

Capital Area Community
Action Agency
Needs Assessment:

Head Start and Community Services Block Grant



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Capital Area Community Action Agency Head Start (HS) and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Needs Assessment addressed needs, strengths, and resources in serviced counties to inform Capital Area Community Action Agency’s policy and decision making pertaining to these grant funded services. Primary study objectives included:

- Describe and characterize service areas and targeted population
- Describe and characterize availability and accessibility of services
- Identify and describe demand or need for services
- Identify and describe relevant community strengths, resources, and supports
- Make recommendations for closing service need gaps

CAPITAL AREA: PHILOSOPHY AND SERVICES

The Capital Area Community Action Agency (Capital Area) is a private non-profit organization serving the needs of the community in Leon, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jefferson, Liberty, and Wakulla counties. The agency’s mission is to provide a comprehensive, seamless system of services and resources to reduce the detrimental effects of poverty, empower low-income citizens with skills and motivation to become self-sufficient, and improve the overall quality of their lives, and our community. Services offered by Capital Area are summarized in the chart below.

Capital Area Community Action Agency Services and Programs				
Crisis Services	Head Start	Project Independence	Weatherization	Getting Ahead
Emergency Shelter Project Quincy Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Weatherization Talquin Electric (TAP) Project Share Direct Emergency Assistance Program (DEAP) Hardest Hit Fund	Federal program for preschool children, including those with disabilities, from low-income families. Participants have access to school readiness program, medical and dental services, speech therapy and mental health treatment	Micro-Enterprise Small Business Development Program assists clients with special skills and motivation to start their own business. On-the-Job Training Program - Food Vouchers - Bus Passes/Gas Vouchers - Transportation - Rental and Utility Deposit Assistance - Mortgage Assistance - Prescriptions - Referrals	Provides minor repairs to the homes of low-income individuals and families to permanently reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient.	Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin’-by-World is a 16-week program where participants work together to explore where they are now, the opportunities in their community and, write their future story.



STUDY METHODS

A mixed methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis was used to assess the needs in the areas served by Capital Area's HS and CSBG initiatives. Existing archival data from State, National, and Local sources and primary data sources (survey and interview data) were combined to address the study objectives. A detailed county profile for each of the eight counties served is included in the report.

Findings for counties where HS and CSBG services are offered are presented first in alphabetical order in the series of county profiles. Next, profiles for the five counties where only CSBG services are offered are presented in alphabetical order. Thus, the order of the county profiles is: Franklin, Jefferson, Leon, Calhoun, Gadsden, Gulf, Liberty, and Wakulla. Given that each of the two grants has somewhat different federal reporting and service delivery requirements, the report organization is intended to facilitate pulling information from the pertaining to one grant or the other (HS or CSBG) for ease of federal reporting or making policy and service delivery decisions.

Following the eight served county profiles is a cross-county comparison between the eight served counties and reference counties/communities selected on the basis of demographic, need, and resource indicators. The final section of the report summarizes stakeholder survey and interview data collected for this study by topic areas and by needs and strengths reported by clients, providers, partners, and Capital Area leadership and board members.

Aligned with the organization of the full report, in this Executive Summary, the findings across data sources for each of the served counties are synthesized within a brief county profile chart, followed by a section highlighting the comparison of served counties with reference counties on several need indicators. Service delivery recommendations are then offered based on study findings.

FINDINGS

County Profiles

The following charts provide brief profiles of the greatest needs and risks as well as strengths, resources, and supports for each of the counties served by Capital Area. Note that the needs and resources shown in the charts are not all inclusive of every factor assessed in this study which included well over 100 indicators of needs and strengths across data sources. Rather these charts are intended to offer a snapshot of each county's needs and resources. General resources found in all counties such as local faith-based organizations and police departments and services provided by State agencies available to all Florida residents are of critical importance in meeting community and individual needs, however, the resources included in the charts are

intended to show those uniquely available or accessible in that area. As such, these more generally available resources are not duplicated in every county profile chart.

What the county profiles demonstrate is that every county has its own complement of needs and resources. Additionally, gaps in service needs remain across all counties where the resources currently available are insufficient to meet the needs of the community. Those gaps appear most pervasive in Gadsden, Liberty, and Calhoun Counties. The gaps appear least drastic in Leon and Wakulla Counties but certain zip codes in these counties show a pattern of very high unmet needs.



WIC = Women, Infants, and Children (Food Nutrition Service)

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

HS/EHS = Head Start/Early Head Start

VPK = Voluntary Preschool

21st CCLC = 21st Century Community Learning Centers (before/after school service)

¹ Data sources include U.S. Census Bureau, American community Survey, 2012 Data Release; Florida Department of Health, Florida Charts pulled in 2013 and 2014; Florida Department of Children and Families facilities database pulled in 2013 and 2014; Surveys and Interviews custom developed for this study.

