2023 Edition

# Stark County Community Assessment

## Indicators of Health, Social, and Economic Conditions

stark community foundation

United Way of Greater Stark County
Serving Stark and Carroll Counties

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# INTRODUCTION

Dear Stark Community,

To say that much has occurred since the last *Stark County Community Assessment* was released in 2019 would be an understatement. More than three years have passed since the COVID-19 global pandemic upended daily life. In the intervening time, we also witnessed a national re-awakening to issues related to systemic racism and equity more generally. As grantmakers, we watched organizations adapt to rapidly changing circumstances while deepening their commitment to improving conditions for ***all*** Stark County residents. We are proud of the response of the community to these unprecedented challenges.

The *2019 Stark County Community Assessment* sparked numerous conversations about how to move the community forward. We still see it referenced in conversations, other reports, and grant applications. It is time to take another look to try to understand our community's conditions and the people it serves. We partnered with The Center for Community Solutions to pull together, in one place, the most timely, relevant data on health, social, and economic conditions in Stark County. Much of the data contained in these pages was collected in 2021, a time when many schools maintained remote learning, emergency pandemic assistance was still in place for families, and vaccination for COVID-19 was less widespread. Yet it provides the most complete snapshot of data on community conditions post-pandemic.

The *2023 Stark County Community Assessment* is an update to the previous report, and, like the earlier edition, is not meant to be an exhaustive compilation of all data on Stark County, but rather a curated set of data to inform decision-making. Specific indicators were selected based on their relationship to key community conditions, availability and reliability, and based on feedback provided by local leaders. The following pages provide detailed data on six community conditions:

1. Stark County Overview
2. Families, Households, and Neighborhoods
3. Education
4. Economics
5. Environment
6. Health

Where possible, we have noted changes since the previous report, which gives us a sense of the direction the community may be heading. Many economic indicators are promising, and progress is being made within the Strengthening Stark movement to advance our community's economy. Median incomes are up and poverty is down. However, data on the education and well-being of children presents reasons for concern.

In today's rapidly changing world, understanding the well-being of a community is more vital than ever. It is our hope that this report serves as a valuable resource for community leaders, policymakers, organizations, and concerned individuals who are committed to fostering positive change and improving the quality of life for all residents of Stark County.

Regards,

Angela Perisic
President and CEO
United Way of Greater Stark County

Mark J. Samolczyk
President and CEO
Stark Community Foundation

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## Data Sources

Researchers utilized a variety of reliable, timely, trusted sources of information to compile the data in this report. Sources for individual indicators are noted throughout the document. In addition, there are three online resources that are particularly useful for those who wish to examine data on community conditions in greater detail.

*American Community Survey (ACS)*

The ACS is an annual survey performed by the U.S. Census Bureau that includes data on a wide variety of demographic, social, and economic variables. This data can be accessed at http://data.census.gov/

*CDC PLACES*

CDC PLACES is a collaboration between the CDC, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the CDC Foundation. This data set provides health data for smaller areas across the country like counties, census designated places, census tracts, and zip code tabulations. More information about PLACES and the full data set can be found at https://www.cdc.gov/places/index.html

*County Health Rankings*

The County Health Rankings website ranks all counties within each state on a number of health-related measures. In addition to more typical health statistics such as mortality, number of uninsured, and obesity rates, County Health Rankings also measure environmental factors such as air pollution, access to healthy foods, and social factors such as number of children in poverty and crime rates. The data can be downloaded from https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/

*Ohio's State Agencies*

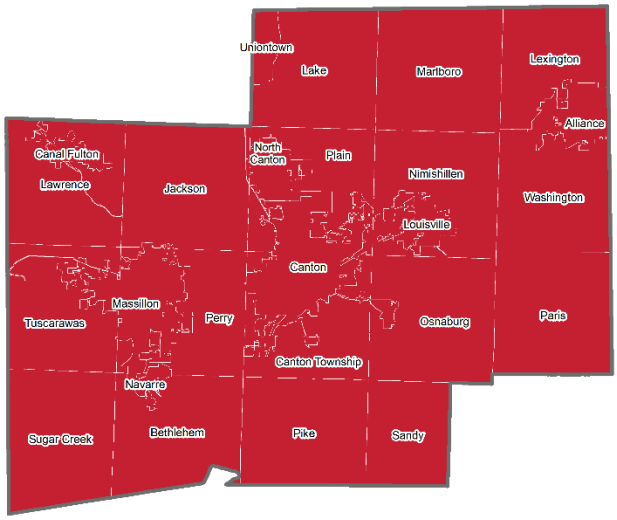
Several state agencies provide data on their websites.

- The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) collects and publishes data on all school districts in Ohio. This data can be found at https://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/
- The Ohio Public Health Information Warehouse, found at http://publicapps.odh.ohio.gov/EDW/DataCatalog, is maintained by the Ohio Department of Health and contains data on a variety of health conditions.
- The research department at the Ohio Development Services Agency compiles data from a variety of sources, including many used in this assessment. It includes county profiles and a variety of economic data. This data can be found at https://development.ohio.gov/reports/reports_research.htm
- The Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey provides health care access, utilization, and health status information about residential Ohioans at the state, regional, and county levels. This assessment covers the Medicaid, Medicaid-eligible, and non-Medicaid populations in Ohio. The data is available at https://grc.osu.edu/OMAS

# STARK COUNTY OVERVIEW

## Overview

Stark County is located in Northeast Ohio and is part of the Akron-Canton Metropolitan Statistical Area. It is the seventh-largest county in Ohio and is home to 3.2 percent of Ohio's population. Stark County is comprised of eight cities and 17 townships, and there are 17 school districts in Stark County.





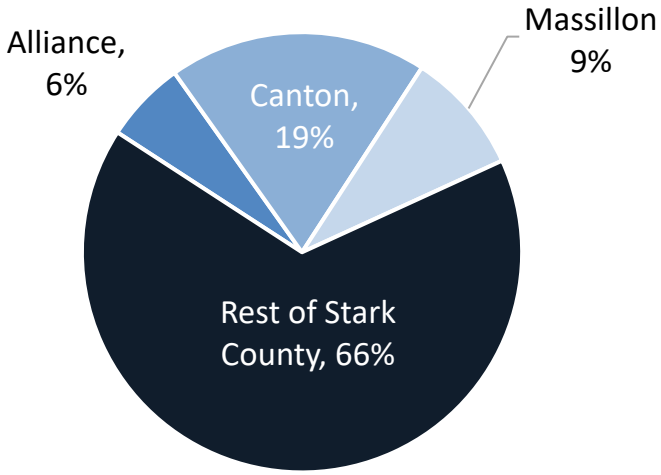


## Population

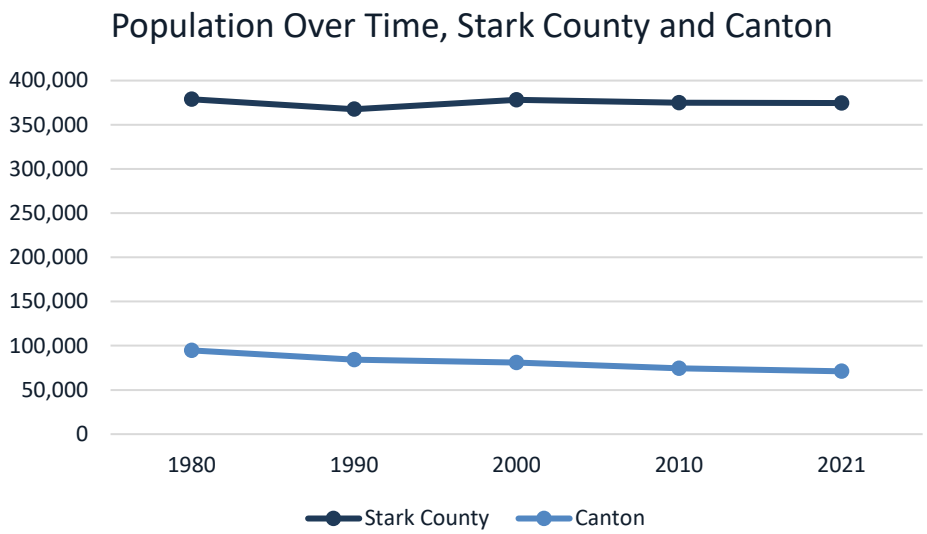
*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

Stark County's population in 2021 was 374,712 residents. Canton has the largest population within the county with over 70,000 residents. Sandy Township is the smallest municipality within the county with an estimated 3,561 residents.

**Stark County Population, Share in Largest Cities, 2021**




| Municipality | Population |
|---|---|
| Alliance City | 21,816 |
| Bethlehem Township | 5,499 |
| Canton City | 71,097 |
| Canal Fulton City | 5,337 |
| Canton Township | 12,456 |
| Jackson Township | 42,769 |
| Lake Township | 30,216 |
| Lawrence Township | 13,546 |
| Lexington Township | 4,986 |
| Louisville City | 9,497 |
| Marlboro Township | 4,278 |
| Massillon City | 32,199 |
| Navarre Village | 1,704 |
| Nimishillen Township | 9,328 |
| North Canton City | 17,884 |
| Osnaburg Township | 5,482 |
| Paris Township | 5,699 |
| Perry Township | 28,278 |
| Pike Township | 3,834 |
| Plain Township | 53,380 |
| Sandy Township | 3,561 |
| Sugar Creek Township | 6,549 |
| Tuscarawas Township | 5,789 |
| Uniontown | 6,992 |
| Washington Township | 4,453 |

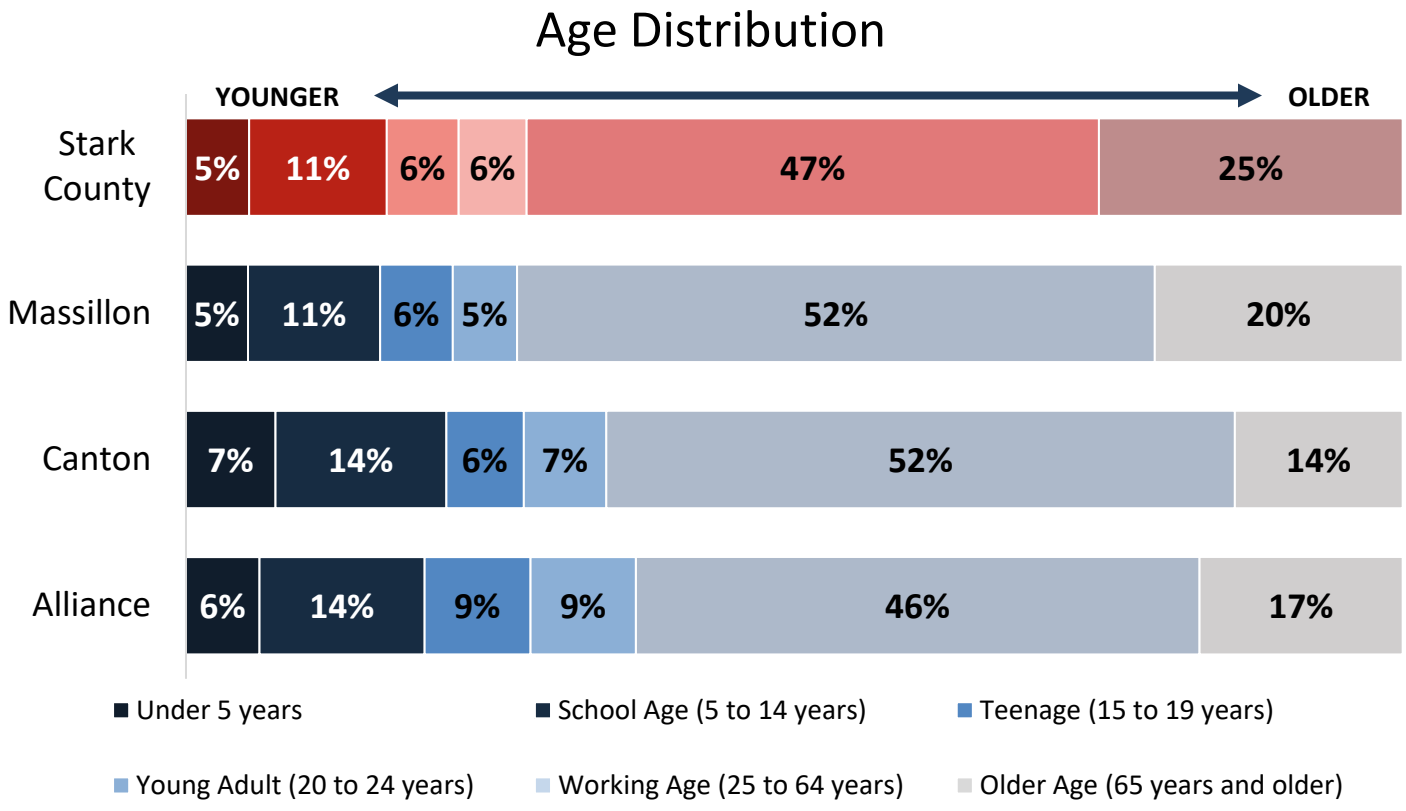



About one-third of Stark County's residents live in the three largest cities: Alliance, Canton, and Massillon. While the county's population has remained relatively steady over the past several decades, where people are living has not. People have moved out of the central cities and into surrounding communities. Canton's population has slowly fallen and the city has lost about 25,000 people, or 25 percent of its population, since 1980.

