



FY 2021-FY2025

Howard County Community Plan for Children, Youth and Families



A Message From the County Executive

We know that during troubling times, communities preserve dignity and compassion by caring for their most vulnerable family members, friends and neighbors. We are pleased to present the Local Children's Board Community Plan for Children, Youth and Families as a roadmap for how public agencies and the private sector can work together to improve the quality of life of its residents, even in the midst of uncertainty. The tenets of this framework are, at their core, the strengths of our county and its residents. Education, diversity and access to quality resources for healthcare and wellness are those areas in which our community investment has established Howard County as one of the nation's great places to grow, live and thrive.

The plan's goals and strategies align with HoCo S.T.R.I.V.E.S. (Strategies To Reach an Inclusive Vision and Equitable Solutions), an education initiative that supports children's mental and behavioral health programs, academic, social and emotional learning supports and community capacity building. This initiative provides greater depth to our deployment of attention and resources in support of children's social and educational success. We believe that education is enhanced by encouraging regular attendance and emphasizing workforce development opportunities. We know that diversity's real value is reached when barriers to equity are eliminated in systems and their entry points.

Moreover, we affirm that behavioral health resources can help families in reducing the impact of maladies like substance misuse disorder, suicidal ideation, homelessness and more. Through collaboration, training and accountability, we will create new pathways for all residents to experience the benefits of living in this great county – health, stability and mobility. I want to thank our team at the Department of Community Resources and Services, the Local Children's Board and all of our community partners for their time and expertise in developing this important framework.

We look forward to joining you for the work and success of the future.

Truly Yours,

Dr. Calvin Ball, County Executive

We created ways for people to care more deeply about one another, to stimulate, encourage, release creativity, minimize intolerance and bigotry. ”

James Rouse, Founder of Columbia, Maryland

RESULTS



Children and youth will be successful in school and life



Health and well-being for children, youth and families



Families are safe and economically stable

PROGRESS INDICATORS

**Progress Indicators will be set annually by the Local Children's Board*

- #/% of children demonstrating Kindergarten readiness
- #/% proficiency on the Maryland State Assessment
- #/% of students chronically absent from school
- #/% of unemployed youth
- #/% of Howard County youth who felt sad and hopeless
- #/% of Howard County youth who seriously considered attempting suicide during past year
- #/% of families and children receiving childcare subsidies
- #/% of children living in poverty
- #/% of individuals facing food insecurity
- #/% of residents living at or below the poverty and ALICE thresholds
- #/% FARMs participation

Strategic Roadmap FY 2021-FY2025

VISION

All children, youth and families in Howard County are safe, healthy and have equitable opportunities to thrive.

PRIORITIES



1

Affordable and quality education and training



2

Increase inclusiveness, awareness and coordination of resources to meet the needs of each community



3

Access to affordable and quality behavioral health care

STRATEGIES

- Empower, support and amplify the voices of historically underserved communities
- Build awareness of and capacity to access resources, including food, housing and other basic needs
- Advocate for family-focused and equitable policies (i.e. increased eligibility for early childhood services)
- Attract more funding for children and families
- Increase LCB capacity to foster cross-sector collaboration among government, business, nonprofits, faith and civic groups
- Advocate for expansion of childcare options
- Advocate for affordable housing options for families and youth aging out of foster care
- Empower and support community-led solutions
- Increase youth engagement in community solutions that affect their lives and futures
- Engage businesses to work with youth to build life and job skills
- Expand access to training (job, life skills, trauma-informed)
- Promote equity and expand racial equity training
- Broaden adoption of Results-Based Accountability and data-sharing

MISSION

To improve the lives of all children, youth and families in Howard County by convening community stakeholders and aligning resources for measurable impact.

INCLUSION

The LCB advocates and supports all members of the Howard County community regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, disability and immigration status.

“

We are focused on becoming the best county not just overall – but *for all* – by being data informed, people driven and expanding opportunity for all.

