



ROOSEVELT COUNTY

Community Health Assessment



2023



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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following community members that contributed to the development of this document.

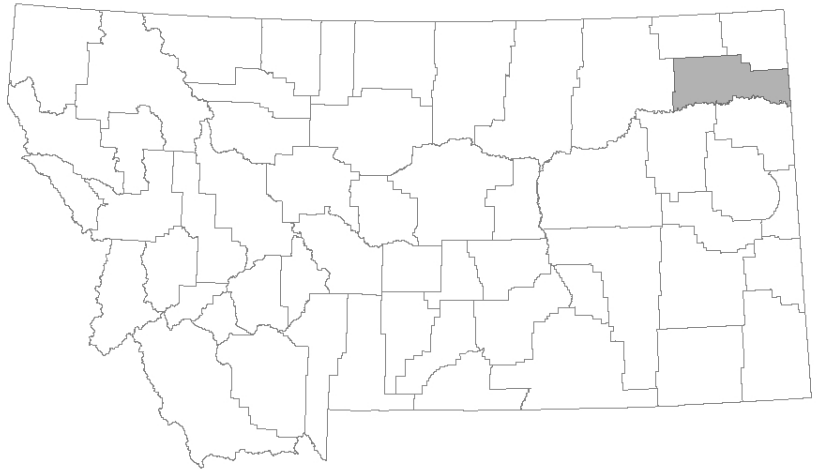
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Overview

Roosevelt County, is a frontier county with fewer than 4 residents per square mile located in rural, northeastern Montana. The county encompasses 2,369 square miles and is home to nearly 11,000 residents.. Three quarters of the county's land area encompasses the Fort Peck Reservation, home to two American Indian Nations, the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes. The county seat of Roosevelt County is Wolf Point. Other communities in the county include Poplar, Bainville, Brockton, Culbertson and Froid.

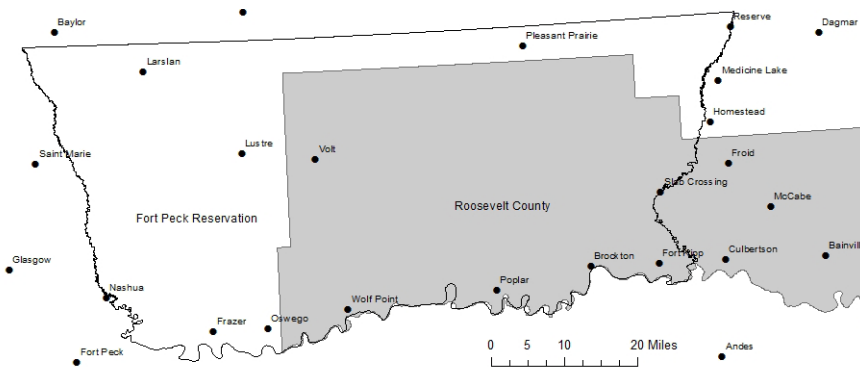


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Roosevelt County is governed by three county commissioners Gary Macdonald, Robert Toavs and Gordon Oelkers. Roosevelt County operates the Roosevelt County Health Department whose mission is to “Improve and protect the public health and well-being of the citizens of Roosevelt County.” The Department provides population-based services, information and linkages to care that focus on early intervention and prevention. Patty Presser is the director of the Roosevelt County Health Department.

For this assessment, the Roosevelt County Health Department partnered with the Fort Peck Tribal Health Department and Loveland Consulting to convene a group of community stakeholders to guide the health assessment process. The stakeholder group met virtually to guide the process.

The following document contains an analysis of population-level primary and secondary data for the Roosevelt County. For question regarding the information contained in this report, contact Patty Presser at 406-653-6227 or ppresser@roosevelt-county.org.



Community Stakeholder Survey

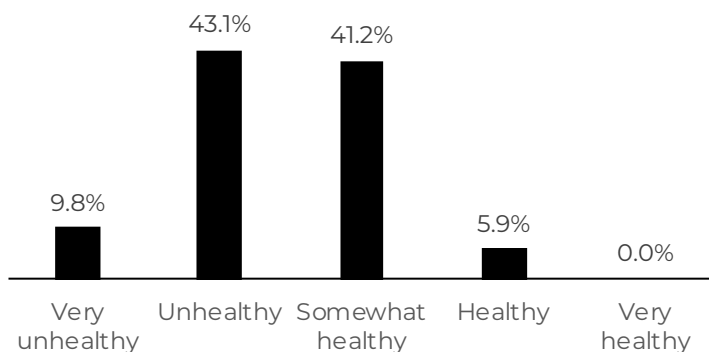


In the spring of 2023, an electronic key informant survey was developed by the Roosevelt County Department and the Fort Peck Tribal Health Department and disseminated and analyzed by independent contractor Loveland Consulting. The survey instrument was based on other community health stakeholder surveys used in Montana and designed to identify health indicators and key health issues of concern specific to our community. The survey was distributed electronically and 53 total responses were received. The following graphs summarize the responses from these 53 community stakeholders

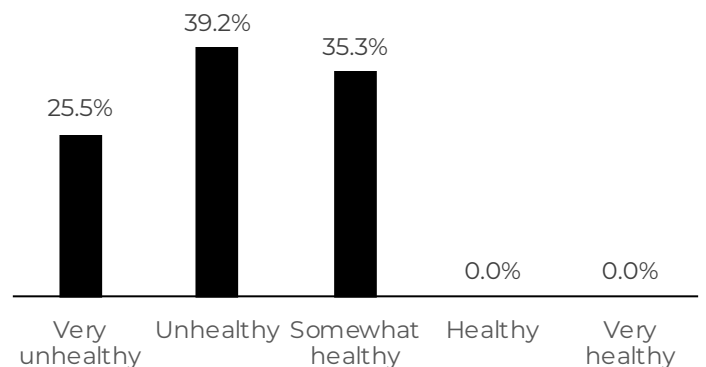
General Health of the Community

The majority of stakeholders rated both the physical and mental health of the community as unhealthy or very unhealthy.

