

Summary Guide 2015

HOWARD COUNTY LOCAL CHILDREN'S BOARD 2015 HOWARD COUNTY NEEDS ASSESSMENT



The Changing Landscape of Howard County:

- Young children under age 5 are the fastest growing group among all children
- White children have become a minority since 2012
- Child poverty and reliance on public assistance are rising
- Unemployment and housing vacancy rates are decreasing

AN OVERVIEW OF HOWARD COUNTY

Howard County is home to over 300,000 people and comprises 5% of the total population of the State of Maryland. More than 52,000 children and youth attend Howard County public schools, close to 92% of all school-aged children in the County.

As a community, Howard County boasts many strengths. Howard County is the fifth wealthiest county in the U.S. (median income: \$109,000 in 2013) and ranks #1 in Maryland based on how long people live, how healthy people feel while alive, and other factors that influence health.

Howard County children are generally well-behaved and healthy children.



Despite high levels of wealth and health, important challenges remain - or are otherwise emerging - in several important areas.

Continued attention and action are required to effectively address these challenges.

HOW THIS GUIDE IS ORGANIZED:

This summary guide provides highlights from the Howard County Local Children's Board (LCB) 2015 Needs Assessment, which accompanies the guide.

The highlights are organized by the key indicators required of the LCB by the

State of Maryland and by strengths and challenges. Emerging trends are also noted where appropriate. Although the numbers tend to be small and the availability of data is limited in some cases, they corroborate some of the anecdotal information around the County and are indicative of

burgeoning issues that merit further inquiry and notice to better understand the underlying factors that may explain these trends.

It concludes with a sample list of available resources in the County and suggests next steps for County stakeholders.

HOWARD COUNTY CHILDREN'S CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

State Mandated Indicators

1. Howard County, a Community that Supports Family Life
2. Stability and Economic Independence of Howard County Families
3. Children's Safety in their Families and Communities
4. Babies Born Healthy
5. Healthy Children
6. Children Enter School Ready to Learn
7. Children Successful in School
8. Children Completing School

Additional Indicators Recommended by Governor Hogan:

- Dropout rates
- Hunger
- Incarcerated parents
- Homelessness

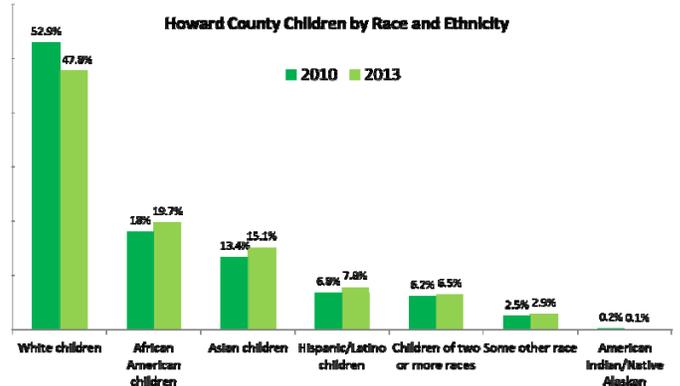
◆ Howard County is 1 of 3 counties in Maryland that has witnessed an increase in its total population (as a percentage of the state population) between 2006 and 2010, from 4.8% to 5%, whereas all remaining counties in the state have either seen a drop or remained the same.

◆ The Howard County child population has increased by 2% from 2010 to 2014, with the largest growth among young children under 5 years old.

◆ While White adults are still a majority of the

population (61% in 2013), it is no longer the case for White children since 2012. In fact, the percentage of White children has decreased dramatically over the past 5 years from 58.2% in 2009 to 47.8% in 2013.

◆ In contrast, African-American children, Asian children, and Latino children have had a growing presence. They represented 19.7%, 15.1%, and 7.8% of all children in Howard County in 2013.



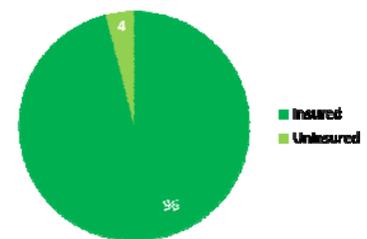
WHAT DO WE KNOW? STRENGTHS

1. HOWARD COUNTY, A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS FAMILY LIFE

Howard County has achieved near universal health insurance coverage for children residing in the County .

In 2013, 96.1% of all children under age 19 had insurance, 1 percentage point higher than the state percentage and almost 4 percentage points higher than the U.S. percentage.

