



FY 2025-2026

Community Needs Assessment

“People helping people; empowering individuals, strengthening families and enriching communities in Northeast Nebraska.”



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Executive Summary



NENCAP's FY25-26 Community Needs Assessment highlights key demographic, economic, health, and service-related conditions across the 14-county Northeast Nebraska service area. The region—spanning Antelope, Burt, Cedar, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Dodge, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Stanton, Thurston, Washington, and Wayne Counties—reflects a diverse rural population with steady but uneven growth, widening economic disparities, and persistent needs among children and families. This assessment is derived from national sources, community and agency feedback, client satisfaction surveys and surveys of service providers and partners. Importantly, the assessment identifies priority needs that extend beyond NENCAP's current programs and services. For unmet needs where direct program expansion is not immediately feasible, NENCAP will pursue a structured response framework that may include:

- Strategic partnerships to strengthen referral pathways and coordinated service delivery
- Capacity-building collaborations with community providers to expand regional access
- Targeted grant development to pilot or scale responsive programming
- Policy and systems advocacy to address structural barriers
- Resource alignment and phased expansion planning where mission-aligned and financially sustainable

This approach ensures that unmet needs inform strategic decision-making rather than remain static findings. The assessment provides the Board and leadership with a framework to guide resource allocation, partnership strategy, program prioritization, and funding advocacy—positioning NENCAP to respond proactively to shifting community conditions while maintaining fiscal discipline and mission focus.

Demographics & Population Conditions

The total population of 188,149 includes an aging demographic in many counties, while Dakota, Madison, and Wayne maintain younger population profiles. Racial and ethnic diversity continues to grow, particularly in Dakota, Thurston, Dixon, and Madison Counties, where Native American and Hispanic/Latino communities represent a significant proportion of residents. Dakota County, for example, is 40.6% Hispanic/Latino, reflecting meaningful cultural and linguistic shifts across the region.

Economic Conditions

Economic disparities remain among the most pressing challenges. Median household incomes range widely—from \$57,303 in Burt County to \$90,188 in Washington County—yet poverty remains entrenched, affecting 14.1% of the population and more than 18,600 children. Food insecurity impacts more than 26,800 residents, with Thurston, Burt, and Knox experiencing the highest rates. Housing burdens continue for both renters and homeowners, and vacancy rates remain elevated in several rural counties. Limited English-speaking households are concentrated most heavily in Dakota, Dixon, and Cuming Counties.

Employment remains generally strong, though unemployment has risen slightly since 2023. Average weekly wages range from \$829 in Knox to \$1,611 in Thurston County, highlighting notable wage disparities.

Children & Families

Child poverty is particularly severe in Dakota, Dodge, Madison, Knox, and Thurston Counties, where more than one in four children live below the poverty line. Foster care placements are elevated, especially in Dodge, Madison, and Dakota. Free and reduced-price lunch eligibility—an indicator of family economic stress—ranges from high to extremely high across the region, peaking at 84.5% in Thurston County and 73.2% in Dakota County.

Early childhood service gaps remain substantial: 226 Head Start-eligible children under age five are not being served, with the largest gaps in Dodge, Madison, Dakota, and Thurston Counties.



Health Indicators

Disability rates average 12.7% across the area, with Burt and Knox showing the highest prevalence. Although uninsured adult rates have improved overall, they remain elevated in Thurston, Dakota, and Dixon Counties. Insurance coverage for children is strong (95% insured), though gaps persist in Dixon and Dakota Counties. Teen birth rates remain highest in Dixon, Knox, and Burt Counties, while low-birth-weight rates align with statewide averages.

Food access remains a significant barrier: more than 29,000 low-income residents experience limited access to healthy foods, especially in Thurston (46%), Dixon (30%), and Antelope (24.7%) Counties.

Education & Workforce

Educational attainment varies widely, with many communities having a high proportion of residents whose highest credential is a high school diploma. Special education identification rates also vary significantly by district, averaging 5.79% across the region.

Workforce participation remains strong but uneven. Many counties report the need for additional job training aligned with locally available employment.

Client Satisfaction Highlights

Client surveys show consistently high satisfaction with NENCAP programs and staff. South Sioux City, Norfolk, and Pender offices were the most frequently visited. Most of the households surveyed were two-parent families with four to six children. Education and income levels vary: 43% of clients have a high school diploma, and 25% report annual household incomes between \$20,000 and \$30,000, with wages as the primary income source.

Clients rely primarily on Facebook, email, and print flyers for information and most commonly utilize WIC, Head Start, and food pantry services. Across all survey areas, clients overwhelmingly report respectful treatment, convenient locations, helpful referrals, and improved life circumstances resulting from services. Satisfaction metrics include 100% reporting dignity and respect, 98% reporting convenient office hours/locations, and 100% noting improvement in their situation after receiving NENCAP services.

Community-Identified Needs

The assessment highlights critical needs across six domains. In education, priorities include affordable, high-quality childcare and preschool readiness. Employment needs focus on better-paying jobs with benefits and job-specific training. Health-related concerns include access to adult dental, hearing, and vision care. Housing needs emphasize affordable homeownership and support for homeless families. Income-building priorities include budget counseling and financial education. Civic engagement and support services, such as youth programs and meal assistance, are also key areas of concern.

Key Cross-Cutting Themes

Several persistent and interconnected challenges emerge across the region: child poverty, food insecurity, and housing instability. The highest concentrations of need are found in Thurston, Dakota, Dodge, and Madison Counties. Cultural and linguistic diversity continues to grow, particularly in Dakota and Dixon Counties. Transportation remains a significant barrier to accessing services, especially after hours.



Agency History



Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership, Inc. (NENCAP) is a private, 501 c (3) non-profit, incorporated under the laws of the State of Nebraska, and headquartered in Pender, Nebraska. The Agency was chartered in 1966 as the Thurston County Community Action Council under the provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

NENCAP has approximately 120 employees and serves around 9,000 clients a year. Below is a description and history of NENCAP programs and services.

[NENCAP Homeless Programs](#)

- Since 1998, the Agency has served the homeless with grant funds from the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program (NHAP).
- From July of 2012 through June 2020 the Agency served the homeless and near homeless with SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR).
- The agency was also a Housing Prevention and Rapid Re-housing (HPRP) grantee from 2009 to 2011.
- The agency has been entering all client data in a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) since 2007.
- In 2013, the agency started providing housing and support services specifically for veterans through the U.S. Department VA Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program.

[NENCAP Economic Self Sufficiency Programs](#)

- Since 2009, the agency has served the homeless and nearly homeless with grant funds.
- Since 2009, the agency has provided self-sufficiency focused case management to those receiving homeless services.
- The agency has been providing free income tax assistance for over 30 years.

[NENCAP Housing Programs](#)

- Since 1975, Weatherization/furnace replacement services have been provided to low-income families.
- Since 1990, the agency has administered rent, utility and food assistance from the federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program.

[NENCAP Health Programs](#)

- From 2010 to 2015 the agency hosted support groups and provided resources and referral coordination for the Traumatic Brain Injury Network.
- Operation Great Start and Operation Building Blocks, two early childhood home visitation programs providing parenting education since 2005, were consolidated into an evidence-based home visitation program called Healthy Families. This program is accredited by the Healthy Families America Program.
- Early Development Network has been administered since 1994 in the Norfolk Public School District of Madison County.
- Since 1988, the agency has provided immunizations to the public through traveling clinics across the service area.
- In 2013, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funded a statewide network of Marketplace Navigators to assist families and individuals enrolling in health insurance under the Affordable Care Act. NENCAP staff assists families, individuals and small businesses purchasing health insurance coverage through the federally operated Health Insurance Marketplace. This program ended in November 2017.

[NENCAP Food Programs](#)

- The agency manages four Food Pantries across the service area.
- The agency has managed the Commodity Supplemental Food Program since 1984 in 12 of 14 counties.
- Since 1976, the agency has served over 5,000 clients a year with Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

[NENCAP Education Programs](#)

- Since 1966, the agency has served an average of 350 children per year with Head Start services. In late 2015 an Early Head Start program was implemented at the Siouxland Family Center in Dakota County.

The agency is overseen by a volunteer board of directors, comprised of representatives of the low-income population, government entities and private interests. NENCAP manages a budget of over 9 million dollars. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Agency Vision and Mission



Mission Statement

People helping people; empowering individuals, strengthening families and enriching communities in Northeast Nebraska.

Vision Statement

Imagine...

Being an agency that empowers communities and families.

Imagine...

Communities inspired with confidence and trust to support the agency.

Imagine...

Building strong family foundations through education, empowerment and support.

Imagine...

Every person understanding and living a healthy lifestyle.

Imagine...

Unlimited access to quality healthcare.

Imagine...

Needs of every culture, ethnicity, race and gender is understood and met in an ever-changing population.

Imagine...

Safe and affordable housing available for all.

Imagine...

An agency developing and nurturing partnerships that provide seamless services.

Imagine...

Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership, Inc.



