



COMMUNITY
HEALTH NEEDS
ASSESSMENT

SNAPSHOT



OUR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Areas where community action may yield measurable results and recommendations to get there.

AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Areas where learning more about the root causes of issues may lead to intervention opportunities.



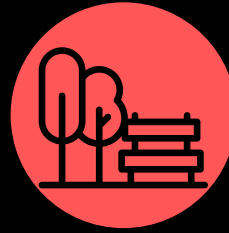
ECONOMIC STABILITY



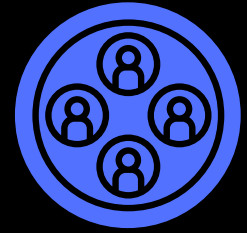
EDUCATION



HEALTH CARE AND ACCESS



NEIGHBORHOOD AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT



SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT

UNDERSTANDING THE ICONS



Throughout this document you'll see icons relating to the Social Determinants of Health, referenced as areas of impact. These are conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality of life outcomes and risks.

Social Determinants of Health are grouped into five key areas and referenced in this document using icons to see the areas where this community health needs assessment intends to make the greatest impact.

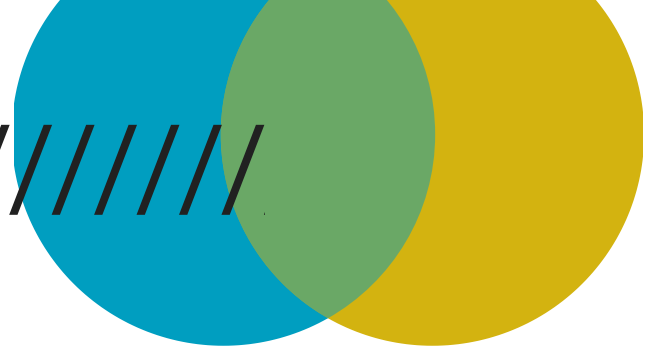
OUR PARTNERS

We proudly partner with our local non-profit hospitals on the community health needs assessment and improvement process. Our hospital partners include Colorado Canyons Hospital and Medical Center, Community Hospital, St. Mary's Medical Center, West Springs Hospital, and the VA Western Colorado Health Care System.



SNAPSHOT

COMMUNITY HEALTH
NEEDS ASSESSMENT



HEALTH DOESN'T START IN THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE,



**IT STARTS WHERE WE LIVE,
LEARN, WORK, AND PLAY.**

INTRODUCTION

The Mesa County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) presents information and analysis on the current health status of the community, brings attention to areas of concern needing community action, and fulfills the assessment needs for all partners of the local public health system. This version is a condensed snapshot of the entire document, available online at health.mesacounty.us.

OUR APPROACH

Mesa County is unique in our collaborative approach to the community health needs assessment. Local non-profit hospitals and the public health agency release one comprehensive document every three years to meet the requirements of all agencies. This facilitates a more unified approach to improving health and quality of life in our community.



FRAMEWORK

In Mesa County we work hard, we play hard, and we take care of each other. Yet not everyone has the same opportunities to make choices that allow them to live a long and healthy life. People in Mesa County lose time, money, and years of their life to preventable and treatable illnesses. Mesa County's foundation is strong in some ways and weak in others. When the foundation is weak, healthy choices feel out of reach as people struggle to meet basic needs.

The community data provided in the CHNA is designed to help us see where our community has strong foundations, and where there are opportunities to strengthen the foundations. Every change we make as a community gives Mesa County residents the opportunity to make choices that allow them to live a long and healthy life.

WAGES AND WORKFORCE

WHAT WE FOUND

More than half (55.6%) of Mesa County workers earn less than \$17.50 per hour, an essential wage for household stability.

Mesa County is projected to lose over a thousand jobs between 2020 and 2022 particularly in Accommodation and Food Services and Oil and Gas, but gain them back and more in industries such as Health Care, Construction, and Tech by 2029.



RECOMMENDATIONS

01

Enroll workers with low-income jobs in benefits programs for which they are eligible but not yet enrolled--this can effectively raise a family's household wage by:

- Up to \$3/hour (for most families)
- Up to \$8/hour (for families most in need).

02

Health care, tech, and construction jobs pay good wages for the average family and are slated to grow. Drive engagement in training programs toward these fields to ensure the local workforce is ready to fill new positions.

03

Re-train people from waning industries to advancing industries (health care, tech, and construction) in order to appeal to industries that may be looking to relocate to Mesa County.

04

Develop a local training and education pipeline to meet the needs of key industries.

05

Provide more financial assistance and scholarships for local workers with low-income jobs to train up into higher paying positions.