How would you rate the general physical health of your community overall?



How would you rate the general mental health of your community overall?



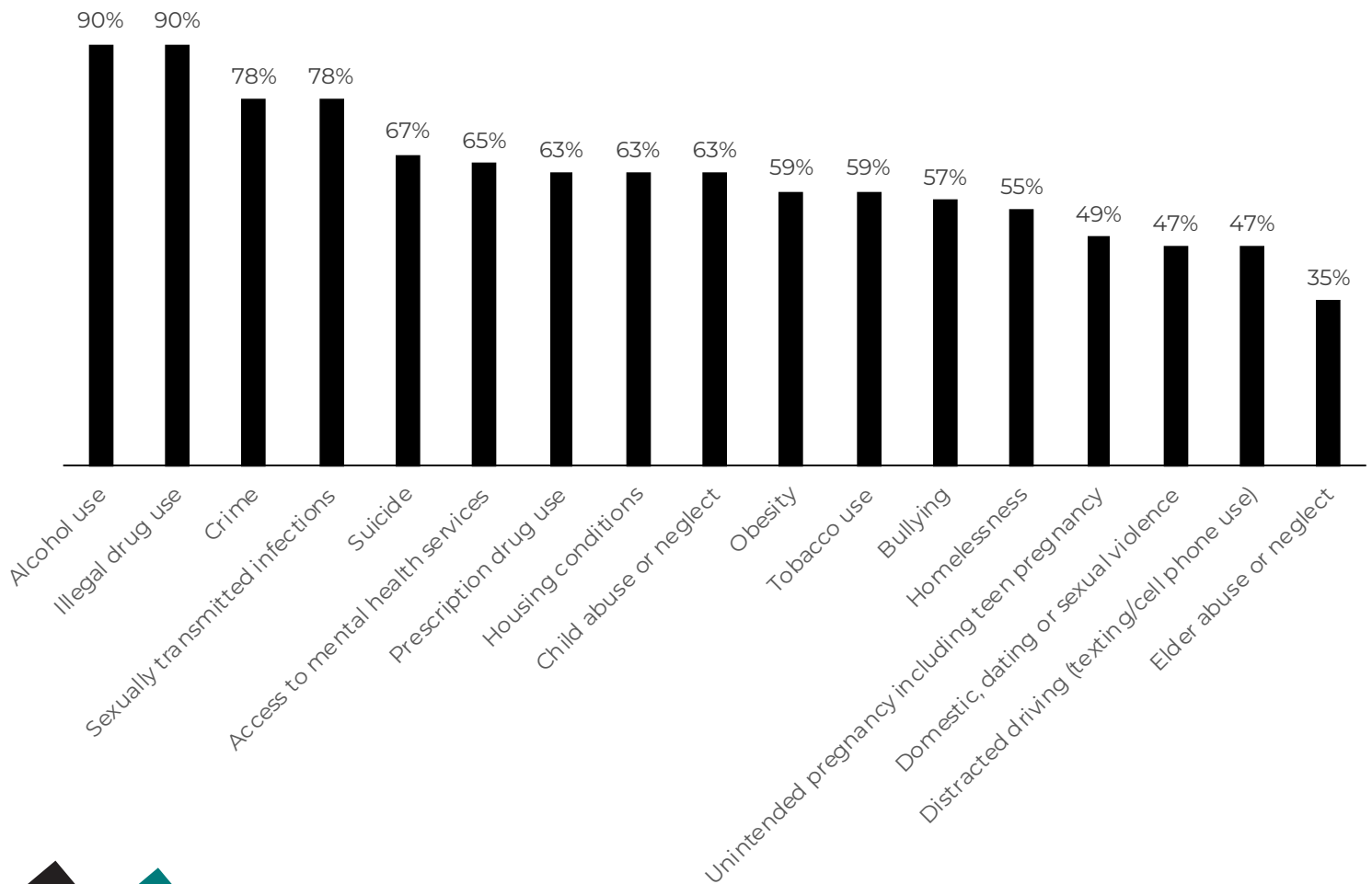
Biggest Health Concerns

The biggest health concerns identified by stakeholders fall into the categories of behavioral health and public safety.

Lack of housing and trauma, which contribute to mental health, substance use and crime issues, were also flagged as key concerns by community stakeholders.

More than two thirds of community stakeholders also identified sexually transmitted infections as a big problem in the community.

