

Burke County Childhood Poverty Community Assessment Report

Prepared by the Family, Infant and Preschool Program, August 2023

Contents

Introduction	3
Defining Childhood Poverty in Burke County, NC.....	3
Federal Definitions of Poverty	3
Local Definitions of Poverty	5
Community Census	6
Demographics of Children Under the Age of 18 in Burke County	6
Community Survey.....	8
How Burke County Families Describe Poverty.....	11
How Burke County Families Describe Living Above Poverty	13
Services Provided to Children in Poverty and Where the Services are Located.....	13
How Burke County Families with Children Access Goods and Services	16
Food	16
Clothing, Diapers, and Household Supplies	17
School Supplies	18
Transportation	18
Childcare	19
Medical, Mental Health, and Medicine	19
Accessing Resources	20
Barriers to Accessing Services.....	20
What Families Report About Barriers to Accessing Services for their Children	20
What Agencies Shared about Barriers to Accessing Services	23
Strategies Agencies Report Using to Overcome Barriers.....	24
Recommendations	25
Process	25
Joint Recommendations	26
Expand the availability of needed services equitably and in quantities sufficient to meet the demand.	26
Expand service eligibility guidelines to ensure the needs of families are met in quantity, quality, and duration.....	26
Simplify the eligibility application process.....	27

Increase the accuracy, accessibility, and usefulness of an existing resource database by expanding the robustness and boosting updating and use by community agencies.....	27
Increase the quality and quantity of the public service workforce.	27
Sources.....	28
Appendix A: Stakeholder Roster	29
Appendix B: Family Survey – English & Spanish.....	30
Appendix C: Agency Survey.....	46
Appendix D: Ideas and Considerations for Addressing Barriers to Services for Children.....	53
Appendix E: Matrix of Burke County Resources	64

Introduction

In 2021, the Community Foundation of Burke County commissioned the Family, Infant, and Preschool Program to facilitate the Childhood Poverty Community Assessment and Mapping Project. The purpose of the project was to identify key demographics impacted by childhood poverty, the services available to children in Burke County living in poverty, and existing resources, and then make recommendations for addressing childhood poverty. The project took two years to complete and engaged a diverse group of community stakeholders to inform the process.

This report addresses the key findings from the project, including (1) definitions and descriptions of childhood poverty by federal, state, and local standards; (2) a description of the demographics for children living in poverty in Burke County with regard to race/ethnicity, family status, income level, education level, access to housing, and geographic location within the county; (3) a description of the services Burke County offers to assist children living in poverty; (4) a description of the location of the available services and how they are currently accessed by families; (5) an analysis of the barriers that prevent children from receiving available services designed to support children living in poverty; (6) a roster of all institutions, agencies, clubs, and organizations that serve children living in poverty in Burke County; and (7) recommendations for improving the quality of and access to resources and supports for children living in poverty.

Defining Childhood Poverty in Burke County, NC

Many definitions of poverty exist, but at its core, poverty is the lack of resources to meet basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter. In today's world, the definition can be extended to include access to healthcare, education, and transportation. While most government organizations define poverty using a monetary threshold, poverty is not only about lack of money. It is a multi-dimensional issue that impacts individual families as well as society as a whole. For the purposes of this report, poverty definitions established by the federal government are used to discuss U.S. Census information related to Burke County. Other monetary standards are also provided for comparison purposes. Results from the Burke County Family Survey provide a more personal view of how families with children in Burke County perceive poverty.

Federal Definitions of Poverty

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) issues poverty guidelines in the Federal Register at the beginning of each year. These poverty guidelines are a simplification of the previous year's poverty thresholds and are used for administrative purposes (e.g., determining financial edibility for certain federal programs). The 2023 poverty guidelines for the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia are listed below.

Table 1.*2023 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia*

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$14,580
2	19,720
3	24,860
4	30,000
5	35,140
6	40,280
7	45,420
8	50,560

Note. For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,140 for each additional person.

Source: Federal Register, Vol. 88, No. 12 Thursday, January 19, 2023/Notices

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2023-01-19/pdf/2023-00885.pdf>

Families are considered to be living in **extreme poverty** when their household earnings are less than half of their assigned poverty threshold, also referred to as below 50% poverty (Annie E. Casey Foundation). Families who earn less than 200% of their assigned poverty threshold are considered to be living in poverty or low-income (also referred to as below 200% poverty). Families earning more than 200% of their assigned poverty threshold are typically not considered low-income (Annie E. Casey Foundation).

Areas of **concentrated poverty** (also referred to as high-poverty areas) are census tracts where poverty rates for the local population are 30% or higher, meaning that at least 30% of the population falls below 200% of their assigned poverty threshold. Areas of concentrated poverty are more likely to have high rates of crime, violence, health issues, and unemployment (Annie E. Casey Foundation).

The U.S. Census Bureau uses the poverty threshold when reporting the statistical levels of poverty in any geographic area, such as cities, counties, and states. Poverty threshold and guidelines are also criteria for participation in programs targeting families with lower incomes. These programs often have eligibility requirements that are higher than the poverty threshold, but generally are a multiplier of it. A common example is eligibility for the National School Lunch Program (free and reduced-price lunch) and related federal programs. Children can participate if they come from a household with an income up to 185% of the federal poverty guidelines. The percentage of children in schools who qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch is a commonly used measure of childhood poverty in program administration decisions. Being deemed as poor or needy by the free and reduced-price lunch or similar program standards often serves as the criterion for eligibility in other programs (i.e., a child who is deemed eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch may automatically be eligible for other assistance).

The same logic applies at other levels of program administration. Programs targeting high-poverty areas, such as the Community Development Block Grant program, may base area eligibility on the percentage of children in the school system who qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program. In other words, the poverty guidelines measure is the fundamental building block upon which most other definitions of poverty and need are based.

Local Definitions of Poverty

Policy makers and organizations are increasingly looking at self-sufficiency standards in order to measure poverty at the county level. The Center for Women's Welfare Self-Sufficiency Standard defines the income that the working families need to meet their basic necessities without public or private assistance, taking into account family composition, ages of children, and geographic differences in costs. The Standard is an affordability and living wage economic security measure that provides an alternative to the official poverty measure. Table 2 provides the 2020 self-sufficiency standard for Burke County.

Table 2.
Self-Sufficiency Standard for Burke County, NC, 2020

Monthly Costs	Adult & infant	2 Adults & infant	Adult, infant & preschooler	2 Adults, infant & preschooler	Adult, school-age & teenage	2 Adults, school-age & teenage
Housing	\$766	\$766	\$766	\$766	\$766	\$766
Child Care	\$680	\$680	\$1,310	\$1,310	\$469	\$469
Food	\$324	\$514	\$434	\$608	\$576	\$744
Transportation	\$281	\$535	\$281	\$535	\$281	\$535
Health Care	\$656	\$708	\$665	\$717	\$701	\$753
Miscellaneous	\$271	\$320	\$346	\$394	\$279	\$327
Taxes	\$555	\$642	\$770	\$829	\$466	\$538
Earned Income Tax Credit (-)	(\$32)	(\$4)	\$0	\$0	(\$211)	(\$185)
Child Care Tax Credit (-)	(\$55)	(\$50)	(\$100)	(\$100)	(\$113)	(\$99)
Child Tax Credit (-)	(\$167)	(\$167)	(\$333)	(\$333)	(\$265)	(\$284)
Self-Sufficiency Wage						
Hourly	\$18.63	\$11.21	\$23.51	\$13.43	\$16.76	\$10.12
Monthly	\$3,279	\$3,945	\$4,138	\$4,726	\$2,950	\$3,564
Annual	\$39,344	\$47,337	\$49,658	\$56,710	\$35,400	\$42,763
Emergency Savings Fund (Monthly Contribution)	\$67	\$36	\$105	\$45	\$79	\$42

Source: Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington.

For more information see <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/NorthCarolina>

The U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program provides annual estimates of income and poverty statistics for all school districts, counties, and states. The main objective of this program is to provide estimates of income and poverty for the administration of federal programs and the allocation of federal funds to local jurisdictions. In addition to these federal programs, state and local programs use the income and poverty estimates for distributing funds and managing programs.

Table 3.*SAIPE Program Estimates for the Poverty at County, State, and National level*

Age group	Year	Burke County			North	United
		Total population	Poverty count	Poverty percent	Carolina poverty percent	States poverty percent
All ages	2021	85,117	12,185	14.3	13.5	12.8
	2020	87,662	16,166	18.4	12.9	11.9
	2015	86,681	14,434	16.7	16.4	14.7
	2010	87,762	16,377	18.7	17.4	15.3
	2005	85,418	12,441	14.6	14.9	13.3
	2000	86,781	9,534	11.0	11.7	11.3
Under age 18	2021	15,236	3,038	19.9	18.2	16.9
	2020	15,690	4,730	30.1	17.9	15.7
	2015	16,833	3,981	23.6	23.4	20.7
	2010	19,412	5,167	26.6	24.6	21.6
	2005	20,204	4,086	20.2	20.8	18.5
	2000	21,282	3,358	15.8	16.5	16.2

Source: https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/saipe/#/?s_state=37&s_county=37023&s_district=&s_geography=county&s_measures=mhi

Community Census

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2017-2021 American Community Survey five-year estimates report the population of Burke County to be 87,829. Approximately nineteen percent (18.6%, n = 16,637) of Burke County's population are under the age of 18.

The majority of Burke County residents are White or Caucasian and not of Hispanic origin (80.0%). Approximately seven percent (6.5%) are Hispanic or Latino, and 6.2% of the residents are Black or African American. The primary language spoken at home is English (90.7%) with 9.3% speaking some other language at home. Currently 90.2% of households have a computer and 80.7% have access to broadband internet. Seventy-two percent (72%) of housing units in Burke County are owner-occupied and 28% are renter-occupied. The estimated median monthly owner cost with a mortgage is \$1,110 and estimated median monthly rental housing cost is \$744.

The median household income (2021 dollars) is \$48,142, and 83.3% of the population that are 25 years of age or older are a high school graduate or higher. The current overall percentage of persons in poverty is 14.3%.

