

# 2015 COMMUNITY STATUS REPORT



# WHAT THIS PLACE NEEDS...

all of us living UNITED



United Way  
of Amarillo & Canyon



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Our work at the United Way of Amarillo and Canyon recognizes that the building blocks of Income, Education, and Health are interwoven, and our solutions must connect these dots. Through community supports and positive personal choices, even the most vulnerable in society can build a good quality of life. The United Way of Amarillo & Canyon works toward this goal *to improve lives through the caring power of our community.*

**Lifestyle Choices Impact Health.**

There is a very direct link between good nutrition, active lifestyles and the prevention of heart disease, our number one killer in both Potter and Randall Counties. There is a direct link between breastfeeding babies and the resulting health of both the babies and the moms.

The Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings shows that out of 237 ranked counties in Texas, Potter County ranks 233rd on Health Behaviors. Better health outcomes translate to better income and better educational outcomes. We can do better. *We must do better.*

**Education Drives Income.**

The correlation between educational attainment and earnings translates into the millions of dollars over a lifetime. How well are we communicating this to our youth?

Too many babies in our community are being born into poverty—to single women with low education and an often insurmountable uphill climb out of poverty. Yet research shows doing three things reduces the chance of living in poverty to *just two percent.* What is this formula?



High school graduation in Potter County continues to improve and unemployment continues to fall—both very positive trends, but the third factor: births to single mothers continue to be remarkably high in Potter County with more than one in two babies born to a single mom. This statistic paints a bleak picture for these young women’s future income, education, and health outcomes. Unfortunately, it paints the same bleak picture for their children and for our community.

*Children in Poverty* is the fastest growing demographic in our area. This trend is unsustainable as it places increased demand on government and philanthropic assistance for food, housing, after-school care, and other supports. The needs are increasingly outpacing available resources.

**Basic Needs and the Foundational Building Blocks of Healthy Communities.**

It is important that as a community we have the data to drive policies and initiatives so that our programs not only continue to provide emergency intervention to ensure the basic needs of food, shelter, and safety; but that we double down on efforts to prevent problems before they turn into crises. The United Way of Amarillo & Canyon supports both essential basic needs, as well as innovative programs demonstrating successful outcomes in the areas of Income, Education, and Health because that’s **WHAT THIS PLACE NEEDS.**

Chris R. Koop

President, Board of Directors  
United Way of Amarillo & Canyon



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Community Needs Assessment Report supplies data for Potter and Randall Counties on key indicators for demographics, income, education, health, and vulnerable populations. When available, data for the United States, Texas, and Lubbock County are included for comparison.

Although Potter and Randall Counties are located right next to each other, they are in fact very different.

Minorities constitute the majority of the population of Potter County. Potter County is also characterized by high poverty, low educational achievement, poor health outcomes, and a sizable proportion of people in vulnerable circumstances such as reliance on public assistance and victims of abuse. With some rare exceptions, Potter County performs worse than the United States, Texas, and Randall County and similar to or worse than Lubbock County on most indicators, however over time Potter County has improved on many indicators. For example, between 2012 and 2013 the poverty rate in Potter County dropped by 7.3%.



Randall County is predominantly Caucasian and affluent. It performs better than the United States, Texas, Potter, and Lubbock County on almost every indicator. Randall County has higher educational achievement, overall better health outcomes, and a smaller proportion of people in vulnerable circumstances, however the population of Randall County is changing. The total population grew by 1.7% every year between 2009 and 2013, the proportion of minorities increased, and the poverty rate had an overall increasing trend. The two neighbors are becoming more alike.

The large number of college dropouts, and health concerns including elevated rates of deaths from heart disease, cancer, and accidents were areas of concern for both counties. At the same time, both counties have improved high school graduation rates and lowered teen birth rates.

Despite growing similarities, the 2015 report suggests that the nature of poverty in Potter and Randall Counties is quite different. Poverty in Potter County appears to be more fundamental and long-term, whereas in Randall County it seems to have more of an acute, situational nature.



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH THE  
CARING POWER OF OUR COMMUNITY.

## INTRODUCTION

This report is designed to provide a comprehensive picture of trends for Potter and Randall Counties in key areas of interest. The United Way of Amarillo and Canyon (UWAC) focuses its efforts on three areas: Income, Education, and Health. The goal of the United Way is to help the residents of Potter and Randall Counties, and particularly their most vulnerable populations, excel in these areas. Trends in these areas have been highlighted in the report using data information from various state and federal sources.

The report includes data for the five most recent years available. Usually the time frame is 2009 through 2013 but the actual years presented will vary from indicator to indicator. When possible, data for the United States, Texas, and Lubbock County are included for comparison.

This report revealed both similar and divergent patterns in the two counties against the backdrop of demographic factors.

Each county had its own strengths and areas for improvement. Potter County had a low unemployment rate, growing median household income, and an improving high school graduation rate. At the same time, Potter County faced many challenges such as a high rate of family violence, a rising rate of gonorrhea, and a high poverty rate.

Randall County showed strong performance on most community indicators such as high median income, low unemployment, and low rates of sexually transmitted infections. Among the areas of concern for Randall County were low rate of college completion, high rate of death from heart disease and breast cancer, and an overall trend toward increasing poverty.

### New in the 2015 Report

- A new section was added on Early Childhood Education. It contains data from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT report as well as data from the Texas Education Agency.
- In the Income section a new indicator was added, "median income of households with children under 18," to highlight how single parents fare financially compared to married couples with children.
- For some of the indicators such as those in the Health section, data was available to add two additional years, 2012 and 2013.
- Neither the Mortality nor the Motherhood indicator rates are still provided by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Consequently, the indicators in these sections had to be calculated based on the number of incidents (not rates) obtained from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission website and population estimates from the American Community Survey. As a result, the rates in this report differ from those in the 2014 report.
- "Meth and Amphetamines" was broken out into "Meth" and "Amphetamines" to get a clearer picture of patterns of drug treatment sought by community residents.
- Data on *Individuals with Disabilities* was highlighted in this year's report to include their proportion in the total population, poverty, employment rates, and receipt of SNAP benefits.
- New data on family violence in Texas, Lubbock County, Potter County, and Randall County was added.

#### **The Government Assistance section has undergone considerable change.**

- Medicaid and CHIP enrollment rates are no longer provided by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Consequently, these rates had to be calculated based on the average monthly enrollment data available from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission website and the American Community Survey population estimates. As a result, the rates in this report differ from those in the 2014 report.
- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) data is no longer provided by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. There was also a considerable delay in getting the monthly enrollment data for SNAP, which is no longer available on the Texas Health and Human Services Commission website. The SNAP estimates had to be obtained from the American Community Survey. Fortunately these estimates included 2014 as the most recent year.

- The Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) indicator in 2014 was replaced with a more comprehensive indicator from the American Community Survey called Cash Assistance (Public Assistance in the ACS database). The new indicator includes TANF (available to individuals with dependents only) and General Assistance (GA) programs (available to individuals with no dependents). All government assistance rates were calculated as a proportion of total population (or households) to give an idea of how prevalent these programs are in the general population. The TANF and GA rates do not reflect the degree to which these programs are being utilized by the eligible population.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic changes are very important in understanding the social and economic dynamics of communities. Demographic factors can be compared to tectonic plates; slow and often invisible, they produce changes that determine societal landscape for many years to come. Similarly demographic trends such as changes in the number of residents, their race and age set the tone for all aspects of community life.

Potter and Randall Counties continue to experience demographic shifts.

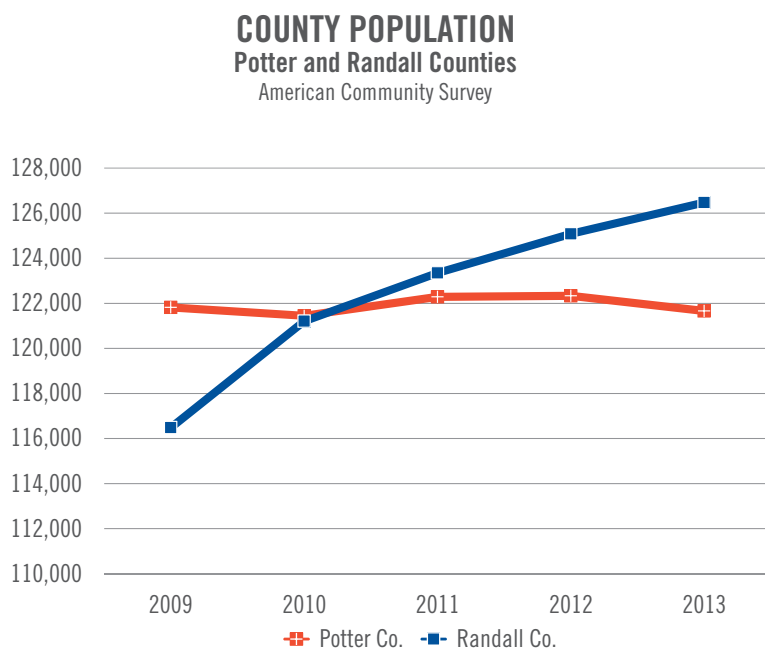
Between 2009 and 2013 Randall County's population grew steadily with a yearly rate of 1.7%. In comparison, the US increased its population by an average of 0.6% per year, and Texas by 1.3% per year during the same time period.

The total population of Potter County remained largely stable between 2009 and 2013.

The median age of a Potter County resident in 2013 was 33.5 years old, and in Randall County 35.1 years old. Potter County experienced a 0.7% yearly increase in the median age (equal to 0.2 years). Median age in Randall County, on the other hand, did not change in a consistent manner.

The racial composition of both Potter and Randall Counties experienced significant changes between 2009 and 2013. The proportion of minority residents increased by 9.8% in Potter County and by 13.8% in Randall County. In comparison, the proportion of minorities increased by only 7.1% in the US, 5.1% in Texas, and 6.7% in Lubbock County.

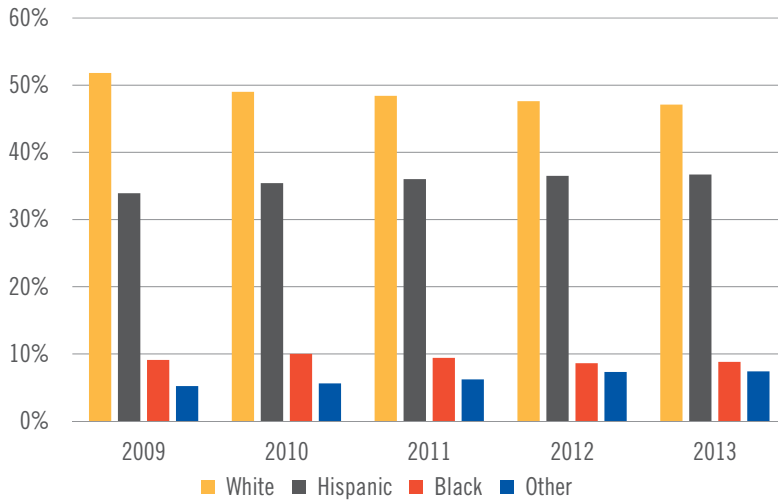
The increase in the proportion of minority residents was largely due to the growing number of Hispanic residents in both counties (an increase of 8.3% in Potter County and of



17.6% in Randall County between 2009 and 2013). Nonetheless, the population of Randall County remained predominantly white (75.3%) and the population of Potter County predominantly minority (52.9%).



**RACIAL COMPOSITION**  
Potter County / Percentage of Population  
American Community Survey



Another small but significant trend was a 50% increase in the proportion of Asian residents in Potter County (from 3.2% in 2009 to 4.8% in 2013) and a 20% growth in Asian population in Randall County (from 2.0% in 2009 to 2.4% in 2013).

**The Difference in the Growth of Hispanic and Asian Populations in the United States**

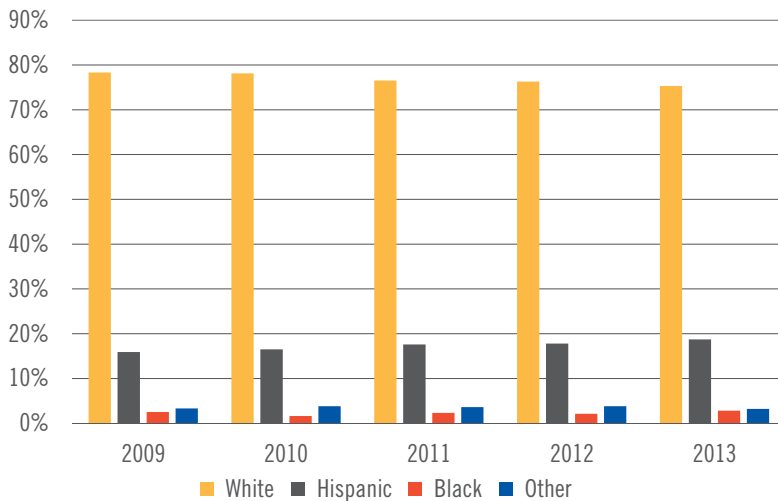
The recent report by the Pew Charitable Trust<sup>1</sup> highlighted the differences in the sources of population growth between Hispanic and Asian populations.

