



2023 Community Assessment Annual Update

Prepared by

FOUNDATIONS FOR

families

www.foundationsforfamilies.com

Prepared for

Northeast Iowa Community Action
Corporation (NEICAC)

October 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation (NEICAC) is a community action agency serving Allamakee, Bremer, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek counties in rural, northeastern Iowa. The Head Start/Early Head Start program continues to be funded to serve 233 children in center-based Head Start and 80 children in home-based Early Head Start.

SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

NEICAC's Head Start/Early Head Start service area includes seven counties in northeast Iowa: Allamakee, Bremer, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek counties. The total population in NEICAC's service area is 117,263, level from the year prior. Median age continues to trend higher than the statewide rate, and a significant portion of the population is over age 65. Service area residents are predominantly White, Non-Hispanic, and the primary language is English.

The poverty rates in counties in the service area remain relatively consistent with the rate for Iowa. Across the service area, there continues to be disparity with regard to poverty rates by race. Poverty rates are substantially higher among Black or African American individuals and individuals who are two or more races than among White individuals.

There continues to be a significant number of single-parent families in NEICAC's service area, many of which are led by the mother. Poverty rates are high among single-mother households, particularly those with young children; this is especially true in Howard County, where the rate is 73%. Additionally, in Fayette County, data continue to show an increase in the percentage of children who live with a grandparent(s); the rate is 4.9%, greater than the statewide rate.

NEEDS OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO MEET NEEDS

The needs of children and families in the service area remain multifaceted. Four-year graduation rates in the school districts in NEICAC's service area remain mostly above the statewide rate; rates are most challenging in Postville School District in Allamakee County, Clayton Ridge School District in Clayton County, and Oelwein School District in Fayette County. Kindergarten readiness data show improvements from Fall 2020 to Fall 2022, though rates in Postville School District and Oelwein School District are exceptionally low compared to other school districts in the service area. Educational attainment among adults in NEICAC's service area continues to trend toward a high school degree and some college, without degree completion. Disparities at the local level persist with regard to access to high-quality early learning and K-12 educational experiences.

Data continue to show that many residents in NEICAC's service area do not have sufficient optimal health outcomes and experience negative health factors; there continue to be challenges both in availability of and access to health care. Bremer and Winneshiek counties continue to show the strongest health outcomes in the service area. Health outcomes remain the most challenging in Allamakee County and Fayette County. In Chickasaw County, recent data show some improvements in health outcomes (e.g., lower percentage of individuals in poor or fair health). Substance misuse data show that alcohol, marijuana, and methamphetamines remain the most frequently used substances among Iowans entering treatment.

Teen birth rates remain low in most of the counties in the service area, however the rate in Allamakee County continues to trend well above the statewide rate. Most infant and maternal health data remain consistent with NEICAC's *2021 Community Assessment*, though there is a notable increase in infant mortality in most counties in the service area. Vaccination coverage for 2-year-old children varies, ranging from 58.5% in Chickasaw County to 82.8% in Winneshiek County. Rates of child abuse and neglect are consistently highest in Fayette County and, across the service area, neglect, dangerous substance, and physical abuse are the most frequent type of abuse experienced by children.

While there continue to be no low-income and low-access census tracts (food deserts) in NEICAC's service area, many children remain eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Postville School District in Allamakee County has the highest rate, nearly 74%. Updated data on SNAP show a notable decrease in the number of recipients from 2022 to 2023, coinciding with the passing of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, which ended supplemental SNAP benefits.

In NEICAC's service area, many families continue to depend on a wide range of social services to support their families, including subsidized child care, cash assistance, and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. The percent of the population in the labor force remains consistent with the statewide rate in many counties in the service area, and many young children have both parents in the labor force, more than 70% across the service area and as high as 100% in some communities.

Home value and affordability continue to vary across the service area, with median home value ranging from \$109,200 in Fayette County to \$196,300 in Winneshiek County. Rental cost burden also remains high in the service area; the rate is highest in Fayette County, where nearly 50% of households are spending 30% or more of their monthly income on rent. Rental costs have increased across the service area, which may lead to challenges accessing or maintaining affordable housing.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the types of jobs that most people are employed in include management, business, science, and arts occupation, and sales and office occupations. The top industries are manufacturing, retail trade, educational services, and health care and social assistance. These findings are unchanged from the *2021 Community Assessment*. The availability of public transportation and work-related transportation data are also consistent with years prior. Further, data continue to show that, in a majority of the counties in the service area, unemployment rates are greater than the statewide rate, though rates have returned to pre-pandemic levels.

ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN

Updated data show there are a total of 679 children and 134 pregnant women who are eligible for Head Start or Early Head Start services based on having a family income at or below the federal poverty level. This is an increase from the year prior (647 in 2020) and similar to the number of eligible children reported in NEICAC's *2021 Community Assessment* report (681 children in 2019). The poverty rate for children under age 5 remains greatest in Allamakee County, which also has the greatest number of income-eligible children. Combined with Fayette County, which has the second highest number of income-eligible children, these two counties continue to account for nearly 50% of income-eligible children in the service area.

In Iowa, the estimated number of individuals experiencing homelessness has decreased steadily from 2020 through 2023. A January 2023 point-in-time count of homelessness found 2,381 individuals experiencing

homelessness. Data continues to show that many homeless children enrolled in public schools in Iowa are unaccompanied homeless youth or children with disabilities. During the 2022-2023 program year, NEICAC served 16 children experiencing homelessness, an increase from 10 children the year prior. Therefore, it is estimated there may be greater than 16 children birth to age 5 who are experiencing homelessness and categorically eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start.

Data continue to show many children in NEICAC's service area are living in households that receive public assistance. Rates continue to be highest in Clayton and Fayette counties, at approximately 22% of children birth to age 18. It is estimated there are 1,054 children birth to age 5 eligible for Head Start/Early Head in the service area based on receipt of public assistance. This estimate remained steady from that reported in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*, after a significant increase from the *2021 Community Assessment* due to a change in eligibility guidelines from the Office of Head Start, which now includes SNAP for eligibility determination.

In NEICAC's service area, the number of children in foster care has continued to fluctuate in recent years. Fayette County, followed by Bremer County, continues to account for a significant portion of all children in foster care in the service area. There are an estimated 65 foster children birth to age 5 who are categorically eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start services; this is down from 77 children reported in the *2021 Community Assessment* and 67 reported in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*.

In the service area, there are approximately 588 children ages birth to 5 years old with an identified disability who may be eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start. This includes 473 children between the age of birth and 3 years old, and 115 children 3 to 5 years old. The percent of children birth to age 3 with an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) continues to be slightly less in the Area Education Agencies (AEAs) serving NEICAC's Head Start/Early Head Start service area than it is statewide.

AGENCIES SERVING ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

September 2023 data show 137 licensed child care and registered child development (RCD) programs available to families in NEICAC's service area. This is a decrease from 141 programs in September 2022 (reported in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*) and 146 programs in September 2021 (reported in the *2021 Community Assessment*). The 137 licensed programs have the capacity to serve 4,688 children birth to school age. The number of children under 5 years old in the service area continues to exceed total child care capacity (including school age).

Up-to-date data on Iowa's Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), IQ4K (Iowa Quality for Kids), show a participation rate in the service area of 28%, a decrease from 33% the year prior. Consistent with the findings of the *2021 Community Assessment*, a majority of programs are not participating in IQ4K; among those that are, most are rated Level 4 or Level 1.

In the NEICAC service area, 43 schools participate in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP). The number of sites and locations are unchanged from the 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 school year. Iowa continues to offer a robust public preschool program, ranking 5th in the nation for four-year-old access to public quality preschool programming.

Pregnant mothers and new parents in Iowa are eligible to access the home visiting program. NEICAC remains a primary provider of home visiting through its Early Head Start home-based program option and Family

Development & Self Sufficiency Program (FaDSS). Home visiting options are available for families in all counties in the service area and have not changed from that reported in the *2021 Community Assessment*.

In NEICAC's service area, there continue to be social services resources available to families in addition to those offered by the grantee, and NEICAC continues to connect families with resources within the service area to expand their access to comprehensive services. There are no substantial differences in the need for or the availability of community resources from what was reported in the *2021 Community Assessment*. Data continues to show some disparity in the quality of and access to educational resources, challenges with regard to affordable housing and homelessness, a need for mental health resources, and challenges accessing health services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the *2021 Community Assessment* was conducted, and consistent with that reported in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*, NEICAC has continues to make significant progress toward the recommendations established in the report. This includes:

- increasing the number of children enrolled as categorically eligible based on receipt of public assistance, alongside a decrease in the number of enrolled children who are over income;
- enhancements to staff compensation to support recruitment and retention in order to fully staff the Head Start/Early Head Start programs to meet families' needs;
- engaging in agency-wide rebranding and expansion of social media presence and marketing of the agency's early childhood programs;
- engaging in ongoing relationship-building with public school districts;
- providing support to families and exploring new strategies for meeting their needs;
- advocating for and providing support to families experiencing homelessness;
- collaboration with local health service providers to support the health and wellbeing of children and families;
- partnering with county agencies and providing mental health training and resources to program staff;
- maintaining an awareness of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families served by the Head Start/Early Head Start program as well as other factors impacting families' needs; and
- completion of this *2023 Community Assessment Annual Update* to supplement the *NEICAC 2021 Community Assessment* and *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*.

CONTENTS

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1**
- PURPOSE OF REPORT 6**
 - Head Start/Early Head Start Program 6
- METHODOLOGY 8**
 - Limitations of NEICAC 2023 Community Assessment Annual Update 8
- OVERVIEW OF SERVICE AREA 9**
 - Geographic Boundaries 9
 - Service Area Demographics 9
 - Poverty 12
- HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS 13**
- NEEDS OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES 14**
 - Education 15
 - Health 20
 - Nutrition 27
 - Social and Economic Factors Impacting Wellbeing 30
- EMPLOYMENT, WORKFORCE, AND TRANSPORTATION 35**
 - Labor Force, Industries, and Occupations 35
 - Employment 38
 - Education and Training 40
 - Transportation 40
 - Work and Training Schedules 42
- ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN 42**
 - Child Poverty and Geographic Location 43
 - Race and Ethnicity of Eligible Children in Poverty 45
 - Language of Eligible Children 46
 - Cultural Trends 46
 - Children Experiencing Homelessness 46
 - Children in Foster Care 48
 - Children Receiving Public Assistance 49
 - Children with Disabilities 50
- AGENCIES SERVING ELIGIBLE CHILDREN 52**
 - Child Care Centers and Family Child Care 52
 - Home Visiting 58
 - Publicly Funded Preschool 58
- RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE COMMUNITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES 60**
- RECOMMENDATIONS 61**
- LOOKING AHEAD 63**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The 2023 Community Assessment Annual Update serves as an update to Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation's (NEICAC) *Community Assessment, June 2021* and *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*. The purpose of this report is to update data provided in the 2021 and 2022 reports and to provide new and enhanced data to ensure NEICAC has the most current and comprehensive information for program planning and grant writing.

Per Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), Section 1302.11ⁱ, community assessment requirements include:

- 1) The number of eligible infants, toddlers, preschool age children, and expectant mothers, including their geographic location, race, ethnicity, and languages they speak, including:
 - a) Children experiencing homelessness in collaboration with, to the extent possible, McKinney-Vento Local Education Agency Liaisons (42 U.S.C. 11432 (6)(A));
 - b) Children in foster care;
 - c) Children with disabilities, including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies;
- 2) The education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of eligible children and their families, including prevalent social or economic factors that impact their well-being;
- 3) Typical work, school, and training schedules of parents with eligible children;
- 4) Other child development, child care centers, and family child care programs that serve eligible children, including home visiting, publicly funded state and local preschools, and the approximate number of eligible children served;
- 5) Resources that are available in the community to address the needs of eligible children and their families; and,
- 6) Strengths of the community.

Information in this report is organized according to the community assessment requirements noted above and is aligned to NEICAC's *2021 Community Assessment* and *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*. All data tables included in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update* are reflected in this update and correspond to the same table numbers.

Head Start/Early Head Start Program

NEICAC continues to serve children and families in Allamakee, Bremer, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek counties in rural, northeastern Iowa.

NEICAC's funded enrollment has not changed since the *2021 Community Assessment* was conducted. The agency is funded to serve 233 children in its Head Start program, which is provided in all seven counties in the service area. All slots are center-based and operate a full-day schedule, five days per week.

A summary of NEICAC Head Start centers and numbers of classrooms, by county, is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Head Start Classrooms by County

County	Center	Number of Head Start Classrooms
Allamakee County	Postville Head Start Center 210 S. Ogden St. Postville, IA 52162	2
	Waukon Head Start Center 953 3 rd Ave. NW Waukon, IA 52172	2
Bremer County	Waverly Head Start Center 1805 Horton Rd. Waverly, IA 50677	1
Chickasaw County	New Hampton Head Start Center 201 N. Locust Ave. New Hampton, IA 50659	1
Clayton County	Monona Head Start Center 700 S. Page St. Monona, IA 52159	1
	Guttenberg Head Start Center 131 S. River Park Dr. Guttenberg, IA 52052	1
Fayette County	West Union Head Start Center 400 N. Pine St. West Union, IA 52175	1
	Oelwein Head Start Center 317 8 th Ave. SE Oelwein, IA 50662	4
Howard County	Cresco Head Start Center 1135 Canterbury St. Cresco, IA 52136	1
Winneshiek County	Decorah Child Development Center 301 Center St. Decorah, IA 52101	1
Total		15

During the 2022-2023 program year, approximately 51% of children enrolled in Head Start were eligible for participation based on family income (Table 2). This rate is consistent with that reported in the *2021 Community Assessment*. Since the *2021 Community Assessment* was conducted, NEICAC has enrolled a greater portion of children who are eligible based on public assistance, and fewer children are enrolled “based on other type of need” or over income.

Table 2. Number and Percent of Children Enrolled in Head Start by Primary Eligibility Criteria (2022-2023)ⁱⁱ

Primary Eligibility Criteria	Cumulative Number of Head Start Children	Percent of Cumulative Enrolled Head Start Children
Income-eligible	133	51.4%
Public assistance	65	25.1%
Foster care	5	1.9%
Homeless	8	3.1%
Eligibility based on other type of need	19	7.3%
Over income	29	11.2%
Total	259	100.0%

NEICAC is also funded to serve 80 children in its Early Head Start program. Early Head Start is operated through the home-based program option and is provided in Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek counties.

During the 2022-2023 program year, NEICAC served 115 infants and toddlers, along with nine pregnant women. Approximately 53% of pregnant women and children were enrolled in Early Head Start based on income-eligibility, and 22% based on receipt of public assistance. The *2021 Community Assessment* reported nearly 32% of children enrolled in Early Head Start were over income or exceeding over income (2018-2018 program year); the percentage of enrolled children that are over income or exceeding over income has decreased to 10.5% (2022-2023 program year).^{iii,iv}

Staffing and enrollment challenges have deeply impacted the early care and education field over the last year. These challenges are highlighted in the Agencies Serving Eligible Children section of the report, below. NEICAC, though multiple efforts, has been able to maintain open classrooms and a strong staffing structure. NEICAC staff, including administrators, have been flexible in their abilities to cover classrooms to maintain ratios; wage increases were implemented across the program to support retention; and NEICAC implemented a new policy of paying teachers through summer months to align with local school district policy. Through these efforts, NEICAC has been able to maintain near-capacity enrollment and is approaching full capacity.

METHODOLOGY

Limitations of NEICAC 2023 Community Assessment Annual Update

NEICAC's service area is defined as multiple counties; therefore, a substantial amount of data at the county level was used to inform the agency's community assessment. State-level data is provided, when county-level data is not available, for comparison to counties within the service area, or to set the context for Iowa within the national landscape. School district, zip code, city/town, and census tract-level information is provided for key data points and to illustrate unique and specific needs in local communities.

Throughout the report, when relevant or required data points could not be obtained to inform the community assessment, this is indicated in the text. Anecdotal information is provided, where possible, to balance statewide, county, and local data with observations and reflections about the experiences of children and families in NEICAC's service area.

U.S. Census Bureau data is reported from the American Community Survey (ACS),^v an annual survey that is provided to help determine how more than \$675 billion in federal and state funds are distributed each year.

When examining U.S. Census data tables, the margins of error for data on communities with small populations may be higher than communities with large populations. Zip code level data provided in the U.S. Census is a representation of the U.S. Postal Service zip code service area known as a "ZIP Code Tabulation Area."^{vi} Zip codes are used by the Postal Service for mail delivery routes, and these boundaries may cross county, school district, or other geographic boundaries. A sum of zip code level data for a county will not total the county level data.

OVERVIEW OF SERVICE AREA

Geographic Boundaries

NEICAC's service area has not changed since the 2021 *Community Assessment* was conducted. NEICAC serves children and families in seven counties in northeast Iowa, including Allamakee, Bremer, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek counties.

Service Area Demographics

Population

The total population in NEICAC's service area is 117,263. In recent years, the population in Iowa has continued to increase, while the population in the service area continues to decrease or fluctuate (Table 3).

Table 3. Population by Geographic Area and Year (2017-2021)^{vii}

Geographic Area	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Four-Year Trend
Allamakee County	13,940	13,880	13,813	13,761	14,068	Fluctuating
Bremer County	24,741	24,782	24,864	25,032	24,863	Fluctuating
Chickasaw County	12,140	12,099	12,026	11,970	12,021	Fluctuating
Clayton County	17,711	17,672	17,625	17,527	17,173	Decreasing
Fayette County	20,139	19,929	19,803	19,604	19,582	Decreasing
Howard County	9,321	9,264	9,226	9,201	9,456	Fluctuating
Winneshiek County	20,575	20,401	20,262	20,090	20,100	Fluctuating
Iowa	3,118,102	3,132,499	3,139,508	3,150,011	3,179,090	Increasing

Up-to-date data on median age and the age distribution of the population in the service area is provided in Table 4. Data is stable from that reported in NEICAC's 2021 *Community Assessment*. Median age continues to trend higher than the statewide rate, and a significant portion of the population is over age 65. There are communities within the service area with a high percentage of the population that is under age 5.

Table 4. Median Age and Distribution of the Population by Geographic Area (2021)^{viii,1}

Geographic Area	Median Age	Percent of Population Under Age 5	Percent of Population Over Age 65
52140 (Dorchester)	52.6	4.9%	26.2%
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	58.8	7.4%	35.7%
52151 (Lansing)	56.6	6.6%	35.6%
52160 (New Albin)	51.3	4.3%	15.8%
52162 (Postville)	34.5	8.0%	16.4%
52170 (Waterville)	59.6	8.2%	31.9%
52172 (Waukon)	41.6	5.2%	20.4%
Allamakee County	37	6.1%	17.1%
50622 (Denver)	37	6.1%	17.1%
50631 (Frederika)	n/a	n/a	n/a
50647 (Janesville)	41.5	6.6%	14.2%
50666 (Plainfield)	48.7	3.0%	30.9%
50668 (Readlyn)	41	6.0%	19.8%
50674 (Sumner)	45.3	5.0%	22.5%
50676 (Tripoli)	39.9	9.7%	14.6%
50677 (Waverly)	36.8	5.2%	19.4%
Bremer County	39	5.7%	19.2%

¹ Rates greater than the countywide rate are highlighted.

Geographic Area	Median Age	Percent of Population Under Age 5	Percent of Population Over Age 65
50603 (Alta Vista)	59.7	0.9%	44.5%
50630 (Fredericksburg)	44.8	8.9%	25.7%
50645 (Ionia)	56.2	3.8%	25.7%
50658 (Nashua)	43.1	4.0%	16.9%
50659 (New Hampton)	41.7	7.9%	16.7%
52154 (Lawler)	37.2	5.9%	18.8%
Chickasaw County	43.4	6.7%	20.5%
52042 (Edgewood)	37.4	6.0%	18.8%
52043 (Elkader)	50.7	4.0%	28.0%
52044 (Elkport)	49.1	4.2%	7.5%
52047 (Farmersburg)	33.4	3.7%	11.3%
52048 (Garber)	38.2	12.3%	18.3%
52049 (Garnavillo)	43.3	7.1%	25.4%
52052 (Guttenberg)	54.4	3.1%	26.0%
52066 (North Buena Vista)	54.5	7.1%	22.2%
52072 (Saint Olaf)	56.8	6.6%	28.7%
52076 (Strawberry Point)	43.1	6.3%	23.2%
52077 (Volga)	51.3	12.5%	20.3%
52156 (Luana)	32.4	13.9%	8.8%
52157 (McGregor)	51.5	4.2%	26.4%
52159 (Monona)	43.5	7.6%	25.4%
Clayton County	47.1	5.9%	23.4%
50606 (Arlington)	38.1	14.0%	21.7%
50655 (Maynard)	41.4	5.7%	13.6%
50662 (Oelwein)	45	4.7%	22.8%
50664 (Oran)	55.7	4.7%	26.8%
50681 (Westgate)	48.1	2.4%	20.6%
52135 (Clermont)	53.3	2.7%	22.8%
52141 (Elgin)	46.8	5.9%	30.3%
52142 (Fayette)	32.2	5.0%	19.8%
52147 (Hawkeye)	47.5	2.7%	19.4%
52164 (Randalia)	41	10.1%	23.7%
52169 (Wadena)	52.4	4.4%	35.6%
52171 (Waucoma)	44.1	4.4%	22.4%
52175 (West Union)	39	6.5%	20.6%
Fayette County	43	5.5%	21.0%
50466 (Riceville)	34.1	6.7%	19.6%
50628 (Elma)	44.8	7.7%	27.4%
52134 (Chester)	26.3	15.5%	15.2%
52136 (Cresco)	44	5.9%	19.5%
52155 (Lime Springs)	39.8	6.3%	20.6%
Howard County	40.5	7.1%	20.3%
52101 (Decorah)	40.7	4.4%	22.8%
52132 (Calmar)	35.7	7.1%	11.9%
52133 (Castalia)	57.2	0.3%	19.7%
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	50.4	9.0%	19.8%
52161 (Ossian)	40	9.1%	22.6%
52165 (Ridgeway)	37.3	1.1%	16.2%
Winneshek County	41.7	4.6%	21.1%
Iowa	38.3	6.1%	17.0%

Tables 5 and 6 describe the race and ethnicity of the service area population by county; data remains stable from that reported in the 2021 Community Assessment. Counties within the service area are less diverse than Iowa as a whole. Allamakee County continues to show the most ethnic diversity; the percentage of the population that is Hispanic or Latino grew from 6.6% (2019) to 6.9% (2020) to 7.2% (2021).