Dr. Calvin Ball, Howard County Executive

”

i If you need this information in an alternate format, contact Maryland Access Point of Howard County at 410-313-1234 (voice/relay) or map@howardcountymd.gov.

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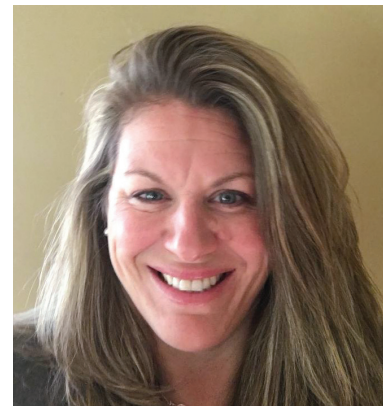
Beyond those listed here, we are grateful to the residents and community leaders who helped shape this plan by attending our first Community Conversation.

A Message From DCRS and the Local Children's Board

On behalf of the Howard County Local Children's Board (LCB) we are proud to present our Community Plan for Children, Youth and Families. Howard County is an immensely diverse community, racially, economically and socially. As a community, we pride ourselves on providing a vast array of opportunities for our children, youth and families to thrive – yet we recognize that for many, these opportunities remain out of reach. This plan reflects the seeds of change. The goals discussed on the pages that follow demonstrate our commitment to creating an equitable, healthy, safe and economically stable Howard County where all of our children, youth and families thrive.

We believe that together, through public and private partnerships, interagency coordination and community support, we can collectively grow and nurture these seeds of change. We understand that this work is complex and will take time. To that end, we shaped this process by investing time in engaging in an inclusive, yearlong effort to develop a common agenda and commitment to creating pathways forward for our most vulnerable. This document represents the beginning of a multi-sector, collaborative approach developed to foster the use of data-driven strategies to achieve a set of shared results. We are invested in the promise of our community and will work together to invest in and achieve results that will measurably improve people's lives.


In the face of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the actions outlined within this plan are more critical than ever. This is not just the Local Children's Board's plan – this is our community's plan for the children, youth and families living in Howard County. It will take all of us to accomplish the bold goals and transformational results it envisions. We invite our full community to join us in the quest for a more equitable future for all.



Jacqueline R. Scott, Director
Department of Community Resources and Services



Dawn Duignan, Chair
Local Children's Board



Empower, support and amplify the voices of historically underserved communities



Community-led solutions



Childcare



Cross-sector collaboration



Data sharing + accountability for results




Youth engagement




Racial equity training




RESULTS



Children and youth will be successful in school and life



Children, youth and families are healthy and thriving



Families are safe and economically stable

Planting the Seeds of Change



- 1 Affordable and quality education and training**
- 2 Increase inclusiveness, awareness and coordination of resources to meet the needs of each community**
- 3 Access to affordable and quality behavioral health care**

STRATEGIES

- ☹ Increase awareness and capacity to access resources**
 - ☹ Family-focused, equitable policies**
 - ☹ More \$\$\$ for children and families**
 - ☹ Advocacy for family and foster youth housing**
 - ☹ Access to training**
 - ☹ Life and job skills for youth**

About DCRS

The Department of Community Resources and Services (DCRS) is Howard County's Human Service Agency. The Department is comprised of nine offices. We work to address needs across the lifespan in a culturally competent and proficient manner and promote full inclusion for individuals living with disabilities.

About this Plan

The Local Children's Board (LCB) is committed to creating equitable services and opportunities across the county, especially for those who are the most vulnerable. In 2018, the LCB developed the Equity Report using qualitative and quantitative data to tell the story of opportunity, across race, ethnicity and income levels in Howard County. This Community Plan for Children, Youth and Families draws on data from that report and other county needs assessments to lay out an actionable plan for collective impact that ensures ALL children, youth and families in Howard County are safe, healthy and have equitable opportunities to thrive. We are grateful to our Board, Guiding Coalition and community stakeholders who helped to inform and shape this plan.

This is a living plan that is designed to be nimble and responsive to the changing needs in our community. In February 2020, HCLCB held the first of what will be an ongoing series of community conversations to invite feedback on this plan. In response to COVID-19, we halted these in-person gatherings and hope to resume them as soon as it is safe to do so.

