



# Harvey County Partnership/ Communities In Schools, Inc.

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## Needs Assessment

*August 2004*

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## Introduction

In 1996, the Harvey County Community Health Assessment Process (CHAP) was completed. The goal of CHAP was to complete a community health and human services assessment, identify problems in the area of health and quality of life for Harvey County residents, and develop a community action plan to address these problems.

After evaluating quantitative data on Harvey County health, conducting a public opinion survey, and gathering data from community experts, CHAP identified the following three problems as the most appropriate targets for community action. This decision was based on evaluation of each problem's magnitude, consequences for the community, and the feasibility of implementing intervention.

- 1- Illegal drug use
- 2- Youth tobacco use
- 3- Juvenile arrest rate

The Harvey County Partnership/Communities In Schools (HCP/CIS) was formed to focus on these three problems and other community needs. HCP/CIS members are health and human service providers who work together to meet the needs of the residents of Harvey County. **The stated mission of the HCP/CIS is to help coordinate the collaborative efforts of the human and health service resources of Harvey County, Kansas.** HCP/CIS has partnered with the national Communities In Schools program, which works to **help kids stay in school and prepare for life** by connecting needed community resources with schools. **By bringing caring adults into the schools to address children's unmet needs, CIS provides the link between educators and the community.**

The HCP/CIS Board of Directors determines the direction of the organization's outreach with the assistance of the Advisory Council, comprised of approximately 30 health and human services representatives. Monthly Advisory Council discussions promote effective coordination of services.

## Objective

**The objective of the 2004 Harvey County Partnership/Communities In Schools Needs Assessment is:** To identify the key social, health and economic factors that create risk for preschool and school age children and their families in Harvey County. The assumption is that if families are strong and supported by the community, children will be more likely to succeed in school and in life. The needs assessment is a first step toward identifying the needs of children and families and working to better meet those needs.

This report is meant to serve as a resource for HCP/CIS as it evaluates its mission and goals.

**Differences between the 1996 and 2004 assessments:** The 2004 assessment continues the work of the 1996 Community Health Assessment Process in evaluating the well being of Harvey County communities. However, this assessment differs from the 1996 assessment in several ways. First, the 2004 assessment focuses on preschool and school age children and their families instead of the entire population of Harvey County. This reflects the Communities In Schools focus. Second, the 2004 assessment is a smaller operation than the 1996 process. It analyzes existing Harvey County and Kansas statistics to identify risks, but it utilizes a much smaller sample of key informants (interviewees) than the 1996 process. Lastly, it should be noted that the 2004 assessment process is concurrent with a separate needs assessment process being completed by the Harvey County Health Department. As such, more specific data on health care concerns may be found in the Health Department assessment.

## Methodology and Data Sources

The 2004 assessment begins by comparing 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census data and highlighting demographic changes in Harvey County over the last 10 years. Next, indicators of risk for children and families in Harvey County are introduced. Hard data for these indicators are provided in the following general and secondary areas.

- Economic Well-Being
  - Free and reduced lunch
  - Food stamps
  - Temporary Aid to Need Families (TANF)
  - Unemployment
- Education
  - K-12
  - Early childhood education and health
- Health and Safety
  - Child abuse
  - Adolescent pregnancy
  - Childcare availability
  - Drug and alcohol use
  - Violent crime
- Vulnerable Youth: Children in Foster Care and Juvenile Justice Systems
  - Foster care
  - Juvenile court filings and annual rate of arrests of students
- Language: Bilingual and Non-English Speaking Children and Families
  - Census data on nativity and language
  - English-language proficiency of Spanish-speaking population

Lastly, the assessment offers commentary from seven key informants in Harvey County about the needs of children and families in Newton, Hesston, Halstead, Burrton, and Sedgwick.

### **Methodology**

Quantitative data were gathered from existing data sources (identified below). Qualitative data were gathered in the form of interviews with key informants. Key informants were chosen according to their familiarity with issues facing children and families or their work in agencies and organizations that offer health and human services to Harvey County residents. The goal of these interviews was to document perceptions of the risks faced by children in Harvey County and needs that are met or unmet.

Quantitative and qualitative data were compiled to meet the following objectives:

- to identify key risk factors,
- to identify trends in these factors,
- to provide comparisons with Kansas state data, and
- to document key informant perceptions of risk factors.

Each area of focus (i.e. Economic Well-Being) begins with an introduction about why it is an important indicator of risk for children and families, what data is offered and what it measures, and a summary of the data results for Harvey County. Data are analyzed by looking at both the trends and significant changes in Harvey County rates, particularly in the last five years. Trends and changes are compared briefly to Kansas state rates. The hard data are offered in charts and graph representations. Each focus area ends with a summary conclusion of impressions gained from the data.

### **Quantitative Data Sources**

*Harvey County Health Assessment Process (CHAP), 1996*

Kansas Action for Children (KAC)

*Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Book (KAC and the Annie E. Casey Foundation)*

Kansas Children's Report Card for Harvey County

U.S. Census Bureau

Connect Kansas, Communities That Care

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS)

Kansas Department of Human Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Kansas Bureau of Investigation

South Central Kansas Regional Prevention Center

Head Start

Children's Defense Fund

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect

Child Welfare League of America: National Data Analysis System

### **Qualitative Data Sources**

Cliff Kirk pastor and retired SRS supervisor, Burrton

Jennifer Chappell Deckert, school social worker, Newton USD 373

Alice Jantzen, R.N., Harvey County Health Department  
 Judy Friesen, Director, Hesston Community Child Care Center  
 Carolyn Taylor, former public school teacher, USD 440 Halstead  
 Diane Davison, public school teacher, USD 439 Sedgwick  
 Drew Harris, Superintendent, Burrton USD 369

## Harvey County Demographic Data

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census data

Harvey County demographic data from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census shows the following:

- In both 1990 and in 2000, children (individuals under 18 years) made up around 26 percent of the population.
- There was a decrease between 1990 to 2000 in the percentage of people who identified their race as “white,” and an almost three percent increase in people who claimed “Hispanic or Latino” race.
- The percentage of households with individuals under 18 years decreased slightly between 1990 and 2000. While the percentage of married couple families decreased, the percentage of female-headed households with no husband present increased.
- Census data shows a slightly higher unemployment rate in 2000 than in 1990, and the Kansas Department of Human Resources also indicates a higher rate of unemployment in 2000 and a steady increase in unemployment rates over the last five years (see “Unemployment rate” under “Economic Well-Being”).
- Census data shows a decrease in the percentage of families living below the poverty level, while the percentage of families in poverty with children (under 18 years) increased. The percent of female-headed households with children living in poverty also increased (see also “Economic Well-Being” for other measurements of poverty).

	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population	31,028	100.0	32,869	100.0
<u>Sex and Age</u>				
Male	15,035	48.5	15,968	48.6
Female	15,993	51.5	16,901	51.4
Under 5 years	2,130	6.9	2,167	6.6
Under 18 years	8,170	26.3	8,555	26.0

## Race

White	29,300	94.4	29,924	91.0
Black or African American	551	1.8	522	1.6
American Indian & Alaska Native	145	.5	171	.5
Asian or Pacific Islander	212	.7	181	.6
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,616	5.2	2,620	8.0

## Households by Type

Total Households	11, 581		12,581	
Family Households (families)	8,356	72.2	8,930	71.0
With own children under 18			4,123	32.8
Married-couple families	7,290	62.9	7,579	60.2
With own children under 18			3,269	26.0
Female householder	810	7.0	966	7.7
With own children under 18			640	5.1
Households with individuals under 18 years	4,192	36.2	4,386	34.9

## Employment Status

Population 16 years and over	23,700		25,408	
In labor force	15,561	65.7	16,922	66.6
Civilian labor force	15,547	65.6	16,908	66.5
Employed	14,999	63.3	16,285	64.1
Unemployed	548	2.3	623	2.5
(Percent)				(3.7)
Armed Forces	14	.06	14	0.1
Not in labor force	8,139	34.3	8,486	33.4

## Income and Poverty Status (1989, 1999)

	1989		1999	
Income				
Households	11,600		12,607	
Less than \$10,000	1,638	14.1	929	7.4
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1,081	9.3	764	6.1
\$15,000 to \$24,999	2,537	21.9	1,695	13.4
\$25,000 to \$34,999	2,190	18.9	1,886	15.0

\$35,000 to \$49,999	2,330	20.1	2,438	19.3
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,354	11.7	2,863	22.7
\$75,000 to \$99,999	243	2.1	1,279	10.1
\$100,000 to \$149,999	115	0.1	577	4.6
\$150,000 or more	112	0.1	176	1.4

Median household income (dollars) 27,539 40,907

<b>Families</b>	<b>8,422</b>		<b>8,971</b>	
Less than \$10,000	491	5.8	236	2.6
\$10,000 to \$14,999	539	6.4	226	2.5
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,808	21.5	918	10.2
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,755	20.8	1,280	14.3
\$35,000 to \$49,999	2,150	25.5	1,939	21.6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,257	14.9	2,551	28.4
\$75,000 to \$99,999	210	2.5	1,157	12.9
\$100,000 to \$149,999	112	1.3	514	5.7
\$150,000 or more	100	1.2	150	1.7

Median family income (dollars) 32,955 48,793

## Poverty Status<sup>1</sup>

<b>Total Families</b>	<b>8,422</b>		<b>8,971</b>	
<b>Families below poverty level</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>4.2</b>
With related children under 18 yrs	329		275	
Percent (of families below poverty level)		70.6		73.7
With related children under 5 yrs	169		127	
Percent (of families below poverty level)		36.5		34.0

<sup>1</sup> Poverty status is based on the following computation by the Census Bureau (this computation differs from that used by the Kansas Department of Health and Human Services):

If total family income is less than the threshold appropriate for that family:

- the family is in poverty
- all family members have the same poverty status
- for individuals who do not live with family members, their own income is compared with the appropriate threshold

1989 Threshold for a family: (see <http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thresh89.html>)

1999 Threshold for a family: (see <http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thresh99.html>)

For State of Kansas measurements of children and families in poverty, see "Economic Well-Being." For the federal poverty guidelines used to determine eligibility for free and reduced lunches and other services, see <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/03poverty.htm>.

*Poverty thresholds* are the statistical version of the poverty measure and are issued by the Census Bureau. They are used for calculating the number of persons in poverty in the United States or in states and regions.

*Poverty guidelines* are the administrative version of the poverty measure and are issued by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). They are a simplification of the poverty thresholds and are used in determining financial eligibility for certain federal programs.

<b>Female householder families, no husband present</b>	<b>681</b>		<b>966</b>	
Percent of total families	8.1		10.8	
<b>Families below poverty level</b>	<b>155</b>		<b>220</b>	
With related children under 18 yrs	142		205	
Percent (of female householder families below poverty level)		91.6		93.2
With related children under 5 yrs	72		89	
Percent (of female householder families below poverty level)		46.5		40.5

### **Housing Occupancy and Tenure**

Total Housing Units	12,190		13,378	
Occupied housing units	11,581	95.0	12,581	94.0
Vacant housing units	709	5.8	797	6.0
Owner occupied units	7,925	65.0	9,042	71.9
Renter occupied units	3,656	30.0	3,539	28.1
Average household size				
Owner occupied	2.65		2.62	
Renter occupied	2.29		2.20	

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## Quantitative Data Results:

# Indicators of Risk for Preschool and School Age Children and their Families in Harvey County

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### Economic Well-Being

Children and families living in poverty face a variety of risks that affect children's physical and emotional health and success in school. According to Kansas Action for Children, 2003 analyses of Census 2000 data suggest that the number of children growing up poor in Kansas is on the rise. The Kansas Action for Children 2003 Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Book states:

Child poverty is of particular concern as the United States has reached an all-time high for the proportion of poor children in families whose parents are working. Living poor means living with serious deprivations such as lack of food, utility shutoff, crowded housing and lack of a stove or refrigerator. Poor children are also more likely to face a range of risks, such as inadequate nutrition, environmental toxins, trauma and abuse, low-quality child care and parental substance abuse. The impact on children is an increase in health problems, educational problems and the likelihood that they will be poor themselves as an adult.

The Free and Reduced Lunch Program is an important indicator because children who experience hunger and food insecurity face a variety of consequences including:

- Poorer overall health status and compromised ability to resist illness.
- More frequent health problems such as stomachaches, headaches, colds, ear infections and fatigue.
- Higher incidence of hospitalizations.
- Higher levels of aggression, hyperactivity and anxiety.
- Difficulty getting along with other children.
- Increased need for mental health services.
- Impaired cognitive functioning and diminished capacity to learn.
- Lower test scores and poorer overall school achievement.
- Increased school absences, tardiness and school suspension.

Economic need is related to unemployment but also to wages. Families may have members working but still live in poverty. The Children's Defense Fund gives the following national information for 2002:

- Three out of four poor children live in a working family.

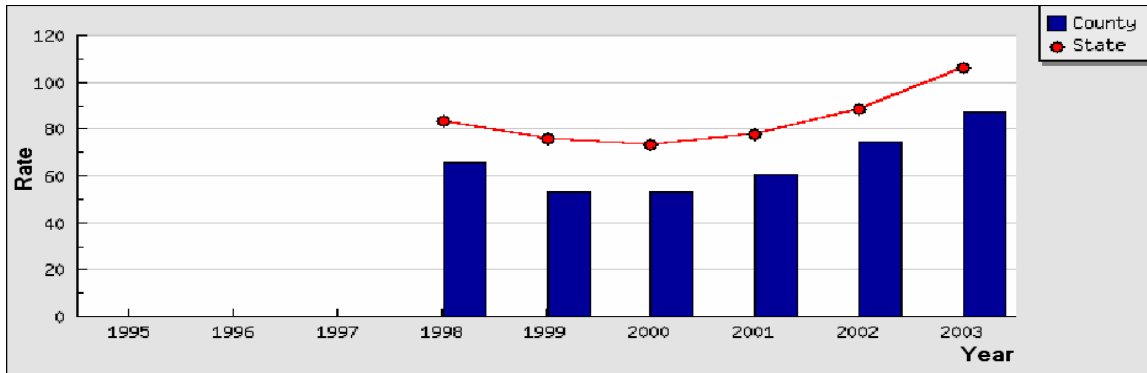
- The number of parents unemployed long term has tripled in the last two years.
- The traditional safety net for jobless workers – Unemployment Insurance – fails to catch many low-income jobless parents.

The rates of eligibility for food stamps, Temporary Aid to Needy Families, and free and reduced school lunches indicate economic need. The following data show increased participation in these programs over that last five years in Harvey County and in Kansas. The number of children in families receiving food stamps in Harvey County increased over 30 percent between 1999 and 2003. The rate of persons participating in the TANF program doubled between 1999 and 2003, after a steady decrease between 1995 and 1999. The percentage of children approved for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program increased by about seven percent from 1999 to 2003. Unemployment rates for Harvey County rose from 2.6 percent in 1999 to 5.4 percent in 2003.

