



Community Needs Assessment Report 2017



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Community Action Advisory Board

Lydia Sanders, Chair
Bridget McLeman, Vice-chair
Mavis Nickels, Battle Ground School Board, Secretary
Rebecca Anderson
Julie Rotz, Camas School Board
Nancy Schultz
Ty Stober, Vancouver City Council
Sheree Thun
Judith Walseth

Community Action Advisory Board CNA Task Force

Lydia Sanders, Chair
Bridget McLeman, Vice-chair
Ty Stober, Vancouver City Council
Judith Walseth

Community Partners

Many community partners were involved in the completion of this assessment. View a full list of participants on page 48.

Clark County Staff

Vanessa Gaston, Director
Rebecca Royce
Michael Torres

Consultants

Applied Research NW
Community Commons



Special contributions by Washington
State Community Action Partnership

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

The 2017 Clark County Community Needs Assessment, or CNA, of people who are low-income was conducted by the Community Action, Housing and Development unit, or CHAD, of Clark County Community Services between summer 2016 and spring 2017. The assessment is required every three years under Section 676(b)(11) of the Community Services Block Grant Act.

Community Services hopes this report is not just a compilation of data, but rather a holistic analysis of the community's needs as identified by people and households in need. If used to develop policy, program or funding decisions affecting persons who face poverty, the report may be a catalyst to a brighter future for everyone in Clark County.

Direct feedback from people and households with low incomes was collected through a comprehensive survey covering six areas of need. The survey was developed by county staff, with significant assistance by a volunteer CNA Task Force of Clark County Community Action Advisory Board members and a consultant provided by the Washington State Community Action Partnership. The survey was open July 1, 2016 through Sept. 30, 2016 and distributed in English, Spanish and Russian by more than 65 service organizations. The survey also was available online in English.

Clark County received 1,165 responses – they came from every zip code in the county. During the fall and winter, staff analyzed survey responses to understand the needs identified, conducted statistical validation, and checked response bias.

In May 2017, a cross-section of community members, service providers and policy makers attended a forum where the survey information was presented and qualitative feedback was collected. Discussions were robust and provided more thoughts and ideas about the topics.

As a result of this process, the following three needs were clearly identified as the most crucial in Clark County, ranked in order of importance:

1. Food assistance
2. Housing assistance
3. Employment services

Food and housing assistance ranked closely in overall importance. Although food assistance ranked slightly higher in overall need, housing overwhelmingly received greater specificity and focus regarding the types of assistance required and far greater attention during group discussions.



Within housing, the following types of assistance were clearly identified as needs:

1. Affordable/subsidized housing
2. Rental assistance
3. Move-in cost assistance for security deposits, application fees, etc.

Level of income defines whether a person or household is considered living in poverty, and employment is broadly viewed as the primary means of obtaining and increasing income. Despite low unemployment rates and that nearly half of survey respondents identified “Earned Income/Employment” as the source of family income, employment services were identified as a priority need.

Within the Employment Services category, the following needs were considered most important by survey respondents, ranked by frequency of identification:

1. Getting a better job
2. Finding a job
3. Items to become or remain employed

We would be remiss not to report a finding that emerged as we compared the demographics of the survey respondents to the county’s overall demographics of those in poverty as stated by the U.S. Census Bureau: People of color and ethnic minorities in Clark County are disproportionately represented among people and households experiencing poverty.

We urge programs and services that address needs identified in this report to make special efforts to engage communities of color.

Did you know

An estimated 49,314 people live at or below the federal poverty level in Clark County.ⁱ

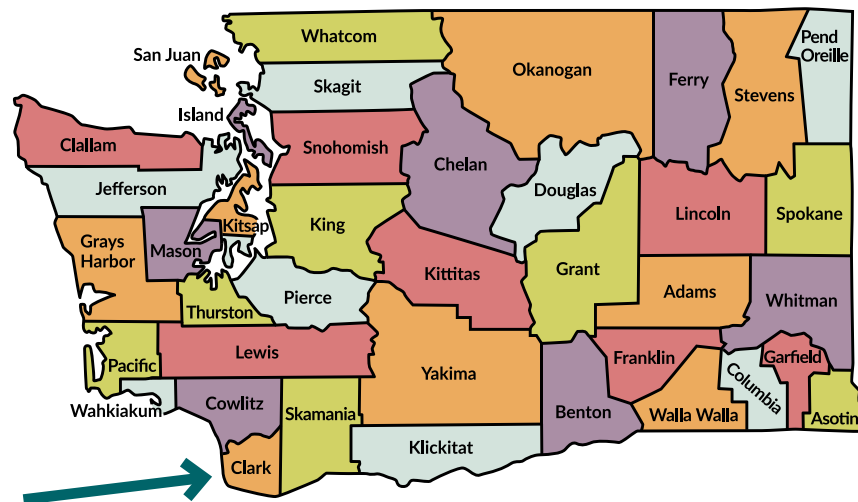
SERVICE AREA

This section is designed to give readers an understanding of Clark County as compared with Washington as a whole and the rest of the nation. Because Clark County is a border county and part of the Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton, OR-WA Metropolitan Statistical Area, or MSA, this comparison has been included throughout this section and the demographics section. The MSA includes Multnomah, Clackamas, Columbia, Washington and Yamhill counties in Oregon and Clark and Skamania counties in Washington.

Southwest Washington

Located in Southwest Washington, Clark County is approximately 70 miles from the Pacific Ocean. It is compact, measuring approximately 38 miles east to west and covering 656 square miles. The Columbia River forms the western and southern boundaries, giving the county more than 40 miles of major river frontage. The Columbia River is the only fresh-water route for ocean-going commerce on the West Coast. The Lewis River forms the northern perimeter and the Cascade Range forms the eastern border.¹

Map 1. Washington counties



Population

Approximately 440,404 people live in the 656 square mile report area defined for this assessment, according to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2011-15 five-year estimates. The population density for this area, estimated at 671.3 people per square mile, is greater than the national average population density of 89.61 people per square mile.

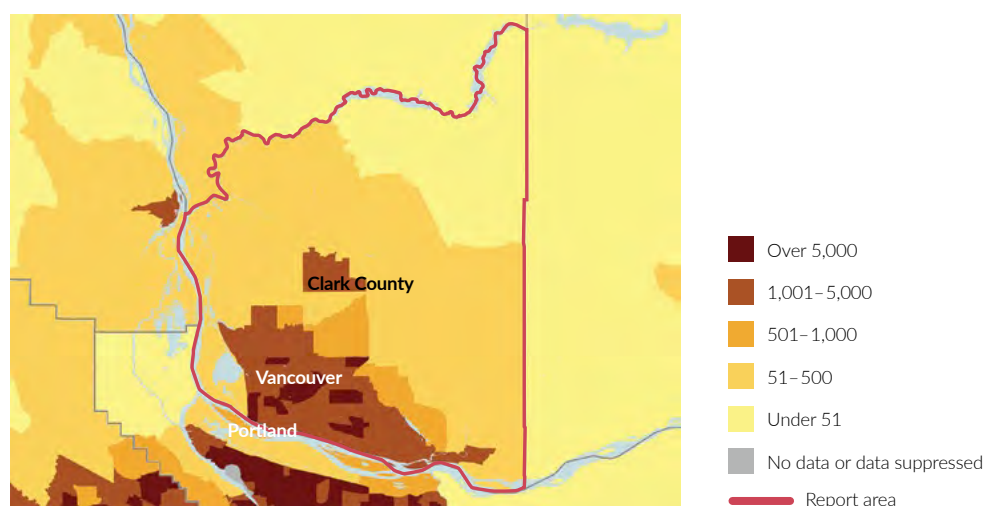
Table 1. Population density

Report area	Total population	Total land area (square miles)	Population density per square mile
Clark County, WA	440,404	656	671.3
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA	2,268,055	6,821.3	332.5
Washington	6,985,464	66,456.30	105.11
United States	316,515,021	3,532,070.45	89.61

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-15. Source geography: Tract

Map 2. Population density by tract, ACS 2011-15

Persons per square mile

**Table 2. Population below federal poverty level**

Within the service area, 11.2 percent, or 49,314 people, are living in households with incomes below the federal poverty level (FPL). Some local funding serves households earning up to 200 percent FPL. In the service area, 29 percent, or 127,733 people, are living in households with incomes below 200 percent of the FPL.

Report area	Total population	Population in poverty	Percent population in poverty	Population with income at or below 200% FPL	Percent population with income at or below 200% FPL
Clark County, WA	440,404	49,314	11.2	127,733	29
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA	2,268,055	353,705	15.6	704,142	31.0
Washington	6,850,693	908,512	13.26	2,058,068	30.04
United States	308,619,550	47,749,043	15.47	105,726,604	34.26

Note: This indicator is compared with the state average. Data source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-15. Source geography: Tract



Rural and urban geography

The U.S. Census Bureau's urban-rural classification identifies urban areas and rural areas. The bureau's urban areas are densely developed territories that encompass residential, commercial and other non-residential urban land uses. The bureau delineates urban areas after each census by applying specified criteria to decennial census and other data.

The census bureau identifies two types of urban areas:

- areas of 50,000 or more people
- clusters of 2,500 to 49,999 people

"Rural" encompasses all residents, housing and territory not included within an urban area.²

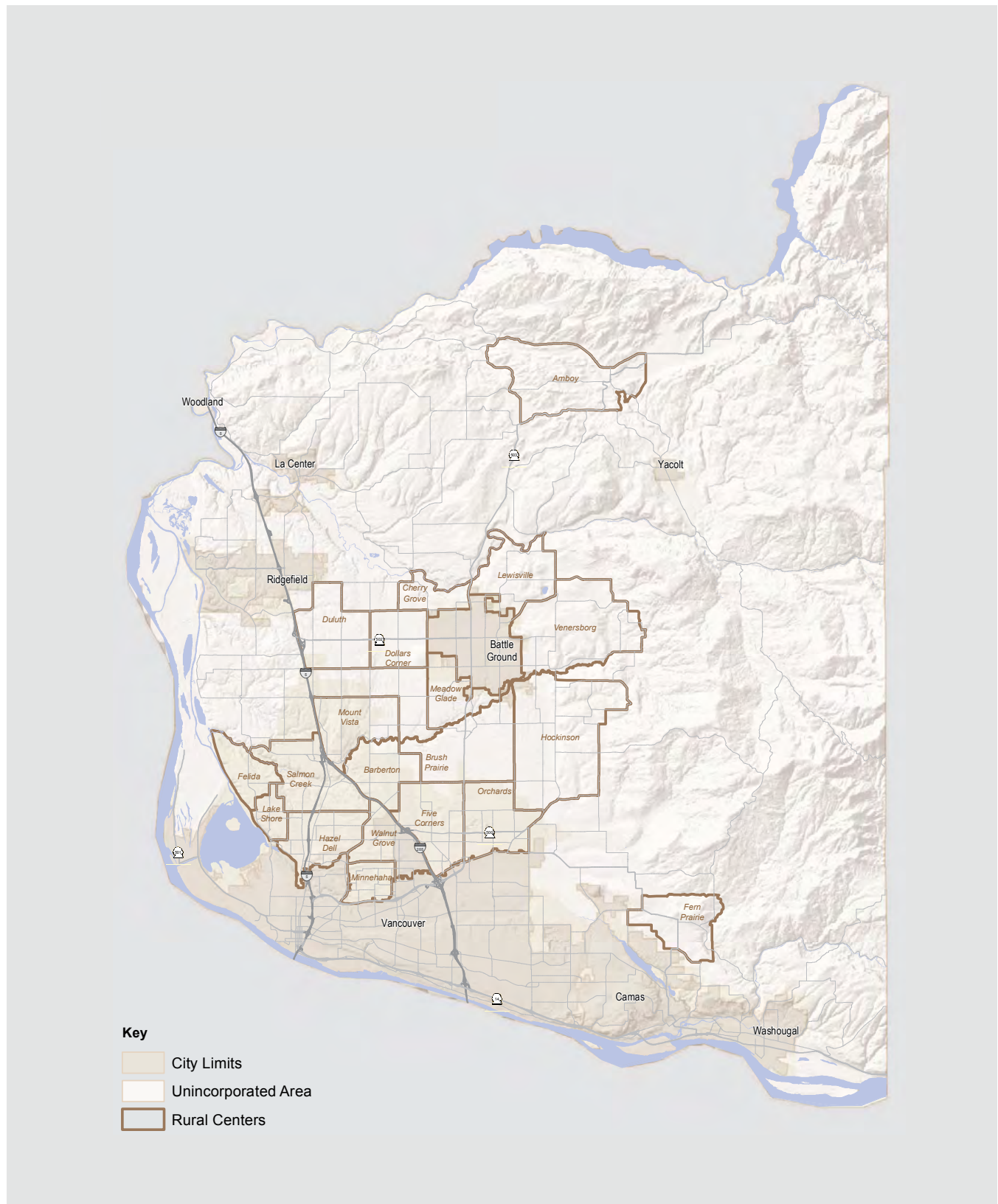
Using these guidelines, the Washington State Department of Health considers 13.7 percent of Clark County's population to be rural, as counted in the 2010 census. This marks a 21.4 percent decline in rural population since the 2000 census.³

Today, most county residents live in eight municipalities surrounded by a rural landscape. Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, Washougal and Woodland are cities; Yacolt is a town. Each has an urban growth area defined in the county's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan.⁴

Did you know

10.2 percent of people who identify as white live at or below the federal poverty level in Clark County compared with 22.4 percent who identify as black or African American or 20.9 percent who identify as American Indian and Alaska Native.ⁱⁱ

Map 3. Clark County, Washington



Economic activity

The Washington Employment Security Department considers Clark County part of the Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area. Its economy can be understood only in that context: one-third of the county's labor force, more than 50,000 workers, commutes to Oregon during the work-week, while 11,000 commute north into Clark County. The lack of a sales tax in Oregon has led to leakage of retail sales, lowering both retail investment and tax revenues for local governments.

Clark County has excellent transportation linkages. Portland International Airport is just across the Columbia River, rail lines run both east-west and north-south, and residents have immediate access to both Interstate 5 and Interstate 205 going north and south and Interstate 84 and State Route 14 going east.

Clark County, when originally occupied by white settlers, had primarily an agricultural and timber economy. In fact, the first apple tree in the state still stands here. The Camas paper mill started in the 1870s. Cheap power from damming the Columbia River helped spur industrialization, including an aluminum smelter that opened in the late 1930s and closed in 2001.

In the 1970s, the county began to attract investment in electronics, which became its most important industry in the 1990s. Despite the loss of one-third of the sector's employment base in the 2001 recession, electronics remain the top industry and Wafertech, Sharp Microelectronics, Hewlett Packard, SEH America and Linear Semiconductor remain important employers.

