



Teton County Community Health Assessment **2024**

LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

Teton County's 2024 Community Health Assessment provides an overview of the current health in Teton County.



It is with great pride that we release Teton County's 2024 Community Health Assessment – a collaborative examination of the many factors and qualities that relate to the health and well-being of our unique and scenic Teton County.

First and foremost, we would like to offer a wholehearted, “thank you!”, to all Teton County residents who participated in this Community Health Assessment, including Teton County Health Department (TCHD) staff and their collaborative partners at the Benefis Teton Medical Center (BTMC) and the Teton County Community Alliance for Resiliency and Educational Support (Teton County CARES). Your combined efforts created this introspective of your community's physical, mental, and social health, simultaneously providing a foundation for strategic improvement.

The purpose of the Teton County 2024 Community Health Assessment is to synthesize information from a variety of sources, including previously conducted

assessments, state and national data sources, and data collected from county residents and stakeholders over the last year, to identify different factors, challenges, successes, and areas of improvement impacting the health of Teton County. Our hope is that this document will be used widely and collaboratively to identify priorities and create solutions that continually improve the quality of life in our communities.

In Teton County, we believe that health is not just about individuals, but includes families, communities, and systems, and is a result of the interaction of complex networks or conditions and factors. Where and how we live, learn, work, play, and worship affect health and it starts long before illness occurs.

In health,

Gary Dale, MD
Teton County Health Officer

HEALTHY PEOPLE 2030 INFLUENCE

The Teton County Community Health Assessment incorporates this definition of health by presenting a diverse profile that includes the conditions and factors affecting people's health in Teton County, as well as indicators of health status.

Additionally, this profile aligns with goals set forth in Healthy People 2030, the national agenda for health developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2030 has moved from an understanding of health focused on the individual to one focused on communities and systems.

Healthy People 2030 Over-Arching Goals

- Attain healthy, thriving lives and well-being free of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death.
- Eliminate health disparities, achieve health equity, and attain health literacy to improve the health and well-being of all.
- Create social, physical, and economic environments that promote health and well-being for all.
- Promote healthy development, healthy behaviors, and well-being across all life stages.
- Engage leadership, key constituents, and the public to take action and design policies that improve health and well-being for all.

On behalf of all the individuals and organizations that have taken the time to participate and collaborate in the completion of this document, we offer thanks. We hope these efforts will help improve the health and well-being of the Teton County community.

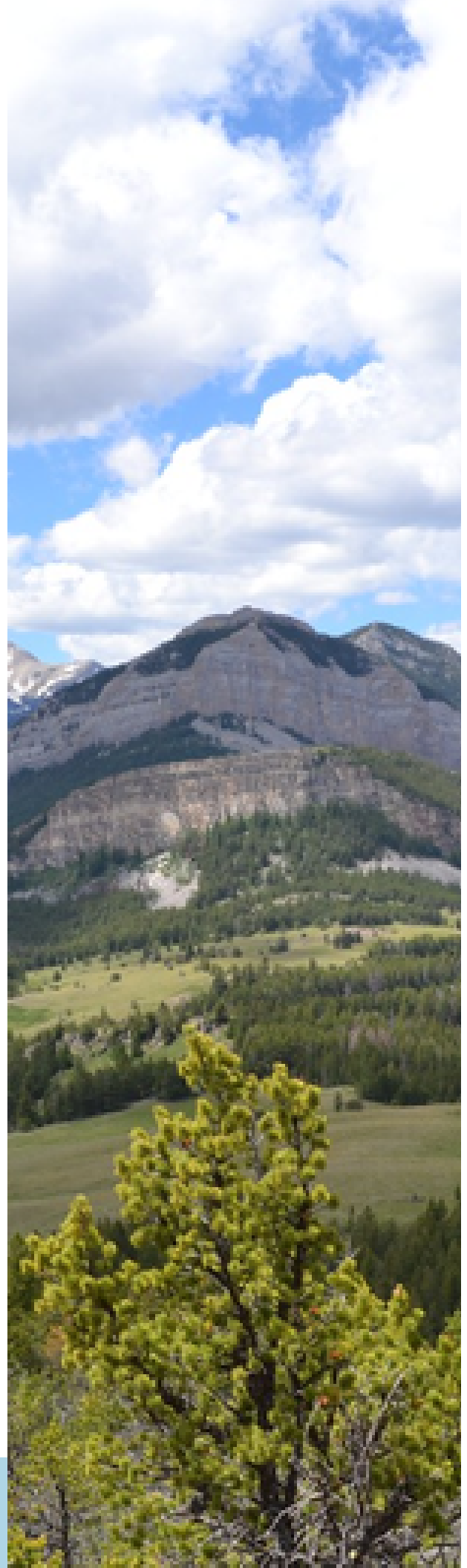


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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

COLLABORATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

Teton County has a strong history of promoting collaborative approaches to community projects. Teton County's CHA process engaged a diverse array of community leaders and other agency and organizational partners, community coalitions, and advisory groups with a strong focus on engaging community members facing significant barriers to better health.

Sponsorship of and much of the guidance for this assessment was provided by Teton County Health Department, Benefis Teton Medical Center, and the Teton County Community Alliance for Resiliency and Educational Support. In 2023, Benefis hired PYA Consulting to facilitate the collection of data and Community Health Needs assessment process on behalf of Benefis Teton Medical Center (BTMC). The Teton County Health Department (TCHD) participated in the development of surveys, and collection of responses, then utilized technical assistance from the Montana Public Health Systems Improvement Office (PHSIO) of the Montana Department of Health and Human Services to develop a comprehensive health assessment of Teton County.

SPONSORS



Teton County Health Department is a county department that provides health, wellness, and prevention services across Teton County. Programs include public health emergency preparedness, communicable disease surveillance and response, tobacco use prevention, Women, Infants, and Children Nutritional Supplement Program (WIC), cancer screening services, diabetes prevention, immunizations, and chronic disease self-management classes. The Teton County Health Department is governed by the Teton County Board of Health and Board of Commissioners.



Benefis Teton Medical Center is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital located in Choteau. Services include a 24-7 emergency room, physical therapy, occupational therapy, lab, x-ray and CT, inpatient beds, long term care, and an outpatient clinic. Monthly special services include mammography, DEXA scan, general cardiology, women's health, pediatrics, podiatry and foot care. BTMC is a department of Benefis Health System, a large non-profit hospital system headquartered in Great Falls. The local hospital is overseen by president/CEO Louie King. The BTMC Board of Directors governs BTMC and is composed of six at-large community members and two hospital administrators.



Teton County Community Alliance for Resiliency and Educational Support (Teton County C.A.R.E.S.) was created to confront Teton County's behavioral health challenges through comprehensive and evidence-based strategies that focus on resilience, education, prevention, access to treatment and reducing drug, alcohol and mental health related consequences, through community partnership and cultural change. This group was formed to address the concerns of the 2017 Teton County CHNA, and in 2019 merged with the Teton County Local Mental Health Advisory Council (LAC).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

METHODOLOGY

Through various quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, the Community Health Assessment (CHA) process utilized different sources of information to identify the most pressing health needs in Teton County, Montana. In the section below, the different data collection models are described in detail, including each of their target audiences, questions asked, and survey/discussion locations among others.

COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE:

In 2023, Benefis Teton Medical Center (BTMC) hired PYA consulting to develop a community survey questionnaire to provide to individuals within Teton County, Montana. Quick Response (QR) code flyers linking directly to the questionnaire were made available to members of the community at locations including but not limited to the BTMC check-in area, patient rooms at various community health clinics, and entrances to businesses and restaurants across the county. QR code flyers were also posted at several Teton County community events, such as the Dutton Fun Days and the Fairfield Swim Days. BTMC and Teton County Health Department staff encouraged community members to complete the survey, but participation was not financially incentivized.

The survey questionnaire included 24 topic questions related to demographics, socioeconomic status, individual health, and community healthcare perceptions. BTMC received 90 returned responses. The participants' races closely reflect the racial make-up of Teton County; however, the respondent uninsured rate (3%) fell significantly below the uninsured rate for Teton County (~14%). Respondents were predominately female, not atypical for this type of survey. Detailed survey results are included in Appendix A.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS:

In 2023, a survey was also provided to key leaders within the Teton County community (e.g., school administrators, business owners, healthcare professionals, etc.) to assess the health of the community, as well as its specific needs. BTMC received 212 returned responses. Detailed results of the survey are discussed later in this report. Full survey results and the Teton County organizations represented are also included in Appendix B & C, respectively. Some responses were kept confidential as promised in the distribution of the survey.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS:

During the summer of 2023, the Teton County Health Department conducted a series of seven focus group discussions with members of targeted populations in the community: high school students, low-income families, behavioral health patients, individuals with chronic health conditions, and senior citizens. A total of 40 community members participated in groups ranging in size from three to eleven. Each group was asked eight questions which aimed to assess quality of life in Teton County, access to care in the area, quality of local care provided, and additional health services needed. Data was compiled from the focus groups' discussions and answers, and results are discussed later in the report. Focus group participants were promised anonymity. Quotes obtained during the focus group are found throughout this report.

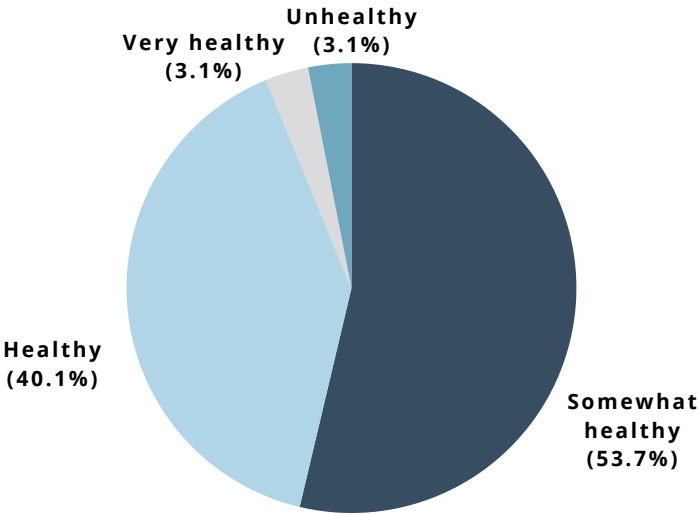
COMMUNITY VOICES

KEY INFORMANT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

- Alluvion Health
- Beehive Homes of Choteau
- Benefis Teton Medical Center
- Benefis Teton Medical Center Foundation
- Bethany Christian Services
- Big Sky Special Needs Cooperative
- Choteau Ace Hardware
- Choteau Activities
- Choteau Chamber of Commerce
- Choteau Lions Club
- Choteau Senior Citizens Center
- Choteau/Teton Public Library
- Choteau & Vicinity Soroptimist
- Choteau Volunteer Fire Company
- City of Choteau
- Courage Counseling
- Choteau Roxy Theatre
- DPHHS Child and Family Services Division
- Eastern Front Counseling
- First Bank of Montana
- Fit Choteau
- Frontier Family Practice
- Front Range Family Psychiatry, LLC
- Heart and Mind Counseling
- Life Alliance for Youth
- LIVING the WORD
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
- Montana State University Extension Service
- Mountain Front Family Vision Center
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors
- Saint Joseph's Catholic Church
- Skyline Lodge Apartments
- Sun River Electric Cooperative
- Teton County Council on Aging
- Teton County Agriculture
- Teton County Board of Health
- Teton County Commissioners
- Teton County Conservation District
- Teton County – Choteau Elementary School
- Teton County – Choteau Public Schools
- Teton County – Dutton/Brady School District
- Teton County EMS/Ambulance Services
- Teton County Food Pantry
- Teton County – Fairfield Elementary School District
- Teton County – Fairfield Public Schools
- Teton County – Greenfield School District
- Teton County Health Department
- Teton County – Power Public Schools
- Teton County Search and Rescue
- Teton County Sheriff's Office
- Teton County Superintendent of Schools
- Teton Pass Ski Area
- The Alley Cat Bar & Bowling
- The Teton County Abstract Company
- Town of Fairfield
- Trinity Lutheran Church
- True North Counseling
- Weist Farms
- Wholly Authentic Life, LLC
- USDA Forestry Services
- Zion Lutheran Church
- 3 Rivers Communications

WHAT IS YOUR IMPRESSION OF THE GENERAL HEALTH OF TETON COUNTY?

Key Informant Survey

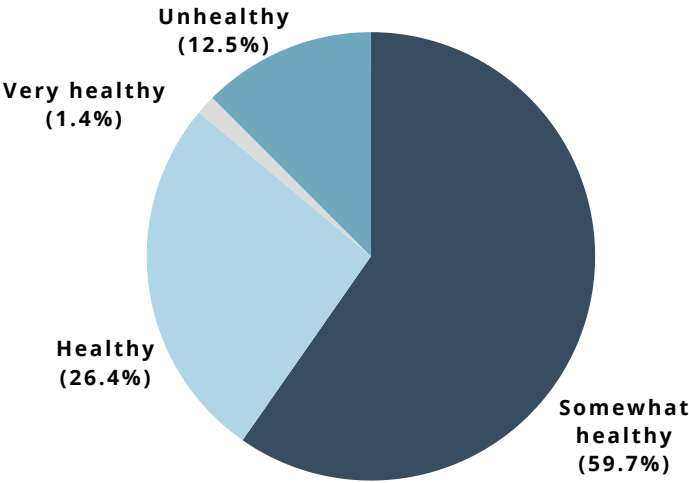


A majority of community participants (53.7%) selected Teton County as being "Somewhat Healthy."

3.1% said the county was unhealthy and no respondents said the county was very unhealthy.

(Key Informant Survey, 2023)

Community Survey Findings



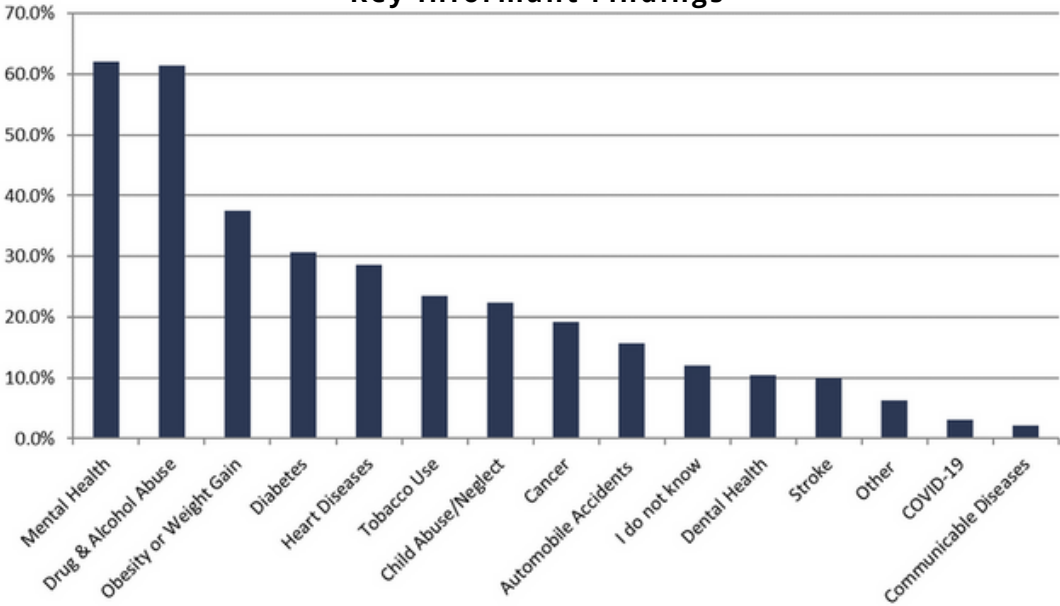
A majority of community participants (59.7%) selected Teton County as being "Somewhat Healthy."

12.5% said the county was unhealthy and no respondents said the county was very unhealthy.

(CHNA Community Survey, 2023)

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE BIGGEST HEALTH CONCERNS IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Key Informant Findings

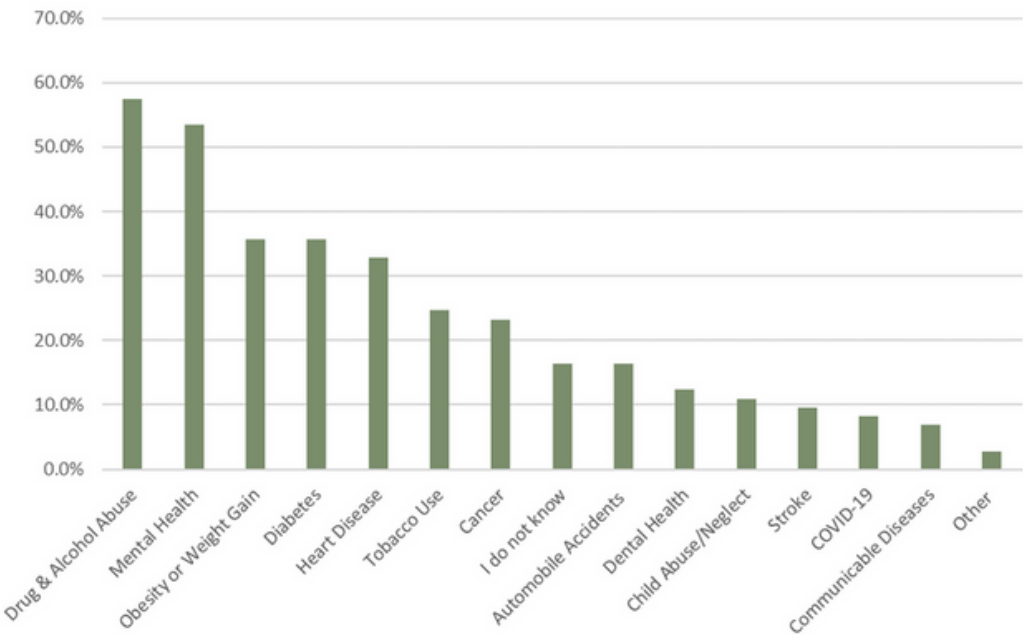


(Key Informant Survey, 2023)

- #1 Mental Health
- #2 Drug & Alcohol Abuse
- #3 Obesity or Weight Gain

- #1 Drug & Alcohol Abuse
- #2 Mental Health
- #3 Obesity or Weight Gain

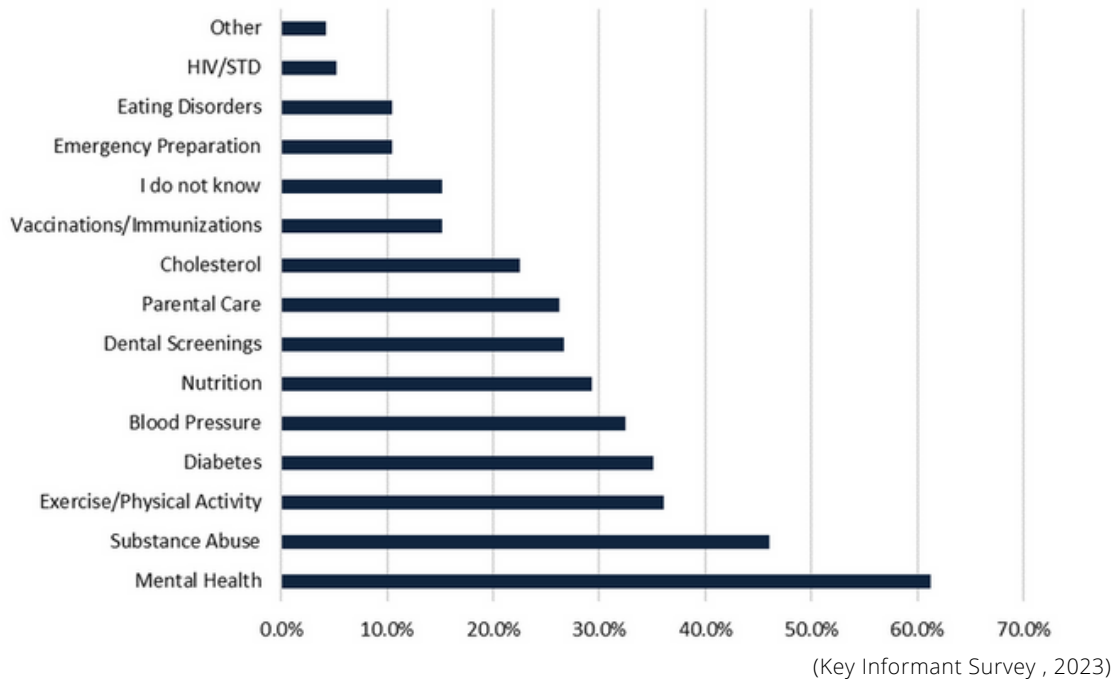
Community Survey Findings



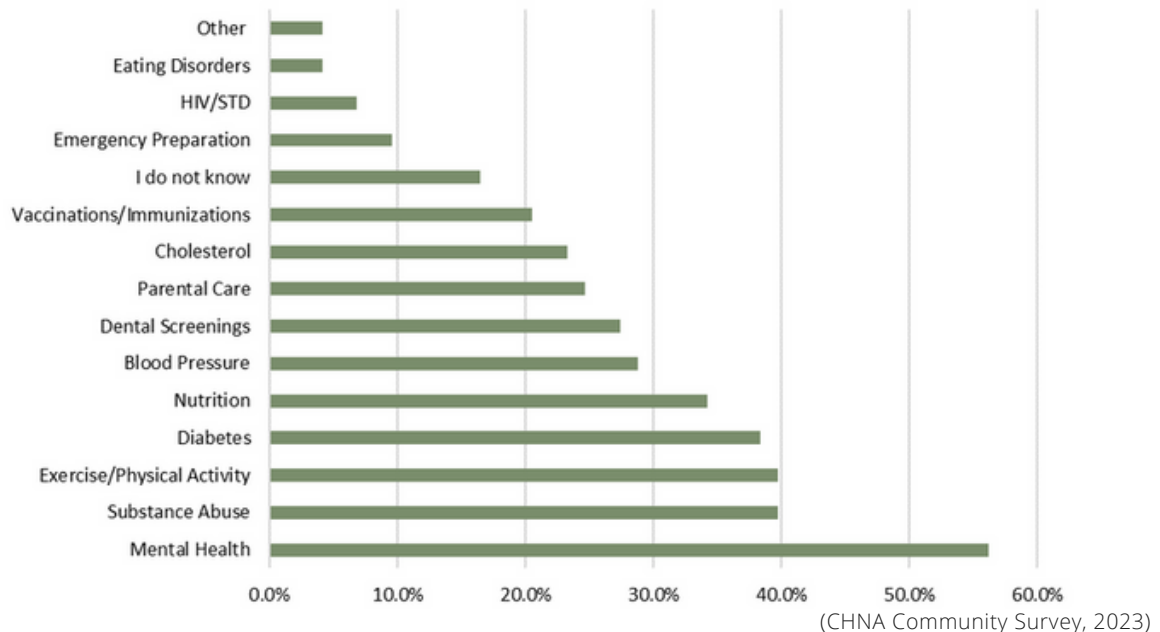
(CHNA Community Survey, 2023)

WHAT HEALTH SCREENINGS, EDUCATION, OR FREE SERVICES ARE MOST NEEDED IN YOUR COMMUNITY? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

Key Informant Findings

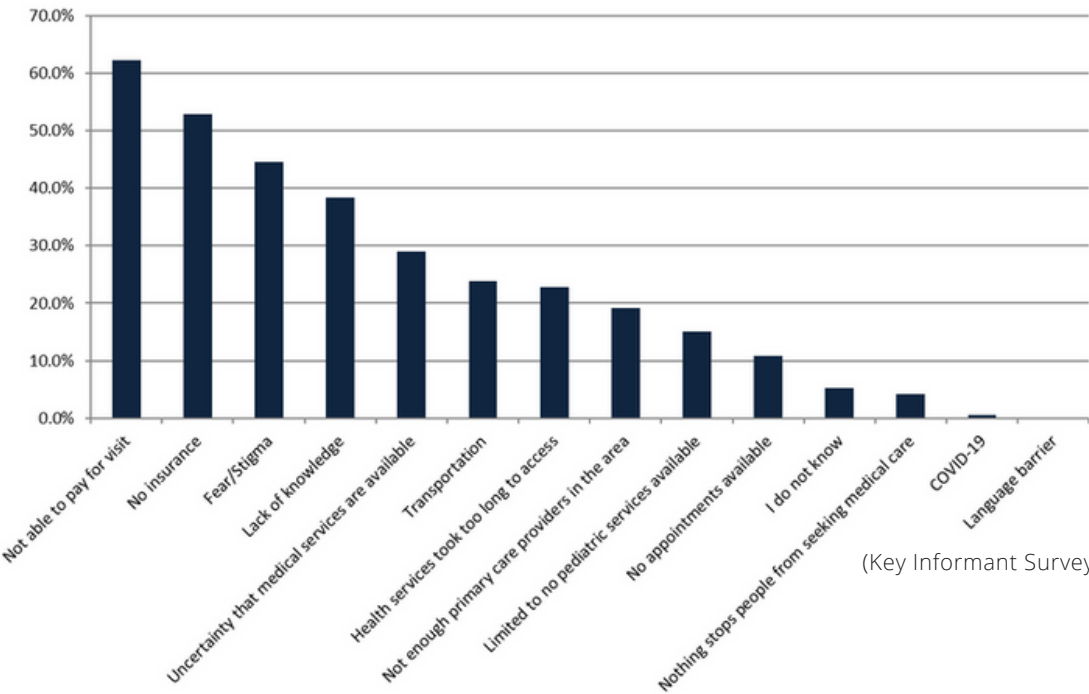


Community Survey Findings



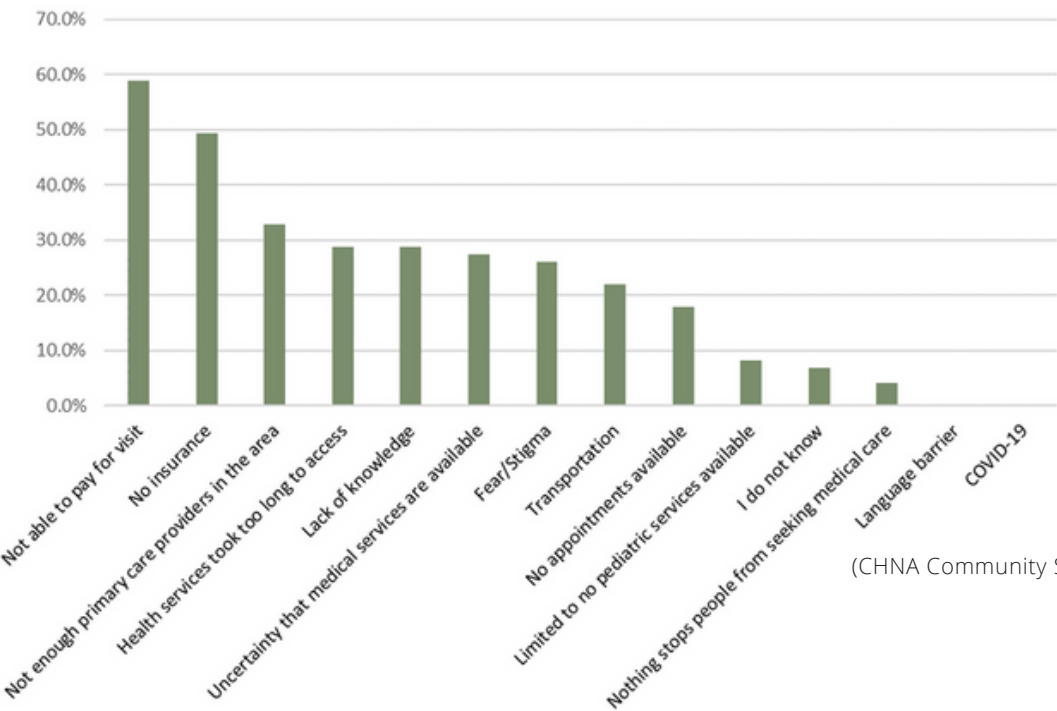
WHAT DO YOU THINK STOPS PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY FROM SEEKING MEDICAL CARE?

Key Informant Findings



(Key Informant Survey, 2023)

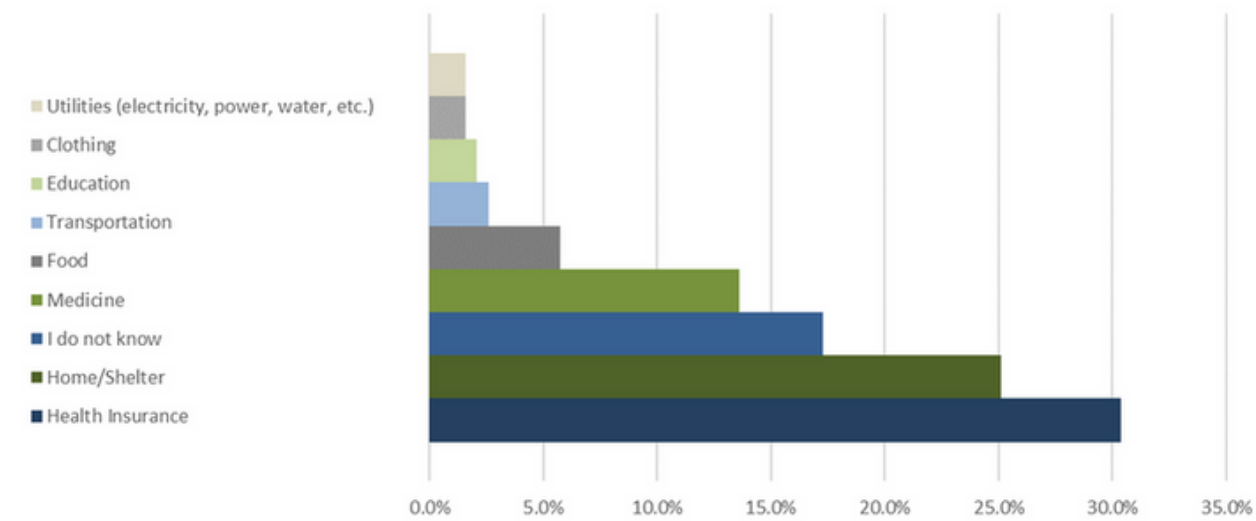
Community Survey Findings



(CHNA Community Survey, 2023)

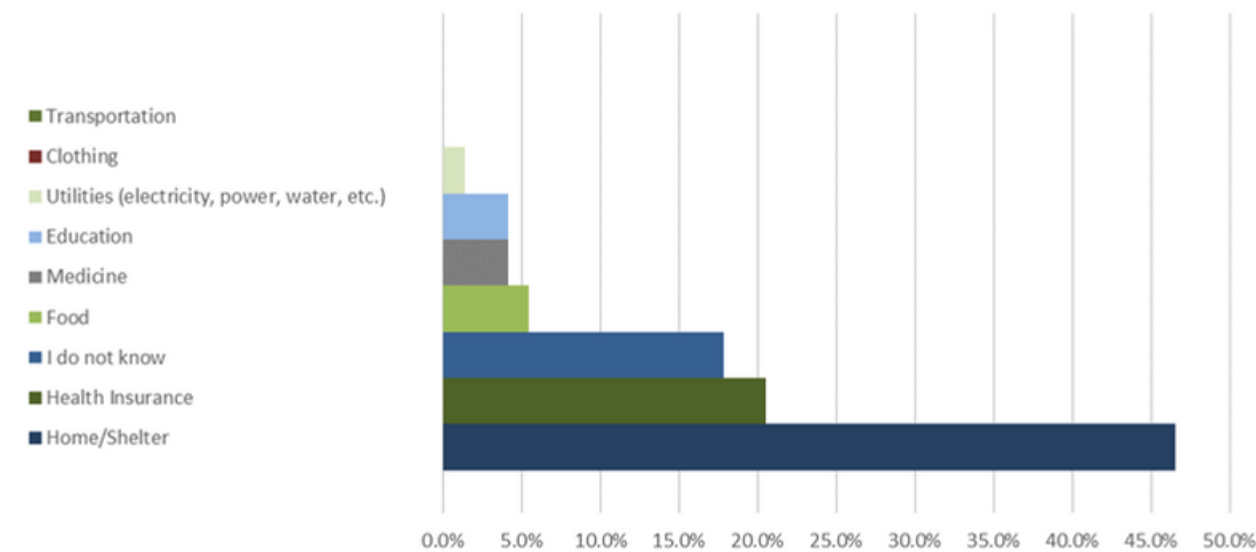
WHAT DO YOU FEEL PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY LACK THE ABILITY TO PURCHASE MOST?

Key Informant Findings



(Key Informant Survey , 2023)

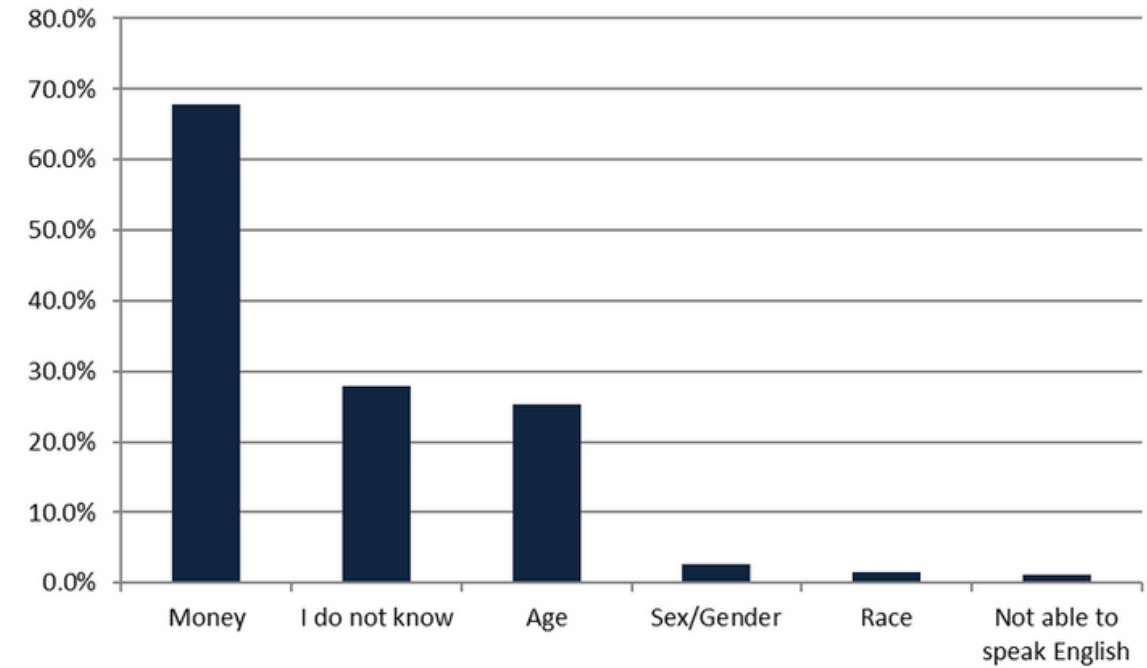
Community Survey Findings



(CHNA Community Survey, 2023)

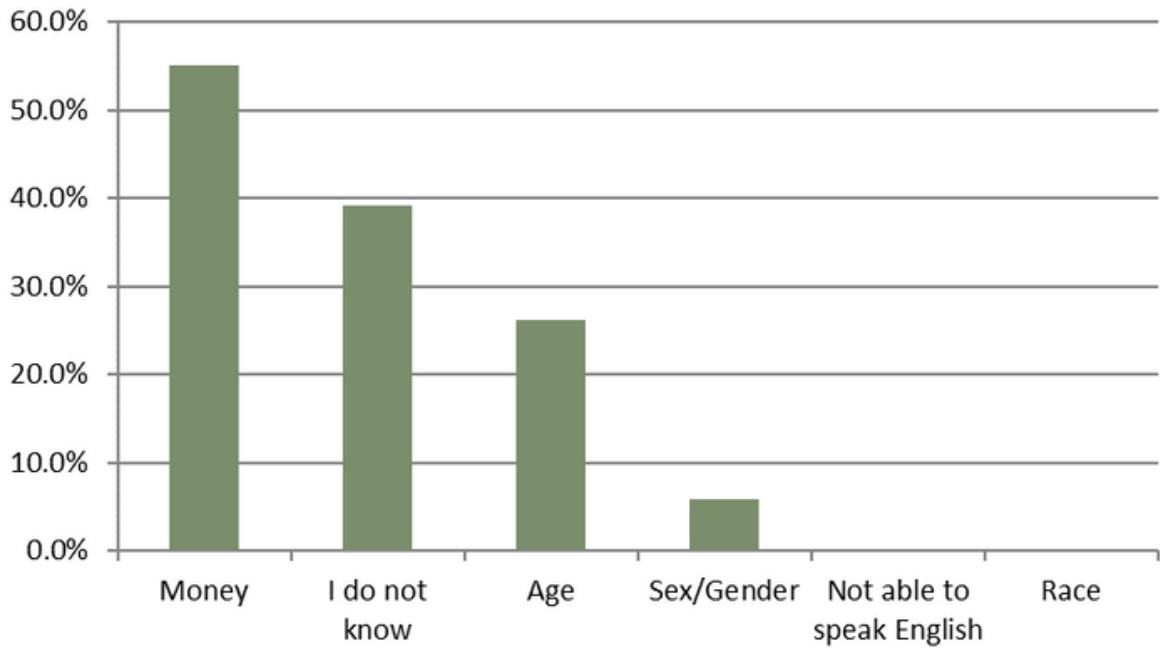
WHAT DO YOU THINK MOST AFFECTS THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE YOU OR OTHERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY RECEIVE?

Key Informant Findings



(Key Informant Survey , 2023)

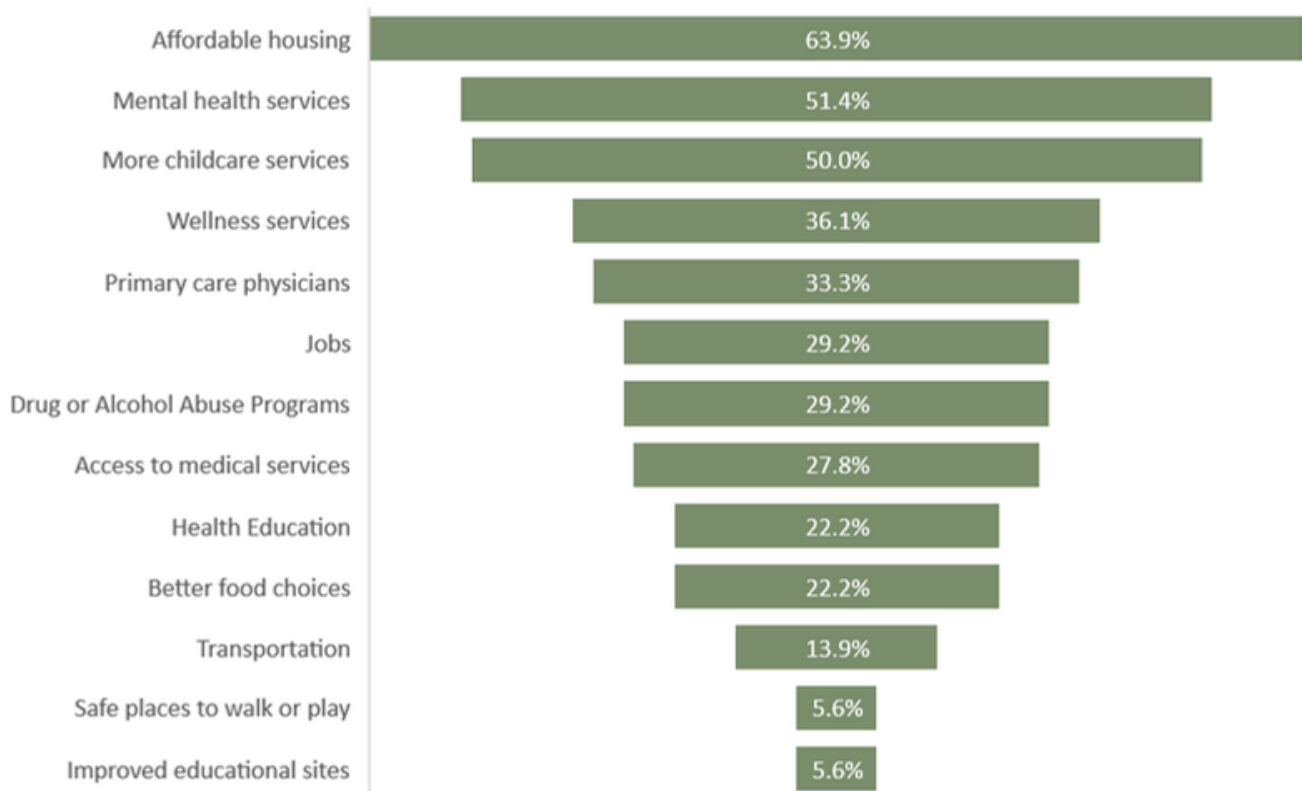
Community Survey Findings



(CHNA Community Survey, 2023)

WHAT SHOULD YOUR COMMUNITY FOCUS ON TO IMPROVE ITS HEALTH? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

Community Survey Findings



(CHNA Community Survey, 2023)

From the community survey, a majority of participants (63.9%) selected affordable housing as their top focus area for how the community should improve health in Teton County. Mental health services (51.4%) was selected second, and more childcare services (50.0%) was selected as the third focus area.

Transportation (13.9%), safe places to walk or play (5.6%), and improved educational sites (5.6%) were selected as the lowest priority areas for improving health in Teton County.

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS



WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT LIVING IN TETON COUNTY?

Participants expressed a lot of pride about the “small community feel” and tight-knit, quiet, safe, friendly, walkable, supportive in times of crisis, and with ample opportunity to get involved.

Additionally, several participants nodded to the natural beauty in Teton County, and broad range of high-quality services and activities available including schools, healthcare, and the outdoor recreation.

WHAT CONCERNS YOU MOST ABOUT LIVING HERE?

- **Economic:** Limited job market and low wages, loss of main street businesses, inflation
- **Housing:** Lack of housing options available, particularly affordable housing
- **Limited Health Services:** Hospital struggles to retain good providers, long-term care options, medical specialties, mental health services, addiction services and supports, disability services, in-home care services
- **Limited Community Services:** Transportation, childcare and services for special needs children, job service, activities and educational opportunities for youth, communities outside the county seat feel unimportant and neglected when it comes to roads, weeds, and other county services
- **Stigma:** Difficult to seek help and maintain privacy

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

WHAT HAVE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH THE HEALTH SYSTEM IN TETON COUNTY BEEN LIKE?

- Providers are hesitant to prescribe pain medications
- Misdiagnosed
- The Emergency Department is very beneficial to the community
- Treated like a business, not a patient
- Need to be strong self-advocates
- Humble providers. Will refer when they don't know.
- Specialists come to the area on occasion
- Younger providers with new information. Willing to learn.
- Good care at the hospital
- Lots of provider turnover
- Good care at the hospital
- Limited services and options
- No specialists
- All PA's no MDs
- Vaccinations are accessible
- Have to travel far to Great Falls
- Slow referral process
- Concerns not taken seriously
- Few mental health care options

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE HEALTH SERVICES THAT PEOPLE LIVING HERE NEED THAT ARE NOT CURRENTLY BEING OFFERED?

- An increase in educational opportunities
- Adult education
- Elder care education
- More healthcare providers/specialists
- More services available for elderly population

WHAT BARRIERS DO PEOPLE FACE THAT PREVENT THEM FROM IMPROVING THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE?

- Lack of opportunity
- Self-Motivation/Self-Worth/or Pride
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of childcare and high cost
- High cost of living
- Not enough housing
- Low income/low wages
- Fear of judgement

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE MAJOR HEALTH-RELATED PROBLEMS IN TETON COUNTY? FOR YOUTH? ADULTS? SENIOR CITIZENS?

YOUTH

- Substance use and more risky behaviors at younger ages, including tobacco, vaping, marijuana, and alcohol
- Undiagnosed mental health issues, trauma, stress and services to treat
- Poor family support systems and lack of stability
- Negative online/social media interactions (bullying, predators, isolation)
- Lack of adequate sex education
- Lack of support and opportunity for non-sports activities
- Lack of resources for young children: childcare, early childhood education, pediatricians, opportunities for kids to socialize
- Lack of resources and support for children with special needs

ADULTS

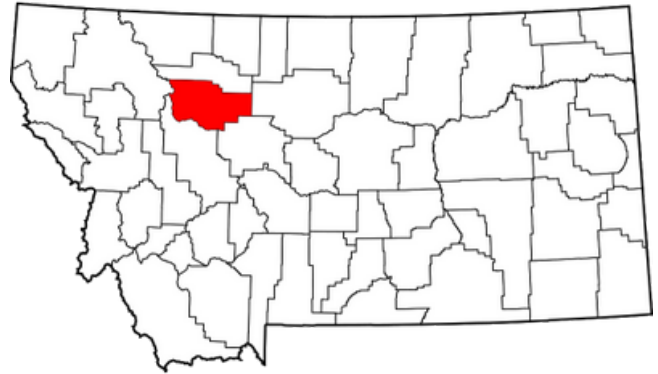
- Substance use/abuse, particularly alcohol
- Mental Health, stress, and social isolation
- Limited opportunity for exercise
- Lack of well-paying jobs, debt, and financial stress
- Balancing family and work

SENIORS

- Access to healthcare services in local community
- Difficulty understanding medical advice from providers, need for advocates
- End of life care, hospice
- Limited long-term care facilities, including memory care
- Lack of services that allow seniors to stay in home, like cleaning, grocery shopping, etc
- Isolation, and fear of leaving home post pandemic
- Lack of awareness of available resources and services

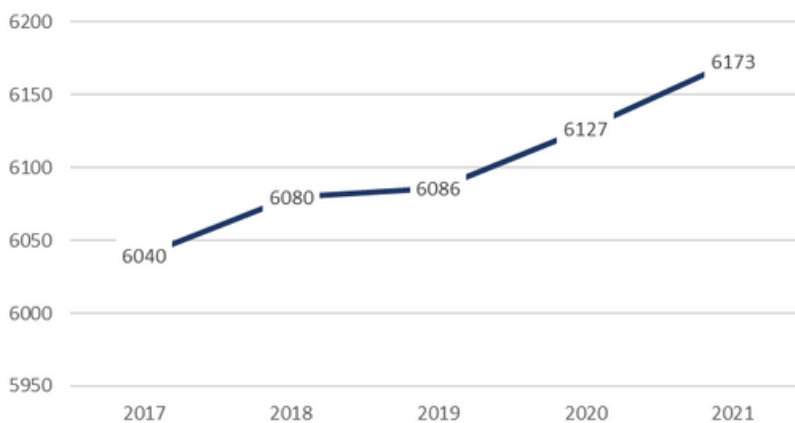


DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



Teton County is a county located in the North-Central region of the U.S. state of Montana. It's 2,272 square miles and a total population of 6,238 in 2022.

Resident Population in Teton County



432

2021 NUMBER OF VETERANS

Montana has 84,430 veterans.

U.S. = 254,296,179

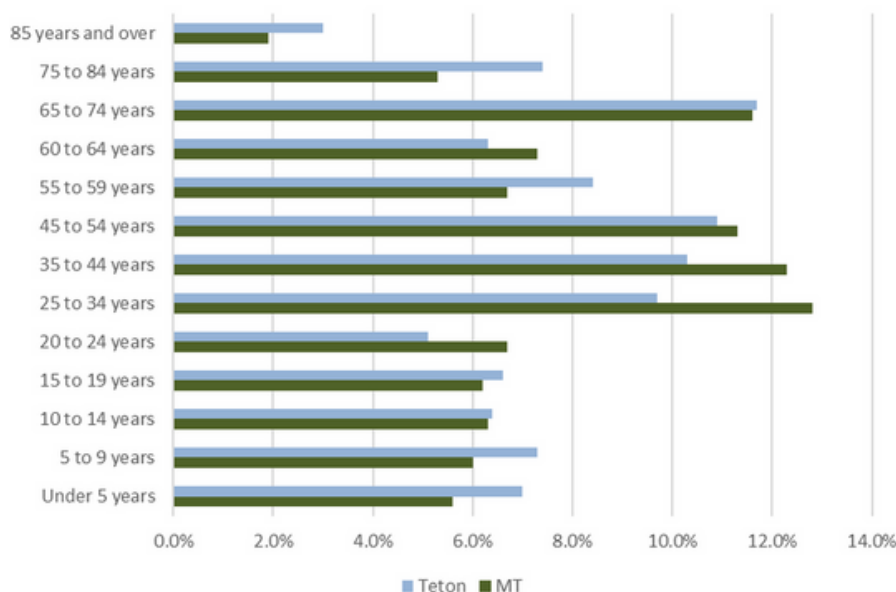
42.5

2021 MEDIAN AGE (YEARS)

Montana = 40 years old

U.S. = 38.8 years old

Age Distribution Estimates Teton County, 2017-2021



49.3%

MALES IN TETON COUNTY

Montana = 50.4%

U.S. = 49.5%

50.7%

FEMALES IN TETON COUNTY

Montana = 49.6%

U.S. = 50.5%

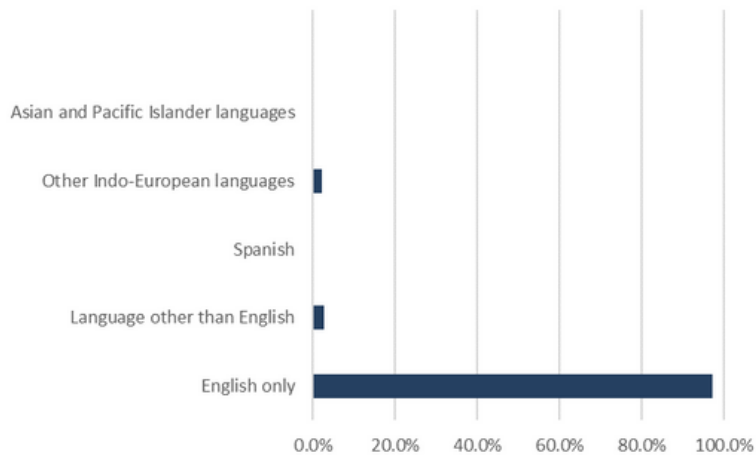
U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

97.2% of Teton County residents speak English at home.

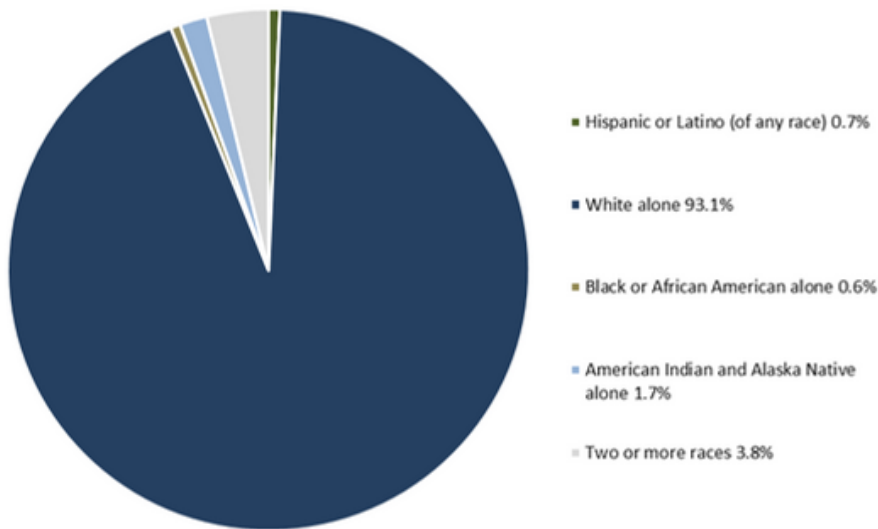
German is commonly spoken in Hutterite communities.

U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Language Distribution Teton County, 2017-2021



Racial Distribution Teton County, 2017-2021

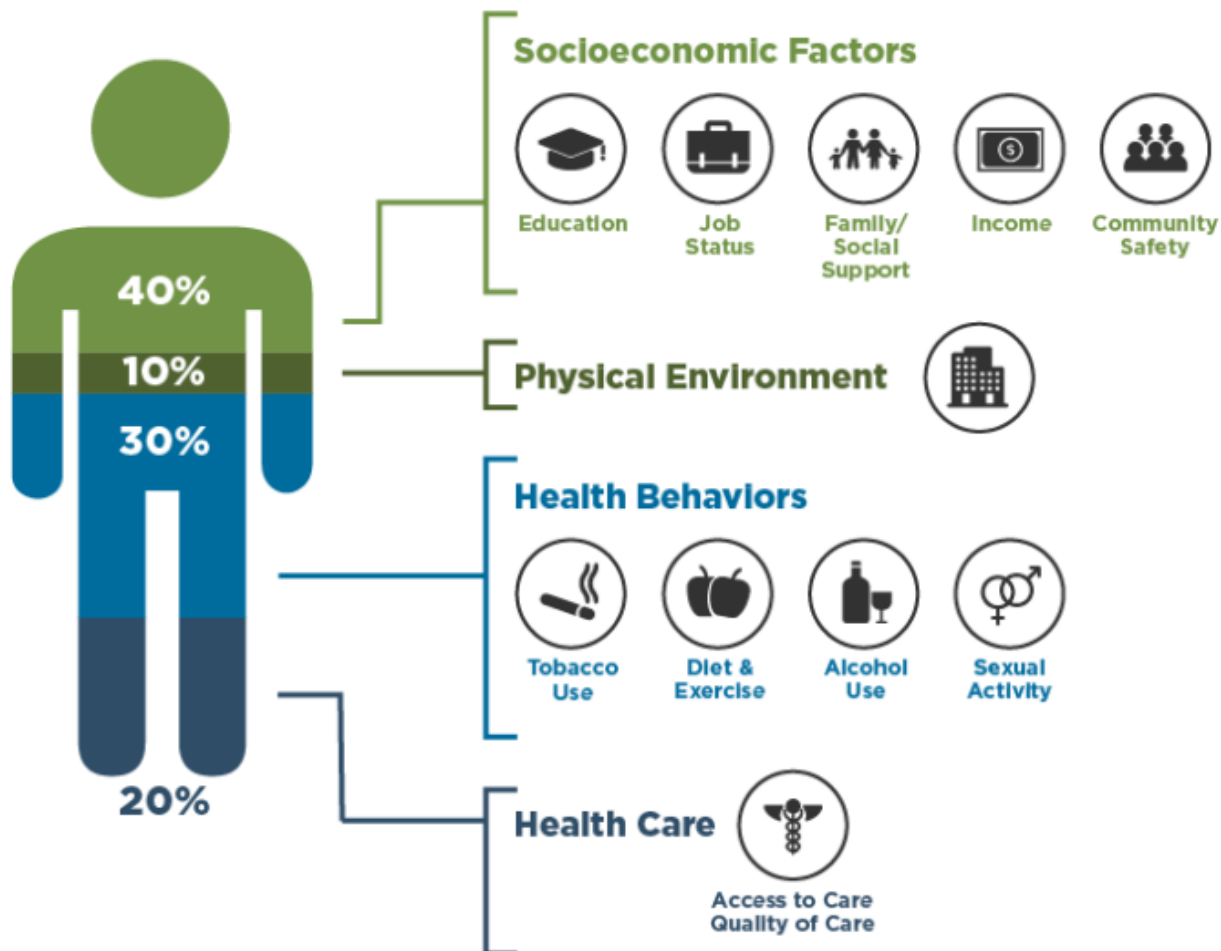


Across the Social Determinants of Health categories (economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context) can be impacted by one’s race and ethnicity.¹

U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

DRIVERS OF HEALTH IN TETON COUNTY

WHAT GOES INTO YOUR HEALTH?



Public health research indicates that factors other than health care contribute to differences in health. Global and national health authorities including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recognize that external factors such as education and income drive health. These factors are sometimes called the social determinants of health (SDOH).

The SDOH can be broken down into four categories: socioeconomic factors, physical environment, health behaviors and health care.¹ Genetic factors are not included in this analysis, since they are not modifiable.

SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

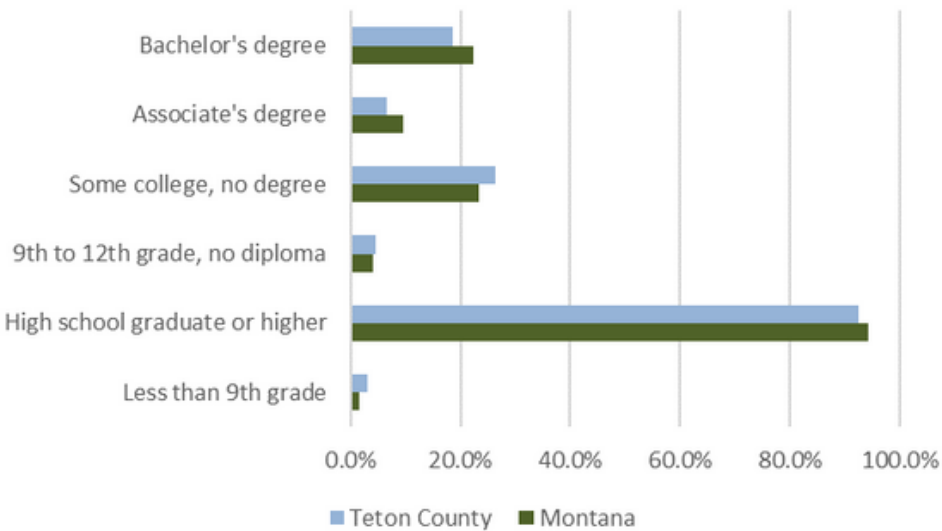


EDUCATION

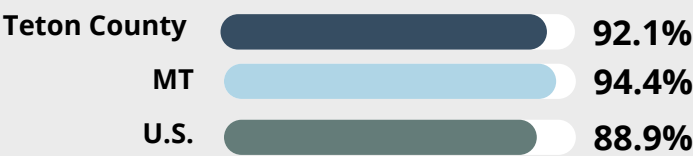


- Individuals with more education are more likely to have jobs, higher incomes, health insurance and engage in more health-promoting behaviors.²
- Education, along with income, are the greatest predictors of a person's health status.¹
- Income and education tend to correlate with health outcomes in the same way, for example, high rates of chronic disease are correlated with low income and low education.
- Education and health influence each other – higher education outcomes tend to translate to better health outcomes, but children also need to be healthy before they can learn and succeed.

Educational Attainment Distribution Teton County



High School Graduation Rate



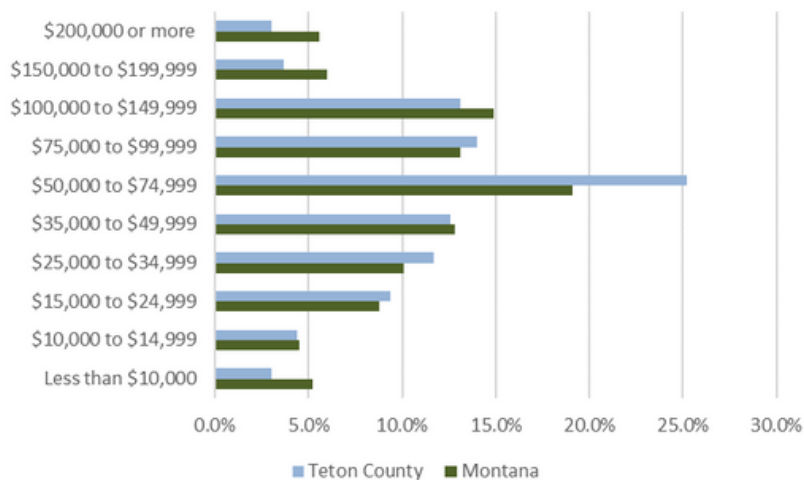
U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

JOB STATUS AND INCOME

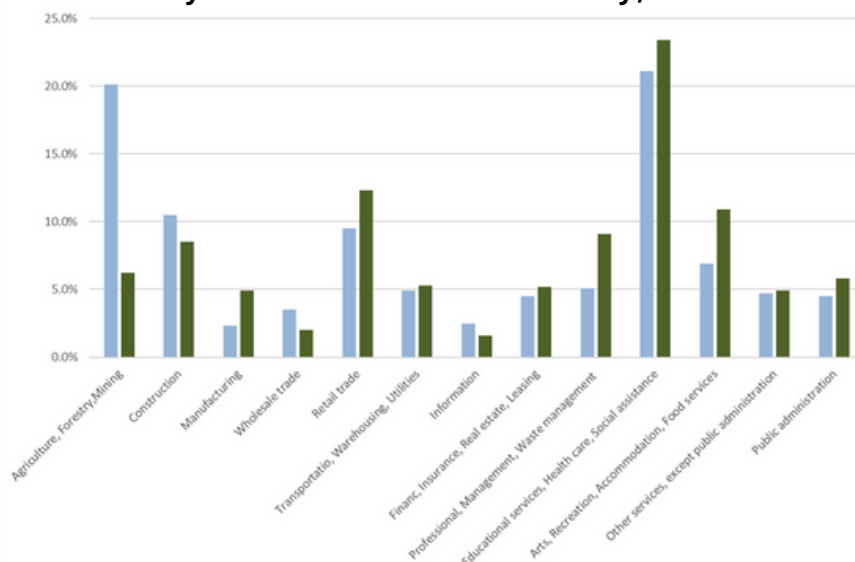


- People with higher income tend to live longer, healthier lives.
- Greater income generally allows for better access to medical care, nutritious food, safe neighborhoods, opportunities for physical activity and high-quality education.³
- Poverty is a root cause of many poor health outcomes.⁴
- Research shows that poverty influences health behaviors in many ways, such as by limiting access to healthy foods and safe neighborhoods for playing, exercise, and social interaction.⁵
- The interaction between socioeconomic status and health is mutually influential and complex, with effects that can accumulate over generations.³

Income Distribution Teton County, 2017-2021



Industry Distribution Teton County, 2017-2021



U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

13.9%

Poverty rate for all ages in Teton County (2021).
MT = 12.5%.
U.S. = 12.6%

21.5%

Poverty rate for children in Teton County (2021).
MT = 15.2%.
U.S. = 13.9%

\$48,237

Median household income in Teton County.
MT = \$60,560.
U.S. = \$69,021

2.10%

Unemployment rate, in Teton County.
MT = 4.10%.
U.S. = 5.5%

FAMILY AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

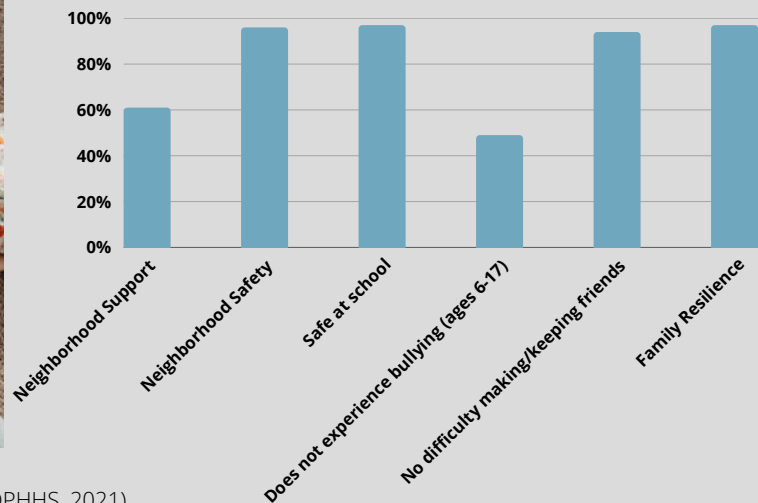


- Social support includes both emotional and practical support from family, friends and community.
- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic experiences that disrupt the safe, nurturing environment that children need to thrive. ACEs can include abuse, neglect, family dysfunction, racism and poverty.⁷
- ACEs can lead to toxic stress, in which the body's stress systems are consistently engaged over a long period of time. This stress response releases chemicals that damage cells in the brain and other parts of the body, changing the way a child's brain and body develop.⁷
- The more ACEs a child is exposed to, the higher their risk later in life for many physical and mental health problems, such as diabetes, heart disease, depression and substance misuse.⁷
- According to the CDC, preventing ACEs could reduce the number of adults with depression by as much as 44%.⁸



(MTDPHHS, 2021)

Percentage of Positive Childhood Experiences, Montana, 2020-2021

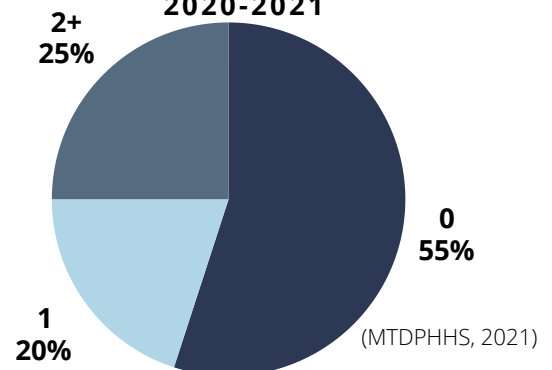


Top Five Types of ACEs Experienced in Children, Montana, 2020-2021

Type of ACE	Percentage
1. Divorce	31.4%
2. Substance Use	15.7%
3. Mental Illness	13.0%
4. Jail	11.5%
5. Financial Troubles	11.0%

(MTDPHHS, 2021)

Percentage of ACEs, Montana, 2020-2021



(MTDPHHS, 2021)

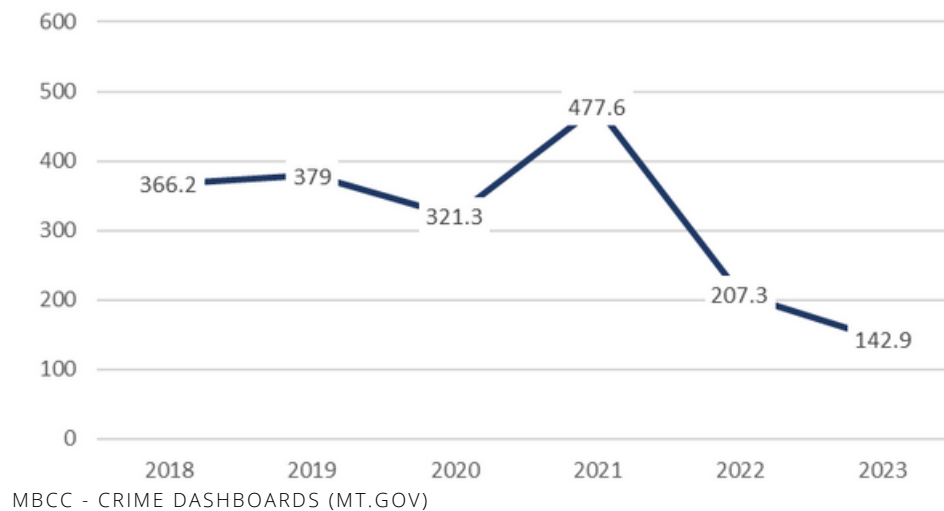
"We have lack of childcare here, like no childcare, for working families. If you don't have family here to help, you're stuck."

COMMUNITY SAFETY

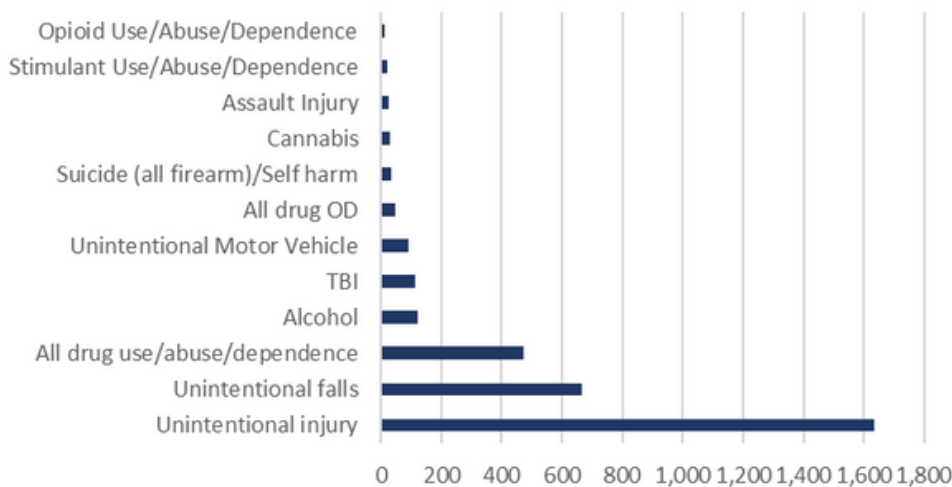


- Exposure to crime and violence in one's community can lead to premature death, non-fatal injuries and negative long-term health outcomes.⁹
- Children and adolescents exposed to violence are at risk for poor long-term behavioral and mental health outcomes, regardless of whether they are victims, direct witnesses, or hear about the crime from others.⁹
- Low-income neighborhoods are more likely to be affected by crime than high-income neighborhoods.⁹

Offense Rate Teton County (per 10,000)



Emergency Department Visits Teton County, 2018-2022



Injury Related Deaths Teton County, 2018-2022

	Deaths
Unintentional Injuries	30
Suicide/ Self-Harm	9
Unintentional Falls	8
Traumatic Brain Injuries	13
Alcohol-related	15

(MTDPHHS INJURY AND OVERDOSE DASHBOARD, 2018-2022)

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



- According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the built environment includes the physical makeup of where we live, learn, work and play — our homes, schools, businesses, streets and sidewalks, open spaces, and transportation options. The built environment can influence overall community health and individual behaviors such as physical activity.¹⁴
- The CDC supports strategies to make moving more and sitting less a part of everyday life.¹³ Creating or modifying neighborhood environments to make it easier for people to walk or bike increases residents' physical activity levels and can decrease residents' body weight.^{15, 16} The EPA and the CDC both recommend targeting the built environment as a strategy for improving public health, expanding transportation options, and providing access to critical services and amenities.¹⁴

Air Pollution -
Particulate Matter in
Teton County

5.0

Montana = 4.6
U.S. = 7.4

Drinking Water
Violations in
Teton County

NONE

Montana = Unk
U.S. = Unk

Walkability
Index Score in
Teton County

6.3

Montana = Unk
U.S. = 6.1

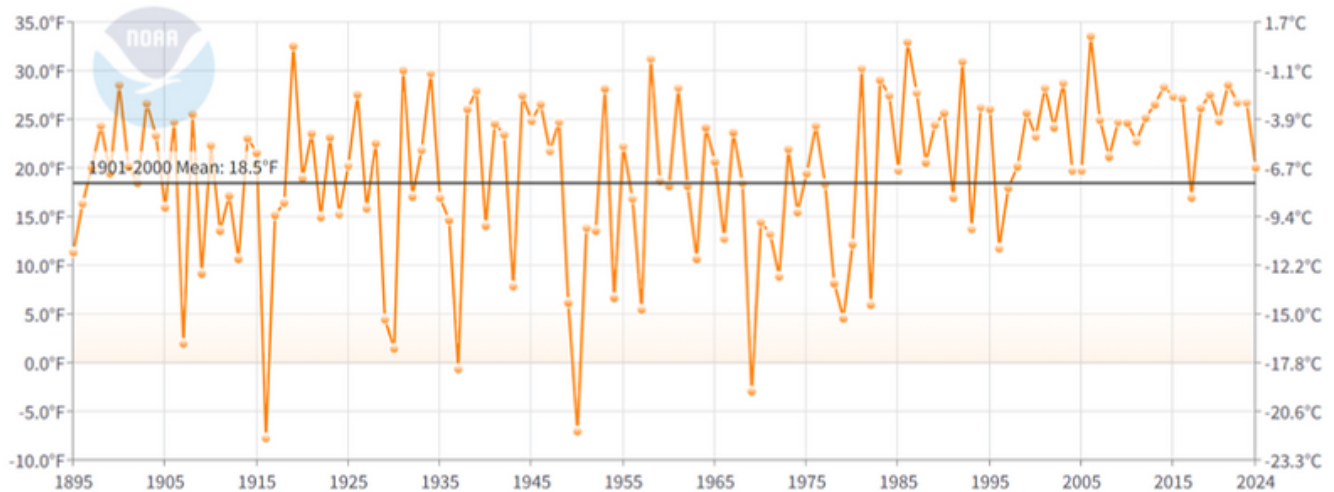
(County Health Rankings, 2018-2020)

CLIMATE



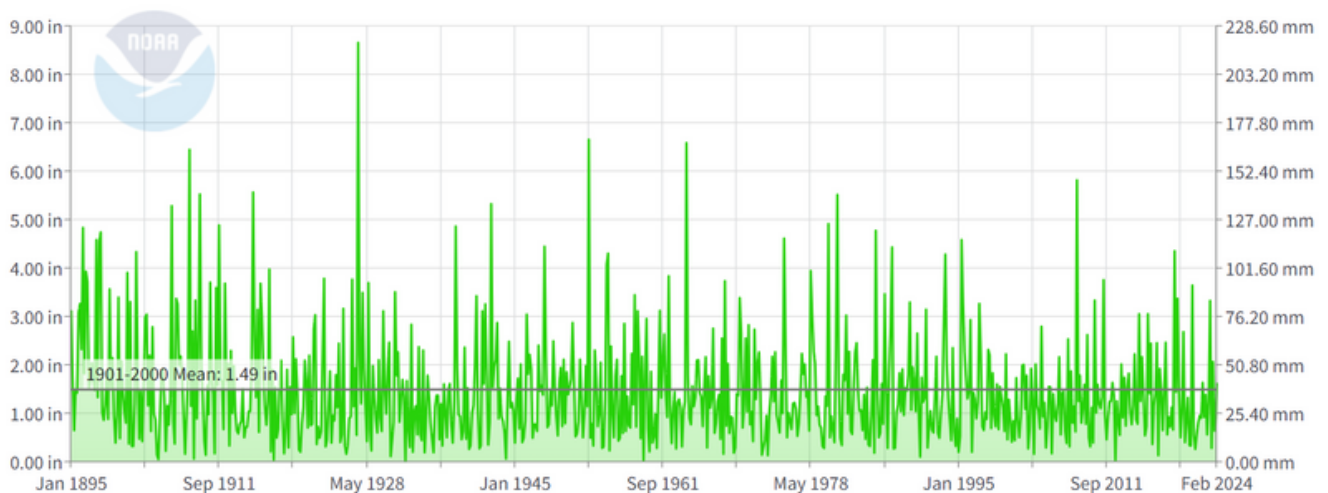
- Climate change, together with other natural and human-made health stressors, influences human health and disease in numerous ways.
- Some existing health threats will intensify and new health threats will emerge. Not everyone is equally at risk. Important considerations include age, economic resources, and location.

**Teton County January Average
Temperature, 1895-2024**



(NOAA, 2024)

**Teton County Precipitation by Month,
1895-2024**



(NOAA, 2024)

FARMING AND RANCHING



- Agriculture has been considered the foundation of Montana economy.
- The top 5 producing counties in 2017 for each of the major crop categories:
 - Winter wheat - Teton, Hill, Cascade, Teton, and Liberty
 - Spring wheat - Teton, Hill, Valley, Toole, and Liberty
 - Pulses – Sheridan, Hill, Teton, Roosevelt, and Toole
 - Barley – Teton, Pondera, Teton, Toole, and Gallatin
- Direct and indirect employment in production agriculture was more than 60% of the labor force in Teton county
- Farms and ranches generated \$52.5 million of value-added, or 38% of Teton County's total gross domestic product of \$137 million in 2017.
- Over 81% of land in Teton County is classified as farmland.

686

Farms in Teton County

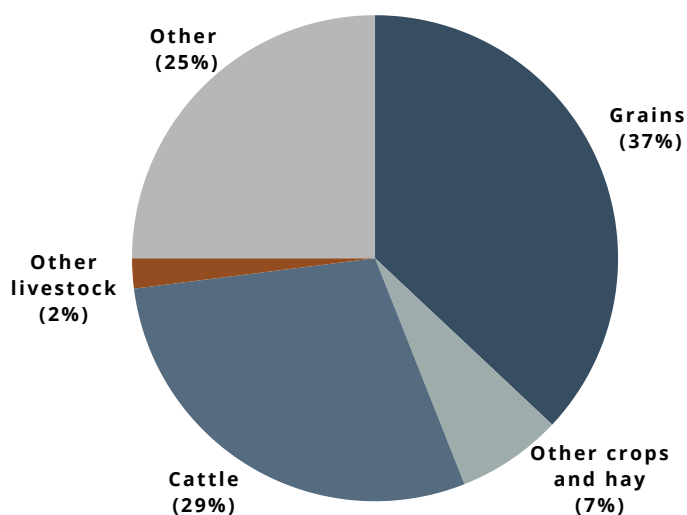
315

Median Farm Size (acres) in Teton County

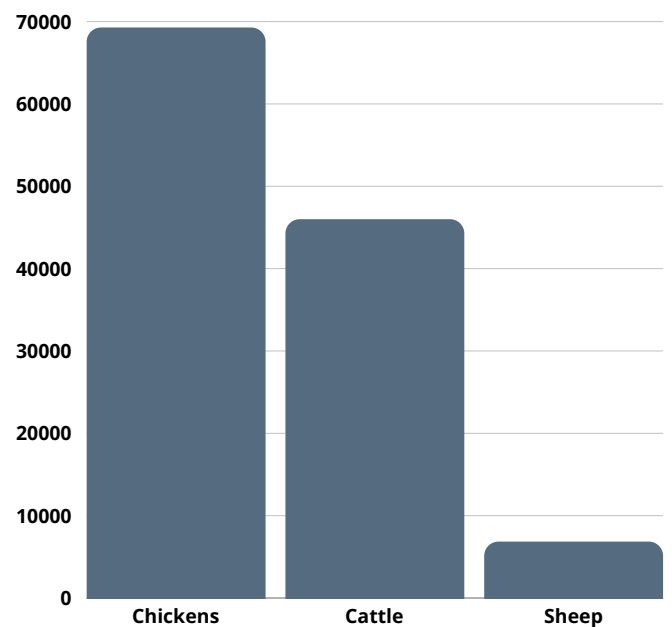
1,294

Average Farm Size (acres) in Teton County

Crops and Livestock Market Share Value in Teton County, 2017



Top Livestock in Teton County (number of head), 2017



(Census of Agriculture, 2017)

TRANSPORTATION



- Transportation affects health in several ways: providing access to needed resources and services; affecting time and opportunity for physical activity; pollution; and motor vehicle-related injuries and deaths.¹¹
- A lack of efficient alternatives to automobile travel disproportionately affects vulnerable populations such as the poor, the elderly, children and people who have disabilities by limiting access to jobs, health care, social interaction and healthy foods.¹¹

67%

OF TETON COUNTY
RESIDENTS DRIVE
ALONE TO WORK

28%

OF TETON COUNTY
RESIDENTS HAVE A
LONG COMMUTE -
DRIVING ALONE

20.6

MEAN TIME
COMMUTE TO WORK
(MINS) IN TETON
COUNTY

11

UNINTENTIONAL MOTOR VEHICLE DEATHS AND
91 EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS.
(2018-2021)

476

MOTOR VEHICLE
ACCIDENTS IN TETON
COUNTY 2018-2022

County Health Ranking

MTDPHHS Injury and Overdose Dashboard

HOUSING



- Unaffordable housing is typically defined as housing expenses that are more than 30% of household income.¹⁰
- Affordable housing leaves people more resources for other needs such as medical care and food.¹⁰
- Adults living in unaffordable housing are more likely to report fair or poor health than other adults.¹⁰
- Safe, quality housing minimizes exposure to pollutants, pests, allergens and toxic chemicals that can lead to health problems, such as infections and asthma.¹⁰
- When asked what the community lacks the ability to purchase most, housing was the second highest concern (CHNA Community Survey, 2023)

\$870

Median rent price in
Teton County.
Montana = \$886
U.S. = \$1,163

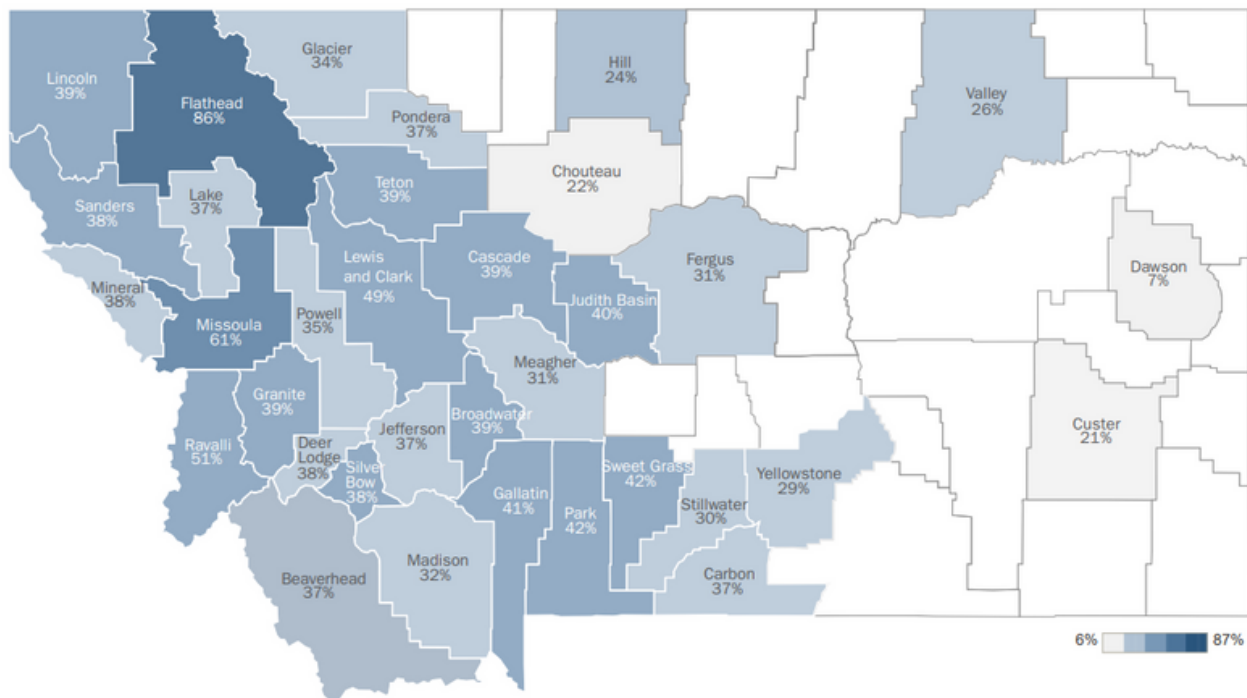
\$191,300

Median home price in
Teton County.
Montana = \$263,700
U.S. = \$244,900

81.6%

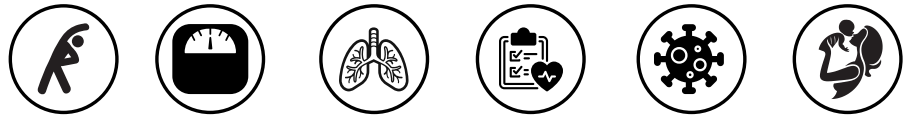
With broadband
internet subscription
in Teton County.
Montana = 85.2%
U.S. = 77%

U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Percent Increase in Typical Home Values (2020 to 2022)

Zillow Research Data. ZHVI for All Homes. Jan-Jun 2020 compared with Jan-Jun 2022. Data unavailable for some counties.

HEALTH BEHAVIORS



LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

The leading causes of death in the U.S. (2021) are: 24

1. Heart disease: 695,547
2. Cancer: 605,213
3. COVID-19: 416,893
4. Accidents (unintentional injuries): 224,935
5. Stroke (cerebrovascular diseases): 162,890
6. Chronic lower respiratory diseases: 142,342
7. Alzheimer's disease: 119,399
8. Diabetes: 103,294
9. Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis: 56,585
10. Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, and nephrosis: 54,358

Leading Causes of Death in Teton County Residents 2017-2021

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|--|
| 01. | Heart Disease | 06. | Cerebrovascular Diseases |
| 02. | Cancer | 07. | Diabetes Mellitus |
| 03. | Unintentional Injury | 08. | Alzheimer's Disease |
| 04. | Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease | 09. | Suicide |
| 05. | COVID-19 | 10. | Nephritis, Nephrosis, and Nephrotic Syndrome |

(MTDPHHS, 2023)



TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL USE

- Substance use disorders occur when the habitual use of alcohol and/or drugs causes clinically significant impairment, including health problems, disability and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school or home.
- Addiction is the most severe form of substance use disorder.
- Addiction is a complex, relapsing disease that affects both the brain and the body
- Risky use of drugs or alcohol can change the brain in ways that make it very hard to quit, even for those who want to do so, and can lead to a substance use disorder.

Binge drinking is a pattern of excessive alcohol use in a short period of time.

It is defined as consuming 5 or more drinks on an occasion for men or 4 or more drinks on an occasion for women.

Vaping devices are battery-operated devices that people use to inhale an aerosol, which typically contains nicotine (though not always), flavorings, and other chemicals.

They can resemble traditional tobacco cigarettes (cig-a-likes), cigars, or pipes, or even everyday items like pens.

Binge Drinking Rates

Teton County Adults	19.4% U.S. = 15.5%
Teton County Youth	15.5% MT = 16.4%

(CDC PLACES, 2021)

(YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY, 2021)

Tobacco and Vaping Rates

Teton County adults currently smoking	16.5% U.S. = 13.5%
Teton County youth currently smoking	6.8% MT = 7%
Teton County youth currently using an electronic vapor product.	23.0% MT = 25.5%

(CDC PLACES, 2021)

(YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY, 2021)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Benefits:

Adults



- Improves quality of life
- Lowers risk of chronic disease, including heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, cancer and dementia
- Improves fitness
- Improves mental health, sleep and cognitive function
- Prevents weight gain

Children

- Reduces risk of depression
- Improves bone health and fitness
- Promotes healthy body composition
- Improves sleep, attention and some measures of academic performance



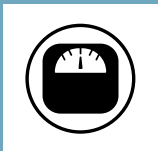
26.1% no leisure-time physical activity among Teton County adults aged ≥ 18 years. U.S. = 23.7%
(CDC PLACES, 2021)



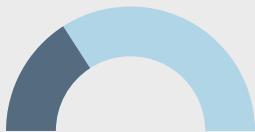
66.5% of youth in Teton County reported getting 60 minutes of physical activity on 5 or more days in the past 7 days. MT = 52.0%
(Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021)

OBESITY

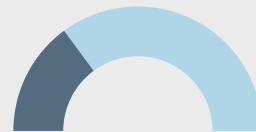
Impact:



- Obesity raises medical care costs for obese adults by an average of \$3,429 per person per year.¹⁹
- As of 2013, 28.2% of total health care spending in the U.S. was devoted to treating obesity-related illness. (Up from 20.6% in 2005).¹⁹
- Obesity costs employers \$506 per obese worker per year through lower productivity.²⁰
- Obesity is associated with job absenteeism, costing approximately \$4.3 billion annually in the U.S.²⁰



31.8% obesity among adults aged ≥ 18 years in Teton County. U.S. = 33.0%
(CDC PLACES, 2021)



29.8% of youth in Teton County describe their weight as being very or slightly overweight. MT = 32.0%
(Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021)



NUTRITION

- Good nutrition is essential to good health. The availability of health and affordable foods decreases the risk of related chronic diseases.
- Poor nutrition contributes to many of the top causes of death, including diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.¹⁷
- Access to healthy foods is affected by numerous factors, such as socioeconomic status, cooking knowledge, family and community culture, food environment, and availability of transportation.
- Evidence shows that healthy eating patterns, as outlined in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are associated with positive health outcomes.¹⁸

8.7%

Food insecurity rate in Teton County
MT = 8.5%
(Feeding America, 2021)

\$3.63

Average Meal Cost in Teton County
MT = \$3.39
(Feeding America, 2021)

71%

Of Teton County residents are below SNAP,
Other Nutrition Programs threshold of 200%
poverty. MT = 56%
(Feeding America, 2021)

530

Food insecure population Teton County.
MT = 93,720
(Feeding America, 2021)



"Food scarcity is a thing. You go to the grocery store and there isn't stuff. The grocery store is closed on Sunday nights, did you remember to buy your groceries because otherwise 'what are you going to do?' you can't even buy pizza."



CHRONIC DISEASE

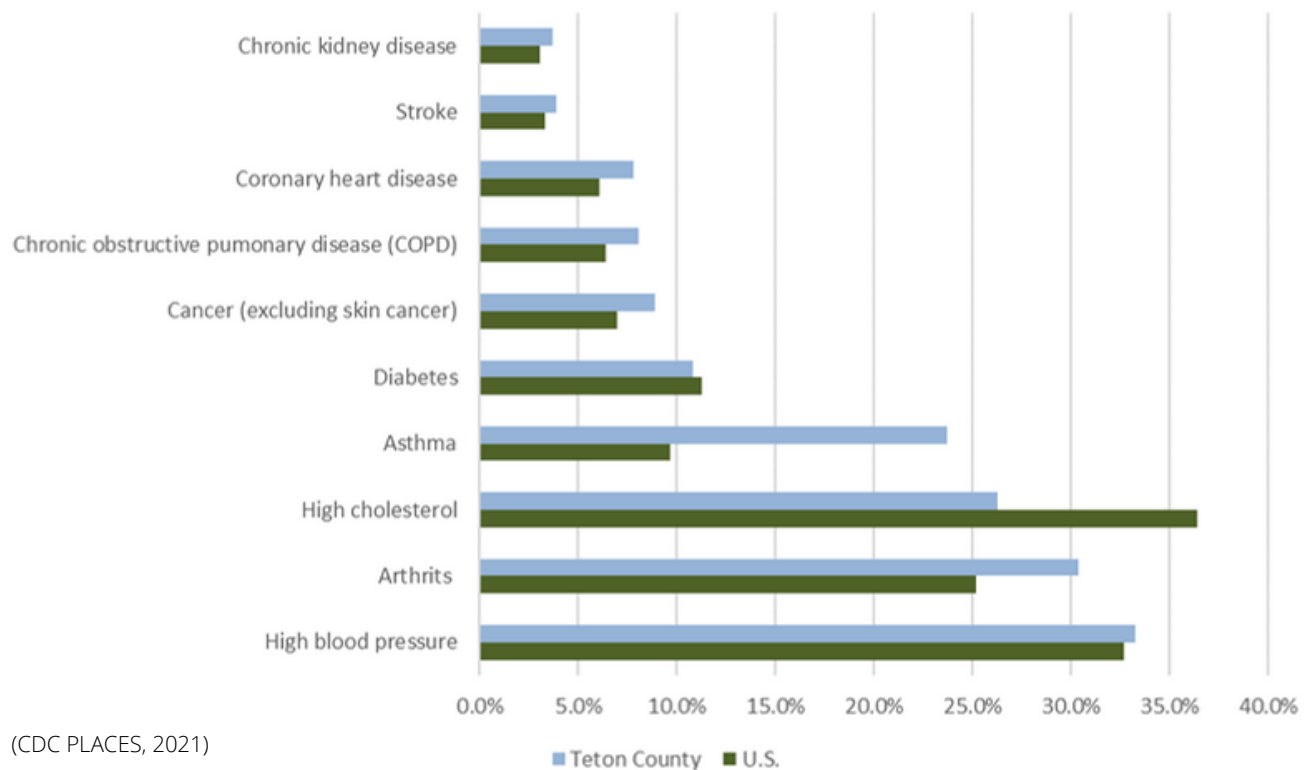
- A chronic disease is a condition that lasts one year or more and requires ongoing medical attention or limits activities of daily living or both. Many chronic diseases can be prevented by living a healthy lifestyle.
- Six in ten U.S. adults have a chronic disease.²²
- Four in ten U.S. adults have two or more chronic diseases.²²

Risk Factors for Chronic Diseases 61-64

Chronic disease varies in cause and symptoms, but many share common risk factors.

	Hypertension/ Heart Disease	Cancer	Asthma	COPD	Stroke	Diabetes	Dementia
Lack of physical activity	X	X				X	X
Poor nutrition	X	X				X	X
Obesity	X	X	X			X	X
Smoking/second hand smoke	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Adverse childhood experiences	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Chronic Conditions among Teton County Adults, 2021



High blood pressure is the most prevalent chronic condition in Teton county adults. Arthritis is the second most prevalent condition and high cholesterol is the third.



SCREENINGS

- Getting screening tests regularly may find breast, cervical, and colorectal (colon) cancers early, when treatment is likely to work best. 23
- Lung cancer screening is recommended for some people who are at high risk.
- The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine helps prevent most cervical cancers and several other kinds of cancer. 23
- The hepatitis B vaccine can help lower liver cancer risk.23
- You can reduce your risk of getting cancer by making healthy choices like keeping a healthy weight, avoiding tobacco, limiting the amount of alcohol you drink, and protecting your skin.23

Prevalence of core preventive services in men aged >65 years in Teton County

39.1%

U.S. = 43.7%

(Flu shot past year, PPV shot ever, and Colorectal cancer screening)

Colorectal cancer screening among Teton County adults aged 50-75 years

66.5%

U.S. = 72.4%

Cholesterol screening among Teton County adults aged 18 years and older

81.0%

U.S. = 86.4%

Visits to doctor for routine check-up in past year among Teton County adults 18 years and older

70.7%

U.S. = 73.6%

Prevalence of core preventive services in women aged >65 years in Teton County

38.6%

U.S. = 37.9%

(Flu shot past year, PPV shot ever, Colorectal cancer screening, and Mammogram past 2 years)

Cervical cancer screening among Teton County women aged 21-65 years

80.9%

U.S. = 82.8%

Mammography use among Teton County women aged 50-74 years

66.6%

U.S. = 78.2%

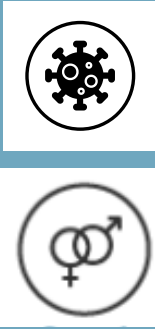
Visits to dentist or dental clinic in past year among Teton County adults 18 years and older

60.6%

U.S. = 64.8%

(CDC PLACES, 2021)

"I wish some of the smaller procedures were able to be done in Teton County, I understand sending the big things out but why can't the small things be done?"



INFECTIOUS DISEASE

- Communicable diseases are illnesses caused by viruses or bacteria that people spread to one another through contact with contaminated surfaces, bodily fluids, blood products, insect bites, or through the air.²³
- Some examples of communicable diseases include HIV, hepatitis A, B and C, salmonella, measles, and blood-borne illnesses.²³
- Most common forms of transmission include fecal-oral, food, sexual contact, insect bites, contact with contaminated fomites, droplets, or skin contact.²³

Teton County Infectious Disease Rates per 100,000 population, 2022

COVID-19 Rate



Enteric Diseases Rate



Vaccine Preventable Diseases Rate



Sexually Transmitted Disease Rate



Hepatitis C (HCV) Acute Rate



Hepatitis C (HCV) Chronic Rate



(MIDIS, 2022)

Vaccine Coverage Rate for 24 months through 35 months Teton County residents as of 04/30/2024

DTaP/DT/Td	68%
HIB	75%
Polio	77%
Hep B 3 Dose	77%
MMR	82%
Varicella	75%
Pneumo (PCV)	72%

Vaccine Coverage Rate for 13-year-old Teton County residents as of 04/30/2024

Tdap	59%
Meningococcal	49%
HPV	10%

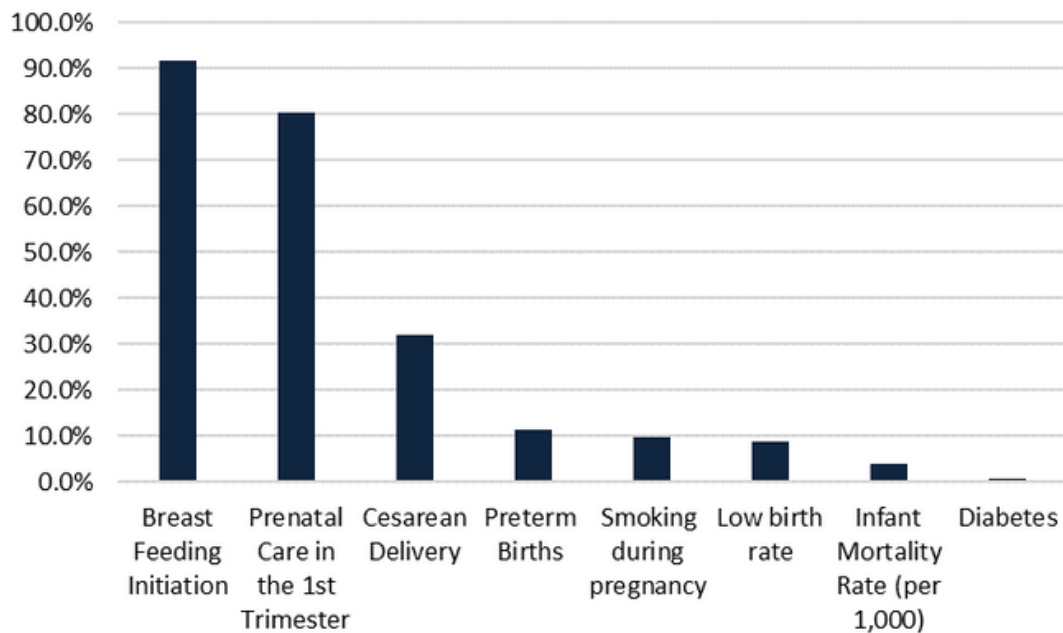




MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

- Maternal health is defined as the health of mothers during pregnancy, childbirth and in the postpartum period. It is heavily dependent on a woman's health before pregnancy.
- Child health is the health of children from birth through adolescence with a focus on the health of children under age five.
- Maternal and child health are considered important public health indicators for a community, because the well-being of mothers, infants and children determines the health of the next generation and can help predict future public health challenges.

Maternal and Infant Health Rates in Teton County, 2017-2019



(HRSA.GOV, 2017-2019)

Teton County Women 15-44 Years of Age

958

(HRSA.GOV, 2017-2019)

Access to prenatal care rate in Teton County

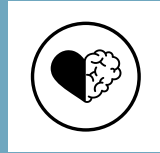
67.3%
MT = 71.7%

(MTDPHHS HMF Dashboard, 2023)

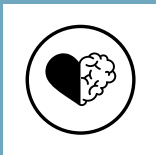
Birth Rate per 1,000

12.8%

(HRSA.GOV, 2017-2019)



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

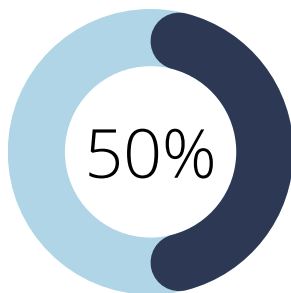


- Mental health includes emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how a person handles stress, relates to others and whether they make healthy choices.
- Mental illnesses such as depression and schizophrenia are diagnosable conditions that affect a person's thinking, feeling, mood or behavior.
- Mental illnesses may be occasional or long-lasting (chronic).
- Mental and physical health are equally important to overall health.
- Mental illness, especially depression, is a risk factor for many physical health problems and chronic diseases such as stroke, diabetes and heart disease.
- Similarly, chronic conditions are also a risk factor for mental illness.

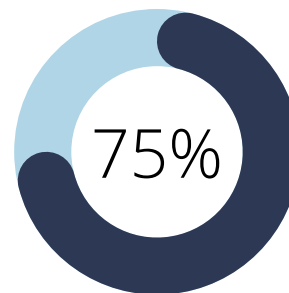
Factors contributing to a person's risk for mental illness include:²⁵

- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), such as trauma or a history of abuse
- Chronic medical conditions, such as cancer or diabetes
- Biological factors including genetics or chemical imbalances in the brain
- Alcohol and recreational drug use
- Having few friends, feeling lonely or isolated

Chronic mental illness²⁵



Half of all chronic mental illness begins by age 14 in the U.S.



Three-quarters begin by age 24 in the U.S.

MENTAL HEALTH IN ADULTS

14.6%

MENTAL HEALTH NOT GOOD FOR ≥ 14 DAYS AMONG
TETON COUNTY ADULTS AGED ≥ 18 YEARS.

U.S. = 14.7%

(CDC PLACES, 2021)

22.4%

DEPRESSION AMONG TETON COUNTY ADULTS AGED
 ≥ 18 YEARS.

U.S. = 19.5%

(CDC PLACES, 2021)



"THERES A STIGMA IN OUR
COMMUNITY WHERE YOU INVESTING
IN YOU IS A LITTLE SELFISH. WE'RE A
VERY GIVING COMMUNITY, WHERE
ASKING FOR HELP IS FROWNED UPON
BUT NOT HELPING IS FROWNED
UPON. SO, PEOPLE HELP AT THEIR
OWN EXPENSE."

-TETON COUNTY RESIDENT

MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUTH

SOMETIMES I THINK THAT LIFE IS NOT WORTH IT.



AT TIMES I THINK I AM NO GOOD AT ALL.



IN THE PAST YEAR, HAVE YOU FELT DEPRESSED OR SAD MOST DAYS, EVEN IF YOU FELT OKAY SOMETIMES?



(Teton Prevention Needs Assessment, 2022)



14.1%

of Teton County youth have made a plan for how they would attempt suicide in the past 12 months.

MT = 21.4%

19.4%

of Teton County youth have seriously considered attempting suicide in the past 12 months.

MT = 27.9%

77.8%

of Teton County youth ask their Mom or Dad for help if they have a personal problem.

MT = 79.8%

(Teton Prevention Needs Assessment, 2022)

"This younger generation, I'm seeing that they need more help mentally. There are not therapists here, like Benchmark, all those specialists that could help young families."



HEALTHCARE AVAILABILITY AND COVERAGE

- Access to health care is a complex concept that encompasses more than just adequate numbers of facilities and professionals.¹¹
- Access to comprehensive, quality health care services is important for:¹¹
 - Promoting and maintaining health
 - Preventing and managing disease
 - Reducing unnecessary hospitalization and premature death
 - Helping ensure that all Teton County residents have the opportunity to be healthy.
- Access to health care impacts overall physical, social and mental health status, and quality of life.¹¹
- Potential barriers to health services include:
 - High cost of care
 - Inadequate insurance or no insurance
 - Lack of services
 - Lack of care that meets patients’ social, cultural and linguistic needs

28.4%

Of Teton County Residents have delayed care due to lack of money and/or insurance

(CHNA Survey, 2023)

1:2,090

Ratio of Dentists to Teton County Residents.
Montana = 1:1,350
U.S. = 1:1,380

1:780

Ratio of Mental Health Providers to Teton County Residents.
Montana = 1:280
U.S. = 1:340

1:3,120

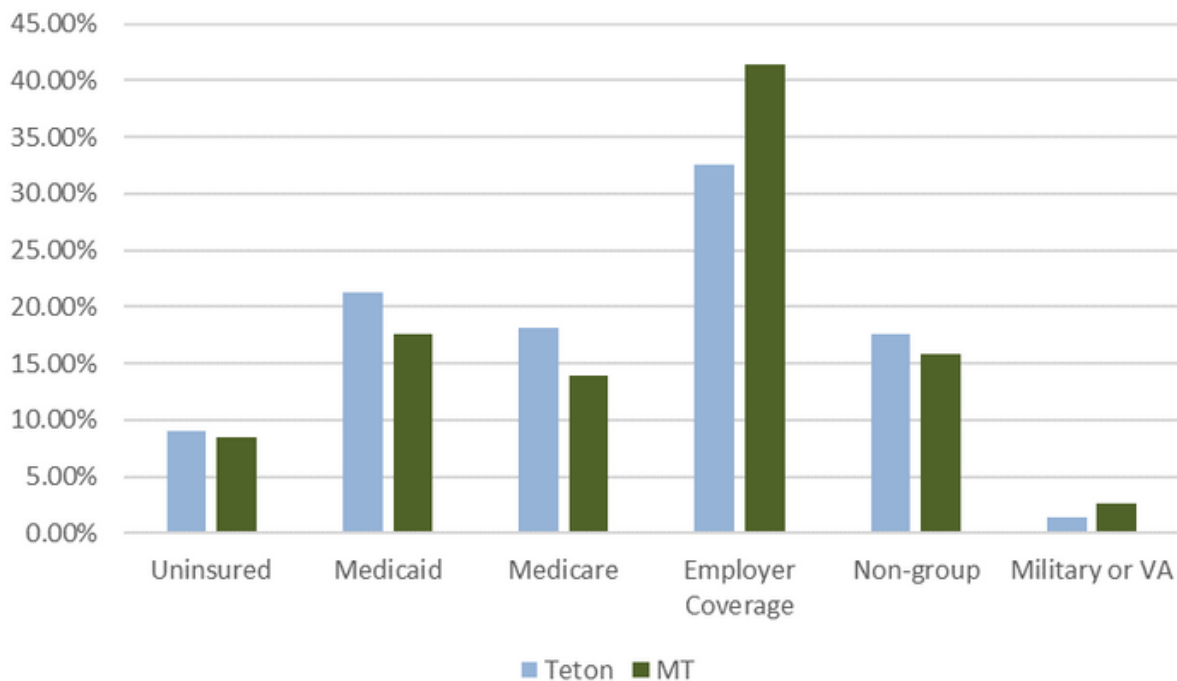
Ratio of Primary Care Providers to Teton County Residents.
Montana = 1:1,210
U.S. = 1:1,310

(County Health Rankings, 2018-2020)

Uninsured by age

	Teton	MT	U.S.
<18 years	26.8%	23%	24.2%
18-34 years	15.5%	20.6%	21.3%
35-64 years	36%	37.7%	38.5%
64+ years	21.7%	18.6%	15.9%

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Sources of Health Insurance in Teton County

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

SUMMARY

CHA PRIORITY AREAS

	Key Informant Survey Findings	Community Survey Findings	Focus Group Findings	Secondary Data	Previous CHIP
Mental Health					
Substance Use					
Access to Healthcare					
Preventive Screenings					
Family & Social Support					
Nutrition & Food Security					
Physical Activity & Obesity					
Chronic Disease					
Housing					
Transportation					
Injury					
Economy & Education					
Infectious Disease					
Health Communications					

CLOSING THOUGHTS & NEXT STEPS

Community health assessments are one step in the process towards improving the health of a community. This assessment serves to show the current health status of Teton County through analysis of the available secondary public health data and primary data compiled through the community and key informant surveys and focus groups. While there is never perfect consensus on prioritizing health concerns in the county, the table above demonstrates that, once again, Mental Health and Substance Use are identified as areas of concern in both the primary and secondary data. Additionally, Access to Healthcare, Preventive Screenings, and Family & Social Supports are widely regarded as areas of concern.

Armed with the knowledge contained in this report, Teton County will be able to continue towards improving their community's health by conducting a community health improvement plan (CHIP). The CHIP process will bring together key stakeholders and community members to set county-wide health priorities and collaborative strategies that we can use to work together to address health concerns in Teton County. We welcome the community's engagement and support as we move forward together!

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Primary Care			
	Benefis Teton Medical Center	Choteau	406-466-5763
	Alluvion Health Choteau Clinic	Choteau	406-466-3574
	Frontier Family Practice	Fairfield	406-467-3447
Behavioral Health			
	Heart & Mind Counseling	Choteau	406-466-2011
	Montana Online Counseling		406-590-9177
	Eastern Front Counseling	Conrad	406-868-6902
	Front Range Family Psychiatry	Choteau	406-478-5510
	New Roots, PLLC	Dutton / Fairfield	406-590-6991
	Teton Counseling	Fairfield	406-467-2700
	True North Counseling	Choteau	406-369-6129
	Eating Disorders (Emily Wish)		406-952-3772
	Wholly Authentic Life	Choteau, Fairfield	406-799-2711
	Impeccable Therapy	Dutton	406-788-4706
	Many Rivers Whole Health	Great Falls	406-466-5681
Public Health			
	Teton County Health Department	Choteau	406-466-2562
Dental Care			
	Allen Dental	Choteau	406-466-5662
	Huhn Family Dental	Fairfield	406-467-2407
Vision Care			
	Mountain Front Family Vision Center	Choteau, Fairfield	406-466-2802
Physical Therapy			
	Benefis Teton Medical Center	Choteau, Fairfield	406-467-3800
	Pivot Physical Therapy	Choteau	406-466-3040
Chiropractor			
	Vandolah Chiropractic Clinic	Choteau, Fairfield	406-466-5665
Police, Fire & Ambulance			
	Teton County Sheriff's Office	Choteau	406-466-5781
	Teton County EMS	Choteau	406-466-5552
Child Care Resource and Referral			
	Family Connections	Great Falls	406-761-6010
Child & Family Services			
	CASA-CAN	Great Falls	406-576-7041
	Centralized Intake	Statewide	1-866-820-5437
	Hi-Line Help for Abused Spouses	Conrad	406-278-3342
	Child and Family Services - Teton County	Conrad	406-278-5142

Food/Living Expense Assistance			
	Teton County Food Pantry	Choteau	509-847-9488
	Choteau Schools - Backpack Buddies	Choteau	406-781-8711
	Fairfield Food Pantry	Fairfield	406-590-3150
	Caring Tree (Oct.-Dec.)	Choteau	406-590-1126
	Neighbors Helping Neighbors	Choteau	406-466-3646
	Opportunities for All Scholarships, Inc.	Choteau	406-466-5393
	Opportunities, Inc.	Great Falls	406-761-0310
	W.I.C	Choteau	406-466-2562
Homeless Shelter			
	Great Falls Rescue Mission	Great Falls	406-761-2653
Legal Services			
	Disability Rights Montana	Statewide	800-245-4743
	Montana Legal Services Helpline	Statewide	800-666-6899
	People's Law Center	Great Falls	406-761-7720
Schools			
	Rural County Schools		406-466-2907
	Choteau Schools	Choteau	406-466-5364
	Power Schools	Power	406-463-2251
	Dutton/Brady Schools	Dutton/Brady	406-476-3424
	Fairfield Schools	Fairfield	406-467-2528
	Playtime Learning Center Preschool	Choteau	406-466-5166
	Big Sky Special Needs Cooperative	Conrad	406-271-7558
Personal/Home Health Care			
	Easter Seals	Choteau	406-466-2088
	Peace Hospice of Montana	Great Falls	406-455-3040
Senior Centers/Services			
	Choteau Senior Citizens Center	Choteau	406-466-2121
	Fairfield Senior Center	Fairfield	406-467-2574
	Dutton Senior Center	Dutton	406-476-3291
	Power Whistle Stop Senior Center	Power	406-463-2440
	Teton County Council on Aging	Teton County	406-476-3586
Independent/Assisted Living			
	Beehive Homes Assisted Living	Choteau	406-370-3507
	Skyline Lodge Retirement Home	Choteau	406-466-2062
	Front Range Assisted Living	Fairfield	406-467-2407
	Teton Peak Assisted Living	Choteau	406-590-1102
Community Service Organizations/Community Coalitions			
	Teton County C.A.R.E.S.	Choteau	406-466-2562
	MSU Extension - Teton County	Choteau	406-466-2491
	Choteau Lions Club	Choteau	406-203-4679
	North Central Cancer Support Group	Choteau	406-466-2562
	Soroptimists	Choteau	

Government Organizations			
	Choteau Chamber of Commerce	Choteau	406-466-5316
	Choteau Area Port Authority	Choteau	
	Fairfield Chamber of Commerce	Fairfield	406-467-2531
	CONNECT Referral System	Statewide, Choteau	406-466-2562
Faith-Based Organizations			
	Choteau Ministerial Association	Choteau	
	Choteau Baptist Church	Choteau	406-466-2902
	Trinity Lutheran Church	Choteau	406-466-2291
	United Methodist Church	Choteau	406-466-2641
	New Life Church	Choteau	406-466-2303
	St. Joseph's Catholic Church	Choteau	406-466-2961
	St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church	Fairfield	406-466-2961
	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Choteau & Fairfield	406-466-2725
	Zion Lutheran Church	Power	406-463-2541
	Guardian Angel Catholic Church	Power	406-463-2357
	Power Baptist Church	Power	406-799-6779
	United Church of Christ	Choteau	406-467-2466
	NewLife Fairfield	Fairfield	406-467-2713
	St. John Lutheran Church	Fairfield	406-467-3325
	Grace Lutheran Church	Fairfield	406-467-2277
	Pendroy Community Church	Pendroy	406-469-2245
	Bethany Lutheran Church	Dutton	406-476-3371
	St. William Catholic Church	Dutton	406-476-3327
	Dutton United Methodist Church	Dutton	406-476-3223
	Brady United Methodist Church	Brady	406-753-2253
Support Groups			
	Alcoholics Anonymous (Choteau Trinity Lutheran)	Choteau	406-466-2291
	Narcotics Anonymous (Choteau Trinity Lutheran)	Choteau	406-466-2291

SECONDARY DATA AND REFERENCES

SECONDARY DATA SOURCES

- American Community Survey
- Census of Agriculture
- CDC PLACES
- County Health Rankings
- Feeding America
- HRSA
- Montana Department of Transportation
- Montana Prevention Needs Assessment
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- Zillow
- Montana Department of Health and Human Services
 - ACES
 - Crime Dashboard
 - ImMTrax
 - MIDIS
 - HMF Dashboard
 - Vital Statistics

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Thank you for your continued support.

Teton County Health Department
905 4th Street NW, Choteau MT 59422

(406) 466 - 2562

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