



COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2020

Board Approval Granted on August 6, 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pamela J. Craig, Executive Director

Harford Community Action Agency, Inc. (HCAA) was organized and incorporated in 1982 as Harford Interfaith Community Services by a group of local clergy and community leaders who identified the need for an organization to help County residents access food and shelter. In 1989, the Harford County Council officially designated the organization as the Community Action Agency to provide anti-poverty programs and services to low-income individuals, families, and communities. Our Mission Statement says: The Harford Community Action Agency, Inc. is dedicated to providing assistance and building self-sufficiency to help all Harford County individuals and families who are experiencing financial hardships in meeting their housing, food, energy/heating, budget and family counseling needs. At HCAA, we offer the following services to aid customers on their paths to self-sufficiency: emergency food assistance, energy assistance, homeless prevention and shelter placement, cooking and parenting classes, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

Part of our role as a Community Action Agency is to conduct a Community Needs Assessment every three years to get a better understanding of our community, our customers, and what the needs of both are. We began gathering data for this CNA in January 2019 and concluded our final focus group in January 2020. Prior to this year, the most recent CNA was conducted in 2016.

The mission of this CNA was to query our customers in a way that would allow them to express their needs in a succinct and anonymous way that was open-ended and thought-provoking. To do so, we reviewed County-wide strategic and consolidated plans, conducted seven focus groups, surveyed our waiting room over a 30-day period, and consulted community partners. The specific methodology can be found on page 7 of this assessment.

The purpose of this assessment is to develop a deeper understanding of our customers' needs, bearing in mind that three years can cause a significant shift in the needs of a community. We want to ensure that we are providing enough of what they need, focusing our energy on actual rather than perceived needs, and not imparting our values and our judgments of what is important on them. We set out to hear their voices, to trust them to know what they need in their lives, and to listen to those voices in determining our next steps as an agency. It is our hope that this assessment also serves as a conversation opener with local and state government, non-profits, and businesses who can help us help those who come to us in need.

For purposes of this assessment, we surveyed Harford County, which is HCAA's service area. We conducted focus groups in Northern Harford County and along the Route 40 corridor, where most of our customers reside. We used reference materials that covered the whole County.

This project was made possible through the support of several key agencies. First of all, our Board of Directors, who, in keeping with the CSBG tripartite board composition, approved this methodology and the final report. The tripartite composition ensures that we have representation from three key areas of a community's make up: local government, business, and the people. The carrying capacity of our board is 15 people. We have four vacancies as of the date of this summary. Additionally, we would like to thank Harford County Office of Community and Economic Development for the work they did on their Consolidated Plan FY18-FY20 that informed our housing section, and the Harford County Department of Community Services for their information in the Local Management Board 2017 Community Plan which aided in the development of our youth focus group and our community needs list.

And, lastly, we would like to thank our customers who participated in the waiting room survey and focus groups, and Harford County Public Schools and Mason-Dixon Community Services who hosted our focus groups.

Questions about this assessment can be directed to me at pj@harfordcaa.org or 410-612-9909 x2208.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Harford County, MD

Harford County, Maryland was founded on December 17, 1773. As of 2019, there are 255,441 people living in Harford County. The County Seat is the Town of Bel Air, and the largest city is Aberdeen. Besides Aberdeen and Bel Air, there is one other municipality: Havre de Grace. The County is 527 square miles in area, with 17% water. ("2010 Census Gazetteer Files". United States Census Bureau. August 22, 2012. Archived from the original on September 13, 2014. Retrieved 30 June 2020.) County Executive Barry Glassman and the County Council lead government in Harford County, and the Sheriff's Office is led by Sheriff Jeffrey Gahler, another elected official. Aberdeen, Bel Air, and Havre de Grace have municipal police departments. There are six council districts.

Harford County straddles the divide between the Piedmont Plateau and Atlantic Coastal Plain regions of Maryland, so its geography is varied, and the County is a mix of rural and suburban communities, with a higher concentration in the three municipalities.

