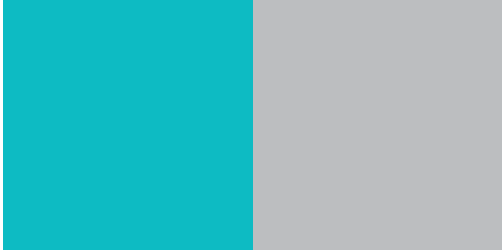


Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities



King County
211 calls for basic
needs in Bellevue
52% in 2014
56% in 2016




 **Mini City Hall**
27,724
requests human
service resources




Best Starts for Kids
\$392.3 million
focusing on
prevention and
early intervention
for youth in KC



Family connection centers
are located in **6** elementary,
2 middle, and **2** high
schools in Bellevue



16% reported
having a lot of
stress, anxiety or
depression that
interferes with
daily life.



GOAL #2: SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN FAMILIES, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND COMMUNITIES

Why is This Goal Area Important?

Social support helps to give people the emotional and practical resources they need to feel cared for, valued and secure. The term social support refers to the physical and emotional comfort that we receive from family, friends and others. These human connections often are looked to when formal support agencies cannot assist. Studies show that social support is an important factor in predicting health and wellbeing no matter what age, from young children through older adults. Service areas in this support network include social support for individuals, families and adults, legal assistance, and information and referral.

What's Working?

- Eastside Pathways was started by community volunteers in 2011 who believe that it is unacceptable for any child in Bellevue to fail to graduate from high school. Initial conversations brought overwhelming support from the Bellevue School District, Bellevue Schools Foundation, City of Bellevue, Bellevue College, a number of community groups, private citizens and non-profit organizations. Eastside Pathways is based on a "collective impact" model, a systemic approach that focuses on relationships between organizations and progress towards shared objectives. Some of the current projects include sponsoring school campaigns that encourage attendance, improving opportunities for students in 4th grade through age 26, and focusing on early learning, birth through kindergarten, ensuring that all kids enter school ready to learn. In all the activities, supporting and involving parents and family members is a major focus.
- The Wrap-Around Services Program, a collaboration of the Bellevue School District, City of Bellevue, and United Way of King County, began in 2005 at Lake Hills Elementary School. The program is designed to provide eleven objectives for students, their families and the surrounding school community. To date Wrap-Around Services has partnered with numerous local agencies and organizations with great success: it has bolstered academic achievement and family involvement in schools and enhanced neighborhood vitality through community celebrations and local business collaboration.
- The Together Center works collaboratively to ensure people find the help they need. It is a sustainable one-stop model that allows people to find services, improving accessibility and connecting face-to-face with 20 essential agencies under one roof including medical, dental, child care, and mental health. Another feature is that the Together Center can also provide space on a weekly or monthly basis for providers, such as Cultural Navigators, as needed. Located in Redmond, it is a resource for all of East King County.

Service Trends

Support for Individuals, Families, and Adults Raising Children.

- Support for older adults is even more critical as the population ages, and more families live long distances apart. Many older adults will be “aging in place” and will require in-home care, most likely from family, friends and neighbors, in addition to paid providers. Programs that keep older adults active in the community are important opportunities for decreasing isolation. Examples of Eastside programs that engage older adults include Hopelink’s “Travel Ambassador” program, which helps people learn about travel options, including taking the bus, Bellevue Network on Aging which advocates for elder-friendly communities and services, and Bellevue School District’s elementary school tutor and mentoring programs. (Note: For more information about this topic, please see the Older Adults section in this report.)
- Adults with children under age 18 were asked in a 2011 survey how often they have someone to turn to for day-to-day emotional help with childrearing. In East King County, 79% of respondents stated that they had this support in parenting all or most of the time. The highest percentage was in Seattle, where 89% of respondents said they have this support. The percentage was 82% in King County as a whole; parents who were people of color, foreign born or had incomes under \$50,000 reported getting less emotional support.¹
- **In the 2017 Bellevue phone/online survey, having a lot of stress, anxiety or depression that interferes with your daily life was rated as a major or moderate household problem by 16% of respondents**, about the same as 2011,

2013 and 2015. It was the third highest rated problem.