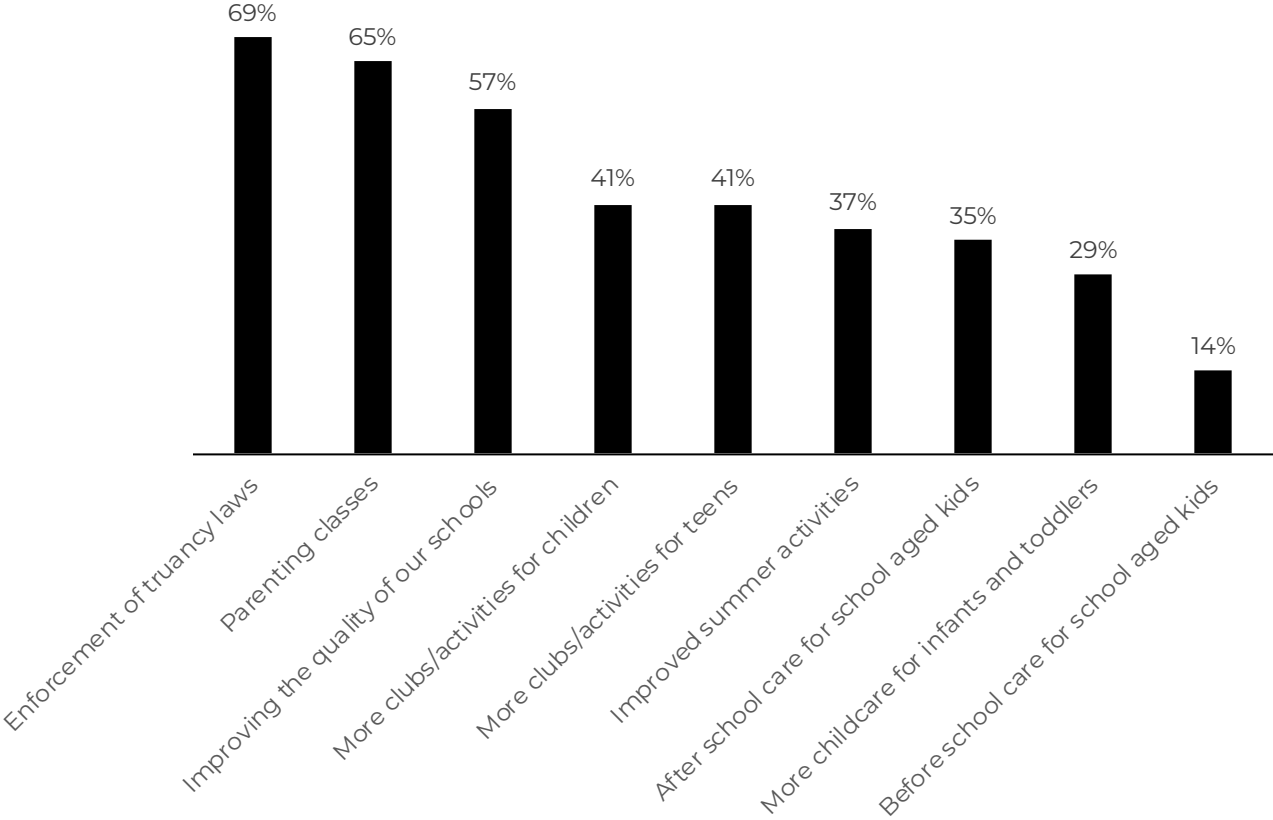
Health issues rated as a "Big Problem" by Roosevelt County and Fort Peck stakeholders



Making the Community a Better Place to Raise Children

Stakeholders identified the enforcement of truancy laws, parenting classes and improving the quality of schools as the highest priority areas for making the community a better place to raise children.

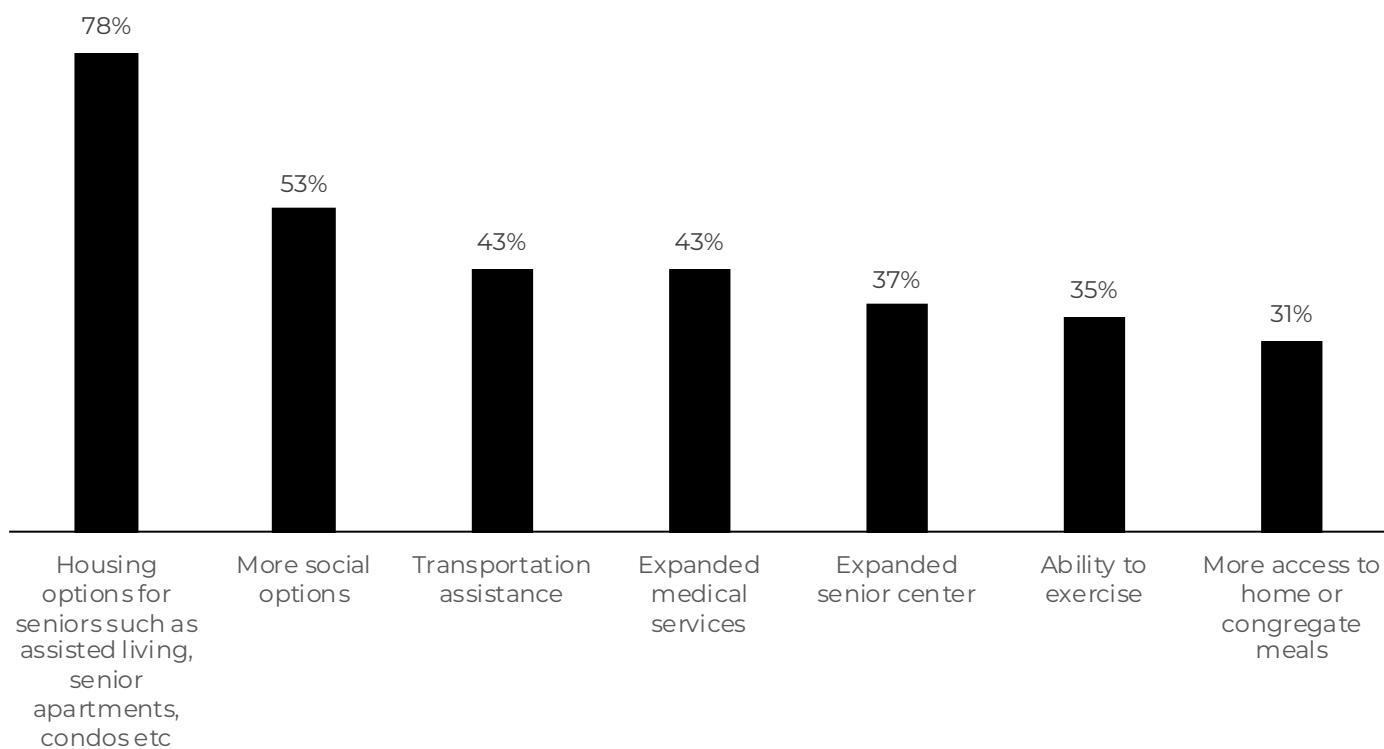
What do you think needs to be available, or improved upon, to make our community a better place to raise children?



Making the Community a Better Place to Grow Old

Housing was by far the most identified issue needed to support seniors in the community, followed by more social options and expanded transportation and medical services

What do you think would make our community a better place to grow old?