All Howard County Children: Percentage Insured, 2013



2. STABILITY AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF HOWARD COUNTY FAMILIES

Howard County is one of the wealthiest counties in the U.S. as measured by median income.

The County had the lowest child poverty rate of any county in Maryland in 2013 (6.7%).

In 2013, 1.2% of Howard County public school students were homeless compared to 1.8% of Maryland students.

In 2012, 14.8% of Howard County children were food insecure, compared to 19.3% of children in Maryland and 21.6% of children nationally.

HOWARD COUNTY CHILDREN'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES

- ◆ Poverty among children has increased by 32% over the past ten years – from 3,800 children in 2003 to 5,000 children in 2013.
- ◆ The number of children in families making half

the poverty level grew from 1,398 in 2009 to 2,126 in 2013 – a 52.1% increase over 4 years.

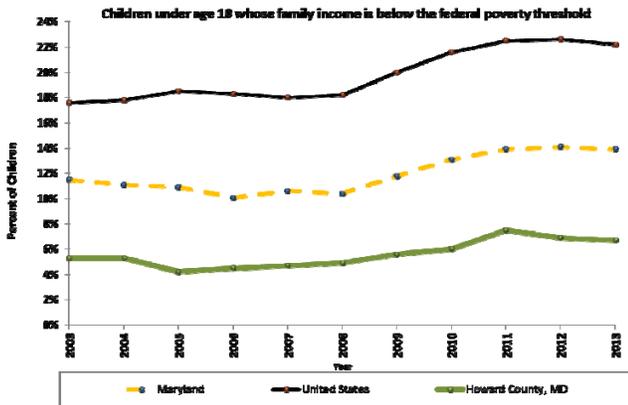
- ◆ Children below twice the poverty level have also experienced growth, from 11.7% in 2009 to 14.7% in 2013 –

this represents 8,499 children in 2009 and 10,924 children in 2013.

- ◆ While the poverty rate among White children had dropped by more than half between 2009 and 2013 – from 33.6% to 15.5% - it has increased the most among African American children and Asian children by 5.7% and 6.6%, respectively.

- ◆ African American children have the highest rate of poverty with 42.4% in 2013.

- ◆ Latino children did not see a dramatic rise in the poverty rate affecting them and have a rate between White and Asian children with 16.4% in 2013.



The number of Howard County households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) increased by 64.2% between FY 2010 and FY 2014, with 9,009 households in the program in FY 2014.



Enrollment in the free and reduced school meal program has increased 73% between SY 07-08 and SY 13-14 with close to 1 in 5 students enrolled in the program.



The monthly unemployment rate has been fluctuating between 3.7% and 4.3% between January and May 2015, and is lower than the monthly unemployment rate for Maryland. Compared with 2011, the rates for the same months have all decreased by 1 percentage point or more.



The housing vacancy rate dropped from 4.7% to 4% between 2009 and 2013.

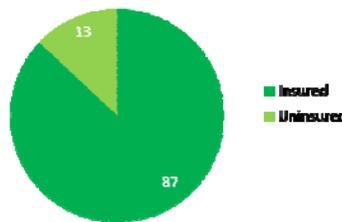
WHAT DO WE KNOW? CHALLENGES

1. HOWARD COUNTY, A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS FAMILY LIFE

This success in covering children almost universally masks important differences within the County.

For example, Jessup and North Laurel are 2 of the 7 communities with the most vulnerable children in Howard County and have among the highest rates of uninsurance in the County – 13.4% – 20% compared to 1%-2.3% in Fulton.

Children in households with incomes below 138% FPL: Percentage Uninsured, 2013

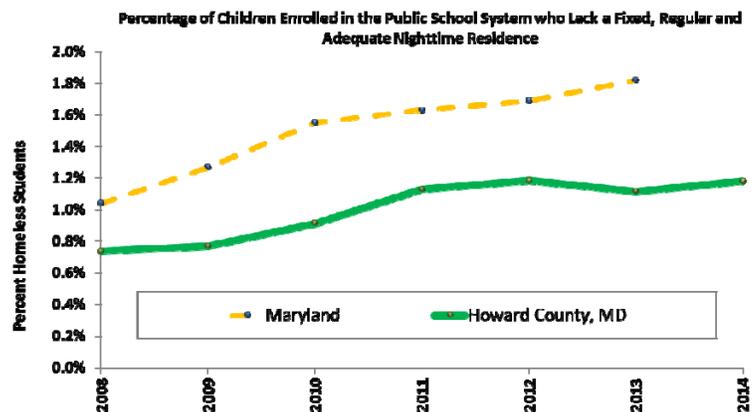


2. STABILITY AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF HOWARD COUNTY

While point-in-time statistics are favorable to Howard County, data over time reveal increases in the poverty, homelessness, and food insecurity rates affecting Howard County children.

Homelessness among students has increased more than 70% between SY 07-08 and SY 13-14 with 623 homeless students enrolled in public schools in 2014. Figure, right.

Food insecurity among children is increasing again – from 13.4% in 2011 to 14.8% in 2012.



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WHAT DO WE KNOW? STRENGTHS

3. CHILDREN'S SAFETY IN THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Rates of violent crimes are low compared to Maryland and the U.S. and have declined slightly between 2005 and 2013 (2.3 vs. 2.1 violent crimes per 1,000 persons).

Juvenile felony offenses have declined among all ages between 2005 and 2014 and are below the Maryland numbers, with the bulk of offenses committed by 15-17 years old.

Child maltreatment is low compared to Maryland and has remained stable with 2.3 cases of maltreatment per 1,000 children in 2013 compared with 9.2 cases per 1,000 children for the state.

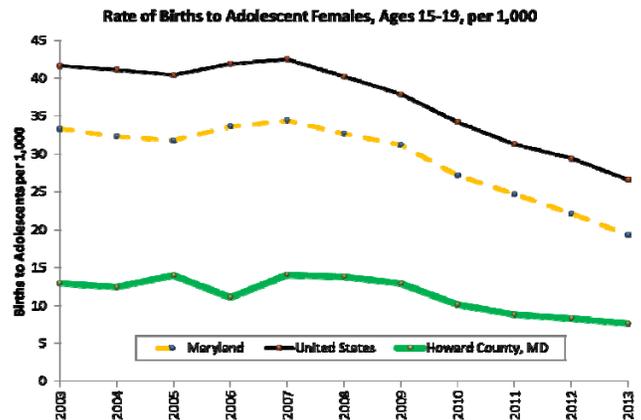
4. BABIES BORN HEALTHY

⇒ In 2013, the infant mortality rate was 4.7 per 1,000 live births, compared to 6.6 per 1,000 live births for the State of Maryland.

⇒ The birth rate to adolescents ages 15 to 19 is the lowest it has been since 2003 at 7.6 per 1,000 in 2013, which is 3.5 times lower than the U.S. rate and 2.5 times lower than the Maryland rate.

⇒ There were no births to adolescents under 15 years old.

⇒ The majority of births were to women who were between the ages of 18 and 19.



5. HEALTHY CHILDREN

In 2013, 95.3%, 95.4%, and 86.9% of high school students reported they did not touch tobacco, marijuana, and alcohol, respectively, before they were 13 years old.

In general, Howard County boasts lower nonfatal injury hospitalizations rates than the State of Maryland with the exception of 2009, where unintentional and self-inflicted injury rates surpassed the State's rates.

WHAT DO WE KNOW? CHALLENGES

3. CHILDREN'S SAFETY IN THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

15% of middle school students reported they did not always feel safe and secure in their neighborhoods in 2013.

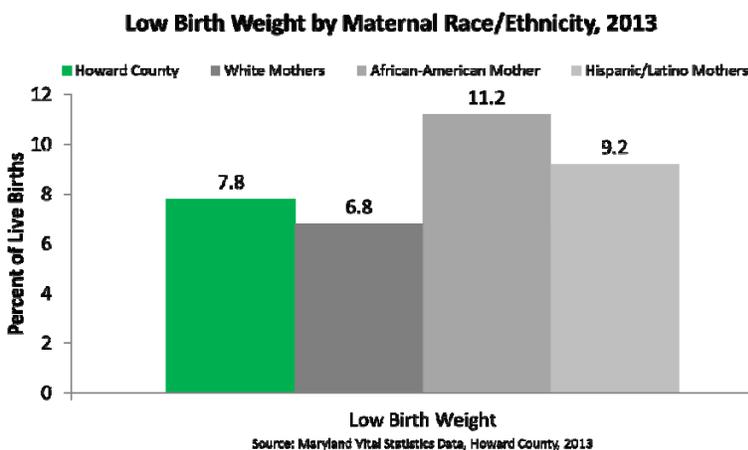
6% of high school students reported they did not go to school on one or more of the past 30 days because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

19% of high school students and 43% of middle school students reported they had been bullied on school property during the past 12 months.

4. BABIES BORN HEALTHY

⇒ From 2000 to 2013, the average infant mortality rate for African American infants was 13.8 per 1,000 live births, compared to 4.5 deaths per 1,000 live births among White infants.

⇒ Over half of White adolescent births were to youth of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity in 2013.



5. HEALTHY CHILDREN

In 2013, 23.3% of high school students and 19.4% of middle school students reported that they felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some of their usual activities.

Self-inflicted injuries are on the rise, while other types of injuries are down.

In 2013, 40.8% of high school students and 37.8% of middle school students reported they were trying to lose weight when 24.3% of high school students and 22.4% of middle schools students describe themselves as slightly or very overweight and when their self-reported BMI indicates that 17.5% of students are overweight or obese.

Hispanic/Latino teenagers had a much higher rate of drug use in 2013 than other teenagers in the County.

While the percentage of high school students who ever tried a prescription drug without a prescription is much lower than for alcohol and roughly half of those who ever tried marijuana, in 2013 13.1% of high school students report ever using a prescription drug and 2.9% report ever using heroin.

Only 61% of middle school students describe their health as excellent or very good.

Asthma among middle and high school students is not as prevalent as in some other counties in Maryland, yet 16.3% of high school students and 14.2% of middle school students reported they experienced symptoms in the past 12 months.

WHAT DO WE KNOW? STRENGTHS

6. CHILDREN ENTER SCHOOL READY TO LEARN

The percentage of Kindergarten students who achieved full readiness increased dramatically between FY 2002 and FY 2014, from 66% to 84%.

Similar rates were achieved in licensed child care centers and family child care homes (88% and 80%, respectively), as well as non-public nursery schools (83%).

Full readiness scores for public prekindergarten and Head Start each improved by 25%.

The percentage of Kindergarten students with disabilities who achieved full readiness also increased dramatically between 26% in FY 2002 and 60% in FY 2014, which is above the rate for the State of Maryland.

7. CHILDREN SUCCESSFUL IN SCHOOL

⇒ The percentage of high school students receiving a passing score on the Maryland High School Assessment has increased in every core subject since 2003, reaching 94.9% for algebra and biology and 92.5% for English in 2014.

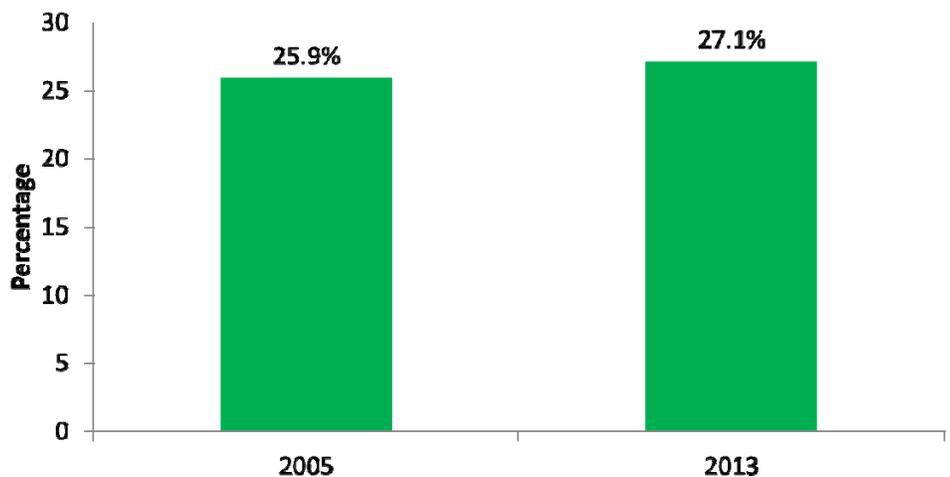
⇒ Absence from school is low at .34% of all public school students who are habitual truants.

8. CHILDREN COMPLETING SCHOOL

The percentage of young adults ages 18-24 who completed high school has increased over the past 8 years, from 25.9% in 2005 to 27.1% in 2013.

Howard County experienced higher levels of educational attainment in 2013 than in 2005, with 43.6% of young adults ages 18-24 obtaining some college or associate's degree and 21.4% of young adults obtaining a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Percentage of Young Adults, Ages 18-24, Who Have Completed High School



WHAT DO WE KNOW? CHALLENGES

6. CHILDREN ENTER SCHOOL READY TO LEARN

The percentage of low income Kindergarten students who are fully ready has increased from 24% to 75% between FY 2002 and FY 2014 but is still much lower than the County average and just short of the State average.