Table 5. Population (and Percentage of Population) by Race and Geographic Area (2021)^{ix,2}

County	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaskan Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	Some other race	Two or more races
Allamakee County	13,297 (94.5%)	235 (1.7%)	122 (0.9%)	82 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	85 (0.6%)	247 (1.8%)
Bremer County	23,581 (94.8%)	236 (0.9%)	97 (0.4%)	239 (1.0%)	17 (0.1%)	102 (0.4%)	591 (2.4%)
Chickasaw County	11,704 (97.4%)	77 (0.6%)	47 (0.4%)	3 (0.0%)	3 (0.0%)	65 (0.5%)	122 (1.0%)
Clayton County	16,594 (96.6%)	50 (0.3%)	13 (0.1%)	53 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	70 (0.4%)	393 (2.3%)
Fayette County	18,398 (94.0%)	285 (1.5%)	31 (0.2%)	129 (0.7%)	1 (0.0%)	34 (0.2%)	704 (3.6%)
Howard County	9,122 (96.5%)	25 (0.3%)	31 (0.3%)	22 (0.2%)	2 (0.0%)	16 (0.2%)	238 (2.5%)
Winneshiek County	19,262 (95.8%)	179 (0.9%)	52 (0.3%)	150 (0.7%)	1 (0.0%)	161 (0.8%)	295 (1.5%)
Iowa	2,795,319 (87.9%)	119,036 (3.7%)	10,889 (0.3%)	79,188 (2.5%)	4,182 (0.1%)	46,711 (1.5%)	123,765 (3.9%)

Table 6. Ethnicity as a Percentage of the Population by Geographic Area (2021)^{x,3}

Geographic Area	Hispanic or Latino Origin (of any race)	Hispanic or Latino Origin: Mexican	Hispanic or Latino Origin: Puerto Rican	Hispanic or Latino Origin: Cuban	Hispanic or Latino Origin: Other
Allamakee County	7.2%	5.3%	0.2%	0.0%	1.6%
Bremer County	1.8%	0.7%	0.4%	0.1%	0.6%
Chickasaw County	3.0%	2.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%
Clayton County	2.1%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
Fayette County	2.8%	2.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.3%
Howard County	1.8%	1.7%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Winneshiek County	2.4%	1.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.9%
Iowa	6.4%	4.8%	0.3%	0.1%	1.2%

² Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

³ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Poverty

The poverty rate of counties in the service area, compared to the state of Iowa, is provided in Table 7. With the addition of the most recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2021), poverty rate data continues to show fluctuations. Poverty rates remain highest in Clayton, Fayette, and Allamakee counties.

Table 7. Poverty Rate by Geographic Area and Year (2017-2021)^{xii,4}

Geographic Area	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Five-Year Trend
Allamakee County	11.4%	9.5%	11.0%	11.4%	10.5%	Fluctuating
Bremer County	7.7%	8.2%	7.4%	7.1%	7.4%	Fluctuating
Chickasaw County	8.9%	7.4%	6.7%	7.8%	6.2%	Fluctuating
Clayton County	10.4%	9.0%	11.5%	12.3%	12.2%	Fluctuating
Fayette County	12.8%	12.4%	11.4%	12.0%	12.2%	Fluctuating
Howard County	11.6%	11.9%	9.0%	9.0%	8.2%	Fluctuating
Winneshiiek County	8.0%	8.6%	8.2%	8.8%	8.2%	Fluctuating
Iowa	12.0%	11.7%	11.5%	11.1%	11.0%	Decreasing

Across the service area, there continues to be disparity with regard to poverty rates by race (Table 8). Poverty rates remain higher among Black or African American individuals and individuals who are two or more races than among White individuals.

Table 8. Number (and Percent) of Individuals Below Poverty Level by Race and Geographic Area (2021)^{xii,5}

Geographic Area	White	Black or African American	American Indian & Alaskan Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Some other race	Two or more races
Allamakee County	1,282 (9.8%)	93 (39.7%)	5 (4.1%)	0 (0.0%)	n/a	38 (44.7%)	31 (13.0%)
Bremer County	1,539 (6.9%)	56 (45.5%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (8.9%)	126 (23.9%)
Chickasaw County	667 (5.8%)	14 (20.6%)	35 (74.5%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	18 (14.8%)
Clayton County	2,002 (12.3%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (23.1%)	1 (1.9%)	n/a	0 (0.0%)	52 (13.6%)
Fayette County	2,083 (11.6%)	110 (45.8%)	1 (3.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	123 (18.0%)
Howard County	686 (7.7%)	8 (44.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (43.8%)	62 (26.2%)
Winneshiiek County	1,389 (8.0%)	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	33 (37.9%)	0 (0.0%)	24 (17.9%)	32 (14.5%)
Iowa	261,729 (9.6%)	32,909 (29.7%)	2,364 (22.9%)	10,682 (13.8%)	972 (23.8%)	7,897 (17.3%)	23,142 (19.3%)

⁴ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

⁵ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Across most of the service area, the poverty rate among individuals of Hispanic or Latino origin is higher than that of individuals who are White alone (Table 9).

Table 9. Number (and Percent) of Individuals Below Poverty Level by Ethnicity and Geographic Area (2021)^{xiii,6}

Geographic Area	Hispanic or Latino Origin	Non-Hispanic or Latino Origin, White Alone
Allamakee County	326 (32.6%)	1,030 (8.3%)
Bremer County	64 (18.3%)	1,539 (6.9%)
Chickasaw County	23 (6.4%)	654 (5.8%)
Clayton County	153 (42.6%)	1,864 (11.5%)
Fayette County	32 (6.5%)	2,056 (11.7%)
Howard County	37 (21.4%)	656 (7.4%)
Winneshiek County	113 (36.5%)	1,332 (7.7%)
Iowa	35,442 (17.9%)	242,203 (9.3%)

Disparities also remain with regard to single-parent and two-parent families with young children. Consistent with findings of the 2021 *Community Assessment*, for families with a female head of household (no spouse present), poverty rates remain substantially higher than married-couple families (Table 10).

Table 10. Poverty Status of Families in the Past 12 Months by Geographic Area (2021)^{xiv,7}

Geographic Area	All Families with Related Children Under Age 5	Married-couple Families with Related Children Under Age 5	Families with Female Householder, No Spouse Present, with Related Children Under Age 5
Allamakee County	8.4%	0.0%	38.3%
Bremer County	4.0%	0.0%	15.5%
Chickasaw County	17.5%	12.3%	21.1%
Clayton County	13.9%	7.2%	31.2%
Fayette County	6.40%	2.5%	39.1%
Howard County	25.7%	0.0%	72.6%
Winneshiek County	8.9%	9.5%	10.2%
Iowa	12.7%	4.2%	41.4%

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

In NEICAC's service area, most children live with their biological, step, or adopted parents. In Fayette County, data from 2019 to 2021 show an increase in the percentage of children who live with a grandparent(s); the rate is greater than the statewide rate. Table 11 describes the percentage of children by relationship to householder for each county in the service area.

Table 11. Percent of Children (ages 0 to 18-years-old) by Relationship to Householder and Geographic Area (2021)^{xv,8}

Geographic Area	Own child (biological, step, or adopted)	Grandchild	Other relatives	Foster child or other unrelated child
Allamakee County	95.8%	1.0%	1.3%	1.9%
Bremer County	97.0%	2.5%	0.3%	0.2%
Chickasaw County	93.6%	1.4%	1.6%	3.4%
Clayton County	92.1%	3.5%	0.9%	3.5%
Fayette County	92.6%	4.9%	0.7%	1.7%
Howard County	94.8%	2.4%	1.2%	1.7%
Winneshiek County	96.5%	1.6%	0.0%	2.0%
Iowa	92.6%	4.1%	1.4%	1.9%

⁶ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

⁷ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

⁸ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

In the Head Start/Early Head Start program, there was an increase in the number of children formally in the primary care of their grandparents. The number increased from six families during the 2021-2022 to 10 families in the 2022-2023 program year.^{xvi,xvii}

In NEICAC’s service area, there continue to be many single-parent households. Countywide rates have remained stable in recent years (Table 12). The most recent NEICAC program data shows the agency continues to serve a high percentage of single-parent families; during the 2022-2023 program year, 44% of families in Head Start and 39% of families in Early Head Start were led by single-parents.^{xviii} These rates remain well above the countywide and statewide rates.

Table 12. Percent of Children in Single-Parent Families by Geographic Area and Year^{xix,xx,xxi}

Geographic Area	2015-2019	2016-2020	2017-2021
Allamakee County	15%	13%	11%
Bremer County	17%	18%	17%
Chickasaw County	8%	9%	12%
Clayton County	17%	17%	15%
Fayette County	21%	17%	18%
Howard County	10%	9%	10%
Winneshiek County	18%	18%	17%
Iowa	21%	21%	21%

NEEDS OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The needs of children and families in NEICAC’s service area remain multi-faceted and interconnected.

Widespread Factors Impacting Families’ Needs

On May 11, 2023, the United States ended its COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). While not signaling the end of the pandemic, the removal of the designation indicates that the virus is now “an established and ongoing health issue which no longer constitutes a public health emergency.”^{xxii,xxiii} The *2021 Community Assessment* provided data and insights into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families in the service area. While COVID-19 continues to be present in communities, its impacts have stabilized as evident in data and reflections from NEICAC leadership team members.

Since the *2021 Community Assessment* was conducted, inflation has moved to the forefront as one of the more significant factors impacting families in the service area. Because low-income households spend a greater portion of their income on basic necessities (e.g., food, gasoline, heating), they tend to be more deeply impacted by rising inflation.^{xxiv} Table 12 describes the year-over-year change in Consumer Price Index (CPI) in the Midwest Region.⁹

Table 12. Midwest Region CPI-U 12-Month Percent Changes, All Items Index, by Month/Year

Geographic Area	2021	2022	2023
January	+1.2	+7.9	+6.0
April	+4.9	+8.2	+4.9
July	+5.9	+8.6	+2.9
October	+6.6	+7.4	n/a

⁹ As defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services.

Education

Educational attainment among adults in NEICAC’s service area continues to trend toward a high school degree and some college, without degree completion (Table 14).

Table 14. Educational Attainment (Ages 25 and Over) by Geographic Area (2021)^{xxv}

Geographic Area	Less Than 9 th Grade ¹⁰	9 th to 12 th Grade, no diploma ¹¹	High school graduate	Some college, no degree	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Advanced degree
Allamakee County	4.8%	4.9%	41.0%	18.9%	13.2%	12.0%	5.4%
Bremer County	1.0%	2.5%	30.4%	17.2%	15.3%	22.2%	11.5%
Chickasaw County	3.3%	3.4%	44.8%	16.4%	13.8%	13.0%	5.4%
Clayton County	3.4%	5.7%	43.6%	19.0%	11.0%	13.1%	4.3%
Fayette County	2.8%	4.6%	42.5%	21.1%	11.8%	12.4%	4.8%
Howard County	4.2%	4.2%	40.6%	17.0%	15.7%	13.5%	4.7%
Winneshiek County	2.1%	2.1%	33.9%	16.9%	14.5%	18.6%	12.1%
Iowa	2.8%	4.4%	30.6%	20.5%	12.0%	20.0%	9.7%

The levels of educational attainment among families served by NEICAC’s Head Start and Early Head Start programs continues to trend more toward a high school diploma or Associate’s degree, vocational school, or some college. Few families have a Bachelor’s degree or an advanced degree (Table 15).

Table 15. Educational Attainment of Families Served by NEICAC Head Start/Early Head Start (highest level of education obtained by parent(s)/guardian(s)) (2022-2023)^{xxvi}

	EHS: Number of Families (at enrollment)	EHS: Percent of Families	HS: Number of Families (at enrollment)	HS: Percent of Families
Less than a high school degree	20	20.4%	46	19.6%
High school graduate or GED	36	36.7%	96	40.9%
Associate’s degree, vocational school, or some college	35	35.7%	72	30.6%
Bachelor’s or advanced degree	7	7.1%	21	8.9%
Total	98	100%	235	100%

Four-year graduation rates in the school districts in NEICAC’s service area remain mostly above the statewide rate. Most recent data (2022) show graduation rates are most challenging in Postville School District in Allamakee County (87.9%), Clayton Ridge School District in Clayton County (88.9%), and Oelwein School District in Fayette County (74.7%) (Table 16).

Also described in Table 16, disparities continue to exist across subgroups of the student population. In many school districts, four-year graduation rates are lower for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. Because data on graduation rates for English Language Learners (ELLs) is not available for almost every school district in the service area, this data point has been removed from Table 16. Statewide, the graduation rate for ELLs is 73.3%, well below the statewide rate for all students, 89.9%.^{xxvii}

¹⁰ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

¹¹ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Table 16. Four-Year Graduation Rate by Subgroup and School District (2019-2020 through 2021-2022)^{xxviii,12}

Geographic Area	School District	Overall			IEP			Free or Reduced-Price Lunch		
		2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
Allamakee County	Allamakee	98.8%	95.5%	98.6%	91.7	76.9%	100%	97.8	91.1%	97.1%
	Eastern Allamakee	97.4%	100%	97.2%	**	**	**	91.7	**	93.3%
	Postville	83.7%	96.2%	87.9%	**	**	80.0%	83.7%	96.2%	87.9%
Bremer County	Denver	100%	98.5%	100%	**	**	**	100%	100%	100%
	Janesville	100%	96.2%	96.3%	**	**	**	**	**	**
	Sumner-Fredericksburg	95.7%	90.2%	94.9%	**	**	**	94.7%	76.9%	86.7%
	Tripoli	96.8%	89.5%	95.8%	**	**	**	90.9%	82.4%	90.0%
	Wapsie Valley	97.6%	100%	95.8%	**	**	**	**	**	92.9%
	Waverly-Shell Rock	96.5%	98.4%	94.5%	95.2%	100%	92.8%	91.1%	93.9%	90.2%
	Chickasaw County	Nashua-Plainfield	100%	100%	95.1%	**	**	**	100%	100%
	New Hampton	98.7%	94.4%	94.1%	100%	90.9%	**	96.4%	86.5%	89.7%
Clayton County	Central	100%	96.9%	100%	**	**	**	100%	92.3%	100%
	Edgewood-Colesburg	100%	100%	93.0%	**	**	**	100%	100%	90.0%
	Clayton Ridge	83.0%	88.6%	88.9%	76.9%	85.0%	75.0%	70.9%	87.5%	87.5%
	MFL Marmac	100%	98.0%	100%	**	**	100%	**	95.0%	100%
Fayette County	North Fayette Valley	86.6%	93.5%	93.1%	81.8%	83.3%	92.9%	72.7%	83.3%	86.8%
	Oelwein	91.0%	79.1%	74.7%	**	85.7%	50.0%	85.1%	72.4%	69.7%
	Starmont	90.7%	97.6%	94.1%	**	**	**	89.5%	100%	88.9%
	West Central	100%	100%	95.0%	**	**	**	100%	100%	90.9%
Howard County	Howard-Winneshiek	94.9%	94.7%	90.3%	84.2%	92.3%	69.2%	91.5%	89.5%	83.3%
	Riceville	100%	100%	95.5%	**	**	**	100%	100%	**
Winneshiek County	Decorah	96.6%	98.6%	97.2%	72.7%	90.9%	100%	89.7%	93.1%	93.6%
	South Winneshiek	97.6%	100%	95.7%	**	**	**	94.4%	100%	90.0%
	Turkey Valley	100%	100%	96.7%	**	**	**	100%	100%	**
Iowa		91.8%	90.2%	89.9%	76.4%	73.8%	72.8%	85.5%	82.3%	82.3%

In Iowa, disparity by race and ethnicity remains evident in four-year graduation data. A significantly lower rate of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, African American, American Indian, and Hispanic students graduate on time compared to the rate of White and Asian students, though there has been some progress in reducing the disparities over the last 10 years (Table 17).

Table 17. Four-Year Graduation Rate by Student Subgroup in Iowa and Year^{xxix,13}

Subgroup	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	10-Year Comparison 2012-2022
Black	80.7%	77.8%	77.3%	+3.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	82.5%	76.9%	81.1%	+8.4%
Asian	93.7%	92.9%	93.0%	+3.1%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	75.5%	64.2%	63.7%	-13.2%
Hispanic/Latino	84.8%	81.0%	80.2%	+2.7%
Two or More Races	88.8%	85.6%	83.4%	-1.0%
White	93.8%	92.6%	92.7%	+1.6%
Iowa	91.8%	90.2%	89.9%	+0.6%

¹² Rates less than the statewide rate are highlighted.

¹³ Rates less than the statewide rate are highlighted.

In nearly every school district in the NEICAC service area, dropout rates remain lower than the statewide rate. Dropout rate is most concerning in Oelwein School District (Fayette County), where it is greater than the statewide rate and has been increasing in recent years (Table 18).

Disparities persist for subgroups of the student population; statewide, students with IEPs, English Language Learners, and those eligible for free and reduced-price lunch have higher dropout rates than the overall rate.

Table 18. Dropout Rate by Subgroup and School District (2019-2020 and 2020-2021)^{xxx,14}

Geographic Area	School District	Overall			IEP			Free or Reduced-Price Lunch			English Language Learners		
		2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
Allamakee County	Allamakee	0.7%	0.2%	0.7%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	0.4%	0.8%	**	**	**
	Eastern Allamakee	0.0%	0.7%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	**	**	**
	Postville	2.8%	1.1%	1.8%	6.1%	2.0%	2.2%	2.8%	1.1%	2.2%	4.8%	3.4%	5.0%
Bremer County	Denver	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	**	**	**
	Janesville	0.6%	1.9%	0.6%	0.0%	8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	**	**	**	**
	Sumner-Fredericksburg	0.8%	0.3%	1.9%	3.3%	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	0.9%	4.3%	**	**	**
	Tripoli	1.6%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	2.6%	0.0%	**	**	**
	Wapsie Valley	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	**	**	**
	Waverly-Shell Rock	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.8%	0.9%	3.7%	2.9%	2.7%	**	**	**
Chickasaw County	Nashua-Plainfield	0.0%	0.7%	1.2%	0.0%	2.3%	2.7%	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%	**	**	**
	New Hampton	0.6%	1.7%	2.5%	1.8%	2.0%	4.3%	1.3%	2.9%	6.8%	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%
Clayton County	Central	0.0%	1.0%	0.5%	0.0%	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	**	**	**
	Edgewood-Colesburg	0.9%	0.0%	1.8%	7.1%	0.0%	10.0%	2.4%	0.0%	2.6%	**	**	**
	Clayton Ridge	2.4%	3.2%	1.9%	4.1%	6.3%	0.0%	3.3%	3.7%	4.1%	**	**	**
	MFL Marmac	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.0%	1.7%	1.6%	0.0%	0.9%	0.8%	**	**	**
Fayette County	North Fayette Valley	3.0%	1.3%	1.4%	3.0%	2.6%	1.1%	5.9%	2.8%	3.2%	**	**	**
	Oelwein	1.7%	2.8%	4.4%	1.7%	4.0%	6.9%	2.6%	4.3%	7.6%	**	**	**
	Starmont	1.1%	0.4%	1.4%	2.3%	0.0%	2.3%	1.5%	0.0%	2.5%	**	**	**
	West Central	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	1.4%	**	**	**
Howard County	Howard-Winneshiek	0.3%	1.2%	1.5%	0.0%	2.3%	2.7%	0.8%	1.4%	3.9%	**	**	**
	Riceville	0.7%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	**	1.6%	0.0%	3.6%	**	**	**
Winneshiek County	Decorah	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%	1.4%	1.3%	0.0%	2.0%	1.6%	1.1%	**	**	**
	South Winneshiek	0.8%	0.0%	0.4%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	**	**	**
	Turkey Valley	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	1.7%	1.5%	1.4%	**	**	**
Iowa		1.5%	2.0%	3.0%	2.5%	3.1%	5.4%	2.7%	3.7%	5.8%	4.4%	4.6%	8.4%

**Data suppressed due to small number of students.

¹⁴ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

In Iowa, disparities also persist by race and ethnicity among students dropping out of school. During the 2021-2022 school year, the dropout rate for all racial subgroups, with the exception of White and Asian students, was above the statewide rate; this trend has held true for the last three school years (Table 19).

Table 19. Dropout Rate by Student Subgroup in Iowa and Year^{xxxi,15}

Subgroup	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Three-Year Trend
Black	3.5%	4.4%	6.5%	Increasing
American Indian or Alaska Native	5.0%	4.9%	6.7%	Fluctuating
Asian	0.7%	0.9%	1.7%	Increasing
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2.6%	4.6%	9.7%	Increasing
Hispanic/Latino	2.9%	3.4%	5.8%	Increasing
Two or More Races	2.0%	2.7%	4.6%	Increasing
White	1.1%	1.5%	2.2%	Increasing
Iowa	1.5%	2.0%	3.0%	Increasing

State level educational assessment data primarily show fluctuating trends for third grade proficiency rates in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics in recent years (Table 20 and Table 21).¹⁶ Oelwein Public Schools continues to have some of the most challenging proficiency rates for both ELA and Mathematics.