## Age Distribution

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

Stark County, like the rest of Ohio, is aging. Today, adults ages 60 and older outnumber children under age 18. Stark County has a slightly older population than Ohio as a whole, yet Canton has a slightly younger population. Alliance has the highest percentage of residents under age 25.



## Race and Ethnicity

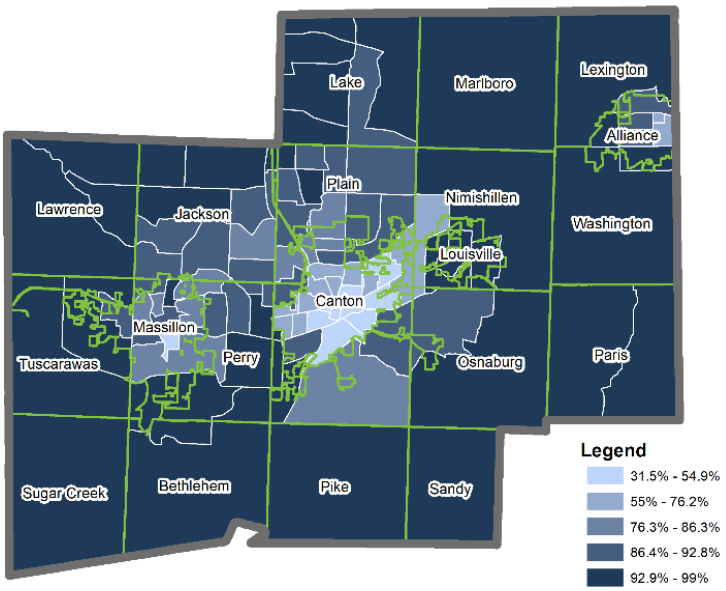
*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

Most Stark County residents (87 percent) are white, which is more than the state average (80 percent). However, nearly 1 in 4 residents of Canton are Black, and another 9 percent identify as two or more races. The U.S. Census Bureau counts Hispanic or Latino as an ethnicity, meaning that people who identify as Hispanic or Latino can be of any race. Two percent of Stark County's residents are Hispanic or Latino, with Canton having the largest proportion at 5 percent.

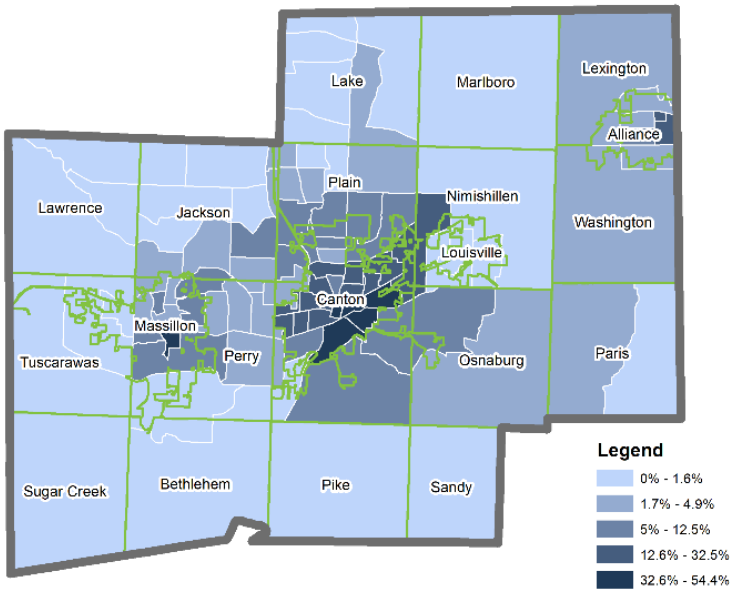
| | Stark County | | Alliance | | Canton | | Massillon | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** |
| **White** | 324,684 | 86.6% | 18,643 | 85.5% | 46,188 | 65.0% | 27,630 | 85.8% |
| **Black** | 27,440 | 7.3% | 1,744 | 8.0% | 17,284 | 24.3% | 2,553 | 7.9% |
| **American Indian** | 470 | 0.1% | 57 | 0.3% | 19 | <0.1% | 110 | 0.3% |
| **Asian American** | 3,271 | 0.9% | 36 | 0.2% | 326 | 0.5% | 54 | 0.2% |
| **Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander** | 34 | <0.1% | - | 0.0% | 10 | <0.1% | - | - |
| **Some other race** | 2,341 | 0.6% | 184 | 0.8% | 912 | 1.3% | 108 | 0.3% |
| **Two or more races** | 16,472 | 4.4% | 1,152 | 5.3% | 6,358 | 8.9% | 1,744 | 5.4% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Hispanic or Latino (of any race)** | 8,376 | 2.2% | 182 | 0.8% | 3,380 | 4.8% | 401 | 1.2% |

The maps on the next page present race and ethnicity by Census Tract.

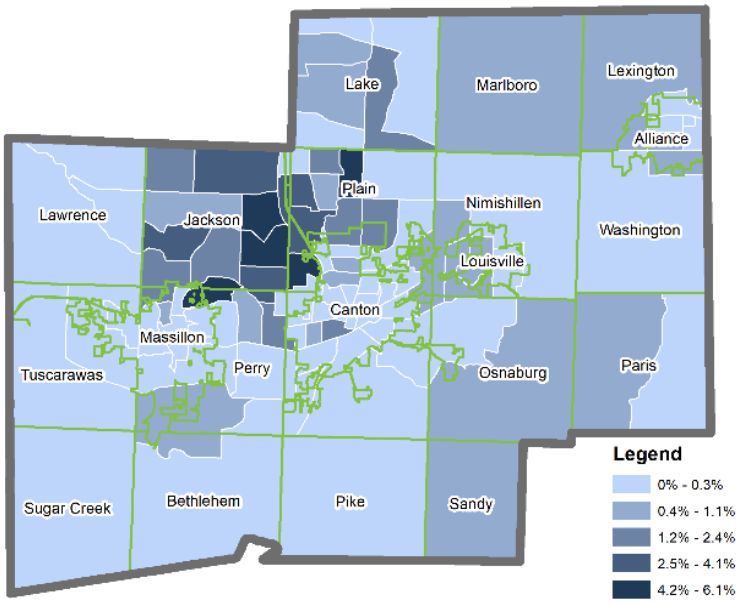
**Percentage of White Stark County Residents Mapped by Tract**



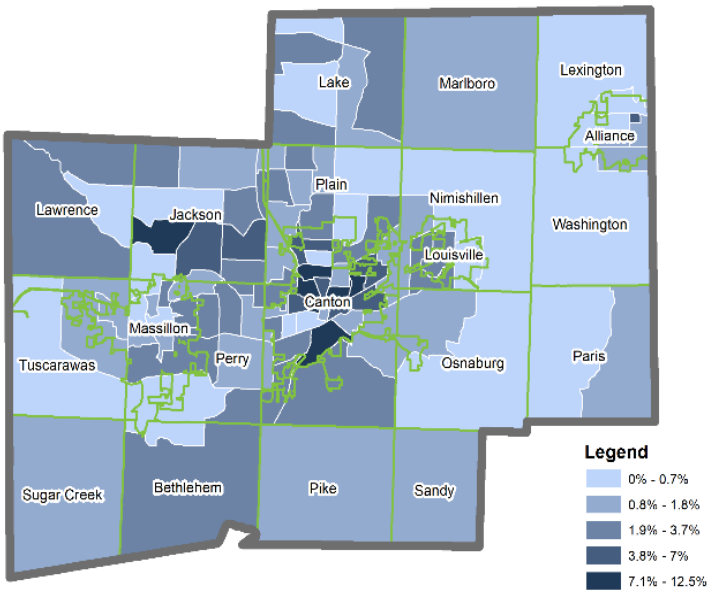

**Percentage of Black Stark County Residents Mapped by Tract**




**Percentage of Asian Stark County Residents Mapped by Tract**



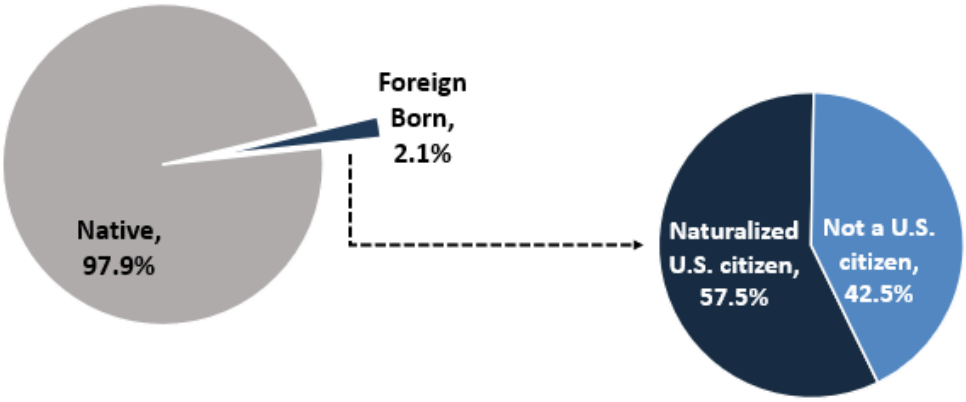

**Percentage of Hispanic/Latino (of any Race) Stark County Residents Mapped by Tract**



## Immigration

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

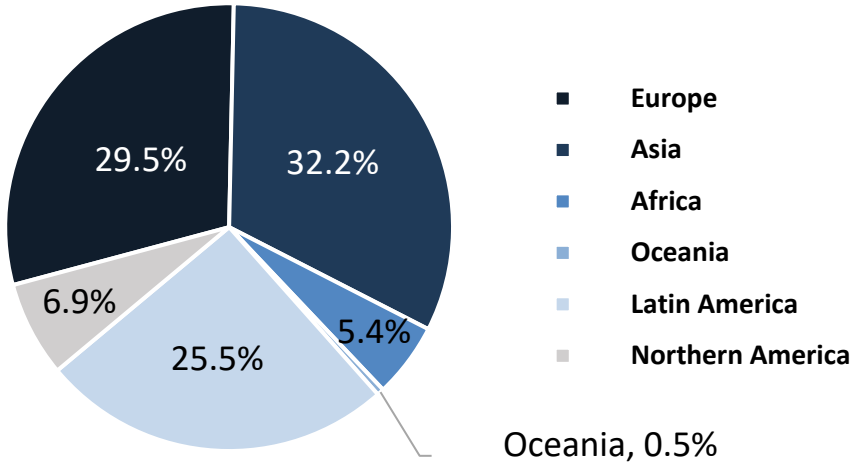
In Stark County, a little over 2 percent of the population is classified as foreign-born, or not born in the United States or its territories. Of those who were not born in the U.S., 58 percent have become U.S. citizens.




Most immigrants were born in Asia, followed by Europe. Only 0.5 percent were born in Oceania, which consists of Australia, New Zealand, and the surrounding island clusters of Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia.

Almost 97 percent of households in Stark County speak only English at home. The remaining 3 percent are made up by Spanish (1.2 percent), Asian and Pacific languages (0.5 percent), and other Indo-European languages (1.4 percent). Of those who speak a language other than English at home, 2 out of 3 speak English "very well."

**World Region of Birth of Foreign-Born Residents**




## Refugees

*Data Source: U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration Case Management System*

There were around 2,000 individuals who have settled in Ohio as refugees in 2022. An immigrant chooses to leave their country of origin, while a refugee is compelled to seek asylum elsewhere. Under United States law, refugees are of special humanitarian concern to the U.S. and must demonstrate that they had been or were afraid of persecution in their country. Fifty-seven percent of refugees in Ohio came from the Democratic Republic of Congo, followed by 12 percent from Syria.

