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This Community Status Report was prepared by Wang Evaluation Consultants



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Essence (Who we are)

We gather community resources to advance the common good.

Mission (What we do)

To unite community ideas and resources to fight poverty and create opportunity for all.

Vision (Our Aspiration)

A community living United: All of us helping all of us.

Yes, it's that simple.

As problems become increasingly complex, so do their solutions. There is no silver bullet that will solve systemic challenges like income inequality, school readiness and health equity. We know that community is the cornerstone of society and that creating the community we want for our children requires all to work together for the common good. We believe we should innovate and invest in our community like never before.

Deep understanding of local needs

- To solve problems, we need to know where the problems begin. Power lies in understanding the community we serve.
- Our United Way understands the barriers individuals face-whether it's access to shelter, essential programs, education, healthcare, or basic resources. This deep insight allows us to address community needs effectively and create lasting change.
- Our decisions must be data-driven. We cannot underestimate the importance of understanding before action...

ALICE - Who we serve

Currently our target population is ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed.) ALICE is a term used to describe individuals and families who maintain regular employment but remain in relative poverty due to low levels of pay and dependent expenditures.

Reflect the people we seek to serve

- We are partners, not saviors! Solving community problems starts with listening and ensuring decisionmakers reflect those we serve. True change happens when those affected have a voice in the solutions.
- We honor contributions at all levels and keep donors informed about the impact of their investments.
 Transparency and accountability ensure every dollar makes a meaningful difference.

Long term investment

- The building blocks for a good life are education, health, and financial stability-foundations that guide our partnerships. We also recognize that meeting basic needs is essential for long-term growth.
- Community change takes time and isn't always easy to measure, but we stay committed for the long run to address urgent and evolving needs.
- We convene and lead impact partners where collaboration drives results, while also working with others to advance the greater good, even beyond our direct influence.



ESSENTIAL. WORKING. STRUGGLING.

For a growing number of U.S. households, financial stability is nothing more than a pipe dream, no matter how hard their members work. These households are ALICE – Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed – earning above the Federal Poverty Level yet struggling to afford basic expenses.

ALICE may be your relative, friend, colleague, or neighbor, or maybe you qualify to be ALICE. ALICE may also be your caregiver, hotel clerk, preschool teacher, retail clerk, sanitation worker, and others. ALICE workers are the backbone of our economy, with the pandemic making it crystal clear just how much we need them.

ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) is essential workforce, ALICE earns just above the Federal Poverty Level but less than what it costs to make ends meet. These struggling households are forced to make impossible choices each day. While such hardship is pervasive, households of color are disproportionately represented in ALICE.

ALICE also represents the data reshaping the dialogue on financial hardship, and a grassroots movement that is picking up steam across half of U.S. states - and counting.

ALICE Quick Facts

- Spans all races, ages, ethnicities, and abilities, though households of color are disproportionately ALICE.
- Includes workers whose wages cannot keep up with the rising cost of goods and services.
- Often includes those who are working two or more jobs and still cannot pay their bills.
- May have family members who need care and assistance, making it harder for them to find living-wage work.
- Lives paycheck to paycheck and are forced to make impossible choices: pay the rent or buy food, receive medical care or pay for childcare, pay utility bills or put gas in the car.
- Is part of every community nationwide.

BARRIERS FOR ALICE

Housing

Housing is the cornerstone of stability, but it is also the most expensive item in most families' budgets. Without safe, affordable housing, families cannot maintain stability in other areas of life like school and work attendance, or access to health care and healthy food. They may also face long commutes to work, the inability to save for emergencies, and excessive stress.

Food

Food is the most basic of all needs. A healthy diet builds overall good health and fuels working and learning throughout the day. In the short term, food is the easiest place for a family to skimp on cost, but in the long term, the consequences of a poor diet or food insecurity can include developmental delays in children, compromised performance at school or work, and chronic disease in adults. ALICE families living in food deserts also face challenges in getting access to healthy foods, such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

Taxes

Taxes are a necessary additional expense for working ALICE households. Because most ALICE families are not eligible for public assistance, they are net contributors and, on average, pay a higher rate of state and local taxes than households in the highest income bracket. Earned income and child tax credits provide important relief to working families, though primarily those with children under the age of 18.



Childcare & Education

Childcare is essential for parents to work and children to be prepared for kindergarten, and education is one of the best predictors of financial well-being in the U.S. Yet, childcare is also the second most expensive item in the family budget, and ALICE families face challenges finding quality education at every level. Without quality childcare, children may not be ready for school and can face health and safety risks, and parents cannot work. Without quality K-12 education, students do not gain the important skills they need to advance to sustainable jobs. And without affordable higher education, students incur debt and forgo job advancement.

Transportation

Transportation is necessary to get to jobs, housing, grocery stores, childcare, school, and health care providers, as well as for social and faith-based activities. Though public transportation is cheaper than vehicle ownership, it is unavailable in much of the country, so owning a car is essential for many and a purchase most ALICE families struggle to afford. The consequences of buying less expensive vehicles include sacrificing reliability and safety, risking travel delays, and adding costs for repairs, insurance, registration, and traffic fines.

Healthcare

Health care is the hardest item to budget and is both a consequence and a cause of financial instability. Depending on age, illnesses, and overall health, costs vary widely between families. While health insurance has become more available to lower-income families since the introduction of the Affordable Care Act in 2014, there are still millions without insurance and even more who cannot access quality, regular health care due to initial cost outlays, work and family obligations, and doctor shortages, particularly in primary care and in rural areas.

Technology

Technology has become an essential part of the current economy, so families need access to basic technology, such as smartphones and home internet, to participate. Yet smartphones and home internet add costs to ALICE's budget. Without access, ALICE families are disadvantaged in job searches and job performance, school performance, accessing public benefits, and health care. Subsidized phone and internet programs exist, but there are significant limitations to performance, eligibility, and enrollment.

Survival Household Budgets 2023 for Potter & Randall County

Understanding the Consequences of Insufficient Income

There is substantial variation in the number of households who live below the ALICE Threshold within both Potter and Randall counties. See how the six essential elements of a household budget — housing, child care and education, food, transportation, health care, and technology — as well as taxes affect financial decision-making for ALICE families. This data was gathered from unitedforalice.org/the-cost-of-basics/texas and is specific to Potter and Randall County. This reflects the Household Survival Budget which is the minimum cost to live and work in today's economy and is **based on the most recent data collected in 2023**.

Potter County

Randall County

Monthly	SINGLE Adult	ONE ADULT, ONE CHILD IN CHILD CARE	ONE ADULT, TWO CHILDREN IN CHILD CARE	TWO Adults	TWO ADULTS, ONE CHILD IN CHILD CARE	TWO ADULTS, TWO CHILDREN IN CHILD CARE	SINGLE SENIOR	TWO SENIORS
HOUSING - RENT	\$737	\$856	1,069	\$856	\$1,069	\$1,069	\$737	\$856
11003ING - KENT	\$792	\$924	\$1,155	\$924	\$1,155	\$1,155	\$792	\$924
CHILD CARE	\$0	\$602	\$1,172	\$0	\$602	\$1,172	\$0	\$0
OHIED OAKE	\$0	\$602	\$1,172	\$0	\$602	\$1,172	\$0	\$0
FOOD	\$429	\$630	\$848	\$787	\$977	\$1,166	\$395	\$724
1000	\$488	\$717	\$964	\$895	\$1,111	\$1,325	\$449	\$824
TRANSPORTATION	\$431	\$565	\$719	\$670	\$824	\$958	\$361	\$530
THAIRDI GRIATION	\$431	\$565	\$719	\$670	\$824	\$958	\$361	\$530
HEALTH CARE	\$178	\$488	\$739	\$488	\$739	\$780	\$547	\$1,094
HEALTH CARE	\$178	\$488	\$739	\$488	\$739	\$780	\$545	\$1,090
TECHNOLOGY	\$86	\$86	\$86	\$116	\$116	\$116	\$86	\$116
TECHNOLOGY	\$86	\$86	\$86	\$116	\$116	\$116	\$86	\$116
MISCELLANEOUS	\$186	\$323	\$463	\$292	\$433	\$526	\$213	\$332
	\$198	\$338	\$484	\$309	\$455	\$551	\$223	\$348
TAV DAVAGNIT	\$246	\$247	\$334	\$336	\$405	\$390	\$303	\$561
TAX PAYMENT	\$270	\$280	\$378	\$370	\$452	\$443	\$326	\$596
MONTHLY TOTAL	\$2,293	\$3,797	\$5,430	\$3,545	\$5,165	\$6,177	\$2,642	\$4,213
JITTIET TOTAL	\$2,443	\$4,000	\$5,697	\$3,772	\$5,454	\$6,500	\$2,782	\$4,428
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$27,516	\$45,564	\$65,160	\$42,540	\$61,980	\$74,124	\$31,704	\$50,556
AMIOALIOIAL	\$29,316	\$48,000	\$68,364	\$45,264	\$65,448	\$78,000	\$33,384	\$53,136
HOURLY WAGE	\$13.76	·	\$32.58	\$21.27	\$30.99	\$37.06	\$15.85	\$25.28
Needed to Survive	\$14.66	\$24.00	\$34.18	\$22.63	\$32.72	\$39.00	\$16.69	\$26.57

DATA NOTE:

- DATA IS FROM 2023.
- SINCE THE RELEASE OF THE 2023 COMMUNITY STATUS REPORT, EACH ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF A HOUSEHOLD BUDGET HAS SEEN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN COST, DESPITE THE MINIMUM WAGE REMAINING THE SAME, PLEASE SEE 2023 COMMUNITY STATUS REPORT FOR A FULL COMPARISON.