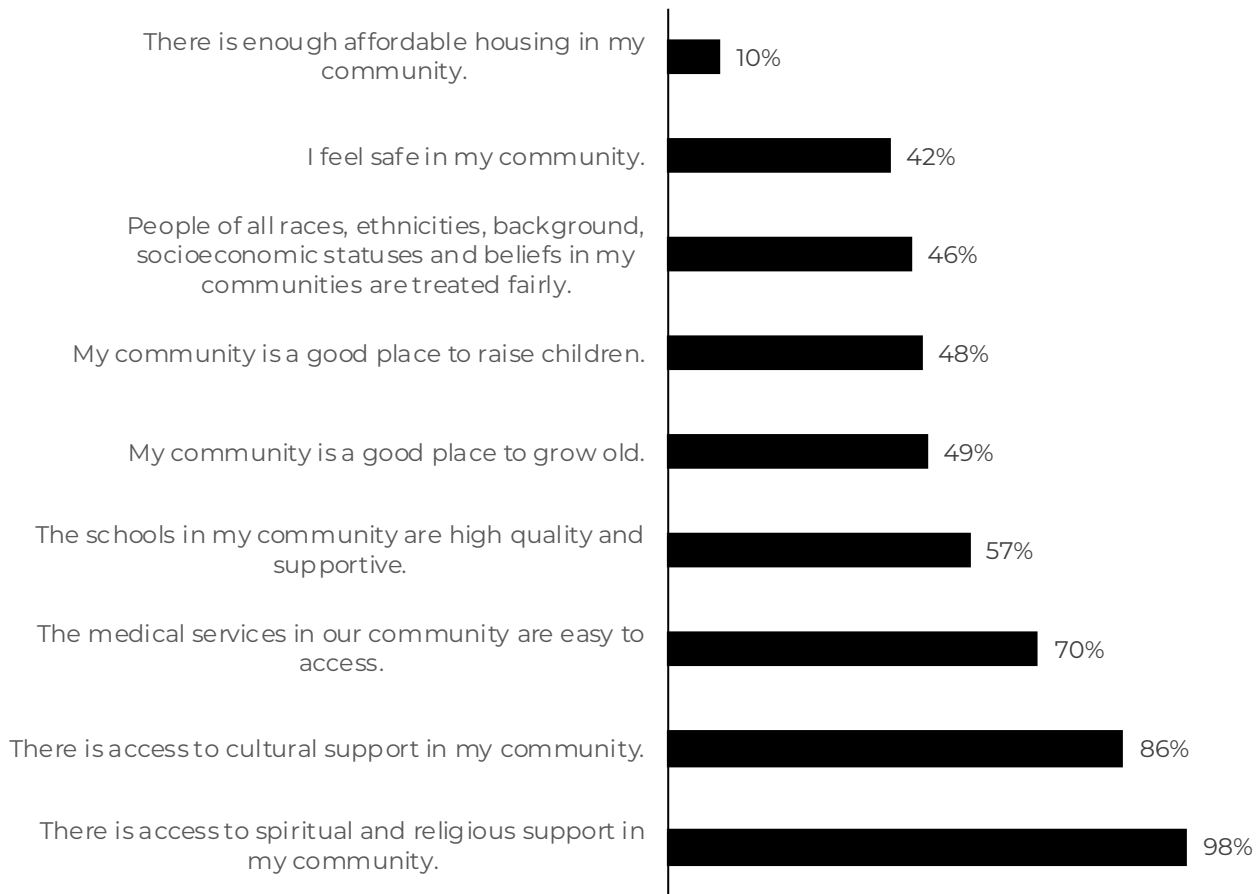


Assets and Resources



The top assets and resources identified as available in Roosevelt County were spiritual, religious and cultural support and easy to access medical services. Affordable housing was the least available health resources according to stakeholders.

Percent of community stakeholders who "Agree or Somewhat Agree" with the following statements



Health in Roosevelt County



Data Sources

For this report, we utilized population level data sources compiled by the State of Montana, as well as the federal government. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) provided valuable information in their Community Health Assessment data by County.

Data sources utilized include:

- American Community Survey (ACS) 5 Year Estimates, 2021
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2021
- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) and CDC Places Data (2020)
- Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings
- Montana Office of Vital Statistics
- Montana Hospital Discharge Data System
- DPHHS Medicaid Dashboard and Injury and Overdose Dashboard
- Montana Kids Count

Loveland Consulting compiled and analyzed secondary data for this report.

Demographics

About 1% of Montana’s population and 8% of Montana’s Native American population resides in Fort Peck. The population of our community skews younger than Montana as whole with one in ten residents under the age of 5 and one in three residents under the age of 18. In 2020, there were 187 births and 196 deaths in Roosevelt County.

Age and Race	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Population	10,884	1,104,271	331,449,281
Median Age	30.3	40.1	38.8
Under 5	10%	5%	6%
Under 18	34%	21%	23%
65 and older	11%	20%	15%
White	39%	91%	76%
American Indian	65%	8%	2%
Hispanic or Latino	4%	4%	18%
Male	50%	51%	49%
Female	50%	49%	51%

Source: American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2021

Income and Employment	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Unemployment	13%	4%	6%
Median household income	\$47,182	\$63,249	\$69,717
Percent below poverty	32%	12%	13%
Percent of American Indians in poverty	47%	37%	21%
Percent of White residents in poverty	10%	10%	10%
Children in Poverty	40%	14%	17%
High school students who experienced hunger in the last month	22%	15%	-

Source: American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2021, Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2021

The rate of unemployment in Roosevelt County is more than three times that seen in Montana as a whole. Wealth is unequally distributed in Roosevelt County with American Indians and children experiencing far higher rates of poverty than White and older residents. .

