

Boone County Health and Social Needs Assessment 2009



Vision 2015

Transforming Northern Kentucky Through
Talent, Innovation and Contribution



**NORTHERN KENTUCKY
INDEPENDENT DISTRICT
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Boone County Health and Social Needs Assessment Report

July 2009

Kevin Costello, Chair

The goal of the Vision 2015 Livable Communities objective is “Northern Kentucky will be recognized, both nationally and internationally, as a great place to live.”

One strategy to achieve this goal is to “conduct ongoing health and social assessments and implement a comprehensive regional approach to meet and fund those needs.”

Vision 2015 and the Northern Kentucky Health Department utilized the **Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships** strategic planning process. A MAPP Leadership Team was informed by four community assessments to update or revise the Master Health Plan for Northern Kentucky. This report presents the results of these assessments as they relate specifically to Boone County.

The **Community Health Status** assessment evaluates health and social indicators and analyzes supporting local data. This assessment answers the questions: “*How healthy are our residents?*” and “*What does the health status of our community look like?*” The results of the Community Health Status Assessment provide an understanding of the community’s health status and ensure that the community’s priorities consider specific health status issues. This assessment was repeated in each county to develop county priorities.

The **Local Public Health System** assessment uses the National Public Health

Performance Standards assessment of the services provided by the community public health system. This assessment answers the questions: “*What are the components, activities, competencies and capacities of our local public health system?*” and “*How are the Essential Services being provided to our community?*”

The Local Public Health System assessment focuses on the local public health system— all organizations and entities within the community that contribute to the public’s health. This assessment was a regional assessment that includes organizations that serve Boone County as well as other counties.

The **Community Themes and Strengths** assessment looks at the social and support assets of the community. The Community Themes and Strengths assessment answers the questions: “*What is important to our community?*” “*How is quality of life perceived in our community?*” and “*What assets do we have that can be used to improve community health?*” During this assessment, community thoughts, opinions and concerns are gathered, providing insight into the issues of importance to the community. Feedback about quality of life in the community and community assets is also gathered. This information leads to a portrait of the community as seen through the eyes of its residents.

This assessment used a regional community survey. The results of this survey have been sorted by county to indicate Boone County-specific concerns.

The **Forces of Change** assessment looks at the current social, economic and political trends in the community that will support or hinder the achievement of the Vision 2015 goals. During the Forces of Change assessment, participants answer the questions: “*What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of our community or the*

local public health system?” and “What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?”

The Forces of Change assessment results in a comprehensive, but focused, list of key forces and describes their impacts. This assessment was a regional assessment, but the forces identified also impact Boone County.

While many of the health and social needs of the Northern Kentucky region are the same, there are county and community differences at the local level.

To identify county-specific issues, the Community Health Status assessment was repeated in each of the four counties served by the Northern Kentucky Health Department: Boone, Campbell, Grant and Kenton counties.

In addition, Three Rivers District Health Department conducted the MAPP process separately in each of the other four counties in the Northern Kentucky Area Development District. The combined assessments cover eight of the nine counties addressed by Vision 2015.

The first step in the MAPP process was to develop the vision to guide the process, **“Thriving people living healthy lifestyles in a vibrant community.”** and to identify **community values:**

- Responsible and healthy lifestyle choices
- Green space and recreation opportunities throughout our community
- Air, water and environmental quality
- Wellness initiatives in schools, the workplace and the community at large
- Access to a health care system that encompasses wellness and sick care

- Technology and quality improvement practices for efficient and effective health care
- Resources for safety-net services
- Holistic approach to addressing health problems

To achieve this vision:

The **Community Health Status assessment** identified Boone County’s top four priority health and social needs:

- 1. Access to care**
- 2. Oral and dental health**
- 3. Mental health and depression**
- 4. Families in poverty**

1. Access to care: Primary health care and mental health share many risk factors. There is a lack of insurance. At risk are the unemployed, Hispanic, underinsured, uninsured, Medicaid insured patients and KCHIP insured children.

