Heart of Illinois
UNITED WAY

2026 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Why assess education, financial stability, and health needs in central Illinois?

Because understanding our community helps us build a stronger future together.

At the Heart of Illinois United Way, we believe data should do more than describe challenges — it should help communities take action.

This assessment provides a picture of the trends shaping life across central Illinois, from workforce and economic changes to educational outcomes, health needs, and barriers affecting families and individuals.

The information in this report helps identify where needs are growing, where disparities persist, and where opportunities exist to strengthen our region. It also helps guide investments, partnerships, and strategies that improve lives and create measurable community impact.

Most importantly, this work is not done alone. Real progress happens when nonprofits, schools, healthcare providers, businesses, government agencies, and community members work together toward shared goals.

The Heart of Illinois United Way looks forward to continuing these collaborations as we work to strengthen education, financial stability, and health outcomes throughout our region.

Jennifer Zammuto, President
Heart of Illinois United Way

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ABOUT THE HEART OF ILLINOIS UNITED WAY 2026 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The 2026 Heart of Illinois United Way Community Assessment examines key trends impacting education, financial stability, and health across central Illinois. Conducted every three years since 2005, the assessment helps identify emerging needs, disparities, and opportunities affecting individuals, families, employers, schools, nonprofits, and the broader community.

The assessment combines local, state, and national data sources to better understand the conditions influencing community well-being and long-term quality of life. Expanded research areas in 2026 include workforce readiness, Career and Technical Education (CTE), mental and behavioral health, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

This research supports the Heart of Illinois United Way's ongoing commitment to data-informed decision making, collaborative problem solving, and measurable community impact. Findings from the assessment help guide funding priorities, strategic planning, partnership development, and community-wide conversations focused on improving outcomes across the region.

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HEART OF ILLINOIS UNITED WAY COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND

Through our multi-year, competitive grant process, the Heart of Illinois United Way Community Impact Fund is a reliable source of funding to our partner agencies while helping ensure charitable investments create measurable community impact.

Turning Data into Community Impact

- The Heart of Illinois United Way's Community Impact Fund focuses on supporting education, financial stability, and health needs.
- One out of three people in central Illinois are helped by Community Impact Fund programs and initiatives each year.
- Funding decisions are made by local volunteers with years of grant review expertise. Our data-driven process is based on a set of measurable outcomes, using the data from this assessment, that benchmark how well each funded program impacts the clients served and if the program is financially viable.
- By funding established outcomes–which are specific changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors or conditions–the Heart of Illinois United Way ensures donations to the Community Impact Fund are invested in sustainable programs and initiatives.
- For 2026-2027, dollars distributed through the Community Impact Fund were allocated in support of education programs (30%), financial stability programs (43%), and health programs (27%).

Community Impact Fund Outcomes

Through more than 70 Community Impact Fund programs, the Heart of Illinois United Way is committed to ensuring the people of central Illinois have access to a quality education essential to a livable wage, financial stability leading to increased independence, and access to healthcare promoting wellness at all ages. A few examples of the Heart of Illinois United Way's Community Impact Fund at work include:

- More than 85% of students enrolled in Heart of Illinois United Way funded after school programs achieved grade-level academic success in reading and math.
- More than 95% of adults increased their knowledge of community resources and improved their financial stability through Heart of Illinois United Way funded vocational and supportive employment programs.
- More than 95% of youth and adults who received treatment from Heart of Illinois United Way funded health programs improved their physical health.

▲ **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** ▰ **Social Drivers of Health (SDoH)**

Look for the ACEs and SDoH symbols throughout the assessment identifying data, trends, and community conditions associated with trauma exposure, chronic stress, family instability, behavioral health challenges, and broader social drivers of health (SDoH) including poverty, housing instability, education access, transportation, employment, healthcare access, and other conditions affecting long-term wellness.

WHY EDUCATION, FINANCIAL STABILITY, AND HEALTH?

Education, financial stability, and health are vital for building safe and stable lives. The Heart of Illinois United Way is committed to ensuring these fundamentals are available for all individuals in our community.

Quality education is essential to earning a livable wage.

Improving financial stability leads to increased independence.

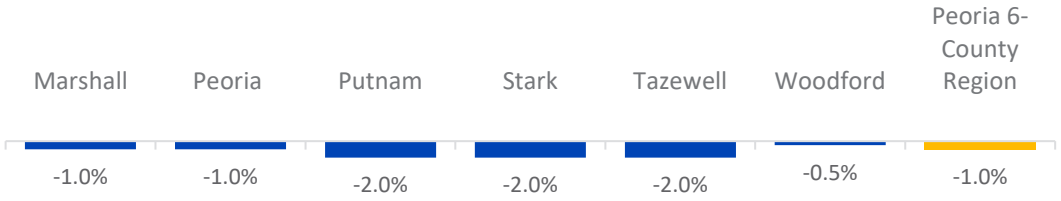
Access to healthcare promotes wellness for all ages.

POPULATION, WORKFORCE, AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

Population and employment trends influence nearly every aspect of community well-being, including workforce availability, economic growth, housing demand, educational enrollment, healthcare access, and the long-term sustainability of local services and infrastructure. Changes in population size and labor force participation also directly impact the capacity of nonprofit organizations, employers, schools, and community systems to meet local needs.

As the Heart of Illinois United Way works to improve education, financial stability, and health outcomes across the region, understanding shifts in population and employment helps identify emerging challenges and opportunities affecting individuals, families, employers, and the broader economy.

Percent Population Change, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 to 2024



Population Fig. 1 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

The Peoria 6-County Region continues to experience modest population decline, with most counties reporting small decreases in population since 2020. Similar to previous trends, population loss remains more pronounced in rural counties and is largely influenced by negative domestic migration, reflecting more people moving out of the region than relocating into it.

While recent population changes are less dramatic than previous decades, long-term population decline may continue to affect workforce availability, economic growth, school enrollment, housing demand, and the sustainability of community services.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS
2026 Heart of Illinois United Way Community Assessment

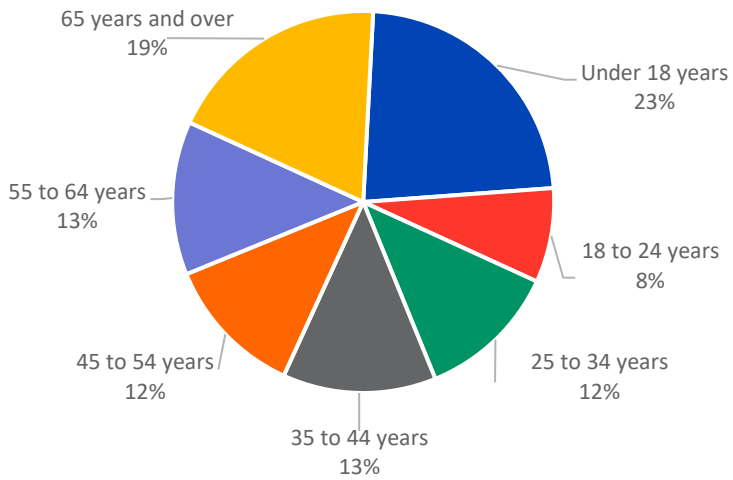
Tri-County Area:
Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford counties

Peoria 6-County Region:
Marshall, Peoria, Putnam, Stark, Tazewell, and Woodford counties

Peoria MSA:
Marshall, Peoria, Stark, Tazewell, and Woodford counties

Additional comparison data is included for the State of Illinois (statewide) and Fulton County which is part of the IL-507 HUD Continuum of Care.

Percentage of Population by Age Segmentation, Peoria MSA, 2024

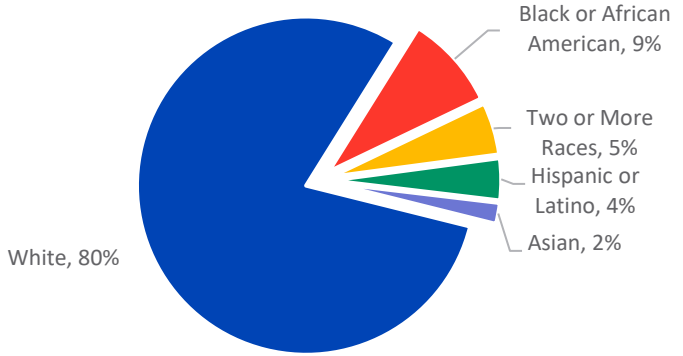


Population Fig. 2 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Similar to national trends, the Peoria region continues to experience an aging population. In 2024, nearly one-third of residents were age 55 or older, including 19% age 65 and older, while only 8% of residents were between ages 18 and 24.

At the same time, children under age 18 represented 23% of the total population, reinforcing the importance of continued investment in education, workforce development, healthcare, and supportive community services across all age groups.

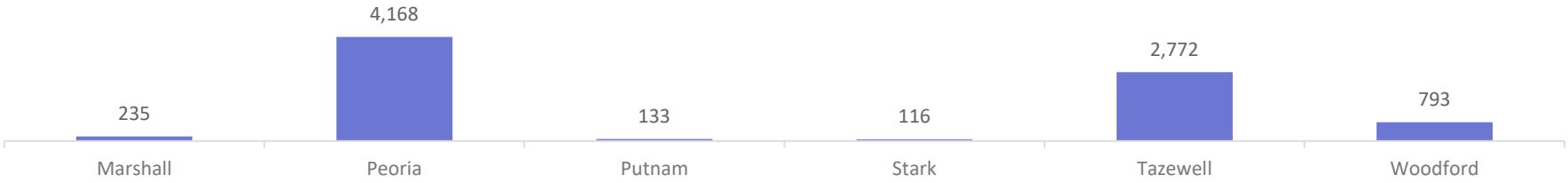
Percentage of Population by Race, Peoria MSA, 2024



Population Fig. 3 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

The U.S. Census Bureau assesses the race of community members in combination with information about housing, employment, and education to help governments and communities better serve their population and to enforce antidiscrimination laws, regulations, and policies.

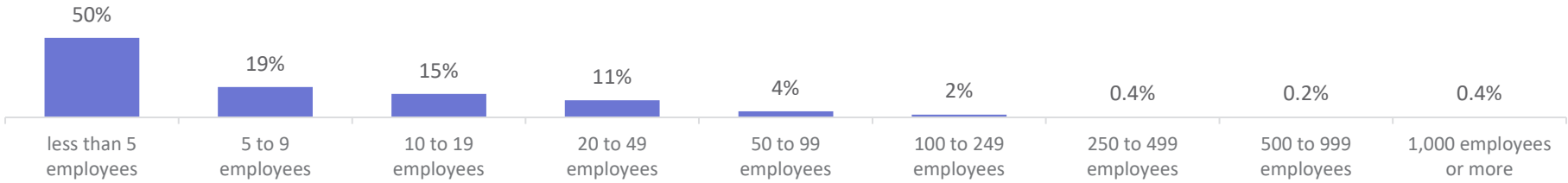
Number of Employers by County, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023



Population Fig. 4 — U.S. Census Bureau Economic Surveys, County Business Patterns 2023

In 2023, there were more than 8,200 employers with more than one employee down from 8,500 in 2020. These establishments employed more than 160,000 people in 2023 compared to 150,000 in 2020. Combined, 2023 payroll totaled more than $10.2 billion annually, up from $8.5 billion in 2020.

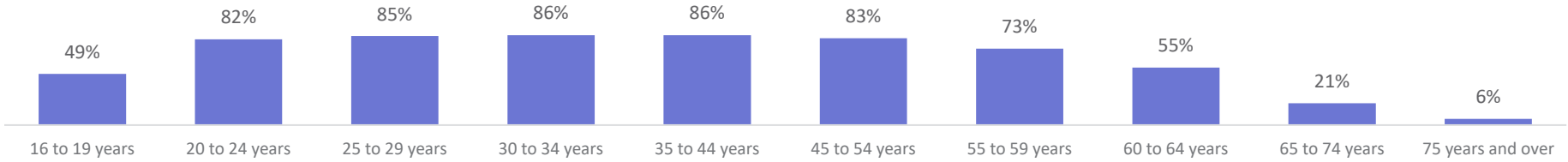
Percentage of Employers by Number of Employees, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023



Population Fig. 5 — U.S. Census Bureau Economic Surveys, County Business Patterns 2023

Small employers continue to make up the majority of businesses across the Peoria region. In 2023, approximately 84% of employers had fewer than 20 employees, highlighting the important role small businesses play in workforce and economic stability. While the percentage of mid-sized employers increased slightly since 2020, large employers remain limited across the region.

Percentage of Population 16 and Older in the Labor Force, Peoria MSA, 2024



Population Fig. 6 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Labor force participation rates (LFPR) in the Peoria MSA are highest among adults ages 25 to 54 and decline steadily among older age groups nearing retirement. As the region's population ages, these trends may affect future workforce availability and demand for healthcare and supportive services. Overall, the Peoria MSA LFPR was 63% in 2024, up from 60% in 2020.

Unemployment Rate, Peoria MSA, Year-End 2024 vs 2025

According to Pew Research Center, unemployment rates are influenced not only by job gains and losses, but also by changes in the number of people entering or leaving the labor force. Official unemployment rates also exclude some underemployed and discouraged workers.

Population Fig. 7 — Illinois Department of Employment Security, not seasonally adjusted

Workforce by Occupation, Industry Sector & Worker Class, Peoria MSA, 2024

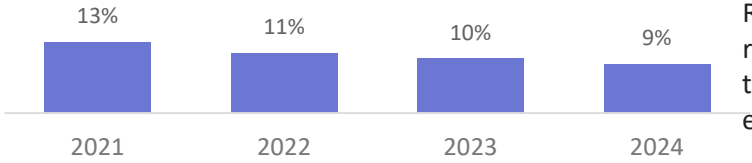
OCCUPATIONS	
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	44%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	13%
Sales and office occupations	17%
Service occupations	18%
INDUSTRY SECTOR	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food services	8%
Construction	6%
Educational services, health care, and social assistance	27%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	5%
Information	1%
Manufacturing	16%
Other services, except public administration	6%
Professional, scientific, waste, and management services	11%
Public administration	4%
Retail trade	9%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	4%
Wholesale trade	2%
CLASS OF WORKER	
Government workers	13%
Private wage and salary workers	82%
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	5%

Population Fig. 8 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Employment trends in the Peoria MSA reflect a workforce (civilian employed population 16 years and older) increasingly concentrated in healthcare, education, professional services, and management-related occupations. Educational services, healthcare, and social assistance remain the region's largest industry sector, accounting for more than one-quarter of civilian employment in 2024.

While manufacturing continues to play an important role in the regional economy, workforce patterns also reflect broader shifts toward professional, technical, service, healthcare, and professional occupations. The majority of workers in the region are employed in private wage and salary positions, reinforcing the importance of employer stability, workforce retention, and long-term economic opportunity.

Population Who Worked from Home, Peoria MSA, 2021-2024



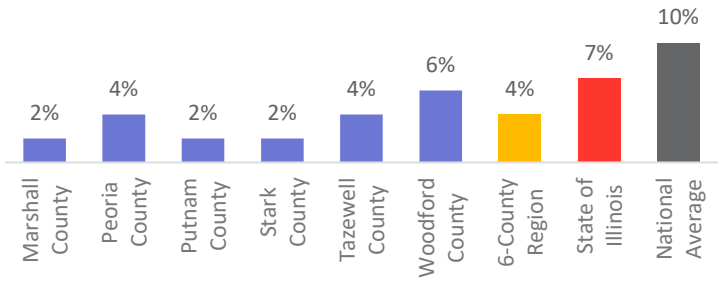
Remote work participation in the Peoria MSA has gradually declined since 2021 but remains significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels of 4%. The long-term shift toward remote and hybrid work continues to influence workforce recruitment, employee engagement, workplace fundraising, and volunteer participation strategies.

Population Fig. 9 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates

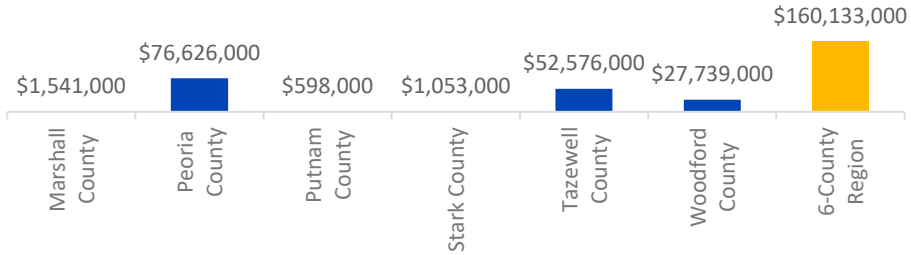
ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND CHARITABLE GIVING

National research shows that charitable giving closely follows broader economic trends such as inflation, consumer confidence, employment, and stock market performance. When inflation rises, donors have less disposable income, and nonprofits face higher operating costs and greater demand for their services, increasing financial pressure on both nonprofits and donors. Additionally, charitable giving is becoming increasingly concentrated among wealthier donors, as overall donor participation declines. This trend, reflected in IRS data and national reports, has important implications for nonprofits like United Way and highlights the need to rethink donor engagement strategies. Ultimately, giving tends to increase during times of strong economic growth and confidence, underlining the close connection between economic indicators and nonprofit sustainability. (Giving USA Trends)

Taxpayers Reporting Charitable Contributions, 2022



Reported Charitable Contributions by County, 2022



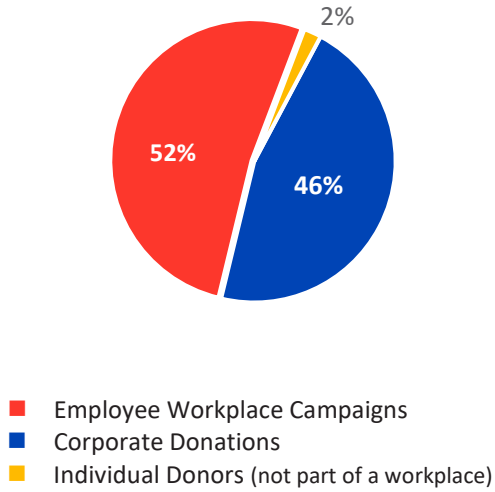
Population Figs. 10 and 11 — IRS, Statistics of Income Division, Individual Master File System, 2025

IRS charitable contribution data suggests that charitable giving across the region is heavily concentrated among higher-income households. In each county, households earning $100,000 or more reported the majority of itemized charitable contributions, reflecting broader national trends showing increasing concentration of charitable giving among wealthier households.

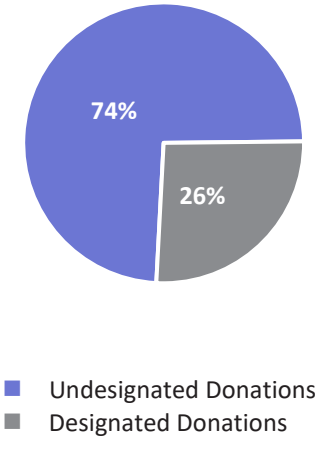
While only a relatively small percentage of taxpayers reported itemized charitable deductions, total reported charitable contributions across the Peoria 6-County Region exceeded $160 million in 2022. National research suggests that lower-income households may contribute through non-itemized giving, religious organizations, volunteerism, or informal community support that may not be fully reflected in federal tax data. Beginning in 2026, federal tax law changes related to charitable deductions may influence future charitable giving patterns and itemized deduction reporting among some taxpayers.

HEART OF ILLINOIS UNITED WAY 2025 CAMPAIGN

Campaign Dollars by Donation Type



Community Impact Fund Support



The majority of Heart of Illinois United Way fundraising continues to come from corporate support and employee workplace giving programs, reinforcing the important relationship between local employers, workforce participation, economic conditions, and long-term nonprofit sustainability across the region.

Donor investment in the Heart of Illinois United Way Community Impact Fund has continued to steadily increase, growing from 64% of total campaign dollars raised in 2016 to 74% in 2025.

Workplace Campaign Participation by Industry Sector, Ranked

1. Educational Services, Health Care & Social Assistance
2. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Leasing
3. Professional, Scientific, and Waste Management Services
4. Manufacturing
5. Other Services (includes labor/trades/religious/civic groups)
6. Construction
7. Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities
8. Public Administration
9. Retail Trade
10. Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodations, and Food Services
11. Information
12. Wholesale Trade
13. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining

Heart of Illinois United Way workplace campaigns and corporate support reflect broad participation across healthcare, education, manufacturing, finance, labor, government, utilities, construction, retail, and nonprofit sectors. This engagement reinforces the strong connection between local employers, workforce stability, and long-term community investment in the Peoria region.

- Healthcare and education remain dominant forces in both the regional economy and local philanthropy.
- Financial institutions demonstrate particularly strong civic engagement relative to workforce size.
- Organized labor and trade organizations reflect a longstanding culture of collective community support.
- Participation from local businesses, contractors, law firms, and professional offices highlights broad civic engagement across multiple sectors.

Population Figs. 12, 13, and 14 — Heart of Illinois United Way Campaign Data

POPULATION, WORKFORCE, AND ECONOMIC TRENDS SUMMARY

- The Peoria 6-County Region continues to experience modest population decline, particularly in rural counties, which may affect long-term workforce availability, school enrollment, housing demand, and economic growth.
- Similar to national trends, the region's population continues to age, increasing future demand for healthcare, supportive services, workforce replacement, and caregiver support.
- Small businesses remain the foundation of the regional economy, with most employers having fewer than 20 employees. At the same time, healthcare, education, manufacturing, and professional services continue to play major roles in regional employment and economic stability.
- Workforce participation in the Peoria MSA has largely recovered from pandemic-era declines, although workforce shortages, remote work trends, and changing employment patterns continue to impact employers and nonprofit organizations.
- Charitable giving and nonprofit sustainability are increasingly influenced by broader economic conditions such as inflation, workforce participation, donor demographics, and concentration of giving among higher-income households.
- Donations to the Heart of Illinois United Way closely reflect broader national shifts in charitable giving, including workplace changes and increased giving from fewer donors. Local fundraising trends suggest stronger donor alignment with flexible, community-wide investment strategies focused on education, financial stability, health, and emerging community needs.

Together, these trends highlight the interconnected relationship between population change, workforce participation, economic opportunity, and long-term community welfare. Continued collaboration across community sectors will remain important to supporting regional stability, workforce development, and economic growth.

EDUCATION TRENDS

Given a supportive environment, all children and youth have the potential to succeed and make a positive contribution to society. Investing in young children provides greater long-term returns and is less costly than retraining them later in life.

A quality education provides the skills and knowledge needed to achieve success in all stages of life. A community's investment in education contributes directly to lower poverty rates, higher levels of wellness, and a focus on lifelong learning – from preschool to college and beyond.

Data in the education section addresses present and future needs and issues impacting children and youth throughout central Illinois.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHICS — *Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary*

Schools/districts use enrollment figures and trends to determine financial needs within the district. Enrollment numbers may affect bussing, staffing, building requirements, or boundary configurations. In the 2024-2025 academic year, there were 55,485 students enrolled in public schools in the Peoria 6-County Region; 83% of students were in Peoria and Tazewell counties.

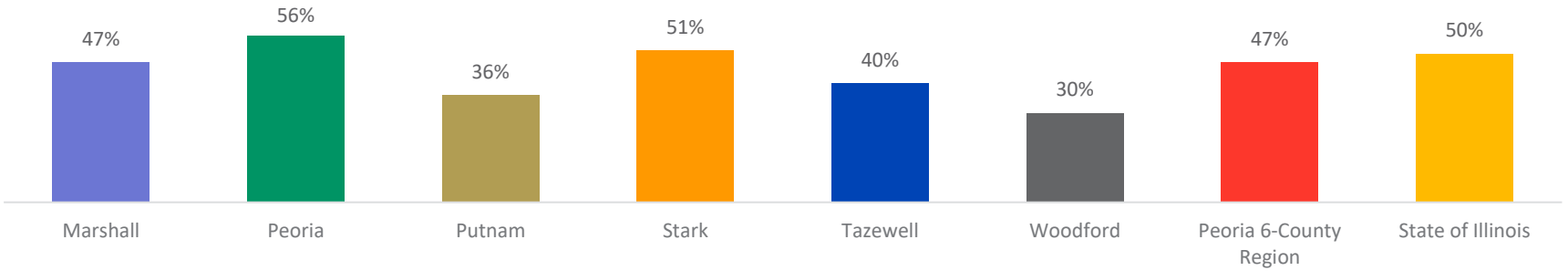
In 2023, to comply with the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a law designed to safeguard student privacy, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) started redacting data from public reports to protect the privacy of small student populations.

At the regional level, more than 67% of students are white. For school districts able to report enrollment diversity, Peoria SD 150 reported 55% of their student population is black, 16% Hispanic, and 11% two or more races. As reported in previous assessments, smaller rural school districts continue to report statistically significant numbers of Hispanic students and students who identify as two or more races when compared to black student enrollment; the largest population of Asian students at 23% attend Dunlap CUSD 323. Slightly more male students (by 16%) are enrolled in the region.

LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) data identifies low-income students as children who may qualify for free or reduced-price meals, live in substitute care, receive public assistance, or experience other forms of economic hardship. Student poverty is closely connected to educational engagement, attendance, academic performance, behavioral health, housing stability, food insecurity, and long-term educational outcomes.

Percentage of Low-Income Students Per County, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 1 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary*

More than 47% of students enrolled in public schools across the Peoria 6-County Region were identified as low-income during the 2024–2025 academic year. While this percentage remained slightly lower than the statewide average of 50%, the number of low-income students increased across several counties since 2022. Stark County experienced one of the largest increases, rising from 43% to 51%.

In the Peoria 6-County Region, 34 of the area's 51 school districts reported that more than two-thirds of enrolled students were identified as low-income. Several districts met the definition of "high-poverty" school districts, where at least 75% of students were classified as low-income. A high-poverty school is defined as a school in which 75% or more of their students are considered low-income. In the Peoria 6-County Region, there are four school districts that are defined as being/having high-poverty schools: Pleasant Valley SD 62 at 97% (Peoria County), Pleasant Hill SD 69 at 92% (Peoria County), Peoria Public Schools at 79% (Peoria County), and Creve Coeur SD 76 at 78% (Tazewell County).

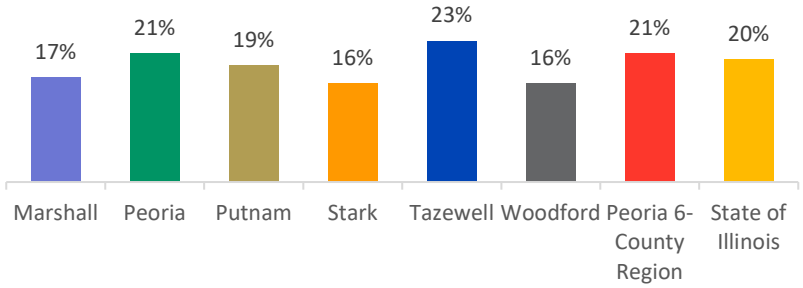
Economic hardship can significantly affect educational engagement and academic success. Students experiencing poverty may face barriers related to food insecurity, housing instability, transportation challenges, limited childcare support, chronic stress, reduced access to healthcare, and fewer educational enrichment opportunities.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND IEPS

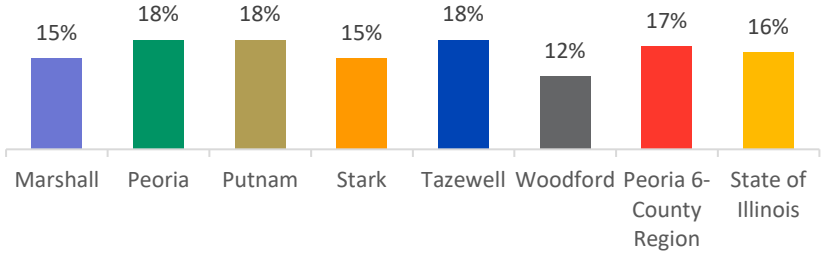
Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) data includes students who receive special education services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Schools identify and support students with disabilities through evaluations, specialized instruction, accommodations, related services, and individualized educational planning designed to help students succeed academically, developmentally, and socially.

ISBE tracks a variety of student disabilities including learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, developmental delays, autism, health impairments, emotional disabilities, and intellectual disabilities. Students with disabilities may experience additional barriers related to educational engagement, academic achievement, attendance, behavioral health, communication, healthcare access, and social connection. Early intervention, family support, inclusive learning environments, and access to specialized educational and behavioral health services can improve long-term educational and life outcomes.

Percentage of Students with a Disability Per County, 2024-2025 Academic Year



Percentage of Students with an IEP Per County, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ▰ *Education Figs. 2 and 3 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary*

During the 2024–2025 academic year, approximately 21% of students enrolled in public schools across the Peoria 6-County Region were identified as students with disabilities, slightly higher than the statewide average of 20%. Approximately 17% of students in the region had an Individualized Education Program (IEP), compared to 16% statewide.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) helps ensure children with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education tailored to their individual needs. IEPs outline individualized educational goals, accommodations, supports, and services developed collaboratively with families, educators, and support staff to help students succeed academically and developmentally.

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) data includes students identified under the federal McKinney-Vento Act as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. School districts are required to provide additional supports and services designed to reduce barriers to school attendance, educational engagement, and academic success for students experiencing homelessness.

Students experiencing homelessness may include children and youth who are temporarily sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing, living in motels or shelters, residing in substandard housing, awaiting foster care placement, or staying in other unstable living situations.

Estimated Number of Students Experiencing Homelessness, 2021-2022 vs 2024-2025 Academic Years

County	2021-2022 Academic Year	2024-2025 Academic Year
Peoria County	279	457
Tazewell County	85	106
Woodford County	30	27
Tri-County Area	**394**	**590**

▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 4 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2021-2022 and 2024-2025 Report Card Summaries*

Estimated ISBE data indicated the number of students experiencing homelessness in the Tri-County Area increased from 394 students during the 2021–2022 academic year to approximately 590 students during the 2024–2025 academic year. Peoria County reported the largest increase, accounting for more than half of all reported students experiencing homelessness in the Tri-County Area.

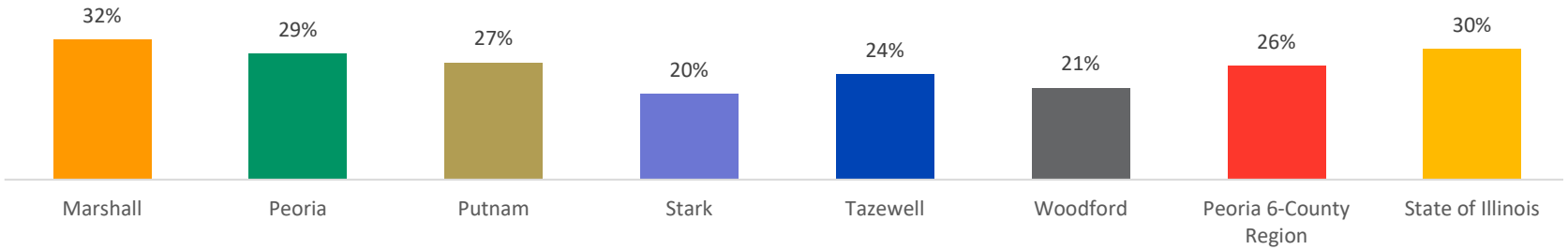
Beginning in the 2022–2023 academic year, ISBE started redacting data for smaller student populations to help protect student privacy. As a result, 22 school districts in the Tri-County Area reported fewer than 10 students experiencing homelessness and were not included in county totals. Peoria Public Schools reported that approximately 3% (386 students) of enrolled students experienced homelessness during the 2024–2025 academic year.

The McKinney-Vento Act uses a broader definition of homelessness than the definition used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The law includes students and families experiencing unstable or temporary housing situations, including doubled-up living arrangements and emergency shelter stays, in order to better identify children and youth who may need additional educational and support services.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Illinois defines a chronically absent student as one who misses 10% or more of school days during an academic year, including both excused and unexcused absences*. Chronic absenteeism may be associated with illness, transportation barriers, housing instability, behavioral health concerns, caregiving responsibilities, school disengagement, or other family and social challenges. Frequent absenteeism can negatively affect academic achievement, educational engagement, social development, and long-term student outcomes.

Percentage of Chronic Absentee Students by County, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ▬ *Education Fig. 5 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary*

Chronic absenteeism rates across the Peoria 6-County Region have gradually improved since peak pandemic-era disruptions; however, absenteeism remains a significant educational challenge throughout the region. During the 2024–2025 academic year, 26% of students in the region were identified as chronically absent, compared to nearly 30% statewide.

Nine school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region reported chronic absenteeism rates above the statewide average, including Bartonville SD 66 (28%), Limestone CHSD 310 (33%), Peoria Heights CUSD 325 (30%), Peoria SD 150 (33%), Pleasant Hill SD 69 (42%), Pleasant Valley SD 62 (31%), Creve Coeur SD 76 (34%), East Peoria CHSD 309 (33%), and Pekin CSD 303 (43%).

Research has linked chronic absenteeism to lower academic performance, reduced graduation rates, behavioral health concerns, poverty, housing instability, transportation barriers, chronic stress, and community violence exposure. Students benefit academically and socially when they are consistently engaged and connected to school environments.

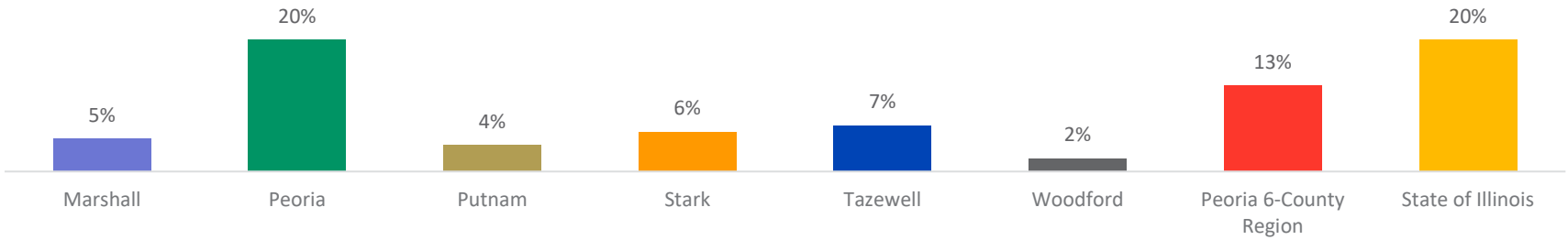
Beginning with the 2025–2026 academic year, Illinois shifted from using “chronic absenteeism” as a negative accountability indicator to measuring “consistent attendance” as part of the state’s school accountability framework. While the reporting methodology has changed, regular school attendance remains an important factor influencing student engagement and educational success.

**Illinois law defines “chronic absentee” as a student who misses 10 percent of school days within an academic year with or without a valid excuse (approximately 18 days of an average 180-day school year). Excused absences include illness, suspension, need to care for a family member, etc. Chronic absenteeism affects academic success and social skill development.*

CHRONICALLY TRUANT STUDENTS

Illinois defines chronic truancy as students who miss 5% or more of school days during an academic year without a valid excuse. Unlike chronic absenteeism, chronic truancy does not include excused absences. Persistent truancy may reflect school disengagement, behavioral health concerns, family instability, transportation barriers, unmet social needs, or other underlying challenges affecting student health, safety, and educational success.

Chronic Truancy by County, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 6 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary*

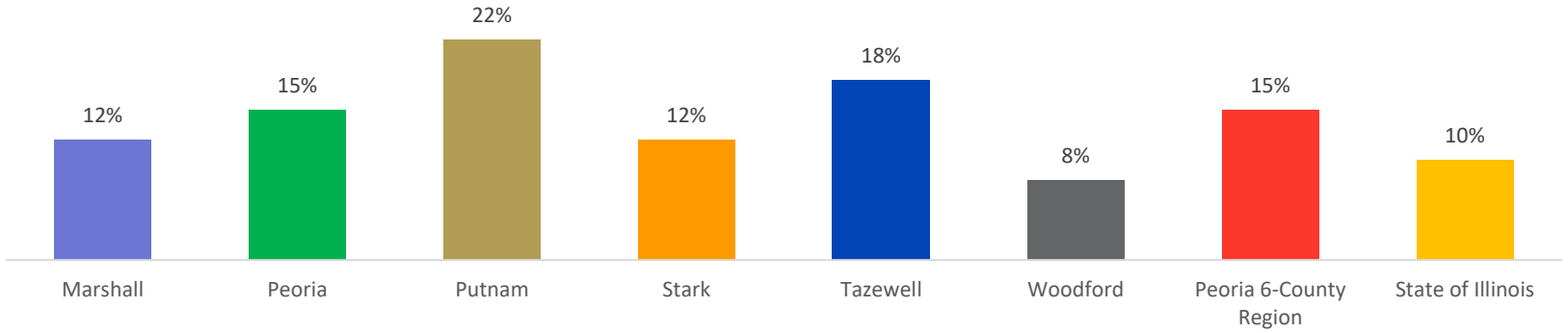
Overall, chronic truancy rates in the Peoria 6-County Region remained lower than the statewide average during the 2024–2025 academic year. However, several school districts reported rates significantly higher than both regional and state averages, including Limestone CHSD 310 (24%), Peoria SD 150 (36%), Pleasant Hill SD 69 (24%), Pleasant Valley SD 62 (26%), and Pekin CSD 303 (36%).

