



COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A closer look at the needs
of seniors, caregivers,
and persons with a
disability in
Region 8

PREPARED BY:

Sheri Harris, Director of Advocacy and Planning

Julie Wagner, Compliance & Quality Improvement Manager

Emily Armstrong, Director of Communications

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Mary “Erin” Rogers

Jessica Torpey

Ashley Schwartz

Lucy Brehrens

WE ARE ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL TO OUR PARTNERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO HELPED US GET THE WORD OUT BY SHARING THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY!

INDEX:

Executive Summary	3	County Profiles cont.	
Introduction		Mason	15
Background	4	Mecosta	16
Methodology	4	Montcalm	17
Needs Assessment Survey		Newaygo	18
Demographics	5	Osceola	19
Results: Older Adults	6	References	20
Results: Caregivers	9	Appendix A:	21
Conclusions	10	Appendix B:	27
County Profiles		Appendix C:	32
Allegan	11		
Ionia	12		
Kent	13		
Lake	14		



Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan

3215 Eaglecrest Drive NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
www.aaawm.org



SUMMARY

In January 2024, the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM) completed a Community Needs Assessment for the nine counties in the Planning and Service Area (PSA): Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo, and Osceola. This assessment, by design, investigated the experiences and identified challenges of older adults in the region using primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a survey of older adults in each county. Secondary data was sourced from the 2022 American Community Survey five-year estimates* to create profiles of the over-60 population in each county to provide context for survey data. This report offers an overview of the characteristics and identified needs of older adults and caregivers in the PSA served by AAWM.

PURPOSE

The AAWM Community Needs Assessment aims to identify the needs of older adults and caregivers within the AAWM Planning and Service Area (PSA). Additionally, this assessment also points to certain strengths of the existing aging network. The Needs Assessment will be helpful in planning for programming and services within the PSA over the next 3-year planning cycle.



SURVEY METHOD

The 2023 Community Needs Assessment Survey was developed first in a committee of individuals that included members of the AAWM Staff, Advisory Council, and the Board of Directors. The survey had two sections; one for older adults and one for those who provide care to an aging adult or individual with disabilities. The assessment team distributed the survey to service partners throughout the nine-county region in the hopes of soliciting responses from older adults aged 60 and above as well as caregivers in the PSA. The survey was available to take online or in paper form.

KEY CONCLUSIONS



Issues of greatest concern for older adults in the region are losing memory or having dementia, having enough money in retirement, falling or the fear of falling, maintaining, or repairing their home, and being able to live in the setting of their choice as they age.



The top five activities of daily living that were reported through the survey to be the most difficult were cleaning the house, shoveling snow, and completing yard work, doing the laundry, shopping for groceries, and taking a shower or bath.

76% of respondents claim their community is an excellent or good place to live



Most caregivers reported they were providing care for their significant other, aging parents, or in-laws.



Caregivers identified the top five areas of need to be socialization, transportation, accompaniment to medical appointments, meal preparation, and house cleaning.

COUNTY PROFILES

Profiles of the older adult population in each county were included to provide a picture of the region AAWM serves. Data from the 2022 American Community Survey Five Year Estimates were used to introduce key demographic characteristics for each county.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM) is part of a nationwide network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) that were created in 1974 by the federal Older Americans Act designated to create home and community-based services to maximize the independence and dignity of older adults. AAWM works hand-in-hand with the state agency that oversees aging programs, the Bureau of Aging, Community Living, and Supports (ACLS).

Michigan's "aging network" encompasses the ACLS, AAAs, and local service providers. This collaboration was carefully constructed to provide services for all of Region 8. Anchored in the Older Americans Act, AAAs offer top-notch and inventive programs and services tailored to enable older adults and individuals with disabilities to age gracefully in their preferred locations.

AAAWM lives out its mission of providing older persons and persons with a disability living in West Michigan with an array of services designed to promote independence and dignity in their homes and their communities. By making efforts, like this Needs Assessment as required by the Older American's Act, AAWM can ensure that programs are designed, located, offered, and funded in a manner responsive to all older adults and persons with disabilities in the Region.

METHODOLOGY

Survey Design

The 2023 Community Needs Assessment Survey was developed first in a committee of individuals that included members of the AAWM Staff, Advisory Council, and the Board of Directors. The survey had two sections; one for older adults and one for those who provide care to an aging adult or individual with disabilities. The assessment team distributed the survey to service partners throughout the nine-county region in the hopes of soliciting responses from older adults aged 60 and above as well as caregivers in the PSA. The survey was available to take online or in paper form.

Data Collection

The survey was made available in both digital and print versions. A link to the online survey, and the printed version were disseminated to the public through community partners who provide services to older adults and caregivers in each county. Most responses were taken from print surveys. The survey opened October 6, 2023, and closed December 22, 2023 allowing approximately 3 months to gather as many surveys back as possible. We allowed until January 1, 2024 for the last few print surveys to be returned. The total number of surveys received was 1,294. This was a decrease of 26 surveys from the 2019 needs assessment survey. Caregiver survey responses totaled 494 insert statement about that here. (the previous year was 390).

Results Analysis

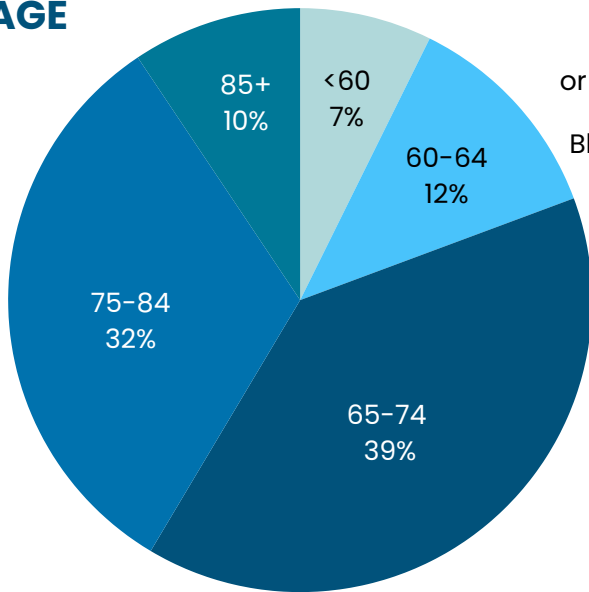
Responses collected on paper were entered manually into an online data entry version of the survey. The online and paper response datasets were combined and analyzed using Formstack. Overall survey results for both the Older Adult survey and the Caregiver survey can be found in Appendices B and C.

Respondents were able to skip any questions they did not feel comfortable answering. Surveys were accepted in any degree of completeness, based on the viewpoint that accounting for any information provided by respondents is more valuable than whether the survey was fully completed. In addition, the survey included "not applicable" and "prefer not to answer" choices for certain selected questions or statements. As a result, response rate varies by question. Response count is included for each individual question result in this report. Not applicable and prefer not to answer responses were treated as missing unless otherwise noted.

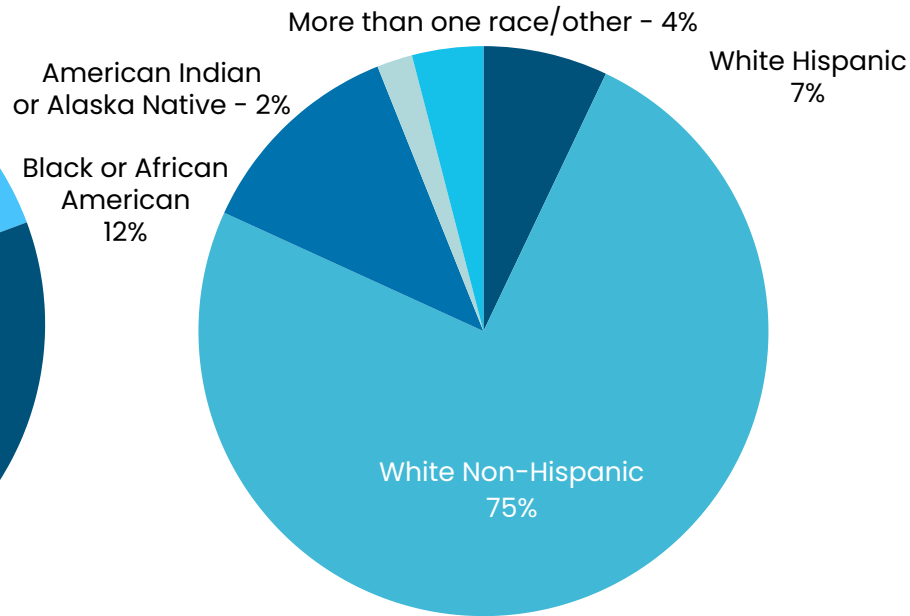
DEMOGRAPHICS

- The two most prevalent age groups among survey respondents were 65–74 years old (38.4%) and 75–84 years (31.4%). 7% of respondents identified their age as Less than 60 years old.
- Every county in the PSA was represented in the survey. Kent County residents had the highest number of responses (48%), followed by Montcalm County (11%) and Mason County (9%). Counties outside of the PSA made up just 2% of respondents. Females made up 72% of the respondents.
- Survey respondents were asked to identify their race with over half reporting they were white non-Hispanic (74%). 12% of respondents were black or African American. Those who selected White Hispanic represented 7% of the survey respondents and more than one race represented just 4%.

