The Knox County Community Health Assessment Partnership commissioned a research and assessment project -- the 2014 Knox County Community Health Assessment -- which is a follow up to the 2011 Community Health Assessment. This project aims to gather and update data and information from a variety of community sources and use this information to continue to improve health and community services in Knox County. Two different surveys were administered to various subsets of the population throughout Knox County. With a desire to gather information from a broad base of Knox County residents and business owners, two similar, but specialized, surveys were disseminated through various means. The surveys included both quantitative and qualitative data including ‘yes/no’ questions, rating scales, and opportunities for open-ended responses.

Data Collection

The household survey was designed to assess the issues that are facing Knox County residents and to identify where there have been changes in issues, or perceptions of issues, since the 2011 survey was completed. The 2014 survey was completed by 1,095 community members of Knox County, Ohio and included questions on community strengths, support services, physical and mental health issues, financial, safety, health and housing issues, educational issues, and issues facing youth.

Prevention Team Parent Survey
2013 PRIDE Youth Survey
Interchurch Data
Pathways of Central Ohio Hotline
County Health Rankings and Roadmaps
Salvation Army Statistical Reports 2014
2012 Ohio Statewide Transit Needs Study

The business survey was conducted through the Knox County Chamber of Commerce. Utilizing a selective electronic mailing list, targeted area business leaders were invited by the Chamber to complete the survey. The 60 respondents included both Chamber member and non-member businesses and included information on strengths and positive reactions to conducting business in Knox County, immediate and long-term concerns, and future plans for business operation.
The 2014 assessment gathered information on perceived strengths in Knox County and sought to understand what residents and business owners like and dislike about living in Knox County. Respondents were asked to rate several indicators of community togetherness.

Ninety-two percent (92%) of respondents enjoy living in Knox County and are proud of their community and 89% of respondents believe that residents are willing to help each other out in the community.

In addition to feeling close to other residents in their communities, respondents believe that they have an opportunity to make an impact in their community. The majority (64%) reported that they have ‘much’ or ‘some’ opportunity and this is demonstrated, in part, by the large number of Knox County residents who are engaged in civic and volunteer activities. Fifty-five percent (55%) of Knox County residents reported an affiliation with a religious group, church or organization, and 21.9% reported volunteering with their church or religious group.

“I like the rural sensibility and the willingness of people to help each other regardless of class ... Of course the natural beauty of the area is what really drew us to Knox County.”

~Household Survey Participant

Perception of Community Issues: Top 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Percent Rated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Education Levels</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources to Meet Basic Needs</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>67.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Literacy Levels</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of household survey respondents believe that Knox County is an inclusive community that is accepting of people of all races (69.5%) and income levels (76.9%).

The participants were asked to rate the following issues: poverty, low educational levels, low literacy levels, resources to meet families’ basic needs, seat belt usage, motor vehicle accidents, availability of exercise resources or fitness opportunities, domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, littering, water pollution, air pollution, proper land use (zoning, building), and lack of building codes.
The questions on the household assessment were designed to gauge resident’s perceptions of issues impacting the community, as well as further understand the issues that are impacting individual households in Knox County. The questions that were posed asked respondents to rate their perception of how various community issues, physical and mental health issues, and financial/income issues impact Knox County, and then respondents were asked to consider how these issues impact their household. The 2014 assessment also included a section that asked respondents to report on opinions related to issues impacting youth in the community.

The household respondent population is substantially more educated, overall, than the general population of Knox County, with 40.2% of respondents earning a bachelor’s degree or above compared with 20.4% of the total county population. As would be expected, there is a statistically significant correlation between education level and income with higher levels of education positively correlated with higher income levels. For example, 47% of respondents with a post-graduate degree had income levels over $100,000, whereas only 2.5% respondents with a high school education earned more than $100,000.

Of the 1,095 household survey respondents 78% were female and 77% had higher levels of education than most Knox County residents.

Perceptions of Knox County Residents

The household survey was designed to assess the perceptions Knox County residents have regarding issues in the community and issues in their home. There are vast differences between the ratings of issues in the community vs. issues in the home -- with obesity being the only issue that was present as a top five issue in the household and the community. Among issues impacting youth in the community, respondents identified: alcohol/drug abuse (53.5%), unhealthy food choices (49.9%), obesity (48%), mental health issues (44.3%), and teen pregnancy/parenting (42.2%) as the top five concerns. Distracted driving (65.5%), misuse/overuse of technology (55.5%), lack of parent involvement (54.2%), bullying/cyberbullying (46.1%), and child abuse/neglect (39%) led the list of top safety issues facing youth.

Respondents were asked to assess physical and mental health issues - both in their home and the community. Significant variances were present based upon household income with the lowest earners reporting the greatest number of health issues, the least access to healthcare providers, and the greatest need for community support services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Household Health Issues: % Major Issues</th>
<th>Top Community Health Issues: % Major Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>Alcohol &amp; Drug Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obesity</td>
<td>Obesity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Dental Care</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>No Health Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Respondents</td>
<td>% of Respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Respondents</td>
<td>% of Respondents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The business survey was designed to gather information on the social, economic, and health issues that impact the county from an infrastructure and economic perspective. The questions solicited feedback on areas of immediate concern as well as anticipated needs and goals for the future. The business survey posed questions to respondents regarding their overall impressions of Knox County as a place to do business.

