

Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council, INC.

2025 Community Needs Assessment



Macon-Bibb County
Economic Opportunity
Council, Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background	1
Executive Summary	1
Methodology	1
Data Limitations	2
Agency Profile and Services.....	2
Vision	3
Mission.....	3
Purpose.....	3
Values	3
Demographics	5
Population	5
Age	6
Gender	7
Race	7
Ethnicity	9
Language	9
Income.....	10
Median and Per Capita Incomes.....	10
Poverty.....	12
Employment.....	17
Employment Sector Profile	18
Education	19
Pre-K Education and Early Learning.....	19
K-12 Education	21
Adult Educational Attainment.....	24
Higher Education	25
Housing.....	27
Vacancy	27
Housing Type.....	29
Housing Value	32
Housing Affordability	33

Homelessness.....	35
Health and Nutrition.....	36
Free and Reduced Lunch Program.....	38
SNAP	38
Food Insecurity.....	38
Healthcare Coverage.....	39
Transportation.....	42
Access to a Vehicle.....	42
Macon Transit Authority.....	43
Head Start Program	44
Demographics of Potential Participants	44
Women, Infants, and Children Participants.....	46
Disability	46
Maternal Child Health Pregnancies and Births	47
Births	48
Dual Language Learners	49
Health Insurance.....	50
Pre-K Enrollment.....	50
Enrollment.....	55
Disability Characteristics.....	55
Parent Services	56
Needs and Opportunities.....	57
Family Services.....	57
Appendix A	58
Monroe County	58
Demographics	58
Ethnicity	60
Language	61
Income and Poverty	61
Poverty.....	62
Families in Poverty.....	65
Adult Educational Attainment.....	65
Housing Cost Burden.....	67
Homelessness.....	67
Employment.....	69

	Health and Nutrition.....	71
	SNAP	72
	Food Insecurity.....	72
	Transportation.....	73
Appendix B		75
	Services Provided	75
Appendix C.....		78
	Partners.....	78
Appendix D		79
	Needs Assessment Survey Analysis.....	79
Appendix E		86
	Needs Assessment Full Survey Summary Response.....	86

Background

The Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (EOCI) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing poverty and promoting self-sufficiency through community-based services. Established in 1965, EOCI provides programs in employment, housing, education, health, and transportation to low-income individuals and families in Macon-Bibb County. Because EOCI also operates Head Start programs in Monroe County, limited data from that county is included in this assessment to ensure the needs of all service recipients are addressed. The 2025 Community Needs Assessment combines community survey results with data from government and public health sources to identify local needs and guide program planning.

Executive Summary

This assessment presents a comprehensive overview of the socio-economic conditions affecting residents in Macon-Bibb County, with supplemental data from Monroe County. Key findings include:

- **Employment:** While unemployment has declined to 3.9%, job quality and access remain concerns.
- **Housing:** Nearly 50% of renters are cost-burdened, and over 11,000 housing units are vacant.
- **Education:** Adult educational attainment and Pre-K enrollment remain below state averages.
- **Health:** The County ranks low in health outcomes, with high rates of obesity and uninsured residents.
- **Transportation:** About 12% of households lack access to a vehicle, limiting mobility.
- **Poverty:** 28% of residents live below the poverty line, including over 40% of children under five.

These findings will support EOCI's efforts to align services with community needs and advocate for resources that promote equity and opportunity.

Methodology

Primary Research and Data Collection

Primary data collection included gathering quantitative feedback from surveys distributed throughout the community. Surveys were distributed throughout Macon-Bibb County. A total of 565 survey responses were collected over two months in 2024.

Secondary Research and Data Collection

Secondary research and data collection included gathering relevant and current statistics and research available from reliable sources, such as government entities and social agencies, to supplement survey results. The secondary research offers greater insight and context into the issues that Macon-Bibb County's population faces.

The information presented in this assessment comes from the following sources:

- American Community Survey (ACS) 2018-2023
- U.S. Census 2010
- Macon Transit Authority

- Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
- Georgia Department of Labor
- Georgia Department of Education
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Georgia Department of Public Health
- Kids Count

Data Limitations

American Community Survey (ACS): The ACS 5 is a 5-year estimate of data collected over 60 months by the US Census Bureau. It is an estimate and therefore not precise, but it is the most reliable estimate of changing population characteristics. Additionally, it may not represent actual numbers now, but it still provides relevant data and can be used to understand general trends and conditions. Other 5-year ACS Estimates are referenced in this document to provide comparative data.

U.S. Census: The Census is a complete count of the population and is intended to be precise because it counts every person and household every 10 years.

Survey data: The survey results may not represent the diversity of Macon-Bibb County (attitudinally and demographically) because the participants were recruited based on their participation in Macon-Bibb County EOCI services. This method is similar to a convenience sample because it is made up of people easy to reach as opposed to a random sample.

Because the findings are based on self-reports, there may be reliability issues because participants may interpret items and situations differently (e.g. lack of money, transportation needs, lack of or need for a job).

Agency Profile and Services

The Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. was established in 1965 as part of the Macon-Bibb County Planning and Zoning Department by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The agency became a city-county agency through a joint resolution of the Bibb County Board of Commissioners and the Macon City Council. In 1985, the Macon-Bibb County EOCI became an incorporated, private, non-profit agency.

The Macon-Bibb County EOCI is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors. One-third of the board must consist of elected public officials, holding office on the date of selection. No less than one-third must be people chosen by a democratic selection process, adequate to ensure that members are representative of low-income individuals and families.

Vision

We envision a society of empowered families who are self-sufficient and own a stake in their community.

Mission

Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. is committed to reducing poverty by providing collaborative holistic services and resources that empower economically disadvantaged families to achieve self-sufficiency.

Purpose

It is the purpose and mission of the Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. to break the cycle of poverty by coordinating available resources, in a structured manner, to affect the economic and other causes of poverty in the Macon-Bibb County area.

It is further the purpose and mission of the agency to identify barriers to individual and family self-sufficiency and focus all available resources toward the elimination of these barriers; thereby, enabling low-income individuals to obtain the skills, knowledge, and motivation to extricate themselves from their poverty condition.

Values

Customer Service: We view poverty through the lens of humanity. We are dedicated to servicing our clients with compassion, dignity, and respect. We seek to understand their needs in an unbiased way as we empower our families to achieve self-sufficiency.

Community Partnerships: We know the success of our families is based on fostering long-term innovative partnerships. We approach all our engagements with partners and other stakeholders with respect, working collaboratively as peers to achieve our goals.

Diversity: We honor the uniqueness of everyone. Our goal is to provide an inclusive and equitable environment and representative of our diverse communities. We are proud to act courageously and openly with respect for the knowledge, experience, and abilities of all our families and community partners.

Shared Purpose: We function as a team to attain our organizational goals. We work collaboratively with our policymakers, departments, employees, families, and individuals.

Excellence: We strive to excel in every aspect of our business and approach every challenge with a determination to succeed. Our pursuit of excellence drives our decision-making and inter-strategies.

Integrity: We conduct our business by the highest standards of professional behavior and ethics. We are transparent, honest, and ethical in all our inter-strategies with employees, clients, and community partners.

Responsible Stewardship: We are committed to excellent stewardship of all human and financial resources. We are trustworthy of the funds invested in us and we hold ourselves accountable to our partners, donors, and other stakeholders.

Sustainability: We are committed to acting responsibly in the interest of our organization. We operate with the consciousness of the social and environmental impact of our strategies and incorporate healthy and sustainable best practices into our standard business operations.

Service Area

The majority of Macon-Bibb County EOCI's service provision occurs within Macon-Bibb County. However, the EOCI operates Head Start centers in both Macon-Bibb County and Monroe County. It also operates transportation services for the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA), Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Seniors Centers, and the Area Agency on Aging in Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Macon-Bibb, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs, and Wilkinson Counties.

Monroe County

An overview of demographic and socioeconomic data related to Monroe County can be found in Appendix A. Detailed data on Monroe County is included in this report because Macon-Bibb County EOCI provides Head Start services in the county.

Services Provided

A complete list of programs can be found in Appendix B.

Partners

A list of current partners can be found in Appendix C.

Survey Summary Results

A sample of the survey and a summary of survey results can be found in Appendices D and E, respectively.

Demographics

Population

Macon-Bibb County's population has cumulatively grown in the past 50 years. Between 2010 and 2022, Macon-Bibb County experienced an overall population rate of 3.7 percent. This growth rate is significantly lower than those of Macon-Bibb County's neighboring counties of Crawford, Houston, Jones, and Peach Counties. These counties experienced growth rates of over 30 percent for the same period.

Only Twiggs County is expected to have slower growth as its population is projected to decline by less than one percent from 2020 to 2050.

However, since 2010, Macon-Bibb County has experienced negative population growth. According to the 2017-2022 American Community Survey (ACS), the county's population has declined by 1.1 percent, an estimated loss of 1,744 people since 2010.

Table 1: Population Trends and Projections

Bibb County Population Trends, 1960 – 2050	
Year	Population
1970	143,366
1980	150,256
1990	150,137
2000	153,995
2010	155,844
2018	156,668
2020	157,349
2030	161,471
2040	164,164
2050	165,322

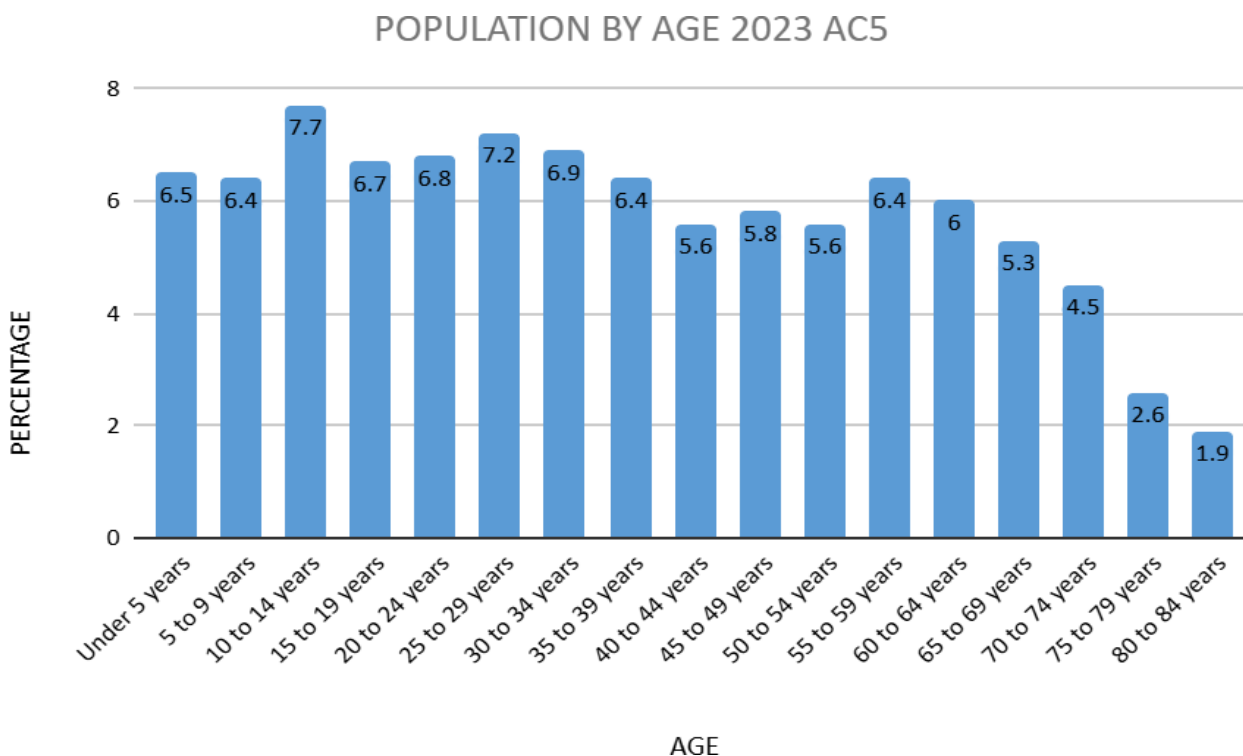
Sources: 1960-2020 decennial years (United States Census Bureau and American Population Review, 2030-2050 projected population (Governor's Office of Planning and Budget)

According to Estimates by the Governor's Office of Planning Budget, developed in 2020, Macon-Bibb County is expected to have modest cumulative growth over the next 30 years. Table 1 shows the recent and projected population trends for the county. These projections were modified since EOCI's 2019 Assessment, as Macon-Bibb County has been experiencing population loss since 2018. Projections do reveal growth between 2020 and 2030 shown in Table 1.

Age

Similar to the State of Georgia and neighboring counties, Macon-Bibb County’s population is aging, albeit slowly. The county had a median age of 34.7 in 2000, 35.5 in 2010, and 36.3 according to the US Census Bureau County and City Data Book. Based on the 2018-2023 ACS, 27.1 percent of the population was 19 and under, while 22.5 percent was 65 and over. Children under the age of 5 accounted for 6.5 percent of Macon-Bibb County’s population. Figure 1 shows the current distribution of age groups in Macon-Bibb County.

Figure 1: Age Distribution, Macon-Bibb County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey S0101 Age and Sex

The age demographics are expected to change over the next 30 years. According to the Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget, 2022 Series, seniors over 65 are expected to grow from 12.6% percent of the county’s population in 2010 to 23.0 percent in 2050. While specific percentages for the 85+ age group are not provided in the state-level data, the overall increase in the senior population suggests a corresponding rise in this subgroup. Persons age 19 and under are expected to decline from 21.2 percent in 2010 to 23.1 percent in 2050. While these numbers are estimated projections, they indicate that services may need to adapt based on population trends

Gender

Females make up approximately 52.88% (82,776) percent of the population, whereas males comprise the other 47.26% (73,767) percent. This creates a ratio of 1.11 females for every male. Statewide, the ratio is 0.90 females for every male.

Source: US Census Bureau -American County Survey 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profile

Race

Macon-Bibb County is mostly composed of individuals that identify as White or as Black or African-American with 8.67 percent identifying as another race. Table 2 shows the estimate of racial groups in the county.

Table 2: Racial Groups, Macon-Bibb County

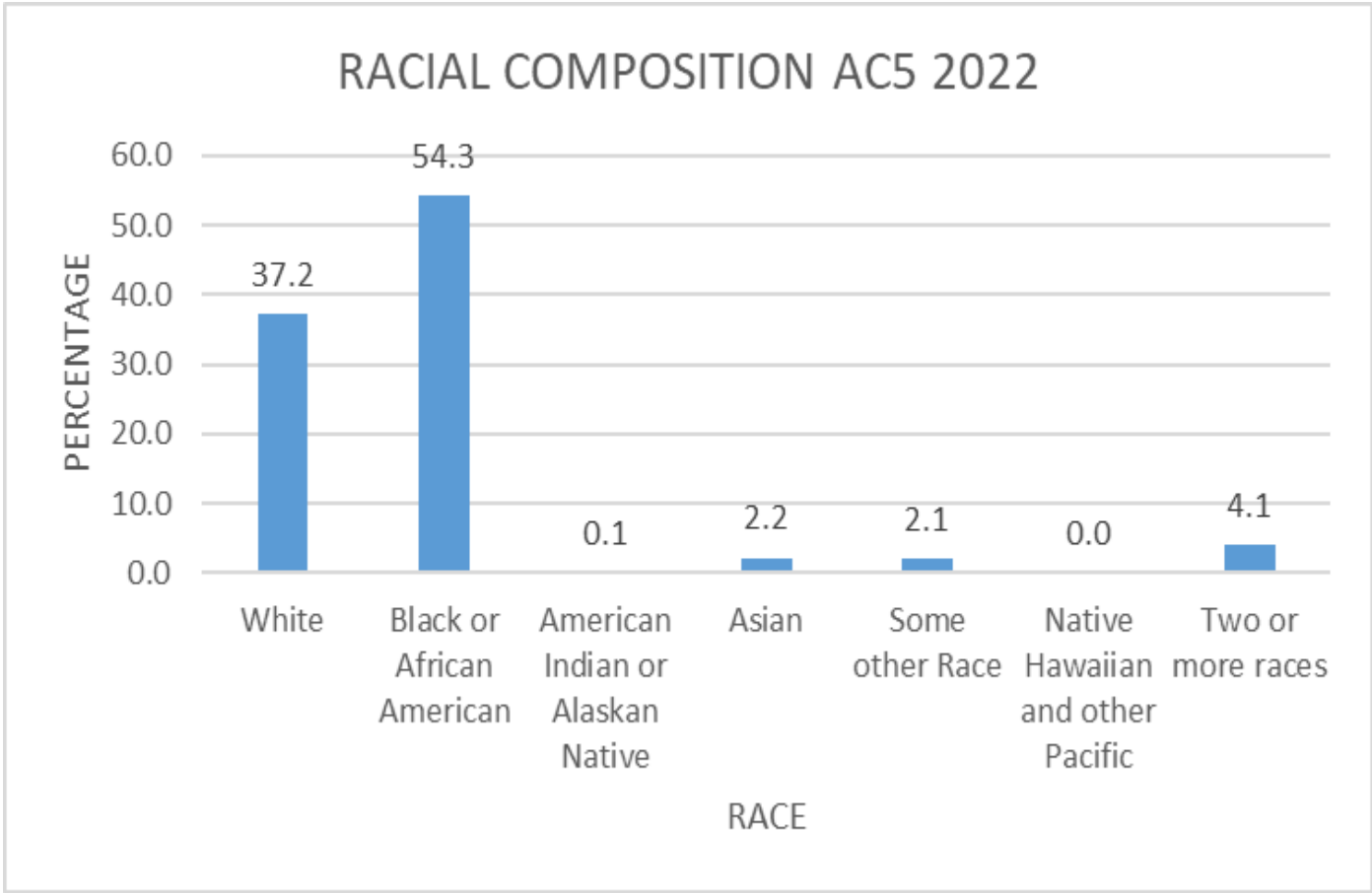
Race	#	%
White	58,258	37.2
Black or African-American	85,028	54.3
American Indian or Alaskan Native	210	0.13
Asian	3,428	2.2
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	39	.02
Some Other Race	3,244	2.07
Two or More Races	6,347	4.05

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

The racial composition of Macon-Bibb County has significantly changed since 1990, largely characterized by a decrease in the White population and an increase of the Black or African- American population. In total, the White population decreased by 10,585 persons, a 15.4 percent decrease between 2010 and 2022. The Black or African-American population increased by 6,162, a 7.8 percent increase between

2010 and 2022. Figure 2 shows the change in racial groups between 2010 and 2022.

Figure 2: Racial Composition of Macon-Bibb County, 2022



Source: US Census Bureau -American County Survey 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profile

Ethnicity

In the 2018-2022 ACS Estimates, 5,853 individuals identified as being Hispanic or Latino in Macon-Bibb County. This group comprises 3.7 percent of Macon-Bibb County’s population. Table 3 shows a detailed breakdown of the origin of the Hispanic/Latino population. The population with Mexican origins had the largest increase, growing by nearly 700 people in 2022.

Table 3: Hispanic/Latino Populations by Origin, Macon-Bibb County

Ethnicity and Origin	2010	2018-2022 Estimate	Difference
Hispanic/Latino	4,389	5,853	1,464
Mexican	2,429	3,119	690
Puerto-Rican	474	961	487
Cuban	252	528	276
Other Hispanic/Latino	1,234	1,245	11

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Language

Macon-Bibb County’s population that speaks a language other than English at home has increased since 2016 - 2020 ACS. According to that estimate, there were 7,510 people or 5.3 percent of the population five years old and over who spoke a language other than English. According to the 2018-2022 ACS Estimates, 7,990 people or 5.5 percent of the population speak a language other than English.

Of the 7,990 other language speakers in Macon-Bibb County in 2022, 37.2 percent of them spoke English less than “very well.” Spanish is the language that most residents spoke and comprised 50.8 percent of the population that spoke a language other than English. This is followed by Indo-European languages (23.8 percent) and Asian and Pacific Island languages (23.8 percent).

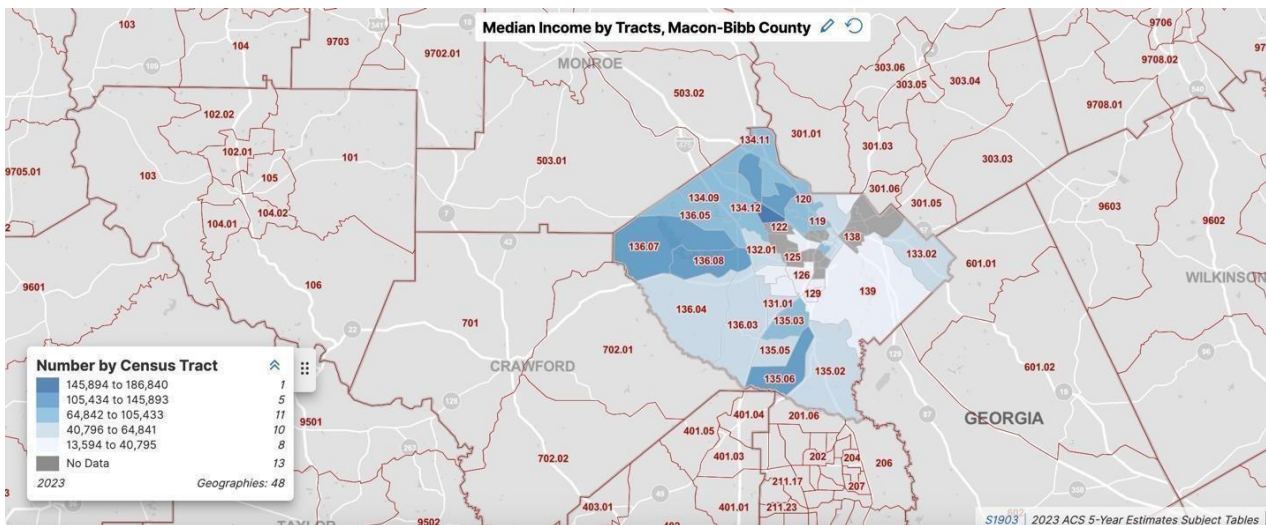
Income

Median and Per Capita Incomes

There are several metrics for income collected by the 2018-2022 U.S. Census including median household income, median family income, and per capita income. Household income measures the income of all individuals 15 years old and over a household, regardless of relation by birth, marriage, or adoption. The median is then derived from dividing the income distribution into two equal parts with one-half of the cases falling below the median and one-half of cases above the median. According to 2018-2022 ACS Estimates, Macon-Bibb County's median household income is \$48,897. This measure captures all households in the county. Statewide, the median household income is \$71,355. Median family income measures the income of all individuals in a household who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Macon-Bibb County's median family income is \$64,826, considerably lower than the statewide median family income of \$86,169. Median family income is generally higher than median household income as family households typically have more people and those members are in their prime earning years. Per capita income, the average income per person, is \$30,115 in Macon-Bibb County. The per capita income in Georgia is \$37,836.

In addition to the differences between the county and the state, there are also significant income discrepancies within Macon-Bibb County. Map 1 shows the median household income by tract in the county. The tracts with the lowest median household incomes are in central and eastern Macon-Bibb County while the wealthier tracts are in the northern and southwestern parts of the county.

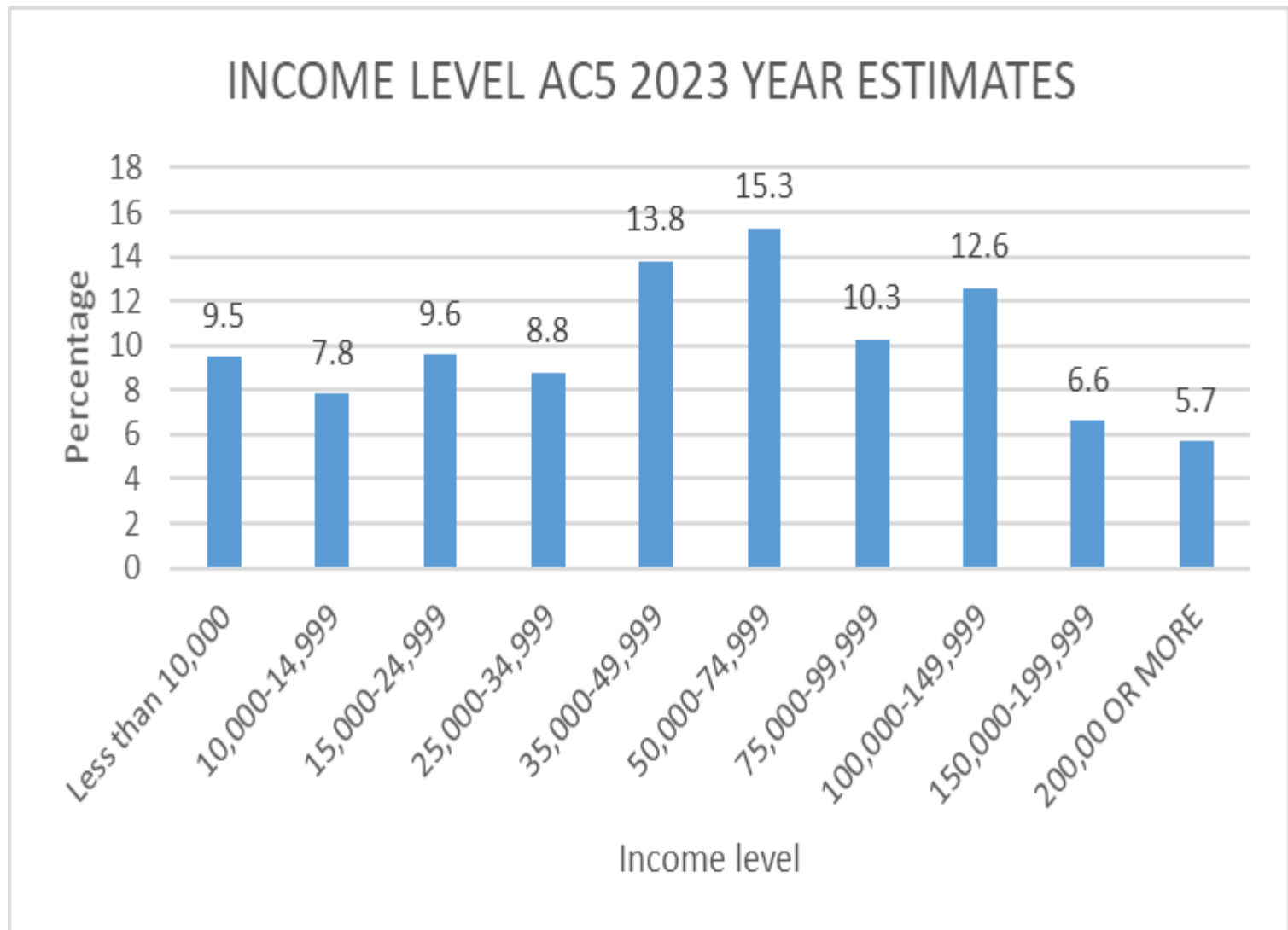
Map 1: Median Income by Tracts, Macon-Bibb County 2023 ACS



Another metric to understand income in Macon-Bibb County is the distribution of household income – the number or percentage of households within each income bracket, shown in Figure 3. About 49.5 percent of households in Macon-Bibb County have a total household income of less than \$49,999. This is significant when compared to the state where only 41 percent of households have a total income of less than \$49,999.

Figure 3: Percentage of Households in an Income Bracket, Macon-Bibb County

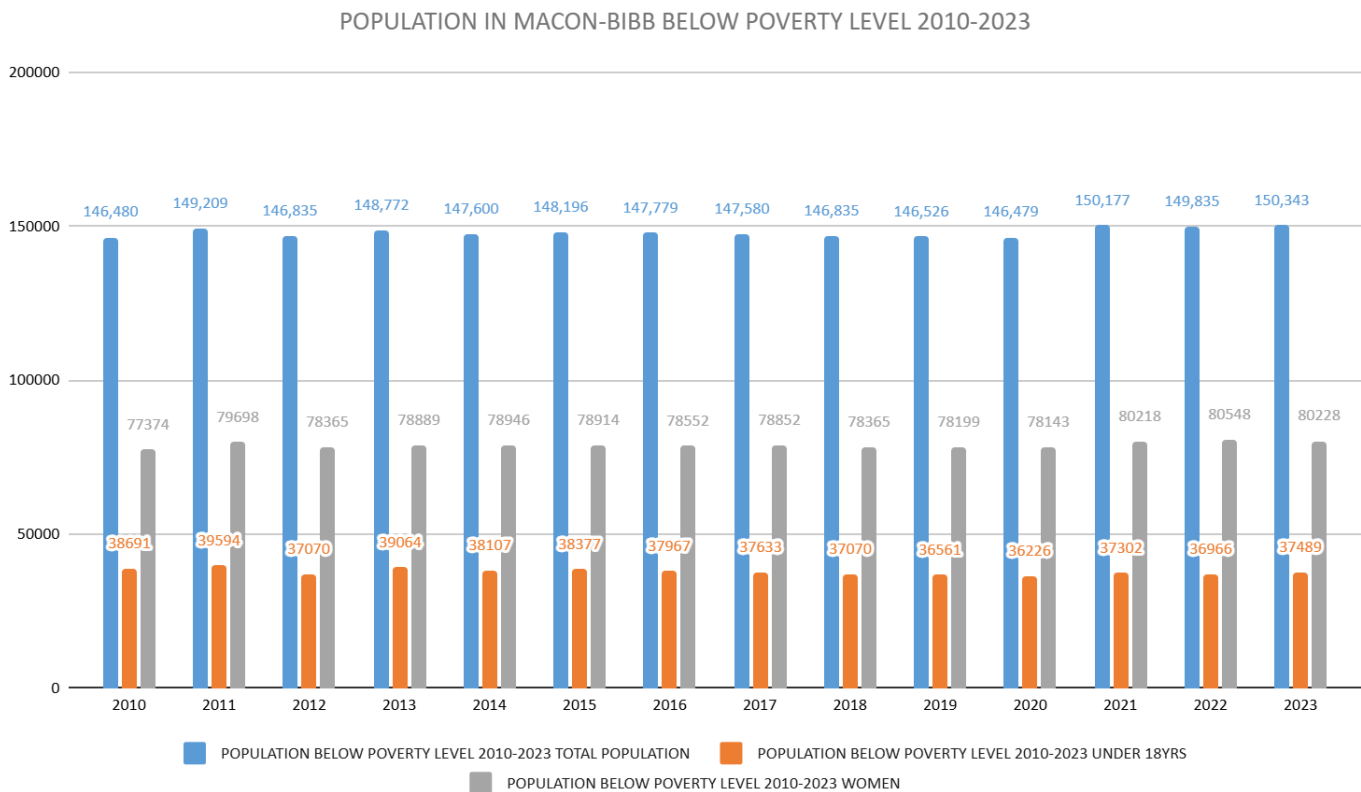
Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey



Poverty

About 28 percent of Macon-Bibb County's population is below the poverty level according to the 2020 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates. Since 2000, the percent of the total population below the poverty threshold has increased from 17.2 to 28 percent. The highest poverty rate was in 2022 when 28.0 percent of the total population was below the poverty level and 37.4% of the 0-17 population was living in poverty. The population under 18 years old has experienced higher rates of poverty than the total population. In 2000, 25.5 percent of the under-18 population was below the poverty level. By 2020, 37.4 percent of the under -18 population was living below the poverty level. Figure 4 shows the change in poverty level since 2000 for Macon-Bibb County.

Figure 4: Population in Poverty, Macon-Bibb County, 2000-2023



Source: 2010-2023 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey S1701 Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months

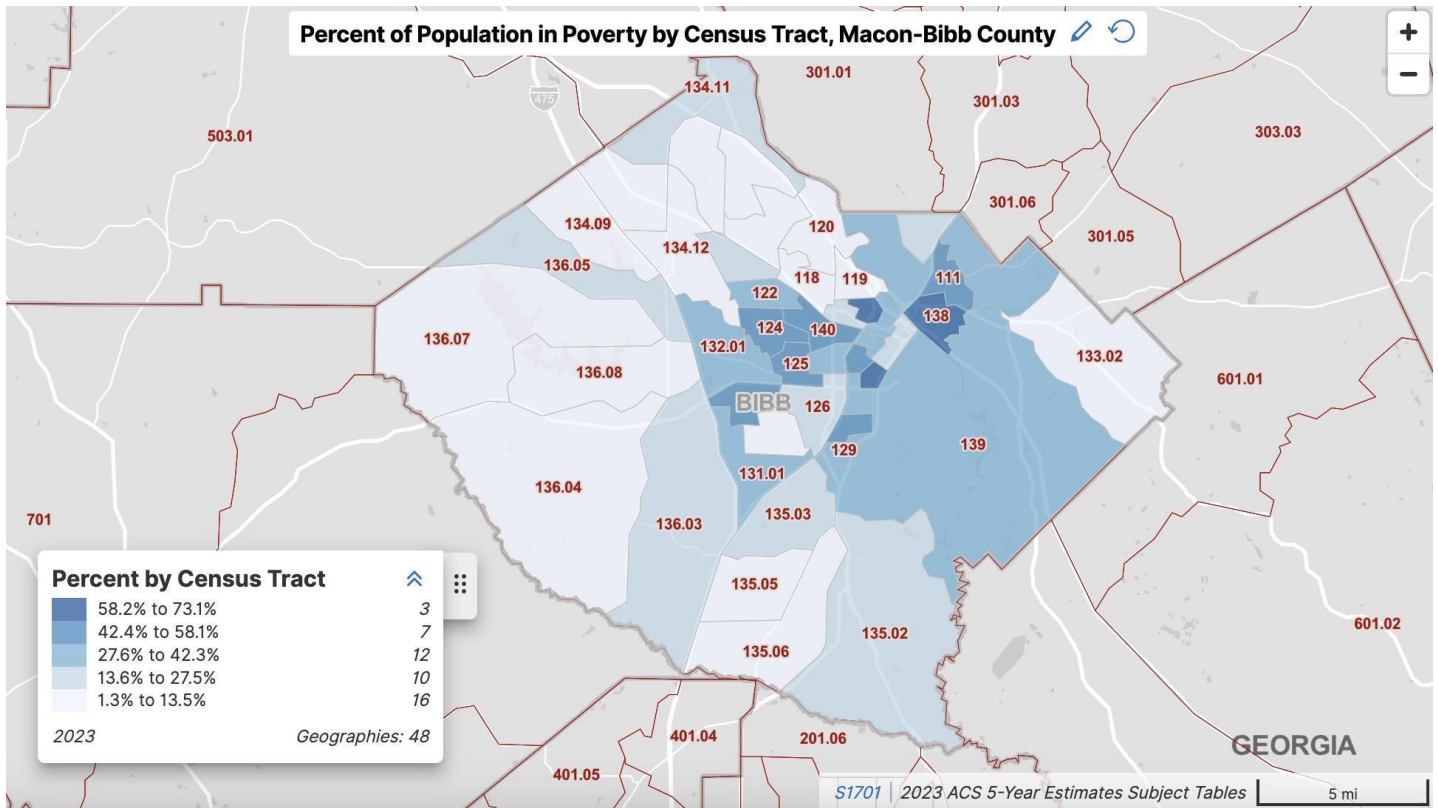
Table 4 provides more detail about Macon-Bibb County's population in poverty related to age, gender, and race or ethnicity. Of note, nearly 40 percent of the population in poverty is under the age of 18. Women comprise the majority (40.11%) of those in poverty and this population is half Black or African-American.