According to the US Census Bureau, the number of Hispanic residents in the US reached 54 million in 2013, a 2.1% increase from 2012. The number of Asians grew to 19.4 million, which represents a 2.9% increase from the previous year.

The primary reason for the increase in the Hispanic population was domestic births. In fact, the Census Bureau attributed 78% of this growth to natural increase (births minus deaths).

The increase in the Asian population, on the other hand, was predominantly fueled by immigration. According to the Pew analysis, 74% of Asian adults living in the US in 2012 were foreign born, and international immigration contributed 61% to the growth of the Asian population between 2012 and 2013. In the same time period, the Hispanic population in Texas grew by over one million residents (from 9,149,688 to 10,154,405). This represents an 11% growth rate. The Asian population of Texas increased by 281,467 people (from 976,368 to 1,257,835), which translates into 29% growth over the five years (5.8% average per year).

**RACIAL COMPOSITION**  
Randall County / Percentage of Population  
American Community Survey





## EDUCATION

Education has an extraordinarily transformative power. Research has documented that quality education improves individuals’ well-being<sup>ii</sup>, health<sup>iii</sup>, and economic outcomes<sup>iv</sup> throughout their lives.

### Early Childhood Education (ECE)

For generations, early childhood education and nurturing was provided within families, most often by women who did not work outside of the home. Since women entered the workforce, the domain of early childhood education has shifted from families to organized childcare facilities. Despite the fact that the majority of American women work outside of the home, we still know surprisingly little about the early childhood education of young children. The majority of data on ECE comes from state and federal programs, many of which are income-based and predominantly serve low-income families. Every year the Annie E. Casey Foundation issues its KIDS COUNT report<sup>v</sup> which contains publicly available data on early childhood education.

For children less than three years old, the latest data available was for 2011-2012 for the Early Head Start Program. The enrollment rate was under 1% in Texas, Lubbock County, and Randall County. As expected, given Potter County’s relatively poor economic status, Potter County had the largest percentage of children enrolled in Early Head Start (5.1% in 2011-2012).

KIDS COUNT also contains data on the 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in government subsidized Early Childhood Education programs. The four regions differed considerably in the enrollment rates, consistent with income and poverty data. Rates varied widely from Potter County at 53.1% to Randall County at 4.6%. Texas and Lubbock County were in the middle with rates of 29.7% and 24.9% respectively.

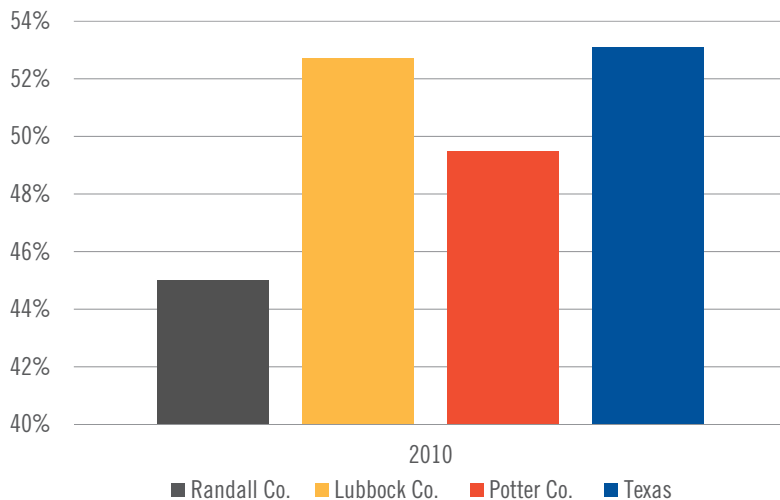
### Early Childhood Education (KIDS COUNT)

	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
Early Head Start 0-3 (2011-2012)	0.5%	0.3%	5.1%	0.0%
Pre-K Enrollment for 3 and 4 year olds (2013-2014)	29.7%	24.9%	53.1%	4.6%

“EDUCATION is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

~ Nelson Mandela

**CHILDREN 0 TO 4 IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS**  
Texas and Counties / Percentage Children 0-4 in ECE  
ECE Texas



In the long-term, **ECE PROGRAM** participants were much more likely to **GRADUATE** from high school and **EARN over \$20,000** a year. They were also **less likely** to engage in **criminal behavior**, more likely to raise their own children, and had **lower levels of drug use**.

The Texas ECE Needs Assessment<sup>vi</sup> attempts to estimate the gap in early childhood education for all children in Texas. The report compares the number of children in the 0 to 4 age category to the number of available registered childcare slots while adjusting for other important factors. Registered childcare slots refer to the number of available spots in childcare facilities that have met the state childcare requirements and obtained an official facility registration from the state.

Both Potter and Randall Counties had higher proportions of children in ECE programs than Texas (49.5% Potter County and 53.1% Randall County, vs. 45.0% for Texas). The remaining children were not enrolled in registered ECE programs and were considered to be in the ECE gap. Of course, not all families necessarily want their young children to be enrolled in registered ECE programs. Some parents might stay home, or work part-time to also take care of their children.

**STARR Performance Scores**

STARR Performance Scores				
		Texas	Region 16	Amarillo ISD
3rd Grade Reading	2014	76%	78%	76%
	2013	81%	81%	81%
3rd Grade Math	2014	71%	73%	76%
	2013	70%	72%	73%
8th Grade Reading	2014	90%	91%	92%
	2013	90%	91%	92%
8th Grade Math	2014	86%	89%	93%
	2013	86%	89%	93%

When only full-time working couples and single parents were taken into account, the overall adjusted gap in ECE for Texas was reduced from 55% to 22%. Unfortunately, there wasn't sufficient data to calculate the adjusted gap indicator for all Texas counties.

**Is investing in early childhood education for low income children worth it?**

Early childhood education (ECE) programs for low income families have received a considerable amount of attention in recent years. Some experts claim ECE programs result in significant gains to society. Others point to statistics that show that intellectual and educational gains achieved through these programs largely disappear by the end of elementary years and conclude that the investment in such programs cannot be justified.

Perhaps the most notable study that addressed the issue of "worth" or economic efficiency of early childhood programs was the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program<sup>vii</sup>. This program was implemented in the 1960s in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The program targeted low-income African American children who were assessed at high risk for academic failure. Children between the ages of 3 and 4 attended this high-quality early childhood education program twice a week until kindergarten.

Program participants were followed up through age 40. In addition to educational outcomes, program participants were assessed on a host of other characteristics such as economic performance, criminal behavior, health, and family relationships.

The early reports regarding the program participants' IQ scores and educational achievement were very promising, but these gains largely disappeared by the end of elementary school.

However in the long-term, ECE program participants were much more likely to graduate from high school and earn over \$20,000 a year. They were also less likely to engage in criminal behavior, more likely to raise their own children, and had lower levels of drug use.

A cost-benefit analysis of the program participants at age 40 revealed that society had received tremendous benefits from the program, even though the initial educational gains were lost. "In constant 2000 dollars discounted at 3%, the economic return to society of the Perry Preschool program was \$244,812 per participant on an investment of \$15,166 per participant—\$16.14 per dollar invested."

This initial cost-benefit analysis was later criticized for overestimating program benefits. In 2010 another group of researchers recalculated benefits and costs of the program using very conservative estimates for program benefits. Remarkably, they found that even with the most stringent criteria the Perry Preschool Program yielded society *at least* \$7.1 dollars for every dollar invested.<sup>viii</sup>

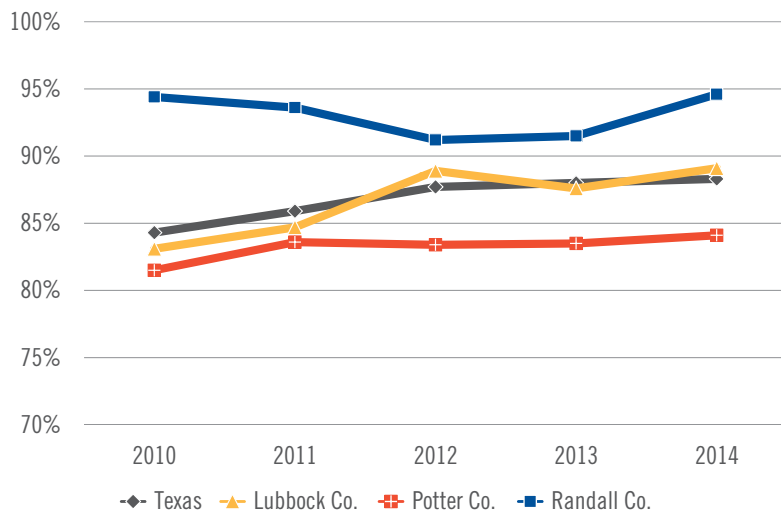
Therefore, early childhood education should not be seen as a strictly educational intervention, but rather as a way to build long-term positive social competencies in children who may otherwise be at risk for future problem behavior.

**Kindergarten through 12th Grade Achievement.** In the 2012-2013 academic year, the Texas Education Agency introduced the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), replacing the former Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test as the primary educational readiness measure. The performance results for the 2013-2014 academic year were available for Texas, Region 16, and Amarillo ISD. These results should be seen as preliminary, as students and the school personnel were still adjusting to the new assessment.

**High School Graduation.** In 2014, Potter County’s graduation rate (84.1%) remained significantly below that of Randall County (94.6%), Texas (88.3%), and Lubbock County (89.1%), however between 2010 and 2014 the graduation rate in Potter County increased by 3.2%. Randall County, on the other hand, experienced a drop in graduation rates in 2011-2013, though the rate improved again in 2014.

**SAT and ACT participation and performance.** Historically, the proportion of students taking college entrance exams in Amarillo ISD has been lower than in Region 16, and much lower than in Texas. This dynamic changed in 2013 when the College Board initiative in Amarillo ISD allowed all students to take college entrance exams free of charge. As a result, Amarillo ISD saw a 12.6% increase in the proportion of students taking the exams (from 56.3% in 2012 to 63.4% in 2013), while Region 16 and Texas had a drop in the rate by 1.7% and 4.6% respectively (to a 58.9% participation rate for Region 16 and a 63.8% rate for Texas in 2013).

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE**  
Texas and Counties / Percentage of Students  
Texas Education Agency



**EARLY** childhood **EDUCATION** should not be seen as a strictly educational intervention, but rather as a way to **build** long-term **positive SOCIAL COMPETENCIES** in children who may otherwise be at risk for future problem behavior.

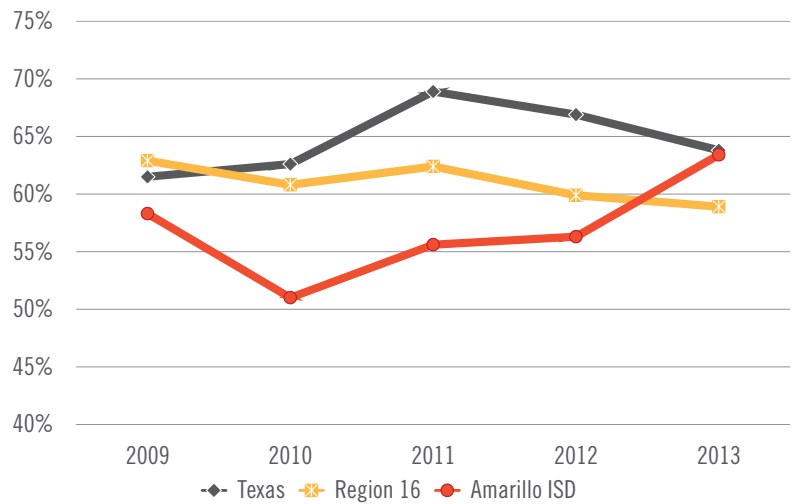
In terms of SAT/ACT performance, the trend for Amarillo ISD was less encouraging. The proportion of students performing at or above criteria declined in both Amarillo ISD and Region 16, while it increased by 2.0% in Texas. Amarillo ISD suffered a considerable loss with 14.3% fewer students performing at or above criteria in 2013 compared to 2012. This decline could be largely explained by the College Board initiative, but could also indicate an overall worsening of educational outcomes in the district. In 2013 the proportions of students performing at or above criteria were: 25.4% in Texas, 21.9% in Region 16, and 19.7% in Amarillo ISD.

