



Community Assessment

Early Learning Essentials

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Early Learning Essentials

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Early Learning Essentials, Inc., provides services in the three-county region of Juab, Utah, and Wasatch Counties in Central Utah. We have successfully served the children and parents of this community since our inception in 1978. Today, Early Learning Essentials provides educational support and wrap-around services to 587 children.

In our three-county service area, Utah County is the largest and its population continues to grow; it is now home to more than 727,251 individuals. Wasatch County has nearly 38,000, and Juab County has 12,766 persons. In addition to its population growth, Utah County is also the youngest of any county in the United States (among counties with more than 100,000 residents). Utah County's median age is 25.1, and the county is home to 58,257 children under age 5. These children make up 9.3 percent of the County's population.

Our community boasts many strengths such as two major universities (with combined enrollment of well over 80,000 students), low unemployment, high educational attainment, and multiple national recognitions. When asked about what they like, adult residents mention the several outdoor recreation opportunities and the family-oriented high quality of life, which combine to make our service area well liked and well known.

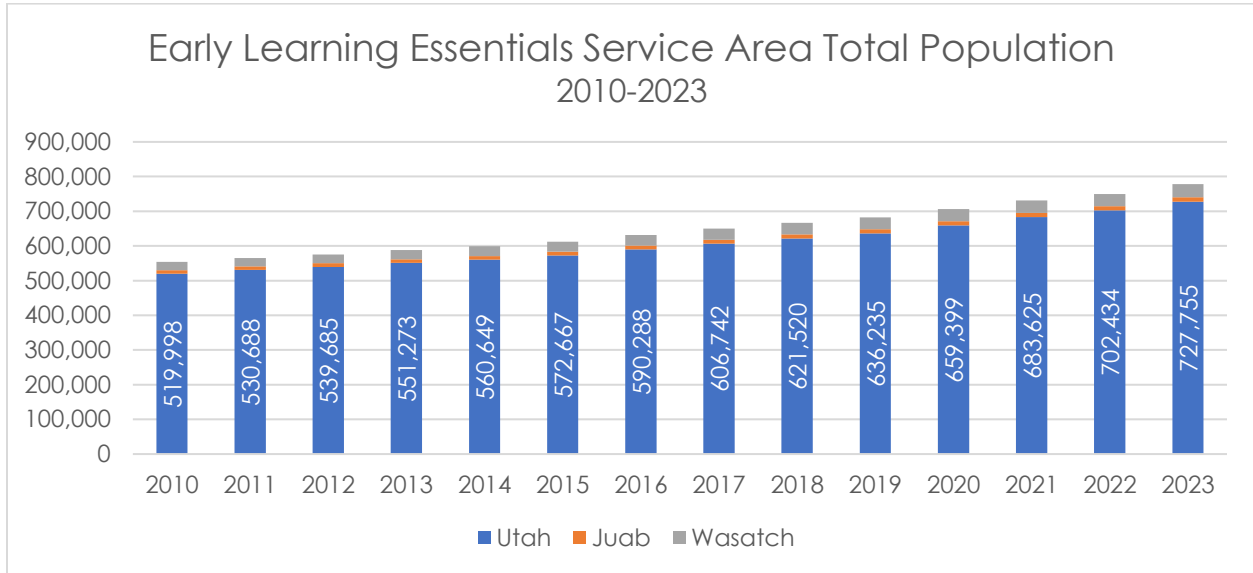
Nearly 97 percent of our population is White, and 12.4 percent—or more than 88,000—residents are of Hispanic or Latino descent. The majority of Hispanic individuals in our service area live in Provo and Orem.

Challenges faced in our service area include high rates of children in poverty, high housing costs, inflationary impacts on food and fuel, and adequate nutrition.

However, Early Learning Essentials continues to be a key element to the human service network in our area. Our services are integral to those facing language, poverty, nutrition, and other problems. We are poised to continue to build upon our past successes in order to help vulnerable children and families in our service area.

OVERVIEW

Early Learning Essentials serves Juab, Utah, and Wasatch Counties in the state of Utah, just south of Salt Lake City. Since 2010, our area's population has increased from 553,906 to 778,454—an increase of 40.5 percent. Most of this growth is in Utah County, which has increased from about 520,000 in 2010 to 727,755 in 2023. Wasatch County has increased at a faster rate, although its total population is much smaller; its 60.4 percent growth from 23,644 in 2010 to 37,934 is indicative of improved transportation and increased development in a beautiful mountain region. Looking at our service area as a whole, 93.5 percent of our population is in Utah County.¹



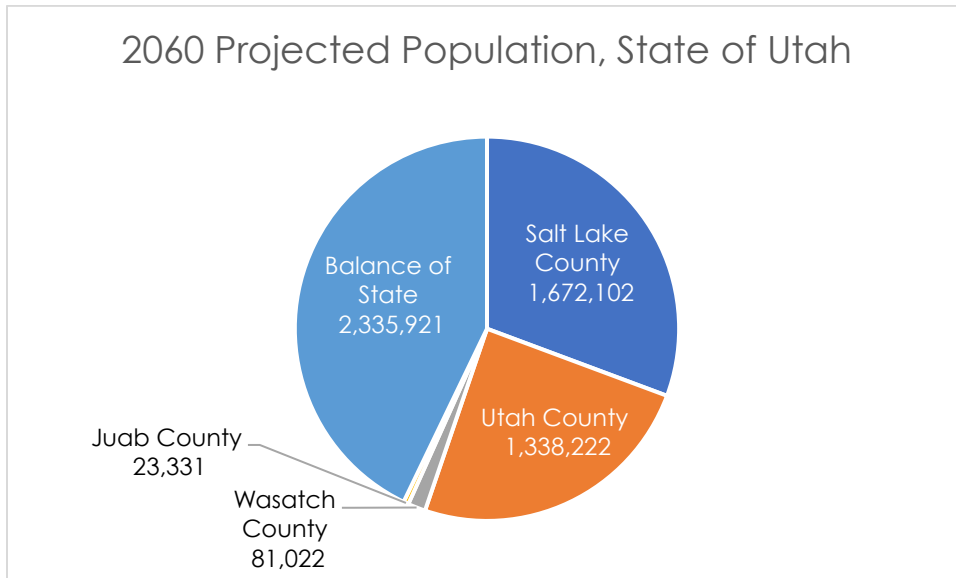
Population growth in our service area is not new. Utah County's population in 2000 was 371,811; since then, the population has increased 95.7 percent. And the County's growth is continuing: since 2020, the population has grown by 10.4 percent.²

Utah County is the second-largest county in the state of Utah, and its population is now projected to reach about 1.39 million by 2060—about 300,000 shy of Salt Lake County. The population of our three-county service area will be 26.5 percent of the entire state's population,

¹ Population data for years 2010 through 2021 comes from the U.S. Census Bureau PEPANNRES data, Table B01001. The population estimates for years 2022 and 2023 come from the Kem C. Gardner Public Policy Institute Population Projections. Throughout this report, Census Bureau data is from the American Community Survey (using 5-year estimates for years 2018 through 2022) unless otherwise noted.

² U.S. Census Bureau 5-year estimates for applicable years, Table B01001

with about 1,442,000 individuals. Combined with adjacent Salt Lake County, well over half of the state's residents—just over 57 percent—will be in this portion of Utah.³



The area of northern Utah County known as Silicon Slopes—due to its high concentration of technology-based corporations—has seen significant growth in the past year. Lehi, once a quaint community where dance scenes from the 1984 movie Footloose was filmed, is now a burgeoning community of more than 90,000 people; it's the fastest-growing community in the state of Utah.⁴

Growth in Northern Utah County is also due to the strength of metro Salt Lake City, which leads the nation in job market strength. The Wall Street Journal attributes the employment power to Utah's high-tech industry.⁵

³ *State and County Projections*. (2024). Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute of the University of Utah. Retrieved 12 July 2024 from <https://gardner.utah.edu/demographics/population-projections/>

⁴ Latest census data shows variations in Utah communities' population growth. (2024, May 17). *heraldextra.com*. <https://www.heraldextra.com/news/local/2024/may/18/latest-census-data-shows-variations-in-utah-communities-population-growth/>

⁵ Au-Yeung, A., & Corrigan, T. (2024, April 8). Utah's tech hub powers America's hottest job market, WSJ ranking finds. *Wall Street Journal*. <https://www.wsj.com/economy/jobs/utahs-tech-hub-powers-americas-hottest-job-market-wsj-ranking-finds-e67d0171>

	OVERALL RANK	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE RANK	LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RANK	PAYROLL CHANGE RANK	CHANGE IN LABOR FORCE SIZE RANK	CHANGE IN AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES RANK
Salt Lake City	1	4	2	12	5	5
Jacksonville, Fla.	2	6	32	2	1	14
Orlando, Fla.	3	6	29	9	7	5
Tampa, Fla.	4	10	41	6	3	1
Oklahoma City	5	10	30	24	9	3
Miami	6	3	40	13	22	2
Austin, Texas	7	29	1	4	6	42
Nashville, Tenn.	7	6	8	6	31	31
Seattle	9	33	7	13	17	13
Dallas	10	42	4	3	3	

Although the job market in our service area has been strong—anchored, of course, in Utah County and its high-tech industry—the Provo-Orem MSA has seen its share of scrapes and bumps in recent months. The Milken Institute, in its annual report of best performing cities, summed up the outlook well.

After its remarkable three-year run as the top-ranked large metropolitan area, Provo-Orem, UT, forfeits the number one position but remains among the top five large metro areas. Provo-Orem's labor market has been impacted by recent tech layoffs, resulting in notable declines in its job and wage growth. Nonetheless, the metro area retains many advantages, with many new businesses being established in the area, providing signals of future growth.⁶

Milken Institute ranks Salt Lake City as number 4 in 2024, and Provo-Orem (Utah County) as number 5—both being considered as “Tier 1,” or highest-ranked cities in the country. From 2017 to 2022, the Provo-Orem area experienced 22 percent job growth, 63.1 percent wage growth, and 71.2 percent high-tech job growth. Milken Institute ranked the area's community resilience at 89.3 percent, and 93 percent of households have access to broadband internet.

⁶ M. Switek, L. Mansell, and Brock Smith, “Best-Performing Cities 2024” (New York, 2024).

Milkin Institute Best-Performing Tier 1 Cities 2024			
Metropolitan Statistical Area	2024 Rank	2023 Rank	Change
Austin–Round Rock, TX	1	2	+1
Raleigh, NC	2	3	+1
Boise City, ID	3	5	+2
Salt Lake City, UT	4	19	+15
Provo–Orem, UT	5	1	-4
Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN	6	4	-2
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO	7	9	+2
Dallas-Plano-Irving, TX	8	6	-2
Olympia-Tumwater, WA	9	42	+33
Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC	10	20	+10
Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville, FL	11	24	+13

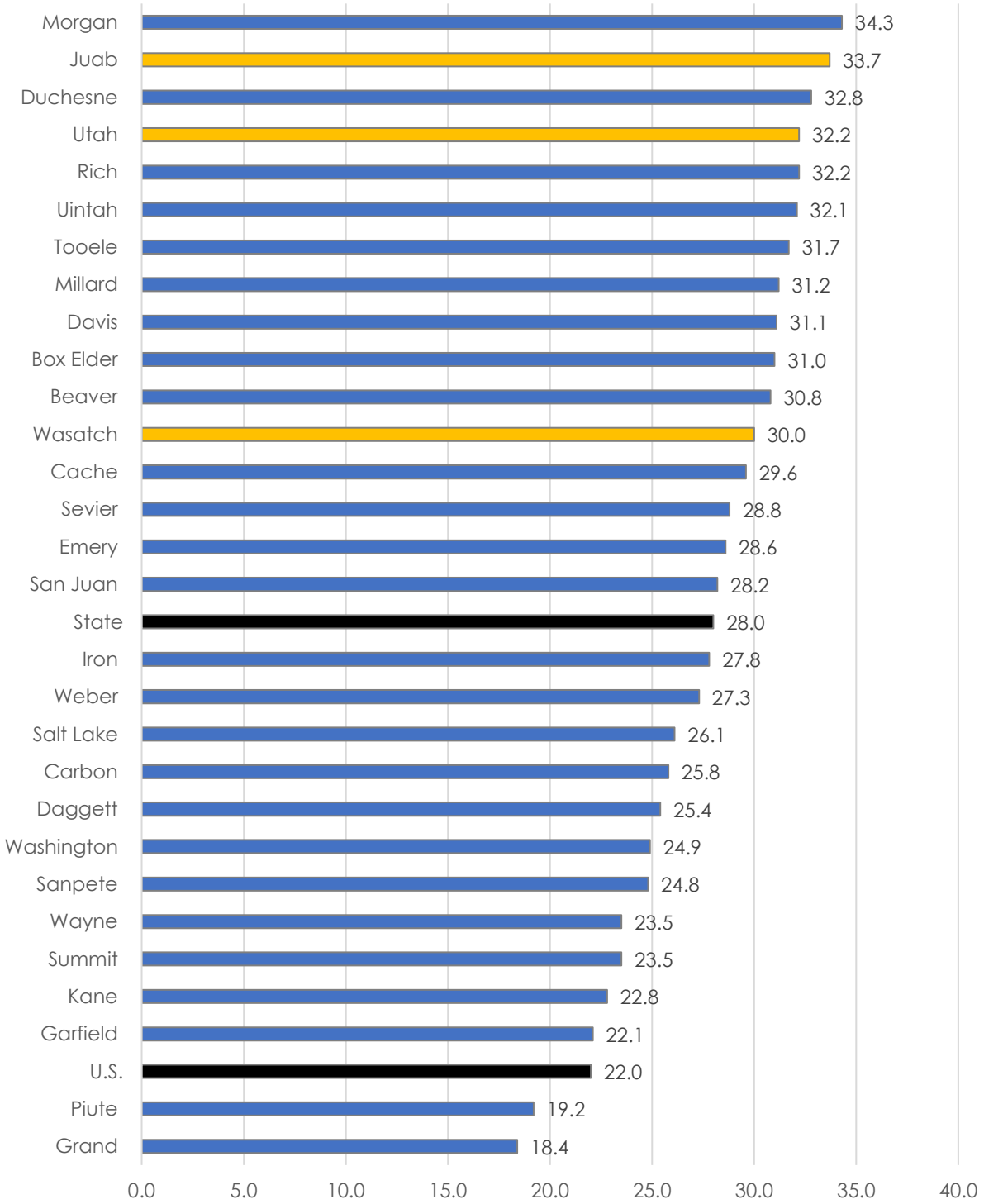
Utah County continues to be among the youngest in the nation. With a median age of 25.1 years, the County is the youngest of any county with a population greater than 100,000. In fact, it's the youngest of any county with a population greater than 50,000.⁷

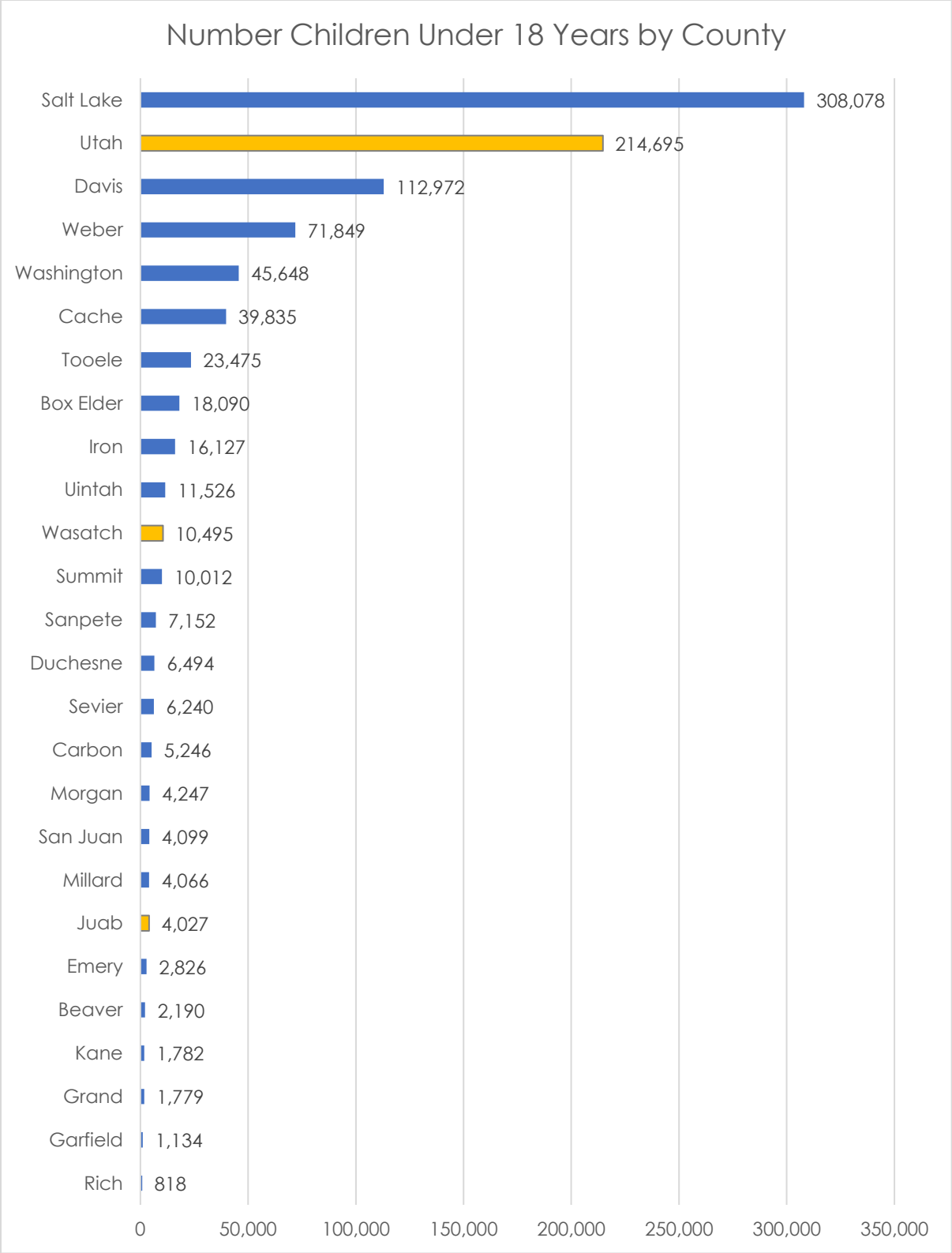
Youngest Counties (Counties with at least 100,000 Population)		
	Population	Median Age
Utah County, Utah	648,265	25.1
Cache County, Utah	131,703	25.5
Onslow County, North Carolina	201,597	26.9
Brazos County, Texas	231,095	27.1
Tippecanoe County, Indiana	185,961	28.5
Clarke County, Georgia	128,195	28.7
Webb County, Texas	266,963	29.1
Hidalgo County, Texas	865,677	29.6
Monroe County, Indiana	140,189	30.1
Champaign County, Illinois	206,583	30.6

Within the state of Utah, Utah County's 214,695 minors are second only to neighboring Salt Lake County's 308,000. Combined with Wasatch and Juab County, our service area has about 230,000 minors.

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B01003 and Table B01002

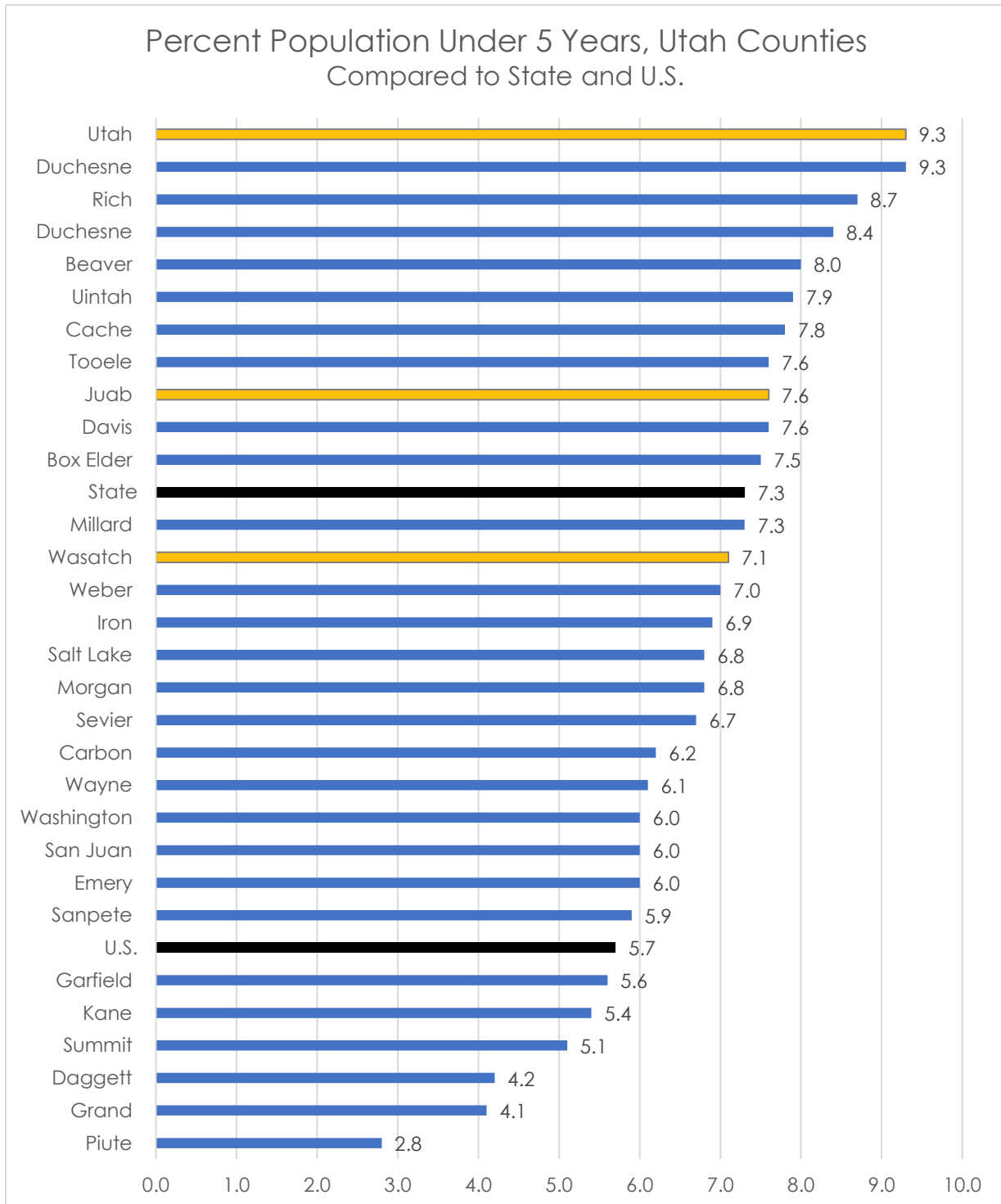
Percent Population Under 18 Years, Utah Counties Compared to State and U.S.





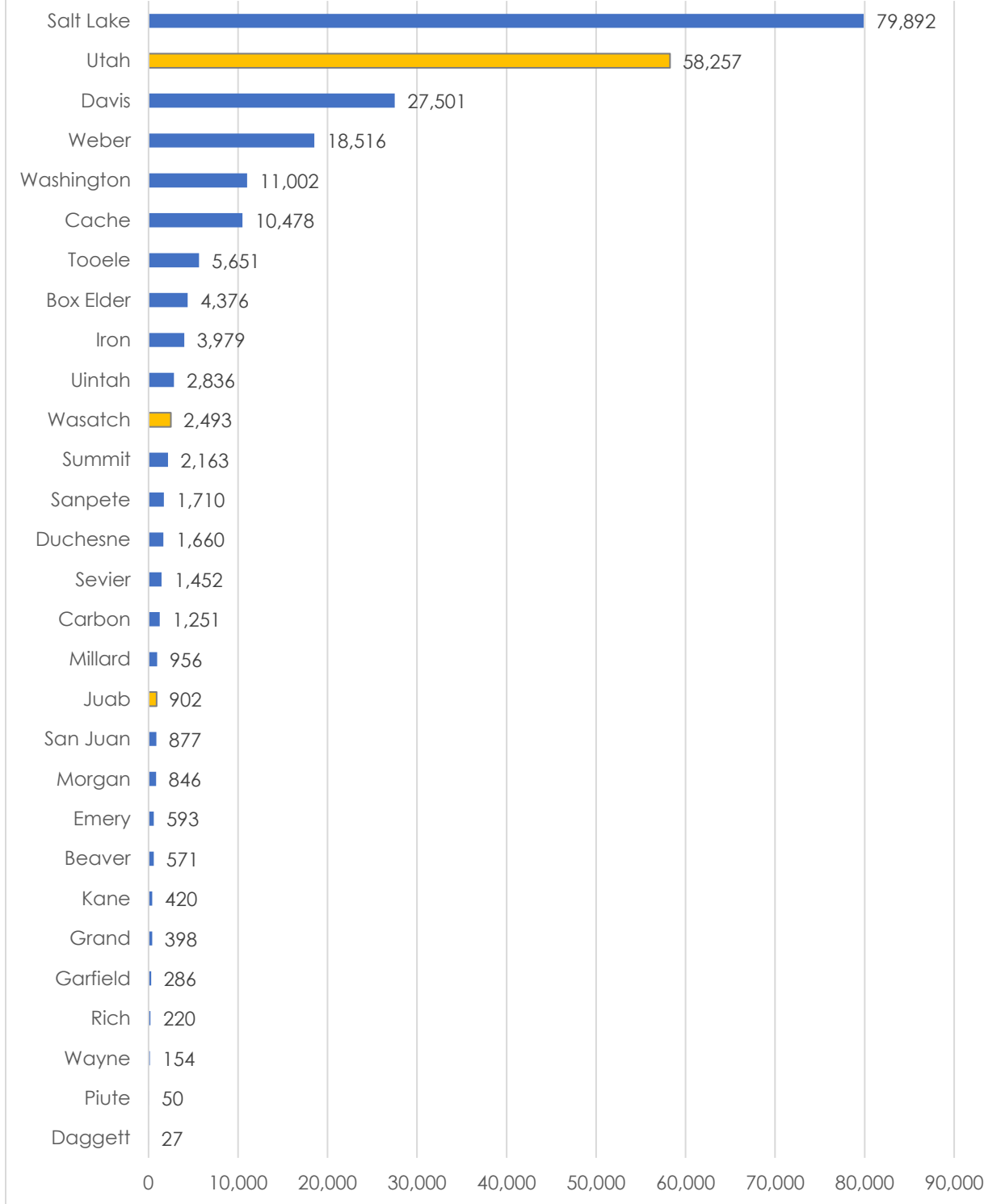
Utah County has the highest percentage of residents under age 5 (9.3 percent) of any county in the state, and nearly one-third of its residents (32.2 percent) are under age 18. Just over 7

percent of Wasatch County's population is under age 5, and 7.6 percent of Juab County's is in this age group. Utah County alone has more than 58,000 children under 5 years of age.⁸