Demographics of Children Under the Age of 18 in Burke County

Of the children in households, 29.8% are 5 years of age or younger, 35.2% are between 6 and 11 years of age, and 35.0% are 12 to 17 years old. Approximately seventy percent (69.7%) of the child population is White and not of Hispanic or Latino origin. Fourteen percent (13.6%) of the child population is of Hispanic or Latino origin. A smaller number of children are Black or African American (5.5%) or Asian (5.1%).

Eighty-six percent (86%) of the children live with a biological, step or adopted parent, and 9.5% live with a grandparent. Most children (65.5%) live in a married-couple family household, 25.2% live in a single female householder home, and 9.3% live in a single male householder home. The overall median income for families with children under the age 18 is \$54,586 (2021 inflation-adjusted dollars). This varies greatly based on the type of household. In married-couple family households the median income is \$71,917, single male household median income is \$45,367, and the single female household median income is \$25,472. Children under the age of 18 years living in single female households have most often received public assistance (57.7%), followed by single male households (47.8%), and then married-couple households (24.9%).

The percentage of children under the age of 18 in households whose income in the past 12 months was below the poverty level is 28.4%. Children in single parent households are more likely to be below the poverty level (50.3% male household, 48.9% female household, and 17.1% married-couple household).

The Feeding America organization provides county statistics for food insecurity and presently reports 21.4% (3,610) of Burke County children under age 18 are experiencing food insecurity. Ninety-one percent (91%) of these children are income-eligible for federal nutrition programs. Table 4 shows the distribution of poverty within Burke County by township. Poverty among children under the age of 18 is not equally distributed across the county. Morganton, Jonas Ridge, and Lower Creek all have a percentage of children in poverty above 40 percent. In contrast, Linville and Upper Fork have percentages less than 10 percent.

Table 4.

2021 Estimates of Total and Under Age 18 Burke County Population in Poverty

Township	Total Population			Under Age 18		
	N	Below poverty level	% Below poverty level	N	Below poverty level	% Below poverty level
Drexel	6,648	709	10.7	993	138	13.9
Icard	16,153	2,408	14.9	3,066	420	13.7
Jonas Ridge	328	68	20.7	45	20	44.4
Linville	1,731	16	0.9	84	2	2.4
Lovelady	7,964	957	12.0	1,457	219	12.8
Lower Creek	3,129	1,383	44.2	658	289	43.9
Lower Fork	2,950	434	14.7	498	113	22.7
Morganton	25,558	6,203	24.3	5,387	2,427	45.1
Quaker Meadows	7,172	1,430	19.9	1,161	369	31.8
Silver Creek	10,560	1,555	14.7	2,074	447	21.6
Smoky Creek	642	67	10.4	94	13	13.8
Upper Creek	1,403	17	102	250	0	0
Upper Fork	1,243	243	19.5	118	9	7.6

Of the children enrolled in school and experiencing poverty, 35% percent of them are in the fifth to eighth grade and 30% are in the first to fourth grade. Table 5 provides the number and percent of students below and above poverty level.

Table 5.

2021 Estimates of School Enrollment Based on Poverty Status in Past 12 Months for Children 3 years and Older

Grades Enrolled	Below poverty level		Above poverty level	
	n	%	n	%
Nursery school or preschool	196	8.5	478	4.5
Kindergarten	171	7.4	678	6.4
Grade 1 to grade 4	694	30.0	2,318	22.0
Grade 5 to grade 8	809	35.0	3,381	32.0
Grade 9 to grade 12	441	19.1	3,710	35.1
Total students enrolled	2311	17.9	10565	82.1

Source: US Census Data

<https://data.census.gov/table?t=Education&g=0500000US37023&tid=ACSDT1Y2021.B14006>

Community Survey

As part of this community assessment process, a stakeholder group consisting of three parents with children who are consumers of Burke County services and five agency representatives whose agencies provide services to children living in poverty was formed. Stakeholder group members participated voluntarily and were invited based on their knowledge, expertise, and experience either as consumers or providers of services that benefit children living in poverty in Burke County. Parent members of the stakeholder group were compensated \$25 per hour for their time. The stakeholder group worked together over four, two-hour meetings to develop a set of surveys to better understand the poverty that exists among Burke County families with children, the services that are used by Burke County families with children, and the barriers to accessing services. The group developed a survey to be completed by parents (Appendix B) and a survey to be completed by representatives from agencies that provide services to children (Appendix C).

Sample of Respondents

The family survey was distributed among families in Burke County between August and October 2022. The survey was disseminated through agencies that provide supports to families including Burke County Schools, United Way, local churches, Burke United Christian Ministries, Early Head Start, and the Outreach Center. Families were offered the choice to complete the survey in English or Spanish and were invited to take the survey over the phone if they preferred. Survey respondents were asked to indicate if they lived in Burke County and if they had children under the age of 18. If either question was answered “no” the participant was automatically exited from the survey platform. As an incentive to complete the survey, participants were offered a chance to be entered into one of 50, \$50 gift card drawings. The survey was initiated by 1,115 respondents, but only six hundred and twenty-nine (629)

surveys met the qualification for inclusion in this data collection process and provided responses for the results presented. Some respondents chose not to answer all questions, so sample size for individual results vary.

The sample of families represented in the survey results closely resembles the demographics of Burke County in race/ethnicity, language, education level, and geographical location as a population; therefore, the sample is considered proportionate and representative of Burke County. A proxy was used to indicate if the family was experiencing poverty. Respondents were considered to be living in poverty if they indicated using one or more services (e.g., Food stamps, WIC, Medicaid, free or reduced-price school meals) provided primarily to families with low income.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of the respondents (392) indicated using one or more of the services and were assigned to the living in poverty (poverty) group. The remaining respondents did not indicate using any of the services and were assigned to not living in poverty (other) group. Table 6 shows the demographics of both groups.

Table 6.*Demographic Characteristics of Family Survey Participants with Children Under Age 18*

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b		Full Sample ^c	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Race/ethnicity						
White	263	68.0	134	87.6	397	73.5
Black or African American	30	7.8	3	2.0	33	6.1
Hispanic or Latino	24	6.2	1	0.7	25	4.6
Asian	24	6.2	3	2.0	27	5.0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	15	3.9	1	0.7	16	3.0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	5	1.3	2	1.3	7	1.3
Multi-race (2 or more of the above)	12	3.1	6	3.9	18	3.3
Prefer not to answer	14	3.6	3	2.0	17	3.1
Language spoken at home						
English	360	92.5	150	98.7	510	94.3
Spanish	14	3.6	0	0	14	2.6
Hmong	13	3.3	0	0	13	2.4
Other	2	0.6	2	1.3	4	0.8
Marital status						
Married/Live-in Partner	181	46.6	122	79.7	303	56.0
Single/Widowed	120	30.9	14	9.2	134	24.8
Separated/Divorced	87	22.4	17	11.1	104	19.2
Highest educational level						
Less than 12th grade	34	8.7	0	0	34	6.4
High school graduate/GED	98	25.1	9	6.2	107	20.0
Some college or training	180	46.2	26	17.9	206	38.5
4-year college graduate	56	14.4	57	39.3	113	21.1
Graduate degree or higher	22	5.6	53	36.6	75	14.0
Employment						
Full-time (32+ hours per week)	180	46.6	126	86.9	306	57.6
Part-time	63	16.3	8	5.5	71	13.4
Migrant seasonal farm worker	14	3.6	0	0	14	2.6
Unemployed	94	24.4	5	3.4	99	18.6
Disabled	15	3.9	1	0.7	16	3.0
Stay-at-home spouse	13	3.4	4	2.8	17	3.2
Retired	7	1.8	1	0.7	8	1.5

Note. Number of respondents varies by variable. ^an ≈ 390. ^bn ≈ 150. ^cn ≈ 540.

How Burke County Families Describe Poverty

Families completing the survey were asked to rank the top three statements that best describe living in poverty. Among the families meeting the criteria for living in poverty, two hundred and forty-seven (247) of respondents (63%) indicated that poverty can best be described as when the income is not enough or regular enough to meet basic needs. Two hundred and thirty-one (231) respondents (59%) indicated that poverty can be described as not having enough food, housing, transportation, childcare, or healthcare. One hundred and seventy-five (175) respondents (45%) indicated that needing to use outside help to get enough food, housing, transportation, childcare, and healthcare is the best way to describe living in poverty. One hundred and sixty (160) respondents (43%) indicated that poverty can best be described as being afraid or having anxiety about not having enough to meet future needs. Families categorized as not living in poverty showed the same trends in their responses and collectively indicated the same four indicators were the best descriptors of living in poverty.

Table 7.

Description of Living in Poverty for Participants with Children Under Age 18

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b	
	n	%	n	%
Income is not enough or regular (depends on seasons or weather) to meet basic needs	247	63.0	178	75.1
Not having enough food, housing, transportation, childcare, healthcare	231	58.9	184	77.6
Needing to use outside help to get enough food, housing, transportation, childcare, healthcare	175	44.6	115	48.5
Fear or anxiety about not having enough to meet future needs	167	42.6	67	28.3
Lack of choice in food, housing, transportation, childcare, healthcare	104	26.5	43	18.1
Not having access to all the materials that are needed to succeed in school	94	24.0	62	26.2
Not having friends and family who can help during tough times	90	23.0	34	14.3
Not having the internet when I need it	68	17.3	28	11.8

Note. Number of respondents varies by variable. ^an = 392. ^bn = 237.

To gain a better understanding of perceptions Burke County families have of poverty and the associated connotations and emotional burden of living in poverty, we asked families to list three to five words or phrases that describe the life of a child living in poverty. We conducted a qualitative discourse analysis of the terms, and the results are presented below in a word cloud to illustrate the magnitude of the responses. The terms that were noted by more people appear larger in the diagram, while terms that were noted infrequently appear smaller. Terms such as anxious, enough, food, hungry, needs, sad, and stressful were noted between 31 and 91 times with food and hungry being noted the most, 90 and 91 times respectively.

