

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

GEAUGA COUNTY

20
23



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GEAUGA COUNTY 2019-2022

United Way Services of Geauga County, with the support of United Way of Greater Cleveland, is committed to finding solutions to help residents of the communities we serve move from poverty to prosperity. For over 100 years, we have helped people in crisis with immediate relief for basic human needs. To get out of crisis mode, people need to reach a level of wealth and influence that will withstand a crisis – no longer living one crisis away from falling back into poverty. **Every few years, a Community Needs Assessment is conducted in partnership with the Center for Community Solutions to gather and analyze data.**

The assessment is organized into three community strategies: **Economic Mobility, Health Pathways, and Housing Stability.** This executive summary provides a synopsis of the assessment.

Each section includes secondary data, most of which is based on U.S. Census data and is therefore trackable over time. Some data points reflect Mobility Metrics from the Urban Institute, part of a framework for conditions that boost upward mobility and narrow racial inequalities. This year's report highlights key findings from complementary local assessments to create a fuller picture of our shared regional understanding. Finally, sections conclude with United Way 211 data from January 2018 through March 2023. As pandemic-related supports cease and the region's economy adjusts to post-pandemic norms, United Way 211 social need data can serve as an early indicator of stabilization or emerging challenges.

This Needs Assessment is a starting point and limited to data sets that do not reflect identities like disability status, sexual orientation, or gender. Incorporation of stakeholder voices, assessment of community assets, and policy analysis are also necessary for finding workable systems-level solutions.

Key Findings

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Economic mobility focuses on early childhood development and income progression, emphasizing the need to improve kindergarten readiness and address income disparities. **One third of Geauga children are not ready for kindergarten** at the start of the school year, starting school at a disadvantage. The disparity varies by school district. The county benefits from low rates of student mobility within the school year, with a high of 8.2% in Cardinal Local School District, the same district with the highest rate of students (61%) that are not ready for kindergarten.

Young adults, in particular, need support to identify and pursue pathways to financial stability and success. While the county has a high rate of residents obtaining advanced degrees and high wages, **fewer residents complete high school compared to the rest of Ohio. Black residents are less likely to obtain a bachelor's degree, a key driver of income in the county.**

HEALTH PATHWAYS

The Health Pathways section discusses health disparities, food insecurity and behavioral health. **Geauga County has an overall life expectancy of 80.9 years**, above the state and national averages. **Disparities exist for some residents.** Women experience increasing high incidents of breast cancer and older adults have rising rates of atrial fibrillation, increasing the risk of stroke and congestive heart failure. Some health trends are more pronounced among minority residents, such as higher infant mortality among Black families.

Community health includes the built environment and access to quality food. While food insecurity has decreased from 2017 to 2021, early 2023 data from United Way 211 indicates a greater need for food, especially after the expiration of expanded SNAP benefits in March 2023.

Specific to behavioral health, while drug overdoses have fallen, **Geauga residents experience more behavioral health needs than the state average.** Residents have higher rates of depression among adults (21.5% versus 18.4% state average), smoking (17.7% versus 14.3% state average) and adults with poor mental health days (14.4% versus 13.5% state average). Finally, children have lower rates of insurance coverage compared to the state as a whole, which may keep kids from necessary well child and sick care. Over 16 percent of children ages 5 and younger in Geauga County were uninsured in 2021, more than 3.5 times the uninsured rate for young children across Ohio.

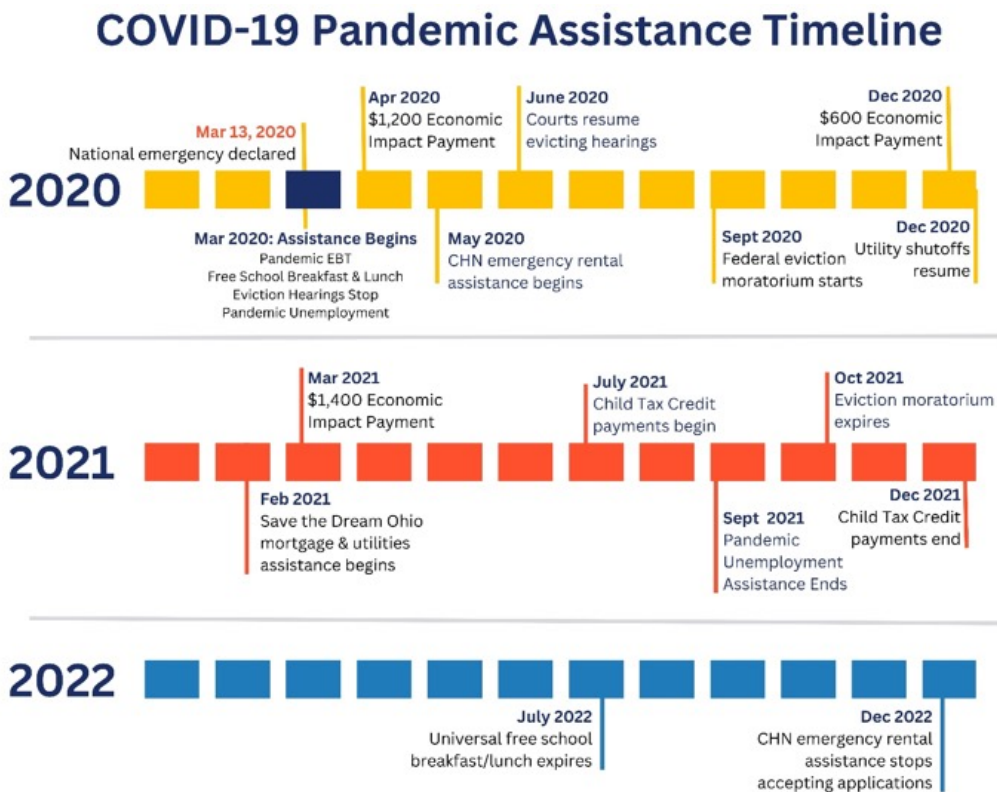
HOUSING STABILITY

The Housing Stability section reveals high rates of unaffordable housing, especially among female household renters and older adults. While homelessness is low, resources are needed to help families stabilize. Regarding housing, the area is fortunate to have newer housing stock with fewer contaminants like lead and asbestos. Nevertheless, housing affordability is particularly challenging for renters. Renters continue to be less likely to live in affordable housing, compared to homeowners. **Only 49% of older adults who rent have affordable housing, compared to 83% of older adult homeowners.** This is particularly challenging for the growing population of older adults in the county and those who may wish to downsize to a rental unit.

National and Local Context

COVID-19 exposed deep health disparities in the community, with some children excelling in remote learning while others struggled. Mental health issues reached an all-time high, and social isolation became a nearly universal experience. Unemployment rates soared, and many people sought assistance for basic needs for the first time. The pandemic brought issues of race and racism to the forefront of public consciousness, and the United Way of Greater Cleveland intensified its commitment to identify and dismantle systemic racism.

The pandemic also led to positive changes which staved off economic crisis for many residents. Moratoriums and emergency assistance for renters and mortgage holders kept people housed. Economic Impact stimulus payments and the enhanced Child Tax Credit put money in the pockets of everyday people when working adults left the workforce to care for children. As the pandemic slowly receded, labor market forces caused many companies to raise wages and improve benefits to attract workers. Additionally, the swift distribution of COVID-19 vaccines included targeted efforts to ensure that low-income individuals and communities of color, who are often underserved in healthcare, had access to the vaccines. These changes offer a hopeful glimpse at potential systems-level solutions to some of the community's most pressing issues.



When comparing Geauga County to the state of Ohio, we can see that county residents are less diverse than the rest of the state, have similar labor force participation, and are less likely to live in poverty across age groups. In Geauga County, less than 6% of the population live in poverty, with another 12% near poverty (18.2%), compared to the state

averages of 13.4% in poverty and 30% in or near poverty. **Approximately 5,500 people live below the poverty level in Geauga County**, with approximately **12,000 additional people in or near poverty**.

COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	Geauga		Ohio
Population	95,408		11,769,923
Under age 18	21,883	22.9%	22.3%
Ages 18-64	53,957	56.6%	60.6%
Ages 65+	19,568	20.5%	17.0%
Race	Count	%	%
White	90,648	95.0%	79.6%
Black/African-American	1,043	1.1%	12.3%
Asian-American/Pacific Islander	509	0.5%	2.4%
American Indian/Alaska Native	65	0.1%	0.2%
Other race reported	478	0.5%	1.2%
Two or more races	2,665	2.8%	4.3%
Ethnicity	Count	%	%
Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	1,572	1.6%	4.3%
Disability Status	Count	%	%
With a disability	9,376	9.9%	13.9%

Source: 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates

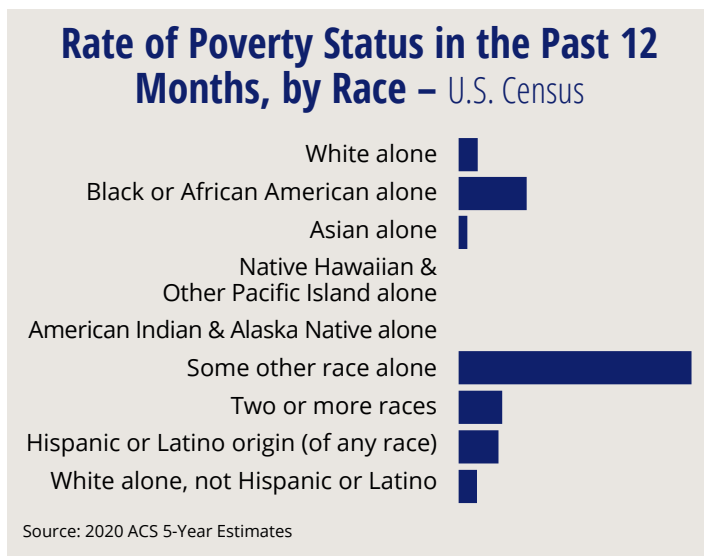
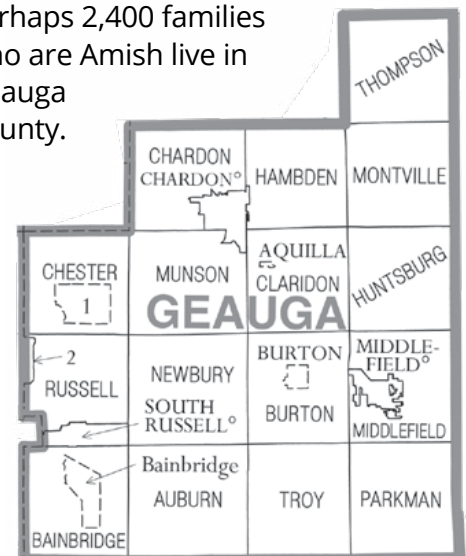
Income, Employment & Poverty	Geauga		Ohio
Median Household Income	\$90,285		\$61,938
Employment (Ages 16 and older)	%		%
Labor Force Participation	65.2%		63.3%
Unemployment Rate	3.1%		5.3%
Income & Poverty	Count	%	%
Persons living below poverty	5,502	5.8%	13.4%
Children (Ages 0-17) below poverty	1,228	5.7%	18.6%
Families w/children living below poverty	504	4.8%	15.6%
Older Adults (Ages 60+) below poverty	1,625	6.3%	9.3%
Persons in deep poverty (under 50% of poverty)	2,445	2.6%	6.1%
Persons in or near poverty (under 200% of poverty)	17,168	18.2%	29.9%

Source: 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Older adults living in Geauga County are more likely to live in poverty than other age group, compared to the state of Ohio as a whole, where children are more likely to be in poverty than older adults.

In Geauga, poverty affects individuals across the county. Regarding White residents, only 5.4% live in poverty or 4,826 individuals. Poverty impacts 19% of Black residents or 212 individuals and 65% of residents who identify as another race, or 221 individuals.

Gauga County is home to a significant Amish population. The Geauga Amish Community extends to portions of Portage, Trumbull and Ashtabula counties. Within Geauga County, most members of the Amish community live in Middlefield and Parkman townships, followed by Huntsburg, Troy, and Burton. Finally, a smaller number of families reside in Montville and Claridon. Local service providers estimate that perhaps 2,400 families who are Amish live in Geauga County.



ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Intergenerational economic mobility – the likelihood that children born into families with low wealth can achieve a higher standard of living – is often hampered by high rates of poverty, shrinking populations, and declining economic standing. The Economic Mobility strategy is about making sure kids start kindergarten ready to learn and paving career pathways to financial success.

Starting Strong

In Geauga County, a third of children are not ready for kindergarten at the start of the school year, starting school at a disadvantage. The disparity varies by school district. Early childhood education should be prioritized, particularly in communities with the highest need. Overall, students experience low mobility during the school year, meaning students are more stable within a school or district.

Pathways to Financial Success

Young adults, in particular, need support to identify and pursue pathways to financial stability and success, such as career planning, post-secondary education, and homeownership opportunities. In Geauga County, residents have a higher share of bachelor's and graduate degrees than the state and mean earnings rise with education levels, yet some groups are less likely to attain a bachelor's degree or higher. Unemployment remains low in the county, with some post-pandemic increases.



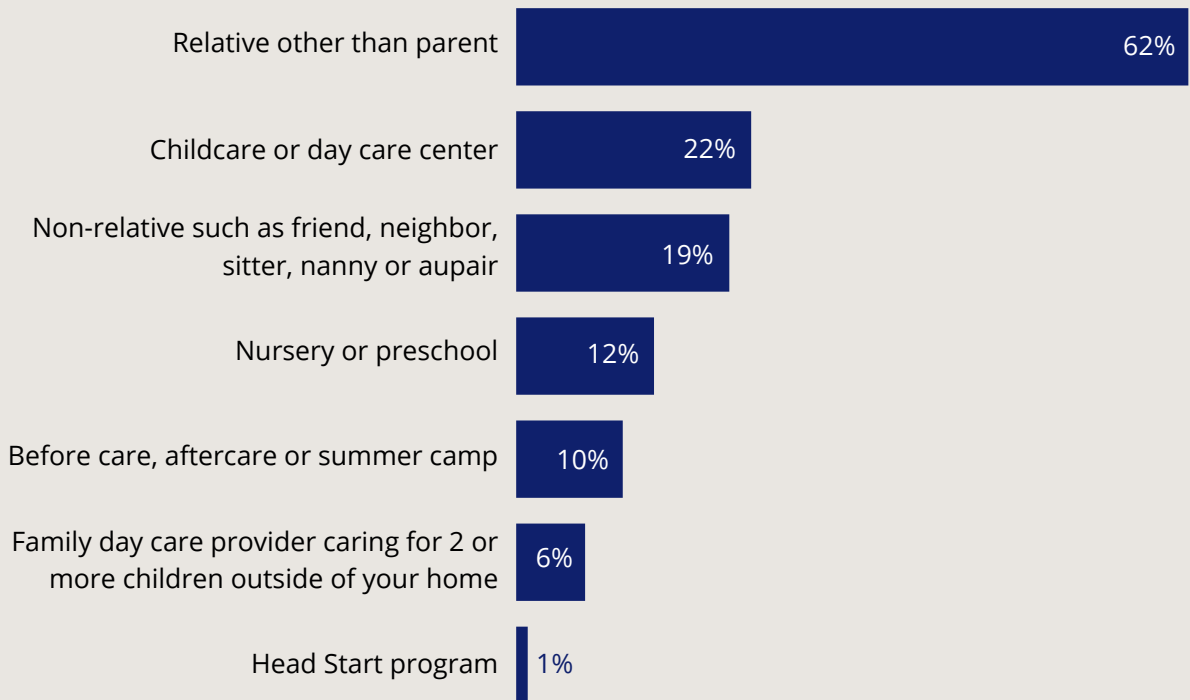
SECONDARY DATA: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND OUTCOMES

Child Care

For families with young children, paying for childcare can be a substantial portion of their regular expenses. Of those in Ohio who paid for during the first half of February 2023, the mean payment for a week of childcare was \$291.00. During that same time period, the most common arrangement for childcare was with a relative other than a parent. The relative may be a sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or other non-parent. The second most common arrangement was at a childcare or day care center. The least common arrangement was in federally funded Head Start programs.

Arrangements for Child Care

Census Household Pulse Data, Ohio
Week 54, February 1 - February 13, 2023

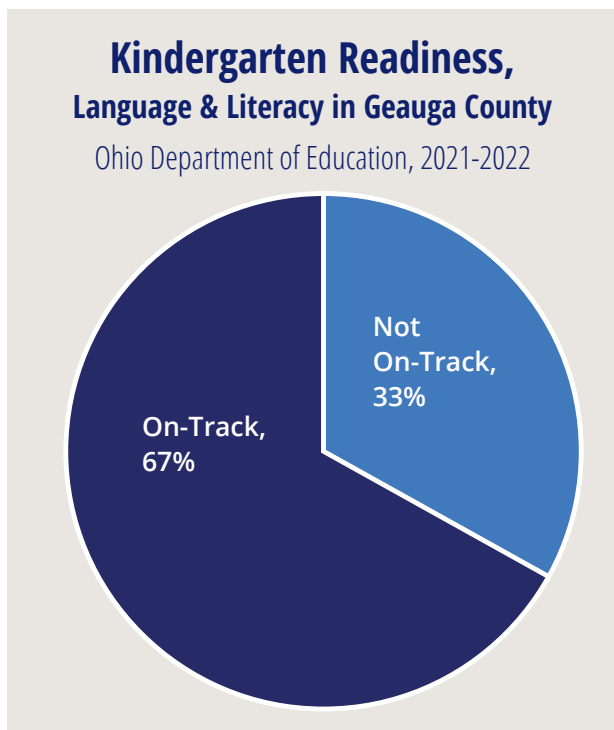
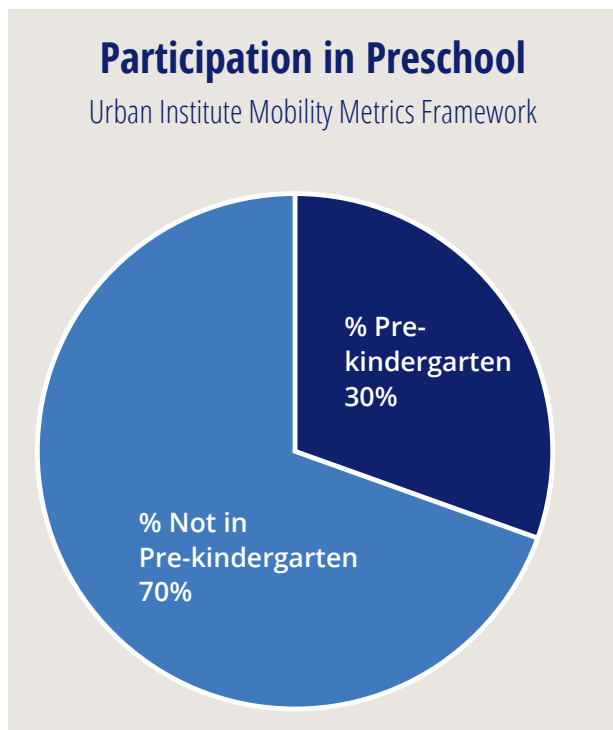


Source: U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey Data, 2023

Kindergarten Readiness

Urban Institute Mobility Metrics Framework examines participation in preschool as an important indicator of early childhood education and its potential impact on future outcomes. By measuring access to and enrollment in preschool programs, the framework aims to provide insights into the potential long-term effects on educational and economic mobility for individuals and families in urban areas.

Participation in preschool measures the share of 3- to 4- year-olds in a community who are in nursery school or preschool. A little less than one-third (30%) of all children aged 3 to 4 in Geauga are in nursery school or preschool. This means that a majority of toddlers may lack helpful skills that will help them to learn more easily in the classroom.

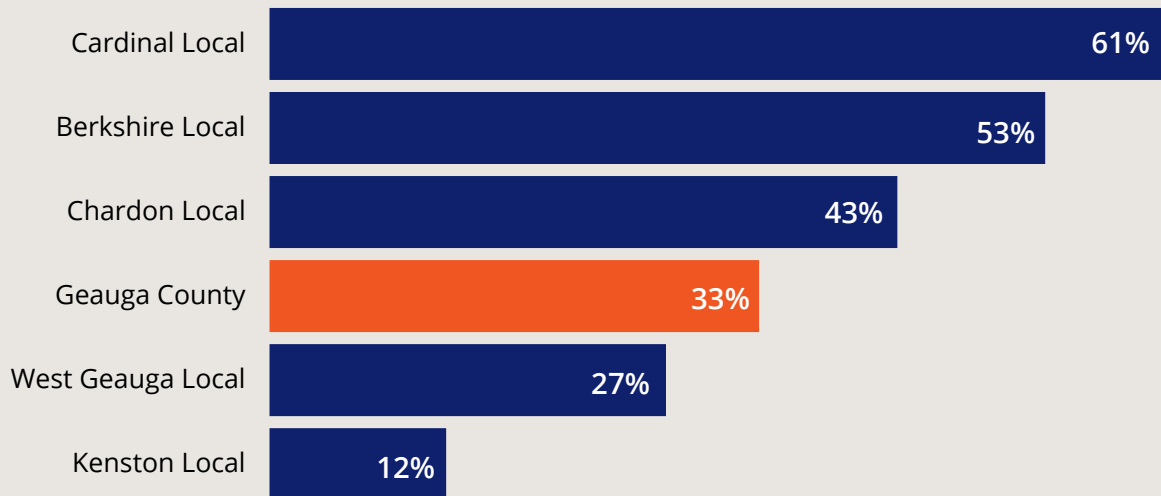


Source: Urban Institute Mobility Index Analysis, Geauga, OH, 2018, Provided February 2023



Students Not On-Track to be Ready for Kindergarten

Ohio Department of Education, 2021-2022



Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2021-2022

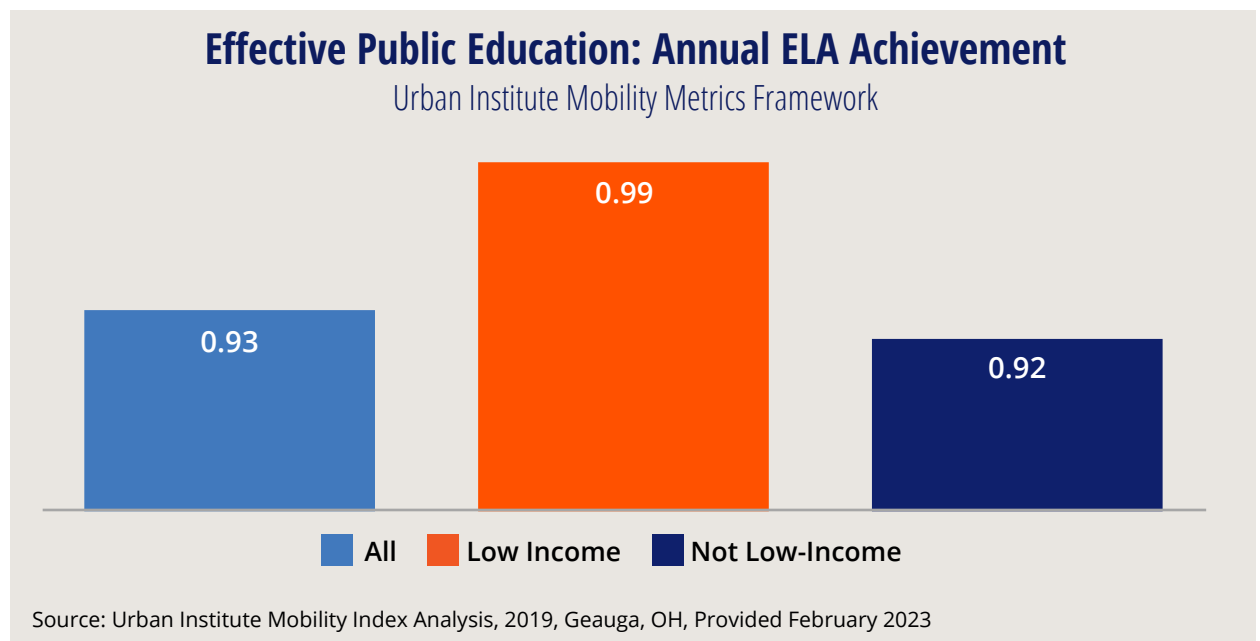
One-third of the children in the county are not on-track to be ready for Kindergarten according to data provided by the Ohio Department of Public Education. More than half of children entering Kindergarten in two school districts in Geauga County are not on-track in the areas of language and literacy, indicating a significant need for early childhood education interventions.