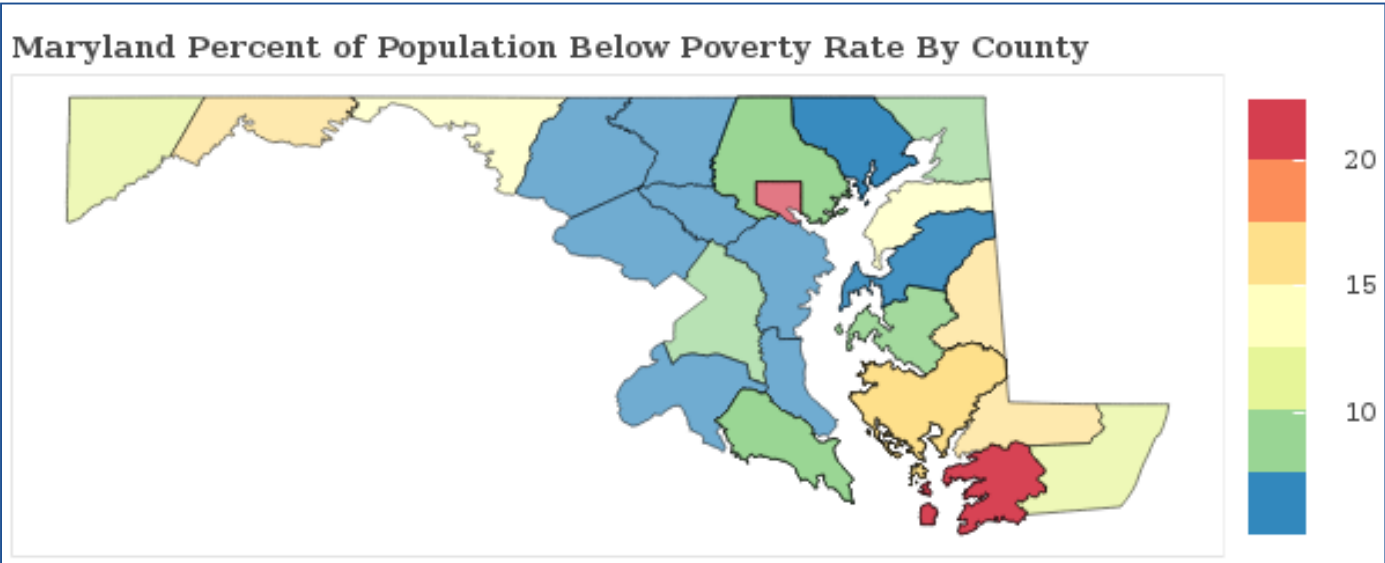
Aberdeen is home to the Aberdeen Ironbirds, a minor league baseball team that is a feeder for the Baltimore Orioles. There are two colleges in Harford County: Towson University Northeast and Harford Community College. The Harford County Airport is located in Churchville, and there are two hospitals: Upper Chesapeake Medical Center and Harford Memorial Hospital. There are two forms of mass transportation. Harford Transit provides in-County bus transportation, and the MARC Penn Line runs from Washington D.C. Baltimore north to Edgewood and Aberdeen along Route 40.

Harford County is home to 33 public elementary schools, nine middle schools, and nine high schools. There are also private schools that provide educational experiences from pre-k through twelfth grade. Public school enrollment is 37,826, and the graduation rate is 89.2%. (Harford County Public Schools. (2019). Fast Facts based on the 2018-2019 school year. Retrieved June 30, 2020, from <https://www.hcps.org/aboutus/docs/FastFactsInfographic2018-19.pdf>.)

Almost 79% of Harford County is White, roughly 15% is Black, and 3% is Asian. Other racial groups make up just over 3% of the population in total. About 5% of the population considers themselves to be of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Twenty-eight (28%) percent of the population is under the age of 18, and 16.6% are 65 years of age or older. Fifty-one (51%) percent of the population is female. There are 93,286 households in Harford County, with an average of 2.67 persons per household. Ninety-two (92%) percent of households have a computer, and 86.6% have a broadband internet subscription. The median household income is \$85,942, and the per capita income is \$39,365. (United States Census Bureau. "U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Harford County, Maryland." *Census Bureau QuickFacts*, 2019, www.census.gov/quickfacts/harfordcountymaryland.)