Demographics

Population by Gender

Report Area	Male	Female	Percent Male	Percent Female
Report Area	70,331	70,291	50.00%	50.00%
Antelope County	2,397	2,363	50.40%	49.60%
Burt County	2,591	2,598	49.90%	50.10%
Cedar County	3,140	3,062	50.60%	49.40%
Cuming County	3,458	3,272	51.40%	48.60%
Dakota County	7,527	7,524	50.00%	50.00%
Dixon County	2,086	2,061	50.30%	49.70%
Dodge County	13,824	13,969	49.80%	50.20%
Knox County	3,163	3,193	49.80%	50.20%
Madison County	13,215	13,255	49.90%	50.10%
Pierce County	2,792	2,654	51.30%	48.70%
Stanton County	2,248	2,181	50.80%	49.20%
Thurston County	2,140	2,234	48.90%	51.10%
Washington County	7,862	8,007	49.50%	50.50%
Wayne County	3,888	3,918	49.80%	50.20%
Nebraska	756,311	762,360	49.80%	50.20%
United States	129,884,828	136,024,741	48.80%	51.20%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-year estimates



Population by Age

Report Area	Age 0-4	Age 5-19	Age 20-34	Age 35-49	Age 50-64	Age 65 and over
Report Area	12,269	40,466	33,095	31,863	34,578	35,859
Antelope County	417	1,325	883	958	1,207	6,012
Burt County	344	1,261	1,002	1,100	1,374	1,649
Cedar County	528	1,804	1,210	1,291	1,682	1,829
Cuming County	692	1,781	1,439	1,481	1,736	1,810
Dakota County	1,789	4,862	4,738	3,637	3,538	2,767
Dixon County	347	1,178	795	964	1,098	1,179
Dodge County	2,377	7,877	6,430	3,282	7,013	7,067
Knox County	497	1,742	1,151	1,235	1,614	2,123
Madison County	2,498	7,606	6,609	6,241	6,538	6,043
Pierce County	518	1,504	1,108	1,280	1,467	1,435
Stanton County	330	1,212	868	1,011	1,235	1,179
Thurston County	613	1,377	1,332	982	1,027	835
Washington County	1,153	4,390	3,049	4,017	4,416	3,964
Wayne County	484	2,482	2,276	1,440	1,509	1,595
Nebraska	121,522	413,834	404,706	383,137	334,125	348,052
United States	18,365,047	63,602,569	68,430,960	66,305,086	62,161,945	61,245,383

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2024 ACS 1-year estimates.

Report Area	Median Age	Report Area	Median Age	Report Area	Median Age
Antelope County	42.7	Dodge County	38.9	Washington County	42.6
Burt County	44.8	Knox County	44.5	Wayne County	31.6
Cedar County	41.9	Madison County	37.1	Nebraska	37.4
Cuming County	40.8	Pierce County	39.7	United States	39.2
Dakota County	32.1	Stanton County	42		
Dixon County	42.1	Thurston County	28.7		



Population by Race

Report Area	White	Black or African American	American Indian & Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	Some Other Race
Report Area	148,617	2,939	5,427	1,676	114	2,076
Antelope County	5,899	22	16	22	-	3
Burt County	6,197	19	72	35	17	9
Cedar County	8,010	25	13	9	2	3
Cuming County	7,638	21	26	18	9	23
Dakota County	9,347	1,603	526	602	154	33
Dixon County	4,643	17	19	17	-	8
Dodge County	29,501	215	133	183	12	93
Knox County	6,967	16	943	28	3	13
Madison County	27,823	404	366	445	7	118
Pierce County	6,950	30	17	12	2	14
Stanton County	5,215	22	27	18	7	11
Thurston County	2,444	24	3,897	8	4	16
Washington County	19,359	70	25	100	1	42
Wayne County	7,828	350	28	122	8	61
Nebraska	1,484,687	94,405	15,051	52,359	1,318	6,335
United States	191,697,647	39,940,338	2,251,699	19,618,179	622,018	1,689,833

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2020: DEC



Population by Ethnicity

Report Area	Total Population	Hispanic or Latino Population	Percent Population Hispanic or Latino	Non-Hispanic Population	Percent Population Non-Hispanic
Report Area	188,149	25,761	13.69%	163,791	86.31%
Antelope County	6,293	255	4.00%	6,074	96.00%
Burt County	6,755	266	3.90%	6,550	96.10%
Cedar County	8,371	206	2.50%	8,194	97.50%
Cuming County	8,929	926	10.40%	7,901	89.60%
Dakota County	21,042	8,539	40.60%	12,771	59.40%
Dixon County	5,464	835	15.30%	4,810	84.70%
Dodge County	36,997	6,033	16.30%	31,084	83.70%
Knox County	8,336	312	3.70%	8,206	96.30%
Madison County	35,368	5,817	16.40%	30,071	83.60%
Pierce County	7,332	206	2.80%	7,175	97.20%
Stanton County	5,717	402	7.00%	5,490	93.00%
Thurston County	6,507	561	8.60%	6,513	91.40%
Washington County	21,167	689	3.30%	20,246	96.70%
Wayne County	9,871	714	7.20%	8,706	92.80%
Nebraska	1,961,504	234,715	12.30%	1,726,789	87.70%
United States	331,449,281	62,080,044	19.10%	269,369,237	80.90%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2020: DEC Survey



Household Types

Report Area	Total Households	Families with Children (Under Age 18)	Percent of HH with Seniors 65+ Living Alone
Report Area	73,825	21,965	
Antelope County	2,687	684	11.9%
Burt County	2867	783	6.8%
Cedar County	3,419	907	9.6%
Cuming County	3,782	1,004	9.8%
Dakota County	7,299	2,631	3.4%
Dixon County	2,237	612	9.2%
Dodge County	14,863	4,407	4.9%
Knox County	3,235	825	10.5%
Madison County	14,152	4,117	4.3%
Pierce County	2,859	840	4.5%
Stanton County	2,289	631	8.4%
Thurston County	1,983	818	7.4%
Washington County	8,391	2,712	7.2%
Wayne County	3,762	994	8.8%
Nebraska	824,012	244,505	8.2%

Data Source: data.census.gov. 2024 ACS: 1-year estimates.



Children in Foster Care

County	2023	2024	2025
Report Area	357	318	388
Antelope	8	9	16
Burt	1	3	3
Cedar	10	6	4
Cuming	24	25	17
Dakota	33	22	36
Dixon	14	11	17
Dodge	136	143	152
Knox	11	19	12
Madison	114	93	96
Pierce	8	17	11
Stanton	4	3	3
Thurston	8	4	6
Washington	17	26	12
Wayne	12	12	13

Data Source: fcro.nebraska.gov, Annual Report Sept. 2023, 2024, 2025



Population with a Disability

Report Area	Total Population (For Whom Disability Status Is Determined)	Total Population with a Disability	Percent Population with a Disability
Report Area	186,423	23,689	12.7%
Antelope County	6,246	792	12.7%
Burt County	6,641	1,189	17.9%
Cedar County	8,214	883	10.7%
Cuming County	8,868	864	9.7%
Dakota County	21,130	2,566	12.1%
Dixon County	5,423	651	11.9%
Dodge County	36,648	5,242	14.3%
Knox County	8,204	1,340	16.3%
Madison County	34,905	4,276	12.3%
Pierce County	7,198	787	10.9%
Stanton County	5,770	679	11.8%
Thurston County	6,596	752	11.4%
Washington County	20,807	2,233	10.7%
Wayne County	9,743	1,435	14.7%
Nebraska	1,951,731	247,346	12.7%
United States	329,987,997	44,741,326	13.6%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-year estimates



Children with Disabilities Served by Head Start

Disability	2021-2022 Head Start Program Information Report (PIR)	2022-2023 Head Start Program Information Report (PIR)	2023-2024 Head Start Program Information Report (PIR)	2024-2025 Head Start Program Information Report (PIR)
<i>Autism</i>	2	0	0	1
<i>Health Impairments</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Speech/Lan guage Impairments</i>	15	13	13	13
<i>Intellectual</i>	2	4	4	1
<i>Visual Impairments</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Learning Disability</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Developmen tal Delay Impairment</i>	29	20	20	36
<i>Deaf/Heari ng Impairments</i>	0	1	1	0
<i>Multiple Disabilities</i>	0	3	0	0
<i>Ortho Impairments</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Number of children with an IEP</i>	39	47	40	51
<i>Number of children with an IFSP</i>	3	13	10	7

Data Source: NENCAP Childplus Report
9710



Veteran Population

Report Area	Total Population	Veterans Total	Percentage Veteran Population
Report Area	188,149	11,802	6.27%
Antelope County	6,293	317	6.70%
Burt County	5,189	405	7.80%
Cedar County	6,202	477	7.70%
Cuming County	6,730	382	5.70%
Dakota County	15,051	702	4.70%
Dixon County	5,464	359	6.50%
Dodge County	27,760	2,338	8.40%
Knox County	6,356	523	8.20%
Madison County	26,470	1,556	5.90%
Pierce County	5,446	368	6.80%
Stanton County	4,429	335	7.60%
Thurston County	4,374	254	5.80%
Washington County	15,869	1,175	7.40%
Wayne County	7,806	318	4.10%
Nebraska	1,961,504	97,319	6.40%
United States	257,456,135	16,569,149	6.40%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, ACS: December 2024 (total population is for citizens 18 yrs and older).



Limited English Households

Report Area	Total Households	Limited English-Speaking Households	Percent Limited English-Speaking Households
Report Area	73,825	9,857	13.4%
Antelope County	2,687	135	2.3%
Burt County	2867	22	0.3%
Cedar County	3,419	48	0.6%
Cuming County	3,782	568	6.9%
Dakota County	7,299	4,339	22.2%
Dixon County	2,237	364	7.0%
Dodge County	14,863	2,093	6.0%
Knox County	3,235	40	0.5%
Madison County	14,152	1,742	5.3%
Pierce County	2,859	92	1.4%
Stanton County	2,289	20	0.4%
Thurston County	1,983	65	1.1%
Washington County	8,391	96	0.5%
Wayne County	3,762	233	2.5%
Nebraska	824,012	94,109	11.6%
United States	132,737,146	27,606,796	21.0%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2022. Source geography: Tract



Socioeconomic Factors & Assistance



Population in Poverty

Report Area	Total Population	Percent Population in Poverty Below 50%	Percent Population in Poverty Below 125%	Percent Population in Poverty Below 150%
Report Area	188,149	6.21%	13.16%	28.60%
Antelope County	6,302	4.70%	12.70%	16.70%
Burt County	6,730	7.60%	15.90%	20.50%
Cedar County	8,380	1.50%	9.20%	11.80%
Cuming County	8,976	3.50%	12.20%	16.90%
Dakota County	21,335	4.80%	15.00%	18.00%
Dixon County	5,606	1.80%	15.60%	19.50%
Dodge County	37,884	4.10%	14.00%	18.20%
Knox County	8,391	5.00%	17.80%	22.80%
Madison County	35,579	4.80%	14.50%	18.30%
Pierce County	7,312	5.90%	10.00%	12.90%
Stanton County	5,835	4.00%	8.90%	12.20%
Thurston County	6,773	6.90%	21.30%	28.20%
Washington County	21,254	2.10%	8.20%	11.40%
Wayne County	9,697	4.40%	15.70%	18.30%
Nebraska	1,961,504	5.40%	14.30%	17.80%
United States	3,331,449,281	0.60%	1.60%	1.90%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2024: ACS 1-Year Estimates



