



## **Community Assessment 2021**

Published by Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc. CAPCO, 2021

32 N. Main Street

Cortland, NY 13045

[www.capco.org](http://www.capco.org)

CAPCO is dedicated to providing and advocating for community-wide actions and programs that increase individuals' dignity and self-reliance and improve community conditions, engaging all sectors of the community in Cortland County's fight against poverty.

Board of Directors Approval:

Policy Council Approval:

## Key Points

The following findings were included in this assessment because community level and program level quantitative data and key informant qualitative data indicated a need in the Cortland County community. Each of these conclusions can assist with community and agency understanding on the causes and conditions of poverty in the Cortland County community.

**Finding #1: Mental Health:** Key data indicators at the community level show that mental health is a serious concern in the general Cortland County community and perceptions of community key informants indicate mental health services are a pressing need of low income families and individuals in Cortland County. Additionally, shutdowns due to COVID-19 have hindered progress towards reaching Head Start program objectives related to mental health.

**Finding #2: Education:** In Cortland County, disparities exist for economically disadvantaged students, who are less likely to score proficient on NYS ELA tests and less likely to graduate from high school than economically advantaged students in Cortland County. Head Start program data suggests the program improves school readiness in all domain areas, however, there is still room for improvement towards the target of 85% of enrollees meeting or exceeding expectations before transitioning. Educational disparities can impact residents of Cortland County who are low income for the rest of their life. Key informants in the community perceive jobs skills/employment training as a need of low income individuals in the county.

**Finding #3: Adverse Childhood Experiences:** Community level data indicates that risk factors related to adverse childhood experiences are prevalent in the Cortland County community including high poverty. Additionally, Cortland County has a high rate of child abuse/mistreatment. Community member perceptions support this conclusion with results showing survey respondents having difficulty meeting basic life needs over the past year.



**Finding #4: Diversity:** U.S Census data from 2020 indicates Cortland County has become more diverse and this is reflected in Head Start program data as well. Current program goals/objectives should consider outlining how CAPCO and/or the Early Head Start/Head Start programs will respond to the increasing cultural diversity in the community and programs.

**Finding #5: Childcare/Early Childhood Education Deficit:** Community level estimates suggest that there is a deficit in available childcare/early education opportunities in the community. Estimates of the number of children income eligible for Early Head Start indicate funded capacity is not sufficient to serve all eligible children. Increasing capacity in Early Head Start may ease the burden currently faced by the childcare system in Cortland County.

**Finding #6: Nutrition:** Community level and Head Start program data indicates an increase in obesity in the community and, in particular, that obesity disproportionately impacts low income residents of the community. Respondents to the Community member key informant survey reported food assistance as a top five household need and as a need they required but did not receive in the past year.



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Purpose.....	5
State of the Grantee.....	5
<b>Methods.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Secondary Data.....	11
Community Data.....	11
Head Start Program Data.....	11
Primary Data...12	
CAPCO Key Informant Survey of Community Members.....	12
CAPCO Key Informant Survey of Staff/Board/Volunteers.....	12
CAPCO Key Informant Survey of Community Partner.....	12
Head Start/Early Head Start Family Satisfaction Survey.....	13
Data Analysis.....	13
<b>Results—Community Assessment.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Service Area/General Community Profile.....	14
Education.....	22
Employment and Poverty.....	27
Transportation and Communication.....	35
Social Services.....	39
Health.....	43
Childcare and Early Education.....	54
<b>Results—Community Perceptions.....</b>	<b>56</b>
Perceived Needs of Individuals and Families with Low Income.....	56
Perceptions of Individuals with Low Income.....	59
Community Strengths and Weaknesses.....	64
CAPCO Organizational Strengths and Weaknesses.....	65
<b>Results—Head Start/Early Head Start Program Data.....</b>	<b>67</b>
Service Utilization.....	67
Demographics.....	69
Education.....	70
Employment, Income, Poverty.....	71
Health.....	74
Social Services.....	78
Program Goals.....	81
Program Strengths and Weaknesses.....	92
Family Satisfaction Survey.....	94
<b>Findings.....</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>107</b>
2021 CAPCO Community Member Survey.....	107
2021 CAPCO Staff/Board/Volunteer Survey.....	153
2021 CAPCO Community Partner Survey.....	166
School Readiness Goals Alignment.....	180



# Introduction

## Purpose

The purpose of the CAPCO Community Assessment 2021 is two-fold:

1. Satisfy the organizational standards required by the Cortland County Community Action Program including:
  - a. Analyze information collected directly from low income individuals regarding the needs in the community.
  - b. Collect and include current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area(s).
  - c. Collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.
  - d. The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.<sup>1</sup>
2. Satisfy the Head Start Program “Performance Standard 1302.11: Determining Community Strengths, Needs, and Resources” as required by the Department of Health and Human Services.
  - a. Performance Standard 1302.11 requires “community wide strategic planning and needs assessment (community assessment). To design a program that meets community needs, and builds on strengths and resources, a program must conduct a community assessment at least once over the five-year grant period. The community assessment must use data that describes community strengths, needs, and resources.”<sup>2</sup>

Conclusions of the CAPCO Community Assessment will be utilized by CAPCO program leadership to better understand client needs, set goals, and measure contributions that agency programs may be making to towards improving the lives of their clients and the entire Cortland County community.

## State of the Grantee

The Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc. (CAPCO) is a community based; not-for-profit 501c3 Corporation located in Cortland, New York and is the second largest human service provider in the county. CAPCO was incorporated in 1974 and designated as Community Action Agency under the provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 signed by President Lyndon Johnson in the declaration of the “War on Poverty”. For more than 47 years, CAPCO has worked intensely with low income people in our community. Through a broad range of programs and resources, CAPCO provides assistance to over 3,500 people in the community annually. These include early childhood and adult education, health, nutrition, safe and secure housing, emergency assistance, family stability and support. CAPCO is *dedicated to providing and advocating for community-wide actions and programs that increase individuals'*



*dignity and self-reliance and improve community conditions, engaging all sectors of the community in Cortland County's fight against poverty.*

CAPCO is governed by a 15-member tripartite board of directors. One third of the members of the board are elected public officials or their representatives. At least one third of the members are representatives of the low-income community with the remainder of the seats being representatives from the private sector to be chosen from “business, industry, and labor, religious, law enforcement, education or other major groups and interests in the community served.” The board structure reflects and promotes the unique anti-poverty leadership, action, and mobilization responsibilities assigned by law to community action agencies. CAPCO’s board is responsible for assuring the agency continues to assess and respond to the causes and conditions of poverty in our community, achieves anticipated family and community outcomes, and remains administratively and fiscally sound. The main office for CAPCO is located at 32 North Main Street, Cortland, NY 13045.

CAPCO operates the following programs throughout Cortland County:

### **Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP)**

In 1973, a group of individuals with severe disabilities, joined together to find a solution to the way they were receiving care. At that time, these individuals had not suitable alternatives available other than the traditional approaches of institutionalization, such as a nursing home or hospital. Others could go home with no support, with the help of a family member willing to care for them. From this group of disabled individuals, a model for what is now referred to as the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP) was developed. It would be the cornerstone of a program which recognizes that disabled individuals have the ability to choose their own caregivers and to direct their own home care services. CDPAP helps promote independence and Consumer Empowerment. The personal care aides hired by participants provide support including health and daily care and wide range of services which can include basic housekeeping, personal care or high level of nursing services. In 2016, CAPCO CDPAP made it possible for more than 75 participants to live in their homes free of the constraints imposed by traditional home care and institutional settings. Without the support of CDPAP, many of these individuals would most likely remain in a nursing home situation. Thirteen families received support and care for their disabled family members through CDPAP, allowing them to continue to be employed and over 100 individuals obtained employment and received the necessary skills and training to increase their employability in the home care industry in the home care industry. CDPAP fosters independence and consumer empowerment by affording more control over identifying and acquiring personal care needs. This control makes consumers less reliant on a medical service model to obtain the daily assistance they need to fully participate in their own communities. The Consumer benefits by being able to live independently in the community, giving them a sense of empowerment to make decisions on how and



when their care is provided. The Consumer's family benefits by allowing them to maintain/obtain employment if they were providing care to their loved ones.

## **Early Head Start**

The Early Head Start Program is for low-income infants, toddlers, expectant mother, and their families. The CAPCO Early Head Start Program is funded for 72 children and their families through the center based program option, as well as the home-based program option. This program is relatively new to the agency, as well as the community. The Early Head Start Program enhances the children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; assists expectant mothers to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parent's roles and help parents move towards self-sufficiency.

## **Energy Services**

### *EmPower New York*

The focus of EmPower New York is on cost-effective energy conservation measures such as insulation, air sealing, appliance efficiency (heating, hot water tank, refrigerator, freezers, dryers.), lighting, ventilation, and appliance conversions. This is a free service to those which meet the programs eligibility requirements.

### *Energy Savers*

Energy Savers is a fee for service program for residential and commercial energy conservation. Energy costs are reduced by installing weatherization measures. These include but are not limited to air sealing, insulation of floors, walls, crawl spaces and attics, installation of high efficiency heating systems, clean and tunes, hot water tanks, ventilation of Kitchen and bathrooms, and health & safety measures. A Comprehensive Building Assessment or Energy Audit is conducted to determine the insulation levels, air infiltration rates and appliance efficiency. This program has no income requirements and is for residential and commercial buildings. An audit fee is collected before the Audit is performed, a work scope is then determined, and a contract is negotiated with the owner for the costs involved. The Energy Services department utilizes a staff of highly trained individuals to install energy saving measures for income eligible households.

### *The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)*

WAP has income guidelines which is the gross income before taxes and deductions. This is a free service to eligible clients. Furthermore, renters must check with their landlord first. Make sure he/she is willing to upfront the money. Tell them this program will benefit them, as well as you. Have them call the program if they are unsure about how the program operates. Landlords must sign a Permission to Enter form for 1-4 units. For 5 or more units, the actual cost of the audit will be collected prior to the audit depending on the number of units. You must have 66% of your tenant's income eligible in order for us to weatherize your building. This program is free to income eligible





landlords. The guideline charts are provided by this department in their brochures or online at [www.capco.org](http://www.capco.org).

## **Family Development**

Family Development works with people in the community to develop and provide resources and supports to encourage strong, healthy individuals and families. Family Development makes resources available which help to increase individuals' dignity and self-reliance while helping to move them out of poverty.

### *Health/Nutrition Education & Programs*

This program assists families in getting healthy food options into their homes, as well as education on how to incorporate healthy options into their diet and how to prepare new foods. This food assistance helps to decrease financial resources being spent on food and allows for the family to use those resources on other necessities.

- Snack Pack Program
- Subsidized Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Exercise & Cooking Classes
- SNAP EBT benefits at Farmers Market

### *Parent Education*

This program provides parents with support and resources which help them to improve their parenting skills and enhance family engagement. These classes are individualized toward the needs of the parents. The classes are delivered in a group format that allows parents to be a resource to each other. The classes overall goal is to increase parents' knowledge on family/discipline/family engagement topics and decrease instances of child abuse and neglect.

- Parents with Hope
- Everybody's Baby Shower
- Pajama Party
- Project Share (NYSEG)
- Care & Share (National Grid)

### *Heat Share Energy Assistance Program*

This supports low-income families throughout New York State. In partnership with utility companies, elected officials and community organizations, Heat Share helps low-income people handle utility costs.

### *Marathon Family Success Center*

This program allows those living in rural areas of the county to receive services closer to home. The center which is located in Marathon, NY provides services and resources to families which they would otherwise need to drive miles to receive.





### *Community Action Angels*

This program believes that all people in need deserve to be helped and in return should be given the opportunity to help others.... creating a Circle of Giving.

- Volunteer Opportunities
- Family Essentials
- Coat Giveaway
- Holiday Extravaganza
- Everybody's Baby Shower
- School Supply Giveaway
- Emergency Assistance

### *Adult Education*

This program allows adults to work toward their educational goals in small groups or with a one-on-one tutor. The focus is on young adults working towards their High School Equivalency diploma and adults looking to increase literacy skills for job readiness and/or to increase their quality of life.

- Tutoring, support and assistance in the High School Equivalency process
- Literacy Volunteers of Cortland County

### *Nutrition and Outreach Program*

NOEP offers free, confidential, one-on-one services that help food insecure people in the community get nutrition assistance. The NOEP Coordinator helps applicants gather documentation for, fill out, and send in the SNAP application and works to increase participation in the School Breakfast Program and the Summer Food Service Program, which provide nutritious meals to school-aged children.

### *Healthy Families of Cortland County*

The Healthy Families home visiting program matches parents with knowledgeable and caring workers who provide information and support during pregnancy and early childhood. Services include helping families access community resources and services, educating families on parenting and child development, connecting families with medical providers, and assessing children for developmental delays.

### **Head Start**

Head Start is a comprehensive program designed to foster the healthy development of pre-school aged children from ages 3 to 5 years old from low-income families. Head Start provides children with daily nutritious meals and many opportunities for social, emotional, and intellectual growth which can prepare them for success in school and life. The CAPCO Head Start Program is funded for 200 children and their families throughout Cortland County. The program also connects children to a health care



source and provides vital support services to their families. In addition, other services provided to the children are education services, transportation (if eligible), disabilities services, Individual Education Program and Individual Family Service Plan, as well as mental health, nutrition services and family engagement. The cornerstone of the program is parent and community involvement which has made it one the most successful preschool programs.

### **Volunteer Driver Program**

The Volunteer Transportation Program provides transportation for Medicaid eligible individuals for non-emergency medical appointments and care. Transportation is provided by volunteer drivers who are reimbursed for their mileage. The program provides a caring, safe transport to medical appointments and saves significant Medicaid resources. In 2021, CAPCO is working to expand the program to be able to provide transportation for grocery shopping, participation in community opportunities and other supports for health and safety. CAPCO is working with community partners and Long-term Managed Care entities for financial support to expand this resource for Medicare recipients and others in the community.

### **WIC**

WIC is a federally funded supplemental food and nutrition education program funded by the US Department of Agriculture for women (pregnant, breastfeeding or up to 6 months postpartum), infants and children up to the age of five which provides vouchers for nutritious foods, nutrition counseling, and referrals to health care. At WIC clinics, participants receive nutrition education and are issued a set of checks listing specific foods for that month. The checks are redeemed at local stores contracted to accept WIC checks. By providing some of the foods needed daily for good health, WIC can help you stretch the food budget. Nutritionists at the WIC clinic can help plan healthy meals for families, advise on infant feeding, children's diet needs, and the food needs of pregnant and breastfeeding women. WIC also employs a certified lactation consultant, and peer counselors who are available after normal clinic hours to help with topics relating to breastfeeding such as nutrition facts, positioning, and returning to work. WIC has electric and manual breast pumps available for special needs. In addition to appointments at the Cortland office, WIC also provides each participating household with a set of vouchers which can be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers markets. To be eligible for WIC, you must meet four eligibility criteria:

- Categorical: Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or have just had a baby; infants; and children under 5 years old.
- Residential: Must be a resident of New York State.
- Income: Must have a gross income under 185% of the Federal Poverty Level or receive Food Stamps, Medicaid or Temporary Assistance for needy families.
- Nutritional: Must have a nutritional need.



## Methods

All primary qualitative data collection, survey tool design, and survey implementation was conducted by CAPCO staff as outlined under the “Primary Data” methods section. CAPCO contracted with an outside agency, Cortland Area Communities That Care (CACTC), to assist with accessing secondary quantitative data, data analysis, compiling secondary/primary data into one report, and outlining key findings/conclusions.

The CACTC Data & Epidemiology Team utilizes local data to support and build efforts that drive population level outcomes in Cortland County. The data the agency collects and analyze is used by community coalitions and partners for strategic planning, strategy design, and evaluation of prevention, school based, and public health programs. CACTC’s data-driven approach identifies targeted populations and focus areas that help ensure community agencies are providing programs and services to community members who need it most, all while saving valuable resources such as time and money. Margaret Broderick, CACTC Epidemiologist, was responsible for completing tasks related to the CAPCO Community Assessment as outlined above.

### Secondary Data

#### Community Data

Secondary data from publicly accessible databases and reports was collected and analyzed to identify population trends, conditions of poverty, and areas of need in the Cortland County community. References for secondary data are indicated at the end of this report. Questions regarding data collection, cleaning, and analysis of this data should be directed to the sponsoring agency.

Note: U.S Census data from 2020 was utilized, whenever available, otherwise American Community Survey 2019 five year estimates were utilized unless otherwise noted in the report. The American Community Survey (ACS) replaced the long form of the decennial census in order to provide annual demographic, socioeconomic, and housing data estimates. However, higher frequency data comes with larger margins of error, especially for sub-county geographies. Margin of error ranges for variables can be provided upon request.

#### Head Start Program Data

The majority of Head Start/Early Head Start program data was provided to CACTC by CAPCO program staff in the form of yearly program information reports (PIR) for both Head Start and Early Head Start. Additional data, such as program outcomes, were provided to CACTC in the form of excel/word tracking spreadsheets.



## Primary Data

### CAPCO Key Informant Survey of Community Members

The CAPCO Key Informant Survey for Community Members was designed by CAPCO program staff. Surveys were distributed using Survey Monkey by CAPCO staff from October-November 2021 with a particular focus on directly reaching individuals who are low income in Cortland County as outlined in the CAPCO organizational standards. A total of 117 community members responded to the survey, and 69 out of the 78 respondents that reported their income had annual household income less than \$50,000 per year.<sup>3</sup>

The survey sample was small (n=117), mostly female (112 out of 117 respondents) and mostly white (107 out of 117).<sup>3</sup> Additionally, by question #9 (first non-demographic question), the number of respondents answering questions dropped to 88 and continued to decline throughout the survey with 69 respondents answering question #64.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, sample size is reported on a by-question basis in this report.

While the results can provide a snapshot into the health, well-being, and needs of individuals/families with low income in Cortland County, due to the limitations stated above, they cannot be applied to the entirety of the county population and should be interpreted with caution. Data from the CAPCO Community Member Survey is used in the findings/conclusions of this report only to support the findings observed in secondary data.

See Appendix A for survey questionnaire and full results report.<sup>3</sup>

### CAPCO Key Informant Survey of Staff/Board/Volunteers

The CAPCO Key Informant Survey for Staff/Board/Volunteers was designed by CAPCO program staff. Surveys were distributed using Survey Monkey by CAPCO staff from October-November 2021. A total of 93 CAPCO staff/board/volunteers responded to the survey; 58 employees, 9 Board of Directors, 5 Head Start Policy Council Members, 2 volunteers, 0 interns, and 19 individuals who fill other roles in the organization.<sup>4</sup>

See Appendix B for survey questionnaire and full results report.<sup>4</sup>

### CAPCO Key Informant Survey of Community Partners

The CAPCO Key Informant Survey for Community Partners was designed by CAPCO program staff. Surveys were distributed using Survey Monkey by CAPCO staff from October-November 2021 with a particular focus on reaching all five community sectors as outlined in the CAPCO organizational standards. A total of 25 CAPCO Community partners responded; 11 from community based organizations, 4 from healthcare, 4 from the private sector, 4 from the public sector, 1 from a faith based organization, and 1



from another sector not listed.<sup>5</sup> There were no survey respondents from educational institutions, despite being included on the survey distribution list.

See Appendix C for survey questionnaire and full results report.

### **Head Start/Early Head Start Family Satisfaction Survey**

The Head Start/Early Head Start Family Satisfaction survey was designed and implemented by CAPCO Head Start/Early Head Start program staff. The surveys were distributed to all families of enrolled children in May 2021. The surveys were delivered to each classroom and sent home with the children. For children attending the virtual classroom, the surveys were mailed to their home address. Data was compiled on 6/19/21 for all returned surveys. There were 27 families that responded to the survey.<sup>6</sup>

### **Focus Groups**

Due to barriers related to COVID-19 including; staff availability and hesitation to meet in person, focus groups were not conducted for the 2021 CAPCO Community Assessment. Additionally, past focus groups had low participation (n=1) for the 2018 CAPCO Community Assessment indicating this resource-intensive form of data collection may not be justified, regardless of the barriers created by COVID-19.

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted by Cortland Area Communities That Care. Secondary data indicators were identified and analyzed using ad hoc methods to determine areas of concern in the general Cortland County community. Basis for ad hoc analysis and inclusion in key findings were if comparisons between United States/New York State data and/or trend data and Head Start/Early Head Start program data indicated an area of concern. Identified disparities also warranted inclusion in key findings. Following analysis of secondary data, qualitative data from key informant surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics and utilized to support and further explore the findings of quantitative data analysis.





# Results—Community Assessment

## Service Area/General Community Profile

### Geography

The service area for CAPCO and CAPCO's Head Start/Early Head Start programs is the entirety of Cortland County. Located in Central New York (CNY), Cortland County is in the northernmost area of the Appalachian designated counties in the United States.<sup>7</sup> Cortland is located between Syracuse and Binghamton on the Interstate 81 corridor (Figure 1). It is bordered by Tompkins and Cayuga counties to the West, Tioga and Broome Counties to the South, Chenango and Madison counties to the East, and Onondaga County to the North (Figure 1). The county is comprised of the City of Cortland surrounded by three villages—Homer, Marathon, McGraw—and fifteen townships.<sup>7</sup>

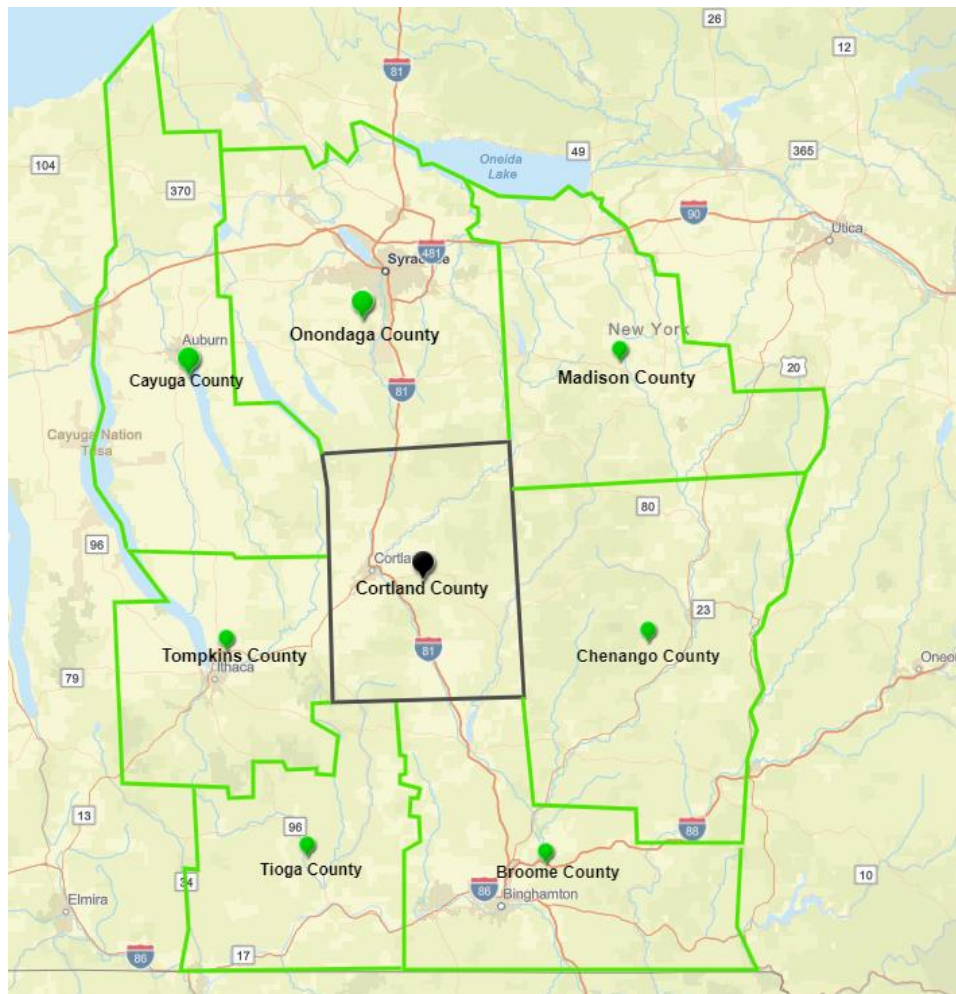
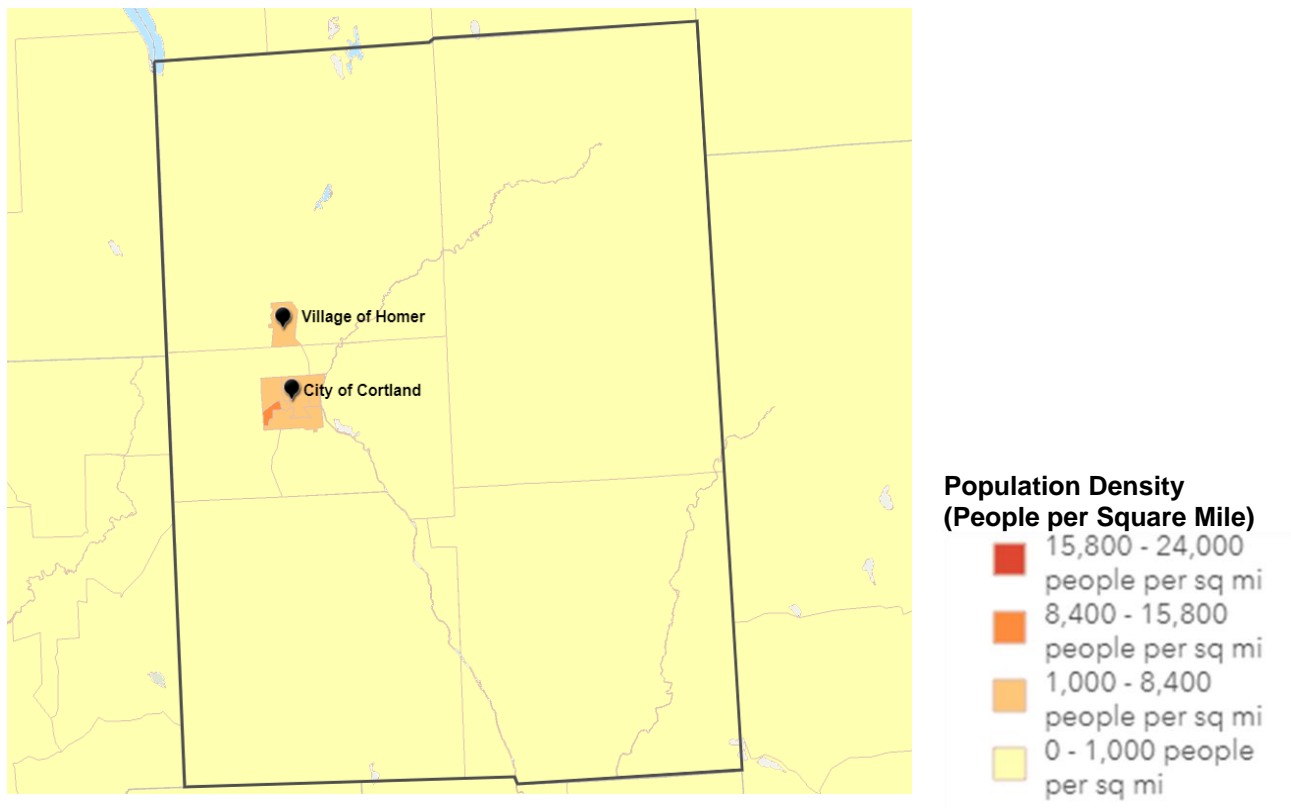


Figure 1. Map of Cortland and Surrounding Counties in Central New York

Cortland County has a total land area of 498.76 square miles.<sup>8</sup> The population in Cortland County is centered in the City of Cortland and the Village of Homer (Figure 2).<sup>10</sup> The remainder of the county is rural, with a population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile.<sup>10</sup>



**Figure 2. Cortland County Population Density by Census Tract  
(Esri Updated Demographics, 2021)<sup>10</sup>**

## Population Trends

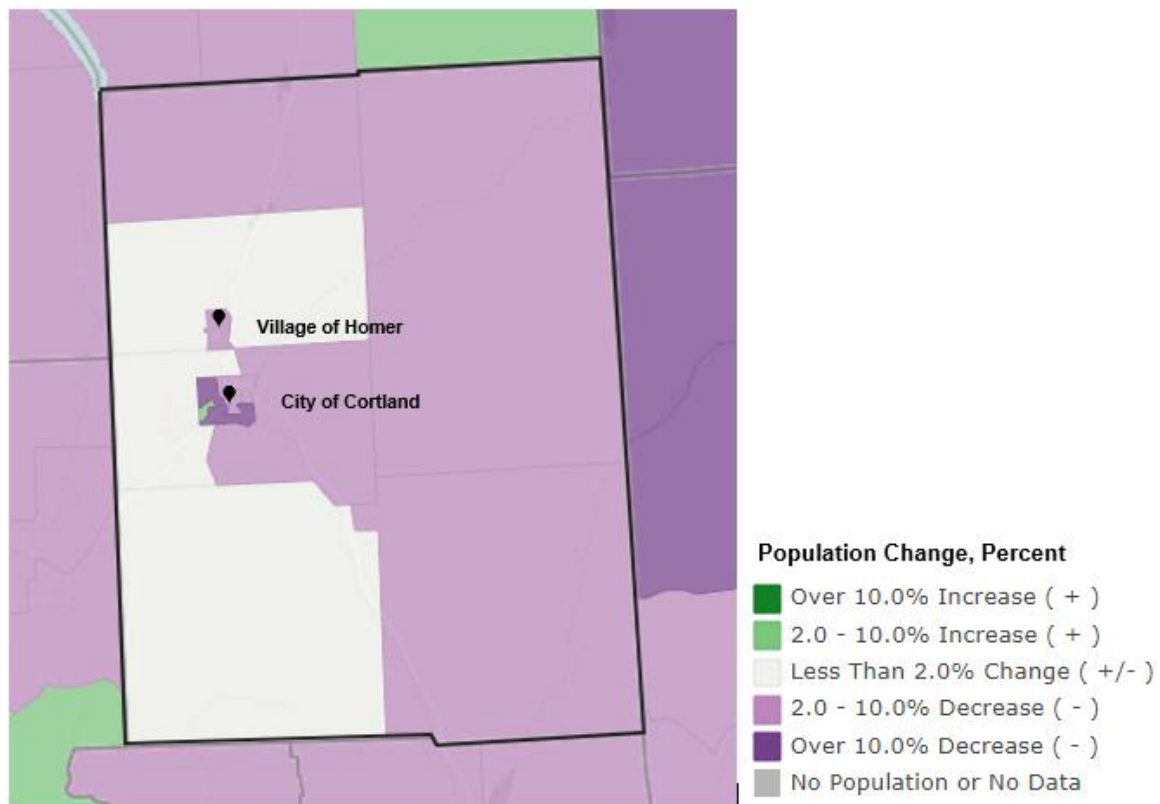
From 2010 to 2020, the population of Cortland County decreased by 5.12% from 49,336 to 46,809 (Table 1).<sup>10,11</sup> Comparatively, the population of both New York State and the United States increased from 2010 to 2020 (Table 1).<sup>10,11</sup>



Table 1. Population Changes by Geography (2010-2020)

	Total Population (2010)	Total Population (2020)	Total Population Change (2010-2020)	Percent Population Change (2010-2020)
<b>Cortland County</b>	49,336	46,809	-2,527	-5.12%
<b>New York</b>	19,378,102	20,201,249	+823,147	+4.25%
<b>United States</b>	308,745,538	331,449,281	+22,703,743	+7.35%

The geographic areas in Cortland County that had the greatest change in population from 2010 to 2020 are located in the city of Cortland (Figure 3).<sup>12</sup>

Figure 3. Cortland County Population Change by Census Tract (2010-2020)<sup>12</sup>

## Age

The median age in Cortland County is 36.4 years.<sup>13</sup> The relatively young median age in Cortland County is driven by ages 20 to 29 (18.4%) and ages 10 to 19 (14.4%) accounting for the highest percentage of the population (Figure 4).<sup>13</sup>

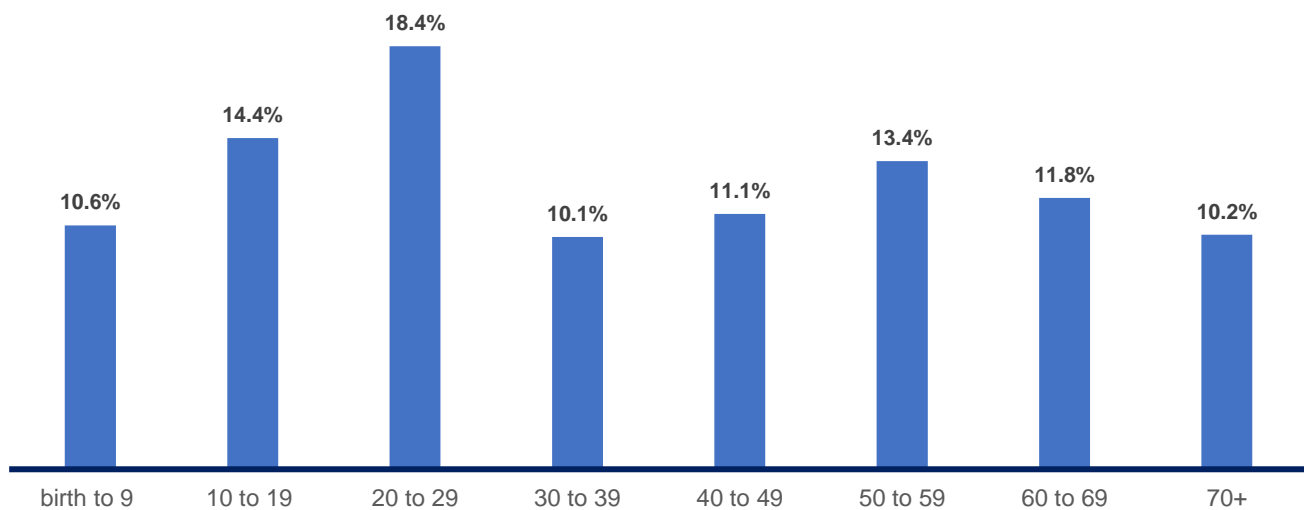


Figure 4. Percentage of Total Population by Age (Cortland County, 2019)<sup>13</sup>

CAPCO programs, such as Head Start/Early Head Start, generally target younger members of the Cortland County community. There are approximately 2,376 children in Cortland County under the age of 5 (5.0% of the population) and 2,674 ages 5-9 years old (5.6% of the population) (Table 2).<sup>13</sup>

Table 2. Early Childhood Age Distribution (Cortland County, 2019)<sup>13</sup>

	# of Residents	% of Residents
Under Age 5	2,376	5.0%
Ages 5-9	2,674	5.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,050</b>	<b>10.6%</b>