Harford County is a beautiful place to live and work, but there are aspects of the County that are not so beautiful. Poverty in Harford County is at 7.3% for residents of Harford County who were born citizens of the United States and 10.8% for residents who were born citizens of a country other than the United States. (WelfareInfo.org. "Poverty Rate in Harford County, Maryland." *7.5% Poverty Rate in Harford County, Maryland*, 2019, www.welfareinfo.org/poverty-rate/maryland/harford-county.)

Along with poverty, hunger is an issue in Harford County. According to Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap research, 9.3% of Harford County residents are food insecure. Below is the infographic provided by Feeding America for Harford County. (Feeding America. “Map the Meal Gap.” *Feeding America*, 2020, map.feedingamerica.org/county/2018/overall/maryland/county/harford.)



This map shows poverty levels by county across Maryland. Harford’s total poverty rate is 7.5%, which puts us below the surrounding counties of Baltimore and Cecil and Baltimore City. (WelfareInfo.org. “Poverty Rate in Harford County, Maryland.” *7.5% Poverty Rate in Harford County, Maryland, 2019*, www.welfareinfo.org/poverty-rate/maryland/harford-county.)

One of the most important statistics surrounding food insecurity in the County is that the amount of money needed to meet food needs is a total of \$13,296,000. This amount is staggering and indicative of how great the (often invisible) need is. There is helpful information to allow us to paint a more detailed picture of the struggle to meet basic needs in our County. The ALICE Report, produced in 2020 with data tracked from 2007 by United Way and United for ALICE, describes the plight of Maryland families in a



world of rising costs for basic necessities with income staying relatively static. This report describes the “survival budget for the state of Maryland as \$87,156 for a family of four, \$36,804 for a senior living alone, and \$33,636 for an adult living alone.” (United for ALICE, and United Ways of Maryland. 2020 ed., United Way, 2020, *ALICE in Maryland: A Financial Hardship Study*, p.10.) This budget is what it takes to run a household without accumulating savings or accounting for emergencies. Households that do not meet this basic survival budget are known as ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employed. They are working, but they are not making enough money to make ends meet to acquire all the basic needs of a family. In Harford County, 32% of the population is considered to be in poverty or to be an ALICE household (United Way for ALICE p. 4) Meaning, almost a third of Harford County residents are struggling to pay their bills. Additionally, the high cost of housing in Harford County makes it difficult for families to spend money on other basic necessities, including food. In Harford County’s three-year consolidated plan, the Department of Housing and Community Development writes that in 2017, Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment was \$1,376. They calculate

that, in order to avoid spending more than 30% of income on housing, a household must make \$58,971 per year, making \$28/hour. (Harford County Housing and Community Development. Harford County Housing and Community Development , 2017, *Consolidated Plan FY 2018-2020 FFY2017-2019*.) This is well above the minimum wage in Maryland of \$10.10/hour. Affordable housing remains an ongoing issue in Harford County, but developments with lower income housing available are being built regularly throughout the County.

Of additional concern in Harford County is homelessness. In the 2020 Point in Time Count that is conducted on a date in the last ten days of January each year across the United States under HUD guidelines, the unsheltered population was counted as 53 individuals. These individuals were living in places not meant for human habitation such as tents, cars, and abandoned buildings. That night, there were also 144 people living in emergency shelter, and 23 people in transitional housing. (Harford Community Action Agency. Harford Community Action Agency, 2020, *2020 Harford County (MD-502) Homeless Point-in-Time Count* .)

Harford County continues to experience households living in poverty, households that are food insecure, and individuals and families that lack adequate and affordable housing. It is our hope that this Community Needs Assessment will shed some light on these issues and offer steps to a solution to these complex problems.

KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

By conducting this survey and hosting the seven focus groups, HCAA has learned that there are certain basic needs in the community that are critical. Some of these are being met, and others are not. Additionally, there is a major need for community development in particular areas of the County.

