

Alexander County Public Health

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COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT — 2014 —



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Prepared by Alexander County Health Department · 338 1st Ave SW · Taylorsville NC 28681 · 828-632-9704 · AlexanderHealth.org
From the cover

Top right: Rock Face Mountain Recreation Area in Hiddenite offers residents opportunities for hiking, camping, picnicking, rock climbing, and offers educational opportunities so visitors can learn more about its unique plant and animal life.

Top Left: Held annually in March, Robin's Run 5K draws hundreds of participants to run the streets of Taylorsville.

Bottom: Created in 1927 with the completion of Oxford Dam, Lake Hickory covers 4,223 acres and provides Alexander County residents with opportunities for fishing, boating, and other watersport recreation activities.

Executive Summary

Overview

In the practice of public health, the health of the community is monitored and evaluated by examining key indicators such as leading causes of death, access to health care, and trends in health indicators such as physical activity. Every four years, the Alexander County Health Department conducts a state developed process known as the community health assessment (CHA). Findings from the CHA are used by the Health Department to conduct strategic planning and to guide collaborate community action addressing identified priority issues. The CHA is also used to meet the requirements for state accreditation of local health departments.

The 2014 Community Health Assessment is designed to:

- Show the systematic collection, assembly, analysis, and dissemination of information about health in Alexander County.
- Evaluate the quality of life in Alexander County with emphasis on health care.
- Identify trends in chronic diseases, causes of death, and high-risk behaviors.
- Define Alexander County's health assets, needs, and priorities

Data Collection

To build a comprehensive assessment, the Health Department utilized both primary (collected directly) and secondary (data provided by other identified organizations) sources to compile data.

- Primary data collection tool – the 2014 Alexander County Community Health Assessment Survey distributed to the public through Health Department website and social media as well as other distribution channels.
- Electronic and paper versions in both English and Spanish were used to facilitate broad participation.
- Secondary data gathered from local, state, and national sources were also gathered from outside organizations and were used in assessing the severity of health issues in the county

Ranking Priority Focus Areas

In November 2014, members of the Health Alexandrians Task Force reviewed data specific to the following nine areas:

1. Chronic Diseases Prevention
2. Substance Abuse Prevention
3. Mental Health
4. Access to Health Care
5. Healthy Lifestyle Choices
6. Violence Prevention
7. Injury Prevention
8. Responsible Sexual Behavior
9. Maternal Child Care

Members next reviewed the data obtained from the Alexander County Community Health Assessment Survey and ranked them using the following criteria: severity, magnitude, urgency, and intervention effectiveness. Because Alexander County is a

rural community with limited health care professionals, health disparities guided the discussion. Participants made recommendations for the top five health issues: Mental Health, Drug Abuse, Aging Population Issues (Alzheimer's, Dementia, etc.) Obesity, and Heart Diseases.

Final Selection

Participants of the final Priority Setting meeting in December 2015 made recommendations for the top three health issues to address in the next four years: Mental Health, Healthy Families, and Substance Abuse.

Mental Health

- Lobby for and seek additional funds for mental health care in the county.
- Increase education programs for suicide prevention.
- Increase public awareness of existing counseling resources for mental health.

Healthy Families

- Create public awareness/prevention campaigns to combat high obesity, cancer, and heart disease rates.
- Maintaining partnerships with other local agencies with significant community outreach to encourage healthier lifestyles.
- Synchronize CHA efforts with other strategic efforts in the city and county to establish and promote parks and recreational activities.

Substance Abuse

- Increase/maintain substance abuse prevention programs in Alexander County schools.
- Create a public awareness/educational campaign to stress that substance abuse is an equal-opportunity disease and is a gateway to many risk-taking behaviors and chronic health problems.
- Educate public on proper disposal sites of unused and/or expired medication.
- Work with health care professionals in the county in finding a method to regulate opioid prescriptions.

This report is available for download on the Alexander County Health Department website at www.AlexanderHealth.org , or by visiting the Health Department located at 338 1st Avenue SW in Taylorsville, NC.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leanne Whisnant, RN, MS
Alexander County Health Director



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Background and Introduction

Every four years the Alexander County Health Department completes a comprehensive Community Health Assessment as required by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. This assessment allows us to gather information used to better understand the community's health concerns, document health status trends, as well as to serve as a catalyst for developing strategies to assess community health problems.

Community Health Assessments are the foundation for improving and promoting the health of community members. The role of community assessment is to identify factors that affect the health of a population and to determine the availability of resources within the community to adequately address these factors. In 2014 the process consisted of three primary steps: survey the community, analyze the data collected, and select health priorities. While the county Health Department is the lead agency in conducting the assessment, existing community partnerships are utilized throughout the process to ensure the assessment truly reflects the community's needs. The Healthy Alexandrians Task Force is the group tasked with analyzing and determining which health priorities for Alexander County. The group is comprised of a mixture of government agencies, private industry leaders, the non-profit community, and interested community members who are concerned with the ongoing health needs of our community. These individuals, along with the Alexander County Board of Health, examined the survey results and health data to make a final determination of health priorities for the next four years.

Statistical data presented in the report represents the most recent information available at the time the assessment was completed. Health survey results vary and represent the opinion of the person completing the survey.



Alexander County Health Department

Community Profile

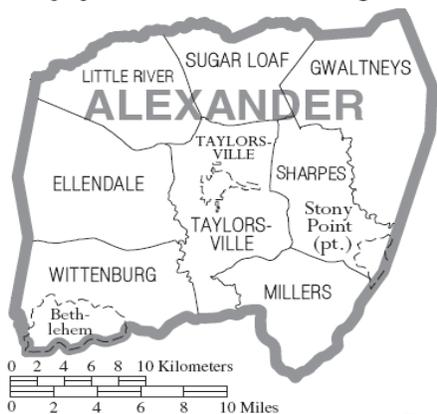
County Overview

Alexander County, North Carolina is located in the scenic foothills of North Carolina's Appalachian Mountains. Bordered on the south by the Catawba River, the county offers numerous recreational activities, upscale and moderate housing, and opportunities for industrial and commercial operations. Taylorsville, incorporated in 1851, is the county seat. Other townships include Bethlehem, Ellendale, Wittenburg, Stony Point, Hiddenite, Sugar loaf, and Vashti.



The county is comprised of 263 square miles, two-thirds of which is covered in farmland, with an average farm size of 90 acres producing commodities such as poultry, dairy, tobacco, apples, forestry products, grain crops, and beef cattle. Other primary industries include furniture, textiles, education, health services, professional, business services, trade, transportation and utilities.

Alexander County offers a variety of outdoor attractions for citizens and visitors to enjoy, whether it's hiking or rock climbing at Rocky Face Mountain Recreational Area, gem mining at the Emerald Hollow Mine in Hiddenite, swimming at Suncrest Water Park, running in one of the county's numerous road race events, boating or fishing on Lake Hickory, or riding your ATV at one of the county's all terrain parks. Alexander County strives to offer its citizens and visitors with numerous opportunities to remain active and fit.



Alexander County...the "Gem" of North Carolina.



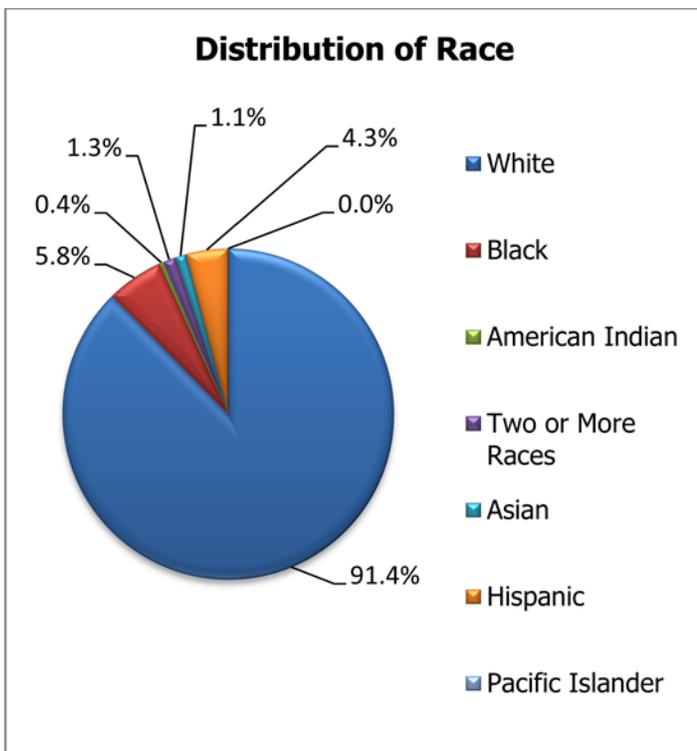
Rocky Face Mountain, Alexander County

Population Trends

The total estimated population for Alexander County for 2013 is 36,930, which is a slight decrease from the recorded 37,198 in 2010 Census data. The NC State Office of Budget and Management projects the county population to be 37,292 in 2020 and 37,202 in 2030.

Population Demographics

Distribution of Race



Distribution of Age

	Alexander County	North Carolina
5 Years old and Under	6.30%	7.48%
6 years- 19 years	17.55%	18.63%
20 years-64 years	58.92%	59.67%
over 65	17.23%	14.22%

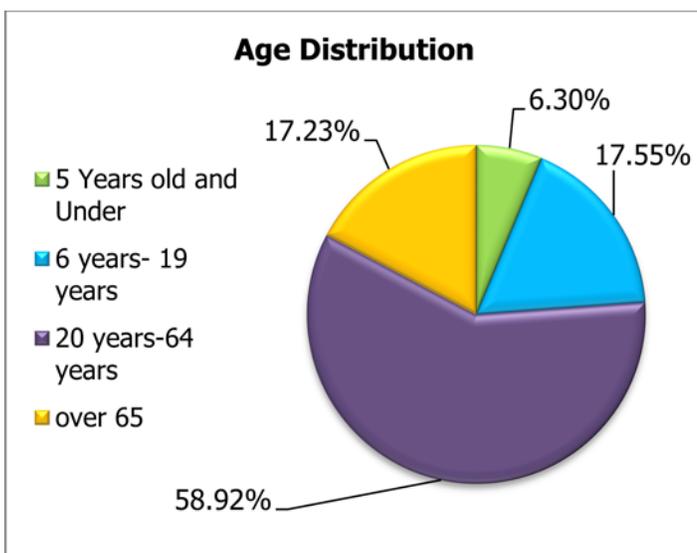
Gender Distribution

	Male	Female
Alexander County	50.70%	49.30%
North Carolina	48.70%	51.30%

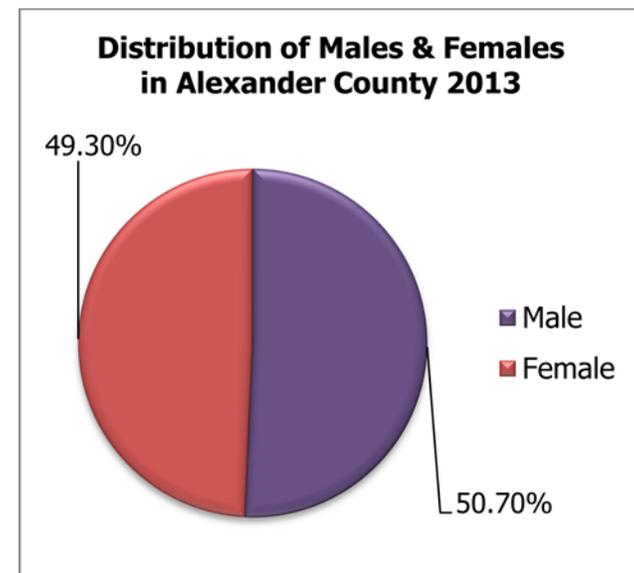
Distribution of Race

	Alexander County	North Carolina
White	91.40%	71.70%
Black	5.80%	22.00%
American Indian	0.40%	1.60%
Two or More Races	1.30%	2.00%
Asian	1.10%	2.60%
Hispanic	4.30%	8.90%
Pacific Islander	0.00%	0.10%

Age Distribution



Distribution of Males & Females in Alexander County 2013



Demographic Information Source: US Census Bureau

Education

- There are eleven public schools, ranging from the Head Start pre-k program to secondary education, and a campus of Catawba Valley Community College located in Alexander County.
- The Alexander County School cohort graduation rate is 79.3%, compared to the state 84.9% for the state. (Source: US Census)
- In 2014 the average SAT score for Alexander County was 1,439 (2,400 scale).

Educational attainment

80%

High school grad or higher

a little less than the rate in North Carolina: 85.2%

about 90 percent of the rate in United States: 86.3%

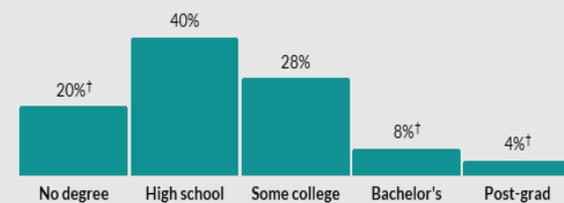
12.1%

Bachelor's degree or higher

about two-fifths of the rate in North Carolina: 27.6%

about two-fifths of the rate in United States: 29.1%

Population by minimum level of education



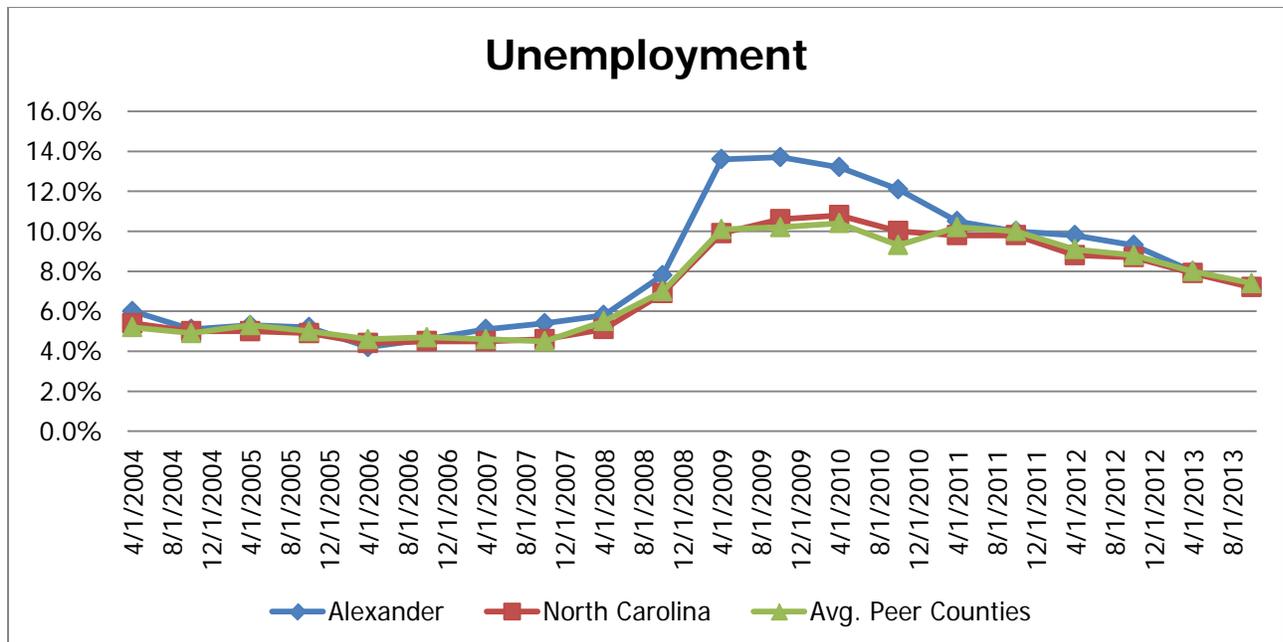
* Universe: Population 25 years and over

[Show data / Embed](#)

Source: US Census Data

Unemployment

Alexander County was dramatically affected by the economic downturn of the late 2000's. Fortunately, diligent work by leaders in the community has helped to lower the unemployment rate since the 2010 CHA. The "peer counties" described in the graph include the state required counties of Hoke, Jackson, McDowell, as well as the local health department selected counties of Caldwell, and Wilkes.



Source: US Department of Labor

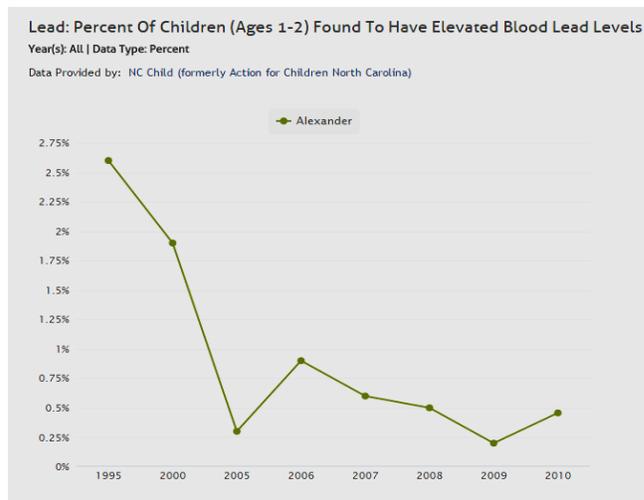
Poverty

Poverty and health are interrelated. Poverty is considered a key determinant of health because families and individuals who struggle financially often struggle with poor environmental conditions, low education attainment, financial barriers in accessing health services, and a lack of resources necessary to maintain good health status.

- In 2013, 15.1% of people between the ages of 18 and 64 in Alexander County reported incomes below the United States poverty level.
- In 2014, 15% of people lacked health insurance coverage, a key factor in access to proper health care services. (source: Enroll America)
- Education is also an indicator of poverty because studies have shown that those with college degrees often have higher paying jobs and are more educated on healthy lifestyles. As of 2013, over 60% of people in Alexander County only have a high school diploma or less.

Environmental Issues

In 2011, the average daily measure of fine particulate matter in the air, measured in micrograms per cubic meter, in Alexander County was 12.9 (slightly higher than the state average of 12.3). There were no reports of the population being exposed to water exceeding a pollutant violation limit during 2011. In 2010, the Kids Count Data System reported that 0.5% of the 1 – 2 year olds tested in Alexander County were shown to have elevated blood lead levels, a vast decrease from 1995 levels.



Source: Kids Count Data System

Access to Health Care

Alexander County is a medically underserved community. There exists a severe shortage of medical care providers in all medical areas. The ratio of health care providers to citizens in Alexander County compared to the state average is listed below.

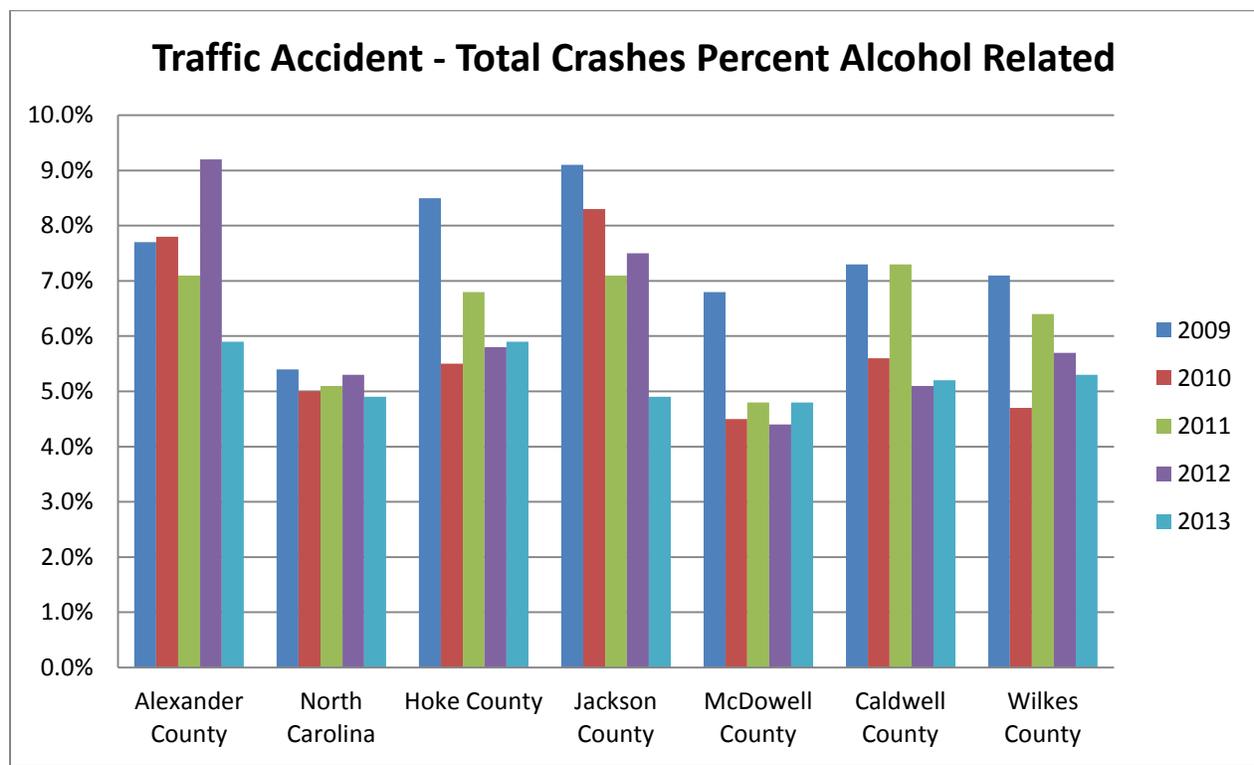
2012 Health Professionals per 10,000 Populations		
	Alexander County	State Average
Primary Care Physicians	2.9	7.6
Dentists	1.6	4.5
Pharmacists	6.7	10.1
Registered Nurses	29.2	103.8
Physicians Assistants	2.4	4.1
Occupational Therapists	1.1	2.8
Optometrists	0.3	1.1
Podiatrists	0	0.3
Psychologists	0.5	2.2
Physical Therapists	0.5	5.5

Source: North Carolina Health Professionals Data System

Areas of Success

Alcohol Related Crashes

In conjunction with our partner agencies, the percent of alcohol related crashes in 2013 in Alexander County was cut by nearly one-third from the high in 2012. The Arrive Alive Campaign fostered a partnership between the Alexander County Sheriff's Office and the Alexander County Health Department to educate and enforce alcohol laws within the county. While the current rate is still above the state average, significant progress has been made and work continues to reduce this number.

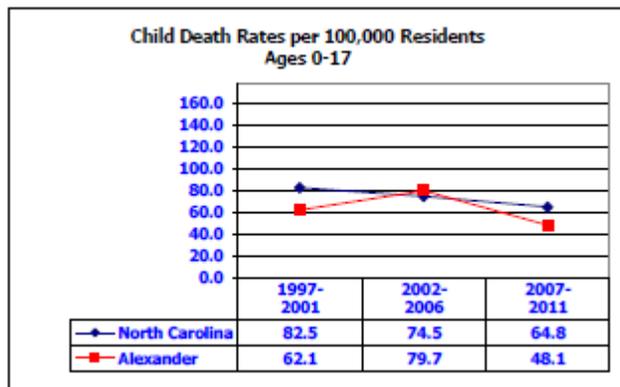


Source: Highway Safety Research Center (UNC-Chapel Hill)



Child Deaths

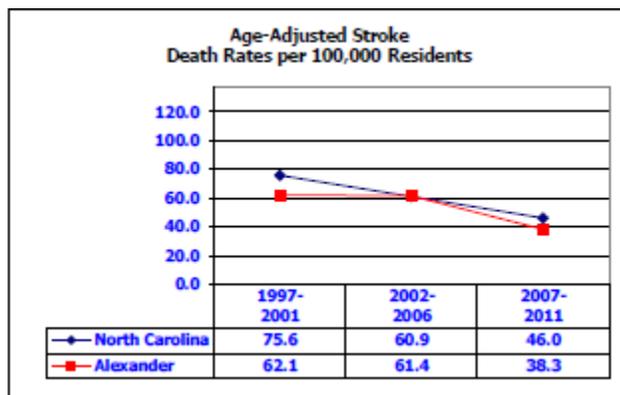
The child death rate for Alexander County has moved below the state average according to the most recently available data. After a small spike in 2002 – 2006, the child death rate for ages 0 – 17 has been reduced to 48.1 per 100,000 residents, a rate nearly 30% lower than the state average.