Source: Urban Institute Mobility Index Analysis, Geauga, OH, Provided February 2023



K-12 Education

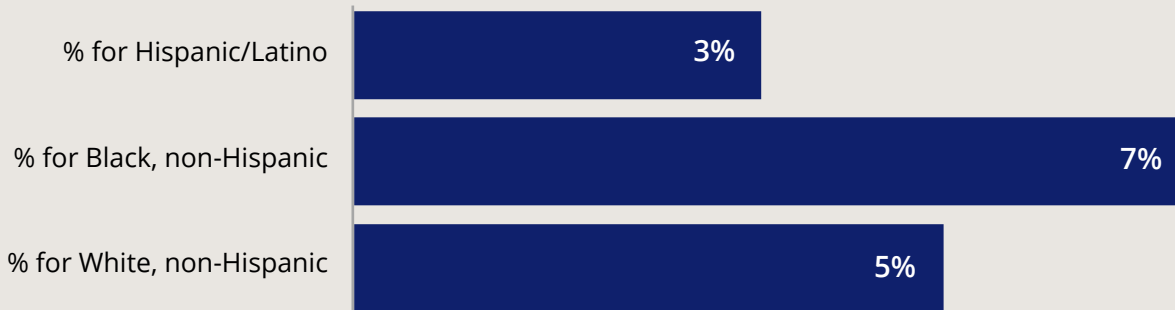
Proficiency in reading at the 3rd grade level and mathematics at the 8th grade level are significant predictors of an individual's future academic success in high school, postsecondary education, and of their earnings potential. Effective Public Education is a metric that looks at public students' average of improvement per year in English/Language Arts (ELA) between third and eighth grades. A score of 1 indicates learning at an average rate, while below 1 is slower than average, and above 1 is faster than average. The score in Geauga County is below the average for all students, regardless of income. This places students at a disadvantage that could predict struggles in future academic success or earnings potential. The Urban Institute states that research suggests students in low-income households is above those in higher income households because students in more advantaged households, on average, start with lower levels of English language skills and can improve more quickly than children with higher baseline skills.



Student Poverty Concentration measures the share of students attending schools with high concentrations of classmates with poverty. Students are more successful academically when they attend more economically and racially diverse schools, which correlates with better economic outcomes. Overall, only a small percentage of students in Geauga County attend schools with higher concentrations of student poverty. A slightly higher percentage of Black students (7%) are in schools with student poverty concentration than Latino (3%) or White students (5%). But, less than 10 percent of students in all three groups experience this in the county.

Student Poverty Concentration

Urban Institute Mobility Metrics Framework

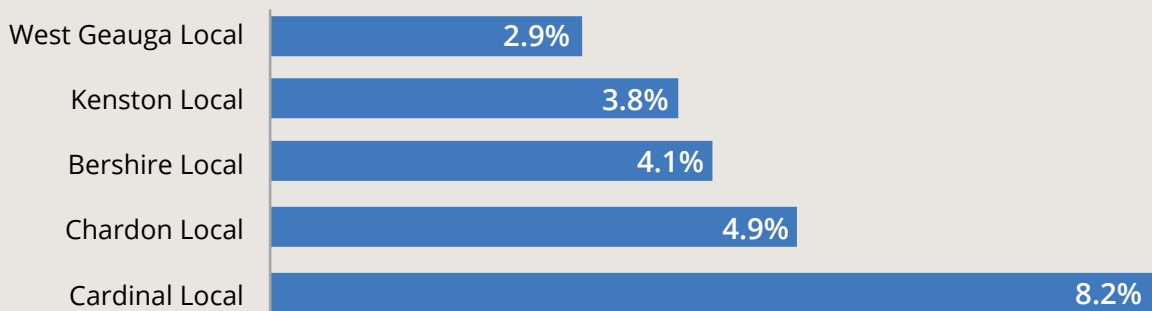


Source: Urban Institute Mobility Index Analysis, Geauga, OH, Provided February 2023

Student Mobility refers to students moving schools or school districts, at times in the middle of a school year. Students may switch schools due to moving in and out of districts, for discipline reasons or in search of a better academic fit. Students who move schools frequently, i.e. attending 4 different school during their elementary years, are more likely to experience challenges with staying on track for their learning objectives. High mobility within a district can cause instability. Frequent changes to the make-up of a classroom creates a sense of constant change which can cause disruption to students who are looking for stability in a school setting. In Geauga County, Cardinal Local school district has the highest rate of mobility at 8.2 percent, which is two times or more than that of three other districts (Berkshire, Kenston, West Geauga), and almost double that of Chardon Local. It is notable that Cardinal has both the highest rate of student mobility, and the fewest number of kindergarteners who are on-track in the areas of language and literacy.

Student Mobility by District

Ohio Department of Education, 2021-2022



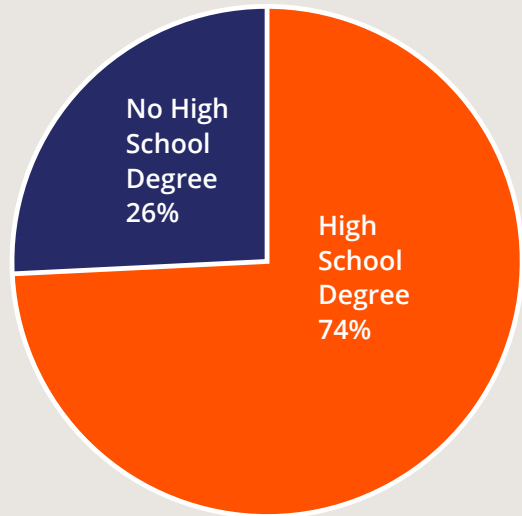
Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2021-2022

College Readiness

Attaining a high school degree is generally a measure of an individual's readiness to attend college. On average, those who complete a college degree typically have a higher income than those with only a high school education. College readiness measures the share of 19 to 20 year-olds with a high school degree. In Geauga County, 74% of all residents in this age bracket have a high school degree. Over a quarter of young adults do not have a diploma and may lack a basic education, which can negatively impact their earnings potential.

College Readiness: % with a High School Degree

Urban Institute Mobility Metrics Framework



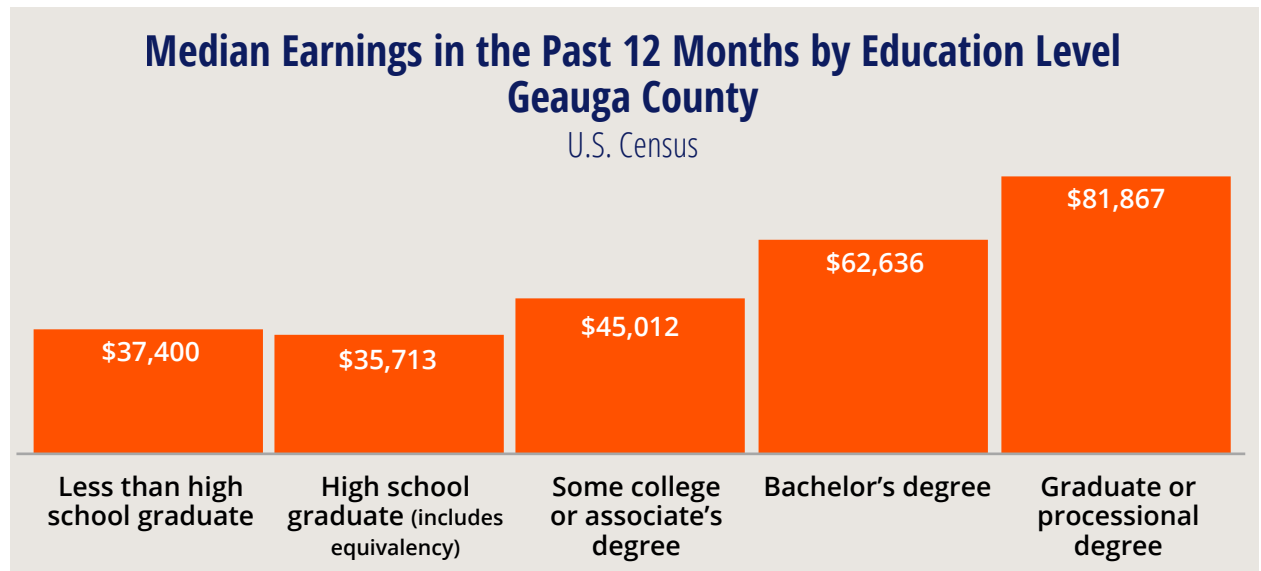
Source: Urban Institute Mobility Metrics Index Analysis, Geauga, OH, 2021, Provided June 2023



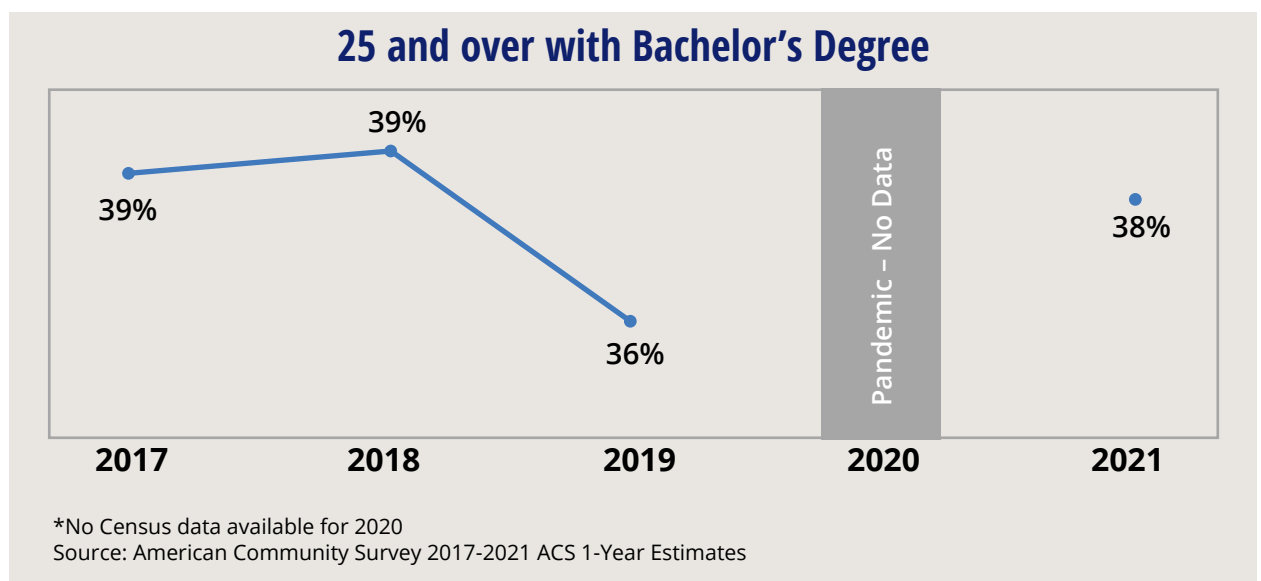
Educational Attainment

Higher educational attainment is associated with higher earnings.

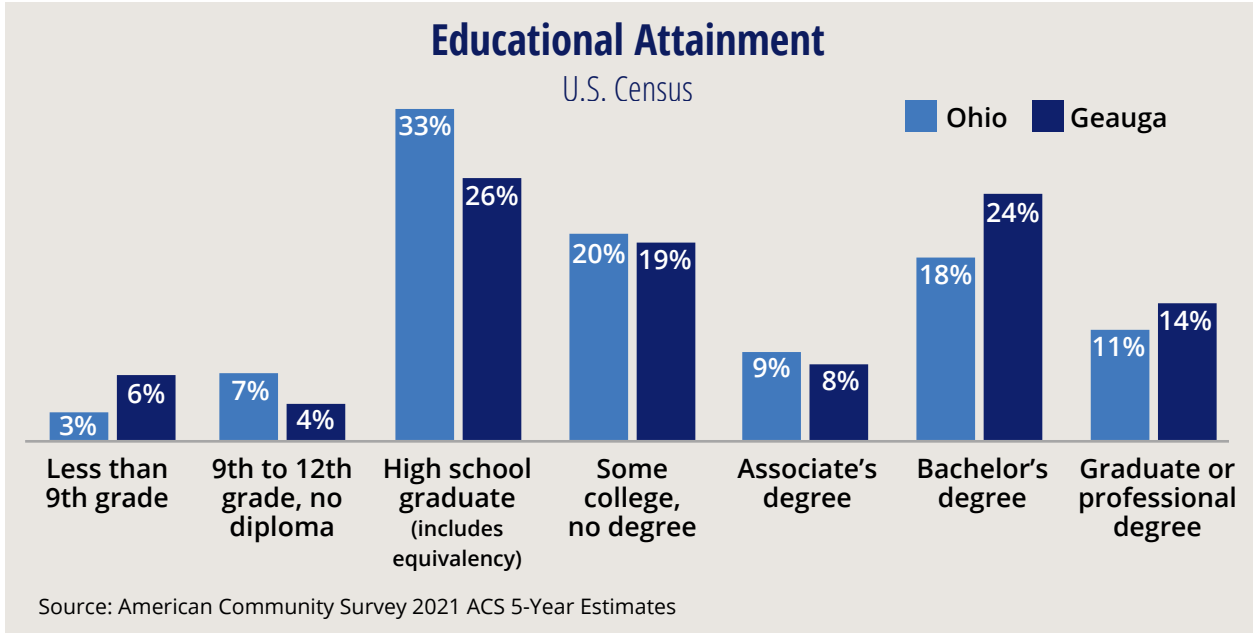
The greatest jump in median incomes occurs between attainment of a bachelor's and a graduate or professional degree. The mean earnings differential between these two levels of attainment is slightly more than \$19,000. Another large increase of median earnings occurs between some college or an associate's degree and a bachelor's with an added \$17,000 at the higher education level.



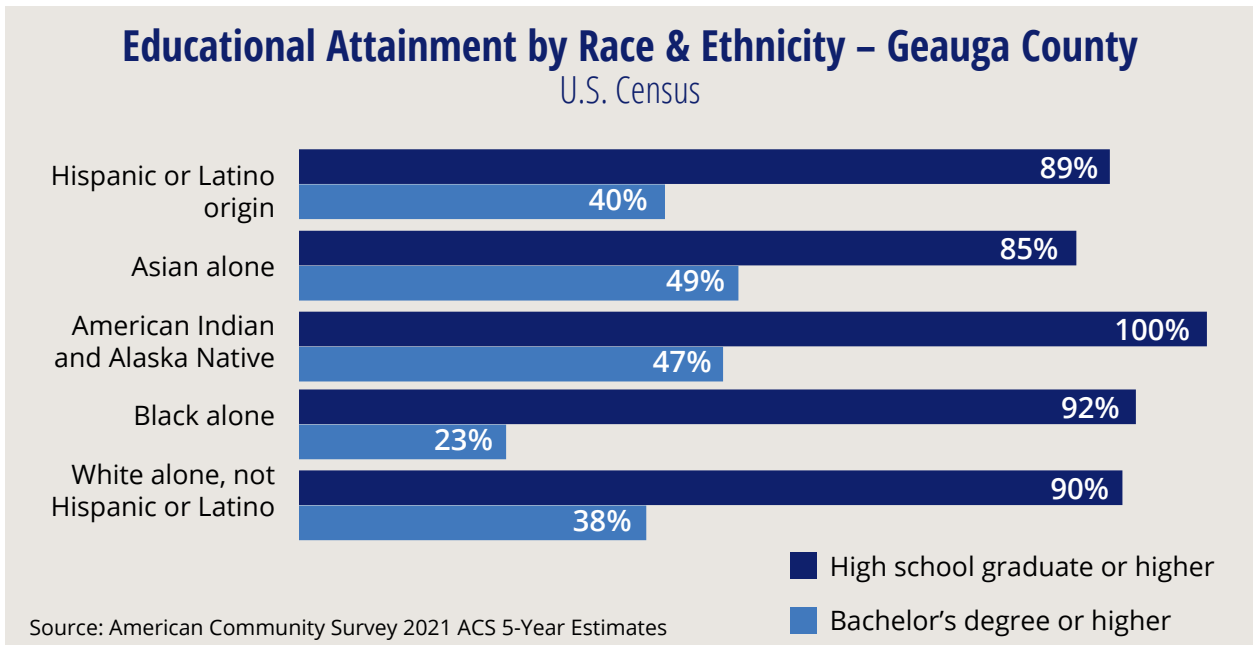
The percentage of individuals aged 25 and over with a bachelor's degree or higher has not changed over the past 5 years and remains at a little more than one-third of this population in Geauga.



Geauga County has slightly higher rates than the state overall in the lowest levels of educational attainment, lower than the 9th grade, and the highest levels associated with higher median earnings, bachelor's and graduate/professional degree.

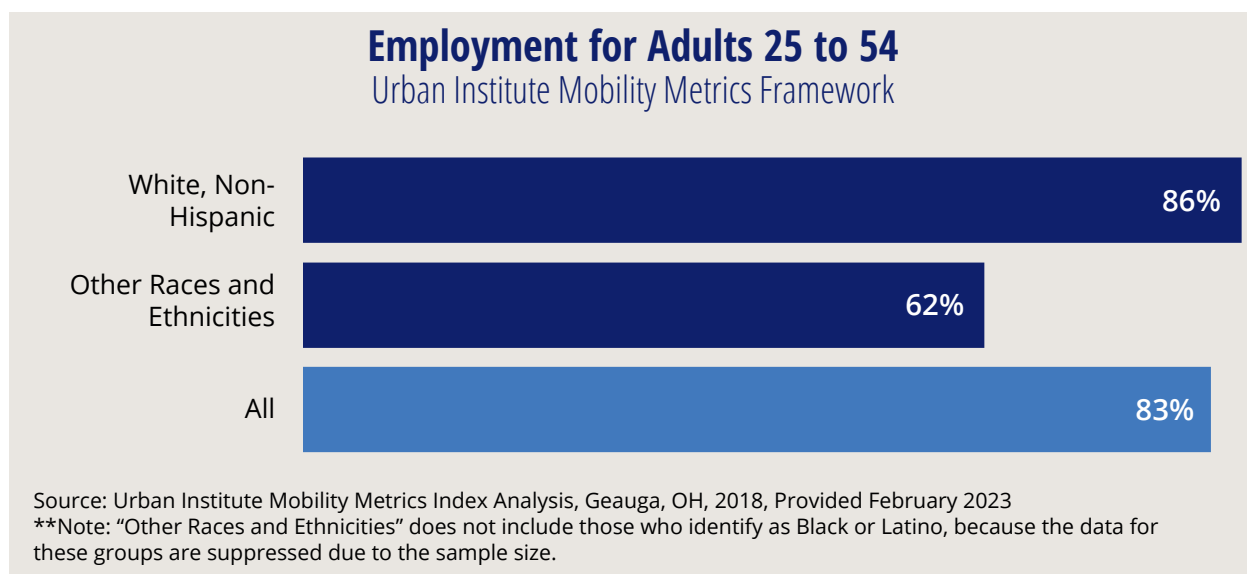


When examined by race and ethnicity, Asians have the highest percentage of residents who achieve a Bachelor's degree or higher with 49 percent holding this degree. American Indian or Alaska Native residents have the second highest rate at 47 percent. Black residents have the second highest rate of high school diploma and also the lowest rate of Bachelor's degree attainment, which indicates a lower earning potential among this subgroup.



Employment

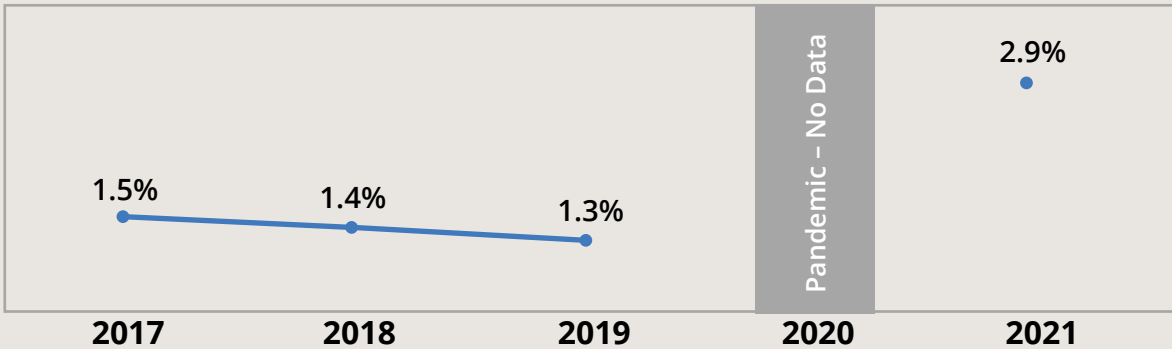
Experiencing unemployment can result in a loss of income and lower earnings in future employment, especially for those who are out of work for extended periods of time. In households where someone is unemployed, children's academic performance can also suffer due to the additional stressors brought on by the loss of income. The employment ratio measures the number of employed adults to the total number of adults between the ages of 25 and 54 in a given jurisdiction. Eighty-three percent of all residents in this age group in Geauga County are employed. The percentage of white residents in the county who are employed (86%) is even higher, while the percentage of residents of other races and ethnicities (62%), including those who identify as Black or Latino, is over 20 percent lower than these categories. This places them in a more disadvantaged position to gain higher earnings and avoid the negative impacts of unemployment.



