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2018 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT



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INTRODUCTION

Chattanooga is not the same city it was 50 years ago. The city has changed from an old, industrial, polluted, dying city to a hub of startups, technology and innovation. Businesses are moving to Chattanooga, forming in Chattanooga, transforming Chattanooga. The high-speed Internet service that gives the city the moniker “Gig City” has helped generate nearly 3,000 new jobs in the area. Wages are growing faster than in almost any other city of the same size. The success and energy of Chattanooga crosses from the business sectors to the public sector. Public education, private education, city government, entrepreneurs, and nonprofits come together to solve problems. Chattanooga has an ethic of working together through public-private partnerships.

Information was collected from (1) primary research including focus groups and surveys, and from (2) secondary research including Kids Count website, US Census Data, and a variety of community information sources.

Sources are indicated throughout this document. The outline and structure of this Community Assessment follows the Community Needs Assessment methodology outlined on the Office of Head Start’s website (<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>).

The early childhood community in Hamilton county is highly engaged and highly informed, as evidenced by the interactions

occurring as part of the community assessment collection process.

Chattanooga’s investment in quality early childhood education goes back more than 50 years. But they haven’t been satisfied to stand on the past. Continual improvement and growth can be seen throughout the program; since 2000, the Chattanooga HS/EHS had been named a “Program of Excellence”. One of the first to implement Early Head Start in their region, Chattanooga’s EHS program has been used as a model training site, with programs coming from around the United States to learn from them. Chattanooga HS/EHS builds the strength of the

INTRODUCTION

program and the impact on their community through expansion grants, professional development, multi-disciplinary family training, medical & dental care, disabilities care, and community partnerships. And, as the city is changing, the program is changing. Head Start and Early Head Start parents & children can now receive services in Spanish. Currently the program serves over 900 children.

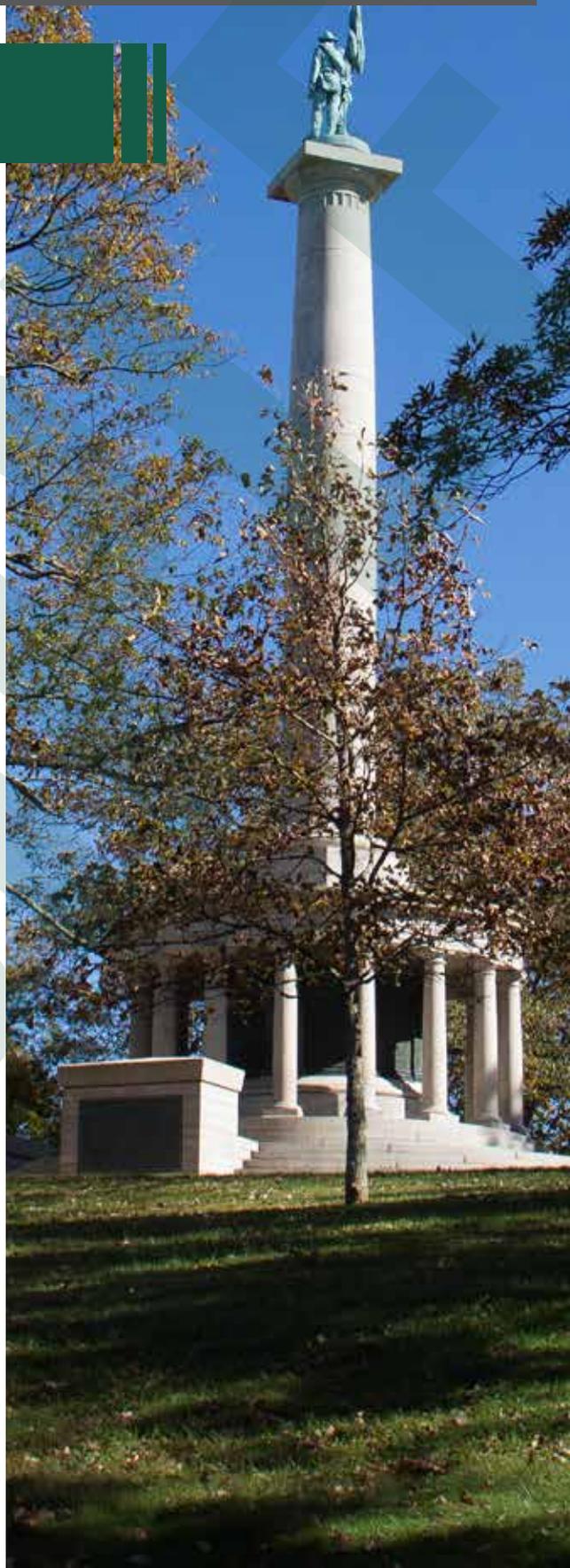
Research indicates the participants (families) are very satisfied with the program, which is governed by a Governing Board comprised of one representative from each of the 9 City districts, nominated by City Council and voted on by Council, one representative from the County Mayor's office, and two nominated by the City Mayor and voted on by City Council. The Board includes members with expertise in finance, law and ECE. The Mayor works in concert with the city's Department of Youth and Family Development, Office of Early Learning, Head Start Administrative Staff, a Policy Council consisting of parents of children enrolled in the program and community members with content expertise in child development and related fields. Together, this leadership team provides direction and oversight to Head Start and Early Head Start program leadership.