Table 4: Detailed Estimates about Population in Poverty, Macon-Bibb County*Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey*

	Number of Persons Below Poverty	Percent of Persons Below Poverty
Population Below Poverty Level	37,641	
AGE		
Under 5 years	3,978	10.6
Under 18 years	18,245	48.5
18 to 64 years	19,683	52.3
65 years and above	3,494	9.3
SEX		
Male	15,901	42.2
Female	21,740	57.8
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN		
White	6,909	18.3
Black or African-American	27,345	72.6
American Indian and Alaska Native	53	0.1
Asian	402	1.1
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders	0	0.0
Some Other Race	1,325	3.5
Two Other Races	1,607	4.3
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,866	5.0
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		
Population 25 years and over	19,396	51.5
Less than high school graduate	5,199	13.8
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	7,278	19.3
Some college or associate degree	5,039	13.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,880	5.0

While there is poverty county-wide, there are specific parts of Macon-Bibb County that have heavier concentrations of poverty. In particular, the central part of the county and one census tract on the east side of the Ocmulgee River as shown in Map 2 have the highest concentrations.

Map 2: Percent of Population in Poverty by Census Tract, Macon-Bibb County



Families in Poverty

Of the approximately 35,000 families living in Macon-Bibb County, 19.5 percent of them are below the poverty level, amounting to approximately 7,000 families. Table 5 provides more details about families in poverty.

Table 5: Detailed Estimates about Families in Poverty, Macon-Bibb County

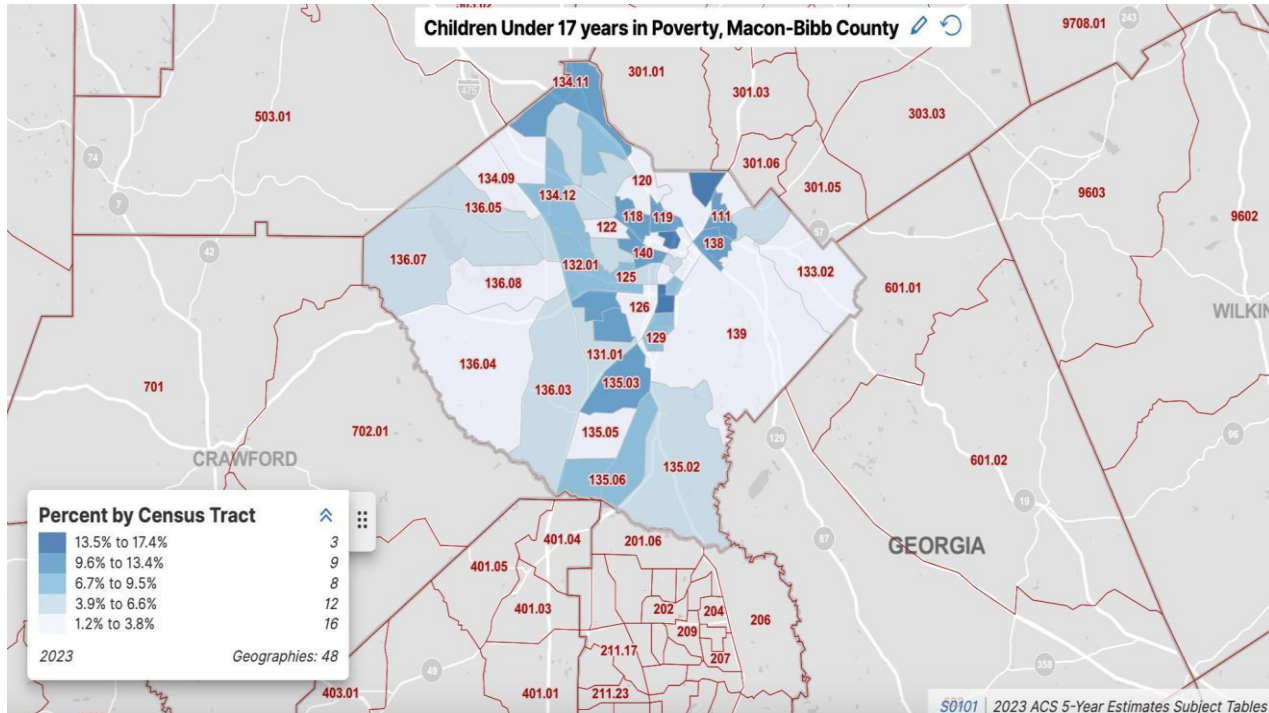
Group	Percent in Poverty
All Families	19.5
With related children under 18	31.9
With related children under 5	26.5
Married Couple Families	5.0
With related children under 5	2.8
With related children under 18	7.4
Families with female householder, no husband present	43.4
With related children under 5	46.2
With related children under 18	53.5

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Children in Poverty

Of the 9,652 children under 5 years old in Macon-Bibb County, 41.2 percent of them live below the poverty line. Statewide, the percentage of children in poverty is 20.3 percent. Map 3 shows where children under 5 below the poverty level live in the county.

Map 3: Number of Children under 17 below Poverty Level, Macon-Bibb County



Seniors in Poverty

Of the estimated 24,322 seniors, age 65 and over, in Macon-Bibb County, 14.4 percent are below the poverty level, compared to 10.3 percent of seniors statewide.

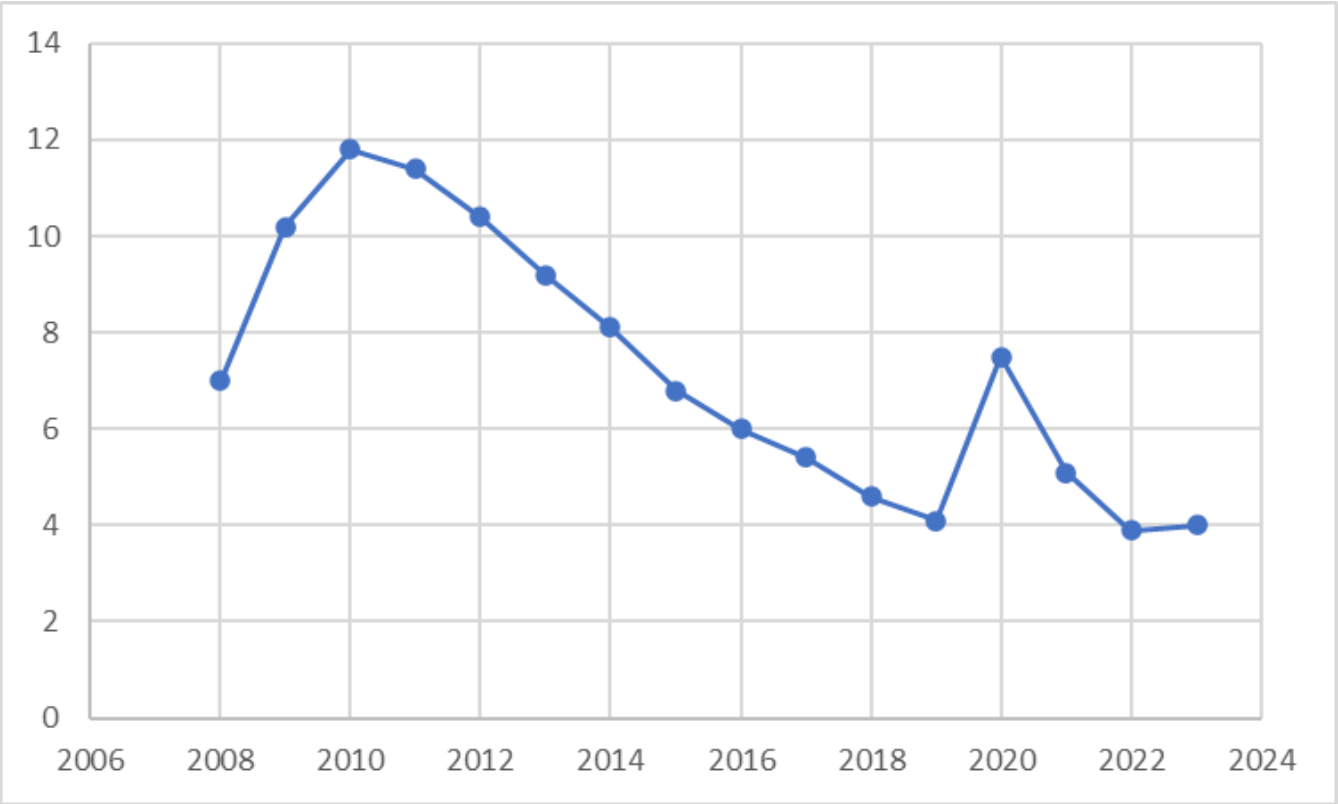
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a needs-based federal program that provides economic assistance to people with low incomes and who are disabled or aged. It is separate from Social Security. Of the approximately 59,480 households in the county, 8.9 percent are SSI recipients according to the 2018-2022 ACS. This is an increase since the 2008-2012 Estimates when 6.7 percent of households received SSI.

Employment

Like the rest of the country and state, Macon-Bibb County’s employment situation has improved as economic recovery has continued. The unemployment rate is defined as the number of people in the civilian labor force (people who are working or actively seeking work) divided by the number of unemployed persons (people who are jobless, have sought work in the last four weeks, and are available to take a job). Macon-Bibb County’s unemployment rate of 3.9 percent in 2022 is now lower than the pre-recession unemployment rate of 7.0 percent in 2008 as shown in Figure 5. However, these figures are still higher than the state’s average unemployment rate for 2023 which was 3.2 percent. The rate was 7.5 due to COVID-19 but has dropped to 3.9 in 2022.

Figure 5: Unemployment Rate in Macon-Bibb County, 2008-2023



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Employment Sector Profile

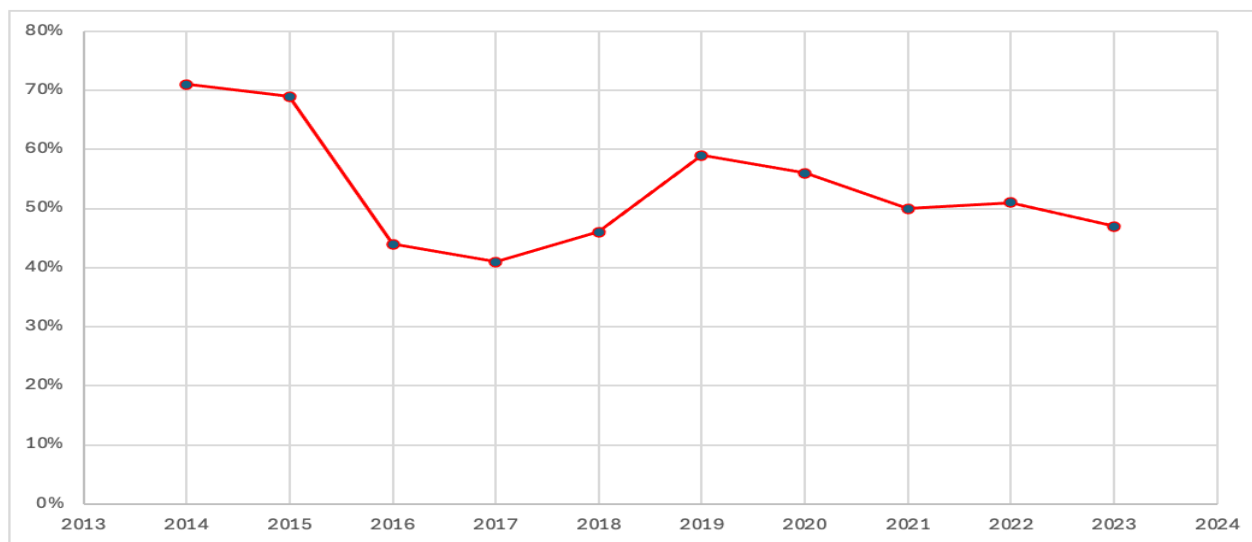
As an employment center in the Middle Georgia region, a sizable number of people work in Macon-Bibb County. In 2023, there were 80,003 people employed in the county by 4,945 business or government establishments. Table 6 shows the current employment mix based on the 2023 figures.

Table 6: Employment Mix in Macon-Bibb County, 2023

Sector	Number of Firms	Employed Persons	Percent of the Labor Force	Average Weekly Wage
Goods-Producing	410	9,186	11.5	\$1,269
Service-Providing	3,884	61,236	76.5	\$987
Government	156	9,336	11.7	\$1,017
Unclassified	497	246	0.3	\$1,121
All Sectors	4,945	80,003	100.00	\$1,023

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Similar to other economic indicators, there have been significant changes in the number of establishments and the composition of the labor force in the last decade. The total number of business establishments declined by 310 between 2011 and 2023 which includes a loss of 42 goods-producing firms and 25 service-producing establishments. Average employment in the goods-producing sector fell by 1866 people, but employment in the service-producing industry decreased by 1,862 people. The government labor force also decreased by 994 people in that time period. As a result, the share of the goods-producing labor force rose from 9.5 percent of the total labor force in 2011 to 11.7 percent in 2023; the government labor force fell from 13.4 percent of the total labor force in 2011 to 11.9 percent in 2023; and the service-producing labor force declined slightly from 77.0 percent of the total labor force in 2011 to 76.1 percent in 2021.



Education

Pre-K Education and Early Learning

- **Highest enrollment** was in **2014 (71%)** and **2015 (69%)**.
- After 2015, there was a **sharp decline** — hitting the **lowest point in 2017 (41%)**.
- From **2017 to 2020**, enrollment **gradually increased** back up to **56%**.
- **After 2020**, enrollment started **declining again**, dropping to **47%** in 2023.
- Overall, **2023's** rate (47%) is **much lower** than the peak years (2014–2015).

Trend summary:

Big drop after 2015 → slight recovery by 2020 → drop again through 2023.

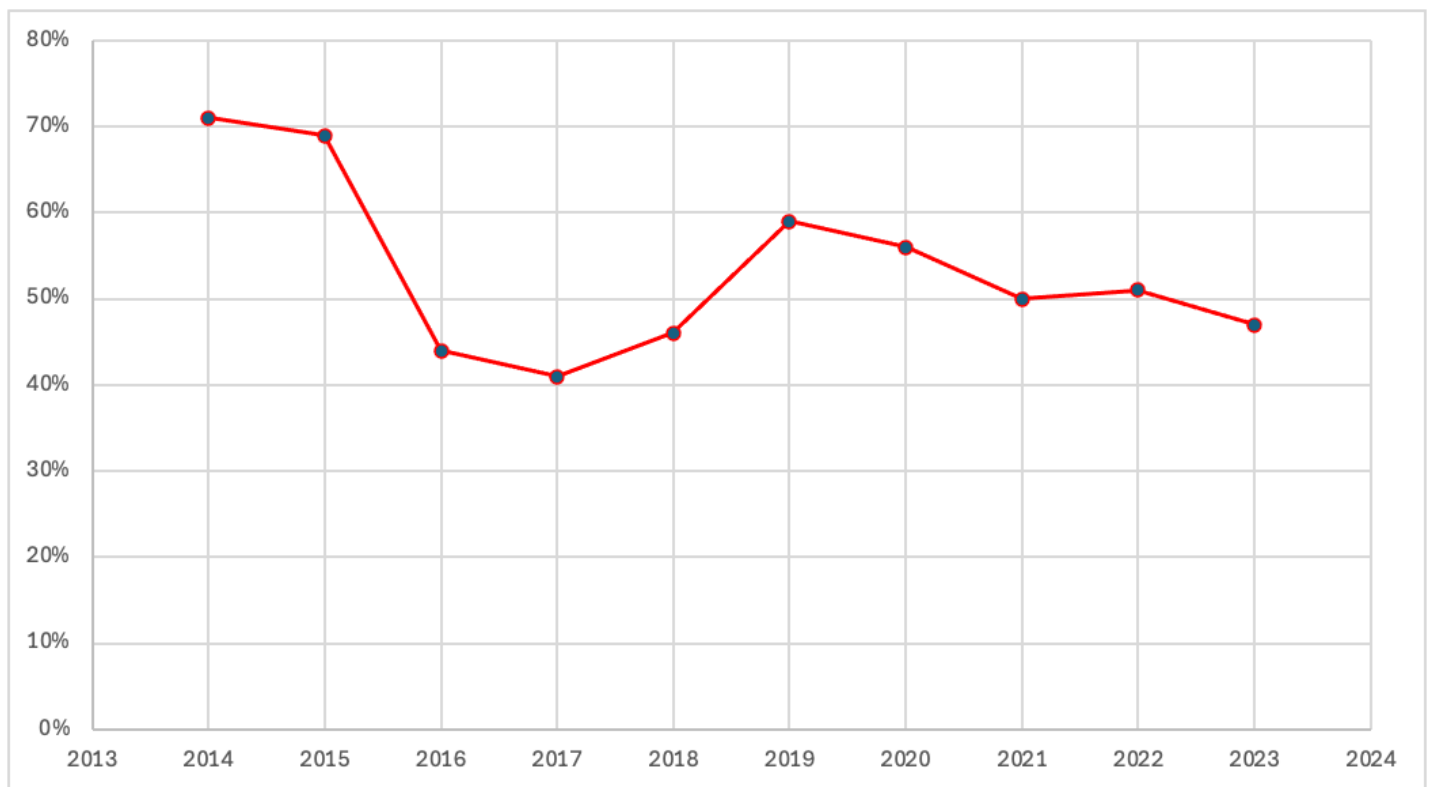
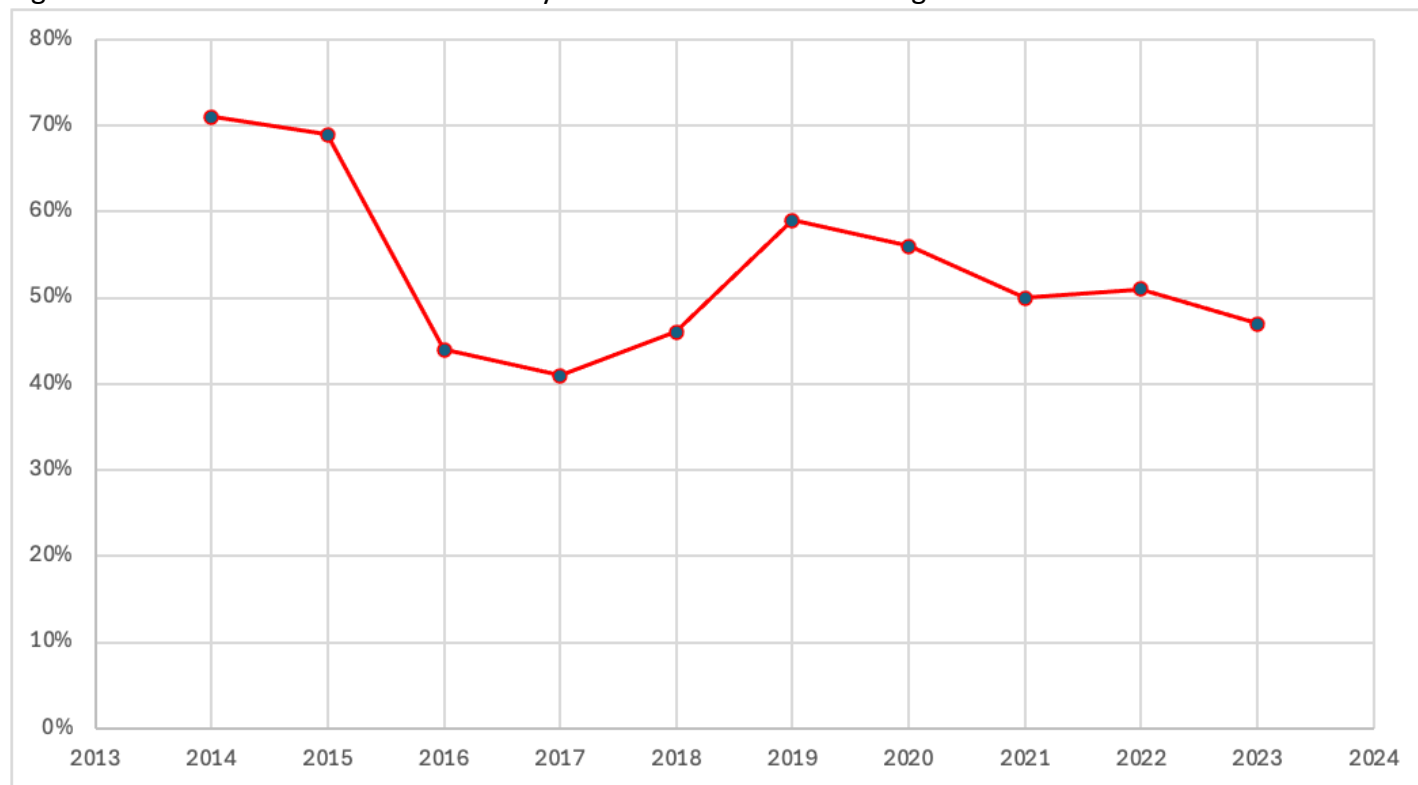


Figure 8: Low-Income Macon-Bibb County Children Enrolled in a Georgia Pre-K



Source: The Governor's Office of Student Achievement

Macon-Bibb County has 63 Quality-rated centers and family care homes according to the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. Quality-rated is a systemic approach used to assess and improve the quality in early and school-age care and education programs.

Quality-rated assigns a rating to programs that meet a set of defined program standards including credentials and training of staff, the program's commitment to the health and physical activity of children, their family engagement, instructional and curriculum practices, and classroom ratios and group size. Quality-rated centers account for 70 percent of all early learning centers in the county. The number of quality-rated centers has consistently increased every year since the first year of data being available in 2014.

K-12 Education

The Bibb County School system serves approximately 20,877 students across 21 elementary schools, five middle schools, six high schools, and three specialty schools. The school district has several magnet schools, which include math, science, communications, fine arts, engineering, technology, and communicative arts. There are two elementary school magnet programs, and one middle school magnet program. Students from across the district may apply for these magnet programs.

There are also 16 private and parochial schools in Macon-Bibb County which serve approximately 4,609 students, as well as two state charter schools.

One ongoing education-related issue in Macon-Bibb County is the issue of race. The Bibb County School District, having undertaken slow integration efforts after the Brown v. Board of Education decision, was ordered to integrate the district in 1965. However, through a “Freedom of choice” plan was developed by the school board; students were able to transfer to any school. This resulted in minimal integration; therefore, the district was forced to completely integrate under court orders. Following this court-ordered integration, private and parochial schools began to flourish, and by 1973, the school district was predominantly black as a result of white flight.

The desegregation order ended in 2007, yet the racial concentration in schools in the county has continued. Based on 2022-2023 enrollment numbers, 77 percent of Bibb County School students identified as Black while only 11 percent of the students identified as White. This contrasts with the county where approximately 55.5 percent of the county’s population identify as Black or African-American and 35.1 percent identify as White. The number of White students in the county’s public schools has fallen in the district by 3,335 students between the 2010-2011 school year and 2022-2023 school year, further concentrating Black students in Macon-Bibb County’s schools.

The Bibb County School district has seen an improvement in various measures of progress over recent years. Table 7 highlights some of those measures that have seen progress over the past three years and how they compare to the state. While still below the state’s statistics, there have been marginal improvements in key performance measures for Macon-Bibb County students.

Table 7: Education Performance Measures in Macon-Bibb County, 2018 – 2023*Source: Kids Count Data Center and The Governor's Office of Student Achievement*

Category	Entity	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Four Year Graduation Rate	Bibb County	78.5%	79.4%	76.1%	80.7%	80.98	87.07
	Georgia	81.6%	82.0%	83.8%	83.7%	84.1%	84.4%
Percent of HS graduates who are college-ready	Bibb County	51.5%	50.9%	---	46.7%	----	41.3%
	Georgia	57.1%	56.8%	---	54.1%	----	52.9%
Percent Proficient or Above on English Language Arts Assessment (5 th Grade)	Bibb County	29.4%	32.2%	----	18%	24.6%	23.7%
	Georgia	41.4%	45.4%	----	39.4%	41.6%	41.8%
Percent Proficient or Above on English Language Arts Assessment (8 th Grade)	Bibb County	24.0%	29.5%	----	22.3%	21.9%	24.4%
	Georgia	43.2%	47.3%	----	41.5%	41.6%	41.8%
Percent Proficient or Above on Math Assessment (5 th Grade)	Bibb County	27.0%	26.2%	----	8.0%	17.2%	15.8%

	Georgia	38.8%	40.8%	----	34.7%	37.0%	37.5%
Percent Proficient or Above on Math Assessment (8 th Grade)	Bibb County	12.8%	13.4%	---	8.0%	13.4%	13.9%
	Georgia	34.5%	35.1%	----	31.9%	36.4%	36.3%

As the four-year graduation rate has increased, there have been fewer high school dropouts in grades 9 through 12.

According to reports from the Bibb County School District, the overall high school graduation rate in 2012 was approximately 52.3%. By 2023, this rate had increased to 87.07%, marking a significant improvement over the decade. In 2023, all high schools within the district achieved graduation rates of 80% or higher for the first time. Notably, Central High School reached a graduation rate of 96.41% in 2023, the highest in the district's history.

Adult Educational Attainment

Table 8 shows the educational attainment of individuals age 25 and over in Macon-Bibb County. Of the 103,131 people in this group, 86.6 percent of them have a high school diploma or higher. This is slightly lower than the statewide percentage where 88.7 percent of the 25 and over group have at least a high school diploma. Additionally, of that adult age group, 25.9 percent of that group have at least a bachelor's degree compared to Georgia's percentage of 33.6 percent.

Table 8: Adult Educational Attainment Macon – Bibb County

Educational Attainment	#	%
Population 25 years and over	103,131	
Less than high school graduate	13,878	13.5
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	31,676	30.7
Some college or associate degree	30,910	30.0
Bachelor's degree	26,667	25.9

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Higher Education

There are several higher education options in Macon-Bibb County:

- Central Georgia Technical College, a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, offers credit instruction, adult education, and customized business and industry training through traditional and distance education delivery designed to promote community and workforce development. It offers 39 associate degrees, 50 diplomas, and 124 technical certificates of credit in areas of Aerospace, Trade and Industry, Business and Computer Technologies, Health Sciences, Public Safety and Professional Services and General Studies. The College also offers continuing education classes and economic development services. The College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate degrees and many programs hold industry-specific accreditations, licensure, and approvals from various state and national agencies. CGTC, in the tradition of the individual Colleges, will continue to contribute to economic and workforce development in its eleven county service area and throughout the State of Georgia.
- Mercer University is a private, four-year liberal arts college with schools of law, engineering, and medicine. From its humble beginnings in Penfield, Georgia, today Mercer is a dynamic and comprehensive center of undergraduate, graduate and professional education. With more than 9,200 students enrolled in 12 schools and colleges on campuses in Macon, Atlanta, Savannah and Columbus, as well as 2 Regional Academic Centers, Mercer University is consistently ranked among the nation's leading institutions by publications such as U.S. News & World Report. While offering a breadth of programs found at much larger universities, Mercer maintains an intimate, student-focused culture more characteristic of smaller liberal arts colleges. Mercer is a community where your expertise will be valued, your knowledge expanded and your abilities challenged. The institution's reputation for exceptional academics in an engaged learning environment continues to grow. In 2018 the University was reclassified as a doctoral university with high research activity (R2) and is ranked in the top tier of national universities by U.S. News & World Report. Mercer has also earned a Community Engagement classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and is one of only 286 institutions in the country to shelter a chapter of The Phi Beta Kappa Society.
- Middle Georgia State University (MGA) is a leading public university in Georgia, committed to offering high-quality educational opportunities and fostering an engaged and welcoming community. The best value state university in the University System of Georgia, MGA serves 8,000+ students on campuses in Macon, Cochran, Dublin, Eastman, and Warner Robins - and online. Student housing is available on the Macon, Cochran, and Eastman campuses. The University offers 70+ areas of study and degrees at the doctorate, master's, and bachelor's levels, along with select career-oriented associate's degrees and certificates. MGA is home to Georgia's Flagship School of Aviation and stands at the forefront of aviation education.
- Chartered as the Georgia Female College on December 23, 1836, Wesleyan College was founded through the efforts of a group of Macon citizens and the Georgia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as evidence of their concern for the education of women. The Reverend George Foster Pierce was elected president of the Georgia Female College in 1838, and the College opened its doors on January 7, 1839. Ninety young women were enrolled in our first session. More than 180 years later, Wesleyan continues to educate women to do the extraordinary in their professions and in service to their communities. With many celebrated Wesleyan Firsts and honorary degrees conferred by the College, Wesleyan continues the tradition of excellence. Wesleyan offers the Bachelor of Arts, the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), and the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees, as well as eight pre-

professional programs - allied health, athletic trainer, dental, engineering (dual degree), law, medicine, pharmacy, seminary, and veterinary medicine. Wesleyan's four graduate programs enroll both men and women — Master of Business Administration, Master of Education in Elementary Education, Master of Science in Nonprofit Management, and the Master of Music.

- Miller-Motte College-Macon, formerly Miller-Motte Technical College, is a system of for-profit technical colleges throughout the southeastern United States. It offers fifteen different program options at eleven campuses across the United States as well as Online education. Miller-Motte's mission to inspire and empower individuals through education and skill development is achieved through our two organizations: Miller-Motte College (MMC) and Miller-Motte Driving Institute (MMDI). MMC offers campus locations in GA, NC, OK, and TN (programs vary by location) and fully online learning nationwide for those seeking Associate of Applied Science and Bachelor of Science degree programs, in Business, Healthcare, Technology, Education, and Skilled Trades categories. MMDI, launched in 2024 in SC, is dedicated exclusively to commercial driver training.
- With over 130 years of academic excellence, Strayer University is an accredited online university. We're continuously evolving our curriculum to help students prepare for the workplace. And we're dedicated to making education affordable and possible for all.
- Webb's Barber School of Arts began as a family business, established with a vision for providing an opportunity for other aspiring professionals to become barbers and/or barber instructors. Webb's Barber School of Arts, Inc. is located in the historic city of Macon, GA at the epicenter of both the business as well as the shopping district. The school is approximately 2000 square feet. Clinical areas are similar to standard barbering/salon settings. In addition to the classroom and clinical areas, the school has a dispensary, offices, and student break room. The school has 16 barber chairs, 8 shampoo bowls, 8 dryers, wet and dry sterilizers, towels, mannequins and work stations with mirrors.

Housing

Affordable and decent housing continues to be a challenge for many Americans across the country. Not only does decent housing provide shelter and a stable home for people, it can also be an investment that allows individuals and families to build and retain an asset for the future. In July 2023, there were 71,965 housing units in Macon-Bibb County, 60,919 of which were occupied, leaving 11,046 units vacant. According to the 2018-2022 ACS Estimates, there were 71,828 housing units, an increase of 2,166 housing units since the 2010 Census. Of those 71,828 units, 59,480 were occupied leaving 12,348 units vacant. This is an increase of 2,981 vacant units since the 2010 Census.

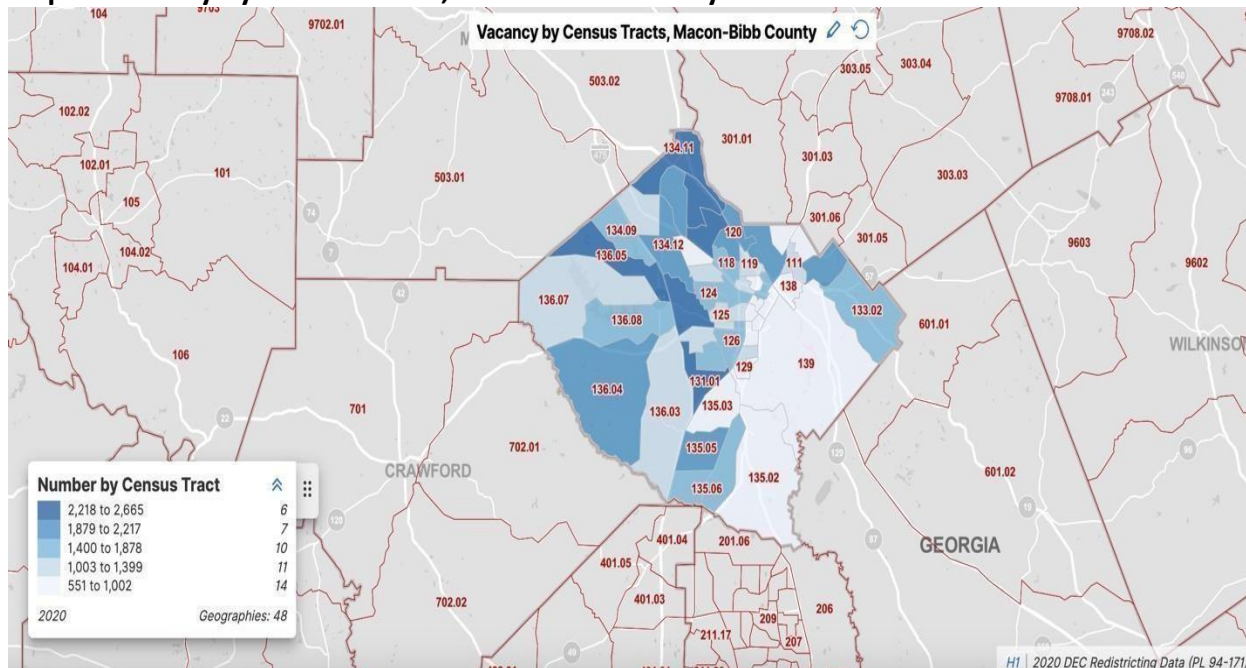
In 2010, of the 60,295 occupied units, 58.5 percent of them were owner-occupied, and 41.5 percent were renter-occupied. Of the 59,480 occupied housing units from the 2018-2022 ACS Estimates, 52.6 percent of them were owner-occupied, and 47.4 percent were renter-occupied. The proportion of renter-occupied units in the county has increased since 2010.

In general, since 2010, Macon-Bibb County has experienced a small increase in overall housing units, a significant increase in vacant housing units, and a market with an increasing proportion of renters.