Children in Poverty

Report Area	Total Population	Population Underage 18	Population Under Age 18 in Poverty
Report Area	188,149	47,347	18,672
Antelope County	6,293	1,504	623
Burt County	6,755	1,540	909
Cedar County	8,371	2,068	506
Cuming County	8,929	2,203	686
Dakota County	21,042	6,196	2,355
Dixon County	5,464	1,382	387
Dodge County	36,997	9,186	3,365
Knox County	8,336	1,981	1079
Madison County	35,368	8,923	4,078
Pierce County	7,332	1,838	573
Stanton County	5,717	1,397	408
Thurston County	6,507	2,244	1178
Washington County	21,167	5,070	1434
Wayne County	9,871	1,815	1091
Nebraska	1,961,504	472,510	202,078
United States	331,449,281	7,155,990	40,763,043

Data source: data.census.gov - 2023: ACS 5-year estimates.



Projected 2025-26 Early Head Start/Head Start Enrollment Under Age 5

County	Number of Children Under 5	Number of Children Under 5 in Poverty	Projected 2025-2026 Early Head Start/Head Start Enrollment Under 5	# of Unserved Eligible Children Under 5
Antelope	414	4	0	54
Burt	345	82	0	41
Cedar	531	16	0	47
Cuming	662	10	11	48
Dakota	1,760	178	58 (HS) 28 (EHS)	118
Dixon	340	50	0	38
Dodge	2,397	432	135*	256
Knox	499	80	8 37**	77
Madison	2,465	395	93	235
Pierce	520	71	0	49
Stanton	314	0	0	31
Thurston	624	167	12 340***	107
Washington	1,078	187	0	77
Wayne	495	41	16	14
Totals	12,444	1713	226	1,192

*Served by another grantee: Dodge County

**Santee Sioux Nation serves 37 Head Start Children in Knox County.

***Omaha Tribe of Nebraska serve 101 Head Start Children and 48 Early Head Start children.

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska Educare reserves 191 children in Thurston County.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2024 ACS-5 year estimates



Median Household and Per Capita Incomes

Report Area	Total Households	Median Household Income	Total Population	Per Capita Income
Report Area	73,825	\$ 70,299	188,149	No Data
Antelope County	2,687	\$ 63,750	6,302	\$ 78,983.00
Burt County	2,867	\$ 57,303	6,730	\$ 81,148.00
Cedar County	3,419	\$ 73,977	8,380	\$ 91,700.00
Cuming County	3,782	\$ 70,708	8,976	\$ 88,653.00
Dakota County	7,299	\$ 71,655	21,335	\$ 85,144.00
Dixon County	2,237	\$ 69,156	5,606	\$ 96,634.00
Dodge County	14,863	\$ 71,249	37,884	\$ 85,422.00
Knox County	3,235	\$ 64,821	8,391	\$ 79,345.00
Madison County	14,152	\$ 64,637	35,579	\$ 88,101.00
Pierce County	2,859	\$ 75,938	7,312	\$ 88,305.00
Stanton County	2,289	\$ 78,275	5,835	\$ 97,831.00
Thurston County	1,983	\$ 64,838	6,773	\$ 78,288.00
Washington County	8,391	\$ 90,188	21,254	\$ 112,711.00
Wayne County	3,762	\$ 67,687	9,697	\$ 80,553.00
Nebraska	824,012	\$ 76,376	1,951,480	\$ 100,280.00
United States	132,737,146	\$ 81,604	3,331,449,281	\$ 114,296.00

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-year estimates & 2024: ACS 1-year estimates.



Unemployment

Report Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate – Sept 2023	Unemployment Rate – Sept 2024	Unemployment Rate – Sept 2025
Report Area	201,404	126,827	2,648	2.1%	2.3%	2.6%
Antelope County	3,106	3,028	78	2.3%	2.3%	2.5%
Burt County	3,142	3,043	99	2.8%	2.9%	3.2%
Cedar County	4,582	4,472	110	1.7%	2.0%	2.4%
Cuming County	5,158	5,045	113	1.8%	2.0%	2.2%
Dakota County	111,194	10,901	293	2.4%	2.7%	2.6%
Dixon County	2,868	2,796	72	1.7%	1.9%	2.5%
Dodge County	19,995	19,435	560	2.4%	2.6%	2.8%
Knox County	4,178	4,062	116	2.1%	2.4%	2.8%
Madison County	19,252	18,769	483	1.9%	2.4%	2.5%
Pierce County	3,960	3,874	86	1.9%	2.1%	2.2%
Stanton County	3,196	31,190	77	1.9%	2.2%	2.4%
Thurston County	3,198	3,107	91	2.5%	2.5%	2.8%
Washington County	11,703	11,392	311	2.2%	2.3%	2.7%
Wayne County	5,872	5,713	159	1.6%	2.1%	2.7%
Nebraska	1,058,103	978,540	23,801	2.3%	2.9%	3.0%
United States	175,408,841	167,292,666	8,116,175	11.2%	4.4%	4.4%

Data source: neworks.nebraska.gov (LAUS) 2025



Average Weekly Wages by Household

County	Average Weekly Wages
Report Area	\$1,022
Antelope	\$934
Burt	\$858
Cedar	\$842
Cuming	\$1,008
Dakota	\$1,086
Dixon	\$983
Dodge	\$1,037
Knox	\$829
Madison	\$1,054
Pierce	\$899
Stanton	\$1,611
Thurston	\$1,082
Washington	\$1,203
Wayne	\$877

Data Source: networks.nebraska.gov (Q2 2025 data)



Head Start and Early Head Start Adults Employed or in Job Training/School

Total Number of Families	Head Start 23-24	Early Head Start 23-24	Head Start 24-25	Early Head Start 24-25
Two Parent Families	77	14	89	15
Single Parent	112	20	103	16
At least one parent employed	158	25	150	26
At least one parent in job training	5	0	9	0
At least one parent is enrolled in school	4	0	4	0
Neither/no parent or guardian is employed, in job training or in school at child's enrollment	29	9	37	5



Public Assistance Income

Report Area	Total Households	Households w/ Public Assistance Income	Percent Households w/ Public Assistance Income	Households' w/o Public Assistance Income	Percent Households w/o Public Assistance Income
Report Area	80,919	1,304	1.61%	1,304	1.61%
Antelope County	3,112	274	2.11%	1,268	2.11%
Burt County	3,324	308	1.31%	1,233	1.31%
Cedar County	3,900	256	0.82%	1,883	0.82%
Cuming County	4,123	155	1.30%	2,083	1.30%
Dakota County	7,765	1,094	2.50%	5,162	2.50%
Dixon County	2,520	117	1.56%	1,272	1.56%
Dodge County	16,191	2,041	2.31%	7,270	2.31%
Knox County	4,502	336	1.75%	1,668	1.75%
Madison County	15,094	1,385	0.96%	7,607	0.96%
Pierce County	3,118	236	1.94%	1,621	1.94%
Stanton County	2,460	100	2.43%	1,305	2.43%
Thurston County	2,283	795	5.56%	1,497	5.56%
Washington County	8,577	439	1.43%	4,650	1.43%
Wayne County	3,950	220	0.33%	1,758	0.33%
Nebraska	824,012	82,138	1.92%	396,433	1.92%
United States	132,737,146	17,202,201	2.36%	55,580,193	2.36%

Public assistance income includes SSI, cash public assistance income, or Food Stamps/SNAP in past 12 months.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2024: ACS 1-year estimates.



Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch

Report Area	Total Students	Number Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligible	Percent Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligible
Report Area	39,211	18,002	46%
Antelope County	1,093	472	43.20%
Burt County	1,228	506	41.20%
Cedar County	1,624	523	32.20%
Cuming County	1,928	967	50.20%
Dakota County	4,435	3,249	73.20%
Dixon County	808	247	30.60%
Dodge County	8,949	3,804	42.50%
Knox County	1,902	494	25.90%
Madison County	7,615	3,445	42.85%
Pierce County	1,094	329	30.00%
Stanton County	395	174	44.10%
Thurston County	2,376	2,007	84.50%
Washington County	3,849	927	24.10%
Wayne County	1,915	858	44.80%
Nebraska	365,467	121,790	33.30%
United States	49,500,000	21,100,000	42.30%

Data Source: Nebraska Department of Ed, 2023-24 Free & Reduced Lunch Counts by School.