**Data**

**Children in families receiving food stamps**

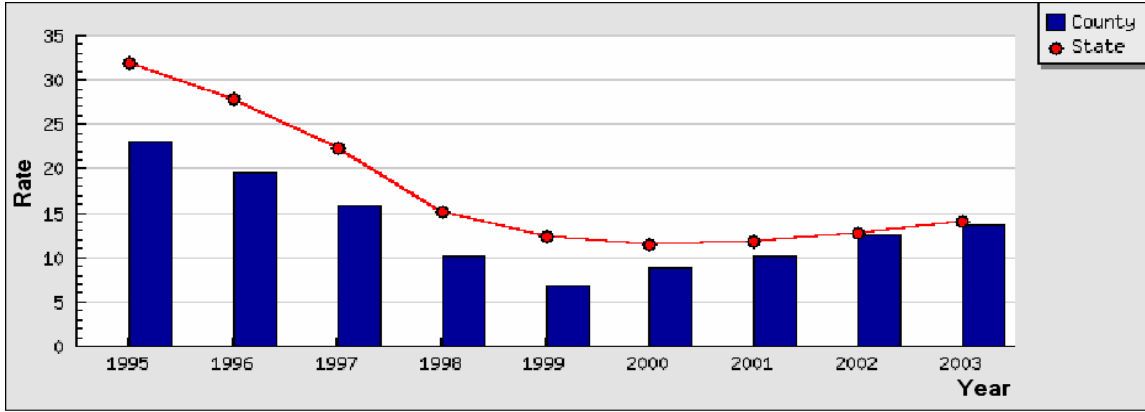
The number of children under the age of 18 receiving food stamps per 1,000 children under the age of 18. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>				65.75	53.08	53.07	60.78	74.76	86.89
<b>Kansas State Data</b>				83.22	75.68	73.51	77.81	88.58	105.88

## Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF)

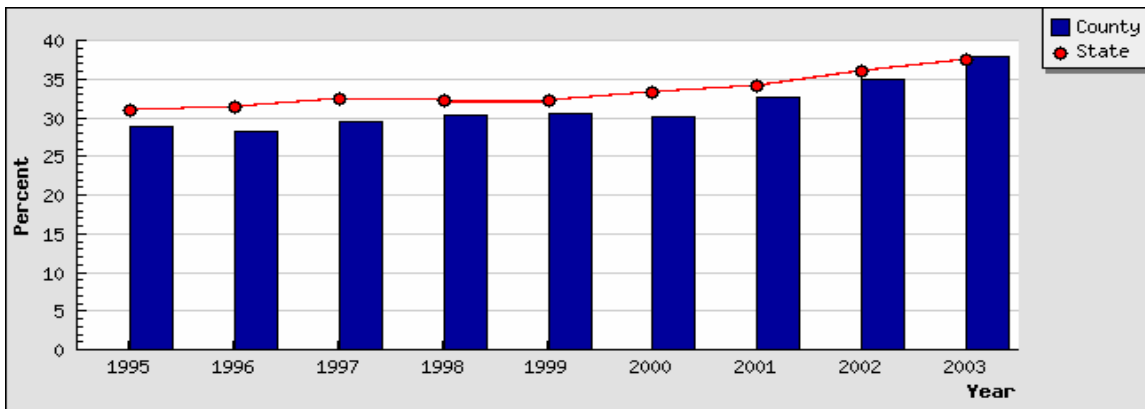
The rate of persons (all ages) participating in Temporary Aid for Needy Families program per 1,000 population. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	22.99	19.58	15.86	10.04	6.86	8.82	10.17	12.58	13.6
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	31.82	27.88	22.26	15.12	12.34	11.42	11.8	12.69	14.04

## Free and Reduced Lunch Program

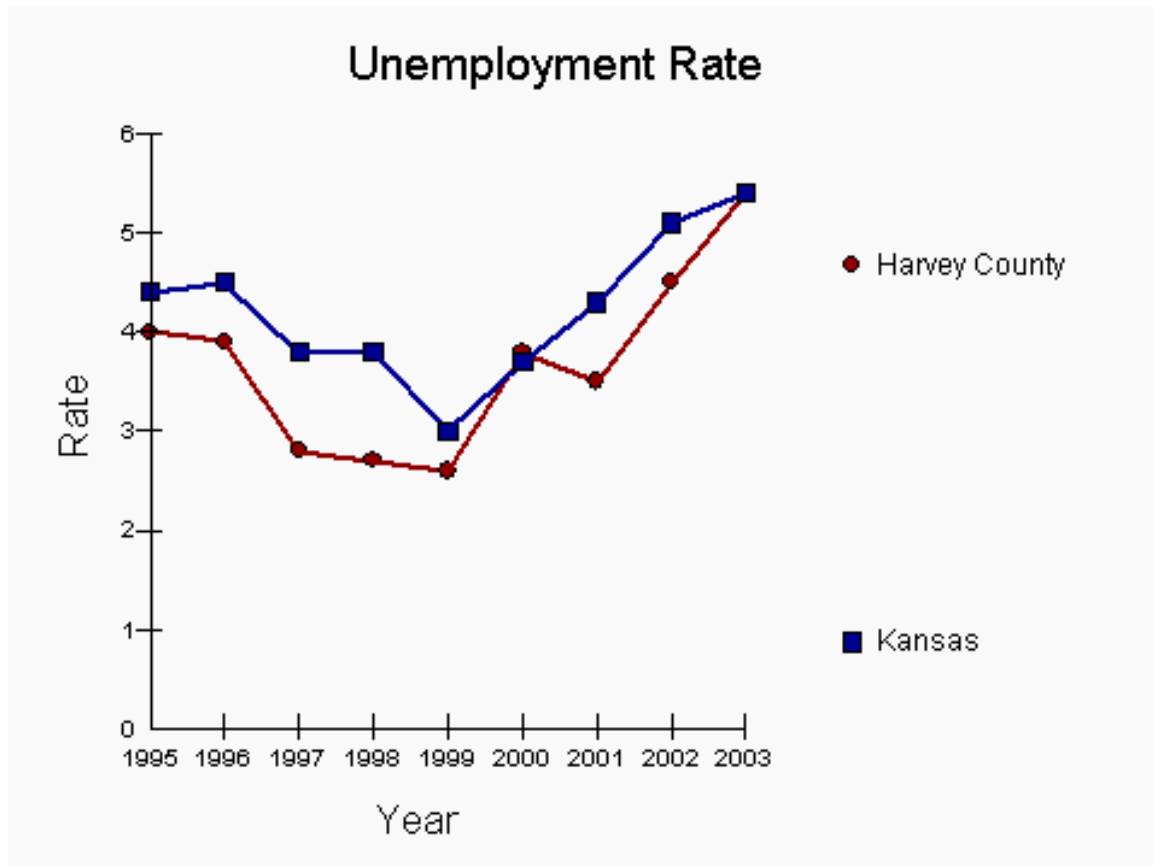
The percentage of students in public schools (K-12) whose applications have been approved for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Education.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	28.79	28.13	29.54	30.25	30.53	30.17	32.69	35.01	37.92
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	30.97	31.44	32.4	32.24	32.18	33.27	34.15	36.04	37.51

## Unemployment Rate

Source: Kansas Department of Human Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics<sup>2</sup>



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<i>Harvey County Data</i>	4.0	3.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	3.8	3.5	4.5	5.4
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	4.4	4.5	3.8	3.8	3.0	3.7	4.3	5.1	5.4

<sup>2</sup> Kansas Department of Human Resources' basic definitions of employment and unemployment:

- People with jobs are employed. People who don't work, are looking for jobs, and who are available for work are unemployed. People who are either employed or unemployed are in the labor force.
- The statistics include civilians 16 years of age and older, counted at the location where they live. Military personnel are not included, but civilian employees of the military are included as employed.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, children and families in Harvey County have experienced increased economic need over the last five years. The data concludes that more children live in poverty in Harvey County today than did five years ago. The trends for rates of children in families receiving food stamps, participation in TANF, eligibility for free and reduced lunch, and unemployment are all steady upward trends. Harvey County trends mirror Kansas trends.

## **Education, K-12**

Education helps children succeed in life. The Kansas Action for Children *2003 Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Book* notes:

Put simply, getting a high school degree pays off. High school graduates are more likely to be gainfully employed and have higher earnings than those who drop out. Youth who fail to graduate are more likely to experience these challenges:

- Having children at a younger age.
- Single parenting.
- Reliance on public assistance.
- Criminal activity and imprisonment.
- The children of high school dropouts are also more likely to experience school problems and school failure.

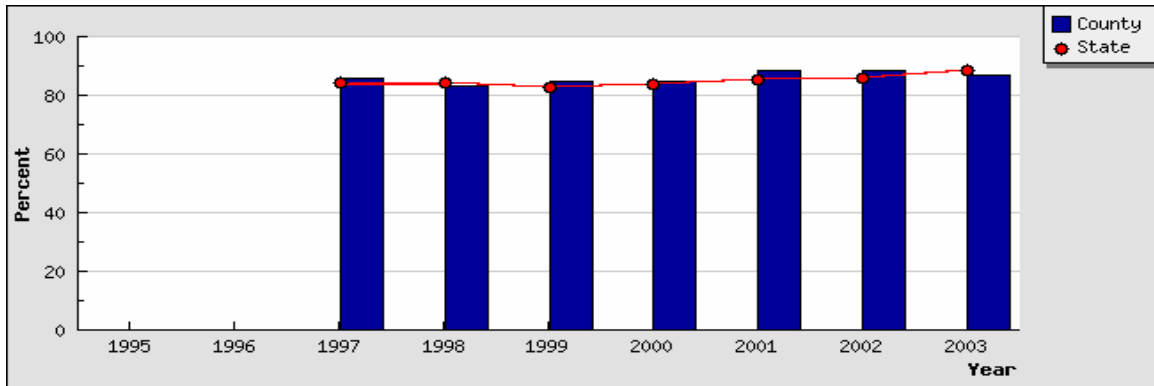
The data below show the graduation, attendance and dropout rates for Harvey County schools. The data also provide student perceptions of opportunities to be involved in out-of-class school activities, school safety, and positive interaction with teachers. In Harvey County, the high school graduation rate rose from 1999 to 2002, and then dropped slightly in 2003, falling below the Kansas rate. Dropout rates have stayed under three percent in the last five years and dropped to 1.65 percent in 2003, the lowest rate in 10 years, after rising above the Kansas rate in 2002. School attendance rates have remained steady around 94 percent. Student perceptions of school activities, safety and teachers have not changed significantly in the last five years. Student were less positive about school activity opportunities in 2003 than in the previous four years, indicated they felt less safe at school in 2003 than in 2002, and were noticeably more positive about their interaction with teachers in 2003 than the previous four years.

## Data

### High school graduation rate

The number of 12th grade graduates divided by the sum of graduates and all dropouts reported over the four-year period. Transfers are accounted for in the total graduates.

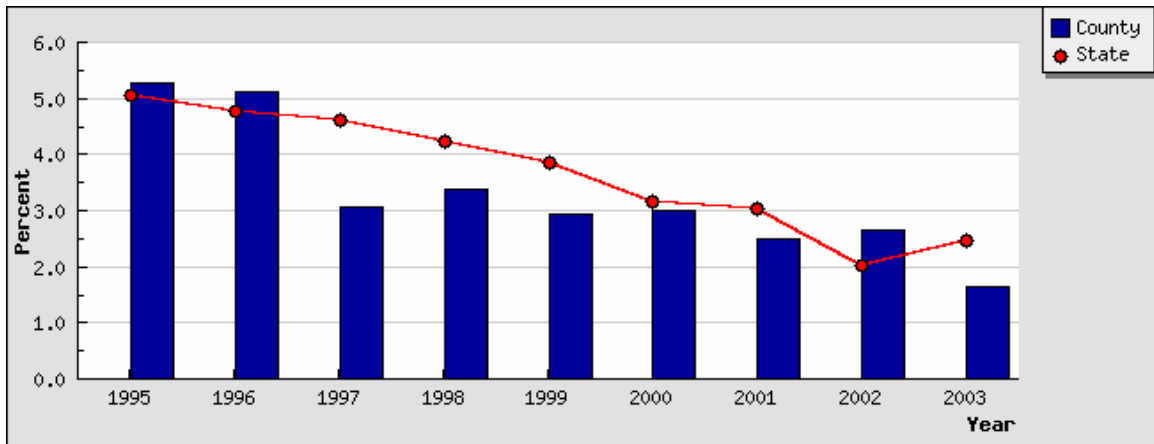
Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Education.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>			86	83.2	84.5	84.5	88.3	88.61	86.6
<b>Kansas State Data</b>			84.1	84.1	82.7	83.7	85.2	85.7	88.2

### Event Dropouts

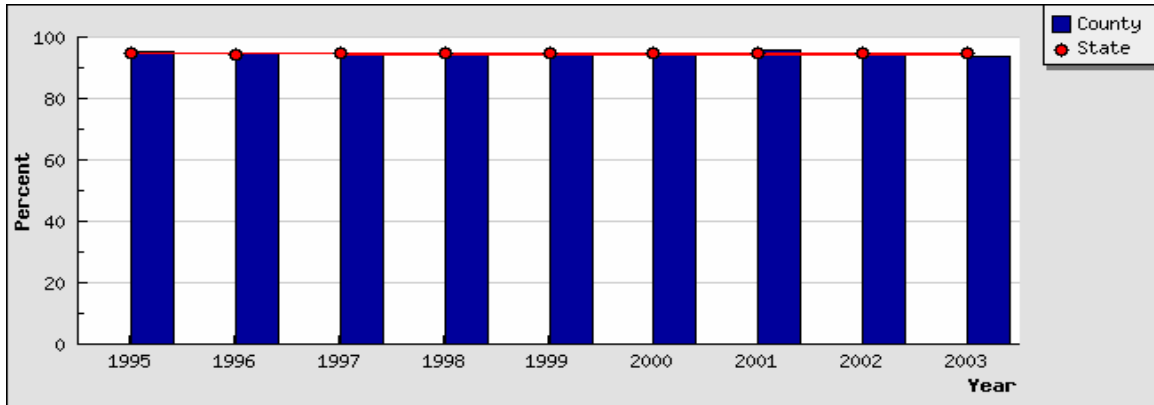
The percentage of students (grades nine through 12) who drop out of school in a single year without completing high school. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Education.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	5.27	5.11	3.06	3.38	2.95	2.99	2.51	2.64	1.65
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	5.05	4.76	4.61	4.22	3.85	3.16	3.04	2.03	2.45

## School attendance rate

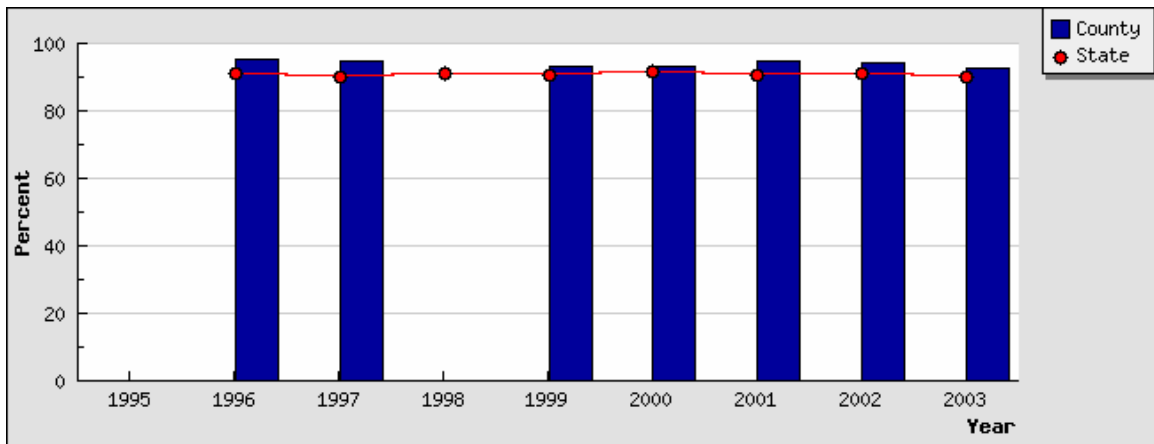
The total average daily attendance divided by the total average daily enrollment. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Education.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	95.31	94.61	94.16	94.55	94.07	94.58	95.6	94.44	93.57
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	94.82	94.39	94.79	94.64	94.57	94.92	94.92	94.93	94.85

## Involvement in school activities (student perceptions of)

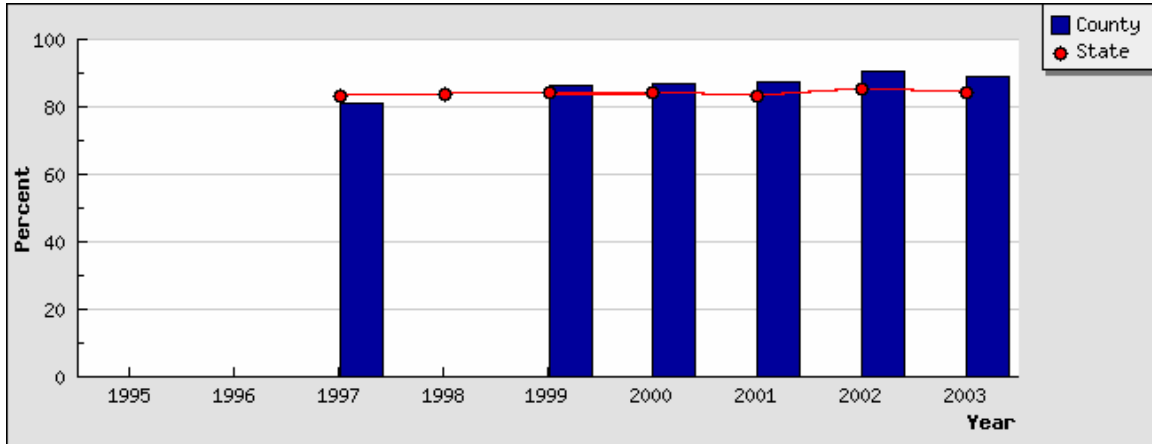
The percentage of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who answered yes or YES! to the statement “There are lots of chances for students in my school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.” The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies. Source: Connect Kansas and the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	95.20	94.50	93.30	93.42	94.84	94.20	92.70	92.70
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	91.20	90.09	90.83	90.74	91.43	90.77	90.80	89.90

