



Denton County  
**MHMR Center**

# Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Needs Assessment 2023

DENTON COUNTY MHMR CENTER  
*DENTON COUNTY, TEXAS*

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May 2023

# Introduction to Denton County MHMR Services

Denton County MHMR Center is the Local Mental Health & Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Authority for Denton County, TX and has provided services since 1971. We strive to enhance the quality of lives of the individuals served and their family members through our trauma informed care approach with our comprehensive behavioral health and intellectual and developmental disability services.

## What is CCBHC?

The Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model helps increase access to comprehensive behavioral health care services. CCBHCs must provide services to anyone who requests treatment for mental health and/or substance use disorders. Access to services must be provided regardless of their ability to pay, where they live, or age.

CCBHCs must provide nine core services (listed to the right) and they are required to provide quick access to care. Service requirements include crisis services that are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. CCBHCs are obliged to provide a thorough array of behavioral health services so people do not have to access multiple providers. Care coordination is also a vital tool required to help people navigate behavioral health care, physical health care, social services, and the other systems.

The criteria establish a basic level of service at which a CCBHC must operate and this falls into the six key program areas of staffing, availability and accessibility of services, care coordination, scope of services, quality and reporting, and organizational authority and governance.



## Purpose of The Needs Assessment

A thorough needs assessment allows the Center to understand our community, identify gaps in care, assess our current services, spotlight health concerns in our community, gain insight into our workforce, and identify our strengths and limitations as an organization.

This needs assessment is an important part of continually reviewing the quality of our services, seeking feedback from our individuals served, and implementing essential changes to improve our services that meet the CCBHC model of care. The needs assessment utilized a mixed methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data, and is conducted every three years as required by our CCBHC certification.

## CCBHC Needs Assessment Goals

The following goals were identified by the Executive Management Team:

1. Identify gaps in services and develop strategies to better serve our community.
2. Determine the knowledge our community has on MHMR services and local resources.
3. Receive and implement feedback and community recommendations.

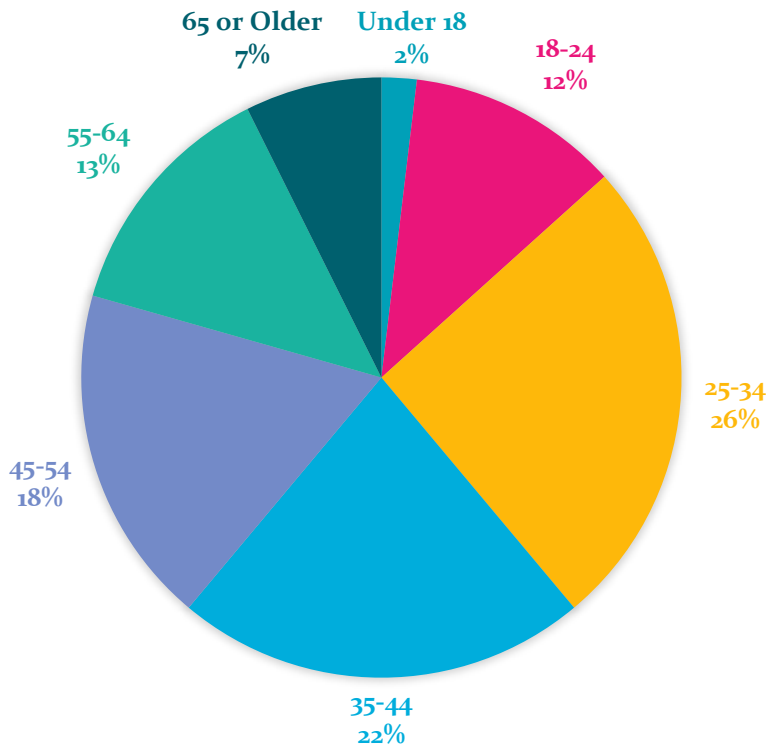
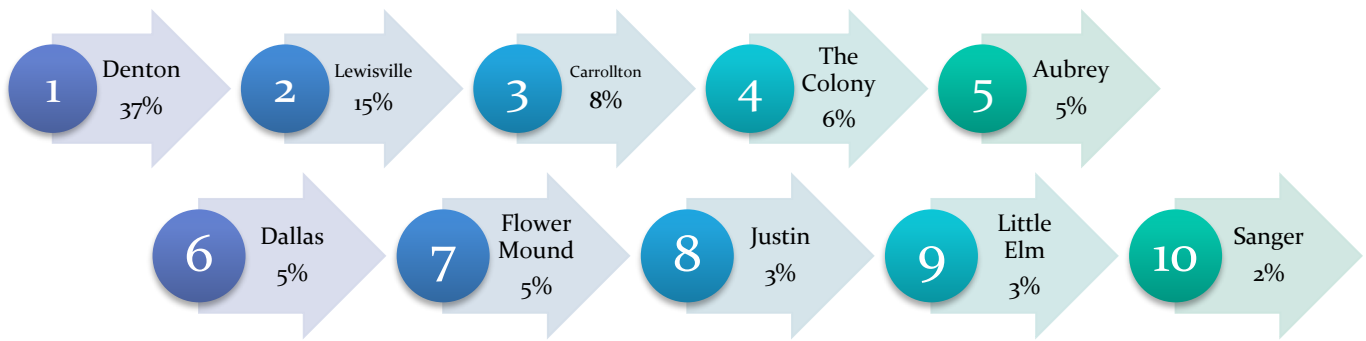
## Methodology & Data Analysis

This cross-sectional mixed methods approach consisted of quantitative self-report surveys where participants could also provide qualitative responses to specific questions. This methodology was driven by a purposive sampling approach due to the focus on those who reside, receive services, or work in Denton County, TX. The sample was representative of the people of Denton County, TX. Surveys were created for individuals served by Denton County MHMR, Denton County residents, Denton County community organization partners, and Denton County MHMR staff. All surveys had the same Needs Assessment questions, but some program specific questions did differ depending on the respondent.

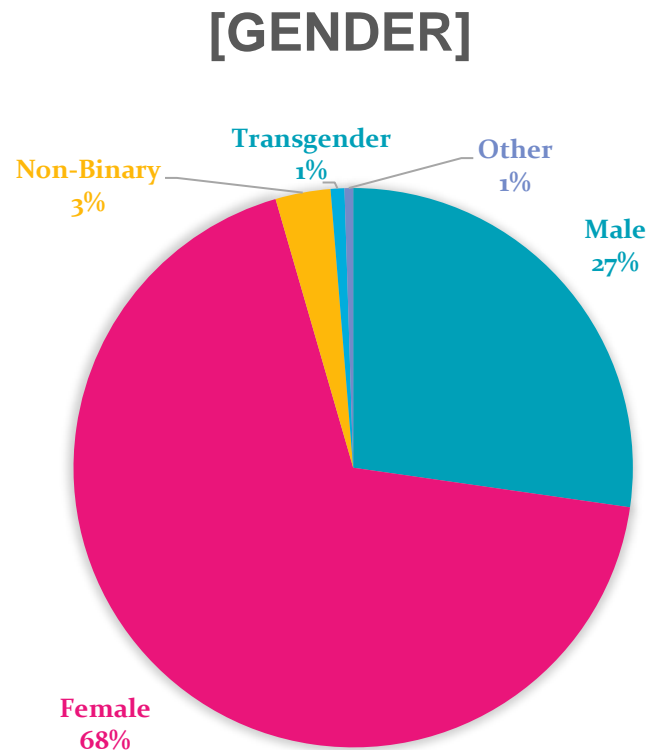
Surveys were created through Microsoft Forms and were made available to the community via social media, our website, city advertisement, the local county newspaper, email, QR codes, other electronic means, and via paper surveys. These surveys were available from November 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022. We received 1,064 total survey responses, but 59 of those had missing data and were excluded from the final sample. The final sample included 1,005 completed surveys. Surveys were completed by 418 individuals served by Denton County MHMR (residing in Denton County), 353 Denton County residents, 46 Denton County community organization partners, and 188 Denton County MHMR staff.