Potter County, Texas 2023						
Total Households	42,674	% Below ALICE Threshold	55%			

Randall County, Texas 2023					
Census County Subdivisions in Randall County	Total Household	% Below ALICE Threshold			
	56,279	37%			
Amarillo CCD, Randall County, Texas	49,010	35%			
Canyon CCD, Randall County, Texas	6,748	42%			







1. Executive Summary

For 100 years, United Way of Amarillo and Canyon (UWAC) has been empowering local community organizations to care for the residents of Potter and Randall counties in the areas of education, income, and health, and to provide critical services to residents who found themselves on the economic and social margins of the local community.

To accomplish these important goals, UWAC provides local nonprofits with financial resources and equips them with guidance and reliable data on key community indicators. The annual Community Status Report, commissioned by UWAC and delivered by Wang Evaluation Consultants, informs local stakeholders on the most relevant trends in education, income, and health, and illuminates the areas of community life that may need additional attention.

1.1 Indicators

In **Demographics**, this year's report compared the median age of Potter and Randall counties to all 3,222 counties in the U.S.

In **Education**, this year's report looked at STAAR test scores longitudinally (2017-2024), in order to identify changes due to COVID, as well as the percentage of economically disadvantaged students. Dr. Wang's research while at the Texas Tech University College of Education from 2006-2012 indicated that the best predictor of standardized test scores at both the district and campus levels is percentage of economically disadvantaged students. Total Enrollment is also presented.

In **Health**, several new indicators are examined, including low birth weight babies, diabetes prevalence, and infant mortality (compared to all U.S. counties), and health insurance distributions for children and adults for Potter and Randall counties.

For **Financial Stability**, unemployment, median household income, child poverty, food insecurity, and home ownership of Potter and Randall counties are compared to all 3,222 U.S. counties.

The **Vulnerable Populations** section examined child care in Potter and Randall counties in depth, including the number of children receiving Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) assistance (broken down by 3 age levels of children), as well as the reasons children are in child care.

Further, this report includes a large portion of an August 2024 Texas Legislative Study report on the Texas "child care crisis".

Finally, Vulnerable Populations examined Family Violence crimes.

1.2 Highlights

Demographics

- The total and child populations of Potter and Randall counties have followed different trends in the past 5 years: in Randall County, the total population and the child population have both been increasing at a steady rate, while Potter County's total population has stayed at the same level, and its child population has actually **decreased** (see Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2).
- Although the child population of Potter County has declined over the past 5 years, Potter County's median age (35.1) is younger than Randall County by 1.7 years, and the U.S. average by 6.7 years (see Figure 2.3)

Education

- There were dramatic COVID effects for 3rd Grade Math for Texas, as well as Potter and Randall counties. There was less of an apparent COVID effect for 3rd Grade Reading (see Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.1).
- There were dramatic COVID effects for 8th Grade Reading for Texas and Amarillo ISD, and less so for Canyon ISD (see Figure 3.3). For 8th Grade Math, Amarillo ISD had better pass rates pre-COVID than Canyon ISD or Texas, but the COVID effect was dramatic for Amarillo ISD, and even more for Texas (see Figure 3.4).
- Total student enrollment has decreased in Amarillo ISD from 33,066 in 2017 to 29,626 in 2024, while in Canyon ISD it has increased from 9,827 in 2017 to 11,311 in 2024 (see Figure 3.5).
- Amarillo ISD has had very high percentages of economically disadvantaged students (between 67% 71.6%), while Canyon ISD has enjoyed relatively lower percentages (between 29.3% 39.7%)—although the percentage has been climbing from 2021-2024 (see Figure 3.6). Dr. Wang's research while at Texas Tech University's College of Education showed that the percentage of a campus' or district's economically disadvantaged students was the best predictor of state standardized test score pass rates (TAAS or TAKS or STAAR).
- Both Amarillo ISD and Canyon ISD have had 6-year longitudinal high school graduation rates which have been higher than the state rate (see Figure 3.7).

Health

- Randall County had slightly lower rates of low birth weight babies than both Texas and U.S., while Potter County had significantly higher rates of low birth weight babies than both Texas and U.S.
- As far as infant mortality (e.g., live births which die before their first birthday), Randall County had higher rates than both Texas and U.S., and Potter County had a higher rate than all 3.
- Randall County had diabetes prevalence rates about the same as Texas, but both were below U.S. rates, while Potter County had significantly higher rates than U.S. (as well as Texas or Randall County).
- As far as uninsured children, Potter County's percentage of 14.2% was more than twice as high as Randall County's 6.2%, while Potter County's percentage of uninsured adults (28.3%) was not quite double Randall County's 14.9%.

Financial Stability

- In 2023, despite both Potter and Randall counties having low levels of unemployment relative to Texas
 or the U.S., Potter County had low median household income and a low percentage of home ownership,
 and a high percentage of child poverty and food insecurity.
- Randall County, on the other hand, had a high median household income and high percentage of home ownership, and a low child poverty rate and a percentage of food insecurity lower than Texas (although higher than U.S.).

Vulnerable Populations

This year's report looked deeply into the child care crisis.

- It is estimated that Texas loses \$9.39 billion annually due to insufficient childcare.
- Child care in Texas is more expensive than average in-state college tuition.
- Child care centers operate on margins typically less than 1%.

- Although Texas received about \$5.9 billion in one-time federal COVID funds for CCDF, those expired in September, 2024, leaving a gaping hole in child care funding in Texas.
- The month-to-month variability in pre-K and school-age children in child care in Potter and Randall counties makes it difficult for a child care business to plan.
- Family violence rates for Potter County are extremely high relative to Texas, but particularly relative to Randall County rates. The stability of these rates over time suggest a very difficult problem for Potter County to solve.

Community Strengths and Challenges

These are some of the identified community strengths:

- Both counties have public school systems which perform at (and usually **above**) comparison statewide performance levels.
- Both Potter and Randall counties have low unemployment rates.
- Randall County has higher than average economic stability (e.g., high median household income and home ownership, low child poverty and low uninsured rates, low rates of economically disadvantaged students), and a very low rate of family violence.

Despite these strengths, challenges remain:

- Potter County faces multiple challenges, including economic strain (low median household income
 and low home ownership rate, high percentage of economically disadvantaged students and high child
 poverty rate, and high food insecurity), and poor health outcomes (high rates of low birth weight babies
 and infant mortality, high diabetes prevalence, and high rates of uninsured children and adults), and an
 extremely high rate of family violence.
- We concur with the Texas Legislative Report that there is a "child care crisis", exacerbated by one-time federal COVID child care funding which ran out in September, 2024.





2. Demographics

Indicators 2.1

include total population and child population (from 2020-2024), and median age in 2023. The median the U.S., as well as the U.S. average.

In the Demographics section, the indicators will age of both Potter and Randall counties will be compared to the distribution of all 3,222 counties in

2.2 Summary

The populations of Potter and Randall counties have followed different trends in the past five (5) years: in Randall County, the total and child populations have both been increasing at a steady rate, while Potter County's total population has stayed at the same level, while its child population has actually decreased over time (see Figure 2.1 and Figure

Although the child population of Potter County has declined over the past five (5) years, Potter County's median age of 35.1 is younger than Randall County by 1.7 years, and the U.S. average by 6.7 years (see Figure 2.3).

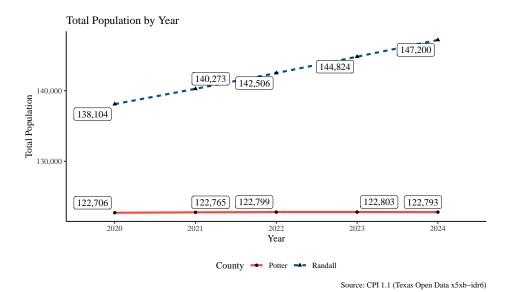


Figure 2.1: Total Population, 2020-2024

Population Changes

Between 2020 and 2024, the total population of Potter County was static, and its child population **decreased**. In contrast, Randall County's total and child populations increased at a steady rate.