## School safety (student perceptions of)

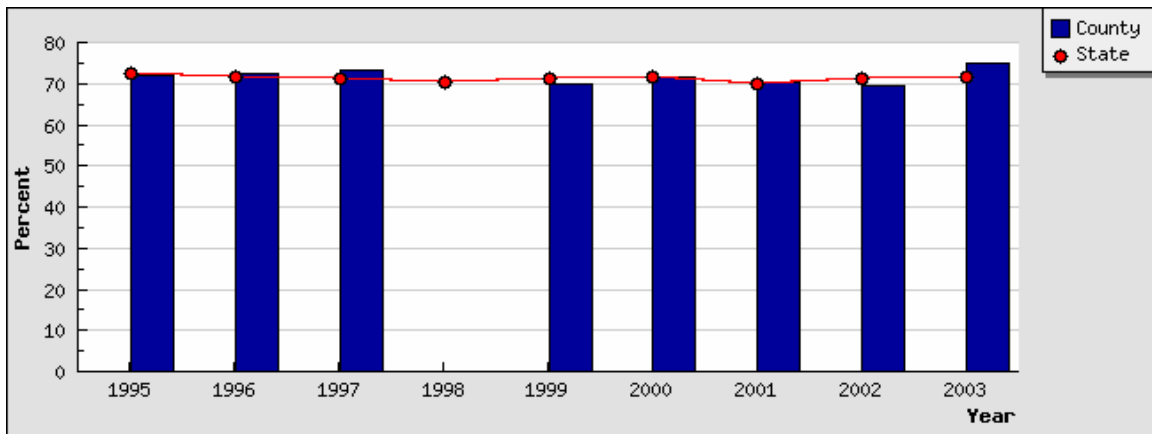
The percentage of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who answered yes or YES! to the statement “I feel safe at my school.” The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies. Source: Connect Kansas and the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>			81.10		86.54	86.81	87.42	90.70	89.20
<b>Kansas State Data</b>			82.90	83.76	84.31	84.22	83.32	85.50	84.00

## Positive interaction with teachers (student perceptions of)

The percentage of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who answered yes or YES! to the statement “My teacher(s) notices when I am doing a good job and lets me know about it.” The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies. Source: Connect Kansas and the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	72.00	72.50	73.40		69.78	71.76	70.15	69.60	75.10
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	72.60	71.50	71.17	70.47	71.13	71.41	70.09	71.30	71.60

## **Conclusion**

In summary, K-12 education in Harvey County appears to be strong and stable. Rates of high school graduation have remained steady and near the Kansas rate for the last five years. The high school dropout rate is the lowest in nine years. School attendance rates remain high, and students' perceptions of school remain generally positive.

## **Early Childhood Education and Health**

(See also "Childcare Availability" and "Child Abuse and Neglect" under "Health and Safety.")

Early childhood education and health affect the long-term well being of children and families. According to a 2004 report by Voices for America's Children and the Child and Family Policy Center investment in early childhood education is important because:

- Families with young children are those who are most likely to struggle economically and are in the least position to be able to privately pay for additional educational and developmental services and supports.
- Comprehensive, high quality investments in education and development in the early years have demonstrated high monetary returns-on-investment—both to government and society in reduced social costs and increased economic activity and to the individuals served in improved economic status.

The Kansas Action for Children 2004 Kids Count Data Book explains the benefits of Head Start and similar programs:

Head Start is considered one of the nation's premier early childhood programs that serves children in low-income families. Like other high-quality early childhood programs, Head Start is cost-effective. These kinds of early education programs have been shown to benefit children in many ways. In the short term, early childhood education improves young children's school readiness. In the long term it:

- Increases the likelihood that children will be literate, employed and go to college.
- Decreases the chances that children will become school dropouts, dependent on welfare and arrested for juvenile delinquency or adult criminal activity.
- Helps all areas of children's development—physical, cognitive, social and psychological. Investing in high-quality early childhood education is clearly a win-win for children, families and the community.

The data below measure the availability of Head Start, licensed preschools, and child care in general. The data also measure the percentage of children fully immunized by Kindergarten. The Kansas Department of Health & Environment reports six licensed preschools in Harvey County for each of the last three years, and seven for the previous three years. The number of Head Start slots available per 3-4 year olds living below the poverty threshold held steady around 63 percent (63 slots per 100 children) from 2000-2001 and then dropped to 56 percent in 2003. This mirrored the Kansas trend, but Harvey County rates remain below the Kansas rate for the last three years. Childcare capacity for

children under 13 in Harvey County dropped significantly from 1999 to 2001 and then rose slightly by 2003, remaining below the Kansas rate for the last four years. The percentage of children who were fully immunized upon entering kindergarten in Harvey County increased by 10 percent from 1999 to 2001 and has decreased slightly over the last two years. Immunization rates remain close to Kansas rates for the last three years.

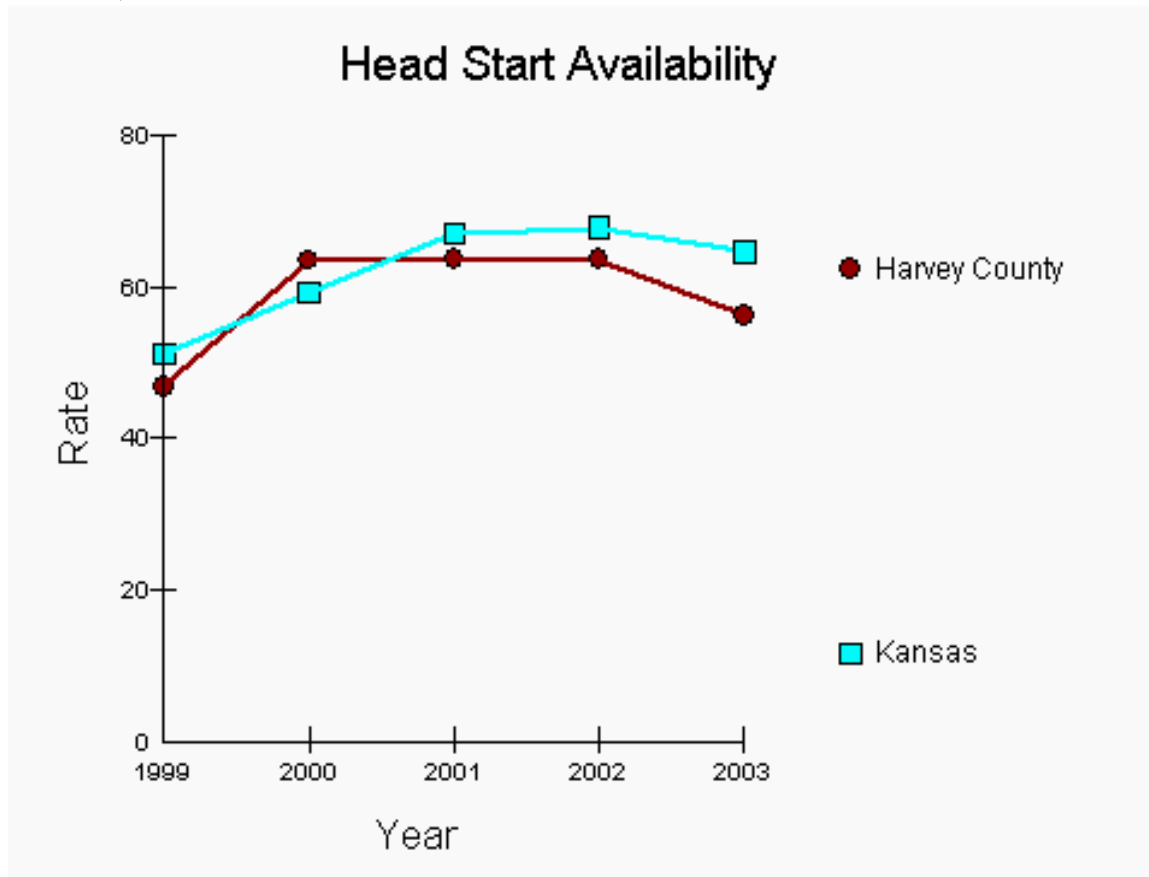
Lastly, the 2003 Report Card also notes that the percent of Harvey County’s median household income spent on child care has increased for all age groups (infant to 6+ years old) over the last three years.

## Data

### Head Start availability

Number of Head Start slots available per 3-4 (slots per 100) year olds living below the poverty threshold

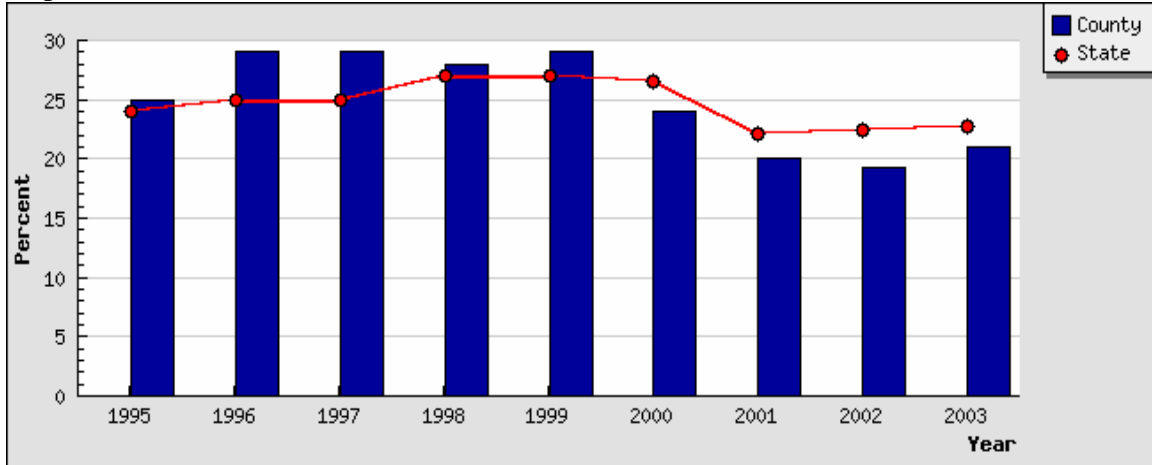
Source: Kansas Action for Children CLIKS, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; U.S. Bureau of The Census.



	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County</b>	46.8	63.5	63.6	63.6	56.2
<b>Kansas</b>	51.1	59.2	67.0	67.8	64.7

## Child care availability

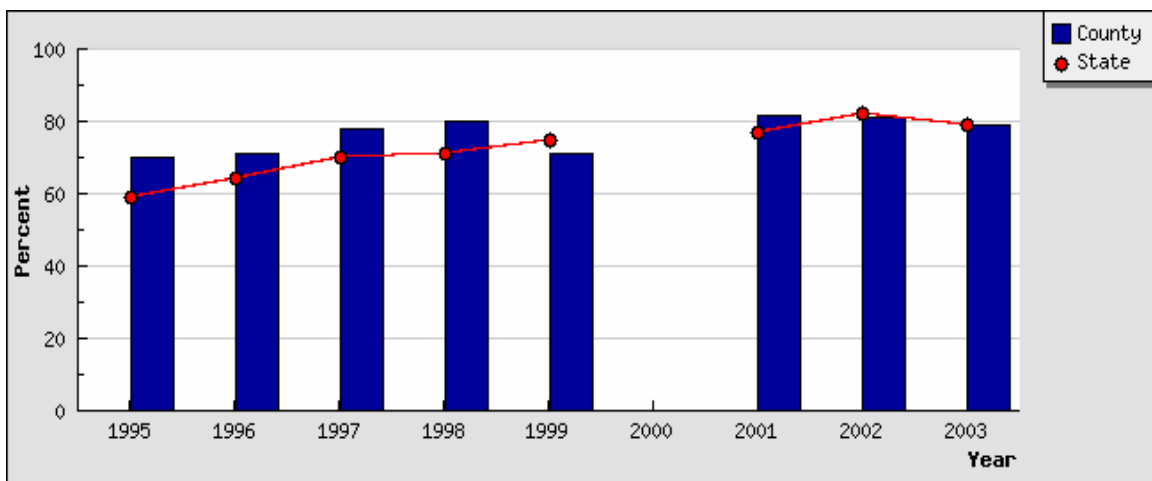
The child care capacity for children under the age of 13 including the number of registered daycare homes, licensed daycare homes, group daycare homes, and child care centers per 100 children under the age of 13. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Health & Environment.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	25	29	29	28	29	24	20.06	19.22	21.06
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	24	25	25	27	27	26.6	22.06	22.46	22.76

## Kindergartners fully immunized

The percentage of children in kindergarten who were adequately immunized by age two, based on a retrospective survey of immunization certificates at the time of enrollment in kindergarten. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Health & Environment.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	70	71	78	80	71	81.8	81	79	79
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	59	64	70	71	74.9	77.1	82	79	79

## **Conclusion**

In summary, early childhood programs are available but capacity is a problem. Head Start availability dropped in 2003 after sitting at 63 percent for the previous three years. Child care capacity dropped from 1999-2002 and rose slightly in 2003 to only 21 percent. Affordability of child care continues to be an issue, and Harvey County families are spending more on child care than three years ago. In the area of physical health, the percent of children fully immunized by the time they enter Kindergarten remains around 80 percent for the last three years, near the Kansas rate.

## **Health and Safety**

The health and safety of children and their families affects children's ability to do well in school and succeed in life. Data in this section measure health and safety in Harvey County by analyzing rates of the following indicators:

- Child Abuse
- Adolescent Pregnancy
- Childcare Availability
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Violent Crime

The data show the following trends:

- The rate of reported cases of child abuse in Harvey County have decreased slightly between 2001 and 2003 after reaching 54 per 1000 in 2001, and remains consistently below the Kansas rate. In 2001, the Harvey County rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect victims rose above the Kansas rate, with the highest rate of the years 1998-2003. Since 2001, the rate of substantiated cases in Harvey County has been declining and, according to preliminary findings, reached 7.4 per 1000 in 2003, which is below the Kansas rate.
- Harvey County adolescent pregnancy rates reached 17 per 1000 in 1998, declined to nearly eight per 1000 in 2000, and rose to 11 per 1000 by 2002. Data for 2003 was not available. After remaining below the state rate in 2000 and 2001, Harvey County nearly matched the Kansas rate of adolescent pregnancy in 2002.
- Childcare capacity for children under age 13 in Harvey County dropped significantly from 1999 to 2001 and has remained around 20 percent from 2001-2003.
- The percentage of children surveyed who identified drug and alcohol problems in their family rose slightly from 1999 to 2003. The most significant changes in rates related to drug and alcohol abuse in Harvey County are a decrease in the percentage of student who report coming to school drunk or high, an increase in the percentage of students who said they would not be caught by their parents if they drank alcohol, and an increase in the percentage of students who said their

parents did not know where they were or with whom when the student was out of the house.

- The Harvey County violent crime rate remains around two percent and is consistently below the Kansas rate.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Child abuse and neglect can have long-term bearing on children's ability to succeed in school and in life. As the Children's Defense Fund states:

All children should be raised in safe, nurturing, and loving families. It is a tragedy when children are victimized by abuse, neglect, alcohol and drug abuse, or domestic violence. The physical or emotional scars from such experiences can sometimes last a lifetime if not treated. They can prevent children from learning in school. They can make young people more vulnerable to violence and alcohol and drug abuse. It must be an urgent priority to strengthen the web of child and family supports to keep children safe, to prevent problems before they occur, and to resolve problems that do happen before they become crises.

Kansas Action for Children explains the impacts of child abuse and neglect:

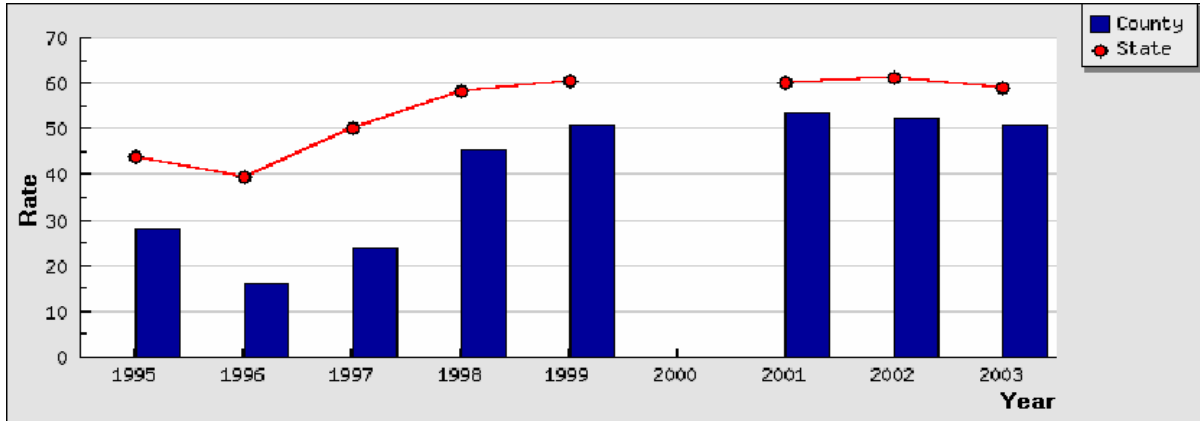
Abuse and neglect increase the risk of low academic achievement, alcohol and other drug abuse, teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. Child maltreatment also increases costs for our communities by adding to expenses for child welfare, mental health and substance abuse services; police and court intervention; correction facilities; public assistance and special education.