LCB Board Members

Sharon Afework

Tonya Aikens

Charmayne Anderson

Fayth Bowie

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Kelly Cimino

Bitia Dayhoff

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Co-Tu Doan

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Brianna Hughes

Stephen Liggett-Creel

Timothy Madden

Michael Martirano

Mike Mitchell

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Maura Rossman

Melissa Rosenberg

Jacqueline Scott

Francine Trout

Strategic Priorities



1

Affordable and Quality Education and Training

Over the next 5 years, Howard County Local Children's Board is focusing on affordable and quality education and training. We will invest in setting children and youth on a life-long path to success by working to improve early education access and opportunities, decreasing rates of chronic absenteeism and increasing access to job training.



2

Increase Inclusiveness, Awareness and Coordination of Resources to Meet the Needs of Each Community

Howard County is a caring community that is committed to making its resources available to all residents. These connections are difficult to make for some families with access challenges, even for the most basic needs. By increasing awareness of resources for food, housing and healthcare within hard-to-reach communities, we can support families' efforts to increase their self-sufficiency and financial stability through education, training and affordable, quality childcare.

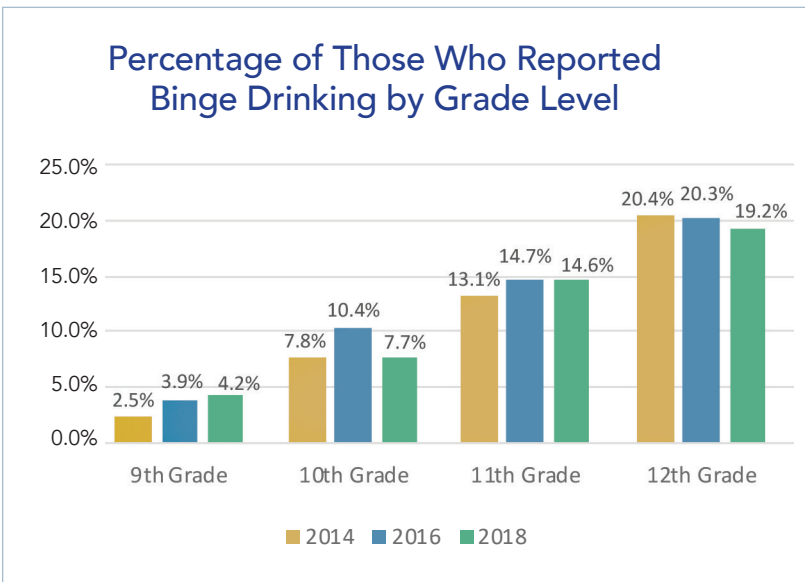


3

Access to Affordable and Quality Behavioral Health Care

Behavioral health care for all residents in Howard County is a major focus for the county. Many behavioral health indicators in Howard County are trending in the wrong direction. With this priority, the HCLCB will reduce youth rates of hopelessness and suicidal ideation while addressing the effects of intergenerational traumas by increasing access to mental health services.

Youth who engage in substance abuse are more likely to drop out of school and consider suicide. Children and youth who have social and emotional support learn vital coping strategies and positive ways of managing life challenges, which improves their overall health, well-being and resiliency.



Binge drinking: 5 or more drinks on one occasion for males, 4 or more drinks on one occasion for females.

A 2016 study of 10,000 adolescents found that two-thirds of those who developed alcohol or substance use disorders experienced at least one mental health disorder.

- 2019 Howard County Community Health Needs Assessment
- 2018 Howard County Health Assessment
- Miller, Caroline, and Child Mind Institute. "Mental Health Disorders and Teen Substance Use." Child Mind Institute
- American Psychological Association, American Psychological Association, [psycnet.apa.org/record/1994-09966-001](https://www.apa.org/record/1994-09966-001).