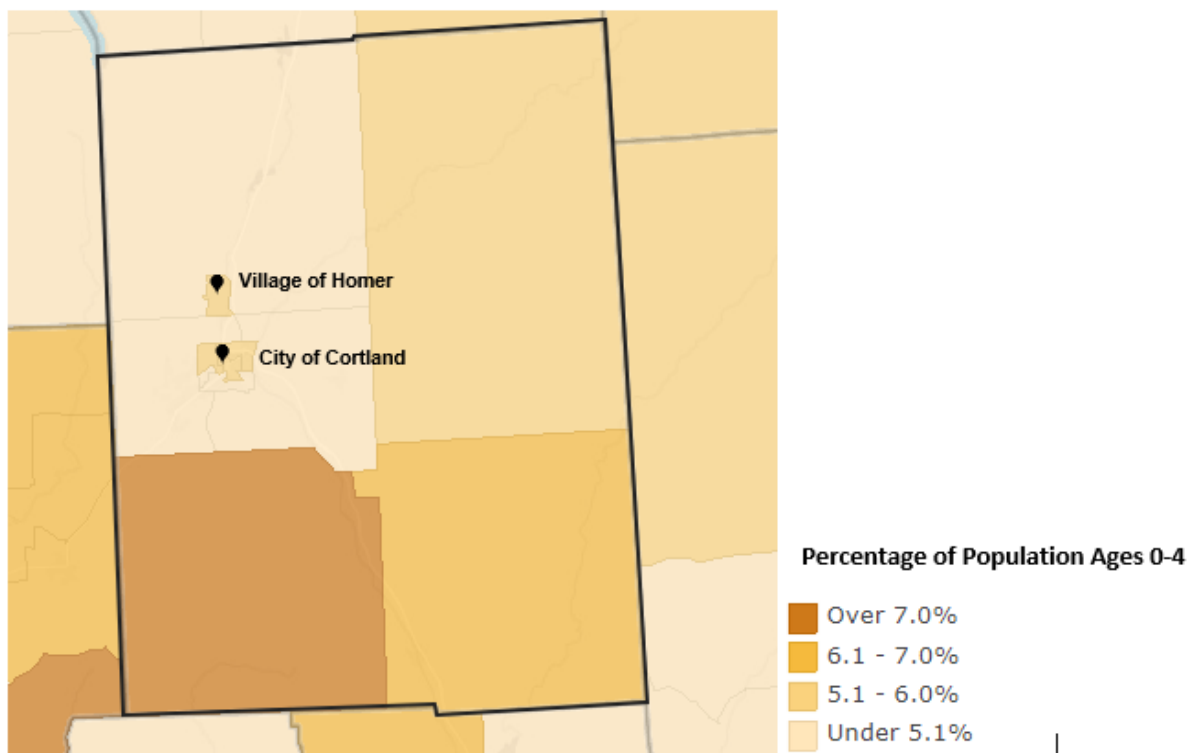


Similar to Cortland County, the largest age groups in New York State and the United States are both 20 to 29 (Table 3).<sup>13,14,15</sup> However, the median age of 39.2 in New York State and 38.5 in the United States are both slightly higher than the median age in Cortland County.<sup>13,14,15</sup>

**Table 3. Percentage of Total Population by Age and Geography (2019)**<sup>13,14,15</sup>

	Birth-9	10 to 19	20 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	70+
<b>Cortland County</b>	10.6%	14.4%	18.4%	10.1%	11.1%	13.4%	11.8%	10.2%
<b>New York</b>	11.5%	12.1%	14.4%	13.5%	12.5%	13.7%	11.4%	11.0%
<b>United States</b>	12.3%	12.9%	13.9%	13.3%	12.5%	13.3%	11.4%	10.4%

The geographic areas in Cortland County that have the highest percentage of population between the ages of 0-4 are Virgil, Harford, Marathon and Cincinnatus regions and the surrounding areas (Figure 5).<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 5. Population Age 0-4 by Census Tract (Cortland County, 2015-2019)**<sup>12</sup>

## Sex

In Cortland County, 51.1% of the population identifies as female and 48.9% identifies as male.<sup>13</sup> This is similar to gender distributions in New York State and the United States (Figure 6).<sup>13,14,15</sup>

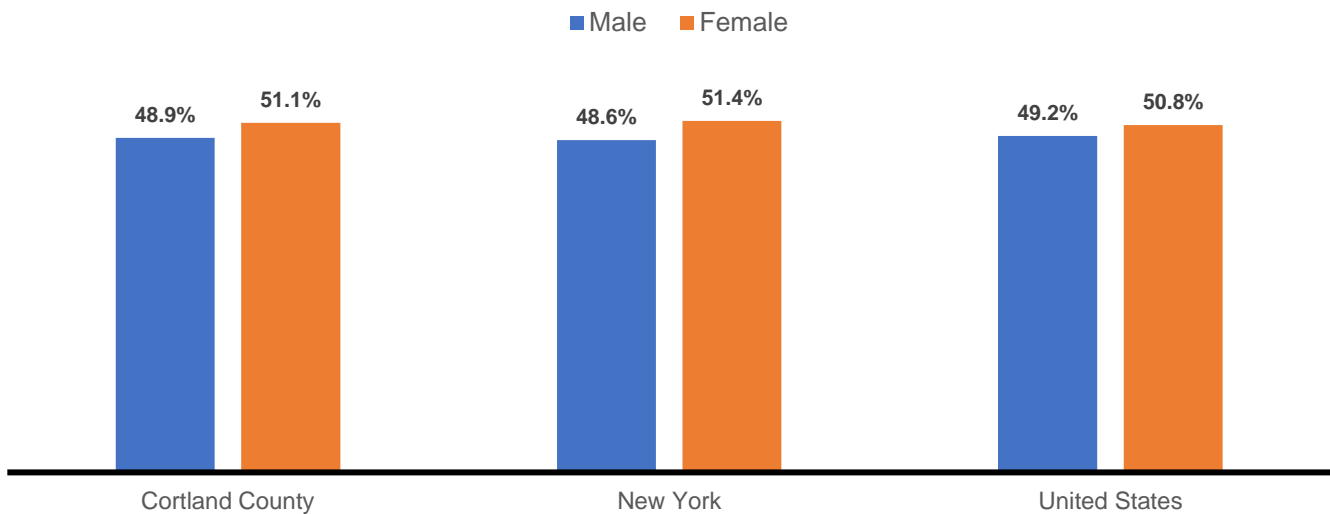


Figure 6. Percentage of Total Population by Gender and Geography (2019)

## Race and Ethnicity

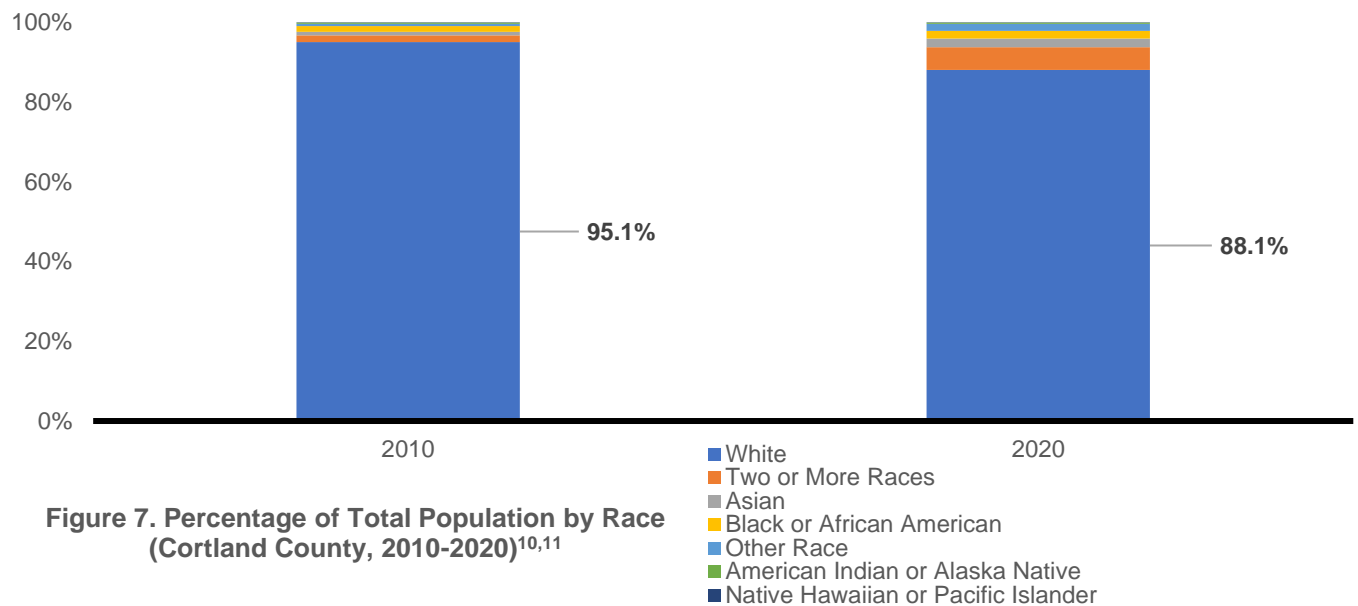
In 2020, 88.1% of Cortland County residents identified as White alone, 5.7% identified as two or more races, 2.2% as Asian, 1.9% as Black or African American, 1.8% as some other race, 0.3% as American Indian or Alaska Native and 0.03% as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (Table 4).<sup>10</sup>

Table 4. Total Population by Race (Cortland County, 2020)<sup>10</sup>

	# of Residents	% of residents
White alone	41,250	88.1%
Two or more races	2,672	5.7%
Asian alone	1,028	2.2%
Black or AA alone	895	1.9%
Some other race alone	825	1.8%
AIAN alone	124	0.3%
NHPI alone	15	0.03%



Since 2010, Cortland County has become more racially diverse with the percentage of residents identifying as White declining from 95.1% in 2010 to 88.1% in 2020 (Figure 7).<sup>10,11</sup> The percentage of residents identifying as two or more races increased from 1.7% in 2010 to 5.7% in 2020 and the percentage of residents identifying as Asian increased from 0.8% in 2010 to 2.2% in 2020 (Figure 7).<sup>10,11</sup>



In 2020, only 3.5% of Cortland County residents identified as Hispanic or Latino (Table 5).<sup>10</sup> Comparatively, 19.5% of New York State residents and 18.7% of United States residents identified as Hispanic or Latino (Table 5).<sup>10</sup>

Table 5. Percentage of Total Population Hispanic or Latino by Geography (2020) <sup>10</sup>	
	Percentage of Residents
Cortland County	3.5%
New York State	19.5%
United States	18.7%



## Language

Most Cortland County residents over age five speak English at home (96.7%) (Table 6).<sup>13</sup> Of the 3.3% that speak a language other than English at home; 1.9% speak another Indo-European Language, 0.7% speak Spanish, 0.5% speak Asian or Pacific Island languages, and 0.2% speak some other languages (Table 6).<sup>13</sup>

**Table 6. Language Spoken at Home for Residents Over Age 5  
(Cortland County, 2019)<sup>13</sup>**

	# of Residents	Percentage
<b>English</b>	43,989	96.7%
<b>Other Indo-European</b>	859	1.9%
<b>Spanish</b>	326	0.7%
<b>Asian or PI</b>	242	0.5%
<b>Some other language</b>	73	0.2%

In comparison, 30.5% of New York State residents over age five speak a language other than English at home and 21.6% of United States residents speak a language other than English at home (Table 7).<sup>13-15</sup>

**Table 7. Language Spoken at Home for Residents Over Age 5  
by Geography (2019)<sup>13-15</sup>**

	Percentage of Residents
<b>Cortland County</b>	3.3%
<b>New York State</b>	30.5%
<b>United States</b>	21.6%

## Governing Structure

Cortland County is governed by the Cortland County legislature which is comprised of one legislature from each of the seventeen legislative districts. The County Administrator is appointment by the Legislature and serves as the chief administration officer and budget officer.

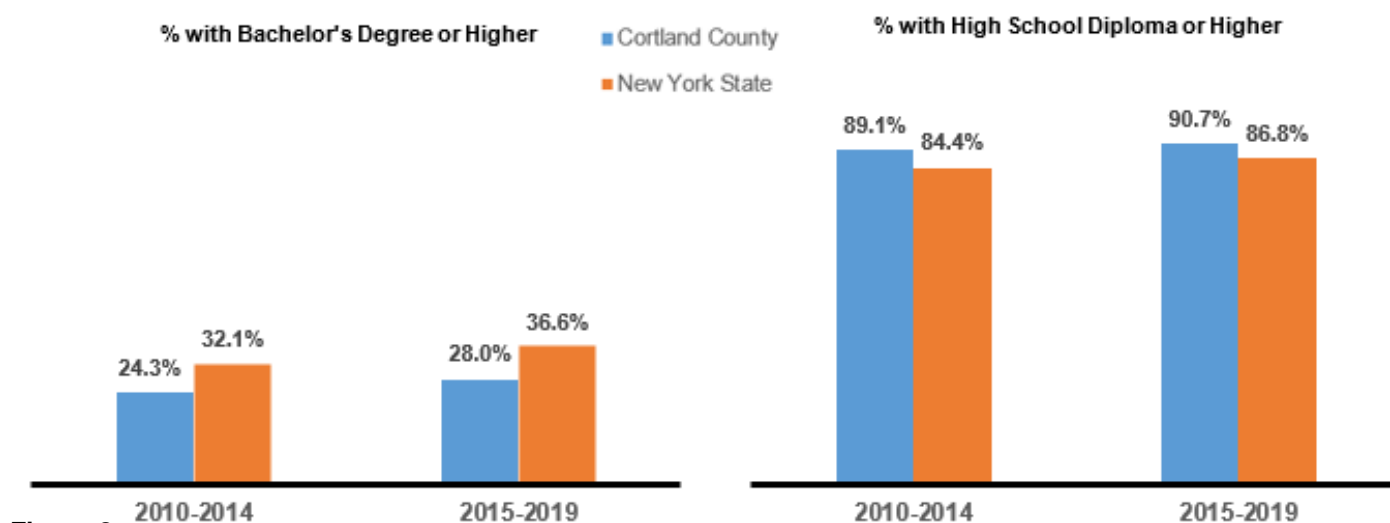


## Education

Note: in spring-Summer 2021, the Cortland County Literacy Coalition completed a comprehensive needs assessment on early childhood language and literacy development.<sup>16</sup> CAPCO staff serve as members of the coalition, and in an effort to avoid duplication of community efforts, this section was adapted directly from that assessment. Permission was obtained from the coalition director prior to publication.

### Educational Attainment

From 2010-2014 to 2015-2019, the percentage of Cortland County residents age 25 and over who attained a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 24.3% to 28.0% (Figure 8).<sup>13,17</sup> There is little noted change in attainment of high school diplomas or higher during this timeframe (89.1% to 90.7%).<sup>13,17</sup> A higher percentage of Cortland County residents attained a high school diploma in 2015-2019 compared to New York State (Figure 8).<sup>13,18</sup> However, Cortland County residents were less likely to attain a bachelor's degree.



**Figure 8.**  
Educational Attainment for Residents Age 25 and Over (Cortland County and New York State, 2010-2019)

Residents who are female are more likely to attain a high school diploma or higher (92.2%) or a bachelor's degree or higher (30.0%) than males (89.2%, 25.8%) (Table 8).<sup>13</sup> There is no data available to determine educational attainment by gender identity.

**Table 8. Educational Attainment for Residents Age 25 and Older by Sex (Cortland County, 2019)<sup>13</sup>**

	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	High School Diploma or Higher
Male	25.8%	89.2%
Female	30.0%	92.2%





## High School Graduation and Dropout

After increasing from 2013-2017, the percentage of Cortland County students who graduated high school has been relatively stable since 2017, fluctuating between 85% and 88% (Figure 9).<sup>19</sup> After decreasing from 2013-2017, the percentage of students who dropped out of high school has been relatively stable since 2017, fluctuating between 4% and 7% (Figure 10).<sup>19</sup>

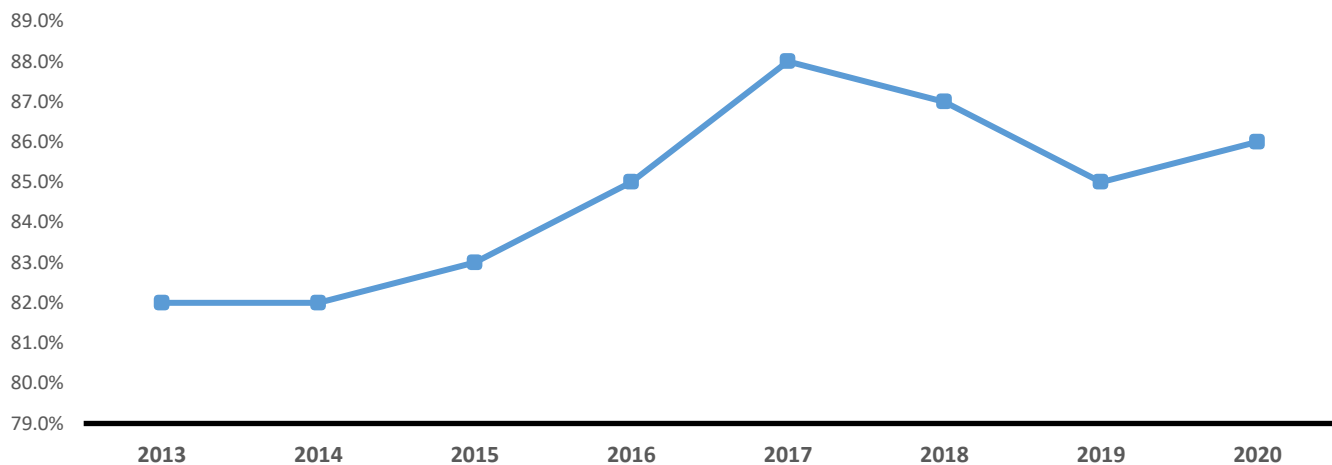


Figure 9. High School Graduation Rate  
(Cortland County, 2013-2020)<sup>19</sup>

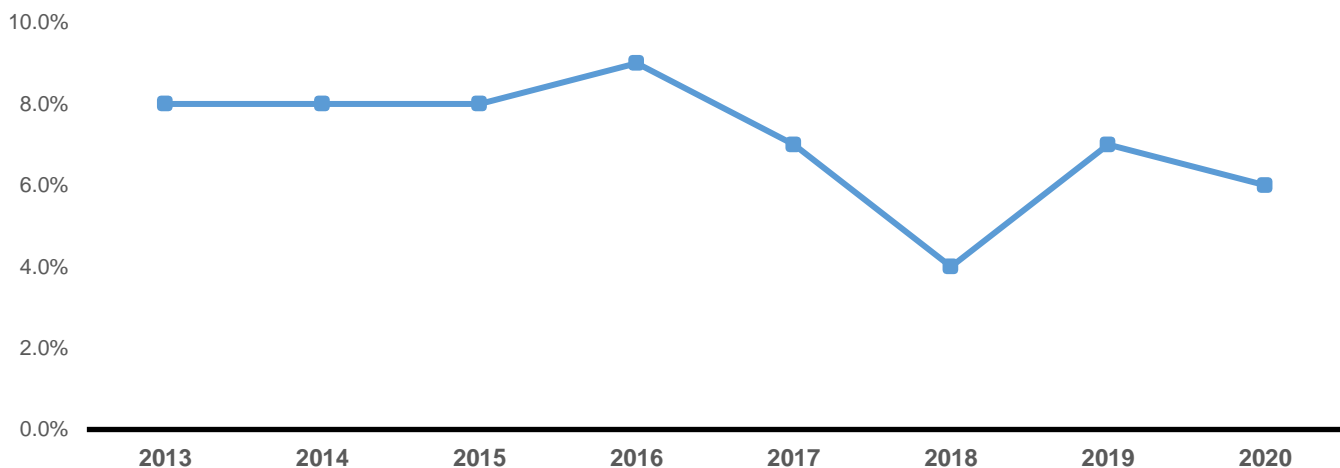
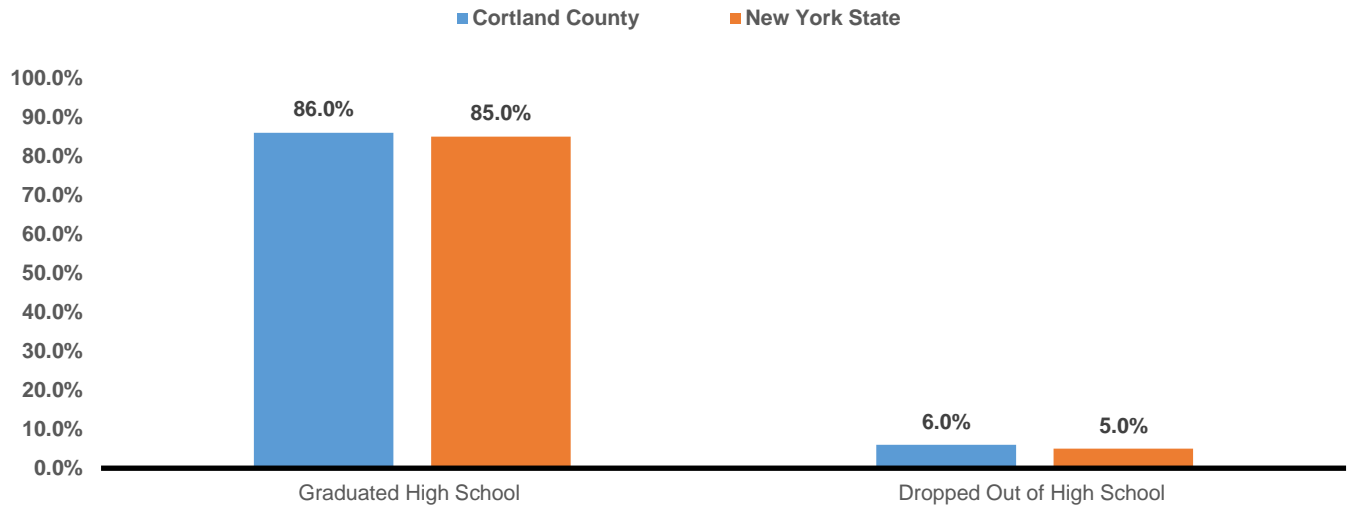


Figure 10. Percentage of Students Who Dropped Out of High School  
(Cortland County, 2013-2020)<sup>19</sup>



Cortland County graduation and dropout rates are similar to New York State, with 86% of Cortland County students graduating in 2020 compared to 85% in New York State and 6% of Cortland County students dropping out compared to 5% in New York State (Figure 11).<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 11. High School Graduation Rate and Drop Out (Cortland County and New York State, 2020)<sup>19</sup>**

In 2020, students who are not economically disadvantaged (91.0%) were more likely to graduate high school than students who are economically disadvantaged (81.0%) (Table 9).<sup>19</sup> This trend is present historically since 2016.<sup>19</sup>

**Table 9. High School Graduation Rate by Socioeconomic Status (Cortland County, 2020)<sup>19</sup>**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	74.0%	83.0%	81.0%	77.0%	81.0%
<b>Not Economically Disadvantaged</b>	91.0%	91.0%	90.0%	92.0%	91.0%

Historically, McGraw and Homer School Districts, have had the highest graduation rate compared to other districts in the county, with the exception of 2018 and 2020 in which Marathon had the highest graduation rate (Table 10).<sup>20-24</sup>



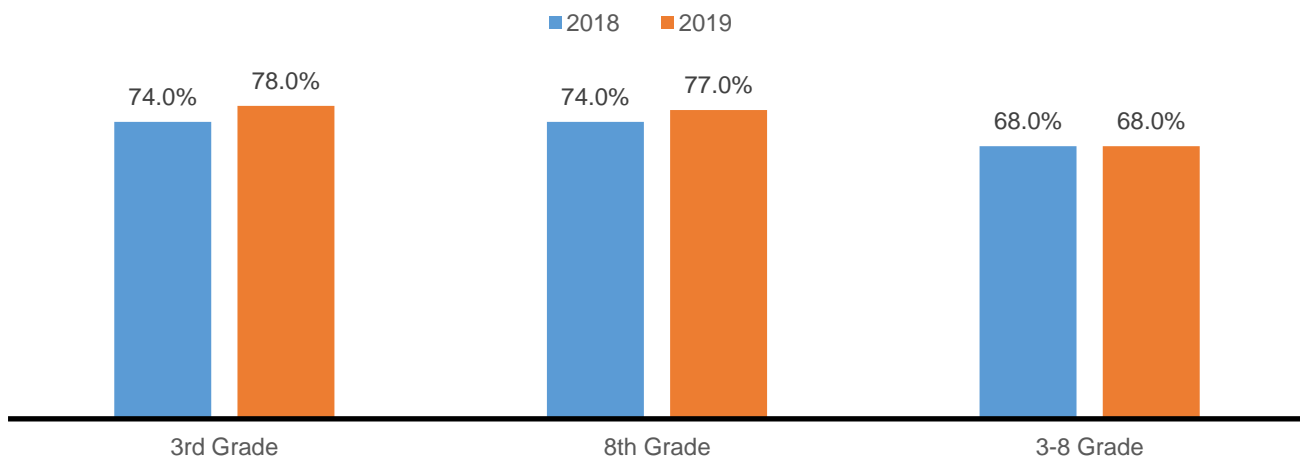
**Table 10. High School Graduation Rate by District  
(Cortland County, 2016-2020)<sup>20-24</sup>**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Cortland</b>	74.0%	84.0%	79.0%	81.0%	80.0%
<b>Homer</b>	92.0%	92.0%	91.0%	90.0%	88.0%
<b>Marathon</b>	88.0%	88.0%	94.0%	81.0%	98.0%
<b>McGraw</b>	94.0%	95.0%	91.0%	93.0%	93.0%
<b>Cincinnatus</b>	89.0%	79.0%	87.0%	83.0%	90.0%

### 3-8 ELA Assessments

Due to a change in test design, 2018 is considered a new baseline year for 3-8 grade ELA assessment scores and previous years are not comparable. For the purposes of this assessment, students are considered proficient at levels 2-4, which according to NYS Department of Education means they are on track to graduate.<sup>25</sup>

From 2018 to 2019, the percentage of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and 8<sup>th</sup> graders with proficient scores increased from 74% to 78% for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and 74% to 77% for 8<sup>th</sup> graders (Figure 12).<sup>19</sup> However, looking at aggregate scores for 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders, the percentage scoring proficient has remained the same at 68% for both 2018 and 2019 (Figure 12).<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 12. Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Scoring Proficient at Levels 2-4 of  
NYS ELA Assessments (Cortland County, 2018-2019)<sup>19</sup>**

In 2019, compared to New York State, the percentage of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, 8<sup>th</sup> graders, and aggregate 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders in Cortland County scoring proficient on ELA assessments was lower (Table 11).<sup>19</sup>



**Table 11. Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 Scoring Proficient at Levels 2-4 of the NYS ELA Assessments (Cortland County and New York State, 2019)<sup>19</sup>**

	<b>Cortland County</b>	<b>NYS</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>	78.0%	85.0%
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	77.0%	81.0%
<b>3-8 Grade</b>	68.0%	75.0%

Not economically disadvantaged students were more likely to score proficient than economically disadvantaged students in 2018 and 2019 (Table 12).<sup>19</sup>

**Table 12. Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient at Levels 2-4 of the NYS ELA Test by SES (Grade 3-8, Cortland County, 2018-2019)<sup>19</sup>**

	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Not Economically Disadvantaged</b>	82.0%	81.0%
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	56.0%	58.0%

## Kindergarten Readiness

A measure to assess countywide kindergarten readiness in Cortland County was developed by county school districts in 2016. In 2019 a new baseline was established due to a change in how school districts assessed readiness.

Based on this measure, for the 2020-2021 school year, 71% of public school Kindergarteners were deemed ready to enter Kindergarten (Table 13). This is up from 69% in 2019, the new baseline year. Data is not currently available for specific demographics such as socioeconomic status.

**Table 13. Percentage of Kindergarteners Ready to Enter School (Cortland County, 2019-2020 & 2020-2021)<sup>26</sup>**

<b>2019-2020</b>	69.0%
<b>2020-2021</b>	71.0%



## School Enrollment

Overall, school enrollment in Cortland County has decreased by 11.5% from 2015-2016 to 2020-2021 (Table 14).<sup>20-24</sup> Additionally, each school district with the exception of McGraw experienced a decrease in enrollment. In particular, the City of Cortland School district experienced the most drastic decrease with enrollment decreased by 17.98% (Table 14).<sup>20-24</sup> Each of these school districts are part of CAPCO's Head Start/Early Head Start service area.

**Table 14. PreK-12<sup>th</sup> Grade School Enrollment by District  
(Cortland County, 2016-2017, 2020-2021)<sup>20-24</sup>**

	2015-2016	2020-2021	Change in Enrollment
<b>Cortland</b>	2575	2112	-17.98%
<b>Homer</b>	1987	1853	-6.74%
<b>Marathon</b>	739	637	-13.8%
<b>McGraw</b>	514	534	+3.89%
<b>Cincinnatus</b>	592	533	-9.97%
<b>Total</b>	6,407	5,669	-11.52%

## Colleges and Universities

The State University of New York at Cortland is located within in Cortland County. Additionally, Tompkins Cortland Community college is located in nearby Tompkins County. Many colleges and universities are within an hour drive of Cortland County in Ithaca, Syracuse, and Binghamton areas.

## Employment and Poverty

### Employment

When looking at trends in unemployment over the past two years, there was a steep increase in unemployment in both Cortland County and New York State in April 2020. Many workers across the nation were furloughed or laid off during this timeframe due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Cortland County, unemployment during the past two years peaked in April 2020 at 15.4% and hovered around 10-11% in the following three months (Figure 13).<sup>27</sup> Unemployment in the county has been gradually declining since.



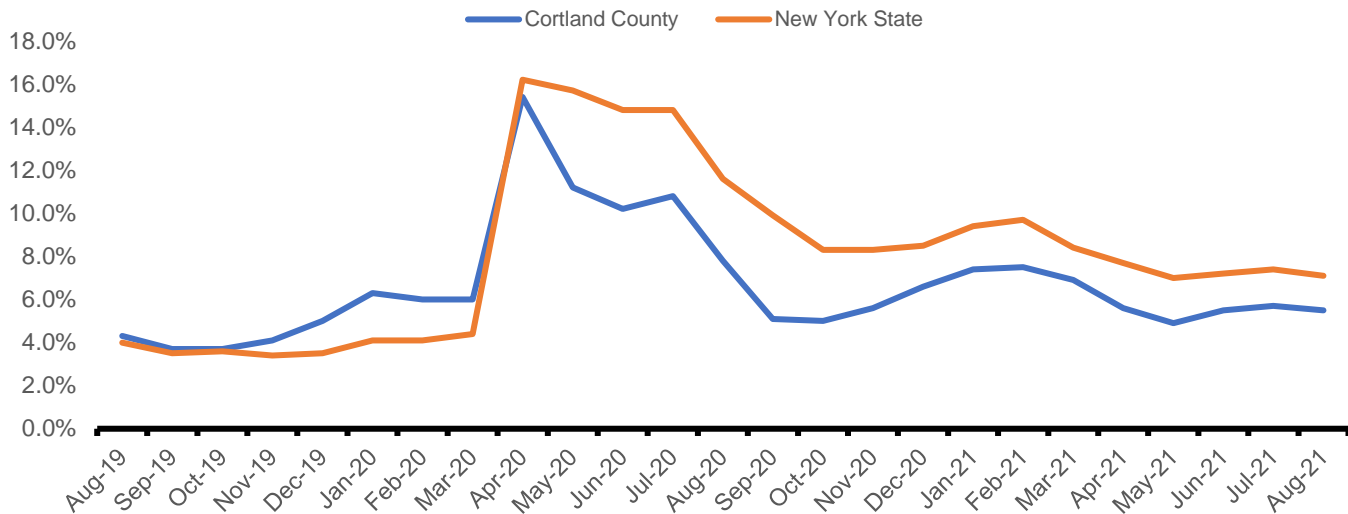


Figure 13. Monthly Unemployment Rate by Geography (August 2019-August 2021)<sup>27</sup>

In August 2021, the unemployment rate in Cortland County was 5.5%, compared to 7.1% in New York State (Table 14).<sup>27</sup> Unemployment in Cortland County was also lower than in New York State in August 2020, following the steep increase seen in unemployment during late spring of 2020.<sup>27</sup> Cortland County has reached pre-pandemic unemployment rate of about 6.0% observed in January-March 2020.

Table 14. Monthly Unemployment Rate for the Month of August by Geography (2019-2021)<sup>27</sup>

	August 2019	August 2020	August 2021
<b>Cortland County</b>	4.3%	7.8%	5.5%
<b>New York State</b>	4.0%	11.6%	7.1%

For fully employed Cortland County residents ages 16 and older, the most common industry of employment is education, healthcare and social services (32.6%). This is followed by arts/entertainment/food service (12.4%) and retail trade (10.8%) (Figure 14).<sup>13</sup> Notably, 23.1% of employed Cortland County residents age 16 and older are involved in physically demanding industries including; ag/forestry/hunting/mining, construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation.



