

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 and the practical resources that we receive from family, friends and others. Especially in uncertain economic times, 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 El-

ementary 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. In the 2014-2015 City budget, Wrap-Around Program remained as one of the highest priorities for the City in the area of Quality Neighborhoods. Wrap-Around is sited at Lake Hills Elementary School and Stevenson Elementary School. The program was additionally placed at Odle Middle School for three years. Upon completion at the Odle site, the second Wrap-Around site at Stevenson Elementary School commenced with the assistance of a federal grant and is now supported by the City of Bellevue and Bellevue School District. Wrap-Around Services is currently working with Bellevue School District's Family Connection Centers to provide partnerships, collaboration and human/community-related services to students, parents and neighborhood residents.

- The Together Center works collaboratively to ensure people find the help they need. It is a sustainable one-stop model which allows people to find services, improving accessibility and connect 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 an Outreach Worker for Veterans, as needed. Located in Redmond, it is a resource for all of East King County.

Prevalence

Social Support and Social Cohesion

- In a 2011 countywide survey, social support

was measured by asking people about specific types of social support they believed they could rely on. The answers were used to create a social support scale with a possible score between 9 (low) and 45 (high).

“There is a need for emotional support for people who are here from other countries, like spouses of those who are working her, older adults, and single mothers. They have a need for emotional support from others who share their experience. How can we help them with emotional support?”
Key Informant Interview, City of Bellevue Crossroads Mini City Hall volunteer

The average score in King County was 39.5 compared to 39.1 in 2007, and in East King County, the average score was 40.9 compared to 40.3 in 2007. As Figure 1 shows some groups reported higher levels of social support than others. These include college graduates, married or unmarried couples, people earning \$75,000 or more, people who spoke English as their primary language and people who are White.¹

- Social cohesion is generally understood as mutual trust among neighbors combined with a willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good. Neighborhoods with high levels of social cohesion tend to have lower rates of violence. In 2011, King County adults were asked 5 questions about trust in their neighborhood and 5 questions about the likelihood that their neighbors could be counted on to intervene in problem situations. The mean social cohesion score for adults in King County was 36.2, with a possible range from 10 (low) to 50 (high). East King County adults reported higher lev-

els of social cohesion (37.0) than adults in Seattle, South King County and the county overall.²

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 impor-

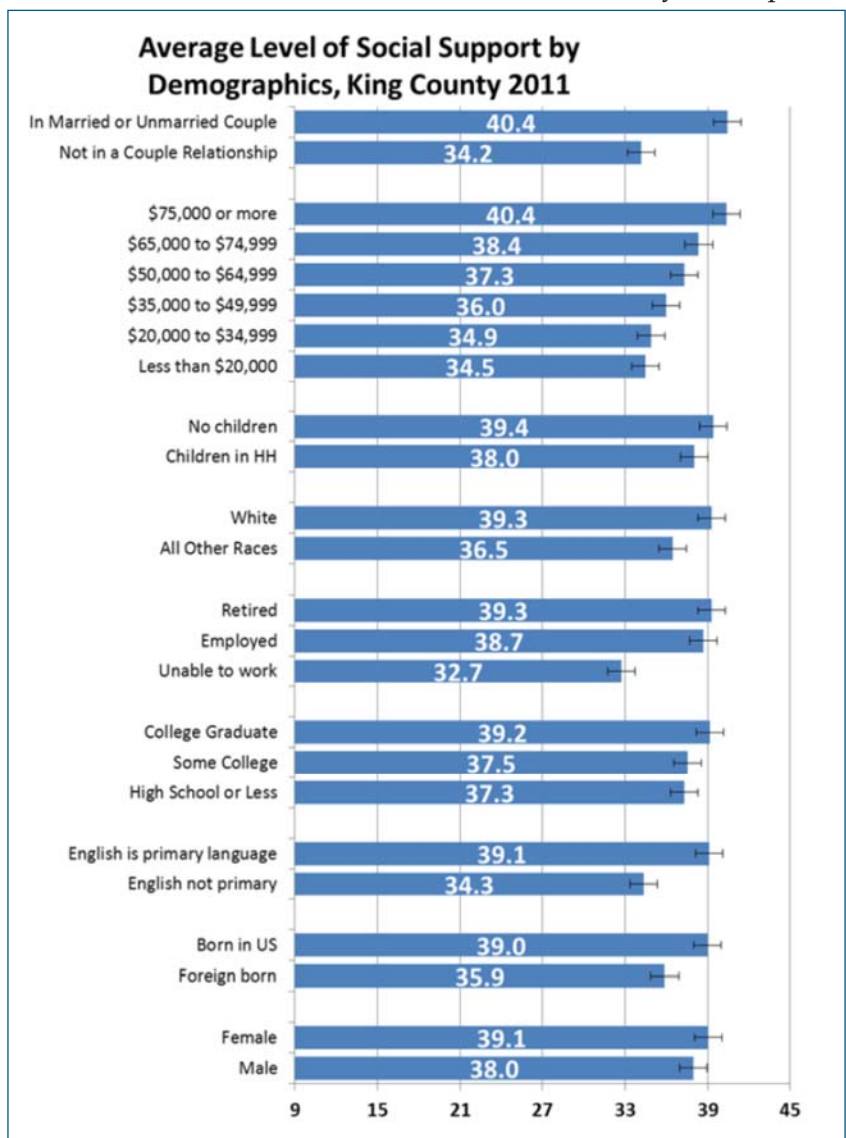


Figure 1
Source: Communities Count – Public Health Seattle & King County

tant 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.)

“If our clients cannot get services, they cope by getting help from social support networks when possible.”

Provider Survey, Kindering Center

- 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. As Figure 2 shows, adults with children in the household countywide indicated that they had less social support than adults with no children.³
- In the 2015 Bellevue phone/online survey, having a lot of stress, anxiety or depression that interferes with their daily life was rated as a major or moderate problem by 17% of

“People have have support systems here. People who are struggling need to have more of their resources close, like the school district and churches.”

Key Informant Interview, City of Bellevue Police Detective

respondents, about the same as 2011 and 2013. Sixteen percent of respondents rated the need for parent or caregiver support as a household problem compared to 7% in 2013, a significant increase. Additionally, qualitative feedback from providers and parents strongly suggests that both individual and community support is very much needed. In particular, some immigrant and refugee parents expressed a desire for additional help; these families may face challenges such as not having translated materials to help them keep up with what is happening at school, and lack of understanding of academic expectations in this country. Although a number of local organizations (e.g. Youth Eastside Services, Kindering Center, Bellevue College, Hopelink, and Chinese Information and Service Center) provide parenting classes and support groups to help these parents bridge cultural gaps, more are needed.

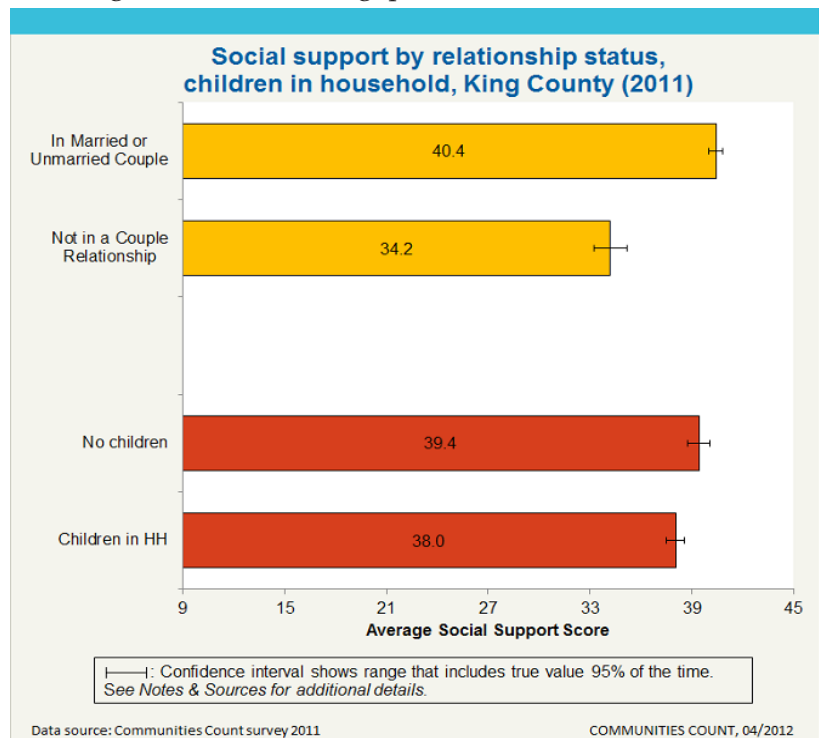


Figure 2
Source: Communities Count

- 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.⁴

“There are lots of providers, lots of resources, but sometimes we can’t connect the dots.”
Community Conversation, Bellevue College

- 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, a number of them who are bilingual, refers 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. Staff report that though more people are employed, many are still living paycheck to paycheck. The need for connections to services is greater as the needs increase, particularly for food. For example, during the 2014-2015 school year, 797 families received 2,354 boxes of food during winter, mid-winter and spring breaks. Funding for more sites and longer hours of service, including during school vacations, were added by the school district to help meet some of the critical needs.⁵
- 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 6% of all households in Bellevue are composed of single-parent households. Families with a female householder, no husband present, and related children under age 18 had the highest family poverty rates of families in Bellevue-23.4%.⁶

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. 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. From the initial work, a community collaboration SOAR, was created to help further the goals of the Action Agenda. Towards that end, four sub regional networking teams (called Families and Children Early Support - FACES), began implementing strategies to meet common school readiness goals. FACES on the Eastside has sponsored a number of activities, including parenting groups in multiple languages, free developmental screenings for children birth to three, and is currently focusing on trainings for early learning professionals on social emotional development and adapting learning environments for children with special needs. Another 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. The Getting School Ready (GSR) Team which uses a research based model builds partnerships between teachers, parents, community members including cities, libraries and other non-profits to ensure schools are ready for children and children are ready for school. There are 25 GSR teams in elementary schools in King County, including one at Stevenson Elementary School and one at Lake Hills Elementary School in Bellevue.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 Kinderling Center and one at Encompass in North Bend. At Kinderling Center in Bellevue, 90% of the children served are from immigrant families, primarily Latino. The services and information handouts are provided in the family’s home language. Staff identified emergency financial assistance, dental, housing, legal assistance and health/mental health care as services their participants have a hard time finding. Another challenge is finding services in their home languages.⁸ At Encompass, in 2013-2015, 50 families were served, with 58% of them Spanish speaking households. A major challenge at this program is their large service area and setting up home visitors so they don’t have to drive a lot between each home visit. Both programs are seeing increases in positive parent-child interaction, positive social interaction and participation by the child during the home visit.⁹

“Young moms who go to Healthy Start do much better and their babies do better. The program reinforces the message that we give in the clinics. Moms feel more secure.”
Key Informant Interview-Public Health Seattle & King County Eastgate Clinic, Pediatrician

- 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 2014, Healthy Start served 91 Bellevue individuals in 33 families: 70% identified as Hispanic/Latino; 33% had less than a high school diploma or no GED and 15% 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 2014, they reported providing supplies to 4,224 Bel-

levue low-income residents, a 3% increase compared to 2012. Also during 2014, EBC distributed 796,274 diapers, a 26% increase over 2013, and they are on track to distribute even more in 2015.¹¹

- 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. 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 5 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.¹² Several other Play and Learn groups are under development in Bellevue.

Increased Resources for School-Aged Kids

- Research indicates that positive after-school and “out of school time” programs are critical for school-aged children and youth to build developmental assets and avoid at-risk behaviors. In 2005, SOAR convened a countywide workgroup that developed a King County Youth Action Agenda, similar to the one for birth to five-year olds. Completed in December 2006, this plan’s implementation is overseen by the School Age Implementation Team (SAIT), a group of professionals whose efforts address collaboration, professional development, training, and leadership for this age group. In 2015, SOAR youth initiatives include the King County Youth Advisory Council and an on-line resource hub and website.¹³ (Note: See the School Aged Children and Youth section of this report for more information.)

- In 2015 King County Executive Dow Constantine proposed “Best Starts for Kids”, a six year levy that would raise about \$58 million in the first year and a cumulative \$392.3 million for improve outcomes for all children and youth in King County focusing on prevention and early intervention which are the most effective and least expensive compared to the cost of treating serious problems such as mental illness and substance abuse. The Levy passed November 2015 by voters in King County. The split for the funds allocation include 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.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 for caring for their children, as well as for frail, older family members;

recession was that more fathers are taking the primary role in parenting. Four years ago, the data indicated that unemployment rates increased more rapidly for men than women; this was probably because men were more likely to be employed in industries like construction and finance that experienced the most severe job cuts. However, recent data indicates a reversal of that trend, with the unemployment rate for women in June 2015 at 5.2% and men, at 4.8%.¹⁵

- A recent 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. One implication of this finding is that there likely is a need for new family policies that could help equalize workloads and opportunities for mothers and fathers. For example, new provisions could include more telecommuting options, longer family medical leave, flexible work hours and universal pre-school and employer onsite child care centers.¹⁶

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%	23.0%	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%	23.5%	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%

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

Figure 3

Source: 2013 Employee Benefits Survey Report-State of WA Employment Security Department

- these caregivers are commonly called the “sandwich generation.”
- A trend that surfaced during the recent recession was that more fathers are taking the primary role in parenting. Four years ago, the data indicated that unemployment rates increased more rapidly for men than women; this was probably because men were more likely to be employed in industries like construction and finance that experienced the most severe job cuts. However, recent data indicates a reversal of that trend, with the unemployment rate for women in June 2015 at 5.2% and men, at 4.8%.¹⁵
- 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 shown in Figure 3. 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 by human services providers who work with single parents. They expressed the need for child-care 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.

- A national study done in 2014 by the Families and Work Institute identified two broad trends amongst employers in regard to flexible work options between 2008 and 2014. The first is that employers have increased the options that allow employees to manage their time, like control over over-time hours, and employers have decreased options that allow employees to spend a significant time away from their work like job sharing. Another finding was that while the majority of employers (79%) are complying with the federally mandated Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 with 12 weeks leave allowed employees for life events such as maternity leave or caring for a seriously ill relative, between 2008 and 2014, employers have become significantly less likely to provide full pay for maternity related disability. And among employers who provide any pay to employees during a disability, only 9% paid this in 2014 compared to 16% in 2008.¹⁸

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, experts estimate that legal aid offices turn away 50% or more of those seeking help. The “justice gap”, which is the difference between the number of people in need of legal civil aid and the current resources available, has grown. The U. S. Census Bureau 2012 statistics on poverty show that more than one in five Americans (63.6 million) qualified for civil legal assistance, increasing dramatically since 2007 after the recent economic downturn.¹⁹

- 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 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 2014 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.²⁰
- 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 2014, 29,936 adults and chil-

dren were helped, a 3% increase over those helped in 2013.²¹

- Since 2013, state funding for civil legal aid has remained stable. The state's Fiscal Year 2013-2015 budget included a continuation of the same level of funding from the Fiscal Year 2011-2013 funding – approximately \$23 million. For the Fiscal Year 2015-2017 budget that was recently passed, civil legal aid is receiving stable funding plus a maintenance increase (i.e. vendor rate adjustment) of approximately \$700k. Since 2010, federal funding for civil legal aid has been cut by nearly 11%. However, during the last two years, legal aid has seen slight increases in federal funding. In 2014, legal aid received a \$24 million increase (from \$341M to \$365M), and in 2015, legal aid received a \$10 million increase (from \$365M to \$375M). At the current funding level of \$375M, Washington State receives roughly \$6.409 million in federal legal aid funding. While the 2016 federal budget has not yet passed, the House's proposed budget for legal aid includes a 20% cut (from \$375M to \$300M). If this amount of funding passes, it would mean an approximate loss of \$1.2 million for Washington State.²²
- In keeping with statewide trends, Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP) has seen a large increase in requests for legal services. As a result of the economic downturn, more people are seeking help with evictions and foreclosures, family law (including domestic violence), credit card and debt issues. Crisis Clinic calls for legal assistance are screened and directed to ELAP, which has improved access to Eastside clients. There are more referrals to the Domestic Violence Legal Fund Project than there is space available and there is a waiting list for the family law/Domestic Violence clinic appointments. There is a shortage of attorneys to help beyond a 30-45-minute free family law clinic consultation with clients because taking such pro-bono cases often involves months of intensive legal work. In an effort to address the community need, in the fall of 2014 ELAP launched their Domestic Violence Legal Program Fellowship. Through this program attorneys who are seeking to learn more about opening their own private practice in Family Law and Domestic Violence are provided with training, mentoring, and resources. In return, over the course of one year Fellowship attorneys will provide 600 hours of pro bono legal services to domestic violence survivors.²³
- ELAP provides a variety of legal clinics, including two specialized clinics for immigrants and refugees: an immigration clinic which deals with immigration law issues and is held twice a month and a multilingual clinic which provides assistance on any civil legal issue with bilingual interpreters. Similar to ELAP's other clinics, these clinics offer a free half-hour with a volunteer attorney for advice and consultation. ELAP utilizes phone translations options through their voicemail system where potential clients can leave voicemails and be screened for services in a variety of languages. ELAP also provides interpreters for those needing help in other languages through telephonic language lines as well as bilingual informational brochures that other social services agencies use to inform potential clients of ELAP's services.²⁴
- King County Bar Association (KCBA) helps low-income King County residents with civil legal issues through legal services/pro-bono programs including neighborhood clinics, the Housing Justice Project and Self-Help Plus. Staff reports that many clients who use their services face barriers such as domestic violence, language, mental health, disability and financial. KCBA received budget cuts in 2009 and they are still working at the reduced level of staff and volunteer attorneys; they are at capacity and cannot serve more clients without increased resources.²⁵

Finding Help: Information and Referral

- During the first six months of 2015, staff at the City of Bellevue's Mini City Hall (MCH) at Crossroads Shopping Center received 20,133 requests from consumers for resource information with about 51% related to human service needs. In 2014 the MCH received 25,139 requests with about

50% related to human service needs. This is on pace to meet or exceed 2013 numbers. Due to the recession, staff began to see a steady increase in human service contacts, beginning in late 2008 and early 2009. Between January and May 2009, MCH staff served 10,583 consumers, more than 50% related to human services and that percentage has remained steady since then. The most frequent human service requests for 2015 are affordable housing, mental health counseling referrals, food bags, job development and referrals for help with long term unemployment, access to health care, and health insurance enrollment questions. There are also language and cultural barrier issues resulting in problems accessing services. While the total number of clients have not increased significantly, staff see a trend in spending more time with each customer as more agencies and organizations are short staffed and don't have the capacity to respond especially to those with limited English. Also staff report that some of those who come in for help tell them that though the recession is "officially" over, they still are struggling with making ends meet with lower wage jobs than they had prior to the recession. Consumers also relate that the economy seems only to be better for a small segment of the population and this increases the stress and hopelessness that they feel about their lives improving. Volunteer interpreters and city staff offer help in Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Russian, 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 developed city wide and provider websites in different languages are becoming more frequent. Staff have access to the dual receiver language line which provides an over-the-phone interpreter in over 100 languages. The MCH continues to refer newcomers to programs and events that help connect to their new community. Cultural Conversations continues to grow in numbers and popularity as a way to fight the isolation of moving from your homeland. Supporting and creating

opportunities for community connection is a priority as more people from all over the world come to live in Bellevue. The MCH staff are now beginning to work with the new city staff recently hired to implement the newly adopted Diversity Plan and that partnership will foster even more community engagement which also helps newcomers to feel less isolated.²⁶

- 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. Statewide, WIN 2-1-1's seven call centers received 272,200 calls in 2013, a 5% decrease over 2012. In 2014 the centers received 266,127 calls, another slight decrease. Of these calls 541,682 referrals were given in 2014. Interestingly, though calls have decreased statewide, the number of referrals have increased, that is, giving more referrals to services per caller. The King County call center typically comprises at least 40% of the total state calls due to its population density. Requests exceeded service availability most often regarding utilities assistance, rent and mortgage and move-in costs, emergency shelters, transportation and legal. In addition to these services, 2-1-1 also is the call center for people to get information about Free Tax Preparation and possible eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit Program.²⁷ Due to effective advocacy by a number of community groups, lawmakers allocated \$1 million for the biennium to WIN 2-1-1 in the 2015-2016 State Budget. These funds do not provide operating funds for the individual call centers for staffing but does pay for infrastructure costs such as the phone system and database.
- 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 2014, the number of calls for assistance countywide increase slightly by 3,700 calls. However, previous funding cuts still im-

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	-	2390	26.8%	-
1997	613	-	2333	26.2%	-
1998	629	-	1998	31.4%	-
1999	581	-	2018	29.4%	-
2000	414	-	1899	24.04%	-
2001	308	-	2265	13.6%	-
2002	394	-	2119	18%	-
2003	511	-	2102	30%	-
2004	555	-	2587	21%	-
2005	543	-	2428	23%	-
2006	552	465	3156	18%	15%
2007	956	754	3306	29%	23%
2008	954	780	3390	28%	23%
2009	857	1089	3470	25%	31%
2010	893	1101	3360	27%	33%
2011	637	941	2434	26%	39%
2012	1555	1012	3384	34%	30%
2013	1441	728	3302	44%	22%
2014	1825	892	3699	49%	24%

Source: Crisis Clinic, Community Information Line 2-1-1, July 2015

Figure 4

fact needed staffing and they were not able to answer all of the incoming calls.²⁸

- As Figure 4 shows, the number of calls pertaining to basic needs, especially for shelter and affordable housing, continues to rise. In 2014, calls for permanent housing totaled 440 compared to 253 in 2012, reflecting a 74% increase and the increase in calls for transitional housing was less, but still a 27% increase. Comparing 2014 to 2012, calls for DV Shelter increased 123%, calls for Emergency Shelter increased 59%, and the number of callers identifying as homeless increased by 84%. The top unmet needs for Bellevue callers are for emergency shelter, permanent housing, rent assistance and transportation. In 2014, 2,081 Bellevue King County 2-1-1 callers who disclosed their incomes lived below the poverty level (90%). Among the Bellevue callers to the Crisis Line (the line for emergency crisis assistance), 2,043 or about 69%, lived below the poverty level.²⁹

Community Perceptions Social Support

- Twenty-two percent of the 2015 phone/online survey respondents identified lack of parenting skills as a major or moderate community problem, about the same as 2013 but significantly less than 2011 and 2009. In previous years (since 1995), this issue has been decreasingly identified as a community problem.
- In well over half of the Community Conversations held in Bellevue, participants of all ages, cultures and special interests identified the need for support for parents and family caregivers.
- Phone/online survey respondents who found help were asked to identify which organizations or persons provided assistance. Among the 68 respondents, help was most often attributed to a family member, friend or neighbor (56%), health care provider (47%) or social service agency (24%).

- Several of the representatives from faith communities in Bellevue who were interviewed reported that many of the requests they receive from their congregations are for support for basic needs, like rent assistance or food, but that they also act as a gathering place for people to find social support and a sense of community. This comment also came from staff at Jubilee REACH Center about their community luncheon for those enrolled in their ESL programs.
- Some Bellevue employees, including those working in the Fire Department or 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.
- On a scale of 0-10 on the phone/online survey respondents rated the degree to which the community completely supports children between the ages of five and nine as 7.3, similar to 2011 and 2013. The next highest rated was preteens (7.2) followed by young children 0-5 (7.1).
- In the 2015 consumer survey, about 16% of respondents rated not having community or individual support as a parent/caregiver of children as a major or moderate household problem similar to 2013.
- Several Cultural Navigators observed that families they work with tell them that they have a lot of support from the Bellevue School District, and that's one of the reasons they stay in Bellevue despite the high rents.
- 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 2015 38% of respondents identified it as a problem, the fourth highest rating. As a household program in the same survey, this issue was identified by 19% of the respondents and was the second highest rated problem.