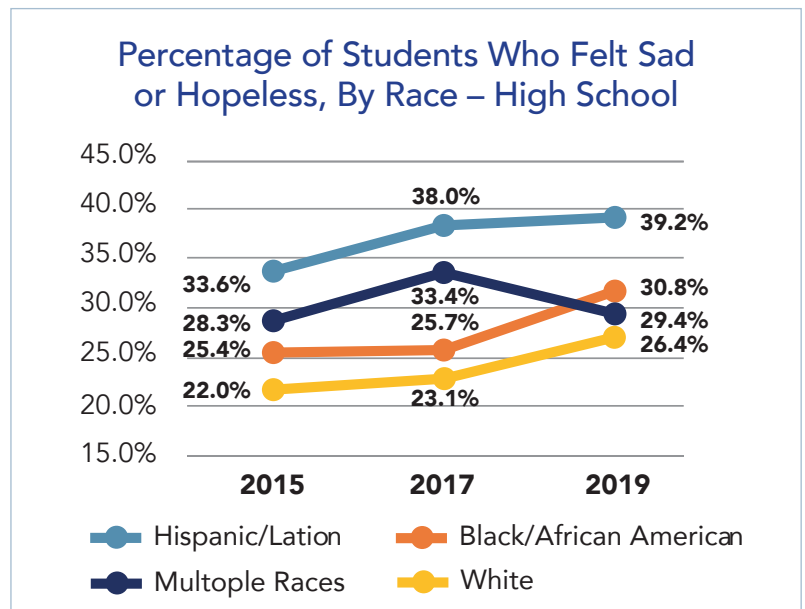
P R I O R I T Y **3**

Access to Affordable and Quality Behavioral Health Care

Declining youth behavioral health is a silent crisis. In Howard County, one in five high school students seriously considered committing suicide. Youth depression affects growth, development, school performance, engagement and relationships. Howard County is at a critical point in youth behavioral health and does not have enough services or supports to meet the need. Without adequate mental and behavioral health services and supports, our youth will continue to struggle.

Between 2014 and 2017,
 suicide was the leading
 cause of death for ages
 15-19 in Howard County

- Howard County Local Children's Board. Access to Opportunity in Howard County: Making the Case for Equity. 2019.
- Maryland Department of Health. Youth Risk Behavior Survey/Youth Tobacco Survey. <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/ccdpc/Reports/Pages/YRBS-Main.aspx>.
- Community Health Indicators Report Card. Howard County Health Department 2019.



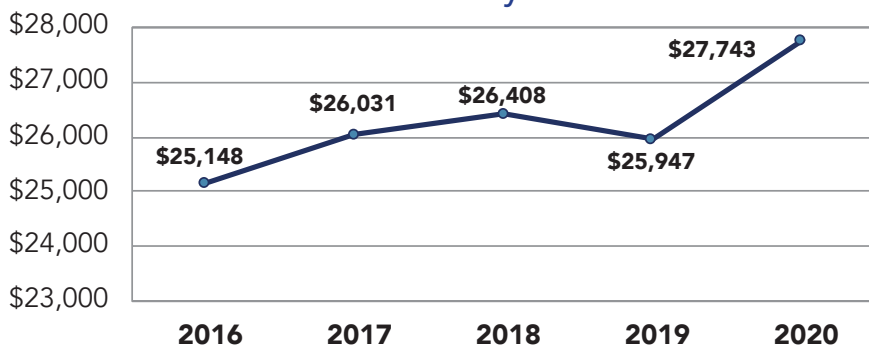
Affordable and Quality Education and Training

Early learning is critical to establishing healthy habits and knowledge that put children on a path to success. The cost of childcare in Howard County is one of the top three highest household expenses. The high and increasing cost of childcare leads to inequitable outcomes for children from low-income areas. These children are left without access to early learning opportunities that leads to significant achievement gaps and fewer opportunities to succeed throughout life.

Children who received early childhood services:

- **Have higher scores** on cognitive, reading, and math tests;
- Are **more than twice as likely** to attend a four-year college and to delay parenthood; and
- Are **five times more likely** to be law abiding adults than those who did not.