County	Description	Needs/Vulnerability	Strengths/Resources
FRANKLIN	<p>Total area of 1,037 square miles of which 544 square miles is land and 493 square miles is water. Situated along the Gulf of Mexico in the Florida panhandle. Extreme eastern tip of the county is bordered by the Ochlocknee River. Includes several large preserved areas and rivers, state parks, and islands. County seat is Apalachicola. Eastpoint and Apalachicola are the county's most populous cities. Historically home to commercial timber and fishing industry.</p> <p>Population: 11,545</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: 83% White, 15% Black, 2% Other • Youngest Children: 5% • Older Children: 12% • Adults: 66% • Older Adults: 17% 	<p>Highest Need Areas: County rates are higher relative to Florida on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Poverty • Poverty rate for young children* and female headed families • Births to teenage, unwed, and lower educated mothers. • Children in school readiness programs and kindergarten eligible for free/reduced lunch • Children 3 to 5 years with disabilities receiving pre-K services • Uninsured* • SNAP usage • WIC eligibility rates • Low education levels (High School/GED graduate or below) • Immunizations at Kindergarten entry • Smoking • Health conditions: Coronary heart disease, congestive heart failure, lung cancer, respiratory issues. <p>Moderate Need Areas: County rates are high but similar to or lower than Florida:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment • Food Stamp Recipients • Lack of basic literacy skills • Median income is lower than Florida • WIC served rates are much lower than Florida though need is higher • VPK and school readiness program participation slightly lower than Florida 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime rates have declined overall and for arrests and violent and non-violent offenses • Unemployment decreased from 2012 to 2013 • Head Start Parents served by Capital Area report high satisfaction rates with Head Start services and programming • Events occur with very low frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not speaking English well • Infants and children in foster care • Receipt of mental health services • Infant deaths <p>Educational Programs/Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 ECE facilities, 3 have Gold Seal status, 4 provide HS or EHS • 3 elementary and secondary schools (includes Charter and Alternative schools) • 21st CCILC Program-Project Impact • Franklin County Adult Learning Center <p>Service Centers/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning Coalition of NW Florida • Apalachee Regional Planning Council • North Florida Workforce Development Board • Gulf and Wakulla County Senior Citizens Associations serve Franklin citizens • Franklin Promise Coalition • Franklin Community Center • Franklin County Food Pantry • Gulf coast Workforce Center


County	Description	Needs/Vulnerability	Strengths/Resources
<p style="text-align: center;">JEFFERSON</p>	<p>Jefferson County has a total area of 636.65 square miles (1,648.9 km²), of which 597.74 square miles is land and 38.91 square miles is water. Located within Florida's northwest region, in the panhandle, Jefferson County is located in northwest Florida at the apex of the panhandle. Jefferson County is one of eight counties in North Florida that make up the Big Bend area. Leon County lies to the west, Thomas County (Georgia) to the north, Madison County to the east, and Taylor County to the southeast and Wakulla County to the southwest. Also to the south is the Gulf of Mexico. The city of Monticello is the only major town in the County.</p> <p>Population: 14,564</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: 61% White, 37% Black, 2% Other • Youngest Children: 6% • Older Children: 14% • Adults: 65% • Older Adults: 16% 	<p>Highest Need Areas: County rates are higher relative to Florida on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Poverty • Poverty rate for young children (especially) and seniors • Children in school readiness programs eligible for free/reduced lunch • Children 3 to 5 years with disabilities receiving pre-K services • Births to teenage, unwed, and lower educated mothers • SNAP usage • WIC eligibility rates • Children's Medical Services usage • Low education levels (High School/GED graduate or below) • Smoking, inactivity, obesity, respiratory issues, diabetes hospitalizations <p>Moderate Need Areas: County rates are high but similar to or lower than Florida:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uninsured • Unemployment • High school dropout • Births without adequate prenatal care • Lack of basic literacy skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Median income is lower than Florida ▲ Percent of children participating in VPK is much lower than Florida ▲ Head Start parents served by Capital area report needing increased access to transportation services and youth centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Higher rate of owner occupied homes than Florida ▲ Crime rates have declined overall and for arrests and violent and non-violent offences ▲ Head Start Parents served by Capital Area report high satisfaction rates with Head Start services and programming ▲ School Readiness rates are high and similar to Florida ▲ Child care costs are lower or comparable to other counties ▲ Events occur with very low frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not speaking English well • Infants and children in foster care • Receipt of mental health services • Infant deaths <p>Educational Programs/Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 ECE facilities, 3 have Gold Seal, 1 provides Head Start services • Four elementary/secondary public schools • Jefferson County Adult Education Center <p>Service Centers/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend • Apalachee Regional Planning Council • Jefferson County Economic Development Council • North Florida Workforce Development Board • Jefferson County Senior Citizens Center, Inc.

County	Description	Needs/Vulnerability	Strengths/Resources
	<p>Leon County encompasses 702 square miles in area, of which 667 square miles is land and 35 square miles of water. Located within Florida's northwest region, in the panhandle, Leon County is home to Florida's capital, Tallahassee, which was established in 1824. Leon County is one of eight counties in North Florida that make up the Big Bend area. Wakulla County lies to the south, Leon County to the east, and Gadsden County and Liberty County to the west. The city of Tallahassee is the only incorporated municipality in the county and is also the largest city in Florida's panhandle.</p> <p>Population: 276,506</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: 64% White, 31% Black, 5% Other • Youngest Children: 5% • Older Children: 14% • Adults: 72% • Older Adults: 9% 	<p>Highest Need Areas: County rates are higher relative to Florida on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Poverty • Poverty rate for young children • Children 3 to 5 years with disabilities receiving pre-K services • Injuries and deaths due to motor vehicle crashes <p>Moderate Need Areas: County rates are high but similar to or lower than Florida:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Births to unwed mothers • SNAP usage • Unemployment • Child eligibility for free/reduced lunch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Median income slightly lower than Florida ▲ Lower rates of receiving WIC or food stamps relative to Florida ▲ Cost of child care is high but similar to Alachua County ▲ Areas of Leon County with the highest rates of low income, unemployment, and low education include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment: 32301, 32304, 32305, 32310 • 9th grade education or less: 32304, 32305, 32310 • Needing cash assistance: 32305, 32310 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Higher education levels relative to Florida ▲ Lower teenage birth rate than Florida ▲ High rates of fully immunized Kindergarteners ▲ Head Start Parents served by Capital Area report high satisfaction rates with Head Start services and programming ▲ Uninsured rates much lower than Florida ▲ Crime rates and arrests have declined overall ▲ Most health outcomes fair better than Florida ▲ Generally greater access to health care and high quality education ▲ Low rates of not speaking English well ▲ Low rates of children in foster care <p>Educational Programs/Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 214 ECE facilities, 60 have Gold Seal, 6 HS and 4 EHS programs • 48 elementary/secondary public schools; special and alternative schools; Gretchen Everhart School for mentally handicapped • Leon Schools Adult Community Education • 21st CCLC program sites • Multiple colleges and universities including a State university system <p>Service Centers/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home to State Agency Offices • Two large Hospitals (i.e., Level II Trauma, Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) • Whole Child Leon • Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend • Apalachee Regional Planning Council • Second Harvest Food Bank • North Florida Workforce Development Board, Workforce Plus • Leon County Senior Outreach, Elder Care Services, Tallahassee Senior Center