How Burke County Families Describe Living Above Poverty

Respondents were also asked to rank the top three statements that best describe living above poverty. Among the respondents living in poverty, 261 (67%) marked that having financial savings of at least three months was one of the top three indicators of being out of poverty. Two hundred and thirty-two (232) respondents (59%) marked that one of the top three indicators of being out of poverty is owning your own home. Two hundred and thirteen (213) respondents (54%) indicated that having healthcare when you are well and when you are sick is one of the top three indicators of living out of poverty. Among the respondents not living in poverty, the same trends in responses were seen.

Table 8.

Description of Living Above Poverty for Participants with Children Under Age 18

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b	
	n	%	n	%
Financial savings of at least three months	261	66.6	181	76.4
Owning your own home	232	59.2	148	62.4
Having healthcare when you are well and when you are sick	213	54.3	144	60.8
Having a support system to help when times are tough	176	44.9	92	38.8
Owning your own vehicle	174	44.4	97	40.9
Having other education after high school	120	30.6	49	20.7

Note. Number of respondents varies by variable. ^an = 392. ^bn = 237.

Services Provided to Children in Poverty and Where the Services are Located

Burke County community resources were researched and compiled into a matrix that shows location, contact information, and types of services provided. These Burke County agencies and programs were then invited to provide information about services they provide to children under 18 and their families who are experiencing poverty. Of 42 agencies who completed the survey, 86.5% provide services to all of Burke County. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of agencies or programs were non-profit, 19% were faith-based organizations, 13.5% were government agencies, and 8.1% were local education agencies. Ninety-five percent (95%) of agencies completing the survey report that immigration status is not used to determine eligibility for services. The two agencies that did report using immigration status to determine eligibility were government and non-profit organizations. Thirty-two percent (32%) of agencies do not provide language interpretation services and 46% of them do not have bilingual staff. Of those that do have bilingual staff, Spanish is the most common secondary language (35.1%). Seventy-three percent (73%) of agencies provide their forms to families in English and Spanish.

The most frequent services provided by agencies completing the survey were food assistance and family support care (40%), followed by school supplies and crisis assistance (37%), and then transportation, mental health care, and clothing (26%).

Table 9.
Services Provided by Programs and Presence of Income Eligibility

	Programs providing ^a		Have income eligibility criteria	
	n	%	n	%
Family support care	17	40	6	35
Food assistance	17	40	5	29
Crisis assistance	16	37	6	37
School supplies	16	37	3	19
Mental health care	11	26	4	36
Clothing	11	26	3	27
Transportation	11	26	3	27
Child development services	10	23	3	30
Energy assistance	10	23	3	30
Medical care	9	21	4	44
Housing or housing assistance	9	21	2	22
Before/after school care	8	19	1	12
Childcare	7	16	3	43
Substance-use services/treatment	7	16	2	29
Disability services	7	16	1	14
Dental care	6	14	4	67
Employment/job skills training	6	14	3	50
Home repair	6	14	2	33
Preschool	5	12	2	40
Legal assistance	2	5	0	0

Note. Number of respondents ^aN = 43.

Agencies report that families learn about their services primarily by word of mouth (97.6%), referral (76.2%), and the agency website (76.2%).

Table 10.
How Families Learn About Program Services

	Programs	
	n	%
Word of mouth	41	97.6
Referral	32	76.2
Website	32	76.2
Social media	30	71.4
Brochure/poster/sign	30	71.4
Google/search engine	25	59.5
Newspaper	11	26.2
TV/radio announcement	10	23.8

Note. Number of programs N = 42.

Applications for services are typically completed in-person at the program's office (38.1%), online or virtually (38.1%), and through referrals from other organizations (35.7%). Twenty-six percent (26%) of agencies report they have no application process. The option to complete applications virtually is provided mostly by government agencies or non-profits who completed the survey. No faith-based groups provided this option. Faith-based organizations, however, are significantly more likely to have no application process at 55.6%.

Table 11.
How Families Access Applications for Services

	Programs Accepting	
	n	%
Completed in-person at program office	16	38.1
Accepted online or virtually	16	38.1
Accepted through referrals from other organizations	15	35.7
Completed over the phone	10	23.8
Applicants are taken first come, first serve	9	21.4
Taken by appointment	6	14.3
Sent through child's school	6	14.3
Sent to home address, return by mail or in person	6	14.3
Completed at a mobile location	3	7.1
No application process	11	26.2

Note. Number of programs N = 42.

Most services are provided at an agency facility (78.6%). Some agencies (35.7%) reported that services can also be provided online or virtually.

Table 12.
How Families Are Provided Services

	Programs Providing	
	n	%
Provided in program's facility	33	78.6
Provided online or virtually	15	35.7
Provided at a mobile location	12	28.6
Provided through home visits	12	28.6
Provided at school	12	28.6
Provided via phone call	11	26.2

Note. Number of programs N = 42.

According to the Burke County Quality of Life Explorer website, grocery stores, WIC vendors, and SNAP retailers are clustered along the major highways in the county. Most grocery stores are in Morganton, with one located in Valdese and several others located in the Hildebran/Long View area. A cursory overview of Burke County reveals most of the county is a grocery desert, especially the northwestern and southeastern sections of the county.

The medical facilities and offices are also clustered along the major highways connected to Interstate 40. The Department of Social Services, Health Department, and many non-profit organizations that help families in poverty with children are located in Morganton.

Burke County has a public transportation system that serves the city of Morganton. Public transportation services are limited in rural areas of the county.

Burke County has 45 licensed childcare facilities in Burke County. These facilities are more evenly distributed across the county with most of the Pre-K's located within the elementary schools. Other childcare facilities are located along or off major highways within the county.

How Burke County Families with Children Access Goods and Services

The survey distributed to Burke County families also asked about how they access goods and services they use to support their families. Specifically, families were asked how they access goods such as food, clothing, diapers, and household and school supplies as well as services such as transportation, childcare, and healthcare.

Food

Nearly 88% of families living in poverty and 98% of those over the poverty indicator buy their food from grocery stores, discount stores, or farmer's markets. Thirty percent (30%) of respondents living in poverty grow or raise their own food compared to 39% of respondents not living in poverty. Those not living in poverty are more than twice as likely to order food from restaurants or fast-food establishments (65% vs. 28%) while those living in poverty are twice as likely to trade food with friends or neighbors (14% vs. 7%). Thirteen percent (13%) of both groups report using hunting as a food resource.

Programs that offer food assistance are much more likely to be used by families living in poverty than those living above poverty. Food banks and food pantries are used by 34% of those families living in poverty and 7% by families who do not. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of families living in poverty use school or childcare programs to access food while 15% of families not living in poverty use these programs. Families living in poverty are more likely to eat at a soup kitchen (8%) than families not living in poverty (less than 1%).

Table 13.
Accessing Food

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b	
	n	%	n	%
Buy from a grocery store, discount store, or farmer's market	343	87.5	184	97.9
Pick up from food banks or food pantries	134	34.2	14	7.4
Grow/raise our own food	118	30.1	73	38.8
Order from restaurant or fast-food establishment	109	27.8	123	65.4
Obtain from school/childcare program	107	27.3	28	14.9
Trade with friends or neighbors	56	14.3	14	7.4
Hunting	53	13.5	24	12.8
Eating at soup kitchen	30	7.7	1	0.5

Note. Number of respondents ^an = 392, ^bn = 188.

Clothing, Diapers, and Household Supplies

Families living in poverty indicate using salvage, thrift, or discount stores as the most common way they access clothes, diapers, and household supplies at 68% compared to 46% of families not living in poverty. Retail stores or online shopping are used 64% of the time by those families living in poverty and 93% by families who do not. Families living in poverty are seven times more likely (38%) to use free clothing, diapers, or household item banks than families living above poverty (5%). Trading items with family and friends showed the closest alignment between the two groups with 33% of families living in poverty and 24% of those not living in poverty.

Table 14.
Accessing Clothes, Diapers, and Household Supplies

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b	
	n	%	n	%
Buy from salvage, thrift, or discount stores	266	67.9	87	46.3
Buy from a retail store or online shopping	252	64.3	174	92.6
Pick up from free clothing, diapers, and household item banks	147	37.5	10	5.3
Trade with family or friends	131	33.4	45	23.9

Note. Number of respondents ^an = 392, ^bn = 188.

School Supplies

All respondents from the survey primarily access school supplies by purchasing them from the store with 68% of families living in poverty and 93% of families living above poverty doing so. Families living in poverty are much more likely to receive school supplies from friends or family (48% vs. 22%), from a Backpack Program (48% vs. 10%), or from the school (23% vs. 9%) than families not living in poverty.

Table 15.
Accessing School Supplies

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b	
	n	%	n	%
Purchase from the store	260	66.7	173	93.0
Receive from friends or family	186	47.7	41	22.0
Receive from the Backpack Program	186	47.7	19	10.2
Receive from the school	91	23.3	16	8.6

Note. Number of respondents ^an = 392, ^bn = 188.

Transportation

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of families living in poverty and 93% of those not living in poverty disclosed that the main way they travel is by using their own car. Relying on friends or family to drive them and sharing a car with other family members or friends was used an average of 16% of the time for those living in poverty and only 2% and 8% respectively for those not living in poverty. Public transportation, walking, or riding a bike was used about 14% of the time for those living in poverty but only 3-4% for those who do not.

Table 16.
Accessing Transportation

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b	
	n	%	n	%
Drive my own car	265	67.6	175	93.1
Rely on friends and family to drive me	65	16.6	4	2.1
Share a car with other family members or friends	63	16.1	15	8.0
Use public transportation	57	14.5	6	3.2
Walk or ride a bike	55	14.0	8	4.3
Use transportation provided by the agency/program	37	9.4	3	1.6

Note. Number of respondents ^an = 392, ^bn = 188.

Childcare

Friends or family are the primary way survey respondents access childcare with 57% of those families living in poverty and 75% of those who do not. Both groups list school and daycare as the second and third most common ways they access childcare. Preschool or Head Start is used by 14% of families living in poverty and 6% of families not living in poverty. Parent's Morning/Evening Out is used by nearly 14% of families in poverty versus 4% of families living above the poverty line. Babysitters or nannies are more than twice as likely to be used for childcare by families not living in poverty (12%) than families living in poverty (5%).