Estimated Childcare Costs in Howard County Per Year



- Maryland Family Network Child Care Demographics. Maryland Child Care Resource Network, 2016-2020.
- Bosland, Julie, et al. "Supporting Early Childhood Success Action Kit for Municipal Leaders." NLC Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, no. 6, 2008.

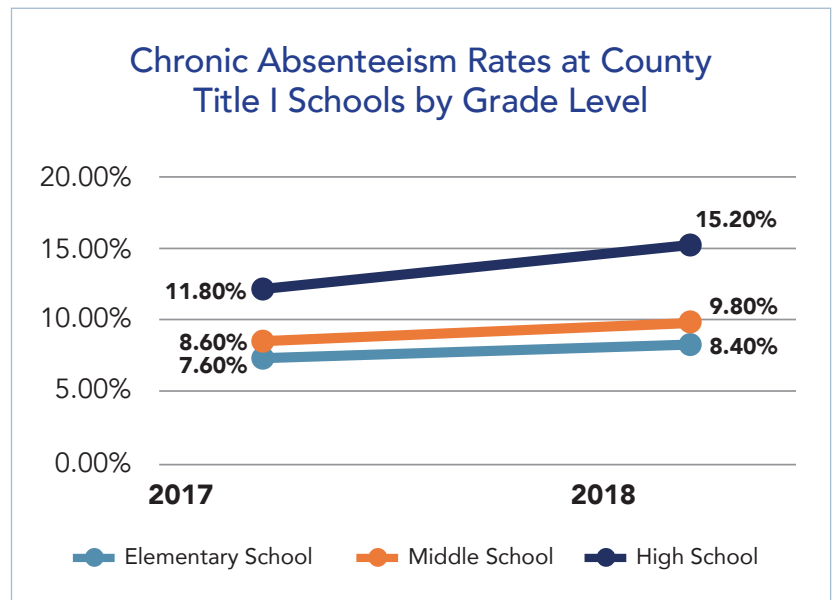


P R I O R I T Y 1

Affordable and Quality Education and Training

It is critical for youth to obtain a high school diploma to achieve success after high school. Regular class attendance is essential for success in school and life. Research reports that chronic absenteeism is one of the most accurate predictors of high school graduation and post secondary completion. One to two weeks of absence per semester significantly decreases the probability of a student graduating. Good attendance is a key first step to improve student learning and academic performance.

Chronic Absenteeism: Missing 10% or more of school days due to absence for any reason, both excused and unexcused.

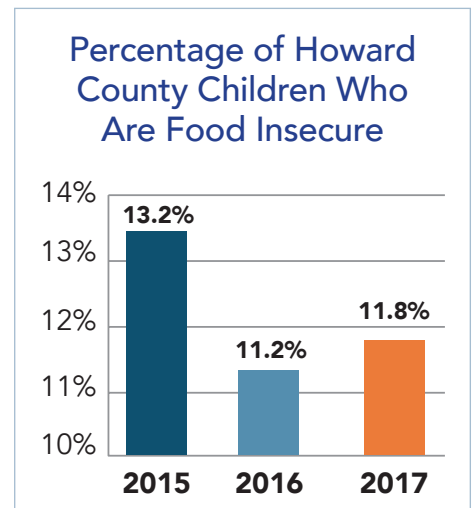
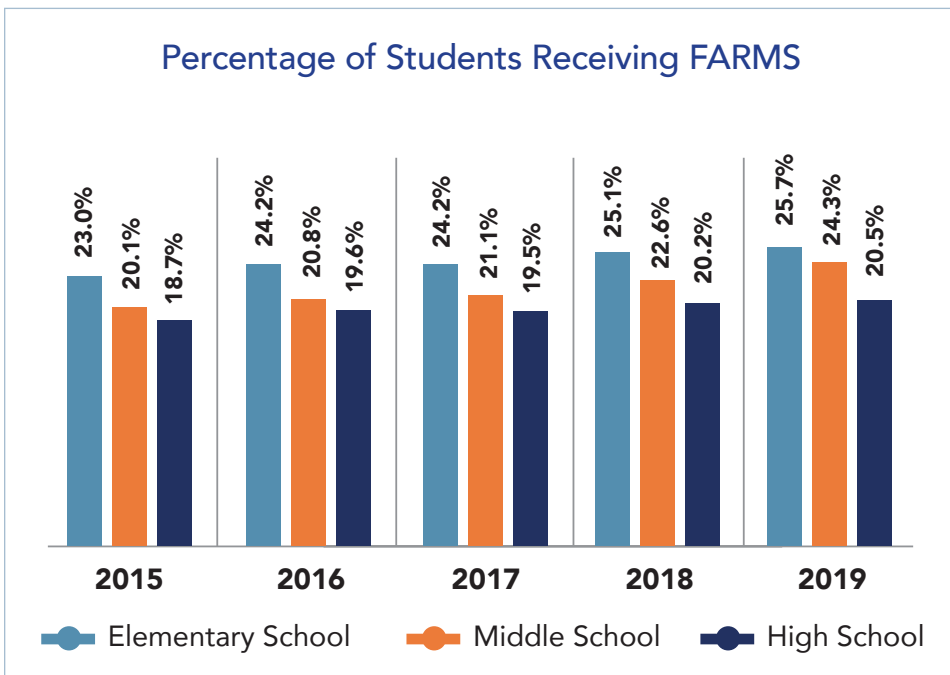