**English Proficiency among adults.** According to the American Community Survey, the proportion of adults who don't speak English nearly doubled in both Potter and Randall Counties between 2012 and 2013. This seems highly unlikely considering that the proportion of foreign-born residents of these counties during the same time period did not change significantly. Whether this dramatic increase is a genuine trend or a sampling issue remains to be seen.

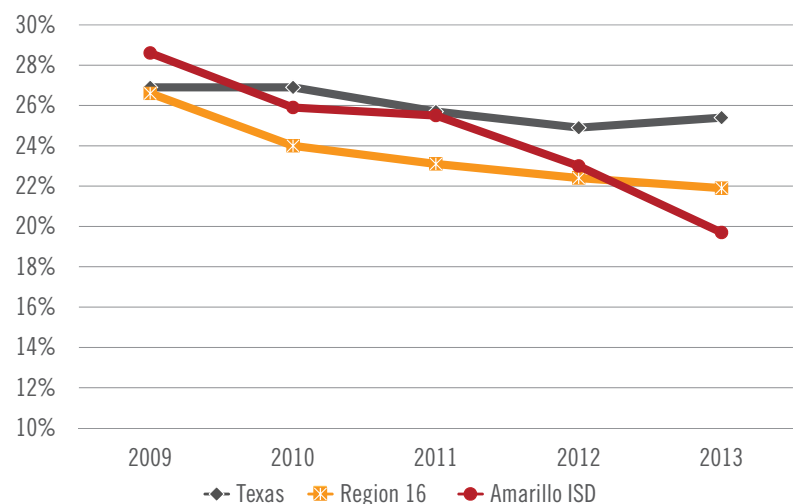
**Educational Achievement.** Educational achievement of individuals in Potter and Randall Counties in 2013 remained similar to previous years. Among the five regions compared in this report, Potter County had the highest percentage of people with no high school diploma (24.2% in 2013), while Randall County had the lowest (8.6% in 2013). The statistic was reversed for people with bachelor's degrees or above (16.0% for Potter County vs. 30.0% for Randall County). What Potter and Randall Counties had in common was a high proportion of people who attended some college but did not graduate (25.9% for Potter County and 29.8% for Randall County vs. 21.1% for the USA and 22.6% for Texas).



**STUDENTS TAKING SAT/ACT**  
Texas, Region 16, and Amarillo ISD / Percentage of Graduating Students  
Texas Education Agency

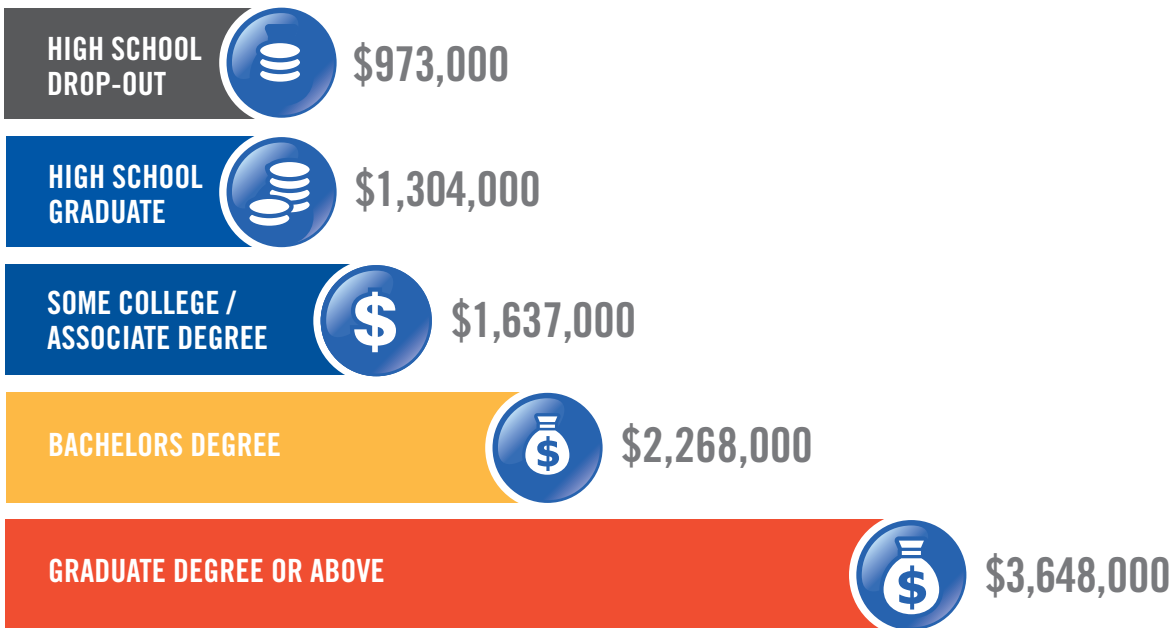


**SAT/ACT AT OR ABOVE CRITERIA**  
Texas, Region 16, and Amarillo ISD / Percentage of Graduating Students  
Texas Education Agency





## LIFETIME EARNINGS BY EDUCATION



**Education and Earnings.** Getting a good education can result in a lifetime of higher earnings. In a recent study<sup>x</sup> the analyst found that the wage premium for a high school diploma over no diploma was \$331,000. A person with a bachelor's degree earned \$964,000 more than a high school graduate, and a person with an advanced degree earned \$2,344,000 more over a lifetime than someone with a high school diploma.

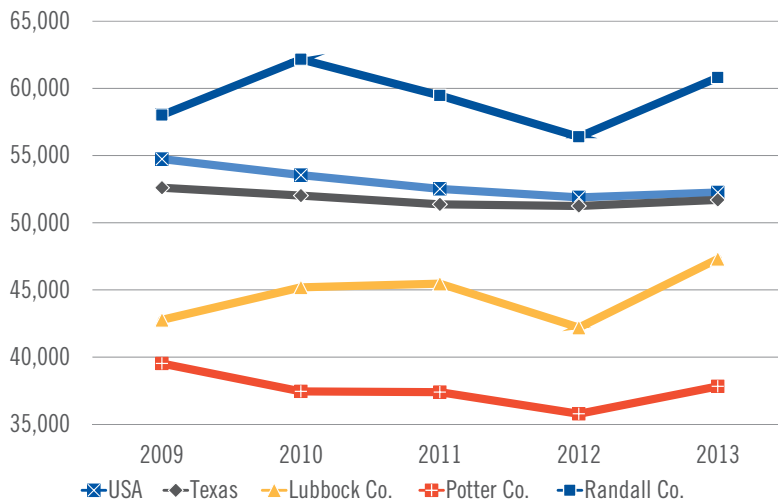
Getting a **GOOD EDUCATION** can result in a lifetime of **HIGHER EARNINGS.**

## INCOME

Data on median income and other economic indicators provides valuable information regarding the welfare of communities. Money may not buy happiness, but better economic outcomes have been linked to greater safety, better health, and the improved psychological well-being of residents<sup>xi</sup>.

**Median Income.** There are two primary ways to report median income. *Median Household Income* includes all households, families, cohabiting individuals, and single individuals. *Median Family Income* includes families only ("family" is defined as two or more people living together related by birth, marriage, or adoption), and therefore excludes single and cohabiting individuals. Median Household Income in 2013 increased in both Potter County (by 5.7%) and Randall County (by 7.8%). However, Median Family Income (single and cohabiting householders excluded) actually dropped in Potter County by 7.6%, and increased

**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**  
US, Texas, and Counties / Inflation Adjusted Dollars  
American Community Survey



in Randall County by 18.9%. It appears that single and cohabiting householders had a significant effect on 2013 income estimates. All income estimates here have been reported in inflation adjusted 2013 dollars.

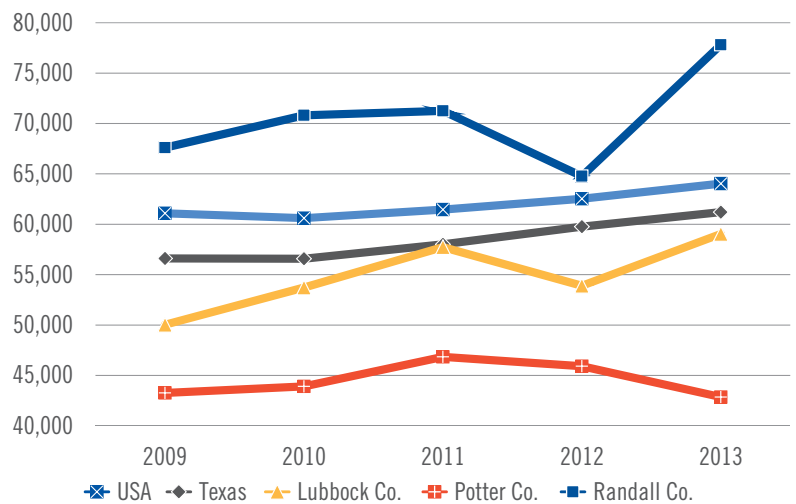
**Median Family Income in Households with Children.** Median income estimates were broken down for households with children by householder type. The average Median Family Income for a married couple between 2009 and 2013 was \$57,076 in Potter County and \$87,705 in Randall County. In Potter County, the average income of a single father with children under 18 was \$32,262. This constitutes 56.5% of married couples' incomes. In Randall County, a single father made on average \$42,287, or 48.2% of married couples' incomes. Single mothers with children had lower median incomes than single fathers. In both Potter and Randall Counties, single mothers made on average 31% of the median income of married couples (30.6% in Potter County and 31.1% in Randall County). In Potter County for this period, the median income of single mothers was \$17,488, falling between the national poverty threshold for a single mother with one child (\$15,510) and a single mother with two children (\$19,530).



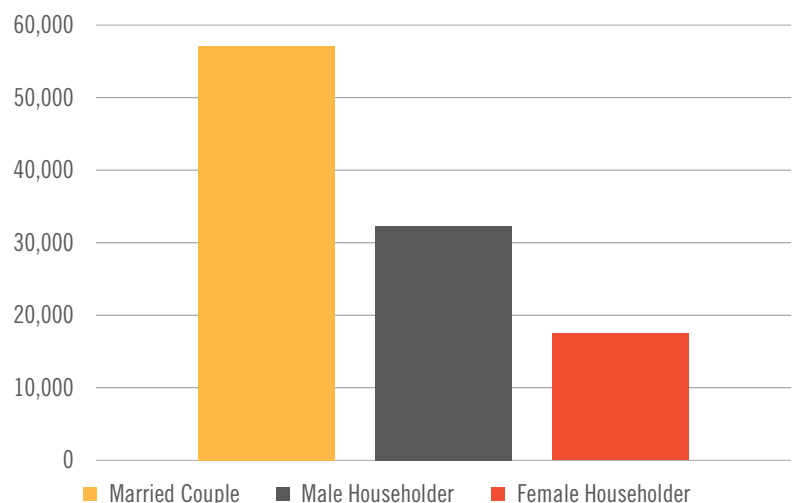
**Unemployment.** The unemployment rate in Potter County dropped again in 2013 for the third consecutive year (from 6.7% in 2011 to 4.7% in 2013). In Randall County however, it more than doubled in one year (62.1% increase from 2012 to 2013). Such a dramatic change most likely indicates that the 2012 unemployment estimate for Randall County was lower than the true (unmeasured) unemployment rate. Both Potter and Randall Counties remained below the national and the state rates in 2013 (4.7% unemployment for Potter and Randall Counties vs. 8.4% for the US and Texas, and 7.1% for Lubbock County).