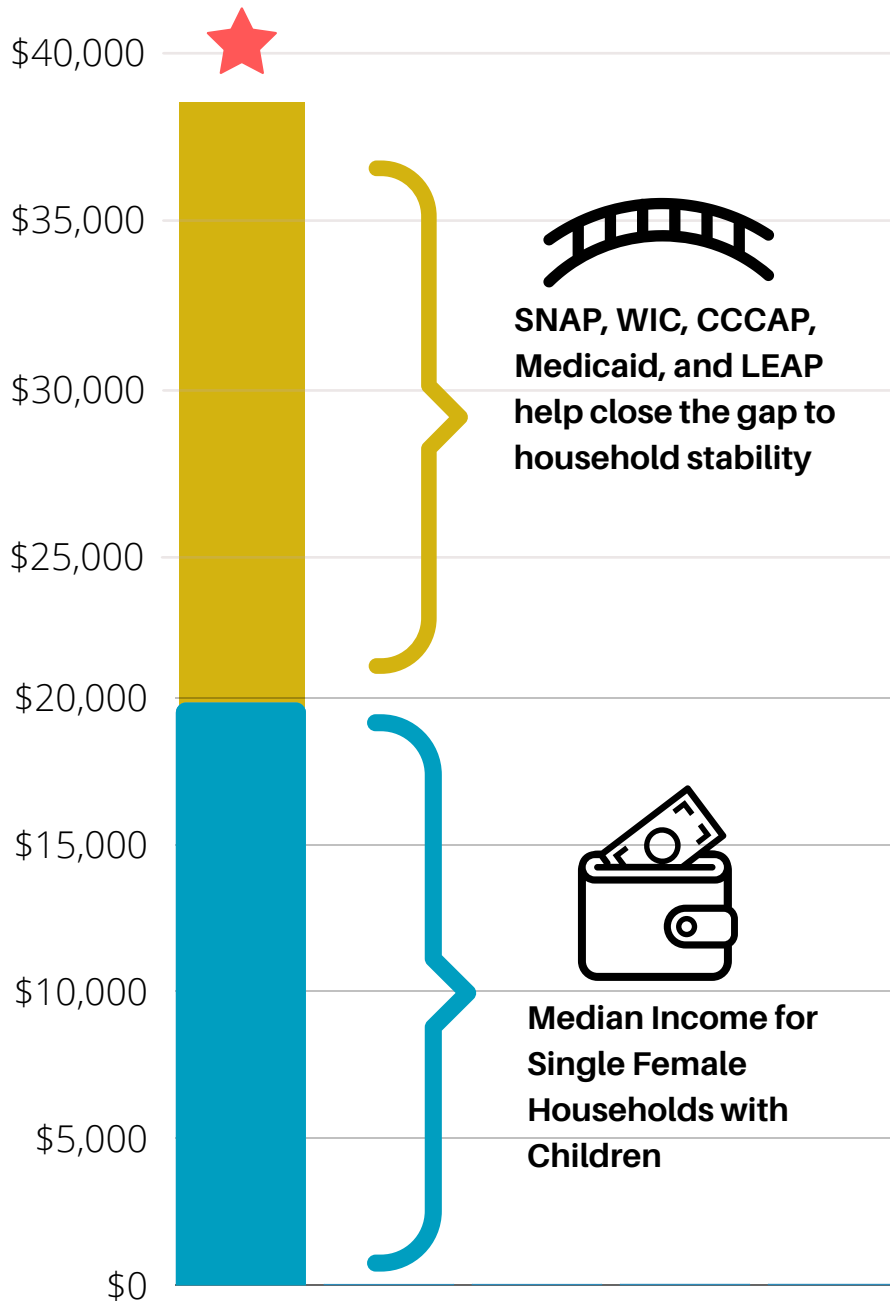
AREAS OF IMPACT

- Economic Stability
- Education
- Social and Community Context

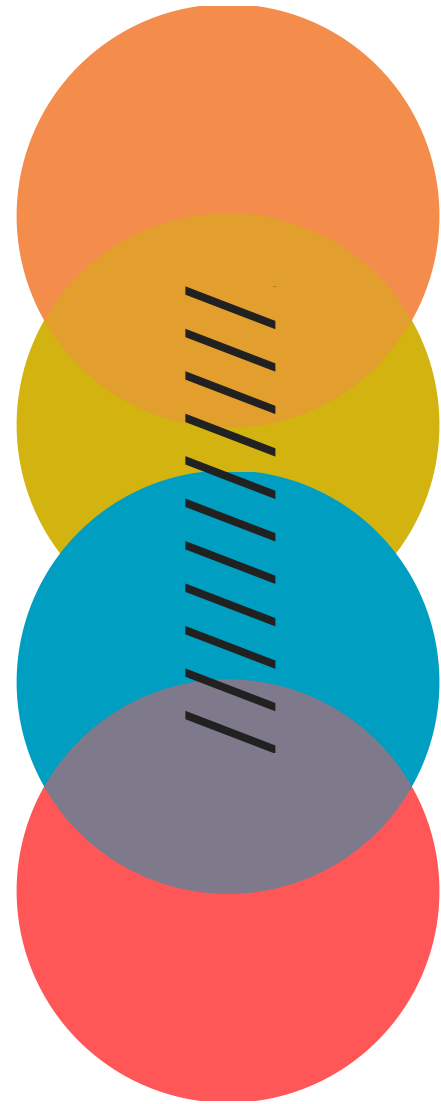


ILLUSTRATING THE POINT

GAP TO HOUSEHOLD STABILITY FOR MEDIAN SINGLE-FEMALE HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN



 Income required for household stability



BENEFITS CLOSE THE GAP TO HOUSEHOLD STABILITY FOR MEDIAN SINGLE FEMALE HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