Staff work directly with a variety of partners, including health and mental health professionals, family services workers, and private child care programs.

Partners and community stakeholders see the positive impact Chattanooga HS/EHS has in the community according to the research conducted for this study.

Some of the concerns that rose to the top during the course of this research included: small pockets of poverty being left behind as the city gentrifies, the need to ensure Head Start and Early Head Start families can benefit from Chattanooga's rebirth as Gig City, and the mental health toll on families faced with violence, death, incarceration, and quickly rising costs of living. Each of these problems are on the rise in the service area.

The following pages provide a deeper dive into each of the relevant areas of the Community Needs Assessment.



ELIGIBLE FAMILIES

As seen in the table, the populations of Chattanooga and Hamilton County are diverse.

	HAMILTON COUNTY		CHATTANOOGA	
	2015	2018	2015	2018
POPULATION	336,463	357,738	176,588	173,366
White	73%	76%	57%	56.9%
African-American	20%	(Same)	34%	32.9%
Latino	4%	5.4%	5%	5.6%

Poverty visits children at a much higher rate than it does adults in our community; 23.9% of children under 5 in Hamilton county are living below the poverty level. Poverty also falls on African American and Latino people at a much higher rate than the white population. In the City of Chattanooga, African American households continue to earn an average of \$26,787 per year which remains consistent from last year's report while the average income of white persons is \$51,548 (no statistically relevant change). Likewise, 60% of African American children live in poverty, compared to only 16.5 % of white children and 39.1 % of Latino children (no statistically relevant change).

Poverty rates are highest among non-white populations.

	HAMILTON COUNTY		CHATTANOOGA	
	2015	2018	2015	2018
POPULATION	336,463	357,738	176,588	173,366
White	10.7%	11.3%	15.7%	12.4%
African-American	35.4%	27.9%	33.6%	32.9%
Latino	34.8%	30.5%	39.1%	37.4%

ELIGIBLE FAMILIES

The following statistics contribute to understanding poverty in Hamilton County:

1) Children receiving TANF grants fell from 4210 (5.6%) in 2014 to 2794 (3.7%) at the time of this report

2) Children receiving SNAP benefits fell from 24,473 (32.7%) in 2014 to 22,679 (30.3%) at the time of this report

3) Infants and children receiving WIC benefits fell from 6287 (30.3%) in 2014 to 6234 (29.9%) at the time of this report

Families living just above the poverty level can experience many of the same challenges as those below the poverty level.

ALL INDIVIDUALS WITH INCOME BELOW THE FOLLOWING POVERTY RATIOS	
50 percent of poverty level	21,159
125 percent of poverty level	67,647
150 percent of poverty level	83,733
185 percent of poverty level	107,957
200 percent of poverty level	116,553
300 percent of poverty level	175,270
400 percent of poverty level	223,858
500 percent of poverty level	258,545

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE NEEDS

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Drugs like cocaine, heroin and especially methamphetamine continue to pose a public health threat in Tennessee. The production of meth is extremely dangerous as the chemicals used are highly flammable and produce poisonous fumes. Given that meth is often cooked in makeshift labs, explosions are all too common. Aside from those risks, meth can cause long term damage to users' brains and bodies.