Food Insecurity Rate

Report Area	Total Population	Food Insecure Population, Total	Food Insecurity Rate	% Above SNAP	% Below SNAP
Report Area	188,149	26,820	14.13%	48%	51.71%
Antelope County	6,293	890	14.10%	51%	49%
Burt County	6,755	1070	15.90%	46%	54%
Cedar County	8,371	1010	12.10%	59%	41%
Cuming County	8,929	1160	12.90%	49%	51%
Dakota County	21,042	3,190	14.90%	41%	59%
Dixon County	5,464	710	12.70%	38%	62%
Dodge County	36,997	5,410	14.60%	46%	54%
Knox County	8,336	1,290	15.40%	38%	62%
Madison County	35,368	5,280	14.90%	46%	54%
Pierce County	7,332	920	13%	54%	46%
Stanton County	5,717	740	13%	61%	39%
Thurston County	6,507	1,210	18.10%	33%	67%
Washington County	21,167	2,460	11.70%	63%	37%
Wayne County	9,871	1,480	15.10%	51%	49%
Nebraska	1,961,504	287,240	14.50%	50%	50%

Data Source: Feeding America. 2023. <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2023/overall/nebraska>



Households Receiving Snap Benefits

Report Area	Households Receiving SNAP Total	Households Receiving SNAP Percent	Households Receiving SNAP Income Below Poverty	Households Receiving SNAP Income Above Poverty	Households NOT Receiving SNAP Income Below Poverty
Report Area	7,042	9.4%	3,797	3,245	5,743
Antelope County	141	5.2%	79	62	215
Burt County	236	8.2%	146	90	230
Cedar County	188	5.5%	84	104	166
Cuming County	214	5.7%	55	159	268
Dakota County	603	8.3%	216	387	488
Dixon County	133	5.9%	46	87	135
Dodge County	1,484	10.0%	510	974	944
Knox County	264	8.2%	101	163	311
Madison County	937	6.6%	483	454	1,386
Pierce County	202	7.1%	68	134	186
Stanton County	90	3.9%	38	52	180
Thurston County	340	17.1%	171	169	135
Washington County	314	3.7%	240	74	431
Wayne County	186	4.9%	143	43	487
Nebraska	68,814	8.4%	30,453	38,457	62,433
United States	15,632,675	11.8%	6,590,958	9,041,717	9,965,748

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2024: ACS 1-year estimates.



Population Percent of Uninsured Adults

Report Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Report Area	12.69%	13.24%	8.30%	12.67%	13.24%	10.36%	7.56%	11.21%	7.39%	8.07%
Antelope County	11.30%	11%	8.05%	11.50%	11%	11.00%	6.40%	11.00%	6.00%	8.00%
Burt County	10.80%	11%	8.78%	13.00%	11%	12.00%	9.60%	13.00%	8.40%	8.00%
Cedar County	9%	9.70%	7.45%	10.60%	9.70%	10.00%	6.00%	10.00%	6.60%	7.00%
Cuming County	11.50%	12.60%	8.79%	13.90%	12.60%	11.00%	7.50%	12.00%	8.60%	11.00%
Dakota County	16%	16.10%	12.52%	19.40%	16.10%	15.00%	8.40%	15.00%	7.80%	11.00%
Dixon County	10.40%	10.80%	7.94%	12.00%	10.80%	10.00%	8.10%	14.00%	8.90%	10.00%
Dodge County	10.70%	10.70%	7.95%	12.30%	10.70%	10.00%	6.50%	11.00%	6.20%	9.00%
Knox County	14.20%	13.10%	9.18%	14.70%	13.10%	12.00%	6.40%	12.00%	6.10%	9.00%
Madison County	10.70%	11.30%	8.61%	13.20%	11.30%	11.00%	8.80%	12.00%	8.20%	9.00%
Pierce County	7.30%	7.20%	6.64%	9.60%	7.20%	8.00%	6.80%	7.00%	6.20%	6.00%
Stanton County	8%	7.50%	5.76%	9.00%	7.50%	7.00%	4.30%	9.00%	5.40%	6.00%
Thurston County	17.30%	15.90%	13.04%	21.60%	15.90%	15.00%	17.60%	15.00%	15.40%	7.00%
Washington County	5.60%	6.20%	5.02%	7.60%	6.20%	6.00%	5.00%	7.00%	4.50%	5.00%
Wayne County	8.80%	7.90%	5.31%	9.00%	7.90%	7.00%	4.40%	9.00%	5.10%	7.00%
Nebraska	9.70%	9.60%	7.86%	11.40%	9.60%	9.00%	5.80%	9.00%	7.10%	8.00%

Data Source: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/nebraska?year=2025&measure=Uninsured>



Population Percent of Uninsured Children

Report Area	Total Population Under Age 19	Population with Medical Insurance	Percent Population with Medical Insurance	Population Without Medical Insurance	Percent Population Without Medical Insurance
Report Area	50,739	48,274	94.10%	2,285	5.9%
Antelope County	1,606	1,526	93.00%	80	7.0%
Burt County	1,588	1,538	92.80%	50	7.2%
Cedar County	2,279	2,127	94.40%	152	5.6%
Cuming County	2,363	2,249	93%	114	7.0%
Dakota County	6,496	6,351	92.50%	145	7.5%
Dixon County	1,491	1,358	92.00%	133	8.0%
Dodge County	9,778	9,578	94.20%	200	5.8%
Knox County	2,120	2,003	94.40%	117	5.6%
Madison County	9,501	8,757	94.10%	744	5.9%
Pierce County	1,971	1,912	95.90%	59	4.1%
Stanton County	1,479	1,381	95.30%	98	4.7%
Thurston County	2,421	2,205	95%	216	5.0%
Washington County	5,223	5,001	95.80%	222	4.2%
Wayne County	2,423	2,288	95.70%	135	4.3%
Nebraska	476,270	345,742	95.20%	14,063	3.9%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-year estimates.



Education

Educational Attainment

Report Area	No High School Diploma	High School Only	Some College	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
Report Area	4.31%	32.84%	20.90%	15%	16.57%	7.04%
Antelope County	4.60%	32%	22.20%	19.40%	12.70%	7.20%
Burt County	6.00%	34%	21.00%	11.50%	18.80%	6.90%
Cedar County	2.70%	37.20%	20.70%	13.30%	18.30%	6.70%
Cuming County	3.90%	33.90%	19.90%	13.50%	17.40%	7.50%
Dakota County	7.30%	35.50%	21%	9.70%	11.50%	4%
Dixon County	6.60%	31.90%	17.30%	11.30%	18.00%	5.70%
Dodge County	5.20%	35.90%	21.20%	10.50%	14%	7.40%
Knox County	4.80%	35.00%	22.10%	15.90%	13.70%	6.00%
Madison County	3.50%	31.20%	22.40%	15.20%	16%	8.00%
Pierce County	3.00%	30.20%	20.40%	20.90%	17.10%	5.80%
Stanton County	2.60%	31.60%	21.20%	20.10%	16.50%	5.90%
Thurston County	5.40%	33.90%	22.60%	15.60%	14.10%	6.20%
Washington County	2.30%	25.30%	22.50%	11.60%	25.70%	10.80%
Wayne County	2.50%	32.70%	18.40%	14.70%	18.60%	10.80%
Nebraska	7.30%	25.20%	20.80%	11.30%	22.30%	13.00%
United States	10.10%	25.70%	18.50%	8.80%	22.10%	14.70%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-year estimates.



Children w/ a Verified Disability Receiving Special Education

Data Year	2018-2022
School District	Percentage
Allen Consolidated	2.90%
Arlington Public	5.20%
Bancroft-Rosalie Community	1.80%
Battle Creek Public	6.20%
Blair Community	2.80%
Bloomfield Community	0%
Creighton Community	0%
Crofton Community	1.10%
Elgin Public	9.50%
Elkhorn Valley	9.80%
Emerson-Hubbard Public	6.80%
Fort Calhoun Community	2.40%
Fremont Public	5.20%
Hartington-Newcastle Public	0.90%
Homer Community	6.10%
Howells-Dodge Consolidated	5.50%
Laurel-Concord-Coleridge	0.90%
Logan View Public	1.80%
Lyons-Decatur Northeast	20.60%
Madison	1.70%
Neligh-Oakdale	5.10%
Newman Grove Public	1.50%
Niobrara Public	2.80%
Norfolk Public	7.40%
North Bend Central Public	9.20%
Oakland-Craig Public	7.60%
Osmond Community	13.50%



Pender Public	8.00%
Pierce Public	0.70%
Plainview Public	8.00%
Ponca Public	9.20%
Randolph Public	2.80%
Scribner-Snyder Community	10.20%
South Sioux City Community	2.90%
Stanton Community	8.20%
Tekamah-Herman Community	19.40%
Umo N Ho N Nation Public	10.00%
Wakefield Public	4.00%
Walthill Public	9.90%
Wausa Public	0%
Wayne Community	12.90%
West Point-Beemer Public	3.00%
Winnebago Public	7.40%
Winside Public	13.90%
Wisner-Pilger Public	3.90%
Wynot Public	5.00%
Average for Service Area	6.04%
Nebraska	17%

Data Source: https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/district_list.asp?Search=1&State=31&DistrictPageNum=2



Housing



Housing Cost Burden 30% or Greater (Renters)

Report Area	Total Households	Cost Burdened Households (Housing Costs Exceed 30% of Income)	Percentage of Cost Burdened Households (Over 30% of Income)
Report Area	74,866	9,506	12.70%
Antelope County	2,748	301	10.80%
Burt County	2,885	349	12.10%
Cedar County	3,508	452	12.90%
Cuming County	3,790	584	15.40%
Dakota County	7,427	1,145	15.40%
Dixon County	2,307	241	10.40%
Dodge County	15,090	1,900	12.60%
Knox County	3,662	320	8.70%
Madison County	14,236	1,953	13.70%
Pierce County	2,985	364	12.20%
Stanton County	2,351	208	8.80%
Thurston County	2,142	289	13.50%
Washington County	8,133	695	8.50%
Wayne County	3,602	705	19.50%
Nebraska	824,012	137,114	16.60%
United States	132,737,146	25,384,425	19.10%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-year estimates (table B25070)



Housing Cost Burden 30% or Greater (Mortgages)

Report Area	Total Households	Cost Burdened Households (Housing Costs Exceed 30% of Income)	Percentage of Cost Burdened Households (Over 30% of Income)
Report Area	74,866	6,256	8.40%
Antelope County	2,748	162	5.90%
Burt County	2,885	289	10.00%
Cedar County	3,508	452	12.90%
Cuming County	3,790	209	5.50%
Dakota County	7,427	591	7.90%
Dixon County	2,307	132	5.70%
Dodge County	15,090	1,140	7.60%
Knox County	3,662	320	8.70%
Madison County	14,236	1,330	9.30%
Pierce County	2,985	205	6.90%
Stanton County	2,351	127	5.40%
Thurston County	2,142	62	2.90%
Washington County	8,133	962	11.80%
Wayne County	3,602	275	7.60%
Nebraska	824,012	78,921	9.60%
United States	132,737,146	15,407,231	11.60%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2024: ACS 1-year estimates (table B25091)

These numbers are for households with a mortgage payment.