- Respondents to the 2017 Next Door Survey rated *having a lot of stress, anxiety, or depression which interfere with your daily life* as the second highest household problem.
- Jubilee REACH Center, a family support center sponsored by the First Presbyterian Church of Bellevue in the Lake Hills neighborhood, provides numerous programs that support individuals and families. These include before and after-school programs, medical and vision clinics, on-site school programs called Club Jubilee, mentoring, youth activities such as community service projects, and English-as-a-Second-Language classes with childcare. This center also provides community meal programs, some with an international focus, and a dental van for low-income children and adults.²
- **Located in 6 elementary, 2 middle and 2 high schools in the Bellevue School District, Family Connections Centers** facilitate improved access to human services between home, school, and community. Staff refer families to local agencies for clothing and food, as well as counseling, housing, employment, emergency financial assistance and health care. Many schools have students from refugee and immigrant families, as well as many families eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program.³
- Single parents may need more support. Whether mothers or fathers, they often have special needs because they may be the sole providers of their children’s needs. Nearly 11% of all households in Bellevue are composed of single-parent households.⁴ Families with a female householder, no husband present, and related children under age 18 had the highest poverty rates of families in Bellevue at 30.7%.⁵

Support for Early Learning to Promote School Readiness

- In 2003, more than 120 agencies, organizations and individuals from across King County helped to develop An Early Childhood and School Readiness Action Agenda, which aims to improve school readiness for children birth to five years. It is part of SOAR, a collaborative focused on helping kids succeed from birth-24. Brain science and research concludes that children begin learning from birth, so the earlier a child has opportunities to develop socially, cognitively, and emotionally, the better he or she will do in school and life. One collaboration is the King County Early Learning Coalition that brings together early learning stakeholders to oversee SOAR's early learning activities. This coalition is one of ten in Washington State as part of the Department of Early Learning.⁶
- Eastside Pathways School Readiness Collaborative was formed to expend family and early learning opportunities in currently new underserved communities. Some of its activities include hosting parent engagement opportunities and fostering collaborations among group members.⁷
- Home Visiting Programs have been shown to increase parent-child bonding and result in children gaining the social emotional and other skills that improve school readiness. The Parent Child Home Program is a voluntary home visiting program funded through a special initiative by United Way of King County throughout the county. There are two sites in East King County, one at Kindering Center and one at Encompass in North Bend. The services and information handouts are provided in the family's home language. 90% of families served by Kindering's Parent Child Program are under the Federal Poverty Level and half make less than \$15,000 a year.⁸ At Encompass, in 2016-2017, 36 families were served, with 64% of them Spanish speaking households. A major challenge for this program is their large service area, requiring home visitors to coordinate visits to minimize extensive driving. Both programs are seeing increases in positive parent-child interaction, positive social interaction and participation by the child during the home visit.⁹
- Healthy Start is a voluntary home visiting program that uses the Parents as Teachers model to support healthy child development, enhance parenting skills, improve the quality of parent-child interactions and promote school readiness activities for at-risk families. This program results in increased parenting skills, low rates of involvement with child welfare, and parents meeting goals of being more independent, by going to work or school. In 2017 Healthy Start served 56 Bellevue individuals in 27 families: 61% identified as Hispanic/Latino; 30% had less than a high school diploma or no GED and less than 1% were homeless.¹⁰
- Eastside Baby Corner (EBC) supplies food banks, schools and other organizations with basic infant and child supplies like formula, cribs, diapers, and clothing. In 2015, they reported providing 859,676 diapers, 4,253 cans of formula, and 1,374 car seats to the community.¹¹
- Family, friends and neighbors (FFNs) provide care for an estimated 60,000 children in King County. For 28,000 of those children, FFNs are the primary source of care when parents are working or attending school.¹² Child Care Resources sponsors the Family, Friend and Neighbor Project, whose goal is to provide a comprehensive, community-based network of supports and resources for family, friend and neighbor caregivers and the children in their care. One activity is an informal play group called Play and Learn where children birth to five and their caregivers can interact. The Kaleidoscope