Table 17.
Accessing Childcare

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b	
	n	%	n	%
Friends or family	213	56.8	131	75.3
School	139	37.1	56	32.2
Childcare/Daycare	108	28.8	44	25.3
Preschool/Head Start	54	14.4	11	6.3
Parent's Morning/Evening Out	51	13.6	7	4.0
Babysitter/nanny	20	5.3	21	12.1

Note. Number of respondents ^an = 392, ^bn = 188.

Medical, Mental Health, and Medicine

Sixty-six percent (66%) of families living in poverty and 93% of families living above poverty indicate the main way they access healthcare is by seeing a doctor or therapist at their office. Urgent care (45%) and the emergency room (35%) are the second and third most common ways families living in poverty access healthcare. Similar trends were seen in families who do not live in poverty. Both groups also show similar trends in how frequently they search online information about their diagnoses or symptoms (24-29%), ask friends or family for health advice (21-23%), see a nurse at school (19-22%), or read about health advice on social media (8-11%). Families living in poverty are six times more likely (20%) to go to the health department than families who do not (3%). Telehealth visits are used by 16% of families living in poverty and 23% of families who do not live in poverty.

Table 18.
Accessing Medical Care and Advice

	Poverty ^a		Other ^b	
	n	%	n	%
See a doctor or therapist at their office	260	66.3	175	93.1
Go to Urgent Care	175	44.6	105	55.9
Go to the emergency room	137	34.9	54	28.7
Search online information about my diagnosis or symptoms	92	23.5	54	28.7
Ask friends or family for health advice	89	22.7	39	20.7
See a nurse at school	87	22.2	35	18.6
Go to the health department	78	19.9	6	3.2
Do a telehealth visit online	61	15.6	44	23.4
Read about health advice on social media	44	11.2	15	8.0

Note. Number of respondents ^an = 392, ^bn = 188.

Accessing Resources

Respondents also indicated how they prefer to access resources. Fifty-one percent (51%) of respondents living in poverty and 53% of all other respondents prefer to access services online. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of those living in poverty and 43% of all other respondents prefer to access services in person; and a much smaller number prefer to use the phone, 12% and 4% respectively.

Barriers to Accessing Services

Barriers to accessing services are conditions or obstacles that prevent families with children living in poverty from using or accessing knowledge and resources that provide them with crucial support. These barriers can either prevent families from accessing services at all or can prevent them from accessing services to the extent needed to benefit the family. Information from both the Family and Agency Surveys are presented here to explain the barriers as perceived by both groups.

What Families Report About Barriers to Accessing Services for their Children

In the Burke County Family Survey, we asked participants to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with statements about how services are provided. Three hundred and ninety (390) people living in poverty completed this question as well as 159 other respondents not living in poverty. All of these respondents live in Burke County and have children under the age of 18 years. Families indicating that they do not live in poverty were excluded from the reporting of this question. The responses to this question highlight some of the obstacles or challenges families living in poverty experience when trying to access services for their children. Below are the trends that emerged from the information all families shared.

Of the families living in poverty, 26% indicated they are not eligible for the services their child and family needs. Families elaborated that the eligibility criteria for receiving formal services is too restrictive and many families described they are not “making ends meet” or are “barely getting by” and still do not qualify for services. One parent wrote, “We are considered above the poverty level but still struggle...We have been denied Medicaid and EBT and childcare assistance for our dependent grandchildren. Even though our income is above the cut-off, it is difficult to afford insurance, childcare, and food.” Several families shared the belief that their “needs are not being assessed correctly.” Some respondents expressed that they perceive a bias in how benefits are calculated across families based on the type of work they do, their race, or their primary language. Others noted that people who do not work at all are prioritized over those who are trying to help themselves get out of poverty but are still struggling. Respondents also commented that the eligibility criteria are designed to keep people in poverty because as soon as you make a few dollars, your benefits decrease, lowering you back down into deeper poverty.

Others described that the eligibility restrictions do not allow for a second chance and their children are being denied services for mistakes the parent made when they themselves were children. One respondent wrote, “I’ve never gotten the opportunity for low-income housing fairly due to something [I did] at 16 years old.”

Of the survey respondents, 22% indicated that the operating hours for services that their family needs do not work with their schedules. Several respondents elaborated on this idea in the open-ended comments by sharing that when families are working, traveling to fill out applications is time consuming and unmanageable. Families expressed that the limited window in which to access services conflicts with their work schedules, and they are at times forced to forego services to keep their job and ensure they are maximizing their income.

Other respondents noted that the availability of services has “improved since the pandemic” or “has gotten better.” This may be an indication that in response to the pandemic, agencies moved the application process online, thereby allowing for applications to be completed during times more convenient for families. Receiving services online was also noted as a preference among both families living in and above poverty.

Of the respondents, 20% indicated that they do not have family members or friends that can provide help when they need it. Respondents did not elaborate on this in their open-ended responses but further analysis of the quantitative data shows that having a support system is an important tool for families living in poverty. Nearly a quarter of respondents living in poverty listed “not having friends or family who can help during tough times” as one of the top three indicators of living in poverty. Further results indicate that respondents living in poverty are 18.5% more likely to access childcare using friends or family, twice as likely to share a car, eight times more likely to rely on friends or family to take them places, and 26% more likely to receive school supplies from friends or family. All respondents acknowledge the importance of support systems, but for families living in poverty these support systems play a crucial role in how well they can receive goods and services.

Of the respondents, 20% indicated that they do not know what services are available for their child within Burke County. Many respondents elaborated on this theme in the open-ended questions, sharing that it is “hard to know what is available to families and children in need.” One respondent wrote, “there should be more people to advocate for and advertise these awesome, amazing programs for

children...” Others commented that they have lived in the area all their lives and still do not know what is available to help families and children. Several respondents noted that it is particularly difficult to know what is available for children with special needs (i.e., “if your child has special needs, you are just lost”).

Respondents also elaborated that knowing about a resource does not necessarily make them accessible, since a participant also needs to know how to apply for or access the resource and this is not always clear.

Of the respondents, 19% indicated that they do not get the support they need when applying for services for their child and family. Many comments were provided related to the perception that the process of applying for and receiving services is needlessly complicated and overwhelming, particularly for “non-English speaking individuals and persons with cognitive challenges.” Lack of personal resources such as literacy, transportation, necessary documentation, and co-pays were frequently cited as making the application process more difficult.

One respondent noted that “the forms that have to be completed are difficult to understand even with an education.” Another shared that it is hard to gather all the necessary paperwork needed to qualify for services without missing work to do it. The words “confusing,” “difficult,” “time-consuming,” and “frustrating” are used repeatedly to describe the process. Another respondent wrote that “not all of the paperwork makes sense [and] there’s nobody to explain the things that don’t make sense.” Others commented that the process of qualifying for services is not fast enough and communication between agency personnel and families is not good enough and sometimes delays the process even longer. Sometimes families are waiting to be contacted only to find out that the agency is waiting for paperwork from the family. The mutual waiting without knowing what the other was expecting results in needless delays of services. Some respondents expressed that there always seems to be a last minute “catch” that holds up the services, as sometimes the paperwork or information needed from the family is something they do not have or cannot easily obtain, so they give up on pursuing the service. In fact, 17% of respondents indicated that they do not have the paperwork they need to access services they need.

One respondent noted that they needed “forms from a lawyer to prove something and I do not have the money to go to a lawyer.” Individuals who work primarily for cash, such as a handyman, wrote that they were not able to provide documentation for wages earned. Other respondents simply listed “poverty” or “poor” when asked what keeps them from getting services and resources their family needs.

Many respondents had strong emotional responses of shame, humiliation, anxiety, and embarrassment for having to ask for assistance. One respondent wrote that the process was “dehumanizing [and] makes you feel like a failure.” Another wrote that they were “uneasy, incompetent, it’s a bad feeling not to be able to provide for my family.” Others felt that they were “looked down upon” and that “people at these places you go to for help aren’t that friendly” and have “a lot of judgmental people who make it extremely difficult to reach out for help.”

Respondents elaborated that perceptions of service provider attitudes impact their ability to receive services. One respondent wrote that a person does not always get help “because the caseworker doesn’t believe the applicant.” In addition, several respondents noted that many agencies are “short-staffed” and “don’t always get calls returned quickly.”

Of the respondents, 16% indicated they are not able to get to and from services that their child and family need. Lack of transportation, high gas prices, and difficulty navigating public transportation limit many respondents from accessing services. One respondent noted that “there’s no use in applying for needed resources if you can’t get to the services to receive them.” Some respondents elaborated on difficulties getting to and from services because of their geographical location. Those that live in more rural areas and the eastern part of the county said that it “makes it harder since most [resources] is in Morganton.” For those using public transportation, they noted that rides must be scheduled one or more days in advance and that “not everything can be planned that early.”

Of the respondents, 12% indicated their citizenship status interferes with their ability to use services their child and family needs. Although some respondents thought that lack of citizenship interfered with getting services, other respondents felt that services were diverted to non-citizens.

Of the respondents, 7% indicated that when using services for their child and family, they are not confident services will be provided in a language they speak or understand. Some respondents noted that the process of applying for and getting services is difficult for non-English speakers. Others wrote that language barriers keep them from getting needed services and resources.

Despite the barriers shared, several respondents noted they didn’t experience barriers and were happy and grateful to have received services. One respondent wrote that the application process was “quick, thorough, professional, but personable. Everyone has been nice, understanding, and doesn’t make you feel bad.” Others note that the ability to apply online and receive services since Covid has made it “much easier.” One respondent wrote that Burke County has “better resources compared to some other states or counties.”