Source: NC Center for Health Statistics

Stroke

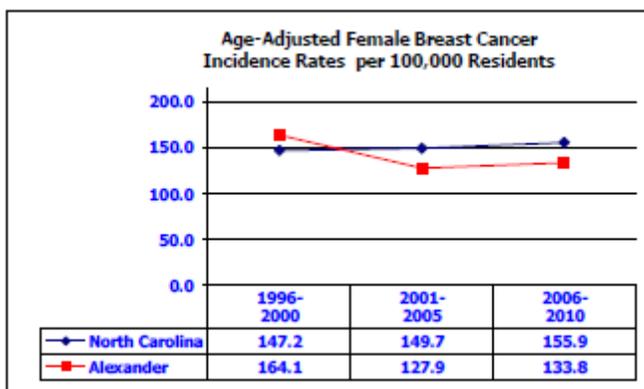
Stroke, caused by a blocked blood vessel or bleeding in the brain, continues to be listed in the top leading causes of death in Alexander County, although rates are decreasing. The Health Department and partner agencies are devoted to educating citizens on the signs and symptoms, and the importance of obtaining medical treatment as quickly as possible during a stroke.



Source: NC Center for Health Statistics

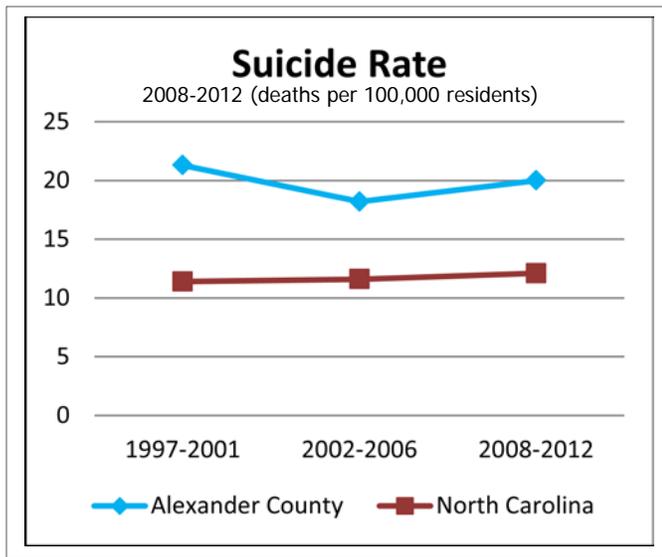
Breast Cancer

Cancer is the overall leading cause of death in Alexander County. However, female breast cancer rates are approximately 16% lower than the state average. The Health Department provides screening opportunities for clients and encourages self breast exams. Staff continually teach the proper techniques for self-examination to interested groups and individuals throughout the community.



Source: NC Center for Health Statistics

Areas of Concern



Source: NC Center for Health Statistics

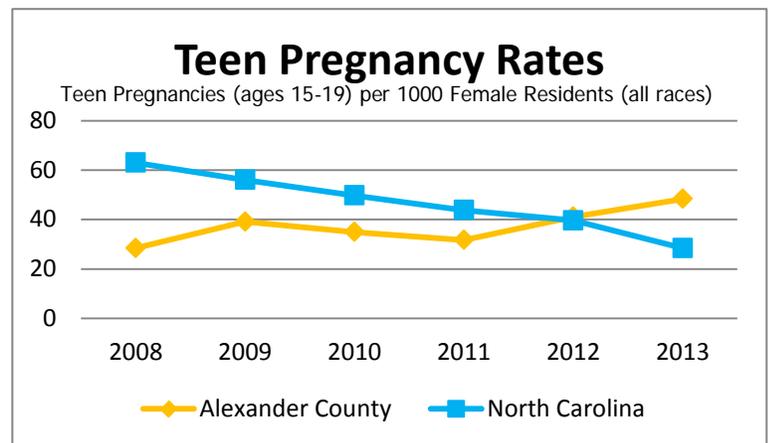
Intentional Self-Harm (Suicide)

The suicide rate in Alexander County during the years 2008-2012 was 20 deaths per 100,000 residents, making it one of the top 10 causes of death locally. This rate is 48% higher than the state average and the highest of any of our assigned peer counties. Untreated mental illness (including depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and others) is a leading cause for the majority of suicides. An overall lack of mental health resources exists in the county to address the needs of our citizens.

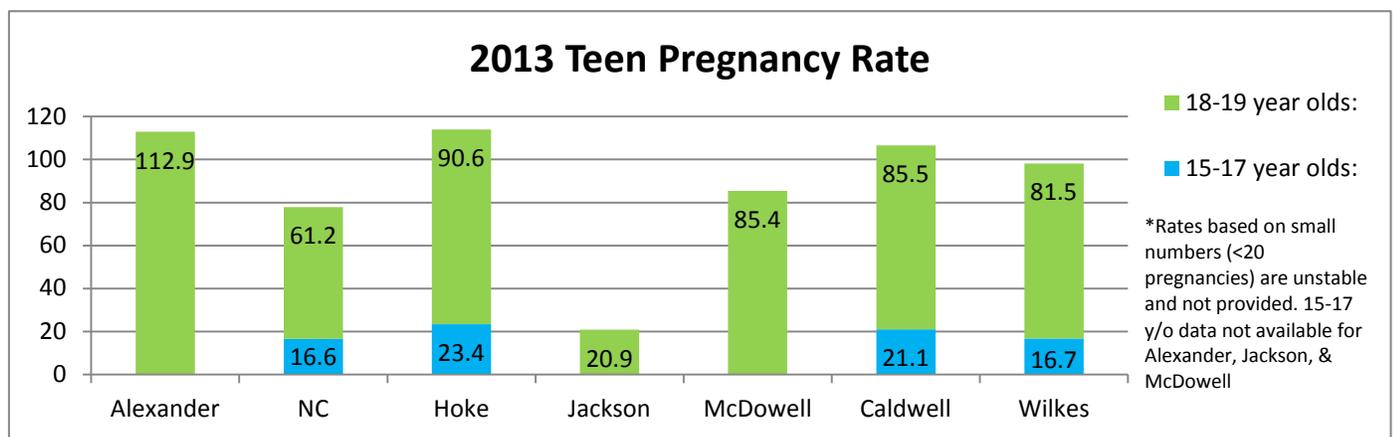
Suicide rate, along with other mental health issues is addressed in the mental health action plan.

Teenage Pregnancy

The teenage pregnancy rate in Alexander County surpassed the state average in 2012 and continued its upward trend in 2013. The rate locally is also higher than that of our assigned peer counties. Health Department staff continues to work with Alexander County Schools to educate students in an attempt to reduce this rate locally.



Source: Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC



Source: Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC

At-Risk Populations

Numerous documents and agencies define at-risk populations using different criteria. For the purpose of this document the planning group followed the definition outlined by the US Department of Health and Human Services, At Risk, Behavioral Health, and Human Services Coordination. Their definition states that at-risk populations include those that may have additional needs in one or more of the following functional areas: communication, medical care, maintaining independence, supervision, and transportation. This group also includes children, senior citizens, and pregnant women, as well as individuals who may need additional response assistance to include those who have disabilities, live in institutionalized settings, are from diverse cultures, have limited English proficiency or are non-English speaking, are transportation disadvantaged, have chronic medical disorders, and have a pharmacological dependency.

After collecting primary and secondary data, the planning group identified the following sectors of our population that may be at-risk of decreased health in Alexander County:

Adults and children in need mental health services- Limited mental health services are available in Alexander County. Those individuals who struggle with mental health and substance abuse have inadequate resources to effectively manage their mental health needs without traveling out of the county.

Individuals with limited transportation resources- With no hospital located within the county, and limited access to specialized medical services, those requiring specialized medical care must often travel out-of-county to receive services. With no private for-hire transportation options available, these individuals must rely on friends or family or services provided by Greenway Public Transportation. In 2014 Urgent Care of Mountain View opened the first true after hours urgent care facility in Taylorsville. This facility provides our citizens with the opportunity to receive care for acute illnesses and injuries after hours and on weekends without having to leave the county.



Urgent Care of Mountain View – Taylorsville Facility

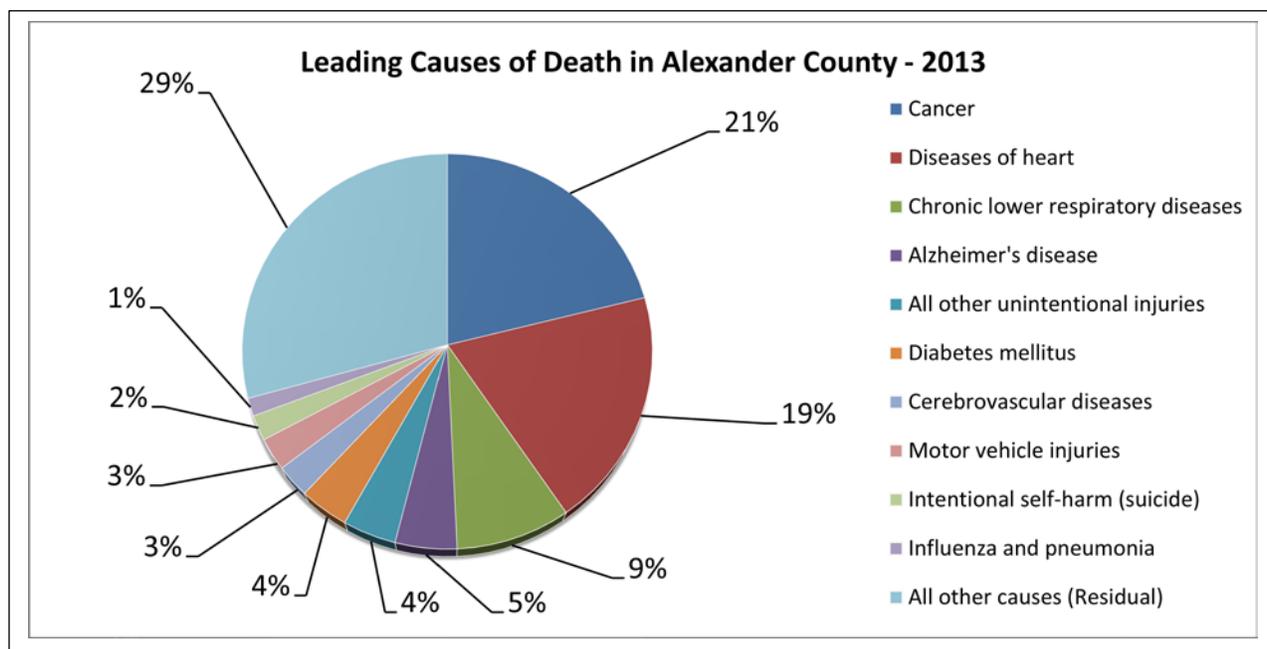
Low income/Uninsured- There are currently no “free medical clinics” located in Alexander County. Those individuals without health insurance needing primary care services are referred to out-of-county facilities by the Health Department. Often, there are transportation challenges for these individuals limiting their ability to travel such distances. The Health Department is working to address this challenge by offering more primary care services internally utilizing our sliding fee scale.

Mortality and Morbidity Information

The State Center for Health Statistics reports the top ten causes of death for each county annually. Alexander County's top ten causes of death (Figure 1) shows that cancer and diseases of the heart are once again ranked highest. This has been consistent for a number of years. Heart Disease and Cancer alone contributed to over 556,213 years of potential life lost in the State of North Carolina in 2013.

Figure 1

Trends in Mortality – Alexander County									
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Cancer	62	92	78	72	72	70	77	102	72
Diseases of the Heart	70	70	69	85	77	70	89	70	66
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	22	17	24	22	25	22	34	27	30
All Other Unintentional Injuries	10	14	17	12	14	14	18	9	14
Alzheimer's Disease	7	11	2	8	7	15	18	26	16
Diabetes Mellitus	6	8	7	8	7	8	10	15	13
Cerebrovascular Diseases	15	17	15	17	14	19	9	11	9
Influenza and Pneumonia	19	12	8	14	8	11	9	7	5
Intentional Self-Harm (Suicide)	5	12	4	8	11	5	7	9	7
Nephritis, Nephrosis	10	5	7	3	14	10	7	3	N/A
All other causes (Residual)	89	77	88	84	84	93	84	72	100
Total number of deaths	305	335	320	333	333	337	362	351	341



Source: NC Center for Health Statistics

Overview

In the 2010 CHA, diseases of the heart were the leading cause of death in Alexander County. However, in 2012 cancer took over the top spot and remained the leading cause of death in 2013. Ranking second and third in 2013 were diseases of the heart, and chronic lower respiratory disease. It is also important to note that deaths associated with Alzheimer's Diseases have increased significantly since the 2010 CHA. Diseases of the heart and cancer have been the leading causes of death in Alexander County for many years as indicated from the data in Figure 1 dating back to 2005. Cancer, diseases of the heart, and chronic lower respiratory diseases are also the 2013 top three leading causes of death in North Carolina.

Positive Trends

- There was a continued upward trend in the number of deaths caused by Alzheimer's disease from 2009 to 2012, but the number of deaths dropped in 2013.
- There has been a relatively downward trend in the number of deaths caused by cerebrovascular disease from 2010 to 2013. It was the 7th top leading cause of death in Alexander County, compared to its 4th place in the state in 2013.

Areas for Improvement

- Cancer and heart disease remain leading causes of death.
- From 2009 to 2013, the number of deaths caused by diabetes mellitus more than doubled in Alexander County.
- Suicide continues to be an significant issue in the county.

Cancer

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Alexander County, as it is in North Carolina. However, nationally and locally cancer mortality rates are gradually declining.

- Four cancers are responsible for almost 50% of cancer deaths: colon/rectum, lung/bronchus, female breast, and prostate. Between 2009 to 2013, these cancers accounted for around 44% of cancer deaths. (Source: NC Center for Vital Statistics)
- Risk factors for some cancers are well established such as sun exposure and skin cancer, smoking and lung cancer, human papilloma virus (HPV) and cervical cancer. While other cancers require early screening to detect.
- The prevalence rate of smoking is fairly high in Alexander county. In 2012, 21.8% of females and 29.6% of males reported smoking. In comparison, the national average for females is 17.9% and for males it is 22.2%. (Source: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation)

Risk Factors and Intervention

- Tobacco Use: Smoking and smokeless tobacco are responsible for the majority of all cancers of the lung, trachea, bronchus, larynx, pharynx, oral cavity, and esophagus. Despite the ban on smoking in public places, smoking continues to be a significant problem in the county. According to the 2012

Surgeon General's Report, tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

Nutrition and Physical Activity

- It is part of the Health Department's mission to promote health nutritional habits and proper physical activity as well as limiting alcohol consumption. These behaviors are also recommended by the American Cancer Society for cancer prevention.

Vaccines

- Cervical cancer is preventable through the use of a vaccine that is available for HPV. The Health Department is working to actively promote HPV vaccination in the county, especially among the teen/young adult population.

Screening

- The survivability of many cancers depends on early detection. Breast cancer is a good example of this. Stage at diagnosis is the most important factor in determining chance of survival. Therefore we continue to promote screenings for early detection.

Diseases of the Heart

Heart Disease is an umbrella term for the many diseases that affect the heart. In 2013 it was the second leading cause of death in Alexander County, a decline partially due to improved treatment options.

- The number of death incidences caused by heart disease in 2013 was 66, a drop from 70 in 2012. (Source: NC Center for Health Statistics)
- Diseases of the heart accounted for 19.4% of deaths in 2013, which was just below the state's average of 21.4%
- Although in the CHA Survey, residents of Alexander County listed drug abuse, obesity, cancer, mental health, diabetes, and Alzheimer's as all issues of greater magnitude, heart disease continues to be a serious issue in the community.
- Risk factors for heart disease include diabetes, smoking, overweight, inadequate physical activity, not eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, elevated cholesterol and high blood pressure. In the 2014 CHA survey, Alexander residents reported:
 - Elevated cholesterol – 25.05%
 - High blood pressure – 26.30%
 - Overweight or obesity – 35.82%
 - Diabetes – 9.75%
 - No physical exercise – 19.65%
 - Current smoking – 15.5%

Overweight/Obesity

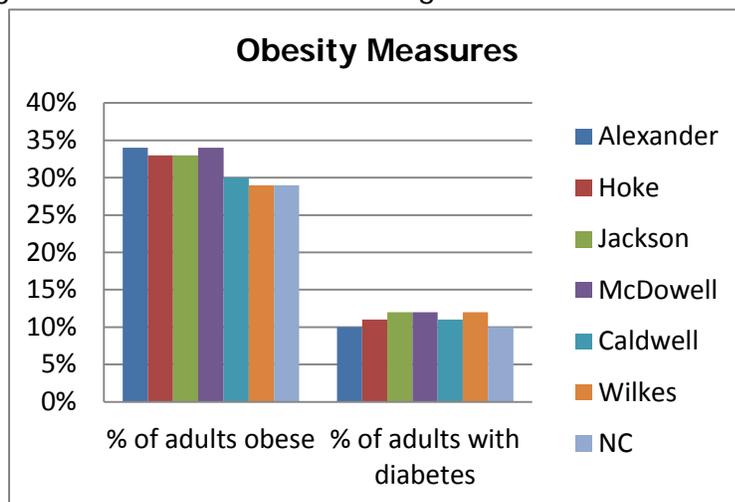
According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 78.6 million U.S. adults (20 years or over) are obese, which is about 34.9% of the population. In fact, North Carolina has one of the highest prevalence rates of obesity at 29.4%. Obesity has been linked to heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer, which are many of

the leading cases of preventable death. In addition, the estimated medical costs for individuals who are obese were \$1,429 higher than those at normal weight.

In 2014, an estimated 27% of the population in Alexander County was considered obese (BMI 30.0 or greater). This is slightly below the state average and significantly below national averages. (Source: County Health Rankings and Roadmaps)

Risk of Overweight/Obesity in Youth

Overweight/obesity is also a concern in the youth population both in Alexander County and around the country. In a 2014 Teen Health Survey (Appendix B) conducted among high school students in Alexander County, 13.18% of teens surveyed reported being overweight (BMI between 25.0 and 29.9) or obese (BMI 30.0 or greater).



Source: County Health Rankings – Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

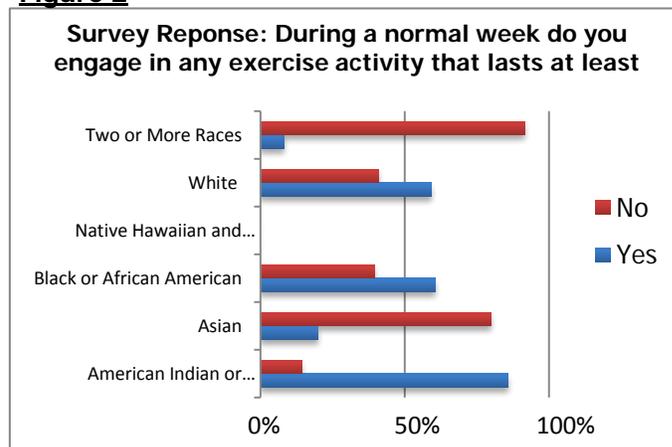
Physical Activity

Despite the proven benefits of physical activity, more than 50% of adults fail to get adequate physical activity. Physical activity is crucial in maintaining a healthy lifestyle because it helps with weight control and reduces the risk for a number of chronic diseases. Inactive adults have a higher risk for health issues including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, and some cancers. Physical inactivity is a serious issue in North Carolina. In a 2013 study conducted by the CDC, 24.9% of respondents reported that they failed to participate in physical activity for over a month.

In the 2014 CHA Survey, 41.89% of respondents in the county reported to not have engaged in regular weekly exercise that lasted as least half an hour.

Figure 2 is a breakdown of the responses regarding physical activity by race in Alexander County.

Figure 2



Source: Alexander County CHA Survey

Physical Activity Among Youth

- National guidelines call for being physically active at least 60 minutes on five or more days a week.
- In a 2014 Teen Health Survey (Appendix B) conducted among high school students in Alexander County, 53.02% of teens did not engage in regular weekly exercise.
- In addition, 72.04% of teens reported spending 2 or more hours watching television, playing video games, or using the computer for recreational purposes.

Health Data Collection Process

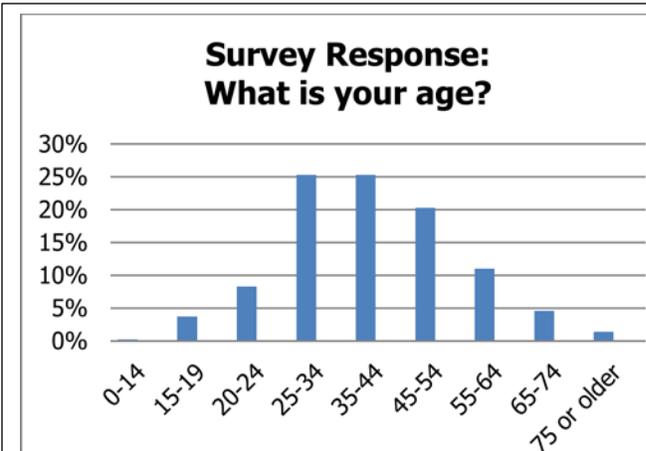
Residents of Alexander County were encouraged to complete a community health assessment survey from July 2014 through October 2014. The survey was available to residents in electronic and hard copy formats, was prepared in both English and Spanish, and was distributed widely throughout the community. The survey was distributed to Healthy Alexandrians Task Force members (for completion and distribution to their contacts), Alexander County staff (for completion and distribution to their contacts), a random sample of Health Department clients, the public at various community meetings, and citizens at several health fairs throughout the county. A link to the survey was available to the public on the Health Department's webpage as well as the Health Department and Alexander County Government social media outlets.

In an effort to involve the teenage population in the assessment process, the Health Department worked with William Cheung, Alexander Central High School senior, to survey the health priorities of the county's high school population. With the approval of school leadership, high school seniors were given the opportunity to complete a modified Community Health Assessment survey during the school day on November 5, 2014. This represents the first time that this number of high school students were specifically targeted for input in the assessment process. The survey results were presented to focus groups during the health priority identification and selection process.

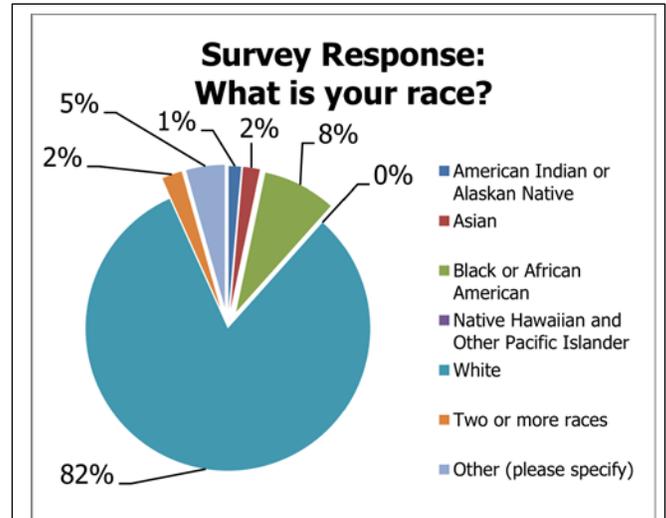
A total of 1,064 completed surveys were collected, analyzed, and presented to the Healthy Alexandrians Task Force and Board of Health for their consideration. All survey results were provided freely and without coercion. Survey answers were maintained anonymously and no individual identifying information was collected or used in the assessment process.

Demographic information of respondents is included on the following page. The Alexander County Health Department works diligently each CHA cycle to survey a diverse set of individuals that accurately represents our community. A breakdown of all survey responses is available in Appendix A found later in this document.

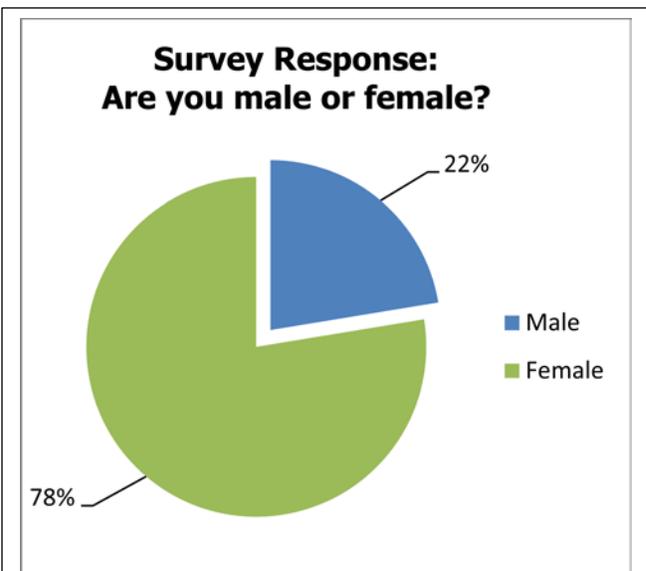
Survey Respondent Demographic Data



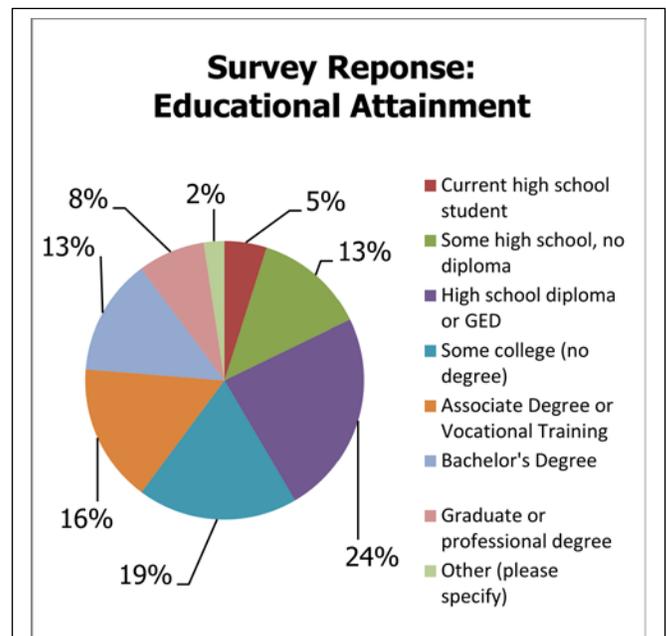
Information in the chart above does not include survey received from Alexander Cental High School respondents. All 539 of those respondents fall within the 15-19 age category.