Vacancy

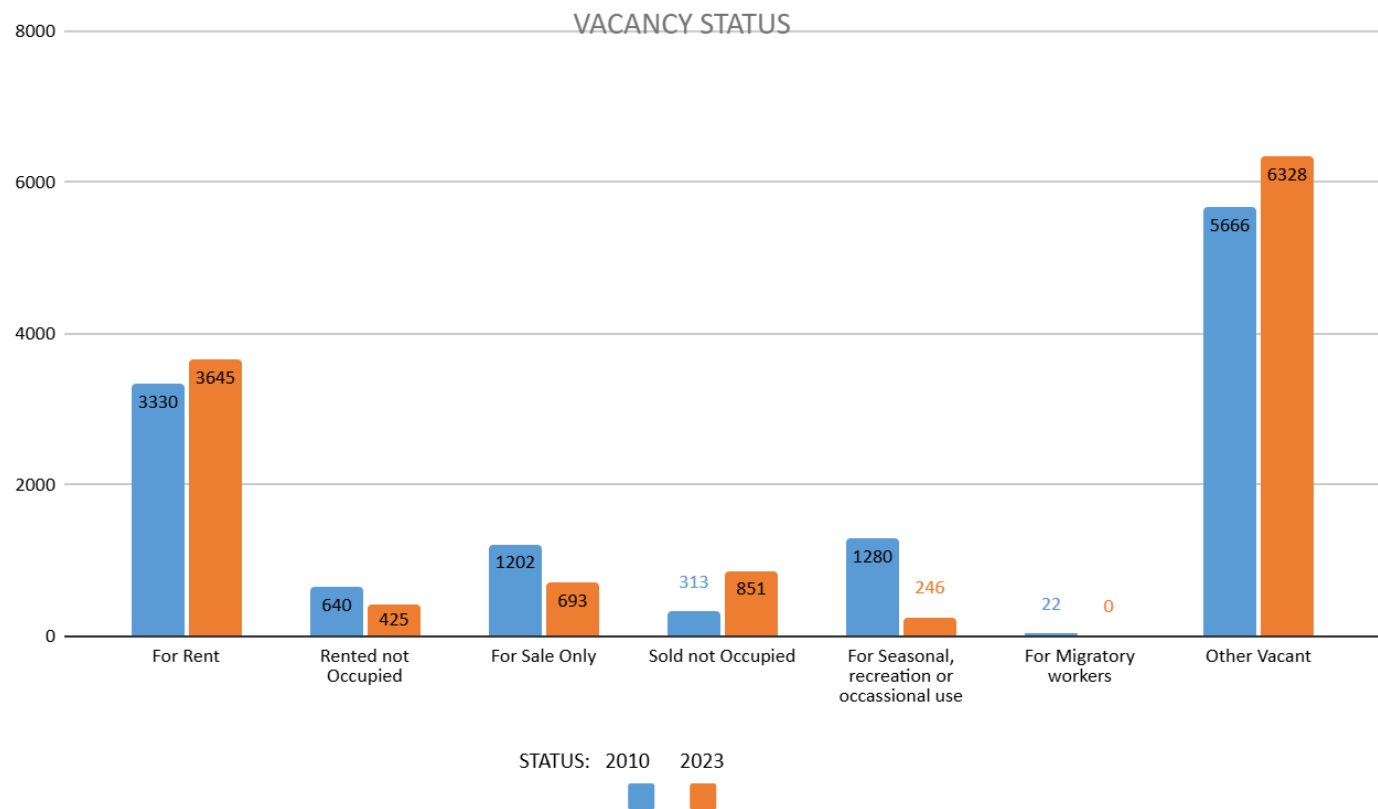
While overall housing growth has been marginal since 2010, there has been a significant decrease in vacant housing units since 2010. In 2010, there were only 9,367 vacant units, while according to the 2023 ACS, there were 11,046 vacant units. There are areas of concentration in central Macon and in a block group along the Ocmulgee River in southern Macon as shown in Map 4.

Map 4: Vacancy by Census Tracts, Macon-Bibb County



Housing vacancy can be a significant challenge to communities. Vacant and abandoned properties are associated with crime, health hazards, and declining property values, contributing to overall community decline and disinvestment. There are several reasons for a vacancy, such as being on the market, only being used for seasonal use or foreclosure, among others. Figure 9 shows the vacancy reason according to the 2010 Census and compared to 2023.

Figure 9: Vacancy Status 2010 and 2023 Comparison, Macon-Bibb County



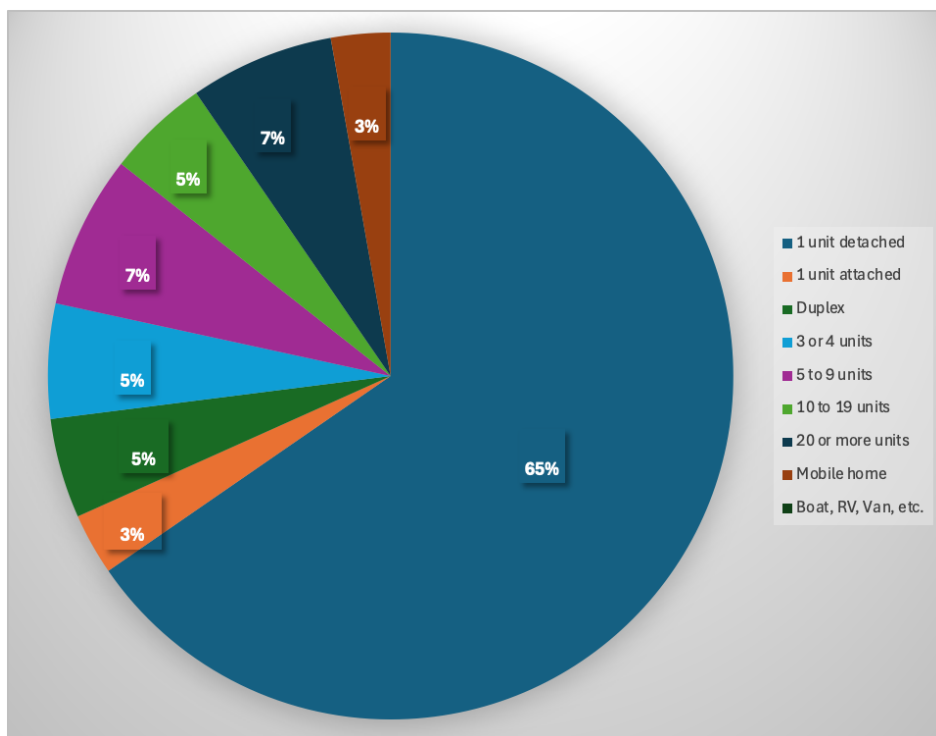
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS5 2010 AND 2023 American Community Survey

As shown in Figure 9, the “Other vacant” status increased by over 1,700 units going from 5,666 units in 2010 to 6,328 units in the 2019-2023 ACS. In 2010, “Other vacant” status structures comprised 45.5 percent of vacant units. This dramatically increased according to the 2019-2023 ACS when 51.9 percent of vacant units were “Other vacant.” This category could include vacancy caused by abandonment, long-term repair, foreclosure, or a variety of other reasons. All categories saw declines except “For Rent”, “sold not occupied”, and “Other Vacant” which increased by 315,538 and 662 units, respectively.

Housing Type

The majority of occupied housing units (65.4 percent) in Macon-Bibb County are single-family, detached structures. Multi-family units, structures which contain housing units built on top of each other or side-by-side and have shared facilities like heating, plumbing, attic, etc., comprise 28.9 percent of housing units in the county, while manufactured or mobile homes make up 2.8 percent of the housing stock. Figure 10 shows the exact breakdown of different types of housing structures.

Figure 10: Units in Structure for Occupied Housing, Macon-Bibb County

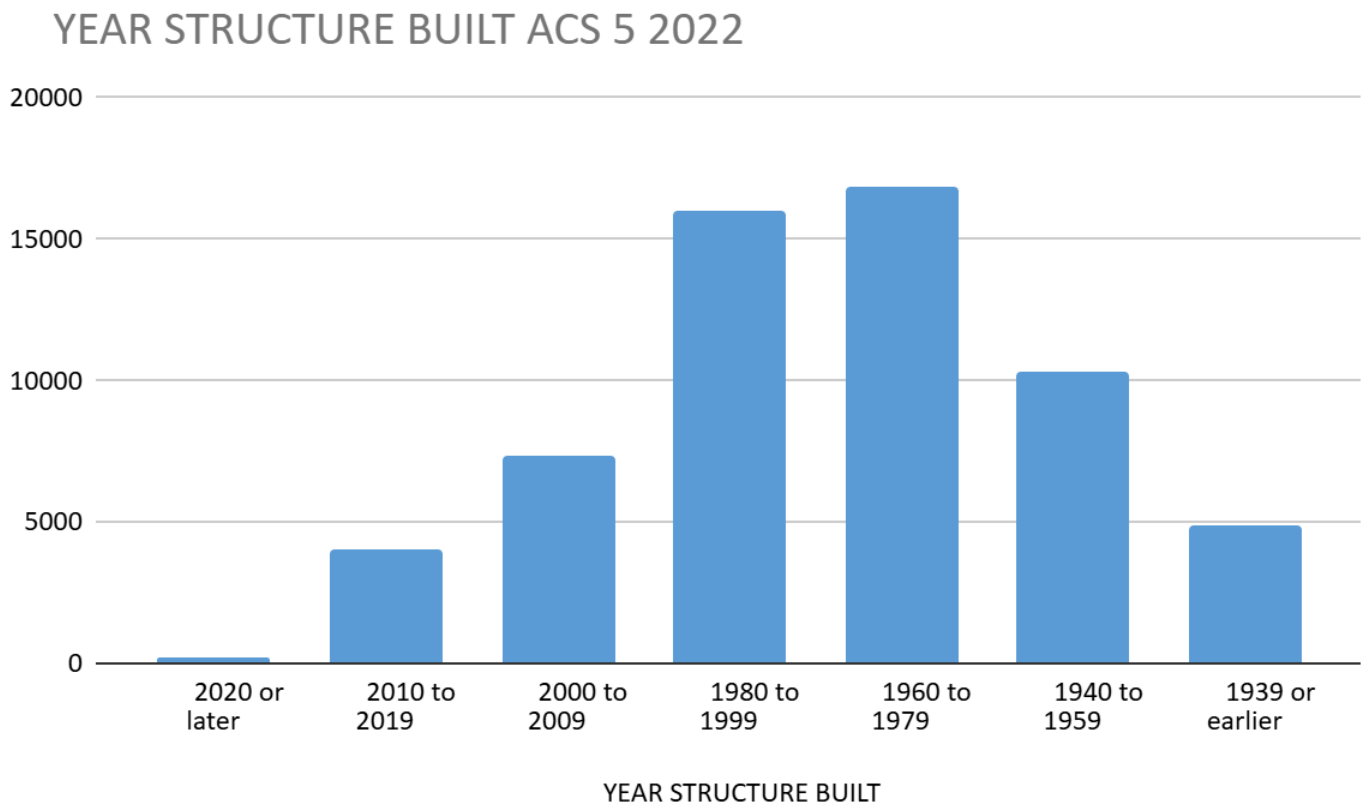


Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Age and Condition

According to the 2018-2022 ACS, the median year a housing structure was built was 1975. In fact, 56.9 percent of housing structures built in Macon-Bibb County were constructed prior to 1970, making a large portion of the housing structures in the county nearly 60 years old or older as shown in Figure 11. Maintenance of these houses can be expensive given their age and can also be subject to historic standards, potentially adding greater expense to maintenance and upkeep.

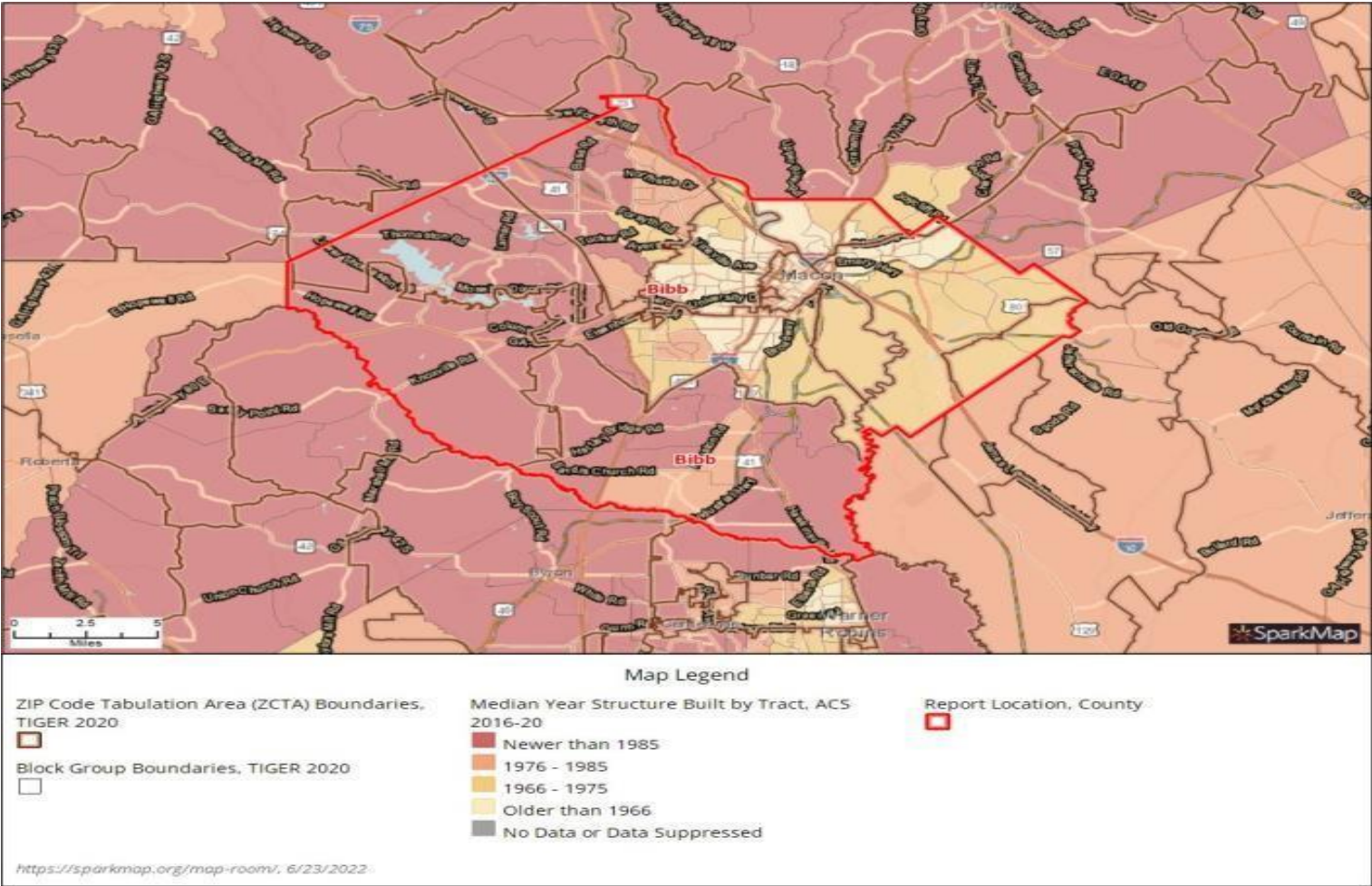
Figure 11: Age of Housing Stock, Macon-Bibb County



Source: American Community Survey ACS 5 2022

As expected, many of the older homes are concentrated in central Macon-Bibb County. Map 5 shows the general location within the county where there are concentrations of homes 50 years and older.

Map 5: Age of Housing Stock, Macon-Bibb County



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

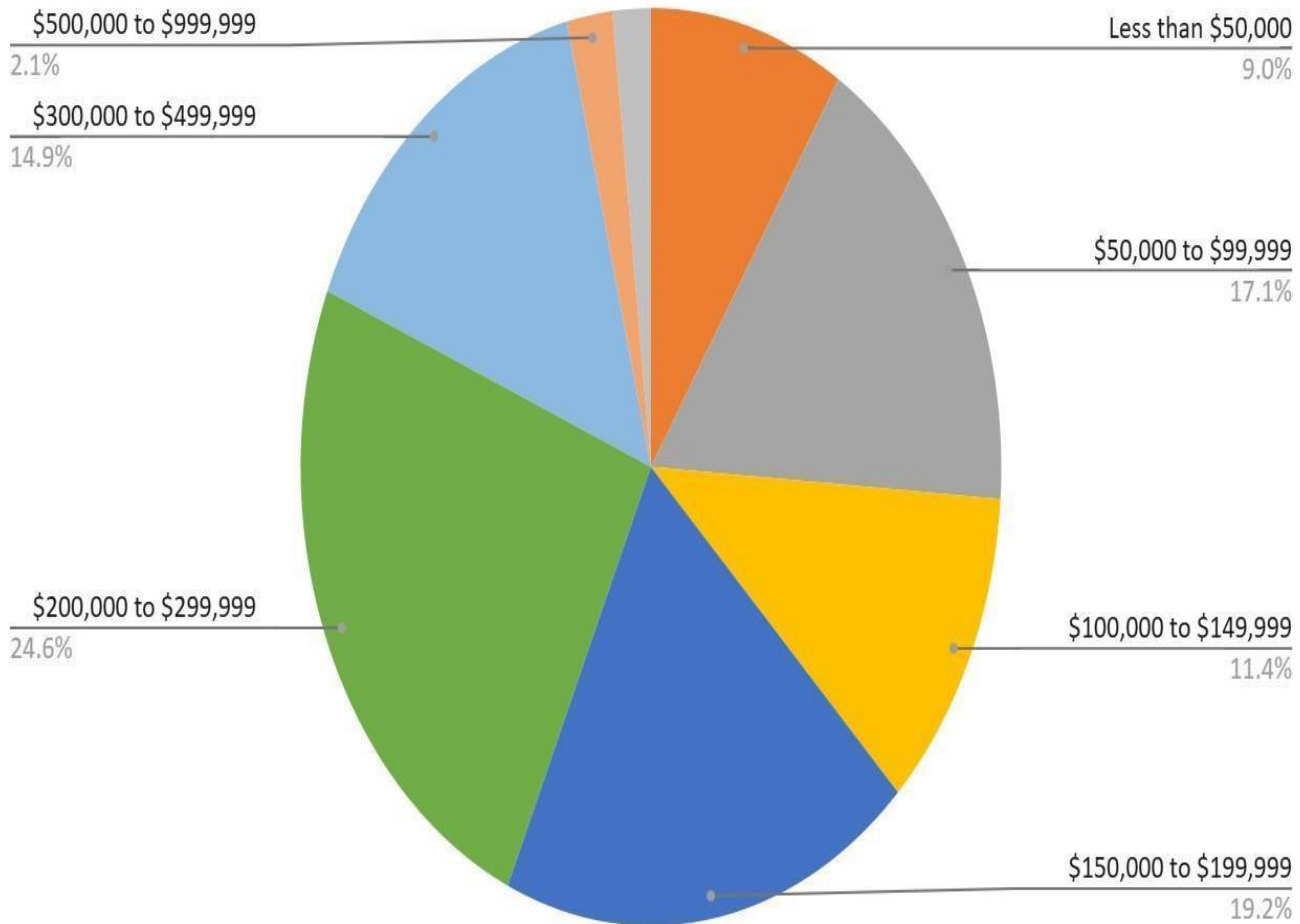
It is difficult to ascertain the condition and adequacy of homes without a detailed housing assessment; however, the ACS survey does include questions about plumbing facilities (hot and cold running water, (a flush toilet, a sink with a faucet), kitchen facilities (a stove or range, refrigerator), and telephone service. Of the 58,154 occupied housing units, 0.6 percent of the structure lacked complete plumbing facilities, 1.4 percent of units lacked complete kitchen facilities, and 2.0 percent had no telephone service available.

Housing Value

The median value of owner-occupied units in Macon-Bibb County is \$182,500 based on 2022 ACS 1. Figure 12 shows a breakdown of those values.

Figure 12: Housing Value, Macon-Bibb County

HOUSING VALUE AC1 2022



Source: American Community Survey ACS 1 2022

Housing Affordability

Affordable Housing Programs

All affordable housing programs provided by or through the government have maximum income limits to qualify for assistance. These income limits are typically derived from Area Median Income (AMI), the theoretical family income of the average household in a given geography, such as a Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) or county, is updated annually by the US. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Fiscal Year 2022 AMI for a family of four in Macon-Bibb County is \$102,604. The income limits used for Section 8, public housing, Low Income Housing Tax Credit, the HOME program, and other federal programs are all derived from the AMI. To qualify for most rental assistance programs, a renter can earn no more than 50 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). Table 9 shows the income limits for Macon-Bibb County for 2022.

Table 9: Area Median Income Limits, Macon-Bibb County

Area Median Income	FY 2022 Income Limit Category	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
\$65,500	Extremely Low Income (30% Limit)	\$13,300	\$15,200	\$17,100	\$19,000	\$20,550	\$22,050	\$23,600	\$25,100
	Very Low Income	\$22,200	\$25,400	\$28,550	\$31,700	\$34,250	\$36,800	\$39,350	\$41,850
	60% Limits	\$26,640	\$30,480	\$34,260	\$38,040	\$41,100	\$44,160	\$47,220	\$50,220
	Low Income	\$35,500	\$40,600	\$45,650	\$50,700	\$54,800	\$58,850	\$62,900	\$66,950

Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Fair Market Rents (FMRs) are primarily used to determine payment standard amounts for the Housing Choice Voucher program, to determine initial renewal rents for some expiring project-based Section 8 contracts, to determine initial rents for housing assistance payment contracts, and to serve as a rent ceiling in the HOME rental assistance program. The FMRs are established by HUD for MSAs and counties each year as shown in Table 10. The goal with these rents is to ensure that assistance payments are in line with the current rents in the area.

Table 10: 2022 Fair Market Rents

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
\$1,014	\$1,082	\$1,252	\$1,508	\$1,660

Source: Huduser.gov Income Limits

Housing Cost Burden

Housing affordability is a significant concern for many residents in Macon-Bibb County. One way to assess housing affordability is to examine the cost burden. Households are considered cost burdened when they spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing. A household is considered to have a severe cost burden when the household spends 50 percent or more of income on rent.

According to the most recent dataset, the 2017-2021 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), of the 27,675 renter households, 14,065 of them had a cost burden of greater than 30%, and 7,760 had a cost burden of greater than 50%. Please note, those who have a cost burden of greater than 50% are also counted in the cost burden greater than 30%. Therefore, at 14,065 renter households have at least a cost burden of greater than 30%.

Another means of assessing housing affordability has been developed by the National Low- Income Housing Coalition, which is an organization that works to ensure that low-income people have affordable and decent homes. The organization publishes an annual report, “Out of Reach” which documents the gap between renters’ wages and the cost of rental housing using a variety of sources including the U.S. Census, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, HUD, among others.

Highlights from this 2021 report specific to Macon-Bibb County highlight how difficult it can be for lower-income households to afford housing. For example, a person making minimum wage would have to work 73 hours per week in order to afford a one-bedroom apartment to stay below the cost burden threshold. Additional details can be found in Table 11.

Table 11: Affordability Metric, Macon-Bibb County

Housing Units	Fair Market Rent	Current Minimum Wage	Hourly Wage Needed to Afford Rent	Annual Income Needed to Afford Rent	Work Hours Per Week at Minimum Wage Needed to Afford Rent
0 Bedroom	\$893	\$7.25	\$17.7	\$35,720	95
1 Bedroom	\$999		\$19.21	\$39,960	106
2 Bedroom	\$1146		\$22.04	\$45,840	122
3 Bedroom	\$1346		\$26.88	\$55,920	148
4 Bedroom	\$1526		\$29.35	\$61,040	162

Source: "Out of Reach." National Low-Income Housing Coalition

Homelessness

Homelessness is a challenge for many residents of Macon-Bibb County. One way to assess homelessness is through the Point-in-Time Homeless Count which captures responses for one night in the county. This count, which is conducted every two years, includes the people that are literally homeless whether they are in shelters or transitional/supportive housing or if they are unsheltered. Table 12 shows the point-in-time homeless counts in the county from 2013-2022.

Table 12: Homeless Population, Macon-Bibb County

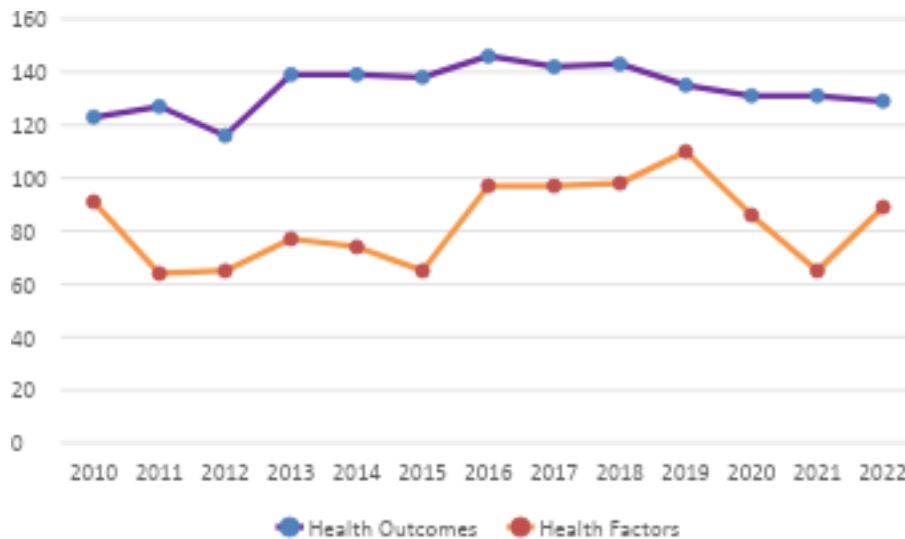
Year	Unsheltered Homeless Persons	Sheltered Homeless Persons (Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing)	Total
2013	67	245	312
2015	92	252	344
2017	174	136	310
2019	194	0	194
2022	142	249	391

Source: 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2022 Report on Homeless

Health and Nutrition

Socio-economic conditions can be related to health outcomes and health access. The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps revealed some of the challenges and strengths regarding health in Macon-Bibb County. There are two rankings: health outcomes and health factors. Health outcomes measure how healthy a county is now and use data regarding length of life and quality of life. Health factors assess how healthy a county will be in the future. The ranking accounts for health behaviors, clinical care, socio-economic factors, and the physical environment. For health outcomes, Macon-Bibb County is ranked number 149 out of 159 counties. However, on the health factors score, Macon-Bibb County is ranked 89th. These scores have fluctuated since 2010 as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: County Health Rankings 2010-2022, Macon-Bibb County



Source: The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

Some of the strengths of Macon-Bibb County from the health rankings are:

1. Excessive Drinking: Only 14 percent of adults in Macon-Bibb County engage in binge drinking or heavy drinking compared to 16 percent statewide.
2. Primary Care Physicians: Macon-Bibb County has a ratio of 12,710:1 for population to primary care physicians. Statewide, the ratio is 1,490:1.
3. Mental Health Providers: Macon-Bibb County has a lower ratio of population to mental health care providers of 6000:1. Statewide, the ratio is 600:1.
4. Mammography Screening: Macon-Bibb County has a higher percentage of female Medicare enrollees ages 67-69 that receive a mammography screening. Approximately 32 percent of this population receives the screening compared to 36 percent statewide.

Some of the challenges and areas to explore in the county include;

1. Smoking: 26 percent of adults in the county smoke compared to 16 percent of adults statewide.
2. Obesity: 43 percent of Macon-Bibb County's adult population report a BMI (body mass index) of 30 or more. Only 34 percent of all adults in Georgia have a BMI of 30 or more. A BMI of 30 and above is classified as obese.
3. Food Environment Index: This index ranges from 0 (worst) to 10 (best) using equal weights of two factors: (1) percentage of the population that is low-income and does not live close to a grocery store and (2) percentage of the population who did not have access to a reliable source of food in the past year. Macon-Bibb County has a score of 7.6 compared to a score of 6.1 statewide.
4. Sexually Transmitted Diseases: This is measured as the Chlamydia incidence (number of new cases reported) per 100,000 people in 2023. In 2023, Macon-Bibb County had 738.4 new cases per 100,000 in population compared to 665.8 new cases per 100,000 people
5. Uninsured: 20 percent of Macon-Bibb County's population under age 65 does not have health insurance coverage compared to 15 percent statewide.
6. Violent Crime: According to data from Area Vibes, Macon-Bibb County has a violent crime rate of 5,349 per 100,000 people, which indicates a high number of offenses involving face-to-face confrontation between the victim and perpetrator. In contrast, the state of Georgia, as reported by USA Facts, has a significantly lower violent crime rate of 400 per 100,000 people. This sharp difference underscores the elevated crime levels in Macon-Bibb County compared to the broader state average.
7. Air Quality: The metric for air quality measures particulate matter which is the average daily density of fine particulate matter per cubic meter (PM2.5) in a county. Fine particulate matter is emitted from a forest fire or can form when gases from power plants, industries, and automobiles react in the air. Macon-Bibb County has an average daily density of 9.7 micrograms per cubic meter. Georgia has an average of 9.4 micrograms per cubic meter.
8. Severe Housing Problems: Measured as the percentage of households with at least one or more of the following housing problems: (1) incomplete kitchen facilities, (2) incomplete plumbing facilities, (3) severely overcrowded, and (4) severely cost- burdened. 16 percent of households have at least one of these housing problems in Macon-Bibb County, compared to 15 percent of households statewide.

Free and Reduced Lunch Program

The National School Lunch Program is a federally-assisted program that provides low-cost or free lunches to children at schools each day. According to the FY2022 Free and Reduced Lunch School Data report, each school in the Bibb County School District has 100 percent of students receiving a free and reduced lunch except VIP (Virtual) Academy at 56.55 percent.

SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offers nutrition assistance to low-income individuals and families. These benefits are available to most households with a gross income less than 130 percent of federal poverty guidelines. In Macon-Bibb County, 20.0 percent of households received SNAP benefits based on the 2018–2022 ACS Estimates, compared to 20.1 percent of households according to the 2016–2020 ACS Estimates.

.

Food Insecurity

Feeding America, the nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief organization, publishes an annual study to better understand hunger at the local community level. To do this, they assess food insecurity for each county’s population. Food-insecure people are not necessarily always food-insecure, but this measure may reflect the number of people who must make difficult decisions about basic needs such as housing, utilities, or nutritionally adequate foods.

There are several factors that contribute to food insecurity, including poverty, unemployment, and lack of access, among other demographic and household characteristics. Based on 2019 food insecurity data from Feeding America approximately 24,190 people or 15.8 percent of the Macon-Bibb County population were classified as food-insecure, while 8,920 people or 23.7 percent of all children in the county were considered food-insecure.

A supplementary measure of food insecurity is to study food access. For Macon-Bibb County, there are a significant number of people who have food access challenges. Using a measure that combines low income and low grocery stores access, According to the US Department of Agriculture, in 2019, there were 20,315 (or 13 percent of the Bibb County, GA population) low-income individuals living more than 1 mile (urban areas) or more than 10 miles (rural areas) from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store in a tract in Bibb County, GA. Low income is defined as annual family income at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty threshold for family size.

Healthcare Coverage

Of the estimated 153,131 people in the civilian, non-institutionalized population in Macon- Bibb County, 86.4 percent of them have some type of health insurance. Those without insurance generally have lower household incomes, lower educational attainments and are more likely to be a minority population. Table 15 provides more information about the uninsured population in Macon-Bibb County.

Table 15: Uninsured Population Details, Macon-Bibb County

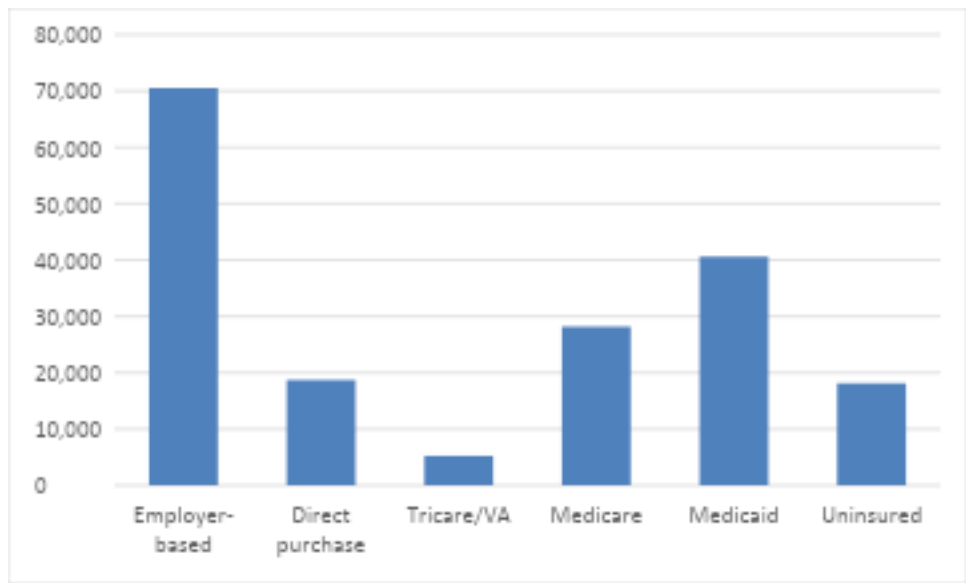
	Total Population	Number Uninsured	Percent Uninsured of Total Population
Civilian Non- Institutionalized Population	153,131	20810	13.6%
AGE			
Under 19 years	40,226	2,259	5.6%
19 to 64 years	88,513	18,332	20.7%
65 years and over	24,392	219	0.9%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN			
White	55245	6110	11.1%
Black or African-American	83459	11695	14.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	205	49	23.9%
Asian	3450	482	14.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	88	0	0.0%
Some other race	4181	1661	39.7%
Two or more races	6503	813	12.5%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	6746	2301	34.1%

	Total Population	Number Uninsured	Percent Uninsured of Total Population
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			
Population 26 years and over	98,400	14,969	15.2%
Less than HS Grad	12,101	3,457	28.6%
High School Grad or equivalent	30,157	5,713	18.9%
Some college or Associate degree	30,083	4,135	13.7%
Bachelor's degree or Higher	26,059	1,664	6.4%
HOUSEHOLD INCOME (by total households)			
Under \$25,000	32,966	5,957	18.1%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	30,555	5,760	18.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	24,239	4,295	17.7%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	16,965	1,917	11.3%

Source: ACS 5 American Community Survey

There are several options for health insurance in the county. Of the population that has insurance, the majority have employer-based insurance followed by Medicaid as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Insurance Type, Macon-Bibb County



*Some individuals may be covered by more than one type of health insurance.

