

COMMUNITY STATUS REPORT

Publication Year 2020 | Volume 21



Lubbock Area United Way





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PUBLICATION YEAR 2020 | VOLUME 21

For more than twenty years, Lubbock Area United Way has published the Community Status Report to present research and data on important community indicators. This report provides statistics on safety, economics, health, education, population, as well as a more in-depth look at local mental health. The featured section of the 2020 publication includes key findings from the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute's (MMHPI) comprehensive assessment of Lubbock's mental health needs.

Our hope is that access to this information leads to better awareness and understanding of some of the underlying issues and problems facing our community today. While this report will show various areas where improvement is needed, it also highlights progress that has been made across priorities and other areas of concern. By realistically assessing the needs of our community, we can begin to identify the additional resources and collaborations needed to achieve sustainable community improvements.

Now more than ever, this need for community collaboration is abundantly clear. As COVID-19 swept through the South Plains community, the needs of our neighbors shifted faster than ever before. While organizations across the community immediately began addressing these needs and filling service gaps across the South Plains, the existing issues many of our neighbors face on a "good day" were amplified. Sustaining programs, increased collaboration, and access to information and resources will continue to be crucial to effectively serve all in need.

Lubbock Area United Way has been at the forefront of community-wide awareness and impact for nearly 75 years. This is made entirely possible by partners willing to stand by our side to create long-term positive impact, and by a community dedicated to becoming the best it can be. With your support, we will continue *Giving • People • Hope*.

PRIORITIES & INDICATORS | 2

EDUCATION | 4

SAFETY | 6

MENTAL HEALTH | 8

POPULATION | 10

ECONOMICS | 12

HEALTH | 14

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE | 16

SOURCES | 18

PRIORITIES

Early in 2017, Lubbock Area United Way’s Board of Directors began updating the strategic plan for the organization. The decision was made to focus on external issues, considering the priority needs and issues in the community and what United Way’s role is in addressing them. The board worked to identify issues as well as goals and outcomes, consulting with expert practitioners in a variety of fields. Over a five month period of thoughtful consideration, the board determined that United Way should move forward in addressing the following three priority areas.

It should be noted there are some common themes that run throughout each area: awareness, advocacy, education, cooperation, collaborations and the importance of good parenting. Also, none of the solutions solely involve funding by United Way or other sources. Yet, an ongoing examination of how United Way invests donors’ contributions to best address the needs of the Lubbock area is of the utmost importance to continue a long-standing commitment of accountability.

Priority Issue	Areas of Emphasis	United Way Action
To ensure that all children are school-ready by kindergarten and are grade-level readers by 3rd grade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on ages 0-8 • Summer loss • Books in homes • Volunteer reading opportunities • Access to Pre-K • Adult literacy • Social skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a sustainable, long-term community-wide effort to raise awareness of the importance of parents reading to and with their children in early childhood. • Build awareness of the need to close the achievement gap between minority and low-income students and non-minority, more affluent students. • Utilize successful parents to serve as mentors and role models to other parents. • Target awareness efforts to reach private and home-based day care providers. • Continue and expand activities that promote the importance of proper social and emotional development to prepare children for school readiness.
To eliminate child abuse and sex trafficking in our communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention and awareness • Parenting education and empowerment • Mentoring of youth and adults • Fostering children under age 18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue current awareness and advocacy efforts aimed at child abuse prevention. • Provide opportunities for parents to learn proper parenting skills and the importance of those skills in breaking the cycle of abuse. • Build awareness of the difference between human trafficking and sex trafficking and the scope to which it now exists in the local area. • Advocate for more training of professionals and awareness with the general public to recognize and understand how to take action related to sex trafficking. • Address the lack of infrastructure of agencies and services currently available in the community that support foster children and foster parents.
To provide access to all persons in need of mental health services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Abuse • Homelessness • Infant and childhood mental health • Substance abuse prevention for youth • Adult education and treatment • Lack of infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a community-wide conversation to build awareness and acknowledgement and to eliminate stigmas related to mental health issues. • Identify and address current gaps in services related to detox, medications, aftercare, outpatient rehabilitation, homeless and youth. • Raise the awareness of existing services in order to assist those in need to more easily gain access. • Facilitate the formation of a working group of service providers to collaborate on funding opportunities. • Advocate for more funding of youth prevention programs within public schools. • Continue to advocate for infant and early childhood mental health and better educate and provide skills for parents.

INDICATORS

IMPORTANT INDICATORS	LUBBOCK		TEXAS CURRENT	COMPARED TO TEXAS
	PREVIOUS	CURRENT		
Born Healthy (Lubbock County) (TDSHS)	2014	2015	2015	
Onset of prenatal care in first trimester (per total live births)	65.9%	62.4%	59.7%	above ✓
Percent of babies born with low weight birth	9.8%	8.0%	8.2%	below ✓
Infant death rate (per 1,000 live births)	5.0%	5.0%	5.6%	below ✓
School Functioning (Region 17) (TEA)	2017-2018	2018-2019	2018-2019	
Retention (1st Grade), Non-Special Education	4.9%	4.2%	3.1%	above ✗
Retention (Kindergarten), Non-Special Education	4.6%	3.7%	1.7%	above ✗
Graduation Rate 4-Year Longitudinal Completion Rate (9-12)	95.0%	95.9%	90.0%	above ✓
Annual Dropout Rate (Gr 9-12)	1.7%	1.5%	1.9%	below ✓
College Readiness (Region 17) (TEA)	2017-2018	2018-2019	2018-2019	
Percentage of students at or above criterion in college entrance exams	18.5%	29.5%	37.9%	below ✗
Economics (Lubbock County)	2017	2018	2018	
Unemployment rate (Texas Workforce Commission)	3.2%	3.1%	3.9%	below ✓
Percentage of children in poverty (U.S. Census)	21.4%	17.5%	17.5%	same =
Percentage of adults in poverty (U.S. Census)	19.5%	20.1%	13.5%	above ✗
Persons without health insurance (U.S. Census)	16.0%	13.5	17.4%	below ✓
Percentage of adults 25+ with at least high school education (U.S. Census)	85.5%	85.8%	83.2%	above ✓
Percentage of adults 25+ with bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census)	28.7%	29.1%	29.3%	below ✗
Community Safety (Lubbock County)	2017	2018	2018	
Rape rate (per 100,000 population) (UCR)	56.2	85.8	51.9	above ✗
Aggravated assault rate (per 100,000 population) (UCR)	707	628	258	above ✗
Family violence rate (per 100,000 population) (UCR)	1,246	1,496	690	above ✗
Confirmed victims of child abuse rate (per 1,000 children)	13.5	14.5	8.8	above ✗



EDUCATION

*Region 17 is one of 20 regional service organizations created by the Texas Legislature and the Texas Board of Education in 1965. All Lubbock area school districts are located in Region 17.

★ LUBBOCK AREA UNITED WAY PRIORITY #1: TO ENSURE THAT ALL CHILDREN ARE SCHOOL-READY BY KINDERGARTEN AND ARE GRADE-LEVEL READERS BY 3RD GRADE.

For years, the Lubbock Area United Way has been committed to furthering early childhood education and literacy. This commitment was furthered by establishing the priorities listed above. By establishing events and initiatives such as *United We Read* and *Start Smart Texas*, Lubbock Area United Way continues to bring awareness to the importance of reading to and with children.

“The architecture of a child’s brain is built during his or her first 1,000 days, laying a foundation for long-term learning, health and behaviors. A weak foundation can have lasting impacts well into adulthood.” (*Children at Risk*)

START SMART TEXAS

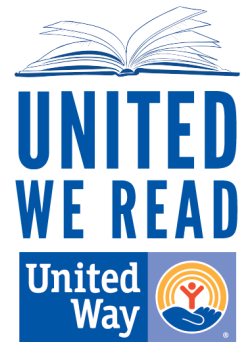
In 2019, Lubbock became one of 13 Texas cities that have joined the *Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (CGLR)* collaborative in an effort to improve reading proficiency and early school success for children from low-income families. This campaign is supported by a partnership of Lubbock Area United Way, Lubbock ISD, Frenship ISD, and Lubbock-Cooper ISD, with plans to expand the coalition over the next year. Events like the annual *United We Read* event will be a key component of this collaboration.