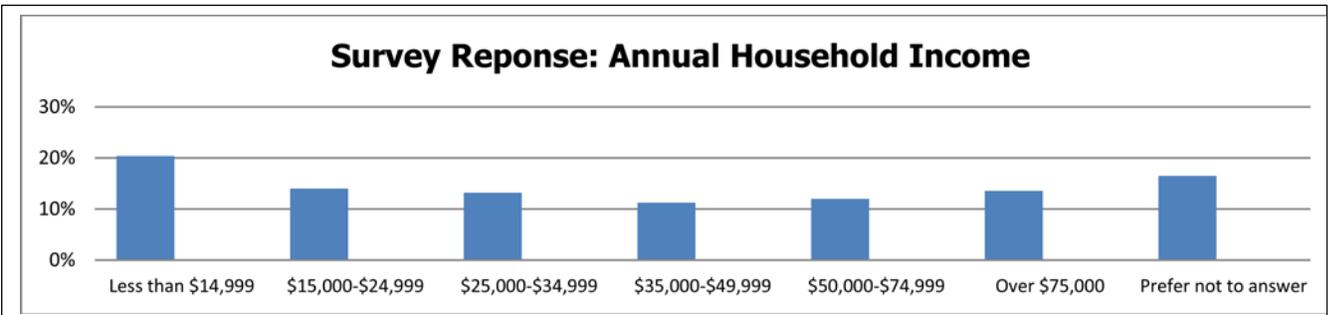
This data shows what race respondents report that they most identify with.



Survey respondents in the High School survey were 63% female and 37% male. Work will continue to increase participation within males in future surveys.



A fairly even distribution of educational attainment was reported by survey respondents.



Priority Selection

The priority selection process was completed through a partnership between Health Department staff, Health Alexandrian Task Force members, and the Alexander County Board of Health. Community opinion (primary data) information obtained from the Community Health Assessment (CHA) survey results were first collated and analyzed internally. Staff next compiled and analyzed secondary data to determine changes and trends in mortality and morbidity since the last CHA process in 2010. This information was shared with the Healthy Alexandrians membership who reviewed and voted on priority areas. The top five areas for focus identified during the November 2014 meeting were:

Mental Health
 Drug Abuse
 Aging Population Problems
 Obesity
 Heart Disease

The Healthy Alexandrians Task Force next worked to identify resources that were currently available in the community to address the top identified priorities. Resources and agencies to assist in the action phase for each priority area included:

Mental Health: Smoky Mountain LME, RHA Mental Health, school counselors, urgent care, churches, school resource officers, probation/parole, YMCA, Health Department, Neil Counseling Group, Barium Springs Home for Children, media outlets

Drug Abuse: Substance Abuse Taskforce, Health Department, local medical providers, Naloxone Program, Social Services, media outlets, Law Enforcement, RHA Mental Health, Smoky Mountain LME, school counselor, YMCA, churches, Barium Springs

Aging Population Problems: Senior Center, churches, ACHD Home Health, DSS, Christian Crisis Center, Salvation Army, food banks, Hospice, VA, nutrition sites, Smoky Mountain LME, RHA Mental Health, YMCA

Obesity: Community gardens program, walking trails, nutrition sites, Partnership for Children (Smart Start), Rocky Face Mountain Recreation Area, media outlets, YMCA, Health Department, school counselors, Social Services, school system, Cooperative Extension, Eat Smart Move More, farmers market, Shape NC Grant, media outlets

Heart Disease: Eat Smart Move More, local medical providers, Health Department, school counselors, EMS, churches, media outlets, Cooperative Extension, local parks, YMCA, child care providers, Alexander County Parks and Recreation

In December 2014, the Alexander County Board of Health reviewed CHA survey data, secondary data, and Healthy Alexandrians Task Force recommendations and determined the final section of CHA focus areas.

1 Mental Health

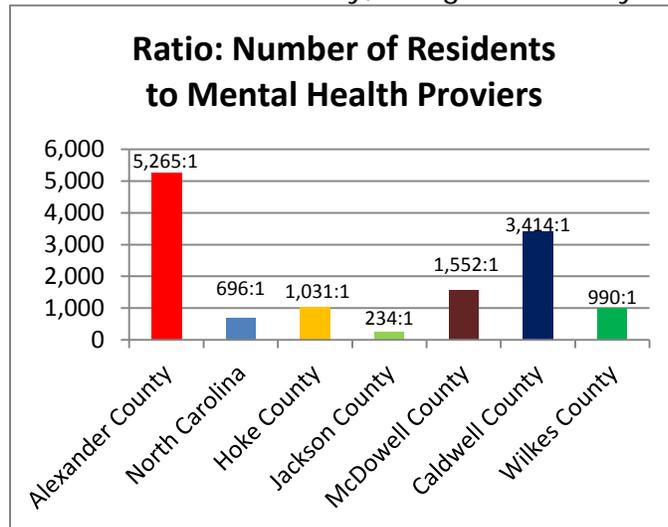
2. Substance Abuse

3. Healthy Families

Community Priorities

Mental Health

The first focus area selected for the 2014 Community Health Assessment was mental health. Alexander County, along with twenty-two others counties in western North

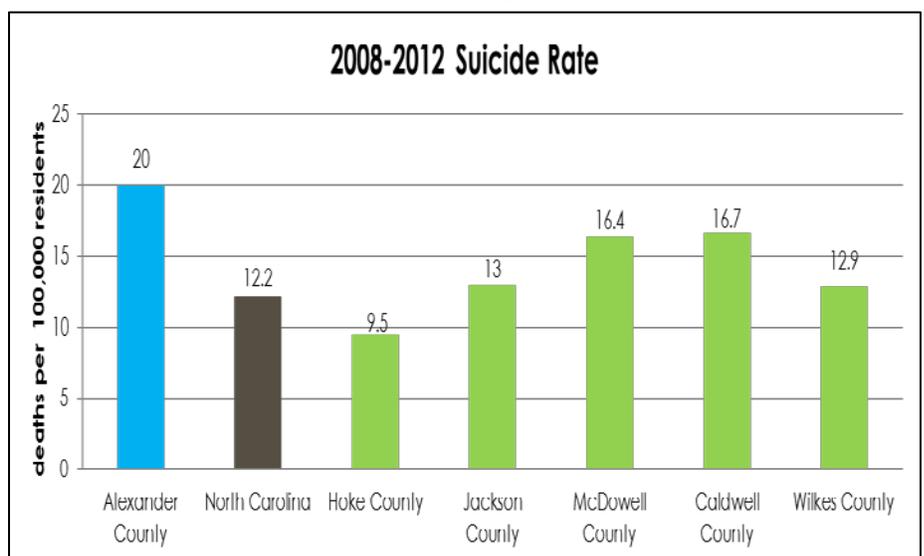


Source: County Health Ranking & Roadmaps

Carolina, is supported by the Smoky Mountain local management entity/managed care organization (LME/MCO) authority. Locally, RHA provides mental health services to the citizens of Alexander County. Mental health funding at the national and state levels continues to fall short of the identified need in Alexander County. There are currently no drug treatment centers located in our county and when an individual is referred for treatment waiting lists can be substantial.

The intentional self-harm (suicide) rate in Alexander County is currently reported at 20 deaths per 100,000 residents, a rate nearly double the state average and higher than any of our assigned peer counties.

The Health Department and community partners will focus on lobbying for and seeking opportunities to provide adequate mental health resources locally. Work will also focus on increasing the support framework which is in place to provide help to those suffering from mental health issues. The group will work to reduce the stigma of mental health disorders held by some members of the community as well as continue to work with our elected and appointed leaders to identify the need for increased funding in the mental health arena. Efforts will also focus on educating the public on resources available to those in need of counseling, increasing community education, and early intervention to reduce suicide rates locally.

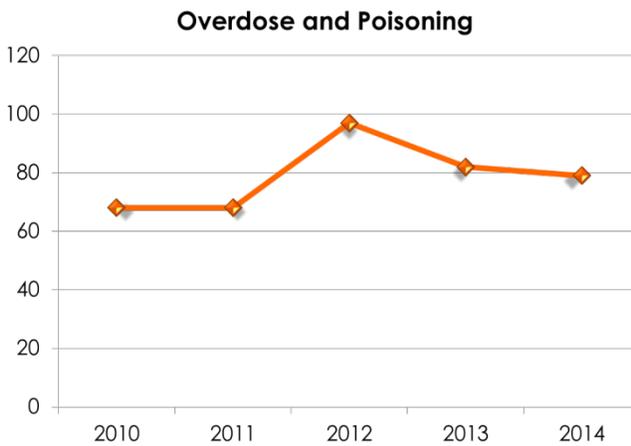


Source: NC Center for Health Statistics

Substance Abuse

Prescription drug, illegal substance, tobacco and alcohol abuse

Prescription drug abuse is a growing phenomenon nationwide. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs are,



Source: Alexander County Sheriff's office – Communications Center

after marijuana (and alcohol), the most commonly abused substances by Americans 14 and older. Alexander County is no exception to this national trend. In 2014, the Alexander County Emergency Communications Department dispatched first responders and/or law enforcement agencies to 79 reported overdose or poisoning calls. However this number is likely a vast underreporting of all calls as it does not include cases where the caller reported that the patient was in respiratory distress, unconscious,

or reported another non-overdose condition.

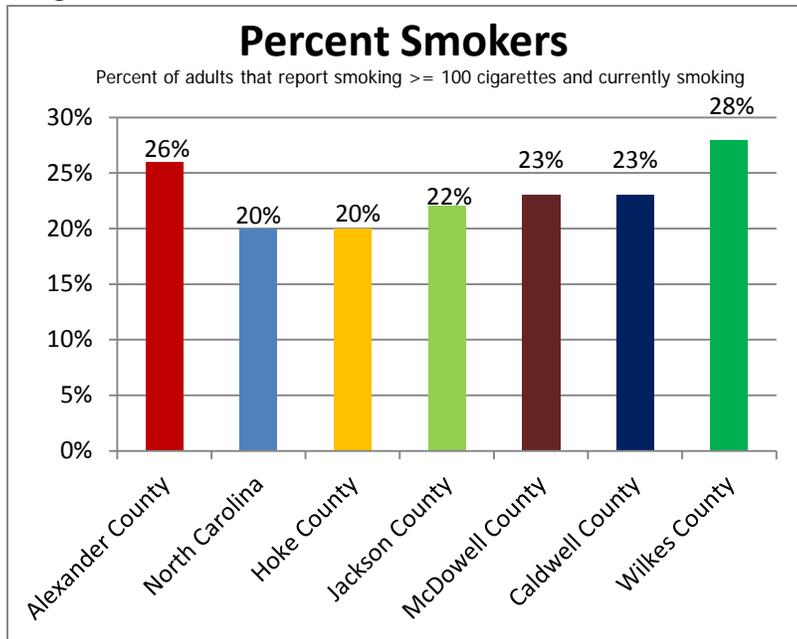
The Alexander County Substance Abuse Task Force, consisting of public health, law enforcement, medical providers, pharmacists, and veterinary professionals, has begun participation in a program designed to help deliver better pain relief options to those in need while reducing overdose risk. The program was designed by Project Lazarus, a public health non-profit organization established in 2008 in response to extremely high drug overdose death rates in Wilkes County, North Carolina. The programs aims to curb excessive prescribing of prescription drugs, track pharmaceuticals prescribed to individuals, and promote the safe and secure storage and disposal of prescription drugs. The Health Department, in conjunction with Alexander County Emergency Medical Services, is also working to supply and train first



Example of an intranasal Naloxone kit for first responder use

responders in the use of the Naloxone, an antidote that reverses an opioid overdose. Currently seven of the county's eight fire departments and the two law enforcement agencies have agreed to participate in the Naloxone program. Work will continue to train first responders in the safe and effective use of this life-saving drug.

Figure 3



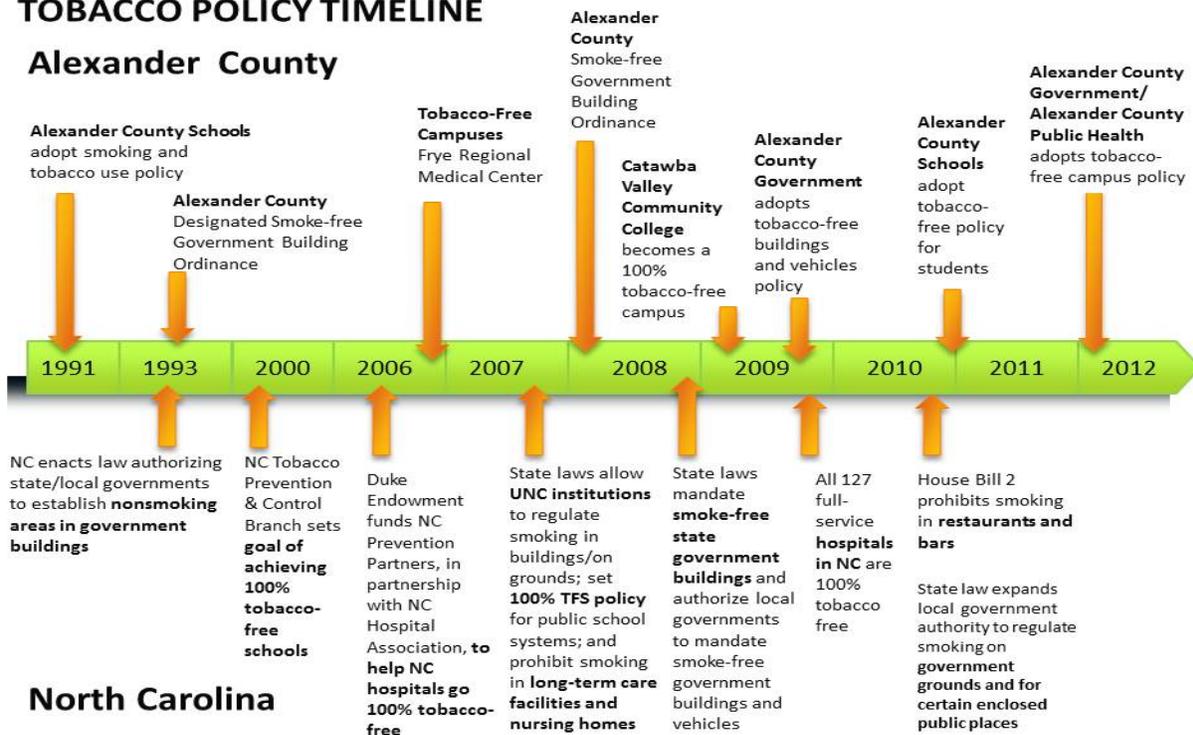
Source: County Health Ranking & Roadmaps

The Health Department also continues to address tobacco use within our community. As you can see in figure 3, Alexander County's percent of smokers still ranks above the state average of twenty percent and ranks above nearly all of our peer counties. Policy development and education efforts are conducted by Health Department staff to help reduce the number of persons using tobacco products locally. Figure 4 provides a highlight of tobacco related policy issues conducted in Alexander County and North Carolina as a whole since 1991.

Figure 4

TOBACCO POLICY TIMELINE

Alexander County



North Carolina

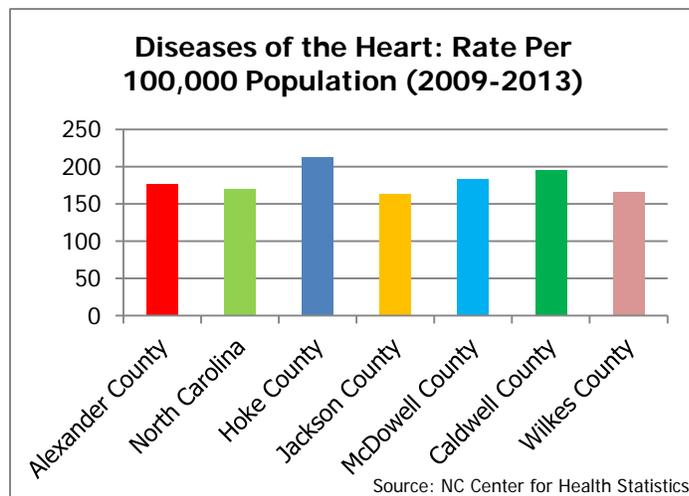
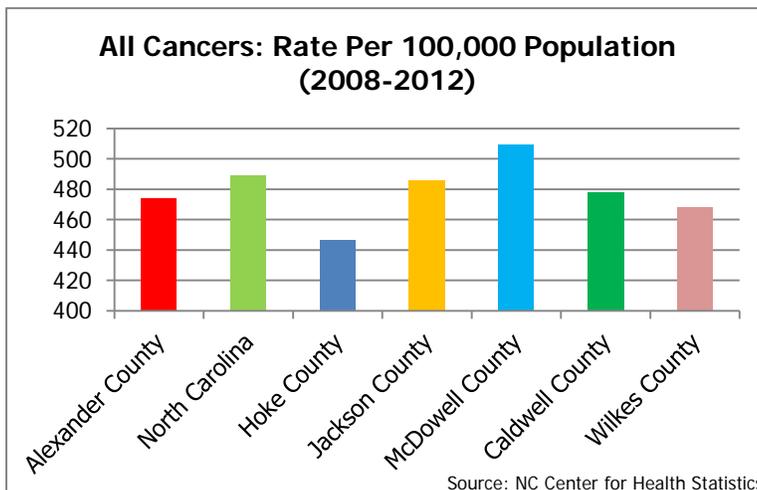
Healthy Families

Cancer, Heart Disease, Physical Activity

Representing the top two leading causes of death in Alexander County for a number of years, cancer and heart disease have been combined with physical activity to comprise the final 2014 CHA focus area.

Cancer

The American Cancer Society states that cancer is the general name for a group of more than 100 diseases. Although there are many kinds of cancer, all cancers start because abnormal cells grow out of control. Untreated cancers can cause serious illness and death. The Health Department and community partners work to reduce the prevalence of cancer by promoting and offering cancer screening services, offering vaccines to reduce the risk of some cancers, promoting nutrition and physical activity, and supporting cessation programs.

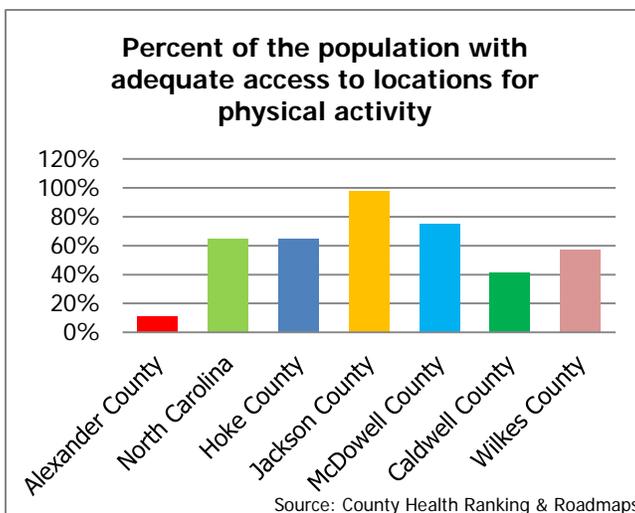


Heart Disease

Many of the risk factors for heart disease can be linked to physical activity and poor eating habits. The Health Department will work to educate citizens on healthy eating habits and promote physical activity to help reduce the prevalence of these diseases.

Physical Activity

Given its profound influence on the overall health of a community, the Health Department and partners agencies including Alexander County Schools, Partnership for Children, and the NC Cooperative Extension's Eat Smart Move More program, will work to encourage and enhance opportunities for physical activity throughout Alexander County.



Acknowledgements

The Alexander County Health Department would like to thank the following individuals and agencies for their contributions during the Community Health Assessment process. These individuals bring extensive knowledge and show unyielding support of the health and well-being of Alexander County citizens. Without their efforts, this assessment would not have been possible.

Community Assessment Planning Team:

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Health Director

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Human Services Planner/Evaluator

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Town of Taylorsville

David Odom

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Chad Ritchie

CVCC – Alexander Center for Education

Linda Graham

Alexander County Partnership for Children

Paula Cline

Alexander County Schools

Dr. Jennifer Hefner
Dr. Jeff Peal

Alexander County Economic Development Corporation

David Icenhour
Gary Herman

United Way

Janeen Jones

Taylorsville Times

Micah Henry

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Donna Bruce

Maceo Mayo

Citizens

Kathy Riddle
Brenda Fox

A special thank you is extended to William Cheung, public health volunteer and student from Alexander Central High School. During and after his senior project, William worked many hours on the 2014 CHA Document. His commitment and determination made the completion of the CHA process and this document possible.