# DENTON COUNTY CCBHC NEEDS ASSESSMENT

According to the United States Census data, Denton County has a population of 943,857 and is expected to continue its exponential growth. The county consists of 51% female and 49% male, and there are about 2.72 people per household. About 23% of Denton County residents reported speaking a language other than English in their home. Residents reported that 93% of people had a high school diploma and 47% had earned a bachelor's degree. About 13% of residents reported they did not have health insurance to access needed services. The median income is \$96,265 and the percentage of those living in poverty is 7% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). In total, 1,005 Denton County residents participated in the surveys and the demographic make-up of the respondents and the top ten cities who completed the surveys, identified by their zip codes, are below:



[AGE]

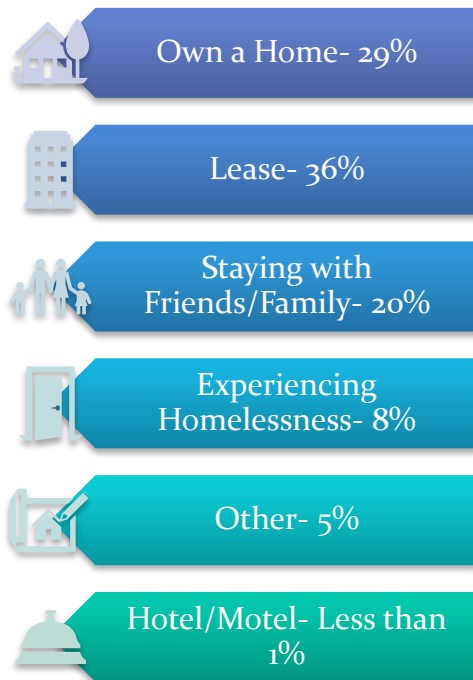


[GENDER]

## [MARITAL STATUS]

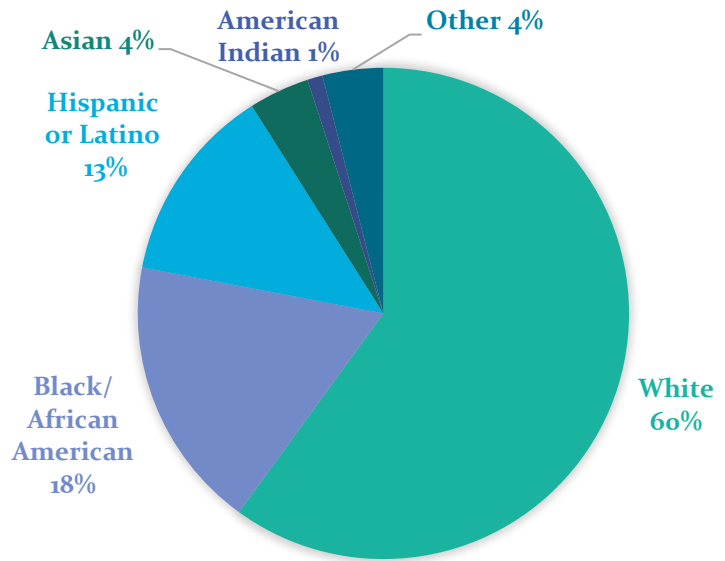


## [HOUSING]

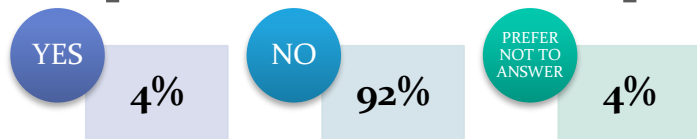


All other options were less than 1%

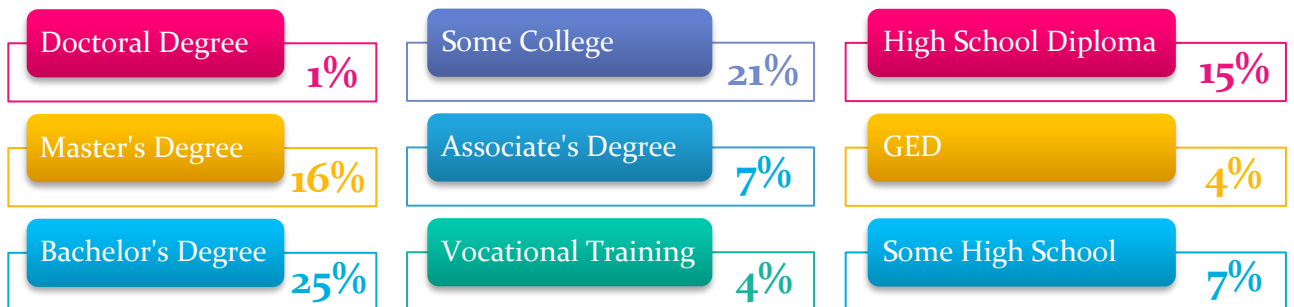
## [RACE]



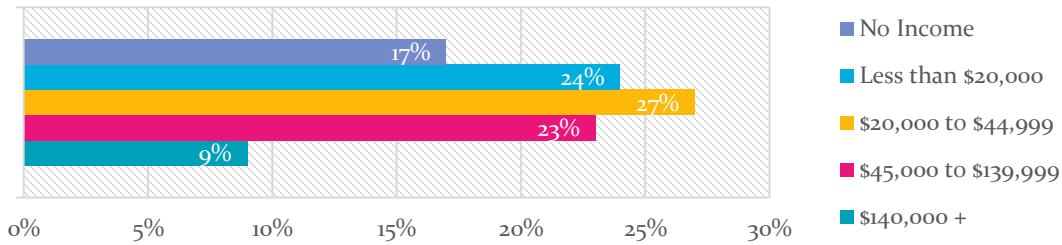
## [MILITARY SERVICE]



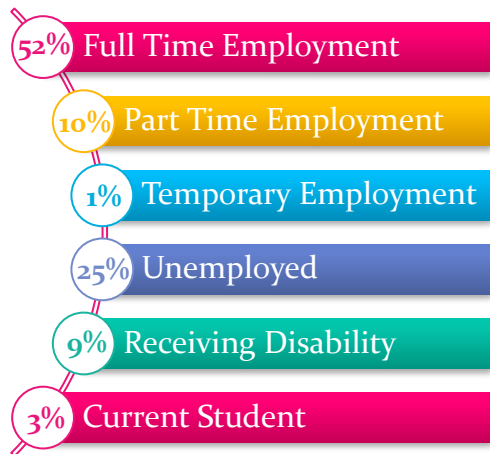
## [EDUCATION]



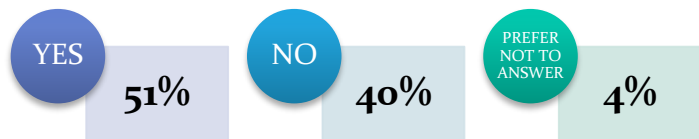
## [HOUSEHOLD INCOME]



## [EMPLOYMENT]

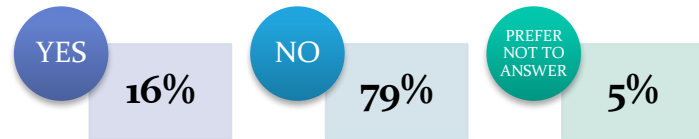


## [HEALTH INSURANCE]

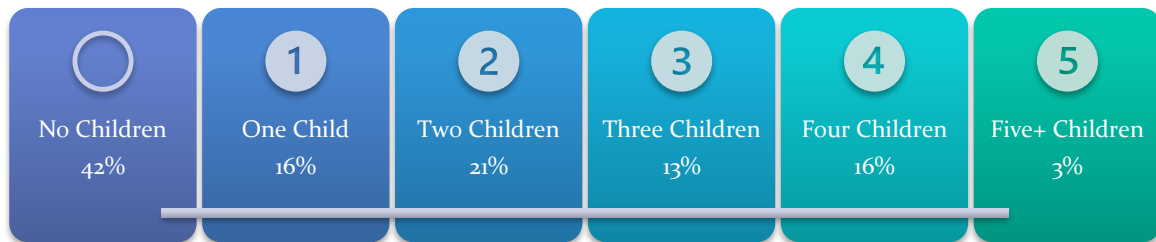


5% reported having insurance but it did not include mental health coverage.