County	Description	Needs/Vulnerability	Strengths/Resources
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #4b0082;">CALHOUN</p>	<p>Calhoun County encompasses 574 square miles in area, of which 567 square miles is land and 7 square miles of water. Located within Florida's northwest region, in the panhandle. County seat is Blountstown. One of eight counties in North Florida that make up the Big Bend area. Gulf County lies to the south, Liberty County to the east, Gadsden County to the northeast, Jackson County to the north, and Bay County to the west. Altha and Blountstown are the only incorporated municipalities in the county.</p> <p>Population: 14,639</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: 82% White, 16% Black, 3% Other • Youngest Children: 6% • Older Children: 16% • Adults: 63% • Older Adults: 15% 	<p>Highest Need Areas: County rates are higher relative to Florida on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Poverty • Poverty rate for young children and school-age children • Children in school readiness programs eligible for free/reduced lunch • Children 3 to 5 years with disabilities receiving pre-K services • Births to teenage, unwed, and lower educated mothers. • Unemployment • SNAP usage • WIC eligibility rates • Low education levels (High School/GED graduate or below) • Being in poor or fair health, adult smoking, inactivity, and obesity <p>Moderate Need Areas: County rates are high but similar to or lower than Florida:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uninsured • High school dropout • Births without adequate prenatal care • Lack of basic literacy skills <p>▶ Median income is much lower than Florida</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Higher rate of owner occupied homes than Florida ▶ Crime rates have declined for arrests and domestic violence ▶ Child care costs lower or comparable to other counties ▶ Events occur with very low frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not speaking English well • Infants and children in foster care • Major injuries • Major medical conditions • Infant deaths <p>Educational Programs/Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 ECE facilities: 3 have Gold Seal status, 1 provides HS and EHS services • 5 public elementary or secondary schools and 1 adult school • Career Technical Center <p>Service Centers/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calhoun County Senior Citizens Association, Inc • Gulf Coast Children's Advocacy Center • Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board • Early Learning Coalition of NW Florida • Apalachee Regional Planning Council

GADSDEN

County	Description	Needs/Vulnerability	Strengths/Resources
	<p>Gadsden County encompasses 528 square miles in area, of which 516 square miles are land and 12 square miles are water. Located within Florida's northwest region, in the panhandle, Gadsden County is one of eight counties that make up the Big Bend area and is surrounded by Jackson, Calhoun, Liberty, and Leon Counties in Florida. To the north, Gadsden County shares a border with the Georgia counties of Decatur, Seminole, and Grady. Its county seat is Quincy, Florida.</p> <p>Population: 46,823</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: 39% White, 58% Black, 3% Other • Youngest Children: 7% • Older Children: 17% • Adults: 63% • Older Adults: 13% 	<p>Highest Need Areas: County rates are higher relative to Florida on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Poverty* and children living in poverty* • Children eligible for free/reduced lunch in school readiness programs and Kindergarten • Children 3 to 5 years with disabilities receiving pre-K services • Births to teenage, unwed, and lower educated mothers • Births covered by emergency Medicaid • Unemployment • Food Stamp recipients • SNAP recipients • WIC eligibility rates (but lower recipient rates) • Individuals with disabilities • Lack of basic literacy skills* • Low education levels (High School/GED graduate or below) • Dropout rates • Crime rates, arrests, domestic violence, non-violent offences • Being in poor or fair health, inactivity, and obesity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Rates of births with adequate prenatal care are lower than Florida ▲ Median income lower than Florida ▲ Lower rates of children ready for kindergarten than Florida. ▲ High rate of ECE programs not Gold Seal approved and no HS/EHS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ High Immunization rates at kindergarten ▲ Violent criminal offences decreased ▲ Child care costs lower than other counties ▲ Rate of children participating in VPK higher than the State ▲ Events occur with very low frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants and children in foster care • Infant deaths <p>Educational Programs/Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33 ECE facilities: 3 have Gold Seal status • 16 public elementary or secondary schools and 1 technical institute • 21st CCLC Program sites • Gadsden County Adult and Community Education Center <p>Service Centers/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend • Apalachee Regional Planning Council • Gadsden County Senior Center • Workforce Plus