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

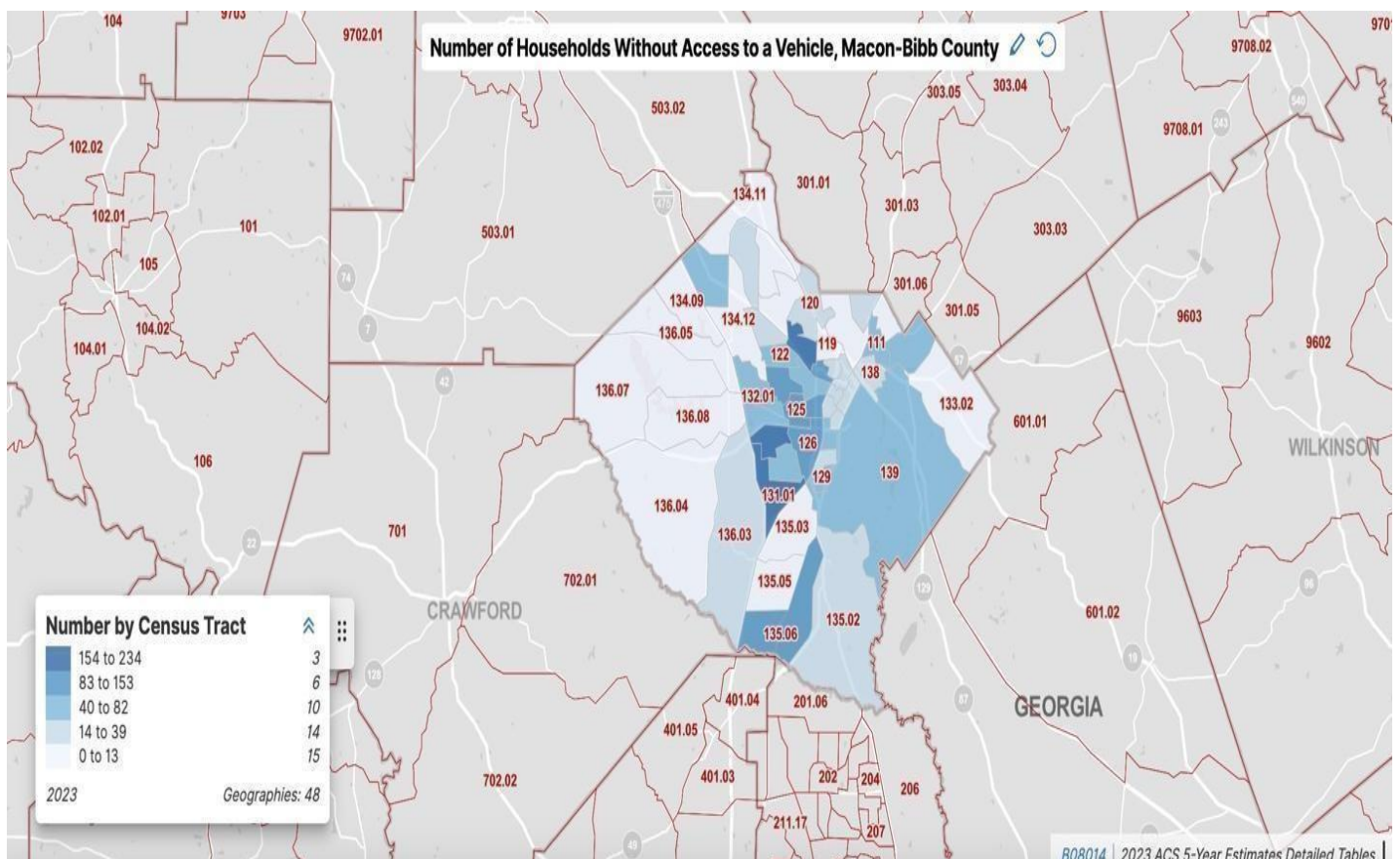
Transportation

The issues regarding transportation, employment, and housing choice revolve around the accessibility of residents to both home and work. If employment, housing, and services are not accessible for those without a vehicle or through walking or biking, public transportation becomes essential. This is particularly true for low-income residents, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Access to a Vehicle

Approximately, 6,977 households or 12.0 percent of households in Macon-Bibb County do not have access to a vehicle. These households are concentrated in central and eastern Macon-Bibb County and are shown in Map 6.

Map 6: Percent of Households without Access to a Vehicle, Macon-Bibb County



Macon Transit Authority

The Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority (MBCTA) operates 11 fixed bus routes throughout Macon-Bibb County. These routes generally run from 5:25 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on weekdays and from 5:20 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays, though not all routes operate the full span of these hours. The regular one-way fare is \$1.25, with discounts available for seniors (62+), students (K-12), and children under 13 who ride free with an adult.

Transfers are available for \$0.50. Although there was a proposal in 2023 to raise the fare to \$1.75, it was postponed after public feedback. The Macon Transit Authority projected a 19% increase in daily fixed-route ridership between 2020 and 2026, estimating approximately 3,148 riders per day by 2026. Between 2022 and 2024, the system has already seen a 16% increase in ridership, indicating progress toward that goal.

Paratransit services are also provided to individuals unable to use the fixed-route system. These services offer curb-to-curb transportation and require appointments to be made at least one day in advance. The fare for a one-way paratransit trip is \$2.50, with a round-trip cost of \$5.00 and a 20-ride pass available for \$40.00. These services operate from 6:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on weekdays and 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays. Paratransit ridership is also expected to grow, with projections estimating around 141 daily riders by 2026—a 19.5% increase from 2017. As of 2024, the service has already reached approximately 155 daily riders, totaling close to 48,000 annual rides.

Head Start Program

Head Start Needs Assessment

Head Start is a federally-funded program for young children (birth-age to five) and their families who reside in high need areas of Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties. The Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) program provides a developmentally appropriate learning environment for children and a supportive atmosphere for the families being served. The HS/EHS program recognizes parents as their child's first teacher and works to empower parents for a life-long role in the child's learning and development process. To achieve this goal, the HS/EHS program delivers services to children, families, and pregnant women in the core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being while engaging parents as partners.

Head Start programs require a community needs assessment to ensure that the correct services are being provided. While some of the information is useful in this needs assessment, the following information is more focused on eligible children and families.

Demographics of Potential Participants

The following table is an overview of the demographic makeup of children in Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties, whose Head Start services are provided by the Macon-Bibb County EOCI.

Table 16: Demographic Characteristics of Population Under 5 Years Old, Macon- Bibb and Monroe Counties

	Macon-Bibb County		Monroe County	
	2010 Census	2018-2022 ACS	2010 Census	2018-2022 ACS
Age				
Population Under Age 5	11,465	10,110	1,461	1,359
Poverty				
Children 0-5 In Poverty	4,729	3,978	353	277
Race and Ethnicity for Population Under Age 5				
White	3,429	2,603	1,019	974
Black/African-American	7,142	6,147	350	327
American-Indian/Alaskan Native	17	16	2	0
Asian	158	204	12	0
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5	0	0	0

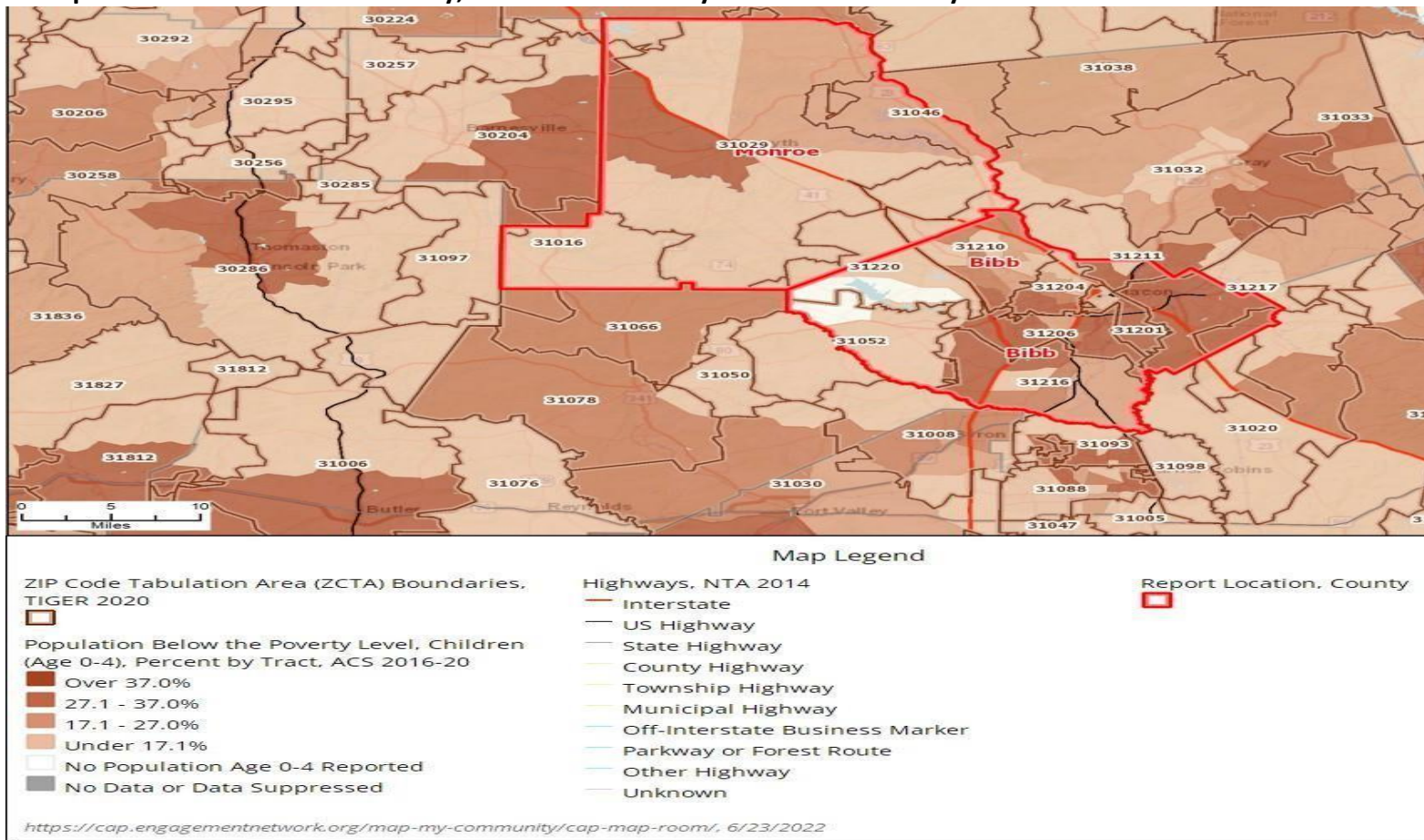
Other	287	472	20	0
Two or More Races	427	668	58	58
Hispanic/Latino	565	609	49	21

Source: 2010 U.S. Census, 2018-2022 ACS Estimates

According to the figures in Table 16, the number of children under age five in both counties has declined since the 2012 Census, with Macon-Bibb County losing nearly 13 percent of its children under age five and Monroe County losing 9.8 percent of its children under five.

During the same period, Macon-Bibb County saw a decrease of 385 children in poverty between birth and age five while Monroe County saw a decline of 15 children in poverty. There are geographic disparities regarding this data. Map 7 shows the census tracts where there are high percentages of children below the poverty line in Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties.

Map 7: Children under 5 in Poverty, Macon-Bibb County and Monroe County



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Both Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties have seen shifts in their under-five populations. In Macon-Bibb, children under five now make up just 6.5% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau ACS5 2023), reflecting a decline. Within this group, both White and Black/African-American populations have decreased while the Hispanic/Latino

Population has grown slightly—rising to 4.5% of the total population, per the American Community Survey (2018–2022). There has also been some fluctuation among those identifying as two or More Races.

Monroe County’s under-five population remains relatively stable at 4.9% of residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau ACS5 2023, about 74.5% of this group identifies as White and 22.2% as Black/African-American—proportions consistent with the county’s overall racial composition.

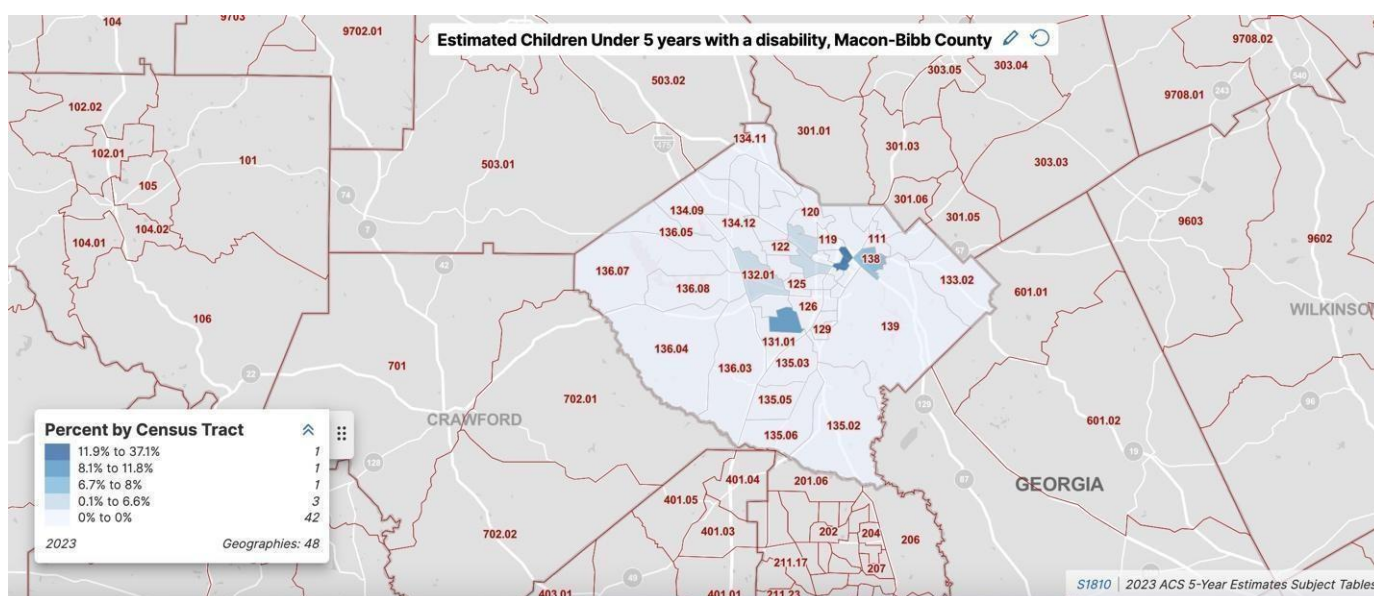
Women, Infants, and Children Participants

In 2023 according to Kids Count, there were 4,096 children ages 0 to 4 enrolled in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program in Macon-Bibb County. Monroe County had 441 children enrolled in the program. This program helps provide nutritious foods to supplement diets, health information, and health referrals. Eligible participants must be at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level or enrolled in Medicaid.

Disability

Of the estimated 24,290 children under age five in Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties, approximately 2.1 percent have a disability. Map 8 shows where children with disabilities live according to ACS. It should be noted that this data has a significant margin of error and may not be entirely accurate.

Map 8: Estimated Children under 5 with a Disability, Macon-Bibb County and Monroe Counties



According to the Georgia Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS), as of March 31, 2024, there were 203 children in foster care in Bibb County. This figure reflects the number of children in state custody and is based on data reported by the DFCS. The median length of stay for children in care was 19.0 months, with 53% of children in care for over 18 months. Additionally, 22% of children experienced placement moves toward permanence, while 55% had lateral placements, and 23% had placements away from permanence.

Maternal Child Health Pregnancies and Births

The number of pregnancies and births in Macon-Bibb County has steadily declined since 2010 as shown in Table 17, while the number of pregnancies and births in Monroe County have fluctuated during this period. The decline in pregnancies and births in Macon-Bibb County is in accordance with the population decline in Macon-Bibb County. Monroe County's population has slightly grown since 2010 by 1,618 people, but there is no trend in the number of births that reflect that growth.

Table 17: Number of Pregnancies and Births, Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties

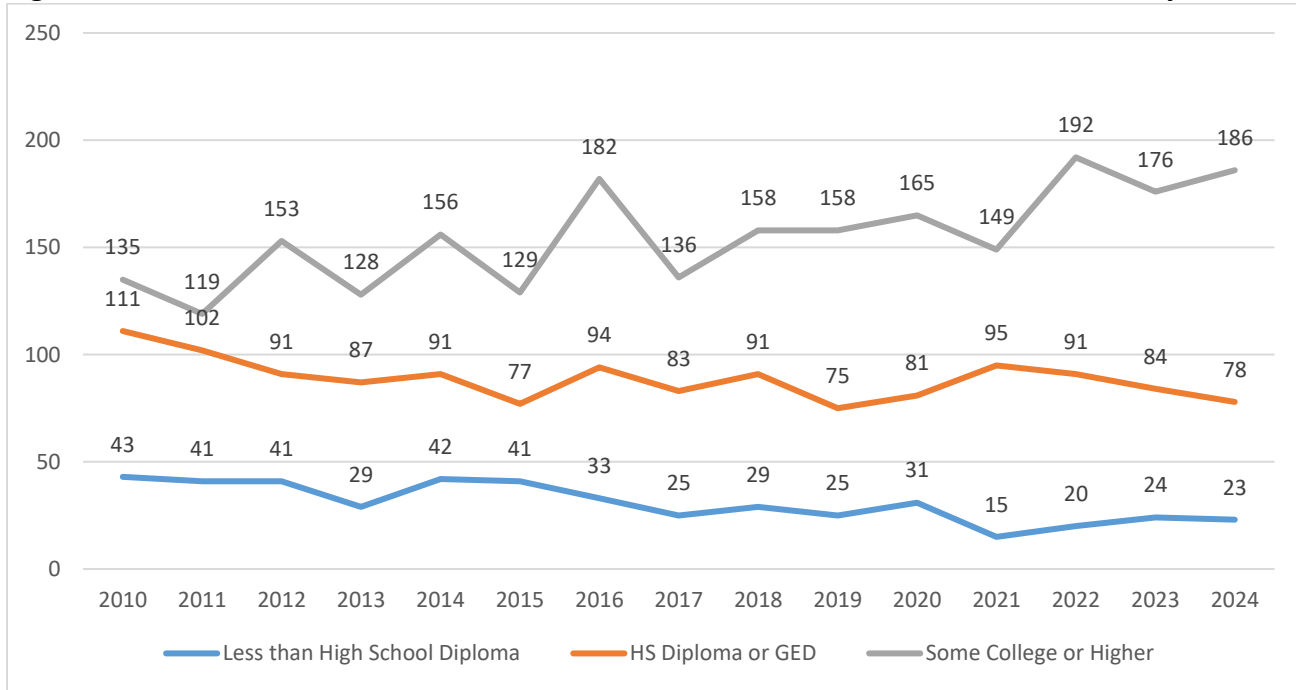
	Macon-Bibb County		Monroe County	
Year	Pregnancies	Births	Pregnancies	Births
2010	2,977	2,359	339	296
2011	2,881	2,309	314	267
2012	2,805	2,230	334	291
2013	2,853	2,175	305	246
2014	2,876	2,252	317	290
2015	2,655	2,148	288	247
2016	2,637	2,004	345	306
2017	2,625	2,097	275	245
2018	2,434	1,917	319	280
2019	2,581	1,970	312	259
2020	2,659	1,962	326	277
2021	2,731	1,965	318	259
2022	2,766	1,982	349	303
2023	2,361	1,842	316	284

Source: Georgia Department of Public Health, Online Analytical Statistical Information System, 2010-2023

Births

According to the Georgia Department of Public Health, in 2023, there were 1,842 children born in Macon-Bibb County and 284 born in Monroe County. While most of the data collected about these births regard the health of the child and mother, there are some demographic characteristics measured including race/ethnicity, age, and educational attainment. While income is a primary factor in determining the eligibility of Head Start applicants, this data is not available. However, educational attainment could be an indicator of socioeconomic condition. Figures 15 and 16 show the number of children born to mothers in an educational attainment group.

Figure 16: Number of Births Based on Mother’s Educational Attainment, Monroe County

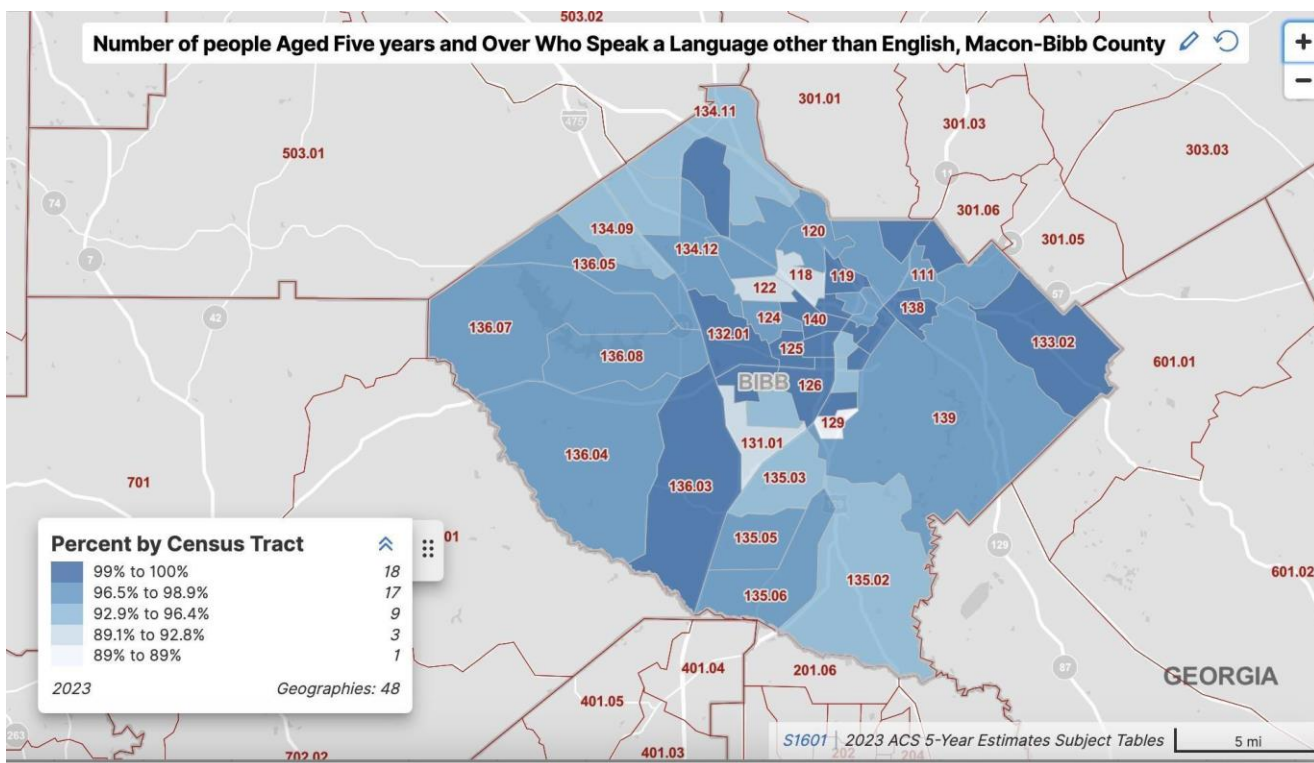


Source: Georgia Department of Public Health, Online Analytical Statistical Information System, 2010-2023

Dual Language Learners

The ACS does not collect data on dual language speakers under the age of five. However, there is data on residents who speak a language other than English at home, which could serve as an indicator for children who speak a language other than English. In Macon-Bibb County, 7,990 people or 5.5 percent of the population speak a language other than English at home, while 816 people or 3.1 percent of Monroe County's population speaks a language other than English at home. The population who speaks a language other than English is distributed throughout Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties, with those speakers more heavily concentrated in Macon-Bibb County. Map 9 shows a distribution of where people over age five live who speak a language other than English.

Map 9 and 10: Number of People Age Five Years and Over Who Speak a Language Other than English, Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties



Of the 7,990 people who speak a language other than English at home in Macon-Bibb County, 25.4 percent of them are below the poverty level in Macon-Bibb County. In Monroe County, 31.7 percent of the 846 other language speakers are below the poverty level.

Health Insurance

In Macon-Bibb County, 4.4 percent of children five years old and under do not have health insurance according to the 2018-2022 ACS. In Monroe County, 7.9 percent of children five years old and under do not have health insurance coverage. Of the five-year-old and under group that is insured, 7,673 people or 64.1 percent of the age group have public health coverage (e.g. Medicaid) in Macon-Bibb County. Of the insured group in Monroe County, 709 people or 41.6 percent of them have public health coverage.

Pre-K Enrollment

According to the 2018-2022 ACS, 42.3 percent of children ages three and four attended preschool in Macon-Bibb County, meaning approximately 57.7 percent of this age group or 2,349 eligible children were not in a preschool program. This is a decline since the 2008-2012 ACS when 50.3 percent of children ages three and four attended a preschool program in the county.

In Monroe County, 65.8 percent of children ages three and four attended a preschool program according to the 2018-2022 ACS, meaning 34.2 percent of this age group or 193 eligible children were not attending preschool. This is a significant increase since the 2008- 2012 ACS when 59.6 percent of eligible children were attending a preschool program.

Georgia offers a free Pre-K program for all eligible four-year-old children regardless of family income. In 2022, there were 1,175 children or 58.2 percent of eligible children in Macon- Bibb County enrolled in a Georgia Pre-K Program. This is an increase since 2010 when 1,136 children or 47 percent of all four-year-old children were enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K program.

In Monroe County, there were 198 children or 68.3 percent of all four-year-old children enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K program. In 2010, there were 200 four-year-old children enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K program, 62.1 percent of eligible children. While the number of children has marginally declined, the percentage of eligible children enrolled has marginally improved between 2010 and 2022.

In 2022, of the children in Macon-Bibb County enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K program, 50 percent of the children were from low-income families. This has shifted since 2015 when 71.2 percent of children enrolled in the program were from low-income families.

In Monroe County in 2022, 36.9 percent of children enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K program were from low-income families, nearly the same as it was in 2015, when 57.4 percent of enrolled children were from low-income families.

Macon-Bibb County has 87 Quality Rated centers and family care homes according to the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. Quality Rated is a systemic approach used to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs. Quality Rated assigns a rating to programs that meet a set of defined program standards including credentials and training of staff, the program's commitment to the health and physical activity of children, their family engagement, instructional and curriculum practices, and classroom ratios and group size. Seventeen of those centers offer Pre-K programs. Quality Rated programs in Macon-Bibb County are listed in Table 18. This list does not include any local school system-based programs, which only offer Pre-K services.

Table 18: Quality-Rated Child Learning Centers, Macon-Bibb County

Location	Infant 0 to 12 months	Toddler 13 mos to 2 years	Preschool 3 yrs to 4 yrs	Pre-K	Program Type	Licensed Capacity
Annette's ABC- 123 Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	83
Apple tree Learning Center and Academy III	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	99
Bailey, Valentina L	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child Care Learning Home	6
Battle, Cathy G	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child e Learning Home	6
Big Blue Marble - Hartley Station	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	217
Big Blue Marble - Peake Rd.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	215
Bonita LiL Children	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	22
Brown's Child Care Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	43
Buck Melton Community Center	No	No	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	80
CGTC Early Childhood Learning Center	No	No	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	48
Childcare Network #167	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	110
Childcare Network #19	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	103
Childcare Network #227	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	190
Childcare Network #230	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	156
Childcare Network #233 B	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	198
Clark, Linda	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child e Learning Home	6

Eagle's Nest Children's Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	71
Goolsby, Darnisha M	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child Care Learning Home	6
Grace Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	230
Hide-N-Seek Learning Center II	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	66
Houston Road Day Care and Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	160
Jackson Day Care Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	50
Jimmie Samuel @ Agnes Barden Early Head Start/Head Start Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	GA Head Start	---
Joshua House Early Care & Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	55
The Kids Loft	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	145
Latrenda's World for Learning	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	34
Latrenda's World for Learning	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	52
LaTrenda's World for Learning Inc.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	50
Lee, Andrea L	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child Care Learning Home	6
Mciver, Kimberly N	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child Care Learning Home	6
Northside Prep Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	195
Peek A Boo Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	113
Peek A Boo Learning Center II	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	40
Perkins, Jerry D	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child Care Learning Home	6
Sandy's Sandbox	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	144

Sandy's Sandbox - Mercer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	90
Sandy's Sandbox - Shurling Drive	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	100
Smith, Necol S.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child Care Learning Home	6
Spry, Ammer L.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child Care Learning Home	6
Tender Years Learning Center #15	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	198
Tender Years Learning Center #3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Care Learning Center	89
Tender Years Learning Center #5	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	90
The Children's Center at Mulberry	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	78
Tiny Tot's Learning Academy	No	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	18
Tiny Treasures Early Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	77
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star Childcare and Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	30
Walter P. Jones Early Head Start/Head Start Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	GA Head Start	---

Source: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2022

Monroe County has seven Quality Rated child care centers with one a Head Start/Early Head Start Center, shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Quality-Rated Child Learning Centers, Monroe County

Location	Infant 0 to 12 mos	Toddler 13 mos to 2 years	Preschool 3 yrs to 4 yrs	Pre-K	Program Type	Licensed Capacity
Forsyth United Methodist Church – Caring for Kids	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	150
Happy Haven Day Care 2	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	68
Little Angels at Smarr	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	113
Little Angels Learning and Daycare Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	100
Monroe County HS/EHS Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	84
Shannon Academy	No	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	23
Star Learning Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child Care Learning Center	50

Source: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2022

Enrollment

To be eligible for the head start program, a child must be between birth and five years old, a resident of Macon-Bibb or Monroe Counties and meet federal poverty income guidelines. This program serves children from three to five years old and the Early Head Start program serves children from six weeks old to approximately two years old. For the 2023-2024 program years, there were 587 Head Start (HS) students, 100 Early Head Start (EHS) students, and 64 students in the Early Head Start Expansion under the Macon-Bibb County EOC. Macon-Bibb County EOC also partners with Childcare Network, which serves 32 children. For the 2024-2025 program year, there were 456 Head Start students, 96 Early Head Start students with Expansion and Partnership numbers remaining the same. There are three HS/EHS Centers in Macon-Bibb County: Buck Melton HS Center, Walter P. Jones HS/EHS Center, and Jimmie Samuel at Agnes Barden HS/EHS Center. The fourth center, in Monroe County, is the Monroe County HS/EHS Center. There are waiting lists for enrollment in both the HS and EHS programs. As of May 2025, there were approximately 98 students on the waiting list for Head Start and 287 students on the waiting list for EHS for both Monroe and Macon- Bibb Counties.

Disability Characteristics

The HS and EHS centers provide services to children with disabilities. In the 2024-2025 program years, there are 19 children with an Individualized Education Programs (IEP), 15 children with an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and 65 children with a 504 Plan. Table 20 is an overview of the type of disabilities for these 99 students, some of whom have more than one disability.

Table 20: Disability Characteristics of Head Start Students

Source: Macon-Bibb County EOC

Type of Disability	Number of Students
Significant Developmental Delays	16
Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	0
Autism	31
Speech and Language Impairment	50

Brain Injury / Health Impairment	0
Other Impatient	2

Parent Services

There are a variety of services for parents through the HS and Early Head Start Centers. One program includes services for expectant mothers and families. Expectant families can complete a prenatal application in their first trimester. As of January 2025, there were 8 expectant mothers enrolled in a prenatal class from both counties. Their children will automatically be enrolled in EHS services after birth.

Another program, Parents as Teachers, is a curriculum for parents that focuses on parent- child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family-well-being. This is available for parents prior to the birth of their child. As of January 2025, there were approximately 4 individuals enrolled in this program. Additionally, Ready4K is an evidence-based curriculum used to empower families with the information and emotional support to act as their child’s first and most important teacher. The continuous birth to third, whole child curriculum promotes family well-being, positive relationships, child transitions, and involvement at school, supporting families as lifelong learners and leaders. As of May 2024, there are 229 families actively enrolled. There are also parent committees based at each center which consist of parents of currently enrolled children. These committees advise the staff on program policies and activities, plan and develop activities for parents and children, and work to involve all parents of children enrolled in the center. As of January 2025, there had been a total attendance of 428 parents for the 2024-2025 program year from both counties.

In Macon-Bibb County, Head Start and Early Head Start programs administered by the Macon-Bibb Economic Opportunity Council (MBEOC) provide a range of verified parent services. These include support for expectant mothers, who may enroll during pregnancy and receive education in health, nutrition, child development, and parenting, with their children automatically entering Early Head Start services after birth. The “Parents as Teachers” program is available to families before the birth of a child, focusing on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being. Additionally, the Ready4K program offers evidence-based, ongoing guidance to empower parents as their child’s first and most important teacher, supporting family wellness, school transitions, and early learning through a whole-child approach. Parent Committees at each center, along with policy councils and parent meetings, enable families to advise staff, plan activities, and actively participate in program decisions.

Needs and Opportunities

In examining the demographic data and Macon-Bibb County EOCI HS/EHS data, there are several community needs.

- **Expanded HS and EHS Services:** Of the estimated 4,200 children in Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties in poverty according to ACS Estimates, only 19 percent of those children are being served by one of the HS, EHS, Partnership, or Expansion programs in the two counties. How many children are being served by one of the HS, EHS, Partnership or Expansion programs in the two counties? (648 students being served by the program) There are more children in poverty than spaces available, meaning there are potentially thousands of children not receiving early childhood development services. Additional HS/EHS services could be utilized by the community, a need that is evidenced by the long waitlist for both HS and EHS services. To do this, however, would require significant additional funding.
- **Services for Children with Disabilities:** While not a new need for the HS and EHS programs, continuing to provide services for children with disabilities or in the RTI process is essential.

Family Services

The Macon-Bibb County EOCI has an array of programs and services that can be easily provided to HS and EHS families because of their child's attendance. Continuing to provide these services to families is critical to the success of the children enrolled in the HS and EHS programs.

Appendix A

Monroe County

Demographics

Population

Table 1: Monroe County Population Trends and Projections

Year	Population
1970	10,991
1980	14,610
1990	17,113
2000	21,757
2010	26,121
2018	27,537
2020	27,960
2023	28,919
2030	32,760
2040	35,012
2050	36,971

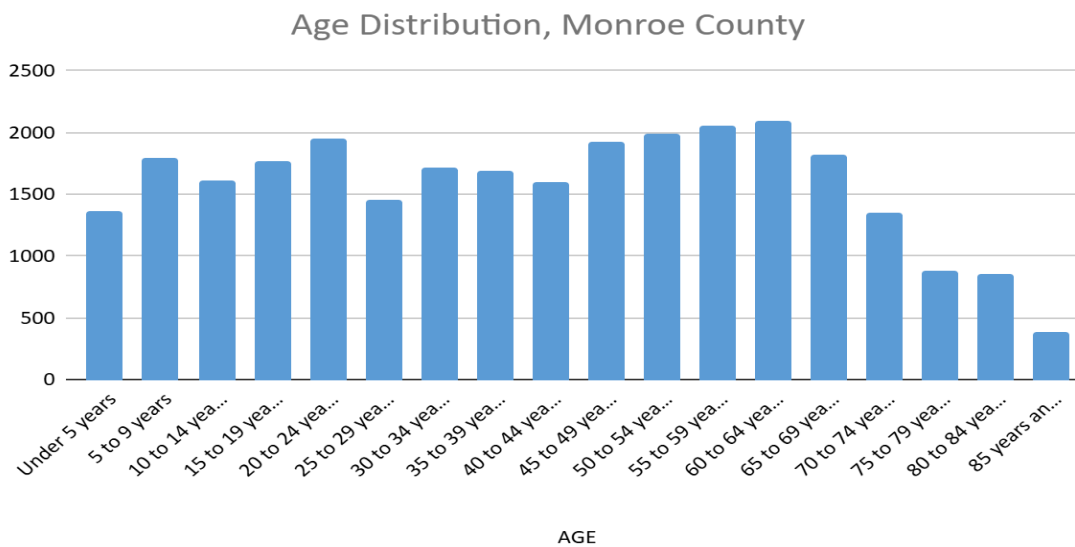
Source: U.S. Census and Governor's Office of Planning Budget, 2022

Monroe County's population has steadily grown over the last 50 years with an estimated population of 28,919 in 2023 as shown in Table 1. This is a 6.1 percent increase in population since the 2010 Census.

Age

Monroe County’s population has been aging like the state. The median age according to the 2018-2022 ACS Estimates was 42.6, compared to 40 in 2010 and 36.4 in 2000. In the 2018-2022 Estimates, 12.9 percent of the population was 65 years old or older, while 18.7 percent of the population was 19 or under. These proportions have shifted since the 2010 Census when 12.9 percent of the population was 65 and over, and 25.6 percent was 19 or under. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of Monroe County’s population by age group.

Figure 1: Age Distribution, Monroe County



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Race

Monroe County is mostly composed of individuals that identify as White or as Black or African-American. The proportion of different racial groups in the county has stayed mostly consistent since 2010 as shown in Figure 2. The Black or African-American population has declined between 2010 and the 2018-2022 ACS Estimate by almost 200 people; however, the growth rate of other racial groups, particularly those identifying as White is higher. The population identifying as White has increased by approximately 1,400 people between 2010 and 2022.