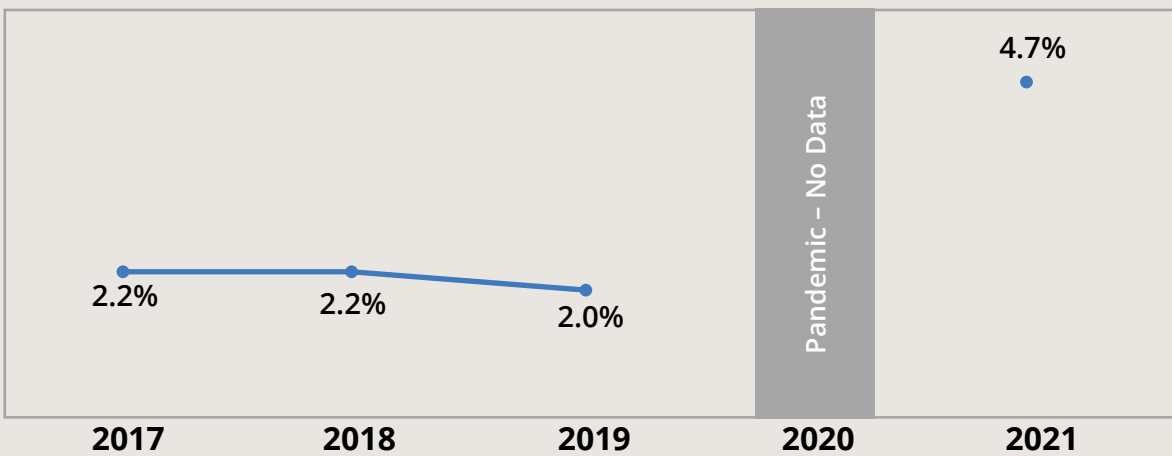
While employment is important, individuals need to be paid a living wage relative to the cost of living in the area they reside in, in order to secure economic security. This metric is computed by dividing the average earnings for a job in an area by the cost of meeting a family of three's basic expenses in that area. A value that is greater than 1 indicates that the typical job pays more than the cost of living, while values less than 1 suggest that the typical job pays less than the cost of living. In Geauga, the ratio of pay to a living wage is less than 1 at .74, indicating that the average resident may not be able to cover all of the expenses.

In Geauga County, 2 percent of the total population that was 16 years of age and older was unemployed in 2021¹. The unemployment rate, a measurement of the percentage of the labor force that are without a job, but actively seeking work, was 3.1 percent in Geauga County in 2021.

The percentage of those aged 16 and older who were unemployed remained steady in Geauga since 2017, but saw a significant increase after the pandemic in 2021.



The unemployment rate in Geauga remained steady between 2017 and 2019, but more than doubled in 2021 after the pandemic.

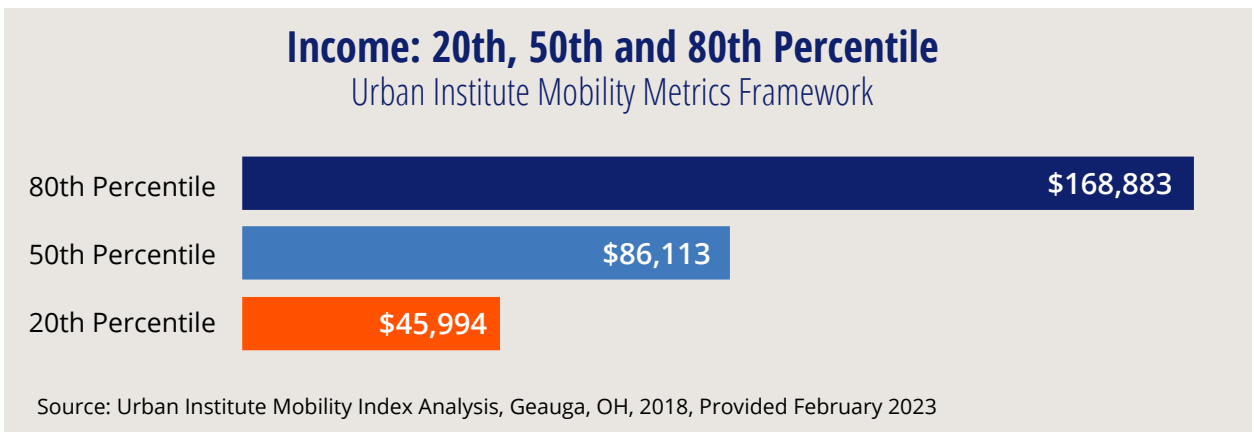


¹data.census.gov/table?q=unemployment&g=050XX00US39035,39055&tid=ACSDP5Y2021.DP03&moe=false

Economic Success

Higher income is often an indicator of higher educational attainment and academic achievement, helping to ensure economic security. Income percentiles measure financial resources available to low-, middle-, and high-income households, as well as the extent of income inequality.

Income percentiles show the distribution of household income in a certain area, in order to compare them. The 20th percentile represents the income level threshold at which eighty percent of households would have a higher income. The 50th percentile income (or median income) is the point at which half of the population makes income that is below that amount and the other half makes income that is above it. The 80th percentile is the income level threshold where the richest twenty percent of households would have higher income.



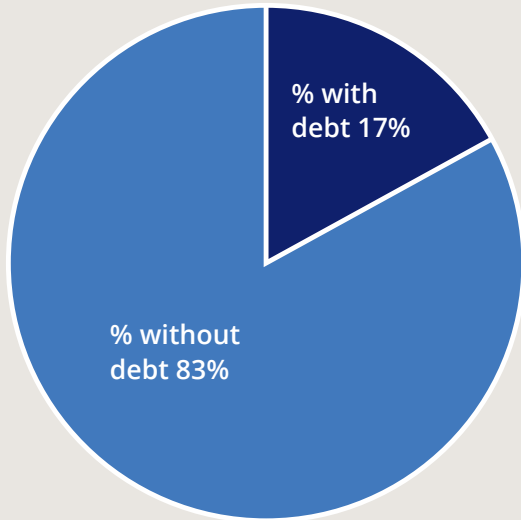
For Geauga County, the median income or 50th percentile mark for all residents is over \$86,000. The poorest twenty percent of all households earn a little over \$45,000, while the richest twenty percent earn more than \$168,000. The average income amongst the 20th percentile is higher than in other counties, like Cuyahoga. However, the income gap between the poorest and richest residents in Geauga is steep, as residents at the 80th percentile make over three-and-a-half times that of those at the 20th percentile.

Households with overdue debt generally have limited assets and savings, making it difficult to cover unexpected expenses. Financial security looks at the share of people in an area with a credit bureau record with debt that has progressed from being past-due to being in collections. In Geauga, seventeen percent of all residents have debt in collections, indicating less resources to build wealth with.

Paying down debt was the most often reported plan for using stimulus money provided during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Nearly sixty percent of Ohioans reported they would apply their stimulus funds towards debt, 30 percent had plans to spend the funds and 11 percent planned to save the funds for future use.

Financial Security: % with Debt in Collections

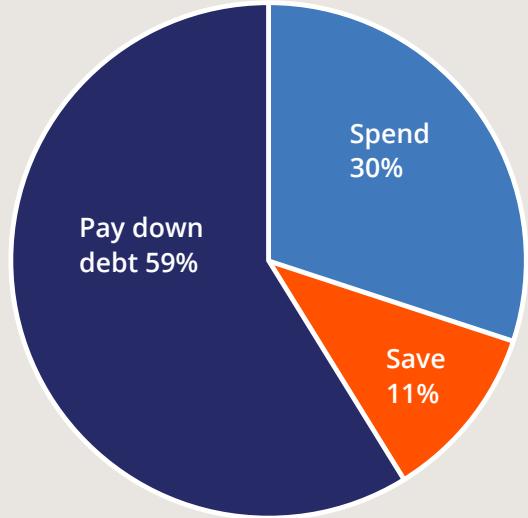
Urban Institute Mobility Metrics Framework



Source: Urban Institute Mobility Index Analysis, Geauga, OH, 2018, Provided February 2023

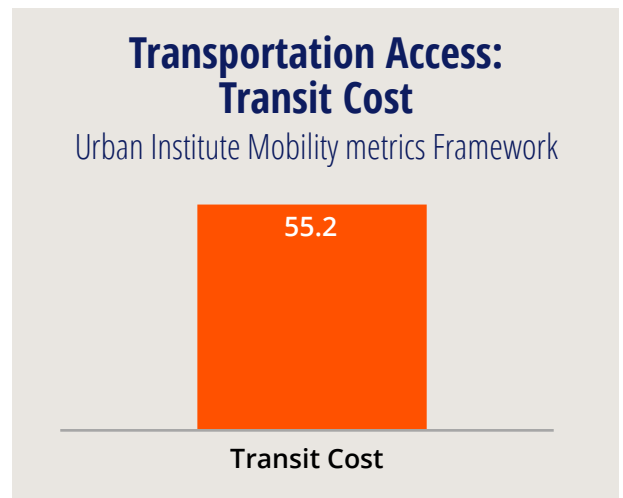
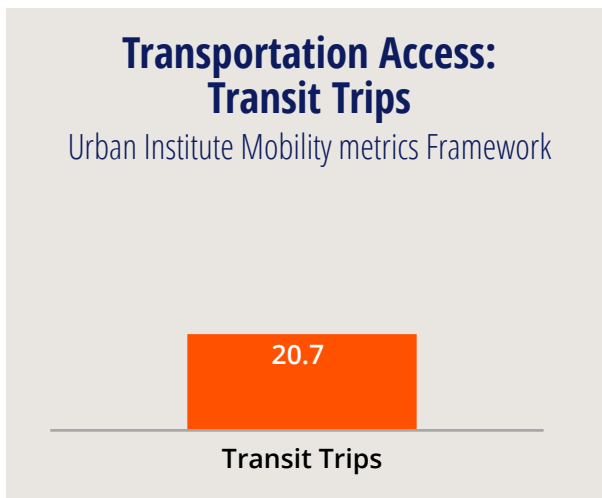
Ohioans reporting of plans for stimulus payment

Census Household Pulse Survey
Week 33, June 23-July 5, 2021



Transportation

Transportation access is a measure of annual transit trips and local transportation costs for a three-person, single-parent family with income at 50 percent of the median income for renters. Transit trips looks at the number of public transit trips taken annually, while transit cost looks at affordability for transit and cars as a percent of renters' incomes. A higher score out of a total of 100 in these measures indicates better access to and lower costs for public transportation. Geauga has a score of 20.7 for transit trips and a slightly higher score of 55.2 for transit cost. This indicates transportation that is highly inaccessible, and has room for improvement in affordability throughout the county. The AARP Livability Index provides an estimate of transportation costs for each municipality and village within Geauga County. The average annual transportation costs for residents of the county is \$ 17,684. Communities with lower annual costs are more likely to purchase less expensive cars and have more residents without cars who rely on public transit or other modes of getting around.



Source: Urban Institute Mobility Metrics Index Analysis, Geauga, OH, 2016, Provided February 2023.



EXISTING ECONOMIC MOBILITY COMMUNITY ASSESSMENTS

Team NEO's Aligning Opportunities in the Northeast Ohio Region 2022

The Aligning Opportunities report by Team NEO provides data-driven insights into the talent demand/supply gap in our region. Recently, Intel announced a \$20 billion investment creating over 20,000 jobs in the state, while Ford intends to add 2,000 new jobs in Lorain County focused on electric vehicle production, and Ultium Cells LLC is ramping up production at one of the world's largest electric battery facilities in the Mahoning Valley. Despite these developments, there is still a mismatch between talent supply and demand in the region, with demand outpacing supply. The pandemic has exacerbated this situation, especially in high-performing industries like health care, manufacturing, and IT, where occupations cut across multiple industries. The need for a diverse talent base has become increasingly important. Addressing labor force participation as a community will be crucial moving forward. While population and labor force declines have impacted our competitiveness over the last two decades, labor force participation is only down by 1%, and unemployment is slightly lower. Higher education still offers opportunities to increase one's quality of life and long-term earnings potential, with postsecondary degrees in demand, although employers are also valuing skills. STEM careers offer higher wages than non-STEM occupations and are projected to grow. Team NEO is promoting a talent development strategy that includes on-the-job training, certifications, associate's, and two-year pathways. Only 17% of jobs in the region offer a living wage for two adults and two kids (\$72,571), while 70% offer a self-sustaining wage (\$32,531). Prosperity, as measured by family-sustaining wages, is a key metric in a vibrant economy.

Team NEO's Lost Opportunities & Misaligned Opportunities

The wage gap has a disproportionate impact on women's ability to repay student loans, particularly for minority women, which affects their loan repayment timeline. The American Association of University Women (AAUW) reports that women hold two-thirds of the total student debt, with women graduating with an average of nearly \$22,000 in debt, compared to \$18,880 for men. Black women, in particular, graduate with an average of \$37,558 in student debt. The burden of student loan debt is particularly challenging for Black graduates, leading to limited professional growth, reduced workforce opportunities, and negative impacts on the economy, such as delayed home purchases and marriages.

LifeLine, Inc.'s 2021 Social Services Needs Assessment

Transportation continues to be a significant barrier to employment and basic services in Geauga County, with no fixed route public transit available. This seems to be a significant barrier to self-sufficiency for low-income people in Geauga County based on feedback in focus groups and client surveys.

Historically, the unemployment rate in Geauga County has been fairly stable and low. During the focus groups conducted in conjunction with the needs assessment, the most significant discussion around employment was the dilemma of not being able to accept a job offer without childcare in place, but not being able to secure childcare without a job offer letter indicating that it will be affordable. In every focus group there was discussion around the need for childcare opportunities for swing shift and overnight shift employees and that childcare is just not affordable for low-income people.



211 DATA TRENDS

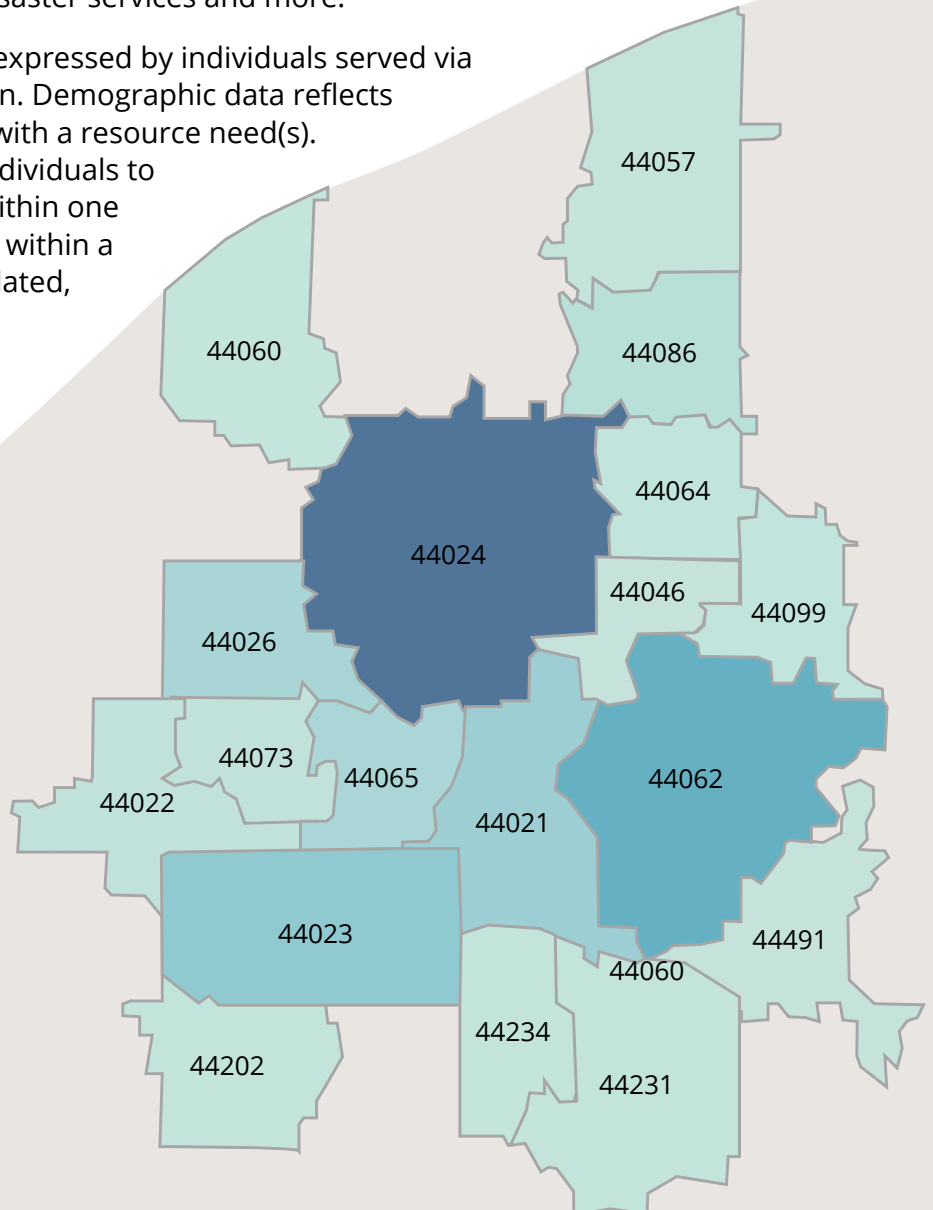
211 Overview

The data for this report was obtained from United Way of Greater Cleveland 211 and covers the period from 2018 to March 2023. The analysis was conducted on needs expressed in Geauga County.

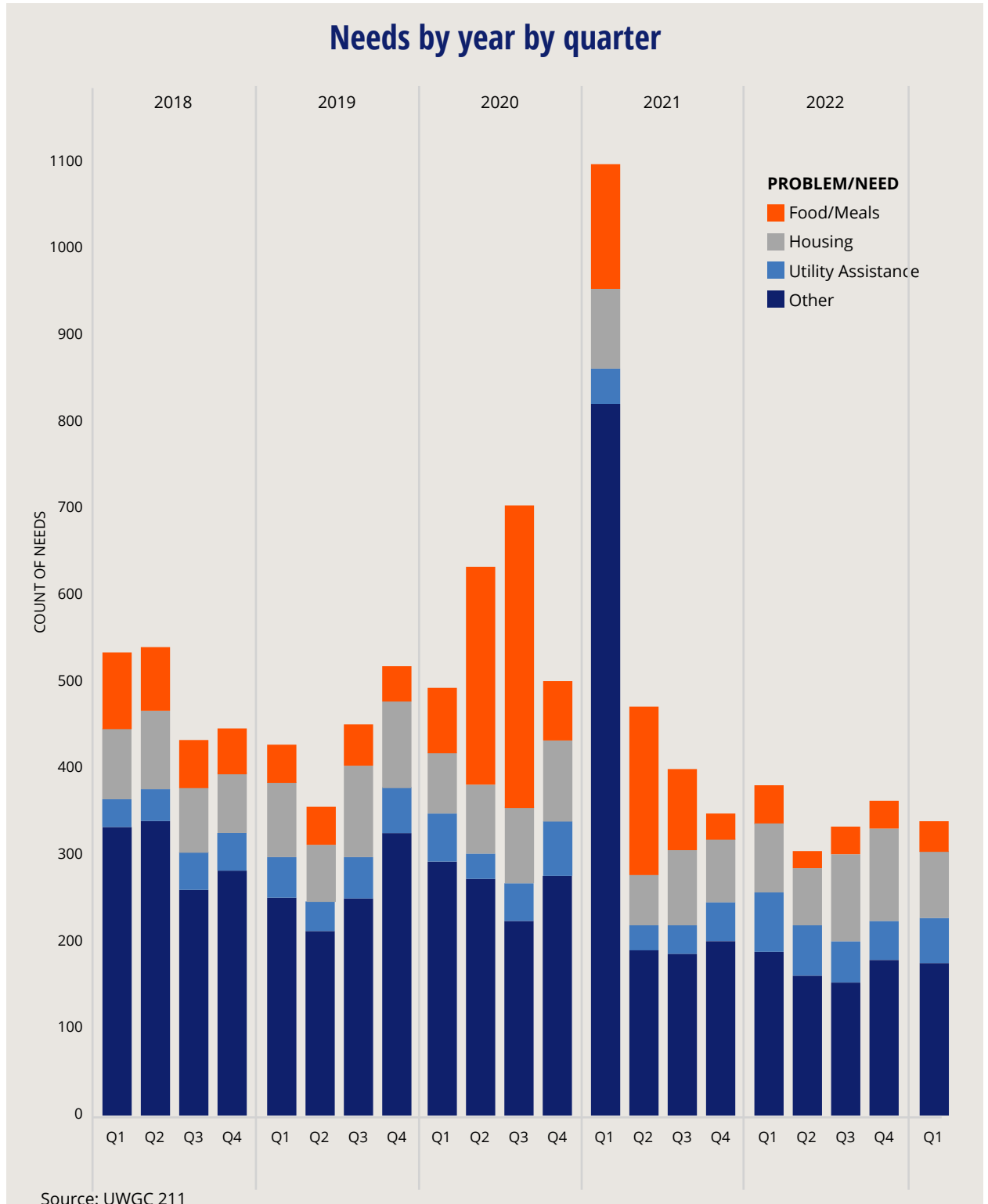
United Way 2-1-1 is a free and confidential service for anyone seeking resources to address health and social service needs. The typical 211 client is reaching out during a crisis. Cupboards are bare, housing eviction may be imminent, utilities may already be shut off. AIRS certified Information and Referral Specialists are trained to listen, engage, ask questions, assess needs and connect individuals to the best and closest community resource from a database of over 18,000 resources, including supplemental food and nutrition programs, utility assistance, behavioral health care, educational resources, job training, disaster services and more.

Data here reflects needs expressed by individuals served via phone, chat, and in person. Demographic data reflects the primary individual(s) with a resource need(s).

It is not uncommon for individuals to express multiple needs within one contact. Expressed needs within a contact may be closely related, such as only tangentially aligned such as utility assistance and job training.