County	Description	Needs/Vulnerability	Strengths/Resources
<p>Gulf County is a county located in the panhandle of the U.S. state of Florida. The population increased 16% between 2000 and 2010. Its county seat is Port St. Joe. The county has a total area of 744.59 square miles, of which 554.60 square miles is land and 190.00 square miles is water. The St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge is part of the United States National Wildlife Refuge System, located in northwestern Florida, on the barrier island of St. Vincent, off the coast of Apalachicola.</p> <p>Population: 15,796</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: 79% White, 19% Black, 2% Other • Youngest Children: 4% • Older Children: 1.3% • Adults: 67% • Older Adults: 17% 	<p>Highest Need Areas: County rates are higher relative to Florida on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Poverty • Poverty rate for young and school-age children • Children 3 to 5 years with disabilities receiving pre-K services • Births to teenage, unwed and smoking mothers • SNAP usage • Children's Medical Services usage • Low education levels (High School/GED graduate or below) • Smoking, inactivity, and obesity <p>Moderate Need Areas: County rates are high but similar to or lower than Florida:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uninsured • Unemployment • Kindergarten and School Readiness program children eligible for free/reduced lunch • Births to low educated mothers • Births without adequate prenatal care • Lack of basic literacy skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Crime rates, arrests, violent and non-violent offences have increased ▲ Lower health screening rates than Florida ▲ Median income is lower than Florida ▲ Food stamp recipient rate is lower but poverty rate is higher than Florida ▲ Lower rate of children participating in VPK and School Readiness programs but higher rate of young children in poverty than Florida 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ High Immunization rates at kindergarten ▲ Higher rate of owner occupied homes than Florida ▲ Higher Kindergarten reading school readiness rates than Florida ▲ Low rate of not speaking English well ▲ Events occur with very low frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants and children in foster care • Child and infant death rates • Individuals with disabilities • Child birth defects and hospitalizations <p>Educational Programs/Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 ECE facilities, 1 provides HS and EHS services • Four elementary/secondary public schools • Gulf County Adult School • 21st CCLC program sites <p>Service Centers/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning Coalition of NW Florida • Apalachee Regional Planning Council • Gulf County Senior Citizens Association, Inc., Gulf County Senior Citizens and Community Center • Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board 	

County	Description	Needs/Vulnerability	Strengths/Resources
	<p>Liberty County is the least populous and least-densely populated of all of Florida's counties. The most populous incorporated area and the county seat is Bristol. Apalachicola National Forest occupies half the county. The county has a total area of 843.16 square miles, of which 835.87 square miles is land and 7.29 square miles is water. The county is bordered on the west by the Apalachicola River.</p> <p>Population: 8,300</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: 78% White, 16% Black, 6% Other • Youngest Children: 5% • Older Children: 13% • Adults: 72% • Older Adults: 10% 	<p>Highest Need Areas: County rates are higher relative to Florida on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Poverty • Poverty rate for young children and seniors • Children in kindergarten and school readiness programs eligible for free/reduced lunch • Children 3 to 5 years with disabilities receiving pre-K services • Births to teenage and unwed mothers • SNAP usage • WIC eligibility rates (but served rates much lower) • Children's Medical Services usage • Low education levels (High School/GED graduate or below) • Poor or fair health, smoking, inactivity, obesity <p>Moderate Need Areas: County rates are high but similar to or lower than Florida:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uninsured • Unemployment • Births without adequate prenatal care • Births to low educated mothers • Lack of basic literacy skills ▲ Median income is lower than Florida ▲ More children in Foster care than most other served counties ▲ Food stamp recipient rate is lower but poverty rate is higher than Florida ▲ Lower health screening rates than Florida ▲ Overall crime and violent, non-violent, and total offenses increased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ High Immunization rates at kindergarten ▲ Higher rate of owner occupied homes than Florida ▲ Though crime rates have increased overall, total arrests have decreased ▲ Kindergarten reading school readiness rates are high and similar to Florida ▲ Low rate of not speaking English well ▲ Rates of children participating in School Readiness programs and VPK is higher than Florida to help meet the higher young child poverty rate in Liberty ▲ Events occur with very low frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants in foster care • Infant deaths <p>Educational Programs/Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 ECE facilities, 1 with Gold Seal status, 1 provides HS and EHS services • Three elementary/secondary public schools and one magnet school • Liberty County Adult School <p>Service Centers/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend • Health Families Florida Project • Apalachee Regional Planning Council • Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board • Liberty County Senior Citizens Association