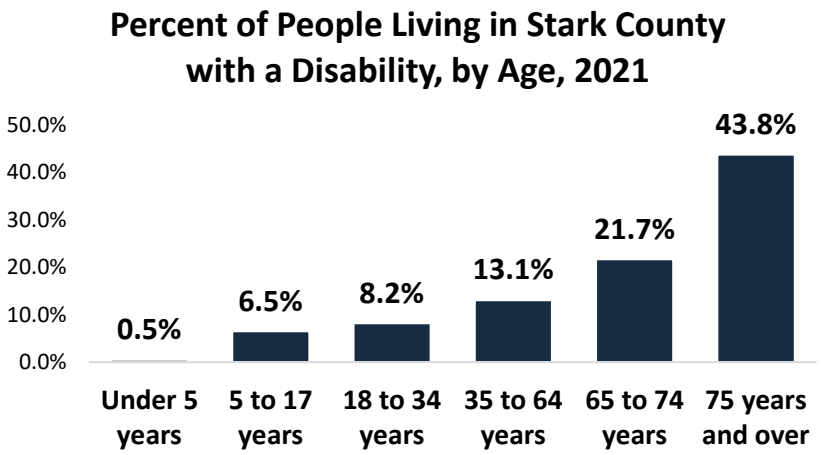
The most common continent of origin is Africa, with 71 percent of refugees, followed by Asia at 23 percent, Europe at 3 percent, South America at 2 percent, and North America at 1 percent.

| *Country* | *Count* | *Percentage* |
|---|---|---|
| **Afghanistan** | 85 | 4.4% |
| **Belarus** | 4 | 0.2% |
| **Bhutan** | 6 | 0.3% |
| **Burma** | 57 | 2.9% |
| **Burundi** | 1 | 0.1% |
| **Cameroon** | 1 | 0.1% |
| **Central African** | 15 | 0.8% |
| **Colombia** | 20 | 1.0% |
| **Dem. Rep. Congo** | 1099 | 56.6% |
| **El Salvador** | 7 | 0.4% |
| **Eritrea** | 71 | 3.7% |
| **Ethiopia** | 7 | 0.4% |
| **Guatemala** | 9 | 0.5% |
| **Guinea** | 2 | 0.1% |
| **Haiti** | 4 | 0.2% |
| **Honduras** | 5 | 0.3% |
| **Iran** | 8 | 0.4% |
| **Iraq** | 41 | 2.1% |
| **Kyrgyzstan** | 6 | 0.3% |
| **Nepal** | 5 | 0.3% |
| **Pakistan** | 7 | 0.4% |
| **Palestine** | 2 | 0.1% |
| **Republic of S. Africa** | 2 | 0.1% |
| **Rwanda** | 8 | 0.4% |
| **Senegal** | 7 | 0.4% |
| **Somalia** | 58 | 3.0% |
| **Sudan** | 96 | 4.9% |
| **Syria** | 225 | 11.6% |
| **Uganda** | 6 | 0.3% |
| **Ukraine** | 54 | 2.8% |
| **Uzbekistan** | 11 | 0.6% |
| **Venezuela** | 14 | 0.7% |

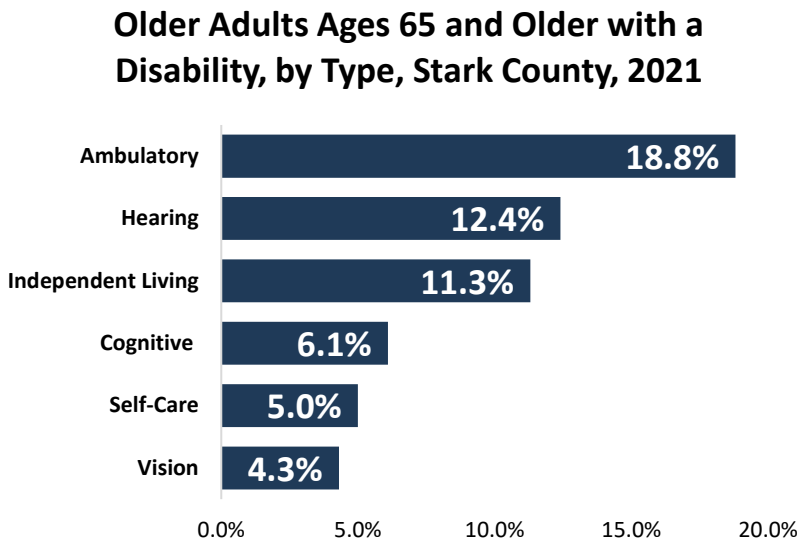
## Disabilities

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

Overall, 50,388 people in Stark County lived with a disability in 2021, which is 13.6 percent of the population. This is slightly below Ohio's rate of 13.9 percent. The U.S. Census Bureau defines six disability types, and someone is living with a disability if they report one or more of the types of difficulty. These include being deaf or having serious difficulty hearing, blind or having serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses, having difficulty remembering, concentrating or making decisions because of a physical, mental or emotional problem (cognitive difficulty), having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs (ambulatory difficulty), having difficulty bathing or dressing (self-care difficulty), or having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping because of a physical, mental or emotional problem (independent living difficulty).




There is variance in people living with disabilities by race in Stark County. American Indian or Alaska Native residents have the highest percentage of people living with a disability at 27.5 percent. This unfortunately follows national trends. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Indian and Alaska Native people are over 50 percent more likely to have a disability, when compared to the national average for all races. In Stark County, 16.7 percent of residents who are Black or African American are living with a disability. The percentage of white residents living with a disability is the same as the county as a whole at 13.6 percent and Hispanic/Latino residents have the lowest percentage of people living with disabilities at 8.9 percent.




The older you are, the more likely you are to live with a disability. Only half of 1 percent of children under 5 are living with a disability, and that number steadily increases as residents get older. Almost half of people in the oldest category, over age 75, are living with a disability, with over 1 in 4 older residents living with ambulatory difficulties. The chart at right shows the type of disability for all older adults ages 65 and older.

# FAMILIES, HOUSEHOLDS, & NEIGHBORHOODS

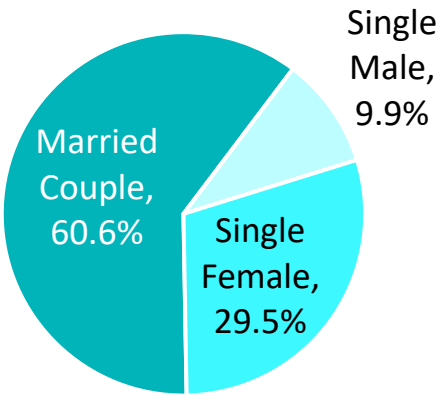
## Family Structure

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

There are 154,426 households in Stark County, including 38,049 households with children. Twenty-eight percent of all households have at least one member under the age of 18 and 44 percent of households have at least one person older than age 60. The average family size is 2.37 people, but 30 percent of householders live alone. Two-thirds of households in Stark County live in homes that they own, while the remaining 33 percent rent.

A married couple heads more than 3 in 5 households with children in Stark County. Two-parent households, when compared to single-parent households, often experience improved economic stability and more ease with parental tasks (cooking, cleaning, care, and transportation). Children who grow up in a household with two parents are less likely to live in poverty, more likely to meet academic benchmarks and receive better grades.

**Head of Household, Households with Own Children, Stark County, 2021**




However, Stark County has slightly higher rates of single-parent households with children, both male and female-headed, than the Ohio average.

## Housing Affordability

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

When housing costs are more than 30 percent of a household's income, a family is considered to have an unaffordable housing burden. Monthly rent and utility costs are included in a renter's total burden, and owners' monthly housing costs include mortgage, second mortgage and/or home equity loans, real estate taxes, homeowners' insurance, condominium fees, mobile home costs, and utilities.

| Housing Affordability, 2021 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Stark County | Alliance | Canton | Massillon |
| **Owners** | Total occupied units | 105,031 | 3,873 | 14,415 | 8,801 |
| | Housing costs 30% of income or more | 15,796 | 616 | 2,769 | 1,548 |
| | Percent unaffordable | 15.0% | 15.9% | 19.2% | 17.6% |
| **Renters** | Total occupied units | 49,395 | 4,551 | 15,746 | 5,283 |
| | Housing costs 30% of income or more | 20,244 | 1,844 | 7,610 | 2,177 |
| | Percent unaffordable | 41.0% | 40.5% | 48.3% | 41.2% |

Renters are more likely to be housing burdened than owners. Overall, a smaller share of Stark County residents live in unaffordable housing (23 percent) than the state as a whole (25 percent). However, rates in Alliance (29 percent) and Canton (34 percent) are worse than both the rest of the state and county.

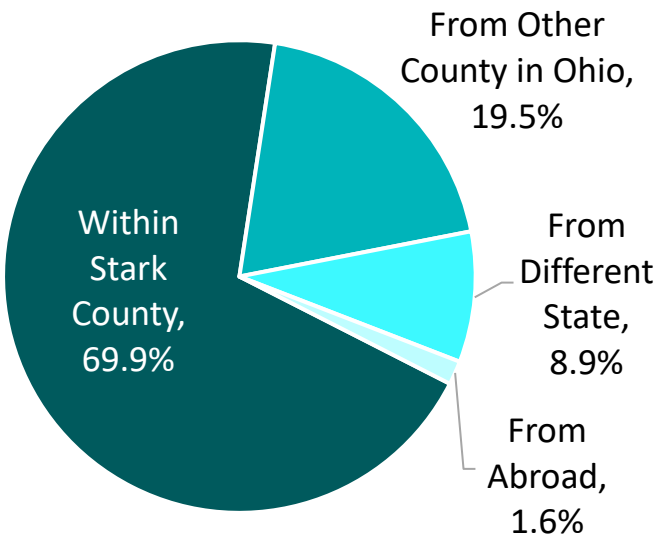
## Geographic Mobility

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

Overall, 88 percent of Stark County residents lived in the same home that they did one year ago. Of the 45,594 households that moved, most moved within Stark County.

The lower the income, the more likely residents are to move within the county. Sixteen percent of households who live in poverty moved within the county in the past year, compared to just 6 percent of those above 150 percent of the federal poverty level. Renters are more than four times as likely to move within the county as those who own their homes.

**Stark County Residents Who Moved in the Last Year, by Previous Residence, 2021**




## Eviction

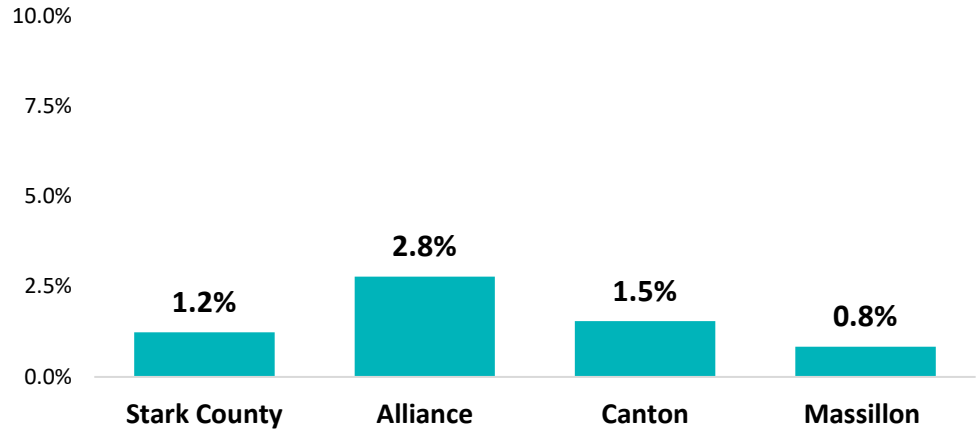
*Data Source: Eviction Lab.*

An eviction from a rental property can have a long-lasting negative impact on future housing options for families. While many families find ways to avoid court-ordered evictions, there are an average of 7.9 evictions a day in Stark County according to Eviction Lab, which is up from 5.03 evictions per day that was recorded in the last assessment. The filing rate per 100 rental homes in Stark County in 2018 was 5.6 percent, which was lower than the state average of 6.2 percent.

## Blood Lead Levels

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Health, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

**Percent of Children Tested in 2021 With Confirmed Elevated Blood Lead Levels**




Lead paint is a condition of housing closely tied to health outcomes for children. Many homes built before 1978 have lead paint, and lead can be inhaled or ingested by residents if it is peeling or chipping. Nearly three-quarters of Stark County's occupied housing units were built before 1980. Many older homes have not undergone lead remediation or abatement. Lead can also be found in the soil of older industrial cities, such as those found across Northeast Ohio, as well as in older pipes and on toys manufactured in countries without lead paint regulations. In Stark County, 1.2 percent of the 4,780 young children tested in 2021 had a confirmed blood lead level above 5 ug/dL, which is labeled a blood lead level of concern by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This rate is lower than the Ohio average. While the percent was still small, Children in Alliance were 2.5 times more likely to have elevated blood lead levels than those in the rest of the county, but the confirmed test level is down over 2 percent since the last assessment.

## Residential Segregation

*Data Source: County Health Rankings.*

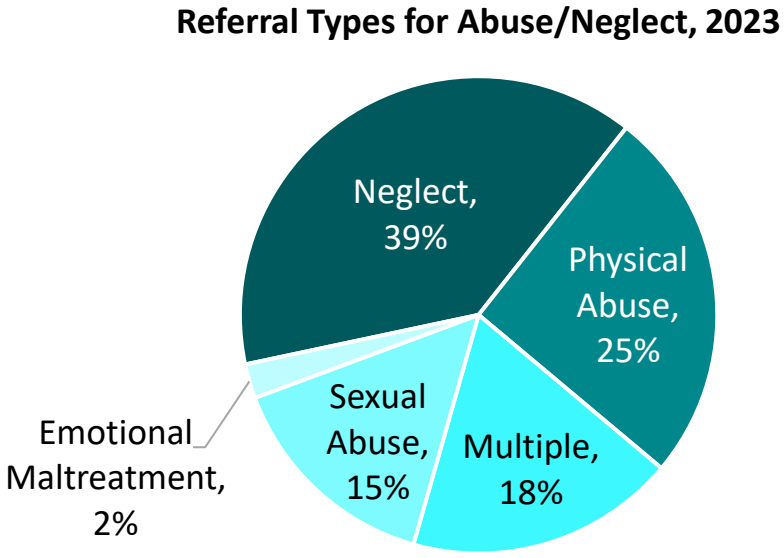
The residential segregation index provides a score of 0-100, where 0 is complete integration and 100 is total segregation, meaning that a lower number is more desirable. Stark County's white and non-white residential segregation score is 57, compared to the Ohio average of 70, according to County Health Rankings, which means that the physical separation of races is lower in Stark County when compared to the state. Though no longer codified, residential segregation remains present in communities. Residential segregation has been linked to negative health outcomes and economic status and is often worse for non-white residents.