The data below measure rates of reported and substantiated child abuse and neglect cases. In Harvey County, the rate of reported child abuse and neglect cases has decreased by about three per 1000 children in the last three years, after rising in the previous three years to an all-time high for the last nine years in 2001. The Harvey County rate of reported abuse remains consistently below the Kansas rate. However, in 2001, the rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect victims rose above the Kansas rate, with the highest rate of the years 1998-2003. Since 2001, the rate of substantiated cases in Harvey County has been declining and, according to preliminary findings, reached 7.4 per 1000 in 2003, which is below the Kansas rate.

## Data

### Reported child abuse and neglect cases

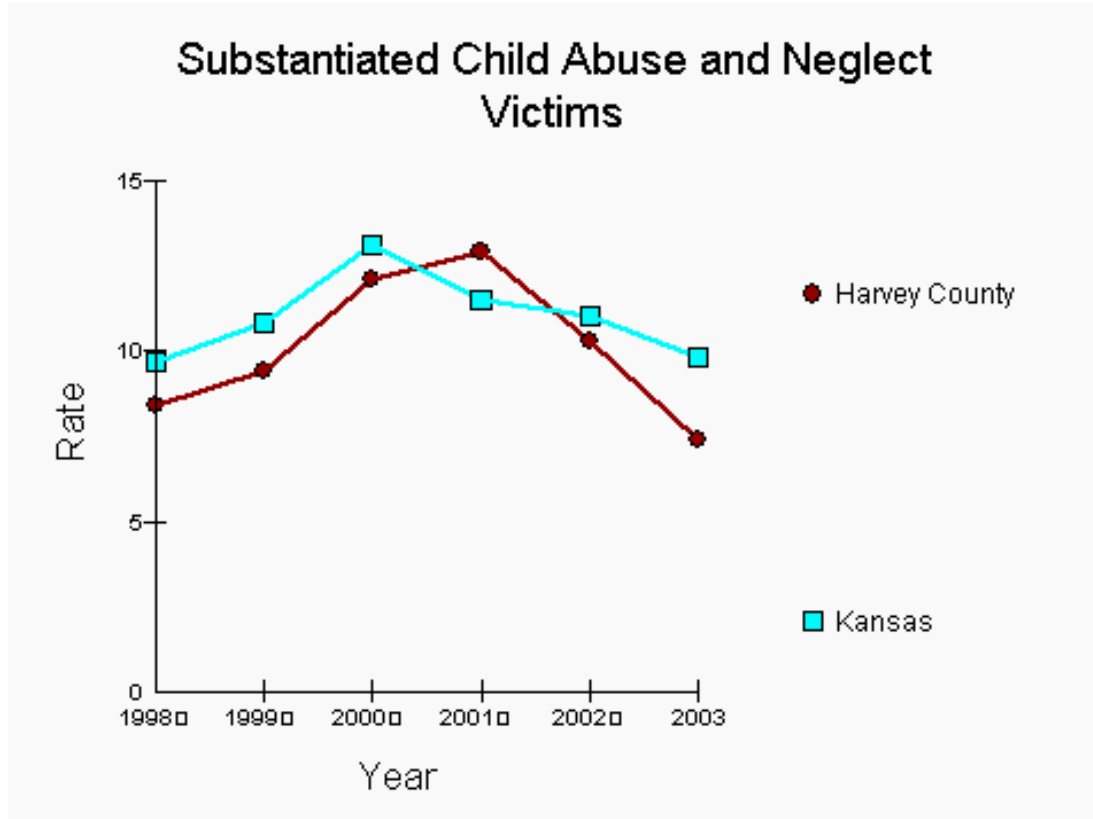
Harvey County rate of reported child abuse and neglect cases per 1000 children under the age of 18. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Health & Environment.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	28.16	16.18	23.97	45.42	50.93		53.54	52.25	50.96
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	43.95	39.36	50.1	58.12	60.38		59.87	61.08	58.78

## Substantiated child abuse and neglect victims<sup>3</sup>

Harvey County rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect victims per 1,000 children 0 to 17 years of age. Source: Kansas Children's Report Card, Kansas Action for Children.



	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	8.4	9.4	12.1	12.9	10.3	7.4
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	9.7	10.8	13.1	11.5	11.0	9.8

## Adolescent Pregnancy

Adolescent pregnancy and birth can affect the mother's—and the child's—ability to succeed in school and life. Pregnancies that do not end in live births can still impact the mother's emotional and physical health. According to the Kansas Action for Children *2003 Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Book*:

Although teen birth rates have reached historic lows, the United States still has the highest rate in the industrialized world. Teen births result in challenges and difficulties for both young mothers and their children. Teen mothers' future prospects dramatically decline as they are less likely to complete school, more likely to be a single parent, to live in poverty and to receive public assistance. Babies born to young mothers are more likely to be low birth weight, have

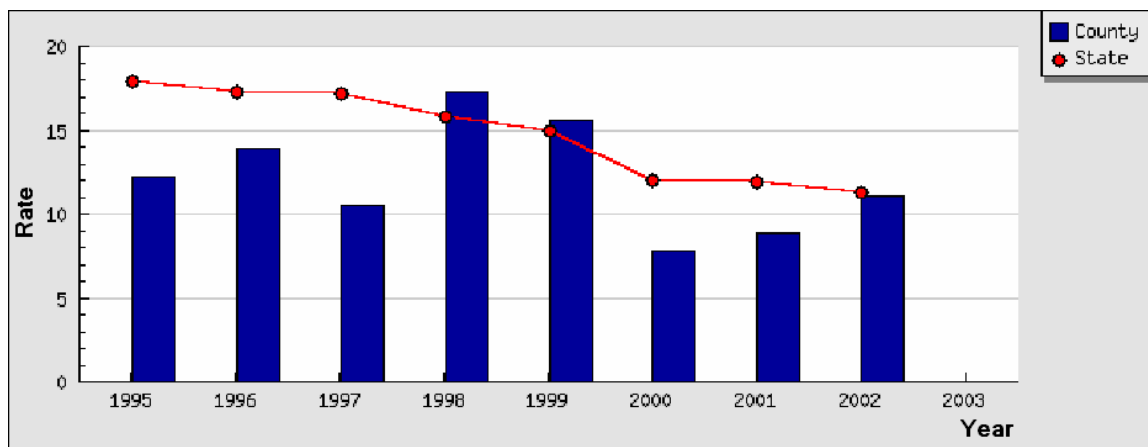
<sup>3</sup> 2003 rates are preliminary findings from Kansas Action for Children.

childhood health problems in school, suffer abuse and neglect and become a teen parent themselves.

Harvey County adolescent pregnancy rates per 1000 females aged 10-17 reached 17 in 1998, declined to nearly eight by 2000, and rose to 11 by 2002. After remaining below the state rate in 2000 and 2001, Harvey County nearly matched the (declining) Kansas rate of adolescent pregnancy in 2002. Data for 2003 were not available.

## Data

The rate of pregnancies (live births, abortions, miscarriages) per 1,000 females ages 10 to 17. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Health & Environment.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	12.24	13.91	10.57	17.25	15.58	7.8	8.81	11.0	
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	17.89	17.31	17.13	15.8	14.99	11.97	11.94	11.3	

## Child Care Availability

(See also “Early Childhood Education and Health” under “Education.”)

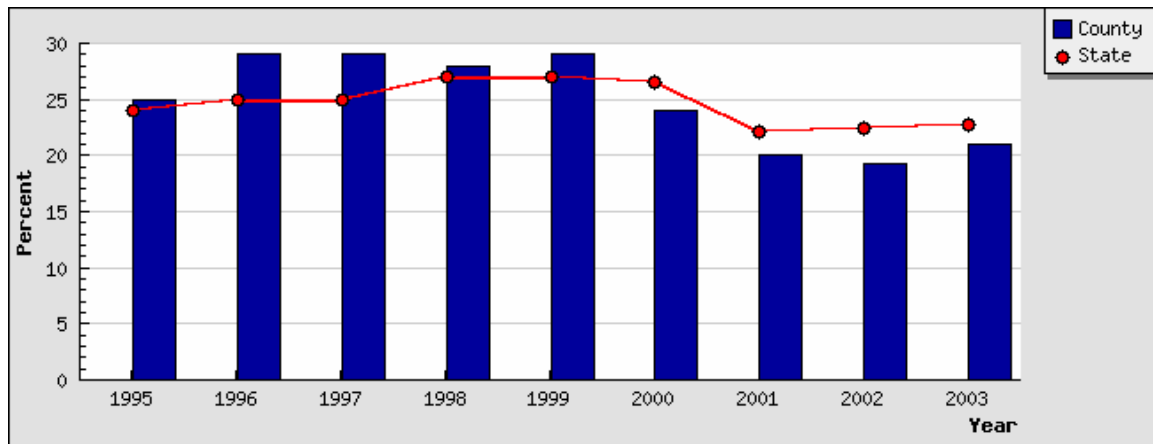
Child care availability affects the ability of parents to support their families. Quality child care can benefit children’s development. The Kansas Action for Children *2003 Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Book* states:

Child care is essential for self-sufficient families. Child care must be available for parents to work and successfully support their families. As more and more mothers of young children have entered the workforce, child care has grown increasingly important. The need is underscored by a growing number of single parent families. Moreover, the quality of child care programs is highly important as this is a time in children’s lives when they need to be exposed to a variety of rich experiences. Experts clearly agree that quality child care benefits children’s language, physical, social and emotional development.

The data below measure child care capacity for children under the age of 13 in Harvey County. Childcare capacity dropped significantly from 1999 to 2001 and then rose slightly by 2003. The rate has remained around 20 percent from 2001-2003, and is below the Kansas rate for the last four years.

## Data

The child care capacity for children under the age of 13 including the number of slots in registered daycare homes, licensed daycare homes, group daycare homes, and child care centers per 100 children under the age of 13. Source: Connect Kansas, Kansas Department of Health & Environment.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	25	29	29	28	29	24	20.06	19.22	21.06
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	24	25	25	27	27	26.6	22.06	22.46	22.76

## Drugs and Alcohol

Use of drugs and alcohol by children and family members can affect a child's ability to do well in school and impact physical and emotional health. According to the Children's Defense Fund, children whose parents abuse drugs and alcohol are almost three times more likely to be abused and more than four times more likely to be neglected than children of parents who do not abuse alcohol and drugs. Kansas Action for Children notes that teens who use drugs are more likely to fail in school, have health problems, and participate in crime.

The Kansas Action for Children *2003 Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Book* offers the following information on the risks surrounding tobacco, alcohol and drug use for children, particularly teens:

## **Tobacco**

Nicotine is one of the most heavily used addictive drugs in the United States. Unfortunately, it can have serious consequences. While most adults understand the health consequences of tobacco use, many teens appear not to or to ignore them. Importantly, preventing smoking may prevent other drug use. Young people who use tobacco are more likely than others to drink heavily later or use illicit drugs. Tobacco use also damages the user's health. Cigarette smoking causes heart disease; stroke; chronic lung disease; and cancers of the lung, mouth, pharynx, esophagus and bladder. The most serious of all consequences of tobacco use is that it is addictive and it can kill the user.

## **Alcohol and Binge Drinking**

One of the most significant reasons to pay attention to binge drinking among teens is because it increases their risk for alcohol-related injuries and deaths. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among youth younger than 20. Alcohol is often involved. Youth who binge drink are more likely to miss class and fall behind in schoolwork. Binge drinking among teens is also associated with illicit drug use. In sum, binge drinking often results in poor decision-making, high-risk behaviors and negative outcomes.

## **Other Drugs**

Experimenting during the teen years is normal adolescent behavior. However, teens often do not see or fully understand consequences and they feel indestructible. Drug use can, therefore, be quickly and easily minimized by teens. Unfortunately, it can have serious negative effects on their lives. Teens who use drugs have increased school failure, physical and mental health problems and involvement with violent crime and the juvenile justice system. Use at a young age is also associated with increased use in later life. Some teens will become dependent on drugs, move on to more serious drugs and develop serious destructive behaviors.

The following data measure factors related to drug and alcohol use that raise the risk for children and families in Harvey County. Some data from the last five years is available only for the years 1999 and 2003, when the *Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey* was administered.

According to the 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders surveyed, drug and alcohol abuse in Harvey County families increased slightly from 1999 to 2003 and remains above the Kansas rate. More students said their parents would *not* disapprove of them drinking in 2003 than in 1999. The percent of students who said their parents would *not* disapprove of them smoking cigarettes decreased from 1999 to 2003. The percentage of students who reported having sold illegal drugs decreased between 1999 and 2003. The percentage of students who reported attending school drunk or high decreased between 1999 and 2003. The percentage of students who said they would not be caught by their parents if they drank alcohol rose from 17 percent in 1999 to 28.3 percent in 2003. The percentage of

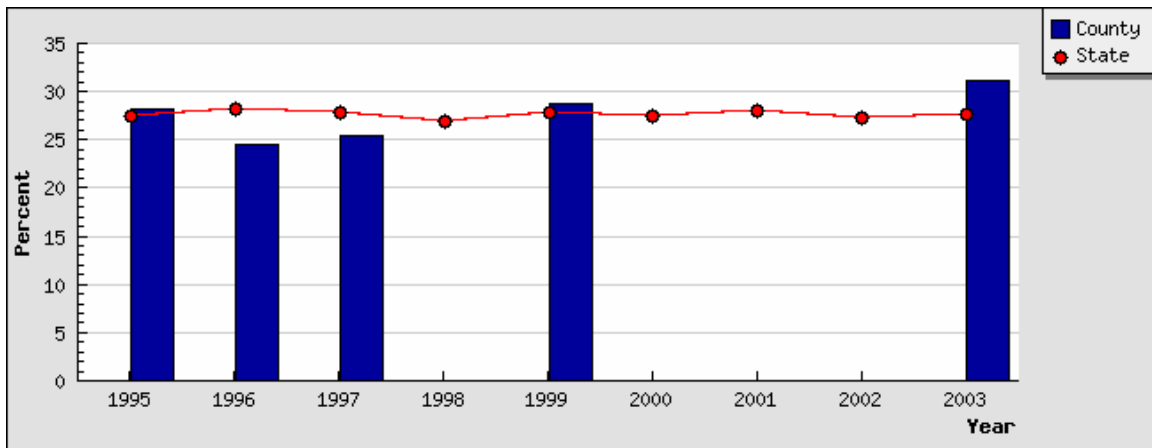
students who said their parents did not know where they were or with whom when students were out of the house rose from 8.3 in 1999 to 15.2 percent in 2003.

At no point in the last nine years were the Harvey County rates for drug and alcohol abuse, perceived parental approval of drinking and smoking, students selling illegal drugs and students attending school drunk or high more than four percent greater than rates for the State of Kansas.