## [RECEIVING DISABILITY]



## [NUMBER OF CHILDREN]



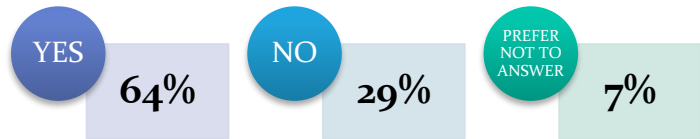
Participants in this survey have many similarities with the reported Denton County population when compared to the U.S. Census data. Areas where the samples differ is in gender, race, and insurance status. Participants in this study were 68% female, but according to the most recent U.S. Census, Denton County is 51% female (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). For race, the participants reported being 60% White and the U.S. Census data shows Denton County is 73.8% White (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). The survey saw increased participation from the county's minority population. Finally, respondents reported no insurance at a rate of 40% and the U.S. Census reports only 13% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Also, as seen on the next page, respondents reported having a mental health diagnosis at 64%. Both points are most likely due to 42% of respondents receiving unfunded or low-cost services from Denton County MHMR and may not be reflective of the county overall.

## Mental Health, Substance Use & Physical Health Diagnosis

Respondents were asked if they have a mental health, substance use, and/or physical health diagnosis, and if they had anyone in their homes living with these disorders as well. About 9% of respondents reported they were living with all three diagnoses. The sections below show the prevalence of these diagnosis in Denton County.

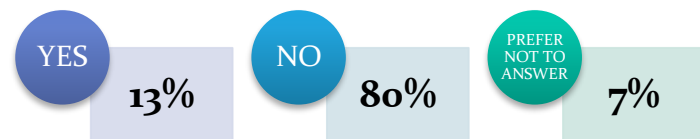
### Mental Health Disorder Diagnosis

About 64% of participants shared they were living with a mental health disorder diagnosis, and 29% reported they were not. According to the survey, African Americans and Caucasians were the two races with the highest prevalence of mental health diagnoses. Females were more likely to report living with mental illness. The age range that reported the highest rates of mental illness was 18-34 years old, and older populations reported lower rates of having a diagnosis. Most people living with a diagnosis shared they were working full time, but a high number of people who did not disclose if they had a diagnosis were experiencing unemployment. When asked about mental illness in the home, 49% reported at least one other person in their residence living with a diagnosis and 43% they did not have a diagnosis in the home. A high percentage of people reporting a mental health diagnosis also reported having a physical health diagnosis.



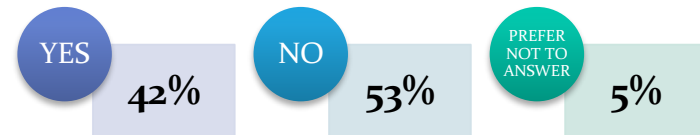
### Substance Use Disorder Diagnosis

About 13% of participants shared they were living with a substance use disorder diagnosis, and 80% reported they were not. The survey found that the race reporting the highest rates of substance use diagnosis fell into Other and the lowest were American Indian and Hispanic or Latino. About 10% of respondents reported that at least one other person in their home was living with a substance use diagnosis, and the highest age range reporting this was 35-44 years old. Most respondents who reported having someone in their home with a substance use diagnosis included those with a high school diploma or some college education. Finally, based on the survey data, it appears that households with lower incomes have a higher incidence of substance use diagnosis when compared to those with higher incomes. Roughly 12% of participants reported living with both and substance use disorder and a mental health disorder.



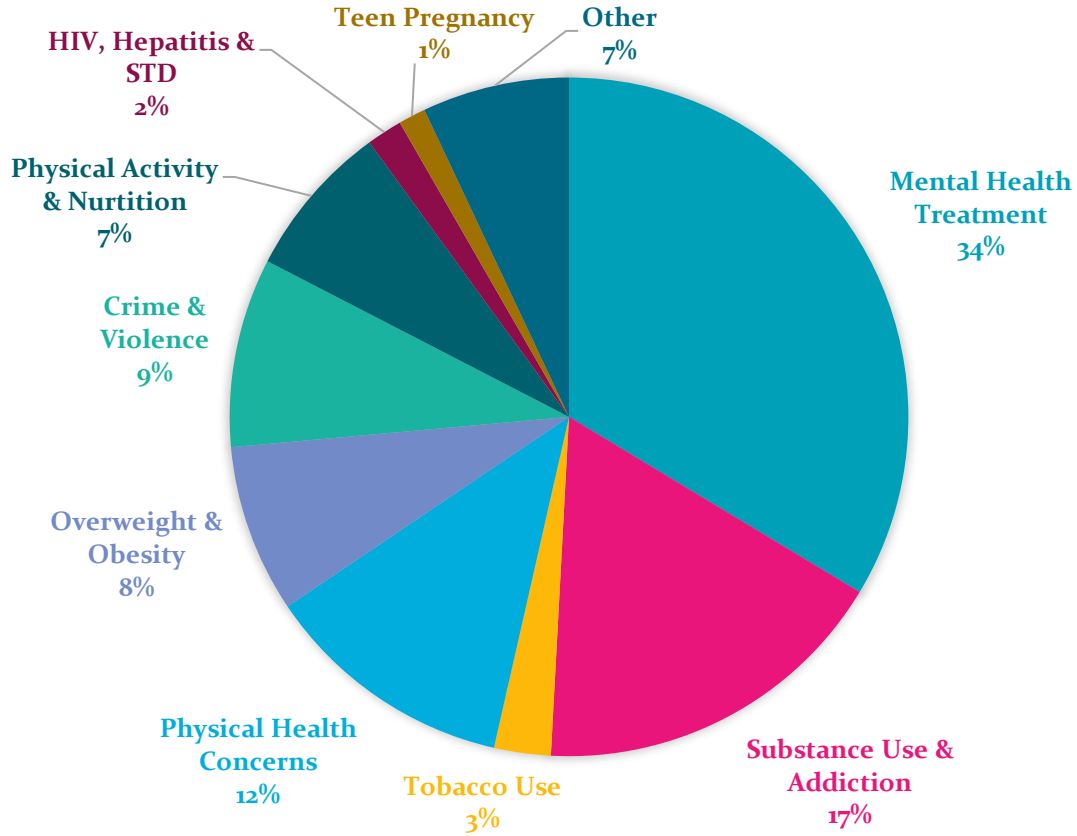
### Physical Health Diagnosis

About 42% of participants shared they were living with a physical health diagnosis, and 53% reported they were not. The age range who was most likely to report a physical health diagnosis were 35-44 years old, and the most likely to not report it were 25-34 years old. Participants shared that 39% had at least one other person in their home with a physical health diagnosis, 54% reported they did not.



## Top Health Concerns & Needs in Denton County

Respondents identified the top three health needs in Denton County included mental health treatment (34%), substance use treatment (17%), and physical health concerns (12%). The pie chart below identifies all responses for top health needs in the county.



Respondents were also asked what the primary needs of their household were and the options included: physical health care, pediatric health care, prenatal care, dental services, health education & prevention, nutrition & exercise programs, services for the elderly, services for those living with disabilities, crisis services, substance use services & addiction treatment, transportation, insurance & funding, smoking cessation, counseling, support groups, mental health services, prescription assistance programs, and other. The top five needs of Denton County households are below.





