



2025

COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Ness County



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED BY THE CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION (CARE) AND THE CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVES (CPHI)



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Introduction

In the fall of 2024, Ness County Health Department contracted with Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute (WSU CEI) to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan for Ness County. WSU CEI's Center for Applied Research and Evaluation (CARE) conducted the data collection elements of the assessment, and the Center of Public Health Initiatives (CPHI) facilitated the community listening and planning sessions.

The Ness County Design Team was comprised of people from Ness County Health Department, Ness County Hospital, Ness County Public Health, Grisell Memorial Hospital, Ness County Emergency Medical Services, and representatives from the county.

Community Health Needs Assessment Summary

Demographics

Respondents to the community survey were similar in demographics to those that tend to respond across many other Community Health Needs Assessments that WSU CEI has conducted. Participants are primarily female, middle-aged to older, White, and mid- to high-income. While the survey sample of mostly White respondents is consistent with state and county populations, Hispanic/Latino/Spanish residents are underrepresented compared to state and county populations.

Notable Findings

The following section provides a summary of findings and highlights from the community survey responses and secondary data. The full results follow this section.

Top Needs

Ness County residents identified Housing, Aging-Related Issues, and Food/Nutrition to be of highest concern.

Housing

When compared to the state of Kansas, Ness County has significantly lower home values, median rent, significantly fewer renters spending over 30% of their income on rent and people with severe housing problems such as overcrowding, high housing costs, and lack of plumbing.

Homeowners were overrepresented in this survey sample – as 62.5% of Ness County are homeowners while 82.2% of respondents reported owning a home. Almost all participants reported having safe housing (95.1%) and most are satisfied with their current housing (89.8%).

Despite how secondary data portrays the housing landscape for Ness County, and that homeownership, housing safety, and housing satisfaction is high for survey participants, participants still repeatedly expressed housing as a concern throughout the survey.

Respondents identified housing as a top concern. Over half reported having high housing costs, 60.8% of respondents indicated they disagree or strongly disagree that their community has enough affordable housing and 61.4% indicated that affordable housing for everyone would improve their quality of life.

Regarding housing needs specifically, more than half of respondents reported affordable housing as a top concern, followed by more than one third that reported a lack of variety of affordable housing options (35.4%), and one third that reported assistance with property repair/maintenance as an issue (33.5%).

Participants who are renters most frequently indicated they did not own a home due to houses being too expensive to buy (53.3%), followed by there being a lack of availability of suitable housing to buy (46.7%).

Those who reported dissatisfaction with their current housing (N=24) most frequently indicated it was due to the place being too small (33.3%), followed by unsafe housing conditions (27.3%).

Community members who attended the community listening session elaborated on findings from the survey data. They described housing needs are related to a lack of available and affordable rentals; lack of available houses to buy; lack of safe housing for older adults/limited senior housing; lack of homes that are not outdated or in need of major repairs; difficulty finding housing to rent or own that has not had drug influence; and struggling with needing assistance with property repairs. Additionally, they explained there are regulation and policy barriers – the city not enforcing codes, there not being enough construction workers, and housing rules/policies that create barriers such as income requirements that disqualifies them due to their income being too high. Community members also explained that young people want to stay in the community, but the lack of affordable housing is a deterrent.

Economy

Secondary data indicate that, compared to Kansas overall, Ness County has fewer people over age 65 living below poverty, fewer households living below poverty, and fewer Asset Limited Income Constricted Employed (ALICE) households, which means the household lives above the poverty level but below the basic cost of living. Secondary data also indicate Ness County has more children under 18 and under 5 living below poverty than Kansas overall.

In this survey, households living below poverty level are underrepresented. Among survey participants, 4% reported an annual household income that falls below the federal poverty level of \$15,650, while there are twice as many Ness County households (8%) that live below poverty level.

Respondents were asked to rate statements about the quality of life in their community based on their experiences regarding the economy and housing. 45.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed that there are enough jobs in their community that pay a livable wage and 42.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed that people have enough opportunities and resources to succeed financially.

Aging-Related Issues

There is a higher percentage of people ages 65 and over in Ness County than Kansas (25.4% vs 17.5% respectively) and they are slightly overrepresented in the survey sample (27.7%). Survey respondents identified aging-related issues (caregiving, assisted living, services, safety) as a top concern. Respondent feelings on their community being accessible for older residents are mixed – 29.6% disagree or strongly disagree that their community has housing and support services available for older adults, while 35% agree or strongly agree.

There were relatively few survey questions that asked about aging-related issues, so participants had limited opportunity to elaborate on this concern. Additional research on this issue is recommended.

As reported above, community members during the community listening session mentioned housing being a concern for older adults. Specifically, they mentioned the lack of safe housing for older adults and limited senior housing. Other concerns about aging-related issues involve a lack of transportation to get around town and to healthcare; systematic barriers such as difficulties aging in home and affording home repairs, especially on a limited/fixed income; and other areas of accessibility such as food, adult day care, medical/health services.

Food

The food environment index ranges on a scale of 0 to 10 from worst to best, based on two indicators: 1) limited access to healthy food (population that are low-income and do not live close to a grocery store) and 2) food insecurity (population that has not had a reliable food source in the last year). While the index is higher for Ness County than it is for Kansas (8.2 vs 7.1 respectively), survey respondents still expressed concerns about food access. Participants identified food and nutrition (access to food stores, cost of food, healthy food options) as one of three top community needs. Over half disagree or strongly disagree that their community has an adequate number of grocery stores (52.7%) or has enough access to healthy and affordable food (55.5%). Respondents most commonly cited that access to affordable, healthy food would improve their quality of life (68%).

At the community listening session, community members described challenges around food being related to knowledge, accessibility, and finances. They explained that there needs to be more cooking classes and education about resources and food assistance. In terms of accessibility, they mentioned a lack of nutritious food available, there not being a farmers' market available due to a lack of space, transportation/distance to grocery stores being a barrier, and a lack of a grocery store in town. Regarding finances, they explained cost as a barrier since produce costs are high and those on a fixed income cannot afford healthy food.

Services

Survey participants most frequently identified Behavioral Health/Counseling Services (42.4%), Assisted Living Services (37.8%), Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Services (36.1%), and Ambulance Services (35.7%) as needed services.

Access

Participants indicated dental services were most difficult to access, while immunizations were easiest to access. Primary healthcare, and credible and accurate health information were also identified as easiest to access.

Cost is a significant barrier for Ness County residents seeking to receive healthcare services. Almost half of survey respondents identified cost as a barrier to receiving healthcare services. About a quarter identified the following barrier (location of healthcare services).

While there are fewer households without a vehicle in Ness County when compared to Kansas, a notable portion of survey respondents reported transportation as a barrier for their healthcare.

Children & Youth

Education and physical health are areas of lowest concern for children. When asked to select the top needs for children ages 0-12, 43% of participants identified childcare for children ages 0-5. Over a third identified bullying/relationship violence prevention and about a third identified employment opportunities as top needs for youth ages 13-18.

Mental Healthcare

Over a third of participants identified addressing stigma of people with mental health issues as the top need. Almost a third identified affordable mental health services, high quality mental health services, and affordable health insurance as top needs for mental healthcare. Over a fifth of respondents self-reported poor or fair mental health. Over two-thirds disagree or strongly disagree that their community has mental health services for people who need them.

Of 244 respondents, 41.8% of respondents reported not seeking mental healthcare or not experiencing barriers to mental healthcare. For the 142 respondents that do experience mental healthcare barriers, the most common barrier is the lack of mental health providers/services (62.7%), followed by discomfort with seeking mental health services/talking about personal issues (40.8%) and not being able to take time off work (31.7%).

Mental health being a top concern is supported by input from community members during the community listening session. They expressed concerns about access to providers and services, lack of mental health providers, stigma, knowledge/education on mental health issues, and substance use.

Dental Healthcare

Participants indicated dental services were most difficult to access. Respondents reported that the community does not meet many needs for children's dental health. Secondary data supports the survey results – there is a substantially lower dentist ratio for Ness County than for Kansas overall.

Community & Environment

Secondary data indicates the violent crime rate is substantially lower and there are fewer driving deaths involving alcohol in Ness County than in Kansas. There are substantially fewer

residents that live close to or have access to exercise opportunities (1.6% vs 79.9%) and parks (0% vs 47.5%) in Ness County compared to Kansas residents.

Participant satisfaction with their quality of life, local schools, healthcare system, and local government in the community is mixed. Participants' feelings about their emotional relationship/ties to the community and accessibility for disabled and older residents are also mixed. Though, most agree that their community is a safe place to live, and a good place to raise children, and grow old.

Needs by ZIP Code

The Design Team requested the data for these three questions be broken down by three groups of ZIP codes categorized according to differences in community contexts. One group includes Beeler and Ness (67518, 67560); another group includes Ransom, Utica, Arnold, & Brownell (67572, 67584, 67515, 67521); and another group includes Bazine (67516).

Regarding the top five community needs, housing and economy/employment show up across all three ZIP groups. Aging-related issues, youth/children related issues, and food/nutrition show up across two groups.

Regarding the top five mental health needs, addressing stigma and affordable health insurance that includes mental healthcare show up across all three ZIP groups. Affordable mental health services, children's mental health services, and high quality mental health services show up across two groups.

Regarding the top five housing needs, affordable housing, variety of affordable housing options, and assistance with property repair/maintenance show up across all three ZIP groups. Code enforcement and higher quality rentals show up across two groups.

Methodology

Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data is publicly available data that is typically collected at the census tract, zip code, town/city, county, state, or national level. Secondary data provides a broad perspective of community conditions but can be several years old due to the complexity of collection and analysis. It is often not available for smaller communities due to too few people reporting or experiencing certain conditions. The most well-known secondary data source is the United States Census. Kansas Health Matters (KHM) and County Health Rankings (CHR) were utilized as sources for secondary data – both of which compile data from numerous external sources.

Survey Methodology

The survey was designed by CARE and the Design Team in a collaborative process. After selection of questions, the online survey was programmed into the Alchemer platform. The survey was also available to take on paper. Both were offered in English and in Spanish. Participation was open to all individuals in the community aged 18 years or older. All survey responses remained confidential. No identifiable information was collected. Participants were able to skip questions they did not wish to answer.

CARE provided the Design Team with an online link, QR code, and PDF of the survey to print and distribute to their community. The Design Team distributed the survey by sending mailers out to all Ness County residents, hanging flyers at local businesses, putting a flyer in the local newspaper, posting on Facebook, going door-to-door to reach an underrepresented community, attending school events, Ransom October-fest, and the Leisure Years lunch.

The survey opened on September 28th, 2024. CARE provided access to real-time response rates and demographics of de-identified respondents in order to assist the Design Team in tailoring outreach efforts to promote the survey.

About a month and a half after distribution began, survey modifications were made to accommodate requests from the community, to increase accessibility of the survey. The Design Team identified three questions from the existing survey that were 'most important to know from the community.' CARE moved these questions to the beginning of the survey and created an additional, shorter version of the survey condensed to only contain those three questions alongside demographic questions. The full and shortened versions of the survey are available to view in the appendix.

The Design Team requested the data for these three questions be broken down by three groups of ZIP codes categorized according to differences in community contexts. One group includes Beeler and Ness (67518, 67560); another group includes Ransom, Utica, Arnold, & Brownell (67572, 67584, 67515, 67521); and another group includes Bazine (67516). The Design Team noticed several participants entered ZIP codes incorrectly and requested CARE correct them in the analysis. Results reported reflect corrected ZIP codes. Analyses for the three 'most important' questions by ZIP code groups are available to view in the appendix.

The survey closed on December 10th, 2024. Completed paper surveys were mailed to CARE and entered into the online survey platform by CARE for analysis. In total, there were 272 respondents who fully or partially completed the survey. According to the 2023 U.S. Census data, the total number of individuals over 18 years old in Ness County is 2,123. Therefore, the response rate for this survey was about 13% of the eligible population.

Survey Results and Supporting Secondary Data

This section contains analyses for all community survey questions. This section also contains secondary data on the characteristics of the county's population compared to the state of Kansas to provide a more comprehensive look at community health needs.

Since all questions were optional and voluntary, a varying number of individuals responded to each item on the survey so items reported below will vary in frequency of responses. The number of responses received for a question is reported, for example, as (N=210) for the corresponding question.

Demographics

Respondents were asked questions regarding their location, age, gender, race/ethnicity, primary language at home, education, relationship status, income, and employment. Data for sexuality was not collected as requested by the Design Team.