Employment grew rapidly in all sectors during the 1990s, but slowed after the 2001 recession. Construction and homebuilding remained strong until the housing bubble burst in 2006-07. The county lost 6 percent of its employment base in the downturn, a percentage similar to the state and nation. But by late 2015, the county was 9 percent above its pre-recession peak, compared with 6 percent for the state and 3 percent for the nation.

In 2015, major industry sectors in Clark County included health care and social assistance (23,600 jobs), professional and business services (18,100 jobs), retail trade (17,200 jobs), leisure and hospitality (14,000 jobs) and manufacturing (13,100 jobs). In addition, government employed 24,000, more than half of whom are in public education.⁵

Did you know

21.8 percent of Clark County residents with disabilities have incomes at or below the federal poverty level.ⁱⁱⁱ

Figure 1. Most common industries (%)

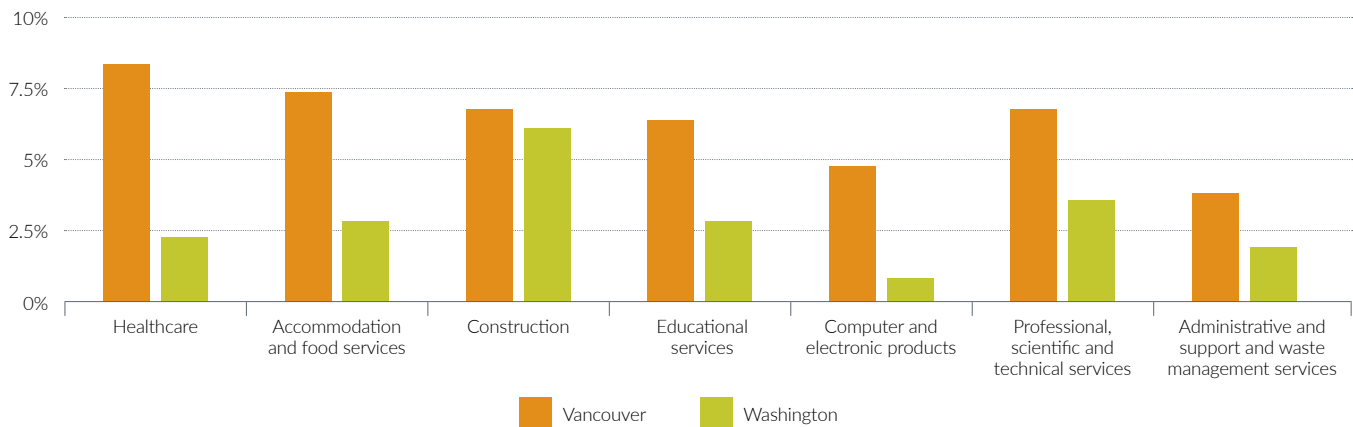


Figure 2. Most common occupations (%)



Based on data from 2000-2015 when the population of Vancouver rose from 143,560 to 172,853. www.city-data.com/work/work-Vancouver-Washington.html

Table 3. Labor force and unemployment

Report area	Labor force	Number employed	Number unemployed	Unemployment rate
Clark County, WA	218,672	205,144	13,528	6.2
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA	1,225,993	1,023,933	103,060	8.4
Washington	3,625,231	3,435,080	190,151	5.2
United States	159,514,565	152,199,769	7,314,796	4.6

Total unemployment in the service area for May 2017 was 13,528, or 6.2 percent, of the civilian, non-institutionalized population aged 16 and older (non-seasonally adjusted). This indicator is relevant because unemployment creates financial instability and barriers to access including insurance coverage, health services, healthy food and other necessities that contribute to poor health status.

Note: This indicator is compared with the state average. Data Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2017 - May. Source geography: County

DEMOGRAPHICS

This section includes information from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, or ACS. Community Commons uses the ACS to create a report that estimates the number of people in each category. The total number of people living in Clark County for purposes of the ACS survey is estimated at 440,404 people, with 49,314 people living below 100 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

The federal poverty guidelines, more commonly known as the federal poverty level, or FPL, is a term used throughout this report. The FPL is an economic measure used to decide whether a person's or family's income level qualifies them for certain federal benefits and programs. The FPL is supposed to represent the set minimum income a family needs for food, clothing, transportation, shelter and other necessities.

The formula used to calculate the FPL has not been updated since its inception in the 1960s. For example, it does not take child care costs into consideration, assuming that one parent will be home with children. Each year, the FPL is updated and issued in the Federal Register by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).⁶

Gender

Clark County's population is evenly split between males and females, similar to state-wide data. For those living below the federal poverty level, females outpace males.

Table 4. Population by gender

Report Area	Male	Female	Percent Male	Percent Female
Clark County, WA total population	217,440	222,964	49.4	50.6
Clark County, WA below poverty	21,861	27,453	10.1	12.3
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA total population	1,127,958	1,158,057	49.7	51.1
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA below poverty	142,899	168,683	12.7	14.6
Washington	3,487,725	3,497,739	49.93	50.07
United States	155,734,280	160,780,741	49.2	50.8

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-15. Source geography: Tract

Did you know

Single female-headed households make up the largest family type living at or below the federal poverty level in Clark County.^{iv}



Age

The table below shows the age distribution of Clark County residents compared with residents statewide. The Clark County distribution is similar to the state distribution, but with slightly more youths aged 5-17 and slightly fewer people aged 25-34. For those living below the federal poverty level, the poverty rate is lower among those 65 and older and higher for small children through age 4.

Table 5. Population by age

Report area	Age 0-4	Age 5-17	Age 18-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65
Clark County total population	6.45%	19.07%	8.34%	12.8%	13.61%	13.88%	12.72%	13.14%
Clark County below poverty	14.9%	14.2%	14.5%*		8.9%*			6.8%
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA total population	10.7%	16.7%	23.4%		41.7%			12.7%
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA below poverty	10.8%	17.0%	18.5%		10.6%			7.8%
Washington	6.38%	16.47%	9.55%	14.33%	13.11%	13.7%	12.87%	13.58%
United States	6.29%	16.99%	9.91%	13.55%	12.84%	13.87%	12.45%	14.1%

*The ACS does not break down the age ranges in the same categories as the general population. These data points represent the percent of population across multiple ranges. Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2011-15. Source geography: Tract

Race

The tables below represent the race and ethnicity of people living in Clark County compared with people statewide.

Clark County has a higher Caucasian population and lower African American, Asian and Native populations when compared with Washington as a whole. However, all people of color in Clark County live in poverty at a higher rate than the white population.

Table 6. Population by race

Report area	White	Black	Asian	Native American / Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	Some other race	Multiple races
Clark County total population	84.73%	1.93%	4.23%	0.71%	0.75%	3.11%	4.55%
Clark County below poverty	10.16%	22.36%	20.9%	9.23%	10.06%	27.87%	14.96%
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA total population	82.7%	25.8%	6.3%	0.8%	0.5%	3.5%	4.3%
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA below poverty	11.9%	32.5%	12.1%	26.7%	23.0%	33.4%	16.6%
Washington	77.79%	3.63%	7.67%	1.34%	0.63%	3.79%	5.16%
United States	73.6%	12.61%	5.13%	0.81%	0.17%	4.7%	2.98%

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2011-15. Source geography: Tract

Ethnicity

When looking at ethnicity data from the ACS, Clark County has a lower total Hispanic and Latinx population when compared with Washington as a whole. For those living below the federal poverty level, there are significantly more Hispanic and Latinx persons when compared to the total population.

Table 7. Population by ethnicity

Report Area	Total	Number Hispanic or Latinx	Percent Hispanic or Latinx	Non-Hispanic or non-Latinx	Percent non-Hispanic/Latinx
Clark County total population	440,404	36,942	8.4	353,789	80.3
Clark County below poverty	49,314	8,374	22.7	40,940	9.7
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA total population	2,268,055	258,690	11.4	1,719,014	75.8
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton MSA below poverty	353,705	70,035	27.1	185,389	10.8
Washington	6,985,464	835,488	11.96	6,149,976	88.04
United States	316,515,021	54,232,205	17.13	262,282,816	82.87

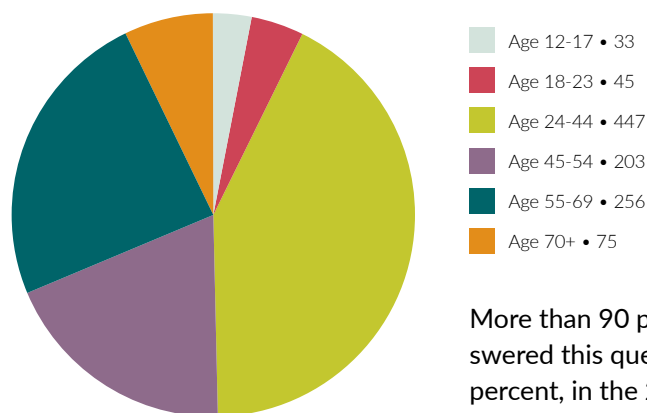
Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2011-15. Source geography: Tract

Clark County Survey of Needs demographics

Below is self-identified, demographic data from the Survey of Needs conducted by Clark County Community Services with people who identify as being low-income. Clark County received 1,165 responses from throughout the county. Survey questions were optional; not every respondent answered every question. Each chart indicates the number of responses received for each demographic question. Some questions, such as age, race and ethnicity, are specific to the family member completing the survey. Others encompass information about the entire family.

Figure 3. What is your age?

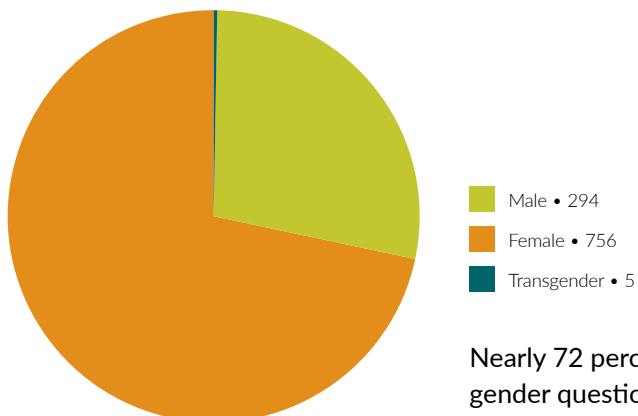
1,059 responses



More than 90 percent of respondents answered this question, with the majority, 42 percent, in the 24-44 age bracket.

Figure 4. What gender do you identify with?

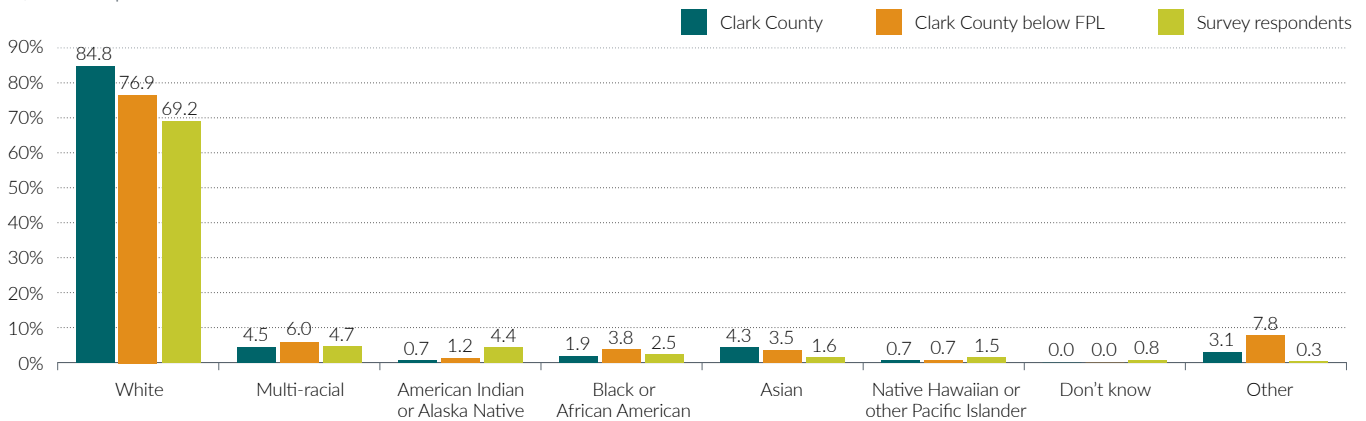
1,055 responses



Nearly 72 percent of those who answered the gender question were female.

Figure 5. What is your race?

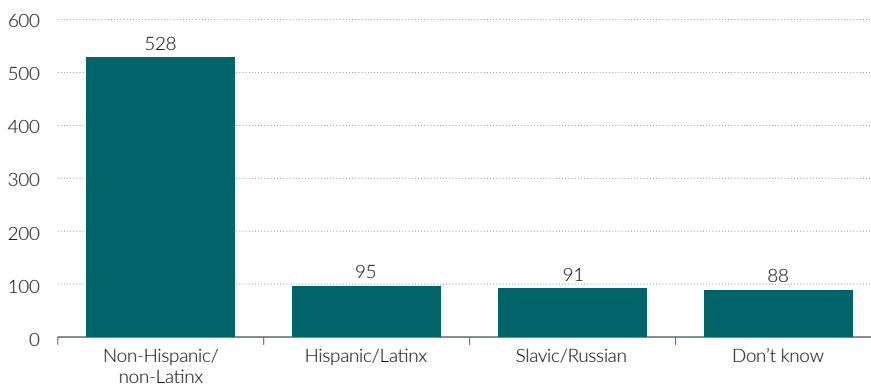
1,015 responses



Of all respondents, 87 percent indicated their race. When compared with the American Community Survey (ACS) 2011-2015 five-year estimates for all people in Clark County and ACS data for those living below the federal poverty level, the Survey of Needs had fewer responses from people who identify as white and more responses from people who identify as people of color.

Figure 6. What is your ethnicity?

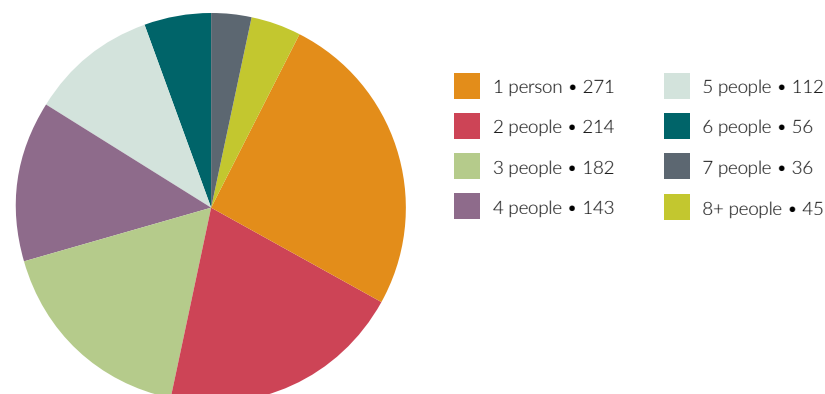
802 responses



The majority of respondents who indicated their ethnicity identified as non-Hispanic/Latinx, and more than 23 percent identified as Hispanic/Latinx or Slavic/Russian descent.