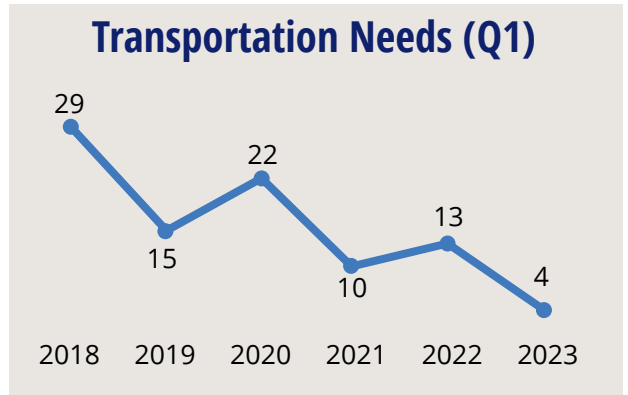
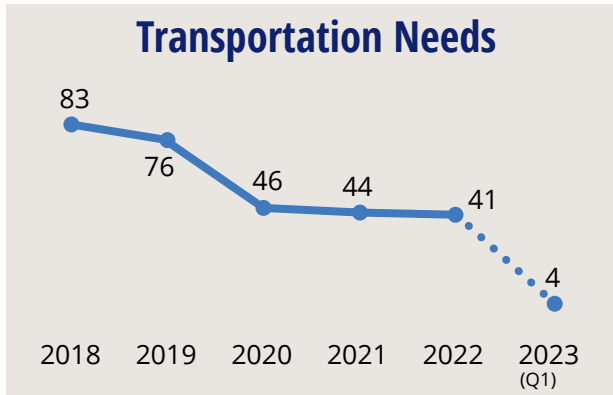
Geauga County calls were analyzed for each indicator, but low numbers makes it difficult to draw conclusions from the data. However, it is important to note that low call volume does mean that Geauga County is without need for resources, assistance, and services.



Transportation

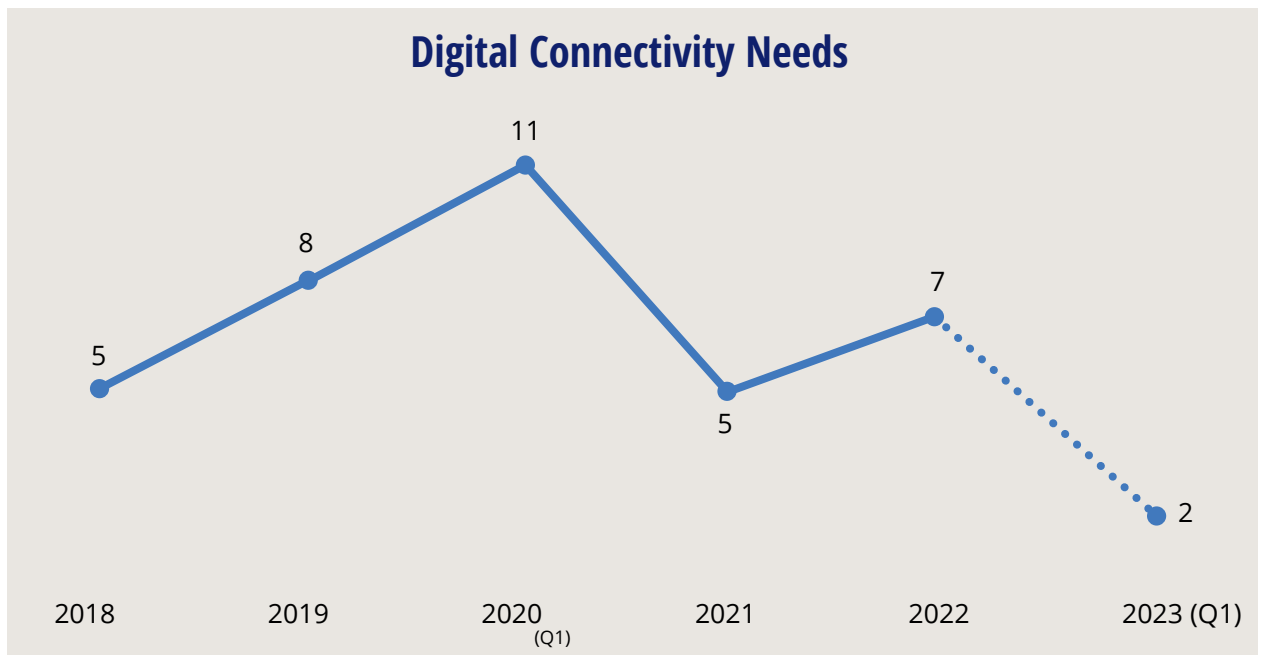
Expressed needs for transportation assistance were highest in 2018 with 83 and dropped dramatically to a low of 41 in 2022. Calls were often highest in quarters 1 and 4 during the years, but the pattern is not consistent throughout the years. With the exception of 2018, transportation needs were highest for adults over 55 years of age.

The majority of transportation needs related to transportation expenses, followed by medical transportation.



Digital Connectivity

Expressed needs in digital connectivity and internet access peaked in 2020, then fell in 2021 and rose in 2022. Most needs were from adults aged 55 and over, with the exception of 2022, when 25-44 aged adults made up the majority.



HEALTH PATHWAYS

Many chronic health conditions are rooted in social inequities felt most by low-income residents and communities of color. The Health Pathways strategy targets medical and social determinants of health to address chronic health conditions and improve health outcomes.

Health Disparities

Residents of Geauga County have an average life expectancy above state and national averages. Nevertheless, residents have higher rates of heart disease and breast cancer, both of which are trending up. In measures like low birth weight, Black babies make up a disproportionate share. Programs and services that address community conditions or offer preventive health can help reduce disparities in health.

Community Conditions

Community health includes the built environment and access to quality food. Geauga County has low rates of food insecurity, but two-thirds of food insecure adults do not qualify for SNAP benefits. Geauga County's low rating of "F" in air quality exacerbates health issues.

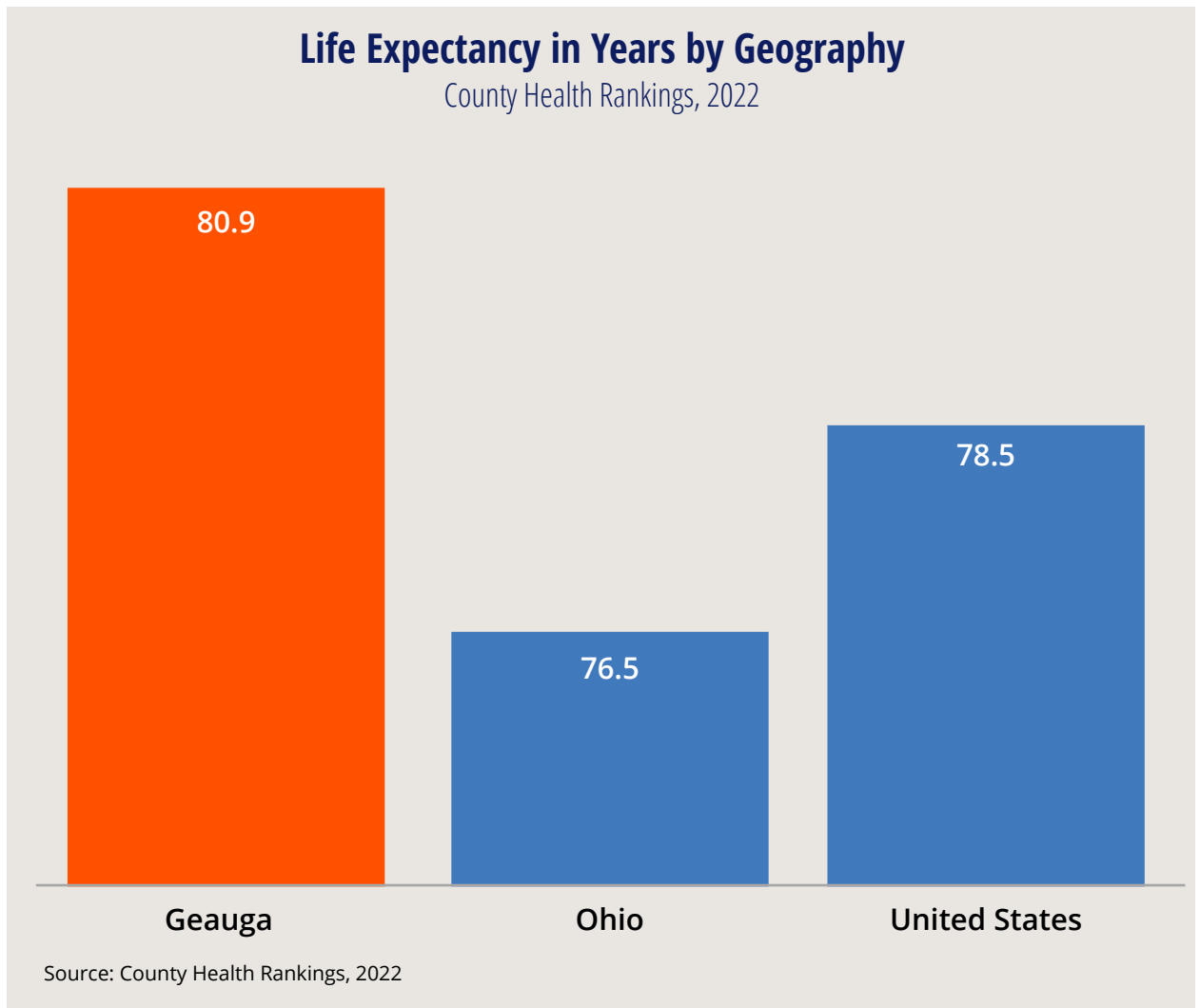
Trauma and Behavioral Health

Gauga County fares worse than the national average across all behavioral health measures like adult depression, binge drinking, and mental health. Therefore, trauma informed care should be embedded in all human services. The county also has higher rates of uninsured children and adults up to age 45, compared to the state of Ohio, impeding access to care.

SECONDARY DATA: HEALTH CONDITIONS AND OUTCOMES

Life Expectancy

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps reports health outcomes and health factors by county. Geauga County has a higher life expectancy, 80.9 years, than the state, 76.5 years, and national life expectancy, 78.5 years.

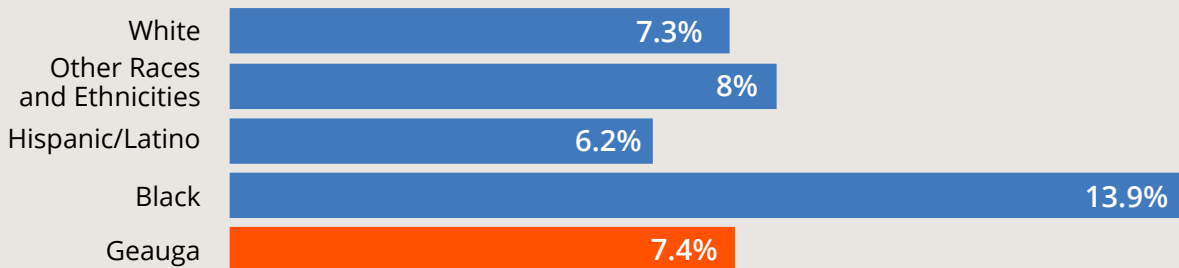


Pre/Postnatal

Low birth weights are most often the result of premature birth; one that occurs before 37 weeks of pregnancy. In Geauga County, 7.4 percent of babies born are considered to have a low birth weight. Black babies have higher incidences of low birth weight at more than double the rate of those of Latino descent, close to double the rate of their White peers, and over 1.5 times that of babies of other races and ethnicities. According to the March of Dimes, babies with low birth rates are more likely to experience breathing problems, bleeding in the brain, intestinal complications, jaundice and infections. Access to prenatal care and reduce the risk of low birth weight.

Share of babies born weighing less than 5lbs 8oz out of all births

Urban Institute Mobility Index Framework



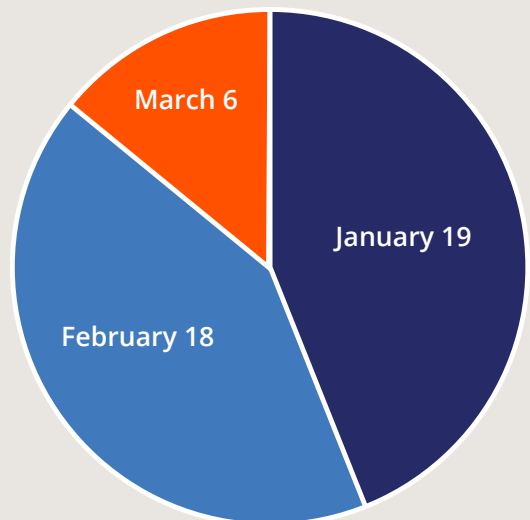
Source: Urban Institute Mobility Index Analysis, 2018, Geauga, OH, Provided February 2023

The Ohio Department of Health offers Home Visits to new parent through multiple models and agencies. In Geauga, this important service is offered to new parents with infants and toddlers, up to the age of three, through the Help Me Grow Early Intervention Program. Workers visit the home and provide information on community services and resources for families, and offer screenings to children to ensure healthy development.

As of March 2023, the program had capacity for 12 families in Geauga County to receive services. At this point in time, 11 families were receiving ongoing services representing 21 individuals. Catholic Charities Corporation is the agency that provides home visiting services in the county. Since the beginning of 2023, it has made 43 home visits: 19 in January, 18 in February, and 6 in March, as of the writing of this report.

Home Visits, Geauga County

Ohio Department of Health, 2023



Source: Ohio Department of Health DataOhio Project, 2023

Infant Mortality

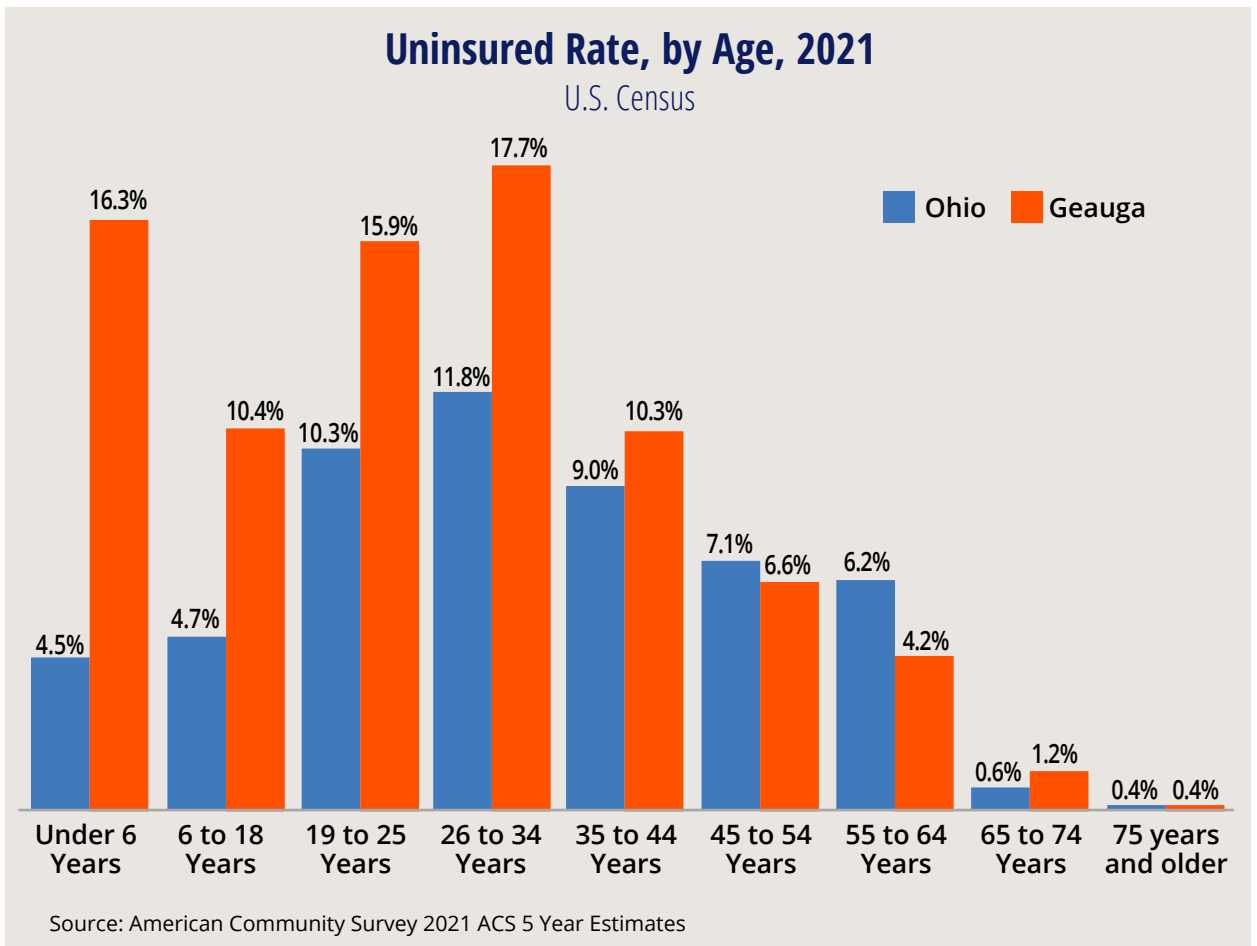
Infant mortality is rare in Geauga County. There were fewer than five infants who died before their first birthday out of 937 live births in 2020. The numbers are so low that we are unable to calculate infant mortality rate. Both deaths occurred in the postneonatal period, between day 28 and 364 after birth. Preterm birth, complications during delivery and birth defects are the leading causes of most neonatal deaths according to the World Health Organization.

Source: Ohio 2020 Infant Mortality Annual Report;

**Note: Neonatal, Postneonatal, and Infant Mortality Rate are suppressed due to sample size.

Access to Health Services

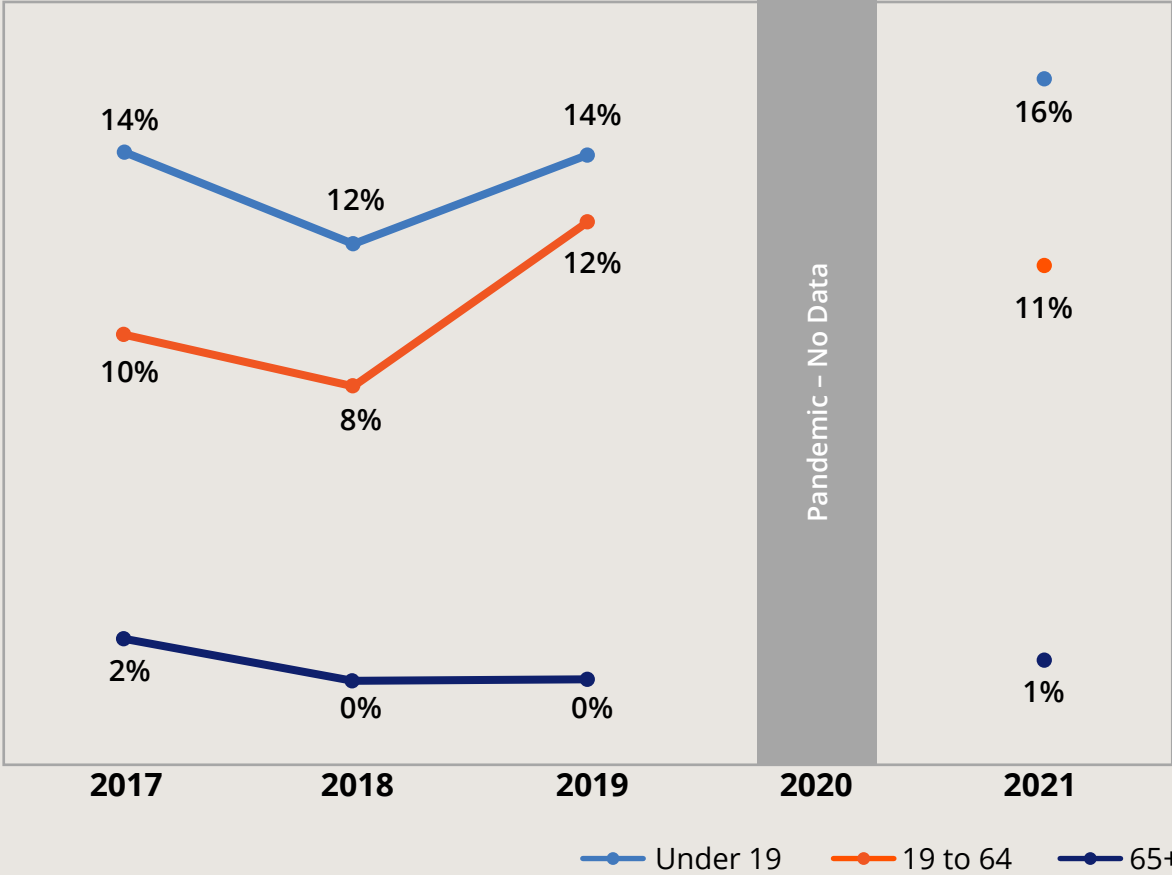
Having health coverage, local options for care, and a usual source of care are important aspects of access to care which allows individuals to get their health care needs met. Geauga County has a higher uninsured rate than the state or national average. In 2021, there were 7,906 people who did not have health insurance in Geauga County, or 8.4 percent of the population.



Particularly concerning is the fact that children are more likely to be uninsured in Geauga than in the state as a whole, especially young children. Over sixteen percent of children ages 5 and younger in Geauga County were uninsured in 2021, more than 3.5 times the uninsured rate for young children across Ohio. This is particularly concerning because uninsured children are less likely to be up to date on vaccines and are at higher risk of developing preventable conditions if they do not receive regular care. The unusually high number of Geauga children who lack health insurance could be influenced by the fact that it is a higher income area, so fewer families qualify for Medicaid health coverage. Also, while adults with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level qualify for Medicaid, children can be covered by Medicaid up to 206 percent of federal poverty level, or over \$51,000 household income for a family of 3. In Geauga County, people with higher income make up a greater share of the total people who are uninsured.