Almost all respondents reside in Ness County and over half reside in the 67560 ZIP code area.

| <i>County of Residence (N=276)</i> | N | % |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Ness County</i> | 270 | 97.8 |
| <i>Other</i> | 6 | 2.2 |

| <i>ZIP (N=263)</i> | N | % |
|--------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>67560</i> | 134 | 51.0 |
| <i>67572</i> | 69 | 26.2 |
| <i>67516</i> | 27 | 10.3 |
| <i>67584</i> | 15 | 5.7 |
| <i>67521</i> | 11 | 4.2 |
| <i>Other</i> | 7 | 2.7 |

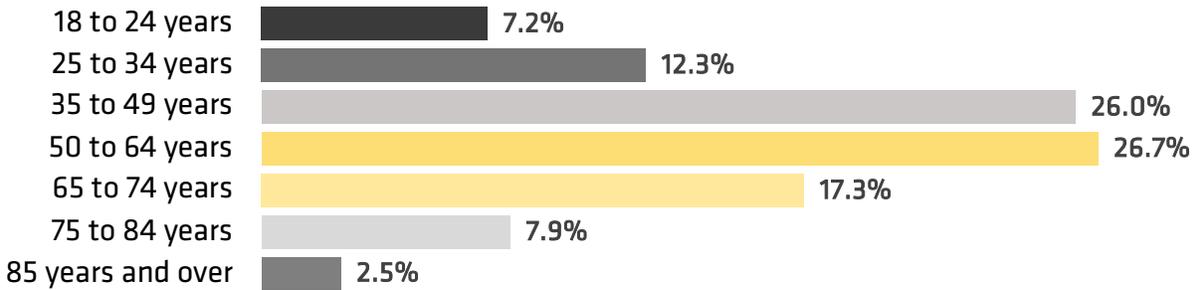
*Other includes: 67518, 67515, 67233, 67849

Age and gender demographics for Ness County and Kansas are extremely similar, except for one age category – there is a higher percentage of residents over age 65 in Ness County than in Kansas overall. While 49% of Ness County’s population is male and 51% is female, 21.4% of the survey sample reported their gender as male and 78.2% reported female – meaning females were overrepresented in the survey. About half of the survey sample (52.7%) fall between ages 35-64 and about half are above age 50 (54.4%).

| <i>Age & Gender Indicators</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Under 5</i> | 6.9% | 6.0% |
| <i>Under 18</i> | 22.5% | 23.6% |
| <i>65+</i> | 25.4% | 17.5% |
| <i>Female</i> | 51.0% | 49.9% |
| <i>Male</i> | 49.0% | 50.1% |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2023

AGE (N=277)



| <i>Gender (N=257)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Man</i> | 55 | 21 |
| <i>Woman</i> | 201 | 78 |
| <i>Non-binary/Non-conforming/Genderqueer</i> | 1 | 0.4 |

Ness County has a higher percentage of white residents and lower percentage of Native/Indigenous, Asian, and Black residents, compared to Kansas.

| <i>Race/Ethnicity</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Native/Indigenous</i> | 2.1% | 1.3% |
| <i>Asian</i> | 0.2% | 3.2% |
| <i>Black</i> | 1.0% | 6.2% |
| <i>Hispanic/Latino</i> | 13.9% | 13.7% |
| <i>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</i> | 0.0% | 0.2% |
| <i>White</i> | 94.7% | 85.9% |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2023

Nearly all (91.5%) survey respondents are white, followed by 6.6% Hispanic respondents.

| <i>Race & Ethnicity (N=259)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Hispanic</i> | 17 | 6.6 |
| <i>Asian (South, Southeast, East, etc.)</i> | 1 | 0.4 |
| <i>Indigenous, Native American (Mexican, North/South American), Alaska Native</i> | 4 | 1.5 |
| <i>White</i> | 237 | 91.5 |
| <i>Prefer to self-describe</i> | 2 | 0.8 |

Nearly all participants primarily speak English at home (93.1%), followed by 5.7% of respondents that primarily speak Spanish at home.

| <i>Indicators</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Foreign Born Persons</i> | 7.6% | 7.2% |
| <i>Age 5+ Non-English Primary Language at Home</i> | 14.1% | 12.1% |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2023

| Primary Language at Home (N=261) | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>English</i> | 243 | 93.1 |
| <i>Spanish</i> | 15 | 5.7 |
| <i>Another language</i> | 2 | 0.8 |
| <i>Prefer not to answer</i> | 1 | 0.4 |

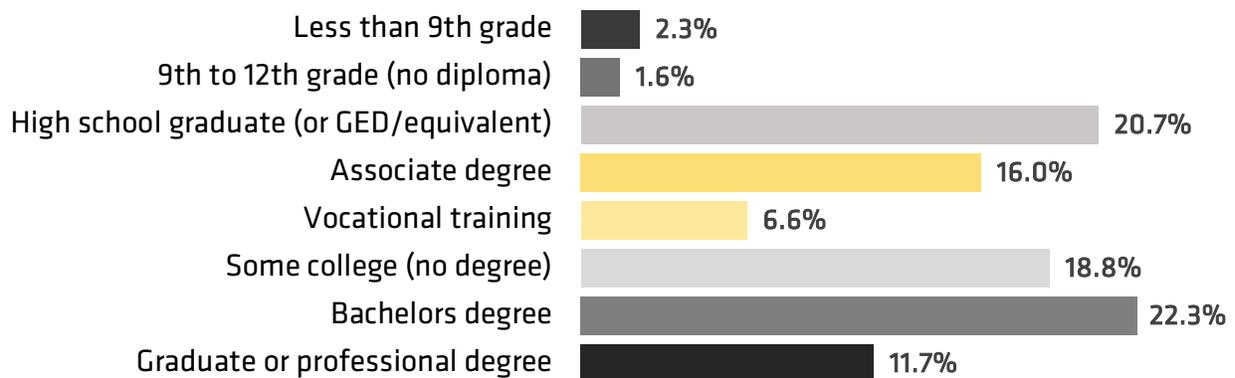
Secondary data indicate educational attainment for Ness County and Kansas is fairly similar. Ness County has a lower percentage of residents over 25 with a bachelor’s degree or higher.

| Education | Ness | Kansas |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>High School Graduation</i> | 90.9% | 88.1% |
| <i>25+ with HS Diploma or Higher</i> | 91.5% | 91.9% |
| <i>25+ with Bachelors or Higher</i> | 23.0% | 35.2% |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2023, 2019-2022, & 2019-2023

3.9% of respondents did not have a high school diploma or equivalent. Those with a bachelor’s degree or higher are overrepresented in the survey – 34% of respondents have a bachelor’s degree or higher compared to 23% of Ness County.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (N=256)



| Relationship Status (N=258) | N | % |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Married</i> | 164 | 63.6 |
| <i>Single</i> | 36 | 14.0 |
| <i>Divorced</i> | 22 | 8.5 |
| <i>Widowed</i> | 20 | 7.8 |
| <i>Domestic partnership</i> | 10 | 3.9 |
| <i>Prefer not to answer</i> | 6 | 2.3 |

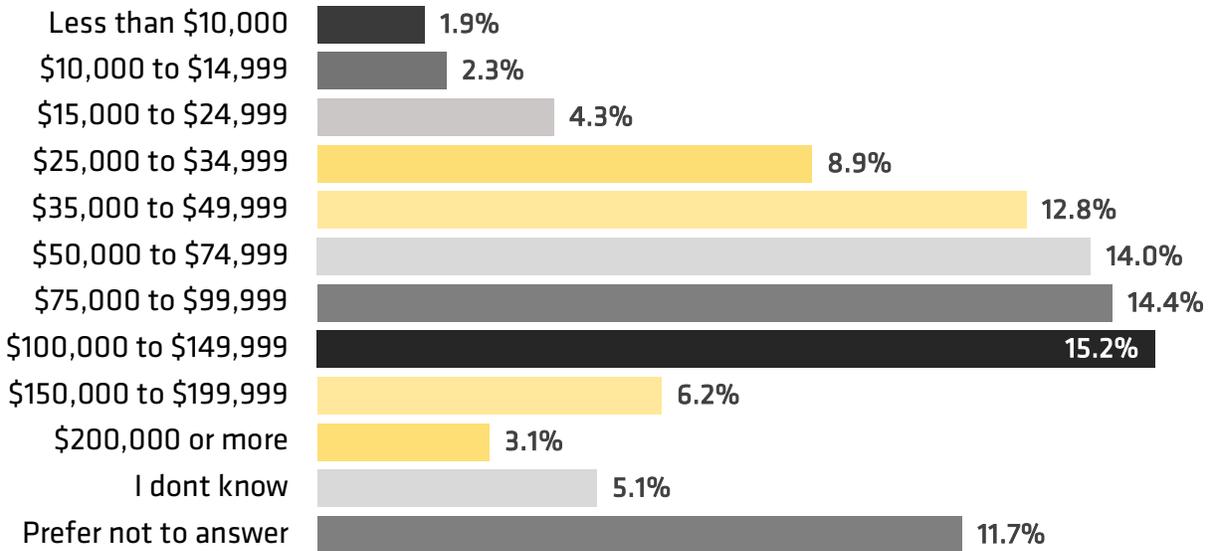
Participants were most frequently married. According to secondary data, the median household income in Ness County is lower than Kansas. Almost a third of survey respondents’ household income is less than \$50,000 (30.2%) and more than half of have a household

income of over \$50,000 a year (52.9%). More than a third live in households with incomes over \$75,000 (38.9%) – meaning at least a third of respondents make over the median household income of \$66,107 for Ness County. Almost a quarter over \$100,000 (24.5%).

| <i>Indicator</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Median Household Income</i> | \$66,107 | \$72,639 |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2019-2023

HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL INCOME (N=257)



Over half (51.6%) are employed full-time with one job and almost all (93.5%) work in Ness County. About every four out of five respondents are employed at least part-time (79.1%).

| <i>Employment Status (N=254)</i> | N | % |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Employed full-time (one job)</i> | 131 | 51.6 |
| <i>Retired – don't work</i> | 40 | 15.7 |
| <i>Working more than one job</i> | 31 | 12.2 |
| <i>Self-employed</i> | 22 | 8.7 |
| <i>Employed part-time</i> | 17 | 6.7 |
| <i>Homemaker</i> | 8 | 3.1 |
| <i>Disabled – don't work</i> | 3 | 1.2 |
| <i>Unemployed for 1 year or less</i> | 2 | 0.8 |

| <i>Work County (N=201)</i> | N | % |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Ness County</i> | 188 | 93.5 |
| <i>Other County</i> | 13 | 6.5 |

General Health & Healthcare

When asked to select the “top three issues in the community that should be addressed” from a provided list, Ness County residents identified Housing and Aging-Related Issues to be of highest concern. Additional data on Housing follows this section.

| <i>Top Community Issues/Needs (N=218)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Housing (availability, affordability, safety)</i> | 84 | 38.5 |
| <i>Aging-Related Issues (caregiving, assisted living, services, safety)</i> | 81 | 37.2 |
| <i>Food and Nutrition (access to food stores, cost of food, healthy food options)</i> | 66 | 30.3 |
| <i>Economy and Employment (inflation, interest rates, joblessness, wages, quality of available jobs)</i> | 61 | 28.0 |
| <i>Youth and Children Related Issues (childcare, education, bullying, abuse)</i> | 45 | 20.6 |
| <i>Mental Health (access to affordable care, insurance)</i> | 44 | 20.2 |
| <i>Dental Care (access to affordable care, insurance)</i> | 43 | 19.7 |
| <i>Medical care (access to affordable care, insurance, access to needed specialists)</i> | 39 | 17.9 |
| <i>Physical Activity (access to exercise opportunities)</i> | 30 | 13.8 |
| <i>Chronic Diseases (cancer, diabetes, heart disease)</i> | 29 | 13.3 |
| <i>Transportation</i> | 25 | 11.5 |
| <i>Substance Use, Abuse, Misuse (tobacco, alcohol, opioids, treatment)</i> | 23 | 10.6 |
| <i>Poverty (fixed or low-income households)</i> | 12 | 5.5 |
| <i>Social Issues (domestic violence, child abuse, crime, gun violence, intolerance, discrimination)</i> | 12 | 5.5 |
| <i>Prescription medications (access to pharmacy services, affordability, insurance)</i> | 11 | 5.0 |
| <i>Infant and toddler related issues (education for parents, early intervention programs)</i> | 6 | 2.8 |
| <i>Other</i> | 5 | 2.3 |
| <i>Immunizations</i> | 3 | 1.4 |
| <i>Infectious Disease</i> | 2 | 0.9 |
| <i>Reproductive Health Services and Family Planning</i> | 2 | 0.9 |

When asked what services are needed in the county, survey participants most frequently identified Behavioral Health/Counseling Services (42.4%), Assisted Living Services (37.8%), Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Services (36.1%), and Ambulance Services (35.7%) as needed services.

| <i>Services Needed (N=238)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Behavioral health/counseling services</i> | 101 | 42.4 |
| <i>Assisted living services</i> | 90 | 37.8 |
| <i>Non-emergency medical transportation services</i> | 86 | 36.1 |
| <i>Ambulance services</i> | 85 | 35.7 |
| <i>Urgent Care</i> | 69 | 29.0 |
| <i>Home health assistance</i> | 68 | 28.6 |

| | | |
|---|----|------|
| <i>Addiction treatment services</i> | 65 | 27.3 |
| <i>Emergency room</i> | 46 | 19.3 |
| <i>Pediatrics</i> | 44 | 18.5 |
| <i>Dietician/Nutritionist</i> | 41 | 17.2 |
| <i>Psychiatry</i> | 41 | 17.2 |
| <i>Cardiology</i> | 39 | 16.4 |
| <i>Obstetric care (OB)</i> | 39 | 16.4 |
| <i>Hospice</i> | 36 | 15.1 |
| <i>Dermatology</i> | 34 | 14.3 |
| <i>Rheumatology</i> | 34 | 14.3 |
| <i>Allergist</i> | 32 | 13.4 |
| <i>Physical therapy and rehabilitation services</i> | 29 | 12.2 |
| <i>Imaging services</i> | 29 | 12.2 |
| <i>Oncology</i> | 27 | 11.3 |
| <i>Endocrinology</i> | 26 | 10.9 |
| <i>Surgery</i> | 26 | 10.9 |
| <i>Oral surgery</i> | 22 | 9.2 |
| <i>Immunization services</i> | 17 | 7.1 |
| <i>Other</i> | 7 | 2.9 |

Ness County has slightly fewer residents with health insurance compared to Kansas overall. The percentage of survey respondents that reported having health insurance coverage for their household is higher (92.5%) than the rate of insured people in Ness County (86.5%). Though, this could possibly be attributed to one data measure being households and the other measure being persons.

| <i>General Healthcare Indicator</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Self-Reported Poor/Fair Health</i> | 19.9% | N/A |
| <i>Poor Physical Health (14+ Days)</i> | 14.2% | N/A |
| <i>Persons with Health Insurance</i> | 86.5% | 89.8% |
| <i>Primary Care Provider Rate per 100,000</i> | 75 | 78 |
| <i>Age-adjusted Mortality Rate per 100,000</i> | 1040.6 | 878.9 |
| <i>Age-adjusted Suicide Mortality Rate per 100,000</i> | 60.7 | 19.3 |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2022 & 2020-2022

| <i>Is everyone in your household covered by health insurance? (N=241)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>No</i> | 18 | 7.5 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 223 | 92.5 |

Those self-reporting poor or fair health are slightly underrepresented in the survey. While 19.9% of Ness County self-reported poor or fair health status, 16.7% of the survey sample rated their overall health as poor or fair.

