

LIFE

Life in MARATHON COUNTY

11TH EDITION | 2017-2019

2017-2019 LIFE Steering Committee

The LIFE Steering Committee is a group of community members who oversee and implement the LIFE project for the benefit of the community. For continuity and fiscal management, the project is coordinated at United Way of Marathon County.

The purpose of the LIFE Report is to:

- Acknowledge community strengths.
- Identify community challenges.
- Serve as a catalyst for change by advancing community conversation and partnerships.

The LIFE Report Steering Committee members and volunteers for this report are:

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We are grateful to these volunteers as well as others who gave a tremendous amount of volunteer time doing office support and sub-committee members who wrote and compiled section information.

*Denotes Executive Committee Members



Dear Friends:

The LIFE in Marathon County Steering Committee and our generous sponsors are proud to present the eleventh LIFE Report. This report has become a staple in our community, being actively used by non-profit organizations, community foundations, researchers, and businesses across our county. This edition represents 22 years of a commitment by our community to have a go-to resource piece that focuses on the quality of life in Marathon County.

With this edition the LIFE Report is organized in four sections: Prosperous, Healthy, Safe and Connected. These sections represent interrelated areas that are essential to the overall assessment of our county in understanding strengths, challenges and opportunities for improvements.

The LIFE Report is truly a community project. Over 100 volunteers participated in its creation through six sub-committees. With the 11th report a community advisory team was established that provided feedback to the Steering Committee in priority setting.

Other highlights you will find as you review and use the LIFE Report:

- The Report showcases community survey results, demographic comparisons, data indicator pages, section summaries, opportunities for actions and an executive summary.
- An online version of the report is available at www.unitedwaymc.org. Printed copies are available by contacting United Way of Marathon County at (715) 848-2927.

The LIFE Report continues to evolve with the goal of guaranteeing the information provided between its covers is relevant to developments statewide and nationally. The commitment by Report developers has been, and will continue to be, to provide the best data comparisons for Marathon County and an accurate overview of our quality of life.

Happy reading!

Sincerely,

Karen Katz
LIFE Project Chair

Report Sponsors

This is the eleventh edition of the LIFE Report, which has been published every two years since 1997. The LIFE Report project is guided by the LIFE Project Steering Committee and made possible through the support of the organizations listed below.

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LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Subcommittee Volunteers

Approximately 100 volunteers make the LIFE Report possible. Most of these dedicated, community focused people participate on LIFE subcommittees, researching and shaping the indicators that form the report. The report simply would not exist without their work. We are very grateful for each and every one of our volunteers.

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The Life Priority Setting Advisory Team was new to the priority setting process with the 2017-2019 LIFE Report. The goal of the Advisory Team was to add a community perspective to the priority setting process. Their work informed the LIFE Steering Committee in their final priority setting.

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LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Executive Summary

This is the eleventh edition of LIFE in Marathon County, a report presenting information and data about the quality of life in Marathon County. The 2017-2019 LIFE Report has adopted a new structure. Over the first 10 reports (representing 20 years – 1997-2017) the report indicators were grouped in six categories. Those sections were:

- Economic Environment
- Education
- Basic Needs and Supports
- Health and Wellness
- Community Safety
- Environment and Energy

With the 2017-2019 report, a new structure was adopted that encompasses four broader sections:

- Prosperous
- Healthy
- Safe
- Connected



These four categories serve as descriptors in painting a picture of the quality of life in Marathon County: where we strive to have a county that is prosperous, healthy, safe and where residents are connected. These four categories closely align with the 2016 Marathon County Comprehensive Plan, a plan that was structured around the goal to be the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county in Wisconsin. Factors of interconnectedness between the sections and indicators within this report show the need to work collaboratively to support efforts to improve the quality of life for all residents to ensure Marathon County is a great place to grow up, work, raise a family and retire.

“The LIFE Report has allowed the community to be more proactive. It has been a valuable tool many funding organizations reference and non-profit entities list as reasons why they are seeking funds.”

Brian Gurness
Executive Director
B.A. & Esther Greenheck
Foundation

“Marathon County has done an excellent job in coming together to address community issues. The community assessment identifies the important areas that need to be looked at in Marathon County and allows organizations to target those, investing their resources to provide the greatest bang for our buck.”

Antonina Olszewski
Director
Spiritual Care
Ascension Wisconsin

“When resources are pooled and the efforts are coordinated it creates a synergy that enhances the effectiveness of the overall effort. That is one of the biggest benefits of the LIFE Report.”

Rick Nevers
Senior Vice President
Aspirus/Past LIFE Chair

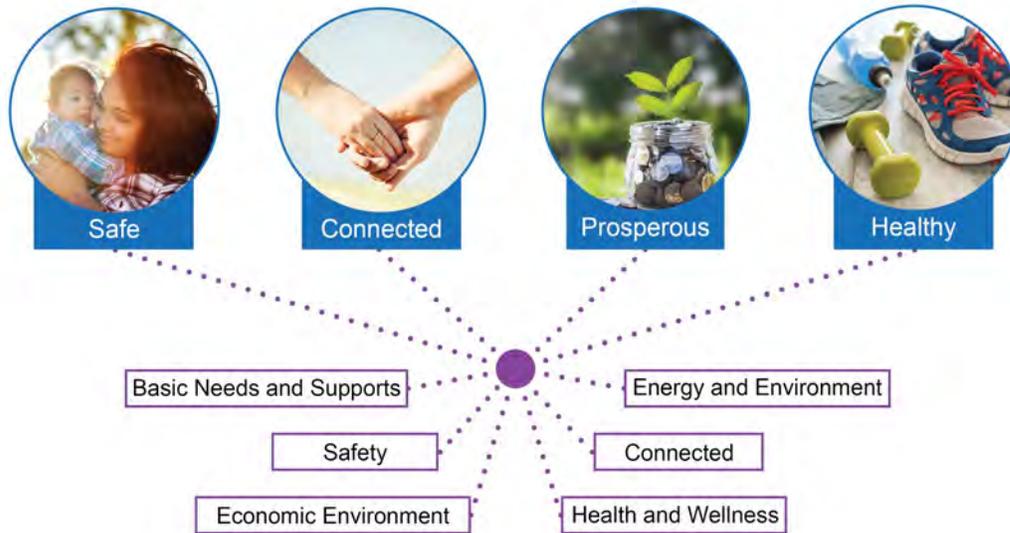
LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Executive Summary

Our Community is a System

Understanding that a community is a system of interconnected parts is increasingly important as the issues we face become more complex. The more we work collaboratively and across boundaries the more successful we will be in our efforts to sustain a high quality of life.

The graphic below illustrates the connectivity of the various aspects of our community. They are linked by the impact one has on the other, or by the interplay between them.



Every indicator in this report is linked in some way. As you read, multiple linkages between indicators will likely come to mind as you “connect the dots” between indicators. For example:



LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Executive Summary

Success and Progress

The LIFE Report identifies areas of success and progress based on the report data and feedback from community advisors and the LIFE Steering Committee. The purpose of the Success and Progress section is to identify areas of strength, improvement and willingness to address some of our community's most challenging issues. In this eleventh report, seven successes and progress were identified:

- Child Success in School
- Openness to Explore Diversity
- Access to Health Care
- Strong Economy
- Substance Abuse Education
- Affordable Housing
- Data on Youth Risk Behaviors



Child Success in School

Marathon County children are set up for success from kindergarten through high school graduation.

- Over 90% of children entering kindergarten in Marathon County pass literacy screening and all school districts in Marathon County have a higher graduation rate than the state average.



Openness to Explore Diversity

The community has created initiatives to address racial divisions such as Toward One Wausau and The Unity Project.

- Toward One Wausau is a grassroots effort formed in 2016 of people of many backgrounds coming together for one purpose – to move toward a vision of “One Wausau” that works for people regardless of race or ethnic background.
- The Unity Project focuses on creating an inclusive and welcoming environment.

Access to Health Care

Access to health care remains high in Marathon County with four health care systems located in the community and a primary care physician ratio better than Wisconsin's average. Residents continue to receive preventative health care and screenings across their lifespan. Examples of this include:

- High percentage of babies born at a healthy weight.
- High rates of two year olds with up-to-date immunizations.
- Decreased average length of time to reduce a child's blood lead level to safe range.
- High rates of screenings such as mammograms and cholesterol checks.
- The majority of LIFE Survey respondents report being satisfied with the accessibility of health care.

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Executive Summary

Success and Progress continued

Strong Economy

Marathon County has a strong economy that positively impacts the greater region.

- The county had a gross regional product (GRP) of 6.1 billion dollars and 10.2 billion dollars in sales in 2014.
- Marathon County is a regional economic hub that provides job opportunities for County residents and commuters from outside of the County's borders.

Substance Abuse

The issue of substance abuse has been kept in the public by engaging the media as well as educating and providing expertise to policy makers.

Data on Youth Risk Behavior

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data from all 10 school districts in Marathon County provides a rich local data source regarding the behaviors of our community's youth. The 2017-2019 LIFE Report marks the second collection of county-wide YRBS data, allowing for comparisons to prior years and for the first time, middle school data is available.

Affordable Housing

Marathon County has made strides to address affordable housing.

- Emergency housing assistance recipients have increased housing stability. In 2016, 57% reported having housing stability 3 months after services were provided.
- The Coordinated Entry System in Marathon County, which prioritizes the most vulnerable chronically homeless, has resulted in more homeless people being housed.



LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Executive Summary

Calls to Action

The LIFE Report sets community level Calls to Action on the report data and feedback from community advisors and the LIFE Steering Committee. The purpose of these Calls to Action is to advance community dialogue and stimulate action to improve our community's well-being. In this eleventh report, five complex interconnected Calls to Action were identified:

Mental Health

The mental health of individuals in Marathon County, especially youth, warrants attention as does the need for accessible mental health services.

- Schools throughout Marathon County are struggling with managing mental health of children as a result of childhood trauma.
- Suicide risk has increased among high school students as has the number of youth reporting feelings of hopelessness.
- Stigma, cost and a shortage of mental health providers (psychiatrists and dual certified therapists) remain barriers to accessing services.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse and misuse continues to be of concern in Marathon County.

- Illegal drug use was the number one issue of concern among 2017 LIFE Survey respondents.
- Drug overdoses were the number one cause of injury related deaths among individuals aged 15-64.
- While alcohol remains the largest substance abuse burden in our community, rates remain unchanged among adults and youth.
- E-cigarette use is on the rise, yet, there is a low level of concern regarding their use.

Bullying

Bullying, the pressures of social media, and social isolation pose a threat to the security, confidence and self-esteem of both youth and adults in Marathon County.

- 43.5% of high school students who took the 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate they believe bullying at school is a problem, an increase from 40% in 2015.
- 27% of students said they do not feel they have a teacher or other adult whom they can talk to if they have a problem.

Broadband Access

Broadband access is crucial to keep up with trends in education, employment, healthcare and public safety.

- 40% of rural Wisconsin does not have broadband, according to the FCC.
- Costs of Internet services also tend to be much higher as areas become more rural.

Future Job Growth

Training to job demand will be key to delivering the workforce needed with in-demand skills (technical know-how or specialized skills) to fill upcoming vacancies created by retirement and additional new job growth, especially in health services and education.

- From 2012 to 2022, the North Central Wisconsin Region can expect to add between 14,000 and 16,000 more jobs to its economy.
- There is also a need to promote training and education to not only fill those openings, but to encourage people to move into higher paying jobs.

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Executive Summary

Community Assets

The quality of life in Marathon County is enhanced by its strong community assets.

Education

- Collaboration of educational organizations.
- Strong birth to higher educational opportunities.

Environment

- Collaboration of natural resources organizations/efforts.
- Active outdoor lifestyle.
- Natural resources with specific reference to water and air.

Lifestyle

- Great place to raise kids.
- Spiritual support is accepted and available.
- Safe place to live.

Economic

- Numerous family-owned manufacturing companies.
- Marathon County is the north central economic hub providing an attraction for others to come here.
- Collaboration on access to broadband.
- Educational institutions provide train-to-job demand resources.

Health

- Health initiatives are active and supported.
- Collaboration is a way of life – active in substance abuse and among health care systems.
- Medical College of Wisconsin is in Marathon County, has a psychiatry residency, and a focus on generating rural doctors.

Connected

- Spirit of collaboration in shared outcomes and people who care.
- Care about diversity.
- The LIFE Report itself demonstrates the community's commitment to quality of life.



PROSPEROUS



“Building a better tomorrow starts today; the choices we make today individually and as a community will impact our natural environment for the rest of time.”

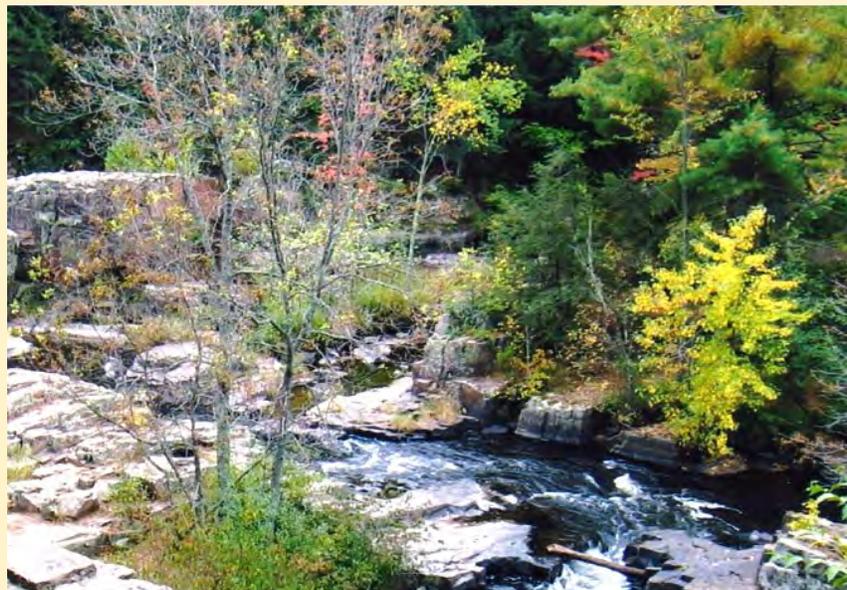
Aaron Ruff, Marathon County Health Department

Prosperous Section Summary



SUCCESS AND PROGRESS

- All school districts in Marathon County have a higher graduation rate than the state average.
- Marathon County has a strong economy that positively impacts the greater region. The county had a gross regional product (GRP) of 6.1 billion dollars and 10.2 billion dollars in sales in 2014. It is a regional economic hub that provides job opportunities for county residents and commuters from outside of the county's borders.
- Marathon County's labor force participation rate remains strong at 69.2% and is above both state and national averages.
- Over 90% of children entering kindergarten in Marathon County pass literacy screening.
- There were 71,000 jobs in the county during 2016. This was a 3.1% increase from 2014 and a 9.9% increase from 2010, at the height of the recent economic recession.
- Individual industries play a key role in the strength of our local economy. Manufacturing generated a 1.5 billion dollar gross regional products (GRP) which produced 5.1 billion dollars in exports. The Finance and Insurance industry reported an 800 million dollar GRP with 1.1 billion dollars in exports.
- Students in Marathon County continue to surpass state scores in reading proficiency (Grades 3-8).
- Marathon County ranked 10th out of all Wisconsin counties in direct visitor spending, or tourism, in 2015. From 2014 to 2015, spending increased 2.7%, totaling 235.9 million dollars.
- Since 2008, Marathon County Government has completed 42 energy conservation projects in collaboration with Focus on Energy and Wisconsin Public Service. Marathon County is committed to being an environmentally responsible county government which includes policies and programs that conserve energy, and reduce fuel, utility, and resource consumption. This approach saves tax dollars that can be redirected to support services to the public.
- Local foundations and grants are making child care more affordable for eligible families in Marathon County with Good Start Grants.
- The quality of child care continues to increase in Marathon County based on YoungStar ratings.



Eau Claire Dells, Wisconsin



Prosperous Section Summary



CALLS TO ACTION

- From 2012 to 2022, the North Central Wisconsin Region can expect to add between 14,000 and 16,000 more jobs to its economy. Training to job demand will be key to delivering the workforce needed with in-demand skills (technical know-how or specialized skills) to fill upcoming vacancies created by retirement and additional new job growth, especially in health services and education. There is also a need to promote training and education to not only fill those openings but to encourage people to move into higher paying jobs.
- Since 2010, Marathon County has lost more than half of its regulated childcare providers and a wait list exists in 82% of programs serving children under 2 years and 71% of programs serving 2-4 year olds.
- Marathon County households have less buying power than they did fifteen years ago. Since 2000, incomes have not kept up with inflation while housing prices and rents hit record highs. Many single-parent households with two or more children are not even meeting living wage requirements. Housing and child care costs have the heaviest impact.
- Schools throughout Marathon County are struggling with managing mental health of children as a result of childhood trauma.
- Even with financial support through grants and the Wisconsin Shares childcare reimbursement program, the affordability of childcare continues to be a significant barrier to many families causing parents to seek often unsafe, unregulated care or preventing parents from entering the workforce.
- Marathon County schools continue to serve high numbers of children living below the federal poverty line in excess of 30% and in some schools above 70%.
- In Marathon County 51.7% of people living in poverty, 16 years if age and older, are in the labor force. Organizations need to pay a living wage that allows employees to participate in the local economies.



Prosperous Section Summary



OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTION

For Individuals

- Seek educational and training opportunities that meet the county workforce needs now and for the future.
- Serve on advisory committees and boards to assure training and education is relevant based on employer's needs.
- Choose or encourage regulated child care as a profession to offset the decrease in child care providers in Marathon County.
- Advocate for increased pay, benefits and quality training opportunities for child care providers for added quality child care in our area.
- Talk, read, sing and play with children from the day they are born. Mentor a child or consider becoming a foster parent. These efforts will positively impact the health, happiness and lifelong success of children in our community.

For Organizations

- Organizations need to pay a living wage that allows employees to participate in the local economy.
- HR Departments should partner with higher education to meet workforce demands.
- Employers and low-income families must work together to eliminate barriers to full-time employment.
- Continue Chamber of Commerce efforts to bring together educators and local employers through its Workforce Hub Program which supports programs such as INSPIRE and The Branch.
- Advocate on behalf of child care agencies for higher reimbursement rates through Wisconsin Shares, so families can afford quality child care and remain in the workforce.
- Work together to strengthen family resiliency and reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences thereby strengthening the future workforce, reducing health costs and improving the lifelong social, emotional and economic success of children.

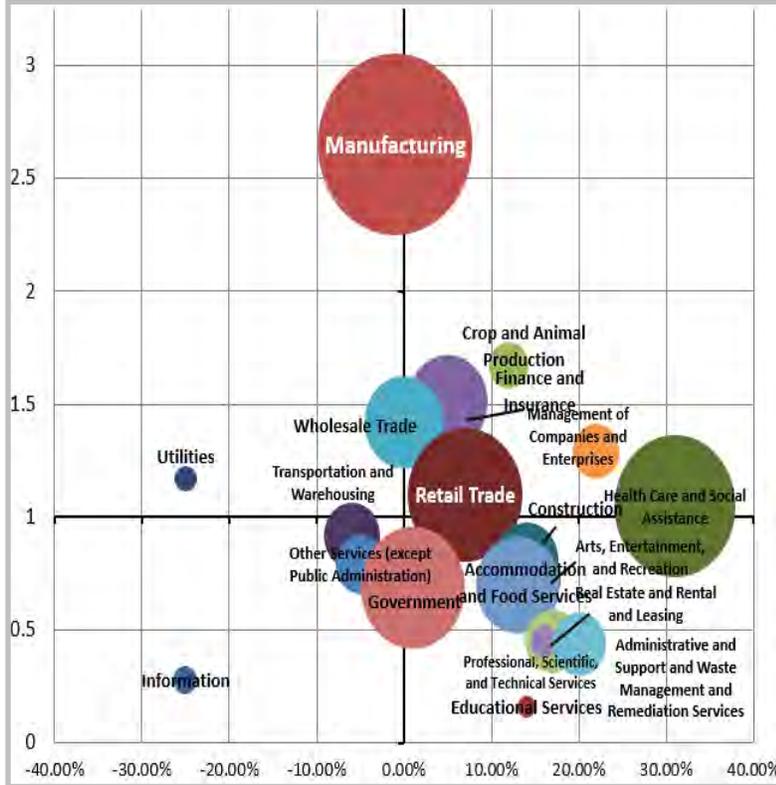
For The Community

- Recognize and advocate for change regarding poverty in our county and the adverse impact it has on our schools, children and families.
- Invest in infrastructure to support low-income employees entering the workforce including access to transportation, affordable housing and quality child care.
- Develop public/private partnerships to increase child care availability and grant opportunities for families to afford quality child care.
- Continue funding for programs providing professional agency training for childhood trauma, mental health treatment and building family resiliency to reduce adverse impact of early year's experiences like abuse, neglect, family violence, serious accidents, illness, or medical procedures.
- Provide resources and encourage participation in local higher education opportunities.

Regional Economic Drivers

INDICATOR 1

Key Measure: Location Quotient (LQ) for Industries in Marathon County 2016-2026



Marathon County is a strong economy that positively impacts the greater region. The county had a gross regional product (GRP) of 6.1 billion dollars and 10.2 billion dollars in sales in 2014.

There were 71,000 jobs in the county during 2016. This was a 3.1% increase from 2014 and a 9.9% increase from 2010, at the height of the recent economic recession.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Manufacturing was the County's top industry, employing 16,230 people in 2016, 2.7 times more than the national average. This was a 5.2 % increase from 2014.
- Wood Product Manufacturing had the highest concentration of employees with an LQ of 11.07, employing 2,126 people in 2016. This was a 1 % increase from 2014.
- Paper Manufacturing had the second highest LQ of 9.06, employing 1,678 people in 2016. This was a slight increase from 2014.
- Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing rose to third place in 2016, employing 1,068 people with an LQ of 5.30.
- Crop and Animal Production was the second most concentrated industry in 2016 with an LQ of 1.67. It employed 1,051 workers in 2016.
- Finance and Insurance had an LQ of 1.51 which made it the fourth highest LQ, but employed the second highest number of people at 4,413 in 2016.

SOURCES

- Economic Modeling Specialists International

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

In 2016, Marathon County had eight export industries. An export industry produces goods and services to meet consumer demands in and out of a particular region. Outside industry sales bring new money into the regional economy, rather than simply circulating money that is already here, as retail or restaurants do.

Exporting industries in a region can be determined by calculating an industry Location Quotient (LQ), which compares the industry's share of regional employment with its share of national employment. Companies with a high LQ and a large number of jobs are vital to the region's economic base and likely has a large multiplier effect (impact on dependent businesses). This can be seen in the quadrant location quotient analysis above,

which analyzes Marathon County industries from 2016 to 2026. All the industries above the horizontal axis have a LQ greater than one. All of the industries to the left of the vertical axis are projected to lose jobs while industries to the right are expected to increase jobs. The size of the bubbles represents the number of jobs in that industry in 2016.

Over the next ten years, employment in manufacturing is projected to decrease -1.4% or by 235 jobs. Crop and animal production is expected to increase 11.6%, or 122 jobs. An increase of 5.2% is expected in the finance and insurance industry which equates to 228 jobs. Overall, jobs are projected to increase by 8.2% in Marathon County by 2026.

INDICATOR 2

Regional Labor Shed

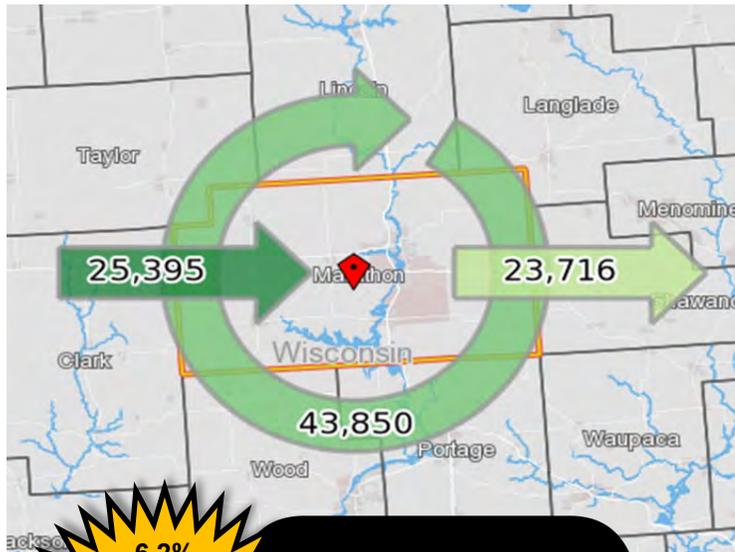
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

Jobs Counts by Counties Where Marathon County Workers Live. Includes all Jobs 2014

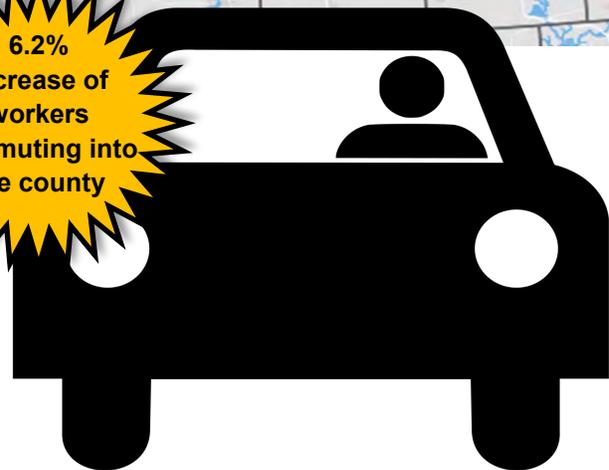
Location	Count	Share
All Counties	69,245	100.0%
Marathon	43,850	63.3%
Lincoln	2,985	4.3%
Wood	2,779	4.0%
Portage	2,250	3.2%
Clark	1,304	1.9%
Shawano	1,206	1.7%
Oneida	994	1.4%
Langlade	975	1.4%
Taylor	796	1.1%
Brown	740	1.1%
Elsewhere	11,366	16.4%

- 63.3% or about 44,000 Marathon County residents are employed within the county borders.
- More than 25,000 workers flow into the county from other counties.

Key Measure: Marathon County Regional Labor Shed Map 2014



6.2%
increase of
workers
commuting into
the county



SOURCES

- U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov
- Map (LEHD) 2014

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

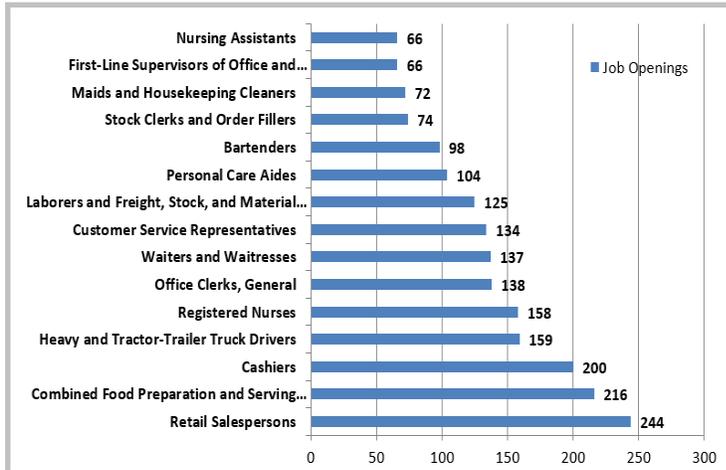
Marathon County is a regional economic hub that provides job opportunities for county residents and commuters from outside of the county's borders. The impact of the urban center is seen in county-to-county commuting patterns.

About 65 percent, or about 44,000, of employed county residents worked within the county borders in 2014; this is a slight increase from 2012 which was 64.3%. Roughly, 25,000 workers flowed into the county from other counties. Incoming commuters increased 6.2 percent from 2012 to 2014.

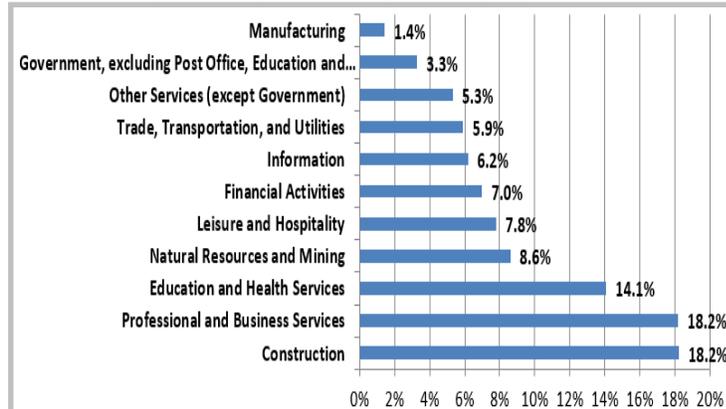
About 24,000 workers commute out of Marathon County for employment.



Key Measures: North Central Workforce Development Area Occupational Projections, 2012-2022



Key Measures: North Central Workforce Development Area Industry Projections (Total Change in Employment), 2012-2022



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- From 2012 to 2022, the North Central Wisconsin Region can expect to add between 14,000 and 16,000 more jobs to its economy.
- Overall, Education and Health Services will experience the largest net increase in jobs, adding roughly 5,000 jobs over the ten year period. This is followed by the Trade, Transportation, and Utilities industry which is expected to add about 2,500 jobs.
- Fastest growing industry is Professional and Business services, which is expected to grow 18.19 % by 2022, which equates to 1,794 jobs.
- The Manufacturing industry is expected to increase 1.44 %, or by 444 jobs.
- Natural Resources and Mining is expected to shrink 8.60 %, or by 250 jobs.

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Office of Economic Advisors, 2015.

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The Office of Economic Advisors provides workforce projections for the North Central Wisconsin Region, which is nine counties including Marathon. In 2022, the projected employment for the North Central Wisconsin Region is 204,652 workers, including those who are self-employed. This is an increase of 7.35% from 2012. The service providing sector will see the largest percentage increase at 8.95%. This sector includes professional and business services industry as well as the educational and health services industry. The goods producing sectors are expected to increase 3.22%, which includes construction and manufacturing.

Annually, North Central Wisconsin is expected to have 6,108 average job openings over the next ten years. The majority of these positions, 72.43%, will be open

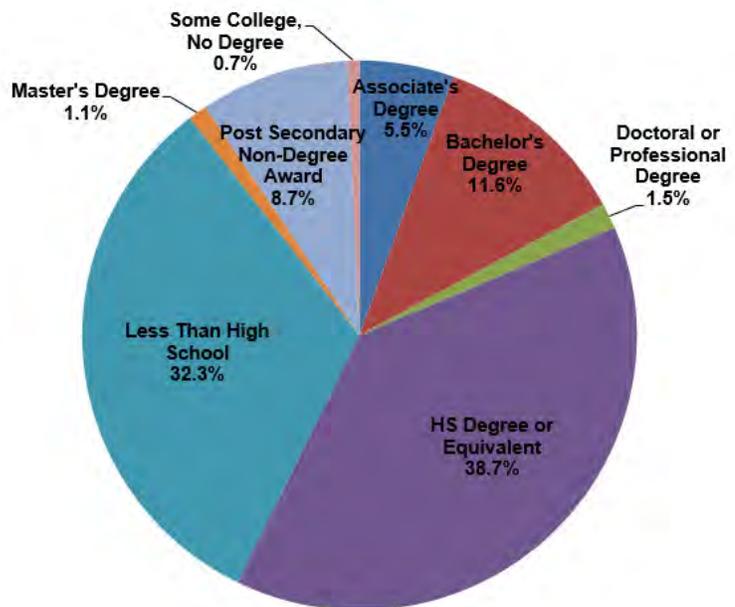
annually due to replacement needs while the rest of the openings will be due to new job growth. Job openings are in a variety of occupations and the region will need people with a diverse set of skills, interests, and educational backgrounds to fill these positions.

The region is facing modest employment growth overall but is also needing large numbers of skilled workers to replace retirees and to incorporate new technologies. Many companies are reducing costs and improving efficiency through innovations and automation, decreasing the need for some positions but increasing the need for people with technological skills. Furthermore, manufacturers are relying on contractors and temporary workers to perform functions that are not part of their core operations.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- A High School diploma is the education required for the highest percentage of jobs in our region. In Marathon County 39% of jobs require a high school diploma or equivalent. This is a 5% drop from the previous projections, from 2010 to 2020.
- About 3% of jobs in our region require an advanced degree (Master’s, Doctoral or Professional Degree).
- Bachelor’s and Associate’s degrees are required for only 17% of jobs in our region. In 2015, 11% of county residents over the age of 25 had an Associate’s Degree and 14% of residents had a Bachelor’s Degree.

Each occupation is assigned to one of eight education paths. The assignment only gives a general indication of the education typically needed in the occupation. There may be other pathways into the occupation, as well as additional educational, training, or licensing requirements. The pie chart below illustrates the percentage of job openings anticipated in each education and training group.



SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Office of Economic Advisors, 2015
- U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov, American Community Survey, 2015

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Among the job openings anticipated between 2012 and 2022 in the North Central Wisconsin Region, 32% will not require a high school degree. Occupations in this group include cashiers, combined food preparation and serving workers such as retail salespersons, waiters and waitresses and bartenders.

Of the other job openings, 39% will fall into the high school or equivalent category. Some examples of occupations in these categories are truck drivers, heavy and tractor-trailer, office clerks, customer service representatives, receptionists and information clerks and childcare workers.

A post secondary non-degree award will be needed for 9% of job openings. Some examples of occupations in these categories are nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants, hairdressers, hairstylists and cosmetologists, licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses, first-line supervisors/managers of

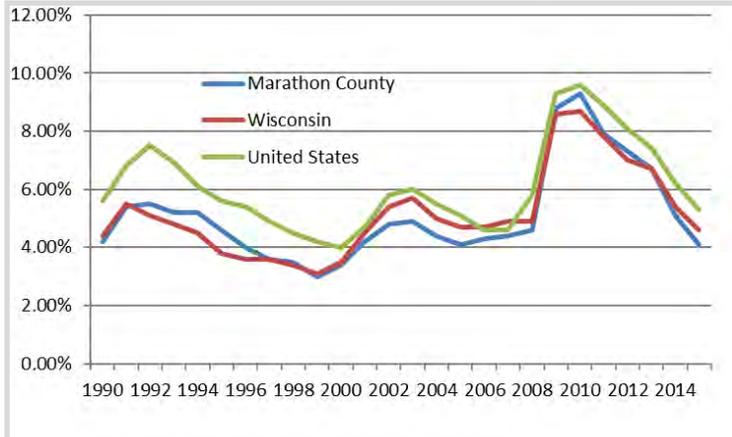
production and operating workers and emergency medical technicians and paramedics.

An Associate’s Degree will be needed for 6% of job openings. Some examples of occupations in these categories are registered nurses, general and operations managers, preschool teachers, radiologic technologists and technicians and dental hygienists.

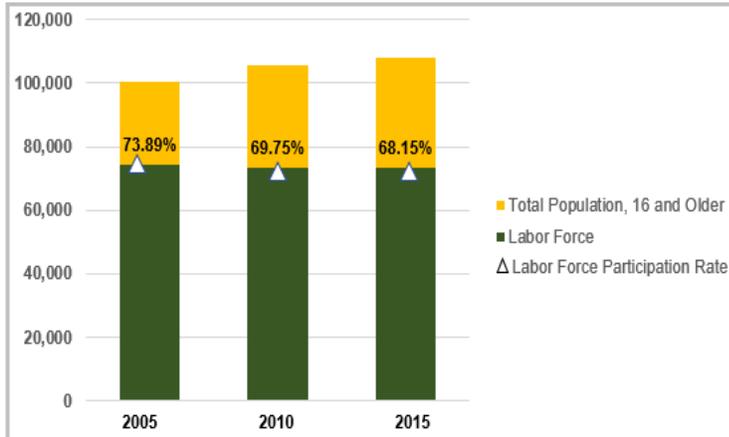
Additionally, 12% of openings will require a Bachelor’s Degree. Some examples of occupations in these categories are elementary, special education and secondary school teachers, accountants, auditors, and human resource professionals.

The percent of residents in Marathon County with a Bachelor or Advanced degree continues to be slightly less than the state average, but higher for Associate degrees.

Key Measure: Unemployment Rate by Nation, State, and County, 1990-2016



Key Measure: Marathon County Labor Force Participation Counts and Rates, 2000-2015



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The unemployment rate is a measure of the number of individuals who are both unemployed and actively seeking employment as a ratio of the total workforce population. This is a place of residence measure, meaning that it only considers individuals who live in Marathon County, for example.
- The unemployment rate has rapidly declined over the last six years after reaching a local high of 11.6 % in February 2010. In comparison, the most current rate of 3.1% (October 2016) is about a fourth of the previous peak.
- In 2015, the Labor Force Participation Rate in Wisconsin was 68.15%

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and the U.S. Census Bureau

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

In 2015, Marathon County saw unemployment levels not seen since 2005 at 4.1%. This was spurred by increasing employment opportunities and the number of jobs available in the county.

The labor force is made up of residents who are employed or unemployed but actively seeking work, aged sixteen and older. The labor force in Marathon County peaked in 2006 at 74,976 people before declining to 73,573 in 2009. Since this time the labor force has increased modestly to 74,676 people in 2015. However, the Labor Force Participation Rate, the number of people employed and actively seeking work as a percentage of the population aged 16 and older, has declined by roughly 6 points since the peak in

2005. This can be partially contributed to an increasing percentage of the population who have reached the retirement age of 65, up 1.5 percentage points since 2000 to 2015 as well as more people taking advantage of post-secondary education opportunities, which has increased 1.2% among Marathon County adults. The decline in participation rates could also be contributed to the long-term unemployed who are dropping out of the labor force, but unfortunately data was not available. The county's labor force participation rate in 2016 remains strong at 69.2% and is above both state and national averages.

INDICATOR 6

Living Wage and Income

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2015 median household income in Marathon County was 54,083 (\$26.00 per hour). The median household income meets the minimum threshold for two adults (one working) with children, but does not meet the minimum threshold for one adult households with two or more children.
- The required annual income before taxes to meet the living wage threshold for a single adult is \$20,934 and for two adults is \$33,842. The 2015 per capita median income in Marathon County was \$28,457 (\$13.68 per hour).
- The required annual income before taxes to meet the living wage threshold for a single adult with 3 children is \$78,933, for two adults (one working) with 3 children is \$52,828, and 2 adults (both working) with 3 children is \$81,185.
- Child care is typically the largest monthly expense for families. On average, child care for one child is \$8,160; 2 children is \$15,969; and 3 children is \$23,778 per year.

Key Measure: Living Wages for Marathon County, 2015

Hourly Wages	Living Wage	Poverty Wage	Minimum Wage
1 Adult	\$10.06	\$5.00	\$7.25
1 Adult 1 Child	\$22.17	\$7.00	\$7.25
1 Adult 2 Children	\$28.96	\$10.00	\$7.25
1 Adult 3 Children	\$37.95	\$11.00	\$7.25
2 Adults (1 Working)	\$16.27	\$7.00	\$7.25
2 Adults (1 Working) 1 Child	\$19.93	\$10.00	\$7.25
2 Adults (1 Working) 2 Children	\$22.40	\$11.00	\$7.25
2 Adults (1 Working) 3 Children	\$25.40	\$13.00	\$7.25
2 Adults	\$8.14	\$3.00	\$7.25
2 Adults 1 Child	\$12.30	\$5.00	\$7.25
2 Adults 2 Children	\$15.78	\$5.00	\$7.25
2 Adults 3 Children	\$19.52	\$6.00	\$7.25



10.6% of individuals in Marathon County live below the federal poverty line in 2015

- SOURCES**
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Living Wage Calculator, 2015 www.livingwage.mit.edu
 - U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov, American Community Survey, 2015

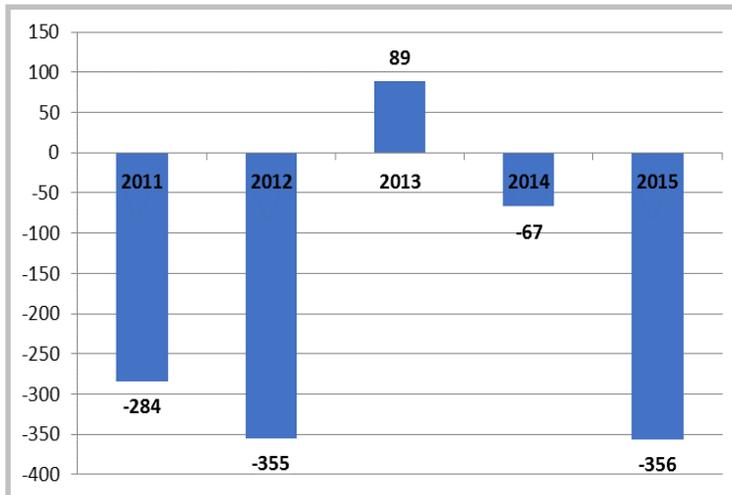
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The living wage is the hourly rate that an individual must earn to support their family, if they are the sole provider and are working full-time (2,080 hours per year). The data assumes that for single adult families, the adult is employed full-time. For two adult families, both adults are in the labor force, both adults are assumed to be employed full-time. For two adult families where one adult is not in the labor force, one of the adults is assumed to be employed full-time while the other non-wage-earning adult provides full-time child care for the family's children. Full-time work is assumed to be year-round, 40 hours per week for 52 weeks, per adult.

Families with one child are assumed to have a 'young child' (4 years old). Families with two children are assumed to have a 'young child' and a 'child' (9 years old). Families with three children are assumed to have a 'young child', a 'child', and a 'teenager' (15 years old).

The living wage in Marathon County ranges from \$8.14 per hour for a two adult two income household to \$37.95 per hour for a one adult household with three children. In general, households with two working adults require lower per hour salaries to meet the living wage threshold.

Key Measure: Net Migration in Marathon County, 2011-2015



Retaining students in the area is also an important indicator. Northcentral Technical College (NTC) reported that for its Class of 2015, 76% of graduates worked within the NTC District.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Affordable workforce housing is an essential part of retaining the workforce. The available workforce housing can be measured by the percentage of households that are 'cost burdened', or paying more than 30% of their income on housing, which was 26.6% in 2015, compared to 25.7% in 2010. This suggests that housing costs are rising for households and that it may be difficult to find housing given a household's income.
- The U.S. Department of Housing suggests that housing vacancy rates of 5% are favorable, as very low vacancy rates may drive up housing prices to unaffordable levels and very high vacancy rates may lead to decreases in safety and surrounding property values. In Marathon County, the homeowner vacancy rate is 1.7% while the rental vacancy rate was 4.4%.

