



Community Needs Assessment Report

01 August 2022

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Executive Summary.....	4
Summary of Key County-Level Demographic Data	4
Key Findings	4
County-Level Demographic Highlights.....	5
Lamoille County Highlights	5
Key Trends in County.....	5
Population Demographics	5
Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone	5
Orange County Highlights.....	6
Key Trends in County.....	6
Population Demographics	6
Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone	6
Washington County Highlights.....	7
Key Trends in County.....	7
Population Demographics	7
Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone	7
Assessment Findings by Sector	8
A. Education/Childcare	8
Education Trends: Quantitative Data	8
Childcare Trends: Qualitative Survey and Stalled at the Start 2021 data.....	8
Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone	9
B. Employment and Income	10
Income Trends: Quantitative Data.....	10
Employment Trends: Quantitative Data.....	10
Finances and Use of Income: From the Qualitative Survey.....	10
Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone	111
C. Food Security	12
Food Security: Quantitative Data	12
From Qualitative Survey.....	12
Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone	12
D. Housing.....	13
Housing Availability: Quantitative Data.....	13
Housing Quality: Quantitative Data	14
Broadband Services: Quantitative Data	14

Affordability: From Qualitative Survey	14
Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone	14
E. Health Care	155
F. Mental Health/Substance Use	16
G. Transportation	18
From Qualitative Survey	18
H. Race	19
I. Climate	19
Climate Impacts: From Qualitative Survey.....	19
Questions for Consideration in Capstone’s Strategic Planning Process	20
Assessment Methodology and Limitations	20

Executive Summary

Summary of Key County-Level Demographic Data

Capstone Community Action is dedicated to creating resilient households and communities and to advancing justice in social, economic, and environmental policy. Capstone empowers individuals with the tools and resources to move beyond poverty. Through advocacy and community collaboration, Capstone champions positive social change. Capstone guides people to have a voice in their own transformation and promote a vision of what is possible.

Capstone undertakes a community needs assessment every three years to follow trends in poverty, housing, food security, mental health, and education. This year, data points on climate change impacts, transportation, and racial equity have been added to allow Capstone to start following trends in these critical and emerging areas impacting community members in their three-county region: Lamoille, Orange, and Washington.

This Capstone Community Action Community Needs Assessment incorporates data from multiple quantitative and qualitative data (see methodology section at the end of this report). There are two sections in which data and analysis is presented: the first section looks at poverty and population demographic data by county, while the second section presents trends in key sectors for Capstone programming across the three counties. Data from the Community Action Survey conducted by Middlebury College is combined into the sector analysis, offering Capstone staff and stakeholders the opportunity to see how service user survey responses align with quantitative data.

Key Findings

- Orange and Washington saw similarly marginal drops in poverty rates between 2010-2020 that mirrors the US rate; Lamoille saw almost double the rate drop.
- Orange and Lamoille had *married couple household* poverty rates higher than VT and the U.S., whereas Lamoille and Washington had higher rates of poverty among *female-headed households* than VT and the U.S.
- Washington had a little over two times the *male-headed household* poverty rate than the other two counties, and closer to VT and the U.S. rates.
- All three counties grew less than the U.S. average, with Lamoille growing the fastest in the state.
- While all three counties continue to have an overwhelmingly white population, the fastest growing racial groups across all three counties are people of non-Hispanic mixed race and other race.
- The three counties continue to lean toward having an older population, with most towns having median ages over 45. Three towns, Johnson, Northfield, and Roxbury, have median ages under 35.
- While unemployment rates are low across all three counties, residents still indicate that incomes are high enough to ensure basic needs are met.
- Housing and childcare continue to be challenging for residents in all three counties, with an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in 2021 PIT count and an overwhelming number of families unable to find childcare. Both of these factors contribute to families and individuals inability to hold down full time jobs and were exacerbated by impacts of COVID.