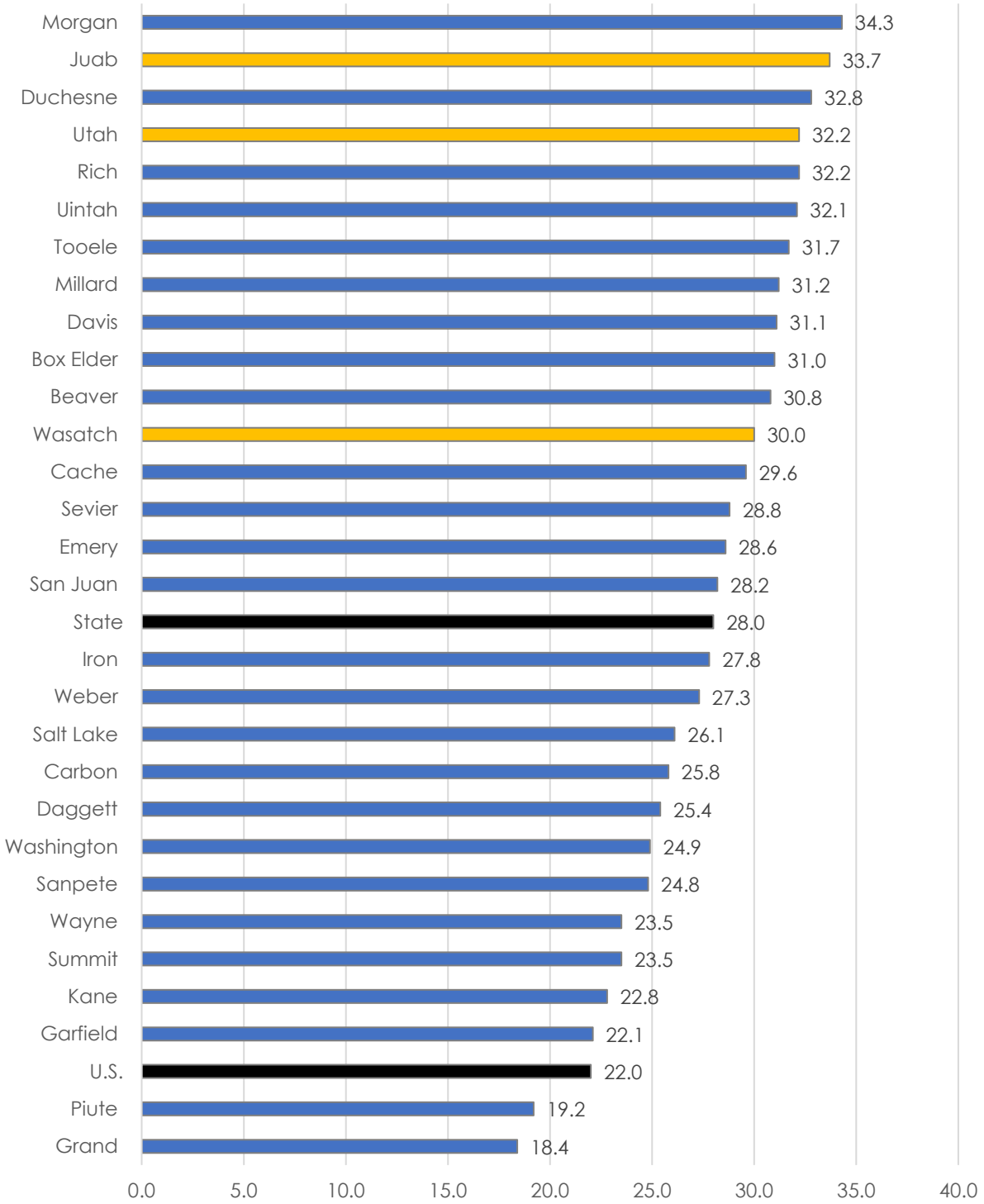


⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, Table S0101

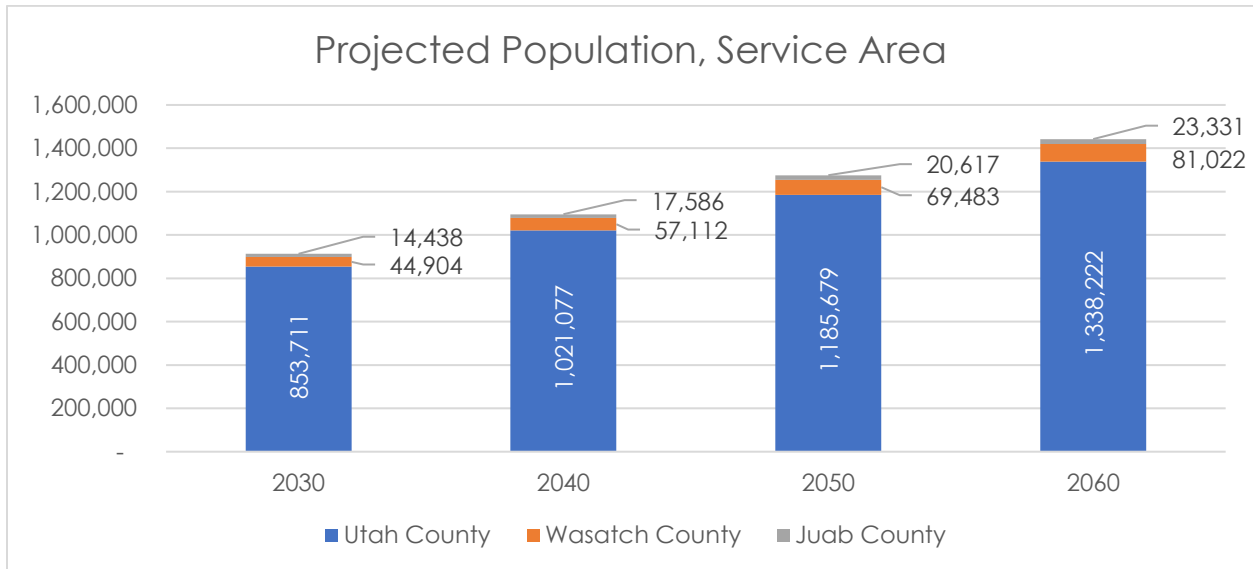
Number Children Under 5 Years, by County



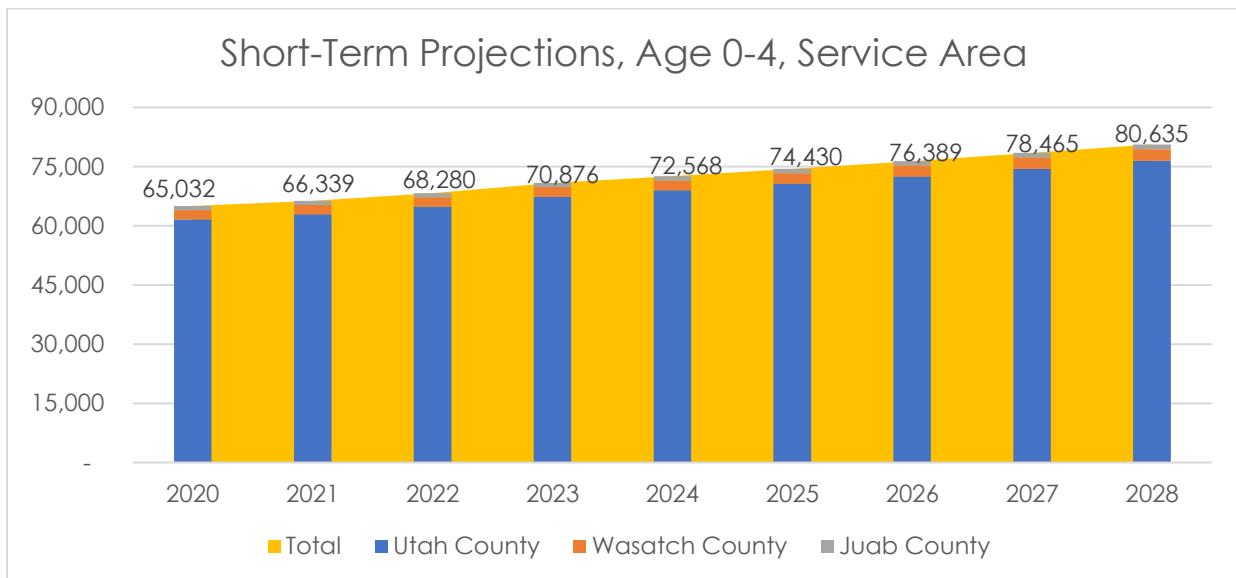
Percent Population Under 18 Years, Utah Counties Compared to State and U.S.



Our tri-county service area's population growth continues. By 2040, our service area population will exceed 1 million.⁹



Short-term projections indicate the number of young children will increase from approximately 65,000 in 2020 to nearly 81,000 in 2028.¹⁰

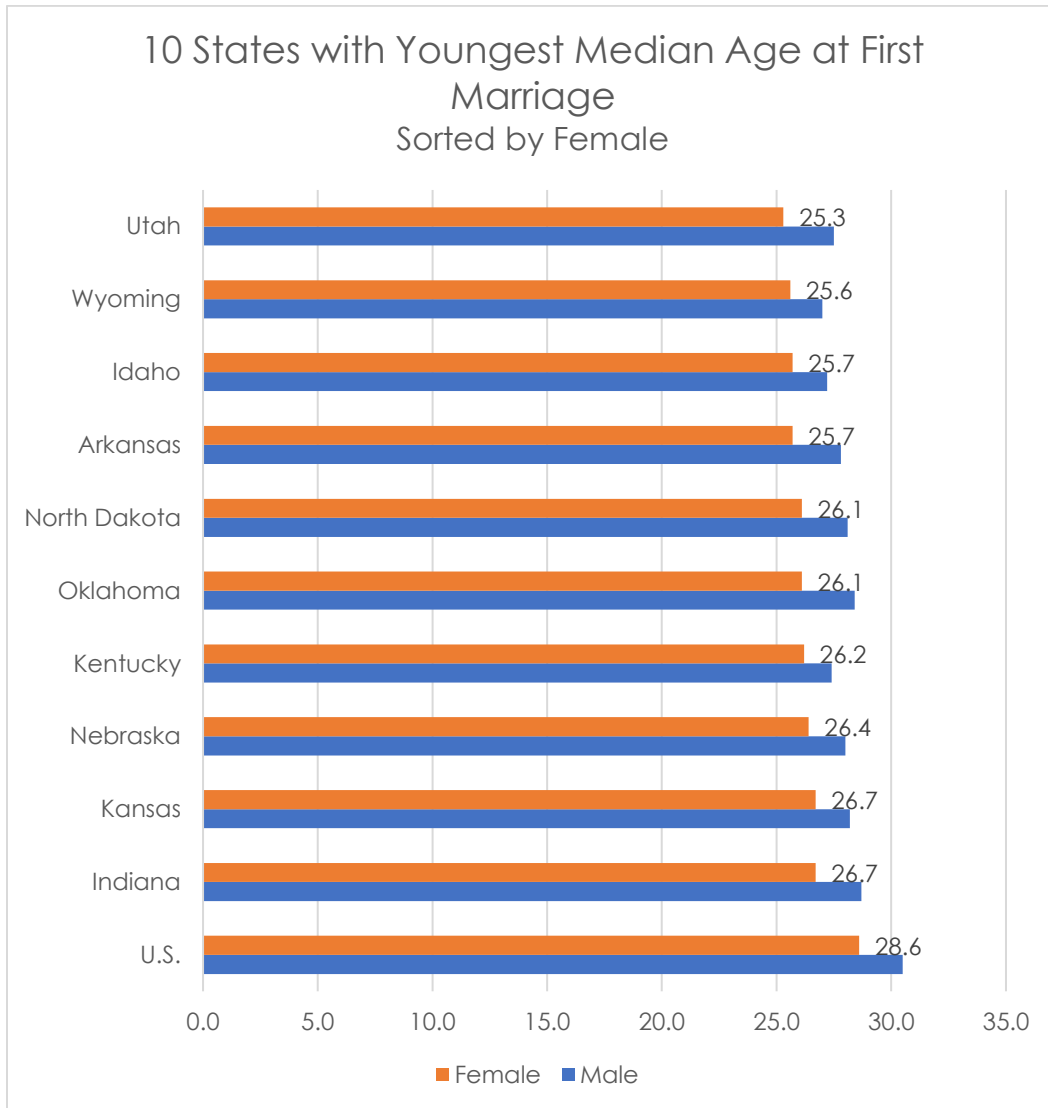


One of the factors in the large number of young children in our service area is the culture of younger-than-average marriage age. Although the median age of first marriage has increased

⁹ Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, *State and County Projections 2020-2060*; U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census; U.S. Census Bureau, ACS population estimates

¹⁰ *State and County Projections*. (2024). Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute of the University of Utah. Retrieved 2 Jul 2023, from <https://gardner.utah.edu/demographics/population-projections/>

over the past two decades, it is still lower than most states and the U.S. as a whole. Utah's median age of first marriage for women is 25.3—the youngest of any state in the nation.¹¹



Not only does the state have the lowest median age at first marriage of any state in the Union, but Utah County has large families. Among counties with at least 100,000 population, Utah County has the largest percentage of families with five or more persons (32 percent) and the largest percentage of families with six or more persons (17.1 percent).¹²

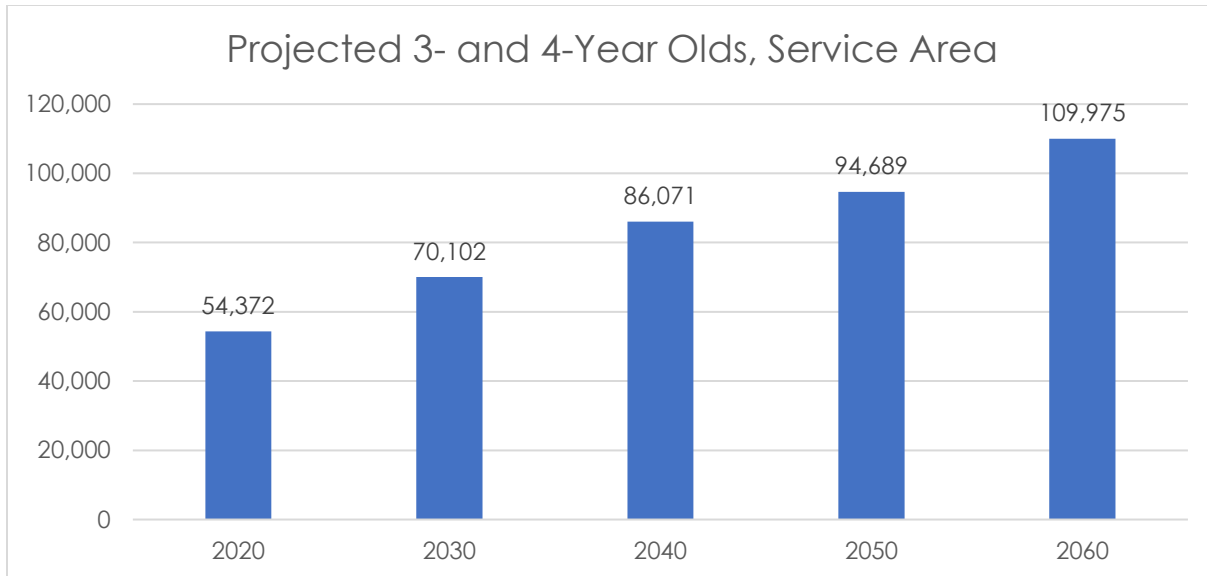
¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B12007

¹² U.S. Census Bureau, Table B11016

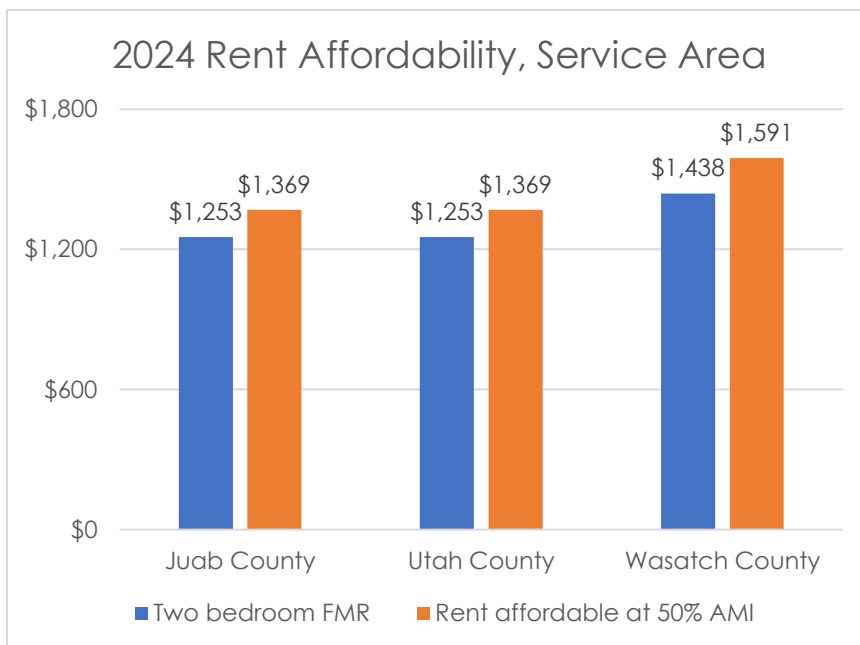
Top 25 Counties with Largest Families			
Counties > 100,000 Population			
	Population	Percent Families 5 or more persons	Percent Families 6 or more persons
Utah County, Utah	648,265	32.0	17.1
Webb County, Texas	266,963	30.0	12.8
Madera County, California	156,304	28.7	15.2
Hidalgo County, Texas	865,677	28.3	13.2
Tulare County, California	470,999	28.2	12.7
Merced County, California	279,150	27.7	12.0
Monterey County, California	438,953	27.6	14.3
Davis County, Utah	358,831	26.7	13.3
Imperial County, California	180,051	26.7	11.3
Rockland County, New York	336,485	26.4	15.2
San Joaquin County, California	771,406	26.2	11.9
Cache County, Utah	131,703	25.9	13.3
Fresno County, California	1,003,150	25.4	11.8
San Bernardino County, California	2,171,071	25.2	11.7
Riverside County, California	2,409,331	25.0	11.7
Kings County, California	151,887	24.5	11.1
Kern County, California	905,644	24.5	11.3
Kaufman County, Texas	140,145	24.4	10.1
Yakima County, Washington	255,151	24.2	11.0
Stanislaus County, California	550,842	23.9	11.2
Bonneville County, Idaho	121,771	23.8	10.9
Ector County, Texas	161,258	23.4	8.1
Cameron County, Texas	420,554	23.1	10.2
Weber County, Utah	259,390	22.8	10.2
Salt Lake County, Utah	1,173,331	22.4	10.8

As the population grows, the number of eligible children increases as well. According to 2020 estimates, there were over 50,000 children aged 3-4 years living in our tri-county region. This is projected to increase to about 110,000 by 2060.¹³

¹³ *State and County Projections*. (2022). Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute of the University of Utah. Retrieved 2 June 2023, from <https://gardner.utah.edu/demographics/population-projections/>.



Affordable housing continues to present a major economic challenge to households in our service area. Fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit in Utah County is \$1,438; in Wasatch and



Juab Counties, it is \$1,253. The National Low-Income Housing Coalition estimates the rent available to households making 50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) is \$1,591 in Utah County, and \$1,368 in Wasatch and Juab Counties.¹⁴

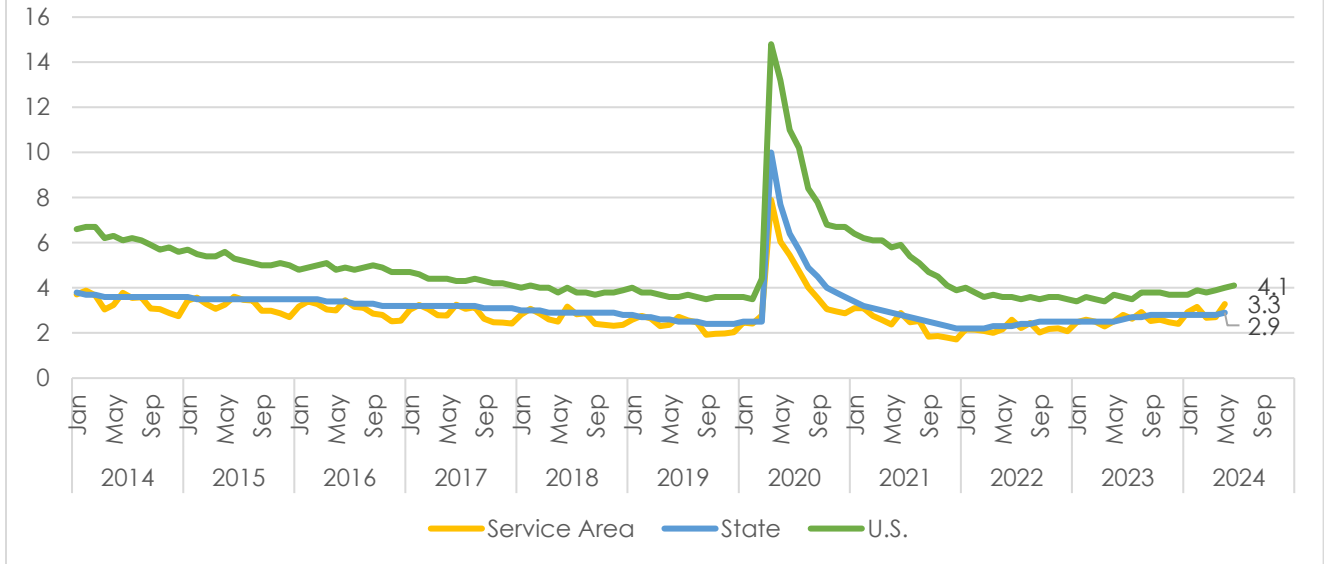
The economy in our three-county area has recovered from the pandemic-related loss of jobs in 2020. Utah Unemployment in our service area has increased slowly since the post-

pandemic recovery. In December 2021, our service area unemployment was 1.9 percent; as of May 2024, it is 3.1 percent. The state's unemployment rate as of May 2024 was 2.9 percent; nationally, it was 4.0.¹⁵

¹⁴ National Low-Income Housing Coalition, 2024 State of Utah Affordable Housing Report. Retrieved 20 July 2024 from <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/ut>.

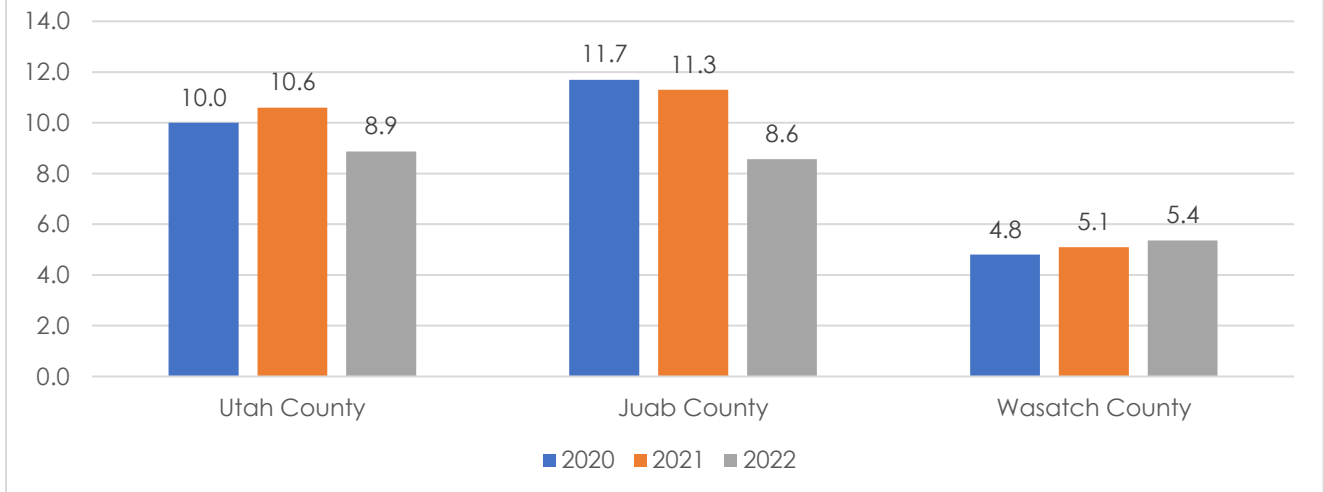
¹⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Data extracted 20 June 2024.

Unemployment Rate, January 2014-June 2024 Service Area, State, U.S.



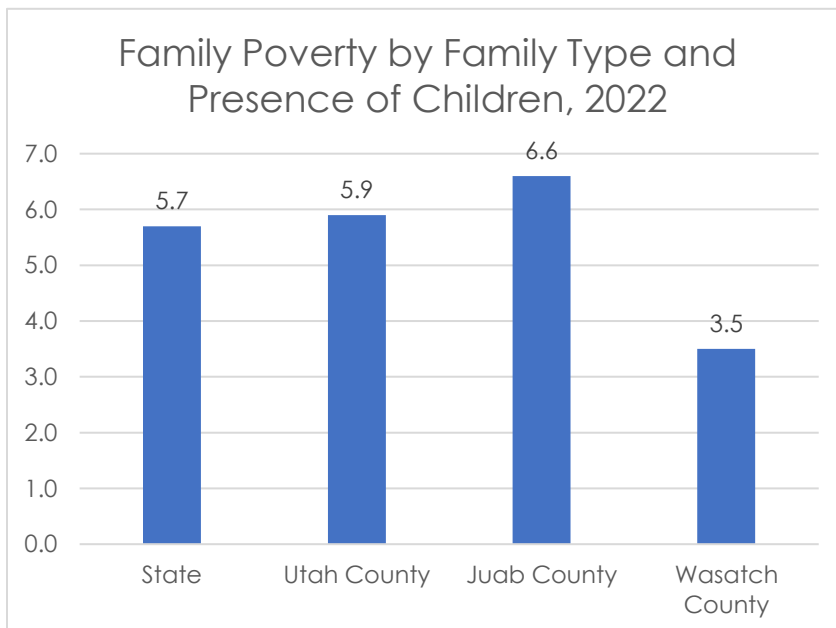
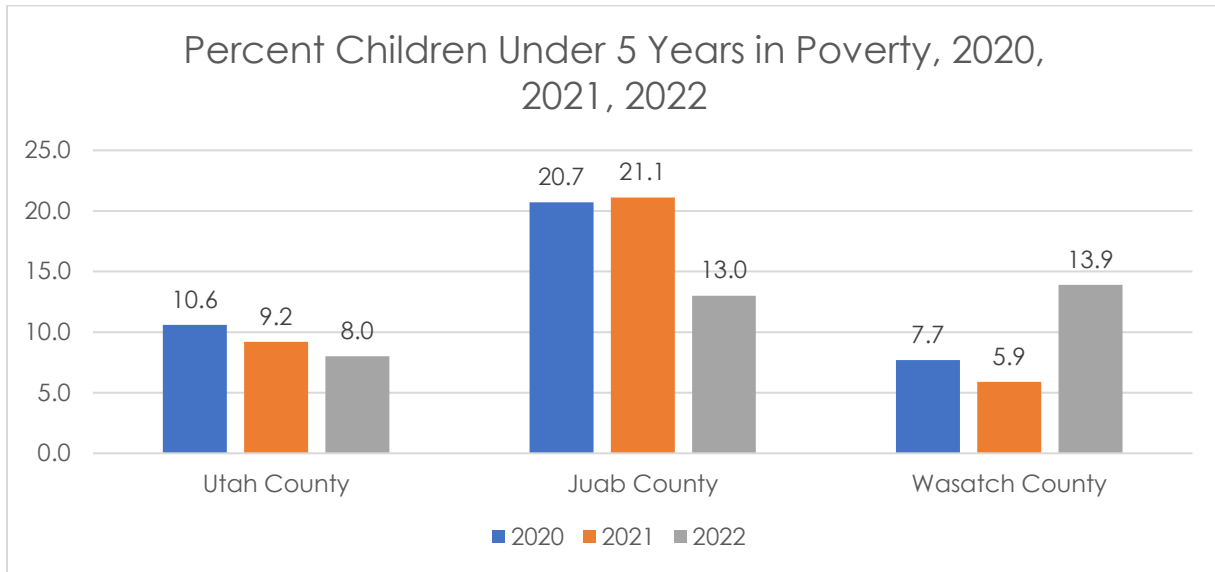
Latest poverty data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicate a decrease in poverty in Utah County from 2020 (10.0 percent) and 2021 (10.6 percent). In 2022, Utah County's poverty rate declined to 8.9 percent; Juab County's rate was at 8.6 percent, and Wasatch County's was at 5.4 percent. Although it is difficult to predict 2023 rates at this point, the slow rise in unemployment rates seems to indicate that poverty rates will increase as well.¹⁶

Percent Persons in Poverty, 2020, 2021, 2022



¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B17001

The percentage of children under age 5 in poverty saw a decrease in Utah and Juab Counties in 2022, but a significant increase in Wasatch County—going from 5.9 percent in 2021 to 13.9 percent in 2022.¹⁷



When considering poverty among families, Utah County's families (5.9 percent) are similar to the state's families (5.7 percent). Juab County's rate of poverty among families is higher, at 6.6 percent, while Wasatch County's is lower (3.5 percent).¹⁸

Of course, poverty rates are higher among families with children—such is the case throughout the nation. Statewide, the poverty rate for families with related

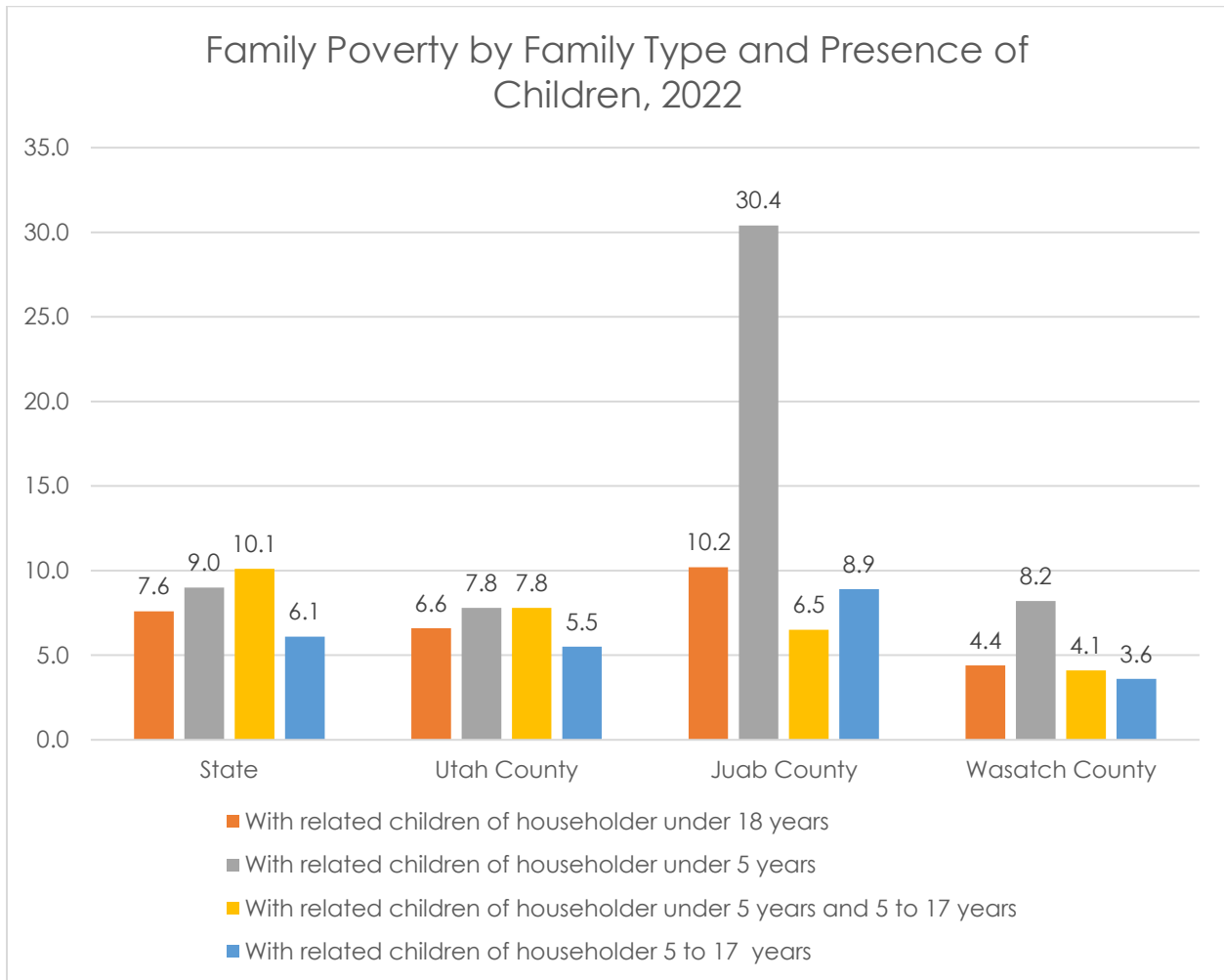
children under the age of 18 is 7.6 percent; in Utah County, it is 6.6 percent, while in Wasatch County, it is at 4.4 percent. Juab County's poverty rate of families with related children is 10.2 percent.¹⁹

¹⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B17001

¹⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, Table S1702

¹⁹ Ibid.