SOURCES

- U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov American Community Survey, 2011-2015

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Attracting and maintaining a skilled workforce is essential to the health of an economy. One indicator of attracting and maintaining a workforce is net migration. Net migration is the difference between the number of people, age one and older, moving to Marathon County from another Wisconsin county, another state, or from abroad and the number of people moving away from a county. From 2010 to 2015, Marathon County had a net migration of minus 973 people. This statistic, in addition to capturing the workforce population, also includes children and retirees.

Demographics of those moving from Marathon County was not available; however, 25.9 years is the median age of those moving here from another county and 29.6 for those moving from another state. Twenty-three

percent of those moving here are 18-24 years old while this group makes up only 8.1% of the total county population. Twenty-two percent moving here are 25-34 compared to 15% of the general population. Marathon County median age is 40.6 years old. While more people overall are leaving Marathon County, the largest percentage are those moving here are young adults.

The young adults moving here have lower individual incomes as 52% of the migrants make \$25,000 or less. Twenty-one percent of the general population makes \$50,000 or more, only 16% of migrants were in this category. This group may be more educated, but their young age could possibly indicate that they have less work experience, leading to lower individual incomes.

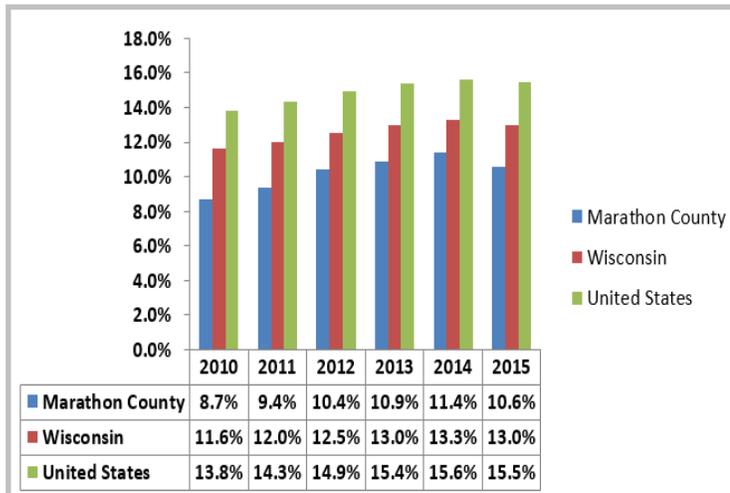
INDICATOR 8

Poverty/Living Wage

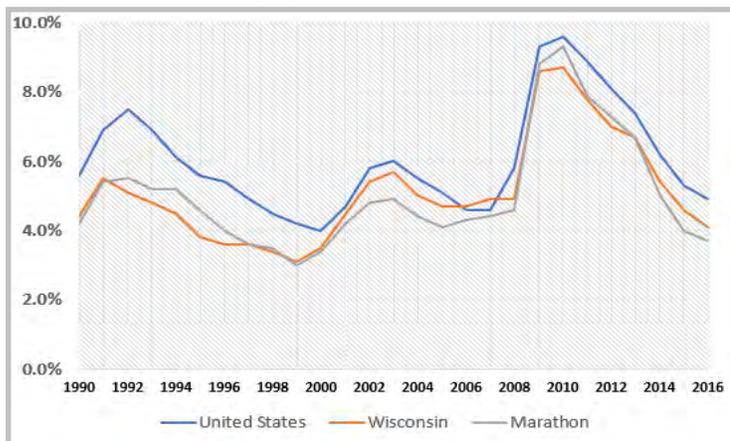
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In Marathon County 51.7% of people in poverty, 16 years and older, are in the labor force.
- Most people below the poverty line commute to work by car, as there are few public transportation options in the county.
- In 2015, 7.2% of families lived below the federal poverty level while 8.5% of all households experienced poverty.
- Of the 14,000 individuals living under the poverty level, 77.5% are white, but those that self-report as black were more likely than any other race to be in poverty in Marathon County.
- In Marathon County, 8.4% of veterans live below the federal poverty line, of these 21% are age 18 to 34 years (largest age group).
- In 2015, 10.8% of households in Marathon County received food stamps (SNAP).
- In Marathon County, 18% of people living in poverty have a disability.

Key Measure: Poverty Rate of Individuals, 2015



Key Measure: Unemployment Rates 1990-2016



SOURCES

- U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Over the past fifteen years, poverty rates have risen across the nation. In 2000 the poverty rate was 12.4% nationally and 8.7% in Wisconsin. Historically, poverty rates increase during economic recessions, however, after the 2001 recession, poverty rates continued to increase through the recovery. In 2015, the poverty rate was 15.5% for the nation and 13% for Wisconsin.

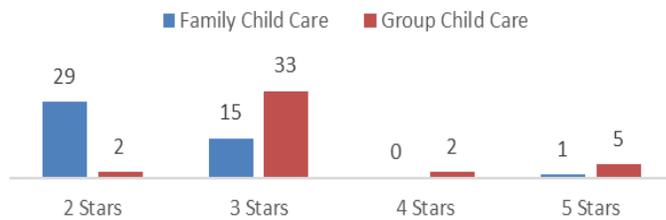
In 2000, in Marathon County, 6.6% of all individuals lived under the federal poverty level. In 2015, that number had grown to 10.6%. The poverty rate peaked in 2014 in Marathon County at 11.4%. The small recovery in 2015 is largely contributed to wage increases and a drop in unemployment.

Stagnate incomes contribute to increasing poverty. Since 2000, incomes have not kept up with inflation

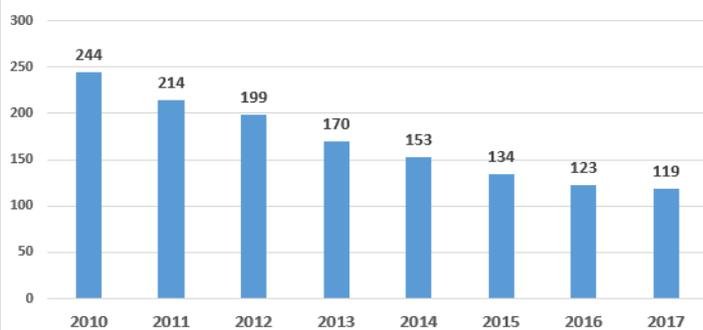
while housing prices and rents hit record highs. In 2015, the national median household income increased for the first time since 2007. In Marathon County, the median household income was \$54,083, still less than household income in 2000. If median income for households had increased with inflation it would be \$63,851. This means that households have less buying power than they did fifteen years ago.

In 2015, 15.6% of children under the age of 18 were living in poverty in Marathon County, compared to only 7.4% of seniors. While children are the most vulnerable age group, 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 age groups have high rates of poverty, at 15.3% and 13.4% respectively. Age groups between 35 and 65 and 65 and older experienced poverty at a rate of about 7%, half that of the other age groups.

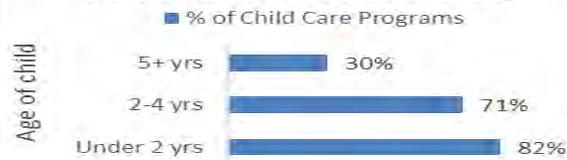
2016 YoungStar Ratings in Marathon County



Decline of Regulated Child Care Providers in Marathon County



Wait Lists in Marathon County



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- There is a positive trend in YoungStar ratings and the overall quality of child care in Marathon County with a decrease in 2 Star programs and an increase in 3, 4 and 5 Star programs.
- To increase the quality of child care, in 2016, Childcaring, Inc. provided 78 trainings to providers. From January to May 2017, 32 trainings have occurred.
- Availability of child care programs has decreased, leaving current programs with wait lists. A survey conducted by Childcaring, Inc. shows that 39% of programs have a wait list for children under 2, with over a year wait.
- 9% of LIFE Survey respondents were dissatisfied with the availability of child care in Marathon County. This increased from 6.6% since the last survey in 2015.
- To increase the supply of regulated child care, Childcaring, Inc. is providing free information sessions to help answer questions about becoming a provider.

SOURCES

- Childcaring, Inc. www.childcaring.org
- Wisconsin Department of Children & Families www.dcf.wisconsin.gov

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The loss of regulated child care is occurring locally, statewide and nationally. The decline in family child care has a significant impact on children and families, particularly in rural areas.

Overall, in Marathon County there has been a 51% decrease in the number of regulated child care programs (both group centers and family child care) from 2010-2017. As a result of this decline, over 1,000 spots for children are no longer available in regulated child care programs. According to the US Census Bureau, 74% of Wisconsin's labor force have children under age 6. Through the referral service Childcaring, Inc. parents share about the difficulties families face finding available child care in Marathon County,

especially when families need infant care or second and third shift care. Families in central Wisconsin also have 60% fewer choices for child care than in 2005.

Expanding public-private partnerships and looking at intentional, creative community-level planning could have a huge benefit for children and families in central Wisconsin.

Research suggests that investing in early child development and care makes sense socially and economically. The importance of focusing on early childhood development is affirmed by both emerging neuroscience and economic research.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

To help supplement the high cost of child care, Marathon County families have access to programs that pay a portion of their child care tuition.

- Jan- June 2017: 1,499 Families, and 2,415 children received assistance.
- Guidelines for assistance: Income below 185% of the federal poverty level, participate in an approved activity, and attend a child care program rated 2 stars or higher.

Good Start Grants (Program of Childcaring, funded by United Way of Marathon County, B.A. & Esther Greenheck Foundation, Dudley Foundation, Women In Action).

- 2016: 70 families, and 112 children received grants.
- As of May 2017: 29 families, and 65 children received grants.
- Guidelines: Under 300% of the federal poverty level, have been denied Wisconsin Shares, participate in an approved activity. Must attend a child care program rated 3 stars or higher.

Average Wages in Child Care Profession



2016 Average Child Care Rates per Week



A single mother, making \$37,800 annually with 2 children under two years attending a child care center pays \$500 per week for child care; an annual cost of \$26,000 or 68% of her yearly salary.

If the mother qualified for Good Start Grants, her weekly parent portion would be \$175.00 per week; now, an annual cost of \$9,100 for child care – 24% of her annual income.

If the mother qualified for Wisconsin Shares, her weekly parent portion would be \$86.28 per week. However, because the ceiling rates for a child care center in Marathon County, are maxed at \$180 the mother is also responsible for any amount charged over the county ceiling. Now her weekly parent portion would be \$226.28; an annual cost of \$11,767 - 31% of her annual income.

SOURCES

- Child Care Aware® of America’s 2016 *Parents and the High Cost of Child Care* report
- Childcaring, Inc. www.childcaring.org

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

According to Child Care Aware® of America’s 2016 *Parents and the High Cost of Child Care* report, the cost of child care is one of the highest in a family’s monthly budget. It is often higher than the cost of housing, college tuition, transportation or food. Families all across the country know that it can be hard to find quality child care that is affordable.

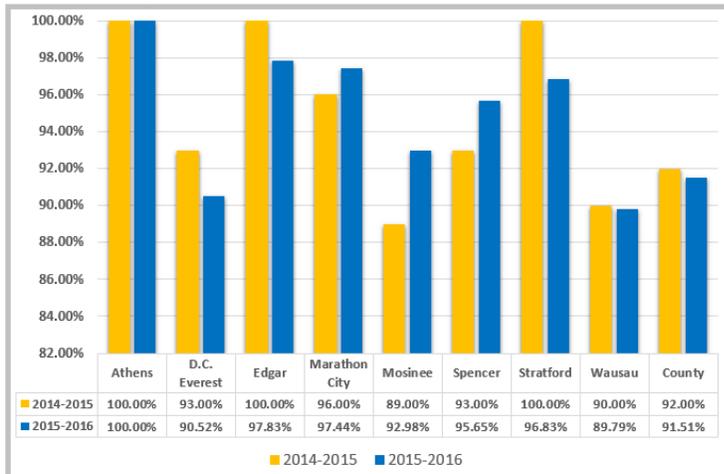
While quality child care programs may cost more, the fact remains that it is important for children to have quality care. A safe and nurturing early learning environment allows children to get ready for school, and their parents are able to focus on work or school knowing that their child is in a healthy, caring environment.

While child care is expensive for families, you can see from the data above that child care professionals are barely making minimum wage. Many child care programs struggle with the “trilemma” — balancing affordability, accessibility, and quality. The challenge is to figure out how to run a quality program that parents can afford to use and that teachers can afford to work in. It is extremely difficult to balance all the necessary expenses (like staff salaries, appropriate space and equipment, healthy meals and snacks, insurance, supplies, etc.) with what families can afford to pay. Simply, families cannot afford to pay more; the child care programs need outside investments.

Kindergarten Readiness

INDICATOR 11

Key Measure: Percent of Students Meeting the PALS-K Benchmark, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016



The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening – Kindergarten (PALS-K) was Wisconsin’s required literacy screener from 2012-13 until 2015-16. Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, districts had the option to continue to use PALS or select a different assessment of reading readiness.



SOURCES

- PALS-K Assessment Data (Per School District)
- Annie E. Casey Foundation www.aecf.org

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

District	# Students Screened	# Meeting Benchmark	% Meeting Benchmark
Athens	21	21	100.00%
D.C. Everest	401	363	90.52%
Edgar	46	45	97.83%
Marathon City	39	38	97.44%
Mosinee	114	106	92.98%
Spencer	46	44	95.65%
Stratford	63	61	96.83%
Wausau	578	519	89.79%
County	1308	1197	91.51%

*WISEdash Secure

- A recent report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation – “The First Eight Years: Giving Kids a Foundation for Lifetime Success” - explains how the reading gap can widen when children don’t have access to books or live in a language-rich home. For children growing up in poverty or suffering with health problems from birth tend to have slow cognitive, social, and emotional development which impacts reading proficiency later on.

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Reading readiness assessments are designed to measure skills predictive of future reading success such as phonemic awareness and letter sound knowledge. PALS-K and other reading readiness assessments are not comprehensive and do not evaluate other necessary reading skills such as vocabulary comprehension and rhyming. However, results from literacy screening helps schools identify children needing academic interventions at the start of their kindergarten year.

Reading readiness is not the only part of school readiness. In fact, other skills such as the ability to maintain attention, follow directions, follow social rules and regulate behavior can significantly affect a

student’s performance. The ACES Study Data at Indicator 37 of this report highlights the need to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences. School districts throughout the county are noting the educational impacts of these experiences and have initiated social/emotional/behavioral screening for students in addition to training to help teachers understand and reduce the effects of childhood trauma.

Communities and families can improve readiness by mitigating the impact of poverty through early intervention programs like Head Start, educating parents how to care for children to improve cognitive skills and having access to quality child care.

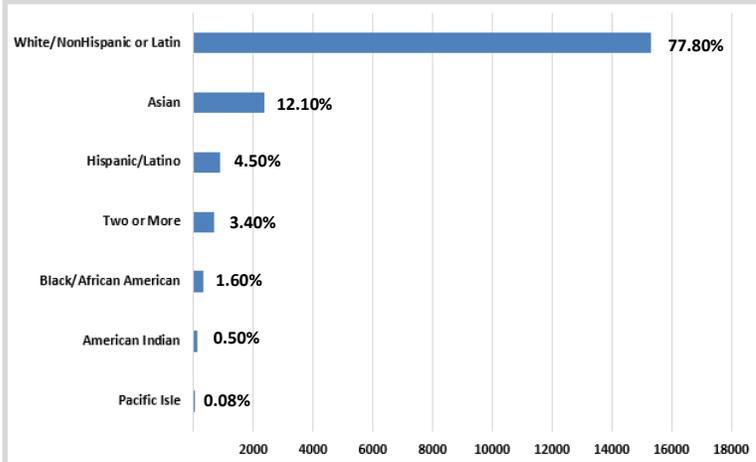
INDICATOR 12

Enrollment by Race or Ethnicity

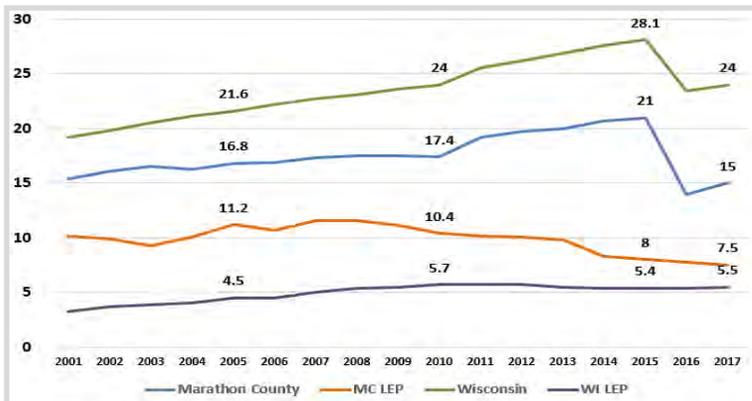
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 73% of Marathon County students attended the urban districts of Wausau or D. C. Everest in 2014-15.
- 32.9% of Wausau students and 22.2% of Marathon County students identified as a race or ethnicity other than white in 2016-17.
- While Asians remain the second largest ethnicity in county schools, Hispanics are the fastest growing, followed by students of two or more races.
- While both Marathon County and Wisconsin total enrollments have decreased slightly, the number of students identified as a race or ethnicity other than white and the number of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students have increased.

Key Measure: Marathon County District Enrollment by Race or Ethnicity 2015-2016



Key Measure: Percent of Students Identified as a Race or Ethnicity Other than White and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students



SOURCES

- WI Department of Public Instruction WISEdash Public Portal wise.dpi.wi.gov/wisedash
- U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov/

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

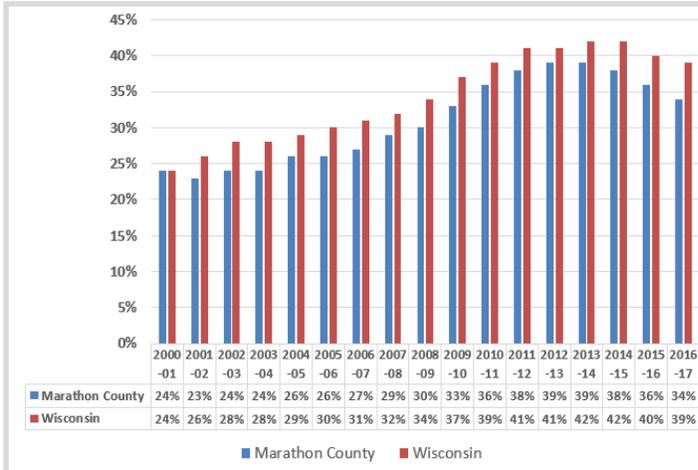
While only about 8.7% of the entire Marathon County population identified as non-white in the last 2010 census, 22.2% of county students do and 32.9% in Wausau. Schools are indicators of impending community change, and, while a mostly white older generation still skews demographics, it is clear from school-age data that the ethnic make up of Marathon County is becoming more diverse.

Also notable, while Marathon County remains below statewide percentages for non-white students, it continues to serve a higher percentage of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, although that percentage is trending slightly down from 7.8% in 2015-16 to 7.5% in 2016-17.

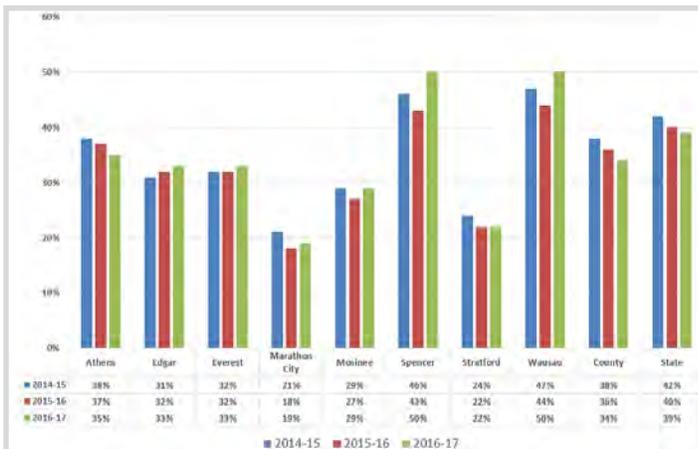
Marathon County serves students in eight different school districts. Wausau and D.C. Everest are urban districts, while the other six are rural. Populations within those districts range from under 500 to more than 8,400 and serve a wide range of students from a variety of circumstances.

District Enrollments 2016-17	
Athens	416
Edgar	617
D.C. Everest	5,878
Marathon City	717
Mosinee	1,998
Spencer	718
Stratford	949
Wausau	8,405
Total	19,698

Key Measure: Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students 2000-2016



Key Measure: Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students by District 2014-2017



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- All 8 school districts in Marathon County had a decrease in the percent of economically disadvantaged students in 2015-16 but an increase in poverty county-wide in 2016-17, which was reflected at the state level as well.
- Urban districts with multiple elementary schools (Wausau and D.C. Everest) see disparities among schools largely because of wealthy and impoverished neighborhoods within those school boundaries.
- In 2016-17, Wausau schools had an average economic disadvantage of 43%. Elementary schools range from South Mountain at 14% (the district's lowest) to Lincoln at 80.7% (the district's highest).
- Wausau has three elementary schools with economic disadvantage percentages above 65%.
- While D.C. Everest schools have an average economic disadvantage of 28.6%, its elementary schools range from Hatley and Riverside both at 19.2% to Weston at 58%.

SOURCES

- WI Department of Public Instruction WISEdash Public Portal wise.dpi.wi.gov/wisedash
- USDA Food and Nutritional Service National School Lunch Program www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/
- U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/data/statecounty/index.html

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Education research has revealed a strong correlation between poverty and learning challenges for students. To improve learning outcomes, the number of individual students living in poverty needs to shrink. By reducing poverty in our communities, learning improves and lessens the challenges of poverty on our schools in Marathon County.

The economic downturn continues to impact the number of economically disadvantaged students in Marathon County schools, from 23% in 2001-02 increasing to 34% in 2016-17. While the last two years have seen slight decreases from peak numbers, the percent of economically disadvantaged students still

remains well above pre-recession levels.

There exists disparities between districts in Marathon County—with Wausau and Spencer having the highest percentages of economically disadvantaged students at 47% and 46% respectively and Marathon City having the lowest at 21%. There are similar disparities within the larger urban districts, especially at the elementary school level. For instance, of Wausau's 13 elementary schools, five fall below 30% while three exceed 65%. Only one—Riverview Elementary—falls within 5% of Wausau's district average.

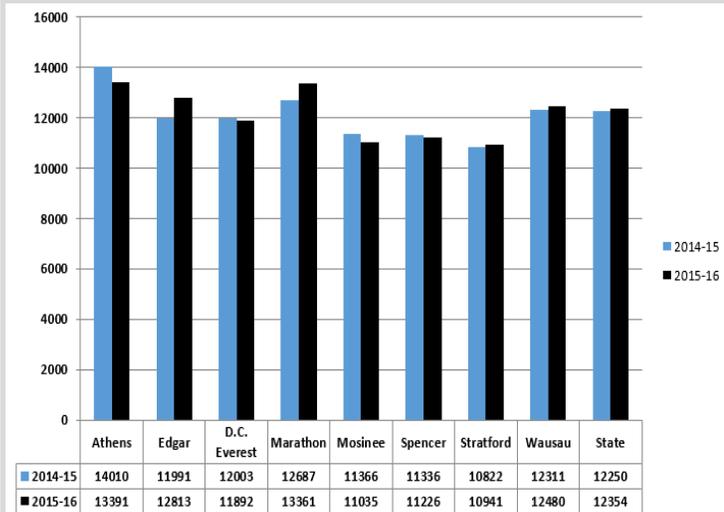
INDICATOR 14

School District Expenditures

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- At \$14,010, Athens continues to have the highest per pupil TEC in the county. Stratford continues to have the lowest at \$10,822. TEC per pupil do not include the cost of food service or community service activities but does include transportation and facility costs.
- The statewide expansion of the School Voucher program has had an impact on the per pupil dollars that a district is able to keep within its schools.
- Districts throughout Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin are struggling financially due to lack of funding increases at the state level.
- Legislation to support rural schools in Wisconsin led to a spike in funding for rural districts in Marathon County.
- In the last 3 school years, 5 of 8 Marathon County School Districts sought financial assistance through referendum. Districts seeking referendum state-wide increased from 71 in 2013 to 154 in 2016.

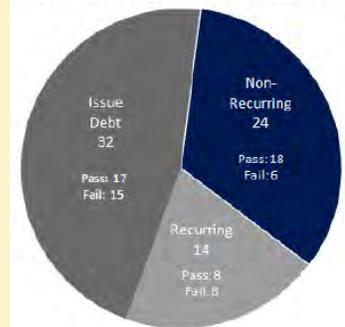
Key Measure: Total Education Costs (TEC) Per Pupil by District, 2014-2016



April 4, 2017 Wisconsin Referendum Breakdown:

- 44 Wisconsin School Districts got to referendum
- 28 School Districts celebrate referendum success
- 16 School Districts' questions passed totaling \$464,665,000
- 6 School Districts' recurring questions passed totaling \$7,204,747
- 18 School Districts' non-recurring questions passed totaling \$227,844,405

2017 YTD Referendum Breakdown



SOURCES

- WI Department of Public Instruction WISEdash Public Portal wise.dpi.wi.gov/wisedash
- Robert W. Baird & Co. Referenda Results April 4, 2017

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

With the exception of a recent investment in rural schools statewide, funding for education in Marathon County has stayed relatively flat since the 2008-09 school year—hovering just above or below \$12,000 per pupil. With 75% of students in Marathon County attending urban schools, additional funding for rural schools did not have an impact on the overall educational investment for the county.

With the cost of operations continuing to rise and the statewide expansion of the School Voucher Program, districts have had to work with fewer dollars even as total dollars have slightly increased. School districts throughout Marathon County are experiencing funding reductions due to the expansion of the Wisconsin

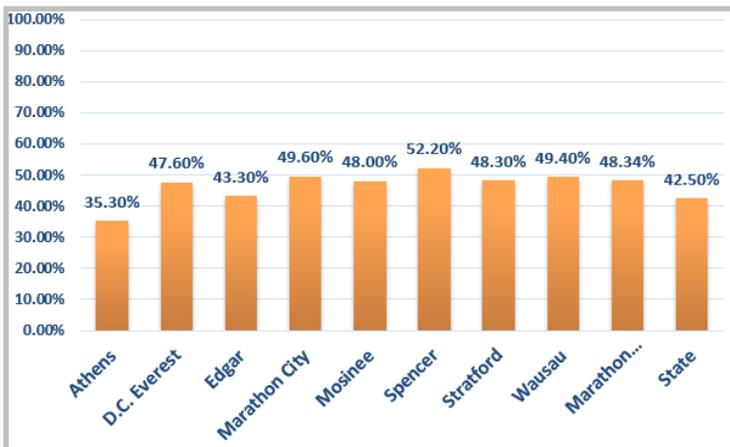
School Voucher Program. Marathon County schools lost a total of \$487,169 during the 2015-16 school year voucher program. With the expansion of that program the total dollars lost is expected to increase.

Wisconsin overall has an average per pupil spending rate of \$776 per pupil. With much needed building maintenance and updates, schools are seeking additional funding through referendums. In the past three years schools seeking funding through referendums has dramatically increased, with 61.5% of referenda questions passing on April 4, 2017. Locally the Mosinee School District went to referendum for the past two years but has not received the votes required to pass.

Key Measure: Percent Achieving Reading Proficiency, 2010-2016



Key Measure: Percent of Students Achieving Proficiency or Advanced in Reading on the Wisconsin Student Assessment System by District



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 48.3% of Marathon County students score Proficient or Advanced on the Wisconsin Academic Standards (WSAS) reading assessments, surpassing the state average of 42.5%.
- There has been variability in scores in recent years due to several changes in assessments administered. The 2016-17 school year marked the first time the same assessment was used in back-to-back years since the 2013-14 school year.
- In 2015-16, Edgar had the highest rate of closing the achievement gap with a score of 73.4. Seven of eight school districts in Marathon County exceeded the state average in the Student Growth Priority Area.
- All school districts in Marathon County met or exceeded expectations for performance on the Wisconsin School Report Card.

SOURCES

- WI DPI School Report Cards <https://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/report-cards>
- WISEdash Public Portal <http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

State standardized assessments gauge how well students are doing in relation to the Wisconsin Academic Standards and measures students' preparedness for college and employment. In 2015-16 and 2016-17, the Wisconsin Forward Exam was selected to measure student performance of educational standards. From those results, Marathon County schools continue to exceed state averages.

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) produces annual Accountability Report Cards for every district and school in Wisconsin which includes data for multiple indicators over multiple years in four priority areas including Student Achievement and Student Growth. Student Growth measurements show how rapidly students gain knowledge and skills from year to

year in the areas of reading and math. Unlike Student Achievement, which is based on the levels of performance students have attained, Student Growth focuses on the pace of improvement in students' performance compared to the growth of similar students in other Wisconsin schools. The state recognizes schools and districts for helping students reach higher performance levels by measuring student progress over time, across assessments.

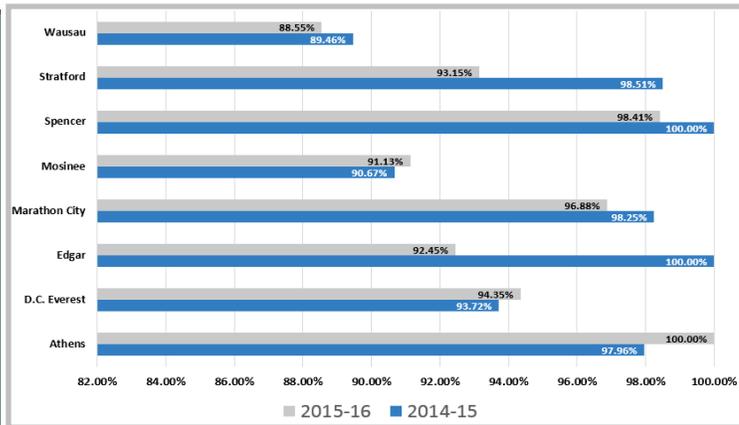
A district's or school's Overall Accountability Score places the district or school into one of five ratings. All school districts in Marathon County meet expectations for performance according to these ratings. Three districts, Edgar, Marathon City, and Stratford exceeded expectations.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

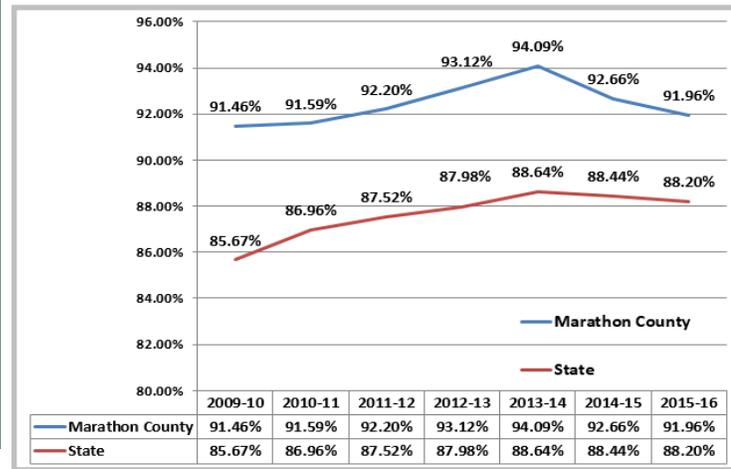
- With 88% of high school freshmen graduating within four years, Wisconsin ranks in the top ten in the country for high school graduation rates.
- Marathon County graduation rates have dropped over the past two years from 94.1% in 2013-14, to 92.7% in 2014-15, and 92.0% in 2015-16.
- Edgar and Spencer both had 100% graduation rates for 2014-15, and Athens had 100% rate in 2015-16.
- All districts in Marathon County continue to have a higher graduation rate than the state average.



Key Measure: Percent of Seniors Graduating (Four-year Cohort) with a Regular Diploma



Key Measure: Percent of Students Graduating (Four-year Cohort) with a Regular Diploma



- SOURCES**
- National Center for Education Statistics https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_coi.asp
 - WISEdash Public Portal <http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

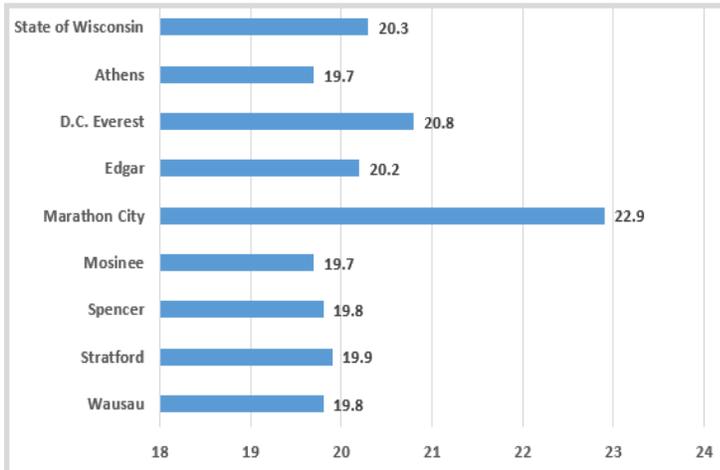
Wisconsin has historically been a leader in the nation with its ability to graduate seniors on time from high school. Marathon County continues this tradition with 92% of its students graduating with their four-year cohort. This rate continues to exceed the state average, however, there has been a decline in the Marathon County graduation rate in recent years.

Since 2011, there has been increased emphasis placed on students graduating within four years. All states use the same graduation rate formula which provides a uniform method for reliable comparisons among states. The new method of determining graduation rates does not affect students who take more than four years to graduate, including at-risk students and students with disabilities. When students

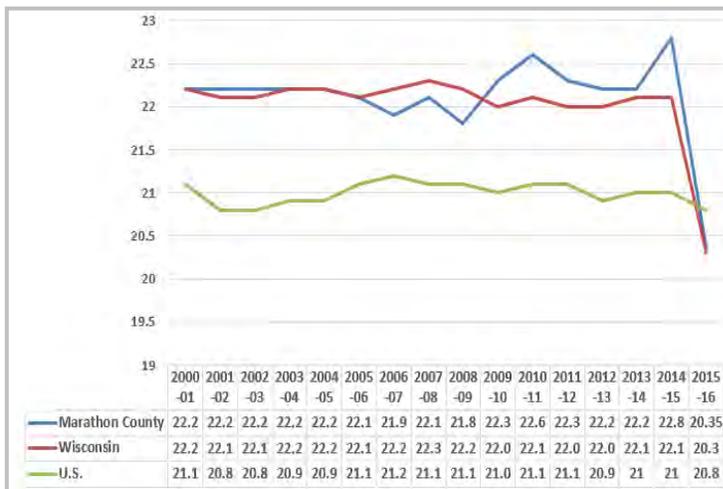
do earn a regular diploma in five or six years, they are credited in the extended year graduation rates as appropriate. Due to this calculation process, district graduation rates are often higher when they include students who obtained a regular diploma within six years.

A timely graduation sets county students up for a successful future, increasing the likelihood of attending college or finding a stable job after graduation. An increasing number of jobs require a high school diploma and graduating on time signals to employers a work ethic and reliability they look for in employees. Investing in efforts to maintain or improve the graduation rate in Marathon County will continue to have benefits for the county.

Key Measure: ACT Average Score by District, 2015-2016



Key Measure: Average ACT Composite Score, 2000-2016



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Marathon County's 8 districts ACT scores average 20.35 compared to the state score average of 20.3. Two of our county's school districts exceed the state average and 6 districts performed below the state average by a minimal range of 0.1-0.6.
- At 20.35 Marathon County has maintained an average ACT composite score above the state average for five testing cycles, although the gap continues to narrow.
- Marathon County's 8 district average ACT participation rate is 94.85% compared to the state participation rate of 91.4%.
- Secondary instruction focuses much of its efforts on preparing students for their lives after high school in hopes that graduates are well prepared to participate in society either as students or workers. While students have a variety of post-secondary options, a strong majority of high school graduates in Marathon County will continue their education at a vocational or technical college or at a private or public university or college.

SOURCES

- WI Department of Public Instruction WISEdash Public Portal wise.dpi.wi.gov/wisedash
- The American College Test (ACT) www.act.org

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

For four-year college students, the ACT (originally an abbreviation of American College Testing) is a strong indicator of pupil preparedness for post high school education and career readiness. A 36 is the highest possible composite score achievable for the ACT.

While results from previous years reflected only the scores for students who were headed to college, this year's data reflects all high school junior students' achievement, yielding the opportunity to assess college and career readiness for all students. First year comparison of the graduation data results between this year and the previous years is similar and supports previously seen scores.

In the recent Marathon County LIFE Report Survey, respondents were asked about the affordability of post high school education. Of those responding 19.2% were very concerned, 13.8% concerned and 19.4% were somewhat concerned. Overall, for this survey post high school education scored relatively low in comparison to other concerns highlighted in the survey.

INDICATOR 18

Education Attainment

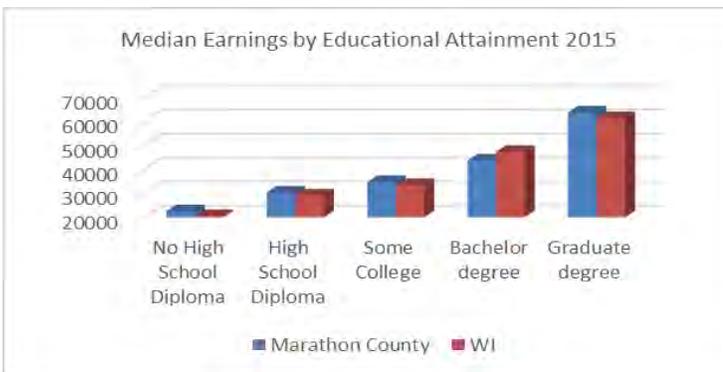
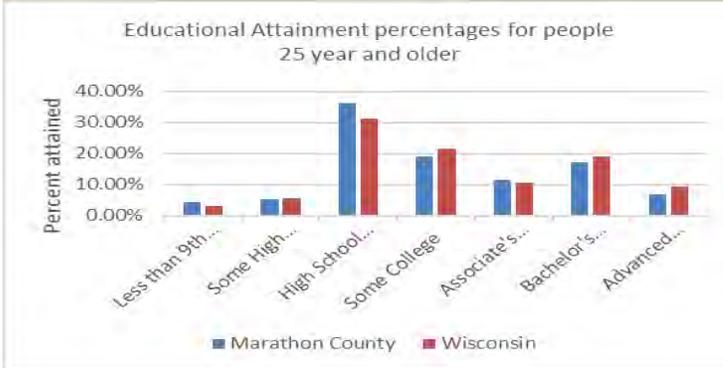
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

The 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Report indicate that of the population 25 years and over in Marathon County:

- 4% have less than a 9th grade education
- 5% 9th-12th, with no diploma
- 37.1% High School Graduate
- 18.5% Some college, with no degree
- 11.7% Associate's Degree
- 16.1% Bachelor's Degree
- 7.6% Graduate or Professional Degree
- State of Wisconsin General Purpose Revenue Expenditures for the UW System in 2016 was \$993,500,000 and \$1,086,000,000 in 2015. In 2016, the amount for the Wisconsin Technical College System was \$516,000,000 and \$511,000,000 in 2015.
- In 2016-17 UW-Marathon County awarded \$158,000 in scholarships and Northcentral Technical College awarded \$388,802 in scholarships.

Levels of poverty for Marathon County individuals 25 and older (less than 100% of the poverty level)

Grade	Level of Poverty
Less than HS Graduate	20.40%
High School Graduate	9.3%
Some College or Assoc. Degree	6.9%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	4.10%



- SOURCES**
- U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov
 - FY 2016 State of Wisconsin Annual Fiscal Report
 - Institute for College Access and Success <http://ticas.org/posd/map-state-data>
 - 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

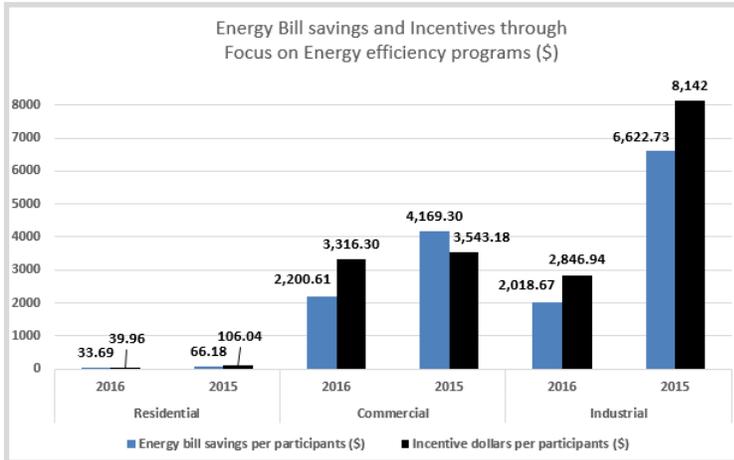
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Marathon County is a very giving community that supports our area institutions through a variety of scholarships and other donations.

Many Marathon County residents expressed some level of concern about the affordability of post high school education. The Wisconsin average student debt is \$29,460 for public and private non-profit four year institutions. Marathon County higher education institutions offer a variety of opportunities for students to lower the cost of their college education. The UW-Marathon County and Northcentral Technical College have awarded over \$540,000 in scholarships in 2016-17 and over 12,400 dual enrollment credits in

2015-16. These dual enrollment programs provide high school students the chance to earn college credits while still in high school, lowering the total cost of their college tuition and reducing time to graduation.

Marathon County offers its residents many programs to continue their education, including UW-Marathon County, Northcentral Technical College and Rasmussen College along with partnerships with Concordia University, Edgewood College, Lakeland College, Marian University, Silver Lake College, Upper Iowa University, UW-Green Bay, UW-Stevens Point, UW-Stout and Viterbo University.



Marathon County/municipality departments and official buildings--energy conservation and saving efforts have maintained costs over time.



