

Big Sandy Area Community Action Program

Community Needs Assessment 2020

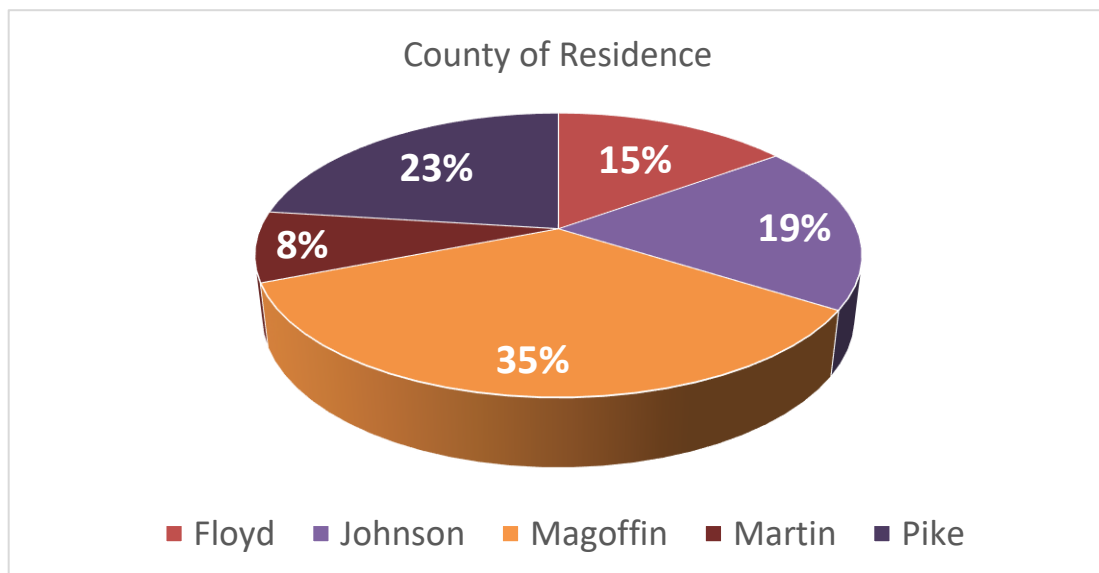


Needs Reported Through BSACAP Needs Assessment Survey

The annual needs assessment process was conducted by the Big Sandy Area Community Action Program from November 2019 to March 2020. Raw data was gathered from 550 respondents using Agency assessment survey forms. In order to compile a comprehensive and accurate community cross section, assessment forms were distributed to community members throughout the five-county service region.

The complete results, as well as a list of locations that the surveys were conducted can be found in the appendices. The survey results were compiled and tallied after respondents completed the survey while in the presence of BSACAP staff. As proven by the responses, the needs for services that assist the impoverished are great.

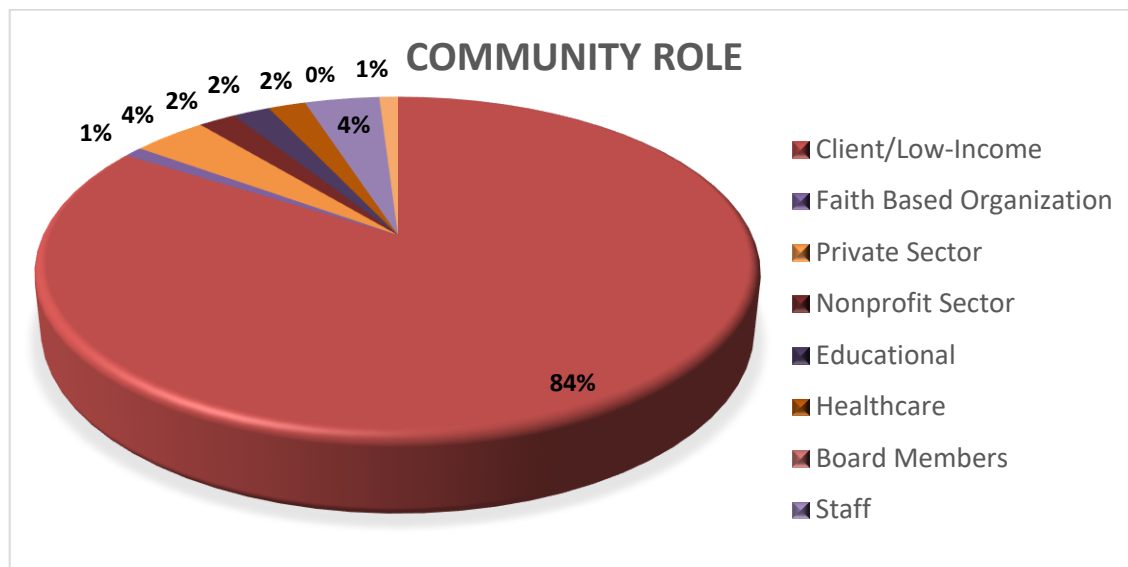
With Kentucky having one of the higher national poverty levels, the survey results will help us align programs to assist individuals and families living in poverty.