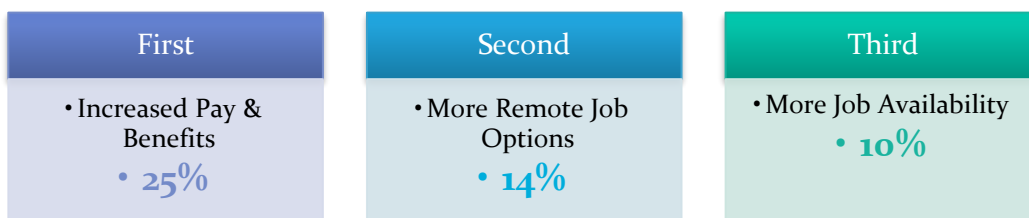
## Education Needs in Denton County

About 25% of respondents reported their highest level of education is a bachelor's degree, followed by some college (21%) but no degree. Participants who reported attending some college only also reported the highest levels of mental health diagnosis. Those who reported having higher levels of education (master's degree and doctoral degree) also reported the lowest levels of living with a mental health diagnosis. Having someone in the home with a substance use diagnosis was more prevalent with those who hold a high school diploma or some college education. Respondents were asked about their top educational needs within Denton County. The top three education needs in Denton County, as reported by the survey participants, are below.



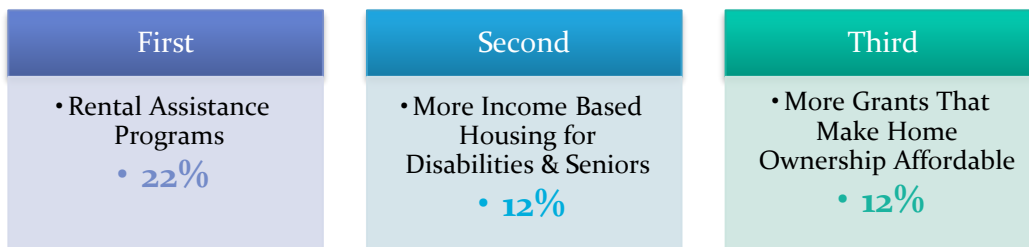
## Employment Needs in Denton County

Full time workers in Denton County are more likely to hold a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, or have attended some college. Part time workers in the county have a more diverse educational background and include a higher proportion of high school graduates. Full time employment is the most common in Denton County with 52% reporting they were currently employed full time, 10% reported working part time, and 25% shared they were unemployed. About 10% of those who reported being unemployed were not looking for work (i.e. caregiver or stay at home parent), while 15% shared they were looking for work. A significant number of participants who shared they were employed full time, part time, or receiving disability benefits reported issues with accessing childcare. Also, about 9% of people reported losing a job due to childcare issues, with the most common lost job being full time employment. Only 60% of people who reported working full time receive health insurance benefits from their employer, while 5% of people have health insurance that does not have mental health coverage. The top three employment needs in Denton County, as reported by the survey participants, are below.



## Housing Needs in Denton County

Owning a home in Denton County was reported at a rate of 29% and leasing a house or apartment was reported at 36%. About 20% of people also reported staying or living with friends and/or family, and some of this percentage may include high school or college students who still reside at home. About 8% of participants reported they were experiencing homelessness in Denton County. Roughly 42% of respondents, in all income categories, reported some concerns about paying their monthly bills and rent or mortgage was the highest concern at 25%. The top three housing needs in Denton County, as reported by the survey participants, are below.



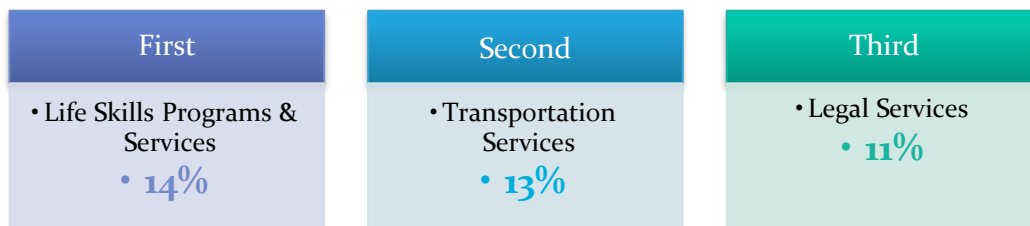
## Financial Difficulties in Denton County

Roughly 42% of respondents, in all income categories, reported some concerns about paying their monthly bills, with the top three financial difficulties in Denton County, as reported by the survey participants, are below. Also, about 32% of participants shared they accessed a food pantry with the past year for support. Close to 41% of participants stated they either had no income or received less than \$20,000 a year on average. Approximately 16% of respondents shared that they receive disability income from Social Security, but many of them shared it was under \$20,000 a year. According to the survey data, mental illness is not a strong predictor of financial difficulties in Denton County, while living with a substance use disorder and/or physical health concern are strong indicators of financial difficulties. The data also showed that a high percentage of respondents were not working because of their mental health while a smaller percentage shared that they were not working due to their physical health, or a substance use disorder. But about 40% of participants reported that they did not have access to health insurance to cover needed treatment for their conditions, and about 5% shared they had insurance, but it did not cover mental health treatment.



## Support Services Needs in Denton County

Respondents were asked which support services they felt were needed in Denton County. Participants were provided with the following options: child support, legal services, youth services, life skills programs & services, meal programs, transportation services, disability services, in-home services, elderly services & support, senior centers & programs, and other. The top three support service needs in Denton County, as reported by the survey participants, are below.



## Barriers to Services

Denton County needs to assist residents in accessing treatment options by working to reduce the barriers that people experience when trying to connect with health care options. Individuals served by Denton County MHMR, and Denton County residents reported very similar barriers to accessing treatment except in their second ranked barriers to treatment. Denton County residents were more likely to report issues with not knowing what resources were available to them, and individuals served by Denton County MHMR were more likely to put that a lack of evening or weekend appointment times were a barrier for them. Approximately 18% of individuals served by Denton County MHMR shared that treatment was difficult to access due to not having appointments outside of weekdays 8am to 5pm or not having services available on the weekends. The top five barrier to treatment in Denton County, as reported by the survey participants, are below.

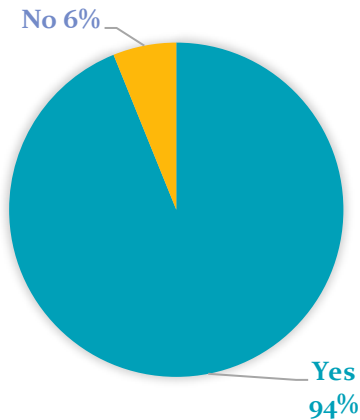


## Telehealth in Denton County

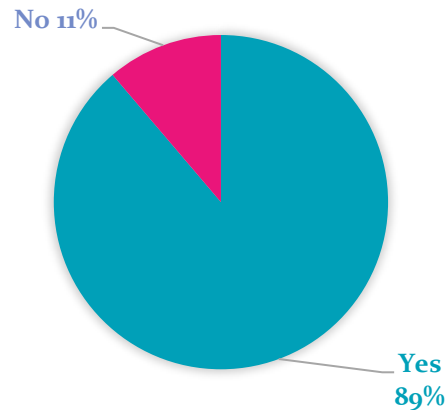
During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a clear need for increased access to telehealth treatment options. Though increasing access to care is vital for our community, not every

person in Denton County can access telehealth. According to participants, about 94% reported reliable access to a phone and 89% reported reliable access to the internet. These responses do not guarantee reliable access within their home, but instead that they can get access to one or the other if it is needed. The U.S Census found that about 94% of households in Denton County had internet access (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

Do you have reliable access to a phone?