Figure: Upgraded energy efficient boilers at Marathon County Library in 2015

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2017 LIFE Survey indicated that 18.6% of respondents are very concerned about energy conservation.
- Diverse Energy Sources: Weston Power Plant coal and natural gas, Domtar Rothschild biomass plant, Wausau hydroelectric dam, Fiber Recovery Corporation landfill biogas plant and an increasing number of solar photovoltaic installations at homes and businesses.

Table: Marathon County Focus on Energy efforts on energy efficiency between year 2014-2016

Sector	Year	No. of participants	Energy bill savings per participants (\$)	Incentives dollars per participants (\$)
Residential	2016	6,021	33.69	39.96
	2015	2,259	66.18	106.04
	2014	701	35.19*	5.20*
Commercial	2016	135	2,200.61	3,316.30
	2015	190	4,169.30	3,543.18
	2014	145	1,034.14*	69.17*
Industrial	2016	73	2,018.67	2,846.94
	2015	86	6,622.73	8,142
	2014	30	771.93*	67.69*

SOURCES

- <http://evaluations.focusonenergy.com/#!/maps>
- Focus on Energy: <http://evaluations.focusonenergy.com/#!/maps>; *per capita
- RENEW Wisconsin; Source: <http://www.renewwisconsin.org/data/projects-wimap.html> (Updated data through personal communication with Tyler Huebner, Executive Director, RENEW Wisconsin)
- Public Service Commission, <https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/Home.aspx> (Personal communication with Holly O'Higgins, Data Analyst)
- <http://www.renewwisconsin.org/data/install-county-wimap.html>
- <http://www.renewwisconsin.org/data/projects-wimap.html>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Focus on Energy, a program coordinated by the State of Wisconsin with utility providers, offers statewide energy conservation and renewable energy programs for residents and businesses. These programs provide financial incentives, education and consultative services to encourage and implement projects such as appliance recycling, lighting upgrades, and installation of energy efficient equipment and renewable energy.

Marathon County government has implemented a significant number of energy conservation and

efficiency projects in their various departmental buildings and facilities. The energy efficiency improvement measures helped keep the county

utility budget steady in terms of electricity and natural gas usage between 2008 and 2016.

Types of fuel used in Marathon County	Capacity (Megawatt)
Coal	1,027
Hydro	16.4
BioMass	50
BioGas	.8
Fuel Oil	1.3
Natural Gas	81
Solar	<1
Wind	<.5

Healthy Section



“Envisioning a Marathon County where all people enjoy the opportunities to live, learn, work and play in healthy communities; whereby we build upon our community assets.”

Ambassadors for Marathon County

Healthy Section Summary



SUCCESS AND PROGRESS

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey data from all 10 school districts in Marathon County provides a rich local data source regarding the behaviors of our community's youth. The 2017-2019 LIFE Report marks the second collection of county-wide data, allowing for comparisons to prior years and the first time middle school data is available.
- Marathon County residents recognize the benefits to our ample and clean water resources. The 2017 LIFE Survey indicates that 70.8% of the respondents are either very concerned or concerned about the cleanliness of local lakes and rivers. The survey also revealed a high public awareness of the importance of protecting open and natural areas.
- The number of insured residents in Marathon County has increased, indicating that more residents are able to access needed health care services to prevent disease and treat health conditions before they worsen. LIFE Survey respondents reported decrease in medical debt compared to previous years.
- Access to health care, which helps ensure the health of residents, remains high in Marathon County with four health care systems located in the community and a primary care physician ratio better than Wisconsin's average. The majority of LIFE Survey respondents report being satisfied with the accessibility of health care.
- Progress continues to be made on reducing tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke in Marathon County. Perception of tobacco use, particularly among youth, is an important contributor to progress achieved as 89% of middle school youth report that their parents feel it would be wrong for them to smoke cigarettes.
- Marathon County residents remain committed to reducing their waste and improving the health of our local environment. According to the 2017 LIFE Survey, 78.8% of Marathon County residents recycle, donate, re-use or compost waste.
- Residents of Marathon County continue to receive preventative health care and screenings across the lifespan. Examples of this include - high percentage of babies born at a healthy weight, high rates of two year olds with up-to-date immunizations, decreased average length of time to reduce a child's blood lead level to safe range, high rates of screenings such as mammograms and cholesterol checks.
- Marathon County has made strides to address affordable housing. For example - Emergency Housing assistance recipients have increased housing stability. In 2016, 57% reported having housing stability 3 months after services were provided. The Coordinated Entry System in Marathon County, which prioritizes the most vulnerable chronically homeless, has resulted in more homeless people being housed.
- Marathon County is home to a number of parks, recreation, and open natural areas providing an abundance of opportunities for residents to enjoy the outdoors and be physically active. The majority, 80.8% of LIFE Survey respondents are satisfied with the availability of these outdoor spaces.
- Progress to improve access to dental care for Marathon County residents continues to be made. Two Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) act as consistent providers for Medicaid/BadgerCare patients and LIFE respondents report a decreased level of concern of the affordability of dental care compared to prior years.



Healthy Section Summary



CALLS TO ACTION

- Substance abuse and misuse continues to be of concern in Marathon County. Illegal drug use was the number one issue of concern among 2017 LIFE Survey respondents and drug overdoses were the number one cause of injury related deaths among individuals aged 15-64. While alcohol remains the largest substance abuse burden in our community, rates remain unchanged among adults and youth. Furthermore, e-cigarette use is on the rise, yet, there is a low level of concern regarding their use.
- The mental health of individuals in Marathon County, especially youth, warrants attention as does the need for accessible mental health services. Suicide risk has increased among high schoolers as has the number of youth reporting feelings of hopelessness. Stigma, cost and a shortage of mental health providers (psychiatrists and dual certified therapists) remain barriers to accessing services.
- Affordability of health care, regardless of insurance status, remains a concern among Marathon County residents. LIFE Survey respondents cited cost as the number one reason for not having health insurance. Survey respondents with health insurance disclosed that despite having coverage they are burdened with significant medical debt.
- Marathon County streams are contributing heavily to high levels of phosphorus in the Wisconsin River. Education for county residents is needed on the sources of the high phosphorous levels and successful mitigation strategies to bring levels back within a safe range.
- More affordable housing is needed as 46.1% of LIFE Survey respondents stated they spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Housing costs lead to financial instability for individuals and families. Implementing more "Housing First" programs offers permanent, affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, as well as support so people keep their housing and avoid returning to homelessness. Additionally, shelters and transitional housing options are needed to bridge the gap as homeless individual and families move toward permanent housing.
- Explore solutions to increase household income as 84% of LIFE Survey respondents indicated they were concerned about availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses.
- Overweight and obesity rates continue to rise among Marathon County adults, putting them at risk for obesity-related chronic diseases. Youth are also at risk as the number reporting sedentary activities, such as video games, has increased in recent years.
- Falls continue to be the number one cause of injury related hospitalizations and emergency room visits in Marathon County, particularly among residents aged 65 and over. Further concerning is the death rate due to falls has increased in recent years.



Healthy Section Summary

OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTION



For Individuals

- Learn about the needs of all community members and organizations. Advocate for resources to address those needs.
- Know the risk of substance abuse and be educated on consequences of the misuse of alcohol, prescription and illegal drugs. Develop a dialog regarding substance abuse with youth, monitor behavior of family and friends and be supportive for their need of counseling and recovery.
- Support family and friends experiencing personal difficulties – feeling sad, lonely, stressed, anxious, bullied, overwhelmed, or distraught by spending quality time with them. Find ways to help anyone that you know that needs professional counseling assistance.
- Help with healthcare affordability by being informed about your current insurance coverage, practice preventable health behavior by reducing stress, getting adequate sleep, eating healthy and increasing physical activity. Engage in preventative clinical services via annual exams, screenings and immunizations.

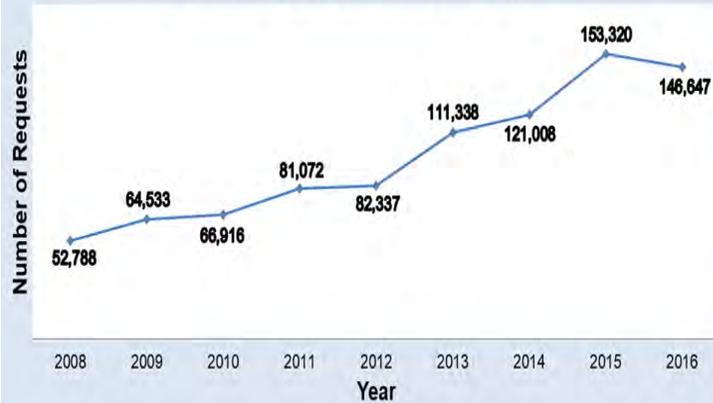
For Organizations

- Collaborate and partner to work together to address the needs of all community members.
- Leverage current programs and resources for substance abuse prevention, education, treatment, and legal enforcement.
- Support community initiatives addressing depression in youth and provide assistance for those with mental health needs.
- Support wellness policies and incentives for those engaging in healthy behaviors.

For The Community

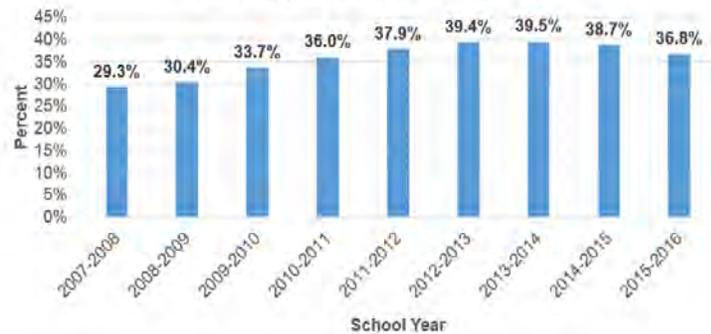
- Come together, as individuals and organizations, to look for innovative approaches to solving the community's most challenging issues.
- Get involved and connect with local initiatives addressing substance abuse. Invest in community based prevention, intervention and policy strategies to reduce/eliminate substance abuse.
- Promote community conversations on the benefits of integrating mental health well-being into everyday life.
- Build community capacity of private and public partnerships to achieve greater natural resource protection. Influence legislation to enhance natural resource protection.

**Marathon County Hunger Coalition Partner Pantries:
Requests for food assistance met by year**



Source: United Way of Marathon County – Marathon County Hunger Coalition

**Percent of Marathon County public school students
receiving free or reduced lunch**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction <https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/program-statistics>

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 41.5% of individuals served by FoodShare in Marathon County in 2016 were children.
- 72.3% of individuals served by W.I.C. in Marathon County in 2016 were children.
- Over 2 million pounds of food were distributed by Marathon County Hunger Coalition Partner Pantries in 2016, including over 750,000 pounds of produce.
- The Neighbors' Place distributed 981,732 pounds of food in 2015 and 1,503,272 pounds in 2016.
- 66.7% of LIFE Survey respondents are concerned or very concerned about the availability of jobs that pay enough to cover basic household expenses.
- 14.6% of LIFE survey respondents struggled to cover food expenses during one or more months of the past year.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/stats
- United Way of Marathon County – Marathon County Hunger Coalition www.unitedwaymc.org
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction <https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/program-statistics>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Since the recession, hunger is still a significant issue based on the number of requests for food assistance seen at local food pantries. Forty-one percent of Marathon County's population is considered ALICE (Asset-Limited Income Constrained Employed). ALICE is employed – often with multiple jobs – but struggles to make ends meet. Access to food assistance is vital to ALICE families. It is important to consider how the federal and state funding to safety net programs like FoodShare and W.I.C. impacts ALICE families.

Youth are the largest number of those served by W.I.C. and FoodShare. Marathon County students who qualify for free or reduced school lunches is still much higher than pre-recession. Area schools and organizations report an increase in youth with limited or no access to

food outside of school, which is leading to new school-based food pantries and weekend food backpack programs.

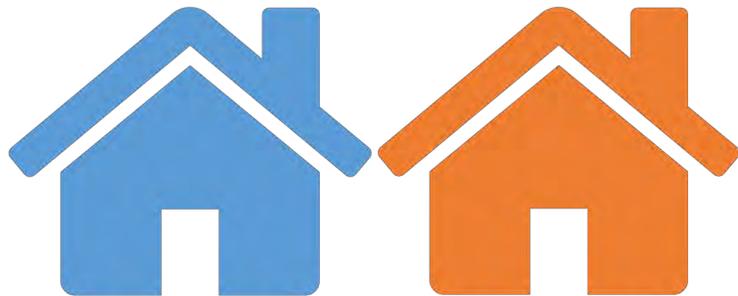
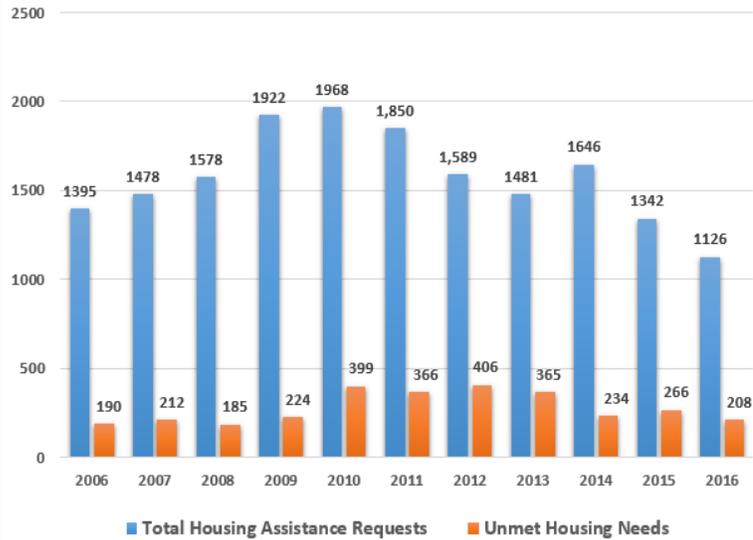
With the anticipated increase in the senior population in Marathon County over the next 10-20 years, our community needs to continue discussions around reducing hunger among seniors, including addressing barriers like transportation that can make getting food more difficult for the aging population.

	Individuals Served Through Food Assistance in Marathon County	
	W.I.C.	FoodShare
2010	4,610	19,212
2011	5,988	20,325
2012	5,801	23,899
2013	4,108	23,846
2014	3,885	22,619
2015	3,730	20,606
2016	3,504	19,217

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2016, there were 1,126 requests for housing assistance, 18% of these went unmet (208 out of 1,126).
- In 2016, 415 households received Emergency Housing Assistance Funds (EHAF).
- In 2016, 147 people (57%) indicated their housing situation was stable 12 weeks after receiving EHAF assistance.
- The City of Wausau owns 46 units of public housing scattered throughout the city. The waiting list for these units range from 3 months to 4 years depending on the number of bedrooms.
- In November of 2016, the City of Wausau reopened the application for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program and 220 applications were received. As of July 2017, 174 families remain on the wait list.
- Marathon County has 435 vouchers allocated but because of amount needed per voucher they only have funds for 275 vouchers.

Key Measure: Total and Unmet Housing Assistance Requests from United Way's 2-1-1, 2006-2016



SOURCES

- United Way of Marathon County United Way's 2-1-1 Caller Unmet Needs Snapshot www.unitedwaymc.org/211.htm
- US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD
- City of Wausau Community Development Authority www.ci.wausau.wi.us/

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

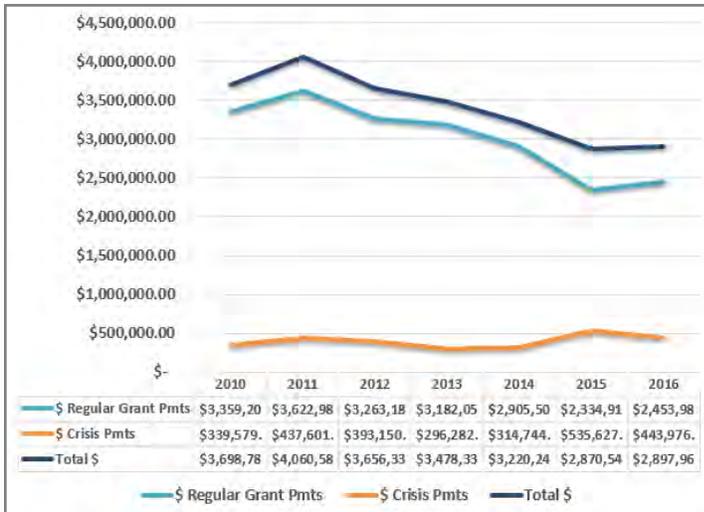
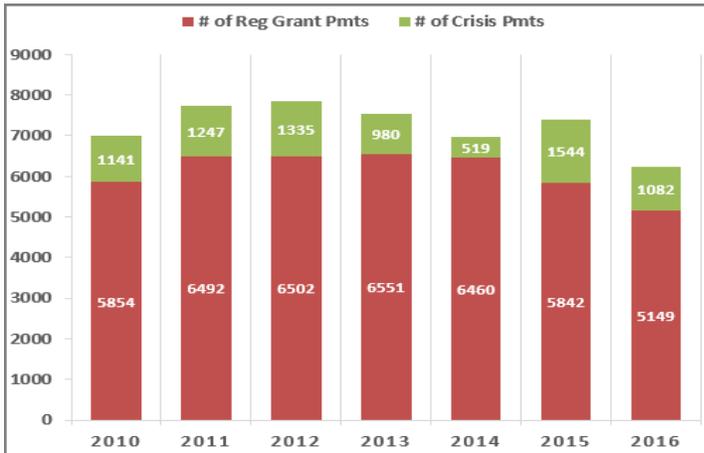
In the 2017 LIFE Community Survey 46.1% of respondents stated that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing compared to 44.7% of LIFE survey respondents in 2015.

According to national guidelines, for housing to be considered affordable, a family should spend less than 30% of their income on housing. Housing assistance is needed for community members whose income and earning make housing unaffordable.

There are resources available to assist with housing costs, but the needs continue to outweigh the available resources. 18% of 2-1-1 callers requesting

housing assistance in 2016 had their request go unmet. Wait lists, limited housing funds, and limited resources all factor into a less than ideal situation for those needing housing assistance.

Key Measures: Wisconsin Energy Association Program Applications and Payments in Marathon County, 2010-2016



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The average water bill for a Wisconsin residential customer using 18,750 gallons in a quarter was \$86.59. Since 2007, the average bill has increased by 25%. The additional cost for sewer is \$17.00 to \$62.00 per quarter.
- Wisconsin's average electric use per household is 723 kwh/month, compared to the national average of 909 kwh/month. The average cost per kwh in Wisconsin is \$0.135; Wisconsin Public Service kwh is \$0.098.
- Wisconsin averages \$2.416- \$3.568/gallon for home heating oil while the average price of propane in Marathon County costs \$1.582 - \$2.00/gallon. The national average cost of home heating oil is \$2.491/gallon.
- Marathon County's four cable providers are Charter Communications, Frontier Communications, Wittenberg Cable & Telephone Company and Chippewa Valley Cable, Inc. Customers pay between \$19.99 and \$43.80 for basic cable packages.

SOURCES

- US Department of Energy <http://energy.gov/>
- Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) <http://www.homeenergyplus.wi.gov/>
- Wisconsin Public Service www.wisconsinpublicservice.com
- Public Service Commission of Wisconsin <http://psc.wi.gov>
- Riiser Energy www.riiser.com

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

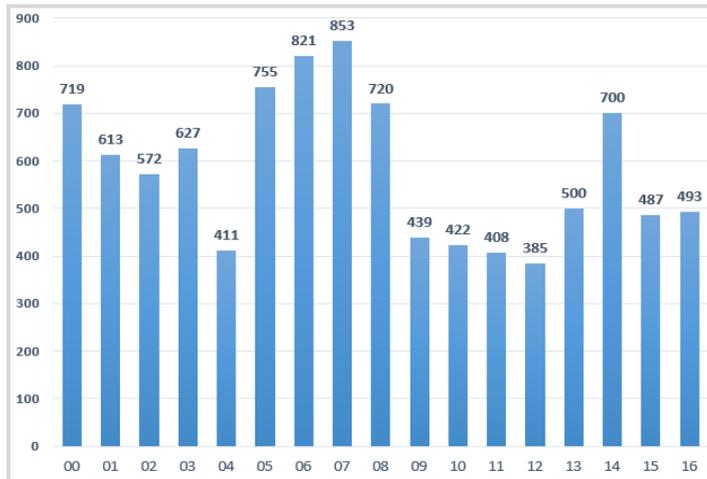
The costs associated with owning or renting a home are numerous, but in Marathon County there is help available for families in need. Residential services include telephone service, water and sewer, cable television, internet, electricity and either natural gas, LP or propane. Added together, the total costs for these services can exceed family budgets. Families can seek help with assistance for utility costs to keep their heat and electricity on; however overall the number seeking help has decreased by 700 households since 2012.

Two of the major energy assistance programs available to residents with limited income are the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program administered by Energy Services, Inc. on behalf of Marathon County and Public Benefits Energy Assistance Program. In combination, these programs help approximately 225,000 Wisconsin households each year. While available resources in the community provide much needed assistance, there are still needs not being met in Marathon County. In 2016 over 6,231 families received assistance totaling over \$2,897,962.

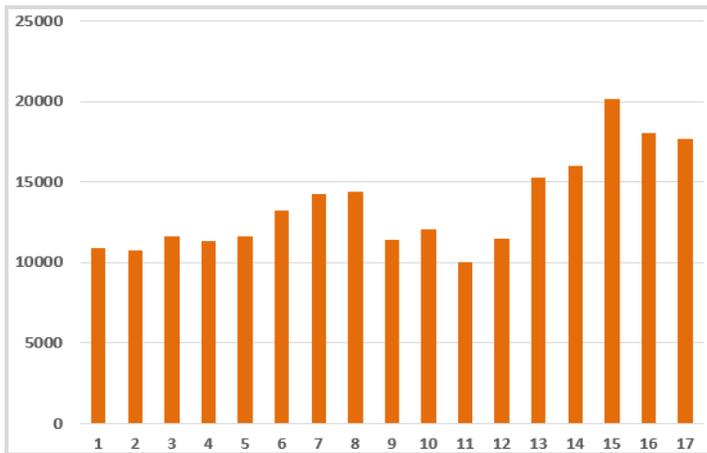
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Wausau Community Warming Center provided 3,013 nights of shelter to 146 unduplicated people in the 2015-2016 season. In the 2016-2017 season, they provided 3,505 nights of shelter to 155 unduplicated people.
- The Women’s Community saw their number of shelter nights decrease from 8,835 in 2015 to 8,606 in 2016 but saw the unduplicated number of women and children housed increase from 158 in 2015 to 172 in 2016.
- The Salvation Army saw their number of shelter nights decrease from 9,225 in 2015 to 9,045 in 2016 but saw the unduplicated number of people housed increase from 289 in 2015 to 295 in 2016.
- In the spring of 2017, sheltered residents were surveyed and 27% (11 out of 40 respondents) indicated that they had been homeless for a year or longer. 60% of those surveyed (24 out of 40) had been homeless more than 30 days but less than one year.
- The Point In-Time Homeless Street Counts on the last Wednesday of January and July in 2016 found 23 people living in places not meant for human habitation and 16 people in 2017.

Key Measure: Total Number of Individuals Sheltered in Marathon County 2000-2016



Key Measure: Total Number of Lodging Nights in Marathon County 2000-2016



SOURCES

- Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care www.wiboscoc.org
- The Salvation Army <http://www.salvationarmy.org>
- Catholic Charities www.cclse.org/wausau/php
- Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP) <http://www.wiscap.org>
- The Women’s Community, Inc. www.womenscommunity.org

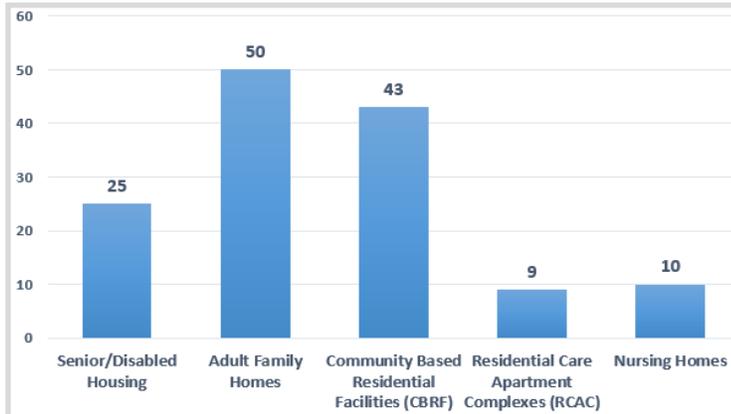
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Homelessness is caused by tragic life occurrences like the loss of loved ones, job loss, domestic violence, divorce and family disputes. Other impairments such as depression, untreated mental illness, alcohol and other drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, and physical disabilities also contribute to homelessness. Many factors push people into living on the street. Acknowledging these factors can help facilitate the end of homelessness. For those living in poverty or close to the poverty line, an "everyday" life issue that may be manageable for individuals with a higher income can be the final factor in placing them on the street. A broken down vehicle, a lack of vehicle insurance, or even unpaid tickets might be just enough

to render someone homeless.

In Marathon County, homelessness continues to impact individuals and families. While numbers of individuals staying in shelters and the number of nights lodged have dropped in the last two years, often people are staying longer as their options for permanent housing are limited. New innovative programming that focuses on "Housing First", a national approach to addressing homelessness, are being implemented in Marathon County. In addition, Marathon County has added a Coordinated Entry System that prioritizes the most vulnerable homeless individuals or families.

Key Measure: Assisted Living Facilities by Option in Marathon County 2017



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 29.7% of LIFE survey respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with availability of elder care.
- 46% of LIFE survey respondents were very concerned or concerned with affordability of elder care and 19.7% were somewhat concerned.
- In 2017, there are 967 beds available in nursing homes in Marathon County. In 2015, there were 975 and in 2011 there were 939.
- In 2015, those 65 years old or older made up between 15-18% of the population. In 2040, this number is projected to be between 21-24%.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services
- Wisconsin Assisted Living Facilities <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/bqaconsumer/AssistedLiving/AsLivindex.htm>
- Wisconsin Nursing Homes <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/bqaconsumer/NursingHomes/NHindex.htm>
- State of Assisted Living <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/bqaconsumer/assistedliving/altrends12.pdf>
- Connections to Community Living <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/ccl/reports-pubs/index.htm>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Sixty-five percent of LIFE Survey respondents reported that they are concerned about affordability of elder care. Cost can be a major factor in looking at housing options for the aging. Seniors today have more choice in housing options than ever. For those needing a little assistance to remain in their home there is Supportive Home Care which is non-medical assistance designed to provide help with housekeeping, laundry, grooming, bathing and companionship. Skilled Home Care provides medical assistance at home for seniors that need additional care after illness, injury or surgery.

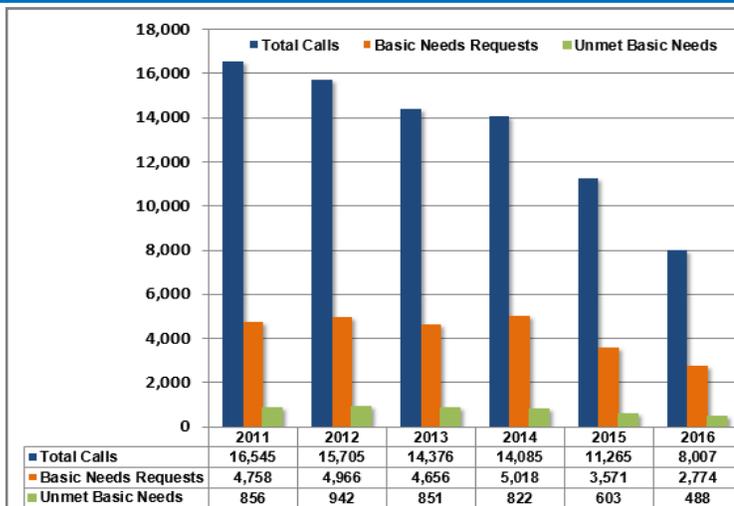
There are apartment complexes that also cater specifically to seniors offering amenities such as housekeeping, activities and meals. Resident Care Apartment Complexes (RCAC) offer regular apartments where residents are their own decision maker and can access skilled and non-skilled services

(including help with medications and medical issues). Community Based Residential Facilities (CBRF) are intended for people who cannot live independently but are neither acutely ill nor need extensive nursing care; many in CBRFs no longer make their own legal decisions.

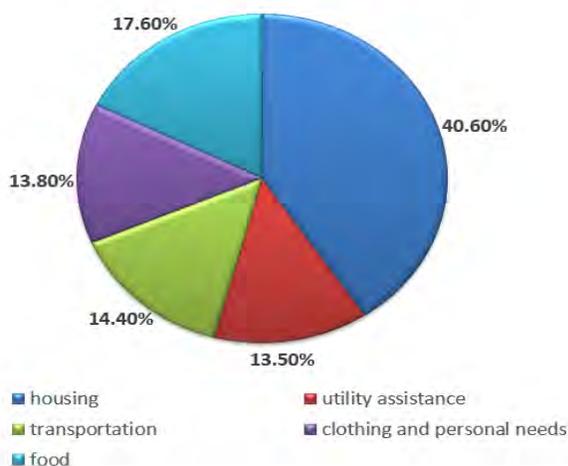
Lastly there are traditional nursing facilities which offer 24-hour skilled services providing long-term, complex medical care for seniors who can no longer perform daily living activities that keep them safe and able to live at home. There is also short-term bridge care between hospital and home for folks recovering from major or minor health problems that need short-term support before returning home.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2016, United Way's 2-1-1 received 8,007 calls from people requesting help for 9,188 needs. Of those needs, 767 (8%) were not met related to inadequate community resources and program requirements.
- 30% of requests for services were related to basic needs, which includes housing, utility assistance, food, transportation, clothing and personal needs.
- United Way's 2-1-1 connected more people to basic needs programs in 2016, meeting 82% of total requests from callers compared to 81% in 2012.
- During the past year, 42 of 472 LIFE survey respondents indicated that they missed or were late with their rent or mortgage payments, and 88 of 474 respondents indicated that they missed or were late with monthly bills.



United Way's 2-1-1 Basic Needs Category



SOURCES

- United Way's 2-1-1 www.unitedwaymc.org/get-help/
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Eighty-four point four percent of county residents who participated in the 2017 LIFE Community Survey indicated that they were concerned, somewhat concerned or very concerned about availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses. Additionally, 46% of LIFE Survey respondents indicated that they spend 30% or more of their total household income on housing, which included rent/mortgage, utilities, home/rental insurance, and property taxes.

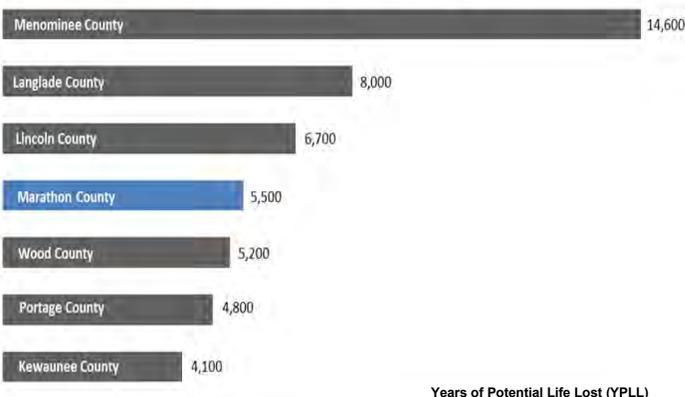
With these survey responses, it is not surprising that we continue to see an increase in requests for basic needs assistance through United Way's 2-1-1. Even though requests continue to increase for basic needs including housing, utility assistance, transportation,

food, clothing and personal items, the 2-1-1 program was able to provide referrals for 92% of all requests in 2016.

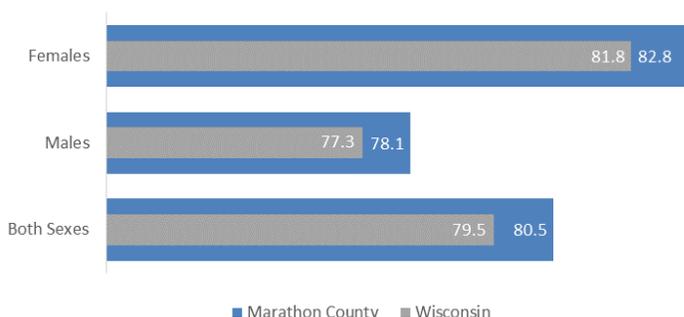
Individuals and families who experience financial hardships are able to access services, but Marathon County continues to be challenged by gaps in community services designed to help residents regain or remain financially self-sufficient.



Marathon County Ranks 22nd in YPLL Among WI Counties



Years of Life Expectancy is Higher in Marathon County Compared to Wisconsin.



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- A 1.2% increase in the U.S. death rate was reported in 2015; the first increase since 1999.
- In Marathon County in 2015, the age-adjusted death rates per 100,000 population for the top three causes were: Cancer, 137.2; Heart Disease, 120.3; Unintentional Injuries, 45.1.
- In 2015, death rates due to cancer decreased in the U.S. yet, cancer still remains the 2nd leading cause of death in the U.S. and the number one leading cause in Marathon County.
- Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death for the U.S. and Wisconsin and the 11th leading cause for Marathon County.
- In 2014, the rate of tobacco as an underlying cause of death in Marathon County was reported at 138.9 per 100,000 population.

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Life Expectancy in Wisconsin 2010-2014 <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p01551.pdf>
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Annual Wisconsin Death Report, 2015 <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p01170-16.pdf>
- Mortality and Morbidity in the 21st Century https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/casdeaton_sp17_finaldraft.pdf
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Mortality in the United States, 2015 <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db267.htm>
- CDC Wonder Database <https://wonder.cdc.gov/>
- Wisconsin Public Health Profiles, Marathon County 2016 <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p45358-2016-marathon.pdf>
- County Health Rankings & Roadmaps <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Premature death reflects the extent of poor health in a community. It is measured as years of potential life lost (YPLL) before age 75 per 100,000 population. For example, an individual dying at age 30 contributes 45 YPLL. In 2015, the top three contributors of YPLL in Marathon County were cancer, heart disease, and unintentional injuries.

In 2015, life expectancy at birth decreased for the first time since the 90s, yet remained unchanged at age 65 indicating that people are dying younger. This is seen particularly among middle age White Americans

without a college degree, who experience a large burden of “deaths of despair”: overdoses, alcoholism, and suicide. Reduced labor force participation acts as a contributor due to its effect on social and economic factors throughout the lifespan.

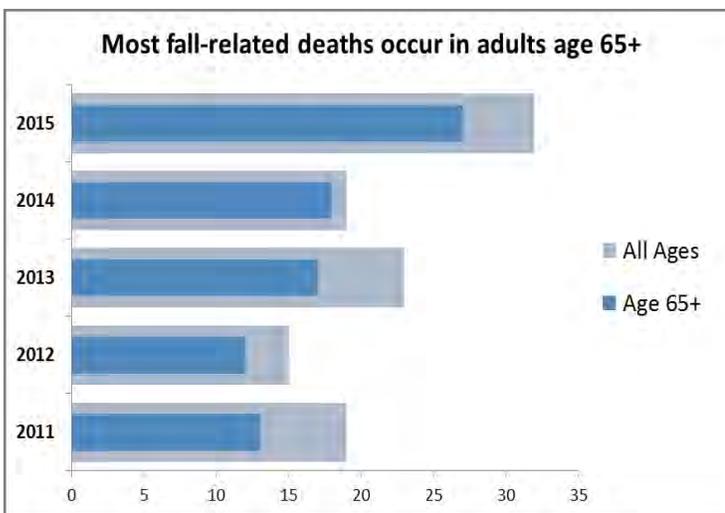
While Marathon County reports a higher life expectancy than the state and U.S., disparities among races/ethnicities exist and persist across the lifespan. For Wisconsin, Hispanics report the highest life expectancy at 86.9 years while American Indians have the lowest at 72.8 years.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- From 2011-2015, 76 Marathon County residents died on average each year from unintentional injuries.
- In 2015, 27 Marathon County adults age 65+ died from falls, an increase from 18 in 2014.
- In 2015, for Marathon County adults age 65+, the rate of fall-related deaths was 121.6 per 100,000. The national Healthy People 2020 goal is 45.3.
- In 2014, falls accounted for 607 hospitalizations in Marathon County. The average age was 72.5 years old with an average hospital stay of 4.7 days.
- Accidents (unintentional injuries) were the third leading cause of death for children under 18 years old in Marathon County from 2011-2015.



Data Source: Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health, 2015



- SOURCES**
- Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH)

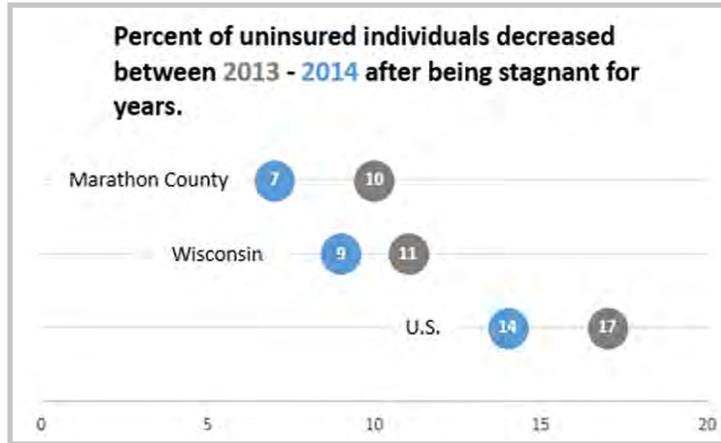
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Injury is a leading cause of death and disability among Wisconsin residents, accounting for 92 deaths in Marathon County in 2015. In Wisconsin, falls are the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death, emergency department visits, and inpatient hospitalizations. Fall-related injuries disproportionately impact older adults. For adults 65 and older, falls are the leading cause of emergency department visits and hospitalizations.

with an average hospital stay of 4 days.

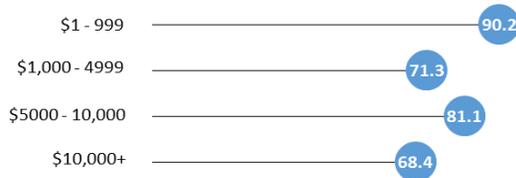
Nearly all poisoning deaths in the United States are attributed to drugs, and most drug poisonings result from the abuse of prescription and illegal drugs. In 2014, poisonings accounted for 107 hospitalizations in Marathon County. The average age was 41.1 years old





Data Source: County Health Rankings

Large percentages of LIFE Survey respondents with medical debt indicate **having insurance.**



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 82.2% of LIFE survey respondents are satisfied or strongly satisfied with accessibility of health care.
- 71% of LIFE survey respondents are concerned or very concerned with affordability of health care.
- 14.6% of LIFE survey respondents reported a time in the past 12 months when they had no health insurance due to the following: cost 9%, reasons not listed 2.4%, not offered by employer 1.9%, and didn't know how to sign up 1.3%.
- Of LIFE Survey respondents, 21.7% reported \$1-\$999 of household medical debt and 18.2% reported \$1000-\$4999.
- Marathon County reports a primary care physician ratio (ratio of population to total primary care physicians) of 1,100:1 compared to Wisconsin at 1,240:1.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- 2017 County Health Rankings <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Overall, Marathon County residents are satisfied with accessibility of health care, yet remain concerned with affordability. While the rate of uninsured individuals and reported medical debt among LIFE Survey respondents has significantly decreased in recent years, gaps persist. In particular, the percent of uninsured children under age 19 has remained unchanged since 2010 at 5% and individuals who have insurance still report a substantial amount of medical debt. Also, households with an income of \$50,000 – \$99,999 report a higher level of concern regarding health care affordability compared to

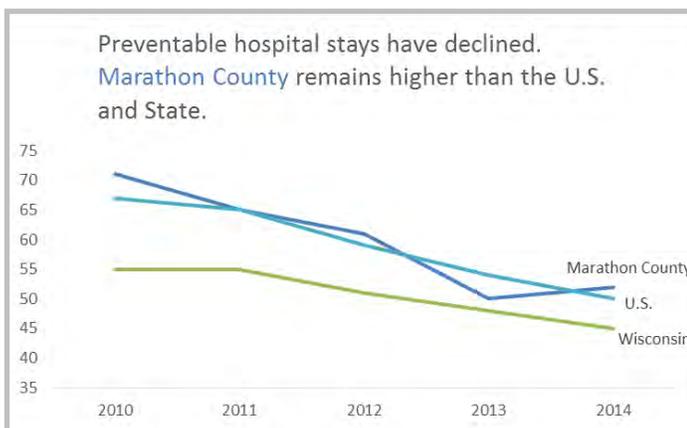


households under \$49,999. Further highlighting affordability concerns, LIFE Survey respondents who reported not having health insurance at any time during the past 12 months, cited cost as the number one reason why. Affordability was also cited as the top reason why either LIFE Survey respondents themselves or a family member did not see a doctor when they should have. Access to high quality care that is affordable is vitally important to ensuring the health of Marathon County residents.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Marathon County ranks 14th in clinical care among Wisconsin counties. Factors considered in this ranking include diabetic monitoring, mammography screening, and preventable hospital stays among others.
- During 2009-2013, close to 40% of invasive colorectal cancers in Wisconsin were diagnosed at an early stage.
- 31% of Wisconsin adults who had their blood cholesterol checked in 2015 were told it was high.

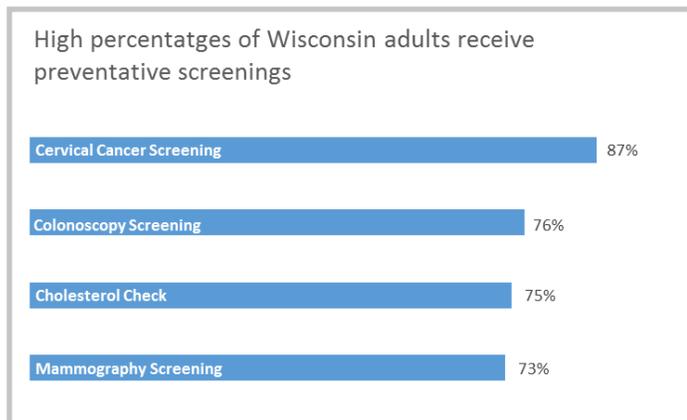
Cervical Cancer Screening	87% of Wisconsin women aged 21-65 who have had a pap test in the past three years
Colonoscopy Screening	76% of Wisconsin adults aged 50+ who have ever had a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy
Cholesterol Check	75% of Wisconsin adults aged 18+ who have had their blood cholesterol checked within the last five years
Mammography Screening	73% of Wisconsin women aged 40+ who have had a mammogram within the past two years



(See Graph Above)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Marathon County	71	65	61	50	52
Wisconsin	55	55	51	48	45
U.S.	67	65	59	54	50

Note: Preventable hospital stays is measured as the number of hospital stays for ambulatory-care sensitive conditions per 1,000 Medicare enrollees.