Research has linked chronic truancy to lower academic achievement, increased behavioral health concerns, school disengagement, delinquency, substance use, and reduced graduation outcomes. Causes of truancy may vary based on age, family circumstances, school connectedness, mental health, transportation access, community safety, and other social drivers affecting students and families.

STUDENT MOBILITY

Student mobility measures the percentage of students who transfer into or out of a school during an academic year. Students may change schools for a variety of reasons including housing instability, financial hardship, homelessness, family disruptions, changes in caregiving arrangements, or educational needs. Frequent school changes can disrupt academic progress, school connectedness, peer relationships, and access to supportive educational services.

Student Mobility by County, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲■ *Education Fig. 7 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary*

Student mobility rates in the Peoria 6-County Region remained higher than the statewide average during the 2024–2025 academic year, despite improving from peak pandemic-era levels. Several school districts reported mobility rates notably above both regional and state averages, including Limestone CHSD 310 (18%), Norwood ESD 63 (16%), Peoria Heights CUSD 325 (11%), Peoria SD 150 (18%), Pleasant Hill SD 69 (15%), Pleasant Valley SD 62 (18%), East Peoria CHSD 309 (14%), and Creve Coeur SD 76 (14%).

Student mobility rates were also higher among low-income students. Statewide, approximately 10% of low-income students experienced school mobility during the academic year, compared to 15% in the Peoria 6-County Region.

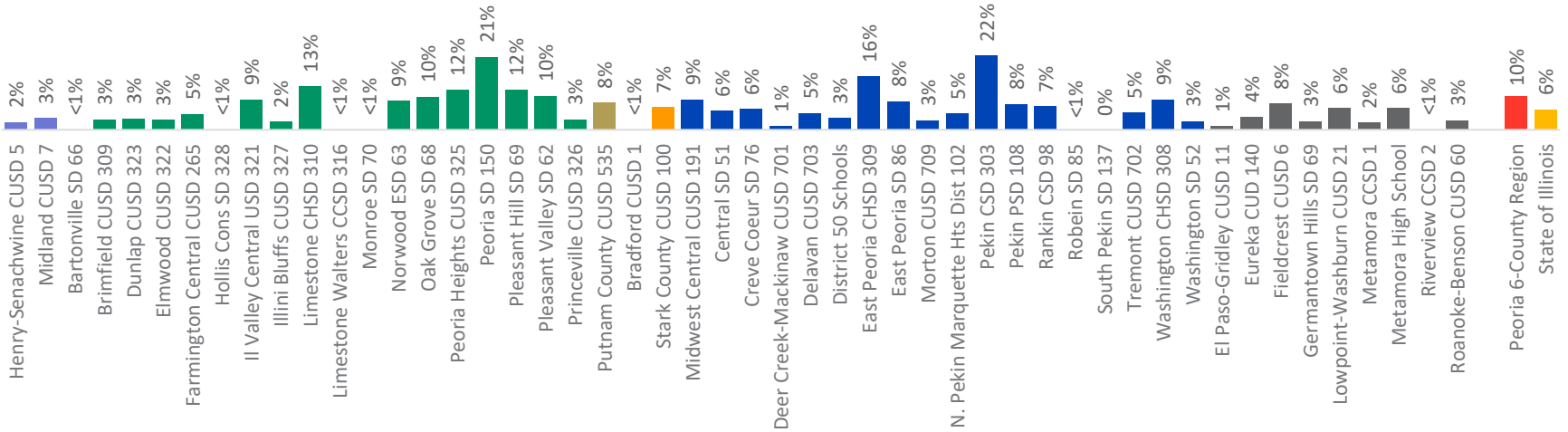
Research has linked frequent school mobility to lower academic performance, reduced graduation rates, behavioral health concerns, school disengagement, and disrupted peer and educator relationships. Housing instability, poverty, family stress, and homelessness are among the factors most commonly associated with elevated student mobility rates.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) data tracks student disciplinary incidents including suspensions, expulsions, removals to alternative settings, and other disciplinary actions. School discipline data can help identify patterns related to school climate, student engagement, behavioral health needs, trauma exposure, school safety, and disparities affecting specific student populations.

Research has linked exclusionary discipline practices to increased absenteeism, academic challenges, school disengagement, behavioral health concerns, and lower graduation rates. Students experiencing poverty, trauma, housing instability, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and unmet behavioral health needs may face elevated risk for disciplinary involvement.

Percentage of Students by District with a Disciplinary Incident, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ■ *Education Fig. 8 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Approximately 10% of students in the Peoria 6-County Region experienced at least one disciplinary incident during the 2024–2025 academic year, compared to 6% statewide. More than 12,400 disciplinary incidents were reported across the region, including behavioral violations, violence-related incidents, and substance-related offenses. Peoria SD 150 and Pekin CSD 303/Pekin PSD 108 reported the highest number of disciplinary incidents. In both districts, incidents disproportionately involved male and low-income students.

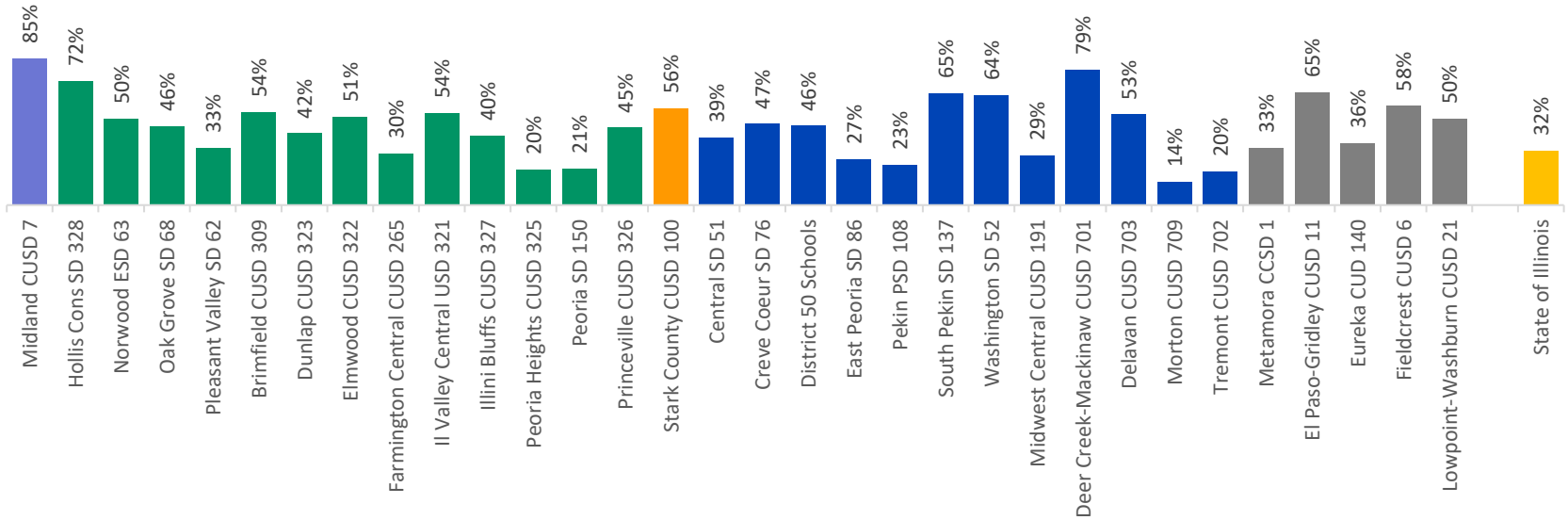
School discipline data may reflect broader challenges related to behavioral health, trauma exposure, poverty, unmet social-emotional needs, community violence, and school connectedness. Research has shown that repeated exclusionary discipline may contribute to absenteeism, school disengagement, and long-term educational inequities.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) measures developmental readiness for children entering kindergarten. The assessment helps educators and families better understand early childhood development across multiple areas including social-emotional development, language and literacy, and math skills. Early childhood experiences and developmental readiness are influenced by a variety of factors including access to early learning opportunities, childcare, preschool participation, healthcare, family stability, nutrition, behavioral health, and supportive home environments.

Overall Kindergarten Readiness, Peoria 6-County Region, Start of 2024-2025 Academic Year

Kindergarten readiness measuring all three developmental areas: social-emotional, language and literacy, and math development.



▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 9 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

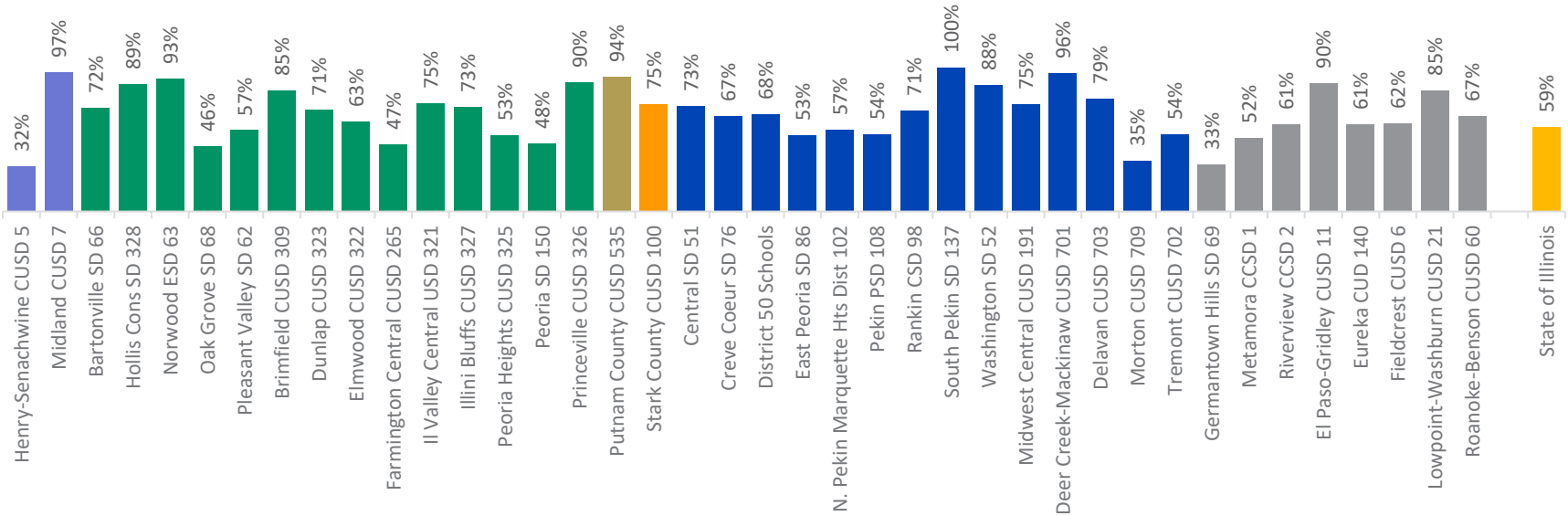
For school districts reporting KIDS data during the 2024–2025 academic year, overall kindergarten readiness varied substantially across the Peoria 6-County Region. Eight school districts reported readiness rates below the statewide average of 32%.

Differences in school readiness were also evident among low-income students, who generally scored approximately 5–8 percentage points lower than their peers across developmental areas. Research has shown that early childhood development and kindergarten readiness are strongly associated with long-term academic achievement, school engagement, literacy development, behavioral health, and graduation outcomes.

To protect student privacy under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), some KIDS data was redacted or not publicly reported for districts with smaller student populations. Several districts in the region did not report overall kindergarten readiness data.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Social-Emotional Development/Kindergarten Readiness, Peoria 6-County Region, Start of 2024-2025 Academic Year
Kindergarten readiness measuring social-emotional development of students entering kindergarten in the region.



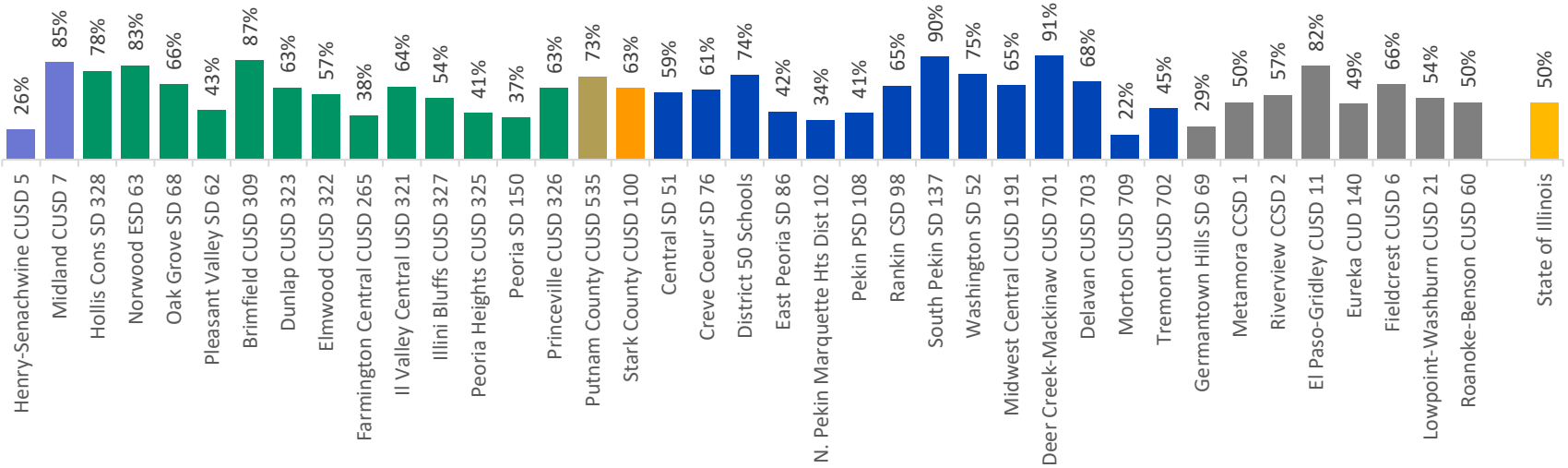
▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 10 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Social-emotional kindergarten readiness varied substantially across school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region during the 2024–2025 academic year. Thirteen school districts reporting KIDS data scored below the statewide social-emotional readiness average of 59%. Please note that to protect student privacy under FERPA, several districts did not publicly report KIDS readiness data for this measure.

Social-emotional development includes skills related to emotional regulation, self-control, relationship building, communication, cooperation, confidence, and classroom engagement. Research has shown that strong early social-emotional development is associated with improved academic achievement, school connectedness, behavioral health, attendance, and long-term educational success. Early childhood trauma, chronic stress, housing instability, poverty, limited access to preschool or childcare, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) may affect social-emotional development and school readiness among young children.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Language and Literacy Development/Kindergarten Readiness, Peoria 6-County Region, Start of 2024-2025 Academic Year
Kindergarten readiness measuring language and literacy development of students entering kindergarten in the region.



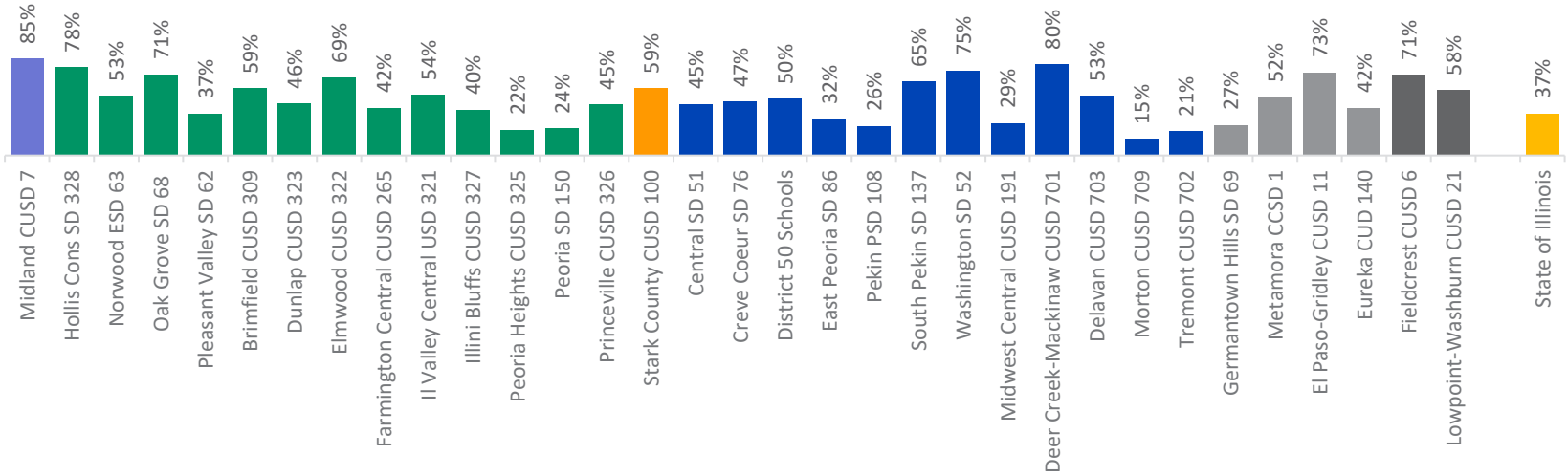
▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 11 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Language and literacy kindergarten readiness varied across school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region during the 2024–2025 academic year. Twelve school districts reporting KIDS data scored below the statewide language and literacy readiness average of 50%. Please note that to protect student privacy under FERPA, several districts did not publicly report KIDS readiness data for this measure.

Language and literacy development includes early communication, vocabulary, comprehension, listening, and foundational reading skills that support later academic achievement. Research has shown that early literacy readiness is strongly associated with third grade reading proficiency, school engagement, graduation outcomes, and long-term educational success. Differences in kindergarten readiness may reflect varying access to preschool, early childhood education, childcare, healthcare, family literacy opportunities, stable housing, and other social and economic supports affecting young children and families.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Math Development/Kindergarten Readiness, Peoria 6-County Region, Start of 2024-2025 Academic Year
Kindergarten readiness measuring math development of students entering kindergarten in the region.



▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 12 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Math kindergarten readiness varied substantially across school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region during the 2024–2025 academic year. Eight school districts reporting KIDS data scored below the statewide math readiness average of 37%. Please note that to protect student privacy under FERPA, several districts did not publicly report KIDS readiness data for this measure.

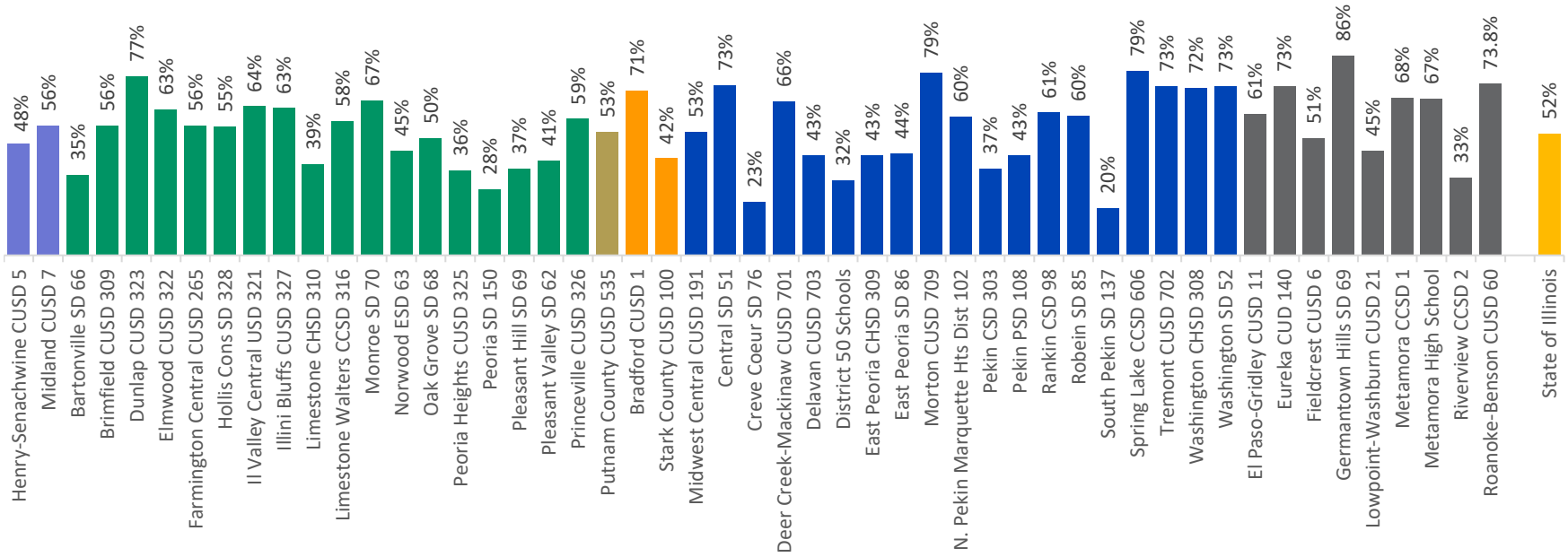
Early math development includes foundational skills related to counting, number recognition, problem solving, patterns, measurement, and spatial reasoning. Research has shown that early math readiness is associated with later academic achievement, confidence in learning, problem-solving abilities, and long-term educational success. Differences in kindergarten math readiness may reflect varying access to preschool and early childhood education, family and community supports, healthcare, stable housing, nutrition, and other social and economic factors affecting child development

Together, the KIDS developmental readiness indicators suggest that educational disparities and developmental challenges are evident for some children before formal K–12 instruction fully begins, reinforcing the importance of early childhood supports, family stability, healthcare access, and early intervention services.

OVERALL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA), MATH, & SCIENCE PROFICIENCY

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to assess student learning standards in English Language Arts (ELA), Math, and Science. Illinois proficiency measures are based on statewide standardized assessments designed to evaluate whether students are meeting grade-level learning expectations. Academic proficiency is often used as an indicator of educational progress, college and career readiness, and long-term academic success.

ELA Proficiency, Percentage of Students by District, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



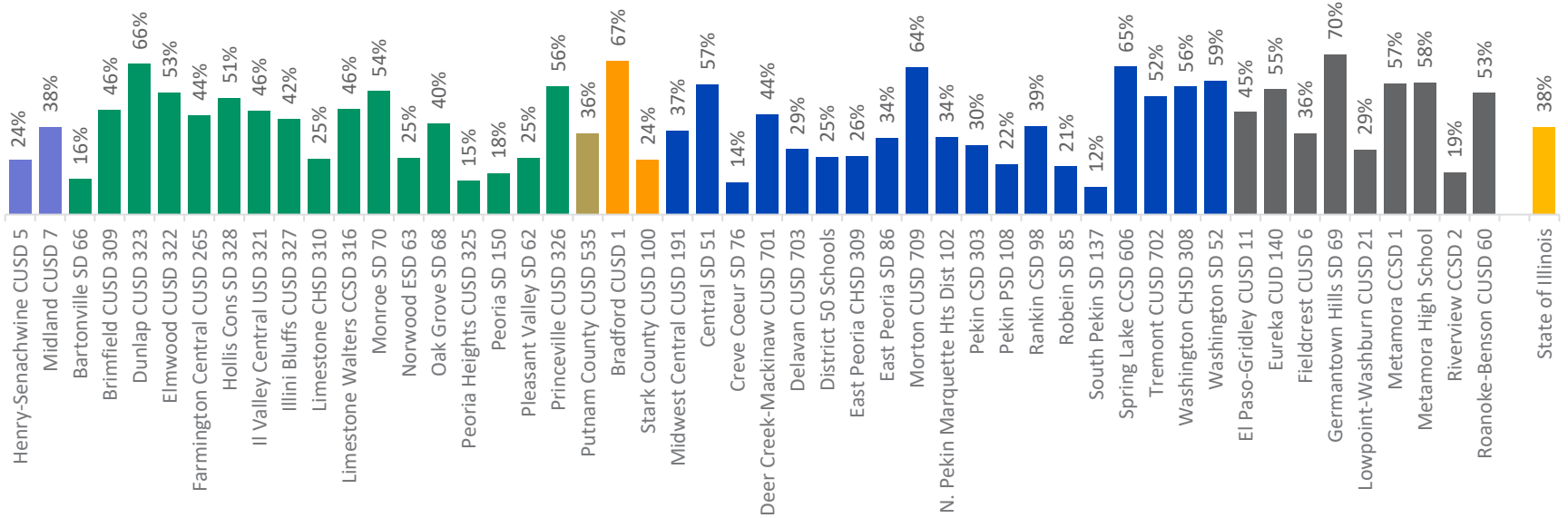
▲ ▬ *Education Fig. 13 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Twenty-one school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region reported ELA proficiency rates at or below the statewide average of 52% during the 2024–2025 academic year. Across districts, proficiency gaps between low-income students and the overall student population averaged approximately 11 percentage points, with some districts reporting differences exceeding 25 percentage points. These disparities highlight ongoing inequities in educational outcomes and suggest that factors such as poverty, chronic absenteeism, housing instability, access to early learning opportunities, and behavioral health challenges may affect student academic performance.

Educational performance indicators should also be interpreted within the context of recent statewide assessment changes. In 2025-2026 academic year, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) adopted revised proficiency benchmarks intended to better align standardized assessment performance levels with college and career readiness expectations. Future proficiency rates may increase due to new benchmarks.

OVERALL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA), MATH, & SCIENCE PROFICIENCY

Math Proficiency, Percentage of Students by District, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



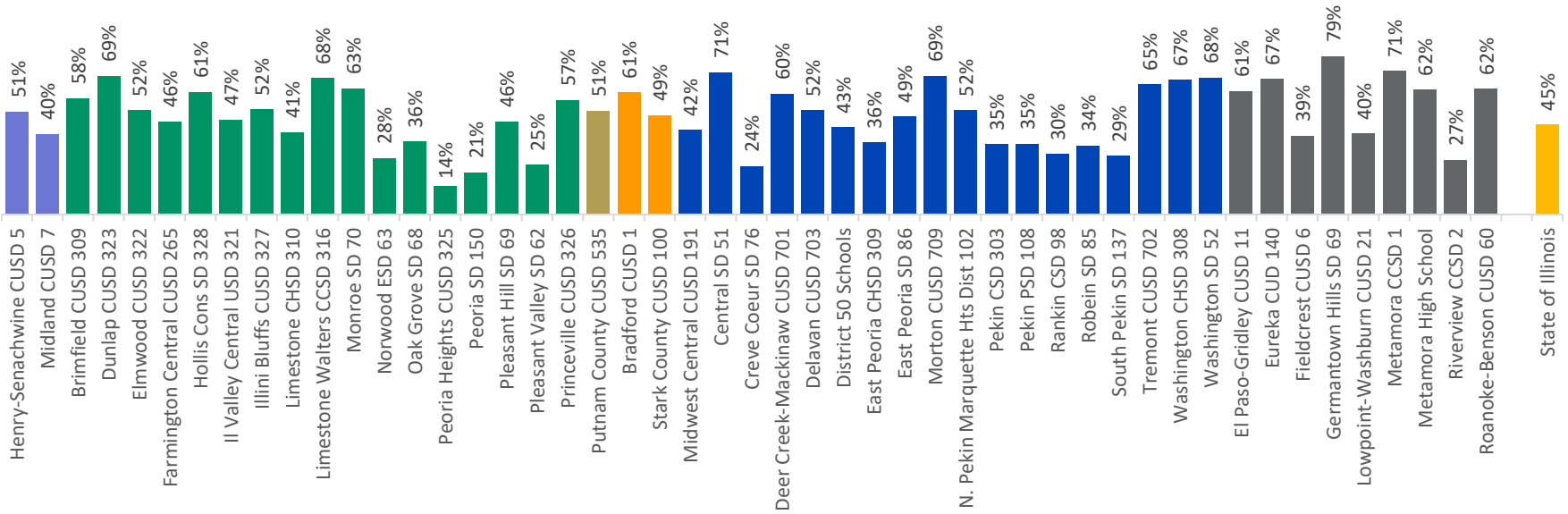
▲ ▬ *Education Fig. 14 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Twenty-four school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region reported math proficiency rates at or below the statewide average of 38% during the 2024–2025 academic year. Disparities in math proficiency were among the most pronounced across academic subjects, with low-income students scoring approximately 14 percentage points lower on average than the overall student population. In some districts, math proficiency gaps between low-income students and overall student performance exceeded 30 percentage points.

Research has linked strong math proficiency with long-term academic success, workforce readiness, problem-solving skills, and postsecondary opportunities. Persistent gaps in math achievement may reflect broader community challenges including poverty, chronic absenteeism, housing instability, limited access to academic supports, and differences in early educational opportunities. Pleasant Hill SD 69 did not report math proficiency data.

OVERALL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA), MATH, & SCIENCE PROFICIENCY

Science Proficiency, Percentage of Students by District, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ■ *Education Fig. 15 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Nineteen school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region reported science proficiency rates at or below the statewide average of 45% during the 2024–2025 academic year. Across districts, the science proficiency gap between low-income students and the overall student population averaged approximately 13 percentage points, with some districts reporting differences exceeding 30 percentage points.

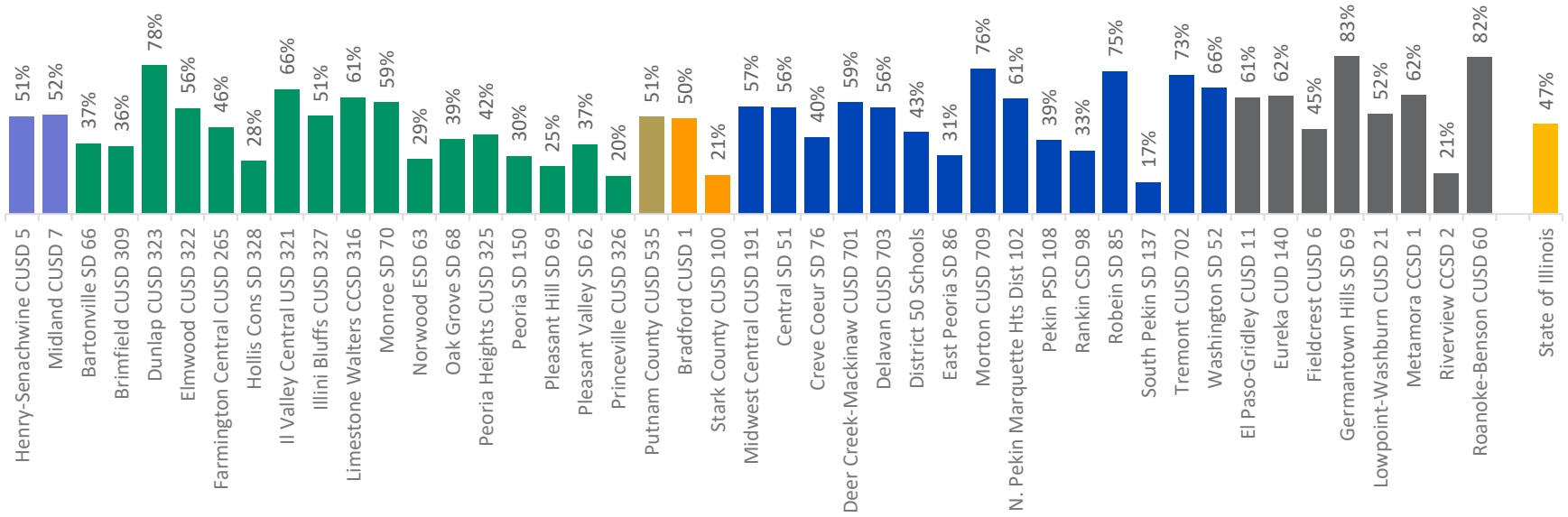
While a small number of districts reported narrower gaps—or, in some cases, slightly higher science proficiency rates among low-income students—many communities continued to experience significant disparities in science achievement. Research has linked science proficiency to long-term academic success, critical thinking skills, STEM readiness, and future workforce opportunities.

Differences in academic performance may reflect broader factors affecting educational outcomes including poverty, access to academic supports, attendance, behavioral health, housing instability, and early childhood educational opportunities. Bartonville SD 66 and Spring Lake CCSD 606 did not report science proficiency data.

3rd GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) AND MATH READINESS

The Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) measures student proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics for students in grades 3 through 8. IAR results are used statewide to assess academic progress, student readiness for future learning, and school and district educational performance.

Percentage of 3rd Grade Students Who Met or Exceeded ELA Learning Standards by District, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ■ *Education Fig. 16 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

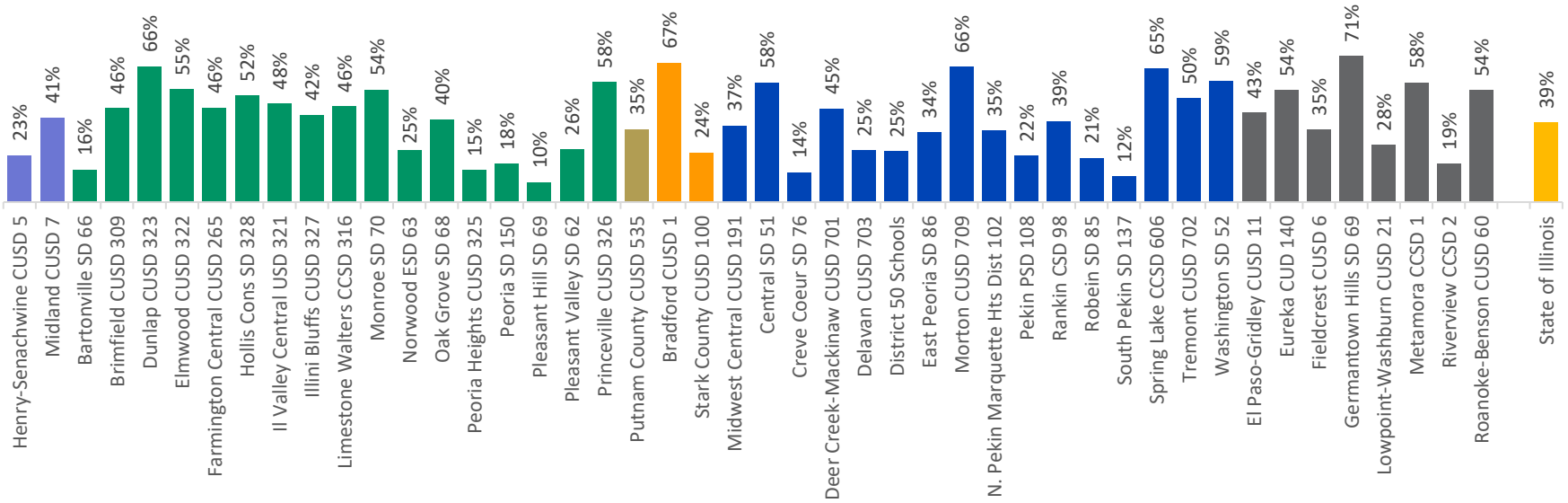
Twenty school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region with third grade students reported ELA proficiency rates at or below the statewide average of 47% during the 2024–2025 academic year. Sample sizes were too small to report data for Spring Lake CCSD 606.

Reading proficiency by the end of third grade is widely recognized as an important predictor of future academic success, including middle school achievement, high school graduation, and long-term educational attainment. Students who are not reading at grade level by third grade may experience increasing academic challenges as classroom instruction shifts from “learning to read” toward “reading to learn”.

Across the region, low-income students scored approximately 9–10 percentage points lower on average in third grade ELA proficiency than the overall student population. Research suggests these disparities may reflect broader factors affecting educational outcomes, including poverty, chronic absenteeism, housing instability, behavioral health concerns, and access to early childhood education and academic supports.