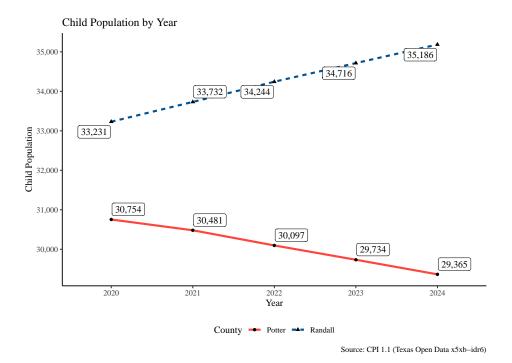


Figure 2.2: Child Population, 2020-2024

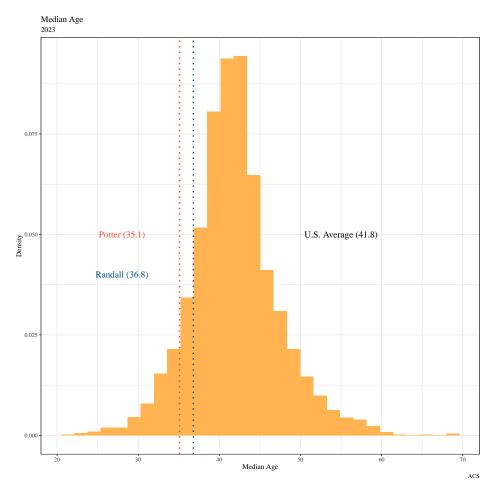


Figure 2.3: Median Age, 2023

Median Age

The median age for both Potter and Randall Counties is younger than the U.S. average by 5-6 years.



3. Education

3.1 Indicators

Education indicators include the percentage of students which met grade level or above on STAAR tests for 3rd and 8th grades Reading and Math from 2017-2024 (this allowed for examination of the effects of COVID); total student

enrollment (2017-2024); percentage of economically disadvantaged students (2017-2024); and 6-year extended longitudinal high school graduation rates for 2017-2021 graduating classes.

3.2 Summary

COVID disrupted communities across many levels, but none more than public education. These effects were most evident in 8th Grade Reading and Math scores, but also in 3rd Grade Math scores. The effects of COVID on high school graduation rates may not be evident for some time.

Both total student enrollment and the percentage of economically disadvantaged students put stress on schools—total student enrollment by stressing classroom and building assignments, while the percentage of economically disadvantaged students is inversely correlated with standardized test scores at both campus and district levels.

3.3 K-12 Performance

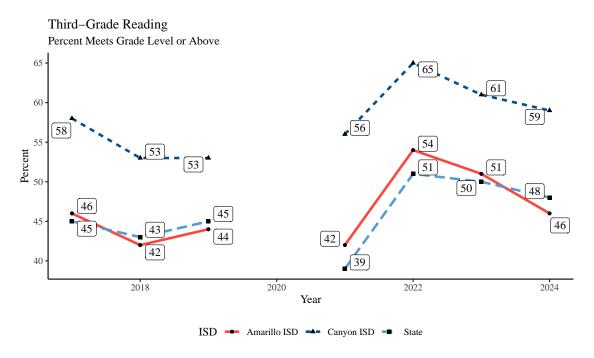


Figure 3.1: STAAR Reading, 3rd Grade

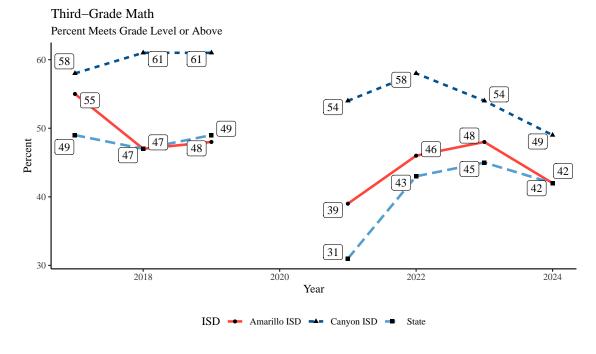


Figure 3.2: STAAR Math, 3rd Grade

3rd Grade

There were dramatic COVID effects for 3rd Grade Math for Texas, as well as Potter and Randall counties. There was less of an apparent COVID effect for 3rd Grade Reading

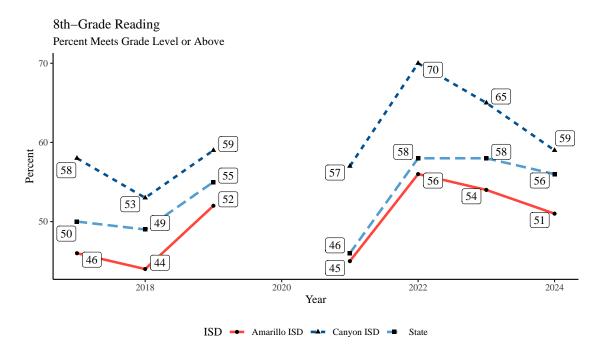


Figure 3.3: STAAR Reading, 8th Grade

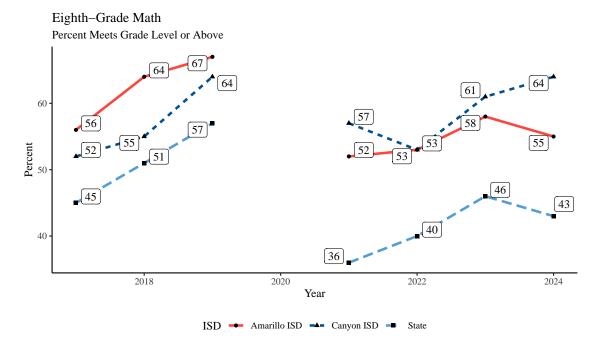


Figure 3.4: STAAR Math, 8th Grade

8th Grade

There were dramatic COVID effects for 8th Grade Reading for Texas and Amarillo ISD, and less so for Canyon ISD. For 8th Grade Math, Amarillo ISD had better pass rates pre-COVID than Canyon ISD or Texas, but the COVID effect was dramatic for Amarillo ISD, and even more for Texas.

3.4 Total Enrollment

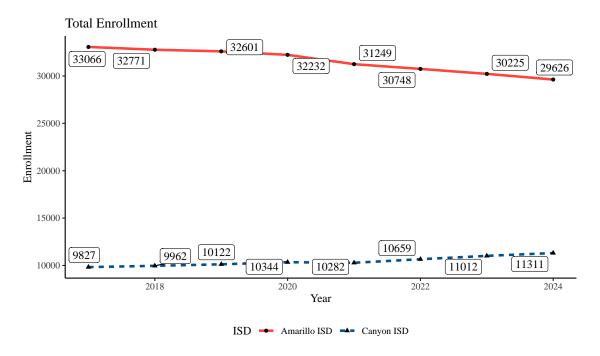


Figure 3.5: Total Student Enrollment

Total Enrollment

Total Enrollment in Amarillo ISD declined dramatically from 2017-2024, while Canyon ISD total enrollment increased slightly during the same time frame. Both increasing and decreasing enrollment put stress on school districts—decreasing enrollment may lead to campus closures, while increasing enrollment may lead to new building projects.

Economically Disadvantaged Students

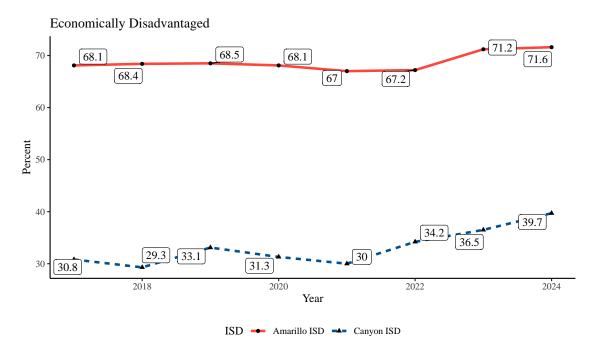


Figure 3.6: Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students

Economically Disadvantaged Students

Dr. Wang's research when he was with the Texas Tech University's College of Education from 2006-2012 focused on predictors of pass rates on standardized tests at both campus and district levels. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students was ALWAYS the best predictor of standardized test scores at BOTH campus and district levels.

3.6 **High School Graduation**

Graduation rates are the most confusing indicator It is the Senior Statistician's belief that the 6-Year or metric which the Texas Education Agency (TEA) reports. It reports 4 different rates (4-Year Longitudinal Rate, a 5-Year Extended Longitudinal Rate, a 6-Year Extended Longitudinal Rate, and a 4- appropriate to report. Year Federal Graduation Rate).

Extended Longitudinal Rate for the subgroup of Graduates, the Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE), and Continuers is the most

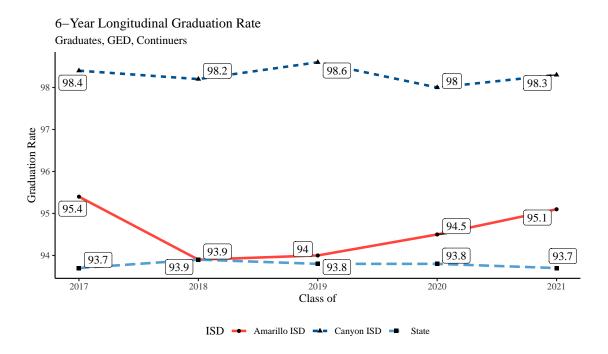


Figure 3.7: Graduation Rates, Classes of 2017-2021

High School Graduation

Both Amarillo ISD and Canyon ISD have had 6-year longitudinal graduation rates which have been higher than the state rate.



OUR IMPACT



Community Impact Programs — Supports Randall & Potter Counties

Behind the Scenes Program at Amarillo Wesley Community Center Wesley Wrestling Club at Amarillo Wesley Community Center Cubscouts Scoutreach Program at Boy Scouts, Golden Spread Council FYi Center at Buckner Children's Family Services Education Prevention Programs at Family Support Services Girls at School at Girl Scouts of Oklahoma & Texas Plains Academic Success at Maverick Boys & Girls Club of Amarillo

EDUCATION:

At United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, our mission is to remove barriers that hold back ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) individuals and empower them to move from simply surviving to truly thriving. One powerful way we do this is by funding programs that deliver direct services to residents of Potter and Randall counties.