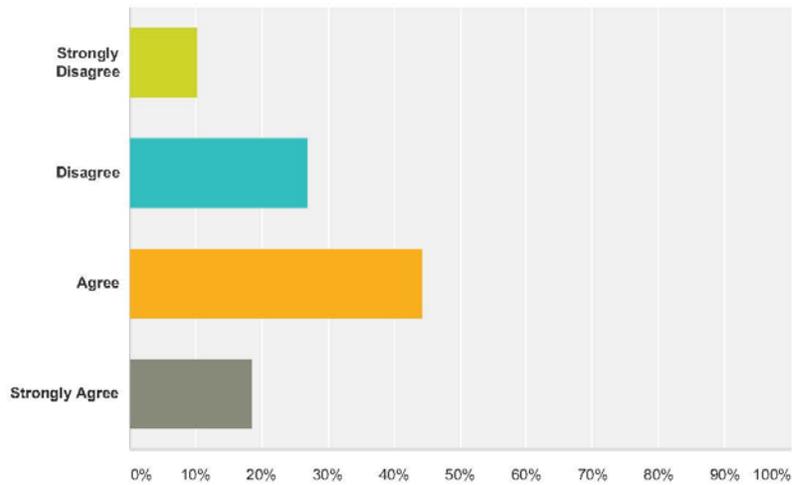
Appendix A

Community Health Assessment Survey Response Data

Community Health Assessment 2014

**Q1 How do you feel about this statement:
"There is a good healthcare system in
Alexander County."--Consider the cost and
quality, number of options, and availability
of healthcare in Alexander County.**

Answered: 521 Skipped: 4

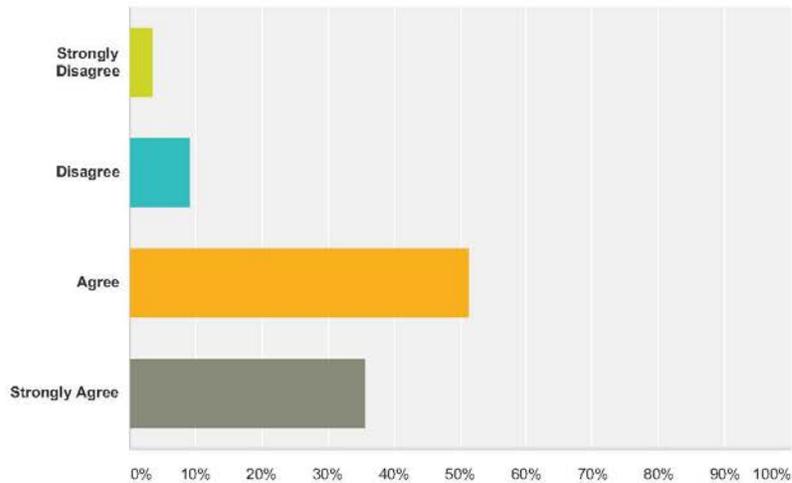


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	10.17%	53
Disagree	26.87%	140
Agree	44.34%	231
Strongly Agree	18.62%	97
Total		521

Community Health Assessment 2014

**Q2 How do you feel about this statement:
 “Alexander County is a good place to raise
 children.” --Consider the quality and safety
 of schools and child care programs, after
 school programs, and places to play in this
 county.**

Answered: 521 Skipped: 4

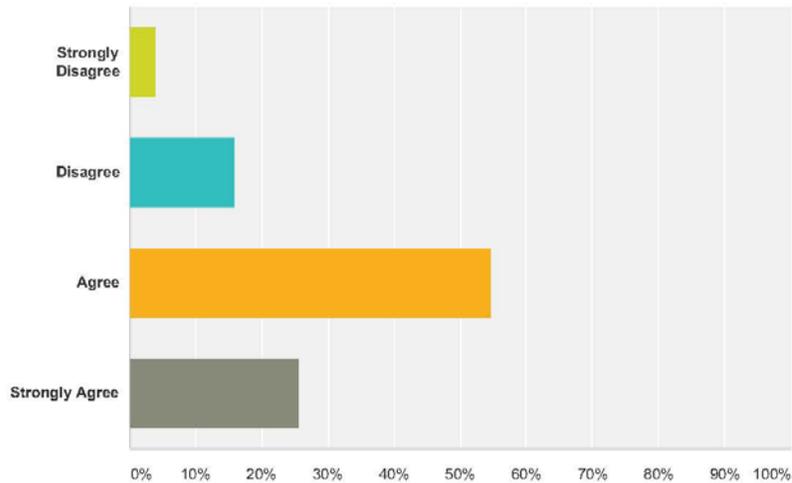


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	3.65% 19
Disagree	9.21% 48
Agree	51.44% 268
Strongly Agree	35.70% 186
Total	521

Community Health Assessment 2014

**Q3 How do you feel about this statement:
“Alexander County is a good place to grow
old.”--Consider our county’s elder-friendly
housing, transportation to medical services,
recreation, and services for the elderly.**

Answered: 520 Skipped: 5

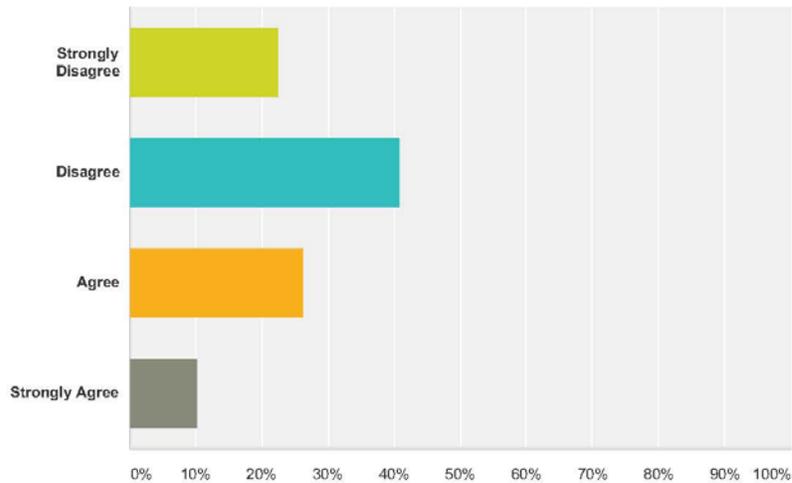


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	4.04%	21
Disagree	15.77%	82
Agree	54.62%	284
Strongly Agree	25.58%	133
Total		520

Community Health Assessment 2014

**Q4 How do you feel about this statement:
 “There is plenty of economic opportunity in
 Alexander County.” --Consider the number
 and quality of jobs, job training/higher
 education opportunities, and availability of
 affordable housing in Alexander County.**

Answered: 522 Skipped: 3

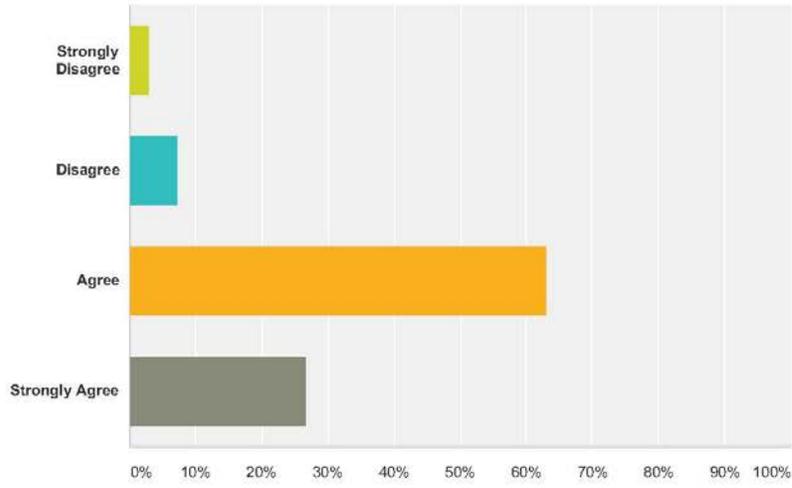


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	22.61% 118
Disagree	41.00% 214
Agree	26.25% 137
Strongly Agree	10.15% 53
Total	522

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q5 How do you feel about this statement, “Alexander County is a safe place to live”? - Consider how safe you feel at home, in the workplace, in schools, at playgrounds, parks, and shopping centers in Alexander County.

Answered: 522 Skipped: 3

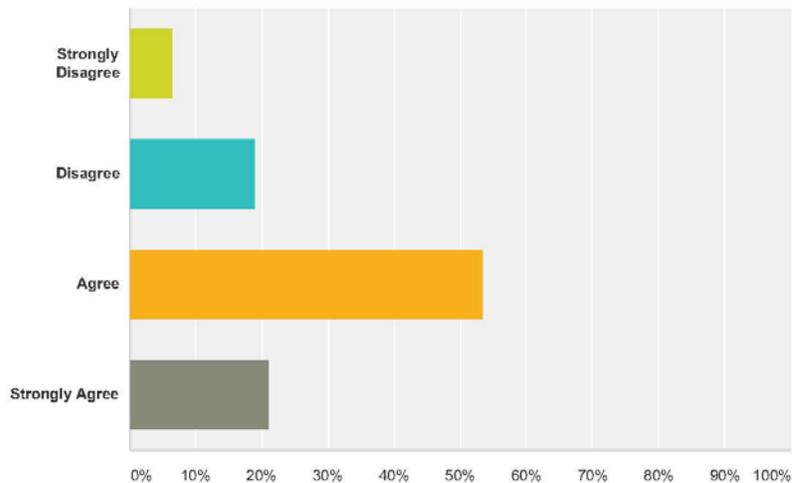


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	2.87% 15
Disagree	7.28% 38
Agree	63.03% 329
Strongly Agree	26.82% 140
Total	522

Community Health Assessment 2014

**Q6 How do you feel about this statement:
 “There is plenty of help for individuals and families during times of need in Alexander County.” --Consider social support in Alexander County: neighbors, support groups, faith community outreach, community organizations, and emergency monetary assistance.**

Answered: 522 Skipped: 3

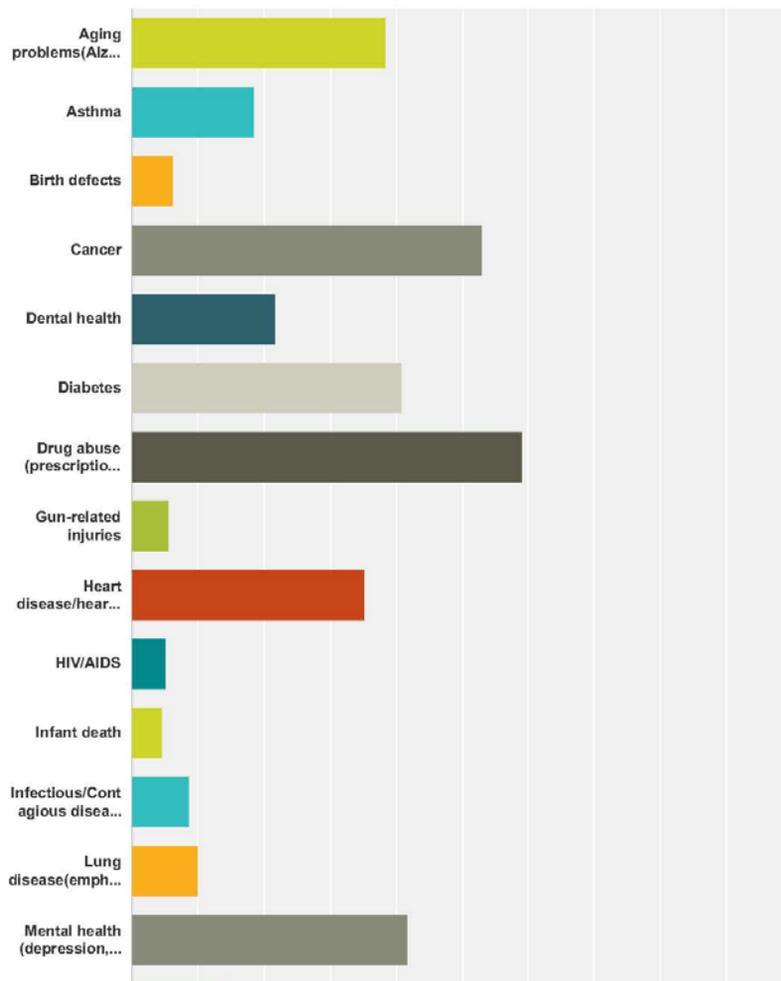


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	6.51% 34
Disagree	18.97% 99
Agree	53.45% 279
Strongly Agree	21.07% 110
Total	522

Community Health Assessment 2014

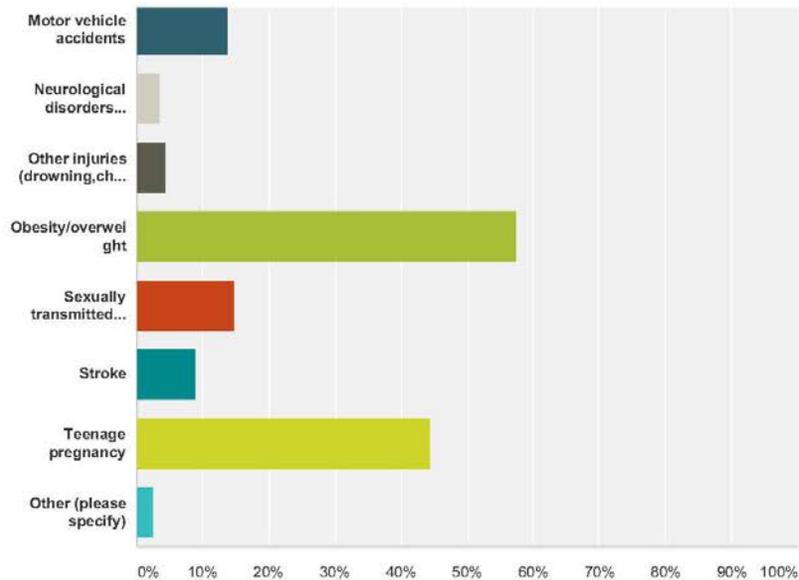
Q7 These next questions are about health problems that have the largest impact on the community as a whole. Please look at this list of health problems. Please pick what you believe to be the most important health problems in Alexander County. You can choose up to 5. Remember this is your opinion and your choices will not be linked to you in any way. If you do not see a health problem you consider one of the most important, please add it in the other box.

Answered: 518 Skipped: 7



7 / 44

Community Health Assessment 2014



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Aging problems(Alzheimer's, arthritis,hearing or vision loss, etc.)	38.42%	199
Asthma	18.53%	96
Birth defects	6.18%	32
Cancer	53.09%	275
Dental health	21.62%	112
Diabetes	40.93%	212
Drug abuse (prescription drugs/illegal drugs/overdose)	59.07%	306
Gun-related injuries	5.60%	29
Heart disease/heart attacks	35.33%	183
HIV/AIDS	5.21%	27
Infant death	4.63%	24
Infectious/Contagious diseases (TB, salmonella, pneumonia, flu, etc.)	8.69%	45
Lung disease(emphysema, etc.)	10.04%	52
Mental health (depression,schizophrenia, suicide etc.)	41.70%	216
Motor vehicle accidents	13.71%	71
Neurological disorders (Multiple Sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, A.L.S.)	3.47%	18
Other injuries (drowning, choking, home or work related)	4.44%	23

Community Health Assessment 2014

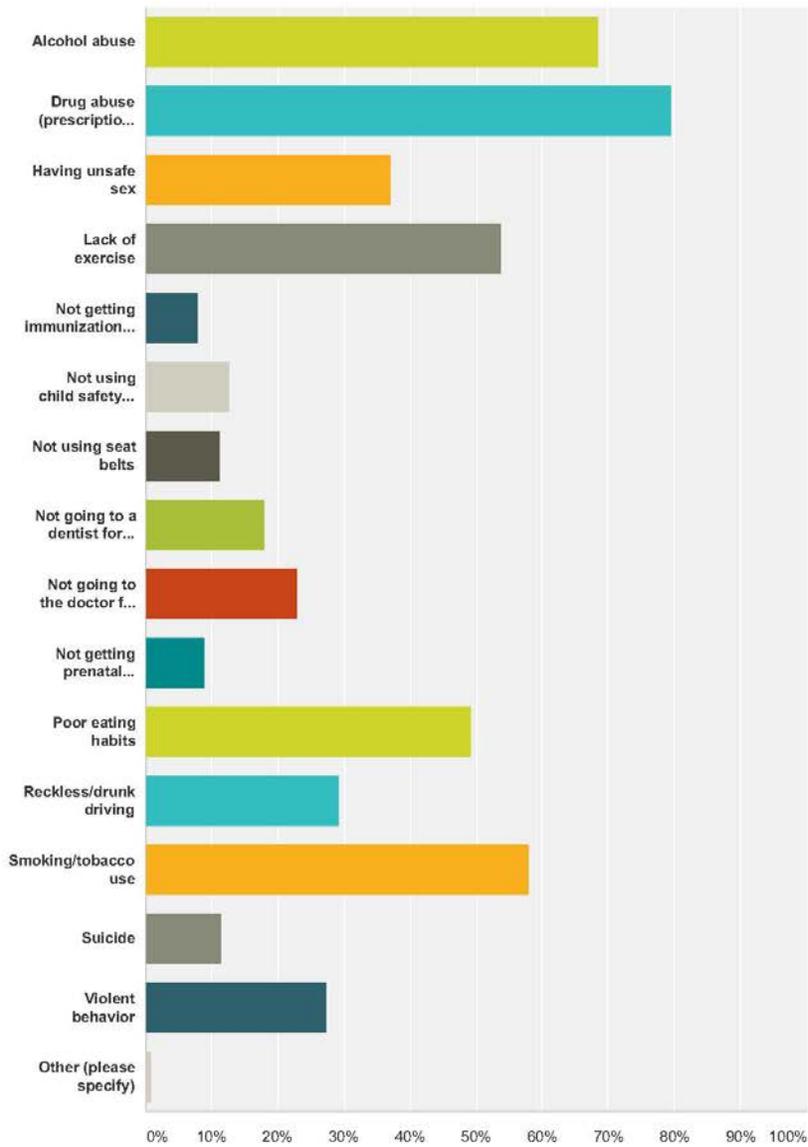
Obesity/overweight	57.34%	297
Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)	14.86%	77
Stroke	9.07%	47
Teenage pregnancy	44.40%	230
Other (please specify)	2.51%	13
Total Respondents: 518		

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q8 These next questions are about unhealthy behaviors that impact the community as a whole. Please look at this list of unhealthy behaviors. Pick what you believe to be the top unhealthy behaviors in Alexander County. You may choose up to 5. Remember this is your opinion and your choices will not be linked to you in any way. If you do not see an unhealthy behavior that you consider one of the most important, please add it in the other box.

Answered: 518 Skipped: 7

Community Health Assessment 2014



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Alcohol abuse	68.53%	355
Drug abuse (prescription drugs/illegal drugs/overdose)	79.54%	412
Having unsafe sex	37.07%	192
Lack of exercise	53.86%	279

Community Health Assessment 2014

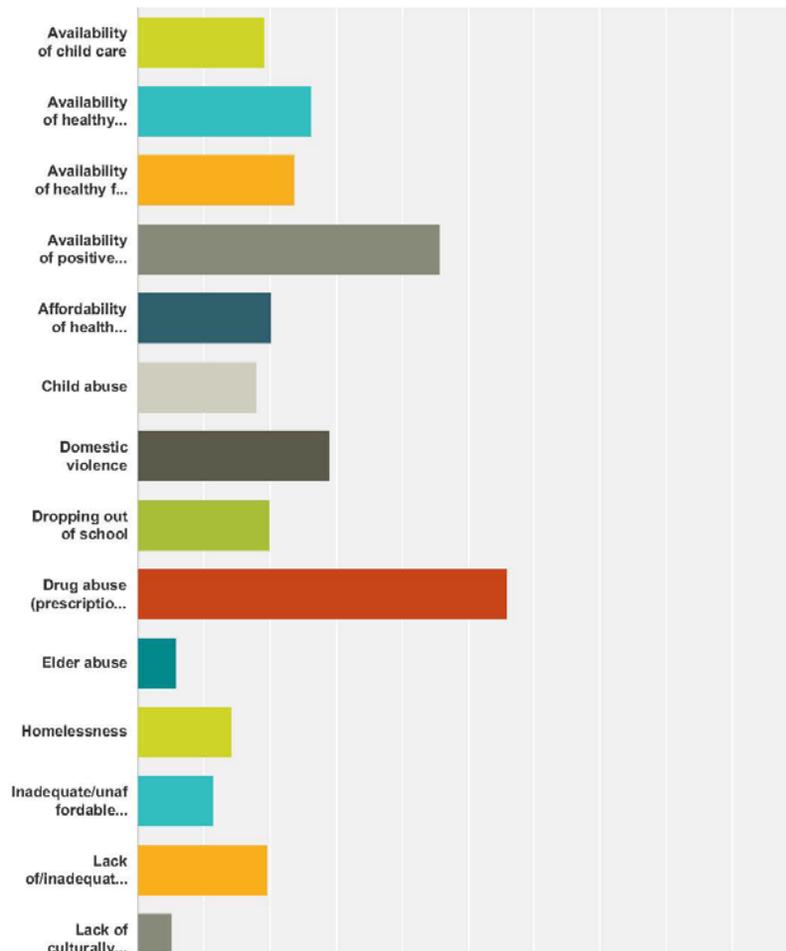
Not getting immunizations ("shots") to prevent disease	7.92%	41
Not using child safety seats	12.74%	66
Not using seat belts	11.20%	58
Not going to a dentist for preventive check-ups / care	17.95%	93
Not going to the doctor for yearly check-ups and screenings	22.97%	119
Not getting prenatal (pregnancy) care	9.07%	47
Poor eating habits	49.23%	255
Reckless/drunken driving	29.15%	151
Smoking/tobacco use	58.11%	301
Suicide	11.58%	60
Violent behavior	27.41%	142
Other (please specify)	0.77%	4
Total Respondents: 518		

Community Health Assessment 2014

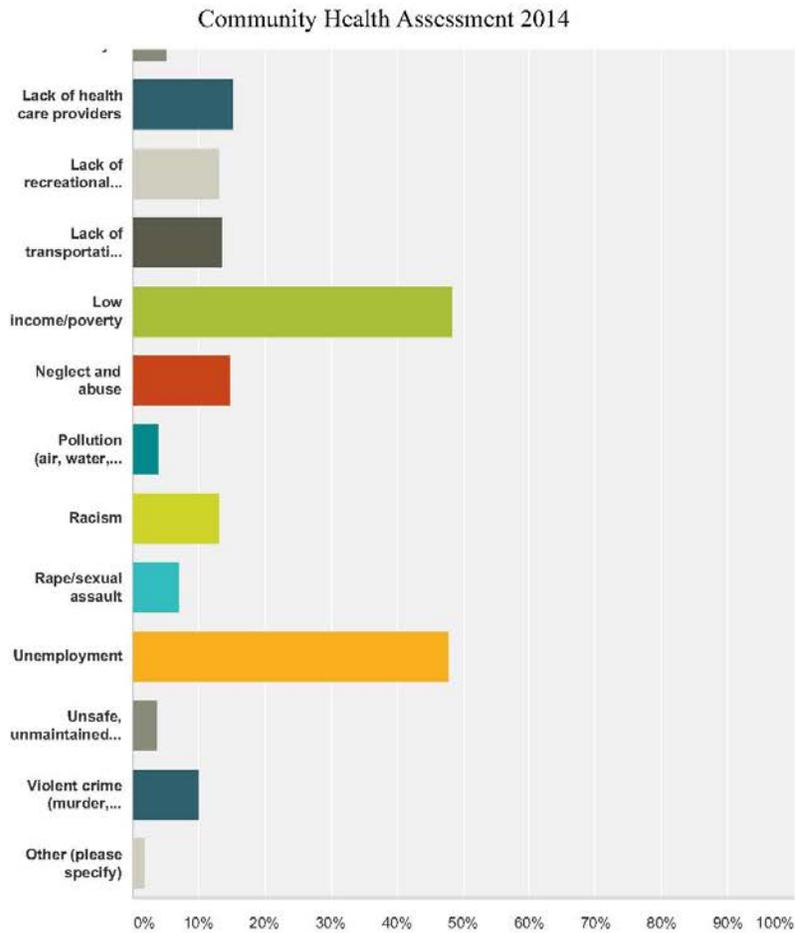
Q9 This question is about community-wide issues that have an impact on the overall quality of life in Alexander County. Please look at this list of community issues. Pick the community issues that have the greatest effect on quality of life in Alexander County. You may choose up to 5.

Remember this is your opinion and your choices will not be linked to you in any way. If you do not see a community problem you consider one of the most important, please add it in the other box.

Answered: 519 Skipped: 6



13 / 44



Answer Choices	Responses
Availability of child care	19.27% 100
Availability of healthy family activities	26.20% 136
Availability of healthy food choices	23.89% 124
Availability of positive teen activities	45.66% 237
Affordability of health services	20.23% 105
Child abuse	17.92% 93
Domestic violence	29.09% 151
Dropping out of school	20.04% 104
Drug abuse (prescription drugs/illegal drugs/overdose)	55.88% 290
Elder abuse	5.78% 30

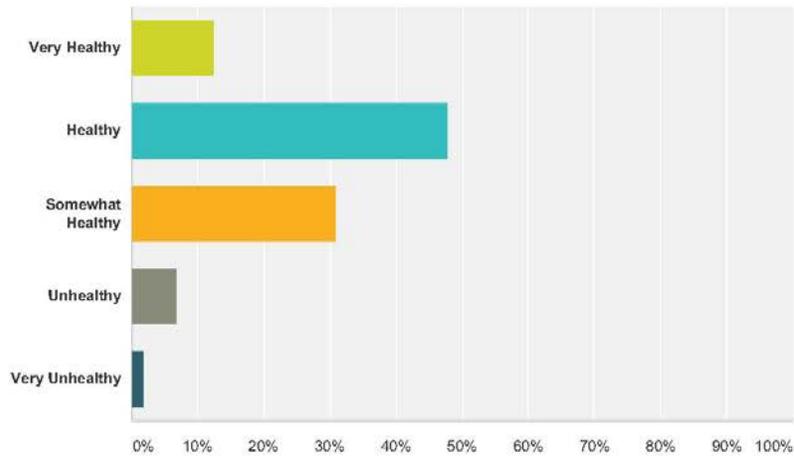
Community Health Assessment 2014

Homelessness	14.26%	74
Inadequate/unaffordable housing	11.56%	60
Lack of/inadequate health insurance	19.65%	102
Lack of culturally appropriate health services.	5.20%	27
Lack of health care providers	15.22%	79
Lack of recreational facilities (parks, trails, community centers, etc.)	13.10%	68
Lack of transportation options	13.49%	70
Low income/poverty	48.36%	251
Neglect and abuse	14.84%	77
Pollution (air, water, land)	4.05%	21
Racism	13.10%	68
Rape/sexual assault	7.13%	37
Unemployment	47.78%	248
Unsafe, unmaintained roads	3.85%	20
Violent crime (murder, assault, etc.)	10.02%	52
Other (please specify)	1.93%	10
Total Respondents: 519		

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q10 How would you rate your own health? Please choose only one of the following:

Answered: 523 Skipped: 2

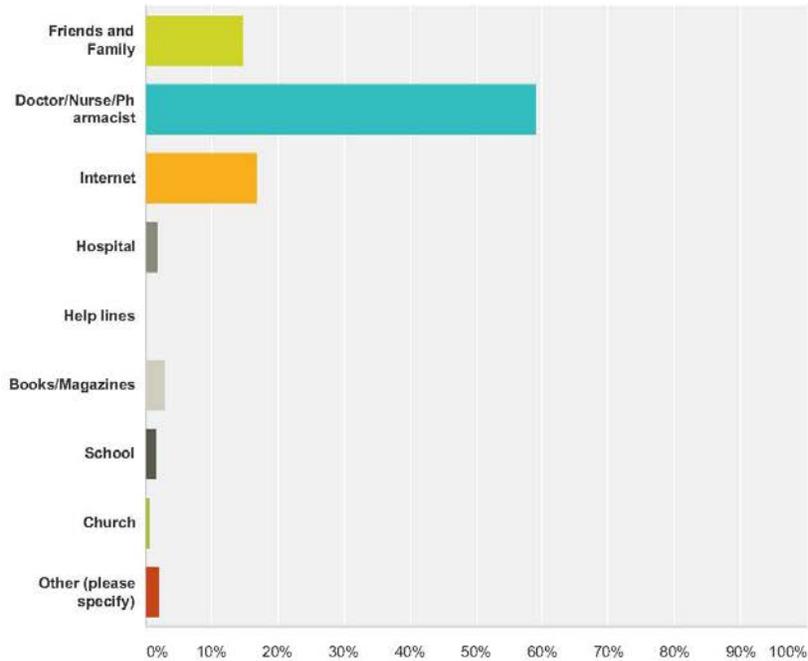


Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Healthy	12.43%	65
Healthy	47.80%	250
Somewhat Healthy	30.98%	162
Unhealthy	6.88%	36
Very Unhealthy	1.91%	10
Total		523

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q11 Where do you get most of your health related information? Please Choose Only One.

