

City of Appleton's Community Health Assessment 2025



DEPARTMENT OF
**PUBLIC
HEALTH**

August 2025

Purpose: What is a Community Health Assessment?

The primary goal of a CHA is to identify the health priorities, strengths, and challenges within the community. This informs decision-making processes, resource allocation, and interventions aimed at improving health outcomes and promoting equity.

Approach: What does the CHA involve?

Steering Committee

The steering committee for Appleton’s Community Health Assessment was intentionally asked to represent a diverse set of stakeholders that represent critical sectors within the community. Those asked to join the committee, and those who accepted, are experts within a few key areas we wished to have represented in our assessment: children; youth; families; cultural diversity; and mental health.

Steering Committee		
Kayla McNamara	Boys & Girls Club of the Fox Valley	Children; Youth; Families; Cultural Diversity
Laura Jackson	Appleton Area School District	Children; Youth; Families
Kenny Yarborough	Lawrence University	College; Cultural Diversity
Wendy Krueger	United Way Fox Cities	Non-Profit; Fundraising
Megan Zimmerman	NAMI Fox Valley	Non-Profit; Mental Health
Beth Clay	NEW Mental Health Connection	Mental Health
Pa Khang	HMong American Partnership	Cultural Diversity
Breanna Mekuly	Appleton Health Department	Local Health Department
Jena McNiel	Appleton Health Department	
Sonja Jensen	Appleton Health Department	
Chuck Sepers	Appleton Health Department	

The Survey: Development

- Developed by the Steering Committee using:
 - a model from the Community Tool Box
 - similar surveys from the Fox Valley region (ex: Mind Your Wellness; Imagine Fox Cities)
 - goal was to build on existing data by asking more specific questions

The Survey: Timeline

- Available March 1 to August 31, 2024
 - online and in paper form
 - in English, Spanish, HMong, Kinyarwanda, Swahili, and Dari/Farsi
- In-person support sessions held at several community locations, including:
 - Lawrence University, Riverview Gardens (job training site), Oneida Heights (Appleton Housing Authority), Salvation Army (during free lunch services), Long Cheng Market (while HMong elders were gathered)

The Survey: Aftermath

- 1,291 people responded; 1,080 are residents of Appleton (about 84% of total responses)
- Responses were analyzed using a quadrant method: how strongly one agrees with a statement along with how important one considers the statement

Secondary data

- Local data: Imagine Fox Cities, the Mind Your Wellness survey, the Appleton Police Department's Fall 2023 survey, and the Fox Cities Point-in-Time Count
- State and national data: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, the U.S. Census, County Health Rankings, and United for ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), etc.

Timeline

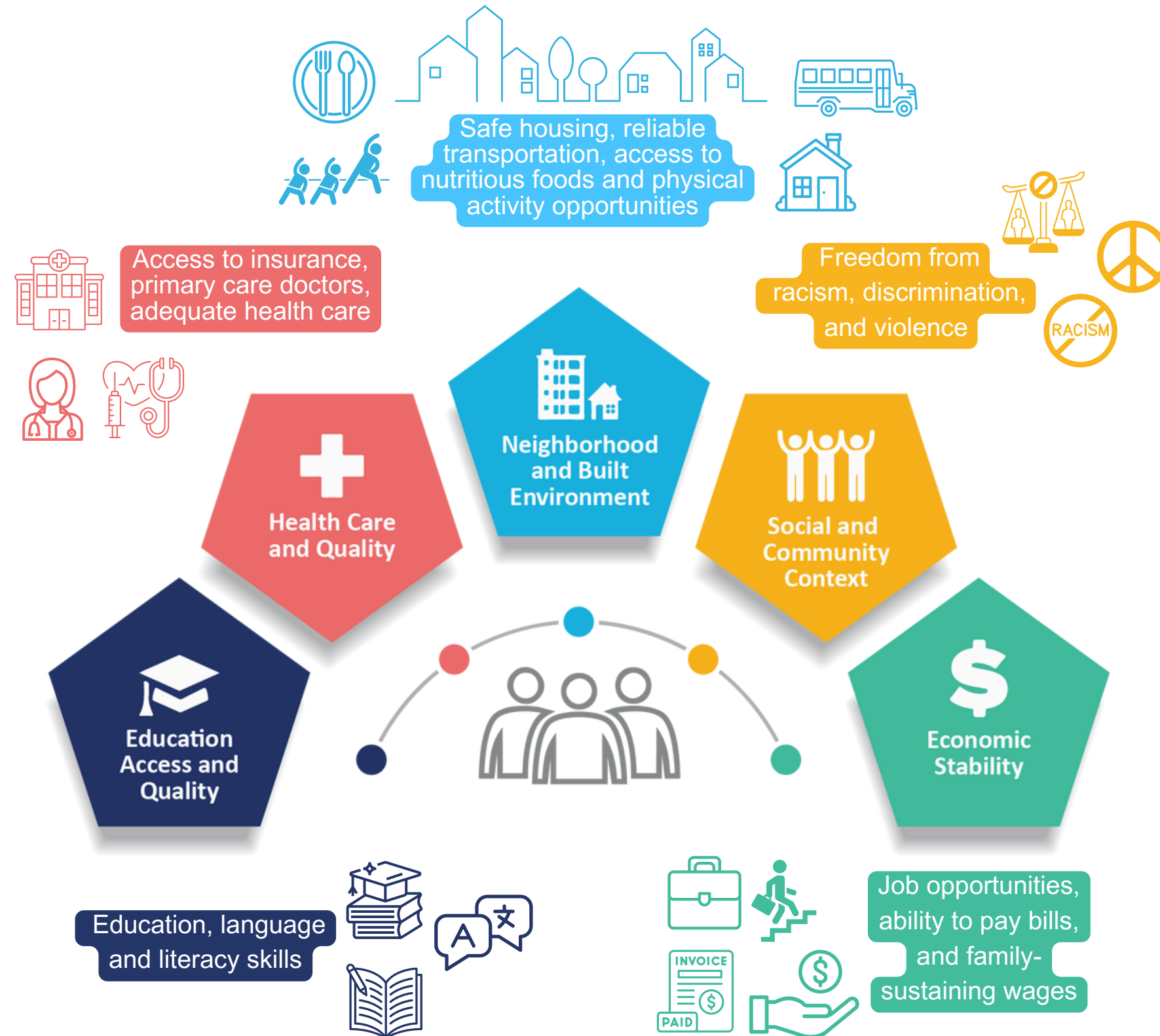
Steering Committee		
Choose / Ask Steering Committee	November 2023	Choose Community leaders with different backgrounds, workplaces, and topic-area focuses
Steering Committee Meetings	December 2023	Introductions, Hopes for the CHA Process
	December 2023	Discuss what data we already have (primary and secondary) along with what we want to learn using a survey
	January 2024	
	January 2024	
	March 2024	
	April 2024	
	November 2024	Shared Sense-Making
	July 2025	Finalize CHA Document