Play and Learn Model was designated in 2013 as a promising practice by the Evidence Based Practice Institute at the University of Washington. There are 8 such groups in East King County and two in Bellevue one of which is conducted in Mandarin and English, and one conducted in Spanish and English.¹³

Increased Resources for School-Aged Kids

- In 2015 King County Executive Dow Constantine proposed **“Best Starts for Kids”, a six year levy that would raise approximately \$58 million in the first year and a cumulative \$392.3 million to improve outcomes for all children and youth in King County focusing on prevention and early intervention.**

These are the most effective and least expensive compared to the cost of treating serious problems such as mental illness and substance abuse.

Voters passed the Levy in November 2015 in King County. The split for the funds allocation

includes 50% for children under age 5, 35% for children and youth age 5-24, 9% for Communities of Opportunity, a project in South King County, and 6% for evaluation, data collection and improving the delivery of services and programs for children and youth. As of 2017, the BSK core team has been hired and many of the grants have been allocated. Under the data collection

“Parenting classes are needed for different language groups in the school district.”

**— Family Connections Centers
Community Conversations**

bucket of funding, the BSK Kids Health Survey was conducted. This survey was recognized with the National Equity Award. There was a high priority on capturing data from traditionally underrepresented groups which meant providing the survey in 6 different languages and the option of bilingual, bicultural phone interviews as well as paper and online surveys. Over 6,000 people participated, and the data is now available in an interactive format. This data will be used to better inform future funding and programming for BSK, which will create more resources for school-aged kids. More information on the data findings is discussed in School-Aged Children & Youth section.¹⁴

Work/Family Supports

- Work and family support needs in the United States are increasing as more families work longer hours, and have more responsibilities in caring for their children, as well as for medically fragile, older family members; these caregivers are commonly called the “sandwich generation.”
- A 2013 Pew Research Center report found that in the U.S., mothers are the primary or sole income earners in 40% of households with children, compared to 1960 when only 11% were sole income earners.¹⁵ As of November 2016, however, 69% of children live in a two parent household in the US. Single mother led is now the second most common household type at 23%. Sixty six percent of fathers and 62% of mothers work outside of the home.¹⁶
- According to the Employee Benefits Survey Report in Washington State published in 2013, from 2006 to 2013, there were across-the-board increases in the percent of employers that offered paid leave to employees with the exception of vacation leave offered to full-time employees as

“Renters need to help to know their rights as tenants. Renters are afraid to ask for repairs because they think the landlord will tell them to move out”

— Faith Community Conversation

shown in Figure 1. This reverses a trend in which employers offering some paid leave was decreasing.¹⁷ Especially hopeful is the news that more companies are providing some kind of sick leave benefits; without sick leave, many workers must choose between working when they, their children or an elderly parent is ill, using vacation days (if available), or risk losing pay or their jobs. This concern was mentioned again by human services providers who work with single parents. They expressed the need for childcare when their children are sick. However, there is still a gap for part-time workers for all paid leave, with a much

smaller percentage receiving benefits when compared to those who work full time.

Need for Low-Cost Legal Assistance

- Access to justice is an American value, but many low-income people are left out due to inability to pay for civil legal aid. Civil legal aid, legal assistance for those who cannot afford it, is also seen as an anti-poverty tool, allowing access to rights and benefits and advocating for laws and policies that promote fairness regardless of socioeconomic status. Nationally, there is an estimated 1 million low-income Americans in need of legal aid, but due to lack of resources, only 50% will be able to receive adequate assistance. Eighty six percent of the civil legal problems faced by low-income Americans in 2016 alone received either no legal assistance or inadequate assistance. These statistics represent the “justice gap”, which is the difference between the number of people in need of legal civil aid and the current resources available. The justice gap continues to grow.¹⁸