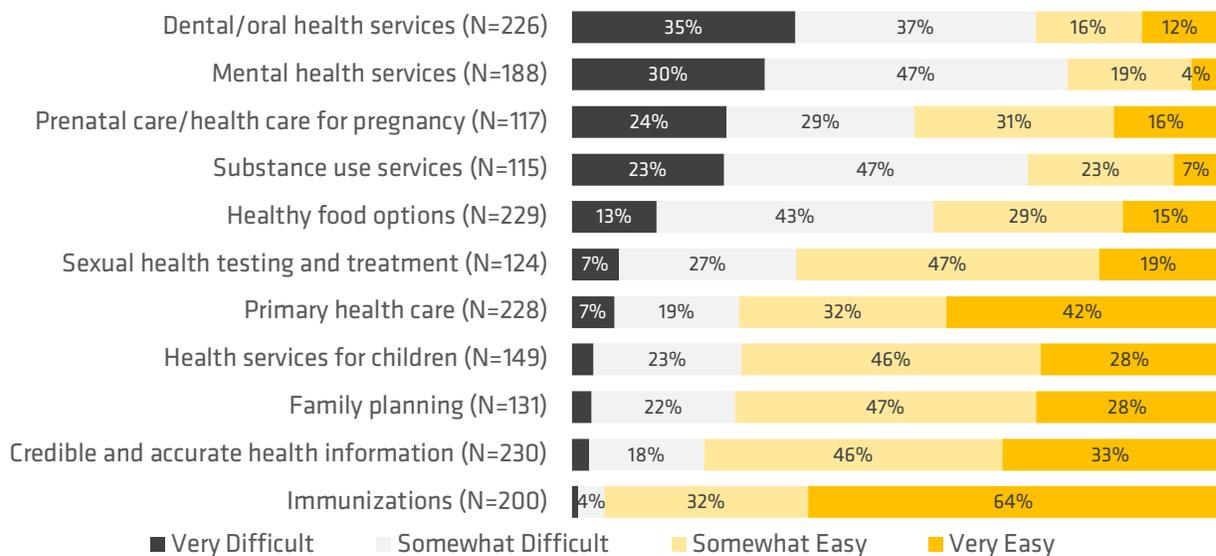
| <i>How would you rate your overall health? (N=270)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Poor</i> | 5 | 1.9 |
| <i>Fair</i> | 40 | 14.8 |
| <i>Good</i> | 128 | 47.4 |
| <i>Very Good</i> | 82 | 30.4 |
| <i>Excellent</i> | 15 | 5.6 |

Healthcare Access

Participants indicated dental services were most difficult to access, while immunizations were easiest to access. This is supported by secondary data which indicates a substantially higher ratio of population to dentists for Ness County than the state of Kansas, meaning there are fewer dentists available in Ness County.

Primary healthcare, and credible and accurate health information were reported as easiest to access for participants.

HOW EASY OR DIFFICULT IS IT TO ACCESS...



| Dental Healthcare Indicators | Ness | Kansas |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Dental Provider Ratio</i> | 2,650:1 | 1,580:1 |

Source: County Health Rankings 2022

About half of the survey sample identified cost as a barrier to receiving healthcare services (46.8%), which is almost twice as many respondents that identified the following barrier,

location of healthcare services (26%). This indicates cost is a significant barrier for Ness County residents seeking to receive healthcare services.

| <i>Healthcare Barriers (N=235)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Cost (premiums, deductible, copay)</i> | 110 | 46.8 |
| <i>Location of health care services</i> | 61 | 26.0 |
| <i>Fear or distrust of the health care system</i> | 56 | 23.8 |
| <i>N/A - I have no barriers</i> | 56 | 23.8 |
| <i>Prescription/medication cost</i> | 50 | 21.3 |
| <i>Difficulty getting an appointment</i> | 37 | 15.7 |
| <i>Too much paperwork</i> | 23 | 9.8 |
| <i>Not accepting my insurance</i> | 21 | 8.9 |
| <i>Transportation</i> | 19 | 8.1 |
| <i>Stigma</i> | 16 | 6.8 |
| <i>Doctors do not speak my language</i> | 10 | 4.3 |
| <i>Other</i> | 10 | 4.3 |
| <i>I don't have insurance</i> | 7 | 3.0 |

Other responses include: not being able to have one consistent provider to develop a relationship, build trust with, get accurate diagnosis or treatment; concerns about quality and qualifications of doctors available; confidentiality; treatment of patients by staff; availability of appointments for specialized services; providers not listening and taking time to go over symptoms; and costs still being high despite having insurance.

| <i>Healthcare Access Indicators</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Households without a Vehicle</i> | 2.4% | 5.1% |
| <i>Households with an Internet Subscription</i> | 89.7% | 89.5% |
| <i>Persons with an Internet Subscription</i> | 92.8% | 95.0% |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2019-2023

Internet access is similar for Ness County and Kansas. There are fewer households without a vehicle in Ness County when compared to Kansas. However, a notable portion of survey respondents (9.7%) indicated transportation is a barrier for taking care of their health, i.e. receiving health services, scheduling appointments, getting to appointments, picking up medications, etc. A similar portion of participants (8%) reported family or friends as their usual method of transportation to primary healthcare providers.

| <i>Is transportation a barrier for you to take care of your health? (N=236)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>No</i> | 213 | 90.3 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 23 | 9.7 |

| <i>How do you usually get to your primary healthcare provider? (N=237)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>I drive my own car</i> | 201 | 84.8 |
| <i>A family member or friend drives me</i> | 19 | 8.0 |
| <i>I use public transportation</i> | 1 | 0.4 |
| <i>I don't have transportation options</i> | 1 | 0.4 |
| <i>I don't know</i> | 3 | 1.3 |
| <i>Prefer not to answer</i> | 2 | 0.8 |
| <i>Other</i> | 4 | 1.7 |
| <i>I don't receive primary care services</i> | 6 | 2.5 |

Other responses include: aides help me; healthcare is outsourced to larger towns and transportation is a barrier; costs/copays/fees preventing care unless emergent; and walking.

Economy & Housing

When compared to Kansas overall, Ness County has fewer people over age 65 living below poverty, fewer households living below poverty, and fewer ALICE* households. While Ness County has more households above the ALICE* threshold, there are more children under 18 and under 5 living below poverty than Kansas overall.

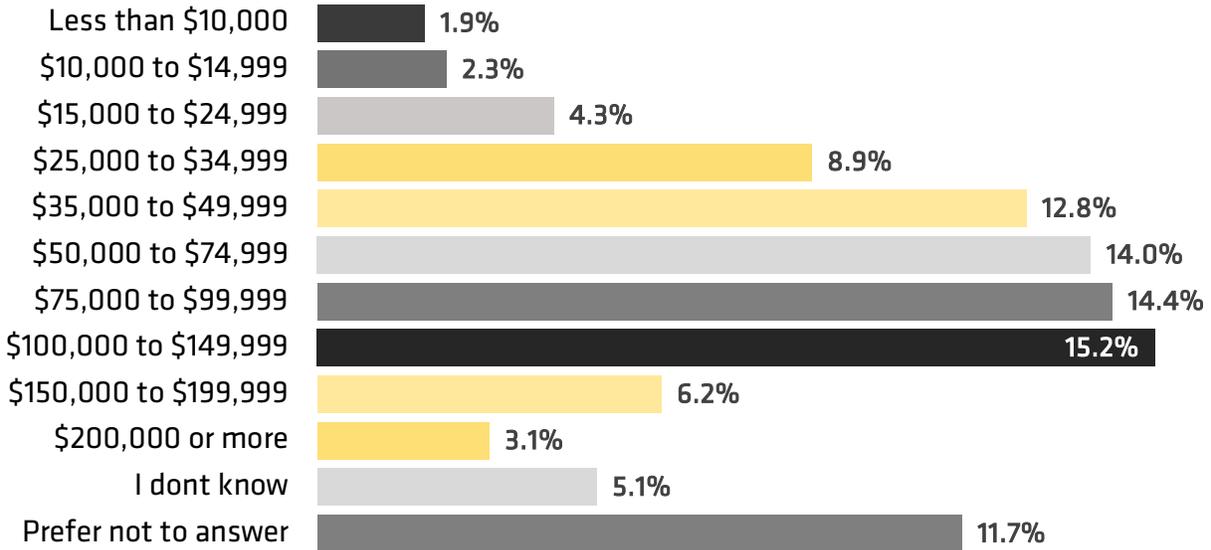
*ALICE: asset limited, income constrained, employed. This means living above the poverty level but below the basic cost of living.

| <i>Economy: Income & Poverty Indicators</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Households Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE)</i> | 23.2% | 27.0% |
| <i>Households above ALICE Threshold</i> | 68.4% | 61.0% |
| <i>Median Household Income</i> | \$66,107 | \$72,639 |
| <i>People Living Below Poverty</i> | 11.4% | 11.5% |
| <i>Households Living Below Poverty</i> | 8.4% | 12.0% |
| <i>Under 5 Living Below Poverty</i> | 26.3% | 15.8% |
| <i>Under 18 Living Below Poverty</i> | 21.1% | 13.7% |
| <i>65+ Living Below Poverty</i> | 7.5% | 8.5% |

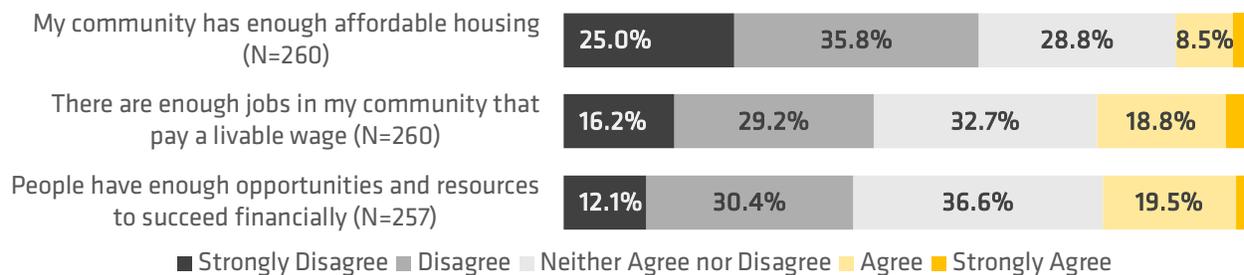
Source: Kansas Health Matters 2022 & 2019-2023

Ness County households living below poverty level are underrepresented in this survey. 4.2% of survey respondents reported an annual household income that falls below the federal poverty level of \$15,650 while there are twice as many Ness County households (8.4%) that live below poverty level.

HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL INCOME (N=257)



Survey respondents were asked to rate statements about the quality of life in their community based on their experiences regarding the economy and housing. 45.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed that there are enough jobs in their community that pay a livable wage and 42.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed that people have enough opportunities and resources to succeed financially.



Among survey respondents, 60.8% indicated they disagree or strongly disagree that their community has enough affordable housing. This is supported by other survey data that asked to select three issues of highest concern for housing, in which participants most commonly identified affordable housing as a top concern.

More than half of respondents reported affordable housing as a top concern (52.5%), followed by more than one third that reported a lack of variety of affordable housing options (35.4%), and one third reported assistance with property repair/maintenance (33.5%).

| <i>Top Housing Needs (N=257)</i> | N | % |
|--|-----|------|
| <i>Affordable housing</i> | 135 | 52.5 |
| <i>Variety of affordable housing options</i> | 91 | 35.4 |

| | | |
|---|----|------|
| <i>Assistance with property repair and maintenance</i> | 86 | 33.5 |
| <i>Higher quality rentals</i> | 61 | 23.7 |
| <i>Quality housing</i> | 55 | 21.4 |
| <i>Senior housing</i> | 52 | 20.2 |
| <i>Code enforcement (e.g. overgrown lawns, broken windows, trash, etc.)</i> | 51 | 19.8 |
| <i>Accessible housing (for persons with disabilities)</i> | 45 | 17.5 |
| <i>Neighborhood improvement programs</i> | 34 | 13.2 |
| <i>Education about financing options for homeownership</i> | 27 | 10.5 |
| <i>Low-income housing assistance (Section 8)</i> | 25 | 9.7 |
| <i>Education about responsible homeownership</i> | 16 | 6.2 |
| <i>Safe housing</i> | 12 | 4.7 |
| <i>Historic preservation</i> | 11 | 4.3 |
| <i>Other</i> | 1 | 0.4 |

When compared to the state of Kansas, Ness County has significantly lower home values (\$203,400 and \$85,400 respectively). Ness County’s median rent is \$653, which is lower than it is for Kansas at \$1,029. There are also significantly fewer renters spending over 30% of their income on rent in Ness County than in Kansas (14.4% vs 43.4%), and fewer people with severe housing problems such as overcrowding, high housing costs, and lack of plumbing (6.3% vs 12.3%). The rate of homeownership is slightly higher in Ness County than in Kansas.

However, while secondary data portrays a better housing landscape for Ness County than Kansas, survey participants still identified housing as a top concern (as seen earlier in this report) and over half reported having high housing costs (52.9%).