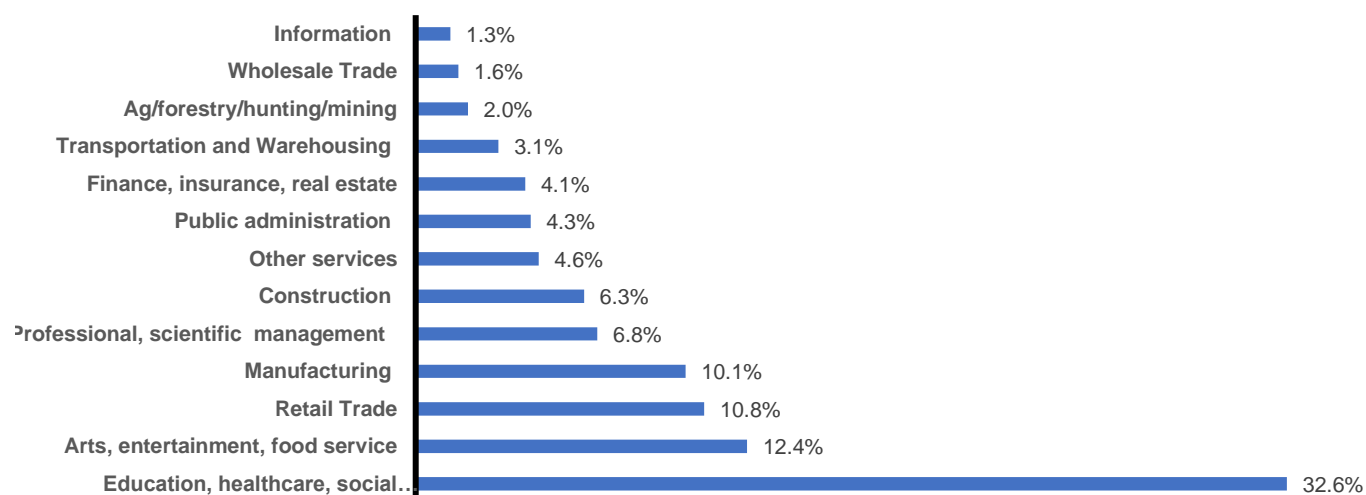


Figure 14. Percentage of Employed Population Age 16+ by Industry  
(Cortland County, 2019)<sup>13</sup>

## Income

There are 11,394 family households in Cortland County.<sup>13</sup> The median income for family households in Cortland County \$70,192, which has increased from \$62,931 in 2014. Cortland County has a lower mean and median family household income than New York State and the United States (Table 15).<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup>

Table 15. Median Income for Family Households  
by Geography and Year (2014-2019)<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup>

	2014	2019
<b>Cortland County</b>	\$62,931	\$70,192
<b>New York State</b>	\$71,419	\$84,385
<b>United States</b>	\$65,910	\$77,263





There are 17,925 households in Cortland County with income.<sup>13</sup> The most common source of income for households in the county are earnings through wages, salaries, and self-employment with 77.2% of households reporting this income source.<sup>13</sup> This is followed by social security income (33.3%) and retirement income (24.3%) (Table 16).<sup>13</sup>

**Table 16. Reported Sources of Household Income (Cortland County, 2019)<sup>13</sup>**

<b>Earnings (wages, salary, self-employment)</b>	<b>77.2%</b>
<b>Social Security income</b>	<b>33.3%</b>
<b>Retirement income</b>	
<b>Interests, dividends, or non-rental income</b>	<b>20.7%</b>
<b>Cash public assistance/Food Stamps/SNAP</b>	<b>14.4%</b>
<b>Other types of income</b>	<b>11.7%</b>
<b>Supplemental Security Income</b>	<b>6.8%</b>

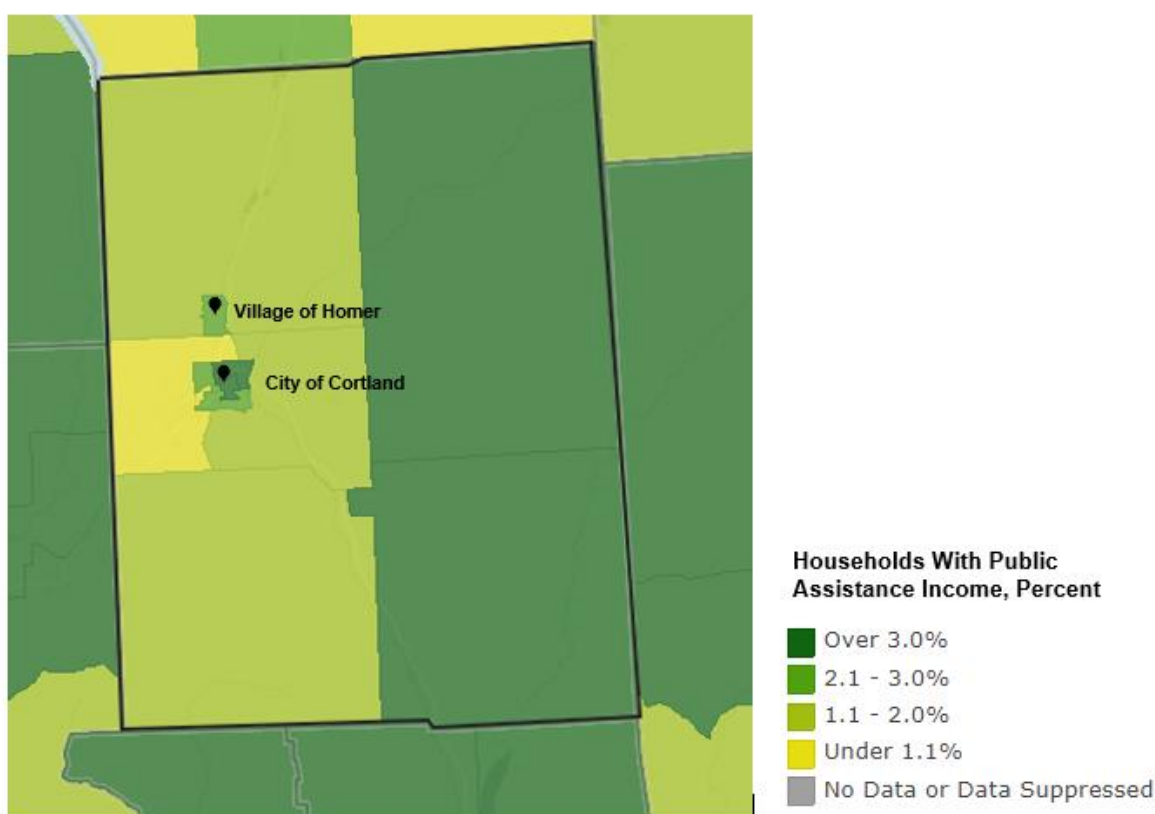
There are 624 households in Cortland County receiving cash public assistance (3.5% of households).<sup>13</sup> This has increased from 2.6% in 2014.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, 3.5% of New York State households report cash public assistance income in 2019 (Table 17). However, there has been little notable change for New York State since 2014.<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup>

**Table 17. Percentage of Households Receiving Cash Public Assistance Income by Geography and Year (2014,2019)<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup>**

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Cortland County</b>	2.6%	3.5%
<b>New York State</b>	3.4%	3.5%
<b>United States</b>	2.8%	2.2%

The geographic areas in Cortland County with the highest percentage of the population with public assistance income are concentrated in the City of Cortland and the eastern rural areas of the county (Figure 15).<sup>12</sup>





**Figure 15. Percentage of Households with Public Assistance Income by Census Tract (Cortland County, 2019)<sup>12</sup>**

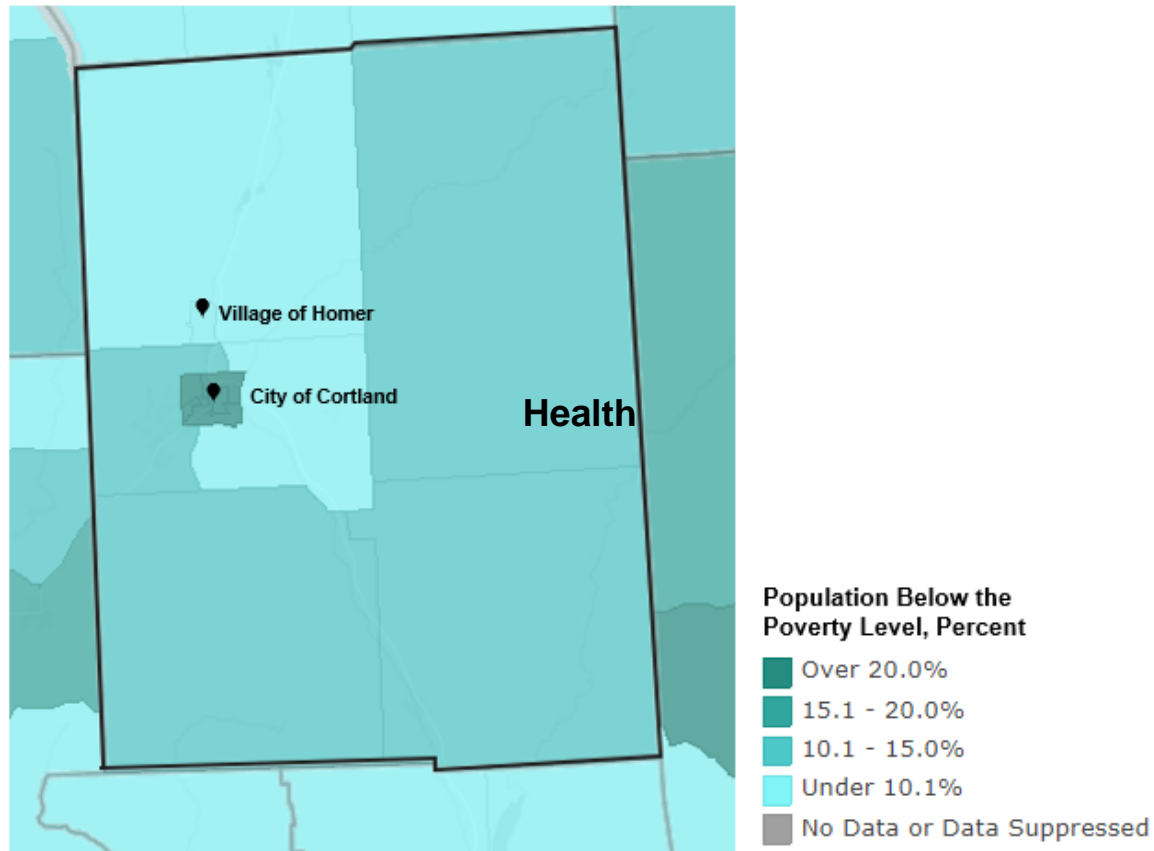
## Poverty

In 2019, 7,272 Cortland County residents (16.4%) live below the federal poverty level, which was an increase from 13.5% in 2014 (Table 18).<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup> Comparatively, the poverty level for New York State and the United States decreased from 2014 to 2019.<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup> Cortland County has a higher percentage of residents living below the federal poverty level than New York State and the United States (Table 18).<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup> Additionally, 3,153 Cortland County residents live below 50% of the federal poverty level which is considered extreme poverty.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 18. Percentage of Households Living Below the Federal Poverty Level by Geography and Year (2014-2019)<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup>**

	2014	2019
<b>Cortland County</b>	13.5%	16.4%
<b>New York State</b>	15.6%	14.1%
<b>United States</b>	15.6%	13.4%

Geographically, the City of Cortland has the highest percentage of the population living below the federal poverty level in Cortland County (Figure 16).<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 16. Percentage of Population Below the Poverty Level by Census Tract (Cortland County, 2019)<sup>12</sup>**

Poverty disproportionately affects certain population groups in Cortland County. When looking at the poverty rate of different demographic characteristics it is apparent that poverty rates are high for; female headed households with no spouse, residents with less than a high school degree, and residents with disabilities (Table 19).<sup>13</sup>

**Table 19. Poverty Rates by Demographic Characteristics  
(Cortland County, 2019)<sup>131</sup>**

<b>Demographic Characteristic</b>	<b>Poverty Rate</b>
<b>Male</b>	12.7%
<b>Female</b>	20.0%
<b>Under 5</b>	23.6%
<b>Under 18</b>	18.2%
<b>18 to 64</b>	17.5%
<b>65 and over</b>	10.3%
<b>White</b>	16.1%
<b>Black or AA</b>	15.4%
<b>Asian</b>	5.4%
<b>Hispanic (any race)</b>	36.5%
<b>White, not Hispanic</b>	15.9%
<b>Married couple family</b>	4.8%
<b>Female householder, no spouse</b>	34.3%
<b>Less than high school graduate</b>	27.2%
<b>High school graduate</b>	13.7%
<b>Bachelor's degree or higher</b>	6.2%
<b>With disability</b>	24.8%
<b>No disability</b>	15.1%

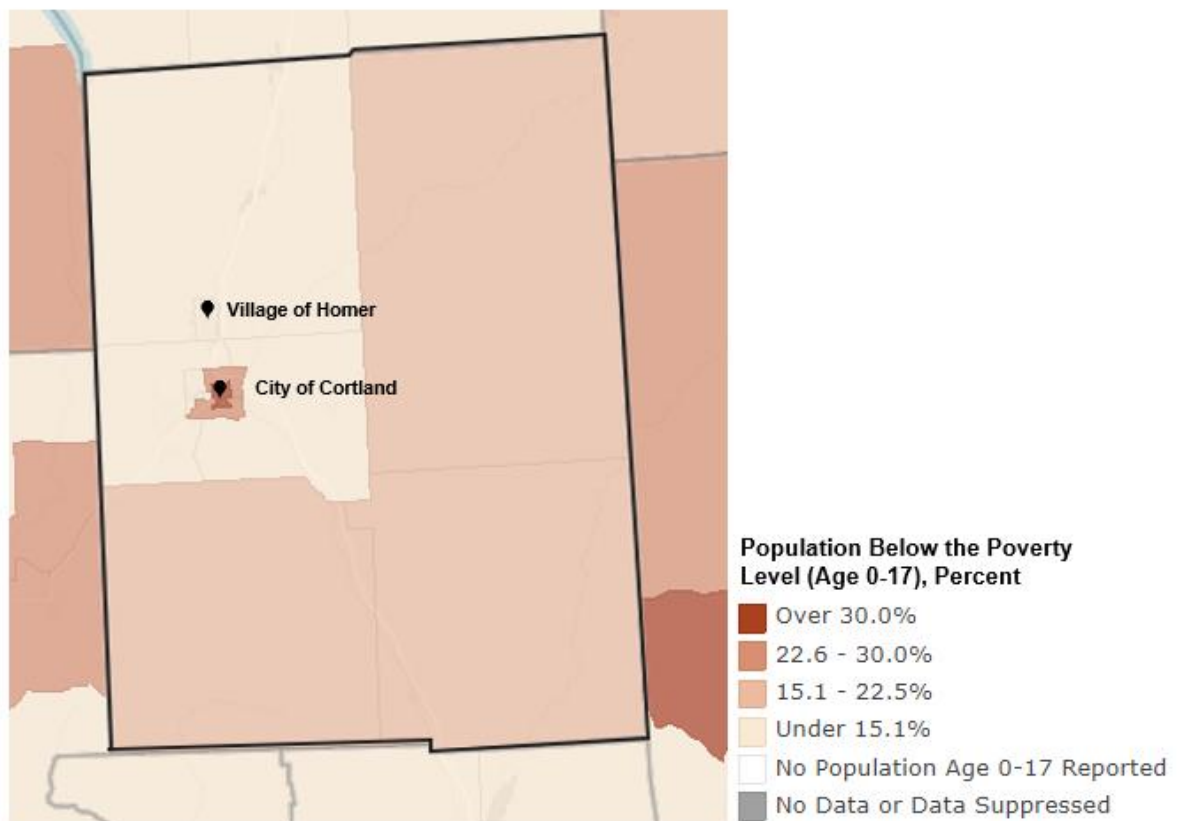
CAPCO programs are particularly concerned with children living in poverty. In 2019, 18.2% of children in Cortland lived below the federal poverty level. This has increased from 13.9% in 2014 (Table 20).<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup> The percentage of Cortland County residents under age 18 that live below the federal poverty level is on par with New York State and less than the United States (Table 20).<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup>

**Table 20. Percentage of Residents Under Age 18 That Live Below the Federal Poverty Level by Geography and Year (2014-2019)<sup>13-15,17-18,28</sup>**

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Cortland County</b>	13.9%	18.2%
<b>New York State</b>	22.1%	18.1%
<b>United States</b>	18.5%	21.9%



The geographic area in Cortland County with the highest percentage of the population ages birth to seventeen living below the federal poverty level is the City of Cortland (Figure 17).<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 17. Percentage of Population (Age 0-17) Below the Poverty Level by Census Tract (Cortland County, 2019)**

## Transportation and Communication

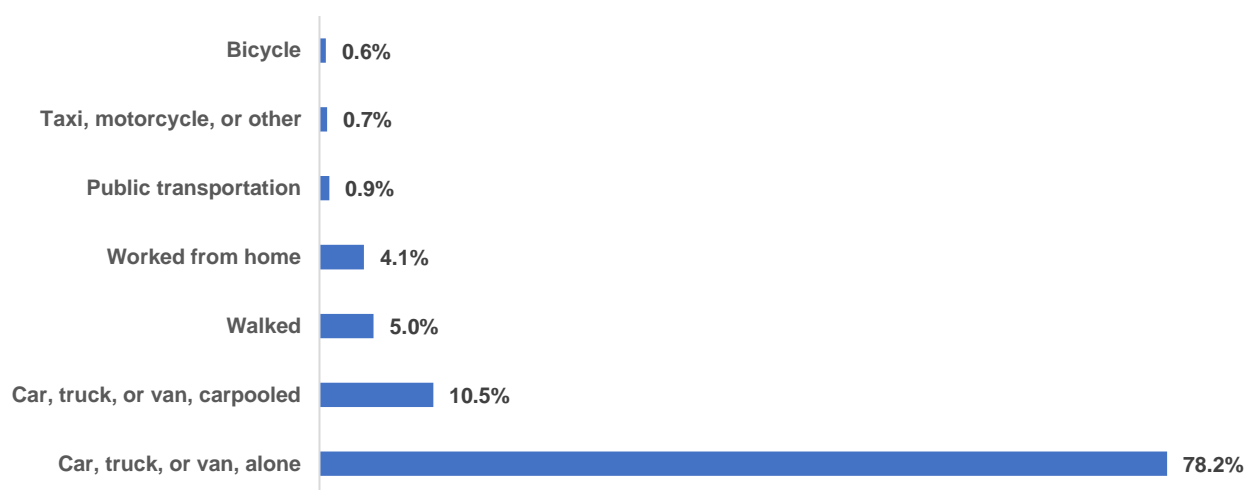
### Vehicle Ownership and Commuting

In 2019, 9.9% of all occupied housing units in Cortland County did not have a vehicle to use.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, 23.1% of renter occupied housing units in the county did not have a vehicle.<sup>13</sup> Comparatively, 29.3% of all occupied housing units in New York State do not have a vehicle available for use (Table 21).<sup>13-15</sup>

**Table 21. Occupied Housing Units Without a Vehicle to Use by Geography (2019)<sup>13-15</sup>**

Percentage of Occupied Housing Units	
<b>Cortland County</b>	9.9%
<b>New York State</b>	29.3%
<b>United States</b>	9.1%

The most common mode of transportation to work for Cortland County workers ages 16 and older is car, truck, or van (alone or carpooling) (Figure 18).<sup>13</sup> Only 0.9% of workers in Cortland County use public transportation to get to work.<sup>13</sup>

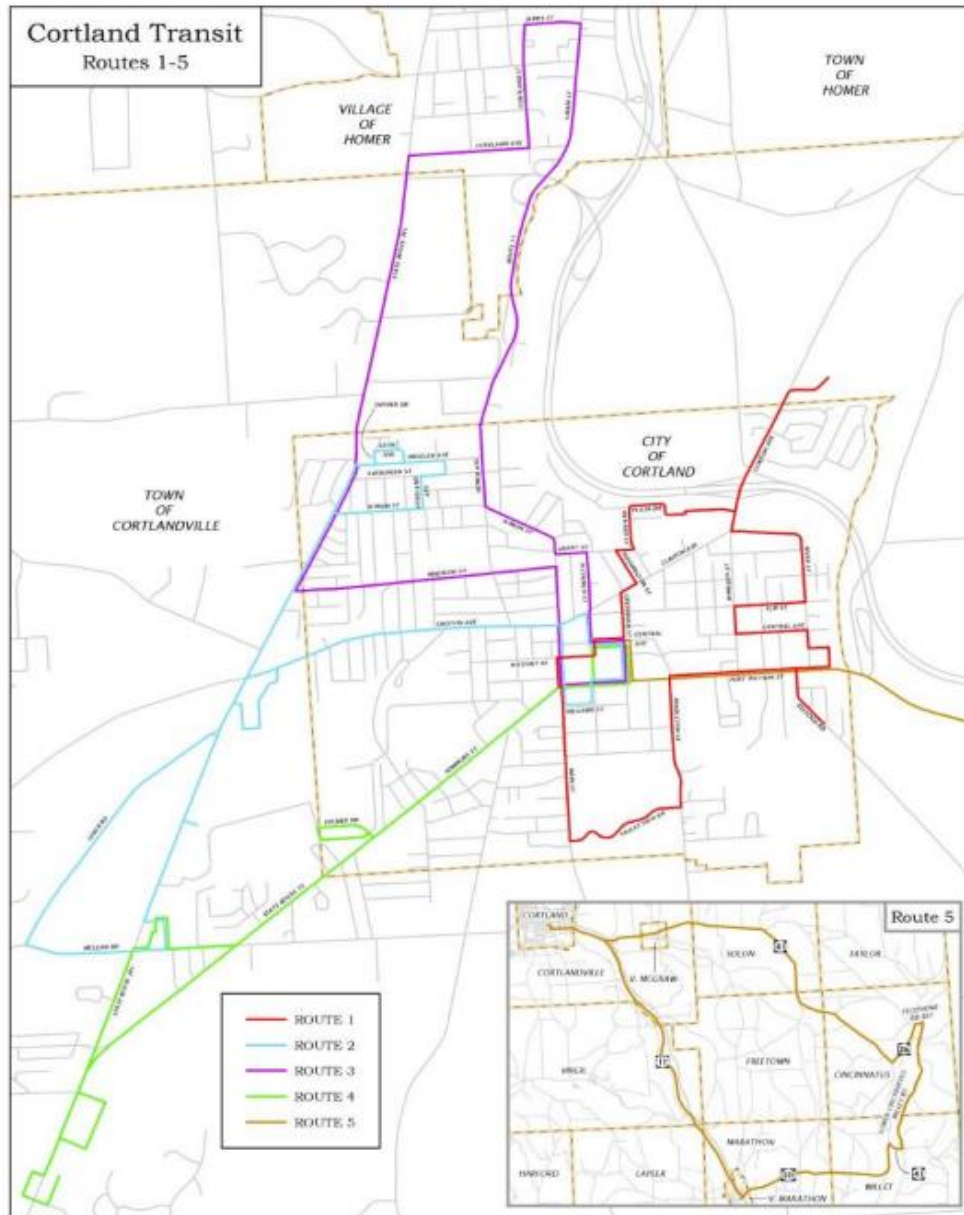


**Figure 18. Means of Transportation to Work for Workers 16+ (Cortland County, 2019)<sup>13</sup>**



## Public Transportation

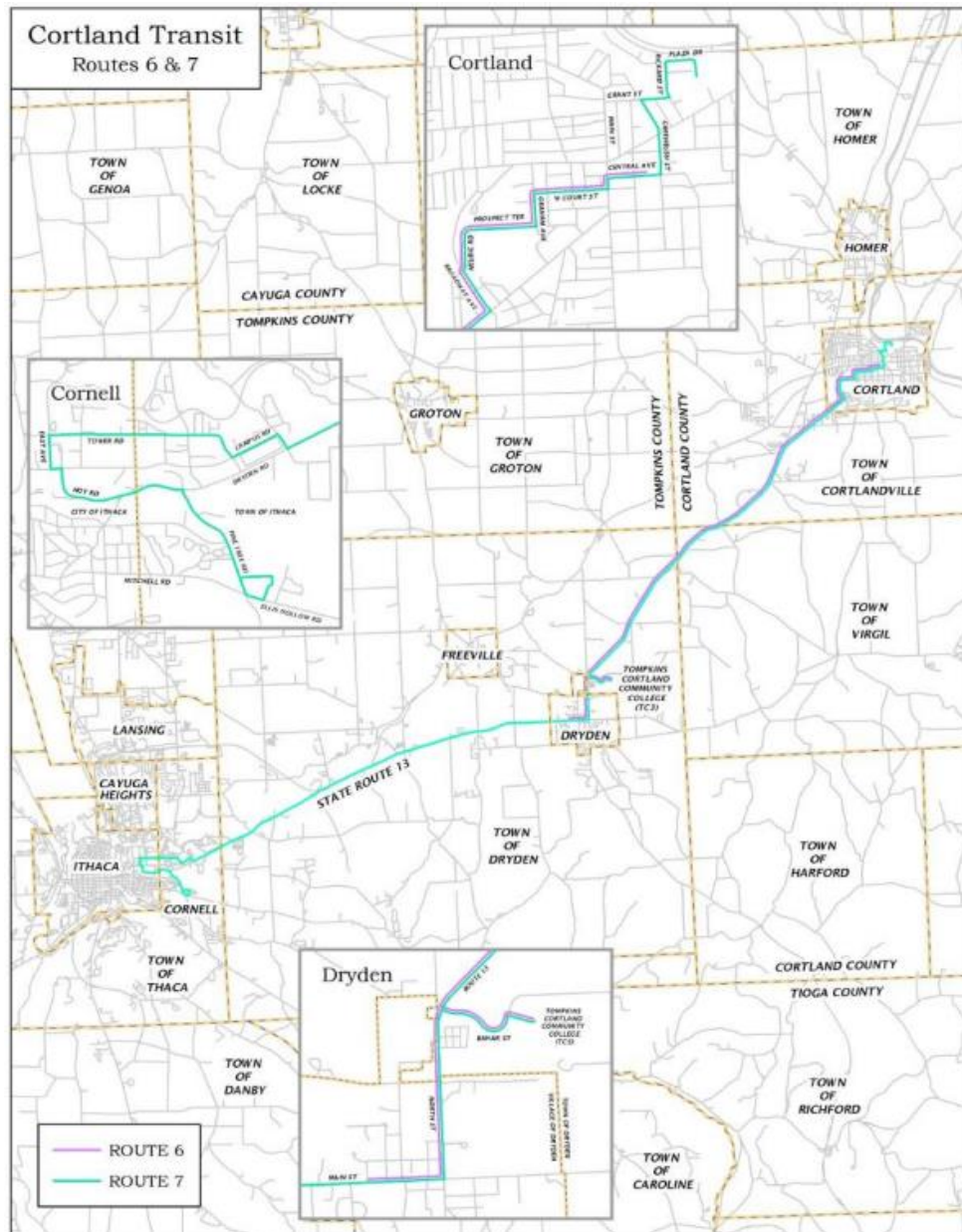
Cortland Transit offers public transportation services throughout Cortland and Tompkins County. Buses run throughout the City of Cortland daily from 6am to 6pm and have stops at many major businesses, healthcare facilities, and SUNY Cortland (Figure 19).<sup>29</sup>



**Figure 19. Cortland Transit Routes 1-5**  
(Source: Cortland County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan 2020, Cortland Planning Department)<sup>29</sup>

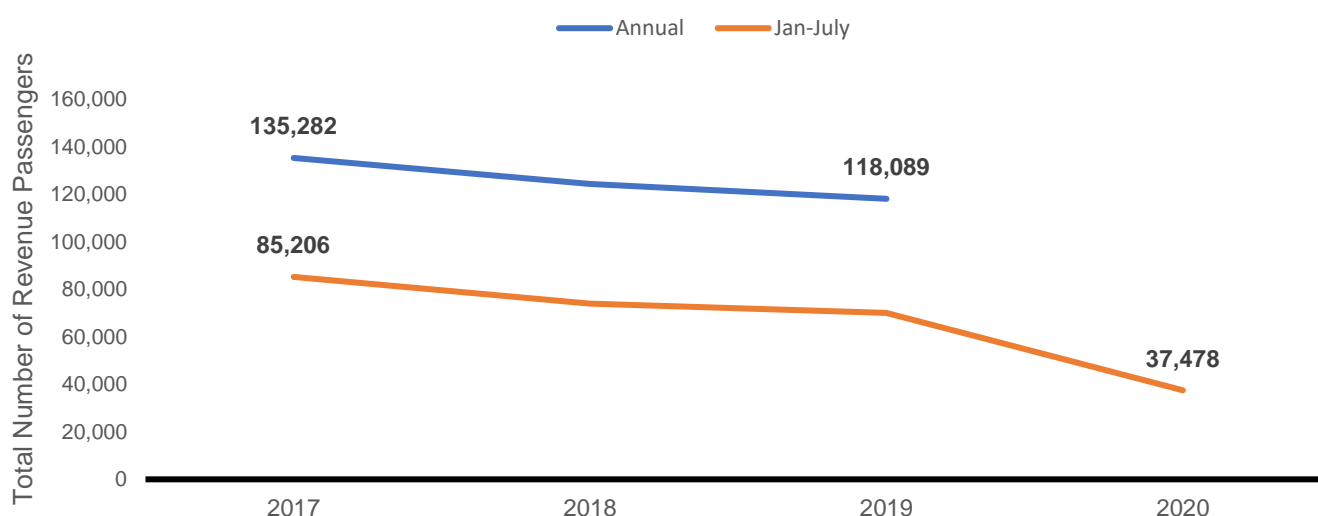


Cortland Transit also offers service to Dryden, Cornell's campus, and to the rural areas of the county such as Cincinnatus, Willet, and Marathon (Figure 20).<sup>29</sup> However, routes outside the City of Cortland have limited times in which they pick up/drop off.



**Figure 20. Cortland Transit Routes 6 & 7**  
 (Source: Cortland County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan 2020, Cortland Planning Department)<sup>29</sup>

Cortland County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan found that from 2017 to 2019, the number of revenue passengers for Cortland County Public Transit has been on the decline (Figure 21).<sup>29</sup> The plan also found that COVID-19 had a significant impact on the number of revenue passengers in the first seven months of 2020, as noted in (Figure 21).<sup>29</sup>



**Figure 21. Total Number of Cortland Transit Revenue Passengers (Cortland County, 2017-2020)<sup>29</sup>**

## Communication

In 2019, 87.1% of households in Cortland County have a computer, 74.4% have internet access, and 73.6% have a smartphone (Table 22).<sup>13-15</sup> Compared to New York State and the United States a lower percentage of households in Cortland County have internet access (Table 22).<sup>13-15</sup>

**Table 22. Communication in Occupied Housing Units Geography (2019)<sup>13-15</sup>**

	Has Internet	Has a Computer*	Has a Smartphone
<b>Cortland County</b>	74.4%	87.1%	73.6%
<b>New York State</b>	83.2%	89.6%	78.4%
<b>United States</b>	83.0%	90.3%	79.9%

\*One or more of the following; desktop, laptop, smartphone, tablet, other computer



Geographic areas in the Northern part of the county and the central part of the City of Cortland are less likely to have households with a computer (Figure 22).<sup>12</sup>

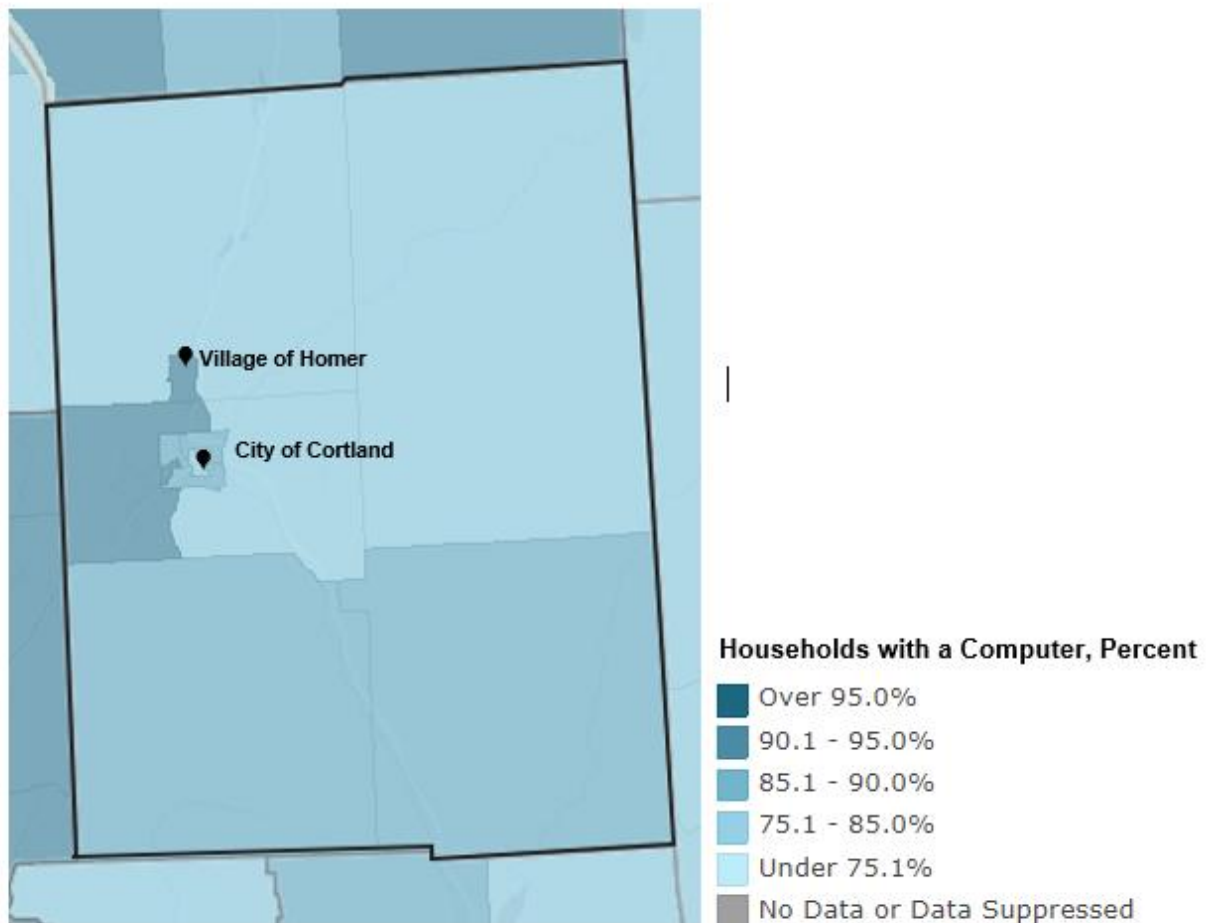


Figure 22. Percentage of Households with a Computer by Census Tract (2019)<sup>12</sup>

## Social Services

### Housing

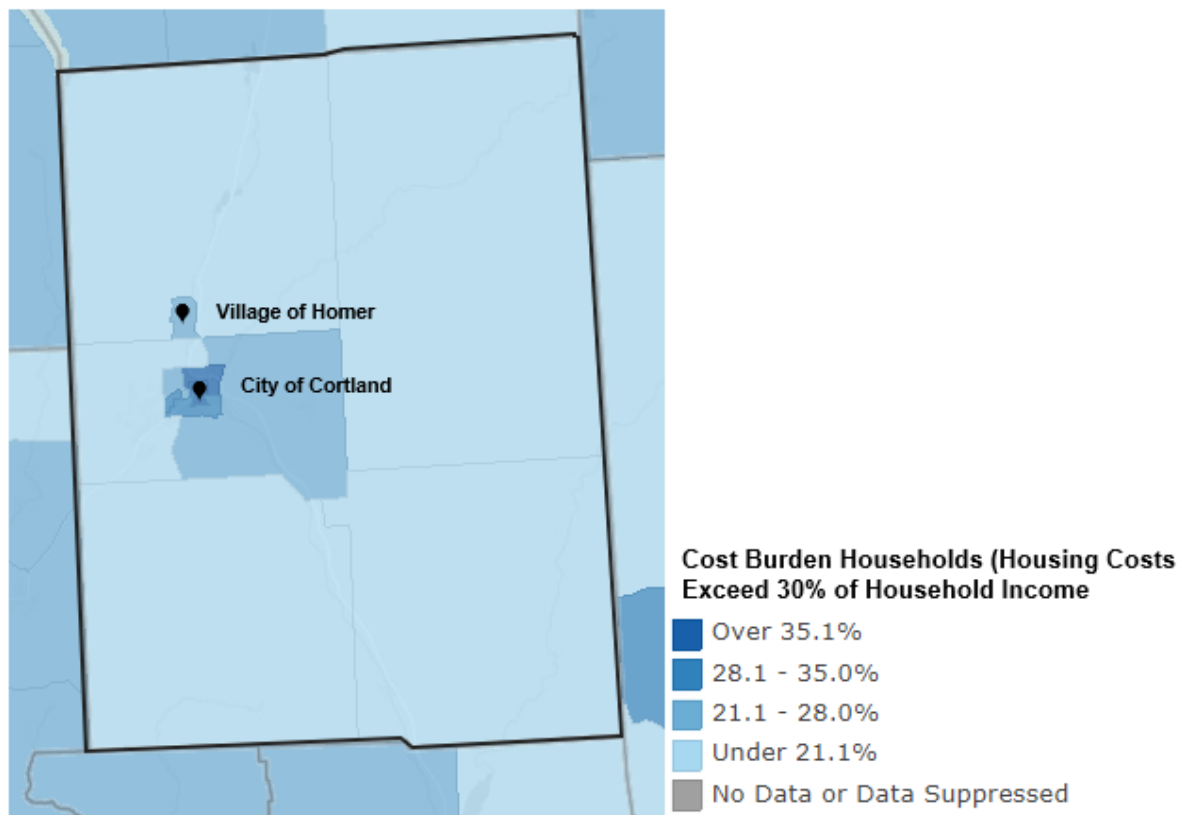
Of the 17,745 occupied housing units in Cortland County, 25.4% have monthly housing costs that exceed 30% or more of the household income in the past month (Table 23). This is lower than New York State (29.0%) and the United States (30.8%) and has decreased since 2014 (27.9%) (Table 23).<sup>13-15</sup>



**Table 23. Percentage of Households Where Housing Costs Exceed 30% of Income by Geography (2014-2019)<sup>13-15</sup>**

	2019
Cortland County	25.4%
New York State	29.0%
United States	30.8%

Geographically, in Cortland County, cost burdened housing units are concentrated around the City of Cortland (Figure 23).<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 23. Percentage of Households with Housing Costs That Exceed 30% of Household Income by Census Tract (2019)<sup>12</sup>**

In the 2018-2019 school year, less than 1% of students in Cortland County school districts experienced homelessness (24 total students) (Table 24).<sup>20-24</sup> This has declined from approximately 1% in 2017-2018 (39 students) and 2016-2017 (57 students) (Table 24). Homer and Cortland School Districts were the only districts to report students experiencing homelessness at approximately 1% of their student populations each.<sup>20-24</sup>