CLIENTS BY AGE



CLIENTS BY RACE & ETHNICITY

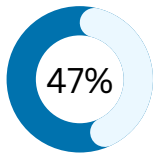


EMPLOYMENT

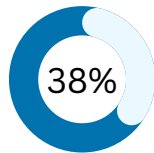
The question regarding employment had a much smaller response rate compared to other demographic questions (42% were left blank). We believe the cause of this was the position of the question on the form. 48% of the respondents say they are not employed with only 5% saying they work 0–20 hours and another 5% saying yes to 21–40 hours of work.



LIVING ARRANGEMENT



Live alone

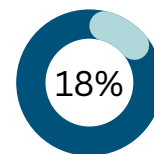


Live with significant other

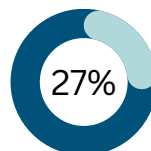
Other living arrangements included living with friends or relatives (9%) or other (6%),



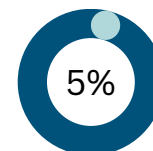
INCOME



2 person household below or at poverty line



2 person household above poverty line



1 person household above poverty line

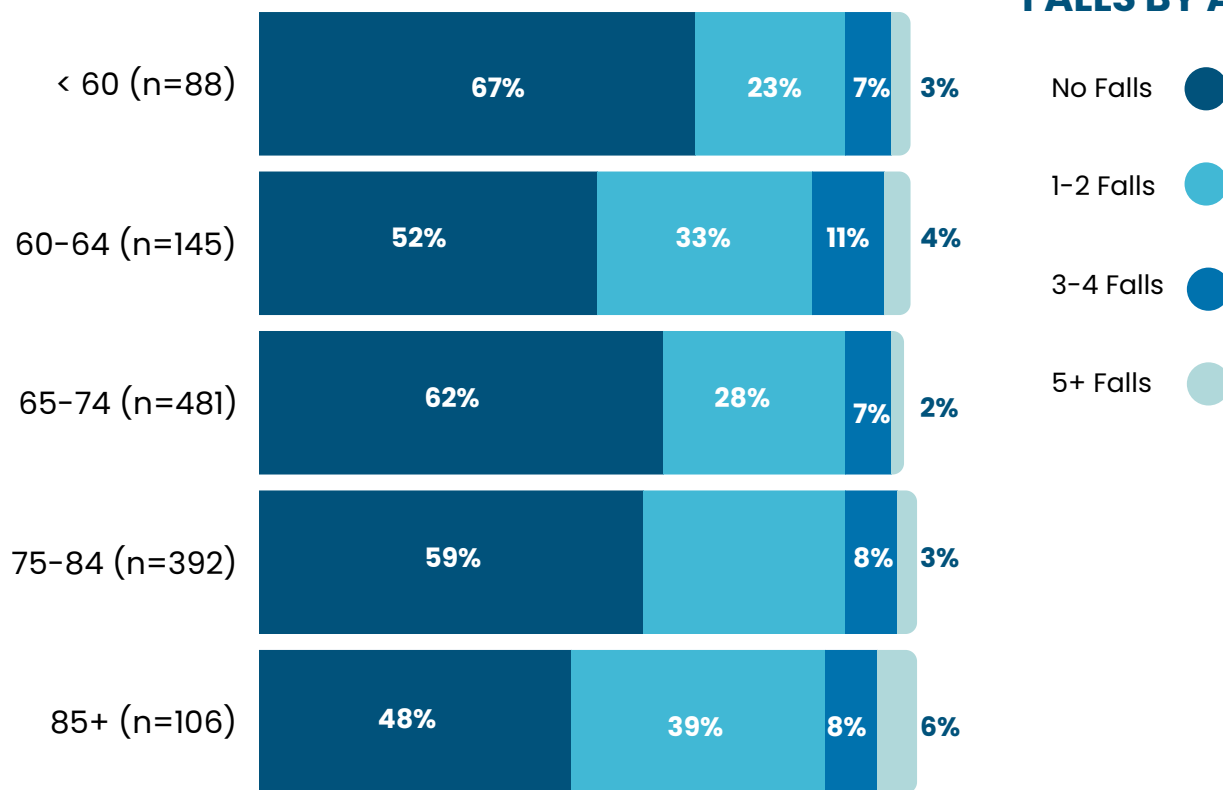


1 person household at or below poverty line

SURVEY RESPONSES- CONCERNS

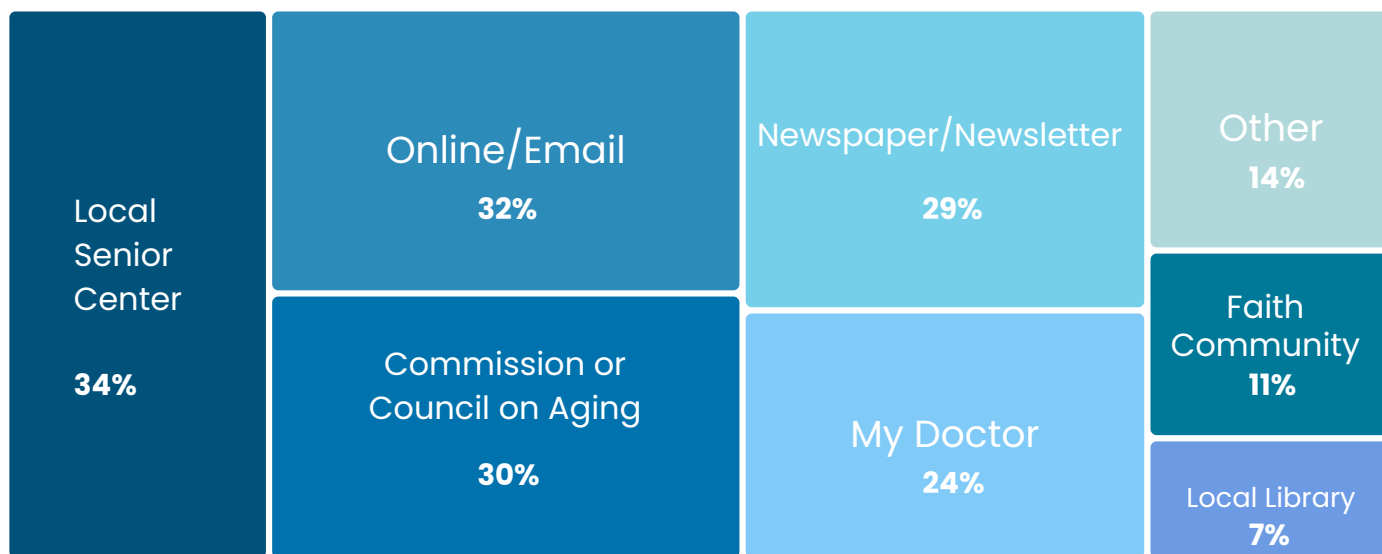
Over half of the respondents (59%) claim they have not fallen in the last year while 30% claim to have fallen 1-2 times. Just 7% claim to have fallen 3-4 times and only 3% have had 5+ falls.

FALLS BY AGE GROUP



INFORMATION GATHERING

Where do you go for information about senior services and activities?

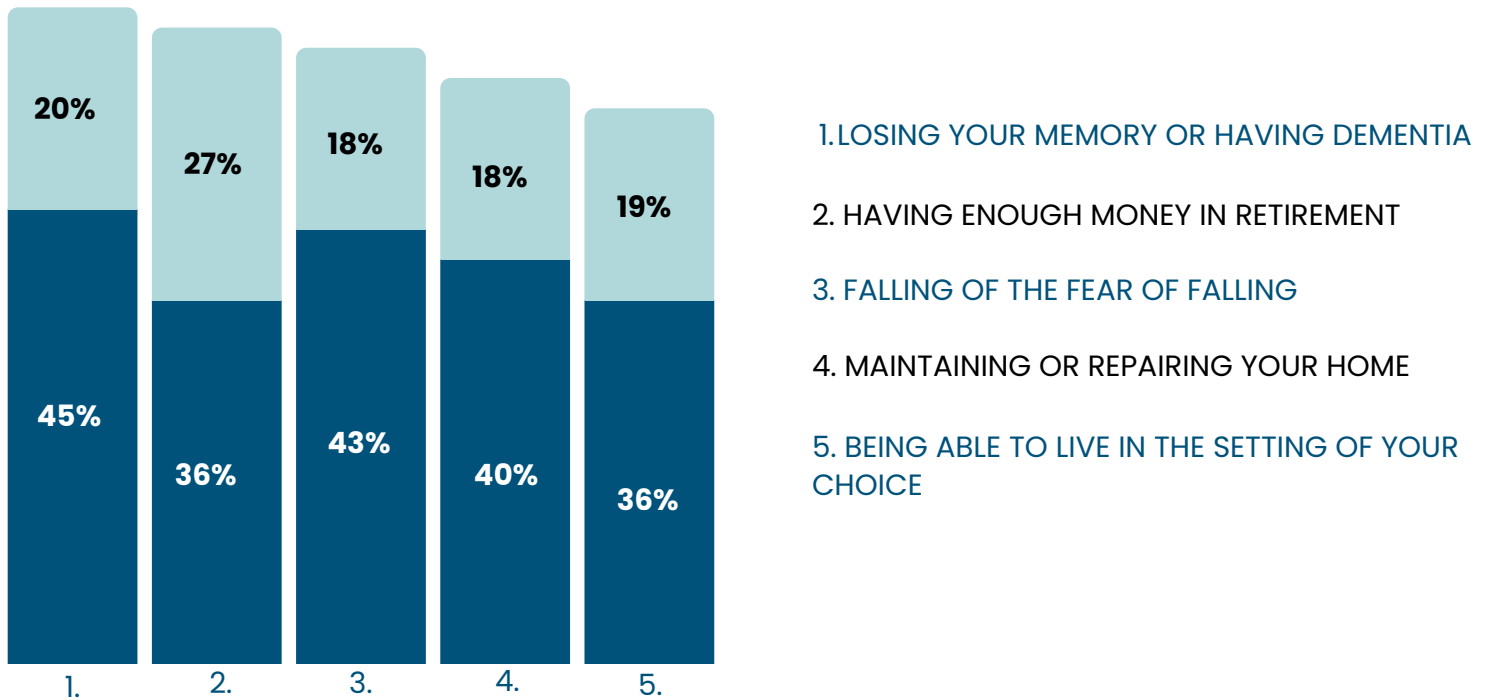


Respondents were invited to choose as many options as were applicable for the question “Where do you go for information about senior services and activities?”. Just 13% of respondents claim they have not needed information while 34% claim to get information from a local senior center.