The graph above indicates the survey responses by county. As indicated, Magoffin County had the largest number of responses. We find that surveys roughly aligned with the population distributed throughout the BSACAP service area except for the increase in the Magoffin County responses.

Assessments were completed by low-income representatives, individual

program participants, local service providers, and members of the private sector.



The graph above indicates the category of community member that respondents felt they most represented. Over two-thirds of respondents came directly from our clients or members of the low-income community. Less than one-third came from representatives of the health, education, public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

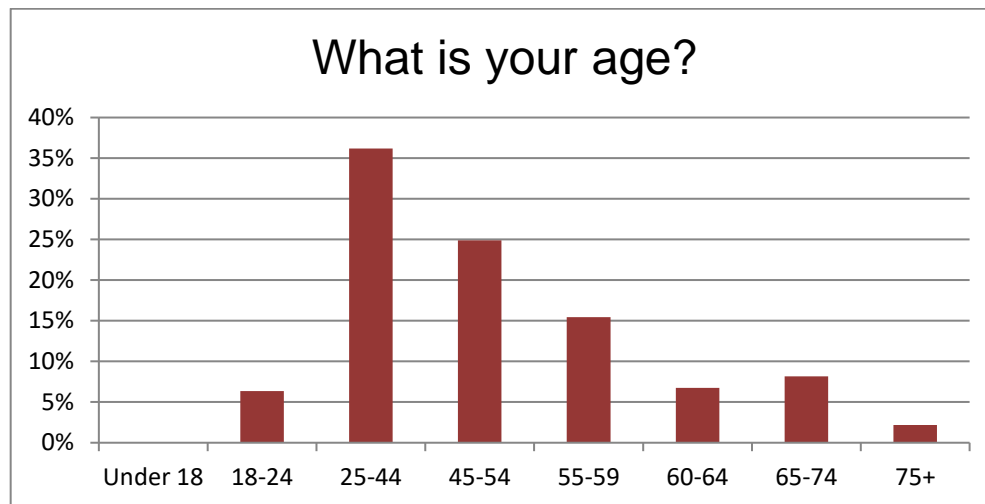
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 27.33% of the population in the Big Sandy Area are living in poverty. This information is shown in the table below.

Report Area	Total Population	Population in Poverty	Percentage of Population in Poverty
Report Location	140,960	38,531	27.33%
Floyd County, KY	36,265	11,491	31.69%
Johnson County, KY	22,315	5,119	22.94%
Magoffin County, KY	12,502	3,456	27.64%
Martin County, KY	10,520	2,763	26.26%
Pike County, KY	59,358	15,702	26.45%
Kentucky	4,302,315	772,080	17.95%
United States	314,943,184	44,257,979	14.05%