Families with both young children and older children tend to have higher rates of poverty than those with only one age group of children. Statewide, 10.1 percent of families with related children under the age of 5 and age 5 to 17 is 10.1 percent. In Utah County, it is 7.8 percent, and in Juab County, it is 6.5 percent. Wasatch County's figure for this category is 4.1 percent. The anomaly in poverty among families with children is Juab County, with 30.4 percent of its families with only children under age 5 are in poverty.²⁰

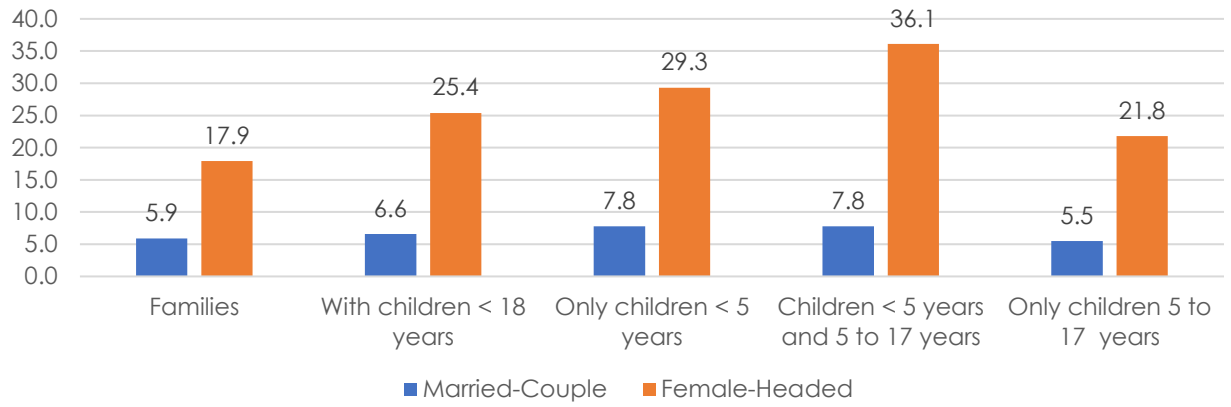


Single-mother families continue to experience the highest rates of poverty among all family types. While 5.9 percent of married-couple families in Utah County are in poverty, 17.9 percent of female-headed families are in poverty. And 36.1 percent of female-headed families with children under the age of 5 and with children from age 5 to 17 are in poverty.²¹

²⁰ Ibid.

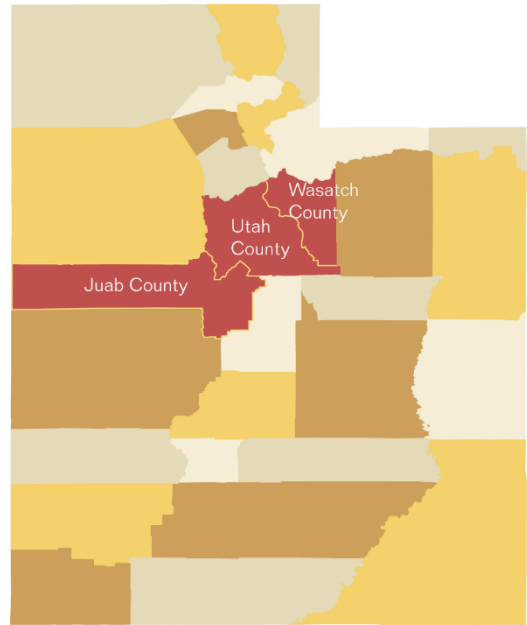
²¹ Ibid.

Utah County Families in Poverty: Married-Couple vs. Female-Headed, 2022



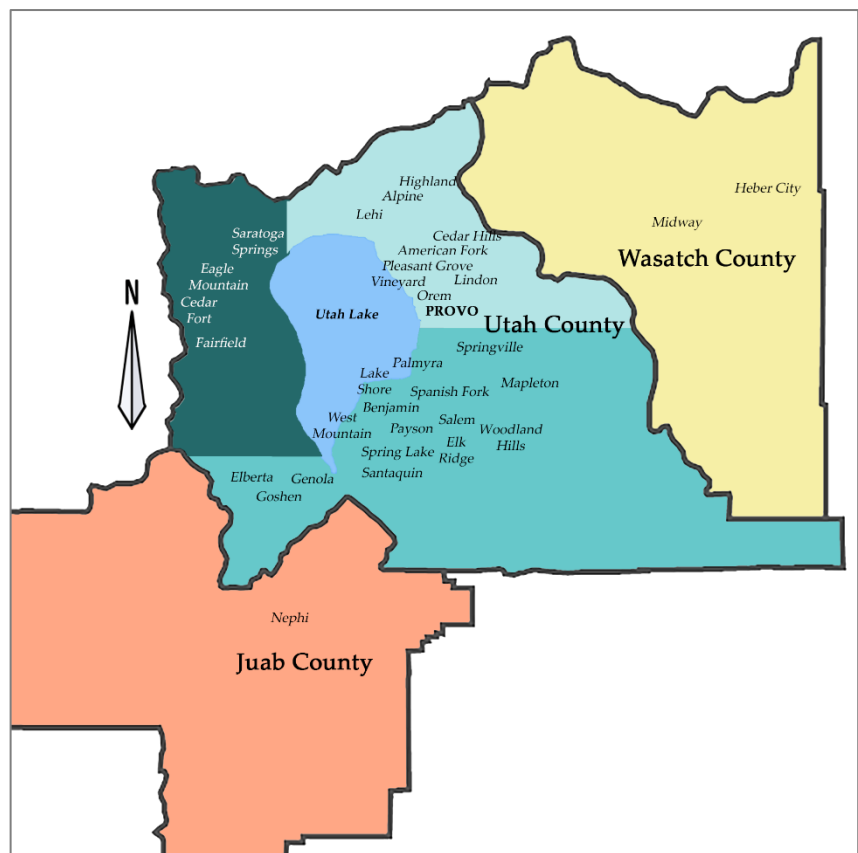
ANALYSIS OF SUB-AREAS

Our tri-county service area is located in central Utah, with the largest county—Utah County—being just south of Salt Lake County. A major north-south Interstate freeway, I-15, runs directly through Utah County. Historically, most of Utah County's population growth has been along this corridor. In recent years, growth has expanded in the east-to-west direction, particularly in Northern Utah County and along the west shores of Utah Lake.



Our planning at Early Learning Essentials is divided into five areas.

- Juab County, whose major community is Nephi
- Wasatch County, with major communities of Heber and Midway
- West Utah County, which includes the communities of
 - Cedar Fort
 - Eagle Mountain
 - Fairfield
 - Saratoga Springs
- North Utah County, which includes:
 - Alpine
 - American Fork
 - Cedar Hills
 - Highland
 - Lehi
 - Lindon
 - Orem
 - Pleasant Grove
 - Provo
 - Vineyard
- South Utah County, which includes:
 - Benjamin
 - Elberta
 - Elk Ridge
 - Genola
 - Goshen
 - Lake Shore
 - Mapleton

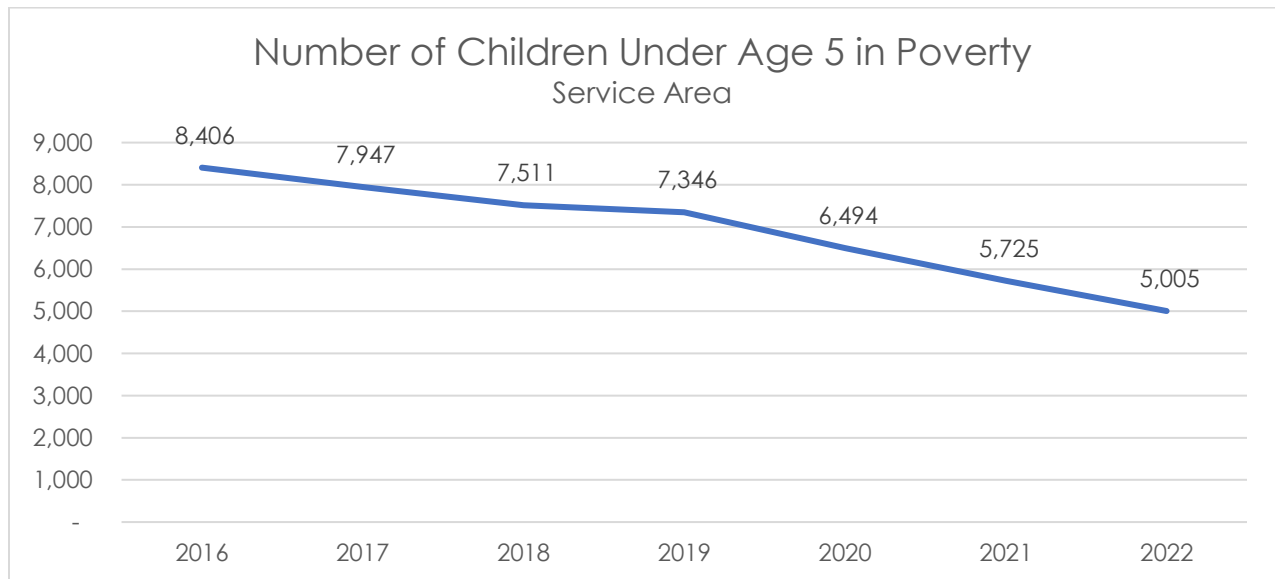


- Palmyra
- Payson
- Salem
- Santaquin
- Spanish Fork
- Spring Lake
- Springville
- West Mountain
- Woodland Hills

The following portions of this assessment consider our service area in terms of these five sub-areas.

NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INFANTS, TODDLERS, PRESCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN, EXPECTANT MOTHERS

The number of infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children who qualify for Early Learning Essentials in our service area (because they live below the federal poverty guideline) has consistently declined over the past five years. According to the most recent numbers, there are 5,005 children in our service area who live in poverty—a decrease of about 720 children.²²



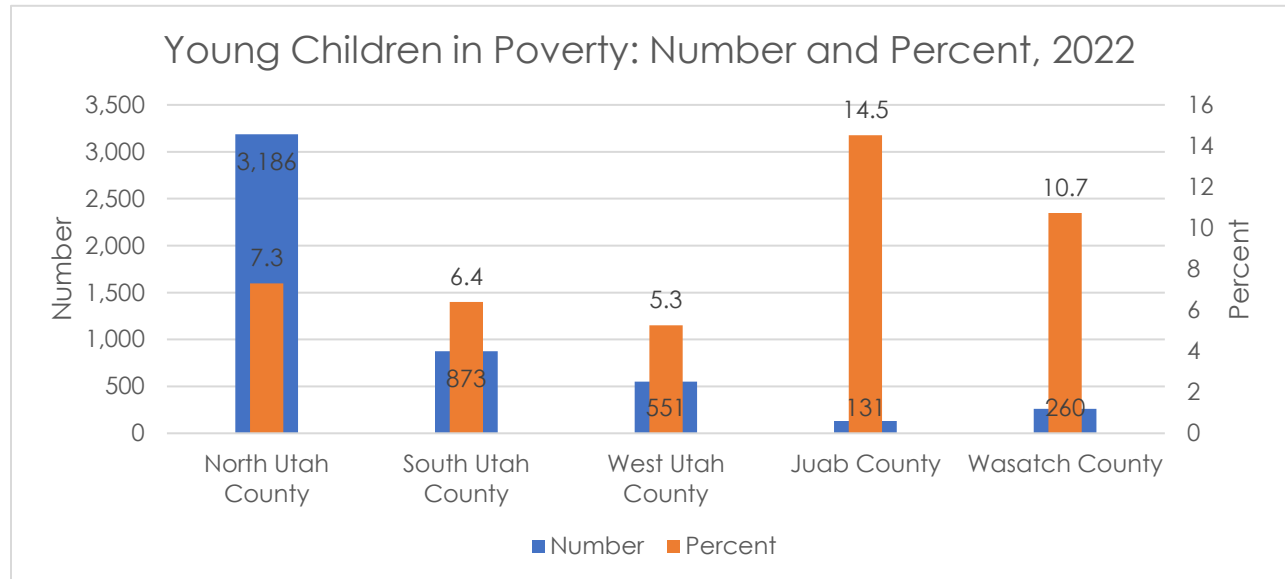
YOUNG CHILDREN IN POVERTY: NUMBER AND PERCENT

In calculating need, this analysis looks at both the number of young children under age 5 in poverty, as well as the percent of all children under age 5 who are in poverty.

In our service area, North Utah County continues to have the most eligible children, at 3,186, followed by South Utah County (885) and West Utah County (551). Juab County (131) and

²² U.S. Census Bureau, Table B17001

Wasatch County (260) have the fewest. Of note is that four of the five subareas we analyze had decreases in the number of eligible children; Wasatch County was the only area that saw an increase in raw number. It increased from 154 in last year's assessment to 260 this year.



Northern Utah County has the most young children living in poverty, but Juab County has the highest percentage of these children (14.5 percent). Wasatch County has 10.7 percent, and North Utah County has 7.3 percent. South Utah County and West Utah County are at 6.4 and 5.3 percent respectively.²³

Number and Percent Young Children in Poverty			
North Utah County			
	Number		Percent
Alpine	36		7.4
American Fork	130		4.8
Cedar Hills	16		2.0
Highland	4		0.3
Lehi	547		7.4
Lindon	35		6.3
Orem	770		10.4
Pleasant Grove	234		7.1
Provo	1,340		20.1
Vineyard	70		5.4

Provo has the highest percentage of young children living in poverty in our North Utah County subarea, at 20.1 percent (1,340 children). Orem is next highest, at 10.4 percent and 770 children. Lehi and Alpine both come in at 7.4 percent, but due to the population variance, this represents 547 children in Lehi and only 36 children in Alpine. Highland has only four young children in poverty, representing 0.3 percent. However, margins of error would indicate this number is likely higher.²⁴

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

	Number	Percent
Benjamin	8	14.0
Elberta	0	0.0
Elk Ridge	0	0.0
Genola	27	24.1
Goshen	36	52.2
Lake Shore	0	0.0
Mapleton	4	1.7
Palmyra	0	0.0
Payson	124	9.3
Salem	46	5.1
Santaquin	54	3.2
Spanish Fork	237	5.6
Spring Lake	19	41.3
Springville	247	7.0
West Mountain	0	0.0
Woodland Hills	16	22.2

	Number	Percent
Cedar Fort	0	0.0
Eagle Mountain	207	3.0
Fairfield	0	0.0
Saratoga Springs	344	7.2

In South Utah County, Spanish Fork (5.6 percent) and Springville (7.0 percent) have similar percentages and raw numbers. Spanish Fork's 237 is only 10 fewer than Springville's 247 young children living in poverty. Combined with Payson's 124 children (9.3 percent), the three communities make up the bulk of the area's young children living in poverty. Note that although the table to the left shows no young children living in poverty in the communities of Elberta, Elk Ridge, Lake Shore, Palmyra, and West Mountain, Census Bureau methodologies are such that these numbers should be used with caution. Margin of errors indicate that there are likely some children living in poverty in these communities.²⁵

Of course, the same is true for Cedar Fort and Fairfield in West Utah County. In this subarea, Saratoga Spring has both the highest percentage of young children living in poverty (7.3) as well as the largest number (344). Eagle Mountain has 207 such children living in poverty, which is about 3 percent of all young children in the community.²⁶

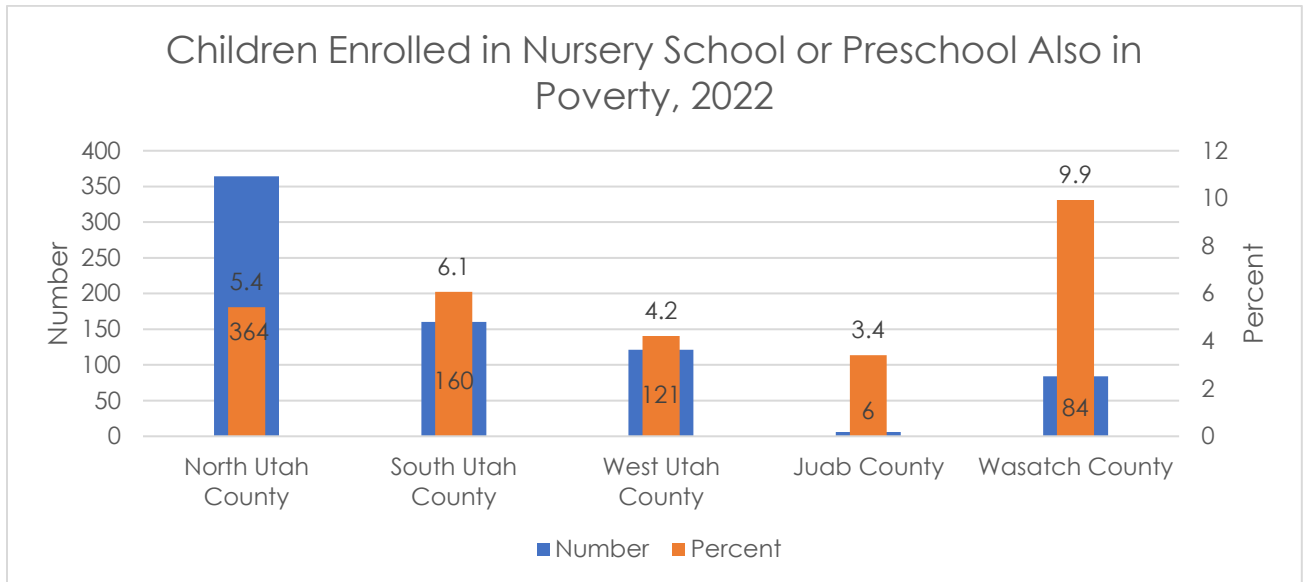
YOUNG CHILDREN IN POVERTY: ENROLLMENT IN NURSERY SCHOOL OR PRESCHOOL

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 735 children enrolled in nursery school or preschool in our service area are living in poverty. This includes 364 children in North Utah County, 160 in South Utah County, and 121 in West Utah County. Wasatch County has 84, and Juab County has six.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

Due to the low numbers in Juab and Wasatch Counties, these numbers should be used with caution, as the margin of error is large.²⁷



North Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Alpine	0	0.0
American Fork	25	4.3
Cedar Hills	0	0.0
Highland	0	0.0
Lehi	51	2.7
Lindon	9	6.5
Orem	104	7.6
Pleasant Grove	18	3.0
Provo	134	12.9
Vineyard	23	8.6

Provo has the most children in poverty enrolled in preschool or nursery school in the North Utah County subarea of ELE, at 134. Orem has 104.²⁸

²⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B14006

²⁸ Ibid.

South Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Benjamin	0	0.0
Elberta	0	0.0
Elk Ridge	0	0.0
Genola	0	0.0
Goshen	0	0.0
Lake Shore	0	0.0
Mapleton	0	0.0
Payson	13	5.2
Palmyra	0	0.0
Salem	0	0.0
Santaquin	41	11.8
Spanish Fork	18	2.7
Spring Lake	0	0.0
Springville	87	12.8
West Mountain	0	0.0
Woodland Hills	1	25.0

In the South Utah County subarea, Springville has 87 children enrolled in preschool or nursery school who are also in poverty. Santaquin has 41, and Spanish Fork and Payson have fewer than 20. Again, because of the low numbers, this data should be used with caution.²⁹

In West Utah County, Eagle Mountain has 75 students enrolled in nursery or preschool who are

West Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Cedar Fort	0	0.0
Eagle Mountain	75	4.5
Fairfield	0	0.0
Saratoga Springs	46	3.8

also in poverty, and Saratoga Springs has 46.³⁰

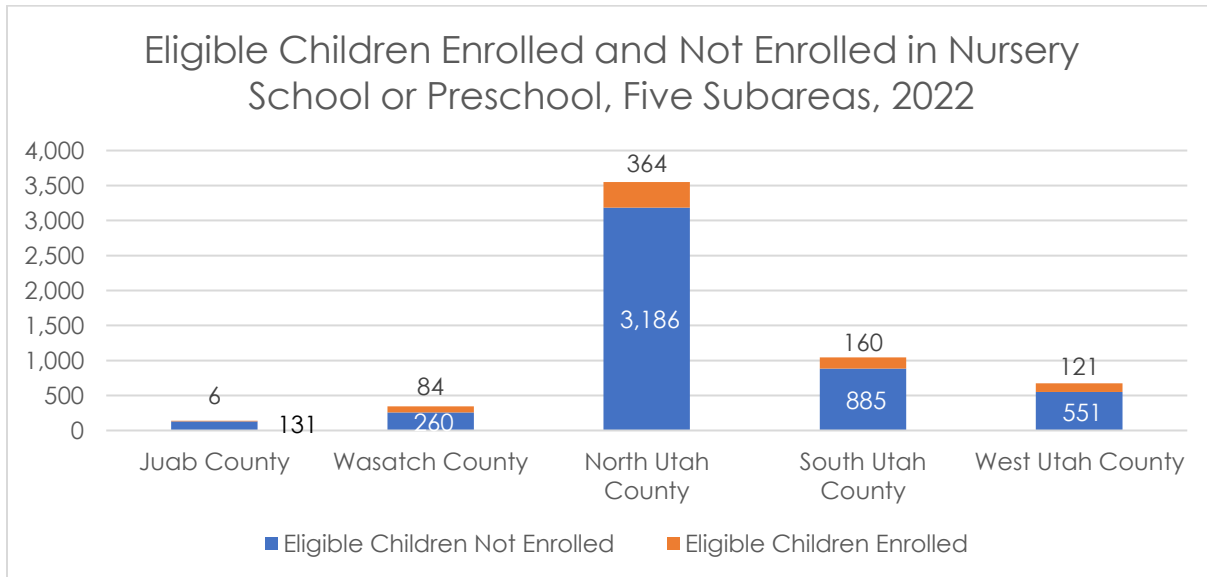
When considering our five geographic subareas, North Utah County continues to have the most

eligible children enrolled in a nursery school or preschool, with 442—which is 12.0 percent of the total possible. South Utah County has 211 (21.2 percent), and West Utah County has 105 (18.3 percent). Juab County has only about four eligible children enrolled, and Wasatch County has none. Of course, the margin of error in the Census Bureau numbers allows for a small number of Wasatch County children to be enrolled, although the official count is zero.³¹

NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN ENROLLED VS. NOT ENROLLED

²⁹ Ibid.
³⁰ Ibid.
³¹ Ibid.

In the past, we've considered the number of eligible students (that is, children of preschool and nursery school age) who are not enrolled. North Utah County continues to have the most children under the age of 5 years and living in poverty than any subarea—according to 2022 Census data, it has 3,186 who are not enrolled in nursery or preschool. by far, has the most potential for additional eligible children to be enrolled.³²



Provo City has the most such children in this subarea, with slightly more than 1,200. Orem City has

	Enrolled	Not Enrolled
Alpine	0	36
American Fork	25	105
Cedar Hills	0	16
Highland	0	4
Lehi	51	496
Lindon	9	26
Orem	104	666
Pleasant Grove	18	216
Provo	134	1,206
Vineyard	23	47

666, and Lehi has 496. The communities of Alpine, Cedar Hills, Highland, and Vineyard have such small numbers that it is difficult to ascribe certainty; however, the low enrollment figures for these communities do present a level of understanding about these communities.³³

³² U.S. Census Bureau, Table B14006, Table B17001

³³ Ibid.

In South Utah County, we have many small communities with very few young children living in poverty. Spanish Fork has the largest population, with about 219 not enrolled and 18 enrolled. Springville has 160 not enrolled and 87 enrolled; Payson's 111 not enrolled young children in poverty is the third-largest group in this subarea.³⁴

South Utah County			
	Enrolled		Not Enrolled
Benjamin	0		8
Elberta	0		0
Elk Ridge	0		0
Genola	0		27
Goshen	0		36
Lake Shore	0		0
Mapleton	0		13
Palmyra	0		0
Payson	13		111
Salem	0		46
Santaquin	41		13
Spanish Fork	18		219
Spring Lake	0		19
Springville	87		160
West Mountain	0		0
Woodland Hills	1		15

West Utah County			
	Enrolled		Not Enrolled
Cedar Fort	0		0
Eagle Mountain	75		132
Fairfield	0		0
Saratoga Springs	46		298

Saratoga Springs has about 350 young children in poverty, but only 46 of them are enrolled in nursery school or preschool. About 36 percent—or 75 children—of Eagle Mountain's 200 or so small children in poverty are enrolled in nursery school or preschool.³⁵

FAMILIES IN POVERTY WITH CHILDREN UNDER 5

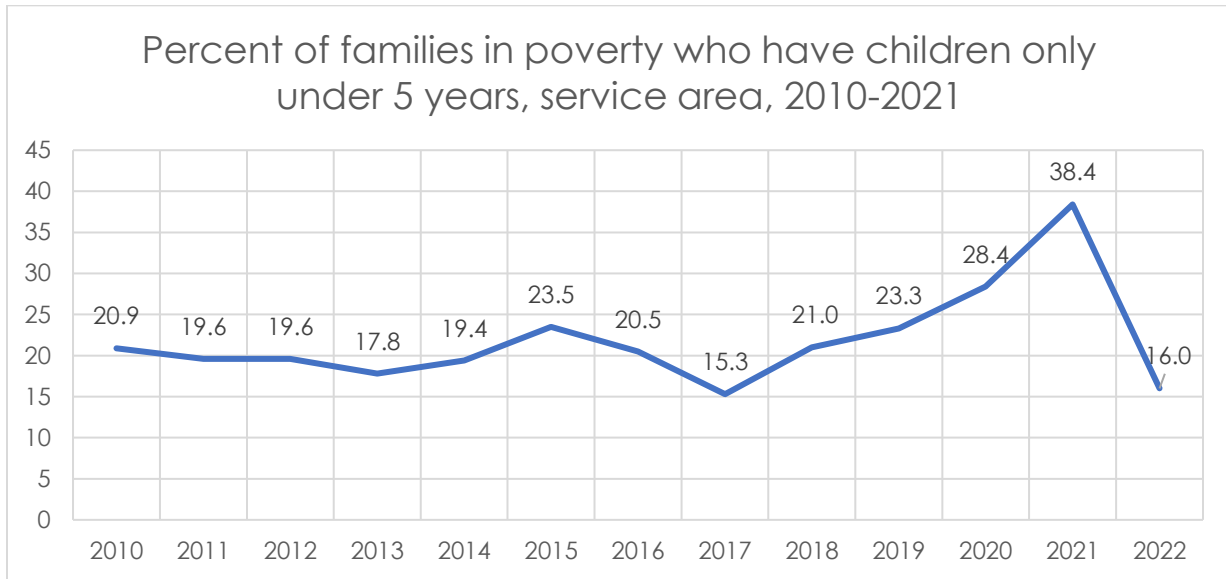
As of 2022—the latest year for which Census data at the county and community levels are available—there were 6,092 families with children who are living in poverty in our service area.