Start Smart Texas

Reading proficiency by the end of third grade is a critical milestone toward high school graduation and success later in life because it marks the transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.” **“Children who reach fourth grade without being able to read proficiently are more likely to struggle academically and eventually drop out of school.”** (*Kids Count*)

Membership in the CGLR Network gives Lubbock access to experts and policymakers focused on early school success, assistance in addressing the challenges that keep many children from learning to read, and access to the online Community Learning for Impact & Improvement Platform (CLIP), which is designed to lower the barriers and costs associated with spreading information about what’s working, why and under what conditions.



Lubbock Area United Way

SCHOOL READINESS

“High-quality preschool programs for 3- to 4-year-olds help set the stage for future skill development and well-being and learning, particularly for those from low-income households. These programs play an important role in preparing children for success and lead to higher levels of educational attainment, career advancement and earnings.” (*Kids Count*) Yet, **the price of infant care today is higher than public college tuition** in most states. (*American Progress*) Lack of affordable childcare



forces many parents to leave work, change jobs, or turn down job offers because of childcare obligations. Many more end up leaving their children with untrained family members or other caretakers due to lack of options.

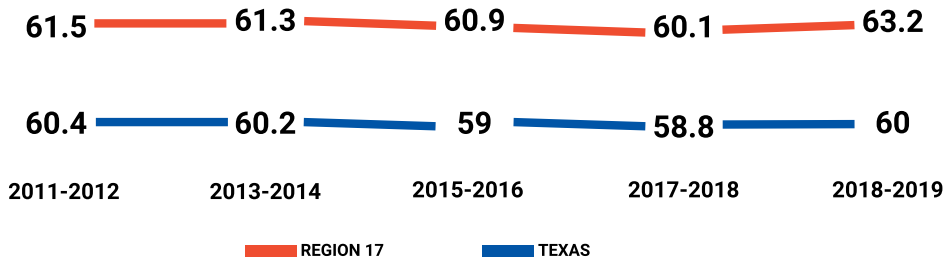
Of the 5,743 students assessed in Region 17, 55% were deemed Kindergarten ready in the 2018-2019 school year. (*TEA*)

The Early Learning Centers of Lubbock is the only childcare centers in Lubbock whose parent fees are based on a sliding fee scale, making quality childcare affordable to all parents. Of the families served in 2019, 68% say they have a better understanding of their child’s development and 95% of parents read to their children at least once a week which leads to advanced brain and education development.

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

Despite a slight drop in the 2017-2018 school year, Region 17 is once again showing significant numbers of economically disadvantaged children for the 2018-2019 school year. The current 63.2% rate is consistently higher than the state average of 60.6%.

PERCENTAGE OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS



Research shows growing up in poverty is one of the greatest threats to healthy childhood development. “It increases the likelihood that a child will be exposed to factors that can impair brain development and lead to poor academic, cognitive, and health outcomes.” (*Kids Count*)

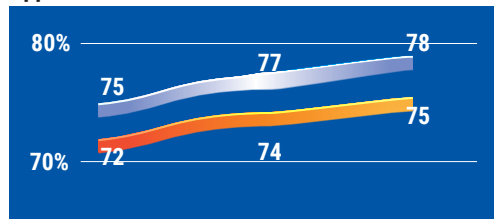
This is also significantly higher among different ethnic groups. “In 2017, the poverty rate among African-American and American Indian children (33% for both) was **three times the rate** for white and Asian and Pacific Islander children (11% for both). The poverty rate for Latino children (26%) was higher than the national average.” (*Kids Count*)

EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

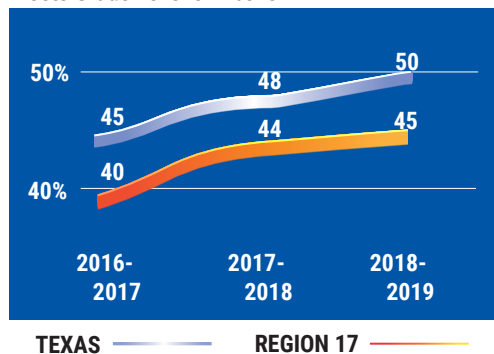
Despite improvements across the region and state, Region 17 continues to fall 3-4% behind the state average in the number of students who are scoring at approaching grade level, meeting grade level and above grade level. Our community should be watching these results closely after cancellation of 2019-2020 STAAR tests due to COVID-19. It is too soon

STAAR TEST RESULTS

Approaches Grade Level



Meets Grade Level or Above



to tell how this pandemic and the months of school-from-home will impact educational success for K-12 students.

On a positive note, there have been consistent improvements in graduation rates. “85% of high school students graduated on time in the 2016-2017 school year, the nation’s graduation rate reached an all-time high.” (*Kids Count*)

During the 2018-2019 school year, Communities in Schools of the South Plains provided case management services to 2,350 at-risk students, with 100% staying in school, 94% improving in academics, and 99% promoted to the next grade.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Another key component of childhood success comes from identifying other learning, social, and emotional needs that may be barriers to academic achievement. Research indicates that providing mentors or adult advocates for at-risk students is an effective strategy. Going beyond the classroom through partnerships with other organizations can help bridge the gaps the public education system lacks the resources to address.

Agencies such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boy Scouts, Lubbock Boys & Girls Clubs, Girl Scouts, Guadalupe-Parkway Neighborhood Centers, and United Way Youth Division through the Volunteer Center of Lubbock take student support beyond the classroom to help vulnerable students in need.



ADULT LITERACY

Adult literacy is key to a sustainable society. When individuals have the basic education they need for day-to-day life, they have the power to lift themselves out of poverty, find and keep sustainable employment, and ultimately take control of their lives.

Literacy Lubbock executes and supports programs that enable people to become literate on the South Plains. Over 400 individuals were assisted in 2019 through their Tiny Tots, English as a Second Language, GED Study, and Adult Basic Education programs.

Lubbock County has a 13% adult illiteracy rate.

(Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning)

SAFETY



LUBBOCK AREA UNITED WAY PRIORITY #2: TO ELIMINATE CHILD ABUSE AND SEX TRAFFICKING IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

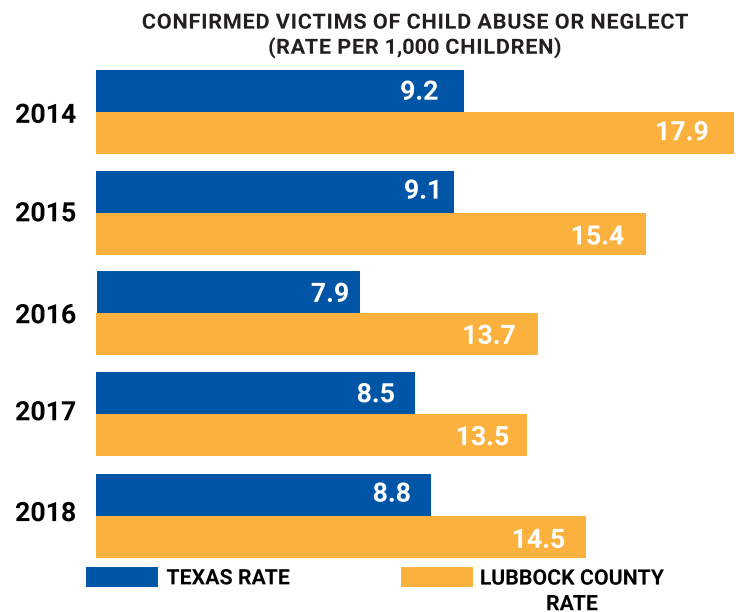
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

In 2019, Lubbock County had 1,217 confirmed cases of child abuse or neglect with **5 victims losing their lives** which is a significant increase compared to the average of 1-2 deaths seen over previous years.

Of the 612 children served by CASA of the South Plains in 2019, 68% received ongoing counseling. 22% received trauma therapy and 27% were prescribed psychotropic medication.

Children who are victims or witnesses of a crime are assessed by Children’s Advocacy Center of the South Plains. Through their forensic interviews, community education and outreach programs, and evidence-based trauma therapy, they were able to serve 5,976 children on the South Plains in 2019.