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.
- In the 2015 phone/online survey, 7% of respondents said that people in Bellevue do not have enough access to human services, slightly lower than 2013 but not significantly. They were also asked if they looked for help whether or not they found it. About 78% found the help they needed for all or some of their needs.
- In the consumer survey, only 12% of respondents stated that the reason they did not get services was due to not knowing where to find them; about a third said the reason was inability to pay for them.
- 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.
- 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 2015 phone/online survey, lack of affordable legal services was rated as a major or moderate household problem by 7% 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 2015, it received a combined major and moderate rating by 25% of respondents, significantly higher than 2013.

- In the 2015 consumer survey, 29% of respondents rated not being able to pay for legal help as a major or moderate problem.
- 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.

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 are a growing 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.

Endnotes

1. Public Health—Seattle & King County. (2015). Communities Count Social and health indicators across King County. Retrieved from: www.communitiescount.org
2. Public Health—Seattle & King County. (2015). Communities Count Social and health indicators across King County
3. Public Health—Seattle & King County. July 14, 2015
4. Jubilee REACH Center, (2013) Website: Retrieved from <http://www.jubileereach.org/learn>
5. J. Buckmaster, L. Tuupo, B. Takahashi. Bellevue School District, community conversation, May 12, 2015
6. G. Rousseau. City of Bellevue, personal communication, July 17, 2015
7. SOAR website. 2015. www.childrenand-youth.org
8. H. Locke. Kinderling Center, provider survey, April 20, 2015
9. M. Clayton. Encompass Center, personal communication, July 22, 2015
10. E. Orleck. Friends of Youth, personal communication, July 14, 2015
11. H. B. Routon Eastside Baby Corner, personal communication, July 17, 2015
12. Child Care Resources (n.d.). Family, Friend and Neighbor Care. Retrieved July 17, 2015 from <http://www.childcare.org/ffn-care/index.asp>
13. SOAR, 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.childrenand-youth.org/what/sacy/kcydn/ydn-website-events/>
14. Best Starts for Kids, 2015. Retrieved from: www.kingcounty.gov/beststarts
15. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). Employment status of the civilian population by sex and age. Retrieved from Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t01.htm>
16. A. Bohling, (June 10, 2013). Families, breadwinner moms still on losing end of public policy. Retrieved from Families and Work Institute: <http://truth-out.org/news/>

- item/16874-families-breadwinner-moms-still-on-losing-end-of-public-policy
17. State of Washington Employment Security Department. March 2014. 2013 Employee Benefits Survey Report. Retrieved from: <https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/employment-data/docs/occupational-reports/employee-benefits-2013.pdf>
 18. Work and Family Institute. The 2014 National Study of Employers. Retrieved from: <http://familiesandwork.org/downloads/2014NationalStudyOfEmployers.pdf>
 19. Legal Services Corp. 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.lsc.gov/about/what-is-lsc>
 20. Washington Department of Civil Legal Aid (2015). Civil Legal Needs Study Update. Retrieved from: <http://ocla.wa.gov/civil-legal-needs-study-update-results-of-probability-survey/>
 21. Northwest Justice Project. 2015. Retrieved from: <https://nwjustice.org/sites/default/files/NJP-2014-Annual-Report.pdf>
 22. J. Doran, Equal Justice Coalition, personal communication, July 22, 2015
 23. J. Monson, ELAP, personal communication, July 28, 2015
 24. J. Monson, ELAP, personal communication, July 28, 2015
 25. T. Milligan, King County Bar Association, provider survey, April 16, 2015
 26. B. Tuininga. City of Bellevue, personal communication, July 20, 2015
 27. WIN 2-1-1, Retrieved from: , <http://win211.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Washington-Information-Network-2-1-1-4th-Quarter-2013-Newsletter.pdf>, July 28, 2015
 28. S. Gemmel, Crisis Clinic, personal communication, July 20, 2015
 29. S. Gemmel, Crisis Clinic, personal communication, July 20, 2015