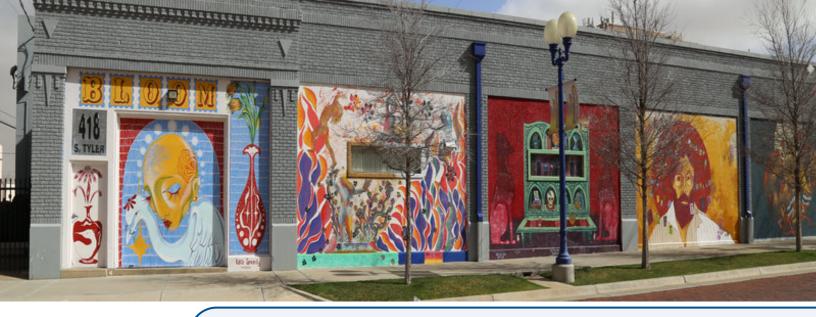
Through grant funding for educational programs at various local agencies, children and families gain valuable skills, access critical resources, and receive the support needed to break the cycle of poverty and build a path toward long-term self-sufficiency. Over the past year, United Way of Amarillo & Canyon has proudly supported educational advancement for individuals and families across our community—helping them take meaningful steps toward a brighter future.

Client Testimonial

Blake joined the Golden Spread Council's Scoutreach after-school program in 2019. As a bright but easily distracted student from a low-income, single-parent home, he often struggled with behavior and focus. That changed when he met his Scout leader, Mr. Chris, who kept him engaged and encouraged his growth. Blake quickly discovered a love for Cub Scouting, and over time, went from resisting the program to becoming a leader—now guiding others in the Scout Oath and Law.

Today, Blake is thriving in school and Scouting, with teachers and site leaders praising his transformation. Scouting has given him the structure, support, and recognition he needed to succeed. Thanks to United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, the zero-cost Scoutreach program continues to remove barriers for kids like Blake–helping them grow into confident, capable leaders with bright futures.





4. Health

4.1 **Indicators**

infant mortality, diabetes prevalence, and health insurance for both children and adults (for the for Medicare).

Health indicators include low birth weight babies, purposes of health insurance, "adults" are defined as ages 18-64 because adults 65 and older are eligible

4.2 Summary

Randall County had slightly lower rates of low birth weight babies than both Texas and U.S., while Potter County had significantly higher rates of low birth weight babies than both Texas and U.S.

As far as infant mortality (e.g., live births which die before their first birthday), Randall County has higher rates than both Texas and U.S., and Potter County had a higher rate than all 3.

Randall County had diabetes prevalence rates about the same as Texas, but both were below U.S. rates, while Potter County had significantly higher rates than U.S. (as well as Texas or Randall County).

As far as uninsured children, Potter County's percentage of 14.2% was more than twice as high as Randall County's 6.2%, while Potter County's percentage of uninsured adults (28.3%) was not guite double Randall County's 14.9%.

4.3 Natality

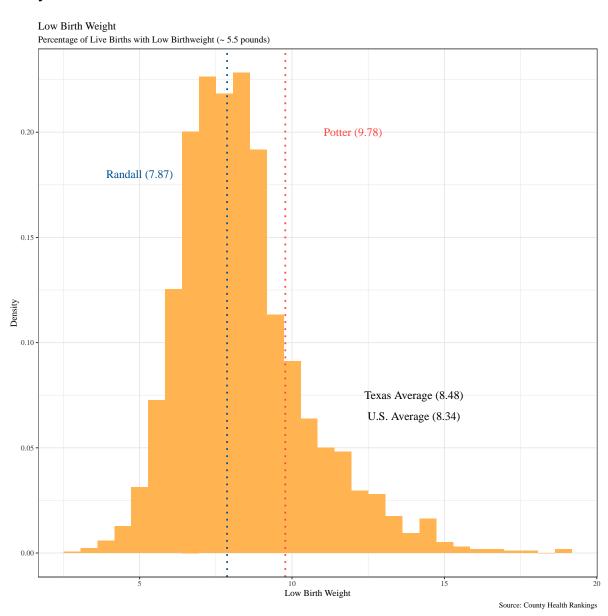


Figure 4.1: Low Birth Weight

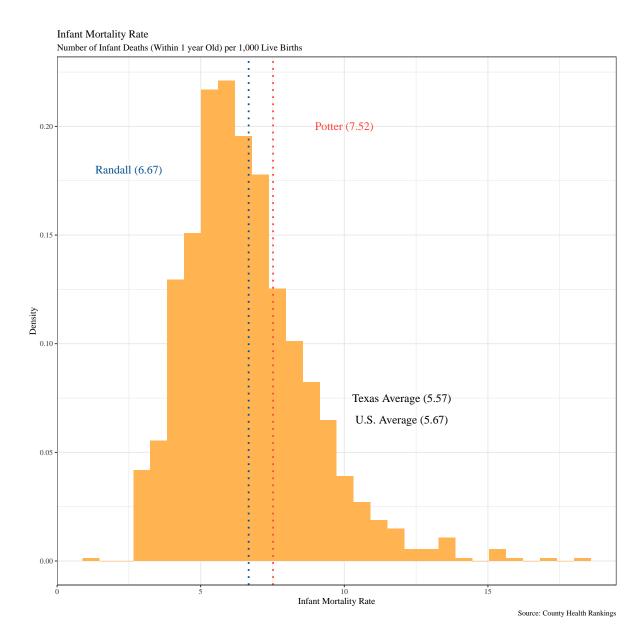


Figure 4.2: Infant Mortality

4.4 General Health

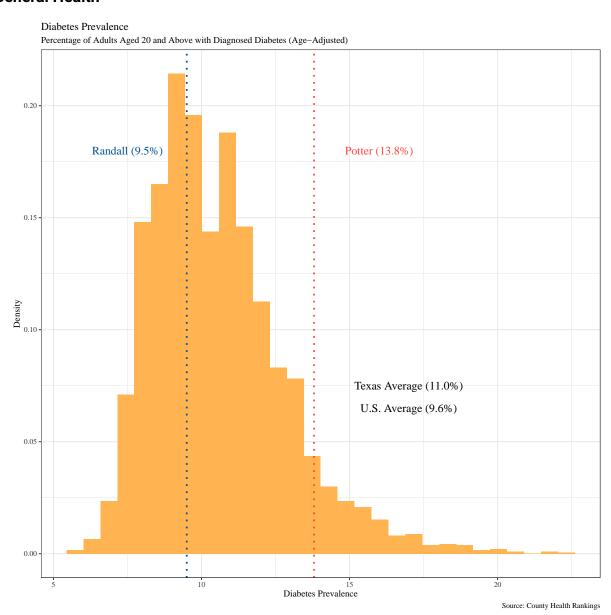
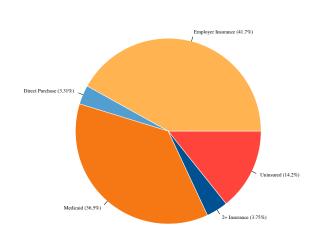


Figure 4.3: Diabetes Prevalence

4.5 Health Insurance



Children's Insurance, Potter County, ACS 2023

Children's Insurance, Randall County, ACS 2023

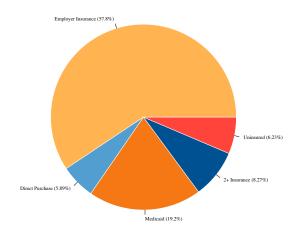


Figure 4.4: Insurance: Potter Children

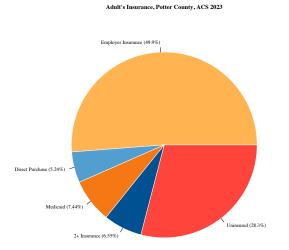


Figure 4.5: Insurance: Randall Children

Adult's Insurance, Randall County, ACS 2023

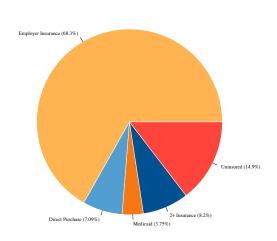


Figure 4.6: Insurance: Potter Adults

Figure 4.7: Insurance: Randall Adults



OUR IMPACT

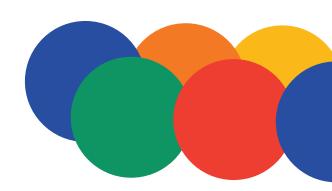


Health:

At United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, we believe everyone deserves access to quality health care. Too often, ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) individuals are forced to make difficult choices between essential needs—like paying for electricity or seeking medical care. Through grant-funded programs like the ones listed below, United Way of Amarillo & Canyon helps ease that burden. By covering critical health-related services, these programs allow families to redirect their limited resources toward other vital expenses such as groceries, higher education, and utilities.