Do you have reliable access to the internet?



Even if someone in Denton County has reliable access to a phone or internet, and could participate in telehealth services, not everyone feels they benefit from receiving services via this delivery method. About 59% of participants reported that they felt they benefitted from synchronous video or audio services and about 20% reported that did not feel as though they benefitted from telehealth services. Close to 15% of respondents shared they had not received any services via telehealth prior to completing the survey.

## Access to Community Resources

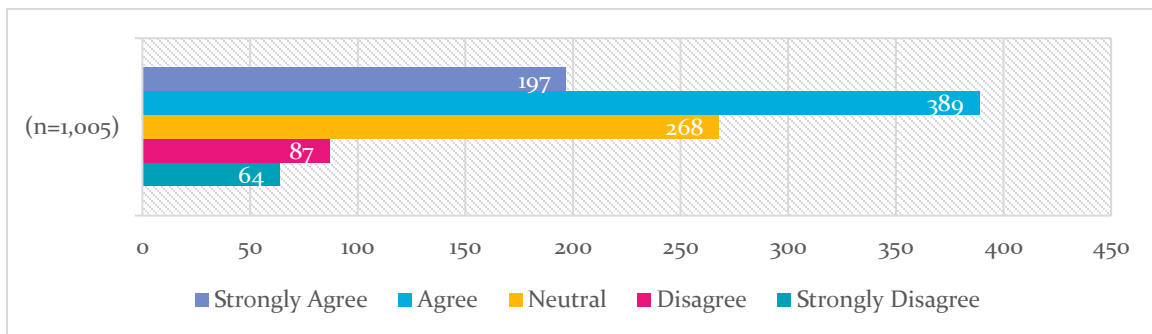
Respondents were asked about their perception of how accessible resources were in Denton County for outpatient mental health services, substance use treatment, crisis services, housing resources and assistance, inpatient psychiatric services, family support and education services, transportation support, and language assistance services. About 51% of participants reported having insurance, 40% reported they did not have insurance, and about 5% shared that they had insurance, but it did not cover mental health treatment.

They were asked to scale their beliefs on accessibility from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These sections of the survey had about 40% neutral responses when asked about accessibility to services. Having a high percentage of neutral responses may mean that people were possibly unsure of the resources and accessibility or did not have an opinion (DeMars & Erwin, 2005).

## Outpatient Mental Health Services

Participants were asked if they felt that outpatient mental health services were accessible in Denton County. About 59% of respondents either strongly agreed (39%) or agreed (20%) that outpatient services are available and accessible in Denton County. Also, roughly 15% reported they did not feel services were accessible or felt strongly that they were not accessible. Of the respondents, about 64% reported they have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder, and 49% reported that at least one other person in their home was also living with a mental health diagnosis.

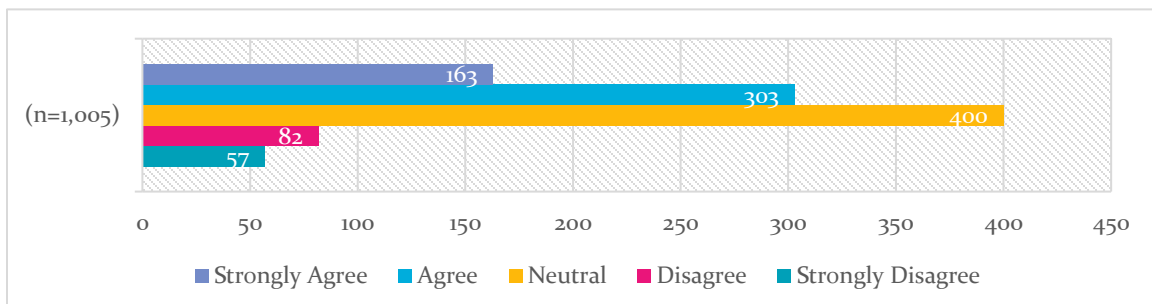
*STATEMENT: I believe outpatient mental health services are accessible in Denton County.*



## Substance Use Treatment & Addiction Services

Roughly 46% reported that treatment was accessible, 40% were neutral, and about 14% felt that substance use services were not as accessible in Denton County. About 13% of participants shared that they were living with a substance use diagnosis and 10% reported they had someone in their home living with a substance use disorder. Females were more likely to agree that substance use services were accessible. There are gaps in substance use treatment access in Denton County, especially for those without insurance or funding. The closest inpatient rehab and withdrawal management facility that serves individuals without insurance is approximately over 40 miles away in Dallas or Fort Worth. There are multiple agencies in the county that provide scholarships or low-cost services for counseling or sober living, but overall, there is a need for increased services in Denton County for individuals and families living with a substance use disorder.

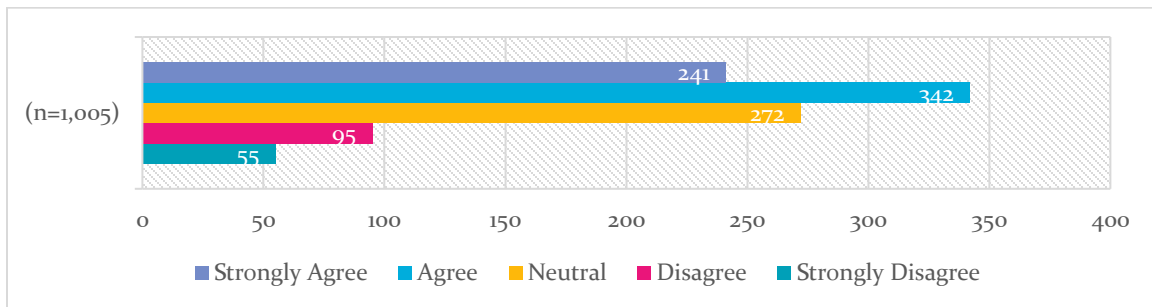
*STATEMENT: I believe substance use treatment services are accessible in Denton County.*



### Crisis Services (for Mental Health)

Crisis services are available in Denton County through the Denton County MHMR Center Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT) and crisis hotline (1-800-762-0157) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. It appears that a good majority of respondents are aware of the available services with only 15% of participants disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to the question. Knowledge and agreement that crisis services are accessible in Denton County decreased as the age groups increased. Respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed crisis services were accessible with 35-44 age group disagreeing at 15%, 45-54 at 19%, 55-64 at 17%, and 65 and older at 20%. The 18-34 age groups were the most agreeable to crisis services being available in Denton County.

*STATEMENT: I believe crisis services are accessible in Denton County.*

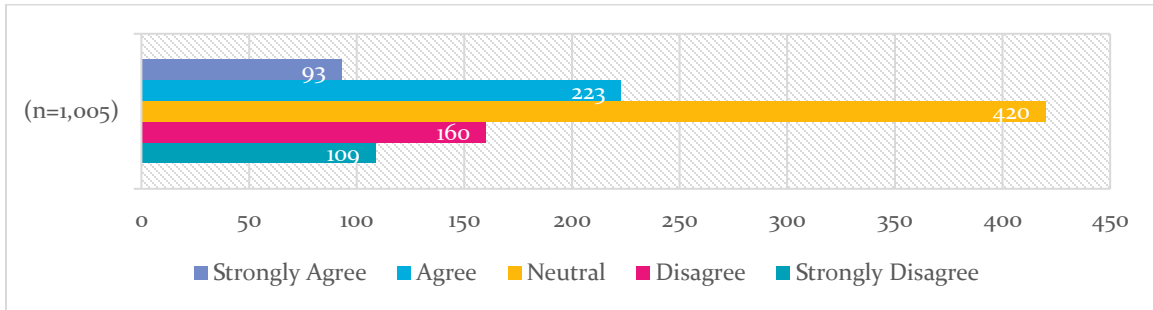


### Housing Resources & Assistance

As of 2022, Denton County has over 376,666 housing units and are continuing to expand with new communities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Denton County survey respondents reported leasing a residence occurred about 36% of the time and owning a home occurred with about 29% of participants. Survey respondents reported that on average they had 3.37 person per household and the U.S. Census found that residences in Denton County on average housed 2.72 persons (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Multiple participants reported that they were living with eight or more people in their residence. The average median gross rent in Denton County is \$1,352 and the median monthly owner home cost with a mortgage is \$2,242 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

As mentioned previously, paying for a mortgage or rent was the top financial concern of the respondents in the survey who shared they had issues paying monthly bills. During COVID, there were many funded housing assistance programs developed to help renters stay in their homes or connect with housing. Many rental or assistances programs that were supported through temporary pandemic funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) have slowed or utilized all their funding. The high neutral responses on this survey question point towards people not knowing what the resources or options are for support with housing assistance (DeMars & Erwin, 2005).