³⁴ Ibid.

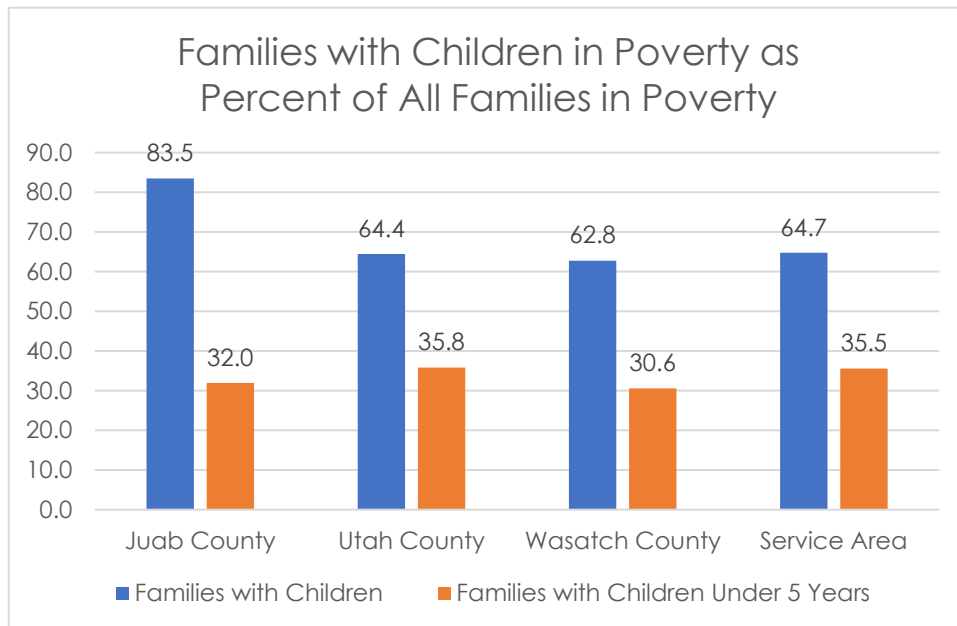
³⁵ Ibid.

This is about 370 fewer families than last year (6,464), and about 740 families than in 2020 (6,829).³⁶

After four straight years of increasing percentage of families in poverty who have only children younger than 5 years, 2022 brought a sharp decline. 2021's figure of 38.4 percent decreased to 16.0 percent—the second-lowest percentage since 2010.



In our service area, there are 3,345 families in poverty who have children under the age of 5 years. Nearly two-thirds of families in poverty in our service area have children, and 35.5 percent



have children younger than 5 years.³⁷

³⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B17010

³⁷ Ibid.

**Families in Poverty
with Children < 5 Years
North Utah County: 2,220**

Alpine	33
American Fork	109
Cedar Hills	15
Highland	4
Lehi	334
Lindon	37
Orem	530
Pleasant Grove	161
Provo	922
Vineyard	75

In North Utah County, Provo has the most families in poverty with children under age 5, at 922. Orem has 503, and Lehi has 334.³⁸

**Families in Poverty
with Children < 5 Years
South Utah County: 538**

Benjamin	5
Elberta	0
Elk Ridge	0
Genola	28
Goshen	13
Lake Shore	0
Mapleton	8
Palmyra	0
Payson	80
Salem	23
Santaquin	41
Spanish Fork	158
Spring Lake	9
Springville	165
West Mountain	0
Woodland Hills	8

In South Utah County, Springville has 165 families in poverty with children younger than 5 years, compared to Spanish Fork's 158 families and Payson's 80. Although some communities are listed as "0" families in poverty with young children, the likelihood is that there are at least one or two—and possibly more.³⁹

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

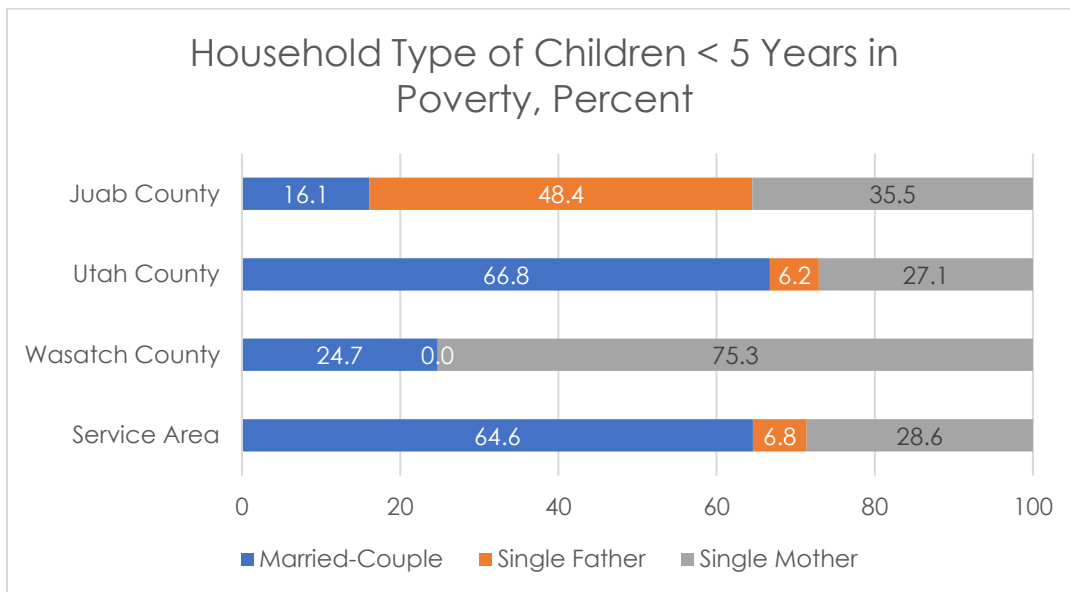
**Families in Poverty
with Children < 5 Years
West Utah County: 394**

Cedar Fort	0
Eagle Mountain	159
Fairfield	0
Saratoga Springs	235

In West Utah County, Saratoga Springs has 235 families in poverty with children under the age of 5 years. Eagle Mountain has 159.⁴⁰

FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD TYPE

In our service area—unlike many other areas in the country—most young children in poverty are living in married-couple families. Nearly two-thirds (64.6 percent) of families with young children in poverty are married-couple families; in Utah County, the percentage is slightly over two-thirds, at 66.8 percent. In Juab County, the largest percentage—48.4 percent—are single fathers. Only in Wasatch County do we see the typical high rate of impoverished single mothers with young children, at 75.3 percent.⁴¹

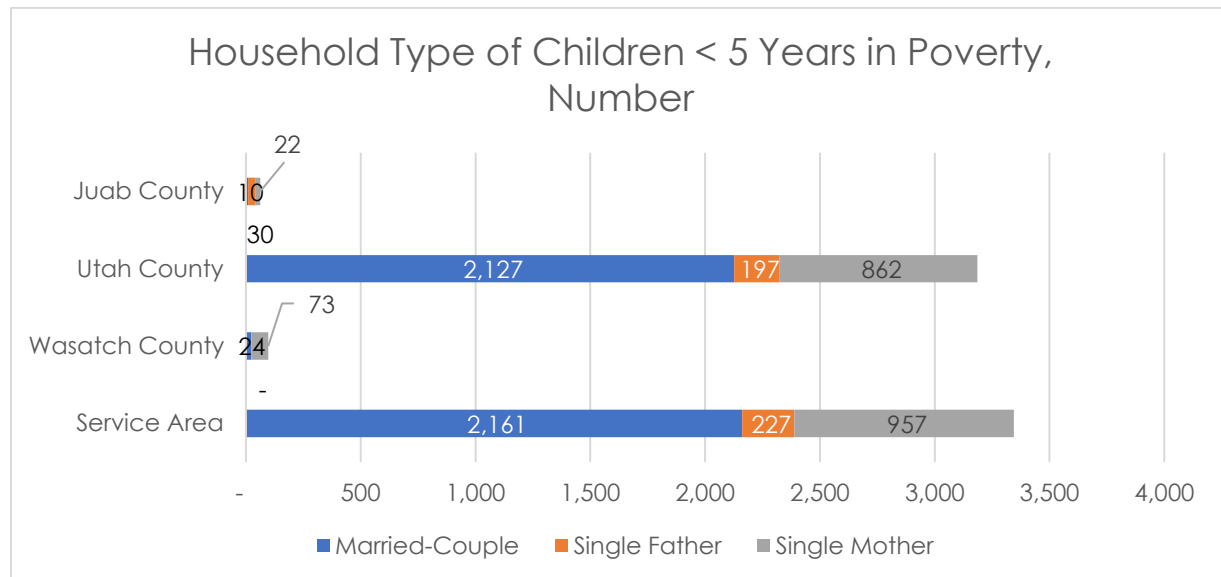


Of course, with most of our service area's population living in Utah County, the number of single-mother households with young children and living in poverty in Wasatch County is relatively low

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

(73) compared to Utah County's 862 single mother households and its 2,127 married couple households in poverty with small children.⁴²



In North Utah County, 683 families with children and living in poverty are married-couple families living in Provo. Fewer than half that number—311—are living in Orem; 221 are in Lehi.⁴³

North Utah County: Families with Young Children in Poverty by Household Type			
	Married-Couple Families	Male Householder, No Spouse Present	Female Householder, No Spouse Present
Alpine	12	0	21
American Fork	52	31	26
Cedar Hills	8	0	7
Highland	0	0	4
Lehi	221	0	113
Lindon	31	0	6
Orem	311	45	174
Pleasant Grove	121	0	40
Provo	683	111	128
Vineyard	75	0	0
North Utah County	1,514	187	519

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

In South Utah County, the most common household type of families with young children living in poverty is also married-couple families. About 115 such families live in Spanish Fork, while 72 live in Springville. About 93 single-mother households with young children living in poverty reside in Springville, and 58 live in Payson.⁴⁴

South Utah County: Families with Young Children in Poverty by Household Type			
	Married-Couple Families	Male Householder, No Spouse Present	Female Householder, No Spouse Present
Benjamin	5	0	0
Elberta	0	0	0
Elk Ridge	0	0	0
Genola	28	0	0
Goshen	7	0	6
Lake Shore	0	0	0
Mapleton	8	0	0
Palmyra	0	0	0
Payson	12	10	58
Salem	23	0	0
Santaquin	10	0	31
Spanish Fork	115	0	43
Spring Lake	9	0	0
Springville	72	0	93
West Mountain	0	0	0
Woodland Hills	1	0	7
South Utah County	290	10	238

⁴⁴ Ibid.

In West Utah County, there are no single-father households with young children living in poverty (recognizing, again, that margin of error plays a role). Nearly 200 married-couple families with small children living in poverty are in Saratoga Springs.⁴⁵

West Utah County: Families with Young Children in Poverty by Household Type			
	Married-Couple Families	Male Householder, No Spouse Present	Female Householder, No Spouse Present
Cedar Fort	0	0	0
Eagle Mountain	115	0	44
Fairfield	0	0	0
Saratoga Springs	193	0	42
West Utah County	308	0	86

RACE, ETHNICITY, LANGUAGE

RACE

Our service area continues to consist primarily of White individuals, who make up 86.5 percent of the total population. Nearly 7 percent indicate they are of two or more races, and about 0.6 percent are of three or more races. About one-tenth of one percent are of four or more races.⁴⁶

Other single-race individuals include Asian (1.4 percent), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (0.8 percent), Black or African American (0.6 percent) American Indian or Alaska Native (also 0.6 percent), and "some other race" (3.3 percent).⁴⁷

Subarea	Percent White
Juab County	92.6
Wasatch County	87.8
North Utah County	85.0
South Utah County	89.1
West Utah County	88.4

The ratios of race are similar in all five subareas. The subarea with the highest percentage of White individuals is Juab (92.6 percent); the lowest is North Utah County (85.0 percent).⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Ibid.

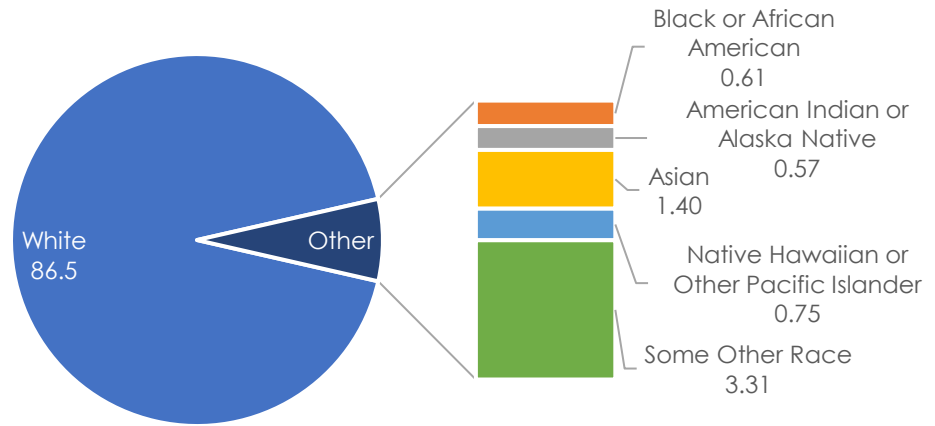
⁴⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Table C02003

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

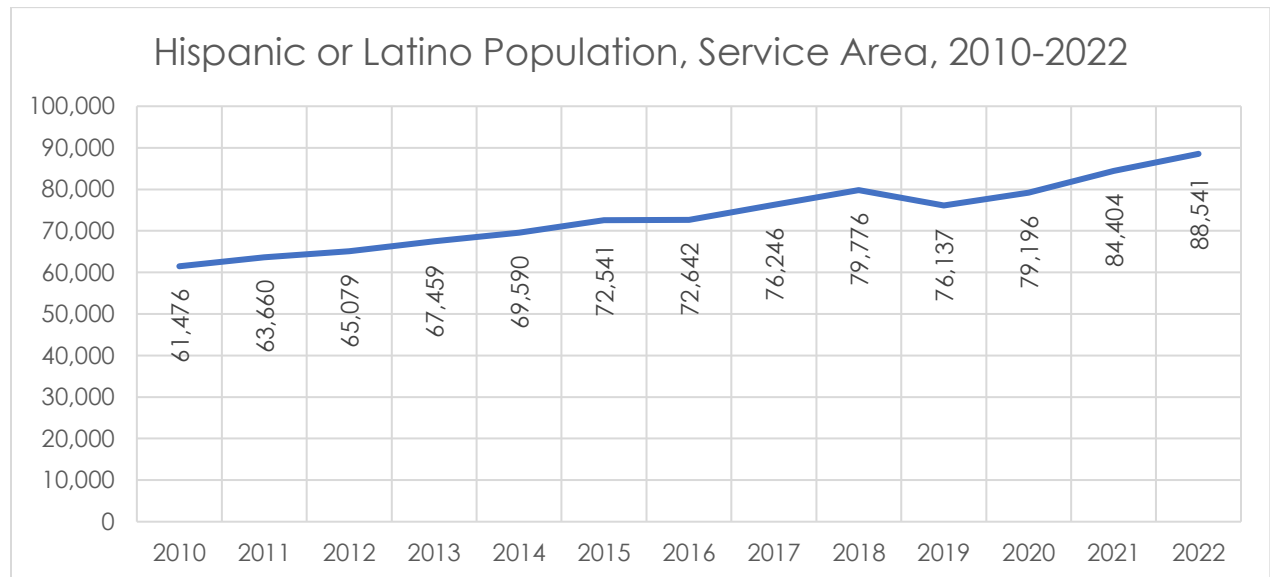
Race by Percent, Service Area, 2022

Persons indicating they are of one race alone



ETHNICITY

Hispanic or Latino individuals make up about 12.4 percent of our service area's population—up from 12.2 percent last year. The number of these individuals has grown from 84,404 in 2021 to 88,541 in 2022. The rise has been steady for the last two decades; in 2010, the Hispanic or Latino population was only 61,476.⁴⁹

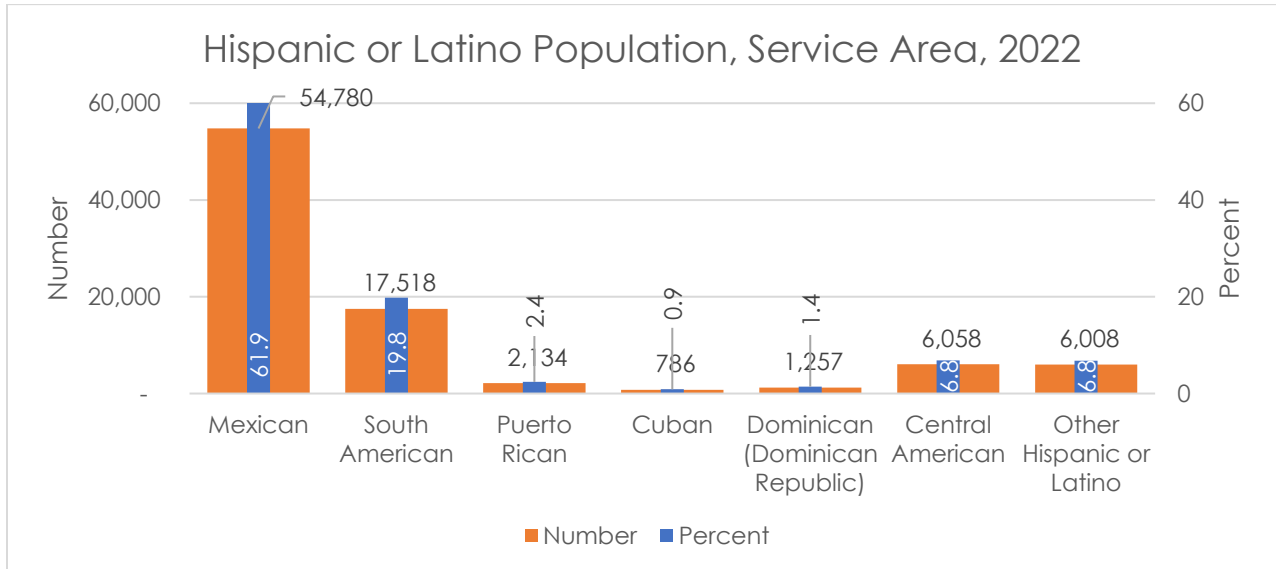


Most of this group (54,780, or 61.9 percent) comes from Mexico. Nearly 20 percent come from South America, 6.8 percent from Central America, 2.4 percent from Puerto Rico, 1.4 percent

⁴⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B03001

from the Dominican Republic, and 0.9 percent from Cuba. About 6.8 percent come from Spain or other Hispanic or Latino origins not specified.⁵⁰

Most of these (7.7 percent of the area's total population, or about 53,096) are from Mexico. The next largest group includes those from South America, with about 14,542, or 2.1 percent of the total population. Individuals from Central American countries are the third largest group, with 6,837, or 1.0 percent. Only about 1,214 are from the Dominican Republic and 774 are from Cuba. About 5,839 are from other Hispanic or Latino origins, making up about 0.8 percent of the population.⁵¹



Despite the decrease of about 3,500 individuals from 2018 to 2019, the Hispanic or Latino population in our service area has grown significantly. From 2010 to 2022, the increase has been slightly more than 27,000 persons—an increase of 44 percent.⁵²

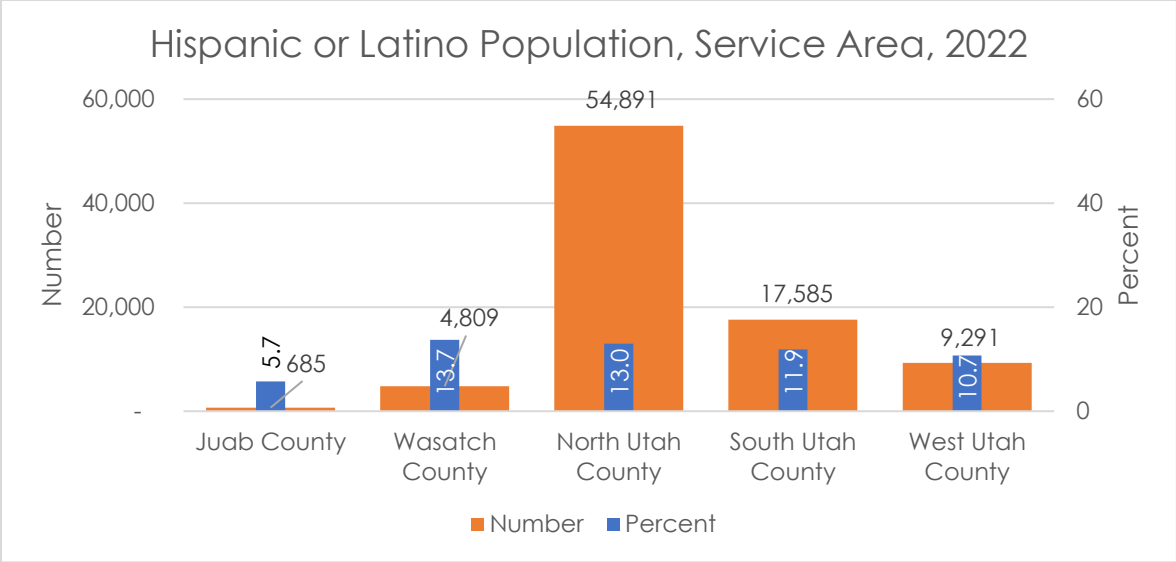
The subarea in our service area that has the highest ratio of Hispanic or Latino individuals continues to be North Utah County, at 13 percent—and about 55,000 persons. South Utah County's 17,585 account for 11.9 percent of the population; West Utah County has nearly 10,000 Hispanic or Latino persons, which is 10.7 percent of the overall population.⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ U.S. Census Bureau Table B03001

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.



Persons of Latino or Hispanic Descent North Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Alpine	349	3.4
American Fork	3,365	9.9
Cedar Hills	1,338	13.4
Highland	537	2.8
Lehi	5,925	7.7
Lindon	662	5.8
Orem	17,113	17.6
Pleasant Grove	3,816	10.2
Provo	20,046	17.5
Vineyard	1,740	13.7

Our North Utah County subarea has the most Hispanic or Latino persons by far, with nearly 55,000. South Utah County has about 17,500. The “Percent” column in these tables indicates the percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents to the population as a whole.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Persons of Latino or Hispanic Descent South Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Benjamin	28	3.3
Elberta	-	0.0
Elk Ridge	201	4.3
Genola	59	3.6
Goshen	269	31.1
Lake Shore	5	0.4
Mapleton	534	4.5
Palmyra	11	1.8
Payson	3,103	14.4
Salem	432	4.6
Santaquin	2,018	14.0
Spanish Fork	5,115	12.0
Spring Lake	22	4.3
Springville	5,599	15.9
West Mountain	100	7.9
Woodland Hills	89	6.7

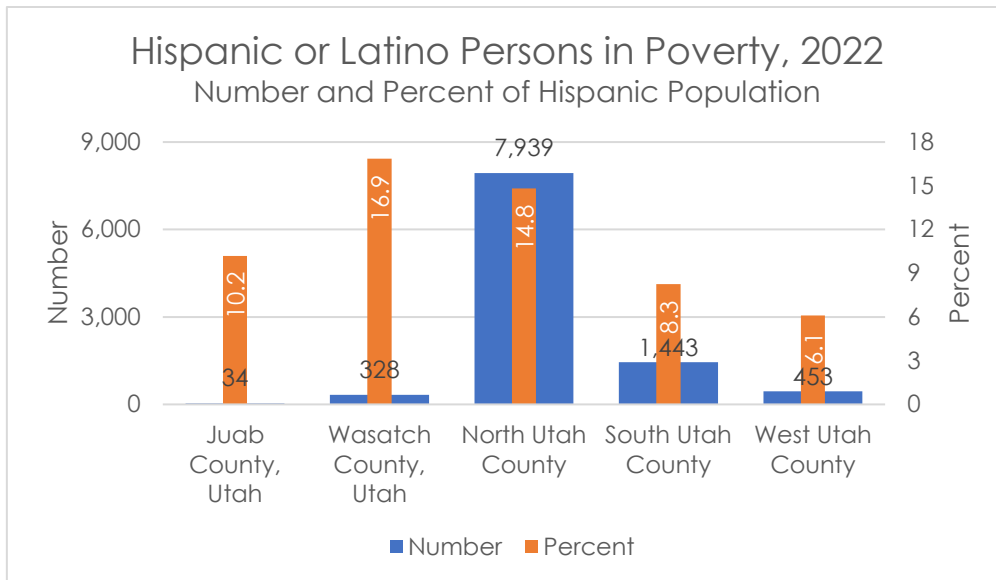
Springville and Spanish Fork are the communities in our South Utah County subarea that have the most persons of Hispanic or Latino descent; Springville has 5,599, and Spanish Fork has 5,115. Payson, with its 3,103, is not far behind. Santaquin is home to 2,018 persons of Hispanic or Latino descent. The small community of Goshen is 31.1 percent Hispanic or Latino.⁵⁵

Persons of Latino or Hispanic Descent West Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Cedar Fort	0	0.0
Eagle Mountain	5,204	11.3
Fairfield	4	5.1
Saratoga Springs	4,083	10.1

In West Utah County, Eagle Mountain is home to about 5,204 Hispanic or Latino persons. In Saratoga Springs, there are about 4,083.⁵⁶

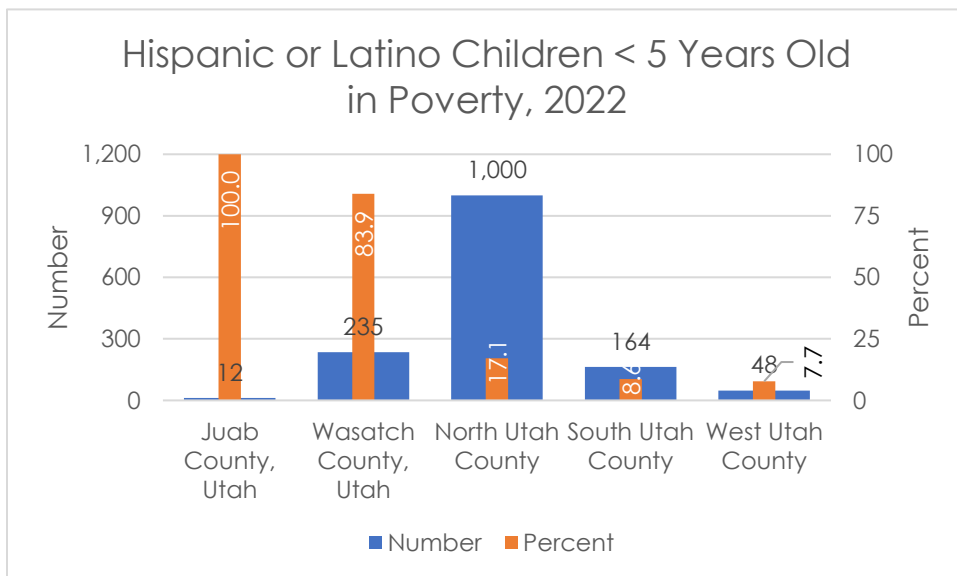
⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.