Figure 7. What is the size of your family?

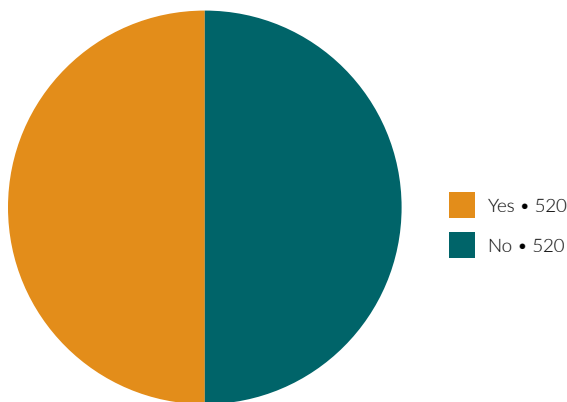
1,059 responses



Responses to the family size question fell into every category, with highest response, 26 percent, from single-person families. The second most frequent response was a two-person family, with just more than 20 percent, followed by a three-person family at 17 percent.

Figure 8. Does anyone in your family have a disability/special need?

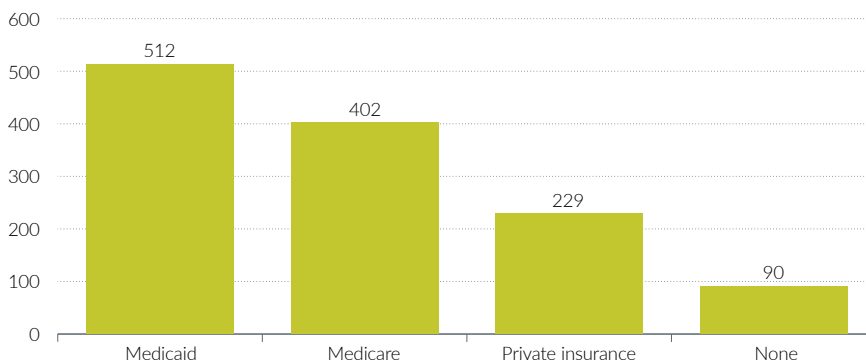
1,040 responses



A great majority, 89 percent, of survey respondents answered the question about a family member with a disability. Of those, 50 percent said they themselves or a family member had a disability or special need.

Figure 9. What type of health insurance does your family have?

992 responses

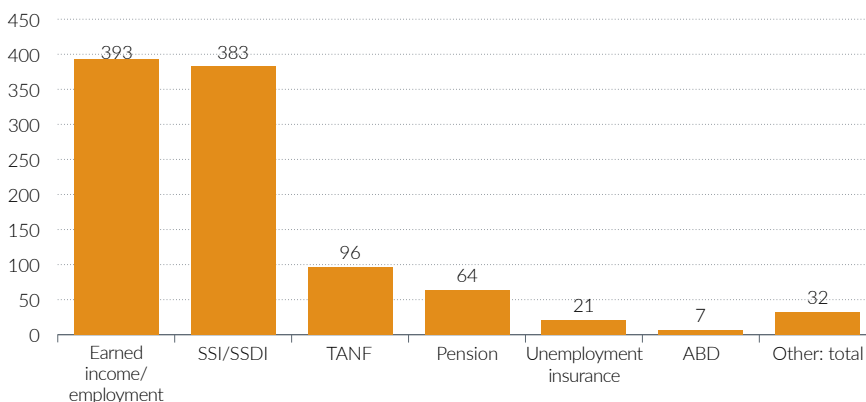


These numbers are duplicated; a person may have more than one type of health insurance

More than 85 percent of people responding to the Survey of Needs answered the question about health insurance. More than half indicated their family was covered by Medicaid; this result was not surprising since the majority of the respondents earn less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Nearly 10 percent indicated they lacked health insurance.

Figure 10. What is the source of your family's income?

857 responses

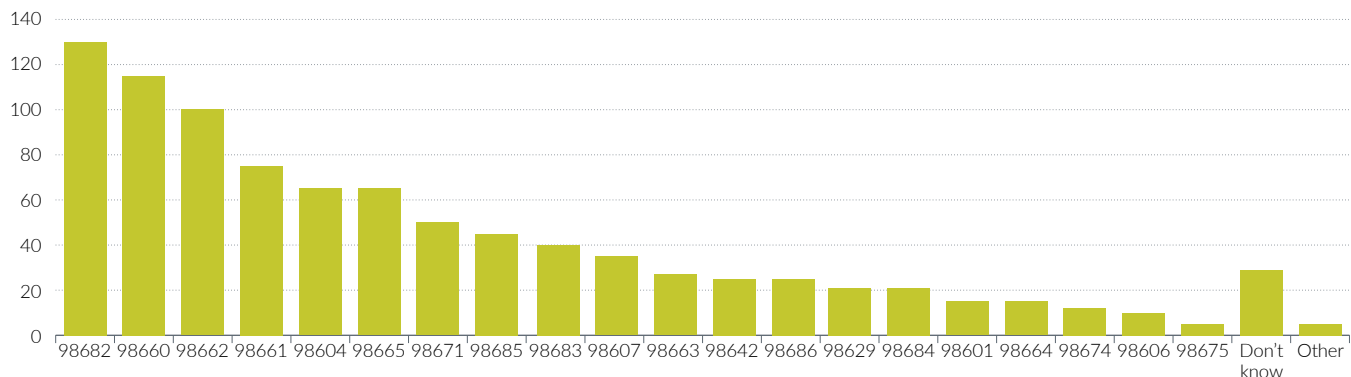


These numbers are duplicated; a person may have more than one source of income

Almost 74 percent of survey respondents indicated their family's source(s) of income. The majority said they received, at least in part, earned income, while many received Social Security Insurance or Social Security Disability Insurance, which is reserved for those with a temporary or long-term disability.

Figure 11. What is your current or last known zip code?

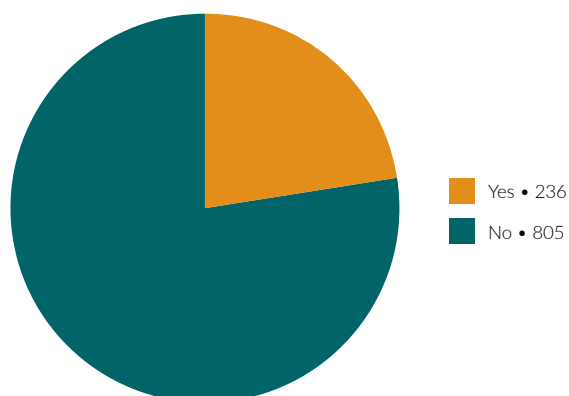
933 responses



Eighty percent of respondents answered the question about their zip code. Every zip code in Clark County was represented by the answers. Less than 1 percent of respondents had zip codes outside the county, and 3 percent did not know their latest zip code.

Figure 12. Has anyone in your family served in the armed forces?

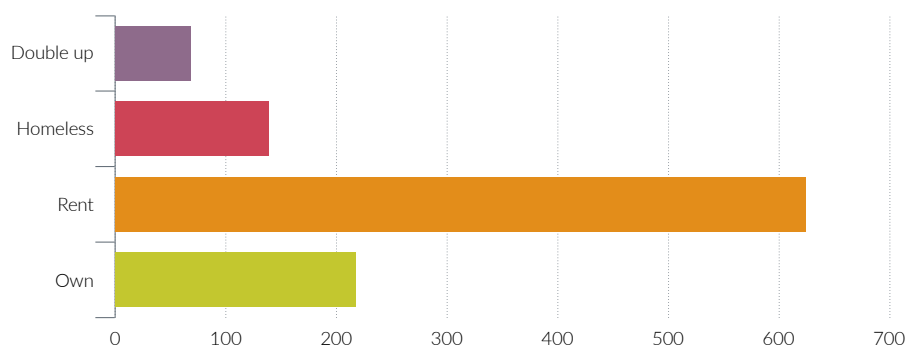
1,041 responses



Almost 90 percent of survey respondents indicated whether a family member had served in the armed forces; nearly 23 percent said yes.

Figure 13. What is your current housing situation?

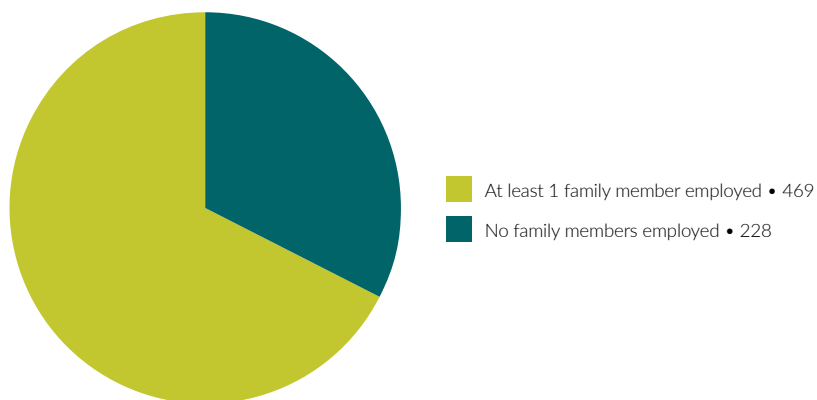
1,048 responses



Of the 90 percent of respondents who answered the question about their housing status, nearly 60 percent were renters, 21 percent were home owners, and 20 percent were homeless or doubled up with friends or family.

Figure 14. Is someone in your family employed?

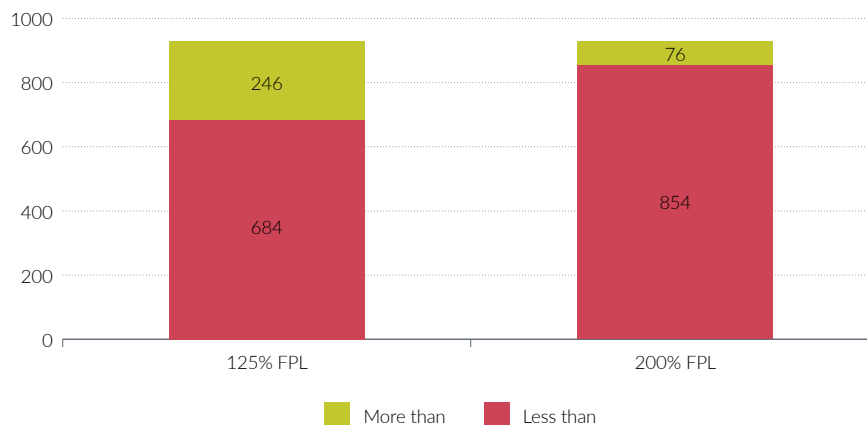
697 responses



Nearly 60 percent of respondents answered the question about employment. Of those, 67 percent said someone in their family was employed.

Figure 15. Does your family earn more or less than 125% FPL for your family size? 200%?

930 responses each



Respondents were given a chart listing family size and monthly income and asked whether their family earned more or less than 125 percent and 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Nearly 80 percent answered each question, with nearly 75 percent earning less than 125 percent (\$2,531 for a family of four) and more than 91 percent earning less than 200 percent (\$4,050 for a family of four).

CAUSES AND CONDITIONS OF POVERTY IN CLARK COUNTY

The following elements influence poverty in this region.

A. Economic

Clark County has mostly recovered from the Great Recession and is currently undergoing a period of rapid economic expansion.

- Not all sectors have recovered at an equal rate. Construction, in particular, has lagged in its capacity to meet demand.
- Increasingly, employers are having difficulty finding enough qualified workers; skill shortages once again are a pressing issue.⁷



Clark County has experienced significant and ongoing change in the predominant industries driving employment and economic activity. Historically an agricultural community, the first half of the 20th century saw rapid growth in the timber industry. During and after World War II, the manufacturing sector increasingly gained importance. Starting in the 1970s, information and technology industries began supplanting manufacturing. The health care sector became a major employer in the 1990s, and it has played an important role alongside retail services and information technology since the 2000s.

- These industry changes have required constantly shifting workforce skills.
- Major employers have not had steady growth, but experienced cycles of expansion and contraction.

Did you know

More than 68,000 people are unemployed in the region, yet many employers express concerns about finding qualified workers.^v

Conditions

The lack of affordable housing and rising costs of obtaining and maintain housing, rented or owned, are the results, in part, of a construction industry that does not have the capacity to meet the housing demand.

The cost of housing is the single biggest driver of homelessness. The authors of the 2012 article entitled “New Perspectives on Community-Level Determinants of Homelessness,” published in *The Journal of Urban Affairs*, found that every \$100 increase in rent is associated with a 15 percent increase in homelessness in metro areas and a 39 percent increase in homelessness in non-metro areas.

More than 68,000 people are unemployed in the region, yet many employers express concerns about finding qualified workers. The combination of education and experience regional employers require increasingly does not reflect regional job seekers' qualifications.

Our region's per capita income is growing slightly faster than the nation's, yet still trails that in other metropolitan area of the U.S. Of the region's top 10 most prevalent occupations, just more than half pay wages above \$25,000 per year and only two—registered nurses and general/operations managers—pay wages sufficient to enable a single parent to support themselves and two children without public assistance.⁸

B. Population changes

Clark County has had significant population growth in a relatively short time, growing by 86 percent between 1990 and 2014. Residential growth has been particularly strong in the smaller cities, with Camas growing by 207 percent, Washougal by 213 percent, Ridgefield by 353 percent and Battle Ground by 397 percent.⁹

Population growth in smaller cities, which are further from primary areas of employment and education in Vancouver and Portland, increases the reliance on and need for transportation.¹⁰



Conditions

Due to increases in the cost of living, adults in households with low-incomes often have to work more than one full-time job and are frequently underemployed.

Families are paying a significant part of their earnings for child care. The cost of child care increases but family income does not, making child care an extremely difficult financial burden on working families to bear. Families are spending approximately 13 percent to 18 percent of their median income on child care. The average cost of infant care—the most expensive care—in a center increased 2.7 percent, while the average cost of infant care in a family child care home increased 3.7 percent. Over three quarters of families enrolled in our programs use relatives for child care.¹¹



Transportation from housing to employment, education and training are significant cost burdens to households with low-incomes in Clark County. According to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator, typical annual transportation costs in the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro Metropolitan Statistical Area range from \$3,768 for a single adult to as much as \$10,231 for a household of two adults and three children.¹²

C. Education

Washington has struggled to adequately fund education.