There is no access in Boone County for people of low income lacking insurance. Consider these statistics:

- More than 3,200 people must leave Boone County to go to Kenton County for care.
- A total of 25 percent of Boone County citizens are uninsured.
- St. Elizabeth Healthcare treated 9,000 Boone County residents with KCHIP and Medicaid.
- Hours of operation are not user friendly to those seeking care. More non-traditional times are needed.

Proposed solutions include:

- Additional health centers for the uninsured
- Expand Health Department services to cover the uninsured
- Rely on employers to help support needed services.

2. Oral and dental health: Dental health is expensive even for those with insurance. There is a lack of coverage for adults, poor Medicaid coverage and no Medicare coverage. This results in poor reimbursement for low-income children.

Another issue is the shortage of dentists and other providers. Oral health isn't valued by many. There is a need to work on education and access. Children should be required to have a dental examination before entering kindergarten. The no-show rate for Medicaid patients for private providers is too high. Dentists do not have convenient hours for these patients. Risk factors include: the need to deregulate dentists; education about the problem; the issue is not a state priority; private providers need to support education programs; and many people dread visiting the dentist.

Solutions that include education and prevention are very important. Addressing oral and dental health will save a great deal of money. Having dental vans visit schools could prevent the appointment no-show problem.

3. Mental health and depression: Mental health needs are increasing, especially due to the economic crisis. Issues are similar to access to primary care.

One delivery model is the co-location and reimbursement for services. This issue is hampered by a lack of providers in the area. There is a focus on the "worst," leaving out the middle group. There is still a stigma

attached to receiving mental health services. Lack of funding and poor reimbursement for services is a major issue. Adult caretakers with mental health needs are affecting the children in their homes. Improved access and improved education are needed.

4. Families in poverty: The number of families living in poverty is growing due to increased job losses. There is an increase in the applications for KCHIP and Medicaid. Pockets of poverty exist in Boone County. Rent and utilities are the top needs.

Community services are available, but non-traditional hours of availability for services are needed.

Strategies require assistance at the state and national levels. There is a need to teach life skills and give referrals to agencies. There is a need to better implement what is currently in place by improving coordination of available resources.

A partial solution is to involve and engage the faith-based community and to sustain the effort by offering assistance to faith-based organizations like accessibility of services. An example is the Roselawn Lutheran Church in Cincinnati that offers free dental care.

The **Local Public Health System assessment** identified weaknesses that will need to be addressed to effectively change the health and social needs of the community.

Those system weaknesses are:

- Linking people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
- Mobilizing community partnerships to identify and solve health problems and review of community partnerships and strategic alliances.

	High Importance	Low Importance
High Satisfaction	Strengths	Opportunities
	Public libraries	Parks and natural areas
	Violence or threat of violence	Overall education
	Safety, in general	Recreation, trails, playgrounds, sports
	Theft or home invasions	Preschool programs
	Health care access and facilities	Adult learning and continuing education
Low Satisfaction	Weaknesses	Threats
	Job opportunities	Public transportation
	Traffic	Local leaders response to your concern
	Stream, pond and river quality	Community centers
	Public areas free of litter	Neighborhood meetings or activities
	Overall economy	Vibrant business districts

The **Community Themes and Strengths assessment** used a community survey to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the community. The community rated a variety of indicators for importance and how satisfied they were with the outcomes.

Issues rated highly important and high in satisfaction are community strengths, those rated high in importance but low in satisfaction are weaknesses. Items ranked low in importance, but high in satisfaction are opportunities and those ranked low in importance and low in satisfaction are potential threats.

Of the 1,875 responses to the survey, 325 reported living in Boone County. In the table above and listed below are indicators as reported by Boone County residents.

This was not a randomly distributed survey, so there may be some distribution bias in the results.

Discussion

The Quality of Life survey was a convenience survey and possibly has some bias in the results. Since one of the primary distribution points was the library system, it is not surprising that public libraries scored high.

The sample was also weak in reaching the lower income population. This may account for access to health care being rated a strength and the Community Health Status assessment rating access as the top need for the low income population. The greatest asset or strength in the county is the feeling of safety and security. The list of community threats are those rated as lowest in satisfaction, but also lowest in importance. This may account for difficulties in improving these areas.