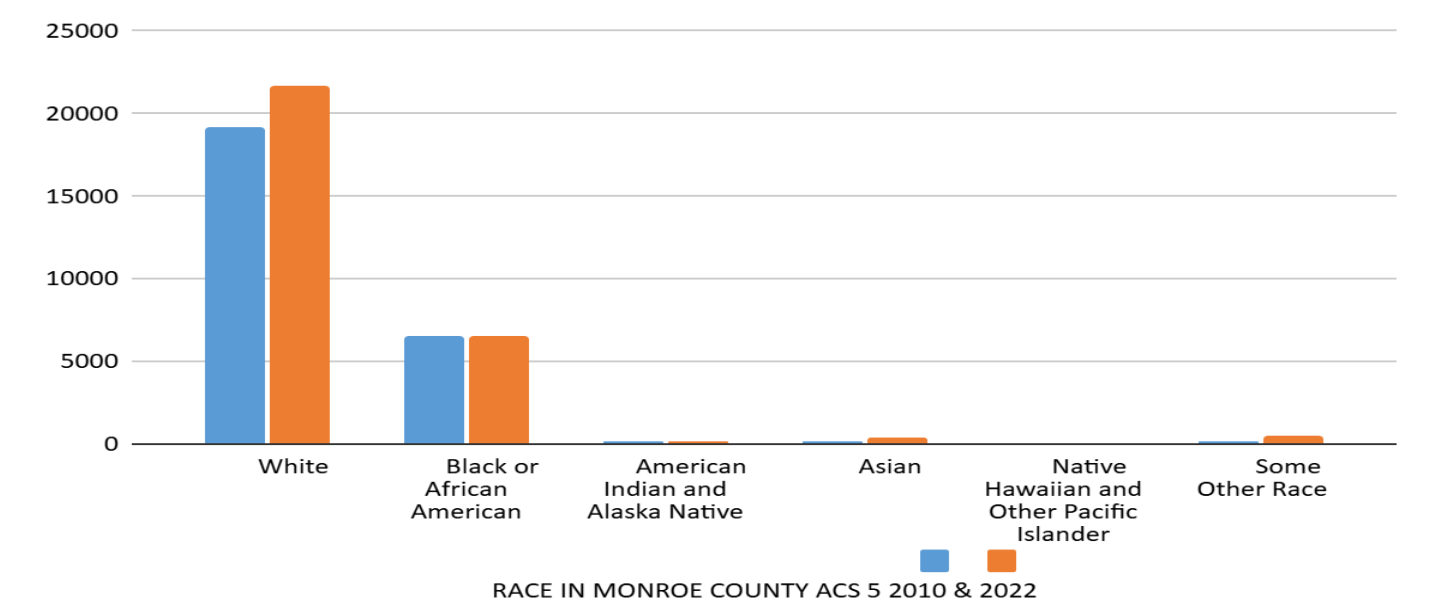


Figure 2: Racial Composition of Monroe County, 2010-2022

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Ethnicity

In the 2018-2022 ACS Estimates, 7 individuals identified as being Hispanic or Latino. This group comprises 2.5 percent of Monroe County’s population. Table 2 shows Hispanic/Latino population in 2010 and 2022

Table 2: Hispanic/Latino Population in Monroe County

	2010	2018-2022 Estimate	Difference
Hispanic/Latino	535	707	172

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey, 2010 Census

Language

In Monroe County, the number of people who speak a language other than English at home has increased between the 2008-2012 and 2018-2022 ACS Estimates. In the 2008-2012 Estimates, there were 726 people who spoke another language or 2.9 percent of the population.

Income and Poverty

Monroe County's median household income is \$60,491 however, that figure varies widely across the county from as low as \$32,083 in the northern part of the county to \$102,752 in the southeastern part of the county as shown in Map 1.

Map 1: Median Household Income by Block Group, Monroe County

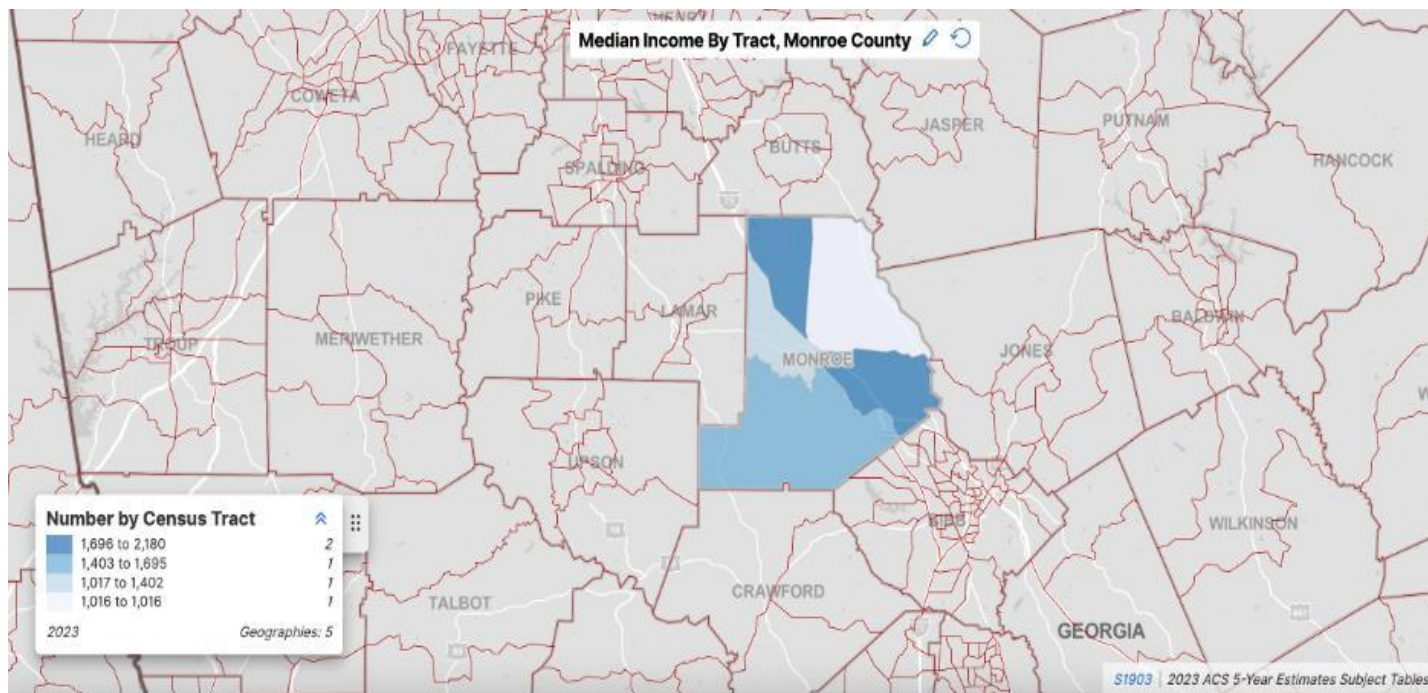
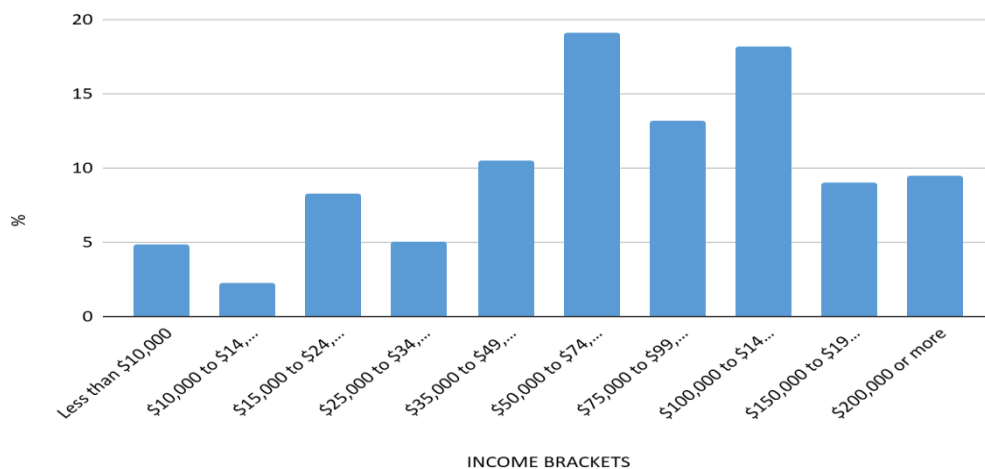


Figure 3: Percentage of Households in an Income Bracket, Monroe County



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Poverty

Approximately, 12.8 percent of Monroe County's population or 3,447 people are below the poverty level according to the 2017 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates. Since 2010, the poverty rates for all ages and for the Under 18 age groups have declined; however, the poverty rate for youth in the county is still higher than the overall poverty rate. Figure 4 shows the poverty rate for Monroe County since 2010.

Figure 4: Percent of Population in Poverty, Monroe County, 2012-2022

Source: 2012-2022 American Community Survey

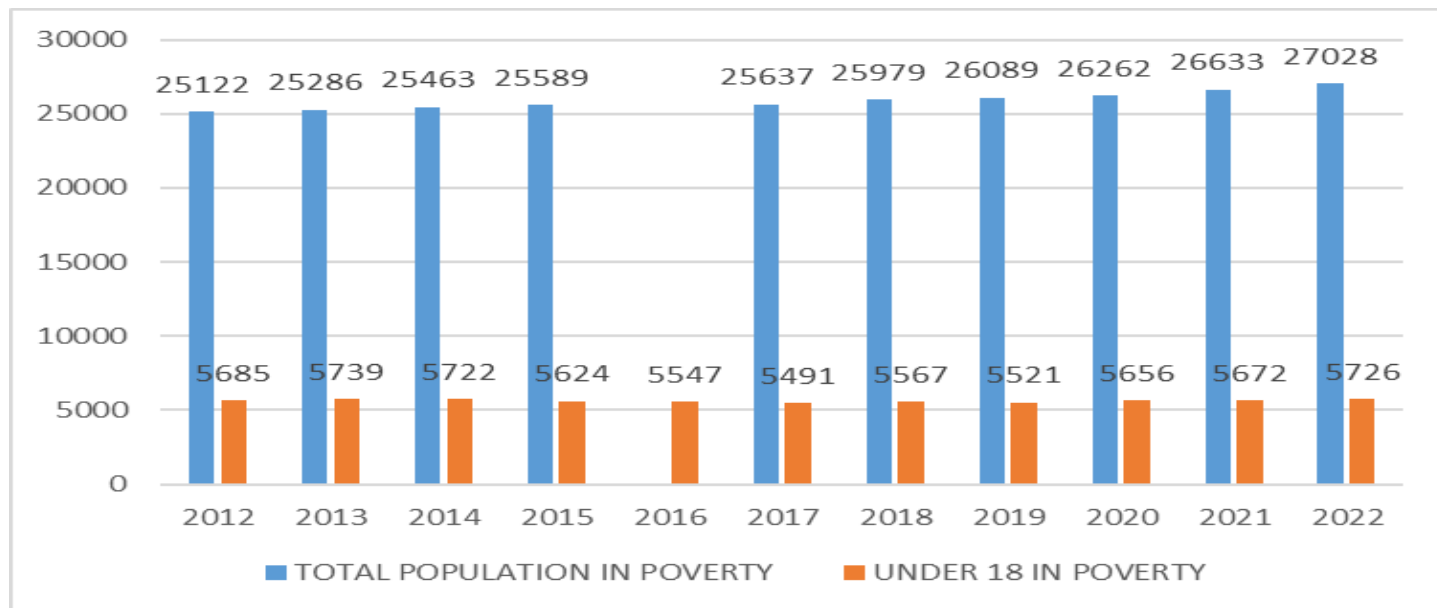


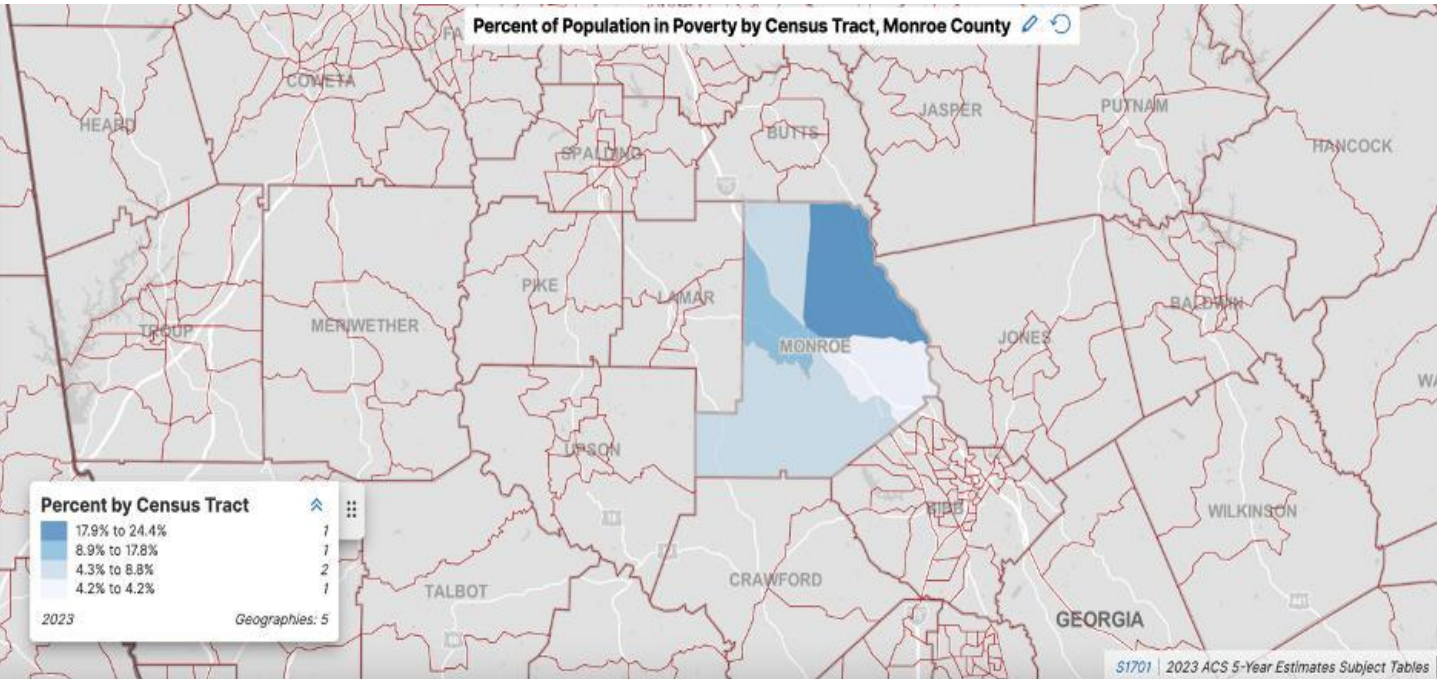
Table 3 provides more detail about the population in poverty related to age, gender, and race or ethnicity.

Table 3: Detailed Estimates about Population in Poverty, Monroe County 2022 (ACS 5 2022)

	Number	Percent of Pop Below Poverty Level
Population Below Poverty Level	27,028	13.7
AGE		
Under 5 years	1359	20.4
Under 18 years	5726	18.4
18 to 64 years	16,279	13.6
65 years and above	5023	8.6
SEX		
Male	13235	13.8
Female	13793	13.7
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN		
White	20310	12.7
Black or African-American	5507	15
American Indian and Alaska Native	27	0.0
Asian	295	74.6
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders	0	0.0
Some Other Race	113	37.2
Two Other Races	776	5.9
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	637	22.6
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		
Population 25 years and over	18916	12.1
Less than high school graduate	2020	33.1
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	6478	16.2
Some college or associate degree	4787	8.7
Bachelor's degree or higher	5631	2.8

While there is poverty county-wide, there are parts of Monroe County that have heavier concentrations of poverty. The tract with the highest rate of poverty includes much of the City of Forsyth as shown in Map 2.

Map 2: Percent of Population in Poverty by Census Tract, Monroe County



Families in Poverty

Of the approximately 6,900 families living in Monroe County, 11.4 percent of them are below the poverty level, amounting to approximately 780 families. Table 4 provides more details about families in poverty.

Table 4: Detailed Estimates about Families in Poverty, Monroe County

Group	Percent in Poverty
All Families	8.0
With related children under 18	14.4
With related children under 5	6.6
Householder worked	7.0
Householder worked full-time, year-round in the past 12 months	4.2
Householder 65 years and over	2.4

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Children in Poverty

Of the 1,394 children under five years old in Monroe County, 16.9 percent of them live below the poverty line. Statewide, the percentage of children in poverty is 22.2 percent.

Adult Educational Attainment

Table 5 shows the educational attainment of individuals age 25 and over in Monroe County. 33.9 percent of Monroe County's population are high school graduates or those with a GED. This is slightly lower than the statewide percentage where 36.3 percent of the age have at least a high school diploma. Additionally, of that adult age group, 26.6 percent in Monroe County have at least a bachelor's degree compared to the statewide percentage of 29.9 percent.

Table 5: Educational Attainment, Monroe County

		Monroe	
	Educational Attainment	#	%
	Population 25 years and over	19,809	
	Less than high school graduate	357	13.6
	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1081	41.3
	Some college or associate degree	886	33.8
	Bachelor's degree or higher	294	11.2

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey

Housing Cost Burden

Housing affordability is a significant concern for many residents in Monroe County. One way to assess housing affordability is to examine the cost burden. Households are considered cost burdened when they spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing. Households are considered severely cost burdened when the household spends 50 percent or more of income on rent.

According to the 2014-2018 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), of those 2,040 renter households in Monroe County, 670 of them had a cost burden of greater than 30%, and 225 had a cost burden greater than 50%. Please note, those who have a cost burden of greater than 50% are also counted in the cost burden greater than 30%.

Therefore, 670 renter households have at least a cost burden of greater than 30%.

Homelessness

Homelessness is a challenge for many residents of Monroe County. One way to assess homelessness is through the Point-in-Time Homeless Count which captures responses for one night in the county every two years. This counts the people that are literally homeless whether they are in shelters or transitional/supportive housing or if they are unsheltered. Table 6 shows the point-in-time homeless count in the county from 2013 to 2019. The 2021 was not conducted due to COVID.

Table 6: Homeless Population, Monroe County

Year	Unsheltered Homeless Persons	Sheltered Homeless Persons (Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing)	Total	Total Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Beds
2013	22	0	22	0
2015	18	0	18	0
2017	13	0	13	0
2019	8	0	8	0

Source: 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019 Report on Homeless

Homeless Students

According to the Georgia Department of Education, 15.0 percent of Monroe County students were homeless for the 2020-2021 school year. These figures have increased since 2013. Table 7 provides an overview of the change in homeless student counts. However, the number of homeless students declined by 129.

Table 7: Homeless Student Population, Monroe County

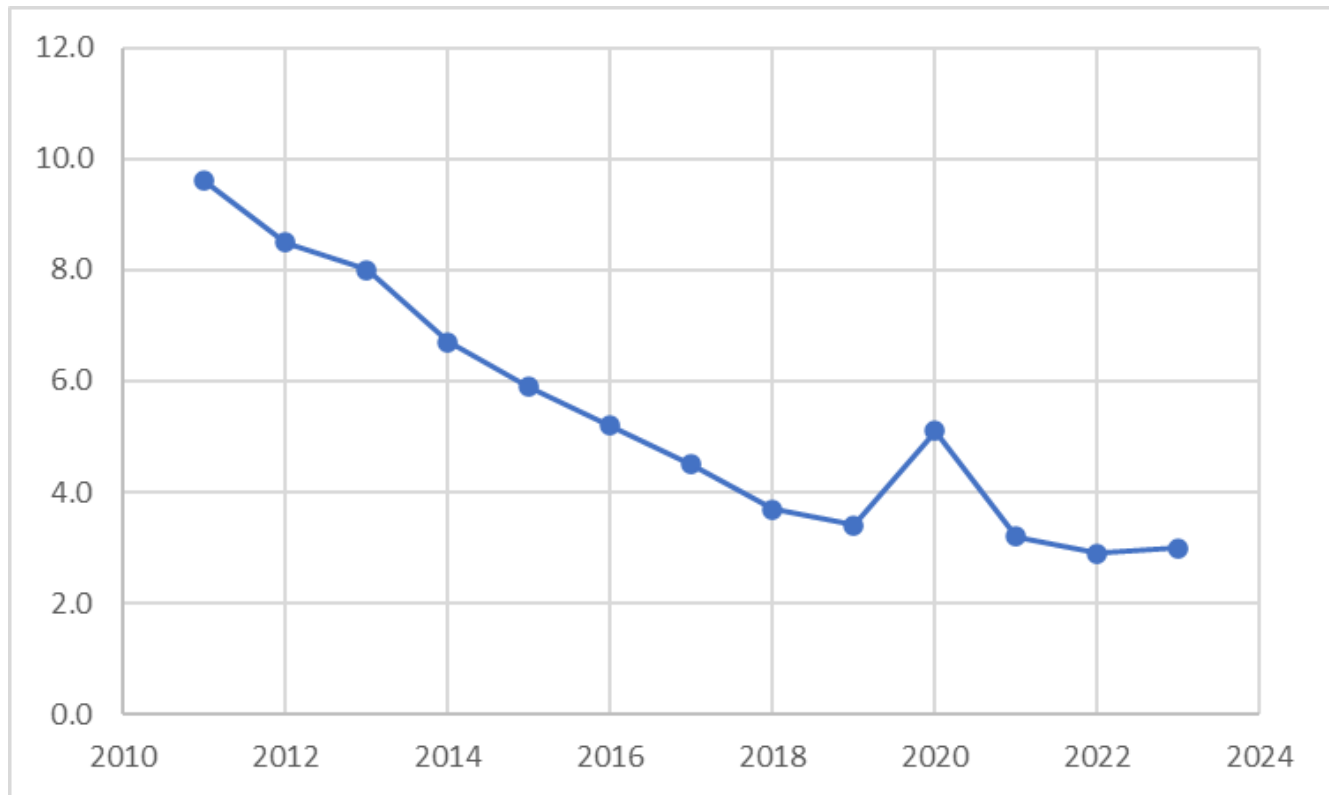
	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20	2020 -21	% change 2013-14/2 020-21
Monroe County	140	124	785	823	803	735	785	656	368.6

Source: Georgia Department of Education

Employment

Monroe County's average 2022 unemployment rate of 2.9 percent is the lowest rate over a decade as shown in Figure 5. The unemployment rate is defined as the number of people in the civilian labor force (people who are working or actively seeking work) divided by the number of unemployed persons (people who are jobless, have sought work in the last four weeks, and are available to take a job).

Figure 5: Unemployment Rate in Monroe County, 2011-2023



Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Employment Sector Profile

In 2021, there were 7,557 people employed in the county by 608 business or government establishments. Table 8 shows the current employment mix based on the 2021 figures.

Table 8: Employment Mix in Monroe County, 2021

Sector	Number of Firms	Employed Persons	Percent of the Labor Force	Average Weekly Wage
Goods-Producing	109	953	12.6	\$927
Service-Providing	413	4,063	53.8	\$863
Government	38	2,514	33.3	\$896
Unclassified	48	28	0.4	\$1,169
All Sectors	608	7,557	100.00	\$883

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

The number of firms in Monroe County has increased from 532 establishments in 2011 to 608 in 2021, but the composition of those firms has shifted. In 2011, there were 115 goods-producing establishments, compared to 109 in 2021. There has been an increase of approximately 52 service-providing firms during the 10-year period.

The number of employed persons in each sector has also shifted. In 2011, there was a monthly average of 910 persons employed in the goods-producing sector accounting for 14 percent of the total labor force, while the service-providing sector had an average of 3,293 employees, which made up 51.0 percent of the labor force. In 2021, there were 953 people employed in the goods-producing sector, amounting to 12.6 percent of the total labor force. There were 4,063 people employed in the service-providing sector, amounting to 53.8 percent of the labor force. The size of the government sector has significantly increased during this 10-year period going from 2,243 people employed in the sector in 2011 to 2,514 people employed in 2021. In spite of these shifts, there has been an increase in the total number of employed people in the county since 2011 when there was an average of 6,461 people employed in a month.

Health and Nutrition

Health

Free and Reduced Lunch Program, 2021-2022

The National School Lunch Program is a federally-assisted program that provides low-cost or free lunches to children at schools each day. There are four schools in Monroe County that qualify for having a free and reduced lunch program:

- Samuel E. Hubbard Elementary School (31.44 percent free and reduced)
- Katherine B. Sutton Elementary School (30.09 percent free and reduced)
- Monroe County Middle School Banks Stephens Campus (24.73 percent free and reduced)
- T.G. Scott Elementary School (19.89 percent free and reduced)

SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offers nutrition assistance to low-income individuals and families. These benefits are available to most households with a gross income less than 130 percent of federal poverty guidelines. In Monroe County, 6.6 percent of households received SNAP benefits according to the 2018–2022 ACS Estimates, a decline compared to the 2008–2012 ACS Estimates when 14.9 percent of households received SNAP benefits. Of the 673 households receiving SNAP benefits in Monroe County, 44.1 percent of them have children under 18 years old.

Food Insecurity

Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, publishes an annual study to better understand hunger at the local community level. To do this, they assess food insecurity for each county's population. Food-insecure people are not necessarily always food-insecure, but this measure may reflect the number of people who must make difficult decisions about basic needs such as housing, utilities, or nutritionally adequate foods.

There are several factors that contribute to food insecurity including poverty, unemployment, and lack of access, among other demographic and household characteristics. Based on 2019 food insecurity data from Feeding America, a non-profit studying food insecurity, 3,370 people or 12.4 percent of Monroe County's population is classified as food insecure, 660 of whom are children.

Socio-economic conditions can be related to health outcomes and health access. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHR&R) is a program of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. The CHR&R program provides data, evidence, guidance, and examples to build awareness of the multiple factors that influence health and support leaders in growing community power to improve health equity. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps' work is rooted in a sincere belief in health equity, the idea that everyone deserves a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. For Health outcomes, Monroe County is ranked number 59 out of 159 counties. However, on the Health Factors score, Monroe is ranked 29th. Health Outcomes increased from 2017 when the county was 51st and 30th on the Health Factors.

The report highlighted some of the strengths and challenges of Monroe County.

Some of the strengths regarding health for Monroe County are:

Food Environment Index: Monroe County has a food environment index of 8.3 on a scale of 0 (worst) to 10 (best). This metric includes the percentage of the population that is low income and does not live close to a grocery store and the percentage of the population who did not have a reliable source of food during the past year. Georgia's index score is 6.3, Monroe County is ranked among the least healthy counties in Georgia (lowest 0% - 25%).

Some of the challenges and areas to explore in the county include

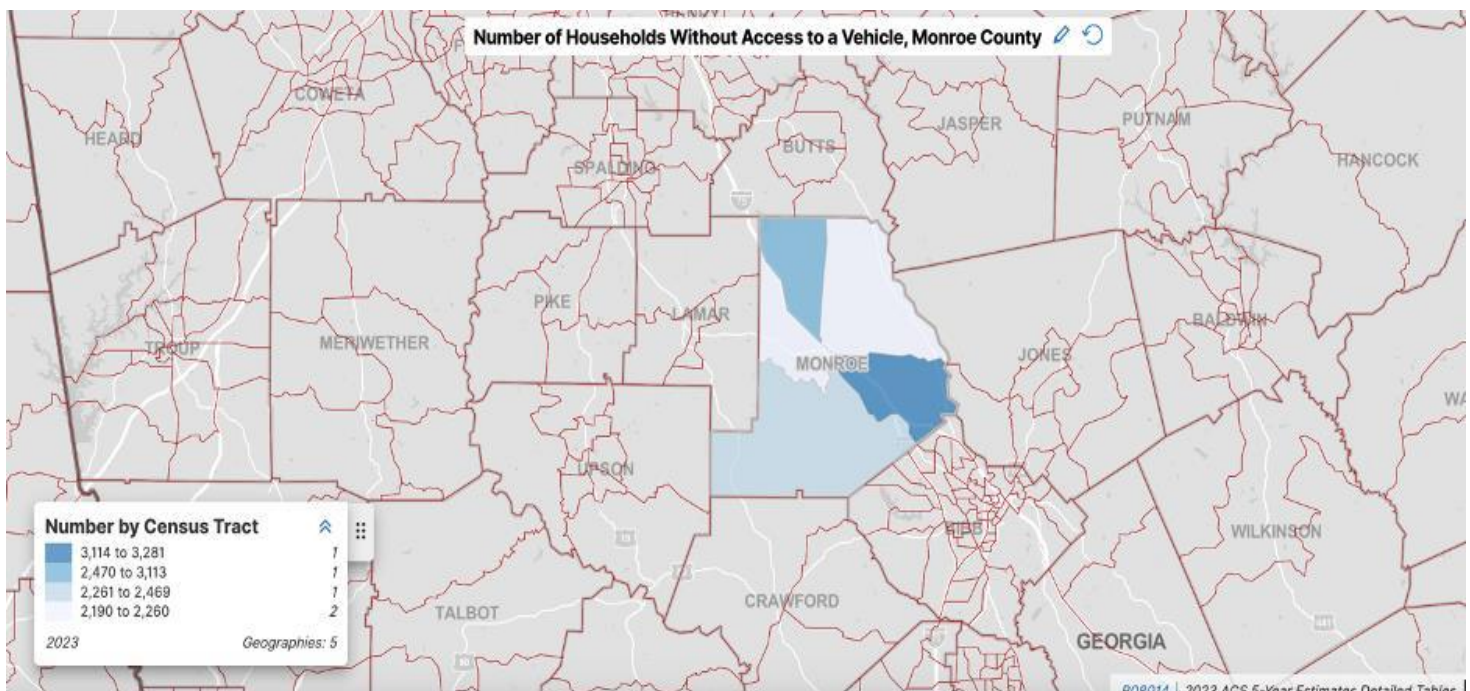
1. Smoking: 20 percent of adults in the county smoke compared to 17 percent of adults statewide
2. Obesity: 32 percent of Monroe County's adult population report a BMI (body mass index) of 30 or more. Only 33 percent of all adults in Georgia have a BMI of 30 or more. A BMI of 30 and above is classified as obese.
3. Excessive Drinking: 12 percent of adults report binge drinking or heavy drinking, the same as the statewide rate of 18 percent.
4. Uninsured: 13 percent of Monroe County's population under age 65 does not have health insurance coverage compared to 16 percent statewide
5. Preventable Hospital Stays: Monroe County had 3,666 for ambulatory- care-sensitive conditions (e.g. convulsions, asthma, dehydration, diabetes) per 100,000 Medicare enrollees compared to 4,295 per 100,000 Medicare enrollees statewide. Monroe County is getting better for this particular measure.

Transportation

Access to a Vehicle

Approximately 484 households or 4.8 percent of households in Monroe County do not have the highest access to a vehicle; however, there is a concentration of households without access to a vehicle in the north-west area as shown in Map 3. For those without vehicles, travel is difficult as Monroe County does not operate an on-demand transit system like other counties in the region.

Map 3: Percent of Households without Access to a Vehicle, Monroe County



This indicator reports the number and percentage of households with no motor vehicle based on the latest 5-year American Community Survey estimates. Of the 10,177 total households in the report area, 484 or 4.76% are without a motor vehicle.

Public Transportation

Monroe County does not operate a public transportation system. However, there are transit services under a Coordinated Transportation System, which is designed to work with the various human service agencies in Monroe County to provide transportation to its clients, as well as citizens without a means of transportation. This service serves clients for the Division of Aging Services, Division of Family and Children Services, Division of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, and the Division of Public Health

Appendix B

Services Provided

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG): CSBG is the main source of federal funding for Community Action in the United States. Funding allows individuals and families to meet their basic needs, educate themselves, achieve self-sufficiency and improve their communities.

Emergency Services: Emergency Assistance will be provided to individuals/families under various emergency conditions to stabilize the family. Referrals will be provided to individuals/families to other social service/non-profit agencies for assistance.

Employment Services: For Job Readiness clients, an action plan will be developed for each individual, workshops will be conducted and materials will be issued that address work ethic attitude, dependability, continuous learning and going the extra mile.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): This program provides one-time financial assistance to eligible households to help meet high-energy costs during the winter months.

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP): is a federally funded program created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that helps households pay for drinking water and wastewater for their homes. This program will help eligible customers experiencing a water burden pay their home water bill.

Utility Services: Assistance will be provided to individuals or families for fuel/utility support to prevent cut-offs or restoration of services. Counseling will be offered to individuals/families on energy conservation to reduce energy costs.

Head Start/Early Head Start Program: A federally-funded program for young children (birth-age to five) and their families who reside in high need areas in Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties. In addition, the Head Start/Early Head Start program provides a developmentally appropriate learning environment for children and a supportive atmosphere for the families being served.

Health Services: Individuals will be provided with smoke/carbon monoxide detectors to enhance their health and safety. Clients will be shown how to use and maintain the detectors. For the health fair, individuals will have the opportunity to participate in one-on-one counseling with health professionals on diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and cholesterol monitoring. Individuals will be provided with immediate and urgent aid through prescription assistance. Individuals will be provided with preventive health care services through the health care clinic assistance.

Services for Homeless: Homeless services through Rapid Rehousing Programs are provided to those individuals/families who are experiencing homelessness in Macon-Bibb County. These services include, but are not limited to assistance with security deposits, first and last month rent, application fees, and utility deposits. Daycare services are offered to clients enrolled in the Rapid Rehousing Program and are currently seeking housing or have been placed in housing through the program, but are still under case management.

Hotel/motel vouchers are offered to clients enrolled in Rapid Rehousing and have timed out at the shelter or are no longer able to reside where they are. This may also apply if the shelter does not have space for an individual or family and they have been deemed ineligible to receive assistance through Rapid Rehousing Programs. Homeless Prevention services are offered to individuals and families that reside in Macon-Bibb County who meet the financial guidelines, whose housing meets the rent reasonableness for Macon-Bibb County, who have a court-ordered eviction notice, and who can show once assisted, they will be able to maintain housing.

The Homeless Prevention Program, an initiative aimed at providing individuals identified as at-risk groups facing homelessness with portable rent supplements and support services to help them access rental housing in the private (non-subsidized) housing market.

Income Management: Budgeting courses facilitated by a financial wellbeing coach through Operation HOPE are offered through the EOCI.

Regional Transportation Services: Macon-Bibb County EOCI provides transportation for Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA), and Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Senior Centers, and Area Agency on Aging. These services are provided for Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Macon-Bibb, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs, and Wilkinson Counties. Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Foster Grandparent Program: The Foster Grandparent Program provides invaluable aid to children and youth with literacy and/or exceptional need. Grandparents serve 15-40 hours a week in Head Start, local schools, and daycare centers.

This funding helps individuals and families meet their basic needs, pursue education, achieve self-sufficiency and improve their communities.

Emergency Services: Emergency Assistance is provided to individuals and families under various emergency conditions to stabilize the family. Referrals to other social service or non-profit agencies are also available.

Employment Services: For Job Readiness clients, an action plan will be developed for each individual. Workshops and materials will address work ethic, attitude, dependability, continuous learning and going the extra mile.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): This program provides one-time financial assistance to eligible households to help meet high-energy costs during the winter months.