- Education Week Research Center's 2016 Quality Counts report gives the United States a C average for school finance; it gives Washington a C-.¹³
- The Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction indicates that for 2014-2015, the state spent an average of \$10,747 per student. This figure was an increase from \$9,246 in 2013, but still below the national 2013 average of \$11,667.¹⁴
- The average cost to educate an in-state, full time community or technical college student is \$7,524. Of that, the state pays \$4,468.¹⁵

Conditions

Households with low-incomes in Washington bear a substantial financial burden to attain needed skills, certifications and education needed to compete for attractive jobs, paying as much as \$3,056 per year for community or technical college.¹⁶

D. Health

As the World Bank Group's Aug. 25, 2014 brief *Poverty and Health* explains, ill health is a major cause of poverty. This is because of:

- the costs of health care, which include out-of-pocket spending, consultations, tests and medicine.
- the cost of transportation to receive care.
- lost work time and income for the person with an illness and any family member who has to stop working or attending school to take care of the person.

Families also might be forced to sell assets to cover medical expenses, borrow at high interest rates or otherwise become indebted.

Strong health systems not only improve the health of a whole population, but they protect households from the potentially catastrophic effects of out-of-pocket health care costs.¹⁷

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation's The Washington State Health Care Landscape report, overall health in Washington is ranked above the national average, with lower rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and smoking than most states. However, Washington also has a higher than average percentage of adults who report poor mental health, a greater prevalence of asthma among adults, and slightly higher incidences of invasive cancers.

Like other states, Washington sees health and health care access disparities by race and ethnicity. As far as health goes, 87 percent of Washingtonians who identify as



Did you know

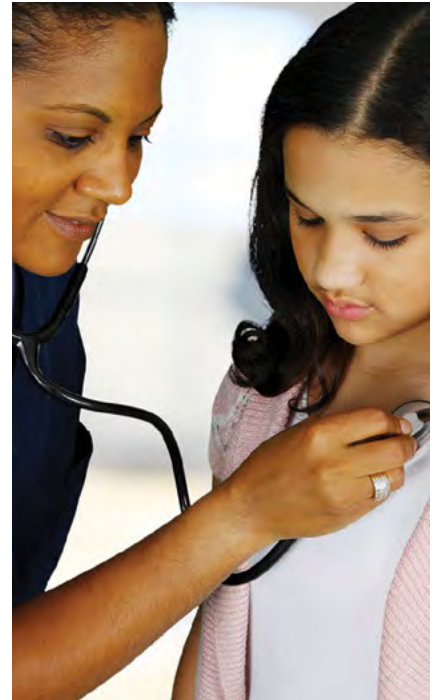
6.9 percent of Clark County seniors 60 and older live at or below the federal poverty level compared with 10.8 percent of adults and 14.4 percent of children.^{vi}

Did you know

In the U.S., the richest 1 percent of men lives an average of 14.6 years longer than the poorest 1 percent of men; for women in those wealth percentiles, the difference is an average of 10.1 years.^{vii}

white report being in very good or excellent health, compared with 77 percent of blacks, 73 percent of American Indian or Alaska Natives and 69 percent of Hispanics. While rates of overweight and obesity are low state-wide, those who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native (79 percent), black (76 percent) or Hispanic (69 percent) are more likely to be overweight or obese than those who identify as white (61 percent) or Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (42 percent).

In addition, those who identify as black (44 percent) and white (42 percent) are more likely to report mental health issues compared with those who identify as Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (33 percent) or Hispanic (26 percent).



Regarding access to health care, 75 percent of those who identified as white and 71 percent of those who identified as Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander reported having a usual source of care. Only 63 percent of blacks, American Indians and Alaska Natives and 46 percent of Hispanics reported having usual health care.¹⁸

Washington and Clark County have aggressively pursued improving systems of care, particularly for households with low-incomes. Under Health Care reform, Washington expanded Medicaid, started a state-based Health Insurance Marketplace, and invested heavily in outreach and assistance for disadvantaged and underserved populations. It also passed legislation to support the Healthier Washington Initiative which integrates the Apple Health Medicaid system to help improve care for individuals while lowering costs. Clark County has led the state in an effort to integrate and coordinate care between primary care and behavioral health providers, as well as to align financing and payment systems to support an integrated health system and supports the use of evidence-based strategies to improve care quality for people on Medicaid.¹⁹

Annual price-adjusted Medicare reimbursements per Clark County enrollee is \$8,057, slightly higher than the state average of \$7,863.²⁰

Conditions

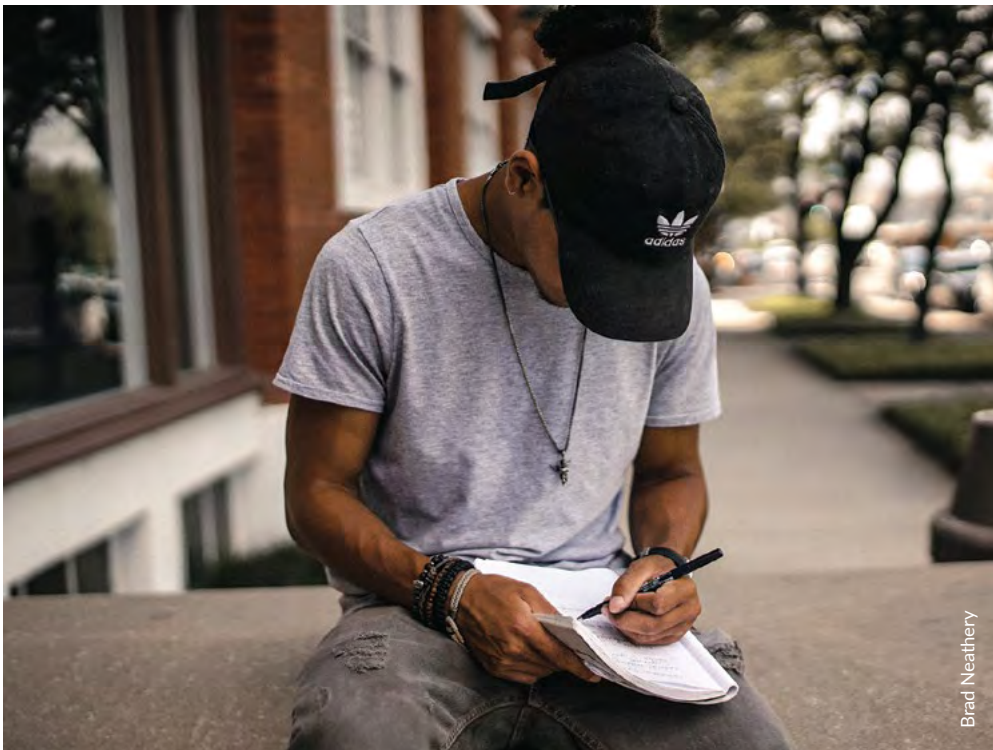
Although access to and the cost and coordination of health care have improved significantly for households with low-incomes in Clark County, access remains a challenge. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's *County Health Ranking and Roadmaps 2016*, the ratio of residents to primary care physicians is 1,510:1. The ratio for dentists is 1,500:1 and the ratio to mental health providers is 440:1.²¹

Community Forum feedback

During a community forum, participants saw results of the Survey of Needs through a “data walk.” This self-led experience included six areas of need for people who are low-income: education; housing; health and social/behavioral health; employment; income and asset building; and support services. The data walk included demographic information about the survey participants and staff provided more information about each topic.

After the data walk, participants had small group discussions about their thoughts to specific questions based on their knowledge and experience and the information they gleaned from the Survey of Needs results. Below is a brief synopsis of the responses when asked, “What do you think are the causes of poverty in our community?”

- Having a clear understanding of the differences between generational and situational poverty is key for service providers to determine the depth of services a household needs.
- The lack of education, skills and educational supports in the community hinder the advancement of many people who have low incomes.
- Behavioral health issues, such as addiction and mental health challenges, can be both a cause and a condition of poverty. These challenges may lead someone to fall into poverty or may be a coping mechanism for someone struggling with the trauma that poverty can cause.
- The lack of employment opportunities, specifically those paying a living wage.



Brad Neathery

Did you know

The ratio of residents to primary care physicians is 1,510:1. The ratio for dentists is 1,500:1 and the ratio to mental health providers is 440:1.^{viii}

AREAS OF NEED

The six areas of need were determined through the 2016 Survey of Needs. The survey was designed to understand the needs people who are low-income in education, employment, health and social/behavioral health, housing, income and asset building and support services.

The sections below are ordered based on the number of responses to the question, “Do you or anyone in your family have a need for...” Additional information about each category is provided from: the Community Feedback Forum conducted May 18, 2017; personal stories of participants in programs funded by Community Services; summaries from community assessments completed by other partner agencies; and research conducted to supplement the feedback forum’s data walk.

Housing

Survey of Needs

Survey respondents were asked to identify needs or concerns they or someone in their family had regarding housing. They could identify up to three needs for adults and three for youth. Figure 16 shows 610 respondents with housing needs for adults and 199 respondents with housing needs for youth. Just more than half of respondents who identified housing needs for adults (52 percent) said *affordable/subsidized housing* is a current need or concern. Ranking second was *rent assistance* (48 percent) and *move-in cost assistance for security deposit, application fees, other expenses* ranked third (39 percent).

Top youth housing needs were *affordable/subsidized housing* (51 percent) and *rent assistance* (42 percent).

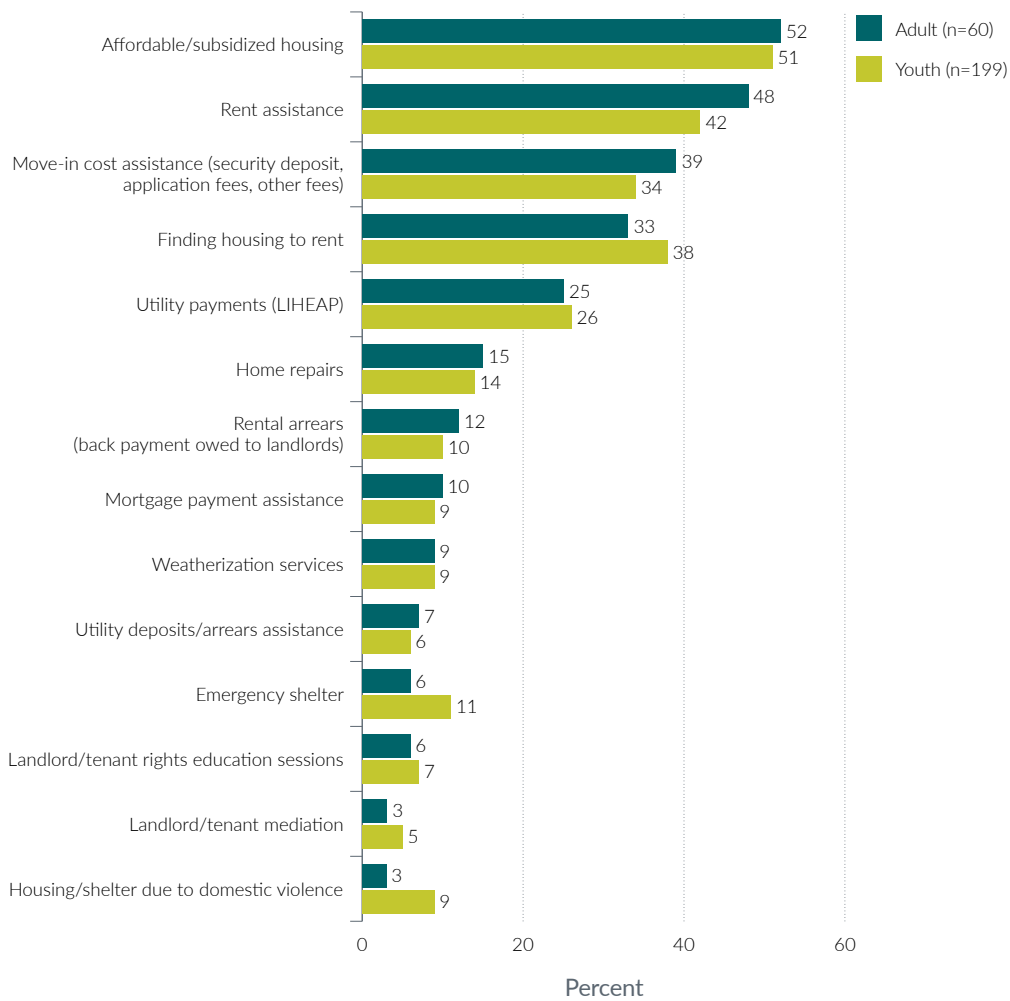
Did you know

An increase of \$100 in median rent results in a 15 percent rise in homelessness in metro areas and a 39 percent rise in homelessness in nearby non-metro areas.^{ix}



Beth Conyers

Figure 16. Housing needs, sorted by adult need



Community Forum feedback

Through small group discussions during the community forum, several themes emerged. Below are ideas discussed about housing:

- Our community lacks affordable housing stock
- Housing costs are high
- New home construction is backlogged
- The aging population will add to housing needs
- Tenant education and assistance working with landlords is important.

Findings from other community assessments

Housing is among the top health-related themes in the 2015 Clark County Public Health Community Needs Assessment, though there is no elaboration or prioritization of issues within the housing domain.²²

Housing as a priority need also was evident in the 2014 Comprehensive Community Assessment prepared by the consulting firm of Essential Elements for the Educational Opportunities for Children and Families, Educational Service District 112 and Head Start, Early Head Start and ECEAP.²³

Under *Major issues, trends and concerns*, the report notes, “Major challenges facing local communities remain a consistent theme with lack of sustainable family wage jobs, affordable housing, homelessness, mental health issues, substance abuse and lack of transportation. Although in 2013-14 unemployment slowed a bit, housing continues to be a challenge for our families. This contributes to a high mobility rate for our families which impacts enrollment and attendance in our early learning classes.”

Safe and affordable housing was a key theme identified in the 2016 Behavioral Health Community Needs Assessment conducted by the GEHC Camden Group for the Community Foundation of Southwest Washington. The assessment noted, “Individuals without permanent housing often suffer from physical and mental health needs that often are not addressed effectively or appropriately.” The report identified several behavioral health service gaps around housing, including improved outreach efforts to people who are homeless, establishing consistent mechanisms to bill services to patients who are homeless, and increasing alternative housing options for people receiving behavioral health treatment.²⁴

Personal Journey – Share’s Homestead Family Shelter Program

“Ella” had never experienced homeless. Sometimes she and her ex-husband had a difficult time keeping up with bills, but they always made ends meet. When Ella and her husband separated, she was still able to pay rent and keep a home for her daughter and herself. When Ella had a significant medical diagnosis that left her unable to work, she was awarded disability, and it was enough to pay the rent. Then her landlord sold the property where they lived.