Data Source: 2014/2015 BRFSS

SOURCES

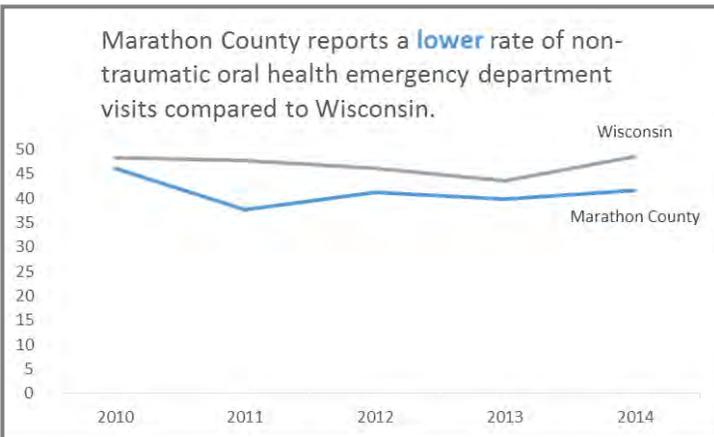
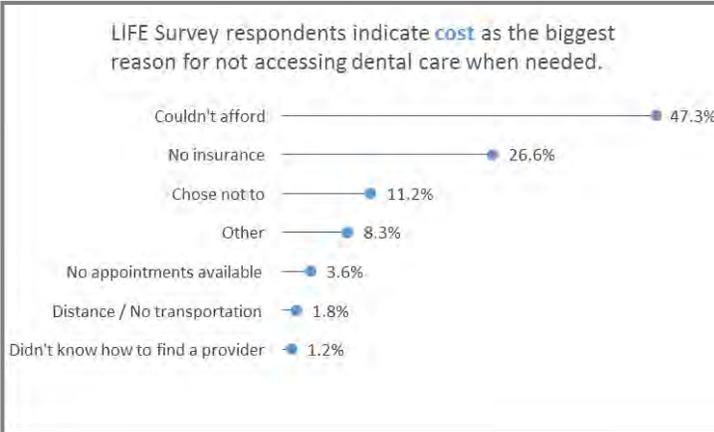
- County Health Rankings www.countyhealthrankings.org
- CDC – BRFSS <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Preventative health screenings are important in identifying health issues before they develop and in stopping the effects of health conditions before they worsen. Furthermore, screenings are cost effective as they detect disease early on. Common preventative screenings, often age and gender specific, include the following; colorectal cancer screenings, mammography screenings, cervical cancer screenings, and cholesterol screenings. Wisconsin, as a whole, reports fairly high participation in such screenings.

to examine the quality and access of primary healthcare. Hospitalization for conditions such as asthma, hypertension, or diabetes, which are often treatable in outpatient settings, may suggest a low quality of care in the outpatient setting and/or indicate overuse of hospitals as a primary source of care.

Preventable hospital stays, measured as the number of hospital stays for ambulatory-care sensitive conditions per 1,000 Medicare enrollees, is often used



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Marathon County	46.1	37.7	41.2	39.8	41.6
Wisconsin	48.3	47.8	46.1	43.6	48.6

Note: Rates are per 10,000 population

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Of LIFE Survey respondents, **48.2%** are satisfied with the availability of dental care in their community and **29.1%** are very satisfied.
- In 2017, **79.6%** of Marathon County high school youth reported seeing a dentist for a check-up in the past 12 months, indicating that **20.4%** did not.
- **30%** of Wisconsin adults did not visit a dentist within the past year.
- **39.6%** of LIFE Survey respondents indicated that they themselves or a family member did not visit a dentist in the past year when they should have.
- In 2015, the ratio of population to dentists in Marathon County was **1,390:1** compared to Wisconsin's ratio of **1,560:1**.

SOURCES

- Environmental Public Health Tracking <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/epht/oralhealth.htm>
- Healthy Wisconsin 2020 <https://healthy.wisconsin.gov/>
- Wisconsin's Roadmap to Improving Oral Health 2013-2018 <http://www.chawisconsin.org/documents/OH3OralHealthRoadmap.pdf>
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Aggregate
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/conditions/index.html>
- County Health Rankings <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Oral health is important to overall health. Research indicates that infections of the mouth may increase the risk for heart disease and pre-term births as well as complicate blood sugar control for diabetics. Cavities, which are largely preventable, are one of the most common chronic conditions in the U.S. They can lead to serious complications, such as infections in the mouth, if left untreated.

Receiving regular dental care is important for all. However, disparities in dental care coverage continue to exist among minority and low-income populations. As a result, these populations report a higher

percentage of oral health problems, such as aching and discomfort when eating. While the number of private dentists who accept Medicaid is limited, two federally qualified health centers are located in Marathon County and serve Medicaid patients.

Besides regular teeth cleanings, community water fluoridation is as a key strategy for preventing tooth decay. It is also the most cost-effective method. In 2013, 92% of Marathon County residents on a public water system had optimal levels of fluoridation.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Chlamydia has consistently been the most prevalent communicable disease in Marathon County, Wisconsin and the U.S. In 2016, for chlamydia and gonorrhea combined, ages 15-24 accounted for 62% of cases.
- In 2015, Marathon County saw an increase in pertussis; 62% of cases were among ages 10-19.
- Gonorrhea numbers for the first half of 2017(data not shown) have surpassed 2016 numbers, highlighting the rise in drug resistant gonorrhea.
- Statewide, the majority of Hepatitis C cases are among baby boomers (born 1945-1965, many of whom were infected through contaminated blood products and medical equipment in their 20-30s) and recent infections in injection drug users, many who are under age 30.

SOURCES

- Marathon County Health Department www.co.marathon.wi.us
- Epidemiologic Profile of Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) in Wisconsin 2014 <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00860.pdf>

Marathon County
*Rates are per 100,000 people

	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	2016 Rates*	'12-'16 Rates	2020 Goals
Reportable Diseases								
BABESIOSIS	5	9	4	7	9	6.6	5.0	
BLASTOMYCOSIS	16	8	7	8	10	7.4	7.3	
EHRlichIOSOS/ANAPLASMOSIS	39	39	37	37	53	39.1	30.4	
HEPATITIS B	13	7	14	9	5	3.7	7.1	1.5*
HEPATITIS C	62	62	55	49	81	59.8	45.8	0.2
HIV/AIDS	1	4	4	2	2	1.5	1.9	3.5*
INFLUENZA ASSOCIATED HOSPITALIZATIONS	39	85	75	88	42	31.0	48.8	
LYME DISEASE	86	128	67	72	101	74.5	67.3	
MENINGITIS	0	0	0	0	3	2.2	0.4	
STREPTOCOCCAL DISEASE/INVASIVE/GROUPS A & B	24	18	32	24	18	13.3	17.1	
STREPTOCOCCUS PNEUMONIAE/INVASIVE	13	17	10	9	12	8.9	9.0	
TUBERCULOSIS/ACTIVE DISEASE	3	3	1	2	4	3.0	1.9	1.0
WEST NILE	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.1	
Sexually Transmitted Diseases								
CHLAMYDIA	287	334	351	386	368	271.6	255.8	
GONORRHEA	17	20	18	22	16	11.8	13.8	195-252*
SYPHILIS	5	6	2	1	5	3.7	2.8	1.3-6.7*
Food and Waterborne Diseases								
CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS	39	36	30	46	47	34.7	29.3	
CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS	70	36	26	28	37	27.3	29.2	
SHIGA TOXIN PRODUCING E COLI	12	2	7	7	12	8.9	5.9	
GIARDIASIS	22	17	20	23	66	48.7	21.9	
SALMONELLOSIS	32	35	31	35	25	18.5	23.4	
Vaccine-Preventable Diseases								
PERTUSSIS (WHOOPING COUGH)	316	32	61	22	121	89.3	81.8	0.0
MUMPS	0	0	1	1	0	0	0.3	0.0
HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE/INVASIVE	1	3	0	3	5	3.7	1.8	0.0
VARICELLA (CHICKENPOX)	6	1	9	5	5	3.7	3.9	0.0
Others (MEASLES, RUBELLA, TETANUS, DIPHTHERIA, POLIO)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0

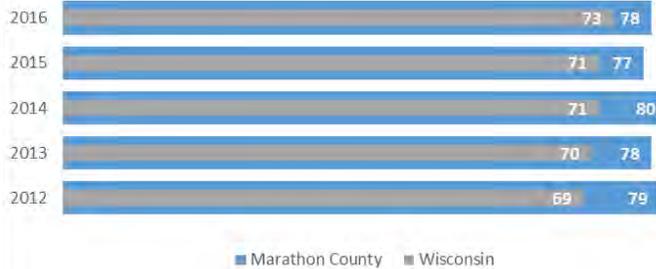
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

While the impact of diseases in terms of illness and premature death has shifted from communicable to chronic diseases over the last century, communicable diseases continue to play a significant role. Communicable diseases impacting Marathon County include sexually transmitted diseases, hepatitis C, tuberculosis, pertussis, tickborne, foodborne, and waterborne diseases.

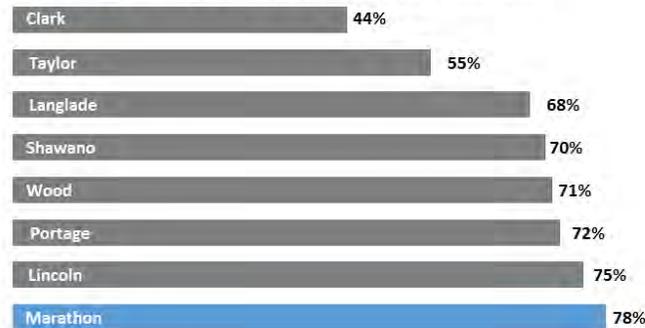
Community conditions influence reported numbers.

The number of hepatitis C cases rose in 2016, which may reflect added screening resources in the community. Additionally, individuals with a history of injection drug use are at increased risk for becoming infected. Needle exchange programs have shown to be effective at reducing hepatitis C infection without increasing drug use. Regarding giardia, an increase in cases in 2016 was attributed to an increased rain volume as the majority of cases were associated with water recreation.

Marathon County reports a **higher percentage** of 2 year olds with up-to-date immunizations compared to Wisconsin.



Marathon County reports **higher vaccination coverage** compared to surrounding counties.



Note: Vaccination coverage refers to the percentage of children that are up-to-date at 24 months of age.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Nationally, vaccination coverage among 19-35 month old children has increased from 68% in 2012 to 72% in 2015.
- Healthy People 2020 has set an 80% target for the proportion of 19-35 months old children who are fully immunized.
- Marathon County health care providers use one of two immunization registries - the Wisconsin Immunization Registry and the Registry for Effectively Communicating Immunization Needs. These provide timely and accurate immunization data.
- Contributors to lower immunization rates in the past decade are the mistaken belief that vaccines are not safe, despite repeated studies that have shown no link between vaccines and autism or other neurologic problems, and alternative vaccine schedules.

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Immunization Registry <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/wir.htm>
- National Immunization Survey Data <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/nis/index.html>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Immunizations continue to be one of the most cost effective measures to prevent communicable diseases. Immunizations benefit both the individual who receives them as well as the community as a whole. Communities with high immunization rates provide “herd immunity”, which protects individuals who are unable to be vaccinated and those with compromised immune systems.

Wisconsin ranks 29th nationally for vaccination coverage. Marathon County reports a higher vaccination rate than the state. The percentage of two year olds in Marathon County who are up-to-date with their vaccinations has remained relatively stable over the last five years, with rates reported between 76% - 79%. These rates are higher compared to neighboring

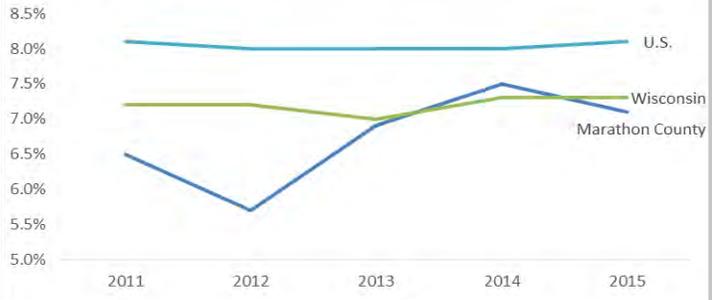
counties. Since vaccine preventable diseases know no geographic boundary, surrounding counties’ rates may effect Marathon County. The immunization rate for Marathon County increases to 83% if it includes those who are late-up-to date at age two; children who are vaccinated, but not on schedule.



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

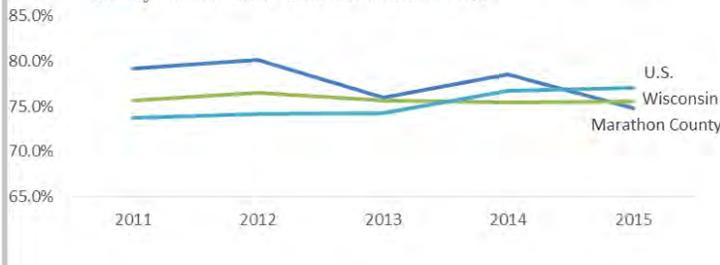
- Of babies born to mothers who smoked during pregnancy in 2015, 10.3% were low birthweight compared to 6.6% born to non-smokers.
- In 2015, 80% of low birthweight babies were born prematurely.
- Of births among White females, 78% received first-trimester prenatal care compared to 54% of births among Laotian or Hmong females in 2015.
- Of births to mothers receiving WIC (Women, Infant, and Children) services in 2015, 67% received first-trimester prenatal care compared to 78% among those not receiving WIC.
- In 2015, the teen (ages 15-19) birth rate was 17.5 births per 1,000 females, which is higher than the state rate of 16.4. This rate has historically been lower than Wisconsin, until 2015.

Low birth Weight Babies in Marathon County Decreased to 7.1% in 2015, after Previously Increasing.



Birth Weight	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Marathon County	6.5%	5.7%	6.9%	7.5%	7.1%
Wisconsin	7.2%	7.2%	7.0%	7.3%	7.3%
U.S.	8.1%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%	8.1%

Marathon County Mothers Receiving First-Trimester Prenatal Care has Declined in Recent Years. In 2015, the County Ranked Lower than the State at 74.8%.



Prenatal Care	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Marathon County	79.2%	80.1%	76.0%	78.5%	74.8%
Wisconsin	75.6%	76.5%	75.6%	75.4%	75.5%
U.S.	73.7%	74.1%	74.2%	76.7%	77.0%

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Health Services WI Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH) www.dhs.wisconsin.gov
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov

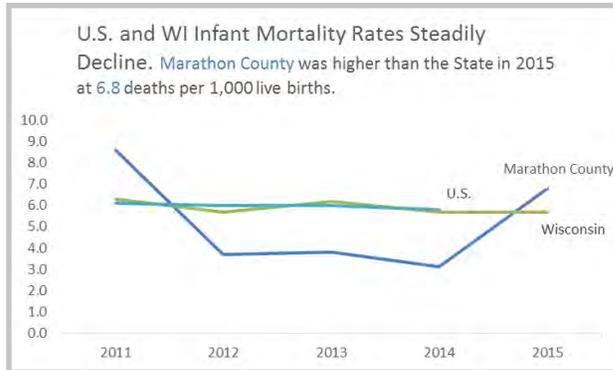
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The health and well-being of infants is a key health indicator of the health of a community as infants with poor birth outcomes are at increased risk for health problems later in life. Prenatal care correlates with birth outcomes as early (within the first trimester) and regular prenatal care increases the likelihood that babies are born at a healthy birthweight (greater than 5.5 lbs.) and at term (37 weeks gestation).

Women who are under 24 years of age, less educated, unmarried, and lower-income tend to receive less early prenatal care. Disparities are also seen across racial and ethnic minorities. Cultural norms may influence women's care utilization and their view of birth outcomes, particularly low birthweight babies which

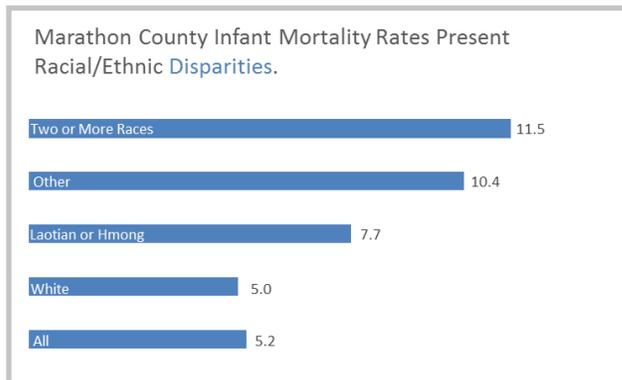
may be viewed as easier births.

Teenage pregnancy has continued to decline in recent years. While reasons behind this trend are not clear, teens seem to be less sexually active or may be engaging in sexual activity that does not result in pregnancy. Furthermore, those who are sexually active may be using birth control at higher rates compared to prior years.



Mortality Rates	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Marathon County	8.6	3.7	3.8	3.1	6.8
Wisconsin	6.3	5.7	6.2	5.7	5.7
U.S.	6.1	6.0	6.0	5.8	-

Note: Rates are measured as number of infant deaths (infant <365 days) per 1,000 live births. Due to small numbers in Marathon County, large swings in the data are expected.



Note: Black/African American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Hispanic racial/ethnic categories had no reported data. Years of data used: 2011-2015.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2015, the age-adjusted child (≤ 17 years) mortality rate (per 100,000 population) in Marathon County was 17.1 compared to 15.0 for Wisconsin.
- The Healthy People 2020 target is 6.0 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

Leading causes for infant mortality rates in Marathon County from 2011-2015 were:

- Other: 1.4
- Congenital malformations, deformations & chromosomal abnormalities: 1.2
- Disorders related to short gestation and low birthweight: 1.0

In Marathon County from 2011-2015, the age-adjusted child mortality rates for leading causes were:

- Accidents: 3.4
- Congenital malformations, deformations, & chromosomal abnormalities: 2.7
- Conditions originating in the perinatal period: 2.6

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH) www.dhs.wisconsin.gov
- Centers of Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Infant mortality (death prior to the first birthday) is an important indicator of the health of a community. Infant death is attributable to a variety of causes, birth defects, pre-term birth complications, maternal complications during pregnancy, sudden infant death syndrome and injuries. Unsafe sleeping environments like co-sleeping, sleeping in a car seat, and blankets in the crib, are also a contributor.

Despite declines in infant mortality in recent years, disparities remain among racial/ethnic groups. Specific to Marathon County, infant mortality rates are higher among Laotian or Hmong, Other, and Two or More Races compared to Whites.

Marathon County child mortality has historically been lower than the state but was higher in 2015. Leading

causes are accidents, congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities, and conditions originating in the perinatal period. Accidents as the leading cause is consistent with the state and nation.



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

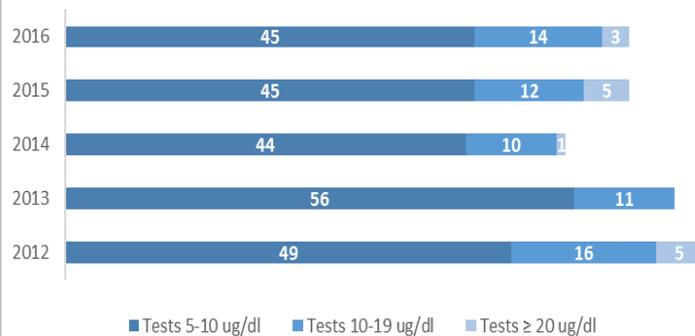
- The Healthy People 2020 objective is to eliminate elevated blood lead levels in children.
- In 2016, the percentage of children in Marathon County who were tested and identified to be lead poisoned was 0.6%.
- As a result of the Centers for Disease Control’s recommendation to intervene at 5 ug/dL vs. 10 ug/dL in May of 2012, the average length of time to reduce a child’s blood lead level to a safe range in Marathon County is 12 months; a decrease from an average of 28 months prior to 2012.
- Five housing units underwent lead hazard reduction in 2016 and 19 properties were inspected for lead.
- 84% of the City of Wausau and 71% of the County housing stock was constructed prior to 1978.

The number of childhood blood tests screening for elevated lead levels remains stable in Marathon County.



Note: Childhood refers to children under age 5

Number of positive childhood lead tests: Earlier intervention at 5 mg/dL prevents higher blood level concentrations.



SOURCES

- Marathon County Health Department Annual Reports www.co.marathon.wi.us

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES



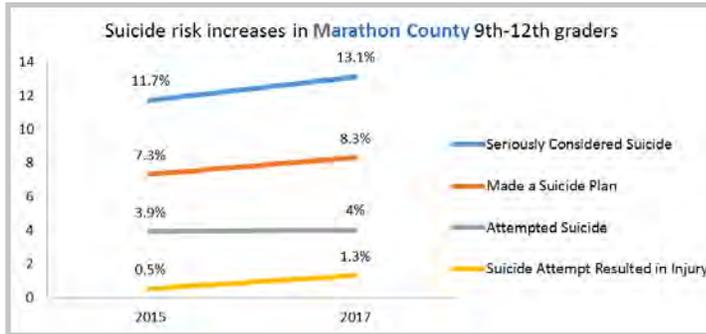
Exposure to lead, a toxic substance, can cause reduced IQ and attention span, learning disabilities, and developmental delays, among other health and behavioral effects. Young children, especially those under age six, are particularly

vulnerable. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends intervening at blood lead

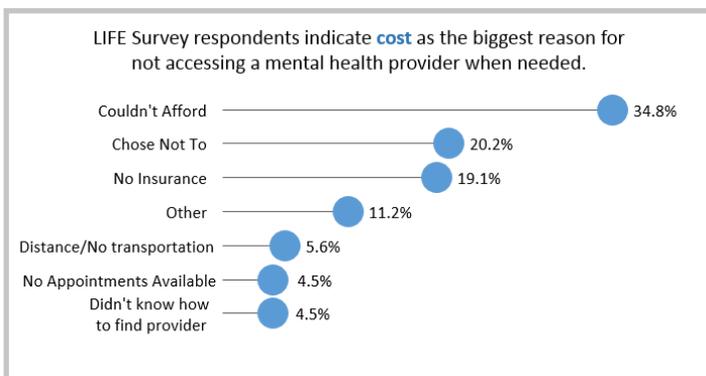
levels of 5 micrograms per deciliter (ug/dl) and above. Prior to 2012, the recommendation was 10 ug/dl. As a result, fewer young children are exposed to the negative health impacts from lead.

Wisconsin recommends that children between the ages of 6 months through 5 years be screened for risk to lead exposure. Children who are at increased risk for lead exposure are tested at ages one and two. A main source of exposure is lead based paint. Lead paint was banned in 1978 yet, health risks still persist as numerous housing structures in Marathon County were constructed prior to the ban and the housing stock has remained relatively unchanged. Wisconsin’s goal is to have all houses be lead safe.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS



Data Source: 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey



- 29.4% of 2017 LIFE Survey respondents are satisfied or strongly satisfied with accessibility of mental health care services or treatment, while 35.2% reported they didn't know or it was not applicable to them.
- 46.7% of 2017 LIFE Survey respondents are concerned or very concerned with the affordability of mental health and alcohol or drug services/treatment.
- 94.5% of 2017 LIFE Survey respondents said they have at least one person they can talk to if they had a personal problem.
- 21.5% of 2017 LIFE Survey respondents reported there was a time in the past 12 months when they or someone in their family should have seen a mental health provider but could not.
- The average Marathon County adult experienced 3.3 poor mental health days in the past month, compared with 3.5 days in Wisconsin.
- Marathon County's suicide death rate (per 100,000 population) was 13.2 from 2011-2015, compared to 13.8 in Wisconsin.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Aggregate (2017)
- Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH)
- WI Epidemiological Profile on Alcohol and Other Drug Use, 2016 <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p45718-16.pdf>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Access to mental health care is vitally important to the health of individuals and the public health and safety of communities.

Mental health and substance abuse conditions often co-occur. Integrated treatment or treatment that addresses mental health and substance abuse at the same time is associated with lower costs and better outcomes. Additional benefits are reduced substance use, improved psychiatric symptoms and functioning, decreased hospitalization, increased housing stability, fewer arrests, and improved quality of life.

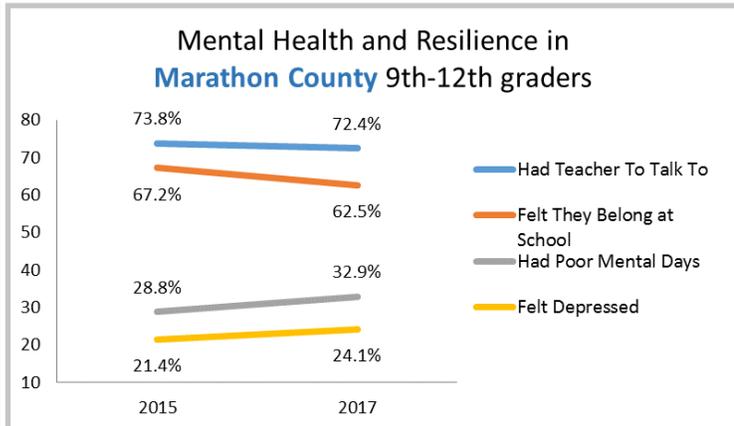
In Marathon County, the ratio of mental health

providers to population is 708:1, compared with the Wisconsin state average of 600:1. A shortage of dual-certified (mental health and substance abuse) therapists and psychiatrists continues to exist in Marathon County.

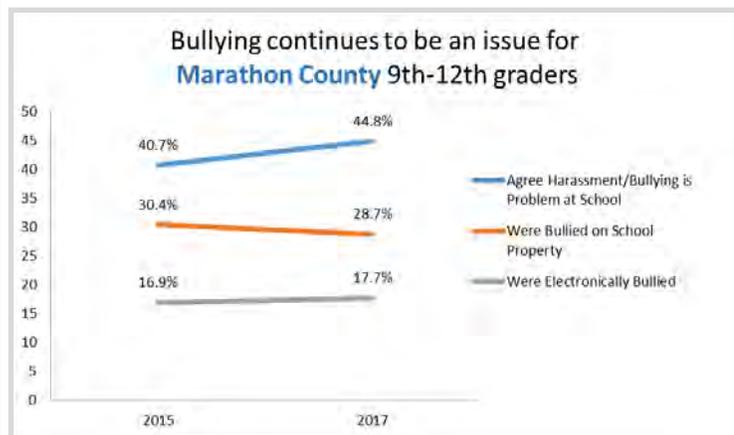
Mental health is one of many factors that can influence suicide risk. Suicide is a complex health issue influenced by a variety of factors, such as serious mental illness, substance abuse, social isolation, lack of support from family or friends, and/or exposure to violence. There is no single path that will lead to suicide.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 18.3% of Marathon County middle school students (6th-8th Grade) reported feeling depressed.
- 91.5% of Marathon County middle school students agreed or strongly agreed that their family loves them and gives them help and support when they need it.
- 73.3% of Marathon County middle school students reported having at least one teacher or other adult in their school that they can talk to if they had a problem.
- 14.5% of Marathon County middle school students reported having seriously thought about killing themselves.
- 65% of 2017 LIFE Survey respondents ate a meal at a table with family and/or friends at least 3 days each week
- 58% of Wisconsin adults have at least one Adverse Childhood Experience.



Data Source: 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey



- SOURCES**
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
 - Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Aggregate (2017)
 - Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH)
 - Wisconsin Epidemiological Profile on Alcohol and Other Drug Use, 2016 <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p45718-16.pdf>

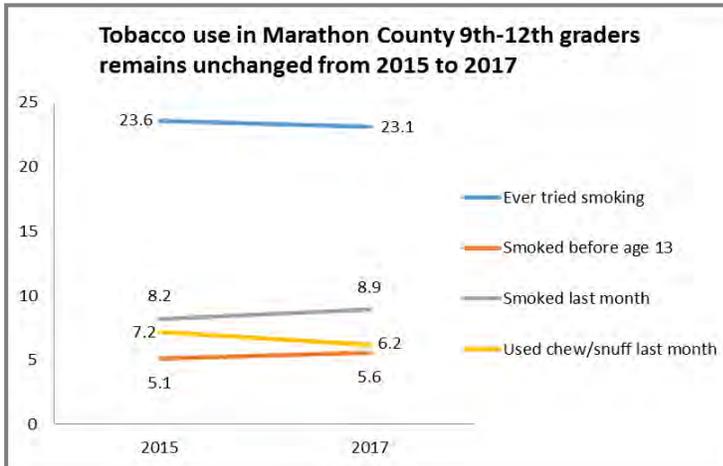
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Trauma refers to extreme stress (e.g. threat to life, bodily integrity or sanity) that overwhelms a person’s ability to cope. Trauma is subjective to each individual, but often results in feelings of vulnerability, helplessness, and fear. An individual’s experience of trauma impacts every area of human functioning – physical, mental, behavioral, social, and spiritual.

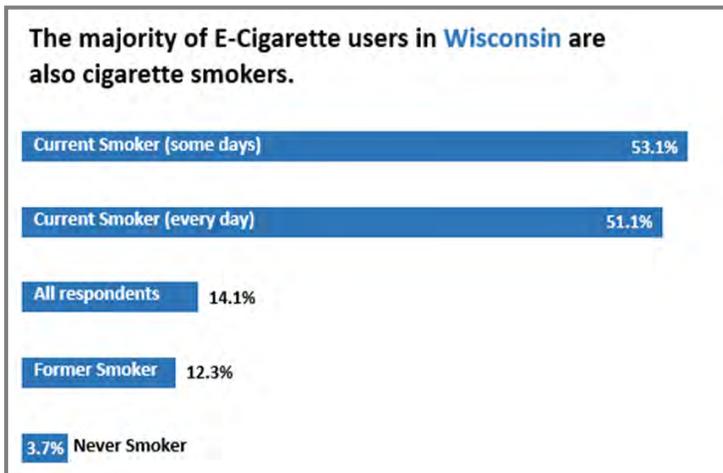
An Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) is a traumatic experience prior to the age of 18. ACEs result in toxic stress that can harm a child’s brain. Adults with higher ACEs have poorer outcomes, such as increased levels of toxic stress, higher risk for alcoholism, illegal drug use, depression, suicide,

partner violence, smoking, obesity, and heart disease. ACEs tend to occur in clusters, such that people who experienced at least one ACE are likely to have experienced multiple ACEs in childhood.

Resilience is the ability of a child to return to being healthy and hopeful after an adverse experience occurs. Research shows that if parents, teachers, friends, and family members provide a safe environment for children and teach them how to be resilient, the negative effects will be reduced. When children build up resilience, they learn to adapt positively to changing situations and maintain a hopeful outlook.



Data Source: 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey



Data Source: Wisconsin Behavioral Risk Factor Survey

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 50.3% of LIFE survey respondents are concerned or very concerned with e-cigarettes/vaping.
- 18% of adults age 18+ are current smokers in Marathon County, compared with 17.3% in Wisconsin and 16.7% in the U.S.
- 89% of Marathon County middle school students reported that their parents feel it would be wrong or very wrong for their son or daughter to smoke cigarettes.
- In 2015, 12.6% of pregnant mothers in Marathon County reported using tobacco compared to 12.1% in Wisconsin.
- 75.5% of Wisconsin adults feel indoor workplaces should be smoke-free, including bars and restaurants.
- 81.3% of Wisconsin households with children do not allow smoking inside the home.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Aggregate (2017)
- Wisconsin Wins - <http://www.wiwins.org/>
- Tobacco Facts, Center for Urban Population Health, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee http://tobwis.org/files/download_file/1356c77607e0a44

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Over the last decade, Wisconsin has made tremendous strides in reducing tobacco use and the public's exposure to secondhand smoke. As commercial tobacco products keep changing, so does the health impact on individuals with tobacco addiction and those exposed to secondhand smoke. While cigarette smoking rates have declined, e-cigarette usage continues to rise in Wisconsin.

More than 7,700 deaths in Wisconsin are linked to tobacco use or exposure each year. Tobacco products and secondhand smoke lead to a wide range of chronic health problems, including cancer, asthma and heart disease. That costs our state more than \$4.5 billion

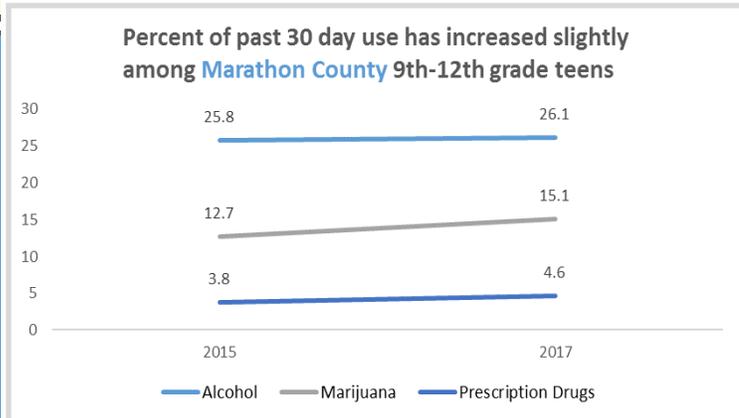
each year in rising healthcare costs and sick days from work.

Additionally, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are connected to risky behaviors (like tobacco use) and linked to negative health outcomes in adulthood. Data show that 74% of all smokers in Wisconsin have experienced at least one ACE, compared with 57% of the general population.

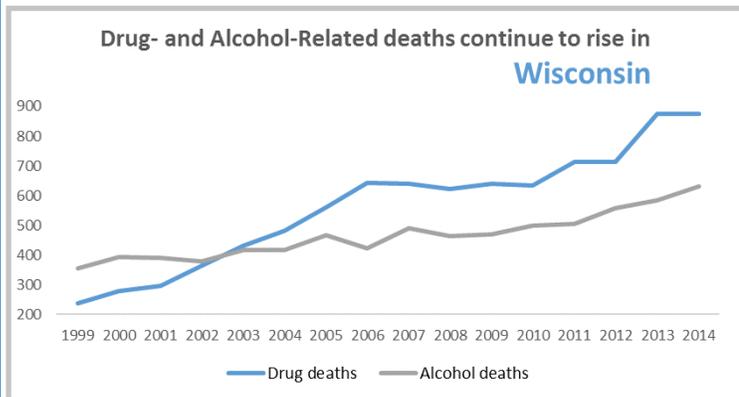
Adults with an income below \$15,000/year and less than a high school education are 4 times more likely to smoke than those with a college degree and income of \$75,000+/year.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Illegal drug use was the number one issue of concern among 2017 LIFE Survey respondents.
- 76% of LIFE Survey respondents are concerned or very concerned with illegal drug use, compared to 65.6% about the abuse or misuse of prescription drugs.
- 74% of LIFE Survey respondents are concerned or very concerned with drinking and driving, compared to 48.4% about the abuse or misuse of alcohol.
- 61.5% of Marathon County high school students and 71% of middle school students reported that their parents feel it would be wrong or very wrong for their son or daughter to drink alcohol at least twice a month.
- 92.7% of Marathon County middle school students reported that their parents feel it would be wrong or very wrong for their son or daughter to smoke marijuana.



Data Source: 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey



- SOURCES
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
 - Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Aggregate (2017)
 - WI Epidemiological Profile on Alcohol and Other Drug Use, 2016 <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p45718-16.pdf>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

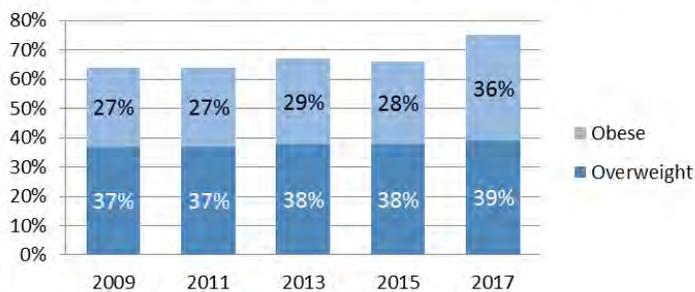
Alcohol continues to be the most frequently consumed substance of use and misuse in Wisconsin, among youth and adults, contributing to consequences that affect all state residents. The per capita alcohol consumption rate in Wisconsin is 1.3 times higher than the national rate. The alcohol consumption rate for adults is 10 percentage points above the national rate (63% vs. 53%). In the past 30 days, 30% of LIFE Survey respondents reported consuming 5 or more drinks on one occasion.

While alcohol is still the largest burden on our community, heroin use and prescription drug abuse continues to rise as an immediate concern. Annual numbers of heroin and other opioid-related deaths in

the state increased steadily from 2006 to 2015. The proportion of drug deaths with a mention of opioids, the largest category, increased from 60 to 74%.

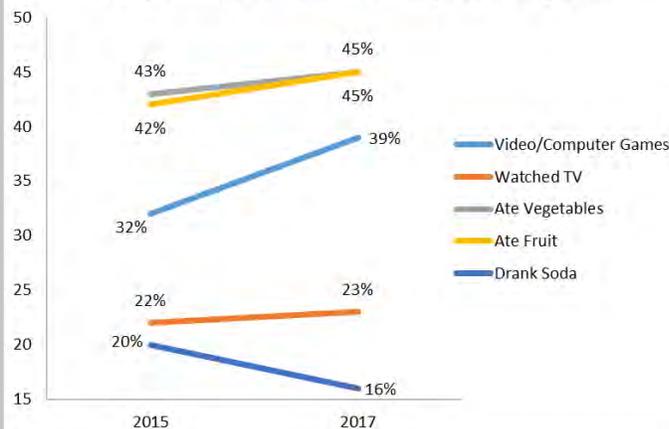
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are known to be associated with a higher risk for both adult illnesses and substance abuse disorders. These experiences include childhood physical abuse, sexual abuse, and substance abuse in the household. In 2014, 27% of Wisconsin adults reported they experienced substance abuse in their home environment while growing up.

Overweight & Obesity rates rise among Marathon County Adults



Data Source: 2009-2017 LIFE Surveys

Daily habits of Marathon County 9th-12th graders



Data Source: 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Aggregate

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2017, 29.3% of Marathon County high school students were overweight or obese (BMI >25), 62.5% were a normal weight (BMI between 18.5-25), and 8.3% were underweight (BMI<18).
- 57.4% of Marathon County high school students and 48.7% of middle school students were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day 5-7 days per week.
- 80.8% of LIFE Survey respondents were satisfied with the availability of parks, recreation, and open natural areas and 66.4% were satisfied with the availability of a safe place to walk and bike.
- 65% of LIFE Survey respondents reported eating a meal at a table with family and/or friends at least 3 times per week.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey Aggregate (2017)
- County Health Rankings & Roadmaps <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/wisconsin/2015/rankings/marathon/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Obesity is a complex health issue that is affected by a person's genetics, lifestyle choices, and the environment in which they live. Often obesity is considered a personal health issue, based on one's choices and daily habits, but the physical places in which we live, learn, work and play shape how active we can be and how accessible healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables are for individuals and families.

Since 2013, LIFE Survey respondents are less concerned about lack of physical activity and unhealthy eating. Marathon County has an abundance of recreation opportunities in all four seasons, from the city and county parks, to the numerous miles of hiking, biking, snowshoeing, and cross country ski trails.

Maintaining and enhancing the active community environments is paramount to ensure all residents and visitors can be physically active. In 2017, 51% of LIFE Survey respondents participated in 30 minutes or more of physical activity 3 or more days per week.

As far as access to healthy, local food, Marathon County has 11 public farmers' markets spread throughout the county, five of which accept FoodShare.

INDICATOR 41

Chronic Conditions and End of Life Care

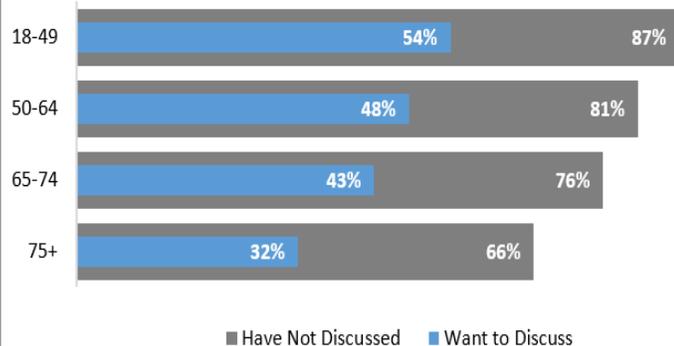
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 90% of Americans think it's important to talk about wishes for end of life care, yet only 27% have had these conversations.
- 27% of adults 65+ have discussed end of life care issues with their health care provider.
- 4 in 10 Americans age 65 and older do not have advanced directives or have not written down their wishes.

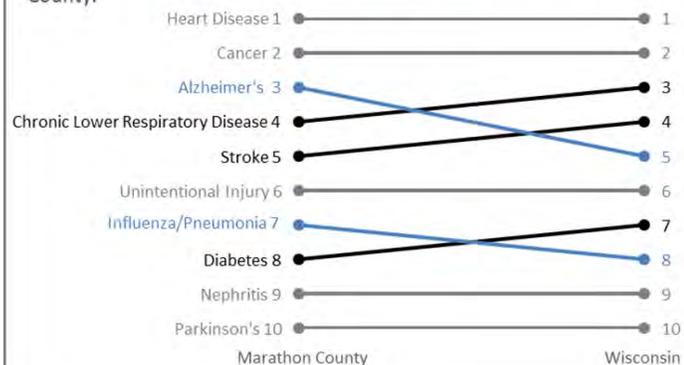
Top reasons Americans haven't discussed their end of life wishes include:

- It's not something they need to worry about at this point in life (29%).
- They aren't sick yet (23%).
- The subject makes them uncomfortable (21%).
- They don't want to upset their loved ones (19%).

Americans have not discussed end of life wishes with a doctor, even though many **want to**.



Leading causes of death in 2015 among adults 65+:
Alzheimer's & influenza/pneumonia rank higher in Marathon County.



SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- National Council on Aging <https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/chronic-disease/>
- Healthy People 2020 <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/older-adults>
- WISH <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/>
- CDC Wonder <https://wonder.cdc.gov/>
- The Conversation Project Survey, 2013 http://theconversationproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/TCP-Survey-Release_FINAL-9-18-13.pdf
- Henry J Kaiser Foundation <http://kff.org/medicare/fact-sheet/10-facts-medicares-role-in-end-of-life-care/>
- Wisconsin Annual Death Report, 2015 <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p01170-16.pdf>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

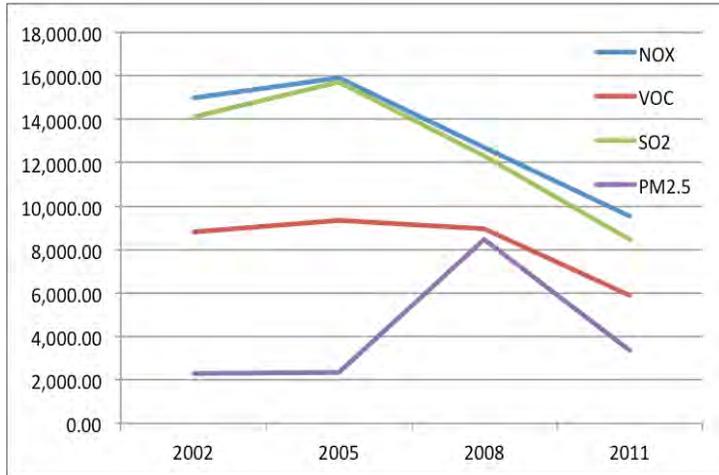
By 2060, the percent of the U.S. population aged 65+ is predicted to reach 23.5%. Currently in Marathon County, 15.8% of the population is age 65+ and as this population continues to grow, their specific needs warrant attention. Two key concerns for this age group are chronic conditions and end of life care. Almost two thirds of LIFE Survey respondents are concerned or very concerned about meeting such needs, among others.

Older adults experience a large burden of chronic conditions with 80% reporting at least one and 68% reporting at least two. Furthermore, 7 of the 10 leading

causes of death among those 65+ are due to chronic diseases, with heart disease and cancer being the biggest killers. Interestingly, the third leading cause in Marathon County is Alzheimer's, whereas in Wisconsin it is ranked 5th.

Proactively planning for end of life care and stating wishes can be done through advance care planning and creation of advanced care directives. Since 2016, Medicare covers this service and local health systems now offer the Honoring Choices Program focused on providing such services.

Key Measure: Air Pollutant Emissions (Tons) in Marathon County, 2002—2014.



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2017 LIFE Survey indicated that 50.1% of respondents reported being concerned about air quality.
- Nine of 62 Marathon County municipalities reported regulations on outside wood burners.
- It is estimated that about 25% of homes in Marathon County have radon levels that exceed EPA guidelines, compared with 5-10% statewide.
- In 2016, 61% of radon tests had elevated radon levels. This figure represents tests, which some homes completed multiple times.
- In 2016, 485 radon mitigation systems were installed in the 12-County North Central Wisconsin Radon Information Center area.

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources www.dnr.wi.gov/topic/AirEmissions/Historical.html
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/radiation/radon
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Marathon County Health Department 2016 Annual Report http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/Portals/0/Departments/HLD/Documents/MCHD_AnnualReport.pdf

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Air quality is based on trends in air emissions. Sources of emissions include stationary sources (facilities with significant emissions), mobile sources (vehicles), and area sources (households, wood burning). Air pollutant emissions for Nitrogen Oxides (NOX), Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), and Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂) decreased from 2008 to 2011, which is the most recent data available.

The DNR measures regional air quality and issues air quality advisories when air pollutants reach unhealthy levels. Based on ozone and fine particles, outdoor air quality in Marathon County is good. Local air quality can be affected by local air emissions from regulated and unregulated sources like smoke from outdoor wood burners (OWB) containing carbon monoxide, nitrous oxides, particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, and

carcinogens. Since there are no federal or state regulations governing OWBs, it is up to the local government to implement regulations.

Radon is the primary indoor air quality concern in Marathon County and the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. Radon naturally occurs and is an odorless radioactive gas. Because of this, testing is needed to determine the amount of radon in a home. Between five and ten percent of homes in Wisconsin have radon levels above the EPA guideline of 4 pCi/L. Marathon County's geology contributes to the area having among the highest rates of elevated radon levels in the state. Radon levels can generally be reduced with a radon mitigation system, which costs approximately \$1,000.

INDICATOR 43

Drinking Water Quality

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

According to 2017 LIFE Survey respondents:

- 43% (215) rely on a private well for drinking water.

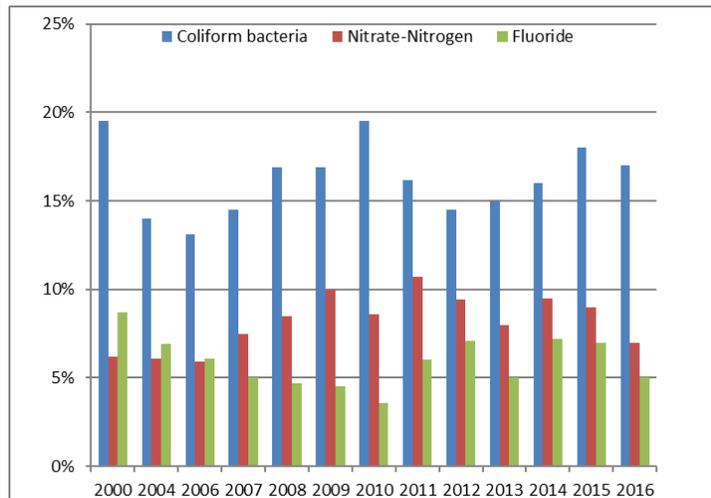
Reasons why respondents (215) do not test their private well water annually:

- No concerns with the water in terms of taste, odor, or appearance—94
- Cost—19
- Correcting problems cost too much—15
- Didn't know how to have the water tested—16
- Didn't know they should—35
- Other—36

- 52.8% of LIFE Survey respondents indicated they were very concerned or concerned about drinking water quality.

- Marathon County Health Laboratory data indicates private wells testing unsafe for bacteria, nitrate, or fluoride have stayed essentially the same over the last three years. State agencies estimate 20-25% of private wells are unsafe bacteriologically alone.

Key Measure: Unsafe Private Well Test Results in Marathon County, 2000-2016



- SOURCES**
- Marathon County Health Department www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/HealthDepartment/WaterTestingLab.aspx
 - LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
 - Marathon County Municipal wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/find/marathon/watersystems.html
 - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources dnr.wi.gov/topic/Wells/WaterQuality.html

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

One-third of Marathon County residents use groundwater for drinking water. Given that water is used every day, clean, safe drinking water is one of the most important elements of good health. Private well owners are responsible for testing their water.

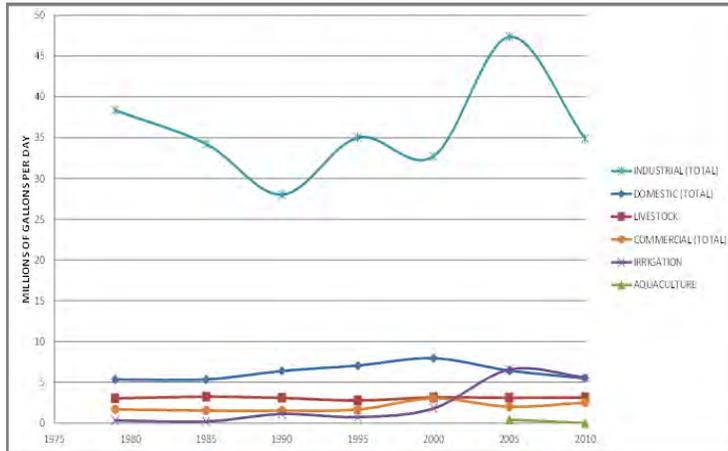
Primary contaminants in Marathon County are coliform bacteria, nitrate-nitrogen, and fluoride. Depending on the type of contamination, drinking water may be unsafe.

Coliform bacteria is an indicator of the potential presence of disease-causing organisms, such as *E. coli* (fecal coliform) which can cause severe intestinal illness. *E. coli* is usually the result of contamination by sewage (failing septic system) or animal waste.

Nitrate-nitrogen levels at or above 10 ppm pose significant health risks to infants and pregnant women. These levels reduce the blood's ability to carry oxygen, which could lead to coma or death. Nitrate-nitrogen is colorless, odorless, and has no taste, so testing is the only way to detect it. Nitrate-nitrogen sources include lawn and farm field fertilizers, livestock facilities, and sewage treatment plants.

Fluoride occurs naturally in water and is safe and effective to reduce tooth decay. However, fluoride levels above 2.0 mg/liter may increase the risk of staining and pitting of tooth enamel in children. Levels over 4.0 mg/liter can result in bone disorders. The appropriate levels of fluoride and any contaminants can only be achieved by regular testing.

Key Measure: Marathon County Water Use by Category, 1975-2010



Marathon County identified as a 2 in groundwater deficient for the state.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In the 2017 LIFE survey, 20.8% of respondents indicated that they are very concerned about drinking water quality.
- There are 425 approved DNR high capacity wells in Marathon County.
- According to a 2013 DNR Wisconsin Water Use Summary – Marathon County ranked 9th out of 72 counties in terms of Total Groundwater Withdrawals by County.
- In 2013, statewide groundwater withdrawals totaled 250 billion gallons of water from over 13,000 high capacity wells.
- In 2013, total statewide withdrawals (surface & ground water) of water exceeded 2.12 trillion gallons of water.

SOURCES

- Sustain Rural Wisconsin Network sustainruralwisconsin.net
- Wisconsin Water Science Center wi.water.usgs.gov
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources dnr.wi.gov/topic/DrinkingWater
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Although Wisconsin is generally considered to be a water rich state, Marathon County is located in a groundwater deficient portion of north-central Wisconsin. Therefore, as usage increases, concerns about water quantity and quality grow. Groundwater quantity is affected both naturally and by human activity.

Comprehensive legislation addressing groundwater quantity has existed for many years, working towards ensuring adequate groundwater quantity for users. The Department of Natural Resources regulates high capacity wells (wells with a capacity to pump more than 100,000 gallons per day). High capacity wells include industrial and municipal water supply systems,

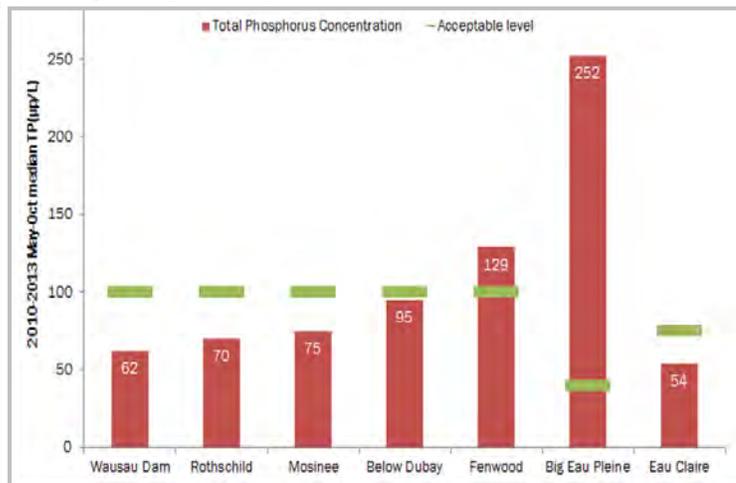
energy producers, paper manufacturers, and agricultural producers. The Great Lakes Compact requires Wisconsin to establish water conservation goals within the Great Lakes Basin.



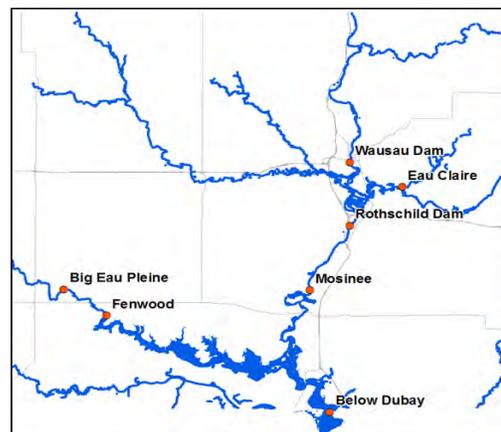
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Phosphorus is the nutrient of most concern regarding water quality in Marathon County.
- Marathon County’s eastern streams and the Wisconsin River are currently in compliance with phosphorus standards.
- Western county streams and the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir are significantly out of compliance with phosphorus standards.
- Data indicates the western county surface waters are a high risk for health concerns to both the fisheries and humans.
- The 2017 LIFE Survey indicated that 25.5% of respondents are very concerned about the cleanliness of local lakes and rivers.

Key Measure: Surface Water Phosphorus Concentration (Micrograms per Liter), 2010-2013



Wisconsin River Main Stem, Tributaries, and Reservoir Monitoring Locations



- SOURCES**
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
 - Surface Water dnr.wi.gov/topic/surfacewater/, dnr.wi.gov/topic/SurfaceWater/phosphorus.html
 - Marathon County
 - Land & Water Resource Management Plan www.co.marathon.wi.us/Portals/0/Departments/CPZ/Documents/lwrm2010_final_PostedVersion.pdf
 - LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

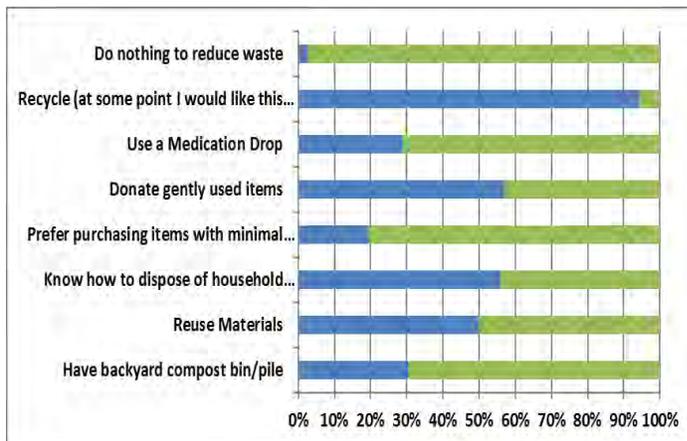
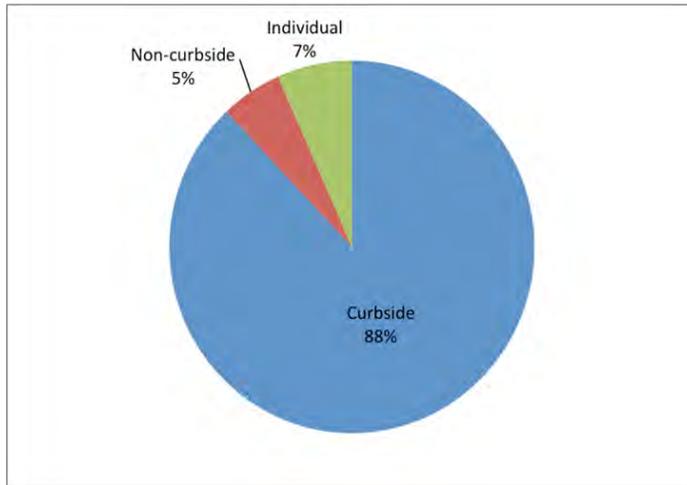
In 2010, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources initiated monitoring along the Upper Wisconsin River, its tributaries and its reservoirs to assess the health of these waters relative to phosphorus concentrations. Excessive phosphorus causes algae blooms which lead to low dissolved oxygen. Low levels of oxygen kill fish. The information will be used to develop a Total Maximum Daily Load allocation plan for all discharges to these waters.

Sources of phosphorus discharges include municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants and storm water and agricultural runoff. The data indicates that the heavy agricultural land use in much of western Marathon County contributes significantly to the low

water quality of the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir. The east tributaries to the Wisconsin River are at acceptable water quality levels.

One of the ways in which the State of Wisconsin measures water quality is by the phosphorous concentration. Water Quality Standards for Wisconsin Surface Waters NR 102 has defined an acceptable concentration as 100 micrograms per liter or less for the Wisconsin River, 75 micrograms per liter or less for Marathon County streams, and 40 micrograms per liter or less for the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir.

Key Measure: Percent of Marathon County Residents with Municipal-Coordinated Solid Waste Management, 2013



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- On average, Marathon County recycles about 100 pounds per capita. By comparison, the state average is about 140 pounds per capita.
- 94.3% of LIFE Survey respondents participated in recycling programs to reduce trash.



SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Waste Management <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Waste/>
- Wisconsin Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America www.swana-wi.org/
- Marathon County Solid Waste Management Department www.marathoncountysolidwaste.org/

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Environmentally-sound integrated solid waste resource management options are vital to a community's health, safety, and prosperity. The community looks to a network of integrated solid waste resource professionals to reduce the amount of waste produced, to recycle more, and to safely dispose of that which remains. Business and industry rely on diverse solid waste management strategies for their day-to-day operations, and residents use convenient solid waste management services to dispose of household waste.

Integrated solid waste resource management includes programs and services that reduce, recycle,

beneficially reuse, repurpose, collect, transport, and dispose of waste. However, the most affordable and sustainable way to manage waste is to never produce it. Waste avoidance and waste reduction are the foundation on which a 21st Century waste management system stands. From reducing the amount of food wasted to avoiding unnecessary purchases, everyone plays an important role in support of this foundation.

Safe Section



“Accountability and integrity are the foundations community respect and trust are built upon.”

Scott Parks, Marathon County Sheriff's Department

Safe Section Summary

SUCCESS AND PROGRESS

- Wisconsin Department of Transportation is dedicated to reducing traffic injuries and fatalities by addressing factors that cause them. Most traffic crashes are avoidable events caused by distracted driving (texting/cellphone use), driving under the influence drugs/alcohol, speeding, human error, etc.
- The Marathon County AOD Partnership engages the public and media about substance abuse, while educating and providing expertise to policy makers.
- Tabulating data collection and analysis of issues affecting local, state, and federal government are effective tools in planning and implementing the next best practices to combat criminal activity.
- Law enforcement has increased interaction with businesses offering information and instructions for protection and security for their employees and properties in an effort to minimize incidents. By cultivating awareness, law enforcement is helping businesses and people protect themselves against crime, further improving the safety of our communities.
- Marathon County has a compliance court for domestic violence offenders with the goal of reducing the level of violence and changing offenders' behaviors.



CALLS TO ACTION

- **Marathon County's current addressing system was built in the 1980's and is structured on ten rural address grids, which have conflicts such as odd and even address numbers on the same side of the road; no sequential address numbering on one or both sides of the road; inconsistent use of compass directional data in road names; roads with the same or similar names; and duplicate addressing.**
- **Inconsistent and duplicate addressing creates challenges when there is an emergency services response requiring mutual aid and the responding agency is not aware of the local inconsistencies of the current addressing system.**
- **Identify the needs of the community through assessment and evaluation, followed by advocating for policy change, including pursuing legislative action.**
- **Awareness of the potential issues with crowdfunding. Crowdfunding provides an alternative to the traditional banking system by creating a forum for individuals, non-profits and small businesses to raise funds across a social network or private website quickly and easily. These unregulated sites occur outside the regulated banking and financial industry providing a potential platform for criminals to defraud potential victims.**
- **Current rates of mental illness in county jail settings are reported to be 30% to 40% for male detainees and 50% to 60% for female detainees. Incarceration is not the answer.**



Safe Section Summary



OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTION

For Individuals

- Consistent seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people from being ejected from a vehicle or thrown around violently inside it during a traffic crash.
- Substance abuse is everyone's business. Awareness is raised when we unite together and think differently about addiction.
- To deter criminals, fortify home security focusing on entry doors, windows, especially those at ground level, fencing, alarms and security lighting, making physical access more difficult.

For Organizations

- Education and awareness on the necessity of seat belt use. Motorists who are hurt or killed in traffic crashes because they did not buckle up create excessive economic loss through medical expenses, higher insurance premiums, taxes, and other public funding, according to the National Transportation Safety Board.
- The Marathon County District Attorney's Office has seen a significant rise in criminal prosecutions: 94% for heroin cases and 89% for synthetic opioids such as fentanyl. This does not include the volume of cases for other illegal substances or factor in the impact on families, children and the expanded role of Department of Social Services.

For The Community

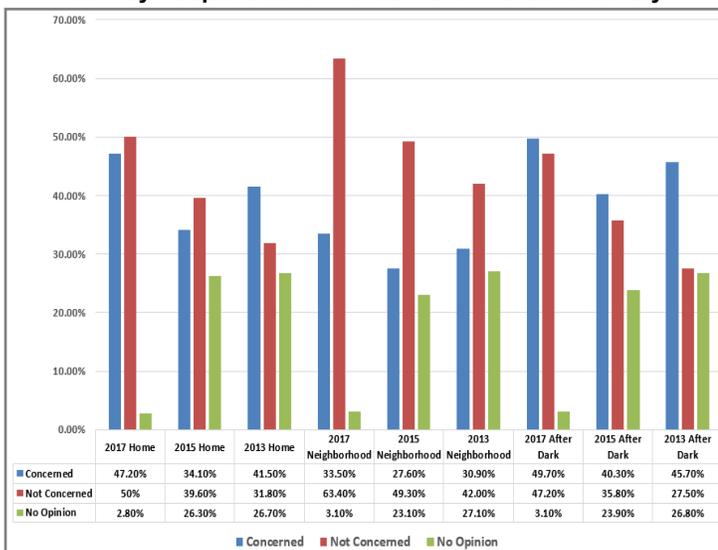
- To meet the goal of being the safest county in Wisconsin, Marathon County must establish and maintain a single uniform address system with the policy and administrative guidelines established by the Marathon County Uniform Addressing Implementation Plan. A reliable and uniform address system is imperative to compliment the County's multi-million dollar investment in information technology which replaces the existing Land Records System and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD-emergency services dispatch software).
- The Sheriff's Office and Wausau Police Department are working to develop a behavioral health unit, teaming local crisis workers with area law enforcement assigned to meet the challenges of assisting persons and families with managing mental health illness while obtaining the appropriate services needed. This effort will create opportunities for individuals to be successful in our community without the need for incarceration from activities caused by their mental illness, substance abuse or a combination of the two.
- Increase awareness and promote crime prevention by providing information on do it yourself security installations, developing or enhancing existing Neighborhood Watch programs, or encouraging property marking by retaining detailed descriptions and serial numbers of property, which may aid in recovery or detection of stolen goods.
- There is a shortage of mental health and addiction medicine professionals, especially in rural areas. These shortages generally result in fewer resources and options for treatment available even when a person seeks assistance.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

Marathon County student responses in 2015 pertaining to at least 1 day during the 30 days prior to the survey:

- **Students who carried a weapon on school property: 2% Marathon County; 3% Wisconsin; 5% U.S.**
- **Students who did not go to school due to feeling unsafe: 4% Marathon County; 6% Wisconsin; 7% U.S.**
- **Students who were threatened or injured with any weapon at school 1 or more times in the 12 months before the survey: 6% Marathon County; 4% Wisconsin; 7% U.S.**
- **The LIFE Survey identifies the top 5 concerns as illegal drug use, texting and driving, operating vehicle while intoxicated, neighborhood personal safety after dark and alcohol misuse.**

LIFE Survey Responses for Concerns for Personal Safety



SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Marathon County www.co.marathon.wi.us
- Marathon County Sheriff's Office www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/Sheriff.aspx
- Marathon County AOD Partnership www.aodpartnership.org
- 2015 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey www.healthymarathoncounty.org

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

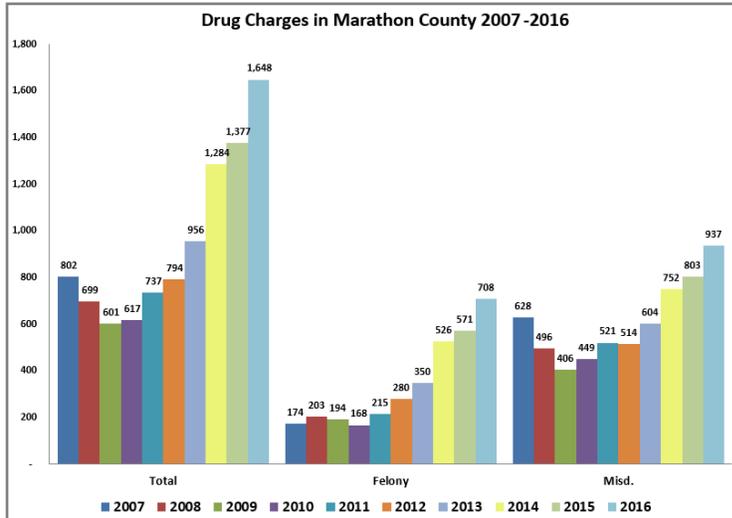
People now, more than ever, are concerned about protecting themselves and their property from crime. Crime adversely impacts the entire community, not just victims. Law enforcement is helping educate people about personal protection and crime prevention in an effort to reduce incidents and make communities safer.

Crime is composed of three elements: the victim, the criminal's desire, and the opportunity to commit the crime. Remove one of these elements and the crime will not occur. Through neighborhood meetings, law enforcement is educating citizens and listening to concerns that will help strengthen communities and reduce criminal opportunity.

Further work is being done in Marathon County in

regard to the increased diversity in our population, especially with ethnicities that fear law enforcement. Work is ongoing to change these perceptions through community forums with the goal to build trust. Only then will all citizens be empowered to report criminal activity and help our communities be even safer.

Law enforcement has also increased interaction with businesses offering information and instructions for protection and security for their employees and properties in an effort to minimize incidents. By cultivating awareness, law enforcement is helping businesses and people protect themselves against crime, further improving the safety of our communities.

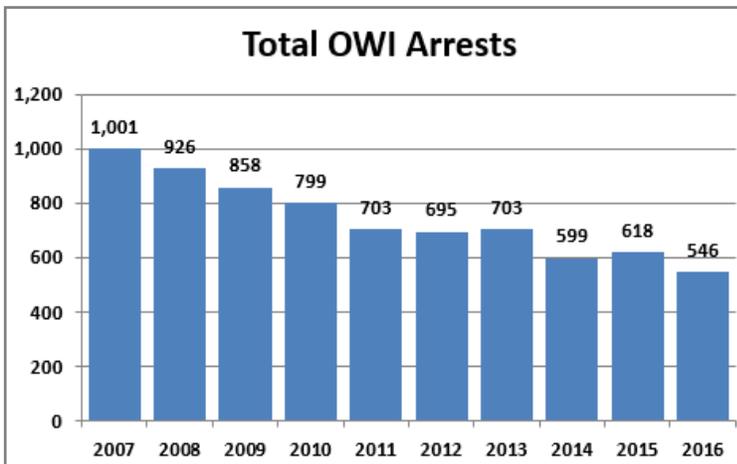


DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Marijuana legalization promises increased State revenue, but costs associated with potential abuse problems, such as behavioral health, family services, or law enforcement services related to substance abuse and driving under the influence are not always calculated.
- Acryl fentanyl is one of the newest and most powerful drugs on Wisconsin streets. It has been the direct cause of increased overdose deaths as users confuse it with heroin.

LIFE Survey respondents concerns are about:

- 90% drinking and driving
- 87% illegal drug use
- 83% misuse/abuse of prescription drugs
- 74% alcohol misuse
- 86% affordability of mental health, alcohol or drug services treatment



SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Marathon County Sheriff's Office www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/Sheriff.aspx
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
- 2015 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey www.healthymarathoncounty.org

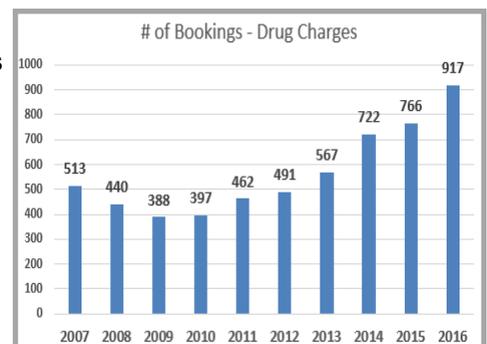
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The Marathon County District Attorney's office filed 708 felony and 937 misdemeanor drug charges in 2016. In 2015, 571 felony and 803 misdemeanor charges were filed. Marijuana, methamphetamine, heroin and cocaine are most abused. In the first quarter of 2017, the Sheriff's Office Special Investigations Unit made 58 felony and 14 misdemeanor arrests for trafficking illegal drugs with 19 illegal firearms and nearly \$12,000.00 in illegally gained money seized.

Opioid dependence impacts all demographics. Nationally in 2014, 78 deaths occurred daily from opioid overdose. In 2017, 91 deaths occur daily. This does not account for other substances causing deaths daily. Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) arrests have declined. In 2016, there were 546 arrests for OWI.

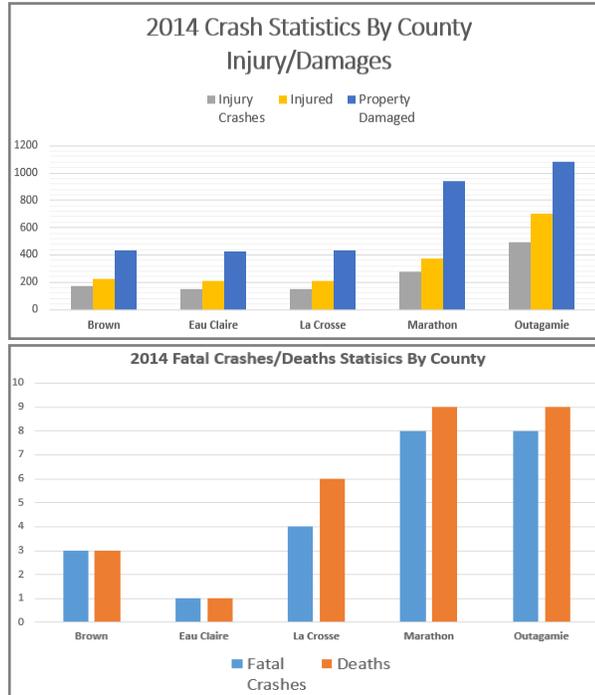
1st and 4th offense accounted for 55% of the arrests. Alcohol is the choice for youth. 26% of students report having at least 1 drink on at least 1 day during the 30 days prior to the survey. 72% obtained the alcohol consumed from family or a friend.

Substance abuse requires collaboration to develop strategies to overcome issues faced.



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 94% of LIFE Survey respondents are concerned about texting and driving.
- 10% of LIFE Survey respondents admit driving under the influence of alcohol in the last 30 days.
- Most traffic crashes resulting in injuries/death occur every day between 2:00a.m.-3:00a.m. Sunday, 2:00a.m.-3:00a.m. has the highest volume of alcohol related traffic crashes.
- Economic losses from Wisconsin fatalities and injuries totaled about \$2.5 billion in 2015.
- In 2013, Marathon County had 148,023 vehicles registered and 98,775 licensed drivers.
- In 2013, 556 vehicle vs. deer traffic crashes occurred in Marathon County.
- 32% of LIFE Survey respondents were satisfied with maintenance of Marathon County's roadways, 42% were not.



2014 Crashes Statistics/COUNTIES COMPARABLE TO MARATHON COUNTY

County	Total Crashes	Fatal Crashes	Deaths	Injury Crashes	Injured	Property Damaged
Brown	3,856	3	3	169	224	431
Eau Claire	2,447	1	1	150	208	424
La Crosse	2,781	4	6	153	210	430
Marathon	3,186	8	9	274	376	937
Outagamie	3,847	8	9	495	704	1083
TOTAL	16,117	24	28	1,241	1,722	3,305
AVERAGE	771	4.8	5.6	248	344	661

Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for teens and young adults. The combination of education in conjunction with enforcement causes a visible reduction in traffic violations and crashes.

- SOURCES**
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
 - Marathon County Sheriff's Office www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/Sheriff.aspx
 - Wisconsin Department of Transportation 2013 Crash Facts www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/motorist/crashfacts/crashfacts-archive.htm

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

588 people died in Wisconsin traffic crashes in 2016. This is up from 555 deaths in 2015. This is almost two lives lost daily on Wisconsin roads. The U.S. saw traffic deaths rise 8% in 2016.

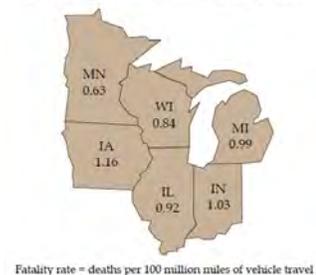
In 2013, Marathon County had 3222 crashes resulting in 1336 citations issued. 3 primary contributing factors resulting in crash deaths are alcohol 18%; alcohol/speed 14% and speeding 13%. A majority of the crashes involve the group age 25-34. That same year, Marathon County had 26 bicycle related crashes resulting in 24 bicyclists injured. Efforts were made to enhance bicycle safety through different routes/lanes on roads.

Wisconsin has seen an 88% rate of seat belt use, which

is an all-time high. The figure is behind the U.S. average of 90%. In 2016, 47% of drivers/passengers killed in Wisconsin traffic crashes were not wearing seat belts.

A Marathon County survey revealed 6% of students said they rarely wore a seat belt. This compares to 8% in Wisconsin and the U.S. 22% of students admit to texting or emailing while driving in the past 30 days. This compares to 48% in Wisconsin and 41% in the U.S.

2014 Fatality Rates of Surrounding States



Fatality rate = deaths per 100 million miles of vehicle travel

Property Crimes

INDICATOR 50

Property Crimes = Burglary, Theft, Motor Vehicle Theft & Arson

Property Crimes - Offense Rates Per 100,000

Years	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Non Metro	888	953	905	781	705	478
Metro	2298	2418	2391	2138	1827	1632
Wisconsin	2509	2450	2454	2098	1974	2092
U.S.	2945	2905	2859	2733	2574	2487

Non-Metro = Marathon County SO, Athens PD, Edgar PD, Marathon City PD, Spencer PD
 Metro = Wausau PD, Everest Metro PD, Rothschild PD, Kronenwetter PD, Mosinee PD

2012-2016 Property Crimes in Marathon County / Metro & Non-Metro

Property Crimes	2014 Metro	2014 Non-Metro	2015 Metro	2015 Non-Metro	2016 Metro	2016 Non-Metro
Burglary	200	88	173	72	220	74
Theft	1,086	325	987	233	1,136	267
Motor Vehicle Theft	38	15	34	8	55	6
Arson	10	1	4	4	3	0
Total	1,334	429	1198	317	1,414	347

Technology is rapidly changing society, while at the same time, it paves new avenues for criminals to engage in fraudulent schemes and avoid detection.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 17.6 million persons experienced identity theft in 2014, which is about 7% of U.S. residents age 16 or older.
- Most identity theft victims discover the incident when notified of suspicious activity by a financial institution (45%) or upon noticing fraudulent charges on an account (18%). Nine in 10 victims did not know anything about the offender.
- 10% of identity theft victims report that the crime was severely distressing as compared to 33% of violent crime victims.
- Nationally in 2015, 7.6% of all households (10 million) experienced one or more property crimes.
- Cybercriminals use ransomware schemes to encrypt files then demand extortion payments to free the data.

SOURCES

- Marathon County Sheriff's Office www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/Sheriff.aspx
- Wisconsin Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis www.doj.state.wi.us
- U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics www.bjs.gov/index.cfm
- Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime Statistic www.fbi.gov/stats-services/crimestats

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Property crimes are committed to obtain property or money and can involve force or the threat of force. In 2015, Wisconsin had 114,444 property crimes which included burglary, theft, vehicle theft, and arson. In 2016, the state had 111,627 property crimes.

Marathon County saw an increase in property crimes from 1,515 in 2015 to 1,761 in 2016. Theft was the main crime at 1,267 in 2015 to 1,403 in 2016. Comparing 2015 to 2016, Marathon County saw an 18% increase in burglaries, an 11% increase in thefts, a 33% increase in vehicle thefts, but a 63% decrease in arson.

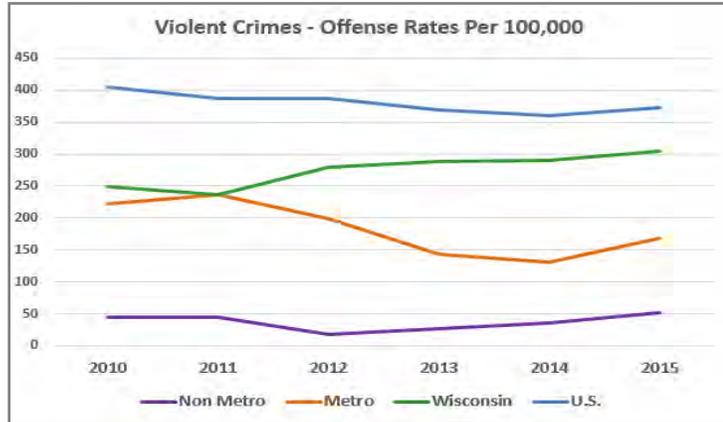
Wisconsin had a 1% decrease in burglary, a 2%

decrease in theft, a 10% decrease in vehicle thefts, but a 13% increase in arson. The Midwest saw a 2% decrease in burglary, a 2% decrease in theft, a 3% increase in vehicle thefts, and a 1% decrease in arsons.

Identity theft and technology used to commit property crimes are increasing. Devices planted on ATMs or other credit card machines are used to gain personal financial information. Data collected is stored or sent wirelessly to criminals, who use the owner's information to make withdrawals from accounts. Marathon County has detectives with forensic technology expertise to help combat these crimes.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- There were 15,961 violent crimes reported in Wisconsin in 2013.
- Age group 20-24, whether male or female, is most likely to commit a violent crime in Wisconsin.
- Wisconsin juveniles involved with violent crime commit aggravated battery the most.
- 66% of LIFE Survey respondents are satisfied with the availability of safe places to walk and bicycle in Marathon County.
- Wisconsin issued its first concealed carry weapon license on November 1, 2011. The licenses must be renewed every five years. In July 2016, 160,000 license renewal notices were sent out.
- The SafeWise Report listed the Village of Kronenwetter as the number 6 ranked safest city in Wisconsin.



In the table: "Metro" is the police agencies of Wausau, Everest Metro, Rothschild, Kronenwetter and Mosinee and "Non-Metro" are all others in Marathon County including the Sheriff's Office.



- SOURCES**
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
 - Marathon County Sheriff's Office www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/Sheriff.aspx
 - Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime Statistics www.fbi.gov/stats-services/crimestats
 - Wisconsin Department of Justice Department of Law Enforcement Services Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis www.doj.state.wi.us
 - SafeWise Report www.safewise.com

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Violent crime can occur at any time and anywhere. The thought that it cannot happen here changed for many on March 22, 2017, when 3 citizens were shot at two different local businesses and a detective at another location, before the shooter was killed by police. Tragedy erupted unexpectedly leaving behind an outpouring of compassion from the community.

In 2015, increased violent crime was reported in both areas. This was also true across the midwest U.S. with reported violent crime increasing 6% in 2016.

Comparing Marathon County to the midwest revealed a

43% increase of reported sexual assaults where the midwest had a 7% increase. Marathon County had an 8% increase in robberies where the midwest had a 4% increase. The midwest had an 8% increase for aggravated assaults where Marathon County had a 5% increase.

Violent crime will always exist, but if everyone remains vigilant and takes common sense precautions, criminal activity can be prevented.

Solved Crimes

INDICATOR 52

Offense	2015		2016			2015-16% Change			
	Non-Metro	Metro	WI	Non-Metro	Metro	WI	Non-Metro	Metro	WI
Murder	0	1	175	1	0	241	-100%	38%	
Sexual Assault	7	16	578	3	32	672	-57%	100%	16%
Robbery	8	19	1,656	3	32	1,594	-63%	68%	-4%
Aggravated Assault	24	85	5,068	28	73	5,002	17%	-14%	-1%
Total	39	121	7477	35	137	7509			

Offense	2015		2016			2015-16% Change			
	Non-Metro	Metro	WI	Non-Metro	Metro	WI	Non-Metro	Metro	WI
Burglary	42	41	2,886	24	43	2,815	-43%	5%	-2%
Theft	148	404	29,339	203	487	27,797	37%	21%	-5%
Motor Vehicle Theft	4	12	1,190	8	20	1,326	100%	67%	11%
Arson	9	0	137	1	1	133	-89%		-3%
Total	203	457	33,552	236	551	32,071			

Non-Metro = Marathon County SO, Athens PD, Edgar PD, Marathon City PD, Spencer PD
 Metro = Wausau PD, Everest Metro PD, Rothschild PD, Kronenwetter PD, Mosinee PD

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Half the violent crimes and a third of the property crimes occurring in the U.S. each year are reported to the police.
- Theft is the least likely to be reported, possibly because it is the most common form of property crime. 7 out of 10 vehicle thefts are reported.
- Wisconsin has 20 adult institutions, 17 correctional centers and 3 juvenile facilities housing 22,471 criminal offenders. This number does not include the population numbers of the various county jails.
- There are 12,504 sworn law enforcement officers in Wisconsin with 86% of those officers working in agencies with 50 or less officers.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey 2017
- Federal Bureau of Investigations, Crime Statistics www.fbi.gov
- Marathon County Sheriff's Office www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/Sheriff.aspx
- Marathon County Justice System www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/Administrator/JusticeAlternatives.aspx
- Wisconsin Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis www.doj.state.wi.us

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Solved crime statistics can be misleading. The number of violent and property crimes reported may be higher or lower than the actual amount occurring. Many agencies use the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting for solved crime rates. This relies on data voluntarily reported by police across the country, but unfortunately not all agencies participate in providing data. Another factor affecting solved crime rates are crimes reported in one calendar year and then solved the following year or years. Data on solved crime is impacted when investigations are ongoing.