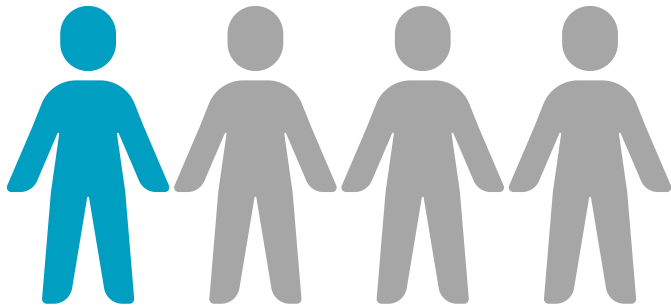
EARLY EDUCATION

WHAT WE FOUND

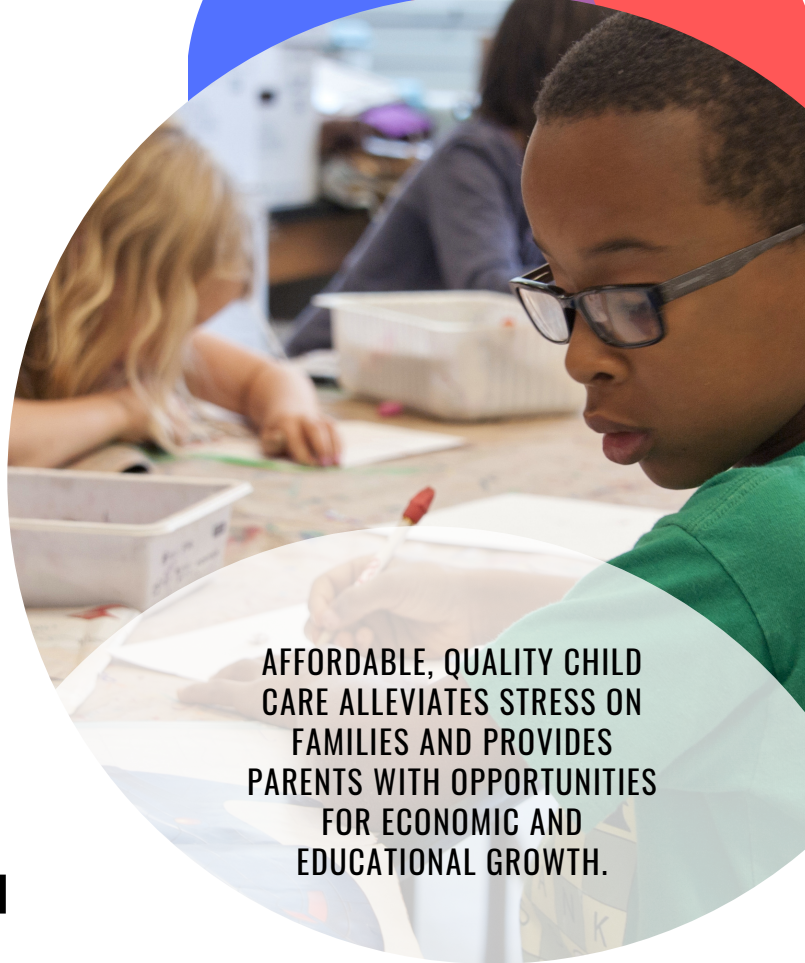
Kindergarten readiness varies by as much as 80% among different elementary schools in Mesa County. **Many students who are ready for kindergarten are struggling in later grades.**

LESS THAN

1 IN 4



4TH GRADERS ARE PROFICIENT IN MATH.



AFFORDABLE, QUALITY CHILD CARE ALLEVIATES STRESS ON FAMILIES AND PROVIDES PARENTS WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL GROWTH.

APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD

OF MESA COUNTY 3RD GRADERS ARE PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

01

Expand quality, licensed child care in communities with few care options.

02

Support existing child care facilities in achieving high quality ratings.

03

Make quality child care more affordable for families.

04

Support families and schools in improving elementary school reading and math proficiency.