Table 20. Percent of Third Grade Students Proficient on English Language Arts State Assessment by School District and Year^{xxxii,17}

Geographic Area	School District	2018-2019	2021-2022	2022-2023	Three-Year Trend
Allamakee County	Allamakee	83.1%	76.8%	84.6%	Fluctuating
	Eastern Allamakee	87.5%	73.1%	58.8%	Decreasing
	Postville	36.5%	67.6%	70.3%	Increasing
Bremer County	Denver	82.4%	85.7%	91.4%	Increasing
	Janesville	83.9%	76.9%	69.2%	Decreasing
	Sumner-Fredericksburg	59.7%	82.7%	86.3%	Increasing
	Tripoli	68.8%	89.7%	80.0%	Fluctuating
	Wapsie Valley	71.9%	79.6%	80.4%	Increasing
	Waverly-Shell Rock	77.1%	72.1%	77.7%	Fluctuating
	Chickasaw County	Nashua-Plainfield	79.7%	65.1%	77.1%
	New Hampton	59.6%	61.1%	63.5%	Increasing
Clayton County	Central	73.3%	72.4%	76.7%	Fluctuating
	Edgewood-Colesburg	61.5%	56.8%	75.7%	Increasing
	Clayton Ridge	74.5%	66.7%	57.7%	Decreasing
	MFL Marmac	69.5%	79.2%	68.1%	Fluctuating
Fayette County	North Fayette Valley	79.5%	78.8%	74.4%	Decreasing
	Oelwein	51.7%	63.3%	62.5%	Fluctuating
	Starmont	66.7%	59.5%	71.7%	Increasing
	West Central	80.0%	72.9%	69.2%	Decreasing
Howard County	Howard-Winneshiek	50.7%	88.2%	67.3%	Fluctuating
	Riceville	65.6%	48.6%	85.7%	Fluctuating
Winneshiek County	Decorah	83.0%	70.6%	81.7%	Fluctuating
	South Winneshiek	76.2%	69.6%	77.1%	Fluctuating
	Turkey Valley	83.3%	82.6%	91.3%	Fluctuating
Iowa		65.3%	65.1%	66.3%	Fluctuating

¹⁵ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

¹⁶ 2019-2020 data is not reported due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁷ Rates less than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Table 21. Percent of Third Grade Students Proficient on Math State Assessment by School District and Year^{xxxiii,18}

Geographic Area	School District	2018-2019	2021-2022	2022-2023	Three-Year Trend
Allamakee County	Allamakee	87.0%	81.7%	90.8%	Fluctuating
	Eastern Allamakee	100%	80.8%	82.4%	Fluctuating
	Postville	53.8%	62.2%	51.4%	Fluctuating
Bremer County	Denver	82.4%	85.7%	97.5%	Increasing
	Janesville	82.4%	82.1%	69.2%	Decreasing
	Sumner-Fredericksburg	59.7%	86.5%	82.4%	Fluctuating
	Tripoli	75.0%	93.1%	90.0%	Fluctuating
	Wapsie Valley	80.7%	87.8%	95.7%	Increasing
	Waverly-Shell Rock	84.3%	87.1%	87.2%	Increasing
Chickasaw County	Nashua-Plainfield	79.7%	76.7%	80.0%	Fluctuating
	New Hampton	80.7%	64.8%	74.6%	Fluctuating
Clayton County	Central	76.7%	79.3%	90.0%	Increasing
	Edgewood-Colesburg	79.5%	62.2%	89.2%	Fluctuating
	Clayton Ridge	68.6%	68.2%	69.0%	Fluctuating
	MFL Marmac	67.8%	81.3%	76.8%	Fluctuating
Fayette County	North Fayette Valley	81.8%	89.4%	80.8%	Fluctuating
	Oelwein	70.8%	63.3%	68.8%	Fluctuating
	Starmont	69.0%	66.7%	78.7%	Fluctuating
	West Central	80.0%	78.0%	100%	Fluctuating
Howard County	Howard-Winneshiek	80.8%	88.2%	81.6%	Fluctuating
	Riceville	81.3%	60.0%	90.5%	Fluctuating
Winneshiek County	Decorah	90.2%	74.1%	88.1%	Fluctuating
	South Winneshiek	90.9%	95.7%	91.4%	Fluctuating
	Turkey Valley	77.8%	95.7%	100%	Increasing
Iowa		71.7%	72.0%	75.3%	Increasing

As described in Table 22, from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020, nearly every school district in the service area saw a decline in the percentage of kindergarten students who were determined ready for kindergarten based on results of approved assessment tools, as prescribed by the Iowa Department of Education. In most school districts in the service area, that percentage rebounded by Fall 2022. Fall 2021 data is not reported, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The rates of kindergarten readiness remain most concerning in the Postville School District and Oelwein School District, where the percentage of incoming kindergarten students meeting learning benchmarks are 23% and 44%.

¹⁸ Rates less than the statewide rate are highlighted

Table 22. Percent of Kindergarten Students Meeting Kindergarten Assessment Benchmarks by School District and Year^{xxxiv,19}

Geographic Area	School District	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2022
Allamakee County	Allamakee	74%	68%	74%
	Eastern Allamakee	95%	80%	95%
	Postville	34%	13%	23%
Bremer County	Denver	88%	84%	86%
	Janesville	86%	84%	84%
	Sumner-Fredericksburg	55%	46%	60%
	Tripoli	73%	53%	61%
	Wapsie Valley	73%	68%	69%
	Waverly-Shell Rock	79%	78%	81%
Chickasaw County	Nashua-Plainfield	71%	64%	85%
	New Hampton	73%	63%	64%
Clayton County	Central	90%	74%	69%
	Edgewood-Colesburg	72%	62%	73%
	Clayton Ridge	75%	66%	71%
	MFL Marmac	67%	74%	72%
Fayette County	North Fayette Valley	74%	82%	76%
	Oelwein	58%	47%	44%
	Starmont	87%	74%	74%
	West Central	60%	54%	84%
Howard County	Howard-Winneshiek	65%	63%	59%
	Riceville	58%	86%	64%
Winneshiek County	Decorah	74%	63%	74%
	South Winneshiek	73%	74%	76%
	Turkey Valley	68%	81%	78%

Health

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, ranks communities across many health and wellness factors. According to the most recent rankings (2023), some residents in communities in NEICAC’s service area may continue to have less than optimal health outcomes and experience negative health factors (Table 23).

Rankings have remained relatively stable from 2021 to 2023. After a decline in ranking from 2021 to 2022, Fayette County continues to have the most challenging Health Outcomes rank in the service area. Also of note, the Health Outcomes rank in Winneshiek improved from 8 (2022) to 2 (2023), now one of the highest rankings statewide. With regard to Health Factors, Allamakee County, Clayton County, and Fayette County continue to have the lowest rankings in the service area. Highlighted cells show where counties are in the lowest half of rankings (Table 23).

Table 23. Health Outcomes and Health Factors Ranking (Out of 99 Counties in Iowa) (2023)^{xxxv}

Geographic Area	Health Outcomes Rank	Health Factors Rank
Allamakee County	47	77
Bremer County	6	5
Chickasaw County	26	17
Clayton County	35	86
Fayette County	67	73
Howard County	29	38
Winneshiek County	2	4

¹⁹ Fall 2021 data is not reported.

Table 24 provides updated health outcomes data. Within the service area, health outcomes remain the most challenging in Allamakee County and Fayette County. In Chickasaw County, there were some improvements in health outcomes, for example, a lower percent of individuals in poor or fair health.

Table 24. Health Outcomes Data by Geographic Area²⁰

Geographic Area	Years of Potential Life Lost (2018-2020) ^{xxxvi, 21}	% Poor or Fair Health (2020) ^{xxxvii}	Physically Unhealthy Days ²² (2020) ^{xxxviii}	Mentally Unhealthy Days ²³ (2020) ^{xxxix}
Allamakee County	6,900	13%	3.0	4.5
Bremer County	5,200	10%	2.5	4.0
Chickasaw County	6,600	11%	2.8	4.1
Clayton County	5,700	14%	3.2	4.4
Fayette County	7,600	13%	3.0	4.2
Howard County	5,200	12%	2.9	4.1
Winneshiek County	3,100	10%	2.6	4.1
Iowa	6,500	12%	2.8	4.4
United States	7,300	12%	3.0	4.4

Across other health-related factors, rates remain high for smoking and obesity in a majority of counties in the service area (Table 25).

Table 25. Adult Health Factors by Geographic Area and Year^{xl,xli,xlii,24}

Geographic Area	% Smokers			% Obese			% Diabetic		
	2018	2019	2020	2017	2019	2020	2017	2019	2020
Allamakee County	20%	18%	19%	41%	36%	38%	9%	10%	9%
Bremer County	16%	16%	15%	35%	34%	38%	9%	8%	8%
Chickasaw County	19%	19%	18%	31%	34%	36%	11%	9%	8%
Clayton County	20%	21%	20%	41%	38%	42%	9%	10%	9%
Fayette County	20%	19%	19%	39%	38%	39%	13%	9%	9%
Howard County	20%	19%	18%	34%	36%	39%	11%	9%	8%
Winneshiek County	17%	16%	15%	31%	35%	33%	6%	8%	8%
Iowa	17%	17%	17%	34%	34%	37%	10%	9%	9%
United States	17%	16%	16%	30%	32%	32%	11%	9%	9%

²⁰ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

²¹ Updated data (2023 County Health Rankings) is not available for this measure.

²² Average number of physically unhealthy days reported in past 30 days

²³ Average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in past 30 days

²⁴ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Substance Abuse

Table 26 describes substance abuse factors including excessive drinking and alcohol impaired driving deaths. While rates of excessive drinking are less than the statewide rate, the overall rate in Iowa remains high and many driving deaths in counties in the service area involve alcohol.

Table 26. Substance Use by Geographic Area and Year^{xliii,xliv,xlv,25}

Geographic Area	% Excessive Drinking ²⁶			Percent of Driving Deaths with Alcohol Involvement	
	2018	2019	2020	2015-2019	2016-2020 ²⁷
Allamakee County	23%	23%	25%	55%	50%
Bremer County	26%	25%	25%	22%	20%
Chickasaw County	26%	24%	26%	25%	25%
Clayton County	25%	22%	24%	33%	38%
Fayette County	25%	23%	23%	33%	29%
Howard County	24%	24%	24%	0%	0%
Winneshiek County	28%	25%	26%	40%	33%
Iowa	26%	25%	25%	27%	27%
United States	19%	20%	19%	27%	27%

Data for drug overdose mortality rate (per 100,000) is not reported for the counties in the service area; the statewide rate continues to remain relatively stable at 11 per 100,000, compared to 10 per 100,000 (2017-2019).^{xlvi,xlvii}

Table 27 describes Iowa's most common drugs of abuse by type and year for individuals entering substance abuse treatment programs. With the addition of 2022 data, it is evident that alcohol, marijuana, and methamphetamines remain the most frequently used substances. Usage rates for all three substances increased for 2022 compared to 2019.

Table 27. Primary Substance Cited by Iowans in Treatment by Year^{xlviii,xlix}

Substance	2019	2022
Alcohol	42.7%	48.1%
Marijuana	25.4%	35.2%
Methamphetamines	22.8%	28.1%
Nicotine	Not reported	8.6%
Other	4.9%	3.0%
Heroin	2.7%	Not reported
Cocaine	1.5%	3.1%

²⁵ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

²⁶ Percent of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking.

²⁷ Updated data (2023 County Health Rankings) is not available for this measure.

Healthcare and Clinical Care

The rate of uninsured individuals remains relatively low in Iowa and is better than nationwide rates. Across the service area, the rate of uninsured individuals is similar to or slightly above the statewide rate; uninsured rates remain highest in Allamakee County (Table 28).

Table 28. Percent of the Population that is Uninsured by Geographic Area and Year^{l,li,lii,28}

Geographic Area	Adults (Under Age 65)			Children (Under Age 19)		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
Allamakee County	9%	10%	10%	5%	5%	4%
Bremer County	4%	4%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Chickasaw County	7%	8%	7%	4%	5%	3%
Clayton County	6%	9%	8%	4%	4%	3%
Fayette County	6%	7%	7%	3%	3%	3%
Howard County	6%	7%	7%	3%	4%	3%
Winneshiek County	4%	6%	5%	3%	3%	2%
Iowa	7%	7%	7%	3%	3%	3%
United States	12%	13%	12%	5%	6%	5%

Data show that a lack of health providers continues to be a challenge in the service area. The ratio of individuals to primary care providers, dentists, and mental health providers in the service area is described in Table 29. In nearly every category, the provider ratio remains above the statewide rate; these are the same data points that were highlighted in NEICAC's *2021 Community Assessment*, indicating little or no improvement in this area.

Table 29. Ratio of Health Care Providers by Geographic Area^{liii,29}

Geographic Area	Primary Care Provider Ratio (2020)	Dentist Ratio (2021)	Mental Health Provider Ratio (2022)
Allamakee County	1,950:1	2,790:1	3,480:1
Bremer County	2,300:1	1,570:1	600:01
Chickasaw County	1,970:1	2,380:1	1,980:1
Clayton County	2,890:1	2,120:1	5,670:1
Fayette County	2,750:1	1,930:1	1,480:1
Howard County	1,840:1	4,740:1	1,900:1
Winneshiek County	900:01	1,530:1	410:01
Iowa	1,360:1	1,430:1	530:01
United States	1310:1	1380:1	340:1

* Does not include nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, and clinical nurse specialists.

Infant and Maternal Health

Prenatal Care. Updated data on access to first trimester prenatal care is not available. As reported in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*, access to first trimester prenatal care is low in many counties in the service area, and the rate has been fluctuating in recent years (Table 30).

²⁸ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

²⁹ Ratios greater than the statewide ratio are highlighted.

Table 30. Percent of Live Births Where Mothers Began Prenatal Care During First Trimester (2018-2020)^{liv,30}

Geographic Area	2018	2019	2020	Three-Year Trend
Allamakee County	55.2%	72.6%	68.9%	Fluctuating
Bremer County	85.0%	88.6%	91.3%	Increasing
Chickasaw County	82.9%	90.2%	83.2%	Fluctuating
Clayton County	51.9%	80.2%	82.0%	Increasing
Fayette County	78.1%	84.8%	83.4%	Fluctuating
Howard County	66.7%	76.3%	76.0%	Fluctuating
Winneshiak County	75.8%	90.7%	84.4%	Fluctuating
Iowa	79.0%	83.8%	83.9%	Increasing

Also reported in the 2022 Community Assessment Annual Update, disparities by race/ethnicity with regard to the percentage of women receiving late or no prenatal care remain present. The percentage of Black or African American women receiving late or no prenatal care is 7%, and the rate for Hispanic or Latino women is 7%. This compares to 3% of non-Hispanic White women who received late or no prenatal care (2020).^{lv}

Teen Pregnancy. In Iowa, the most recent data on births to teenagers under age 20 show a rate of 6.3 per 1,000 (2021). The statewide rate continues to decrease. While rates are low in most of the counties where data is reported, the rate in Allamakee County remains well above the statewide rate (Table 31).

Table 31. Teen Birth Rate (Under Age 20), per 1,000 Population, by Year and Geographic Area (2017-2021)^{lvi,31}

Geographic Area	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Five-Year Trend
Allamakee County	10.7	7.7	6.5	13.0	10.8 (8 births)	Fluctuating
Bremer County	2.5	*	*	*	*	n/a
Chickasaw County	*	*	*	6.9	*	n/a
Clayton County	5.8	5.1	*	*	*	n/a
Fayette County	8.9	10.9	9.2	7.1	4.7 (6 births)	Decreasing
Howard County	*	*	*	*	*	n/a
Winneshiak County	3.3	2.9	2.8	*	3.9 (7 births)	Fluctuating
Iowa	7.7	7.4	6.8	6.4	6.3	Decreasing

* Data suppressed

Low Birth Weight and Infant Mortality. In Iowa, 1.92% of newborns are considered low birth weight; this is an increase from 2020 to 2021. The percentage of babies born at a very low birth weight and infant mortality rates have increased in nearly every county for which data is reported. Infant mortality remains highest in Howard County (Table 32).

Table 32. Infant Health Factors by Geographic Area (2023)^{lvii,32}

Geographic Area	Low Birth Weight		Very Low Birth Weight		Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)	
	2020	2021	2016-2020	2017-2021	2016-2020	2017-2021
Allamakee County	*	*	0.65%	0.66%	1.05	3.22
Bremer County	*	*	0.63%	0.79%	1.43	3.79
Chickasaw County	*	*	*	*	1.43	2.82
Clayton County	*	*	*	*	2.16	2.12
Fayette County	*	*	1.08%	1.41%	2.86	3.93
Howard County	*	*	*	*	5.02	6.41
Winneshiak County	*	*	0.69%	*	2.22	*
Iowa	1.86%	1.92%	0.86%	0.87%	4.55	4.65

* Data suppressed

³⁰ Rates less than the statewide rate are highlighted.

³¹ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

³² Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Updated data show that maternal health disparities continue to persist in NEICAC's service area. In Iowa, the percentage of low birth weight babies is highest among those whose maternal race is Black (3.64%), compared to babies with mothers who are White (1.69%). Infant mortality is higher among Hispanic babies (6.25 per 1,000) than non-Hispanic babies (4.50 per 1,000).^{lviii}

Child Health and Wellbeing

Primary and Preventative Health. In NEICAC's Early Head Start program, recent years' data show few children are up-to-date on primary and preventative health care at enrollment, a finding that is consistent with the *2021 Community Assessment*. NEICAC's services help to increase those rates and there is improvement by the end of the program year, though maintaining an up-to-date status remains challenging for many children enrolled in the program. In Head Start, the rates remain significantly higher at enrollment and continue to increase by the end of the program year (Table 33).

Table 33. Percent of NIECAC Head Start/Early Head Start Children Up-to-Date on Age-Appropriate Preventative and Primary Health Care (EPSDT) by Program Year^{lix, lx}

Program Option	2021-2022		2022-2023	
	At Enrollment	End of Enrollment Year	At Enrollment	End of Enrollment Year
Early Head Start	25% (28 out of 114)	54% (62 out of 114)	21.7% (25 out of 115)	31.3% (36 out of 115)
Head Start	83% (210 out of 253)	96% (242 out of 253)	80.7% (209 out of 259)	89.6% (232 out of 259)

Table 34 describes the percentage of 2-year-olds who are up-to-date on age-appropriate immunizations. Data from 2019 to 2022 shows a decline in vaccination coverage in Bremer County, decreasing from 89.5% to 69.0%, which is now below the statewide rate. Vaccination coverage remains low in a majority of the counties in the service area; however, in Allamakee County, there was a notable increase in recent years.

Table 34. Immunization Rate of 2-Year-Olds (up to date on 4:3:1:3:3:1:4 series³³) by Geographic Area and Year^{lxi, 34}

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	2022
Allamakee County	67.0%	70.7%	51.1%	77.7%
Bremer County	89.5%	85.6%	78.4%	69.0%
Chickasaw County	60.3%	64.0%	55.5%	58.5%
Clayton County	58.1%	53.8%	67.2%	67.7%
Fayette County	62.3%	82.5%	64.1%	64.5%
Howard County	70.3%	64.8%	64.8%	60.2%
Winnebago County	73.8%	87.8%	87.2%	82.8%
Iowa	66.0%	75.9%	73.3%	70.1%

Obesity and Chronic Diseases. Consistent with the findings of the *2021 Community Assessment* and *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*, indicators from the NEICAC 2022-2023 Head Start PIR show that the majority of enrolled children are at a healthy weight. Yet, out of 259 Head Start children served during the 2022-2023 program year, 34 children (13%) were classified as overweight and 60 children (23%) were classified as obese, a combined overweight and obesity rate of 36%.^{lxii}

PIR data demonstrate that the overweight and obesity rates among Head Start children continue to be above the obesity rate among 2- to 4-year-old WIC participants in Iowa (15.8% in 2020, an increase from 15.2% in 2019) and the obesity rate of children 10-17 years old (16.7% in 2021, an increase from 15.3% in 2019).^{lxiii, lxiv}

³³ 4 DTaP, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 Hepatitis B, 1 Varicella and 4 PCV

³⁴ Rates less than the statewide rate are highlighted.

The primary chronic health conditions experienced by NEICAC Head Start/Early Head Start children are hearing and vision problems. No children have other reported chronic health conditions (2022-2023).^{lxv}

There continues to be limited local data available on pediatric chronic health conditions. New data (2022) on emergency department visits for children birth to age 4 show the highest rate in Clayton County. All rates are below the statewide rate, however data is suppressed in a majority of counties in the service area (Table 35). Asthma hospitalization data remains suppressed for all counties in the service area. Statewide, from 2019 to 2022, the rate of asthma hospitalizations for children birth to age 4 fluctuated from 7.36 per 100,000 in 2019, down to 5.50 in 2020, before rising again to 7.58 in 2021.^{lxvi}

Table 35. Treatment for Asthma for Children 0-4 by Geographic Area and Year^{lxvii,35}

Geographic Area	ED Visits Rate (per 10,000)		
	2019	2021	2022
Allamakee County	62.57	*	63.56
Bremer County	41.07	*	*
Chickasaw County	*	*	*
Clayton County	*	*	76.59
Fayette County	63.18	*	56.58
Howard County	*	*	*
Winneshie County	67.26	*	*
Iowa	49.07	39.67	76.69

*Data suppressed

Child Abuse and Neglect. Updated data on the rates of child abuse and neglect in counties in the service area is not available. As reported in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*, the rate of child abuse and neglect is highest in Fayette County, 20.9 per 1,000, which is well above the statewide rate (14.5 per 1,000) (Table 36).