County	Description	Needs/Vulnerability	Strengths/Resources
	<p>Wakulla County encompasses 736 square miles in area, of which 607 square miles is land and 129 square miles of water. Located within Florida's northwest region, in the panhandle, Wakulla County has two incorporated municipalities: Sopchoppy and St. Marks. Wakulla County is one of eight counties in North Florida that make up the Big Bend area. Franklin County lies to the southwest, Jefferson County to the east, Leon County to the north, and Liberty County to the west. The county seat, Crawfordville, is the only unincorporated county seat among Florida's 67 counties.</p> <p>Population: 30,449</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: 83% White, 14% Black, 3% Other • Youngest Children: 6% • Older Children: 16% • Adults: 67% • Older Adults: 11% 	<p>Highest Need Areas: County rates are higher relative to Florida on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty rate for school-age children • Children in school readiness programs eligible for free/reduced lunch • Children 3 to 5 years with disabilities receiving pre-K services • Smoking, inactivity, and obesity <p>Moderate Need Areas: County rates are high but similar to or lower than Florida:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall Poverty • Kindergarten children eligible for free/reduced lunch • Low education levels (High School/GED graduate or below) • Uninsured • Unemployment • High school dropout • Births to teenage and unwed mothers • Births without adequate prenatal care <p>▲ Lower rates of kindergarten children fully immunized relative to Florida</p> <p>▲ WIC eligibility rate is similar to Florida but recipient rate is much lower</p> <p>▲ Higher rate of individuals with disabilities and limited activity and use of special equipment due to health issues relative to Florida</p> <p>▲ Lower VPK participation but similar rates of School Readiness participation and free/reduced lunch eligibility as Florida</p> <p>▲ Areas of Wakulla County with highest need by topic and zip code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment: 32346 and 32355 • Uninsured Minors: 32327 and 32346 • Income less than \$35, 000: 32327 and 32346 • Low education levels: 32327, 32346, and 32358 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Low rate of lacking basic literacy skills compared to other counties and Florida ▲ Lower rates of births to low education mothers compared to Florida ▲ Median income is higher compared to other served counties and Florida ▲ Lower SNAP rates compared to Florida ▲ Food Stamp need and recipient rate is lower than Florida ▲ Higher rate of owner occupied homes than Florida ▲ Overall crime rates and arrests declined ▲ Child care costs are reasonable compared to similarly sized counties ▲ Low rate of not speaking English well ▲ Events occur with very low frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants and children in foster care • Child and infant death rates <p>Educational Programs/Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 ECE facilities: 1 with Gold Seal status, 1 provides EHS services • 7 public elementary or secondary schools, 1 charter school, Second Chance Alternative High School—Adult School • 21st CCLC program sites <p>Service Centers/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively close proximity to Leon County resources (e.g., medical facilities, State Agency Offices, institutions of higher education, etc.) • Wakulla County Coalition for Youth • Wakulla County One Stop Center • Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend • Wakulla Senior Citizens Center, Wakulla County Senior citizens Council • Workforce Plus • Apalachee Regional Planning Council

Geographical Comparisons

Comparisons are made across select geographical areas on community population statistics, socio-demographic characteristics, family and household community characteristics, health and wellness factors, access to services, and cost of child care. Geographical comparisons summarized in this Executive Summary include:

Comparisons with counties served by CSBG and HS grants:

- Alachua County compared to Leon County
- Jackson County compared to Franklin and Jefferson counties

Comparisons with counties served by the CSBG grant alone:

- Jackson County compared to Wakulla, Calhoun, Gadsden, Gulf, and Liberty counties
- Citrus County compared to Wakulla, Calhoun, Gadsden, Gulf, and Liberty counties

In the full study, a multitude of factors were selected for comparison across these counties. As well, Tallahassee (the major city within Leon County) was also compared with Gainesville (the major city

in Alachua County). Comprehensive findings on all geographical comparisons and factors assessed can be found in the body of the report. In this Executive Summary, four factors have been selected to demonstrate general patterns of need across served and comparison counties:

- Poverty Rates
- Uninsured Rates
- Low Education Rates (High School Diploma or Less)
- Teenage Pregnancy Rates

Findings for these four factors are presented in Figures 1 through 8. These data are from the U.S. Census Bureau, America community Survey. Figures 1 and 2 depict 2012 poverty rates across counties as well as the State of Florida. The highest poverty rates are found in Alachua, Gadsden, and Liberty Counties. With one exception, Wakulla, all counties have higher poverty rates relative to Florida. The poverty rate in Leon County is lower compared to the rate in Alachua County. Jackson and Citrus County poverty rates are most comparable to those of Leon and Jefferson.

Figure 1. Poverty Rate in 2012 Across HS and CSBG Served Counties and Reference Counties

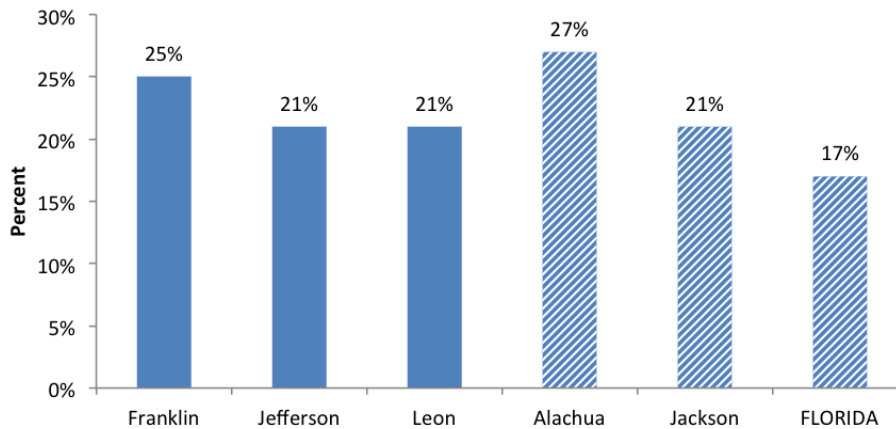
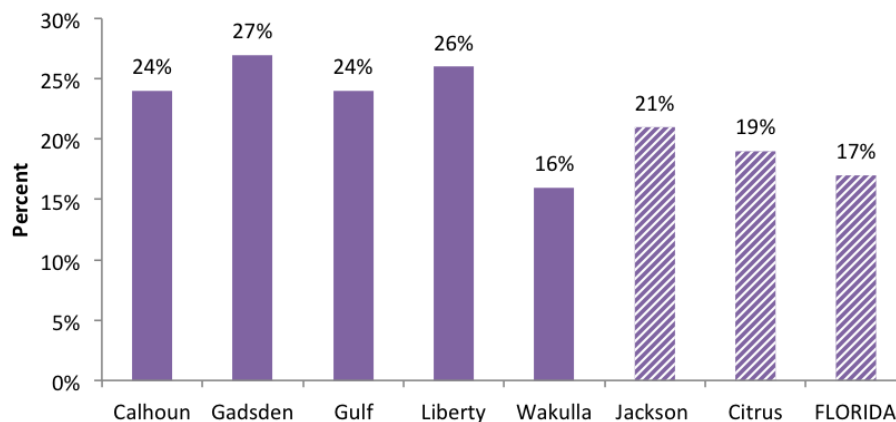