The new owners wanted to live in the property themselves. Ella and her daughter were fortunate enough to find a townhouse she could afford, and the landlord was willing to rent to her despite her poor credit and her low income-to-rent ratio. Ella and her daughter lived there four years. Then the owner decided to remodel the home. It needed major renovations to stay up to code. The landlord told Ella she would happily rent to her when the renovations were complete, but the new rent was more than double what Ella had been paying and she could not afford it.

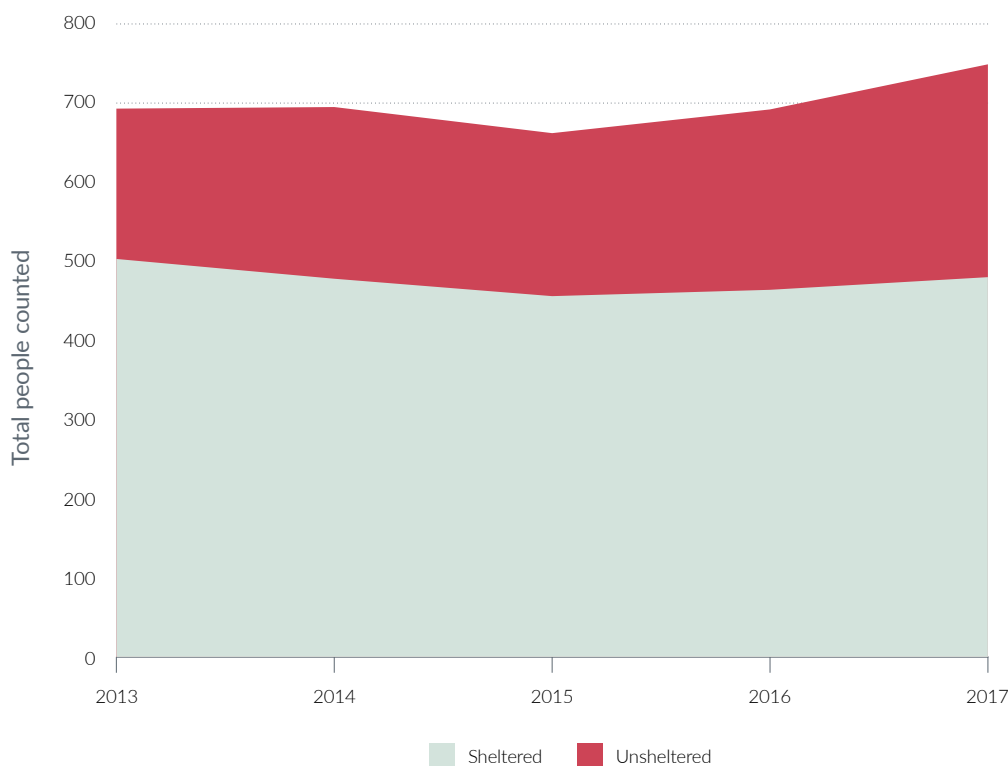
Ella and her daughter spent a few weeks couch surfing among friends, but no one could let them stay long, and they began sleeping in their car. Ella’s medical conditions worsened, and when the cold weather came, she contacted the Council for the Homeless and was able to get Severe Weather Accommodations for her and her daughter, now 19, at Share Homestead. They then moved to the Winter Hospitality Overflow shelter at St. Andrew Lutheran Church, where people sleep on the floor. But Ella was unable to get up and down from the church floor, and she fell forward over her walker the first night there. Ella and her daughter were moved to Homestead to better meet their needs.

Even though Ella had no evictions and a good rental history, her search for housing was not going well. Ella was being denied because of poor credit and not having income greater than three times the required rent—a common measure of a renter's qualifications. They spent four months between the two family shelters before Ella's name came up on a subsidized housing list. Ella was able to get move-in costs assistance from the Council for the Homeless diversion fund, and finally got the home she and her daughter had been searching for.

Additional information

Figure 17. Point-in-time count

2013-2017



Clark County's annual Point-in-Time Count provides a snapshot of homelessness in our community. The number indicates the least number of people experiencing homelessness on that day and is helpful to show the trend of homelessness over time. The January 2017 event found an 18 percent increase over the number of people counted in 2016.

Health and social/behavioral health

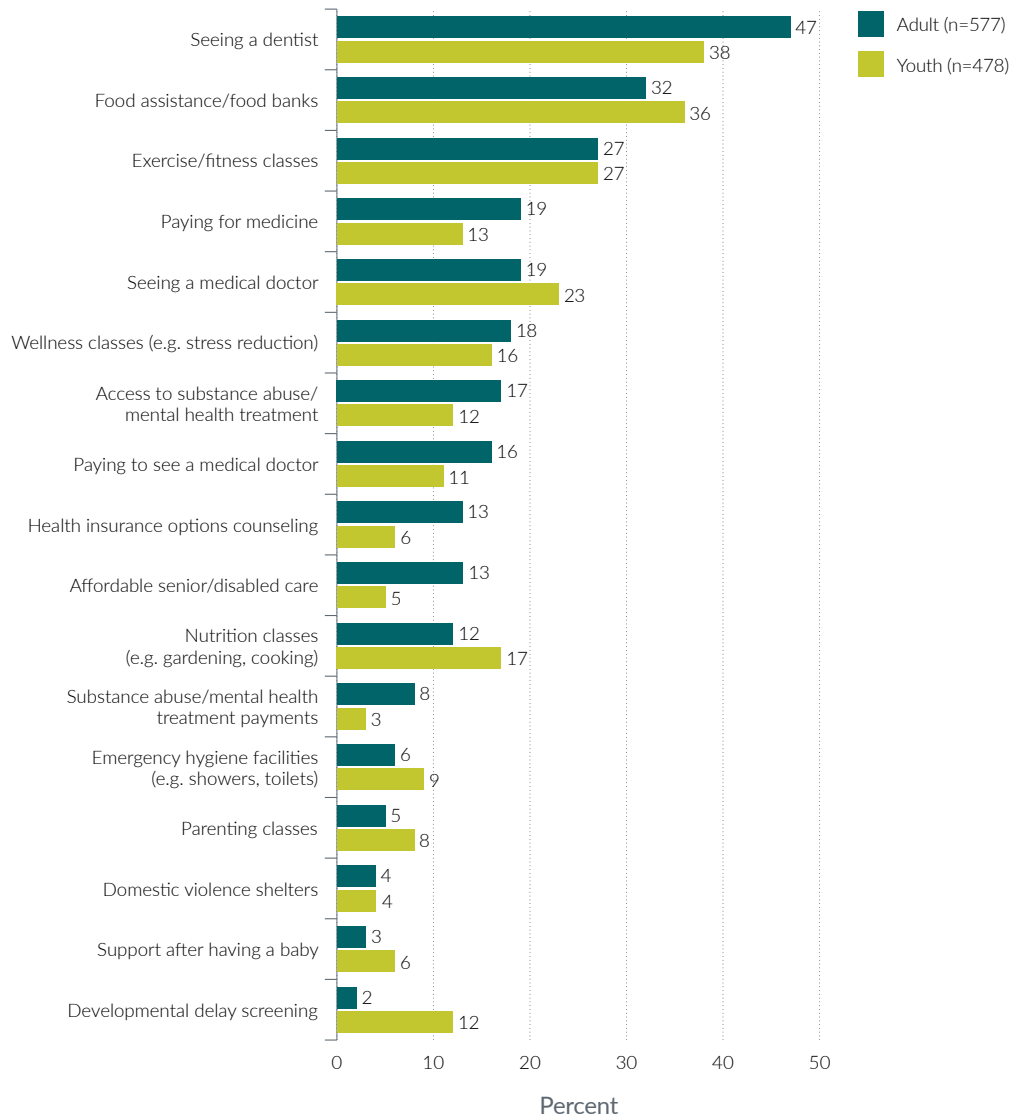
Survey of Needs

Survey takers were asked to identify any needs or concerns they or someone in their family had about health and social/behavioral development. They could identify up to three needs for both adults and youth.

Figure 18 shows 577 respondents with needs for adults and 478 respondents with needs for youth. Almost half of respondents who identified needs for adults (47 percent) said *seeing a dentist* is a current need or concern. The next top two needs were *food assistance/food banks* (32 percent) and *exercise/fitness classes* (27 percent).

Top youth social/behavioral development needs were *seeing a dentist* (38 percent) and *food assistance/food banks* (36 percent).

Figure 18. Health and social/behavioral development needs, sorted by adult need



Community Forum feedback

Through small group discussions at the community forum, several themes emerged. Below are the ideas discussed regarding health and social/behavioral health needs:

- Mixed surprise that mental health/substance abuse services were such a low priority. Some said it may be because the community's level of services in those areas was adequate while others thought it was under-reported.
- Many were surprised that dental needs were ranked so high. There was general agreement that it was likely accurate.
- The demographic response indicating a prevalence of disability/special need was surprising. Groups discussed suggestions for more outreach.

Findings from other community assessments

The social/behavioral development needs identified by survey respondents are largely consistent with those of residents with low-incomes and without insurance at early 2013 Healthy Columbia-Willamette Collaborative listening sessions. These sessions were part of Clark County Public Health's 2015 Community Needs Assessment.²⁵

Group discussions revolved around four questions:

- What does a healthy community look like to you?
- Are there other health issues you think should be on this list?
- What five health issues would you like addressed first?
- What should be done to fix or address these health issues?

The Health Assessment discussion groups strongly agreed about what health issues are most important. The order of priorities is different, which is understandable, given the more narrow health focus of Public Health, but the themes and issues identified are familiar. The most-prioritized health issues, in order, were:

1. Mental health and mental health services
2. Chronic disease and related health behaviors
3. Substance abuse
4. Access to affordable health care
5. Oral health and access to oral health services

Within mental health and mental health services issues, addressing isolation and anxiety as contributing factors to mental health issues is a priority. Homelessness was identified as an isolation factor.

Nutrition and exercise habits, diabetes and heart disease were concerns most frequently cited under chronic disease and related health behaviors.

Did you know

211info received 6,170 phone calls and 6,539 website visits inquiring about health and human service resources in Clark County in 2016.^x

Personal Journey – Share’s Hunger Response Program

The daily Hot Meals Program provides nutritious meals to community members in need. Because the meals satisfy a basic human need, case managers are able to connect with people who may not want to access other services. Through the Hot Meals program, case managers were able to build a relationship with “Stephanie,” a 58-year-old woman who has been homeless for at least four years and was unhoused off-and-on the previous 15 years. Stephanie lived in a tent near Share House, where she would shower, eat and do laundry. She had chronic health conditions and struggled with mental health and controlled substance use. She regularly was seen in a hospital emergency department or admitted to inpatient treatment programs.

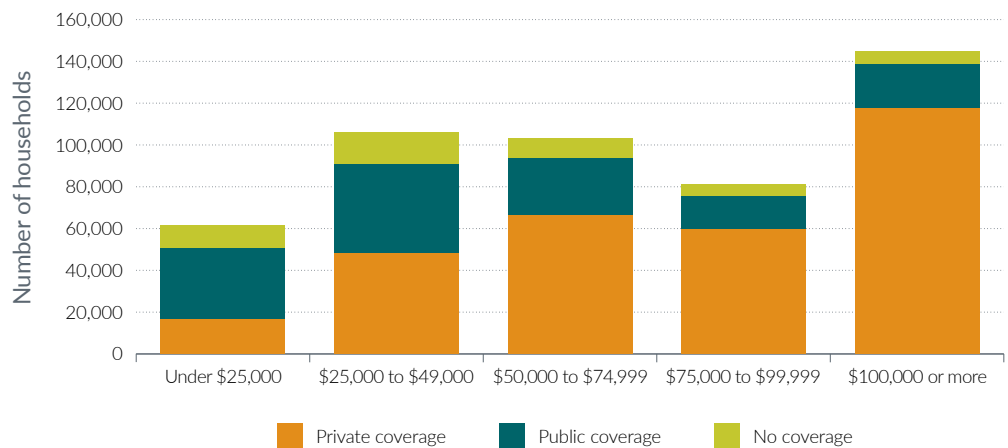
Through connections with case managers, Stephanie was able to sign up for food, Medical and ABD benefits. She was approved for housing assistance and connected with a mental health treatment provider.

She is now housed in a one-bedroom apartment, sees her health care providers and cooks in her own home.

Stephanie visits Share each month to help keep her fixed income on budget and stay housed.

Additional information

Figure 19. Health insurance by type of household income



This chart shows the types of health insurance by income level, according to the ACS 2011-2015 five-year estimates. As income increases, the likelihood of private insurance increases and the chance of not having insurance decreases.

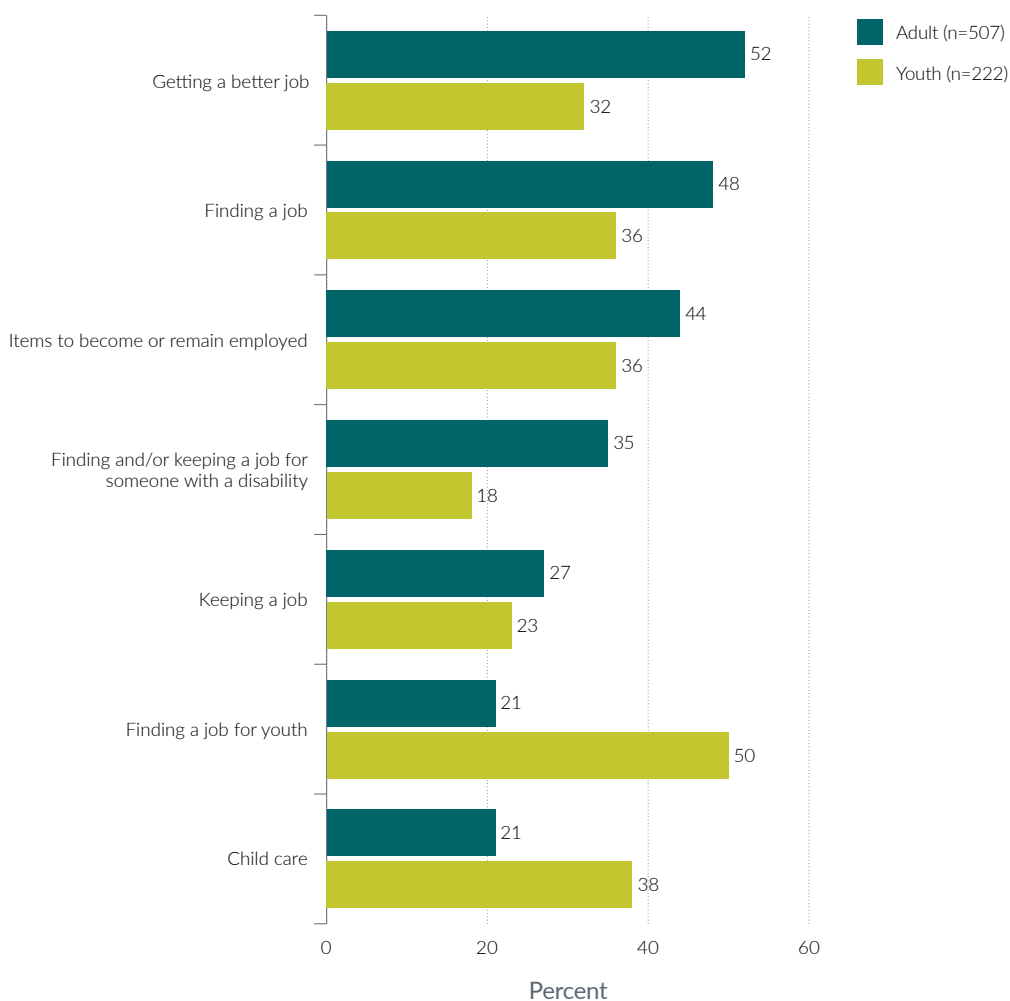
Employment

Survey of Needs

Survey respondents were asked to identify any needs or concerns they or someone in their family had regarding employment. They could identify up to three needs each for adults and youth. Figure 20 shows 507 respondents with needs for adults and 222 respondents with needs for youth. Just more than half who identified employment needs for adults (52 percent) said *getting a better job* is a current need or concern. Issues of *finding a job* (48 percent) and *items to become or remain employed* (44 percent) ranked highly, too.