Prevention is the key to stopping child abuse and neglect before it occurs. The Parenting Cottage utilizes parenting education aimed at increase school readiness, decreasing the achievement gap among poverty and non-poverty households, and preventing child abuse and neglect. In 2019, they provided services to 420 individuals and families through their Parents as Teachers program.



SEX AND LABOR TRAFFICKING

Voice of Hope continues to spearhead efforts to address the issues of child and adult sex trafficking in Lubbock and the West Texas Region. Through their sexual assault intervention and prevention programs, hotline call management, and community education programs, they were able to assist 10,266 individuals in 2019.

Traffickers target locations youth frequent such as social media sites, schools, malls, parks, bus stops, shelters, and group homes. **Runaway or homeless youth, as well as those with a history of physical and sexual abuse, may have an increased risk of being trafficked.** (*Shared Hope International*) It is important to note victims are typically not kidnapped and taken into sex trafficking as portrayed across entertainment and social media channels. Instead, traffickers use the process of grooming their potential victims to build trust, provide for needs, isolate the victim, and essentially force them into trafficking. Often the trafficker is a family member or another individuals with legitimate access to the victim.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline has handled 51,919 cases since 2007. Of the 23,078 survivors identified in 2018, their records give insight into the systems and tactics that traffickers use to conduct their businesses. As demonstrated here, traffickers frequently prey on an individual’s vulnerabilities, and the data spotlights risk factors and recruitment tactics to recruit and keep them in a trafficking situation. (*Polaris Project*)

--TOP 5 --

RISK FACTORS FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Recent Migration/relocation - 3,516
- Substance Abuse - 710
- Unstable Housing - 593
- Runaway/homeless youth - 569
- Mental health concern - 530

METHODS OF FORCE, FRAUD, COERCION

- Isolation/confinement - 5,353
- Economic abuse - 5,019
- Threats of any kind - 4,677
- Emotional abuse - 4,007
- Physical abuse - 3,159

POINTS OF ACCESS TO POTENTIAL HELP

- Family/friends - 2,530
- Law enforcement - 1,242
- Health services - 861
- Mobile apps or social media - 717
- Child welfare system - 503

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

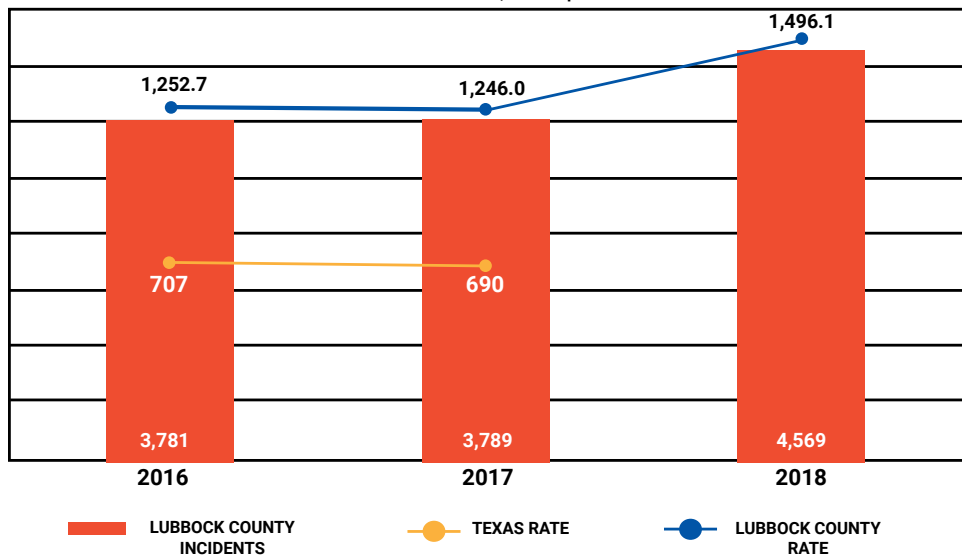
As referenced in the Indicators on page 3, **Lubbock County had more than double the rate of Family Violence** (1,496 per 100,000 population) compared to the state average (690 per 100,000 population) in 2018.

Family Violence is defined as an act by a member of a family or household against another member that is intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or a threat that reasonably places the member in fear of imminent physical harm. The reasonable discipline of a child is excluded from consideration as family violence. *(Texas Family Code)*

The Legal Aid Society of Lubbock’s Family Legal Services program exists to assist disadvantaged families with their legal needs. Of the 1,391 cases they assisted with in 2019, over 70% involved victims of domestic or sexual violence. Through their partnership with Women’s Protective Services of Lubbock (WPS), they are able to send an attorney to the shelter twice a week. Beyond this partnership, WPS was able to assist 11,126 individuals through their residential and non-residential programs and their community outreach and education.

FAMILY VIOLENCE RATES

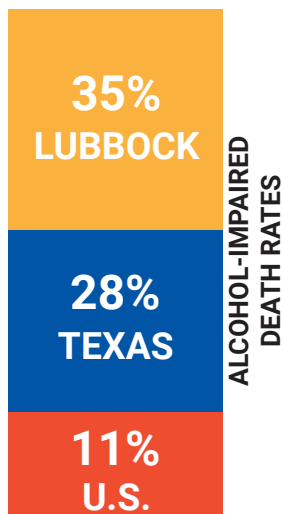
Rate is Per 100,000 People



ROAD SAFETY

Lubbock County had a higher rate of alcohol-impaired driving deaths (35% of driving deaths) than Texas (28%) or the United States (11%) *(Meadows)* For deaths in 2018, 80% were age 40 or under. *(TxDoT)*

In addition, in 2019, 412 motorcyclists were killed in Texas, and more than 1,800 were seriously injured. The number of motorcycle traffic crashes in the Lubbock area totaled 127 which resulted in 10 deaths and 21 seriously injured. *(KCBD)*



CRIME IN LUBBOCK COUNTY

Ongoing analysis from the Texas Department of Public Safety measures crime statistics year over year. In 2018, the rates of murder, rape, robbery, family violence, and child abuse and neglect were all up in Lubbock County. Meanwhile, rates of aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and auto theft were all down.

Compared to Texas rates, the Lubbock County rates are higher in every single area except for murder which has the same rate as the state. *(FBI and TXDPS)*

TYPE:	2016	2017	2018
MURDER	2.3	4.3	4.6
RAPE	65.8	56.2	85.8
ROBBERY	162.1	131.9	145.7
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	727.2	706.7	628.0
BURGLARY	974.7	871.0	800.3
THEFT	3,229.7	2,958.0	2,887.4
AUTO THEFT	380.4	449.2	406.7
FAMILY VIOLENCE	1,252.7	1,246.0	1,496.1
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT	13.7	13.5	14.5

*RATES PER 100,000 PEOPLE

LIFE AFTER DISASTER

In the event of a fire or other disaster, American Red Cross steps in to cover basic needs. They ensure each family has a safe place to stay, food to eat, clothes to wear, eyeglasses, medications, and other basic essentials. They are able to immediately intervene to move families onto the path of recovery. In 2019, they assisted 241 individuals after a crisis.