Answered: 520 Skipped: 5

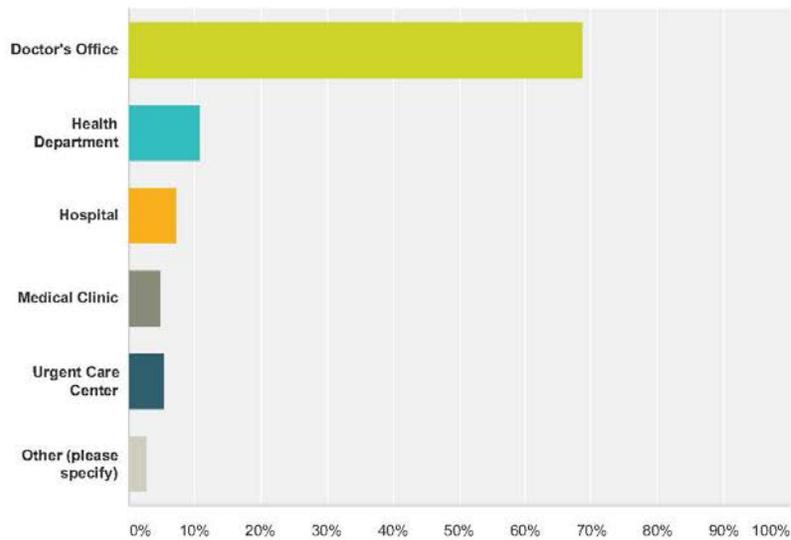


Answer Choices	Responses
Friends and Family	14.81% 77
Doctor/Nurse/Pharmacist	59.04% 307
Internet	16.92% 88
Hospital	1.92% 10
Help lines	0.00% 0
Books/Magazines	2.88% 15
School	1.73% 9
Church	0.58% 3
Other (please specify)	2.12% 11
Total	520

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q12 Where do you go most often when you are sick or need advice about your health? Choose the one that you usually go to.

Answered: 515 Skipped: 10

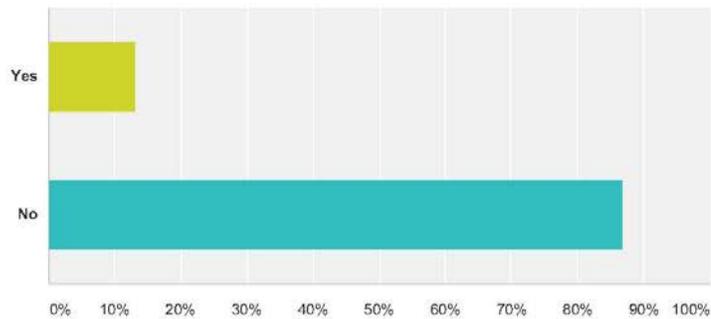


Answer Choices	Responses	
Doctor's Office	68.74%	354
Health Department	10.87%	56
Hospital	7.38%	38
Medical Clinic	4.85%	25
Urgent Care Center	5.44%	28
Other (please specify)	2.72%	14
Total		515

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q13 In the past 12 months, did you ever have a problem getting the health care you needed from any type of health care provider or facility?

Answered: 522 Skipped: 3

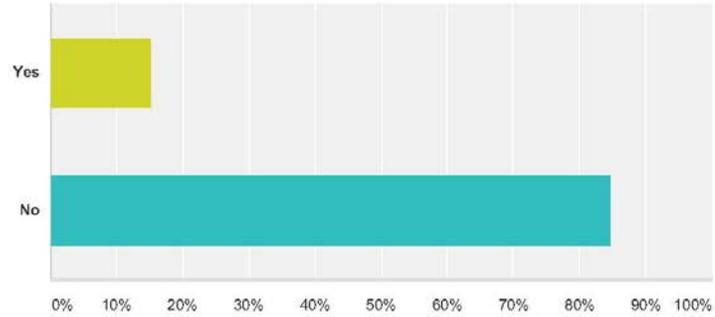


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	13.22%	69
No	86.78%	453
Total		522

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q14 In the past 12 months, did you have a problem filling a medically necessary prescription?

Answered: 521 Skipped: 4

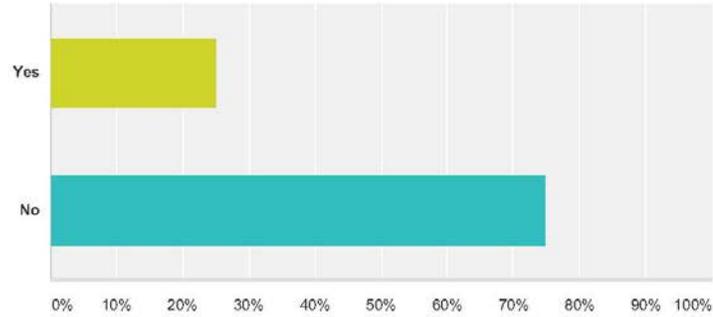


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	15.16%	79
No	84.84%	442
Total		521

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q15 Was there a time during the past 12 months when you needed to get dental care, but could not?

Answered: 521 Skipped: 4

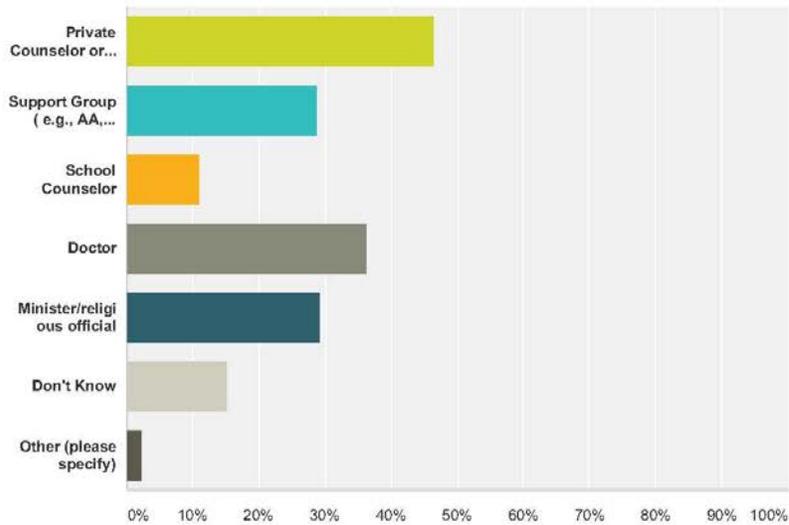


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	25.14%	131
No	74.86%	390
Total		521

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q16 If a friend or family member needed counseling for a mental health or a drug/alcohol problem, who would you tell them to call or talk to? Choose all that apply.

Answered: 515 Skipped: 10

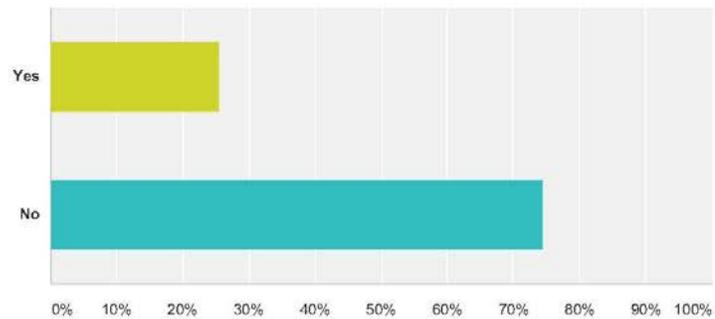


Answer Choices	Responses
Private Counselor or therapist	46.60% 240
Support Group (e.g., AA, Al-Anon)	28.74% 148
School Counselor	11.07% 57
Doctor	36.31% 187
Minister/religious official	29.32% 151
Don't Know	15.15% 78
Other (please specify)	2.33% 12
Total Respondents: 515	

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q17 In the past 30 days, have there been any days when feeling sad or worry kept you from going about your normal business?

Answered: 509 Skipped: 16

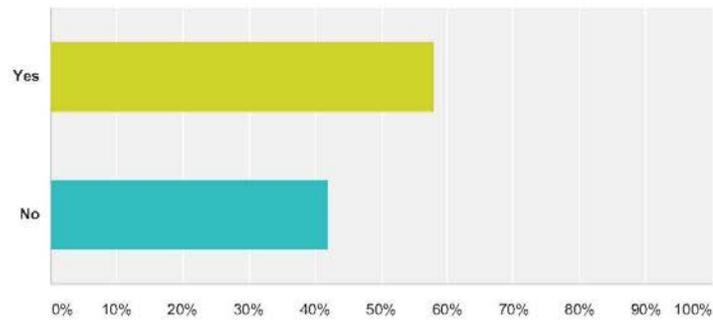


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	25.54%	130
No	74.46%	379
Total		509

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q18 During a normal week, other than in your regular job, do you engage in any exercise activity that lasts at least half an hour?

Answered: 517 Skipped: 8

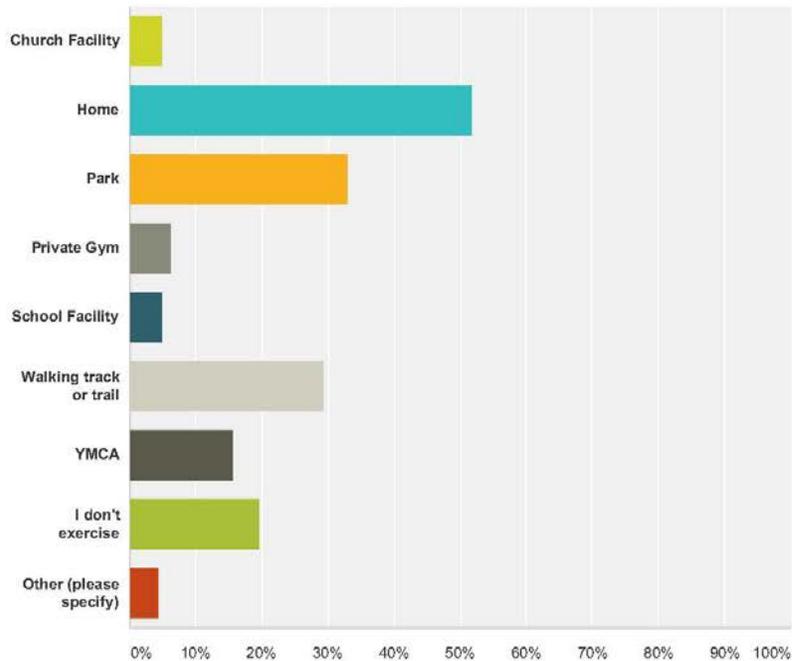


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	58.03%	300
No	41.97%	217
Total		517

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q19 Where do you go to exercise or engage in physical activity? Check all that apply.

Answered: 518 Skipped: 7

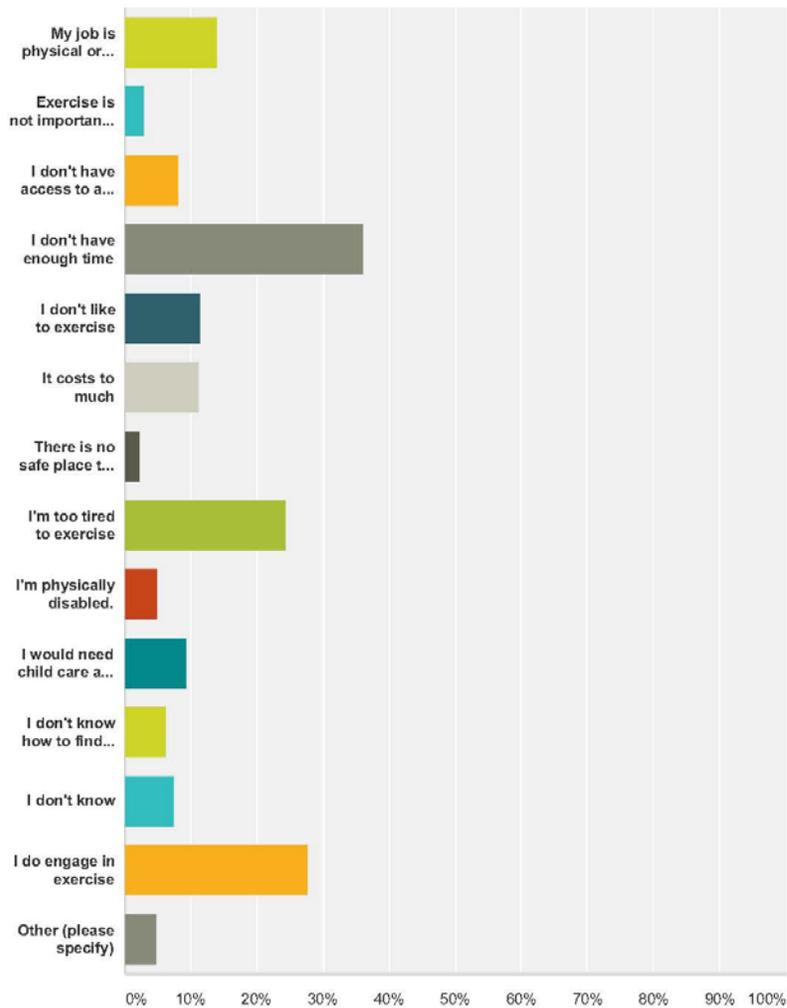


Answer Choices	Responses
Church Facility	5.02% 26
Home	51.74% 268
Park	33.01% 171
Private Gym	6.18% 32
School Facility	5.02% 26
Walking track or trail	29.34% 152
YMCA	15.64% 81
I don't exercise	19.69% 102
Other (please specify)	4.44% 23
Total Respondents: 518	

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q20 What are some reasons why you do not exercise for at least half a hour during a normal week? You may select multiple answers.

Answered: 482 Skipped: 43



Answer Choices	Responses
My job is physical or hard labor	13.90% 67
Exercise is not important to me	2.90% 14

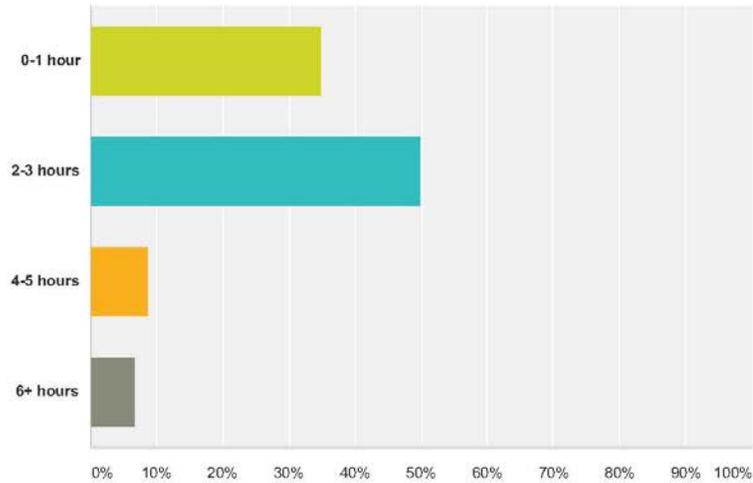
Community Health Assessment 2014

I don't have access to a facility	8.09%	39
I don't have enough time	36.10%	174
I don't like to exercise	11.41%	55
It costs too much	11.20%	54
There is no safe place to exercise	2.28%	11
I'm too tired to exercise	24.48%	118
I'm physically disabled.	4.98%	24
I would need child care and I don't have it	9.34%	45
I don't know how to find exercise partners or teams	6.22%	30
I don't know	7.47%	36
I do engage in exercise	27.80%	134
Other (please specify)	4.77%	23
Total Respondents: 482		

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q21 How many hours per day do you watch TV, play video games, or use the computer for recreation?

Answered: 514 Skipped: 11

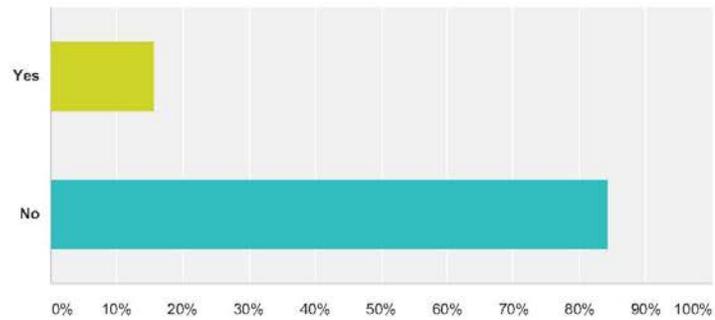


Answer Choices	Responses
0-1 hour	34.82% 179
2-3 hours	49.81% 256
4-5 hours	8.75% 45
6+ hours	6.61% 34
Total	514

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q22 Do you currently Smoke?

Answered: 507 Skipped: 18

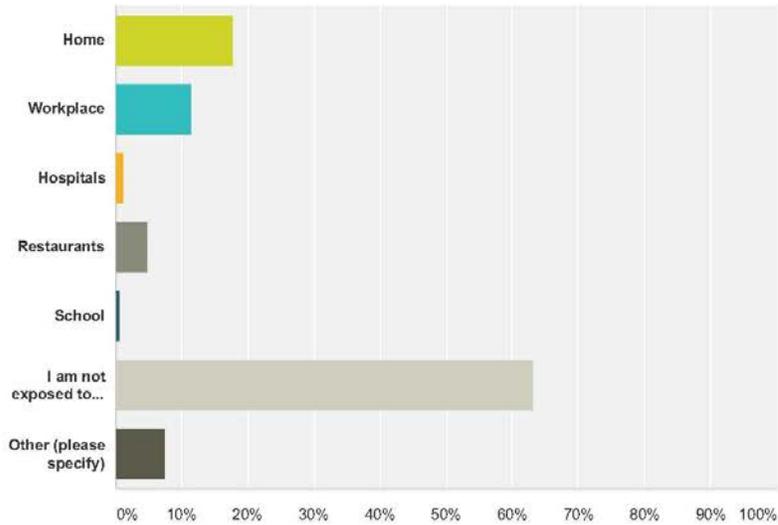


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes	15.58%	79
No	84.42%	428
Total		507

Community Health Assessment 2014

**Q23 Are you exposed to secondhand smoke in any of the following places?
Check all that apply.**

Answered: 500 Skipped: 25



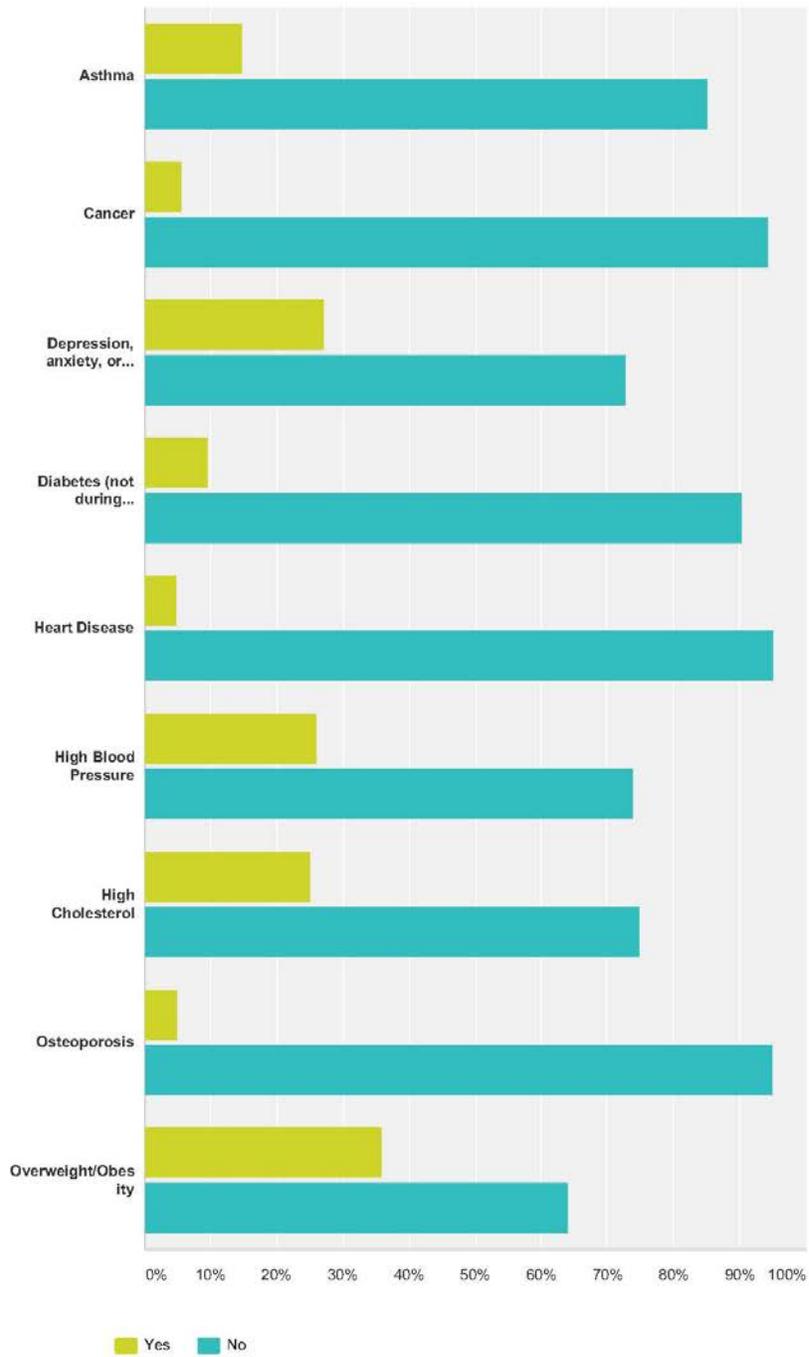
Answer Choices	Responses	
Home	17.80%	89
Workplace	11.40%	57
Hospitals	1.20%	6
Restaurants	4.80%	24
School	0.60%	3
I am not exposed to secondhand smoke	63.20%	316
Other (please specify)	7.60%	38
Total Respondents: 500		

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q24 Have you ever been told by a doctor, nurse, or other health professional that you have any of the conditions?

Answered: 510 Skipped: 15

Community Health Assessment 2014



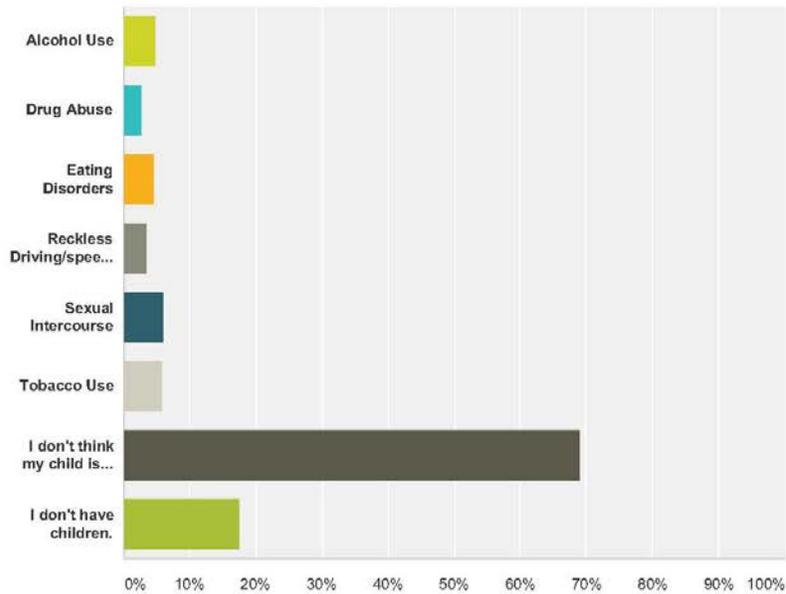
Community Health Assessment 2014

	Yes	No	Total
Asthma	14.80% 70	85.20% 403	473
Cancer	5.64% 26	94.36% 435	461
Depression, anxiety, or other mental health disorder	27.10% 129	72.90% 347	476
Diabetes (not during pregnancy)	9.55% 45	90.45% 426	471
Heart Disease	4.79% 22	95.21% 437	459
High Blood Pressure	26.15% 125	73.85% 353	478
High Cholesterol	25.10% 120	74.90% 358	478
Osteoporosis	4.98% 23	95.02% 439	462
Overweight/Obesity	35.90% 168	64.10% 300	468

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q25 Do you think your child is engaging in any of the following high risk behaviors?