Educational enrollment & attainment	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
3 and 4 year olds enrolled in preschool	44%	41%	40%
15 to 17 year olds enrolled in school	86%	96%	96%
Did not graduate high school	13%	6%	11%
High school graduate or equivalency	35%	27%	26%
Some College	26%	24%	19%
Associate's Degree	9%	9%	9%
Bachelor's Degree or higher	17%	35%	35%

Source: American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2021

In Roosevelt County, adults more likely to report a high school diploma as their highest level of education versus a bachelor's degree, which is the most commonly completed education level for all Montana adults. 44% of 3rd grade students are proficient in English Language Arts.



Housing, Technology and Transportation	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Owner Occupied Housing	66%	70%	65%
Renter Occupied Housing	34%	31%	35%
Rental vacancy rate	12%	56%	5%
Mobile homes	11%	9%	6%
Vacant Housing	23%	14%	10%
Housing built in year 2000 or later	8%	26%	24%
No vehicle available	10%	4%	8%
No computer	23%	6%	5%
Without broadband internet	33%	11%	10%
No telephone service	14%	1%	0.9%
Gross rent in the past 12 months is 30% or more of total household income	30%	42%	51%
High school students who were kicked out, ran away or were abandoned in the last month	7%	4%	-

Source: American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2021, Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2021

Access to technology and transportation is a barrier to optimal health in Roosevelt County. Residents of Roosevelt County are three times more likely to not have a vehicle or broadband internet service, four times more likely to not have a home computer, and 14 times more likely to not have telephone service than all Montanans.



Mental Health

On every mental health measure, adults in Roosevelt County have elevated rates of risk factors and experience of mental health concerns compared to adults in Montana and the US.

Mental Health among Adults	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
No leisure time physical activity	29%	19%	22%
Sleeping less than 7 hours	36%	29%	33%
Frequent mental distress	20%	16%	14%
Depression	25%	23%	19%
Poor mental health days in the last month	6.0	4.6	4.5
Violent crime per 100,000 population	611	346	386

Source: CDC Places, 2019 and 2020, BRFSS 2019 and 2020, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings

Youth in Roosevelt County are more likely to report suicide attempts, experience of rape and dating violence and bullying than their counterparts in Montana or the US.

Mental Health among Youth	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Inadequate sleep	72%	71%	-
Symptoms of depression in the last year	41%	41%	42%
Mental health not good in the past 30 days	26%	32%	29%
Considered suicide in the last year	24%	22%	22%
Suicide attempts in the last year	17%	10%	10%
Carried a weapon on school property in the past 30 days	7%	9%	3%
In a physical fight in the past year	21%	20%	18%
Physically forced to have sexual intercourse	13%	11%	9%
Experienced dating violence	9%	4%	9%
Experienced sexual dating violence	10%	5%	10%
Bullied on school property in the last year	21%	16%	15%
Electronically bullied in the last year	18%	16%	16%

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021

AREA OF CONCERN Youth Mental Health

Since the last Community Health Assessment in 2015, youth in Roosevelt County are much more likely to report symptoms of depression-an increase from 15% of high school student in 2015 to 41% of students in 2021.

Substance Use

Residents of Roosevelt County are twice as likely to report current smoking, More than 50% of all driving deaths in the community are alcohol impaired, twice the rate seen in the US as a whole.

Substance Use Among Adults	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Current smoking	30%	16%	15%
Binge drinking	21%	20%	17%
Excessive drinking	24%	24%	20%
Driving deaths that are alcohol impaired	54%	46%	27%
Opioid prescription rate (per 100)	26.0	46.1	43.3

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2020, CDC PLACES 2020, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings

High school students in Roosevelt County are equally or less likely than all students in Montana or the US to report alcohol, inhalant, cocaine, methamphetamine, ecstasy or heroin use. They are more likely than all US students to engage in binge drinking, use marijuana and misuse prescription drugs.

SUCCESS STORY Youth Substance Use

Since the last Community Health Assessment in 2015, youth in our community are less likely to report use of all illicit substances including cocaine, inhalants, methamphetamine and heroin. Reported use of chewing tobacco also plummeted.

Substance Use Among Youth	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Current cigarette use	14%	7%	4%
Current chewing tobacco use	5%	5%	3%
Lifetime vaping	53%	48%	36%
Current vaping	34%	26%	15%
Lifetime alcohol use	55%	60%	47%
Current alcohol use	23%	31%	23%
Binge drinking in the last month	16%	16%	11%
Lifetime marijuana use	41%	37%	29%
Current marijuana use	21%	20%	16%
Lifetime cocaine use	2%	4%	3%
Lifetime inhalant use	9%	9%	8%
Lifetime heroin use	1%	2%	1%
Lifetime methamphetamine use	1%	2%	2%
Lifetime ecstasy use	3%	4%	3%
Lifetime misuse of prescription drugs	13%	12%	6%

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021

Chronic Disease

High school students in Roosevelt County have chronic disease risk factors related to nutrition and are more likely describe themselves as overweight compared to high school students in Montana and the US.

Chronic disease risk factors and prevalence among youth	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Self-described overweight	39%	28%	32%
Did not eat fruit in the past 7 days	17%	10%	8%
Drank pop every day in last 7 days	19%	12%	15%
No physically activity in the last week	13%	11%	16%
Three or more hours of screen time daily	75%	72%	76%
Current asthma	13%	14%	-

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021

Areas of Concern Youth Tobacco Use

Youth in Roosevelt County are more than three times more likely than youth in the US as a whole to report current cigarette use. More than one in three students reports current vaping.

Chronic disease risk factors among adults	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Limited access to healthy foods	8%	7%	6%
Access to exercise opportunities	29%	67%	80%
Physical inactivity	32%	19%	26%
Obesity	38%	28%	32%
High cholesterol	26%	31%	29%
High blood pressure	37%	30%	30%

Source: CDC Places, 2019 and 2020, BRFSS 2019 and 2020, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings

Adults in Roosevelt County have more risk factors for chronic disease, except for reported high cholesterol. However, since fewer adults in Roosevelt County are receiving cholesterol screening, there may be cases of high cholesterol that are going undiagnosed, and untreated, in the community.