While the county specific open-ended questions were not a large enough sample to generalize, the regional analysis indicated that the economy and job opportunities were more regional while the environment and traffic issues were more neighborhood focused.

The most important issues in the immediate neighborhood were roads, crime and housing. Each of these categories had a variety of concerns. Roads included traffic, road conditions, parking and observing traffic laws.

Crime included a variety of conditions involving personal and property safety. Drug and alcohol abuse were categorized separately. While crime was a big concern, as noted above, there was not an immediate threat and most reported being satisfied with the level of crime and enforcement in the community.

The issue of housing included both the availability of affordable housing, the level of maintenance of property (especially from absentee landlords) and the high number of property foreclosures in the neighborhood.

Most of the concerns in the larger region related to the economy. First among these issues were employment and the shrinking availability of jobs. The economy in general was also a big concern. Other areas of high concern were good schools, availability and affordability of health care, and uncontrolled growth and development.

Items like sidewalks, social capital, infrastructure and availability of child care were seen as neighborhood issues, whereas economic and government issues were seen more as regional issues. See Attachment I for a complete listing of neighborhood concerns.

The **Forces of Change** assessment identified the most important forces affecting all of Northern Kentucky. They are:

1. **Rising health care costs** are making it harder for employers to provide insurance, and some are increasing the cost to the employees. Fewer people can afford insurance on their own. Related forces are increasing chronic diseases like dementia among seniors, diabetes, obesity and people improperly using hospital

emergency rooms for ordinary medical needs.

2. **The current economic crisis** is creating an increase in the population living in poverty. There is a diminished capacity for government to fund programs and private funds are shrinking while people's needs are increasing. There is an increasing need for public transportation for certain populations such as seniors and those with special needs.
3. **Early childhood needs** are increasing like dental care, obesity and quality child care. Related forces are a lack of personal accountability for health and wellness and a culture promoting increasing obesity.
4. **New needs of the aging population** are increasing such as unemployment, health care and housing. Related forces include elder care and the growth of the senior citizen population. There is an increasing lack of providers in health care, particularly in certain specialties.

Next Steps

Many of the issues and risk factors identified specifically in Boone County are common to the Northern Kentucky region. Vision 2015 and the Health Department are developing a regional plan and organizing implementation teams to continue the development and implementation of regional strategies.

Where there is overlap, Boone County can contribute to the regional effort to achieve the vision of **“Thriving people living healthy lifestyles in a vibrant community.”**

Where identified issues are unique to Boone County or where implementation at the local level is most effective, Boone County might organize local implementation teams to address local priorities.

Boone County Stakeholders

Kevin Costello, Chair

Participants

Kim Adams	Women's Crisis Center
Andrea Ashcraft	NKCAC Headstart
Dorothea Becker	Family Nurturing Center
Jennifer Boblitt-Johnson	Women's Crisis Center
Judy Boggs	Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission
Monica Braunwart	Boone County Human Services Department
Donna Bredenberg	Boone County Student Services
Ben Brooks	St. Elizabeth Healthcare
Cindy Brown	Boone County Public Library
Marianne Burke	Senior Services of Northern Kentucky
Kevin Costello	Boone County Planning Commission
Dawn Denham	Boone County Success by 6
Rebekah Duchette	Northern Kentucky Health Department
Shelly Espich	BRC for Women
Robyn Fortner	Northern Kentucky Health Department
Betsy Glick	Boone County Public Library
Chris Goddard	HealthPoint Family Care
Gary Goetz	NorthKey Community Care
Denise Govan	Brighton Center
Judy Hennessy	NorthKey KNP
Laurel Humes	HealthPoint Family Care
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Lydia Noll	Northern Kentucky Children's Advocacy Center
Stephen Ogden	Boone County Schools
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Tara Rapp	CareNet
Trisha Rayner	R.C. Durr YMCA
Susan Rich	Boone County Fiscal Court
Dale L. Rose	Resident
Kathy Reutman	Boone County Schools
Ken Schmidt	BAWAC Inc. Community Rehabilitation Center
Lyndi Soden	CareNet
Karkie Tackett	North Central Area Health Education Center
Nancy Tillett	St. Elizabeth Healthcare
Kathy Webb	Boone County School-Based Health Center
David Wilkerson	Northern Kentucky University
Sue Williams	Northern Kentucky Area Development District
Ruth Ann Wilson	Boone County Assisted Living
Patricia Wingo	City of Florence
Gail Wise	Gateway Community and Technical College
Laurie Wolsing	NKCAC Headstart Committee