Answered: 486 Skipped: 39

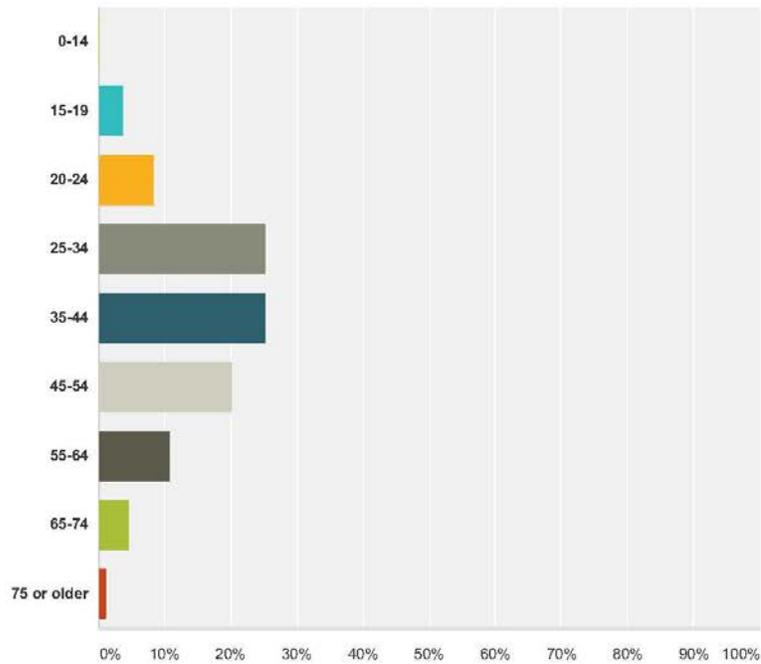


Answer Choices	Responses
Alcohol Use	4.73% 23
Drug Abuse	2.67% 13
Eating Disorders	4.53% 22
Reckless Driving/speeding	3.50% 17
Sexual Intercourse	5.97% 29
Tobacco Use	5.76% 28
I don't think my child is engaging in high risk behaviors	69.14% 336
I don't have children.	17.49% 85
Total Respondents: 486	

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q26 How old are you?

Answered: 517 Skipped: 8

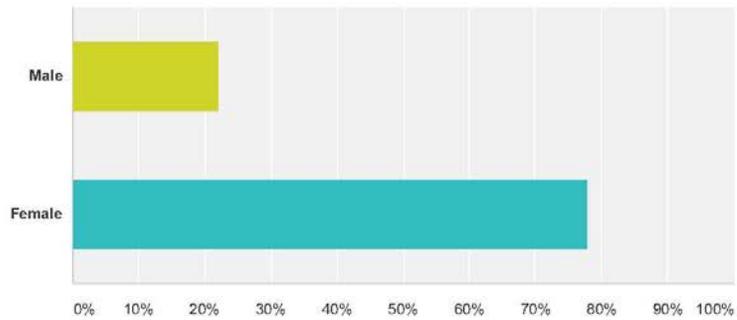


Answer Choices	Responses	
0-14	0.19%	1
15-19	3.68%	19
20-24	8.32%	43
25-34	25.34%	131
35-44	25.34%	131
45-54	20.31%	105
55-64	10.83%	56
65-74	4.64%	24
75 or older	1.35%	7
Total		517

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q27 Are you male or female?

Answered: 518 Skipped: 7

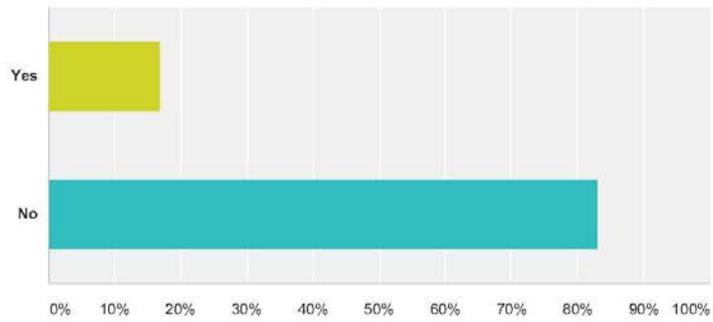


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Male	22.20%	115
Female	77.80%	403
Total		518

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q28 Are you of Hispanic Origin?

Answered: 512 Skipped: 13

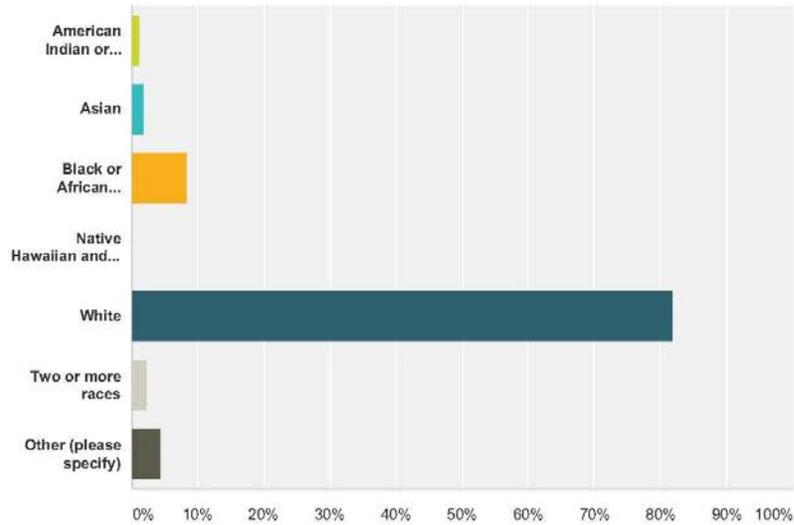


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	16.99%	87
No	83.01%	425
Total		512

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q29 What is your race? Please check one or choose "other" if you do not identify with only one of the categories.

Answered: 516 Skipped: 9

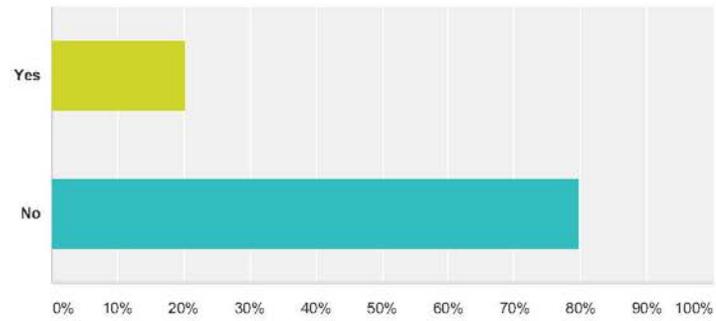


Answer Choices	Responses
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.16% 6
Asian	1.94% 10
Black or African American	8.33% 43
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.00% 0
White	81.78% 422
Two or more races	2.33% 12
Other (please specify)	4.46% 23
Total	516

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q30 Do you speak a language other than English at home?

Answered: 518 Skipped: 7

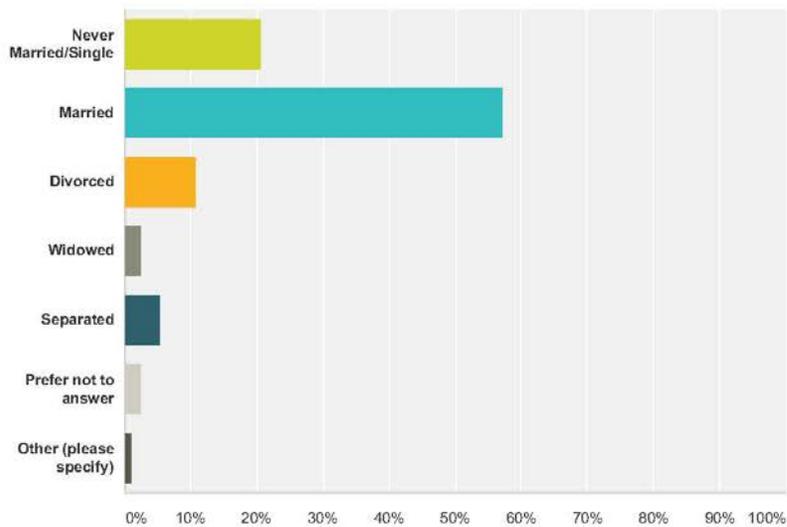


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	20.27%	105
No	79.73%	413
Total		518

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q31 What is your current marital Status?

Answered: 518 Skipped: 7

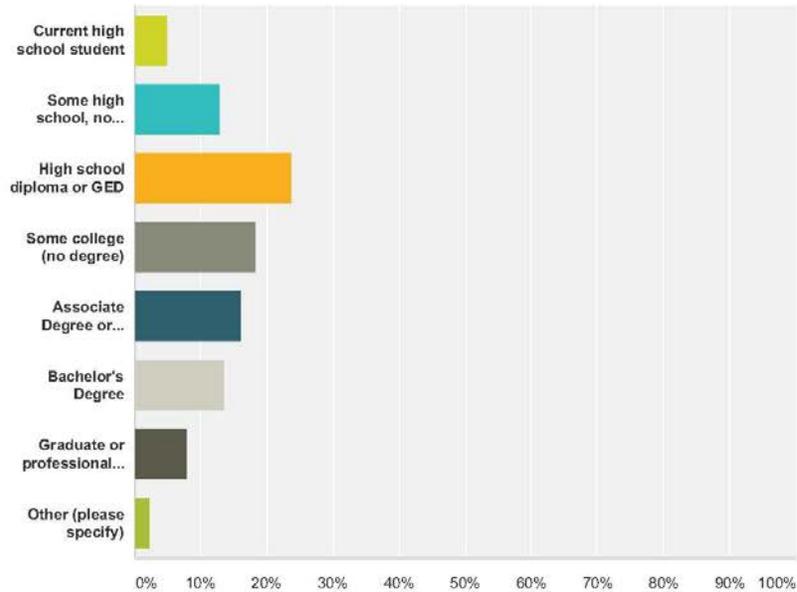


Answer Choices	Responses
Never Married/Single	20.66% 107
Married	57.14% 296
Divorced	10.81% 56
Widowed	2.51% 13
Separated	5.41% 28
Prefer not to answer	2.51% 13
Other (please specify)	0.97% 5
Total	518

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q32 What is the highest level of school, college, vocational training that you have finished?

Answered: 509 Skipped: 16

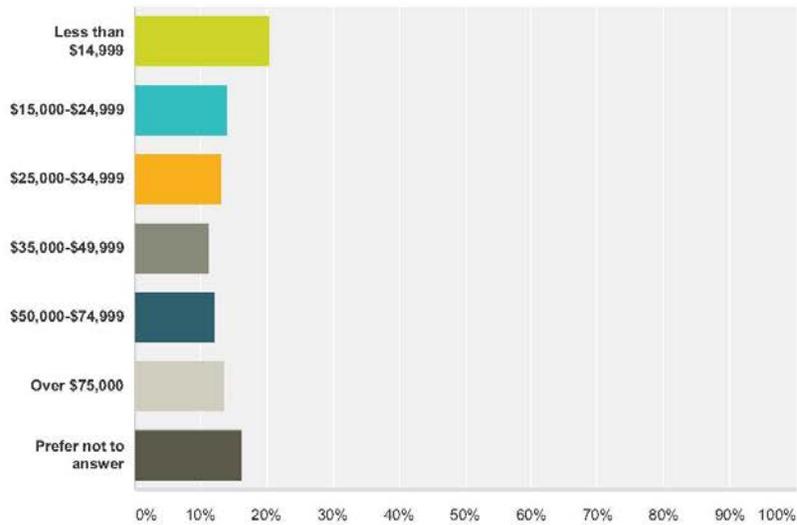


Answer Choices	Responses
Current high school student	4.91% 25
Some high school, no diploma	12.97% 66
High school diploma or GED	23.77% 121
Some college (no degree)	18.47% 94
Associate Degree or Vocational Training	16.11% 82
Bachelor's Degree	13.56% 69
Graduate or professional degree	7.86% 40
Other (please specify)	2.36% 12
Total	509

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q33 What was your total household income last year, before taxes?

Answered: 514 Skipped: 11

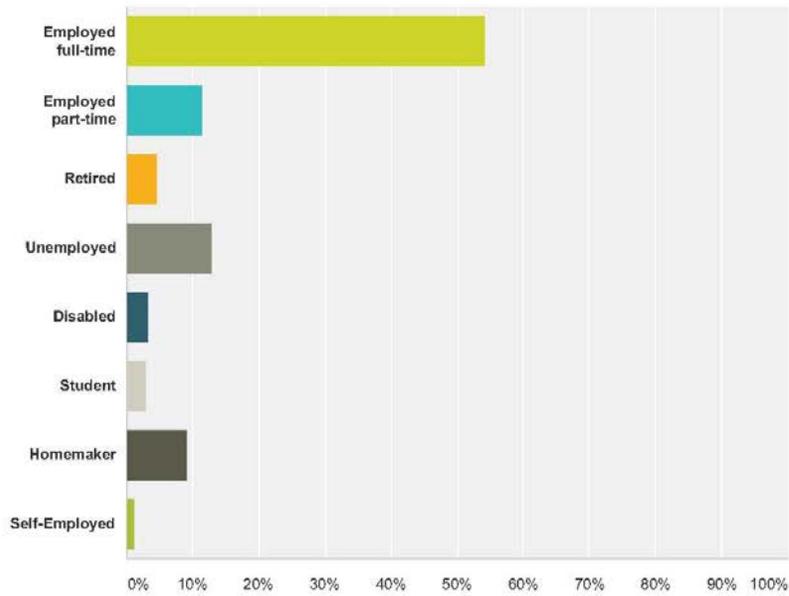


Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than \$14,999	20.43%	105
\$15,000-\$24,999	14.01%	72
\$25,000-\$34,999	13.23%	68
\$35,000-\$49,999	11.28%	58
\$50,000-\$74,999	12.06%	62
Over \$75,000	13.62%	70
Prefer not to answer	16.34%	84
Total Respondents: 514		

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q34 What is your current employment status?

Answered: 516 Skipped: 9

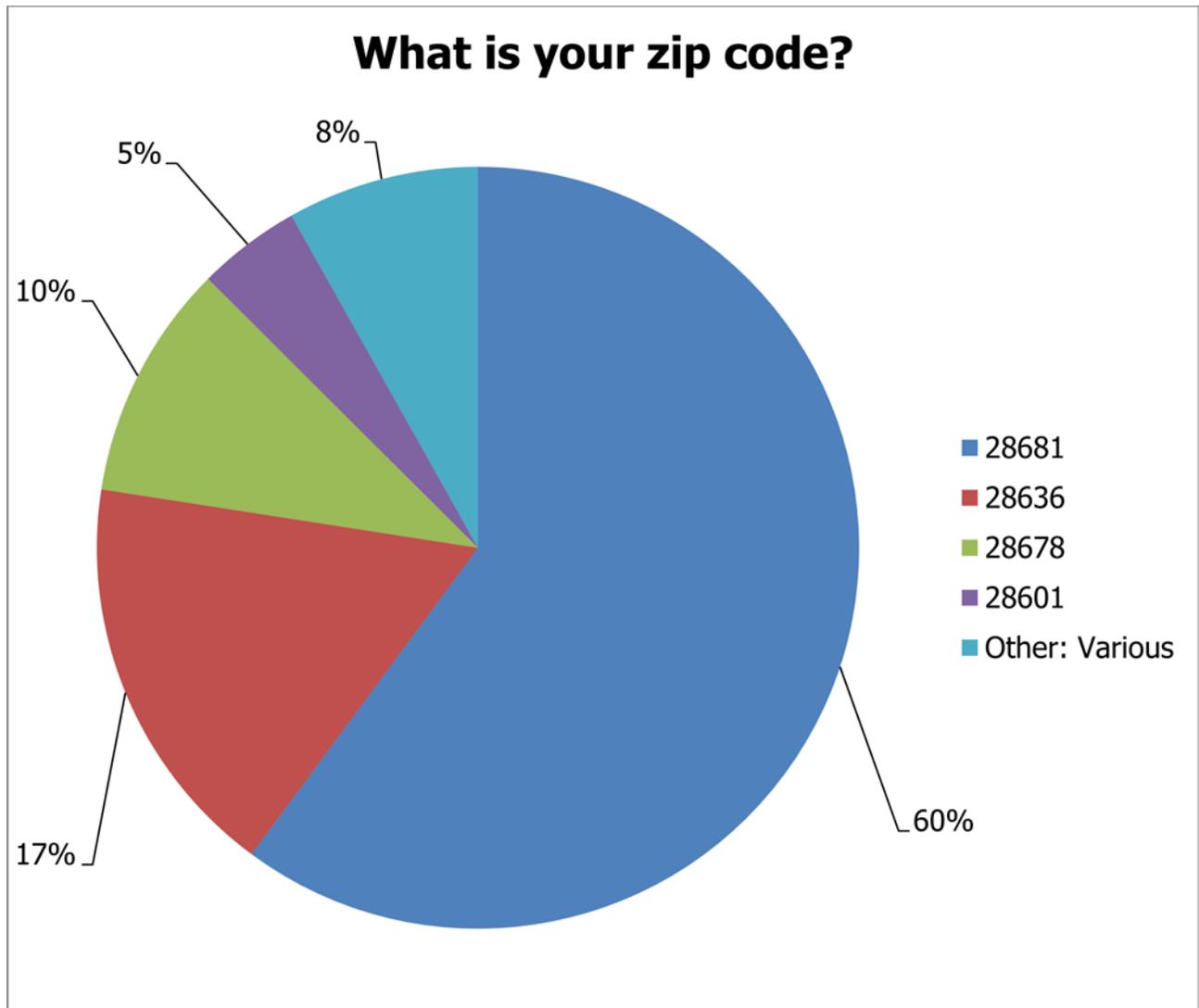


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Employed full-time	54.26%	280
Employed part-time	11.43%	59
Retired	4.65%	24
Unemployed	12.98%	67
Disabled	3.29%	17
Student	2.91%	15
Homemaker	9.11%	47
Self-Employed	1.36%	7
Total		516

Community Health Assessment 2014

Q35 What is your Zip Code?

Answered: 478 Skipped: 47

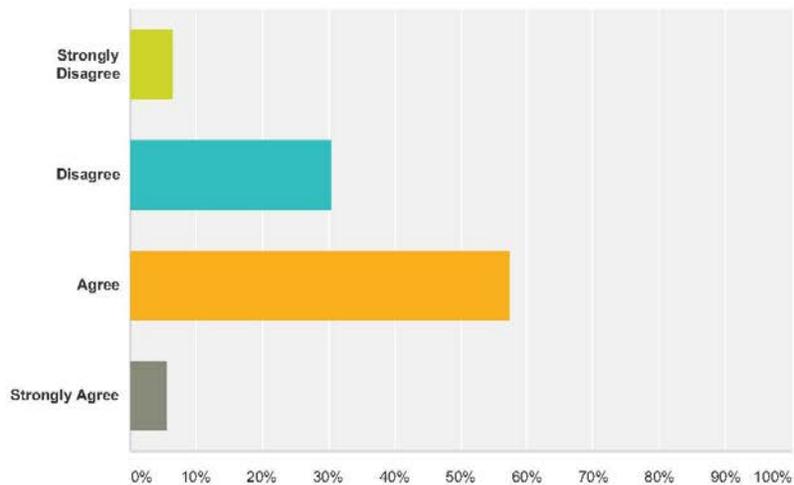


Appendix B
Alexander Central High School
Community Health Assessment Survey Response Data

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

**Q1 How do you feel about this statement:
 "There is a good healthcare system in
 Alexander County."--Consider the cost and
 quality, number of options, and availability
 of healthcare in Alexander County.**

Answered: 536 Skipped: 0

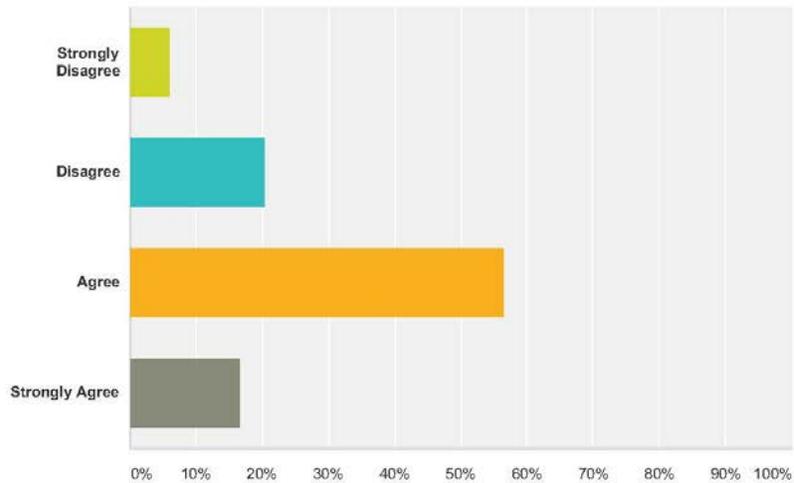


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	6.53%	35
Disagree	30.41%	163
Agree	57.46%	308
Strongly Agree	5.60%	30
Total		536

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

**Q2 How do you feel about this statement:
“Alexander County is a good place to raise
children.” --Consider the quality and safety
of schools and child care programs, after
school programs, and places to play in this
county.**

Answered: 536 Skipped: 0

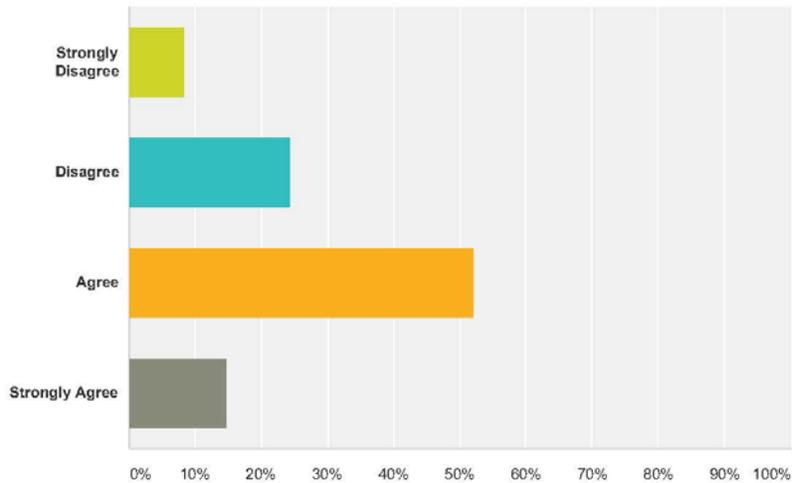


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	6.16% 33
Disagree	20.52% 110
Agree	56.53% 303
Strongly Agree	16.79% 90
Total	536

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

**Q3 How do you feel about this statement:
 “Alexander County is a good place to grow
 old.”--Consider our county’s elder-friendly
 housing, transportation to medical services,
 recreation, and services for the elderly.**

Answered: 536 Skipped: 0

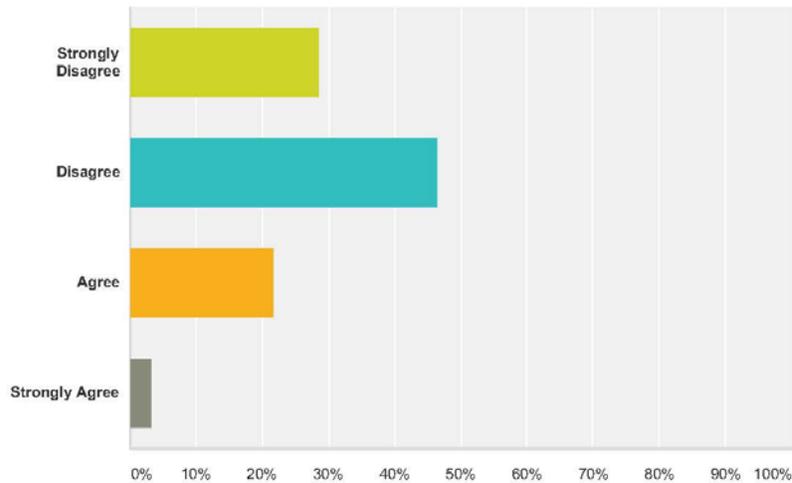


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	8.40% 45
Disagree	24.44% 131
Agree	52.24% 280
Strongly Agree	14.93% 80
Total	536

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

**Q4 How do you feel about this statement:
 “There is plenty of economic opportunity in
 Alexander County.” --Consider the number
 and quality of jobs, job training/higher
 education opportunities, and availability of
 affordable housing in Alexander County.**

Answered: 536 Skipped: 0

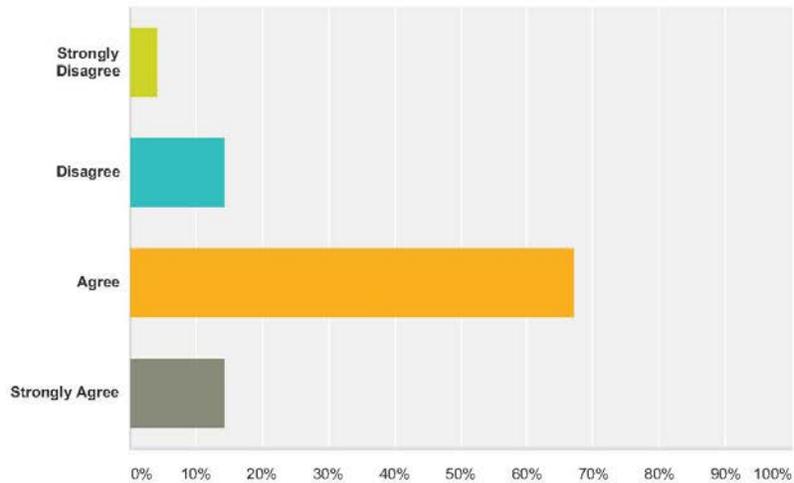


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	28.54% 153
Disagree	46.46% 249
Agree	21.64% 116
Strongly Agree	3.36% 18
Total	536

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q5 How do you feel about this statement, “Alexander County is a safe place to live”? - Consider how safe you feel at home, in the workplace, in schools, at playgrounds, parks, and shopping centers in Alexander County.