Nationally in 2015, 13% of burglaries, 13% of vehicle

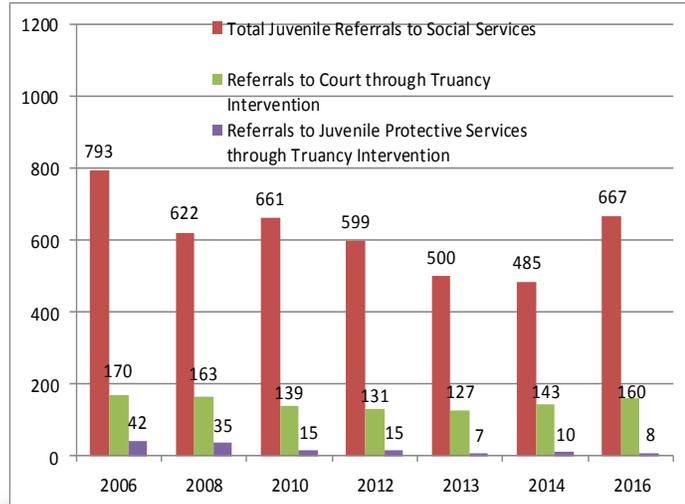
thefts and 22% of thefts were solved. In comparison, 29% of robberies, 38% of sexual assaults, 54% of aggravated assault, and 62% of murders were solved. The midwest states were similar with 11% burglaries, 14% of vehicle thefts, 24% of thefts, 26% of robberies, 33% of sexual assaults, 51% of aggravated assault and 58% of murders cleared.

Ultimately, preventing crime is key. Keeping crime from happening will be more impactful in reducing incidents locally and nationally and keeping people safe.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2016, 42% of the youth whom Social Services worked with were considered to be at a moderate to high risk of relapsing back into criminal behavior. This rate decreased by 12% since 2014.
- In 2015, 49% of the youth referrals received were for disorderly conduct; 13% were for battery; 10% for theft; and 6% for sexual assault. These four areas reflected the largest numbers of referrals.
- In 2016 referrals were similar in that 47% of the referrals were for disorderly conduct; 19% for battery; 13% for theft; and 6% for sexual assault. These four areas continue to reflect the largest number of referrals.
- Juvenile jurisdiction is between the ages of 10 and 16. Any youth age 17 or older is automatically tried as an adult.
- Nationally, almost half of youths released from juvenile justice facilities return to confinement within three years.

Key Measure: Youth referred to Marathon County Department of Social Services, Court, and Juvenile Protective Services in Marathon County, 2006-2016



- SOURCES**
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
 - Marathon County Social Services Juvenile Justice www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/SocialServices/JuvenileJustice.asp
 - Understanding Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency <http://rfknrcji.org>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

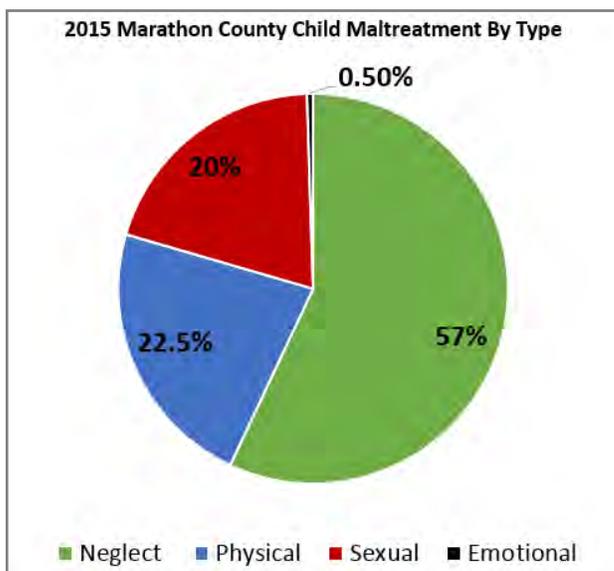
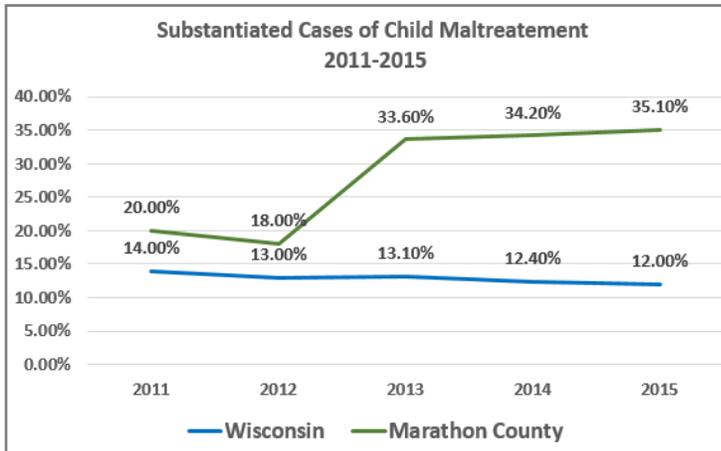
In Marathon County, an estimated 67% of youth (under age 17) referred for a law violation have a history with Child Protective Services. Furthermore, 25% to 50% of all youth committing offenses have experienced abuse. Statistics prove that youth who are exposed to domestic violence and abuse are more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system and develop a history of unlawful behavior.

To reduce youth offenses, targeted intervention efforts are being utilized. For example, social workers evaluate family and adolescence needs and implement services which may include supervision, electronic monitoring, group or individual treatment, along with

family therapy, to improve root causes of abusive behavior.

Another reform effort, coordinated through United Way Partnership for Youth’s Juvenile Justice Action Team, hopes to improve systems and support earlier for youth in school and in the community. The intent is to remedy behavior and break cycles of repeated offenses.

Data confirms that a large percentage of youth offenders relapse into unlawful behavior, but with reform efforts this rate has decreased by 12% since 2014. Further reductions in youth offenders are expected as abuse and violence in the home are addressed.



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2015, the population in Marathon County included 31,458 children. 118 were in out-of-home placements.
- Marathon County had 155 victims of child maltreatment in 2015, which equals a rate of 4.9 victims per 1,000 children. The overall rate for Wisconsin is 3.6 victims per 1,000 children.
- Neglect is the most frequent form of substantiated maltreatment in Marathon County and for the State of Wisconsin.
- At 18.8%, educational personnel are the most frequent reporters of child maltreatment followed by law enforcement (17.3%) and social service workers (13.2%).
- Between 2011-2015, screened in child protective service reports which law enforcement responded to increased by 14%.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Marathon County Social Services <http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/>
- Wisconsin Department of Children and Families www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/reports

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Children raised in abusive or neglectful environments are more likely to experience physical and emotional health issues and to display social, cognitive, and behavioral impairments. Abused and neglected children create both immediate and long-term costs for hospitalization, mental health services, educational supports, and legal intervention. Marathon County Child Protective Services (CPS) seeks to shift the support given to families from a “what is wrong with you” to “what has happened to you” approach.

Several key partners in the community routinely report suspected child abuse. Some of these partners are mandated reporters who are required by law to report any suspected child maltreatment seen in the course of

their professional duties. However, anyone who suspects child maltreatment may make a report and is immune from criminal or civil liability. Citizens concerned with a child’s safety are encouraged to report suspected child maltreatment directly to our CPS agency (715) 261 – 7556, or local law enforcement. You could be the voice for a vulnerable child.



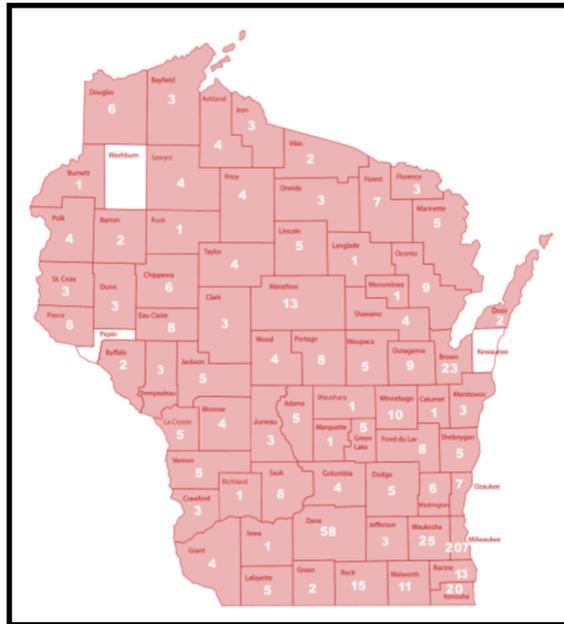
INDICATOR 55

Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Assaults

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- From 2005 to 2015, Marathon County had 10 homicides and 4 suicides related to intimate partner violence.
- 80% of LIFE Survey respondents were concerned about family violence or abuse of adults and/or children. 26% are satisfied with availability of services for victims of family violence or abuse.
- Marathon County had 574 domestic abuse arrests in 2016 with 362 (79%) of the perpetrators being male. August had the most arrests (59).
- In 2016, The Women’s Community provided support services to 1,811 people (1,433 females, 196 males, 1 transgender, 181 undisclosed).
- In 2016, The Women’s Community provided shelter to 87 women and 85 children. 65 sexual assault victims were treated at area hospitals.

Domestic Violence Map of Wisconsin 2000-2015



Wisconsin Deaths Related to Domestic Violence Homicide and Suicide

YEAR	HOMICIDE DEATHS	SUICIDES	TOTAL
2015	49	9	58
2014	37	6	43
2013	43	12	55
2012	48	4	52
2011	34	3	37
2010	51	7	58
2009	52	15	67
2008	36	10	46
2007	41	10	51
2006	28	8	36
2005	40	6	46

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Center for Disease Control, Intimate Partner Violence www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/
- National Network to End Domestic Violence www.nnedv.org
- National Sexual Violence Research Center www.nsvrc.org

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Intimate partner violence is committed by a spouse, ex-spouse, or current/former boyfriend/girlfriend. Nationally every minute, about 24 people are victims of sexual assault, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner. Each year, more than 12 million people report being victims of these offenses. In a lifetime, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men report experiencing severe physical violence.

Since 2000 in Wisconsin, domestic violence deaths occur slightly more often than 1 every 8 days. In 2015, 29 of 40 persons committing domestic violence homicides were male. The victims were age 2 months to 92, with the average being 37. The offenders were

age 14 to 66 with the average age being 41. One third of the victims of intimate violence homicide were killed after the relationship had ended or while the person was taking steps to leave the relationship.

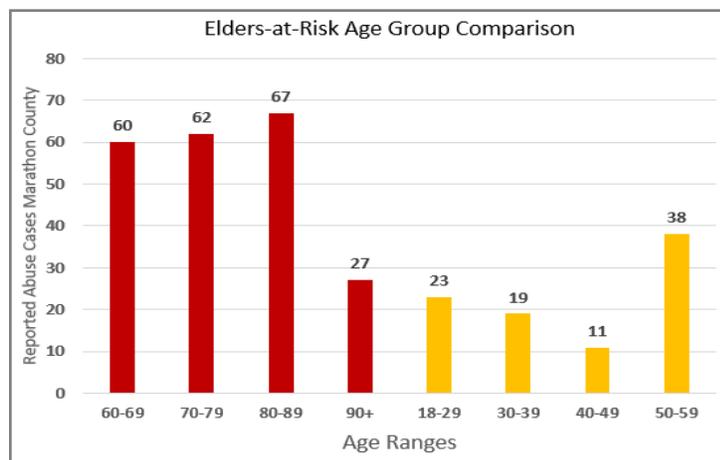
Factors associated with domestic violence are threats or actual use of force, stalking, obsessive jealousy, control and sexual assault. The Women’s Community provides advocates and coordinated community response for victims leaving an abusive relationship. Marathon County uses a multitude of approaches to maintain an effective and comprehensive program in an effort to prevent intimate partner violence or sexual violence.

Abuse Cases Age Group 60 and Older

Age Group	Number	Percent
60-69	60	27.80%
70-79	62	28.70%
80-89	67	31.00%
90+	27	12.50%
Total	216	100.00%

Abuse Cases Age Group 18-59

Age Group	Number	Percent
18-29	23	25.30%
30-39	19	20.90%
40-49	11	12.10%
50-59	38	41.80%
Total	91	100.00%



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Adults at risk age 60 and older were 60.60% female and 41.80% male.
- Marathon County reported 280 cases of abuse to adults age 60+, which increased from the 254 reported cases in 2014. 24% had substitute decision makers with a majority revolving around power of attorney pertaining to finance or health care needs.
- The most common abuser to an adult age 60+ was a son followed by a daughter.
- Marathon County had 134 reported cases of abuse of adults age 18-59. The majority were developmentally disabled and physically disabled.
- Adult protective services are set up to aid elder adults or vulnerable adults at risk, who have been abused, neglected, or exploited.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Wisconsin Incident Tracking System (WITS) WITS Statistical Reports, Adults at Risk Age 18-59, Elders at Risk Age 60+, Marathon County Reporting Year 2016 www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/APS/wits/index.htm
- National Center for Elder Abuse www.ncea.acl.gov/

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Elder abuse negatively impacts individuals and communities on a multitude of levels. These impacts revolve around physical, psychological, financial, social, hospitalizations and disabilities, medical and others. Experts have reported that knowledge about elder abuse lags as much as two decades behind the fields of child abuse and domestic violence.

Locally, the three most common characteristics of an adult at risk age 60+ are: 32.90% frail elderly; 20.80% Alzheimer's or related dementia; and 17.10% medically fragile. 186 reported incidents occurred at the elder's place of residence with 13 of those incidents classified as life threatening and in one instance the victim's death was caused by the abuse.

22.90% of the alleged abusers in these incidents are

financially dependent on the elder and 3.6% of the abusers suffer from mental illness, an alcohol or substance abuse problem or combination of the three. Locally, vulnerable adults at risk age 18-59 are 58.20% female and 41.80% male. There were 77 reported incidents occurring at the place of residence with 7 of those incidents classified as life threatening. These vulnerable adults are abused by family members, caregivers, service providers and others placing victim's health, safety, and emotional well-being at risk.

Persons suffering from dementia are particularly vulnerable because they may be unable, frightened, or embarrassed to report the abuse, which could mean actual incidents are underestimated. More research needs to be conducted in a coordinated approach that includes policy-makers, researchers, and funders.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The National Climatic Data Center indicated 290 weather related hazards occurred in or near Marathon County from January 1, 1997 to January 31, 2017.
- The Local Emergency Planning Committee worked as a task force identifying hazards most likely to pose the greatest threat. A majority of the hazards were natural events such as winter storms, tornados, etc.
- The Marathon County Board of Supervisors took action to move the county from the current multiple grid addressing system to a uniform addressing system.
- The Federal Communications Commission has taken steps encouraging the improvement of E911 dispatch to process, receive, and respond to the various digital communication technologies.

EMS Calls for Service

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Metro	7069	7014	7181	7874	7469	8079	8447
Non-Metro	1455	1366	1366	1426	1210	1240	1333

FIRE Calls for Service

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Metro	2265	2463	2378	3469	3387	2916	2692
Non-Metro	541	512	543	600	519	411	411

Metro = Mosinee FD, Kronenwetter FD, Riverside FD, SAFER FD, and Wausau FD

Marathon County Task Force Hazard Analysis Ranking

Hazard	Greatest Threat (One being most likely, seven being least likely)
Winter Storm/Extreme Cold	1
Tornado	2
Thunderstorm/High Wind/Hail/Lightning	3
Hazardous Materials Incidents/ Groundwater Contamination	4
Flooding/Dam Failure	5
Drought/Extreme Heat	6
Forest Fire/Wildfire	7

* Although fog was identified as a concern, it was removed from the list due to lack of ways to effectively mitigate against

- SOURCES**
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
 - Marathon County Sheriff’s Office 911 Dispatch www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/Sheriff.aspx
 - Marathon County Emergency Management www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/EmergencyManagement.aspx

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Updates on Next Generation 911 infrastructure improve public emergency communications in the wireless society. 95% of Americans own a cellphone. 77% have a smartphone. Enhancements update the system to allow digital information (voice, photos, videos, text) from the public through the 911 Network to emergency responders.

The Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) provides fire service improvements in mutual aid. Law enforcement participates in North Central Emergency Response Teams (NCERT). Its purpose provides a systematic response of law enforcement officers/

equipment to emergencies while providing for contractual responsibilities/liabilities.

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system is seeing increases in calls for service. Call reviews identified high-utilizer patients requiring care that conventional EMS and health care do not meet such as social work, psychological, substance abuse assistance, and homecare. Wausau Fire Department created a repeat patient prevention program using paramedics to conduct routine visits and develop a care plan to improve overall patient health and wellbeing.

CONNECTED



“When we aren’t open to listening to one another, we remain static as a community and not much changes. We all have a responsibility to help build a better community for every one of its members and to spread hope where there is none.”

Maysee Yang Herr, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

Connected Section Summary

SUCCESS

AND PROGRESS

- The community has created initiatives to acknowledge and address racial divisions such as Toward One Wausau and The Unity Project. Toward One Wausau is a grassroots effort formed in 2016 of people of many backgrounds coming together for one purpose – to move toward a vision of “One Wausau” that works for all people regardless of race or ethnic background. The Unity Project focuses on creating an inclusive and welcoming environment.
- Recent remodeling investments and a commitment for new venues will increase Wausau’s standing as a regional arts destination. Marathon County currently features two world-class venues for the arts in Wausau, and more than 30 arts organizations across the county provide participation opportunities for individuals of all ages. There has also been an increase in cultural activities and events.
- Approximately 35% of Marathon County seniors age 65+ live alone compared to 44.8% for Wisconsin and 42.8% for the U.S. To address concerns about social isolation among seniors, particularly as the senior population continues to grow, a group of community volunteers are fundraising and developing plans for The Connections Place, a senior center focusing on education, exercise and entertainment. Efforts are also underway with the Wausau Public Library.
- For the 2016 national election, Marathon County maintained a significantly higher voter turnout (87%) than the state (67%) and country (60.2%).
- 95% of LIFE Survey respondents said they have at least one person whom they could talk to if they have a problem.



CALLS TO ACTION

- 55% of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with how welcoming the community is. That’s a 14-point drop from 2013 and an 11-point drop from 2015. Although family still is the top reason why people chose to live in Marathon County, the aging population and aging workforce requires that we attract additional younger workers. They will demand a friendly, open and diverse community. To effect change, leaders in business, education and government must support dialogue, tolerance and understanding.
- 43.5% of high school students who took the 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate they believe bullying at school is a problem, an increase from 40% in 2015. At the same time, 27.9% of high school students said they do not have a teacher or other adults that they can talk to if they have a problem. Bullying, the pressures of social media and social isolation pose a threat to the security, confidence and self-esteem of our youth. Community and school officials should explore other successful anti-bullying efforts to supplement current initiatives.
- Increased availability of public transportation is needed throughout Marathon County. Currently, a public transportation system is only available in the City of Wausau, and it has limited hours on weekdays and no weekend service. Public transportation helps community members’ access employment, health care, shopping and other services. According to the Wisconsin Urban and Rural Transit Association, for every \$1 invested in transit, there is a return of \$3.
- Broadband access is crucial to keep up with trends in education, employment, health care and public safety. 40% of rural Wisconsin does not have broadband, according to the FCC. Costs of Internet services also tend to be much higher as areas become more rural. Marathon County needs to continue efforts to expand broadband services and improve affordability to increase access.



Connected Section Summary

OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTION



For Individuals

- Seek awareness and understanding of the ways groups of people are stereotyped. Practice civility, listening skills and kindness. Be respectful.
- Offer a smile to someone you don't know. Introduce yourself to a new neighbor or invite a new coworker to join you for lunch.
- Spend quality time with your family and friends. Eat meals together. Put down your electronic devices when talking to people.
- Volunteer to provide social connections. I.E. Mentor youth or visit with seniors.

For The Community

- Marathon County is becoming more culturally diverse. Along with that diversity comes some perceptions – and misconceptions – about people of different ethnicities and backgrounds. As a community we need to acknowledge that disparities and discrimination still exist and work to address these issues. We need to encourage unity and challenge misconceptions and attitudes that lead to discrimination.
- There is even more diversity among children than adults in Marathon County. Striving to create in children a sense of curiosity about new people, experiences, and cultures may help to decrease discrimination and bullying. As a community we need to show children– starting in their early years, how to embrace diversity and be inclusive by acting and speaking in ways that are in line with these values.
- Social isolation can have negative effects on both the mental and physical health of community members of all ages. We need to bring together multiple sectors (government, business, education, etc.) to develop a broad community initiative to foster understanding of the community and how members can become involved and connected. Determine key information sources and tap digital tools and networks to promote community engagement.
- Public transportation is vital to the elderly, disabled, students and the under- or unemployed who cannot get around otherwise. As the aging population grows, our public transportation infrastructure will determine their abilities to stay in their homes while accessing health care, shopping and social connections. Lack of public transportation can also be a barrier to employment and may impact an employer's ability to fill open positions. Marathon County needs to explore partnerships to create innovative transportation options to connect people where they live, work and retire.

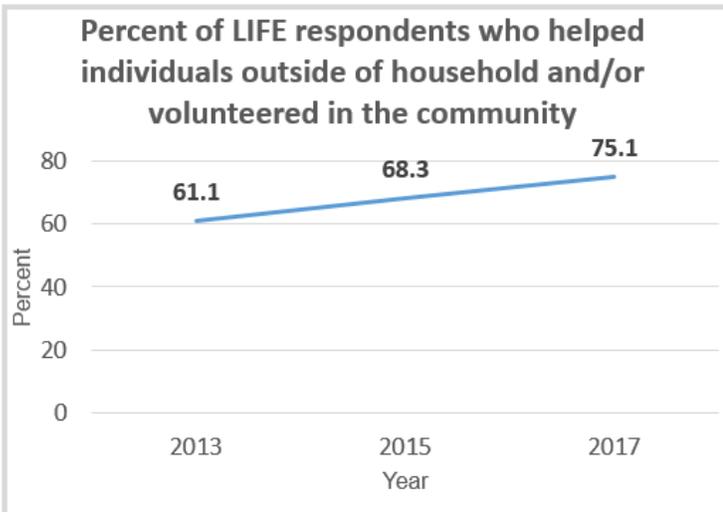
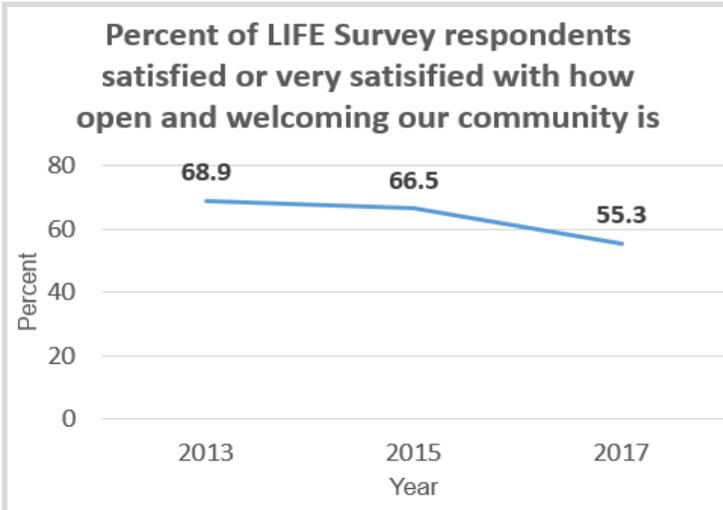
For Organizations

- Create a diverse workplace by considering recruitment and employment practices that seek to expand the variety of people, talent, and experience among your workforce. Acknowledge the increased problem-solving ability of a diverse group of workers.
- When recruiting new members and leadership for your organization as a whole, board, committees, etc., be intentional about ensuring the diversity of the community is represented in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, age, etc.
- Rally faith, service and civic organizations to partner with schools – to help families in need of assistance AND to learn about diverse populations.
- Work with your church or another organization you're affiliated with to hold an event to welcome people new to the area.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The top three reasons LIFE Survey respondents choose to live here are: Near family/friends (23.4%), size of community (11.4%) and rural lifestyle (10.6%).
- Family/friends (35.4%), organizations (18.7%) and access to needed services (15%) are what LIFE Survey respondents say most connects them to Marathon County.
- 53.3% of LIFE Survey respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with availability of information about community services while 12.1% are dissatisfied or strongly dissatisfied. 36.5% were neutral or didn't know.
- LIFE Survey respondents agree that Marathon County is a good place to live:

	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Children	40.2%	40.0%
Families	26.5%	67.0%
Young Adults	41.9%	29.5%
Adults	41.1%	42.5%
Seniors	40.9%	35.1%
People with disabilities	39.7%	21.1%
People from diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds	35.4%	15.2%



- SOURCES
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017), (2015), (2013)
 - McMillan, D.W., & Chavis, D.M. Sense of community: A definition and theory. Journal of Community Psychology (1986)

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

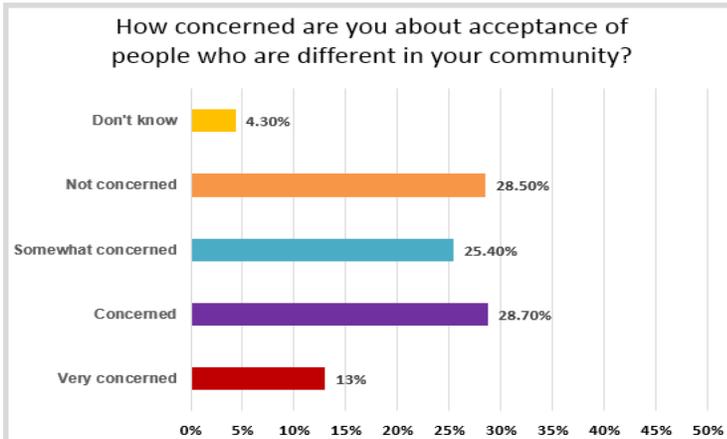
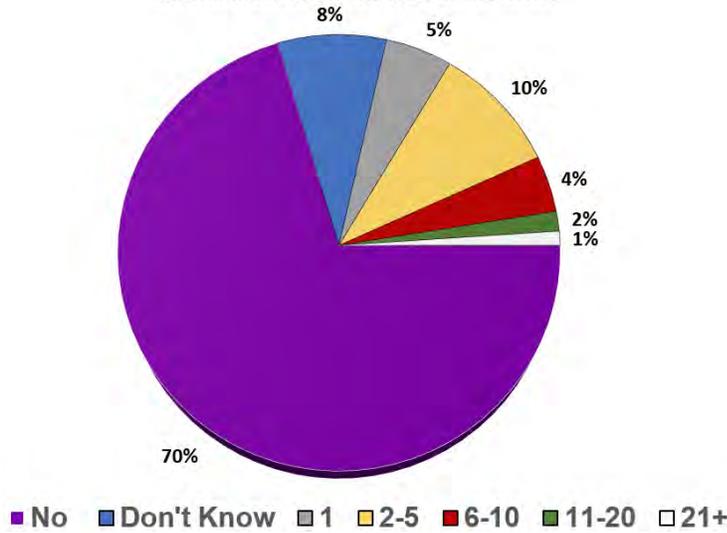
According to psychologists David W. McMillan, Ph.D. and David M. Chavis, Ph.D., “sense of community” means having a sense of belonging and feeling welcome, having needs met by community resources and having relationships.

Based on this definition, an area of concern for Marathon County residents is a sense of belonging and feeling welcome. 2017 LIFE Survey respondents who are satisfied with how open and welcoming our community is have decreased by nearly 14 percentage points since 2013. In addition, only 50.6% of 2017 LIFE Survey respondents think Marathon County is a good place to live for people of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, and 67.1% of 2017 LIFE Survey respondents are somewhat concerned to very concerned about the acceptance of people who are

different [than me]. To help address these concerns, the community developed initiatives such as Toward One Wausau and The Unity Project.

Marathon County has many strengths impacting sense of community. Those include increased civic engagement, rises in voter participation, peaceful demonstrations and public dialogue. We continue to see growth in the number of volunteers as well as an increase in investment in the community through public-private partnerships via sports, arts/culture and other community events. Marathon County residents derive a sense of community and value relationships, as being near family/friends topped the 2017 LIFE Survey respondents’ reasons for living here.

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 55.3% of LIFE Survey respondents feel satisfied or very satisfied with how open and welcoming the community is. [See more at Indicator 58 Sense of Community]
- 93% of LIFE Survey respondents were White/Non-Hispanic or Latino, as compared to 91.6% of Marathon County citizens.
- 30.4% of Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey respondents shared that they personally experienced bullying on school grounds. This number is higher than the state (22.7%) and national (19.6%) averages.
- 40% of Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey respondents indicated they believe bullying at school is a problem.

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Toward One Wausau
- Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2015) www.co.marathon.wi.us
- FBI Hate Crime Statistics Report (2015) www.fbi.gov

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Discrimination, hate crimes, and bullying are real problems detrimental to communities across our nation. The FBI, in their 2015 Hate Crime Report, noted that 43 hate crimes were reported in Wisconsin. They estimated that many more incidents occurred but were unreported. 55.3% of the 2017 LIFE Survey respondents indicate they are satisfied with the degree to which Marathon County is an open and welcoming community. Yet, 30.4% of 2017 LIFE survey respondents indicated some level of concern about the level of acceptance of people who are different (than me) in Marathon County.

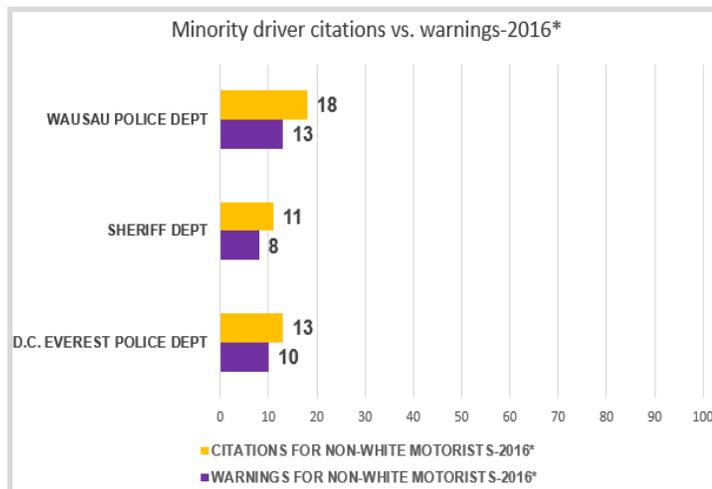
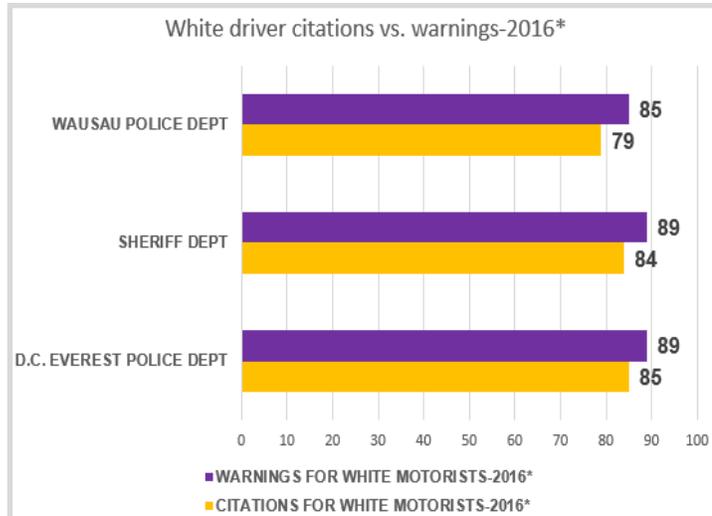
However, respondents to the 2017 LIFE Survey do not fully reflect the diversity of Marathon County citizens,

especially with regard to age, ethnicity, and income.

Racial tensions have led to new efforts in Marathon County to bridge the divide. The Toward One Wausau project (TOW) began in 2016 to foster a welcoming community for all people by identifying concerns, creating dialogue, and developing action plans.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In Marathon County, the general population is approximately 91% White/ Non Hispanic or Latino while the jail population is 78.7% White/Non Hispanic or Latino.
- In Marathon County, the population is 5.5% Asian and .7% Black/African American while the jail population is 7.2% Asian and 8.5% Black/African American.
- Nationally, prison and jail populations would decrease by nearly 40% if Black/ African Americans and Hispanics were incarcerated at the same rate as White/Non Hispanic or Latinos.
- Nationally, a disproportionate number of Black/African American students are suspended in schools as compared to the number of White/Non Hispanic or Latino students. Black/African American students in K-12 schools are 3.8 times more likely to receive at least one suspension outside of school as compared to White/Non Hispanic or Latino students (U.S. Department of Education).



SOURCES

- Toward One Wausau Report
- United Way ALICE Report 2015 www.unitedwayalice.org/Wisconsin
- U.S. Department of Education www.ed.gov

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

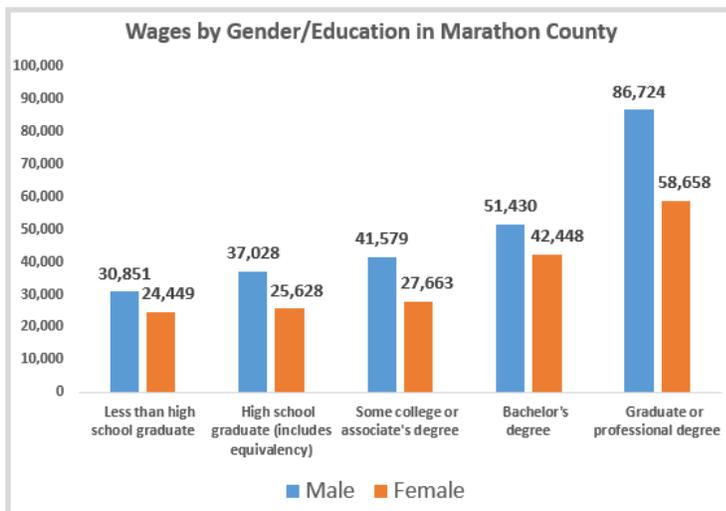
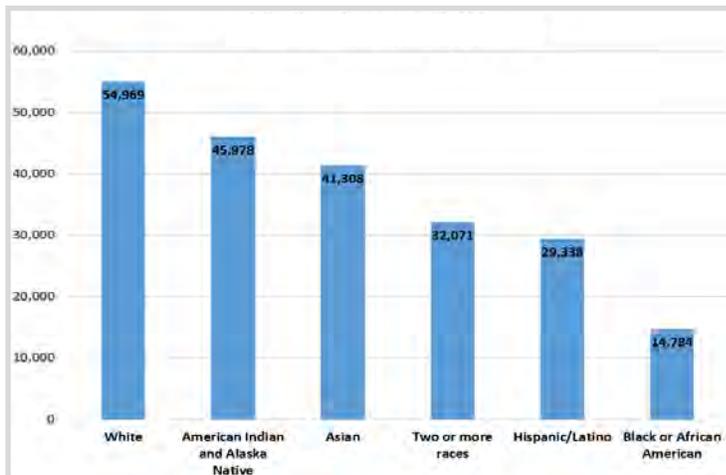
There is racial disparity in the corrections system and schools across America in which people of varying ethnicities are incarcerated or disciplined more frequently than people who are White/Non Hispanic or Latino. Research shows that nationally Black/African American students in schools are suspended at a higher rate than other students. In the 2013-2014 school year, the percentage of suspensions of Black/ African American boys and girls was 18% and 10%, respectively. In comparison, White/Non Hispanic or Latino students who received at least one suspension was 5% for boys and 2% for girls (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights).

A disturbing number of incidents in which innocent Black/African Americans were shot and killed by police

officers over the past few years raises concerns about racial disparities in the justice system. There were two tragic incidents locally (the stabbing of a 13 year old boy by another teenager in 2015 and in 2017 a shooting that resulted in the death of three citizens and a police officer) which involved people of varied ethnicities which raised questions in the community about racial bias in the justice system. The aftermath of the 2015 incident in Wausau prompted the creation of the Toward One Wausau project that initiated a research committee to gather and analyze data pertaining to local racial disparities.

By understanding inequalities better we may begin to see an end to racial targeting in schools and the correction system.

Key Measure: National Median Income By Race



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2015, women earned approximately \$0.81 for every dollar men earned. The average salary for men in Wisconsin was \$51,007; the average salary for women was \$41,199.
- Financial insecurity is experienced by 28% to 66% of households throughout Wisconsin. In Marathon County, 41% of households are financially insecure.

The percentage of financially insecure households is disproportionately higher for people of certain ethnicities:

- 57% of Asian households
- 62% of Black/African American households
- 65% of Hispanic/Latino households
- 9% of White/Non-Hispanic or Latino households

SOURCES

- United Way ALICE Report (2014) www.unitedwayalice.org/Wisconsin
- U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov
- PEW Research Center www.pewinternet.org
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- American Community Survey (2010-2014)

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Gender wage gaps exist in Wisconsin as well as across the nation. This wage gap tends to be even more pronounced for some ethnicities. PEW Research Center reported in 2016 that white men out earn women and most other ethnic groups. Career interruptions due to unpaid caregiving roles (most often assumed by women) and discrimination against women and other racial groups impact lifetime earning potential.

In 2014 the United Way ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed) Project took a closer look at financial insecurity in Wisconsin. The costs of basic needs (e.g., food, housing, transportation,

health care, and daycare) are higher than is affordable based on income levels. When people are unable to afford their basic needs, it creates a strain on community resources and government-run programs. Pay inequality due to gender and race can make certain groups of people vulnerable to financial hardship.

Affordability of health care and the availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses were consistently among the greatest concerns of LIFE Survey respondents.

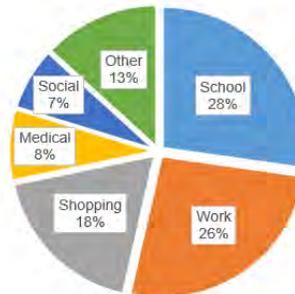
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- **5.3% of LIFE Survey respondents in Marathon County have missed work, medical appointment, or other important events due to lack of transportation.**
- **An increasing number of the noninstitutionalized population over the age of 65 and those on Medicare have given up driving (19%) and therefore 24-34% have reduced their travel due to health or physical limitation creating barriers to community connectedness.**
- **Homes without cars have steadily decreased in Wausau year-over-year with about 3.5% of households without a car, according to the 2015 Census. More than a quarter of homes, however, have only one car.**

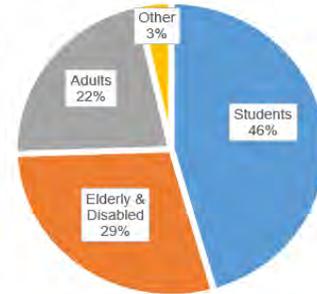
Bus Operating Stats 2015

Bus Miles	402,903	Paratransit Rider	2,504
Bus Passengers	577,044	Paratransit Expense	\$200,355
Bus Expense	\$2,633,332	Paratransit Exp./Rider	\$80.01
Bus Exp./Passenger	\$4.56	Paratransit Revenue	\$5,614.75
Bus Revenue	\$430,033	Paratransit Rev/Expense	2.80%
Revenue/Expense	16.33%		

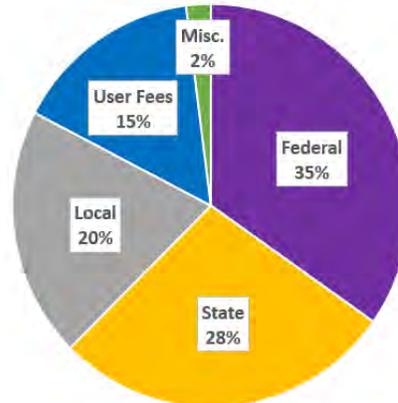
Bus Riders By Purpose 2011



Bus Riders By Fare Category 2015



Key Measure: Transportation Funding Sources 2015



- SOURCES**
- Metroride Website www.Metroride.ci.wausau.wi.us
 - ALICE Report 2016 www.unitedwayalice.org/Wisconsin
 - U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov
 - LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

To remain competitive and encourage economic development, an affordable, easily accessible public transportation system is needed to create a healthy and vibrant community. According to the Wisconsin Urban and Rural Transit Association, for every \$1 invested in transit, there is a return of \$3.

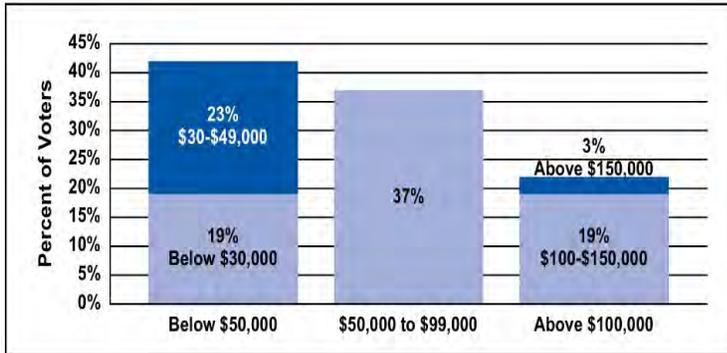
Currently, Wausau is the only city in Marathon County that provides public transportation in the form of city buses. LIFE Survey respondents indicated that they had missed important appointments because they do not own a vehicle, do not have access to a vehicle, were unable to drive, or do not have access to public transportation. With no or limited access to public transportation many find it challenging to make medical appointments, shopping or events especially on

evenings or on weekends.

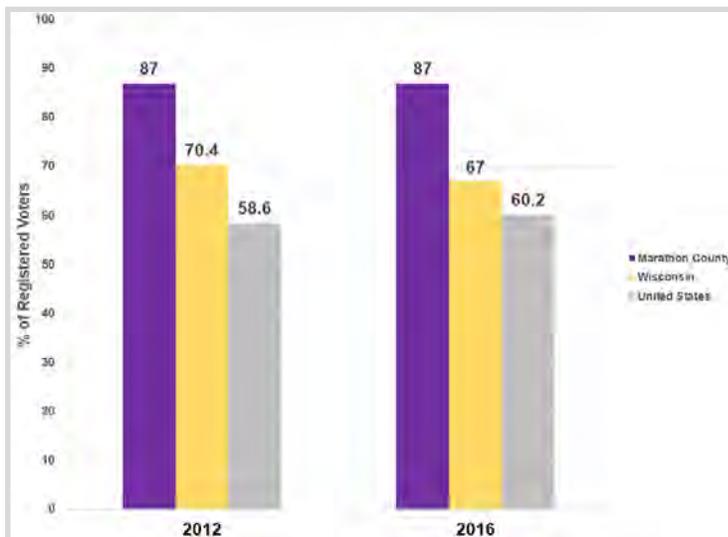
Metro Ride, the public transportation service provider in Wausau, currently operates 7 regular bus routes Monday through Friday from 6:30a.m. to 6:30p.m. Metro Ride also provides 10 express routes during the school hours for students in the Wausau School District. One bus route is provided for workers at Northern Valley Industries and a weekly grocery shopping bus route for seniors. Metro Ride also operates paratransit services for those with disabilities which travel the same hours and routes as the city buses.