**Median Family Income dropped in POTTER COUNTY by 7.6%, and increased in RANDALL COUNTY by 18.9%.**

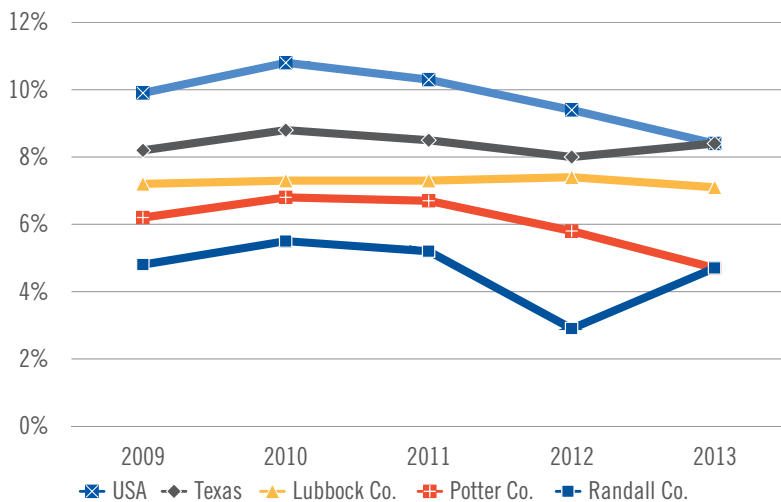
**MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME**  
US, TX, and Counties / Inflation Adjusted Dollars  
American Community Survey



**MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN**  
Potter County, Average for 2009-2013 / Inflation Adjusted Dollars  
American Community Survey



**UNEMPLOYMENT**  
 US, Texas and Counties / Percentage of Population Over 16  
 American Community Survey



- Regional GDP grew by 2.5% in 2014
- Manufacturing production and orders continued to grow
- Texas exports declined due to strengthening of the dollar
- Texas state and local government jobs continued to grow
- Oil prices were in sharp decline and the number of drilling rigs began to fall. The initial drop in oil prices from \$106 to \$80 per barrel was beneficial for the Texas economy. However, economists predict that a “sustained drop from \$80 to \$50 will hurt the Texas economy, because \$50 is below the breakeven point for the majority of shale drilling. Texas GDP growth will likely weaken more than jobs as output per worker in mining is about 4.6 times more than average for the state.”

In conclusion, the economy continued to remain strong, but the growth is likely to slow down in 2015.

## HEALTH

Winston Churchill once said that healthy citizens were the greatest asset any country could have. It is difficult to argue the point. Health has always been considered one of the fundamental qualities of a good life. A lack of health reduces the quality of life, can deprive communities of a productive workforce, and increases the financial burden on taxpayers.

**Uninsured.** Health insurance plays a very significant role in the lives of many Americans. People without health insurance are much less likely to receive the appropriate level of medical care in a timely manner. Lack of health insurance also reduces the use of preventive care and increases the use of emergency services. It greatly reduces the quality of life of uninsured individuals and places a significant financial burden both on the uninsured and on society.

Historically, Potter County has had the highest uninsured rate of our sample regions for both children and adults. In 2013, the county experienced a 1.5% decline in the rate of uninsured children dropping to near Texas’ level (12.8% uninsured children for Potter County vs. 12.7% for Texas).

**TEXAS ranked THIRD in job growth in 2014.**  
 Texas **JOB GROWTH** was broad-based between different industries.

2014 Texas Economic Outlook from the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas<sup>xii</sup>

- Home prices continued to grow for the third consecutive year, while home inventories remained low
- The ratio of personal debt to personal income continued to fall and remained below the national level (0.99 for US vs. 0.92 for Texas)
- Mortgage foreclosures were back to normal level, but delinquencies remained elevated
- Average job growth improved in 2014 compared to the previous year (246,000 per month in 2014 vs. 194,000 in 2013). Texas ranked third in job growth in 2014.
- Texas job growth was broad-based between different industries

The proportion of uninsured among adults also decreased in Potter County in 2013 (by 3.7%), however Potter County still retained the highest uninsured rate for adults among the five regions (34.4% for Potter County vs. 30.1% for Texas, 27.1% for Lubbock County, 20.4% for US, and 20.2% for Randall County).

Randall County, on the other hand, has always had a very low uninsured rate among both children and adults. An interesting dynamic here is that despite the growing poverty rate in Randall County it has not experienced an increase in the proportion of uninsured, but rather saw a decline: 8.8% decline in the rate of uninsured children and a 10.2% decline of the rate of uninsured adults between 2012 and 2013 (dropping to 9.2% of uninsured children and 20.2% of uninsured adults).

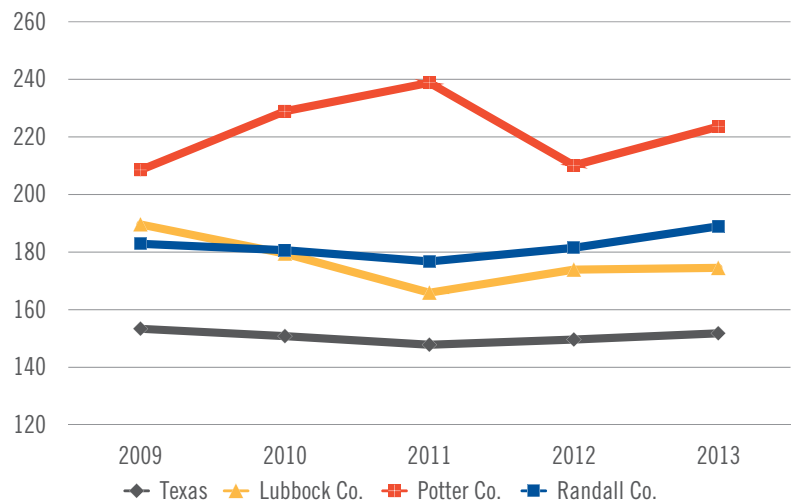
This outcome might be attributable to the increased enrollment rate for CHIP and Medicaid in Randall County. It is important to note that this increased insurance participation occurred prior to the roll-out of the Affordable Care Act.

Not all regions experienced similar declines in uninsured rates. Texas saw an increase in the rate of uninsured children (from 12.4% in 2012 to 12.7% in 2013), while Lubbock County saw an increase in both the childhood and the adult uninsured rates during the same year (from 10.0% to 11.2% for children and from 26.1% to 27.1% for adults).

**Mortality.** The five most common causes of death in Potter and Randall Counties in 2013 were: heart disease, stroke, breast cancer, cancer of lungs, throat, and trachea, and accidents.

**Heart Disease.** Heart disease continued to be the number one killer in Potter and Randall Counties. Historically, Potter County has had the highest rate of death from heart disease among the four regions (Texas, Lubbock County, Potter County, and Randall County). The rate in Potter County in 2013 was 47.3% higher than in Texas (223.6 deaths per 100,000 residents in Potter County vs. 151.8 in Texas). Alarming, Randall County has had a very high rate of deaths from heart disease as well; 189.0 deaths per 100,000

**DEATH FROM HEART DISEASE**  
Texas and Counties / Rate per 100,000 Population  
Texas Department of State Health Services



residents in 2013; 24.5% higher than Texas overall. This is very unsettling, considering that Randall County has very few community risk factors commonly associated with high levels of heart disease. It is affluent, predominantly white/non-Hispanic, has great access to quality foods, and has an overall high health ranking.

**Stroke.** Heart disease and stroke are highly correlated and share many of the same risk factors. Unsurprisingly, Potter County had the highest rate of stroke in 2013: 47.7 deaths per 100,000 residents, which was 36.5% higher than the state's rate. Randall County's rate of death from stroke was at 38.7, which was 10.9% higher than in Texas.

Cultural and dietary patterns of this region may illuminate some of the reasons why Potter and Randall Counties have elevated heart disease and stroke death rates.





**Regional differences in acute coronary heart disease and the role of diet.**

A recent study<sup>xiii</sup> examined the relationship between dietary patterns and acute coronary heart disease (CHD) in a large, population-based, longitudinal sample.

Instead of pre-determining the types of dietary patterns individuals might follow, the authors analyzed participants’ food consumption and looked for consistent patterns. This technique, called Factor Analysis, revealed five eating patterns: Convenience, Plant-based, Sweets, Southern, or Alcohol and Salad.

- A ‘Convenience’ diet consisted largely of mixed dishes, pasta dishes, pizza, Mexican food, and Chinese food
- ‘Plant-based’ diets included vegetables, fruits, fruit juice, cereal, beans, fish, poultry, and yogurt
- A ‘Sweets’ focused diet included large amounts of sugars, desserts, chocolate, candy, and sweetened breakfast foods
- The ‘Southern’ diet was heavy on added fats, fried food, eggs and egg dishes, organ meats, processed meats, and sugar-sweetened beverages
- The ‘Alcohol and Salad’ diet consisted of heavy consumption of beer, wine, liquor, green leafy vegetables, tomatoes, and salad dressing

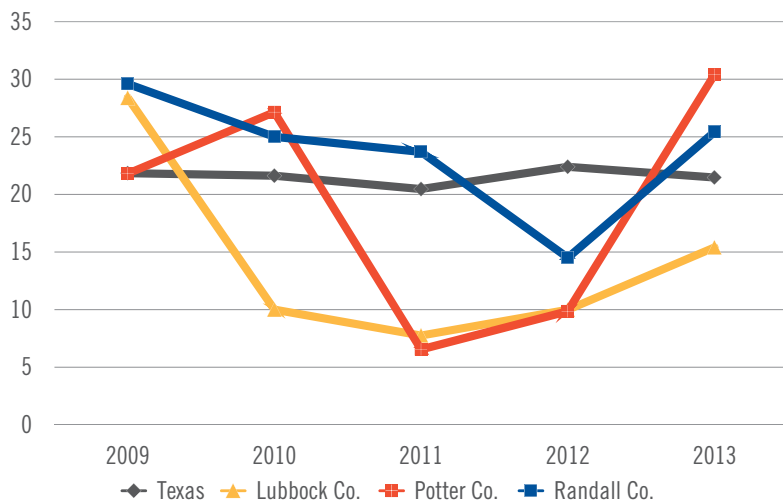
Individuals who largely consumed the Southern diet had a 56% higher probability of experiencing an episode of coronary heart disease during the 5.8-year follow-up than the individuals who consumed few Southern diet foods.

Other known risk factors for heart disease include high cholesterol, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, cigarette smoking, and physical inactivity.

**Cancer.** Cancers are the second most prevalent group of deadly illnesses in America. The rates of death from cancers in Potter and Randall Counties vary greatly between years.

For breast cancer an average rate of death was the highest in Randall County (23.6 deaths per 100,000 women) between 2009 and 2013. Texas had the second highest rate (21.6), followed by Potter County (19.1), and Lubbock County (14.3). It is worth pointing out that the ranking of the region for the rate of death from breast cancer parallels the ranking for median age. Median age for women in Randall County was 36.4 years old compared to 35.1 in Texas, 34.2 in Potter County, 32.1 in Lubbock County. In other words the regions with the oldest population of women (Randall County and Texas) had higher rates of deaths from breast cancer than the regions with younger populations (Potter and Lubbock County). This is consistent with breast cancer research that shows older age to be the number one risk factor for breast cancer among women<sup>xiv</sup>. In addition to age, race might play a role in the elevated breast cancer death rate in Randall County. Even though African-American women have the highest rate of death from breast cancer, white/non-Hispanic women have the highest rate of diagnosis of breast cancer<sup>xv</sup>. The African-American population is very small in both Potter and Randall Counties. White population, on the other hand, constitutes the majority in Randall County. In addition to race, white women are also more likely to be childless, have fewer children, and have children later in life than Hispanic women<sup>xvi</sup>, all of which are known risk factors of female breast cancer<sup>xvii</sup>.

**DEATH FROM BREAST CANCER**  
Texas and Counties / Rate per 100,000 Population  
Texas Department of State Health Services



## The Importance of Breastfeeding

The importance of breastfeeding has been widely recognized for the benefits it creates for both mothers and babies.

47 epidemiological studies in 30 countries revealed that **BREASTFEEDING** serves as a **PROTECTIVE FACTOR** against female **BREAST CANCER**.

A review<sup>xviii</sup> of 47 epidemiological studies in 30 countries revealed that breastfeeding serves as a protective factor against female breast cancer. The review found that women who had breast cancer tended to have fewer children and were less likely to breastfeed. Among those who breastfed, the duration of breastfeeding was shorter than for women without breast cancer (9.8 months vs. 15.6 months).

Another study<sup>xix</sup> examined the long-term effects of breastfeeding on babies. This study is unique because it accounted for differences in demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the parents that may affect the rates of breastfeeding (confounding variables). The study found that 30 years later people who were breastfed as infants for longer than 12 months had higher IQs, greater educational attainment, and higher incomes than people who were breastfed less than 1 month as infants. The analysis also suggests that 72% of the gains in income were due to increased IQ.