Facilitators: Alan Kalos, Louise Kent, William Lambeth

Attachment I

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Boone County Neighborhood Priorities

Quality of Life Survey Results

The responses below indicate the open ended question results from the quality of life survey.

Question: *What do you feel is the single most important issue facing your neighborhood?*

Responses have been edited for spelling, punctuation, capitalization and readability but not content.

41005 Burlington

Air quality
City zoning regulations applied to rural areas
Crime
Development pressures
Economy
Environmentally speaking—traffic congestion and I-275 noise pollution
Joblessness
Keep foreclosures down
Keeping the subdivisions from being built from farms being sold and not keeping up with the infrastructure, thus creating traffic problems and low housing moving into areas where higher priced homes already exist
Kids leaving bikes and toys all over parking lot

Lack of sidewalks
Litter
Lowering property values
Need pond cleaned and need sidewalks
No street lights to deter teens from hanging on corners late at night
Piped in water
Poor schools
Possibility of home invasion
Public services
Quality of education and extra curricular activities for youth
Roads
Roadside trash
Safety
Sidewalks
Sidewalks in the country
Streets having major pot holes
Teen behavior
Teenagers not knowing what to do with their time
Traffic
Traffic issues on Ky. 18
Unattended children
Unemployment
Youth engagement

41005 Other

Affordable health care
Cleanliness—with the foreclosures the streets are disgusting and look like project

neighborhoods
Crime /break-ins
Economy
Garbage cans outside - sheds
Job loss and foreclosures
Lack of bike paths so kids aren't on busy streets
Lack of preservation of natural areas
Lack of respect for neighbors' privacy—right to quiet enjoyment of home and yard
Loss of value of homes
Need city water and city sewage
Speeding—no lights
Unemployment
Unsold, vacant homes

41042 Florence

Access to main roads
Affordable food and health care
Appropriate affordable child care
Available jobs
Break-ins
Caring neighbors, youth and adults
Child safety
City spending
Communication
Community
Crime
Deterioration of greenspace
Development of locally

owned restaurants and shops
Drivers breaking various laws
Drug and alcohol
Drugs and underage drinking
Economic issues, especially jobs and costs of goods and services
Economy
Fast, not well planned growth
Getting city water
Grants to fix your house up—Newport had something like this a few years ago
Green space
Individually owned business not receiving any help and having to close their doors
Keeping crime rates down
Keeping the right to smoke
Keeping us safe
Lack of sidewalks, bike paths
Litter
Maintaining home values
Monetary problems
No help for the working poor
No place to walk safely
Noise
Not enough family-oriented events
Number of homes for sale or rent
Overcrowding in schools
Property value
Safety and crime prevention
Single parent families
Social connectedness
Speeding down streets with

a 20 MPH speed limit doing at least 45 MPH—it is dangerous, especially for the children who may be playing outside
Speeders through neighborhood
Speeding on residential streets, disregarding traffic control devices
Traffic
Traffic flow—area has outgrown existing infrastructure
Trash
Unsupervised youth
Unemployment
41042 Oakbrook
Better sidewalks and bike paths so we can walk and ride to work and decrease dependence on the car
Housing prices
Increasing cost of living
Keeping houses with families in them
Need public transportation to decrease traffic
Need to pay a fee to recycle—if free many would recycle
Neighborhood watch
No more building until road infrastructure is improved
Noise pollution
Overcrowding—there are houses in every direction you look, with little to no attention paid to variety and diversity. I live in a suburban nightmare.
Road congestions
Road maintenance