MENTAL HEALTH



LUBBOCK AREA UNITED WAY PRIORITY #3: TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO ALL PERSONS IN NEED OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

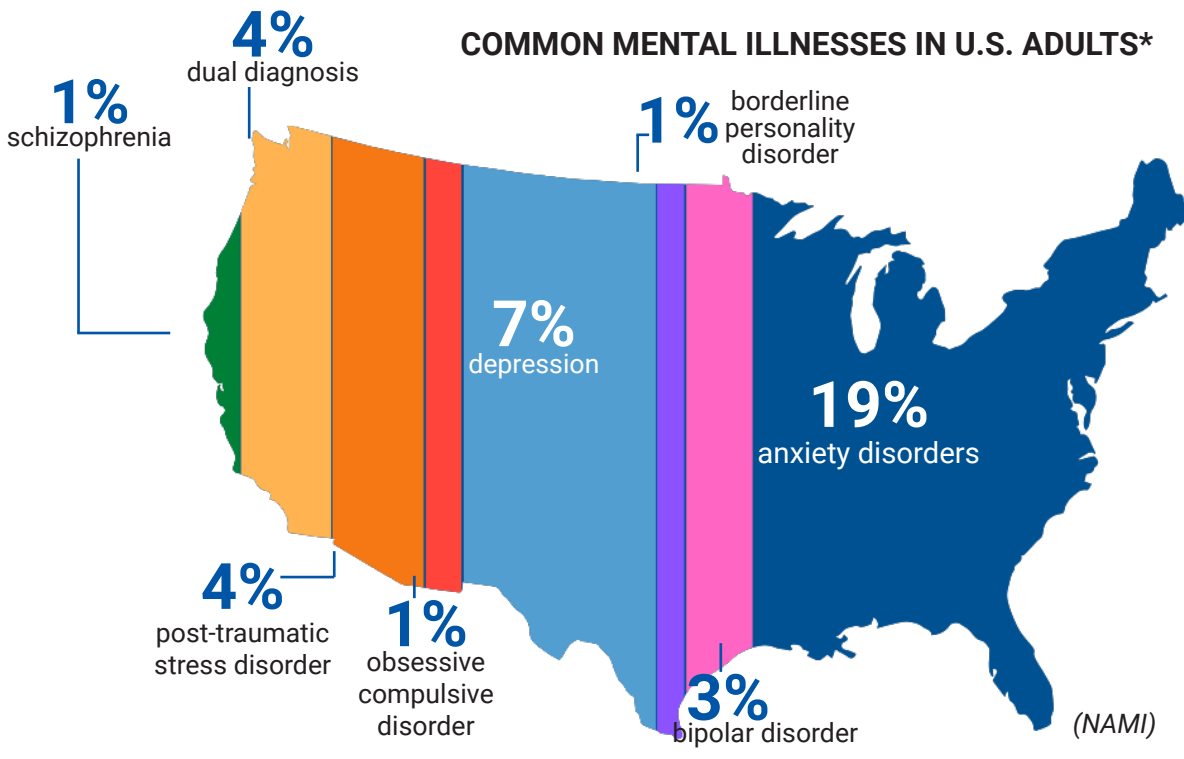
LUBBOCK AREA COMPREHENSIVE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

From December 2018 - July 2019, The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) conducted a comprehensive assessment of Lubbock’s mental health needs – and its capacity to meet them. With the support of the City of Lubbock, the Community Foundation of West Texas, Covenant Health System, Lubbock County, StarCare Specialty Health System, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, and University Medical Center, they conducted research, provided a detailed overview of their findings (both good and bad), and gave recommendations as to the direction the Lubbock community needs to go in terms of improving mental health services for its citizens.

While the full results are still being evaluated, initial findings include:

- Lubbock County has 21 psychiatrists, or 6.9 per 100,000 residents, approximately one half the national average.
- **There are no intensive outpatient treatment or partial hospitalization programs available to people with commercial insurance.**
- There is no first episode psychosis (FEP) program to identify and treat people experiencing a psychotic disorder at the earliest possible point – an important gap, especially in a community with a large college-age population.
- “Lubbock leaders from every sector are committed to fundamentally improving mental health care in their communities and, for at least two years, have engaged in ongoing discussions about strategies to make these improvements. Elected officials, public health officials, philanthropic organizations, the heads of major health systems, law enforcement leadership, academic leaders, social service providers, school districts, and others expressed a deep-seated desire to improve care for people with mental illnesses. **This cooperation among leaders is the most critical asset Lubbock has going forward.**”

As the full results are reviewed, it will be even more crucial for local stakeholders to collaborate and address the many mental health gaps currently existing on the South Plains. With estimates suggesting only half of people with mental illnesses receive treatment, it is more crucial that access to services for those in need are readily available.



*The graph shown is reflective of the participants surveyed who identified as having experienced one of the mental illnesses listed during the previous 12-month period.

YOUTH & MENTAL HEALTH

“The latest CDC data show that the U.S. life expectancy has declined over the past few years. Tragically, this troubling trend is largely driven by deaths from drug overdose and suicide.” (CDC) During this increase, youth suicides (those less than 25 years old) have also risen. (DSHS)

Mental health conditions are very common among teens and young adults. Staff at the Lubbock County Juvenile Justice Center (LCJJC) identified mental health as the most significant challenge for children in the juvenile justice system. It is estimated that 70% of kids in the juvenile-justice system suffer from a serious mental health disorder. (NAMI) However, **all 326 people age 0-17 years who were admitted to inpatient care were hospitalized outside of the Lubbock County area due to a lack of local treatment centers.** This could potentially lead to additional trauma by moving a child in need away from any local support system.

50% of all lifetime mental illnesses develop by age 14.

75% develop by age 24.

17% of youth (6-17 years) experience a mental health disorder

(NAMI)

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)

Issues such as child abuse or neglect, sex trafficking, domestic violence are all traumatic experiences that impact the victim for the rest of their lives. Trauma can change the make-up of your brain which makes preventing early trauma key to improving adult health. “Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood. ACEs can include violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems. Toxic stress from ACEs can change brain development and affect how the body responds to stress. ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood.” (CDC)

Preventing ACEs and early trauma is a potential key to helping children and adults thrive. Exposure to ACEs is associated with increased risk for health problems across a lifetime. Yet initial studies showed 61% of adults had at least one ACE and 16% had 4 or more types of ACEs.

1 IN 6

1 in 6 adults experienced four or more types of ACEs.

5 OF 10

At least 5 of the top 10 leading causes of death are associated with ACEs.

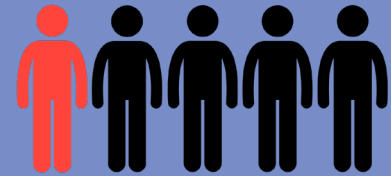
44%

Preventing ACEs could reduce the number of adults with depression by as much as 44%.

FAMILY COUNSELING SERVICES

Family Counseling Services (FCS) provides individual counseling in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, and victims of sex trafficking. They also provide group therapy services for substance abuse, domestic violence, life skills, parenting, and anger management.

COVID-19 put many of our neighbors at-risk for an increase in stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues. To adapt and continue meeting the needs of clients across the South Plains, FCS was able to switch to a telemedicine format. In 2019, FCS assisted 1,300 individuals through counseling services. While their current numbers are on track with last year, they are seeing a spike in family relationship, substance abuse, and domestic abuse themed sessions largely due to COVID-19.



1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness

LONELINESS AND COVID-19

A recent survey of more than 20,000 American adults found that nearly half report always or sometimes feeling lonely - a situation experts worry could worsen within social-distancing restrictions. Feelings of loneliness can increase risk of depression, anxiety, and are associated with a 26% jump in mortality risk. (TIME)

In addition, a 2017 study from the University of Pittsburgh found that people ages 19-23 who spent two hours or more a day on social media were twice as likely to feel isolated as those who spent less time. Another area that may increase due to a spike in social media usage during COVID-19 stay-at-home orders.

POPULATION



UNITED WAYS ACROSS TEXAS FIGHT FOR THE HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND FINANCIAL STABILITY OF **EVERY** PERSON IN **EVERY** COMMUNITY.

POPULATION GROWTH

Lubbock is the 11th largest city in Texas, the 2nd largest west of Interstate 35 and is projected to grow 7% through 2022. The 2020 Census estimates a total population of 312,832 for Lubbock County. By 2025, total projection is 331,839.