County-Level Demographic Highlights

Lamoille County Highlights

Key Trends in County

- Johnson has the highest percentage of households in poverty in Lamoille County (over 20%), with Stowe second (15 to 20%).
- Johnson has the youngest median age in Lamoille County (<35), with Stowe, Belvidere, and Eden with the highest median age (>45).
- Number of children birth to age four living in poverty is above U.S. and Vt. rates
- Rates of children birth to age 17 living in poverty is the same as U.S. and above Vt.

Population Demographics

	Total (%)	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan	Non-Hispanic Asian	Non-Hispanic Pacific Islander	Non-Hispanic Other Race	Non-Hispanic Multiple Races	Hispanic or Latino
Growth	5.9%	0.6%	52.8%	0%	13.7%	-66.7%	303.3%	236.6%	102.2%
Of total population	N/A	95.3%	1.2%	0.8%	0.8%	0	0.15%	1.6%	No data
Population in Poverty	N/A	13.3%	27.7%	14%	0	No data	18%	29.3%	No data

2010 Poverty Rate ¹	2020 Poverty Rate	Poverty Rate Change	2020 0-17 YO in Poverty ²	2020 0-4 in poverty ³	2020 Married Poverty Rate ⁴	2020 Male HH Poverty Rate	2020 Female HH Poverty Rate
13.3%	8.1%	-5.2%	18.7%	24.4%	41.9%	3.8%	54.3%

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- Lamoille County's population growth is through a significant increase in racial diversity and the highest rates of poverty are within the same rapidly growing racial demographics. How is Capstone's programming and outreach reaching this growing population of non-white residents?
- Lamoille has a high rate of female headed households in poverty. How is Capstone's programming taking this into consideration?
- Lamoille's designated agency for mental health provides limited outpatient treatment services for adults. Where do Capstone's adult service users receive their mental health treatment and what are Capstone's relationships with those providers?

¹ US Census Bureau, [Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates](#). 2020. – same source for 2020 and rate change across all three counties.

² US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#). 2015-19.

³ US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#). 2015-19.

⁴ US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#). 2015-19. – same source for married, male, and female HHs.

Orange County Highlights

Key Trends in County

- Topsham, Corinth, and Bradford had the highest percentage of households living in poverty (10.1%-15%)
- Children birth to age four and birth to age 17 are in poverty below U.S. and VT rates.
- The median age for all towns across Orange County is over 35.

Population Demographics

	Total (%)	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan	Non-Hispanic Asian	Non-Hispanic Pacific Islander	Non-Hispanic Other Race	Non-Hispanic Multiple Races	Hispanic or Latino
Growth	1.2%	-3.7%	41.1%	44.8%	16.8%	66.7%	376%	244.8%	69.2%
Of total population	N/A	96.6%	0.7%	0.4%	0.2%	0.09%	0.19%	1.8%	No data
Population in Poverty	N/A	9.8%	0%	15.5%	0%	0%	0%	6.7%	No data

2010 Poverty Rate	2020 Poverty Rate	Poverty Rate Change	2020 0-17 YO Poverty Rate	2020 0-4 living in poverty	2020 Married Poverty Rate	2020 Male HH Poverty Rate	2020 Female HH Poverty Rate
12.5%	9.6%	-2.9%	12.2%	12.6%	50.6%	3.9%	45.6%

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- Similar to Lamoille, the majority of the growing population is of mixed or other races. Unlike Lamoille, poverty rates are largest in Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan.
- Married households had a higher poverty rate than single headed households.

Washington County Highlights

Key Trends in County

- Washington has the highest rate of female-headed household families in poverty within the three counties.
- Barre City has the highest rate of households living in poverty in the county (over 20%), with Cabot, Marshfield, Plainfield, and Warren following (ranging from 10 to 15%).
- Children birth to age four and birth to age 17 have poverty rates below U.S. and Vt. averages.
- Northfield, Roxbury, and Waterbury have median ages below 35, while the remaining towns are above that age.