Class attendance is eight times more predictive of class failure than test scores.

- Allensworth, Elaine M., and John Q. Easton. What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools. 2007, pp. 1–68.
- Maryland State Department of Education Report Card. 2017-2018
- www.attendanceworks.org



For many children in Howard County, getting the nutrients and energy needed to grow and learn is a day-to-day challenge. Not having enough healthy food impacts a child's physical and mental well-being as well as their ability to achieve academically. In order for all Howard County residents to thrive, they must have access to nutritious food.



- Feeding America; <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2017/child/maryland/county/howard>
- 2019 CHNA
- 2019 Feeding American
- 2018 Community Action Council

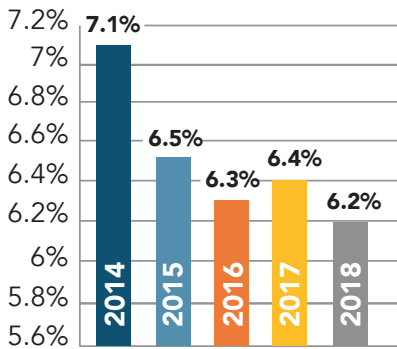


P R I O R I T Y **2**

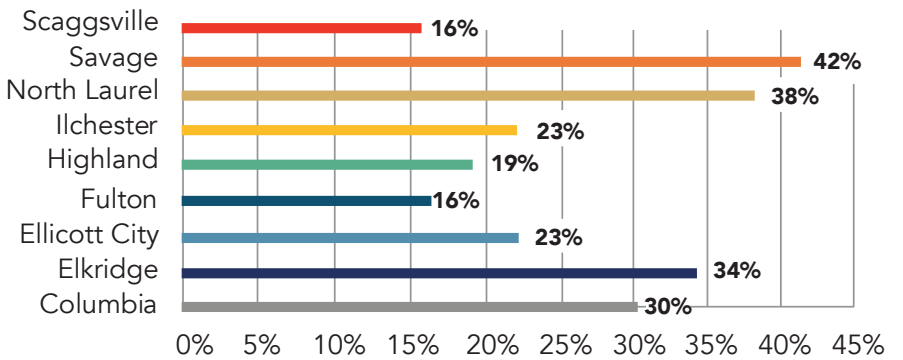
Increase Inclusiveness, Awareness and Coordination of Resources to Meet the Needs of Each Community

The average cost of living in Howard County for a household of four is \$101,772. This threshold often places families in a position to make tough choices about investing in educational supports for their children and paying bills. Additionally, the stress of financial concerns on a family leads to instability in the home environment, which impacts academic performance and social/emotional well-being. Two-generation, early interventions helps families achieve financial and educational stability that allows parents and children to thrive together.