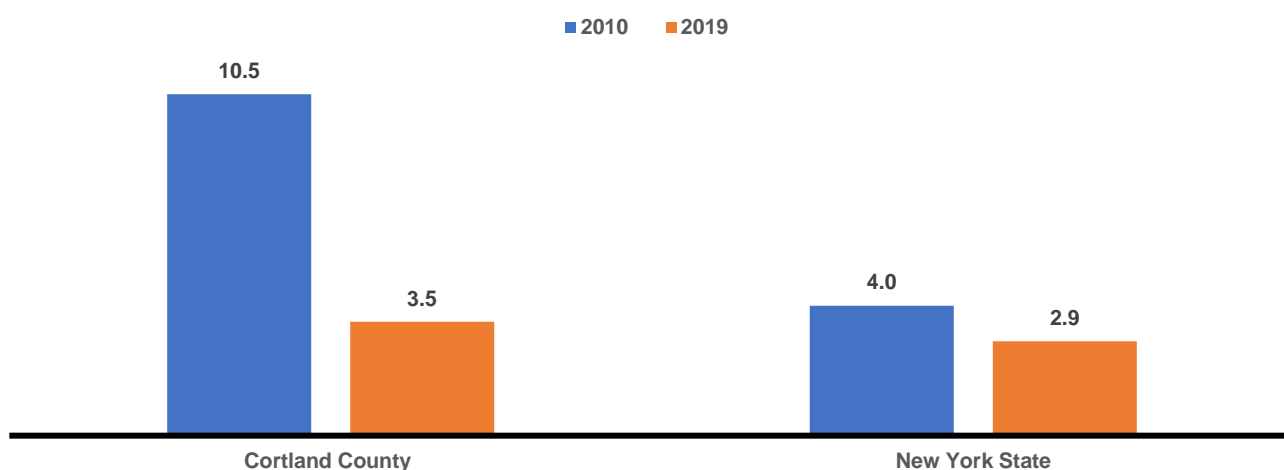
**Table 24. Number and Percentage of Students Experiencing Homelessness by School District (Cortland County, 2016-2017, 2020-2021)<sup>20-24</sup>**

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2018-2019
<b>Cortland</b>	27 (1%)	12 (1%)	12 (1%)
<b>Homer</b>	22 (1%)	22 (1%)	10 (1%)
<b>Marathon</b>	-	5 (1%)	-
<b>McGraw</b>	-	-	-
<b>Cincinnatus</b>	-	-	-
<b>County</b>	57 (1%)	39 (1%)	24 (0%)

\*Percentages rounded in line with NYSED website

## Family Well Being

In 2019, 3.5 per 1,000 children ages 0-21 years old were in foster care in Cortland County (Figure 24).<sup>30</sup> This indicator has decreased since 2010 when 10.5 per 1,000 children were in foster care. New York State has a lower rate at 2.9 per 1,000 in 2019.<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 24. Children Ages 0-21 Years Old in Foster Care per 1,000 Children by Geography (2010, 2019)<sup>30</sup>**



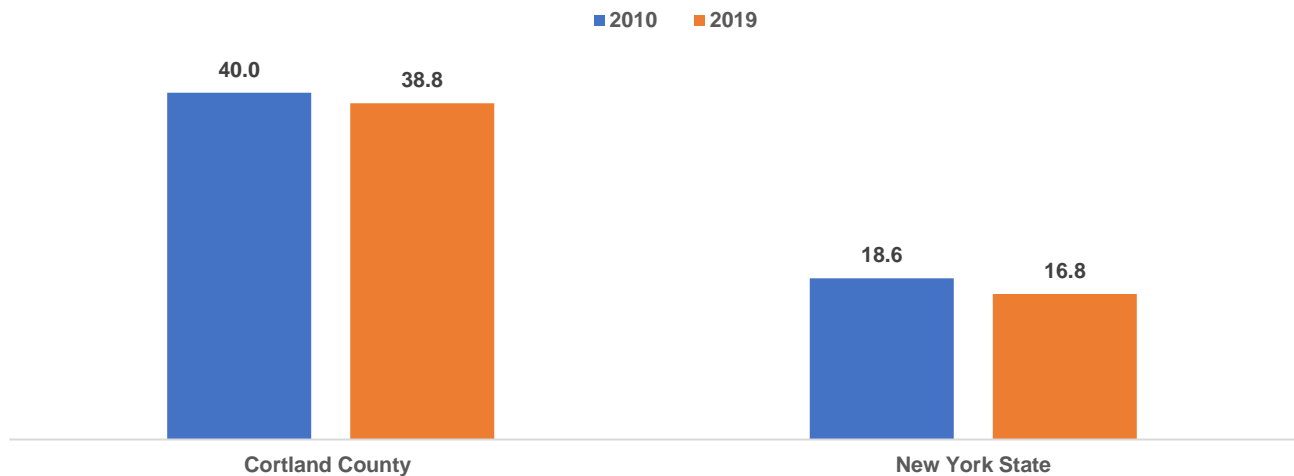
When looking at foster care by school enrollment, less than 1% of students enrolled in Cortland County school districts are in foster care (23 students total in 2019-2020) (Table 25).<sup>20-24</sup> Foster care data is only reported at the district level consistently by the City of Cortland School District. In 2019-2020, 1% of enrolled students in this district were in foster care (12 students total).<sup>20-24</sup>

**Table 25. Number and Percentage of Students in Foster Care by School District  
(Cortland County, 2016-2017, 2020-2021)<sup>20-24</sup>**

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
<b>Cortland</b>	11 (0%)	17 (1%)	12 (1%)
<b>Homer</b>	-	-	6 (0%)
<b>Marathon</b>	5 (1%)	7 (1%)	-
<b>McGraw</b>	-	-	-
<b>Cincinnatus</b>	-	-	-
<b>County</b>	21 (0%)	28 (0%)	23 (0%)

\*Percentages rounded in line with NYSED website

In 2019, the rate of children abuse/maltreatment for youth ages 0-17 years old in Cortland County (38.8 per 1,000) is nearly double New York State (16.8 per 1,000) (Figure 25).<sup>30</sup> It has declined from 40 per 1,000 in 2010 (Figure 25).<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 25. Children in Indicated Reports of Abuse/Maltreatment per 1,000 Children  
Ages 0-17 by Geography (2010, 2019)<sup>30</sup>**

## Health

Based on the results of the Cortland County Health Department's 2019-2024 Community Health Assessment the Health Department selected two health priority areas for the county to focus efforts on for 2019-2024.<sup>31</sup> These priorities include:

1. Prevent Chronic Disease
  - a. Healthy eating and food security
  - b. Physical Activity
  - c. Tobacco Prevention
  - d. Preventative Care and Management
2. Promote Well-Being Mental and Substance Use Disorders

This section of the assessment will highlight key health indicators for these two community level public health priority areas. Additionally, this section will address disabilities, healthcare access, and women and infant health Cortland County as these health topics are relevant to CAPCO clients and programs.

### Healthy Eating and Food Security

In 2018, 34.4%\* of adults in Cortland County were obese, which increased from 28.9% in 2016 (Figure 26).<sup>32</sup> A higher percentage of adults in Cortland County are obese compared to New York State (27.5%) and New York State excluding NYC (29.1%) (Figure 26).<sup>32</sup>

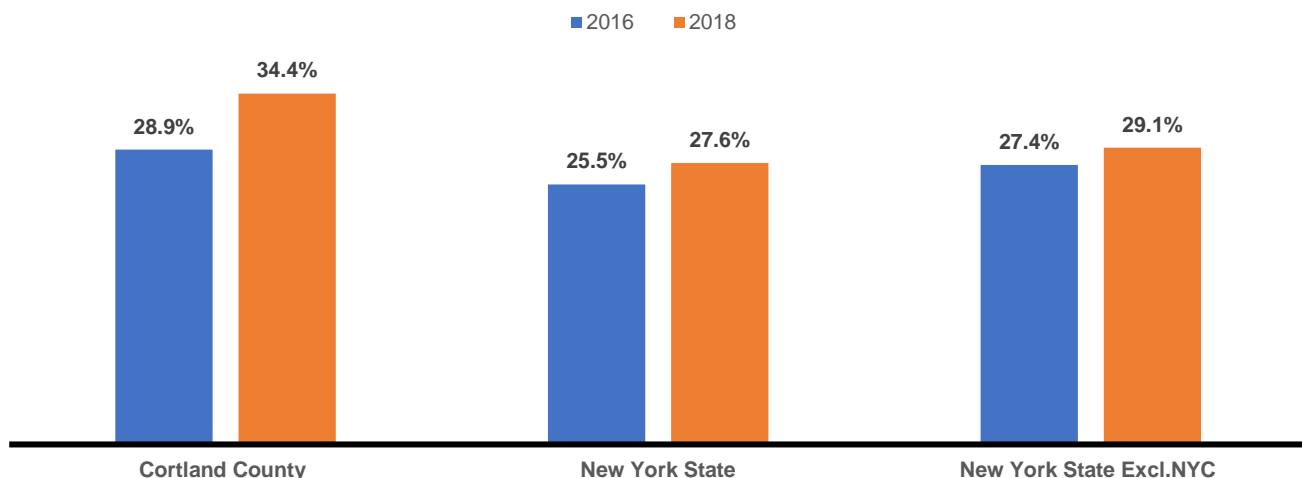


Figure 26. Percentage of Adults with Obesity by Geography and Year (2016-2018)<sup>32</sup>

\*2018 Cortland County data has a margin of error greater than 10% and is therefore unstable



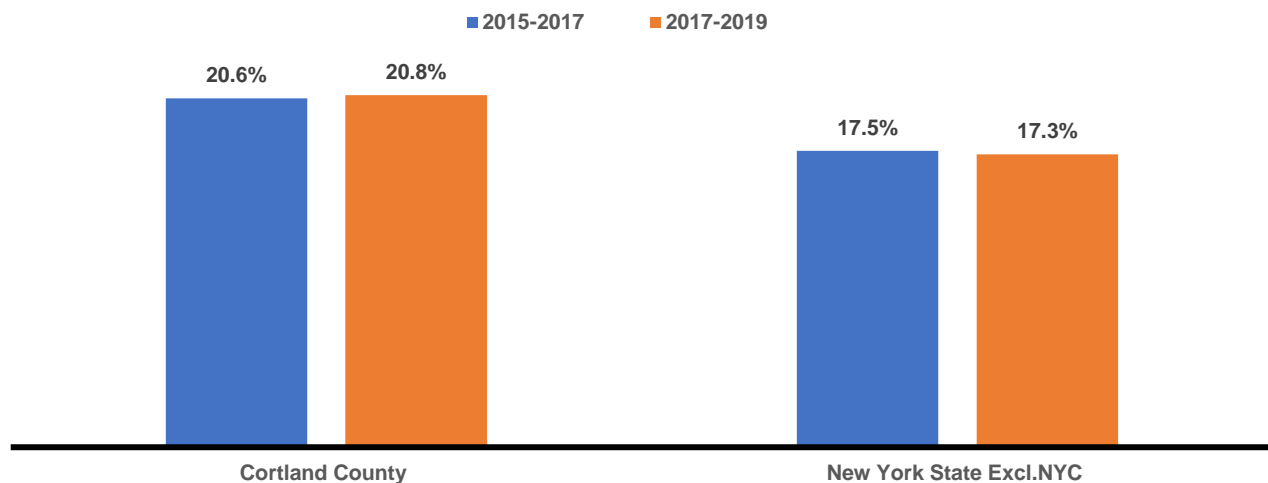
In 2018, 47.1% of adults in Cortland County who make less than \$25,000 a year were obese, which is higher than both New York State and New York State excluding NYC (Table 26).<sup>\*32</sup>

**Table 26. Percentage of Adults Who Make Less than \$25,000 a Year With Obesity (By Geography, 2018)<sup>32</sup>**

<b>Cortland County</b>	47.1%*
<b>New York State</b>	31.8%
<b>New York Excl. NYC</b>	34.4%

\*Margin of error greater than 10% therefore percentage is unstable

From 2017-2019, 20.8% of children and adolescents in Cortland County were considered obese, there was little noted change in this indicator from 2015-2017 (Figure 27).<sup>32</sup> A higher percentage of children and adolescents are obese in Cortland County compared to New York State excluding NYC (Figure 27).<sup>32</sup>



**Figure 27. Percentage of Children with Obesity by Geography and Year (2015-2017, 2017-2019)<sup>32</sup>**



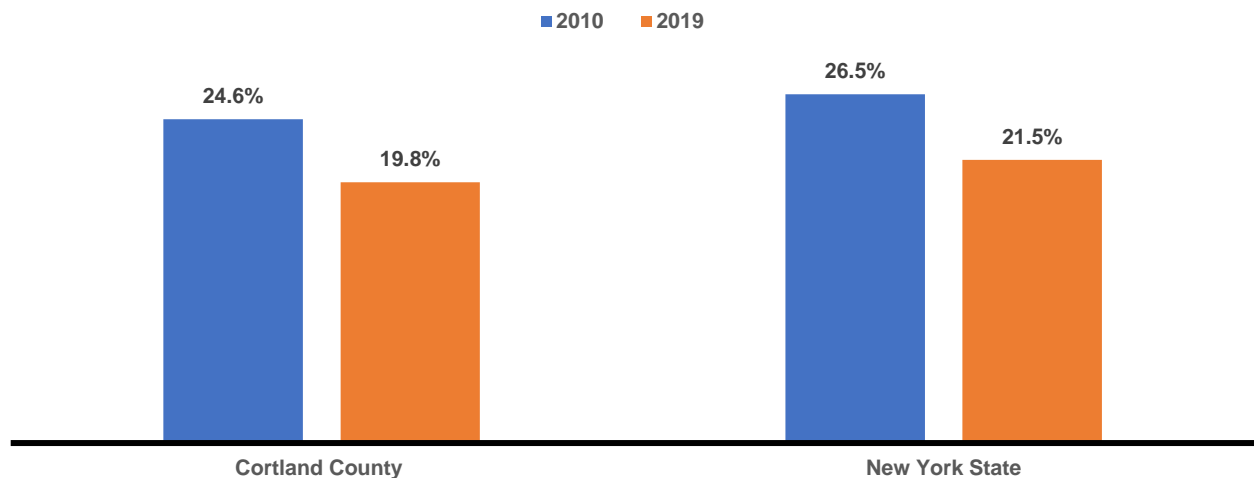


In 2017, 10.1% of children ages 2-4 in the WIC program in Cortland County were obese (Table 27).<sup>32</sup> This is lower than both New York State (13.7%) and New York State excluding NYC (15.1%) (Table 27).<sup>32</sup>

**Table 27. Percentage of Children with Obesity, Among Children Ages 2-4 Participating in the WIC Program (By Geography, 2017)<sup>32</sup>**

<b>Cortland County</b>	10.1%
<b>New York State</b>	13.7%
<b>New York Excl. NYC</b>	15.1%

In 2019, 19.8% of children birth-17 years old received SNAP benefits in Cortland County, which is lower than New York State (Figure 28). Historically, in 2010, 24.6% of children birth-17 years old in Cortland County received SNAP benefits (Figure 28).<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 28. Percentage of Children Receiving SNAP Benefits (Birth-17 Years)<sup>30</sup>**



## Substance Use

The 2021 Healing Cortland Needs Assessment on Opioid related overdoses in Cortland County reported 83 fatal overdoses in Cortland County from 2009 to 2020 (data provided by Cortland County coroner, 2020 data preliminary) (Figure 28).<sup>33,34</sup> The assessment found that the majority of all overdose deaths in Cortland County are related to opioids.<sup>33</sup>

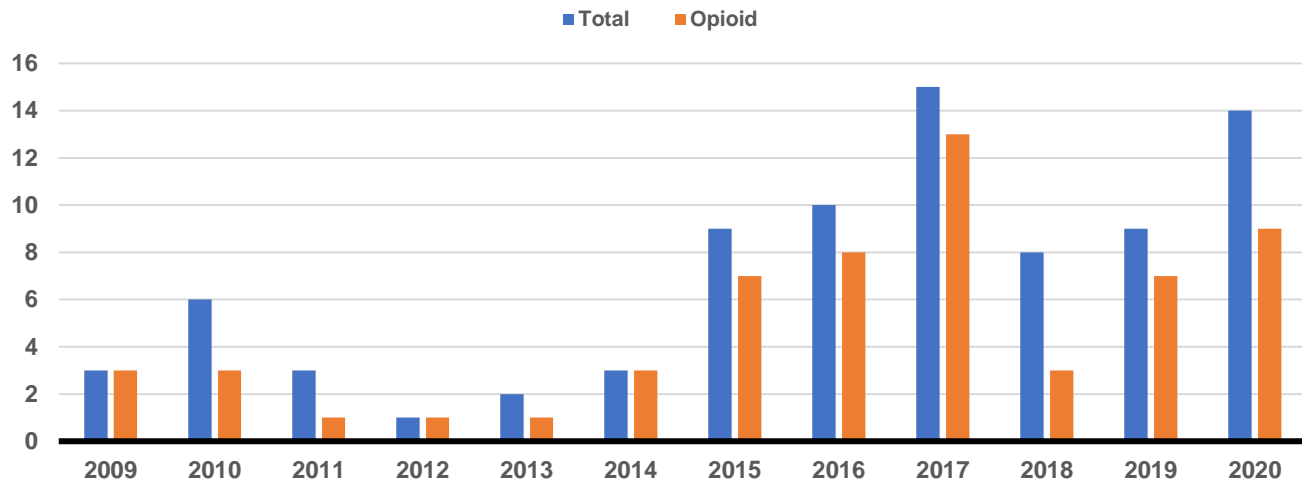


Figure 29. Cortland County Fatal Overdoses (2009-2020)<sup>33,34</sup>

The number of opioid related overdoses peaked in 2017 and, after a decline in 2018, has been increasing each year since. In 2018, the age adjusted death rate for overdose deaths involving any opioid in Cortland County was 11 per 100,000 which was lower than New York State and New York excluding NYC for that year (Table 28).<sup>35</sup> However, as noted in the above graph and Healing Cortland's assessment, 2018 recorded the lowest number of opioid related overdoses since 2014 and opioid related overdoses have increased in Cortland County in 2019 and 2020 (Figure 29).<sup>33,34</sup>

**Table 28. Overdose Deaths Involving Any Opioid  
Age Adjusted Death Rate per 100,000  
(By Geography, 2018)<sup>35</sup>**

<b>Cortland County</b>	11.0*
<b>New York State</b>	15.0
<b>New York Excl. NYC</b>	18.5

\*Rate unstable because numerator less than 10



In 2018, 16.6% of adults in Cortland County binge drank in the past month (age adjusted).<sup>32</sup> This was an increase from 14.6% in 2016. This is lower than New York State (17.5%) and New York State excluding NYC (18.4%) (Figure 30).<sup>32</sup>

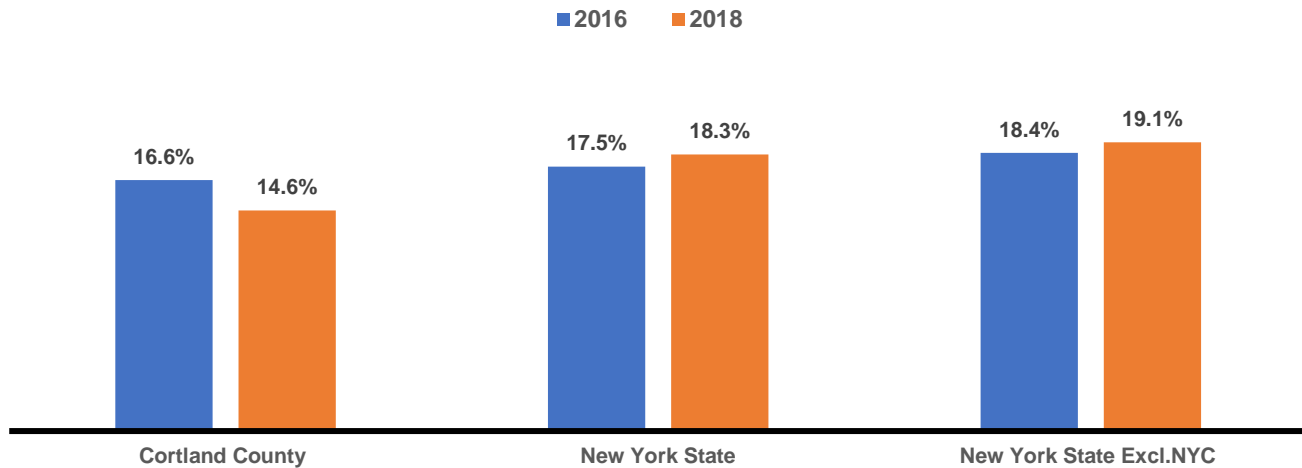


Figure 30. Age Adjusted Percentage of Adults that Binge Drank in the Past Month by Geography (2016-2018)<sup>32</sup>

In 2018, 19.8% of adults (ages 18 and older) report they are currently smoking cigarettes.<sup>32</sup> This was an increase from 18.3% in 2016 (Figure).<sup>32</sup> This is higher than New York State (12.8%) and New York State excluding NYC (13.9%) (Figure 31).<sup>32</sup>

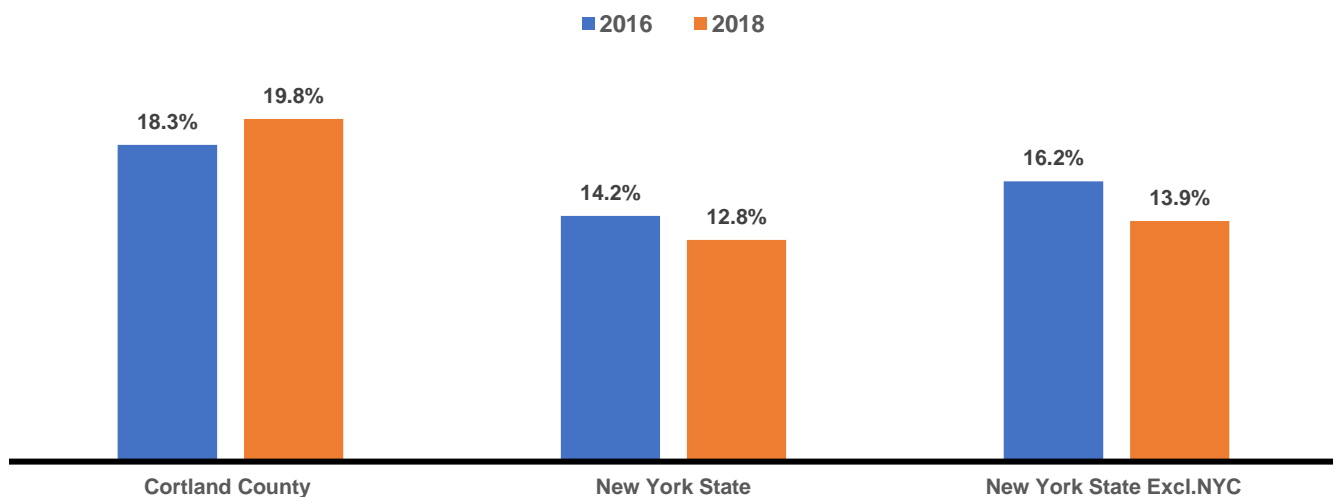


Figure 31. The Percentage of Adults (18+) That Report Currently Smoking Cigarettes by Geography (2018)<sup>32</sup>



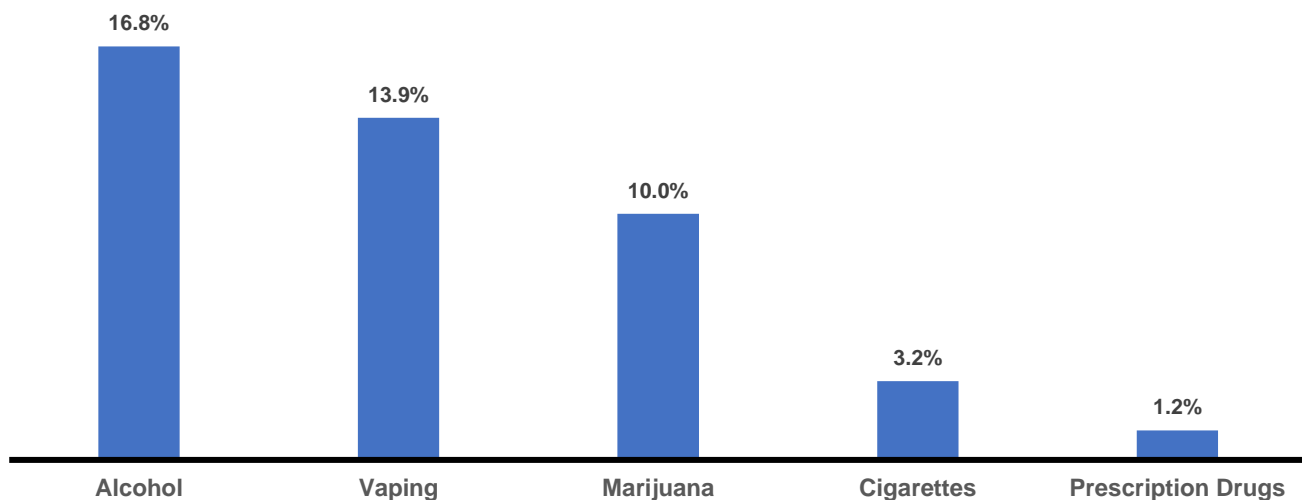
Additionally, the percentage of adults who make less than \$25,000 a year that report currently smoking cigarettes in Cortland County was 45.4% in 2018, which is higher than New York State and New York State excluding New York City.<sup>32</sup>

**Table 29. Percentage of Adults Who Make Less than \$25,000 a Year That Report Currently Smoking Cigarettes (By Geography, 2018)<sup>32</sup>**

<b>Cortland County</b>	45.4%*
<b>New York State</b>	20.4%
<b>New York Excl. NYC</b>	24.8%

\*Margin of error is greater than 10, therefore percentage is unstable

The 2019 Cortland Area Communities That Care Needs Assessment on Underage Drinking found that alcohol is currently, and historically, the most commonly used substance reported by Cortland County 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders.<sup>36</sup> The 2020 youth survey showed that 16.8% reported using alcohol in the past 30 days. Comparatively, 13.9% reported vaping, 10.0% reported marijuana use, 3.2% reported cigarette use, and 1.2% reported prescription drug use (Figure 32).<sup>38</sup>



**Figure 32. Past 30 Day Use of Common Substances 7-12 Grade (Cortland County, 2020)<sup>38</sup>**



## Well Being & Mental Health

In 2018, 16.4% of Cortland County adults aged 18 years and older reported experiencing frequent mental distress in the past month (age adjusted) (Figure 33). This doubled from 8.2% in 2016.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, in 2018 a higher percentage of Cortland County residents report experiencing frequent mental distress than New York and New York excluding NYC.<sup>32</sup>

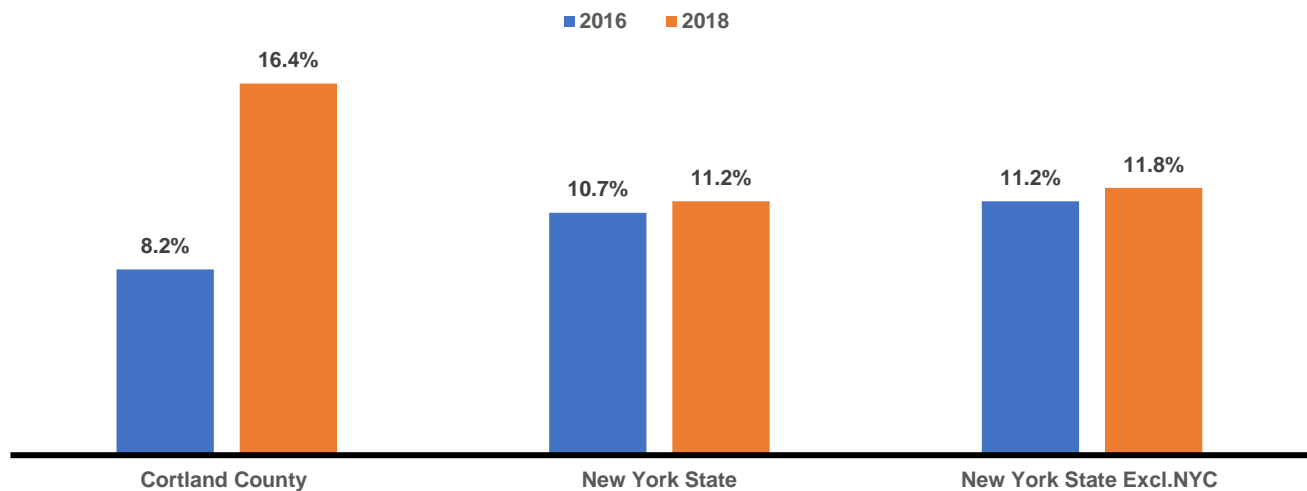


Figure 33. Age Adjusted Percentage of Adults that Report Experiencing Frequent Mental Distress in the Past Month by Geography (2016-2018)<sup>32</sup>

From 2016-2018, the age adjusted suicide mortality rate in Cortland County was 12.8 per 100,000, this is higher than both New York State (8.2) and New York State excluding NYC (9.9) and increased from 2014-2016 (12.0) (Figure 34).<sup>3</sup>

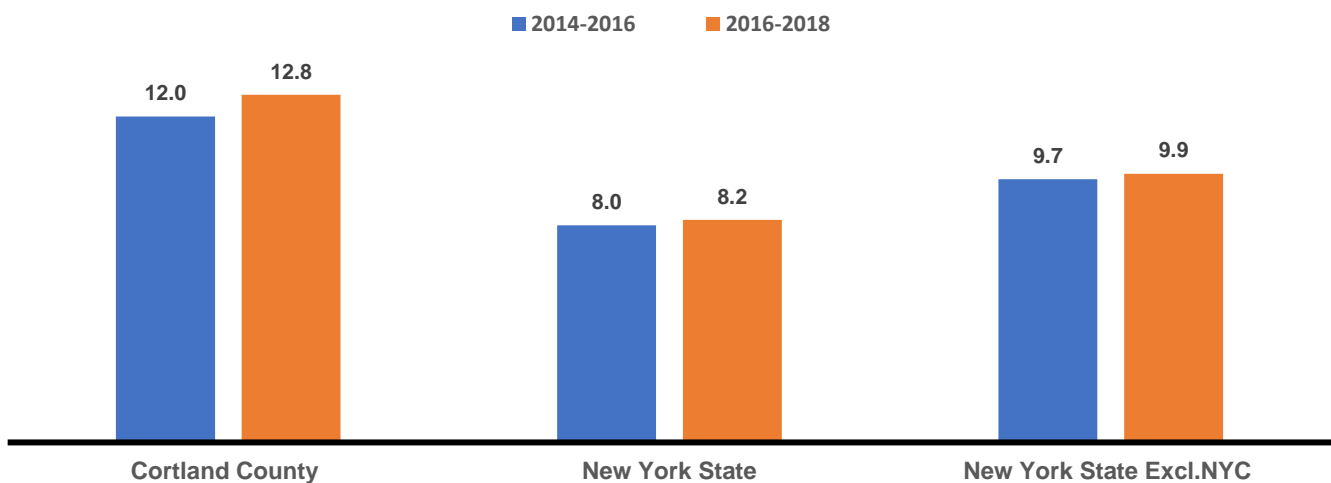


Figure 34. Age Adjusted Suicide Mortality Rate per 100,000 by Geography (2014-2016, 2016-2018)<sup>32</sup>



Results from the 2020 Cortland County youth survey found that, 18.1% of 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders report experiencing four out of four depressive symptoms asked about on the survey, 22.6% reported having suicide ideation in the past year, and 8.0% reported attempting suicide in the past year (Figure 35).<sup>38</sup> Depressive symptoms include; thinking they are a failure, thinking they are no good at all, feeling sad or depressed on most days in the past year, and thinking life is not worth it.