## Data

### Family history of alcohol and/or drug abuse

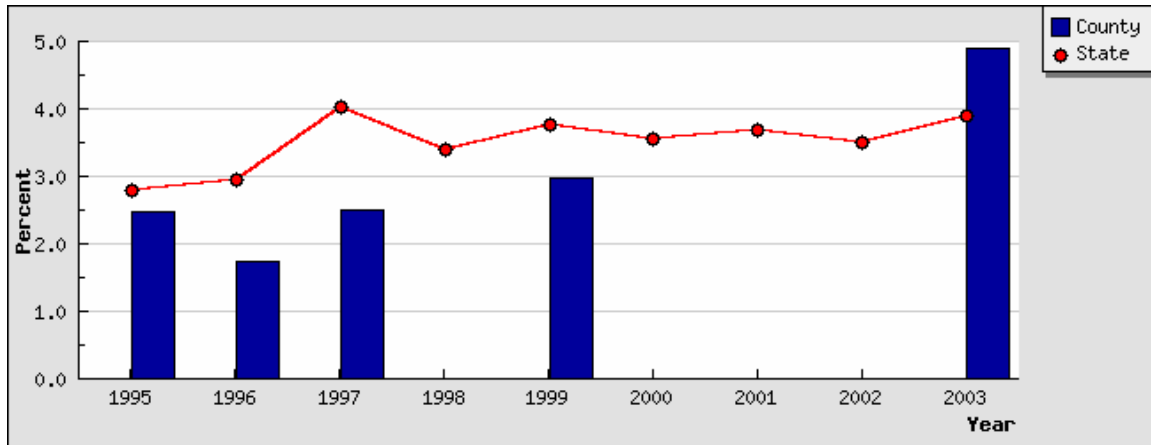
The percentage of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who answered yes to the question “Has anyone in your family ever had a severe alcohol or drug problem?”. The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies. Source: Connect Kansas and the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	28.24	24.46	25.40		28.79				31.10
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	27.41	28.12	27.75	26.94	27.80	27.37	28.09	27.30	27.70

## Perceived parental approval of drinking alcohol by youth

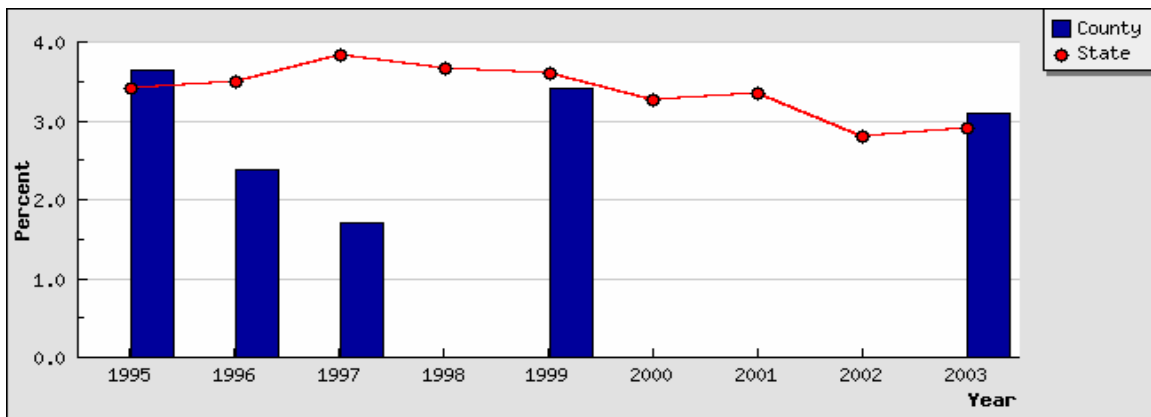
The percentage of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who answered “not wrong at all” to the question “How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to drink beer, wine, or hard liquor regularly?” The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies. Source: Connect Kansas and the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	2.47	1.74	2.50		2.97				4.90
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	2.79	2.96	4.20	3.39	3.76	3.54	3.68	3.50	3.90

## Perceived parental approval of smoking cigarettes by youth

The percentage of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who answered “not wrong at all” to the question “How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to smoke cigarettes?” The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies. Source: Connect Kansas and the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.

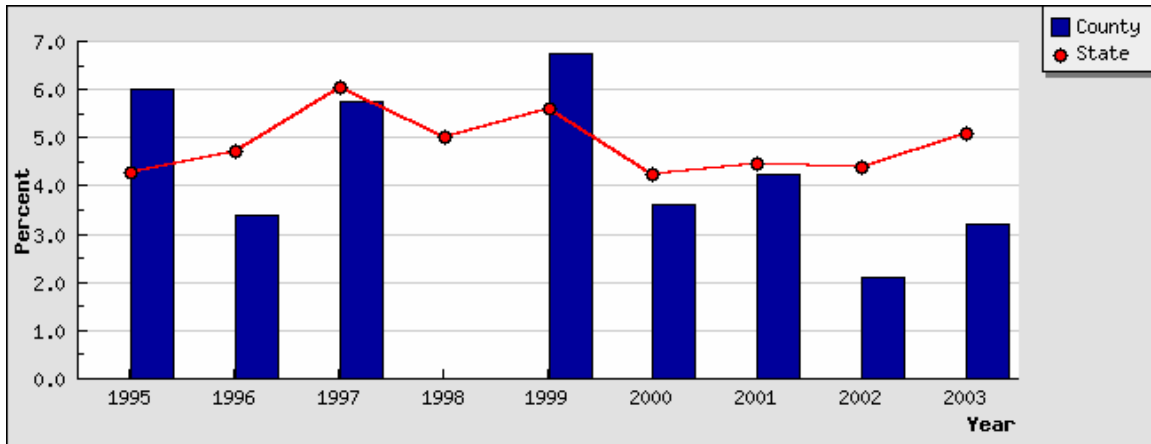


	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	3.64	2.38	1.70		3.40				3.10
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	3.40	3.50	3.84	3.66	3.59	3.26	3.34	2.80	2.90

## Annual rate of selling illegal drugs by students

The percentage of students who reported having sold illegal drugs at least once in the past 12 months. The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies.

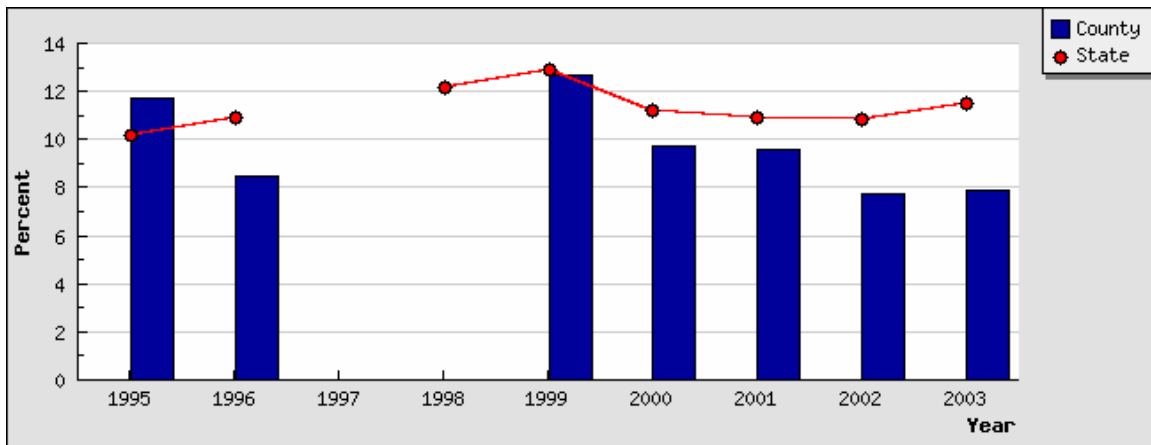
Source: Connect Kansas and the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	6.01	3.40	5.74		6.76	3.61	4.25	2.10	3.20
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	4.29	4.70	6.03	5.02	5.59	4.24	4.45	4.40	5.10

## Annual rate of students attending school drunk or high

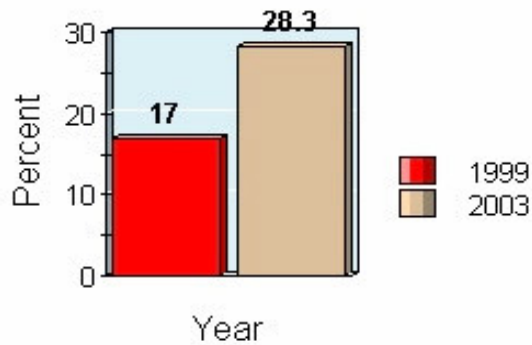
The percentage of students who reported attending school drunk or high at least once in the past 12 months. The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies. Source: Connect Kansas and the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



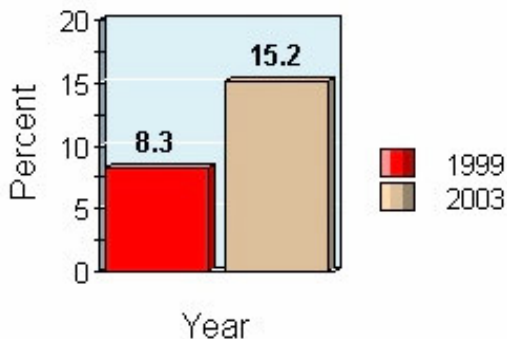
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	11.68	8.50			12.71	9.69	9.59	7.70	7.90
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	10.15	10.90		12.19	12.91	11.23	10.90	10.80	11.50

## Family Management

28.3% of 6th grade students responded “No” in 2003 to the question: **If you drank some beer or wine or hard liquor for example, vodka, whiskey, or gin without your parents' permission, would you be caught by your parents?** 17% responded “No” in 1999. Source: Kansas Communities That Care Student Survey, Mid-Kansas Regional Prevention Center.



15.2% of 6th grade students responded “No” in 2003 to the question: **When I am not at home, one of my parents knows where I am and who I am with.** This is up dramatically from 8.3% in 1999. Source: Kansas Communities That Care Student Survey, Mid-Kansas Regional Prevention Center.



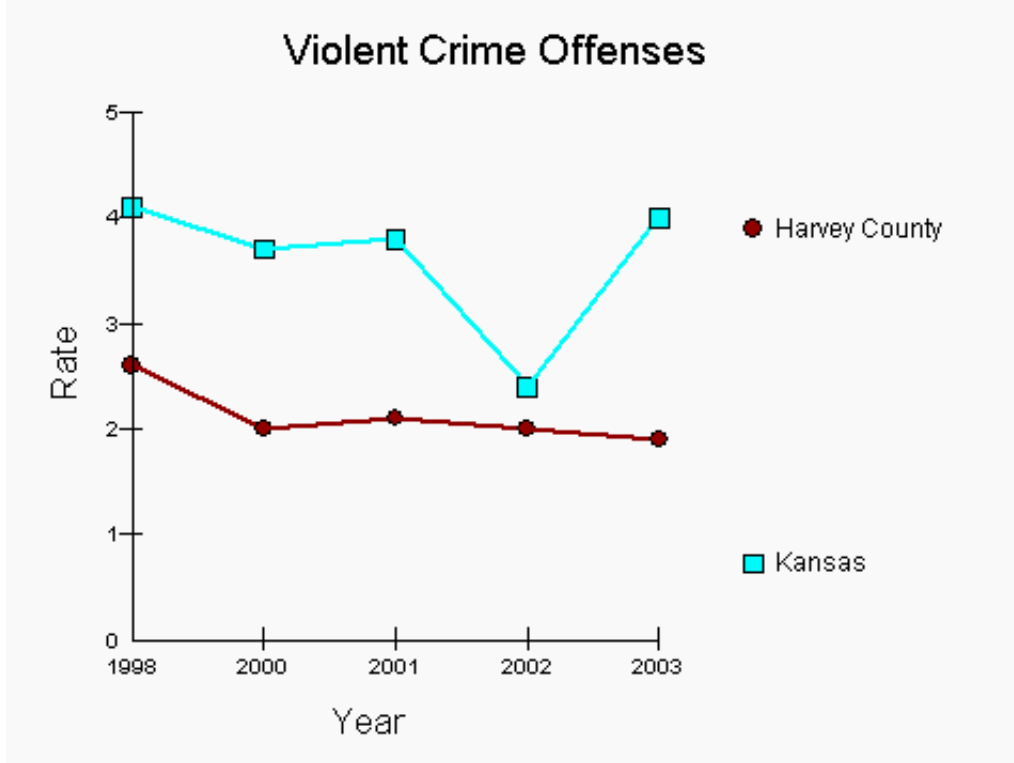
## Violent Crime

Violent crime is a safety risk for communities and can affect the physical and emotional health of children and families. Harvey County rates of violent crime have decreased slightly from 1998 to 2003 but remain steady at around two per 1000 persons for the last six years. This is consistently below the Kansas rate.

## Data

### Violent Crime Offenses

The rate of violent crime offenses per 1,000 persons. Source: Kansas Bureau of Investigation. Information for 1999 not available.



	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	2.6		2.0	2.1	2.0	1.9
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	4.1		3.7	3.8	2.4	4.0

### Conclusion

To summarize the indicators of health and safety for children and families in Harvey County: the rate of substantiated child abuse shows a downward trend since 2001; adolescent pregnancy rates were lower in 2003 than in 1998 but have been increasing since 2000; child care capacity remains around 20 percent for the last five years; drug and alcohol use in Harvey County families has increased slightly between 1999 and 2003; violent crime rates remain around two percent for the last six years. Data show the following:

- The rate of reported and substantiated child abuse and neglect cases shows a downward trend in the last three years. The rate of reported child abuse and neglect cases in Harvey County reached a decade high in 2001, and the rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect victims rose that same year above the

- Kansas rate, with the highest rate of the years 1998-2003. Since 2001, the rate of substantiated and reported cases has been declining.
- Adolescent pregnancy rates per 1000 females aged 10-17 in Harvey County dropped from 17 in 1998 to 11 in 2002. However, rates have been increasing since 2000.
  - Child care capacity has risen slightly between 2001 and 2003 but remains at 20 slots per 100 for the last three years. The Harvey County rate is below the Kansas rate for the last four years.
  - Drug and Alcohol abuse in Harvey County families increased slightly between 1999 and 2003 and is above the Kansas rate. Students note more parental disapproval of smoking cigarettes and less parental disapproval of drinking in 2003 than in 1999. The percentage of students who reported having sold illegal drugs decreased between 1999 and 2003. The percentage of students who reported attending school drunk or high decreased between 1999 and 2003. The percentage of students who said they would not be caught by their parents if they drank alcohol rose from 1999 to 2003, as did the percentage of students who said their parents did not know where they were or with whom when students were out of the house.
  - Harvey County rates of violent crime have decreased slightly from 1998 to 2003 but remain steady at around two per 1000 persons for the last six years. This is consistently below the Kansas rate.

## **Vulnerable Youth: Children in Foster Care and Juvenile Justice Systems**

Children in foster care and juvenile justice systems may be at greater risk for problems later in life, and their life experiences may affect their ability to do well in school.

In regards to children placed out of the home in the foster care system, the Kansas Action for Children *2003 Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Book* states:

All children should have a permanent and stable home to grow up in, one that provides love, nurturing and safety. Some children end up in foster care, usually for very serious reasons related to abuse or neglect. Although foster care is needed for crisis situations, it is not a permanent solution. Youth in foster care do not get the support they need for high school graduation, employment, accessing health care, attending college and housing arrangements. Children who “age-out” of foster care are more likely to not finish high school, be unemployed, dependent on public assistance, and many end up in prison, homeless and teen parents.

The Data Book offers the following on the impact of juvenile crime:

Juvenile court filings are a proxy measure for juvenile crimes. These offenses impact the delinquent youth, their victims and the community-at-large, reflecting on the safety and general well-being of a community. Moreover, juvenile crime is

just the tip of the iceberg because youth delinquent behavior often leads to adult criminal behavior.

The data below measure the number of children in SRS custody (placed out of and in their own homes), the rate of out-of-home placements of children by SRS for the last three years, the juvenile court filing rate, and the rate of student arrests in Harvey County. The data show a steady decrease in the number of children in SRS custody since 1997.<sup>4</sup> SRS out-of-home placements decreased between 2001 and 2002 and then increased by four percent from 2002 to 2003, rising above the Kansas rate. The rate of juvenile court filings dropped in 2001 and then rose over 10 percent by 2003 to the highest rate of the last five years—over 10 percent higher than the Kansas rate. The annual percentage of students who report being arrested remains below 10 percent over the last nine years and rose slightly from 2002 to 2003.

## Data

### Children in SRS custody (living in foster care or their own homes)

The annual number of children age zero to 18 in Harvey County referred to the county foster care contractor.<sup>5</sup> Children are in custody of SRS whether placed in foster care or in their own home under SRS supervision. Source: Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.

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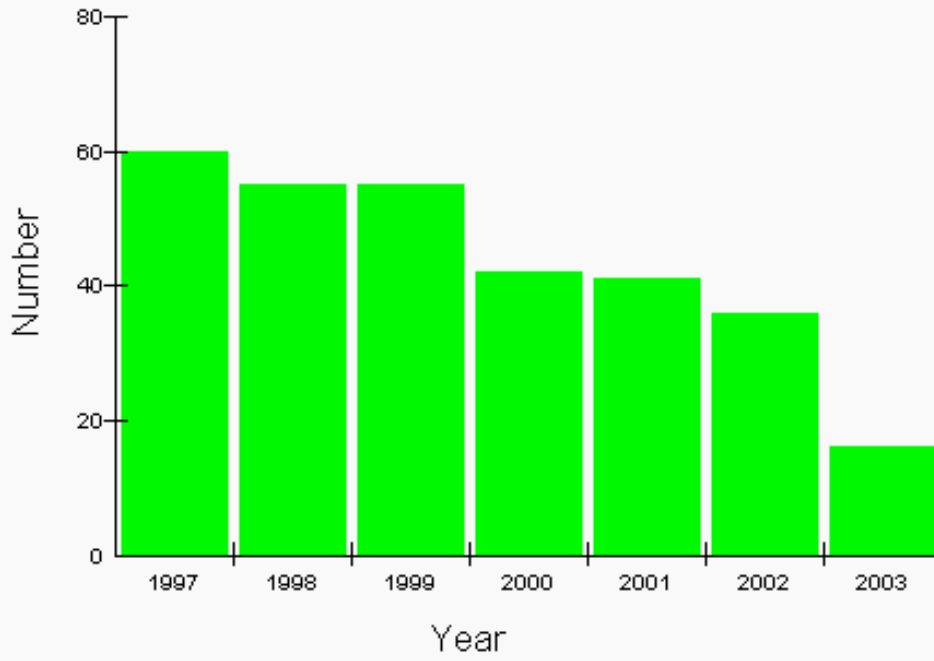
<sup>4</sup> **Explanation of factors affecting foster care data:** According to Judy Hawk, Chief of Social Services for the Hutchinson area of SRS, the Juvenile Justice Authority (JJA) was created in 1997 and offenders were transferred from SRS to JJA on July 1, 1997.

