

Passaic County Needs Assessment 2020

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JANUS Solutions

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PART 1



Executive Summary

Narrative: In the Words of the County

When the NJ Department of Children and Families requested that Passaic County complete a Needs Assessment focused on children and their families, County leadership decided to use this opportunity to review the needs of all of its residents - including seniors and the disabled (which were not included in the DCF protocols). With the assistance of JANUS Solutions, the Passaic County Department of Human Services completed this comprehensive needs assessment, conducted April to August 2020.

By definition, a needs assessment is an opportunity to examine the strengths, gaps and areas in need of development for a community. While we used multiple methods to gather information from the very diverse constituencies, from Paterson to West Milford, we intend with this report to communicate in ways that county government and community stakeholders get perspective needed to take action to help improve the community. During these months of information gathering we engaged with more than 2,600 residents and stakeholders, including 15 focus group gatherings (171 individuals), individual interviewees with key social service providers and other stakeholders (48), and, most importantly, from the 2450 residents who completed the needs assessment survey. As this report illustrates, data collected enables the reader to get a cogent picture of a County with tremendous diversity, a lot of will to make things better, and numerous challenges on which to focus attention.

While significant challenges exist – lonely seniors, struggling families, debilitating addictions, housing limitations, homelessness, to name a few – recommendations in each of the report’s sections offer means gleaned from the community for addressing them.

County stakeholders – governments, business, non-profits, faith communities, health care, and the like – have, within this report, a useful look into life in the county. Stakeholder determination to collaboratively address the county’s needs will result in a legacy of what can be achieved when all work together for the common good.

Following is a summary of Findings and Recommendations:

Positive Strengths: While Passaic County government, service providers, and community members face significant challenges in achieving good quality of life for all or most residents, a significant and uncommon powerful positive force emerged during the assessment. That force is made up of the will expressed by many individual, organizational, and governmental stakeholders to collaborate in new ways to address community issues. From the Bengali, Palestinian, and Dominican communities of Paterson, to the suburban communities of West Milford and Ringwood, to the Latin communities scattered throughout both lower county and

upper county, multi-sectoral stakeholders and residents have expressed strong desire to work together for the betterment of the county.

An additional strength for Passaic County are the rich diversity and community supports that are available for many of the individuals who make up the cultural-language communities of the County.

Obstacles faced by many residents: Residents identified many of the obstacles they or their friends, families, or neighbors face when seeking help for social service need areas. A summary of the most commonly identified needs are:

- * Limited housing, particularly scarce *affordable* housing results in multi-family settings and often substandard housing; enormous rental burdens diminish the ability to afford other, safer housing.
- * Systemic racism (“It’s in the air we breathe”) prevents many from equal access to opportunities and impacts social determinants of health and social and health inequity across all life spans.
- * Reducing the complexity in accessing services, including safety net services,
- * Significant intergenerational poverty that creates a sense of hopelessness with prolonged exposure to disadvantaged neighborhood environments and reduced child developmental outcomes.
- * Systems and resources that do not have significant and consistent service user input in the design and delivery for optimal use.
- * Addictions and mental illness and their stigma debilitate many with resources stretched to capacity.
- * Many seniors are isolated, living in long term care facilities, and face elevated health risks from COVID, and may also face discrimination from ageism.
- * Current national environment threatens the physical and mental health of the undocumented population.
- * Nonprofits are challenged by reduced funding, increased needs and sustainability.
- * Transportation options limit job seekers and those needing services, and impact the mobility of the community.
- * Increased isolation from COVID-19 increases struggles, particularly for individuals with a disability and their families

An often-overlooked aspect of needs within a county concerns the concept of episodes of need. These are times of heightened need, triggered for residents by a birth/new dependent, job loss, disability, or health crisis of self/loved one. These episodes are occurring more frequently during COVID and are well-documented. Data during COVID is difficult to come by, as it changes frequently, but the responses from some residents tells an important and sobering story.

Inequity and systemic racism persist in Passaic County and across the country; understanding their

dynamics is requiring some deep listening and conversation. The needs assessment began this process by engaging almost 3,000 residents in discussing their experiences, needs, and aspirations. Solutions to systemic issues can be forged out of the lived experience of those facing consequences of these disparities, and we received many comments from residents and stakeholders about the need for systemic change. Many commented that service needs and delivery must be examined in the context of racial justice and equality, and others gave examples of how their access to services is negatively affected by who they are, where they live, or their legal status.

The needs assessment highlighted the fact that the current human service systems are designed to deal with crises, rather than bend the curve and make investments towards proactive, preventive solutions. There are no organized systems of care to address needs, both short term and longer term, while bending the curve and making investments towards proactive, preventive solutions. An example of this is the need to focus on the management of the homelessness/potential homelessness as a result of the devastating effect that COVID has had on the economy, while also trying to address the longer term issue of affordable housing and homelessness in Passaic County.

Improvements in operations at the County DHS were also reviewed, since DHS should be the key entity with a coordinating responsibility for many established human services planning bodies. It is critical to improve the functioning and image of DHS, in order to support their role in implementation of accepted needs assessment recommendations. The interest and commitment of the larger human service system is needed to support this larger community mobilization effort to make things better for residents of the county. To accomplish this, there needs to be a comprehensive approach to establishing better relationships among DHS, service providers, other human service stakeholders and residents. Representative members of the diverse faith community and civic organizations should be included as crucial partners in community mobilization.

Recommendations Related to Systemic Findings:

✓ The County should launch a public-private comprehensive community mobilization, to implement the accepted recommendations of this report. This would be accomplished by establishing the **Passaic County Collective Impact Council**. The Council would leverage the

tremendous interest and expressed commitment of the Steering Committee, other key stakeholders and community residents to map out and implement strategies and systemic solutions to the priorities and challenges identified by this needs assessment. This will require high level, visible leadership from County Freeholders and County administration, and partnerships with municipalities and stakeholders around local human service needs (e.g., prevention, financial recovery, prisoner reentry, etc.).

- ✓ The Council will integrate the goal of racial justice as a priority in all planning, implementation and monitoring activities, including inequities in representation, resource allocation and service provision.
- ✓ The Council would over time serve to integrate and coordinate the planning, funding, implementation and evaluation of all human service related activities, **beginning with collective impact initiatives related to homelessness, the opioid epidemic and financial recovery and empowerment**. The Council will also review and prioritize the many recommendations in this report for consideration for action.
- ✓ The Council would review all county investments and related state and federal funding in human services to assure effectiveness, efficiency, resident satisfaction and consistency with forward-looking strategies.
- ✓ The Council will work towards establishing organized systems of services and supports to address current and future needs of residents utilizing the framework of this assessment as a guide. This can be done while providing immediate response to crises with a shift towards proactive prevention and early intervention. Organized systems of services and resources will assure that residents know how to find what they need, have resident-friendly access and can navigate connected provider networks based on their needs and aspirations.
- ✓ The Council will monitor the implementation of accepted recommendations and provide transparent reports to the public about progress and continuing challenges based on measurable benchmarks and outcomes.
- ✓ Establish a **“Collective Impact Cabinet,”** internal to County government, to assure coordination of all county departments in support of Council activities.