In general, adults in Roosevelt County are less likely to report receiving chronic disease screening than their counterparts in Montana and the US.

Chronic disease screening among adults	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Colon cancer screening among adults aged 50-75	57%	70%	71%
Cervical cancer screening among women aged 21-65	78%	75%	84%
Mammography use among women aged 50-74	65%	73%	78%
Cholesterol screening in the last five years	78%	81%	86%

Source: CDC Places, 2019 and 2020, BRFSS 2019 and 2020, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings

Adults in Roosevelt County report a higher prevalence of heart, lung and kidney disease as well as diabetes than adults in Montana and the US.

Chronic disease prevalence among adults	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Diabetes	14%	9%	10%
Cancer (excluding skin cancer)	6%	7%	6%
Stroke	5%	3%	3%
Coronary heart disease	8%	6%	6%
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	10%	7%	6%
Chronic kidney disease	4%	3%	3%
Asthma	13%	11%	9%
Arthritis	26%	26%	21%

Source: CDC Places, 2019 and 2020, BRFSS 2019 and 2020, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings



Communicable Disease



Roosevelt County adults have low rates of vaccination for flu and pneumonia. During the pandemic, the vaccination rate for the first series of Covid was much higher in Roosevelt County than in Montana as a whole. However, the Covid vaccination rate fell significantly for the bivalent booster.

Vaccination	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Older adult men (aged 65+) who are up to date on flu and pneumonia shots and colorectal cancer screening	30%	-	44%
Older adult women (aged 65+) who are up to date on flu and pneumonia shots, colorectal cancer screening & mammography	30%	-	37%
Flu vaccinations	31%	43%	48%
Covid primary series vaccination rate	89%	59%	81%
Covid bivalent booster rate	18%	16%	17%

Source: CDC Places, 2019 and 2020, BRFSS 2019 and 2020, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings

Adults in Roosevelt County are almost three times as likely as adults in Montana to have a sexually transmitted infection. The rate of mortality from Covid in Roosevelt County was nearly double that seen elsewhere in the state.

Communicable diseases and deaths	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Sexually Transmitted Infections rate per 100,000	1109	387	481
Covid case rate per 100,000	38,012	31,247	31,546
Covid Age-Adjusted Mortality per 100,000	695	361	343

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings, CDC Covid Data Tracker as of May 2023

Areas of Concern

Syphilis

Starting in 2021, there was a syphilis outbreak in Roosevelt County that continued into 2022 and 2023 with historically high levels of the disease detected in the community. The health of adults and infants exposed in utero was affected. Controlling this outbreak and preventing future outbreaks should be a priority.



Maternal and Child Health



There are just under 200 births per year in Roosevelt County. Only 1 in 3 pregnant women is receiving adequate prenatal care, less than half the rate seen in Montana.

Births from 2012-2020	Roosevelt County	Montana
All births (2012-2020)	2224	120,080
Medicaid births 2012-2020	1677	56,952
Percent of births that are covered by Medicaid	75%	47%
Mom's average age-all births	26.6	29.5
Mom's average age-Medicaid births	25.7	27.5
Adequate prenatal care-all births	31%	64%
Adequate prenatal care-Medicaid births	23%	54%
Low birth weight, premature-all births	6%	5%
Low birth weight, premature-Medicaid births	6%	6%

Source: DPHHS Medicaid Births Dashboard, January 2023

Children in Roosevelt County are almost four times more likely to be raised by grandparents than children in Montana as a whole. They are also more likely to experience food insecurity.

Family Support Services	Roosevelt County	Montana
Child food insecurity	22%	14%
Percent of households with children where grandparents are raising grandchildren	22%	6%
Children enrolled in Healthy Montana Kids (CHIP and Medicaid)	82%	56
SNAP recipient (household participation rate)	36%	10
TANF recipients (household participation rate)	7.3	0.5
Free and reduced priced lunch participation rate	85%	43%

Source: DPHHS Dashboard, January 2023



Areas of Concern | Decreased enrollment in safety net programs

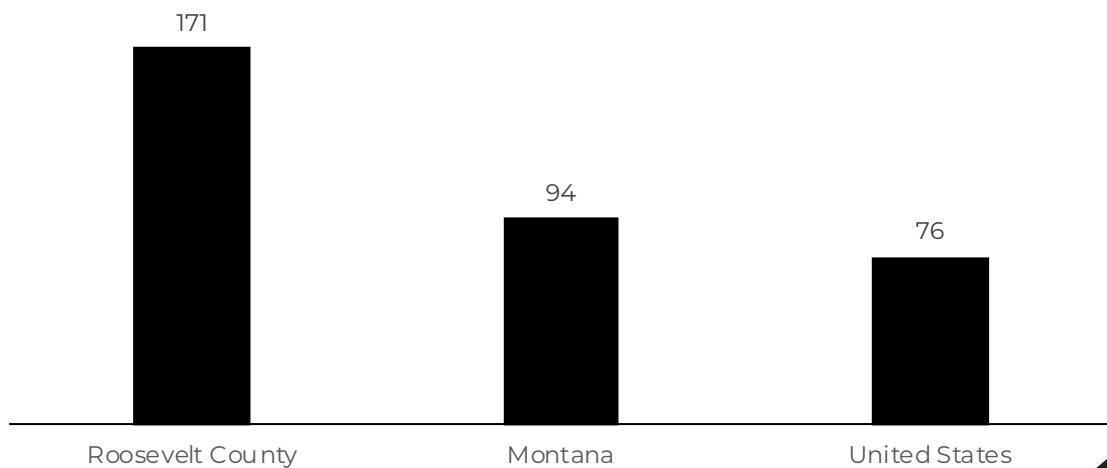
Though participation rates in family support service programs is high in Roosevelt County, the percent of families participating in these programs has been steadily falling in recent years. For instance the number of households participating in SNAP fell 1391 in 2020 to 11116 in January 2023. The number of TANF recipients in Roosevelt County has steadily fallen in the last 5 years from a high of 469 in August 2017 to 229 in January 2023. WIC participation is less than half of what it was in 2013. In addition, recent changes in the Medicaid program are reducing the number of Montanans who are covered by this program.