YEAR	FIRMS THAT OFFERED PAID LEAVE TO FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES				FIRMS THAT OFFERED PAID LEAVE TO PART-TIME EMPLOYEES			
	Undesignated	Sick Leave	Vacation	Holiday	Undesignated	Sick leave	Vacation	Holiday
2006	23.4%	46.1%	74.2%	71.0%	9.1%	17.6%	26.4%	28.9%
2007	20.3%	44.0%	73.1%	68.3%	7.4%	14.1%	23.05%	25.8%
2008	20.5%	41.7%	69.6%	66.0%	8.1%	15.5%	24.4%	27.0%
2009	22.5%	41.2%	64.2%	62.3%	8.6%	14.3%	22.8%	24.8%
2010	21.5	44.1%	67.9%	66.2%	8.2%	15.3%	22.2%	25.7%
2011	21.8%	44.9%	67.5%	65.3%	8.7%	15.5%	23.1%	24.3%
2012	63.5%	26.6%	44.2%	65.1%	24.8%	10.0%	15.4%	22.1%
2013	30.9%	49.1%	69.9%	90.1%	15.1%	23.55	28.7%	32.2%
Percent change from 2006 to 2013	7.5%	3.0%	-4.3%	19.1%	6.0%	5.9%	2.3%	3.3%

Figure 1 | Numbers are not directly comparable because the universe of employers surveyed changes from year to year.

- At the request of the Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid, (OCLA), the State Supreme Court established a committee to oversee a comprehensive update of the 2003 Civil Legal Needs Study. The updated study released in June 2015 found that, consistent with the 2003 study, more than 70% of low-income households had a civil legal problem within the past 12 months but more than three quarters of them did not seek help or were not able to obtain legal help for these problems. Also, consistent with 2003, large percentages of low-income people did not get help because they did not understand the problems they faced had a legal dimension. There was also a change in what problems were experienced by low-income Washingtonians. In 2003, the top problems were housing, family relations and employment; in 2015 the highest percentage of problems were in the areas of health care, consumer-finance (credit and debt collection) and employment. One positive finding was that while in 2003, 12% were able to get legal help, in 2014, 24% got legal help with one or more problems.¹⁹
- The Northwest Justice Project (NJP) provides a statewide law firm with 13 regional and 2 satellite offices to address the civil legal needs of low-income people in Washington with some paid staff and a number of volunteer attorneys. NJP maintains the statewide legal hotline, CLEAR, and a number of specialized units including ones to help veterans, victims of domestic violence, vulnerable populations, homeowners facing foreclosures an online help for other legal issues. In 2016, NJP closed 13,718 cases, helping 29,601 individuals, including 13,200 children, 2,595 seniors, and 1,290 veterans.²⁰

Finding Help: Information and Referral

- **During the first six months of 2017, staff at the City of Bellevue’s Mini City Hall (MCH) at Crossroads Shopping Center received 27,724 requests from customers for resource information, with 56% related to human service needs.** In 2016, the MCH received 50,871 requests, with 54.5% related to human service needs. Due to the recession, staff began to see a steady increase in human service contacts, beginning in late 2008 and early 2009; the percentage has remained steady since then. The most frequent human service requests during the past 6 months are centered on access to healthcare as well as uncertainty and fear about the future with existing healthcare. There is also a new trend since the federal election of people contacting MCH staff with concerns about travel and discrimination, ranging from uneasiness to fear centered on the travel ban and

“Make sure all people/agencies serving others know of all of the resources in the community.”

— Bellevue Diversity Advisory
NetworkCommunity Conversation

feeling less safe and welcome in their community. Families are seeking support and advice about next steps with these two issues and also are reporting incidents of discrimination and bullying and

asking for guidance with these issues. As in past years, affordable housing, mental health counseling referrals, job development and referrals for help with long term unemployment are the most frequent human service requests. While the total number of