SURVEY RESPONSES- CONCERNS

The first section in the Older Adult survey asked respondents to rate the level of concern they feel about 13 different situations. Respondents could choose from Not Concerned, Somewhat Concerned, or Very Concerned. The five situations with the highest level of concern (largest percentage of somewhat concerned or very concerned responses) Losing your memory or having dementia (45%), Having enough money in retirement (36%), Falling or the fear of falling (43%), Maintaining, or repairing your home (40%), Being able to live in the setting of your choice (36%).

TOP 5 RESPONDENT CONCERNS



SOCIAL SCENARIOS

The second section of the Older Adult Survey asked respondents to report how often they participate in five different social scenarios. A high percentage of respondents answered that they visit with friends or family (94%). 86% percent reported they attend community activities, and there was a significant amount (65%) who volunteer in the community. 51% percent of respondents depend on someone else to drive them and 53% report feeling lonely or isolated sometimes or often.

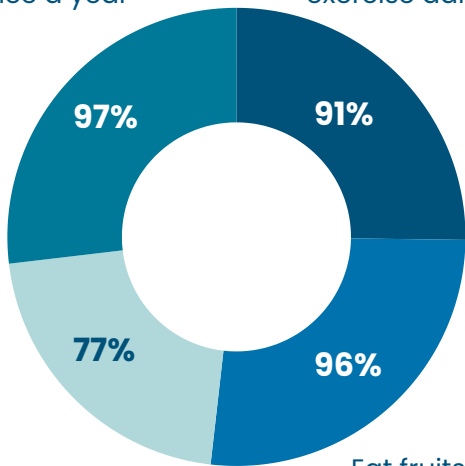
HOW OFTEN DO YOU...	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER	COUNT
FEEL LONELY OR ISOLATED	11%	42%	47%	1,216
DEPEND ON SOMEONE ELSE TO DRIVE YOU SOMEWHERE	22%	29%	49%	1,209
VOLUNTEER IN THE COMMUNITY	27%	38%	35%	1,204
VISIT WITH FRIENDS OR FAMILY	52%	42%	6%	1,236
ATTEND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS	37%	50%	14%	1,244

SURVEY RESPONSES- CONCERNS

HEALTHY ACTIVITIES

Go to the doctor at least once a year

Actively move about or exercise daily



Go to the dentist at least once a year

Eat fruits & vegetables daily

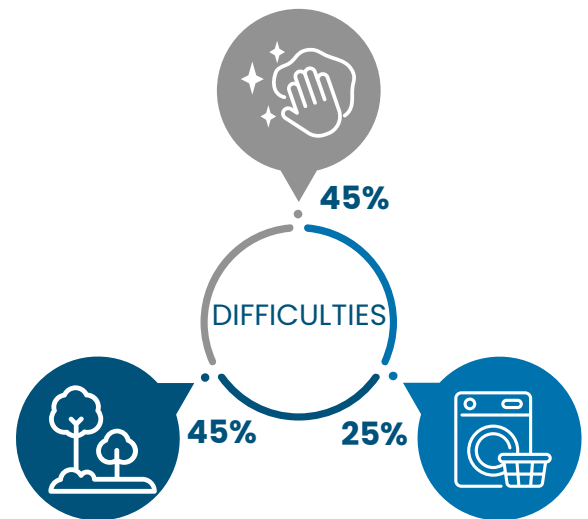
The third section of the Older Adult survey asked four questions related to physical health. More respondents reported seeing a doctor at least once a year (97%) than reported seeing a dentist once a year (77%). The majority of respondents indicated that they actively move around or exercise daily (91%) and eat fruits and vegetables daily (96%).

DIFFICULTY AFFORDING

The fourth section of the Older Adult Survey asked respondents to report if they have difficulty paying for nine different items or expenses. Assistive Devices (28%), Dental Care (27%), Fresh / healthy food to eat (fruits and vegetables) (26%), Healthcare including doctor visits or hospitalizations (26%), and Transportation (gas, insurance, repairs, public transit) (26%) were the top expenses most respondents had difficulty paying for.

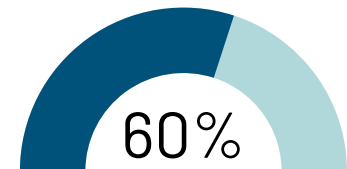
LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

The fifth section of the Older Adult Survey asked respondents to provide the level of difficulty they experienced with 10 different activities of daily living. 45% of respondents reported difficulty cleaning their house, 45% said it is difficult or very difficult to shovel snow or complete yard work, and the third highest percentage of somewhat or very difficult responses was doing the laundry (25%).

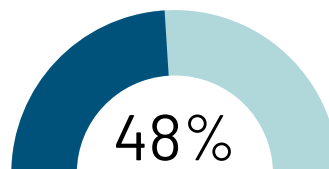


OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

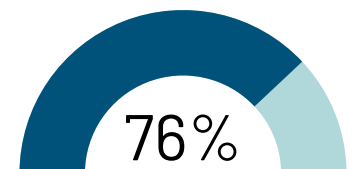
The final section of the Older Adult survey asked respondents to rate five statements about overall impressions of their health and community. Of these statements, four out of five showed a majority of respondents answering with a rating of Good or Excellent. However, a key cause for concern was the ability to live with quality and dignity at only 48%.