Limited taxi/shuttle services are available countywide but can be cost prohibitive for lower income residents.

Key Measure: Wisconsin Voters by Income (2014 Gubernatorial Election)



Key Measure: Voter turnout Marathon County, Wisconsin, National (2012 v 2016)



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 49,793 Marathon County citizens turned out to vote in the 2016 Primary Election.
- 29,966 voters cast their ballot in the Republican Primary while 19,827 voters cast their ballot in the Democratic Primary.
- More than 80% (69,518) of eligible voters in Marathon County turned out to vote in the 2016 General Election. Nationally, voter turnout was 57%, down .5% since the 2012 General Election.
- From June 2016 to June 2017, the number of registered voters in Marathon County rose from 79,593 to 84,060.
- Just 3.7% of the 2017 LIFE Survey respondents stated that civic engagement created a sense of connectedness to community.

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Election Commission www.elections.wi.gov
- League of Women Voters www.lwv.org
- www.fivethirtyeight.com
- NBC News www.NBCnews.com
- Wisconsin Voices www.wisconsinvoices.org
- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Since the Voter ID law was implemented in Wisconsin, requiring all eligible voters to show an identification card to get their ballot, there have been reports that some eligible voters were unable to register and/or cast their ballots because of difficulties obtaining the correct form of identification. The League of Women Voters created a report based on observations of polling places across Wisconsin during the 2016 General Election. Observers saw as many as 500 potential voters turned away for not having a correct form of identification. Observers also witnessed hundreds of voters across various voting places being turned away because they were at the wrong polling location. Largely, these same observers noted that individuals staffing the polling locations treated voters

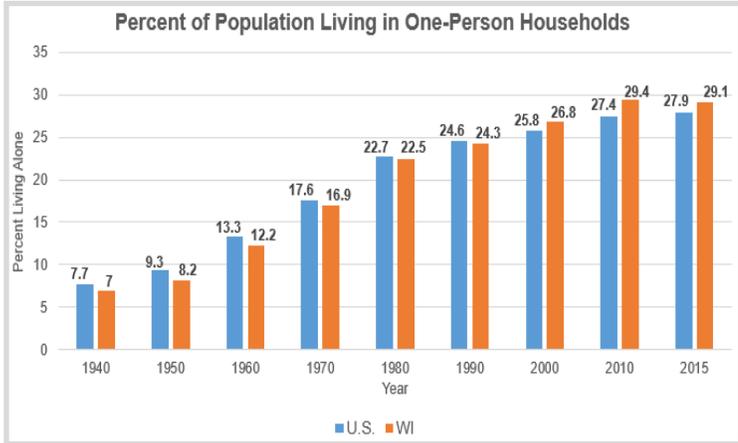
courteously and professionally.

While the number of registered voters in Marathon County has increased since 2016, voting law confusion and/or voting laws being incorrectly applied can create barriers that prevent eligible voters from casting their ballot. In addition, Marathon County citizens who are eligible to vote may have faced difficulty visiting their polling place if they did not live on a bus route or have transportation.

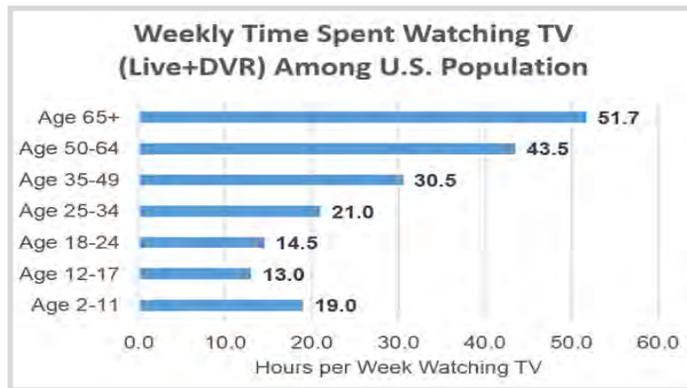


DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 95% of LIFE Survey respondents said they have at least one person whom they could talk to if they have a problem. 5% have no one to talk to if they have a problem.
- 27.9% of Marathon County high school youth say they do NOT have a teacher or other adult who they can talk to if they had a problem (2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey).
- The percent of LIFE Survey respondents who do NOT eat any meals with family or friends in a typical week has gone up to 13.9% in 2017 from 11.9% in 2015.
- In 2015 approximately 35% of Marathon County seniors age 65+ lived alone compared to 44.8% for Wisconsin and 42.8% for the United States.
- A 2015 study performed by Wisconsin Institute of Public Policy & Service (WIPPS) indicated that 74.4% of Wausau area adults age 55+ report that they rarely, if ever, participate in social activities with other seniors in a given year.



According to a study published in the American Journal of Preventative Medicine, people age 19 to 32 who spent more time on social media—two hours a day or more—had twice the odds of feeling socially isolated than people who spent less than half an hour a day on it.



SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2017)
- "Social Media Use and Perceived Social Isolation Among Young Adults in the U.S." study published in American Journal of Preventive Medicine
- Nielsen "Total Audience Report" (Q1, 2017)
- Wisconsin Institute of Public Policy & Service (WIPPS) Feasibility Study of The Connections Place, an active aging resource center (2015)
- US Census Bureau www.factfinder.census.gov

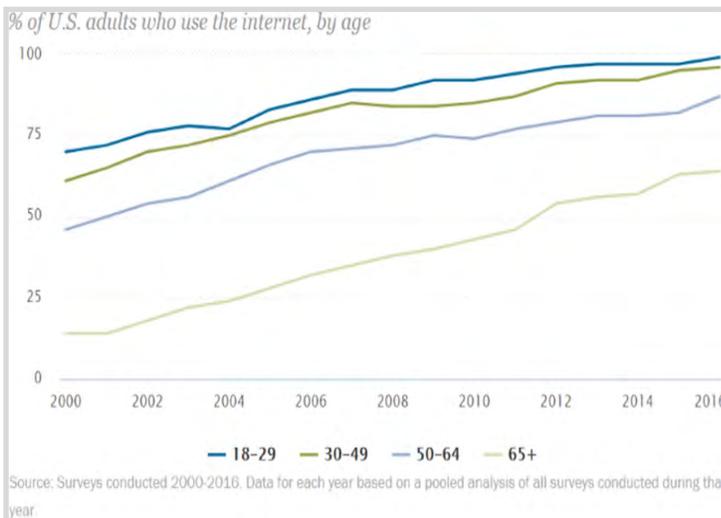
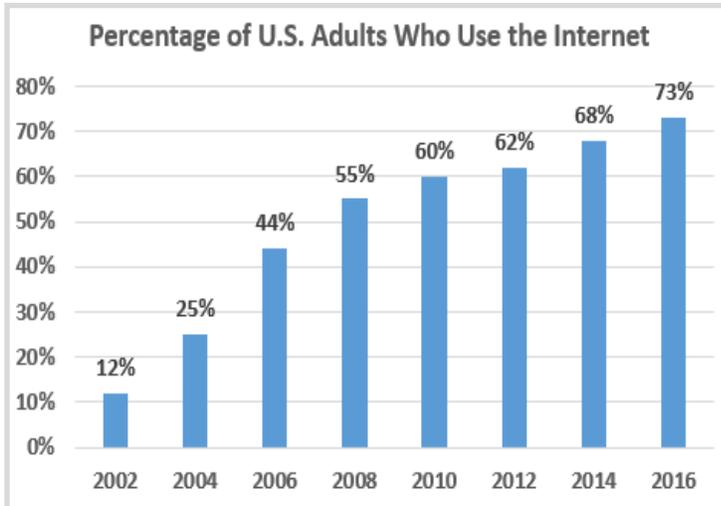
COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Increases in the number of people living alone and increased TV and social media use combine to make social isolation an area of concern for Marathon County. Social isolation among the elderly and the related physical and emotional effects is a growing epidemic across the country, based on a wide-body of data.

Marathon County research is less clear, but data shows a growing number of single-person households and a need for activities that connect seniors. In response, residents have developed a plan to build The Connections Place, where local senior members can

meet for programs and social activities. Other local organizations have added programming specifically to engage seniors. Still, cost is a potential barrier for some of these programs, especially among lower income residents.

In addition to seniors, increased social media use, the potential for bullying and other cultural elements contribute to a growing sense of isolation among local teens. Local organizations and schools are working together to connect students to positive mentors, reduce bullying, build resiliency and educate youth about healthy relationships and online safety.



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2002, 12% of American adults used the Internet while in 2016, 73% used the Internet.
- 33% of Americans currently do not have broadband service at home due to affordability and lack of computer access.
- Per the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) 40% of rural Wisconsin does not have broadband access.
- In 2017 Marathon County was awarded \$503,500 for broadband expansion through a 10 mile fiber optic route connection and to increase speed for 3,578 households and 41 businesses.
- In 2010 the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allocated \$7.2 billion to improving broadband infrastructure and consumer education.

SOURCES

- PEW Research Center www.pewinternet.org
- PSC Wisconsin Website www.psc.wi.gov
- Federal Communications Commission Website www.fcc.gov
- Broadband and Now www.broadbandnow.com/Wisconsin/Wausau

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Technology is impacting every part and parcel of our lives in our rapidly changing world – from where and how we conduct work, to whether we can thrive economically and socially. Technology and broadband access, when available, improve and enhance the way we work and live. With the introduction and accelerated advancement of technologies, having access to affordable, reliable and abundant broadband is quickly becoming the most critical infrastructure of our time, similar to the expansion of electricity, transportation, and roadways early in the last century.

In Wisconsin, there are plans to eliminate the rural divide by bringing broadband Internet connectivity to

all communities. Broadband access is crucial to keep up with trends in education, employment, healthcare, and public safety. According to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, broadband is defined as Internet speeds of at least 768Kbps downstream and 200Kbps upstream.

Internet use has been on the rise across age groups in the past two decades; however, affordability may be a barrier to some families. The average cost for the Internet/broadband providers in the Wausau area is around \$60 a month, with speed and cost varying as areas become more rural.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 65.2% of LIFE Survey respondents reported that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of arts and entertainment opportunities in Marathon County.
- 43.8% of LIFE Survey respondents reported that they are concerned about the affordability of arts and entertainment offerings.
- 53.3% of LIFE Survey respondents reported they are satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of family-friendly activities.



Total Impact of the Non-Profit Arts and Culture Industry in Marathon County

(Expenditures by both organizations and audiences)

Total Direct Expenditures	\$9,174,439
Full-Time Equivalent Jobs	340
Resident Household Income	\$6,074,000
Local Government Revenue	\$309,000
State Government Revenue	\$464,000

Total Impact of the Arts---Economic Prosperity Study IV



Photo by Sue Bluhm Copyright U.S. Workstories

SOURCES

- LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey (2017)
- Economic Prosperity Study IV

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Arts and culture activities and opportunities in Marathon County are thriving. They drive economic growth and help attract much-needed younger residents. Overall, residents surveyed are satisfied with the availability of arts and entertainment opportunities.

Among its assets, the county features two world-class venues in Wausau, the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum and The Grand Theater, which combine to bring more than 200,000 guests through their doors each year. More than 30 arts organizations across Marathon County provide opportunities to individuals of all ages to participate in arts events and diverse cultural activities such as Hmong New Year and Polish Fest. Opportunities to enjoy arts and

entertainment for free are plentiful throughout the county—from weekly summer concert series, such as Wausau’s Concerts on the Square, to major events such as Artrageous Weekend and ChalkFest.

Recent investment in remodeling of the Center for Visual Arts and a commitment to create a Museum of Contemporary Art compliment Wausau’s standing as a regional arts destination.



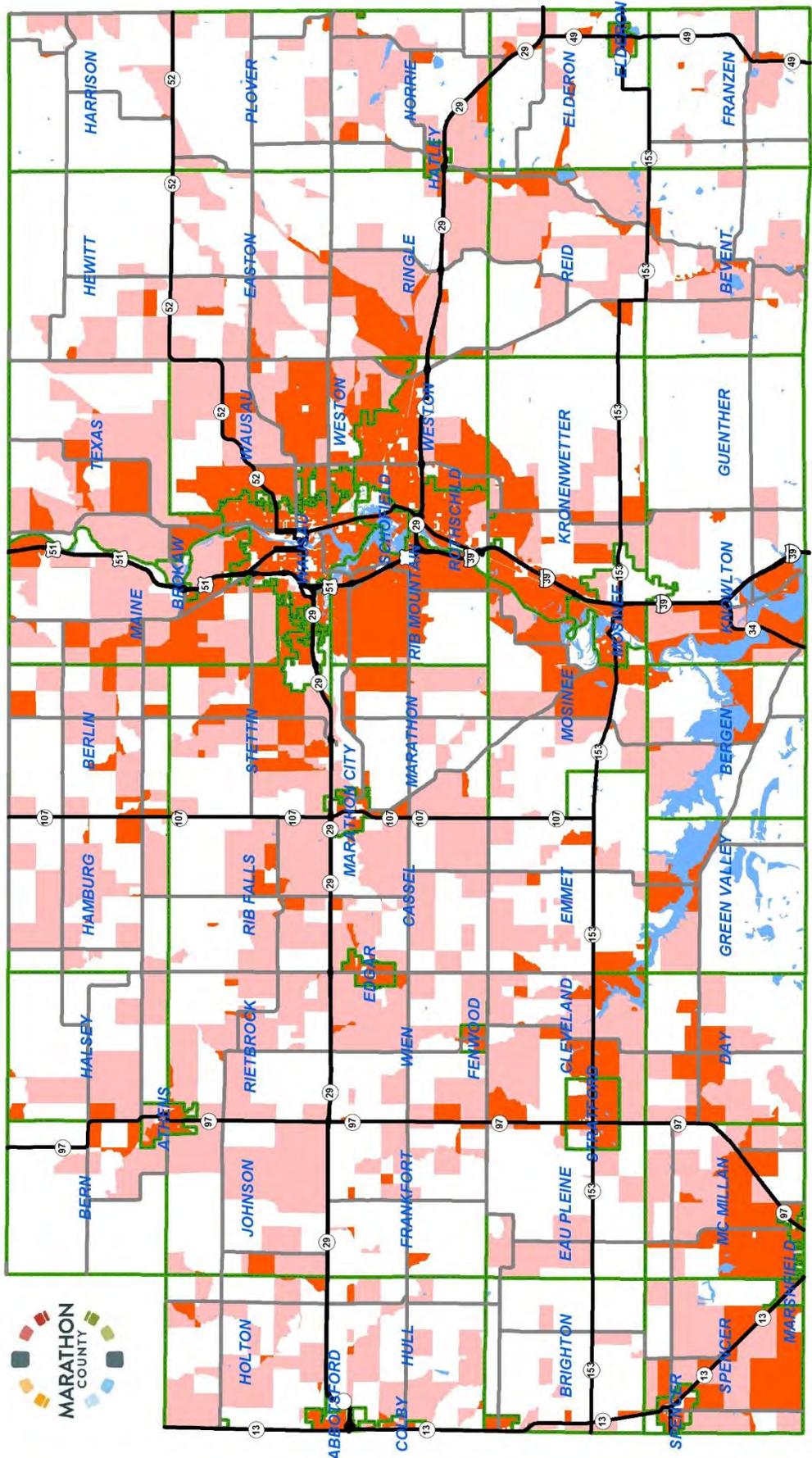
Demographics and Survey



**2017 LIFE in Marathon County
Community Survey**

2017 LIFE Survey Data

MARATHON COUNTY, WI POPULATION DENSITY



2010 Census

- 0 - 25.0 Persons/SqMile
- 25.1 - 50.0 Persons/SqMile
- > 50 Persons/SqMile

— State & US Highways
 — County Roads
 □ Municipal Boundary
 ■ Hydro Features



Map Date: November 3, 2011

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

2017 LIFE in Marathon County Community Survey

In order to assess some important issues regarding the quality of life in Marathon County that are not currently being measured, the LIFE Steering Committee issued a survey to Marathon County residents in February of 2017. During March and early April 2017, the Survey Research Center (SRC) from University of Wisconsin-River Falls collected data on behalf of the 2017 LIFE Report. The 2017 survey mirrored similar surveys done in previous years.

During March and early April 2017, the Survey Research Center (SRC) from University of Wisconsin-River Falls collected data on behalf of the 2017 LIFE Report. The 2017 survey mirrored similar surveys done in previous years.

- A six-page survey was mailed to 2,100 households in Marathon County. *(The SRC used the Dillman Method for the 2,100 households in the mail survey. Each person in the sample was sent a survey initially. Those who had not returned their survey within two weeks were sent a postcard reminding them to complete the survey. Two weeks after the postcard, those who had still not responded received a second postcard.)*
- Of those 2,100 surveys:
 - 600 were sent to three subpopulations: Under age 35, household with incomes under \$25,000 and minorities of varying ethnicity, to ensure a representation from these challenging to reach groups.
 - 1,500 surveys were randomly sent throughout Marathon County.
- An additional 100 surveys were distributed to selected Marathon County non-profit partners by United Way of Marathon County including: Salvation Army, The Neighbor's Place and Bridge Clinic to better reach minorities and underserved populations.
- Those who received surveys had the option to complete the survey online.

The SRC received the following number of responses from these three sources:

- 443 paper surveys from those mailed
- 33 paper surveys from non-profit partners
- 21 online surveys

Given an adult population of 103,194 in Marathon County, this data should provide estimates accurate to within plus or minus 4.5%.

WHO TOOK THE SURVEY:

The LIFE Report follows proper protocols to capture a representative sample of Marathon County population with its survey. However, any survey is influenced by the people who choose to participate. Interpreting any survey requires an understanding of who took it. The data obtained from the community survey represents the viewpoints of those who responded. The survey is not representative of Marathon County's total population.

To help readers, we have included the following comparison of 2017 LIFE Community Survey participants to actual Marathon County demographics:

Gender	Survey Count	Survey %	County %	Wisconsin State %	U.S. %
Female	235	52.1%	50.4%	50.6%	47%
Male	256	47.9%	49.6%	49.4%	53%

Marital Status	Survey Count	Survey %	County %	Wisconsin State %	U.S. %
Single	70	14.3%	29%	33.1%	25%
Married	302	61.9%	56.5%	51.7%	58%
Separated/Divorce	51	10.5%	10.5%	10.2	10%
Widowed	64	13.1%	2%	2.6%	6%
Other	1	0.2%	No Data	No Data	10%

2017 LIFE Survey Data

Racial or Ethnicity Category	Survey Count	Survey %	County %	Wisconsin State %	U.S. %
Asian	16	3.3%	2.0%	1.7%	5.7%
Black/African American	2	.04%	6.0%	5.7%	12.3%
Hispanic/Latino	2	.04%	4.5%	3.6%	17.1%
Native American	2	.04%	.09%	.19%	1.2%
Other	6	1.2%	.17%	No Stats	.2%
Two or More Races	6	1.2%	1.0%	No Stats	2.2%
White	455	93.0%	90.1%	88.9%	61.3%

Age	Survey Count	Survey %	County %	Wisconsin State %	U.S. %
18-24	11	2.2%	7.5%	9.7%	9.8%
25-34	52	10.5%	12%	12.5%	13.6%
35-44	56	11.4%	12.2%	12.1%	12.7%
45-54	65	13.2%	14.7%	13.9%	13.4%
55-64	103	20.9%	14.1%	13.8%	13.7%
65 and Older	206	41.8%	16.4%	15.5%	14.8%

Highest Level of Education	Survey Count	Survey %	County %	Wisconsin State %	U.S. %
No High School or GED	22	4.6%	6.8%	9.4%	12.9%
High School or GED	133	27.7%	34.5%	31.9%	27.9%
Some Technical or College	110	22.9%	13.9%	18.4%	18.1%
2 Years/Associate Degree	60	12.5%	12.7%	14.7%	13%
Bachelor's Degree	91	19.0%	15.4%	17.4%	17.9%
Professional or Graduate Degree	64	13.3%	4.9%	8.2%	10.1%

Household Annual Income	Survey Count	Survey %	County %	Wisconsin State %	U.S. %
Prefer not to say	64	13.3%			
Less than \$15,000	36	7.7%	8.2%	10.1%	11.9%
\$15,000-\$24,999	65	13.5%	10.2%	10.3%	10.2%
\$25,000-\$49,999	98	20.3%	11.8%	24.3%	23%
\$50,000-\$74,999	85	17.6%	21.2%	19.9%	17.8%
\$75,000-\$99,999	48	9.9%	14.4%	14%	12.2%
\$100,000+	87	18.0%	19.4%	21.5%	24.9%

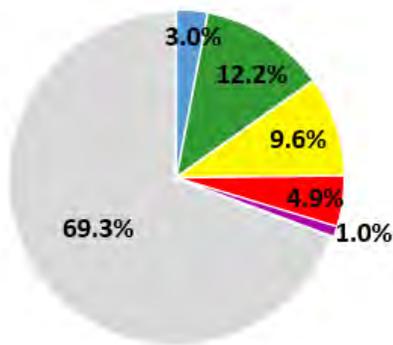
2017 LIFE Survey Data

1 - How SATISFIED are you with the following in your community?

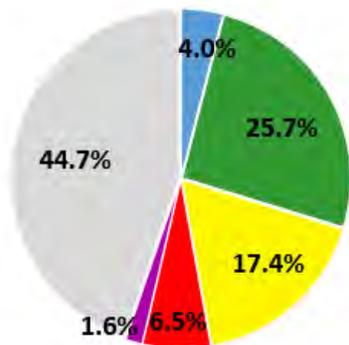
■ Very Satisfied
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
 ■ Dissatisfied
 ■ Very Dissatisfied
 ■ Don't Know/Not Applicable

N = Total Responses

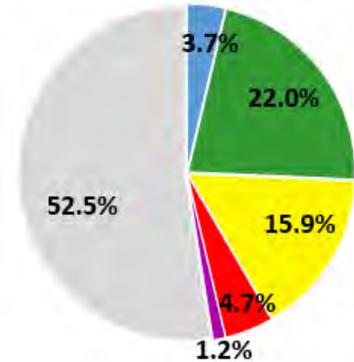
A - Availability of child care. (N=492)



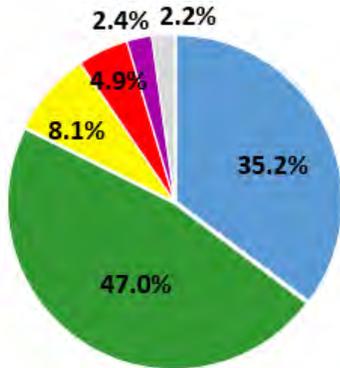
B - Availability of elder care. (N=494)



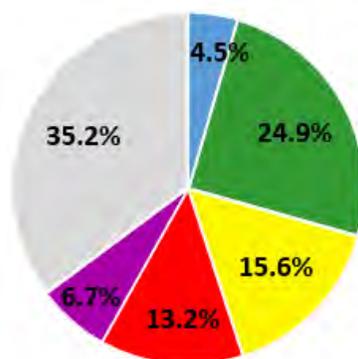
C - Availability of services for victims of family violence or abuse. (N=491)



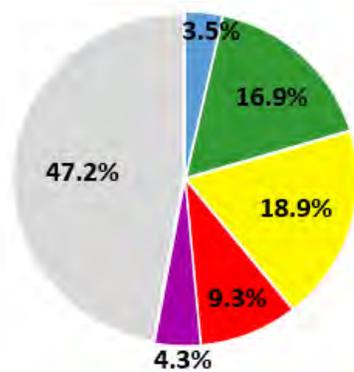
D - Availability of health care. (N=491)



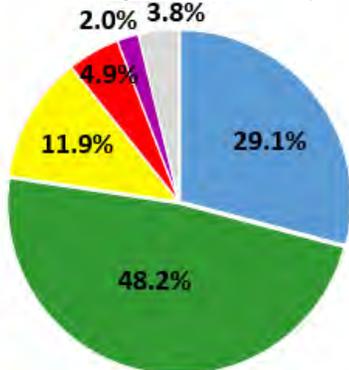
E - Availability of mental health services or treatment. (N=494)



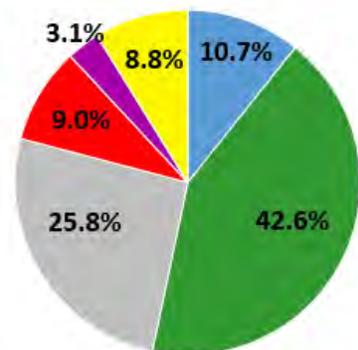
F - Availability of alcohol and other drug services or treatment. (N=492)



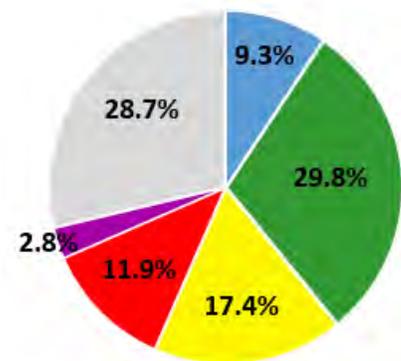
G - Availability of dental care. (N=494)



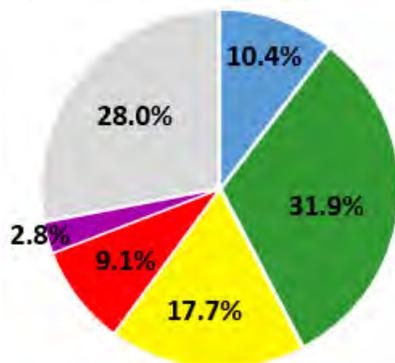
H - Availability of information about community services. (N=488)



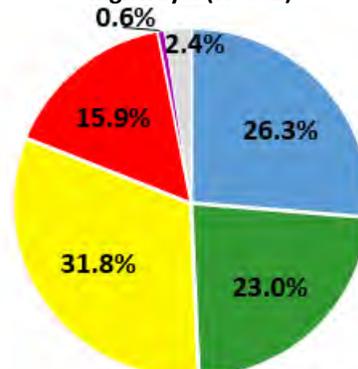
I - How well public K-12 education prepares our youth for a career. (N=494)



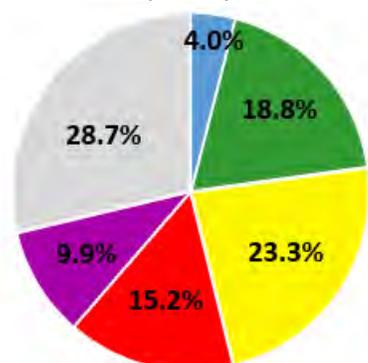
J - How well public K-12 education prepares our youth for college. (N=492)



K - Maintenance of streets, roads and highways. (N=491)

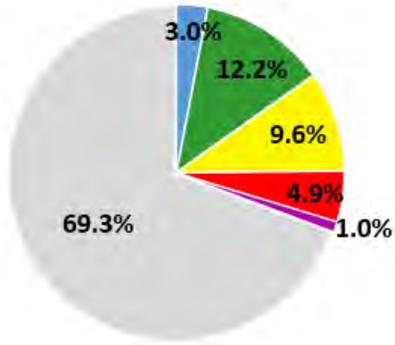


L - Availability of public transportation. (N=494)

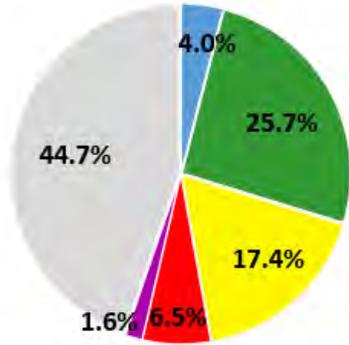


2017 LIFE Survey Data

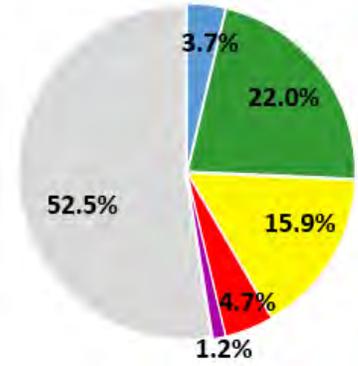
A - Availability of child care. (N=492)



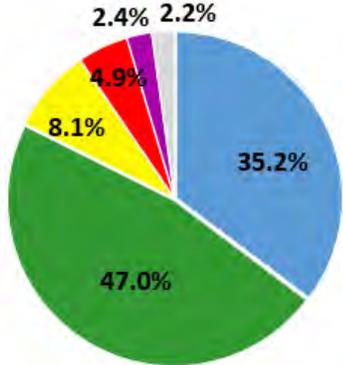
B - Availability of elder care. (N=494)



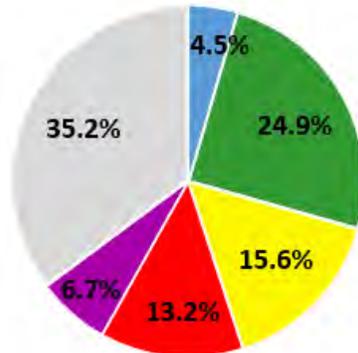
C - Availability of services for victims of family violence or abuse. (N=491)



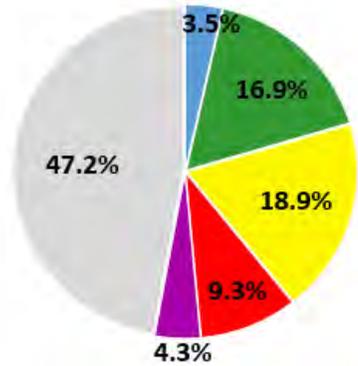
D - Availability of health care. (N=491)



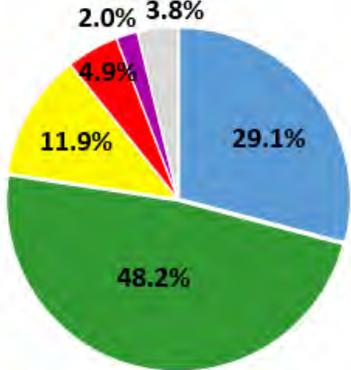
E - Availability of mental health services or treatment. (N=494)



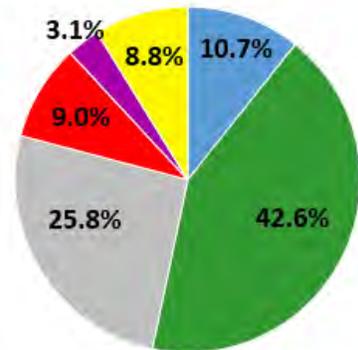
F - Availability of alcohol and other drug services or treatment. (N=492)



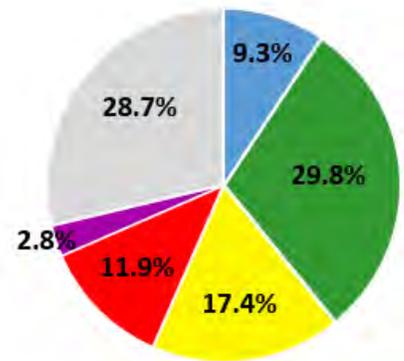
G - Availability of dental care. (N=494)



H - Availability of information about community services. (N=488)



I - How well public K-12 education prepares our youth for a career. (N=494)



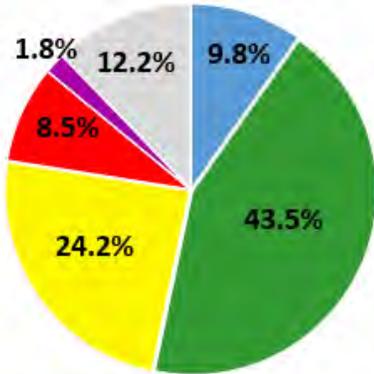
2017 LIFE Survey Data

1 - How SATISFIED are you with the following in your community? (Continued)

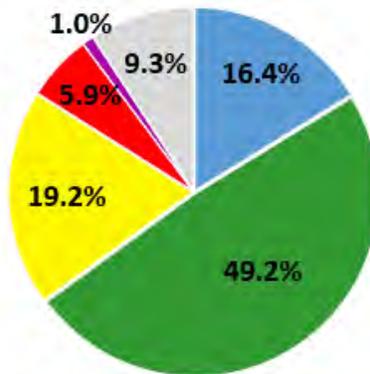
■ Very Satisfied
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
 ■ Dissatisfied
 ■ Very Dissatisfied
 ■ Don't Know/Not Applicable

N = Total Responses

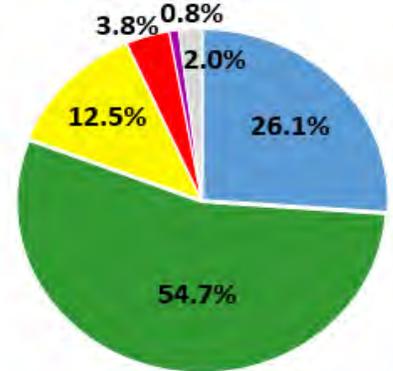
M - Availability of family-friendly activities. (N=492)



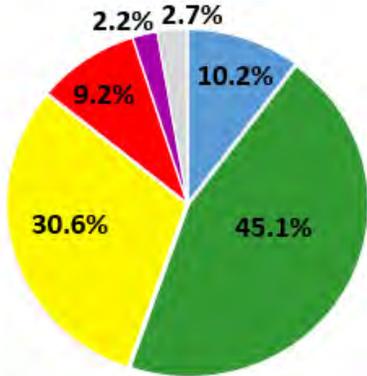
N - Availability of arts and entertainment opportunities. (N=494)



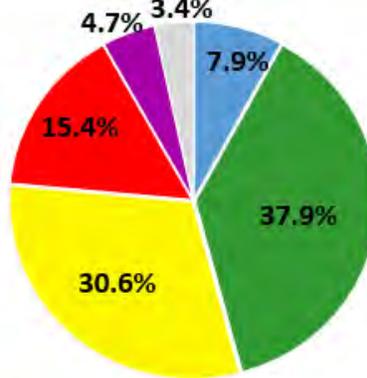
O - Availability of parks, recreation and open natural areas. (N=495)



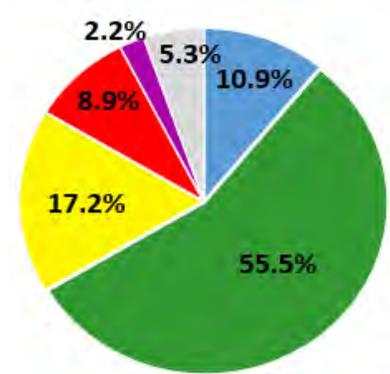
P - How open and welcoming is our community. (N=490)



Q - How tolerant we are of people who are different. (N=493)



R - Availability of safe places to walk and bike. (N=494)



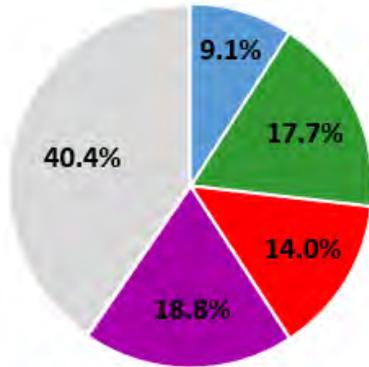
2017 LIFE Survey Data

2 - How CONCERNED are you about the following in your community? (N = Total Responses)

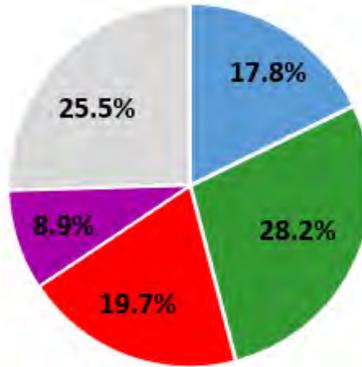
Very Concerned Concerned Somewhat Concerned Not Concerned Don't Know

N = Total Responses

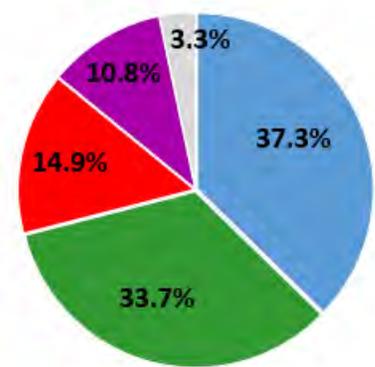
A - Affordability of child care. (N=485)



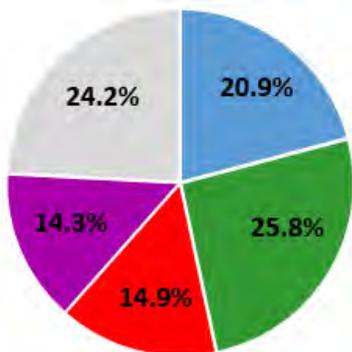
B - Affordability of elder care. (N=483)



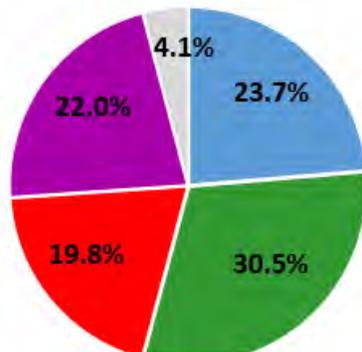
C - Affordability of health care. (N=483)



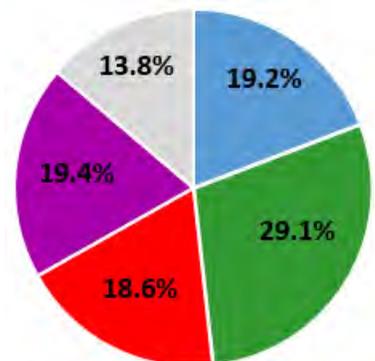
D - Affordability of mental health, alcohol or drug services/treatment. (N=484)



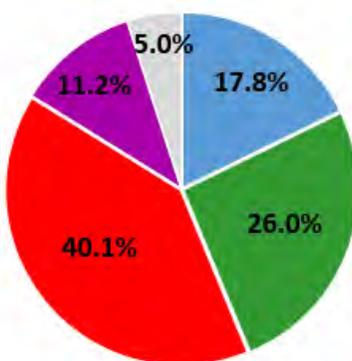
E - Affordability of dental care. (N=486)



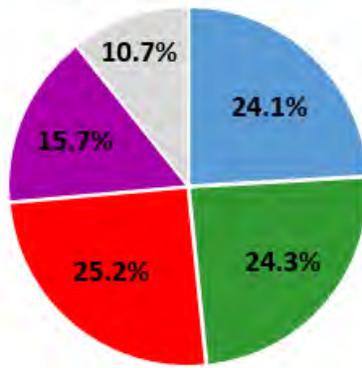
F - Affordability of post high school education. (N=485)



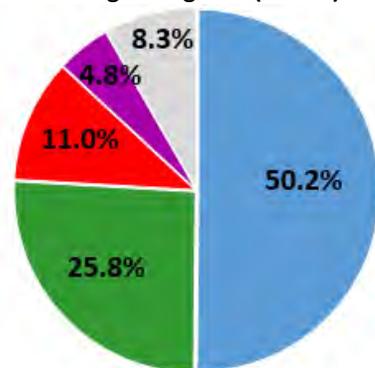
G - Affordability of arts and entertainment. (N=484)



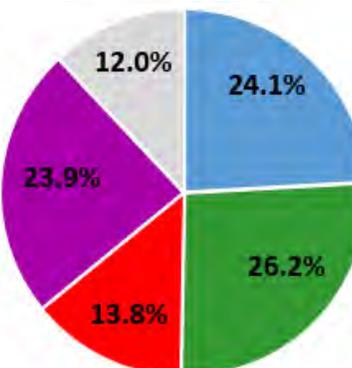
H - Abuse and misuse of alcohol. (N=485)



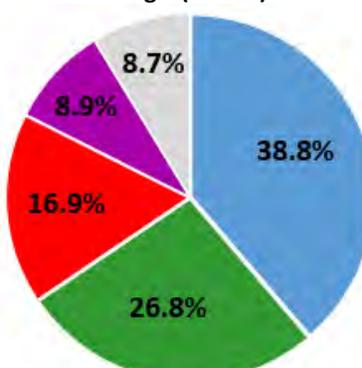
I - Illegal drug use. (N=484)



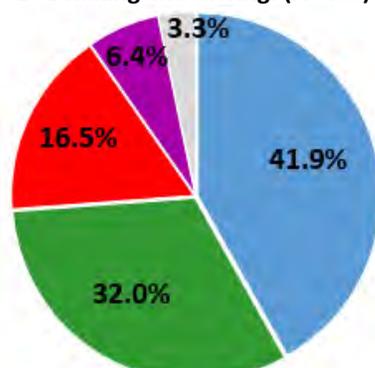
J - Cigarettes/ vaping. (N=485)



K - Abuse and misuse of prescription drugs. (N=485)



L - Drinking and driving. (N=485)

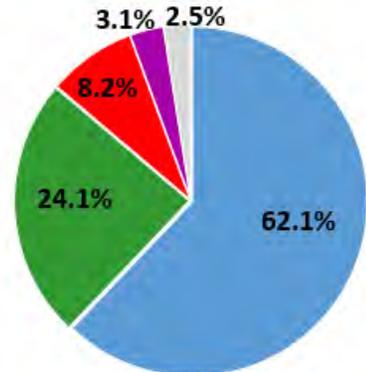


2017 LIFE Survey Data

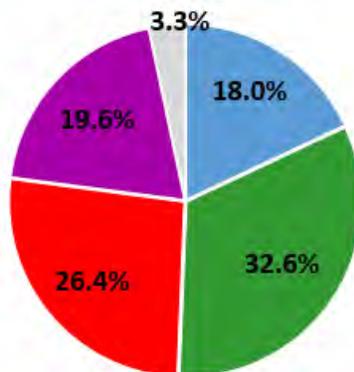
2 - How CONCERNED are you about the following in your community? (Continued)

Very Concerned Concerned Somewhat Concerned Not Concerned Don't Know

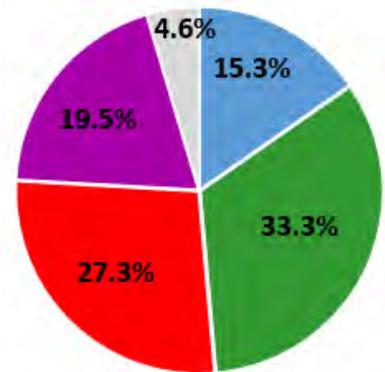
M - Texting and driving. (N=486)