3rd GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) AND MATH READINESS

Percentage of 3rd Grade Students Who Met or Exceeded Math Learning Standards by District, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 17 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

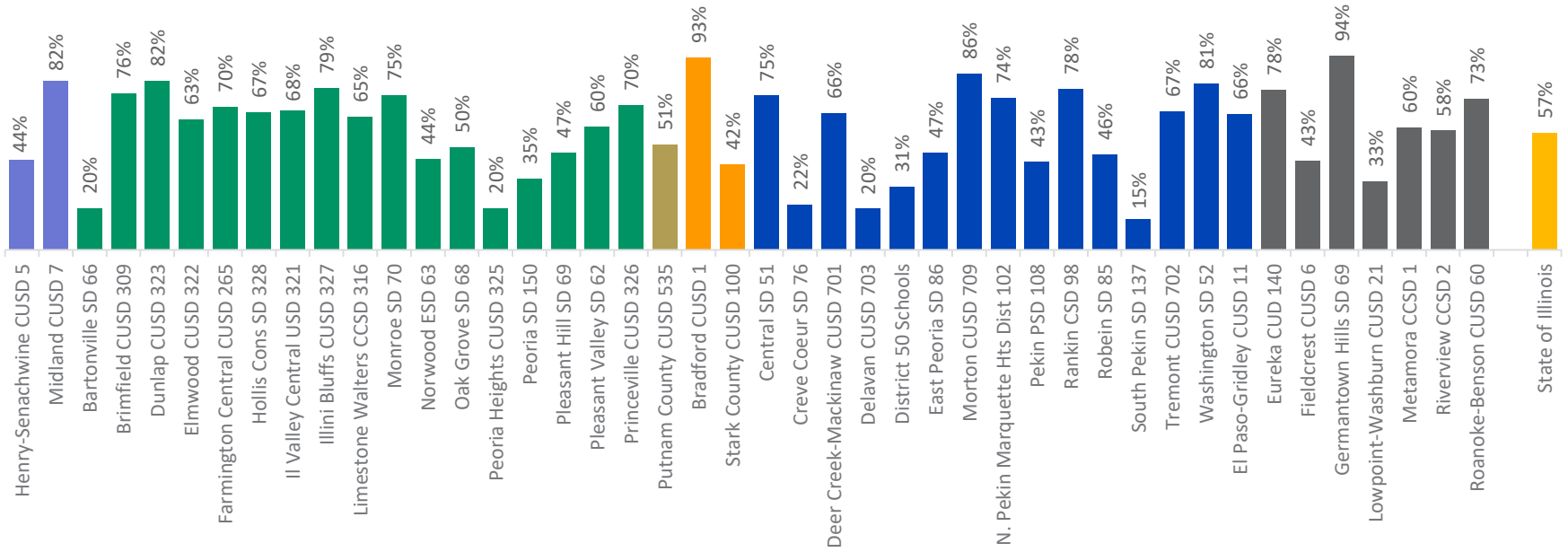
Twenty-two school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region with third grade students reported math proficiency rates at or below the statewide average of 39% during the 2024–2025 academic year. Across the region, low-income students scored approximately 10–12 percentage points lower on average than the overall student population, with some communities reporting proficiency gaps approaching 40 percentage points.

Early math proficiency helps build foundational skills related to problem solving, reasoning, number sense, and analytical thinking that support later academic achievement. Research has shown that students who struggle with foundational math concepts in elementary school may experience increasing academic challenges in later grades as coursework becomes more advanced.

Differences in third grade math proficiency may reflect broader factors affecting educational outcomes including poverty, chronic absenteeism, early childhood educational opportunities, access to academic supports, behavioral health challenges, and housing instability.

8th GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) AND MATH READINESS

Percentage of 8th Grade Students Who Met or Exceeded ELA Learning Standards by District, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ■ *Education Fig. 18 - Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

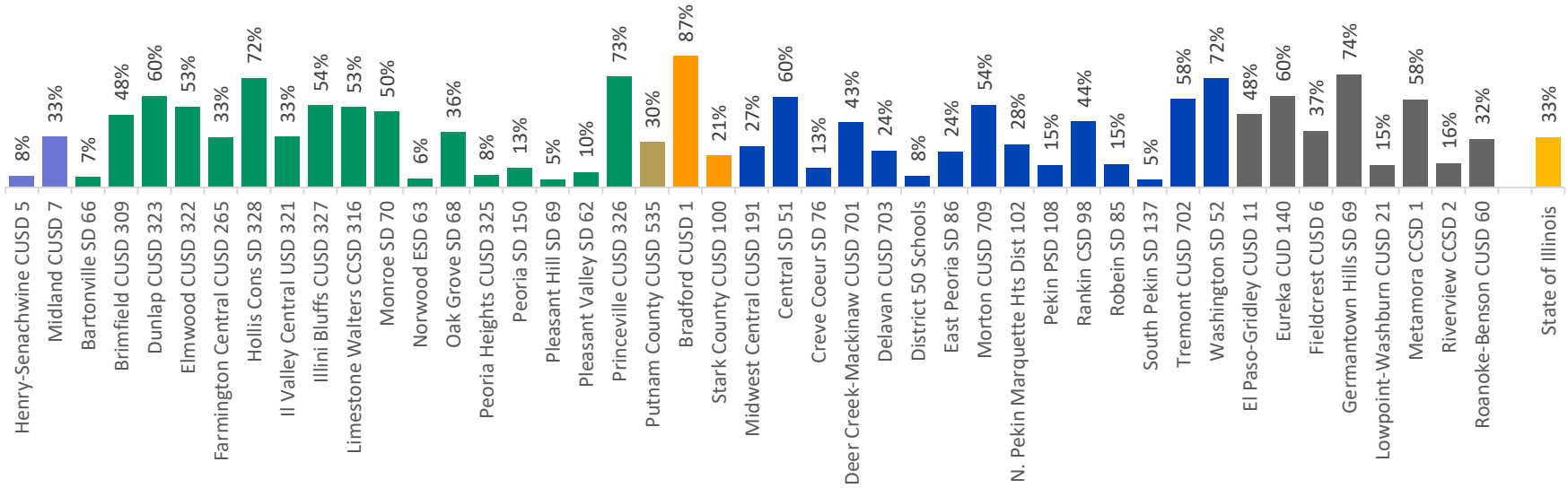
Eighteen school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region with eighth grade students reported ELA proficiency rates at or below the statewide average of 57% during the 2024–2025 academic year. While disparities in academic performance begin in elementary school, the ELA proficiency gap widens by middle school, with low-income students scoring approximately 13–15 percentage points lower on average than the overall student population. Spring Lake CCSD 606 did not report eighth grade ELA proficiency data.

By eighth grade, students are expected to apply more advanced reading, writing, communication, and analytical skills across multiple academic subjects. Strong middle school literacy skills are associated with high school readiness, graduation outcomes, college and career preparedness, and long-term educational success.

Differences in eighth grade ELA proficiency may reflect broader community and educational factors including poverty, chronic absenteeism, behavioral health challenges, housing instability, access to academic supports, and early childhood educational opportunities.

8th GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) AND MATH READINESS

Percentage of 8th Grade Students Who Met or Exceeded Math Learning Standards by District, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ▰ *Education Fig. 19 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Twenty-four school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region with eighth grade students reported math proficiency rates at or below the statewide average of 33% during the 2024–2025 academic year. Spring Lake CCSD 606 did not report eighth grade math proficiency data. Disparities in math proficiency among low-income students were both persistent and pronounced, increasing from approximately 10–12 percentage points in third grade to approximately 14–15 percentage points by eighth grade.

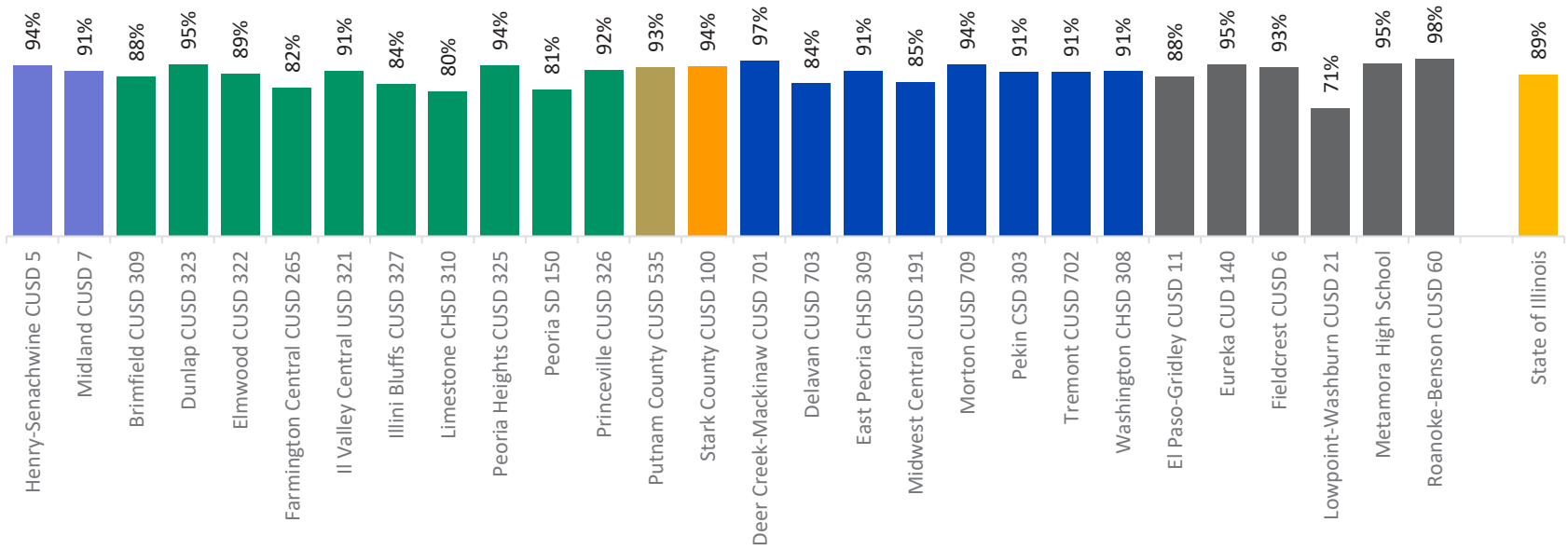
Eighth grade math proficiency is an important indicator of academic readiness as students transition into high school coursework, including algebra and other advanced math classes. Research has shown that strong middle school math skills are associated with high school graduation, college readiness, STEM participation, workforce preparedness, and long-term economic opportunity.

Differences in math achievement may reflect broader factors affecting educational outcomes including poverty, chronic absenteeism, behavioral health challenges, housing instability, access to academic supports, and differences in early educational opportunities.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

Represents the percentage of students who graduated from high school within four years. High school graduation is an important indicator of educational attainment and is associated with employment opportunities, income stability, postsecondary education, health outcomes, and long-term economic mobility.

High School Four-Year Graduation Rate by District, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



▲ ■ *Education Fig. 20 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Nine high school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region reported four-year graduation rates below the statewide average of 89% during the 2024–2025 academic year. Across the region, graduation rate disparities between low-income students and the overall student population averaged approximately 7–8 percentage points.

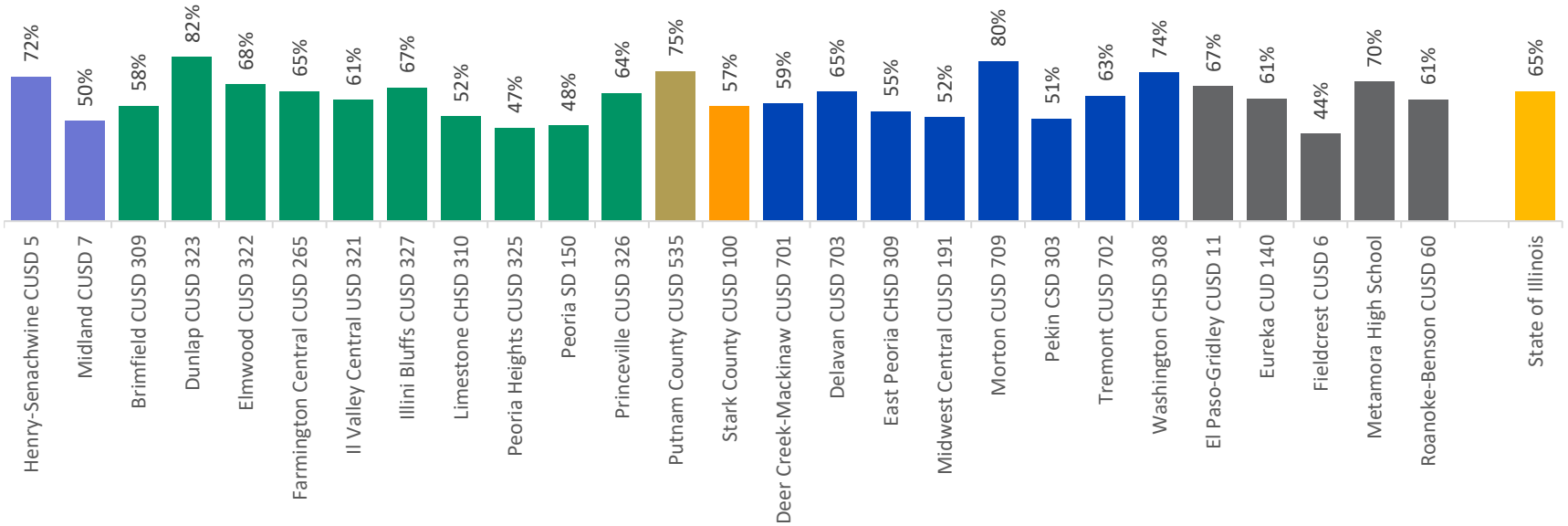
Overall, more than 420 students in the Peoria 6-County Region did not graduate within four years during the 2024–2025 academic year, although this represented an improvement of approximately 100 fewer non-graduates compared to 2022.

High school graduation is strongly associated with long-term educational attainment, employment opportunities, income stability, health outcomes, and overall quality of life. Research has shown that students who do not graduate are at greater risk for unemployment, poverty, chronic health conditions, housing instability, and justice system involvement. Differences in graduation outcomes may reflect broader factors affecting educational success including chronic absenteeism, behavioral health challenges, economic hardship, trauma exposure, and access to academic and family supports.

POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT

Represents the percentage of public high school graduates in Illinois who enrolled in a two-year or four-year postsecondary institution within 12 months of graduation. Postsecondary enrollment is associated with workforce opportunities, income potential, economic mobility, and long-term health and well-being outcomes.

Percentage of 2023 High School Graduates Enrolled in a Postsecondary Institution within 12 months of Graduation, Peoria 6-County Region



▲ ■ *Education Fig. 21 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district*

Eighteen high school districts in the Peoria 6-County Region reported postsecondary enrollment rates at or below the statewide average of 65% for students enrolling in a college or university within 12 months of graduation. Statewide, postsecondary enrollment rates have gradually declined from approximately 75% in 2016.

Postsecondary enrollment patterns varied across the region, with students enrolling in both two-year and four-year institutions. Enrollment in two-year colleges remained relatively consistent across districts, while enrollment in four-year institutions showed greater variation, potentially reflecting differences in college affordability, financial aid access, family income, academic preparation, transportation, workforce opportunities, and other social and economic factors.

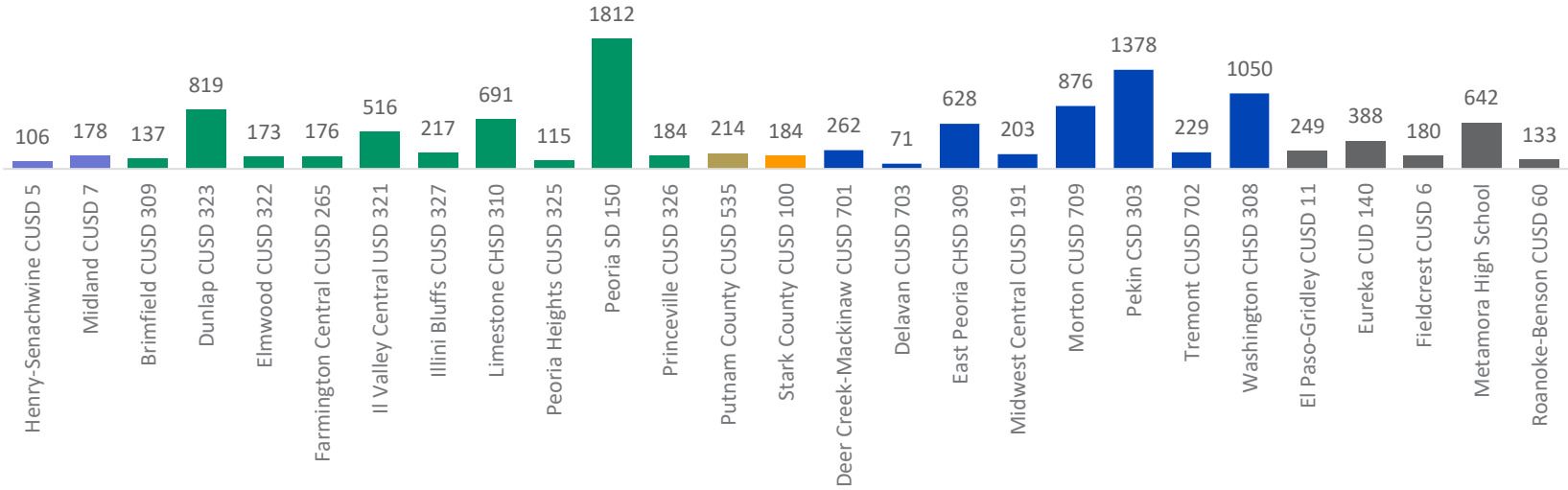
Educational attainment beyond high school is associated with higher lifetime earnings, lower unemployment rates, improved health outcomes, and increased economic mobility. Differences in postsecondary enrollment may also reflect broader community factors including poverty, housing instability, behavioral health challenges, access to career guidance, and availability of educational and workforce supports.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs provide students with academic, technical, and career-focused instruction aligned with high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations. CTE participation may support workforce readiness, postsecondary transitions, career exploration, technical skill development, and long-term economic opportunity.

Research has shown that participation in CTE programs is associated with improved student engagement, higher graduation rates, employability skills, and postsecondary enrollment outcomes. CTE pathways can also help students connect classroom learning with real-world career opportunities and regional workforce needs.

Number of High School Students Who Participated in CTE Courses, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



Education Fig. 22 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district

More than 11,800 high school students in the Peoria 6-County Region participated in at least one CTE course during the 2024–2025 academic year. Of participating students, approximately 39% were low-income, 75% were white, and 54% were male.

CTE participation varied across school districts and career pathways, reflecting differences in program availability, regional workforce needs, student interests, transportation access, and educational resources. Career pathway participation was highest in Human Services, Agriculture, and Hospitality programs, while participation in STEM and Health Science pathways remained comparatively lower.

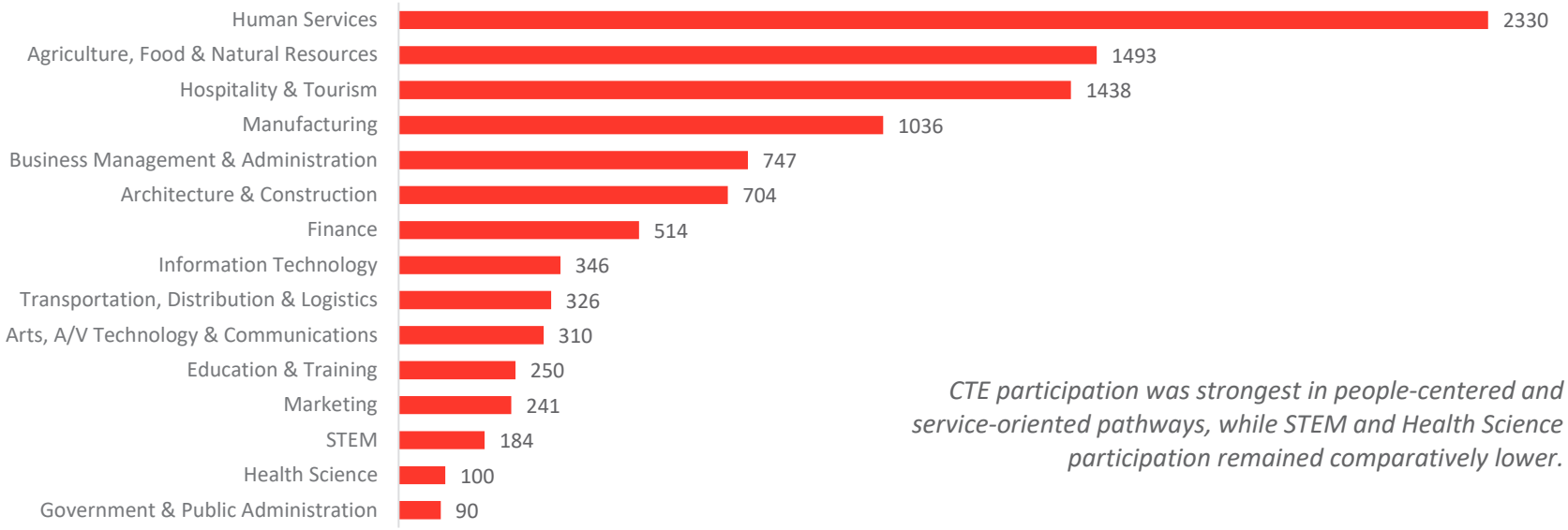
CTE programs may provide important opportunities for students to develop technical skills, career awareness, workplace experience, leadership skills, and postsecondary readiness while supporting regional workforce development needs.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

CTE Concentrators are students who complete multiple courses within a single career pathway during high school. Research has shown that students who are CTE Concentrators are more likely to graduate high school, pursue postsecondary education, and develop workforce-ready technical skills compared to students with more limited CTE participation.

More than 55% of CTE students in the Peoria 6-County Region were classified as concentrators during the 2024–2025 academic year, with approximately 34% identified as low-income students.

Ranked CTE Concentrators by Fields of Study, High School Students, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



CTE participation was strongest in people-centered and service-oriented pathways, while STEM and Health Science participation remained comparatively lower.

Education Fig. 23 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary

CTE concentrator participation varied across career pathways, with Agriculture, Hospitality & Tourism, Manufacturing, and other service-related fields enrolling the largest numbers of students. Participation in STEM and Health Science pathways remained comparatively lower despite continued workforce demand in many technical and healthcare-related occupations.

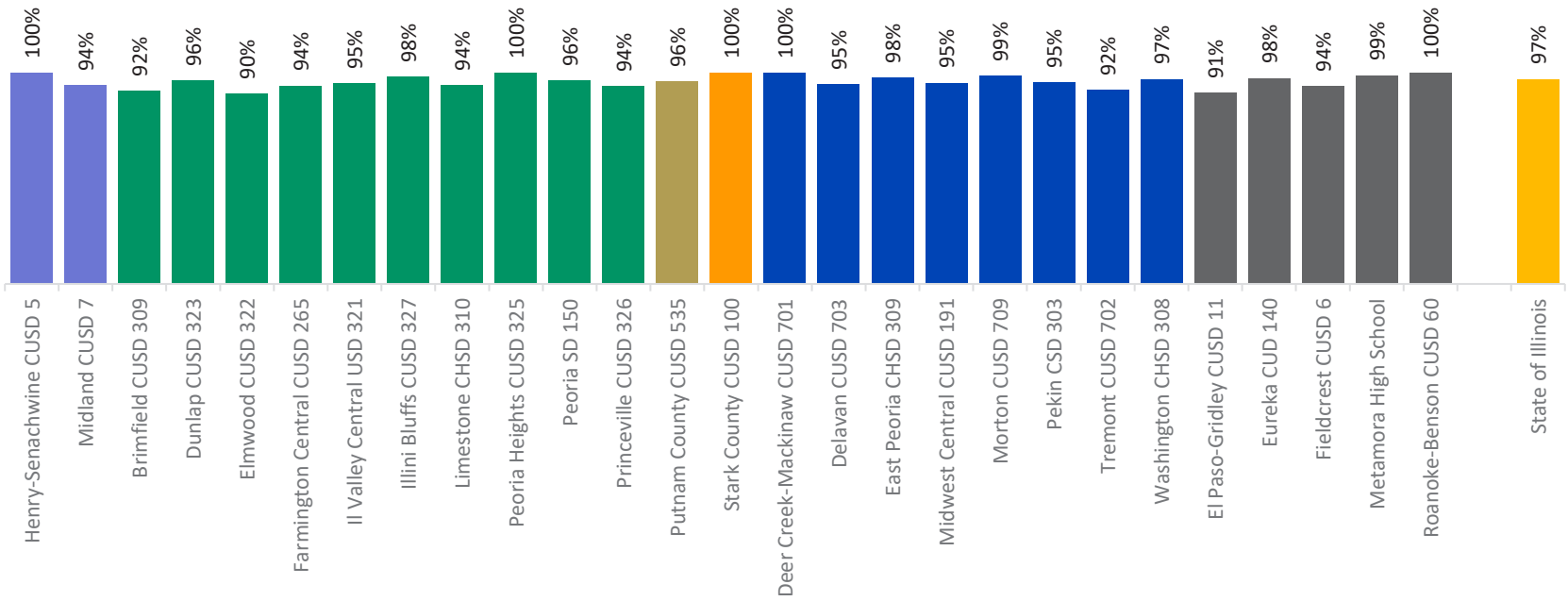
Participation patterns may reflect student interests, program availability, transportation access, awareness of career opportunities, regional workforce trends, and access to specialized coursework or equipment. Strong participation in service-oriented and hands-on career pathways also highlights the importance of aligning educational programming with evolving workforce and economic development needs.

Data for Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security pathways was redacted due to low reported enrollment.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Graduation rates for students participating in CTE coursework are often significantly higher than graduation rates for the overall student population. Statewide, CTE Concentrators (students completing two or more advanced CTE courses) reported a 97% four-year graduation rate compared to 89% for all students.

CTE Participants Four-Year Graduation Rate, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



Education Fig. 24 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district

Across the region, students participating in CTE coursework consistently reported higher four-year graduation rates than the overall student population. Low-income students participating in CTE coursework also reported graduation rates approximately 10–11 percentage points higher than low-income students overall.

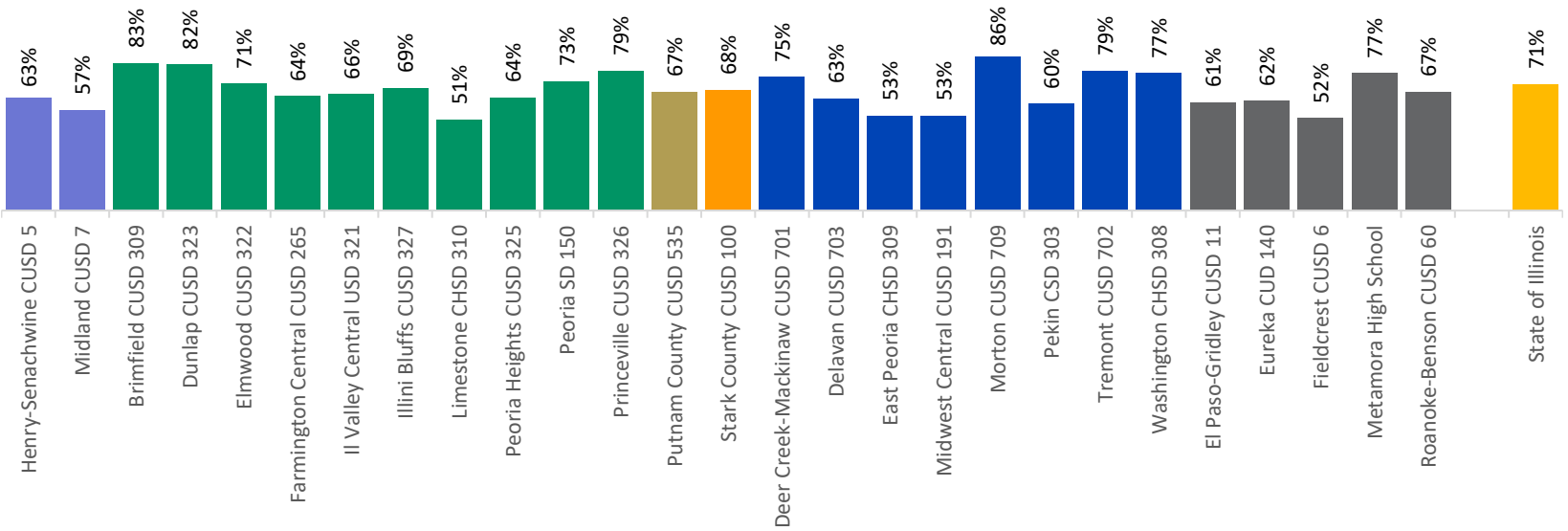
These findings suggest that participation in career-focused educational pathways may support student engagement, persistence, career readiness, and successful high school completion. Hands-on learning opportunities, workforce exposure, and connections between classroom instruction and real-world careers may help increase student motivation and educational attainment.

Please note due to sample size, data was redacted for Lowpoint-Washburn CUSD 21.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Postsecondary Perkins placement data measures how successfully Career and Technical Education (CTE) concentrators transition into postsecondary education, employment, military service, apprenticeship programs, or other service opportunities within six months of leaving high school. ISBE compiles this data through the Illinois Longitudinal Data System, which links high school, college, and employment records to track postsecondary outcomes for CTE concentrators.

CTE Postsecondary Placement Rates, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024-2025 Academic Year



Education Fig. 25 — Illinois State Board of Education, 2024-2025 Report Card Summary; alpha order by county/district

Across the region, many school districts reported postsecondary placement rates near or above the statewide average of 71%, highlighting the role of CTE programs in supporting workforce readiness and postsecondary transitions. Postsecondary placement rates for low-income graduates remained lower on average by approximately 8–10 percentage points.

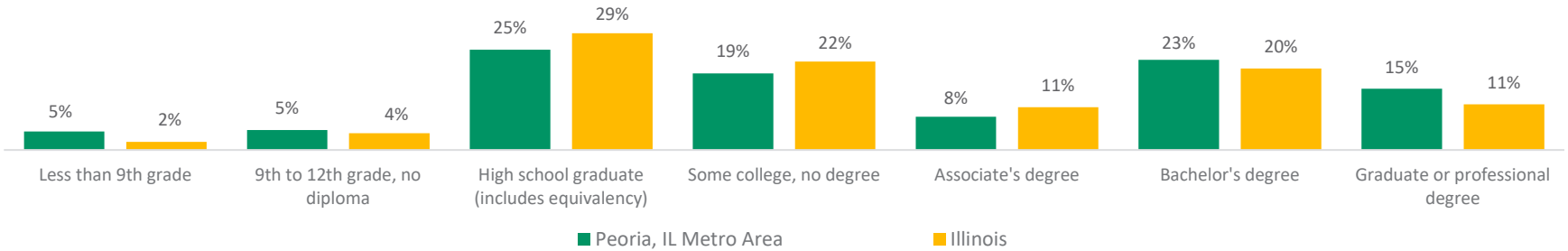
These findings suggest that participation in CTE pathways may help strengthen connections between education, workforce preparation, and long-term economic opportunity. Career-focused learning experiences can help students build technical skills, explore career interests, and develop clearer pathways into postsecondary education, apprenticeships, military service, and high-demand careers aligned with regional workforce needs.

Please note due to sample size, data was redacted for Lowpoint-Washburn CUSD 21.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Educational attainment influences workforce readiness, economic mobility, health outcomes, and long-term community development. Tracking educational attainment helps identify workforce strengths, opportunity gaps, and areas where additional educational, training, or support services may be needed.

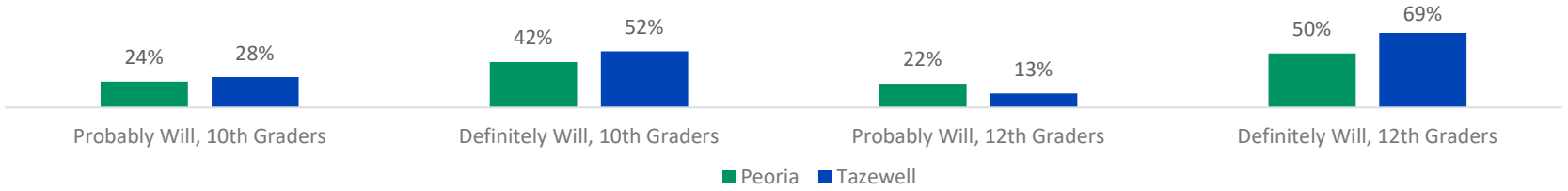
Educational Attainment, Ages 25+, Peoria MSA vs State of Illinois, 2024



▲ ▬ *Education Fig. 26 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates*

In the Peoria MSA, 94% of adults ages 25 and older have a high school diploma or equivalent, slightly above the statewide average of 91%. Approximately 38% of adults in the Peoria MSA hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 31% statewide. Educational attainment is strongly associated with economic stability. Poverty rates decrease substantially as educational attainment increases, with adults holding bachelor's degrees reporting the lowest poverty rates.

Academic Expectations, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



▲ ▬ *Education Fig. 27 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development*

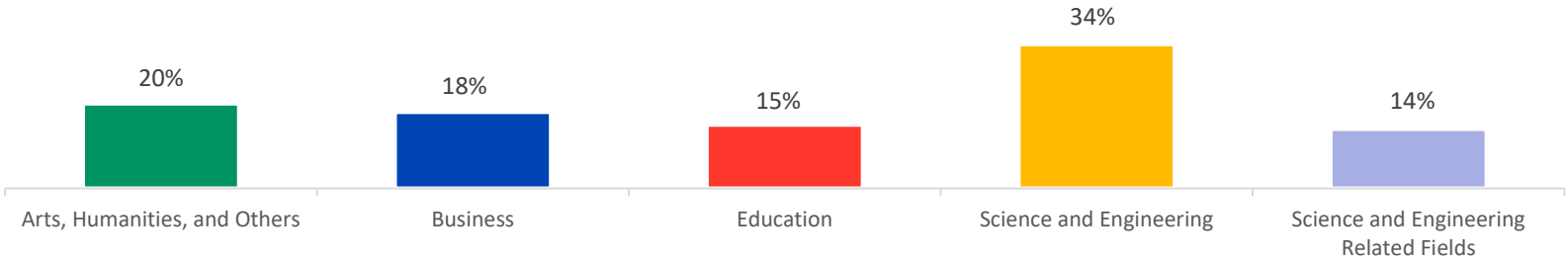
Student expectations for postsecondary education varied by grade level and county. Among 12th grade students, reported expectations for completing a four-year college degree were higher in Tazewell County than Peoria County. Educational expectations can influence academic engagement, career planning, and postsecondary participation. Factors such as family income, school support systems, career exposure, financial concerns, and access to college and career readiness resources may affect students' educational aspirations and long-term opportunities.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY FIELD OF STUDY

Educational attainment by field of study provides insight into regional workforce strengths, talent pipelines, and potential labor market gaps. This information can help guide workforce development efforts, align educational programming with employer needs, and identify opportunities to strengthen high-demand career pathways such as STEM and healthcare fields.

Differences in degree attainment across fields may also reflect disparities in access to educational opportunities, career exposure, affordability, and long-term economic mobility.

Field of Study, Bachelor's Degrees or Higher, Percentage of Population Ages 25+, Peoria MSA, 2024



Education Fig. 28 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Nearly 80,000 adults ages 25 and older in the Peoria MSA hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Among degree holders, approximately half earned degrees in science and engineering related fields.

Degree attainment patterns also varied by age. Adults ages 40 and older represented the majority of degree holders in education-related fields, while younger adults were more highly represented in science and engineering fields.

EDUCATION TRENDS SUMMARY

- More than 47% of students in the Peoria 6-County Region are considered low-income, increasing from 44% in 2022. Several school districts report particularly high concentrations of low-income students and are classified as high-poverty districts.
- Student needs continue to extend beyond the classroom, with 21% of students identified as having a disability and rising numbers of students experiencing homelessness across the region, particularly in Peoria County.
- Chronic absenteeism remains a major educational challenge. Approximately 22% of students missed 10% or more of school days during the 2024–2025 academic year—an improvement from pandemic-era levels, but still a significant barrier to academic success. Several districts reported absenteeism rates well above the state average.
- Student mobility and disciplinary incidents reflect ongoing instability affecting many students and families. Mobility rates for low-income students remain higher than the state average, while disciplinary incidents continue to exceed statewide levels in several districts.
- Early learning gaps are evident at kindergarten entry, with multiple districts falling below state readiness benchmarks. Low-income students entered kindergarten approximately 5–8 percentage points behind their peers across key developmental areas.
- Academic proficiency gaps widen over time, particularly for low-income students. Across districts:
    - ELA proficiency gaps average approximately 11 percentage points
    - Math proficiency gaps are the most pronounced at approximately 14 percentage points
    - Science proficiency gaps average approximately 13 percentage points, with some districts exceeding 30 points
- By middle school, disparities continue to increase with low-income students performing approximately 13–15 percentage points lower in ELA and 14–15 percentage points lower in math.
- High school graduation rates remain relatively strong overall; however, disparities persist. Approximately 420 students did not graduate within four years during the 2024–2025 academic year, and low-income students graduated at rates 7–8 percentage points lower than their peers.
- Postsecondary enrollment varies widely across districts, with approximately 60% of graduates enrolling within one year of graduation. Enrollment pathways are relatively evenly split between two-year and four-year institutions, though access to four-year opportunities remains less consistent across the region.
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) remains an important area of student engagement and workforce preparation, with more than 11,800 students participating in CTE coursework. Students participating in CTE programs reported higher graduation rates than the overall student population, including improved outcomes for low-income students.
- However, postsecondary placement outcomes for CTE concentrators—particularly low-income students—remain lower than overall graduation gains, highlighting the need for stronger transitions from high school into employment, apprenticeships, military service, or postsecondary education.