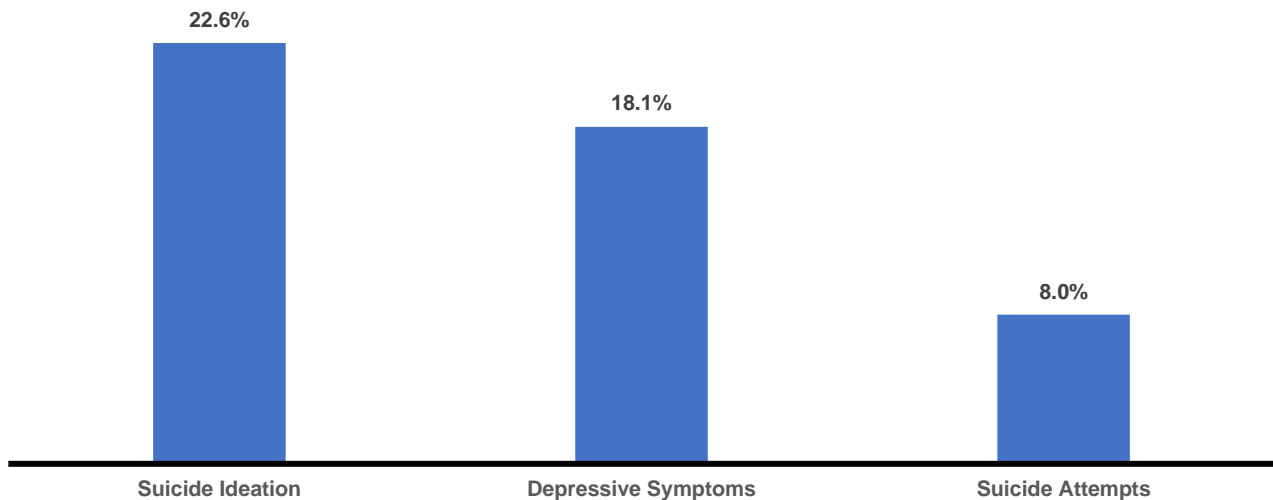


Figure 35. Percentage of Students Experiencing Indicators of Poor Mental Health (Cortland County, 7-12 Grade)<sup>38</sup>

## Healthcare Access

In 2016, 89.8% of children ages birth to 15 months in government sponsored insurance programs in Cortland County had the recommended number of well child visits. This is higher than NYS (80.1%) and NYS excluding NYC (82.8%) (Figure 36).<sup>32</sup> For children ages 3-6 years old in government sponsored insurance programs, 79.0% in Cortland County had the recommended number of well child visits. Which is less than NYS (84.3%) and NYS excluding NYC (82.3%) (Figure 36).<sup>32</sup>



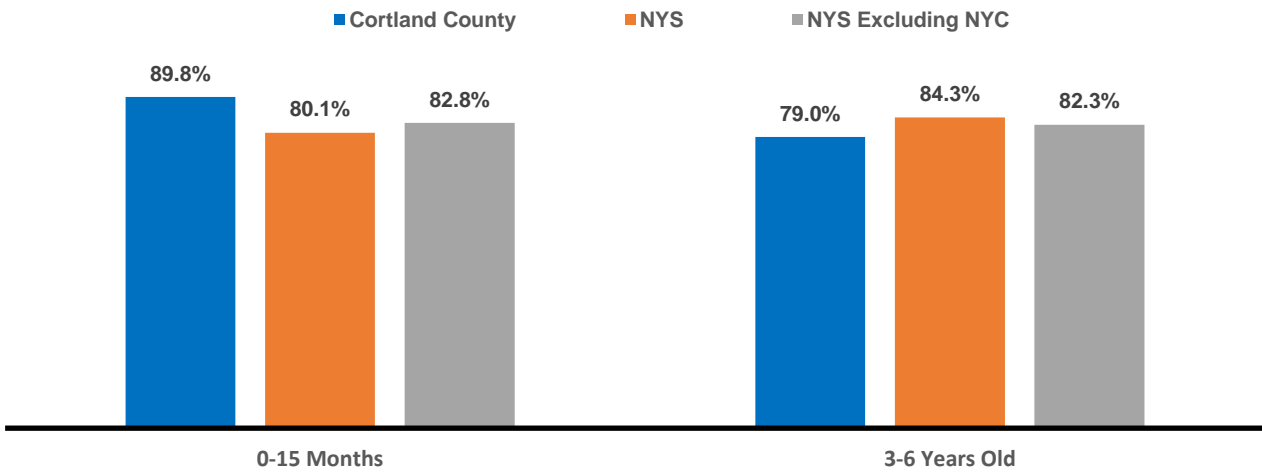


Figure 36. Percentage of Children in Government Insurance Programs Who Received the Recommended Number of Well Child Visits (2016)<sup>32</sup>

In 2017-2019, 48.9% of Cortland County residents ages 2-20 years old enrolled in Medicaid had a dental visit which is on par with New York State at 49.9% (Figure 37).<sup>32</sup> Additionally, 46.3% of Cortland County residents ages 2-20 years old on Medicaid had a preventative dental visit which is slightly higher than New York State at 45.9% (Figure 37).<sup>32</sup>

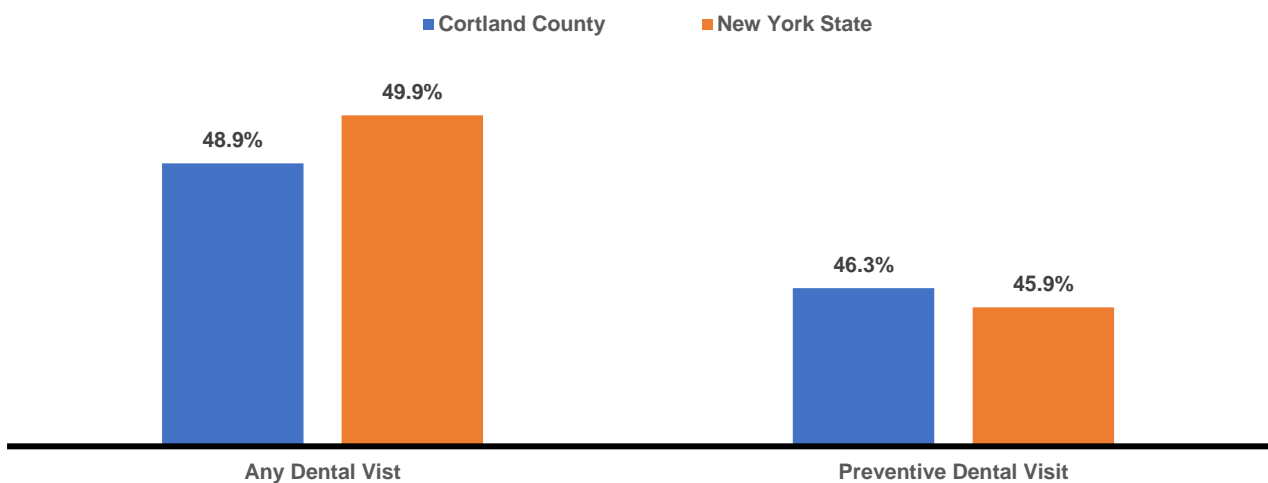


Figure 37. Percentage of Medicaid Enrollees (Age 2-20 Years) With Any Dental Visit or Preventive Dental Visit in the Past Year (2017-2019)<sup>32</sup>



## Women & Infant Health

From 2015-2017, 80.3% of births had prenatal care in the first trimester and 82.6% were deemed to have adequate prenatal care, both of which are higher than New York State and New York State excluding New York City (Table 30).<sup>3</sup>

**Table 30. Prenatal Care by Geography (2015-2017)<sup>39</sup>**

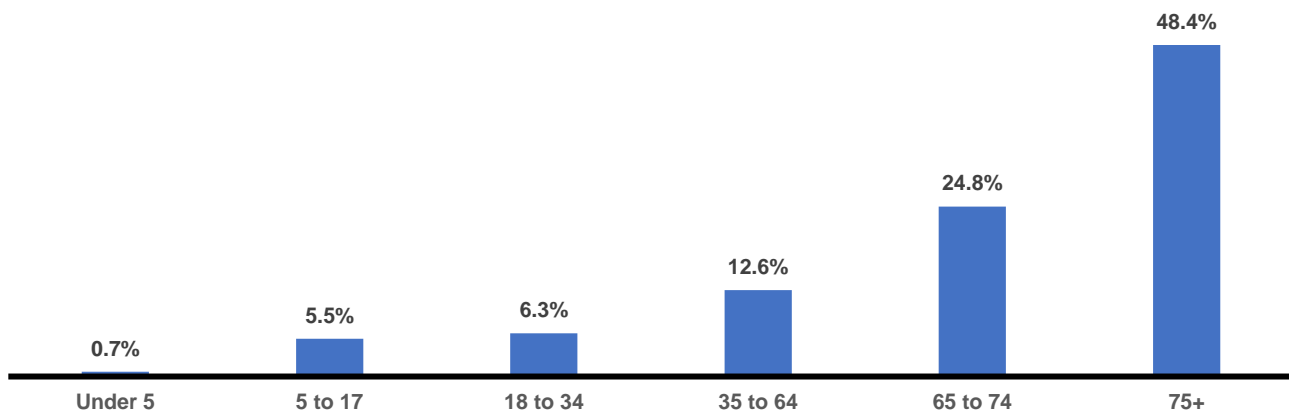
	Cortland County	New York State	NYS Excluding NYC
<b>First Trimester Prenatal Care</b>	80.3%	76.0%	77.7%
<b>Adequate Prenatal Care</b>	82.6%	74.7%	76.0%

## Disabilities

In 2019, 13.0% of Cortland County residents had a disability. This is higher than New York State (11.5%) and the United States (12.6%) (Table 31).<sup>13-15</sup> When looking at disabilities by age group in Cortland County, older adults are more likely to experience disabilities. For children under age five in the county, 0.7% have a disability (Figure 38).<sup>13</sup>

**Table 31. Percentage of Residents with a Disability  
(By Geography, 2019)<sup>13-15</sup>**

<b>Cortland County</b>	13.0%
<b>New York State</b>	11.5%
<b>United States</b>	12.6%



**Figure 38. Percentage of Residents with a Disability by Age  
(Cortland County, 2019)<sup>13</sup>**



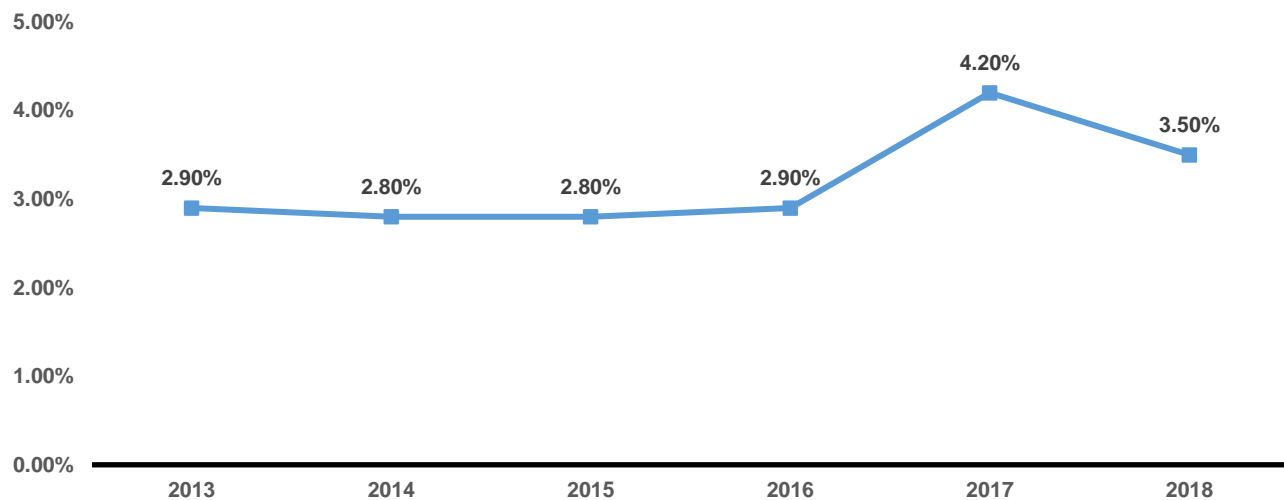


In the 2019-2020 school year, 14.0% of students enrolled in Cortland County school districts had a disability (Table 32).<sup>20-24</sup> Rural school districts in the county (Marathon, McGraw, Cincinnatus) had higher percentages of students with disabilities than Homer or Cortland.

**Table 32. Number and Percentage of Students with Disabilities by School District**  
(Cortland County, 2016-2017, 2020-2021)<sup>20-24</sup>

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
<b>Cortland</b>	296 (13%)	294 (13%)	307 (14%)
<b>Homer</b>	222 (12%)	214 (11%)	200 (11%)
<b>Marathon</b>	134 (20%)	126 (19%)	106 (16%)
<b>McGraw</b>	94 (18%)	107 (20%)	100 (19%)
<b>Cincinnatus</b>	102 (20%)	98 (20%)	95 (18%)
<b>County</b>	848 (14%)	839 (14%)	810 (14%)

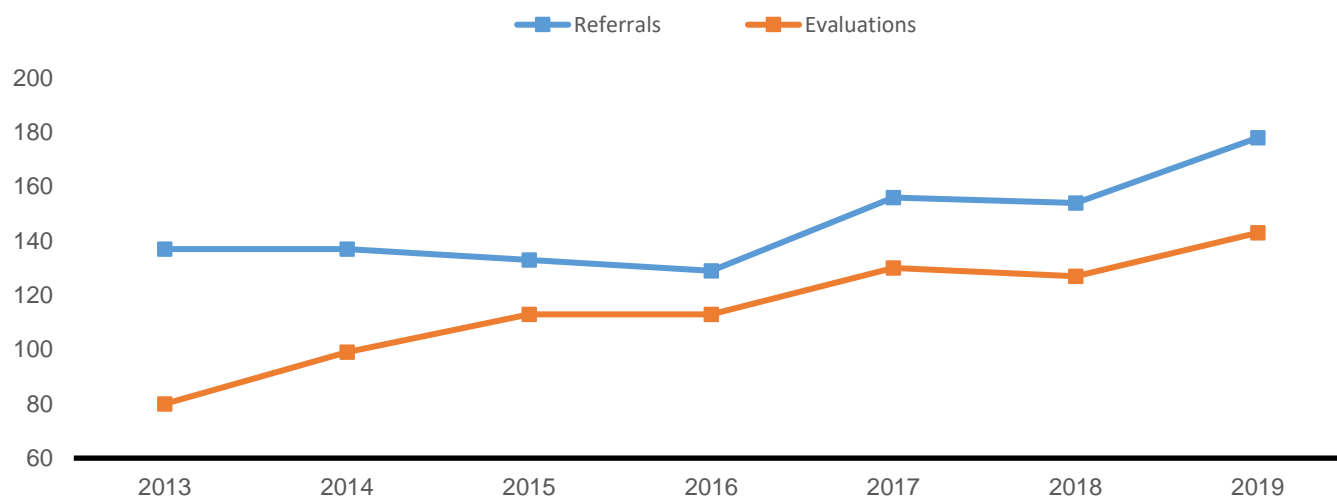
In 2018, the most recently reported data, 3.5% of Cortland County residents age birth to three years were served by early intervention.<sup>40</sup> Historically, from 2014-2018 the percentage served was between 2.8% and 4.2% (Figure 39).<sup>40</sup>



**Figure 39. Percentage of Children Served by Early Intervention**  
(Birth-3 Years, Cortland County 2013-2018 )<sup>34</sup>



In 2019, there were 178 referrals to the EI program and 109 evaluations completed by the clinical team. Historically, the number of referrals and evaluations to Cortland County EI has been increasing since at least 2013 (Figure 40).<sup>40</sup> Note: in 2019 the Health Department changed reporting terminology in the annual report, therefore, 2019 evaluation data includes “screenings” and “evaluations.”



**Figure 40. Early Intervention Referrals and Evaluations  
(Cortland County, 2013-2019)<sup>40</sup>**

## Childcare and Early Education

There are 15 daycare centers, 10 family daycares, 10 group family daycares, and 9 school age childcare programs in Cortland County.<sup>41</sup> According to the 2020 reports released by the Child Development Council, capacity for the above modalities in 2019 was 1,488 and in 2020 it decreased to 1,159.<sup>41,42</sup> Excluding school age modalities, there were 784 childcare slots available to children under age five in Cortland County.<sup>41</sup> However, in the 2018-2019 school year there were also 282 children enrolled in full or half day pre-K programs through private or public schools indicating an estimated total of 1,066 childcare/early education slots available to children under age five in Cortland County.<sup>19</sup>

Based on the U.S census, the percentage of households with children under age six in which all parents are part of the labor force in Cortland County is 77.4% and the number of children under age five in the county 2,376, therefore there are an estimated 1,839 children under age five who need childcare in Cortland County.<sup>13</sup>

This data suggests that there is an estimated deficit of 773 children under age 5 who need childcare/early education but cannot be served by daycare centers, family



daycares, group family daycares, or public/private pre-K in Cortland County. It can be assumed these families use informal childcare such as family members, friends, and neighbors. Home visiting programs can provide services, including early childhood education, to children who receive informal childcare in Cortland County.

Based on data reported by home visiting programs in 2021, Cortland County's funded capacity for home visiting programs is 184 children ages birth to five (age depends on the program).<sup>43-46</sup> CAPCO's Early Head Start is the only home visiting program in the county that is income based.

Table 33 calculates the estimated number of childcare/early education slots available based on modality and includes home visiting programs that can provide services to children who receive informal childcare.<sup>19, 42-46</sup> This data suggests there is an estimated deficit of 589 childcare/early education slots in Cortland County.

**Table 33. Estimated number of childcare/early education slots available based on modality (Cortland County 2021)<sup>19, 42-46</sup>**

	Number	Capacity
<b>Daycare Centers</b>	15	570
<b>Family Daycare</b>	10	80
<b>Group Family Daycares</b>	10	134
<b>Home Visiting Programs</b>	4	184
<b>Public/Private Preschool</b>		282 (enrolled)*
<b>Total</b>	184	1,250

\*number enrolled in 2018-2019 school year



## Results—Community Perceptions

Data in the following sections are derived from three key informant surveys developed and implemented by CAPCO staff in October/November 2021. For full survey methodology please review the “Methods” section of this report. For full survey responses, including survey respondent demographics, please see the following Appendices A-C.

### Perceived Needs of Individuals & Families with Low Income

Each group of key informants surveyed had the opportunity to identify needs of low income individuals and families in Cortland County. Community members were asked to select their household’s top five needs in the past 12 months and all the services someone in their household needed but did not receive in the past month. Partners and Staff/Board/Volunteers were asked what the five most pressing needs of individuals/families with low income in Cortland County are and what the five most challenging issues that individuals/families with low income in Cortland County will face in the next five years.

#### CAPCO Partners

The top five most selected responses by CAPCO partners for the “Top Five Most Pressing Needs of Families/Individuals in Cortland County” were; childcare, safe affordable housing, job skills/employment training, transportation, and mental health services/substance abuse assistance/healthcare (Table 33).

**Table 33. Top Five Most Pressing Needs of Families and Individuals with Low Income in Cortland County (Community Partner, n=25)<sup>5</sup>**

<b>Childcare</b>	68.0% (17)
<b>Safe Affordable Housing</b>	52.0% (13)
<b>Job Skills/Employment Training</b>	44.0% (11)
<b>Transportation</b>	40.0% (10)
<b>Mental Health Services</b>	28.0% (7)
<b>Substance Abuse Assistance</b>	28.0% (7)
<b>Healthcare</b>	28.0% (7)

The top five most selected responses by CAPCO partners for the “Top Five Most Challenging issues Families/Individuals in Cortland County will Face in the Next Five Years” were; childcare, safe affordable housing, job skills/employment training, substance abuse assistance, and transportation/mental health services/healthcare (Table 34).<sup>5</sup>



**Table 34. Top Five Most Challenging Issues Families and Individuals with Low income in Cortland County will Face in the Next Five Years (Community Partner, n=25)<sup>5</sup>**

<b>Childcare</b>	80.0% (20)
<b>Safe Affordable Housing</b>	60.0% (15)
<b>Job Skills/Employment Training</b>	36.0% (9)
<b>Substance Abuse Assistance</b>	32.0% (8)
<b>Transportation</b>	28.0% (7)
<b>Mental Health Services</b>	28.0% (7)
<b>Healthcare</b>	28.0% (7)

### **CAPCO Board, Volunteers, and Staff**

The top five most selected responses by CAPCO Board/Volunteers/Staff for the “Top Five Most Pressing Needs of Families/Individuals in Cortland County” were; childcare, safe affordable housing, mental health services, substance abuse assistance, and adult education/literacy/financial assistance (Table 35).<sup>4</sup>

**Table 35. Top Five Most Pressing Needs of Families and Individuals with Low Income in Cortland County (CAPCO Board, Staff, Volunteer, n=70)<sup>4</sup>**

<b>Childcare</b>	74.3% (52)
<b>Safe Affordable Housing</b>	55.7% (39)
<b>Mental Health Services</b>	42.8% (30)
<b>Substance Abuse Assistance</b>	35.7% (25)
<b>Adult Education/Literacy</b>	22.9% (16)
<b>Financial Assistance</b>	22.9% (16)

The top five most selected responses by CAPCO Board/Volunteers/Staff for the “Top Five Most Challenging issues Families/Individuals in Cortland County will Face in the Next Five Years” were; childcare, safe affordable housing, mental health services, transportation, and substance abuse assistance (Table 36).<sup>5</sup>



**Table 36. Top Five Most Challenging Issues Families and Individuals with Low income in Cortland County will Face in the Next Five Years (CAPCO Board, Staff, Volunteer, n=70)<sup>5</sup>**

Childcare	75.7% (53)
Safe Affordable Housing	61.4% (43)
Mental Health Services	48.6% (34)
Transportation	41.3% (29)
Substance Abuse Assistance	38.6% (27)

## Community Members

The top five most selected responses by community members regarding their household's top five needs in the past 12 months were; food assistance, utility assistance, childcare, financial assistance, and dental care. Note: 25 (28.4%) of community members selected "none of the above" (Table 37).<sup>3</sup>

**Table 37. Top Five Household Needs in the Past 12 Months (Community Members, n=117)<sup>3</sup>**

Food Assistance	55.7% (49)
Heating/Utility Assistance	34.1% (30)
Childcare	27.3% (24)
Financial Assistance	21.6% (19)
Dental care	15.9% (14)

The top five most selected responses by community members regarding the services their household needed but did not receive in the past 12 months were; food assistance, home repairs, heating/utility, childcare, and financial assistance. Note: 30 (34.1%) of community members selected "none of the above" and 22 (25.0%) selected "I am currently receiving services" (Table 38).

**Table 38. Services You/Your Household Needed but Did Not Receive in the Past 12 Months (Community, n=117)<sup>4</sup>**

Food Assistance	15.9% (14)
Home Repairs	13.6% (12)
Heating/Utility	12.5% (11)
Childcare	11.4% (10)
Financial Assistance	9.1% (8)



## Perceptions of Individuals with Low Income (Including CAPCO Clients)

Respondents who completed the community member key informant survey were asked more detailed questions regarding the community, barriers, and their personal behaviors. Of the 78 respondents who answered the question about income; 69 (88.5%) of respondents reported their annual household income was \$50,000 or less per year indicating the majority of survey respondents have a household income less than the median household income in Cortland County.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, 96 out of the 117 survey respondents (82.1%) have received services from CAPCO in the past year indicating that most survey respondents are CAPCO clients.<sup>3</sup>

Note: the survey sample was small (n=117), mostly female (112 out of 117 respondents) and mostly white (107 out of 117). While the results provide a snapshot into the health and well-being of individuals/families with low income in Cortland County, due to these limitations, they cannot be applied to the entirety of the county population and should be interpreted with caution.<sup>3</sup>

This section provides a summary of key information identified in the survey results. For full survey results please see Appendix A.

### Transportation

Transportation related challenges in the past 12 months reported by survey respondents included; unable to afford car repairs (45.9%), unable to afford gas (34.1%), and no access to a car (11.8%) (Figure 41).<sup>3</sup>

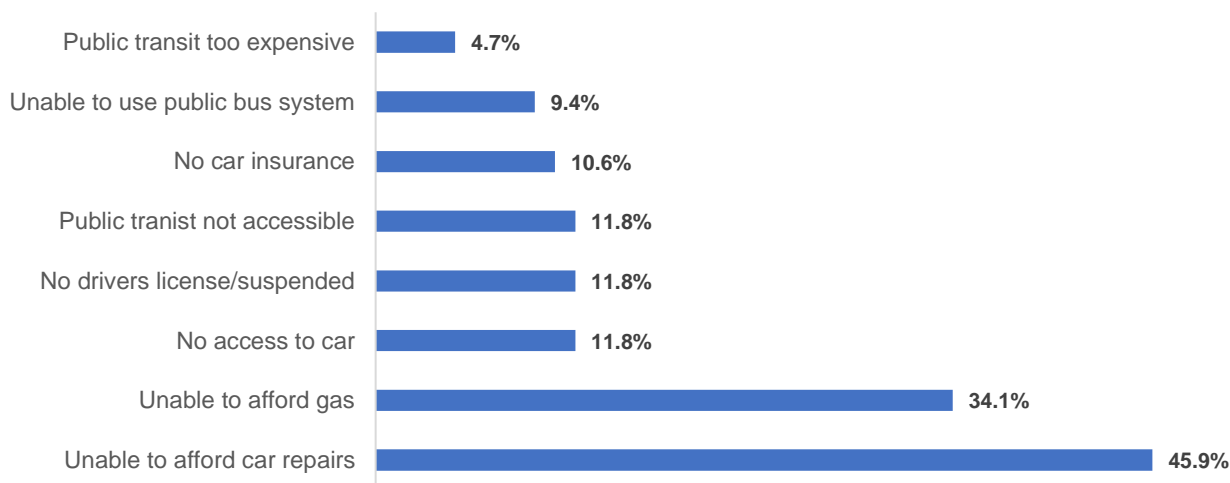


Figure 41. Reported Challenges Related to Transportation  
2021 CAPCO Community Survey, n=85)



## Housing

Housing related challenges in the past 12 months reported by survey respondents included; I have bad credit (25%), I lost my job (13.2%), I cannot afford housing repairs (13.2%) (Figure 42).<sup>3</sup> Options that were not selected were excluded from Figure 42 and 55.3% of respondents reported they did not experience any of the identified housing challenges.

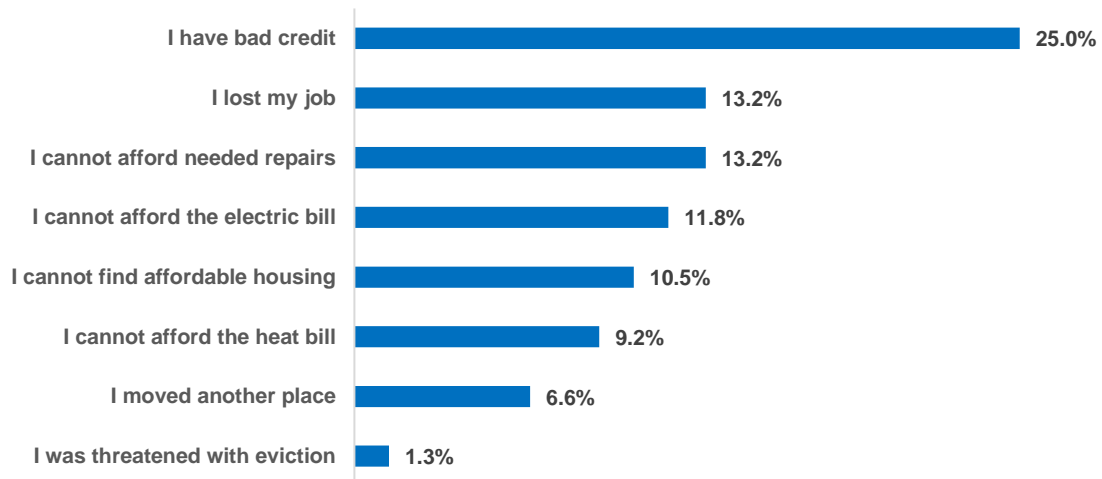


Figure 42. Reported Challenges Related to Housing  
(2021 CAPCO COMMUNITY Survey, n=76)<sup>3</sup>

When asked about the condition of their home; 80.6% reported it needs minor repairs or is in good shape with no repairs needed (Figure 43).<sup>3</sup>

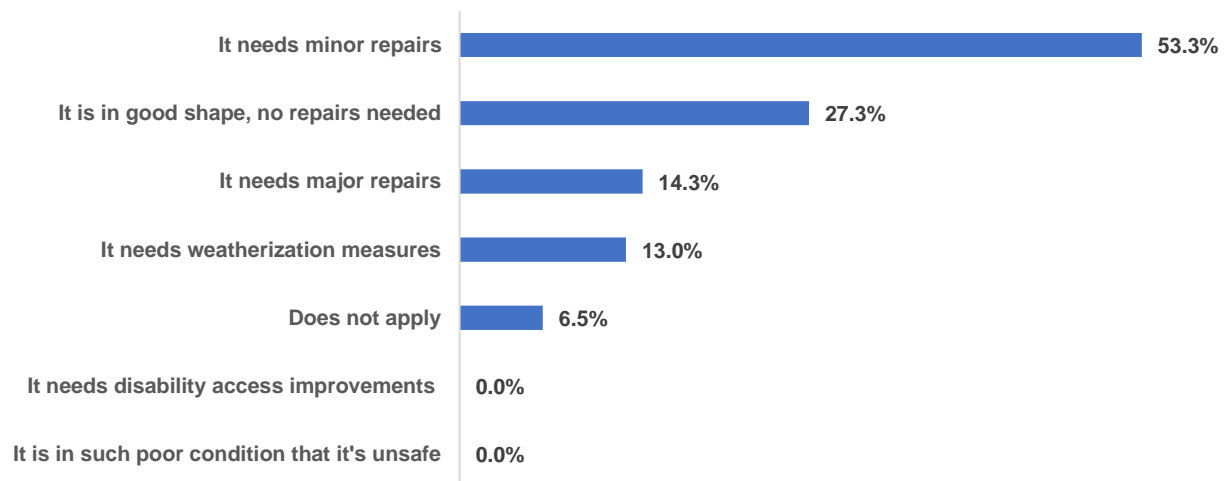


Figure 43. Reported Condition of Home  
(2021 CAPCO Community Survey, n=77)<sup>3</sup>





## Nutrition

Out of 71 survey respondents who answered questions related to food security; 16 (22.5%) reported someone in their household has had to skip or cut the size of their meal because there was not enough food, 25 (35.2%) have had to choose between buying food or paying a bill to meet other basic needs (housing, heat etc.), and 34 (47.9%) are only not at all confident/not so confident/or somewhat confident they will be able to afford the kinds of food they need over the next month (Figure 44).<sup>3</sup>

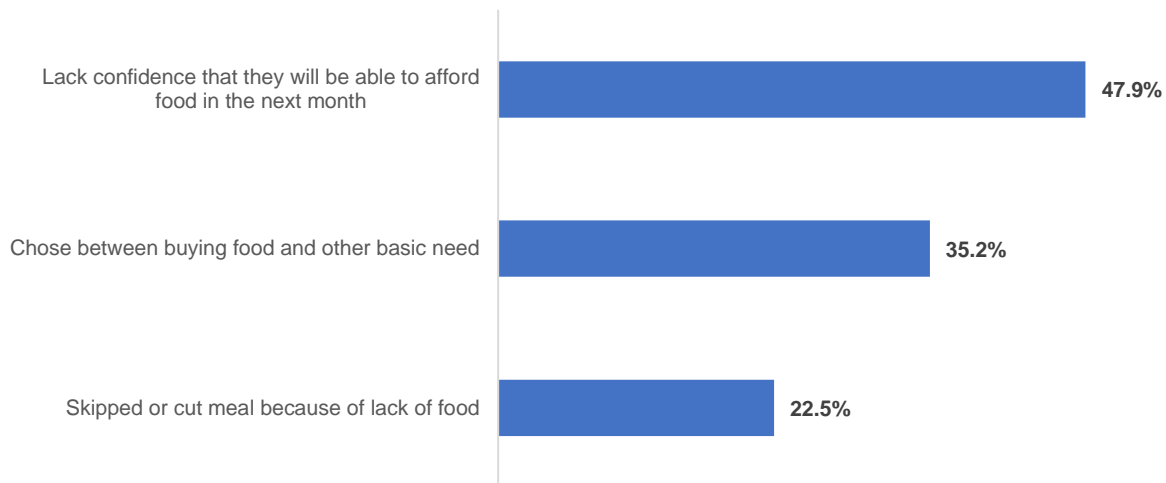


Figure 44. Reported Challenges Related to Food Security  
(2021 CAPCO Community Survey, n=71)<sup>3</sup>

## Mental Health/Healthcare

Of the 70 respondents that answered the question about healthcare access; 12.9% reported not being able to access dental care in the past 12 months and 7.1% reported the same for medical, mental health, and prescription drugs (Figure 45).<sup>3</sup>

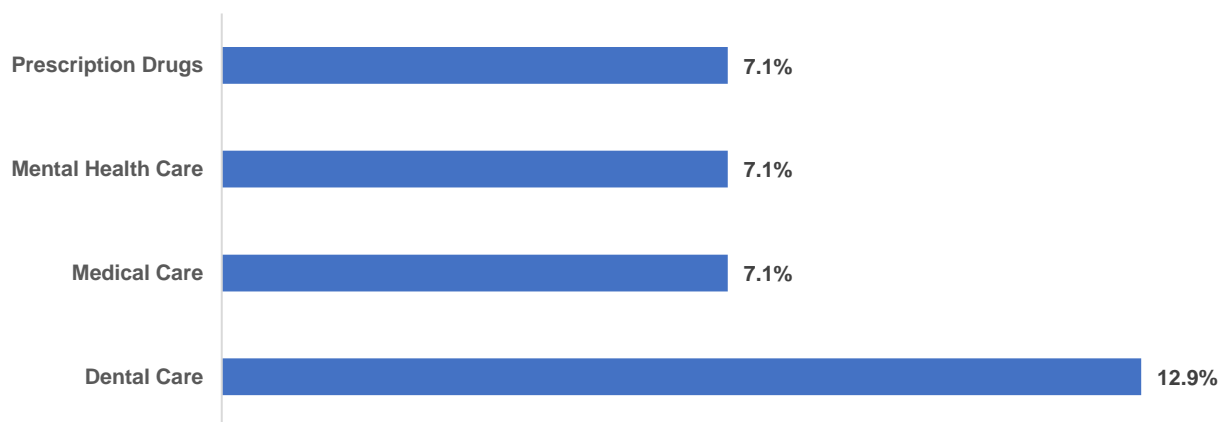
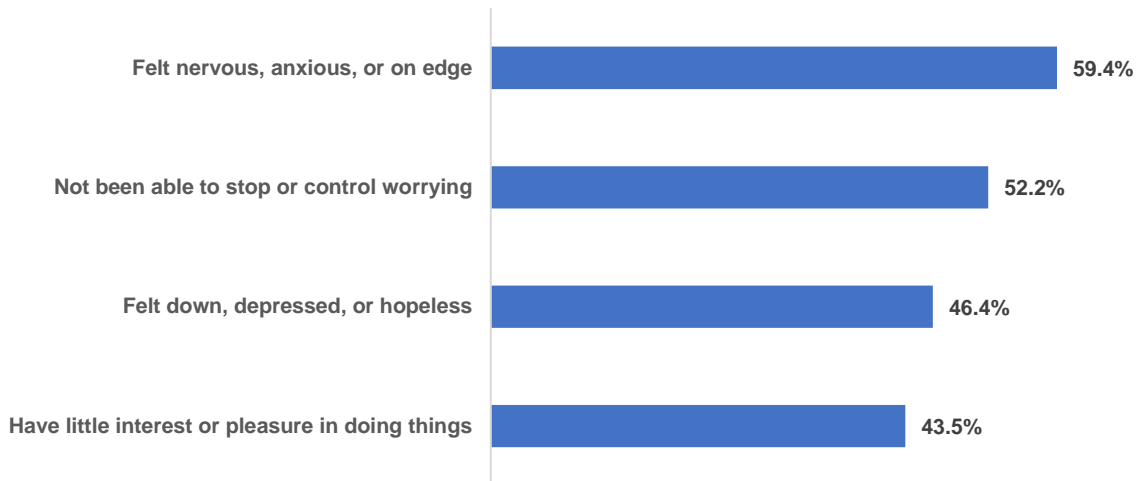


Figure 45. Reported Not Being Able to Access Care in Past 12 Months  
(2021 CAPCO Community Survey, n=70)<sup>3</sup>



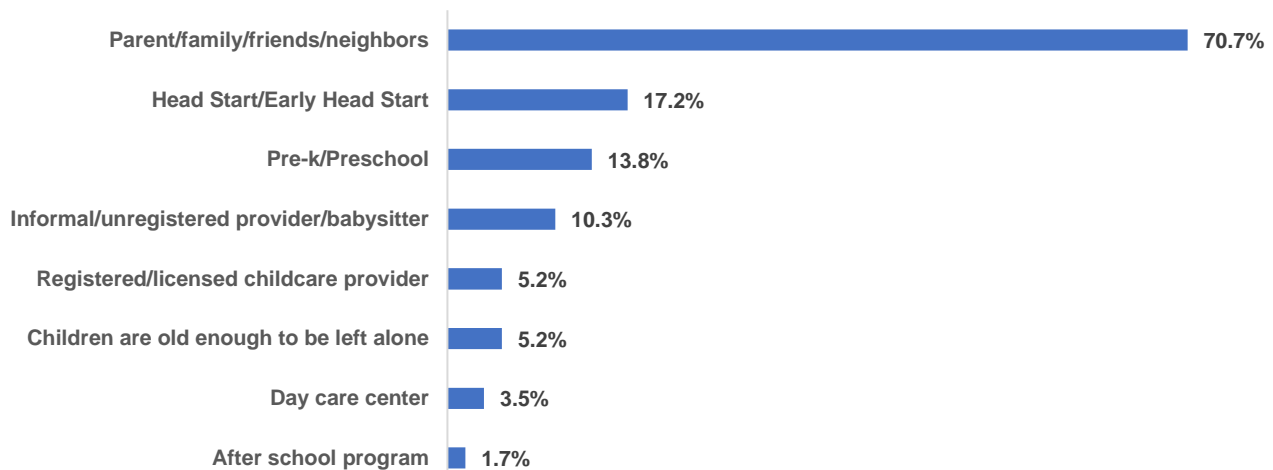
Of the 69 respondents who answered the question related to mental health; 59.4% reported feeling anxious/nervous on edge, 52.2% have not been able to control worrying, 46.4% felt depressed/down/hopeless, and 43.5% have had little interest in doing things at least once in the past 7 days (Figure 46).<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 46. Reported Mental Health Symptom Several, More than Half, or Nearly Everyday in the Past 7 Days**  
(2021 CAPCO Community Survey, n=69)<sup>3</sup>

## Childcare

Of the 58 survey respondents that reported on how they meet their childcare needs; 70.7% reported they use parents/family/friends/neighbors, 17.2% reported they use Head Start/Early Head Start, and 13.8% reported using Pre-K/Preschool (Figure 47).<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 47. Reported Ways to Meet Childcare Needs**  
(2021 CAPCO Community Survey, n=58)<sup>3</sup>



## Financial Impacts of COVID

The survey asked several questions related to the financial impact of COVID. When asked about work status of household members employed prior to COVID, 43.5% (19 out of 78) are unemployed/laid off or working reduced hours (Figure 48).<sup>3</sup>

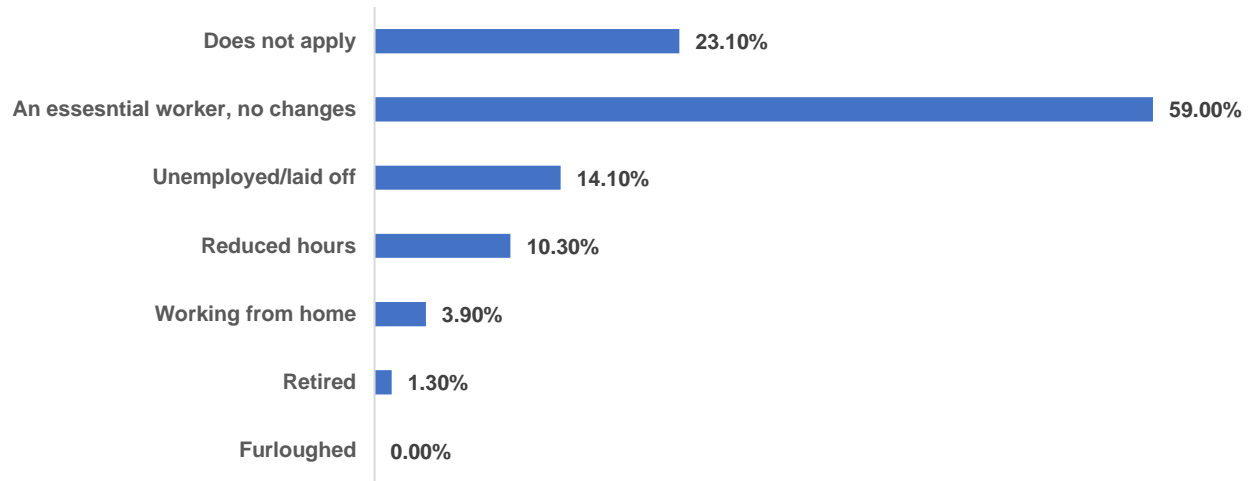


Figure 48. Reported Work Status of all Household Members Employed Prior to COVID  
(2021 CAPCO Community Survey, n=78)<sup>3</sup>