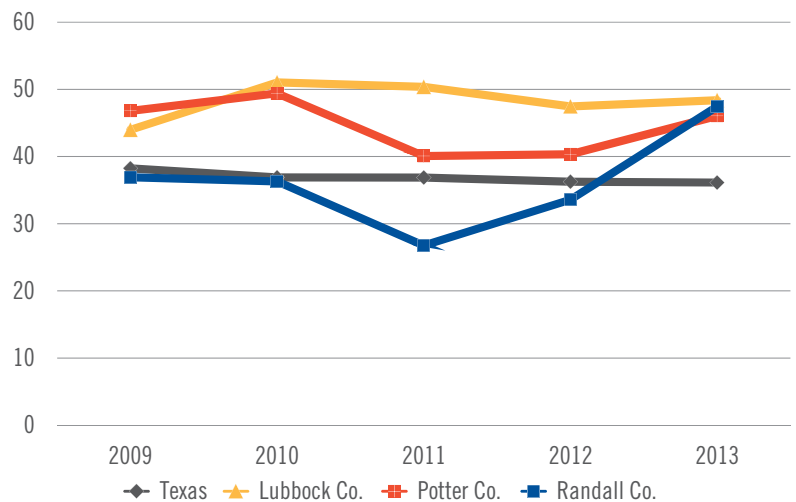
Additional benefits of breastfeeding include improved intestinal and respiratory health, lower infant mortality, reduced risk of obesity,

and estimated savings of at least \$1500 per year in infant formula purchases<sup>xx</sup>.

**Lung cancer.** For the cancers of lung, throat, and trachea, Potter County had the highest average rate (43.5 deaths per 100,000 residents), followed by Randall County (39.8), Texas (37.3), and Lubbock County (36.2).

**Accidents.** Both Potter and Randall Counties experienced a sharp increase in the rate of deaths from accidents in 2013. In Potter County, the death from accidents rate increased by 14.1% reaching 46.0 deaths per 100,000 residents. Randall County historically has had a much lower rate of death from accidents than Potter County. Unfortunately, in 2013 the rate increased by 41.3%, reaching 47.4 deaths per 100,000 residents. Some of this increase could be attributed to the increase in the rate of deaths from motor vehicle accidents, which had been rising in Randall County (16.6 in 2013, a 2.4% increase from 2012) and falling in Potter County (17.3 in 2013, a 4.1% decline from 2012). However, a 16.6 rate of motor vehicle accidents in Randall County constituted only 35.0% of total deaths from accidents in 2013. The remaining 65.0% must be attributed to other types of accidents.

**DEATH FROM ACCIDENTS**  
Texas and Counties / Rate per 100,000 Population  
Texas Department of State Health Services



30 years later people who were **BREASTFED** as infants for **longer than 12 months** had **higher IQs**, greater **educational attainment**, and **higher incomes** than people who were breastfed less than 1 month as infants.

**Suicide.** Suicide is a relatively infrequent cause of death, therefore the suicide rates in all three counties fluctuated considerably between the years. For this reason, it is more informative to look at average rates between the years rather than trends. Potter and Randall Counties continued to have higher average suicide rates than Texas. Potter County’s rate was 17.6 and Randall County’s rate was 14.7 compared to 11.4 in Texas.

**Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).** Among all STIs, chlamydia and gonorrhea continued to have the highest diagnosis rates in all four regions for 2014. In Potter County the chlamydia rate<sup>xxi</sup> remained high and stable (957.0 per 100,000 residents, 101.5% higher than in Texas). Potter County experienced an alarming growth in the gonorrhea diagnosis rate. It increased by 20.8% from 2013 to 2014, while in Lubbock it only grew by 1.8%.

Randall County had the lowest rates for all STIs. In 2014, the chlamydia rate was 300.3 diagnosed cases per 100,000 residents, 36.8% lower than the state’s. However, similar to Potter County, the gonorrhea rate in Randall County grew more rapidly than in Texas and in Lubbock County; from 104.2 in 2013 to 112.3 in 2014, which constituted a 7.8% increase. This is compared to 0.9% growth in Texas and 1.8% growth in Lubbock.

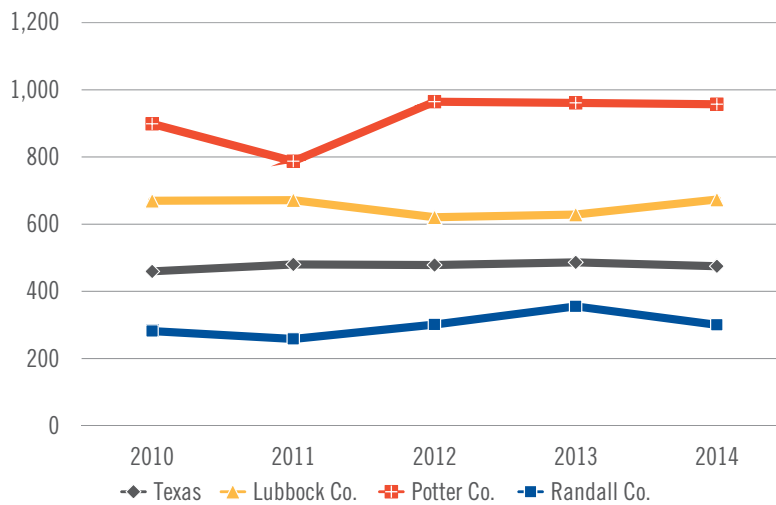
Syphilis diagnoses rates were overall much lower than the rates for chlamydia and gonorrhea. Syphilis was not prevalent in Potter and Randall Counties until 2012 when syphilis rates skyrocketed in both counties growing by 339.0% in Potter County and 250.0% in Randall County in one year. In comparison, in the same year syphilis rates increased by only 24.1% in Lubbock County and 12.4% in Texas.

Unfortunately, these elevated rates persisted through 2013. In 2014, Potter County’s syphilis rate decreased by 29.8%, while Randall County’s increased by 23.8%. Despite the 2014 changes, the actual rate in Potter County (13.2 diagnosed cases per 100,000 residents) was still higher than in Randall County (7.8 diagnosed cases per 100,000 residents). The good news is that both counties had lower syphilis rates than Texas (27.5).

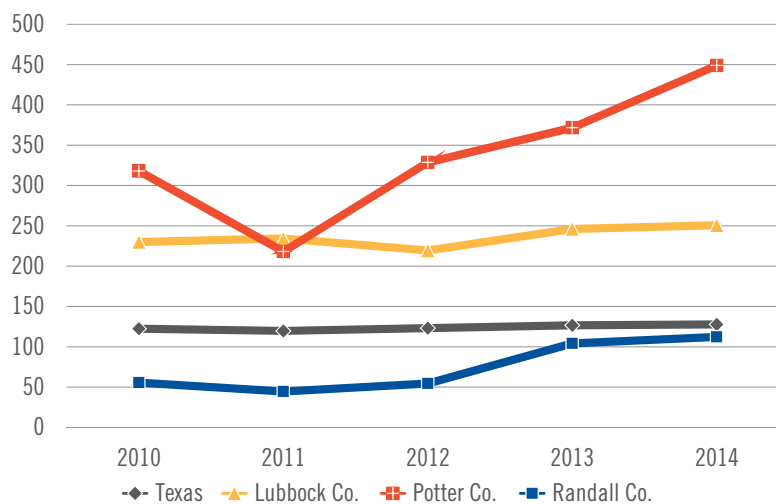
HIV rates remained low in all regions. In 2014, Texas had the highest diagnosis rate (16.3 diagnosed cases per 100,000 residents),

followed by Lubbock County (13.6). Potter and Randall Counties had much lower HIV rates: 5.8 and 3.9 respectively. Between 2010 and 2014, the HIV diagnosis rate dropped by 50.0% in Potter County, while in Randall County it increased by 18.2%.

**CHLAMYDIA RATES**  
Texas and Counties / Rate per 100,000 Population  
Department of State Health Services



**GONORRHEA RATES**  
Texas and Counties / Rate per 100,000 Population  
Department of State Health Services



**Drug Abuse.** The use, manufacturing, and distribution of drugs have a profound effect on communities. Increases in property and violent crimes, child abuse and neglect, and depressed housing markets are some of the known consequences of drug abuse in communities.

The actual rates of drug use and abuse are elusive and hard to measure. Survey methods are not always effective in this area of study because people generally feel reluctant to reveal their true drug use patterns. One way to infer drug abuse rates is by looking at publicly available statistics from state-run treatment centers. The draw-back of these statistics is that they do not represent the population as a whole. State-run treatment programs work predominantly but not exclusively with low-income clients. More affluent drug abusers have an option of using private treatment clinics and thus not be accounted for in state records. This makes it difficult to compare treatment rates between counties with varying degrees of affluence. Nevertheless, treatment data from state clinics can still be useful when looking at treatment rates for different substances within a single county.

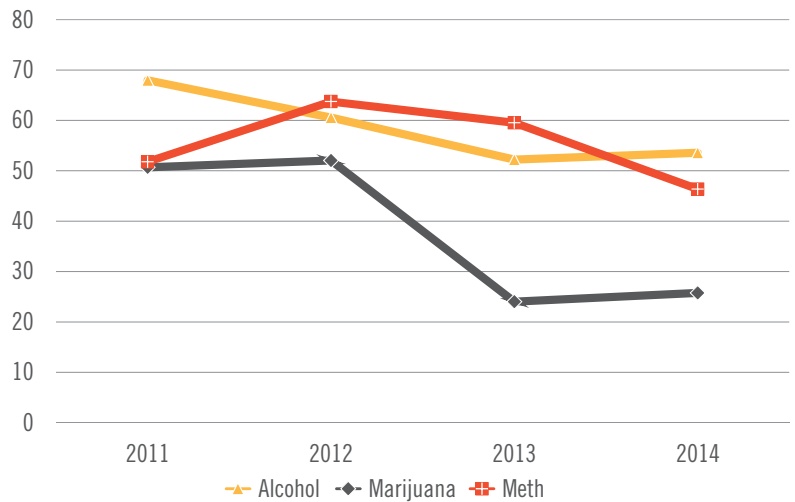
In 2014 in Potter County, meth had the highest treatment prevalence (127.1 interventions per 100,000 residents), followed by alcohol (72.6), and marijuana (67.0). In 2012, meth replaced alcohol as the most prevalent substance for which treatment was sought. The rate of treatment interventions for meth increased in Potter County by 20.0% in 2012, but has gone down slightly since then.

The rates for the remaining four substances, amphetamines (20.4), crack (14.8), cocaine (11.4), and heroin (2.3), were considerably lower than for the top three, and continued to fall between 2011 and 2014. The same was true for the total number of interventions in Potter County, which fell by 6.5% between 2011 and 2014.

Randall County, being considerably more affluent, cannot be directly compared to Potter County in terms of drug treatment rates. However, within Randall County among low-income individuals, treatment rates in 2014 were the highest for alcohol (53.6 interventions per 100,000 residents), followed by meth (46.4), marijuana (25.8), heroin (9.3), cocaine (7.2), amphetamines (5.2), and crack (5.2). Meth interventions peaked in

Randall County in 2012 (the same year as in Potter County), but have decreased considerably since then falling below the 2011 level. Total drug interventions in Randall County fell by 25.6% between 2011 and 2013.

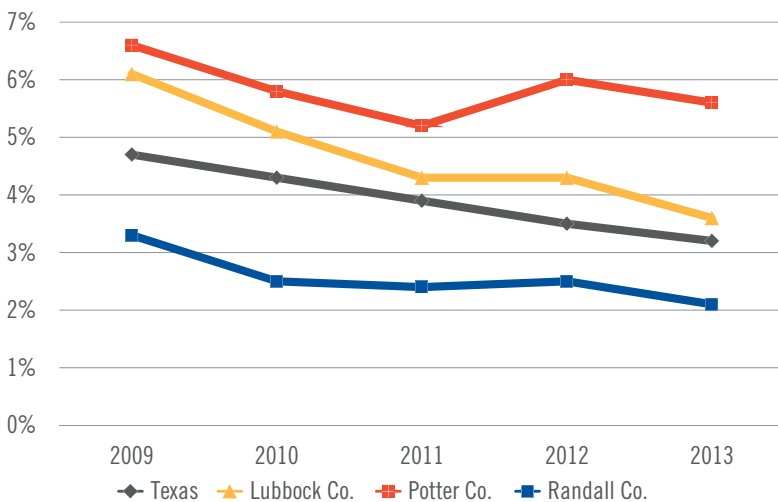
**TOP 3 INTERVENTIONS FOR ADULTS**  
 Randall County / Per 100,000 Population  
 Texas Department of State Health Services



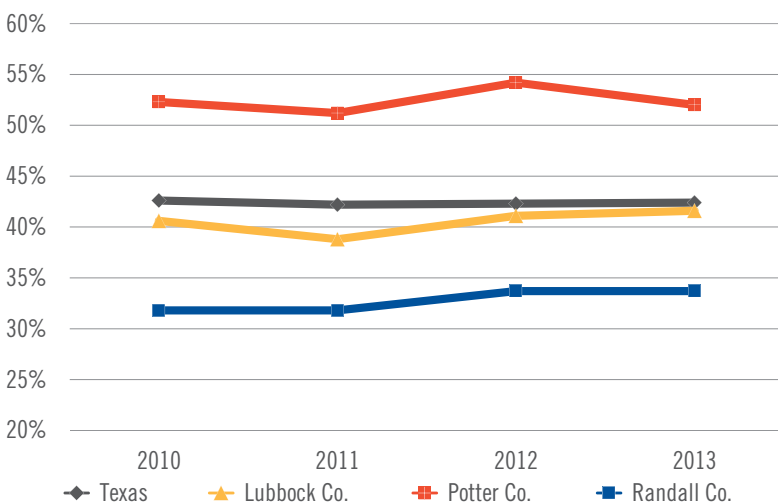


Over one half of all NEW MOTHERS in Potter County were UNMARRIED and over one half of all single mothers lived BELOW POVERTY level.