Together, these trends highlight both the persistent challenges facing students and the opportunities to strengthen pathways from early learning through postsecondary success, workforce readiness, and long-term economic mobility.

FINANCIAL STABILITY TRENDS

Financial stability is foundational to individual well-being, family success, and long-term community resilience. The ability to consistently meet basic needs—including housing, food, transportation, health care, childcare, and utilities—influences not only household financial security, but also educational outcomes, physical and mental health, and overall quality of life.

Across the Peoria region, many households continue to face growing economic pressures related to rising living costs, housing affordability, wage disparities, debt burden, and limited financial flexibility. While median incomes have increased in recent years, many individuals and families remain financially vulnerable and struggle to build savings, recover from emergencies, or achieve long-term economic stability.

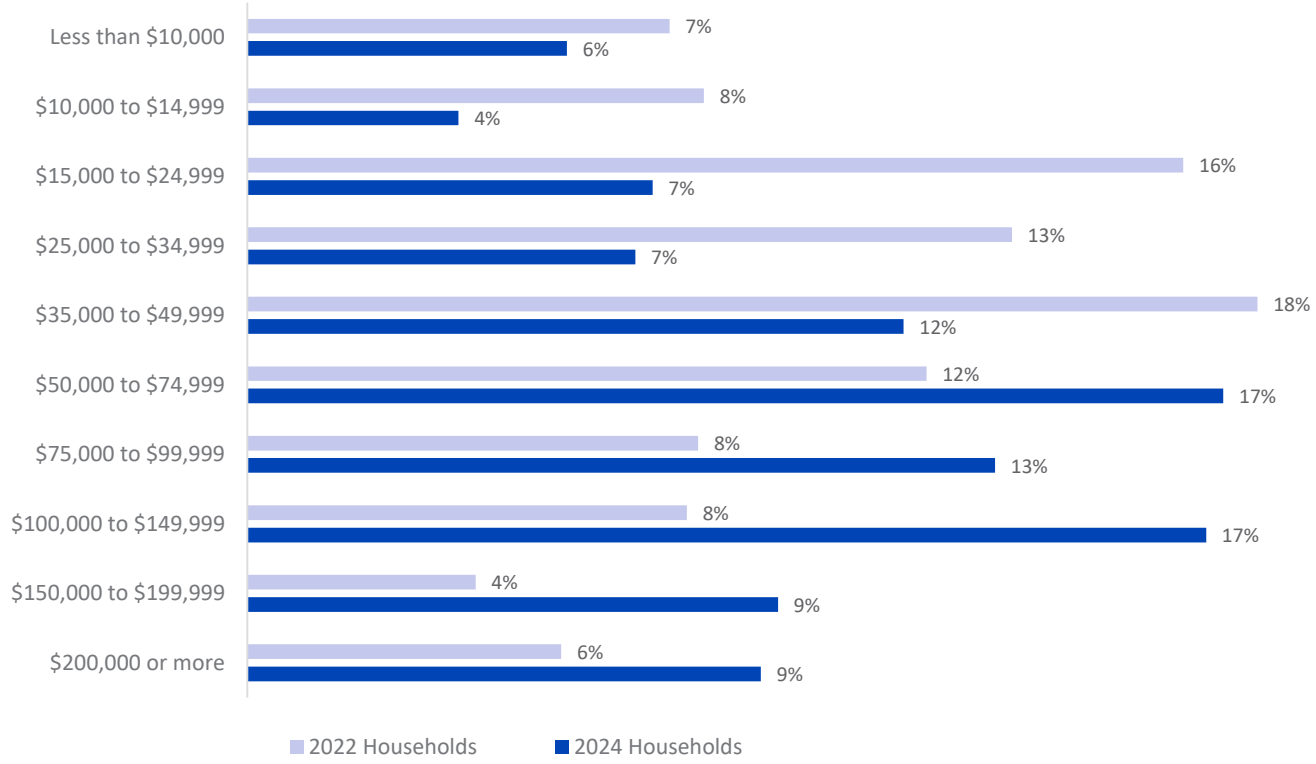
Financial stability is influenced by far more than income alone. Employment opportunities, educational attainment, access to affordable housing, transportation, financial services, public assistance programs, and supportive community resources all shape a household's ability to withstand economic hardship and move toward self-sufficiency.

The following section examines trends related to income and wages, poverty, housing affordability, food insecurity, homelessness, disability, public assistance participation, and community service demand across the Peoria MSA and surrounding region.

INCOME, WAGES, AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Financial stability is influenced by far more than income alone. Access to stable employment, family-sustaining wages, educational opportunities, and pathways to career advancement all shape a household's ability to meet basic needs and build long-term economic security. The following data highlights trends related to household income, wages, poverty, educational attainment, and opportunity across the Peoria MSA, while also illustrating how financial outcomes can vary significantly by household structure, race, geography, and access to opportunity.

Percentage of Households by Income Levels, Peoria MSA, 2022 vs 2024

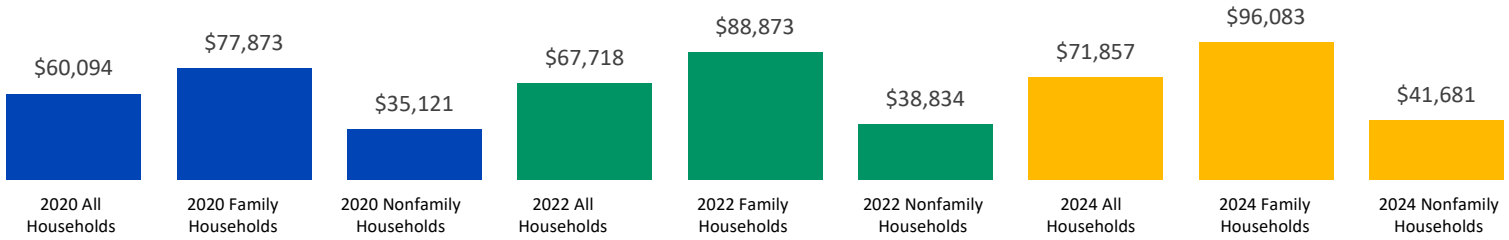


Financial Stability Fig. 1 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2022/2024

Recent income trends in the Peoria MSA suggest overall household earnings are rising, particularly among higher-income households. Despite these gains, the percentage of households earning less than $10,000 annually changed very little, highlighting persistent economic vulnerability among some residents.

Median Income — Median income trends provide insight into overall financial security and purchasing power across households and demographic groups. While rising incomes may reflect wage growth, inflation, workforce changes, and economic recovery, increases do not always translate into improved financial stability—particularly when housing, childcare, health care, transportation, and other living expenses continue to rise. Examining income trends by household type, race, age, geography, occupation, gender, and educational attainment helps highlight broader disparities in economic opportunity across the Peoria MSA.

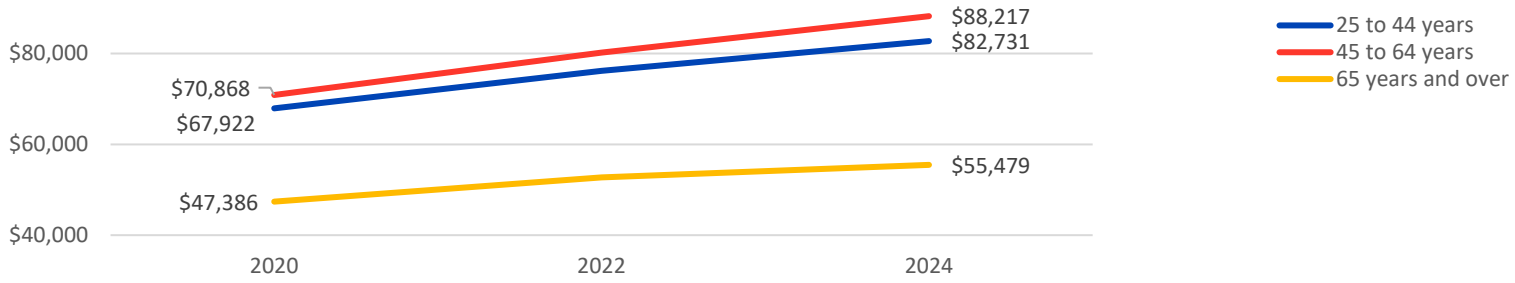
Median Income by Household Type, Peoria MSA, 2020-2024



Financial Stability Fig. 2 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2020-2024

Median incomes have risen across all household types; while family households continue to earn substantially more, nonfamily households continue to experience significantly lower incomes—highlighting uneven financial stability across household types.

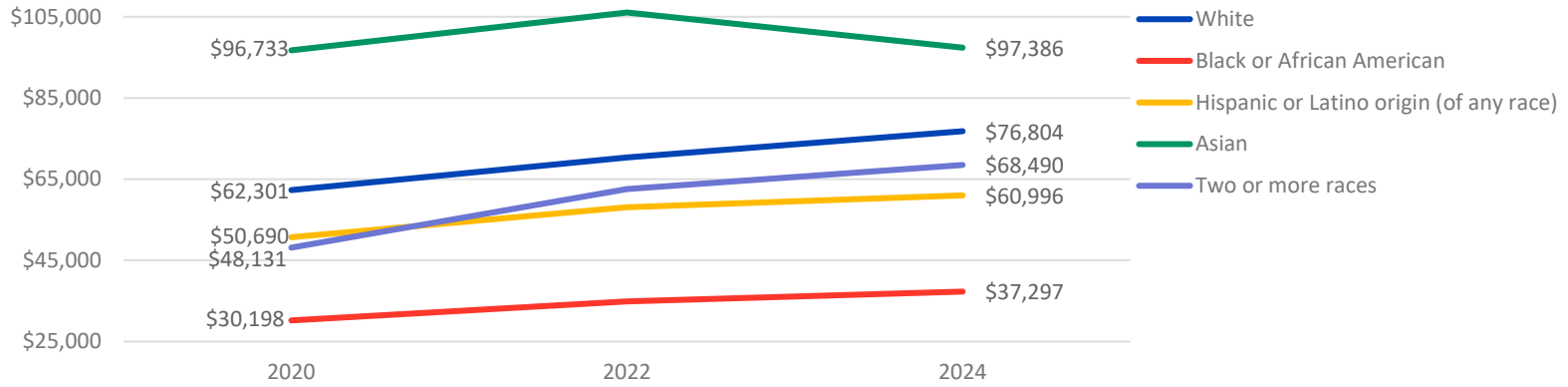
Median Household Income by Age, Peoria MSA, 2020-2024



Financial Stability Fig. 3 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2020-2024

While median income has increased across all age groups since 2020, individuals aged 65 and older continue to have substantially lower incomes, and the gap between seniors and working-age adults is widening.

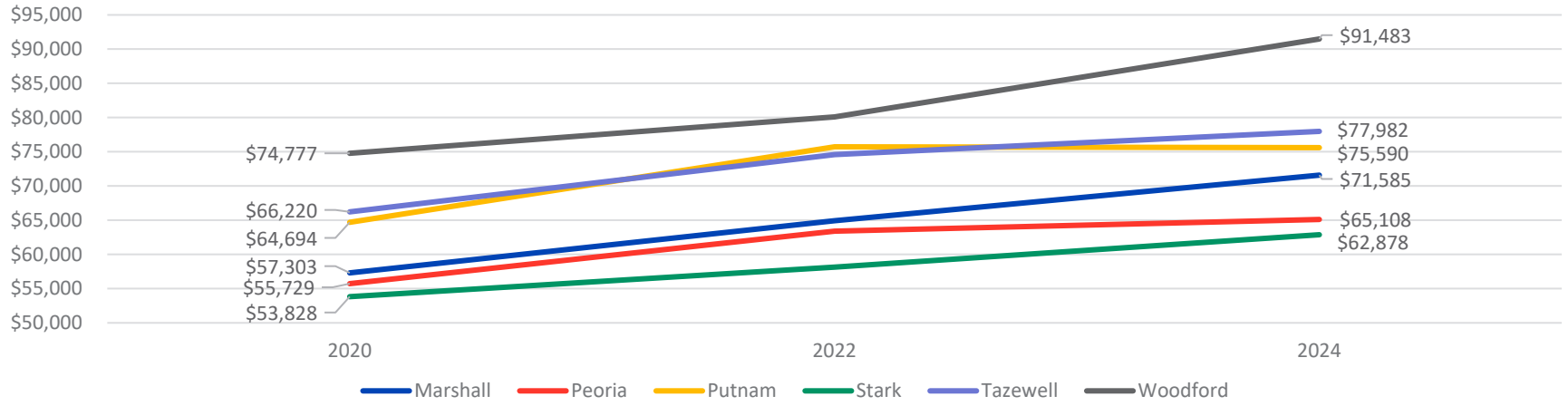
Median Household Income by Race, Peoria MSA, 2020-2024



Financial Stability Fig. 4 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2020-2024

Median income has increased across all racial groups since 2020; however, significant disparities remain. White households continue to earn roughly twice as much as Black households, while Hispanic/Latino households show steady growth. Asian households remain the highest earning group, and households identifying as two or more races have experienced the largest income gains.

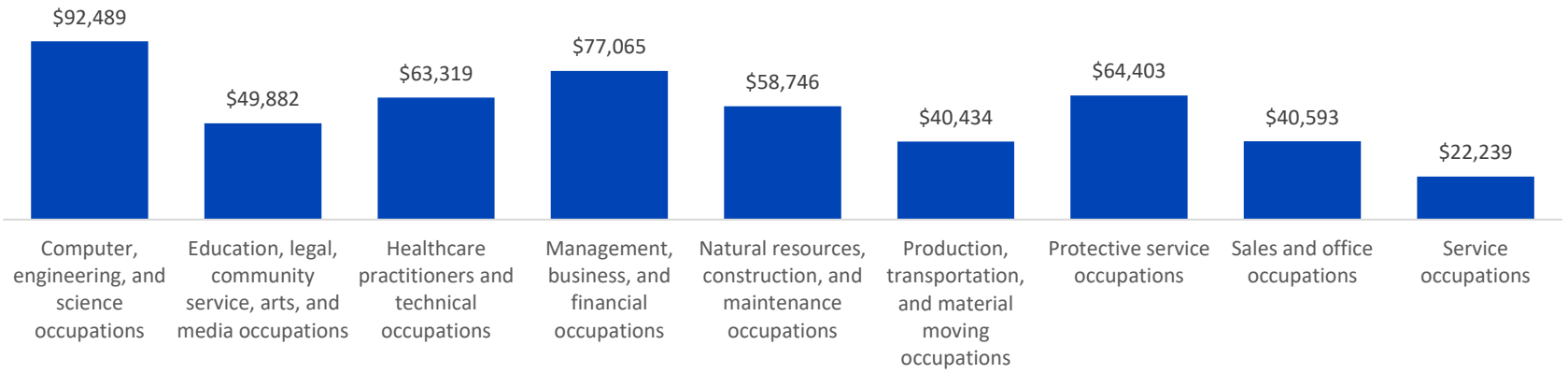
Median Household Income by County, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020-2024



Financial Stability Fig. 5 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2020-2024

Median household income has increased across all counties since 2020; however, disparities between counties persist, with Woodford and Tazewell consistently reporting higher incomes and Peoria remaining below the regional average.

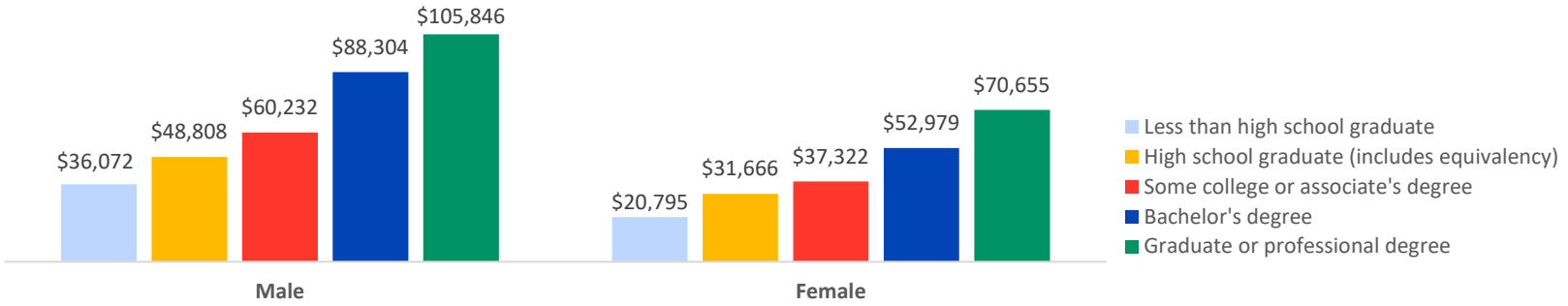
Median Income by Occupation for Population 16 and Older, Peoria MSA, 2024



Financial Stability Fig. 6 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024

Median income by occupation highlights substantial differences in earning potential across the workforce, with the highest wages concentrated in technical and professional occupations and the lowest wages concentrated in service and support roles.

Median Income by Gender and Educational Attainment for Population 25 and Older, Peoria MSA, 2024



Financial Stability Fig. 7 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024

Higher education leads to increased earnings for both men and women; however, significant gender disparities remain, with women earning substantially less than men at every level—and the gap widening among those with advanced degrees. Regardless of educational attainment, males 25 and older in the Peoria MSA who worked full-time in the past year earned a median income of $62,501 compared to their female counterparts who earned $42,035.

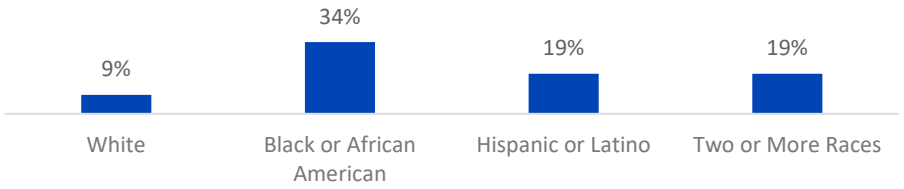
Poverty — Poverty is more than a measure of income—it is an indicator of financial vulnerability and limited access to economic opportunity. Examining poverty across demographic groups, household structures, and educational attainment levels helps communities better understand where financial hardship is most concentrated and where targeted strategies and supports may be needed. Federal Poverty Guidelines are updated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and are used to determine eligibility for federal assistance programs. In 2024, the poverty guideline for a household of four was approximately $31,200 annually.

Poverty Trends, Peoria MSA, 2024

- **Overall Poverty:** Approximately 12% of the Peoria MSA population lives below the federal poverty level, consistent with state and national averages. While rates improved slightly over the past decade (-1%), poverty remains a persistent indicator of financial vulnerability across the region.
- **Concentrated Poverty:** Poverty remains heavily concentrated within several Peoria ZIP codes including 61602 (45%), 61605 (40%), 61603 (30%), 61606 (26%), and 61604 (21%); the overall poverty rate for Peoria County is 16%.
- **Employment & Poverty:** Employment status significantly affects poverty levels. In 2024, 3% of full-time workers lived below the poverty level compared to 16% of part-time workers.
- **Gender Disparities:** Economic disparities by gender persist, with 9% of employed females living below the poverty level compared to 4% of employed males.
- **Child Poverty:** Children continue to represent one of the region's most economically vulnerable populations, with 16% of children under age 18 in the Peoria MSA living below the poverty level.
- **Senior Poverty:** Although poverty rates for adults aged 65 and older remain slightly below state and national averages, senior poverty has increased by 2% since 2014.

▲ ▰ *U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2014/2024*

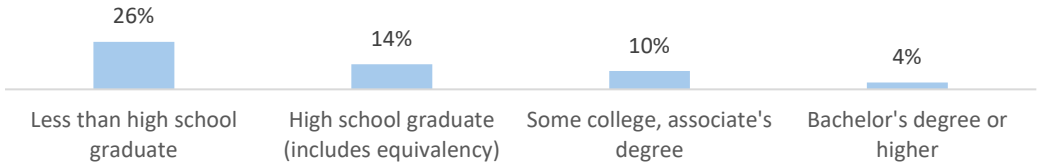
Percent of Population Living Below Poverty Level by Race, Peoria MSA, 2024



Black or African American residents are nearly four times more likely to live below the poverty level than white residents, while Hispanic/Latino and multiracial populations also experience elevated poverty rates.

▲ ▰ *Financial Stability Fig. 8 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024*

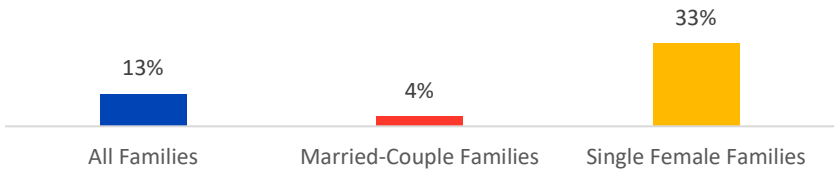
Percent of Population Living Below Poverty Level by Educational Attainment (Age 25 and over), Peoria MSA, 2024



Education remains one of the strongest predictors of financial stability in the Peoria MSA. Individuals without a high school diploma are more than six times as likely to live below the poverty level as those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

▲ *Financial Stability Fig. 9 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024*

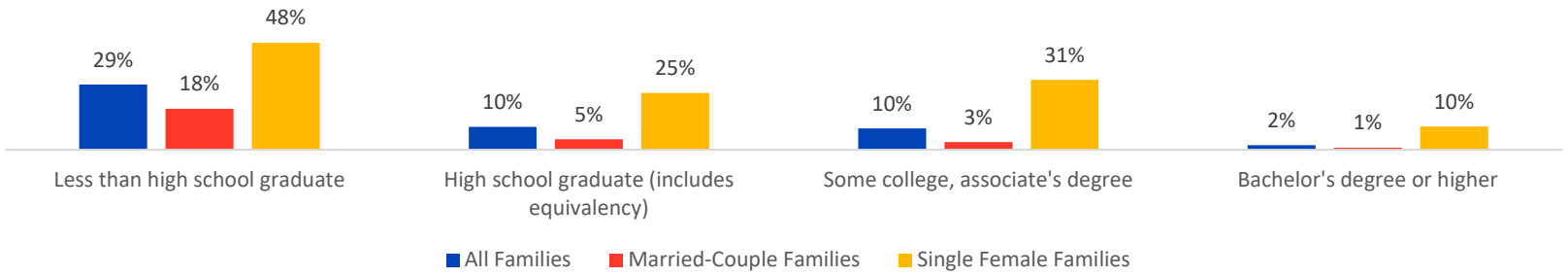
Household Poverty by Family Composition with Related Children Under Age 18, Peoria MSA, 2024



In the Peoria MSA, families with children under 18—especially female-headed households—face much higher poverty rates than married-couple families. Even with employment, female-headed households remain financially vulnerable: in 2024, 23% with a working householder still lived below the poverty level.

▲ *Financial Stability Fig. 10 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024*

Poverty Rates for Families by Educational Attainment of Householder, Peoria MSA, 2024



▲ *Financial Stability Fig. 11 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024*

Higher levels of educational attainment are linked to lower poverty rates for all family types. Poverty is highest among households without a high school diploma and lowest among those with a bachelor's degree or higher. However, female-headed households continue to experience higher poverty at every education level.

Mean Income Deficit for Individuals and Families Living in Poverty, Peoria MSA, 2024

▲ ■ *Financial Stability Fig. 12 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024*

Income deficit measures how far a person's or family's income falls below the poverty threshold. While poverty rates show who is below the threshold, income deficit captures the depth of hardship. In the Peoria MSA, families—especially those with a female-head of household—face the largest average gaps between income and basic needs.

Living Wages, Peoria MSA, 2021 vs 2024

	1 Adult Head of Household				2 Adults, 1 Working Head of Household				2 Adults, 2 Working Heads of Household			
Year	***No Children***	***1 Child***	***2 Children***	***3 Children***	***No Children***	***1 Child***	***2 Children***	***3 Children***	***No Children***	***1 Child***	***2 Children***	***3 Children***
2021	$15.31	$32.18	$41.67	$54.30	$25.35	$31.08	$36.01	$39.47	$12.52	$18.12	$23.16	$27.47
2024	$20.62	$37.37	$46.06	$57.68	$29.05	$35.03	$37.80	$43.19	$14.52	$21.63	$26.67	$30.44

▲ ■ *Financial Stability Fig. 13 — Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2024*

A living wage estimates the hourly wage needed for individuals and families to meet basic needs, including housing, childcare, food, transportation, healthcare, and technology. Between 2021 and 2024, estimated living wages increased across nearly all household types in the Peoria MSA. Despite increases to Illinois' minimum wage, many households—particularly those with children—still require significantly higher wages to meet basic living expenses.

FINANCIAL VULNERABILITY AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Financial stability is shaped not only by income, but also by a household's ability to withstand financial challenges and recover from economic hardship. Factors such as savings, debt burden, housing costs, access to tax credits, and reliance on public assistance programs can all influence long-term economic resilience. The following indicators highlight areas where households in the Peoria MSA may experience ongoing financial strain, limited financial flexibility, or increased vulnerability to economic disruption.

Asset Poverty Rates by Race, Peoria MSA, 2023

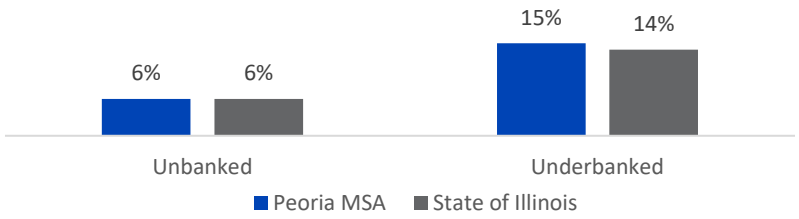
Household Asset Poverty Rate				Household Liquid Asset Poverty Rate			
All Households	*White Households*	*Black Households*	*Hispanic/Latino Households*	*All Households*	*White Households*	*Black Households*	*Hispanic/Latino Households*
16%	16%	54%	27%	24%	23%	58%	46%

▲ *Financial Stability Fig. 14 — Prosperity Now Scorecard (U.S. Census Bureau SIPP and American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates), 2023*

Asset poverty measures households without enough financial assets to meet basic needs at or above the poverty level for three months. The liquid asset poverty rate focuses on households lacking sufficient savings to cover basic needs for three months. Lower liquid asset poverty rates generally reflect stronger household financial stability and greater ability to withstand unexpected financial emergencies.

According to the Prosperity Now Scorecard, more than 12% of households in the Peoria MSA have zero net worth – meaning the households have no net assets or their debt is greater than their assets.

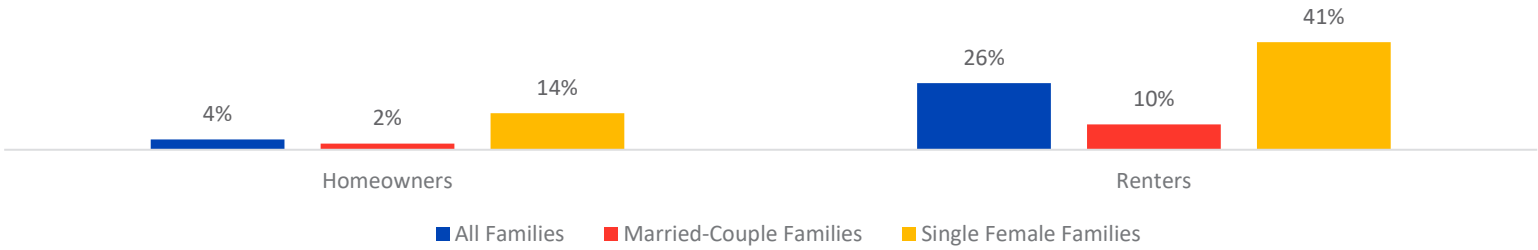
Unbanked and Underbanked Households, Peoria MSA, 2023



Financial resilience is influenced not only by income but also by access to safe, affordable financial services. Both unbanked and underbanked households rely on alternative financial products such as payday loans and check-cashing services, which can cost thousands of dollars over a lifetime. These financial barriers can increase household costs, limit opportunities to build savings, and contribute to ongoing economic vulnerability.

▲ *Financial Stability Fig. 15 — Prosperity Now Scorecard (FDIC and U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates), 2023*

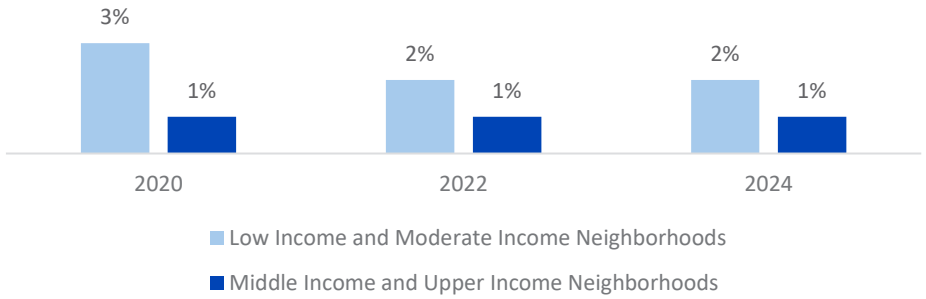
Percentage of Families Living in Poverty, Homeownership Compared to Renters, Peoria MSA, 2024



▲ ■ *Financial Stability Fig. 16 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024*

Homeownership provides stable housing costs and wealth-building opportunities, while renters face higher housing cost burdens and greater risk of financial instability. Housing tenure is strongly associated with financial stability in the Peoria MSA. Families who rent are significantly more likely to live below the poverty level than homeowners, particularly female-headed households.

Percentage of Mortgage Borrowers with Severely Delinquent Debt, Peoria MSA, 2020/2022/2024

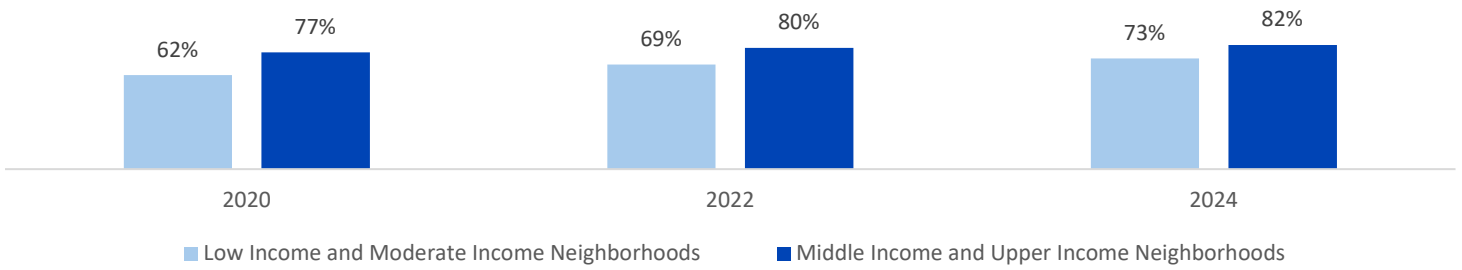


Note: under the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), the Federal Reserve classifies Low Income and Moderate Income (LMI) neighborhoods as census tracts with median family incomes below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), while Middle Income and Upper Income neighborhoods meet or exceed that threshold.

■ *Financial Stability Fig. 17 — Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax Data and Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Census Flat File, accessed via the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia Consumer Credit Explorer, Q4 Data*

Mortgage delinquency rates remained relatively stable between 2020 and 2024 but are consistently higher in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods affecting housing stability and financial resilience. Severely delinquent mortgage debt, as defined by the Federal Reserve Bank, refers to loans more than 90 days past due or already in foreclosure, indicating borrowers at high risk of default.

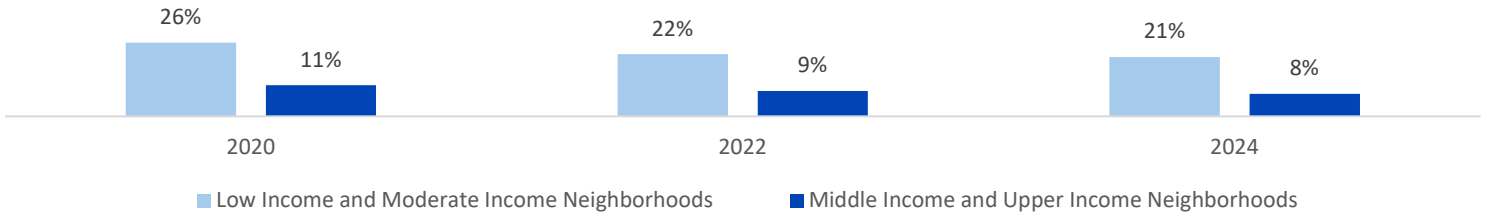
Percentage of Borrowers with Credit Card Debt, Peoria MSA, 2020/2022/2024



Financial Stability Fig. 18 — Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax Data and Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Census Flat File, accessed via the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia Consumer Credit Explorer, Q4 Data

Consumer credit card use continues to rise across the Peoria MSA. Between 2020 and 2024, the percentage of residents carrying credit card debt increased in both low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and middle- and upper-income neighborhoods, which may reflect increasing reliance on revolving credit to manage household expenses.

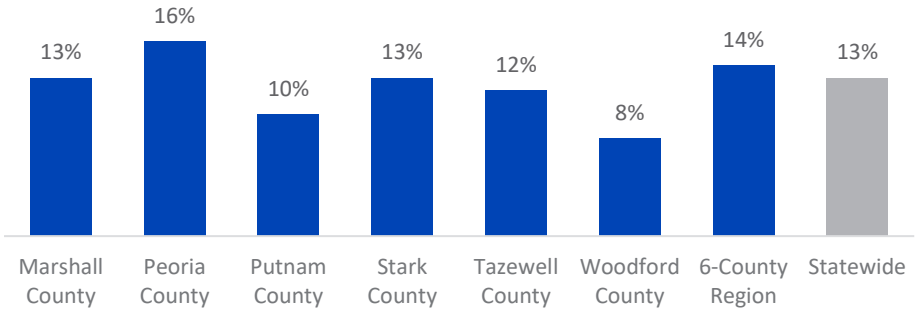
Percentage of Consumers with Debt Sent to Collections, Peoria MSA, 2020/2022/2024



Financial Stability Fig. 19 — Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax Data and Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Census Flat File, accessed via the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia Consumer Credit Explorer, Q4 Data

The percentage of consumers with debt sent to collections declined between 2020 and 2024 across all neighborhood income levels in the Peoria MSA. However, residents in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods continue to experience substantially higher rates of collections activity than those in middle- and upper-income neighborhoods.

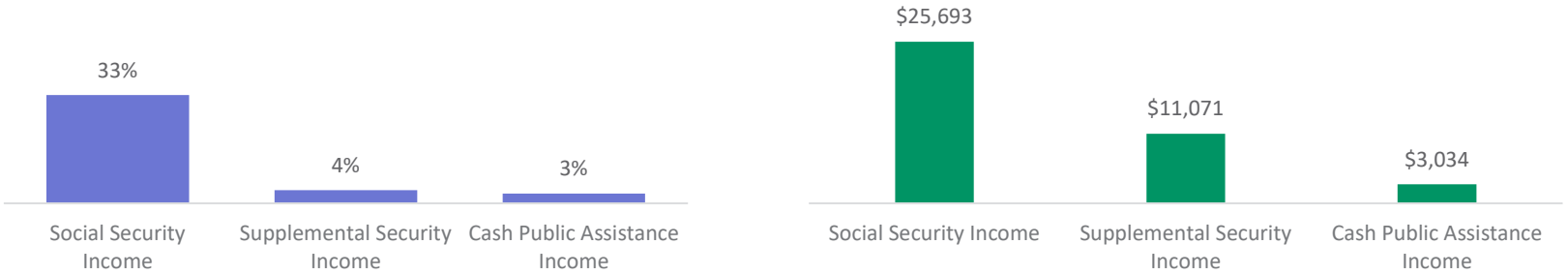
Percentage of Population with an Earned Income Credit, Peoria 6-County Region, 2022



The Earned Income Credit (EIC) reduces poverty for low-income working families by supplementing income and supporting workforce participation. In the Peoria 6-County Region, EIC participation is concentrated among working households with children earning less than $50,000. Households with qualifying children receive the largest credits, highlighting the EIC's key role in helping families meet basic needs and maintain financial stability.