The percentage of Kindergarten students who were not fully physically developed for school has not changed, and has even decreased very slightly, since 2002, with 73% of students being fully physically developed compared to 89% for the State of Maryland.

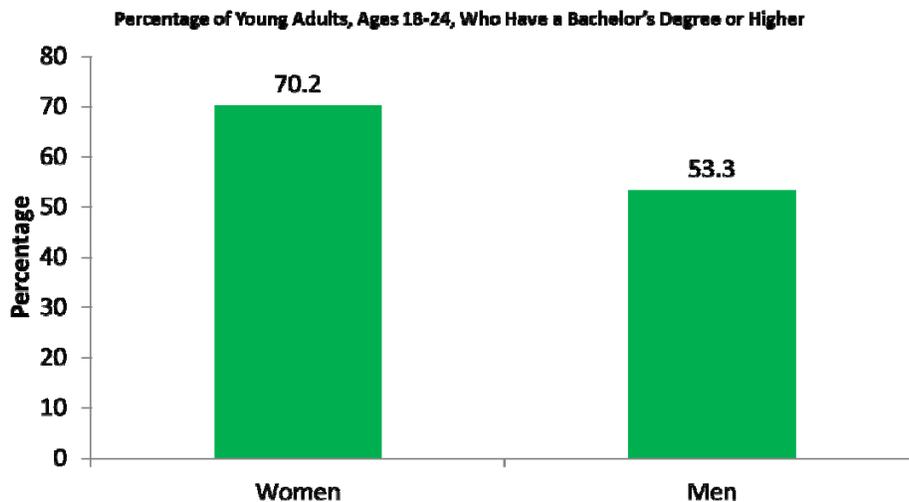
7. CHILDREN SUCCESSFUL IN SCHOOL

⇒ While the percentage of high school students passing the High School Assessment has increased substantially over the past 10 years and reached a very high level of success overall, the rates have been rather stable since 2008.

8. CHILDREN COMPLETING SCHOOL

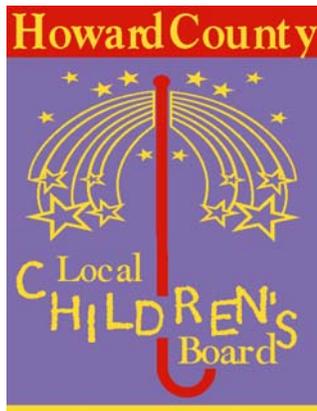
While more than 2/3rd of young adults ages 18-24 have achieved post high school levels of education, the percentage of young adults ages 18-24 who obtained a high school diploma or equivalent is lower than for the State of Maryland, 27% vs. 28% in 2013.

Men, especially men between the ages of 25 and 34, are much less highly educated than women.



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[http://
www.howardcountymd.gov/
localchildrensboard.htm](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/localchildrensboard.htm)

The Howard County Local Children's Board is composed of public and private members working collaboratively to ensure a strong continuum of services for families and children in our community. Also known as the Local Management Board, there is a functioning board in all 24 jurisdictions in Maryland. We work in partnership with the Governor's Office for Children to ensure children grow up healthy, secure and successful.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE COUNTY

Key Agencies and Organizations

Voices for Children
Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks
Office of State's Attorney
Howard County Department of Social Services
Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development
Community Action Council
Hope Counseling Center
Howard County Public School System
Department of the Police
Howard County Department of Juvenile Services
Howard County Department of Citizens Services
Howard County Health Department
Maryland State Department of Education
Howard County Mental Health Authority

A Sample of Community Programs

Medical Home/Head Start Learning Collaborative to Address Toxic Stress (Lead agencies: Health Department and Howard County Head Start) provides education and awareness on an issue impacting early childhood and brain development; Safe Sleep Campaign, including Cribs for Kids Program (Lead agencies: Health Department and Office of Children's Services) addresses injury prevention; Teen Health Website at Teenhealthmatters.org (Lead agencies: Health Department, Voices For Change, advisory board) addresses health education and promotion targeted to adolescents; School Based Wellness Centers (Partner agencies: Health Department and Howard County Public School System) addresses access to care and provision of health services.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Community stakeholders should convene and use this child needs assessment to consider the following questions for further inquiry and potential action:

- ◇ Where do we know enough to act? What are the community strengths? What are the gaps that still need to be addressed through the full continuum of services from all child-serving public and private agencies in the County?
- ◇ What do we still need to know? What questions are still partially or totally unanswered? How do we prioritize which issues to focus on?