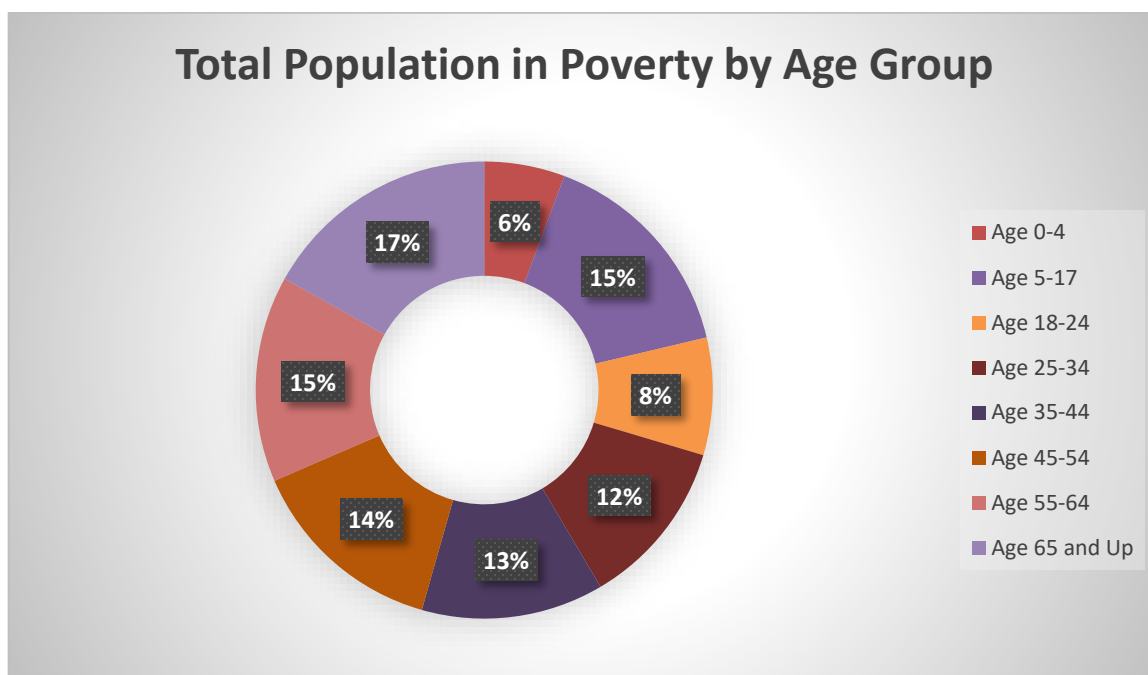
Demographic Information

Respondents were asked several questions regarding their demographic categorization,

including age, gender, race, ethnicity, education, and military status.



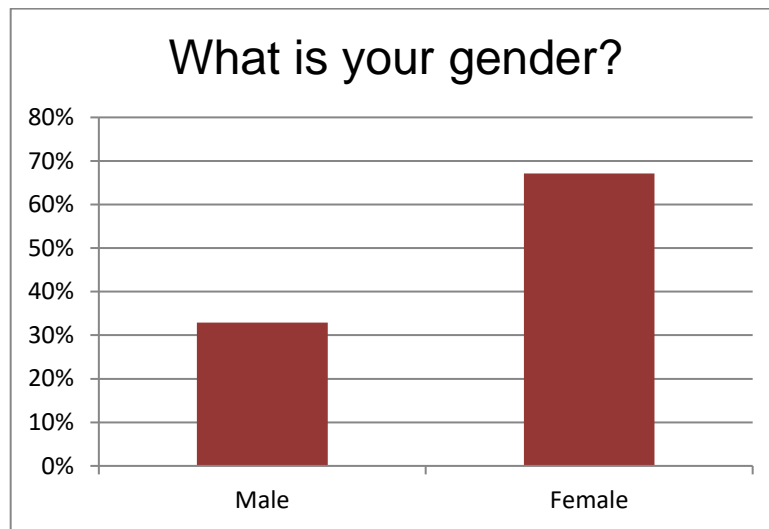
As the graph above indicates, over 60% of respondents were middle-aged, between 25 and 54 years of age. Thus the responses to the survey are largely from people who are in their prime working years who may be caring both for children and aging parents. The next highest number of responses came from those age 55-59 who are nearing or have entered retirement age. The fewest number of responses came from those age 75 and older.



Data Source: US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#). 2014-18.

The graph above shows the total population by age groups in the Big Sandy Area. A total of 144,837 people live in the 1,980.04 square mile report area defined for this assessment according to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2018. The population

density for this area, estimated at 73.15 persons per square mile, is less than the national average population density of 91.42 per square mile.

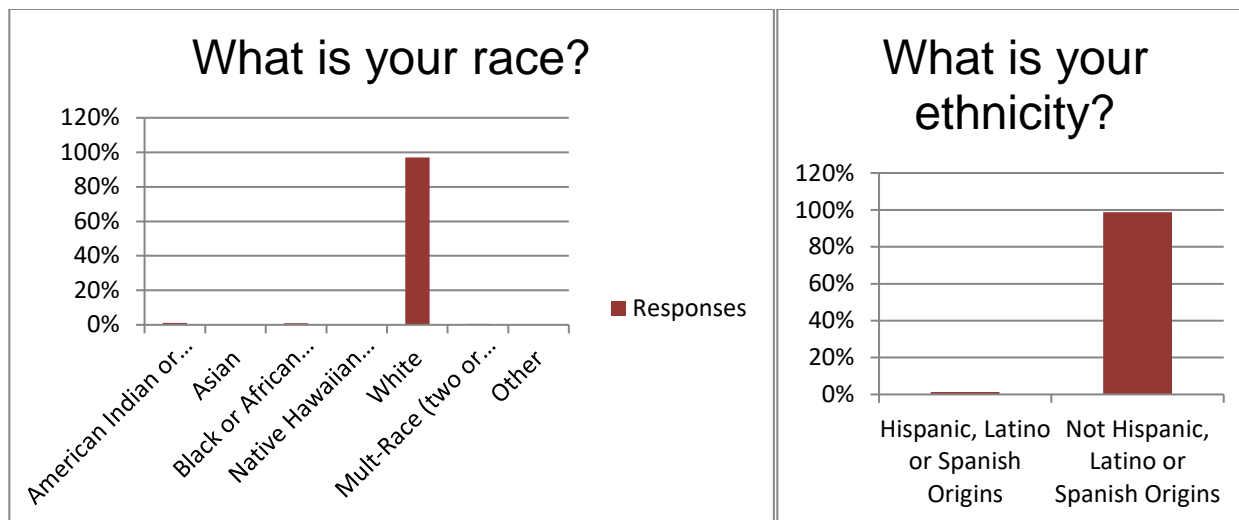


As the graph above indicates that the respondents of the 2020 Community Needs Assessment were split nearly 80/20, female to male. This number largely reflects the gender disparity in social service workers and clients we serve, particularly within programs funded through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG).