Percentage of Children Living in Poverty



Percentage of Households in Howard County Living at or below ALICE and Poverty Threshold by Location

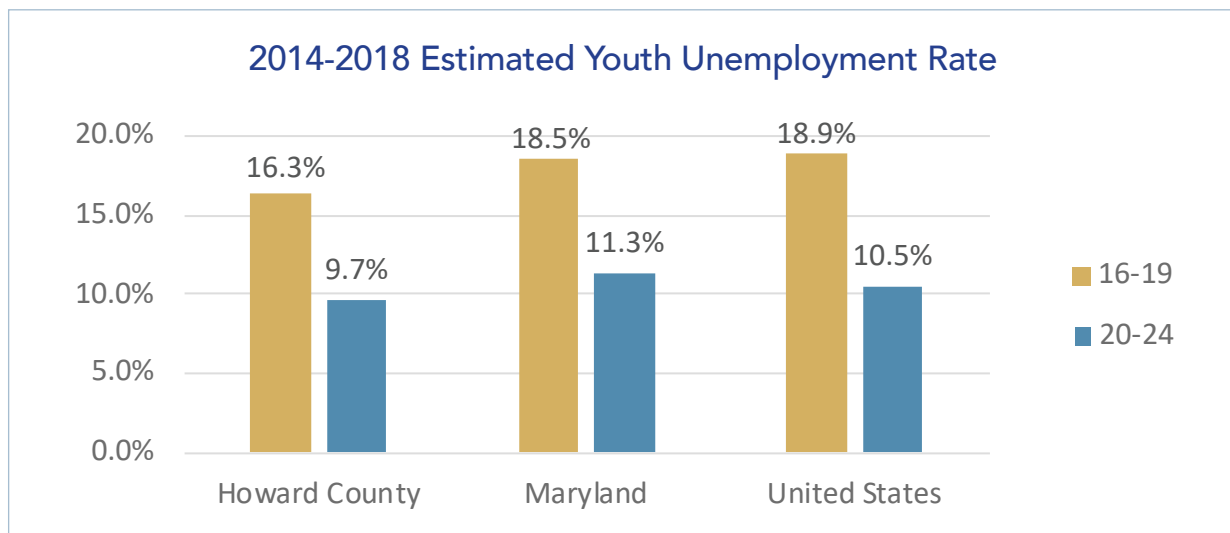


- Annie E. Casey, Kids Count Data Center: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>
- ACS Self-Sufficiency Indicators Howard County, MD 2019
- Chien, Nina C; Mistry, Rashita S. "Geographic Variations in Cost of Living: Associations with Family and Child Well-Being." Child Development. 84 (2013): 209 – 225.
- United Way ALICE Report 2018
- www.attendanceworks.org
- 2019 CHNA



High school graduates are **more likely** to be employed, make higher taxable income and aid in job generation.

Youth need assistance obtaining a high school diploma or GED *and* occupational skills training. When these opportunities are provided, youth experience increased income, security, self-confidence, mental health and personal development. Youth need preparation and nurturing to have a bright and productive future. Without this foundation, youth not only suffer today but throughout life as they are more likely to depend on public services, abuse substances and take part in illicit activities.



- Robinson, Shanks, Meehan, Hallmarks of Effective Youth Employment Programs from Research and Programs Across the United State. Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation, 2017.
- American Community Survey 5-year Estimate
- America's Promise, <https://www.americaspromise.org/high-school-graduation-facts-ending-dropout-crisis>