A small minority of respondents (2.5%) reported receiving at least one type of assistance for housing.

| <i>Housing Indicators</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Homeownership</i> | 62.5% | 60.4% |
| <i>Median Housing Unit Value</i> | \$85,400 | \$203,400 |
| <i>Median Household Gross Rent</i> | \$653 | \$1,029 |
| <i>Renters Excessive Rent</i> | 14.4% | 43.4% |
| <i>Severe Housing Problems</i> | 6.3% | 12.3% |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2019-2023 & 2016-2020

| <i>Do you spend more than 30% of your yearly income on housing (including utilities)? (N=242)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>No</i> | 114 | 47.1 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 128 | 52.9 |

| <i>Do you or anyone in your household receive any assistance to help pay for housing? (N=240)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>I receive only formal assistance</i> | 2 | 0.8 |
| <i>I receive other types of assistance for housing - such as from friends or family</i> | 3 | 1.3 |
| <i>I receive both formal assistance and other types of assistance</i> | 1 | 0.4 |
| <i>I don't receive formal or other types of financial assistance for housing</i> | 207 | 86.3 |
| <i>I don't know</i> | 27 | 11.3 |

Homeowners were overrepresented in this survey sample – as 62.5% of Ness County are homeowners while 82.2% of respondents reported owning a home. For the 30 respondents that rent, they most frequently indicated they did not own a home due to houses being too expensive to buy (53.3%), followed by there being a lack of availability of suitable housing to buy (46.7%).

| <i>Do you own your home or rent? (N=247)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>N/A (e.g. I live with a friend or family member, I have no place to live)</i> | 14 | 5.7 |
| <i>Own</i> | 203 | 82.2 |
| <i>Rent</i> | 30 | 12.1 |

| <i>Reasons for not owning a home (N=30)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Too expensive to buy</i> | 16 | 53.3 |
| <i>Lack of availability of suitable housing to buy</i> | 14 | 46.7 |
| <i>Too costly to maintain</i> | 9 | 30.0 |
| <i>Too hard to get financing</i> | 7 | 23.3 |
| <i>Too costly to insure</i> | 7 | 23.3 |
| <i>N/A - I prefer to rent</i> | 4 | 13.3 |
| <i>I would be the only occupant</i> | 3 | 10.0 |
| <i>Too much responsibility</i> | 1 | 3.3 |
| <i>Other</i> | 1 | 3.3 |

Almost all participants reported having safe housing (95.1%) and most are satisfied with their current housing (89.8%). For the 24 respondents that are not satisfied with their current housing, they most frequently indicated it was due to the place being too small (33.3%), followed by unsafe housing conditions (27.3%).

| <i>Do you think your current housing is safe? (N=246)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>No</i> | 12 | 4.9 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 234 | 95.1 |

| <i>Are you satisfied with your current housing? (N=246)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>No</i> | 25 | 10.2 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 221 | 89.8 |

| <i>Housing Dissatisfaction Reasons (N=24)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Too small</i> | 11 | 33.3 |
| <i>Unsafe because of the condition of housing</i> | 9 | 27.3 |
| <i>Too expensive</i> | 5 | 15.2 |
| <i>Other</i> | 4 | 12.1 |
| <i>Location</i> | 3 | 9.1 |
| <i>Lack of privacy</i> | 1 | 3.0 |

Over three-quarters do not have housing problems. For those that do, water leaks were reported to be the most common problem respondents have (10.2%).

| <i>Housing Problems (N=244)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Water leaks</i> | 25 | 10.2 |
| <i>Mold</i> | 24 | 9.8 |
| <i>Bug infestation</i> | 17 | 7.0 |
| <i>No or not working smoke detectors</i> | 13 | 5.3 |
| <i>Lead paint or pipes</i> | 8 | 3.3 |
| <i>Inadequate heat</i> | 6 | 2.5 |
| <i>Oven or stove not working</i> | 3 | 1.2 |
| <i>None of the above</i> | 186 | 76.2 |

Children & Youth

Health indicators for maternal, fetal, infant, and youth health listed below are fairly similar for Ness County and Kansas.

| <i>Maternal, Fetal, Infant, Youth Health Indicators</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Children with a Disability</i> | 4.5% | 4.9% |
| <i>Average Monthly WIC Participation per 1,000</i> | 14.9 | 16 |
| <i>Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births</i> | 0 | 7 |
| <i>Number of Births per 1,000 Population</i> | 11.5 | 11.7 |
| <i>Percent of All Births Occurring to Teens (15-19)</i> | 5.5% | 5.0% |
| <i>Percent of Births Where Prenatal Care Began in First Trimester</i> | 78.9% | 81.2% |
| <i>Child Care Centers per 1,000</i> | 6.1 | 7.0 |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2023, 2022, 2021-2023, 2020-2022, & 2019-2021

Over a third (34.6%) of respondents are a parent/guardian of someone under 18 and 12.1% have other children under 18 living with them.

| <i>Are you a parent or custodial guardian of someone under 18 years of age? (N=257)</i> | N | % |
|---|-----|------|
| <i>No</i> | 168 | 65.4 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 89 | 34.6 |

| <i>Are there any other children under 18 years of age who live with you? (N=247)</i> | N | % |
|--|-----|------|
| <i>No</i> | 217 | 87.9 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 30 | 12.1 |

Most respondents have not quit or lost a job because of a lack of childcare (89.1%). Over a third have children that are old enough to attend school and do not need to use childcare. For the 27 respondents that do use childcare, about half use a licensed daycare home and a third have a relative or friend watch their child(ren).

| <i>Have you ever quit or lost a job because you did not have the childcare you needed? (N=147)</i> | N | % |
|--|-----|------|
| <i>No</i> | 131 | 89.1 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 16 | 10.9 |

| <i>Do you use childcare? (N=145)</i> | N | % |
|--|----|------|
| <i>No</i> | 63 | 43.4 |
| <i>Yes</i> | 27 | 18.6 |
| <i>All my children are old enough to attend public or private school</i> | 55 | 37.9 |

| <i>Childcare Type (N=27)</i> | N | % |
|-------------------------------|----|------|
| <i>Licensed Day Care Home</i> | 14 | 51.9 |
| <i>Group Day Care Home</i> | 5 | 18.5 |
| <i>Child Care Center</i> | 6 | 22.2 |
| <i>Preschool</i> | 8 | 29.6 |
| <i>Relative or Friend</i> | 9 | 33.3 |

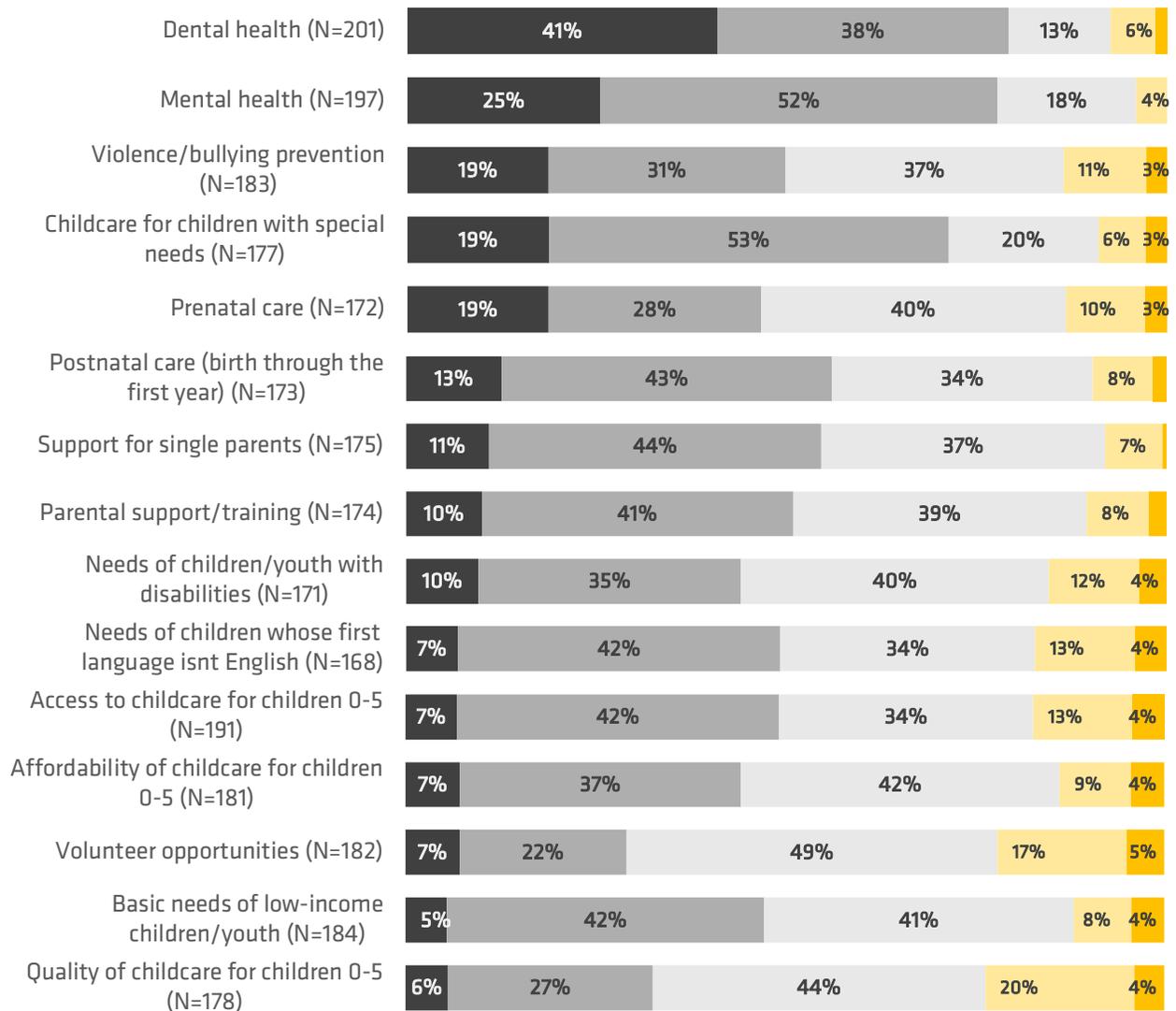
Most respondents reported being satisfied with the quality of childcare they currently receive (80.3%) and do not receive childcare assistance (92.2%). However, over half are not satisfied with the options for childcare available to them (57.1%). About two-thirds indicated their childcare is affordable (64.5%).

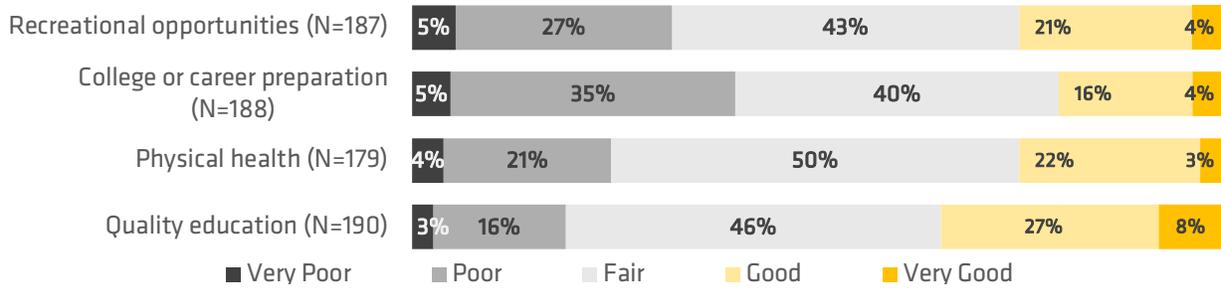
| | Disagree | Agree |
|---|----------|-------|
| <i>I'm satisfied with the quality of childcare I currently receive (N=61)</i> | 19.7% | 80.3% |
| <i>I'm satisfied with the options for childcare available to me (N=63)</i> | 57.1% | 42.9% |
| <i>My childcare is affordable (N=62)</i> | 35.5% | 64.5% |
| <i>I receive some type of childcare assistance (N=64)</i> | 92.2% | 7.8% |

Participants were asked how well their community currently meets the needs of children, including adolescents, in several areas. The response categories offered were:

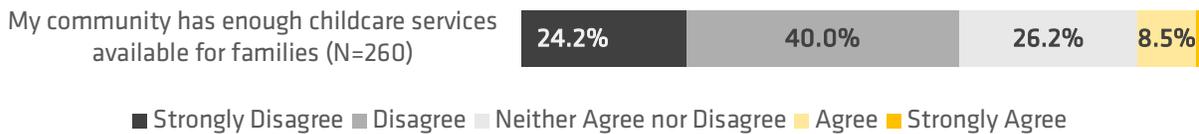
- Very Poor: No needs are met
- Poor: Some needs are met
- Fair: Many needs are met
- Good: Most needs are met
- Very good: All needs are met

The survey sample identified dental health as the area of highest need for children, followed by mental health. They indicated quality education and physical health as areas of lowest concern.





When asked to rate childcare availability, 64.2% disagree or strongly disagree that there are enough childcare services available for families.