The chart below identifies the number of residents in the Big Sandy Area living in poverty as well as the percentage by gender.

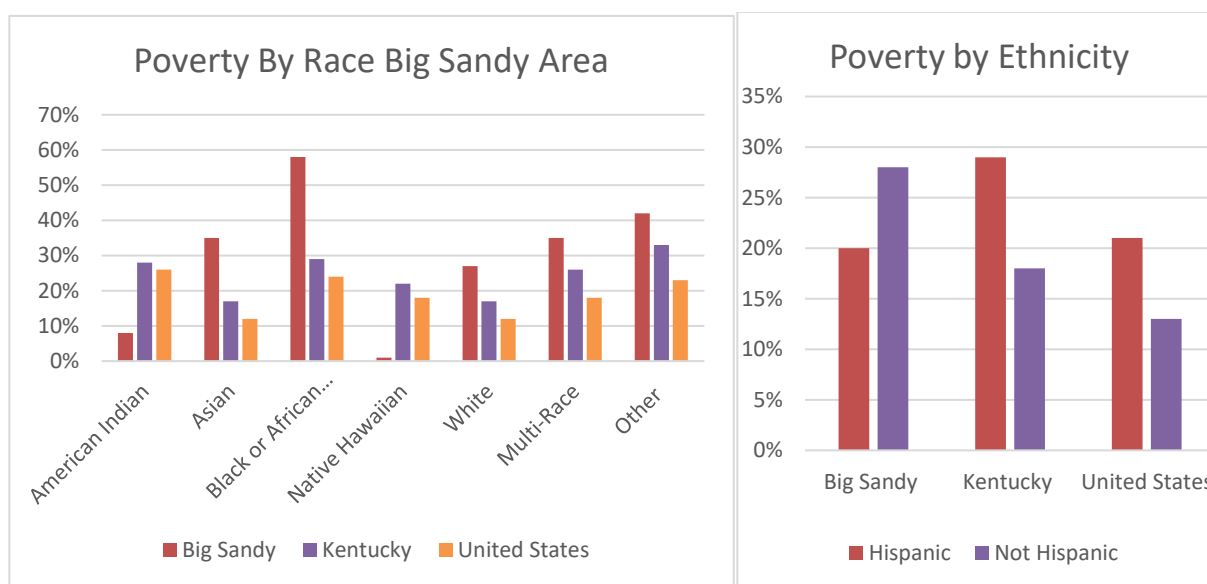
Report Area	Total Male	Total Female	Percent Male	Percent Female
Report Location	17,524	21,007	25.34%	29.26%
Floyd County, KY	5,250	6,241	29.58%	33.71%
Johnson County, KY	2,315	2,804	21.32%	24.48%
Magoffin County, KY	1,766	1,690	28.11%	27.17%
Martin County, KY	1,317	1,446	24.97%	27.57%
Pike County, KY	6,876	8,826	23.72%	29.07%
Kentucky	343,398	428,682	16.30%	19.53%
United States	19,737,150	24,520,829	12.80%	15.26%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#), 2014-18.

