

# 2018 Community Needs Assessment Highlights

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As part of a community needs assessment, Stokes Partnership for Children (SPC) recently conducted requested input from parents, caregivers and professionals who work with young children as part of a community-wide needs assessment. First, relevant existing data from a variety of sources was gathered and reviewed. Next, an online survey was conducted over a 3 week period. The data and survey results<sup>1</sup> will shape the Smart Start funding priorities over a three year period (2019-22) for programs in Stokes County that support children from birth to age five, but not yet in kindergarten.

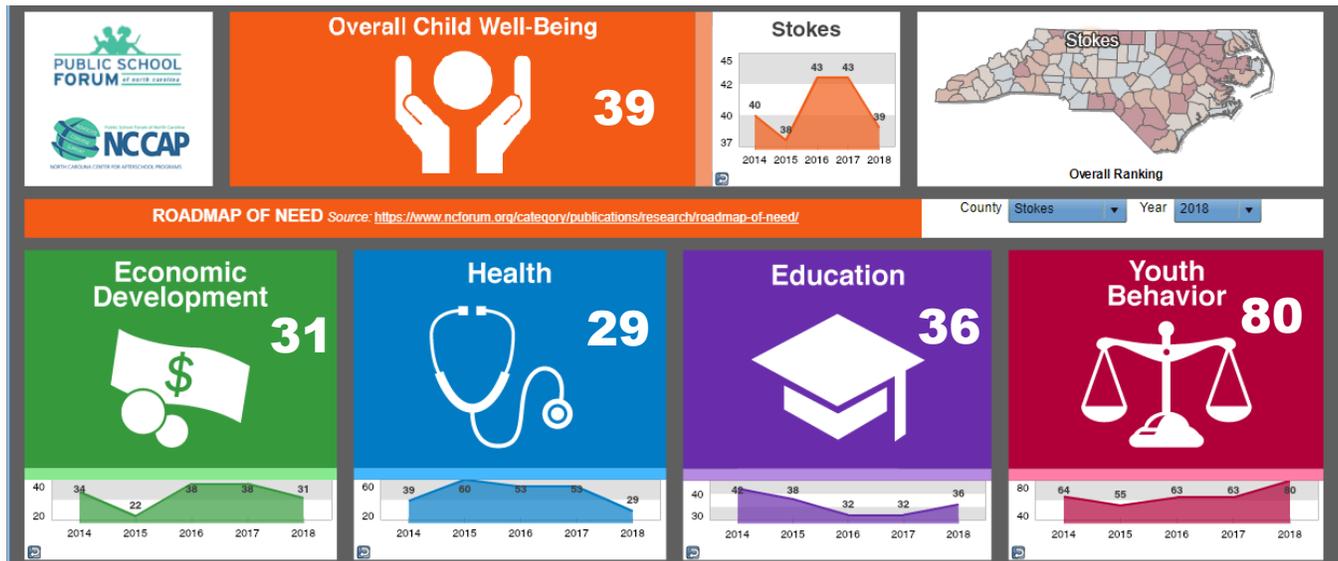
In summary, the following key needs were identified:

- Support for behavioral needs of children, both in child care setting & directly for parents.
- Expanded access to Pre-K, particularly in the northern part of the county.
- Increased treatment of child care providers as professionals, including compensation & benefits.

A few highlights about Stokes County data:

- Stokes' youngest population has shrunk as rest of population remains roughly the same. This means % of youngest children out of total population fell from 7% in 2000 to 5% in 2017.

Out of 100 counties, in 2018, Stokes ranks<sup>2</sup> **39<sup>th</sup>**: (See trend since 2014 in graph under each area)



- **16<sup>th</sup>** (18%) children in Stokes County living in poverty
- **76<sup>th</sup>** (8%) for adults with at least a bachelor's degree
- **81<sup>st</sup>** in access to physicians (4 per 10,000 people)
- **63<sup>rd</sup>** for child fatalities (6 out of 10,000 children)
- **13<sup>th</sup>** (11%) for child obesity
- **40<sup>th</sup>** (23%) in child food insecurity
- **34<sup>th</sup>** (58%) for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading proficiency
- **25<sup>th</sup>** (89%) for graduation rate
- **20<sup>th</sup>** (20 out of 1,000) for juvenile delinquency rate
- **92<sup>nd</sup>** (19 out of 1,000) for children in DSS custody
- **80<sup>th</sup>** (16 out of 1,000) child abuse and neglect rate

<sup>1</sup> Not all of the data directly relates to the mission of SPC or its funding sources such as Smart Start; therefore, SPC will focus mainly on the data that does directly relate to its core focus areas: early literacy, family support, health and early care and education. However, the data will be made available as it may be relevant and useful to other local agencies and to the public.

<sup>2</sup> Source: 2018 Roadmap of Need Public by School Forum of North Carolina's Center for Afterschool Programs (NC CAP) available online: [www.ncforum.org/category/publications/research/roadmap-of-need/](https://www.ncforum.org/category/publications/research/roadmap-of-need/)

From the online survey of 442 residents or those who work with young children in Stokes County, 345-352 rated “Challenges for your family and/or families you work with,” and the following received an average of at least a 3.0 using the following scale: *Never=1, Rarely=2, Sometimes=3, Often=4, N/A*

1. **Children with challenging behaviors**
2. **Services/care for children with special needs (speech, physical, occupational therapies)**
3. **Affordable health insurance**
4. Access to affordable high quality child care or pre-k
5. Availability of high quality child care or pre-k near home or work
6. Access to affordable camps, classes, or after school programs
7. Access to child mental health services
8. Access to affordable dental care
9. Access to adult mental health services
10. Access to affordable medical care
11. Unemployment, underemployment or availability of jobs

Additionally, 272-277 responded to a series of items that led to the following conclusions:

- **High quality** child care and Pre-K is important, but there is not enough of it in all areas of Stokes County.
- Early childhood and Pre-K teachers are not adequately recognized as professionals;
- they need **college educations** and to have **benefits** such as paid sick leave and health insurance.

Social and emotional issues relating to young children rose to the top and many expressed concern over **challenging behaviors** exhibited by young children in and out of early learning environments. This is supported by the fact that behavioral challenges have become more prevalent in the child care system as a whole, including in the public school pre-k classrooms, Head Start and private child care.

For more details or questions concerning data sources or general inquiry contact Cindy Tuttle, Executive Director at [ctuttle@stokespfc.com](mailto:ctuttle@stokespfc.com) or Shannon Cox, Program Manager at [scox@stokespfc.com](mailto:scox@stokespfc.com) or by calling (336) 985-2676.