Uninsured in Geauga County

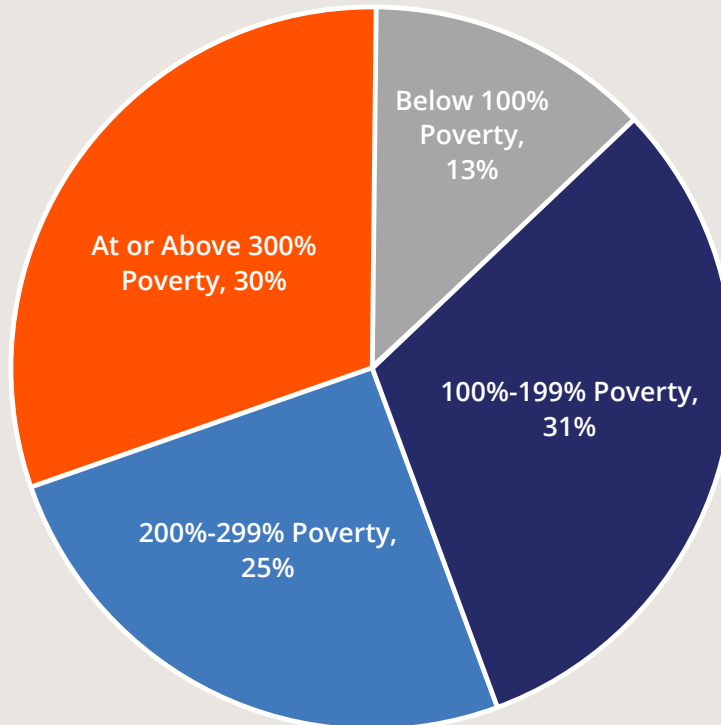
Youth under 19 were more likely to be uninsured than any other age group over the past 5 years.



Source: American Community Survey 2017-2021 ACS 1-Year Estimates
*No Census data available for 2020

Share of Uninsured, by Income to Poverty Ratio, Geauga County, 2021

U.S. Census



Source: American Community Survey 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates

County Health Rankings' model of health includes several additional data points which are indicators of access to health care. Geauga County fares slightly worse than the rest of the state in provider availability. For these statistics, a lower number is desirable. There are 1,440 residents for every primary care physician, and 2,070 residents per dentist, compared to 1,290:1 and 1,570:1 respectively. There are also 410 residents for every mental health provider, which includes marriage and family therapists and mental health providers that treat alcohol and other drug abuse.

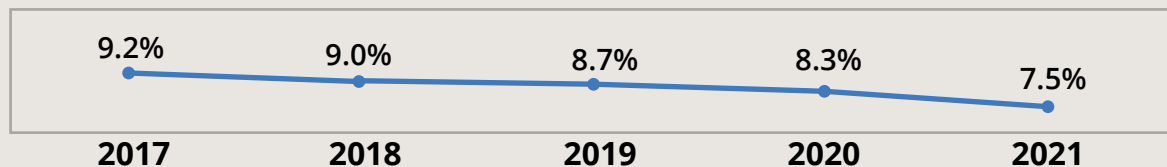
While 91.5 percent of Geauga County adults had a usual source of care in 2021 according to the Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey, 19.7 percent found the care they needed harder to secure than three years ago, and 14.5 percent said they avoided or delayed care.

Food Security

In Geauga County, 7,140 people were food insecure in 2021, according to Feeding America. This placed the food insecurity rate in the county at 7.5 percent that year. Close to two-thirds (64%) of those who were food insecure were above the SNAP threshold of 130 percent of the federal poverty level, while a little more than a third (36%) were below it.

Food Insecurity – Geauga County

The percentage of people of all ages who are food insecure in Geauga has declined since 2017. The food insecurity rate in 2021 was the lowest it had been in 5 years.



Source: Feeding America, 2021

Environmental Quality

Environmental quality data was accessed through Healthyeo.org in March 2023.

The American Lung Association has rated Geauga County an "F" in Air Quality, which has not changed over the past 10 years with the exception of a slightly worsened rating between 2013-2015. Poor air quality can cause difficulty breathing and aggravate existing lung conditions. Children, people with lung disease, and older adults tend to be more sensitive to poor air quality.



Geauga County has a rating of 30 in Physical Health Environment as ranked by County Health Rankings. The physical environment includes all of the parts of where we live and work including homes, buildings, streets, and parks. The design of the environment as well as maintenance influence who accessible it is to the general public. The more accessible the environment, the more opportunity for residents to engage in activities related to a healthy lifestyle including walking, running and biking.



In 2021, Geauga County experienced 24 Extreme Heat Days according to the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Record. The number of high heat days over the past 9 years has varied, with most years having a number of days in the mid-20s. There was a high of 44 days in 2016, and a low of 13 or 14 days every 2 years from 2015 to 2019. Extreme heat days can lead to heat rash, heat exhaustion and heat stroke and is leading cause of weather-related deaths. In 2021, there were 19 Extreme Precipitation Days, which can lead to increased extreme storms and flooding incidents.

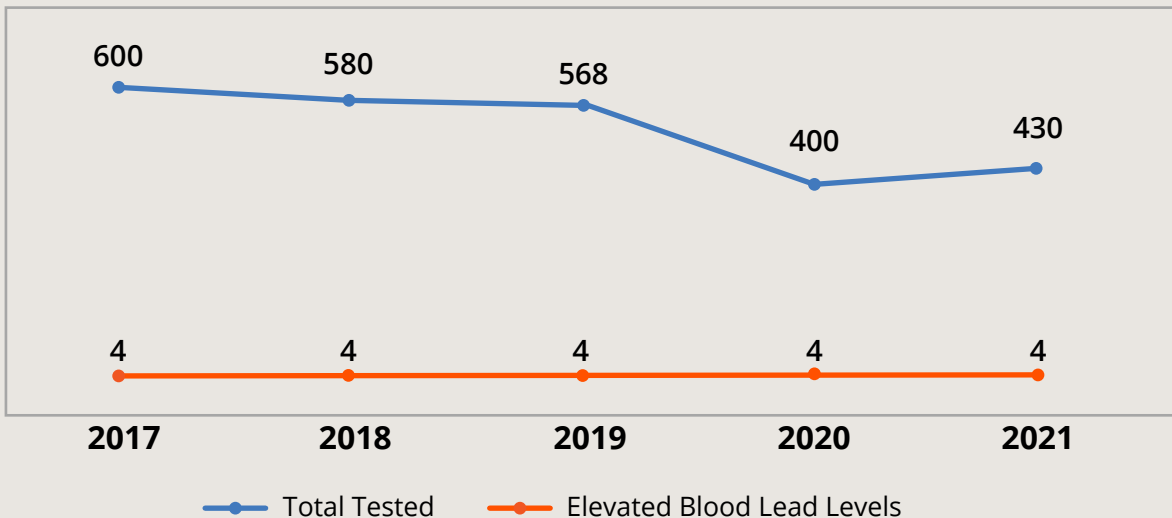


Lead Poisoning

The age of available housing is a significant factor in determining the quality of housing and potential health hazards. According to Healthy Northeast Ohio's website, houses built before 1950 that have not undergone substantial updates may contain hazardous materials. For example, lead-based paint, which was banned in the United States in 1977, is a known toxin that can cause nervous system damage, stunted growth, and delayed development, especially in children under six years of age. The long-term inhalation of asbestos fibers from insulation in older homes can also trigger cancer development and other lung diseases such as asbestosis.

Blood Levels of Lead – Geauga County

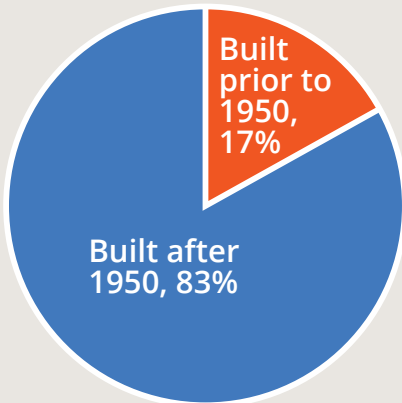
In the last 5 years, confirmed elevated blood levels of lead in children under 6 have remained constant in Geauga County.



Source: Ohio Department of Health

In Geauga County, seventeen percent of homes were built before 1950. There is one zip code within Geauga County where blood lead testing for children less than six years of age is required due to high risk of exposure. In 2021, there were 4 confirmed cases of elevated blood levels of lead in children less than six years of age in Geauga County. No amount of lead exposure is safe, and any amount can create permanent, irreversible effects to children's brains and other organs, as well as their mental and behavioral health. Lead poisoning disproportionately affects low-income children and families of color further contributing to generational poverty and racial injustice.

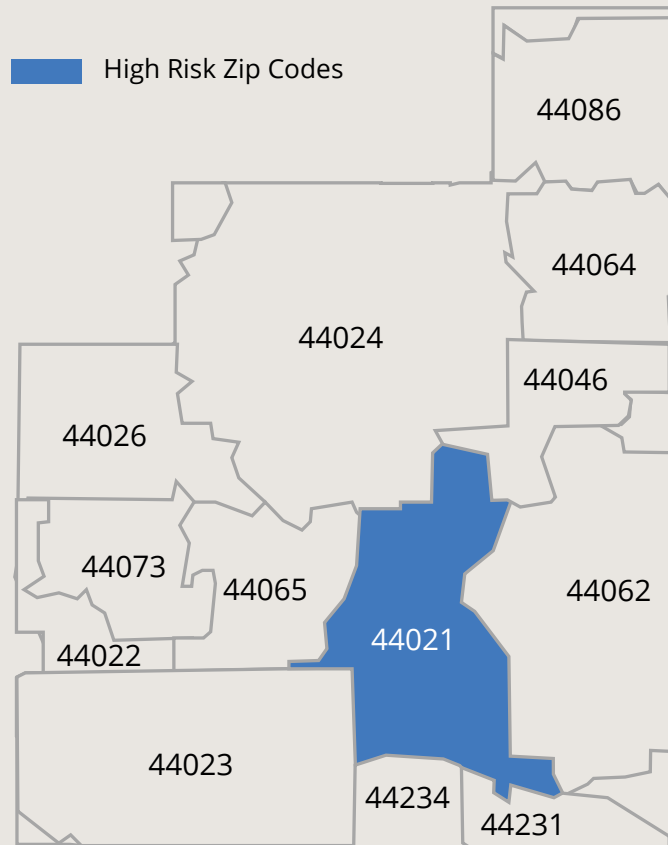
Age of Housing



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year averages 2021 accessed on Healthy Northeast Ohio March 2023

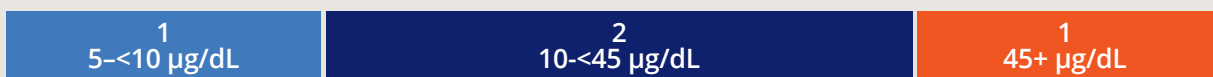
In Ohio, an elevated level of lead is defined as 5 µg/dL of blood, but the Lead Exposure and Prevention Advisory Committee recommended updating the reference value to 3.5 µg/dL. In 2021, 70% of elevated blood lead levels in children were between 5-10 µg/dL, and an additional 29% were between 10-45 µg/dL. In 2021, four children tested positive for high lead levels, including very high levels of lead exposure. At these levels, treatment is indicated to actively try to remove the lead from a child's body. Treatment can be considered at lower levels as well. At lower levels, children require additional testing and monitoring and the source of lead exposure must be identified and removed.

Geauga County High Risk Zip Codes Requiring Blood Lead Testing for Children Less than 6 Years of Age



Source: Ohio Department of Health

Confirmed elevated blood levels in 2021 for children less than 6 years of age

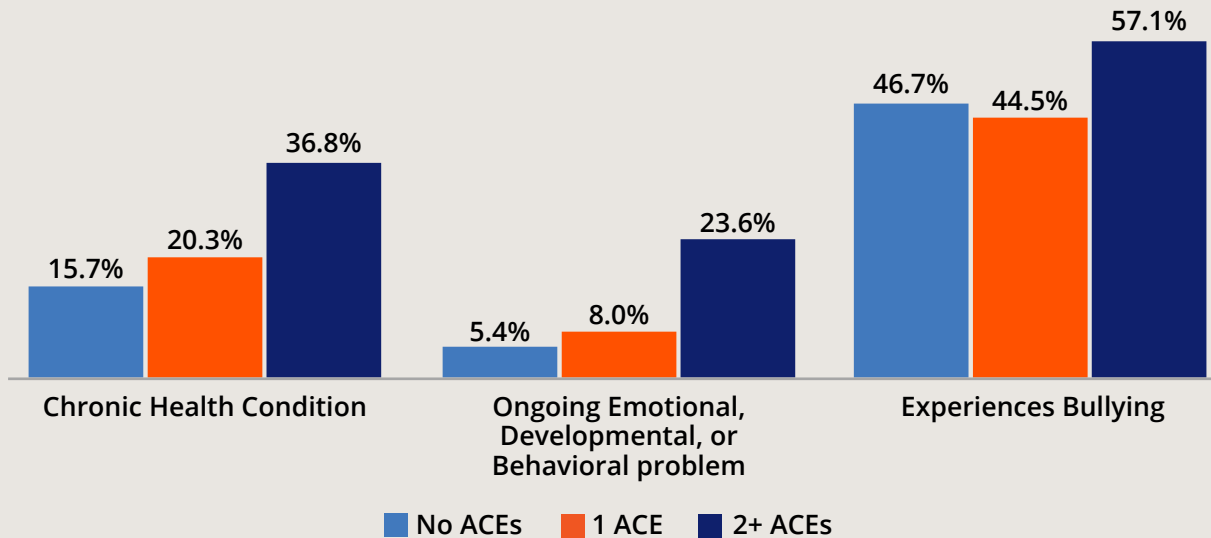


Source: Ohio Department of Health

Adverse Childhood Experiences

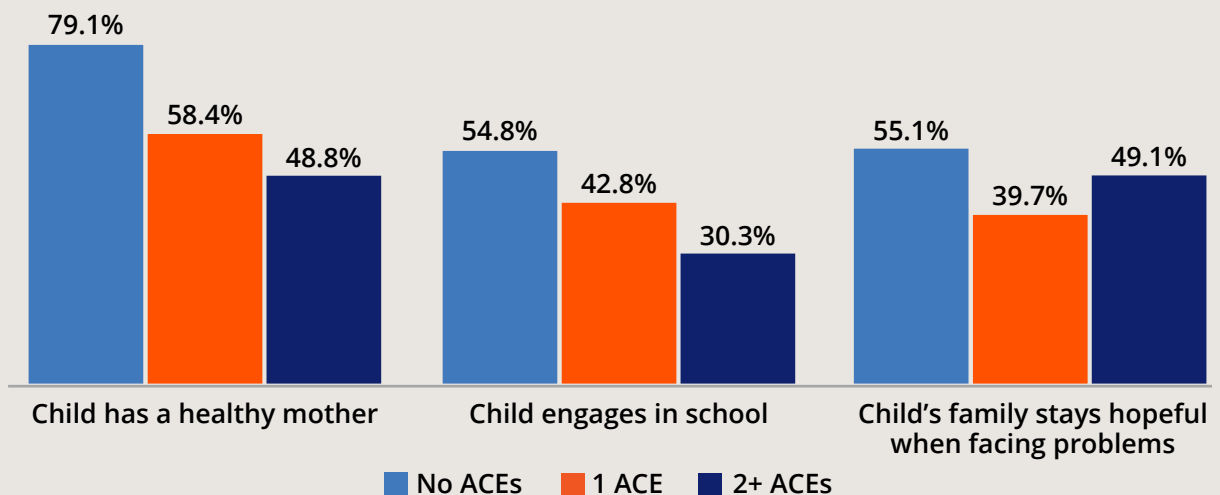
Increased adverse experiences in childhood are associated with negative health and social emotional outcomes

Ohio 2018-2019 – Childhood and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative



Protective factors are associated with fewer adverse childhood experiences

Ohio 2018-2019 – Childhood and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative



Source: Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative 2018-2019

Social Vulnerability

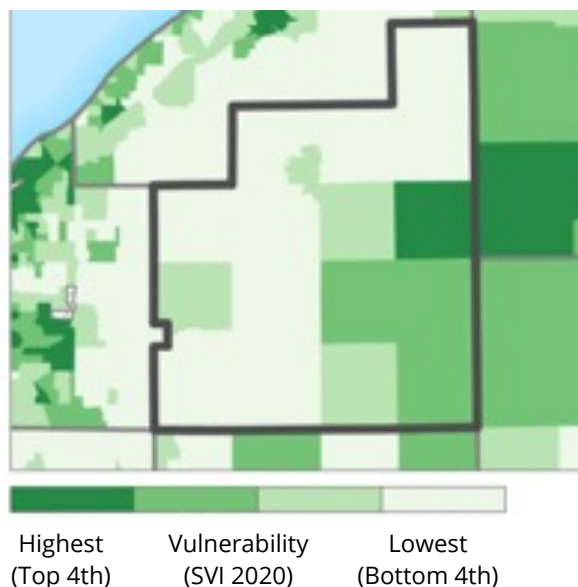
Social vulnerability refers to the potential negative consequences of external stresses on human health in communities. Such stresses may include natural or human-caused disasters, or disease outbreaks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry has developed a social vulnerability index to assist local officials in identifying communities that may require support prior to, during, or after disasters. This index is used to assess the stability of a community. Reducing social vulnerability can lower both human suffering and economic loss.

In 2020, Geauga County had a social vulnerability index score of .1111 which indicates a low level of vulnerability, with 1 being the highest score possible. Little variation in the index rating exists among communities within the county, as a majority of them are within the lowest range of social vulnerability. The communities with the highest ratings include Huntsburg and parts of Middlefield index, while Aquilla, Claridon, Burton, Troy and Parkman are within the second highest range. The index consists of sixteen metrics combined into groups of four representing socioeconomic stats, household characteristics, racial and ethnic minority status and housing type and transportation. The socioeconomic status portion of the vulnerability index includes data from American Community Survey 5 Year 2020 estimates.

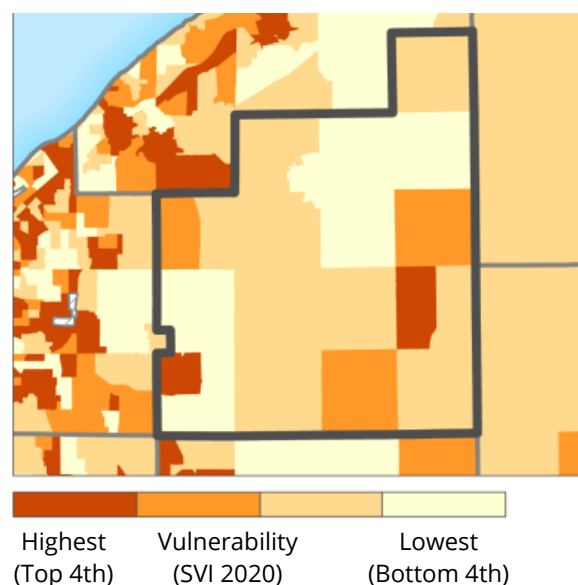
Individuals living in areas with high socioeconomic vulnerability may have limited access to personal and community resources to manage financial challenges. The socioeconomic status index includes variables such as residents with incomes below 150% of the federal poverty level, unemployment, housing cost burden, lack of high school diploma, and no health insurance. A majority of communities in Geauga have low rates of socioeconomic vulnerability.

Vulnerability mostly increases in the far east and southeastern communities within the county.

Socioeconomic Status



Household Characteristics

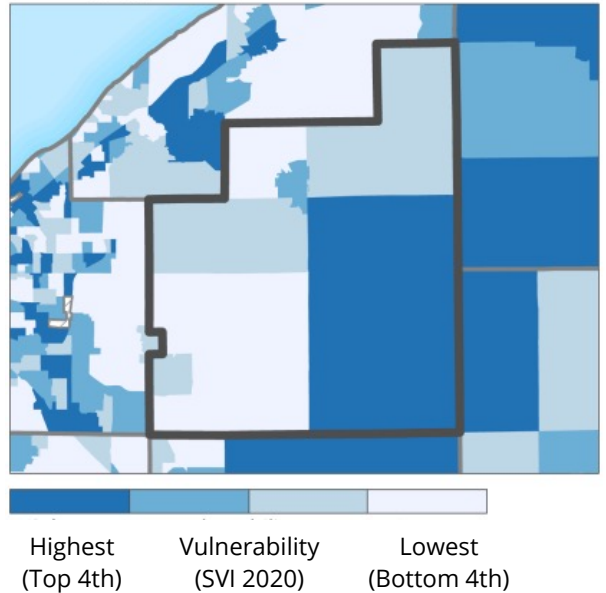


The household characteristic index includes population groups that may have difficulty navigating systems during a crisis, such as residents aged 65 and older, aged 17 and younger, those with disabilities, single parent households, and those with limited English proficiency. Pockets of medium and low vulnerability exist throughout most of the county. High vulnerability in this index only occurs in parts of Bainbridge and Middlefield. There is also a medium-high level that exists in parts of Chesterland, and in Huntsburg and Troy. Supports for these groups should be located throughout the county with slightly more concentration centralized in these five counties.

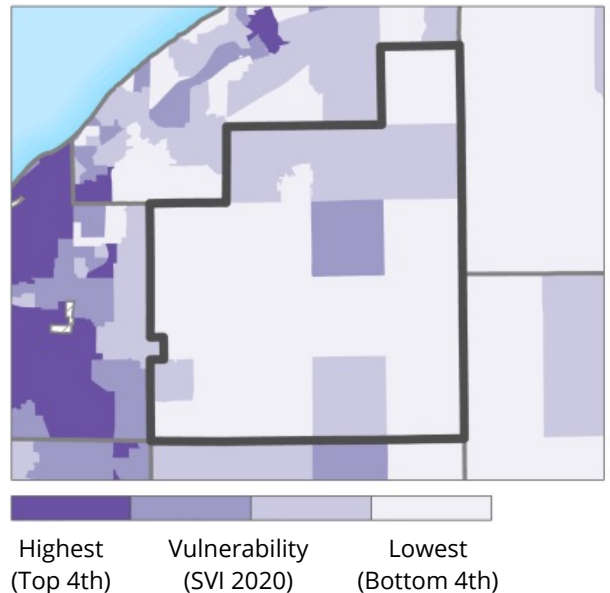
The Housing Type and Transportation Index consider the presence of multi-unit structures, mobile homes, crowding, lack of vehicles, and group living arrangements. Residents included in this group likely face challenges to being able to efficiently being able to navigate the community. They also experience both the stressors and benefits of close quarters living. There is a notable section of the county, in the southeastern area, that has a large geography of high vulnerability in this index. Mediation and specialized transportation services should be prioritized for the highly vulnerable areas of the county. The rest of Geauga is indexed at a low or medium low vulnerability.

The Racial and Ethnic Minority Index is a map of residents who are Hispanic or Latino (of any race), and those who are not Hispanic Latino and identify as Black and African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Two or More Races and Other Races. Historic disinvestment in BIPOC communities have left them more vulnerable to external stressors and crisis situations. In Geauga County, most of the county is indexed at a low vulnerability in this area, with some communities being indexed as medium-low across the top and the southeastern corner of the county. Aquilla and Claridon are slightly higher in the medium-high category. Investment into these communities, including economic development and health and social services, can improve the conditions and provide residents with resources necessary to weather a crisis.