- **Around 800 meth laboratories are believed to be operating in Tennessee at any given time.**
- **The number of arrests related to heroin have risen from 169 in 2009 to over 1,500, which is an 800 percent increase.**
- **More than 1,400 individuals are admitted to treatment programs in Tennessee for cocaine annually.**

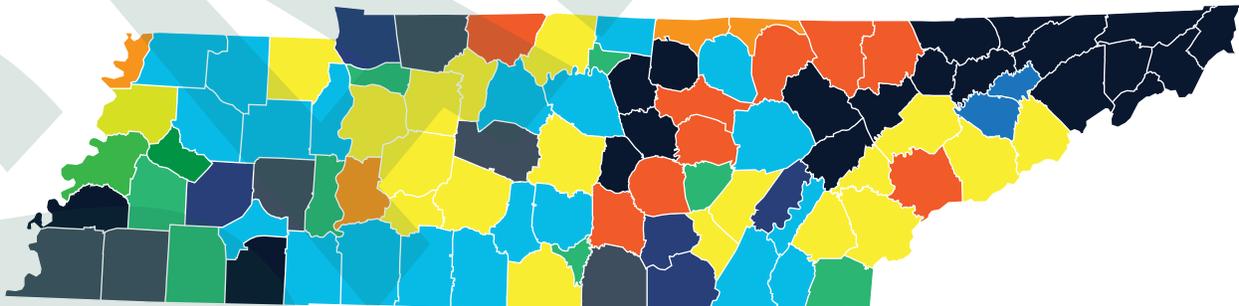
(source for drug stats - <https://www.lakeviewhealth.com/resources/substance-abuse-statistics/tennessee/>)

NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN TO ADDICTED MOTHERS

A child is born with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) every half hour in the US. (nbcnews.com October 9 2017 Born Addicted: the number of opiod addicted babies is soaring)

The problem is so bad that eight of the region's district attorneys general are suing opioid manufacturers on behalf of local babies born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) in 24 counties.

Tennessee is part of a cluster of states, including Alabama and Kentucky, experiencing some of the highest rates of NAS births. In East Tennessee the problem is particularly acute: Sullivan County alone reported a rate of 50.5 cases of NAS per 1,000 births, the highest rate in the state for five years running.

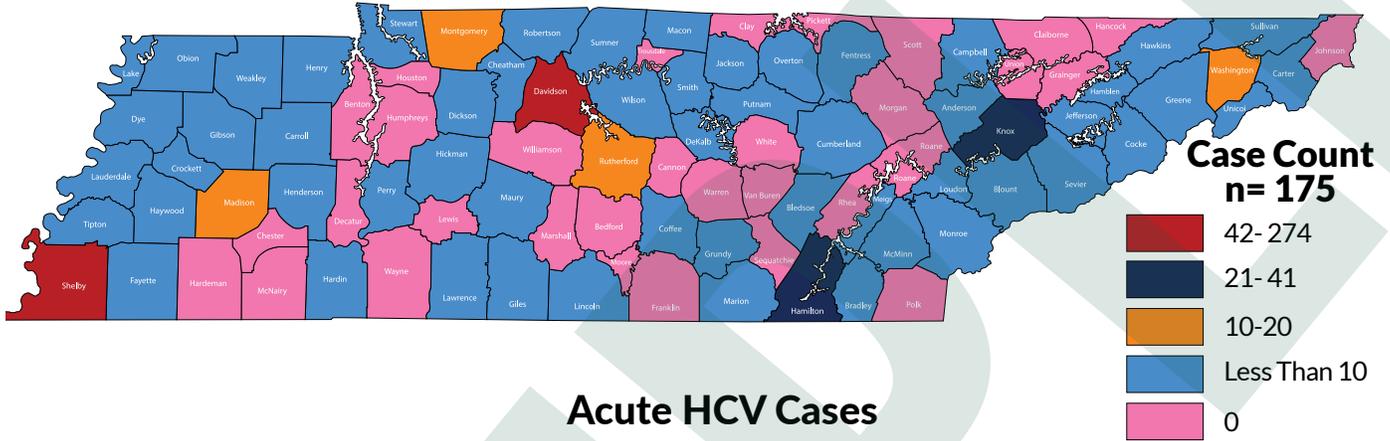


Rate per 1,000 live births:

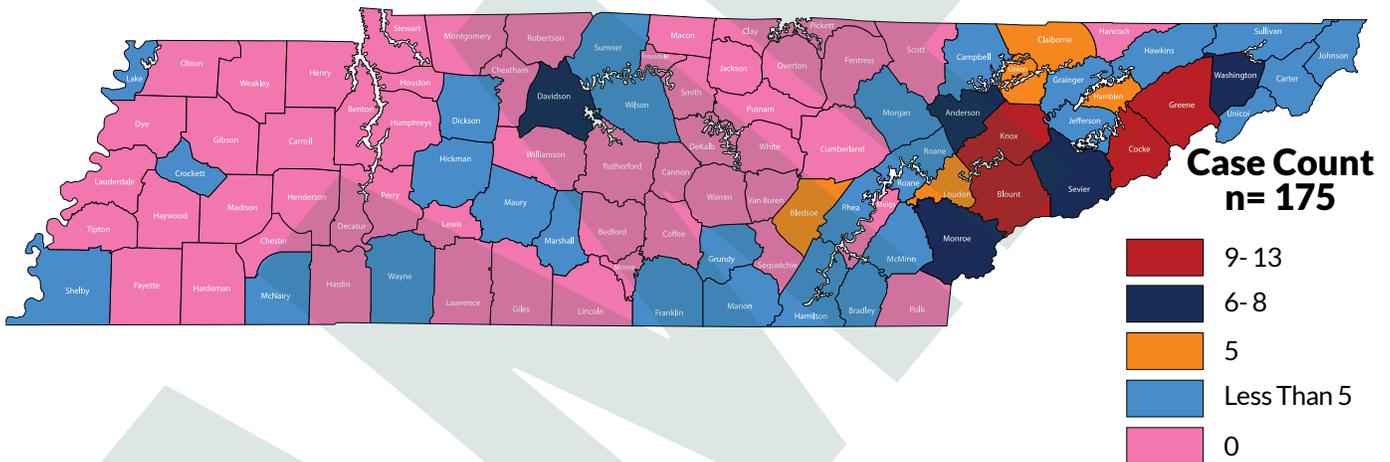


HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE NEEDS

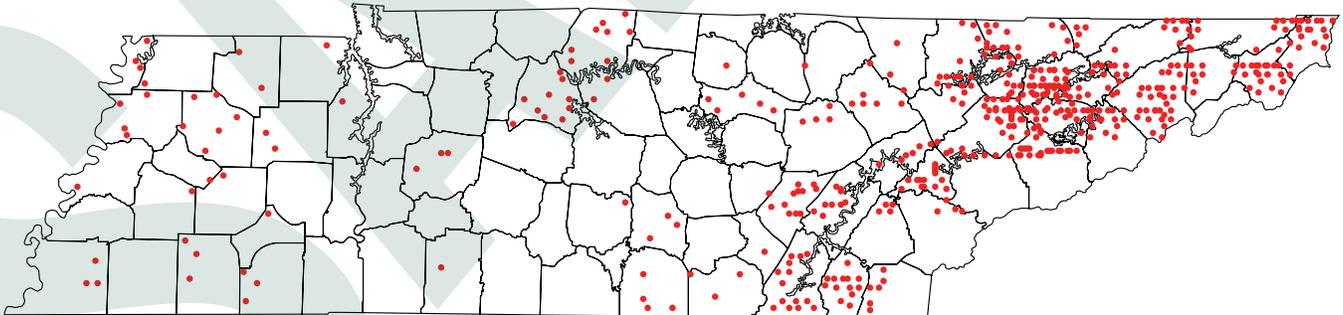
Newly Diagnosed HIV Cases



Acute HCV Cases



Hamilton County continues to face higher than average rates of newly diagnosed HIV cases
(Source: Tennessee Department of Health)