▲ ▰ *Financial Stability Fig. 20 — IRS, Statistics of Income Division, Individual Master File System, 2022 Individual Income Tax Returns*

Percentage of Households Receiving, and Average Dollars Received, for Supplemental Income Programs, Peoria MSA, 2024



▲ ▰ *Financial Stability Figs. 21 & 22 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2024*

- Social Security Income plays an important role in reducing poverty and supporting financial stability among older adults, particularly women and people of color who may have fewer retirement resources. For nearly half of all beneficiaries over 65, Social Security provides at least 50% of their total income.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) primarily supports older adults and individuals with severe disabilities who have very limited income and assets. In 2024, the maximum federal SSI benefit was $943 per month for an individual and $1,415 for a couple, highlighting the financial vulnerability many recipients continue to experience despite assistance.
- Cash Public Assistance Income (aka, TANF) provides temporary financial support for low-income families with dependent children while also connecting households to employment, education, childcare, and workforce development services designed to promote long-term self-sufficiency.

- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and IDHS

HOUSING AND BASIC NEEDS STABILITY

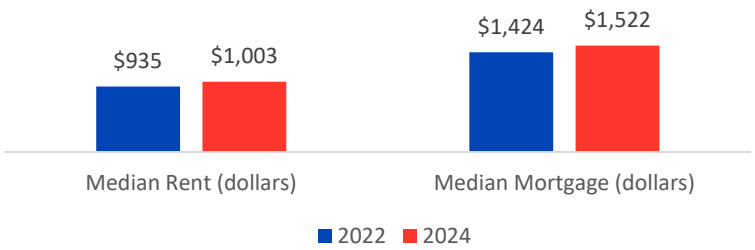
Stable housing and reliable access to basic needs are foundational to long-term health and financial stability. However, many households in the Peoria MSA continue to experience economic pressures related to housing affordability, utility costs, and food access. Financial strain caused by rising living expenses can contribute to housing instability, overcrowding, frequent moves, and food insecurity—particularly among low-income households and other economically vulnerable populations.

Percentage of Adults Reporting Housing Insecurity Past Year, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023

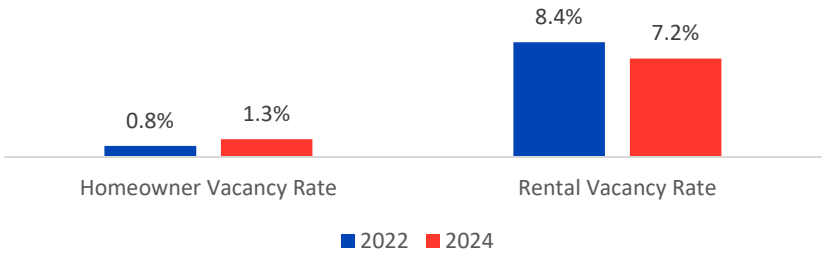
▲ ▰ *Financial Stability Fig. 23 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2023*

Housing insecurity reflects ongoing financial stress related to the ability to afford stable housing. CDC PLACES data estimates the percentage of adults who reported being worried or stressed about having enough money to pay rent or mortgage costs during the past year. Housing insecurity can contribute to chronic stress, frequent moves, delayed healthcare, educational disruption for children, and increased risk of homelessness and other adverse health outcomes.

Median Rent and Mortgage Payments, Peoria MSA, 2022 vs 2024



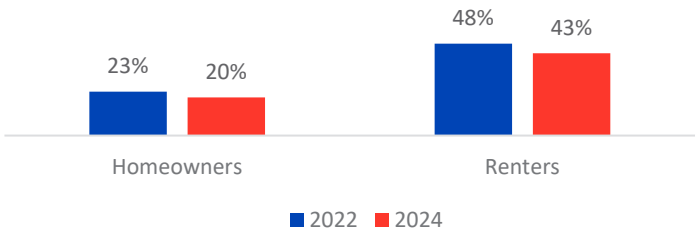
Homeowner and Rental Vacancy Rates, Peoria MSA, 2022 vs 2024



▰ *Financial Stability Figs. 24 & 25 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2022/2024*

- Median housing costs continued to increase across the Peoria MSA between 2022 and 2024. In 2024, median monthly rent exceeded $1,000, while median monthly mortgage costs increased to more than $1,500, reinforcing ongoing concerns about housing affordability and cost burden for many households.
- Vacancy rate trends suggest continued housing market pressures across the Peoria MSA, particularly for renters. Between 2022 and 2024, rental vacancy rates declined while homeowner vacancy rates increased slightly, reinforcing broader concerns related to availability, affordability, and access.

Housing Cost Burden for Homeowners and Renters, Peoria MSA, 2022 vs 2024



Housing cost burden is spending more than 30% of income on housing, making it harder to afford essentials like food, transportation, and health care. Renters in the Peoria MSA face much higher financial strain than homeowners. Housing cost burden also accounts for almost all HUD-defined disproportionate housing needs related to incomplete plumbing, kitchen facilities, and lack of telephone service (only 1.5% of reported concerns).

Financial Stability Fig. 26 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2022/2024

Minimum Income Needed to Afford Fair Market Rent, Peoria MSA, 2023

Fair Market Rent and Needed Income to Afford by Unit Size, Peoria MSA				
Unit Size	**One-Bedroom**	**Two-Bedroom**	**Three-Bedroom**	**Four-Bedroom**
Fair Market Rent Estimate	$790	$1,003	$1,300	$1,364
Minimum Income Needed to Afford	$31,600	$40,120	$52,000	$54,560

Financial Stability Fig. 27 — National Low Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2025

The National Low Income Housing Coalition calculates the minimum income needed to afford rental housing without spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs. In 2023, a full-time worker earning Illinois' minimum wage of $13 per hour earned approximately $27,000 annually before taxes—well below the income needed to afford a modest two-bedroom rental unit in the Peoria MSA.

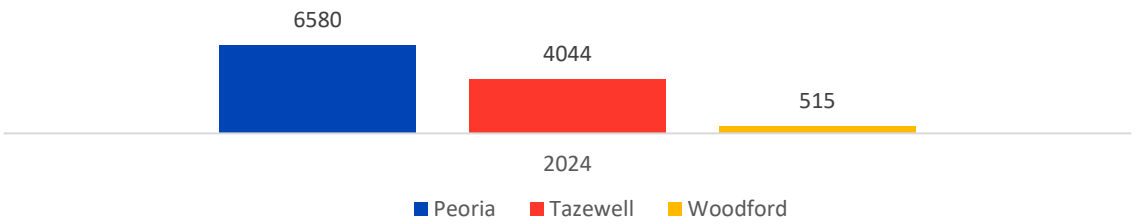
Gas and Electricity Expenses of Occupied Housing Units, Peoria MSA, 2021 vs 2024

Natural Gas			Electricity		
Monthly Bill Range	**2021**	**2024**	**Monthly Bill Range**	**2021**	**2024**
Under $100	46%	56%	Under $100	73%	58%
$100 to $149	23%	21%	$100 to $149	14%	16%
$150 or more	20%	33%	$150 or more	13%	26%

Financial Stability Fig. 28 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2021/2024

Households across the Peoria MSA are increasingly experiencing higher utility costs. Between 2021 and 2024, the percentage of households reporting electricity bills of $150 or more doubled, while gas costs also increased significantly. Rising utility expenses may place additional financial pressure on low-income households and contribute to increased demand for utility assistance programs.

Households Receiving Energy Assistance, Tri-County Area, 2024



▲■ *Financial Stability Fig. 29 — Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies*

LIHEAP helps eligible low-income households pay for heat, gas, propane, and electricity. Households must be within 200% of the federal poverty level to qualify. In the Tri-County Area, about 12% of eligible households received assistance in 2024—supporting over 25,500 people, with more than a third under age 6. Most recipients were single-family households.

According to CDC PLACES, 6-9% of adults in the Peoria 6-County Region reported a utility company (electric, gas, oil, or water) issued a shutoff notice in 2023. Unmet social and economic needs—like utility insecurity—cause chronic stress, worsen disease outcomes, and limit access to essential resources.

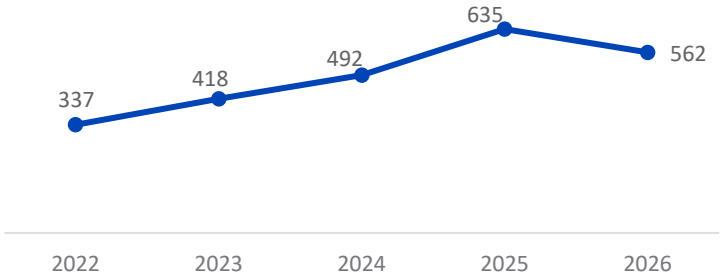
Adults with Lack of Reliable Transportation in the Past Year, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023

Financial Stability Fig. 30 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2023

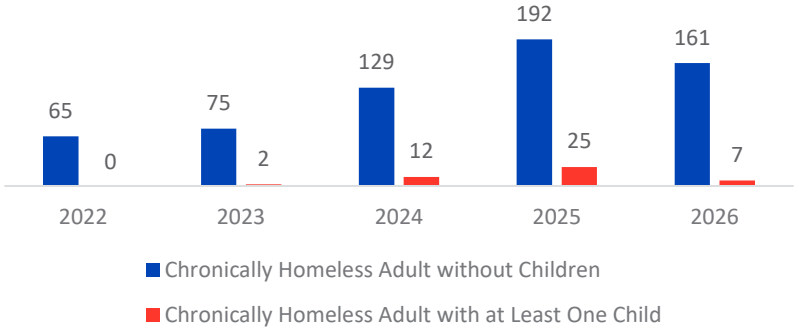
Reliable transportation is a critical social driver of health that affects access to employment, healthcare, childcare, groceries, education, and other essential services. Adults without reliable transportation may experience greater financial instability, reduced employment opportunities, delayed medical care, and increased social isolation—particularly in communities with limited public transportation infrastructure.

Homelessness — The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) program supports regional systems designed to address homelessness through coordinated outreach, emergency shelter, housing assistance, supportive services, and long-term housing stabilization efforts. The HUD IL-507 Continuum of Care serves Fulton, Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford counties and collects annual system performance and Point-in-Time Count data to help communities better understand local homelessness trends and housing needs.

Homelessness Point-in-Time Count, 2022-2026



Chronic Homelessness Count, 2022-2026

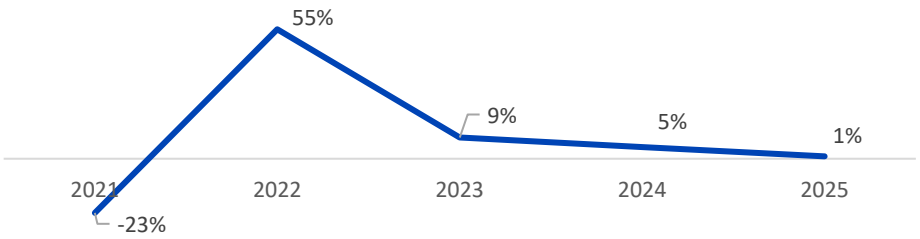


▲ ▰ *Financial Stability Figs. 31 and 32 — HUD IL-507 Continuum of Care, Point-in-Time Counts for Fulton, Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford counties*

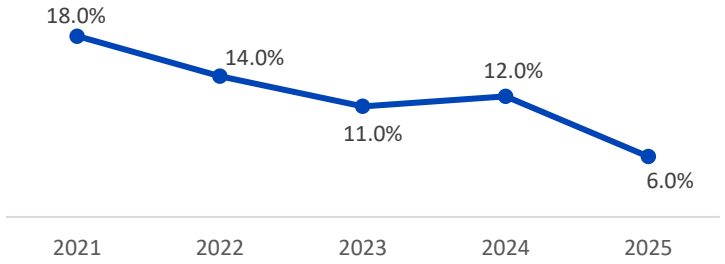
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires an annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count that measures the number of people experiencing homelessness in a community on a single night each January who are living on the streets, places not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters, and transitional housing. Annual Point-in-Time homelessness counts in the Peoria region increased significantly since 2022. This upward trend may reflect growing housing affordability challenges, economic instability, limited housing availability, behavioral health needs, and increased visibility and identification of individuals experiencing homelessness.

- Chronic homelessness in the Peoria region is most concentrated among working-age adults ages 35 to 64. Point-in-Time Count data also reflects racial disparities in homelessness, with Black/African American individuals disproportionately represented compared to their share of the regional population, despite white individuals representing the majority of individuals counted overall. Chronic homelessness is defined by HUD as affecting individuals or families who have a disability and have been homeless for at least 12 consecutive months, or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years, totaling at least 12 months. This includes people living in places not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters, or safe havens, and also those who have briefly spent time in institutions but were homeless before entering.

Percent Change Number of Persons Experiencing Homelessness for First Time Compared to Previous Year, 2021-2025



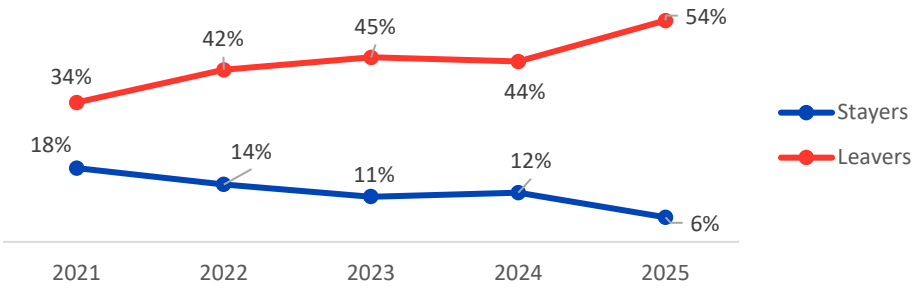
Return to Homelessness within 12 Month Rate, 2021-2025



▲ *Financial Stability Figs. 33 and 34 — HUD IL-507 System Performance Measures, 2021-2025*

- After reaching significant highs in 2018 and 2019 prior to the pandemic, and declining sharply during 2020 and 2021, first-time homelessness returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2022 before slowing considerably through 2025 to levels comparable to 2017.
- While overall homelessness continues to increase across the Peoria region, the percentage of individuals returning to homelessness within 12 months declined significantly between 2021 and 2025. This trend may indicate stronger housing stabilization efforts and improved long-term support for individuals transitioning out of homelessness.

Increased Total Income for Continuum of Care Clients, 2021-2025



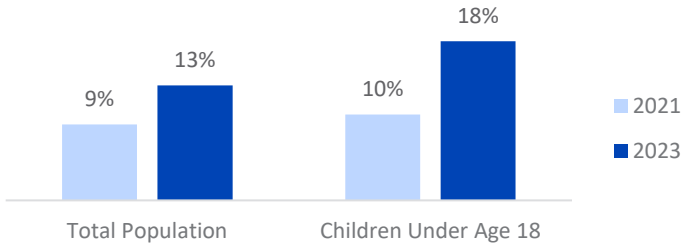
Housing instability is often closely tied to financial hardship. When household income is not enough to consistently cover housing costs, events such as job loss, reduced work hours, illness, or unexpected expenses may increase risk for eviction, homelessness, or reliance on temporary housing supports. – Adapted from National Alliance to End Homelessness

▲ *Financial Stability Fig. 35 — HUD IL-507 System Performance Measures, 2021-2025*

HUD measures changes in total income for individuals who remain in CoC-funded homelessness programs (“stayers”) and those who successfully exit programs (“leavers”). Between 2021 and 2025, the percentage of program leavers reporting increased total income rose substantially, while income growth among program stayers declined. This trend may reflect stronger employment and income outcomes among individuals successfully exiting homelessness programs, while long-term program participants often face more significant barriers to sustained income growth.

Food Insecurity — Food insecurity refers to limited or uncertain access to enough nutritious food for an active and healthy life due to financial hardship or limited household resources. Food insecurity may affect physical health, child development, educational engagement, behavioral health, and long-term economic stability.

Percentage of Population Who are Food Insecure, Peoria MSA, 2021 vs 2023



▲ ■ *Financial Stability Fig. 36 — Feeding America Map the Meal Gap (U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and USDA)*

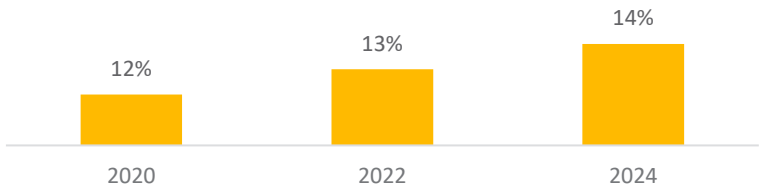
Food insecurity increased across the Peoria MSA between 2021 and 2023, rising from 9% to 13% of the total population. Among children under age 18, food insecurity increased even more sharply, rising from 10% to 18%, reinforcing concerns about the growing financial strain experienced by families with children.

While SNAP (food assistance) benefits help support many food insecure households, a significant percentage of food insecure individuals in the Peoria MSA do not qualify for SNAP benefits and must rely on charitable food assistance programs. According to Feeding America, this percentage increased from 39% in 2021 to 48% in 2023.

Average Estimated Monthly SNAP Benefits by Household Size, FY 2023								
1 Person	2 People	3 People	4 People	5 People	6 People	7 People	8 People	Each Add'l
$195	$359	$577	$684	$818	$1,011	$1,048	$1,150	$211

▲ ■ *Financial Stability Fig. 37 — SNAP, Fiscal Year 2023 Cost-of-Living Adjustments, USDA, August 9, 2022*

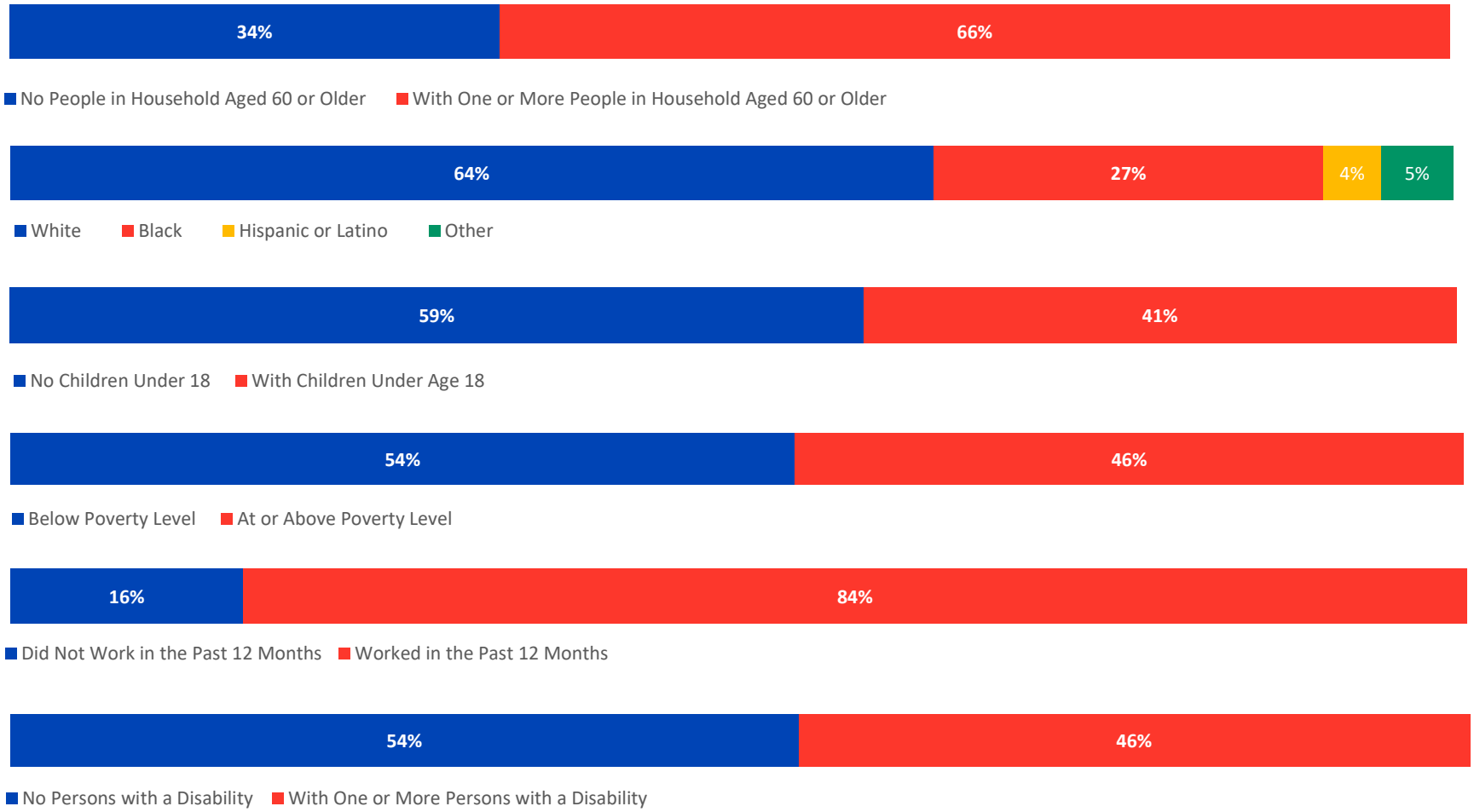
Percentage of Households Receiving SNAP Benefits, Peoria MSA, 2020-2024



As food insecurity has increased across the Peoria MSA, participation in SNAP benefits has also continued to rise, highlighting the growing importance of food assistance programs for financially vulnerable households. Looking deeper into financial stability, median income for households receiving SNAP benefits in 2024 was $25,472 - 64% less than the overall Peoria MSA median income of $71,587.

▲ ■ *Financial Stability Fig. 38 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2020-2024*

Households Receiving SNAP Benefits by Demographics, Peoria MSA, 2024



▲ ▰ *Financial Stability Figs. 39-44 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024*

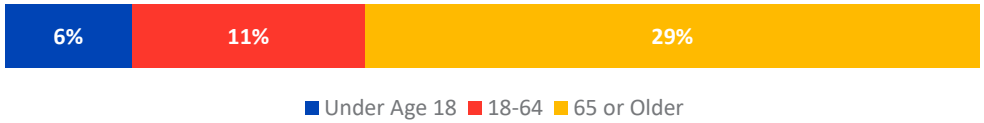
Trends in SNAP participation suggest growing financial instability among households not traditionally associated with public assistance programs. Looking at data between 2020 and 2024, SNAP participation increased among working households, older adults, and households above the poverty level, indicating that many families continue to struggle with rising food, housing, and living costs despite employment or incomes above federal poverty thresholds.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Disability status can significantly impact employment, income, housing stability, transportation access, and overall quality of life. Understanding disability trends helps communities identify barriers to economic stability and improve access to services, employment opportunities, and community participation.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines disabilities as the following: hearing (deaf or having serious difficulty hearing), vision (blind or having serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses), cognitive difficulty (due to a physical, mental, or emotional problem resulting in having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions), ambulatory (serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs), self-care (difficulty bathing or dressing), and independent living difficulty (due to a physical, mental, or emotional problem resulting in being unable to complete errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping).

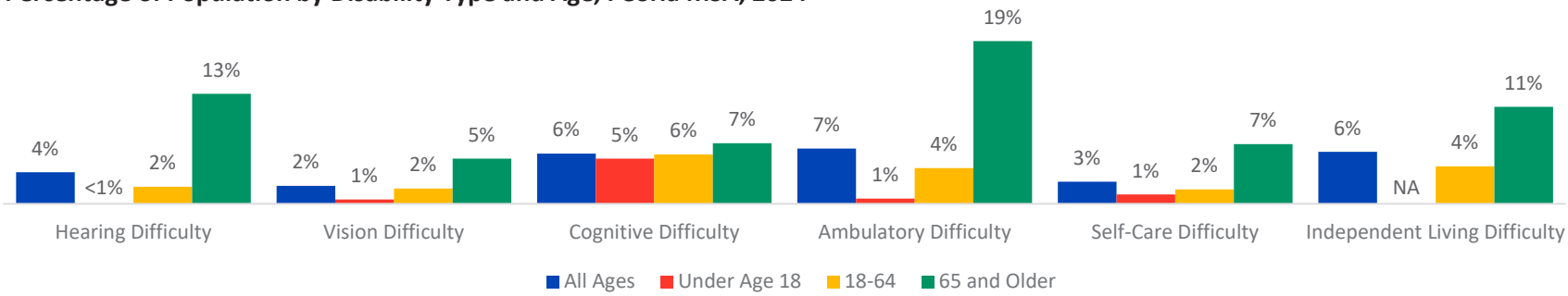
Percentage of People by Age Range with a Disability, Peoria MSA, 2024



When looking at all ages, 13% of the Peoria MSA has a disability. Disability prevalence increases substantially with age, particularly among adults aged 65 and older. For people with a disability who are age 65 or older, slightly more women (54%) have a disability compared to men (46%).

Financial Stability Fig. 45 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2024

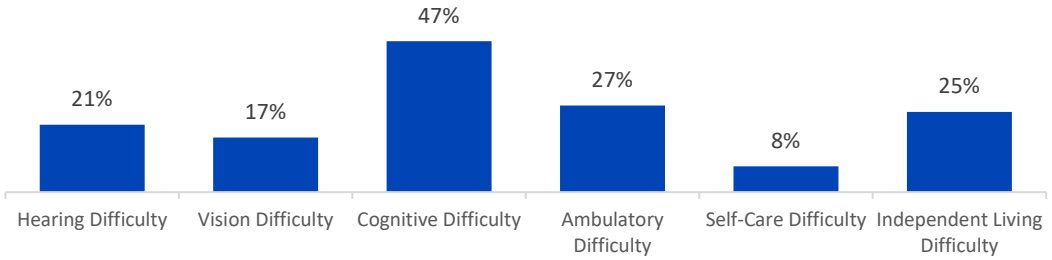
Percentage of Population by Disability Type and Age, Peoria MSA, 2024



Financial Stability Fig. 46 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024

Hearing, ambulatory, and independent living disabilities are highest among seniors 65 and older. *Please note percentages by disability do not add to 100% since many individuals have more than one disability; difficulties with independent living do not apply to the population under age 18.*

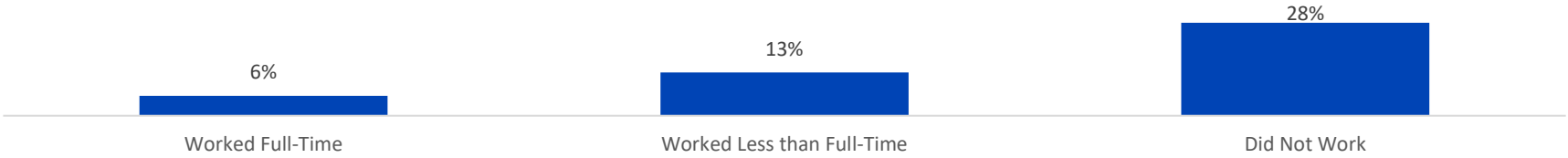
Percentage of Disabled Workforce (Ages 18-64) by Type of Disability, Peoria MSA, 2024



Overall, 7% of the Peoria MSA workforce has at least one type of disability; 27% of adults not in the workforce has a disability.

Financial Stability Fig. 47 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2024

Percentage of Disabled Workers (Ages 18-64) by Work Status, Peoria MSA, 2024

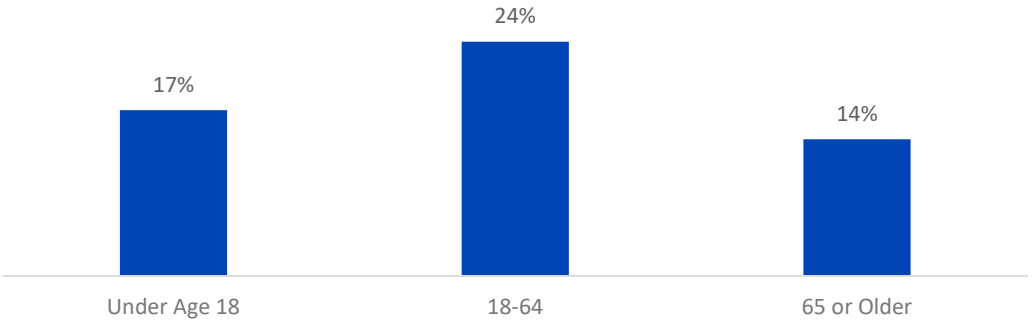


Worked Full-Time, Year-Round		Worked Less than Full-Time, Year-Round		Did Not Work	
With a hearing difficulty	30%	With a hearing difficulty	11%	With a hearing difficulty	22%
With a vision difficulty	15%	With a vision difficulty	18%	With a vision difficulty	14%
With a cognitive difficulty	43%	With a cognitive difficulty	61%	With a cognitive difficulty	50%
With an ambulatory difficulty	29%	With an ambulatory difficulty	26%	With an ambulatory difficulty	41%
With a self-care difficulty	8%	With a self-care difficulty	12%	With a self-care difficulty	24%
With an independent living difficulty	18%	With an independent living difficulty	39%	With an independent living difficulty	51%

Financial Stability Fig. 48 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2024

Cognitive disabilities represented the most commonly reported disability type among disabled adults in the workforce and among adults working less than full-time or not working.

Percentage of People with a Disability Who Live Below the Poverty Level by Age, Peoria MSA, 2024



Financial Stability Fig. 49 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2024

Overall, 19% of the Peoria MSA population that has a disability lives below the poverty level.

In 2024, 46% of the households receiving SNAP benefits had at least one person with a disability representing a 10% increase since 2021.

VETERANS AND ECONOMIC STABILITY

Veterans in the Peoria MSA, 2024	
7%	Percentage of the Peoria MSA population over age 18 who is a veteran (17,947 veterans)
49%	Percentage of Peoria MSA veterans who are 65 and older
7%	Percentage of Peoria MSA veterans who live below the poverty level
30%	Percentage of the total Peoria MSA veterans who have a disability (36% of veterans who live below the poverty level have a disability)

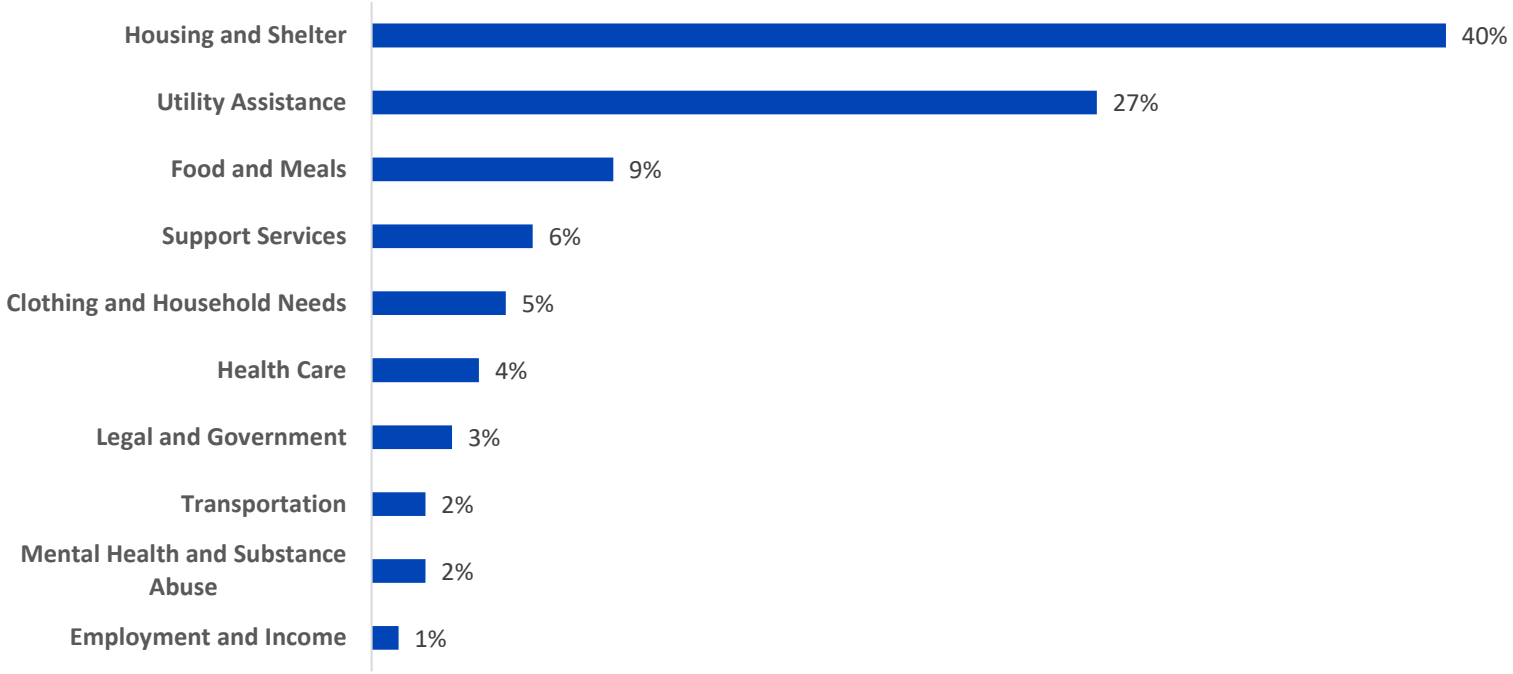
Financial Stability Fig. 50 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2024

Nearly half of veterans in the Peoria MSA are age 65 or older, highlighting the growing overlap between aging, disability, and veteran support needs.

211 INFORMATION AND REFERRAL DATA

211 is a free community information and referral service that connects individuals and families to health and human service resources, including housing, food assistance, utility support, healthcare, mental health services, transportation, and financial assistance programs. Because many households contact 211 during times of financial hardship or crisis, 211 data can provide a real-time snapshot of emerging community needs and economic pressures.

Top 10 Needs by 211 Callers, Peoria 6-County Region, 2026



Financial Stability Fig. 51 — Heart of Illinois 211 Call Center Data, Calendar Year 2025

211 information and referral data provide a real-time snapshot of community need across the Peoria 6-County Region. In 2025, the majority of regional requests to 211 were related to financial stability, particularly housing and utility assistance, reinforcing broader concerns related to affordability, housing instability, and household financial strain.

FINANCIAL STABILITY TRENDS SUMMARY

- Median household income increased across the Peoria MSA between 2020 and 2024; however, significant disparities by race, gender, age, educational attainment, and household type continue to impact long-term financial stability and economic opportunity.
- While the regional poverty rate improved slightly over the past decade, many households continue to experience financial vulnerability. Children, female-headed households, renters, older adults, and individuals with disabilities remain disproportionately impacted by poverty and economic hardship.
- Rising living costs continue to outpace wages for many households. Between 2021 and 2024, living wage estimates increased across nearly all household types, while housing, utility, food, and transportation costs placed additional financial pressure on working families.
- Financial strain extends beyond income alone. Asset poverty, debt burden, limited savings, reliance on credit, and barriers to traditional financial services continue to affect long-term economic resilience, particularly in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.
- Housing affordability remains a significant financial challenge. Renters continue to experience substantially higher housing cost burden rates than homeowners, while increasing rental costs, utility expenses, and limited housing availability contribute to ongoing housing instability.
- Homelessness increased significantly across the Peoria region between 2022 and 2025, reflecting broader economic pressures related to housing affordability, financial instability, and behavioral health needs. At the same time, declining rates of return to homelessness may indicate improved housing stabilization and support efforts.
- Food insecurity increased sharply between 2021 and 2023, particularly among households with children. SNAP participation also increased, including among working households, older adults, and households above the poverty level, suggesting that many families continue to struggle despite employment or incomes above traditional eligibility thresholds.
- Disability status continues to influence employment, income, and poverty outcomes across the Peoria MSA. Adults with disabilities are significantly less likely to work full-time and are more likely to experience poverty, reinforcing the importance of accessible employment opportunities and supportive services.
- 211 information and referral data further reinforce the growing financial strain experienced by households across the region. In 2025, the majority of requests to Heart of Illinois 211 were related to housing, utility assistance, food access, and other basic financial stability needs.

Together, these findings highlight the interconnected relationship between income, employment, housing stability, education, transportation, childcare, and access to basic needs. Financial hardship throughout the region continues to affect household stability, health outcomes, educational engagement, and long-term economic mobility, reinforcing the importance of workforce development, affordable housing, supportive services, and community-wide collaboration to improve long-term financial stability and quality of life.

HEALTH TRENDS

Health and well-being influence every aspect of community life, including educational success, workforce participation, economic stability, and overall quality of life. Physical health, mental health, access to healthcare, nutrition, housing stability, and social connection are all closely linked and shape long-term outcomes for individuals, families, and communities.

Residents across the Peoria 6-County Region should have opportunities to achieve optimal physical and behavioral health through access to healthcare services, preventive care, healthy environments, supportive relationships, and community resources. However, health outcomes are also strongly influenced by broader social drivers of health (SDoH), including income, education, employment, transportation, neighborhood conditions, and access to healthy food and safe housing.

The data in this section examines regional health trends related to birth and death characteristics, chronic disease, healthcare access, behavioral health, substance use, and youth development. Sources include the Tri-County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), Illinois Department of Public Health, CDC PLACES/BRFSS, Illinois Youth Survey, County Health Rankings, and additional state and national public health datasets.