Survey		
Survey Live	March - August 2024	Online & In Person
Marketing of Survey	March 2024	News Segment with Interview on NBC 26
	March 2024	News Segment with Interview on WBAY
	April 2024	Banner & Surveys at Thompson Center
	April 2024	Banner & Surveys at Parks & Rec
	May 2024	Surveys at Catalpa
	May 2024	Surveys at Appleton Neighborhood Meeting
In-Person Survey Support	May 2024	Surveys at Interagency Meeting
	April 2024	at Eagle Point
	April 2024	at Oneida Heights
	April 2024	at City of Appleton's Citizen's Academy
	April 2024	at Lawrence
	April 2024	at Lawrence
	May 2024	at Riverview Gardens
	May 2024	at Salvation Army
Analyze Survey Data	August 2024 - January 2025	Appleton Health Department analyzes data from survey and secondary data

Final Document		
Write CHA	January - June 2025	Appleton Health Department writes final CHA document
CHA Approved by Board of Health	August 2025	Final CHA document is approved by Appleton Board of Health
CHA goes Public	August 2025	CHA is shared publicly online

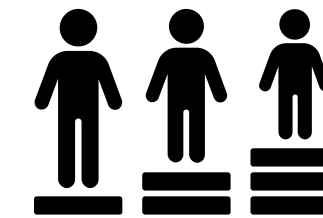
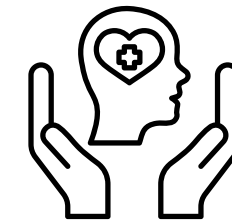
Frameworks

Social Determinants of Health



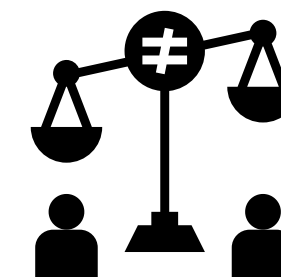
Healthy People 2030 & Wisconsin's SHIP

National Objectives to Improve Health & Wellbeing



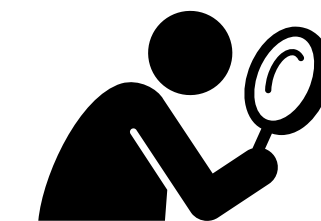
Health Equity

Leading Health Indicators



Health Disparities

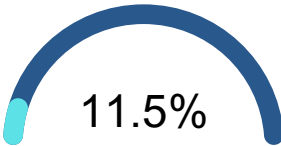
Evidence-based Resources



Demographics

CITY OF APPLETON
TOTAL POPULATION 74,873

Ability Status



of the population have a disability, including a hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care and independent difficulties
Census Reporter