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- ✓ Explore and encourage partnerships with and among municipalities around local human service needs (e.g., prevention, homelessness, prisoner reentry, etc.).
 - ✓ With County leadership, develop strategies to maintain/enhance relationships with municipalities that result in coordinated, effective services and supports for residents.
 - ✓ Continue to improve the functioning and image of the Passaic County DHS, in order to support its role in implementation of accepted recommendations from the needs assessment.
 - Continue to focus on internal operations, especially regarding procurement and contract management, and relationship with funders.
 - Enhance DHS staff skills and reputation for leadership, communication, and problem solving on human service issues.

Community Mobilization for Collective Impact will require a well-conceived and well-executed **communication strategy** informed, trusted and embraced by the membership of the Council and members of the greater Passaic County community. Ultimately, the Council will demonstrate progress by targeting and benchmarking concrete improvements in the quality of life for Passaic County residents through the use of hard facts, or data and growing trust of residents through community voice.

Recommendations:

Our recommendations for implementation are based upon a systemic approach to change, including a focus on the coordination of planning, development and tracking for various issues, populations, and communities.

Specific recommendations are made in the report to address:

- Homelessness and affordable housing
- Unmet service needs, especially “up-county”
- The lack of mental health services and interpreters for those who speak languages other than English
- Transportation to higher paying wage jobs, and for seniors and families to services
- Residents, particularly immigrant and undocumented persons and seniors, that often do not know about, or have difficulty accessing, services and resources
- The dynamics of intergenerational poverty that reinforce poverty as the status quo for a small but significant portion of the population.
- Both violent crime and juvenile crime in Passaic County
- Opioid overdoses
- Babies being born with moms receiving no/late prenatal care.
- Lack of child care, particularly in this COVID environment
- The human services planning system and County Department of Human Services

Please note that much of the formatting of the full report that follows has been proscribed by the NJ Department of Children and Families. Passaic County has added additional information that covers the strengths and needs of residents not emphasized by DCF and utilizing the individual and family success framework to guide the process. That full report can be found on the Passaic County website.

Introduction

Purpose

The N.J. Department of Children and Families is partnering with human services organizations in each county to undertake an assessment of local strengths and needs. The goal of this assessment is to collect the information needed to make sure the right mix of services and activities are available in every county in New Jersey to support families. The findings from the needs assessment can be used to support the development of local recommendations to assist with decision making; the identification of high priority human service needs and barriers to service delivery for New Jersey's communities; the coordination and improvement of services to the Departments' target populations; the planning, funding, coordination and implementation of Department Initiatives.

This statewide approach to county-specific needs assessments aligns with DCF's existing county based continuous quality improvement review cycle, in which each county is evaluated every two years. The findings from the needs assessment will be embedded into the DCF's existing ChildStat process and shared with DCF staff and stakeholders during the county's ChildStat session. ChildStat is a learning, management, and accountability tool used by DCF to support continuous quality improvement, foster a shared sense of accountability and promote system-wide problem solving around critical issues affecting child and family outcomes. A ChildStat session incorporates analysis and interpretation of administrative data to support planning and dialogue between DCF executive management and senior leadership and system partners.

County Description

Narrative: In the Words of the County

Passaic County in northern New Jersey is home to approximately 504,041 residents. Of that number, 41,961 are under age 6, 39,106 are between 6 and 11 years of age, and 41,837 are between 12 and 17 years of age.

The County celebrates the diversity of its residents, where approximately 29% of the population are foreign born, and bring with them the traditions and values of their diverse cultures. In Passaic County, 65% of the population is Caucasian, 41% identifies as Hispanic, 14% are African American, 6% are Asian, and 17% are classified as "other" (including Arabic). Besides English, many residents throughout the County speak Spanish, Arabic, Bengali and Syleti. Unfortunately, 10.4% of the population are "linguistically isolated", meaning that their inability to communicate in English effects their quality of life.

There are 16 municipalities in the County, and a generally acknowledged division of the county to categorize those areas outside of the Paterson/Passaic/Clifton area as "up-county." While many in the County are thriving, other residents struggle with trying to manage on median incomes (\$66,476) that are well below the New Jersey average (\$79,363). The estimated cost of living for Passaic County is \$97,512, the 9th highest in the state. Incomes in the county range from a median income of \$116,198 in Ringwood, to \$34,920 in Paterson. Poverty in the county affects the very young (34,408 kids under 4 live in poverty), the older residents (26% of the senior population in Paterson live in poverty), and individuals and families across the county.

In Passaic County, on average 26% of a family's income is spent on housing - this is the highest percentage in the state. Food insecurity is estimated to affect at least 9.85% of the population. Passaic County has the second highest teen birth rate in New Jersey - 11.1 per 1,000 teens, and too many babies born after little or no prenatal care. The County also experiences high levels of violent crime and juvenile crime, both the 5th highest in the state. Like many other counties in New Jersey, Passaic also has seen an increase in opioid overdoses.

Additionally, the effects of COVID 19 have been severe on the county, as one of the "hot spots" in the state with higher positive results and individuals dying. Incomes, food security, and housing stability have all been severely impacted for many Passaic County residents. Passaic County (as of August of 2020) had 1,094 total deaths and 17,665 total confirmed cases. According to the NJ COVID dashboard, Passaic County had the fifth highest impact in positive COVID-19 cases.

Needs Assessment Methodology

Quantitative and qualitative data from various sources and stakeholders related to housing, food, health care, community safety, employment and career services, child care, services for families caring for a child of a relative, behavioral/mental health services for children, behavioral/mental health services for adults, substance use disorder services, domestic violence services, parenting skills services and legal and advocacy services were collected to inform this needs assessment.

County Data Profile

DCF provided a county data profile to the county Human Service Advisory Council (HSAC) to support the HSAC in identifying key topics to be explored in more depth. The data profile consists of the most recently available administrative data related to demographic population and selected indicators of poverty, housing, food security, childcare, health care, transportation, employment, community safety, mental health and substance use. The sources for the data included in the profile include a combination of federal databases. The primary purpose of the county data profiles is to support the HSAC needs assessment team in identifying key areas to prioritize during the focus group data collection efforts.

Approach for Prioritizing Needs

In addition to the data provided by DCF, JANUS Solutions also presented data to the Steering Committee, some specific to municipalities, in the areas of demographics and other indicators for additional populations within the county, such as seniors and the disabled. JANUS used the Family Success Framework (described below) to structure the data gathering, discussion and development of recommendations.

The premise of the individual and family success framework is that comprehensive, holistic investments in organized local systems of family and individual support and community improvement will, over time, produce dramatically better results for children, youth, individuals and families and thus improve quality of life for residents. This approach acknowledges that developmentally appropriate resources and services are required to successfully support people's developmental journeys through life.