Community Impact Programs —— Supports Randall & Potter Counties

Senior Citizen Program at Amarillo Wesley Community Center Nurse Family Partnership Program at Nurse Family Partnership Panhandle Behavioral Health Alliance Dental Assistance Program, at Family Care Foundation



Client Testimonal

Family Care Foundation, Dental Assistance

The impact of Family Care Foundation, with support from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, on the community–especially among the elderly–is both profound and deeply personal. Countless stories have emerged of seniors receiving critical dental care, such as extractions and dentures, after suffering from chronic pain, broken or abscessed teeth, and the inability to eat properly. These individuals often share the same heartbreaking challenge: struggling with basic nutrition due to severe dental issues, a true quality-of-life concern. Since Medicare does not cover dental services, options are extremely limited. Family Care Foundation remains the only organization in the area with an ongoing program specifically addressing these needs. Thanks to the funding provided by United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, more individuals receive the care they desperately need–care that would otherwise be out of reach. When patients learn that support is available, their reactions are often emotional and tearful, reflecting just how life-changing this assistance can be.



5. Financial Stability

Indicators 5.1

As indicators of financial stability, we used poverty, food insecurity, and home ownership (the unemployment, median household income, child last three are new for this year's report).

5.2 **Summary**

In 2023, despite both Potter and Randall counties having low levels of unemployment relative to Texas or the U.S., Potter County had low median household income and a low percentage of home ownership, and a high percentage of child poverty and food

insecurity. Randall County, on the other hand, had a high median household income and high percentage of home ownership, and a low child poverty rate and a percentage of food insecurity lower than Texas (although higher than U.S.).

5.3 Employment and Income

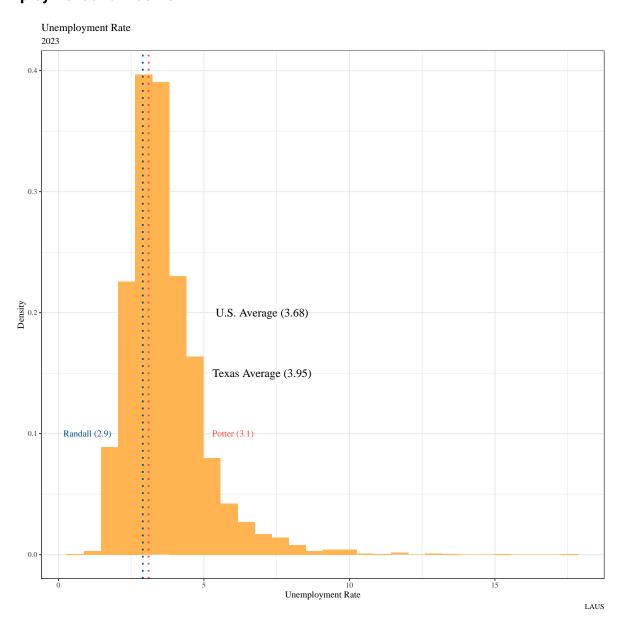


Figure 5.1: Unemployment, 2023 Local Area Unemployment

Financial Stability

In 2023, Randall County had low unemployment and a high median household income and low child poverty percentage, while Potter County had a low unemployment rate, but also a low median household income and a high child poverty percentage.

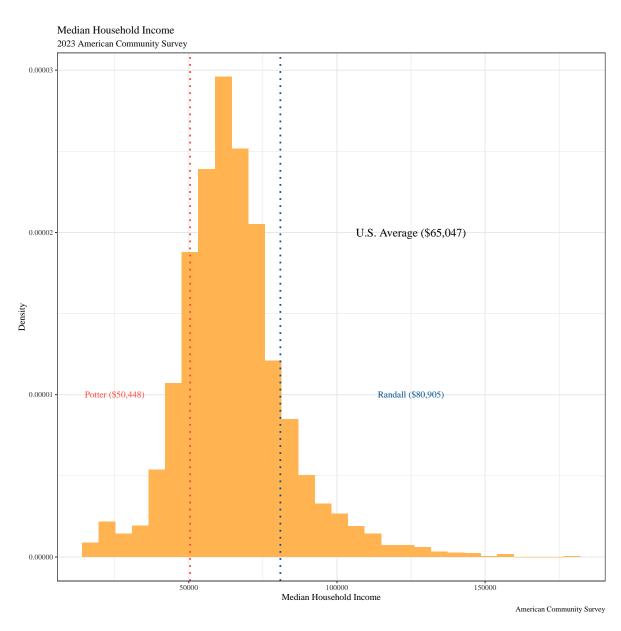


Figure 5.2: Median Household Income, ACS 2023

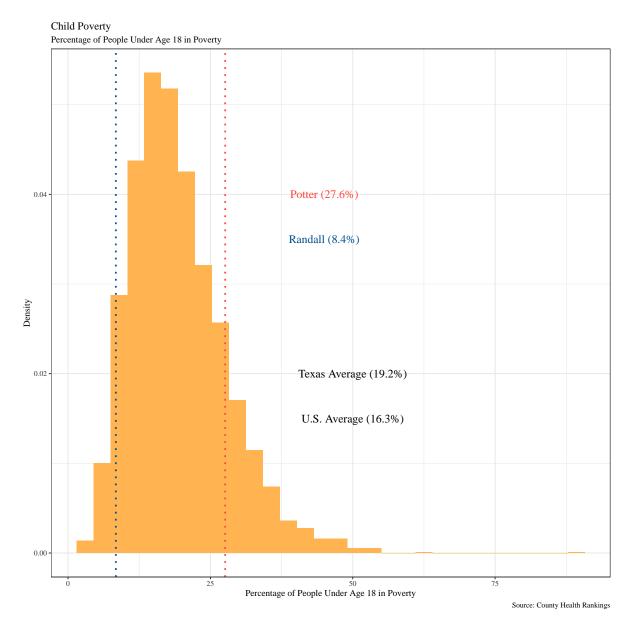


Figure 5.3: Child Poverty

5.4 Food Insecurity

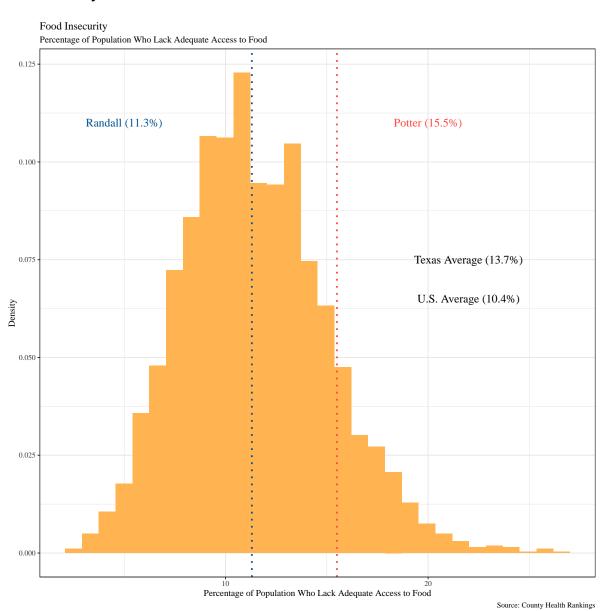


Figure 5.4: Food Insecurity

5.5 Housing

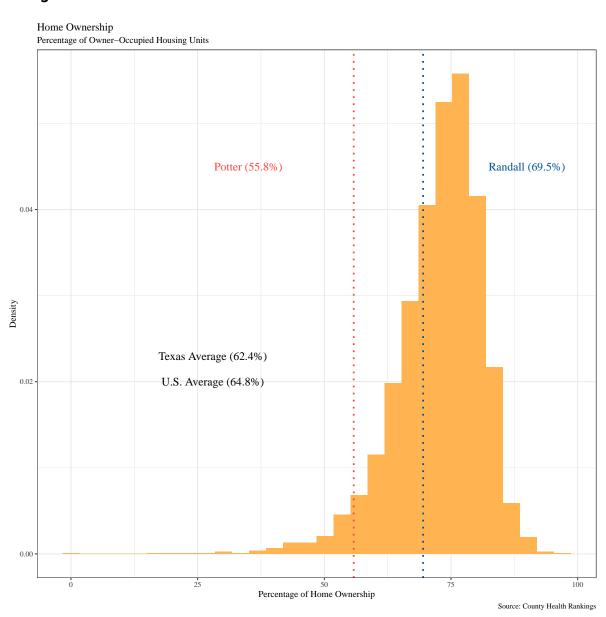


Figure 5.5: Home Ownership



OUR IMPACT



Community Impact Programs

Low-Income Childcare at Children's Learning Centers of Amarillo Veterans Resource Center at Family Support Services Job Training/Placement Program at Goodwill of Northwest Texas

Supports Randall & Potter Counties

FINANCIAL STABILITY:

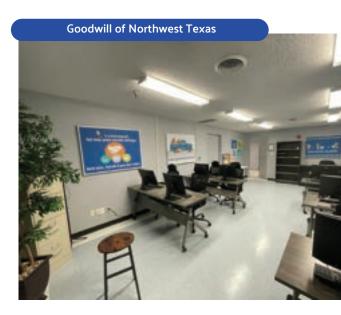
ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) individuals are often working hard but living on the edge-where a single flat tire, medical emergency, or missed day of work can trigger a financial crisis. At United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, we understand that barriers like the high cost of childcare, limited job skills, language or digital literacy, and difficulty navigating services all contribute to financial instability.