Schools need to be improved
41042 Other
Affordable housing
Business development
Child safety from predators
Community involvement and ownership
Development
Drug use in apartment complexes
Education
Employment
Family unit falling apart—it all starts with the family
Foreclosures
Getting neighbors on creek below us to get sewer
Health care
Homeowners' fees
Housing market declining
Infestation of bed bugs
Job loss and subsequent vacant housing
Jobs
Lack of home owners' association due to bankruptcy of home builder
Lack of jobs
Litter
Loss of jobs and small businesses
Lots of old people
More crime moving in or feeling that way anyway
Need community sports court
Need street lights
No sidewalks
Noise pollution
Owners failing to maintain property
Rent going up in a mobile home park
Reserving the living

comfort while addressing
development and
improvement
Road conditions
Safety
Safety
Safety and security
School districting
Sidewalks
Sidewalks and pathways for
bikes and carts
Social interaction
Space
Speeding
Tax on older people
Too much growth
Traffic
Traffic is very heavy in our
neighborhood
Traffic on adjacent arteries
Unemployment
Unsupervised teenagers
Vandalism
Vehicles exceeding the
posted speed limit
Water runoff
Young children playing
unattended in the streets

41048 Hebron

Completion of road
construction on North
Bend Road
Construction
Decreasing property values
vs. increasing property
taxes
Foreclosure of homes
Houses sitting empty
because of trouble selling
them
Keeping it green
Lack of neighborhood
involvement
Lack of sidewalk
connecting the
community

Neighbors that cannot
respect each other
No sidewalks to get around
the small town
No speed bumps on our
street for the children;
teenagers race down the
streets
People invested in taking
care of their homes
Property value decreasing
Residential car traffic and
speed
Road quality
Safety
Traffic
Transportation systems
aging with slow funding
to update

41048 Other

Affordable housing
Construction
Lack of activities for special
needs children
Lack of community
Lower housing values
No sidewalks
Roads not able to handle
the population growth—
example Route 18 and
Route 237
Safety—have had a few
break-ins
Too many homes being
rented by people who
don't keep the outside
clean, which brings
down the value of homes
around it
Traffic

41080 Petersburg

Deer population too high
Drugs
Employment
Housing

41091 Union

Access to local jobs and
support for local
business
Affordable housing and
services
Aging population
Awareness of neighbors
and their needs
Car culture
Child safety
City water becoming
available
Construction
Decreasing home value
Decreasing quality of
education
Drugs
Employment
Foreclosures
High taxes forcing horse
farms to sell to
developers and Boone
County doesn't care
because they are
purposely trying to drive
out horse farms and
farmers so lobbyists and
their developer friends
can buy the land and
build a lot more houses
than are needed in
Boone County. This
causes an additional
problem of high traffic
on two-lane roads
Housing development and
house not selling
Inability to sell houses
because of recession
Keeping up with growth
needs, i.e. traffic, schools
No easy walking access or
public transportation to
areas
No feeling of community

Safety
Safety and security
Sewage service
Street maintenance
Street repair
Taxpayers paying for illegals
Traffic
Traffic and roads not
accommodating increase
in housing and schools
Transportation
Unlawful taxes paid—
annexed as city and
shouldn't be
Urban sprawl without
regard for the current
residents

41091 Other

Affordable housing and
services
Availability of public
transportation to reduce
traffic on Mount Zion
Road
Available parks, walking
trails and dog runs
Burglaries
Cleanliness
Construction
Damage done by others to
people's property
Dog poop not picked up
Economic times—empty
houses
Home Owners' Association
dues
No one knows anyone
No public sewers or water
Safety
Safety of children
Streetlights
Street repair
Too many houses for sale
Too much growth
Undersized school facilities
Vandalism, theft

Walkability and bikeability
and connection to other
areas

41092 Walton-Verona

Affordable swimming
Elderly are unable to do
much for themselves or
others
Housing market
Interaction
Property sales
Too many new subdivisions
with too many empty
overpriced houses
Traffic
Trucks speeding on curvy
roads

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These assessment results, issues and strategies represent the collective work of the MAPP Leadership Team, committees, and retreat participants and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board of Vision 2015, the Northern Kentucky District Board of Health or any member organization.

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National Public Health Performance Standards Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/od/ocphp/nphpsp/