Graphic: 9 cases of Hepatitis A have been reported in Hamilton County between May and July 2018. Source: TN Department of Health

NUTRITION NEEDS OF ELIGIBLE FAMILIES

Food stamp recipients

LOCATION	Data Type	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Tennessee	Number	119,929	116,024	108,253	94,648	86,595	70,483	56,177
	Percent	8.0%	7.8%	7.3%	6.4%	5.8%	4.7%	3.8%
Hamilton	Number	6,174	5,938	5,319	4,504	4,210	3,430	2,794
	Percent	8.5%	8.1%	7.1%	6.0%	5.6%	4.6%	3.7%

Laws are changing that result in families being ineligible for public assistance beyond two years. The table above shows that the number of food stamp recipients has declined starting in 2015.

Looking at median income levels in Hamilton County, it is clear that assistance is not being replaced with income.

Median household income:

LOCATION	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Tennessee	\$42,743	\$44,268	\$44,357	\$47,243	\$48,506
Hamilton	\$47,369	\$47,373	\$48,380	\$48,943	\$48,690

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS



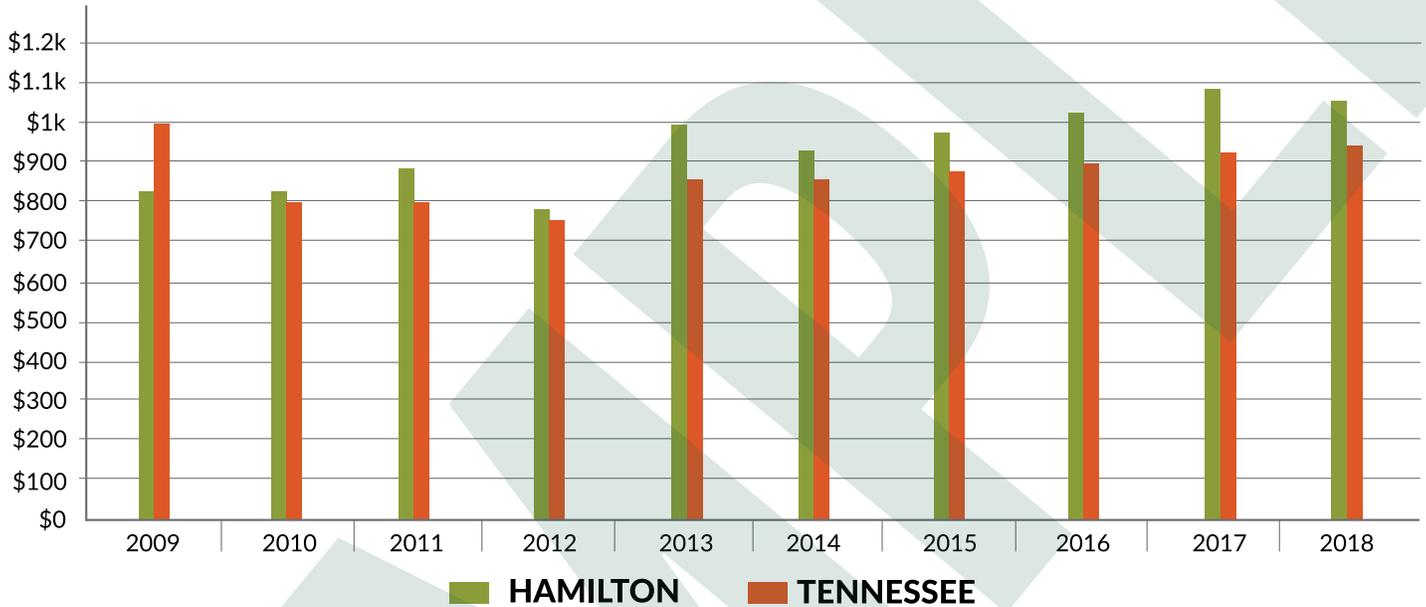
Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke prepares to sign an executive order Monday, March 19, 2018 at City Hall in Chattanooga, Tenn. The executive order established the City of Chattanooga's Interagency Council on Homelessness. Photo by Erin O. Smith

The Point in Time homeless count reported to Housing and Urban Development for the southeastern Tennessee Continuum of Care indicates 576 total homeless persons in January 2017. 298 of those were housed in emergency shelters, and another 61 were placed in transitional housing. The balance, 217 individuals, were unsheltered. Families with children in need of emergency shelter are supported by the McClellan Shelter for Families (39 beds), Interfaith Homeless Network (11 beds), and Partnership for Children and Families (27 beds).