By using data to identify service gaps, we strategically allocate grant funds to programs that directly address these challenges. This not only gives our neighbors a stronger chance at stability and success-it strengthens the economic fabric of our entire community.

Client Testimonial

Jessica Robles came to the Goodwill Career Center in August 2023 after the mechanic shop she owned with her husband closed due to the pandemic. With limited computer skills, she was looking for a part-time office or sales position. Through the Career Center's resources and supportive staff, Jessica completed multiple levels of computer training, as well as personal development classes like Building Self-Esteem and Exploring Canva. She was among the first to earn the Employment Development Series certification, gaining confidence and practical skills in typing, Microsoft programs, and professional communication.

After completing the advanced computer class in December, Jessica applied for and was hired as an HR clerk/receptionist at the Career Center in January. Since then, she has become a valuable team member-contributing to new employee orientation, improving internal processes, and using her bilingual skills to support Goodwill's DE&I efforts. Her manager, Jahnel, describes her as "dependable, positive, and a true embodiment of Goodwill's Core Four Values," and looks forward to her continued growth with the agency.





6. Vulnerable Populations

6.1 Indicators

Child Care

This section begins with a Texas Legislative Study Report from August 2024 on the child care crisis in Texas. This report provides an in-depth contextual view of some of the issues relating to child care.

Local child care indicators include monthly counts of children (broken down into 3 age ranges-infants/toddlers, pre-K, and school-age children) receiving Child Care and Development Funds

(CCDF) assistance (for both Potter and Randall counties). Then monthly counts of the number of families receiving CCDF assistance, and the reason (employment, education, or both), again for both Potter and Randall counties.

Family Violence

As indicators of Family Violence, we report rates of family violence incidents for Potter, Randall, Lubbock, and Texas from 2019-2023.

6.2 Summary

Child Care

The Texas Legislative Study Report on child care highlights multiple issues (and offers several suggestions for moving forward). What were most striking to us were (a) that it is estimated to Texas loses \$9.39 billion dollars annually due to insufficient child care; (b) that child care in Texas is more expensive than average in-state college tuition; (c) that child care centers operate on margins typically less than 1%; and (d) that although TWC received about \$5.9 billion in one-time federal COVID funds for CCDF, those expired in September, 2024, leaving a gaping hole in child care funding in Texas.

What is most stark about Figures 6.1 and 6.2 is how highly **VARIABLE** the number of Pre-K and school-age

children are receiving CCDF assistance in both Potter and Randall counties, as well as the overall increase in infants/toddlers in both counties receiving CCDF assistance. With child care centers operating on barely sustainable margins (typically less than 1%) and this level of client variability, it is difficult to see how local child care providers can construct a business model to start, or continue, a child care business.

The thing that stands out about Figures 6.3 and 6.4 is that most of the families receiving CCDF assistance in both counties is for employment, education, or both.

Family Violence

The most notable thing about family violence rates

for Potter, Randall, Lubbock, and Texas, is simply The second most notable thing about the family how stable they have been over time. stability, particularly across multiple geographic areas, suggests some macro-social forces at play (e.g., legislation, enforcement, lack of effective interventions).

This violence rates is the VERY high rate in Potter County relative to Lubbock, Texas, but particularly to Randall. This variability in local rates suggests more local forces in play (e.g., rates of actual crime or reported crime, enforcement, lack of effective interventions).

6.3 Texas Legislative Study Report: Understanding the Child Care Crisis in Texas

(August, 2024)

Text is copied verbatim from this report. Red text was highlighted by this reports' authors.

6.3.1 Introduction

Child care programs provide children with safe, nurturing environments to learn and grow, enabling parents to work to support their families and the state's economy. Recent reports show Texas is home to about 2.3 million children under six, with 68% having two parents working.

The shortage of affordable child care is not just a family issue, it's a statewide economic problem. Working parents who struggle to find quality, affordable care may arrive late, leave early, miss promotions, delay professional development, or even leave the workforce altogether. A U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation report estimated that Texas loses \$9.39 billion annually from its economy due to insufficient childcare.

Texas Loses Over \$9 Billion Annually due to Insufficient Childcare

A U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation report estimated that Texas loses \$9.39 billion annually from its economy due to insufficient childcare.

6.3.2 Key Issues

Access to Affordable, High-Quality Child Care is Scarce

For many working parents, the critical need for child care comes with a significant financial burden. Approximately 85% of the child care industry is privately funded, with some federal support available for eligible families. On average, American families with a child under five spend about \$10,000 annually on child care, which is about 13% of their income. In Texas, the average annual cost of infant care is \$9,324, which is higher than the average in-state college tuition, according to the latest data from the Economic Policy Institute. This financial strain is a stark reality for many families, making quality child care a luxury rather than a necessity.

The Cost of Infant Care is Higher than College Tuition

In Texas, the average annual cost of infant care is \$9,324, which is higher than the average in-state college tuition, according to the latest data from the Economic Policy Institute.

Despite these high costs for parents, most child care operators don't make a lot of money and early childhood educators earn low wages. Child care centers are operating on barely sustainable margins, typically less than 1%, according to Texans Care for Children. Additionally, the median wage for child care workers in Texas is \$12 per hour, or \$24,000 annually, with an average wage of \$11.43 per hour. These low wages contribute to a national shortage of early child care educators, reducing provider capacity and lengthening waiting lists for subsidized child care.

Provider Margins are Typically Less than 1%

Child care centers are operating on barely sustainable margins, typically less than 1%, according to Texans Care for Children.

In 2023, the waiting list for child care in Texas was around 60,000 children. However, the issue was not a lack of capacity but a shortage of educators, causing providers to operate at only two-thirds of their capacity. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated the already limited access to affordable child care.

Child Care Need Exceeds Capacity

In 2023, the waiting list for child care in Texas was around 60,000 children.

This situation highlights a core issue: even if providers could pay child care staff what they are worth, many families would be priced out of services, negatively impacting providers' revenue.

The current private model for child care fails to meet the demand effectively. High demand is met with unaffordable prices, leading to excess capacity and potential business closures. This underscores the urgent need for increased public funding to make child care more accessible and affordable for all families.

6.3.3 Limited Public Funding for Child Care

The federal government offers financial assistance to states through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) to help subsidize child care expenses for eligible families and enhance the quality and availability of child care. States can use matching funds to maximize these federal dollars. In Texas, this typically results in over a billion dollars in federal funding every biennium through the CCDF. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) administers a portion of the funds through its Child Care Services (CCS) program.

However, federal funding covers a relatively small portion of the child care market. In Fiscal Year 2023, TWC's \$1.1 billion annual allocation will assist approximately 140,000 children daily, which represents just 12% of the total licensed capacity of privately operated child care programs in the state.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government allocated an unprecedented \$52 billion in relief funding to support the child care industry. TWC received about \$5.9 billion in one-time federal CCDF funds. Approximately half of this amount was dedicated to CCDF programs, while the rest supported the broader child care industry, including wage supplements and one-time bonuses for around 10,800 HHSC-regulated child care providers. The last remaining pandemic-related funding for child care expired September 30, 2024.

Providers relied on these funds to stay afloat during the pandemic, especially in an industry that is challenging to sustain. With pandemic-related funding which expired in September, 2024, more provider closures are expected.

6.3.4 Conclusion

There are numerous ways to enhance Texas's child care sector, helping families and boosting the economy. However, most of these approaches require Texas to invest more of its own dollars.

Childcare is essential for economic productivity and child development, but the current system fails to meet the needs of families and providers. Public funding and policy changes are crucial to addressing these issues to create a more sustainable childcare system that benefits children, families, and the state.

Childcare is Essential for Economic Productivity

Childcare is essential for economic productivity and child development, but the current system fails to meet the needs of families and providers