**BIRTHS TO WOMEN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD**  
Texas and Counties / Percentage of All Births  
Department of State Health Services



**UNMARRIED MOTHERS**  
Texas and Counties / Percentage of All Mothers  
American State Health Services



**Mothers and Babies**

Health outcomes of very early childhood are critically important for future growth and development. Babies born to adult women who receive adequate prenatal care and have committed partners to share childrearing and financial responsibilities have better outcomes than babies without these advantages<sup>xxii</sup>.

**Adolescent Mothers.** Potter County’s rate of teenage births remained the highest among the regions (5.6%), while Randall County’s remained the lowest (2.1%). Texas and Lubbock County had 3.2% and 3.6% rates respectively. The rate has declined substantially in all regions since 2009. Lubbock County had the fastest decline in rates, 8.2% per year, followed by Randall County with 7.3% per year, Texas at a 6.4% decline per year, and Potter County at a 3.0% decline per year between 2009 and 2013.

**Prenatal Care in the First Trimester.** Randall County had the highest rate of first trimester prenatal care in 2013 (74.3%), followed by Lubbock County (63.5%), Texas (62.5%), and Potter (57.5%). The rate showed an overall improvement in all regions between 2009 and 2013. The rate of first trimester prenatal care increased by 20.5% in Lubbock County, 19.8% in Potter County, 8.3% in Randall County, and by 6.7% in Texas overall.

**Low Birthweight Babies.** Lubbock County had the highest percentage of low birthweight babies, 10.2% in 2013, followed closely by Potter County at 10.0%. Texas had 8.3% and Randall County had 6.6% low birthweight babies. The trends varied for different regions. In Texas, the rate decreased slowly by 2.4% per year between 2009 and 2013 (larger sample size for the state resulted in a smoother state trajectory compared to the counties’ trajectories that changed frequently due to the smaller sample size). Both Potter and Lubbock Counties had V-shaped trends. Randall County’s rate dropped consistently between 2009 and 2013 by a total of 28.3% (from 9.2% to 6.6%).

**Unmarried Mothers.** The percent of unmarried mothers among all new mothers remained fairly consistent between 2009 and 2013. Potter County had the highest rate, an average of 52.4% during this time frame, followed by Texas at 42.4%, Lubbock at 40.5%, and Randall at 32.8%. Over one half of all new mothers in Potter County were unmarried and over one half of all single mothers lived below poverty level. This is clearly an area of potential for improvement for Potter County.

## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

In 2013, Potter County had the highest poverty rate, 21.7%, which was 37.3% higher than the national level. Randall County had the lowest rate, 11.6%, which was 26.6% lower than the national level. Poverty rates dropped in 2013 in all regions. Lubbock County experienced the greatest decline, 22.6%. Texas had the second greatest decline, 11.7%. Randall County's rate fell by 10.1%, Potter County's by 7.3%, and in the US the poverty rate dropped by 0.6%.

**Poverty among children.** Potter County's rate of childhood poverty in 2013 was 31.2%. This translates into a 15.9% decline since 2010. Lubbock County had the second highest rate, 24.0%, but it too had experienced a decline in childhood poverty rate since 2010 (by 13.4%). Both the US and Texas had a 22.2% childhood poverty rate, but the four-year trends were different. While Texas experienced a 12.7% decline since 2010, in the US the rate increased by 4.5% during the same period. Randall County had the lowest childhood poverty rate, 15.6%, but it also had the biggest growth in childhood poverty: the rate increased by 56.9% between 2010 and 2013.

**Poverty among adults.** Between 2010 and 2013, Potter County had a fairly stable adult poverty rate (fluctuating from 19.2% to 21.0%). In Randall County, the adult poverty rate increased from 8.8% in 2011 to 14.3% in 2012 (28.6% increase) and then dropped back to 11.7%. It appears that the 2012 poverty estimate might have been higher than the true rate.

### The Elderly

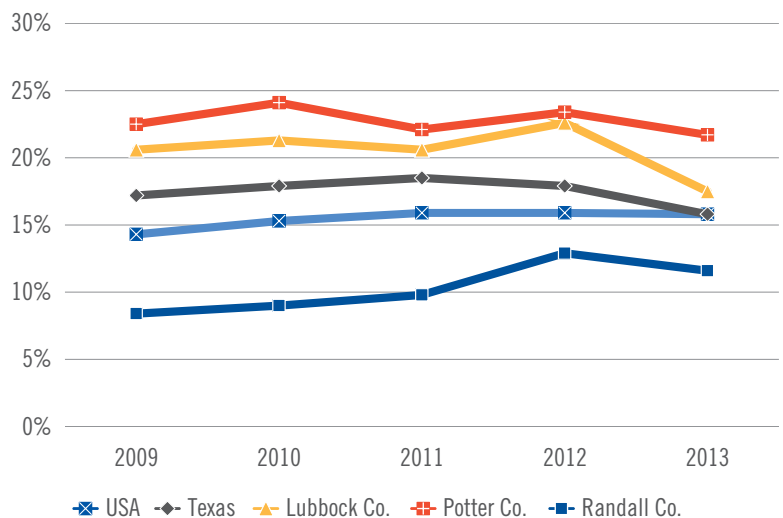
The elderly have much lower poverty rates than children and adults. Many attribute this lower rate to Social Security income<sup>xxiii</sup> and other social programs that target older adults.

**Poverty rates among the elderly.** On average, between 2010 and 2013 Potter County had the highest poverty rate among the elderly (12.7%), followed by Texas (10.8%), Lubbock County (7.4%), and Randall County (5.9%).

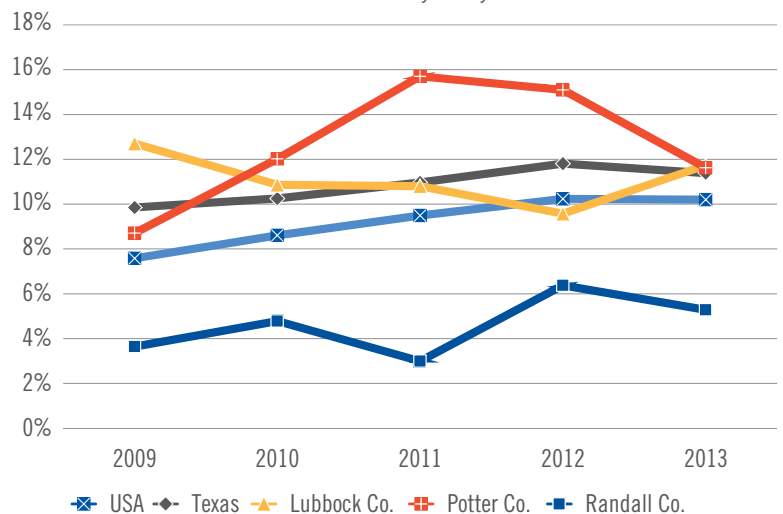
**Employment among the elderly.** More than 80% of people over 65 years old in Potter and Randall Counties were not in the labor force. In Potter County, another 16.2% were employed and less than 0.5% were unemployed. In Randall County, 18.7% of the elderly were employed and 0.7% unemployed. The rate of unemployment in this age group in Potter and Randall Counties was less than in Texas (0.9%) and in the US (1.1%).

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) among the elderly.** The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as SNAP or food stamps, provides nutritional assistance to low income families. In 2013 the receipt of food stamps among the elderly fell in both Potter County (by 23.0%) and in Randall County (by 17.1%), as well as in Texas (by 3.6%) and in the US overall (0.3%). For Potter County, 2013 was the second year in a row with a decline in SNAP participation among the elderly. Lubbock County was the only region in the report with an increase in SNAP participation among the elderly. It increased by 22.5% between 2012 and 2013.

**INDIVIDUALS IN POVERTY**  
US, Texas, and Counties / Percentage of Population  
American Community Survey



**SOMEONE IN HOUSEHOLD OVER 60 RECEIVED FOOD STAMPS**  
US, Texas and Counties  
American Community Survey

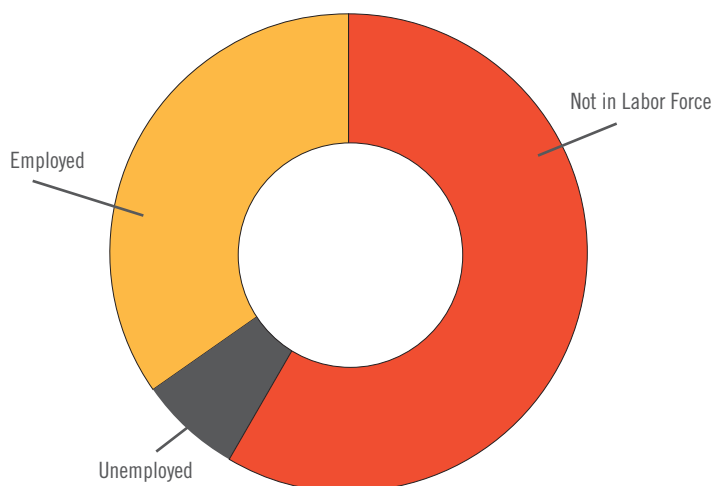


## Individuals with Disabilities

The average proportion of people with disabilities between 2009 and 2013 was: 19.2% in Texas, 17.4% in Lubbock County, 15.0% in the US, 14.1% in Potter County, and 9.9% in Randall County. Based on the national and state data, it appears that the proportion of people with disabilities is increasing slightly. Between 2009 and 2013 it increased by 1.0% per year in the US, and by 0.3% per year in Texas. County-level data fluctuated greatly from year to year due to the small sample size, and was not very informative.

**Poverty among individuals with disabilities.** County-level poverty rates among individuals with disabilities are hard to estimate due to small size. When five-year average rates were calculated, poverty rates were: 25.8% for Potter County, 23.0% for Texas, 22.2% for the US, 22.1% for Lubbock County, and 17.1% for Randall County. As expected for all regions, poverty rates among the disabled were higher than in the general population. The general population poverty rate was 21.7% for Potter County and 11.6% for Randall County in 2013.

**EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF DISABLED ADULTS** | Potter County / 2009-2013 Average  
American Community Survey



**Employment status of individuals with disabilities.** In Potter County, 34.7% of individuals with disabilities were employed, 6.8% were unemployed, and 58.6% were not in the labor force. In Randall County, 43.2% were employed, 3.6% unemployed, and 53.3% were not in the labor force. Lubbock County had the highest rate of employment (45.5%), and the lowest rate of unemployment (5.7%) among disabled in all regions, while the US as a whole had the lowest employment (33.7%) and the highest unemployment (7.8%) rates.

**Individuals with disabilities in the workforce.** People with disabilities in the workforce face many challenges. Besides the physical challenges related to their disability, they also encounter a lack of accommodations necessary for normal work functioning, in addition to potential negative attitudes from employers and colleagues.

In a 2007 study,<sup>xxiv</sup> a group of researchers from DePaul University recruited focus groups in 16 companies in healthcare, retail, and

hospitality and conducted in-depth interviews with the group participants.

The study found that managers often held biases against workers with disabilities and were concerned about the possible costs of accommodations for them. The promotion opportunities for disabled workers were also much more limited compared to non-disabled workers.

The study found that the actual cost of providing accommodations for disabled workers were often minimal, but came with significant benefits for the employers.