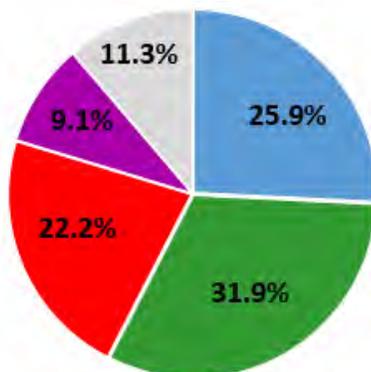
N = Total Responses
N - Unhealthy eating. (N=484)



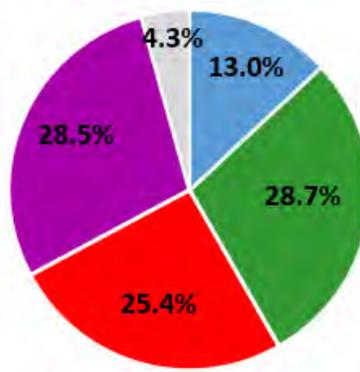
O - Lack of physical activity. (N=483)



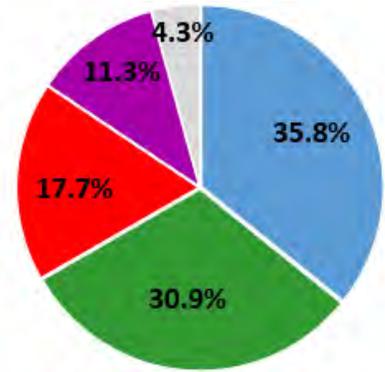
P - Family violence or abuse of adults and/or children. (N=486)



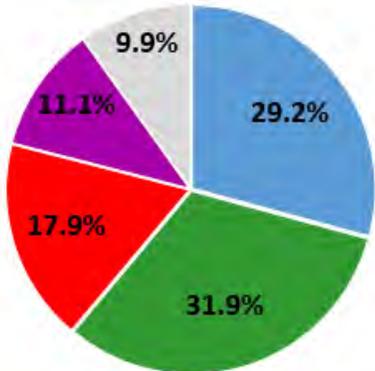
Q - Acceptance of people who are different. (N=484)



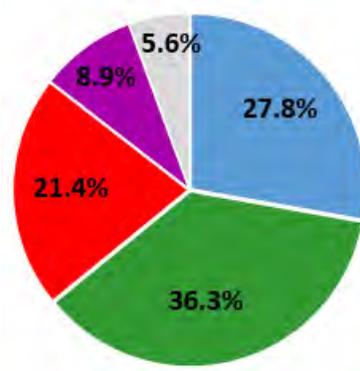
R - Availability of jobs that meet basic household expenses. (N=486)



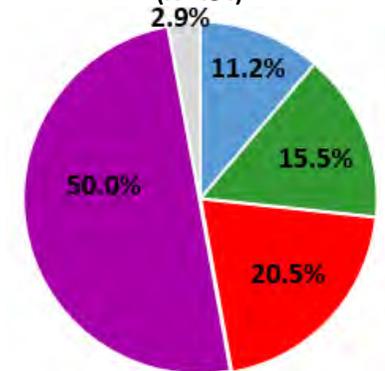
S - Amount of quality time that parents spend with their children. (N=486)



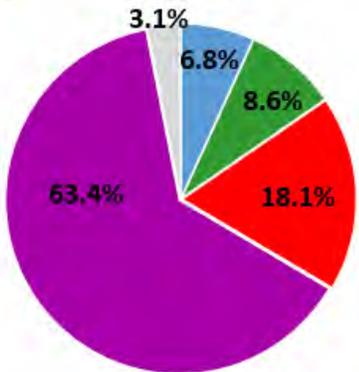
T - Meeting the needs of the growing aging population (N=482)



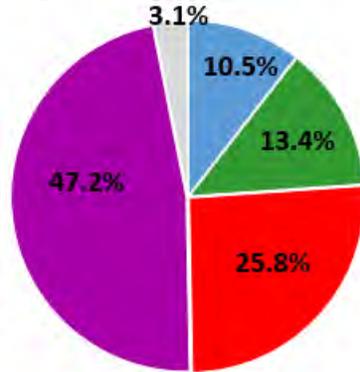
U - My personal safety in my home. (N=484)



V - My safety when alone in my neighborhood in the daytime. (N=486)

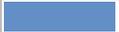


W - My safety when alone in my neighborhood after dark. (N=485)



2017 LIFE Survey Data

3 - Biggest Concern

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Illegal drug use.		97	23.5%
Affordability of health care.		93	22.6%
Texting and driving.		47	11.4%
Availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses.		32	7.8%
Drinking and driving.		20	4.9%
Affordability of elder care.		18	4.4%
Affordability of mental health, alcohol or drug services/treatment.		13	3.2%
Meeting the needs of the growing aging population		12	2.9%
My safety when alone in my neighborhood after dark.		10	2.4%
Affordability of child care.		9	2.2%
Abuse and misuse of alcohol.		8	1.9%
Abuse and misuse of prescription drugs.		8	1.9%
Acceptance of people who are different.		8	1.9%
Affordability of post high school education.		7	1.7%
My personal safety in my home.		7	1.7%
Affordability of dental care.		6	1.5%
Amount of quality time that parents spend with their children.		5	1.2%
Unhealthy eating.		5	1.2%
E-cigarettes/ vaping.		3	0.7%
Family violence or abuse of adults and/or children.		3	0.7%
My safety when alone in my neighborhood in the daytime.		1	0.2%

Total Responses: 412

3 - Second Biggest Concern

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Illegal drug use.		50	12.2%
Drinking and driving.		45	11.0%
Texting and driving.		42	10.2%
Affordability of health care.		32	7.8%
Availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses.		32	7.8%
Abuse and misuse of prescription drugs.		29	7.1%
Affordability of elder care.		21	5.1%
Meeting the needs of the growing aging population		21	5.1%
Abuse and misuse of alcohol.		17	4.1%
Affordability of mental health, alcohol or drug services/treatment.		17	4.1%
Amount of quality time that parents spend with their children.		16	3.9%
Family violence or abuse of adults and/or children.		14	3.4%
Affordability of child care.		12	2.9%
Affordability of dental care.		12	2.9%
Affordability of post high school education.		12	2.9%
Acceptance of people who are different.		8	2.0%
E-cigarettes/ vaping.		7	1.7%
Lack of physical activity.		6	1.5%
My safety when alone in my neighborhood after dark.		6	1.5%
My safety when alone in my neighborhood in the daytime.		4	1.0%
Unhealthy eating.		4	1.0%
My personal safety in my home.		2	0.5%
Affordability of arts and entertainment.		1	0.2%

Total Responses: 410

2017 LIFE Survey Data

3 - Third Biggest Concern

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Texting and driving.		54	13.4%
Meeting the needs of the growing aging population		44	10.9%
Availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses.		33	8.2%
Drinking and driving.		33	8.2%
Illegal drug use.		28	6.9%
Affordability of health care.		26	6.5%
Abuse and misuse of alcohol.		22	5.5%
Affordability of dental care.		18	4.5%
Affordability of post high school education.		16	4.0%
Family violence or abuse of adults and/or children.		16	4.0%
Affordability of mental health, alcohol or drug services/treatment.		15	3.7%
My safety when alone in my neighborhood after dark.		15	3.7%
Acceptance of people who are different.		12	3.0%
Amount of quality time that parents spend with their children.		12	3.0%
Affordability of elder care.		10	2.5%
Abuse and misuse of prescription drugs.		9	2.2%
E-cigarettes/ vaping.		9	2.2%
Lack of physical activity.		9	2.2%
Unhealthy eating.		9	2.2%
Affordability of child care.		5	1.2%
My personal safety in my home.		4	1.0%
Affordability of arts and entertainment.		3	0.7%
My safety when alone in my neighborhood in the daytime.		1	0.2%

Total Responses: 403

3 - Biggest Concerns Aggregated

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Illegal drug use.		290	23.7%
Affordability of health care.		277	22.6%
Texting and driving.		139	11.3%
Availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses.		96	7.8%
Drinking and driving.		56	4.6%
Affordability of elder care.		54	4.4%
Affordability of mental health, alcohol or drug services/treatment.		38	3.1%
Meeting the needs of the growing aging population		36	2.9%
My safety when alone in my neighborhood after dark.		30	2.4%
Affordability of child care.		27	2.2%
Abuse and misuse of alcohol.		24	2.0%
Abuse and misuse of prescription drugs.		24	2.0%
Acceptance of people who are different.		24	2.0%
Affordability of post high school education.		21	1.7%
My personal safety in my home.		21	1.7%
Affordability of dental care.		17	1.4%
Amount of quality time that parents spend with their children.		15	1.2%
Unhealthy eating.		15	1.2%
E-cigarettes/ vaping.		9	0.7%
Family violence or abuse of adults and/or children.		9	0.7%
My safety when alone in my neighborhood in the daytime.		3	0.2%

Total Responses: 1,225 / Estimated Respondents: 409

2017 LIFE Survey Data

4 - How much do you agree or disagree that Marathon County is a good place to live for:

Children 18 & Under

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		3	0.6%
Somewhat Disagree		16	3.3%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		77	15.9%
Somewhat Agree		195	40.2%
Strongly Agree		194	40.0%

Total Responses: 485

Families

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		0	0%
Somewhat Disagree		3	1.0%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		16	5.5%
Somewhat Agree		77	26.5%
Strongly Agree		195	67.0%

Total Responses: 482

Young Adults

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		5	1.0%
Somewhat Disagree		47	9.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		87	17.9%
Somewhat Agree		203	41.9%
Strongly Agree		143	29.5%

Total Responses: 485

Adults

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		1	0.2%
Somewhat Disagree		23	4.8%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		55	11.4%
Somewhat Agree		198	41.1%
Strongly Agree		205	42.5%

Total Responses: 482

Senior Citizens

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		3	0.6%
Somewhat Disagree		34	7.1%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		79	16.4%
Somewhat Agree		197	40.9%
Strongly Agree		169	35.1%

Total Responses: 482

2017 LIFE Survey Data

4 - How much do you agree or disagree that Marathon County is a good place to live for: (Continued)

People with disabilities

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		10	2.1%
Somewhat Disagree		42	8.8%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		136	28.4%
Somewhat Agree		190	39.7%
Strongly Agree		101	21.1%

Total Responses: 479

People from diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		13	2.7%
Somewhat Disagree		70	14.6%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		154	32.1%
Somewhat Agree		170	35.4%
Strongly Agree		73	15.2%

Total Responses: 480

5 - Of the following, which are the THREE most important reasons you've chosen to live in Marathon County? (mark up to 3 reasons)

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Near family/friends		325	23.4%
Size of Community		159	11.4%
Rural life style		148	10.6%
Good place to raise kids		132	9.5%
Job Opportunities		123	8.8%
Affordable cost of living		117	8.4%
Good Schools		114	8.2%
Safe Community		102	7.3%
Recreation opportunities in parks/natural areas		89	6.4%
Welcoming Community		33	2.4%
Entertainment opportunities		24	1.7%
Other		24	1.7%

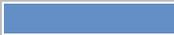
Total Responses: 1,390 / Estimated Respondents: 464

Text Entry

Born and raised here	Default	Hometown	Not my choice
Born here	Family here	Job	Retired
born here too poor to leave	Far away from in-laws`	Lived here all my life	Schools including post high school
Born Raised Home	Friends	Location to new job	Was born here
Climate, taxes, green	Grew up here	My Gym	Weather
Close to lake cabin	Grew up here	Near Relatives	YMCA

2017 LIFE Survey Data

6 - Which of the following most connects you to your community in Marathon County? (mark up to 3 reasons)

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
My family/friends		422	35.4%
Organizations		223	18.7%
Access to needed services		179	15.0%
Respectful treatment by my community		99	8.3%
Volunteering		69	5.8%
Involvement with schools		68	5.7%
Social media/Internet		54	4.5%
Civic engagement		44	3.7%
Other		34	2.9%

Total Responses: 1,192 / Estimated Respondents: 398

Text Entry

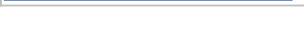
Biking skiing community	Large amounts of features	Positive energy of well-meaning people
Boat landing	Moving unaffordable	Pubs/restaurants
Born Here	My job	Quiet neighborhood
career	Near Hunting	Raised in area
Centrally born	None of the above	Unfortunately I'm alone most of the time.
Don't like the county	Not connected	Wausau's heart source
Employment	Not originally from WI. Do not feel connected.	Work
Health care	Parades, events	Youth sports
Job	Partner and myself hometown	

7 - During the past year, how many times have you/members of your household experienced discrimination in Marathon County?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Don't Know		39	8.2%
None		335	70.4%
1 Time		24	5.0%
11-20 Times		7	1.5%
21+ Times		5	1.1%
2-5 Times		46	9.7%
6-10 Times		20	4.2%

Total Responses: 476

8 - The people with whom I currently work, or with whom I used to work, would say I have a strong work ethic?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		1	0.2%
Disagree		3	0.6%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		37	7.8%
Agree		155	32.6%
Strongly Agree		279	58.7%

Total Responses: 475

2017 LIFE Survey Data

9 - Do you get satisfaction from your current job, or the one you most recently had?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Strongly Disagree		3	0.6%
Disagree		24	5.1%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		70	14.9%
Agree		196	41.6%
Strongly Agree		178	37.8%

Total Responses: 471

10 - If you don't get satisfaction from your current job, which of the following are reasons for your dissatisfaction? (check all that apply)

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Not Applicable		182	36.6%
Low Wages		78	15.7%
Lack of Advancement		48	9.7%
Lack of Benefits		46	9.3%
Poor Work Environment		45	9.1%
Other		36	7.2%
It's Boring		19	3.8%
Too Few Hours		15	3.0%

Total Responses: 469

Text Entry

Bad Management	Hours working	Politics
Can't find people to work	Housewife/widow	Poor Management
Closed plant	I retired	Retired
Company Culture	Job Discrimination	Stress
Company was sold	Lack of respect for profession	The work ethic of up and coming fellow workers
Cruel, insensitive management & fellow workers	Lot of unhappy people	Too Many Hours
Don't work	Management	Too many hours (salary)
Extensive Overtime	Micro Manage	Travel
Good	Not enough help	
Health Insurance, I can't afford	Parking	

11 - If you've not had health insurance (Medicare, Medicaid, BadgerCare, Private Insurance) at any time during the past 12 months, which of the following is the most important reason?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Not Applicable		321	85.4%
Too Expensive		34	9.0%
Other		9	2.4%
Not Offered by Employer		7	1.9%
Don't Know How to Sign Up		5	1.3%

Total Responses: 376

Text Entry

Apparently my husband makes too much money	I have ins but expensive
Had insurance	I only had health care because I was on disability & medic aid.
Have	Medicine
have insurance	Retired 17 years

2017 LIFE Survey Data

12 - In the last 12 months, has there been a time when you or someone in your family should have seen a doctor, dentist, or mental health provider but didn't? If so, please indicate why. (mark all that apply)

Doctor

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Not Applicable		281	56.5%
Couldn't Afford		55	11.1%
Chose Not To		35	7.0%
No Insurance		16	3.2%
Other		13	2.6%
Distance/No Transportation		9	1.8%
No Appointments Available		9	1.8%
Didn't know how to Find a Provider		2	0.4%

Total Responses: 420

Dentist

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Not Applicable		258	51.9%
Couldn't Afford		80	16.1%
No Insurance		45	9.1%
Chose Not To		19	3.8%
Other		14	2.8%
No Appointments Available		6	1.2%
Distance/No transportation		3	0.6%
Didn't Know		2	0.4%

Total Responses: 427

Mental Health

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Not Applicable		324	65.2%
Couldn't Afford		31	6.2%
Chose Not to		18	3.6%
No Insurance		17	3.4%
Other		10	2.0%
Distance/No Transportation		5	1.0%
Didn't Know		4	0.8%
No Appointments Available		4	0.8%

Total Responses: 413

Text Entry

Co-pay too much	Have	High debt Health plan
Good	High copay	Not an issue

13 - Which of the following best describes your family/household medical debt?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
None		210	45.1%
\$1-\$999		101	21.7%
\$1,000-\$4,999		85	18.2%
\$5,000-\$1,0000		46	9.9%
\$1,0001+		24	5.2%

Total Responses: 466

2017 LIFE Survey Data

14 - In the past year, have you been concerned about someone in your family misusing drugs (prescriptions or illegal)?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Yes		28	5.9%
No		434	91.8%
Don't Know		11	2.3%

Total Responses: 473

15 - During the past year, in how many months have you/someone in your household:

Struggled to cover food expenses?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Don't Know		23	4.9%
Zero		380	80.5%
One-Two		33	7.0%
Three-Six		17	3.6%
Seven+		19	4.0%

Total Responses: 472

Missed/Was late with your rent/mortgage?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Don't Know		21	4.4%
Zero		409	86.7%
One-Two		24	5.1%
Three-Six		14	3.0%
Seven+		4	0.8%

Total Responses: 472

Missed/Was late with monthly bills (utilities, phone, etc.)?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Don't Know		18	3.8%
Zero		368	77.6%
One-Two		57	12.0%
Three-Six		24	5.1%
Seven+		7	1.5%

Total Responses: 474

Missed work, a medical appointment or other important event because you had no transportation?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Don't Know		19	4.0%
Zero		429	90.7%
One-Two		16	3.4%
Three-Six		4	0.8%
Seven+		5	1.1%

Total Responses: 473

2017 LIFE Survey Data

16 - If, during the past year, you or someone in your household missed work, a medical appointment or other important event because you had no transportation, which of the following caused this problem? (mark all that apply):

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Not Applicable		367	83.0%
No One Available to Drive Me		14	3.2%
Unreliable Car		12	2.7%
Couldn't Afford Gas/ Cab Fare		12	2.7%
No Car		11	2.5%
No Public Transport		11	2.5%
Other		10	2.3%
Unable to Drive		5	1.1%

Total Responses: 442

17 - Do you/your household:

Spend 30% or more of your total household income on housing (including rent/mortgage, utilities, home/rental insurance, and property taxes)?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Yes		220	46.1%
No		198	41.5%
Don't Know		59	12.4%

Total Responses: 477

Have enough of a savings/rainy day fund to cover your expenses for 3-months in case of sickness, job loss, or other emergency?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Yes		251	52.7%
No		190	39.9%
Don't Know		35	7.4%

Total Responses: 476

18 - In the past year have you:

Donated items or made a financial contribution to a charity?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Yes		415	87.2%
No		57	12.0%
Don't Know		4	0.8%

Total Responses: 476

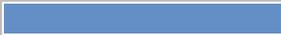
Helped individuals outside my household or/and volunteered in the community?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Yes		356	75.1%
No		109	23.0%
Don't Know		9	1.9%

Total Responses: 474

2017 LIFE Survey Data

19 - If you have NOT tested your well water in the last year, what are your main reasons? (mark up to 3 reasons)

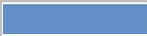
Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Not applicable		284	56.9%
I have been drinking water for years without any problems		94	18.8%
Other		36	7.2%
I didn't know it should be tested		35	7.0%
It costs too much		19	3.8%
I don't know how to have well water tested		16	3.2%
Dealing with problem is too expensive		15	3.0%

Total Responses: 499

Text Entry

Buy water	I Rent	The Dairy test water 2 times a year
Cannot drink our water	I'm having it tested	Was tested 2015
City water	It was new when we moved in	Was tested when we bought the place
Concerned about big dairy and run-off	It was tested	Water is treated
Concerned that pipes from house to municipal waters system are lead. (house is 117 years old)	My well has been tested	We are by Siemens and get rust in our water often. Please repair!
Do have water testing but every year	new well	We have an RU filter for drinking water
Hassle to do so	Past tests were always fine	We need our water tested in the last year
Have a dairy farm, water tested yearly	Pump replaced	We recently moved and the water was tested as part of the sale
have city water	Tastes ok	Well is only a few years old- not needed
Have Filters	Test every 3 years	Well was tested
Have treatment system (well water)	Tested 3 years have treated water	Will be done soon
I don't drink the city's water	Tested every year	Won't get around to it
I filter my water	Tested Feb. 2017	

20 - In addition to trash hauling, over the last year have you disposed of things by any of the following? (mark all that apply)

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Recycling		418	29.5%
Donating		338	23.9%
Re-using Materials		199	14.0%
Composting		162	11.4%
Using a medication drop box		121	8.5%
Purposely bought product with less packaging		92	6.5%
Proper disposal of hazardous waste		79	5.6%
Other		8	0.6%

Total Responses: 1,417

Text Entry

Always bring my own bags for shopping and groceries	Garage sale	I live on the outskirts
Boring	Give away	Marathon County solid waste disposal site
Disposal of old TVs, humidifiers, etc.	Harter's yard waste costs too much!!	Use reusable frequently

2017 LIFE Survey Data

21 - Please indicate how concerned you are about the following in Marathon County.

Drinking water quality

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		98	20.8%
Concerned		151	32.0%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		120	25.4%
Unconcerned		83	17.6%
Very Unconcerned		20	4.2%

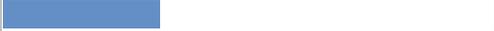
Total Responses: 472

Cleanliness of local lakes and rivers

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		120	25.5%
Concerned		213	45.3%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		91	19.4%
Unconcerned		38	8.1%
Very Unconcerned		8	1.7%

Total Responses: 470

Availability of drinking water

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		88	18.8%
Concerned		106	22.6%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		149	31.8%
Unconcerned		98	20.9%
Very Unconcerned		28	6.0%

Total Responses: 469

Air quality

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		85	18.1%
Concerned		150	32.0%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		129	27.5%
Unconcerned		90	19.2%
Very Unconcerned		15	3.2%

Total Responses: 469

Climate change

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		89	18.9%
Concerned		133	28.2%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		139	29.4%
Unconcerned		78	16.5%
Very Unconcerned		33	7.0%

Total Responses: 472

Energy conservation

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		87	18.6%
Concerned		196	42.0%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		127	27.2%
Unconcerned		46	9.9%
Very Unconcerned		11	2.4%

Total Responses: 467

2017 LIFE Survey Data

21 - Please indicate how concerned you are about the following in Marathon County. (Continued)

Soil erosion

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		58	12.4%
Concerned		148	31.7%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		190	40.7%
Unconcerned		57	12.2%
Very Unconcerned		14	3.0%

Total Responses: 467

Protection of open, natural areas

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		102	21.7%
Concerned		172	36.5%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		137	29.1%
Unconcerned		44	9.3%
Very Unconcerned		16	3.4%

Total Responses: 471

Failing septic system

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Very Concerned		46	9.9%
Concerned		91	19.5%
Neither Concerned nor Unconcerned		197	42.2%
Unconcerned		86	18.4%
Very Unconcerned		47	10.1%

Total Responses: 467

2017 LIFE Survey Data

22 - How tall are you?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
4' 2"		1	0.2%
4' 5"		1	0.2%
4' 9"		3	0.6%
4' 11"		3	0.6%
5' 0"		11	2.3%
5' 1"		15	3.2%
5' 2"		29	6.1%
5' 3"		24	5.1%
5' 4"		27	5.7%
5' 5"		66	13.9%
5' 6"		38	8.0%
5' 7"		36	7.6%
5' 8"		29	6.1%
5' 9"		31	6.5%
5' 10"		53	11.2%
5' 11"		21	4.4%
6' 0"		42	8.9%
6' 1"		13	2.7%
6' 2"		18	3.8%
6' 3"		6	1.3%
6' 4"		5	1.1%
6' 5"		1	0.2%
6' 6"		1	0.2%

Total Responses: 465

23 - What is your weight?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
100		2	0.4%
110		9	1.9%
120		16	3.5%
130		20	4.3%
140		25	5.4%
150		40	8.6%
160		45	9.7%
170		51	11.0%
180		49	10.6%
190		41	8.9%
200		37	8.0%
210		33	7.1%
220		23	5.0%
230		20	4.3%
240		13	2.8%
250		10	2.2%
260		4	0.9%
270		3	0.6%
280		6	1.3%
300+		16	3.5%

Total Responses: 463

2017 LIFE Survey Data

22 & 23 - BMI:

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Underweight (18.5-)		7	1.5%
Normal (18.5 - 24.9)		108	23.3%
Overweight (25.0 - 29.9)		181	39.1%
Obese (30.0+)		167	36.1%

Total Responses: 463

24 - In a typical week, how many times do you:

Participate in 30 minutes or more of physical activity (walking, running, swimming, etc.)?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
None		79	16.1%
1-2 Days		161	32.9%
3-4 Days		150	30.6%
5-7 Days		100	20.4%

Total Responses: 490

Eat a meal at a table with family and/or friends?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
None		68	13.9%
1-2 Days		102	20.9%
3-4 Days		94	19.3%
5-7 Days		224	45.9%

Total Responses: 488

25 - In the past 30 days, how many times have you:

Consumed 5 or more drinks on one occasion, where a drink is defined as a 12 oz. beer, 5 oz. wine, or 1½ oz. liquor?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
None		346	70.2%
1-2 Times		86	17.4%
3-5 Times		33	6.7%
6-9 Times		10	2.0%
10+ Times		18	3.7%

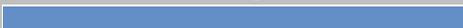
Total Responses: 492

Operated a motor vehicle after consuming 2 or more drinks in an hour?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
None		441	89.6%
1-2 Times		37	7.5%
3-5 Times		10	2.0%
6-9 Times		1	0.2%
10+ Times		3	0.6%

Total Responses: 492

26 - Do you have a least one person you can talk to if you have a personal problem?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Yes		460	94.5%
No		27	5.5%

Total Responses: 487

2017 LIFE Survey Data

27 - What is your gender?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Male		235	47.9%
Female		256	52.1%

Total Responses: 491

28 - What is your age?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
18-24		11	2.2%
25-34		52	10.5%
35-44		56	11.4%
45-54		65	13.2%
55-64		103	20.9%
65 and Older		206	41.8%

Total Responses: 493

29 - What racial or ethnic category best describes you?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Asian		16	3.3%
Black/African American		2	0.4%
Hispanic/Latino		2	0.4%
Native American		2	0.4%
Other		6	1.2%
Two or More Races		6	1.2%
White		455	93.0%

Total Responses: 489

Text Entry

American	Non-White American	Polish
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30 - How many years have you lived in Marathon County?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Less than 5 Years		37	7.6%
5-10 Years		48	9.8%
15+ Years		165	33.7%
Life-Long Resident		240	49.0%

Total Responses: 490

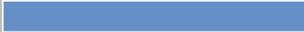
31 - What is the highest level of education that you've completed?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
No High School or GED		22	4.6%
High School or GED		133	27.7%
Some Tech. or College		110	22.9%
2 Year/Associate Degree		60	12.5%
Bachelor's Degree		91	19.0%
Professional or Graduate's Degree		64	13.3%

Total Responses: 480

2017 LIFE Survey Data

32 - What is your marital status?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Single		70	14.3%
Married		302	61.9%
Separated/Divorced		51	10.5%
Widowed		64	13.1%
Other		1	0.2%

Total Responses: 488

Text Entry

Great Girl Friend

33 - What is your household's annual income range?

Choice	Graph	Count	Percent
Prefer not to Say		64	13.3%
Less than \$15,000		36	7.5%
\$15,000-\$24,999		65	13.5%
\$25,000-\$49,999		98	20.3%
\$50,000-\$74,999		85	17.6%
\$75,000-\$99,999		48	9.9%
\$100,000+		87	18.0%

Total Responses: 483

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Section Summary Supplement

This section captures all six subcommittees' Success and Progress and Calls to Action submissions for the LIFE Report. These bullets were presented and used in the creation of the Healthy, Safe, Prosperous and Connected summary sections in the report. The submissions are listed here in their original format by their respective subcommittees.

Health and Wellness Subcommittee Summary

Success and Progress

- **Decreased number of uninsured:** The number of insured residents in Marathon County has increased, indicating that more residents are able to access needed health care services to prevent disease and treat health conditions before they worsen. LIFE Survey respondents reported decrease in medical debt compared to previous years.
- **Immunization:** Marathon County continues to have high rates of two year olds with up-to-date immunizations. Immunizations help prevent the spread of communicable diseases, benefiting not just the individuals but the community as a whole.
- **YRBS Data:** Youth Risk Behavior Survey data from all 10 school districts in Marathon County provides a rich local data source regarding the behaviors of our community's youth. The 2017-2019 LIFE Report marks the second collection of county-wide data, allowing for comparisons to prior years, and the first time middle school data is available.
- **Outdoor Recreation:** Marathon County is home to a number of parks, recreation, and open natural areas providing an abundance of opportunities for residents to enjoy the outdoors and be physically active. The majority, 80.8% of LIFE Survey respondents are satisfied with the availability of these outdoor spaces.
- **Preventive Clinical Care/Screenings:** Receipt of preventive health screenings such as mammograms and cholesterol checks, is high in Marathon County. Screenings are important for identifying health issues before they develop or worsen. Marathon County ranks 14th in clinical care among Wisconsin counties.
- **Dental Care:** Progress to improve access to dental care for Marathon County residents continues to be made. Two Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) act as consistent providers for Medicaid/BadgerCare patients and LIFE respondents report a decreased level of concern of the affordability of dental care compared to prior years.
- **Access to Health Care:** Access to health care, which helps ensure the health of residents, remains high in Marathon County with four health care systems located in the community and a primary care physician ratio better than Wisconsin's average. The majority of LIFE survey respondents report being satisfied with the accessibility of health care.
- **Decreased Tobacco Use & Increased Perception:** Progress continues to be made on reducing tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke in Marathon County. Perception of tobacco use, particularly among youth, is an important contributor to progress achieved. 89% of middle school youth report that their parents feel it would be wrong for them to smoke cigarettes.
- **Childhood Lead:** Marathon County has been proactive in adopting the Center for Disease Control's recommendation to intervene at lower blood lead levels in children. As a result, the average length of time to reduce a child's blood lead level to a safe range decreased and fewer young children in Marathon County are affected by the negative health impacts of lead exposure.
- **Low Birthweight Babies:** Marathon County continues to improve birth outcomes; particularly, the percent of babies born at a healthy weight increased. Positive birth outcomes provide children with a healthy start and minimizes their risk for health problems later in life.

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Section Summary Supplement

Health and Wellness Subcommittee Summary

Calls to Action

- **Substance Use:** Substance abuse and misuse continues to be of concern in Marathon County. Illegal drug use was the number one issue of concern among 2017 LIFE survey respondents and drug overdoses were the number one cause of injury related deaths among individuals aged 15-64. While alcohol remains the largest substance abuse burden in our community, rates remain unchanged among adults and youth. Furthermore, e-cigarette use is on the rise, yet, there is a low level of concern regarding their use.
- **Mental Health:** The mental health of individuals in Marathon County, especially youth, warrants attention as does the need for accessible mental health services. Suicide risk has increased among high schoolers as has the number of youth reporting feelings of hopelessness. Stigma, cost and a shortage of mental health providers (psychiatrists and dual certified therapists) remain barriers to accessing services.
- **Obesity:** Overweight and obesity rates continue to rise among Marathon County adults, putting them at risk for obesity-related chronic diseases. Youth are also at risk as the number reporting sedentary activities, such as video games, has increased in recent years.
- **End of Life Planning:** A lack of end of life planning persists both locally and nationally. As the Marathon County population continues to age, bringing awareness to the importance of advance care planning will be crucial.
- **Affordability of Health Care:** Affordability of health care, regardless of insurance status, remains a concern among Marathon County residents. LIFE Survey respondents who reported not having health insurance cited cost as the number one reason and even those who have health insurance report significant amounts of medical debt.
- **Falls:** Falls continue to be the number one cause of injury related hospitalizations and ER visits in Marathon County, particularly among residents aged 65+. Further concerning, the death rate due to falls has increased in recent years.

Basic Needs and Supports Subcommittee Summary

Success and Progress

- The community has responded to the increasing need for more food by donating to food pantries to address hunger in Marathon County.
- Effective performance by the Marathon County Hunger Coalition and the Housing and Homelessness Coalition has led to new programs to address basic food and housing needs.
- Emergency housing assistance recipients have seen increased housing stability. In 2016, 57% reported having housing stability 3 months after services were provided.
- The Coordinated Entry System in Marathon County, which prioritizes the most vulnerable chronically homeless, has resulted in more homeless people being housed.
- There has been a decrease in unmet needs. 92% of all needs request coming into the 2-1-1 system were met.
- The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program waiting list was re-opened in 2017 affording increased rental assistance opportunities for eligible families and individuals.

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

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Basic Needs and Supports Section Summary

Calls to Action

- More low-income affordable housing is needed. 46.1% of LIFE survey respondents stated that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing.
- Shelters and transitional housing options need to be expanded to bridge the homeless as they move toward permanent housing.
- Explore solutions to increase income for families. 84% of LIFE survey respondents indicated that they were concerned about availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses.
- Implement more “Housing First” programming to provide permanent housing solutions to homeless individuals and families.

Energy and Environment Section Summary

Success and Progress

- Since 2008, Marathon County Government has completed 42 energy conservation projects in collaboration with Focus on Energy and Wisconsin Public Service. Marathon County is committed to being an environmentally responsible county government which includes policies and programs that conserve energy, and reduce fuel, utility, and resource consumption. This approach saves tax dollars that can be redirected to support services to the public.
- Marathon County residents recognize the benefits to our ample and clean water resources. The 2017 LIFE Community Survey indicates that 70.8% of the respondents are either very concerned or concerned about the cleanliness of local lakes and rivers. The survey also revealed a high public awareness of the importance of protecting open and natural areas.
- Marathon County residents remain committed to reducing their waste and improving the health of our local environment. According to the 2017 LIFE Survey, 78.8% of Marathon County residents recycle, donate, re-use or compost waste.

Calls to Action

- To attract young professionals, Marathon County must consider ways to become more energy conscious and invest in programs—bike paths, recycling, conservation, renewables—that help individuals use energy more efficiently.
- Marathon County streams are contributing heavily to high levels of phosphorus in the Wisconsin River. We must educate county residents on the sources of the high phosphorous levels and successful mitigation strategies to bring these levels back with safe ranges.
- Too many residents with private wells in Marathon County are still unaware of the need to have their well tested annually to ensure the safety of their drinking water.

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

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Economic Environment Section Summary

Success and Progress

- Marathon County is a strong economy that positively impacts the greater region. The county had a gross regional product (GRP) of 6.1 billion dollars and 10.2 billion dollars in sales in 2014.
- Marathon County is a regional economic hub that provides job opportunities for county residents and commuters from outside of the county's borders.
- Individual industries play a key role in the strength of our economy. Manufacturing generated a 1.5 billion dollar gross regional products (GRP) which produced 5.1 billion dollars in exports. The Finance and Insurance industry reported an 800 million dollar GRP with 1.1 billion dollars in exports. Healthcare had a 700 million GRP with 716 million in exports in 2014.
- Marathon County ranked 10th out of all Wisconsin counties in direct visitor spending, or tourism, in 2015. From 2014 to 2015, spending increased 2.7%, totaling 235.9 million dollars.
- There were 71,000 jobs in the county during 2016. This was a 3.1% increase from 2014 and a 9.9% increase from 2010, at the height of the recent economic recession.
- The county's labor force participation rate remains strong at 69.2% and is above both state and national averages.

Calls to Action

- Training to Job Demand - from 2012 to 2022, the North Central Wisconsin Region can expect to add between 14,000 and 16,000 more jobs to its economy. Provide a workforce with in-demand skills (technical know-how or specialize skills) to fill upcoming vacancies created by retirement and additional, new job growth, especially in health services and education.
- Marathon County households have less in buying power than they did fifteen years ago. Since 2000, incomes have not kept up with inflation while housing prices and rents hit record highs. Single-parent households with two or more children are not even meeting living wage requirements. Housing and child care costs have the heaviest impact.
- Promote training and education to those able to fill higher paying job openings.
- Organizations need to pay a living wage that allows employees to participate in the local economies.

Education Section Summary

Success and Progress

- Young Star ratings of childcare quality have increased in Marathon County.
- Good Start Grants support the affordability of childcare.
- Over 90% of children entering kindergarten in Marathon County pass literacy screening.

Education Success and Progress continued on next page

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Section Summary Supplement

Education Success and Progress continued

Education Section Summary

Success and Progress

- Marathon County has increasingly diverse school enrollment.
- Marathon County poverty rates continue to run below the state average.
- Students in Marathon County continue to surpass state scores in reading proficiency.
- All districts in Marathon County have a higher graduation rate than the state average.

Calls to Action

- Since 2010, Marathon County has lost more than half of its regulated child care providers and a wait list exists in 82% of programs serving children under 2 years and 71% of programs serving 2-4 year olds.
- Even with financial support through grants and the Wisconsin Shares childcare reimbursement program, the affordability of childcare continues to be a significant barrier to many families causing parents to seek often unsafe, unregulated care or preventing parents from entering the workforce.
- Schools throughout Marathon County are struggling with managing mental health of children as a result of childhood trauma.
- Marathon County schools continue to serve high numbers of children in poverty in excess of 30% and some above 70%.
- Districts throughout Marathon County and the state are struggling financially due to lack of funding increases at the state level resulting in an increase of districts seeking relief through referendum.

Safety Section Summary

Success and Progress

- Wisconsin Department of Transportation is dedicated to reducing traffic injuries and fatalities by addressing factors that cause them. Most traffic crashes are avoidable events caused by distracted driving (texting/cellphone use), driving under the influence drugs/alcohol, speeding, human error, etc.
- The Marathon County AOD Partnership engages the public and media about substance abuse, while educating and providing expertise to policy makers.
- Tabulating data collection and analysis of issues affecting local, state, and federal government are effective tools in planning and implementing the next best practices to combat criminal activity.

Safety Success and Progress continued on next page

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

Section Summary Supplement

Safety Success and Progress continued

Safety Section Summary

Success and Progress

- Law enforcement has increased interaction with businesses offering information and instructions for protection and security for their employees and properties in an effort to minimize incidents. By cultivating awareness, law enforcement is helping businesses and people protect themselves against crime, further improving the safety of our communities.
- Marathon County has a compliance court for domestic violence offenders with the goal of reducing the level of violence and changing offenders' behaviors.
- Wisconsin has Safe at Home which is a statewide address confidentiality program for victims of actual or threatened abuse. More information can be found at safeathome@doj.state.wi.us.
- Area law enforcement has organized a task force to conduct Internet Crimes Against Children operations protecting our vulnerable from those who would prey upon them.
- 63.4% of LIFE Survey respondents feel safe alone in their neighborhood. This is an increase over 2015 and 2013 results.
- The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system is seeing increases in calls for service. Call reviews identified high utilizer patients requiring care that conventional EMS and health care do not meet such as social work, psychological, substance abuse assistance and homecare.

Calls to Action

- Marathon County's current addressing system was built in the 1980's and is structured on ten rural address grids, which have conflicts such as odd and even address numbers on the same side of the road; no sequential address numbering on one or both sides of the road; inconsistent use of compass directional data in road names; roads with the same or similar names; and duplicate addressing.
- Inconsistent and duplicate addressing creates challenges when there is an emergency services response requiring mutual aid and the responding agency is not aware of the local inconsistencies of the current addressing system.
- Identify the needs of the community through assessment and evaluation, followed by advocating for policy change, including pursuing legislative action.
- Awareness of the potential issues with crowdfunding. Crowdfunding provides an alternative to the traditional banking system by creating a forum for individuals, non-profits and small businesses to raise funds across a social network or private website quickly and easily. These unregulated sites occur outside the regulated banking and financial industry providing a potential platform for criminals to defraud potential victims.

LIFE Report of Marathon County: 2017-2019

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Connected Section Summary

Success and Progress

- The community has created initiatives to acknowledge and address racial divisions such as Toward One Wausau and The Unity Project. Toward One Wausau is a grassroots effort formed in 2016 of people of many backgrounds coming together for one purpose – to move toward a vision of “One Wausau” that works for all people regardless of race or ethnic background. The Unity Project focuses on creating an inclusive and welcoming environment.
- Recent remodeling investments and a commitment for new venues will increase Wausau’s standing as a regional arts destination. Marathon County currently features two world-class venues for the arts in Wausau, and more than 30 arts organizations across the county provide participation opportunities for individuals of all ages. There has also been an increase in cultural activities and events.
- Approximately 35% of Marathon County seniors age 65+ live alone compared to 44.8% for Wisconsin and 42.8% for the U.S. To address concerns about social isolation among seniors, particularly as the senior population continues to grow, a group of community volunteers are fundraising and developing plans for The Connections Place, a senior center focusing on education, exercise and entertainment. Efforts are also underway with the Wausau Public Library.
- For the 2016 national election, Marathon County maintained a significantly higher voter turnout (87%) than the state (67%) and country (60.2%).
- 95% of LIFE Survey respondents said they have at least one person whom they could talk to if they have a problem.

Calls to Action

- 55% of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with how welcoming the community is. That’s a 14-point drop from 2013 and an 11-point drop from 2015. Although family still is the top reason why people chose to live in Marathon County, the aging population and aging workforce requires that we attract additional younger workers. They will demand a friendly, open and diverse community. To effect change, leaders in business, education and government must support dialogue, tolerance and understanding.
- 43.5% of high school students who took the 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate they believe bullying at school is a problem, an increase from 40% in 2015. At the same time, 27.9% of high school students said they do not have a teacher or other adult whom they can talk to if they have a problem. Bullying, the pressures of social media and social isolation pose a threat to the security, confidence and self-esteem of our youth. Community and school officials should explore other successful anti-bullying efforts to supplement current initiatives.
- Increased availability of public transportation is needed throughout Marathon County. Currently, a public transportation system is only available in the City of Wausau, and it has limited hours on weekdays and no weekend service. Public transportation helps community members access employment, health care, shopping and other services. According to the Wisconsin Urban and Rural Transit Association, for every \$1 invested in transit, there is a return of \$3.
- Broadband access is crucial to keep up with trends in education, employment, health care and public safety. 40% of rural Wisconsin does not have broadband, according to the FCC. Costs of Internet services also tend to be much higher as areas become more rural. Marathon County needs to continue efforts to expand broadband services and improve affordability to increase access.