However, says Hawk,

Most of our courts kept anyone they could justify had Children In Need of Care (CINC) issues in SRS care until JJA really was up and running. In 2000, SRS was given community service dollars of which the Hutchinson area [which includes Harvey County] received a large portion to reduce the number of children in foster care. We worked closely with families and providers to purchase additional services to prevent out-of-home placements that have continued to flow, and to reduce the number of referrals. Another change was some truants would be placed in foster care when other less intrusive things failed, and then a program was developed, but that no longer happens. Other possible contributors [to trends] are changes in both the judge and the county attorney that handles most CINC matters.

<sup>5</sup> United Methodist Youthville, Newton, was the foster care contractor until 2000 when Saint Francis Academy, Salina, obtained the contract.

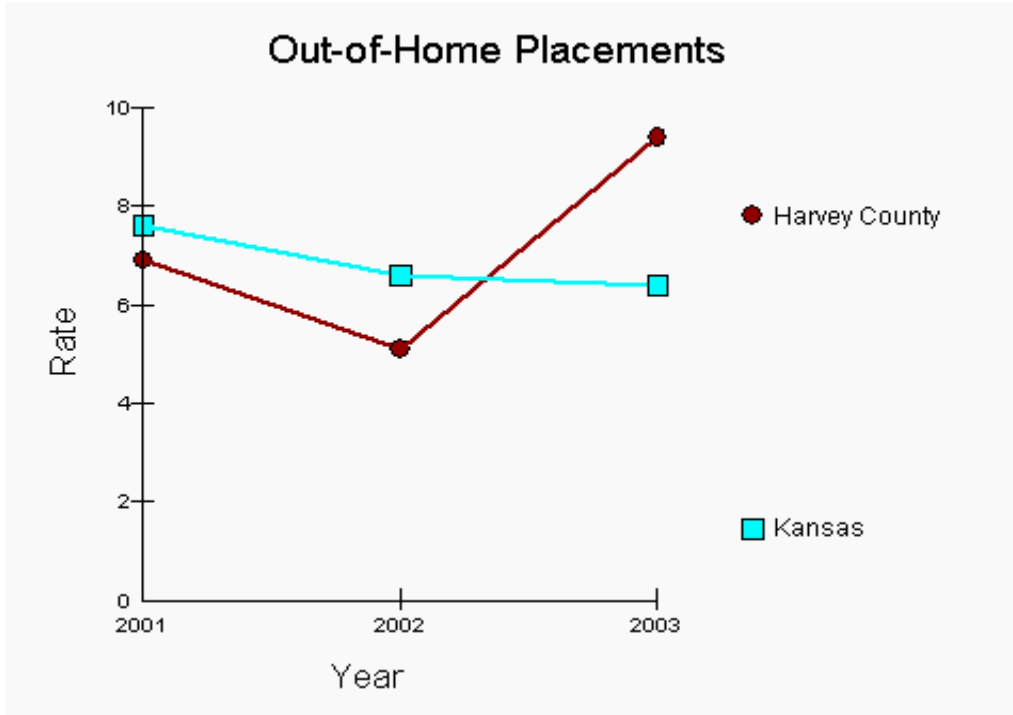
### Children in SRS Custody in Harvey County



	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Harvey County</b>	60	55	55	42	41	36	16

## Out-of-home placements

Average monthly number of children 0-18 years old in out-of-home placements per 1,000 children 0-18 years old. Source: Kansas Action for Children, Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services; U.S. Bureau of The Census. Data for previous years unavailable.

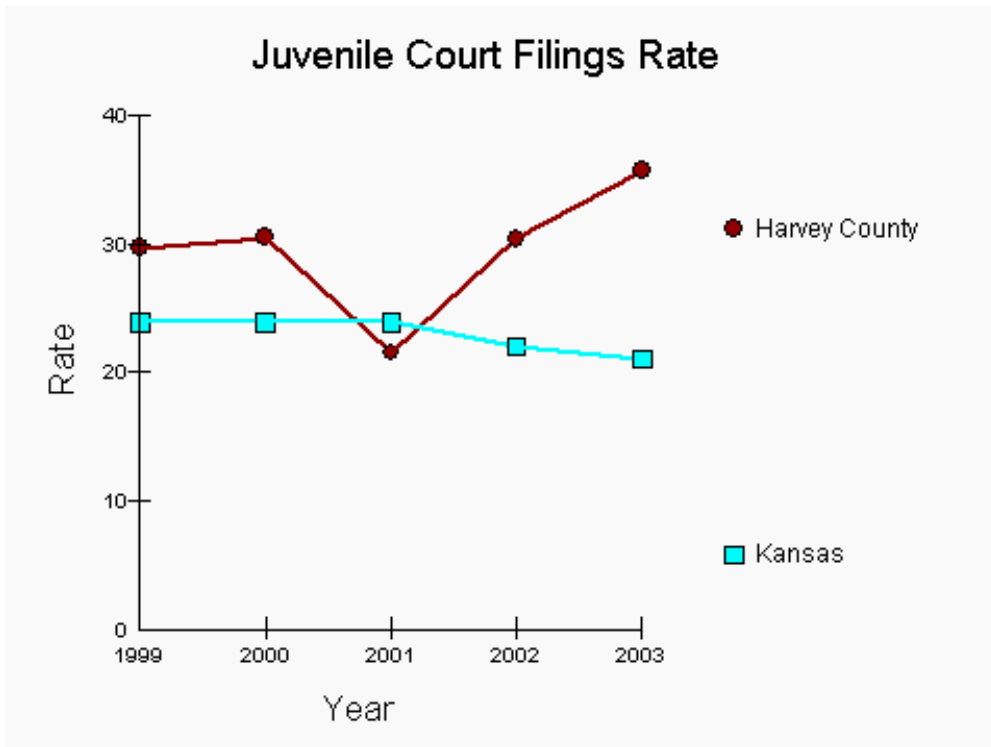


	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County</b>	6.9	5.1	9.4
<b>Kansas</b>	7.6	6.6	6.4

## Juvenile Court filings rate

Filings rate per 1,000 children ages 0-17 years old.

Source: Kansas Bureau of Investigation.

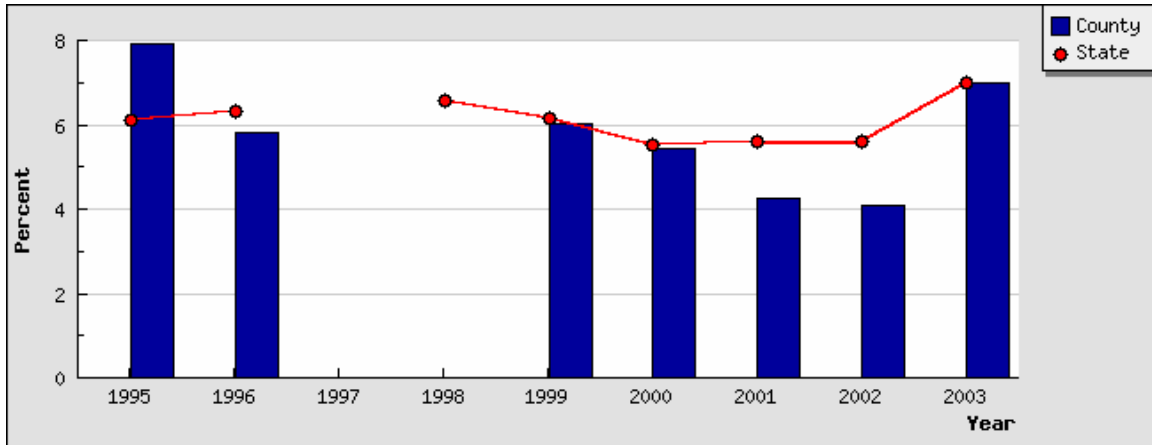


	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	29.7	30.5	21.5	30.4	35.7
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	23.9	23.9	23.9	22.0	21.0

## Annual rate of arrests of students

The percentage of students who reported having been arrested at least once in the past 12 months. The percentage of children completing the survey in each county varies.

Source: Connect Kansas and the Communities That Care Youth Survey, funded by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Harvey County Data</b>	7.93	5.80			6.04	5.42	4.25	4.10	7.00
<b>Kansas State Data</b>	6.12	6.30		6.56	6.16	5.52	5.61	5.60	7.00

## Conclusion

In summary, there is a downward trend in the number of Harvey County children in SRS custody, and an upward trend in the number of children entering the Juvenile Court system. This may be due in part to the creation of the Juvenile Justice Authority in 1997 and the reorganization between JJA and SRS. However, while the number of children in SRS custody has steadily decreased over the last seven years, the out of home placement rate has gone from 6.9 percent in 2001 to 9.4 percent in 2003, rising three percent over the Kansas rate. Juvenile court filing rates rose in the last three years, and are significantly higher in Harvey County than the Kansas rate. The rate of students who reported being arrested also rose in the last year.

## Language: Bilingual and Non-English Speaking Children and Families

Language is a factor affecting the economic and social well-being of children and families. The ability to speak English along with another language affects children's ability to do well in school and succeed in life. Learning English as a second language can help families better connect with services and opportunities. Communities can better

support bilingual or non-English speaking children and families by offering services in a variety of languages.

If we consider language barriers to be potential risks factors for children and families, we lack documentation in Harvey County and Kansas about need in the area of bilingual education and services. Because there is a significant increase in the population of Spanish-speakers in Harvey County over the last decade—including recent immigrants to the United States—language issues are of growing importance.

One way to document the need for bilingual language instruction or assistance in Harvey County would be to look at rates of service provided through English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Learners (ELL) and English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs. This could also indicate the bicultural geography of Harvey County. Just as eligibility for free school lunches is used to measure rates of childhood poverty, ESL rates might provide similar indication. However, county-wide data on services to children and adults in need of language assistance or bilingual services does not appear to be readily compiled.

According to the Kansas Department of Education,

Over the past few years, Kansas school have experienced a dramatic increase in the number of non-native speakers of English that they serve. In the 2002-2003 school year there were over 25,000 English Language Learners (ELL) enrolled in Kansas public schools, grades K-12. This number has increased dramatically since the 1992-1993 school year, which was the first year that Kansas provided State ESOL/Bilingual funding to school districts that meet State ESOL/Bilingual Program Requirements for programs that serve ELL students.

The data below, collected from U.S. Census data<sup>6</sup>, measure only citizenship and native language, and cannot therefore account for other aspects of the culture of speakers. However, it is assumed that language cannot be separated from the cultures of its speakers, and is one of many parts that make up a culture or represent an ethnic group.

Some of the data focus on Spanish-speakers in Harvey County. According to the Census, the percentage of county residents who speak Spanish has doubled in between 1990 and 2000. Of the foreign born population in 2000, nearly sixty percent identify Latin America as their region of birth. There has been an overall increase in foreign-born residents and an increased percentage of people who speak a language other than English. Spanish is the most spoken of these languages.

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<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that U.S. Census data on citizenship and native language may be inaccurate, particularly because people who are not legal aliens or U.S. citizens may not participate in the census.

The following data from 2000 indicate potential needs for children and families in Harvey County:

- About 10 percent of children ages 5-17 who speak Spanish at home speak English less than “well.”
- The rate of adults who speak Spanish at home and speak English less than “well” is over 20 percent.
- 141 of 700 Spanish Language households were determined to be “linguistically isolated,” meaning that all family members age 14 and over have some difficulty with English.

## Data

### 1990 U.S. Census

<b>Nativity and Place of Birth</b>	Number	Percent
<b>Total population</b>	<b>31,028</b>	
Native population	30,283	97.6
Percent born in state of residence		73.5
Foreign-born population	745	2.4
Entered the U.S. 1980 to 1990	268	0.9
<b>Language Spoken at Home</b>		
<b>Persons 5 years and over</b>	<b>28,845</b>	
Speak a language other than English	1,965	6.8
Do not speak English "very well"	638	2.2
Speak Spanish	721	2.5
Do not speak English "very well"	212	0.7
Speak Asian or Pacific Island language	207	0.7
Do not speak English "very well"	148	0.5

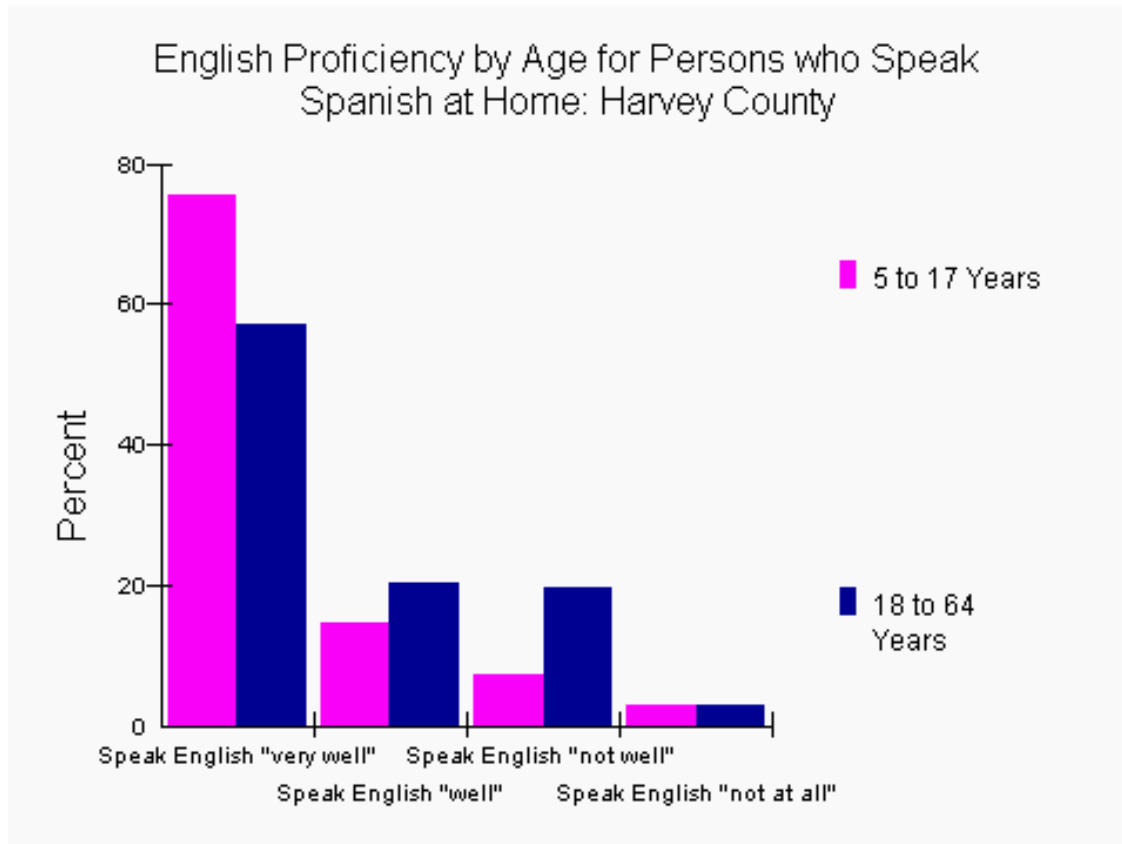
### 2000 U.S. Census

<b>Nativity and Place of Birth</b>		
<b>Total population</b>	<b>32,869</b>	
Native Population	31,644	96.3
Born in the United States	31,389	95.5
State of residence	23,299	70.9