Our findings are as follows:

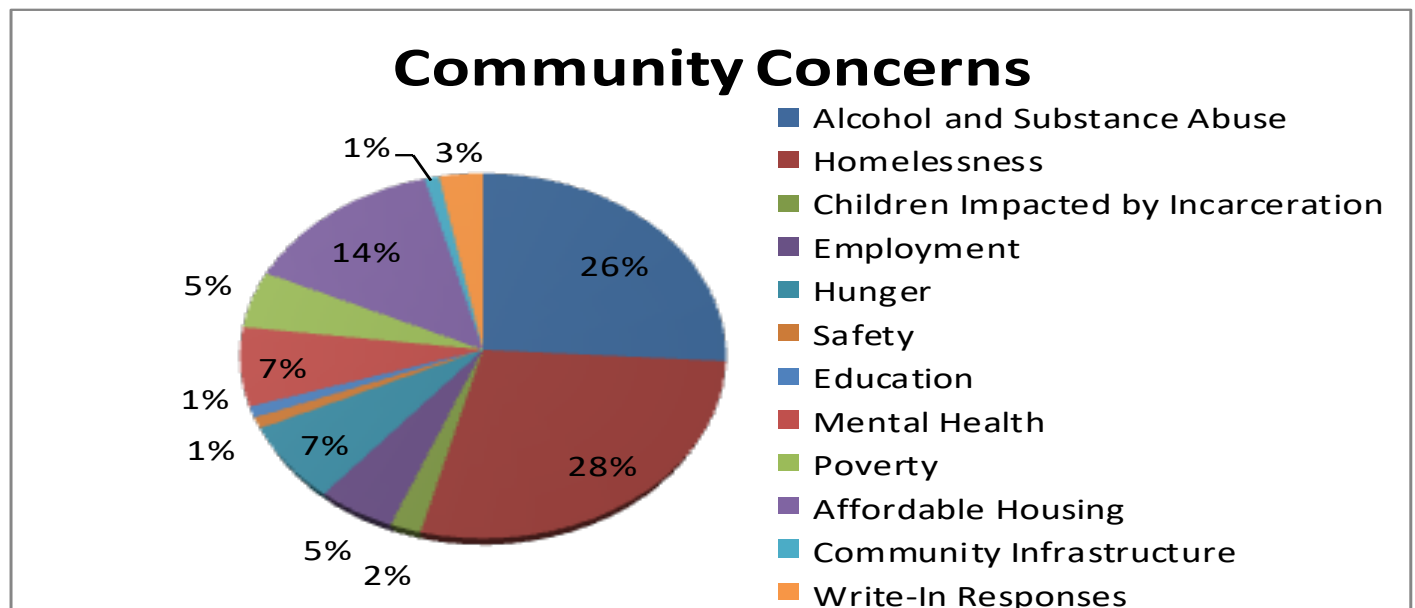
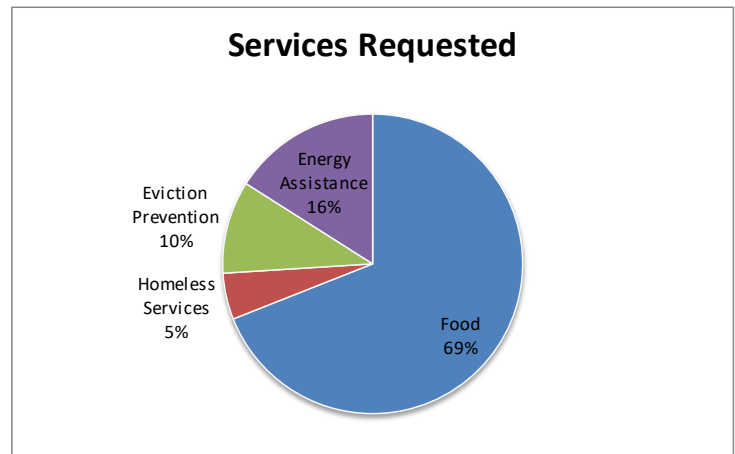
In our survey, we asked what the main purpose a family had for coming to receive services that day. The chart of those responses is to the right. The majority of our customers were there to receive assistance meeting their household's food

needs, followed by energy assistance. When asked, however, what the greatest concern was in their community, the responses were not hunger and housing, but rather homelessness and alcohol and substance abuse. When asked about a secondary concern in the community from a list of choices, again, the two highest categories were substance abuse and homelessness.

In our focus groups, we learned that many of our participants felt that there were enough food resources in Harford County. What was missing, they said, was a lack of community resources such as a YMCA in Northern Harford County, and a community center or youth center in Aberdeen.