Housing Type/Transportation

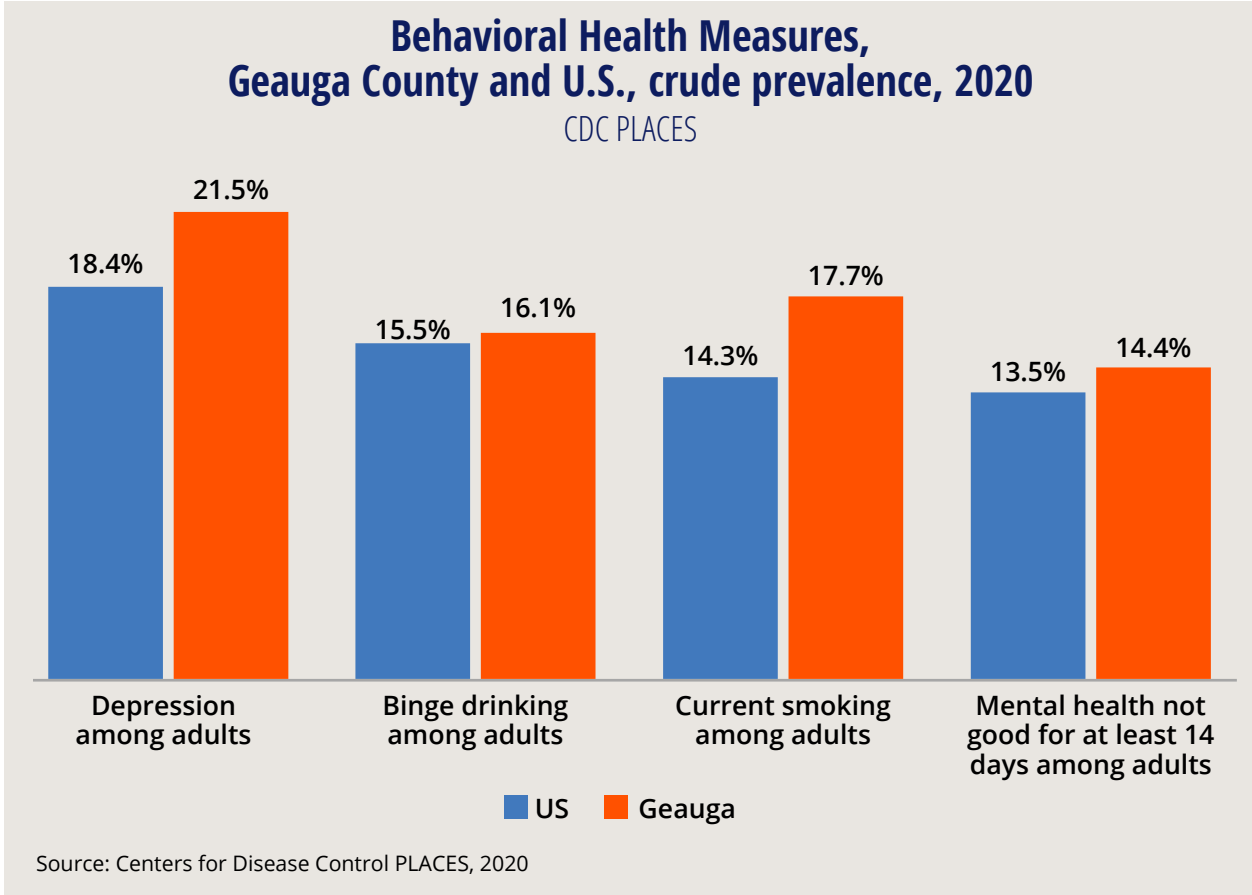


Racial and Ethnic Minority Status



Behavioral Health

Behavioral health encompasses mental illness and substance use disorders. The Geauga County Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services is commissioned to “assess community needs and to plan, organize and manage public resources so essential services are provided” to its county residents.

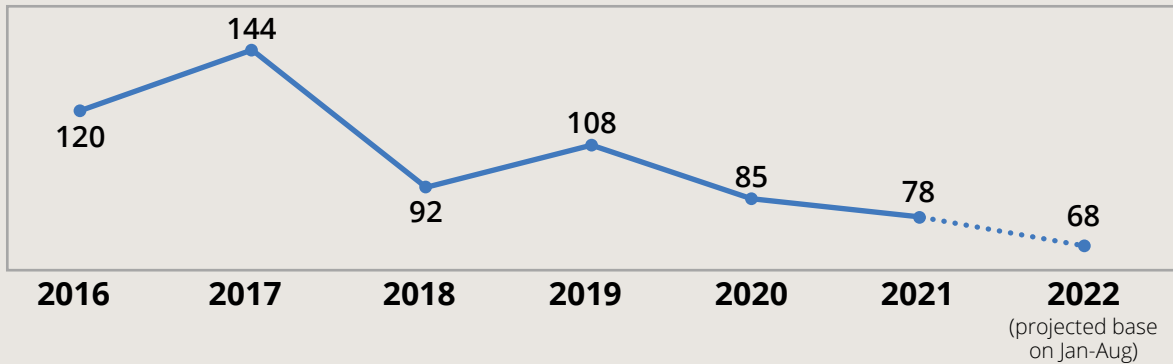


Gauga County is slightly worse than the national average on every measure of behavioral health included in the CDC PLACES data set. Especially concerning is the fact that more than one-in-five adults reported that they have diagnosed depression in 2020, higher than the national average. Binge drinking was also more common here, with 16.1 percent of adults reporting they had five or more drinks (men) or four or more drinks (women) on an occasion in the past month.

Estimated Drug Overdoses measures the number emergency visits to a medical provider where drugs were identified as the cause of traumatic injury, and only cases where the case notes included the terms “OD” or “overdose”. Suicide attempts and injury from everyday drugs like Tylenol are excluded, and these totals do not include victims who were treated by first responders and not transported to emergency departments.

Estimated Drug Overdoses, Geauga County, by Year

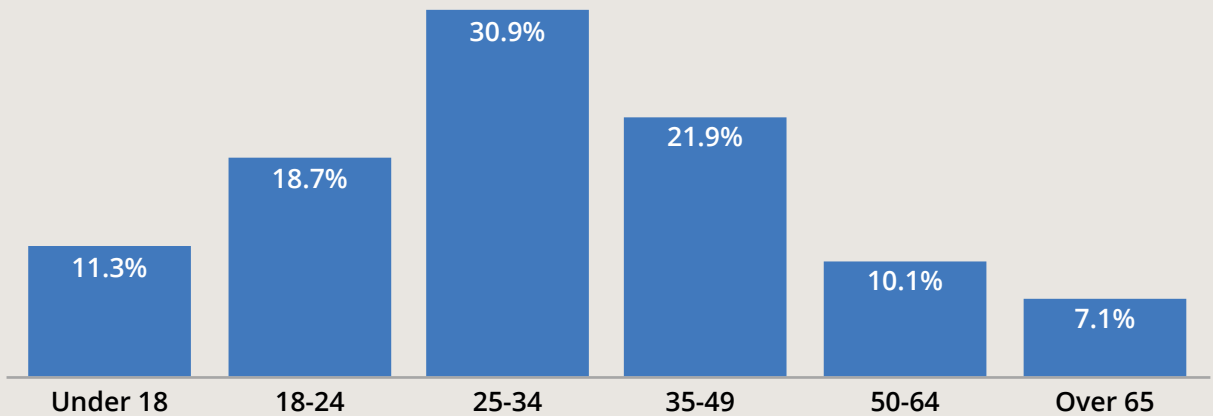
Statewide Estimated Drug Overdoses Dashboard Compiled by Summit County Public Health



Between 2016 and 2022, three Zip Codes in Geauga had at least 100 drug overdoses. These include 44024 (Chardon), 44062 (Middlefield), and 44023 (Chagrin Falls). These are raw counts rather than rates, so the fact that these are more densely populated areas than other parts of the county may influence the number of overdoses. About sixty percent of all overdose patients were male, and the average age was 35.6 years. Overdose patients in Geauga are heavily concentrated between the ages of 25 and 34.

Estimated Drug Overdoses, Geauga County, by Age, 2016-2022

Statewide Estimated Drug Overdoses Dashboard Compiled by Summit County Public Health



Deaths of Despair

Between 2018 and 2021, 164 Geauga County residents died from causes often termed “Deaths of Despair”, including intentional self-harm (suicide), accidental poisoning (including drug overdose), and chronic liver disease and cirrhosis. Deaths of Despair accounted for 4.2 percent of all people who died from the County over the four-year period.

EXISTING HEALTH PATHWAYS COMMUNITY ASSESSMENTS

LifeLine, Inc.'s 2021 Social Services Needs Assessment Excerpts

Innovative partnerships formed during the pandemic have led to new ways to distribute food and many of these partnerships continue well past the pandemic. This has led to less food scarcity than in past years' assessments.

According to data from the 2021 State of Poverty in Ohio report released by OACAA, 9% of Geauga County's population is enrolled in Medicaid in 2019, significantly less than Ohio's 25.3%, and the percentage of Geauga County's residents without health insurance in 2019 was 8.8%, significantly higher than Ohio's 6.1%.

In the 2019 Community Health Assessment, individuals with household incomes less than \$25,000 represented the highest percentage of those ranking their overall health as fair or poor at seventeen percent. Ultimately, respondents ranked mental health and addiction as the top problem, followed by chronic disease and maternal/infant health.

Gauga County has six food pantries located throughout the county, coordinated by the Geauga Hunger Task Force. According to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank's Geauga County Quick Facts for 2018, 9.2% of Geauga County's population is food insecure, with 16.2% of the child population food insecure and 16,983 Geauga County residents eligible for Greater Cleveland Food Bank services.

During the focus groups conducted in conjunction with the needs assessment, there were many issues discussed surrounding expanded mental health supports including additional services for youth, seniors, veterans and victims of domestic violence. Additional concerns included reducing the stigma of mental health issues, increasing group supports and reducing the wait times for services.

Geauga County Community Health Assessment

The Geauga County CHA identifies high and rising rates of Atrial Fibrillation within older adults, which may cause or worsen heart disease. The Assessment also found Breast Cancer rates above state and national trends. Finally, the Assessment notes high levels of alcohol consumption and adults who drink excessively.

According to data from the 2021 State of Poverty in Ohio report released by OACAA, 9% of Geauga County's population is enrolled in Medicaid in 2019, significantly less than Ohio's 25.3%, and the percentage of Geauga County's residents without health insurance in 2019 was 8.8%, significantly higher than Ohio's 6.1%.

LifeLine, Inc.'s 2021 Social Services Needs Assessment

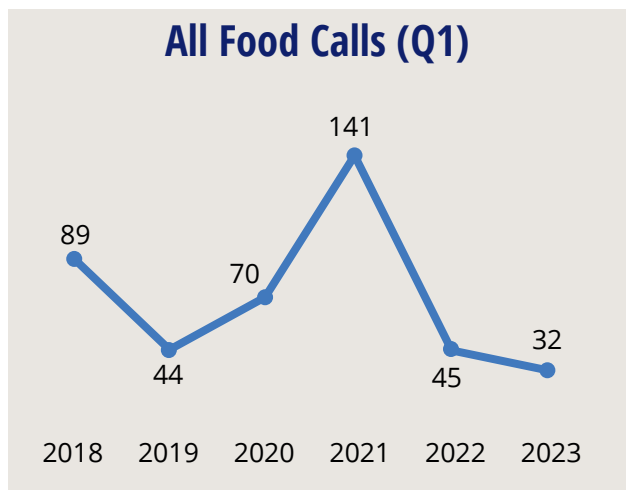
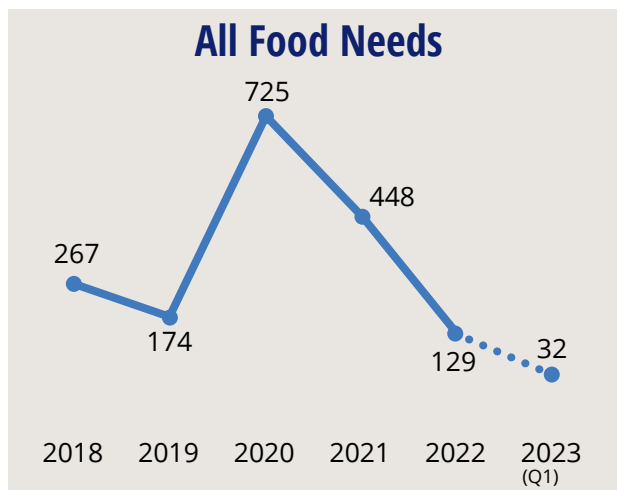
211 DATA TRENDS

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Food and Nutrition

All food needs expressed to 211, including pantries, prepared meals, SNAP and WIC, significantly peaked in 2020 before dropping in 2021 and 2022. The volume in 2022 is the lowest of the past few years recorded, which is interesting given the cost of food with inflation. Need rose to the highest ever in July of 2020 with 281 expressed needs during that month consisting of mostly fresh food resources. There was also a period of increased volume from February to July of 2021 which consisted almost exclusively of adults aged 55 regarding food pantry resources.

Expressed needs for pre and post-natal/baby resources were highest in 2018 at 25 and lowest in 2022 with 16. This low number is interesting, especially in 2021 and 2022 given the baby formula shortage that was occurring nationwide at that time with the shutdown of the Abbott plants.



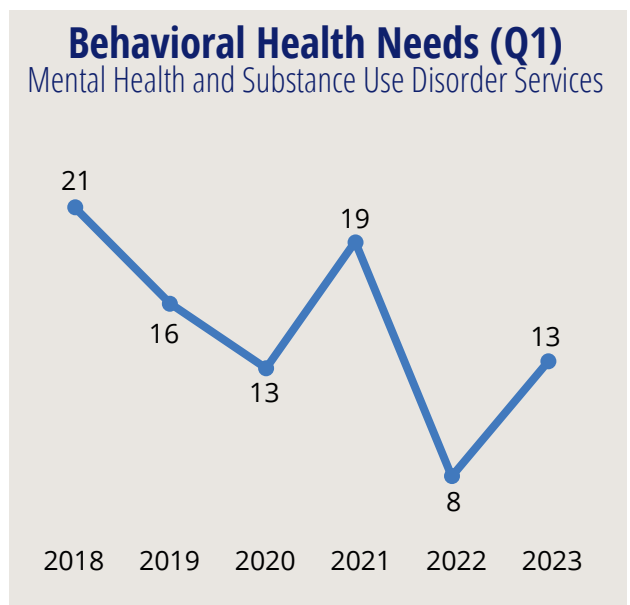
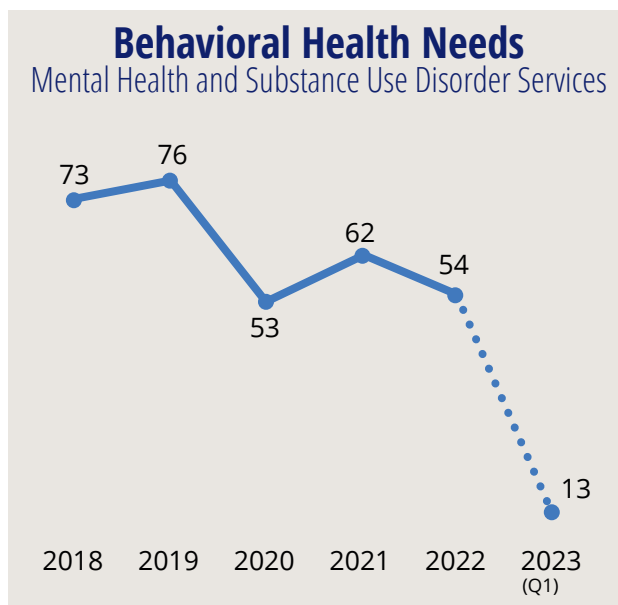
Behavioral Health

Behavioral health expressed needs were highest in 2019 with 76 and fell in 2020 and 2022. Quarter 4 of 2019 had the highest volume of expressed needs in behavioral health. The needs throughout the years consisted mostly of mental health resource needs, with a large chunk also being substance use resource needs too.

The age of callers varied throughout the years as well, but adults aged 25-44 make up the overall majority of callers.

Calls about mental health specific resources didn't follow the same pattern but did still drop in 2020 before rising in 2021 and 2022. The call volume is still not as high as pre-pandemic, but does remain on the higher end. Calls were highest in quarter 4 of 2019 at 21 calls during that quarter. The age of clients varied, but adults aged 25-44 again made up the majority.

Expressed needs for substance use disorder services were highest in 2019 and 2020 at 23 and lowest in 2022 with 8. Clients aged 25-44 made up the majority of clients.



HOUSING STABILITY

Living with the threat of eviction or in the midst of homelessness can lead to adverse health and educational outcomes and decrease the likelihood of escaping systemic and generational poverty. **The Housing Stability strategy rests on a foundation of decreasing homelessness and ensuring that housing is safe, stable, and secure.**

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is decreasing for renters, while stable for homeowners. In Geauga County, older adults or single-headed households who rent are least likely to live in affordable housing. Unaffordable housing jeopardizes family stability and stymies economic growth. With the pandemic's emergency rental aid program ending, housing instability may be on the rise. Black students in Geauga County make up a disproportionate share of students experiencing homelessness, when compared with White residents, indicating the potential of increased housing unaffordability for Black residents.

Housing for Older Adults

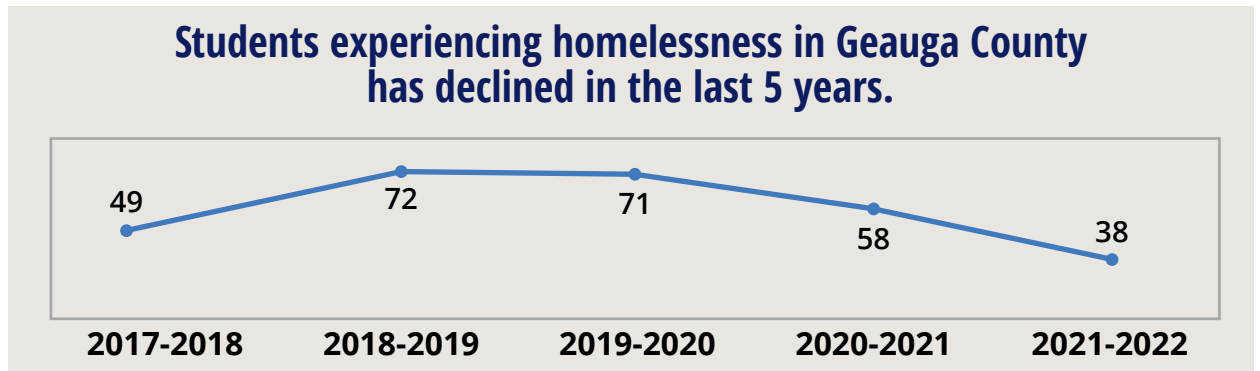
Over 19,500 residents aged 65 and older live in Geauga County, with a growing population of those aging into their 80's, 90's, and 100's. Fixed incomes may prevent older adults from maintaining affordable housing or modifying housing as they age.



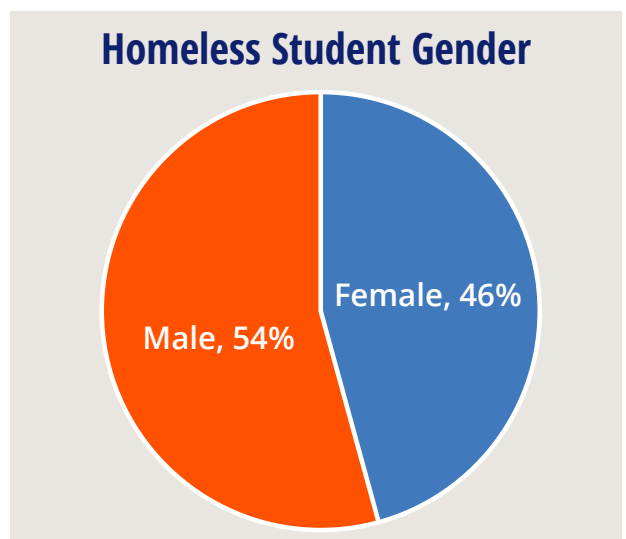
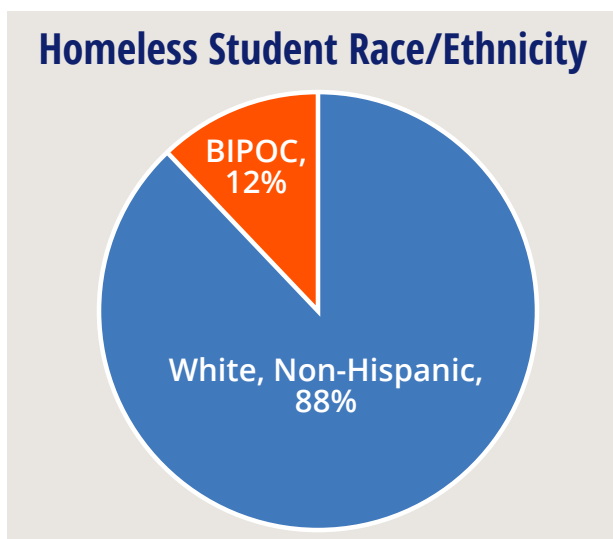
SECONDARY DATA: HOUSING CONDITIONS

Unhoused Students

The U.S. Department of Education measures student homelessness reflecting all students who lack a regular, fixed, adequate nighttime residence. The definition includes children who may be staying with others due to economic hardship; living in a car, motel or hotels; or staying at an emergency shelter. In the 2021-2022 academic year, 38 students in Geauga County, which accounts for .4% of all students, experienced homelessness.



The majority of students experiencing homelessness identified as White non-Hispanic. Eighty-eight percent of students experiencing homelessness identified as White non-Hispanic. The remaining twelve percent of students experiencing homelessness identified as races that fall within the BIPOC designation. Male and female students were fairly evenly represented in experiencing homelessness, with a slightly higher percentage of students experiencing homelessness being male. Homelessness leads to increased family stress, poorer health outcomes and decreased academic performance.