When asked about risky financial situations experienced by household members pre and during COVID, a higher percentage of respondents reported experiencing risky financial situations since COVID (Figure 49).<sup>3</sup>

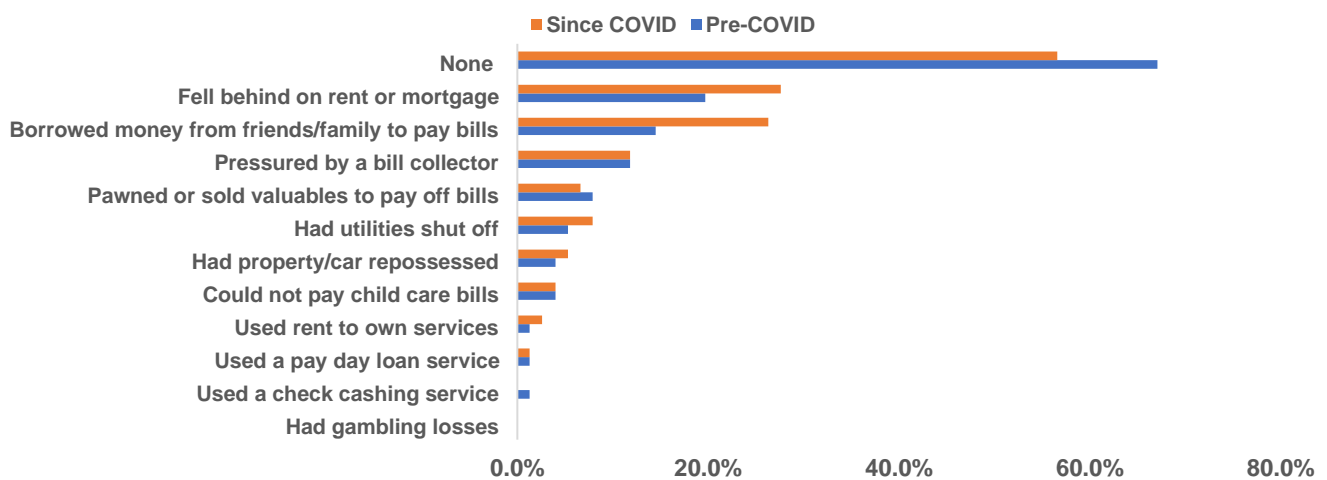


Figure 49. Reported Risky Financial Situations Pre and During COVID  
(2021 CAPCO Community Survey, n=76)<sup>3</sup>

## Community Strengths & Weaknesses

### Positives & Challenges of Living in Cortland County

Table 40 summarized the qualitative responses provided by CAPCO community partners to the question: “please list three positive aspects of living in Cortland County.” Responses were included in the table if they were mentioned three or more times (Table 40).<sup>5</sup>

**Table 40. Positives of Living in Cortland County Summarized Qualitative Responses (CAPCO Community Partner Survey, n=25)<sup>5</sup>**

Positive	# of Times Mentioned
Natural Beauty/Environment	11
Collaboration between agencies	9
Central location	8
Small	6
Safe	5
Help each other/welcoming	5
Schools/education	5
Community	5
Resources/Services	3
Low cost of living	3

Table 41 summarized the qualitative responses provided by CAPCO community partners to the question: “please list three challenging aspects of living in Cortland County.” Responses were included in the table if they were mentioned three or more times (Table 41).<sup>5</sup>

**Table 41. Challenges of Living in Cortland County Summarized Qualitative Responses (CAPCO Community Partner Survey, n=25)<sup>5</sup>**

Challenge	# of times mentioned
Lack of resources/funding	10
Lack of jobs	8
Transportation	7
Taxes	7
Housing	5
Poverty	4
Retail/businesses	4
Leadership	4
Substance use	3



## Community Strengths & Obstacles: Working with Low Income Individuals

Table 42 summarized the qualitative responses provided by CAPCO community partners to the question: “what are the community’s strengths when working with low income individuals.” Responses were included in the table if they were mentioned three or more times (Table 42).<sup>5</sup>

<b>Table 42. Community Strengths When Working with Low Income Individuals Summarized Qualitative Responses (CAPCO Community Partner Survey, n=25)<sup>5</sup></b>	
<b>Strength</b>	<b># of Times Mentioned</b>
Collaboration	8
Many agencies/resources	7
Desire to help	4

When asked about the community’s obstacles when working with low income individuals, the responses were very diverse. The only two response with mentioned three or more times were funding (4) and not enough resources/services (4).<sup>5</sup>

## Organizational Strengths & Weaknesses

### Growth Opportunities

CAPCO staff/board/volunteer survey respondents were most likely to select; program development, staff retention, and staff development as growth opportunities to address in the future (Figure 50).<sup>4</sup>

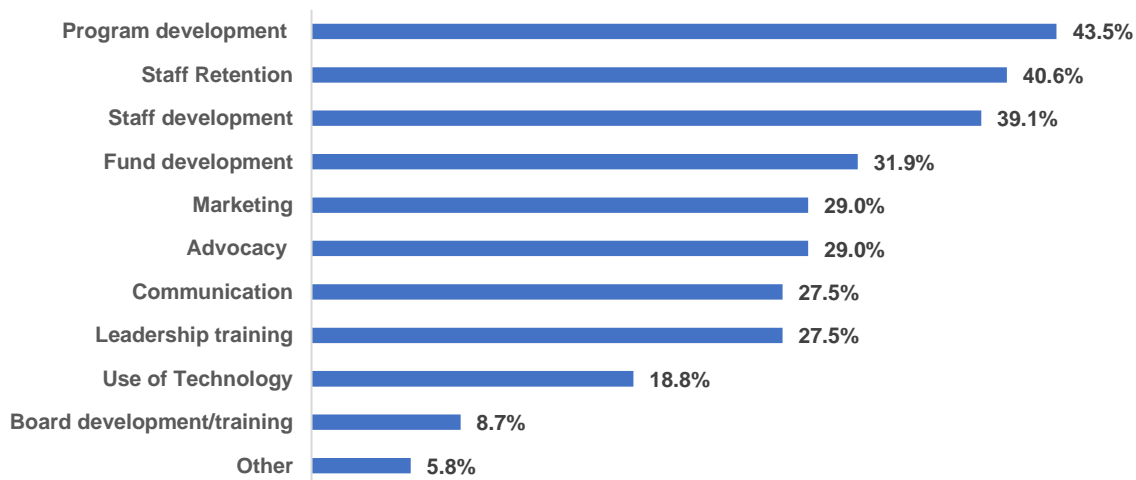


Figure 50. Growth Opportunities Agency Should Address (2021 CAPCO Staff/Board/Volunteer Survey, n=69)<sup>4</sup>



## Community Member Feedback on CAPCO Services

The results of community member feedback on CAPCO services were positive. Of the 34 community member survey respondents that answered the questions related to services provided by CAPCO; 31 reported staff listened carefully and treated them with respect, 27 reported they learned about other CAPCO programs/services, 33 would recommend CAPCO to family and friends, and 33 would come back to CAPCO if they needed something again (Figure 51).<sup>3</sup>

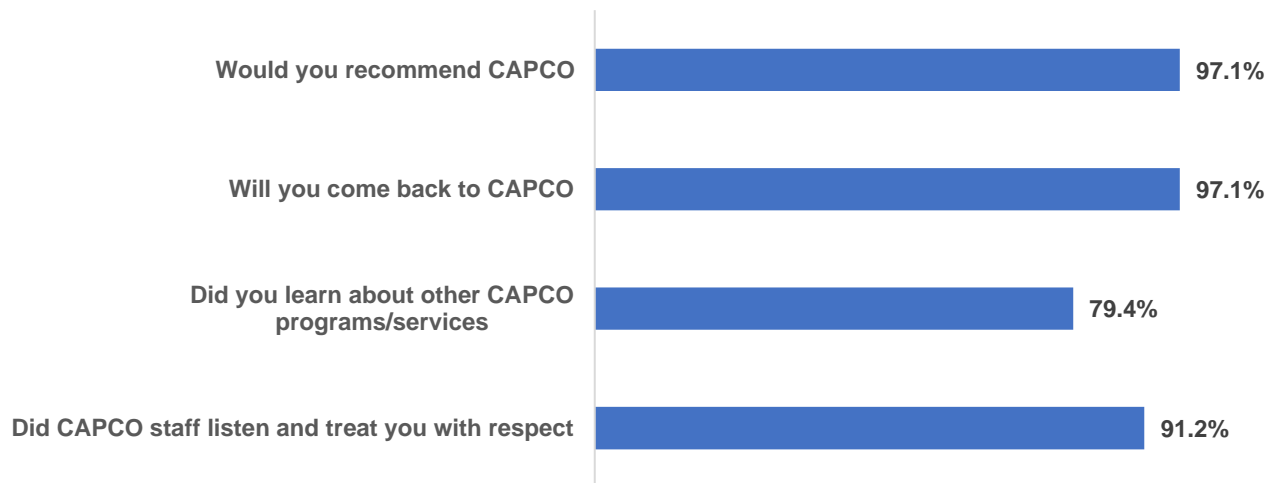


Figure 51. Feedback on CAPCO Services  
(2021 CAPCO Community Member Survey, n=34)<sup>3</sup>



# Results—Head Start/Early Head Start Program Data

## Service Utilization

### Eligibility

In the CAPCO Head Start Service Area, an estimated 335 children under age three would be eligible for Early Head Start based on birth records and county poverty rates for children under age 5 (Table 43).<sup>47,13</sup> The program is funded to serve 88 children. There are an estimated 247 children who are eligible for Early Head Start that are not able to be served due to the current funded capacity.

Table 43. Early Head Start Eligibility Estimates (Cortland County)						
	Births 2015	Births 2016	Births 2017	Birth 2018	Estimated <3 Years Olds*	Estimated Eligibility**
Cincinnatus	31	40	39	28	104	26
Cortland	227	256	228	227	704	166
Homer	103	106	97	107	310	73
Marathon	59	71	62	52	183	43
McGraw	34	35	46	42	118	28
				<b>Total</b>	<b>1,419</b>	<b>335</b>

\*3/4 of the 2013-2016 births

\*\*Based on the % of children less than age 5 in Cortland County in poverty (23.6%)

In the CAPCO Head Start Service Area, an estimated 189 children ages three and four years old would be eligible for Head Start based on enrollment figures for school districts served by the program (Table 44).<sup>20-24</sup> The program is funded to serve 150 children. There are an estimated 39 children who are eligible for Head Start that are not able to be served due to the current funded capacity.

Table 44. Head Start Eligibility Estimates (Cortland County)					
	K Enroll 19/20	Gr 1 Enroll 19/20	Gr 2 Enroll 19/20	Estimated 3 & 4 Years Olds*	Estimated Eligibility**
Cincinnatus	34	46	36	77	18
Cortland	157	150	145	301	71
Homer	127	130	109	244	58
Marathon	52	53	47	101	24
McGraw	37	36	41	76	18
			<b>Total</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>189</b>

\*2/3 of the K-2 enrollment

\*\* Based on the % of children less than age 5 in Cortland County in poverty (23.6%)



## Waiting List

Tables 45 and 46 depict the Head Start and Early Head Start waiting lists from 2009-2010 to 2020-2021. Columns labeled 4- and 3- indicate the number of income eligible children ages 3 and 4, Columns labeled 4 130% and 3 130% indicate the number of eligible children ages 3 and 4 based on the 130% guideline and columns 4+ and 3+ indicate the number of children ages 3 and 4 over the poverty guidelines.<sup>48</sup> For Head Start, the program is only able to utilize 35% of enrollment (83 slots) for 130% poverty guideline and 10% of enrollment (23 slots) for over income.<sup>48</sup>

Table 45. HEAD START ERSEA TRACKING -Waiting List

	4-		4 130%		4 +		3-		3 130%		3+		130 % used		Over Income used	
	Sept June		Sept June		Sept June		Sept June		Sept June		Sept June		Sept	June	Sept June	
2009-2010	27	9	1	1	24	22	25	37	1	2	8	15	7	6	18	18
2010-2011	6	3	1	2	28	23	64	76	6	6	20	26	4	3	11	15
2011-2012	8	3	5	3	35	26	76	83	10	12	32	39	8	13	4	4
2012-2013	6	4	6	4	30	17	43	51	6	10	28	34	10	10	6	7
2013-2014	4	2	2	1	12	12	13	10	10	8	25	25	31	37	15	17
2014-2015	3	3	0	0	21	20	6	7	0	1	13	14	37	35	23	26
2015-2016	1	1	1	1	18	15	6	10	2	4	19	25	27	28	20	21
2016-2017	1	1	0	0	19	20	2	6	1	3	19	29	27	27	19	23
2017-2018	0	1	0	1	14	12	0	1	0	0	16	15	28	27	24	25
2018-2019	0	2	0	0	10	9	0	0	0	0	23	20	30	30	19	22
2019-2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	25	28	33	29	21	21
2020-2021	0	0	0	0	9	5	7	6	17	16	15	16	19	20	11	11

Table 46. EARLY HEAD START ERSEA TRACKING -Waiting List

	Child -		Child 130%		Child +		EMO -		EMO 130%		EMO +		130 % used		Over Income used	
	Sept Aug		Sept Aug		Sept Aug		Sept Aug		Sept Aug		Sept Aug		Sept Aug		Sept Aug	
2010-2011	83	110	1	1	11	17	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3
2011-2012	83	89	7	11	26	31	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	5	6
2012-2013	31	50	23	25	17	21	0	4	0	1	0	4	4	4	7	6
2013-2014	40	56	6	11	12	15	3	2	0	1	1	0	7	6	3	2
2014-2015	50	50	10	9	16	25	3	1	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	0
2015-2016	23	43	7	13	21	29	0	5	1	1	0	3	2	2	0	0
2016-2017	34	76	9	14	19	29	0	9	0	1	0	2	5	5	0	0
2017-2018	57	68	8	10	20	24	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	2	0	0
2018-2019	26	66	10	23	21	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019-2020	47	70	15	21	27	32							0	0	0	0
2020-2021	21	46	13	15	12	26							0	0	0	0



## Demographics

### Age

In 2020-2021 the average age of Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County is 3.58 years old and has been relatively stable since 2014-2015 (Figure 52).<sup>49</sup> The average age of Early Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County is 1.65 years old and has been steadily rising since 2015-2016 when the average age was 1.28 years old.<sup>49</sup>

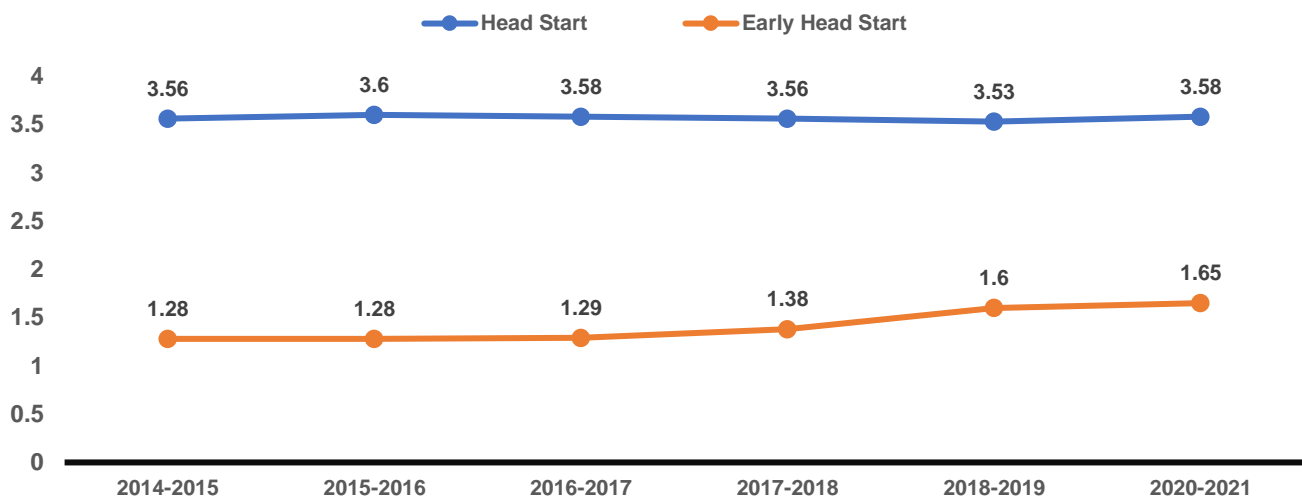


Figure 52. Average Age of Head Start/Early Head Start Enrolled Children (Cortland County, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>

### Race

In 2020-2021, 20.8% of Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County identified as BIPOC (black, indigenous, person of color) and 19.5% of Early Head Start enrolled children identified as BIPOC (Figure 53).<sup>49</sup> Generally, the percentage of Head Start enrolled children who identify as BIPOC has been trending up since 2015-2016.



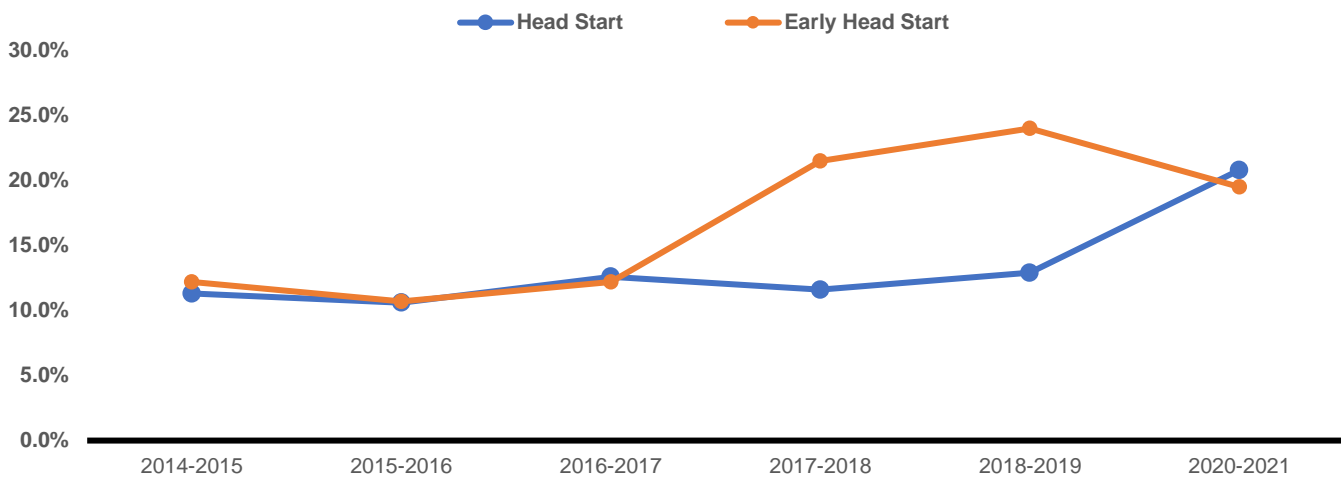


Figure 53. Percentage of Head Start/ Early Head Start Students that Identify as BIPOC (Cortland County, 2021)<sup>49</sup>

## Education

In 2020-2021, 33.1% of parents of Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County had a bachelor's degree or advanced degree. The percentage of parents with a bachelor's or advanced degree increased sharply from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 with little noted change in 2020-2021 (Figure 54).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of parents of Head Start enrolled children with less than a high school diploma was 13.6% in 2020-2021, peaking at 18.4% in 2016-2017 (Figure 54).<sup>49</sup>

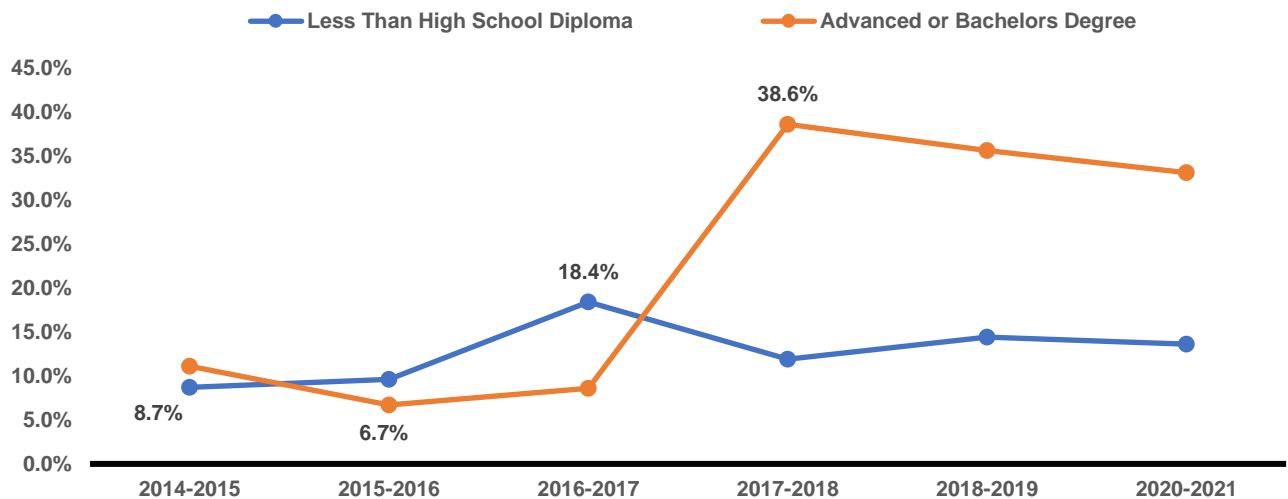


Figure 54. Parent Education Level of Head Start Enrolled Parents (Cortland County, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>



Similar to Head Start, Early Head Start saw a sharp increase in the percentage of parents of Early Head Start enrolled children who had a bachelor's or advanced degree from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018, peaking at 38.5% in 2017-2018 (Figure 55).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of parents of Early Head Start enrolled children with less than a high school diploma increased from 2014-2015, peaking at 18.6% in 2017-2018, and has remained relatively stable since (Figure 55).<sup>49</sup>

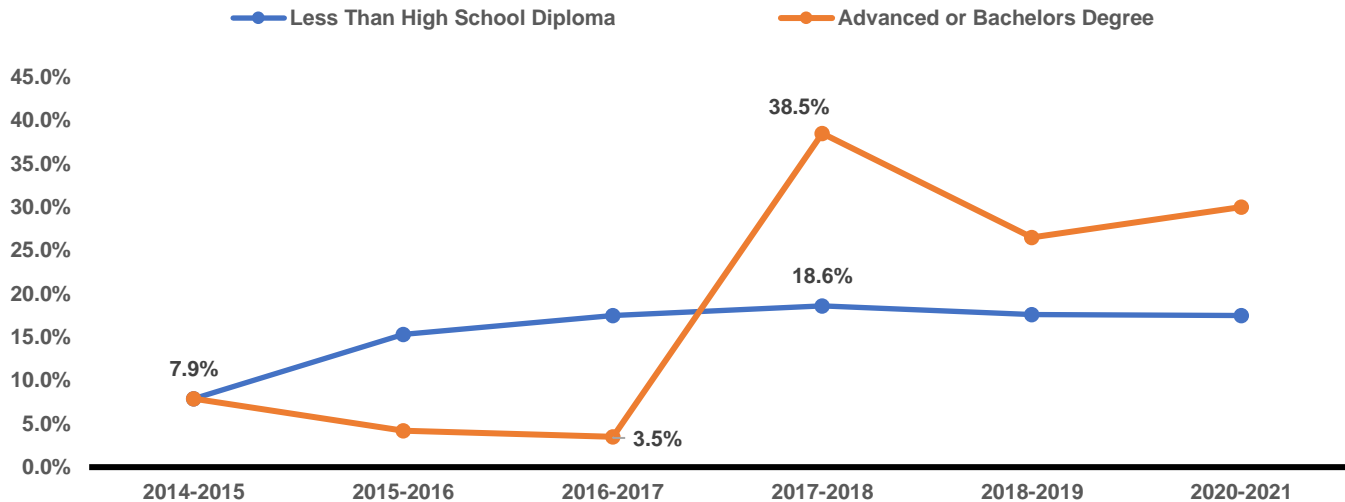


Figure 55. Parent Education Level of Early Head Start Enrolled Parents (Cortland County, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>

## Employment, Income, Poverty

The percentage of Head Start families in Cortland County without at least one parent employed has been declining since 2015-2016 for both single parent and two parent families (Figure 56).<sup>49</sup> Single parent's families are more likely to be unemployed than two parent families (Figure 56).<sup>49</sup> In 2018-2019, 6.3% of two parent families had two unemployed parents and 30.6% of single parent families were unemployed. Data is not available for 2020-2021 (Figure 56).<sup>49</sup>

From 2014-2019, the percentage of Early Head Start families in Cortland County with at least one parent employed has fluctuated with no clear trend. Similar to Head Start, single parent families are more likely to be unemployed than two parent families (Figure 57).<sup>49</sup> In 2018-2019, 6.9% of two parent families had two unemployed parents and 41.0% of single parent families were unemployed (Figure 57).<sup>49</sup>



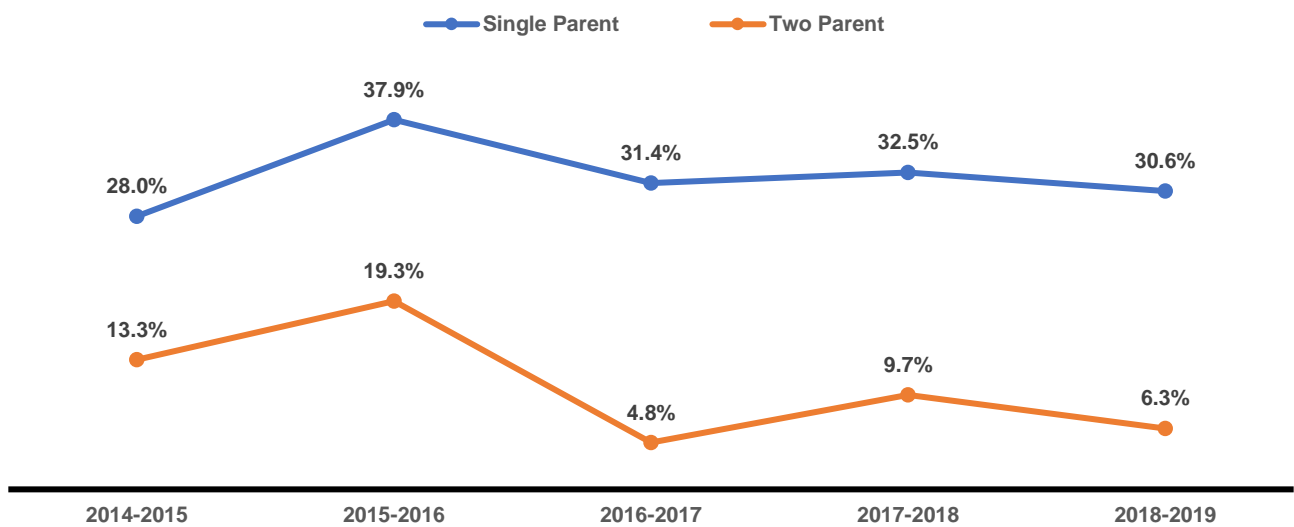


Figure 56. The Percentage of Head Start Families with Unemployed Parent(s)  
(Cortland County, 2014-2019) <sup>49</sup>

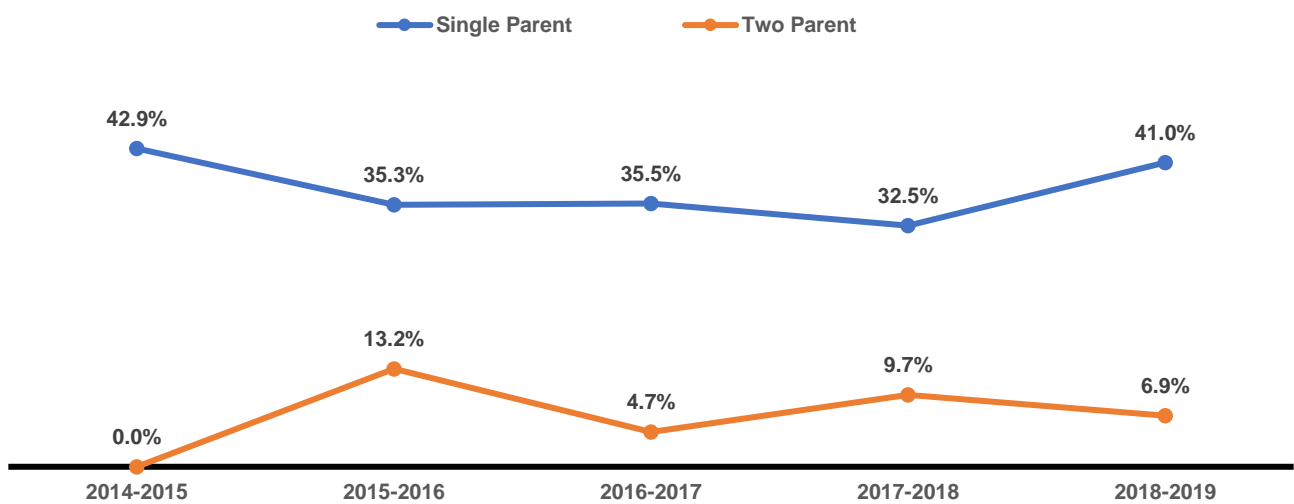
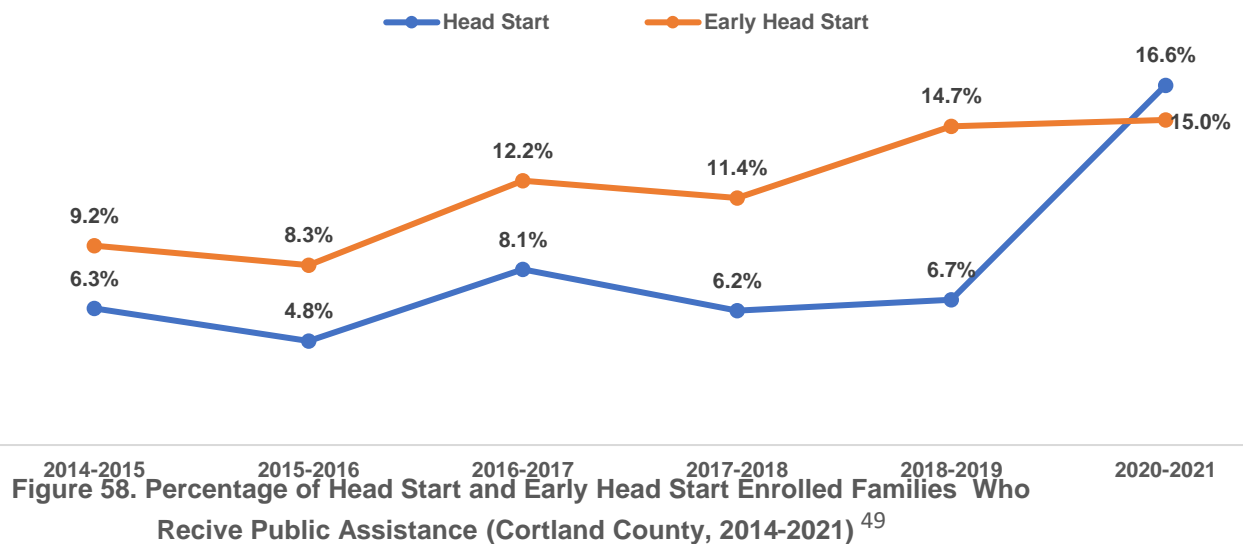
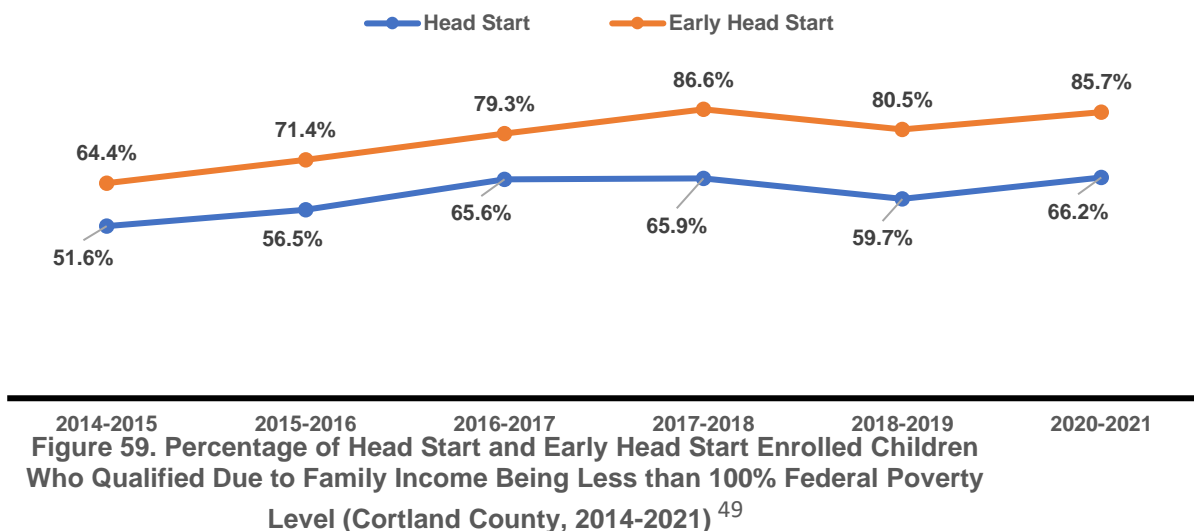


Figure 57. The Percentage of Early Head Start Families with Unemployed Parent(s)  
(Cortland County, 2014-2019) <sup>49</sup>

The percentage of families enrolled in Early Head Start in Cortland County who receive supplemental security income has steadily increased from 9.2% in 2014-2015 to 15.0% in 2020-2021 (Figure 58).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of families enrolled in Head Start who receive supplemental fluctuated between 4.8% and 8.1% from 2014-2015 to 2018-2019 and then sharply increased to 16.6% in 2020-2021 (Figure 58).<sup>49</sup>



The percentage of Head Start and Early Head Start enrolled children who qualify for the program due to family income being below 100% of the federal poverty level increased from 2014-2015 to 2017-2018, before leveling off (Figure 59).<sup>49</sup> In 2020-2021, 85.7% of Early Head Start enrollees and 66.2% of Head Start enrollees qualified based this type of eligibility (Figure 59).<sup>4</sup>

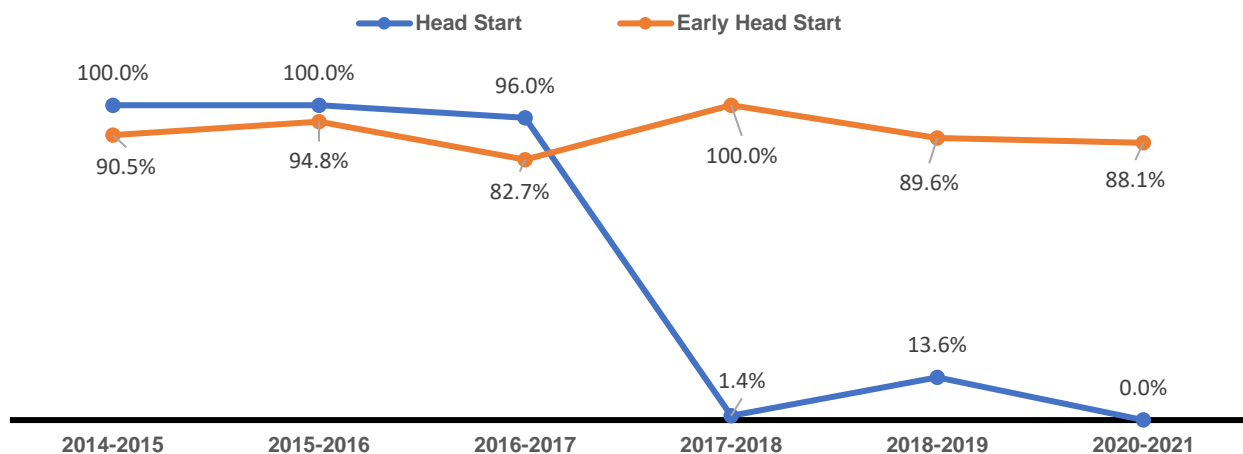


## Health

### Physical Health

From 2014-2015 to 2020-2021, nearly 100% of Head Start and Early Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County had health insurance, a medical home, and were up to date on immunizations at the time of enrollment.<sup>49</sup> In 2020-2021, 100% of Head Start and Early Head Start enrolled children had health insurance and a medical home. 95.4% of Head Start enrolled children and 97.6% of Early Head Start enrolled children were up to date on immunizations.<sup>49</sup>

The percentage of Early Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County who were up to date on a schedule of age appropriate preventive and primary health care according to the relevant state's EPSDT schedule for well child care has been stable between 2014-2015 and 2020-2021, fluctuating between 94.8% and 82.7% (Figure 60).<sup>49</sup> However, there was a drastic drop in Head Start enrolled children who were up to date on appropriate preventive and primary health care from 2016-2017 (Figure 60).<sup>49</sup> In 2020, no child enrolled in Head Start was up to date in this area at the time of enrollment.<sup>49</sup>



**Figure 60. Percentage of Head Start and Early Head Start Enrolled Children Who Are Up to Date on a Schedule of Age Appropriate Primary and Preventative Health Care<sup>49</sup>**

## Oral Health

From 2014-2015 the percentage of Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County who have access to continuous dental care provided by a dentist fluctuated between 74.5% and 78.5% (Figure 61).<sup>49</sup> In 2020-2021, this indicator decreased to 66.2%. The percentage of Early Head Start enrolled children with access to continuous dental care has been historically lower than Head Start enrollees, fluctuating between 27.3% and 57.1% since 2014-2015 (Figure 61).<sup>49</sup>

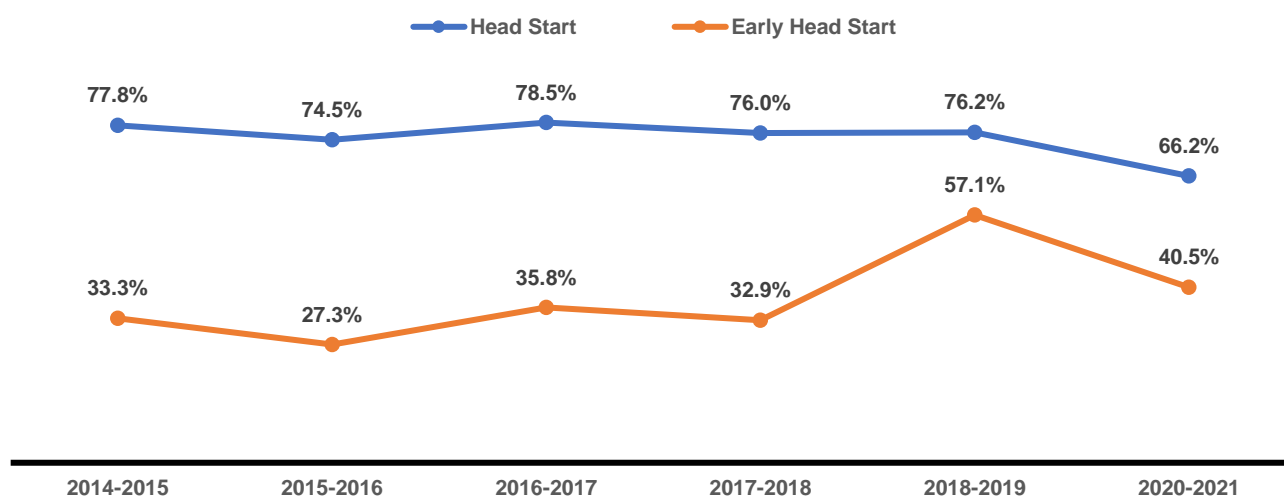


Figure 61. Percentage of Head Start/Early Head Start Enrolled Children with Access to Dental Care (Cortland County, 2014-2021)

The percentage of Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County who received preventative dental care since the previous year's reporting period has been declining since 2016-2017 (Figure 62).<sup>49</sup> In 2020-2021, just 25.4% of enrollees received preventative dental care (Figure 62).<sup>49</sup> Comparatively, the percentage of Early Head Start enrollees that are up to date on a schedule of age appropriate preventive and primary oral healthcare has been increasing since 2016-2017 (Figure 62).<sup>49</sup> In 2020-2021 76.2% of enrollees were up to date of preventive and primary oral healthcare.