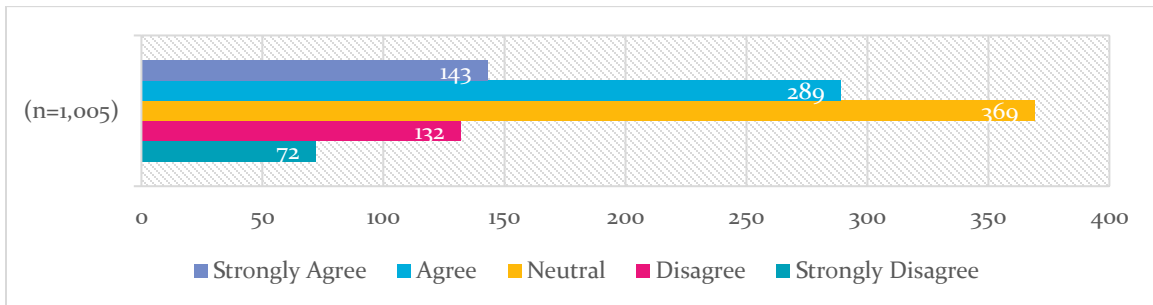
*STATEMENT: I believe housing resources and assistance are accessible in Denton County.*



### Inpatient Psychiatric Services

About 43% of survey respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that inpatient psychiatric services were accessible in Denton County, and about 37% reported they were neutral. Denton County currently has three psychiatric hospitals with Mayhill Hospital, University Behavioral Health, and Carrollton Springs Hospital. These facilities accept insurance or self-pay, and if a person is unfunded and needs services, they must first be assessed by the Denton County MHMR Center crisis team. MHMR has a limited budget for psychiatric bed days, and it is set by the state budget. These acute behavioral health treatment facilities in Denton County can accept people same day for treatment if they have bed availability, and a person meets the criteria for admission. Over the past three years, Denton County MHMR paid for 6,458 hospital bed days in 2020, 7,538 hospital bed days in 2021, and 7,713 hospital bed days in 2022 based on the operating budget provided by the state.

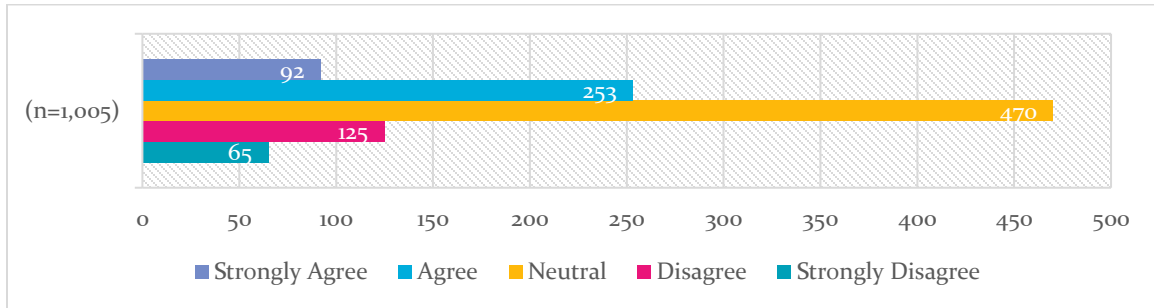
*STATEMENT: I believe inpatient psychiatric services are accessible in Denton County.*



### Family Support & Education Services

Denton County has many leading agencies that provide education, assistance, counseling, play therapy, support groups, and other services for families. About 34% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that resources for families were accessible in Denton County. An increase of about 47% in neutral response seems to point to participants being unsure of what the resources are in this area, and not necessarily that the agencies serving families are not available (DeMars & Erwin, 2005).

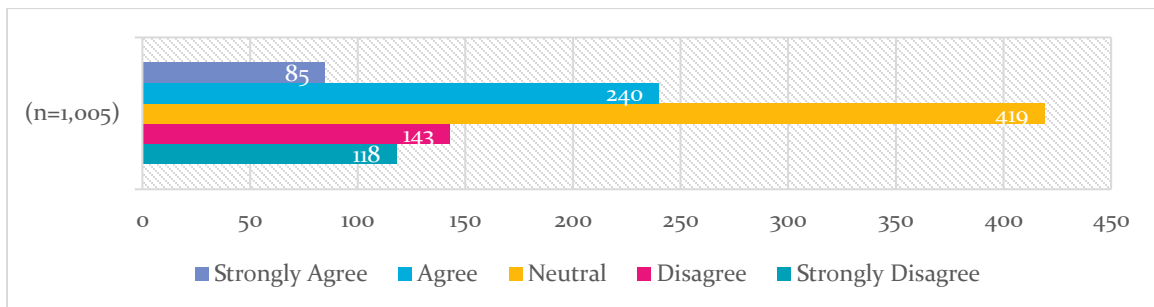
*STATEMENT: I believe family support & education services are accessible in Denton County.*



### Transportation

The survey showed that 26% of people either disagreed or strongly disagreed that transportation was accessible and about 32% reported they agreed or strongly agreed it was accessible in Denton County. About 42% of respondents were neutral. In Denton County, 72% of participants reported owning or leasing their own car and 15% shared they receive rides from friends or family members. Though transportation agencies in Denton County have worked to increase access in the Denton, Lewisville, and Highland Village areas, there are still many parts of Denton County that are not covered by these services. This lack of access leaves some people in smaller cities outside the service zones and without reliable and accessible transportation. Only 6% of respondents reported using public transportation and 4% reported having no access to any reliable forms of transportation. About 16% of respondents reported they had lost a job due to not having transportation to get to work and 6% preferred not to answer the question.

*STATEMENT: I believe transportation services are accessible in Denton County.*



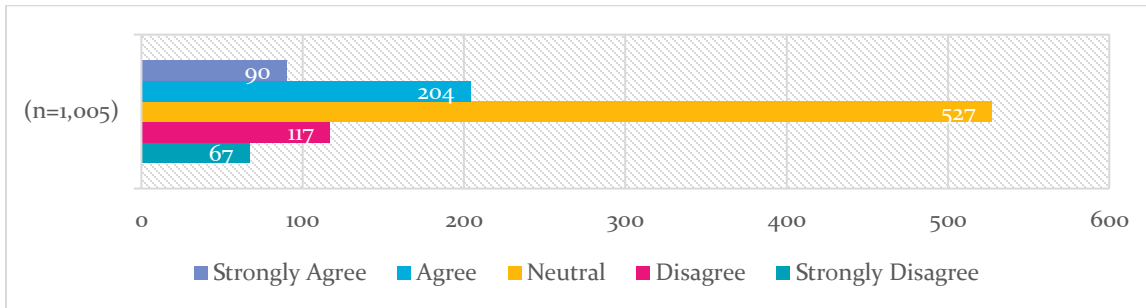
### Language Assistance Services

Access to language services had the highest rate of neutral responses on the survey with 52%. About 18% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that language assistance was accessible, while about 29% responded with agree to strongly agree. Overall, Denton County has gaps in mental health and substance use services for those who do not speak English. While technology assisted translation services are utilized throughout the county, there are still barriers to using this for intensive needs or