What Agencies Shared about Barriers to Accessing Services

Approximately 80 agencies and programs were invited to complete the Burke County Agency Survey to collect both demographic and operational information as well as perceptions about current challenges to providing services. In the survey, participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with statements about barriers to receiving services at their agency or program. Agencies were also given the opportunity to elaborate on specific barriers or challenges they have experienced as well as initiatives or strategies they have employed to improve access to services. Lastly, agencies were asked about how well agencies and programs in Burke County provide resources to families with children. Thirty-nine (39) agencies completed this section of the survey. The responses to these questions reveal the following trends:

Trend #1: Considering that Burke County is rural and under-resourced, Burke County agencies (government, non-profit, faith-based, and healthcare) do a great job providing services. As a service delivery system, however, respondents believe Burke County is not adequately meeting the needs of families with children living in poverty. Fifty-one percent (51%) of agencies completing the survey report that the demand for services exceeds available agency or program resources. This is particularly common among faith-based organizations (75%) and non-profits (46%). One agency noted that the “need far outweighs the availability of services,” and another writes that “there are gaps and too few resources in some areas.”

Trend #2: Agencies report that the lack of resources, including funds, materials, and staff/volunteers is a major barrier to providing all the services that are needed to help children living in poverty. Thirty-

three percent (33%) of agencies report both that their program does not have enough staff on hand and that funding sources are unpredictable and inadequate. One agency providing childcare services cited “lack of funding sources, staffing complications, and locations to provide childcare” as “definite roadblocks to increasing these services in our community.”

Trend #3: Agencies report that childcare for second and third shift, transportation, and healthcare are areas where Burke County is particularly under-resourced. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents reported that families lack transportation to access their services, noting that “transportation is a huge barrier for our families.” Some agencies identified other specific needs such as, “a need for more parenting classes for all ages and more childcare services for second and third shift” workers.

Trend #4: Agencies in the community report a lack of knowledge about the varied services that are available and the gaps in those services. One agency noted an “ongoing challenge” in helping other agency staff “be aware of our services.” Another writes, “I think there are many great services, but some members of the community are not aware of” them and that it would “be nice to know all the programs out there that we could refer people to.”

Trend #5: Agencies report that some families are not able to access or make use of services because their level of crisis has left them without the resources to do so. Issues such as access to and understanding how to use technology, transportation, and stable housing all impact a family’s ability to apply for and receive services. If families do not have these basic supports in place, it can be difficult for them to access and sustain services. For example, one agency wrote that “folks needing our services lack the necessary technological skills to operate in these times.” Another agency elaborated that “because our services are provided in the home if a family living in poverty is staying with someone who doesn’t allow our staff into the home, it could prevent the family from being able to access our services.”

The system of help-giving alleviates some symptoms of poverty temporarily but does not provide long-term solutions. The goods and services provided are typically temporary and often have limited availability based on each agency’s resources and the number of requests for help. One agency noted that “we are only given so many free [car] seats to give out to those in need.” While the goods and services are tremendously helpful to families that receive them in the short term, they generally do not address the root causes of poverty or help build the capacity of families to move beyond their circumstances.

Trend #6: Agencies report that better coordination of services is needed to ensure that services across agencies are provided efficiently, and families experience fewer gaps. Coordination of services and partnering with other organizations is mentioned multiple times in agency responses. Some note ongoing challenges in receiving referrals from other agencies and inter-agency awareness about what services are available. “Given our programs require [other agency] referrals, an ongoing challenge is helping [other agency] staff be aware of our services.” Others mention how invaluable partnerships have been, “there have been issues with getting needed services; however, with partnership with other agencies we are able to get most needed services.” One agency noted that “there is always a need for coordination.”

Strategies Agencies Report Using to Overcome Barriers

Agencies were also asked in the survey what programs, initiatives, or strategies they have used to improve access to services. The following list is a synopsis of primary strategies already employed by

agencies:

- Some agencies have established initiatives to overcome geographical and transportation barriers such as using mobile units to bring services to families providing services closer to where families live.
- Agencies have recognized a lack of knowledge about services available and have employed marketing strategies such as brochures, social media, and providing materials to doctor's offices and schools to help bridge the gap.
- Some agencies have made it easier for families to apply for and access services by extending hours of operation, streamlining intake services, providing after school functions, providing home visits, and employing online platforms for applications, classes, and communication.
- Agencies report addressing the language barrier by offering forms in Spanish and hiring bilingual staff.
- Agencies report providing education to families to help build their capacity to find better employment with higher pay and better benefits.

Recommendations

Process

To develop recommendations that addressed perceived barriers, we engaged a group of stakeholders in a multi-step consensus-building process. The stakeholder group consisted of three parents who are consumers of Burke County services designed to help children living in poverty and ten high-level representatives from key community agencies that provide services to families living in poverty. We held a series of meetings with the following objectives:

Meeting 1: Review the community assessment data to understand how families use community resources and the barriers families experience with accessing resources designed to benefit children living in poverty in Burke County.

Meeting 2: Collectively brainstorm recommendations for improving services to Burke County children living in poverty.

Meeting 3: Recommend an effective and efficient way to update and share needed community assessment information among the agencies that can use the information to improve services and among families who need the information to ensure the health and well-being of their children.

Meeting 4: Assesses the feasibility and impact of recommendations and come to consensus on final recommendations.

Meeting 5: Review and revise final recommendations.

The barriers identified by families who are consumers of Burke County services and those identified by agency representatives are summarized on pages 20-24. The group of stakeholders collectively identified potential recommendations (included in Appendix D) for overcoming identified barriers.

Joint Recommendations

Below are the group's final recommendations:

Expand the availability of needed services equitably and in quantities sufficient to meet the demand.

1. Expand the service delivery hours of agencies to enable families to apply for and receive services in the evenings and on weekends (through staggered scheduling, flexible hours, and supplemental grant funding).
2. Expand the service area of public transportation including more accessibility in rural areas and connecting both ends of the county to better meet the needs of families unable to access it.
 - Conduct a study of what is working and not working about the current Greenway Transportation system.
 - Conduct a needs assessment of what is needed, where it is needed, when it is needed, and how prolific the needs are based on location and time of day.
3. Open a medical clinic for children who are uninsured or underinsured accessible to underserved areas of the county and could be an extension of existing programs such as Health-e Schools, Burke County Health Department, and Good Samaritan Clinic.
4. Increase the amount of affordable housing for families with children by any of the following means:
 - Study national models that ensure adequate housing for families living within a community.
 - Consult with Burke Development, Inc. to capitalize upon existing work on workforce housing.
 - Convert existing structures or divert land with dilapidated structures to low-income or workforce housing.
 - Use local area median income to set criteria for workforce housing eligibility and cost.
5. Increase the availability of behavioral health services in Burke County.

Expand service eligibility guidelines to ensure the needs of families are met in quantity, quality, and duration.

1. Expand eligibility criteria to consider child, family, and situational factors in addition to income (grandparents raising grandkids, kinship care, etc.) that put children at higher risk for the negative consequences of living in poverty. Methods for doing this can be identified by looking at other models for service eligibility across the country and applying them to Burke County (e.g., the flexible system Head Starts and Early Head Starts uses to determine eligibility can look different across programs and is based on the unique needs of a county or community).
2. Provide incentives (volunteers, free advertising, referrals, etc.) to programs that use equitable practices that meet the needs of non-US citizens.
3. Increase the length of time families can access and be weaned off services by encouraging non-profits to fill the gap with grocery vouchers for a limited time (6-9 months). Vouchers are preferable to providing boxes of food and material items as they enable the family to choose what they eat and provide to their families and preserves their dignity.

Simplify the eligibility application process.

1. Investigate existing platforms (NCCARE360) or develop a web-based single point of entry for agencies/organizations in Burke County, including a single initial eligibility application accepted by all agencies and routed to services the consumer is interested in through email alerts to those agencies for staff to follow-up with a call about additional information (if any) that may be needed to complete more specific applications as many agencies may have additional requirements. Additional information would then be uploaded into the consumer's account to build a more comprehensive bank of documentation for future applications for other services.

Increase the accuracy, accessibility, and usefulness of an existing resource database by expanding the robustness and boosting updating and use by community agencies.

1. Expand upon the existing 211 system, that contains a comprehensive database of local resources and mapping of the resource locations on a county map, with enhancements that increase accessibility and accuracy of information. Proposed enhancements include:
 - A local person knowledgeable about Burke County resources responding to the call-in function of the system.
 - A local person assigned to facilitate frequent updates to the existing services in the system, add seasonal services, and add new services as they evolve.
 - A marketing campaign to encourage community agencies to add, update, and use this system. The more it is used, the more likely it is to stay current.
 - A means to optimize the searches so that Burke County residents are alerted to Burke County services. Currently, when a user indicates their zip code, Burke County services are not necessarily the first services that appear on the list.

Increase the quality and quantity of the public service workforce.

1. Address the workforce shortage by giving public service workers access to higher education with incentives to work in public and nonprofit sectors (i.e., tuition, student loan forgiveness).
2. Investigate the feasibility of expanding upon or formalizing natural informal networks of support that families in need can use to get immediate help, such as transportation to urgent care, babysitter for a day, or help fixing a flat tire, to minimize the impact that these setbacks can have on a family barely getting by.

Sources

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- https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/saipe/#/?s_state=37&s_county=37023&s_district=&s_geography=county&s_measures=mhi
- <https://data.census.gov/table?t=Education&g=0500000US37023&tid=ACSDT1Y2021.B14006>

Appendix A: Stakeholder Roster

Name	Stakeholder Role	Email
Allison Bell	Director, Health-e Schools Telemedicine Program Burke, CRHI	allison.bell@crhi.org
Brandy Dupuis	Parent	brandyyelton@outlook.com
David Burleson	Director, New Dimensions Charter School; Former Burke County School Superintendent; Former Director BUCM	dburleson@ndschoool.org
Jennifer Cooper	Parent	jennifercoop24@gmail.com
Kathy Smith	Director, Burke County Smart Start	ksmithbcss@att.net
Korey Fisher-Wellman	Director, Burke County DSS	kfwellman@burkenc.org
Ronn Abernathy	Director, Juvenile Justice System Burke County	
Sara LeCroy	Director of Student & Family Services, BCPS	slecroy@burke.k12.nc.us
Alma Yanez Elvira	Parent	almafyaneze@gmail.com
Beth Heile	Board Member, NC Parks & Rec, Valdese community member	bzheile@gmail.com
Maureen "Mo" Schwind	Executive Director, United Way	executive.director@bcuw.org
Dawn Curtin	Early Head Start, The Enola Group	dawn.curtin@enolagroup.org

Appendix B: Family Survey – English & Spanish

* 1. Which language do you want to take the survey in?