Answered: 536 Skipped: 0

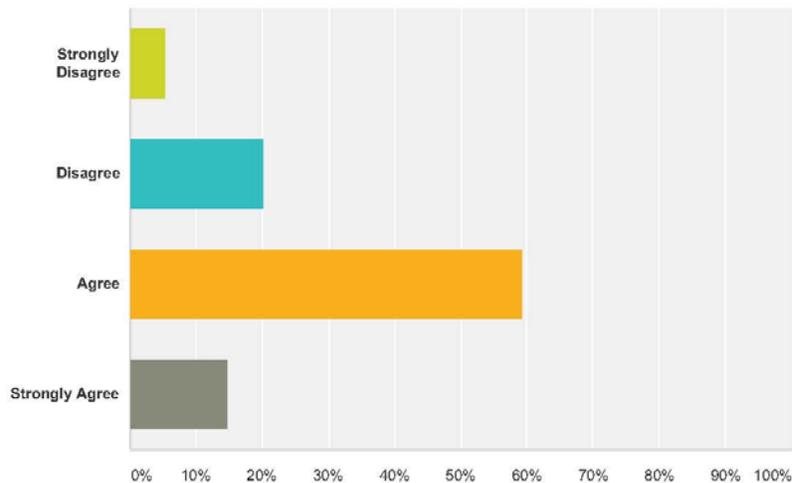


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	4.10% 22
Disagree	14.37% 77
Agree	67.16% 360
Strongly Agree	14.37% 77
Total	536

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

**Q6 How do you feel about this statement:
 “There is plenty of help for individuals and families during times of need in Alexander County.” --Consider social support in Alexander County: neighbors, support groups, faith community outreach, community organizations, and emergency monetary assistance.**

Answered: 536 Skipped: 0

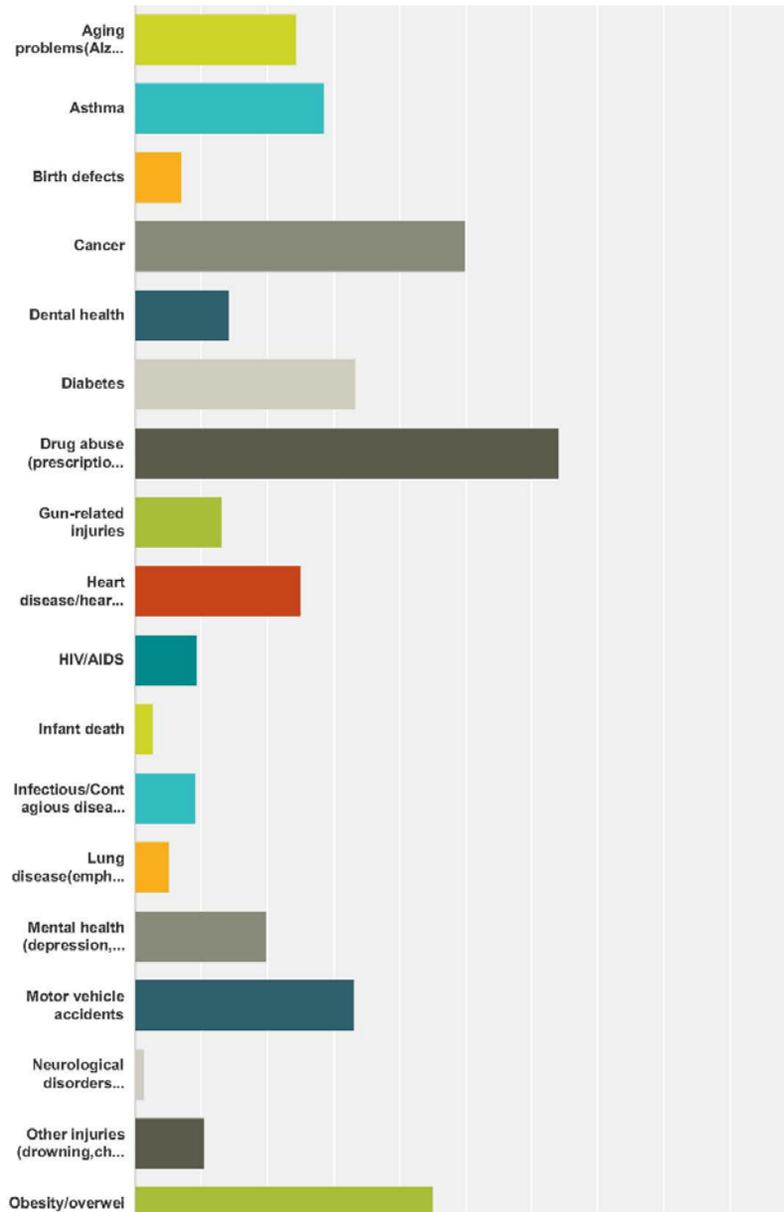


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Disagree	5.41% 29
Disagree	20.34% 109
Agree	59.33% 318
Strongly Agree	14.93% 80
Total	536

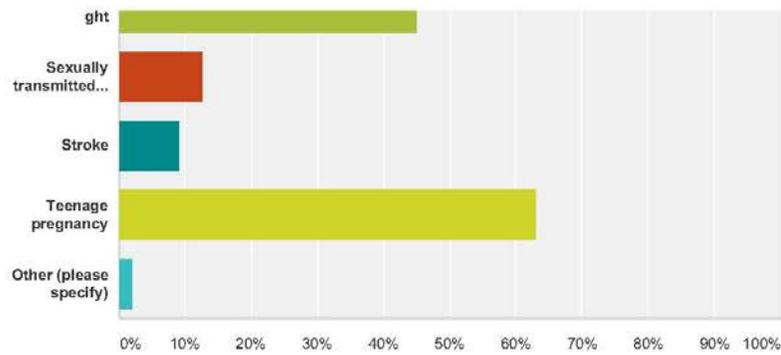
CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q7 These next questions are about health problems that have the largest impact on the community as a whole. You can choose up to 5.

Answered: 486 Skipped: 50



CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

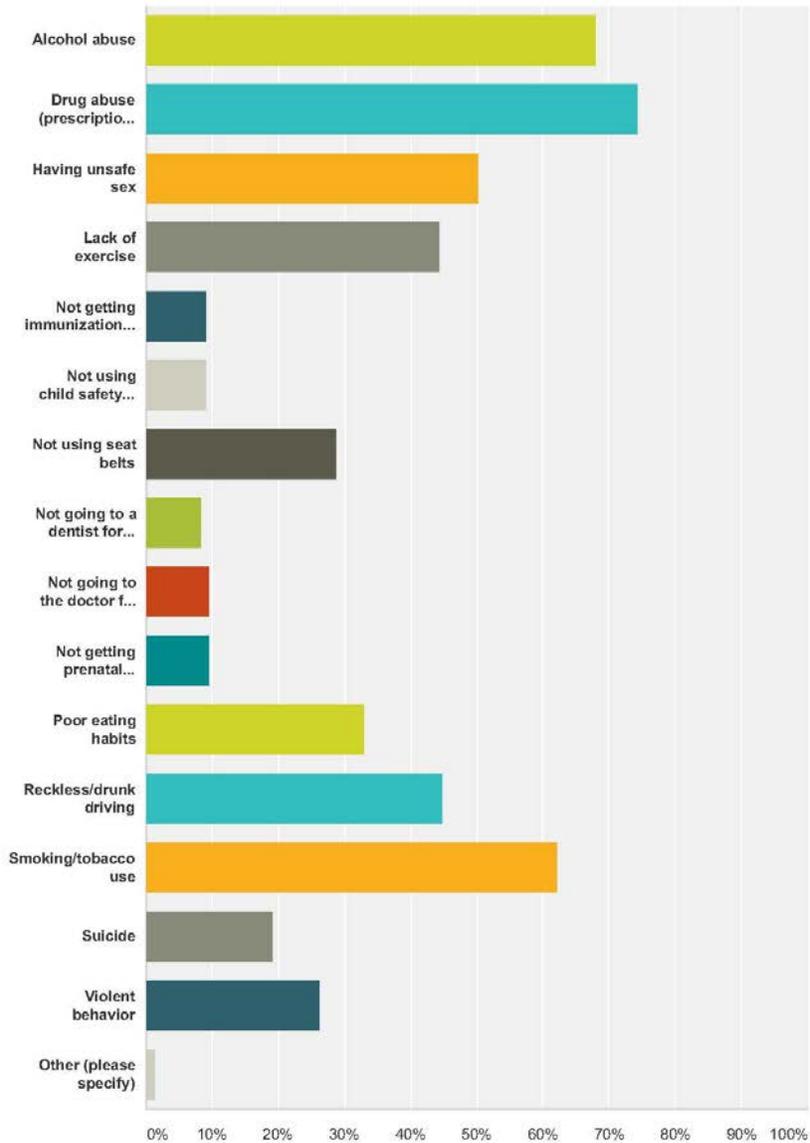


Answer Choices	Responses	
Aging problems(Alzheimer's, arthritis,hearing or vision loss, etc.)	24.49%	119
Asthma	28.60%	139
Birth defects	7.20%	35
Cancer	50.00%	243
Dental health	14.20%	69
Diabetes	33.33%	162
Drug abuse (prescription drugs/illegal drugs/overdose)	63.99%	311
Gun-related injuries	13.17%	64
Heart disease/heart attacks	25.10%	122
HIV/AIDS	9.47%	46
Infant death	2.67%	13
Infectious/Contagious diseases (TB, salmonella, pneumonia, flu, etc.)	9.26%	45
Lung disease(emphysema, etc.)	5.14%	25
Mental health (depression,schizophrenia, suicide etc.)	19.75%	96
Motor vehicle accidents	33.13%	161
Neurological disorders (Multiple Sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, A.L.S.)	1.44%	7
Other injuries (drowning,choking, home or work related)	10.49%	51
Obesity/overweight	45.06%	219
Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)	12.76%	62
Stroke	9.26%	45
Teenage pregnancy	62.96%	306
Other (please specify)	2.06%	10

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q8 These next questions are about unhealthy behaviors that impact the community as a whole. You may choose up to 5.

Answered: 486 Skipped: 50



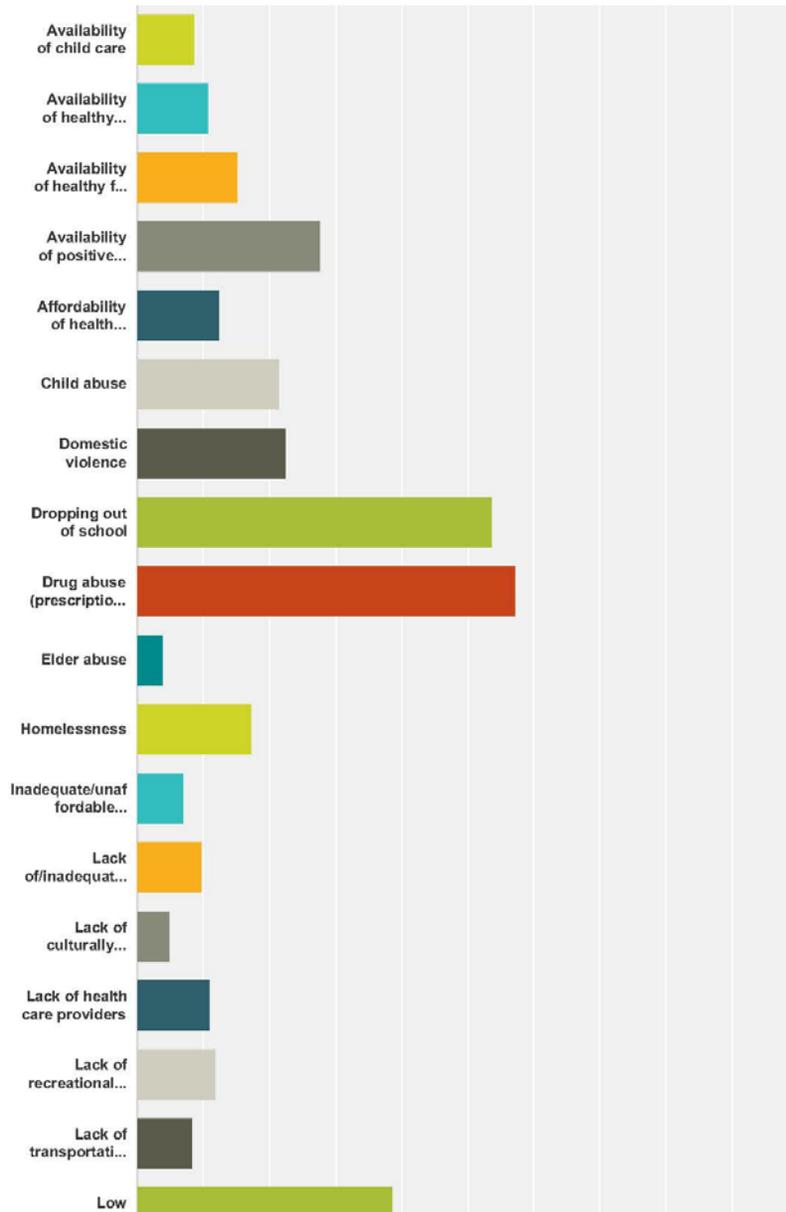
CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Answer Choices	Responses	
Alcohol abuse	68.11%	331
Drug abuse (prescription drugs/illegal drugs/overdose)	74.28%	361
Having unsafe sex	50.41%	245
Lack of exercise	44.44%	216
Not getting immunizations ("shots") to prevent disease	9.26%	45
Not using child safety seats	9.26%	45
Not using seat belts	28.81%	140
Not going to a dentist for preventive check-ups / care	8.44%	41
Not going to the doctor for yearly check-ups and screenings	9.67%	47
Not getting prenatal (pregnancy) care	9.67%	47
Poor eating habits	32.92%	160
Reckless/drunken driving	44.86%	218
Smoking/tobacco use	62.14%	302
Suicide	19.14%	93
Violent behavior	26.34%	128
Other (please specify)	1.44%	7
Total Respondents: 486		

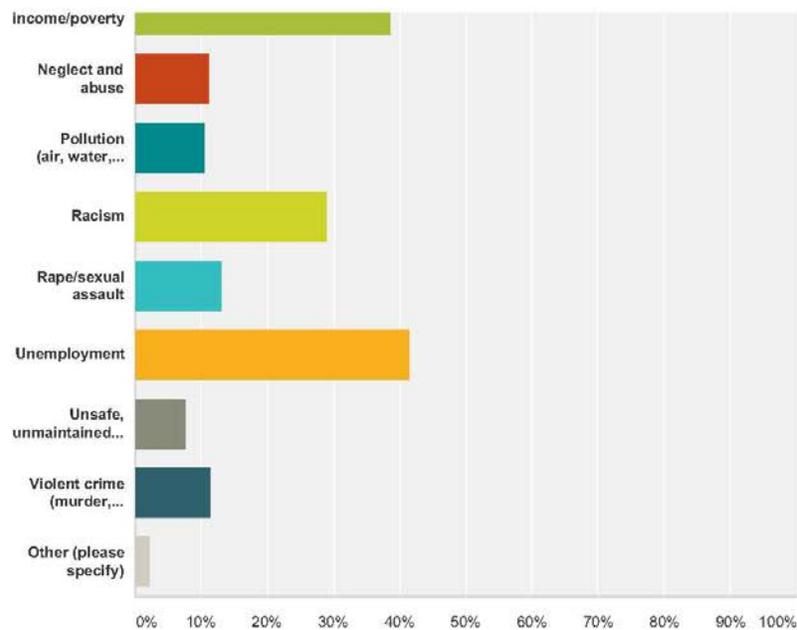
CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q9 This question is about community-wide issues that have an impact on the overall quality of life in Alexander County. You may choose up to 5.

Answered: 486 Skipped: 50



CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version



Answer Choices	Responses	
Availability of child care	8.85%	43
Availability of healthy family activities	10.91%	53
Availability of healthy food choices	15.23%	74
Availability of positive teen activities	27.78%	135
Affordability of health services	12.55%	61
Child abuse	21.60%	105
Domestic violence	22.63%	110
Dropping out of school	53.70%	261
Drug abuse (prescription drugs/illegal drugs/overdose)	57.20%	278
Elder abuse	3.91%	19
Homelessness	17.28%	84
Inadequate/unaffordable housing	7.00%	34
Lack of/inadequate health insurance	9.88%	48
Lack of culturally appropriate health services.	4.94%	24
Lack of health care providers	11.11%	54
Lack of recreational facilities (parks,trails,community centers, etc.)	11.93%	58

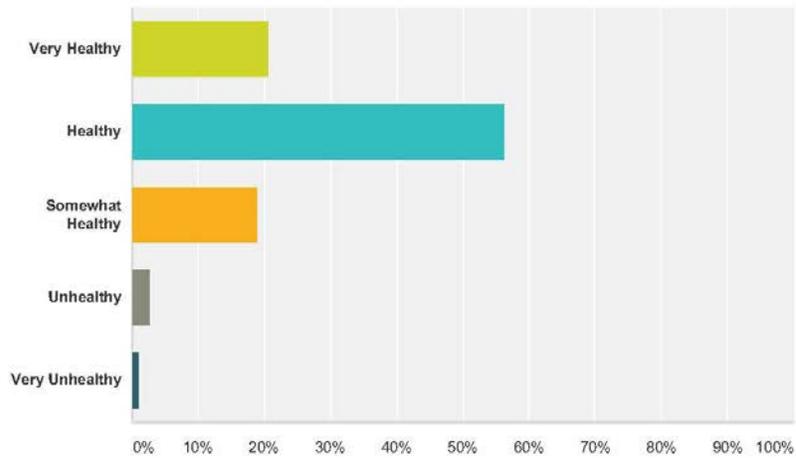
CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Lack of transportation options	8.44%	41
Low income/poverty	38.68%	188
Neglect and abuse	11.32%	55
Pollution (air, water, land)	10.70%	52
Racism	29.01%	141
Rape/sexual assault	13.17%	64
Unemployment	41.56%	202
Unsafe, unmaintained roads	7.82%	38
Violent crime (murder, assault, etc.)	11.52%	56
Other (please specify)	2.26%	11
Total Respondents: 486		

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q10 How would you rate your own health? Please choose only one of the following:

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

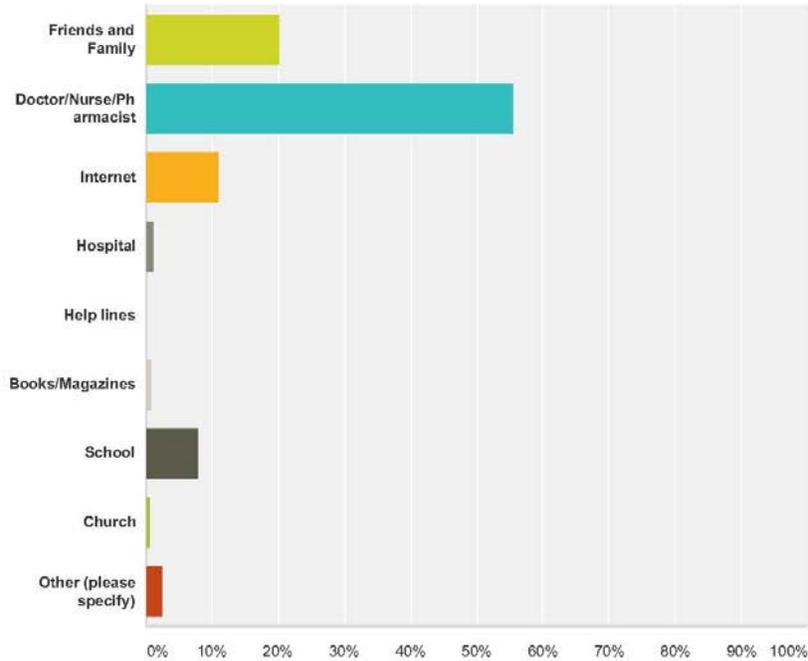


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Very Healthy	20.67%	92
Healthy	56.40%	251
Somewhat Healthy	19.10%	85
Unhealthy	2.70%	12
Very Unhealthy	1.12%	5
Total		445

CHA Survey 2014 - Tccn Version

Q11 Where do you get most of your health related information? Please Choose Only One.

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

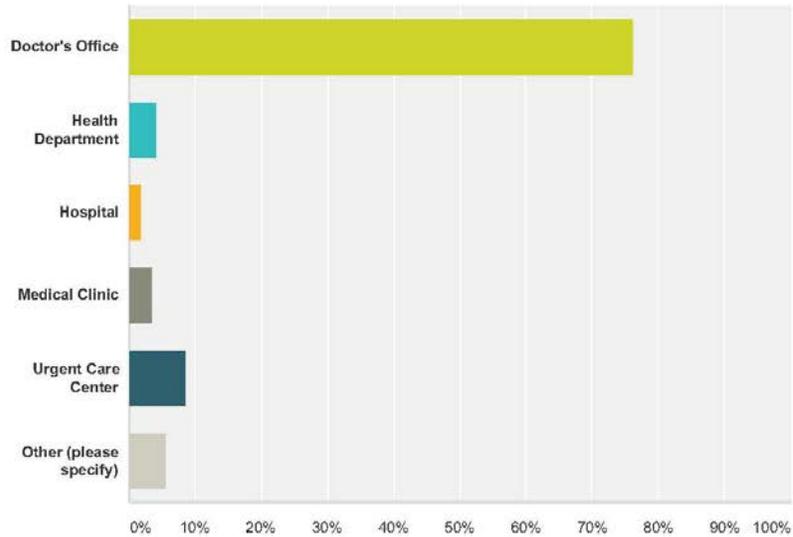


Answer Choices	Responses
Friends and Family	20.22% 90
Doctor/Nurse/Pharmacist	55.51% 247
Internet	11.01% 49
Hospital	1.35% 6
Help lines	0.00% 0
Books/Magazines	0.90% 4
School	7.87% 35
Church	0.67% 3
Other (please specify)	2.47% 11
Total	445

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

**Q12 Where do you go most often when you are sick or need advice about your health?
Choose the one that you usually go to.**

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

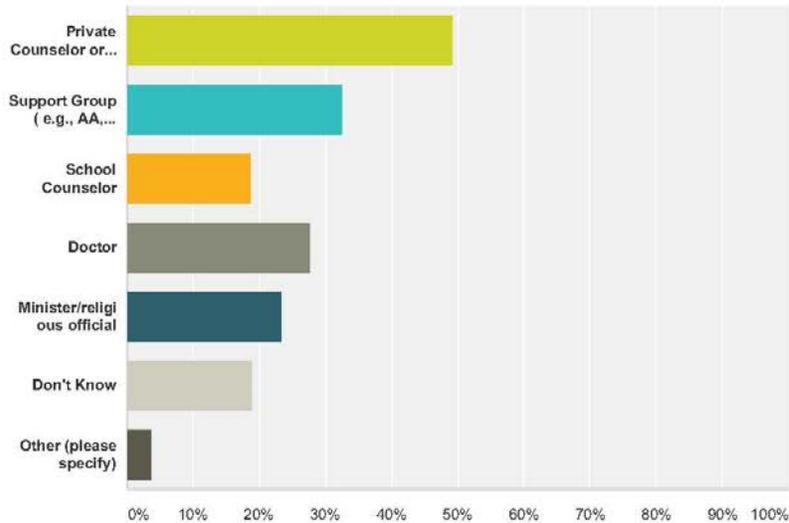


Answer Choices	Responses	
Doctor's Office	76.18%	339
Health Department	4.27%	19
Hospital	1.80%	8
Medical Clinic	3.60%	16
Urgent Care Center	8.54%	38
Other (please specify)	5.62%	25
Total		445

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q13 If a friend or family member needed counseling for a mental health or a drug/alcohol problem, who would you tell them to call or talk to? Choose all that apply.