Figure 2. Poverty Rate in 2012 Across CSBG-Only Served Counties and Reference Counties



Uninsured rates across geographical comparison areas are shown in Figures 2 and 3. The uninsured rates range between 17% and 25% across comparison areas. Notably, the uninsured rate in Alachua (20%) is higher than the rate in Leon County (17%) which has the lowest rate of any of the geographical areas assessed. The highest rates are found in Franklin, Gadsden, and in the State as a whole. Uninsured rates in Jackson are comparable to those of Leon and Wakulla. The uninsured rate in Citrus is similar to the rates in Calhoun, Gulf, Liberty, and Jefferson.

Figure 3. Uninsured Persons Rate in 2010 Across HS and CSBG Served Counties and Reference Counties



Figure 4. Uninsured Persons Rate in 2010 Across CSBG-Only Served Counties and Reference Counties

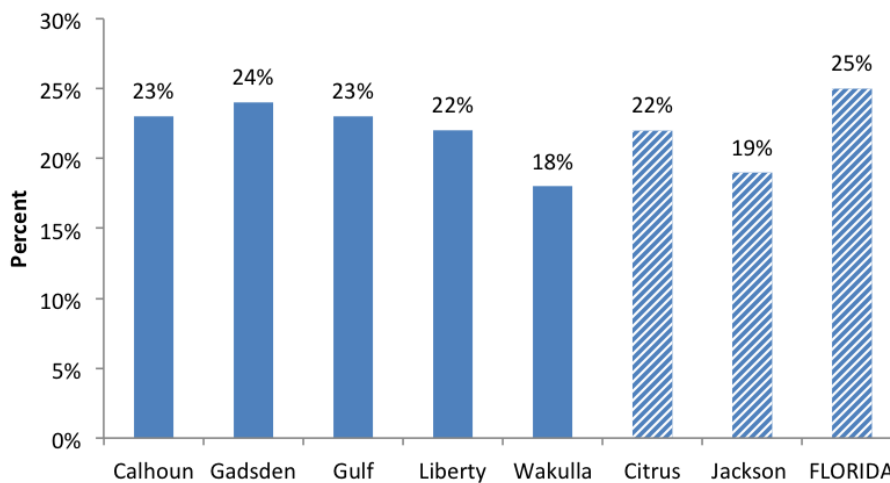


Figure 5 and 6 depict rates of adults with only a High School Diploma or Lower. Alachua and Leon Counties have comparable rates which are much lower than the State or other counties examined in this study. Both of these counties are home to State University systems as well as other post-secondary institutions suggesting greater access to educational opportunities for residents in these areas. Low education rates in Citrus and Jackson are close to rates in all of the other counties with exception of Calhoun and Liberty which have the highest rates at 67% of adults with no college training or degree.

Figure 5. Percent of Individuals with Low Education Levels (High School Diploma or Lower) in HS and CSBG Served Counties and Reference Counties (2008 to 2012 average rates).

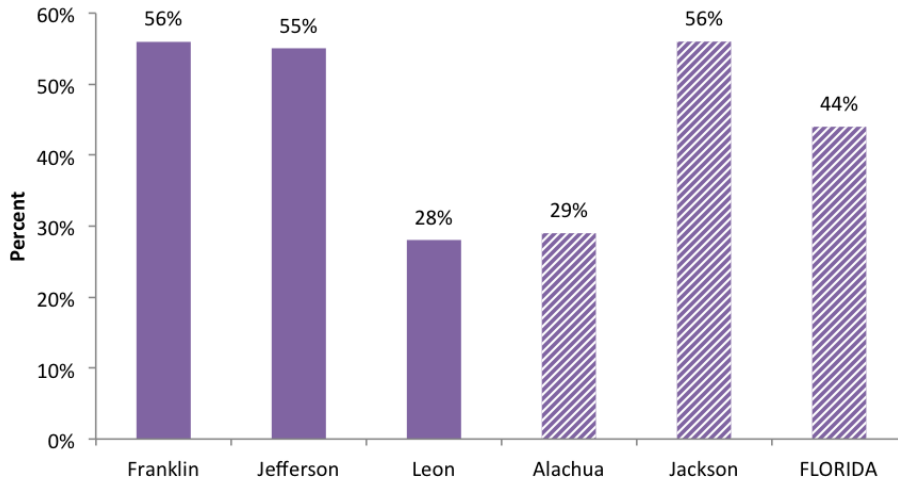
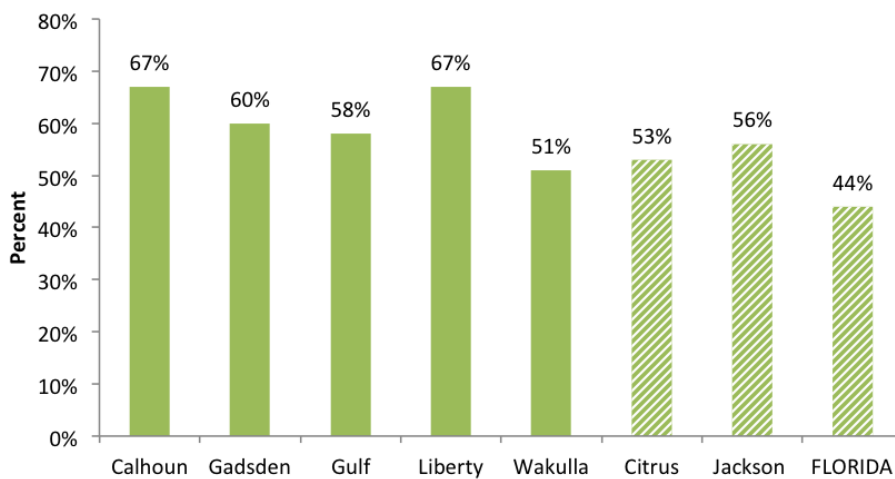