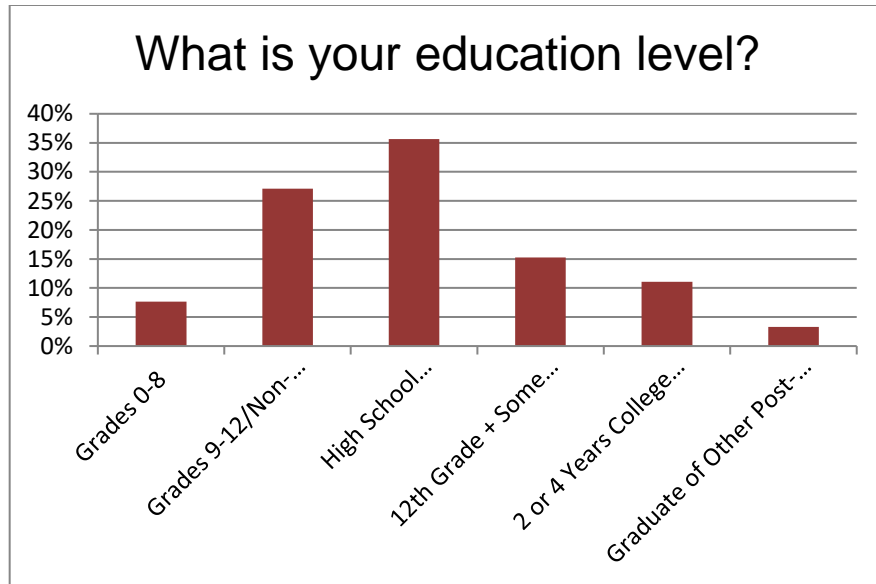


The results of the questions regarding race and ethnicity indicate that the vast majority of respondents were White, Non-Hispanic or Latino people, which reflects local demographic information showing that the BSACAP service area is approximately 97% White and Non-Hispanic or Latino.

The graphs below show the poverty level averages by race and ethnicity.



Data from [Engagementnetwork.org/assessment](https://engagementnetwork.org/assessment) 2019.

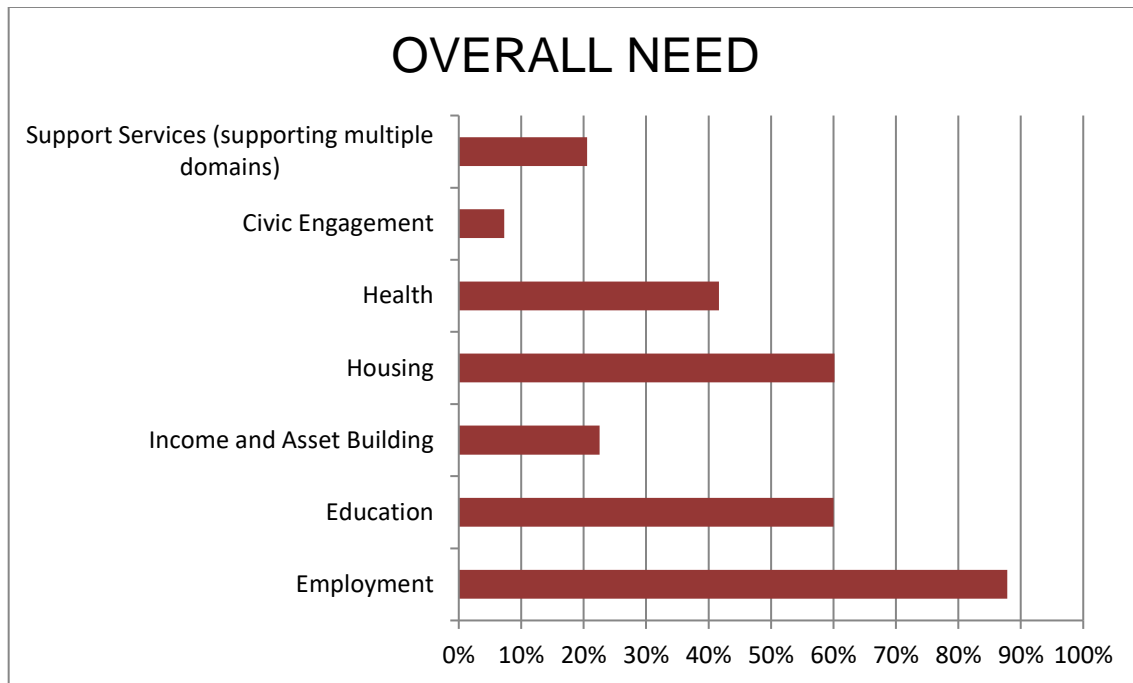


As the chart above indicates, while nearly 35% of respondents have their high school diploma or equivalent, another 35% of respondents either did not attend or did not complete high school. Just over 15% of respondents have attended but not completed some post-secondary education, while 11% completed a two or four-year degree course or higher.

The survey was completed by ten military veterans this year. This number has increased since last years' one response but still a long way from having reliable data for our area. These survey response results do indicate a need on the part of the agency to conduct outreach to current and former military members and to form stronger partnerships with local veterans' service programs.

Areas of Need

Respondents were asked to mark their top three most important needs (in no particular order) among the agency's planning areas: health, employment, education, housing, income and asset building, support services, and civic engagement. The pie chart below indicates what the community ranks as the most important services needed. The results were used to rank the agency's top priorities in the SFY 2020-2021 Plan and Budget Proposal.



Employment was identified as the most needed service in the 2020 Community Needs Assessment with 88% of respondents marking it as a top priority, followed by housing, education, health, income and asset building, support services, and civic engagement.