The developmental stages of life represent the journey, and its goals are:

- * **Early Childhood Success (0-8 years old)** - All young children will be safe, healthy, and ready to learn.
- * **Positive Youth Development (9-15 years old)** - All school-age children and youth will be living in a permanent home, achieving in school, and connected to their families and communities.
- * **Strong Transitions to Adulthood (16-26 years old)** - Youth transitioning to adulthood will be on positive pathways to economic and social independence with strong and responsible family and community ties.
- * **Productive Adulthood (27- 62)** - adults will achieve their greatest potential for economic and social independence as responsible and contributing community members.
- * **Successful Aging (63 and over)**- aging adults will maintain their greatest level of independence, functioning, and dignity as valued members of their families and communities.

The family success framework was developed by JANUS Solutions and adopted by the New Jersey-based Family Success Institute. The developmental model, "Journeys of Family Success", provides a unifying vision for stakeholders' goals around child development and individual and family support in their community across four life areas, or pillars:

1. **Family and Community Connections**
2. **Safety and Financial Security**
3. **Health and Well Being**
4. **Learning and Education**

As material is presented throughout this report, we will refer to these pillars of support that individuals and families need to be successful. They differ slightly from the structure that DCF has requested be followed for this report: breaking down needs, findings and recommendations into the categories of "basic needs" and "service needs." A separate summary report, that includes attachments, has also been prepared for Passaic County by JANUS Solutions and is posted on the

Passaic County website.

The process began with the formation of a Needs Assessment Steering Committee, which met a total of 4 times, and served as ambassadors for the entire process - not only guiding it and providing input, but also in engaging the community to participate in focus groups and complete the survey that was developed. The group considered data and feedback from professionals, but were primarily guided by the significant responses of residents throughout the county. The county made special efforts to outreach the community by producing the survey in 4 languages - English, Spanish, Arabic, and Bengali - and by outreaching community organizations and faith-based leaders to engage their constituents in providing feedback about their needs and experiences. After a review of data, discussion with the various planning bodies in the county, and deliberation by the Steering Committee, several areas were chosen upon which to focus our outreach and information gathering efforts.

Based upon the information provided by DCF/Rutgers, that compiled by JANUS Solutions, and discussion of the Steering Committee, the four need areas selected by the county to be the focus areas and primary topics in the qualitative data (e.g. focus groups and key informant interviews) collection included:

1. **Housing and Poverty**
2. **Substance Use Disorder and Prevention Services (Adults and Adolescents)**
3. **Crime/Community Safety**
4. **Isolation**

Please note: These areas/categories differ from those potential areas identified in the DCF format of Basic and Service Need priorities. For the discussion of needs and recommendations in this report, the DCF format will be followed, and the additional basic need of food was identified as a PRIORITY.

Focus Groups

In an effort to implement a uniform needs assessment approach across counties to support statewide trend analysis, DCF required HSACs to conduct a series of focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to collect qualitative information to better understand the scope, nature and local context related to addressing community needs that influence families.

Focus groups sessions were scheduled for approximately one and a half hours with the first thirty minutes being designated for introductions and survey completion and the remaining hour being designated for the focus group dialogue. In each focus group session, participants were asked to complete a standard survey to gather data about the key topic areas outlined in the aforementioned data profiles. The survey was developed to identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement related to county-based supports and service array. The survey consists of demographic data and approximately 10 questions related to each of the eleven basic and service needs. Six of the questions are based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Upon completion of the surveys, the focus group participants were asked to transition into the dialogue component of the session. The dialogue requirement was intended to allow participants to highlight their experiences and perceptions as community members and provide opportunity for a deeper discussion and assessment of top barriers in each area of need. Group members discussed two selected basic and service need priority areas. Facilitators use a structured protocol to explain the purpose, goals, confidentiality and informed consent and objectives of the focus group.

Recruitment.

The Steering Committee was extremely helpful in helping to identify organizations, formal and informal, that could be outreached for participation in the surveys and focus groups. Unfortunately, because of the existing COVID pandemic, focus groups were extremely difficult to convene. Focus groups were primarily facilitated by JANUS Solutions team members via Zoom, with some additional support from Steering Committee members. Focus groups were facilitated in English, Spanish and Bengali.

Focus Group Participants.

A total of 15 focus groups were conducted in the county as part of this needs assessment. These focus groups were conducted from May 18, 2020 to July 16, 2020. There was a total number of 171 participants. The number of participants in each focus group ranged from a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 18 participants. During the focus group sessions, a total of 171 surveys were completed.

Key Informant Interviews.

Key informant interviews were conducted with 48 individuals to gather additional feedback from agency directors and other identified stakeholders selected by the HSACs regarding considerations for addressing the needs and concerns that were highlighted in the data profiles and focus group sessions. Facilitators used a structured protocol to explain the purpose, goals and objectives of the focus group.

Recruitment.

Recruitment of participants for Stakeholder interviews was broad, and interviewing served as a basis of relationship building/enhancement between the Passaic County DHS and the community, a suspected issue which was confirmed by the interviews. Interviews were also used to begin the process of designing solutions to identified issues by engaging stakeholders in agreeing to work collectively to resolve issues identified. Many different sectors were represented for Stakeholder interviews including elected government officials.

Key Informant Interview Participants. A total of 48 interviews were conducted in this county as part of this needs assessment. The total number of participants included was 48. These interviews were conducted from April 20, 2020 to July 31, 2020. There was a total of 48 surveys completed during the interview sessions.

Participant Demographics

As described in the above sections, both focus group and interview participants completed the needs assessment survey. Below we combine information for all participants to provide an overview of the participant demographics.

Role in the Community (not mutually exclusive)	Number of Participants
County Resident	2300
Staff or Volunteer with a Community-Based Organization (e.g., Health and Human Services providers, Planning Board Participants)	15
Staff or Volunteer with a Public Service Organization (e.g., paramedics, fire fighter, police officers, air force, judges)	0
Local Business Owner in the County	70
Community leader and advocate in the county (e.g., hold a volunteer office, clergy, activist)	103
Other	0

Age	Number of Participants
Under 18	73
18-24	91
25-34	213
35-44	912
45-54	830
55-64	176
65 and over	45

Gender	Number of Participants
Female	1948
Male	362
Non-binary, third gender/transgender	6
Prefer Not to Say	18
Other	1

Race	Number of Participants
American Indian or Alaska Native	17
Asian	178
Black or African-American	235
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
White or Caucasian	881
Multi-Race (2 or More of the Previous)	112
Other	949

Ethnicity	Number of Participants
Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origins	1228
No Hispanic Latino or Spanish Origins	1092

Education Level	Number of Participants
Grades Preschool-8	0
Grades 9-12-Non-Graduate	75
High School Graduate or GED	334
High School/GED <u>and</u> Some College/Trade	764
2 or 4-Year College/Trade School Graduate (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	1099
Graduate or Other Post-Secondary School	See Above

Employment Status	Number of Participants
Employed: Full-Time	1214
Employed: Part-Time	291
Unemployed-Looking for Work	425
Unemployed-Not Looking for Work	0
Retired	45
Student	0
Self Employed	127
Unable to Work	101

Services Accessed by a Household Member within the last 2 Years	Number of Participants
Yes	486
No	1749

Household Member History of Involvement with NJ Division of Child Protection and Permanency	Number of Participants
Yes	37
No	2184

Participants represented the following:

- Municipalities across the county, with special emphasis on outreaching the "up-county" area, where services are not as readily available for individuals or families.
- Every zip code of Passaic County included residents who participated in the survey including:
 - 756 residents of Paterson
 - 497 residents from Clifton
 - 202 residents of Passaic
 - 375 residents of North Haledon
 - 108 residents of Woodland Park
 - 106 residents of Wayne.