So, we have conflicting research showing us that hunger and energy assistance are still areas of need in Harford County, but that residents are interested in seeing a change in the focus of community resources away from those two categories of spending. Responses to the survey asked for treatment centers for addiction, more Section 8 housing, more affordable housing options, more resources for children and low income families, and transportation that runs on the weekend. They report significant alcohol and drug use and abuse in their community, and they shared their concern about homeless individuals and families not having enough shelter, living in "tent cities" or in the woods and asking for money on the street.

Additionally, when we conducted our focus groups, the children in the Delish! Club at Havre de Grace Middle School were very concerned about their families' food supplies, The Relative Matters Conference attendees were concerned with transportation, childcare, and income for their households, and that the Harford County Government Retirees did not have any community con-



cerns except for homelessness, and the group at Mason-Dixon Community Services' Senior Luncheon is concerned with healthcare and medication costs, transportation, and recreation. In the Halls Cross Roads group, community resources were the biggest concern, with requests for childcare programs, community centers, youth activities, and transportation being paramount.

Our recommendations from these findings are to make shifts in our priorities and our advocacy work to encompass the following:

Actions

- 1) Continue to provide food and homeless services at our agency to meet the need that was demonstrated in the survey, while continuing to find ways to do this more efficiently in order to shift funds to other areas of need that were demonstrated in this Assessment.
- 2) Increase our funding requests for Rapid Re-Housing to increase living options for those who are homeless and increase our work with housing developers to provide more low-income housing and greater housing options in Harford County.
- 3) Use this tool to advocate for a community or youth center in Aberdeen and a recreation center in Northern Harford County.
- 4) Make connections with drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers in the area to learn ways in which we can support them with CSBG dollars or other funding sources. Continue to use Peer Recovery money to aid recovering addicts at our agency.
- 5) Use this tool to advocate for stronger "Ban the Box" laws in Harford County.

METHODOLOGY

In gathering data for this Community Needs Assessment, HCAA used the following methods: surveys, focus groups, research from government sources, and private industry background information. We sourced poverty statistics from Feeding America, the United States Census Bureau, PovertyUSA.org, Maryland Alliance for the Poor, United Way of Central Maryland, and the Maryland Community Action Partnership.

HCAA utilized technology at our agency to conduct a month-long survey in our waiting room that led to 118 responses. This survey was designed to capture data quickly and on a basic level to inform our focus groups. We conducted seven total focus groups. Three were with Harford County Public Schools in Havre de Grace and Aberdeen. One was with Mason-Dixon Community Services in Street. One was with Megan's Place in conjunction with the Harford County Health Department and HCAA's Food Advocacy Program, and one was conducted with the Harford County Government Retirees Monthly Meeting in Bel Air. Finally, we hosted a focus group survey at the Relative Matters Conference.

The data from these surveys and focus groups was captured in quantitative and qualitative manners, and the data was analyzed by a team at HCAA to incorporate both numerical and narrative responses into this Assessment.

This Assessment will be delivered to the following groups/individuals: Office of the Harford County Executive: Barry Glassman, Harford County Council, Harford County Continuum of Care, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Harford County Department of Housing and Community Development, Harford County Public Schools, and Harford County Health Department. A digital copy will be available on our website in PDF format for download, and it will be posted to HCAA social media.

FOOD

As has been previously discussed, 67% of our in-agency survey respondents were at our agency during August and September 2019 for assistance with feeding their families. Additionally, a total of 7% of participants listed hunger as the biggest concern in Harford County, with 11% listing it as the County's second biggest concern or problem. Of these customers, 78% listed food as a need for their own family, and 64% listed it as a need of their friends and neighbors, demonstrating a clear need in the community for continued support.

...78% of respondents listed food as a need for their own family, and 64% listed it as a need of their friends or neighbors...

In the focus groups, we saw a split response to the question of what the individual family needed versus what was available in the community. Out of 88 total focus group members, 13 listed food as a specific need of their family, eight listed food as a community need, and 12 listed food and food pantries as being well taken care of in Harford County. Based on some of the responses seen at right, we understand that the problem of "food" is more complex than the initial statistics from Feeding America suggested. The Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as food stamps) is an excellent resource that Harford County residents have access to. However, when analyzed further, the data from Feeding America suggests that 43% of those experiencing food insecurity have incomes above the maximum threshold for applying for this benefit. These families make too much money to qualify for a program that would greatly benefit them, but they still cannot pay for all of their bills. In general, a household cannot make more than 130% of the Federal Poverty Guideline to qualify for SNAP. For a family of four this means maxing a maximum of \$34,060 annually. In our food pantry, we allow households to make up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline, and we do not factor in assets to determine eligibility. Based on this information gleaned from the survey and the focus groups, we have determined that we will continue to serve at a higher level of income and continue to offer SNAP benefits application assistance at our agency.



FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

"Food Stamps are so hard to get for some families. If more than one family live in a house together it takes a chance for a family to lose their finding even if they aren't sharing food."

"Food is always the worst, with a big family food only goes so far, and with my kids I have to have different food items for all my kids."

"I manage but it is probably the one thing I stress about a lot."

"[My husband's] pay fluctuates; when food stamps are low a bill does not get paid due to need of food even with the food pantry."

HOUSING

Affordable Housing and Homelessness

According to the Census Bureau, Harford County is home to 101,600 housing units. The owner-occupied housing rate is 78.5%, and the median value of owner occupied housing units is \$286,700. The monthly mortgage median is \$1,862, median gross rent \$1,213. Harford County, despite having a large number of people own their homes, does have a significant population of renters. At our agency, 10.2% of respondents were seeking eviction prevention, and 4.2% were seeking homeless services. Up until September 2019, HCAA administered the eviction prevention program sponsored by the Department of Social Services. We aided hundreds of families a year with preventing eviction. Currently, the program resides back with DSS, while we focus our efforts on the Rapid Re-Housing of households that have lost their homes. Together, these programs help to keep renter families housed in safe, affordable housing. When asked about the biggest concern or area that needs improvement in Harford County, 13.6% of survey respondents reported the answer as affordable housing, and 28% said homelessness. When asked about the second biggest concern, those numbers were 17.8% and 16.9% respectively. Fifteen (15%) percent of survey takers responded that their families needed shelter, and this number rose to 18.6% when the taker was talking about his or her community's needs.

Amongst focus group participants, eight individuals (or roughly 9%) declared that housing and/or rental assistance was a need in their household, and four (5%) reported that housing was a need in the community. Only two people out of 88 stated that there was enough housing in Harford County.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

"Everywhere is so expensive that even with benefits and help, it's impossible to live."

"There [need] to be affordable apartments or homes for people who make minimum wage."

"There aren't enough income based apartments and the regular ones are too expensive for most."

"Havre de Grace needs more low income housing."

"Our neighborhood houses are small but have very high, over-priced rent."

HOMELESSNESS

"All the shelters are full; churches have no funds."

"There are too many homeless people without help in Harford County. "

"I see a lot of people walking around Aberdeen and Havre de Grace looking dirty and with book bags."

"I noticed that [there] is a lot of empty lots and space to build homeless shelters."

In Harford County, HCAA can advocate for more homeless shelter space, more low-income housing, and more rental assistance to resolve the long-term problem of homelessness. Strategies we can implement right away are 1) asking for additional Rapid Re-Housing funds through our Homelessness Solutions Program grant to get households out of shelter or off the street and into stable housing with a rent subsidy and 2) working with additional low-income housing developers as a partner and shareholder while providing our case management and classroom work to finished housing developments that we have already partnered on to keep people in their homes through support.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Centers, Transportation, and Childcare

As we conducted our focus groups, we learned that there are needs greater in the community than what we had anticipated with our agency survey questions. Over and over again in our focus groups, we witnessed the desire for additional resources and centers in the community, better, more or different transportation, and childcare. Below, we provide snapshots of each area that we considered to be neighborhood and community development. By bringing these wants to light as we send out this information to various levels of government and local resources, we are advocating on behalf of those we interviewed and talked with over the year we conducted this needs assessment.

Community Centers

In the Halls Cross Roads parents' focus group, 11 out of 31 parents described their desire for their children to have a place to go or activities to do after school and in the summer specifying a rec center or teen center in Aberdeen. One parent described their sadness in that their middle school daughter did not have the same access to good afterschool programming that their elementary aged child did, saying the activities at Halls "brings the light out in my children's eyes." Two parents requested closer and less expensive recreational sports programs, and one parent suggested the building of a basketball court or pool in Aberdeen.