The 60 respondents who completed the business survey represent a variety of business types including: retail (42%), healthcare (14%), manufacturing (14%), non-profit (8%), food service (8%), government (8%), and construction (3%). Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents indicate that the composition of their staff is fewer than 20 employees and 61% own their place of business.

Business respondents had positive statements about the county as a place to do business, the availability of community resources, and their planned growth and expansion in the community; however, most expressed concerns about the quality of the Knox County workforce related to skill level, work ethic, availability, and stability.

Business survey respondents rated the availability of community resources as average or good, with the following ratings:

- **GOOD:** fire protection, law enforcement, health care services, school system.
- **AVERAGE:** public transportation, child care services, shopping, recreation, restaurants, hotel and conference facilities.

Forty-five percent (45%) of survey respondents plan to modernize or expand their business, buildings, or equipment.

"We need a dependable workforce with basic computer skills and at least a high school education. We also need young professionals that appreciate the lifestyle here and that want to raise families here. Employees need access to transportation and affordable housing."

-Business Survey Respondent
The Knox Health Planning Partnership (KHPP), formerly the Knox County Community Health Assessment Partnership, designed the 2014 community health assessment to obtain data and gather information on a variety of community issues as a way to identify community strengths and areas of concern. The community partners behind this most recent assessment made special effort to gain a clearer understanding of the strengths, struggles and perceptions of various groups of residents in the Knox County on key issues impacting their daily lives. The reliance on multiple sources of data obtained through the survey offers depth in terms of the quality of information gathered.

The household and business surveys provided information specific to each subgroup defining their key concerns and strengths individually. This information is extremely valuable and will be result in development and implementation of a 2015 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHIP will provide specific goals, strategies and timelines for addressing the priority issues identified through the assessment process. The KHPP anticipates that the 2015 CHIP will include and continue the majority of the successful strategies implemented in the 2012 CHIP addressing the top 3 priorities of alcohol, drug and tobacco use, mental health issues, and childhood obesity.

The 2012 CHIP focused on the priorities and the strategies to address those priorities. These items were identified by KHPP members through the analysis of the top ten (10) issues identified by the assessment respondents, local secondary data (current reality), and the consideration of the issues identified that were feasible for implementation. This document enabled the KHPP to measure the progress made towards addressing the three (3) priorities identified.

Positive outcomes of the 2012 CHIP include but are not limited to: development of the “Get Healthy Knox” wellness campaign (Facebook page, healthy living tips, coalition working on wellness issues) and utilization of the 5-2-1-0 healthy lifestyle and Crunch Out Obesity school-based programs; a community organizational survey that assessed parent education/support initiatives currently being provided in Knox County and a survey of parents assessed interest, needs, barriers, parenting practices regarding parent education and support.

The CHIP, based on all findings, will serve as the foundation for a community-wide effort to improve the health and well-being of all Knox County residents. The work of the KHPP has already served as a mechanism to bring community members together in an effort to improve the safety and cohesiveness already perceived as positive attributes in Knox County.

Thank you to all Knox County residents and businesses who participated in this assessment effort.
2014 Community Health Assessment Funders

Alcohol & Drug Freedom Center  Knox County Head Start
Behavioral Healthcare Partners  Knox County Job & Family Services
Community Foundation of Mount Vernon & Knox County  Mental Health & Recovery for Licking & Knox Counties
Knox County Board of Health  New Directions Domestic Violence Shelter
Knox County Chamber of Commerce  Sanctuary Community Action - Danville
Knox Community Hospital  United Way of Knox County

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Janet Chandler  Joy Harris  Lee Rhoades
Evaluation Coordinator, Mental Health & Recovery for Licking & Knox Counties  Director, Interchurch Social Services  Member, Knox County Board of Health
Nick Clark  Matt Hellman, Executive Director, New Directions, The Domestic Abuse Shelter and Rape Crisis Center of Knox County
Executive Director, YMCA of Mount Vernon  Joann Kerr  Jana Shira
Thom Collier  Health Educator, Knox County Health Department  Administrator, Children's Services
Commissioner, Knox County  Carol Dorough  Kay Spergel
Dean, Health Sciences - Mount Vernon Nazarene University  Richard Mavis  Executive Director, Mental Health & Recovery for Licking & Knox Counties
Jackie Fletcher  Barb Mickley  Jennifer Turnes
Director of Nursing, Knox County Health Department  Director, Sanctuary Community Action - Danville  Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Behavioral Health Care Partners
Judy Gregg  Julie Miller  Sandra Walker
Nursing Faculty, Mount Vernon Nazarene University  Health Commissioner, Knox County Health Department  Dean, Health Programs - Central Ohio Technical College
Carol Grubaugh  Jen Odenweller  Bruce White
Executive Director, Knox County Chamber of Commerce  Executive Director, United Way  CEO, Knox Community Hospital
Steve Oster  Superintendant, Knox County Board of Developmental Disabilities

For more information on the Knox Community Health Assessment or Community Health Improvement Plan, contact the Knox County Health Department at 740-392-2200 or chip@knoxhealth.com. To view the full assessment report please visit the websites of our health assessment funders.