Top youth employment needs were *finding a job* (50 percent) and *childcare* (38 percent).

Figure 20. Employment needs, sorted by adult need



Did you know

According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, 13 of the fastest-growing jobs are in the healthcare industry and eight of them pay less than the national median wage.^{xi}

Community Forum feedback

Through small group discussions at the community forum, several themes emerged. Below are the ideas discussed about employment:

- The need for available living-wage jobs.
- The minimum wage is too low.
- The connection between an adequate level of education and a good job.

Findings from other community assessments

Most Community Needs Assessments do not include a detailed analysis of the employment market, and none cover employment needs from the perspective of people or households with low incomes. The Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative, which includes Workforce Southwest Washington, annually publishes a *State of the Workforce* report that tries to explain the balance between workforce supply and industry demand in the greater Portland-Clark County region. The 2016 report shows health care provides the region's highest concentration of private-sector jobs, followed closely by manufacturing. Small businesses dominate the private-sector landscape, with 95.8 percent of regional private-sector firms employing fewer than 50 people.

Other findings of the report are:

- The pace of the regional economic expansion is rivaling the heydays of the mid-1990s.
- Income growth is strong, with spending power the best it's been in decades.
- Employers increasingly have difficulty finding enough qualified workers, and skill shortages are once again a pressing regional issue.
- Many in our region do not have the skills necessary to participate in the thriving economy and are struggling to make ends meet. To a great extent, the strength of our workforce and its ability to meet industry needs will determine whether growth can be sustained.

The current focus of local and regional workforce development organizations is to help local workers prepare for the region's growing economy and help businesses find qualified workers.²⁶

According to the Regional Transportation Planning Council's Regional Growth and Demographic Trends update, more than 24,000 jobs were added in Clark County between 2010 and 2016.²⁷

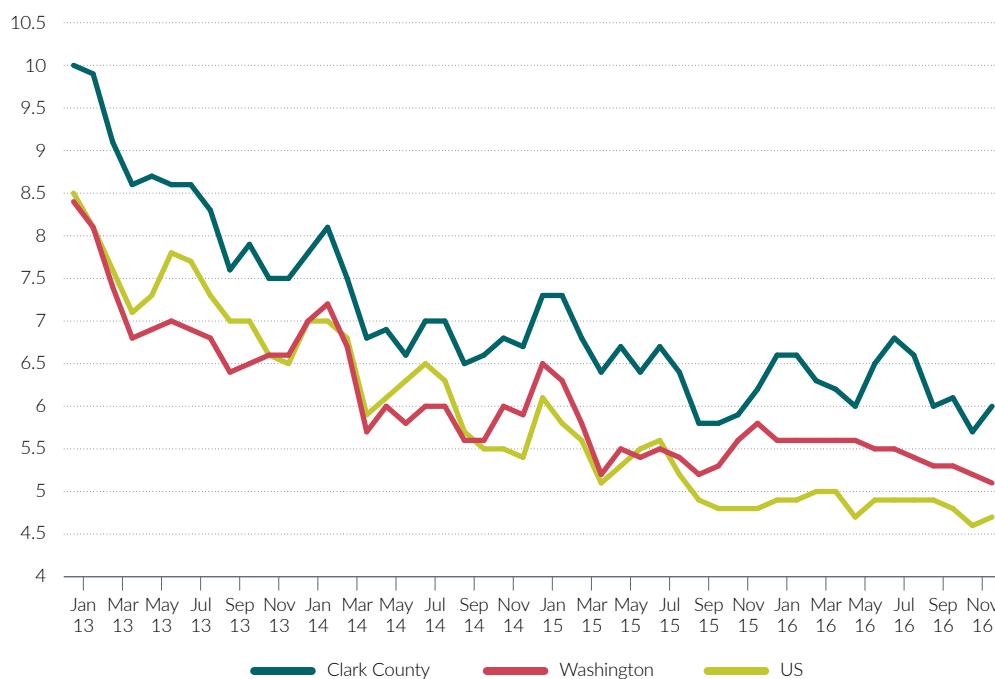
Personal Journey – Partners in Careers Career Academy Program

"John" attended Project Homeless Connect in January 2017. He was homeless and desperately needed help finding employment. We told him what Career Academy could do to help, and he was excited about attending the classes. He attended Career Academy in February 2017 and wrote a résumé and cover letters, conducted intensive job searches, and learned effective communication skills. John was intimidated about interviewing because of his living situation, but he quickly learned how to address his homelessness without demeaning his character. He had no means of transportation, so we provided him a bus pass. With it, he was able to get work as a day laborer and accept interview invitations. We also helped John buy appropriate clothes for interviews. John's persistence led him to a full-time job with plenty of opportunity for overtime. He earns \$12 an hour and now has benefits. Unfortunately, due to the housing crisis in Clark County, John has yet to secure stable housing.

Additional information

Figure 21. Unemployment rates

2013-2016

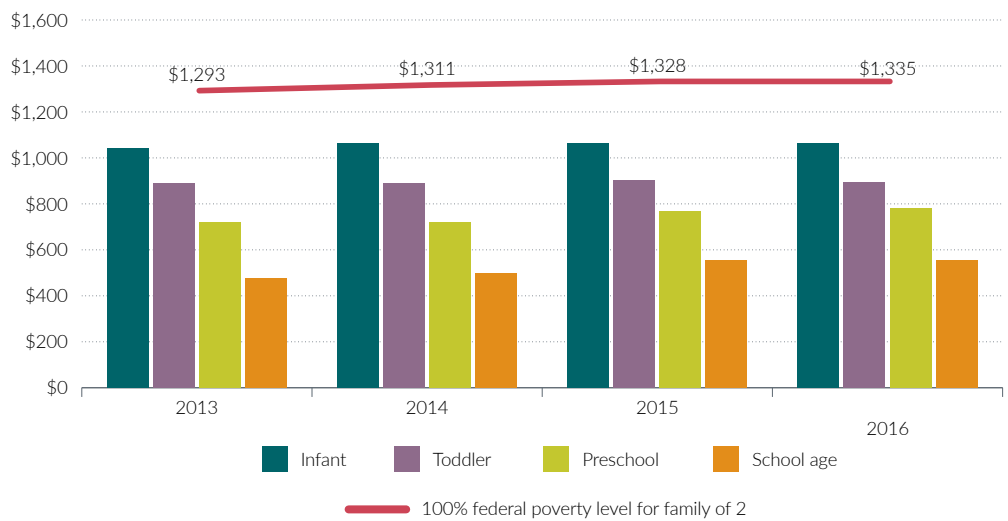


From 2013 to late 2016, the unemployment rate dropped from 10 percent to 6 percent.

The Federal Reserve estimates that even in a healthy economy, the nationwide unemployment rate will be between 4.5 percent and 6 percent because of workers switching jobs, leaving the labor market or entering the labor market. The lowest level of unemployment that the economy can sustain is difficult to determine and has varied over time due to differences in the composition of the labor force and changes in how employers search for workers and how workers search for jobs.²⁸



Figure 22. Average cost of child care per month in Clark County
2013-2016



Using 2016 data, this chart shows the cost of child care for a single-parent family earning 100 percent of the federal poverty level would be 41 percent of income for a school-age child and nearly 80 percent of income for infant care.

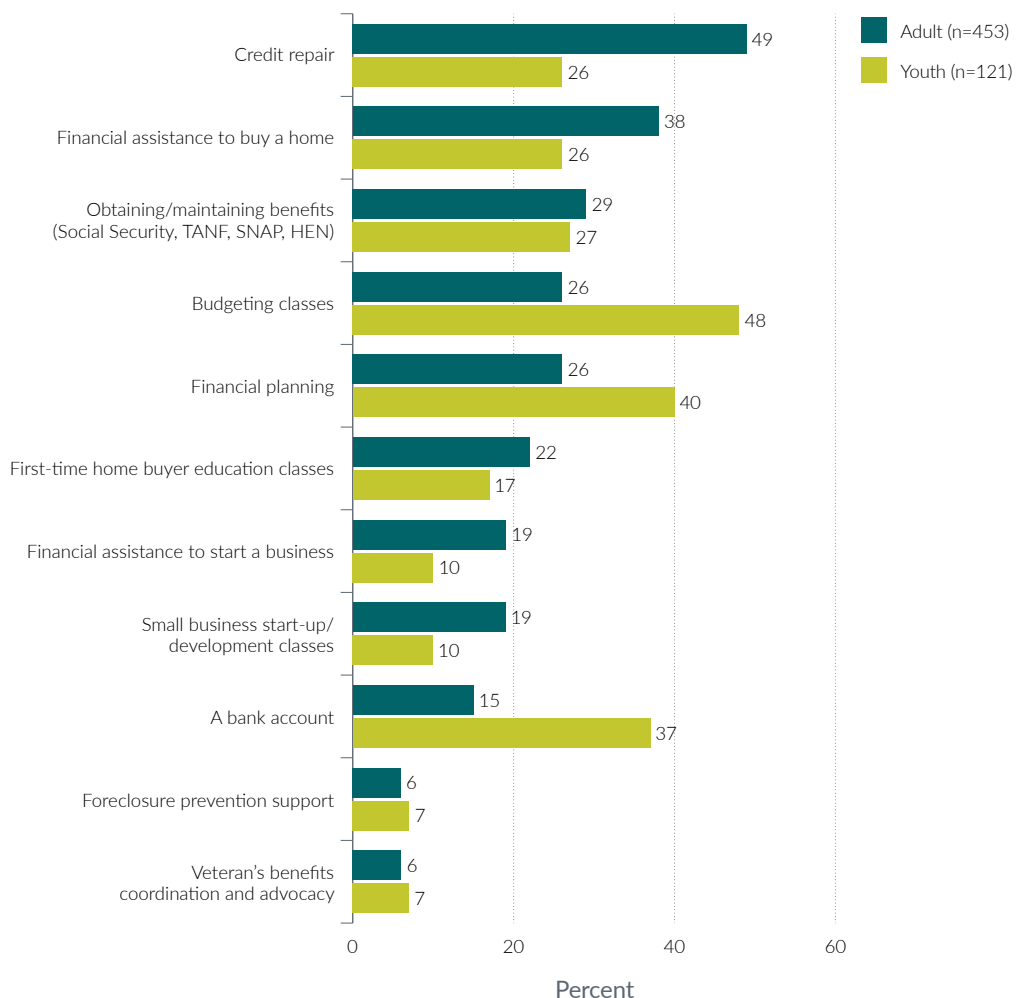
Income and asset building

Survey of Needs

Survey respondents were asked to identify any needs or concerns they or someone in their family had about income and asset building. They could identify up to three needs for adults and three for youth. Figure 23 shows 453 respondents with income and asset building needs for adults and 121 respondents with needs for youth. Almost half of respondents who identified needs for adults (49 percent) said *credit repair* is a current need or concern. The other top concerns were *financial assistance to buy a home* (38 percent) and *obtaining/maintaining benefits such as Social Security, TANF, SNAP, HEN* (29 percent).

Top youth income and asset building needs were *budgeting classes* (48 percent) and *financial planning* (40 percent).

Figure 23. Income and asset building needs, sorted by adult need



Did you know

Washington charges \$54 to renew a driver's license or obtain a valid ID, and both are valid for six years. The cost equals almost five hours of work for someone earning minimum wage.^{xii}

Community Forum feedback

Through small group discussions at the community forum, several themes emerged. Below are the ideas discussed about income and asset building:

- Lots of interest in financial and credit education of both youth and adults.
- Banking services for people with low incomes.
- The difficulty saving while the costs of living, particularly housing, are rising.

Findings from other community assessments

Other community assessments do not discuss or explore income and asset building. However, information in other assessments and community studies helps explain the income and asset building interests and priorities articulated by this assessment's survey respondents.

Kids Count in Washington is a joint effort by the Children's Alliance and Washington State Budget & Policy Center. It gathers and analyzes emerging data on how children are doing in our state and turns that information into action on issues such as poverty, hunger, health care and education. Indicators of health, basic needs and education are collected by counties and published annually in a report entitled *State of Washington's Kids*.

The 2016 report shows the ratio of median income to a self-sufficiency wage in Clark County is only 0.97, meaning the median income is inadequate to allow a household to be self-sufficient. In such an environment, credit repair, various types of financial assistance and services are necessary. The cost of buying a home is too high for a household of low-income in Clark County without some form of assistance.²⁹

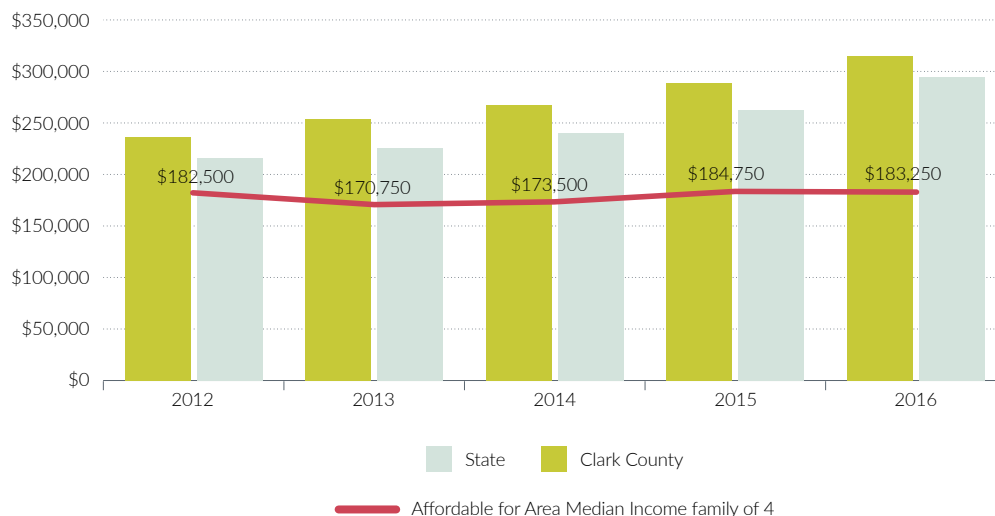


Personal Journey – Community Housing Resource Center Financial Self-Sufficiency Program

"Jackie" is 57 years young. She is homeless, disabled and a veteran living on a fixed income. Jackie also is fleeing domestic violence. She came to the program for help with a landlord debt incurred when her former husband damaged the rental property. Jackie could not contact her abuser and risk her safety. Our program worked with Jackie to contact the landlord and negotiate a reduction of the debt. With the help of partner agencies, Jackie received enough money to satisfy the debt, and she was able to secure a new apartment where she has a sense of safety and security.