Figure 6. Percent of Individuals with Low Education Levels (High School Diploma or Lower) in CSBG-Only Served Counties and Reference Counties (2008 to 2012 average rates).



Shown in Figures 7 and 8, the teenage birth rate (per 1000 females ages 15 to 19) is lowest in Leon and Alachua Counties. The teenage birth rate in those counties is also much lower compared to Florida. Rates in Jackson and Citrus are most comparable to those in Jefferson and Gulf. The highest teenage birth rates are found in Franklin followed by Calhoun, Gadsden, and Liberty.

Figure 7. Teenage Birth Rates in HS and CSBG Served Counties and Reference Counties (2010 to 2012 average rates).

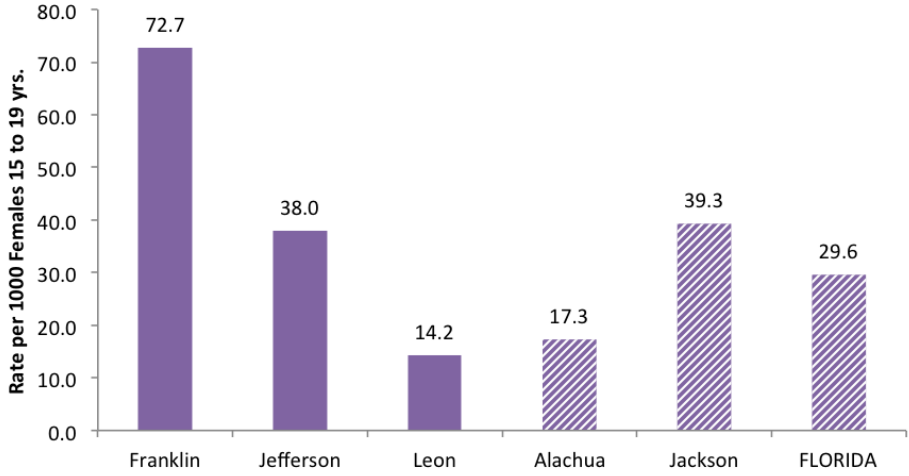
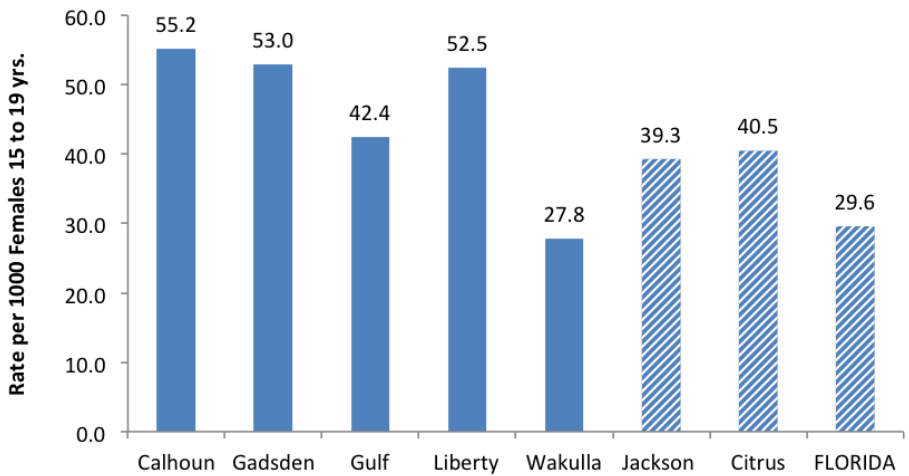


Figure 8. Teenage Birth Rates in CSBG-Only Served Counties and Reference Counties (2010 to 2012 average rates).



Barriers and High Needs

Capital Area services are intended to help ameliorate the deleterious effects of abject poverty. It is not surprising then that this needs assessment has illuminated the high rates of poverty and factors associated with poverty in the serviced counties. The high need areas that emerged from existing data sources converged with self-reports of clients, parents, providers, administrators and board members. The individual needs of each of the served counties are summarized in the county profile charts above.

The need profiles for each county can be used as a guide for making decisions about distributing limited resources toward reducing the highest need areas within each county. In some cases this may be through improving client awareness of services and understanding of how to access services, leveraging and streamlining community resources, or bolstering professional development and self sufficiency efforts as indicated throughout this section. Recommendations are provided cutting across all counties and funding streams followed by recommendations specific to the CSBG and HS grants.