During the Mason-Dixon Senior Luncheon focus group, 20% of participants reported a specific ask for a YMCA with a pool in Northern Harford County. They really enjoy the Highland Activity Center, and asked for more transportation access to get there which is discussed below.

Half of the Relative Matters focus group participants stated the need for a teen or rec center for youth in their communities.

Transportation

In our agency survey, 31.4% of those surveyed said their household had transportation needs. Thirty-two (32%) percent reported that their friends or neighbors needed help with transportation.

One participant said, "There are many people in this county struggling to support themselves and their families. Unfortunately with a lack of public transportation and jobs within walking distance, the problem is probably only growing." Another participant requested bus routes on the weekend. A third said, "Not enough mobility service and buses stop too early."

In the focus groups, four people said that they had individual transportation needs, separately asking for bus vouchers and "more bus runs to make availability for work."

Fourteen focus group members said there is a need for transportation in the community. At Mason-Dixon, participants described a need for "more blue bus routes and days," and said that transportation to the Highland Activity Center was appreciated but it needs to be "more than once per week; it should be five [days a week]."

Childcare

Childcare was a lesser reported need, but there were nine instances in which either an individual needed more affordable childcare or thought that the community needed more affordable childcare. Specifically mentioned was the need for a local Early Headstart, which has since been established in Edgewood, next to HCAA.

ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

We included this category in the Needs Assessment in-agency survey because of the increase in overdose prevalence in Harford County over the last several years. We received a surprising result and lots of excellent commentary from this question, and wanted to demonstrate here that the community is looking for a change in these statistics, leaving room for education and community involvement. In the survey, 26.3% of respondents reported alcohol and substance abuse as the biggest area of concern in Harford County. This was listed as the biggest concern just after homelessness on the list of domains provided. Participants reported it as the second biggest concern at 8.5%.

[SURVEY SAYS]

“Too many overdoses.”

“Alcohol is too available to those who don’t need it.”

“The number of overdoses/deaths has increased at an alarming rate.”

“The drug problem is out of control. I recently lost a close friend due to substance abuse.”

“Addiction is a huge problem; people don’t know how to get help.”

“I don’t think that substance abuse is tak[en] seriously.”

“[Doctors] are no longer prescribing benzodiazepines. There are people who really need them and can not afford therapy as recommended. “

“A lot of the community appears to be under the influence.”

“Drugs and alcohol can destroy your life.”

“People turn to drugs to solve their problems.”

“With people not getting proper mental health treatment, people turn to drugs.”

Over the past three years, HCAA has worked with Harford County Government to administer the Peer Recovery program which offers financial help and case management to those in recovery from substance abuse. Additionally, for the last four years and two years, respectively, HCAA has run the case management side of two special District Court programs, Mental Health Diversion Program and Opiate Recovery Court. These programs provide alternative sentencing for crimes committed when under the influence of opiates or when dealing with a mental health crisis or lack of treatment. Expanding further into this area, HCAA, moving forward, will be pursuing partnerships with recovery houses in Harford County to learn how we, as an anti-poverty organization, can support them.

INCARCERATION

Second Chance Laws and Employment

Roughly 5% of our agency survey responses listed incarceration and its effects as a major concern in Harford County, so we wanted to include a note about it here. Two percent (2%) of respondents said that the biggest concern or area that needs improvement in Harford County was children impacted by incarceration. We included this on the list of domains because we offer Parenting Inside Out® courses through our agency that teach parents who are incarcerated or who have contact with the criminal justice system how to be better parents, both from jail and once released. This is a program offering we took on three years ago through funding from the Local Management Board. We became the first organization to bring this unique and effective program to Harford County.

Among the write-in answers for this category were three responses (3% of survey respondents) that discussed second chance laws for felons with regards to employment. One respondent stated as follows: “People [who] commit crimes while young suffer long into their adulthood. There needs to be more help for reformed individual in order to get better jobs and not have their past follow them and put them in positions to lose their jobs. There needs to be something put in place to help people. Even individuals with [misdemeanors] are having their past follow them. It needs to change. [Harford County] puts a lot of money into the opioid epidemic but where is the money when those same opioids alter peoples state of mind and they commit crimes while under doctors orders for those medications. It’s not right and more resources need to be made available. “

“People [who] commit crimes while young suffer long into their adulthood. There needs to be more help for reformed individual in order to get better jobs and not have their past follow them and put them in positions to lose their jobs...”