The number of Hispanic or Latino persons in poverty in our service area decreased from 11,762 in 2021 to 10,197 in 2022. North Utah County continues to have the most such individuals, at nearly 8,000. Wasatch County's 328

impoverished Hispanic or Latino persons represents 16.9 percent of the Hispanic or Latino population. living in poverty in our service area, which is 14.2 percent of this population. Of course, most of these individuals are living in Utah County. Just under 35 percent of the Hispanic population in Juab County, or 222 individuals, are in poverty, and 16.2 percent of those in Wasatch County are in poverty.⁵⁷



There are about 1,450 Hispanic or Latino children under age 5 living in poverty in our service area, down from 2021's 1,652. About 1,000 of these children live in North Utah County, and 235 live in Wasatch County. Of note is that the 235 in Wasatch County represents 83.9

percent of all Hispanic or Latino children age 5 or younger in the County.⁵⁸

Further analysis of our subareas shows that in North Utah County, 528 Hispanic or Latino children younger than age 5 are living in poverty. This is nearly 30 percent of all Hispanic children in that

⁵⁷ Ibid., Table B170011

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Hispanic or Latino Children < 5 Years in Poverty North Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Alpine	0	0.0
American Fork	0	0.0
Cedar Hills	9	4.2
Highland	0	0.0
Lehi	170	22.1
Lindon	0	0.0
Orem	258	14.5
Pleasant Grove	25	5.9
Provo	528	29.9
Vineyard	10	5.1

age group. Slightly more than 22 percent of this group in Lehi—or 170 children—are in poverty; 14.5 percent (258 children) of all Hispanic or Latino children age 5 or younger are in poverty.⁵⁹

Hispanic or Latino Children < 5 Years in Poverty South Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Benjamin	0	0.0
Elberta	0	0.0
Elk Ridge	0	0.0
Genola	0	0.0
Goshen	36	72.0
Lake Shore	0	0.0
Mapleton	0	0.0
Palmyra	0	0.0
Payson	34	14.2
Salem	0	0.0
Santaquin	0	0.0
Spanish Fork	81	11.1
Spring Lake	0	0.0
Springville	13	2.6
West Mountain	0	0.0
Woodland Hills	0	0.0

In South Utah County, the Hispanic and Latino conclave of Goshen—a small community of only about 865 residents—has the highest ratio of this minority group's poverty among young children. Nearly three out of four—72 percent—of all Hispanic or Latino children younger than age 5 are living in poverty. This equates to 36 children. Payson, with a much larger population, has 34 such children. Spanish Fork has 11.1 percent of these children living in poverty—or 81 individuals.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Ibid.

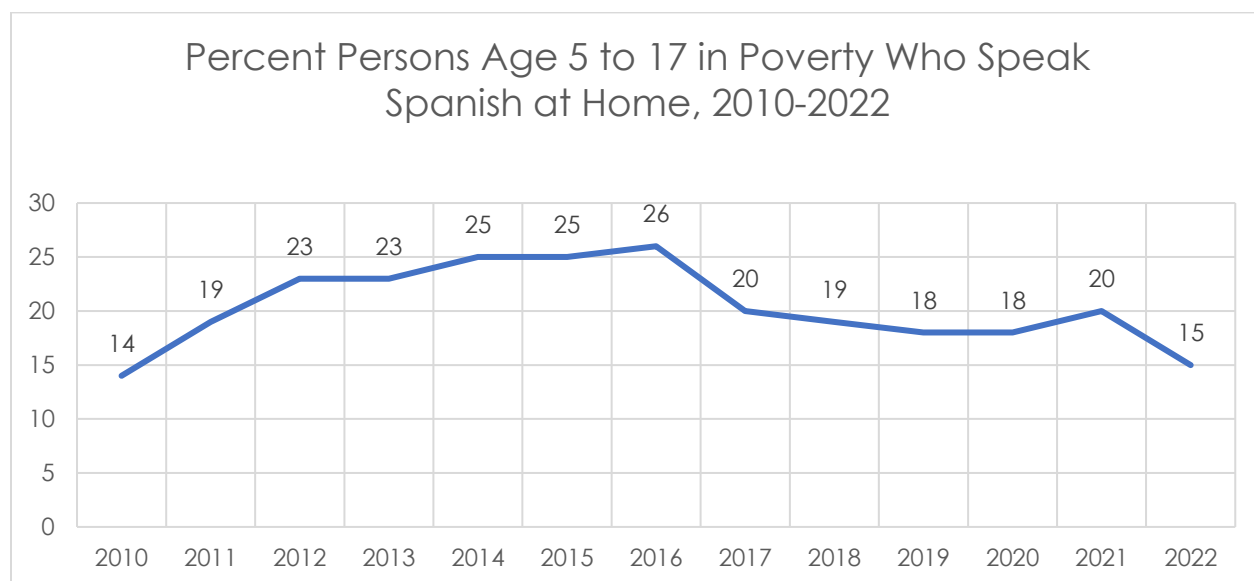
⁶⁰ Ibid.

Hispanic or Latino Children < 5 Years in Poverty West Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Cedar Fort	0	0.0
Eagle Mountain	0	0.0
Fairfield	0	0.0
Saratoga Springs	48	9.1

All of the Hispanic or Latino children younger than 5 years of age who are in poverty and living in West Utah County are in the community of Saratoga Springs; 48 individuals, or 9.1 percent of all Hispanic or Latino children in this age group, are in poverty.⁶¹

LANGUAGE

The language young children speak at home is a consideration in our analysis of service needs. The largest minority in our service area is persons of Hispanic or Latino descent; Spanish is the most common second language used. The Census Bureau does not track the number of young children who speak Spanish in their homes; however, it does track the number of older children who do. In our service area, this percentage decreased from 20 percent in 2021 to 15 percent in 2022. This level is similar to 2010's 14 percent, and demonstrates a further decline from 2016's recent high of 26 percent.⁶²

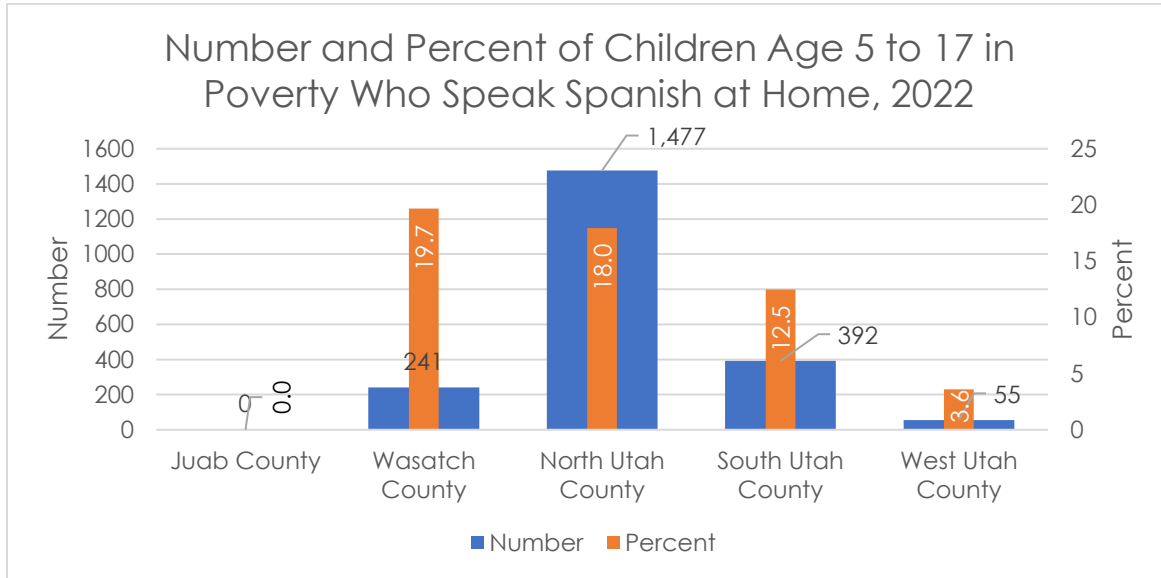


North Utah County has nearly 1,500 children age 5 to 17 who are in poverty and who speak Spanish in their home. This is 18 percent of all children in this age group who are in poverty. Wasatch County has a slightly higher percentage, at 19.7 percent, but this includes a much smaller number—241. South Utah County has 392 children in poverty and in this age group (12.5

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² U.S. Census Bureau Table B16009

percent). West Utah County has only 3.6 percent, or 55 children; Juab County has none (keeping in mind that margins of error have an influence on this number).⁶³



	Number	Percent
Alpine	0	0.0
American Fork	0	0.0
Cedar Hills	130	56.5
Highland	0	0.0
Lehi	52	7.2
Lindon	0	0.0
Orem	528	17.2
Pleasant Grove	57	14.6
Provo	706	25.5
Vineyard	4	3.1

In North Utah County, the largest number of children age 5 to 17 who are in poverty and speak Spanish in their home can be found in Provo, with 706—this represents 25.5 percent of this population group who are in poverty. Orem’s 17.2 percent, or 528 children, is the second-largest number, and Cedar Hills comes in as the

third largest, with 130 (56.5 percent).⁶⁴

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Children 5 to 17 Years in Poverty Who Speak Spanish at Home South Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Benjamin	0	0.0
Elberta	0	0.0
Elk Ridge	0	0.0
Genola	0	0.0
Goshen	57	60.6
Lake Shore	0	0.0
Mapleton	0	0.0
Palmyra	0	0.0
Payson	23	4.9
Salem	0	0.0
Santaquin	41	15.8
Spanish Fork	68	7.6
Spring Lake	0	0.0
Springville	203	15.8
West Mountain	0	0.0
Woodland Hills	0	0.0

Springville, in our South Utah County subarea, has the largest number of children age 5 to 17 who are in poverty and who speak Spanish in their home. Here, 203 children make up 15.8 percent of this population of impoverished children. In other words, of all children age 5 to 17 in poverty in Springville, 15.8 percent of them speak Spanish in the home. Spanish For's 68 children represent about 7.6 percent of this population

group, and Goshen's 57 are 60.6 percent of this group living in poverty.⁶⁵

West Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Cedar Fort	0	0.0
Eagle Mountain	0	0.0
Fairfield	0	0.0
Saratoga Springs	55	7.5

In West Utah County, only Saratoga Springs have children age 5 to 17 living in poverty who speak Spanish in their home. Here, there are 55 such children, making up

7.5 percent of this population group.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Data for children experiencing homelessness is limited. We rely on the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) count and the McKinney-Vento Act reporting by local school districts.

The 2024 PIT count has not yet been released. The 2023 Point-in-Time Homeless Count report includes disaggregated data for Utah and Juab Counties; however, no data for Wasatch County is collected. In 2023, six unaccompanied youth (defined as single persons under age 24) were counted in our service area, all of which live in Utah County. The number of individuals in households comprised of adults and children increased from 47 in 2022 to 57 in 2023. Four individuals in households comprised of only children were counted.⁶⁷

	Utah County	Juab County	Wasatch County
Unaccompanied Youth (under age 24)	6	0	No disaggregated data provided
Youth Parent (under age 24)	0	0	
Children of a Youth Parent	0	0	
Individuals in Households Comprised of Adults and Minors	57	0	
Individuals in Households Comprised of Only Children	4	0	

⁶⁷ State of Utah Annual Data Report on Homelessness 2022, Point-in-Time Count 2023, Utah Department of Workforce Services

As a requirement of Title VII, Part B: McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, the Utah State Board of Education provides information regarding the number of homeless children enrolled in local school districts. The table below provides data from 2018 through 2023.⁶⁸

	Number or Range, 2018	Number or Range, 2019	Number or Range, 2020	Number or Range, 2021	Number or Range, 2022	Number or Range, 2023
Alpine School District	65	≈ 200	51-125	51-125	51-125	51-125
Provo School District	126 – 300	126 – 300	126 – 300	126 – 300	126 – 300	126 – 300
Nebo School District	1,119	>450	426	>450	>450	>450
Juab School District	0 – 50	0 – 50	0 – 50	0 – 50	0 – 50	0 – 50
Wasatch School District	126 – 300	0 – 50		0 – 50	51-125	51-125

The Utah Board of Education also publishes demographic reports for each local education entity. For Fall 2023, the state indicated that 1,378 homeless children were enrolled in our service area. By the end of the school year, this number had decreased to 731.⁶⁹

	Number of Homeless Students Enrolled, EOY 2023
Alpine School District	260
Provo School District	322
Nebo School District	41
Juab County	3
Wasatch County	105
Service Area Total	731

⁶⁸ Utah State Board of Education, Title VII, Part B: McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Report. Districts with exact numbers provided data directly upon request from Early Learning Essentials

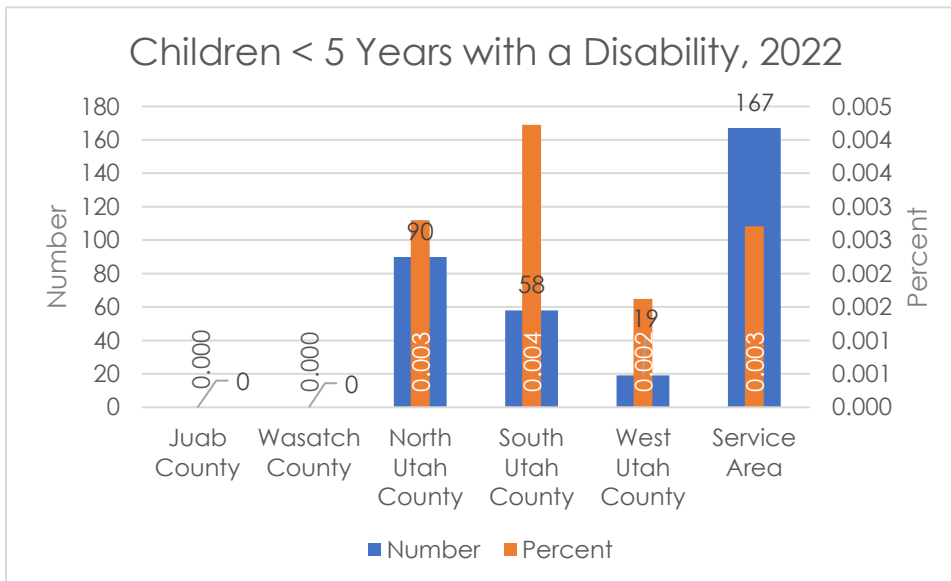
⁶⁹ Utah State Board of Education, EdFacts Homeless Primary Nighttime Residence Student County, downloaded from https://schools.utah.gov/eseastateinitiatives/_esea_state_initiatives/_homeless/_resources_/2023EDFactsHomelessStudentsCounts.pdf

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

As of June 2024, we have at least 76 young children in foster care. The state does not release specific data if the number of children in any age group is lower than 30. Utah County has the largest number with 76.⁷⁰

Age	Juab	Utah	Wasatch
0	0	<21	0
1	0	21	0
2	<11	28	<11
3	<11	27	<11
4	<11	<21	<11

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES



In 2022, there were 167 children age 5 years or younger in our service area who have at least one disability. This figure is down from 2021's 184 and 2020's 234.⁷¹

It is important to remember that the Census Bureau numbers include a margin of error, and thus there are likely

additional children with disabilities. Nevertheless, this data does give us some idea of the scope of this population group and where they live.

The percentage of children in this age group in our service area (0.003 percent) is lower than state (0.005 percent) and national (0.007 percent) numbers.

⁷⁰ Utah Division of Child and Family Services, Western Region (personal communication)

⁷¹ U.S. Census Bureau Table B18101

Children < 5 Years With a Disability North Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Alpine	0	0.000
American Fork	0	0.000
Cedar Hills	0	0.000
Highland	0	0.000
Lehi	16	0.002
Lindon	0	0.000
Orem	24	0.003
Pleasant Grove	0	0.000
Provo	50	0.007
Vineyard	0	0.000

In the North Utah County subarea, Provo has the most children under age 5 with a disability (50). Orem has 24 and Lehi has 16.⁷²

Children < 5 Years With a Disability South Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Benjamin	0	0.000
Elberta	0	0.000
Elk Ridge	0	0.000
Genola	0	0.000
Goshen	0	0.000
Lake Shore	0	0.000
Mapleton	0	0.000
Palmyra	0	0.000
Payson	0	0.000
Salem	0	0.000
Santaquin	49	0.029
Spanish Fork	9	0.002
Spring Lake	0	0.000
Springville	0	0.000
West Mountain	0	0.000
Woodland Hills	0	0.000

In South Utah County, Santaquin has the largest number of young children with disabilities (49); Spanish Fork has 9. Although the Census Bureau figures indicate many communities in our service area have no young children with disabilities, the likelihood is that there are at least a handful of such children. The Bureau's margin of error would indicate this is a probability.⁷³

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

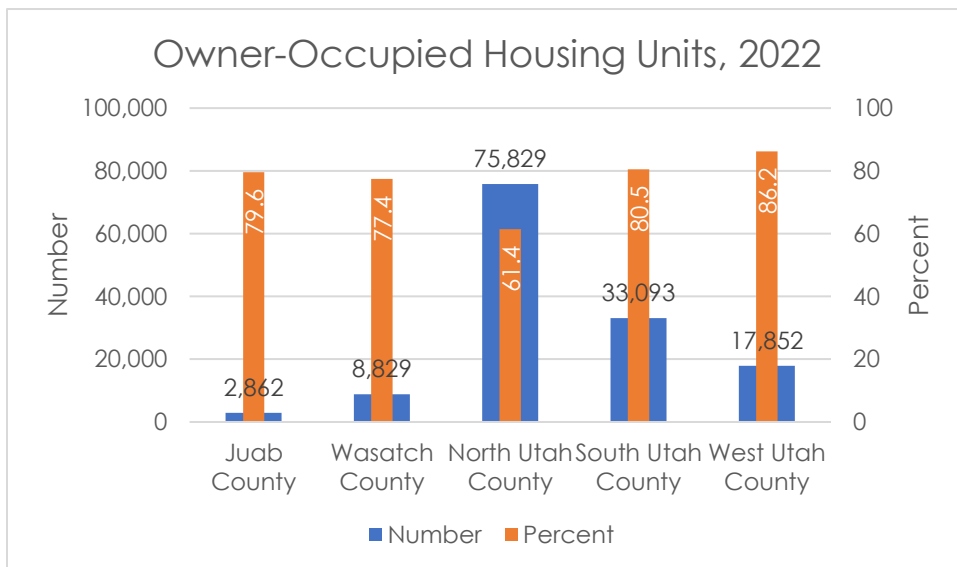
Children < 5 Years With a Disability West Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Cedar Fort	0	0.000
Eagle Mountain	14	0.002
Fairfield	0	0.000
Saratoga Springs	5	0.001

The Census Bureau indicates that our West Utah County subarea has only 19 young children with disabilities; 14 are in Eagle Mountain, and five are in Saratoga Springs. In South Utah County, 25 children under age 5 living in Santaquin have disabilities, and nine live in Spanish Fork. The remaining towns within South Utah County do not have any recorded

children under the age of 5 with a disability.⁷⁴

HOUSING

The type of housing in which eligible children live provides insight into their life circumstances and plays a role in their academic success. Many studies demonstrate that both homeownership and low mobility improve student achievement.⁷⁵ Findings of these studies have held true in both the U.S. and internationally.



In our service area, 69.3 percent of all occupied housing units are owner-occupied; this number is only one-tenth of one percent lower than in 2021, and has hovered around this rate for several years. West Utah County has the highest rate of homeownership

among our subareas, coming in at 86.2 percent. Juab County's 79.6 percent is higher than Wasatch County's 77.4 percent. North Utah County, with two major universities and about 70,000 students, has the lowest rate of our subareas, at 61.4 percent.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ For example, Coulson, N. E. (2002). Housing Policy and the Social Benefits of homeownership. *Business Review (Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia)*, 7.

⁷⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B25003

Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2022		
North Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Alpine	2,449	86.3
American Fork	7,297	71.3
Cedar Hills	2,130	86.3
Highland	4,196	91.1
Lehi	16,663	78.4
Lindon	2,471	79.1
Orem	18,113	59.9
Pleasant Grove	7,700	67.0
Provo	12,957	39.1
Vineyard	1,853	45.6
North Utah County	75,829	61.4

Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2022		
South Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Benjamin	196	88.7
Elberta	64	100.0
Elk Ridge	1,223	99.5
Genola	372	91.6
Goshen	208	73.0
Lake Shore	195	71.2
Mapleton	2,774	86.2
Palmyra	159	86.4
Payson	4,999	81.3
Salem	2,345	92.5
Santaquin	3,305	87.3
Spanish Fork	9,312	79.9
Spring Lake	110	83.3
Springville	7,212	70.3
West Mountain	296	87.3
Woodland Hills	323	91.0
South Utah County	33,093	80.5

Highland has the highest homeownership rate in the North Utah County subarea, at 91.1 percent. Neighboring Alpine and Cedar Hills are both at 86.3 percent, and Lindon is at 79.1 percent. The city with the lowest homeownership rate is Provo—the city where Brigham Young University is located—at 39.1 percent. Vineyard, which is near Utah Valley University and is comprised mostly of apartments, homes, and townhomes built in the last 25 years, is second lowest at 45.6 percent.⁷⁷

In South Utah County, the small community of Elberta is occupied completely by homeowners. Elk Ridge is 99.5 percent, and its neighbor on the mountain is Woodland Hills, at 91 percent. Springville has the lowest rate of homeownership at 70.3 percent.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2022		
West Utah County		
Cedar Fort	54	80.6
Eagle Mountain	9,623	88.3
Fairfield	26	100.0
Saratoga Springs	8,149	83.9
West Utah County	17,852	86.2

In West Utah County, Eagle Mountain has a homeownership rate of 88.3 percent, while Saratoga Springs is at 83.9 percent.⁷⁹

INCOME

Low unemployment rates are a continued strength in Central Utah, with May 2024's rate in our service area at only 2.9 percent—compared to the state's 3.3 percent and the nation's 4.1 percent.⁸⁰ The table below provides labor market data for various local industries.⁸¹ Although these data are for Utah County only, they provide a good framework for understanding the types of jobs available in our area. This table also provides information on average monthly wages for various industries.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 2024

⁸¹ Utah Department of Workforce Services, Economic Data Viewer, Industry Employment and Wages, 2022 Quarter 4 Data

Industry/Sector	NAICS Sector	Average Employment	Establishments	Payroll	Average Monthly Wage
Total, all industries	0	312,492	22,412	4,684,657,299	4,997
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	11	1,070	92	11,441,014	3,564
Mining	21	286	25	5,984,822	6,975
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	212	95	12	1,695,929	5,951
Utilities	22	864	70	20,679,053	7,978
Construction	23	29,995	2,859	501,580,304	5,574
Manufacturing (31-33)	31	23,699	860	397,992,045	5,598
Wholesale Trade	42	7,219	763	159,968,129	7,386
Retail Trade (44 & 45)	44	35,019	2,213	371,503,719	3,536
Transportation and Warehousing (48 & 49)	48	6,966	435	100,743,640	4,821
Information	51	13,269	852	403,843,768	10,145
Finance and Insurance	52	9,308	1,113	206,279,772	7,387
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	3,922	1,117	62,482,102	5,310
Professional Scientific & Technical Svc	54	25,916	4,108	741,071,524	9,532
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	3,067	289	66,462,941	7,223
Admin., Support, Waste Mgmt, Remediation	56	17,494	1,255	227,567,925	4,336
Education Services	61	50,215	660	527,967,914	3,505
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	38,834	2,588	518,458,777	4,450
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	6,841	410	36,479,794	1,778
Accommodation and Food Services	72	23,813	1,130	128,397,230	1,797
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	81	7,593	1,400	83,706,002	3,675
Public Administration	92	7,095	162	111,859,906	5,255
Unclassified establishments	99	7	11	186,918	8,901
Unclassified	999	7	11	186,918	8,901

EDUCATION, HEALTH, NUTRITION, AND SOCIAL SERVICE NEEDS

Early Learning Essentials participates in the triennial Community Assessment conducted by United Way of Utah County; the next assessment is scheduled to be released in March 2025. Some of the data in this section will include data from the most recent assessment, which was published in 2022.

According to the 2021-2022 United Way of Utah County Community Assessment, our service area enjoys many strengths, including high educational attainment, good health, adequate nutrition, and many social service supports. Affordable housing continues to be a problem, however. Emotional and mental health needs are increasing, and local human service nonprofits are struggling to keep pace with the growing demand.⁸²

EDUCATION

Educational attainment is one of the strengths in our service area. Two major universities—Brigham Young University and Utah Valley University—have 34,937 students and 44,653 students respectively, for a total of nearly 80,000 young people.⁸³ This strong post-secondary presence is both a result of and a contributor to our area's culture of educational pursuit.

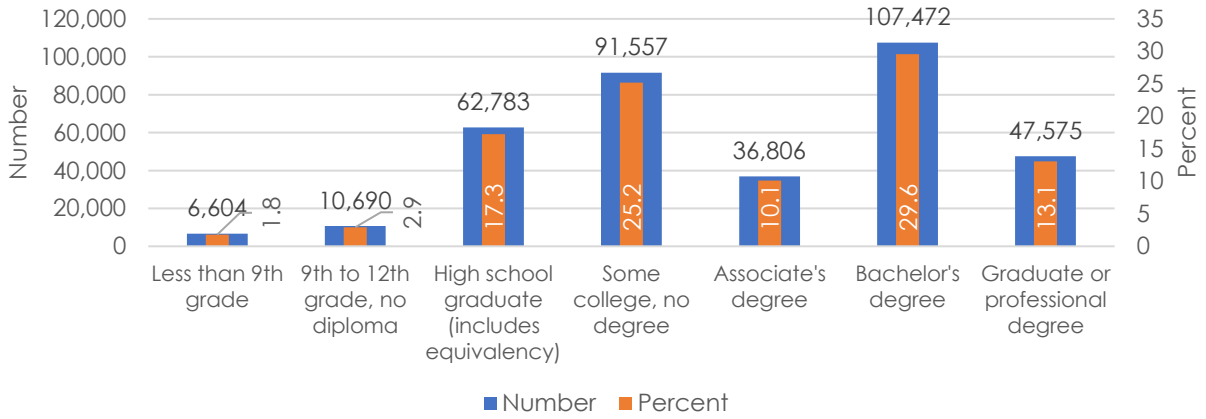
Among adults age 25 or older, 95.2 percent of our service area's population are high school graduates, and 42.7 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. Slightly more than 13 percent of graduate or professional degrees. Another 35.3 percent have some college education or an associate degree. Combined, 78 percent of our adult population age 25 or older have at least some college education.⁸⁴

⁸² *2021-2022 Utah County Community Assessment*, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2

⁸³ *Facts & Figures, BYU Home Site*, <https://www.byu.edu/facts-figures>; *About UVU | Utah Valley University*. (n.d.). <https://www.uvu.edu/about/>

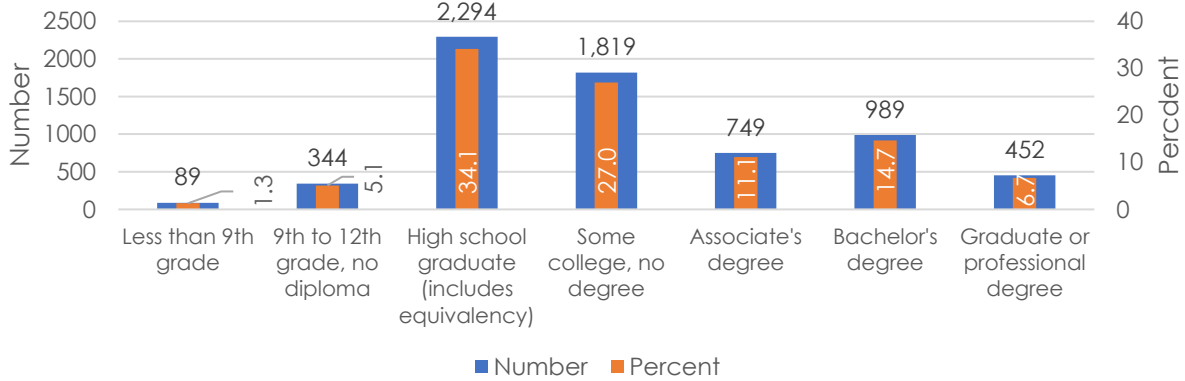
⁸⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Table S1501

Educational Attainment, Service Area, 2022 Age 25 and Older

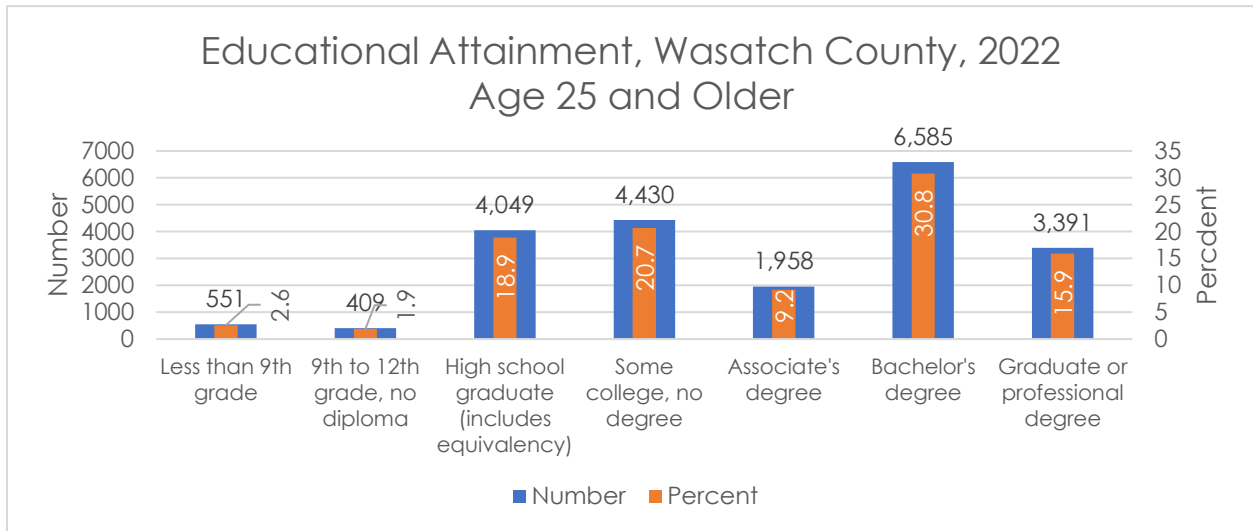


In Juab County, 34.1 percent of adults age 25 or older have a high school diploma; about 21.4 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher.