SOCIAL DRIVERS OF HEALTH (SDOH)

Social drivers of health (SDoH) are the non-medical factors that shape where and how people live, work, and age. These influences—such as income, education, environment, and social connections—impact health outcomes far more than medical care. The five main SDoH domains are:

- **Economic Stability:** Income, employment, food security, and stable housing.
- **Education Access and Quality:** Graduation rates, early learning, and access to higher or vocational education.
- **Healthcare Access and Quality:** Insurance, health literacy, and access to quality, culturally competent care.
- **Neighborhood and Built Environment:** Safe housing, transportation, clean air and water, and access to healthy food.
- **Social and Community Context:** Discrimination, social support, civic engagement, and workplace conditions.

Look for the SDoH Symbol Throughout the Assessment

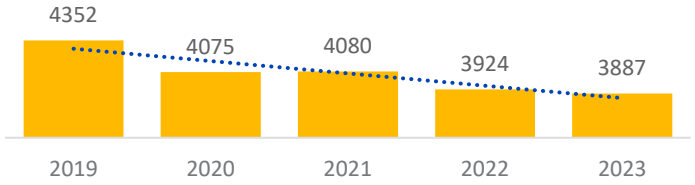
The Heart of Illinois United Way Community Impact Fund, with its support of education, financial stability, and health programs impacts several aspects of the social drivers of health. Because SDoH are closely connected to many community conditions identified in this assessment, look for the SDoH symbol throughout the report identifying data, trends, and community conditions commonly associated with broader social, economic, and environmental conditions including income, housing, education access, transportation, employment, and healthcare access.

HEALTH FOUNDATIONS

Health outcomes are influenced by a combination of physical, behavioral, social, economic, and environmental factors. The indicators in this section provide a broad overview of community health trends across the Peoria region, including birth outcomes, chronic disease, mortality, healthcare access, and factors that influence long-term well-being.

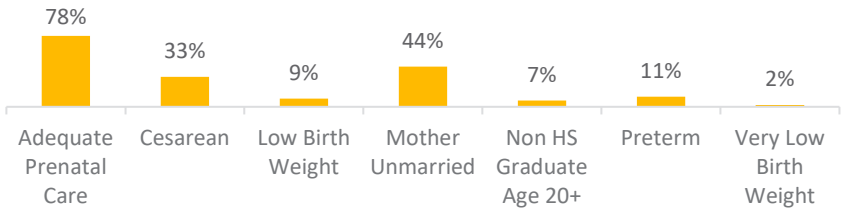
Birth and Death Indicators — including teen births, preterm births, life expectancy, chronic disease, and leading causes of death — provide important insight into the overall health and well-being of a community. These measures help identify long-term public health trends and inform healthcare planning, prevention efforts, and community support services.

Total Births by Year by County and Peoria 6-County Region, 2019-2023



Total births in the Peoria 6-County Region have steadily declined since 2019, mirroring broader national trends associated with changing population patterns, delayed family formation, economic conditions, and other demographic factors.

Birth Characteristics as Percentage of Total Births, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023



Birth characteristics in the Peoria 6-County Region remained generally consistent with statewide trends in 2023. However, preterm birth, low birth weight, and limited prenatal care continue to represent important maternal and infant health concerns associated with increased developmental and long-term health risks.

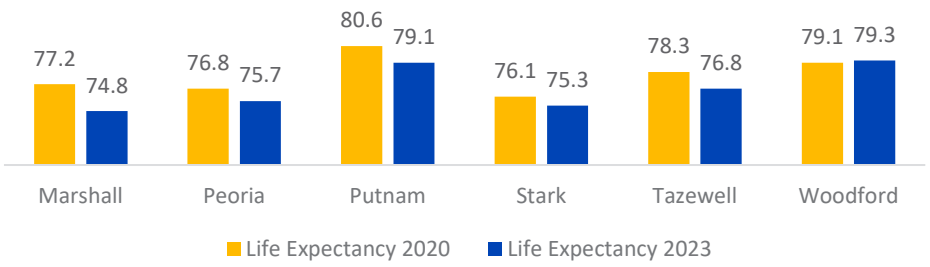
Teen Births, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023

County	Teen < 18	Teen 18-19
Marshall	1	4
Peoria	44	106
Putnam	1	0
Stark	0	3
Tazewell	21	42
Woodford	1	8
Region	68	163

Teen births continue to decline across the Peoria 6-County Region. In 2023, births to mothers aged 18 and younger accounted for 2% of all regional births, reflecting a significant decrease from previous years and mirroring broader national trends.

Health Figs. 1, 2, and 3— Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Birth Characteristics, 2023

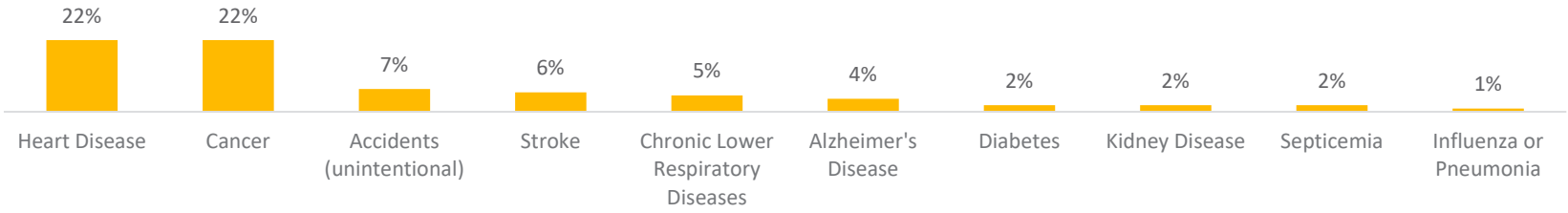
Life Expectancy in Years, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023



Life expectancy is a broad indicator of overall community health and reflects factors such as healthcare access, chronic disease, behavioral health, economic stability, and other social drivers of health. Similar to national trends following the COVID-19 pandemic, most counties across the Peoria region experienced declines in life expectancy between 2020 and 2023, although the extent of decline varied by community.

Health Fig. 4 — County Health Rankings, National Center for Health Statistics - Natality and Mortality Files; Census Population Estimates Program, 2023

Leading Causes of Death, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023



Health Fig. 5 — Illinois Department of Public Health, Death Demographics, 2023

Chronic disease continues to account for the majority of deaths across the Peoria region. In 2023, heart disease and cancer remained the leading causes of death, followed by accidents, stroke, chronic respiratory disease, Alzheimer's disease, and diabetes. Many of these conditions are influenced by behavioral, environmental, and socioeconomic factors, including access to healthcare, nutrition, physical activity, and chronic stress.

According to CDC PLACES (2022–2023), adults across the Peoria region reported increasing rates of several chronic conditions since 2020, including:

- Asthma/COPD — 11% reported asthma and more than 7% reported COPD
- Cancer — more than 7% reported a cancer diagnosis (excluding skin cancer)
- Coronary Heart Disease — more than 6% reported coronary heart disease
- Diabetes — more than 10% reported diabetes
- Stroke — more than 3% reported having experienced a stroke

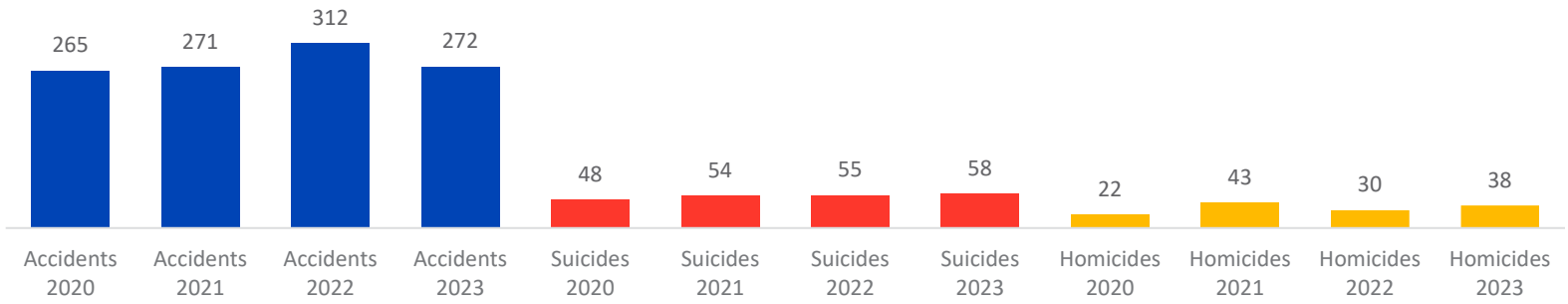
Drug Overdose Deaths, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020-2023

▲ ■ *Health Fig. 6 — Illinois Department of Public Health, Vital Statistics, Drug Overdose Deaths, Illinois Residents, 2020-2023*

Drug overdose deaths increased substantially across the Peoria 6-County Region between 2020 and 2023, reflecting broader state and national behavioral health and substance use trends. Although overdose deaths declined slightly after peaking in 2022, rates remain significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels and continue to represent a major public health concern.

Supplemental SUDORS (State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System) data from Peoria and Tazewell Counties shows that fentanyl and opioids were involved in the majority of overdose deaths between 2019 and 2022. Overdose deaths disproportionately impacted adult males, particularly adults ages 35 to 54, reinforcing the broader relationship between substance use disorders, behavioral health, trauma exposure, family stability, and long-term community well-being. The findings also reinforce the increasing role of fentanyl in overdose mortality across the region.

Injury Deaths, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020-2023

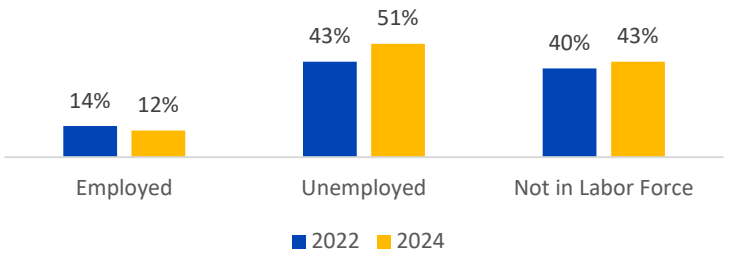


▲ ■ *Health Fig. 7 — Illinois Department of Public Health, Death Demographics, 2020-2023*

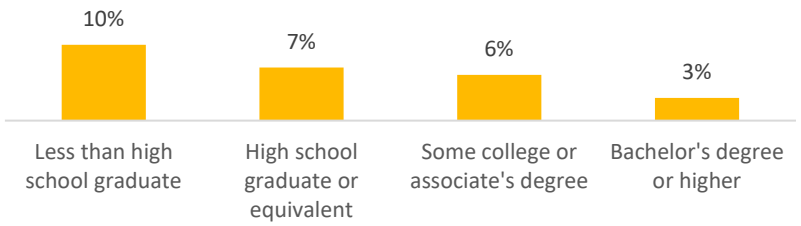
Injury-related deaths — including accidents, suicide, and homicide — continue to impact the health and safety of the Peoria region. Accidental deaths remained consistently high between 2020 and 2023, while suicide deaths increased over the same period. The Illinois Violent Death Reporting System (IVDRS) reported in 2021 that 88% of homicide deaths in Peoria County were from firearms. Insufficient data was reported for other counties. Additional findings from IVDRS report that residences/homes were the most common location for both suicides and homicides; suicide represented the largest category of violent deaths. Exposure to violence, household instability, substance misuse, and trauma are also strongly associated with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and long-term behavioral and physical health outcomes.

Health Insurance — Access to health insurance remains closely connected to employment, education, and economic stability. Individuals without insurance coverage are more likely to delay or forgo preventive care, medical treatment, dental care, and prescription medications due to cost. Public insurance programs continue to play an important role for unemployed adults, retirees, individuals with disabilities, and other economically vulnerable populations across the Peoria region.

Public Insurance Coverage by Employment Status, Ages 19-64, Peoria MSA, 2022 vs 2024



Percentage of Population, Age 26 and Older Without Health Insurance by Educational Attainment, Peoria MSA, 2024



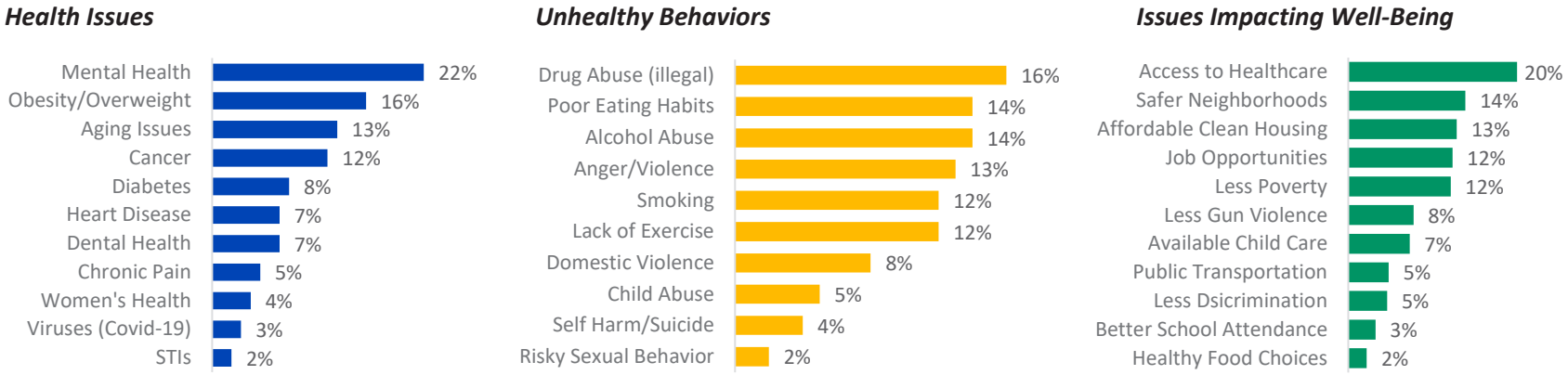
Health Figs. 8 and 9 — U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2022 and 2024

Access to health insurance remains closely connected to employment status and economic stability with employed adults relying primarily on private insurance coverage while unemployed adults and those outside the labor force depended more heavily on public insurance programs. In 2024, 38% of the Peoria MSA population age 19-65 relied on public health insurance compared to 72% who had private health insurance.

- Between 2022 and 2024, public insurance coverage increased most significantly among unemployed adults ages 19-65, rising from 43% to 51%.
- According to the 2025 Tri-County Community Health Needs Assessment, respondents cited cost, lack of perceived need, or uncertainty about how to obtain coverage as common reasons for being uninsured.
- Higher educational attainment is strongly associated with improved access to employer-sponsored health insurance and preventive healthcare services.

Health Priorities and Perceptions — Community perceptions of health concerns provide important insight into the issues residents believe most impact quality of life and long-term community well-being. The following indicators reflect local perspectives related to physical health, behavioral health, healthcare access, safety, and other social drivers of health.

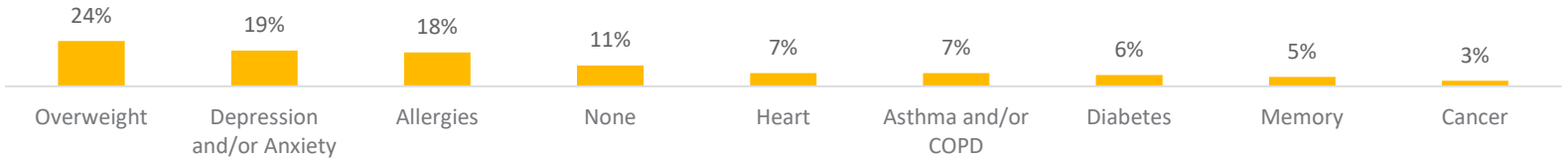
Adult Health Perceptions, Tri-County Area, 2024



▲ ■ *Health Figs. 10, 11, and 12 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2025*

The 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey respondents identified mental health, obesity/overweight, aging issues, and viruses as leading community health concerns. Residents also identified substance use, healthcare access, healthy food choices, neighborhood safety, and violence prevention as major factors impacting long-term community well-being. Several of the community's top concerns, particularly mental health and obesity, also align with broader health trends identified throughout the assessment.

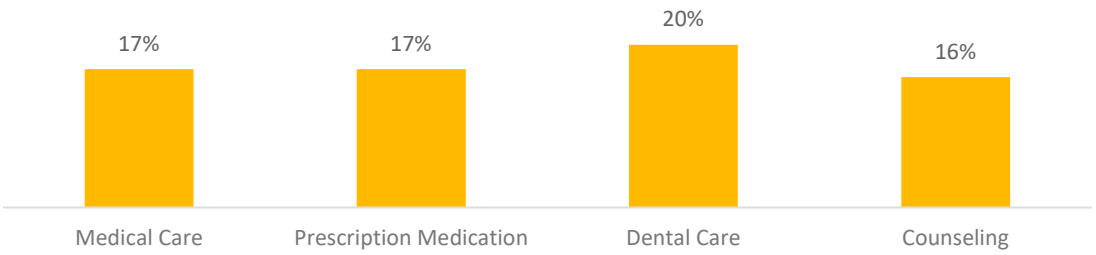
Self-Reported Adult Health Conditions, Tri-County Area, 2025



Health Fig. 13 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2025

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey respondents most frequently reported overweight/obesity, depression/anxiety, allergies, and chronic respiratory conditions among common health concerns. Self-reported health conditions may reflect broader community trends related to chronic disease, behavioral health, aging, and access to preventive care.

Percentage of Adults Who Did Not Have Access to Health Care, Tri-County Area, 2024



▲ ▰ *Health Fig. 14 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2025*

According to the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), access to health care services was strongly associated with broader social drivers of health, including income, education, housing stability, race, and geography. Individuals experiencing housing instability and other financial barriers were more likely to report difficulty accessing medical care, prescription medications, dental care, and counseling services when needed.

Common barriers to accessing care included:

- **Medical care:** long wait times, inability to afford copays, and lack of insurance coverage.
- **Prescription medications:** inability to afford copays or deductibles.
- **Dental care:** inability to afford copays or deductibles, lack of dental insurance, and providers not accepting insurance.
- **Counseling services:** inability to afford copays, long wait times, and difficulty finding providers.

According to CDC PLACES estimates (2023), more than 23% of adults in the Peoria 6-County Region did not visit a doctor for a routine checkup during the past year, while more than 35% did not visit a dentist during the same period. Delayed preventive and dental care may contribute to poorer long-term health outcomes, chronic disease progression, and unmet healthcare needs across the region.

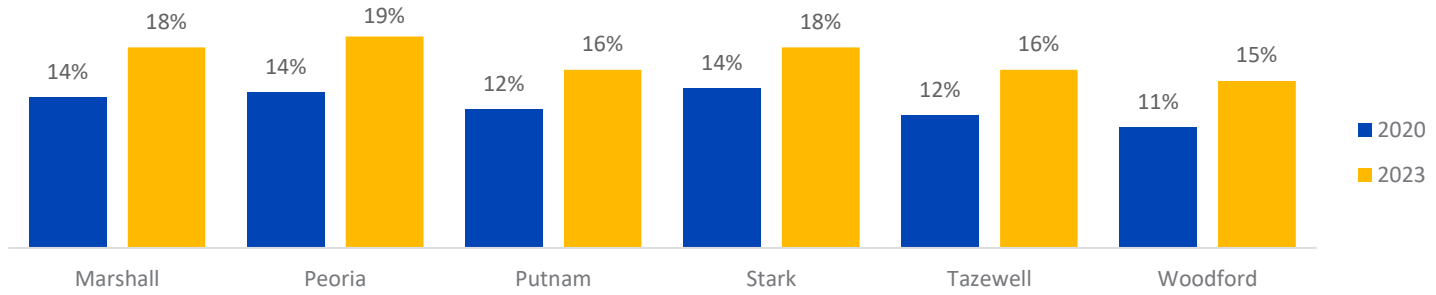
Understanding Changes in Health Care Spending, Peoria MSA, 2017-2021

Per-person health care spending in the Peoria MSA increased 35% between 2017 and 2021, compared to 24% in similar metro areas. Researchers attributed the increase to higher prices, increased use of services, and greater hospital market concentration.

The Peoria region's hospital market became more concentrated during this period, with its Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) increasing to 5,648 — well above the federal threshold for a highly concentrated market (>2,500). Highly concentrated markets are often associated with higher healthcare costs, increased insurance premiums, and reduced access to care. In response, local health systems, public health agencies, and community organizations continue to prioritize social drivers of health, behavioral health services, food security, and access to affordable community-based care.

Health Care Cost Institute,
Healthy Marketplace Index, June 2023

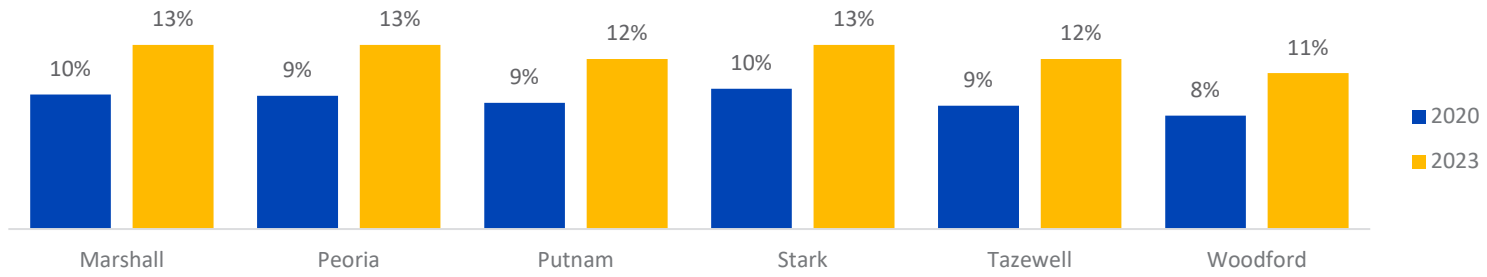
Adults Reporting Fair or Poor Health, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023



Health Fig. 15 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2020/2023

Adults reporting fair or poor overall health increased across all counties in the Peoria region between 2020 and 2023. In the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), 16% of respondents across Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties also reported poor physical health. Perceptions of physical health tended to be more positive among older adults and individuals with higher income and education levels, while poorer physical health perceptions were more commonly associated with housing instability and other social and economic barriers affecting overall well-being.

Adults Reporting Poor Physical Health for 14+ Days, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023



Health Fig. 16 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2020/2023

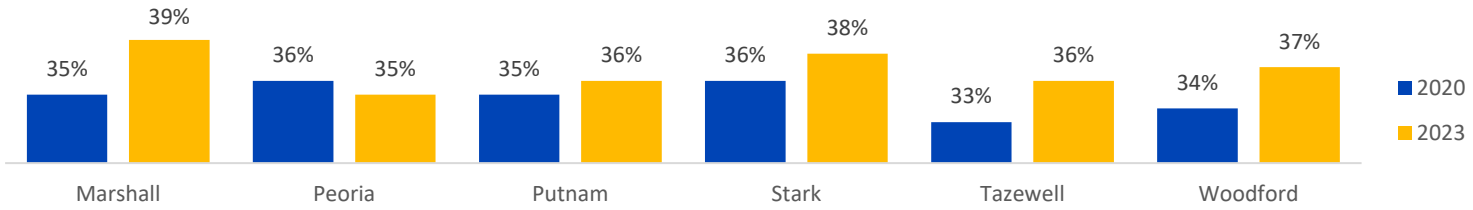
The percentage of adults reporting poor physical health for 14 or more days during the past month increased across all counties in the region between 2020 and 2023. Frequent poor physical health may reflect chronic disease, disability, ongoing medical conditions, or broader social and economic barriers affecting overall quality of life and daily functioning.

HEALTHY LIVING AND CHRONIC DISEASE RISK

Chronic disease risk is influenced by a combination of health behaviors, nutrition, physical activity, environmental conditions, and access to preventive care. The following indicators highlight factors associated with obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other long-term health outcomes across the region.

Weight, Nutrition, and Food Access — Nutrition, food access, and healthy eating behaviors are strongly associated with obesity, chronic disease, educational outcomes, and long-term overall health. Community conditions such as income, transportation, neighborhood food access, and housing stability may also influence opportunities for healthy living.

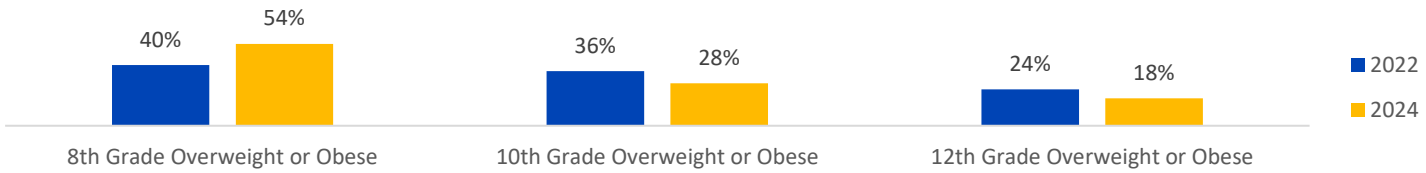
Percentage of Obese Adults 18 and Older, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023



Health Fig. 17 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2020/2023

Adult obesity rates remained high across the Peoria region in 2023, ranging from 35% to 39% by county. Obesity is associated with increased risk for chronic disease, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, mobility limitations, and reduced overall quality of life. Community conditions such as food access, physical activity opportunities, income, education, and neighborhood environments also influence long-term health outcomes.

Middle & High School Students Reported Overweight or Obese, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2022 vs 2024 Academic Years



Health Fig. 18 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development

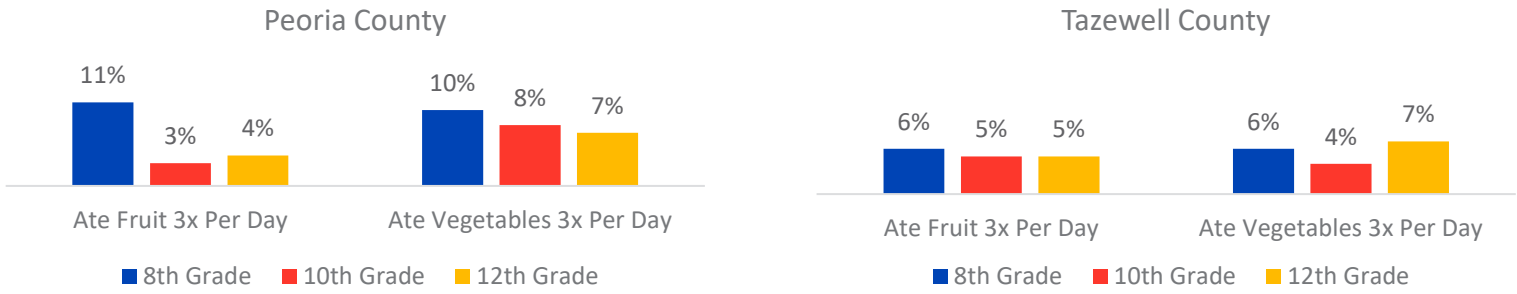
Body Mass Index (BMI) categories were calculated using self-reported height and weight from the Illinois Youth Survey. Youth obesity and physical inactivity are associated with increased risk for chronic disease, behavioral health concerns, absenteeism, and reduced overall well-being later in life. Survey results varied by grade level between 2022 and 2024, with higher percentages reported among younger students. Please note that Woodford County did not participate in the 2024 Illinois Youth Survey and submitted incomplete BMI data in 2022.

Adults Reporting Daily Fruit & Vegetable Consumption, Tri-County Area, 2024

Health Fig. 19 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2025

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey results suggest that many adults in the region report low daily fruit and vegetable consumption, although healthy eating patterns improved slightly since 2022. Healthy eating behaviors were more common among individuals with higher income and education levels and less common among those experiencing housing instability. Community conditions such as food affordability, transportation, and neighborhood access to grocery stores and healthy foods may also influence long-term nutrition and health outcomes.

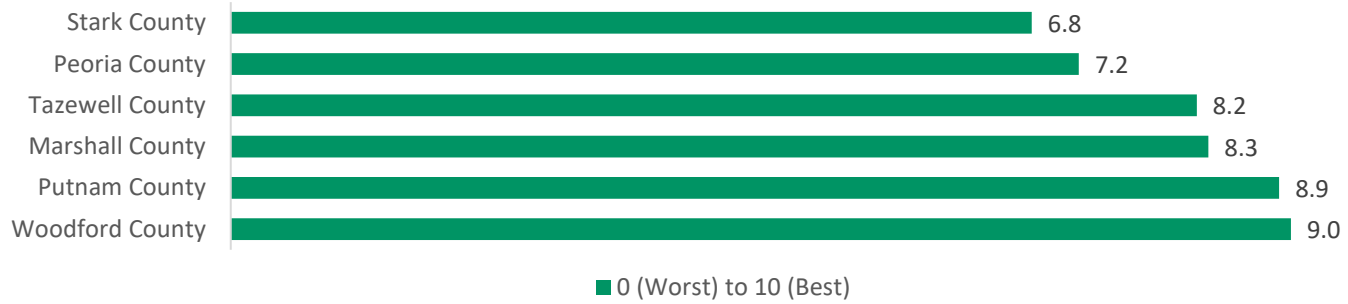
Students Reporting Fruit & Vegetable Consumption 3x Per Day, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



Health Fig. 20 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development

Illinois Youth Survey results suggest that frequent fruit and vegetable consumption generally declined among older students. Healthy eating behaviors during childhood and adolescence are associated with long-term physical health, chronic disease prevention, academic performance, and overall well-being. Access to healthy foods may also be influenced by broader community conditions, including food affordability, neighborhood food access, transportation, and household stability.

Food Environment Index, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023

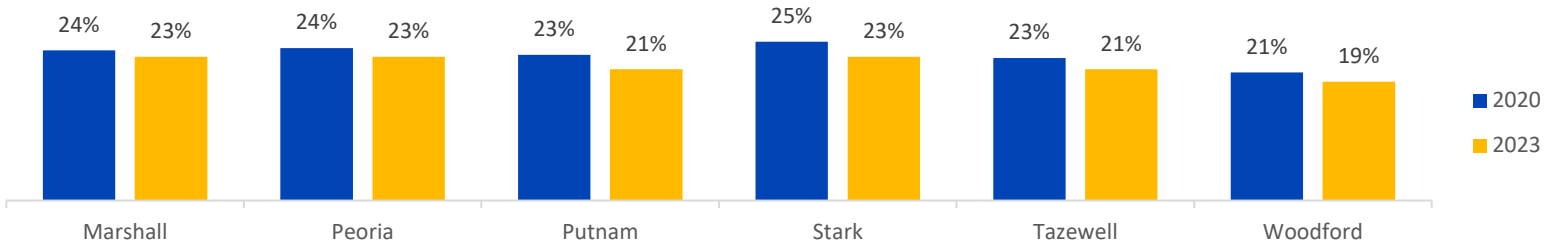


Health Fig. 21 — County Health Rankings, Food Environment Index (USDA Food Environment Atlas; Map the Meal Gap from Feeding America), 2026

The Food Environment Index measures access to healthy foods based on grocery store access, transportation, affordability, and other economic barriers. Lower food environment scores may reflect limited access to healthy food options and are associated with increased risk for obesity and other long-term health conditions.

Physical Activity and Exercise Opportunities — Regular physical activity supports physical, mental, and emotional well-being and helps reduce risk for obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other chronic conditions. Opportunities for physical activity may also be influenced by neighborhood environments, transportation, safety, income, and access to recreational spaces.

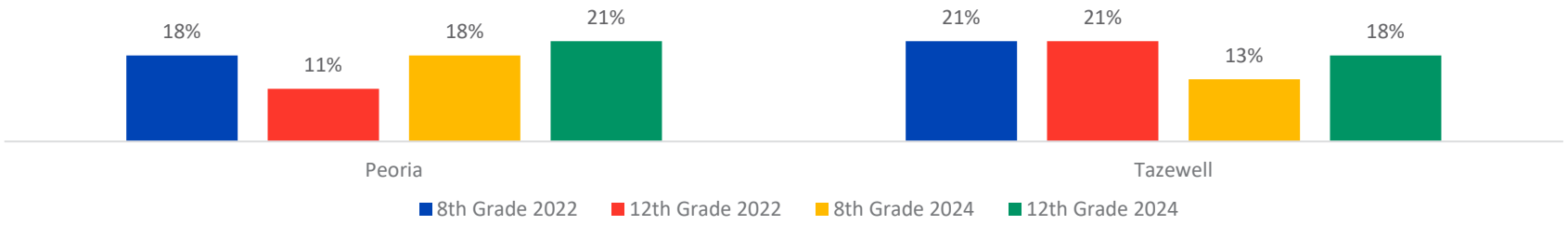
Adults Reporting No Leisure-Time Physical Activity, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023



Health Fig. 22 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2020/2023

According to CDC PLACES estimates, approximately one in five to one in four adults across the Peoria region reported no leisure-time physical activity in 2023. Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey results similarly found that nearly one-quarter of respondents reported they do not exercise at all. Common barriers to physical activity included fatigue, lack of time, and dislike of exercise. Physical activity levels were generally higher among individuals with higher income and education levels and lower among those experiencing housing instability.

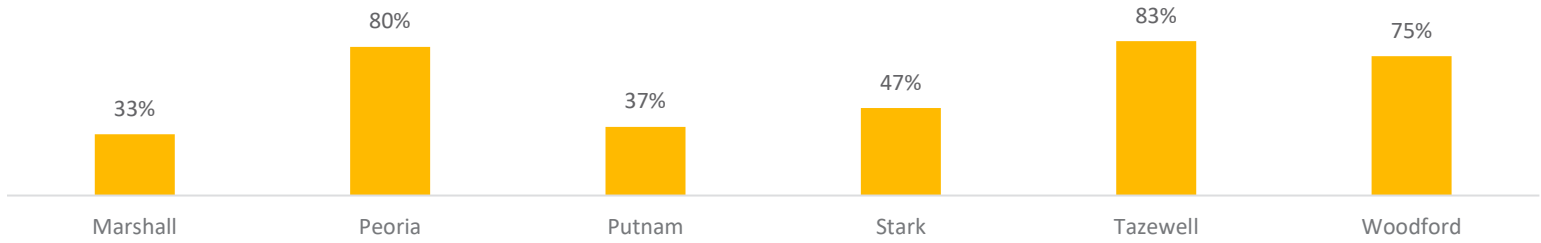
Students Reporting Regular Physical Activity, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2022 vs 2024



Health Fig. 23 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development

In the Illinois Youth Survey, students were asked how many days during the past week they were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day. Activity levels were generally higher among 8th grade students than 12th grade students. Youth physical activity may also be influenced by broader community conditions, including food access, neighborhood environments, physical activity opportunities, and household stability. Lower physical activity levels among older students may also reflect changing school, work, transportation, and lifestyle patterns during adolescence. Please note that Woodford County did not participate in the 2024 Illinois Youth Survey.

Access to Exercise Opportunities, Peoria 6-County Region, 2024

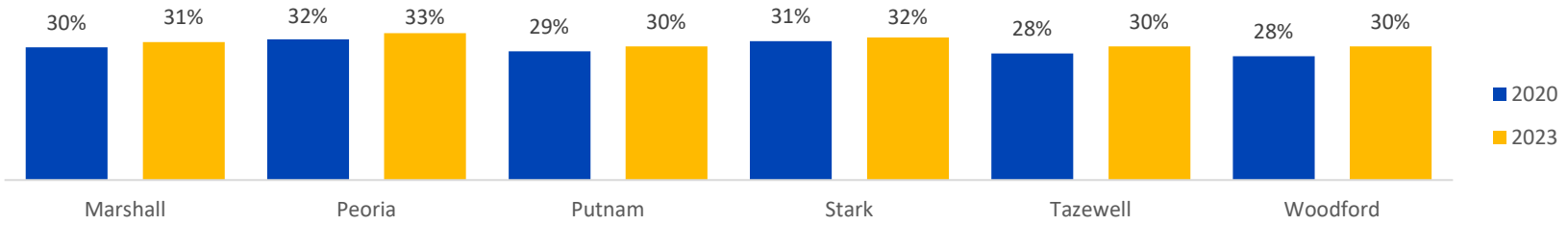


Health Fig. 24 — County Health Rankings, ArcGIS Business Analyst and ArcGIS Online; US Census TIGER/Line Shapefiles, 2026

Increased physical activity is associated with lower risks of health problems, including type 2 diabetes, cancer, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and obesity. The role of the built environment is important for encouraging physical activity. Individuals who live closer to sidewalks, parks, and gyms are more likely to exercise.

Chronic Disease and Preventive Health — Chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and hypertension remain among the leading causes of death in the United States and across the Peoria region. Many chronic conditions are strongly associated with nutrition, physical activity, preventive care access, stress, and other long-term social and behavioral health factors.