Table 36. Rate of Child Abuse and Neglect (per 1,000) by Geographic Area and Year (2017-2020)^{lxviii,36}

Geographic Area	2017	2018	2019	2020	Four-Year Trend
Allamakee County	12.1	13.8	6.6	7.2	Fluctuating
Bremer County	6.5	7.2	10.7	6.8	Fluctuating
Chickasaw County	9.9	8.2	8.4	13.0	Increasing
Clayton County	9.5	12.4	10.0	6.5	Fluctuating
Fayette County	15.9	11.7	22.9	20.9	Fluctuating
Howard County	18.7	13.6	10.3	7.0	Decreasing
Winneshie County	6.5	10.5	5.1	5.1	Fluctuating
Iowa	12.9	15.8	15.7	14.5	Fluctuating

Neglect, dangerous substance³⁷, and physical abuse are the most frequent type of abuse in every county in the service area, as evident in 2022 data from the Iowa Department of Human Services. Additionally, data continue to show that large portions of child abuse cases involve young children, particularly in Allamakee, Fayette, and Howard counties (Table 37).

³⁵ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

³⁶ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

³⁷ As defined by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, when the person responsible for the care of a child in the presence of a child or in a child's home: "unlawfully used, possessed, manufactured, cultivated, or distributed a dangerous substance."

Table 37. Child Abuse Characteristics by Geographic Area (2020-2022)^{lxix}

Geographic Area	Number of Unique Cases ³⁸ of Confirmed or Founded Abuse (Age 0-18)	% of Total Cases Age 5 or Younger	Top Three Most Frequent Types of Abuse (2022)
Allamakee County	2020: 23 2021: 27 2022: 32	2020: 30.4% 2021: 25.9% 2022: 46.9%	Neglect Physical abuse Presence of illegal drugs in child's system Sexual abuse
Bremer County	2020: 38 2021: 76 2022: 64	2020: 39.5% 2021: 38.2% 2022: 37.5%	Neglect Dangerous substance Sexual abuse
Chickasaw County	2020: 36 2021: 41 2022: 21	2020: 30.6% 2021: 39.0% 2022: 28.6%	Neglect Dangerous substance Physical abuse
Clayton County	2020: 24 2021: 27 2022: 34	2020: 45.8% 2021: 51.9% 2022: 28.6%	Neglect Dangerous substance Physical abuse
Fayette County	2020: 87 2021: 70 2022: 83	2020: 44.8% 2021: 50.0% 2022: 44.6%	Neglect Physical abuse Dangerous substance
Howard County	2020: 16 2021: 30 2022: 21	2020: 37.5% 2021: 40.0% 2022: 47.6%	Neglect Dangerous substance n/a
Winneshiek County	2020: 19 2021: 38 2022: 23	2020: 42.1% 2021: 50.0% 2022: 30.4%	Neglect Dangerous substance Physical abuse
Iowa		2020: 47.0% 2021: 47.0% 2022: 46.5%	Neglect Dangerous substance Presence of illegal drugs in child's system

Nutrition

There continue to be no low-income and low-access census tracts (food deserts) in NEICAC's service area, however some families continue to face food insecurity. The food insecurity rate in the service area decreased or remained stable from 2018 to 2020. Rates are elevated above the statewide rate (7%) in Allamakee County, Clayton County, and Fayette County. Access to healthy foods continues to be most limited in Howard County (Table 38).

Table 38. Food Access by Geographic Area and Year^{lxx, lxxi, lxxii, 39}

Geographic Area	% Limited Access to Healthy Foods ⁴⁰		% Food Insecurity		
	2015	2019	2018	2019	2020
Allamakee County	2%	3%	8%	8%	8%
Bremer County	2%	1%	7%	6%	5%
Chickasaw County	5%	3%	8%	8%	7%
Clayton County	1%	1%	9%	10%	10%
Fayette County	2%	2%	10%	10%	9%
Howard County	12%	10%	9%	8%	7%
Winneshiek County	3%	2%	8%	7%	7%
Iowa	6%	6%	10%	9%	7%

³⁸ Per the Iowa Department of Human Services, each child abuse report may have multiple children indicated, and a single child may have more than one abuse report in a given year. "Unique cases" indicates only the most adverse outcome for the child during the calendar year.

³⁹ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

⁴⁰ Updated data (2023 County Health Rankings) is not available for this measure.

Free and Reduced-Price Lunch. Nutrition needs remain evident in the high rates of free and reduced-price lunch in school districts in the service area, and data is relatively consistent with that reported in the *2021 Community Assessment*. Table 39 describes the percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch by school district and school year. Rates remain highest in Allamakee and Fayette counties. Postville School District continues to have the highest rate of eligible students year to year and is the only district in the service area that is participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).⁴¹

Table 39. Percent of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch by School District (2019-2020)^{lxixiii,42}

Geographic Area	School District	Percent of K-12 Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch		
		2019-2020	2021-2022	2022-2023
Allamakee County	Allamakee	43.5%	42.0%	42.2%
	Eastern Allamakee	37.9%	38.2%	42.8%
	Postville	100%	72.0%	73.8%
Bremer County	Denver	13.5%	14.3%	13.8%
	Janesville	19.0%	0.5%	20.8%
	Sumner-Fredericksburg	32.4%	28.7%	36.8%
	Tripoli	43.1%	35.3%	42.8%
	Wapsie Valley	16.4%	16.5%	20.5%
	Waverly-Shell Rock	23.2%	20.4%	23.1%
Chickasaw County	Nashua-Plainfield	39.4%	27.4%	31.8%
	New Hampton	35.6%	31.8%	32.6%
Clayton County	Central	34.8%	34.0%	41.3%
	Edgewood-Colesburg	36.3%	35.8%	34.6%
	Clayton Ridge	40.4%	32.7%	45.0%
	MFL Marmac	38.1%	36.9%	33.9%
Fayette County	North Fayette Valley	38.4%	36.1%	40.7%
	Oelwein	64.2%	53.4%	57.8%
	Starmont	48.2%	38.5%	46.7%
	West Central	53.9%	49.8%	47.9%
Howard County	Howard-Winneshiek	49.1%	39.1%	47.8%
	Riceville	42.3%	37.7%	46.3%
Winneshiek County	Decorah	24.4%	23.0%	25.3%
	South Winneshiek	36.2%	28.8%	30.4%
	Turkey Valley	35.2%	38.5%	39.2%
Iowa		42.4%	41.8%	42.3%

WIC and SNAP. In NEICAC's service area, two Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) agencies serve families (Table 40). The WIC centers are unchanged since NEICAC's *2021 Community Assessment* was completed.

Table 40. WIC Centers by Geographic Area^{lxixiv}

Geographic Area	WIC Agency	WIC Centers
Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek Counties	Visiting Nurse Association - Dubuque (Region 42)	Visiting Nurse Association – Clayton County
Bremer and Chickasaw Counties (<i>in addition to Grundy, Black Haw, Buchanan, and Benton Counties</i>)	Operation Threshold (Region 43)	Operation Threshold WIC, Main Office, Waterloo

⁴¹ The CEP provision allows school districts to provide meals to all students, regardless of their family's economic status.

⁴² Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

The 2021 Community Assessment reported on the percent of children birth to age 4 participating in the WIC program, however updated data is not available and the most current data is from 2019. Therefore, Table 41 has been repurposed to provide WIC participant characteristics by county.

Table 41. WIC Participant Characteristics by Geographic Area (2021)^{lxxv}

Geographic Area	Infants	Children	Pregnant Women	Breastfeeding	Not Breastfeeding
Allamakee County	51	194	23	24	12
Bremer County	65	163	25	25	20
Chickasaw County	31	100	11	9	8
Clayton County	38	125	10	16	12
Fayette County	44	170	22	16	16
Howard County	21	84	7	8	*
Winneshiek County	36	96	8	13	*
Total	286	932	106	111	68

*Data suppressed

Updated data on the percentage of families receiving SNAP benefits by county is not available. As reported in the 2022 Community Assessment Annual Update, the percentage of families receiving SNAP benefits is consistently highest in Fayette County (Table 42).

Table 42. Percent of Families Receiving Food Assistance (SNAP) by Year and Geographic Area (2018-2020)^{lxxvi,43}

Geographic Area	2018	2019	2020	Three-Year Trend
Allamakee County	9.6%	7.4%	7.4%	Steady
Bremer County	4.8%	4.5%	4.5%	Steady
Chickasaw County	6.8%	5.4%	5.4%	Steady
Clayton County	6.3%	5.7%	5.8%	Fluctuating
Fayette County	12.3%	11.7%	11.8%	Fluctuating
Howard County	6.7%	6.1%	6.1%	Steady
Winneshiek County	4.7%	4.1%	4.1%	Steady
Iowa	10.9%	9.9%	9.8%	Decreasing

Up-to-date data on the number of food assistance recipients, by month and by county, is described in Table 43. During 2021 and early 2022, the number of food assistance recipients fluctuated statewide and in a majority of counties in the service area. However, from July 2022 to July 2023, there was a notable decrease in participants statewide and in every county in the service area.

Table 43. Number of Food Assistance (SNAP) Recipients by Month (2021-2023)^{lxxvii}

Geographic Area	January 2021	July 2021	January 2022	July 2022	January 2023	July 2023
Allamakee County	938	908	998	983	915	896
Bremer County	1,053	1,016	1,094	1,030	1,008	997
Chickasaw County	624	590	601	564	518	518
Clayton County	1,004	955	985	936	931	886
Fayette County	2,225	2,106	2,179	2,044	1,963	1,881
Howard County	567	566	559	539	541	501
Winneshiek County	778	743	765	726	743	721
Iowa	295,582	285,096	290,390	279,919	270,836	266,812

⁴³ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

In March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020, a temporary change was made to raise the monthly SNAP benefit for recipients. The increase in allotment was based on household size, rather than income. Due to the passing of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, this benefit has ended. Effective March 2023, SNAP households are no longer receiving the supplemental amount; benefits returned to normal levels.^{lxxviii}

Social and Economic Factors Impacting Wellbeing

Home Value and Affordability

Home value and affordability continue to vary across the service area, with median home value ranging from \$109,200 in Fayette County to \$196,300 in Winneshiek County (Table 44). Median monthly owner and renter costs are lower than the statewide average across all counties in the service area, with the exception of owner costs in Winneshiek and Bremer counties, consistent with data reported in the *2021 Community Assessment*.

Table 44. Median Home Value and Costs by Geographic Area (2021)^{lxxix}

Geographic Area	Median Home Value ⁴⁴	Median Owner Costs	Median Rent
Allamakee County	\$142,600	\$1,236	\$670
Bremer County	\$173,600	\$1,354	\$755
Chickasaw County	\$132,900	\$1,158	\$625
Clayton County	\$136,000	\$1,180	\$680
Fayette County	\$109,200	\$1,067	\$694
Howard County	\$113,800	\$1,032	\$646
Winneshiek County	\$196,100	\$1,396	\$737
Iowa	\$160,700	\$1,348	\$845

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2021) show the vacant housing rate ranges from 5.2% in Chickasaw County to 9.1% in Howard County. Within counties, data continue to show rental vacancy rates as low as 0.0% in many zip codes in the service area (Table 45). This means that in those communities, there is no housing available for families to rent.

Also described in Table 45a (Table 45 in the *2021 Community Assessment* and *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*), the rental cost burden in the service area is high. The rate continues to be highest in Fayette and Winneshiek counties, as well as within highlighted zip codes within counties. Rental vacancy rates are generally low, though fluctuate widely in local areas.

Table 45a. Housing Characteristics by Geographic Area (2021)^{lxxx}

Geographic Area	Rental Vacancy Rate ⁴⁵	Households Spending 30% or More of Monthly Income on Rent ⁴⁶
52140 (Dorchester)	0.0%	n/a
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	0.0%	26.9%
52151 (Lansing)	17.0%	53.1%
52160 (New Albin)	0.0%	5.9%
52162 (Postville)	7.2%	36.8%
52170 (Waterville)	0.0%	25.0%
52172 (Waukon)	7.2%	35.2%
Allamakee County	7.8%	32.1%
50622 (Denver)	26.2%	33.8%

⁴⁴ Values lower than the statewide value are highlighted.

⁴⁵ Rates less than the countywide rate are highlighted.

⁴⁶ Rates greater than the countywide rate are highlighted.

Geographic Area	Rental Vacancy Rate ⁴⁵	Households Spending 30% or More of Monthly Income on Rent ⁴⁶
50631 (Frederika)	n/a	n/a
50647 (Janesville)	0.0%	40.9%
50666 (Plainfield)	7.9%	42.2%
50668 (Readlyn)	0.0%	7.1%
50674 (Sumner)	8.9%	33.2%
50676 (Tripoli)	0.0%	18.5%
50677 (Waverly)	6.3%	38.1%
Bremer County	8.0%	35.4%
50603 (Alta Vista)	0.0%	11.1%
50630 (Fredericksburg)	7.0%	12.5%
50645 (Ionia)	10.0%	14.3%
50658 (Nashua)	5.8%	21.3%
50659 (New Hampton)	2.3%	40.8%
52154 (Lawler)	13.8%	40.5%
Chickasaw County	5.2%	30.2%
52042 (Edgewood)	13.6%	27.2%
52043 (Elkader)	9.2%	32.1%
52044 (Elkport)	0.0%	n/a
52047 (Farmersburg)	0.0%	25.8%
52048 (Garber)	0.0%	6.9%
52049 (Garnaville)	36.0%	56.1%
52052 (Guttenberg)	0.0%	30.7%
52066 (North Buena Vista)	0.0%	0.0%
52072 (Saint Olaf)	0.0%	31.9%
52076 (Strawberry Point)	0.0%	41.10%
52077 (Volga)	0.0%	33.3%
52156 (Luana)	0.0%	38.5%
52157 (McGregor)	6.8%	42.9%
52159 (Monona)	4.0%	34.0%
Clayton County	6.5%	37.3%
50606 (Arlington)	8.2%	56.0%
50655 (Maynard)	6.3%	23.1%
50662 (Oelwein)	9.7%	61.0%
50664 (Oran)	n/a	n/a
50681 (Westgate)	13.6%	46.7%
52135 (Clermont)	14.0%	45.9%
52141 (Elgin)	7.4%	19.3%
52142 (Fayette)	6.6%	48.0%
52147 (Hawkeye)	0.0%	27.8%
52164 (Randalia)	22.2%	0.0%
52169 (Wadena)	0.0%	30.4%
52171 (Waucoma)	0.0%	9.3%
52175 (West Union)	12.8%	45.7%
Fayette County	8.9%	47.4%
50466 (Riceville)	0.0%	27.5%
50628 (Elma)	8.1%	63.5%
52134 (Chester)	0.0%	0.0%
52136 (Cresco)	11.3%	33.3%
52155 (Lime Springs)	4.6%	41.7%
Howard County	9.1%	32.7%
52101 (Decorah)	7.0%	46.9%
52132 (Calmar)	5.8%	15.0%
52133 (Castalia)	0.0%	55.6%
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	0.0%	22.2%
52161 (Ossian)	5.5%	11.1%
52165 (Ridgeway)	0.0%	0.0%
Winneshiek County	6.4%	41.4%
Iowa	6.4%	43.0%

To further illustrate challenges with rental cost, Table 45b has been added and describes two-bedroom apartment fair market rent for counties in the service area.

Table 45b. Two-Bedroom Apartment Fair Market Rent by Geographic Area (2022-2023)^{lxxxix,47}

Geographic Area	2022	2023 (% change from 2022)
Allamakee County	\$739	\$795 (+7.6%)
Bremer County	\$801	\$858 (+7.1%)
Chickasaw County	\$739	\$795 (+7.6%)
Clayton County	\$747	\$795 (+6.4%)
Fayette County	\$739	\$795 (+7.6%)
Howard County	\$739	\$795 (+7.6%)
Winneshiek County	\$739	\$795 (+7.6%)

In addition to challenges with affordability, other factors impact housing stability. In Iowa, the percentage of households that are experiencing severe housing problems remains 12%. In the service area, the rates remain equal to or less than the statewide rate, and the rate remains greatest in Clayton County (Table 46).

Table 46. Percentage of Households with at Least 1 of 4 Housing Problems⁴⁸ by Geographic Area and Year^{lxxxii,lxxxiii,lxxxiv,49}

Geographic Area	2013-2017	2014-2018	2015-2019
Allamakee County	12%	11%	11%
Bremer County	8%	9%	8%
Chickasaw County	8%	7%	7%
Clayton County	11%	12%	12%
Fayette County	10%	10%	11%
Howard County	11%	7%	6%
Winneshiek County	9%	10%	10%
Iowa	12%	12%	12%
United States	18%	17%	17%

Income Inequality

In NEICAC's service area, 2019 to 2021 U.S. Census data show median household income increased in nearly every county. The exception is Fayette County, where median household income decreased approximately 16% from 2019 to 2021. Median household income remains highest in Bremer County (Table 47).

Table 47. Median Household Income by Geographic Area (2019-2021)^{lxxxv,lxxxvi,lxxxvii,50}

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	% Change 2019 to 2021
52140 (Dorchester)	\$52,216	\$46,467	n/a	n/a
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	\$46,898	\$60,000	\$57,550	22.7%
52151 (Lansing)	\$54,583	\$49,663	\$49,808	-8.7%
52160 (New Albin)	\$53,676	\$71,011	\$73,324	36.6%
52162 (Postville)	\$45,781	\$62,426	\$56,719	23.8%
52170 (Waterville)	\$55,278	\$56,550	\$59,074	6.87%
52172 (Waukon)	\$61,250	\$52,597	\$61,418	0.3%
Allamakee County	\$49,819	\$55,523	\$59,461	19.4%
50622 (Denver)	\$81,563	\$91,667	\$38,987	-52.2%
50631 (Frederika)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

⁴⁷ Fair Market Rent is generally calculated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as the 40th percentile of gross rents for regular, standard-quality units in a local housing market, excluding public housing units, rental units built in the last 2 years, rental units considered substandard in quality, seasonal rentals, and rental units on 10 or more acres.

⁴⁸ Overcrowding, high housing costs, lack of kitchen facilities, or lack of plumbing facilities

⁴⁹ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

⁵⁰ Values less than the countywide value are highlighted.

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	% Change 2019 to 2021
50647 (Janesville)	\$81,563	\$84,083	\$97,763	19.9%
50666 (Plainfield)	\$79,880	\$66,194	\$68,490	-14.3%
50668 (Readlyn)	\$75,795	\$64,643	\$74,952	-1.1%
50674 (Sumner)	\$71,250	\$64,412	\$62,750	-11.9%
50676 (Tripoli)	\$67,734	\$71,563	\$77,885	15.0%
50677 (Waverly)	\$66,447	\$70,554	\$75,156	13.1%
Bremer County	\$69,485	\$72,209	\$76,782	10.5%
50603 (Alta Vista)	\$52,639	\$53,281	\$54,813	4.13%
50630 (Fredericksburg)	\$58,092	\$57,386	\$67,895	16.9%
50645 (Ionia)	\$61,000	\$50,563	\$52,083	-14.6%
50658 (Nashua)	\$61,111	\$53,935	\$63,470	3.9%
50659 (New Hampton)	\$62,963	\$65,589	\$69,676	10.7%
52154 (Lawler)	\$59,583	\$66,111	\$67,639	13.5%
Chickasaw County	\$60,523	\$61,239	\$67,146	10.9%
52042 (Edgewood)	\$59,236	\$63,164	\$64,310	8.6%
52043 (Elkader)	\$48,490	\$59,500	\$57,550	18.7%
52044 (Elkport)	\$75,833	\$64,708	\$66,836	-11.7%
52047 (Farmersburg)	\$54,375	\$56,354	\$52,857	-2.8%
52048 (Garber)	\$58,214	\$57,188	\$48,906	-16.0%
52049 (Garnaville)	\$61,354	\$69,740	\$73,807	20.3%
52052 (Guttenberg)	\$52,366	\$49,455	\$52,250	-0.2%
52066 (North Buena Vista)	\$31,250	\$43,750	\$44,286	41.7%
52072 (Saint Olaf)	\$66,094	\$68,382	\$74,417	12.6%
52076 (Strawberry Point)	\$53,197	\$54,750	\$62,813	18.1%
52077 (Volga)	\$67,500	\$59,375	\$60,000	-11.1%
52156 (Luana)	\$48,462	\$68,750	\$84,583	74.5%
52157 (McGregor)	\$41,815	\$41,942	\$45,833	9.6%
52159 (Monona)	\$49,932	\$61,193	\$64,803	29.8%
Clayton County	\$53,152	\$56,456	\$58,148	9.4%
50606 (Arlington)	\$50,577	\$40,625	\$52,708	4.2%
50655 (Maynard)	\$56,154	\$56,500	\$52,083	-7.4%
50662 (Oelwein)	\$43,219	\$39,529	\$38,987	-9.8%
50664 (Oran)	n/a	n/a	\$59,792	n/a
50681 (Westgate)	\$62,250	\$61,042	\$61,250	-1.6%
52135 (Clermont)	\$51,750	\$60,179	\$67,411	30.4%
52141 (Elgin)	\$54,583	\$56,121	\$58,229	6.7%
52142 (Fayette)	\$40,179	\$39,417	\$41,179	2.5%
52147 (Hawkeye)	\$60,625	\$56,750	\$60,938	0.5%
52164 (Randalia)	\$69,750	\$61,250	\$59,583	-14.6%
52169 (Wadena)	\$71,964	\$63,438	\$59,167	-17.8%
52171 (Waucoma)	\$61,447	\$66,667	\$64,735	5.4%
52175 (West Union)	\$53,065	\$52,835	\$55,107	3.9%
Fayette County	\$60,523	\$49,834	\$50,973	-15.8%
50466 (Riceville)	\$51,146	\$50,391	\$55,357	8.2%
50628 (Elma)	\$57,070	\$56,058	\$50,000	-12.4%
52134 (Chester)	\$51,042	\$61,875	\$66,250	29.8%
52136 (Cresco)	\$53,939	\$54,229	\$59,223	9.8%
52155 (Lime Springs)	\$59,167	\$61,786	\$61,736	4.3%
Howard County	\$55,060	\$56,709	\$60,387	9.7%
52101 (Decorah)	\$66,647	\$61,789	\$61,270	-8.1%
52132 (Calmar)	\$53,218	\$58,598	\$72,237	35.7%
52133 (Castalia)	\$67,500	\$56,837	\$59,525	-11.8%
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	\$69,128	\$70,398	\$41,179	-40.4%
52161 (Ossian)	\$70,682	\$70,385	\$67,283	-4.8%
52165 (Ridgeway)	\$62,500	\$77,500	\$71,806	14.9%
Winneshiek County	\$65,263	\$63,162	\$65,330	10.0%
Iowa	\$60,523	\$61,836	\$65,429	8.1%

Income inequality is further described in Table 48. The greatest income inequality in the service area is in Fayette County, consistent with the findings of the 2021 Community Assessment.