Population Demographics

	Total (%)	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan	Non-Hispanic Asian	Non-Hispanic Pacific Islander	Non-Hispanic Other Race	Non-Hispanic Multiple Races	Hispanic or Latino
	0.5%	-2.88%	48.9%	7.14%	27.7%	109.1%	469.6%	190.9%	57.7%
Of total population	N/A	95.8%	0.9%	0.3%	0.8%	0.05%	0.1%	2%	No data
Population in Poverty	N/A	10.5%	13.5%	44.1%	22.4%	14.3%	32%	21%	No data

2010 Poverty Rate	2020 Poverty Rate	Poverty Rate Change	2020 0-17 YO Poverty Rate	2020 0-4 YO living in poverty	2020 Married Poverty Rate	2020 Male HH Poverty Rate	2020 Female HH Poverty Rate
10.8%	9.4%	-2.8%	15.3%	14.9%	31.7%	10.7%	57.7%

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- Similar to Lamoille, the majority of the growing population is of mixed or other races. Unlike Lamoille, poverty rates are distributed among the races, yet the percent of the population of each race is not evenly distributed. How is Capstone working to ensure growing populations of nonwhite Washington County residents are able to access Capstone and that Capstone programming is culturally and linguistically appropriate?
- Washington County has the highest rate of female headed households living in poverty and the only county with increasing number of houses without indoor plumbing.
- What organizational partnerships has Capstone formed to help it build trusting relationships with these diverse segments of the community?

Assessment Findings by Sector

A. Education/Childcare

Report Area	No High School Diploma	High School Only	Some College	Associates Degree	Bachelors Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
Lamoille County	7.18%	25.6%	18.3%	10.8%	22.5%	15.7%
Orange County	8.20%	36.2%	17.0%	9.6%	15.6%	13.4%
Washington County	6.31%	27.0%	17.1%	7.8%	23.5%	18.3%
Vermont	7.33%	28.8%	17.1%	8.7%	22.5%	15.5%
United States	12.00%	27.0%	20.4%	8.5%	19.8%	12.4%

County	16-19 YO not in school & not working (%)	3-4 YO enrolled in school (%)	Adults at or below Tier 1 ⁵ Literacy
Lamoille	3.77%	45%	17.2%
Orange	5.22%	58.03%	17.5%
Washington	4.71%	62.16%	15.7%
Vermont	5.26%	57.84%	16.9%
US	6.61%	48.32%	25.6%

Education Trends: Quantitative Data

- The population in all three counties is a relatively educated population, as demonstrated by:
 - All three counties have lower percentage of population without high school diploma than the U.S. average and hover around the VT state percentage.
 - Almost half of the population in Lamoille and Washington Counties (49% in both cases) have an associate's degree or higher.
 - Only 38% of Orange County population has the same level of education.
- While educational attainment seems relatively high in the three-county region, there are still challenges some of the population face – including functional illiteracy. Both Lamoille and Orange counties have higher percentages of the population at Tier 1 literacy than the VT rate.
- All three counties have lower rates of 16-19 year olds who are not in school or working than both the US and VT rates.
- Orange and Washington counties have higher percentages of three- and four-year-olds enrolled in school than the State of VT, with Lamoille lagging behind the other counties, VT, and the US.

Childcare Trends: Qualitative Survey and **Stalled** at the Start 2021 data⁶

- The qualitative data on childcare received as part of the Community needs Assessment survey with Capstone Community Action's participants followed trends in terms of a high level of need for childcare in all three counties.

⁵ Tier 1 literacy are at risk for being unable to understand printed materials.

⁶ https://letsgrowkids.org/client_media/files/FinalSATS2022.pdf

- In large majority of households, participant and non-participant, among all income levels, someone stays home to provide care for a child. This reduces the number of potential wage earners in the home.
- In addition to most people having challenges finding affordable childcare in their area, most people also strongly agree they have trouble finding or affording afterschool and vacation programs for their children.
- Of service users, white respondents report more difficulty finding childcare than service users who are non-white.