¿En qué idioma desea realizar la encuesta?

- English (Inglés)
 Spanish (Español)

Welcome to the family survey on childhood poverty in Burke County funded by the Community Foundation of Burke County! This survey is for families with children under the age of 18 who live in Burke County. We are interested in learning about poverty in Burke County, what it's like to access services, and what barriers there are to accessing services. This information will be used by community agencies to improve services to families.

This 28-question survey may take around 10 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you can enter to win raffle prizes by entering your name and contact information. Your contact information will only be used for the raffle prizes. Your answers will be anonymous. Results from the survey will be available in 2023 on www.assurethefuture.org/2022-burke-county-community-assessment.html.

If you have questions about the survey or would like to take the survey by phone, please call (828) 608-6713. Thank you so much for taking the time to help us learn more about childhood poverty in Burke County!

* 2. Are you the parent or guardian of a child under the age of 18?

- Yes
 No

* 3. Do you live in Burke County?

- Yes
 No

* 4. Which of these statements best describe living in poverty? Rank your top three choices.

	Best	Second Best	Third Best
Income is not enough or regular (depends on seasons or weather) to meet basic needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having the internet when I need it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having access to all the materials that are needed to succeed in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having enough food, housing, transportation, childcare, healthcare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Needing to use outside help to get enough food, housing, transportation, childcare, healthcare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of choice in food, housing, transportation, childcare, healthcare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fear or anxiety about not having enough to meet future needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having friends and family who can help during tough times	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 5. Which of these statements best describe living above poverty? Rank your top three choices.

	Best	Second Best	Third Best
Financial savings of at least three months	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Owning your own home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Owning your own vehicle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a support system to help when times are tough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having other education after high school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having healthcare when you are well and when you are sick	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 6. Please enter 3-5 words or phrases that describe the life of a child living in poverty.

* 7. Which of the following do you use to get your family to and from the places you need to go? Check all that apply.

- I use my own car.
- I share a car with other family members or friends.
- I rely on friends and family to drive me.
- I use public transportation.
- I use transportation provided by the agency/program.
- I walk or ride a bike.
- Other (please specify)

* 8. Which of the following ways do you get food for your child and family? Check all that apply.

- Grow/raise our own food
- Buy from a grocery store, discount store, or farmer's market
- Trade with friends or neighbors
- Hunting
- Food banks or food pantries
- Soup kitchen
- School/Childcare
- Restaurant or fast food
- Other (please specify)

* 9. Which of the following ways do you access clothing, diapers, and household supplies? Check all that apply.

- Buy from a retail store or online shopping
- Free clothing, diaper, and household item banks
- Salvage, thrift, or discount stores
- Trade with family or friends
- Other (please specify)

* 10. Which of the following ways do you access childcare? Check all that apply.

- Friends or family
- School
- Childcare/Daycare
- Preschool/Head Start
- Parent's Morning/Evening Out
- Babysitter/nanny
- Other (please specify)

* 11. Which of the following ways do you get school supplies? Check all that apply.

- Purchase from the store
- Backpack Program
- Friends or family
- School
- Other (please specify)

* 12. When your child has medical, mental health, or medicine needs, how do you get help?

Check all that apply.

- See a doctor or therapist at their office
- Go to Urgent Care
- Go to the health department
- Go to the emergency room
- See a nurse at school
- Do a telehealth visit online
- Search online for information about my diagnosis or symptoms
- Read about health advice on social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter)
- Ask friends or family for health advice
- Other (please specify)

* 13. I prefer to access resources:

- In person
- Online
- By phone
- Other (please specify)

14. Share your thoughts and experiences about the process of applying for and getting services.

* 15. Some families use services around the community from places such as libraries, rec centers, health departments, and food banks. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about accessing services in Burke County?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am able to get to and from services that my child and family need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The open hours for services that my family needs work with my family's schedule.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When using services for my child and family, I know they will use a language I speak.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have family members or friends that help my child and family when we need it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know what services are available for my child and family in Burke County.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The services my child and family need are available in Burke County.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am eligible for the services my child and family need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I apply for services for my child and family, I get the support I need to fill out the forms.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have the paperwork I need to access services I need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My citizenship status allows me to use services that my child and family need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 16. What keeps you from getting services and resources you feel your child and family need?

* 17. What are your thoughts about how well Burke County provides resources to families with children?

* 18. What elementary school do you live closest to?

- Drexel Elementary School
- Forest Hill Elementary School
- George Hildebrand Elementary School
- Glen Alpine Elementary School
- Hildebran Elementary School
- Hillcrest Elementary School
- Icard Elementary School
- Mountain View Elementary School
- Mull Elementary School
- Oak Hill Elementary School
- Ray Childers Elementary School
- Salem Elementary School
- Valdese Elementary School
- W.A. Young Elementary School

19. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

20. Which of the following describes your race/ethnicity?

- White
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian or another Pacific Islander
- Multi-race (two or more of the above)
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

21. What language do you most often use at home?

- English
- Spanish
- Hmong
- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Other (please specify)

22. How would you describe your marital status?

- Single/Widowed
- Separated/Divorced
- Married/Live-in Partner

23. Is anyone in your household a deployed member of the military?

- Yes
- No

24. Is anyone from your household currently incarcerated?

- Yes
- No

25. What is the highest level of education you've completed?

- Less than 12th grade
- High school graduate/GED
- Some college or training
- 4-year college graduate
- Graduate degree or higher

26. What is your employment status?

- Working full-time (32 or more hours per week)
- Working part-time (31 or less hours per week)
- Unemployed
- Migrant seasonal farm worker
- Other (please specify)

27. Which of the following services do members of your family use? Check all that apply.

- Free or reduced school meals
- Foster care
- Community meal programs
- Food stamps (EBT) and/or Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
- Medicaid/NC Health Choice
- Clothing banks
- Section 8 Housing

28. If you would like to be entered in a raffle drawing to win prizes, please enter your name and phone number. Your name will only be used for the raffle drawing. Your answers will be kept anonymous.

Name

Phone Number

Encuesta de la evaluación comunitaria de pobreza infantil del Condado de Burke
Bienvenido a la encuesta familiar sobre la pobreza infantil en el Condado de Burke
financiada por la Fundación Comunitaria del Condado de Burke. Esta encuesta es
para familias con niños menores de 18 que viven en el Condado de Burke. Queremos
obtener información sobre la pobreza en el Condado de Burke, cómo es acceder a los
servicios y cuáles son los obstáculos para acceder a estos. Las agencias de la
comunidad usarán esta información para mejorar los servicios que se prestan a las

familias.

Esta encuesta de 28 preguntas puede tomar alrededor de 10 minutos para completar. Al final de la encuesta puede participar para ganar premios de sorteo escribiendo su nombre e información de contacto. Su información de contacto solo se usará para los premios del sorteo. Sus respuestas serán anónimas. Los resultados de la encuesta estarán disponibles en 2023 en www.assurethefuture.org/2022-burke-county-community-assessment.html.

Si tiene preguntas sobre la encuesta o preferiría responderla por teléfono, llámenos al (828) 608-6713. Gracias por tomarse el tiempo para ayudarnos a conocer más sobre la pobreza infantil en el Condado de Burke.

* 29. ¿Es el padre/madre o tutor de un niño menor de 18 años?

- Sí
 No

* 30. ¿Vive en el Condado de Burke?

- Sí
 No

* 31. ¿Cuál de estas afirmaciones describe mejor vivir en pobreza? Clasifique sus tres primeras opciones.

	Mejor opción	Segunda mejor opción	Tercera mejor opción
Los ingresos no son suficientes o habituales (depende de la temporada o clima) para cubrir las necesidades básicas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No tener internet cuando lo necesito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No tener acceso a todos los materiales que se necesitan para tener éxito en la escuela	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No tener suficiente comida, vivienda, transporte, cuidado infantil, atención médica	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Necesitar ayuda externa para poder conseguir suficiente comida, vivienda, transporte, cuidado infantil, atención médica	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Falta de opciones de comida, vivienda, transporte, cuidado infantil, atención médica	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Miedo o ansiedad de no tener suficientes recursos para cubrir necesidades futuras	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No tener amigos y familia que puedan ayudar en tiempos difíciles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 32. ¿Cuál de estas afirmaciones describe mejor vivir sin pobreza? Clasifique sus tres primeras opciones.

	Mejor opción	Segunda mejor opción	Tercera mejor opción
Ahorro económico de al menos tres meses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ser dueño de su propia casa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ser dueño de su propio auto	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tener un sistema de apoyo en tiempos difíciles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tener otro nivel de educación después de la preparatoria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recibir atención médica cuando está bien y cuando está enfermo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 33. Escriba 3-5 palabras o frases que describan la vida de un niño que vive en pobreza.