Table 48. Income Inequality by Geographic Area (2017-2021)^{lxxxviii}

Geographic Area	80 th percentile income	20 th percentile income	Income Ratio ⁵¹
Allamakee County	\$105,789	\$27,803	3.8
Bremer County	\$124,313	\$37,205	3.3
Chickasaw County	\$111,091	\$31,804	3.5
Clayton County	\$105,596	\$26,922	3.9
Fayette County	\$95,840	\$21,538	4.4
Howard County	\$102,865	\$31,440	3.3
Winneshiek County	\$112,897	\$31,185	3.6
Iowa	n/a	n/a	4.2

Community Safety and Incarceration

In the 2021 Community Assessment and 2022 Community Assessment Annual Update, Table 49 presented data on the rate of reported violent crime offenses (2014-2016). Updated data from the source used in these reports is not available. Therefore, to present more current data, Table 49 has been updated to provide crime rate by county and year (2022-2023). As described in Table 49 Winneshiek County has the lowest crime rate, while rates are substantially higher in Allamakee County and Bremer County.

Table 49. Crime Rate (per 100,000 Population) by Geographic Area and Year^{lxxxix}

Geographic Area	2021	2022	% Change from 2021 to 2022
Allamakee County	3,828.7	2,547.6	-33.46%
Bremer County	2,098.0	2,407.3	+14.74%
Chickasaw County	1,182.5	1,233.2	+4.29%
Clayton County	1,170.6	1,018.4	-14.00%
Fayette County	2,285.9	1,874.6	-17.99%
Howard County	1,926.8	1,034.1	-46.33%
Winneshiek County	796.0	720.4	-9.50%

Updated data on rates of juvenile arrests is not available. As reported in the 2022 Community Assessment Annual Update, juvenile arrest rates are relatively unchanged in the counties in the service area. Bremer County continues to stand out with a high rate (Table 50).

Table 50. Rate of Juvenile Arrests (per 1,000) by Geographic Area and Year^{xc, xci, 52}

Geographic Area	2018	2019
Allamakee County	26	*
Bremer County	45	42
Chickasaw County	*	26
Clayton County	11	*
Fayette County	39	34
Howard County	23	*
Winneshiek County	15	15
Iowa	37	37

* Data unavailable

⁵¹ A higher inequality ratio indicates greater division between the top and bottom ends of the income spectrum. Ratios greater than the statewide ratio are highlighted.

⁵² Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Technology

In NEICAC's service area, household access to broadband internet access has continued to improved. However, with the exception of Bremer County, rates remain more challenging than the statewide rate (Table 51). Allamakee County continues to have the lowest rates of access among counties in the service area.

Table 51. Percent of Households with Broadband Internet Connection by Geographic Area and Year ^{xcii,xciii,xciv,53}

Geographic Area	2015-2019	2016-2020	2017-2021
Allamakee County	72%	73%	78%
Bremer County	83%	86%	88%
Chickasaw County	76%	80%	84%
Clayton County	74%	78%	79%
Fayette County	76%	77%	80%
Howard County	73%	79%	81%
Winneshiek County	82%	81%	83%
Iowa	81%	83%	85%

EMPLOYMENT, WORKFORCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Labor Force, Industries, and Occupations

In NEICAC's service area, the percentage of the population in the labor force ranges from 61.4% in Fayette County to 69.0% in Chickasaw County. The percentage of the population in the labor force remains consistent with the statewide rate (66.9%) in many counties in the service area (Table 52). Also described in Table 52, many young children have all parents in the labor force, more than 70% in counties across the service area and as high as 100% in some communities.

Table 52. Percent of the Population in Labor Force (Age 16+) by Geographic Area (2021) ^{xcv,54}

Geographic Area	Population Age 16+	Living in Households with Children Under Age 6, All Parents in the Family in the Labor Force
52140 (Dorchester)	77.7%	100.0%
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	49.1%	100.0%
52151 (Lansing)	52.5%	63.6%
52160 (New Albin)	76.1%	100.0%
52162 (Postville)	64.3%	48.7%
52170 (Waterville)	67.0%	100.0%
52172 (Waukon)	65.0%	75.6%
Allamakee County	63.4%	72.0%
50622 (Denver)	70.8%	82.6%
50631 (Frederika)	n/a	n/a
50647 (Janesville)	69.9%	100.0%
50666 (Plainfield)	65.3%	100.0%
50668 (Readlyn)	72.9%	98.8%
50674 (Sumner)	63.9%	78.4%
50676 (Tripoli)	75.6%	96.2%
50677 (Waverly)	66.1%	81.8%
Bremer County	67.7%	85.1%
50603 (Alta Vista)	65.6%	100.0%
50630 (Fredericksburg)	60.4%	81.9%
50645 (Ionia)	51.8%	51.4%

⁵³ Rates less than the statewide rate are highlighted.

⁵⁴ Rates greater than the countywide rate are highlighted.

Geographic Area	Population Age 16+	Living in Households with Children Under Age 6, All Parents in the Family in the Labor Force
50658 (Nashua)	72.0%	87.7%
50659 (New Hampton)	73.1%	83.5%
52154 (Lawler)	75.3%	95.5%
Chickasaw County	69.0%	82.7%
52042 (Edgewood)	69.0%	57.8%
52043 (Elkader)	60.1%	89.0%
52044 (Elkport)	66.7%	100.0%
52047 (Farmersburg)	75.2%	67.4%
52048 (Garber)	57.9%	62.0%
52049 (Garnavillo)	70.5%	97.0%
52052 (Guttenberg)	63.0%	74.2%
52066 (North Buena Vista)	39.3%	100.0%
52072 (Saint Olaf)	45.4%	30.6%
52076 (Strawberry Point)	67.0%	85.9%
52077 (Volga)	61.3%	70.3%
52156 (Luana)	84.7%	96.6%
52157 (McGregor)	56.5%	100.0%
52159 (Monona)	71.6%	87.7%
Clayton County	64.5%	79.9%
50606 (Arlington)	59.9%	81.6%
50655 (Maynard)	72.8%	56.5%
50662 (Oelwein)	53.5%	39.7%
50664 (Oran)	71.9%	100.0%
50681 (Westgate)	60.7%	60.0%
52135 (Clermont)	71.6%	100.0%
52141 (Elgin)	59.1%	47.8%
52142 (Fayette)	62.0%	63.8%
52147 (Hawkeye)	67.6%	58.1%
52164 (Randalia)	61.1%	69.0%
52169 (Wadena)	55.5%	17.6%
52171 (Waucoma)	68.4%	86.0%
52175 (West Union)	64.1%	79.5%
Fayette County	61.4%	63.8%
50466 (Riceville)	63.9%	64.8%
50628 (Elma)	56.5%	45.2%
52134 (Chester)	74.3%	82.0%
52136 (Cresco)	69.4%	70.8%
52155 (Lime Springs)	64.9%	60.0%
Howard County	66.5%	64.0%
52101 (Decorah)	64.9%	89.3%
52132 (Calmar)	77.4%	90.3%
52133 (Castalia)	60.2%	100.0%
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	68.9%	100.0%
52161 (Ossian)	72.6%	90.6%
52165 (Ridgeway)	83.7%	100.0%
Winneshiek County	67.5%	88.9%
Iowa	66.9%	75.7%

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2021), using Census-defined occupation categories, the top occupations across the service area are management, business, science, and arts occupations; sales and office occupations; and production, transportation, and material moving occupations (Table 53). This is unchanged since the 2021 *Community Assessment*. Data continue to show Allamakee County has a high rate of individuals employed in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations. The top industries across the service

area are manufacturing, retail trade, educational services, and health care and social assistance (Table 54); this data is also consistent with findings of the 2021 Community Assessment.

Table 53. Percentage of the Employed Workforce (Age 16+) by Occupation and Geographic Area (2021)^{xcvi,55}

Occupation	Allamakee County	Bremer County	Chickasaw County	Clayton County	Fayette County	Howard County	Winneshek County	Iowa
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	30.9%	39.6%	30.9%	27.3%	28.6%	29.8%	38.0%	37.6%
Service occupations	12.5%	15.0%	14.2%	17.7%	17.1%	11.7%	16.8%	15.6%
Sales and office occupations	20.4%	18.7%	16.8%	17.5%	19.7%	19.3%	17.6%	20.1%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	18.4%	9.4%	11.6%	16.0%	13.1%	15.7%	11.6%	9.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	17.8%	17.3%	26.4%	21.6%	21.5%	23.5%	16.0%	17.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 54. Percentage of the Employed Workforce (Age 16+) by Industry and Geographic Area (2021)^{xcvii,56}

Industry	Allamakee County	Bremer County	Chickasaw County	Clayton County	Fayette County	Howard County	Winneshek County	Iowa
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	11.9%	4.4%	8.4%	11.0%	7.3%	9.9%	6.4%	3.7%
Construction	10.2%	5.9%	7.1%	10.9%	8.4%	8.5%	8.7%	6.7%
Manufacturing	11.3%	17.4%	26.6%	16.6%	16.0%	21.2%	14.5%	14.8%
Wholesale trade	1.8%	2.1%	2.7%	2.9%	3.3%	2.2%	2.8%	2.8%
Retail trade	15.7%	8.8%	8.2%	11.3%	9.4%	9.9%	9.8%	11.7%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4.7%	4.8%	5.1%	4.6%	6.6%	4.2%	3.5%	5.0%
Information	1.1%	1.7%	0.1%	1.8%	0.9%	0.1%	1.6%	1.5%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	3.8%	7.9%	3.1%	3.4%	4.9%	4.2%	3.3%	7.7%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3.8%	6.5%	5.2%	4.5%	4.4%	4.1%	4.0%	7.5%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	23.6%	29.1%	23.7%	19.7%	25.2%	26.6%	32.1%	24.2%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5.2%	5.0%	3.2%	6.8%	5.6%	2.9%	7.6%	7.1%
Other services, except public administration	3.2%	4.3%	3.6%	3.7%	5.2%	3.8%	3.4%	4.3%
Public administration	3.8%	2.2%	2.9%	2.9%	2.6%	2.5%	2.3%	3.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

⁵⁵ Top three occupations highlighted for each county.

⁵⁶ Top three industries highlighted for each county.

Employment

Data continue to show that, in a majority of the counties in the service area, unemployment rates are relatively low but are higher than the statewide rate (Table 55).

Table 55. Unemployment Rate by Geographic Area and Month/Year (2020-2023)^{xcviii,57}

Date	Allamakee County	Bremer County	Chickasaw County	Clayton County	Fayette County	Howard County	Winneshiek County	Iowa
Jan. 2020	5.1%	2.9%	4.2%	6.2%	4.8%	3.8%	4.6%	2.6%
April 2020	9.7%	8.2%	11.7%	10.5%	9.9%	10.6%	10.1%	10.5%
July 2020	4.4%	4.1%	3.9%	4.7%	5.8%	4.0%	5.0%	5.8%
October 2020	2.5%	2.2%	2.7%	2.8%	3.3%	2.9%	2.7%	4.5%
Jan. 2021	7.1%	4.0%	4.6%	8.1%	6.7%	5.6%	6.3%	4.4%
Feb. 2021	7.1%	3.7%	4.7%	7.8%	6.1%	5.7%	6.1%	4.4%
April 2021	4.7%	3.2%	3.7%	4.9%	4.7%	3.9%	4.3%	4.5%
July 2021	3.8%	3.3%	3.5%	4.3%	4.7%	3.5%	3.8%	4.4%
October 2021	3.0%	2.5%	2.7%	3.6%	3.4%	2.7%	2.8%	4.0%
January 2022	7.1%	3.6%	4.3%	8.2%	5.9%	5.5%	6.3%	3.7%
April 2022	3.2%	1.8%	2.1%	2.8%	2.7%	2.5%	2.8%	3.0%
July 2022	3.0%	2.1%	2.4%	3.2%	2.9%	2.5%	2.6%	2.5%
October 2022	2.8%	2.2%	2.1%	2.6%	2.5%	2.4%	2.2%	2.6%
January 2023	6.4%	2.8%	3.2%	7.0%	4.8%	5.0%	5.7%	3.5%
April 2023	3.1%	2.0%	2.1%	3.4%	2.6%	2.6%	2.8%	2.3%
July 2023	3.7%	2.6%	2.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%

A majority of NEICAC Head Start/Early Head Start families have at least one parent who is employed, but not to the same degree as the larger population. The rate of families that do not have a parent who is employed, in job training, or in school at time of enrollment was 22.2% during the 2022-2023 program year, an increase from 19.1% the year prior (Table 56).

Table 56. NEICAC Head Start/Early Head Start Families Employment Status by Program Year^{xcix,c}

Employment Status	2021-2022		2022-2023	
	At Enrollment	End of Enrollment	At Enrollment	End of Enrollment
At least one parent/guardian is employed, in job training, or in school	259 (80.9%)	238 (74.4%)	259 (77.8%)	255 (82.3%)
Neither/No parent/guardian is employed, in job training, or in school	61 (19.1%)	82 (25.6%)	74 (22.2%)	55 (17.7%)
	320 (100%)	320 (100%)	333 (100%)	310 (100%)

As described in Table 57, the numbers of jobs in counties in the service area have declined more than the statewide rate, from January 2020 to January 2023, in Allamakee, Clayton, and Winneshiek counties; this aligns with data from the 2021 Community Assessment and 2022 Community Assessment Annual Update that also showed declines greater than the statewide rate. During the same time period, job growth took place in Chickasaw and Howard counties.

⁵⁷ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Table 57. Total Non-Farm Jobs by Month/Year and Geographic Area^{ci,58}

Geographic Area	January 2020	January 2021	January 2022	January 2023	% Change Jan. 2020 to Jan. 2023
Allamakee County	4,821	4,571	4,565	4,561	-5.4%
Bremer County	*	*	*	*	n/a
Chickasaw County	4,631	4,513	4,674	4,855	4.8%
Clayton County	6,291	5,911	5,934	6,001	-4.6%
Fayette County	7,302	7,135	7,008	7,243	-0.8%
Howard County	3,896	3,771	3,951	4,022	3.2%
Winneshiek County	10,281	9,575	9,950	9,619	-6.4%
Iowa	1,591,700	1,525,200	1,556,400	1,590,000	-0.1%

*Data unavailable

Table 58, as presented in the 2021 Community Assessment, describes the top ten major private industry employers by Iowa Workforce Development (IWD). More current data is not available.

Table 58. Top Ten Major Private Industry Employers (Listed Alphabetically) by IWD^{ci}

IWD Region	Name of Company	Industry
IWD Region 1 Serving Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek counties, in addition to two counties outside NEICAC's service area	Agri Star	Manufacturing
	Agriprocessors Inc.	Manufacturing
	Eagle Window & Door Manufacturing, Inc.	Retail Trade
	IBM	Manufacturing
	John Deere Dubuque Works	Utilities
	Luther College	Educational Services
	Mercy Medical Center, Dubuque	Health Services
	Prudential Retirement	Finance and Insurance
	Unity Point Health-Finley Hospital	Health Services
WS Live	Professional Services	
IWD Region 7 Serving Bremer County, in addition to four counties outside NEICAC's service area	CBE Group Inc.	Administrative & Support
	Covenant Convenient Care	Health Services
	Covenant Medical Center	Health Services
	CUNA Mutual Group	Finance & Insurance
	Ertch Cabinet Manufacturing, Inc.	Manufacturing
	John Deere Waterloo Operations	Manufacturing
	Omega Cabinetry	Manufacturing
	Tyson Fresh Meats	Manufacturing
	Unity Point Health-Allen Hospital	Health Services
Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare	Health Services	

Updated data on occupational projections is not available. As reported in the 2021 Community Assessment, Iowa Workforce Development projections through 2028 indicate that no formal education or high school diploma or equivalent will be required for the top job openings in the service area. Some jobs (heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, phlebotomists) will require a post-secondary non-degree award, and few will require a Bachelor's or advanced degree (Table 59).

⁵⁸ Counties with job loss from January 2020 to January 2022 are highlighted.

Table 59. 2018-2028 Occupational Projections by IWD^{ciii}

IWD Region	Top Five Projected Occupations by Increase in Number of Jobs <i>Career Preparation</i>	Top Five Projected Occupations by Percent Annual Increase <i>Career Preparation</i>
IWD Region 1	Personal Care Aides (+415) <i>High school diploma or equivalent</i>	Home Health Aides (+3.3%) <i>High school diploma or equivalent</i>
	Registered Nurses (+360) <i>Bachelor's degree</i>	Taxi Drivers & Chauffeurs (+3.3%) <i>No formal education</i>
	Food Preparation and Service Workers, including Fast Food (+335) <i>No formal education</i>	Personal Care Aides (+3.3%) <i>High school diploma or equivalent</i>
	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (+215) <i>Post-secondary non-degree award</i>	Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary (+2.9%) <i>Doctoral or Professional Degree</i>
	Janitors and Cleaners (+170) <i>No formal education</i>	Phlebotomists (+2.9%) <i>Post-secondary non-degree award</i>
IWD Region 7	Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers, Handlers (+540)	Physical Therapist Assistants (+3.3%) <i>Associate's degree</i>
	Registered Nurses (+366) <i>Bachelor's degree</i>	Personal Care Aides (+3.3%) <i>High school diploma or equivalent</i>
	Food Preparation and Service Workers, including Fast Food (+295) <i>No formal education</i>	Nurse Practitioners (+3.3%) <i>Master's degree</i>
	Personal Care Aides (+280) <i>High school diploma or equivalent</i>	Phlebotomists (+3.1%) <i>Post-secondary non-degree award</i>
	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (+255) <i>Post-secondary non-degree award</i>	Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary (+2.9%) <i>Doctoral or Professional Degree</i>

Education and Training

Education and training opportunities in NEICAC's service area have not changed since the *2021 Community Assessment* was conducted. NEICAC's *2021 Community Assessment* reported there are educational opportunities within and outside the service area that are accessible to service area residents. Education, training, and community and technical schools are available; however, opportunities may be limited depending on location or other factors (e.g., transportation, schedule).

Transportation

Public Transportation. Public transportation remains limited in NEICAC's service area. There are no changes to the availability of public transit and other transportation services (e.g., ride-sharing).

Access to Vehicles. The percent of the population with limited access to personal vehicles varies within the service area. In most counties, the rate remains consistent with or lower than the statewide rate (Table 60). In Clayton County, the percent of the population living in a household with no vehicle available has continued to rise, increasing from 5.4% in 2019 to 7.3% in 2021.

Table 60. Percent of Households with No Vehicle Available by Geographic Area (2019-2021)^{civ,59}

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	Three-Year Trend
52140 (Dorchester)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Steady
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	2.3%	2.8%	3.8%	Increasing
52151 (Lansing)	1.3%	2.8%	3.2%	Increasing
52160 (New Albin)	2.1%	0.7%	0.5%	Decreasing
52162 (Postville)	4.8%	5.2%	4.7%	Fluctuating
52170 (Waterville)	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	Decreasing
52172 (Waukon)	7.6%	6.5%	6.9%	Fluctuating

⁵⁹ Rates greater than the countywide rate are highlighted.