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP): is a federally funded program created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that helps households pay for drinking water and wastewater services. It assists eligible customers experiencing a water burden to pay their home water bill.

Utility Services: Assistance will be provided to individuals or families for fuel/utility support to prevent cut-offs or restoration of services. Counseling will be provided for individuals/families on energy conservation in order to reduce energy cost.

Head Start/Early Head Start Program Pre-K: A federally-funded program for young children (birth-age to five) and their families who reside in high need areas in Macon-Bibb and Monroe Counties. It provides a developmentally appropriate learning environment for children and a supportive atmosphere for the families.

Health Services: Individuals receive smoke/carbon monoxide detectors to enhance their health and safety, along with instructions on their use and maintenance. Health fairs offer one-on-one counseling with health professionals on diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and cholesterol monitoring. Immediate and urgent aid through prescription assistance. Individuals will be provided with preventive health care services through health care clinic assistance.

Appendix C

Partners

Ambrose Pediatric Dentistry
Area Agency on Aging Kinship Care
Babies Can't Wait
Bibb County School District
Macon-Bibb County Health Department Macon-Bibb Sheriff Department
Center for Academic Excellence
Central Georgia Technical College Adult Learning Center
Childcare Network #227
Communication Dynamics
Department of Family and Children Services
Discovery Therapy Network
Early Learning Academy
Family Counseling Center of Central GA
First Choice Primary Care
Georgia Families Georgia Power Company
Georgia Public Service Commission Georgia Regional/ Teen Work HOME FIRST
L.H. Williams Elementary
Macon-Bibb County Parks and Recreation Macon-Bibb Housing Authority
Macon Regional Youth Development Center MCCG Children's Hospital
Monroe County School District
Older American Council Operation HOPE Progressive
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) River Edge Behavioral Health
River Edge Prevention Resource S&V Educational Systems
Saint Paul AME Church Salvation Army
SCANA Energy STAR Choices Unhealthy/ Source
Union Baptist Church Unionville Baptist Church Universal
University of Georgia Extension Service
Waller Occupational

Appendix D

Needs Assessment Survey Analysis

This analysis examines the key challenges identified in employment, housing, transportation, education, senior and child welfare, healthcare, and overall community well-being.

The survey was accessed by 565 respondents. Many of the questions allowed respondents to select more than one answer. The following data is an overview and a brief analysis of the responses.

Demographics

- The majority of respondents were ages 24-44 (62.6%), meaning most are of working age and likely raising families.
- A predominantly female response rate (88.04%) suggests that women may be more engaged in community health surveys, or this population is more affected by healthcare challenges.
- 78.12% identified as Black or African American, making it the dominant racial group in this sample.

Income and Employment

- 53.23% earn wages or salary, meaning nearly half do not have stable employment-based income.
- 20.41% do not work or receive benefits, which aligns with reliance on Medicaid and community resources.
- Only 1.81% receive pension/retirement benefits, suggesting a younger population with fewer seniors.
- 14.21% rely on Social Security, which could include disability payments rather than retirement.

Insight:

The high percentage of non-working individuals (20.41%) and the reliance on Medicaid suggest financial instability. Expanding job training programs and employment assistance could improve financial independence.

Education

- The most common education levels were:
 - High School/GED (37.97%)
 - Some college (22.53%)
 - Graduate or Professional Degree (8.86%)
- A relatively low number have Bachelor's (8.35%) or Associate's (8.61%) degrees, which may impact employment opportunities and income stability.

Employment Challenges Key Findings:

- 43% of respondents struggle with employment.
- Top barriers include:
 - Lack of employment opportunities (39%)
 - Lack of reliable transportation (42%)
 - Cost/lack of child or senior care (44%)

Analysis:

Employment struggles are strongly linked to transportation and childcare access. Many residents may be willing to work but cannot due to logistical barriers. Additionally, 28% cite lack of resume and job application skills, indicating a need for workforce development programs.

Recommendations:

- Expand affordable childcare services to enable parents to work.
- Improve transportation options, such as employer-sponsored shuttles or public transit access.
- Offer job training and employment readiness programs, including resume writing and interview skills.

Housing Challenges Key Findings:

- 47% struggle with rent or mortgage payments.
- 35% report a lack of affordable housing options.
- 32% cite high utility and insurance costs.
- 28% lack money for deposits or down payments.

Analysis:

Affordability is the primary issue, suggesting that wages are not keeping up with housing costs. The data also shows a mismatch between available housing and financial capability, with many unable to secure stable housing due to initial deposit costs.

Recommendations:

- Increase rental and mortgage assistance programs.
- Expand affordable housing initiatives, including subsidized or mixed-income developments.
- Develop financial literacy programs to help residents with budgeting and homeownership strategies.

Transportation Barriers Key Findings:

- 23% lack access to a vehicle.
- 23% say owning a car is too expensive.
- 10% do not have a driver's license.
- 18% dislike relying on others for transportation.

Analysis:

Limited transportation access affects employment, education, and healthcare. The cost of car ownership is a major issue, suggesting that even those with jobs may struggle with vehicle-related expenses.

Recommendations:

- Improve public transit accessibility, particularly in underserved areas.
- Offer transportation assistance programs for low-income workers.
- Provide driver's education and license assistance to those who lack a valid license

Education & Adult Learning Challenges Key Findings:

- 49% report no education barriers, meaning half the population does not need additional support.
- For those who do, the main issues are:
 - Lack of childcare (23%)
 - Lack of internet/computer access (19%)
 - Transportation challenges (15%)

Analysis:

Education barriers are often tied to financial and logistical constraints. Limited access to technology may impact the ability to complete training or remote learning.

Recommendations:

- Expand affordable childcare services to allow parents to continue education.
- Provide low-cost or free internet and computer access at libraries or community centers.
- Offer evening and weekend adult education programs to accommodate work schedules.

Senior Support Needs Key Findings:

- 74% want better access to benefits (transportation, food, SNAP, etc.)
- 48% need help with daily tasks (food preparation, cleaning, etc.)
- 42% want senior-focused health programs

Analysis:

Many seniors struggle with accessing **basic services**, including food and transportation. Support for daily living tasks is a significant concern, indicating a need for **in-home care services** or expanded community outreach programs.

Recommendations:

- Increase meal delivery services and food programs for seniors.
- Expand senior transportation programs to improve mobility.
- Offer affordable in-home assistance services for daily living tasks.

Child & Youth Support Key Findings:

- 58% want safer neighborhoods.
- 50% advocate for after-school programs.
- 42% need affordable daycare.
- 41% struggle with affording basic child needs (food, clothing, shelter).

Analysis:

Safety is a top concern, indicating potential issues with crime or lack of youth-focused programs. Parents also need better access to affordable childcare and after-school activities to support children's development.

Recommendations:

- Increase after-school and summer programs to keep youth engaged.
- Strengthen neighborhood safety initiatives, including community policing and youth mentorship programs.
- Expand subsidized child care programs for working parents.

Health Insurance & Access to Healthcare Health Insurance Coverage

- 82.21% have health insurance, while 17.79% do not, indicating a significant uninsured population.
- The largest source of insurance is Medicaid (43.13%), followed by employer-provided insurance (17.83%) and Medicare (6.02%).
- 13.01% explicitly stated they do not have insurance, which aligns with the earlier uninsured percentage.
- A notable 14.94% listed "Other", suggesting potential gaps in traditional insurance categories, possibly including short-term plans, community health programs, or undocumented coverage.

Health Challenges

The top three challenges were:

- Lack of dental services (32.85%)

- Lack of free or low-cost medical services (26.62%)
- Lack of providers accepting insurance (25.90%)

Affordability of prescription medicine (22.30%) and lack of vision services (20.62%) are also significant concerns. Approximately 28 % reported no health challenges, which is encouraging but suggests that the remaining 71.7% face at least one healthcare barrier.

Health Concerns

- 28.74% struggle to afford healthy food, which aligns with 22.46% reporting food resource scarcity (e.g., food pantries, senior meals).
- 26.81% listed obesity/overweight as a concern, possibly linked to food insecurity and lack of access to healthy foods.
- 21.26% cited lack of time or opportunities to exercise, another contributing factor to obesity.
- Drug abuse was a concern for only 4.11%, but mental health services were listed as insufficient by 21.58% in the previous section.

Community Resource Utilization

The most used resources:

- Childcare services (35.67%)
- Public transportation (33.33%)
- Housing financial assistance (22.81%)
- After-school programs (22.22%)
- Mental health counseling (20.47%)

Underutilized services:

- Vocational training (3.80%)
- Substance abuse treatment (3.80%)
- Literacy classes (4.09%)

Insight: While many rely on childcare, housing assistance, and transportation, vocational training and literacy programs see low engagement. Awareness and accessibility efforts for skill-building programs may improve workforce participation.

- 38% say they make too much to qualify for assistance but still need help.
- 35% do not know where to go for help.
- 32% cite unhealthy lifestyles as a major concern.
- 28% struggle with housing shortages.
- 28% identify drug use as a problem.

Analysis:

A large portion of the community is in a financial "gray area"—earning too much for public assistance but not enough to be financially stable. Awareness of available resources is also a major gap, preventing families from accessing help.

Recommendations:

- Expand financial assistance programs for middle-income families.
- Improve community resource awareness campaigns to connect families with support services.
- Invest in health and wellness initiatives, including substance abuse prevention.

Desired Community Programs Key Findings:

- 51% want free childcare programs.
- 49% seek housing assistance for single parents.
- 43% need evening childcare options.
- 42% want healthy lifestyle programs.
- 42% support mental health and counseling services.

Analysis:

The demand for childcare, housing, and mental health support is overwhelming. Many families are struggling with basic needs and would benefit from expanded social services.

Recommendations:

- Implement subsidized or free childcare for low-income families.
- Provide mental health resources, including community-based counseling.
- Create housing programs specifically for single parents.

Overall Key Takeaways

- Financial strain is a major issue.
Many are unable to afford housing, transportation, and childcare.
- Transportation barriers limit access.
Access is limited to jobs, education, and healthcare.
- Lack of affordable childcare.
This prevents parents from working or furthering their education.
- Seniors need better access to resources.
Many need better access to food, transportation, and in-home care.
- Community safety and youth programs.

These are top concerns for families.

- More awareness and accessibility of resources.

This is necessary, as many do not know where to go for help.

- Healthcare access is a major issue.

Many struggle with finding providers who accept insurance and need free or low-cost services.

Dental and vision care are major gaps in coverage.

- Food and Nutrition Concerns Are Prominent.

Many struggle to afford healthy food, which is tied to obesity and other health risks.

- Mental Health & Community Services Are Needed.

Demand for mental health services is high, but utilization remains limited.

- Public transportation and housing assistance are widely used, reflecting economic hardship.

Employment & Income Instability Exists.

- A significant portion does not work or relies on non-traditional income, reinforcing reliance on Medicaid and community aid.

Key Takeaways & Recommendations

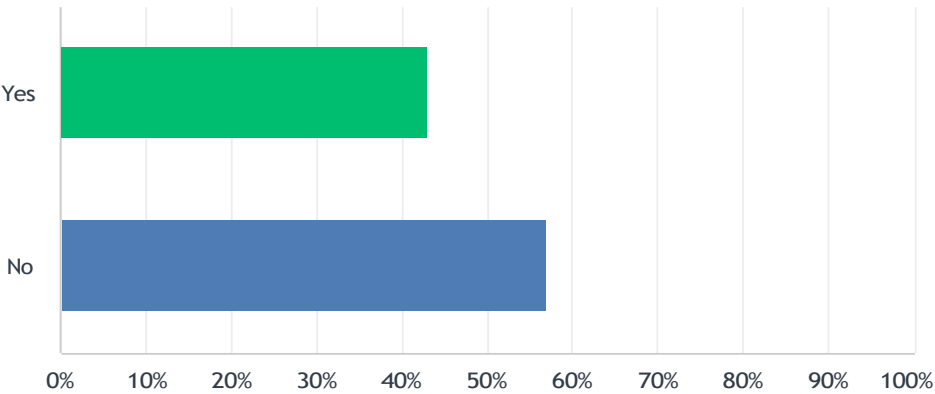
- ✓ **Healthcare Gaps:** Address affordability and provider availability, especially for dental, vision, and prescription costs.
- ✓ **Food Insecurity:** Expand food assistance programs and improve access to healthy, affordable food.
- ✓ **Health & Wellness:** Increase opportunities for affordable exercise programs and nutritional education.
- ✓ **Employment & Education:** Promote workforce training, vocational education, and job placement programs.
- ✓ **Community Services:** Improve awareness and accessibility of underutilized resources like Literacy classes and substance abuse treatment.

Appendix E

Needs Assessment Full Survey Summary Response

Q1 Is maintaining employment a challenge for you or a family member?

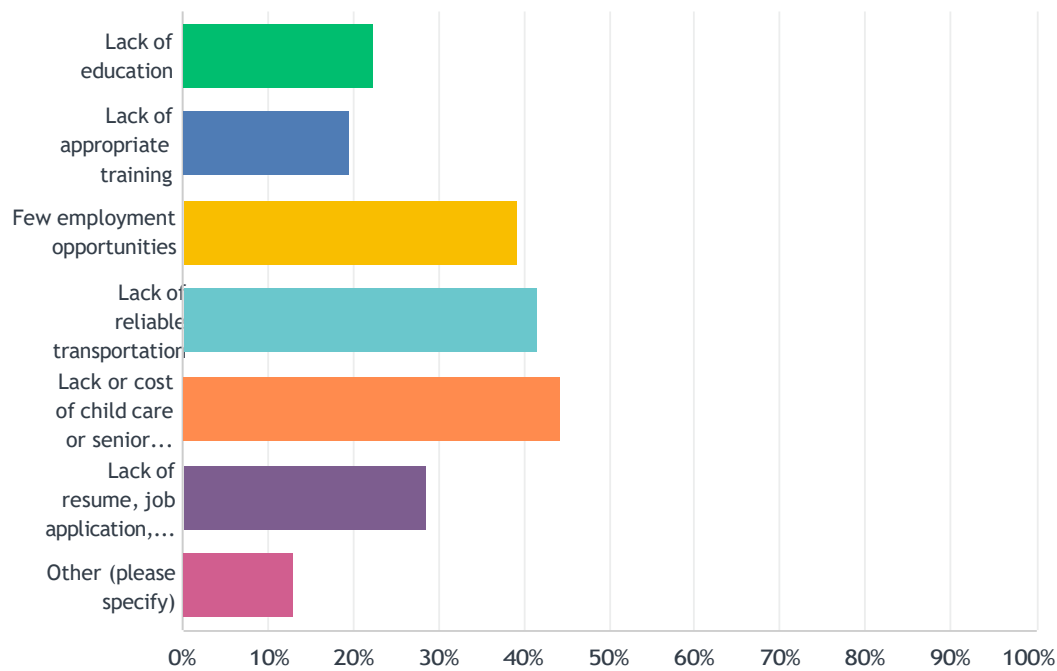
Answered: 563 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		42.98%	242
No		57.02%	321
TOTAL			563

Q2 If YES, what are the most important reasons why? (Choose THREE)

Answered: 214 Skipped: 351

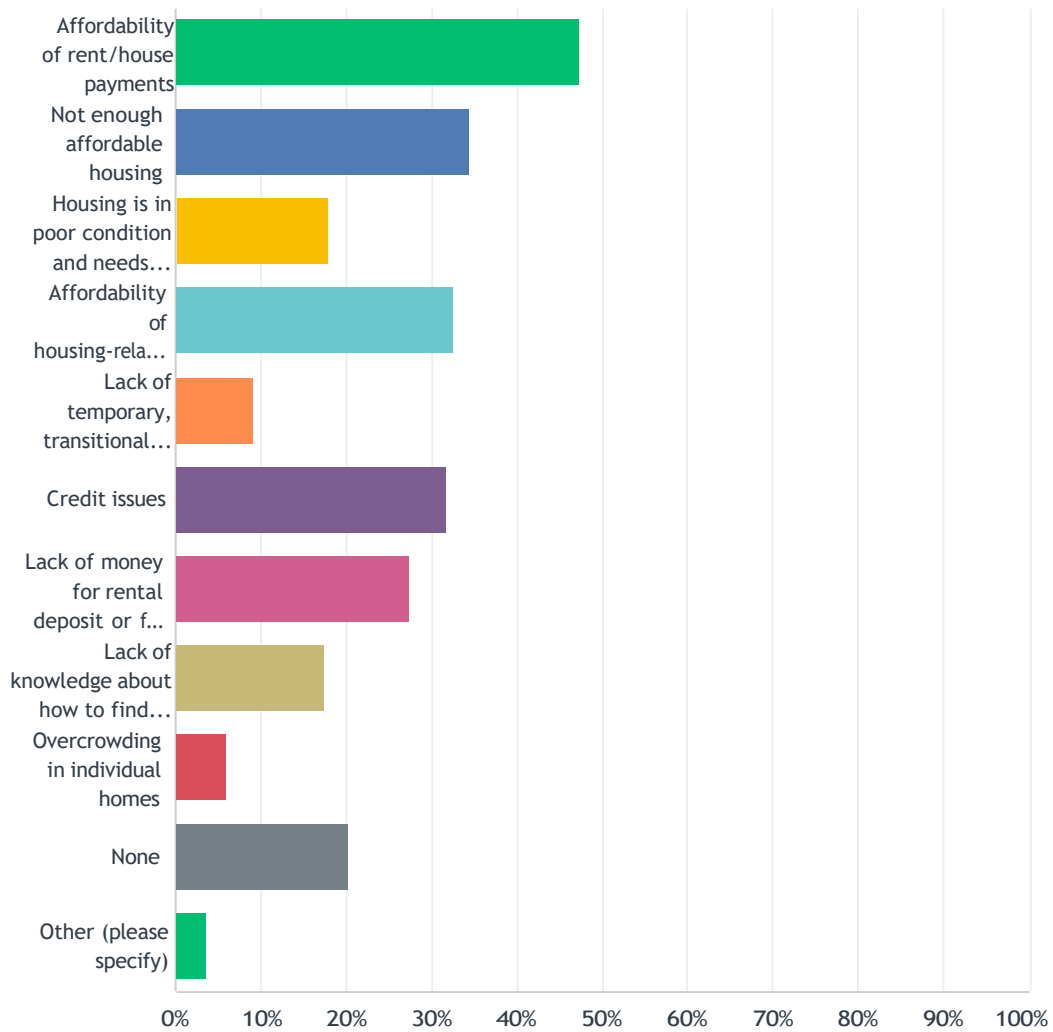


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Lack of education	22.43%	48
Lack of appropriate training	19.63%	42
Few employment opportunities	39.25%	84
Lack of reliable transportation	41.59%	89
Lack or cost of child care or senior (parent) care	44.39%	95
Lack of resume, job application, or interview skills	28.50%	61
Other (please specify)	13.08%	28
Total Respondents: 214		

Q3 What are the following housing challenges for you, your family, or your community? (Choose up to THREE).

Answered: 494

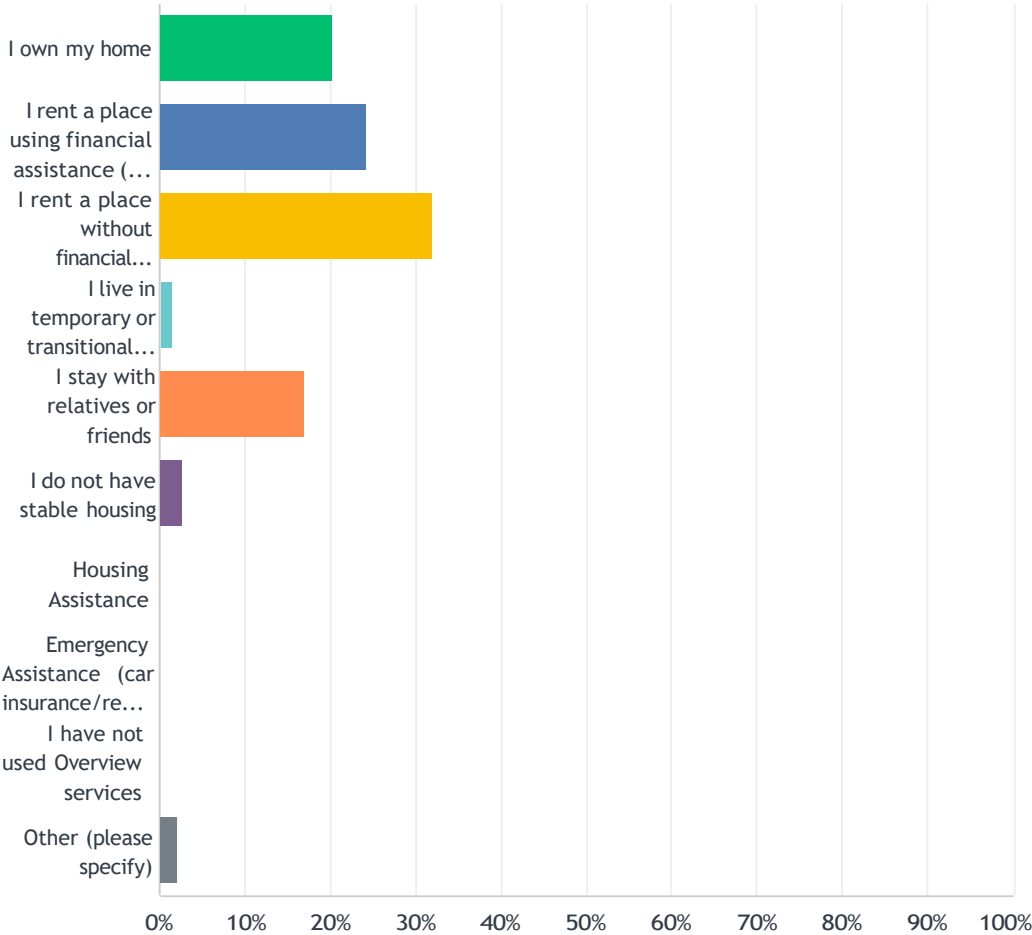
Skipped: 71



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Affordability of rent/house payments	47.37%	234
Not enough affordable housing	34.62%	171
Housing is in poor condition and needs expensive repairs	18.02%	89
Affordability of housing-related costs (utilities, insurance, etc.)	32.59%	161
Lack of temporary, transitional, or emergency housing	9.11%	45
Credit issues	31.78%	157
Lack of money for rental deposit or for down payment on home	27.53%	136
Lack of knowledge about how to find affordable housing	17.41%	86
Overcrowding in individual homes	6.07%	30
None	20.24%	100
Other (please specify)	3.64%	18
Total Respondents: 494		

Q4 Which ONE best describes your housing situation?

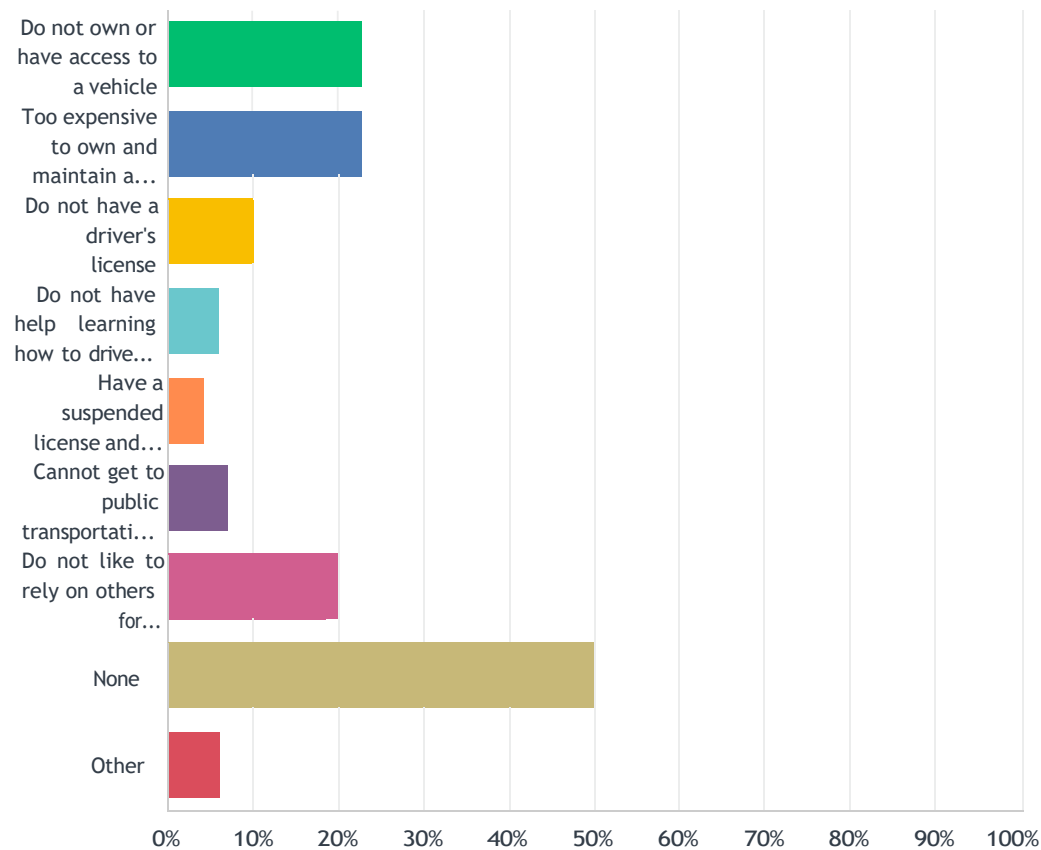
Answered: 484 Skipped: 81



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I own my home	20.25%	98
I rent a place using financial assistance (ex: Section 8, etc)	24.38%	118
I rent a place without financial assistance	32.02%	155
I live in temporary or transitional housing	1.45%	7
I stay with relatives or friends	17.15%	83
I do not have stable housing	2.69%	13
Housing Assistance	0.00%	0
Emergency Assistance (car insurance/repair, utility bill, rent/mortgage, food)	0.00%	0
I have not used Overview services	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	2.07%	10
TOTAL		484

Q5 Which of the following are transportation-related challenges for you or your family? (Choose up to THREE).

Answered: 479 Skipped: 86

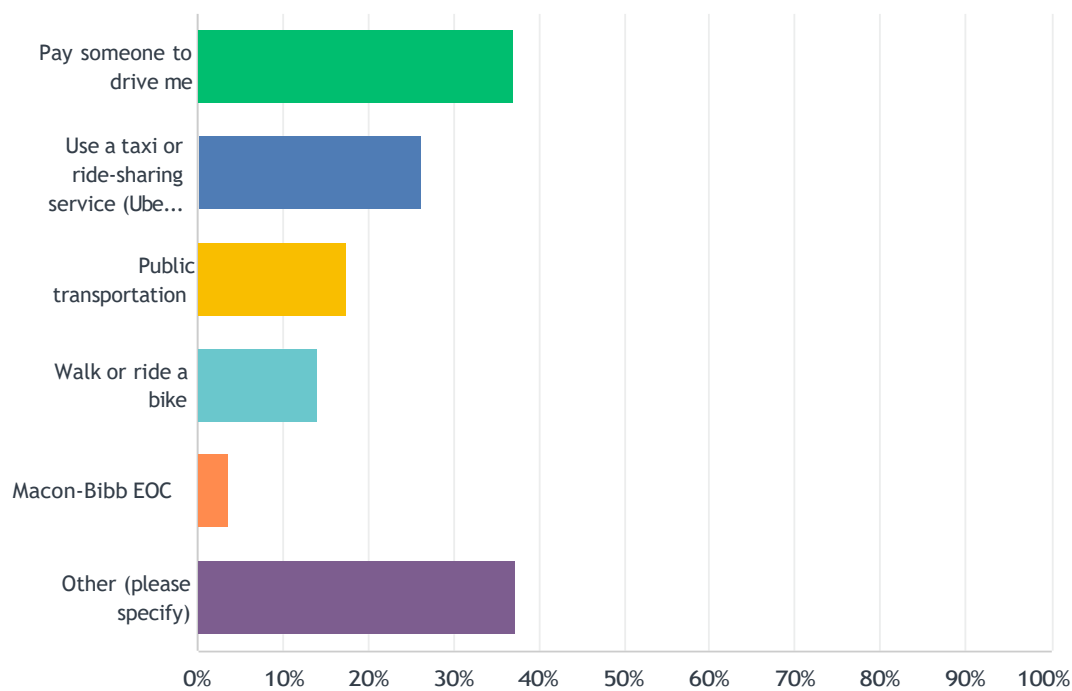


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Do not own or have access to a vehicle	22.96%	110
Too expensive to own and maintain a vehicle (repairs, gas, insurance, etc.)	22.96%	110
Do not have a driver's license	10.44%	50
Do not have help learning how to drive or get a license	6.26%	30
Have a suspended license and can't get the points removed	4.38%	21
Cannot get to public transportation services	7.31%	35
Do not like to rely on others for transportation	18.79%	90
None	49.90%	239
Other	6.47%	31

Total Respondents: 479

Q6 If you do not own a car or have regular access to a car, how do you get around?

Answered: 378 Skipped: 187

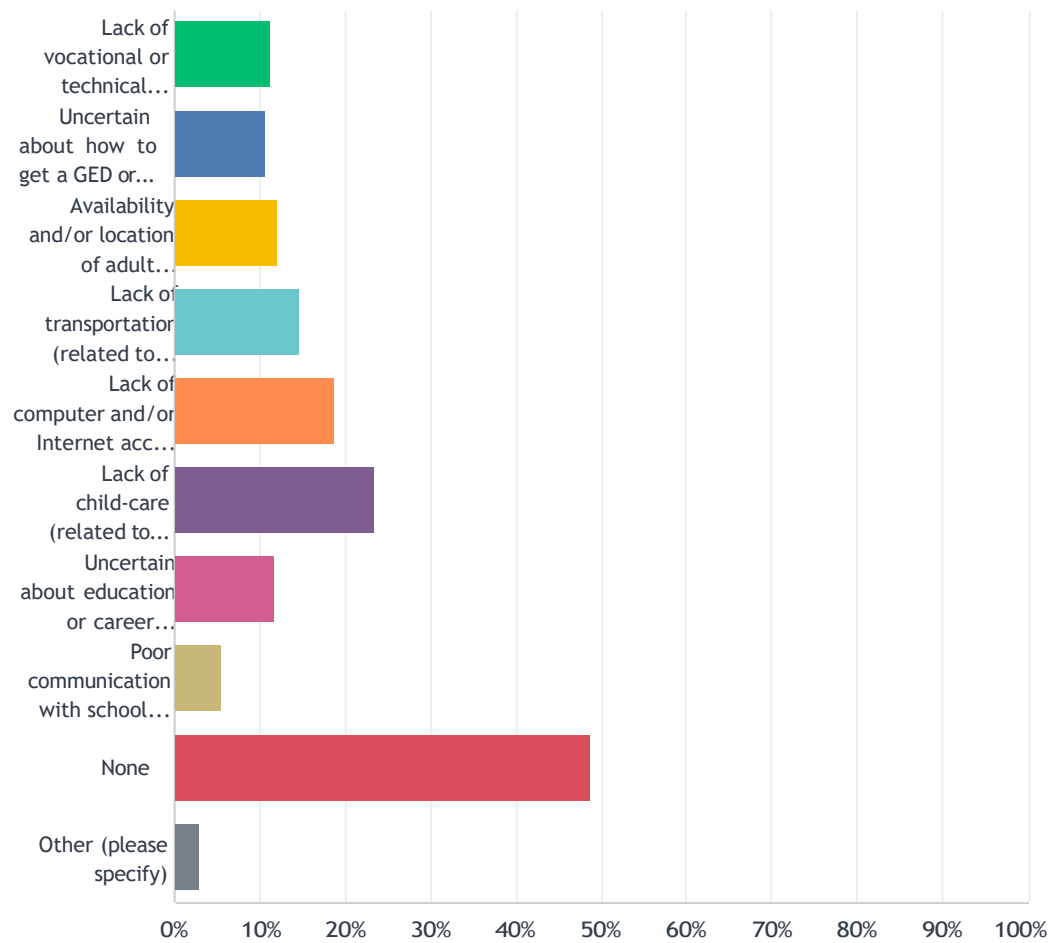


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Pay someone to drive me	37.04%	140
Use a taxi or ride-sharing service (Uber, Lyft, etc)	26.19%	99
Public transportation	17.46%	66
Walk or ride a bike	14.02%	53
Macon-Bibb EOC	3.70%	14
Other (please specify)	37.30%	141

Total Respondents: 378

Q7 Which of the following are adult education challenges for you and/or your family? (Choose up to THREE)

Answered: 465 Skipped: 100



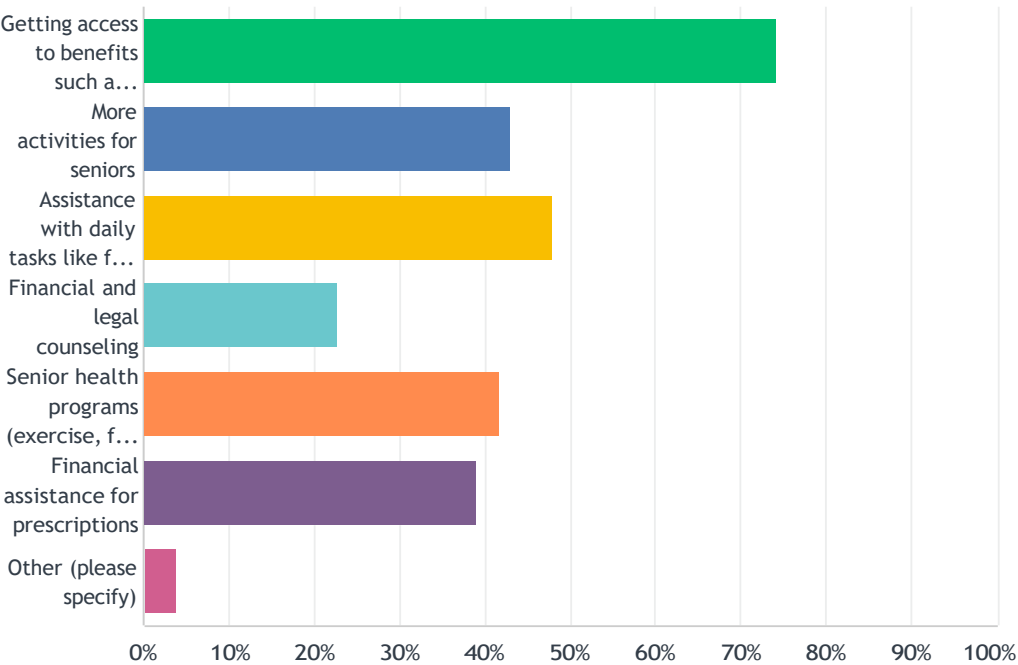
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Lack of vocational or technical training	11.40%	53
Uncertain about how to get a GED or additional training	10.75%	50
Availability and/or location of adult education classes	12.26%	57
Lack of transportation (related to getting to classes)	14.62%	68
Lack of computer and/or Internet access at home	18.71%	87
Lack of child-care (related to going to school)	23.44%	109
Uncertain about education or career interests	11.83%	55
Poor communication with school staff and teachers	5.59%	26
None	48.82%	227

Other (please specify)	3.01%	14
------------------------	-------	----

Total Respondents: 465

Q8 Which of the following most improve the lives of seniors in your community? (Choose up to THREE)