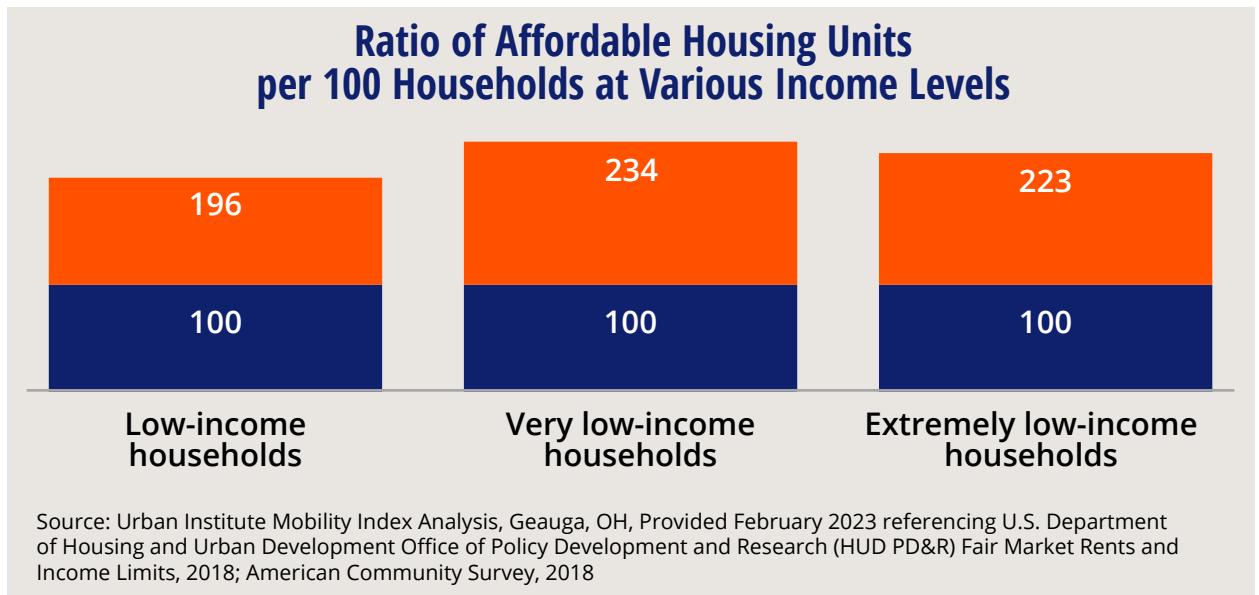


Source: Ohio Department of Education 2021-2022 School Year Data

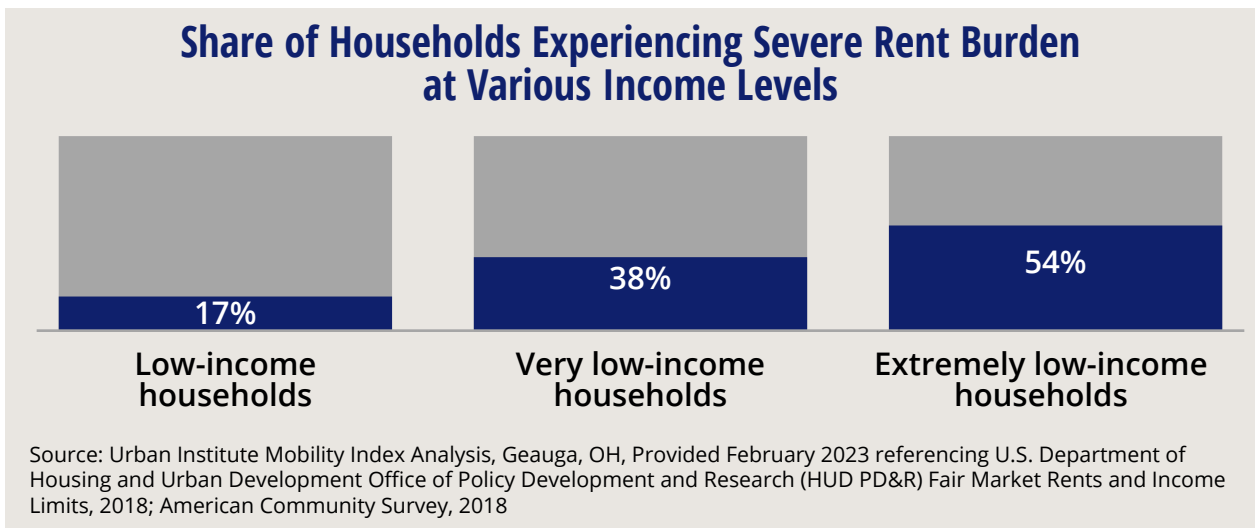
Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is when housing costs are below 30% of household income, ensuring that households have enough money to pay for other nondiscretionary costs. The ability to find affordable housing decreases with income.

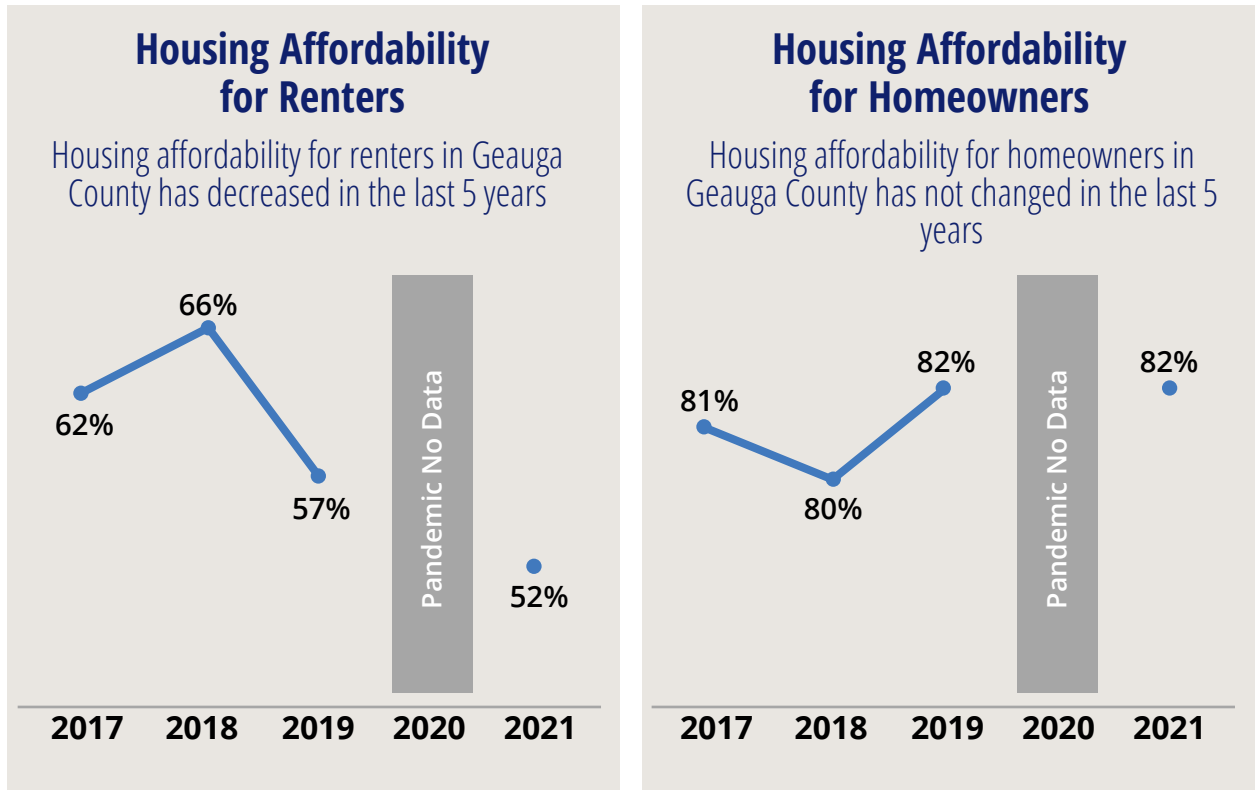
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines low-income, very low-income, and extremely low-income as those households making eighty percent, fifty percent, or thirty percent of the Median Family Income for an area. The Urban Institute analyzed data from 2018, and found that there are enough affordable housing units available in Geauga County at each income level.



A greater percentage of households in Geauga County are experiencing severe rent burden at the lowest income levels.

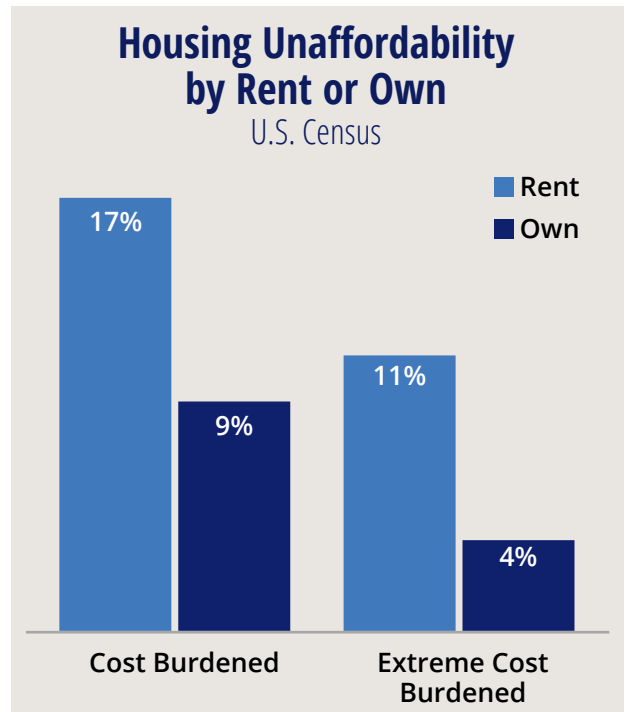
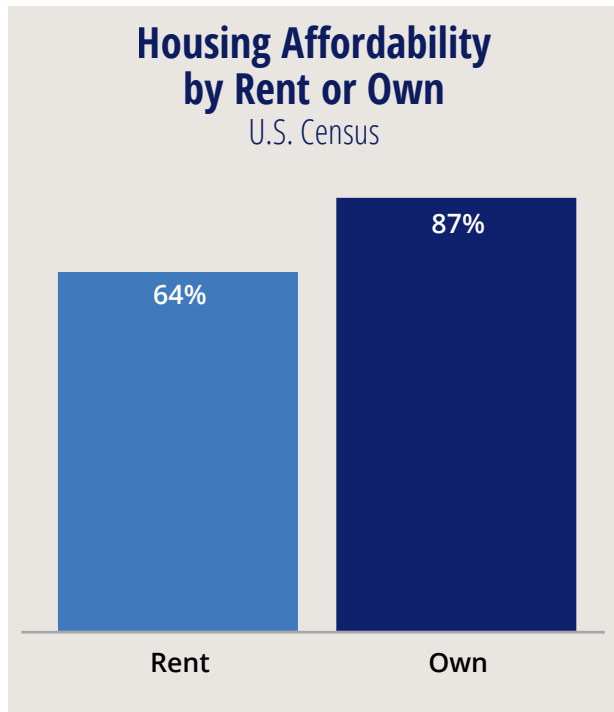


Housing is considered extremely cost-burdened when it requires more than fifty percent of a person's income. Geauga County homeowners are more likely than renters to have affordable housing, with eighty-two percent of homeowners spending less than thirty percent of their income on housing, compared to only fifty-three percent of renters.

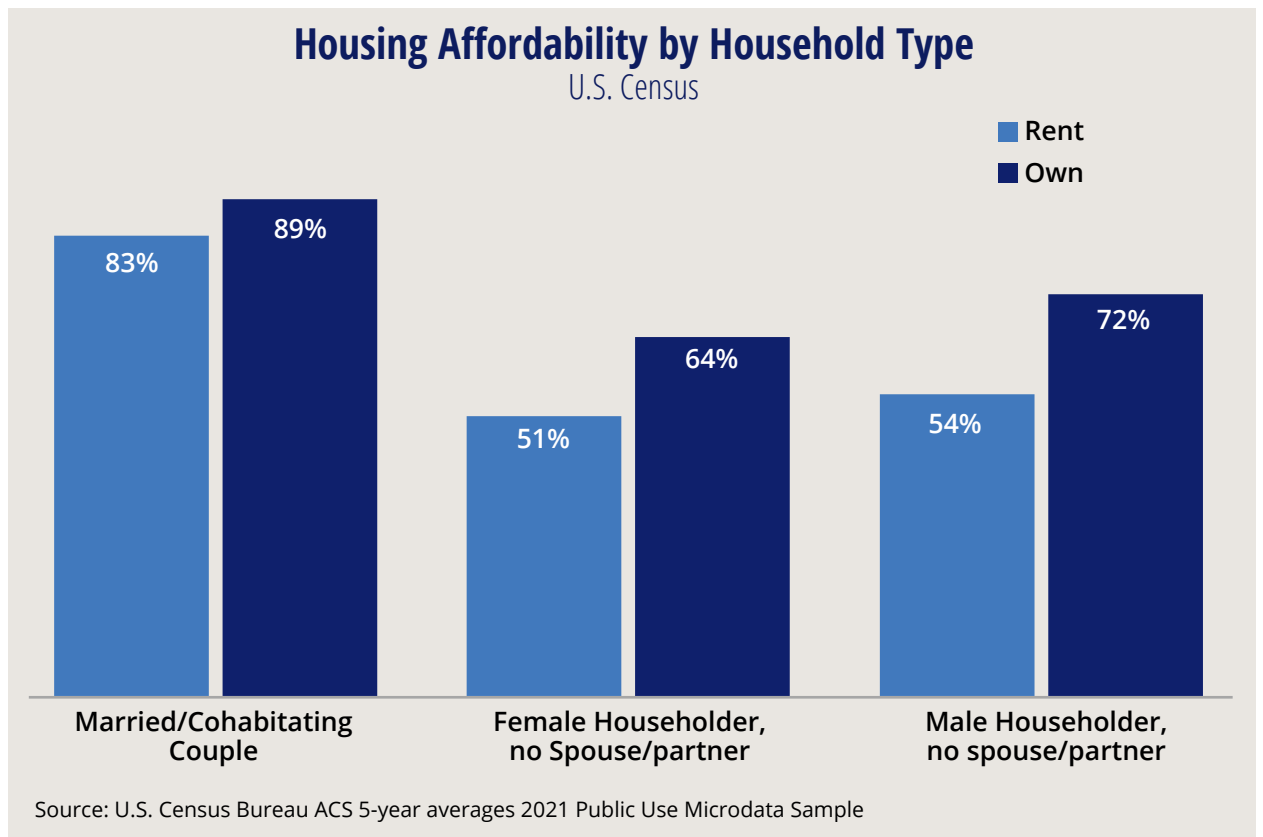


Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year estimates. There is no ACS data for 2020 1-year estimates.

Housing affordability also varies by household type. For both renters and owners, married or cohabitating couples are the most likely to have affordable housing. Of single householders, men have higher rates of affordable housing than women. Across household types, households that are renting have less affordable housing than homeowners.

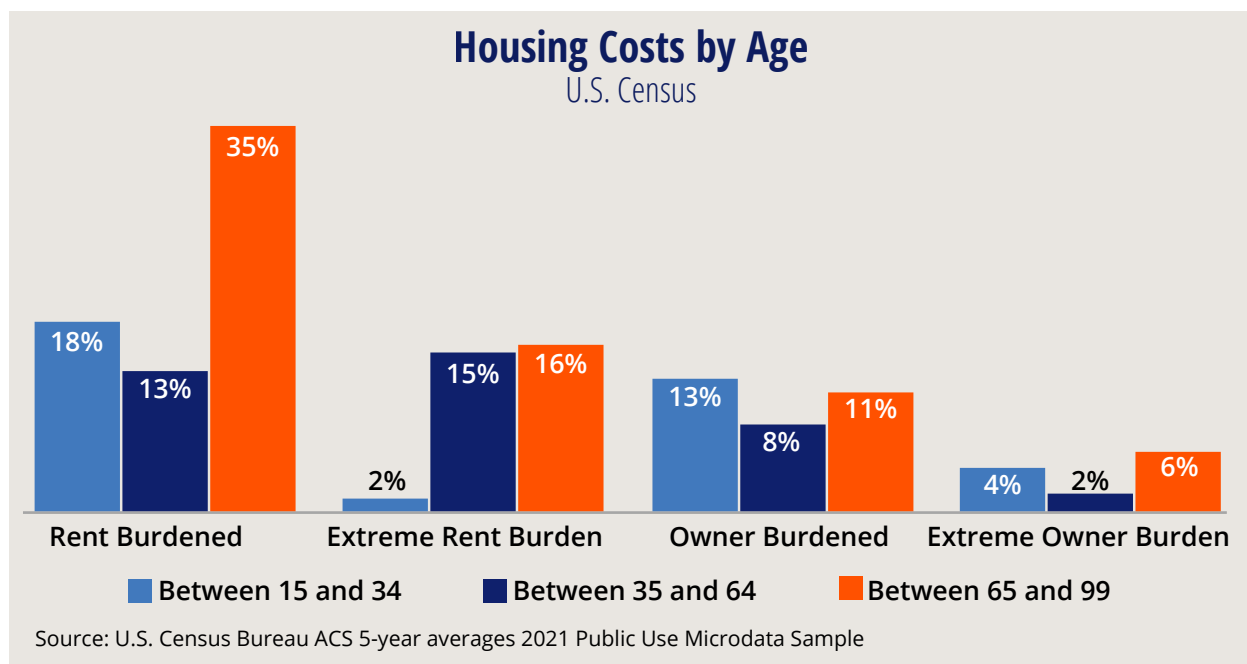
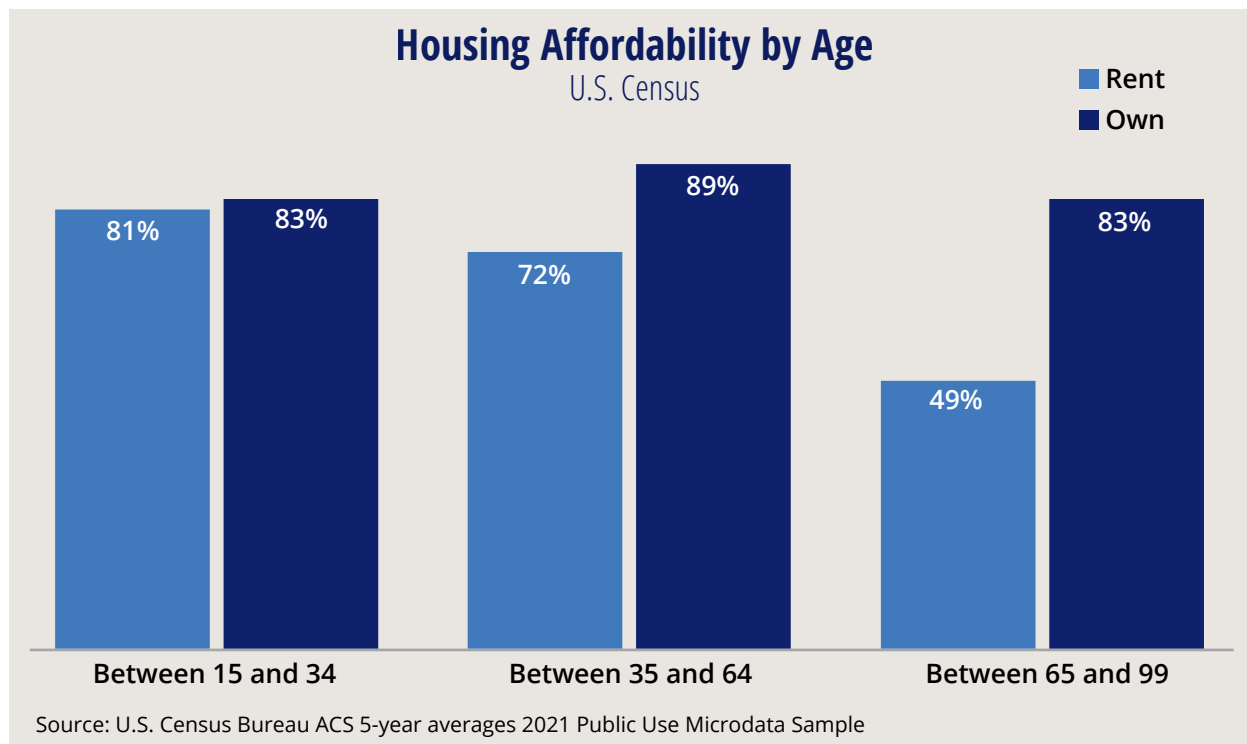


Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year averages 2021 Public Use Microdata Sample



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year averages 2021 Public Use Microdata Sample

Additionally, the data shows that housing affordability decreases with age. A smaller percentage of householders over 65 years of age spend less than thirty percent on housing costs, regardless of owning or renting a home. Seniors age 65 and older experience higher rates of housing cost burden and extreme cost burden compared to other age groups when both renting and owning a home.

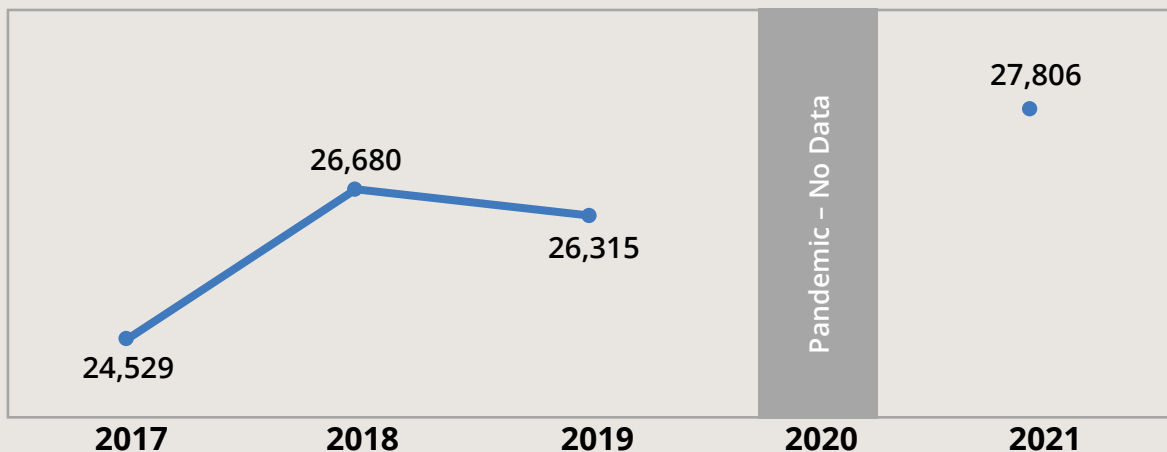


Older Adults Aging in Place

Over 19,500 residents aged 65 and older live in Geauga County. As expected, the share of this group decreases with every 5-year increment added between groups. However, the share of those 85 and older is larger than those between the ages of 80 to 84. The 85 and older group includes the growing population of those aging into their late 80's, 90's, and 100's.

In Geauga County, most older adult households receive Social Security, and many have income from earnings or retirement. Public benefits programs such as SSI, SNAP, and cash assistance provide fewer resources on average than private retirement funds and earnings.