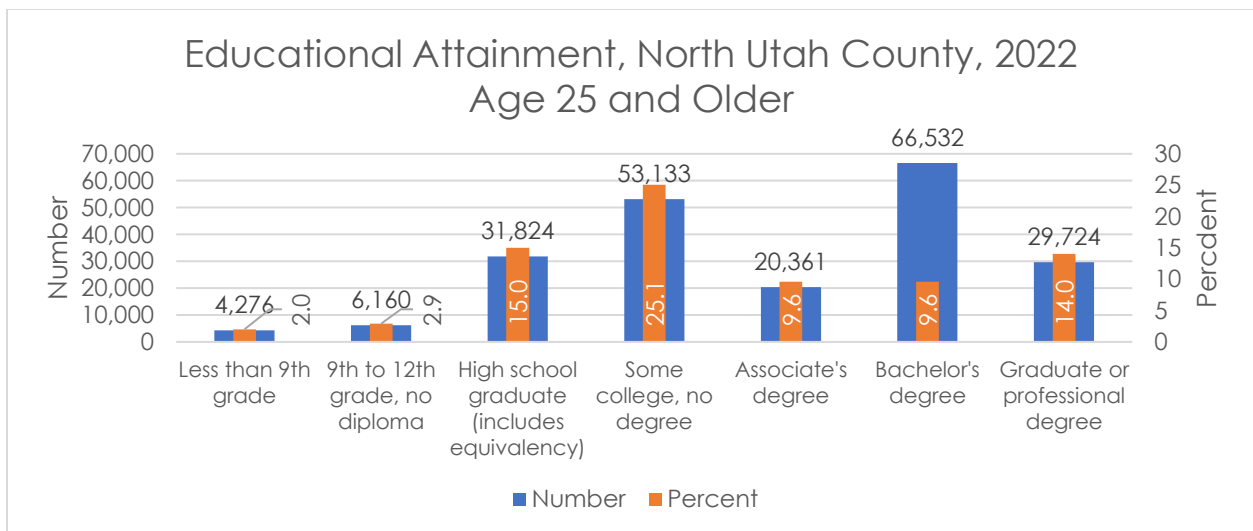
Educational Attainment, Juab County, 2022 Age 25 and Older



In Wasatch County, nearly 47 percent of adults age 25 or older have bachelor's, graduate, or professional degrees; 18.9 percent have a high school diploma.⁸⁵



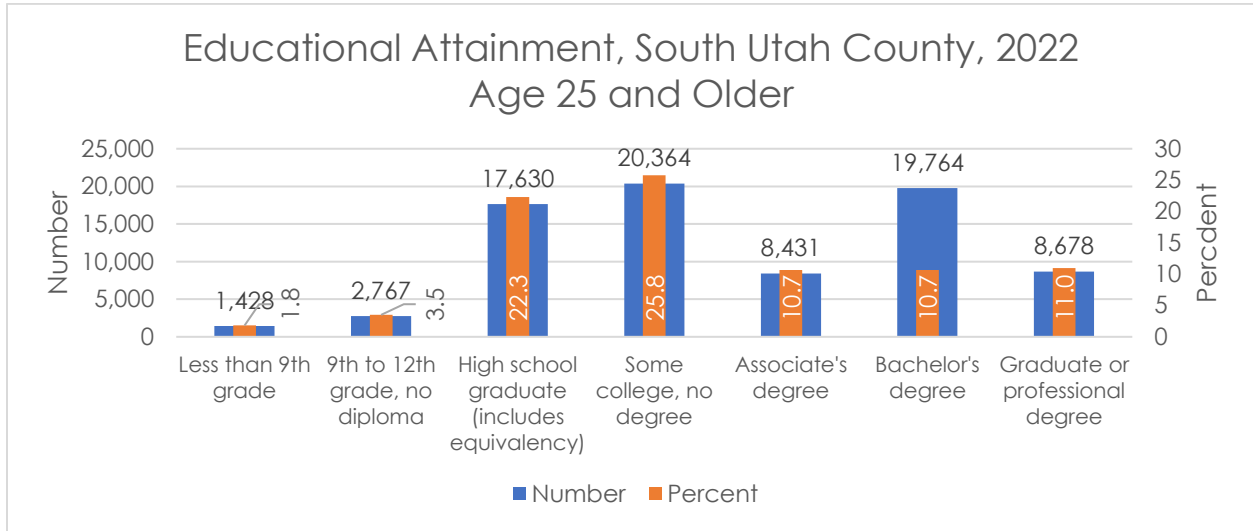
About 23.6 percent of the residents age 25 or older in North Utah County have bachelor's degrees or higher. Note that because many college-age individuals in our area serve two-year voluntary missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, our college student population tends to be older than many other communities'. It is not surprising, therefore, that 25.1 percent of residents age 25 or older have some college, but no degree—many of them are currently enrolled in college.⁸⁶



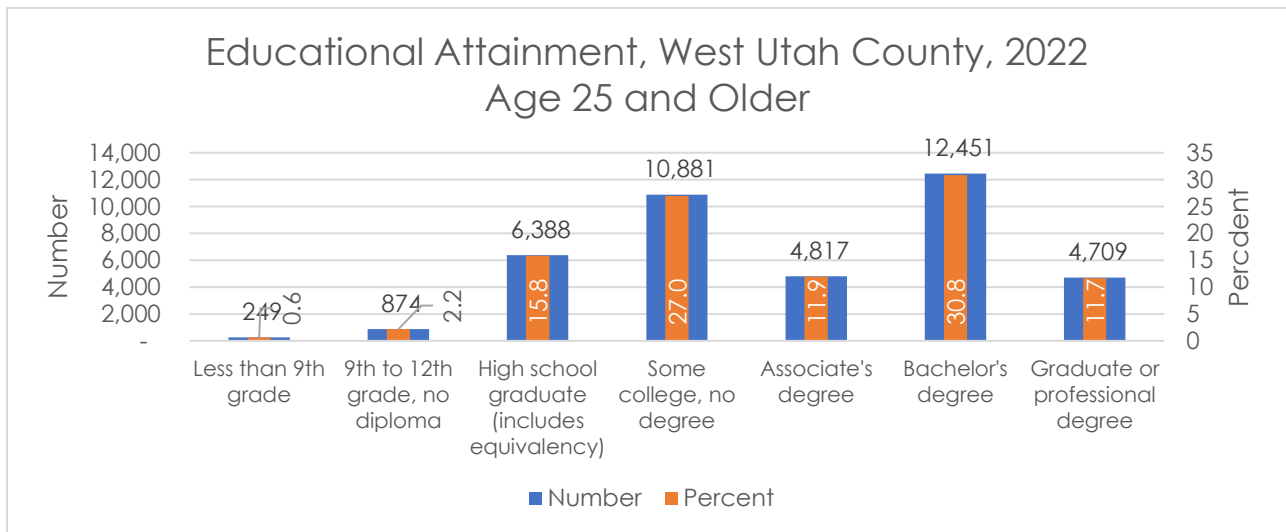
⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

In South Utah County, nearly 22 percent of the adult population has bachelor's or graduate degrees, while 25.8 percent have some college.⁸⁷



About 42.5 percent of the adult population in West Utah County has a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree; 27.0 percent have some college but no degree. Less than three percent have graduated from high school.⁸⁸

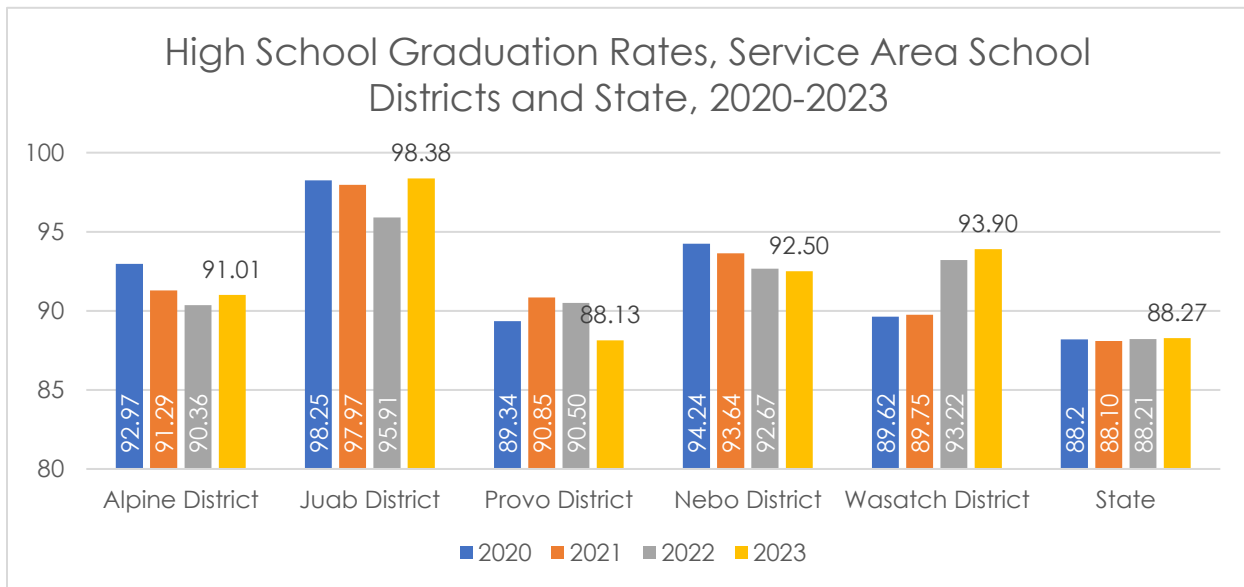


⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Graduation Rates

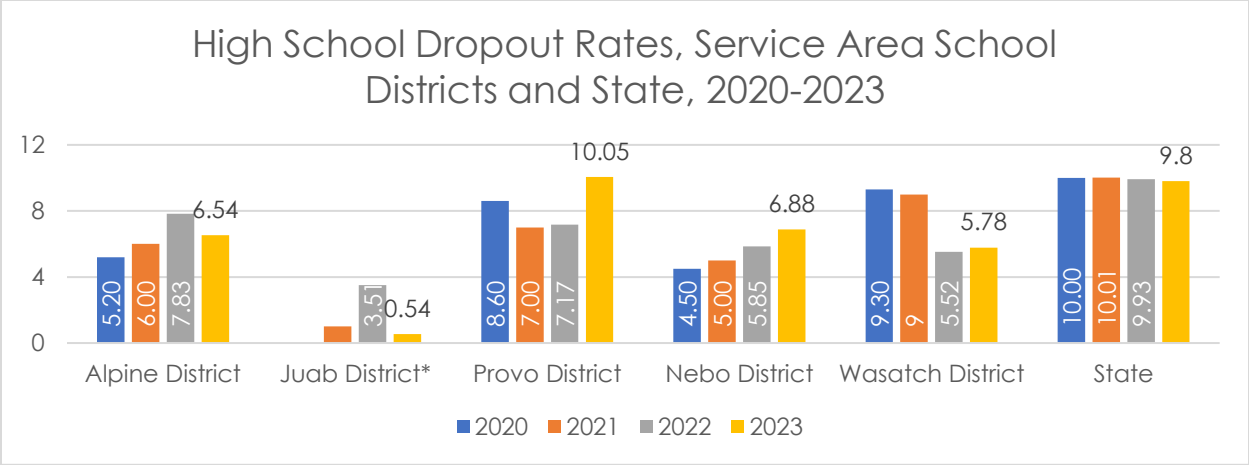
Juab School District continues to have the highest graduation rate of the five school districts in our service area. In 2023, its graduation rate was 98.38. The lowest was Provo School District, at 88.13. Nebo School District, in South Utah County, has experienced a slight decline in graduation rates, going from 94.24 in 2020 to 92.50 in 2023. Alpine School District, in North Utah County, has seen a similar decline, going from 92.97 in 2020 to 91.01 in 2023. Despite these declines, each of the districts in our service area remain above the state averages.⁸⁹



Provo School District has the highest cohort dropout rate (the rate of dropouts for students who entered high school in the same year), at 10.05 per 100 students in 2023. This is the only district in our service area that exceeded the state average of 9.8. Alpine School District was at 6.54 in 2023; Juab was at 0.54, Nebo was at 6.88, and Wasatch was at 5.78.⁹⁰

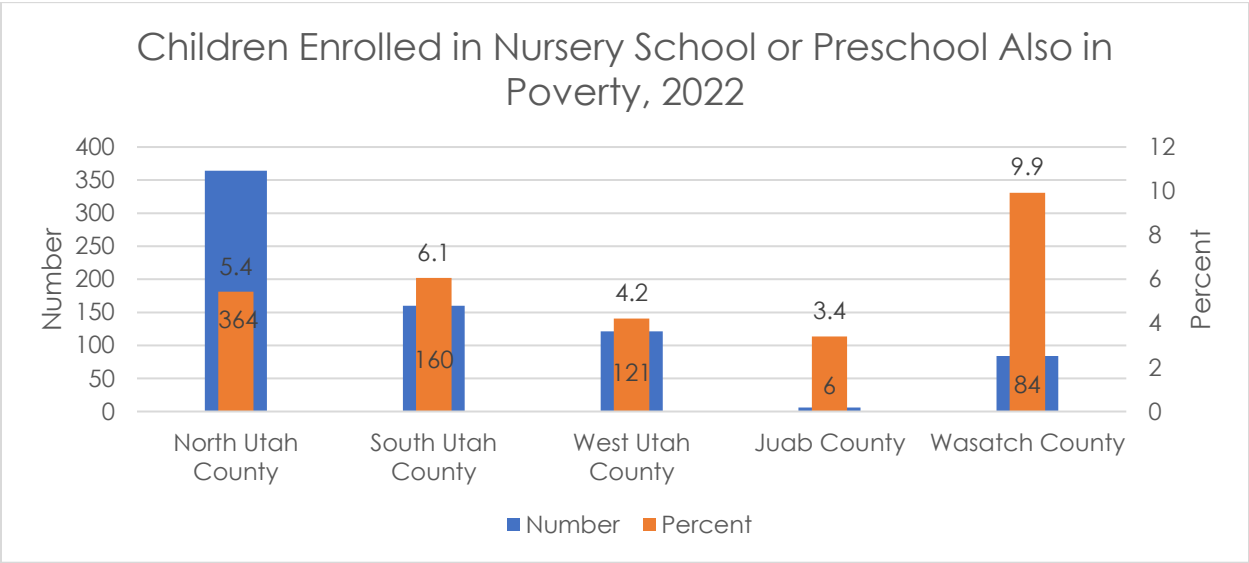
⁸⁹ Utah State Board of Education, *2023 Graduation Rates*, retrieved 15 June 2023 from https://schools.utah.gov/datastatistics/_datastatisticsfiles/_reports/_graduationdropoutrates_/2023 GraduationRates.pdf

⁹⁰ Ibid.



*Juab School District data for 2020 not available

Only a small percentage of eligible children are currently enrolled in nursery school or preschool. In North Utah County and South Utah County, our two largest subareas, only 5.4 and 6.1 percent are enrolled, respectively.⁹¹



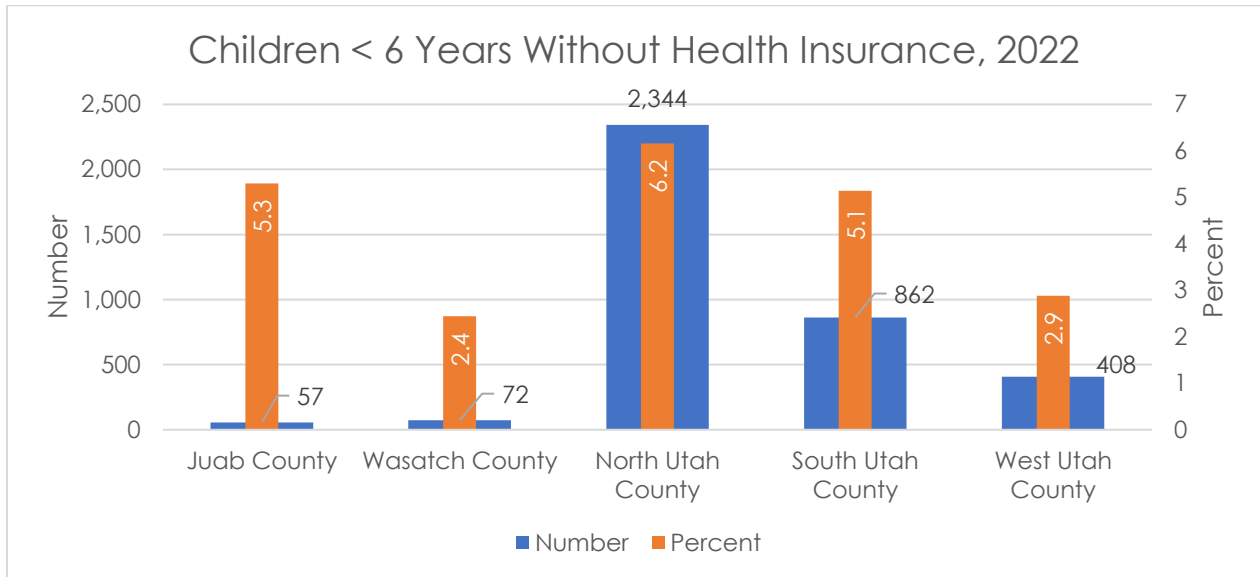
The earlier section of this assessment titled “NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INFANTS, TODDLERS, PRESCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN, EXPECTANT MOTHERS” provides more detail on the number of eligible children.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

⁹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Table B17001

HEALTH INSURANCE

Health care is made more reliable when adequate health insurance is present. In our service area, of the approximately 74,000 children under the age of 6, 5.1 percent do not have health insurance coverage (3,805 children). North Utah County has the highest percentage of uninsured young children, at 6.2 percent; Wasatch County has the lowest, at 2.4 percent.⁹²



North Utah County's 6.2 percent represents 2,344 children, and South Utah County's 5.1 percent represents 862 children.

	Number	Percent
Alpine	49	7.7
American Fork	216	6.4
Cedar Hills	30	2.9
Highland	41	2.4
Lehi	455	5.0
Lindon	74	9.5
Orem	657	7.6
Pleasant Grove	98	2.4
Provo	742	9.7
Vineyard	31	1.9

In North Utah County, the largest number of young children without health insurance is in Provo, with 742. Orem has 657, and Lehi has 455. Cedar Hills (30), Vineyard (31), Alpine (49), and Lindon (98) have the smallest numbers.⁹³

⁹² U.S. Census Bureau, Table B27001

⁹³ Ibid.

Children < 6 Years Without Health Insurance		
South Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Benjamin	0	0.0
Elberta	0	0.0
Elk Ridge	127	22.4
Genola	24	18.9
Goshen	0	0.0
Lake Shore	0	0.0
Mapleton	0	0.0
Palmyra	0	0.0
Payson	118	6.9
Salem	0	0.0
Santaquin	104	5.3
Spanish Fork	319	6.0
Spring Lake	0	0.0
Springville	168	3.8
West Mountain	0	0.0
Woodland Hills	2	1.5

Spanish Fork, in South Utah County, has the highest number of young children without health insurance in this subarea, with 319. Springville has 168, Elk Ridge has 127, Payson has 118, and Santaquin has 104. Besides Woodland Hills (2), all other communities are listed as having no young children without health insurance, although they likely do. The Census Bureau's margin of error indicates this is probably the case.⁹⁴

Children < 6 Years Without Health Insurance		
West Utah County		
	Number	Percent
Cedar Fort	4	28.6
Eagle Mountain	277	3.4
Fairfield	0	0.0
Saratoga Springs	127	2.1

West Utah County's young children without health insurance are almost exclusively in Eagle Mountain (277) and Saratoga Springs (127).⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Income limits for the Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) can be a barrier to health access for many living in our service area. The table below shows 2024 CHIP income limits in Utah.⁹⁶

Household Size	Maximum Income Level (Per Month)	Maximum Income Level (Per Year)
2 (single parent & one child)	\$4,304	\$51,648
3	\$5,200	\$62,400
4	\$6,097	\$73,164
5	\$6,994	\$83,928
6	\$7,890	\$94,680
7	\$8,787	\$105,444
8	\$4,304	\$51,648

The most recent Medicaid limits (March 2024)⁹⁷ also present problems for some children.

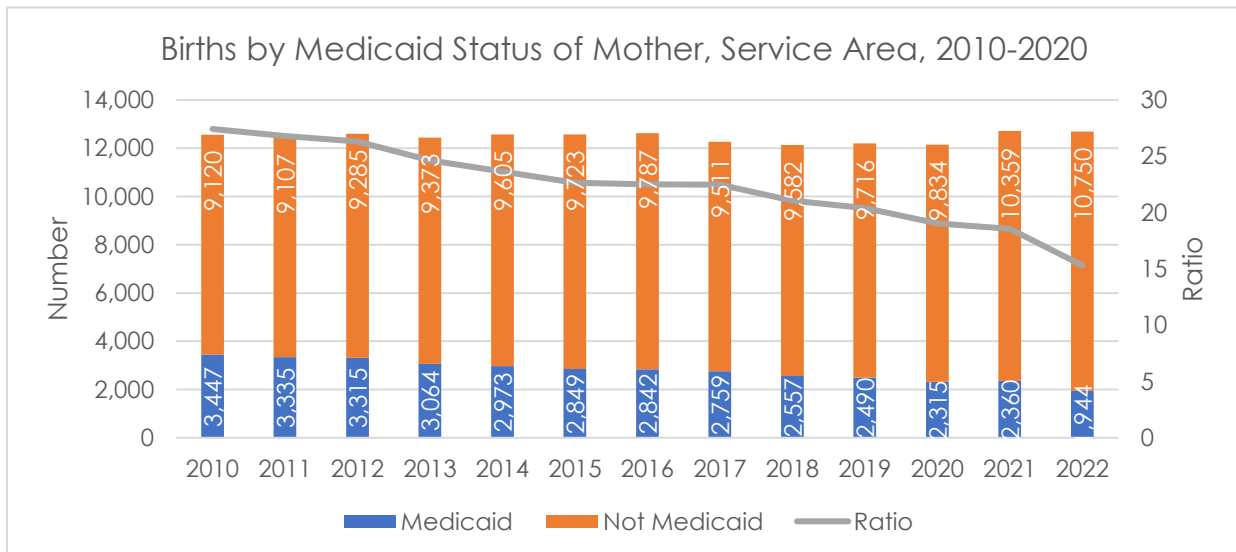
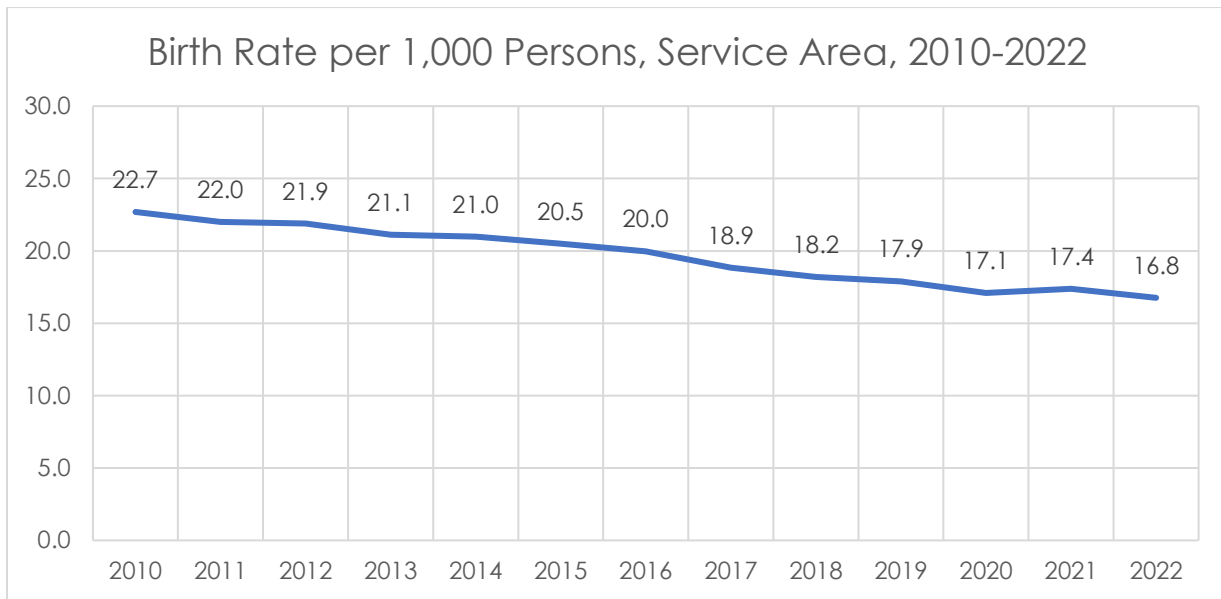
⁹⁶ *Utah CHIP Program, Program Requirements*, retrieved from <https://chip.utah.gov/faqs/>

⁹⁷ Utah Department of Workforce Services. Retrieved 20 June 2024 from https://bepmanuals.health.utah.gov/Medicaidpolicy/DOHMedicaid.htm#t=Tables%2FTABLE_VII_-_Income_Limits_for_Medical_%26_Medicare_Cost-Sharing_Programs.htm

HH Size	PCR	Pregnant Woman & CM 0-5	CM 6-18	Med. Family Needy & Refugee	12 Month TR	CHIP Plan B	CHIP Plan C & UPP	Adult Expansion	ABD	Medicare Cost Sharing					TAM
										MWI	Med Needy	GMB	SLMB	QI-1	
		139% FPL	133% FPL	BMS Level	185% FPL	150% FPL	200% FPL	133% FPL	250% FPL	100% FPL	100% FPL	120% FPL	135% FPL	200% FPL	5% FPL
1	438	1745	1670	382	2322	1883	2510	1670	3138	1255	1255	1506	1695	2510	63
2	544	2368	2266	468	3152	2555	3407	2266	4259	1704	1704	2044	2300	3407	86
3	678	2991	2862	583	3981	3228	4304	2862	5380						
4	797	3614	3458	682	4810	3900	5200	3458	6500						
5	912	4238	4055	777	5640	4573	6097	4055	7621						
6	1012	4861	4651	857	6469	5245	6994	4651	8742						
7	1072	5484	5247	897	7299	5918	7890	5247	9863						
8	1132	6107	5844	938	8128	6590	8787	5844	10984						
9	1196	6730	6440	982	8958	7263	9684	6440	12105						
10	1257	7354	7036	1023	9787	7935	10580	7036	13225						

BIRTHS

The birth rate in our service area continues to decline, although it remains higher than the national rate. In 2022, our rate had dropped to 16.8 births per 1,000 persons, which is the lowest it's been since at least 2010.⁹⁸ The national birth rate in 2022 was 11.0 births per 1,000 persons.⁹⁹



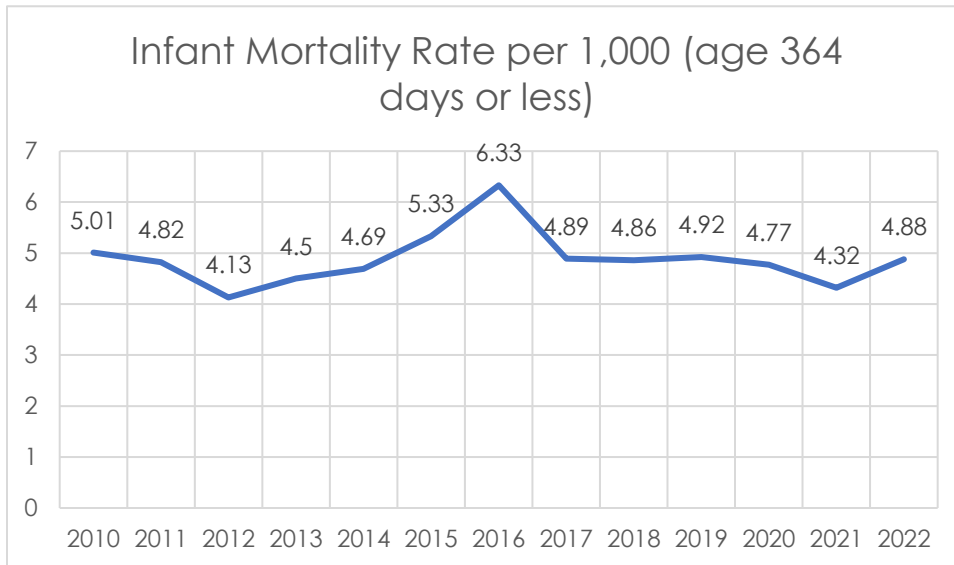
Our service area saw 12,694 live births in 2022, which is on par with the number of births over the past several years. However, because of the increasing population denominator, the rate has dropped by about 6 births per 1,000 persons since 2010. In 2022, 1,944 births were to mothers

⁹⁸ Public Health Indicator Based Information System, Utah Department of Health

⁹⁹ *FastStats*. (n.d.). Births and Natality. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/births.htm>

who were enrolled in Medicaid, which is 15.3 percent of all births. The ratio of Medicaid births has steadily decreased from 27.4 percent in 2010.¹⁰⁰ The ratio of Medicaid to non-Medicaid births

provides some insight into the households of young children.