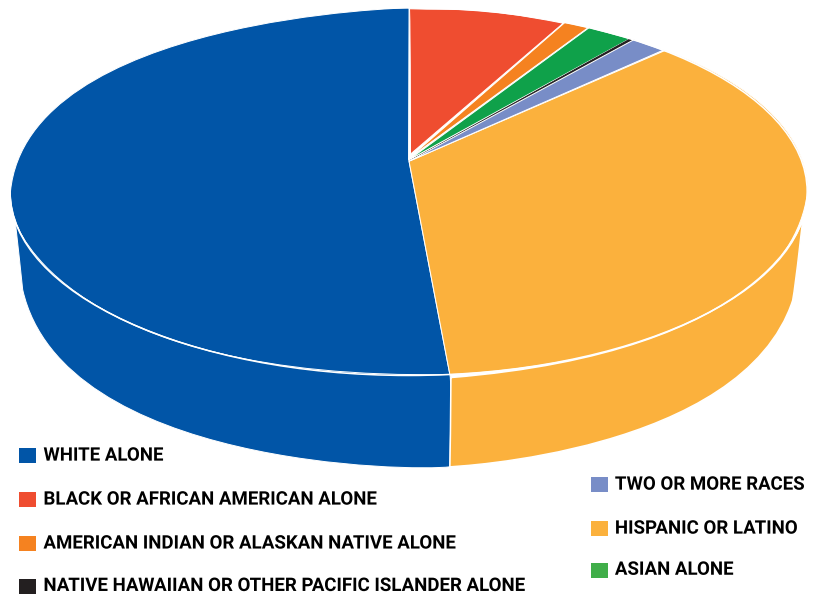
“Lubbock’s age structure differs substantially from the national and state patterns. This is mainly attributed to our large college-age population found at Texas Tech University. Over one-fourth of the City of Lubbock’s population (26%) falls between the ages of 21 and 34, compared to 19% for the U.S. and 20% in Texas overall.” (LEDA)

DEMOGRAPHICS IN LUBBOCK COUNTY

As seen across the state and nation, the overall population continues to shift. Texas’ hispanic population is on track to be the largest population group as soon as 2022. This trend is evident across the South Plains and in Lubbock County. The shift in overall population further emphasizes the need for nonprofits and organizations to ensure their leadership matches the demographics they serve.

In addition to this change, the median age in the City of Lubbock is 30.49. This compares to a median age of 35.22 in Texas and 38.65 in the U.S.

Ideally, results of the 2020 census will give the South Plains accurate demographic information to better reflect the community.



HOMELESSNESS

The Lubbock community has a long history of collaboration among organizations committed to serving people experiencing homelessness. The South Plains Homeless Consortium is vital in bringing together organizations and agencies committed to this issue. Their annual Point in Time count helps accurately track the local homeless population.

“For the third year in a row, the overall number of homeless individuals in Lubbock decreased. The number of homeless children counted was significantly greater than last year, as was the number of homeless individuals who were Black.” (Point in Time Survey)

The Salvation Army of Lubbock has programs and services to successfully address chronic homelessness, emergency sheltering, life-sustaining provision, and transitional/long-term housing solutions. All programs aim to remove barriers that prevent clients from achieving self-sufficiency and long-term life stability; because homelessness is often not a choice. “Homelessness is a symptom of many issues such as a lack of affordable housing, being under-employed or fully employed, lack of skills or education level, intergenerational poverty issues, mental health and addiction challenges and domestic violence.” (Salvation Army)



ALICE

ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mloyed – households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). Combined, the number of ALICE and poverty-level households equals the total population struggling to afford basic needs.

- Population:** 303,137 • **Number of Households:** 111,975
- Median Household Income:** \$49,136 (state average: \$56,565)
- Average 2019 Unemployment Rate:** 3.9% (state average: 5.6%)
- ALICE Households:** 23% (state average: 28%)
- Households in Poverty:** 19% (state average: 14%)

= **42%** **Total Families Struggling to Afford Basic Needs in Lubbock County**

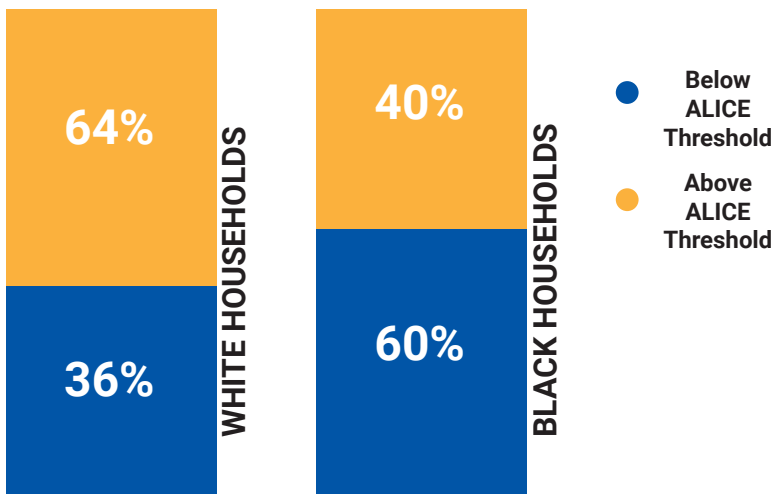
Why do so many households struggle?

Despite an average 3% unemployment rate (pre-COVID), over 40% of the population in Lubbock County struggles to make ends meet as demonstrated above. The number of adults and children living in poverty in Lubbock County is drastically higher than the Texas and U.S. average despite having better rates of the number of adults with at least a high school education.

In addition, data from United For ALICE shows the persistent and widening disparities in income and wealth between Black households and households of other races and ethnicities.

When 40% of American households do not earn enough to cover basic expenses, it proves a structural economic problem. Wages simply are not keeping pace with increases in cost of living across the nation.

Yet for Black households, those numbers are far higher. “Our analysis of the real cost of living in every U.S. count shows that **60% of Black households are unable to afford basic household essentials in their communities.** This is three times the rate shown by the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and **nearly double the rate of hardship for White households.**” (UWW ALICE; American Community Survey, 2020)



FOSTER CARE



The Department of Family and Protective Services is rolling out Community-Based Care (CBC) in different stages across the state. Lubbock is a part of Region 1 as designated by the state. Beginning January 2020, Saint Francis Ministries has taken over as the contractor for all of Region 1 and began implementing Stage 1 of CBC.

The focus of Stage 1 is for Saint Francis to develop a network of services and provide foster care placement services. They are charged with improving the overall well-being of children in foster care and keeping them closer to home and connected to their communities and families. Stage II (which provides case management for families and children) will be instituted after legislative action. (DFPS).

As previously discussed, Lubbock county consistently faces high rates of child abuse and neglect.

“The foster care system in Lubbock is strained by increasing numbers of children and youth removed from home. Meanwhile, the foster care system is also undergoing a significant transition as the region moves from a traditional state-run care model to the community-based care (CBC) model. Through the CBC foster care model, a private entity (Saint Francis Ministries), is now responsible for child placements and outcomes. Children in foster care are a particularly vulnerable population, and interviews revealed several issues in accessing care amid a significant recent increase in removals.” (Meadows Institute Report)

Collaboration among local service providers and existing groups like the South Plains Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention will be key in moving forward as the new system is built.

ECONOMICS



UNITED WAYS ACROSS TEXAS FIGHT FOR THE HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND **FINANCIAL STABILITY** OF EVERY PERSON IN EVERY COMMUNITY.

POVERTY & AFFORDABLE HOUSING

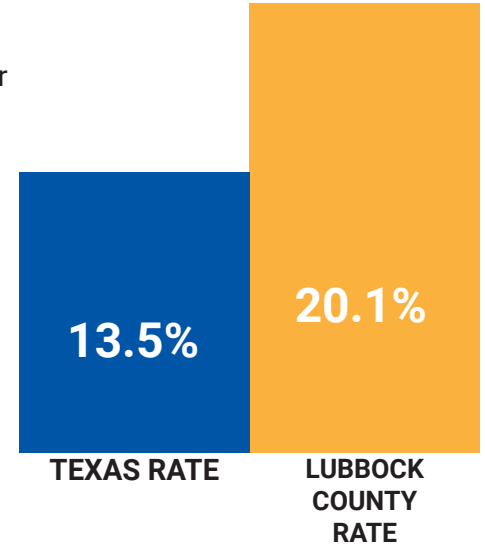
Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the median household income from 2014-2018 in Lubbock County was \$50,473. Yet the estimated household survival budget for a family of four in Lubbock County is \$51,864. (*ALICE Report*) This reflects the bare minimum a household needs to live and work today. It does not include savings for emergencies, future goals, or unexpected global pandemics.