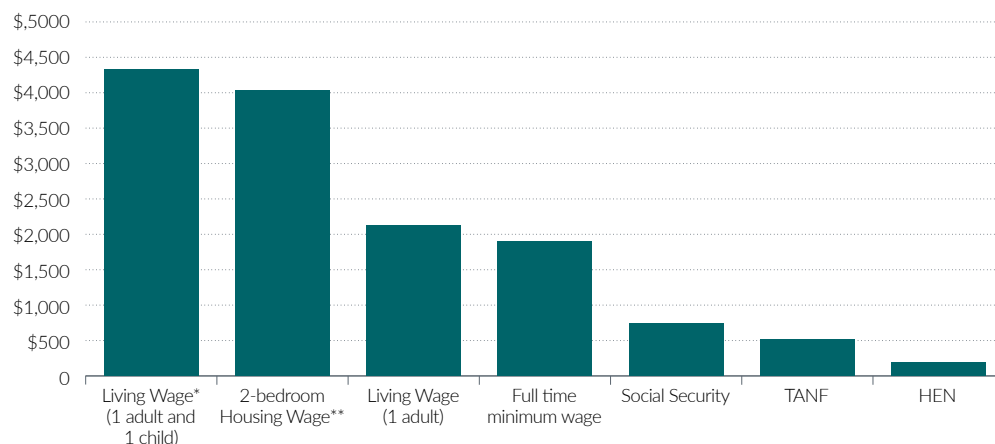
Additional information

Figure 24. Median home selling price and affordability
2012-2016



This chart shows the rise in the median home prices in Clark County and Washington compared with the price considered affordable for a family of four. The cost of purchasing a home is steadily increasing while affordability has remained stagnant.

Figure 25. Monthly income comparison



*Living Wage is a wage that is high enough to maintain a normal standard of living.

**Housing Wage is the amount a person must earn to afford fair-market rent without paying more than 30% of their income on rent.

This chart compares income levels; the living wage of a single-parent family, the income needed to secure a two-bedroom housing unit without being rent-burdened, the living wage for a single person, the earnings of a person working full-time at minimum wage, the amount collected through Social Security, the amount of TANF benefits provided and the amount of support provided through the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) program provided by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

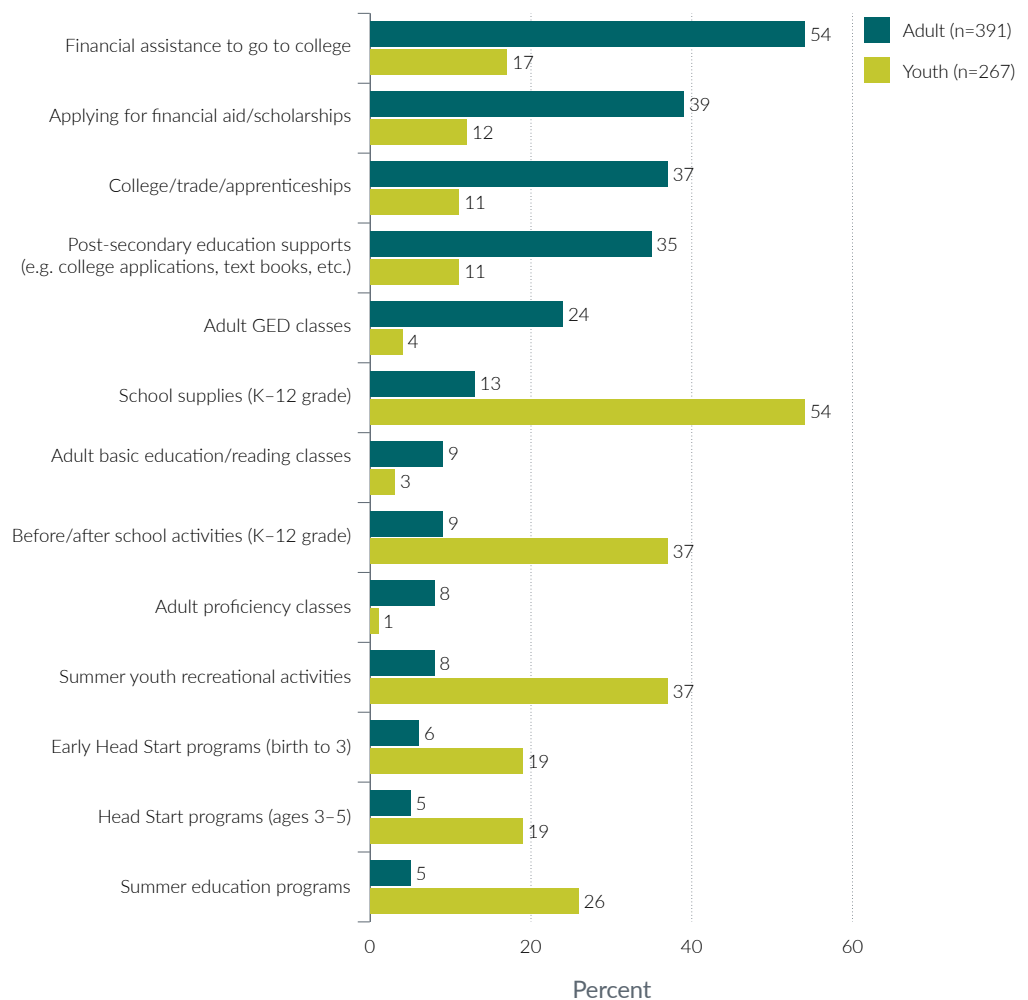
Education

Survey of Needs

Survey respondents were asked to identify any needs or concerns they or someone in their family had about education. They could identify up to three needs for adults and three for youth. Figure 26 shows 391 respondents with education needs for adults and 267 respondents with education needs for youth. Just more than half with needs for adults (54 percent) said *financial assistance to go to college* is a current need or concern. Other top concerns were *applying for financial aid/scholarships* (39 percent) and *college/trade apprenticeships* (37 percent).

Top youth education needs were *school supplies (k-12 grade)* (54 percent) and *before/after school activities (k-12 grade)* (37 percent) and *summer youth recreational activities* (37 percent).

Figure 26. Education needs, sorted by adult need





Community Forum feedback

Through small group discussions at the community forum, several themes emerged. Below are the ideas discussed about education:

- The need for financial assistance for education was reaffirmed. Participants were surprised at the extent of interest in financial education and assistance.
- Placing more value on trade schools and apprenticeships, skills centers and vocational schooling.

Findings from other community assessments

The Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative, which includes Workforce Southwest Washington, publishes an annual *State of the Workforce* report that tries to explain the balance between workforce supply and industry demand in the greater Portland-Clark County region. The 2016 report highlights the need to considerably boost efforts to increase the educational level of area youth.

Findings are:

- Academic achievement and regional graduation rates reflect significant gaps, particularly for youths with low-income and students of color. The number of students identifying as Hispanic and non-English speakers at home is expected to increase by nearly 30 percent by 2030. Given changing demographics, increasing poverty and higher graduation requirements, there is an urgent need to focus on improving academic performance among all regional youth.
- The region continues to see an increase in the number of students entering post-secondary education. However, the rate of completion clearly needs improvement. Students, particularly students of color, are entering post-second-

Did you know

Of those living at or below the federal poverty level in Clark County, 22.3 percent have less than a high school degree or the equivalent.^{xiii}

ary programs but not completing them. The percentage of students requiring remedial education is on the rise, which significantly reduces post-secondary graduation rates.

- Youth unemployment continues to rise—up nearly 5 percentage points from 2000. Among youths aged 16-24, more than 30,000, or 28 percent, are not in school or working.

State of the Workforce 2016 states that education and job-related certificates are critical to a viable workforce that can meet industry demand and earn a living wage.³⁰

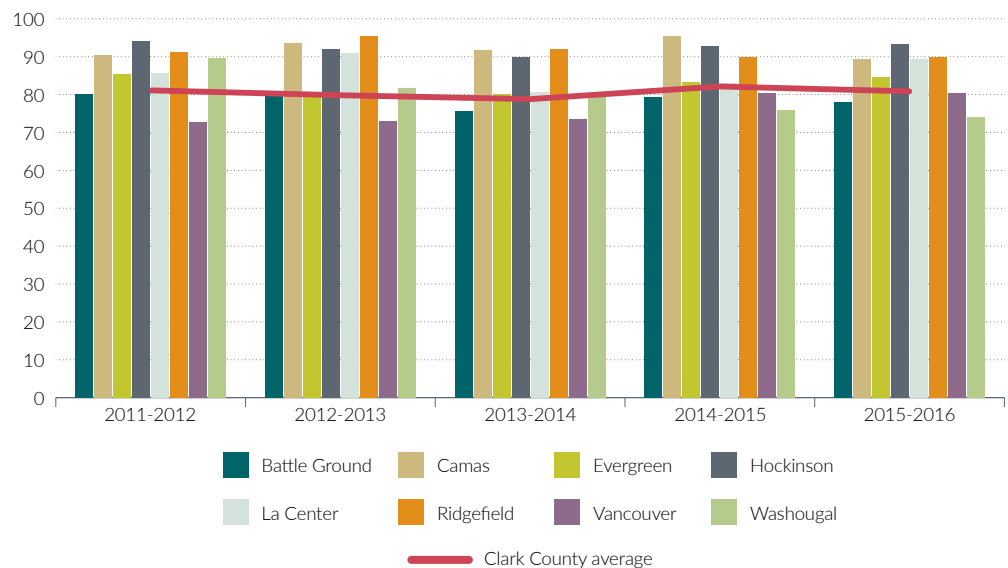
Personal Journey – Share’s Individual Development Account (IDA)

As a single mother of three, "Rachel" applied to the Share IDA program and was accepted in February 2017. Struggling financially while working part time and receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Rachel decided she wanted something more for herself and her children. While higher education can have long-term financial benefits, in the short term, it can be a set-back for families, especially single-income households.

As Rachel entered the IDA program, she had little wiggle room with her budget, but focused on the long term benefit of making monthly deposits to reach her goal. Rachel set her heart on becoming a phlebotomist. In six months, Rachel was able to meet her savings goal, enroll in a phlebotomy program at Clark College and begin her journey with higher education.

Additional information

Figure 27. Graduation rates by district
2012-2016



This chart shows graduation rates by school district compared with the countywide average. Earning a high school diploma nets an average \$8,000 more per year over someone who did not complete high school or high school equivalency.³¹

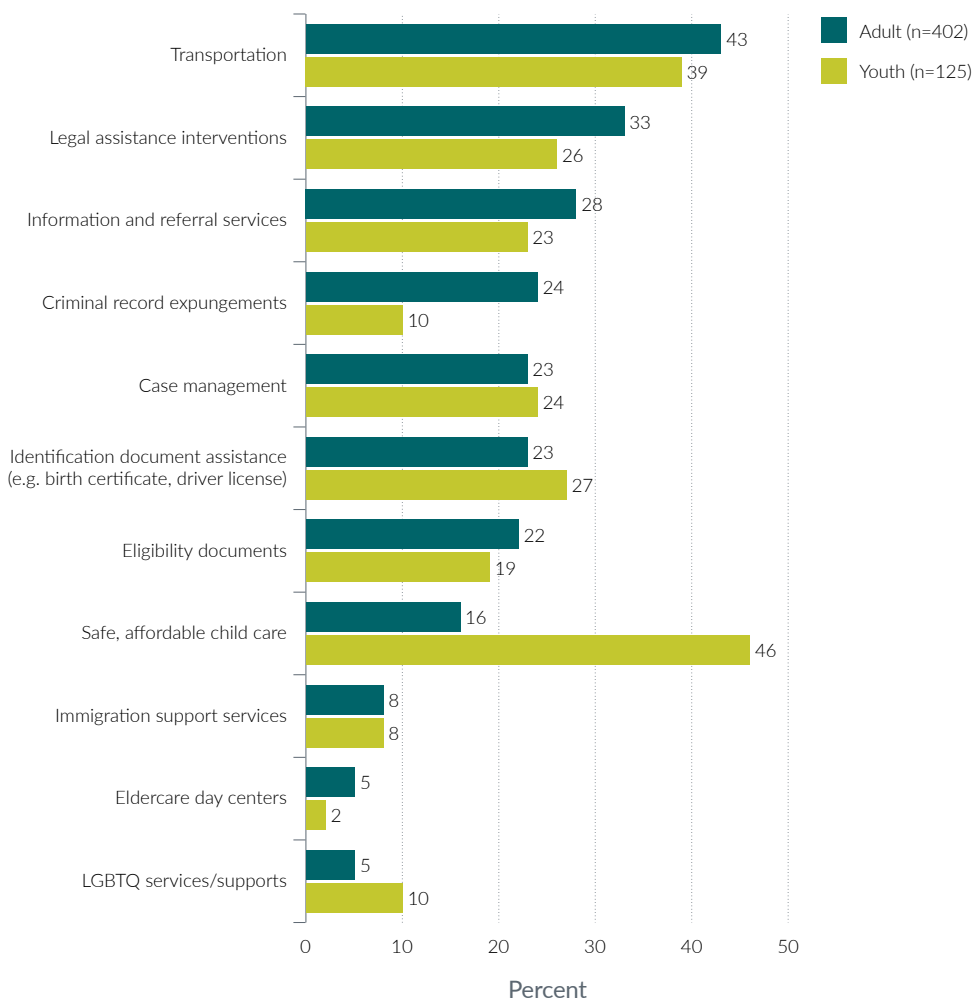
Support Services

Survey of Needs

Survey respondents were asked to identify any needs or concerns they or someone in their family had about support services. They could identify up to three needs for adults and three for youth. Figure 28 shows 402 respondents with support service needs for adults and 125 with support needs for youth. Of those who identified support service needs for adults, many (43 percent) said *transportation* is a current need or concern. Other concerns were *legal assistance interventions* (33 percent) and *information and referral services* (28 percent).