05

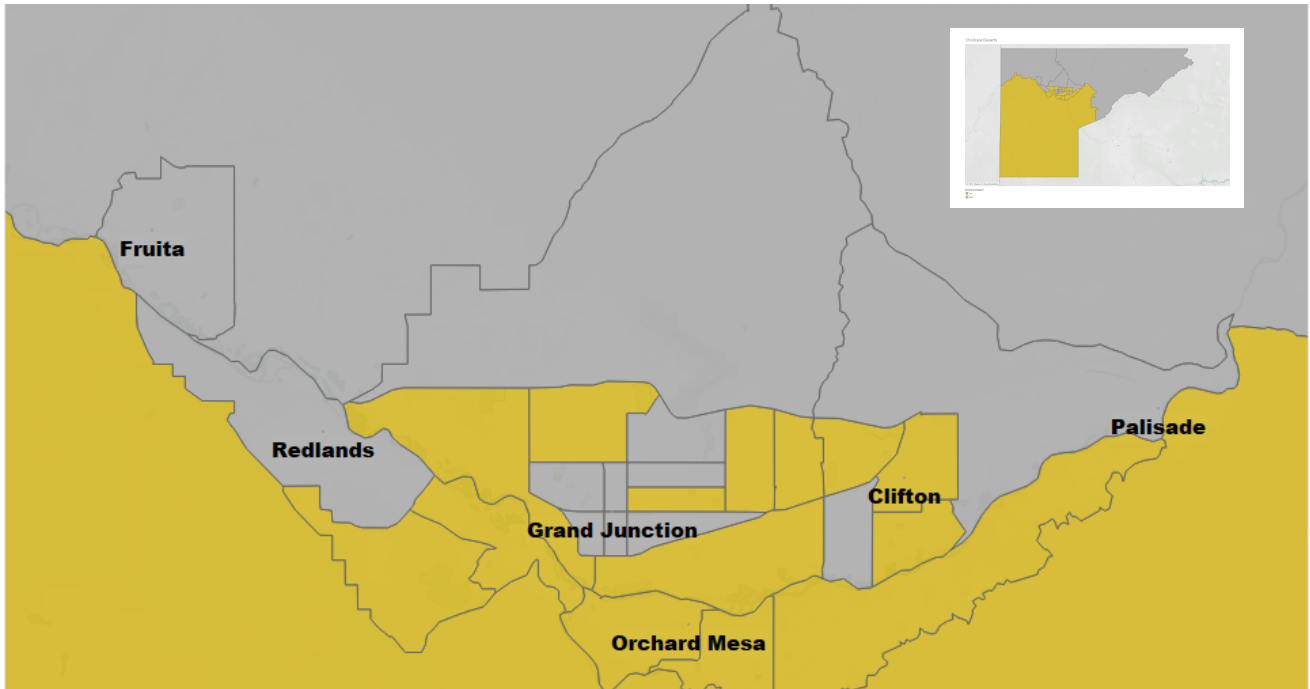
Spend school dollars on activities and resources that lead to improved student outcomes, and a supportive learning environment.

AREAS OF IMPACT

- Economic Stability
- Education
- Neighborhood and Built Environment
- 4- • Social and Community Context



ILLUSTRATING THE POINT

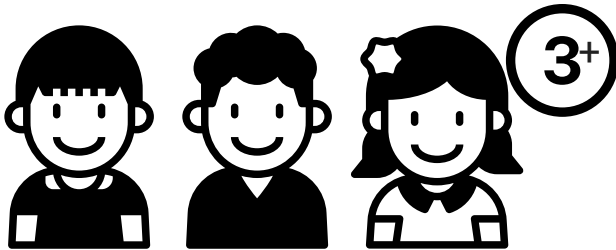


CHILD CARE DESERT BY CENSUS TRACT



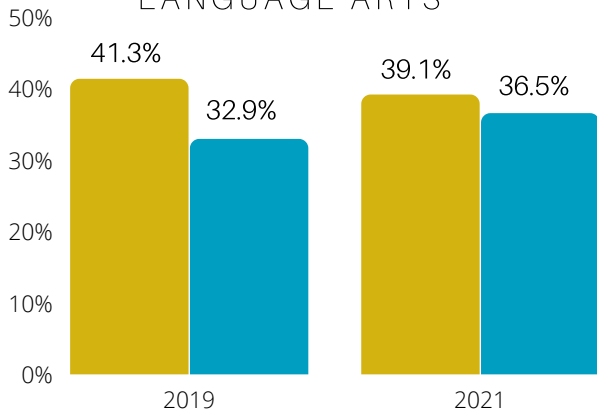
NO

YES

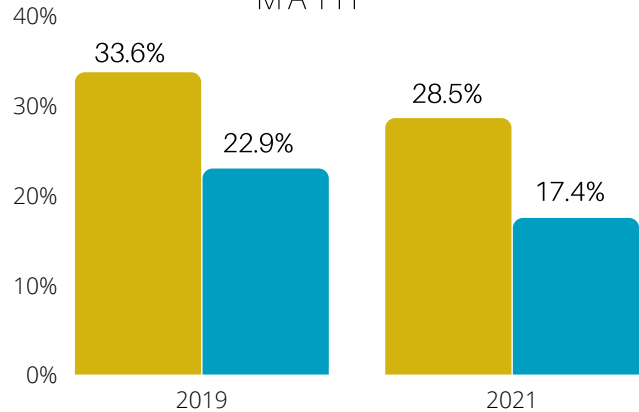


A CHILD CARE DESERT IS AN AREA WITH MORE THAN THREE CHILDREN AGES 0-5 FOR EACH LICENSED CHILD CARE SPOT.