Median Housing Age

Report Area	Total Housing Units	Median Year Structures Built	Median Age from 2024
Report Area	73,825	1964	55
Antelope County	2,687	1955	37
Burt County	2,867	1951	45
Cedar County	3,419	1956	42
Cuming County	3,782	1956	41
Dakota County	7,299	1973	32
Dixon County	2,237	1951	42
Dodge County	14,863	1964	39
Knox County	3,235	1963	45
Madison County	14,152	1971	37
Pierce County	2,859	1963	40
Stanton County	2,289	1970	42
Thurston County	1,983	1973	29
Washington County	8,391	1976	43
Wayne County	3,762	1969	32
Nebraska	813,864	1973	37
United States	131,332,360	1978	39

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-year estimates



Housing Vacancy Rate

Report Area	Total Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units, Percent
Report Area	81,850	8,025	9.80%
Antelope County	3,144	457	14.50%
Burt County	3,338	471	14.10%
Cedar County	3,904	485	12.40%
Cuming County	4,150	368	8.90%
Dakota County	7,795	496	6.40%
Dixon County	2,528	291	12%
Dodge County	16,553	1690	10.20%
Knox County	4,527	1292	28.50%
Madison County	15,371	1219	7.90%
Pierce County	3,137	278	9%
Stanton County	2,475	186	7.50%
Thurston County	2,290	307	13.40%
Washington County	8,665	274	3.20%
Wayne County	3,973	211	5.30%
Nebraska	880,521	56,509	6.40%
United States	146,740,864	14,003,818	9.50%

Data Source: US Census: 2023: ACS 5-year estimates.



Household Internet Access

Report Area	Total Households	Households without Internet Access	Percentage of Households without Internet Access
Report Area	73,825	7,546	18.70%
Antelope County	2,687	127	38.70%
Burt County	2867	138	37.90%
Cedar County	3,419	634	18.50%
Cuming County	3,782	659	17.40%
Dakota County	7,299	1213	16.60%
Dixon County	2,237	380	17%
Dodge County	14,863	1656	11.10%
Knox County	3,235	535	16.50%
Madison County	14,152	647	33.50%
Pierce County	2,859	92	35%
Stanton County	2,289	99	41.10%
Thurston County	1,983	360	18.20%
Washington County	8,391	606	7.20%
Wayne County	3,762	400	10.60%
Nebraska	824,012	63,321	7.80%
United States	132,737,146	10,184,860	7.80%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5- year estimates



Households with No Vehicle

Report Area	Total Housing Units	Percentage of Housing Units without a Vehicle
Report Area	73,825	4.9%
Antelope County	2,687	3.9%
Burt County	2,867	5.0%
Cedar County	3,419	2.4%
Cuming County	3,782	2.2%
Dakota County	7,299	5.7%
Dixon County	2,237	3.0%
Dodge County	14,863	4.2%
Knox County	3,235	3.8%
Madison County	14,152	5.1%
Pierce County	2,859	3.2%
Stanton County	2,289	1.8%
Thurston County	1,983	8.3%
Washington County	8,391	2.1%
Wayne County	3,762	4.0%
Nebraska	813,864	5.4%
United States	131,332,360	8.4%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2024: ACS 1-year estimates.



Food Availability

Low Food Access

Report Area	Total Population	Low Income Population	*Low Income Population with Low Food Access	Percent Low Income Population with Low Food Access
Report Area	188,149	58,483	29,187	18.10%
Antelope County	6,293	2,743	1,554	24.70%
Burt County	6,755	2,080	938	13.90%
Cedar County	8,371	2,029	1,393	16.60%
Cuming County	8,929	2,442	1,481	16.60%
Dakota County	21,042	7,764	3,139	14.90%
Dixon County	5,464	1,570	1,654	30.20%
Dodge County	36,997	12,507	4,617	12.50%
Knox County	8,336	2,597	1,723	20.70%
Madison County	35,368	11,476	4,009	11.30%
Pierce County	7,332	1,827	1,399	19.10%
Stanton County	5,717	1,477	990	17.30%
Thurston County	6,507	3,776	2,994	46.10%
Washington County	21,167	3,766	2,378	11.20%
Wayne County	9,871	2,429	918	9.30%
Nebraska	1,961,504	626,000	245,188	12.50%
United States	308,745,538	123,498,515	35,188,012	17.40%

Data Source: US Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, USDA- Food Access Research Atlas, 2019.

*Low access, low-income population at 1 mile, number (number used for population number)



WIC Authorized Food Stores - NENCAP Service Area

Report Area	Total Population	Number WIC-Authorized Food Stores
Report Area	188,149	41
Antelope County	6,293	3
Burt County	6,755	3
Cedar County	8,371	3
Cuming County	8,929	4
Dakota County	21,042	3
Dixon County	5,464	0
Dodge County	36,997	4
Knox County	8,336	5
Madison County	35,368	5
Pierce County	7,332	2
Saunders County	21,578	2
Stanton County	5,717	1
Thurston County	6,507	1
Washington County	21,167	3
Wayne County	9,871	2
Nebraska	1,961,504	307

Data Source: US Census Bureau & Nebraska WIC



Households Receiving SNAP Benefits

Report Area	Total Households Receiving SNAP Benefits	Percent of Households Receiving SNAP	Below Poverty Income Households Receiving SNAP	Above Poverty Income Households Receiving SNAP	Below Poverty Income Households not Receiving SNAP
Report Area	5,253		2,390	2,893	5,524
Antelope County	141	5.20%	79	62	215
Burt County	236	8.20%	146	90	230
Cedar County	188	5.50%	84	104	166
Cuming County	165	4.40%	65	100	230
Dakota County	603	8.30%	216	387	488
Dixon County	133	5.90%	46	87	135
Dodge County	1,484	10.00%	510	974	944
Knox County	264	8.20%	101	163	311
Madison County	937	6.60%	483	454	1,386
Pierce County	202	7.10%	68	134	186
Stanton County	90	3.90%	38	52	180
Thurston County	340	17.10%	171	169	135
Washington County	314	3.70%	240	74	431
Wayne County	186	4.90%	143	43	487
Nebraska	63,291	7.80%	28,559	34,732	65,250
United States	16,049,441	12.20%	6,802,519	9,246,922	9,936,878

Data Source: [data.census.gov/2023](https://data.census.gov/): ACS 5- year estimate



SNAP Authorized Food Stores

Report Area	Total Population	Total SNAP- Authorized Retailers	SNAP-Authorized Retailers, Rate per 10,000 Population
Report Area	188,149	161	8.6
Antelope County	6,293	6	9.5
Burt County	6,755	7	10.4
Cedar County	8,371	6	7.2
Cuming County	8,929	8	8.9
Dakota County	21,042	22	10.5
Dixon County	5,464	4	7.3
Dodge County	36,997	33	8.9
Knox County	8,336	9	10.8
Madison County	35,368	32	9
Pierce County	7,332	8	10.9
Stanton County	5,717	3	5.2
Thurston County	6,507	6	9.2
Washington County	21,167	10	4.7
Wayne County	9,871	7	7.1
Nebraska	1,967,923	1,418	7.2
United States	336,106,281	254,350	7.6

Data Source: usda-snap-retailers-usda-fns.hub.arcgis.com (December 2024)



Teen Birth Rate

Report Area	Female Population Age 15 – 19 2017-2023	Births to Mothers Age 15 – 19 2017-2023	Teen Birth % (Per 1,000 Population) 2017-2023
Report Area	6,704	216	3.20%
Antelope County	261	10	3.80%
Burt County	179	11	6.10%
Cedar County	269	10	3.70%
Cuming County	256	11	4.30%
Dakota County	638	25	3.90%
Dixon County	167	15	9%
Dodge County	1,246	21	1.70%
Knox County	331	21	6.30%
Madison County	1,210	20	1.70%
Pierce County	253	11	4.40%
Stanton County	204	0	0%
Thurston County	287	47	1.60%
Washington County	739	7	0.90%
Wayne County	664	7	1.10%
Nebraska	67,643	984	14.10%
United States	10,945,936	79,108	12.70%

Data Source: countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/nebraska2025.

data.census.gov: 2024: ACS 1-year estimates



Infant Mortality Rate

Report Area	Total Births 2023	Total Infant Deaths 2023
Report Area	2,419	44
Antelope County	89	0
Burt County	71	0
Cedar County	109	0
Cuming County	118	0
Dakota County	343	0
Dixon County	60	0
Dodge County	462	27
Knox County	111	0
Madison County	463	28
Pierce County	102	0
Stanton County	60	0
Thurston County	128	0
Washington County	200	0
Wayne County	103	0
Nebraska	24,376	983
United States	3,596,017	20,538

Data Source: US Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Area Health Resource File.

2022 County Health Rankings



Low Birth Weight

Report Area	Total Live Births 2017-23	Low Weight Births (Under 2500g) 2017-23	Percentage of Low Weight Births 2017- 23
Report Area	2,568	167	6.50%
Antelope County	88	1	5.00%
Burt County	73	6	8.00%
Cedar County	109	3	6.00%
Cuming County	104	11	5.00%
Dakota County	355	19	7.00%
Dixon County	73	4	4.00%
Dodge County	502	43	7.00%
Knox County	105	4	5%
Madison County	500	37	6%
Pierce County	86	8	5.00%
Stanton County	74	4	8.00%
Thurston County	170	12	8.00%
Washington County	220	14	7.00%
Wayne County	109	1	7.00%
Nebraska	24,345	1,874	8.00%
United States	3,667,758	309,391	8.00%

Data Source: US Department of Health & Human Services, Health Indicators Warehouse. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,



Partner Satisfaction Survey Data





Partner Satisfaction Executive Summary

Partner satisfaction surveys are completed annually. This section focuses on how efficient and effective our employees are with businesses/organizations that coordinate services with our agency for clients. This also gives a snapshot of which programs are utilized the most with our partners.