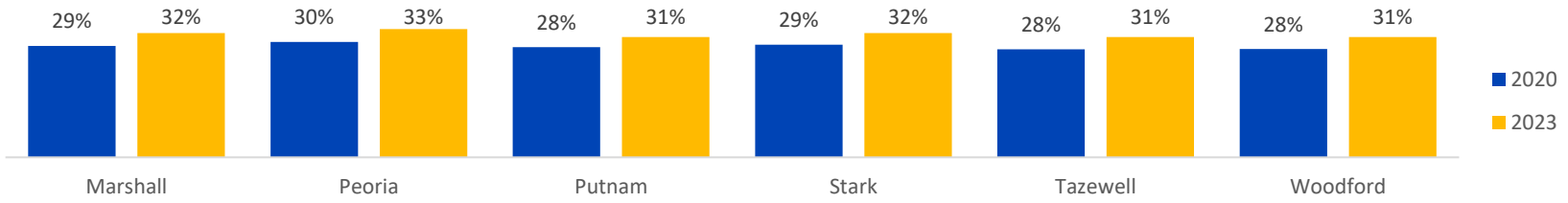
Percentage of Adults with High Blood Pressure, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023



Health Fig. 25 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2020/2023

High blood pressure remained common across the Peoria region between 2020 and 2023, affecting approximately three in ten adults in most counties. Hypertension is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and other chronic health conditions. Long-term risk for high blood pressure may be influenced by nutrition, physical activity, stress, obesity, access to preventive care, and other social and economic factors that affect overall health.

Percentage of Adults with High Cholesterol in the Past Five Years, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023



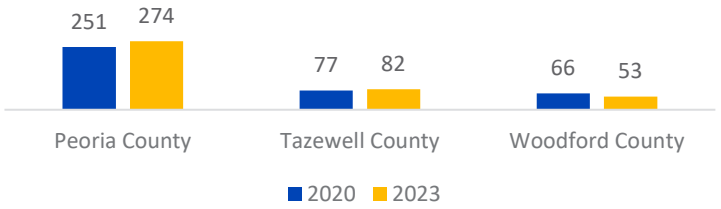
Health Fig. 26 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2020/2023

The percentage of adults diagnosed with high cholesterol increased across all counties in the Peoria region between 2020 and 2023. High cholesterol contributes to increased risk for heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular condition and is often associated with nutrition, physical activity, obesity, stress, aging, and access to preventive healthcare services. Long-term cardiovascular health may also be influenced by broader social and economic conditions that affect healthy living opportunities and healthcare access.

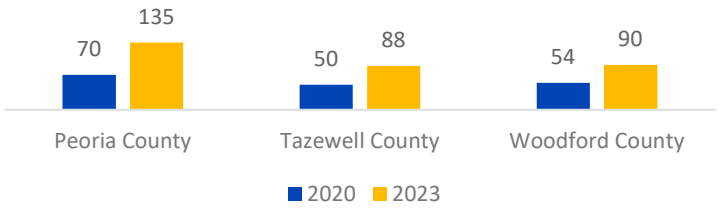
INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND PREVENTION

Infectious disease prevention remains an important component of long-term community health and well-being. Access to health care, preventive services, testing, education, and treatment all play important roles in reducing disease transmission and improving health outcomes across the region.

HIV Prevalence, Rates Per 100k, Tri-County Area, 2020 vs 2023



PrEP Users, Rates Per 100k, Tri-County Area, 2020 vs 2023



Health Fig. 27 — National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, & TB Prevention, County Health Rankings, 2025
Health Fig. 28 — Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health/Center for AIDS Research at Emory University, AIDSVu.org, 2020

HIV prevalence rates remained highest in Peoria County between 2020 and 2023. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a medication used to help prevent HIV transmission among individuals at increased risk of exposure, increased across the Tri-County area during recent reporting periods. Expanding access to HIV prevention, testing, and treatment services remains an important public health strategy for reducing transmission and improving long-term community health outcomes.

STI Rates per 100k Population, Tri-County Area, 2022

County	Chlamydia	Gonorrhea	Early Syphilis
Peoria	828	394	18
Tazewell	305	90	2
Woodford	173	41	10

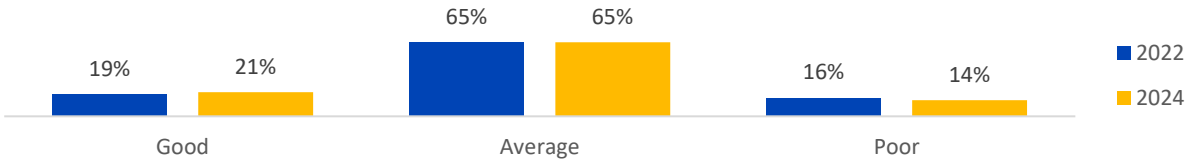
Health Fig. 29 — Illinois Department of Public Health, 2021

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) remain an ongoing public health concern across the region, with Peoria County consistently reporting higher chlamydia and gonorrhea rates than surrounding counties and statewide averages. The 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) findings also identified significant geographic and racial disparities in STI rates, particularly within several high-poverty Peoria zip codes. Public health prevention efforts focus on education, testing, treatment, and reducing barriers to healthcare access and prevention services.

MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Mental and behavioral health are vital to community resiliency and influence physical health, education, employment, relationships, and quality of life. Issues such as depression, anxiety, trauma, substance use, and social isolation can deeply impact individuals and communities. Behavioral health outcomes are shaped by social drivers like income, housing, healthcare, transportation, education, safety, and social connection. Experiences such as ACEs, trauma, violence, bullying, and financial hardship further increases risk for poor mental health. The following indicators highlight behavioral health trends in Peoria, such as mental distress, depression, anxiety, trauma, suicide ideation, bullying, substance use, healthcare access, and related emergency visits.

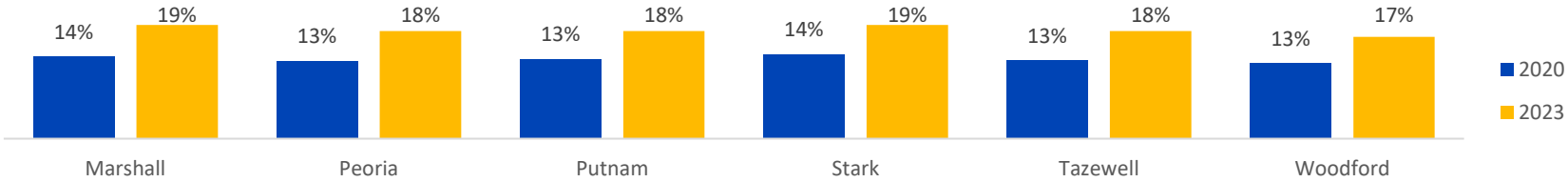
Perceptions of Overall Mental Health (Adults), Tri-County Area, 2022 vs 2024



▲ *Health Fig. 30 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2025*

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey results showed a slight improvement in perceptions of overall mental health between 2022 and 2025, with fewer respondents reporting poor mental health. Perceptions of mental health tended to be more positive among men, older adults, and individuals with higher income and education levels, while poorer mental health perceptions were more commonly associated with housing instability and other social and economic barriers.

Frequent Mental Distress in Adults, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023

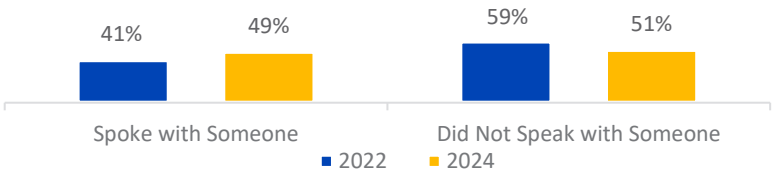


▲ *Health Fig. 31 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2020/2023*

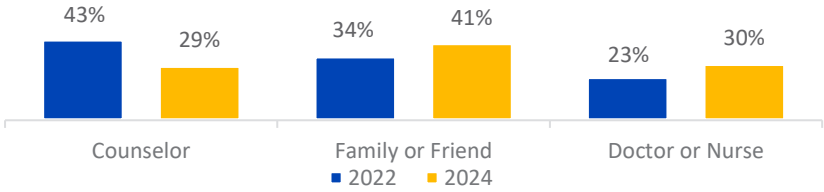
Frequent Mental Distress is defined by the CDC as adults experiencing 14 or more mentally unhealthy days during the past 30 days due to stress, depression, or emotional problems. Between 2020 and 2023, the percentage of adults reporting frequent mental distress increased across all counties in the Peoria region. Frequent mental distress may be influenced by a combination of behavioral health conditions, chronic stress, financial hardship, social isolation, trauma exposure, and other social and economic factors.

Mental Health Support, Social Connection, and Access to Care – Mental and behavioral health are influenced by access to care, social connection, supportive relationships, economic stability, and community conditions. The following indicators highlight trends related to counseling access, emotional support, social isolation, youth connection, and other behavioral health factors associated with overall well-being and resilience.

Adults Who Talked to Someone About Their Mental Health, Tri-County Area, 2022 vs 2024



Who Adults Spoke to About Their Mental Health, Tri-County Area, 2022 vs 2024



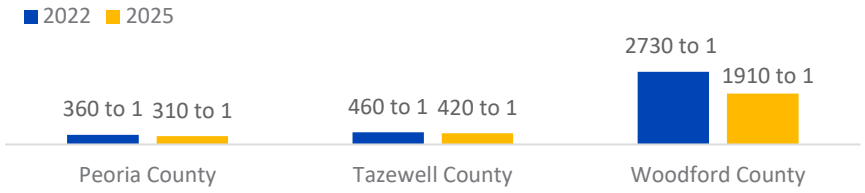
▲ ■ *Health Figs. 32 and 33 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2025*

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey results showed a slight increase in the percentage of adults who reported speaking with someone about their mental health between 2022 and 2024. Family members and friends remained the most common source of support, followed by counselors and medical professionals. Younger adults, women, and individuals experiencing housing instability were generally more likely to report seeking emotional support or discussing mental health concerns with someone.

Among respondents who reported difficulty accessing counseling services, the most reported barriers included inability to afford copays, long wait times, inability to find available providers, lack of insurance coverage, and feelings of embarrassment or mistrust related to seeking care. CHNA findings indicated a slight improvement in counseling access, with more respondents reporting they were able to obtain counseling services in 2025.

Data from the 2024 Illinois Youth Survey also indicated that more than 80% of middle and high school students reported having at least one trusted adult outside of their parents they could talk to about important issues, highlighting the need for support and social connection.

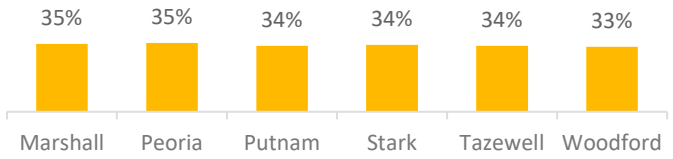
Ratio of Population to Mental Health Providers , Tri-County Area, 2022 vs 2025



Access to mental health providers improved slightly between 2022 and 2025, although provider shortages remain, particularly in rural counties. Limited availability may contribute to longer wait times, delayed treatment, unmet needs, and increased barriers to behavioral healthcare access.

▲ ■ *Health Fig. 34 — NPI Registry for the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System, County Health Rankings, 2025*

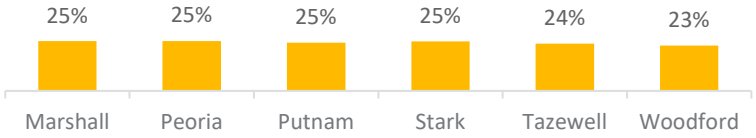
Loneliness Among Adults, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023



1 in 3 adults report loneliness

CDC PLACES estimates indicated that approximately one-third of adults across the Peoria region reported feelings of loneliness in 2023. Chronic loneliness and social isolation are associated with increased risk for depression, anxiety, cardiovascular disease, dementia, and premature mortality. Community connection, social support, and access to supportive relationships are recognized protective factors that contribute to overall mental and physical well-being.

Lack of Social Emotional Support Among Adults, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023

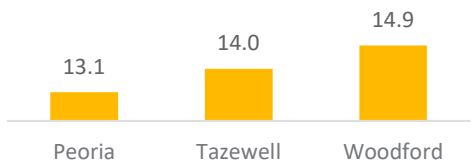


1 in 4 adults report lacking emotional support

CDC PLACES estimates indicated that approximately one in four adults across the Peoria region reported lacking consistent social and emotional support in 2023. Limited social support and social disconnection are associated with increased risk for depression, anxiety, chronic stress, poor physical health outcomes, and reduced overall well-being. Strong support networks and meaningful social connections are recognized protective factors that contribute to resilience, emotional health, and healthier long-term outcomes.

▲ ■ *Health Figs. 35 and 36 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2023*

Community Social Association Rates, Tri-County Area, 2023



Social Association Rates measure the number of civic, volunteer, religious, sports, and community organizations per 10,000 population. Strong social networks and community connectedness are recognized protective factors associated with improved mental and physical health outcomes, reduced isolation, and increased resilience. County Health Rankings data indicate the Tri-County area reports social association rates that generally align with national averages, reflecting the presence of community organizations and opportunities for civic engagement across the region.

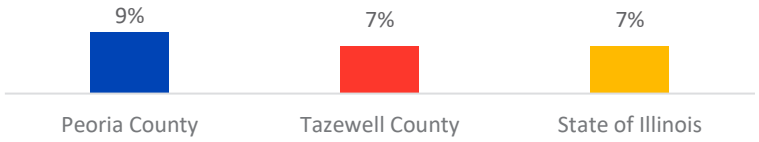
▲ ■ *Health Fig. 37 — U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns (CBP) dataset, County Health Rankings, 2025*

Students Reporting More Than 4 Hours of Daily Non-School Screen Time, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024

▲ ■ *Health Fig. 38 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development*

Illinois Youth Survey results indicated that nearly half or more of middle and high school students in Peoria and Tazewell Counties reported more than four hours of non-school-related screen time per day. Excessive screen time, including gaming and social media use, have been associated with increased risk for depression, anxiety, sleep disruption, social isolation, lower physical activity, and other behavioral health concerns among youth.

Disconnected Youth, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2023



More than half (58%) of surveyed 8th grade students in Peoria and Tazewell counties reported being home alone after school, including extended periods lasting more than three hours per day*. (Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS) Research has linked unsupervised and socially isolated afterschool time to increased risk for loneliness, behavioral health concerns, academic challenges, substance use, and reduced social connectedness.*

▲ ■ *Health Fig. 39 — U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, County Health Rankings, 2025*

Disconnected youth, ages 16 to 19, are neither enrolled in school nor participating in the workforce, placing them at increased risk for social isolation and mental health challenges. This disconnection can contribute to behavioral health issues such as anxiety, depression, and substance use. Addressing youth disconnection requires strong educational support, access to mental health resources, and opportunities for social connection to foster resilience.

Householders Who Live Alone, Peoria MSA, 2024

34% of Householders in Peoria MSA Live Alone

7% aged 15-34 | 13% aged 35-64 | 14% aged 65 plus

▲ ■ *Health Fig. 40 — U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2024*

Living alone can raise the risk of depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline due to reduced daily social interaction. In our area, this highlights the importance of strong community connections to support the mental health of those living solo.

Depression, Anxiety, and Emotional Distress – Depression, anxiety, trauma, and emotional distress are significant behavioral health concerns that affect individuals, families, schools, workplaces, and communities. Persistent emotional distress can negatively impact physical health, relationships, school and work performance, economic stability, and overall well-being. Mental health conditions often occur together and may be influenced by chronic stress, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma exposure, social isolation, financial hardship, housing instability, and barriers to healthcare access. Supportive relationships, early intervention, social connection, and access to behavioral health services are recognized protective factors that contribute to resilience.

Adults Reporting Depression Symptoms in the Past 30 Days, Tri-County Area, 2024

▲ *Health Fig. 41 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment, 2025*

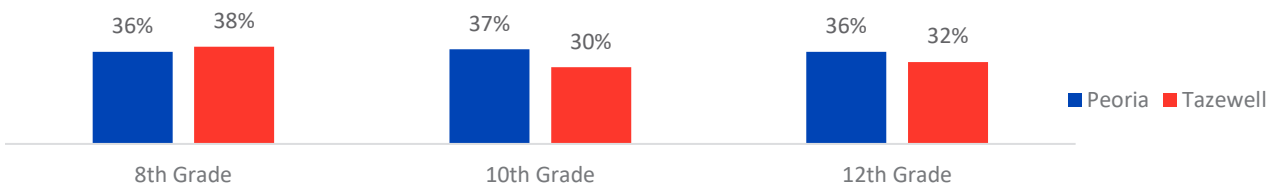
Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey respondents were asked how often they felt depressed during the past 30 days. While half of respondents reported no feelings of depression during the previous month, others reported experiencing depressive symptoms ranging from occasional to frequent occurrences. Emotional distress and depressive symptoms may be influenced by chronic stress, trauma exposure, financial hardship, social isolation, and other social and economic factors affecting overall well-being. In 2022, 58% of respondents indicated they felt depressed in the last 30 days, compared to 50% in 2024. Depression tended to be reported more frequently among women, younger adults, individuals with lower income levels, those experiencing housing instability, and residents of Peoria County. Depression tended to be reported less frequently among residents of Woodford County.

Adults Diagnosed with Depression, Peoria 6-County Region, 2023

▲ *Health Fig. 42 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2023*

CDC PLACES estimates indicated that approximately one in four adults across the Peoria region had been diagnosed with depression in 2023. Depression is associated with increased risk for poor physical health, chronic disease, substance use, social isolation, unemployment, and reduced overall quality of life. Access to mental health services, social support, and early intervention can help reduce long-term impacts on individuals and communities.

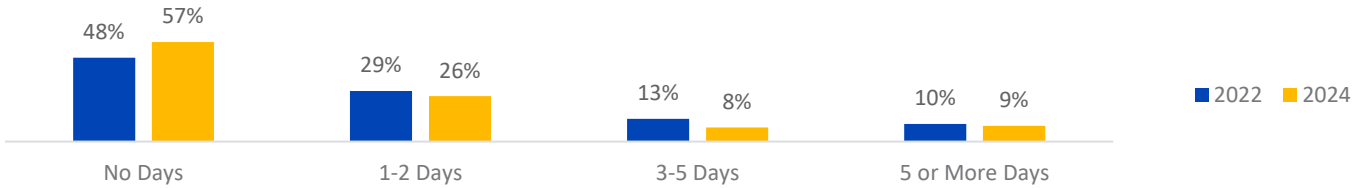
Students Reporting Persistent Sadness or Hopelessness, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



▲ ■ *Health Fig. 43 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development*

Illinois Youth Survey results indicated that approximately one-third of middle and high school students in Peoria and Tazewell Counties reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness during the 2024 academic year. Persistent sadness and hopelessness among youth are associated with increased risk for depression, anxiety, social isolation, self-harm, substance use, and suicidal ideation. Supportive relationships, school connectedness, access to mental health services, and early intervention are recognized protective factors that support youth emotional health and resilience. Please note Woodford County did not participate in the 2024 Illinois Youth Survey.

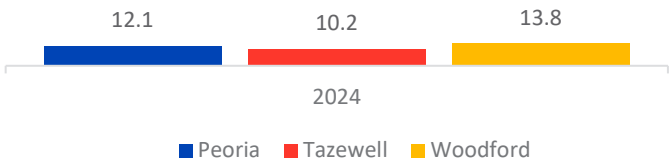
Adults Who Felt Anxious or Stressed the Past 30 Days, Tri-County Area, 2022 vs 2024



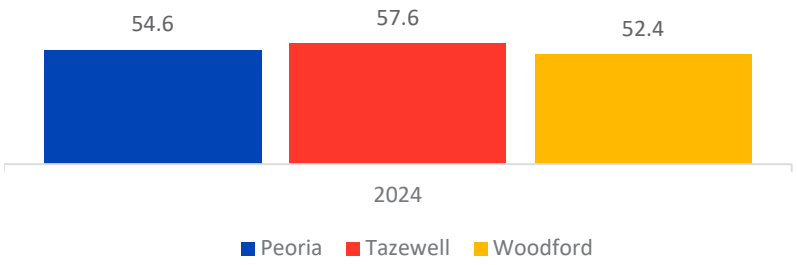
▲ ■ *Health Fig. 44 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment Survey, 2025*

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey results showed a slight improvement in reported stress and anxiety between 2022 and 2024, with fewer respondents reporting feelings of anxiety or stress during the previous 30 days. Stress and anxiety tended to be reported more frequently among women, younger adults, individuals with lower income or education levels, and those experiencing housing instability. Persistent stress and anxiety can negatively affect physical and mental health, relationships, school or work performance, and overall quality of life. Access to mental health services, supportive relationships, stable housing, and community support systems can help reduce long-term impacts associated with chronic stress and anxiety.

PTSD Rates Per 100k Population, Tri-County Area, 2024



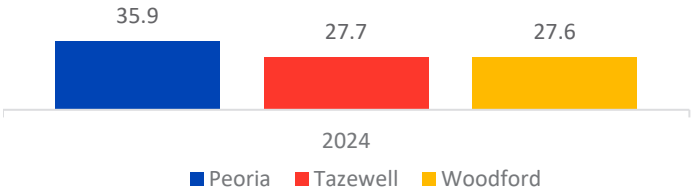
Adults Reporting Trauma Exposure Per 100k Population, Tri-County Area, 2024



▲ *Health Figs. 45 and 46 — Mental Health America, Center for Research & Innovation, Mental Health Risk Assessments*

Trauma exposure and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can have long-term impacts on emotional well-being, physical health, relationships, educational outcomes, and overall quality of life. Trauma may result from adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), violence, abuse, loss, disasters, serious illness, accidents, or other highly stressful events. Individuals experiencing trauma or PTSD may be at increased risk for depression, anxiety, substance use disorders, chronic stress, social isolation, and suicidal ideation. Mental Health America estimates indicated PTSD rates in the Tri-County Area exceeded statewide averages in 2024, highlighting the importance of trauma-informed services, early intervention, supportive relationships, and access to behavioral healthcare resources.

Suicidal Ideation Rates Per 100k Population, Tri-County Area, 2024

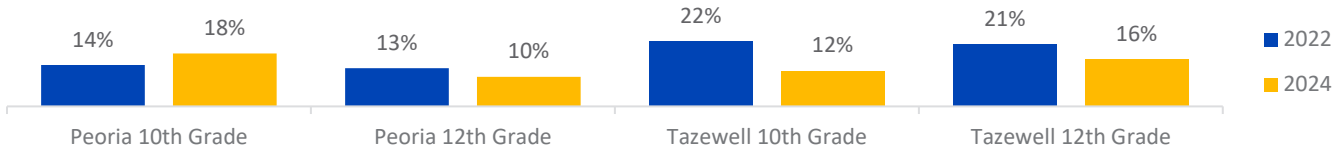


"Suicidal and self-harm thoughts and behaviors—ranging from ideation to planning to attempt—are serious public health concerns that require both preventative and clinical interventions to reduce risk and promote mental wellbeing. In the Tri-County area of Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties, addressing suicide risk is especially urgent given disparities in healthcare access and mental health support." – 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment

▲ *Health Fig. 47 — Mental Health America, Center for Research & Innovation, Mental Health Risk Assessments*

Mental Health America estimates indicated suicidal ideation rates in the Tri-County Area ranged from 27.6 to 35.9 per 100,000 population in 2024 compared to the state rate of 33.8 per 100,000. Suicide risk is influenced by a complex combination of behavioral health conditions, trauma exposure, social isolation, substance use, economic stress, access to care, and other social and environmental factors. National research indicates suicidal thoughts and behaviors are particularly concerning among youth and young adults, highlighting the importance of prevention, supportive relationships, crisis intervention, and access to behavioral healthcare services.

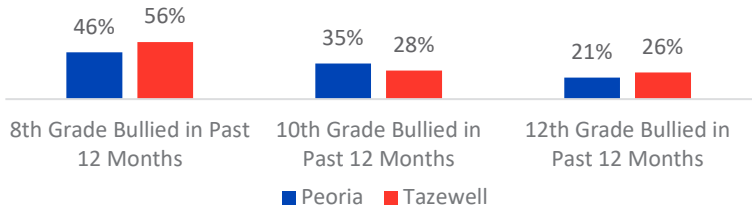
High School Students Who Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2022 vs 2024



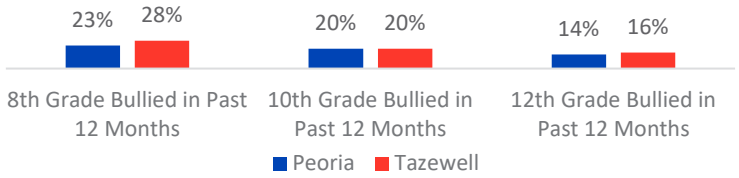
▲ ■ *Health Fig. 48 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development*

Illinois Youth Survey results indicated a notable percentage of high school students in Peoria and Tazewell Counties reported seriously considering suicide during the previous year. While several grade levels showed improvement between 2022 and 2024, suicide ideation among youth remains a significant behavioral health concern. Research has linked suicidal thoughts among adolescents to factors including depression, anxiety, trauma exposure, bullying, social isolation, substance use, family stress, and limited social or emotional support. Supportive school environments, trusted adults, peer connection, behavioral healthcare access, and early intervention are recognized protective factors that can improve youth well-being and reduce suicide risk. Please note Woodford County did not participate in the 2024 Illinois Youth Survey.

Students Reporting Bullying Experiences, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



Students Reporting Cyberbullying, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024

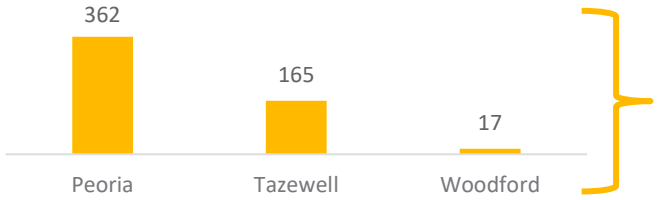


▲ ■ *Health Figs. 49 and 50 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development*

Illinois Youth Survey results indicated bullying and cyberbullying remained significant concerns among middle and high school students in 2024, particularly among younger students. More than half of surveyed 8th grade students in Tazewell County and nearly half in Peoria County reported experiencing bullying during the previous year, representing increases from 2022. Approximately 8–9% of 8th grade students also reported experiencing multiple forms of bullying (“intense bullying”). Students described experiences including name-calling, threats, physical aggression, and cyberbullying through social media and online platforms. Research has linked bullying exposure to increased risk for depression, anxiety, school avoidance, social isolation, substance use, and suicidal ideation. Supportive school environments, trusted adults, peer connection, and early intervention are recognized protective factors that support youth resilience.

Substance Use and Co-Occurring Behavioral Health Conditions – Mental health conditions and substance use disorders frequently occur together and can significantly affect individuals, families, and communities. Depression, anxiety, trauma exposure, chronic stress, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) may increase the risk of substance misuse, while alcohol and drug use can also worsen emotional distress and behavioral health conditions. Research indicates many individuals experiencing behavioral health challenges face co-occurring mental health and substance use concerns, highlighting the importance of prevention, early intervention, trauma-informed care, supportive relationships, and access to integrated behavioral healthcare services.

Nonfatal Drug Overdose Cases, Tri-County Area, 2023



Demographics of Reported Cases

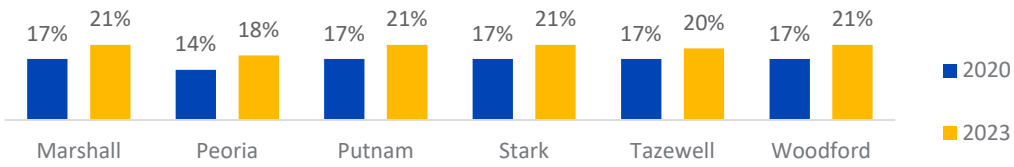
Age			Sex		Race		
15-34	35-54	55-74	Male	Female	White	Black	Other
33%	42%	25%	61%	39%	71%	23%	6%

▲ ▬ *Health Fig. 51 — Illinois Department of Public Health Drug Overdose Data Dashboard*

Primary Substance Categories	
All Opioids	58%
Heroin	17%
Psychostimulants	15%
Benzodiazepines	8%
Alcohol	3%

DPH reported 544 nonfatal drug overdose cases across the Tri-County Area in 2023, with the majority occurring in Peoria County. Adults ages 15–54 accounted for approximately 75% of reported overdose cases, highlighting broader impacts on workforce participation, family stability, caregiving responsibilities, and childhood exposure to substance misuse and trauma. Males represented 61% of overdose cases reported. Opioids remained the leading substance category associated with overdose cases, followed by psychostimulants and heroin. Substance use disorders and overdose risk are often closely connected to mental health conditions, trauma, chronic stress, and other social and economic factors affecting overall well-being.

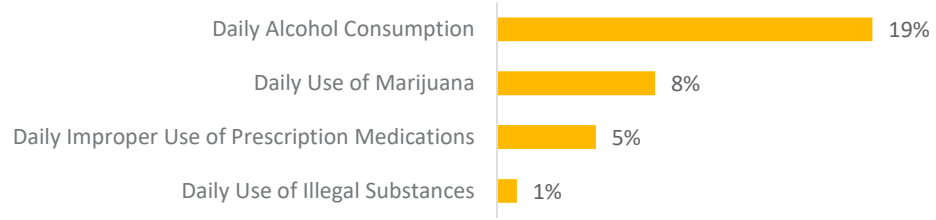
Binge Drinking Among Adults, Peoria 6-County Region, 2020 vs 2023



CDC PLACES data indicated binge drinking rates increased across all counties in the Peoria 6-County Region between 2020 and 2023. Excessive alcohol use is associated with increased risk for injuries, chronic disease, violence, behavioral health concerns, and substance use disorders.

▲ ▬ *Health Fig. 52 — CDC, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2020/2023*

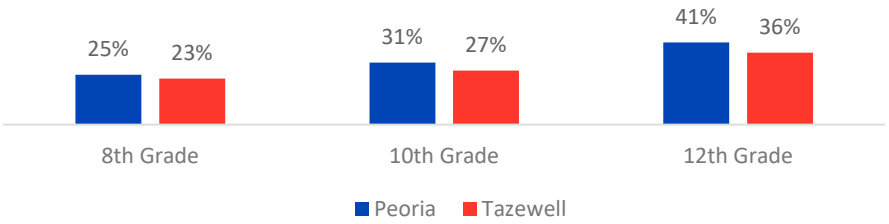
Adult Daily Substance Use, Tri-County Area, 2024



▲ ■ *Health Fig. 53 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment Survey, 2025*

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey results indicated alcohol remained the most commonly reported substance used daily among adults in the Tri-County Area, followed by marijuana and improper use of prescription medications. “Daily use” reflects respondents reporting one or more instances of substance use on a typical day. Correlational analyses suggested higher rates of substance use were associated with factors including younger age, lower income and education levels, housing instability, and residence in Peoria County. Research has linked substance use disorders to increased risk for behavioral health concerns, chronic disease, trauma exposure, economic instability, and other long-term impacts affecting individuals, families, and communities.

Common Substance Use by Students in the Past Year, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



Includes alcohol, tobacco products, e-cigarettes or other vaping products, inhalants, and marijuana.

▲ ■ *Health Fig. 54 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development*

The Illinois Youth Survey provides county-level data on a variety of health and behavioral indicators, including substance use among youth. Survey results showed reported substance use increased significantly by grade level across the Tri-County Area. Alcohol remained the most commonly reported substance used, while marijuana use also increased substantially among older students, particularly 12th graders.

Additional survey findings indicated relatively low reported rates of illicit drug use, prescription drug misuse, and binge drinking among students. However, youth substance use remains an important behavioral health and prevention concern due to its association with mental health challenges, academic performance, risky behaviors, and long-term health outcomes.

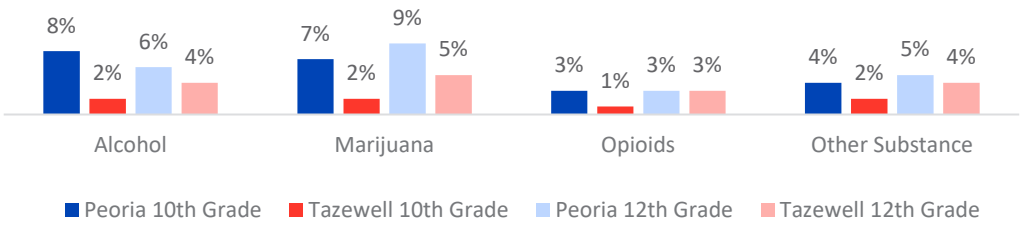
Substance Use Consequences, High School Students, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024

The CRAFFT acronym represents six core questions used to screen problem areas related to alcohol and drug use:		Peoria County 10th Grade	Tazewell County 10th Grade	Peoria County 12th Grade	Tazewell County 12th Grade
C:	Have you ever ridden in a **CAR** driven by someone (including yourself) who was high or had been using alcohol or drugs?	9%	9%	7%	12%
R:	Do you ever use alcohol or drugs to **RELAX**, feel better about yourself, or fit in?	10%	8%	12%	13%
A:	Do you ever use alcohol or drugs while you are by yourself, or **ALONE**?	9%	6%	16%	11%
F:	Do you ever **FORGET** things you did while using alcohol or drugs?	6%	5%	7%	8%
F:	Do your **FAMILY** or friends ever tell you that you should cut down on your drinking or drug use?	4%	3%	4%	4%
T:	Have you ever gotten into **TROUBLE** while you were using alcohol or drugs?	4%	3%	4%	3%
Percentage of students reporting two or more CRAFFT indicators who may benefit from additional screening or behavioral health support		**12%**	**7%**	**13%**	**13%**

▲ *Health Fig. 55 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development*

Students reported using substances to relax, feel better, fit in socially, or while alone. Approximately 12–13% of surveyed high school students met screening criteria indicating potential need for further substance use assessment using the CRAFFT screening tool. Research has linked youth substance use with increased risk for behavioral health concerns, academic challenges, risky behaviors, and long-term health impacts.

Recovery from Substance Use, High School Students, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024

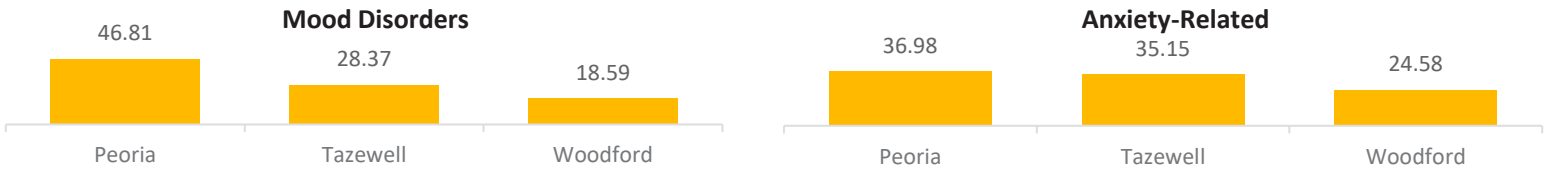


Illinois Youth Survey results showed some students reported recovery support was highest for alcohol and marijuana among 10th and 12th graders. Recovery and early intervention services are important for reducing health risks, supporting behavioral health, strengthening protective factors, and improving outcomes for youth and families.

▲ *Health Fig. 56 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development*

Mental and Behavioral Health Emergency Department Visits – Emergency department visit data provides insight into the impact of behavioral health and substance use conditions on local healthcare systems. Frequent emergency department utilization for mental health, anxiety, substance-related, and alcohol-related conditions may reflect unmet behavioral health needs, delayed treatment access, limited outpatient services, financial or insurance barriers, co-occurring substance use disorders, crisis intervention gaps, and broader social and economic stressors affecting a community's quality of life.

Mood Disorder and Anxiety-Related Emergency Department Visit Rates per 10k Population, Tri-County Area, 2022-2024



Health Figs. 57 and 58 — IDPH, Illinois Public Health Community Map, Illinois Hospital Report Card, 2022-2024

Illinois Public Health Community Map data indicated elevated emergency department (ED) visit rates for mood disorders and anxiety-related conditions across the Tri-County Area between 2022 and 2024. Frequent behavioral health-related ED utilization may reflect unmet mental health needs, limited access to outpatient behavioral healthcare services, financial or insurance barriers, delayed treatment access, chronic stress, crisis intervention gaps, and broader social and economic stressors affecting quality of life. Anxiety and depression often occur together and can significantly affect overall health, daily functioning, relationships, and quality of life.