“The temp company even said, ‘There’s no such thing as expungement.’”

Another respondent described their own experience with discrimination based on criminal records and the struggle they found when trying to seek employment: “The Dept. of Labor says it is illegal to discriminate based of arrest and conviction records IF they do not relate to the duties of the position or sufficient time has passed to allow for personal growth. Employers ignore this routinely. One temp company I worked for in-house would not use applicants if they had any conviction ever. So helping with resumes blah blah does not help when every employer checks records and the Dept. of Labor says approaching 20 percent of the population has a criminal records of some kind. That temp company even said ‘there is no such thing as expungement.’ Something needs to happen to [rectify] this.”

Related to this, we asked respondents to check off the items they needed in their families from a generic list of community needs. Of the 118 survey takers, 21% reported that they needed a job. Thirty-three (33%) percent reported that their friends and/or neighbors need a job. In contrast, only three of our focus group members reported needing jobs or seeing their community members in need of jobs. This could be due to the age of our focus groups. Three of our groups were middle-aged or older adults, and two were middle-school aged. Of the two groups that were younger adults, only one person said their family needed a job.

At this time, we do not know the relationship between criminal records and joblessness amongst our customers, but we know that this survey was conducted in 2019, prior to Maryland becoming another state to “Ban the Box” (i.e, to prohibit employers from requiring an applicant to disclose a criminal history prior to a first in-person interview). This law is less restrictive than in other states that require employers to extend a job offer before inquiring about a criminal history. Maryland’s law does not preempt stricter laws, should counties choose to enact them. So, Harford County could take greater steps toward allowing those with a criminal background to progress further into the hiring process by passing a stricter law. (McGee, Emmett F., et al. “Maryland Becomes Latest State to ‘Ban the Box’.” *Jackson Lewis*, 11 Feb. 2020, www.jacksonlewis.com/publication/maryland-becomes-latest-state-ban-box.)

Community Services Block Grant

Organizational Standards

Harford Community Action Agency, Inc. complied with the following Organizational Standards of the Community Services Block Grant for private Community Action Agencies under the heading “Community Assessment”:

Standard 3.1

The organization conducted a community assessment and issued a report within the past 3 years.

Standard 3.2

As part of the community assessment, the organization collects and includes current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area(s).

Standard 3.3

The organization collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.

Standard 3.4

The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.

Standard 3.5

The governing board formally accepts the completed community assessment.

The full list of CSBG Organizational Standards can be found at CAPLAW.org: <https://www.capl原因.org/resources/PublicationDocuments/csborgstandards/CSBGOrgStandardsHome.html>

Statement of Board Acceptance

August 6, 2020

In compliance with CSBG Organizational Standard 3.5, all Community Needs Assessments must be approved for use and reporting by the Board of Directors of the Community Action Agency. The Board of Directors of Harford Community Action Agency approved this report for use and publication on August 6, 2020.

2020-2021 Board of Directors



Poverty Statistics Resources

Feeding America. "Map the Meal Gap." *Feeding America*, 2020, <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2017/overall/maryland/county/harford>.

Harford Community Action Agency. Harford Community Action Agency, 2020, *2020 Harford County (MD-502) Homeless Point-in-Time Count*, available at <https://harfordcaa.org/programs/homeless-prevention/continuum-of-care/>.

Harford County Housing and Community Development. Harford County Housing and Community Development, 2017, *Consolidated Plan FY 2018-2020 FFY2017-2019*, available at <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/526/Consolidated-Plan>.

United for ALICE, and United Ways of Maryland. 2020th ed., United Way, 2020, *ALICE in Maryland: A Financial Hardship Study*, available at <https://www.uwcm.org/alice/>.

United States Census Bureau. "U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Harford County, Maryland." *Census Bureau QuickFacts*, 2019, www.census.gov/quickfacts/harfordcountymaryland.

WelfareInfo.org. "Poverty Rate in Harford County, Maryland." *7.5% Poverty Rate in Harford County, Maryland*, 2019, www.welfareinfo.org/poverty-rate/maryland/harford-county.