3RD GRADERS PROFICIENT IN LANGUAGE ARTS



4TH GRADERS PROFICIENT IN MATH



HIGHER EDUCATION

WHAT WE FOUND

Mesa County lacks sufficient practical experiences (like internships and clinical rotations) that allow students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world challenges.

Mesa County residents with a technical certificate, two-year degree, or four-year degree are significantly less likely to be living in poverty or unemployed than those who only have a high school diploma or didn't complete high school.



AREAS OF IMPACT

- Education
- Economic Stability

RECOMMENDATIONS

01

Encourage four-year high school graduation and support students who do not finish in four years, so they eventually achieve graduation.

02

Expand high school student engagement in higher education concurrent enrollment opportunities.

03

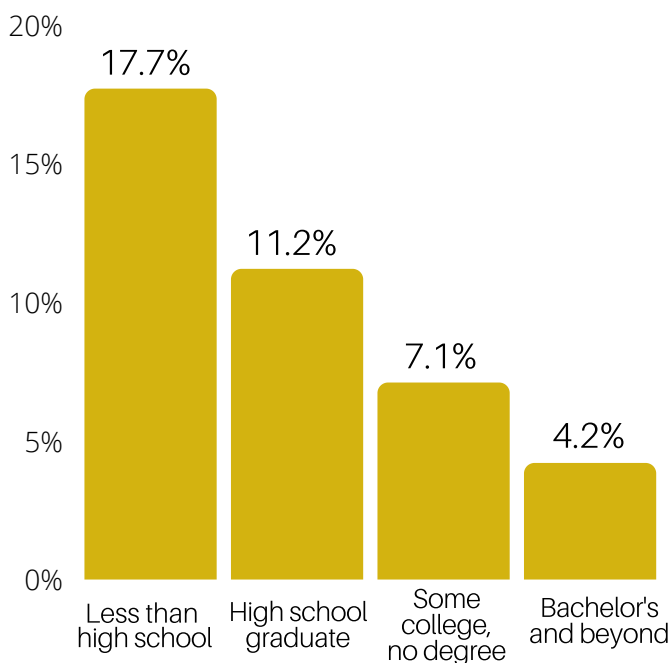
Work with local employers to provide internships and practical experiences for students.

04

Support individuals in seeking better opportunities by participating in flexible, stacked educational programs. Engage students in the training pipeline to build upon their experience and grow into higher paying opportunities.