clients have not increased since 2016, staff see a trend in spending more time with each customer as more agencies and organizations don't have the capacity to respond especially to those with limited English, mental health issues and those with healthcare questions and concerns about the future. Staff also report that some people who come in for help with a job search tell them that though the recession has been "officially" over for several years, they are still struggling with making ends meet with lower wage jobs with less hours and benefits. Customers also relate that the economy seems only to be better for the high tech, younger job seekers but actually is providing less opportunities for those left behind. This increases the stress and hopelessness that they feel about their lives improving. Volunteer interpreters and city staff offer help in Chinese, (Mandarin and Cantonese), Korean, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Arabic, Hindi, Bengali and Urdu. Cultural Navigators assist customers several days a week in Spanish and Russian. Efforts to create written materials about city activities and services in languages other than English have been developing city wide and websites in different languages have been updated and improved with the launch of the city's new website. Staff have access to the dual receiver language line which provides an over-the-phone interpreter in over 100 languages at MCH and throughout the city at community centers. The MCH continues to refer newcomers to programs and events that help connect them to their new community. The city's Cultural Conversations program continues to grow in numbers and popularity since its inception in 2009 as a way to fight the isolation of moving from a persons homeland. Supporting and creating opportunities for community connection is a priority as more people from all over the world come to live in Bellevue.²¹

- During the 2003 Washington State legislative session, lawmakers passed a bill making the three digit dialing code "2-1-1" the official state number for information about health and human services, including access after a natural or other disaster. Washington Information Network (WIN 2-1-1) is a one-stop approach that streamlines access to social service agencies and resources. In the first quarter of 2017, the centers received 81,998 calls, leading to 129,024 referrals. The top unmet needs are emergency shelter and rent/mortgage assistance.²²
- Crisis Clinic is the designated agency in King County for 2-1-1. It provides services Monday -Friday from 8 am to 6 pm. In 2016, the number of calls for assistance countywide increased substantially with 151,841 in 2016 compared to 136,736 in 2015. Inadequate funding continues to impact staffing, and they were not able to answer all of the incoming calls. Of the calls answered and logged, there were 78,747 in 2016 compared to 99,121 in 2015.²³
- As Figure 2 shows, the percentage of calls from Bellevue residents for basic needs greatly increased although the total numbers of calls decreased in 2016. The number of calls answered and logged decreased overall as well. In 2016, calls for permanent housing totaled 328 compared to 440 in 2014. It represents 25% of the calls for basic needs, which was very similar in 2014. Within the basic need calls, calls for emergency shelter or motel vouchers represented 35% or 454 calls. In 2014, these calls represented 40% of the basic need calls.
- Calls for Domestic Violence Shelter remained similar with 6% or 76 calls in 2016 compared to 7% or 127 calls in 2014. In 2016, the percentage of callers identifying as homeless remained very similar with 24% or 552 callers compared to 23% or 806 callers. The top unmet needs for Bellevue callers are for emergency shelter, permanent housing and

rent assistance. In 2016, 85% of Bellevue King County 2-1-1 callers who disclosed their incomes lived below the poverty level. Among the Bellevue callers to the Crisis Line (the line for emergency crisis assistance), 77% lived below the poverty level.²⁴

- In the 2017 phone/online survey, 4% of respondents said that people in Bellevue do not have enough access to human services, slightly lower than 2015.
- The Muslim Community Resource Center (MCRC) provides culturally appropriate food and connections to community resources to the growing Muslim community in East King County. Their vision is to form and continue to have partnerships with existing agencies and have MCRC be the resource of last resort.

Information and Referral

- In virtually all Community Conversations, participants frequently mentioned difficulties finding human services resources. These participants included human service clients, consumers, providers and especially English Language Learners.

REQUESTS FROM BELLEVUE RESIDENTS FOR BASIC NEEDS RESOURCES FROM THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION LINE					
Year	Number of Calls Received for Basic Needs	Financial Assistance (includes Rent, Utilities, Checking/Savings Acct and Credit Counseling/Debt Mgmt.)	Total Calls Received for All Services	Percentage of Total Calls for Basic Needs	Percentage of Total Calls for Financial Assistance
1996	642	-	2,390	26.8%	-
1997	613	-	2,333	26.2%	-
1998	629	-	1,998	31.4%	-
1999	581	-	2,018	29.4%	-
2000	414	-	1,899	24.04%	-
2001	308	-	2,265	13.6%	-
2002	394	-	2,119	18%	-
2003	511	-	2,102	30%	-
2004	555	-	2,587	21%	-
2005	543	-	2,428	23%	-
2006	552	465	3,156	18%	15%
2007	956	754	3,306	29%	23%
2008	954	780	3,390	28%	23%
2009	857	1,089	3,470	25%	31%
2010	893	1,101	3,360	27%	33%
2011	637	941	2,434	26%	39%
2012	1,555	1,012	3,384	34%	30%
2014	1,825	892	3,535	52%	25%
2016	1,298	585	2,317	56%	25%