6.4 Local Child Care Indicators

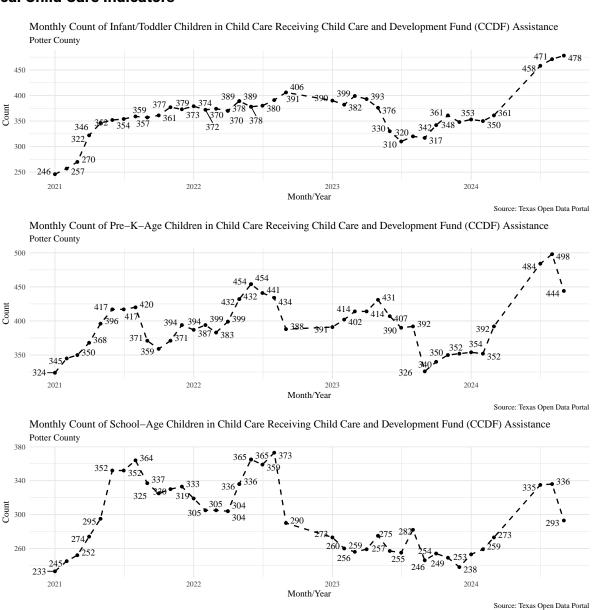


Figure 6.1: Children in Child Care, Potter County

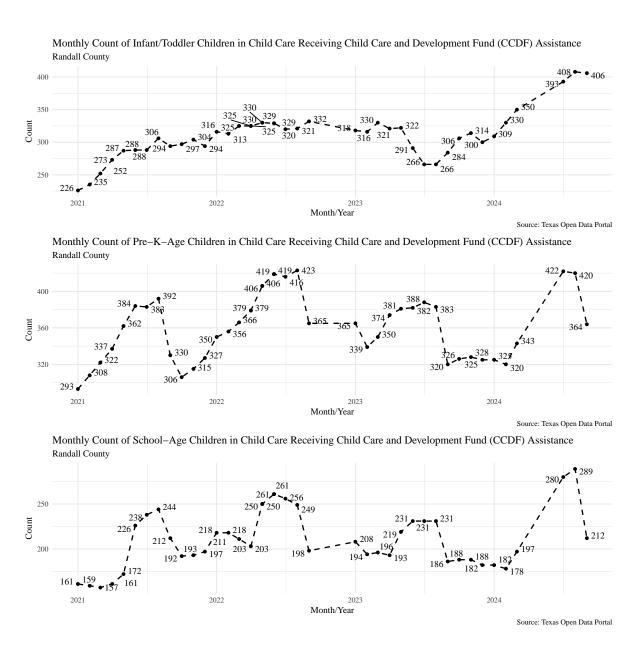


Figure 6.2: Children in Child Care, Randall County

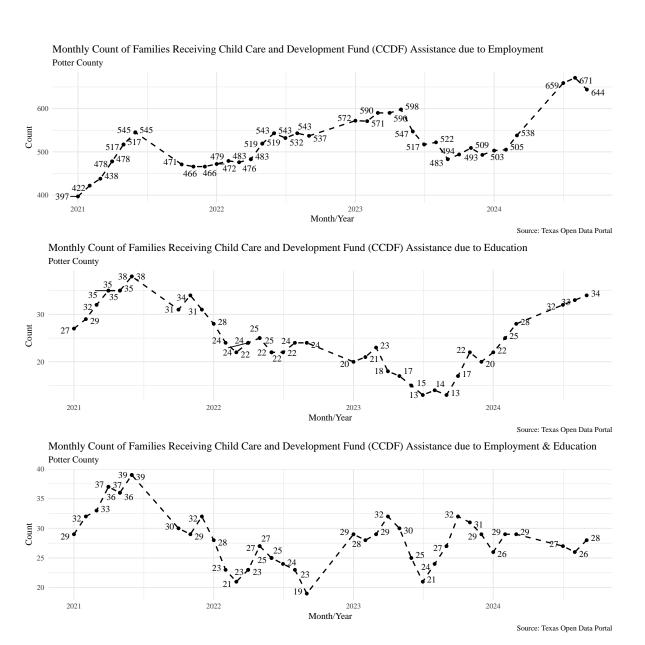


Figure 6.3: Reasons for Children in Child Care, Potter County

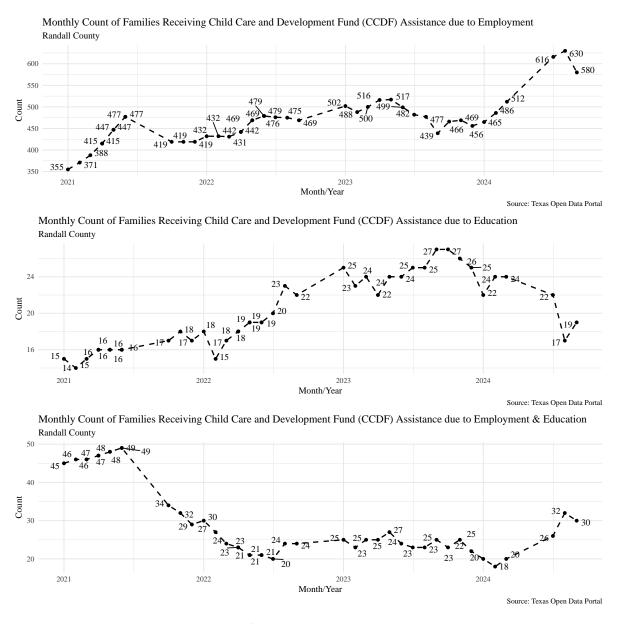


Figure 6.4: Reasons for Children in Child Care, Randall County

6.5 Family Violence

The Texas Family Code, Chapter 71.004, defines Family Violence as "an act by a member of a family or household against another member of the family or household that is intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or sexual assault or that is a threat that reasonably places the member in fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or sexual assault, but does not include defensive measures to protect oneself." The law includes abuse, defined as physical injury that results in substantial harm or genuine threat; sexual contact, intercourse, or conduct; or compelling or

encouraging the child to engage in sexual conduct. The law excludes the reasonable discipline of a child. For Family Violence Reporting, the law defines "family" to include individuals related by consanguinity (blood) or affinity, marriage or former marriage, biological parents of the same child, foster children, foster parents, and members or former members of the same household (including roommates regardless of gender) (Department of Pubic Safety Crime in Texas Report, 2022).

Reported in Figure 6.5 are family violence incidents

(per 1,000 population) for Potter, Randall, and time, and (2) the relative rates of Potter and Lubbock Lubbock counties, as well as state rates, for 2019-counties being above the state rate (in the case of Potter County, roughly three times the state rate).

In reviewing Figure 6.5, a reader is struck by two things: (1) the stability of family violence rates over

time, and (2) the relative rates of Potter and Lubbock counties being above the state rate (in the case of Potter County, roughly three times the state rate), and Randall County's relatively very low rate. These historically very high rates in Potter County should be reason for alarm.

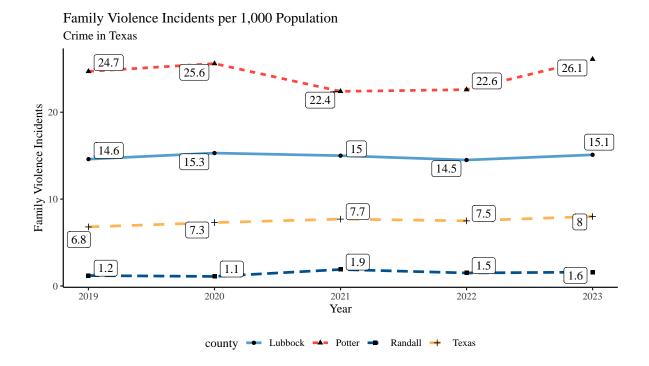


Figure 6.5: Family Violence Incidents, 2019-2023



Figure 6.6: Family Violence Infographic, Office of the Attorney General

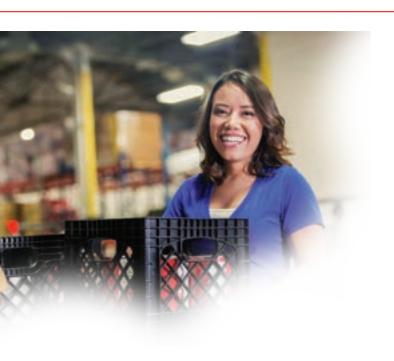
Source: Texas Council on Family Violence

24-hour Family Support Services hotline

806-374-5433



OUR IMPACT



Community Impact Programs — Supports Randall & Potter Counties

Amarillo Area Court Appointed Special Advocates Amarillo Coming Home Project

Texas Panhandle Disaster Services at American Red Cross
Interfaith Hunger Project at Catholic Family Charities of the Texas Panhandle
Crisis Services/Family Violence Program at Family Support Services
Crisis Services/Sexual Assault Program at Family Support Service
Community Day Room Guyon Saunders Resource Center
The Market at Tierra Blanca

Foodnet Program at PRPC/Area Agency on Aging Emergency Shelter Services Program at Salvation Army

BASIC NEEDS:

Basic needs—like food, shelter, safety, clean water, and warmth—are essential for every individual in our community. Without these necessities, families and individuals face overwhelming challenges in pursuing education, maintaining employment, and achieving financial stability. At the United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, we understand that meeting these basic needs is the first critical step in helping people overcome barriers and begin building a better future.

By grant funding programs that address these essential services, we help create a foundation for stability and growth. When individuals have access to the resources they need to survive, they are better positioned to take meaningful steps toward thriving–gaining skills, finding employment, and ultimately contributing to a stronger, more vibrant community.



Amarillo Coming Home Project

In 2021, Erika Robinson found herself at rock bottom—struggling with addiction, homelessness, and the weight of unresolved trauma. Once strong and independent, she had lost her job, her home, and her sense of direction. Desperate for support, she turned to the Coming Home program and attended a weekly lunch at the Development Center. There, she was met with compassion, acceptance, and a path forward. With the help of the outreach team, Erika began rebuilding her life—securing housing, embracing sobriety, and rediscovering her self-worth. Over time, Erika gained the confidence to pursue employment and enrolled in PREP Academy, a job-readiness program offered through Coming Home. She thrived—graduating with pride and earning a full-time position at the city call center. Today, Erika is stable, empowered, and passionate about sharing her story to inspire others. Her advice to those starting their journey: "Trust the process, keep the faith, and stay H.O.T.—Humble, Open, and Transparent."