Overall:

- Partners felt that NENCAP staff were pleasant and helpful during coordination of services.
- Communication was clear and timely with services.
- Partners were very satisfied (44%) and satisfied (47%) with our services.
- Partners preferred to communicate through email, website and face-to-face meetings.
- The top 5 utilized services were: Healthy Families, Food Pantry, WIC, CSFP and Homeless Prevention.
- 32 out of the 36 responses refer clients to NENCAP for services.



1. Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership staff are pleasant and helpful.
There were 36 responses received.

Strongly Agree	21	58%
Agree	14	39%
Undecided	1	3%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

2. Information about our programs and services is communicated clearly and in a timely manner.
There were 36 responses received.

Strongly Agree	12	31%
Agree	18	53%
Undecided	4	16%
Disagree	2	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

3. I receive timely responses to my telephone or email communications.
There were 35 responses received.

Yes	28	78%
Not Applicable	7	19%
No	1	3%

4. What is your organization's overall level of satisfaction with NENCAP's services?
There were 35 responses received.

Very satisfied	16	44%
Satisfied	16	47%
Neutral	2	9%
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Very Dissatisfied	1	0%

5. Which of the following methods do you prefer to learn about NENCAP programs and services?
There were 35 respondents and 62 answers received.

Face-to-Face meetings	10	16%
Email	27	44%
Mail	5	8%
Newspaper	0	0%
Newsletter	5	8%
Website	11	18%
Facebook	4	6%
Other	0	0%

6. Would you like a NENCAP staff member to hold a presentation about our programs and services for your organization? If yes, please provide your contact information.
There were 36 responses.

Yes	7	10%
No	26	90%
Other	3	3%

7. Which NENCAP program/s do you work with? (Check all that apply)
There were 36 respondents and 143 answers.

Homeless Prevention	12	8.5%
Individual Development	6	4%
Free Income Tax Assistance	8	5.5%
Women, Infants and Children (WIC)	12	8.5%
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)	12	8.5%
Head Start	8	5.5%



Early Head Start	7	5%
Immunizations	8	5.5%
Healthy Families	16	11%
Weatherization	10	7%
Food Pantry	12	8.5%
Early Development Network (EDN)	10	7%
Car Seat program	9	6.5%
Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF)	8	5.5%
I work as an administrative partner only	1	0.5%
Other	1	0.5%

8. How often does your organization refer clients to NENCAP?

There were 36 responses.

I do not refer clients to NENCAP	4	11%
Occasionally	13	36%
Often	13	36%
Very Often	6	17%

9. What types of services could individuals and families benefit from that are not currently offered through NENCAP?

There were 10 responses.

- Resources for children of undocumented parents.
- Housing support and transportation
- Would love to see a Veteran's program that assists all Veterans, not just homeless or near homeless.
- Perhaps a dental care financial assistance package.
- As NENCAP's insurance advisor, I haven't had an opportunity to refer but would not hesitate to do so if the opportunity presented itself.
- I feel like your organization does not know about the resources and this is probably an underutilized tool.
- Not that I can think of.
- Transportation, childcare, more elderly programs.
- In my opinion, NENCAP needs established funding for year-round to assist clients of all ages. The funding does not seem to be distributed evenly throughout the state. Rural NE is struggling. The elderly are struggling. Utilities is a big request and now the ERA 2 funding is depleted utilities, and rent is going to be a struggle. Consistent funding would be my request.
- Emergency aid for car repairs.

10. Do you have comments or suggestions for improving services administered by NENCAP? There were 10 responses.

- I enjoy working and partnering with our local Pender office.
- Would love to have someone come out and share info with staff at Heartland Counseling Services, Inc. Thanks!
- I would like to see established funding, so clients are helped year-round. Nine times out of ten, funding is unavailable.
- There is a long turnaround time to get a call back on a referral, there also has been little to no money available in the family services area to help families, and for families needing help the turn around time to help them is too long.
- I love the staff at NENCAP, they are always so kind and eager to assist. I mainly seek assistance with veterans and am amazed at the assistance they provide. Thank you so much.
- We need to set up a presentation of services.
- Nebraska Indian Community College-we need to set up a presentation of services at our All-Staff Meeting. Could you do November 7, 2025? Contact Dawn Price 402-241-5908.
- We would love to have a member of your staff present at one of our All-Staff meetings to explain more about services. Linda Olson, Bright Horizons.
- Get the word out on all the great things you guys do. It is so important.
- The employees I work with from NENCAP are amazing. They are passionate about serving others. They work hard with the limited amount they have. I believe it is an injustice to clients when the funds are dried up. The funds are dried up more than not.
- None at this time.



Client Satisfaction Survey Data





Client Satisfaction Executive Summary

Client satisfaction surveys are completed annually. This section includes comparisons of data for the last 4 years as well as client comments from the 2025 survey. Highest household education level and sources of income were added to this survey.

Overall:

- South Sioux City, Norfolk and Pender offices were most visited by clients.
- Almost 62% of households were two parent families with 4-6 children in the household.
- 43% of clients had the highest education level of a high school diploma, 17% had some college education and 16% had no education.
- 25% of clients had a household income of \$20-\$30,000 with the main source of income being wages or salary.
- Top three media sources clients utilize are Facebook, e-mail and flyers in public places.
- Top three utilized programs were WIC, Head Start and food pantries.
- 100% of clients were treated with dignity and respect by NENCAP staff and 98% felt our office hours and locations were convenient for services.
- 97% of clients received program information for services outside of NENCAP programs that was helpful.
- 83% of clients felt their needs were met by our programs.
- 100% of clients' situations improved with the help of NENCAP services.



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024/25
Sex					
Male	14.89%	16%	24%	13%	6.5%
Female	85.11%	83%	76%	86%	87%
Non-binary	NA	0%	0%	<1%	NA
Prefer not to say	NA	<1%	0%	0%	NA
Other	NA	<1%	<1%	0%	6.5%
Age					
18-24	9.15%	11.7%	11.5%	16.36%	15%
25-44	49.3%	42.72%	62%	62.4%	78%
45-54	2.82%	6%	5.5%	4.5%	3%
55-59	4.23%	4.28%	3%	2.4%	1%
60-64	9.15%	7%	5.5%	3.9%	2%
65+	25.35%	28.3%	12.5%	7.8%	NA
Race					
Black or African American	10%	4%	4.9%	4%	5.7%
Asian	3.57%	.54%	.5%	2%	0.5%
Caucasian	62.14%	62.84%	59.78%	41%	29.5%
American Indian	7.14%	2.73%	1%	4%	2.3%
Bi-Racial	1.43%	1%	2.7%	1%	2.8%
Hispanic	17.86%	27.8%	28.8%	43%	58%
Other	2.14%	1%	2.1%	1%	1.1%
County of Residence					
Antelope	0%	1.6%	2.1%	<1%	1.2%
Burt	0%	3.7%	1%	<1%	2.9%
Cedar	1.46%	1.6%	1%	4.2%	0.5%
Cuming	5.11%	6.38%	5.3%	5.5%	1.2%
Dakota	25.55%	33%	30%	37%	4.5%



Dodge	2.92%	5.3%	4.2%	11.5%	12.9%
Dixon	3.65%	1.6%	2.1%	2.4%	2.9%
Knox	13.87%	5.85%	3.7%	3%	1.8%
Madison	24.82%	18.6%	34.2%	22.7%	19.4%
Pierce	5.11%	1.6%	1.6%	3%	1.2%
Saunders	.73%	0%	.05%	0%	1.2%
Stanton	10.22%	4.8%	5.9%	4.2%	1.2%
Thurston	2.19%	6.38%	2.1%	<1%	1.8%
Washington	2.19%	7.4%	1.6%	1%	0.5%
Wayne	2.19%	2.1%	3.2%	<1%	6.5%
Which NENCAP office did you come to seek help?					
Pender	10.29%	26.08%	11.4%	15.4%	17.7%
Norfolk	36.03%	23.33%	44.5%	30%	22.3%
South Sioux City	27.21%	31.55%	30%	35.7%	44.6%
Fremont	6.62%	3.26%	6%	11.8%	12%
Creighton	14.71%	7.2%	5%	<1%	0.5%
Other	6.61%	8.7%	2.5%	3%	2.9%



Household Type						
Single Person	50.85%	37.86%	35%	23.1%	19%	10.2%
Two Parent Family	23.31%	35.71%	36%	44.72%	47.8%	60.8%
Single Parent Family	13.56%	17.14%	19%	18.6%	21.8%	24.4%
Single Male Parent	.85%	.71%	1%	2.5%	<1%	2%
2+ Adults (no dependent children)	10.59%	8.57%	8%	9%	3%	1%
Other	1.27%	1.43%	0%	.05%	<1%	2%
Household Size						
1	42.8%	31.43%	29%	21%	14%	4%
2-3	28.39%	27.14%	25%	31%	29.4%	27.2%
4-6	28.39%	37.86%	41%	46%	47.6%	43.2%
7-10	1.27%	3.57%	5%	3%	8.4%	16%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	<1%	9.7%
Number of children in the household						
0	54.35%	36.43%	39.2%	15%	18.8%	4%
1	12.17%	17.14%	10%	16.9%	21.8%	21.6%
2-3	24.78%	32.14%	36%	43.75%	40.3%	46.6%
4-6	8.26%	13.57%	13.2%	23.75%	18.1%	26.1%
7 +	.43%	.71%	1.65%	0%	<1%	1.7%
Education Level						
High School Diploma	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	42.7%
GED	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	7%
Some College	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	17%
Trade School	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	4.1%
Associate's degree	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	4.1%