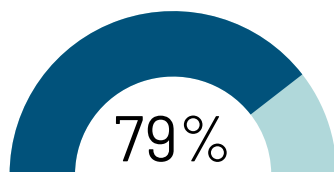
Overall Physical Health



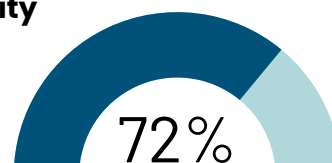
Ability to Live with Quality & Dignity



Community as a Place to Age Well



Overall Mental Health



Overall Oral Health

SURVEY RESULTS- CAREGIVERS

DEMOGRAPHICS

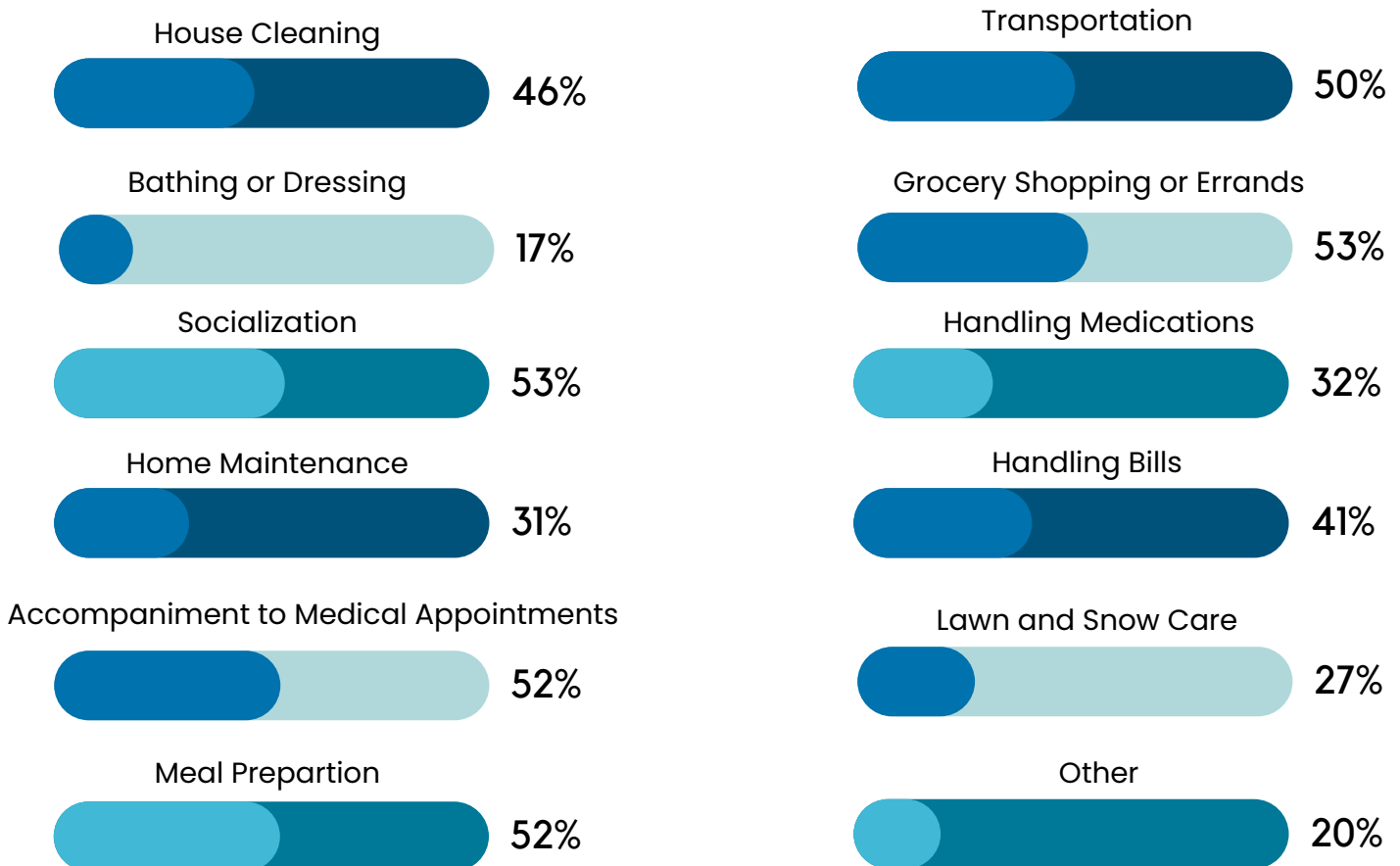
The Caregiver survey collected 494 responses, that is 100 more than in 2019. The demographic characteristics of the caregiver respondents reflected that of the Older Adult survey respondents. Like the Older Adult survey, the two most represented age groups among caregiver respondents were 65-74 years old (38%) and 75-84 years old (31%). Females made up 74% of respondents. The majority of caregivers who identified their race represented white non-Hispanic (70%).

RESPONSES

The largest percentage of caregivers provide care for their significant other (40%), followed by Aging Parent(s) or In-Law(s) (19%), and Other (14%). Well over half of the caregiver respondents (62%) are caregiving less than eight hours while 19% of respondents are caregiving 8-10 hours.

Caregivers were asked to identify all the types of care they provide to the person(s) they care for. The five types of care most frequently identified were Socialization (53%), Grocery Shopping or Errands (53%), Accompaniment to Medical Appointments (52%), Meal Preparation (52%), and Transportation (50%). When asked As a caregiver what services are (or would be) most helpful 40% reported Help Finding Services, 34% reported help with cleaning and meal prep,

What types of care do you provide?



SURVEY RESPONSES- CONCLUSIONS

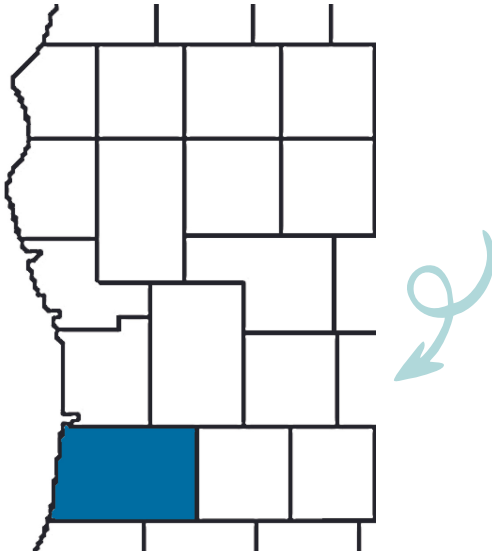
OLDER ADULTS AND PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY CONCLUSIONS

- The five issues of greatest concern for older adults in the region are losing their memory or having dementia, having enough money in retirement, falling or the fear of falling, maintaining or repairing their home, and being able to live in the setting of their choice as they age.
- We recognize through other data sources several concerns like transportation, with 49% of respondents saying they never rely on someone else for transportation, does not match up with caregivers identifying transportation as one of the top five types of care. We conclude that this is due to survey limitations. For instance, many of the surveys we distributed were within our aging network. Those seniors surveyed were likely connected to the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan or a Commission on Aging, receiving services already, or could have been in a more distracting environment, such as having a meal with their friends at a local senior center. We look to our next survey to learn from this experience and seek to survey more individuals outside of the aging network and in various formats.
- Overall, older adults report that they engage in healthy habits such as eating fruits and vegetables every day and visiting the doctor at least once a year. Far fewer report seeing the dentist once a year. Most respondents indicated that they actively move around or exercise daily.
- Several people reported having difficulty paying for assistive devices, dental care, fresh/healthy food (fruits and vegetables), healthcare including doctor visits or hospitalizations, and transportation such as gas, insurance, repairs, and public transportation options.
- Overall, older adults and persons with a disability rate their health and quality of life good and excellent, and identified their communities as a place to age well. There are, however, opportunities for improvement.

CAREGIVER CONCLUSIONS

- The largest percentage of caregiver survey respondents reported that they care for their significant other followed by aging parent(s) or In-Laws.
- Over half of the caregiver respondents indicated providing caregiving less than eight hours a week.
- The most frequently reported types of care provided had to do with securing food (meal preparation and grocery shopping), attending medical appointments, and/or providing transportation to their care recipient.
- Caregivers identified a need for assistance in finding services for those in their care, along with a need for help with cleaning and meal preparation for this individual.

ALLEGAN COUNTY

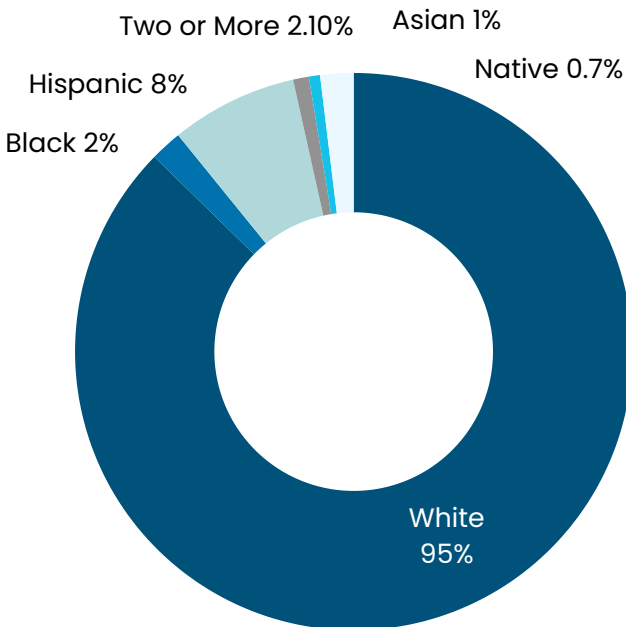


In 2021, Allegan County, MI had a population of 119k people with a median age of 40.1 and a median household income of \$70,269. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Allegan County, MI grew from 117,104 to 119,418, a 1.98% increase and its median household income grew from \$65,071 to \$70,269, a 7.99% increase.

The 5 largest ethnic groups in Allegan County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (86.8%), White (Hispanic) (4.07%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (3%), Two+ (Hispanic) (1.75%), and Other (Hispanic) (1.59%).

None of the households in Allegan County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

ETHNICITIES



120,502 total population

18% of residents Aged 65+

HOUSEHOLD STATS



88.5% have Broadband internet access



10% live at or below poverty level



6.6% Language other than English spoken at home

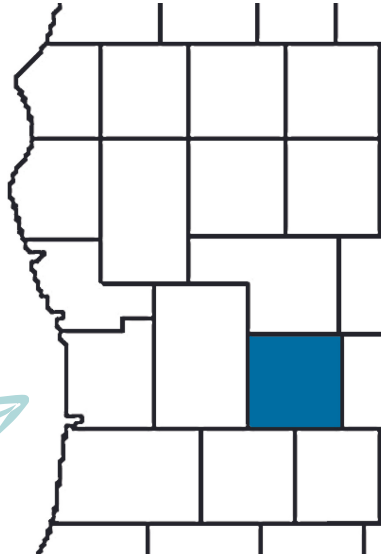


2.67 persons per household

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

1.20% senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

In 2021, Ionia County, MI had a population of 66.6k people with a median age of 39 and a median household income of \$64,436. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Ionia County, MI grew from 64,401 to 66,564, a 3.36% increase and its median household income grew from \$60,139 to \$64,436, a 7.15% increase.