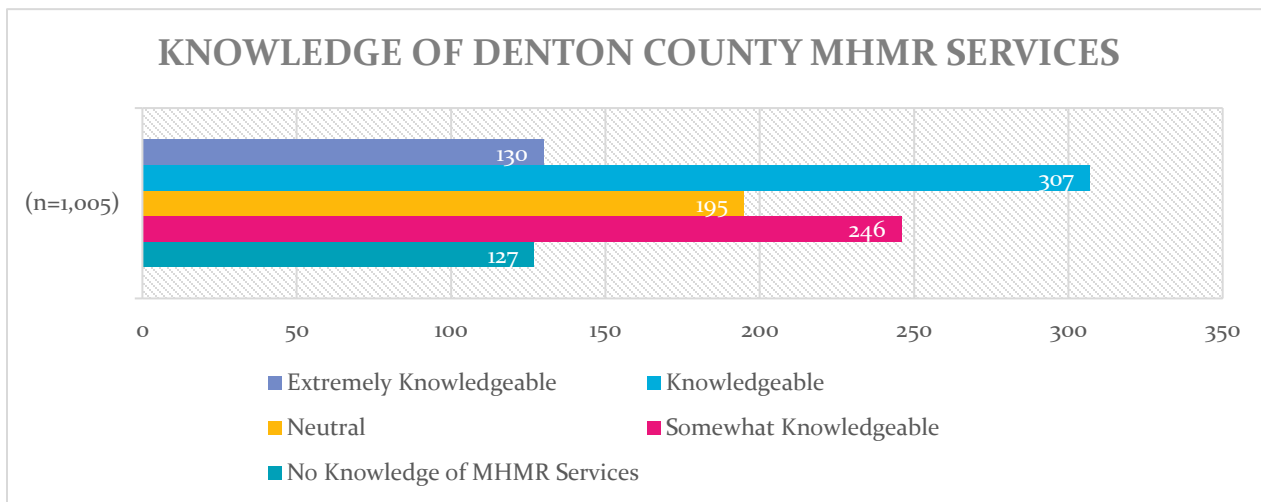
counseling services. Spanish was the second most common language spoken, after English, by Denton County respondents, but the number of resources specifically for languages other than English is heavily lacking in Denton County.

*STATEMENT: I believe language assistance services are accessible in Denton County.*



## Knowledge of Denton County MHMR Services

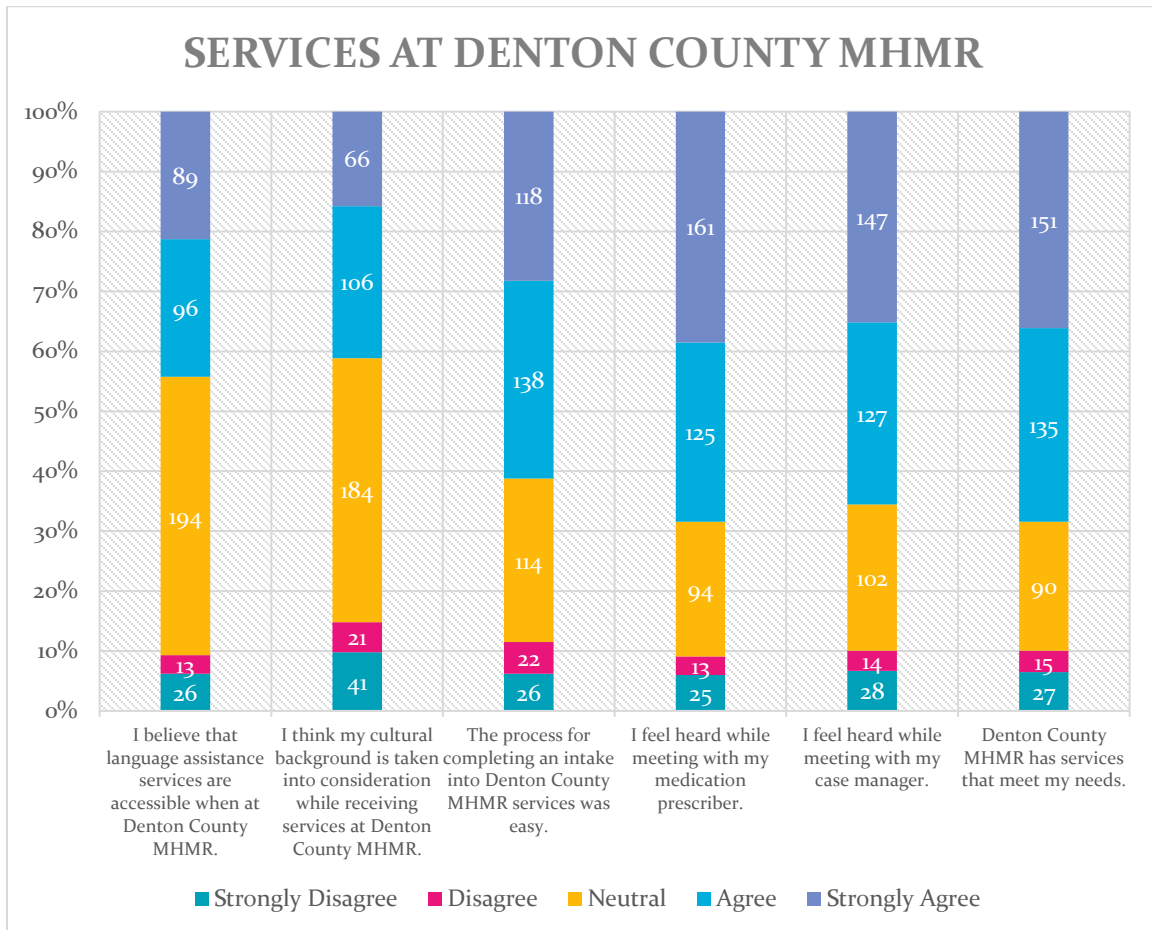
Participants (n=1,005) were asked about their knowledge of the services Denton County MHMR offers as the Local Mental Health Authority for the county. Overall, participants responded as knowledgeable (31%) or neutral (19%), with 24% reporting they were somewhat knowledgeable. Respondents in the age range of 25-34 reported higher rates of being knowledgeable or extremely knowledgeable, while most respondents under 18 years old reported they had no knowledge of Denton County MHMR services. The highest count of people who rated themselves as extremely knowledgeable or knowledgeable about MHMR services are in the income range of \$20,000 to \$139,999, and the highest percentage of people who have no knowledge of MHMR services are in the income range of less than \$20,000 or with no income. Females were also more likely to report being extremely knowledgeable or knowledgeable.



## Denton County MHMR Needs of Individuals Served

Individuals served by Denton County MHMR were asked specific questions pertaining to our services during their surveys in addition to the same questions on the resident surveys. Individuals were asked about their perception of MHMR services, how long they had been receiving service, how long it takes for them to get to an office for services, asked about access to a primary care physician (PCP), and if they would refer a family member or friend to MHMR services. Out of our 418 individuals served who completed the survey, participants reported that 22% receive either Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Also, 35% reported accessing a food pantry within the past year. Both stats are comparable to what was reported in all needs assessment surveys with Denton County residents (SSI or SSDI at 16% and food pantry access at 32%).

Individuals were asked to share about their experiences with MHMR services. They were asked about their experience with language assistance, consideration of their cultural background, the process for an intake, medication prescribers, case management, and if MHMR services meet their needs. Most responses were overwhelmingly positive, but there is still some room for growth with about 11% of responses falling into disagree or strongly disagree. Results from the surveys are below.