Regarding children ages 0-12, participants most frequently identified childcare for children ages 0-5 as a top need (43.2%), followed by afterschool programs (33.2%).

| <i>Needs Age 0-12 (N=199)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Childcare for children 0-5</i> | 86 | 43.2 |
| <i>Afterschool programs</i> | 66 | 33.2 |
| <i>Bullying prevention</i> | 59 | 29.6 |
| <i>Mental healthcare</i> | 45 | 22.6 |
| <i>Dental care</i> | 44 | 22.1 |
| <i>Financial assistance to families</i> | 42 | 21.1 |
| <i>Services for children with physical or developmental disabilities</i> | 31 | 15.6 |
| <i>Early childhood intervention programs</i> | 28 | 14.1 |
| <i>Parenting skills development</i> | 25 | 12.6 |
| <i>Recreational activities</i> | 24 | 12.1 |
| <i>Mentoring programs for children</i> | 21 | 10.6 |
| <i>Medical care</i> | 17 | 8.5 |
| <i>Nutrition programs</i> | 17 | 8.5 |
| <i>Parenting education</i> | 16 | 8.0 |
| <i>Public education</i> | 16 | 8.0 |
| <i>Transportation</i> | 8 | 4.0 |
| <i>Access to diapers</i> | 7 | 3.5 |

Regarding youth ages 13-18, participants most frequently identified bullying/relationship violence prevention as a top need (35.8%), followed by employment opportunities (29%).

| <i>Child Needs 13-18 (N=193)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Bullying/relationship violence prevention</i> | 69 | 35.8 |
| <i>Employment opportunities for teens</i> | 56 | 29.0 |
| <i>Mental healthcare</i> | 54 | 28.0 |
| <i>Appropriate internet/technology use (e.g., sexting, cyber-bullying)</i> | 45 | 23.3 |
| <i>Financial skills training</i> | 42 | 21.8 |
| <i>Dental care</i> | 30 | 15.5 |
| <i>Access to higher education</i> | 29 | 15.0 |
| <i>Comprehensive sex education (including teen pregnancy prevention, STIs/STDs, etc.)</i> | 29 | 15.0 |
| <i>Healthy eating</i> | 26 | 13.5 |
| <i>Mentoring programs for adolescents</i> | 23 | 11.9 |
| <i>Workforce training for teens</i> | 23 | 11.9 |
| <i>Opportunities to contribute to the community</i> | 17 | 8.8 |
| <i>Recreational activities</i> | 16 | 8.3 |
| <i>Substance abuse prevention/treatment</i> | 14 | 7.3 |
| <i>Being able to take part in physical activities</i> | 12 | 6.2 |
| <i>Cultural enrichment opportunities</i> | 10 | 5.2 |
| <i>Public education</i> | 10 | 5.2 |
| <i>Services for adolescents with physical or developmental disabilities</i> | 10 | 5.2 |
| <i>Access to technology/computers</i> | 8 | 4.1 |
| <i>Tutoring</i> | 7 | 3.6 |
| <i>Access to the internet</i> | 6 | 3.1 |
| <i>Medical care</i> | 6 | 3.1 |
| <i>Parenting education/skills development (for parents of adolescents)</i> | 6 | 3.1 |

Mental Healthcare

Secondary data shows the suicide mortality rate for Ness County is about three times higher than it is for Kansas, indicating mental healthcare is a crucial area of concern. Survey data suggests mental health should be a concern as well. More than one in five respondents described their mental health as poor or fair (21.8%).

| <i>Mental Health Indicators</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Poor Mental Health (14+ Days)</i> | 15.5% | N/A |
| <i>Mental Health Provider Rate per 100,000</i> | N/A | 238 |
| <i>Age-adjusted Suicide Mortality Rate per 100,000</i> | 60.7 | 19.3 |

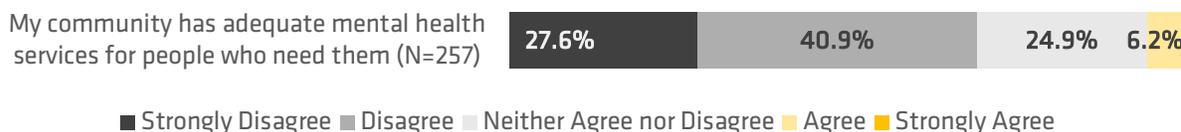
Source: Kansas Health Matters 2022

When asked to select three needs of highest concern for mental health, over a third of participants identified addressing stigma of people with mental health issues as the top need (34.8%). This is followed by a similar number of respondents that identified affordable mental

health services (31.6%), high quality mental health services (30.8%), and affordable health insurance that includes mental healthcare (30%).

| <i>Top Mental Health Needs (N=253)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Addressing the stigmatization of those with mental health issues</i> | 88 | 34.8 |
| <i>Affordable mental health services</i> | 80 | 31.6 |
| <i>High quality mental health services</i> | 78 | 30.8 |
| <i>Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care</i> | 76 | 30.0 |
| <i>Children's mental health services</i> | 73 | 28.9 |
| <i>Increased number of mental health care providers</i> | 53 | 20.9 |
| <i>Availability of transportation to mental health services</i> | 45 | 17.8 |
| <i>Increased mental health education/prevention</i> | 45 | 17.8 |
| <i>Affordable prescriptions</i> | 41 | 16.2 |
| <i>Suicide prevention</i> | 40 | 15.8 |
| <i>Substance abuse prevention/treatment</i> | 39 | 15.4 |
| <i>Care for Caregivers</i> | 37 | 14.6 |
| <i>Another mental health need</i> | 7 | 2.8 |

When asked to rate the availability of mental health services, over two-thirds disagree or strongly disagree that their community has mental health services for people who need them.



Secondary data indicates 15.5% of Ness County residents reported poor mental health for more than 14 days. Among survey participants, 21.8% self-reported poor or fair mental health.

| <i>How would you describe your overall mental health? (N=252)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Poor</i> | 5 | 2 |
| <i>Fair</i> | 50 | 19.8 |
| <i>Good</i> | 85 | 33.7 |
| <i>Very Good</i> | 80 | 31.7 |
| <i>Excellent</i> | 32 | 12.7 |

41.8% of respondents reported not seeking mental healthcare or not experiencing barriers to mental healthcare (N=244). For those that do experience mental healthcare barriers, the most common barrier is the lack of mental health providers/services (62.7%). This is followed by respondents reporting discomfort with seeking mental health services/talking about personal issues (40.8%) and not being able to take time off work (31.7%).

| Mental Healthcare Barriers (N=142) | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Lack of mental health providers/services in my community</i> | 89 | 62.7% |
| <i>I am uncomfortable seeking mental health services/talking about personal issues</i> | 58 | 40.8% |
| <i>Cannot take time off work</i> | 45 | 31.7% |
| <i>Lack of appropriately trained staff</i> | 34 | 23.9% |
| <i>No specialist in my community for my condition</i> | 24 | 16.9% |
| <i>Services are too expensive</i> | 24 | 16.9% |
| <i>Limited hours of operation</i> | 15 | 10.6% |
| <i>My insurance does not cover what I need and/or my insurance isn't accepted</i> | 15 | 10.6% |
| <i>I have tried to receive services before but they did not help</i> | 13 | 9.2% |
| <i>I do not have internet access</i> | 8 | 5.6% |
| <i>No insurance</i> | 8 | 5.6% |
| <i>Outstanding bill/payment</i> | 8 | 5.6% |
| <i>Takes too long for an appointment</i> | 8 | 5.6% |
| <i>Unable to pay co-pay/deductibles</i> | 8 | 5.6% |
| <i>Culture/Beliefs</i> | 6 | 4.2% |
| <i>English is not my preferred language</i> | 6 | 4.2% |
| <i>I have to follow restrictive policies (ex , formularies, monthly limits)</i> | 5 | 3.5% |
| <i>No transportation</i> | 5 | 3.5% |
| <i>Restrictive medication policies (e g , formularies, monthly limit)</i> | 4 | 2.8% |
| <i>No appointment available</i> | 3 | 2.1% |
| <i>No telehealth options</i> | 3 | 2.1% |
| <i>Other</i> | 2 | 1.4% |
| <i>I am homeless and there is no outreach for homeless population</i> | 1 | 0.7% |
| <i>No childcare</i> | 1 | 0.7% |

Other responses include: don't know how to start, quality healthcare – it's way too hard to connect to a provider through telemed.

Community & Environment

Secondary data indicates the violent crime rate is substantially lower and there are fewer driving deaths involving alcohol in Ness County than in Kansas.

| Public Safety Indicators | Ness | Kansas |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Violent Crime Rate per 1,000</i> | 1.1 | 4.6 |
| <i>Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths</i> | 16.7% | 19.9% |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2021 & 2017-2021

There are substantially fewer residents that live close or have access to exercise opportunities (1.6% vs 79.9%) and parks (0% vs 47.5%) in Ness County compared to Kansas residents.

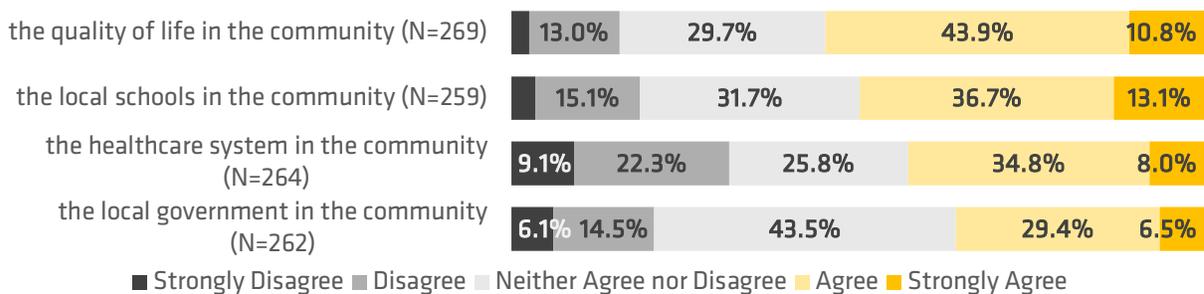
The food environment index ranges on a scale of 0 to 10 from worst to best, based on two indicators: 1) limited access to healthy food (population that are low-income and do not live close to a grocery store) and 2) food insecurity (population that has not had a reliable food source in the last year). The food environment index is higher in Ness County than in Kansas.

| <i>Built Environment Indicators</i> | Ness | Kansas |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Live Close/Access to Exercise Opportunities</i> | 1.6% | 79.9% |
| <i>Live Close/Access to Parks</i> | 0.0% | 47.5% |
| <i>Food Environment Index</i> | 8.2 | 7.1 |

Source: Kansas Health Matters 2024 & 2020

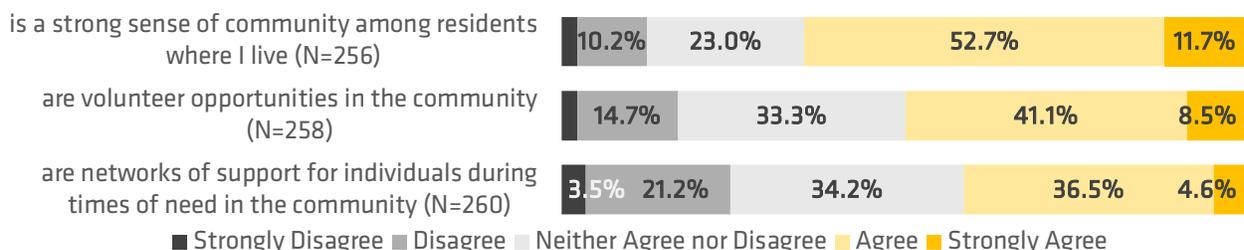
Survey respondents were asked to rate statements about the quality of life in their community based on their experiences. Participant satisfaction with broader aspects of their community is mixed. More than half (54.7%) are satisfied with the quality of life, about half (49.8%) are satisfied with the local schools, 42.8% are satisfied with the healthcare system, and over a third (35.9%) are satisfied with the local government.

I AM SATISFIED WITH..



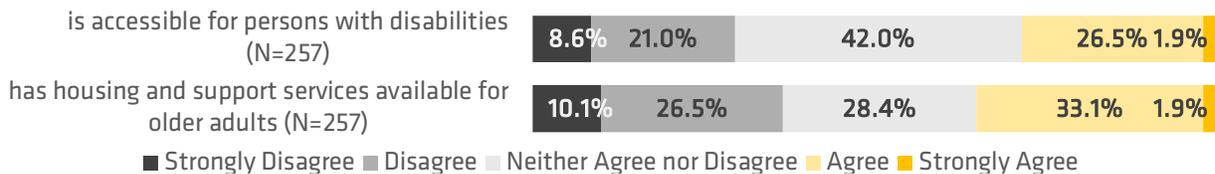
Opinions on having an emotional relationship to the community are mixed as well. 64.4% agree or strongly agree that there is a strong sense of community among residents where they live, 49.6% agree or strongly agree that there are volunteer opportunities, and 41.1% agree or strongly agree that there are networks of support for people in times of need.

THERE...



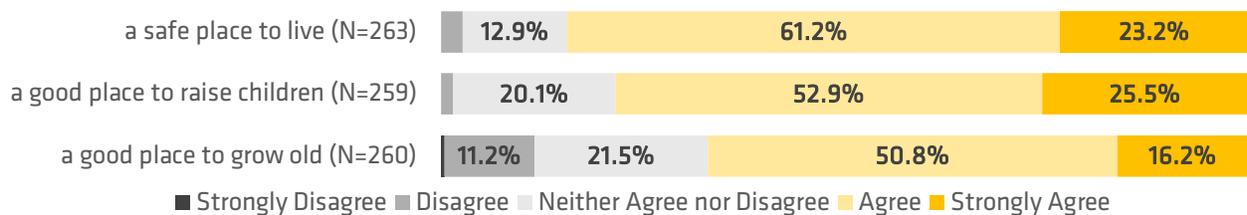
Participant feelings on accessibility for disabled and older residents are mixed again. 29.6% disagree or strongly disagree that their community has housing and support services available for older adults, while 35% agree or strongly agree with that statement.

MY COMMUNITY...