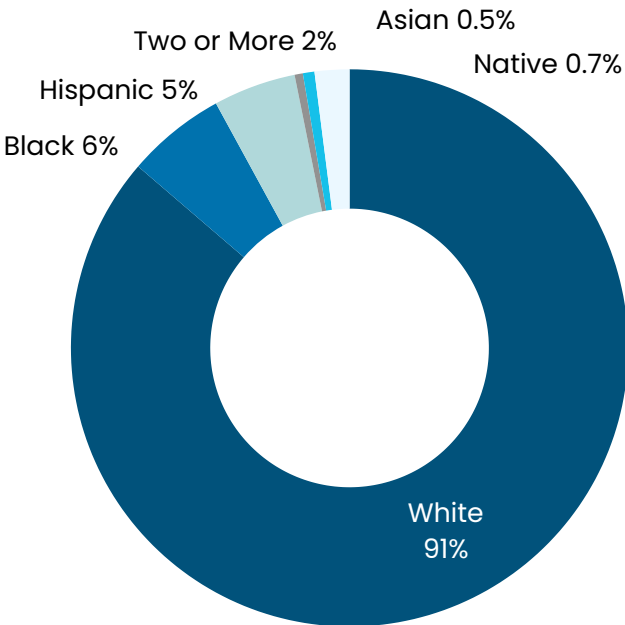


66,804 total population

16% of residents Aged 65+

The 5 largest ethnic groups in Ionia County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (87.6%), Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (4.36%), White (Hispanic) (2.9%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (2.29%), and Two+ (Hispanic) (1.28%).

ETHNICITIES



None of the households in Ionia County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

HOUSEHOLD STATS



85.7% have Broadband internet access



12% live at or below poverty level



2.5% Language other than English spoken at home

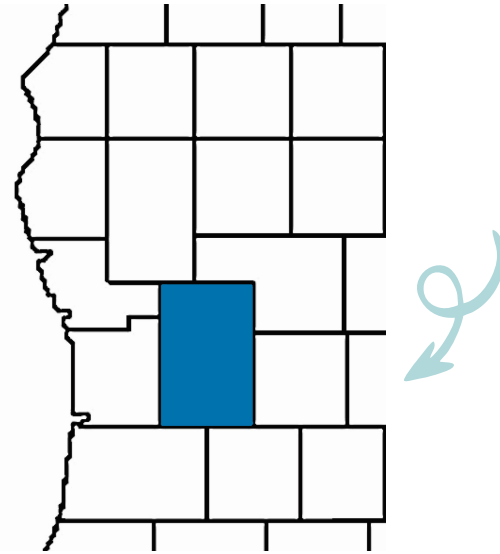


2.78 persons per household

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

0.60% senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

KENT COUNTY

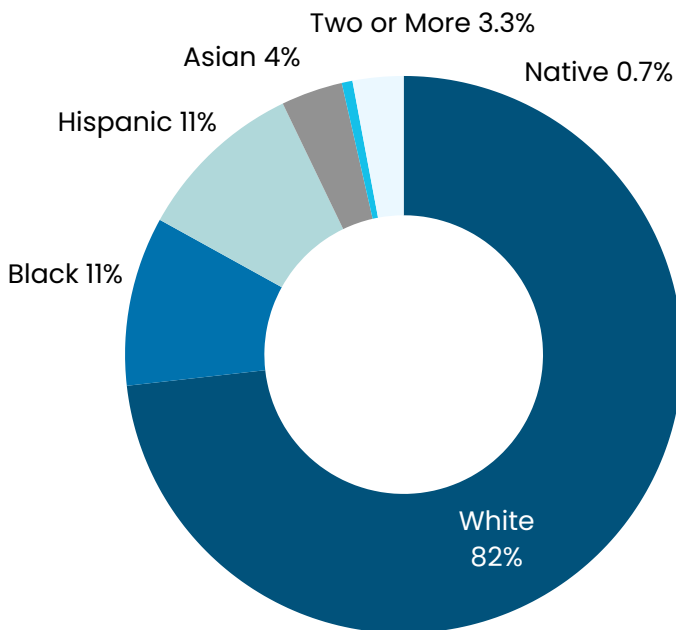


In 2021, Kent County, MI had a population of 655k people with a median age of 35.5 and a median household income of \$69,786. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Kent County, MI grew from 652,617 to 654,958, a 0.359% increase and its median household income grew from \$65,722 to \$69,786, a 6.18% increase.

The 5 largest ethnic groups in Kent County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (72.5%), Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (9.05%), White (Hispanic) (4.33%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (3.92%), and Two+ (Hispanic) (3.04%).

None of the households in Kent County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

ETHNICITIES



657,974 total population

15% of residents Aged 65+

HOUSEHOLD STATS



89.8% have Broadband internet access



11% live at or below poverty level



12.4% Language other than English spoken at home

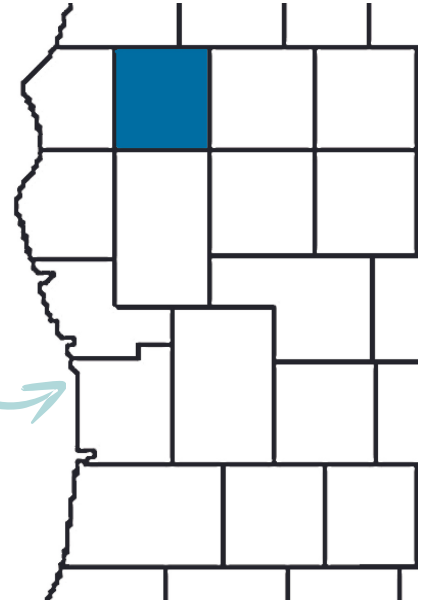


2.56 persons per household

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

0.70% senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

In 2021, Lake County, MI had a population of 12.2k people with a median age of 54.2 and a median household income of \$40,753. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Lake County, MI grew from 11,805 to 12,248, a 3.75% increase and its median household income grew from \$38,356 to \$40,753, a 6.25% increase.

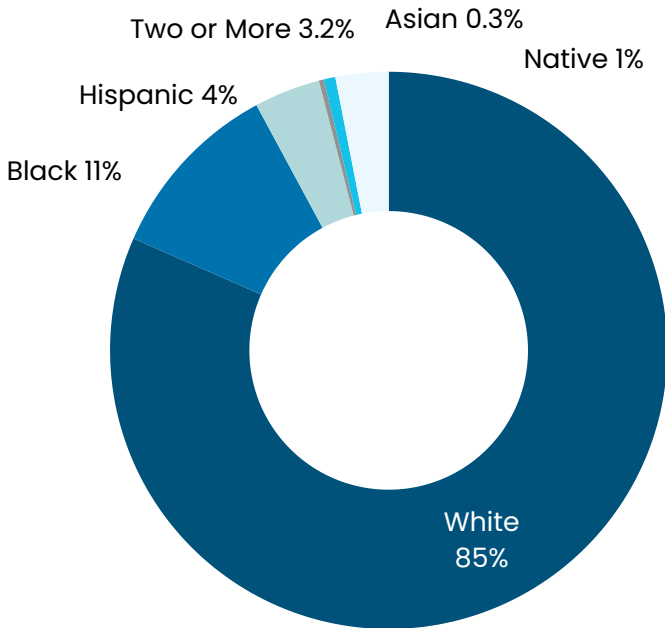


12,096 total population

30% of residents Aged 65+

The 5 largest ethnic groups in Lake County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (85.1%), Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (7.54%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (3.27%), White (Hispanic) (1.54%), and American Indian & Alaska Native (Non-Hispanic) (0.825%).

ETHNICITIES



None of the households in Lake County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

HOUSEHOLD STATS



74.4%

have Broadband internet access



23%

live at or below poverty level



3.1%

Language other than English spoken at home



2.64

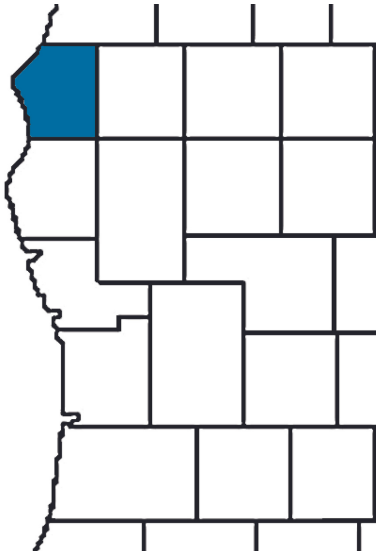
persons per household

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

1.5%

senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

MASON COUNTY

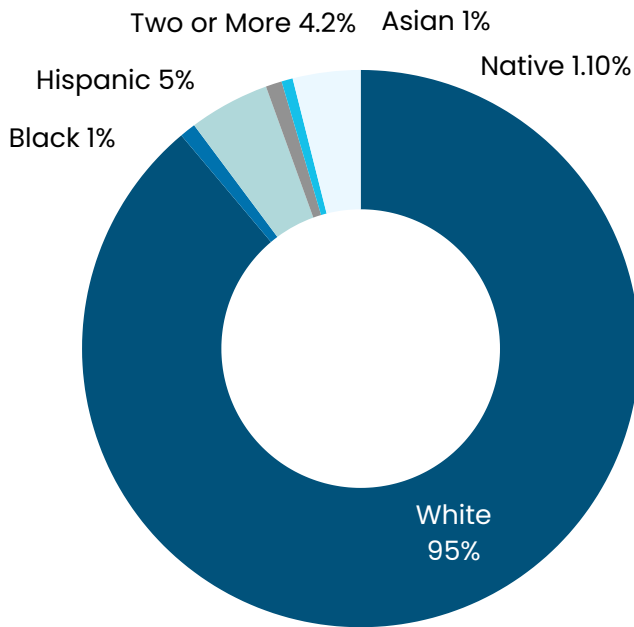


In 2021, Mason County, MI had a population of 29.1k people with a median age of 46.5 and a median household income of \$55,035. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Mason County, MI grew from 29,062 to 29,103, a 0.141% increase and its median household income grew from \$51,568 to \$55,035, a 6.72% increase.

The 5 largest ethnic groups in Mason County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (90.6%), White (Hispanic) (2.63%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (2.52%), Two+ (Hispanic) (1.37%), and Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (1.12%).

None of the households in Mason County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

ETHNICITIES



29,052 total population

26% of residents Aged 65+

HOUSEHOLD STATS



82.4% have Broadband internet access



10% live at or below poverty level



2.6% Language other than English spoken at home



2.34 persons per household

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

0.70% senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

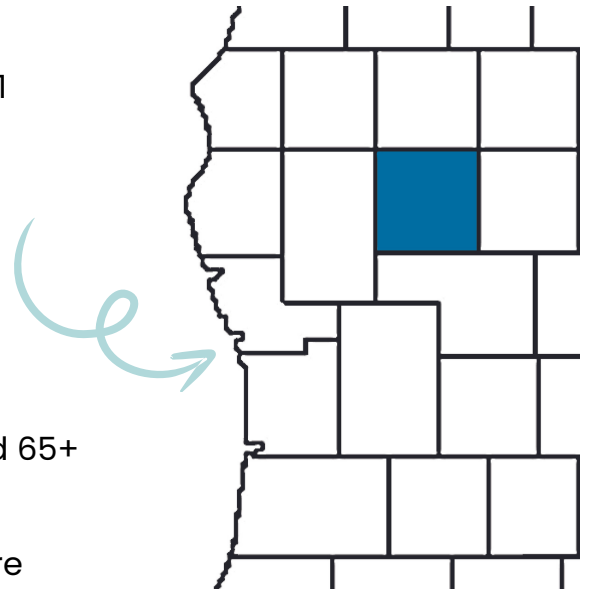
MECOSTA COUNTY

In 2021, Mecosta County, MI had a population of 40.1k people with a median age of 37.8 and a median household income of \$48,440. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Mecosta County, MI declined from 43,481 to 40,051, a -7.89% decrease and its median household income grew from \$45,797 to \$48,440, a 5.77% increase.



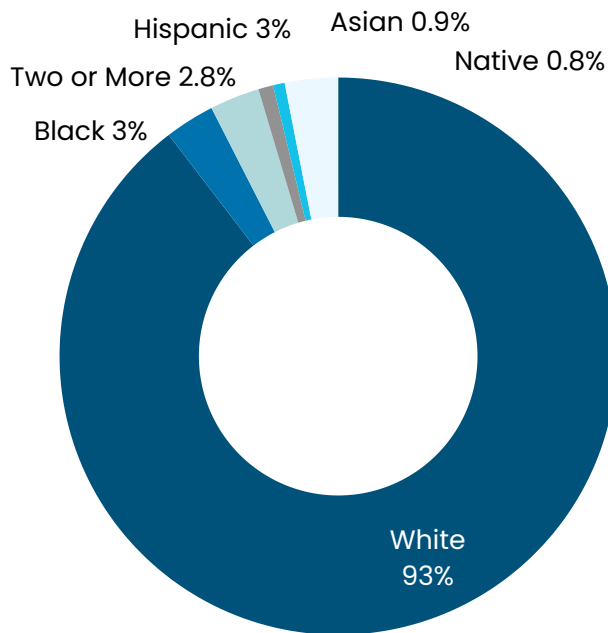
39,714 total population

20% of residents Aged 65+



The 5 largest ethnic groups in Mecosta County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (90.5%), Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (2.82%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (2.47%), White (Hispanic) (1.23%), and Asian (Non-Hispanic) (0.984%).

ETHNICITIES



None of the households in Mecosta County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

0.9% senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

HOUSEHOLD STATS



78.4% have Broadband internet access



20% live at or below poverty level

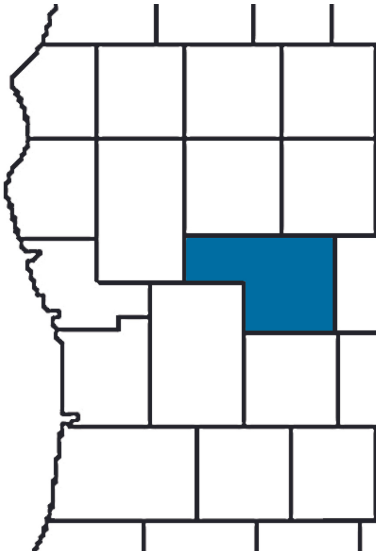


4.6% Language other than English spoken at home



2.34 persons per household

MONTCALM COUNTY

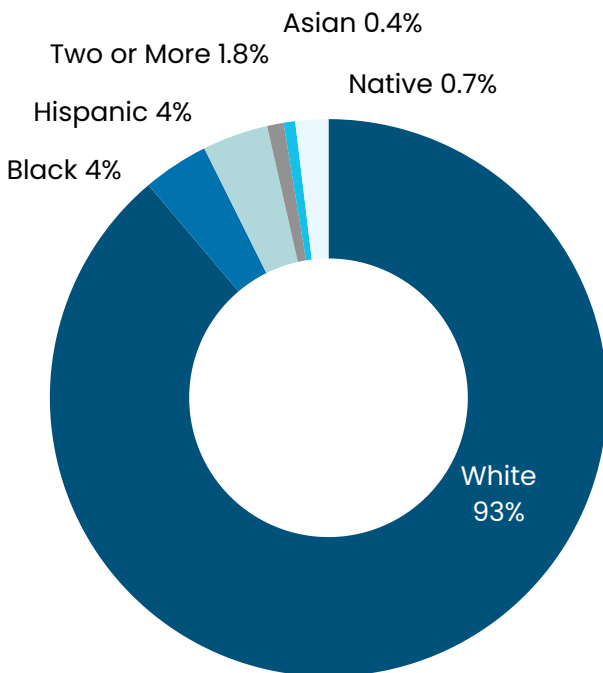


In 2021, Montcalm County, MI had a population of 66.4k people with a median age of 40.7 and a median household income of \$54,803. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Montcalm County, MI grew from 63,516 to 66,430, a 4.59% increase and its median household income grew from \$52,390 to \$54,803, a 4.61% increase.

The 5 largest ethnic groups in Montcalm County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (90.6%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (2.67%), White (Hispanic) (2.35%), Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (2.17%), and Two+ (Hispanic) (0.908%).

None of the households in Montcalm County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

ETHNICITIES



66,614

total population

19%

of residents Aged 65+

HOUSEHOLD STATS



81.1%

have Broadband internet access



15%

live at or below poverty level



3.6%

Language other than English spoken at home



2.67

persons per household

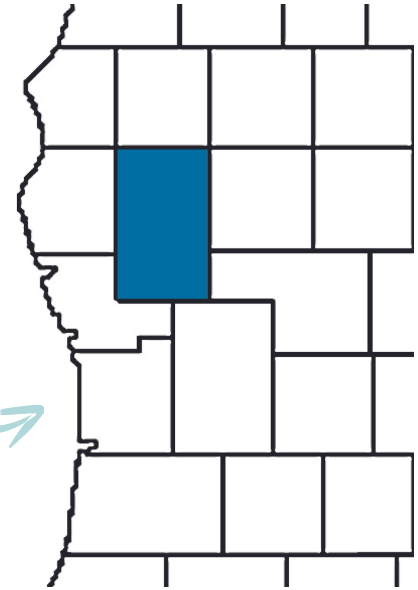
GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

1.10%

senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

NEWAYGO COUNTY

In 2021, Newaygo County, MI had a population of 49.7k people with a median age of 42.5 and a median household income of \$54,235. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Newaygo County, MI grew from 48,687 to 49,653, a 1.98% increase and its median household income grew from \$51,470 to \$54,235, a 5.37% increase.

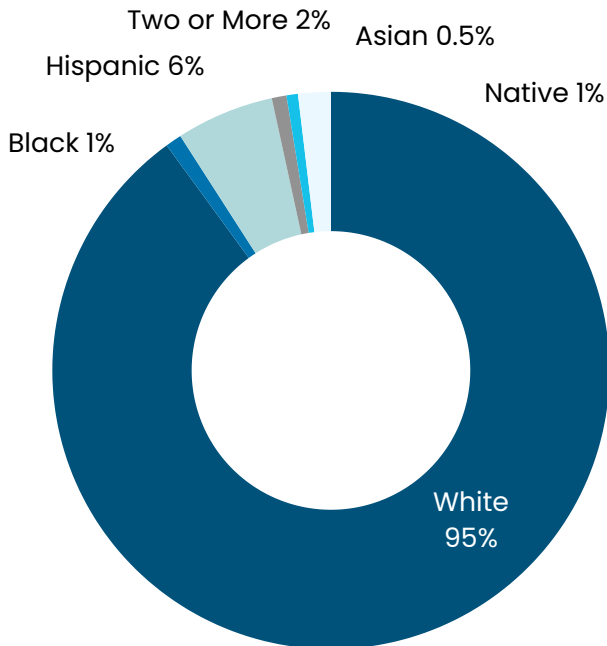


49,978 total population

21% of residents Aged 65+

The 5 largest ethnic groups in Newaygo County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (89.3%), Other (Hispanic) (2.73%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (2.4%), White (Hispanic) (1.98%), and Two+ (Hispanic) (1.02%).

ETHNICITIES



GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

1.8% senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

None of the households in Newaygo County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

HOUSEHOLD STATS



80.4% have Broadband internet access



13% live at or below poverty level

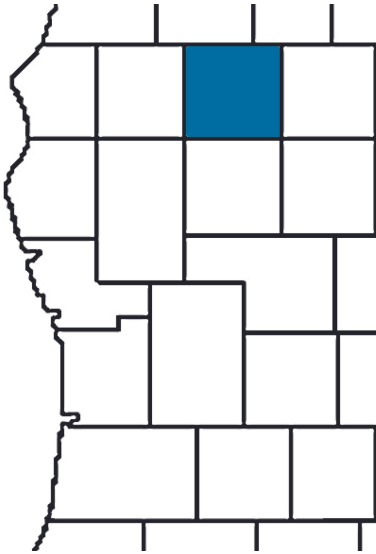


4.9% Language other than English spoken at home



2.59 persons per household

OSCEOLA COUNTY

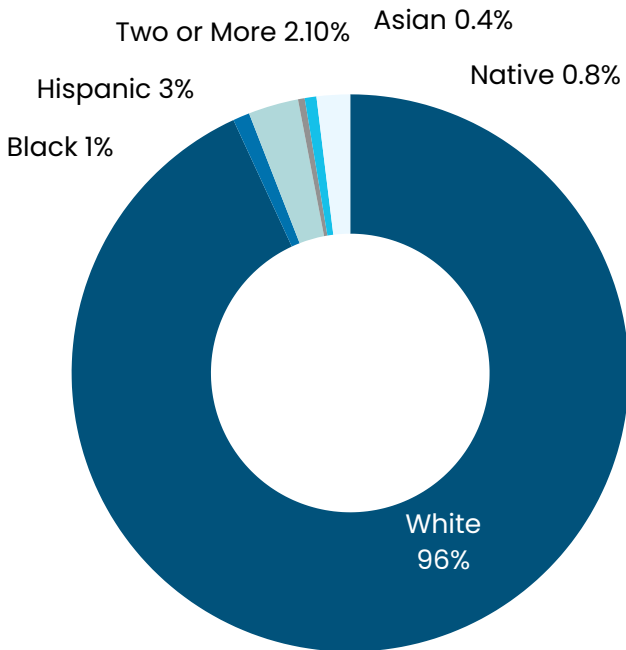


In 2021, Osceola County, MI had a population of 22.9k people with a median age of 43.6 and a median household income of \$50,722. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Osceola County, MI declined from 23,323 to 22,917, a -1.74% decrease and its median household income grew from \$46,969 to \$50,722, a 7.99% increase.

The 5 largest ethnic groups in Osceola County, MI are White (Non-Hispanic) (93.6%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (2.29%), Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (1.22%), White (Hispanic) (1.1%), and Two+ (Hispanic) (0.541%).

None of the households in Osceola County, MI reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.

ETHNICITIES



22,891

total population

16% of residents Aged 65+

HOUSEHOLD STATS



79.9%

have Broadband internet access



17%

live at or below poverty level



4.1%

Language other than English spoken at home



2.55

persons per household

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

1% senior households living with grandchildren under 18 years

REFERENCES

[Allegan County, Michigan - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[Kent County - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[Montcalm County, Michigan - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[Ionia County, Michigan - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[Newaygo County, Michigan - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[Mecosta County, Michigan - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[Mason County, Michigan - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[Osceola County, Michigan - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[Lake County, Michigan - Census Bureau Tables](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Montcalm County, Michigan; Osceola County, Michigan; Ionia County, Michigan; Kent County, Michigan](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Mason County, Michigan; Mecosta County, Michigan; Newaygo County, Michigan](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[S0102: POPULATION 60 YEARS AND OVER ... - Census Bureau Table](#)
accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[S1002: Grandparents - Census Bureau Table](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

[S0101: Age and Sex - Census Bureau Table](#) accessed 4/2/24 by Sheri Harris

APPENDIX A: 2023 NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY



2024 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Community Survey for Older Adults (age 55 and older) and Adults Living with a Disability

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

We respect human diversity and understand that sexual orientation and gender identity and expressions are sensitive and personal matters. It is important to us that we address the needs of our entire community, and ask you to respond to the following demographic information.

What is your county of residence:

- Allegan Kent Mason Montcalm Osceola
 Ionia Lake Mecosta Newaygo Other

Your Gender:

- Male Non-Binary/Third Gender/Two Spirit Prefer not to share
 Female Other

Which of the following best describes you?

- Heterosexual or Straight Bisexual Asexual Prefer not to share
 Gay or Lesbian Pansexual Queer Prefer to describe

Your Age Group:

- Under 60 65-74 85+ Yes (21+ hours) No
 60-64 75-84 Yes (0-20 hours a week)

Are you employed?

Do you identify as a person with a disability or other chronic condition?

- Yes No Prefer not to share

Do you face barriers to accessing services? Please explain if so, _____

Household Income Per Year

- Prefer not to share More than \$14,580 (1 person household)
 \$14,580 or less (one person household) \$19,720 or less (2 person household)
 More than \$19,720 (2 person household)

What is Your Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply):

- American Indian or Alaska Native White Hispanic Middle Eastern
 Black or African American White Non-Hispanic Other Race/
Ethnicity
 Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Asian Prefer not to share

Living Arrangement:

- Live Alone Live with significant other Live with friends or relatives Other



2024 NEEDS ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

For each statement below, fill in the circle for which response best represents your level of concern.

Please rate the following:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Your overall physical health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your overall mental health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your overall oral health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your ability to live life with quality and dignity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your community as a place to age well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Right now, how concerned are you about:

	Not Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Very Concerned	Not Applicable
Being able to live in the setting of your choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being physically, emotionally, or financially abused, or neglected	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being the victim of a financial scam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Driving safely or not being able to drive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Falling or the fear of falling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having enough money in retirement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Losing your memory of having dementia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Right now, how concerned are you about (continued):

	Not Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Very Concerned	Not Applicable
Maintaining or repairing your home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obtaining or understanding benefits (social security, Medicare, Medicaid)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing care to a spouse, partner, or other loved one	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Raising a grandchild or grandchildren	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of clutter or belongings in your home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How often do you:

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Not Applicable
Attend community activities or events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Depend on someone else to drive you somewhere	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel lonely or isolated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visit with friends or family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Actively move about or exercise daily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eat fruits and vegetables daily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you:

	No	Yes	Not Applicable
Go to the dentist at least once a year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go to the doctor at least once a year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have difficulty paying for:

	No	Yes	Not Applicable
Assistive devices (hearing aids, eye glasses)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dental care including cleanings, extractions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enough food to eat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fresh/healthy food to eat (fruits, vegetables)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Healthcare including doctor visits or hospitalizations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rent, mortgage, property taxes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation (gas, insurance, repairs, public transit)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilities (heating, cooling, water)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How difficult is it for you to:

	Not difficult	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult	Someone does this for me	Not Applicable
Clean the house	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do the laundry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enter/exit your home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get dressed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handle paperwork/ pay bills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manage your medication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepare a meal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shop for groceries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shovel snow or complete yard work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take a shower or bath	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Where do you go for information about senior services and activities (check all that apply)?

- My Doctor Newspaper/Newsletters Online/Email
- Faith Community Commission or Council on Aging Other
- Local Library Local Senior Center I haven't needed information

How many times have you fallen in the last year?

- No Falls 1-2 falls 3-4 falls 5+ falls

How many times have you used the Urgent Care or Emergency Room in the last year?

- 0 1 2 3 4 5+

Please only fill out the questions below if you are providing care for a loved one.

How much time do you spend caregiving each week?

- Less than 8 hours
- 8-20 hours
- 21-40
- 41+ hours

Do you provide care for (check all that apply)?

- Significant Other
- Aging Parent(s) or in-law(s)
- Adult child with health conditions
- Friend
- Neighbor
- Other relative
- Other

What types of care do you provide (check all that apply):

- House cleaning
- Meal Preparation
- Handling bills
- Bathing or dressing
- Transportation
- Lawn and snow care
- Socialization
- Grocery shopping or errands
- Other
- Home maintenance
- Handling medications
- Accompaniment to Medical Appointments

As a caregiver, what services are (or would be) most helpful (check all that apply):

- Adult Day Center
- Education about caregiving
- Financial planning for care needs
- In-home respite (respite care provides temporary relief for a primary caregiver)
- Planning for end of life (medical decisions, funeral arrangements)
- Legal planning (wills, trusts, Power of Attorney, etc)
- Help finding services
- Assistance with bathing and dressing
- Cleaning/meal preparation
- Caregiver Support Groups
- Planning for assisted living or nursing home care
- Other

About the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan

The Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM)'s mission is to provide older adults and adults living with a disability an array of services designed to promote independence and dignity in their homes and communities. AAAWM is **The Source for Seniors** in Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo, and Osceola counties. Together with our partners, through the Older Americans Act and Kent County Senior Millage, and through in-house programs, we help provide person-centered care that empowers individuals to age in place.

(616) 456-5664 | www.aaawm.org | 3215 Eaglecrest Drive NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525

Thank you for taking the time to complete our needs assessment survey.

Your feedback will help us improve our programs and services. If you have completed this survey and find yourself in need of support and services please call (616) 456-5664 or 888-456-5664.

APPENDIX B: OVERALL RESULTS

Total Number of Surveys Completed: 1,285

1. What is your county of residence?	Count: 1,285	Percentage
Allegan		4.7%
Ionia		7.4%
Kent		47.8%
Lake		2.5%
Mason		9.3%
Mecosta		5.4%
Montcalm		10.7%
Newaygo		2.6%
Osceola		6.3%
Other		2.5%
Blank		0.9%
2. Your Gender:	Count: 1,285	Percentage
Female		72%
Male		24%
Other/Prefer not to share/Blank		4%
3. Which of the following best describes you?	1,192	Percentage
Heterosexual or Straight		89.3%
Gay or Lesbian		1.5%
Bisexual		0.4%
Pansexual		0.0%
Asexual		0.5%
Queer		0.1%
Prefer not to share		8.2%
4. Your Age Group	1,257	Percentage
<60		7%
60 - 64		12%
65 - 74		39%
75 - 84		32%
85+		9%

5. Are you employed?	747	Percentage
Yes (0-20 hours a week)		8%
Yes (21+ hours a week)		9%
No		83%
6. Do you identify as a person with a disability or other chronic condition?	1,219	Percentage
Yes		44%
No		52%
Prefer not to share		4%
7. Household Income Per Year	1,217	Percentage
\$14,580 or less (1 person household)		20%
More than \$14,580 (1 person household)		18%
\$19,720 or less (2 person household)		5%
More than \$19,720 (2 person household)		27%
Prefer not to share		29%
8. What is Your Race / Ethnicity? (Select all that apply):	1,185	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native		2%
Asian		1%
Black or African American		12%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander		0%
White Non-Hispanic		74%
White Hispanic		7%
More than one race /Other		4%
9. Living Arrangement	1,206	Percentage
Live Alone		47%
Live with Significant Other		38%
Live with Friends or Relatives		9%
Other		6%

10. Please rate the following:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Count
Your overall physical health	10%	50%	33%	7%	1,262
Your overall mental health	25%	53%	19%	3%	1,256
Your overall oral health	21%	51%	21%	7%	1,247
Your ability to live life with quality and dignity	30%	18%	50%	2%	1,243
Your community as a place to age well	21%	55%	21%	3%	1,237
11. Right now, how concerned are you about:	Not Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Very Concerned	Count	
Being able to live in the setting of your choice as you age	45%	36%	19%	1,204	
Being physically, emotionally, or financially abused or neglected	80%	15%	5%	1,098	
Being the victim of a financial scam	55%	34%	10%	1,147	
Driving safely or not being able to drive	58%	28%	14%	1,118	
Falling or the fear of falling	39%	43%	18%	1,208	
Having enough money in retirement	37%	36%	27%	1,206	
Losing your memory or having dementia	35%	45%	20%	1,166	
Maintaining or repairing your home	42%	40%	18%	1,128	
Obtaining or understanding benefits (Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid)	47%	37%	15%	1,219	
Providing care to a spouse, partner, or other loved one	54%	30%	16%	973	
Raising a grandchild or grandchildren	87%	8%	5%	833	
The amount of clutter or belongings in your home	56%	34%	9%	1,131	
12. How often do you:	Often	Sometimes	Never	Count	
Attend community activities or events	37%	50%	14%	1,244	
Depend on someone else to drive you somewhere	22%	29%	49%	1,209	
Feel lonely or isolated	11%	42%	47%	1,216	
Visit with friends or family	52%	42%	6%	1,236	
Volunteer in the community	27%	38%	35%	1,204	

13. Do you:		Yes	No	Count	
Actively move about or exercise daily		91%	9%	1,235	
Eat fruits and vegetables daily		96%	4%	1,190	
Go to the dentist at least once a year		77%	23%	1,195	
Go to the doctor at least once a year		97%	3%	1,227	
14. Do you have difficulty paying for:		Yes	No	Count	
Assistive devices (hearing aids, eye glasses)		28%	72%	1,178	
Dental care including cleanings, extractions		27%	73%	1,174	
Enough food to eat		24%	76%	1,210	
Fresh / healthy food to eat (fruits, vegetables)		26%	74%	1,216	
Healthcare including doctor visits or hospitalizations		26%	74%	1,212	
Medication		25%	75%	1,212	
Rent, mortgage, property taxes		23%	77%	1,201	
Transportation (gas, insurance, repairs, public transit)		26%	74%	1,191	
Utilities (heating, cooling, water)		21%	79%	1,178	
15. How difficult is it for you to:	Not Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Someone does this for me	Count
Clean the house	43%	36%	9%	12%	1,234
Do the laundry	68%	21%	4%	7%	1,228
Enter / exit your home	82%	14%	3%	1%	1,229
Get dressed	85%	13%	1%	1%	1,232
Handle paperwork / Pay bills	75%	16%	4%	5%	1,230
Manage your medication	86%	8%	2%	4%	1,223
Prepare a meal	75%	16%	4%	5%	1,241
Shop for groceries	69%	19%	5%	7%	1,218
Shovel snow or complete yard work	34%	27%	19%	20%	1,085
Take a shower or a bath	77%	18%	4%	1%	1,217

16. Where do you go for information? Check all that apply:	Count: 1,220	Percentage
My Doctor		24%
Faith Community		11%
Local Library		7%
Newspaper / Newsletters		29%
Commission or Council on Aging		30%
Local Senior Center		34%
Online / Email		32%
Other		14%
I haven't needed information		13%
17. How many times have you fallen in the last year?	Count: 1,212	Percentage
No falls		59%
1 - 2 falls		30%
3 - 4 falls		8%
5+ falls		3%
18. How many times have you used the Urgent Care or Emergency Room in the last year?	Count: 1,181	Percentage
0		59%
1		22%
2		11%
3		5%
4		1%
5+		2%

APPENDIX C: CAREGIVER RESULTS

Total Number of Surveys Completed: 494

1. Who do you provide care for? (check all that apply)	Count: 383	Percentage
Neighbor		4%
Adult Child with Health Conditions		9%
Other Relative		13%
Friend		13%
Other		14%
Aging Parent(s) or In-Law(s)		19%
Significant Other		40%
2. How much time do you spend caregiving each week?	Count: 448	Percentage
Less than 8 hours		62%
8-20 hours		19%
21-40 hours		8%
41+ hours		11%
3. What types of care do you provide?	373	Percentage
House Cleaning		46%
Bathing or Dressing		17%
Socialization		53%
Home Maintenance		31%
Accompaniment to Medical Appointments		52%
Meal Preparation		52%
Transportation		50%
Grocery Shopping or Errands		53%
Handling Medications		32%
Handling Bills		41%
Lawn and Snow Care		27%
Other		20%

4. What services would be the most helpful?	308	Percentage
Adult Day Center		15%
In-Home Respite Care		26%
Help Finding Services		40%
Caregiver Support Groups		19%
Education About Caregiving		19%
Planning for End of Life (medical decisions, funeral arrangements)		23%
Assistance to Help with Bathing and Dressing		11%
Planning for Assisted Living or Nursing Home Care		21%
Financial Planning or Care Needs		21%
Legal Planning (wills, trusts, Power of Attorney, etc)		26%
Cleaning/Meal Preparation		34%
Other		11%



Dorothy A. Johnson Center
FOR PHILANTHROPY

FINDINGS OF THIRD-PARTY REVIEW OF METHODOLOGY AND REPORT

June 28, 2024

Sheri Harris, Director of Advocacy and Planning
Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan
3215 Eaglecrest Drive NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525

Dear Ms. Harris:

We have reviewed the 2024 Region 8 Community Needs Assessment report from the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (the Agency). Preparation of this report was the responsibility of the Agency. Our charge was to express an opinion on how well the report adheres to national standards for community engagement.

We conducted our review using the organizational standards for Community Services Block Grant Eligible Entities, developed by the Community Action Partnership with funding from the Federal Office of Community Services. Those standards were designed to ensure appropriate participation, representation, and communication between public and private entities and low-income families and communities. We are using standards representing engagement with low-income families as a proxy for the older adults that are core to AAAWM's programming focus and organizational mission, as well as a core constituency and population directly served by the Agency.

These standards cover nine domains of activity, including community engagement and assessment, organizational leadership and board governance, and financial operations and oversight. Because our review concerned a single report rather than a full review of the Agency, we limited our application of the standards to eight applicable sub-items of standards 1 (Input and Involvement), 2 (Community Engagement), and 3 (Community Assessment).

Our review compared the report's methodology and final presentation of collected data against the applicable standards. In our opinion, the report follows all eight of the relevant benchmarks: it demonstrates the participation of low-income individuals in the data collection, uses data directly collected from low-income individuals, leverages community partnerships to collect the data, utilizes information from the broader community in its analysis, communicates the findings directly back to the community, regularly conducts community assessments, includes data about poverty for its service area, and utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data.

We specifically note the inclusion of comparative data for each of the Agency's counties served based on five-year estimates from the American Community Survey. By including this data, readers can see information gleaned directly from survey results as well as comparable all-household data from their community.



This review was conducted to form an opinion about this report as a whole. Subsequent actions by the Agency or how the report is distributed across the community are not required parts of the basic research review.

On behalf of the Johnson Center,

Jeff Williams
Director, Community Data and Research Lab