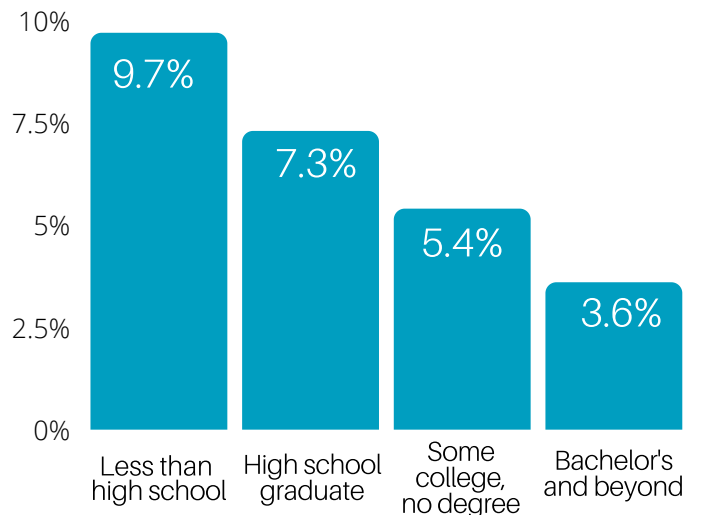
ILLUSTRATING THE POINT

POVERTY RATE VS. EDUCATION LEVEL

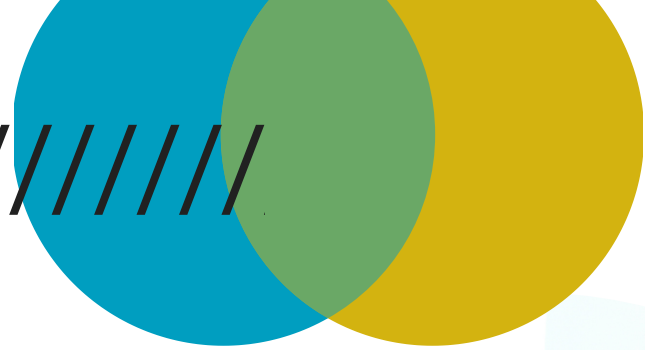


STABILITY IMPROVES WITH EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE VS. EDUCATION LEVEL

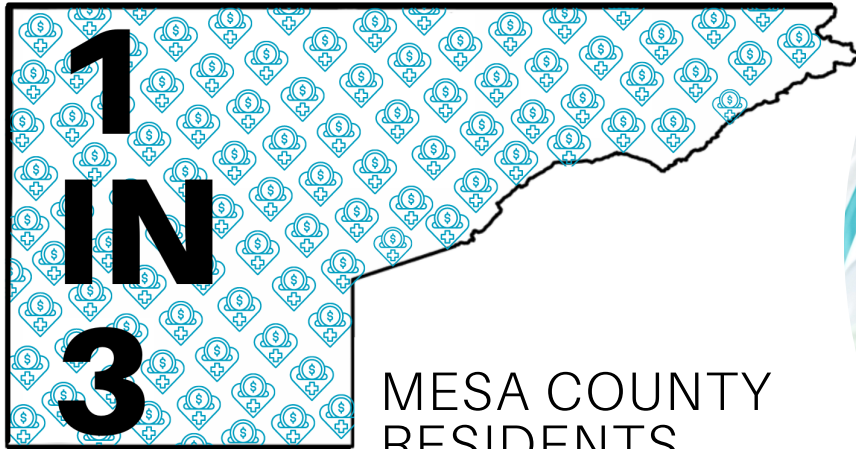


COST OF HEALTH CARE



WHAT WE FOUND

NEARLY



MESA COUNTY RESIDENTS

HAVE GONE WITHOUT NEEDED MEDICAL CARE BECAUSE OF COST.



RECOMMENDATIONS

01

Increase participation in affordable care options such as Medicaid, CHP+, APTC, and MarillacHealth's sliding fee primary care.

02

Educate patients on the costs of different types of care and insurance coverage to encourage efficient use of preventive care and services covered by insurance.

03

Partner with employers, providers, and insurance companies to offer innovative coverage types and payment systems.

04

Assist families in using existing financial resources to reduce overall household expenses.

05

Strengthen referral pathways between hospitals and MarillacHealth for access to affordable primary care.



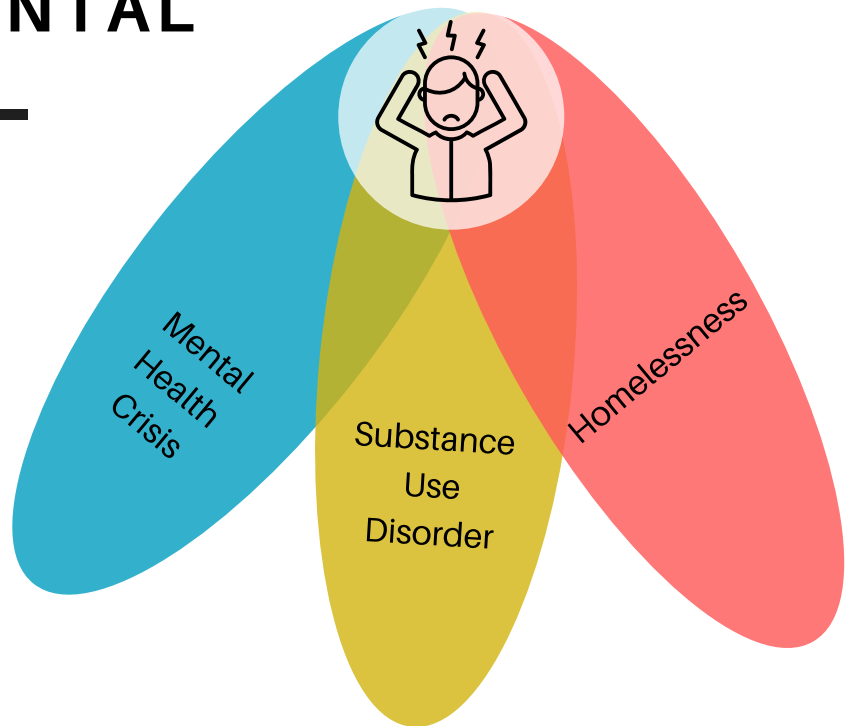
AREAS OF IMPACT

- Economic Stability
- Health Care and Access

ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE

WHAT WE FOUND

Mesa County health care institutions and emergency departments exhaust limited resources and struggle to meet the needs of patients suffering from multiple crises (mental health, substance use, homelessness) at the same time.



**MORE THAN
1 IN 10**

MESA COUNTY RESIDENTS WENT WITHOUT NEEDED MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

01

Launch and support a community resource offering intensive case management for individuals needing mental health and economic stability assistance.

02

Identify or develop a community resource to assist individuals experiencing non-emergency substance use intoxication and/or mental health crises with staying safe and accessing needed treatment resources.

03

Reduce barriers associated with seeking mental health services. Barriers include wait times, issues scheduling an appointment, lack of access to a desired provider, and being unable to take time off work.

04

Use peer-to-peer support to increase accessibility and diversity in services.

05

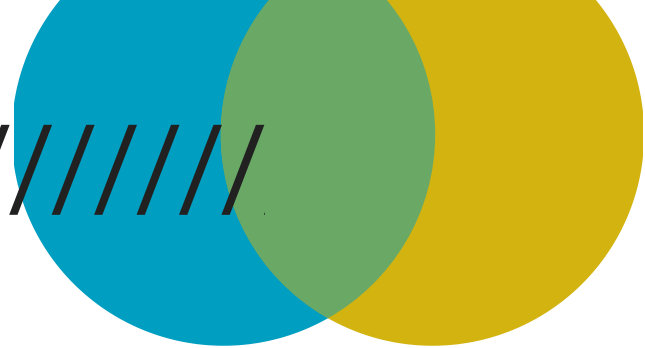
Work through the multidisciplinary mental health steering committee to systematically address other key issues such as workforce, information sharing between agencies, and telemedicine.

AREAS OF IMPACT

- Economic Stability
- Health Care and Access
- Social and Community Context



HIGH COST OF HOUSING

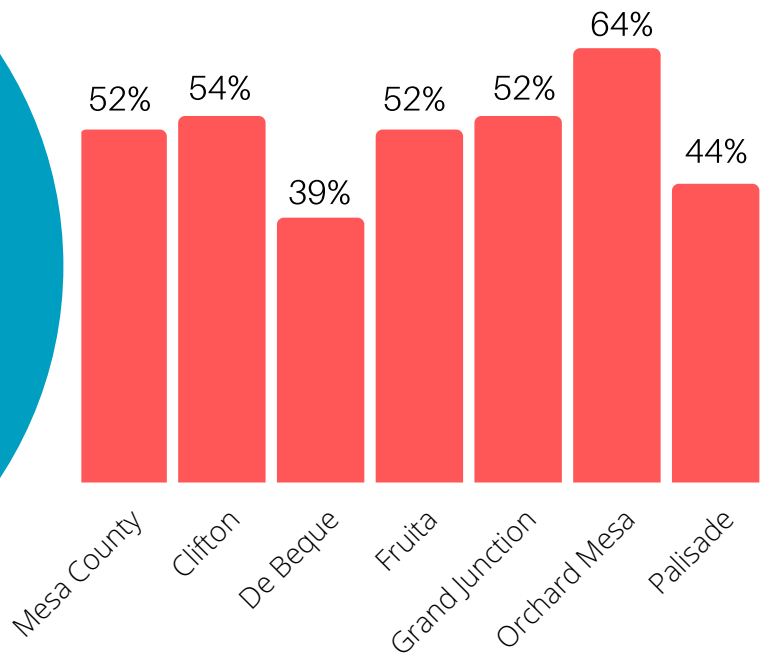


WHAT WE FOUND

There is declining availability of starter homes and family homes priced near or below \$250,000.

MORE THAN
HALF
OF MESA COUNTY RENTERS
SPEND MORE THAN
30% OF THEIR INCOME ON RENT.

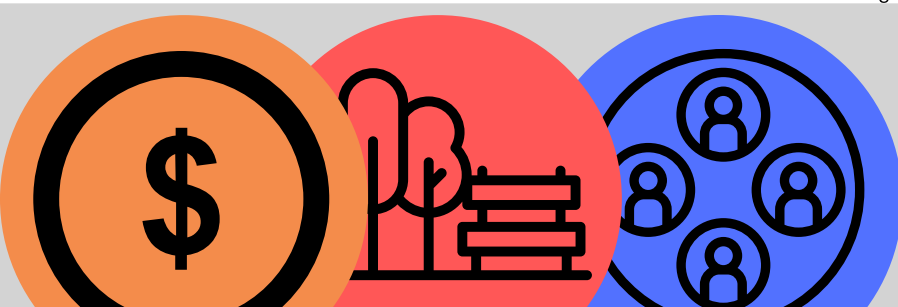
PERCENT OF RENTERS PAYING MORE THAN 30% OF THEIR INCOME ON RENT BY COMMUNITY



RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01 Provide financial support to existing housing and homelessness services and promote access to these services.
- 02 Participate in a local and regional collaboration regarding housing needs and services.
- 03 Implement land use code changes that facilitate attainable housing development and housing diversity.
- 04 Formalize existing incentives and consider additional incentives for housing development.