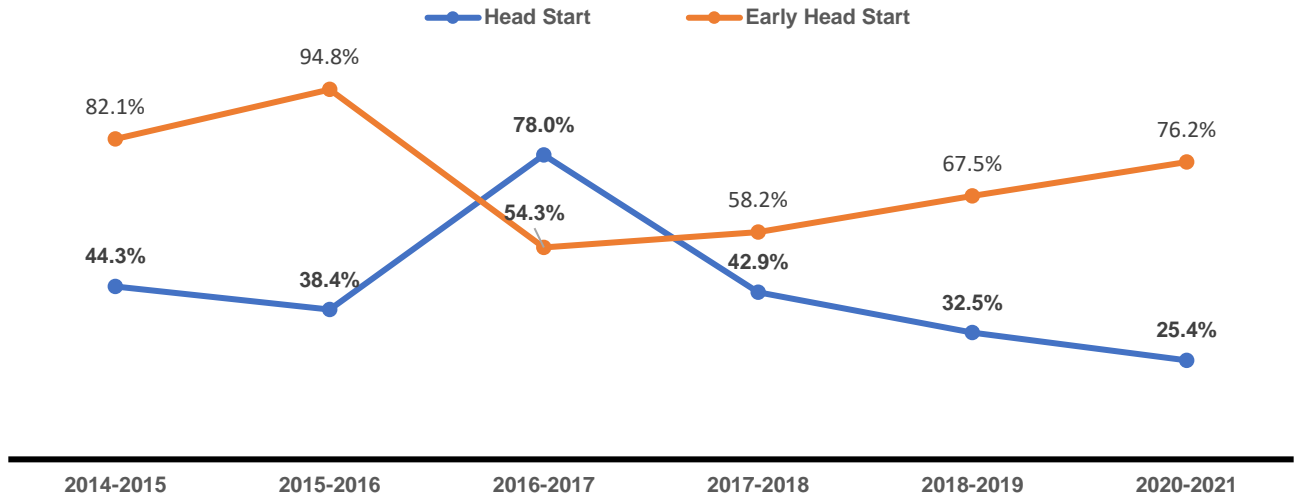


Figure 62. Percentage of Head Start/Early Head Start Enrollees with Preventive Dental Care (Cortland County, 2014-2021)

## Mental/Behavioral Health

From 2016-2019, the percentage of Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County who were served by a mental health professional and for whom the mental health professional consulted with program staff three or more times declined from 14.3% to 2.4%. For Early Head Start enrolled children, this indicator increased from 2015-2016 to 2017 to 2018 before declining to 0% in 2018-2019. Data is not available for 2020-2021.

From 2014-2019 less than 4% of Head Start enrollees and no Early Head Start enrollees were referred by the program for mental health services outside of the agency.<sup>49</sup> Data is not available for 2020-2021.

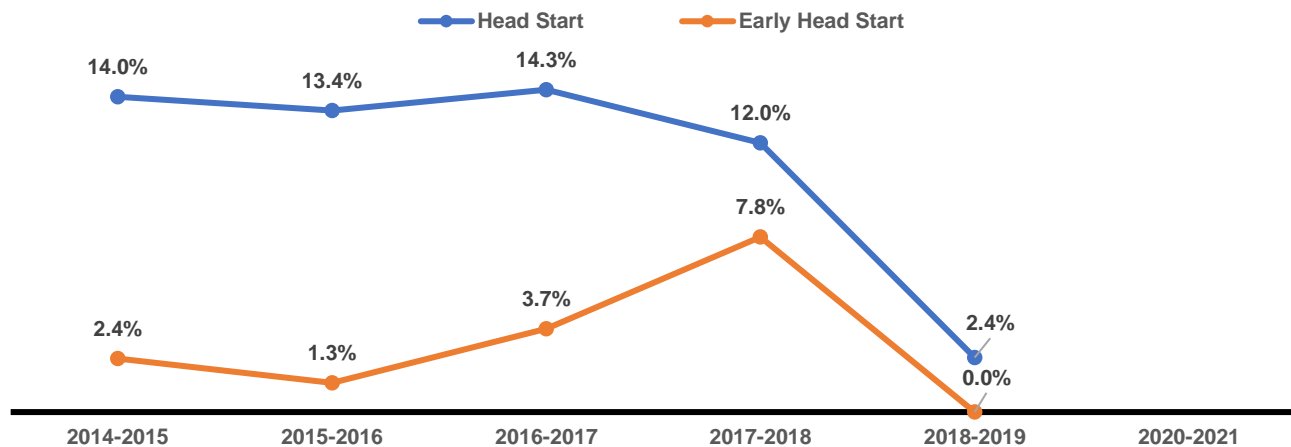


Figure 63. Percentage of Head Start/Early Head Start Enrolled Children who were Served by a Mental Health Professional and for whom the MH professional Consulted with Program Staff Three or More Times (Cortland County, 2014-2019)<sup>49</sup>



## Nutrition

The percentage of Head Start enrolled children who are categorized as overweight or obese has increased from 25.1% in 2016-2017 to 35.4% in 2020-2021 (Figure 64).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of Head Start enrolled children who are underweight has remained relatively stable since 2015-2016 (Figure 64).<sup>49</sup> Data is not available for Early Head Start enrolled children.

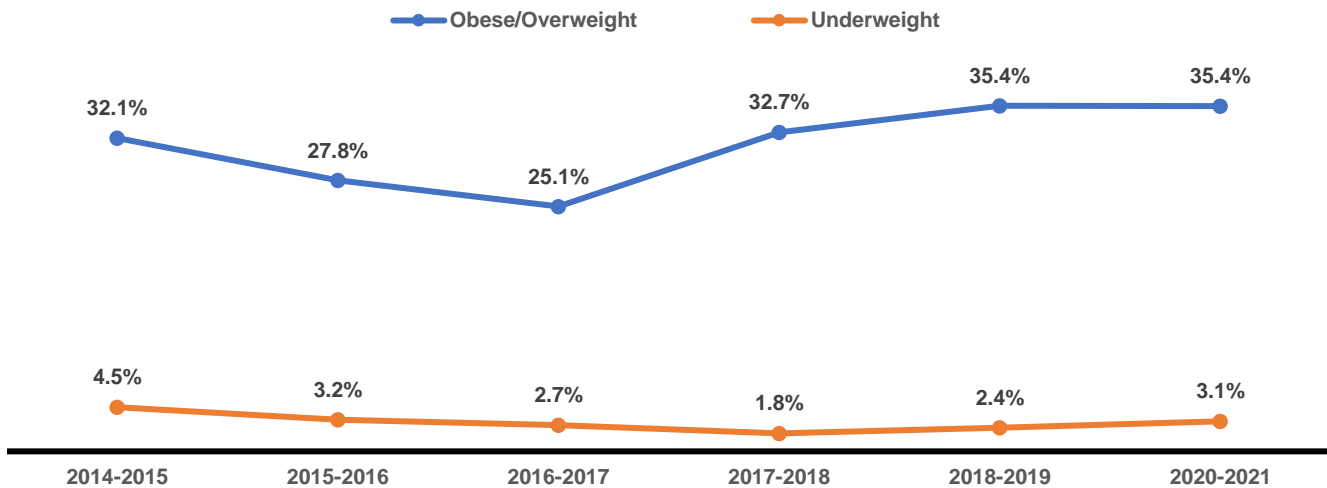


Figure 64. Percentage of Head Start Enrolled Children by BMI  
(Cortland County 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>

In 2020-2021, most Head Start and Early Head Start and Early Head Start families received SNAP benefits (Figure 65).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of Early Head Start families receiving SNAP benefits has been declining since 2017-2018 (Figure 65).<sup>49</sup>

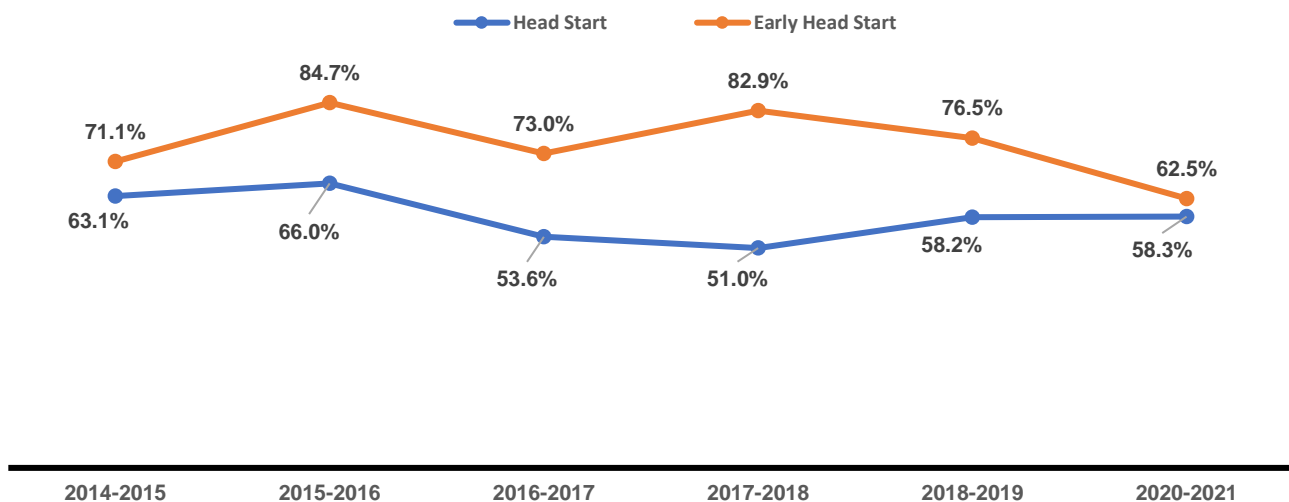


Figure 65. Percentage of Head Start and Early Head Start Families Who Receive SNAP (Cortland County, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>



## Disability

The percentage of Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County with an Individualized Education Plan has fluctuated between 32.9% and 26.3% from 2014-2015 to 2020-2021 (Figure 66).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of Early Head Start enrolled children with an Individualized Family Service plan increased from 0% in 2014-2015, then fluctuated between 9.9% and 14.3% before peaking in 2020-2021 at 26.2% (Figure 66).

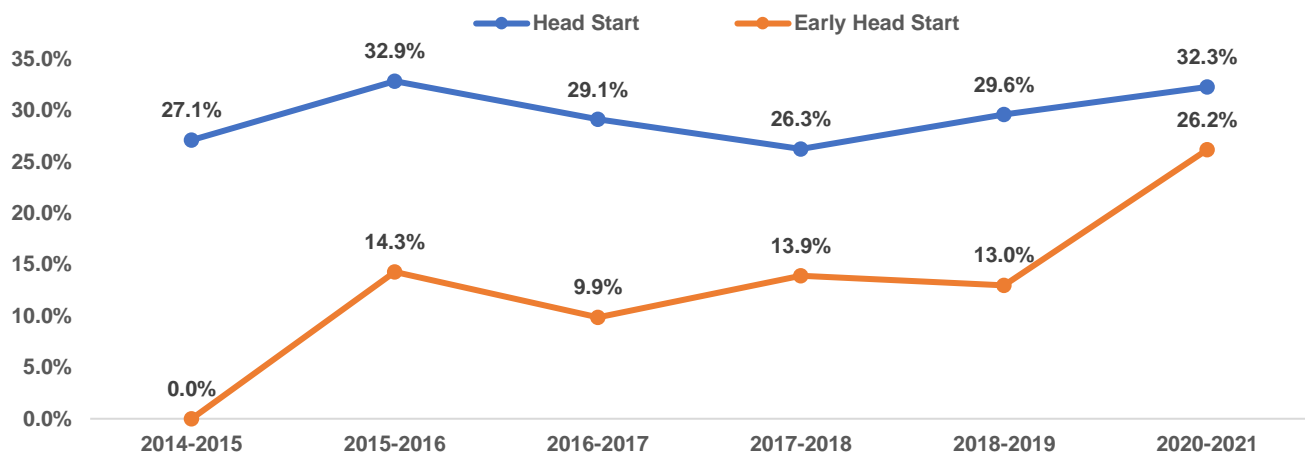


Figure 66. The Percentage of Head Start Enrolled Children with an IEP and Early Head Start Children with and IFSP(Cortland County, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>

## Social Services

### Family Well-Being

In 2020-2021, most Head Start and Early Head Start families in Cortland County were single parent (Figure 67).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of single families in Early Head Start has been steadily increasing since 2014-2015. The percentage of single parent families in Head Start steadily increased from 2014-2015 until 2017-2018, peaking at 55.7%, and declining since (Figure 67).<sup>50</sup>



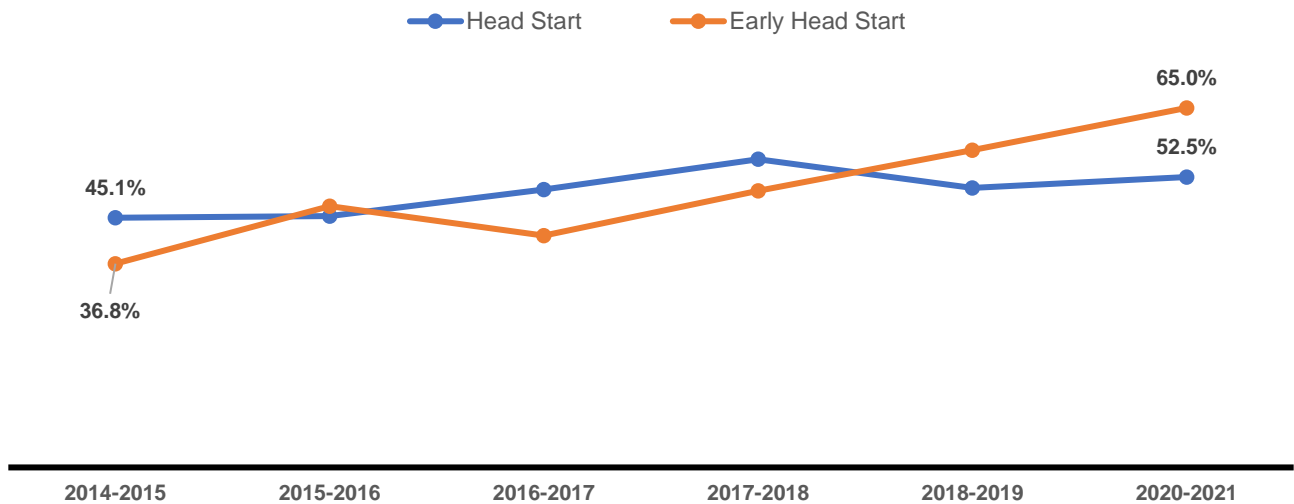


Figure 67. Percentage of Head Start and Early Head Start Families That Are Single Parent(Cortland County, 2014-2015)<sup>50</sup>

From 2015-2016, the percentage of Early Head Start enrolled children in Cortland County who were in foster care at any point in the program year has been increasing, peaking at 9.5% in 2020-2021 (Figure 68).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of Head Start enrolled children in foster care has been relatively stable since 2015-2016, hovering around 1.8%, and declining to 0.8% in 2020-2021 (Figure 68).<sup>49</sup>

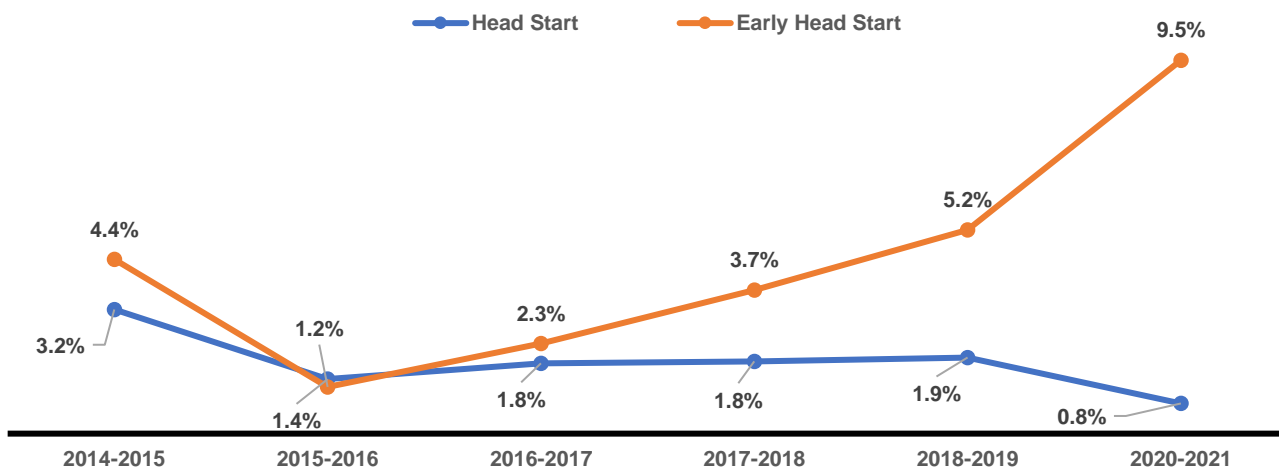


Figure 68. Percentage of Head Start and Early Head Start Enrolled Children in Foster Care (Cortland Count, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>

Comparing child abuse/neglect services, domestic violence services, and parent education services, with the exception of 2014-2015 in which 100% of families received child abuse/neglect services, parenting education services are the most commonly accessed family service by Head Start families in Cortland County (Figure 69).<sup>49</sup>

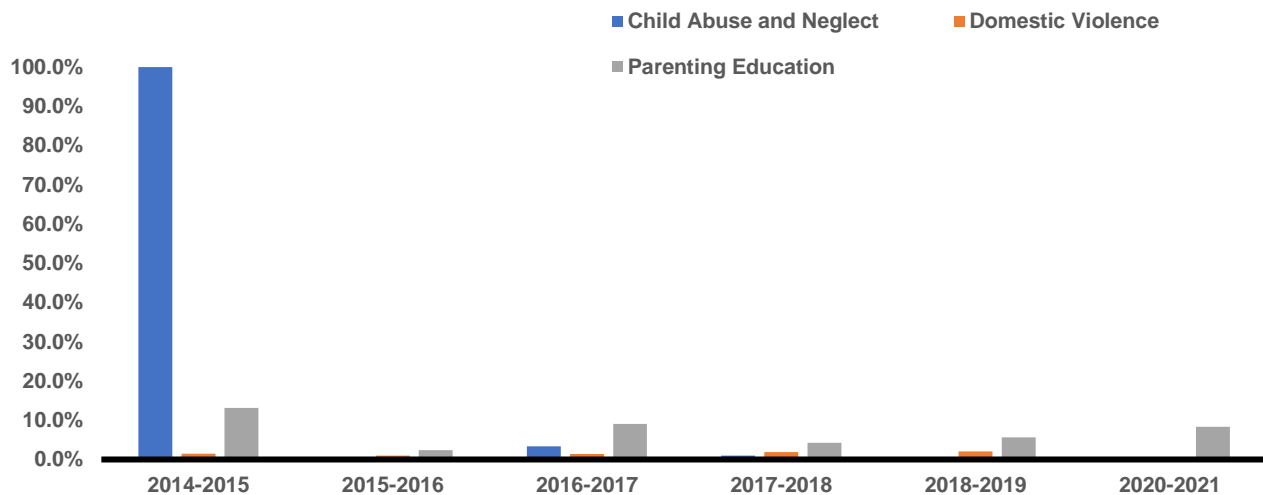


Figure 69. Percentage of Head Start Families to Access Family Services  
(Cortland County, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>

Similar to Head Start, parenting education is typically the most commonly used family services related to family wellbeing. In 2014-2015, child abuse and neglect services were the most commonly used and in 2015-2016 domestic violence services were the most commonly used (Figure 70).<sup>49</sup>

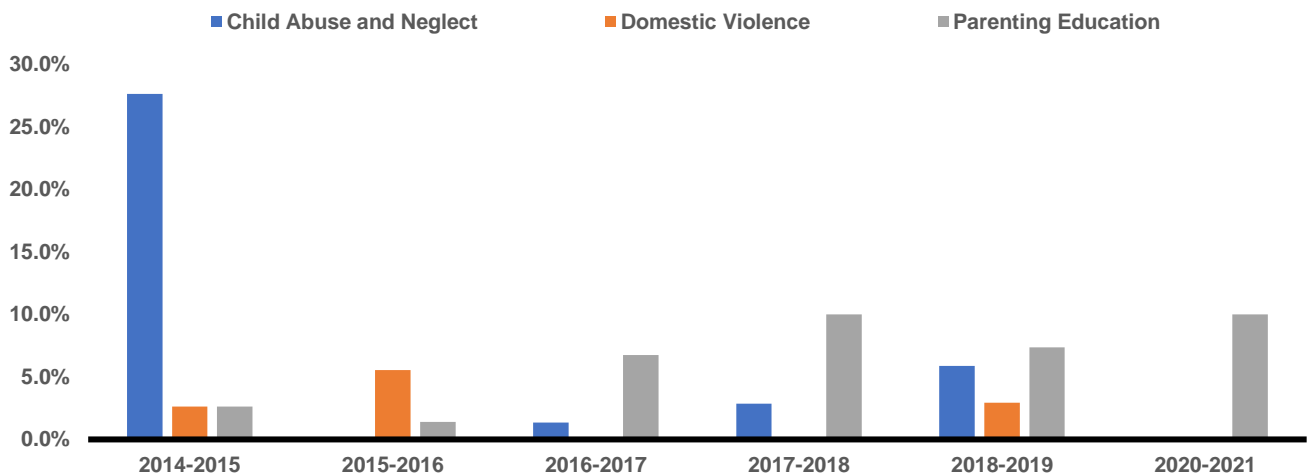


Figure 70. Percentage of Early Head Start Families to Access Family Services  
(Cortland County, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>



## Housing

From 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 the percentage of Head Start enrolled children experiencing homelessness increased from 1.8% to 4.4% before decreasing to 3.1% in 2020-2021 (Figure 71).<sup>49</sup> The percentage of Early Head Start enrolled children experiencing homelessness peaked in 2015-2016 and has since declined, with 0% of Early Head Start children experiencing homelessness in 2020-2021 (Figure 71).<sup>49</sup>

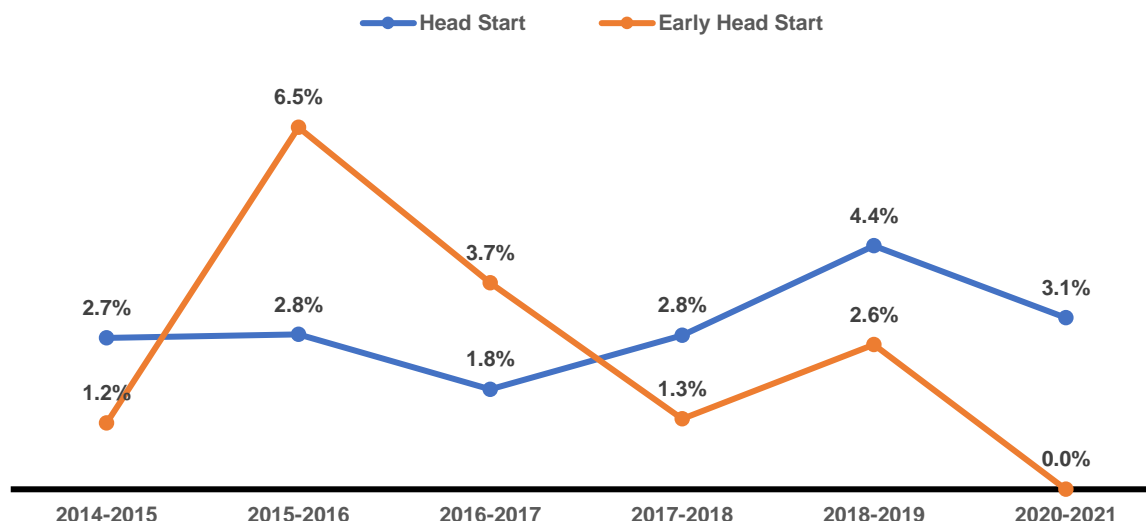


Figure 71. Percentage of Children Enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start Experiencing Homelessness (Cortland County, 2014-2021)<sup>49</sup>

## Program Goals

### School Readiness

CAPCO Head Start/Early Head start utilizes the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool to measure the percentage of children in the program who are meeting or exceeding expectations in each school readiness domain in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. For a detailed explanation on how the program's school readiness goals align with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, the New York States Early Learning Guidelines, and the New York State Pre-K Foundations for the Common Core, please see Appendix D.

The following program goals related to school readiness have been identified by CAPCO Head Start/Early Head Start:

1. *Approaches to Learning:* Children will engage in exploratory play and other learning activities to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
2. *Social and Emotional Development:* Children will be able to regulate behavior
3. *Social and Emotional Development:* Children will create and maintain healthy relationships with peers and adults



4. *Language and Communication:* Children will be able to communicate effectively with peers and adults.
5. *Literacy:* Children will acquire early reading and writing skills.
6. *Cognition:* Children will develop logical and abstract thinking in regards to concepts, relationships, and operations.
7. *Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development:*

CAPCO Head Start/Early Head Start strives to have 85% of all children transitioning into Kindergarten to have met or exceeded GOLD expectations in all areas. Looking at the final checkpoints in the 2019-2020 (winter) and 2020-2021 (spring) school years for Head Start four year olds in Cortland County, the program was closer to reaching this goal in the 2020-2021 school year for all domain areas except social/emotional (Figure 72).<sup>50</sup> However, it should be noted that data was not collected in Spring 2020 due to COVID-19 making it difficult to compare years as children in the program typically improve in domain areas throughout the school year.