## Child Abuse and Neglect

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Data Dashboard.*

As of this publication, Stark County Department of Job and Family Services received 3,875 referrals in the calendar year of January 2023. Of those referrals, 2,683 did not meet the criteria for investigation. Stark County's screened out percentage is slightly higher than surrounding counties.

| Children in Stark County Custody, by Age | |
|---|---|
| **Age of Child** | **Percent** |
| Less than 1 Year | 10 % |
| 1-3 Years | 24 % |
| 4-6 Years | 17 % |
| 7-9 Years | 17 % |
| 10-12 Years | 13 % |
| 13-15 Years | 11 % |
| 16-18 Years | 8 % |




If a case of abuse or neglect is substantiated, the county may remove the children from the home, and are then considered to be in the custody of the county. Children in the care of the county include children who are in placements such as foster care, kinship care, independent living, congregate care, and other settings. Thirty-five percent of children were placed in family foster care, and 36 percent were placed in kinship care with relatives. Over half (53 percent) of all children removed from their homes were cases involving parental substance use or abuse.

Children between the ages of one and three-years-old make up the largest share of children in county care, and one-quarter of children in county custody are in this age group.

## Crime

*Data Sources: Ohio Department of Public Safety, Crime Statistics and Crime Reports.*

The best data on crime is collected by the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program and compiled by county by the Ohio Department of Public Safety. However, this data should be interpreted with caution because it is voluntarily submitted by law enforcement departments based on which department responds to the reported crime. This means the crime statistic may be reported by a municipality that is not where the crime occurred, nor is it the residency of the victim.

In 2022, Stark County's rate of 384 violent crimes per 100,000 people was higher than the state rate of 290. There are wide differences in crime rates for the law enforcement departments within Stark County. For example, the violent crime rate in Canton is over three times as high as the county average, while other jurisdictions reported as few as two total violent crimes. Property crime is much more common than violent crime.

**Number of Crimes and Rate Per 100,000 Population in Stark County, by Law Enforcement Department, 2022**

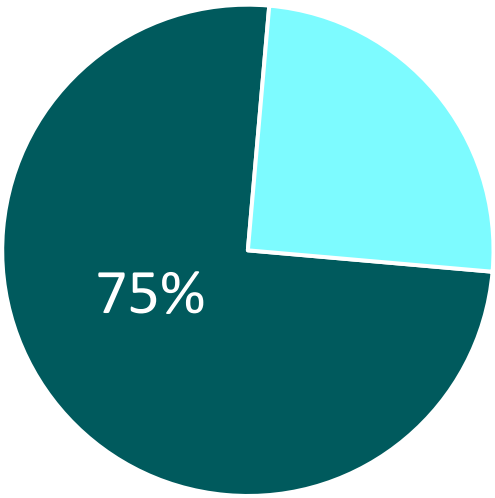
| Agency Name | Violent Crime | | Property Crime | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Rate per 100,000 | Number | Rate per 100,000 |
| Alliance | 74 | 347 | 589 | 2762 |
| Beach City | 0 | N/A | 3 | 308 |
| Brewster | 4 | 187 | 26 | 1214 |
| Canal Fulton | 7 | 130 | 44 | 815 |
| Canton | 962 | 1382 | 4271 | 6134 |
| East Canton | 2 | 128 | 51 | 3255 |
| Hartville | 3 | 97 | 45 | 1451 |
| Jackson Township | 72 | 179 | 1050 | 2611 |
| Lawrence Township | 11 | 133 | 51 | 616 |
| Louisville | 5 | 53 | 120 | 1278 |
| Magnolia | 3 | 312 | 5 | 519 |
| Massillon | 17 | 53 | 124 | 386 |
| Navarre | 3 | 163 | 10 | 542 |
| North Canton | 25 | 146 | 318 | 1861 |
| Stark County Sheriff | 144 | 122 | 1601 | 1352 |
| Uniontown | 4 | 121 | 100 | 3025 |
| Stark County Total | 1413 | 384 | 8924 | 2425 |

## Access to Exercise Opportunities

*Data Source: County Health Rankings.*

Access to exercise opportunities measures the percentage of individuals in a community who live reasonably close to a park or recreation facility. In urban areas, a reasonable distance is considered to be one mile, and in rural areas, three miles is considered a reasonable distance. Opportunities to exercise can improve the physical and mental well-being of residents as well as strengthen social ties by gathering with community members in common spaces. Three out of every four Stark County residents, or 75 percent, have access to exercise opportunities, a smaller share than the Ohio average of 84 percent.

**Stark County Adults with Access to Exercise Opportunities, 2021**




## Social Associations

*Data Source: County Health Rankings.*

Stark County residents have a social association rate of 11.9. Social associations measure the number of membership associations per 10,000 population. Stark County has a higher rate of social associations than the state's overall rate of 10.8. Strong social connections can decrease the risk of social isolation and lead to healthier lifestyle choices as influenced by positive social networks.

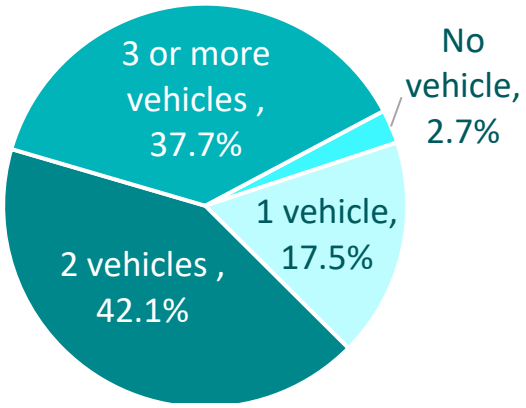
## Transportation

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

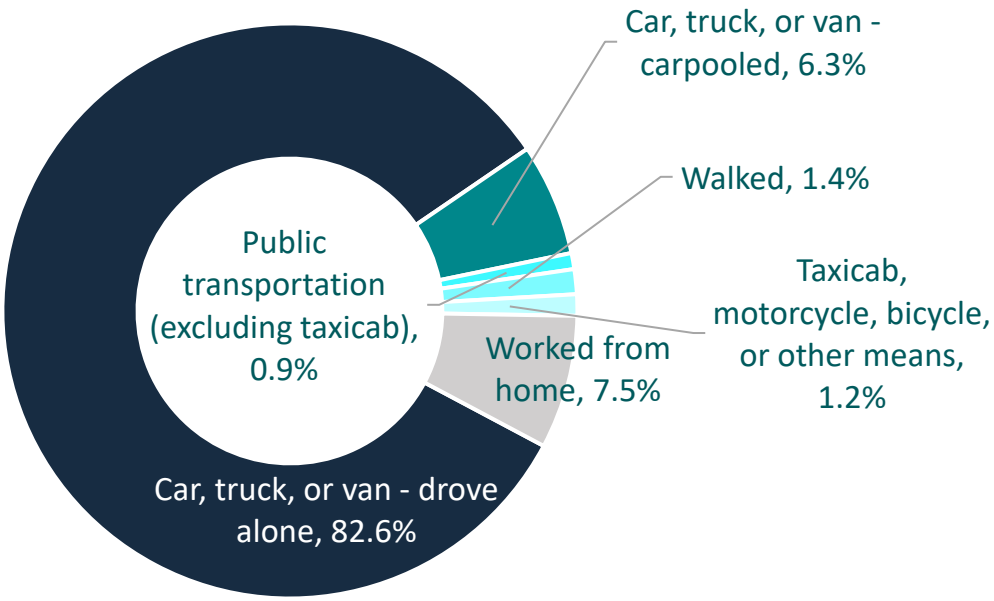
Most residents of Stark County have at least one car that they take to work, but 2.7 percent of residents do not own a vehicle.

The most common means of getting to work is driving alone in a car, truck, or van. Around 6 percent of workers indicated that they carpool to work and very few (less than 1 percent) indicated that they take public transportation. Public transportation rates are lower than the state rate of 1.2 percent and that in neighboring counties, but higher than in more rural counties.

**Transportation to Work, Number of Cars Available**




**How Stark County Residents Get to Work**



# EDUCATION

## Quality Early Childhood Education

*Data Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates, and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.*

In 2021, there were almost 17,000 children under age six with all available parents in the workforce. Since their parents are working, these children need childcare. There were 3,374 children in Stark County who were enrolled in publicly funded childcare in 2021, indicating that there could be a shortfall in high-quality, convenient, affordable childcare. This number also fell by around 1,000 children since 2016, indicating that these children could either be in private care, in the care of a relative, or their parent is out of the labor force and home with them.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services administers a five-star rating and improvement system for licensed childcare facilities. The star ratings are based on standards related to learning and development, administrative and leadership practices, staff qualifications, and family and community partnerships, with five stars being the highest rating. The listing of facilities below includes licensed Type A and Type B family childcare homes, licensed childcare centers, and Ohio Department of Education licensed preschools. As of publication, the rating program remains voluntary and about two-thirds of providers in Stark County participate. Around 14 percent of participating centers have one star, and more than one-fourth have achieved the highest five-star rating. The data on childcare providers is available only by ZIP code, so municipality names do not line up with the municipality data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

| Number of Children Under Age Six with All Available Parents in the Labor Force, 2021 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Canal Fulton** | 90% | 326 |
| **Canton Township** | 83% | 535 |
| **Perry Township** | 82% | 1,405 |
| **Louisville City** | 81% | 395 |
| **Washington Township** | 80% | 178 |
| **Uniontown** | 80% | 389 |
| **Osnaburg Township** | 80% | 300 |
| **Tuscarawas Township** | 79% | 267 |
| **Lawrence Township** | 79% | 604 |
| **Bethlehem Township** | 79% | 223 |
| **Jackson Township** | 77% | 1,977 |
| **Massillon City** | 77% | 1,419 |
| **Alliance City** | 74% | 1,100 |
| **Marlboro Township** | 73% | 179 |
| **Lake Township** | 73% | 1,171 |
| **Paris Township** | 72% | 239 |
| **Stark County** | **71%** | **16,935** |
| **North Canton City** | 70% | 652 |
| **Plain Township** | 70% | 2,180 |
| **Sugar Creek Township** | 60% | 321 |
| **Nimishillen Township** | 58% | 320 |
| **Pike Township** | 58% | 157 |
| **Lexington Township** | 55% | 95 |
| **Sandy Township** | 53% | 80 |
| **Canton City** | 60% | 3,790 |
| **Navarre Village** | 48% | 36 |

| City by ZIP Code | Total Providers | No Rating | 1 Star | 2 Star | 3 Star | 4 Star | 5 Star |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alliance (44601) | 12 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Canal Fulton (44614) | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Canton (44701, 44702, 44703, 44704, 44705, 44706, 44707, 44708, 44709, 44710, 44711, 44714, 44718, 44720, 44721, 44730, 44735, 44750, 44767, 44799) | 104 | 38 | 21 | 2 | 9 | 17 | 17 |
| East Canton (44730) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| East Sparta (44626) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hartville (44632) | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Louisville (44641) | 9 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Massillon (44626, 44647, 44648, 44662, 44706) | 38 | 10 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 |
| Minerva (44657) | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Navarre (44662) | 5 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| North Canton (44709, 44720, 44767) | 21 | 10 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 7 |
| Uniontown (44685) | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Waynesburg (44688) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **210** | **72** | **30** | **13** | **13** | **37** | **51** |

## Total School Enrollment

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Education.*

Stark County has 17 school districts that enrolled a total of 52,742 students in the 2022-2023 school year. The three largest districts are Canton City (7,733 students), Jackson Local (5,892 students), and Plain Local (5,874 students). Together, these three districts account for more than one-third of all students in Stark County. The total school enrollment has dropped by almost 2,000 students since the last assessment, which used the 2017-2018 school year enrollment. There are several theories to try and explain the drop in enrollment. Some families have explored other options such as homeschooling. Changes in requirements for school vouchers may also affect public school enrollment, as many families are now eligible to use these for their child's education, and this number does not include some private and charter schools. Community leaders have also expressed that an increase in school violence has made some students and their families apprehensive to remain in a traditional school setting.

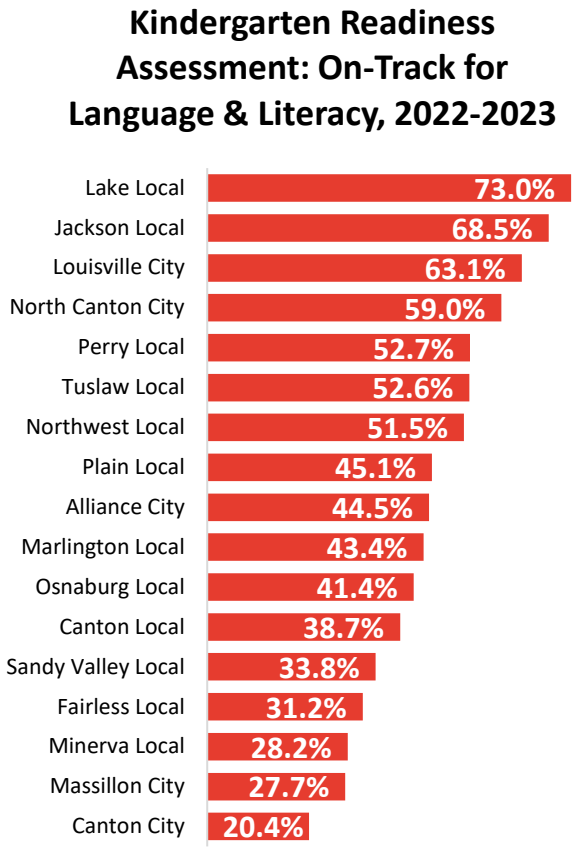
## School Readiness

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Education.*

Students who enter publicly funded kindergarten classrooms take a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) that measures their current skill levels in language and literacy, math, physical well-being, motor development, and social foundations. Students receive an overall score to identify their skills as emerging, approaching, or demonstrating. Demonstrating students are considered to be fully prepared for kindergarten, while those whose skills are emerging are generally not prepared to learn in kindergarten without substantial additional assistance or interventions. The KRA also provides a measurement for language and literacy skills to gauge whether a student is on track or not.

**Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Scores By School District, 2022-2023**

| | Demonstrating *(270-298)* | Approaching *(258-269)* | Emerging *(202-257)* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lake Local | 61.9% | 25.0% | 13.1% |
| Jackson Local | 60.7% | 27.2% | 12.1% |
| North Canton City | 54.1% | 28.9% | 16.9% |
| Louisville City | 53.8% | 27.1% | 19.1% |
| Northwest Local | 43.9% | 38.6% | 17.4% |
| Perry Local | 40.2% | 40.6% | 19.2% |
| Tuslaw Local | 38.5% | 43.6% | 17.9% |
| Alliance City | 37.3% | 32.1% | 30.6% |
| Plain Local | 33.6% | 33.1% | 33.3% |
| Sandy Valley Local | 30.0% | 33.8% | 36.3% |
| Marlington Local | 27.0% | 36.9% | 36.1% |
| Canton Local | 25.2% | 44.1% | 30.6% |
| Fairless Local | 22.6% | 53.8% | 23.7% |
| Massillon City | 21.6% | 36.6% | 41.8% |
| Minerva Local | 20.5% | 41.9% | 37.6% |
| Osnaburg Local | 15.7% | 44.3% | 40.0% |
| Canton City | 15.7% | 36.1% | 48.2% |




As shown in the table, 61.9 percent of kindergarten students in Lake Local School District scored in the “demonstrating” range overall, indicating that three out of five of students in that district arrived in kindergarten fully prepared and ready to learn. Rates have fallen nearly universally. More than one-third of students in Plain, Sandy Valley, Marlington, Massillon, Minerva, and Osanaburg Local School Districts scored in the “emerging” range along with almost half of Canton City kindergarteners. Students who fall in the “emerging” range would need additional intervention and support.

## Third Grade Reading

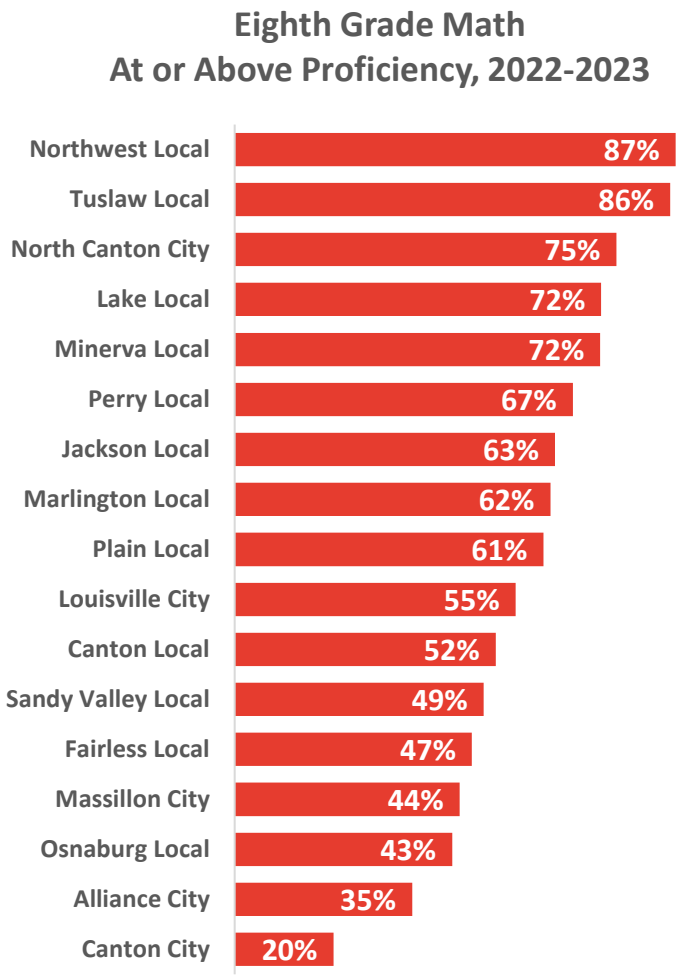
*Data Source: Ohio Department of Education.*

Third grade reading is an important marker of academic achievement. Third grade is the point where students switch from learning to read, to reading to learn. Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee requires that students demonstrate certain levels of literacy and reading ability in order to be promoted to fourth grade. Most districts in Stark County had 100 percent of third graders meet the reading guarantee requirements. The remaining districts came close to meeting the guarantee. These include Northwest Local (98.2 percent), Canton City (98.3 percent), Louisville City (98.8 percent), Jackson Local (99.5 percent), and Perry Local (99.6). These rates are higher than in 2017, when a few districts were below 95 percent of students who met the requirements. The very high number of children passing Third Grade Reading Guarantee requirements, even in districts with lower Kindergarten Readiness scores, indicates that schools and community supports are helping children who enter kindergarten catch up by third grade.

## Eighth Grade Math

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Education.*

Eighth grade math has been shown to be a marker of future academic achievement. Students who demonstrate proficiency in math in eighth grade are more likely to graduate from high school, participate in post-secondary education, and have higher educational attainment. Within Stark County, there is wide variation among districts in the percent of eighth grade students who test at or above the proficient level in math. Northwest Local and Tuslaw school districts have the highest percentage of math proficient eighth graders with over 85 percent achieving proficiency. In contrast, Canton had the lowest percentage of students at or above proficiency with just 20 percent reaching this level.



## Chronic Absenteeism

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Education.*

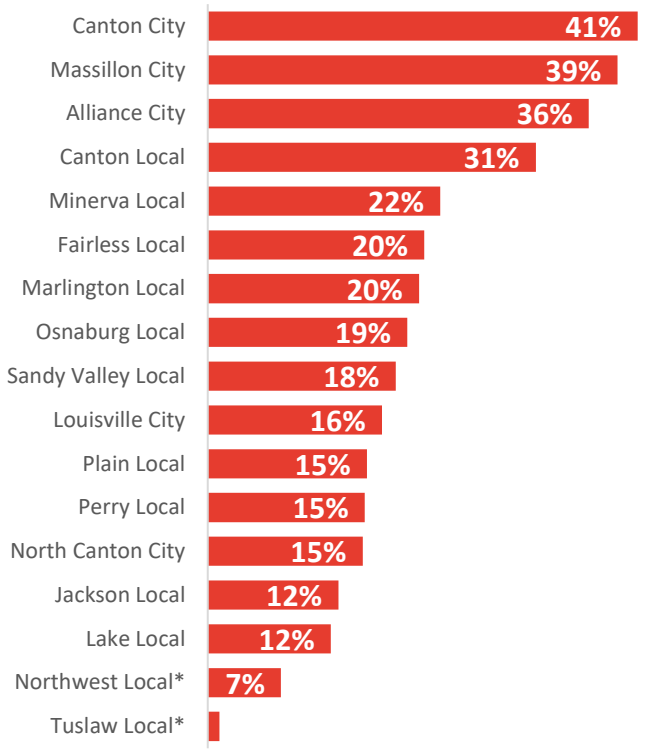
Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more of the academic year for any reason, including absences and suspensions. In Ohio, the minimum number of instructional hours for students in full-day kindergarten through grade 6 is 910 hours and 1,001 hours for students in grades 7 through 12. Good school attendance has been tied to academic achievement. However, the pandemic affected chronic absenteeism, as rates increased substantially since the last assessment.

This trend is not unique to Stark County, and there are a number of factors which may be contributing to rising rates of chronic absenteeism. While quarantining is no longer required with exposure to COVID-19, some are unaware of updated guidance. Evictions, unstable internet, and family illness represent just a few of the issues that may have prevented students from attending school. Community members have reported an increase in school violence may make some students and their families nervous to attend school.

While some of these absences may be considered excused, the high rates of absenteeism still represent missed learning opportunities. Students endured over two years of disrupted learning during the pandemic and may have struggled to develop, or build back, the habits necessary to attend school.

**Chronic Absenteeism Rate, by District, 2022-2023**

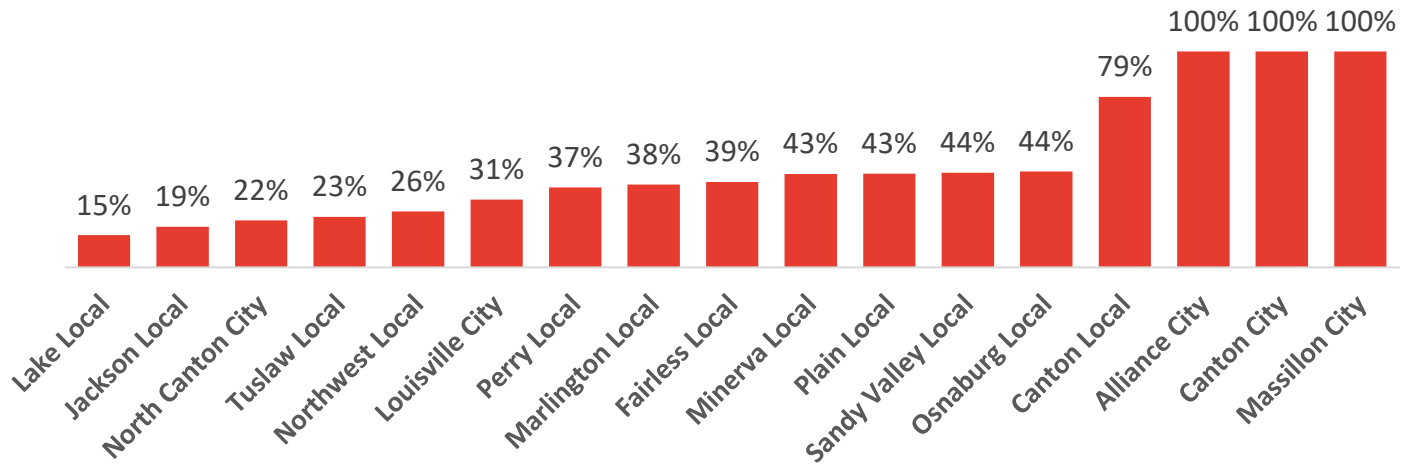
*NOTE: Rates for Northwest Local and Tuslaw Local are substantially lower than in past years, which may indicate an issue with data reporting.*




## Free and Reduced Lunch

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Education.*

**Percent of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, 2022-2023**



Students whose household income is less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level qualify for the free and reduced-price meals through their school district. However, to reduce administrative burden, the federal government allows schools who have a high percentage of students who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or government food assistance, to provide free lunch to all students in the district. Therefore, while all students in three districts, Alliance City, Canton City and Massillon City, can receive free and reduced-price lunches, it does not mean that 100 percent of the students are economically disadvantaged.

## School Suspensions

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Education.*

Students can be suspended from school for a number of reasons including truancy, fighting or violence, vandalism, theft, false alarms, bomb threats, disobedient or disruptive behavior, harassment or intimidation, unwelcome sexual conduct, firearm look-a-likes, serious bodily injury, and use, possession, sale, or distribution of drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons. Suspensions are either in-school or out-of-school. For this report, school suspensions are reported as a rate per 100 students based on total district enrollment. A student can be suspended multiple times in a school year, although most districts have a threshold where students who are repeatedly suspended can be expelled. Most districts' suspension rates are much lower compared to the last assessment. This decrease could be tied to the drop in overall enrollment and it is possible that students opt to stop attending school rather than work through disciplinary processes.