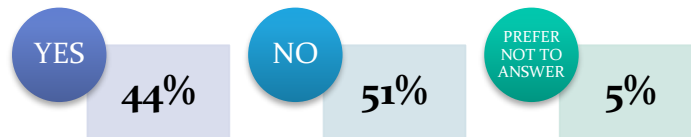
Surveys also asked individuals served how long they had been receiving behavioral health services with Denton County MHMR and responses ranged from less than a year to over 20 years. The range of years the individuals served have been receiving services is below.



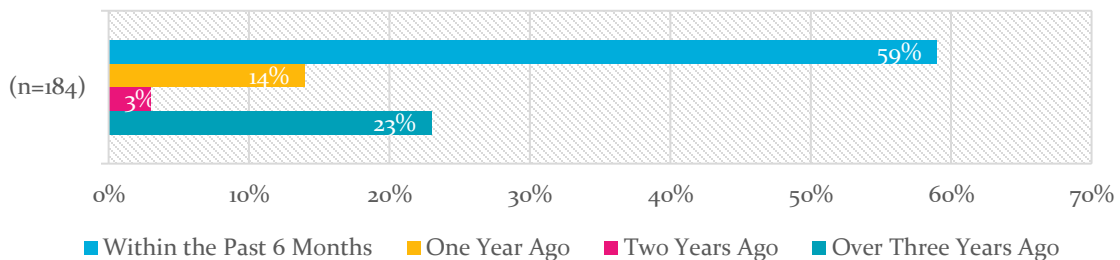
As Denton County has grown and expanded, the survey asked about how long it takes our individuals served to travel to our offices for services. There are currently two primary offices in Denton County for behavioral health services in Denton and Flower Mound. The Denton office intends to serve the north side of the county and the Flower Mound office intends to serve the south side of the county. The graphic to the left contains responses on the amount of time it takes our individuals to commute to one of our offices to receive services.



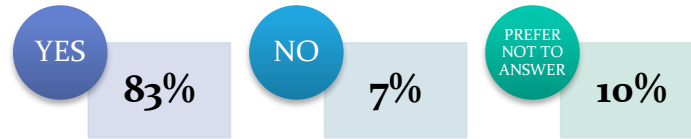
The survey also asked individuals served by Denton County MHMR about their access to treatment for their physical health needs. Respondents reported some access to a PCP, but about 51% shared that they did not have a PCP for routine physical health care. This may be due to many individuals being served by MHMR are either unfunded or underfunded. Results are below:



In addition to understanding if people have access to a PCP for their physical health, the survey asked when the most recent time they saw their PCP for care if they had answered “yes” to the previous question. Out of the 418 participants, only 184 answered positively and then reported when they last visit was. The graphic below shows when our individuals served most recently visited their PCP for physical health treatment.



Finally, our individuals served were asked if they would refer a family member or friend to MHMR services. About 83% reported that they would refer someone to our services if a person needed them, and 7% reported they would not. About 10% stated that preferred not to answer the question.



## Denton County MHMR Center Staffing Plan

Denton County MHMR staff members (n=188) were asked if they believed staff shortages were impacting direct care and services within our agency. Most staff reported that they felt staff shortages were impacting services at Denton County MHMR, with more than 88% either agreeing or strongly agreeing. About 38% of staff also reported that they felt staff shortages were impacting their desire to remain employed with our agency and another 31% reported they were neutral on the issue. Some staff reported feeling burned out, stressed, and overextended with their current workloads. Others believed that current staff shortages are impacting the care for individuals served and spreading out the frequency of clinical appointments.

The feedback received from our staff assisted us in updating our staffing plan and identifying areas for improvement. The Center is committed to maintaining and supporting our current staff while providing solution focused approaches to hiring. We are also dedicated to developing a more robust internship program to support local university students which can also assist our strategic goals of cultivating our workforce.

## Additional Comments

Participants were able to provide qualitative responses if they had anything to add to the survey. No response was required, but out of 1,005 completed surveys we received 118 individual qualitative responses. Many responses were about Denton County and accessing health services within the county, but not every response fell into a thematic category. Below are the themes found in the final survey responses.

1. More family services, support groups, and counseling.
2. Increase education on the county resources and provide advertising for services.
3. Add support services for seniors and adults living with disabilities.
4. Increase access to transportation in Denton County.
5. Increase housing resources and help those who cannot afford housing due to cost.
6. More access to low-cost insurance and benefits, as very few providers in Denton County accept Medicaid.

7. Address homelessness and increase access to services for individuals and families.
8. Current Denton County agencies cannot provide services to all who need them.
9. Increase pediatric mental health services for both inpatient and outpatient services.
10. Increase support and treatment for first responders.
11. Reduce long wait times for mental health services, especially for medications.
12. Low-cost veterinarian services to increase care for animals in Denton County.

## Summary of Key Findings

Though there were some noted differences between the demographics and makeup of the Denton County participants in this survey and the 2021 U.S Census results, the information still provides a reliable picture into the health of residents and the needs of those living within our catchment area. There are many needs within Denton County and many of those needs surrounded access to mental health services, substance use services, counseling, physical health services, dental services, and prescription assistance. About 64% of participants reported living with a mental illness, and 49% also reported that at least one person in their residence is also living with a diagnosis. The need for resources and support is clearly validated with these numbers.

Participants brought up many concerns about access to services and the financial difficulty that many are also experiencing. Being able to cover the cost of housing was reported as the biggest financial difficulty, while many programs to support housing have either been discontinued or slowed due to limited funding or the funding being utilized. About 52% of the participants reported working full time, but still many reported issues with being able to cover bills each month. Then, about 25% reported the need for increased pay and benefits for positions within the county and 10% reported the need for more remote job options.

When it comes to access to services, respondents did not appear to have much knowledge on family support services, language assistance, transportation, and housing resources in the county. These were areas where there were very high neutral responses, and areas where our county can increase resources or education on what already exists. Even though Spanish is the second most common language spoke in Denton County, according to this survey, the health resources for people who do not speak English are limited and using a translator may not always be appropriate. Also, transportation services within the county still have many gaps as the county continues to expand outside of Denton, Lewisville, and Highland Village DCTA Go-Zone access.

Respondents also spoke about barriers to treatment and the top five responses were lack of insurance and funding, limited access or cannot get an appointment, unsure of the resources or providers, lack of transportation, and lack of evening or weekend hours. Providers in Denton County need to be aware of these barriers so they can review their

own practices and identify if they have room for growth or change to meet the needs of Denton County residents and break down barriers to treatment. Denton County MHMR will be reviewing our practices, work to reduce barriers, and reviewing the need for appointment options occurring during the evening and weekends.

A substantial area that Denton County needs to work on, based on the responses to this needs assessment, is community education on available services and making that information accessible to all residents. Many residents do not appear to know what resources are available for different services and supports. This was further validated by qualitative data responses where multiple residents identified the need for education and advertising about what is available within our community. Denton County agencies need to come together to develop a one-stop location to get up to date information on resources that are available in their county. Denton County MHMR also has gaps in ensuring that the community knows what resources we offer and can provide, especially in a crisis. When it comes to Denton County MHMR services specifically, many responses were positive, but there is still room for growth and improvement in our services and increased access.

This community needs assessment will be imperative in meeting the Denton County MHMR mission to improve access to mental health, substance use services, and physical health services for those receiving services in Denton County. This information will also be shared with other providers in Denton County to increase knowledge on county needs, gaps in services, and barriers people experience when accessing services.

## References

- DeMars, C. E., & Erwin, T. D. (2005, August). *Neutral or unsure: Is there a difference?* [Poster presentation]. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- U.S Census Bureau. (2021). *QuickFacts: Denton County, Texas*. U.S. Department of Commerce. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/dentoncountytexas>

See appendix for full list of survey questions used in the Denton County MHMR CCBHC Needs Assessment.