

2022 Community Assessment Annual Update  
Subpart A 1302.11 (b)(2)

**Any significant changes:**

The majority of the 2022 Community Needs Assessment findings echoed previous years, along with the continuous strain that COVID-19 has created. The toll of COVID-19 is evident within families, programs, and businesses as we all navigated through another year in a pandemic.

McPherson County saw unemployment lower from 3.2% in December of 2020, to 1.4% reported for December of 2021. Marion County unemployment went from 3.3% in December of 2021, to 1.8% reported for December of 2021.<sup>1</sup>

The findings for the 2021 Community Assessment identified mental health, lack of services for birth to three, and preschool program options to be top concerns for the communities and the families served within the Head Start program. Those areas continue to be areas of need for both communities, with mental health highly affected by COVID-19 and the ongoing fatigue from living in a pandemic.

CASA for McPherson County reported 34 open Child In Need of Care cases for 2021 and 2020 they reported 43 open CINC cases.<sup>2</sup>

**Increased availability of publicly-funded pre-kindergarten and an assessment of how the pre-kindergarten available in the community meets the needs of the parents and children served by the program, and whether it is offered full school day).**

Kansas did open up funding resources for 3 year-olds who qualified for the At-Risk Program to be funded for the 2021-2022 school year.

Marion Elementary School had 12 students who qualified for the Early Learning Kansans grant and they are requesting 12 slots for the 2022-2023 school year. There would only be a morning session offered.

The McPherson Community Foundation completed a childcare survey that had 180 respondents. 92% answered that they do not believe McPherson County has adequate childcare options. 62% stated the main barrier was that there were no open spaces for children, while cost also proved to be a common barrier for families needing childcare. Before and after school care along with summer care was noted as being a top concern for families in McPherson County.<sup>3</sup>

### **Rates of family and child homelessness**

McPherson County Point In Time Count for 2021 was collected from three different sites: Live Free Ministries, New Hope- who serves Harvey, McPherson and Marion County, and the McPherson Housing Coalition. New Hope reported that they did not collect a point in time for 2021 but they had cared for around 300 individuals year to date as of the end of November, 2021. They also handed food bags and served 900 individuals with that resource. McPherson County Housing Coalition reported 23 individuals on January 28, 2021. Live Free Ministries reported that their homeless shelter for women and children this year had served 13 women and 7 children. There were 3 families and 10 individuals. The Omega Project served 102 individuals by December of 2021. Reporting varied for the year 2021 but overall trends seem similar to that of previous years.

The McPherson school district, USD 418, reported 22 students qualifying under the McKinney-Vento definition for homeless children, which is significantly lower than the previous year. The data might be skewed from inaccurate reporting. No school district in Marion county reported a number over 10 students that fell under the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless and therefore they were not included in the published number by the Kansas State Department of Education.<sup>4</sup>

### **Significant shift in community demographics**

There are no significant shifts in community demographics in McPherson or Marion County.

### **Significant shift in community resources**

The McPherson Community Coalition continues to meet bi-monthly and discuss how mental health is affecting the community, each service area, and the services that are provided. As a coalition, they look for ways to keep mental health at the forefront for the community. They provided different opportunities for the community during 2021: suicide prevention and resource awareness walk, a mental health first aid training, other avenues for community conversations around mental health, and they promoted a Housing Coalition Conference that was geared towards bringing together businesses leaders and nonprofits to discuss the difficulty in providing safe, affordable housing to McPherson County residents.

Marion County was able to offer free parenting classes through the FACT agency. Families could

sign up and attend virtual parenting classes covering Conscious Discipline through 4 different sessions.

Prairie View reported, “Yes – we have seen an increased demand for services and a decrease in qualified staff to provide such services. Our work to take clinical and support services into local schools is one way we are working to increase accessibility and even doing this does not seem to be meeting all the expressed needs. In 2020 we served 1242 patients from MP county. In 2021 we served 1295. The one factor to consider is that some MP county residents could be receiving services in other PV locations.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Resources**

1. Kansas Labor Force Estimates from the Kansas Department of Labor
2. CASA: 9th District
3. McPherson County Community Foundation
4. KSDE Education for Homeless Children and Youth 2021-2022 Data
5. Prairie View Mental Health and Behavioral Services