Overall Needs Assessment Results 2018, 2019, 2020

	2018	2019	2020
Rank 1	Health	Employment	Employment
Rank 2	Employment	Housing	Housing
Rank 3	Education	Education	Education
Rank 4	Housing	Health	Health
Rank 5	Income and Asset Building	Support Services	Income an Asset Building

Please note that a different scoring system was used in 2018. Previously, respondents were asked to rank all service areas in order of their need and overall rank was determined by the number of points each category received. In 2019 and 2020, respondents were asked only to mark the top three needs, but in no particular order.

Respondents were then asked to mark their top three concerns among several subcategories within each service area in order to determine the particular aspects of each area respondents find most challenging to overcome.

Employment was ranked as the top need among survey respondents. Within the service area of employment, barriers to self-sufficiency rose to the top of list of concerns. Chief among those concerns was that the area is in need of more jobs with better pay and benefits.

Employment

Rank	Need	Percent of Total Responses
1	More Jobs with Better Pay & Benefits	84%
2	Affordable Transportation	48%
3	More Training for the Jobs Available	44%
4	Affordable childcare during work hours	36%
5	Improve the workforce readiness skills	33%
6	Increased Knowledge of Available Employment Resources	28%
7	Early Reinforcement of Values	15%
8	Affordable Adult Daycare	11%
9	Other	Less than 1%

The agency's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program participates in a wide variety of economic development initiatives in partnership with other local service organizations in addition to a number of other job seeker services. The agency acts as the area's One-Stop Operator meaning that comprehensive workforce services and support services can be accessed at our local offices. The agency also hosts an annual East Kentucky Workforce Partners Conference in order to allow all area organizations to improve communication and work toward common goals. BSACAP's local county offices are Kentucky Career Center Jobsight Affiliated Access Points. The individual centers provide job seekers access to services carried out by a wide network of partners operating within one physical location.

Staff operate in conjunction with the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP), local Offices of Employment and Training, Vocational Rehabilitation, and others, as well as serve with the local Work Ready Community initiatives. The agency also has an Employer Account Representative who acts as a liaison between the private sector and the nonprofit sector. The Employer Account Representative is able to coordinate employer needs with agency services such as creating incumbent worker trainings, job fairs, vetting and hiring of employees, connections to economic development projects, and more in order to ensure that businesses that open in the area have what they need to succeed.

Unfortunately, the majority of new businesses in the area do not offer a living wage or benefits. The chart below shows the median annual income for households in the Big Sandy Area. You can see that residents in the Big Sandy Area annually earn approximately \$15,000 lower than the state average and approximately \$ \$27,000 lower than the national average.

	Floyd County	Johnson County	Magoffin County	Martin County	Pike County	Kentucky	United States
Average Annual Income per Household	\$31,267	\$37,559	\$29,516	\$35,125	\$34,081	\$48,392	\$60,293

The BSACAP service area is predominately rural with mean commute times for workers is 29 minutes, according to recent census data, and virtually no public transportation. The chart below indicates the average daily commute for the Floyd, Johnson, Magoffin, Martin, and Pike counties as well as the state average.

	Floyd County	Johnson County	Magoffin County	Martin County	Pike County	Kentucky
Average Commute Time (minutes) for individuals in the Big Sandy Area	24.3	28.6	33.2	33	24.5	23.3

Without a reliable personal vehicle and the ability to afford repairs, employment is difficult to maintain. Similarly, lack of affordable childcare options prevents many from entering or remaining in the workforce, especially the working poor.

The second highest ranked service category in 2020 was housing.

Housing

Rank	Need	Percent of Total Responses
1	Rental Assistance Programs	57%
2	Free Home Repair Programs	52%
3	Grants to make home ownership and home rehab affordable	45%
4	Services that Reduce Energy Costs	35%
5	Rental housing for Disabled & Seniors	33%
6	Community supports for homeless families	29%
7	Security/Utility Deposit Programs	28%
8	Counseling for Homeowners	19%
9	Other	1%

BSACAP operates a housing program that provides rental and utility assistance with funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the form of Tenant-Based Rental Assistance and Emergency Solutions grant monies. The program is

financially exhausted nearly as soon as funds are available.

The agency also operates the Weatherization Assistance Program and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, both of which aim to reduce the burden of utility costs.

The U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, show that between 2013 and 2017, an average of 60% of renters in the BSACAP service area were housing burdened, meaning that the household income is not sufficient to afford the average cost of rent plus utilities, without having to spend 30 percent or more of their income on those costs. Big Sandy currently has an average rent of over \$600 per month and an average mortgage of nearly \$900. Many individuals and families seeking housing live on a fixed income making this nearly impossible unless they overlap families and may generations live together. There are currently four emergency shelters in the five county service area. Two of these are homeless shelters that house 45 individuals and the other two are emergency shelters for women and children escaping sexual assault or domestic violence.