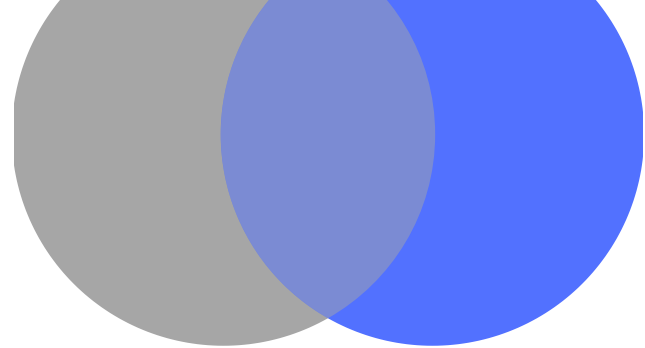
* Data and recommendations in this section are from the Grand Junction Housing Needs Assessment.



AREAS OF IMPACT

- Economic Stability
- Neighborhood and Build Environment
- Social and Community Context

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



WHAT WE FOUND

In 2020, 80% of registered Mesa County voters cast a vote in the presidential election, a local record for turnout. However, precincts with the highest levels of poverty showed the lowest level of turnout.

Many local churches and service organizations report a lack of young people (less than 40 years) joining.

RECOMMENDATIONS

01 Improve voter participation in low-turnout precincts by targeting get-out-the-vote efforts in low-income precincts.

02 Diversify the opportunities to engage people under 40 in civic and community organizations outside of the traditional options.



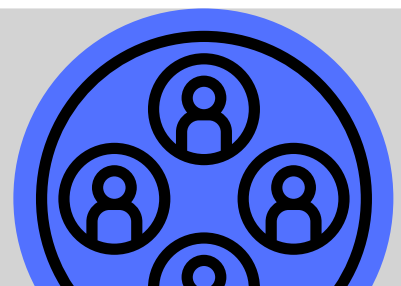
CONNECTION IS THE ENERGY THAT EXISTS BETWEEN PEOPLE WHEN THEY FEEL SEEN, HEARD, AND VALUED;

WHEN THEY CAN GIVE AND RECEIVE WITHOUT JUDGMENT; AND WHEN THEY DERIVE SUSTENANCE AND STRENGTH FROM THE RELATIONSHIP.



AREAS OF IMPACT

- Social and Community Context



HEALTH IMPLICATIONS



A

The primary reason for removal from parental custody for children in Mesa County continues to be meth use, accounting for one-third of removals in 2020.

B

Nearly one in three high school students report current e-cigarette use. Mesa County has a higher rate of overdose hospitalizations and deaths compared to the state.

C

For the 2020-2021 school year, school-aged immunization rates vary across Mesa County districts:

- Elementary Varicella: 86.3% - 94.7%.
- Adolescent Tdap: 76.1% - 92%.

D

Approximately 60% of Mesa County adults and 24% of high school students are above a healthy weight.

E

37% of Mesa County adults between the ages of 18-64 report receiving an annual flu shot - this is higher for adults age 65 and older (60%). Mesa County has a higher rate of hospitalizations due to flu than the state.

F

The teen birth rate in Mesa County decreased by one-third from 2015-2019.

G

The top three causes of early death in Mesa County are not disease, but instead intentional self-harm, non-vehicle accidents, and drug overdose.

H

The overall leading causes of death in Mesa County are heart disease, cancer, and chronic lower respiratory disease.

I

Youth suicide rates in Mesa County are higher than state and national averages.

AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

01

Survey Mesa County residents regarding social and community context/social connectedness to better understand their social networks.

02

Investigate root causes for health care use barriers such as access to providers and appointments, cost barriers, and personal challenges.

03

Assess the barriers to benefit enrollment and best practices for maximizing benefit enrollments for households without economic stability.

04

Investigate preschool enrollment by key demographic and socioeconomic factors to understand where disparities exist.

05

Investigate the disconnect between kindergarten readiness and elementary school proficiency. Determine where disparities exist. Explore best practice solutions for how to better support children and families to improve overall readiness and proficiency.

06

Investigate higher education enrollment statistics by additional demographic factors such as race and age.

07

Investigate provider barriers to timely care, since one in four Mesa County residents was unable to get an appointment as soon as they thought one was needed.



08

Research the resources and challenges around multiple crises for other stakeholder institutions such as Catholic Outreach, Grand Junction Housing Authority, Grand Junction Police Department, District 51, mental health and substance use disorder providers, Community Hospital, Colorado Canyons Hospital, among others.

09

Examine the relationship of school funding to student outcomes and staff retention.

10

Examine voter turnout at the precinct level to better understand local trends. Consider opportunities to engage voters in low-turnout precincts.

11

Examine the most effective social resources for communities based on population and economic factors.

12

Investigate the differences in earning potential among those who began, but did not complete, any higher education goal and those who earned an associate's degree or technical certificate.

13

Assess the range of experience within each household type to identify potential disparities or systematic differences in household stability such as across different neighborhoods, races and ethnicities, and educational backgrounds.

14

Identify Mesa County areas impacted by stacked disadvantage - e.g. those experiencing high rates of unemployment, single-parent families, and poverty.



MESA COUNTY IS UNIQUE.

OUR SOLUTIONS ARE TOO.



**MESA COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH**
Working Together for a Healthy Community