* 34. ¿Cuál de los siguientes usa para transportar a su familia desde y a los lugares que necesita ir? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- Uso mi propio auto.
- Comparto un auto con otros familiares o amigos.
- Dependo de amigos y familia para que me lleven.
- Uso transporte público.
- Uso el transporte proporcionado por la agencia o el programa.
- Camino o ando en bicicleta.
- Otra (especifique)

* 35. ¿Cómo obtiene comida para su hijo y familia? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- Cultivamos/criamos nuestros propios alimentos
- Compramos en el supermercado, tienda de descuento o el mercado de agricultores
- Intercambio con amigos o vecinos
- Cazando
- Bancos de alimentos o comedores
- Comedor popular
- Escuela/cuidado infantil
- Restaurante o comida rápida
- Otra (especifique)

* 36. ¿Cómo accede a ropa, pañales y suministros para la casa? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- Compró de una tienda o en línea
- Bancos de ropa, pañales y artículos para la casa gratis
- Tiendas de salvamento, de segunda mano o de descuento
- Intercambio con familia o amigos
- Otra (especifique)

* 37. ¿Cómo accede a servicios de cuidado infantil? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- Amigos o familia
- Escuela
- Cuidado infantil/guardería
- Preescolar/Head Start
- Mañana de padres "Parent's Morning Out"
- Niñero/cuidador
- Otra (especifique)

* 38. ¿Cómo obtiene materiales para la escuela? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- Compro de la tienda
- "Backpack Program" (Programa mochila)
- Amigos o familia
- Escuela
- Otra (especifique)

* 39. ¿Cuando su hijo tiene necesidades médicas, de salud mental o de medicamentos, cómo consigue ayuda? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- Veo a un médico o terapeuta en su consultorio
- Voy a la sala de urgencias
- Voy al departamento de salud
- Voy a la sala de emergencias
- Veo al enfermero de la escuela
- Hago una consulta con telesalud en línea
- Busco información en línea sobre mi diagnóstico o síntomas
- Leo sobre los consejos de salud en las redes sociales (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter)
- Pido consejos médicos a amigos o familia
- Otra (especifique)

* 40. Prefiero acceder a los recursos:

- En persona
- En línea
- Por teléfono
- Otro (especifique)

41. Comparta sus opiniones y experiencias sobre el proceso para solicitar y obtener servicios.

* 42. Algunas familias usan los servicios en la comunidad de lugares como bibliotecas, centros recreativos, departamentos médicos y bancos de alimentos. ¿Qué tan de acuerdo o en desacuerdo está con las siguientes afirmaciones sobre el acceso a servicios en el Condado de Burke?

	Totalmente en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	No estoy de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Totalmente de acuerdo
Puedo ir y regresar de los servicios que mi hijo y familia necesitan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
El horario de los servicios que mi familia necesita se adapta al horario de mi familia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cuando uso los servicios para mi hijo o familia, sé que usarán un idioma que hablo.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tengo familiares o amigos que ayudan a mi hijo y familia cuando lo necesitamos.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sé qué servicios están disponibles para mi hijo y familia en el Condado de Burke.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Los servicios que mi hijo y familia necesitan están disponibles en el Condado de Burke.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Soy elegible para los servicios que mi hijo y familia necesitan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cuando solicito los servicios para mi hijo y familia, obtengo el apoyo que necesito para completar los formularios.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tengo la documentación necesaria para acceder a los servicios que necesito.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mi ciudadanía me permite usar los servicios que mi hijo y familia necesitan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 43. ¿Qué le impide obtener los servicios y recursos que cree que su hijo y familia necesitan?

* 44. ¿Qué opina sobre qué tan bien el Condado de Burke ofrece recursos a las familias con niños?

* 45. ¿Cuál es la escuela primaria más cercana de donde vive?

- Drexel Elementary School
- Forest Hill Elementary School
- George Hildebrand Elementary School
- Glen Alpine Elementary School
- Hildebran Elementary School
- Hillcrest Elementary School
- Icard Elementary School
- Mountain View Elementary School
- Mull Elementary School
- Oak Hill Elementary School
- Ray Childers Elementary School
- Salem Elementary School
- Valdese Elementary School
- W.A. Young Elementary School

46. ¿Cuál es su género?

- Hombre
- Mujer
- Prefiero no responder
- Otro (especifique)

47. ¿Cuál de las siguientes opciones describe su raza/etnia?

- Blanco
- Negro o afroamericano
- Hispano o latino
- Asiático
- Indio americano o nativo de Alaska
- Nativo de Hawái o de otra isla del Pacífico
- Multirracial (dos o más de las de arriba)
- Prefiero no responder
- Otra (especifique)

48. ¿Qué idioma usa con más frecuencia en casa?

- Inglés
- Español
- Hmong
- ASL (Lengua de señas americana)
- Otra (especifique)

49. ¿Cómo describiría su estado civil?

- Soltero/viudo
- Separado/divorciado
- Casado/vivo con una pareja

50. ¿Alguien de su grupo familiar esté en servicio en el ejército?

- Sí
- No

51. ¿Alguien de su grupo familiar está en prisión?

- Sí
- No

52. ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que alcanzó?

- Menos del 12 grado
- Graduado de preparatoria o GED
- Alguna universidad o capacitación
- Graduado de una carrera universitaria de 4 años
- Posgrado o superior

53. ¿Cuál es su situación laboral?

- Trabajo a tiempo completo (32 o más horas por semana)
- Trabajo a tiempo parcial (31 o menos horas por semana)
- Desempleado
- Trabajador agrícola migrante de temporada
- Otra (especifique)

54. ¿Cuál de los siguientes servicios usan sus familiares? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- Comidas gratis o con descuento de la escuela
- Crianza temporal
- Programas comunitarios de comidas
- Cupones de alimentos (Transferencia electrónica de beneficios, EBT) o Mujeres, Bebés y niños (WIC)
- Medicaid/NC Health Choice
- Bancos de ropa
- Vivienda de Sección 8

55. Si quiere participar en un sorteo para ganar premios, escriba su nombre y teléfono. Su nombre solo se usará para el sorteo. Sus respuestas serán anónimas.

Nombre

Teléfono

Appendix C: Agency Survey

Thank you for participating in the Burke County Community Assessment of Childhood Poverty funded by the Community Foundation of Burke County! This survey is for agencies and programs who serve families living in Burke County with children under the age of 18. The goal of this survey is to identify the services and resources available to children in Burke County living in poverty. We are interested in learning about your eligibility guidelines, how families access your services, and what barriers exist to accessing services.

The survey is 20 questions and will take about 10 minutes to complete. Your identifying information will not be shared. If you work in an agency or program with multiple departments or divisions, please share the survey link with a representative from each, so we can have a clear understanding of what services and resources are currently offered and areas that may have more challenges. Results from the survey will be available in 2023 on www.assurethefuture.org/2022-burke-county-community-assessment.html.

If you have questions about the survey or would like to take the survey by phone, please call (828) 608-6713. Thank you so much for taking the time to help us learn more about childhood poverty in Burke County!

* 1. Name of your agency or organization

* 2. Name of your program or department

3. Your position within your agency, program, or department

* 4. Does your agency or program provide services to children under the age of 18 and their families living in Burke County?

Yes

No

* 5. Which of the following services does your agency/program/department provide, and what is the income eligibility criteria as it relates to the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)?

	Do not provide service	No income eligibility criteria	200% or below FPL	150% or below FPL	100% or below FPL
Medical care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental health care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dental care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Substance-use services/treatment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing or housing assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Home repair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Childcare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preschool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Before/after school care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family support services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child development services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disability services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employment/job skills training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School supplies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crisis assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Please list any additional services your agency or program provides and the criteria used to determine eligibility.

* 7. Is immigration status used to determine eligibility for services?

- Yes
 No

* 8. How do people apply for your agency's or program's services? Please check all that apply.

- Applications are completed in-person at our agency's or program's office.
- Applications can be completed over the phone.
- Applications are accepted online or virtually.
- Applications are sent through the child's school.
- Applications are sent to a home address and returned by mail or in-person.
- Applications are completed at a mobile location(s).
- Applications are accepted through referrals from other organizations.
- Applicants are taken first come, first serve.
- Applications are taken by appointment.
- Applications are accepted through a lottery.
- There is no application process.
- Other (please specify)

* 9. How do people receive your agency's or program's services? Please check all that apply.

- Services are provided in our agency's or program's facility.
- Services are provided via phone call.
- Services are provided online or virtually.
- Services are provided at school.
- Services are provided through home visits.
- Services are provided at mobile location(s).
- Other (please specify)

* 10. How do people learn about your agency's or program's services? Please check all that apply.

- Referral
- Word of mouth
- Google/Search engine
- Website
- Social media
- Brochure/poster/sign
- TV/Radio announcements
- Newspaper
- Other (please specify)

* 11. To what extent do you agree that the following are barriers your agency or program experiences when delivering services to children and their families effected by poverty?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Hours of operation are not convenient for families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Families lack transportation to access our services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Families lack childcare to access our services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language barriers exist between agency staff and families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our funding sources are unpredictable and inadequate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our agency or program lacks the expertise to provide specialty care/services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demand for services exceeds available agency or program resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff may not be aware of available community resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff may not be aware of all the needs of families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The wait time to receive services is lengthy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our agency or program does not have enough staff on hand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eligibility guidelines for our services are narrow and some children who need services don't qualify.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Families exhaust the number of allowable uses for the service(s) we provide.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our agency's or program's location makes it difficult for some families to access our services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a lack of knowledge about the services our agency or program provides.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. What other barriers or challenges have your agency or program experienced?

* 13. What are some of the programs, initiatives, or strategies that your agency or program has employed to improve access to services? If none, please enter "none".

* 14. What are your thoughts about how well agencies and programs in Burke County provide resources to families with children?

* 15. Which area(s) of Burke County are served by your agency or program?

* 16. How is your agency or program classified? Please check all that apply.

- Government
- Non-profit
- For-profit
- Faith-based
- Local Educational Agency
- Other (please specify)

* 17. What are the hours of operation for your agency, program, or department?
If hours vary, please indicate when your agency or program is most frequently providing services.

	Open Time	Close Time
Monday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Tuesday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wednesday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Thursday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Friday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Saturday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Sunday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Please indicate your lunch break hours (if applicable).

* 18. Does your agency or program provide interpretation for any of the following languages?
Please check all that apply.

- Spanish
- Hmong
- ASL
- Braille
- We do not provide interpretation.
- Other (please specify)

* 19. Does your agency or program have bilingual staff for the following languages? Please check all that apply.

- Spanish
- Hmong
- ASL
- Braille
- We do not have bilingual staff.
- Other (please specify)

* 20. Does your agency or program provide forms in any of the following languages? Please check all that apply.