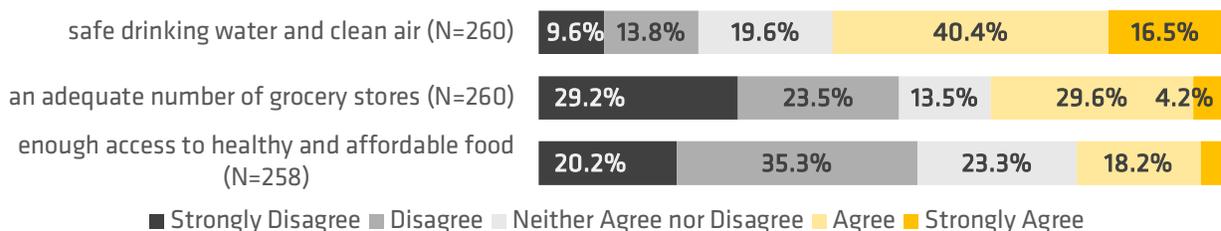
Most agree that their community is a safe place to live (84.4%), a good place to raise children (78.4%), and a good place to grow old (67%).

MY COMMUNITY IS...



While safe drinking water and clean air aren't as much of a concern for respondents, survey data continues to support that food access is. Over half disagree or strongly disagree that their community has an adequate number of grocery stores (52.7%) or has enough access to healthy and affordable food (55.5%).

MY COMMUNITY HAS...



Respondents most commonly cited that access to affordable, healthy food would improve their quality of life (68%), followed by access to affordable housing for everyone (61.4%).

| <i>Improve Quality of Life (N=259)</i> | N | % |
|---|-----|------|
| <i>Access to affordable, healthy food</i> | 176 | 68.0 |
| <i>Access to affordable housing for everyone</i> | 159 | 61.4 |
| <i>Access to healthcare services/medical screenings</i> | 84 | 32.4 |

| | | |
|---|-----|------|
| <i>Access to mental health and substance use services</i> | 130 | 50.2 |
| <i>Access to parks and recreation</i> | 71 | 27.4 |
| <i>Access to public transportation</i> | 95 | 36.7 |
| <i>Appreciation of social and cultural diversity</i> | 35 | 13.5 |
| <i>Better paying jobs and a stronger economy</i> | 136 | 52.5 |
| <i>Cleaner and healthier environment</i> | 30 | 11.6 |
| <i>Improved public education</i> | 77 | 29.7 |
| <i>Improved police, fire/rescue, and emergency services</i> | 77 | 29.7 |
| <i>Less violence/crime</i> | 13 | 5.0 |
| <i>Lower rates of child abuse and neglect</i> | 27 | 10.4 |
| <i>Lower rates of domestic and sexual violence</i> | 29 | 11.2 |
| <i>Other (please specify):</i> | 8 | 3.1 |

Other responses include: a good PCP in Ness City, a grocery store that stocks basics, ambulance service out of Ransom, better city administration, community-wide school, community health/recreational center, less drug abuse, more daycare, and concerns about gender discrimination, racism, and nepotism influencing support and opportunity in the community.

Community Listening Session

Background

The Center of Public Health Initiatives (CPHI) facilitated the community listening and planning sessions. The Ness County Design Team invited members of the Ness County community to participate in a Community Listening Session held on February 16th, 2025 at the Ness County Community Building in Ness City, KS. The session was promoted through email campaigns, social media, local news outlets, word of mouth, and other methods.

The objective of the session was to:

- Gather community feedback on priority health concerns identified through the community survey and secondary data collection.
- Demonstrate transparency and provide an opportunity for community input.
- Collect feedback on possible next steps or resources needed to address community health concerns.

There were 15 community members present, representing both the community and various organizations. The session included a brief, preliminary summary of the CHNA Survey findings followed by a facilitated discussion to gain insights and ideas from participants. Below is a themed summary of the responses gathered during the discussion written CPHI staff facilitators.

Housing-Related Issues

What specific challenges or barriers are people in your community facing?

- Housing that hasn't had a drug influence (rentals as well as owned)
- Availability & Access to Housing
 - Houses that are available are very outdated

- Lack of rental housing
- No affordable rental housing
- Lack of affordable availability
- Lack of available for sale or rent
- No housing available/no apartments/everything is so expensive to rent if available
- Limited affordable housing
- No adequate safe housing- especially for elderly
- Limited senior housing
- Lack of affordable houses not in need of major repairs
- Regulations & Policy Barriers
 - City does not enforce codes
 - Lack of construction workers
 - Housing rules and policies make things difficult (income-based rentals – people make too much)
- Financial & Economical challenges
 - Ability to care for existing housing – especially for elderly and disabled
 - Young people want to stay in the community but there is no affordable or any housing to live in
 - Assistance with property repairs

What existing strengths or resources can we build upon to address this health concern, and what actions or support might be needed?

- Area of Aging (organization)
 - NW/SW can help financially with furnace etc.
- Available housing units
 - Low-income housing units available
 - Option to rent to own
 - Two Intermediate Swing Bed (ISB) units at both hospitals
 - Rentals at Ness County Hospital for elderly
 - Two long-term care facilities in the county
- Other
 - Tight knit community, we will help one another

Aging-Related Issues

What specific challenges or barriers are people in your community facing?

- Transportation
 - No way to get around
 - Lack of transportation to travel to healthcare
 - Lack of transportation for elderly to get to appointments out of town
 - No public transportation available
- Knowledge & Awareness
 - NW part of Ness County lack services or doesn't take advantage of them
 - Need more knowledge of services available
- System Barriers

- Difficult to age in home
- Affordability of home repair
- People are on limited or fixed income and can't afford repairs
- Home health expansion
- Accessibility
 - Not enough home health services offered or assisted living
 - Food desert in District 1
 - Medical services not offered in area
 - Lack of daycare options
 - Far from medical, grocery and emergency services
 - Limited home health
- Other
 - Not enough safe housing available
 - Safety in homes- many cannot obtain the assistance needed or feel they cannot obtain or ask for assistance

What existing strengths or resources can we build upon to address this health concern, and what actions or support might be needed?

- Services
 - Grocery store delivers
 - Pharmacy delivers
 - Meals on Wheels in two parts of the county
 - Senior centers
- Resources
 - Meals on Wheels in two parts of the county
 - 2 nursing homes
 - 4 providers in Ness City and 1 in Ransom
 - Food banks
 - Community Garden at hospital in Grisell
- Other
 - Working to establish rides with Healthy Blue/Medicaid to provide transportation to appointments
 - Working with community health worker to make this happen in rural counties

Food & Nutrition

What specific challenges or barriers are people in your community facing?

- Knowledge
 - Need more classes (cooking)
 - Education about resources/how to access food
 - No resource list of local producers
 - Lack of knowledge of how to get help
- Accessibility
 - No farmer's markets- lack of space
 - Lack of nutritious foods
 - Distance to grocery stores

- Lack of grocery store in town
- Transportation to grocery stores is difficult
- Financial
 - Produce is expensive
 - People on fixed income can't afford healthy food

What existing strengths or resources can we build upon to address this health concern, and what actions or support might be needed?

- Access
 - Food banks at church and hospital
 - Meals on Wheels in two areas of the county
 - Health Department has WIC
 - Salvation Army
 - Harvest America
 - Local churches
- Knowledge
 - Community resource list
 - Cooking classes
 - Work with Extension to teach gardening skills and cooking
 - Extension office offers classes

Mental Health

What specific challenges or barriers are people in your community facing?

- Access
 - No provider in Ness, only one provider that comes every other week
 - Too many hoops to jump through to get help
 - Lack of provider in town
 - Lack of acute mental health care
 - Limited access to mental health
 - No placement option in hospitals
 - Can't transfer/send them elsewhere
 - No acute mental health crisis service
 - Time needed to access during crisis
- Stigma
 - Counselor in hospital does not have a private room available and is moving from room to room
- Knowledge
 - No one is here educating on this
 - Education in general
 - Need education for parents on youth mental health
 - Lack of responsible people who know the protocols
- Substance use and abuse

What existing strengths or resources can we build upon to address this health concern, and what actions or support might be needed?

- Community
 - Community members are caring people
 - EMS
 - Pharmacy
 - School nurse helps w/kids
 - Religious leaders are available and able to connect
- Sacred Heart (local church) put together a survey and parents asked for mental health resources that the school is working on implementing
- All teachers took MHFA in the county that was offered by Health Department
- HD has self-help videos through Credible Minds Ness County platform that is free for anyone in Ness County to use

Key Takeaways

Key Themes:

- Cycle: All issues are related and create and perpetuate a downward cycle of health
 - All the health concerns snowball together
 - Four key issues are related
 - It's a ripple effect
 - All are interconnected
- Availability: Everything depends on food and housing availability. If there is no food or place to live people can't succeed
 - There is a lack of healthcare specialty providers
- Community: Everyone working together
- Knowledge: Important to get more knowledge out to our community
 - Centralized location to access resources and get information out to the public
 - It's important to educate the community
 - There are some great resources but no one knows about them or how to access them
- Importance of mental healthcare and education within the community
- It all comes down to basic needs

Appendix

| <i>ZIP Groups (N=277)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>67518, 67560 - Beeler & Ness</i> | 137 | 49.5 |
| <i>67572, 67584, 67515, 67521 - Ransom, Utica, Arnold, & Brownell</i> | 97 | 35 |
| <i>67516 - Bazine</i> | 27 | 9.7 |
| <i>Other or NA</i> | 16 | 5.8 |

Top Needs by ZIP Group

COMMUNITY TOP NEEDS

| Beeler & Ness | Ransom, Utica, Arnold, & Brownell | Bazine |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Housing | Food and Nutrition | Dental Care |
| Aging-Related Issues | Aging-Related Issues | Youth and Children Related Issues |
| Economy and Employment | Housing | Economy and Employment |
| Youth and Children Related Issues | Economy and Employment | Housing |
| Food and Nutrition | Mental Health | Chronic Diseases |

MENTAL HEALTH TOP NEEDS

| Beeler & Ness | Ransom, Utica, Arnold, & Brownell | Bazine |
|--|--|--|
| Children's mental health services | Addressing stigmatization of those with mental health issues | Increased mental health education/prevention |
| Affordable mental health services | Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care | Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care |
| Addressing stigmatization of those with mental health issues | High quality mental health services | Availability of transportation to mental health services |
| High quality mental health services | Affordable mental health services | Addressing stigmatization of those with mental health issues |
| Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care | Affordable prescriptions | Children's mental health services |

HOUSING TOP NEEDS

| Beeler & Ness | Ransom, Utica, Arnold, & Brownell | Bazine |
|---|---|---|
| Affordable housing | Affordable housing | Assistance with property repair and maintenance |
| Variety of affordable housing options | Assistance with property repair/maintenance | Code enforcement |
| Assistance with property repair/maintenance | Variety of affordable housing options | Affordable housing |
| Higher quality rentals | Higher quality rentals | Variety of affordable housing options |
| Code enforcement | Quality housing | Senior housing |

Beeler & Ness Top Needs

ZIP 67518, 67560

| <i>Top Community Issues (N=109)</i> | N | % |
|--|----|-------|
| <i>Housing (availability, affordability, safety)</i> | 48 | 44.0% |
| <i>Aging-Related Issues (caregiving, assisted living, services, safety)</i> | 42 | 38.5% |
| <i>Economy and Employment (inflation, interest rates, joblessness, wages, quality of available jobs)</i> | 34 | 31.2% |
| <i>Youth and Children Related Issues (childcare, education, bullying, abuse)</i> | 29 | 26.6% |
| <i>Food and Nutrition (access to food stores, cost of food, healthy food options)</i> | 25 | 22.9% |
| <i>Mental Health (access to affordable care, insurance)</i> | 23 | 21.1% |
| <i>Medical care (access to affordable care, insurance, access to needed specialists)</i> | 22 | 20.2% |
| <i>Physical Activity (access to exercise opportunities)</i> | 20 | 18.3% |
| <i>Dental Care (access to affordable care, insurance)</i> | 16 | 14.7% |
| <i>Chronic Diseases (cancer, diabetes, heart disease)</i> | 12 | 11.0% |
| <i>Substance Use, Abuse, Misuse (tobacco, alcohol, opioids, treatment)</i> | 12 | 11.0% |
| <i>Transportation</i> | 11 | 10.1% |
| <i>Social Issues (domestic violence, child abuse, crime, gun violence, intolerance, discrimination)</i> | 6 | 5.5% |
| <i>Prescription medications (access to pharmacy services, affordability, insurance)</i> | 5 | 4.6% |
| <i>Poverty (fixed or low-income households)</i> | 4 | 3.7% |
| <i>Infant and toddler related issues (education for parents, early intervention programs)</i> | 3 | 2.8% |
| <i>Other</i> | 3 | 2.8% |
| <i>Reproductive Health Services and Family Planning</i> | 1 | 0.9% |

| <i>Top Mental Health Needs (N=128)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Children's mental health services</i> | 48 | 37.5% |
| <i>Affordable mental health services</i> | 46 | 35.9% |
| <i>Addressing the stigmatization of those with mental health issues</i> | 43 | 33.6% |
| <i>High quality mental health services</i> | 42 | 32.8% |
| <i>Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care</i> | 32 | 25.0% |
| <i>Increased number of mental health care providers</i> | 31 | 24.2% |
| <i>Availability of transportation to mental health services</i> | 21 | 16.4% |
| <i>Care for Caregivers</i> | 21 | 16.4% |
| <i>Increased mental health education/prevention</i> | 20 | 15.6% |
| <i>Substance abuse prevention/treatment</i> | 19 | 14.8% |
| <i>Suicide prevention</i> | 19 | 14.8% |
| <i>Affordable prescriptions</i> | 18 | 14.1% |
| <i>Another mental health need</i> | 4 | 3.1% |

| <i>Top Housing Needs (N=126)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Affordable housing</i> | 73 | 57.9% |
| <i>Variety of affordable housing options</i> | 56 | 44.4% |
| <i>Assistance with property repair and maintenance</i> | 34 | 27.0% |
| <i>Higher quality rentals</i> | 32 | 25.4% |
| <i>Code enforcement (e.g. overgrown lawns, broken windows, trash, etc.)</i> | 29 | 23.0% |
| <i>Quality housing</i> | 29 | 23.0% |
| <i>Senior housing</i> | 25 | 19.8% |
| <i>Accessible housing (for persons with disabilities)</i> | 19 | 15.1% |
| <i>Education about financing options for homeownership</i> | 14 | 11.1% |
| <i>Neighborhood improvement programs</i> | 13 | 10.3% |
| <i>Low-income housing assistance (Section 8)</i> | 11 | 8.7% |
| <i>Education about responsible homeownership</i> | 8 | 6.3% |
| <i>Historic preservation</i> | 5 | 4.0% |
| <i>Safe housing</i> | 4 | 3.2% |