As we see a greater number of our senior population fall into the range of poverty, we are also seeing a greater need for home repair and home accessibility programs.

In addition to strengthening our referrals to home repair groups, the agency could benefit from assisting with financial education and pathways to homeownership for low-income people.

The Community Needs Assessment data showed that education ranked as the third highest need among those surveyed.

Education

Rank	Need	Percent of Total Responses
1	More Parents Involved in Student's Education	50%
2	More Certificate/Degree Programs Offered Locally	49%
3	Affordable Childcare Options	48%
4	Affordable Transportation	45%
5	Assessable counseling to prepare students for college	42%
6	Increasing the community's knowledge of available education resources	36%
7	Preschool activities for child(ren) to develop school readiness skills	28%
8	Other	2%

All BSACAP programs have an educational component. The WIOA program connects people with colleges and trade schools, assists with paperwork and technical assistance, and offers financial assistance with tuition, required books and tools, test fees, and travel. The Head Start program not only addresses the needs of early childhood, but offers financial assistance to parents and teachers who wish to further their education or obtain early childhood credentials. The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) assists participants with earning their GED and offers computer and customer service training. The CSBG program offers workshops on going back to school, scholarships, and financial assistance.

While graduation rates are on the rise, roughly a quarter of the area's population is without their high school diploma or GED. Of those able to attend, many people believe they cannot afford higher education and are unaware of the financial aid available to them. Additionally, there is a need for trade work and trade school to be incorporated into "college and career ready" discussions. The agency must continue to find ways to share knowledge of educational opportunities and best practices for parenting.

The fourth highest ranked concern in 2020 by survey respondents was health.

Health

Rank	Need	Percent of Total Responses
1	Payment Assistance for Adult Dental, Hearing, & Vision Services	50%
2	Affordable Transportation	41%
3	More Community Focus on Preventative Healthcare	33%
4	Access to affordable comprehensive health care services	32%
5	Increasing the Community's Knowledge of Available Health Resources	24%
6	More Assistance/Resources for Victims of Domestic Violence	24%
7	More knowledge of available food resources	21%
8	More Emphasis on Reinforcing Healthy Eating Habits	19%
9	More Assistance/Resources for Victims of Elder Abuse	18%
10	More education on maintaining	15%

	personal hygiene	
11	More Emphasis on Early Childhood Nutrition Education	12%
12	More nutritional counseling (one on one and free)	9%
13	Other	1%

The agency's CSBG program offers yearly Community Health Fairs in our service counties. The Community Health Fairs offer free preventative health screenings such as dental screenings, Hepatitis A vaccinations, A1C tests, EKGs, cholesterol, blood pressure, and others. The agency also assists clients with accessing the Kentucky Vision Project year-round to help residents obtain assistance with eye exams and prescription eyeglasses. The agency makes referrals via Benefind and the Kentucky Health Benefit Exchange.

The Big Sandy Valley, and indeed the majority of eastern Kentucky counties, reports high rates of obesity, smoking, and lack of exercise, along with a need for chronic disease management. The County Health Rankings report for 2020 found that Floyd County is ranked 116th in the state. In addition, of the 120 Kentucky counties, Martin County ranked 105th; Pike County ranked 97th; Johnson County, 94th; and Magoffin County, 102nd.

The fifth priority for the agency, according to the survey results, was the need for income and asset building.

Income & Asset Building

Rank	Need	Percent of Total Responses
1	More access to low interest loans	58%
2	Budget Counseling	52%
3	More education on how to build assets	43%
4	Increasing the community's knowledge of available mainstream financial resources	40%
5	More information on how to access financial resources	37%
6	Anonymous and confidential savings counseling	35%
7	Information on how to access credit counseling	33%
8	Other	1%

In addition to CSBG workshops regarding budgeting and financial health, through an agreement with the Social Security Administration, the Agency receives Social Security and Supplemental Security Income checks for referred clients through the Social Security Representative Payee Program. Agency staff, trained by representatives from the Internal Revenue Service, electronically complete and file income tax returns.

Cyclical and generational poverty have plagued eastern Kentucky for decades. Many families struggle to maintain subsistence levels of income and assets, so future planning has been difficult for most to envision.

The area is also serviced by a large number of predatory “payday” lenders (i.e. five payday lenders in a town with a population of 4,181 (2020 data) which trap people in a repayment cycle that is difficult for them to break. Clients need education on how to make the most of a small income and potential pathways to homeownership and savings.