- Spanish
- Braille
- We do not have forms in any languages other than English.
- Other (please specify)

Appendix D: Ideas and Considerations for Addressing Barriers to Services for Children

Category: Expand the Availability of Needed Services

Barrier(s): Families indicated they are not able to get to and from services that their child and family needs

Open Brainstorming	Consensus	Refined Idea	Weighted Dot Voting	Considerations noted by Stakeholders
Encourage agencies to make services available during evenings and weekends, not just 8-5.	Passed	Expand the service delivery hours of agencies to enable families to apply for and receive services in the evenings and on weekends (through staggered scheduling, flexible hours, and supplemental grant funding).	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagger staffing patterns • More flexible hours • How would this work with staffing when agencies are already short-staffed?
Expand public transportation including rural areas and connecting both ends of the county.	Passed	Expand the service area of public transportation including more accessibility in rural areas and connecting both ends of the county to better meet the needs of families that need it and are not accessing it. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct a study of what is working and not working about the current Greenway system. ○ Conduct a needs assessment of what is needed and how prolific the needs are. 	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How could we improve the Greenway Transportation System? • Investigate why Greenway Transportation is not working for some. • How would this expansion be funded? • Has there been an extensive needs assessment on where it's needed?
Open a medical clinic for children who are un/underinsured.	Passed		10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we ensure it helps meet an unmet need and does not only serve Morganton proper? • How is this different from the Health Department? • How can we enhance existing resources (Health Department, Good Sam,

				Health-e Schools. Etc.) to implement this idea?
Increase the amount of affordable housing for families with children.	Passed	Increase the amount of affordable housing for families with children by any of the following means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Study national models that ensure adequate housing for families living within a community. ○ Convert existing structures or divert land with dilapidated structures to low-income or workforce housing. ○ Use local area median income to set criteria for workforce housing eligibility and cost. 	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How does this help low-income families with finding a home? ● Where in the county/community to house? ● How do we ensure sufficient levels of housing across these areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Affordable housing ○ public housing (section 8) ○ Workforce housing-housing for working families?
Increase the availability of services that are in Burke County (specifically, behavioral health).	Passed	Open a medical clinic for children who are uninsured or underinsured that is accessible in underserved areas of the county and could be an extension of existing programs such as Health-e Schools, Burke County Health Department, and Good Samaritan Clinic.	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are multiple agencies already overtaxed. ● How much is enough? ● How many providers do we need to meet the demand?
Provide medical/dental services for children not born in the United States who are under school age and not enrolled in Early Head Start.	Dropped			
Increase use of churches for transportation and support where needed.	Dropped			

Increase mobile services going to homes and communities (especially for mental health and dental services).	Dropped			
Provide countywide interpretation services.	Dropped			
Increase the amount of behavior health services available in Burke County.	Passed	Increase the availability of behavioral health services in Burke County (specifically, behavioral health).		

Category: Increase the Quality and Quantity of the Public Service Workforce

Barrier: Families indicated they do not get the support they need when applying for services.

Open Brainstorming	Consensus	Refined Idea	Weighted Dot Voting	Considerations noted by Stakeholders
Give public service workers access to higher education with incentives to work in public and nonprofit sectors (i.e., tuition, student loan forgiveness) .	Passed	Address the workforce shortage by giving public service workers access to higher education with incentives to work in public and nonprofit sectors (i.e., tuition, student loan forgiveness).	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who or where will provide formal education? • Is this being done in other communities and how does it work? • Where does the money come from?
Create a system where families can get immediate help such as transportation to urgent care, babysitter for a day, and help fixing a flat tire.	Passed	Investigate the feasibility of expanding upon or formalizing natural informal networks of support that families in need can use to get immediate help such as transportation to urgent care, babysitter for a day, and help fixing a flat tire, to minimize the impact that these setbacks can have on a family barely getting by.	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liability? • How do I reach out to get immediate help? • Can it work similarly to Uber, but run by volunteers?
Improve salary and benefits to entice applicants to apply for and fill vacant service positions.	Combined			
Give incentives for volunteers who donate time to public service and non-profit organizations (not always money but resources and goods and services) per hour of service.	Dropped			

Create a mechanism so that those who want to volunteer know where volunteers are needed.	Combined			
Hire more bilingual workforce.	Dropped			• How do you reach them to apply?
Improve the way help is provided to families from other cultures.	Dropped			
Improve service workers' understanding of the value of social networks and informal resources.	Dropped			
Add a community of veterans, retired, or disabled individuals to give rides to services provided with a "day of" option.	Combined			
Peer supports for non-US citizens.	Combined			

Category: Expand Service Eligibility Guidelines

Barrier: Families with children living in poverty indicated they are not eligible for services their child and family needs.

Barrier: Families indicate their citizenship status interferes with their ability to use services their child and family needs.

Open Brainstorming	Consensus	Refined Idea	Weighted Dot Voting	Considerations noted by Stakeholders
<p>Use eligibility criteria that looks at “whole person” and considers factors outside of income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of informal network of supports ○ Grandparent raising grandkids. ○ Kinship care, ○ Foster care 	Passed	<p>Expand eligibility criteria to consider child, family, and situational factors in addition to income (grandparents raising grandkids, kinship care, etc.) that put children at higher risk for the negative consequences of living in poverty. Methods for doing this can be identified by looking at other models for service eligibility across the country and applying them to Burke County (e.g., the flexible system Head Starts and Early Head Starts use to determine eligibility can look different across programs and is based on the unique needs of a county or community).</p>	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who makes the final decision? ▪ How does this work with state programs with pre-determined eligibility guidelines? ▪ Is any local program currently using a “whole person” approach? ▪ How does this work if the grandparent is the only one reaching out for help? ▪ Some grant guidelines to agencies may prevent this...maybe a fund to fill in the gaps? • Secure funding for study on feasibility of “whole person” criteria • Study would look at local and non-local programs that already do this (ex. Early Head Start)
<p>Provide incentives to service program providers to meet needs of non-US citizens.</p>	Passed	<p>Provide incentives (volunteers, free advertising, referrals, etc.) to programs that use equitable practices that meet the needs of non-US citizens.</p>	5	<p>Possible incentives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift cards • Volunteers to help the providers. • Money • Free advertisement for their programs
<p>Increase time over which families can access and be weaned off services.</p>	Passed	<p>Increase time over which families can access and be weaned off services by encouraging non-profits to fill the gap with grocery vouchers for a period of time (6-9 months).</p>	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would this decrease the number of families that can access services?

		Vouchers are preferable to providing boxes of food and material items as they preserve the family's ability to choose what they eat and provide to their families and preserves their dignity.		
Adjust eligibility guidelines to account for cost-of-living increases.	Dropped			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No local control over this
Agencies ask for feedback from families about eligibility guidelines.	Dropped			
Inform/educate that no negative impact will come to non-US citizens who apply for resources (i.e., citizenship status-ICE, cultural competency).	Dropped			
Build an incentive program for landlords to rent to non-US citizens.	Combined			

Category: Increase the Knowledge of Families and Agency Representatives about Community Resources

Barrier: Families indicated they do not know what services are available for their child within Burke County.

Open Brainstorming	Consensus	Refined Idea	Weighted Dot Voting	Considerations noted by Stakeholders
<p>Expand 211 system which is an asset map of available services and organizations with: –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local phone help • person to facilitate frequent updates. • seasonal resources included. • search optimization • marketing campaign 	Passed	<p>Expand upon the existing 211 system, which can be accessed by anyone with internet access, contains a comprehensive database of local resources, and maps those resources on a county map, with enhancements that increase accessibility and accuracy of information. Proposed enhancements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The call-in function of the systems should be facilitated by a local person knowledgeable about Burke County resources. • A local person assigned to facilitate frequent updates to the existing services in the system, add seasonal services, and add new services as they evolve. • A marketing campaign to encourage community agencies to add, update, and use this system. The more it is used the more likely it is to stay current. • Optimize the searches so that Burke Count residents are alerted to Burke County services. Currently, when a user indicates their zip code, Burke County services are not necessarily the first services that appear on the list. 	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who could take responsibility for connecting with the 211 system to ensure updates and seasonal resources are included and publicize and promote the platform with one of our agencies?
Institute a family advocate position to assist families in	Dropped			

poverty to access services/resources				
Establish a central point where families can go to learn about county resources (possible east/west Burke locations).	Combined			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group felt this one and the 211 recommendations should be combined.
Install kiosk machines in the community that provide information about available services.	Dropped			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too expensive • Outdated technology—a smart phone is a kiosk you can hold in your hand
Hold resource fairs around the county (use schools).	Dropped			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families want to get information about resources when they need it.

Category: Simplify the Eligibility Application Process

Barrier: Families indicated they do not get the support they need when applying for services for their child and family.

Open Brainstorming	Consensus	Refined Idea	Weighted Dot Voting	Considerations noted by Stakeholders
<p>Create application clearinghouse with a one-time application for multiple services across agencies and give user a card that shows levels of eligibility.</p>	<p>Passed</p>	<p>Develop a web-based portal collaboratively among participating agencies for a “common” initial eligibility application that can be accepted at any agency and routed to services the consumer is interested in through email alerts to those agencies for staff to follow-up with a call about additional information (if any) that may be needed to complete the application there as many agencies may have additional requirements. Additional information is uploaded into the consumer’s account to build a more comprehensive bank of documentation for future applications for other services.</p>	<p>19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application could include questions that would help the multiple agencies determine eligibility for their agency and could be collaboratively developed. • Agencies do not have to adopt the same eligibility criteria. The questions serve as filters letting the family know what they might be eligible for, similarly to how CNFC can tell you the grants and scholarships your eligible for and allow you to apply for them with only having to put your information into the system one time. • Can the process be automated or would there need to be a behind-the-scenes determination. • How can consumers be protected from oversharing of PHI and/or being refused services at one agency for a poor history of behavior at another agency?
<p>Use multiple formats (i.e., video, audio, etc.) to</p>	<p>Dropped</p>			

explain eligibility for services or programs				
Establish hotline for initial access to services that's available 24/7 with a person on the hotline that can start the intake process to get the person started with services.	Dropped			
Establish online chat to discuss available resources, eligibility (understanding income requirements), and how to apply.	Dropped			
Study other models for multi-agency collaboration such as Burke Health Network for ways to centralize information.	Combined			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other models that are designed for rural/small communities.

Appendix E: Matrix of Burke County Resources

Available electronically at: