



**SWEETWATER COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT #1**

Consent Agenda Item 9-n

Recommendation for the approval of the Head Start 2018/2019
Community Assessment Update.

**SWEETWATER COUNTY SCHOOL
DISTRICT #1 HEAD START**

Community Assessment Update

2018/2019

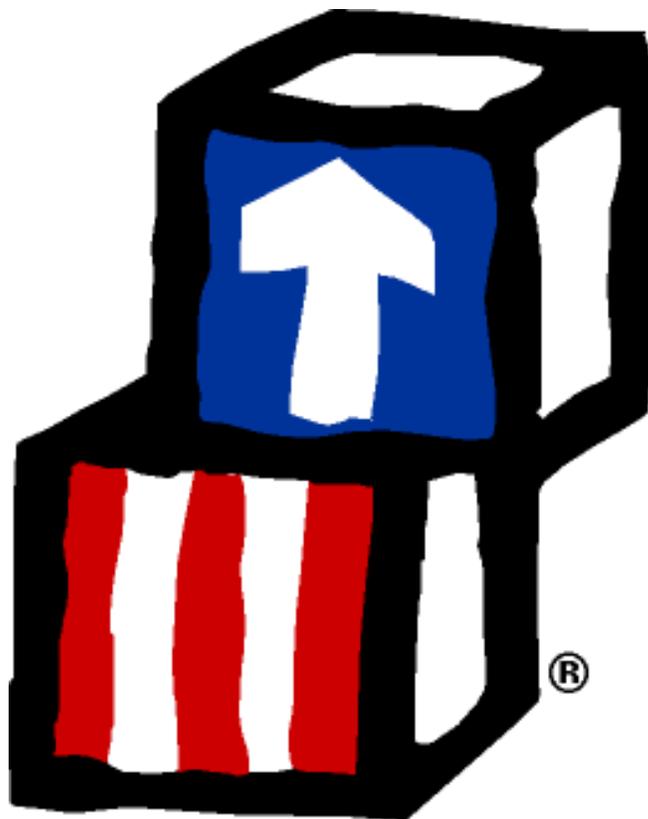


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PURPOSE

Every five years, Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start conducts a community assessment to identify issues and trends within our service area that directly impacts families with young children. The assessment includes data and analysis of information regarding the needs, strengths, and characteristics of Head Start eligible children and families and the areas where they live. This assessment also specifies where there are gaps between available services and needs being met. Ultimately, the community assessment is used to make decisions for outreach, enrollment, selection and the most appropriate delivery of Head Start services. It is a valuable resource that allows staff, parents, and community partners to collectively think about the impacts of population shifts, shortages in services and needs of emerging populations. The assessment is vital for program planning and is updated annually. This report is an update to the Community Assessment that was completed in 2017.

GEOGRAPHY

Wyoming

Wyoming has a total area of 97,818 square miles, making it the 10th largest state. It is the least populous and the second least densely populated state in the country.¹ Over 91% of land in Wyoming is classified as rural.

Wyoming's mineral commodities include coal, natural gas, coal bed methane, crude oil, and trona. Wyoming ranks highest in mining employment in the United States.

Components of Wyoming's economy differ significantly from those of other states. The mineral extraction industry and the travel and tourism sector are the main drivers behind Wyoming's economy.²



Figure 1: Wyoming

Sweetwater County

Sweetwater County is the largest of the twenty-three counties in the state of Wyoming. It is in the southwestern part of Wyoming, north of the Colorado-Utah state line. The county has a total area of 10,427 square miles of land. Sweetwater County is larger than six states and is the eighth-largest county in the United States. The County is sparsely populated with 4 people per square mile.³

Rock Springs and Green River are the service areas and recruiting areas for SCSD #1 Head Start. Rock Springs is the 4th most populated city in the state of Wyoming. Rock Springs is located in an energy-rich region with many oil and natural gas wells and the Green River basin contains the world's largest known deposit of trona ore.⁴

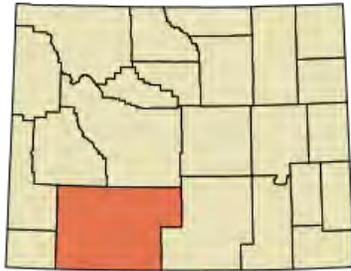


Figure 2: Sweetwater County

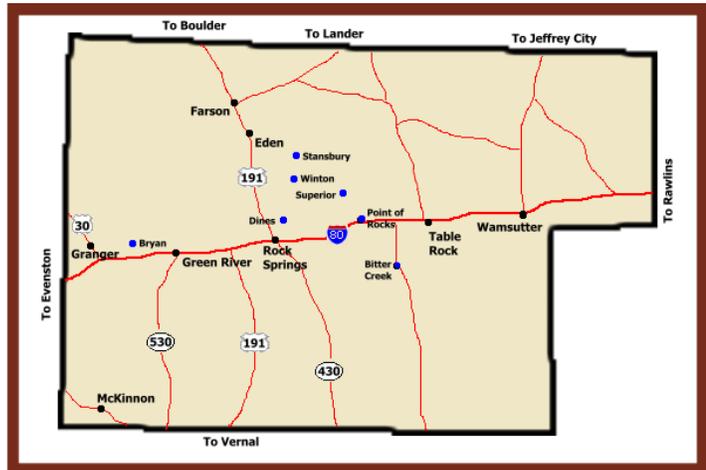


Figure 3: Sweetwater County Map

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start provides comprehensive child development services to 100 low-income preschool children and their families. The program is center-based and operates three classrooms 4 hours per day, 4 days per week and two extended day classrooms 6 hours per day, 5 days per week. Four classrooms are located in Rock Springs and one classroom in Green River.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Population Growth and Change

According to the 2017 Census estimates, the total population of Wyoming was 579,315 – down 1.06 percent from 585,501 in 2016. Sweetwater County had a much greater percent of decrease of 1.45 percent and Green River had a decrease of 1.94 percent.

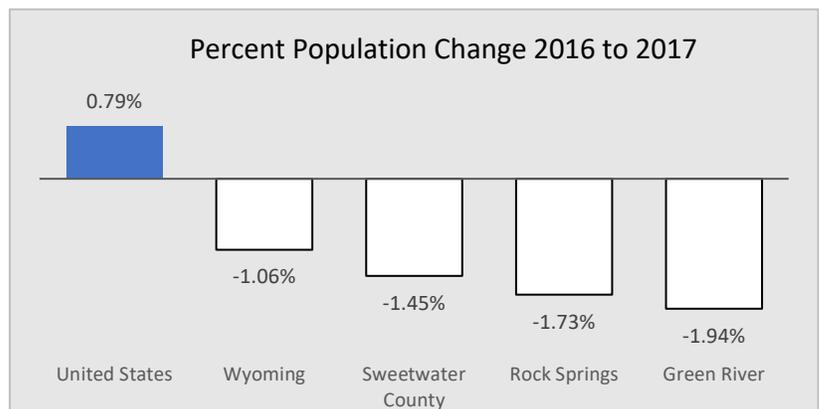


Figure 4: U.S. Census, Percent Population Change 2016 to 2017

Race and Ethnicity

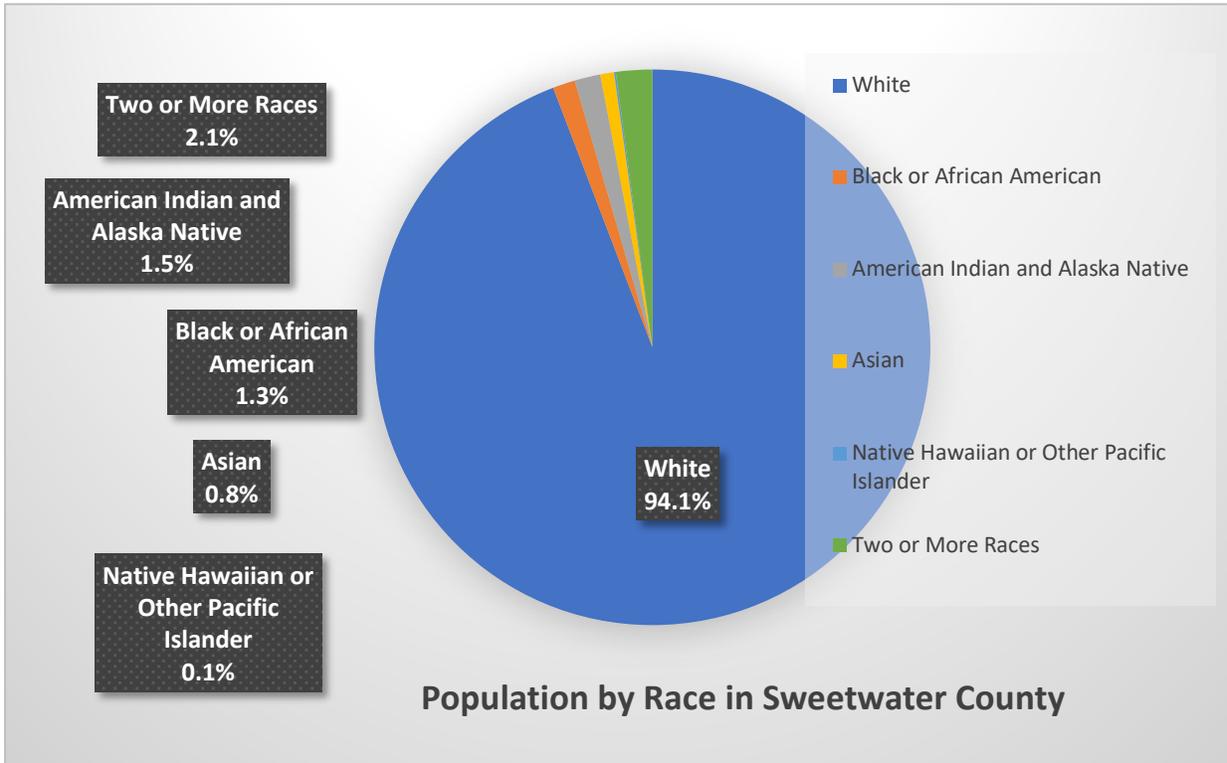


Figure 5: U.S. Census, Population by Race in Sweetwater County 2017 Estimates

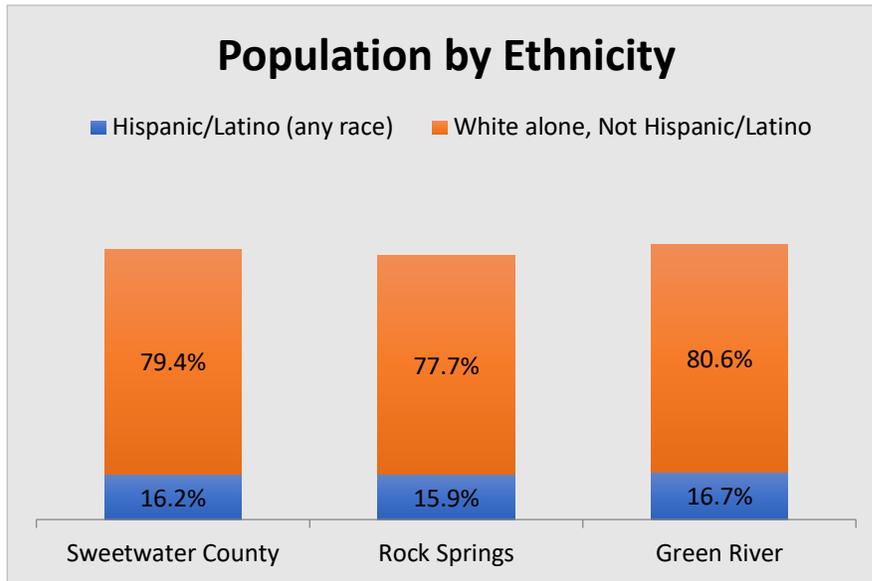
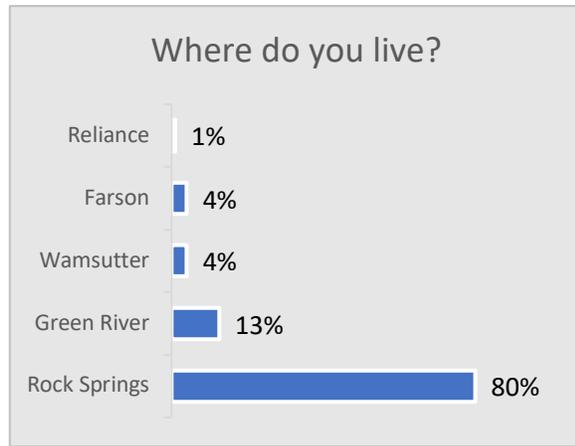
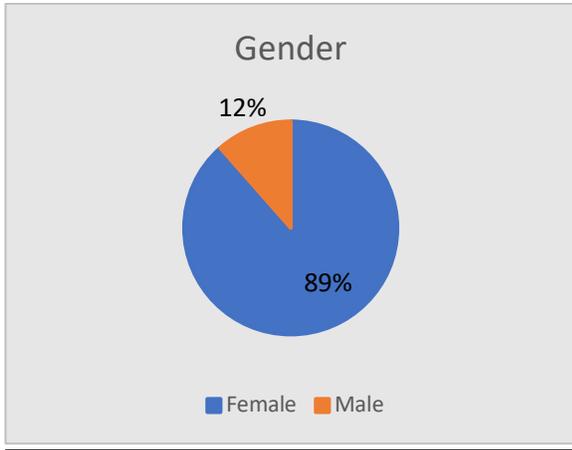


Figure 6: U.S. Census, Population by Race 2017 Estimates

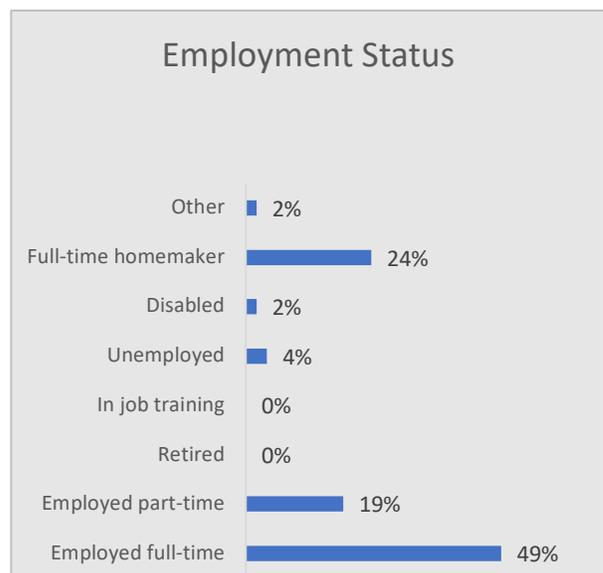
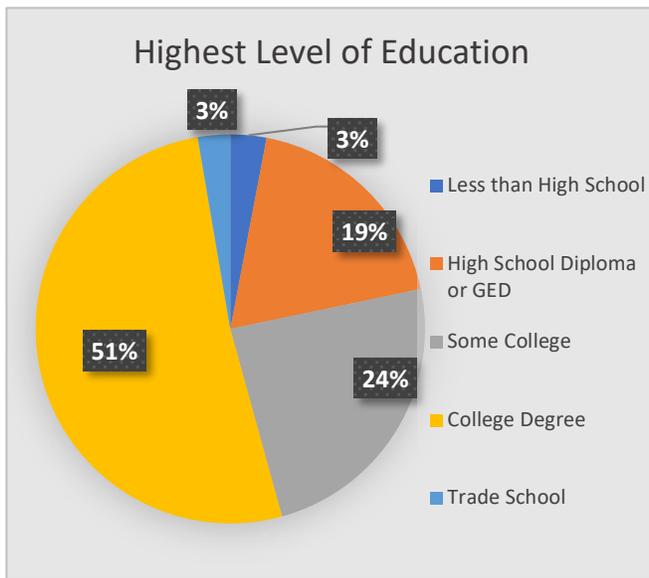
Sweetwater County continues to be predominantly white (94.1%). According to the 2017 population estimates, Rock Springs has a lower percentage of Hispanics and Latinos than that of Green River.

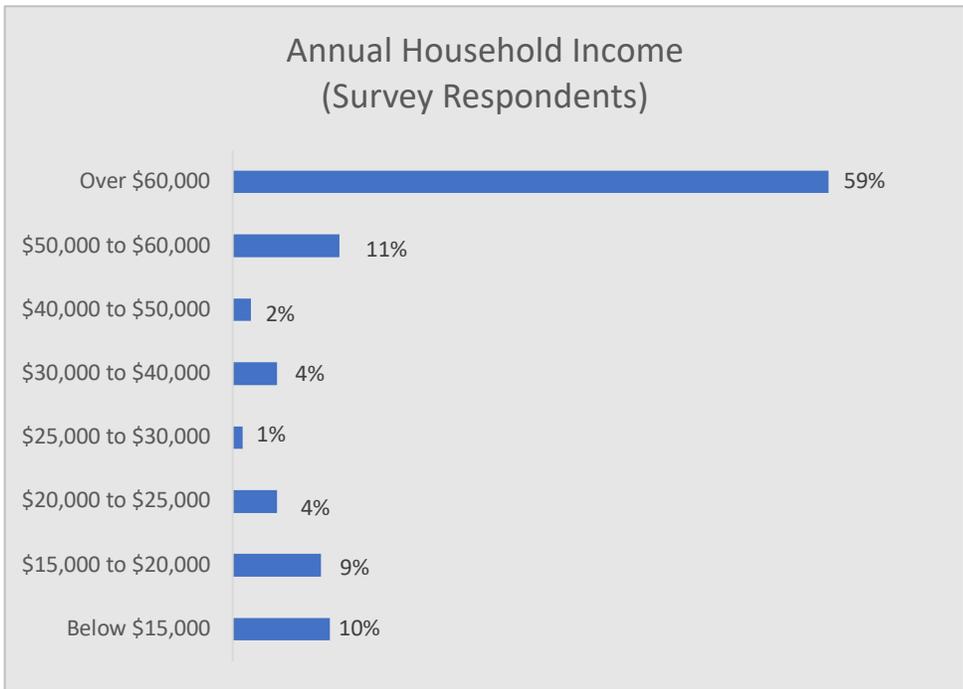
COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

In order to collect data from members of the community, a Community Needs Survey was distributed in English and Spanish to individuals in the community at the time of the Community Assessment. We had 114 responses. Of those who responded to the survey, 80 percent live in Rock Springs, 13 percent live in Green River, 4 percent live in Farson, 4 percent live in Wamsutter, and 1 percent live in Reliance. Twelve percent of respondents are male and 89 percent are female.



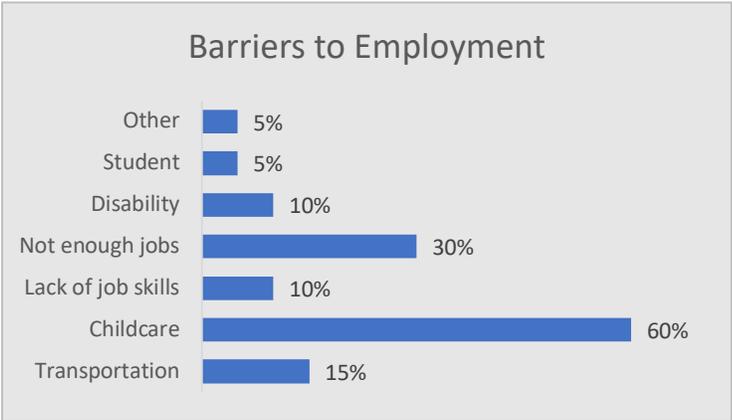
Approximately 19 percent of survey respondent’s highest level of education is a high school diploma or GED, 24 percent have some college, 3 percent have less than high school, 3 percent attended a trade school, and 51 percent have a college degree. Almost 4 percent of respondents were unemployed at the time of the survey and 49 percent were employed full-time.



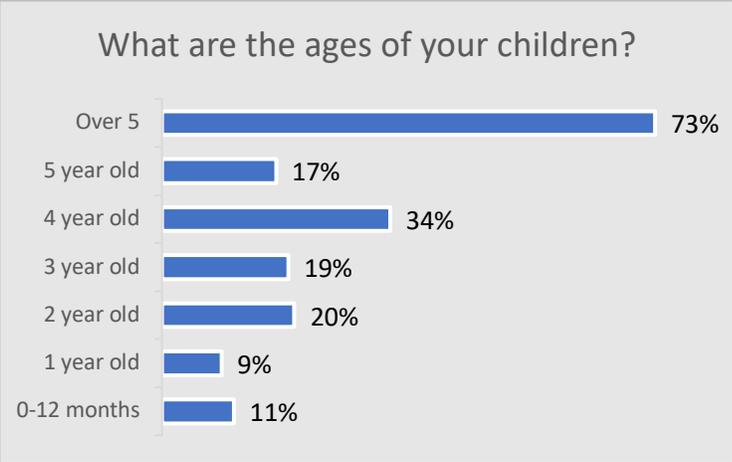


Ten percent of respondents have an annual household income of \$15,000 or less, 9 percent have an annual income of \$15,000 to \$20,000, 4 percent have an annual income of \$20,000 to \$25,000, 1 percent have an annual income of \$25,000 to \$30,000, 4 percent have an annual income of \$30,000 to \$40,000, 2

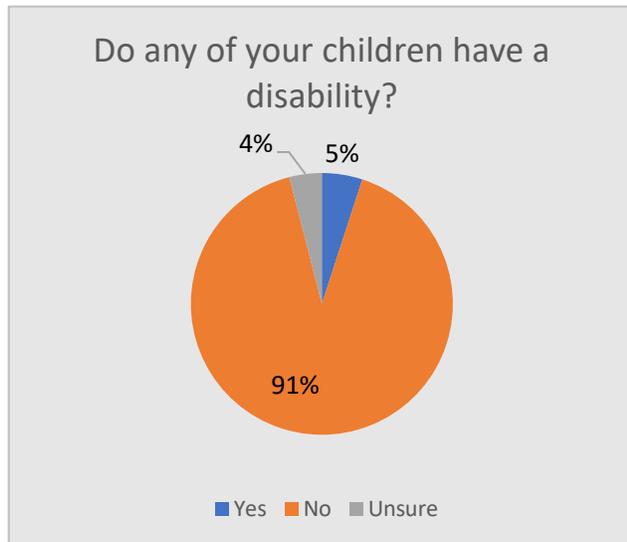
percent have an annual income of \$40,000 to \$50,000, 11 percent have an annual income of \$50,000 to \$60,000, and 59 percent have an annual income over \$60,000.



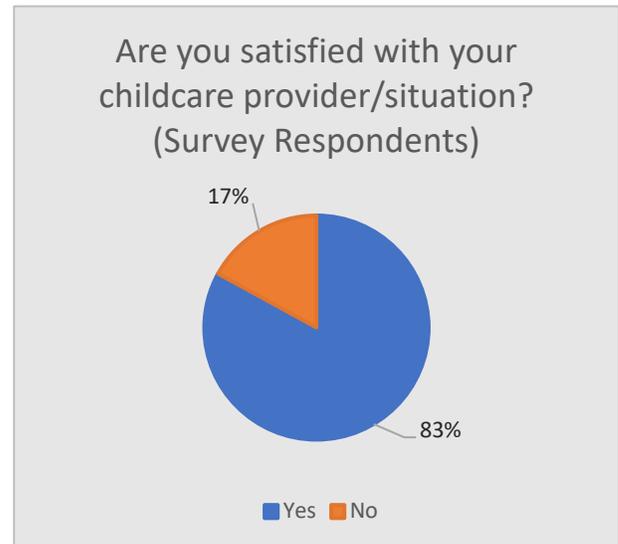
We asked survey respondents what barriers they face when finding employment. Sixty percent of respondents said that childcare is a barrier, 30 percent said there are no enough jobs, and 15 percent said that transportation is a barrier to finding employment.



Seventeen percent of respondents have a five-year old child, 34 percent have a four-year old child, 19 percent have a three-year old child, 20 percent have a two-year old child, 9 percent have a one-year old child, and 11 percent have a child that is 0 to 12 months of age.



Ninety-one percent of respondents said that they do not have a child with a disability, 5 percent said that their child does have a disability, and 4 percent were unsure.

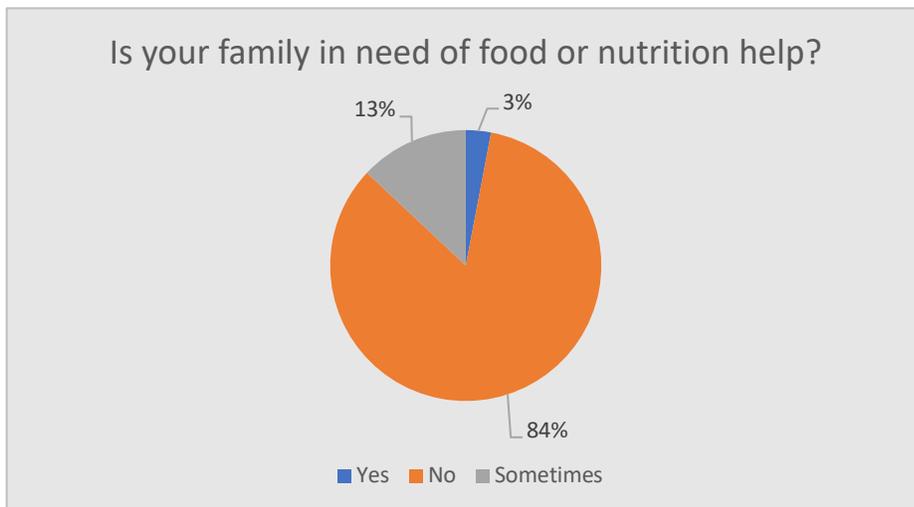
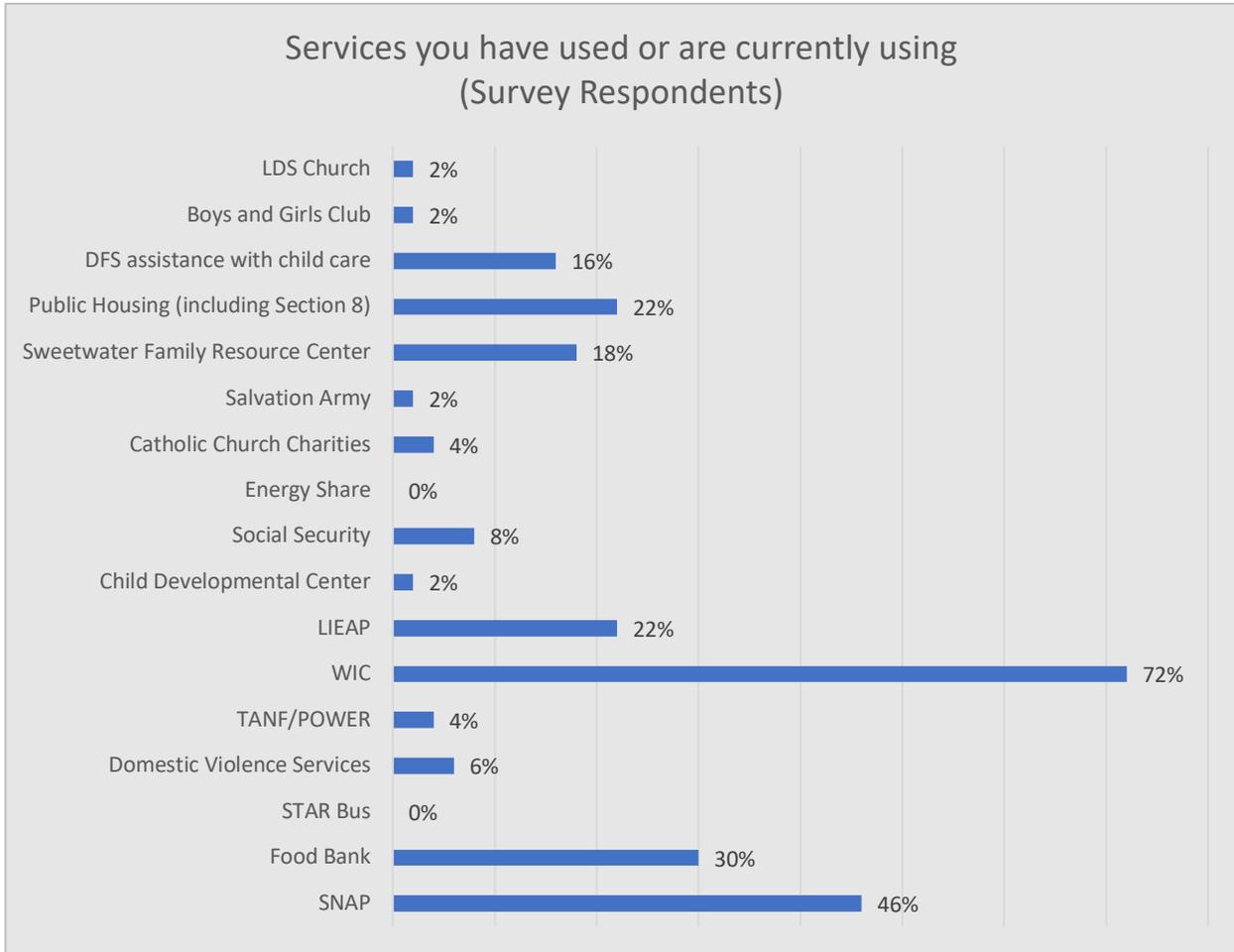


Survey respondents were asked if they were satisfied with their childcare provider/situation. Seventeen percent said that were not satisfied and 83 percent said that they were satisfied.

Respondents were asked what they believe are the top causes of poverty in our county. They stated the following:

- Substance abuse
- Lack of job training
- Affordable child care
- Low wages
- Cost of living
- People not willing to work
- Lack of healthcare
- Lack of full-time jobs
- Lack of adequate social services for the area
- Mental health
- Lack of motivation, pride, and independence
- Lack of strong families
- Lack of money management skills
- Having children out of wedlock
- Poor choices
- Lack of Transportation
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of sex education
- Lack of education

Seventy-two percent of survey respondents have used or are currently using WIC, 46 percent are using or have used SNAP, 30 percent have used or are using the Food Bank, and 22 percent are using or have used Public Housing and LIEAP.



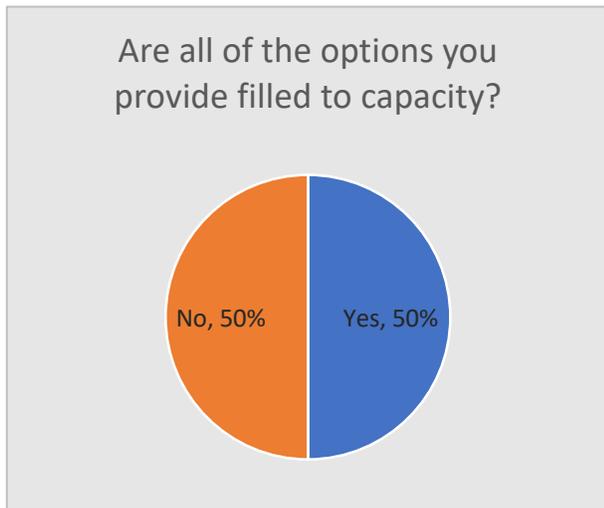
Sixteen percent of respondents said that either all or some of the time their family needs food or nutrition help, such as meal planning or shopping on a budget.

CHILD CARE PROVIDER SURVEY

As of December 2018, the county had 21-licensed childcare providers/facilities in Rock Springs and 9-licensed child care providers/facilities in Green River. In order to collect data a survey was sent to all licensed child care providers in Rock Springs and Green River.



Fifty percent of respondents are filled to capacity and 67 percent have a waiting list with up to 30 children on it.



Fifty percent of respondents serve low-income families and 33 percent said that they possibly serve low-income families. Sixty seven percent serve children with disabilities and only 33 percent provide transportation. One hundred percent of respondents said they serve children with challenging behaviors.

AGENCY/PROGRAM COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was sent out to other agencies and programs in Sweetwater County to get their input and insight from their expertise, such as, transportation, mental health, child care, health and nutrition, and social services. The questions and summary of responses follow:

Are there any fees for your services?

100% of respondents said there are no fees for their services.

Do you believe that the services you offer are being used at the capacity intended?

(34% indicated that the services they provide are not being used at the capacity intended)

1. Parents as Teachers: No, we need more families
2. Sweetwater Family Resource Center: No
3. Parent Information Center: Yes
4. Parents as Teachers: Usually, but adding an additional staff and building caseload
5. YWCA of Sweetwater County: I do believe the services help people understand finances better. It does not solve financial problems but starts the conversation and gives resources.
6. Department of Family Services: Overall, yes

Are there services your agency or program would like to provide but are unable to?

(86% indicated that their agency/program would like to provide certain services but are unable to)

1. Parents as Teachers: No
2. Sweetwater Family Resource Center: A homeless shelter
3. State of Wyoming Department of Family Services: Sexual abuse services for victims and child suspects
4. Parents as Teachers: Dealing with foster parents
5. CLIMB Wyoming: More dental assistance resources, more psychiatric resources
6. YWCA of Sweetwater County: More classes
7. Department of Family Services: In-home counseling – need therapist that can go into the home throughout the week to assist the family.

Are there other unmet needs in our community/county not likely to be met by existing agencies or programs?

1. State of Wyoming Department of Family Services: Sexual abuse treatment
2. Parent Information Center: Medicaid gap families
3. Parents as Teachers: Transportation services

What do you think are the biggest barriers to individuals being able to utilize your resources?

1. Parents as Teachers: They don't know about us or don't understand the program
2. Sweetwater Family Resource Center: Lack of community knowledge of our services
3. Parent Information Center: Lack of awareness of services
4. Parents as Teachers: Transportation, health care and affordable daycare or preschool services
5. CLIMB Wyoming: Not being able to work with more than 20-24 women per year
6. YWCA of Sweetwater County: Just being willing to attend. Part of that is due to time limits. People are busy and this is a service that often gets pushed to the side when other things come up. Also, people who are getting by tend to think they are ok and the service is just for poor people, when in fact anyone can benefit from financial information.
7. Department of Family Services: Money for treatment and ongoing counseling for adults (parents), sex offender treatment for juveniles and adults, transportation.

What do you think are the top reasons/causes of poverty in Sweetwater County?

1. Parents as Teachers: Mental health, disabilities, and effects of those things such as substance abuse
2. Sweetwater Family Resource Center: Lack of formal education, lack of job related skills, poor money management, drug/alcohol addiction.
3. Parent Information Center: Drugs
4. Parents as Teachers: Health care, mental health, low education and affordable services or support
5. YWCA of Sweetwater County: Limited good paying job options. There are high paying jobs in the energy and health sector but those require specific skills or education. Also, those jobs are not as abundant as they once were. The support jobs (stores, retail) do not pay enough to get by with the high housing costs. There are not enough mid-range jobs people can get who don't have the specific skills/education jobs.
6. Department of Family Services: Discrepancy in pay wages

SOURCES

- ¹ Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wyoming>
- ² State of Wyoming, www.wyo.gov/about-wyoming/wyoming-information
- ³ Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweetwater_County,_Wyoming
- ⁴ Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock_Springs,_Wyoming
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_River,_Wyoming