Different state	8,090	24.6
Born outside the United States	255	0.8
Foreign born	1,225	3.7
Entered 1990 to March 2000	635	1.9
Naturalized citizen	427	1.3
Not a citizen	798	2.4
<i>Language Spoken at Home</i>		
<b>Population 5 years and over</b>	<b>30,692</b>	
English only	28,218	91.9
Language other than English	2,474	8.1
Speak English less than "very well"	878	2.9
Spanish	1,534	5.0
Speak English less than "very well"	568	1.9
Other Indo-European languages	733	2.4
Speak English less than "very well"	194	0.6
Asian and Pacific Island languages	174	0.6
Speak English less than "very well"	104	0.3
<i>Region of Birth of Foreign Born</i>		
<b>Total (excluding born at sea)</b>	<b>1,225</b>	
Europe	159	13.0
Asia	200	16.3
Africa	27	2.2
Oceania	5	0.4
Latin America	718	58.6
Northern America	116	9.5

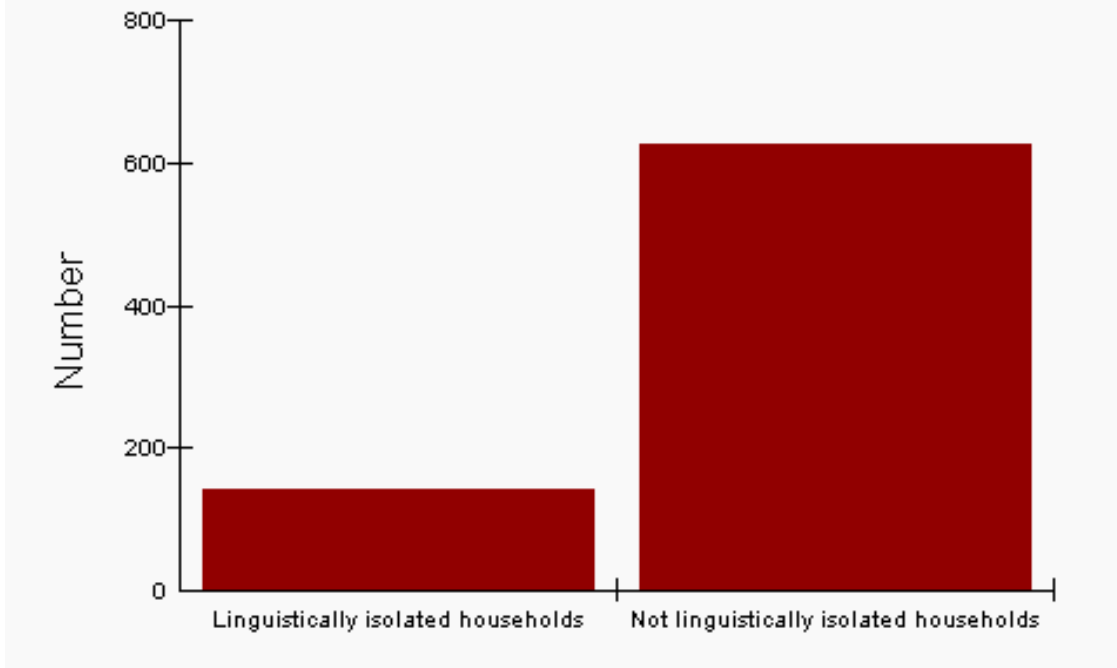
## English Language Proficiency of Spanish-Speaking Population

Data set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) Sample Data



	<i>Age 5 to 17 years</i>	<i>Age 18 to 64 years</i>
<i>Speak English "very well"</i>	<b>75.4</b>	<b>57.0</b>
<b>Speak English "well"</b>	14.5	20.3
<b>Speak English "not well"</b>	7.3	19.7
<b>Speak English "not at all"</b>	2.8	3.0

## Linguistic Isolation of Spanish Language Households: Harvey County



Note: A **linguistically isolated Spanish language household** is one in which no member 14 year and over (1) speaks only English or (2) speaks Spanish and speaks English “very well.” In other words, all members 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with English.

**Linguistically isolated households: 141**

**Not linguistically isolated households: 625**

### Conclusion

In summary, the foreign born population in Harvey County has increased since 1990, of which Latin America was the most represented region in 2000. The percent of people who speak a language other than English in Harvey County has also increased, with the percentage of residents who speak Spanish doubling between 1990 and 2000. About 10 percent of children ages 5-17 and over 20 percent of adults who speak Spanish at home speak English less than “well.” Of 700 Spanish Language households, 141 (20 percent) were determined to be “linguistically isolated,” meaning that all family members age 14 and older have some difficulty with English.

# Qualitative Data Results:

## Key Informant Observations of the Needs of Children and Families in Harvey County

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### Introduction

In addition to looking at quantitative data, qualitative data were gathered in the form of interviews with seven key informants in Harvey County.

The key informants work or have worked as a teacher, nurse, pastor, SRS supervisor, social worker, child care director, or school superintendent. They were chosen according to their familiarity with issues facing children and families or their work in agencies and organizations that offer health and human services to Harvey County residents. The interviews document perceptions of the risks faced by children and families and needs that are met or unmet in Burrton, Newton, Hesston, Halstead and Sedgwick. As with the quantitative data, the goal of these interviews was to help identify key risk factors and identify trends in these factors.

Key informants were asked a combination of the following questions:

- What are the needs of school age children and their families in [your community] that affect the ability of kids to do well in school?
- What are the primary risks facing school age kids and families in [your community]?
- Are there services you need in [this community] that aren't available?
- Are there needs not being met? What needs *are* being met?
- What are the barriers to collaboration (between agencies, schools, and individuals—in your community or in Harvey County) on addressing factors that create risk for children and families?
- Where do you see collaboration working?
- What suggestions do you have for better meeting the needs of children and families in your community or Harvey County?
- What haven't I asked you that I should?

## Data

### Qualitative Data Sources

Cliff Kirk, pastor and retired SRS supervisor, Burrton  
Jennifer Chappell Deckert, school social worker, Newton USD 373  
Alice Jantzen, R.N., Harvey County Health Department  
Judy Friesen, Director, Hesston Community Child Care Center  
Carolyn Taylor, former public school teacher, USD 440 Halstead  
Diane Davison, public school teacher, USD 439 Sedgwick  
Drew Harris, Superintendent, Burrton USD 369

The following interview summaries highlight the key points made by each informant.

### **Cliff Kirk, pastor at First Baptist Church (Sterling) and retired SRS supervisor, Burrton resident**

#### **Needs of the community:**

- Parenting instruction and support is needed, especially in the area of behavior intervention.
- More child care services are needed.
- Training in the schools is needed for drug prevention programs and sex education.
- The swimming pool is currently closed, which is a major activity for children in the summer.
- The Burrton Community Development Council (BCDC) “drive to improve” is trying to get more restaurants in town.
- More industry is needed in Burrton.
- There is no grocery store in Burrton.

#### **Needs that *are* being met:**

- Burrton has an excellent school system with good resources: “if we lose the school we lose the community.”
- Burrton has active summer programs for children, particularly in sports.
- The BCDC “drive to improve” is currently renovating city hall.
- The schools provide a good meal service during the school year.

#### **Risks faced in the community:**

- Burrton is a bedroom community, so people work outside Burrton and there are a lot of lower income families in the town.
- There are landlords who cater to this “lower-class” existence.
- Burrton has “normal” teen problems with drugs and sex.

#### **Barriers to collaboration on addressing needs locally and county-wide:**

- There is a “closed community” mentality and pride: people fear that somebody else might come in and do something they can do themselves.

- Only a few people are willing to take the roles of leadership in Burrton: the same people run for each leadership position/sit on each committee and sometimes self-interest dominates.

**Instances where collaboration is working:**

- The school system is the key to the Burrton community. Grants through HCP/CIS have been helpful, and the Superintendent Harris works to collaborate with HCP/CIS and other groups to address needs.
- BCDC brings people together (from Economic Development Council and City Council) to work on community needs and revitalization.

**Alice Jantzen, R.N., WIC and Family Planning, Harvey County Health Department**

**Needs of the community:**

- Spanish-speakers face language barriers and need both English and literacy classes.
- People need access to health care, especially for Spanish-speakers.
- Harvey County needs locally available prenatal care for low-income and Spanish-speaking families.
- People who are not legal citizens often don't have health insurance or access to health care, and so when they come to the Health Department they have a huge amount of problems.
- Children are uninsured: Children not born in the U.S. do not have health insurance (citizens get Medicaid).
- It would be helpful to have Spanish-speakers at the public library, where there are free resources.
- Cultural education is needed for the community at large. Immigrants are often treated according to their language ability, regardless of education level. More compassion is needed.
- Breast-feeding needs to be promoted and there need to be spaces where women can pump in the workplace.

**Risks faced in the community:**

- Because of language barriers and fear, Spanish-speaking women sometimes don't show up for prenatal care until their third trimester, which increases their risk for problems at delivery and beyond.

**Services needed that aren't readily available in the community:**

- The services [for needs listed above] are inadequate:
  - Prenatal care for women who don't have insurance and are not legal is inadequate. Women have to go to Hunter Health Clinic in Wichita, which is a problem if they have no transportation.

- There is a (free) van that can take people to this clinic, but the person who is in charge of the van does not speak Spanish. Phone messages left in Spanish will not be returned. Alice has to coordinate these clinic and van appointments, and this is time-consuming.
- Spanish-speaking families have no choice for services. Patients rarely work with local doctors because of language issues and cost. At the Hunter clinic, patients don't see the same doctor every time, which is adequate but not ideal.

**Barriers to collaboration on addressing needs locally and county-wide:**

- The attitudes people have toward people from other countries and illegal residents are a barrier to addressing needs. A lot of times people think immigrants are taking away jobs or opportunities or government money, but immigrants often do jobs that other people don't want to do.
- Spanish-speaking patients sometimes don't show up for referral appointments (or bring children in), perhaps because of fear related to language barriers.

**Instances where collaboration is working:**

- There is some cooperation: Alice notes that she has gotten information (for patients) from ESL classes, the Early Childhood Center, Heartland Pregnancy Center, and Health Ministries.
- Schools are doing a good job of working with bilingual kids and increasing cultural awareness.

**Suggestions for better meeting needs:**

- Increase knowledge of resources available.
- Cultural education for the community.

**Jennifer Chappell Deckert, school social worker, Harvey County Special Education Co-op, Newton USD 373**

**Needs of the community:**

- Dental care for kids is needed.
- Low-cost or free after-school programming is needed, especially for middle schoolers. We need more funding for good after-school programs.
- There is a need for emergency, short-term childcare and also *affordable* child care. There are options for those who are poor and qualify for Head Start, for example, and for those who can pay a lot for care. But people in the middle don't have many options.
- Harvey County needs good-quality, low-cost housing
- ESL children in schools have the second biggest need for social work services, next to special education children. There isn't funding for a school social worker for ESL students and their families, so Jen says she ends up being called to do this work. There needs to be one person assigned to working with Spanish-speaking

families, especially newcomers, because “schools are the best place to access help.”

- The school district is scrambling to address the educational needs of newcomer ELL students and they aren’t even thinking about other needs.
- Kids need more things to do in the summer—besides go to the pool.

**Needs that *are* being met:**

- Community transportation options have improved in the last few years.
- The schools do provide language translators to help Jen in her work.
- The school is doing better with the ESL program.
- The Community Mediation Center is good (but it’s not crisis help).

**Risks faced in the community:**

- There is nothing for kids to do after school.
- Drugs are always a problem.
- Hunger: families have no money for groceries.

**Services needed that aren’t readily available in the community:**

- For youth and families in crisis, there needs to be help for out-of-school time when school social workers can’t help. Too often kids go right to law enforcement, which isn’t often the appropriate place for them. Prairie View has provided a crisis line in the past, but Jen has heard more need for this service lately.
- There is not a central place to call to get groceries to families. Newton people and businesses are incredibly generous, but there needs to be a coordination.

**Barriers to collaboration on addressing needs locally and county-wide:**

- On the HCP Advisory Council: “we’ve done a lot of talk about what the needs are and how to prioritize,” which goes to the Board, but not enough action comes out of it. “We’ve done a lot of processing—we need to start moving on things.”
- Turf and communication issues: people are worried about their agency making it in this time of financial crunch.

**Instances where collaboration is working:**

- HCP/CIS model is good and has a lot of potential. HCP/CIS meetings to spread awareness of available resources have been very helpful.
- Kid Fest has been successfully planned and produced by a task force the last three years.
- The Community Calendar is very handy to have as a resource: it could be more current.

**Suggestions for better meeting needs:**

- County-wide social events like festivals could be more friendly toward Spanish-speaking folks.

- Good after-school programming could make a world of difference. We could have a phenomenal program if the school system could collaborate with other agencies (Newton Rec Center, Prairie View, etc).
- A teen center where youth can go in the evening would be helpful.
- A “Teen Fest” would be a good idea, similar to Kid Fest.
- There needs to be community-wide cultural education to address racism.

## **Judy Friesen, Director, Hesston Community Child Care Center**

### **Needs of the community:**

- There is a need for appropriate after school programming for middle school students.
- A “one-stop” place is needed where families can fill out ALL the forms needed for different kinds of assistance. Another way to work with this would be to develop a more generic form that could be used by more than one agency.
- More infant and young toddler care options are needed in Harvey County. There is a big waiting list for infant slots at Hesston Child Care.
- Head Start needs higher-quality programming for the kids it serves.

### **Needs that *are* being met:**

- There are enough child care slots for 3-5 year olds in Harvey County.
- Locally available training opportunities for early childhood caregivers has improved.
- Low-income kids can come to Hesston Community Child Care Center: 28 percent of those enrolled are on SRS assistance or Center scholarships.

### **Risks faced in the community:**

- There are a lot of high-stress parents who deal with balancing jobs, social problems and family problems. Many families seem to be “on the edge.” The parents who need parenting classes have no time to attend.
- There are too many demands on families and there are different schedules within the family, which means children might be falling between the cracks.
- The families who need services are often not the most assertive: they need help wading through paperwork, for example.

### **Barriers to collaboration on addressing needs locally and county-wide:**

- HCP has come a long way since it began. One barrier to meeting needs/collaboration is still all the different forms families have to fill out for each agency.

### **Instances where collaboration is working:**

- Good collaboration happens at HCP/CIS meetings to share resources. These meetings are very important.

**Suggestions for better meeting needs:**

- The “one-stop” idea for paperwork could be applied to actual services also. Any way we can make things easier for stressed parents is good.

**Carolyn Taylor, former public school teacher for 30 years in middle and high school, USD 440 Halstead-Bentley****Needs of the community:**

- Economic development: no new businesses are coming into Halstead, and there doesn't seem to be the needed community support for development. This means a lot of kids have moved out of Halstead, which affects the schools.
- Affordable housing is a need: city taxes are some of the highest in Harvey County. The housing is either substandard or priced out of the average person's range, so there isn't much middle ground.

**Needs that *are* being met:**

- The Halstead school system is above average and kids who go to college are well prepared. The staff at the high school, especially in the last five years, has been exceptional. The administration has hired a diverse group of people as far as attitudes and beliefs; the staff is not racially diverse, however.
- The Spanish teacher at the high school has been good for the community because she does a lot of cross-cultural activities. Only two or three kids have actually presented ESL challenges for the school in the last few years.
- Halstead is a safe place for kids.

**Risks faced in the community:**

- The Halstead school population is a very transient population—kids move in and out and this affects their success in school.
- There doesn't seem to be as much emphasis on school and academic success as there used to be in the community.
- There are problems with drugs and alcohol.
- A lot of parents—across all socioeconomic levels—have poor parenting skills. Parenting tends towards the permissive side.
- Economic risks: the availability of jobs is a problem. Halstead doesn't have a lot of job opportunities since the Halstead Hospital and clinic closed (2001).
- The population of Halstead has dropped, and this is a big deal in a small town.
- There isn't consistency in law enforcement in the community: some traffic violations and the use of drugs and alcohol seem not to be addressed. Part of the problem is that some kids don't have respect for the laws of the community.
- Small town isolation tends toward provinciality, and this includes racial and economic snobbery. There is not much racial diversity in Halstead.
- Single-parent families seem to be on the rise.

**Services needed that aren't readily available in the community:**

- The Halstead school district covers two communities, Halstead and Bentley, which affects where students and families go for services and the quality of services. In general, social services seem to be more responsive in Newton than in the Wichita area.

**Barriers to collaboration on addressing needs locally and county-wide:**

- The Alternative School in Newton has done fairly well with allowing Halstead students to come use their services. This relationship could be stronger, especially because there seem to be a lot of kids dropping out lately who are repeat dropouts. Communication between Halstead and Newton schools is a challenge related to meeting needs of dropouts.

**Instances where collaboration is working:**

- Halstead students go to Newton for vocational-technical training at the high school.