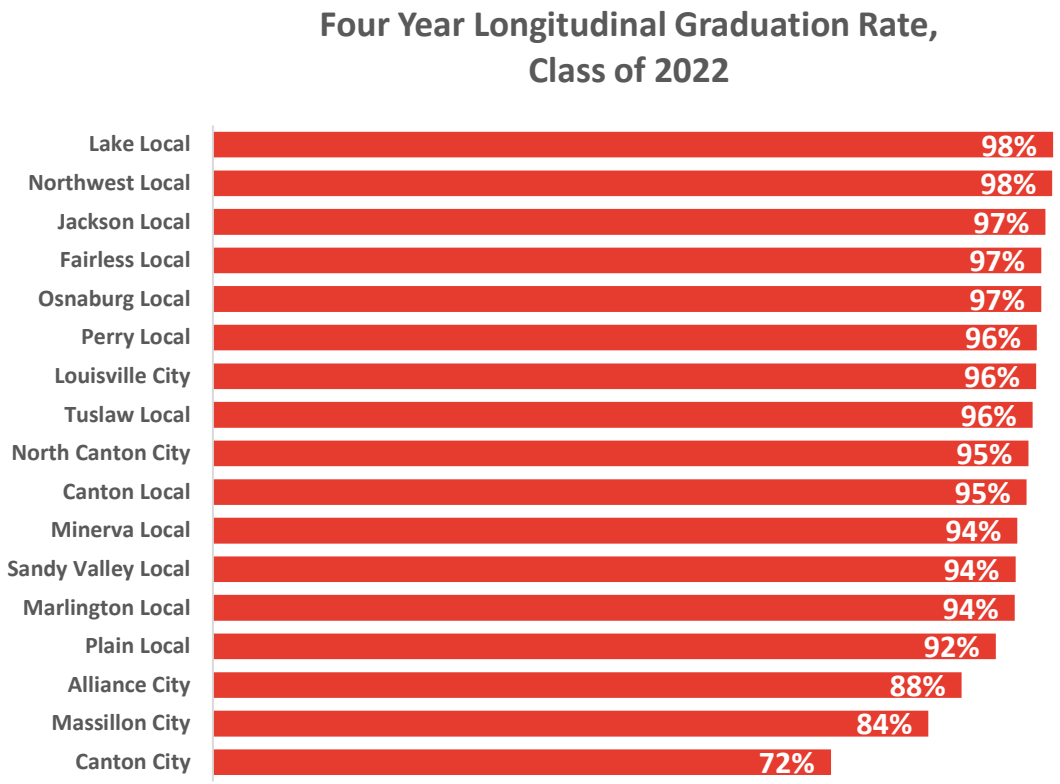
**School Suspensions, By District, 2022-2023**

| | Out of School Suspension | In-School Suspension | Total Suspensions | Enrollment | Rate of Suspensions Per 100 Students* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Alliance City** | 825 | 1689 | 2514 | 2,886 | **87.1** |
| **Canton City** | 2913 | 3360 | 6273 | 7,733 | **81.1** |
| **Massillon City** | 862 | 1230 | 2092 | 3,998 | **52.3** |
| **Canton Local** | 252 | 500 | 752 | 1,857 | **40.5** |
| **Perry Local** | 233 | 499 | 732 | 4,260 | **17.2** |
| **Sandy Valley Local** | 131 | 64 | 195 | 1,211 | **16.1** |
| **Plain Local** | 740 | <10 | 740 | 5,874 | **12.6** |
| **Marlington Local** | 79 | 132 | 211 | 1,856 | **11.4** |
| **Fairless Local** | 61 | 69 | 130 | 1,238 | **10.5** |
| **Osnaburg Local** | 32 | 47 | 79 | 888 | **8.9** |
| **Tuslaw Local** | 47 | 60 | 107 | 1,225 | **8.7** |
| **Louisville City** | 134 | 81 | 215 | 2,740 | **7.8** |
| **Jackson Local** | 421 | -- | 421 | 5,892 | **7.1** |
| **Northwest Local** | 38 | 70 | 108 | 1,720 | **6.3** |
| **North Canton City** | 95 | 127 | 222 | 4,366 | **5.1** |
| **Lake Local** | 103 | 33 | 136 | 3,306 | **4.1** |
| **Minerva Local** | 54 | <10 | 54 | 1,674 | **3.2** |

## On-Time Graduations

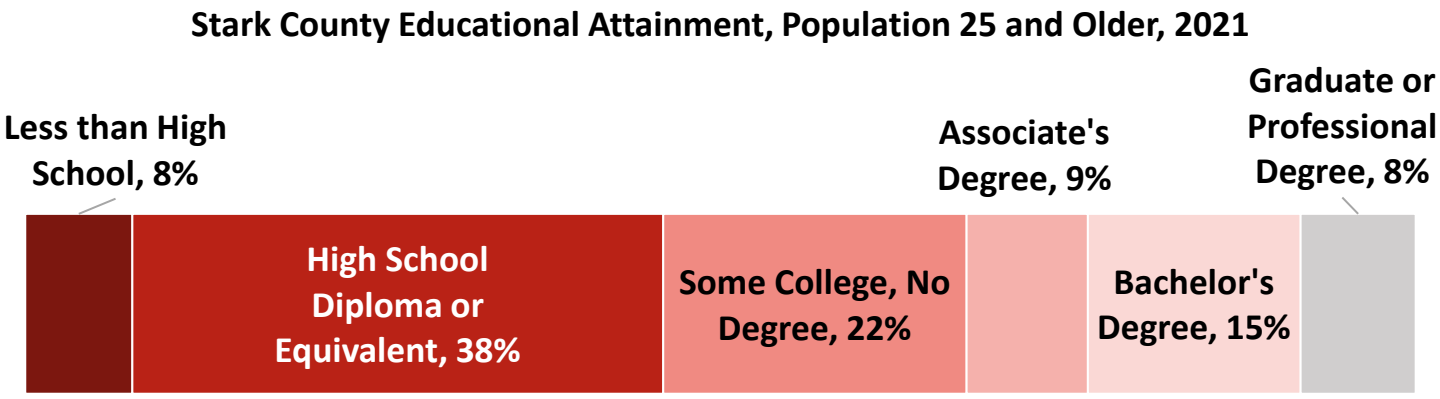
*Data Source: Ohio Department of Education.*

Except for Canton City and Massillon, all school districts in Stark County are above the Ohio average four-year graduation rate of 87 percent. Most districts are very close to full, on-time graduation.



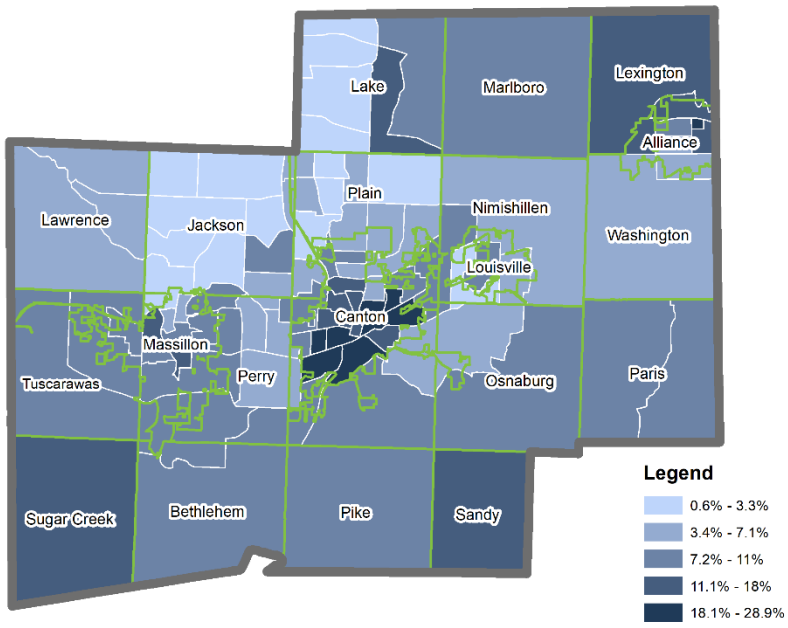

## Educational Attainment

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*



The education levels of adults in a community can indicate the quality of the labor force. By age 25, many people have completed their education and entered the workforce**. Stark County has an unusually high percentage of adults who have no education beyond high school**. Only 1 in 5 Stark County residents over 25 years of age has earned a bachelor's degree or higher. Earning potential and economic independence is closely tied to educational attainment. In Stark County, median earnings increase and poverty decreases with each level of education.

**Percentage of Residents 25 and Older Without a High School Diploma In Stark County Mapped by Tract**




**In Stark County, over 25 percent of those living in poverty did not have a high school education, compared to 3 percent with a bachelor's degree. Individuals without a high school education also have higher rates of chronic conditions and lower rates of self-reported health.** The median income for people who did not complete high school is just $20,241, and other studies reported that they earn an average of $1.8 million less in their lifetime compared to an individual who has a bachelor's degree.

# ECONOMICS

## Median Household Income

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

Median income is the income amount where half the households in a community earn more and half earn less. It is a clearer reflection of the actual economic conditions for families in an area than the statistical average (mean) income because a few households with very high incomes can skew that number.

The median household income for Stark County in 2021 was $58,170, which is below Ohio's median income of $61,938. The majority of communities within Stark County have median household incomes higher than the county average, with just five municipalities below the average. Canton City had the lowest household income at $34,611, while Lake Township had the highest at $85,121. For 2021, the median household income for Stark County has increased by around $4,000 since the last assessment in 2017.

Before adjusting for inflation, median household income has increased in Stark County since 2000. However, median income in 2023 would need to be almost $62,000 to have kept up with inflation.

| Municipality | 2021 Median Household Income |
|---|---|
| **Canton City** | $ 34,611 |
| **Alliance** | $ 44,606 |
| **Massillon** | $ 49,426 |
| **Navarre Village** | $50.284 |
| **Sandy** | $ 53,580 |
| **Stark County** | $ 58,170 |
| **Canton Township** | $ 58,914 |
| **Sugar Creek** | $ 60,417 |
| **Louisville** | $ 60,986 |
| **Paris** | $ 61,241 |
| **Bethlehem** | $ 61,290 |
| **Osnaburg** | $ 62,043 |
| **North Canton** | $ 62,303 |
| **Perry** | $ 62,459 |
| **Lexington** | $ 62,536 |
| **Pike** | $ 63,864 |
| **Plain** | $ 65,174 |
| **Tuscarawas** | $ 67,019 |
| **Canal Fulton** | $71,290 |
| **Lawrence** | $ 72,981 |
| **Washington** | $ 74,105 |
| **Nimishillen** | $ 77,248 |
| **Marlboro** | $ 78,537 |
| **Jackson** | $ 85,053 |
| **Lake** | $ 85,121 |
| **Uniontown** | $85,417 |

## Poverty

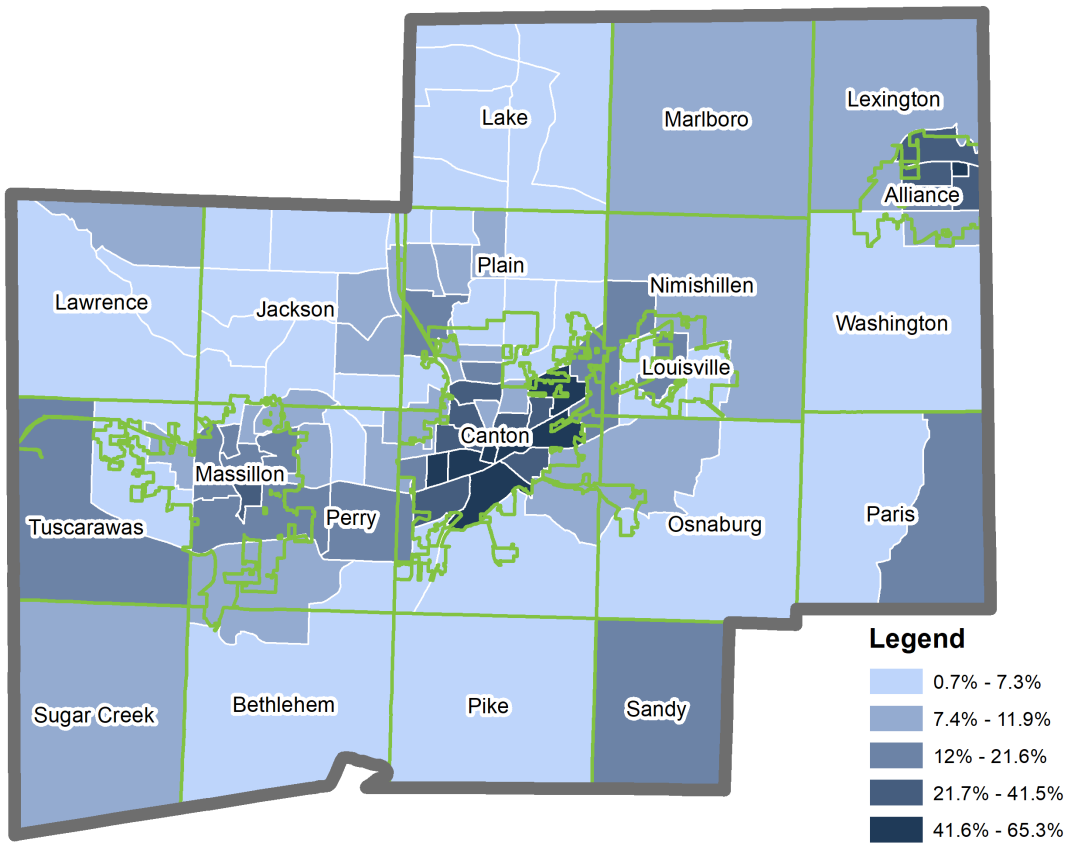
*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

Poverty is an indication of a lack of financial resources. Each year, the federal government identifies poverty guidelines that vary by family size. These guidelines, often called federal poverty level (FPL), are used to determine eligibility for many public assistance programs and other services. The guidelines in the table at right correspond to 100 percent FPL. The U.S. Census Bureau uses similar thresholds to calculate official poverty statistics, which vary by family size, composition and age of householder.