30,860
Number of Households
Census Reporter

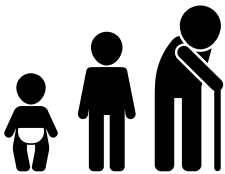
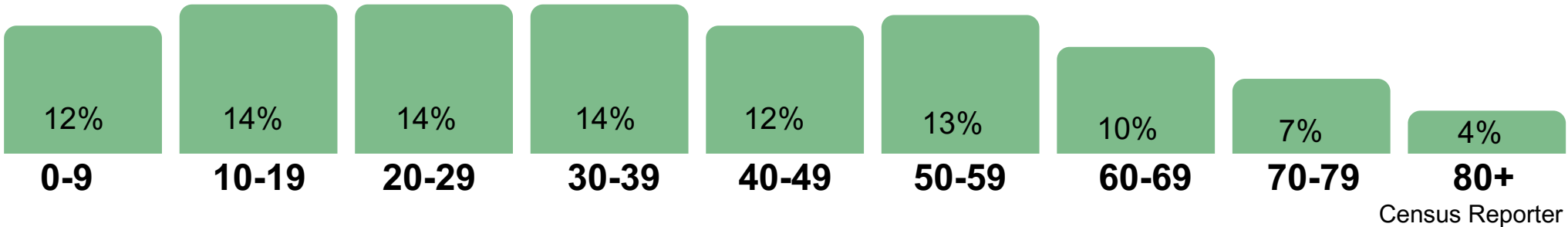


2.4
Persons per Household
Census Reporter

Per Capita Income
per person in Appleton:
\$48,093

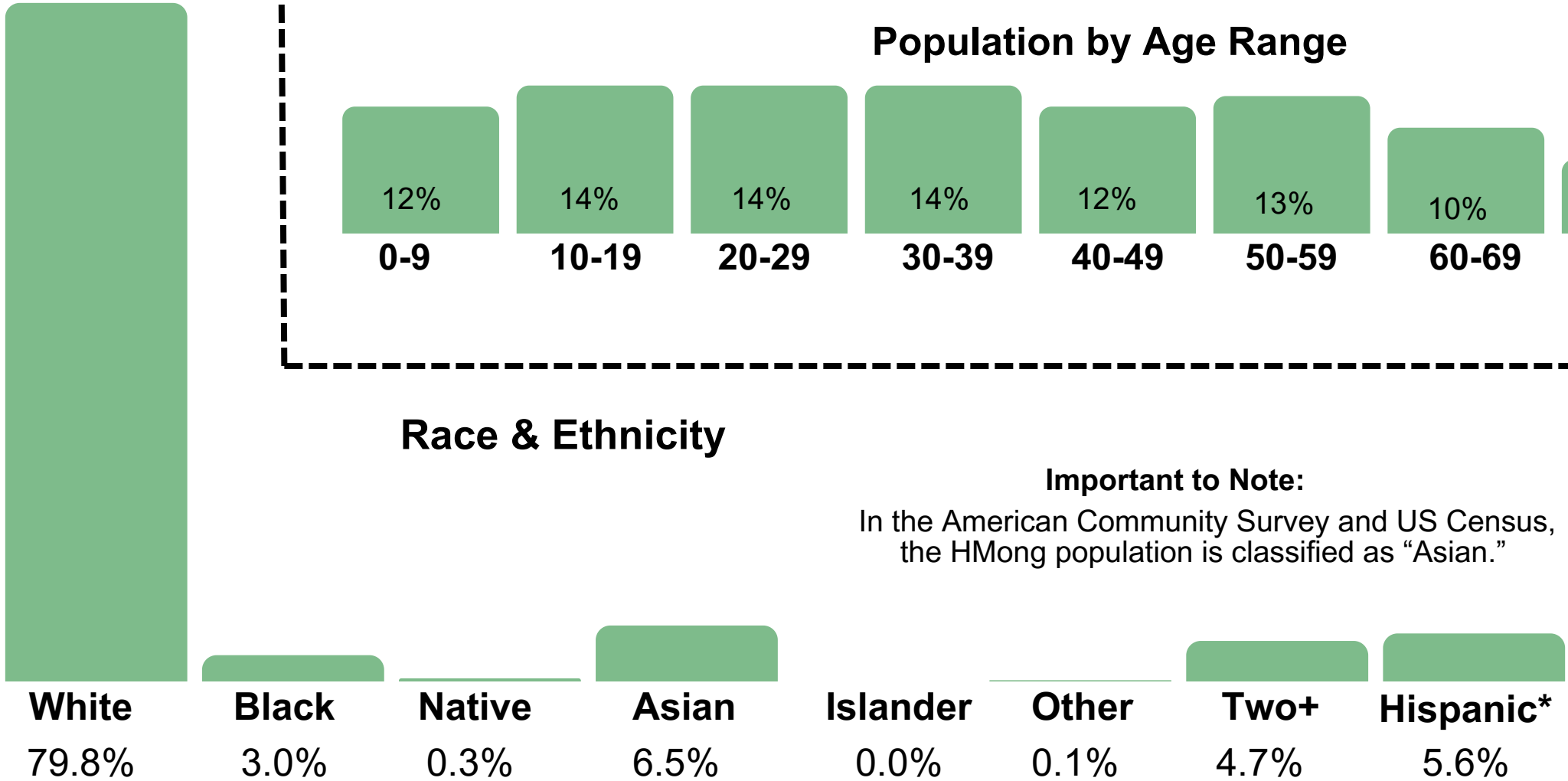
Median Household Income
in Appleton:
\$77,450

Population by Age Range



36.9
Median age
Census Reporter

Race & Ethnicity



*Hispanic includes respondents of any race. All other categories are non-Hispanic.
Census Reporter

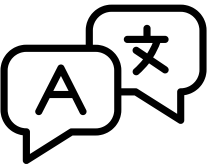
Important to Note:
In the American Community Survey and US Census, the HMong population is classified as "Asian."

Gender



50% Male
50% Female
*too little data is collected on all other genders to report on
Census Reporter

Languages



After English, the next most common primarily languages spoken in Appleton households are: Spanish, HMong, Dari/Farsi, Swahili, and Kinyarwanda.
Appleton Area School District (2024)

Executive Summary

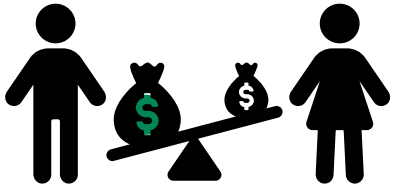
Living in Appleton

Is Living in Appleton Affordable?

Households making more than \$100,000/year believe living in Appleton is more affordable than those making less than \$100,000/year.

\$77,450
Median Household Income in Appleton

Over the past few years, gender wage gaps are growing



In 2024 in Appleton's three counties, **women are paid \$0.786 for every \$1.00 men are paid.**



31,999

Number of Housing Units in Appleton



96%

Percentage of Housing Units in Appleton that are Occupied

Census Reporter

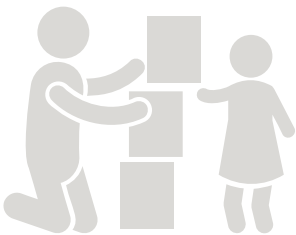
only **37%** of Community Concerns survey respondents **agree** that Appleton has **Safe & Affordable Housing Options**



one in four worry they may **run out of food** before they have money to buy more

Community Concerns Survey

The **cost of childcare** is increasing. In the past two years, families with two children in childcare in the Appleton area have been spending around 30% of their median household income on childcare costs.

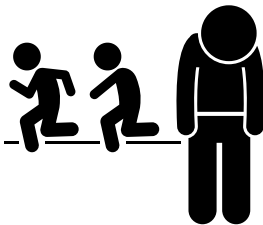


When asked if **"Quality childcare is available and affordable"** only **31%** of Community Concerns survey respondents **Agreed**



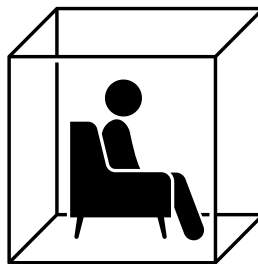
Social Belonging in Appleton

Public health promotes social connectedness to reduce isolation and create healthier, safer communities.



18%

of Community Concerns survey respondents **feel left out**



20%

of Community Concerns survey respondents **lack companionship**



17%

of Community Concerns survey respondents **feel isolated from others**



only **59%**

of Imagine Fox Cities' Well-Being survey respondents reported **they are thriving**



while **32%** of survey respondents reported **they are struggling**

"Social isolation can pose a health risk to people, even if they don't feel lonely."

CDC, Social Connectedness

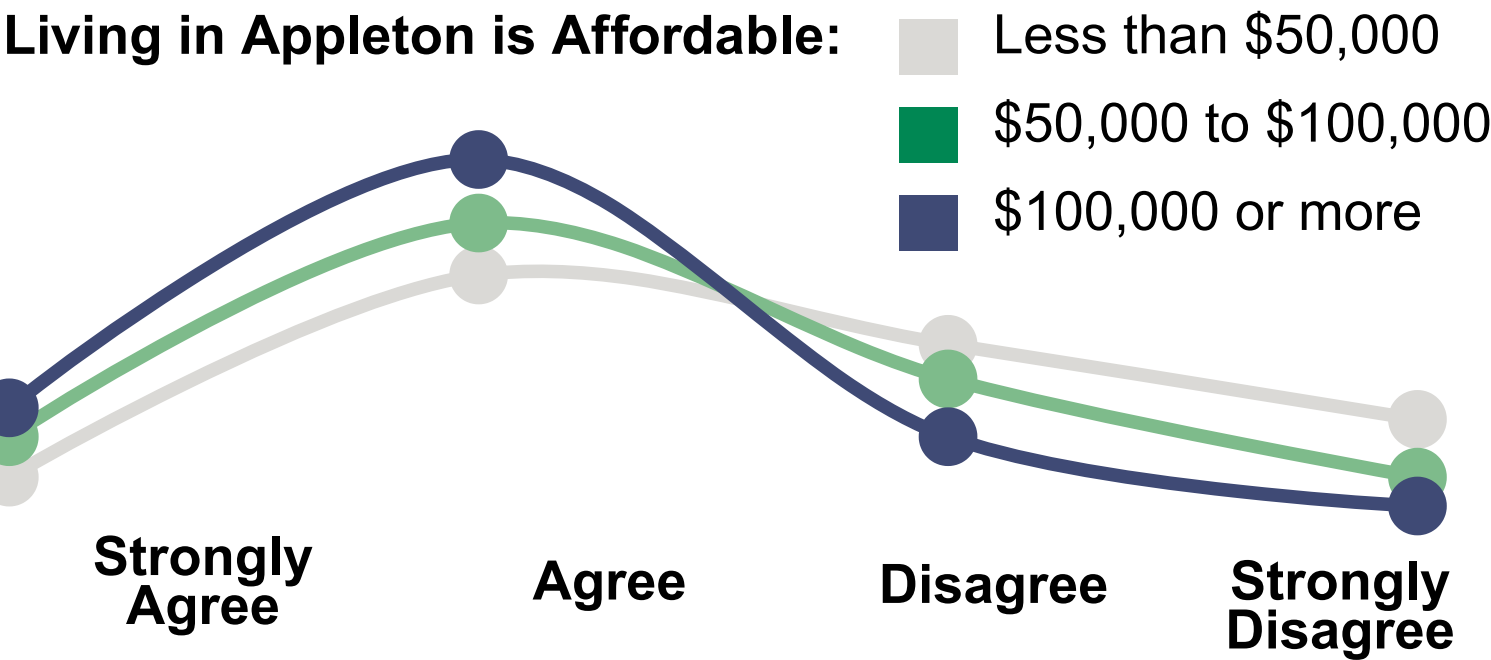
Mind Your Wellness survey respondents reported that if they make **\$150,000 + a year** they are much more likely to **know how to access mental health care**

than those who make less than \$150,000 a year



Economic Conditions

When asked if living in Appleton is affordable, survey responses indicate that households making more than \$100,000/year believe living in Appleton is more affordable than households making less than \$100,000/year.



Community Concerns Survey (percentages of survey responses based on income level)

“I feel Appleton is a great city to live in [but] I feel the expenses of living here are getting out of control. I’d hate to move out of the city but cheaper options will have to be considered if the prices keep going up (taxes, shell tax, etc) as my income doesn’t keep going up.”



Community Concerns Survey Participant

According to Community Concerns survey respondents,

15% of Appleton households **struggle to pay for basic needs** such as: food, clothing, housing, transportation, childcare, etc.

The ALICE (Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed) Threshold represents the minimum income level necessary for survival for a household. The following are the **Estimated monthly costs for a family of four living in Appleton** with two working adults and two children in childcare using data from 2023:

ALICE Household Survival Budget			ALICE Household Stability Budget		
Housing \$1,065	Transportation \$935	Childcare \$1,557	Housing \$1,753	Transportation \$1,515	Childcare \$1,664
Food \$1,293	Technology \$116	Miscellaneous \$558	Food \$2,047	Technology \$116	Miscellaneous \$778
Healthcare \$617	Tax Payments \$627		Healthcare \$688	Tax Payments \$1,234	Savings \$778
Monthly Totals \$6,768	Annual Total \$81,216	Hourly Wage \$20.31/Adult	Monthly Totals \$10,573	Annual Total \$126,876	Hourly Wage \$31.72/Adult
Only 37% of Appleton Households make more than \$100,000					

Data pulled from ALICE Household Survival Budget Calculator for 2 adults and two children (1 infant; 1 preschooler) using Outagamie, Calumet & Winnebago counties.

Neighborhood & Built Environment



“— As I am about to turn 77, I have many concerns regarding affordable and senior living, meaning less than \$1000 a month! —”
-Community Concerns Survey Participant

“— As a person with good credit, no criminal record, and a secure job, it was very difficult to find housing as a single parent. When I rented, I had no money to save at all. —”
-Community Concerns Survey Participant

“— I have many friends of various ages who qualify for low or moderate income housing. Wait lists are way too long. If we didn't own our condo, paying the very high “market rate” housing of the newer apartments downtown would threaten our future finances. —”
-Community Concerns Survey Participant

“— Housing costs in the Fox Valley as a whole are increasing at an alarming rate. These costs are quickly turning two income households into two plus income households to comfortably afford basic lifestyles. —”
-Community Concerns Survey Participant

“— Too expensive to rent and if you don't have a perfect credit you can't buy a house either. —”
-Community Concerns Survey Participant

“I am 70 years old and still working to be able to afford my apartment and expenses.”

-Community Concerns Survey Participant



only
37%
of Community
Concerns survey
respondents
agree
that Appleton has
**Safe & Affordable
Housing Options**

Barriers to Renting

Barriers that keep people from being able to rent:

- Prior Evictions
- Poor Credit History
- High Costs of Housing and Low Wages
- Raising Costs of Housing and Fixed Incomes
- Lack of Enough Affordable Housing
- Lack of Enough Supportive Housing Programs
- Long Waitlists for Apartments and Supportive Housing Units
- Complex Requirements or Processes to enter Apartments or Supportive Housing Units
- Locational Challenges (specifically related to Transportation Issues or School District Needs)
- Demand for Accessible Housing is higher than the Current Quantity
- Language Barriers

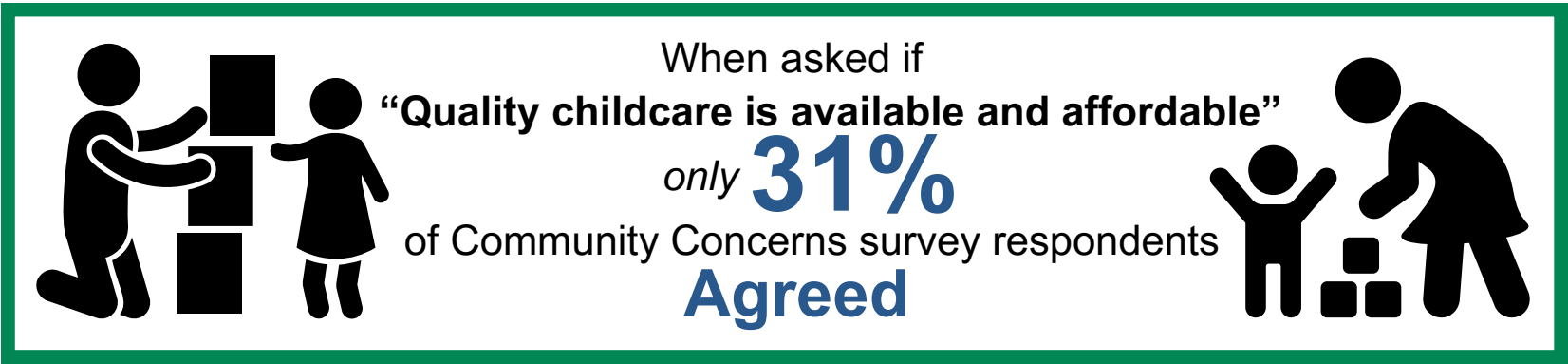


Did you know?

In Wisconsin, evictions can stay on record with the courts for twenty years, which can be used by landlords to deny rental applications.