The cost-benefit study found that:

- Participants with disabilities in retail and hospitality stayed on the job much longer than employees without disabilities
- Disabled employees have fewer scheduled absences than able-bodied workers across all sectors
- Workers with and without disabilities had similar job performance ratings in all sectors
- In retail, employees with disabilities had fewer unscheduled absences than workers without disabilities
- Differences in the amount of supervision needed were relatively minor between disabled and non-disabled workers
- The number of workers' compensation claims between able and disabled employees in retail were equivalent

Some areas in which disabled employees did not fare well were:

- In healthcare, disabled workers stayed on the job shorter than non-disabled workers
- In healthcare, employees with disabilities had more unscheduled absences than employees without disabilities
- In both hospitality and healthcare, employees with disabilities had more workers' compensation claims than non-disabled workers.

The study also found that in healthcare and hospitality the average cost of providing accommodations for disabled employees was \$313. In the retail sector, workers with disabilities reported that the accommodations were already provided to them by their employers. The most common accommodation was "changes in the work schedule."

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits among individuals with disabilities.** The average rate of SNAP benefits received among the disabled between 2009 and 2013 was the highest in Potter County (33.4%), followed by Lubbock County (30.4%), Texas (29.4%), the US (28.6%), and Randall County (15.5%). This is consistent with the poverty rates among disabled in those regions. State and national data indicate that the percentage of disabled individuals on SNAP benefits is increasing over time. Since 2009, it has increased by 4.0% every year nationally and by 2.6% every year at the state level.

**Government Assistance**

**Medicaid.** The proportion of the population participating in Medicaid was the highest in Potter County (19.2% in 2013), followed by Texas (13.8%), Lubbock County (13.5%), and Randall County (7.1%). Participation rates have increased in all regions; most notably the Medicaid participation rate in Randall County increased by 38.5% between 2009 and 2013. Other regions had more modest increases: 9.9% for Texas, 8.2% for Lubbock County, and 7.5% for Potter County. The roll out of the Affordable Care Act in 2014 may have significant impact on these numbers, however the data is not yet available.

**Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).** Potter County and Texas had the highest CHIP enrollment rates (8.5% for both). Lubbock County’s rate was 7.9%, and Randall County’s was 5.4%. CHIP enrollment has continued to rise between 2010 and 2013 in all four regions. The most rapid growth was in Lubbock County (19.0% between 2010 and 2013), followed by Potter County (18.6%), Randall County (13.7%), and Texas (13.2%). The Affordable Care Act is not reflected in this data.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS					
Program	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
Medicaid	2013	13.8%	13.5%	19.2%	7.1%
CHIP	2013	8.5%	7.9%	8.5%	5.4%
SNAP	2014	13.1%	12.1%	17.2%	6.3%
Cash Assistance	2014	1.5%	0.9%	0.7%	1.1%

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).** As expected, Potter County had the largest proportion of population participating in the SNAP; 17.2% households. The US, Texas, and Lubbock County had comparable participation rates in all 5 years (between 12.1% and 13.2%). Randall County had a much lower rate of SNAP enrollment; 6.3% in 2014.

The American Community Survey data on SNAP participation pointed toward an overall decrease in the proportion of households receiving assistance. For the US, Texas, Lubbock County, and Potter County, 2012 was the peak year for SNAP participation. Since 2012, the rate of enrollment in SNAP dropped by 18.3% in Lubbock County, by 8.3% in Potter County, 7.8% in Texas, by 3.1% in the US, and by 1.2% in Randall County.

An interesting picture emerges when SNAP data is broken down by poverty level. In the US among all households receiving SNAP benefits, only 51.3% live below poverty level. In Potter County, this number is somewhat higher with 54.8% of households receiving SNAP



living below poverty. Randall County had the lowest proportion of SNAP households living below poverty (34.5%).

**Cash Assistance.** This category includes two cash programs: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) that provides cash assistance to households with dependents, and General Assistance (GA) programs that provide assistance to households without dependents. Because these programs are highly infrequent and serve a relatively small number of households, the rates fluctuate between the years. National and state data provide a better picture of enrollment in these programs. In the US, the enrollment rate in cash assistance programs fell by 7.1% between 2010 and 2014. In Texas, it dropped by 21.1%. In 2014, the US had a program participation rate of 2.7% and Texas had 1.5%. In Lubbock, Potter, and Randall Counties the rates of participation were even lower than in the state: 1.1% in Randall County, 0.9% in Lubbock County, and 0.7% in Potter County. Since 2012, Potter County has had lower participation rates than Randall County. This seems peculiar considering that Potter County has had much higher poverty rates and much lower median income than Randall County. One potential explanation for this is that the residents of Randall County experience shorter or infrequent bouts of poverty and therefore are more likely to access temporary programs (such as TANF and GA). The poverty faced by the residents of Potter County appears to be of a longer-term fundamental nature, which may explain their high enrollment rates in long-term assistance programs.



## ABUSE

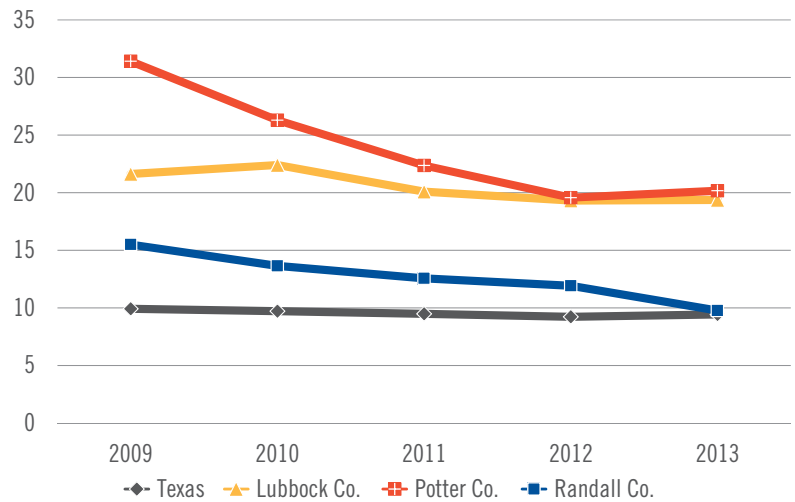
**Child abuse.** Child abuse rates have continued to decline across the board. Between 2009 and 2013, the rate of child abuse and neglect fell by 37.0% in Randall County, by 35.8% in Potter County, by 10.4% in Lubbock County, and by 4.9% in Texas. This is a very encouraging trend for Potter and Randall Counties, both of which historically have had elevated rates of child abuse and neglect. In 2013, Potter County still had the highest rate of child abuse among the four regions (20.2 per 1000 children in Potter County vs. 19.4 in Lubbock County, 9.8 in Randall County, and 9.4 in Texas). However, the distance between these rates has shrunk dramatically since 2009.

**Adult abuse.** The rate of abuse of elderly and disabled individuals has been falling in all regions, except Lubbock County where it fluctuated. Randall County had the lowest adult abuse rate (2.4 per 1000 adults), followed by Texas (2.8), Potter County (6.2), and Lubbock County (8.0). Compared to 2009, the rate fell by 5.5% in Potter County and by 8.7% in Randall County vs. a 15.05% reduction in Lubbock County, and a 6.7% drop in Texas.

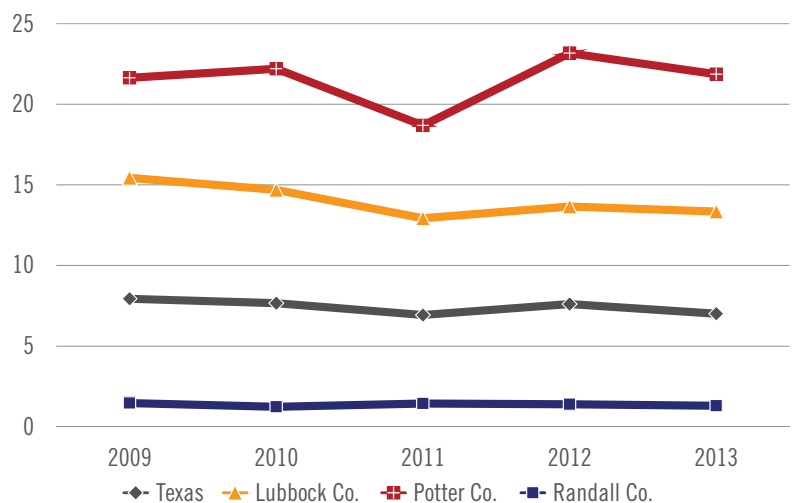
**POTTER COUNTY** had the highest total rate of incidents of **FAMILY VIOLENCE**, 211.8% higher than Texas.

**Family violence.** Family violence is defined as “an act by a member of a family or household against another member that is intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or a threat that reasonably places the member in fear of imminent physical harm.”<sup>xv</sup> In 2013, 38.4% of violent acts happened in marital relationships, 16.2% between children and parents (including step and foster parents), and 45.4% between other family members (grandparents, in-laws, roommates, and step-siblings). Between 2009 and 2013, the overall rates of family violence dropped for all regions, except Potter County where the rate increased by 1.0%. Potter County also had the highest total rate of incidents of family violence, 21.9 in 2013, which was 211.8% higher than the Texas rate (7.0). Lubbock County had the second highest rate, 13.3, which was 90.3% higher than Texas. Randall County had the lowest rate of family violence, 1.3 in 2013, 81.4% lower than the state level.

**CONFIRMED VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**  
Texas and Counties / Rate per 1,000 Children  
Texas State Data Center

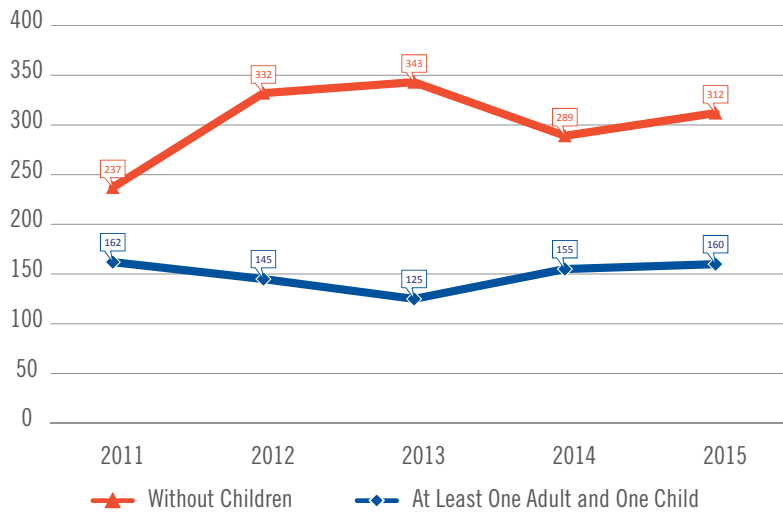


**INCIDENTS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**  
Texas and Counties / Incidents per 1,000 Adults  
Crime in Texas Report



### SHELTERED HOMELESS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE, POINT-IN-TIME COUNT City of Amarillo

US Department of Housing and Urban Development

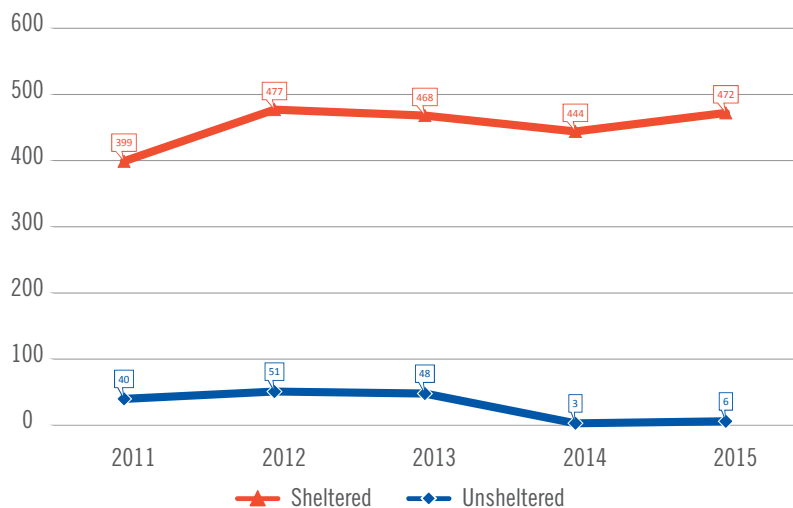


### Homelessness

The data on homelessness is available from Point-In-Time (PIT) reports that collect data on the number of homeless once a year. Due to the snapshot nature of the annual PIT counts that can be highly affected by weather, together with the high mobility among the homeless population, data varies from year to year and the trends should be interpreted with caution. In the city of Amarillo on January 21, 2015, there were 472 sheltered and 6 unsheltered homeless people. When broken down by household type, the majority of the sheltered homeless were individuals without children (312 people). The number of sheltered individuals together with children was 160.

