

Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities



95,782 King County 211 calls for human services needs.

57% of East King County providers report that clients don't know how to access needed services.



20,605 "baby care" bundles of formula, car seats, and diapers provided to Bellevue families.

37% of community members rated lack of affordable legal services as a top community problem.



61% of Bellevue School District parents feel emotionally supported.

Goal #2

Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities

This chapter includes data about:

- Finding Help: Information and Referral
- Legal services
- Support for individuals, families, and adults raising children

This chapter discusses these topics as they pertain to the broader community. For more information about how this goal area relates to specific populations (Older Adults, Refugees and Immigrants, People with Disabilities, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans) within our community, please see their respective chapters.

In addition, we recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase, **"Racial (In)Equity Data Point."**

Key Findings

- Many residents are not aware of how to access human services when the need arises, due lack of knowledge of resources in the community. Some of the factors that contribute to this include not having easy access to a computer, limited English language skills, and not needing to access services in the past. The Crisis Connection's King County 2-1-1 is one way to fill this critical information gap.
- All families need support, regardless of socio-economic status. However, some Bellevue families may need additional social support to raise their children, care for aging and or disabled loved ones, or a combination of the three. Family, friends and neighbors are becoming even more important because funding is often limited for many formal services, such as family support programs.

Finding Help: Information and Referral

Residents in our community often don't know where to turn for help when an issue arises. Information and referral services provide the bridge to connect people with the resources to assist them in alleviating their crisis and removing the barriers to access.

Community Voice

- In the provider survey, 57% (n=16) of respondents report that not knowing where to find help is a barrier for clients in accessing needed services.

- Lack of transportation was one of the most frequently mentioned gaps for all populations and in all service areas during community conversations. It leads to lack of access to needed services and isolation. “Inadequate public transportation” has increased as a major/moderate community problem in the phone and online survey since 2003. In 2021, 41% of respondents identified inadequate public transportation as a community problem. Seventeen percent of the respondents rated it as household problem, which was the third-highest rated problem.¹

“We have seen an increase in need and it is taking a long time for agencies to process requests, especially for financial assistance. With most of the services being offered remotely, people are no longer able to meet in person to get questions answered and they often are not able to speak to a live person. They are missing these interactions and often have to wait a long time after requesting services to get an answer. Another challenge is that all the applications are online, which requires the skills needed to navigate an online application and submit needed documentation.”

~Participant,
Bellevue Mini City Hall Community Conversation

- In the 2021 phone/online survey, 8% of respondents said that people in Bellevue do not have enough access to human services. Mental health services were the services deemed most difficult to access.²
- In the consumer survey, 32% (n=35) of respondents said they had difficulty accessing resources to meet their needs. Among those making less than \$50,000, 53% (n=20) said the same.

Prevalence

- In 2020, staff at the City of Bellevue’s Mini City Hall at Crossroads Shopping Center received more than 30,000 requests from customers asking for resource and information referrals. During the second quarter of 2020 (the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic), 61% of resource and information requests were related to human services; in 2018 and 2019, these percentages were 56% and 57%, respectively, for the same period. As the pandemic continued to rage on, the need intensified: in the 3rd quarter of 2020, the percentage of overall requests related to human services rose to 80%, a stark difference from 56% (2018) and 55% (2019). Many people who have requested assistance had never asked for help in the past. The most frequent requests are food, shelter, unemployment, and rental assistance. The need for legal assistance along with immigration issues also continue to be the undertone of most customer interactions.³
- According to staff at Crisis Connections, the number of calls answered and logged rose 13% from 67,677 calls in 2019 to 76,767 calls in 2020. In addition, Crisis Connections logged 19,015 calls in 2020 through the COVID-19 helpline, accounting for 95,782 calls.⁴
- In 2020, Crisis Connections 211 logged 2,182 calls with clients who self-identified as calling from Bellevue. This is an almost 27% increase from the 1,722 calls logged from Bellevue in 2019. This is not including an additional 323 calls from Bellevue in 2020 through the COVID-19 hotline.⁵

Increase in 211 Calls Between 2019 and 2020

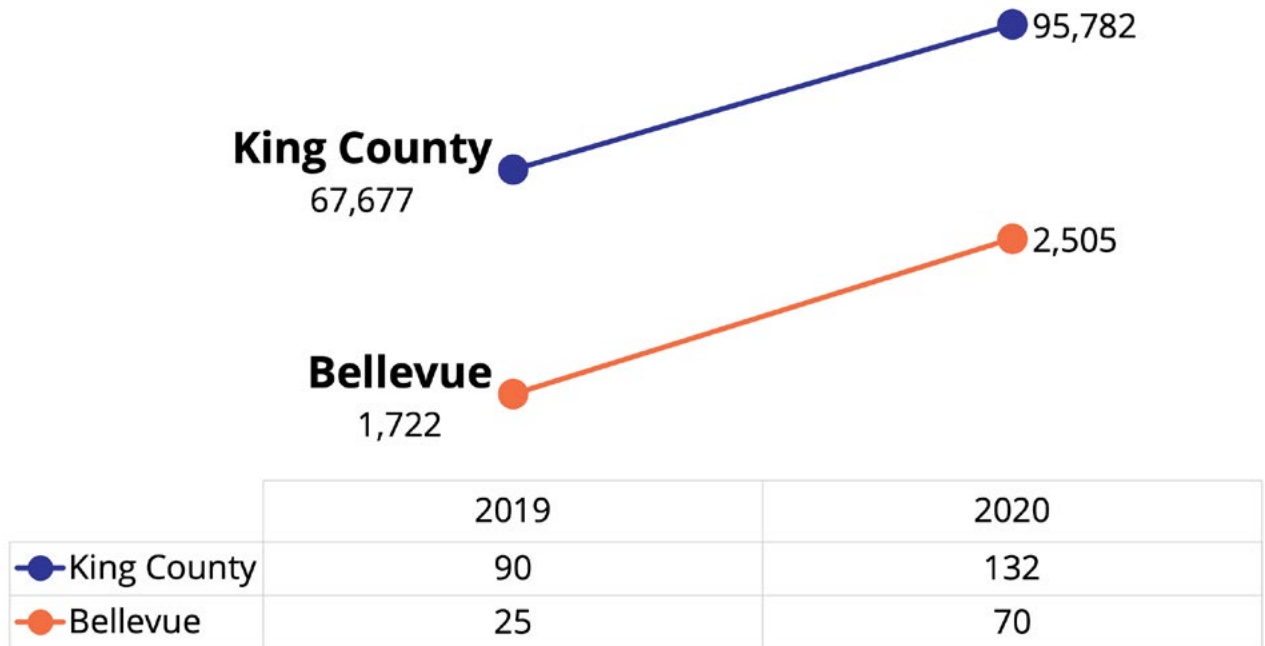


Figure 1 | Source: Crisis Connections⁶

Service Trends

- Crossroads Mini City Hall is an information and resource hub for delivering culturally appropriate, linguistically inclusive customer service to the Bellevue community. Along with its many community partners, Mini City Hall provides an array of services on-site and virtually including
 - The Russian and Chinese Family Resource Support Program provided by Chinese Information and Service Center
 - Computer coaches through King County Library System, and
 - Health resources through State Health Insurance Benefit Advisor (SHIBA), International Community Health Services (ICHS), Public Health and India Association of Western Washington.
- In recognizing the need to provide greater support to community members who have experienced the health and economic impact of the pandemic, the Mini City Hall COVID-19 Resource Navigator Program was created in April of 2020 to specifically help people access health and safety information and to navigate human service resources. The program was offered in multiple languages.⁷
- Crisis Connections provided 253,000 referrals to callers in 2020.⁸

Legal Services

Many low-income people are not able to access legal services due to inability to pay for legal fees, including civil legal aid, free legal assistance, and advocating for laws and policies that promote fairness.

Community Voice

In the 2021 phone/online survey, 8% of respondents reported that lack of affordable legal services was a major or moderate household problem. Thirty-seven percent of respondents rated it as a major or moderate community problem in 2021, a significant increase from 2019.⁹

Prevalence

- In 2016, the most recent data available, 71% of low-income households experienced at least one civil legal problem, including problems with domestic violence, veterans' benefits, disability access, housing conditions, and health care.¹⁰
- Eighty-six percent of the civil legal problems faced by low-income Americans in 2016 alone received either no legal assistance or inadequate legal assistance.¹¹
- Low-income Americans seek professional help for only 20% of their civil legal programs. The top reasons for not seeking professional legal help are deciding to deal with a problem on their own, not knowing where to look for help/what resources exist, and not being sure whether their problem is a legal issue.¹²
- The average number of civil legal problems per low-income household in Washington has tripled over the past decade.¹³
- The highest prevalence of legal problems for low-income households in Washington are in the areas of health care, consumer/finance, and employment. This is a change from the 2003 finding where top occurring problems included housing, family relations, and employment.¹⁴

Service Trends

- In 2020, Eastside Legal Assistance Program provided free legal assistance to 338 Bellevue residents, in the form of trainings, information sessions, and one-on-one legal consultation.¹⁵
- In 2020, King County Bar Association provided free legal assistance to 485 Bellevue households.¹⁶

Support for Individuals, Families, and Adults Raising Children

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 practical resources we receive from family, friends, and others. Studies show that social support is an important factor in predicting health and wellbeing no matter what age.

Community Voice

Thirty-three percent of the 2021 phone/online survey respondents identified lack of resources to provide support to parents as a major or moderate community problem. This is the first year the question has been asked.¹⁷

Prevalence

- Almost three-quarters (73.7%) of parents and caregivers of children in 5th grade and younger in King County had someone to turn to for day-to-day emotional support with parenting or raising children in 2017 and 2019. Among households in the Bellevue School District, 61% of parents and caregivers reported having someone to turn to for day-to-day emotional support with parenting and raising children.¹⁸

- According to Communities Count, King County parents with household incomes below \$50,000 were less likely to report having emotional support than parents in households with incomes above that threshold.¹⁹

“Families are requesting assistance that have never had to ask for help. When they call in, they often say they are asking for a friend, but it ends up being for them. We are working to find ways to make sure families feel comfortable and make sure they understand all the community resources that are available to them.”

~ Participant,
Bellevue LifeSpring Community Conversation

- **Racial (In)Equity Data**

Point: Reports of support and connection for parents

and caregivers varied across racial groups. Across the county, parents and caregivers of Asian (60.7%), Black (58.9%), and Hispanic (51.1%) children were less likely than parents of multiple race (83.2%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (83.7%), or White (86.4%) children to report having emotional support with parenting. Parents of American Indian/Alaska Native children reported rates between these groups (77.3%). However, in Bellevue School District, 71% of parents and caregivers identifying as Hispanic reported having someone who provided emotional support. In contrast, only 53% of Asian parents and caregivers and 65% of White parents reported feeling supported. Data for other racial and ethnic groups were unavailable.²⁰

- Work and family support needs in the U.S. are increasing as more families work longer hours and have more responsibilities for caring for their children. In Bellevue, about 86% of children live in a two-parent household.²¹ In two-parent families, about 81% of fathers and 50% of mothers work outside of the home.²²
- Mothers in low-income families are more likely than their high-income counterparts to be breadwinners. For example, in 69% of families in the lowest income quintile, the mother is the primary income earner. In contrast, the mother is the primary income earner in only 29.6% of families in the top income quintile. These differences stem from several factors, including marital status (e.g., families with multiple wage earners are less likely to be low income, and high-earning women are more likely to marry high-earning men), the presence of school-aged children (e.g., mothers' labor market participation increases when children begin attending school, as women are more likely to stay home with children), and the gender wage gap (e.g., women make, on average, less than their male counterparts and are more likely to work in lower-wage jobs).²³ **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Women of color are, on average, significantly more likely than White women to be breadwinners for their families, although they may be less likely to be co-breadwinners.²⁴ Furthermore, racial earnings gaps persist; research indicates that White individuals may make up to 23% more than Black individuals with the same educational background.²⁵
- Single parents may need more support. Whether mothers or fathers, they often have increased needs because they may be the sole providers for their children. About 14% of children in Bellevue live in single-parent households.²⁶ Most single-parent households are headed by a woman. Roughly 23% of female-headed single-parent Bellevue households live in poverty; for those female-headed single-parent households with at least one child under age 5 and one between the ages of 5 and 17, 50% live in poverty.²⁷

- Beyond caring for children, many parents may also provide care to older family members; these caregivers are commonly called the “sandwich generation.” Forty-seven percent of Americans, ages 40 to 59, are in the sandwich generation.²⁸ **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** According to Pew Research, “Three-in-ten Hispanic adults (31%) have a parent age 65 or older and a dependent child. This compares with 24% of whites and 21% of blacks.”²⁹
- For more information about older adults and/or people with disabilities and Supportive Relationships, please see the section(s) Older Adults and/or People with Disabilities.

Service Trends

- Family Connections Centers (FCC) 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.
- Hopelink’s Family Development program works with families for up to two years to help mitigate barriers to housing stability and long-term self-sufficiency. In 2020, they provided 881 hours of case management to 102 Bellevue Families.³⁰
- 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. Between July 2018 and June 2019, home visiting services were provided to 2,806 families in Washington State. Nearly 60% of families served were in extreme poverty.³¹
- In 2020, Eastside Baby Corner provided 20,605 bundles of items to 1,725 Bellevue residents. These item bundles include necessities such as formula, car seats, and diapers.³²
- Kinderling’s ParentChild+ program offers home visiting for families with a child between 16-30 months old at enrollment, focusing on early learning, school readiness, and parenting skills to enhance their child’s development. All 23 families enrolled during the 2020-21 school year were very low income. They came from 12 countries and spoke 6 languages; 70% spoke Spanish. More than one-third of the children qualified for developmental therapies or special education.³³

Endnotes

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