The number of older adults aged 60 and older residing in Geauga has increased slightly over the past 5 years.



Source: American Community Survey 2017-2021 ACS 1-Year Estimates
 *No Census data available for 2020

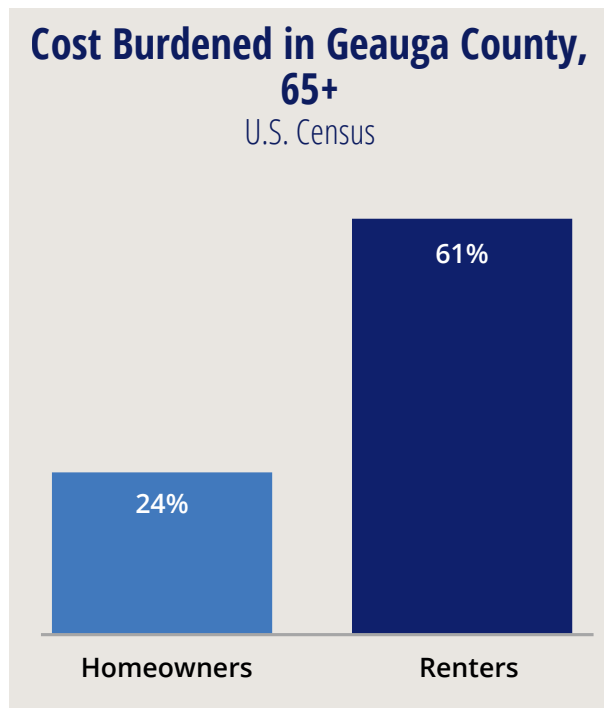
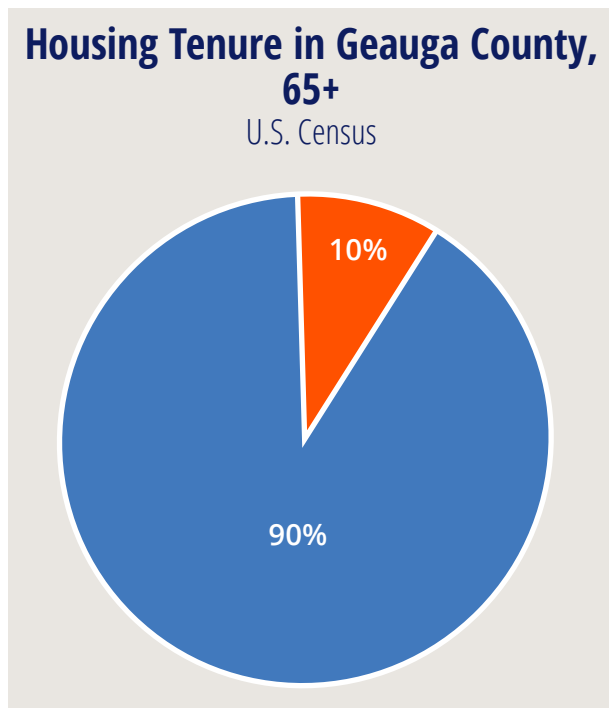


Older Adult (60+) Households

Income Source	Share of Households	Average Annual Income
Earnings	58%	\$85,753
Retirement	52%	\$30,546
Social Security	73%	\$25,202
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	5%	\$10,230
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	4%	Not Applicable
Cash Public Assistance	1%	\$7,077

Source: American Community Survey 2017-2021 ACS 1-Year Estimates

The majority of older adult residents in Geauga County are homeowners. However, renters in the county have a higher rate of being housing cost burdened. Almost two-thirds of renters (61%) contribute more than thirty percent of their incomes towards housing costs, whereas a little less than a quarter of homeowners (24%) in Geauga are in a similar situation.



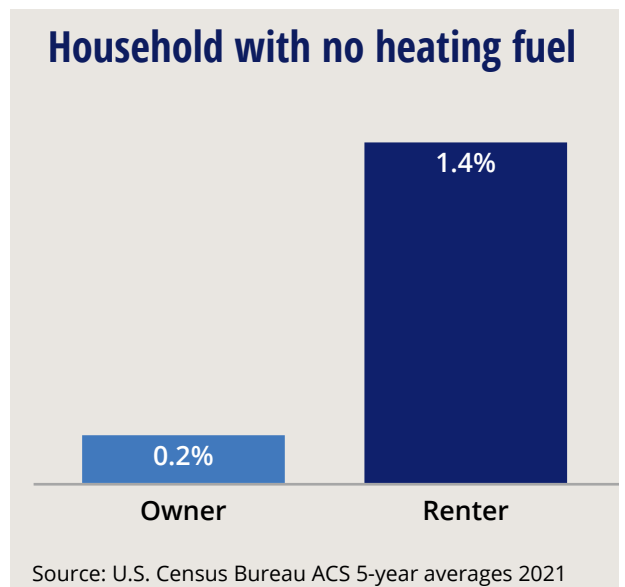
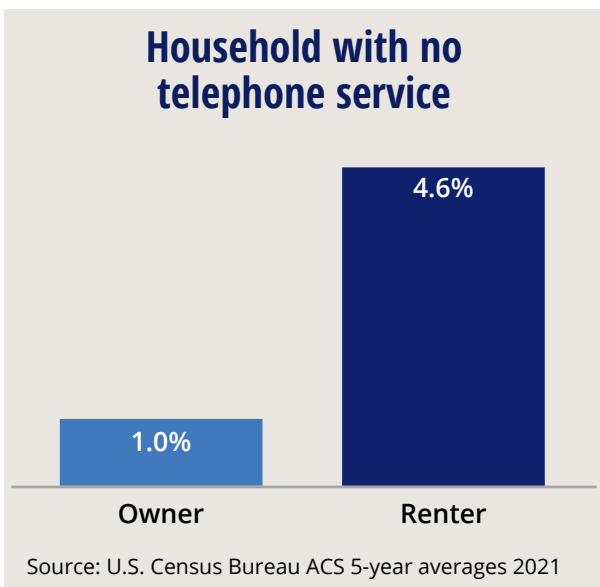
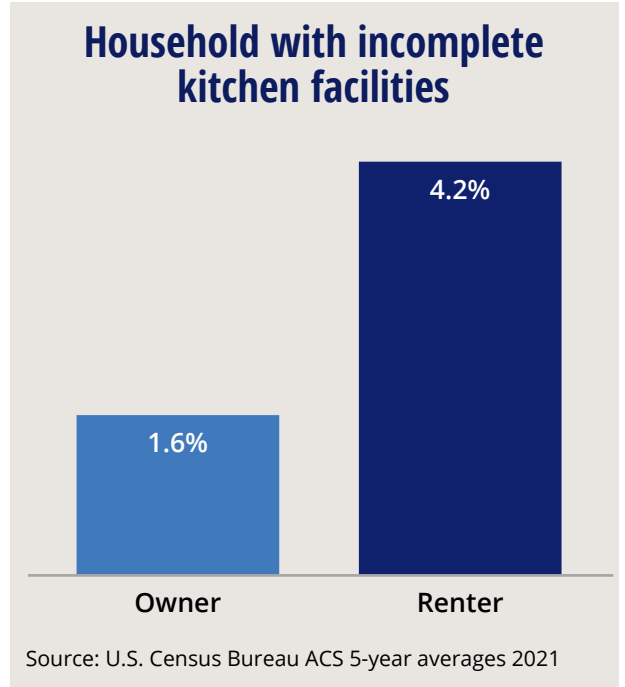
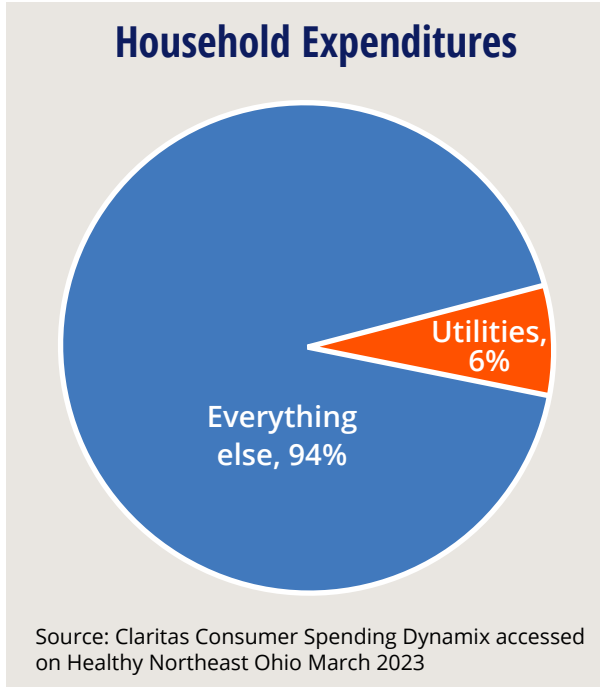
Source: American Community Survey 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates

***Note: No 1-year estimates available in US Census ACS data.

Utilities

Access to and cost of utilities play a critical role in housing quality. In 2022, households in Geauga County spent an average of six percent of household income on utilities.

Moreover, there are still homes in Geauga County without the utilities that make a home habitable. Some homes do not have complete kitchen facilities or heat. More than four percent of rental properties lack complete kitchen facilities and/or telephone service. More than one percent of rental units lack heat.



EXISTING HOUSING STABILITY COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

LifeLine, Inc.'s 2021 Social Services Needs Assessment

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, the Fair Market Rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Ohio is \$684/month in Ohio, but considerably higher at \$705/month in Geauga County. The average worker earning the Ohio minimum wage of \$8.80/hour would have to work 62 hours per week to afford a modest one-bedroom apartment at the Fair Market Rent in Geauga County. The amount of rent that would be affordable at minimum wage working an average 40 hours/week would be \$458/month. According to data from the Geauga Metropolitan Housing Authority, currently Geauga County has 243 public housing units, 171 traditional housing choice vouchers and 13 Mainstream vouchers for non-elderly disabled families. Currently GMHA has only been able to maintain approximately 165 housing choice vouchers and five Mainstream vouchers due to the lack of affordable private rental units in Geauga County. There is a waiting list for both programs and the lists are currently open. During the focus groups conducted in conjunction with the needs assessment, the primary need identified in every focus group was the need for additional affordable rental housing. Also, there is no emergency homeless shelter in Geauga County. Because so much of the housing market in Geauga County are owner-occupied homes, additional concerns were for financial assistance for home repairs, weatherization and mortgage assistance.

The average worker earning the Ohio minimum wage of \$8.80/hour would have to work 62 hours per week to afford a modest one-bedroom apartment at the Fair Market Rent in Geauga County.

Lifeline, Inc.'s 2021 Social Services Needs Assessment

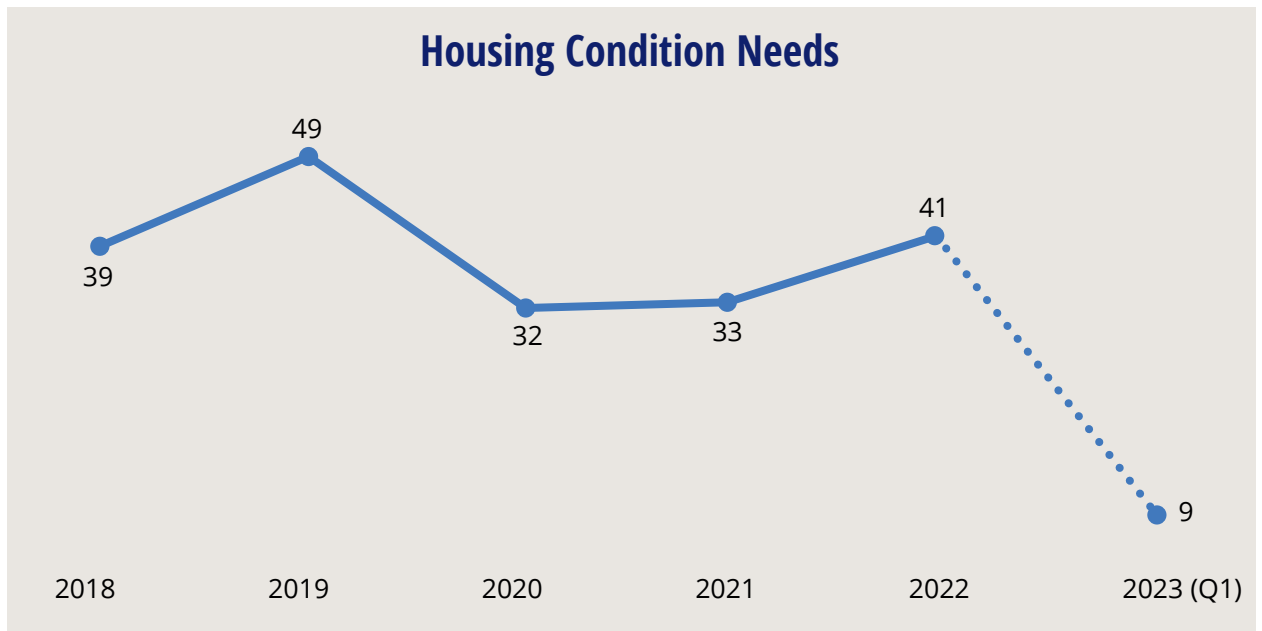
211 DATA TRENDS

The 211 data was pulled from the 211 call database and covers the years 2018-2022. Geauga County calls were analyzed for each indicator, but low numbers makes it difficult to draw conclusions from the data. However, it is important to note that low call volume does not mean that Geauga County is without need for resources, assistance, and services.

Housing Quality

Housing Condition Issues.

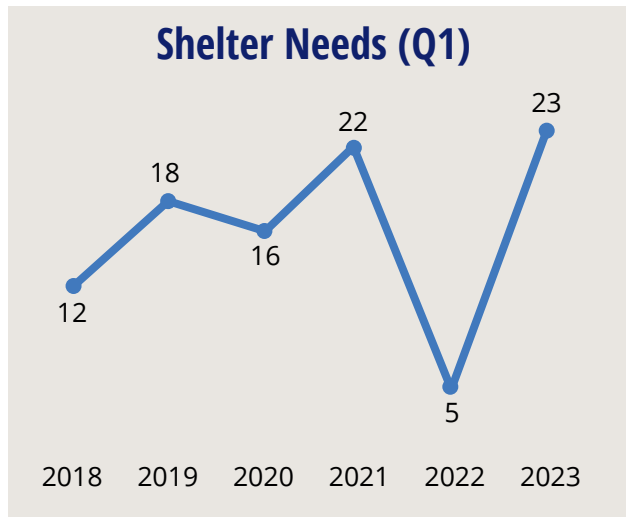
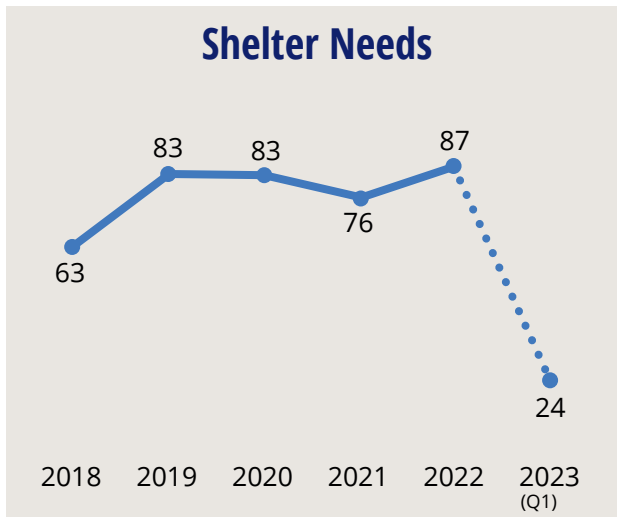
Expressed needs for assistance with housing conditions peaked in 2019 with 49 and have remained lower than pre-pandemic. Adults aged 55 and over make up the vast majority of clients.



Housing Stability

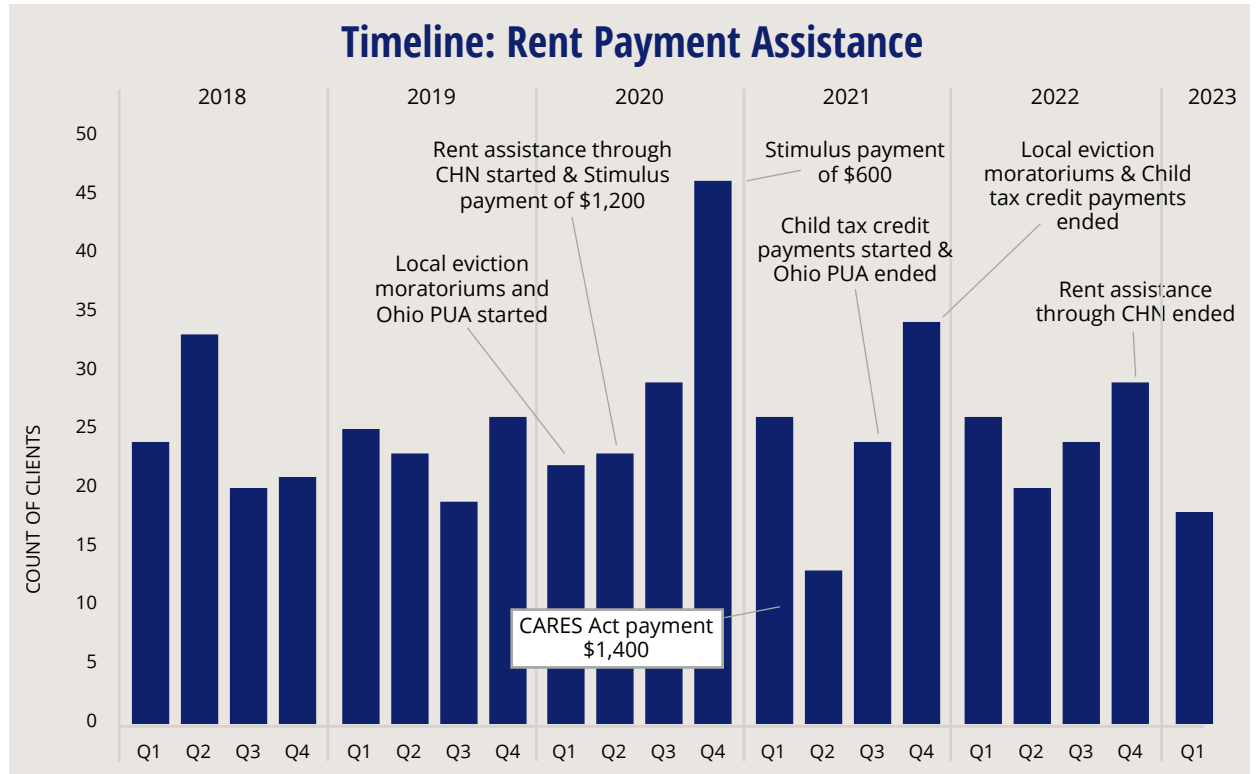
Shelter.

Shelter needs expressed to 211 were highest in 2022 at 87, the lowest being 63 in 2018. There were significant peaks in expressed need for shelter during Q4 of 2019 and Q3 of 2022. Adults aged 25-44 made up most clients, but the other age groups also had peak times as well.



Payment Assistance.

Rent payment assistance needs peaked in 2020 with 113 throughout the year, and Q4 of 2020 showed a notable peak of 45 expressed needs for rent assistance. Clients aged 18-24 tended to peak during Quarters 2 and 3 throughout the years, with adults aged 25-44 and over 55 tended to make up the majority of clients. With the exception of a stimulus payment, relief dollars and rental moratoriums saw a drop in expressed needs until the moratoriums ended.



Moving-Related Needs.

Moving-related needs peaked in 2019 and have dropped since 2020. Older adults aged 55+ tended to be the highest percentage of clients, followed by adults aged 25-44.

Landlord and Tenant Rights and Disputes.

Landlord and tenant needs peaked in 2020 with 15 calls and have dropped since then to a low of 6 in 2022. The age of clients is relatively evenly split among the 25-44, 45-54, and 55+ age groups.

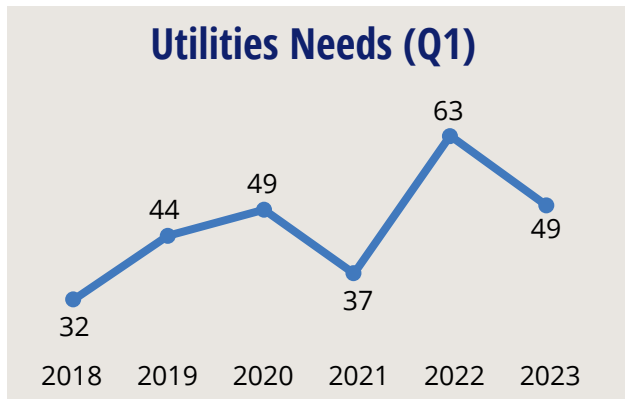
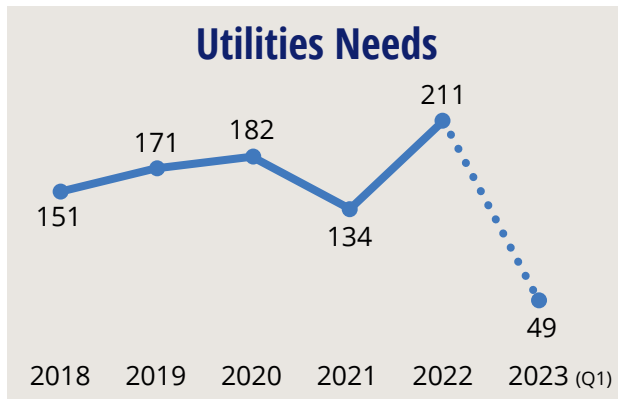
Eviction Prevention Assistance.

Eviction prevention assistance needs peaked in 2020 with 9 expressed needs and have remained higher than pre-pandemic. Years that had more rental payment assistance calls also tended to have higher eviction prevention assistance needs expressed to 211.

Utilities

Assistance with utilities is the highest volume of expressed needs in Geauga County under the Housing Stability umbrella. Needs peaked in 2022 at 211 and were lowest in 2021 at 134. Adults aged 55 and over make up the largest majority of clients. Needs tended to be lower in the summer months and higher in the winter months, with the exception of June 2022 with the highest monthly volume at 26 expressed needs.

Assistance with electric payment is the most common reason for contacting 211, followed by assistance with gas service payment. Electricity assistance is commonly needed in the summer months and gas assistance is commonly needed during the colder months.



As we conclude this assessment we invite you to take the next step with us. We encourage you to visit our website, unitedwaycleveland.org, where you can explore the various ways to engage further and see emerging trends informed by our 211 data. Together, we can build a community where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