Source: homelesschattanooga.org

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

One out of every two households in Chattanooga’s city center and adjacent neighborhoods lives in unaffordable housing and are burdened by housing costs. More than a quarter of all renters are severely burdened, paying more than 50 percent of their total income on housing costs.



Fair market rent has been rising in Hamilton County at a faster rate than in the rest of Tennessee.

Downtown Chattanooga ranks fourth for Hamilton county’s share of new residences in the next decade at 13 percent, with 831 new homes and 921 apartments expected. Community leaders interviewed for this report hear from residents that low income housing is being replaced with higher cost housing, as the downtown area becomes gentrified. This can cause a crisis for low income residents, who cannot afford an increase in housing costs.

Cultural forces drive gentrification, as both the youthful millennial generation and aging Baby Boomers want to live in walkable, mixed-used neighborhoods,

COST OF LIVING	Chattanooga	Tennessee	USA
Overall	88	88	100
Grocery	98.3	94.4	100
Health	93	92	100
Housing	67	73	100
Median Home Cost	\$140,300	\$156,800	\$216,200
Utilities	94	91	100
Transportation	99	94	100
Miscellaneous	97	96	100

2017:

The Enterprise Center (TEC) transportation workshop for Oak Ridge National Laboratory's TennSmart program

2010:

Company Lab formed to spur startups

2008:

Volkswagen chooses Chattanooga for new manufacturing plant



1992:

Tennessee Aquarium



1991:

Walnut Street Pedestrian Bridge (built 1890, restored 1991)



Late 1970's:

Post-industrial, stagnant economy, outmigration, shuttered manufacturing parks



2010:

Electric Power Board (EPB) begins offering 1 Gig internet service

2007:

"CreateHere" formed to support arts & entrepreneurship

1995:

Creative Discovery Museum



1989:

Tennessee Riverwalk

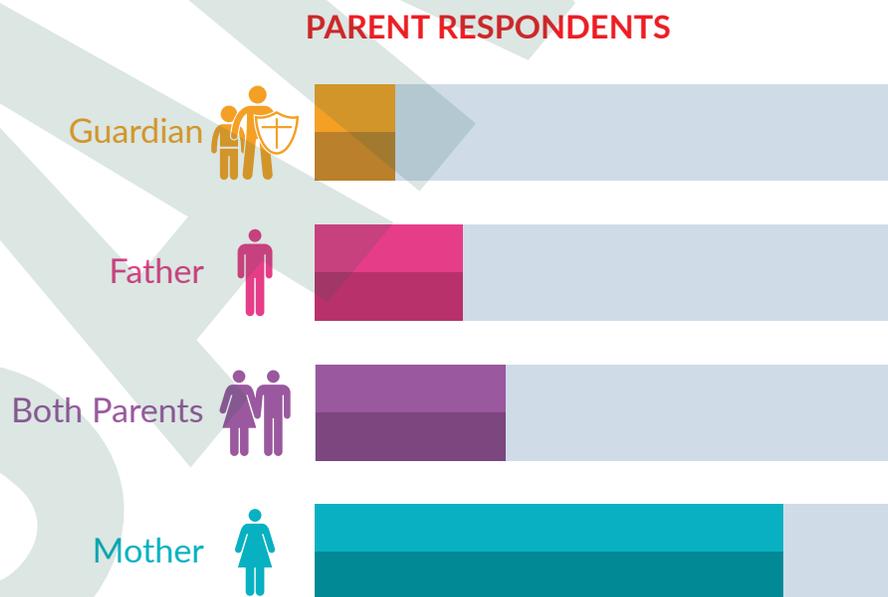
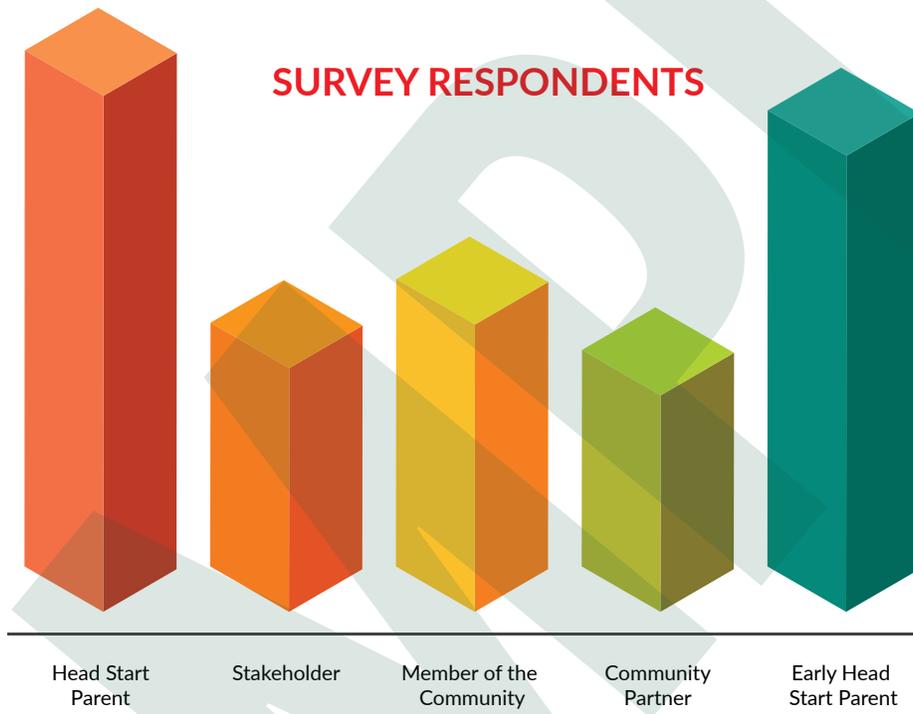