In terms of childcare, there are only 38 licensed childcare facility slots in Roosevelt County and none of them participate in the STARS to Quality Program at level 3+ meaning that there is a severe shortage of childcare slots, especially certified, high quality child care facilities. 85 children in Roosevelt County received the Best Beginnings Childcare Scholarship in 2022, up from 47 in 2019. However, with more than 1000 children under age 5 in Roosevelt County, and more than 400 of these children living in poverty, there is more that should be done to ensure that these children are fully supported in their early years of development.

Injury

Injury is a significant cause of mortality in our community. Roosevelt County's injury death rate that is 82% higher than Montana as a whole.

Injury deaths per 100,000, 2016-2020



In the 10 years between 2012-2021, there were 197 injury deaths in Roosevelt County, with alcohol contributing to 92% of these deaths. The majority of these deaths were unintentional, though 20% were suicides and 8% were homicides. Two thirds of injury deaths, including 90% of firearm deaths and 75% of suicide deaths, are among males.

Injury deaths in Roosevelt County, 2012-2021	Count	Percent
All injury deaths	197	
Alcohol related	181	92%
Unintentional Injury	130	66%
Suicide	40	20%
Unintentional motor vehicle	39	20%
Drug overdose	26	13%
Firearm	21	11%
Homicide	16	8%

Source: DPHHS Overdose and Injury Dashboard

Our community has a motor vehicle fatality rate that is more than twice that seen in the US. Youth in Roosevelt County display elevated risk factors for motor vehicle crashes and injuries including low rates of seat belt use and high rates of distracted driving.

Youth Injury Risk Factors	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Never or rarely wears a seat belt when driving in a car driven by someone else	13%	6%	5%
In a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol in last month	20%	21%	14%
Text or email while driving in last month	52%	43%	36%

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021



Access to Care

One in five residents lacks insurance in our community, including one in four adults and one in eight children. Our uninsured rates are double that seen in Montana and the US.

Uninsured populations	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Uninsured (all)	20%	10%	11%
Uninsured adults	25%	12%	13%
Uninsured children	12%	6%	6%

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings

Adults that do have insurance coverage are much more likely to be covered by Medicaid than other types of insurance.

Type of Insurance (adults)	Roosevelt County	Montana
Medicare Coverage (alone or in combination)	11%	20%
Medicaid Coverage (alone or in combination)	27%	19%
VA Coverage (alone or in combination)	2%	4%
Employer Coverage (alone or in combination)	32%	49%
Direct Purchase Coverage	8%	19%

Source: American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, 2021

In addition to low rates of insurance coverage, our community has fewer healthcare providers per capita than other places in Montana. This is particularly true in the areas of primary care physicians, mental health providers and dentists.

Number of residents per healthcare provider type	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Primary care physicians	3670	1210	1310
Other primary care providers (Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Clinical Nurse Specialists)	730	710	870
Mental health providers	500	300	350
Dentists	1830	1350	1400

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings



Roosevelt County is classified by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as a Low Income Health Professional Shortage area for Primary Care, Dental Care and Mental Health. Existing Indian Health Service clinics are often short staffed, underfunded and have long waiting lists. A 2018 report from the Government Accountability Office found that, “Almost a quarter of all positions for physicians, nurses and other care providers at Indian Health Service (IHS) facilities are vacant in most service regions.” Of the more than 436 healthcare provider positions in the Billings Area IHS office, 135 (31%) were vacant.¹

Position Vacancies, Billings Area Indian Health Service, 2018

Position Type	Total Positions	Number Vacant	Percent Vacant
All	446	135	31%
Nurses	69	245	28%
Physicians	72	33	46%

Source: Billings Area IHS, direct request 2022

The limited number of private clinics often do not accept uninsured patients or those on Medicaid. The nearest Federally Qualified Health Center, which provides primary care to low-income patients, is a two and a half hour drive away in Miles City, Montana. The distance to the nearest specialty providers is even further. The closest practicing psychiatrists and pulmonologists are in Great Falls or Billings Montana, 300+ miles away.

Unsurprisingly, given the rate of uninsurance and healthcare provider coverage in the community, adults and children are less likely to reporting having a routine check up in the last year. This is particularly true for dental visits.

Medical Visits in the Last Year	Roosevelt County	Montana	US
Visit to doctor for routine checkup within the past year (adults)	69%	71%	73%
Visit to dentists or dental clinic (adults)	53%	64%	65%
Visit to dentist during the past 12 months (high school students)	60%	76%	86%

Source: YRBS 2021, CDC Places, 2020 and 2020, BRFSS 2020



1. Source: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/693940.pdf>

Spotlight on Medicaid

In all, 56% of all residents of Roosevelt County (children included) were covered by Medicaid in 2022, including 72% of all American Indian residents. Changes to the enrollment structure in 2023 likely reduced these number. Our community has one of the highest rates of Medicaid enrollment in the state. In Montana as a whole, only 27% of all residents and 59% of all American Indians are enrolled in the program.

Medicaid Enrollment, 2022	Roosevelt County	Montana
All Residents	56%	27%
American Indian Residents	72%	59%

Source: DPHHS Medicaid Dashboard

Though our community has successfully enrolled eligible residents in the Medicaid program, in our frontier community, even individuals who are covered by Medicaid may struggle to access appropriate care. In 2022, adults on Medicaid in Roosevelt County were less likely than all Montana residents on Medicaid to receive every kind of preventative care or treatment tracked by DPHHS.