The infant mortality rate in Early Learning Essentials' service area increased in 2022, going from 4.32 deaths per 1,000 live births to 4.88. The rate is still lower than 2016's 6.33, and lower than the

national figure of 6.42.¹⁰¹

IMMUNIZATIONS AND WELL CHILD CHECKS

For the past several decades, the state of Utah has engaged in immunization efforts, particularly for children. Tracking of immunization through schools, including charter and private schools, has assisted in the efforts to fully immunize children. The following data is from the Utah Department of Health and Human Services. It shows that around 88 to 90 percent of children entering Kindergarten are adequately immunized throughout our service area as well as throughout the state.¹⁰²

Immunization Status by School District, Utah County, 2022-2023

¹⁰⁰ Public Health Indicator Based Information System, Utah Department of Health

¹⁰¹ Danielle M. Ely and Anne K. Driscoll, "Infant Mortality in the United States, 2022: Data From the Period Linked Birth/Infant Death File," *National Vital Statistics Reports* 72, no. 11 (2023): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.15620/cdc:131356>.

¹⁰² "Immunization Coverage Report 2023." Utah Department of Health and Human Services (Salt Lake City, Utah, 2023).

	Alpine		Nebo		Provo		Charter schools		Private schools	
	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)
Kindergarten school entry	88.4	7.4	89.6	9.0	89.6	6.7	83.5	14.8	81.1	16.7
Second dose MMR (K-12)	94.4	5.0	95.4	4.5	95.7	3.8	89.5	10.2	85.9	12.1
7th grade school entry	86.5	7.2	91.0	8.0	84.0	5.8	84.0	13.8	69.1	17.6

Immunization Status by School District, Wasatch and Juab Counties, 2022-2023									
	Wasatch District Public		Wasatch District Charter		Wasatch District Private		Juab District Public		
	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exempt (%)	Total exempt (%)
Kindergarten school entry	89.5	8.5	69.0	31.0	-	-	86.5	9.6	
Second dose MMR (K-12)	93.0	7.0	81.7	18.3	97.8	2.2	92.5	7.2	
7th grade school entry	87.8	11.2	78.6	17.9	75.0	25.0	87.0	11.1	

Immunization status by school type, 2022-23 school year		
Facility type	Adequately immunized (%)	Total exemptions (%)
Childcare facilities and preschools	90.0	5.6
Head start centers	93.3	3.8
Kindergarten (online)	49.6	47.3
Kindergarten (in person or hybrid)	88.2	7.2
District schools	88.5	6.5
Charter schools	86.2	10.9

Private schools	89.8	6.3
7th grade (online)	54.4	38.0
7th grade (in person or hybrid)	88.1	7.0
District schools	88.5	6.4
Charter schools	84.2	12.3
Private schools	87.9	6.7
Second-dose MMR, K-12 (online)	75.7	23.4
Second-dose MMR, K-12 (in person or hybrid)	94.8	4.7
District schools	95.3	4.2
Charter schools	91.2	8.2
Private schools	93.9	4.6

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 73.1 percent of Utah children age 3 to 17 have received a well child physician visit in the past 12 months.¹⁰³

CHILD ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Utah Department of Public Safety's crime dashboard identifies domestic violence by relationship of victim to perpetrator. The table below provides the number and relationship of child victims of domestic violence. The most common perpetrator of child abuse is the parent.¹⁰⁴

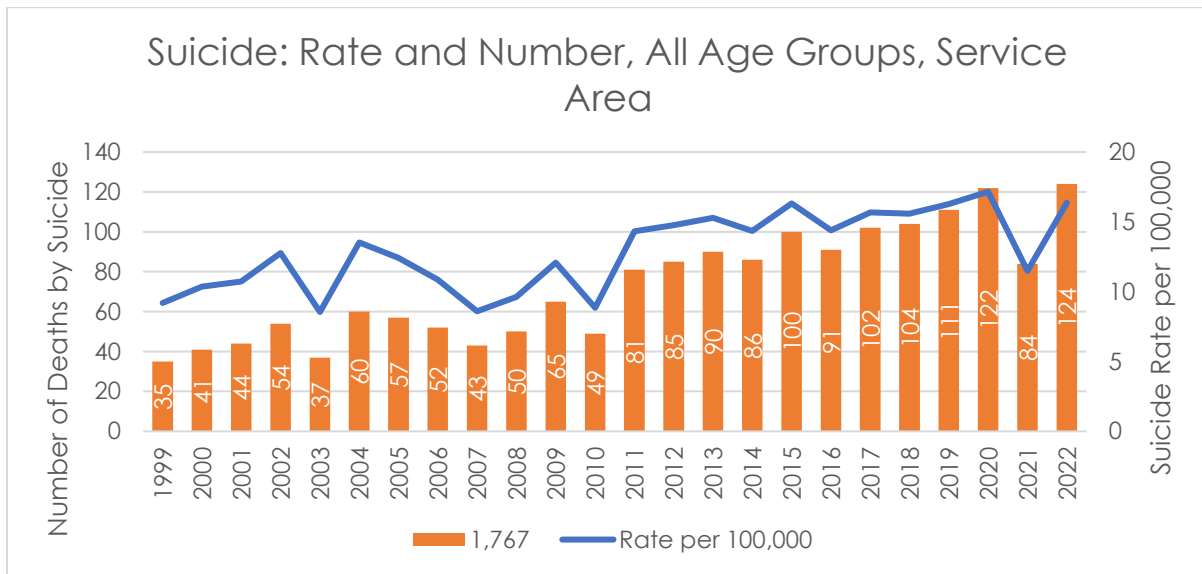
Incidents of Child Abuse, Service Area, by Relationship of Victim				
	Stepchild	Grandchild	Child of boyfriend or girlfriend	Child
2018	15	13	11	131
2019	15	4	16	193
2020	16	11	17	250
2021	37	27	16	408
2022	46	26	29	457
2023	48	14	15	244
2024 (through June)	7	6	4	57

¹⁰³ National Survey of Children's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), 2020-2021

¹⁰⁴ Utah Department of Public Safety Crime Dashboard

MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Our service area continues to experience difficulties with mental and behavioral health. Since 1999, both the number and the rate of suicides for all ages has increased, going from 35 suicides (a rate of 9.19 per 100,000 population) to 124 (rate of 16.37) in 2022.¹⁰⁵ This rate is lower than the national rate of 14.0.¹⁰⁶ rate in 2021 is lower than the national rate of 14.1 deaths per 100,000 population.¹⁰⁷



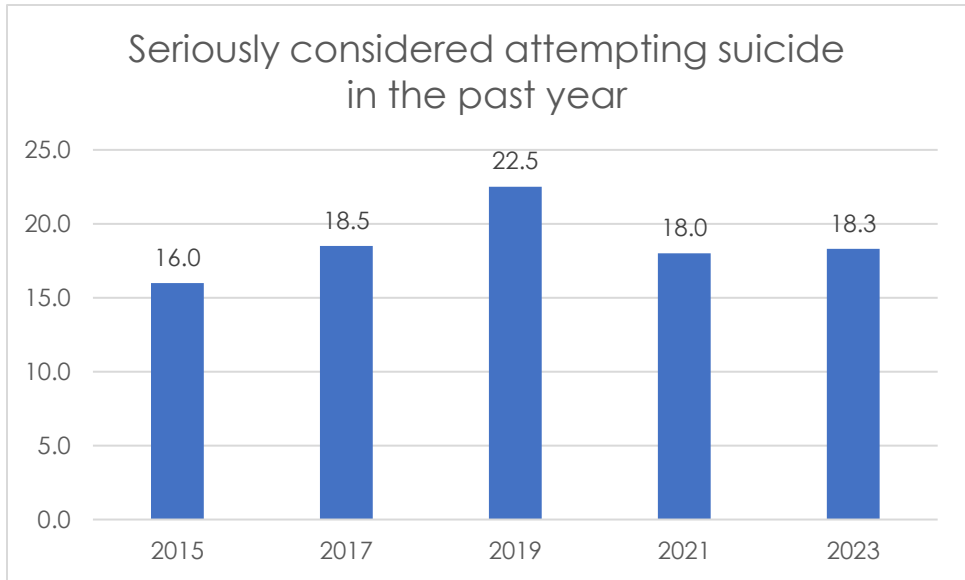
Every two years, the state of Utah conducts a Student Health and Risk Prevention (SHARP) study. This study explores suicidal ideations, non-suicidal self-harm behaviors, and other mental health characteristics. Data is available for local health districts only; this means that the following data are for Utah and Wasatch Counties only (Juab County is combined with Millard, Piute, Sevier, Wayne, and Sanpete Counties). The below data depicts trends over time for our service area, as well as 2023 comparisons to Utah state averages.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Utah Department of Health, IBIS Query, retrieved 20 July 2024.

¹⁰⁶ *Suicide*. (n.d.). National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). [https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide#:~:text=100%2C000%20in%202020.-,The%20total%20age-adjusted%20suicide%20rate%20in%20the%20United%20States,females%20\(5.7%20per%20100%2C000\).](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide#:~:text=100%2C000%20in%202020.-,The%20total%20age-adjusted%20suicide%20rate%20in%20the%20United%20States,females%20(5.7%20per%20100%2C000).)

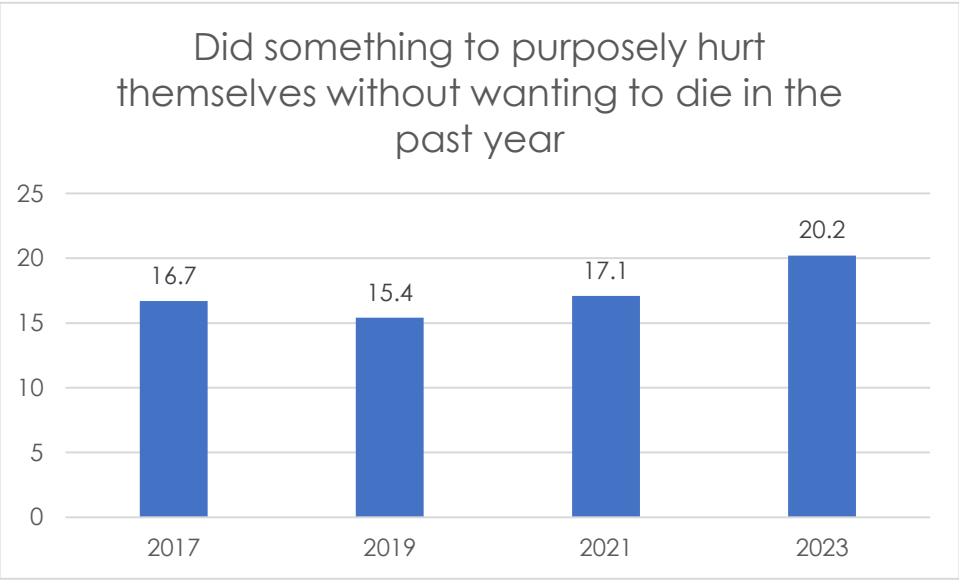
¹⁰⁷ Suicide Mortality in the United States. CDC. Retrieved 24 June 2023 from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db464.htm>

¹⁰⁸ 2021 Student Health and Risk Prevention Needs Assessment Survey, State of Utah Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health



Suicide ideation among 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students in Utah and Wasatch Counties has remained consistent over the past several years, with the exception of 2019 when the percent of students saying they had seriously considered attempting suicide increased from 18.5 to 22.5. In 2023, the

percentage was 18.3.¹⁰⁹



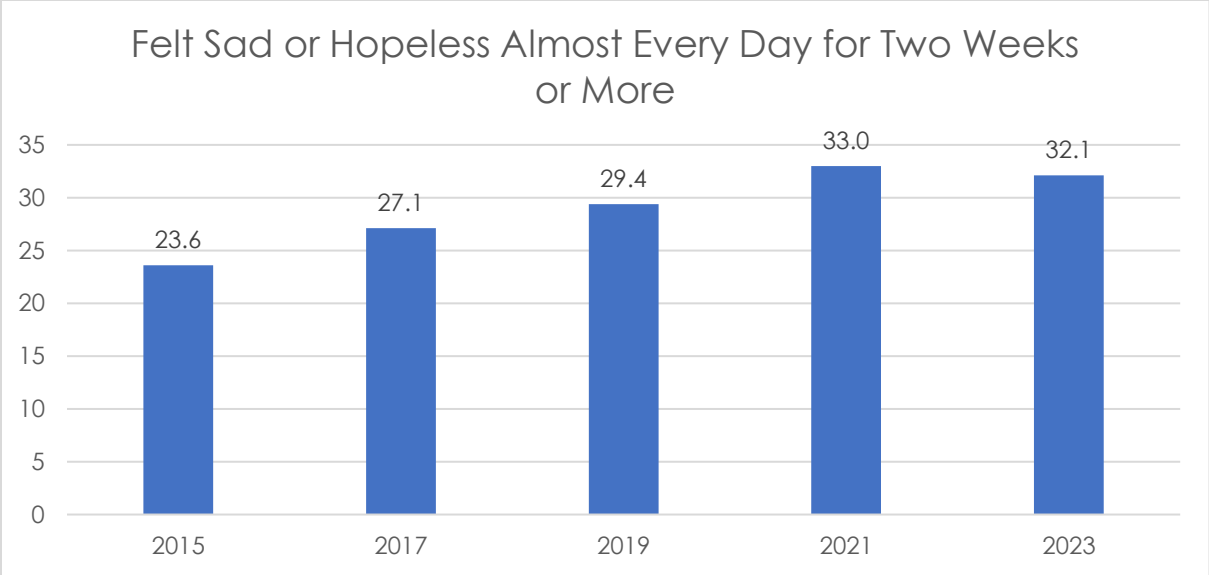
However, a greater percentage of students indicate they have intentionally engaged in self-harm in 2023 than in 2021—going from 17.1 percent to 20.2 percent.¹¹⁰

The percentage of students who say that over the past year they have felt “so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that [they] stopped doing some usual activities” decreased slightly in 2020, dropping to 32.1 percent from 33.0 percent in 2021.¹¹¹

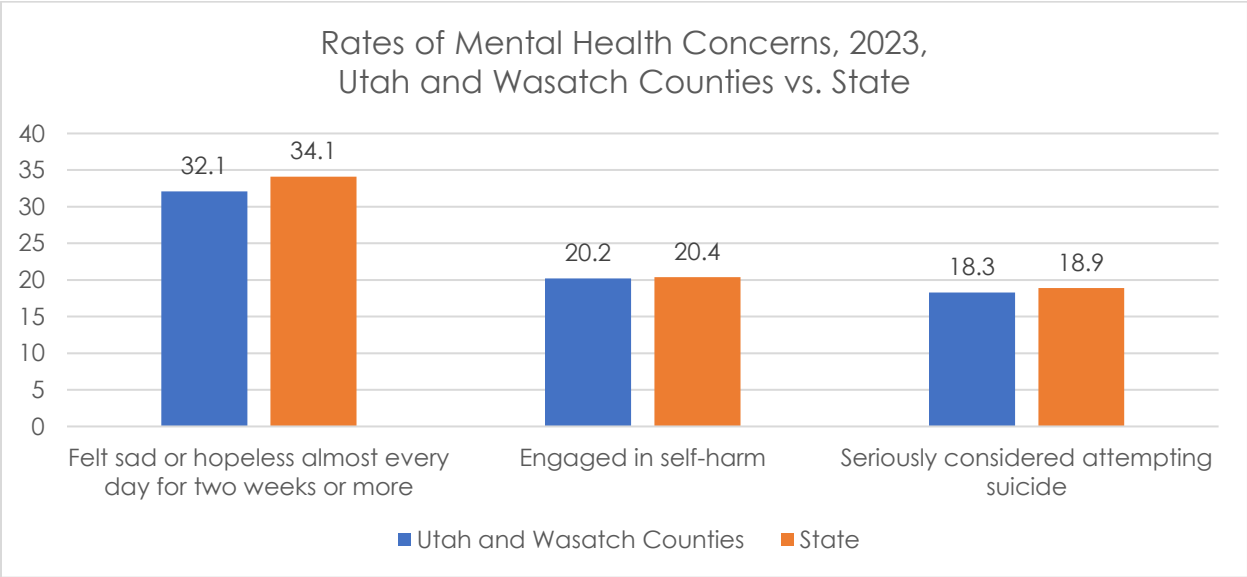
¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

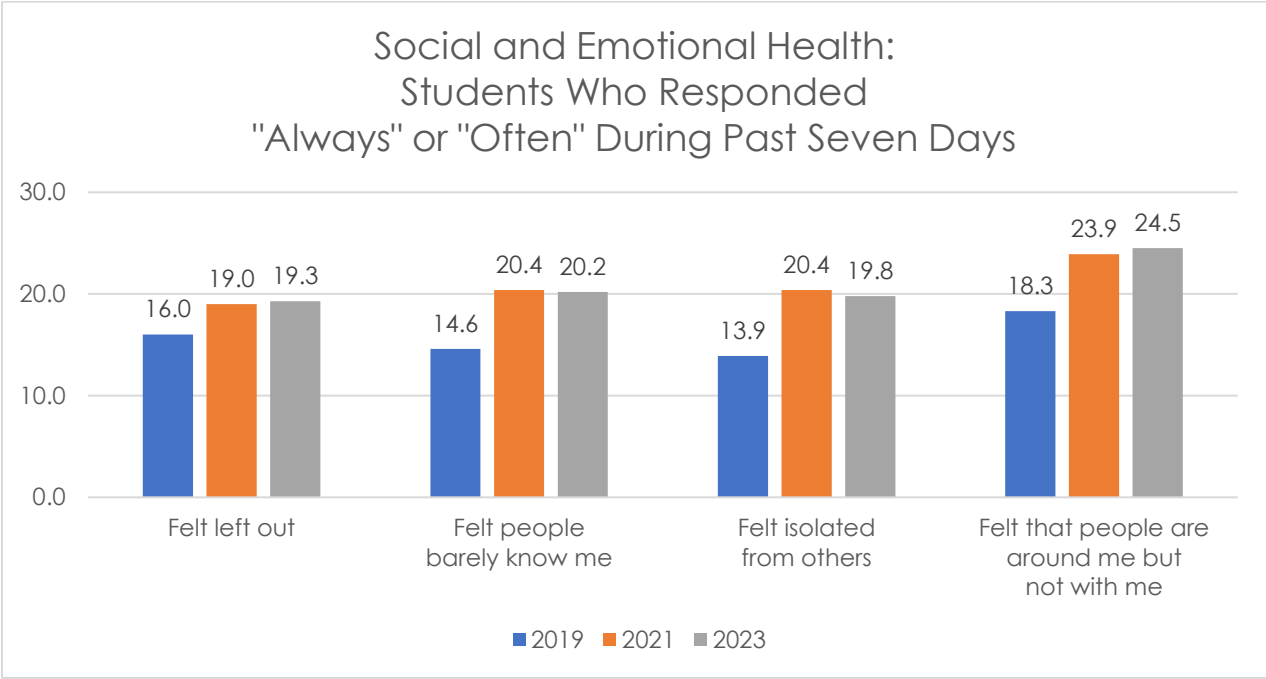


High school students in our service area appear to be on par with statewide peers in the three mental health considerations discussed above. In the “felt sad or hopeless for two weeks or more” category, our service area appears to be doing slightly better than statewide figures (32.1 percent versus 34.1 percent).¹¹²



¹¹² Ibid.

Youth resilience is an indicator of good mental and emotional health. In the SHARP study, students are asked about social isolation such as feeling left out or feeling that people barely know them. Utah County high school students appear to have responded consistently between 2021 and 2023 on these measures. Of note is that the 2021 data was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic; the increased isolation appears to have remained post-pandemic.¹¹³



¹¹³ Ibid.

A good summary of adolescent risk in our service area is presented in the table below. This data is for Utah County students. Of note is that Utah County students fare better than statewide peers in 2023 in every domain.¹¹⁴

RISK PROFILE (<i>Percent of Youth at Risk</i>)	Utah County					State 2021	
	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023	2021	2023
Community Domain							
Low neighborhood attachment	29.0	32.6	26.9	30.0	30.7	33.3	35.1
Law & norms favorable to drug use	11.5	15.2	15.1	18.9	19.3	26.2	26.2
Perceived availability of drugs	18.5	22.4	18.9	15.1	16.4	19.6	19.9
Perceived availability of handguns	26.3	28.7	26.4	26.2	27.2	26.8	26.5
Family Domain							
Poor family management	24.4	24.9	18.1	17.6	19.5	21.8	22.9
Family conflict	30.5	30.9	27.4	27.3	27.8	28.2	29.1
Family history of antisocial behavior	20.6	22.1	17.0	14.0	14.5	19.5	18.6
Parent attitudes favorable to ASB	27.8	34.0	33.2	37.6	42.3	39.3	45.2
Parent attitudes favorable to drug use	7.5	8.2	7.8	7.5	7.7	11.3	11.5
School Domain							
Academic failure	29.2	27.0	22.3	24.5	22.7	29.4	29.5
Low commitment to school	39.9	43.6	44.0	46.3	49.8	48.8	52.5
Peer-Individual Domain							
Rebelliousness	20.1	23.9	20.3	21.2	23.6	22.9	24.3
Early initiation to ASB	20.6	22.8	17.3	16.9	17.1	19.6	20.4
Early initiation to drug use	10.7	10.7	7.5	7.0	5.5	11.7	9.5
Attitudes favorable to ASB	26.1	31.8	32.1	35.5	41.9	39.1	44.5
Attitudes favorable to drug use	13.1	16.0	14.1	15.9	16.7	21.1	20.4
Perceived risk of drug use	24.0	29.0	27.3	28.8	29.1	36.8	35.6
Interaction with antisocial peers	18.0	18.0	13.0	10.1	13.3	12.9	15.5
Friend's use of drugs	9.8	10.4	8.1	5.9	6.5	9.5	9.2
Rewards for ASB	20.5	23.5	22.9	21.7	22.7	25.9	25.2
Depressive symptoms	34.0	38.5	34.0	40.9	43.2	43.1	43.6
Gang involvement	2.2	2.2	1.6	1.0	1.4	1.3	1.7

The following protective profile indicates the percentage of students who had adequate attitudes or behaviors in community, family, school, and peer domains. The only area in which Utah County students are behind statewide students is in rewards for prosocial involvement in the school domain (61.9 vs. 63.0).¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

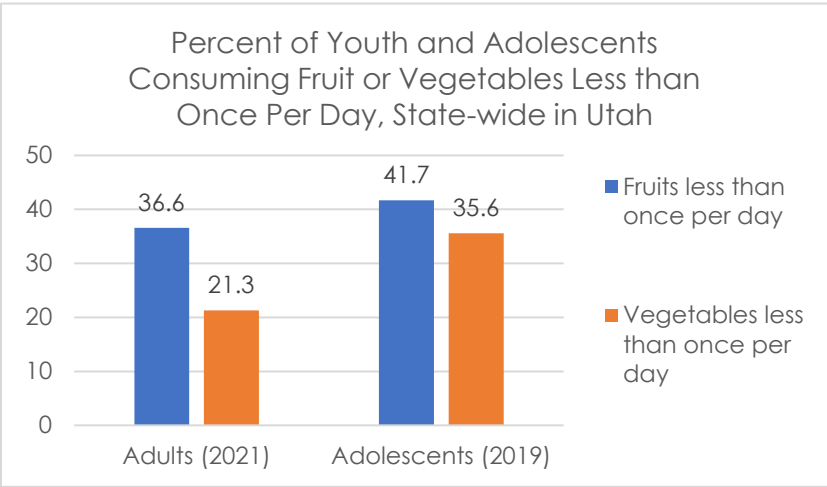
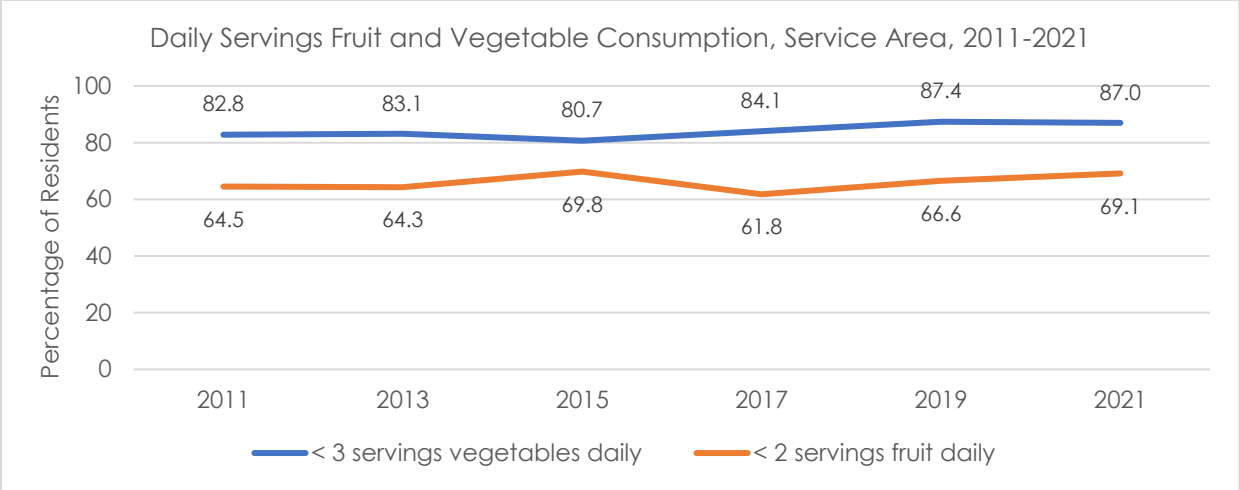
¹¹⁵ Ibid.