Additional Data Collection Methodologies

JANUS Solutions provided summary data to supplement that which was prepared by Rutgers University for the Human Services Advisory Council, and by DCF on the Children's System of Care. Existing County plans in the health, human services, and workforce development areas were also reviewed, and key findings shared with the Steering Committee.

PART 2



Key Findings Across Needs



Need Area: Housing

Status: Prioritized Need Area

Housing includes the availability of affordable, stable, permanent and acceptable living accommodations. This need area seeks to assess the sufficiency of housing in the county and the degree to which residents are homeless or threatened with eviction, as well as the existence of community supports (e.g., subsidy, vouchers, etc.) and services aimed at ensuring housing for all (e.g., Homelessness Prevention Program, Housing Resource Center, community shelters, County Board of Social Services, Section 8, affordable housing, housing authorities, etc.).

In Passaic County, 26 percent of households experienced severe cost burden (50% of income or more is spent on housing) for housing in 2017. This percentage is greater than the percentage for the state of New Jersey (American Community Survey; see *County Data Profile for Additional Source Information*). In 2017 the latest year of data made available in the county profile packet, 32 percent of households experienced at least one of four severe housing problems: 1.) overcrowding determined by high person-per-room, persons-per-bedroom, or unit square footage-per-person; 2) severe cost burden, 3) lack of kitchen facilities, or 4) lack of plumbing facilities (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy; data compiled by HUD; see *Data Profile for Additional Source Information*).

Need Assessment Key Findings

Summary: Scope of the Need

In the survey section of this assessment, housing issues certainly were identified as a key concern for residents. In the section that allowed individuals to comment, over 300 individuals indicated housing concerns. The most frequent comments in this area included the issue of waiting lists-many residents indicated that they remain on a waiting list for subsidized housing for years. In addition, “too expensive” was also a common issue that residents felt strongly about and commented on in this section. Comments on the rising property taxes was also cited in this section.

The need for more affordable and market rate housing was also another theme from surveys, stakeholder groups and focus groups. Housing for sober living was also another area of need that was identified. Another housing related issue also included safety. Residents indicated when they can find rental housing that they can afford, it is often in a neighborhood that they feel is unsafe but have no other options.

One strategy solution that was raised for housing included incorporating federal resources to help families afford safe and stable housing. Programs that could potentially cover housing-related services and tenant services could potentially be paid through Medicaid dollars.

Homelessness was also identified and the need for more shelter beds, a coordinated team approach needed with the development of relationships for the chronic homeless and those who are living on

the street with service providers so that trust can be developed and maintained.

Summary: Nature of the Need

A number of study participants shared emotional accounts that challenge typical notions of who experiences need for social services and in fact, the COVID-19 situation also impacted many individuals who suddenly lost income without any time to prepare and were concerned about most basic needs including their housing stability. One interviewee revealed that she recently earned over \$100,000, another was a recent top student in the graduating class and still another demonstrates leadership at child's school as President of the Parent-Teacher Organization. The message that they wanted people to understand is that they would not want others to know of their struggles, but also that others in the community would never think that they are "the ones" who need assistance. This inability to suspend judgement of people in poverty does prevent some from accessing services or living in "designated" low income housing. In the words of someone who recently had to access services, "We are not 'those people.' We are neighbors and friends and family and coworkers."

Interview participants describe triggers for unanticipated periods of heightened poverty and rather than chronic need or experience of generational poverty, situation poverty often includes feelings of deep shame. Also, in several focus groups individuals commented on the lack of professionalism and courtesy provided when accessing government services, "County is one of the scariest places to go to obtain assistance because the employees aren't friendly or kind. They actually take hope away from people looking for services."

Individuals who experience situational poverty may need services, especially basic need services, for several months, or in some cases, particularly with medical reasons, this may be as long as several years. One participant discusses the impact of an unexpected family medical need: "My son, who is now 12, had three brain surgeries 4 years ago:" I lost my job [caring for him]. At the time we were making \$150,000 . . . I had plenty of savings, but now we went through all that and here I am needing help." The primary triggers named by participants as leading to episodes of heightened need include a birth/new dependent, disability, job loss, and health crisis of self/loved one.

The issue of poverty is difficult to separate from the housing/homelessness issues raised by many as the top need in the County. While the DCF format does not support identifying poverty as a separate issue, in the full needs assessment report to the County, it is identified as a separate need. Unfortunately, poverty has increased as a result of the COVID pandemic, and coordinated strategies to address this have been recommended.

Need Area: Survey Resultsⁱ

Item-Housing	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	1147	31.2%	31%	18.7%	18.0%	1.1%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	1147	36.0%	35.2%	16.8%	10.2%	1.8%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	1147	34.8%	34%	10%	10.2%	10%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	1147	35%	35.6%	14.7%	14.6%	6.4%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	1147	30.6%	36.6%	16.6%	10.7%	5.5%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	1147	36.5%	26.5%	20.0%	7.2%	9.8%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	1221	581	47.58%
Services do not exist	1221	285	18.43%
Transportation	1221	203	16.63%
Cannot contact the service provider	1221	191	15.64%
Too expensive	1221	451	36.94%
Lack of awareness of service	1221	404	33.09%
Cultural Barriers	1221	188	15.40%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	1221	145	11.88%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	1221	183	14.99%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	1221	531	43.49%
Other (explain below)			

Need Area: Food

Status: Prioritized Need Area

Food security is the availability and ability to acquire nutritionally adequate and safe foods. This area of need seeks to assess the level to which residents throughout the county have adequate food and the existence of community services and supports to address unmet food needs (e.g., food banks, soup kitchen, local pantry, community-based organization, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), food stamps, Women, Infants, Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition Program, etc.).

In **Passaic County**, the food insecurity rate for households was approximately 9.8 percent in **2018**, the most recent date of available data (U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey and U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service; *see County Data Profile for Additional Source Information*). This percentage is **greater than** the percentage rate for New Jersey.

Need Assessment Key Findings

Summary: Scope of the Need

As a result of the COVID pandemic, more individuals and families in Passaic County are experiencing food insecurity. Food insecurity, even pre-COVID, was estimated to effect 16.2% of all children, and 9.8% of all adults in the county. In 2017, 43,065 children had their food needs partially met in school by participating in the free/reduced lunch programs across the county. . Food insecurity is also a result of poverty, which has been identified as a major barrier to individual and family success for many residents.

While many in the County are thriving, other residents struggle with trying to manage on median incomes (\$66,476) that are well below the New Jersey average (\$79,363). The estimated cost of living for Passaic County is \$97,512, the 9th highest in the state. Incomes in the county range from a median income of \$116,198 in Ringwood, to \$34,920 in Paterson. Poverty in the county effects the very young (34,408 kids under 4 live in poverty), the older residents (26% of the senior population in Paterson live in poverty), and individuals and families across the county. While the statewide average of children living in poverty is 12%, in Passaic County that number is 25.8%; in Paterson it is 36.6%; in Prospect Park it is 24.2%; and, in Haledon it is 14.5%.

Quotes from participant to demonstrate need related to food insecurity:

“I'm autistic and people with intellectual disabilities are twice as likely to be obese. I don't know if they don't have access to, or if they don't know about, the food shelf or healthy foods.”

“I don't want people to think I can't provide for my kids and I'm just looking for a handout. I work my butt

off, but I still do need help, I'm a single mom. I am wise with my money, I go to work every day, and work a lot. The last thing I want to do is look for a handout, I don't want people to think that's what I'm doing. If it comes down to breaking the bank or asking for help before I'm judged, I'll break the bank."

"I guarantee, if somebody needs food assistance, they probably need some assistance with other areas beyond that."

Summary: Nature of the Need

Since food is a basic need, it is important to know that when ranked in the survey, it was determined to be a top need and almost half of the individuals indicated food was their second priority after housing and for 15% of individuals food was more critical than housing. We learned that accessing food pantries can have many barriers and access to nutritional food was even more concerning. Individuals requiring specific food for dietary needs commented on the difficulties to have nutritional food that met their dietary requirements, such as gluten free, low sodium. One focus group also indicated that the WIC staff had the second worst customer service and this was stated as a barrier to service. Convenient hours for food pantries, convenient locations, and increased selection were all top areas that could be improved.

It should be noted that almost all of the County funds planned for by the Human Services Advisory Council go to address food insecurity in the county.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	1066	28.2%	30.0%	20.4%	16.4%	5.0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	1066	40.0%	41.6%	5.1%	6.0%	7.3%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	1066	40.4%	38.2%	9.4%	10.0%	2.0%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	1066	30.8%	35%	10.2%	10.2%	8.0%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	1066	30.5%	39.5%	10.9%	14.9%	4.2%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	1066	20.5%	49.7%	11.00%	10.5%	8.3%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	1024	230	21.78%
Services do not exist	1024	118	11.17%
Transportation	1024	205	19.41%
Cannot contact the service provider	1024	126	11.93%
Too expensive	1024	263	24.91%
Lack of awareness of service	1024	350	33.14%
Cultural Barriers	1024	152	14.39%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	1024	142	13.45%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	1024	175	16.57%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	1024	409	38.73%
Other (explain below)			

Need Area: Health Care

Status: General Need Area

Health care service providers deliver medical care, including health promotion, disease prevention and diagnosis and treatment services, to children and adults. This need area seeks to determine the level of residents in the county with health care needs, the availability of insurance coverage, and the existence of community services and supports that address health and wellness (e.g., doctors and clinics, hospitals, Medicaid Services, Home Visiting Programs, Family Success Centers, etc.).

In **Passaic County**, the estimated proportion of children under 18 years old (minors) with no health insurance coverage was 5.4 percent in 2018. This percentage is **greater than** the estimated percentage of minors with no health insurance for New Jersey in the same year (ACS; see Data Profile for Additional Source Information).

In Passaic County in **2018**, there were 525 reports of lack of or no prenatal care. This was an **increase** of 69 reports from the previous year (Center for Disease Control and Prevention; see *Data Profile for Additional Source Information*).

Need Assessment Key Findings

The costs associated with health care were identified as a concern for residents, this included medical care and prescriptions. Also, dental care expansion for adults was also identified as an area of need. Health Care was also the third highest ranking need. In the survey data, healthcare concerns ranked third as the highest priority, 18% of individuals listed healthcare as their second highest concern and 44% of survey respondents listed this as their third highest priority. In addition, comments on Health Care also included a lack of medical professionals who accept Medicaid and concerns of health equity in accessing medical services and services with very limited languages.

Summary: Scope of the Need

The scope of need is expansive, including access to healthcare, affordable healthcare, and culturally competent healthcare.

Summary: Nature of the Need

Health Care and healthy communities require positive community resources, support and engagement. Health care is not a sole influencer of health, but rather, it is strongly influenced by access to living wage employment, access to quality education, stable, safe and affordable housing, access to food, healthy environments and air quality, access to transportation and a host of quality of life issues.

In 2018, 525 babies were born in Passaic County after their moms received no/late prenatal

care. his number rose from 476 two years earlier. However, the trend for children having health care coverage is increasing, with only 5.4% of children in the county without coverage. Adults do not fare as well, however, with 17.8% of adults up to age 64 having no health coverage, even prior to COVID causing individuals to lose their jobs and accompanying health coverage.

Access to specialists, especially psychiatrists or providers those speaking languages other than English, is also a need.

The issue of stigma for individuals experiencing mental health and/or addiction issues was raised repeatedly, and Passaic County DHS has made significant progress in working with the communities in addressing this issue.

Summary: Local Considerations for Addressing the Need for County Prioritized Need Area

Access to more and earlier pre-natal care is needed for women in Passaic County. This includes outreach, engagement in services, and ongoing support.

Community health workers (CHW) are needed, particularly for undocumented immigrants and those from cultural/language communities that are underserved. Individuals such as this are at particular risk of isolation, as are many older residents in the county, particularly during the COVID pandemic.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	919	30%	33.1%	18.9%	18.0%	0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	919	26.5%	43.5%	15.3%	10.7%	4%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	919	22.0%	44.9%	23.6%	9.5%	0%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	919	30.5%	40.3%	14.1%	14.1%	1%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	919	36.5%	36.5%	12.5%	13.5%	1%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	919	35.0%	34.5%	10.7%	14.7%	5.1%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	993	293	29.51%
Services do not exist	993	153	15.41%
Transportation	993	183	18.43%
Cannot contact the service provider	993	166	16.72%
Too expensive	993	416	41.89%
Lack of awareness of service	993	324	32.63%
Cultural Barriers	993	161	16.21%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	993	160	16.11%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	993	126	12.69%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	993	490	49.35%
Other (explain below)			

Need Area: Crime/ Community Safety

Status: Prioritized Need Area

Community safety is the ability to be and feel safe from crime or violence in one's community and public spaces. This need area seeks to assess the level to which residents throughout the county are safe from crime or violence and the existence of community services and supports to assist residents with being and feeling safe in their community (e.g., local police, DCF's Child Protection and Permanency, Family Success Centers, security companies, neighborhood watch, safe havens, hospitals, etc.)

In Passaic County there was a total of 1,881 violent crimes in 2018 and the *violent crime* rate per 1,000 was 3.7 percent (NJ Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of NJ State Police, Uniform Crime Reports, Updated 8/15/19; see Data Profile for Additional Source Information). Of the *non-violent* crimes committed there was a total of 18 arson, 1077 motor vehicle theft, 5718 larceny and 1690 burglary in Passaic County (NJ Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of NJ State Police, Uniform Crime Report, Updated 8/15/19; see Data Profile for Additional Source Information).

Need Assessment Key Findings

Summary: Nature of the Need

In answering questions regarding community safety only 33% indicated that they felt the community was safe and there were adequate resources. Many individuals have stated that the streets are not safe and they frequently witness illegal drug transactions. Comments also indicated that residents want the police departments to be more visible and to be representative of the people in the community. More accessible "sub-stations" that are in the community where law enforcement would be more accessible was an area identified as a possible strategy for improving neighborhood safety. Another area that was also identified to improve community safety involved more prevention programs to deter youth from juvenile justice system through additional Station House Adjustment programs. Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives have had an impact on reducing system involvement and more interventions are needed.

"There needs to be more prevention interventions. Often families call asking for help, but help is only available once the youth is legally involved or DCP&P. There needs to be more mentoring accessible without system (DCP&P, legal, or CMO) involvement. We need to fund and empower community workers/ messengers who can come alongside those engaged in gang and drug activities."

A frequent comment was also, "Too many guns, too much violence, too many gangs."

Community safety concerns were also more prevalent in certain zip codes by survey respondents. Passaic, Paterson and Clifton while had more responses in general, also had more concerns around community safety. Many indicated that they were victims of a crime or they live in a neighborhood that

they feel is unsafe and has too much violence. Gangs were also commented on and gang violence was cited as another community safety concern.

Summary: Local Considerations for Addressing the Need for County Prioritized Need Area

- ✓ Communities should be encouraged to complete neighborhood assessments on safety and crime issues and develop new solutions for crime mapping.
- ✓ “Neighborhood Watch” and other police-community partnerships to address crime should be explored across the county and should be encouraged and supported by the county and its municipalities.
- ✓ Volunteer supports for these and other activities aimed at increasing community safety should be developed and supported.
- ✓ Continue to examine and take steps to address racial justice and minority overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system, and to use trauma-informed practices to serve youth.
- ✓ Continue to develop the Prisoner Reentry program through existing and new partnerships.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	812	30.0%	33.0%	23.1%	10.9%	3%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	812	38.0%	38.4%	12.5%	11.7%	0%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	812	41.35%	37.35%	11.3%	12.5%	1.5%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	812	34.5%	37.4%	13.9%	13.0%	1.2%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	812	35.0%	35.0%	13.5%	13.5%	3.0%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	812	38.8	39.0%	10.0%	12.2%	0%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	884	154	18.16%
Services do not exist	884	201	23.70%
Transportation	884	116	13.68%
Cannot contact the service provider	884	129	15.21%
Too expensive	884	121	14.27%
Lack of awareness of service	884	393	46.34%
Cultural Barriers	884	211	24.88%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	884	160	18.87%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	884	147	17.33%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	884	204	24.06%
Other (explain below)			

Need Area: Employment and Career Services**Status: General Need Area**

Employment is the condition of having paid work or an alternate ability to earn a living. This need area seeks to determine the employment status (e.g., full or part-time, permanent or temporary) of county residents and the employment opportunities within a county, as well as the existence of community services and supports to assist in ensuring employment (e.g., unemployment services, career development, County One-Stop Centers, Family Success Centers, County Board of Social Services, etc.)

Summary: Nature of the Need

In this section of the report, we will highlight issues related to access to services, both to secure employment and to access needed supports. People need better transportation to work, school and play.

“75% of the resources I wasn't even aware of. I may have heard about them but to have them all in one place, especially for people who aren't internet savvy, on a very basic and easy to read and understand level. We need that in this community.”

“Ideally we would have a one-stop shop. The community is not set up to serve people efficiently. It is all so frustrating for people in need. They just give up.”

“There is so much red tape behind everything. It is hard to navigate.”

“We make things almost too college level, which doesn't work for people in crisis.”

Summary: Local Considerations for Addressing the Need for County Prioritized Need Area

- ✓ Ensure that supports and benefits are made available to residents who are eligible. This includes educating the community on the availability of the One Stop Career Center, SNAP, Work First NJ, Medicaid, and Family Care (including Children's Health Insurance Program/CHIP), EITC, Child Care Tax Credits, etc.
- ✓ Increase the accessibility of online applications for these services at locations across the county, especially in Family Success Centers, other CBOs, libraries, etc.
- ✓ Support the development of programs and services that focus on residents' accessing financial support services, such as VITA, EITC, first time homeowner programs, financial planning and other related services.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	746	38.0%	38.0%	17.1%	16.3%	1.0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	746	39.0%	38.5%	11.0%	11.5%	0.0%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	746	35.0%	35.0%	13.5%	12.5%	4.0%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	746	34.5%	33.0%	16.4%	16.0%	.1%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	746	38.0%	38.7%	12.2%	10.1%	1.0%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	746	39.1%	39.0%	11.0%	10.9%	0.0%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	821	253	30.82%
Services do not exist	821	178	21.68%
Transportation	821	181	22.05%
Cannot contact the service provider	821	151	18.39%
Too expensive	821	83	10.11%
Lack of awareness of service	821	370	45.07%
Cultural Barriers	821	184	22.41%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	821	158	19.24%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	821	114	13.89%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	821	321	39.10%
Other (explain below)			

Need Area: CHILD CARE**Status: General Need Area**

Child care services include agencies that provide care and supervision to children; as well as, before- and after- school care programs. This need area seeks to assess the level to which residents throughout the county need child care and before and after school care and the existence of community services and supports that address the need for child care (e.g., licensed daycares providers, subsidized and unsubsidized childcare, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, Family Success Centers, County Board of Social Services, etc.)

In Passaic County in 2019 the median monthly center-based child care cost for an infant was equal to the median monthly cost for NJ. The median monthly center-based child care cost for a toddler was equal to the median monthly cost for NJ. Median monthly center-based child care cost child care cost for Pre-K in Passaic County was equal to the median monthly cost for NJ.

Need Assessment Key Findings**Summary: Scope of the Need**

There is a lack of affordable day care options for many, particularly in Passaic and Paterson and in the up county area. This is a critical challenge during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Summary: Nature of the Need**Summary: Local Considerations for Addressing the Need for County Prioritized Need Area**

- ✓ Work with the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, and the County Council for Young Children, to develop strategies to increase the number and quality of Registered Family Day Care Providers, licensed childcare centers, and the safety of child care services.
- ✓ Continue collaborative efforts to improve school performance, and continue to support teens in their efforts to transition successfully to adulthood through programs such as summer youth
- ✓ Continue collaborative efforts among County DHS, the One Stop Career Center, and the Workforce Development Board to address the unemployment situation in the county, during and post-COVID, including the needs of those with disabilities or criminal histories.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	689	30.5%	30.5%	19.5%	19.5%	0.0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	689	35.0%	35.0%	13.8%	13.2%	3.0%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	689	33.1%	38.5%	13.2%	12.0%	3.2%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	689	35.0%	35.0%	10.5%	15.5%	4.0%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	689	35.0%	35.0%	15.0%	15.5%	0.0%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	689	35.5%	35.5%	14.5%	14.5%	0.0%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	783	314	40.10%
Services do not exist	783	126	16.09%
Transportation	783	180	22.99%
Cannot contact the service provider	783	93	11.88%
Too expensive	783	370	47.25%
Lack of awareness of service	783	259	33.08%
Cultural Barriers	783	118	15.07%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	783	135	17.24%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	783	75	9.58%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	783	333	42.53%
Other (explain below)			

PART 3

Results: Specialized Service Needs



Need Area: Services for Families Caring for a Child of a Relative

Status: General Need Area

Kinship services are supports for caregivers who have taken on the responsibility of caring for kin, including financial assistance, support groups, navigation of government benefits and assistance, and more. This need area seeks to assess the level to which residents require kinship services and the existence of community services and supports to support caregivers' ability to care for their kin (e.g., Kinship Navigator Program, DCF's Division of Child Protection and Permanency, Family Success Centers, County Board of Social Services, etc.).

Need Assessment Key Findings

Summary: Scope of the Need

Passaic County has 2,649 relatives caring for children.

Summary: Nature of the Need

This was a particularly difficult topic to address in the COVID environment. This topic area was not a focus area during the assessment, as we were not very successful in engaging those families who have worked with the Division of Child Protection and Permanency in DCF, nor relative caregivers of children.

We assume these residents have similar needs as others in the county who are struggling to meet their needs, with the additional challenge of caring for a relative. Many may be challenged by health issues, be older individuals, and need support to help the child deal with separation issues related to the birth family.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	580	33.0%	33.0%	17.0%	17.0%	0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	580	37.2%	37.0%	12.8%	12.8%	0.2%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	580	35.0%	35.0%	10.1%	10.0%	4.9%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	580	37.0%	37.0%	13.5%	12.5%	0.0%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well-supplied).	580	36.5%	36.0%	13.5%	13.5%	0.5%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	580	35.0%	40.3%	11.7%	11.2%	1.8%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	667	181	27.14%
Services do not exist	667	157	23.54%
Transportation	667	127	19.04%
Cannot contact the service provider	667	90	13.49%
Too expensive	667	190	28.49%
Lack of awareness of service	667	268	40.18%
Cultural Barriers	667	115	17.24%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	667	126	18.89%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	667	77	11.54%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	667	241	36.13%
Other (explain below)			

Need Area: Behavioral/Mental Health Services for Children

Status: General Need Area

Child behavioral/mental health services are services designed to assess, address and support the emotional, psychological and social well-being of children. This need area seeks to assess the level to which children throughout the county have behavioral/mental health disorders, their ability to cope and function, and the existence of community services and supports to address children's behavioral/mental health needs (e.g., hospitals, in/out-patient therapy, individualized counseling, medication management, PerformCare, DCF's Children's System of Care, Family Support Organizations, etc.)

Need Assessment Key Findings

Summary: Scope of the Need

From the Care Management Organization, we understand that 88 Passaic County youth are in residential placements, and 15% overall reside outside their homes. in OOH. The percentage of youth in out of home placements have increased, and challenges include court orders for youth to placement prior to CMO involvement. The majority of families, 85% come from Paterson, Clifton and Passaic, and less than 2% come from West Milford.

Fortunately, there are an array of programs in Passaic County to address family relationships, including:

- ❖ 3 Family Success Centers and 3 Family Friendly Centers
- ❖ 8 School-Based Youth Services Programs
- ❖ Kinship Navigator Program
- ❖ Healthy Families/TIP
- ❖ Parents as Teachers Program
- ❖ 2 Parent Linking Programs

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	554	32.1%	32.1%	17.9%	17.9%	0.0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	554	33.0%	38.0%	11.8%	12.0%	5.2%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	554	36.5%	36.5%	13.8%	13.2%	0.0%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	554	34.6%	34.6%	15.8%	15.0%	0.0%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	554	33.5%	34.5%	15.3%	15.7%	1.0%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	554	34.8%	32.7%	14.5%	15.5%	2.5%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	673	222	32.99%
Services do not exist	673	157	23.33%
Transportation	673	122	18.13%
Cannot contact the service provider	673	111	16.49%
Too expensive	673	188	27.93%
Lack of awareness of service	673	316	46.95%
Cultural Barriers	673	141	20.95%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	673	138	20.51%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	673	162	24.07%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	673	235	34.92%
Other (explain below)			

Need Area: Behavioral/Mental Health Services for Adults**Status: General Need Area**

Adult behavioral/mental health services include services designed to assess, address and support the emotional, psychological and social well-being of adults. This need area seeks to assess the level to which adult residents throughout the county have behavioral/mental health disorders, their ability to function and the existence of community services and supports to address adult behavioral/mental health needs (e.g., hospitals, in/out-patient therapy, individualized counseling, medication management, Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, PerformCare, etc.).

Need Assessment Key Findings**Summary: Scope of the Need****Summary: Local Considerations for Addressing the Need for County Prioritized Need Area**

- ✓ Use established planning bodies to examine the availability of services, especially up county, and make recommendations about service expansion, including languages in which services will be provided, as needed.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	521	31.7%	31.7%	18.6%	18.0%	0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	521	35.5%	38.3%	12.5%	10.5%	3.2%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	521	36.0%	35.0%	14.4%	12.4%	2.2%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	521	32.0%	35.0%	15.5%	16.0%	1.5%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	521	35.4%	36.0%	14.0%	13.6%	1.0%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	521	30.0%	32.0%	17.2%	17.7%	3.1%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	632	229	35.28%
Services do not exist	632	145	22.94%
Transportation	632	137	21.68%
Cannot contact the service provider	632	107	16.93%
Too expensive	632	199	31.49%
Lack of awareness of service	632	316	50.00%
Cultural Barriers	632	153	24.21%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	632	127	20.09%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	632	164	25.95%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	632	234	37.63%
Other (explain below)			

Need Area: Substance Use Disorder and Prevention Services (Adults and Adolescents)

Status: Prioritized Need Area

Substance use treatment services includes services that provide a range of assessment and supportive treatment for substance use disorders. This need area seeks to gauge the substance use needs and the existence of community services and supports to address substance use disorder needs throughout the county (e.g., detoxification, short- and long-term inpatient treatment services, outpatient treatment services, medication management, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, NJ 2-1-1, etc.)

Need Assessment Key Findings

Summary: Scope of the Need

The opioid epidemic, although somewhat overshadowed currently by the COVID epidemic, continues to have a significant impact on the lives of residents of Passaic County. Overdoses have increased by 110% in recent years (up to 171 in 2019), as have Naloxone administrations – a 450% increase from 2015 to 2019, with 846 life-saving incidents occurring in 2019. Substance use disorder treatment services are available within the county, with the largest admissions coming from the major cities in the county: Paterson (2,892), Passaic (577), and Clifton (476). There are also 47 programs cross the county that provide mental health treatment services, and a directory of services on the County DHS website.

The issue of stigma, for individuals experiencing mental health and/or addiction issues was raised repeatedly, and Passaic DHS is involved in addressing this issue.