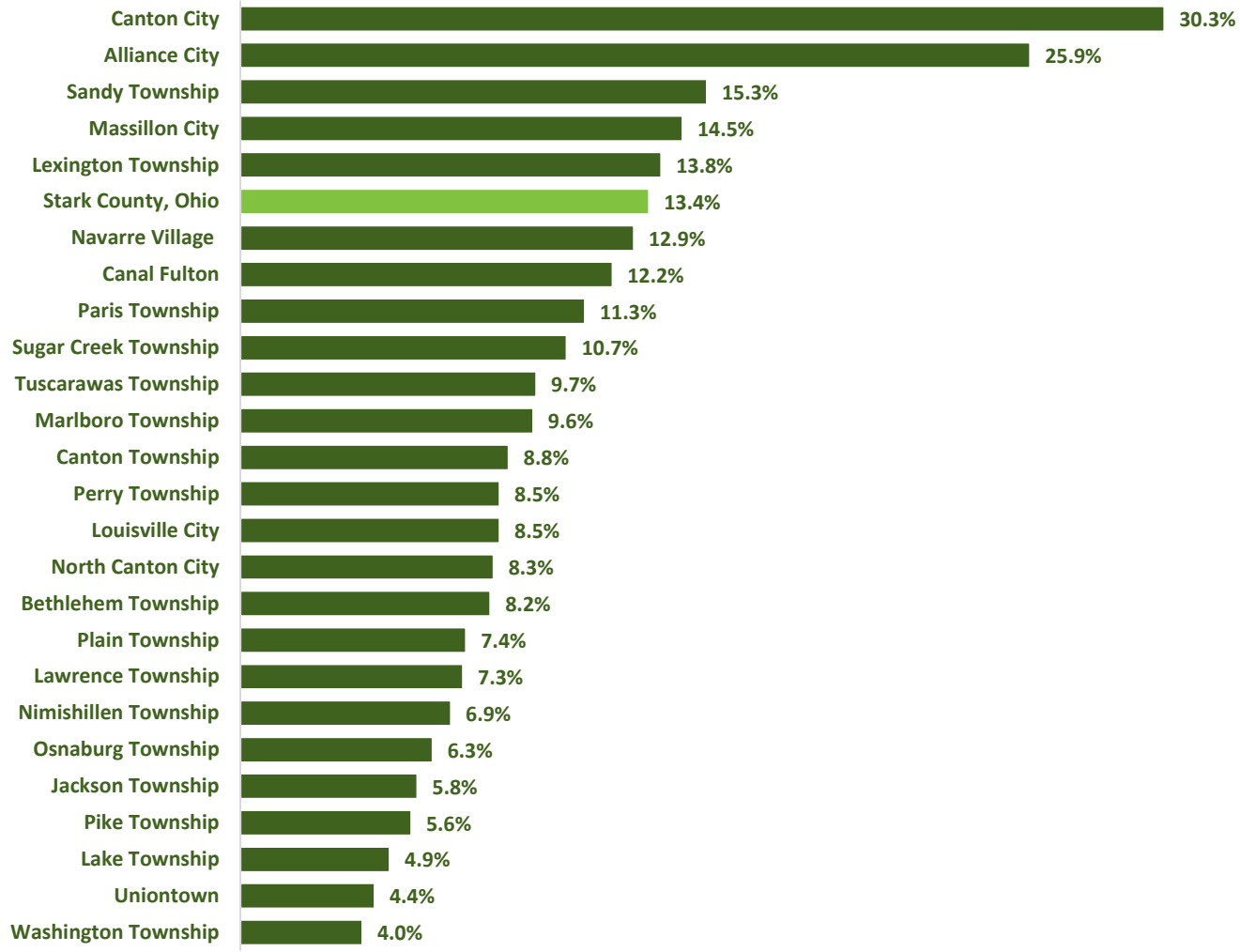
Stark County's poverty rate, at 13.4 percent, is equivalent to Ohio's average, and most municipalities within the county are below Stark County's rate. However, the poverty rate in Canton is more than twice that of the county as a whole, while Alliance is a little less than twice as high. As the map shows, poverty is concentrated within certain areas of Stark County, mainly in the larger cities.

| 2023 Federal Poverty Guidelines | |
|---|---|
| **Family Size** | **Poverty Guideline** |
| 1 | $14,580 |
| 2 | $19,720 |
| 3 | $24,860 |
| 4 | $30,000 |
| 5 | $35,140 |
| 6 | $40,280 |
| 7 | $45,420 |
| 8 | $50,560 |

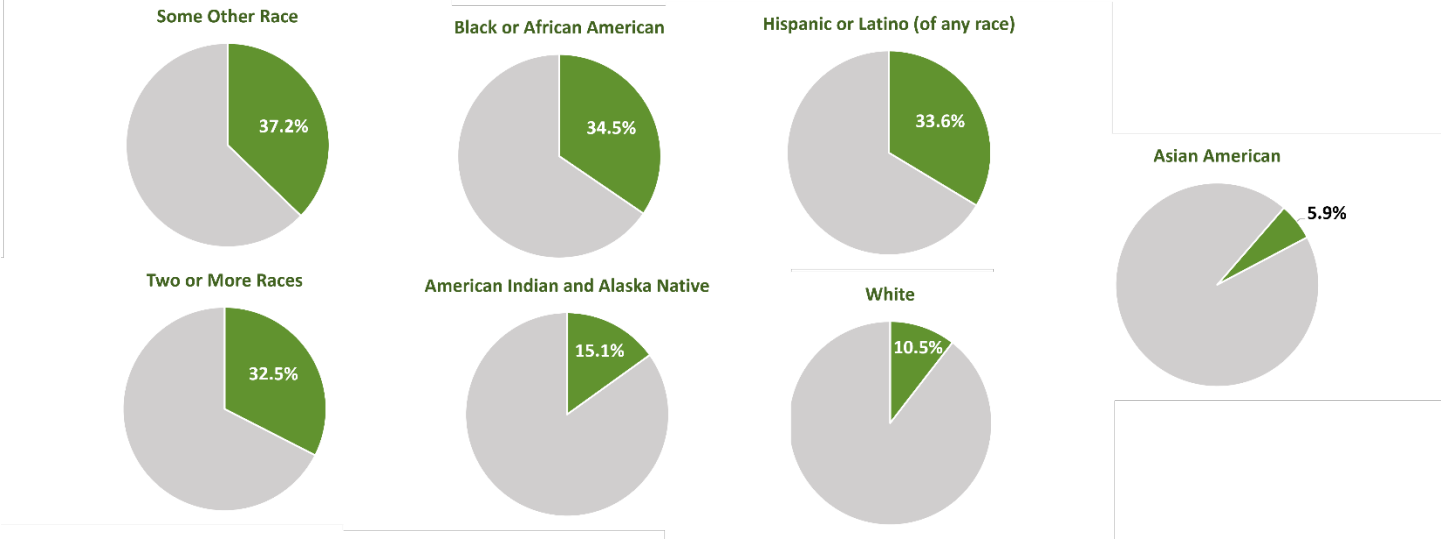
**Percentage of Residents Living in Poverty In Stark County Mapped by Tract**



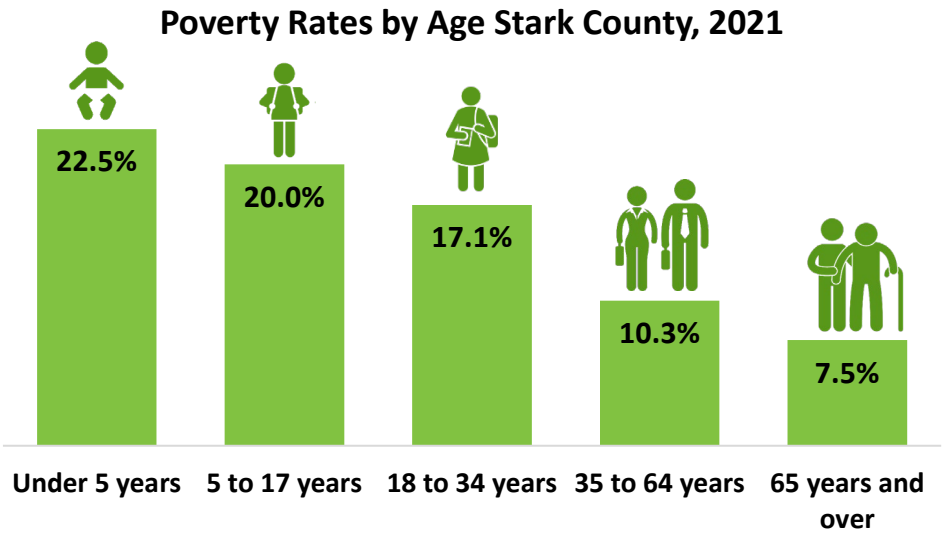
## Percent Below Poverty, By Municipality, 2021




While poverty can affect anyone, Black people and other people of color are more likely to live in poverty.

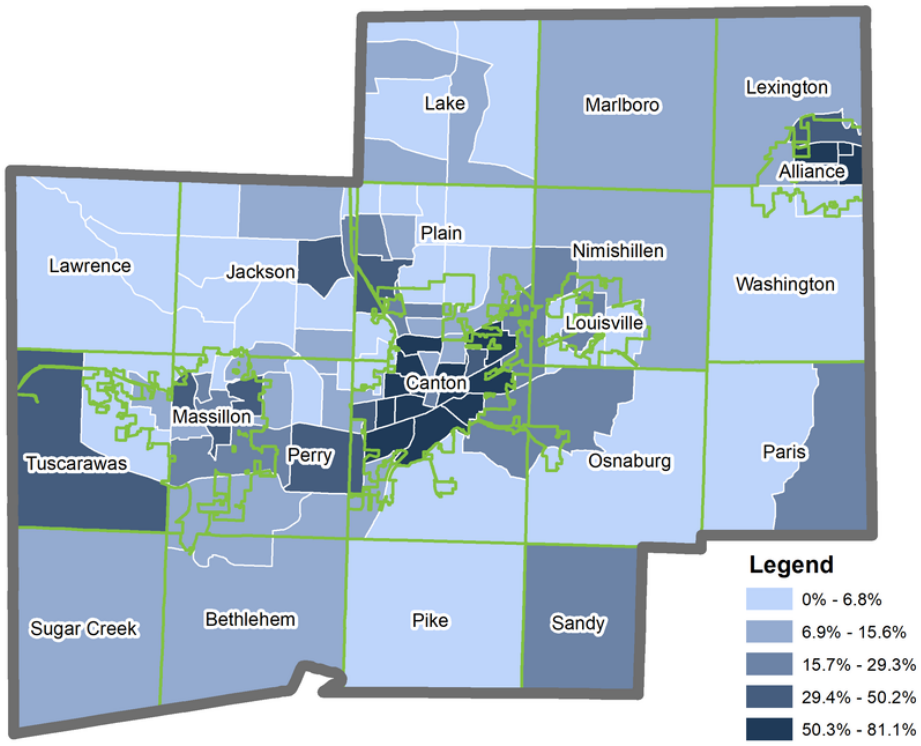


Within the county, and across the state, the younger you are the more likely you are to be living in poverty. While more than 1 in 5 young children in Stark County live in poverty, just 7.5 percent of older adults over age 65 live in poverty. This is thanks in large part to Social Security, which counts as income in poverty statistics.

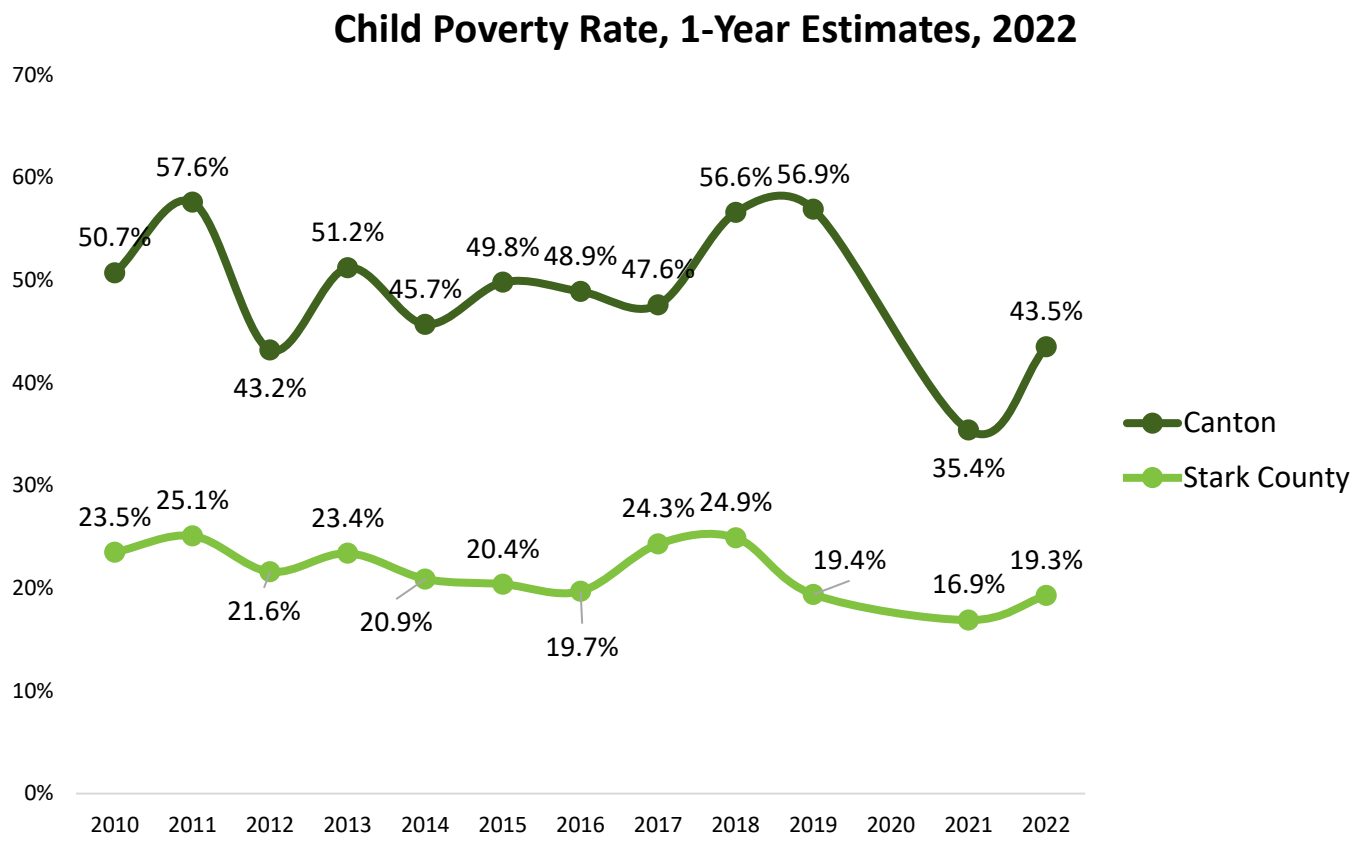



Compared to the last assessment, poverty rates by age have remained relatively the same, except for the group under 5 years.