### SHELTERED AND UNSHELTERED HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME COUNT City of Amarillo

US Department of Housing and Urban Development



## CONCLUSIONS

The differences between Potter and Randall Counties highlighted in the 2014 report persisted into the next year. Potter County remains a “minority majority” county that faces many struggles such as low income, high poverty, low educational achievement, poor health outcomes, and a large proportion of people in difficult circumstances.

Randall County, on the other hand, remains predominantly white/non-Hispanic, affluent, better educated, and healthier than Potter County.

The gap between the two counties continues to narrow on most demographic, educational, and economic indicators. This could be due in part to the relocation of families in search of better economic and educational opportunities from Potter County to Randall County. However, Potter County has also seen an increase in the proportion of single and cohabitating individuals with higher incomes which could signify an urban revival. Despite overall improvement in the high school graduation rate in Potter County, education continued to be an area of struggle for the Amarillo area. The proportion of students performing at or above criteria on college entrance exams continues to drop and the proportion of people who did not complete college remains high. In fact, college completion is low for both Potter and Randall Counties. Research shows that helping young adults succeed in college, including community colleges and vocational programs, can create tremendous benefits for the local community.

The economy in the area remained strong in 2013 with unemployment dropping and median income rising. However, it appears that families benefited less from these improvements than did single and cohabitating individuals. Low income families in Potter County remain a point of concern.

In the area of health, the number one issue continues to be heart disease. The rate of deaths from heart disease was elevated in both counties despite the fact that Randall County possesses many protective factors against the disease (high income, low minority population, high health ranking, etc.). Some evidence points to the potential of cultural and dietary factors playing a significant role in the growing rate of heart disease in this area, however the causes and therefore the solutions for this issue cannot be found without careful scientific examination of the local population. More evidence is necessary to make any kind of definitive conclusion.

Other important health issues identified in this report were a dramatic increase in the rate of deaths from

accidents in both counties and a growing rate of sexually transmitted infections, especially from chlamydia and gonorrhea in Potter County. High demand for treatment for meth addiction in Potter County was also alarming, though it declined in 2012 and 2013.

Poverty rates dropped in 2013 in both counties. Nevertheless, poverty remained a significant issue in Potter County where it was 37.3% higher than the national rate. Randall County has experienced an overall upward trend in the poverty rate between 2009 and 2013, and will most likely see an even greater rise in the future. Government assistance data offered some insight into potential differences in the nature of poverty between the two counties. Based on this data, one can speculate that individuals in poverty in Randall County tend to be better off than those in Potter County. Randall County residents have higher overall incomes and higher participation rates in cash assistance programs, with lower participation rates in other assistance programs. This may indicate that poverty in Randall County is more likely to be situational rather than chronic. If this is true, anti-poverty programs in Randall County should be targeted toward the first-time poor or toward families that are on the brink of poverty.

In Potter County, on the other hand, residents have high participation rates in long-term assistance programs (such as SNAP and Medicaid) and lower incomes. This suggests that the poverty in Potter County is longer-term, chronic in nature, and that anti-poverty interventions need to serve a greater spectrum of needs. These findings are preliminary and warrant further, closer investigation.

If one had to select a single population group in this report that needs the most help it would be single mothers in Potter County. Over 50% of babies in Potter County are born to unmarried mothers. The median income of single mothers in Potter County between 2009 and 2013 was about 30% of that of married couples, and below the national poverty threshold for a single mother with 2 children. Single mothers are also at the highest risk for having children in the early childhood education gap which can have long-term negative outcomes for their children and for the community. In future reports, it would be worth highlighting this population group and investigating the precise educational, vocational, health, and childcare needs these families have, as well as finding the best ways to support them and help them stay out of poverty. In addition, the Amarillo and Canyon communities can benefit from investing in programs that help adolescent girls and young adult women get a good education and delay childbearing until they are financially secure.

## EDUCATION

**Graduation Rates / Texas, and Counties**

	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2010	84.3%	83.1%	81.5%	94.4%
	2014	88.3%	89.1%	84.1%	94.6%
% change	2010-2014	4.7%	7.2%	3.2%	0.2%

**Educational Achievement / Texas, and Counties**

	USA	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
Less Than High School	13.4%	18.2%	15.3%	24.2%	8.6%
High School	27.8%	25.2%	24.6%	27.8%	23.7%
Associates Degree	8.1%	6.5%	6.1%	7.9%	6.5%
Some College	21.1%	22.6%	26.1%	25.9%	29.8%
Bachelors Degree or Above	29.6%	27.5%	27.5%	16.0%	30.0%



## INCOME

**Median Income / US, Texas, and Counties**

	Year	US	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
Median Household Income	2012	\$51,885	\$51,247	\$42,201	\$35,780	\$56,391
Median Household Income	2013	\$52,250	\$51,704	\$47,309	\$37,823	\$60,801
Median Household Income % change 2012-2013		0.7%	0.9%	12.1%	5.7%	7.8%
Median Family Income	2012	\$63,152	\$60,363	\$54,442	\$46,380	\$65,420
Median Family Income	2013	\$64,030	\$61,208	\$59,038	\$42,855	\$77,807
Median Family Income % change 2012-2013		1.4%	1.4%	8.4%	-7.6%	18.9%

**Average Median Household Income / Texas, and Counties**

Average 2009-2013	Year	Potter	Randall
Median Income Married Couples	2009-2014	\$57,076	\$87,705
Median Income Male Householder	2009-2015	\$32,262	\$42,287
% of Median Income Married Couples	2009-2016	56.5%	48.2%
Median Income Female Householder	2009-2017	\$17,488	\$27,244
% of Median Income Married Couples	2009-2018	30.6%	31.1%





## HEALTH

### Death from Heart Disease / Texas and Counties

	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2012	149.6	173.9	210.1	181.5
	2013	151.8	174.5	223.6	189.0
% change	2012-2013	1.5%	0.4%	6.4%	4.1%
% compared to TX	2013	100.0%	115.0%	147.3%	124.5%

### Death from Stroke / Texas and Counties

	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2010	36.2	42.5	42.8	45.4
	2012	35.7	38.8	50.7	33.6
	2013	34.9	39.7	47.7	38.7
% change	2012-2013	-2.1%	2.3%	-5.9%	15.4%
% compared to TX	2013	100.0%	113.8%	136.5%	110.9%

### Death from Breast Cancer / Texas and Counties

	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2009	21.8	28.4	21.8	29.6
	2010	21.6	10.0	27.1	25.0
	2011	20.5	7.7	6.5	23.7
	2012	22.4	10.0	9.9	14.5
	2013	21.5	15.4	30.4	25.4
Average % 2009-2013		21.6%	14.3%	19.1%	23.6%

### Death from Cancer: Lung, Throat, Trachea / Texas and Counties

	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2009	38.6	46.6	35.3	48.1
	2010	37.6	36.0	60.9	42.9
	2011	37.6	29.9	41.7	35.7
	2012	37.1	40.2	34.5	34.8
	2013	35.6	28.0	45.0	37.6
Average 2009-2013		37.3	36.2	43.5	39.8

### Death from Accidents

	Year	Potter	Randall
Accident	2012	40.3	33.6
Accident	2013	46.0	47.4
% change	2012 to 2013	14.1%	41.3%
Motor Vehicle (MVA)	2012	18.0	16.2
Motor Vehicle (MVA)	2013	17.3	16.6
% change	2012 to 2013	-4.1%	2.4%
% of MVA from Total Accidents	2012	44.6%	48.3%
% of MVA from Total Accidents	2013	37.5%	35.0%



STI Rates: Chlamydia / Texas and Counties					
	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2010	459.6	669.6	898.6	281.6
	2011	480.1	671.4	787.3	258.2
	2012	478.3	620.8	964.6	301.4
	2013	486.4	628.8	960.8	355.3
	2014	475.0	673.5	957.0	300.3
% compared to TX	2014	100.0%	41.8%	101.5%	-36.8%

STI Rates / Gonorrhea					
	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2010	122.3	229.9	318.0	55.5
	2011	119.7	234.4	218.1	44.5
	2012	123.1	219.4	328.6	54.4
	2013	126.6	246.2	371.7	104.2
	2014	127.7	250.7	448.9	112.3
% change 2013 to 2014		0.9%	1.8%	20.8%	7.8%

Motherhood / Births Under 18 / Texas and Counties					
	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2009	4.7%	6.1%	6.6%	3.3%
	2010	4.3%	5.1%	5.8%	2.5%
	2011	3.9%	4.3%	5.2%	2.4%
	2012	3.5%	4.3%	6.0%	2.5%
	2013	3.2%	3.6%	5.6%	2.1%
Average % change 2009-2010		-6.4%	-8.2%	-3.0%	-7.3%

Motherhood / Unmarried / Texas and Counties					
	Year	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2010	42.6%	40.6%	52.3%	31.8%
	2011	42.2%	38.8%	51.2%	31.8%
	2012	42.3%	41.1%	54.2%	33.7%
	2013	42.4%	41.6%	52.0%	33.7%
Average 2009-2013		42.4%	40.5%	52.4%	32.8%



## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Poverty / US, Texas, and Counties						
	Year	USA	Texas	Lubbock	Potter	Randall
	2012	15.9%	17.9%	22.6%	23.4%	12.9%
	2013	15.8%	15.8%	17.5%	21.7%	11.6%
% change 2012 to 2013		-0.6%	-11.7%	-22.6%	-7.3%	-10.1%
% compared to US		100.0%	110.8%	137.3%	73.4%	26.6%

## TRENDS

Area	County	2013 Value	Trend	Better Than	Worse Than
Median Income	Potter Co.	\$42,855	↘		US, TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	\$65,420	↔	US, TX, Lubbock Co., Potter Co.	
Unemployment	Potter Co.	4.7%	↘	US, TX, Lubbock Co.	
	Randall Co.	4.7%	↔	US, TX, Lubbock Co.	
Graduation Rate (2014)	Potter Co.	84.1%	↔		TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	94.6%	↔	TX, Lubbock Co., Potter Co.	
SAT/ACT	Amarillo ISD	19.7%	↘	Region 16	TX
	Region 16	21.9%	↘		TX, Amarillo ISD
Uninsured Adults	Potter Co.	34.4%	↘		US, TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	20.2%	↘	TX, Lubbock Co., Potter Co.	
Heart Disease*	Potter Co.	223.6 per 100,000	↘		TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	189.0 per 100,000	↔	Potter Co.	Lubbock Co., TX
Adolescent Mothers	Potter Co.	5.6%	↘		TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	2.1%	↘	TX, Lubbock Co., Potter Co.	
Chlamydia (2013-2014)	Potter Co.	957.0 per 100,000	↘		TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	300.3 per 100,000	↘	TX, Lubbock Co., Potter Co.	
Meth (2014)	Potter Co.	127.1 per 100,000	↔		Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	46.4 per 100,000	↘	Potter Co., Lubbock Co.	
Poverty	Potter Co.	21.7%	↘		US, TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	11.6%	↘	US, TX, Lubbock Co., Potter Co.	
SNAP*(2014)	Potter Co.	17.2%	↘		US, TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	6.3%	↘	US, TX, Lubbock Co., Potter Co.	
Child Abuse	Potter Co.	20.2 per 1000	↘		TX, Lubbock Co., Randall Co.
	Randall Co.	9.8 per 1000	↘	Potter Co., Lubbock Co.	TX

\*Recalculated based on the American Community Survey population estimates

↘ Undesirable   ↔ Desirable   ↗ Undesirable   ↘ Desirable

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Center for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

KIDS COUNT

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Pew Research Center

<http://www.pewresearch.org/>

Texas Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/help/Food/snap.shtml>

Texas Department of Public Safety

<https://www.txdps.state.tx.us/>

Texas Education Agency

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taks/>

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/>

United States Census Bureau

<http://www.census.gov/acs>

## End Notes

<sup>i</sup>Brown, A. (2014). “U.S. Hispanic and Asian population growing, but for different reasons”. Pew Research Center.

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<sup>iii</sup>Cutler, D.M. and Lleras-Muney, A. (2006). Education and health: Evaluating Theories and Evidence, Working Paper 12352, NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, <http://www.nber.org/papers/w12352.pdf>

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<sup>vii</sup>Schweinhardt, L.J., Montie, J., Xiang, Z., Barnett, W.S., Belfield, C.R. & Nores, M. (2005). “Lifetime Effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 40”. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press. ©2005 by High/Scope® Educational Research Foundation.

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