**Suggestions for better meeting needs:**

- “When you’re dealing with kids and parents, no one way is the right way.” There needs to be improvement in cooperation between all the agencies and agencies/schools need to get past the “right way is our way” attitude. Many different solutions have to be provided. It does seem that people may be more willing to talk about problems than they used to be.

**Diane Davison, 5<sup>th</sup> grade public school teacher, USD 439 Sedgwick****Needs of the community:**

- Families need more family time. Parents are sometimes so busy that school time and academics become less important.
- Too many kids are home alone. More child care is needed, or parents need to spend more time with kids.
- Middle school kids need something to do in Sedgwick. Sports and church activities don't necessarily fulfill the need.
- Two Spanish-speaking family came to Sedgwick this last year and while their younger kids did OK in school, their 8<sup>th</sup> grader had more trouble. Despite the family's commitment to academics, the schools could not provide what was needed. More ESL services will be a need in the district in the future. A new Spanish teacher has been hired for the district.
- Local businesses are few and they have a hard time making it. People have to shop outside the community.

**Needs that *are* being met:**

- Churches provide a lot of services to the town (food drives and kids activities, for example). Churches and schools work together with the community: community involvement is good in Sedgwick.
- Schools are good and draw students from out-of-district (there are 50 out-of-district kids in the Sedgwick school system from Halstead-Bentley, Park City and Wichita).

**Services needed that aren't readily available in the community:**

- Local counseling services might be helpful to the community.

**Barriers to collaboration on addressing needs locally and county-wide:**

- Sometimes people are too proud to accept help from food drives or churches.
- The multi-town education system can present challenges. The town itself is divided along Harvey/Sedgwick county lines, which presents some challenges for the school when referring people to services.
- Parents aren't always willing to cooperate with the schools.

**Instances where collaboration is working:**

- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant from HCP/CIS provided funds to start an after school program in Sedgwick. However, a renewable grant would be helpful to continue this work, because the district doesn't necessarily have the funding.
- Community members (retired people, Boeing employees) volunteer in the schools.

**Suggestions for better meeting needs:**

- Sedgwick schools could use a bigger volunteer base.

**Drew Harris, Superintendent, Burrton USD 369****Needs of the community:**

- Early childhood care: opportunities are needed for parents of young children to be better educated on child development, and more early childhood education services are needed. The Parents as Teachers program was effective in Burrton in the past but is not active now.
- Health insurance is needed, as is increased awareness of available health services.
- After school activities for middle school and high school students are needed.
- Affordable education programs need to be available to children who have been expelled or suspended from school.

**Risks faced in the community:**

- Substance abuse by parents: parents need to know how this affects kids. This is particularly the case for parents of young children.

- Poverty is a problem: 52 percent of elementary school age kids in Burrton USD 369 are on free and reduced lunches.
- Unemployment is a problem.
- Rental properties are around 30 percent of Burrton housing and some housing is low-quality.
- The high number of transient students means students may have “holes” in their education and educators face the challenge of finding and filling these holes.
- There is alcohol and tobacco use: kids need more positive things to do.

**Services needed that aren’t readily available in the community:**

- Health care.
- Local grocery store: some families do not have transportation. Some families also do not have telephones.

**Barriers to collaboration on addressing needs locally and county-wide:**

- Small towns like Burrton sometimes worry that larger towns like Newton will absorb county-wide collaboration. Community perceptions of this tension can be a barrier to collaboration.
- Taxes, schools and small businesses: increased tax dollars are good for schools but sometimes a hardship for small businesses.

**Instances where collaboration is working:**

- Grants through HCP/CIS: one grant helped Burrton USD 369 start an after school care program that the district will now be able to continue on its own.
- Other funding from HCP/CIS provided for substance abuse counseling and counseling to address fights and other conflicts in the schools.

**Conclusion**

In summary, key informants repeatedly expressed concern about the following needs and problems:

- Parenting classes are needed, especially in the area of early childhood.
- More child care options are needed. There is a need for affordable and emergency, short-term child care as well as a great need for infant care.
- Drug and alcohol use continues to be a problem.
- Low-cost or free after-school programming is needed, *particularly for middle school students.*
- More low-cost, *good-quality* housing is needed.
- Low-income and Spanish-speaking families need more and better access to health care. Many families have no health insurance.
- Cultural education is needed for the community as a whole. Language barriers and racism are a problem.

- More prenatal care options are needed for low-income women and especially uninsured, Spanish-speaking women who are not legal.
- Dental care is needed for kids.
- Poverty is definitely a problem.
- There is a need for central “one-stop” places to obtain services and fill out the forms for services. A central place for service providers to call to access other services for people would also be helpful.
- Economic development: local businesses and local industry are needed.
- Unemployment is a problem.
- There needs to be more emphasis in families on school and academic success.

Informants also expressed concern about:

- Closed community mentality and pride can be a barrier to meeting needs. This mentality also includes economic and racial “snobbery.”
- Most informants saw ESL as a current or future concern in their schools. Informants noted that schools are doing better with ESL programs, but also mentioned, for example, that there is no school social worker assigned to this population.
- Informants expressed concern that parents are highly stressed from trying to make ends meet and families are too busy, which means kids can “fall through the cracks.”
- In Halstead and Burrton, informants noted that the transient population presents challenges to helping children of transient families succeed in school.
- School dropouts, and suspended or expelled kids need more support. Informants noted that these kids need more services that allow them to continue their education, and better collaboration and communication between districts could help with this.

All informants had positive things to say about their communities, and noted the following instances where needs are being met or collaboration is working:

- Many informants said their schools were excellent or above average, had high test scores, and provided opportunities to children. Informants noted the school was the center of the community, especially in the smaller towns.
- Many informants mentioned that grants through HCP/CIS have been helpful to their schools.
- HCP/CIS members noted that the Advisory Board meetings are quite helpful when it comes to sharing resources.
- Kid Fest was mentioned as a good example of collaboration.
- The Community Calendar was mentioned as a good resource and collaborative product.

## General Conclusion

By looking at hard data and listening to key informants, it can be concluded that the areas of greatest need for children and families in Harvey County are the following:

- Families need help economically. All indicators of **poverty** show an upward trend.
- There is not enough affordable **child care** and the need for early childhood education is greater than the number of slots available.
- Services are needed for **Spanish-speakers** and cultural education is needed for the community as a whole.
- Data show a rising **out-of-home placement** rate in Harvey County.
- Data show a rising rate of **juvenile court** filings in Harvey County.

The following areas show a **less significant, but rising, trend** in the last few years:

- The rate of **adolescent pregnancy**.
- The rate of **drug and alcohol use**.

**Harvey County is doing well** in the following areas:

- K-12 **education** is strong.
- Rates of substantiated **child abuse** show a downward trend.
- Rates of **violent crime** remain low.

**The 1996 Harvey County Community Health Assessment Process goals and 2004 HCP/CIS Assessment findings:** The goals established by CHAP were to reduce illegal drug use, reduce tobacco use, and reduce juvenile crime. As noted in this assessment, more students indicated that someone in their family has had a drug or alcohol problem in 2003 than did in 1996 and 1999. However, this assessment cannot fully evaluate the goal to reduce drug and alcohol use, as it uses student survey data and not, for example, drug treatment rates. For the same reason, this assessment cannot fully evaluate the goal to reduce tobacco. However, the perceived parental approval of tobacco use by youth has risen since 1996. It does appear that the goal to reduce juvenile crime can be somewhat evaluated for the last five years. In the last five years, the Juvenile Court filings rate has risen by five percent.

# Quantitative and Qualitative Data Summary

In summary, the quantitative data show:

- Children and families in Harvey County have experienced increased **economic need** over the last five years. The data concludes that more children live in poverty in Harvey County today than did five years ago. The trends for rates of children in families receiving food stamps, participation in TANF, eligibility for free and reduced lunch, and unemployment are all steady upward trends. Harvey County trends mirror Kansas trends.
- **K-12 education** in Harvey County appears to be strong and stable. Rates of high school graduation have remained steady and near the Kansas rate for the last five years. The high school dropout rate is the lowest in nine years. School attendance rates remain high, and students' perceptions of school remain generally positive.
- **Early childhood programs** are available but capacity is a problem. Head Start availability dropped in 2003 after sitting at 63 percent for the previous three years. **Child care capacity** dropped from 1999-2002 and rose slightly in 2003 to only 21 percent. The number of licensed preschools remains below the Kansas rate. Affordability of child care continues to be an issue, and Harvey County families are spending more on child care than three years ago. In the area of physical health, the percent of children fully immunized by the time they enter Kindergarten remains around 80 percent for the last three years, near the Kansas rate.
- Indicators of **health and safety** for children and families in Harvey County show the following: The rate of **substantiated child abuse** shows a downward trend since 2001, **adolescent pregnancy** rates were lower in 2003 than in 1998 but have been increasing since 2000, child care capacity remains around 20 percent for the last five years, **drug and alcohol use** in Harvey County families has increased slightly between 1999 and 2003, and **violent crime rates** remain around two percent for the last six years.
- There is a downward trend in the number of Harvey County **children in SRS custody**, and an upward trend in the number of children entering the **Juvenile Court system**. This may be due in part to the creation of the Juvenile Justice Authority in 1997 and the reorganization between JJA and SRS. However, while the number of children in SRS custody has steadily decreased over the last seven years, the out of home placement rate has gone from 6.9 percent in 2001 to 9.4 percent in 2003, rising three percent over the Kansas rate. Juvenile court filing rates rose in the last three years, and are significantly higher in Harvey County than the Kansas rate. The rate of students who reported being arrested also rose in the last year.

- The **foreign born population** in Harvey County has increased since 1990, of which Latin America was the most represented region in 2000. The percent of people who speak a language other than English in Harvey County has also increased, with the percentage of **residents who speak Spanish** doubling between 1990 and 2000. About 10 percent of children ages 5-17 and over 20 percent of adults who speak Spanish at home speak English less than “well.” Of 700 Spanish Language households, 141 (20 percent) were determined to be “linguistically isolated,” meaning that all family members age 14 and older have some difficulty with English.

### **Key informants repeatedly expressed concern about the following needs and problems:**

- **Parenting classes** are needed, especially in the area of early childhood.
- More **child care** options are needed. There is a need for affordable and emergency, short-term child care as well as a great need for infant care.
- **Drug and alcohol use** continues to be a problem.
- Low-cost or free **after-school programming** is needed, *particularly for middle school students.*
- More **low-cost, good-quality housing** is needed.
- Low-income and **Spanish-speaking families** need more and better access to **health care**. Many families have no health insurance.
- **Cultural education** is needed for the community as a whole. Language barriers and racism are a problem.
- More **prenatal care** options are needed for low-income women and especially uninsured, Spanish-speaking women who are not legal.
- **Dental care** is needed for kids.
- **Poverty** is definitely a problem.
- There is a need for central **“one-stop” places to obtain services** and fill out the forms for services. A central place for service providers to call to access other services for people would also be helpful.
- **Economic development:** local businesses and local industry are needed.
- **Unemployment** is a problem.
- There needs to be more emphasis in families on school and **academic success**.
- Most informants saw ESL as a current or future concern in their schools. Informants noted that schools are doing better with **ESL programs**, but also mentioned, for example, that there is no school social worker assigned to this population.

Ideas for Addressing the Needs of Children and Families from the Kansas Action for Children *2003 Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Book*

## **Child Poverty**

Child poverty can be addressed with the following:

- Livable wages to all people who work.
- Education and training for better-paying jobs and jobs with substantial health benefits.
- Low-cost housing.
- Both parents supporting their children.
- A range of community services and resources that help strengthen families' capacities to support their own children.

## **Free and Reduced Lunch Program**

Free and reduced meal rates are good indicators of child and family poverty. Some ideas for reducing child poverty include:

- Families must be able to work and to work they need affordable supports like child care and after-school programs.
- Governments should ease access to unemployment insurance, food and medical assistance for low-paid workers.
- Working should pay—the minimum wage should be raised to at least support a family of three above the poverty threshold.

## **High School Graduation**

Here are some ideas for keeping children in school and improving high school graduation rates:

- Identify truancy problems early as it is a key predictor of school drop out (can be predicted as early as 3<sup>rd</sup> grade).
- Read to children early—the foundation to all other learning is reading.
- Expand early childhood education programs to start early, getting children ready to learn and having positive learning experiences.
- School readiness programs can target children at risk of failure and improve their chance of success.
- Teacher and parents should have high expectations for youth.
- School should involve parents and communities as much as possible.

## **Head Start and Early Childhood Education**

Head Start still does not reach all eligible children. We can improve by:

- Expanding the program to reach more children and families in need.
- Expanding to a full-year, full-day program.
- Continuing to implement and assure high-quality, comprehensive programs.
- Increasing staff salaries to assure quality teachers and effective programs.

## Child Abuse and Neglect

The best starting point for improvement is prevention of child abuse. Here are some ideas from the Child Welfare League of America that you can do:

- **Educate yourself and others.** Simple support for children and parents can be the best way to prevent child abuse. After-school activities, parent education classes, mentoring programs and respite care are some of the many ways to keep children safe from harm.
- **Teach children their rights.** When children are taught they are special and have the right to be safe, they are less likely to think abuse is their fault and more likely to report an offender.
- **Know the signs.** Unexplained injuries aren't the only signs of abuse. Fear of a certain adult, difficulty trusting others or making friends, sudden changes in eating or sleeping patterns, inappropriate sexual behavior, poor hygiene, secrecy and hostility are often signs of family problems and may indicate a child is being neglected or physically, sexually or emotionally abused.
- **Report abuse.** If you witness a child being harmed, see evidence of abuse or if a child tells you about abuse, make a report to your state's child protective services department or local police. When talking to a child about abuse, listen carefully, assure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling an adult and affirm that he or she is not responsible for what happened.

## Adolescent Pregnancy

A recent comprehensive review of teen pregnancy prevention programs highlighted the following as key ingredients for effective prevention curriculum:

- A clear, consistently reinforced message on abstinence and/or contraception.
- Basic, accurate information.
- Activities to address social pressures.
- Practice with communication, negotiation and refusal skills.
- Teaching methods that involve participants and personalize the information.
- Behavioral goals, teaching methods and materials that are customized to the students.
- Sufficient length of time (e.g. more than a few hours).
- Adequately trained teachers or peer leaders who believe in the program.

## Child Care Availability

Improve child care by assuring:

- High quality programs.
- Adequate wages.
- Ongoing education and training for child care workers.
- A variety of child care arrangements to meet the unique needs of different families, including evening and weekend care.

## **Youth Tobacco Use**

To help schools address tobacco use, the Center for Disease Control published Guidelines for School and Community Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction in February 2000. These guidelines highlight the key principles of effective youth tobacco use and addiction prevention programs. Programs are most effective if they:

- Prohibit tobacco use at all school facilities and events.
- Encourage and help students and staff to quit using tobacco.
- Provide developmentally-appropriate instruction in grades K-12 that addresses the social and psychological causes of tobacco use.
- Are part of a coordinated school health program through which teachers, students, families, administrators, and community leaders deliver consistent messages about tobacco use.
- Are reinforced by community-wide efforts to prevent tobacco use and addiction.

## **Youth Binge Drinking**

One important solution for reducing binge drinking is to tell youth the truth. That is, the large majority of teens do not participate in binge drinking. Young people are influenced by what they believe their peers are doing. They need to hear the real facts that binge drinking is not a widespread behavior.

Preventing alcohol abuse among youth also involves helping youth focus on other positive activities. Here are a few suggestions:

- Be a role model—if you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
- Help teens find something positive to do.
- Talk to youth about what's happening in their lives and let them know they matter.
- Praise their accomplishments.

## **Other Drugs**

The following ideas may help teens stay away from illegal drugs:

- Teach youth to resist peer pressure.
- Role play conflict and reaching resolutions.
- Help youth get the facts about drugs.
- Build social skills, like teaching teens how to break the ice at a party.
- Value teens—seek their input and make your expectations of them clear as they grow up.
- Parents should get to know their children's friends and their parents.

## **Out-of-home placements**

Recent research on out-of-home placements makes these suggestions:

- Help families seek community and professional resources. Waiting until problems become unbearable can lead to more difficulty achieving resolutions.
- Prevention and early intervention educational services make a positive difference for youth and should be further developed.

- Comprehensive and thorough assessments, including psychological and drug/alcohol evaluations, should be used in developing individualized case plans.
- Communities need more high-quality treatment options.
- Mental health professionals should be available in all urban and rural parts of the state.
- The service delivery system should be more coordinated with timely care and support for all families.

## Juvenile Court Filings

The following is a list of what works in delinquency prevention from the American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF):

- Strong and family-oriented early childhood interventions.
- Well-designed and carefully-implemented school-based prevention programming.
- State-of-the-art treatment for children with conduct disorders and their families.
- Positive youth development opportunities.

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