Nearly one in five women (18.1%) aged 18+ in Lubbock County live in poverty compared to 16.2% of men. Almost 40% of multiracial or of another race live in poverty, and about 1/4 of Hispanic and Black women are in poverty. (*YWCA*)

“High housing costs weigh more heavily on low-income families, who are more likely to struggle with finding affordable housing, often spending more than 30% of pretax income on a home, whether they rent or own. Paying too much for housing limits the resources families have for other necessities such as child care, food, health care and transportation, as well as their ability to save and achieve financial stability.” (*Kids Count*)

Despite rising poverty rates and the struggle to find affordable housing, the Lubbock housing market continues to have positive growth. The median price for homes in 2019 was \$175,000 and there were 4,513 total sales. (*TAMU*) Of the 130,773 housing units in Lubbock County, 55.2% are owner occupied.

PERSONS BELOW POVERTY

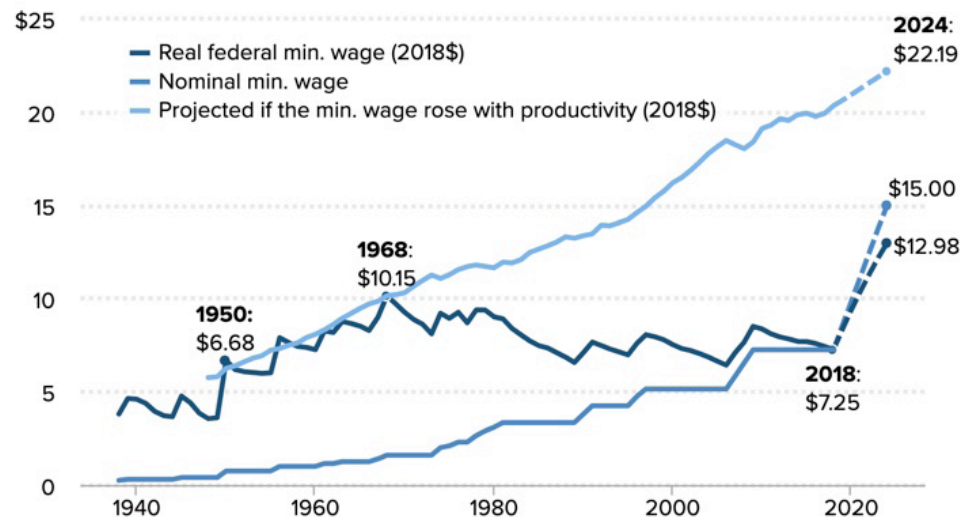


FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE

As previously stated, wages are not keeping pace with increases in cost of living across the nation. Thus, making it difficult for families to afford basic necessities and overcome systemic poverty. In 2018, the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 was worth 14.8 percent less than when it was last raised in 2009, after adjusting for inflation and 28.6 percent below its peak value in 1968, when the minimum wage was the equivalent of \$10.15 in 2018 dollars. (*Economic Policy Institute*)

“Even a full-time job at a low wage does not necessarily lift a family out of poverty. Not only does the federal minimum wage – last increased July 2009 – fail to provide a livable income, it is insufficient to provide families with any possible mobility out of poverty.

Without access to benefits and tax credits, a single parent with two children would need to earn \$9.87 per hour - \$2.62 more than the current federal minimum wage – working full time for 50 weeks per year just to reach the poverty level.” (*Kids Count*)



Real and nominal values of the federal minimum wage, and value if it had risen with total economy productivity, 1938–2018, and projected values under the Raise the Wage Act of 2019, 2019–2024 (*Economic Policy Institute*)

LUBBOCK ECONOMIC INDEX

END OF 2019:

- General real spending per sales tax numbers was up more than 4%.
- Auto sales saw a near 7% increase year-over-year with more than \$944 million going toward vehicle purchases. December alone saw a 26% increase in dollars spent compared to 2018.
- Hotel/motel spending increased nearly 4%.
- Travel at Lubbock Preston Smith International Airport jumped 8% with 544,257 people passing through.
- Building permit valuation total was up 27% for the year, equaling more than \$826 million.
- Home sales were up a modest 3%, but saw a 13% bump in December. Overall, 4,478 homes were sold in 2019, with the average cost coming in at \$209,127 for the year.

(Lubbock Avalanche-Journal and Lubbock National Bank)

SINCE COVID-19

- More than 17,000 people lost their jobs between March and April; more than 11% of Lubbock’s existing positions.
- April and May showed the largest month-to-month changes in the economic index since its inception, at 3.6 and 3.2 points respectively. As of the end of May, Lubbock’s economic index value is 152.9.
- “The airport showed a 50% drop in airline travel in March, a precursor to the staggering drop-off in April: in the whole month, only 2,345 people boarded a plane in Lubbock. The airport usually anticipates 40,000 passengers a month.” *(Fox34)*
- New housing construction remains strong with double-digit percentage year-over-year increases from January - May 2020.

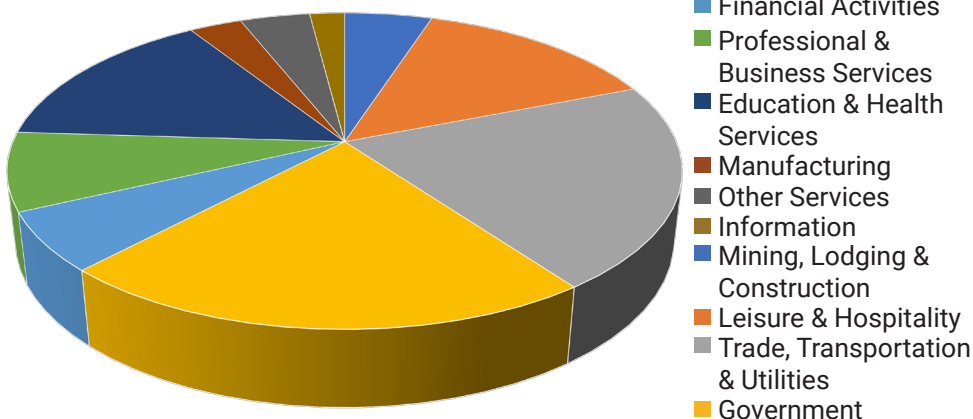
(Lubbock National Bank, May 2020)

The Lubbock unemployment rate fell to 3.1% in 2018 compared to a 3.2% rate in 2017. *(Texas Workforce Commission)*

Yet, the rate jumped to 10.0% in April 2020 during COVID-19. *(U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics)*

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

2018 Industry Composition



ECONOMIC MOBILITY

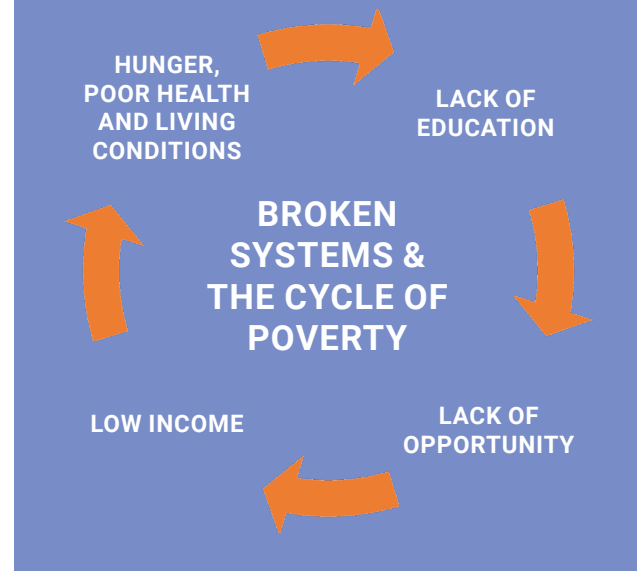
Through their Elderly Outreach and Parent Empowerment Programs (PEP), Catholic Charities aims to assist low-income families with services to help them become as financially independent as possible. They assisted 423 individuals in 2019.

Goodwill Industries’ mission is to create job opportunities for people with barriers to employment. Their Training, Placement, and Life-Skills (T-PALS program) served 408 individuals in 2019. This program carries out their belief that an individual’s life, the lives of their family, and their community as a whole, can be changed for the better through their ability to earn a steady paycheck.

Assisting families and individuals with getting out of poverty is key to community success. Living in poverty isn’t the result of a lack of hardwork. It is often the result of a collection of broken systems that are difficult to navigate.

Poverty is proven to have negative impacts on educational success, chronic illness, physical and emotional well-being, employment opportunities, homelessness, food insecurity, lack of healthcare, and so much more.