County	Toddlers ⁷ without access to regulated care 2018	Toddlers without access to regulated care 2022	Infants ⁸ without access to regulated care 2018	Infants without access to regulated care 2022	Preschoolers without access to regulated care 2018	Preschoolers without access to regulated care 2022
Lamoille	4%	25%	65%	66%	39%	44%
Orange	47%	37%	77%	76%	53%	56%
Washington	36%	52%	72%	72%	48%	48%

County	Number of additional slots needed ⁹ (Infants)	Number of additional slots needed (Toddlers)	Number of additional slots needed (Preschoolers)
Lamoille	218	41	176
Orange	271	111	200
Washington	581	147	450

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- Childcare remains a major challenge for residents in all three counties. Where can Capstone staff advocate or partner to increase their participants' access to quality childcare?
- While the three counties have high educational attainment, there is a sizable portion of the population that are not functionally literate. How does this effect outreach approaches to community members?

⁷ 6 weeks to 23 months

⁸ 24 to 36 months

⁹ # slots anticipated being needed in 2022 to fill the need of childcare

B. Employment and Income

County	Unemployment Rate (Feb 2022) ¹⁰	Unemployment Rate (Feb 2018)	Median HH Income (2020 ¹¹)
Lamoille	3.9%	4.6%	\$57,909
Orange	3.0%	3.7%	\$60,624
Washington	2.5%	3.4%	\$70,061
Vermont	2.8%	3.3%	\$67,717
US	4.2%	4.4%	\$67,340

Income Trends: Quantitative Data

- Even with COVID, all three counties saw a decrease in unemployment between 2018 and 2022.
- Lamoille has the lowest median household income in 2020, followed by Orange County, both of which are lower than the VT and US median incomes.
- Washington County has a higher median household income than VT and U.S.

County	% of jobs Farm ¹²	% of jobs Non-farm	First highest % of jobs (industry)	Second highest % of jobs (industry)
Lamoille	1%	35%	Accommodations & Food (7%)	Health Care & Social Services (5%)
Orange	2%	36%	Government (6%)	Health Care & Social Services (5%)
Washington	0.5%	35%	Government (7%)	Health Care & Social Services (5%)

Employment Trends: Quantitative Data

- All three counties have a decreasing percentage of jobs relying on farms and all three counties have health care and human service providers as the second largest employers.
- Lamoille County, not surprisingly, has accommodations and food industry jobs as the largest non-farm employer, whereas the other two counties government entities are the largest non-farm employing industries.

Finances and Use of Income: From the Qualitative Survey

- Most survey respondents agreed that their household income is not enough to meet their family's basic needs, with most service users struggle to pay rent or mortgage on time and over not having enough resources needed for an emergency.
 - "Service users had a significantly higher proportion of medical, mental health and/or substance abuse issues that made it hard for them to keep a job." From Middlebury College report – about 40% of total survey respondents who use services.

¹⁰ US Department of Labor, [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). 2022 - February.

¹¹ US Census Bureau, [Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates](#). 2020

¹² Data Source: US Department of Commerce, US Bureau of Economic Analysis. 2019.

- About 2/3 of both service users and nonservice users have someone in their household who works more than 40 hours per week.
- About 2/3 of service users report they can't afford education or training needed to get a better job.
- Both white and nonwhite service users believe the jobs they can get do not pay well – with white respondents believing that more strongly.
- Most people agree that they don't have good credit or can't access credit.
- All income cohorts say they need help with:
 - budgeting and/or financial education, and
 - filing taxes.

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- The region has low unemployment and a high supply of jobs. Yet, those jobs that are available do not provide adequate income to support family needs. Who can Capstone partner with to expand job training opportunities for their service users? How can Capstone support regional labor market growth while also ensuring that growth is inclusive and improving lives of community members?
- Capstone's financial education programming seems needed, especially in Lamoille.