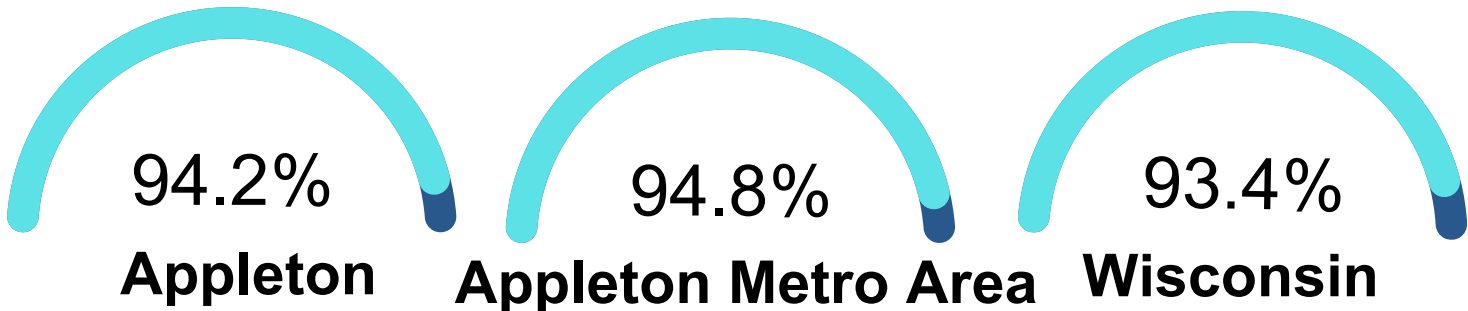
Wisconsin Watch

Education Access & Quality



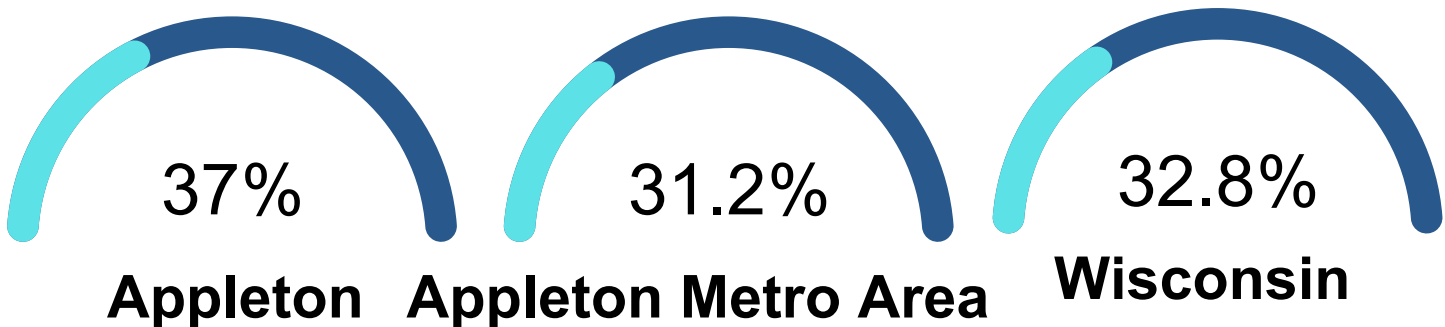
Educational Attainment

High School Graduate or higher



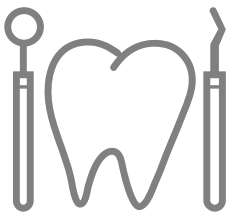
*Population 25 years and over; Census Reporter 2023

Bachelor’s degree or higher



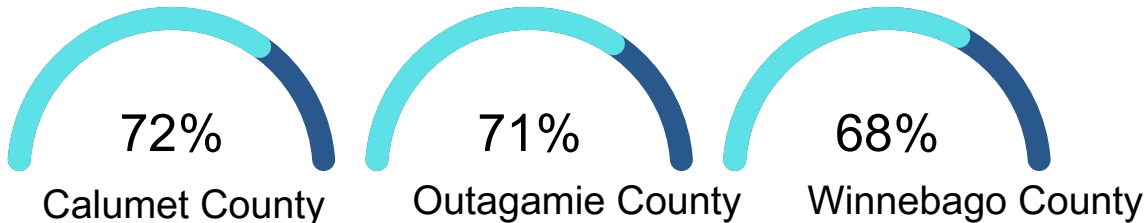
*Population 25 years and over; Census Reporter 2023

Healthcare Access & Quality



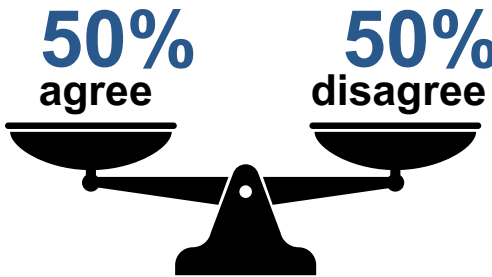
Dental Care

An estimated percent of adults aged 18 or older who report having been to the dentist or dental clinic during the past year:



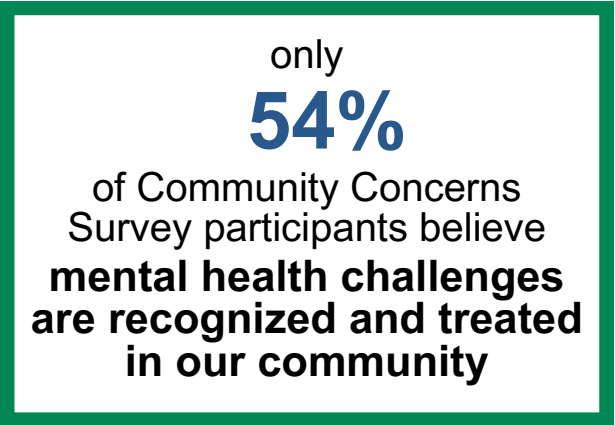
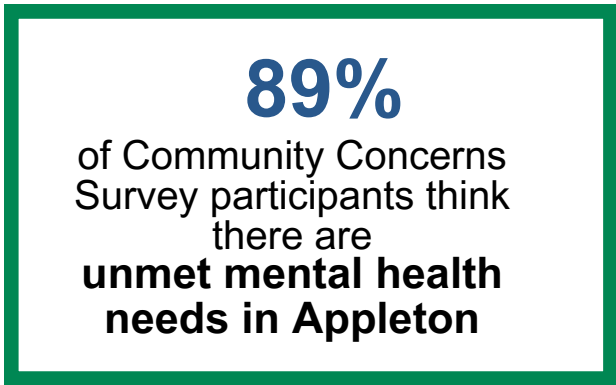
CDC PLACES: Local Data for Better Health

Dental care & preventative screenings are available for all



Community Concerns Survey

Mental Health Care



Insurance

7.9% of adults in Appleton report they **did not see a doctor** in the past 12 months when they needed to because they **could not afford it**

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

“I have health insurance, but I find it to be so expensive to get care that it causes me to hesitate to go in to the doctor.”