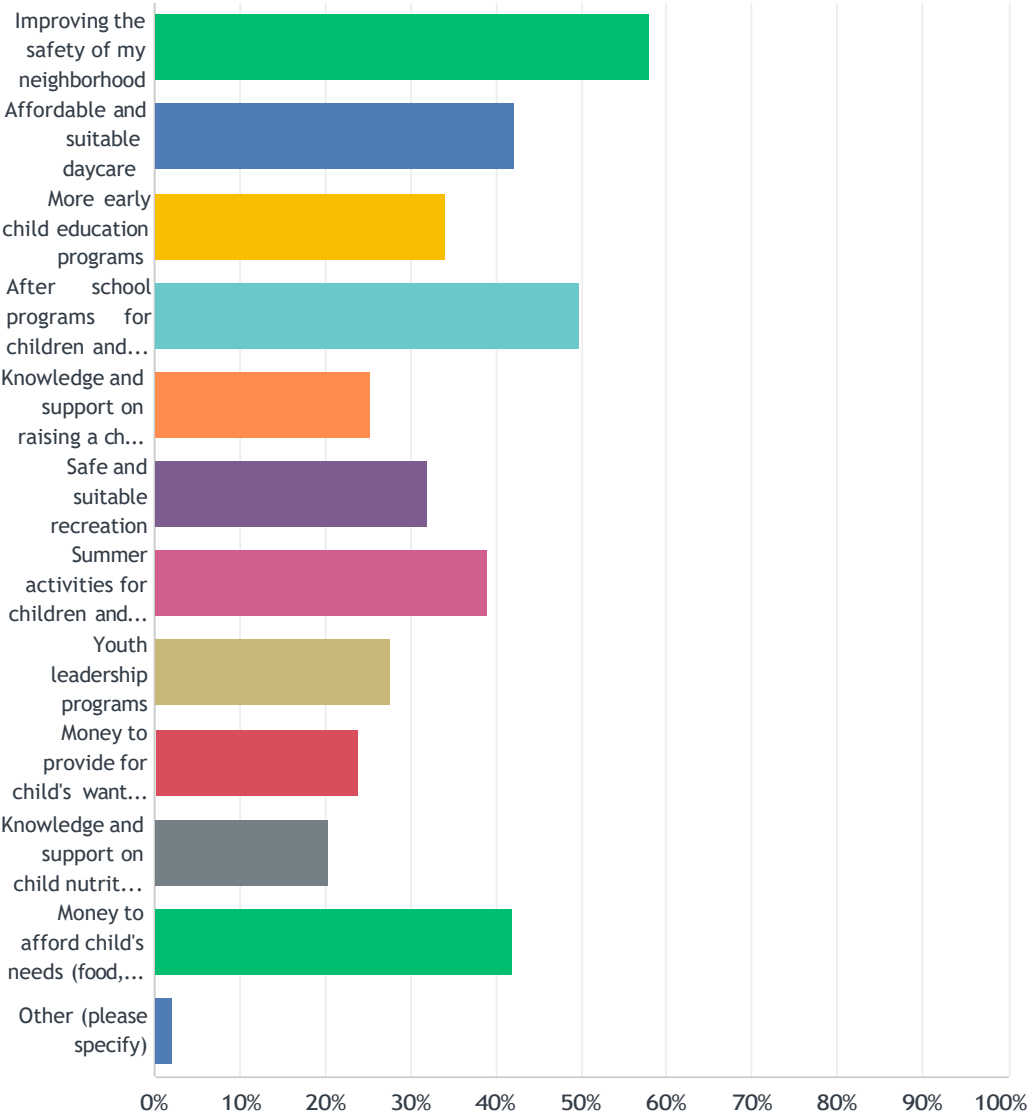
Answered: 427 Skipped: 138



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Getting access to benefits such a transportation, home-delivered meals or group meals, SNAP benefits	74.24%	317
More activities for seniors	43.09%	184
Assistance with daily tasks like food preparation, cleaning, etc.	48.01%	205
Financial and legal counseling	22.72%	97
Senior health programs (exercise, food access, etc.)	41.69%	178
Financial assistance for prescriptions	39.11%	167
Other (please specify)	3.75%	16
Total Respondents: 427		

Q9 Which of the following are MOST IMPORTANT for improving children's lives in your community? (Choose up to THREE)

Answered: 441 Skipped: 124

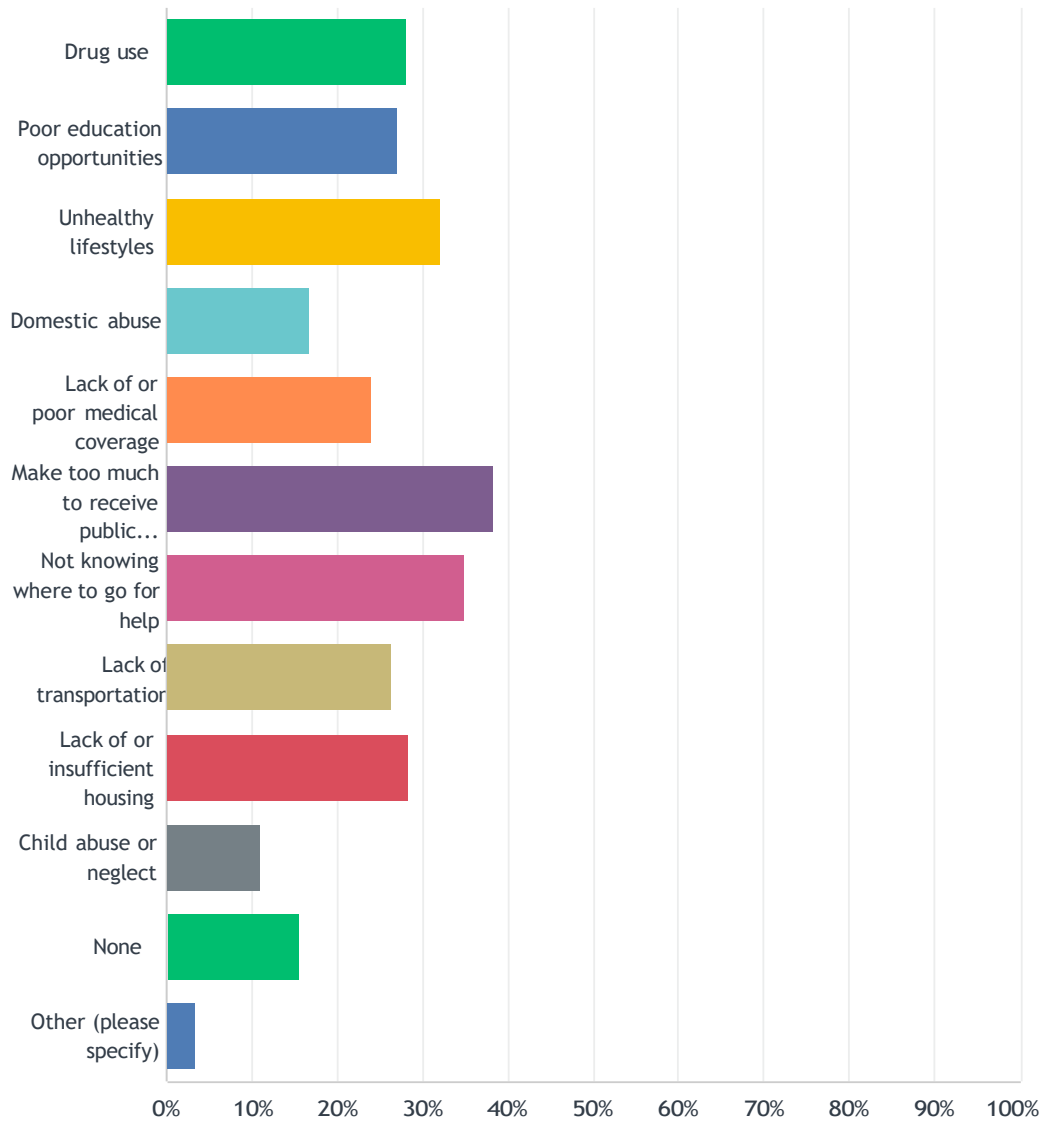


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Improving the safety of my neighborhood	58.05%	256
Affordable and suitable daycare	42.18%	186
More early child education programs	34.01%	150
After school programs for children and teens	49.89%	220
Knowledge and support on raising a child and/or teen	25.40%	112
Safe and suitable recreation	31.97%	141
Summer activities for children and teens	39.00%	172
Youth leadership programs	27.66%	122
Money to provide for children wants (video games, etc.)	23.81%	105
Knowledge and support on child nutrition and exercise	20.41%	90
Money to afford child's needs (food, clothing, shelter)	41.95%	185
Other (please specify)	2.04%	9
Total Respondents: 441		

Q10 What major problems are families dealing with in your community? (Choose up to THREE).

Answered: 431

Skipped: 134

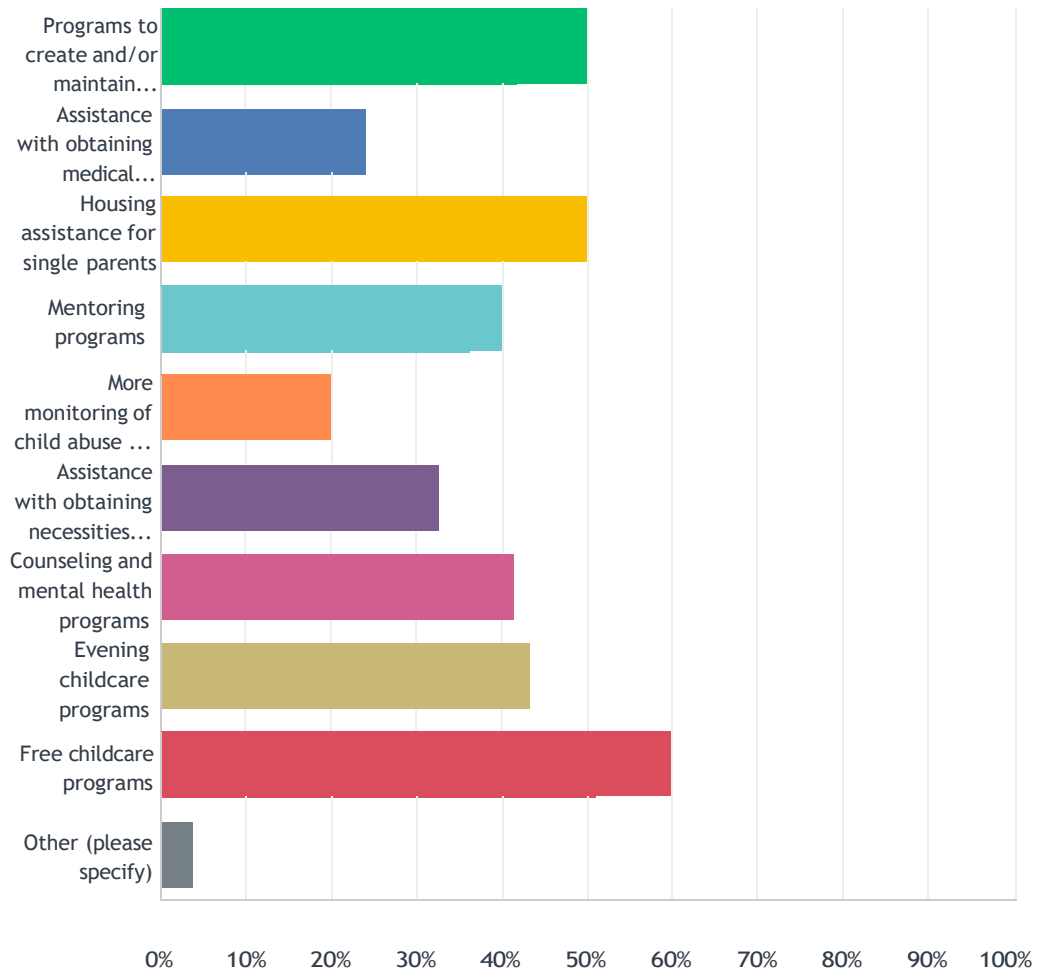


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Drug use	28.07%	121
Poor education opportunities	27.15%	117
Unhealthy lifestyles	32.25%	139
Domestic abuse	16.94%	73
Lack of or poor medical coverage	24.13%	104
Make too much to receive public assistance but still need help	38.28%	165
Not knowing where to go for help	35.03%	151
Lack of transportation	26.45%	114
Lack of or insufficient housing	28.31%	122
Child abuse or neglect	11.14%	48
None	15.55%	67
Other (please specify)	3.48%	15
Total Respondents: 431		

Q11 What programs would you like to see in your community that are NOT currently available?

Answered: 419

Skipped: 146

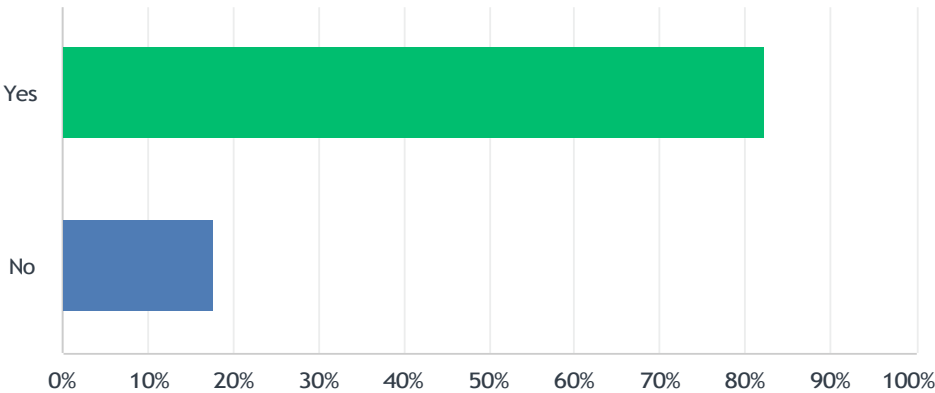


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Programs to create and/or maintain healthy lifestyles	42.00%	176
Assistance with obtaining medical insurance	24.34%	102
Housing assistance for single parents	49.40%	207
Mentoring programs	36.52%	153
More monitoring of child abuse or neglect	19.57%	82
Assistance with obtaining necessities such as clothing or diapers	32.94%	138
Counseling and mental health programs	41.53%	174
Evening childcare programs	43.44%	182
Free childcare programs	51.07%	214
Other (please specify)	4.06%	17

Total Respondents: 419

Q12 Do you have health insurance?

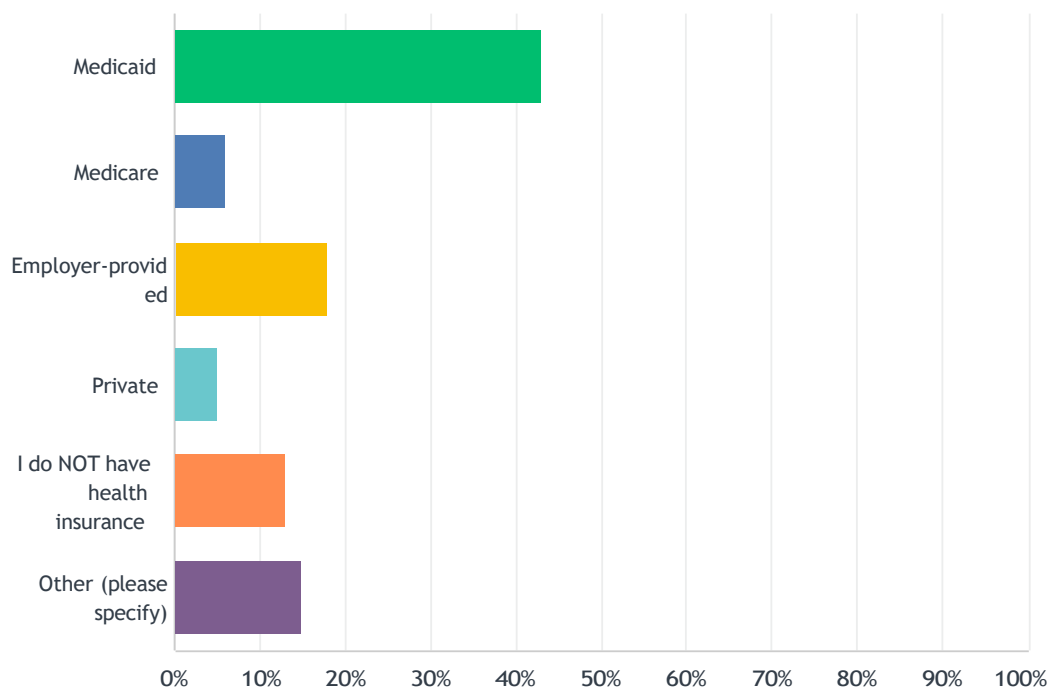
Answered: 416 Skipped: 149



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		82.21%	342
No		17.79%	74
TOTAL			416

Q13 If you have health insurance, what is the source?

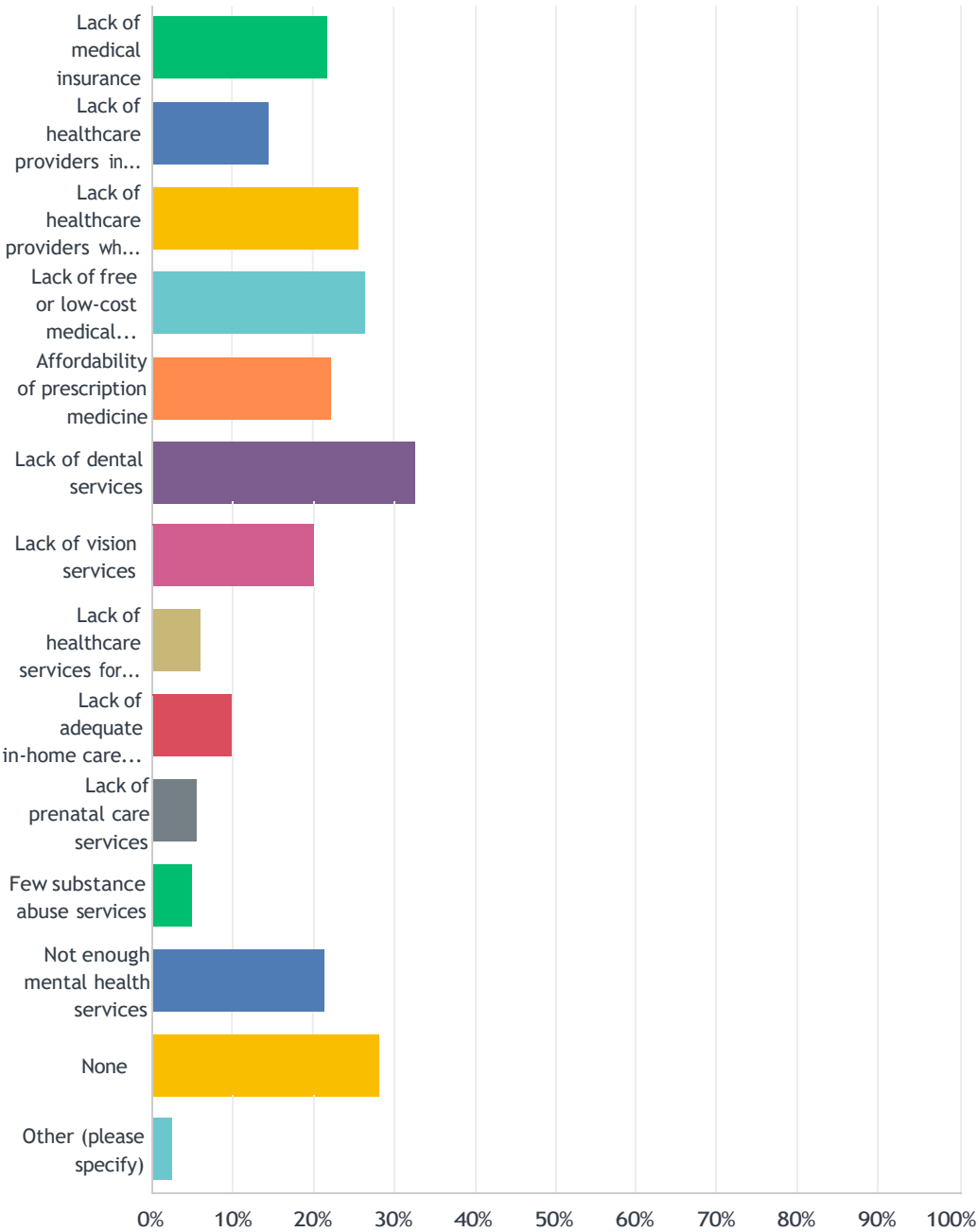
Answered: 415 Skipped: 150



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES
Medicaid		43.13%179
Medicare		6.02%25
Employer-provided		17.83%74
Private		5.06%21
I do NOT have health insurance		13.01%54
Other (please specify)		14.94%62
TOTAL		415

Q14 Which of the following are health challenges for you and/or your family? (Choose up to THREE)

Answered: 417 Skipped: 148

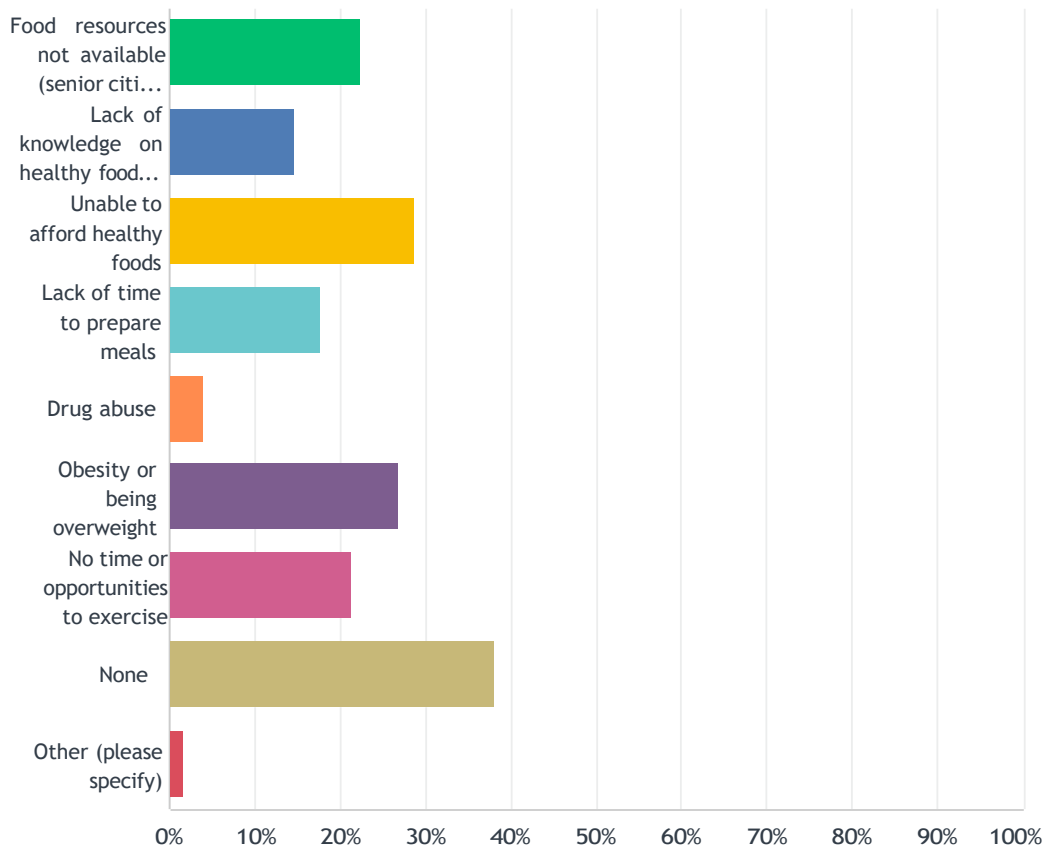


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Lack of medical insurance	22.06%	92
Lack of healthcare providers in the area	14.63%	61
Lack of healthcare providers who accept my health insurance	25.90%	108
Lack of free or low-cost medical services	26.62%	111
Affordability of prescription medicine	22.30%	93
Lack of dental services	32.85%	137
Lack of vision services	20.62%	86
Lack of healthcare services for handicapped individuals	6.24%	26
Lack of adequate in-home care services for seniors	9.35%	39
Lack of prenatal care services	5.76%	24
Few substance abuse services	5.04%	21
Not enough mental health services	21.58%	90
None	28.30%	118
Other (please specify)	2.88%	12

Total Respondents: 417

Q15 What, if any, are health concerns for you or your family?

Answered: 414 Skipped: 151

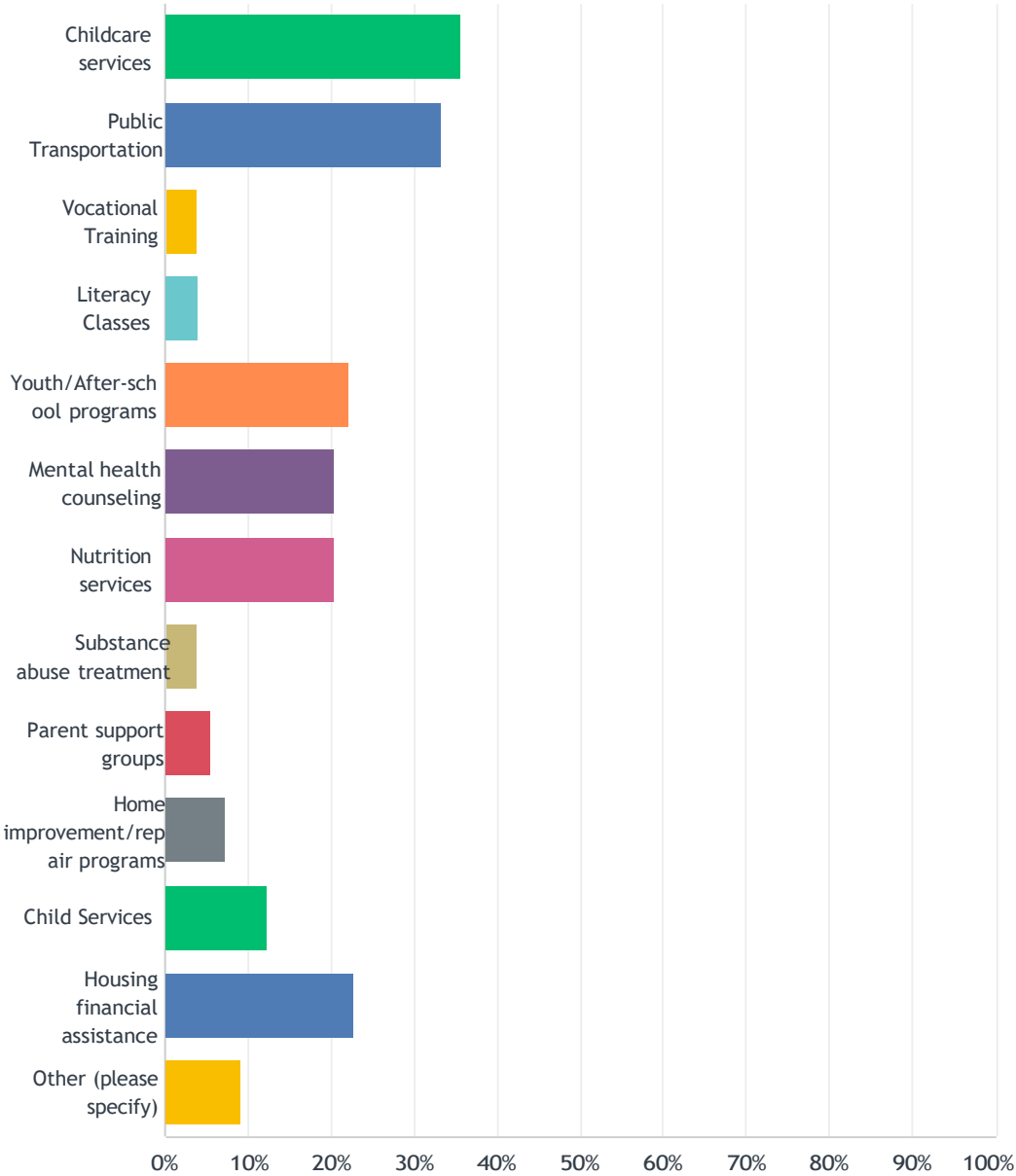


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Food resources not available (senior citizen meals, food pantries, no nearby grocery stores)	22.46%	93
Lack of knowledge on healthy food choices	14.73%	61
Unable to afford healthy foods	28.74%	119
Lack of time to prepare meals	17.63%	73
Drug abuse	4.11%	17
Obesity or being overweight	26.81%	111
No time or opportunities to exercise	21.26%	88
None	38.16%	158
Other (please specify)	1.69%	7

Total Respondents: 414

Q16 Has anyone in your family used any of the following community resources in the past year? (Select all that apply)

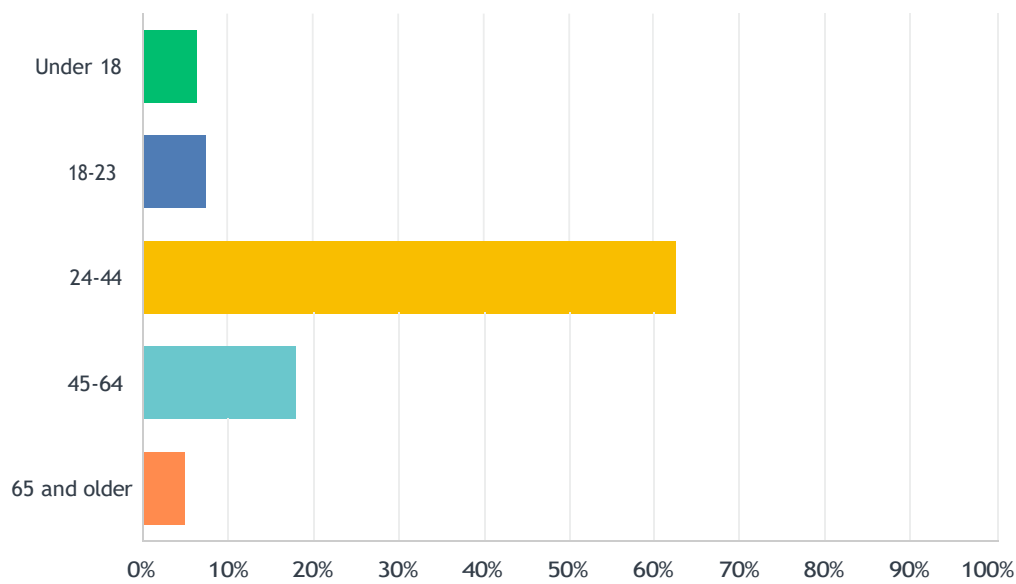
Answered: 342 Skipped: 223



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Childcare services	35.67%	122
Public Transportation	33.33%	114
Vocational Training	3.80%	13
Literacy Classes	4.09%	14
Youth/After-school programs	22.22%	76
Mental health counseling	20.47%	70
Nutrition services	20.47%	70
Substance abuse treatment	3.80%	13
Parent support groups	5.56%	19
Home improvement/repair programs	7.31%	25
Child Services	12.28%	42
Housing financial assistance	22.81%	78
Other (please specify)	9.06%	31
Total Respondents: 342		

Q17 How old are you?

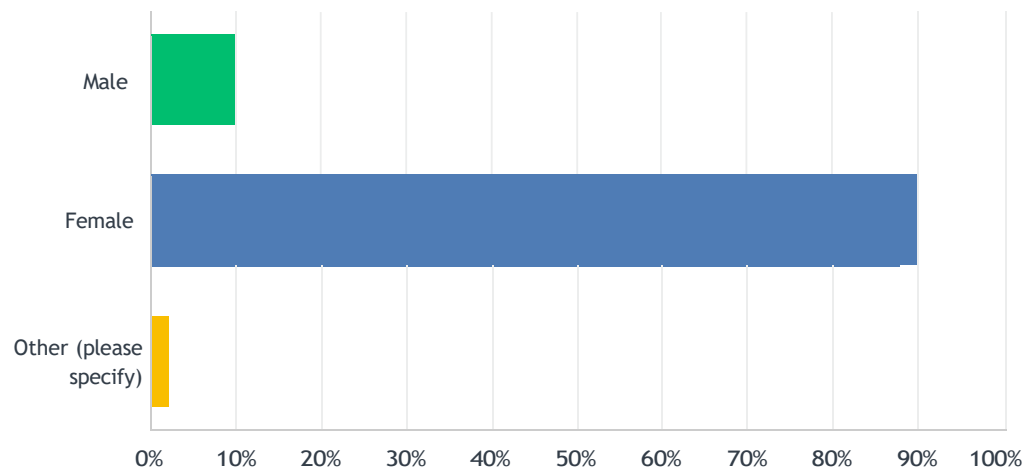
Answered: 393 Skipped: 172



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	6.62%	26
18-23	7.63%	30
24-44	62.60%	246
45-64	18.07%	71
65 and older	5.09%	20
TOTAL		393

Q18 What best describes your gender?

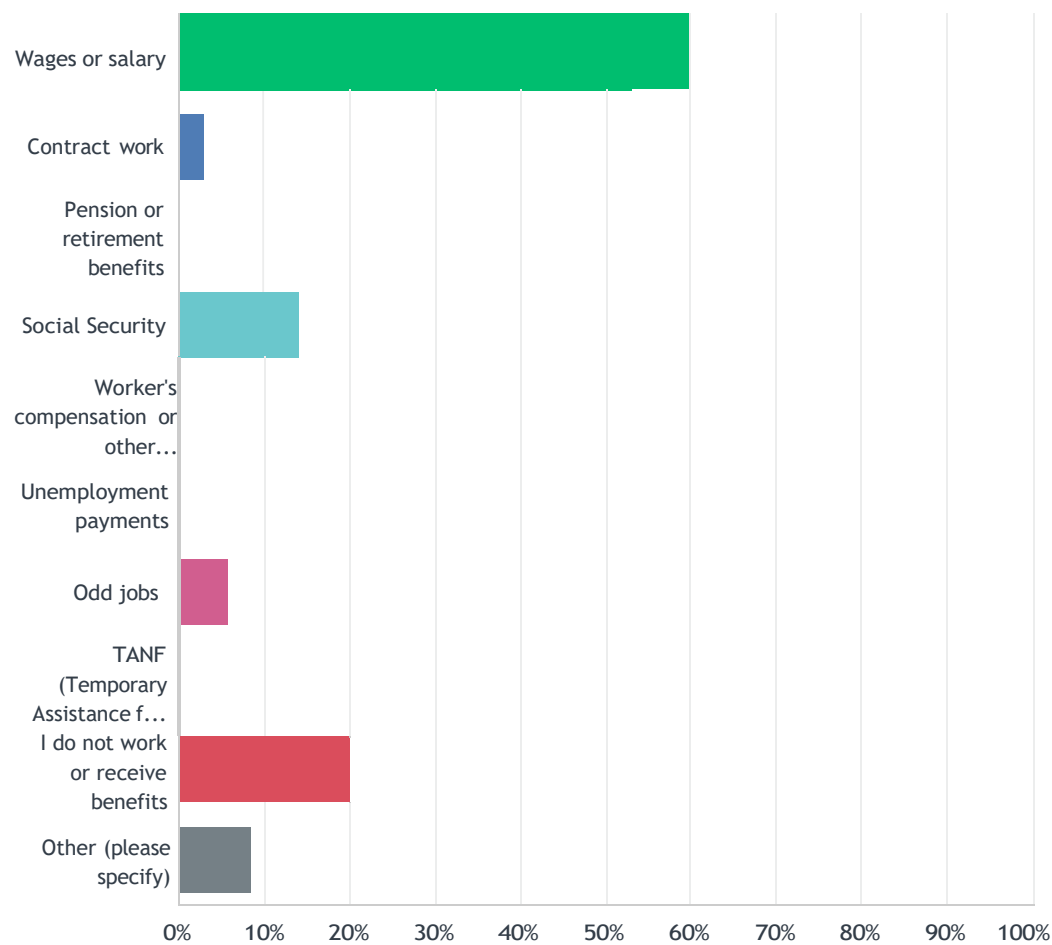
Answered: 393 Skipped: 172



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	9.67%	38
Female	88.04%	346
Other (please specify)	2.29%	9
TOTAL		393

Q19 What are your sources of income?