PROTECTIVE PROFILE <i>(percent of students with adequate responses)</i>	Utah County					State	
	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023	2021	2023
Community Domain							
Rewards for prosocial involvement	70.6	66.6	67.6	63.9	65.0	55.2	55.2
Family Domain							
Family attachment	74.9	74.1	77.0	74.0	76.4	69.4	69.4
Opportunities for prosocial involvement	72.2	70.2	76.3	73.0	74.7	70.2	70.2
Rewards for prosocial involvement	64.7	63.1	68.6	66.9	69.1	62.6	62.6
School Domain							
Opportunities for prosocial involvement	73.6	72.4	75.3	76.3	76.3	73.8	73.8
Rewards for prosocial involvement	65.1	63.5	60.3	63.8	61.9	63.0	63.0
Peer-Individual Domain							
Belief in the moral order	75.2	69.6	76.8	74.0	68.7	67.7	67.7
Interaction with prosocial peers	72.0	64.3	67.0	58.3	58.8	50.1	50.1
Prosocial involvement	64.0	62.8	59.3	51.5	54.5	48.2	48.2
Rewards for prosocial involvement	74.0	71.7	68.6	64.8	62.9	59.4	59.4

NUTRITION

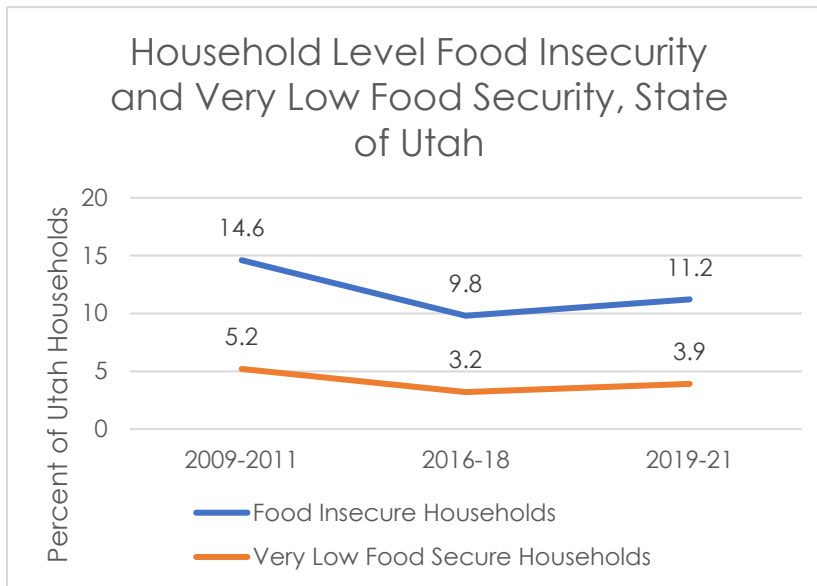
The Utah Department of Health’s Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System tracks consumption of fruits and vegetables. Note that this data is collected in odd-numbered years, and that 2023 data is not yet available. The 2021 percentage of residents in our service area who consume less than 3 servings of vegetables each day was 87.0, improving slightly from 2019’s 87.4 percent. This was very similar to the 2021 state-wide average of 87.6 percent. The 2021 percentage of residents who consumed less than 2 servings of fruit each day was 69.1, an increase of 2.5 percentage points from 2019. This was also very similar to the state-wide average of 71.0 percent. These numbers for our service area have remained fairly similar to 2011, but there has been a slight upward trend of residents not consuming sufficient fruits and vegetables.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Utah Department of Health, IBIS Query, retrieved 24 June 2023



The Centers for Disease Control says that between 36.6 - 41.7 percent of Utah adults and 21.3 - 35.6 percent of Utah adolescents consumed fruit and vegetables less than one time per day.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity: Data, Trends, and Maps*. Retrieved from https://nccd.cdc.gov/dnpao_dtm/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=DNPAO_DTM.ExploreByTopic&islClass=FV&islTopic=FV1&go=GO



The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides statewide data on food insecurity. Food insecure households reflect those that either worried about having funds to purchase food, could not afford food, or otherwise could not afford balanced nutritious food. Very low food security reflects households meeting the above criteria who also either skipped meals or cut the size of meals as a result.¹¹⁸ In Utah, food insecurity decreased substantially from 2011 to 2018,

but has since increased again moving into 2021. The same trend holds true for very low food security. Data between 2012 – 2015 and following 2021 is not available.¹¹⁹

One area of concern is the accessibility of fast-food establishments, which increases the consumption of high-calorie and low-nutrient foods. Fast food is known to contain high levels of sugar, salt, and saturated fats. Fast food can increase blood pressure, decrease nutrient intake, and lead to binge overeating. Because many types of fast food are low in fiber, they can negatively affect the digestive system. And because they are often high in salt content, they can increase the likelihood of heart attacks, stroke, and heart disease.¹²⁰

In our service area, there were 583 fast-food establishments as of 2022; 545 were in Utah County.¹²¹

Number Fast Food Establishments, 2022	
Juab County	12
Utah County	545
Wasatch County	26
Total	583

¹¹⁸ USDA Economic Research Service, Measurement, retrieved from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/measurement/>

¹¹⁹ Ibid., State Fact Sheet: Utah, retrieved from <https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx?StateFIPS=49&StateName=Utah&ID=17854>

¹²⁰ Huzar, T. (2023, February 9). Is fast food bad for you? All you need to know about its nutrition and impacts. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/324847#long-term-impacts>

¹²¹ U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Profile, Table CB2200

Eating meals together as a family has been shown to build self-esteem in children, improve family communication, and generally improve family dynamics.¹²² A study published by the American College of Pediatricians showed that eating meals together improves language development, improves academic achievement, decreases obesity, improves nutrition, and decreases the likelihood of drug, alcohol, and nicotine use.¹²³

Nationally, 49 percent of families eat dinner together daily; another 18 percent eat together “a few times a week.”¹²⁴

SOCIAL SERVICES

In the fall of 2024 and in early 2025, the United Way of Utah County will conduct its triennial Utah County Community Assessment—of which Early Learning Essentials is a part. For our ELE assessment in 2024, we are relying on the results of the United Way’s 2022 study of social service needs.¹²⁵

Key findings, which are discussed in more detail later, include the following.

- Utah County is becoming more diverse in terms of racial and ethnic minority composition. The Hispanic population continues to grow. Community members of two or more races are increasing in numbers.
- Utah County remains young. The county is the youngest county (of significant size) in the nation, with 33 percent of its population being younger than 18 years
- Growth and housing costs are greatest concerns. These public policy issues have, in many ways, overtaken traditional issues such as education and jobs as the most worrisome.
- Emotional well-being is at risk. Depression, anxiety, and poor emotional and mental health are becoming more prevalent among both adolescents and adults.
- Children are falling behind in school. The pandemic likely caused the drop in early childhood education proficiency levels. Proficiency in upper primary grades and middle school has also suffered. However, graduation rates and other measures of secondary success appear unaffected.
- Individual and family self-sufficiency is in danger. As housing costs, including rents, rise dramatically, the ability of individuals and families to meet their financial obligations is decreasing. In addition, high national inflation rates,

¹²² Why the Family Meal Is Important. (n.d.). Stanford Medicine Children's Health. <https://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=why-the-family-meal-is-important-1-701>

¹²³ The benefits of the family table (2021). American College of Pediatricians. <https://acped.org/position-statements/the-benefits-of-the-family-table>

¹²⁴ Christopher F Karpowitz and Jeremy C Pope, “2023 Summary Report : The Practicalities and Politicization of American Family Life” (Provo, UT, 2023).

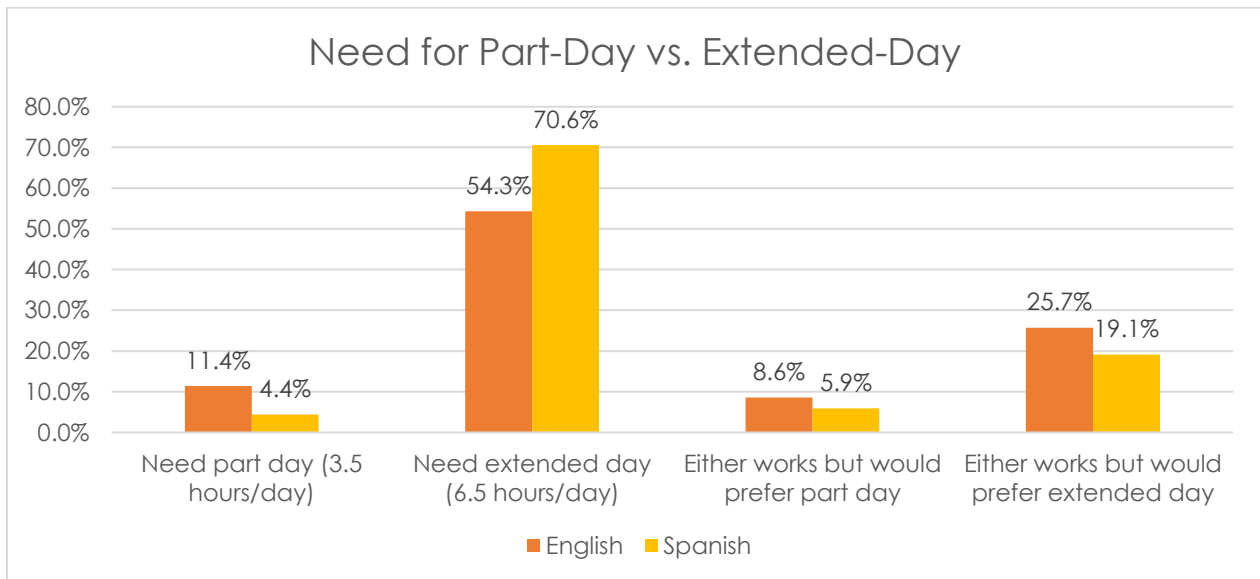
¹²⁵ *Utah County Community Assessment 2021-2022*

increasing interest rates, and lower value of the U.S. dollar are hurting Utah County residents. Wages do not appear to be keeping up with costs.

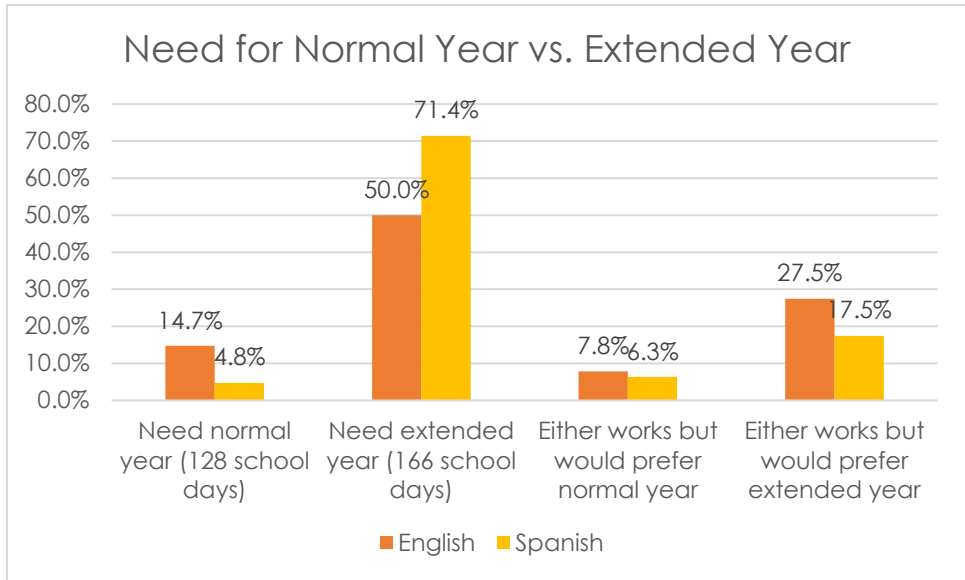
- Informal caring systems must be reinforced and increased. Improved neighborhood attachment will result in more powerful personal and family resiliency, increased public safety, greater trust, enhanced health outcomes, and magnified social capital.
- Formal caring systems must be strengthened. Rapid population growth is outpacing the human service system's ability to meet demand; more volunteers and more funding are necessary to close the gap in current capacity and need.

TYPICAL WORK, SCHOOL, AND TRAINING SCHEDULES OF PARENTS WITH ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

Our 2024 parent survey was completed by about 175 parents (107 English-speaking and 68 Spanish-speaking). Parents need extended-day programming. Slightly more than 70 percent of Spanish-speaking parents, and about 54 percent of English-speaking parents, indicate they need extended day services. Another 25.7 percent of English-speaking, and 19.1 percent of Spanish-speaking, say that either would work, but that they prefer extended day.¹²⁶



¹²⁶ Early Learning Essentials, Inc., 2024 Parent Survey



About the same ratio of English-speaking and Spanish-speaking parents say they need or prefer extended-year services. Nearly eight out of 10 Spanish-speaking parents, and three-fourths of English-speaking parents, are asking for longer school years.¹²⁷

OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS THAT SERVE ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

NUMBER AND LOCATION

There are 250 licensed childcare facilities and preschools in our service area identified in the state's Care about Childcare search engine. Eight of these are in Juab County, 13 are in Wasatch County, and the balance in Utah County.¹²⁸

To be eligible for childcare assistance, the maximum household income for a household size of 2 (one parent with one child) is \$4,853, which is an increase of about \$350 over 2023. The following table provides the 2024 income limits based on household size for receiving childcare subsidies.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Search for Care, retrieved from <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/cac/search/> on 21 July 2024

¹²⁹ Utah Department of Workforce Services, https://jobs.utah.gov/Infosource/eligibilitymanual/Tables,_Appendicies,_and_Charts/Tables,_Appendicies,_and_Charts/Table_4_-_Child_Care_Income_Eligibility_and_Co-Payment.htm. Retrieved 21 July 2024

Childcare Assistance Income Limits	
Table Effective: October 2023	
Household Size	Monthly Income
2	\$ 4,853
3	\$ 5,995
4	\$ 7,137
5	\$ 8,278
6	\$ 9,420
7	\$ 9,420
8	\$ 9,849
9	\$ 9,355
10	\$ 10,277
11	\$ 10,491
12 or more	\$ 10,705

According to a 2023 report by Voices for Utah Children, there is a significant gap in childcare services in our service area.¹³⁰

Service Area Childcare Summary, Children < 6 Years

	Children Needing Care	Percent of Need Met	Center-based Programs	Home-based Programs	Total Licensed Slots	Average Annual Cost of Childcare for Preschool-Age Children	
						Center-based	Home-based
Juab	696	20	2	2	136	\$8,487	\$7,410
Utah	30,569	25	53	147	7,591	\$8,487	\$7,352
Wasatch Service Area	1,704	14	3	1	233	\$8,487	\$7,440
	32,969		58	150	7,960		

CURRENT SLOTS DEDICATED TO ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

Childcare subsidies in Utah are limited to income only; no specific number of licensed childcare slots are dedicated to eligible children.

¹³⁰ "Mapping Care for Kids" (Salt Lake City, Utah, 2023).

CURRENT NUMBERS OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN IN PROGRAMS

As of July 2024, about 996 children younger than age 5 are receiving subsidies for childcare in our service area. This is about the same as last year's figure: 981 in May 2023.¹³¹

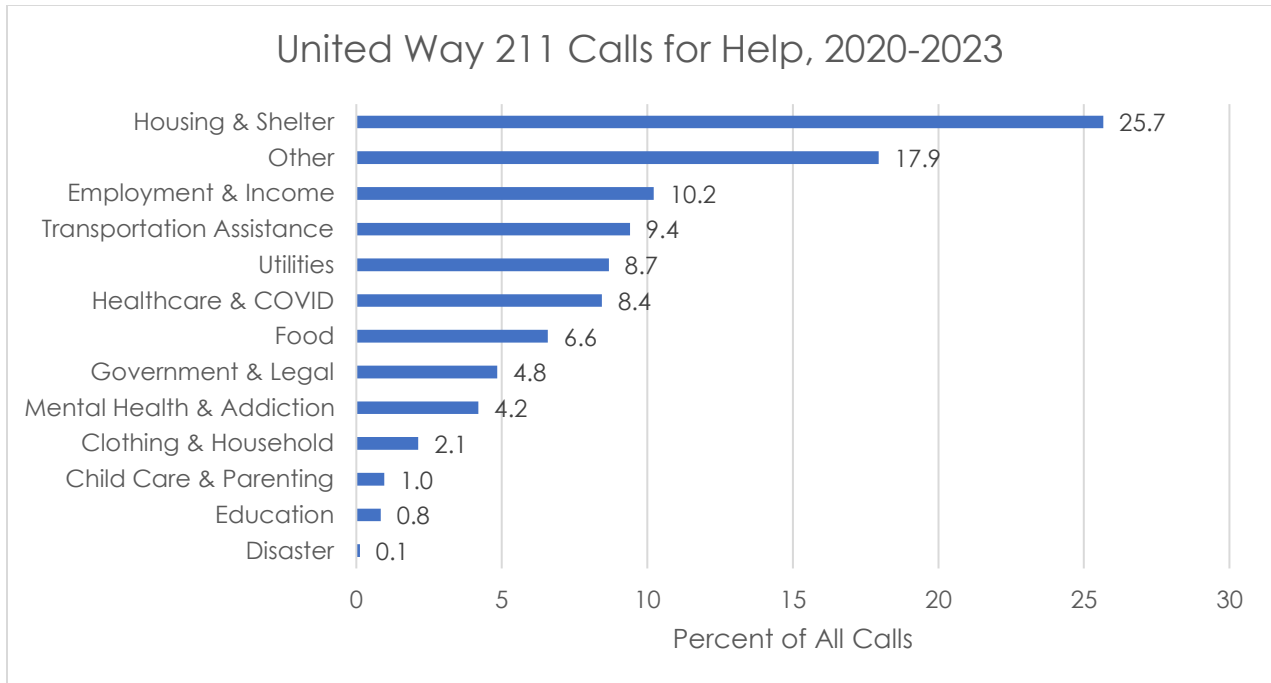
Number of Children Under 5 Who Received Child Care Benefits July 2024						
	AGE					Total
	0	1	2	3	4	
Utah County	80	136	194	239	254	903
Wasatch County	<10	<10	<10	<10	11	≈47
Juab County	<10	<10	10	<10	<10	≈46
Total	≈98	≈154	≈213	≈257	≈274	≈996

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Our service area includes many resources in terms of human service agencies and programs, faith-based organizations, health, and government services for eligible children and their families. Between 2020 and 2023, United Way of Utah County's 211 service received more than 42,000 calls from individuals searching for assistance. About 25 percent of these were for housing assistance. The graph below identifies the categories individuals need help with.¹³²

¹³¹ Utah State Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care. Data for July 2024 (personal communication).

¹³² United Way of Utah County 211



Some of the services and resources in our area include the following.¹³³

Food

- Lehi Peaks Mobile Pantry
- Sharon Park Mobile Pantry
- Iglesia Emanuel Pantry
- Community Action Services and Food Bank
- Benjamin Mobile Food Pantry
- Goshen Mobile Food Pantry
- Kiwanis Food Pantry
- Tabitha's Way
- Heber Valley Thrift
- Central Utah Food Sharing
- Eureka Mobile Food Pantry

Utilities

- Mountainland's HEAT Program
- Community Action Services and Food Bank

Housing and Income

- Centro Hispano Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic
- Provo City Housing Authority
- Community Action Services and Food Bank
- Food and Care Coalition

¹³³ United Way 2-1-1, <http://211utah.org/>. Retrieved 24 June 2023.

- Division of Child and Family Services
- Department of Workforce Services
- The Genesis Project
- Wasatch Behavioral Health Watch

Health

- Intermountain Health Care
- University of Utah Health Care
- Intermountain Dixon Family Health Center
- Mountainland's Family Health Center
- Mountainland Association of Governments
- Utah County Health Department
- Behavioral Health Associates of Utah
- Community Health Connect
- Wasatch Behavioral Health
- UVU Community Mental Health Clinic

STRENGTHS OF THE COMMUNITY

Our three-county service area enjoys many strengths. In May 2024, the Provo-Orem metropolitan statistical area was ranked #5, after being #1 for three consecutive years, in the Milken Institute's list of best-performing cities.¹³⁴ Provo was ranked the #1 city for worker satisfaction by Glassdoor.¹³⁵ Provo was named as the #1 Boomtown in America¹³⁶ also ranked #5 on a 2023 list of best run cities in America, in terms of its quality of public services as well as operating efficiency.¹³⁷ In 2024, Brigham Young University was ranked #1 in America's Best Value Colleges by Forbes.¹³⁸

As discussed previously, our service area has a strong economy with a 10+ year history of unemployment rates below the national average. The most recent data (April 2023) show that our service area's unemployment rate is currently around 2.2 percent.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ Switek, Mansell, and Smith, "Best-Performing Cities 2024." Milken Institute (2024).

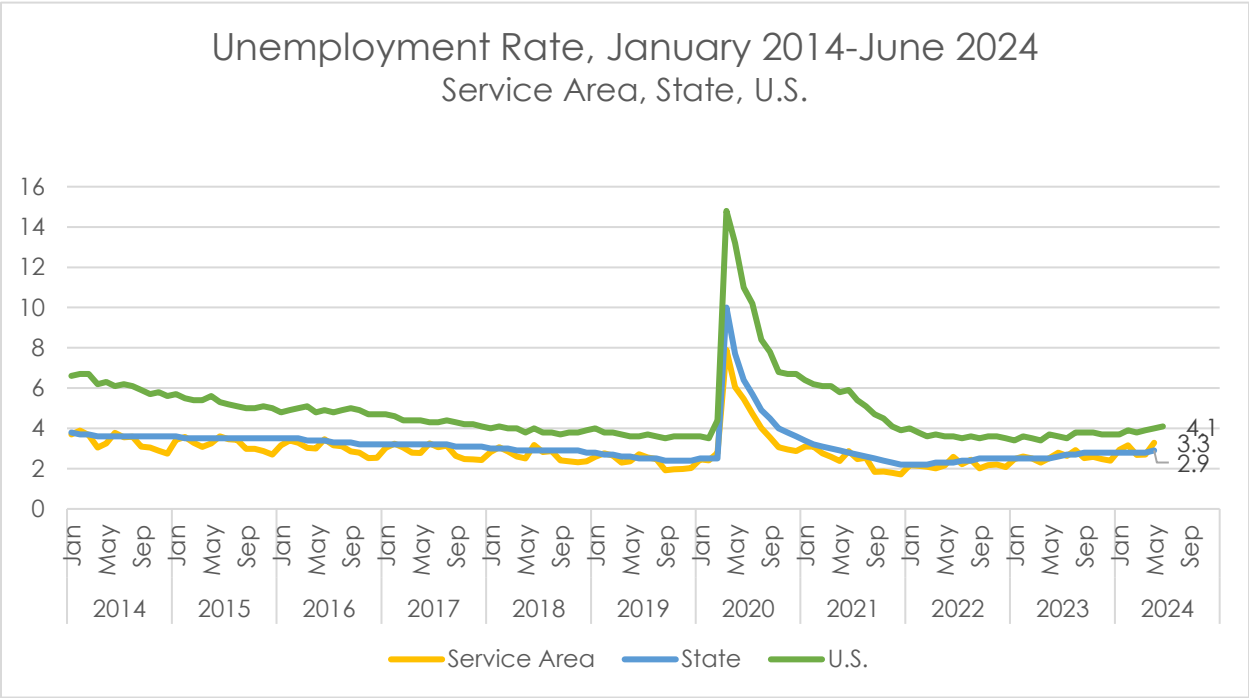
¹³⁵ Conversation starters: cities with the most satisfied workers. (n.d.). glassdoor.com.

¹³⁶ Korolevich, S. (2024, June 28). America's biggest boomtowns: the Fastest-Growing cities in the US. America's Boomtowns: Fastest-Growing Cities in the US | Checkr. <https://checkr.com/resources/articles/americas-biggest-boomtowns>

¹³⁷ McCann, A., et al. (2023, June 20). *2023's Best- and Worst-Run Cities in America*. Wallet Hub. Retrieved 24 June 2023 from <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-run-cities/22869>

¹³⁸ America's best value colleges. (n.d.). Forbes. Retrieved July 30, 2024, from <https://www.forbes.com/value-colleges/list/#tab:rank>

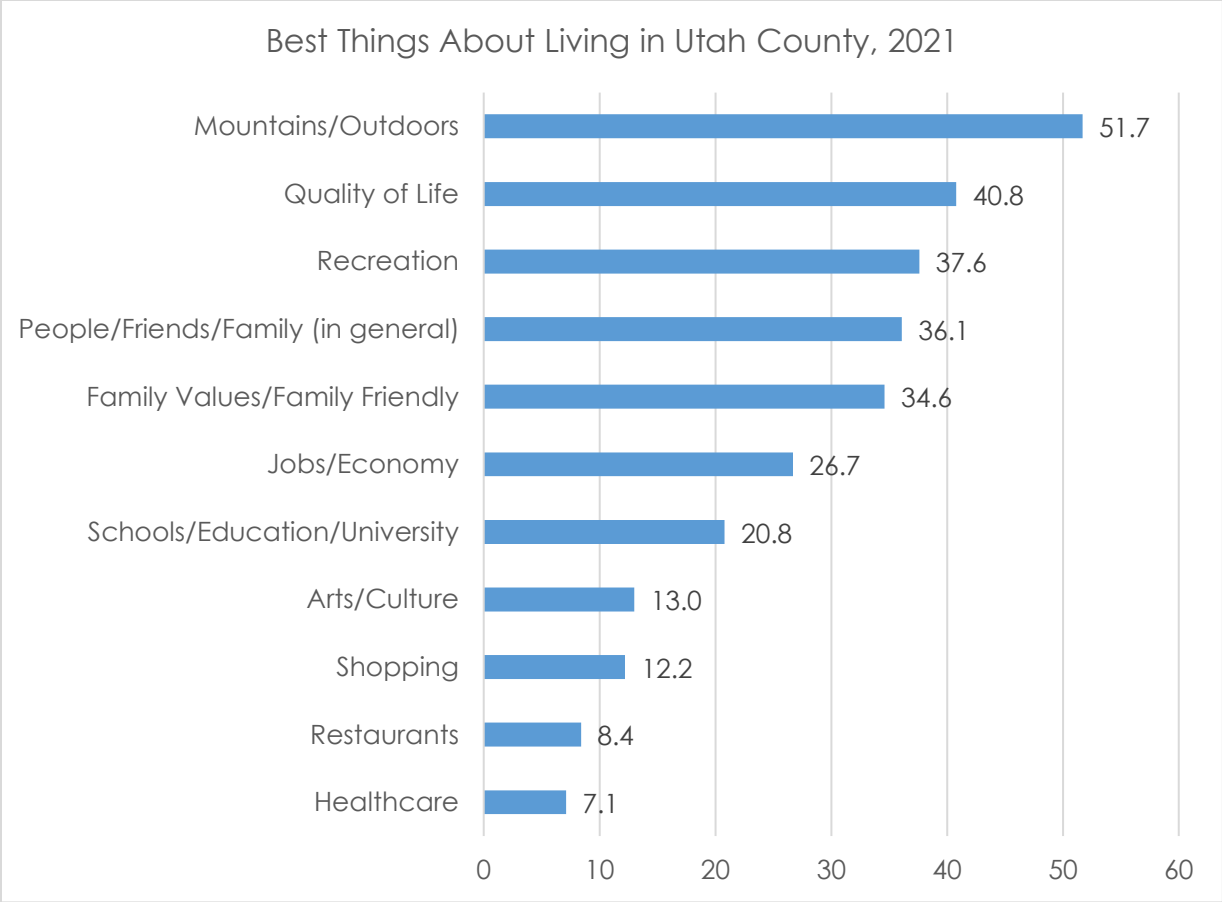
¹³⁹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Monthly Unemployment Rate Report, retrieved 20 June 2024



Our service area also benefits from a highly collaborative human services system. The state's Department of Workforce Services and its Division of Child and Family Services are supportive of local schools, education agencies, and human service nonprofit organizations, providing a thriving Continuum of Care. Furthermore, we participate in a strategic partnership with the United Way of Central and Southern Utah (aka United Way of Utah County) for more effective service delivery.

In the United Way's 2021-2022 Community Assessment, in a survey of adult residents, respondents were asked to describe the best parts of living in Utah County. More than half (51.7 percent) said the best elements of our community were the mountains or other outdoor opportunities. The next highest-ranking feature was the quality of life, mentioned by 40.8 percent of respondents; this was followed by recreation (37.6 percent), people, family or friends (in general) (36.1 percent), and family values or the family friendly environment of our community (34.6 percent). The chart below shows the full results.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ United Way of Utah County, *2021-2022 Utah County Community Assessment (2022)*. Civicus Consulting Group



Mountains and outdoor recreation most likely ranked high due to a thriving park system and other natural resources. Our service area is home to one national monument, three national forests, three state parks, three scenic drives, countless city parks. Commercially, we are also home to 13 golf courses, a ski resort, and several camping and fishing sites.¹⁴¹

There are also many cultural opportunities. The campuses of Brigham Young and Utah Valley Universities are home to many art exhibits. There are many other art galleries and museums throughout our service area that host tens of thousands of visitors each year, including those listed in the chart below.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

Museums in Utah County	
Museum	City
BYU B.F. Larsen Gallery	Provo
BYU Family History Library	Provo
BYU Harold B. Lee Library	Provo
BYU Legacy Hall Provo	Provo
BYU Monte L. Bean Life Science Museum Provo	Provo
BYU Museum of Art Provo	Provo
BYU Museum of Paleontology Provo	Provo
BYU's Museum of Peoples and Cultures Provo	Provo
Cabela's	Lehi
Camp Floyd/Stagecoach Inn State Park and Museum	Fairfield
Chieftain Museum	Santaquin
Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum	American Fork
Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum	Highland
Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum	Payson
Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum	Pleasant Grove
Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum	Provo
Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum	Spanish Fork
Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum	Springville
Historic County Courthouse	Provo
Historic Pioneer Relic Hall	Alpine
Historic Provo Buildings Walking Tour	Provo
Mapleton Heritage Museum	Mapleton
Museum of Ancient Life	Lehi
Museum of Natural Curiosity	Lehi
Orem Heritage Museum	Orem
Pedal Provo	Provo
Peteetneet Museum and Cultural Arts Center	Payson
Petroliana Museum	Provo
Provo Pioneer Village	Provo
Roots of Knowledge	Orem
Springville Museum of Art	Springville
The Hutchings Museum	Lehi
The Museum of Mormon Mexican History	Provo