Bachelor's Degree	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	6.4%
Graduate Degree	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.9%
None	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	15.8%
Household Income						
Less than \$10,000	37.44%	30.66%	23.1%	25.78%	24.8%	22.9%
\$10,000-\$20,000	37%	37.96%	36.1%	23.15%	22.1%	18.2%
\$20-\$30,000	12.78%	12.41%	19.33%	27.36%	21%	25.3%
\$30-\$40,000	7.49%	5.84%	11.37%	10.5%	13.9%	17.6%
\$40-\$50,000	2.64%	5.11%	5.3%	2.6%	4.8%	9.4%
\$50,000+	2.64%	8.03%	4.8%	10.5%	7.5%	6.5%
Sources of Income						
Wages/Salary	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	73.6%
Retirement	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.4%
Social Security	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	7.6%
Woker's Comp	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0%
Unemployment	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.8%
Farming	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0%
TANF	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.4%
I do not work/receive benefits	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	13.2%
Which of the following media channels do you prefer to learn about community programs and services?						
Flyers in public places	18.37%	15.67%	16.39%	15.3%	14.8%	14%
Newspaper	35.71%	26.12%	19.12%	12.7%	9.7%	3%



Mail	32.65%	38.81%	27.3%	30.68%	22.7%	15.1%
E-mail	23.98%	38.06%	26.2%	35.97%	24.2%	21.5%
Website	14.29%	14.93%	14.2%	24.86%	22.4%	13.2%
Facebook	32.65%	41.04%	51.91%	47.61%	41.8%	29.8%
Other	12.75%	11.94%	12.56%	9%	3.9%	3.4%
What programs did you access?						
Car seat	3.51%	4.38%	1.5%	4.2%	2.1%	2.6%
Weatherization	6.58%	5.11%	10%	2.1%	3%	0%
Rent Assistance	12.28%	13.14%	5.2%	13.15%	6.3%	3%
EDN	.44%	0%	1.5%	3.15%	<1%	<1%
WIC	35.09%	29.93%	28.27%	37.89%	70%	51.3%
Utility assistance	17.54%	10.95%	6.8%	12.1%	5.75%	3%
Healthy Families	7.02%	6.57%	5.2%	11%	4.5%	3.7%
SSVF	.44%	2.92%	.05%	0%	<1%	0%
Tax Assistance	2.63%	1.46%	6.2%	5.2%	1.8%	<1%
Immunizations	7.02%	7.30%	11.5%	12.1%	10.6%	4.8%
Commodities	38.6%	30.66%	19.9%	10%	10.9%	3%
Food Pantries	23.68%	20.44%	16.75%	24.21%	10.6%	7.4%
Early Head Start	3.07%	18.98%	10%	11.57%	2.7%	6.3%
Head Start	3.95%	27.01%	30.8%	30%	11.8%	14%
Other	1.32%	2.92%	1.5%	1%	2.4%	<1%
Overall, how would you rate the quality of services you received?						
Excellent	86.02%	79.29%	74%	87%	85.75%	86.4%
Good	13.98%	18.57%	22%	10%	13.3%	12.5%
Fair	0%	1.43%	1%	0%	<1%	0.5%
Poor	.71%	0%	0%	1%	0	0.5%



Were you treated with dignity and respect by NENCAP staff?						
Yes	98.73%	98.59%	97%	98%	99%	100%
No	1.27%	1.41%	1%	1%	<1%	0%
Other	NA	NA	2%	1%	<1%	0%
Were location hours of office and clinic operation convenient to meet your needs?						
Yes	98.31%	99.28%	98%	98%	97.9%	98.3%
No	1.69%	.72%	1%	1%	<1%	1.7%
Other	NA	NA	1%	1%	<1%	0%
Did NENCAP staff perform a thorough assessment of your situation and give you information on other NENCAP programs that may be helpful?						
Yes	97.29%	94.93%	77%	87%	94%	98.3%
No	2.71%	5.07%	7%	4%	<1%	1.7%
Not Needed	NA	NA	13%	9%	3.3%	NA
Other	NA	NA	3%	0%	0%	NA
Did staff give you information on helpful programs and services outside of NENCAP, including contact information?						
Yes	94.25%	88.57%	71%	84%	91.2%	97%



No	5.75%	10.71%	11%	5%	2.1%	3%
Not applicable	NA	NA	16%	10%	4.5%	NA
Other	NA	NA	2%	1%	<1%	NA

How would you rate the staff's overall knowledge of the program?						
Excellent	80.03%	86.03%	75.18%	73%	86%	82.3%
Good	19.13%	13.97%	23.4%	21%	11%	16.6%
Fair	.67%	0%	.71%	4%	2%	0.5%
Poor	.17%	0%	.71%	0%	1%	0.5%
Based on the services the program could provide, were your needs met?						
Entirely	80.44%	83.41%	72.66%	71%	81%	82.9%
Mostly	18.04%	15.72%	25.18%	24%	16%	16%
A few	1.01%	.87%	.72%	3%	1%	1.1%
None	.51%	0%	1.44%	1%	2%	0%
Were your phone calls and/or messages returned in a timely manner?						
Yes	98.3%	98.19%	97.12%	90%	93%	95.4%
No	1.7%	1.81%	2.16%	2%	2%	<1%
Other	NA	NA	NA	8%	5%	<1%
Would you recommend NENCAP to a						



friend or relative?						
Yes	98.82%	99.57%	97.87%	98%	97%	100%
No	1.18%	.43%	2.13%	2%	3%	0%
Do you feel your situation has improved due to the help of NENCAP?						
Yes	98.29%	97.8%	95.62%	98%	95%	99.5%
No	1.71%	2.20%	2.92%	2%	5%	0.5%

Client Satisfaction Survey Comments 2024/25

What types of services could you and your family benefit from that are not currently offered through NENCAP? 109 responses.

- Childcare 22.9%
- Additional Food Service 23.9%
- Transportation Service 12.9%
- Affordable housing 13.8%
- Household essentials 15.6%
- Referral Coordination 2.8%
- Other Service 4.6%
- None 3.7%

Comments or suggestions for improving services received by NENCAP.

- Thank you
- You do a really good job.
- Evelyn the nurse is so nice, love how she talks to me and also to my son and knows him by name.
- A great program as it is. Thank you.
- Everyone was very friendly and helpful.
- None, service and staff are great.
- Very helpful.
- Later hours
- Head start is great!
- Appreciate you all!
- More free stuff.
- Excellent staff in Norfolk, my child loves her teacher.
- Ladies are always so kind.
- Transportation to appointments like rehab for families.
- I wish I could find more help.



- Thank you for all you do.
- I love my HF advocate!
- I like everything about it.
- I appreciate all the help I got from you folks. Thank you so much, god bless you all.



Community Needs Assessment





Community Needs Executive Summary

Community needs assessment is done every 5 years. This assessment is to be completed for anyone in our 14-county service area. The 2025 assessment focused on 5 categories: education, health, employment, housing, income & asset building and civic engagement. 86 responses were collected by community members who were asked to choose the top 3 needs from each category.

Overall top three needs per category:

- **Education:**
 - Affordable high quality childcare options for parents who would like to further their education
 - Preschool activities for children to develop school readiness skills
 - Increasing the community's knowledge of available education resources.
- **Employment:**
 - More jobs with better pay and benefits
 - More training for the types of jobs available in the area
 - Affordable childcare during work hours.
- **Health:**
 - More payment assistance programs for adult dental, hearing, and/or vision services
 - More access to affordable comprehensive (or primary) health care services
 - More knowledge of available food resources.
- **Housing:**
 - More grants to make home ownership and home rehab affordable
 - More community support for homeless families
 - More programs to provide free home repairs.
- **Income & Asset Building:**
 - More access to low interest loans
 - Anonymous and confidential budget counseling
 - More education on how to build assets.
- **Civic Engagement:**
 - More education on how to join neighborhood associations, community boards, advisory groups or smaller organizations
 - Increasing the community's skills and knowledge for leadership development
 - More knowledge on civic activities
- **Support Services:**
 - Meal programs
 - Youth services
 - Life skills programs and services

Top Three Overall Needs:

- Employment
- Housing
- Support services (including multiple domains)



	2025
What best describes your role in the community?	
Community Member or agency client	47.7%
Faith-based or civic organization representative	3.5%
Business or private sector representative	5.8%
Non-profit, education or healthcare organization staff	32.6%
Government, advisory board, or agency staff/volunteer	10.5%
What county do you live in?	
Antelope	8.1%
Burt	NA
Cedar	NA
Cuming	11.6%
Dakota	7%
Dodge	9.3%
Dixon	NA
Knox	2.3%
Madison	34.9%
Pierce	1.2%
Saunders	NA
Stanton	1.2%
Thurston	7%
Washington	1.2%
Other	4.7%
What is your sex?	
Male	17.4%
Female	82.6%



What is your age?	
19-23	4.7%
24-44	47.7%
45-54	25.6%
55-69	16.3%
70 or older	4.7%
Other	1.2%
What is your race?	
Caucasian	77.4%
Black or African American	1.2%
Asian	0%
American Indian	7.1%
Bi-Racial	1.2%
Hispanic	13.1%
What is your ethnicity?	
Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origins	16.3%
Not Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origins	83.7%
What is your highest-level education?	
High school diploma	19%
GED	2.4%
Some College	21.4%
Trade School	2.4%
Associate's Degree	16.7%
Bachelor's Degree	21.4%
Graduate School	10.7%
None	6%
What is your military status?	
Veteran	5.8%



Active Military	1.2%
None	93%
Education-Mark the three most important needs. (227 responses)	
Affordable private school options	3.1%
Preschool activities for children to develop school readiness skills	18.9%
More assessable counseling to prepare students for tech or college	10.1%
More certificate/degree programs offered locally	10.6%
Affordable transportation options to and from school	14.1%
Affordable high quality childcare options for parents who would like to further their education	22.5%
Increasing the community's knowledge of available education resources	15%
Other	5.7%
Employment-Mark the three most important needs. (226 responses)	
More jobs with better pay and benefits	26.1%
More training for the types of jobs available in the area	16.8%
Affordable transportation to and from work	11.5%
Affordable childcare during work hours	16.8%
Increasing the community's knowledge of available employment resources	11.5%
Improve the workforce readiness skills of people who can work	15.9%
Other	1.3%