That is why equitable systems designed to assist families with economic mobility are crucial to improving South Plains communities.



HEALTH



UNITED WAYS ACROSS TEXAS FIGHT FOR THE **HEALTH**, EDUCATION, AND FINANCIAL STABILITY OF EVERY PERSON IN EVERY COMMUNITY.

DIABETES CRISIS

Upbring's Health for Friends Clinic is a nurse-managed clinic in Lubbock that provides quality services for people who might not be able to otherwise have access to health care because they cannot afford health insurance. Approximately 75% of the 1,751 patients seen in their clinic lack medical coverage to access health care. Often, this means their illnesses such as diabetes, high blood pressure, poor nutrition, high cholesterol, and obesity are left untreated. Upbring's nurse-managed clinics provide quality services to help address these issues.

Lubbock County had 28.6 deaths per 100,000 people from diabetes versus 20.3 for the State. Diabetes care can be compromised by untreated mental illness and there is a significant link between diabetes and depression as well, with depression occurring in 25% of people with diabetes. (*Meadows Report*)



DIABETES RATES
(PER 100,000 PEOPLE)

WOMEN'S HEALTH **all rates are per 100,000 women*

The physical and mental health outcomes among women vary across racial and ethnic groups in Lubbock County.

- **The mortality rate overall for Black women (273.5) is nearly double that of White women (145.7);** Hispanic women have a rate of 159.4.
- The mortality rate from diabetes is 82.7 which is 68.1% higher than the rate for Hispanic women and over three times higher than the rate for White women (18).
- White women have the highest suicide mortality rate, more than double or even triple any other race.
- In Texas, about 20 in every 100,000 women die from breast cancer with mortality rates ranging from 9.6 (Asian/Pacific Islander) to 28.4 (Black).

The YWCA's Women's Health Initiative (WHI) is the sole Breast Cervical Cancer Services (BCCS) provider for women age 50-64 (breast) and 18-64 (cervical) in the South Plains. 544 women received services through this program in 2019.

In addition, it is estimated 1 in 8 women experiences postpartum depression after having a baby. And women are more than twice as likely as men to get an anxiety disorder in their lifetime.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE

"Addiction to drugs or alcohol is a mental illness. Substance use disorder changes normal desires and priorities. It changes normal behaviors and interferes with the ability to work, go to school, and to have good relationships with friends and family. In 2014, 20.2 million adults in the U.S. had a substance use disorder and 7.9 million had both a substance use disorder and another mental illness.

More than half of the people with both a substance use disorder and another mental illness were men (4.1 million)." (*National Institute of Mental Health*)

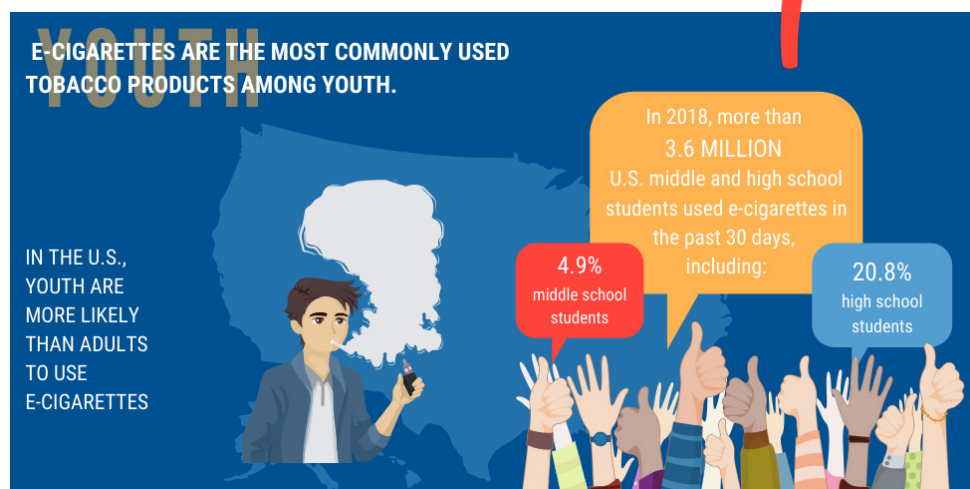
Lubbock has approximately one primary care physician for every 1,200 residents, compared to a Texas average of one for every 1,660 residents. (*Meadows Report*)

VAPING

Although some of this data is still up for debate, recent mental health findings show that vaping has negative side effects on a user's mental health. "E-cigarette aerosol generally contains fewer toxic chemicals than the deadly mix of 7,000 chemicals in smoke from regular cigarettes. However, e-cigarette aerosol is not harmless. It can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances, including nicotine, heavy metals like lead, volatile organic compounds, and cancer-causing agents." (CDC) In addition, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) are not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Starting in 2020, a total of 2,711 hospitalized e-cigarette or vaping, product use-associated lung injury cases or deaths have been reported to CDC from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories. Sixty of these cases resulted in death.

E-cigarettes have become very popular very quickly. This means there has not been time to get results from long-term studies on the safety or health effects of e-cigarettes.



VAPING & TEENS

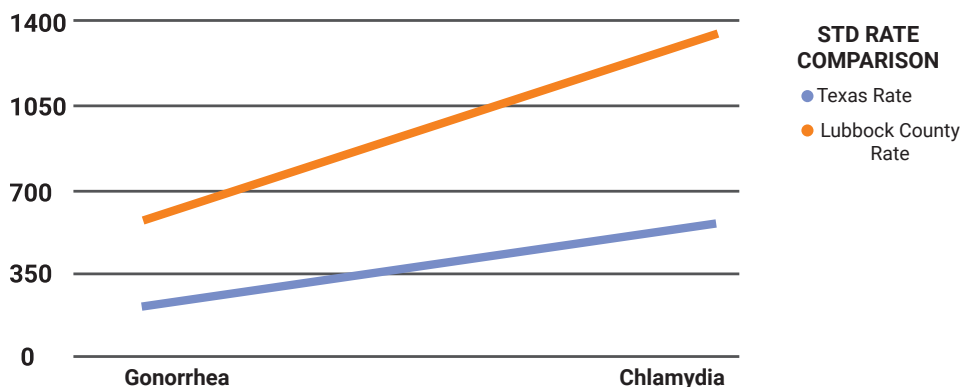
In 2018, more than 3.6 million U.S. middle and high school students used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. One of the primary concerns is that "each time a new memory is created or a new skill is learned, stronger connections – or synapses – are built between brain cells. Young people's brains build synapses faster than adult brains. Nicotine changes the way these synapses are formed." (CDC)

Specifically, "Vaping with or without nicotine has been shown to impact impulse control, especially in young adults whose brains have not fully developed yet. Some of these risks include mood disorders and permanent damage to parts of the brain responsible for memory, emotion and critical thinking." (Change to Chill)



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

Lubbock County ranked in the top 10 of Texas counties for cases of sexually transmitted diseases and in the top 20 for prevalence of HIV and AIDS cases. People suffering from these (often youth) have high rates of depression. (Meadows Report)



CHILDREN'S HEALTH

The Lubbock Children's Health Clinic has two medical clinics providing health care to children in two medically underserved areas of Lubbock County. Their goal is to ensure patients are receiving annual well-exams and needed immunizations despite their financial ability to pay. Their ability to provide children with a medical home and consistent patient care ensures medical conditions are diagnosed and treated correctly. In 2019, they provided 3,771 children with a medical home.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

EDUCATION

With the impact of COVID-19, all eyes seem to be on the education system. In-person and online learning options, the cancelling of the 2020 STAAR test, increased health and safety precautions, and the additional work placed on teachers and administrators all combine to create an overwhelming sense of uncertainty. In addition to being the largest provider of childcare in society, students and families also depend on schools for food, mental health counseling, child safety, socialization, and so much more. Despite this dependency on school systems for more than just a formal education, funding has not kept pace with this increase in community needs. However, some experts are hopeful that COVID-19 may just be the push needed to redesign an underfunded public education system.

Beyond the classroom, childcare providers are also in need of relief. Quality childcare is not only essential to a child's development, it is a critical pillar of the labor market and the economy. Parents depend on childcare for their younger children as well.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The price of infant care today is higher than public college tuition in most states.
- Region 17 is consistently higher than the state average when it comes to the percentage of economically disadvantaged students.
- 85% of high school students graduated on time in the 2016-2017 school year across the nation which was an all-time high.
- Lubbock County has a 13% illiteracy rate.