Adults on Medicaid Receiving Care, 2022	Roosevelt County	Montana
New patient and preventative visit	96%	100%
Breast cancer screening	4%	5%
Colon cancer screening	2%	3%
Hypertension treatment	3%	6%
Diabetes treatment	2%	3%
Mental health outpatient	22%	43%
Mental health inpatient	0.6%	1.1%
Substance use outpatient	3%	5%
Substance use residential	0.5%	1.2%

Source: DPHHS Medicaid Dashboard



Overall Health Status



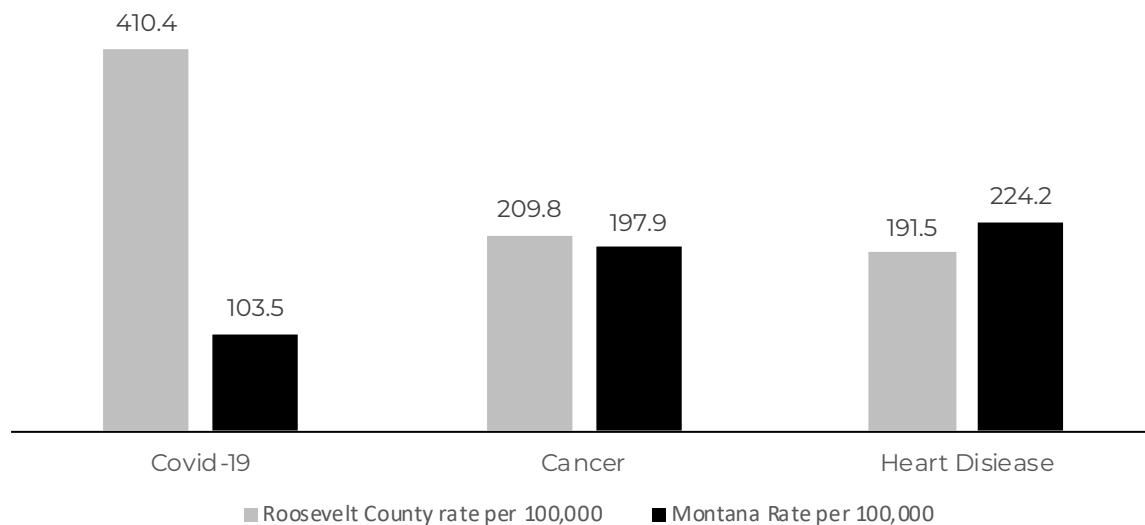
Roosevelt County residents are three times more likely to die prematurely than Montanans as a whole. The rate of child deaths in our community is nearly three times that seen in the US.

More than a quarter of adults in Roosevelt County rate their overall health as fair or poor. One in five experience frequent mental distress.

Overall Health Indicators	Roosevelt County	Montana	United States
Self-rated poor or fair health	26%	14%	17%
Frequent physical distress	16%	10%	9%
Frequent mental distress	18%	14%	14%
Number of deaths per 100,000 under 75	1030	350	360
Years of potential life lost under 75 per 100,000 population	25,600	7,500	7,300
Child mortality per 100,000 under 18	140	50	50

Source: Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings

Death rate per 100,000 for three leading causes of death, Roosevelt County and Montana, 2020



In 2020, Covid-19 was the leading cause of death in Roosevelt County, followed by cancer and heart disease. The proportion of all deaths due to Covid, Diabetes and Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis is significantly higher in Roosevelt County than in Montana as a whole.

Leading Causes of Death Roosevelt County (2020)	Number in Roosevelt County
Covid-19	45
Cancer	23
Heart Disease	21
Diabetes Mellitus	16
Unintentional Injury	14
Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis	12
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	9
Cerebrovascular disease	6

Source: DPHHS Vital Statistics

Conculsion



The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation ranks Roosevelt County as the least healthy county in Montana. We believe the data presented in this report document health concerns that rank our community as one of the highest risk communities in the United States.

Based on these data, there is a critical need to invest in comprehensive and evidence-based economic, public health and medical interventions to address the pressing health risks and significant disparities in morbidity and mortality faced by our population. The health of our community must be prioritized by every person in our community as we strive to create a healthy future for our children. Generational investments to bolster the cultural and spiritual resources in our community while empowering residents to access the needed supports to meet their basic needs and foster a healthy environment are critical to save lives and improve the quality of life in our community. Community-driven efforts to improve public safety and create a sense of individual and communal well-being in Roosevelt County are also needed.

To address these complex realities, Roosevelt County and the Fort Peck Tribes should be prioritized for state and federal funding and capacity building to address health concerns and disparities, as well as to facilitate access to social safety net programs.

This community assessment documents specific areas of health and health risk that contribute to poor health outcomes in Roosevelt County. The following issues should be emphasized to improve the health and wellness of our community.



Key Health Concerns



Basic needs

High rates of poverty and unemployment are a key driver of poor health in our community. Public health partners must focus on supporting access to and strengthening social safety net programs for at-risk residents. Economic development and education should also be emphasized. The ongoing development of affordable housing, especially for seniors, is needed in every community in the county.

Substance use

Substance use—from tobacco to alcohol to illicit drug use—is an underlying cause impacting a range of health concerns from family instability, lung, heart and kidney disease, motor vehicle crashes, violence and suicide. Despite high rates of substance use, residents of Roosevelt County are less likely than all Montanans to receive treatment. Our community must invest in the entire continuum of behavioral health care, from prevention, crisis response, treatment and recovery while committing to strengthening and embedding cultural and spiritual resources into this continuum of supports.

Early childhood and family stability

Our community must invest in innovative and effective ways to engage parents and strengthen families in our community, with a focus on reducing childhood trauma and increasing resiliency. Positive supports and reinforcements are needed, along with resources to help families remain intact and meet their basic needs. Supporting healthy families and children is also a primary strategy for generational prevention of substance use and mental health concerns.

Communicable diseases

Given the high rates of communicable disease transmission and mortality in the community, public health partners should focus on access to and education about testing, vaccinations, and treatment for communicable diseases, including STIs, influenza and Covid-19.