PBHA

- The Panhandle Behavioral Health Alliance (PBHA) is a regional group that works to improve access to mental health care. PBHA has had a remarkable year of achievements centered on three focus areas: Wellness and Access, Justice-Involved Care, and Provider Workforce Development.
- In the area of Wellness and Access, PBHA partnered with Hereford Independent School District to implement a school-based mental health initiative. This program introduced behavioral health specialists into schools to address substance use prevention and provide social work services, aiming to create sustainable support systems for students and staff. Also, the "You Do Matter" suicide awareness event in Hereford fostered community engagement through activities like candlelight vigils and live music, promoting open conversations about mental health.
- Regarding Justice-Involved Care, PBHA supported the 211 Texas
 Panhandle Reentry Program, which assists individuals transitioning
 from incarceration by connecting them with mental health resources
 and support networks to promote successful reentry to the
 community.
- In Provider Workforce Development, PBHA focused on addressing
 the shortage of mental health professionals in the region. Efforts
 included initiatives to recruit and retain providers, particularly in
 underserved areas, and providing financial support for licensure and
 supervision fees to encourage entry into the behavioral health field.
- Former State Representative Four Price led the way in the Texas
 Legislature to focus on providing flexible grant funding for mental
 health organizations, and PBHA benefits from this funding. Price said,
 "The Panhandle's ability to 'do more with less' stood out. Our
 collaboration among schools, hospitals, and local leaders became a
 model for others."
- PBHA operates under the fiscal sponsorship and generous partnership of the United Way of Amarillo & Canyon. To get involved or learn more, please visit <u>PanhandleBehavioralHealthAlliance.org</u>.
 Our guide to mental health resources in the Texas Panhandle can be found at <u>PanhandleMentalHealthGuide.org</u>.



Collaborating

211

- The United Way Helpline took it's first phone call as a Community
 Helpline on January 1, 1975. This was accomplished after the United Way
 of Amarillo & Canyon and the Junior League of Amarillo conducted a
 community study whose recommendations resulted in a need for such a
 service. In 2004, the United Way Helpline acquired a contract from
 Health and Human Services to become one of 25 Area Information
 Centers in the State of Texas for the Nationwide 211 Network.
- Specific Aid a program operated by United Way of Amarillo & Canyon's 211 program, has been a direct funding source to members of the community on behalf of the United Way of Amarillo & Canyon since 2014. This program was developed after recognizing that community members have needs where there is not opportunity for them to adjust their budgets when expenses continue to increase due to inflation but they have no opportunity to increase their income. The Specific Aid program makes one-on-one assessments with these families to provide temporary assistance to meet basic needs; including rental assistance, deposit assistance, utility payment assistance, and prescription and copay subsidies as well as connect individuals and families to other community programs to sustain basic needs going forward.
- Over the past three fiscal years, through campaign contributions, special events, fundraising, and grants, Specific Aid has credited \$745,363.44.
- In FY2024 2025, we helped 426 households. Of those households, 273 were Seniors and 302 had children. The Average Assistance Per Household was \$469.62.





Convening

Early Matters

early matters

- The United Way of Amarillo & Canyon recognizes one of the largest barriers to ALICE is access to affordable and quality childcare. United Way of Amarillo & Canyon is looking forward to supporting Early Matters Texas and The Amarillo Area Foundation in their efforts to collaborate and convene to address the issue of affordable/quality childcare.
- The Amarillo Area Foundation (AAF) helped launch Early Matters Panhandle, a coalition of business, education, and civic leaders focused on expanding access to quality childcare across the Texas Panhandle. AAF jump-started this collaborative effort with an initial \$125,000 grant, underscoring the shared goal of treating childcare as essential infrastructure for a thriving economy and workforce. Early Matters Panhandle promotes twogeneration solutions efforts that support children's early development while enabling their parents to work affirming that investing in young children benefits the entire community.
- Looking ahead, the coalition with support and involvement
 of United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, is working to expand
 childcare access in underserved communities, engage local
 employers in supporting families, strengthen the childcare
 workforce, and advocate for greater state and local
 investment in early childhood initiatives. This forwardthinking partnership is building awareness and inspiring
 action so that every family in the Panhandle have the
 support they need to prosper.

Community Youth Development



Community Youth Development

- The Community Youth Development (CYD) Program accomplished a lot in 2024! We served 1,075 unduplicated youth for the year and served approximately 427 youth each month.
- Some highlights of the year included Youth Leadership
 Development workshops that focused on public speaking and
 advocacy. These workshops included role-playing scenarios,
 interactive discussions, and practical exercises to improve
 public speaking and communication skills.
- We also had huge success with the girls and boys empowerment groups to build self-esteem and promote positive self-image. It focused on fostering confidence, developing leadership skills, and discussing challenges and strengths within themselves. The Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) participated in the United Supermarket Storybook Book Drive. The YAC members organized book collection efforts and donated a generous number of books to support local literacy initiatives, with enthusiasm and a sense of purpose. New summer sports and movement camps from Amarillo College included dance and cheer. They were very well received and many youth are super excited to come back every summer for the CYD camps.

MamaMeals





The Maternal Well-Being Study

Through the year 2023 United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, Amarillo Area Foundation, The Academic Pediatric Association, Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health, and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine were able to support a local study that was able to adapt and refine a home-delivered, nutritious prepared meal program for new mothers called MamaMeals though TTUHSC. The goal of this program/study was to evaluate the impact of receiving meals on the health and well-being of mothers with low income or food insecurity in the "fourth trimester"-the first 12 weeks after giving birth.

The findings of this study not only informed work TTUHSC is continually providing new mothers and their children but provided a precedent for further research and programming that could support meal services to mothers and children. The MamaMeals program and study officially closed June 2024, but the impact has been lasting. The United Way of Amarillo & Canyon is proud to have supported a study in which participants felt respected, heard, and were able to gain access to nutrition in which they reported a higher diet quality score at 4 months post-partum than those who did not receive home-delivered nutritious food during this time. Mothers described improved receptivity to foods, particularly vegetables, that they may not have tried without receiving MamaMeals. This study also suggests that improving the mother's access to nutritious foods may improve the quality and types of foods that she feeds to her family, resulting in potentially lasting intergenerational effects.

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2024-2025 Board President Letter

This Community Status Report comes out as United Way of Amarillo & Canyon begins its second century bringing resources together to help grow a thriving Amarillo/Canyon community. As you will see from this report, we have been busy, thanks to our wonderful staff, but mostly thanks to your investment in our work. The essence of United Way of Amarillo & Canyon is to gather community resources to advance the common good. This report reflects some of the ways your support is making this happen.

We continue to work to address barriers to our ALICE (Asset limited, income constrained, employed) population. One of the primary barriers we have found is childcare, especially for the 0-5 year old population. It is estimated that 50% of knowledge acquired, we learn before entering kindergarten, yet most education funding supports high school graduation rates and higher education. Without some basic knowledge gained before kindergarten (counting, sorting, letter recognition, etc.) children will almost never succeed in school. Yet the cost of good quality childcare is out of reach for most of our population. This means that many parents, especially women, must choose between caring for their children or developing a career that can help them build long term savings, enjoy homeownership, and afford quality healthcare. This is a panhandle-wide issue, so we are partnering with other organizations, especially the Amarillo Area Foundation, to address it. You will read in this report how we are beginning to do so through working with businesses, childcare facilities, and supporting local initiatives.

This report contains highlights of our ongoing program focus areas – health, education, financial stability, basic needs, and even emergency response. Our United Way of Amarillo & Canyon plus 211 of the Texas Panhandle team was critical during last year's fires and floods in providing translation services and relief management services to some of the affected panhandle communities. Amarillo and Canyon's 211 has received national recognition for its work.

211 is one of three directly sponsored programs administered by United Way of Amarillo & Canyon. Another, CYD (formerly the 79107 program) works with at risk teens in our most impoverished neighborhoods to help them develop a vision for their own lives and skills to achieve that vision. The third is PBHA (Panhandle Behavior Health Alliance) which has developed a network of people and organizations working to address mental health issues. The cross fertilization and shared learning this network has fostered is changing the face of mental health services in the Texas panhandle. Each of these grant funded programs is highlighted at the end of this report and are Community Impact areas United Way of Amarillo & Canyon is proud to support and sponsor.

We know that many organizations use the information in the Community Status Report in their own fundraising efforts. We would be grateful if you would let us know when you are doing so, AND give us feedback on how we can make future reports more useful to you.

In the meantime, enjoy it, share it, and celebrate yourselves for the contributions your work and financial investment are making in our community. We are all in this together.



7. Sources

County Health Rankings:

· https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data

Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Crime in Texas Report:

URL: https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/crime-records/crime-texas

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Academic Performance Reports:

URL: https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/texas-academic-performance-reports

Texas Legislative Report ("Child Care Crisis in Texas"):

• URL: https://texaslsg.org/2024/08/13/understanding-the-child-care-crisis-in-texas/

Texas Open Data Portal:

- URL: https://data.texas.gov/
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics:
 - URL: https://www.bls.gov/lau/
- U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS):
 - URL: URL: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs



About the artist (responsible for the front and back covers of this Community Status Report):

Brittany Busch is a working artist in Amarillo, as well as an art teacher at Caprock High School. Brittany's work explores the intersections of our lives; how our circumstances, choices, and experiences—past and present—shape who we are and influence our futures. You will often see themes of heritage, pop culture, and the feminal experience in her work. You can contact her at brittanybusch.art@gmail.com