Top support service needs for youth were *safe, affordable child care* (46 percent) and *transportation* (39 percent).

Figure 28. Support service needs, sorted by adult need





Jenn Evelyn Ann

Community Forum feedback

Through small group discussions at the community forum, several themes emerged. Below are ideas discussed regarding support services:

- Mentoring for youth was frequently brought up as a need.
- The importance of social support networks and personal connection was emphasized. They include family, school, faith and peer supports.
- Transportation costs and limited routes of public transit make it difficult for people who are low-income to succeed.

Findings from other community assessments

Other community studies back up this survey respondents' identification of transportation and affordable child care as priority needs.

The Regional Transportation Plan for Clark County is based on the county's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and is the collective regional strategy for developing a transportation system that provides mobility and accessibility for people as well as goods and freight. The current 2014 plan, states that between 1980 and 2014, the population of the incorporated area grew by 306 percent, from 57,248 to 232,660, while the population of the unincorporated area grew 56 percent, from 134,979 to 210,140. The proportion of residents in the unincorporated areas decreased from 70 percent to 47 percent, while the proportion living in the incorporated area increased from 30 percent to 53 percent.

Specifically, significant growth occurred in the smaller cities, and this trend is continuing. While the county's overall population grew by 86 percent from 1990-2014, Camas grew by 207 percent, Battle Ground by 397 percent, Washougal by 213 percent and Ridgefield by 353 percent. Geographically dispersed growth leads to a

Did you know

Legal representation is not guaranteed for civil cases. Civil defendants often go unrepresented in eviction, bankruptcy and divorce cases.^{xiv}

need to improve transportation facilities connecting the urban areas with the larger Vancouver-Portland metropolitan area, where jobs, higher education and services are concentrated.³²

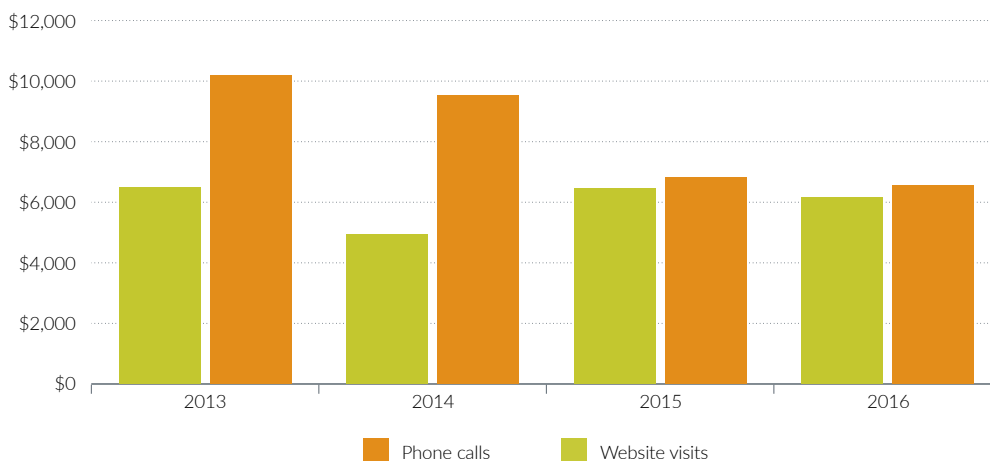
Kids Count in Washington is a joint effort by the Children's Alliance and Washington State Budget & Policy Center. It gathers and analyzes emerging data on how children are doing, and then turns that information into action on issues such as poverty, hunger, health care and education. Indicators of health, basic needs and education are collected by counties and published annually in a report entitled *State of Washington's Kids*. The 2016 report finds that for every 10 children up to age 6 who need child care in Clark County, only four slots are available.³³

Personal Journey—Volunteer Lawyers Program

"Sylvia" came to our program for help gaining custody of her 2-year-old granddaughter. The child was in danger living with her biological parents. Our volunteer attorney was able to represent Sylvia for the duration of her case and prevailed by obtaining non-parental custody for her. The child is now in a safe, loving home, and Silvia has become a better advocate for herself and her grandchild.

Additional information

Figure 29. 211info Information and referral contacts
2013-2016



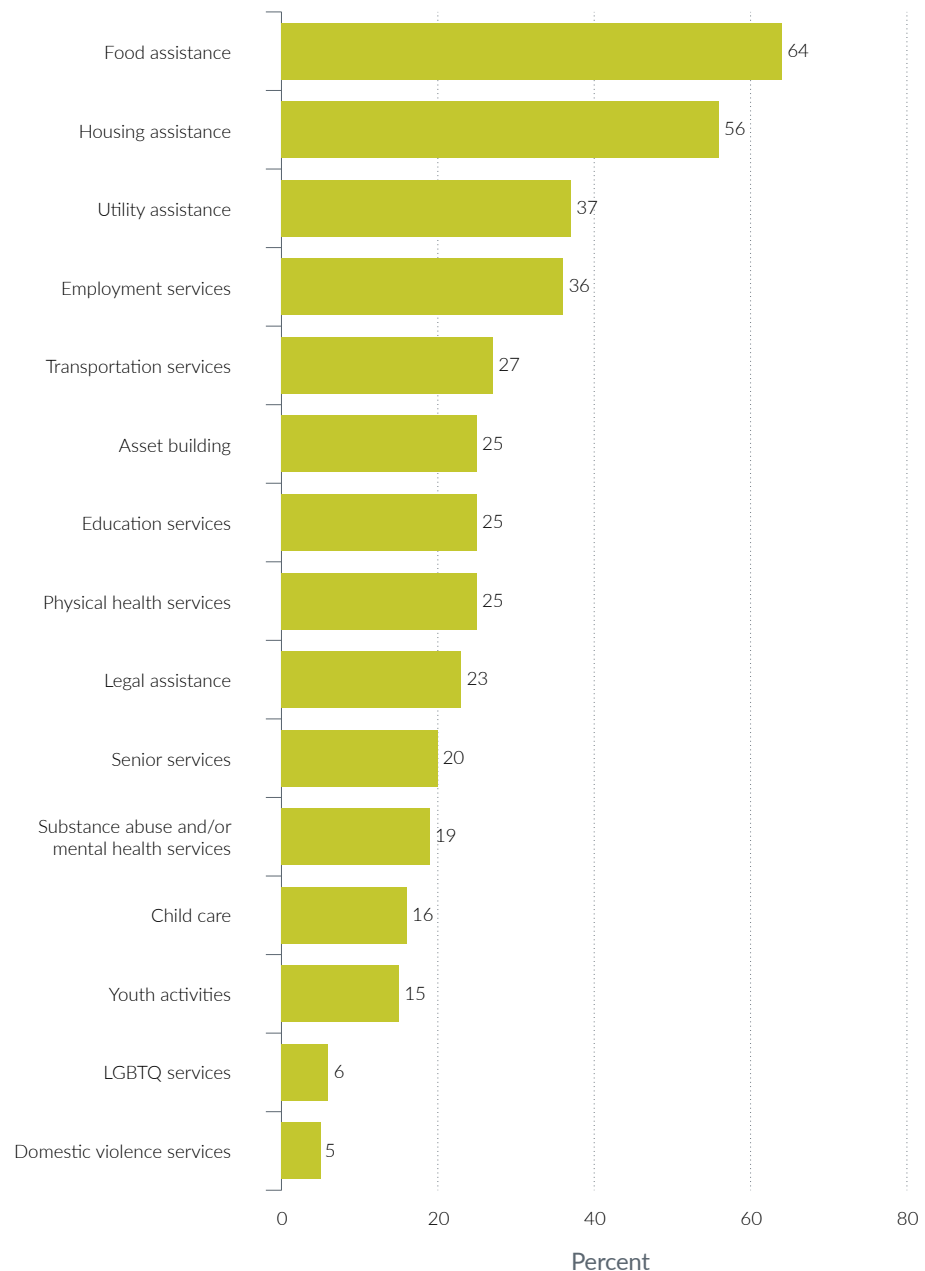
211info is an information and referral program serving Oregon and southwest Washington. Each year, it receives thousands of inquiries for services in Clark County. The agency receives calls for many types of social services; with the top needs being housing, legal assistance, utility assistance and health care services.

TOP OVERALL NEEDS

The previous information was an in-depth look at unmet needs for a better understanding of services needed within each domain. Respondents were asked to identify their families' top overall needs on a list of 15 commonly identified barriers. Responses were tallied and sorted and are presented in Figure 30.

Of the 1,165 total responses, 954 answered this question. Nearly two-thirds who participated in this survey section mentioned *food assistance*. Other top issues were *housing assistance* (56 percent), *utility assistance* (37 percent) and *employment services* (35 percent).

Figure 30. Top overall needs



Overview of Needs

Table 8 shows areas of need in the left column and specific populations along the top. A directional arrow indicates whether that population responded differently than the remaining populations. For example, homeless respondents were more likely to identify a need for housing assistance and less likely to identify a need for utility assistance, when compared to non-homeless respondents. Pale blue boxes indicate no statistically significant difference.

Table 8. Population needs comparison

	% Top need	Homeless	Doubled up	Disability/ special need	Income < 125% FPL	Veteran	Non- white/ Hispanic	55+	No insurance	Recruited from food bank	Recruited from housing provider				
Food assistance	64			↑	↑					↑	→				
Housing assistance	56	↑	↑	↑				→		→					
Utility assistance	37	→		↑											
Employment services	36	↑	↑					→	↑	→					
Transportation assistance	27	↑		↑						→					
Asset building	25			↑	→			→		→					
Education services	25		↑			→		→		→					
Physical health services	25			↑	→	↑									
Legal assistance	23									→					
Senior services	20	→		↑	→		→	↑	→	→					
Substance abuse and/or mental health supports	19	↑		↑				→		→					
Child care	16			→				→							
Youth activities	15	→						→							
LGBTQ services	6			↑				→							
Domestic violence services	5	↑						→							
When compared to other survey respondent populations:												↑	Higher likelihood of need	→	Lower likelihood of need

PARTNER PARTICIPATION

To complete this assessment, Clark County Community Services engaged many community partners, including agencies in the faith community, private sector, public sector, community-based organizations and schools.

Partners participated through emails, presentations and by phone. These agencies and community groups were key in helping distribute the Survey of Needs:

Community-based organizations

ARC of Southwest Washington
Area Agency on Aging and Disability
Catholic Community Services
Council for the Homeless
Children's Home Society
Community Housing Resource Center
Clark County Food Bank and 35 pantries
Columbia River Mental Health Services
Community Services Northwest
Consumer Voices are Born
Developmental Disabilities Parent Coalition
Evergreen Habitat for Humanity
Free Clinic of Southwest Washington
Human Services Council
Impact NW
Innovative Services Northwest
Janus Youth Programs
Lifeline Connections
Lutheran Community Services Northwest
Meals on Wheels
New Day Community Dental
Northwest Justice Project
Outsiders Inn
Partners in Careers
REACH
The Salvation Army
Sea Mar
Second Step Housing
Share
Smith Tower
Trillium Employment
Unite! Washougal
Veterans Assistance Center
Volunteer Lawyers
YWCA

Educational institutions

Battle Ground Public Schools—Homeless Liaison
Camas School District—Homeless Liaison
Educational Opportunities for Children and Families
Evergreen Public Schools—Family Community Resource Centers
Evergreen Public Schools—Homeless School Liaison
Hockinson School District—Homeless Liaison
La Center School District—Homeless Liaison
Mt. Pleasant School District—Homeless Liaison
Ridgefield School District—Homeless Liaison
Vancouver Public Schools—Family-Community Resource Centers
Vancouver Public Schools—Homeless Liaison
Washougal School District—Homeless Liaison

Faith-based agencies

Evergreen Faith-Based Coffee
Friends of the Carpenter
Open House Ministries
Vancouver Faith-Based Coffee

Private sector

Beacon Health Options
Community Health Plan of Washington
Molina Healthcare
SW Washington Regional Health Alliance

Public sector

Clark County Public Health
Clark County Youth House
Clark Public Utility
Commission on African American Affairs
Cowlitz Tribe
Jail Re-entry Program
Jail Work Center
Vancouver Housing Authority
WorkSource

The second phase of the assessment was to get community feedback on the results of the survey. Clark County engaged three agencies to co-sponsor the Community Feedback Forum on May 18, 2017. The Vancouver Neighborhood Alliance, Neighborhood Associations Council of Clark County and Middle Class Alliance were key to informing the community about the feedback forum. Event fliers were emailed to contacts at each of the above agencies. A news release was published April 25, 2017 to inform the public about the event.

Staff made presentations to these groups, inviting their communities to attend the forum:

- Board of County Councilors
Board Time March 29
- Community Health Access
Resource Group *April 12*
- Coordinated Assessment meeting
April 12
- Vancouver Neighborhood Alliance
April 12
- Clark County Food Bank Pantry
distribution meeting *April 13*
- Council for the Homeless,
board meeting *April 13*
- Veterans Advisory Board *April 13*
- Battle Ground City Council *April 17*
- Workforce Southwest Washington
Emerging Workforce Committee
April 18
- Middle Class Alliance *April 18*
- Evergreen Faith-based Coffee
April 19
- Vancouver City Council *April 24*
- Washougal City Council *April 24*
- Local Planning Area meeting
April 25
- La Center City Council *April 26*
- Ridgefield City Council *April 27*
- Share, board of directors *April 27*
- Latino Community Resource Fair
April 29
- Camas City Council *May 1*
- Yacolt Town Council *May 1*

Table 9. Feedback forum participants

To get an idea of the representation at the forum, attendees were asked to identify which category best described them. Of the 53 participants at the forum, 46 responded:

	Percent	Count
Service provider	30.43	14
Elected official	4.35	2
Advocate	8.70	4
Volunteer	23.91	11
Member of a low-income household	2.17	1
Community member	17.39	8
Other	13.04	6
Totals	100	46

A person who entered "other" clarified that they were both an elected official and advocate.



APPENDIX

All of these exhibits as well as this report can be found on our website at www.clark.wa.gov/community-services/community-action-documents

Appendices

Sample copy

Distribution email

Public Service Announcement

Link to raw data

Forum

Flier

Public Service Announcement

Group discussion notes

Interactive feedback multiple choice poll results

2016 Report to the Community

Community Services Strategic Plan

Community Commons Report

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COMMUNITY SERVICES
1601 E Fourth Plain Boulevard • PO Box 5000
Vancouver, WA 98661-5000
360.397.2075

www.clark.wa.gov/community-services

For other formats, contact the Clark County ADA Office

Voice: 360.397.2322 / Relay: 711 or 800.833.6388 / Fax: 360.397.6165 / Email: ADA@clark.wa.gov