Summary: Local Considerations for Addressing the Need for County Prioritized Need Area

Consider coordination, and possible integration, of the planning bodies to address these behavioral health needs. Focus on the development of an organized system of services and supports in the areas of prevention, early intervention and aftercare.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	469	30.5%	28.5%	19.5%	20.0%	1.5%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	469	35.5%	40.0%	13.0%	12.0%	0.0%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	469	34.5%	34.5%	14.0%	14.7%	2.3%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	469	34.5%	35.0%	12.5%	13.5%	4.5%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	469	36.5%	35.0%	13.6%	13.5%	1.4%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	469	35.0%	35.0%	14.4%	14.5%	1.0%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	551	176	31.94%
Services do not exist	551	127	23.05%
Transportation	551	116	21.05%
Cannot contact the service provider	551	87	15.79%
Too expensive	551	149	27.04%
Lack of awareness of service	551	290	52.63%
Cultural Barriers	551	122	22.14%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	551	112	20.33%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	551	153	27.77%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	551	189	34.30%
Availability of Substance Use Disorder Services			
Availability of Substance Abuse Prevention Programs			
Other (explain below)			



Need Area: Domestic Violence Services**Status: General Need Area**

Domestic violence is violence or other forms of abuse by one person against another in a domestic setting, e.g., husband and wife, child and parent, sibling and sibling, etc. This need area seeks to assess the level to which domestic violence impact residents throughout the county and the existence of community services and supports that will keep families safe from physical, sexual, financial, digital, mental and emotional forms of domestic violence (e.g., shelter services, victim services, batterers intervention services, DCF's Office of Domestic Violence Services, domestic violence liaisons, domestic violence hotline, Family Success Centers, etc.)

Need Assessment Key Findings**Summary: Scope of the Need**

Relationships among family members are, unfortunately, sometimes problematic. Domestic violence reports in Passaic County are declining, from 4,013 in 2012 to 3,367 four years later. Most incidents occur in Paterson, Passaic, and Clifton.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	458	32.0%	32.0%	18.8%	18.0%	0.0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	458	34.8%	35.0%	14.7%	13.0%	2.5%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	458	35.0%	32.0%	15.0%	16.0%	2.0%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	458	32.0%	37.0%	14.5%	15.5%	1.0%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	458	34.5%	33.8%	15.2%	14.5%	2.0%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	458	38.9%	32.0%	15.3%	13.8%	0.0%	100%

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Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	519	104	20.04%
Services do not exist	519	118	22.7%
Transportation	519	78	15.03%
Cannot contact the service provider	519	89	17.15%
Too expensive	519	72	13.87%
Lack of awareness of service	519	300	57.80%
Cultural Barriers	519	138	26.59%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	519	113	21.77%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	519	138	26.59%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	519	151	29.09
Other (explain below)			



Need Area: Parenting Skills Services**Status: General Need Area**

Parenting skills services are programs that aim to enhance parental capacity and skills, improve parenting practices and behaviors, and teach age appropriate child development skills and milestones. This need area seeks to assess the level to which residents require parenting skills services and the existence of community services and supports which address parenting skills (e.g., Home Visiting Program, Nurse-Family Partnership, Family Preservation, Family Success Centers, Family Service Organizations, Parents Anonymous, Parent Mentors, SPAN, etc.).

Need Assessment Key Findings**Summary: Scope of the Need**

Respondents to the survey focused on the need for child care. About one-half, or 47% of survey respondents indicated that the cost of childcare was too expensive. It was also noted that transportation for childcare is also an issue. Other needs that were indicated included cultural barriers to accessing childcare and another issue that was identified in this key area included eligibility requirements-this may relate to legal status for subsidized child care assistance.

Summary: Nature of the Need

Parenting programs are provided by the Family Success centers in the County, and by other service providers.

Summary: Local Considerations for Addressing the Need for County Prioritized Need Area

Fortunately, there are an array of programs in Passaic County to address family relationships, including:

- ❖ 3 Family Success Centers and 3 Family Friendly Centers
- ❖ 8 School-Based Youth Services Programs
- ❖ Kinship Navigator Program
- ❖ Healthy Families/TIP
- ❖ Parents as Teachers Program
- ❖ 2 Parent Linking Programs
- ❖ Numerous localized Faith Based Programs

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	440	32.0%	32.0%	17.5%	18.5%	0.0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	440	34.5%	34.5%	13.5%	13.0%	4.5%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	440	34.0%	39.0%	12.5%	13.5%	0.0%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	440	31.1%	31.5%	15.9%	15.0%	6.5%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	440	32.5%	35.5%	16.4%	15.6%	0.0%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	440	32.5%	32.5%	14.7%	15.3%	5.0%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	525	113	21.52%
Services do not exist	525	140	26.67%
Transportation	525	82	15.62%
Cannot contact the service provider	525	65	12.38%
Too expensive	525	79	15.05%
Lack of awareness of service	525	289	55.05%
Cultural Barriers	525	121	23.05%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	525	108	20.57%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	525	90	17.14%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	525	144	27.43%
Other (explain below)			



Summary: Local Considerations for Addressing the Need for County Prioritized Need Area

Legal and advisory services include legal assistance, advocacy and support in various types of legal matters, including child support, child custody, paternity, immigration, domestic violence, housing and eviction, criminal, etc. This need area seeks to assess if the level to which residents throughout the county have unresolved legal issues for which they need assistance and the existence of legal and advisory services to meet those needs (e.g., Legal Aid, pro-bono attorneys and clinics, court system, ombudsman, etc.)

Need Assessment Key Findings

Summary: Scope of the Need

It is notable that the most skipped question in the survey was the Legal and Advocacy Services question, 2,255 respondents skipped this question. The conclusion is that many residents who do not have legal status while willing to take an anonymous survey, still have concerns that revealing any information regarding what they perceived to be questions about their legal status, caused more than 95% of respondents to skip all of the questions labeled as Legal and Advocacy Services.

Need Area: Survey Results

Item	Total Number of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
1. There are enough services available in the county to help those who have this need.	426	30.0%	30.0%	20.4%	19.6%	0.0%	100%
2. Anyone in the county is able to access services.	426	32.0%	31.8%	17.2%	14.5%	4.5%	100%
3. Services are widely advertised and known by the county.	426	36.4%	36.4%	13.0%	13.0%	1.2%	100%
4. Services take race, age, gender, ethnicity and more into account.	426	30.1%	35.0%	15.5%	16.9%	2.5%	100%
5. Facilities that provide service to meet this need are of good quality (e.g., clean, well supplied).	426	34.5%	35.0%	15.7%	15.2%	0.0%	100%
6. Staff are well-trained, knowledgeable and provide good customer service.	426	35.5%	34.5%	14.7%	14.0%	1.3%	100%

Key Barriers

Barrier	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Times Identified	Percentage of Responses
Wait Lists	517	139	26.89%
Services do not exist	517	118	22.82%
Transportation	517	78	15.09%
Cannot contact the service provider	517	81	15.67%
Too expensive	517	157	30.37%
Lack of awareness of service	517	279	53.77%
Cultural Barriers	517	111	21.47%
Services provided are one-size fits all, and don't meet individual needs	517	83	16.05%
Stigma Leads to Avoidance	517	80	15.47%
Eligibility Requirement (explain below)	517	164	31.72%
Other (explain below)			

¹*In some instances survey respondents were confused by the scale and did not identify to what degree of agreement or disagreement they were with some of these questions/categories. In these cases, the scale percentage was taken from the total and in the hundreds of cases of comments, when N/A was utilized; these became the "Don't Know" category.