Health-Mark the three most important needs. (220 responses)	
More community focus on preventative healthcare	11.4%
Affordable transportation for health care services	13.2%
More payment assistance programs for adult dental, hearing and/or vision services	20.5%
More access to affordable comprehensive (or primary) health care services	19.1%
Increasing the community's knowledge of available health resources	10.9%
More nutritional counseling (one on one and free)	7.3%
More knowledge of available food resources	14.1%
Other	3.7%
Housing-Mark the three most important needs. (215 responses)	
More community support for homeless families	14%
More grants to provide services that reduce energy cost	8.8%
More programs to provide free home repairs	10.7%
More monthly rental assistance programs	4.7%
Increased availability of security/utility deposit programs	10.2%
More counseling services for homeowners	6%
More grants to make home ownership and home rehab affordable	16.3%
More programs to provide free home repairs	7%



More income based rental housing for disabled and seniors	9.3%
Other	2.8%
Income & Asset Building-Mark the three most important needs. (206 responses)	
Anonymous and confidential budget counseling	20.4%
More education on how to build assets	18.4%
Information on how to access free credit counseling	17.5%
Anonymous and confidential savings counseling	14.6%
More access to low interest loans	25.7%
Other	3.4%
Civic Engagement-Mark the three most important needs. (199 responses)	
Increasing the community's skills and knowledge for leadership development	28.1%
More citizenship classes	14.6%
More education on how to join neighborhood associations, community boards, advisory groups or similar organizations	30.2%
More knowledge on civic activities	20.1%
Other	7%
Support Services-Mark the three most important needs. (230 responses)	
Legal Services	13.9%
Youth Services	14.3%
Meal Programs	15.7%
Life skills programs and services	14.3%



Substance abuse resources	6.1%
Elderly Services	7.4%
Sexual/emotional/physical abuse services	6.1%
Transportation services	8.3%
Disabled services	2.6%
In-home services for seniors	9.1%
Other	2.2%
Overall Need-Mark top three	
Employment	28.5%
Education	10.5%
Income and asset building	11.8%
Housing	24.1%
Health	9.6%
Civic engagement	13.2%
Support services (supporting multiple domains)	13.2%



Community Needs Assessment Focus Group Survey Results





Focus Group Executive Summary

Focus groups with NENCAP staff, board members, partners, and community residents described NENCAP as a trusted advocate and connector that links families to services and supports long-term stability. Participants emphasized the value of home visitation, case management, budgeting assistance, and skill-building programs that help families work toward independence.

Key community assets included churches and nonprofits providing supportive programming, food pantries and commodity distribution, diaper banks, mental health services, and rural grocery stores that help address food access challenges. Rent assistance and veteran services were also noted as highly impactful.

Programs considered most effective in reducing poverty were rent and housing assistance, stepped budgeting, case management, and structured initiatives such as CORE. These supports strengthen financial literacy, promote stable housing, and increase self-sufficiency. However, limited funding and a lack of affordable childcare remain major constraints.

Participants identified significant barriers to accessing services, including substance use, rural transportation gaps, limited access to phones and internet, low wages, high living costs, childcare shortages, and challenges tied to credit or rental history. Mental health concerns further complicate access.

Opportunities for improvement included simplifying service applications, expanding transportation options, revising income guidelines to reflect local needs, and improving cross-agency communication. Participants noted that siloed systems and inconsistent awareness of available services hinder effective collaboration. Strengthening coordination and shared resources was viewed as essential to better serving families.



Needs Assessment Focus Group Survey Results



Focus groups were held with NENCAP Staff, Agency Board Members, Public and Agency Partners

Public

Staff

Board

Partner

Focus Group Question: What role should NENCAP and others interested in reducing poverty and creating opportunities for all residents play in our communities?

- Advocates for our community, partner with residents, FS: get referrals and send referrals, problem solving, act as a lead liaison between VSO and VA.
- Healthy families: offer a level of support each week from the home visitor, Spanish speaking clients-help apply for services and supports, home visitor teaches them how to contact the resources that they need. The items we can provide to care for their children and allow the family to access other resources for their family.
- Finding jobs for people that need help to become sustainable and independent to get out of poverty, so our services are no longer needed.
- Budgeting education for people getting out of poverty and into the workforce so they can stay independent without assistance.
- Look to NENCAP to take a leadership role, it's our niche and provide the resources as best as we can. Could be simpler to bring down to a level that makes community members more aware of education and our programs.

NENCAP as a place to where they can go, if we can't help then give them more referrals to help everyone explore all options for resources.

Focus Group Question: What conditions and opportunities within the community are the most beneficial to families?

- Churches, other organizations that do similar services-hand them off to another program to continue the support a client needs.
- Commodities and food pantry is a major one that is offered in other communities.
- Diaper bank is a major program that clients are grateful for.
- Mental health services and getting them connected to a counselor for services.
- Rural areas have food desserts and rural grocery stores stepping up and giving discounted food items to residents which helps with people having to drive a long way for groceries.
- Diaper bank is very beneficial to families because of cost of diapers and families need different sizes and Haven House struggles to get different sizes.
- The veteran's services is very helpful and well talked about.
- Rent assistance is helpful to access for clients that need is high. Not always a referral to count on.

Focus Group Question: Please identify programs, strategies and initiatives that have been successful in reducing poverty and why you feel they are successful?

- Rent assistance program, stair stepping program with budgeting, shallow subsidy program that steps in when SSVF is completed and if they need that for a few more months.
- Case managers help do budget clients don't know how to do a budget and opening a savings account, this guidance helps them to remain successful.
- Stable housing is really beneficial to help clients become independent.
- CORE therapeutic and similar programs are great to work with family welfare clients, help them with cooking, budget plans, rental assistance programs; hands on and guided skills to help families. CORE doesn't have to be court ordered??



- Services like NENCAP are helpful but the funding that is offered is never enough to fully help people become successful.
- Affordable childcare is a problem, so people must stay home with kids instead of entering the workforce. Cities are suffering with childcare problems just like rural areas.
- When able to help clients with rent assistance, help with budget and get them on the road to success and help them get back on their feet.

Focus Group Question: What conditions make it more difficult for families to find solutions and or services to their problems?

- Substance abuse, unstable in the past and transit that adds to the challenge, low credit score to rent is hard to find, application fee for rent makes it difficult.
- Transportation in general in Wakefield, Wisner that goes further than a certain radius which makes it hard for appointments. Current transportation services is very limited in our rural areas.
- Phones are hard to afford and if they break it they must get a new phone which is a new number. Spanish speaking uses Whats App and that must be connected to the internet and internet service is tough if they can't find free Wi-Fi.
- Child Care is limited, families that need to go to a job interview because they have no one to watch their kids while they go. They can't afford the money it takes to have someone watch their kid.
- Lack of reliable transportation for people to get to jobs or appointments.
- Wage increases do not match the cost of living. Rent, utilities, basic supplies to live are increasing in costs but people's wages are not enough to maintain stable living.
- Rising cost of health insurance is a big factor as well for people not being able to live sustainably.
- Mental health and substance abuse conditions are all challenges we all struggle with.
- The lack of transportation in the smaller communities. Clients are not getting to their needed resources because of the lack of transportation. Hard to get clients connected to what they need help with.
- Employment is a problem for clients to have a proper job, so they are working at a gas station to just have a job.
- Transportation issues are a problem with people getting a better job.

Focus Group Question: How do people in poverty relate or connect to their communities?

- Churches, program that helps them and they will continue to volunteer for that program when they are done with program.
- Word of mouth; schools. Referrals to different programs for assistance.
- Churches are a good place for low-income people to connect regardless of their religion or status.
- Agencies need to focus more on helping people become independent and not enabling as much. Teaching clients the ways to be independent and allows them to do the work instead of doing the work for them.
- So many jobs available but no one is applying, this could be due to many factors like proper training and background history of person.
- Connect through churches and social service agencies to network. Head Start is a good program that helps families connect with activities in that program.
- Disconnection and no one to turn to help. Churches give them ideas to get involved in the community.
- Food pantry is a place where people can connect.
- Local community events help them connect.

Focus Group Question: If you could add and/or change one aspect of a NENCAP program or service, what would it be and why?

- Application for family services is a little robust and clients get frustrated with all the questions, they are asking for help and then they get turned down because of the application being so long. Pride is already hurt and then he must be asked again to ask for help.
- Getting that application shortened and asking other agencies to see what they do and what their app looks like compared to ours. Increasing income guidelines for programs.



- Head Start is hard to fill the spots with the low-income guideline.
- NENCAP look at streamlining on program applications to make it more appealing for people to apply for assistance. This might not be possible due to funding guidelines and what is needed to comply with that funding source.
- Adding transportation services would be beneficial but after hours and normal working hours. If it's an option, have hours after 5:00 pm to help families.

Focus Group Question: What are the barriers to working collaboratively with other agencies to meet client needs?

- Making other agencies aware of the balance for each person for each program.
- Agencies being silos and not working together to make the process work together.
- Eligibility can be a barrier, flexible funding is hard to come by and needs to be changed state, agency wide.
- Dodge county has a great database that works with all agencies to streamline what assistance has been utilized for people in need. This reduces the problem of people double dipping with services, and this allows more access to people to use the available services since not the same people are getting that service.
- Pink sheets have been a good resource for other counties since it allows the agency to go down the list on the sheet of available resources to make sure the person in need is trying all available resources and if those are not options that agency can look beyond the pink sheet.
- Not being 100% clear with services that each agency provides and making it obvious to how each agency can help. People change positions and turn over with a program.
- Relationships make a good difference in an effective program. Can slow down the process and collaboration between programs.