
- Employment, Education, and Financial Empowerment
- Housing Security
- Community Development

By focusing on these four pillars, with performance management, outcomes, transparency and advocacy at our core, we believe the following outcomes will be achieved.

1. Children will become lifelong learners. Children who do not start kindergarten off at developmental level are less likely to catch up to reading level by grade three. Research has shown that by grade three, children stop learning to read and start reading to

learn. By ensuring children meet developmental milestones and are ready for learning, literacy rates, high school diploma rates, and educational levels can increase over time.

2. Adults are equipped with the skills to be successful parents. Understanding that in today's society, parenting while managing the household and working is difficult. Families often end up making sacrifices that would not have to be made if they either had social capital (a support system) or connections to resources to address social determinates of health.
3. People earn enough to support their families. Once people get to a livable wage, they will no longer be dependent on the social welfare system.

The first three outcomes work towards creating strong families. The next three work towards creating thriving communities.

4. People live in the community of their choice. Even today, persons of color and traditionally marginalized populations are limited in which community they can live, either because of the lack of social and financial capital, or because of structural inequities such as prejudice and racism.
5. People have the resources they need. It is not enough to ensure that people can live where they choose, their communities also have to have the places where they can secure their basic needs.
6. People have the social capital and skills to advocate for themselves by ensuring that they not only have support systems, but also participate in civic engagement and community planning.

Strong families and thriving communities are what a world free from poverty looks like.

Tri County Community Action's programs and services will be aligned under the four identified pillars, and indicators for each outcome will be tracked and evaluated over time to see if the causes and conditions of poverty change.

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