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	Three-Year Trend
Allamakee County	4.4%	4.0%	4.2%	Fluctuating
50622 (Denver)	1.0%	1.3%	1.2%	Fluctuating
50631 (Frederika)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50647 (Janesville)	2.8%	3.5%	1.5%	Fluctuating
50666 (Plainfield)	7.0%	6.8%	5.2%	Decreasing
50668 (Readlyn)	0.0%	0.2%	3.3%	Increasing
50674 (Sumner)	1.4%	1.7%	1.2%	Fluctuating
50676 (Tripoli)	1.9%	0.9%	1.2%	Fluctuating
50677 (Waverly)	3.0%	3.8%	3.0%	Fluctuating
Bremer County	2.5%	2.9%	2.3%	Fluctuating
50603 (Alta Vista)	1.5%	1.0%	1.2%	Fluctuating
50630 (Fredericksburg)	3.0%	2.9%	1.6%	Decreasing
50645 (Ionia)	1.1%	15.0%	17.1%	Increasing
50658 (Nashua)	4.2%	3.7%	3.7%	Decreasing
50659 (New Hampton)	4.8%	4.7%	3.6%	Decreasing
52154 (Lawler)	3.1%	3.1%	2.6%	Decreasing
Chickasaw County	4.0%	3.8%	3.2%	Decreasing
52042 (Edgewood)	9.2%	11.8%	13.0%	Increasing
52043 (Elkader)	11.1%	11.4%	8.9%	Fluctuating
52044 (Elkport)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Steady
52047 (Farmersburg)	1.5%	0.7%	1.1%	Fluctuating
52048 (Garber)	2.5%	1.5%	1.5%	Decreasing
52049 (Garnaville)	4.1%	2.9%	2.6%	Decreasing
52052 (Guttenberg)	4.4%	3.7%	4.2%	Fluctuating
52066 (North Buena Vista)	15.6%	16.7%	13.0%	Fluctuating
52072 (Saint Olaf)	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	Increasing
52076 (Strawberry Point)	6.1%	8.4%	7.5%	Fluctuating
52077 (Volga)	2.5%	3.4%	2.9%	Fluctuating
52156 (Luana)	1.4%	4.1%	3.1%	Fluctuating
52157 (McGregor)	4.7%	12.7%	11.8%	Fluctuating
52159 (Monona)	3.5%	5.4%	6.3%	Increasing
Clayton County	5.4%	6.8%	7.3%	Increasing
50606 (Arlington)	3.7%	3.4%	3.2%	Decreasing
50655 (Maynard)	1.6%	4.0%	6.2%	Increasing
50662 (Oelwein)	7.4%	8.0%	7.7%	Fluctuating
50664 (Oran)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Steady
50681 (Westgate)	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	Decreasing
52135 (Clermont)	2.9%	1.7%	2.1%	Fluctuating
52141 (Elgin)	7.3%	4.4%	4.3%	Decreasing
52142 (Fayette)	5.2%	4.3%	2.5%	Decreasing
52147 (Hawkeye)	0.5%	1.4%	0.7%	Fluctuating
52164 (Randalia)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Steady
52169 (Wadena)	1.4%	1.6%	3.2%	Increasing
52171 (Waucoma)	2.5%	2.1%	2.2%	Fluctuating
52175 (West Union)	6.6%	7.2%	7.6%	Increasing
Fayette County	5.1%	5.2%	5.2%	Increasing
50466 (Riceville)	8.2%	6.5%	7.9%	Fluctuating
50628 (Elma)	5.8%	5.6%	4.9%	Decreasing
52134 (Chester)	3.2%	0.9%	0.9%	Decreasing
52136 (Cresco)	6.1%	5.6%	6.0%	Fluctuating
52155 (Lime Springs)	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	Steady
Howard County	5.5%	5.1%	5.5%	Fluctuating
52101 (Decorah)	4.0%	5.6%	5.8%	Increasing
52132 (Calmar)	2.3%	2.3%	1.3%	Decreasing
52133 (Castalia)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Steady
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	1.0%	1.1%	0.7%	Fluctuating
52161 (Ossian)	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Decreasing
52165 (Ridgeway)	0.6%	0.5%	0.2%	Decreasing
Winneshiek County	3.4%	4.2%	4.2%	Decreasing
Iowa	5.8%	5.7%	5.6%	Decreasing

Most residents in the service area drive themselves to work in their own cars (Table 61). Commute times are relatively low and consistent with the statewide rate (Table 62). These data remain consistent with the findings of the 2021 Community Assessment.

Table 61. Transportation to Work by Geographic Area (2021)^{cv,60}

Geographic Area	Car, truck, or van: drove alone	Car, truck, or van: carpooled	Public transportation	Walked	Other means	Worked from home
Allamakee County	75.6%	8.6%	0.0%	4.9%	1.3%	9.6%
Bremer County	77.6%	6.3%	0.2%	6.2%	0.6%	9.2%
Chickasaw County	84.2%	5.4%	0.0%	2.2%	2.1%	6.1%
Clayton County	78.3%	6.6%	0.0%	2.9%	4.0%	8.1%
Fayette County	79.2%	8.0%	0.2%	3.4%	1.8%	7.4%
Howard County	73.1%	8.8%	0.7%	4.8%	1.9%	10.8%
Winneshiek County	69.5%	5.7%	0.2%	13.3%	1.1%	10.3%
Iowa	79.0%	7.9%	0.8%	3.0%	1.3%	8.1%

Table 62. Mean Travel Time to Work by Geographic Area (2021)^{cv,61}

Geographic Area	Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)
Allamakee County	22.7
Bremer County	20.5
Chickasaw County	19.4
Clayton County	24.3
Fayette County	21.0
Howard County	22.1
Winneshiek County	18.5
Iowa	19.6

Work and Training Schedules

While specific work and training schedules of families in the service area are not readily available, the top industries in the service area continue to suggest a variety of schedules. With a mix of service occupations, manufacturing jobs, and education options, it can reasonably be assumed that some individuals work traditional business hours while others may have second or third shift employment.

ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN

Children must meet an age requirement to participate in Early Head Start or Head Start. The age requirement is birth to 2 years old (up to age 3) for Early Head Start and 3 to 5 years old for Head Start. Children are eligible to receive services if they meet one or more of the Head Start/Early Head Start eligibility requirements: their family has an income at or below the federal poverty level, the family is receiving public assistance (i.e., TANF, SSI, SNAP), the child is experiencing homelessness, or the child is in foster care. At least 10% of program enrollment must be children eligible for services under IDEA (children with disabilities).

Table 63 provides updated estimated numbers of eligible children in the service area by primary eligibility type as compared to the current number of children served by NEICAC's Head Start/Early Head Start

⁶⁰ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

⁶¹ Values greater than the statewide value are highlighted.

program in the most recently completed program year. Primary eligibility captures only one factor by which a child is eligible for services, and many children have needs that fall into multiple categories.

Table 63. Estimated Number of Children Eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start Compared to Number of Eligible Children Served by NEICAC Head Start/Early Head Start⁶²

Eligibility Criteria	Estimated Number of Children Eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start		Number of Children Served by NEICAC Head Start/Early Head Start (based on Primary Eligibility) (2022-2023)
	Birth up to Age 3	Age 0-5	Age 0-5
Income-eligible children	408	679	199
Income-eligible pregnant women	134	n/a	9
Children experiencing homelessness	>16	>16	8
Children in foster care	32 ⁶³	53	15
Children receiving public assistance	625	1,054	92
Over income (family incomes between 100% and 130% of federal poverty line)	n/a	n/a	42
Children with disabilities 10% program enrollment requirement)	<473	588	62 (24 in EHS and 38 in HS)

Child Poverty and Geographic Location

In NEICAC's service area, the rate of child poverty (0-18) ranges from 3.8% in Chickasaw County to 14.9% in Clayton County. Child poverty rates have been increasing in recent years in Bremer, Clayton, and Fayette counties (Table 64).

Table 64. Child Poverty Rate (Children Ages 0-18) by Geographic Area and Year (2019-2021)^{cvii, cviii, cix, 64}

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	Three-Year Trend
Allamakee County	13.9%	15.2%	13.9%	Fluctuating
Bremer County	2.3%	8.6%	8.7%	Increasing
Chickasaw County	12.6%	6.9%	3.8%	Decreasing
Clayton County	13.8%	14.7%	14.9%	Increasing
Fayette County	6.1%	14.7%	14.7%	Increasing
Howard County	29.8%	9.2%	10.5%	Fluctuating
Winneshiek County	9.2%	10.7%	9.7%	Fluctuating
Iowa	13.8%	13.3%	13.0%	Decreasing

There are an estimated total of 679 children birth to age 5 in NEICAC's service area who are eligible for Head Start or Early Head Start services based on having a family income at or below the federal poverty level (Table 65). This is an increase from the year prior (647 in 2020) and similar to the number of eligible children reported in NEICAC's 2021 Community Assessment (681 children in 2019).

⁶² The source for each of the data points in this table will be described throughout the report.

⁶³ Estimated as 3/5 the number of children birth to age 5 in foster care.

⁶⁴ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Table 65. Child Poverty and Young Children Living in Poverty by Geographic Area (2021)⁶⁵

Geographic Area	Poverty Rate for Children < Age 5 ⁶⁵	Number of Children < Age 5	Number of Children < Age 5 Living in Poverty	Number of Children < Age 3 Living in Poverty ⁶⁶
52140 (Dorchester)	0.0%	22	0	0
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	0.0%	59	0	0
52151 (Lansing)	7.5%	120	9	5
52160 (New Albin)	7.3%	41	3	2
52162 (Postville)	50.9%	265	135	81
52170 (Waterville)	0.0%	43	0	0
52172 (Waukon)	7.2%	320	23	14
Allamakee County	17.9%	949	170	102
50622 (Denver)	0.0%	190	0	0
50631 (Frederika)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50647 (Janesville)	2.9%	137	4	2
50666 (Plainfield)	0.0%	22	0	0
50668 (Readlyn)	0.0%	68	0	0
50674 (Sumner)	0.0%	184	0	0
50676 (Tripoli)	0.0%	208	0	0
50677 (Waverly)	7.2%	653	47	28
Bremer County	4.0%	1,415	57	34
50603 (Alta Vista)	0.0%	3	0	0
50630 (Fredericksburg)	10.3%	136	14	8
50645 (Ionia)	0.0%	47	0	0
50658 (Nashua)	10.3%	97	10	6
50659 (New Hampton)	3.4%	442	15	9
52154 (Lawler)	8.2%	49	4	2
Chickasaw County	5.5%	783	43	26
52042 (Edgewood)	0.0%	100	0	0
52043 (Elkader)	0.0%	71	0	0
52044 (Elkport)	0.0%	11	0	0
52047 (Farmersburg)	60.0%	30	18	11
52048 (Garber)	17.1%	41	7	4
52049 (Garnavillo)	5.1%	78	4	2
52052 (Guttenberg)	0.0%	89	0	0
52066 (North Buena Vista)	0.0%	7	0	0
52072 (Saint Olaf)	3.2%	63	2	1
52076 (Strawberry Point)	7.8%	129	10	6
52077 (Volga)	0.0%	37	0	0
52156 (Luana)	4.3%	94	4	2
52157 (McGregor)	23.9%	71	17	10
52159 (Monona)	6.1%	179	11	7
Clayton County	9.7%	991	96	58
50606 (Arlington)	1.7%	115	2	1
50655 (Maynard)	27.9%	43	12	7
50662 (Oelwein)	32.9%	301	99	59
50664 (Oran)	0.0%	6	0	0
50681 (Westgate)	10.0%	10	1	1
52135 (Clermont)	0.0%	17	0	0
52141 (Elgin)	4.6%	65	3	2
52142 (Fayette)	8.4%	83	7	4
52147 (Hawkeye)	0.0%	27	0	0
52164 (Randalia)	20.7%	29	6	4
52169 (Wadena)	0.0%	16	0	0
52171 (Waucoma)	6.7%	45	3	2
52175 (West Union)	12.6%	230	29	17
Fayette County	13.5%	1,060	143	86
50466 (Riceville)	11.3%	141	16	10
50628 (Elma)	16.7%	90	15	9
52134 (Chester)	0.0%	48	0	0

⁶⁵ Rates greater than the countywide rate are highlighted.⁶⁶ Calculated by estimating 3/5 of the number of children birth to age 5 living in poverty.

Geographic Area	Poverty Rate for Children < Age 5 ⁶⁵	Number of Children < Age 5	Number of Children < Age 5 Living in Poverty	Number of Children < Age 3 Living in Poverty ⁶⁶
52136 (Cresco)	14.0%	343	48	29
52155 (Lime Springs)	11.1%	90	10	6
Howard County	13.2%	675	89	53
52101 (Decorah)	14.0%	534	75	45
52132 (Calmar)	0.0%	130	0	0
52133 (Castalia)	100.0%	2	2	1
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	0.0%	83	0	0
52161 (Ossian)	0.0%	127	0	0
52165 (Ridgeway)	0.0%	12	0	0
Winneshiek County	9.1%	891	81	49
Service Area Total		6,764	679	408

The poverty rate for children under age 5 remains greatest in Allamakee County. Data also continue to show Allamakee County has the greatest number of income-eligible children (170), followed by Fayette County (143 children). Combined, Allamakee and Fayette counties account for nearly 50% of income-eligible children in the service area. Additionally, consistent with the findings of the *2021 Community Assessment* and *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*, there is an exceptionally high rate and number of young children living in poverty in Postville in Allamakee County.

The number of income-eligible pregnant women in the service area can be estimated based on data for live births and poverty. As described in Table 66, the greatest numbers of births in the service area are in Bremer County. Based on the poverty rate of children under age 5 and the number of live births per year, it is estimated that there are 134 income-eligible pregnant women in the service area; this estimate has remained relatively stable in recent years. The greatest number of income-eligible pregnant women reside in Allamakee and Fayette counties, consistent with the *2021 Community Assessment* and *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*.

Table 66. Estimated Number of Income-eligible Pregnant Women by Geographic Area

Geographic Area	Poverty Rate for Children <5 Years Old (2021) ^{cx} i	Number of Live Births per Year (2020) (% Change since 2018) ^{cx} ii	Estimated Number of Income-Eligible Pregnant Women ⁶⁷
Allamakee County	17.9%	206 (+5.1%)	37
Bremer County	4.0%	243 (-11.0%)	10
Chickasaw County	5.5%	137 (-6.8%)	8
Clayton County	9.7%	198 (+20.0%)	19
Fayette County	13.5%	205 (-6.4%)	28
Howard County	13.2%	126 (+13.5%)	17
Winneshiek County	9.1%	164 (-11.9%)	15
Service Area Total		1,279 (-1.4%)	134

Race and Ethnicity of Eligible Children in Poverty

Data for the number of young children living in poverty by race is not readily accessible from public sources. As described above, there are disparities with regard to poverty rate and race. Poverty rates are highest among Black individuals, individuals of two or more races, and Hispanic individuals.

NEICAC continues to serve a population of children enrolled in its Head Start/Early Head Start program that mirrors the diversity of the general population.

⁶⁷Calculated by applying the poverty rate for children under age 5 in each of the counties in the service area to the number of live births per year.

Language of Eligible Children

The primary language of individuals in NEICAC's service area is English. Table 67 describes the percentage of people over the age of 5 in the service area, by language spoken at home and county of residence. Up-to-date data remains consistent with what was reported in NEICAC's *2021 Community Assessment*.

Table 67. Language Spoken at Home (Age 5 and Over) by Geographic Area and Percentage of Population (2021)^{cxiii,68}

Geographic Area	English	Spanish	Other Indo-European	Asian and Pacific Island	Other
Allamakee County	87.1%	6.0%	4.7%	0.2%	2.0%
Bremer County	97.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.5%	0.3%
Chickasaw County	93.9%	2.5%	3.5%	0.0%	0.2%
Clayton County	93.6%	2.5%	3.1%	0.4%	0.3%
Fayette County	97.0%	1.6%	0.8%	0.6%	0.0%
Howard County	93.6%	1.2%	4.9%	0.2%	0.0%
Winneshiek County	96.0%	1.7%	1.2%	0.7%	0.3%
Iowa	91.4%	4.2%	1.8%	1.7%	0.8%

During the 2022-2023 program year, a majority of families of children enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start spoke English as their primary language at home. Spanish was the next most common language spoken at home by enrolled families.^{cxiv} The linguistic diversity of Head Start/Early Head Start families continues to be consistent with rates within the service area.

Cultural Trends

The percentage of the population in the counties in the service area that is foreign-born remains small. Data continue to show rates less than the statewide rate (Table 68). Most data remained stable since the *2021 Community Assessment* was conducted, however the rate of foreign-born individuals that are not a U.S. citizen has increased substantially in Fayette and Howard counties, 88% and 83% respectively.

Table 68. Foreign-Born Population by Geographic Area (2021)^{cxv,69}

Geographic Area	Number and Percent Foreign-Born	Number and Percent of Foreign-Born Population that is non-US Citizen
Allamakee County	748 (5.3%)	367 (49.1%)
Bremer County	486 (2.0%)	207 (42.6%)
Chickasaw County	157 (1.3%)	76 (48.4%)
Clayton County	300 (1.7%)	135 (45.0%)
Fayette County	295 (1.5%)	245 (83.1%)
Howard County	100 (1.1%)	88 (88.0%)
Winneshiek County	439 (2.2%)	282 (64.2%)
Iowa	173,864 (5.5%)	99,463 (57.2%)

Children Experiencing Homelessness

In Iowa, the estimated number of individuals experiencing homelessness has decreased steadily from 2020 through 2023. A January 2023 point-in-time count of homelessness found 2,381 individuals experiencing homelessness, an 18.0% decrease from 2019 (2,904 individuals).^{cxvi}

As described in the *2021 Community Assessment* and confirmed in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*, many homeless children enrolled in public schools in Iowa are unaccompanied homeless youth or

⁶⁸ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

⁶⁹ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

children with disabilities, and their primary night time residence is most frequently doubled up (living with a friend or another family). Updated data on the number of public school students experiencing homelessness, by subgroup, is not available, nor is updated data on primary nighttime residence of public school students (Tables 69 and 70).

Table 69. Number of Children/Youth Enrolled in Public Schools in Iowa by Subgroup and School Year^{cxvii}

Subgroup Type	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Migratory children/youth	109	10	9
Unaccompanied homeless youth	1,101	932	882
Children with disabilities	1,672	1,345	1,354
Limited English proficient (LEP) students	767	703	855

Table 70. Percentage of Homeless Children/Youth Enrolled in Public Schools in Iowa by Primary Nighttime Residence and School Year^{cxviii}

Primary nighttime residence	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Doubled up (e.g., living with another family)	70.8%	73.6%	73.1%
Hotels/motels	8.3%	7.3%	10.0%
Shelters, transitional housing, awaiting foster care	19.2%	17.5%	12.8%
Unsheltered	1.7%	1.6%	4.1%

During the 2022-2023 program year, in NEICAC’s Head Start/Early Head Start program, a total of 15 families served experienced homelessness; this is an increase from 9 families during the program year prior.^{cxix,cxx} While the number of families experiencing homelessness has increased, this continues to represent a small portion of total families served (Table 71).

Table 71. Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness During the 2022-2023 Program Year^{cxxi}

Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness	Early Head Start	Head Start
Total number of children experiencing homelessness served during the program year	2 (1.7% total enrollment)	14 (5.4% total enrollment)
Total number of families experiencing homelessness that were served during the program year	2	13
Total number of families experiencing homelessness that acquired housing during the enrollment year	0	3

Since precise numbers of homeless children ages birth to 5 is not available for the service area counties, it is estimated that the number of homeless children who are eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start services is greater than 16 (the number served during the 2022-2023 program year).

The 2021 Community Assessment and 2022 Community Assessment Annual Update reported on eviction filing rates in counties in the service area. Because updated data is not available and the most recent data is outdated (2018), new data on eviction filings in Iowa is presented in Table 72. In Iowa, in 2019, eviction filings reached a 10-year high. Filings then fell drastically at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020 and 2021). Due to the absence of pandemic rental assistance and eviction protections, eviction filings have now returned to pre-pandemic levels.^{cxvii}

Table 72. Eviction Filing Filings in Iowa by Year

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	2022
Iowa	18,072	12,582	13,181	18,330

Children in Foster Care

In Iowa, the number of children in foster care has decreased in recent years. As described in Table 73, the number of children in foster care in counties in the service area fluctuated or decreased between 2019 and 2022. More than 50% of children in foster care in the service area reside in Bremer and Fayette counties.

Table 73. Number of Children (0-18) in Foster Care by Year and Geographic Area (2019-2022)^{cxviii}

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	2022	Four-Year Trend
Allamakee County	24	14	17	15	Fluctuating
Bremer County	33	20	24	34	Fluctuating
Chickasaw County	24	12	11	9	Decreasing
Clayton County	21	16	9	11	Fluctuating
Fayette County	73	73	67	48	Decreasing
Howard County	19	16	16	13	Decreasing
Winneshiek County	29	24	20	21	Decreasing
Service Area Total	223	175	164	151	Decreasing

Updated data show that, in 2021, 8% of children in foster care in Iowa were less than 1 year old. Children ages 1 to 5 years old made up 35% of children in foster care.^{cxix} Table 74 describes the number of children in foster care by age group. There are an estimated 12 infants (less than 1 year old) in foster care, and 53 toddlers and preschool-age children. In total, there are an estimated 65 foster children birth to age 5 who are categorically eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start services; this is down from 77 children reported in the 2021 *Community Assessment* and 67 reported in the 2022 *Community Assessment Annual Update*.

Table 74. Number of Children in Foster Care by Age Group and Geographic Area

Geographic Area	Number of Children (0-18) (2022) ^{cxv}	Number of Children < Age 1 (2021) ⁷⁰	Number of Children Age 1-5 (2021) ⁷¹	Estimated Children Birth to Age 5
Allamakee County	15	1	5	6
Bremer County	34	3	12	15
Chickasaw County	9	1	3	4
Clayton County	11	1	4	5
Fayette County	48	4	17	21
Howard County	13	1	5	6
Winneshiek County	21	2	7	9
Service Area Total	151	12	53	65

During the 2022-2023 program year, NEICAC served 17 children who were in foster care at any point during the program year (9 EHS, 8 HS) (5% of total enrollment). This is consistent with the program year prior. The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) referred 14 children to the Early Head Start program and 14 children to Head Start.^{cxvi}

⁷⁰ Calculated by multiplying the number of children in foster care (ages 0-18) by 8%.

⁷¹ Calculated by multiplying the number of children in foster care (ages 0-18) by 35%.

Children Receiving Public Assistance

WIC and SNAP continue to be the most common types of public assistance utilized by NEICAC Head Start families (Table 75).

Table 75. Number (and Percent) of NEICAC Head Start and Early Head Start Families That Received Federal or Other Assistance at Enrollment (2022-2023)^{cxvii}

Program	TANF	SSI	WIC	SNAP
Early Head Start	8 (7.0%)	9 (7.8%)	71 (61.7%)	27 (23.5%)
Head Start	12 (4.6%)	16 (6.2%)	110 (42.5%)	111 (42.9%)

Updated data continue to show that many children in the service area are living in households that receive public assistance. Rates continue to be highest in Clayton and Fayette counties, at approximately 22% of children birth to age 18 (Table 76).

Table 76. Children (0-18) Living in Households that Receive Public Assistance⁷² by Geographic Area and Year^{cxviii,cxix,73}

Geographic Area	2019	2020	2021	Three-Year Trend
Allamakee County	19.9%	20.5%	16.3%	Fluctuating
Bremer County	12.2%	12.5%	11.1%	Fluctuating
Chickasaw County	9.9%	11.8%	12.1%	Increasing
Clayton County	22.2%	22.3%	22.2%	Steady
Fayette County	21.5%	20.6%	22.1%	Fluctuating
Howard County	12.2%	8.5%	10.8%	Fluctuating
Winneshiek County	13.6%	14.9%	12.2%	Fluctuating
Iowa	21.6%	21.0%	20.7%	Decreasing

The number of children birth to age 5 living in households that receive public assistance can be estimated by applying the percent of children (0-18) living in households that receive public assistance to the number of children birth to age 5 in the service area (Table 77). Data continues to align with Head Start/Early Head Start eligibility based on public assistance, which is dependent on receipt of TANF, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or SNAP benefits.