C. Food Security

County	HH receiving SNAP (%) (2019) ¹³	Eligible for FRPL (2020) (%)	% of low-income population with low food access ¹⁴	Food Insecurity Rate (2017) (%)	SNAP Authorized Food Stores (Rate per 10,000 population) ¹⁵
Lamoille	11.1%	31.4%	0.96%	12.6%	10.65
Orange	10.32%	40.5%	12.29%	10.7%	8.67
Washington	11.21%	24.1%	21.78%	11.3%	11.14
Vt.	11.3%	34.7%	10.81%	11.9%	10.32
U.S.	11.74%	53.2%	19.41%	12.6%	7.47

Food Security: Quantitative Data

- All three counties have SNAP eligibility rates similar to VT and the U.S.
- Orange County free and reduced lunch eligibility is significantly higher than the other two counties, potentially pointing to a hunger or food insecurity problem among school aged children.
- SNAP eligible families in Orange County have less access to SNAP authorized food stores, and the lowest percentage of households receiving SNAP benefits.

From Qualitative Survey

- About 2/3 of service users said they have enough food every day for their family and 40% of service users use a food shelf often.
 - Nonwhite service users were twice as likely to *not* have enough food every day for themselves and their families as compared to white respondents.
- Washington County appears to have the least food security while Orange is next and Lamoille has the greatest access to food. More respondents in Lamoille report having enough food for themselves.
 - This seems to follow the trend in “% of low-income population with low food access” data point reported in the table above.

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- As schools move away from universal free lunches, how will Capstone follow trends in food insecurity?
- Access to food shelves still seems to be something that is needed, with 40% of respondents accessing one on a regular basis. Is Capstone keeping up with new ways to ensure food shelves are accessible across the three counties?
- Are there lessons from COVID experiences that can be brought forward to increase food security?

¹³ US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#), 2015-19

¹⁴ US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, [USDA - Food Access Research Atlas](#), 2019 Low food access is defined as living more than ½ mile from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store.

¹⁵ US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, [USDA - SNAP Retailer Locator](#). Includes any grocery, specialty, supercenters, convenience stores that accept SNAP.

D. Housing

County ¹⁶	PIT 2021 Individuals unhoused (#)	PIT 2020 Individuals unhoused (#)	PIT 2019 Individuals unhoused (#)
Lamoille	112	38	32
Orange	23	23	23
Washington	327	172	141

County	Owner Occupied Homes (2000) (%)	Owner Occupied Homes (2019) (%) ¹⁷	Residential Vacancy Rates 2020 (%) ¹⁸	Eviction Rate ¹⁹ (2016)
Lamoille	70.8%	56.4%	0%	0.19%
Orange	78.3%	64.1%	8.6%	0.07%
Washington	68.5%	56.9%	4.7%	0.22%
VT	70.6%	54.9%	5.7%	0.09%
US	66.1%	56.23%	8.9%	2.34%

County	Median House Age (2019) ²⁰	Percent without plumbing (2000) (%)	Percent without plumbing (2019) (%)	Broadband Access (2020) ²¹
Lamoille	38	0.64%	0.62%	92.5%
Orange	44	1.17%	0.56%	83.9%
Washington	48	0.63%	0.77%	95.4%
VT	45	0.5%	0.51%	95.2%
US	41	0.69%	0.4%	97.54%

Housing Availability: Quantitative Data

- 2021 saw a significant increase in the number of individuals unhoused in both Lamoille (3x) and Washington (2x).
- There was an overall decrease in the percentage of owner-occupied homes in the latest census, perhaps indicating housing affordability challenges for families.

¹⁶ Table data from: <https://helpingtohousevt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2021-Vermont-PIT-Count-by-County-and-AHS-District-Summary-FINAL.pdf>

¹⁷ US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*. US Census Bureau, *Decennial Census*. 2015-19

¹⁸ US Department of Housing and Urban Development. 2020-Q4

¹⁹ *Eviction Lab*. 2016

²⁰ Table Data from: US Census Bureau, *American Community Survey*. 2015-19.