-Community Concerns Survey Participant

Social & Community Context

in Appleton's Community Concerns Survey,

94%

of survey respondents
enjoy a good quality of life



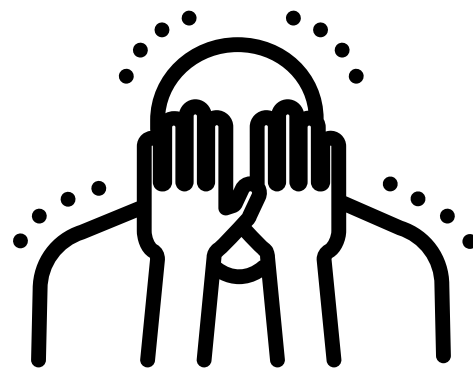
but in Imagine Fox Cities' Well-Being survey,
issued only a few years before in 2021, only

52%

of survey respondents reported
they are thriving

while
45%

of survey respondents reported
they are struggling



and

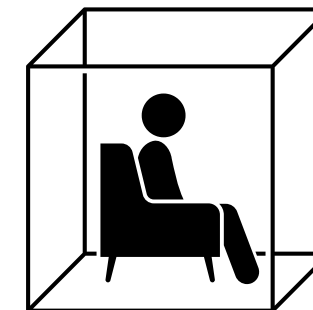
3%

of survey respondents reported
they are suffering



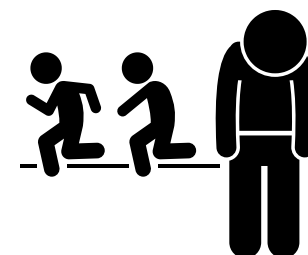
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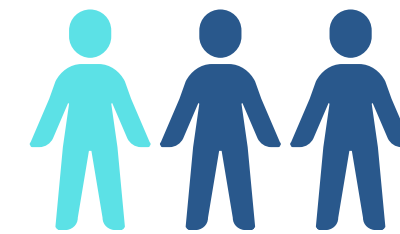
20%

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survey respondents
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18%

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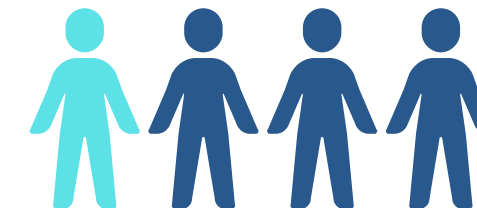


About
1 in 3
adults in the U.S.
feel lonely

"Even a person with a lot of
friends can feel lonely."

CDC, Social Connectedness

**lack of social &
emotional support**



About
1 in 4
adults in the U.S.
CDC Social Connectedness

the Mind Your Wellness Survey reported that people who report
always feeling isolated are:

- **More likely** to be experiencing chronic pain
- **More likely** to have income less than \$150,000 annually
- **49 times more likely** to have symptoms of anxiety
- **17 times more likely** to have symptoms of depression
- **Less likely** to have children

"Social isolation can pose a
health risk to people, even
if they don't feel lonely."

CDC, Social Connectedness

Summary

Where do we go from here?

From now on, we will work with the Tri-County Community Health Improvement Coalition (CHIC) to complete a more intensive Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan.

All five local public health agencies, four area health systems, and numerous diverse community organizations have come together with a shared purpose: to improve health and well-being for every individual in our communities. This isn't just about identifying a priority—it's about committing to action. Our collective focus on health and well-being means the community can expect real, meaningful change. This collaborative effort is more than an assessment—it's a promise.

A promise that we will invest our time, energy, and resources to create a community that is responsive, inclusive, and lasting. We know this work takes time. It requires listening, relationship-building, and trust. It means working through challenges and designing solutions, all of which we have begun doing together. But the reward is worth it: a future where health and well-being is not an afterthought but a foundation of the work in each of our organizations.

- Advocate Aurora Health
- Ascension
- Calumet County Public Health
- Casa Hispana
- Children's Wisconsin
- City of Appleton Health Department
- City of Menasha Health Department
- Diverse and Resilient
- Fox Valley Data Exchange
- Hmong American Partnership Fox Valley
- NEW Hmong Professionals
- NEW Mental Health Connection
- Outagamie County Health Department
- Partnership Community Health Center
- People of Progression
- Samaritan Fox Valley
- ThedaCare
- United Way Fox Cities
- Winnebago County Health Department
- YMCA of the Fox Cities