Ransom, Utica, Arnold, & Brownell Top Needs

ZIP 67572, 67584, 67515, 67521

| <i>Top Community Issues (N=73)</i> | N | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Food and Nutrition (access to food stores, cost of food, healthy food options)</i> | 34 | 46.6% |
| <i>Aging-Related Issues (caregiving, assisted living, services, safety)</i> | 30 | 41.1% |
| <i>Housing (availability, affordability, safety)</i> | 26 | 35.6% |
| <i>Economy and Employment (inflation, interest rates, joblessness, wages, quality of available jobs)</i> | 17 | 23.3% |

| | | |
|---|----|-------|
| <i>Mental Health (access to affordable care, insurance)</i> | 17 | 23.3% |
| <i>Dental Care (access to affordable care, insurance)</i> | 11 | 15.1% |
| <i>Medical care (access to affordable care, insurance, access to needed specialists)</i> | 11 | 15.1% |
| <i>Transportation</i> | 10 | 13.7% |
| <i>Chronic Diseases (cancer, diabetes, heart disease)</i> | 8 | 11.0% |
| <i>Physical Activity (access to exercise opportunities)</i> | 7 | 9.6% |
| <i>Substance Use, Abuse, Misuse (tobacco, alcohol, opioids, treatment)</i> | 7 | 9.6% |
| <i>Youth and Children Related Issues (childcare, education, bullying, abuse)</i> | 7 | 9.6% |
| <i>Poverty (fixed or low-income households)</i> | 6 | 8.2% |
| <i>Prescription medications (access to pharmacy services, affordability, insurance)</i> | 3 | 4.1% |
| <i>Immunizations</i> | 2 | 2.7% |
| <i>Infant and toddler related issues (education for parents, early intervention programs)</i> | 2 | 2.7% |
| <i>Reproductive Health Services and Family Planning</i> | 1 | 1.4% |
| <i>Social Issues (domestic violence, child abuse, crime, gun violence, intolerance, discrimination)</i> | 1 | 1.4% |
| <i>Other</i> | 1 | 1.4% |

| <i>Top Mental Health Needs (N=91)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Addressing the stigmatization of those with mental health issues</i> | 35 | 38.5% |
| <i>Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care</i> | 31 | 34.1% |
| <i>High quality mental health services</i> | 29 | 31.9% |
| <i>Affordable mental health services</i> | 28 | 30.8% |
| <i>Affordable prescriptions</i> | 18 | 19.8% |
| <i>Increased number of mental health care providers</i> | 17 | 18.7% |
| <i>Children's mental health services</i> | 16 | 17.6% |
| <i>Suicide prevention</i> | 15 | 16.5% |
| <i>Substance abuse prevention/treatment</i> | 14 | 15.4% |
| <i>Availability of transportation to mental health services</i> | 13 | 14.3% |
| <i>Increased mental health education/prevention</i> | 13 | 14.3% |
| <i>Care for Caregivers</i> | 10 | 11.0% |
| <i>Another mental health need</i> | 2 | 2.2% |

| <i>Top Housing Needs (N=95)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Affordable housing</i> | 53 | 55.8% |
| <i>Assistance with property repair and maintenance</i> | 33 | 34.7% |
| <i>Variety of affordable housing options</i> | 27 | 28.4% |
| <i>Higher quality rentals</i> | 26 | 27.4% |
| <i>Quality housing</i> | 23 | 24.2% |
| <i>Senior housing</i> | 20 | 21.1% |
| <i>Accessible housing (for persons with disabilities)</i> | 19 | 20.0% |

| | | |
|---|----|-------|
| <i>Neighborhood improvement programs</i> | 13 | 13.7% |
| <i>Code enforcement (e.g. overgrown lawns, broken windows, trash, etc.)</i> | 12 | 12.6% |
| <i>Low-income housing assistance (Section 8)</i> | 8 | 8.4% |
| <i>Education about financing options for homeownership</i> | 7 | 7.4% |
| <i>Historic preservation</i> | 6 | 6.3% |
| <i>Education about responsible homeownership</i> | 4 | 4.2% |
| <i>Safe housing</i> | 4 | 4.2% |

Bazine Top Needs

ZIP 67516

| <i>Top Community Issues (N=23)</i> | N | % |
|--|----|-------|
| <i>Dental Care (access to affordable care, insurance)</i> | 10 | 43.5% |
| <i>Youth and Children Related Issues (childcare, education, bullying, abuse)</i> | 8 | 34.8% |
| <i>Economy and Employment (inflation, interest rates, joblessness, wages, quality of available jobs)</i> | 7 | 30.4% |
| <i>Housing (availability, affordability, safety)</i> | 6 | 26.1% |
| <i>Chronic Diseases (cancer, diabetes, heart disease)</i> | 5 | 21.7% |
| <i>Food and Nutrition (access to food stores, cost of food, healthy food options)</i> | 5 | 21.7% |
| <i>Aging-Related Issues (caregiving, assisted living, services, safety)</i> | 4 | 17.4% |
| <i>Medical care (access to affordable care, insurance, access to needed specialists)</i> | 4 | 17.4% |
| <i>Transportation</i> | 4 | 17.4% |
| <i>Mental Health (access to affordable care, insurance)</i> | 3 | 13.0% |
| <i>Social Issues (domestic violence, child abuse, crime, gun violence, intolerance, discrimination)</i> | 3 | 13.0% |
| <i>Substance Use, Abuse, Misuse (tobacco, alcohol, opioids, treatment)</i> | 3 | 13.0% |
| <i>Infectious Disease</i> | 2 | 8.7% |
| <i>Immunizations</i> | 1 | 4.3% |
| <i>Infant and toddler related issues (education for parents, early intervention programs)</i> | 1 | 4.3% |
| <i>Physical Activity (access to exercise opportunities)</i> | 1 | 4.3% |
| <i>Prescription medications (access to pharmacy services, affordability, insurance)</i> | 1 | 4.3% |
| <i>Other</i> | 1 | 4.3% |

| <i>Top Mental Health Needs (N=25)</i> | N | % |
|---|----|-------|
| <i>Increased mental health education/prevention</i> | 11 | 44.0% |
| <i>Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care</i> | 10 | 40.0% |
| <i>Availability of transportation to mental health services</i> | 10 | 40.0% |
| <i>Addressing the stigmatization of those with mental health issues</i> | 8 | 32.0% |
| <i>Children's mental health services</i> | 6 | 24.0% |
| <i>Affordable mental health services</i> | 4 | 16.0% |
| <i>Care for Caregivers</i> | 4 | 16.0% |

| | | |
|---|---|-------|
| <i>High quality mental health services</i> | 4 | 16.0% |
| <i>Increased number of mental health care providers</i> | 4 | 16.0% |
| <i>Suicide prevention</i> | 4 | 16.0% |
| <i>Affordable prescriptions</i> | 3 | 12.0% |
| <i>Substance abuse prevention/treatment</i> | 2 | 8.0% |
| <i>Another mental health need</i> | 1 | 4.0% |

| <i>Top Housing Needs (N=26)</i> | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Assistance with property repair and maintenance</i> | 14 | 53.8% |
| <i>Code enforcement (e.g. overgrown lawns, broken windows, trash, etc.)</i> | 8 | 30.8% |
| <i>Affordable housing</i> | 7 | 26.9% |
| <i>Variety of affordable housing options</i> | 7 | 26.9% |
| <i>Senior housing</i> | 6 | 23.1% |
| <i>Accessible housing (for persons with disabilities)</i> | 5 | 19.2% |
| <i>Low-income housing assistance (Section 8)</i> | 5 | 19.2% |
| <i>Neighborhood improvement programs</i> | 5 | 19.2% |
| <i>Education about financing options for homeownership</i> | 3 | 11.5% |
| <i>Education about responsible homeownership</i> | 3 | 11.5% |
| <i>Higher quality rentals</i> | 3 | 11.5% |
| <i>Quality housing</i> | 3 | 11.5% |
| <i>Safe housing</i> | 2 | 7.7% |
| <i>Other</i> | 1 | 3.8% |

Shortened version of survey in English

1) What is your age?

- Under 18 years
- 18 to 24 years
- 25 to 34 years
- 35 to 49 years
- 50 to 64 years
- 65 to 74 years
- 75 to 84 years
- 85 years and over

2) Which county do you currently live in?

- Ness County
- Other (please specify): _____

3) What are the top three issues in the community that should be addressed?

Please only select up to three options from the list below.

- Aging-Related Issues (caregiving, assisted living, services, safety)
- Chronic Diseases (cancer, diabetes, heart disease)

- Dental Care (access to affordable care, insurance)
- Economy and Employment (inflation, interest rates, joblessness, wages, quality of available jobs)
- Food and Nutrition (access to food stores, cost of food, healthy food options)
- Housing (availability, affordability, safety)
- Immunizations
- Infant and toddler related issues (education for parents, early intervention programs)
- Infectious Disease
- Medical care (access to affordable care, insurance, access to needed specialists)
- Mental Health (access to affordable care, insurance)
- Physical Activity (access to exercise opportunities)
- Prescription medications (access to pharmacy services, affordability, insurance)
- Poverty (fixed or low-income households)
- Reproductive Health Services and Family Planning
- Social Issues (domestic violence, child abuse, crime, gun violence, intolerance, discrimination)
- Substance Use, Abuse, Misuse (tobacco, alcohol, opioids, treatment)
- Transportation
- Youth and Children Related Issues (child care, education, bullying, abuse)
- Other (please specify): _____

4) What are the top three needs related to housing in the community that should be addressed?

Please only select up to three options from the list below.

- Accessible housing (for persons with disabilities)
- Affordable housing
- Assistance with property repair and maintenance
- Code enforcement (e.g. overgrown lawns, broken windows, trash, etc.)
- Education about financing options for homeownership
- Education about responsible homeownership
- Higher quality rentals
- Historic preservation
- Low-income housing assistance (Section 8)
- Neighborhood improvement programs
- Quality housing
- Safe housing
- Senior housing
- Variety of affordable housing options
- Other (please specify): _____

5) Overall, what are the top three mental health needs in the community that should be addressed?

Please only select up to three options from the list below.

- Addressing the stigmatization of those with mental health issues
- Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care
- Affordable mental health services
- Affordable prescriptions

- Availability of transportation to mental health services
- Care for Caregivers
- Children's mental health services
- High quality mental health services
- Increased mental health education/prevention
- Increased number of mental health care providers
- Substance abuse prevention/treatment
- Suicide prevention
- Another mental health need (please specify): _____

What is your zip code? (Please enter a 5-digit ZIP code; for example, 67114 or 67042)

Are you a guardian of someone over 18 years of age?

- Yes
- No

What is your race and ethnicity?

Please select all that apply.

- Hispanic
- Black
- Asian (South, Southeast, East, etc.)
- Indigenous, Native American (Mexican, North or South American), or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- White
- Prefer to self-describe:: _____

What is your gender?

Please select all that apply.

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary/Non-conforming/Genderqueer
- Prefer to self-describe: _____

What language is spoken most of the time in your home?

- English
- Spanish
- Another language (please specify): _____
- Prefer not to answer

What is your relationship status?

- Single
- Domestic partnership
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Prefer not to answer

What was your total household income last year, before taxes?

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 \$14,999
- \$15,000 – \$24,999
- \$25,000 – \$34,999
- \$35,000 – \$49,999
- \$50,000 – \$74,999
- \$75,000 – \$99,999
- \$100,000 – \$149,999
- \$150,000 – \$199,999
- \$200,000 or more
- I don't know
- Prefer not to answer

What is the highest grade or year of school you have completed?

- Less than 9th grade
- 9th – 12th grade (no diploma)
- High school graduate (or GED/equivalent)
- Associate degree
- Vocational training
- Some college (no degree)
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree

What is your employment status?

- Self-employed
- Working more than one job
- Employed full-time (one job)
- Employed part-time
- Homemaker
- Retired - don't work
- Disabled - don't work
- Unemployed for 1 year or less
- Unemployed for more than 1 year

Which county do you currently work in?

- Ness County
- Other (please specify): _____

Full version of survey in English

1) What is your age?

- Under 18 years
- 18 to 24 years
- 25 to 34 years
- 35 to 49 years
- 50 to 64 years
- 65 to 74 years
- 75 to 84 years
- 85 years and over

2) Which county do you currently live in?

- Ness County
- Other (please specify): _____

3) What are the top three issues in the community that should be addressed?

Please only select up to three options from the list below.