²¹ *National Broadband Map*. Dec 2020. Based on having access to providers offering download speeds of 25 MBPS and upload speeds of 3 MBPS or more. Cellular providers not included.

- Lamoille’s residential *vacancy rate* is holding steady at 0%, pointing to a challenge finding housing. The *business vacancy rate* is also 0% for Lamoille.

Housing Quality: Quantitative Data

- Northfield and Roxbury in Washington County and Randolph in Orange County have over 45% of housing constructed before 1960.
- Washington County had a 0.14% increase in the *number of houses without indoor plumbing* between 2000-2019, representing an increase of 18 houses without indoor plumbing
 - Orange county saw a decrease, similar to that of the U.S. while Lamoille decreased slightly.

Broadband Services: Quantitative Data

- Orange County has the *lowest broadband access*, lower than national and VT access rates. While the broadband access rates seem high, it is worth noting that 25 MBPS download and 3 MBPS upload is the minimal speeds necessary for voice only internet-based streaming.

Affordability: From Qualitative Survey

- Most service users and nonusers of all income levels report needing assistance finding *affordable housing*
 - For service users – 65% or 2/3 struggle to find *affordable housing* near school or work
- Almost ½ of service users stay their *home needs major repairs* they cannot afford
- Service users are much more likely to have *trouble paying rent or mortgage* than nonservice users
- Service users who have *trouble paying rent/mortgage* are more likely to be in Orange, than Lamoille, and Washington residents are least likely to struggle to pay rent/mortgage
- Most people feel *safe* in their neighborhoods – services users feel less safe with about 2/3 feeling safe and 20% feeling unsafe, and 14% in the neutral category

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- Housing stock, especially affordable housing, is rare and compounding challenges people have with finding a house. This trend seems to be getting worse in Washington and Lamoille County, which, when considering the population growth rates in both are high, there is a constant need to think about Capstone’s role in advocating for and supporting participants to access housing.
- With the age of housing stock in Orange County, and especially in Randolph, what can Capstone do to address the weatherization needs and the potential need for lead paint mitigation in that area?

E. Health Care

County	Alcohol Impaired Driving ²²	FQHC (#) ²³	Institutional Medicare & Medicaid providers	Suicides ²⁴	COVID Vaccination Rates ²⁵	Uninsured (%) ²⁶	Opioid Related ODs ²⁷
Lamoille	43%	4	8	14.4	61%	5.5%	35
Orange	29%	8	10	25.3	53%	4.5%	31
Washington	19%	3	12	10.1	66%	3.9%	39
Vermont	34%	58	154	15.3	59%	4.3%	33

- All three counties have higher ratios of patient to primary care provider and dentists than Vermont, pointing to a population with less direct access to basic health care.
- All three counties saw a significant increase between 2011 and 2020 of opioid related overdoses, unfortunately, in line with the VT rate.
- Lamoille’s impaired driving deaths (alcohol) is 9% higher than the state rate, and significantly higher than the other two counties.
- In 2019, all three counties had lower percent of uninsured than the national percentage, with Lamoille having the highest percentage of uninsured.

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- Is Capstone partnering with FQHCs and PCPs across all three counties to assure access to primary care, dental care, and behavioral health services for service users?
- How is Capstone working with local hospitals to support patients after they leave ED or inpatient services?
- What protocols or agreements have been forged to address the emergency mental health and substance treatment needs of their service users?

²² https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HSVR_Injury_Suicide_Databrief_2021.pdf

²³ US Department of Health & Human Services, Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services, [Provider of Services File](#), September 2020

²⁴ https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HSVR_Injury_Suicide_Databrief_2021.pdf

²⁵ <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/covid-19-vaccine-dashboard>

²⁶ US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#), US Census Bureau, [Small Area Health Insurance Estimates](#), 2019.