It is estimated there are 1,054 children birth to age 5 eligible for Head Start/Early Head in the service area based on receipt of public assistance. Of these children, 625 are birth to age 3. The number of children eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start based on receipt of public assistance remained steady from that reported in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*, after a significant increase from the *2021 Community Assessment* due to a change in eligibility guidelines from the Office of Head Start, which now includes SNAP for eligibility determination.

⁷² Supplemental Security Income (SSI), cash public assistance, food stamps/SNAP

⁷³ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

Table 77. Estimated Number of Children Birth to Age 5 Eligible for HS/EHS Based on Receipt of Public Assistance by Geographic Area (2021)^{cxxx}

Geographic Area	Percent of Children Receiving Public Assistance	Number of Children Birth to Age 5	Children Birth to Age 5 Living in Households Receiving Public Assistance ⁷⁴	Children Birth to Age 3 Living in Households Receiving Public Assistance ⁷⁵
Allamakee County	16.3%	949	155	93
Bremer County	11.1%	1,415	157	94
Chickasaw County	12.1%	783	95	57
Clayton County	22.2%	991	220	132
Fayette County	22.1%	1,060	234	141
Howard County	10.8%	675	73	44
Winneshiek County	12.2%	891	109	65
Service Area Total	n/a	6,530	1,054	625

Children with Disabilities

In NEICAC’s service area, there are approximately 588 children ages birth to 5 with an identified disability who may be eligible for Head Start/Early Head Start. This includes 473 children between the age of birth and 3 years old, some of whom might reside outside the NEICAC service area, and 115 children 3 to 5 years old.

Table 78 describes the number of children receiving early intervention services (Early ACCESS) by Area Education Agency (AEA), as well as the percentage and number of children receiving initial services within 30 days of receiving an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The timeline for initial services has returned to pre-pandemic levels. Consistent with the findings of the *2021 Community Assessment*, the percentage of children birth to age 3 with an IFSP is slightly less in the AEA’s serving NEICAC’s Head Start/Early Head Start service area than it is statewide.

Table 78. Number and Percentage of Children (Age 0-3) Receiving Early Intervention Services by Area Education Agency (AEA) Region (2021-2022)^{cxxxi}

Geographic Area	Number of Children Birth to Age 3 with IFSP	% and # of Children Receiving Initial Services within 30 days of IFSP	Percent of Children Birth to Age 3 with IFSP
Keystone AEA (AEA Region 1): <i>Serving Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek Counties</i>	177	90.8% 59 out of 65	2.43%
Central Rivers AEA (AEA Region 7): <i>Serving Bremer County and counties outside NEICAC’s service area</i>	296	88.6% 70 out of 79	2.09%
Iowa		89.1%	2.46%
AEA Total	473		

The percentage of students with disabilities (K-12), as well as the number of 3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities, by school district, is described in Table 79. Many of the school districts serving high percentages of students with disabilities have consistently high rates year to year. The highest rate, 21%, remains in Oelwein School District in Fayette County.

⁷⁴ Estimated by applying the percent of children 0-18 living in households receiving public assistance to the population of children birth to age 5.

⁷⁵ Estimated by multiplying 3/5 by the number of children birth to age 5 living in households that receive public assistance.

Table 79. Number of Preschool Age Children (Ages 3 to 5) with IEP By School District and Year^{xxxxii}

Geographic Area	School District	Percent of Students (K-12) with Disabilities ⁷⁶			Number of Preschool Children (Age 3-5) with IEP		
		2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Allamakee County	Allamakee	13%	14%	13%	7	9	13
	Eastern Allamakee	9%	10%	10%	0	4	2
	Postville	13%	14%	14%	6	8	3
Bremer County	Denver	8%	9%	9%	1	5	3
	Janesville	12%	12%	13%	3	4	1
	Sumner-Fredericksburg	15%	16%	15%	2	10	2
	Tripoli	18%	16%	15%	6	8	6
	Wapsie Valley	10%	12%	14%	5	8	1
	Waverly-Shell Rock	12%	11%	12%	15	26	18
	Chickasaw County	Nashua-Plainfield	15%	16%	14%	2	10
	New Hampton	10%	11%	11%	7	15	5
Clayton County	Central	14%	14%	16%	1	11	9
	Edgewood-Colesburg	10%	11%	10%	0	6	0
	Clayton Ridge	11%	10%	9%	8	10	5
	MFL Marmac	14%	12%	12%	2	6	2
Fayette County	North Fayette Valley	17%	18%	17%	2	8	3
	Oelwein	20%	21%	21%	12	12	2
	Starmont	14%	14%	17%	1	4	3
	West Central	16%	17%	15%	4	6	8
Howard County	Howard-Winneshiek	16%	16%	14%	10	20	14
	Riceville	10%	9%	12%	6	4	2
Winneshiek County	Decorah	13%	13%	13%	5	9	6
	South Winneshiek	15%	14%	15%	1	2	0
	Turkey Valley	12%	14%	12%	1	4	4
Iowa		13%	13%	13%			
Service Area Total					107	209	115

In NEICAC's Head Start program, approximately 15% of the total enrollment had a diagnosed disability during the 2022-2023 program year; the rate was 21% in Early Head Start (Table 80). Both rates are well above the Head Start/Early Head Start requirement that children with disabilities make up at least 10% of total enrollment; this trend continues to be consistent with data reported in the 2021 Community Assessment.

Table 80. Children Served by NEICAC Head Start/Early Head Start with a Disability (2022-2023)^{xxxxiii}

Program Type	Number and Percent of Enrolled Children	Primary Disability
Head Start	38 out of 259 (14.7%)	Non-categorical/developmental delay (15) Speech or language impairments (12) Autism (5) Emotional disturbance (1) Health impairment (1) Orthopedic impairment (1) Visual impairment (1) Multiple disabilities (1)
Early Head Start	24 out of 115 (20.9%)	n/a
Total	65 out of 374 (17.4%)	

⁷⁶ Rates greater than the statewide rate are highlighted.

The predominant disability diagnosed among preschool-age children during the 2022-2023 program year was non-categorical/developmental delay, followed by speech or language impairments. Many children with disabilities enrolled in NEICAC Early Head Start were determined eligible for special education services prior to the program year, showing the strength of local referral systems as well as NEICAC's screening procedures.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the early identification of developmental delays and disabilities in young children was highly impacted in many early childhood programs. Some of the impacts on early identification and service delivery included reduced resources, poor service delivery coordination, communication challenges, and families struggling to meet basic needs.^{cxxxiv} Research also indicates delays in language development among children born during the COVID-19, and some of this may be caused by less language engagement than is typical for young children. Data show that that the number of words a 2-year-old heard before the pandemic was significantly more than what a 2-year-old in 2020 and 2021 would hear. Research showed these differences were the most pronounced for low-income children.^{cxxxv}

AGENCIES SERVING ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

Child Care Centers and Family Child Care

September 2023 data show 137 licensed child care and registered child development (RCD) programs available to families in NEICAC's service area (Table 81) This is a decrease from 141 programs in September 2022 (reported in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*) and 146 programs in September 2021 (reported in the *2021 Community Assessment*). The 137 licensed programs have the capacity to serve 4,688 children (birth to school age), however, licensed capacity does not necessarily reflect available slots. Additionally, there are 23 license-exempt and non-registered child development home programs, a decrease from 24 in the year prior (Table 82).

The far-reaching impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on an already fragile child care sector remains a considerable factor in programs' abilities to meet families' needs. The child care sector's workforce challenges (recruitment, turnover, and retention) were unsustainable prior to the pandemic, and child care workforce numbers have not recovered from pandemic-related job losses to the same extent as other industries.^{cxxxvi}

Research indicates that child care workers are underpaid. Experts suggest that without improvements to the quality of the job (for example, increased wages), workers may no longer consider employment in the child care sector.^{cxxxvii} While there are a variety of strategies states are implementing to try to recruit and retain child care workers – such as financial assistance for degrees and credentials, bonuses, or more flexible paid leave – low pay continues to be a primary issue driving high turnover in programs.^{cxxxviii}

Table 81. Number and Capacity (including School Age) of Licensed and Registered Child Care Programs by Type (as of September 2023)^{xxxxix}

Geographic Area	Licensed Center		RCD Home A		RCD Home B		RCD Home C		Total	
	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity
52140 (Dorchester)	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	1	12
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52151 (Lansing)	1	*	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	*
52160 (New Albin)	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	12	1	16	2	28
52162 (Postville)	2	130	0	n/a	2	24	0	n/a	4	154
52170 (Waterville)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52172 (Waukon)	3	190	2	16	3	36	1	16	9	258
Allamakee County	6	320	2	16	7	84	2	32	17	452
50622 (Denver)	2	311	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	16	3	327
50631 (Frederika)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50647 (Janesville)	1	133	1	8	2	24	0	n/a	4	165
50666 (Plainfield)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	16	1	16
50668 (Readlyn)	1	24	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	2	36
50674 (Sumner)	2	153	0	n/a	2	24	0	n/a	4	177
50676 (Tripoli)	1	30	0	n/a	3	36	0	n/a	4	66
50677 (Waverly)	6	438	1	8	7	84	2	32	16	562
Bremer County	13	1089	2	16	15	180	4	64	34	1,349
50603 (Alta Vista)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50630 (Fredericksburg)	1	72	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	72
50645 (Ionia)	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	12	1	16	2	28
50658 (Nashua)	0	n/a	1	8	1	12	2	32	4	52
50659 (New Hampton)	4	209	1	8	4	48	0	n/a	9	265
52154 (Lawler)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
Chickasaw County	5	281	2	16	6	72	3	48	16	417
52042 (Edgewood)	1	76	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	76
52043 (Elkader)	1	100	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	100
52044 (Elkport)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52047 (Farmersburg)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52048 (Garber)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52049 (Garnavillo)	1	74	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	74
52052 (Guttenberg)	2	67	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	16	3	83
52066 (North Buena Vista)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52072 (Saint Olaf)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52076 (Strawberry Point)	1	70	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	70
52077 (Volga)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52156 (Luana)	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	1	12
52157 (McGregor)	2	67	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	3	79
52159 (Monona)	2	87	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	3	99
Clayton County	10	541	0	n/a	3	36	1	16	14	593
50606 (Arlington)	2	83	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	2	83
50655 (Maynard)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50662 (Oelwein)	2	236	1	8	3	36	0	n/a	6	280
50664 (Oran)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50681 (Westgate)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52135 (Clermont)	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	1	12
52141 (Elgin)	1	50	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	50
52142 (Fayette)	1	68	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	2	80
52147 (Hawkeye)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52164 (Randalia)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52169 (Wadena)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52171 (Waucoma)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52175 (West Union)	3	161	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	4	173
Fayette County	9	598	1	8	6	72	0	n/a	16	678
50466 (Riceville)	1	85	0	n/a	2	24	0	n/a	3	109
50628 (Elma)	1	34	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	34
52134 (Chester)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52136 (Cresco)	3	169	0	n/a	5	60	0	n/a	8	229
52155 (Lime Springs)	1	60	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	2	72

Geographic Area	Licensed Center		RCD Home A		RCD Home B		RCD Home C		Total	
	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity
Howard County	6	348	0	n/a	8	96	0	n/a	14	444
52101 (Decorah)	6	277	0	n/a	8	96	0	n/a	14	373
52132 (Calmar)	2	105	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	3	117
52133 (Castalia)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52161 (Ossian)	2	181	0	n/a	4	48	0	n/a	6	229
52165 (Ridgeway)	0	n/a	0	n/a	2	24	0	n/a	2	24
52168 (Spillville)	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	12	0	n/a	1	12
Winnesiek County	10	563	0	n/a	16	192	0	n/a	26	755
Service Area Total	59	3,740	7	56	61	732	10	160	137	4,688

*Not reported

Table 82. Number and Capacity (Including School Age) of License Exempt and Non-Registered Child Care Programs by Type (as of September 2023)^{cx1}

Geographic Area	License Exempt		Non-Registered Child Care Home		Total	
	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity
52140 (Dorchester)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52151 (Lansing)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52160 (New Albin)	1	*	0	n/a	1	*
52162 (Postville)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52170 (Waterville)	1	*	0	n/a	1	*
52172 (Waukon)	2	*	0	n/a	2	*
Allamakee County	4	*	0	n/a	4	*
50622 (Denver)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50631 (Frederika)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50647 (Janesville)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50666 (Plainfield)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50668 (Readlyn)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50674 (Sumner)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50676 (Tripoli)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50677 (Waverly)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
Bremer County	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50603 (Alta Vista)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50630 (Fredericksburg)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50645 (Ionia)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50658 (Nashua)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50659 (New Hampton)	1	*	0	n/a	1	*
52154 (Lawler)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
Chickasaw County	1	*	0	n/a	1	*
52042 (Edgewood)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52043 (Elkader)	2	n/a	0	n/a	2	n/a
52044 (Elkport)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52047 (Farmersburg)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52048 (Garber)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52049 (Garnavillo)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52052 (Guttenberg)	3	*	0	n/a	3	*
52066 (North Buena Vista)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52072 (Saint Olaf)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52076 (Strawberry Point)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52077 (Volga)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52156 (Luana)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52157 (McGregor)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52159 (Monona)	1	*	0	n/a	1	*
Clayton County	6	*	0	n/a	6	*
50606 (Arlington)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50655 (Maynard)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50662 (Oelwein)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50664 (Oran)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a

Geographic Area	License Exempt		Non-Registered Child Care Home		Total	
	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity	Number	Capacity
50681 (Westgate)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52135 (Clermont)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52141 (Elgin)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52142 (Fayette)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52147 (Hawkeye)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52164 (Randalia)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52169 (Wadena)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52171 (Waucoma)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52175 (West Union)	1	*	0	n/a	1	*
Fayette County	1	*	0	n/a	1	*
50466 (Riceville)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
50628 (Elma)	1	*	0	n/a	1	*
52134 (Chester)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52136 (Cresco)	2	*	0	n/a	2	*
52155 (Lime Springs)	2	*	0	n/a	2	*
Howard County	5	*	0	n/a	5	*
52101 (Decorah)	3	*	0	n/a	3	*
52132 (Calmar)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52133 (Castalia)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
52161 (Ossian)	3	*	0	n/a	3	*
52165 (Ridgeway)	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
Winneshek County	6	*	0	n/a	6	*
Service Area	23	*	0	n/a	23	*

*Not reported

Up-to-date data on Iowa's Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), IQ4K (Iowa Quality for Kids), show a participation rate in the service area, 28%, that is a decrease from the year prior (33%). Consistent with the findings of the 2021 *Community Assessment*, a majority of programs are not participating in IQ4K; among those that are, most are rated Level 4 or Level 1 (Table 83).

Table 83. Number of Child Care Programs (License, License Exempt, Registered, Non-Registered) by Quality Rating as of (as of September 2023)^{exli}

Geographic Area	0 (not participating)	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Total Programs	Total Participating
Allamakee County	14 (66.7%)	1 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (9.5%)	4 (19.0%)	0 (0.0%)	21	7 (33.3%)
Bremer County	26 (76.5%)	4 (11.8%)	1 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (8.8%)	0 (0.0%)	34	8 (23.5%)
Chickasaw County	13 (76.5%)	1 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5.9%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0.0%)	17	4 (23.5%)
Clayton County	13 (65.0%)	3 (15.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	20	7 (35.0%)
Fayette County	14 (82.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5.9%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0.0%)	17	3 (17.7%)
Howard County	15 (79.0%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (15.8%)	0 (0.0%)	19	4 (21.0%)
Winneshek County	20 (62.5%)	7 (21.9%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.1%)	4 (12.5%)	0 (0.0%)	32	12 (37.5%)
Service Area Total	115 (71.9%)	17 (10.6%)	1 (0.6%)	5 (3.1%)	22 (13.8%)	0 (0.0%)	160	45 (28.1%)

Updated data from the Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral agencies on the percentage of requests they receive by county, by the age of the children requesting care, is not available. Table 84, as presented in the 2022 Community Assessment Annual Update, indicates that, in 2021, infant child care was a high need in Allamakee, Bremer, and Howard counties; toddler care was in high demand in Chickasaw and Winneshiek counties; and 2-year-old care was in high demand in Clayton County (Table 84).

Table 84. Percent of Requests for Child Care by Age and County (2021)^{cxlii,77}

Geographic Area	Infant	Toddler	2-Year-Olds	3- & 4-Year-Olds	5-Year-Olds	6- to 8-Year-Olds
Allamakee County	50%	0%	0%	33%	17%	0%
Bremer County	31%	21%	7%	19%	10%	9%
Chickasaw County	17%	28%	11%	22%	0%	17%
Clayton County	0%	0%	34%	33%	0%	33%
Fayette County	17%	13%	13%	8%	17%	24%
Howard County	50%	0%	0%	33%	17%	0%
Winneshiek County	27%	32%	0%	20%	10%	11%

Table 85 shows that the number of children under 5 years old in the service area (6,764 children) continues to exceed total child care capacity, which is likely inflated as it includes school age capacity (4,688 slots).

Table 85. Number of Children Under 5 Years Old and Number of Children Under 5 Years Old Living Below Poverty Compared to Total Child Care Capacity

Geographic Area	Number of Children < Age 5 ^{cxliii}	Number of Children < Age 5 Living in Poverty ^{cxliv}	Child Care Capacity (including School Age) ^{cxlv}
52140 (Dorchester)	22	0	12
52146 (Harpers Ferry)	59	0	n/a
52151 (Lansing)	120	9	*
52160 (New Albin)	41	3	28
52162 (Postville)	265	135	154
52170 (Waterville)	43	0	n/a
52172 (Waukon)	320	23	258
Allamakee County	949	170	452
50622 (Denver)	190	0	327
50631 (Frederika)	n/a	n/a	n/a
50647 (Janesville)	137	4	165
50666 (Plainfield)	22	0	16
50668 (Readlyn)	68	0	36
50674 (Sumner)	184	0	177
50676 (Tripoli)	208	0	66
50677 (Waverly)	653	47	562
Bremer County	1,415	57	1,349
50603 (Alta Vista)	3	0	n/a
50630 (Fredericksburg)	136	14	72
50645 (Ionia)	47	0	28
50658 (Nashua)	97	10	52
50659 (New Hampton)	442	15	265
52154 (Lawler)	49	4	n/a
Chickasaw County	783	43	417
52042 (Edgewood)	100	0	76
52043 (Elkader)	71	0	100
52044 (Elkport)	11	0	n/a

⁷⁷ The age category with the greatest request rate is highlighted for each county. County totals may not equal 100%, as data (unreported in this table) includes request for care for children age 9 and above.

Geographic Area	Number of Children < Age 5 ^{cxliii}	Number of Children < Age 5 Living in Poverty ^{cxliv}	Child Care Capacity (including School Age) ^{cxlv}
52047 (Farmersburg)	30	18	n/a
52048 (Garber)	41	7	n/a
52049 (Garnavillo)	78	4	74
52052 (Guttenberg)	89	0	83
52066 (North Buena Vista)	7	0	n/a
52072 (Saint Olaf)	63	2	n/a
52076 (Strawberry Point)	129	10	70
52077 (Volga)	37	0	n/a
52156 (Luana)	94	4	12
52157 (McGregor)	71	17	79
52159 (Monona)	179	11	99
Clayton County	991	96	593
50606 (Arlington)	115	2	83
50655 (Maynard)	43	12	n/a
50662 (Oelwein)	301	99	280
50664 (Oran)	6	0	n/a
50681 (Westgate)	10	1	n/a
52135 (Clermont)	17	0	12
52141 (Elgin)	65	3	50
52142 (Fayette)	83	7	80
52147 (Hawkeye)	27	0	n/a
52164 (Randalia)	29	6	n/a
52169 (Wadena)	16	0	n/a
52171 (Waucoma)	45	3	n/a
52175 (West Union)	230	29	173
Fayette County	1,060	143	678
50466 (Riceville)	141	16	109
50628 (Elma)	90	15	34
52134 (Chester)	48	0	n/a
52136 (Cresco)	343	48	229
52155 (Lime Springs)	90	10	72
Howard County	675	89	444
52101 (Decorah)	534	75	373
52132 (Calmar)	130	0	117
52133 (Castalia)	2	2	n/a
52144 (Fort Atkinson)	83	0	n/a
52161 (Ossian)	127	0	229
52165 (Ridgeway)	12	0	24
52168 (Spillville)	0	0	12
Winneshiek County	891	81	755
Service Area Total	6,764	679	4,688

*Not reported

Home Visiting

Home visiting programs in the NEICAC service area are outlined in Table 86, by lead agency and program. Programs offered are unchanged from that reported in the 2021 Community Assessment.

Table 86. Home Visiting Programs by Geographic Area (2023)^{cxlvi}

Geographic Area	Lead Agency	Program
Allamakee County	Helping Services for Northeast Iowa	Parents as Teachers
	NEICAC	Family Development & Self Sufficiency Program (FaDSS)
	NEICAC	Early Head Start
Bremer County	NEICAC	FaDSS
	Lutheran Services in Iowa	Families Together II
	Operation Threshold	Partners for Healthy Families
	Together 4 Families	Together 4 Families
	Visiting Nursing Association – Waterloo	Homes with Healthy Children
Chickasaw County	NEICAC	FaDSS
	Floyd, Mitchell, and Chickasaw Early Childhood Iowa Area	FMC Early Childhood Iowa Area
	Lutheran Services in Iowa	Families Together
Clayton County	NEICAC	FaDSS
	HAWC Partnership for Children	HAWC Family Education
	Helping Services for Northeast Iowa	Parents as Teachers
	NEICAC	Early Head Start
Fayette County	NEICAC	FaDSS
	Building Directions for Families	Building Direction for Families
	NEICAC	Early Head Start
	Parent Share and Support	Parents as Teachers
Howard County	NEICAC	FaDSS
	NEICAC	Early Head Start
	HAWC Partnership for Children	HAWC Family Education
	Helping Services for Northeast Iowa	Parents as Teachers
Winnebago County	NEICAC	FaDSS
	NEICAC	Early Head Start
	HAWC Partnership for Children	HAWC Family Education
	Helping Services for Northeast Iowa	Parents as Teachers

Publicly Funded Preschool

In Iowa, the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) is a publicly funded preschool program for 4-year-old children. Three-year-old children are not served in the state-funded PreK.