- Aging-Related Issues (caregiving, assisted living, services, safety)
- Chronic Diseases (cancer, diabetes, heart disease)
- Dental Care (access to affordable care, insurance)
- Economy and Employment (inflation, interest rates, joblessness, wages, quality of available jobs)
- Food and Nutrition (access to food stores, cost of food, healthy food options)
- Housing (availability, affordability, safety)
- Immunizations
- Infant and toddler related issues (education for parents, early intervention programs)
- Infectious Disease
- Medical care (access to affordable care, insurance, access to needed specialists)
- Mental Health (access to affordable care, insurance)
- Physical Activity (access to exercise opportunities)
- Prescription medications (access to pharmacy services, affordability, insurance)
- Poverty (fixed or low-income households)
- Reproductive Health Services and Family Planning
- Social Issues (domestic violence, child abuse, crime, gun violence, intolerance, discrimination)
- Substance Use, Abuse, Misuse (tobacco, alcohol, opioids, treatment)
- Transportation
- Youth and Children Related Issues (child care, education, bullying, abuse)
- Other (please specify): _____

4) What are the top three needs related to housing in the community that should be addressed?

Please only select up to three options from the list below.

- Accessible housing (for persons with disabilities)
- Affordable housing
- Assistance with property repair and maintenance

- Code enforcement (e.g. overgrown lawns, broken windows, trash, etc.)
- Education about financing options for homeownership
- Education about responsible homeownership
- Higher quality rentals
- Historic preservation
- Low-income housing assistance (Section 8)
- Neighborhood improvement programs
- Quality housing
- Safe housing
- Senior housing
- Variety of affordable housing options
- Other (please specify): _____

5) Overall, what are the top three mental health needs in the community that should be addressed?

Please only select up to three options from the list below.

- Addressing the stigmatization of those with mental health issues
- Affordable health insurance that includes mental health care
- Affordable mental health services
- Affordable prescriptions
- Availability of transportation to mental health services
- Care for Caregivers
- Children's mental health services
- High quality mental health services
- Increased mental health education/prevention
- Increased number of mental health care providers
- Substance abuse prevention/treatment
- Suicide prevention
- Another mental health need (please specify): _____

6) How would you rate your overall health?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent

7) Is everyone in your household covered by health insurance?

- Yes
- No

8) Please indicate how easy or difficult it is to access each of the following:

| | Very Difficult | Somewhat Difficult | Somewhat Easy | Very Easy | Does not apply |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Credible and accurate health information | () | () | () | () | () |
| Family planning | () | () | () | () | () |
| Healthy food options | () | () | () | () | () |
| Health services for children | () | () | () | () | () |
| Immunizations | () | () | () | () | () |
| Mental health services | () | () | () | () | () |
| Dental/oral health services | () | () | () | () | () |
| Prenatal care/health care for pregnancy | () | () | () | () | () |
| Primary health care | () | () | () | () | () |
| Sexual health testing and treatment | () | () | () | () | () |
| Substance use services | () | () | () | () | () |

9) Which of the following options make it harder for you to get health care services?

Please select all that apply.

- Cost (premiums, deductible, copay)
- Difficulty getting an appointment
- Doctors do not speak my language
- Fear or distrust of the health care system
- Location of health care services
- I don't have insurance
- Not accepting my insurance
- Prescription/medication cost
- Stigma

- Too much paperwork
- Transportation
- N/A - I have no barriers
- Other (please specify): _____

10) Is transportation a barrier for you to take care of your health? i.e. receiving health services, scheduling doctors appointments, getting to appointments, picking up medications, etc.

- Yes
- No

11) How do you usually get to your primary healthcare provider?

- I drive my own car
- A family member or friend drives me
- I use public transportation
- I don't have transportation options
- I don't receive primary care services
- I don't know
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify): _____

12) How would you describe your overall mental health?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent

13) What barriers have prevented you or others in your household from getting mental health care when you needed it?

Please select all that apply.

- Cannot take time off work
- Culture/Beliefs
- English is not my preferred language
- I am uncomfortable seeking mental health services/talking about personal issues
- I am homeless and there is no outreach for homeless population
- I do not have internet access
- I have to follow restrictive policies (ex., formularies, monthly limits)
- I have tried to receive services before but they did not help
- Lack of mental health providers/services in my community
- Lack of appropriately trained staff
- Limited hours of operation
- No appointment available
- No childcare
- No insurance
- My insurance does not cover what I need and/or my insurance isn't accepted
- No specialist in my community for my condition
- No telehealth options

- No transportation
- Outstanding bill/payment
- Restrictive medication policies (e.g., formularies, monthly limit)
- Services are too expensive
- Takes too long for an appointment
- Unable to pay co-pay/deductibles
- Other (please specify): _____
- N/A - My household does not seek mental healthcare and/or has not experienced any barriers that have kept me from getting mental health care when needed

14) Please rate the following statements about the quality of life in your community based on your experiences.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| I am satisfied with the quality of life in the community. | () | () | () | () | () |
| I am satisfied with the healthcare system in the community. | () | () | () | () | () |
| I am satisfied with the local schools in the community. | () | () | () | () | () |
| I am satisfied with the local government in the community. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community is a safe place to live. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community is a good place to raise children. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community is a good place to grow old. | () | () | () | () | () |
| There are networks of support for individuals | () | () | () | () | () |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| during times of need in the community. | | | | | |
| There is a strong sense of community among residents where I live. | () | () | () | () | () |
| There are enough parks and other places for recreational and physical activities in the community. | () | () | () | () | () |
| There are volunteer opportunities in the community. | () | () | () | () | () |
| I can make the community a better place to live. | () | () | () | () | () |
| I intend to stay in the community for at least the next five years. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community has safe drinking water and clean air. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community has enough access to healthy and affordable food. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community has an adequate number of grocery stores. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community has enough affordable housing. | () | () | () | () | () |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| There are enough jobs in my community that pay a livable wage. | () | () | () | () | () |
| People in my community have enough opportunities and resources to succeed financially. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community has enough childcare services available for families. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community has adequate mental health services for people who need them. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community is accessible for persons with disabilities. | () | () | () | () | () |
| My community has housing and support services available for older adults. | () | () | () | () | () |

15) Which of the following options would improve the quality of life the most in your community?

Please select all that apply.

- Access to affordable, healthy food
- Access to affordable housing for everyone
- Access to healthcare services/medical screenings
- Access to mental health and substance use services
- Access to parks and recreation
- Access to public transportation
- Appreciation of social and cultural diversity
- Better paying jobs and a stronger economy
- Cleaner and healthier environment
- Improved public education
- Improved police, fire/rescue, and emergency services
- Less violence/crime
- Lower rates of child abuse and neglect

- Lower rates of domestic and sexual violence
- Other (please specify): _____

Childcare

16) Are you a parent or custodial guardian of someone under 18 years of age?

- Yes
- No

17) Are there any other children under 18 years of age who live with you (i.e., you are not their parent or custodial guardian)?

- Yes
- No

If you answered no to Questions 16 & 17 above, please skip to Question 22.

18) Have you ever quit or lost a job because you did not have the childcare you needed?

- Yes
- No

19) Do you use childcare?

- Yes
- No
- All of my children are old enough to attend public or private school

If yes, answer the following questions. If you do not use childcare, skip to Question 22.

20) What type of childcare do you use? Please select all that apply.

- Licensed Day Care Home
- Group Day Care Home
- Child Care Center
- Preschool
- Afterschool/Latchkey Program
- Relative or Friend
- Another category of childcare (please specify): _____

21) Please select whether you disagree or agree with the following statements.

| | Disagree | Agree |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I'm satisfied with the quality of childcare I currently receive | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I'm satisfied with the options for childcare available to me | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My childcare is affordable | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| I receive some type of childcare assistance | () | () |
|---|-----|-----|

22) How well does your community currently meet the needs of children, including adolescents, in the following areas?

| | Very Poor: No needs are met | Poor: Some needs are met | Fair: Many needs are met | Good: Most needs are met | Very Good: All needs are met |
|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Access to childcare for children 0-5 | () | () | () | () | () |
| Affordability of childcare for children 0-5 | () | () | () | () | () |
| Basic needs of low-income children/youth | () | () | () | () | () |
| Childcare for children with special needs | () | () | () | () | () |
| College or career preparation | () | () | () | () | () |
| Dental health | () | () | () | () | () |
| Mental health | () | () | () | () | () |
| Needs of children whose first language isn't English | () | () | () | () | () |
| Needs of children/youth with disabilities | () | () | () | () | () |
| Parental support/training | () | () | () | () | () |

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Physical health | () | () | () | () | () |
| Postnatal care (birth through the first year) | () | () | () | () | () |
| Prenatal care | () | () | () | () | () |
| Quality education | () | () | () | () | () |
| Quality of childcare for children 0-5 | () | () | () | () | () |
| Recreational opportunities | () | () | () | () | () |
| Support for single parents | () | () | () | () | () |
| Violence/bullying prevention | () | () | () | () | () |
| Volunteer opportunities | () | () | () | () | () |

23) What are the top three needs for children (ages birth to 12) in the community that should be addressed?

Please only select up to three options from the list below.

- Access to diapers
- Afterschool programs
- Bullying prevention
- Childcare for children 0-5
- Dental care
- Early childhood intervention programs (e.g., Head Start, etc.)
- Financial assistance to families (for nutrition, childcare, housing, etc.)
- Medical care
- Mental healthcare
- Mentoring programs for children
- Nutrition programs (e.g. WIC, free and reduced lunch, etc.)
- Parenting education
- Parenting skills development
- Public education
- Recreational activities
- Services for children with physical or developmental disabilities
- Transportation

Other (please specify): _____

24) What are the top three needs for youth/adolescents (ages 13-18) in the community that should be addressed by the community?

Please only select up to three options from the list below.

- Access to higher education
- Access to technology/computers
- Access to the internet
- Appropriate internet/technology use (e.g., sexting, cyber-bullying)
- Being able to take part in physical activities
- Bullying/relationship violence prevention
- Comprehensive sex education (including teen pregnancy prevention, STIs/STDs, etc.)
- Cultural enrichment opportunities
- Dental care
- Employment opportunities for teens
- Financial skills training
- Healthy eating
- Medical care
- Mental healthcare
- Mentoring programs for adolescents
- Opportunities to contribute to the community (e.g., volunteering, leadership development, participation in community decision-making)
- Parenting education/skills development (for parents of adolescents)
- Public education
- Recreational activities
- Services for adolescents with physical or developmental disabilities
- Substance abuse prevention/treatment
- Transportation
- Tutoring
- Workforce training for teens
- Other (please specify): _____

25) Do you spend more than 30% of your yearly income on housing (including utilities)?

- Yes
- No

26) Do you or anyone in your household receive any assistance to help pay for housing?

- I receive only formal assistance - such as public housing, subsidized housing, or Housing Choice Vouchers (i.e., Section 8)
- I receive other types of assistance for housing - such as from friends or family
- I receive both formal assistance and other types of assistance
- I don't receive formal or other types of financial assistance for housing
- I don't know

27) Do you own your home or rent?

- Own
- Rent
- Not applicable (e.g., I live with a friend or family member, I have no place to live)

28) If you would prefer to own your own residence, but don't, what are the reasons?

Please select all that apply.

- N/A - I prefer to rent
- I would be the only occupant
- Lack of availability of suitable housing to buy
- Too expensive to buy
- Too hard to get financing
- Too much responsibility
- Too costly to maintain
- Too costly to insure
- Other (please specify): _____

29) Do you think your current housing is safe?

- Yes
- No

30) Are you satisfied with your current housing?

- Yes
- No

31) Why are you not satisfied with your current housing?

Please select all that apply.

- Too expensive
- Location
- Unsafe because of the condition of housing
- Too small
- Lack of privacy
- Other: _____

32) Think about the place you live. Do you have problems with any of the following?

Please select all that apply.

- Bug infestation
- Mold
- Lead paint or pipes
- Inadequate heat
- Oven or stove not working
- No or not working smoke detectors
- Water leaks
- None of the above

33) What services are needed?

- Ambulance services
- Emergency room
- Urgent Care
- Non-emergency medical transportation services
- Physical therapy and rehabilitation services
- Addiction treatment services
- Assisted living services

- Home health assistance
- Hospice
- Immunization services
- Allergist
- Behavioral health/counseling services
- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Dietician/Nutritionist
- Endocrinology
- Imaging services
- Oral surgery
- Obstetric care (OB)
- Oncology
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry
- Rheumatology
- Surgery
- Other (please specify): _____

34) What is your zip code? (Please enter a 5-digit ZIP code; for example, 67114 or 67042)

35) Are you a guardian of someone over 18 years of age?

- Yes
- No

36) What is your race and ethnicity?

Please select all that apply.

- Hispanic
- Black
- Asian (South, Southeast, East, etc.)
- Indigenous, Native American (Mexican, North or South American), or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- White
- Prefer to self-describe: _____

37) What is your gender?

Please select all that apply.

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary/Non-conforming/Genderqueer
- Prefer to self-describe: _____

38) What language is spoken most of the time in your home?

- English
- Spanish
- Another language (please specify): _____

Prefer not to answer

39) What is your relationship status?

- Single
- Domestic partnership
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Prefer not to answer

40) What was your total household income last year, before taxes?

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$14,999
- \$15,000 - \$24,999
- \$25,000 - \$34,999
- \$35,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$74,999
- \$75,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$149,999
- \$150,000 - \$199,999
- \$200,000 or more
- I don't know
- Prefer not to answer

41) What is the highest grade or year of school you have completed?

- Less than 9th grade
- 9th - 12th grade (no diploma)
- High school graduate (or GED/equivalent)
- Associate degree
- Vocational training
- Some college (no degree)
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree

42) What is your employment status?

- Self-employed
- Working more than one job
- Employed full-time (one job)
- Employed part-time
- Homemaker
- Retired - don't work
- Disabled - don't work
- Unemployed for 1 year or less
- Unemployed for more than 1 year

Which county do you currently work in?

- Ness County
- Other (please specify): _____

About CEI

For 40 years, the Community Engagement Institute has been dedicated to research/evaluation, facilitating learning, developing innovative solutions and building capacity with organizations across the state of Kansas. We look forward to partnering with you to support, design and implement the vision, purpose and goals of your organization.