²⁷ Rate per 100,000 in 2020, <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/ADAP-OpioidFatalOverdoseDataBrief-2021.pdf>

F. Mental Health and Substance Use

County ²⁸	Alcohol Used in last 30 days		Cannabis Used in last 30 days		Alcohol Ever Used		Cannabis Ever Used	
	Middle School	High School	Middle School	High School	Middle School	High School	Middle School	High School
Lamoille	9%	33%	8%	28%	25%	60%	10%	45%
Orange	6%	28%	4%	26%	23%	57%	7%	42%
Washington	8%	34%	5%	30%	21%	59%	9%	45%
Vermont	7%	31%	5%	27%	20%	55%	7%	40%

NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED by Clients' Primary Program Assignment and Designated Mental Health Agency – Fiscal Year 2021²⁹

Designated Agency	Children's Services	Adult MH Outpatient	Community Rehabilitation	Unassigned	Total
Lamoille	345	188	120	301	954
Washington	958	1,136	349	368	2,811
Orange (Clara Martin)	601	692	141	106	1,540
Lamoille	55	9	6	11	
Washington	82	22	7	6	
Orange (Clara Martin)	105	26	5	3	

- Use of alcohol and cannabis among school aged students in Lamoille and Washington Counties are higher than state averages (using “ever used” indicator).
- Opioid related overdoses rose dramatically in ten years, from 2011 to 2021
 - Washington rate increased almost five-fold in 10 years – 8.4 to 39.4
 - Lamoille increased three-fold – 12.1 to 35.5
 - Orange three-fold increase – 10.3 to 31.2
 - State of Vermont increased four-fold – 8.0 to 33.7
- Suicide rates in Orange County are significantly higher than the other counties and state average.
- Wait lists for behavioral health services is in the hundreds in Lamoille County
- 50% of children served by children’s mental health services live in families that earn less than \$30,000 per year, while 74% of adults receiving outpatient services earn below that threshold.
- The gender breakdown for all mental health services is almost split in half.

²⁸ All data in this table from 2020 VT Youth Risk Behavior Survey:

https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/CHS_YRBS_statewide_report.pdf

²⁹ https://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/sites/mhnew/files/documents/Reports/Stats/DMH-2021_Statistical_Report.pdf

- Of those receiving mental health treatment and disability services from the designated agencies, children represent no more than half of them – in Washington and Orange Counties children’s services are just above 40% - Meaning the bulk of services are for adults in those counties

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- Is Capstone a recovery friendly workplace?
- How would someone know what Capstone’s perspectives on underage use of substances are? How would someone know it’s a safe place to disclose use or misuse?
- Is Capstone a trauma-informed or trauma-transformed workplace?
- What foundational skills and knowledge do all Capstone direct service staff learn and apply in their work?
- How does Capstone support service users with substance addiction connect with recovery?

G. Transportation

County	Workforce driving to work (%) ³⁰	Workforce Carpooling (%)	Workforce Using Public Transport (%)	Workforce Bicycle or Walking (%)	Workforce Taxi or Other (%)	Workforce at home (%)
Lamoille	78.2%	9.5%	0.6%	3.6%	1.7%	6.4%
Orange	75.9%	10.8%	0.5%	3.9%	1.7%	7.3%
Washington	74.3%	9.1%	1.0%	6.7%	0.9%	8.0%
Vermont	75.9%	8.7%	1.3%	6.4%	1.0%	6.8%
US	76.3%	9.0%	5.0%	3.2%	1.3%	5.2%

- All three counties follow similar trends to U.S. regarding transportation trends – with the exception of public transportation, where there is a significantly smaller portion of the population using public transportation to get to work
- All three counties have higher than U.S. rates of the workforce working from home.
- According to the Vermont Climate Assessment, Vermont drivers have the highest average miles traveled per capita in the northeast US, with transportation being the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Vermont.³¹

From Qualitative Survey

- About 2/3 of service user respondents would *definitely or possibly* use a ride program like Uber or Lyft – while 25% said they strongly disagreed they would use it
 - The lower the income of the respondents, the less likely they were to agree they would use a ride service.
- Lamoille County service users strongly disagreed that they have reliable public transportation – about twice the rate of Washington County.
 - Overall, lower income respondents experience greater challenges getting transportation to medical appointments.