THINGS LUBBOCK AREA UNITED WAY IS LOOKING OUT FOR

- Impact of in-person vs. virtual learning on child development
- Federal funding and assistance for childcare providers
- Additional ways to expand the Start Smart network in Lubbock County
- Changes in after-school programs due to COVID-19

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Be on the lookout for education related **legislation** in the 2021 session and contact your representatives to voice your opinion.
- **Get involved** with an organization that supports childhood education: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lubbock, Boy Scouts of America – South Plains Council, Communities in Schools of the South Plains, Early Learning Centers of Lubbock, Girl Scouts of Texas Oklahoma Plains, Guadalupe-Parkway Neighborhood Centers, and Literacy Lubbock. Become a mentor or volunteer and walk alongside a child in need in our community. Also join in Lubbock Area United Way's annual United We Read event every fall to help encourage reading among area second graders.
- **Read** to your kids. Not only does reading aloud to kids improve their educational foundation, it also helps strengthen their social, emotional, and character development.
- **Thank an educator.** Our teachers and childcare providers do so much more than just educating our children. Take the time to write a note or give a small gift to a local childcare hero.



SAFETY

On a “good” day, many people across the South Plains are battling things like child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, sex trafficking, and other day-to-day crimes. While COVID-19 may have shifted the immediate needs to solving food insecurity, employment, and childcare, these other issues still existed and were in desperate need of help. In fact, they may be amplified as families deal with additional stress and isolation. Experts are fully expecting and preparing for increased rates of child abuse, domestic violence, divorce, and mental health to become obvious as things start to open back up.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Lubbock County had a significant increase in child fatalities due to child abuse and neglect in 2019 with 5 victims losing their lives.
- Lubbock County had more than double the rate of Family Violence (1,496 per 100,000 population) compared to the state average (690 per 100,000 population) in 2018.
- Lubbock County had a higher rate of alcohol-impaired driving deaths (35% of driving deaths) than Texas (28%) or the United States (11%).
- Compared to Texas rates, Lubbock County crime rates are higher in every single area except for murder which has the same rate as the state.

THINGS LUBBOCK AREA UNITED WAY IS LOOKING OUT FOR

- Increased/Decreases in safety issues due to COVID-19. Specifically, increases in reports of child abuse or neglect after schools reopen, increases in domestic violence, theft, robbery, and other crimes rates previously mentioned.
- The switch to Community-Based Care through Saint Francis Ministries and the impact on child abuse, neglect, and the foster care system.
- Local sex and labor trafficking community education opportunities with the Human Rescue Coalition.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Educate** – Learn how to spot signs of child abuse and neglect, sex trafficking, and domestic violence and what you should do if you suspect these things are occurring. De-bunk myths, stereotypes, and other misconceptions around these issues so you can help the problem. Contact us at 806-747-2711 or info@unitedway-lubbock.org to get connected with a training.
- **Get involved** with an organization that supports child and family safety – American Red Cross, CASA of the South Plains, Children’s Advocacy Center, Voice of Hope, and Women’s Protective Services.
- **Support Families** - Share resources such as parenting classes through the Parenting Cottage, encourage employees and co-workers to take time to attend school functions, help parents prioritize their own mental health so they can show up better for their children, and when you see something - say something.



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is an issue that effects so many other parts of our society. Ability to gain and maintain employment, child abuse and neglect, sex trafficking, family violence, homelessness, suicide rates, healthy relationships, and many issues beyond those listed here have direct correlation with mental health. With 1 in 5 U.S. adults experiencing mental illness, this should be an issue that is discussed way more than it currently is.

With the mental health needs assessment from The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI), Lubbock Area United Way can begin working with other groups on ways to improve access and services across the South Plains.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Lubbock County has 21 psychiatrists, or 6.9 per 100,000 residents, approximately one half the national average.
- 50% of all lifetime mental illnesses develop by age 14.
- All 326 people age 0-17 years who were admitted to inpatient care in 2019 were hospitalized outside of the Lubbock County area due to a lack of local treatment centers.
- 5 of 10 of the top leading causes of death are associated with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

THINGS LUBBOCK AREA UNITED WAY IS LOOKING OUT FOR

- The final version of the MMHPI report.
- Action items and community groups focused on mental health through partnership with the new West Texas Mental Health Collaborative.
- Clients served by Family Counseling Services and other mental health providers before and during COVID-19.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Fight the Stigma** – There is no shame in needing help to navigate mental health. Stigma around mental health creates environments of shame and fear that prevents many people from seeking treatment. Build your understanding and help cure the mental health stigma.
- **Get Help** – Family Counseling Services is one of several agencies ready and willing to help you navigate your mental health. Reach out and get help today.
- **Educate** – Curing the stigma is just one step in educating yourself on mental health. Learn the statistics, get involved, and find out how you can increase your understanding of mental health. You can take mental health first aid training to take your education to the next level. Contact StarCare Specialty Health System at 806-740-1421 to get started.



OVERALL

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- By 2025, Lubbock County's population is projected to be 331,839.
- 42% of families struggle to afford basic needs in Lubbock County.
- Lubbock County has a much higher percentage rate of persons below poverty (20.1%) than the state of Texas (13.5%).
- The Lubbock unemployment rate jumped to 10% in April 2020. Annual average is 3.0-3.2%.
- Lubbock County had 28.6 deaths per 100,000 people from diabetes versus 20.3 for the State.
- The mortality rate overall for Black women (273.5) is nearly double that of White women (145.7).

THINGS LUBBOCK AREA UNITED WAY IS LOOKING OUT FOR

- **2020 Census** – The census is our #1 community tool in ensuring we have the state and federal resources we need to accurately serve our population. The household information provided dictates how many state and national representatives we are allocated, how much state and federal funding our community gets for hospitals, roads, and free lunch programs, and so much more. This data sets the framework for the next 10 years so it is crucial we have a high response rate. The deadline for 2020 is September 30th. Visit 2020census.gov to respond.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** – Lubbock Area United Way is continuing to evaluate our role in diversity, equity, and inclusion across the South Plains. Taking this work beyond just a diversity statement is key and is at the top of our priority list.
- **2021 Legislative Session** – Planning for the next two years is more uncertain than ever. Many of our Community Partners and other nonprofits across the South Plains depend on funding from the state to carry out their programs and services. With anticipated cuts due to COVID-19, this is one of the many issues we will be monitoring over the next year.
- **Updated ALICE Report** - United Ways of Texas and United Way Worldwide are in the final stages of completing an updated ALICE report to give more accurate information across Lubbock County, the State of Texas, and the U.S. as a whole.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Volunteer** – Nonprofits across the South Plains depend on volunteers to run their organizations, serve clients, and further their mission. Yet, both the Texas and national rates of volunteers giving their time and talent to nonprofits have declined since 2002. Moreover, Texans have stopped participating at a higher rate than the rest of the country. Find a cause that speaks to you and get involved. The Volunteer Center of Lubbock is a great place to get started.
- **Give** – Financial gifts to the Lubbock Area United Way and other nonprofits help ensure greater program sustainability and are key to creating positive change on the South Plains.
- **Advocate** – Policies and legislation create the systems we live by every day. Find the issues you care about, do the research, vote, and speak up to legislators and representatives about what is best for your clients. A government is only as good as its people – so let's do our part.
- **Giving • People • Hope** – We never know the struggles each of us go through on a daily basis. COVID-19, racial injustice, and political unrest have our country in a state of turmoil. A little kindness, some grace, and a lot of hope can go a long way.



SOURCES

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American Progress
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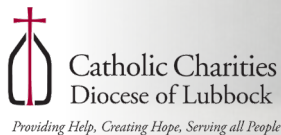
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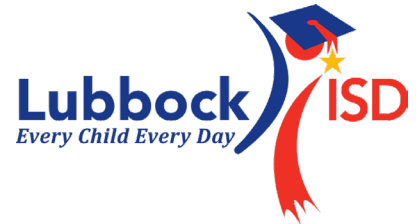
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