Figure 2 | Source: Crisis Clinic, Community Information Line 2-1-1, July 2017

- Staff from the Wrap-Around Services Program observed that a number of the parents they work with at the schools lack access to and knowledge of how to use technology for applying for jobs and signing their children up for programs at school. This makes it critically important that information be available in multiple formats.

Legal Services

- In the 2017 phone/online survey, lack of affordable legal services was rated as a major or moderate household problem by 8% of respondents, slightly lower than the 2009, 2011 and 2013 ratings. (This problem peaked in rating in the 2003 survey, when over 12% of respondents rated it a major or moderate problem.) As a community problem in 2017, it received a combined major and moderate rating by 30% of respondents, significantly higher than 2015.
- Participants in key informant interviews with Cultural Navigators in East King County mentioned that some of the clients seek help for civil legal issues such as landlord tenant disputes or immigration issues but the waiting time for an appointment is long or the amount of time they get is insufficient to deal with the problem completely.
- In the NextDoor Survey, about 10% of respondents rated *not being able to afford legal help* a major or moderate community problem.

Community Perceptions

- Twenty-three percent of the 2017 phone/online survey respondents identified lack of parenting skills as a major or moderate community problem, about the same as 2015. Since 1995, this issue has been decreasingly identified as a community problem.
- Bellevue School District Family Connections Center staff and King County Library staff from the downtown Bellevue Library both identified the need for low cost legal assistance and referrals for

issues including child support, landlord-tenant, and family violence.

- Phone/online survey respondents who found help were asked to identify which organizations or persons provided assistance. Help was most often attributed to a family member, friend or neighbor (54%), health care provider (48%) or social service agency (26%).
- Some Bellevue employees, including those working in the Fire Department and Code Enforcement, noted that sometimes they encounter residents in the community that are isolated and not only need health care or help with their repair needs, but they also are isolated without family or friends who can offer support.
- In the 2017 consumer survey, about 44% of respondents rated not having community or individual support as a parent/caregiver of children as a major or moderate household problem.
- Lack of transportation, which is related to social support in that it can create isolation and lack of access to needed services, was hands down the most frequent mention as a gap with all populations and in all service areas. In the phone/online survey, “inadequate public transportation” has increased as a major/moderate community problem since 2003; in 2017 39% of respondents identified it as a problem, the fourth highest rating. As a household program in the same survey, this issue was identified by 21% of the respondents and was the second highest rated problem.

Implications for Action

- All families need support, regardless of socio-economic status. However, some Bellevue families may continue to need additional social support to raise their children, care for aging and or disabled loved ones, or a combination of the three if they have limited resources. Family, friends and neighbors will

be even more important to help because funding is often limited for many formal services, such as chore services and after school care, or some families may not meet eligibility criteria.

- The need for information provided in languages other than English continues to grow as the Puget Sound Region and East King County becomes more diverse. Human service providers, local government and businesses need to work together to meet this community need by providing resources in a variety of languages.
- Many residents still do not have easy access to computers and instead rely on the phone. Multi-modal forms of getting information out to the community is critical. The Crisis Clinic's King County 2-1-1 is one way to fill this critical information gap. However, sustainable funding for its operation needs to continue as funding cuts results in fewer staff to answer calls. Another way to improve access is partnering with non-profit agencies, cities and faith communities to include information about resources through "low tech" ways such as printed media, multi-ethnic radio stations, public TV access, DVD's, and neighbors sharing information with neighbors.
- Low-cost or free civil legal services continue to be a need for many residents. A major gap for services exists for direct representation, especially for survivors of domestic violence, immigration issues, landlord-tenant issues and credit counseling.

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