Key Takeaways and Questions for Capstone

- What role is Capstone playing in creating a more reliable public transportation system in the region; especially in Lamoille?
- What services and lessons from COVID experiences can be taken forward to enhance public transportation options for service users?

³⁰ Table data from: US Census Bureau, [American Community Survey](#). 2015-19

³¹ <https://site.uvm.edu/vtclimateassessment/files/2021/11/excutive-summary-11-3-21.pdf>

H. Race

- Qualitative analysis by Middlebury College didn't show race as causal factor for any question; instead differences in experiences were more correlated with income than race.
- Yet, there were two outliers:
 - poverty rate in Washington county (Asia) were significantly higher in Asian populations than their percentage of the population and had risen between 2010 and 2020.
 - percentage increase of non-whites with increases in population across the counties was significant.
- Central Vt. Medical Center's community needs assessment (2022) revealed that the percentage of uninsured Washington County Asian residents (13.2%) more than tripled from five years ago (3.8%) and is more than double the statewide percentage (4.8%)
 - Asian residents of Washington County also have a higher poverty rate than their peers statewide and nationally

I. Climate

The Vermont Climate Assessment³² notes various impacts of climate change already occurring in Vermont, but does not include county level data. Yet, here are some of the issues and points that are of concern for residents of Lamoille, Orange, and Washington Counties:

- Vermont's average temperature has increased by almost 2 degrees F since 1900, with the number of very cold nights decreasing by 7 days over the same period.
- Average precipitation has increased by 21% since 1900, but is becoming more variable, and less in the form of snowfall and more as rain.
- The freeze-free period has lengthened in Vermont by 3 weeks since 1960.

This is impacting growing seasons and agriculture industry, tourism industries (especially the ski industry), health of vulnerable and elderly Vermonters, among a myriad of impacts.

Climate Impacts: From Qualitative Survey

- About 56% of service users say they could use help understanding and accessing energy savings, incentives, and rebate benefits
- About 43% of service users are very or somewhat concerned about their water quality.
- For households under \$10,000, there is a high correlation with living in a flood zone and being unable to afford to relocate.

³² 2021 update: <https://site.uvm.edu/vtclimateassessment/files/2021/11/executive-summary-11-3-21.pdf>

Questions for Consideration in Capstone's Strategic Planning Process

In addition to the questions posed in green boxes throughout the report above, there are some general questions that could be incorporated into Capstone's 3-year strategic planning revision.

- In putting together this report, we noticed a lack of mapping or analysis of existing services, resources, or assets available to the population. Is there an opportunity to broaden support provided to Capstone service users through a mapping of resources and services that Capstone could partner with? Could Capstone be well placed to be a hub within each county, providing holistic support through either direct service provision OR referrals?
- Is there an opportunity for Capstone to partner with the LCPC, LHP, Stowe Land Trust, and/or others re: housing opportunities in Lamoille County where housing is particularly challenging?
 - What are the opportunities in Washington and Orange Counties to address housing issues?
 - Are the voices of Capstone's staff and service users adequately represented in housing policy discussions?
- Capstone played a large role in food distribution with ARPA and other federal money that came to Vt. What lessons did Capstone learn as a result of these experiences?
- How does Capstone's intake process and program-level supports (excepting Head Start) support enrollment in Medicaid?
- How does Capstone support families close to or at the "benefit cliff" in their journey to no receiving assistance? How does Capstone monitor families as they get close to this income level?

Assessment Methodology and Limitations

Qualitative data from Middlebury College – The team looking at this data noted that there is a strong correlation between the income level of the respondent and the challenges; income seems to have a more causal relationship to the challenges faced by services users than race or ethnicity.

Quantitative data – The majority of the quantitative data reported is from the US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 or the US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020. Individual data sources have been indicated next to their reporting in tables.