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

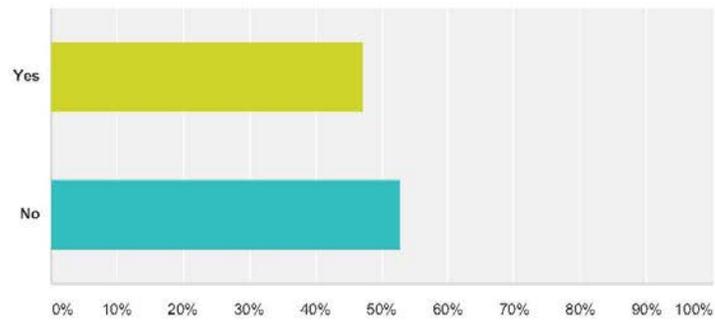


Answer Choices	Responses
Private Counselor or therapist	49.21% 219
Support Group (e.g., AA, Al-Anon)	32.58% 145
School Counselor	18.88% 84
Doctor	27.87% 124
Minister/religious official	23.37% 104
Don't Know	19.10% 85
Other (please specify)	3.82% 17
Total Respondents: 445	

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q14 In the past 30 days, have there been any days when feeling sad or worry kept you from going about your normal school day?

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

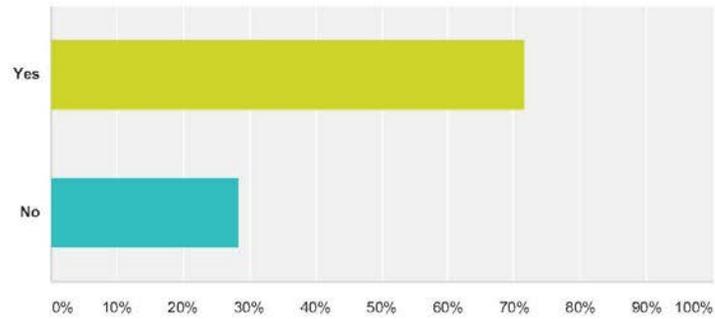


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	47.19%	210
No	52.81%	235
Total		445

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q15 During a normal week, other than in your regular job, do you engage in any exercise activity that lasts at least half an hour?

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

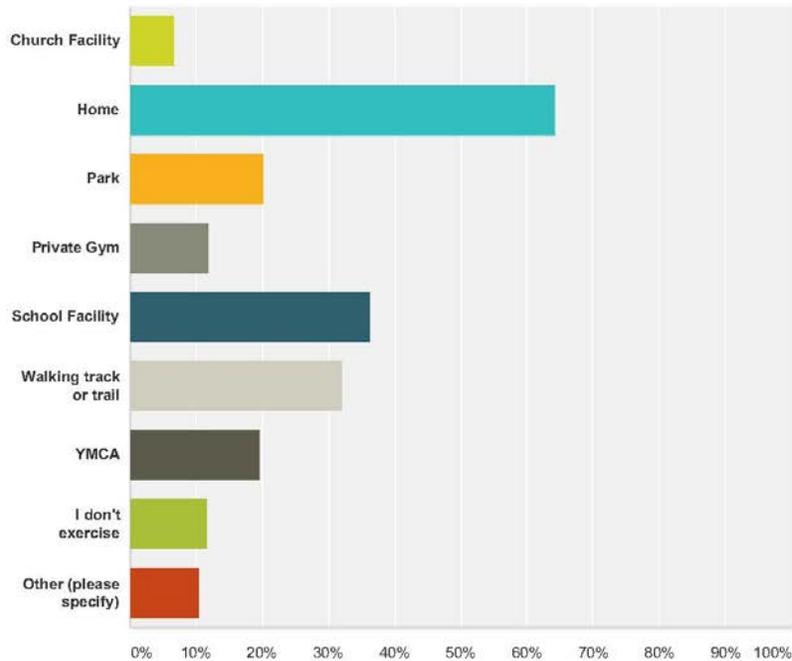


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	71.69%	319
No	28.31%	126
Total		445

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q16 Where do you go to exercise or engage in physical activity? Check all that apply.

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

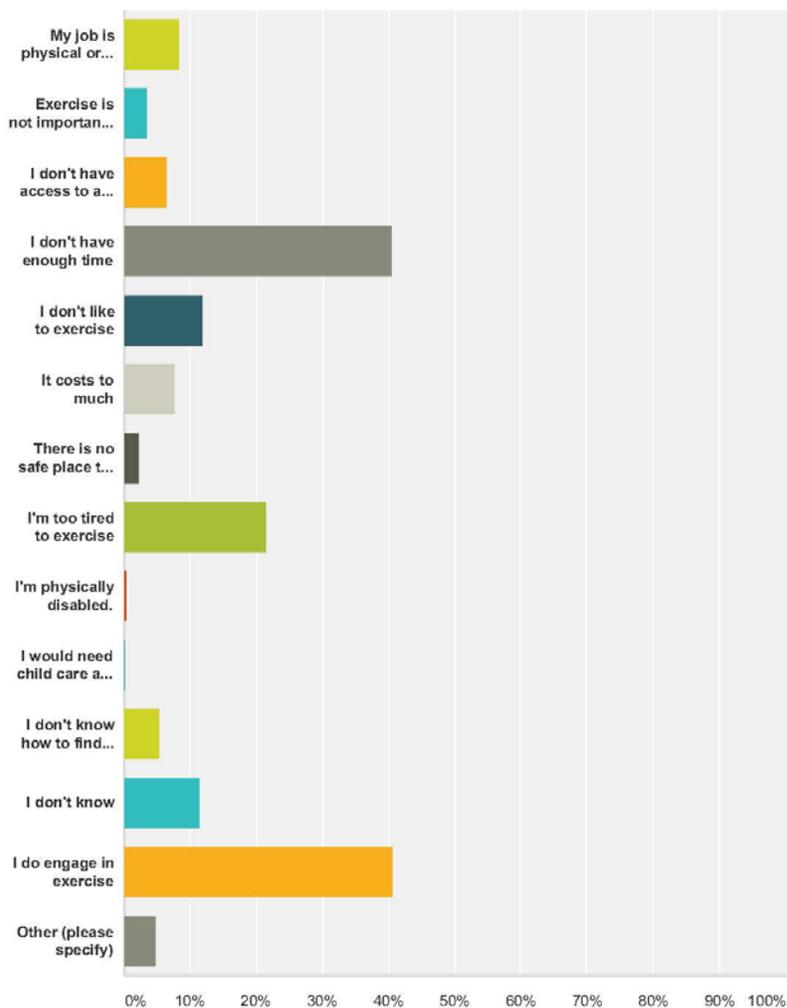


Answer Choices	Responses
Church Facility	6.74% 30
Home	64.27% 286
Park	20.22% 90
Private Gym	11.91% 53
School Facility	36.40% 162
Walking track or trail	32.13% 143
YMCA	19.55% 87
I don't exercise	11.69% 52
Other (please specify)	10.34% 46
Total Respondents: 445	

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q17 What are some reasons why you do not exercise for at least half a hour during a normal week? You may select multiple answers.

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91



Answer Choices	Responses
My job is physical or hard labor	8.31% 37
Exercise is not important to me	3.60% 16

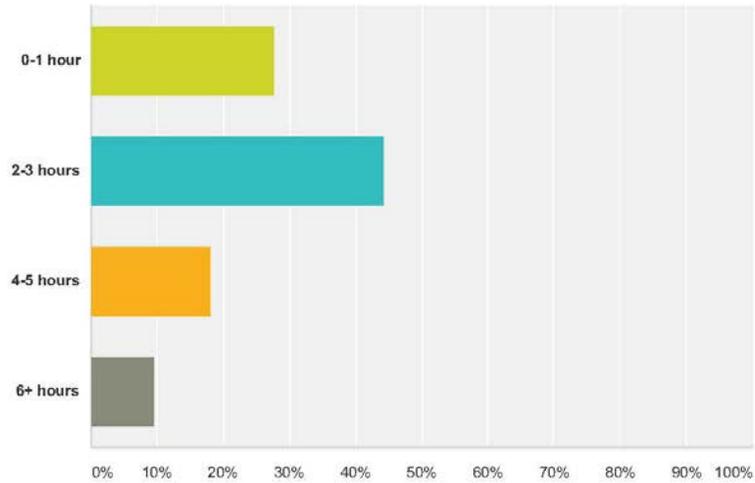
CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

I don't have access to a facility	6.52%	29
I don't have enough time	40.45%	180
I don't like to exercise	11.91%	53
It costs too much	7.64%	34
There is no safe place to exercise	2.25%	10
I'm too tired to exercise	21.57%	96
I'm physically disabled.	0.45%	2
I would need child care and I don't have it	0.22%	1
I don't know how to find exercise partners or teams	5.39%	24
I don't know	11.46%	51
I do engage in exercise	40.67%	181
Other (please specify)	4.72%	21
Total Respondents: 445		

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q18 How many hours per day do you watch TV, play video games, or use the computer for recreation?

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

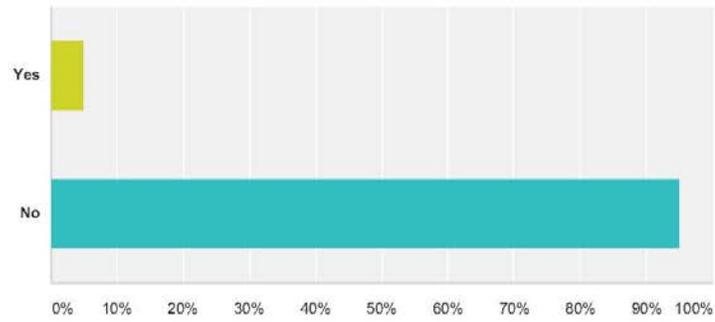


Answer Choices	Responses
0-1 hour	27.87% 124
2-3 hours	44.27% 197
4-5 hours	18.20% 81
6+ hours	9.66% 43
Total	445

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q19 Do you currently Smoke?

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

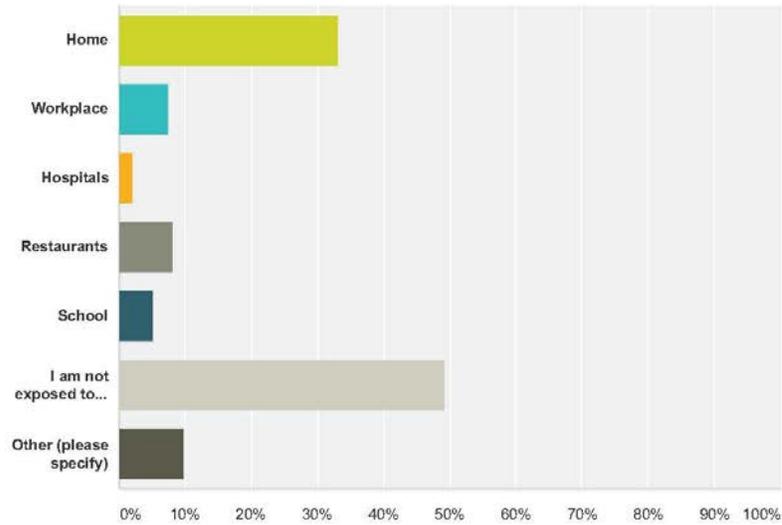


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes	4.94%	22
No	95.06%	423
Total		445

CHA Survey 2014 - Tccn Version

Q20 Are you exposed to secondhand smoke in any of the following places? Check all that apply.

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91

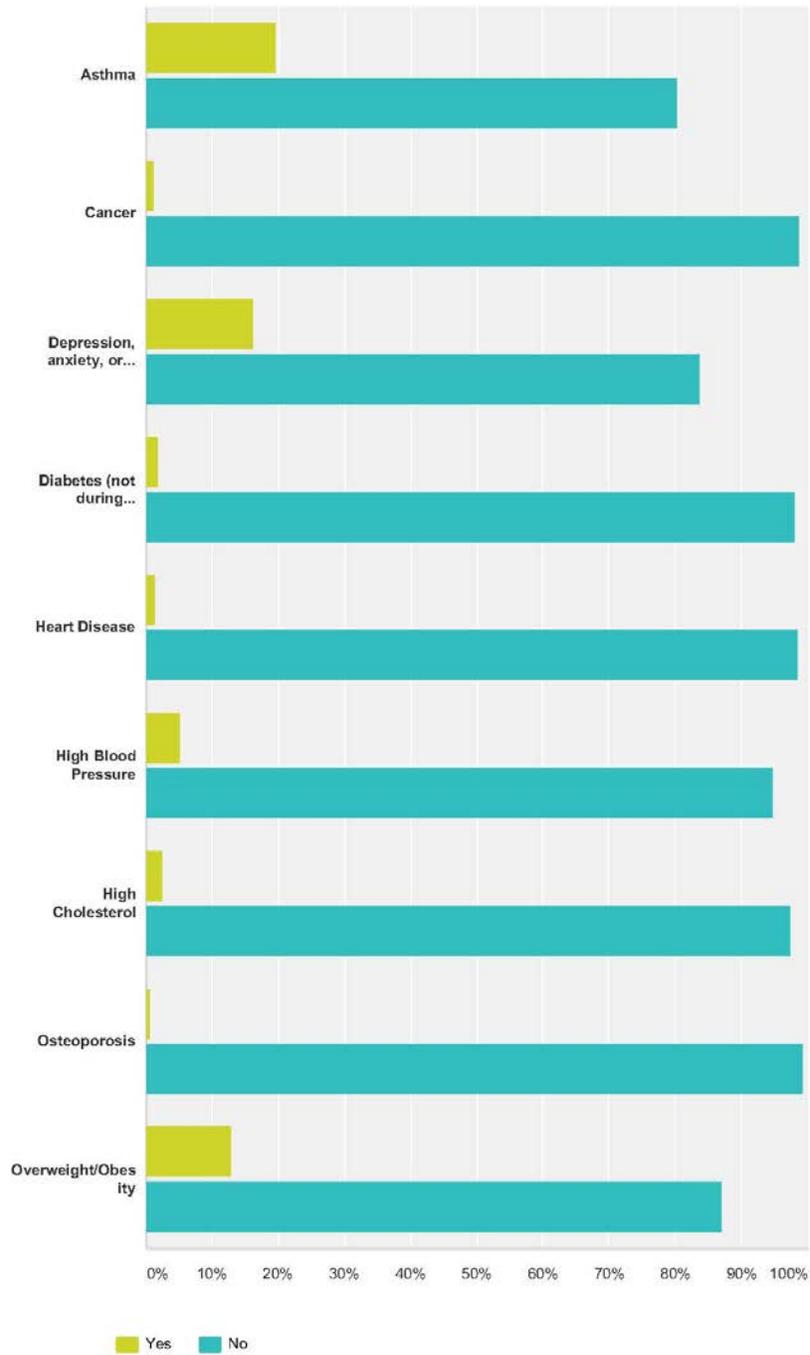


Answer Choices	Responses
Home	33.26% 148
Workplace	7.42% 33
Hospitals	2.02% 9
Restaurants	8.09% 36
School	5.17% 23
I am not exposed to secondhand smoke	49.21% 219
Other (please specify)	9.89% 44
Total Respondents: 445	

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q21 Have you ever been told by a doctor, nurse, or other health professional that you have any of the conditions?

Answered: 445 Skipped: 91



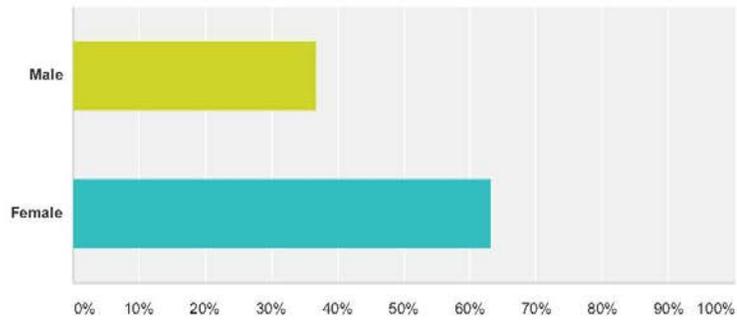
CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

	Yes	No	Total
Asthma	19.54% 85	80.46% 350	435
Cancer	1.20% 5	98.80% 412	417
Depression, anxiety, or other mental health disorder	16.31% 69	83.69% 354	423
Diabetes (not during pregnancy)	1.92% 8	98.08% 408	416
Heart Disease	1.45% 6	98.55% 409	415
High Blood Pressure	5.28% 22	94.72% 395	417
High Cholesterol	2.40% 10	97.60% 406	416
Osteoporosis	0.72% 3	99.28% 413	416
Overweight/Obesity	13.00% 55	87.00% 368	423

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q22 Are you male or female?

Answered: 433 Skipped: 103

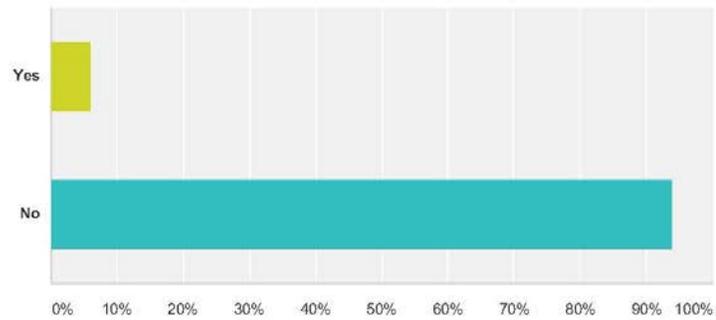


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Male	36.72%	159
Female	63.28%	274
Total		433

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q23 Are you of Hispanic Origin?

Answered: 433 Skipped: 103

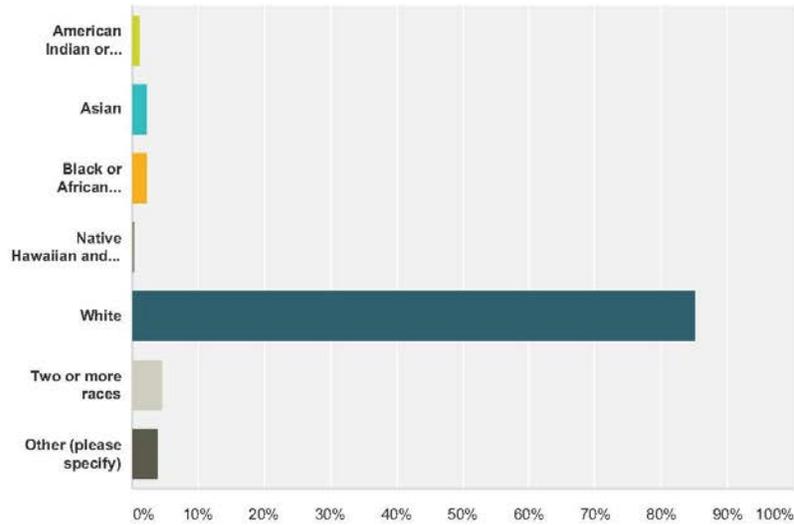


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	6.00%	26
No	94.00%	407
Total		433

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q24 What is your race? Please check one or choose "other" if you do not identify with only one of the categories.

Answered: 433 Skipped: 103

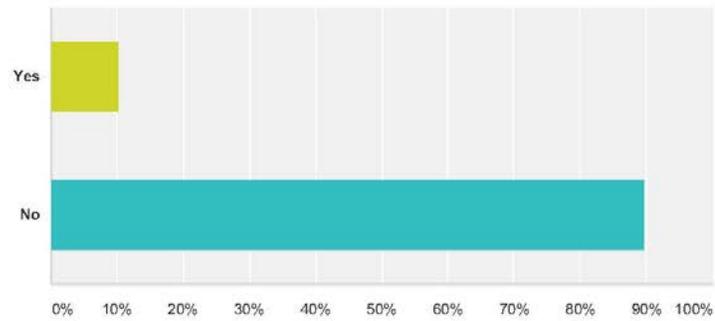


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.15%	5
Asian	2.31%	10
Black or African American	2.31%	10
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.46%	2
White	85.22%	369
Two or more races	4.62%	20
Other (please specify)	3.93%	17
Total		433

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q25 Do you speak a language other than English at home?

Answered: 433 Skipped: 103

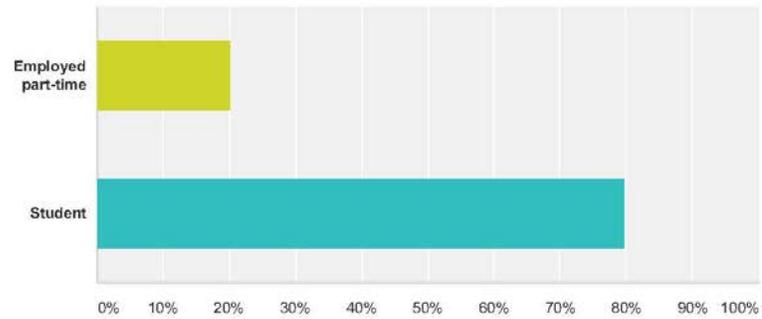


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	10.16%	44
No	89.84%	389
Total		433

CHA Survey 2014 - Teen Version

Q26 What is your current employment status?

Answered: 433 Skipped: 103



Answer Choices	Responses	
Employed part-time	20.32%	88
Student	79.68%	345
Total		433

Appendix C

Alexander County Community Health Resources

Medical Providers

Alexander County Health Department
338 1st Avenue SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Family Care Center
1668 NC HWY 16 South
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Family Medicine Associates
50 Macedonia Church Road
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Stony Point Family Medicine
35 Ruritan Park Lane
Stony Point, NC 28678

Wayne Wilson Family Practice
1232 Shiloh Church Road
Hickory, NC 28601

Bethlehem Family Practice
174 Bolick Lane Suite 202
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Dr. Jamal Kalala
225 NC HWY 16 South
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Urgent Care of Mountain View
60 2nd Avenue SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Carolina Orthopedic Specialists
50 Macedonia Church Road
Taylorsville, NC 28681

OrthoCarolina Hickory
214 18th Street NE
Hickory, NC 28602

Pain Relief Center
1224 Commerce Street SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Piedmont Cardiology
2660 Tate Boulevard SE
Hickory, NC 28602

Carolina Foot and Ankle Associates
1501 Tate Boulevard SE, Suite 203
Hickory, NC 28602

Dentists

Alexander County Health Department
338 1st Avenue SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Carolina Dental Care Center
556 NC HWY 16 South
Taylorsville, NC 28681

William Hackney, DDS
285 NC HWY 16 South
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Alan Grant, DDS/Howard Plant, DDS
167 1st Avenue SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Thomas Ryder, DDS/Allison Reese, DDS
1231 Shiloh Church Road
Hickory, NC 28601

Pharmacies

Bethlehem Pharmacy
9471 NC HWY 127
Hickory, NC 28601

Evans Drug and Company
10187 NC HWY 127
Hickory, NC 28601

Macks Pharmacy
8782 NC HWY 90 East
Stony Point, NC 28678

Town and Country Drugs
53 East Main Avenue
Taylorsville, NC 28681

People Drug
255 NC HWY 16 South
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Office Practice of Pharmacy
24 Commerce Drive
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Walmart Pharmacy
901 NC HWY 16 South
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Northwestern Drug Company, Inc.
53 East Main Avenue
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Mental Health Providers

McNeil Family Counseling & Services
5860 US HWY 64 West
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Carolina Residential Services, Inc.
933 West Main Street
Taylorsville, NC 28681

COMSERV, INC.
4165 NC HWY 127
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Turing Point Services, Inc.
68 Pop Davis Road
438 Old Wilkesboro Road
554 7th St SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

VOCA Corporation of NC
49 2nd Avenue SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Walkers Group Home
229 7th Ave
Taylorsville, NC 28681

RHA Health Services, Inc.
393 3rd Avenue SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

DONLIN Counseling Services
123 North Center Street
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Other Health & Medical Resources

Caring Hearts Pregnancy Center
135 7th Street SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Alexander County Home Health
338 1st Avenue SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Hospice and Home Care of
Alexander County
50 Lucy Echerd Lane
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Alexander County Partnership for Children
1565 NC HWY 90 West
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Alexander County Cooperative Extension
376 1st Avenue SW
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Alexander County Parks and Recreation
81 Wittenburg Road
Taylorsville, NC 28681

Rocky Face Mountain Recreation Area
3451 Rocky Face Church Road
Hiddenite, NC 28636