Assisting clients with information regarding financial opportunities for low-income people is something the agency must research further. Several federal programs are available through HUD and the USDA that provide pathways to homeownership for the working poor, for instance, and such information should be disseminated to agency clients.

Support Services was found to be the sixth priority for the agency.

Support Services		
Rank	Need	Percent of Total Responses
1	Substance Abuse Resources	41%
2	Transportation Services	41%
3	Meal Programs	37%
4	Elderly services	28%
5	Legal Services	25%
6	Life Skills Programs and Services	25%
7	Youth Services	24%
8	Child Support	23%
9	Disabled Services	17%
10	Sexual/Emotional/Physical Abuse Services	17%
11	In-home services-Seniors	13%
12	Senior Centers	10%
13	Other	1%

BSACAP uses the Emergency Food & Shelter Program to provide financial assistance to

local food banks and makes referrals to area food banks, community meals, and the USDA's summer feeding program in which local schools participate. Data gathered by Feeding America shows that an average of 14% of the area's population is food insecure and struggles with hunger. According to data provided by the Kentucky Youth Advocates' 2019 County Data Book, an average of 25% of children across the service area live in food insecure homes.

The agency's SCSEP program assists people ages 55 and over to enter or re-enter the workforce. Referrals are also made to Big Sandy Area Development District which manages several services for the elderly designed to help them stay in their homes and remain as independent as possible.

It is widely known that central Appalachia and eastern Kentucky is in the heart of the nation's prescription drug abuse (opioid and other) epidemic, and that the manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine is prevalent. The agency's WIOA currently runs the Justice-Involved Youth Program. This program targets youth ages 18-24 who have been involved in the criminal justice system by providing mentorship, educational opportunities, one-on-one job and career counseling to help them recover from their mistakes. Providing targeted assistance to families suffering from substance abuse through drug-free housing, employment of ex-convicts, and programs for child victims of parental substance abuse can be ways that we engage with the community on these issues.

Civic Engagement was found to be the seventh priority among those surveyed.

Civic Engagement

Rank	Need	Percent of Total Responses
1	Increasing the Community's Skills and Knowledge for Leadership Development	90%
2	More Education on How to Join Neighborhood Associations, Community Boards, Advisory Groups or Similar Organizations	89%
3	More Knowledge on Civic Activities	81%
4	More Citizenship Classes	38%
5	Other	2%

Big Sandy Area Community Action Program strives for community participation in all programs administered by the Agency, and realizes the importance of Civic Engagement, identified as the seventh priority. Customers are informed about and invited to volunteer

in the Agency and are elected or invited to participate on Agency boards, policy councils, or advisory committees. The interagency meetings coordinated by BSACAP provide valuable linkages to faith- and community-based organizations across the area. BSACAP encourages customer suggestions and participation in the Agency's community needs assessment process.

Finding opportunities for low-income people to have a stake their communities is critical to the success of the area as it could provide a significant portion of the population with a say in decision-making and an understanding of how political changes affect their lives, along with empowering them to speak out on behalf of their communities' needs.

Why Community Action is Important

The final question on the 2020 Community Needs Assessment Survey was "What do you think is the most important reason you or your community needs Community Action?" Below is a cross-section of responses in the respondents' own words.

- Helping family in the past and hoping for the future as well.
- They help fix my house and pay my electric bills.
- Help find jobs since the coal mines shut down.
- To help pay electric bills in the winter months
- To help find jobs and send people to school.
- They helped my nephew go to school and pay his electric bill in December.
- Community Action people are there to help you with anything you need.
- To help the community get food/pay bills/and pay rent.
- Heating Assistance
- Liheap helps us get kerosene to stay warm.
- They helped me get training for the job.
- They help homeless people into shelters and sometimes into their own home.
- To help pay my rent so I am not homeless again.
- To help kids in Headstart and pay utility bills.
- Help fix houses to make electric bills cheaper and help pay electric bills.
- To help people in the community pay bills and find jobs.
- Heating assistance and housing for the homeless.
- To help with heating expenses.

- They help build a stronger, more positive community.
- Help pay electric bills and get kerosene.
- To pay electric bills and help my family get kerosene in winter.
- To help get us off the street.
- Better paying jobs, more vocational training programs, and transportation.

Initial Conclusions

- CSBG staff must continue to expand on the agency's resource guide, which is currently in process and kept up to date. Referrals to proper agencies and partners will assist our clients in having all of their needs met including those that are outside the purview of the agency.
- More agencies and community officials must be encouraged to attend interagency meetings in order to build stronger communication about available resources, which can be shared with those in need at even more entry points into the system.
- The agency must work toward finding more program funding so that a greater number of people can be served.
- The agency needs to conduct outreach to current and former military members and to form stronger partnerships with local veterans' service programs.