1980's:

Vision 2000 community visioning

OPINIONS OF COMMUNITY

103 people responded to the bilingual (Spanish and English) survey. The majority of respondents were Head Start and Early Head Start parents. We also conducted focus group interviews with Head Start staff and community members. All inputs are reflected in this section.



OPINIONS OF COMMUNITY

Early Head Start and Head Start staff report a different Chattanooga for the families they serve than is reflected in the “Gig City” reporting. *“Many of our families are dealing with death due to violence. Parents are dealing with mental health issues.*



Families are living in unstable environments, *exposed to gang violence, domestic violence. Families are unstable, so the kids are unstable.* They are very, very emotional. We had so many parents murdered, children witnessing murders.

Family members are left to take care of the children in the aftermath. Now we have more and *more foster children, grandparents and great grandparents raising children.* It's not just here – there is a new trend of foster kids being brought into the area from other areas.”

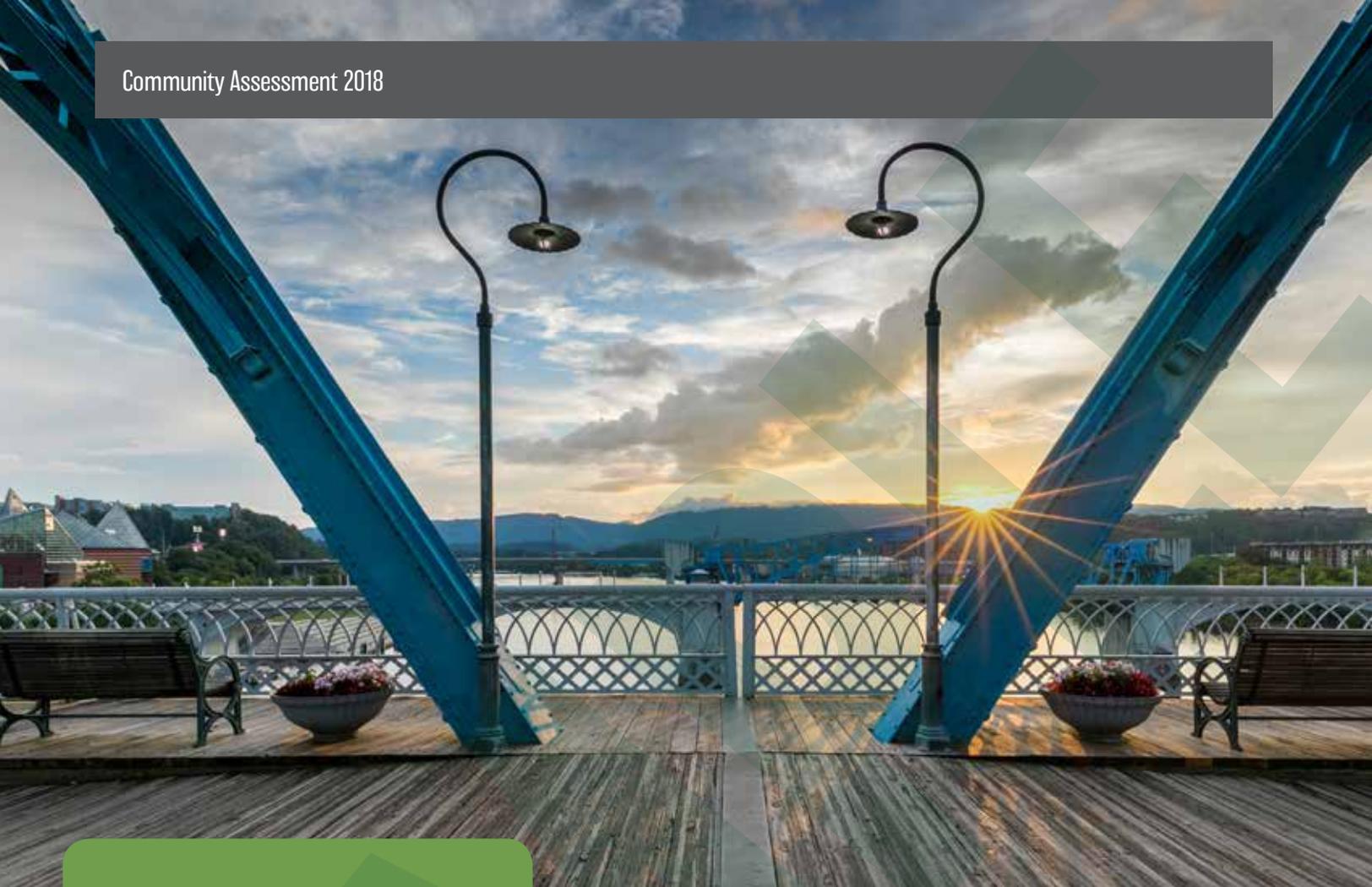
Poverty

Even in the “new” Chattanooga, there is little integration of children from different socio economic backgrounds. Those with certificates for free child care have one set of care, the private pay families go somewhere else. There is poverty throughout Hamilton county. But there are concentrated areas of poverty. St. Elmo is an upwardly mobile neighborhood, but the next neighborhood is plagued by generational poverty. Resources don't overlap; concentrated poverty can be right next to a flourishing community.

Now, subsidized housing families can get housing out of the city a bit, and some of them are moving out. Lots of kids live in the weekly stay hotels. There is a tent city right next to new million dollar condos in the downtown area. The property was condemned and they moved out the homeless but they didn't have anywhere to go.

Role of Head Start and Early Head Start

The staff sees a need to improve the community's awareness of the resources available through Head Start, and the outcomes that are being achieved. People think Head Start is just a place to drop off kids, if they know anything about it at all. But it's so much more.



OPPORTUNITY

Strategically leverage findings of the CNA to strengthen collaboration

RECOMMENDATION

The process of gathering timely data and feedback from key members of the community, such as clients, current partners, and potential partners can serve as an accelerator for continued collaboration and collective problem-solving for Chattanooga's needs.

The City of Chattanooga Youth and Family Development Head Start / Early Head Start Program can leverage the CNA to deepen stakeholder engagement in the community, and use the information to educate the public further on the current state and needs of the community served by Head Start / Early Head Start, as well as further communicate CYFD's programs and services. Leveraging the CNA as an information resource will ultimately position CYFD HS/EHS as a lead convener and advocate in the community.



**THANK
YOU**