County	Estimated Charges
Peoria	$10.3 million
Tazewell	$4.9 million
Woodford	$679,000

Estimated Hospital Charges Related to Mood Disorder Emergency Department Visits, Tri-County Area, 2022–2024

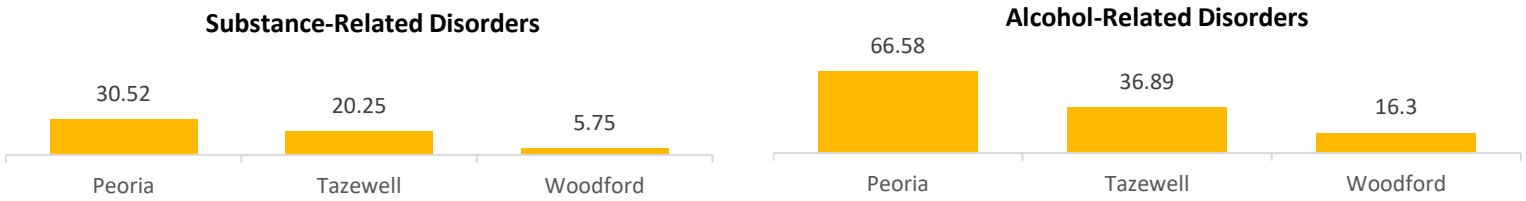
Peoria County reported more than $10 million in estimated hospital charges associated with mood disorder-related emergency department visits between 2022 and 2024. Medicaid represented a substantial share of the charges highlighting connection between behavioral health needs, healthcare access, and socioeconomic factors.

County	Estimated Charges
Peoria	$5.5 million
Tazewell	$3.9 million
Woodford	$600,000

Estimated Hospital Charges Related to Anxiety-Related Emergency Department Visits, Tri-County Area, 2022–2024

Peoria County reported more than $5.5 million in estimated hospital charges associated with anxiety-related emergency department visits between 2022 and 2024. Medicaid represented a substantial share of the charges, reflecting the relationship between behavioral health needs, healthcare access, and economic stressors.

Substance- and Alcohol-Related Disorders Emergency Department Visit Rates Per 10K Population, Tri-County Area, 2022–2024



Health Figs. 59 and 60 — IDPH, Illinois Public Health Community Map, Illinois Hospital Report Card, 2022-2024

Substance-related and alcohol-related emergency department visits reflect the impact of behavioral health and substance use conditions on local healthcare systems. IDPH data showed substantially higher emergency department visit rates in Peoria County compared to Tazewell and Woodford Counties. While working-age adults represented a substantial share of substance- and alcohol-related emergency department visits, some counties also showed notable involvement among younger populations, reinforcing the importance of prevention, early intervention, and youth behavioral health supports.

County	Estimated Charges
Peoria	$6.2 million
Tazewell	$3.1 million
Woodford	$140,000

Estimated Hospital Charges for Substance-Related Emergency Department Visits, Tri-County Area, 2022–2024

Peoria County reported more than $6 million in estimated hospital charges associated with substance-related emergency department visits between 2022 and 2024. Medicaid represented a substantial share of the charges, highlighting the connection between substance use, behavioral health needs, healthcare access, and socioeconomic factors.

County	Estimated Charges
Peoria	$19.4 million
Tazewell	$8.3 million
Woodford	$786,000

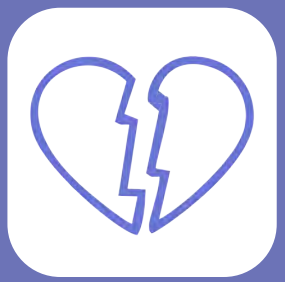
Estimated Hospital Charges for Alcohol-Related Emergency Department Visits, Tri-County Area, 2022–2024

Peoria County reported more than $19 million in estimated hospital charges associated with alcohol-related emergency department visits between 2022 and 2024. Medicaid represented a substantial share of the charges, reflecting the broader healthcare and economic impacts associated with substance use and behavioral health conditions.

HEALTH TRENDS SUMMARY

- Chronic disease, behavioral health conditions, and substance use continued to significantly affect residents across the Peoria 6-County Region between 2020 and 2024. Heart disease and cancer remained the leading causes of death, while accidental deaths, suicides, and overdose-related deaths continued to be major public health concerns.
- Drug overdose deaths and nonfatal overdoses increased substantially in recent years, reflecting broader state and national substance use trends. Opioids and fentanyl continued to play a major role in overdose-related deaths and emergency department visits.
- Mental and behavioral health remained one of the region's most significant concerns. Community Health Needs Assessment respondents consistently identified mental health, substance use, healthcare access, obesity, and aging-related issues among the top health concerns affecting the community.
- Frequent mental distress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, and lack of emotional support increased across many population groups. Social isolation, trauma exposure, housing instability, financial stress, and limited access to behavioral healthcare services were associated with poorer mental health outcomes.
- Youth behavioral health indicators highlighted continued concerns related to persistent sadness or hopelessness, bullying, suicide ideation, substance use, excessive screen time, and social isolation. Supportive relationships, school connectedness, trusted adults, and behavioral health resources remain important protective factors for youth well-being and resilience.
- Access to healthcare and behavioral health services continued to be influenced by employment, education, insurance coverage, housing stability, transportation, and provider availability. Residents experiencing financial hardship or housing instability were more likely to report barriers to medical care, counseling services, dental care, and prescription medications.
- Obesity, physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and chronic disease risk factors remained common throughout the region. Access to healthy foods, preventive healthcare, recreational opportunities, and safe community environments continue to influence long-term health outcomes.

Together, these findings highlight the interconnected relationship between physical health, behavioral health, economic stability, housing, trauma exposure, and access to healthcare services. Many of the health challenges identified throughout the assessment are closely connected to social drivers of health (SDoH) and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), reinforcing the importance of prevention, early intervention, supportive relationships, and community-wide collaboration to improve long-term community well-being.



ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are increasingly recognized as a major public health and community welfare issue affecting educational success, behavioral health, physical health, economic stability, and long-term quality of life.

Research has shown that childhood exposure to abuse, neglect, violence, household instability, substance misuse, mental illness, incarceration, and chronic stress can affect brain development, learning, emotional regulation, and social functioning well into adulthood.

While not every individual exposed to ACEs experiences long-term negative outcomes, repeated or prolonged trauma exposure may increase risk for challenges related to education, employment, housing stability, behavioral health, and chronic disease later in life. Research also highlights the importance of protective factors—including supportive relationships, stable environments, early intervention, school connectedness, and community support systems—that can help strengthen resilience and improve long-term outcomes.

▲ Look for the ACEs Symbol Throughout the Assessment

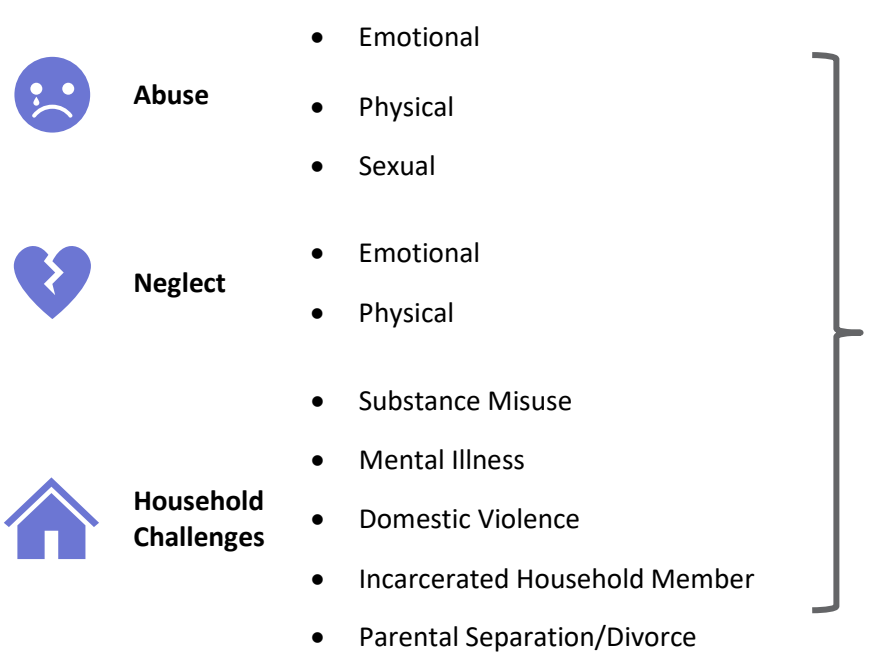
Because ACEs are closely connected to many community conditions, ACEs-related indicators and contributing factors appear throughout this assessment within the Education, Financial Stability, and Health sections. Look for the ACEs symbol throughout the report identifying data, trends, and community conditions commonly associated with trauma exposure, toxic stress, family instability, behavioral health challenges, and related social drivers of health.

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)

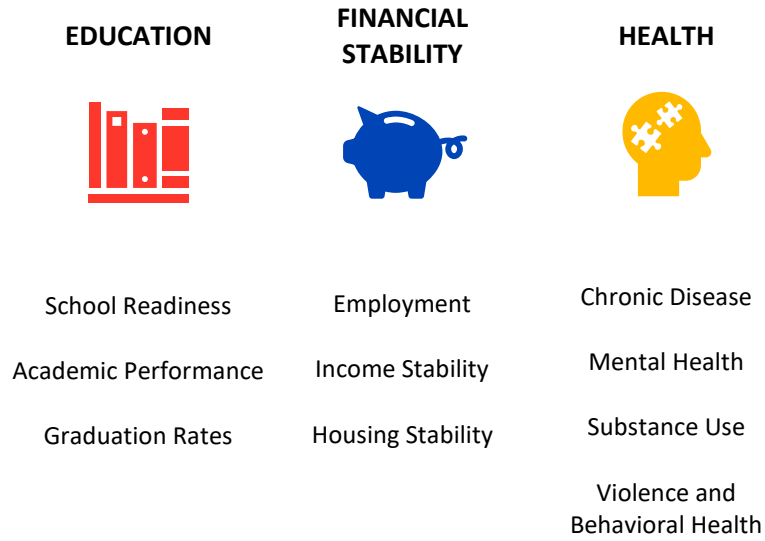
Mental health and behavioral health outcomes are influenced by a wide range of social, economic, environmental, and childhood experiences. Research increasingly shows that exposure to trauma, abuse, household instability, and other Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can significantly affect long-term emotional, physical, behavioral, and economic well-being across the lifespan.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic childhood events that may include abuse, neglect, household substance misuse, domestic violence, mental illness, incarceration, and parental separation. Exposure to ACEs has been associated with increased risk of chronic disease, depression, anxiety, substance use, lower educational attainment, housing instability, and reduced economic stability later in life.

What Are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?



ACEs Can Impact Long-Term Outcomes



ACES Fig. 1

Research shows exposure to ACEs may contribute to long-term challenges related to education, financial stability, physical health, behavioral health, and overall community well-being.

ACEs RELATED TO EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Educational Engagement

Research has shown that trauma exposure, chronic stress, and household instability may affect school connectedness, attendance, emotional regulation, learning, and overall educational engagement.

Related indicators throughout this assessment include:

- Chronic absenteeism
- Truancy
- Student mobility
- Disciplinary incidents
- Kindergarten readiness
- Academic achievement gaps
- Graduation gaps

Mental and Behavioral Health

Research has shown that chronic stress and trauma exposure may affect emotional well-being, coping behaviors, behavioral health, and long-term physical and mental health outcomes.

Related indicators throughout this assessment include:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Mood disorders
- Substance use
- Youth coping behaviors
- Emergency Department visits
- Violence exposure

▲ Look for the Aces Symbol Throughout the Assessment

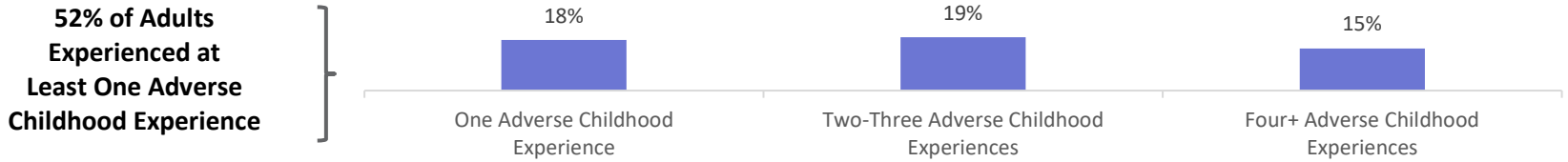
ACEs-related indicators and contributing factors appear throughout this assessment within the Education, Financial Stability, and Health sections. The ACEs symbol identifies data, trends, and community conditions commonly associated with trauma exposure, stress, family instability, behavioral health challenges, and related social drivers of health.

The following pages explore how trauma exposure and ACEs-related conditions may influence long-term educational, behavioral health, family stability, and community well-being outcomes throughout the region.

LONG-TERM COMMUNITY IMPACTS OF ACEs

Adults reporting multiple ACEs are more likely to experience long-term challenges related to mental health, chronic disease, substance use, education, employment, and economic stability.

ACEs Experienced by Adults, Tri-County Area, 2024



ACES Fig. 2 — Partnership for a Healthy Community, Community Health Needs Assessment , 2025; Number of ACEs Experienced in Childhood by Adults per Household

Approximately half of survey respondents across the Tri-County Area reported experiencing at least one Adverse Childhood Experience, while approximately 15–20% reported experiencing up to four or more ACEs during childhood.

Analysis of reported ACEs and correlation to the social drivers of health (SDoH) found that adults reporting higher ACE exposure in the CHNA were also more likely to report lower educational attainment, lower household income, and housing instability. These findings reinforce the strong relationship between childhood trauma and long-term social, economic, and behavioral health conditions.

- ✓ Lower educational attainment
- ✓ Lower household income
- ✓ Higher housing instability

In particular, the following ACEs showed the highest correlations related to SDoH:

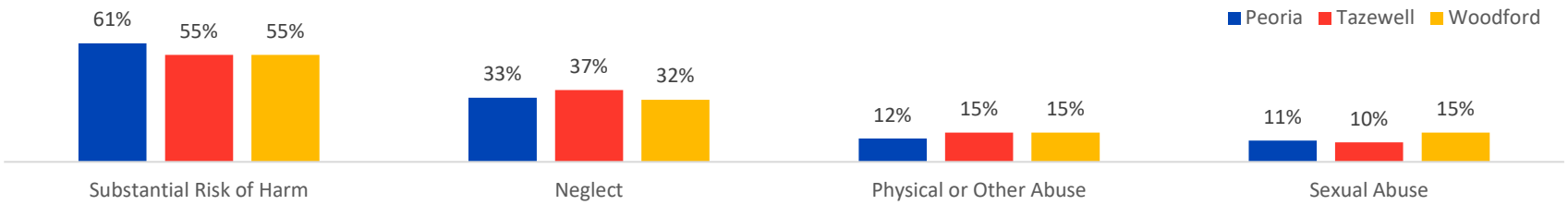
- ✓ Emotional abuse and physical neglect showed some of the strongest relationships with lower household income and increased housing instability.
- ✓ Having an incarcerated household member was associated with lower educational attainment, lower household income, and increased housing instability.

Local ACEs and SDoH analysis also found that younger adults and women were more likely to report exposure to several categories of adverse childhood experiences, reinforcing the long-term relationship between childhood trauma, behavioral health, and economic stability.

CHILD MALTREATMENT AND FAMILY STABILITY

While many ACEs affect long-term well-being, research suggests that direct experiences of childhood abuse and neglect are among the strongest predictors of poor mental health outcomes later in life.

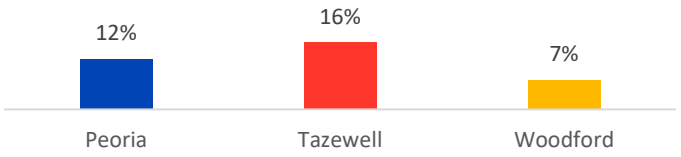
Child Maltreatment Allegations by Type, Tri-County Area, 2024



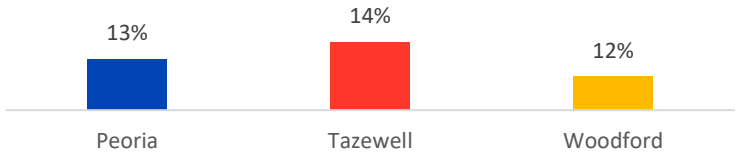
ACES Fig. 3 —Children & Family Research Center, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign School of Social Work, 2026

Because a single child abuse incident may involve multiple allegations, percentages shown may total more than 100%. Neglect includes lack of supervision and environmental neglect, while substantial risk of harm includes risk of physical or sexual abuse.

Recurrence for Intact Family Cases With Services, Tri-County Area, 2024



Recurrence Without Services, Tri-County Area, 2024



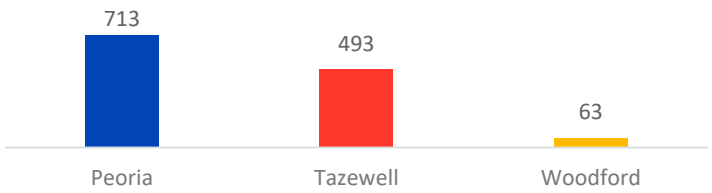
ACES Figs. 4 and 5 — Children & Family Research Center, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign School of Social Work, 2026

Maltreatment recurrence tracks whether children experienced another substantiated maltreatment report within 12 months and may reflect broader challenges related to family stability, behavioral health, substance misuse, economic stress, and access to supportive services. Intact family cases involve situations where children remained in the home while families received supportive or intervention-based services.

YOUTH IN CARE AND PLACEMENT STABILITY

Youth in care often experience higher levels of trauma, educational disruption, behavioral health challenges, and housing instability. Placement stability and family reunification are important factors associated with improved long-term outcomes for youth in care.

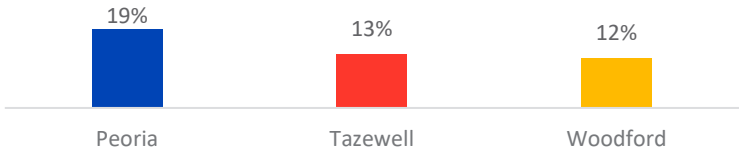
Youth in Care, Tri-County Area, 2024



Youth in care often experience multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), including trauma, family instability, abuse, neglect, and educational disruption related to school mobility and changing living situations. Research shows that stable placements, educational continuity, and timely permanency are associated with improved long-term academic, behavioral health, and social outcomes for youth placed in care.

ACES Fig. 6 — Children & Family Research Center, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign School of Social Work, 2026

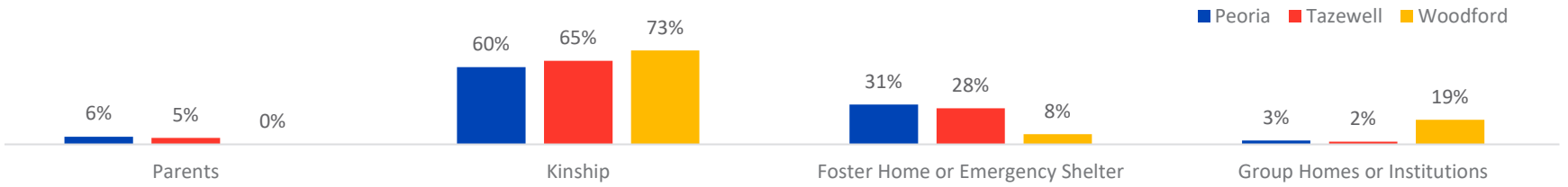
Reunified within 12 Months, Tri-County Area, 2024



This measure reflects the percentage of children entering substitute care who achieved permanency within 12 months through reunification, placement with relatives, adoption, or guardianship. Timely permanency and stable placements may help reduce additional trauma and support improved long-term outcomes for youth in care.

ACES Fig. 7 — Children & Family Research Center, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign School of Social Work, 2026

Placement Settings for Youth in Care, Tri-County Area, 2024



ACES Fig. 8 — Children & Family Research Center, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign School of Social Work, 2026

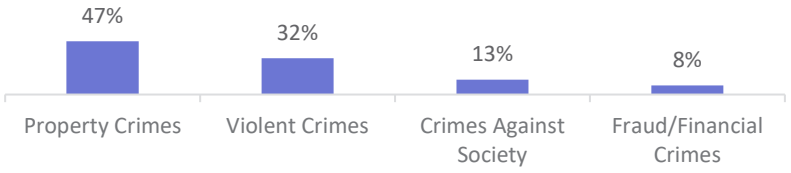
Most youth in substitute care in the Peoria region were placed in kinship care settings with relatives or close family connections. Research shows that kinship placements may provide greater placement stability and improved long-term outcomes for children and youth in care.

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA EXPOSURE

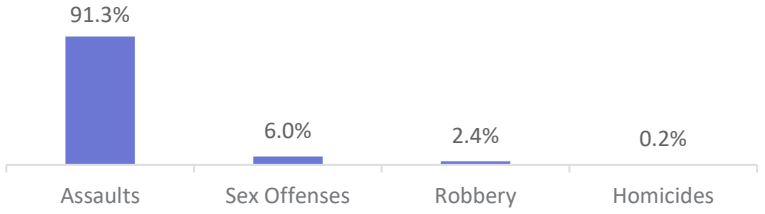
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are broadly categorized into abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. The predominant crimes and systemic behaviors that directly drive ACEs include physical abuse, child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and parental substance abuse. These traumas impair a child's sense of safety and normal neurological development.

Please Note: *Unless otherwise noted, 2024 community violence data was sourced from the FBI Crime Data Explorer (CDE) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics Analysis of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Incident-Based Reporting System. Data included reporting from the Peoria and Tazewell County Sheriff's Offices, as well as municipal police departments in Bartonville, Chillicothe, East Peoria, Morton, Pekin, Peoria, Peoria Heights, and Washington. Not all law enforcement agencies within the region consistently reported data, and some data may be suppressed due to small sample sizes. As a result, county-level comparisons, particularly in more rural areas, may underrepresent the actual number of incidents. However, because Peoria and Tazewell Counties represent the majority of the region's population and include its largest municipalities, the available data provides meaningful context for identifying broader patterns related to community violence and trauma exposure.*

Reported Crime Categories, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



Violence-Related Offense Categories, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



ACES Figs. 9 and 10 — Bureau of Justice Statistics Analysis of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Incident-Based Reporting System, 2026

Violence-related offenses accounted for approximately one-third of all reported crimes in Peoria and Tazewell Counties in 2024. Assault offenses represented the overwhelming majority of violence-related incidents, while sex offenses, robbery, and homicide offenses represented smaller but significant shares of reported violent crime activity.

Violence Exposure Within Homes and Relationships

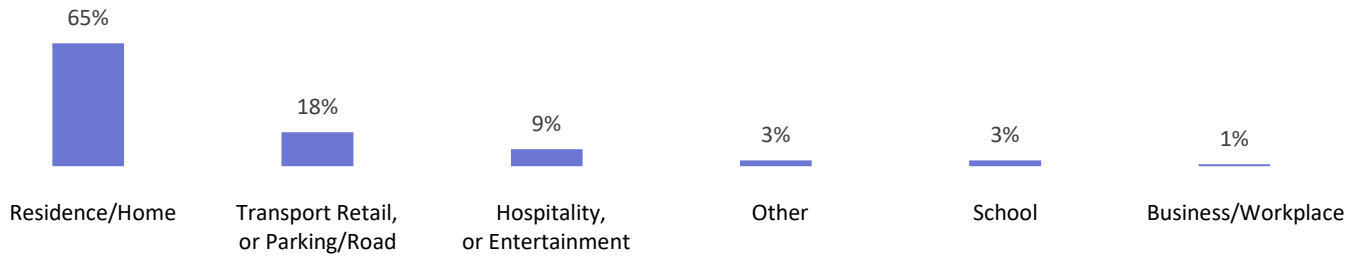
The following violence-related offense categories were selected because they most directly reflect trauma exposure, interpersonal violence, household instability, and victimization patterns associated with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Together, these offenses help identify broader community patterns related to violence occurring within homes, families, intimate partner relationships, and familiar social environments.

- **Aggravated Assault:** unlawful attack intended to inflict severe bodily injury, often involving a weapon or force likely to cause serious harm.
- **Criminal Sexual Contact:** intentional, non-consensual sexual touching for purposes of gratification, degradation, or humiliation.
- **Kidnapping and Abduction:** unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against their will, or of a minor without the consent of their custodial parent(s) or legal guardian.
- **Rape:** penetration, no matter how slight with any body part or object of another person, without the consent of the victim.
- **Simple Assault:** unlawful physical attack not involving a weapon and the victim does not suffer obvious, severe, or aggravated bodily injury.

What these offenses highlight in our area:

- More than 2/3 of incidents occurred in residences/homes.
- More than 90% of victims knew their offender.
- Youth were disproportionately represented among sexual violence victims.
- Interpersonal violence involving bodily force/personal weapons dominated offenses.

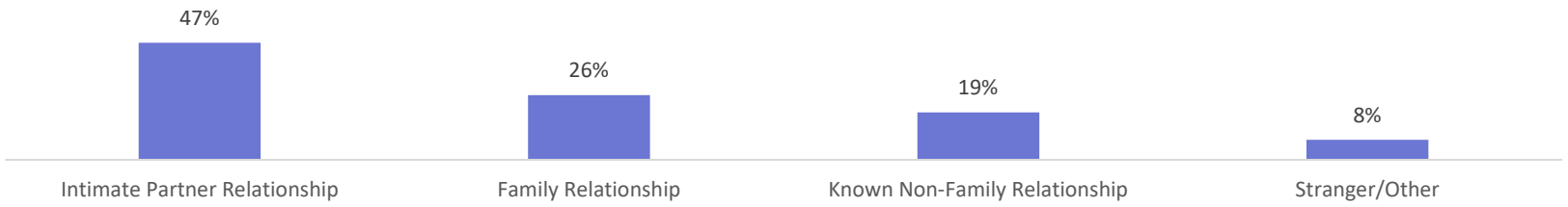
Offense Locations, Selected Violence-Related Offenses, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



ACES Fig. 11 — FBI Crime Data Explorer (Aggravated Assault, Criminal Sexual Contact, Kidnapping, Rape, and Simple Assault), 2026

Across the violence-related offense categories reviewed, nearly two-thirds (65%) of incidents occurred in residences or homes. Transportation-related locations, including roads, parking areas, and sidewalks, represented the second largest category at 18%, while school settings accounted for approximately 3% of reported incidents.

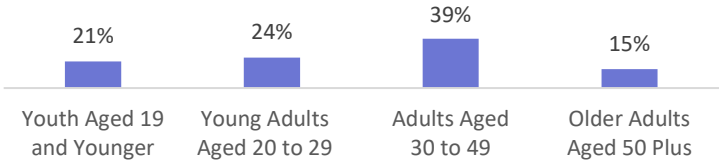
Victim-Offender Relationship Patterns, Selected Violence-Related Offenses, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



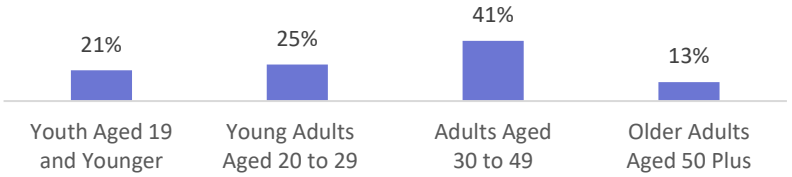
ACES Fig. 12 — FBI Crime Data Explorer (Aggravated Assault, Criminal Sexual Contact, Kidnapping, Rape, and Simple Assault), 2026

Across the violence-related offense categories reviewed, approximately 92% of victims knew the offender. Intimate partner relationships represented the largest relationship category overall, followed by family members and other known individuals, while stranger-related incidents accounted for a relatively small share of cases. Patterns across assault, sexual violence, and abduction-related offenses suggest that trauma exposure and violence within the region are frequently interpersonal and relationship-based, often occurring within families, and familiar social environments rather than involving strangers.

Victim Age Patterns, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



Offender Age Patterns, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024

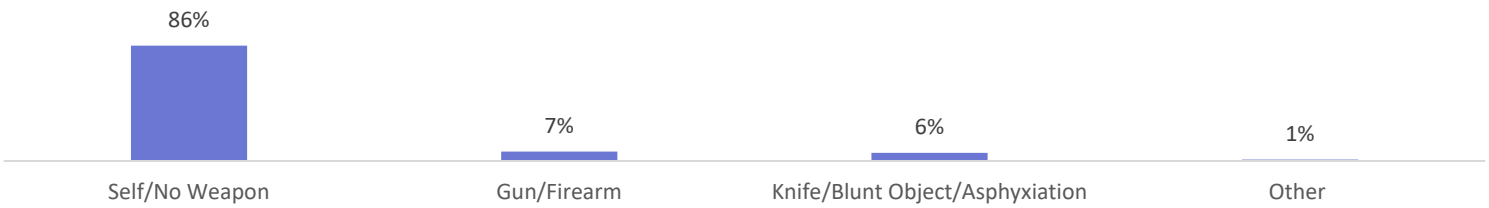


ACES Figs. 13 and 14 — FBI Crime Data Explorer (Aggravated Assault, Criminal Sexual Contact, Kidnapping, Rape, and Simple Assault), 2026

Adults ages 20 to 49 represented the largest overall victim age group across the violence-related offenses reviewed. However, children and teens were disproportionately represented among victims of rape and criminal sexual contact offenses, with approximately 21% of all reported victims aged 19 and younger. Overall, sexual violence offenses skewed younger while assault-related offenses were more concentrated among adults during prime working and family years.

Adults ages 20 to 49 represented the largest offender age group across the selected violence-related offenses, accounting for approximately two-thirds of reported offenders. Youth ages 19 and younger represented approximately 21% of offenders overall. Offender age patterns were driven largely by assault-related offenses and reflect broader patterns of interpersonal conflict, domestic violence, household instability, and relational violence occurring within familiar social environments.

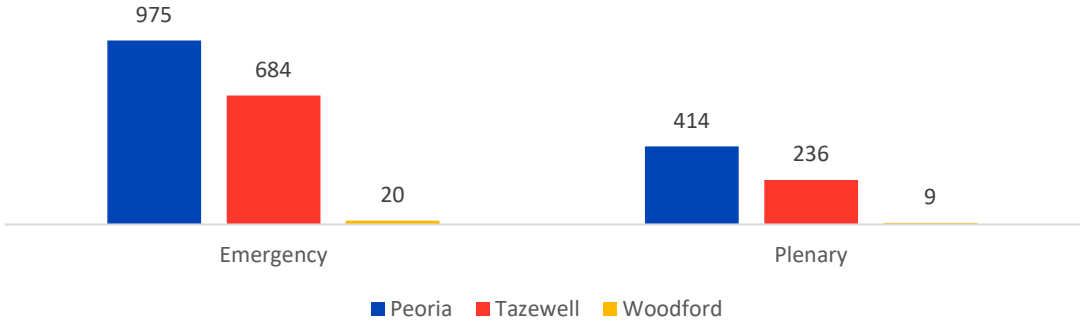
Weapon Type, Selected Violence-Related Offenses, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



ACES Fig. 15 — FBI Crime Data Explorer (Aggravated Assault, Criminal Sexual Contact, Kidnapping, Rape, and Simple Assault), 2026

Across the selected violence-related offense categories reviewed, the majority of reported incidents involved bodily force (86%) rather than firearms (7%). Note that "other" includes drugs/poisons, fires/explosives, and vehicles.

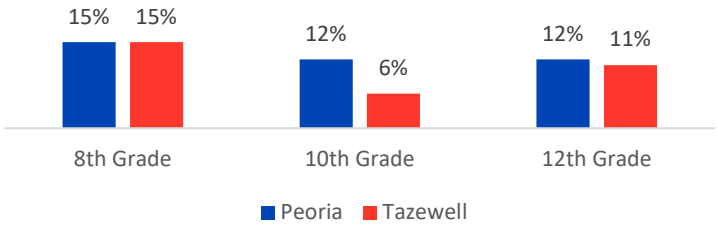
Orders of Protection Filings, Tri-County Area, 2024



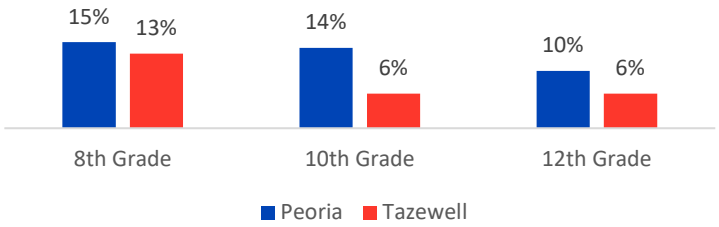
ACES Fig. 16 — Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts - Annual Report Statistical Summaries, Civil and Domestic Relations Caseloads

Orders of Protection filings provide additional insight into interpersonal violence, domestic conflict, household instability, and trauma exposure within the region. Consistent with earlier victim-offender relationship patterns, many cases involve abuse occurring within intimate partner, family, or familiar relationship settings. In Illinois, Emergency Orders of Protection provide immediate short-term legal protection for victims of abuse, while plenary orders may remain in effect for up to two years following a court hearing.

Students Who Felt Unsafe at School, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



Students Reporting Feeling Unsafe at School, Peoria and Tazewell Counties, 2024



ACES Figs. 17 and 18 — Illinois Youth Survey, IDHS, University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research and Development, 2024

Illinois Youth Survey results indicated that some middle and high school students reported feeling unsafe at school, with a portion of students also reporting they missed school because they felt unsafe. Reported concerns were generally highest among 8th grade students. Feeling unsafe at school and school avoidance can negatively affect educational engagement, academic performance, mental health, school connectedness, and overall student well-being. Research has linked chronic stress, bullying, exposure to violence, trauma, and lack of supportive relationships to increased absenteeism and poorer long-term educational and behavioral health outcomes.

Many of the educational, economic, health, and behavioral patterns identified throughout this assessment are interconnected and may reflect the long-term effects of trauma exposure, chronic stress, and adverse childhood experiences across the lifespan.

ACEs SUMMARY

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are closely connected to long-term educational, behavioral health, physical health, and economic outcomes across the lifespan.
- Local data throughout this assessment suggests that trauma exposure, chronic stress, household instability, violence, and behavioral health challenges may contribute to broader community conditions affecting educational engagement, housing stability, workforce participation, and quality of life.
- Research consistently shows that repeated exposure to abuse, neglect, violence, family instability, substance misuse, mental illness, and other ACEs-related conditions may increase risk for chronic disease, depression, anxiety, substance use, and reduced economic stability later in life.
- ACEs-related indicators identified throughout this assessment include chronic absenteeism, school mobility, disciplinary incidents, educational achievement gaps, behavioral health concerns, substance use, violence exposure, and housing instability.
- Child maltreatment and substitute care data reinforce the importance of family stability, early intervention, placement continuity, and supportive services in improving long-term outcomes for children and youth.
- Community violence patterns reviewed within this assessment were frequently relationship-based and concentrated within homes and familiar social environments, highlighting the significant role interpersonal violence and trauma exposure may play in long-term community well-being.
- School safety concerns, chronic stress, and trauma exposure may negatively affect school connectedness, attendance, emotional health, academic performance, and long-term educational outcomes for some students.
- At the same time, research also highlights the importance of protective factors—including supportive relationships, school connectedness, stable housing, behavioral health services, early intervention, and community support systems—that can strengthen resilience and improve long-term outcomes.

Together, these findings reinforce the importance of cross-sector collaboration among schools, healthcare providers, behavioral health organizations, nonprofits, employers, law enforcement, and community partners to support trauma-informed prevention, early intervention, family stability, and long-term community well-being.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The 2026 Heart of Illinois United Way Community Assessment highlights both the strengths and challenges shaping communities across central Illinois. While many residents continue to experience barriers related to education, financial stability, housing, behavioral health, healthcare access, and workforce opportunity, the assessment does not reflect the work taking place daily throughout the community to support individuals and families and help prevent more severe long-term outcomes. The ongoing collaboration of our incredible partners - nonprofits, schools, healthcare providers, employers, community organizations, volunteers, and residents - remain critically important to addressing these issues and challenges.

Many of the conditions identified throughout this report are deeply interconnected. Educational success, economic mobility, physical health, behavioral health, housing stability, and community safety are all influenced by broader social, economic, and environmental factors. Addressing these complex challenges requires continued collaboration, data-informed decision making, prevention efforts, and long-term investment in our community.

The Heart of Illinois United Way remains committed to working alongside community partners to strengthen education, financial stability, health, and opportunity throughout the region.

> *Strong communities are built through shared responsibility, informed action, and continued partnership. Data helps communities better understand challenges and opportunities — collaboration helps communities move forward.*

Data Sources Included Throughout the Assessment: *This assessment incorporates local, state, and national data sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Illinois Youth Survey (IYS), Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA), FBI Crime Data Explorer, Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), and additional public health, workforce, education, and community-based data sources.*

Please note that as more public data is available online, many agencies are increasingly suppressing or aggregating data to protect privacy, address small sample sizes, and improve statistical reliability. This trend has become especially common within health, violence, and youth-related reporting. As a result, some data previously available for detailed local analysis or direct comparison are now more limited.

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