COUNTY EXECUTIVE
 Howard County



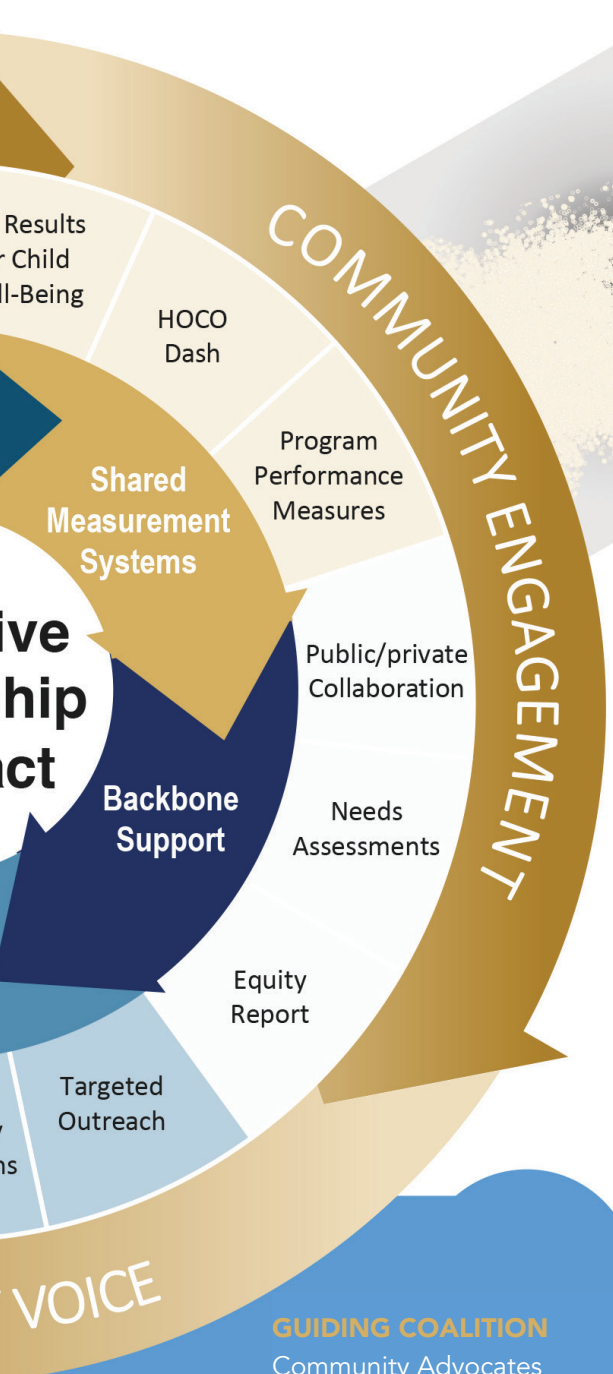
LCB BOARD

- Autism Society
- Child Advocate
- Community Action Counsel
- Dept. Community Resources and Services
- Department of Housing
- Dept. of Juvenile Services
- Department of Social Services
- FIRN

- Health Department
- Hope Counseling Center
- Howard County Library
- Howard County Police Department
- Howard County Public School System
- Maryland State Dept. of Education
- Office of Workforce Development
- Recreation and Parks
- St. John the Evangelist Church

- State's Attorney's Office
- Voices for Children
- Youth Advisory Council



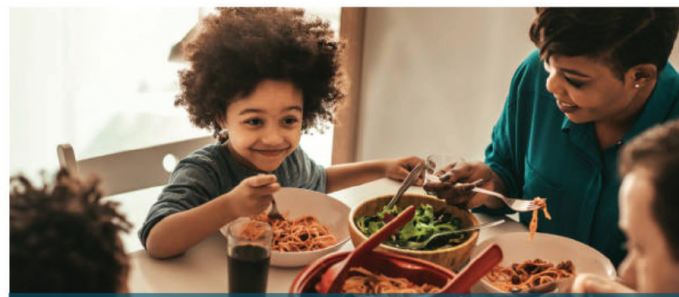


- GUIDING COALITION**
- Community Advocates
 - Enterprise Community Partners
 - House Howard
 - Howard Community College
 - Howard County Public School System
 - Oakland Mills Local Leadership Team
 - Parents

RESULTS



Children and youth will be successful in school and life




Children, youth and families are healthy and thriving



Families are safe and economically stable



 Howard County Office of the
Local Children's Board
Department of Community Resources and Services

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