In 2020-2021, the domain areas in which Head Start four year olds in Cortland County were closest to the 85% program goal were cognitive (83%) and language (80%). The domain areas where Head Start four year olds were least likely to have met or exceeding expectations were math (28%) and approaches to learning (32%) (Figure 72).<sup>50</sup>

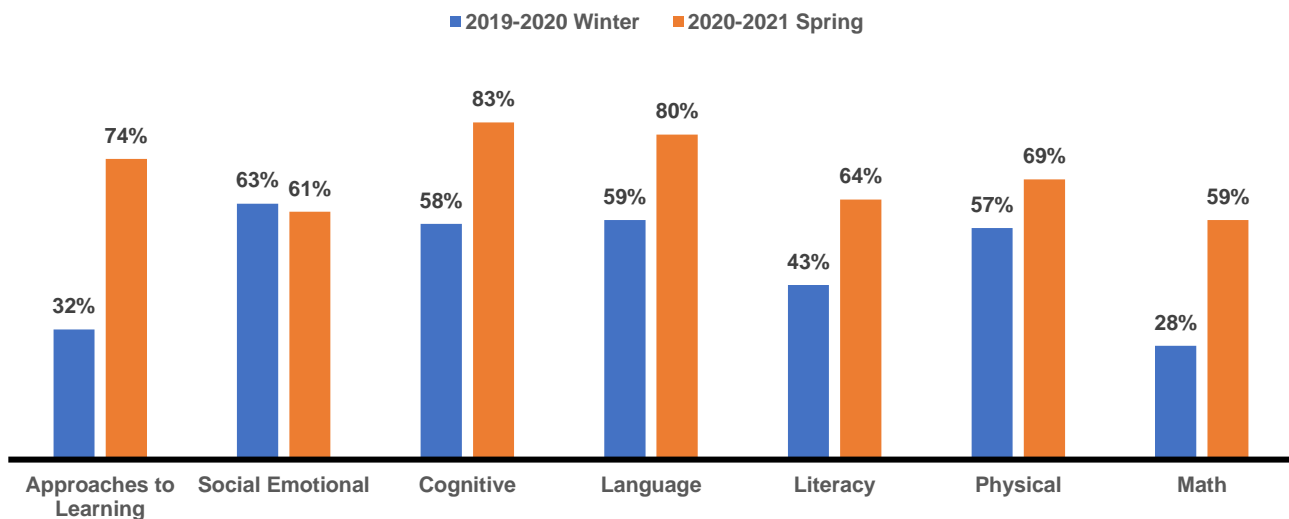


Figure 72. CAPCO Head Start 4 Year Olds Meeting/Exceeding Gold Expectations at Final Yearly Checkpoint (Cortland County 2019-2020, 2020-2021)



In the 2020-2021 school year, the percentage of Early Head Start enrollees meeting or exceeding Gold expectations increased from Fall to Spring in the domain areas of approaches to learning, social emotional, cognitive, language, and math (Figure 73).<sup>50</sup>

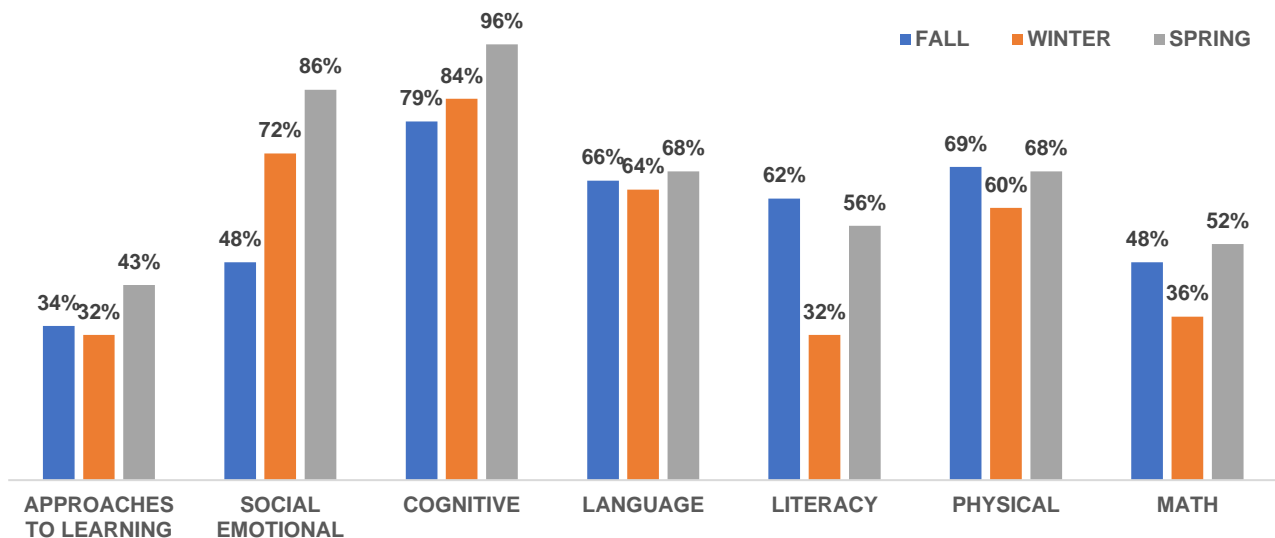


Figure 73. CAPCO Early Head Start Enrollees Meeting or Exceeding Gold Expectations (Cortland County, 2020-2021)<sup>50</sup>

The percentage of Head Start enrolled three year olds meeting or exceeding gold expectations increased in all domain areas from Fall to Spring during the 2020-2021 school year (Figure 74).<sup>50</sup>

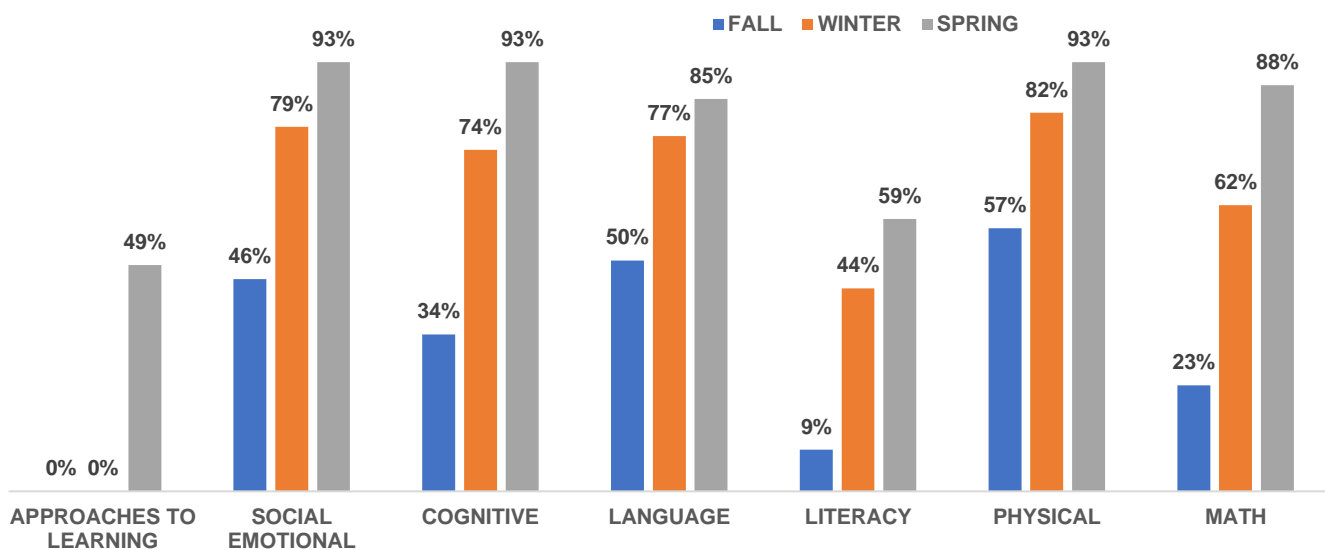


Figure 74. CAPCO Head Start Three Year Olds Meeting or Exceeding Gold Expectations (Cortland County, 2020-2021)<sup>50</sup>



The percentage of Head Start enrolled four year olds meeting or exceeding gold expectations increased in all domain areas from Fall to Spring during the 2020-2021 school year (Figure 75).<sup>50</sup>

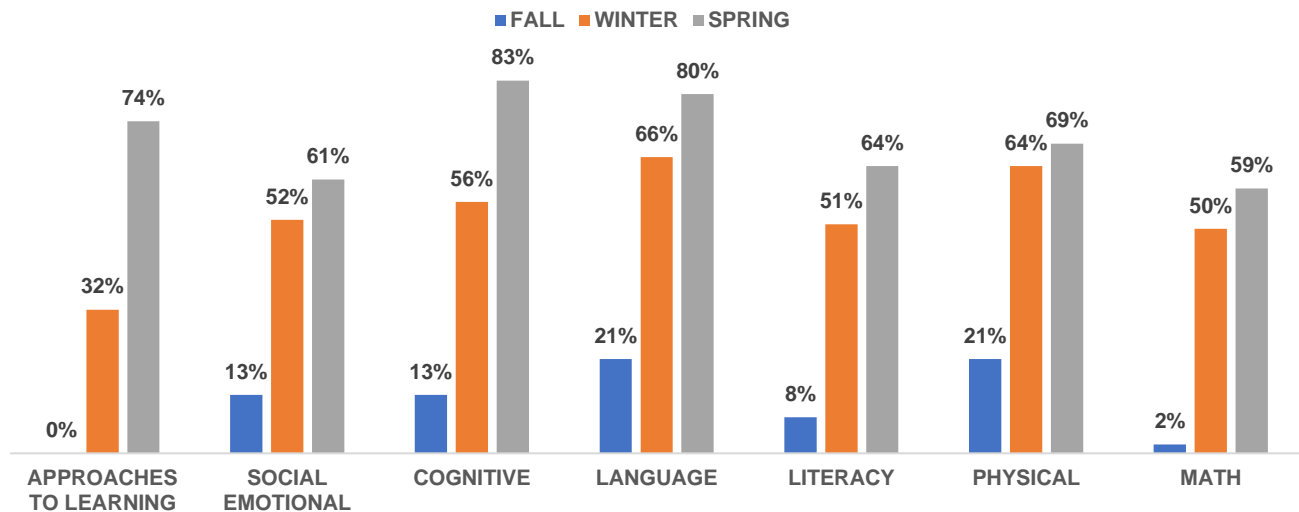


Figure 75. CAPCO Head Start Four Year Olds Meeting or Exceeding Gold Expectations (Cortland County, 2020-2021)<sup>50</sup>

## Trauma Informed Care

Program Goal (2019-2024): The CAPCO Head Start/Early Head Start Program will become a trauma informed care program. The information below summarizes the progress, outcome, and challenges related to each objective associated with this goal. The fiscal year runs from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

*Objective #1: Staff will be educated and begin to understand the effects of trauma on children and families through staff trainings*

	Outcomes	Challenges
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Provided two trauma informed care trainings (10.5 hours total) at August 2019 staff orientation	-Staff turnover -Buy-in from staff and families -Program shut down due to COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Provided two trauma informed care trainings (7 hours total) to all staff in April and June 2020.	-None





*Objective #2: Family Engagement staff will complete a family strengths assessment (FSA) to determine possible areas of family trauma and identify needs.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-192 out of 234 families completed an FSA -116 families identified with possible family trauma/needs -15 families set goals around area of family trauma/needs	-Families did not participate in FSA because they did not want to share personal issues -Program shut down due to COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-105 out of 147 families completed an FSA -81 families identified with possible family trauma/needs -12 families set goals around area of family trauma/needs	-Not fully enrolled due to COVID

*Objective 3: Resources will be sent to families monthly in order for them to receive continued information on Trauma Informed Care.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Resources were sent home in January, February, and March 2020	None
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Resources were sent home in December 2021	None

*Objective 4: Devise a tracking system to correlate children with challenging behaviors whose families have experienced homelessness, substance abuse, foster/kinship care, child abuse/neglect, and arrests.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-Tracking system created in February 2020	-Staying on track with monitoring to ensure new issues are addressed -Program shutdown due to COVID led to a decrease in monitoring.
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-57 out of 157 children served experienced trauma before -Out of the 57 who experienced trauma, 21 had documented behavior concerns in the classroom *Through December 2020	- Program shutdown due to COVID led to a decrease in monitoring. -Only partial year documented



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*Objective 5: The program will implement case conferencing two times a year.*

	Outcomes	Challenges
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-First conferences completed in December 2019 -Second conferences not completed	-Staff schedules and shutdown due to COVID-19
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-Zoom conferencing scheduled for February 2021	-Second case conferencing not completed due to COVID

## Social Emotional Learning

Program Goal (2019-2024): CAPCO Head Start/Early Head Start Program will provide social/emotional learning opportunities through the Conscious Discipline approach to create positive relationships, partner with families on goals for their children, and receive and provide ongoing support. The information below summarizes the progress, outcome, and challenges related to each objective associated with this goal. The fiscal year runs from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

*Objective 1: The program will purchase Conscious Discipline materials annually for classrooms implementing the Conscious Discipline approach.*

	Outcomes	Challenges
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-May 2019: Baby Dolls-Ethnic Pack of 4 purchased -Oct. 2019: I Love You Ritual Books and Star Breathing Tool purchased -Feb. 2020: Premium Resources Membership purchased for one year	-Not able to practice rituals in person due to COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-Jan. 2020: I Love You Ritual books and CDs, Wish You Well boards, and materials to create a calm down area were purchased	-Not able to practice rituals in person due to COVID



*Objective 2: The program will introduce staff at the annual fall staff orientation.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-Provided Conscious Discipline training at August 2020 staff orientation (6.5 hours)	-Staff turnover and training new staff during COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-Provided all staff Building Resilient Classroom books and ran book clubs	-No in person August staff orientation due to COVID

*Objective 3: The program will offer two positive solutions classes to enrolled families twice per year*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Offered twice in Nov/Dec 2019 (3 sessions, 7 parent participants)	-Recruiting families to participate -Program shutdown due to COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Offered twice Nov/Dec 2020 (4 families)	

*Objective 4: The program will create and implement a monthly monitoring system for Conscious Discipline, which will include staff feedback*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Monitoring system created	-Staff schedules -Shutdown due to COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-14 EHS teachers read Conscious Discipline book, 10 participated in feedback -6 HS staff finished chapters 1-6, 7 finished chapters 1-3, supervisor completed book	-HS staff did not participate in feedback zooms because they have not finished the book



*Objective 5: Family engagement staff will set goals with families regarding behavior concerns or discipline methods*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-5 goals set, 2 met, 1 goal still being worked on, 1 goal discontinued	-Family participation and goal setting -Program shutdown due to COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-7 goals set and 0 met as of Dec. 2020	-Program shutdown due to COVID

*Objective 6: The program will complete monthly observations in classrooms implementing the Conscious Discipline approach.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Completed on a monthly basis by supervisor	-Program shutdown due to COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Not completed	-No in person visitation due to COVID

*Objective 7: Pyramid Team will meet once per week and discuss behavior concerns in all of the classrooms and review Behavioral Incidental Reports.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Completed every Friday for two hours	None
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Completed when staff schedules allow due to virtual meetings	COVID-19 causing meeting to be virtual

*Objective 8: Reflect, review, and revise on the Conscious Discipline approach.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Not completed	-Program shutdown due to COVID -Staff schedules
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Not completed	-Program shutdown due to COVID -Staff schedules



*Objective 9: Provide further professional development, as needed, based on the reflections and reviews.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Feb training offered to staff (1.5 hours)	
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Staff assigned to watch webinars about Conscious Discipline approach	-Program shutdown and trainings have to be virtual due to COVID

### Staff Retention

Program Goal (2019-2024): CAPCO Head Start/Early Head Start Program will incorporate key strategies to improve employee retention. The information below summarizes the progress, outcome, and challenges related to each objective associated with this goal. The fiscal year runs from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

*Objective 1: 1-The program will review and analyze the annual staff turnover report to determine percentage of staff who have left the program.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-22.5% turnover rate -Met the goal of 75% staff retention for the first year	-Offering higher pay and the NYS increase of minimum wage -Program shutdown due to COVID-19
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-23.6% turnover rate -Met the goal of 78% staff retention for the second year	None

*Objective 2: The program will create an employee satisfaction committee.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Not completed	-Staff schedules and shutdown due to COVID-19
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Not completed	-Staff schedules and not being able to meet in person due to COVID-19



*Objective 3: The agency will upgrade the Complete Payroll System to incorporate effective Human Resources Tracking.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Completed May 2019	None
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	N/A	None

*Objective 4: The Mental Health Specialist and the Coach will track the number of staff who seek their guidance for personal and professional reasons. The Coach and the Mental Health Specialist will support, mentor, and assist staff in times of need.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-Staff working on objective	-Staff did not feel comfortable asking for assistance -Staff did not feel they needed assistance -Program shutdown due to COVID
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	-5 staff contacted Mental Health Specialist (6/7/19-4/13/20) -3 staff contacted Coach (8/23/19-1/17/20)	-Could not meet in person due to COVID

*Objective 5: Identify space to create a staff wellness location (gym, yoga, meditation area, mindfulness).*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	Not completed	-Lack of space -Program shut down due to COVID-19
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Not completed	-Lack of space -Program shut down due to COVID-19



*Objective 6: Offer walk in interviews for vacant positions.*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	A total of 7 walk-in interview sessions were conducted from June 2019 to February 2020 for educational and other positions	None
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Not completed	-Unable to recruit due to COVID-19 -No walk in interviews scheduled due to program shut down

*Objective 7: Offer more trainings to front line staff in furthering their professional development*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	-Staff offered trainings in August each year -Staff invited to participate in local/statewide trainings	None
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Weekly trainings offered from March 2020-June 2020 during classroom shutdowns	All trainings virtual due to COVID-19

*Objective 8: Offer incentive monies to current staff who recommend a person as a new hire (person must be hired for incentive to be completed).*

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Year One (2019-2020)</b>	2 staff recommended individuals and received \$50 incentive when referral which led to hires	None
<b>Year Two (2020-2021)</b>	Not completed	Unable to recruit due to COVID



## Program Strengths and Weaknesses

The following program strengths and weaknesses were identified by Early Head Start and Head Start staff for the 2020-2021 school year.

Education	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Professional Development Opportunities</li> <li>2. Book Clubs</li> <li>3. CDA Classes completed</li> <li>4. 3<sup>rd</sup> Person in every classroom</li> <li>5. Operated in-person for entire year</li> <li>6. Parent's got children to evaluations</li> <li>7. Laure met/phone conferenced w/teachers on PLEPS-(?)</li> <li>8. Teachers had good communication w/Laura</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not meeting with parents to fill out referral paper work (less relationship building)</li> <li>2. Screening were not all completed. (mainly speech).</li> <li>3. Coach was less able to support teacher's practices in person.</li> <li>4. Lack of oversight and communication with supervisors not being able to visit all classrooms.</li> <li>5. Recruitment for open positions was difficult with not many qualified/quality applications.</li> </ol>

ERSSEA/HB	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Offer in-person classes.</li> <li>2. Child Plus was huge for monitoring- since we couldn't go to classes.</li> <li>3. Met w/every single family</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Couldn't open 3 EHS classrooms and low numbers (due to staff) from COVID</li> <li>2. Recruitment suffered-couldn't get out in the community</li> <li>3. No HB option due to no staff – No in-home visits</li> <li>4. Limited FS Staff</li> <li>5. Disconnection with family advocates, leadership, classroom staff &amp; families.</li> </ol>





Family Services	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Established new system for tracking documentation and family notes in Child Plus.</li> <li>2. Established new timeline for tracking attendance &amp; attendance notes.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No Home-Based- No Staff.</li> <li>2. Other than the number of withdrawals – overall program numbers decreased in all areas.</li> <li>3. Staffing Challenges:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) No Home visitors</li> <li>b) Started the PY short 2 staff members</li> <li>c) Maternity leave – accepted new job at DSS</li> <li>d) Accepted new job within the Agency</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Health Services	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthened relationship with local health department</li> <li>2. Strengthened relationship with local health providers</li> <li>3. Minimal spread/closures through COVID</li> <li>4. Improved current policies/procedures</li> <li>5. Adjusted staff responsibilities (i.e. Health checks onsite)</li> <li>6. Improved Daily Health Check monitoring</li> <li>7. Built stronger relationships with classroom staff</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hearing/vision screenings not completed within 45 days (were completed in Spring 20-21py)</li> <li>2. Health/Safety checklists not completed monthly</li> <li>3. Frustrated families due to exclusion criteria due to COVID symptoms</li> </ol>

Nutrition	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Started virtual cooking class via YouTube</li> <li>2. 2<sup>nd</sup> year CAPCO garden</li> <li>3. Delivered food bags to families affected by COVID</li> <li>4. Delivered diapers/wipes to families affected by COVID</li> <li>5. 3 rounds of food/diaper giveaways</li> <li>6. Nutrition team worked as a team to make changes</li> <li>7. Took on cooking for 4 extra classrooms (Randall &amp; Smith)</li> <li>8. Served 99 children, 44 children (school district) that we created ourselves (Food production records, daily delivery sheets, sets of menus)</li> <li>9. Teachers, TA's, FA's, kitchen aides working together as a team</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication between staff</li> <li>2. Not checking in w/staff bi-weekly</li> <li>3. Zoom CACFP monitoring</li> <li>4. Not knowing if a classroom will be closed due to COVID</li> <li>5. Beginning of the year-school district lunches-not temp correct (cold, prepackaged)</li> <li>6. Food inventory- not knowing what kitchens have (plan to have kitchen aids completing inventory list weekly)</li> </ol>

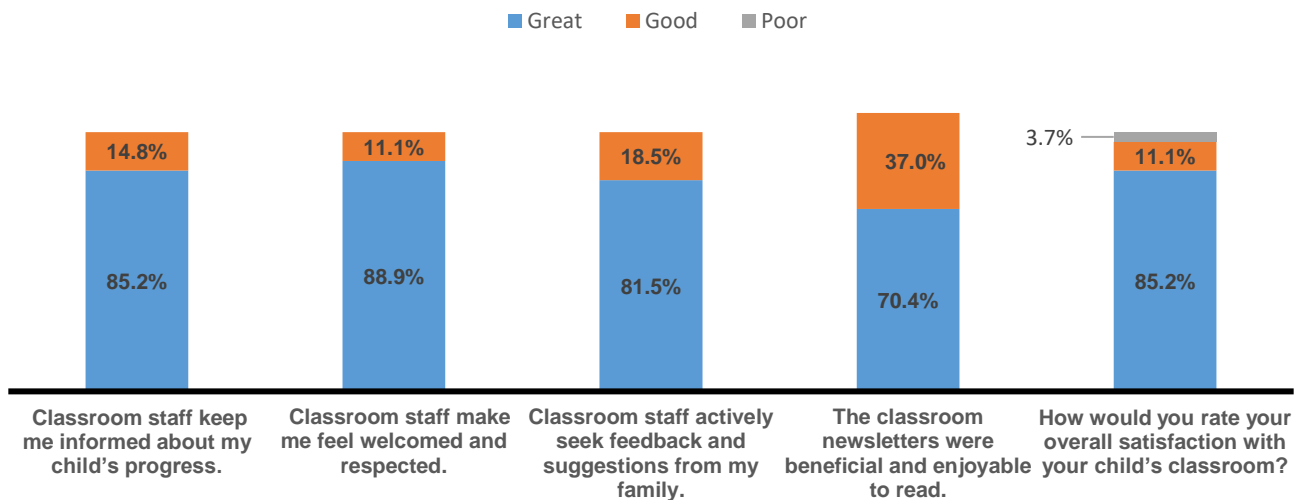
## Family Satisfaction Survey

A total of 27 families completed the Head Start/Early Head Start Family Satisfaction Survey in 2021. Due to staffing shortages and barriers related to meeting in person, focus groups were not held with Head Start/Early Head Start families. However, families were able to provide qualitative feedback in the comments section of the Family Satisfaction Survey.

### Classroom/Staff

Overall, families rated the quality of Head Start/Early Head staff and classrooms high. The indicator that scored the highest was “classroom staff make me feel welcomed and respected” with 88.9% of survey respondents reporting the quality of this indicator as “great” (Figure 76).<sup>6</sup> The indicator that scored the lowest was “the classroom newsletters were beneficial and enjoyable to me” with only 70.4% of survey respondents reporting the quality of this indicator as “great” (Figure 76).<sup>6</sup>





**Figure 76. Classroom and Staff Satisfaction of Head Start/Early Head Start Families (Cortland County 2020-2021, N=27) <sup>6</sup>**

Additional comments related to staff/classrooms were generally positive. In the comments section of the survey, parents noted:<sup>6</sup>

- “[Staff] were very good at keeping me up to date with my child’s progress”
- “[Staff] always so happy and cheerful to see us”
- “We have great communication regarding child’s home and school life”
- “[The newsletters] I actually had time to read were very enjoyable”
- “My child is happy with his classroom teachers and classmates so that makes me happy”
- “100% great”

One parent noted they have never seen the classroom and another noted the classroom has closed doors.

### Family Advocate

Overall, families rated the quality of Head Start/Early Head family advocates as high. When rating overall satisfaction, 77.8% of survey respondents reported the quality of their overall satisfaction with the family advocate as “great” (Figure 77)<sup>6</sup> One parent noted in the comments that they were not aware they had a family advocate. Another parent noted they “love the family events and zooms.”



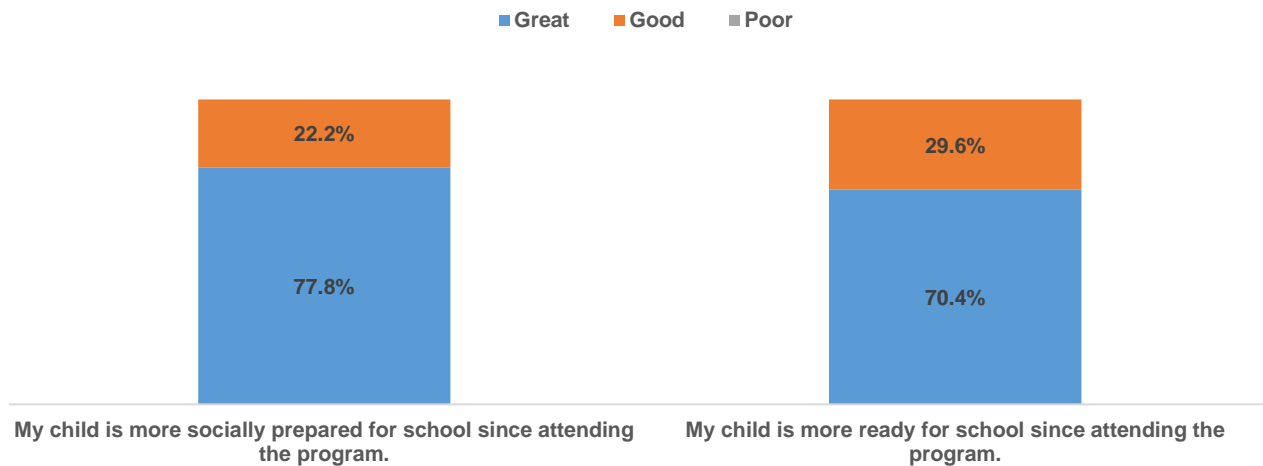


Figure 77. Family Advocate Satisfaction of Head Start/Early Head Start Families  
(Cortland County 2020-2021, N=27)<sup>6</sup>

## Child Progress

Overall, families rated the quality of their child's progress since attending Head Start/Early Head Start as high, with 77.8% of survey respondents reporting the quality of their child being more socially prepared for school as "great" and 70.4% of survey respondents reporting the quality of their child being more ready for school as "great" (Figure 78).<sup>6</sup> Comments were positive and included:

- "He has learned so much, his progress has very much improved since starting."
- "Most definitely [more ready for school since attending the program]."
- "He has improved but we still got some room to grow."
- "He shares so much better now."



**Figure 78. Child Progress Satisfaction of Head Start/Early Head Start Families**  
(Cortland County 2020-2021, N=27)<sup>6</sup>

## Overall Program

Out of the 27 families that took the survey, 26 reported that overall Head Start/Early Head Start has been a valuable for their family (the remaining family did not provide an answer for this question) and 22 out of 27 reported, overall, their experience has been “great.”<sup>6</sup> Comments for improvements included:

- “I would love to interact with the classroom more, visit classroom but I understand COVID precautions”
- “Family activities again”
- “I know that with COVID it’s impossible, but I would suggest a parent’s day so I could come and see the program.”
- “Keep the girls together”
- “Maybe every day when child leaves at end of day someone can tell us what she does, she will not tell us what she does at school every day.”
- “I would like the program to actually ensure the smoke free policy is being adhered to...[in the parking lot].”

## Findings

The following findings were included in this assessment if community level and program quantitative data and key informant qualitative data suggested a need in the Cortland County community. Each of the conclusions assist with community level and agency understanding on the causes and conditions of poverty in the community.

**Finding #1: Mental Health:** Key data indicators at the community level show that mental health is a serious concern in the general Cortland County community and perceptions of community key informants indicate mental health services are a pressing need of low income families and individuals in Cortland County. Additionally, shutdowns due to COVID-19 have hindered progress towards reaching Head Start program objectives related to mental health.

### Community Data

Secondary data of key mental health indicators in Cortland County show that mental health problems are a serious health issue currently facing the community. From 2016 to 2018 the age adjusted percentage of adults in Cortland County that reported experiencing frequent mental distress in the past month doubled from 8.2% to 16.4%. In 2018, a higher percentage of Cortland County residents reported experiencing frequent mental distress than New York State residents (11.2%) and New York State residents excluding NYC (11.8%). In 2016-2018, Cortland County also had a higher age adjusted suicide mortality rate (12.8 per 100,000) than New York State (8.2 per 100,000) and New York State excluding NYC (9.9 per 100,000). Finally, in 2020, one in five (22.6%) of Cortland County 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders reported suicide ideation in the past year.

### CAPCO Program Data

Despite the conclusions highlighted by secondary mental health data indicators, and primary data collected from the key informants of low income individual/families in Cortland County, program data from one of CAPCO's largest programs (Head Start/Early Head Start) shows that in the 2020-2021 program year, only 1.7% of Head Start families and 0% of Early Head Start families received mental health program services to promote family outcomes. Additionally, progress towards program objectives, associated with mental health (trauma informed care and social emotional learning) have faced significant challenges due to COVID-19 shutdowns. In the 2020-2021 school year; resources on trauma informed care were sent to families one time (goal is monthly), case conferencing had to be transitioned to zoom, positive solutions classes for families had low attendance, and monthly in class observations to evaluate implementation of the Conscious Discipline approach could not be completed due to classroom closures.

### Key Informant Perceptions

The key informant surveys collected from CAPCO partners and CAPCO staff/board/volunteers indicate both groups perceive access to mental health services as one of the top five most pressing needs of low income families/individuals and one of



the top five most challenging issues low income families/ individuals will face in the next five years. While the community member survey data collected by CAPCO in October 2021 cannot be applied to the entirety of the county population due to data limitations (see methods section) it does provide a snapshot of the mental health status of low income individuals in the community. Of the 78 survey respondents that disclosed their annual household income, 69 (88.5%) have an annual household income of \$50,000 or less per year. Out of the 69 survey respondents that answered the questions related to mental health; 32 (46.4%) reported feeling down, depressed, or hopeless on several, more than half, or nearly every day in the past seven days before survey administration.

**Finding #2: Educational Disparity:** In Cortland County, disparities exist for economically disadvantaged students. They are less likely to score proficient on NYS ELA tests and less likely to graduate from high school than economically advantaged students in Cortland County. Head Start program data suggests the program can improve school readiness in all domain areas, however, there is still room for improvement towards the target of 85% meeting or exceeding expectations before transitioning. Educational barriers can impact residents of Cortland County who are low income for the rest of their life and key informants in the community perceive jobs skills/employment training as a need of low income individuals in the county.

### Community Data

Key indicators of educational success in Cortland County highlight the disparity that exists for economically disadvantaged students in the community. In 2020, students who are not economically disadvantaged were more likely to graduate high school (91.0%) than students who are economically disadvantaged (81.0%). This trend is present historically since 2016. Additionally, not economically disadvantaged students were more likely to score proficient (81.0%) on NYS ELA assessments than economically disadvantaged students (58%) in 2019. Educational disparities exist for low income children in Cortland County as young as third grade. This disparity, in particular the disparity in high school graduation, puts low income young people in Cortland County at a disadvantage for job and economic prospects for the rest of their lives.

### CAPCO Program Data

CAPCO Head Start/Early Head Start tracks key indicators of school readiness in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. The program strives to have 85% of all children transitioning into Kindergarten to have met or exceeded Teaching Strategies GOLD expectations in all domain areas. In the 2019-2021 school year, the percentage of Head Start three and four year olds exceeding GOLD expectations increased in all domain areas from Fall to Spring. This data suggests the Head Start program contributes to preparing program participants (many of whom are low income) to enter Kindergarten. However, program data also indicates room for improvement as the program did not reach the 85% target for any of the seven domain areas for four year olds in the 2020-2021 school year with



Math (59%), Social Emotional (61%), and Literacy (64%) being the three lowest performing domains.

### Key Informant Perceptions

The only group of key informants to list an education related need in the top five most pressing needs of low income individuals in Cortland County were CAPCO staff/board/volunteers whose responses placed Adult Education/Literacy in the top five. However, school readiness and educational attainment can impact economic success for a lifetime. CAPCO partners who responded to the survey listed job skills/employment training in the top five most pressing needs of low income families/individuals and top five most challenging issues families/individuals will face in the next five years. Qualitative data collected from parents of Head Start enrolled children in May 2021 suggests parents perceive the program has contributed to preparing their child for school. Comments included; “He has learned so much, his progress has very much improved since starting” and “Most definitely [more ready for school since attending the program].”

**Finding #3: Adverse Childhood Experiences:** Community level data indicates that risk factors related to adverse childhood experiences are prevalent in the Cortland County community including high poverty. Additionally, Cortland County has a high rate of child abuse/mistreatment. Community member perceptions support this conclusion with results showing survey respondents having difficulty meeting basic life needs over the past year.

### Community Data

Many community, family, and individual factors can contribute to adverse childhood experiences and there is not a solitary data indicator that can summarize the impacts of ACEs in a community. However, proxy measures can be utilized to better understand ACEs. High poverty and educational opportunities are both community risk factors for ACEs that are apparent in secondary data of Cortland County. The percentage of Cortland County residents under age 18 that live below the federal poverty level has increased from 13.9% in 2014 to 18.2% in 2019. Additionally, residents of Cortland County are less likely to attain a bachelor’s degree or higher than residents of New York State and, as previously discussed, economically disadvantaged students in Cortland County are less likely to have proficient scores for NYS ELA tests and graduate high school. While there are many examples of ACEs, child abuse/mistreatment data provides one measure of ACEs in Cortland County. In 2019, the rate of child abuse/mistreatment for youth 0-17 year olds in Cortland County was 38 per 100,000, more than double New York State’s rate of 16.8 per 100,000.





### **CAPCO Program Data**

In the 2020-2021 program year, 105 Head Start/Early Head Start families completed a family strengths assessment and 81 were identified as having possible family trauma or needs (77%). Despite a high percentage of families with needs, very few families access family services through the program. In 2018-2019 (pre-COVID), only 7.4% accessed parenting education, 2.9% accessed domestic violence services, and 5.9% accessed child abuse/neglect services. In 2020-2021, the only family service accessed was parent education (10%). Outcome data for program objectives indicates COVID-19 and program shutdowns has impacted the program's ability to implement strategies related to trauma informed care and social emotional learning (see mental health findings).

### **Key Informant Perceptions**

Family risk factors for ACEs include; families with low income, families experiencing high levels of economic stress, and families that cannot meet basic needs like safe housing and food. In the CAPCO survey of community members, most of whom reported than annual household income as less than \$50,000 per year, survey respondents selected financial assistance as one of their top five household needs in the past month and top five services their household needed but did not receive.

Heating/utility assistance the second most selected household need in the past 12 months and home repairs and heating/utilities services were the second and third most selected service survey respondents needed but did not receive in the past 12 months. Additionally, 25 out of 71 respondents (35.2%) reported someone in their household had to choose between buying food or paying a bill to meet basic needs. While this data cannot necessarily be applied to the entirety of Cortland County community, it does provide a qualitative snapshot of economic/basic needs based risk factors for ACEs reported by community members.

**Finding #4: Increasing Diversity:** Census data from 2020 indicates Cortland County has become more diverse and this is reflected in Head Start program data as well. Current program goals/objectives should considering outlining how CAPCO and/or the Early Head Start/Head Start programs will respond to the increasing cultural diversity in the community and programs.

### **Community Data**

Data from the 2020 United States census shows that Cortland County has become more racially diverse since 2010, with the percentage of residents identifying as white decreasing from 95.1% to 88.1% and the percentage of residents identifying as two or more races increasing from 1.7% to 5.7%. Additionally, data suggests disparities exist in Cortland County related to race and poverty. Census data shows that 31.5% of



residents in Cortland County who identify as two or more races live below the poverty level compared to 16.1% of residents who are white, alone.

### **CAPCO Program Data**

Increasing racial diversity is also reflected in Head Start/Early Head start program data, with the percentage of Head Start/Early Head start children identifying as BIPOC trending up since 2015-2016. In the 2020-2021 program year, 19.5% of Early Head Start enrolled children and 20.8% of Head Start enrolled children identified as BIPOC. Current program goals/objectives do not clearly outline how CAPCO and/or the Early Head Start/Head Start programs will respond to the increasing cultural diversity in the community and program.

### **Key Informant Perceptions**

Racial diversity and equity were not addressed in the key informant surveys. There were 10 (out of 117) respondents to the community member survey that identified as BIPOC.

**#5: Childcare/Early Childhood Education Deficit:** Community level estimates suggests that there is a deficit in available childcare/early education opportunities in the community. Estimates of the number of children income eligible for Early Head Start indicate the funded capacity is not sufficient to serve all eligible children. Increasing capacity in Early Head Start may ease some burden currently faced by the childcare system in Cortland County.

### **Community Data**

Based on the U.S census, the percentage of households with children under age six in which all parents are part of the labor force in Cortland County is 77.4% and the number of children under age five in the county 2,376, therefore there are an estimated 1,839 children under age five who need childcare in Cortland County.

Looking at the capacities of childcare modalities, enrollment in public/private pre-k, and home visiting capacity (programs that can provide early education services to children in informal childcare situations), there is an estimated deficit of 589 childcare/early education slots in Cortland County.

### **CAPCO Program Data**

In the CAPCO Head Start Service Area, an estimated 335 children under age three would be eligible for Early Head Start based on birth records and county poverty rates for children under age 5. The program is funded to serve 72 children. There are an estimated 263 children who are eligible for Early Head Start that are not able to be served due to the current funded capacity. The lack of available slots in Early Head Start could contribute to the above mentioned deficit of 589 childcare/early education slots in Cortland County.



### Key Informant Perceptions

The key informant surveys collected from CAPCO partners, CAPCO staff/board/volunteers, indicate both groups perceive access to childcare as one of the top five most pressing needs of low income families/individuals and one of the top five most challenging issues low income families/ individuals will face in the next five years. Additionally, 24 out of 117 (27.3%) of respondents to the community member key informant survey reported childcare as one of their top five household needs in the past month and 10 out of 117 (11.4%) reported it has a service their household needed but did not receive in the past month.

The CAPCO Community Member survey supports the data that suggests families in Cortland County utilize informal care in response to the deficit of available childcare/early education slots. Of the 58 survey respondents that reported on how they meet their childcare needs; 70.7% reported they use parents/family/friends/neighbors.

**#6: Nutrition:** Community level and Head Start program data indicates an increase in obesity in the community and, in particular, that obesity disproportionately effects low income residents of the community. Respondents to the Community member key informant survey reported food assistance as a top five household need and as a need they required but did not receive in the past year.

### Community Data

Key indicators to suggest that nutrition is a health concern for Cortland County community members, in particular, low income individuals. In 2018, 34.4% of adults in Cortland County were obese, which increased from 28.9% in 2016. A higher percentage of adults in Cortland County are obese compared to New York State (27.5%) and New York State excluding NYC (29.1%). In 2018, 47.1% of adults in Cortland County who make less than \$25,000 a year were obese, which is higher than both New York State and New York State excluding NYC (note: high margin of error interpret with caution). Additionally, a higher percentage of children and adolescents are obese in Cortland County compared to New York State excluding NYC.

### CAPCO Program Data

Head Start program data shows that the percentage of Head Start enrolled children who are categorized as overweight or obese has increased from 25.1% in 2016-2017 to 35.4% in 2020-2021.

### Key Informant Perceptions

While the community member survey data collected by CAPCO in October 2021 cannot be applied to the entirety of the county population due to data limitations (see methods section) it does provide a snapshot of the food security status of low income individuals in Cortland County. As previously mentioned 88.5% of survey respondents reported an annual household income of less than \$50,000. Out of 71 survey respondents who answered questions related to food security 34 (47.9%) are not at all confident/not so



confident/or somewhat confident they will be able to afford the kinds of food they need over the next month.

Additionally, 49 out of 117 (55.7%) of respondents to the community member key informant survey reported food assistance as one of their top five household needs in the past month and 14 out of 117 (15.9%) reported it as a service their household needed but did not receive in the past month.

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