Answered: 387 Skipped: 178

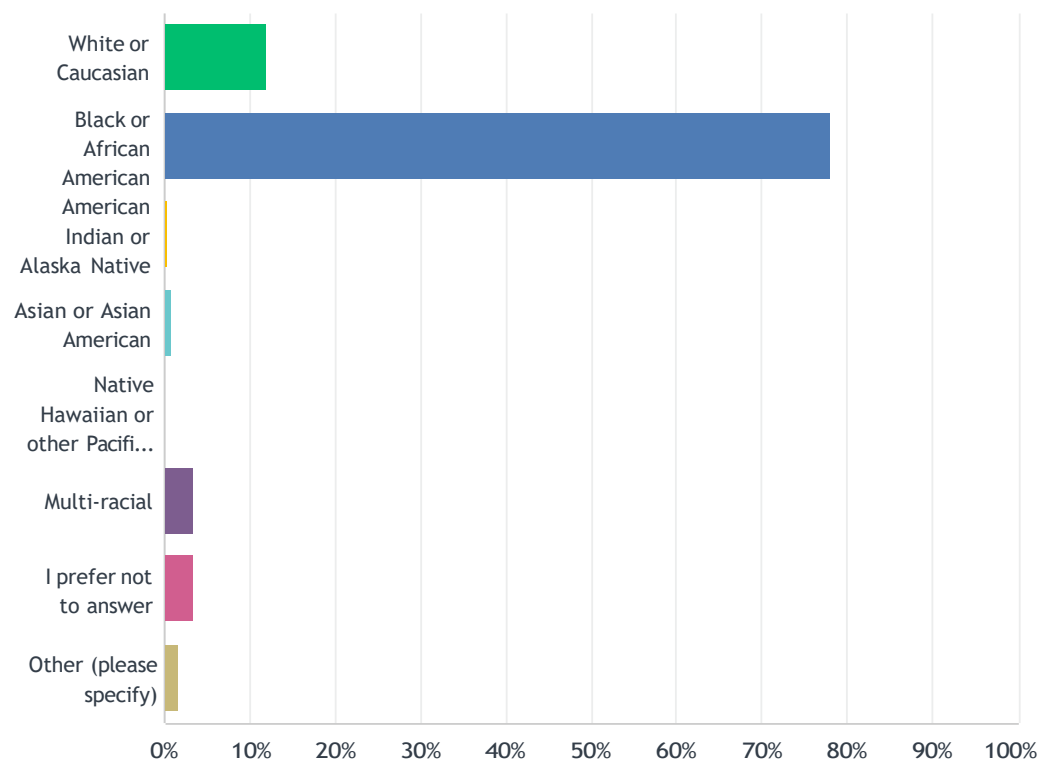


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Wages or salary	53.23%	206
Contract work	3.10%	12
Pension or retirement benefits	1.81%	7
Social Security	14.21%	55
Worker's compensation or other disability payments	1.81%	7
Unemployment payments	0.52%	2
Odd jobs	5.94%	23
TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)	1.55%	6
I do not work or receive benefits	20.41%	79
Other (please specify)	8.79%	34

Total Respondents: 387

Q20 Which best describes your race?

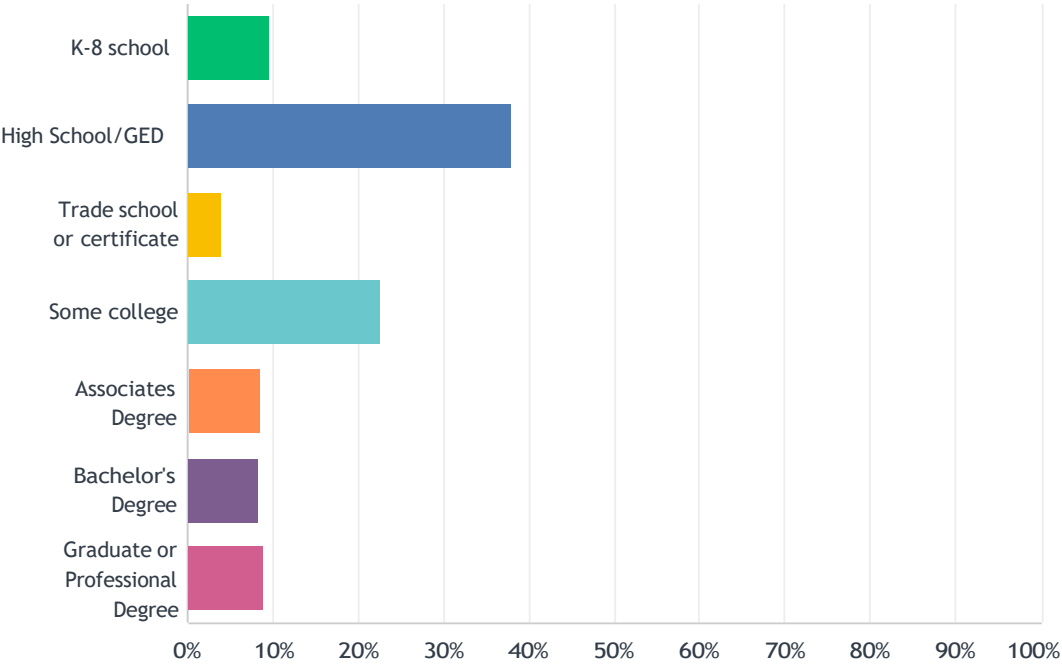
Answered: 393 Skipped: 172



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
White or Caucasian	11.96%	47
Black or African American	78.12%	307
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.51%	2
Asian or Asian American	0.76%	3
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.25%	1
Multi-racial	3.31%	13
I prefer not to answer	3.31%	13
Other (please specify)	1.78%	7
TOTAL		393

Q21 What is the highest level of education of someone in your household? (Choose ONE)

Answered: 395 Skipped: 170



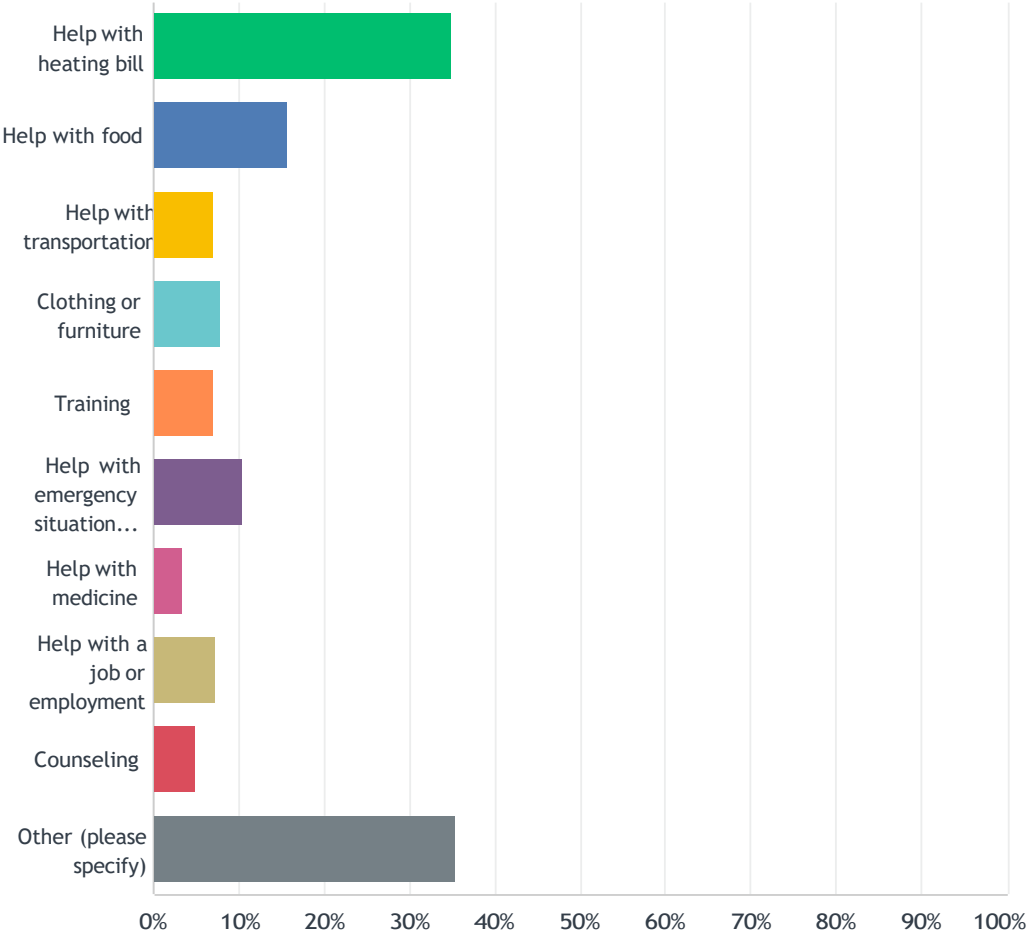
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
K-8 school	9.62%	38
High School/GED	37.97%	150
Trade school or certificate	4.05%	16
Some college	22.53%	89
Associates Degree	8.61%	34
Bachelor's Degree	8.35%	33
Graduate or Professional Degree	8.86%	35
TOTAL		395

Q22 Do you have anything else you'd like to share about your community?

Answered: 182 Skipped: 383

Q23 What services have you received in the past year from EOC?

Answered: 328 Skipped: 237



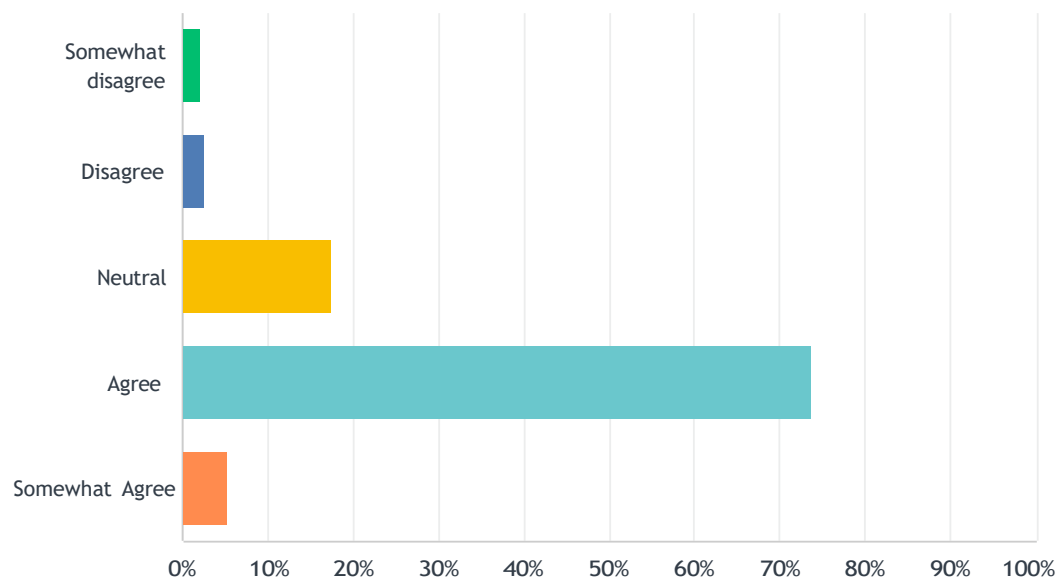
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Help with heating bill	35.06%	115
Help with food	15.85%	52
Help with transportation	7.01%	23
Clothing or furniture	7.93%	26
Training	7.01%	23
Help with emergency situation (rent, etc.)	10.37%	34
Help with medicine	3.35%	11
Help with a job or employment	7.32%	24
Counseling	4.88%	16

Other (please specify)	35.37%	116
------------------------	--------	-----

Total Respondents: 328

Q24 How well do you agree with the following statements when you received assistance from the EOC? I was treated fairly.

Answered: 359 Skipped: 206

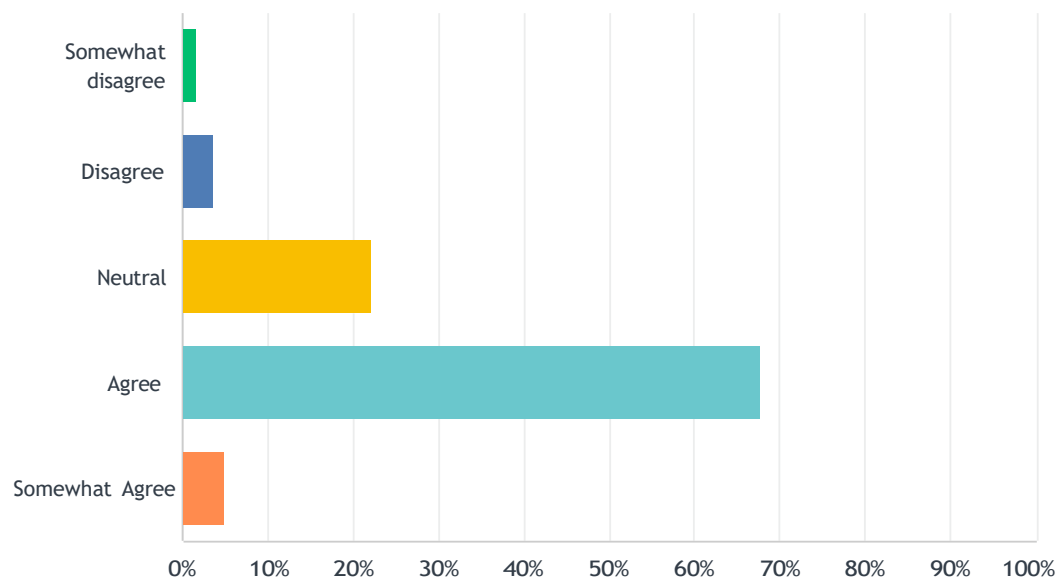


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Somewhat disagree	2.23%	8
Disagree	2.51%	9
Neutral	17.55%	63
Agree	73.82%	265
Somewhat Agree	5.29%	19

Total Respondents: 359

Q25 How well do you agree with the following statements when you received assistance from the EOC? I was assisted in a timely manner.

Answered: 360 Skipped: 205

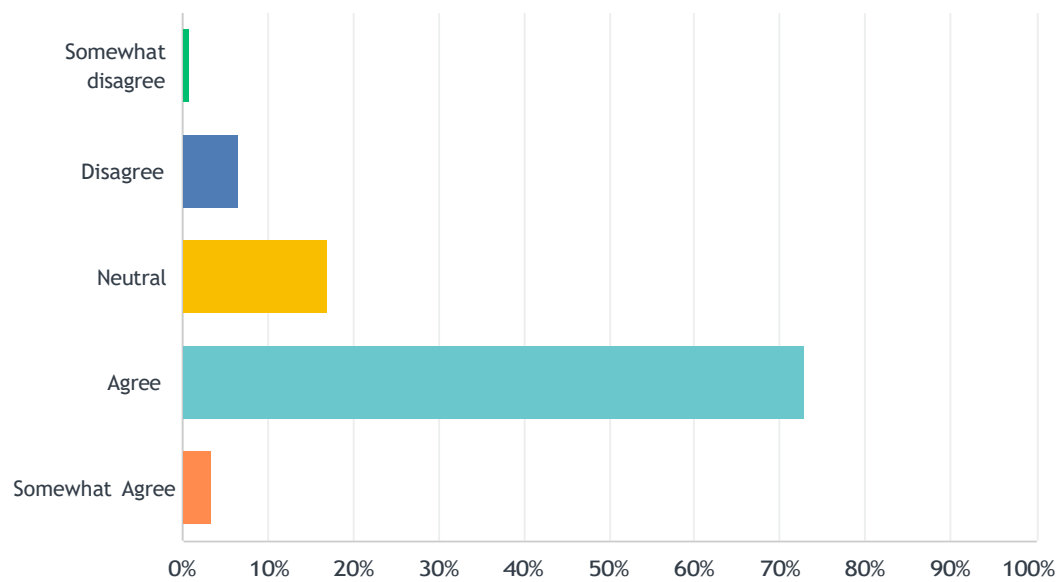


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Somewhat disagree	1.67%	6
Disagree	3.61%	13
Neutral	22.22%	80
Agree	67.78%	244
Somewhat Agree	5.00%	18

Total Respondents: 360

Q26 How well do you agree with the following statements when you received assistance from the EOC? The staff was responsive to my requests.

Answered: 359 Skipped: 206

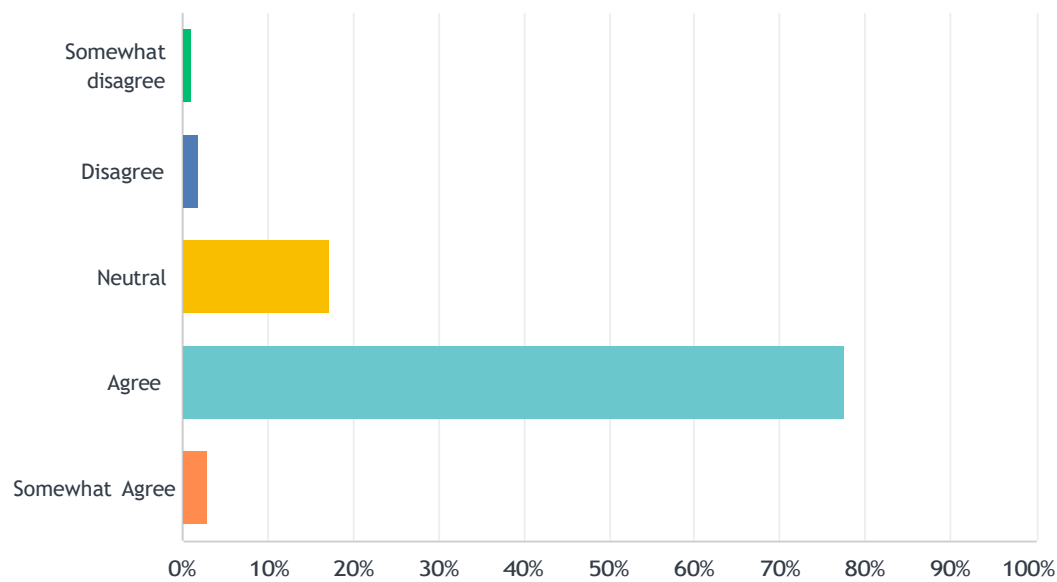


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Somewhat disagree	0.84%	3
Disagree	6.69%	24
Neutral	16.99%	61
Agree	72.98%	262
Somewhat Agree	3.34%	12

Total Respondents: 359

Q27 How well do you agree with the following statements when you received assistance from the EOC? EOC building and surroundings were clean.

Answered: 357 Skipped: 208



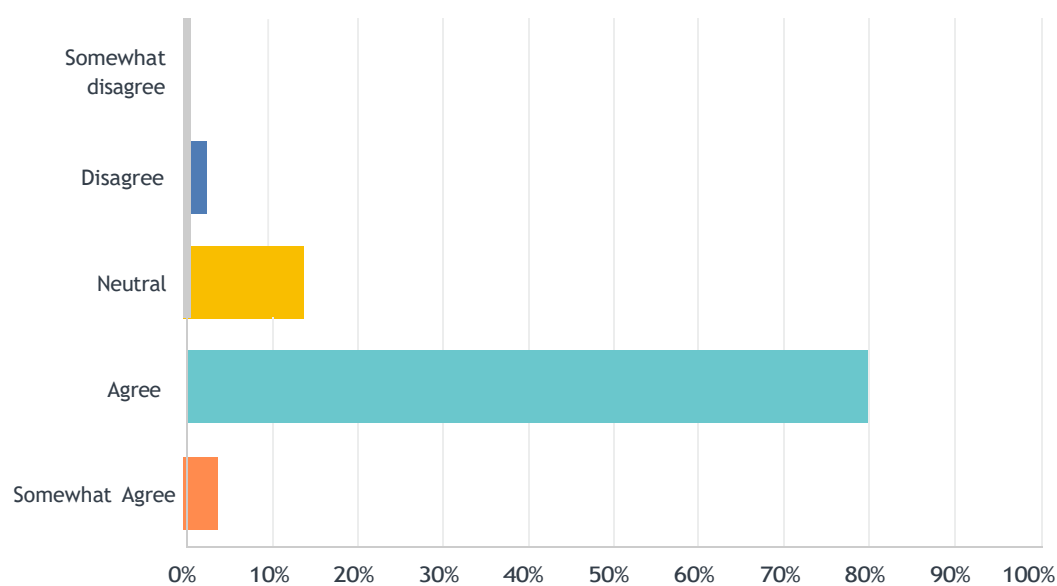
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Somewhat disagree	1.12%	4
Disagree	1.96%	7
Neutral	17.37%	62
Agree	77.59%	277

Somewhat Agree	3.08%	11
----------------	-------	----

Total Respondents: 357

Q28 How well do you agree with the following statements when you received assistance from the EOC? The staff was helpful.

Answered: 359 Skipped: 206

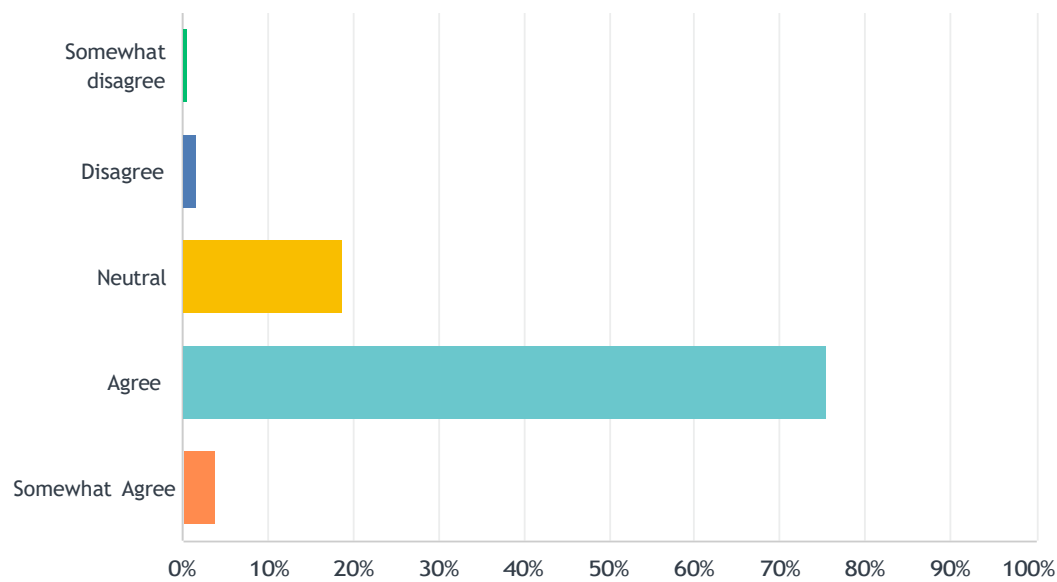


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Somewhat disagree	0.84%	3
Disagree	3.06%	11
Neutral	14.21%	51
Agree	79.39%	285
Somewhat Agree	4.18%	15

Total Respondents: 359

Q29 How well do you agree with the following statements when you received assistance from the EOC? My confidentiality/privacy was protected.

Answered: 359 Skipped: 206

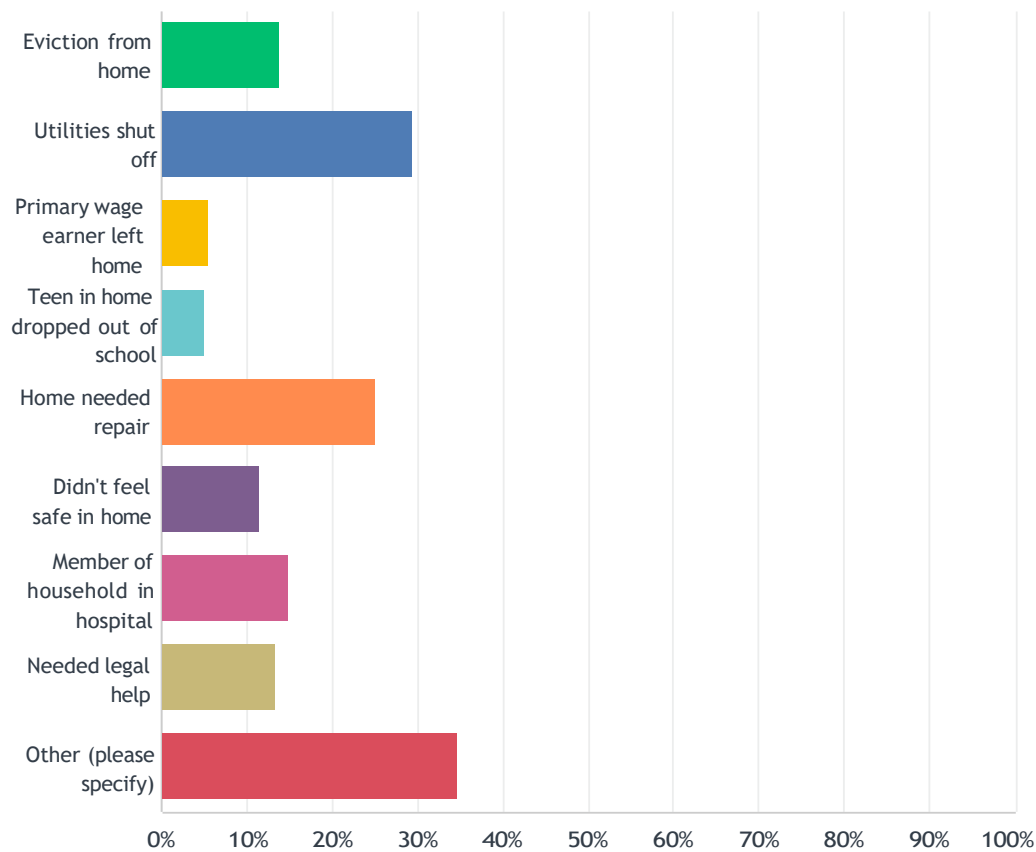


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Somewhat disagree	0.56%	2
Disagree	1.67%	6
Neutral	18.66%	67
Agree	75.49%	271
Somewhat Agree	3.90%	14

Total Respondents: 359

Q30 Which of the following have you experienced in the past year?

Answered: 337 Skipped: 228

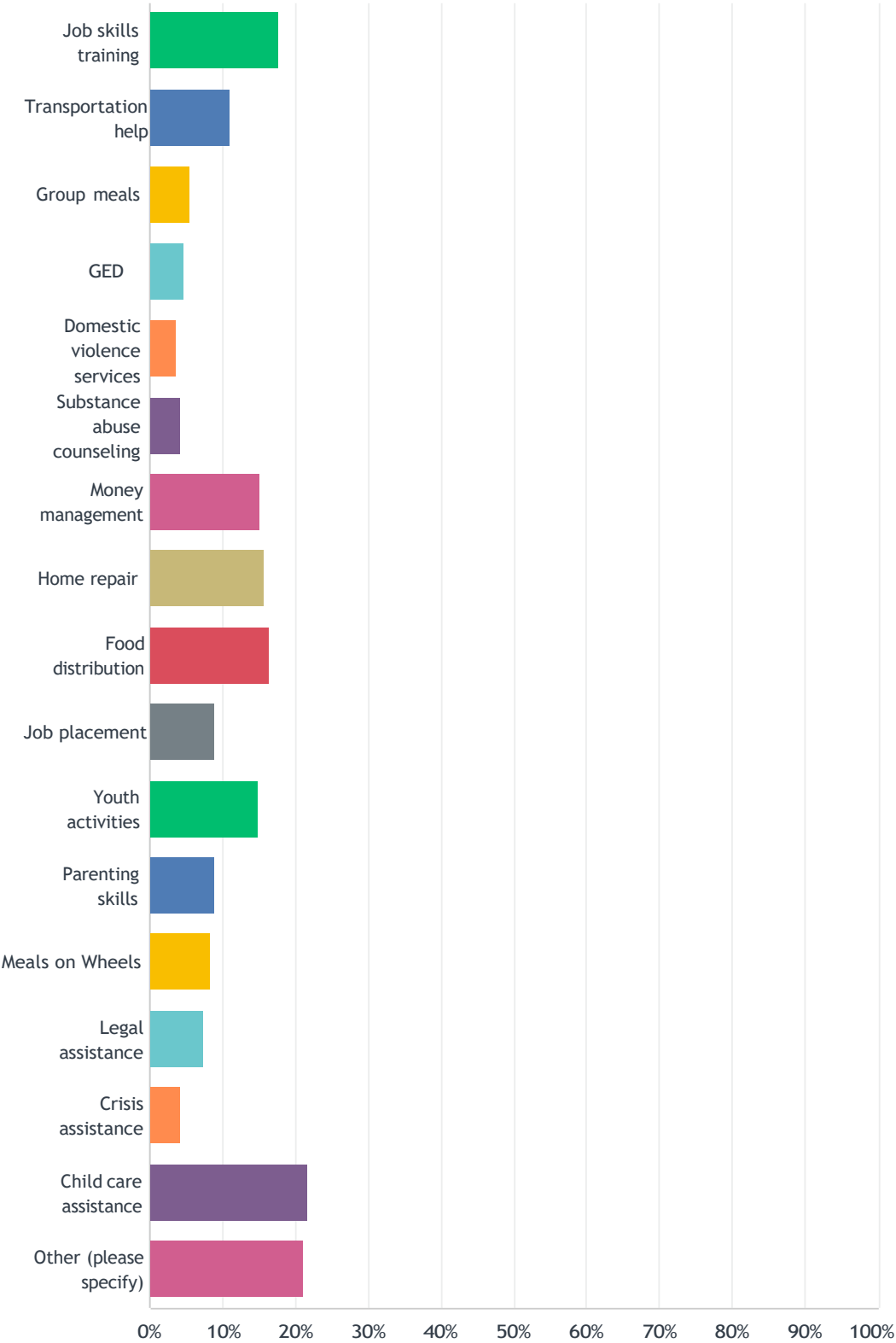


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Eviction from home	13.95%	47
Utilities shut off	29.38%	99
Primary wage earner left home	5.64%	19
Teen in home dropped out of school	5.04%	17
Home needed repair	25.22%	85
Didn't feel safe in home	11.57%	39
Member of household in hospital	14.84%	50
Needed legal help	13.35%	45
Other (please specify)	34.72%	117

Total Respondents: 337

Q31 Which of the following have you experienced in the past year?

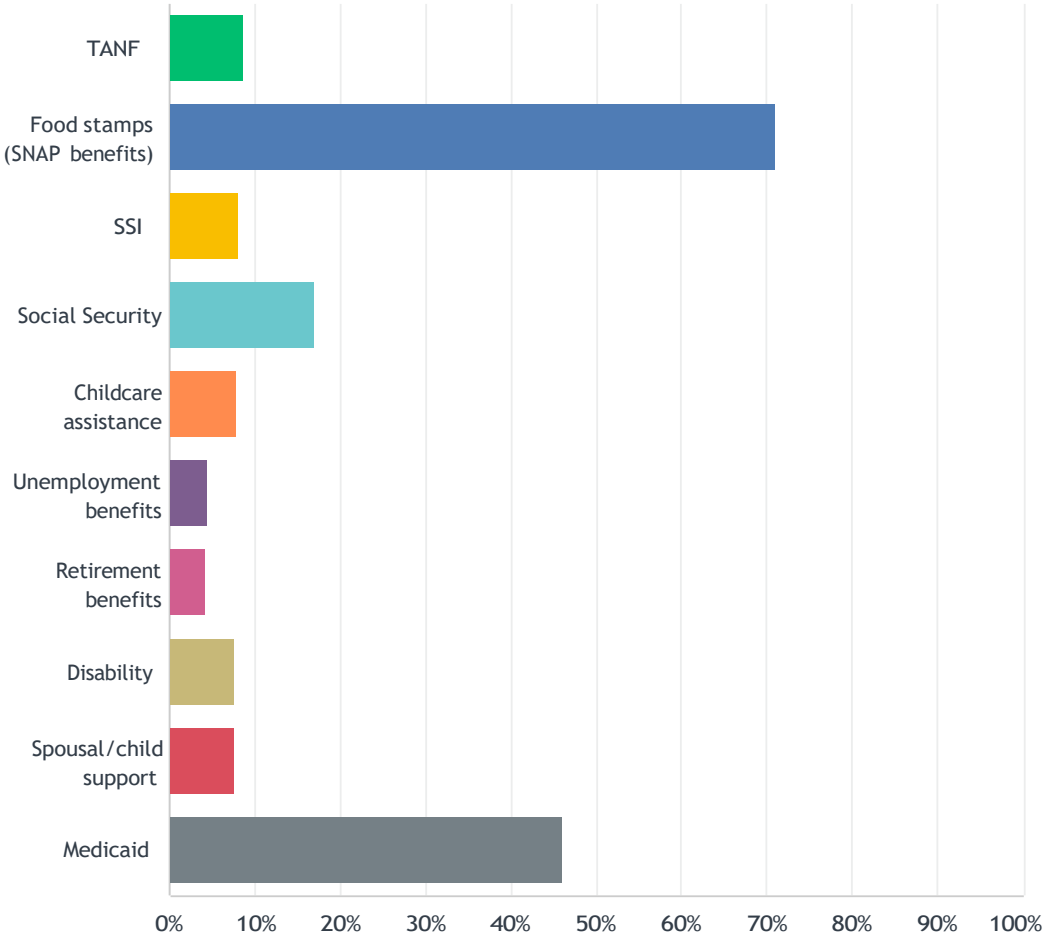
Answered: 323 Skipped: 242



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Job skills training	17.65%	57
Transportation help	11.15%	36
Group meals	5.57%	18
GED	4.64%	15
Domestic violence services	3.72%	12
Substance abuse counseling	4.33%	14
Money management	15.17%	49
Home repair	15.79%	51
Food distribution	16.41%	53
Job placement	8.98%	29
Youth activities	14.86%	48
Parenting skills	8.98%	29
Meals on Wheels	8.36%	27
Legal assistance	7.43%	24
Crisis assistance	4.33%	14
Child care assistance	21.67%	70
Other (please specify)	21.05%	68
Total Respondents: 323		

Q32 Does anyone in your household receive the following?

Answered: 356 Skipped: 209



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
TANF	8.71%	31
Food stamps (SNAP benefits)	71.07%	253
SSI	8.15%	29
Social Security	17.13%	61
Childcare assistance	7.87%	28
Unemployment benefits	4.49%	16
Retirement benefits	4.21%	15
Disability	7.58%	27
Spousal/child support	7.58%	27
Medicaid	46.07%	164
Total Respondents: 356		