In the 2021-2022 school year, Iowa's state-funded preschool program funded the enrollment of 27,078 preschool children, an increase from the two years prior, when approximately 25,000 children were served each school year. The state ranks 5th in the country for four-year-old access to public quality preschool programming.^{cxlvii,cxlviii,cxlix} In the NEICAC service area, 43 schools participate in SWVPP; the number of sites and locations are unchanged from the 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 program year (Tables 87 and 88).

Table 87. Schools/Centers Participating in SWVPP by School District (2021-2022)^d

School District	School/Centers	County, City, Zip Code
Allamakee Community	St. Patrick's Catholic Preschool	Allamakee County Waukon, 52172
	West Campus Elementary School	Allamakee County Waukon, 52172
Central Community School District	Central Elementary	Clayton County Elkader, 52043
Clayton Ridge Community School District	St. Mary's Preschool	Clayton County Guttenberg, 52052
	Clayton Ridge Elementary School	Clayton County Garnavillo, 52049
Decorah	Northeast Iowa Montessori School	Winneshiek County St. Decorah, 52101
	Kinderhaus Preschool	Winneshiek County Decorah, 52101
	Nisse Preschool	Winneshiek County Decorah, 52101
	Sunflower Daycare Ctr	Winneshiek County Decorah, 52101
	St. Benedict's Preschool	Winneshiek County Decorah, 52101
	West Side Elementary School	Winneshiek County Decorah, 52101
Denver	Denver Early Elementary School	Bremer County Denver, 50622
Eastern Allamakee	New Albin Elementary School	Allamakee County New Albin, 52160
Edgewood-Colesburg	Edgewood-Colesburg Elementary School	Delaware County Colesburg, 52035
Janesville	Janesville Elementary School	Bremer County Janesville, 50647
MFL Marmac	MFL MarMac Elementary School	Clayton County Monona, 52159
Nashua-Plainfield	Nashua-Plainfield Elementary School	Chickasaw County Nashua, IA 50658
New Hampton	St Joseph Community School Sunrise Preschool	Chickasaw County New Hampton, IA 50659
	New Hampton Elementary School	Chickasaw County New Hampton, IA 50659
North Fayette Valley	Hippity Hop Preschool*	Fayette County West Union, 52175
	Rainbow Land Daycare and Preschool	Fayette County Fayette, 52142
	Valley Elementary School	Fayette County West Union, 52175
	West Union Elementary School	Fayette County West Union, 52175
Oelwein	Little Husky Learning Center	Fayette County Oelwein, 50662
	Oelwein Online School*	Fayette County Oelwein, 50662
Postville	Postville Child Care Services	Allamakee County Postville, 52162
Riceville	Riceville Elementary School	Howard County Riceville, 50466
South Winneshiek	St. Teresa of Calcutta - Ossian	Winneshiek County Ossian, 52161
	St. Teresa of Calcutta - Calmar	Winneshiek County Ossian, 52161
	South Winneshiek Elementary School	Winneshiek County Ossian, 52161
Starmont	Starmont Elementary School	Fayette County Arlington, 50606

School District	School/Centers	County, City, Zip Code
Sumner-Fredericksburg	Fredericksburg Elementary School	Chickasaw County Fredericksburg, 50630
	Durant Elementary School	Bremer County Sumner, 50674
Tripoli	Tripoli Elementary School	Bremer County Tripoli, 50676
Turkey Valley	Turkey Valley Elementary School	Winneshiek County Jackson Junction, 52171
Wapsie Valley	Community Lutheran Preschool	Bremer County Readlyn, 50668
	Readlyn Elementary School	Bremer County Readlyn, 50668
	Fairbank Elementary School	Buchanan County Fairbank, 50629
Waverly-Shell Rock	Discoveries Learning Center	Bremer County Waverly, 50677
	St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool	Bremer County Waverly, 50677
	Waverly Childcare and Preschool	Bremer County Waverly, 50677
	Shell Rock Elementary School	Butler County Shell Rock, IA 50670
West Central	West Central PK - 8 School	Fayette County Maynard, 50655

*Newly participating in SWVPP as of the 2020-2021 school year

Table 88. Number of Schools Participating in SWVPP in NEICAC Service Area by Geographic Area and School Year^{eli}

Geographic Area	2019-2020	2020-2021	2020-2021
Winneshiek County	10	10	10
Bremer County	10	9	9
Fayette County	6	8	8
Allamakee County	5	4	4
Chickasaw County	4	4	4
Clayton County	4	4	4
Butler County*	1	1	1
Buchanan County*	1	1	1
Delaware County*	1	1	1
Howard County	1	1	1
Total	43	43	43

*Site is located outside NEICAC service area, however school district is located within the service area.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE COMMUNITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

NEICAC's 2021 *Community Assessment* reported that, in NEICAC's service area, there are social services resources available to families in addition to those offered by the agency. And, NEICAC has formal and informal partnerships that help the agency to provide comprehensive services to children and connect families to resources. These reflections are consistent for the 2022 *Community Assessment Annual Update* and 2023 *Community Assessment Annual Update*. It remains that the agency's position as a community action agency is a significant strength in its ability to provide direct services and collaborate with local stakeholders.

NEICAC Head Start/Early Head Start leadership team members report that there are no substantial differences in the need for or the availability of community resources from what was reported in the 2021 *Community Assessment*.

NEICAC continues to serve as a critical partner in supporting vulnerable populations, such as families experiencing homelessness and single-parent families. Through the various services provided by Head Start/Early Head Start, NEICAC partners with other community organizations to meet the needs of young children with disabilities, children who have experienced abuse and neglect or domestic violence, families experiencing homelessness, foster children, single-parent families, and/or grandparents caring for grandchildren.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As reflected throughout the *2023 Community Assessment Annual Update* report, there is a high level of consistency in data and need since the *2021 Community Assessment* was conducted. Demographics data is relatively unchanged. Data continue to show some disparity in the quality of and access to educational resources, challenges with regard to affordable housing and homelessness, a need for mental health resources, and challenges accessing health services. The recommendations from NEICAC's *2021 Community Assessment* remain relevant, high-impact areas to address children and families' needs.

Key progress toward implementation of the recommendations established in the *2021 Community Assessment* are described in "**2022 update**" (as presented in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update*) and "**2023 update**" following each recommendation.

Recommendation 1: Program Design. Review Head Start/Early Head Start slot allocations and community-wide trends (e.g., availability of publicly funded pre-kindergarten, demand for infant/toddler care) to explore strategies to support full enrollment across the program. Explore updates to program schedules and transportation services to ensure the needs of working families are met.

- **2022 update:** In April 2022, the Office of Head Start expanded its interpretation of "public assistance" as a category of eligibility to include SNAP. NEICAC has enrolled children based on receipt of SNAP, helping to maintain enrollment in the Head Start/Early Head Start program.
- **2023 update:** 2022-2023 PIR data show that NEICAC is enrolling a greater number of children receiving public assistance and fewer children whose families are over income. The agency is maintaining close to full enrollment, and continues to support families to enroll in the Head Start/Early Head Start program.

Recommendation 2: Staff Support and Retention. Explore work/life balance and scheduling flexibility needs of staff. Learn more from staff about their professional development and training needs to help them meet their professional goals. Review staff's expressed interest in management/leadership training more closely and leverage this interest to support staff members' professional growth within the agency.

- **2022 update:** To support staff retention, NEICAC offered two bonuses – one as an incentive for completion of the COVID-19 vaccine series (winter 2021) and one as a retention bonus (spring 2022). NEICAC also began participating in the WAGE\$ salary supplement program and is considering a pay scale increase for its teachers. Completion of a wage and benefits comparability study complemented the *2021 Community Assessment* to support this change.
- **2023 update:** NEICAC continues to enhance staff compensation to support recruitment and retention. Wage increases (though a February 2023 cost of living increase as well as a July 2023 increase) were implemented across the program, and teachers are now paid through summer months.

Recommendation 3: Awareness of NEICAC Services. Review and confirm internal roles and processes for partnership management, including formal and informal partnerships at the administrative and service delivery level. Continue to leverage partnerships to increase visibility of NEICAC’s Head Start/Early Head Start program. Promote agency services among families and community members to enhance knowledge and use of available resources.

- **2022 update:** NEICAC is in the process of agency-wide rebranding and expanding its social media presence. Agency recognition is becoming more consistent, and marketing efforts are being expanded for NEICAC’s early childhood programs.
- **2023 update:** NEICAC continues its agency-wide rebranding, which includes an expansion of its social media presence.

Recommendation 4: Public School District Relationship-Building. Continue and enhance relationships with local school districts to support a coordinated approach to serving eligible children, aid in smooth transitions into kindergarten, and leverage community resources (e.g., homelessness support to families with children in the early learning and public school systems). Create or enhance new partnerships by modeling improvements after successful existing partnerships with school districts. Consider shared recruitment strategies so that families of children most likely to benefit from Head Start are aware of the program and encouraged to enroll.

- **2022 update:** Relationship-building with public school districts is ongoing. To support this work, NEICAC participated in a summer 2022 planning meeting with its Area Education Agency (AEA), 10 local school districts, and neighboring Head Start provider.
- **2023 update:** NEICAC continues to focus on relationship-building with public school district partners.

Recommendation 5: Parent Training and Employment. Continue to leverage internal resources and community partnerships, and explore new strategies and partnerships, to provide educational counseling, job training, and resources to families related to employment skill building and job search. Collaborate with community partners and local employers to address specific barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment (e.g., child care, work history, transportation).

- **2022 update:** NEICAC continues to provide support to families and explore new strategies for meeting their needs.
- **2023 update:** Efforts to support parent training and employment, including coordination with community partners, continues to be a focus for the Head Start/Early Head Start program.

Recommendation 6: Affordable Housing and Homelessness. Continue to advocate for and provide support to families experiencing homelessness and those on the brink of homelessness, including help preparing those who may experience housing challenges when rent moratoriums and eviction protections cease. Ensure that families are aware of and understand the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness and how it impacts eligibility for and services available from the Head Start/Early Head start program.

- **2022 update:** NEICAC continues to engage in advocacy for and support of families experiencing homelessness.
- **2023 update:** As data continues to point to challenges with affordable housing and homelessness in the service area, NEICAC continues its efforts support families.

Recommendation 7: Preventive and Primary Care. Continue to collaborate with local health services providers, including dental health providers, to promote the importance of preventative and primary care and address barriers to maintaining an on-time health schedule, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **2022 update:** NEICAC continues to outreach to and partner with health providers to meet children and families' needs.
- **2023 update:** Local health providers continue to serve an important role in NEICAC communities. In 2023, a pediatric dental provider that partners with NEICAC was recognized for their collaboration with the agency. The 'Excellence in Community Service' award was given by the Office of Head Start, Region 7.

Recommendation 8: Mental Health. Collaborate with community-based mental health providers to develop a shared understanding of needs within communities and to identify strategies to address the need for mental health resources and counseling services. Advocate for the availability and accessibility of family-centered, culturally sensitive care and services that meet the needs of families with young children.

- **2022 update:** Prior to the 2022-2023 program year, NEICAC partnered with county services for a presentation on community-based mental health services for children and adults. A trauma-informed care training was also given to all program staff, and NEICAC's Behavior Specialist presented on Starling Minds, a mental health support service for staff.
- **2023 update:** NEICAC's Behavior Specialist continues to provide training, support, and mental health services for the Head Start/Early Head Start program.

Recommendation 9. Impact of COVID-19. Regularly review community data to adapt to the impact of COVID-19 on families. Consider data such as unemployment, food insecurity, child welfare, substance abuse, and housing stability. Leverage partnerships and community resources to support vulnerable families, including those on the verge of homelessness, single parents, grandparents (and other relatives) raising children, and families who may need job search or employment support.

- **2022 update:** As the COVID-19 pandemic stabilizes, NEICAC continues to monitor its impact on children and families. Data provided in the *2022 Community Assessment Annual Update* provides insight into ongoing impacts of the pandemic.
- **2023 update:** The COVID-19 pandemic is no longer a public health emergency, and the Head Start/Early Head Start program has observed less of an impact from COVID-19 on families and staff. There are additional overarching factors (e.g., inflation) that impact families' needs and well-being.

LOOKING AHEAD

NEICAC will use the data and information from the *2023 Community Assessment Annual Update* to support program planning in the agency's continued efforts to meet children and families' needs, in partnership with community resource providers.

The HSPPS requirement to annually review and update the Community Assessment will provide NEICAC with further opportunities to monitor new data and trends and reflect upon the impact on families served by the Head Start/Early Head Start program.

- lvii | Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal. (2023). Reproduction and Birth. Retrieved from <https://tracking.idph.iowa.gov/People-Community/Reproduction-and-Birth>
- lviii | Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal. (2023). Reproduction and Birth. Retrieved from <https://tracking.idph.iowa.gov/People-Community/Reproduction-and-Birth>
- lix 2021-2022 Program Information Report
- lx 2022-2023 Program Information Report
- lxi Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal. (2023). Childhood Immunizations. Retrieved from <https://tracking.idph.iowa.gov/Health/Immunization/Childhood-Immunizations>
- lxii 2022-2023 Program Information Report
- lxiii Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2022). The State of Obesity in Iowa. Retrieved from <https://stateofchildhoodobesity.org/states/ia/>
- lxiv Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2023). The State of Obesity in Iowa. Retrieved from <https://stateofchildhoodobesity.org/states/ia/>
- lxv 2022-2023 Program Information Report
- lxvi Iowa. (2023). Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal. Retrieved from <https://tracking.idph.iowa.gov/>
- lxvii Iowa. (2023). Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal. Retrieved from <https://tracking.idph.iowa.gov/>
- lxviii Kids Count Data Center. (2022). Iowa Indicators. Retrieved from <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#IA/2/0/char/0>
- lxix Iowa Department of Human Services. (2023). Child Abuse Statistics. Retrieved from <https://dhs.iowa.gov/reports/child-abuse-statistics>
- lxx County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2021). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2021/overview>
- lxxi County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2022). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2022/overview>
- lxxii County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2023). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2023/overview>
- lxxiii Iowa Department of Education. (2023). Documents: By District (FRL). Retrieved from <https://educateiowa.gov/document-type/district-frl>
- lxxiv Iowa Department of Public Health. (2021). WIC Agency Map and Contact Information. Retrieved from <https://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/48/WIC%20Agency%20Map%20and%20Contact%20Information.pdf>
- lxxv Iowa Department of Health and Human Services. (2023). Bureau of Family Health – Collaborative Service Areas – Collaborative Service Area Data Resources. Retrieved from <https://hhs.iowa.gov/family-health/CSA/CSA-Data-Resources>
- lxxvi Kids Count Data Center. (2022). Iowa Indicators. Retrieved from <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#IA/2/0/char/0>
- lxxvii Iowa Data. (2023). Food Assistance Recipients and Households by Month. Retrieved from <https://data.iowa.gov/Economic-Supports/Food-Assistance-Recipients-and-Households-by-Month/84y7-cizq>
- lxxviii USDA. (2023). Changes to SNAP Benefit Amounts – 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/changes-2023-benefit-amounts>
- lxxix U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- lxxx U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- lxxxi U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2023) Fair Market Rents (40th Percentile Rents). Retrieved from: <https://www.huduser.gov/Portal/datasets/fmr.html>
- lxxxii County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2021). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2021/overview>
- lxxxiii County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2022). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2022/overview>
- lxxxiv County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2023). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2023/overview>
- lxxxv U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- lxxxvi U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- lxxxvii U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- lxxxviii County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2023). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2023/overview>
- lxxxix Iowa Department of Public Safety. (2023). Iowa Uniform Crime Reporting System. Retrieved from <https://icrime.dps.state.ia.us/Crimelnlowa/Home/Index>
- xc County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2021). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2021/overview>
- xci County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2022). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2022/overview>
- xcii County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2021). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2021/overview>
- xciii County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2022). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2022/overview>
- xciv County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. (2023). Iowa. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/iowa/2023/overview>
- xcv U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- xcvi U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- xcvii U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- xcviii Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. (2023). Unemployment Rate in Iowa. Retrieved from <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/categories/27297>
- xcix 2021-2022 Program Information Report
- c 2022-2023 Program Information Report
- ci Iowa Workforce Development. (2023). Current Employment Statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/current-employment-statistics>
- cii Iowa Workforce Development. (2018). Regional Profiles. Available at: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/regional-profiles>
- ciii Iowa Workforce Development. (2021). Occupational Projections. Retrieved from <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections>
- cdv U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cev U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cvi U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cvi U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cvi U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cix U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cx U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cxii Iowa. (2022). State Data Center. Retrieved from <https://www.iowadatacenter.org/index.php/data-by-source/state-agencies/births-deaths-natural-change>
- cxiii U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cxiv 2022-2023 Program Information Report.
- cxv U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>
- cxvi Institute for Community Alliances. (2023). Point in Time. Retrieved from <https://icaliances.org/pit>
- cxvii National Center for Homeless Education. (2021). Iowa. Retrieved from <http://profiles.nche.seiservices.com/StateProfile.aspx?StateID=16>
- cxviii National Center for Homeless Education. (2021). Iowa. Retrieved from <http://profiles.nche.seiservices.com/StateProfile.aspx?StateID=16>
- cxix 2021-2022 Program Information Report
- cxx 2022-2023 Program Information Report
- cxxi 2022-2023 Program Information Report

cxix Iowa Public Radio. (2023). Evictions on rise in the Midwest put public health at risk. Retrieved from <https://www.iowapublicradio.org/health/2023-02-02/evictions-on-the-rise-in-the-midwest-put-public-health-at-risk>

cxli Iowa Department of Human Services. (2023). Number of Children in Foster Care. Retrieved from <https://www.iowadatabase.org/data/dhs/foster-care>

cxliii Kids Count Data Center. (2023). Iowa Indicators. Retrieved from <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#IA/2/0/char/0>

cxliiii Iowa Department of Human Services. (2022). Number of Children in Foster Care. Retrieved from <https://www.iowadatabase.org/data/dhs/foster-care>

cxliiii 2022-2023 Program Information Report

cxliiii 2022-2023 Program Information Report

cxliiii U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>

cxliiii U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>

cxliiii U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>

cxliiii Iowa Department of Education. (2023). Iowa FFY 2021 (2021-2022) Area Education Agency (Regional Grantee) Data Profiles Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C. Retrieved from <https://educateiowa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/IowaPartCRegionalProfilesFFY2021.pdf>

cxliiii Iowa Department of Education. (2023). Special Education IEP Enrollment. Retrieved from <https://educateiowa.gov/document-type/special-education-iep-enrollment>

cxliiii 2022-2023 Program Information Report

cxliiii Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). CDC's Act Early Response to COVID-19. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/CDCs-act-early-response-to-COVID-19.html>

cxliiii Education Week. 2022. Babies are Saying Less Since the Pandemic: Why That's Concerning. Retrieved from <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/babies-are-saying-less-since-the-pandemic-why-thats-concerning/2022/04>

cxliiii Center for American Progress. (2022). The Child Care Sector Will Continue to Struggle Hiring Staff Unless it Creates Good Jobs. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-child-care-sector-will-continue-to-struggle-hiring-staff-unless-it-creates-good-jobs/>

cxliiii Center for American Progress. (2022). The Child Care Sector Will Continue to Struggle Hiring Staff Unless it Creates Good Jobs. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-child-care-sector-will-continue-to-struggle-hiring-staff-unless-it-creates-good-jobs/>

cxliiii Early Care and Education Consortium. (2022). The Child Care Workforce Shortage: Solutions from Around the Country. Retrieved from https://www.ececonsortium.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/ECEC_Workforce-Report_6.13.22_.pdf

cxliiii Iowa Department of Human Services. (2023). Child Care Families: Provider Search. Retrieved from <https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/clientportal/ProviderSearch.aspx>

cxliiii Iowa Department of Human Services. (2023). Child Care Families: Provider Search. Retrieved from <https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/clientportal/ProviderSearch.aspx>

cxliiii Iowa Department of Human Services. (2023). Child Care Families: Provider Search. Retrieved from <https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/clientportal/ProviderSearch.aspx>

cxliiii Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral. (2021). 2020 County Data Sheets. Retrieved from <https://iowaccrr.org/data/2020-county-data-sheets/>

cxliiii U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>

cxliiii U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov>

cxliiii Iowa Department of Human Services. (2022). Child Care Families: Provider Search. Retrieved from <https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/clientportal/ProviderSearch.aspx>

cxliiii Iowa Family Support Network. (2023). Directory. Retrieved from <https://directory.iafamilysupportnetwork.org/directory/>

cxliiii NIEER. (2019). The State of Preschool 2019. Retrieved from https://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/YB2019_Full_Report.pdf

cxliiii NIEER. (2022). The State of Preschool 2021. Retrieved from <https://nieer.org/state-preschool-yearbooks-yearbook2021>

cxliiii NIEER. (2023). The State of Preschool 2022. Retrieved from <https://nieer.org/the-state-of-preschool-yearbook-2022>

cxliiii Iowa Department of Education. (2023). Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children. Retrieved from <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/statewide-voluntary-preschool-program-four-year-old-children>

cxliiii Iowa Department of Education. (2023). Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children. Retrieved from <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/statewide-voluntary-preschool-program-four-year-old-children>