Before summarizing recommendations derived from this needs assessment, it is important to acknowledge that some barriers or challenges may limit the extent to which suggestions can be implemented. Major barriers are as follows. Some of these could be addressed and minimized while others will be beyond the agency's control.

- Agency funding limitations
- Staff time constraints
- Commitment and motivation of others (other community agencies or organizations, clients, etc.)
- Client transportation barriers
- Economy

General Recommendations

Leveraging Community Resources to Improve Service Coordination, Awareness, and Access

Based on stakeholder reports, there is a clear need for improved awareness of and accessing available community services. There are several areas where the rate of individuals eligible for a service was as high as or higher than the rate for the State but the rate of receipt of the service was lower. Examples include WIC, Food Stamps, VPK, Head Start/Early Head Start, afterschool programs, and other governmental services for low- and middle-income families. Based on this needs assessment, part of the issue is individuals not being aware of the services or not knowing the process for securing these services. In other cases there may be waitlists for services. Another common suggestion across all stakeholder groups was to streamline services and reduce duplication of services across agencies and organizations. Some efforts to address these issues of awareness, access, and streamlining of services include:

- Work with other community organizations to develop a web-based central repository of community and State and Federal resources and services to inform and connect

clients with resources in their respective communities. This repository would also allow for better streamlining of services and reducing duplication of services. The Wakulla County One Stop Center could be used a possible model and Whole Child Leon as a model for services to children.

- Meet with a group of organizations or agencies providing services to meet community needs related to Capital Area's mission. This might take the form of a consortium or taskforce with the goal of generating ideas to match and leverage existing State and community services. Such an effort could enhance commitments from other agencies and organizations in support of Capital Area's services. This group could also be tasked with identifying additional funding opportunities for Capital Area to consider applying.
- Leverage the benevolence efforts of the faith-based community to assist families and coordinate efforts to reduce duplication to ensure the neediest families are provided assistance.
- Promote and encourage families to use 2-1-1 Big Bend, the helpline designed to assist families in navigating and obtaining services to meet their specific needs in their counties. Services can be accessed via telephone or computer.

Expanding Services

Across all stakeholders including those receiving services as well as those directly providing services and those in administration, there is a strong motivation to have increased professional development opportunities for clients to help them improve their workforce skills as well as their changes for securing gainful employment at a living wage. To meet this common goal, focus efforts and resources on:

- Offering professional development trainings or aligning clients and parents with available continuing education, technical training, or post-secondary training opportunities. Aligning clients with existing scholarships or grants for which they may be eligible.



- Aligning clients with prevention programs in their area such as 21st CCLC programs. Most of the served counties currently have 21st CCLC program sites which serve lower income children and families. Some of these programs offer parent literacy activities as well as educational enrichment for children and youth.
- Self-sufficiency initiatives to build employable skills and capacities enhancing long-term economic security for the individuals and communities served.

Grant Specific Recommendations

Both CSBG clients and Head Start parents served by Capital Area were very satisfied with the services they and their families have received by Capital Area. There was common sentiment for Capital Area services to be maintained. The perspectives of providers, clients, and parents served by Capital Area's CSBG and HS grants mirrored information from existing data sources in terms of the needs they face. These stakeholder groups were also asked to offer recommendations for improvements to services in the future. These findings are summarized below.



Community Services Block Grant

The areas mentioned in the CSBG client and provider surveys as most concerning included:

- Not having reliable transportation to get to work, school, or a service agency to receive support.
- Inadequate medical and dental care or insurance.
- Difficulty covering basic living expenses such as paying for their rent/mortgage or utilities.
- Concerns over not having education levels needed to obtain, retain, or advance at their job and not having transportation and/or resources to access educational opportunities.
- Child care issues including lack of transportation, cost of care and the hours that child care program is available.

Administrators and provider staff recommended the following to support staff and address client needs.

- Establish an employee training program
- Hire more staff
- Share client lists with other service agencies
- Regularly survey clients to ensure needs are being met

Head Start Grant

Surveys collected from staff, administrators, and parents of children participating in Capital Area Head Start programs yielded two common need areas that were consistently reported across providers and parents: transportation and income related issues.

Head Start families are clearly in need of supports and services in areas of obtaining gainful employment with wages commensurate with the cost of living, accessible and affordable health and dental care, and professional development opportunities. Other needs associated with employment and wages are also reported by Head Start parents such as food, housing and transportation.

Parents offered recommendations for Head Start services.

- Offer, increase, or maintain transportation services
- Allow more opportunities for parents to get involved or receive information in areas such as the VPK program, parenting skills, and their child's progress.
- Extend the program (through the summer) or increase the hours of operation
- Offer programs for children with special needs

When asked what barriers stand in the way of fully meeting family's needs, staff and administrators reported limitations in funding, space at their Head Start programs, and communication with parents and the community. Recommendations by staff and administrators for improving services to better meet Head Start family needs include:

- Meet with agencies providing similar services to plan for improvement
- Identify services offered by local churches to better leverage those services

Another common theme related to child care that cut across stakeholder surveys was cost of child care. While the cost of child care appears to be less in the Panhandle and Big Bend areas of the state, the costs are still relatively high for families. Head Start, Early Head Start and child care subsidies help to fill a critical need for low-income families. Low-income parents who are not able to access either a Head Start program or child care subsidy have few incentives for seeking and maintaining employment given the high cost of child care. Thus, Capital Area's Head Start services are meeting an important community need in the areas it serves.





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