**Percentage of Children Under 18 Living in Poverty In Stark County Mapped by Tract**



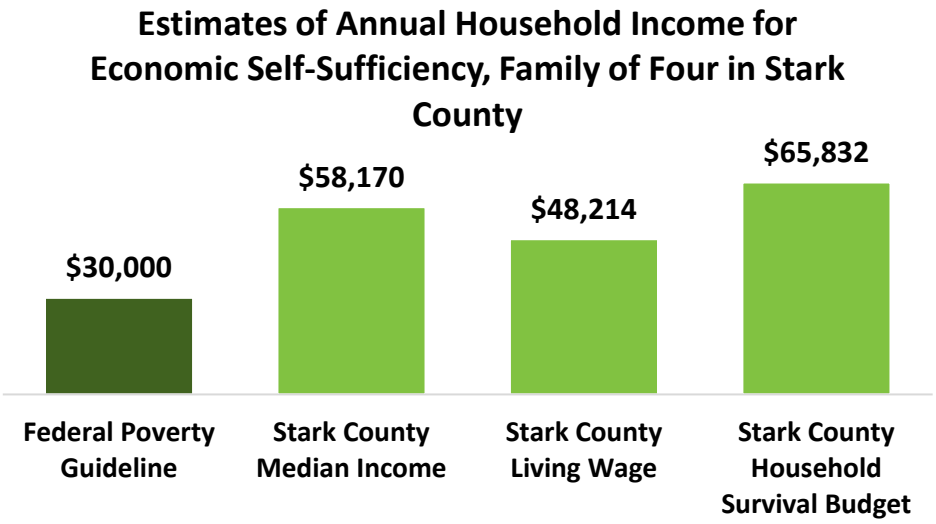
**Child poverty in Canton is of particular concern as 43.5 percent of children were poor in 2022.** According to the less reliable but more up-to-date one-year estimates produced by the U.S. Census Bureau, over 7,000 children in Canton were growing up in poverty. This is a decrease from the previous assessment, but an increase from the 2021 estimate. Due to large margins of error, and anomalies in the underlying data, we have reason to believe that the 2021 estimates were artificially low. Even so, the data indicates that child poverty is improving in Canton and remaining relatively steady in Stark County as a whole.



## Struggling Households

*Source: ALICE Report, 2021.*

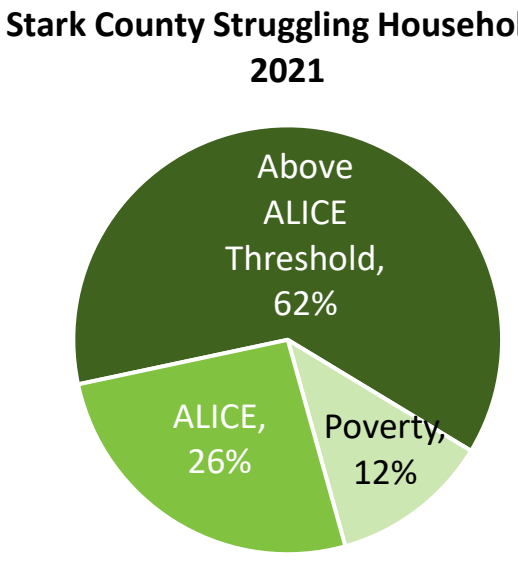
Most experts agree that official measures of poverty do not capture the number of families who struggle to make ends meet. Two other measures of economic self-sufficiency are the living wage calculated by researchers at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the household survival budget, which is described in more detail below.




The household survival budget represents the minimum cost option for each of the five basic household items needed to live and work in today's economy. Spending amounts in the survival budget allow for a two-bedroom apartment, registered home-based childcare, food costs based on the USDA Thrifty Food Plan, use of a car, the "cost of shared responsibility" for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act, and 9 to 11 percent of the budget to be reserved for various federal, state and local taxes. It can be considered the basic cost of living for the county.

Households who earn more than the federal poverty level but less than the household survival budget have been labeled Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE). The ALICE threshold is calculated based on the age of the householder and set at $50,000 for most Stark County households and $30,000 for households with members older than age 65. **The 40,622 households in Stark County who fall below ALICE income levels struggle to reach financial stability.** Like poverty, Canton has both the highest percentage and high number of struggling households in Stark County.

| Household Survival Budget, Stark County | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Single Adult** | **2 Adults, 1 infant, 1 preschooler** |
| Housing | $531 | $805 |
| Child Care | - | $1,562 |
| Food | $416 | $1,136 |
| Transportation | $327 | $804 |
| Health Care | $231 | $796 |
| Miscellaneous | $158 | $521 |
| Taxes | $253 | -$248 (due to child tax credit) |
| Technology | $75 | $110 |
| Hourly Wage | $11.95 | $32.92 |
| Monthly Total | $1,991 | $5,486 |
| **Annual Total** | **$23,892** | **$65,832** |

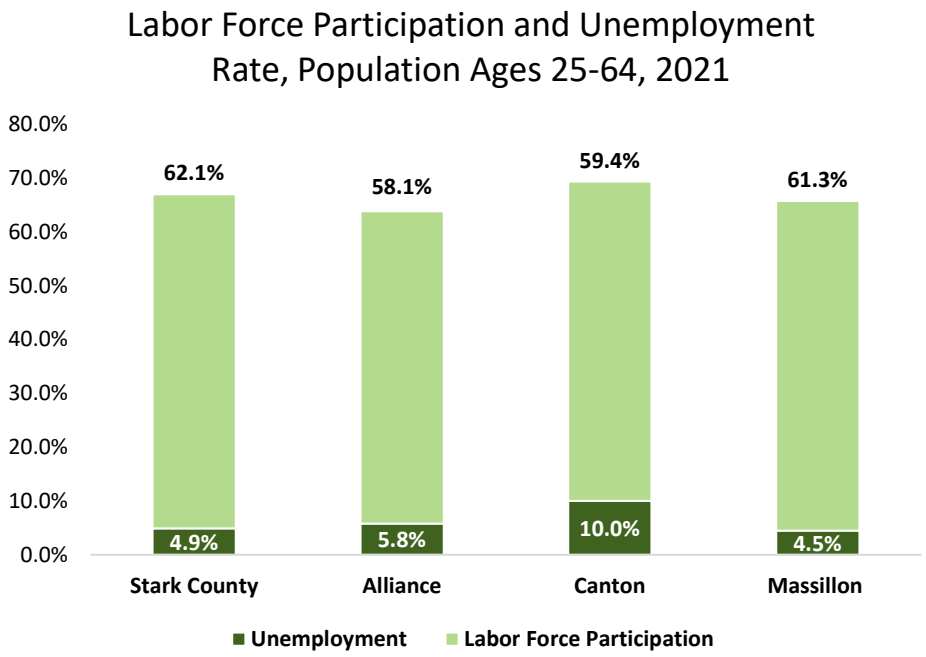


## Unemployment, Employment, and Labor Force Participation

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

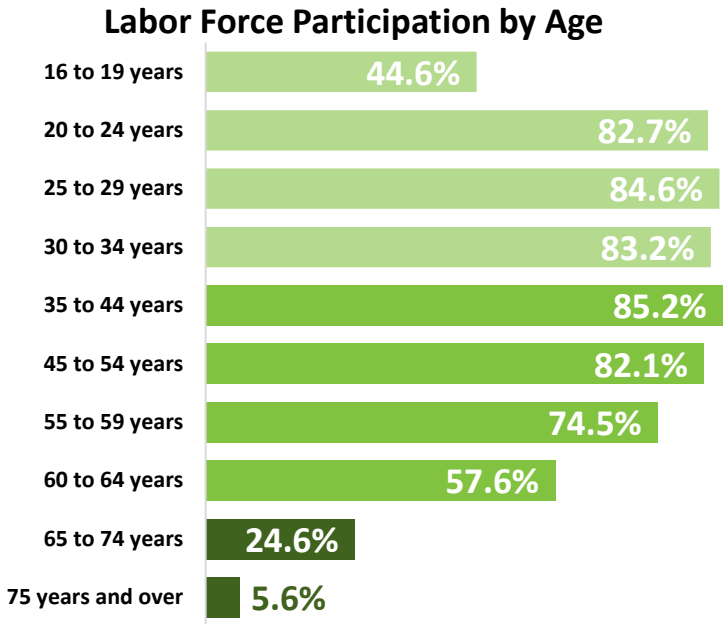
Labor force participation counts the number of adults who are employed and the number who are currently unemployed, but actively looking for work. The unemployment rate is calculated differently by the U.S. Census Bureau than by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which issues monthly employment statistics.

The labor force participation rates for Stark County, Canton, and Massillon are similar to the Ohio rate. **However, the unemployment rate for Canton was nearly twice the rate of Stark County as a whole.**




The labor force participation rate for white people (62.1 percent), Black people (59.4 percent) and Hispanic or Latinos of any race (67.2 percent) in Stark County are similar. However**, people of color are less likely to be employed and more likely to be looking for work. The unemployment rate for Hispanics or Latinos of any race in Stark County (11.4 percent) is nearly three times the rate for white people (4.2 percent), and the rate Black people, at 9.7 percent, is nearly twice as high as white people. Since the last assessment, unemployment rates have dropped significantly, most notably for Hispanic/Latino residents, which was nearly halved.** In the state, unemployment is at or near record lows.

Labor force participation in Stark County is more than 80 percent for people ages 20 to 54. Beyond age 55, as they grow older, people are less likely to remain in the labor force, and they may retire or stop working or looking for work due to illness or disability.

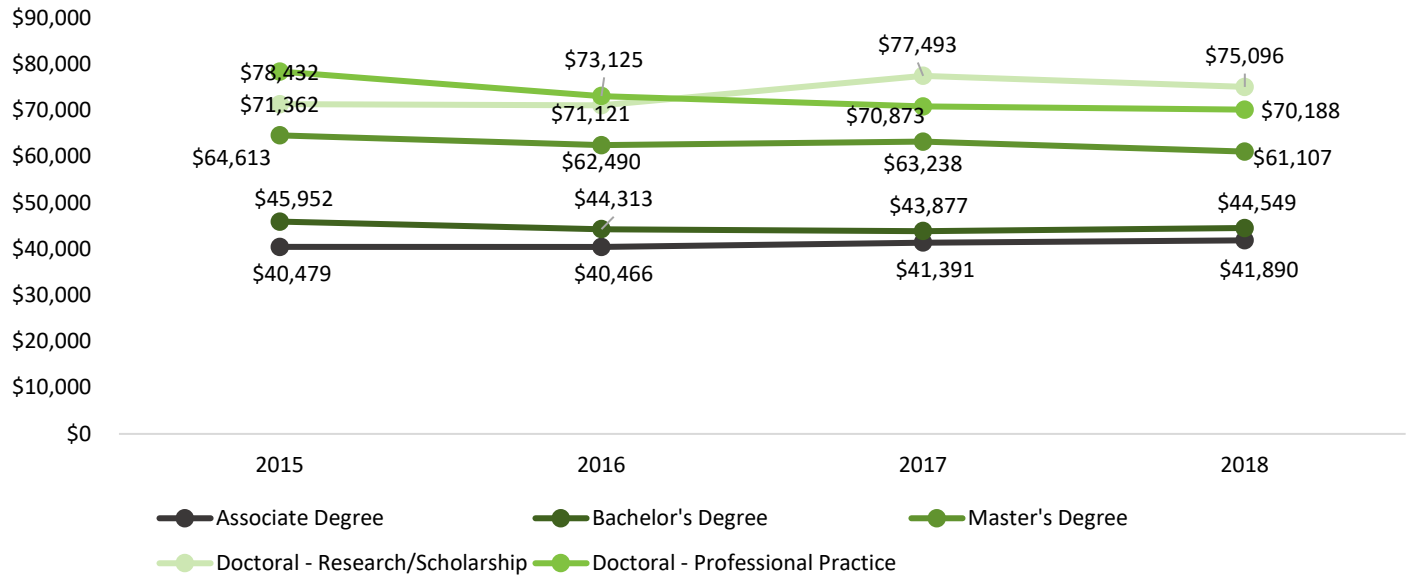


## First-Year Earnings of Ohio Residents

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Higher Education, In-State Retention and Salary Analysis of Spring Graduates.*

The higher the level of post-secondary education, the more new graduates can expect to be paid following graduation. Across Ohio, people who graduated with a master's degree earned over $17,000 more in their first year of employment than those who earned a bachelor's degree. These gains are compounded over a lifetime, so that people with a master's degree earn more than $1 million more over their lifetimes than someone with an associate's degree, according to research conducted by Georgetown University.

**Average First-Year Earnings, Full-Time Salary of Ohio Resident Spring Term Graduates, by Degree Level, in Constant 2018 Dollars (adjusted for inflation)**

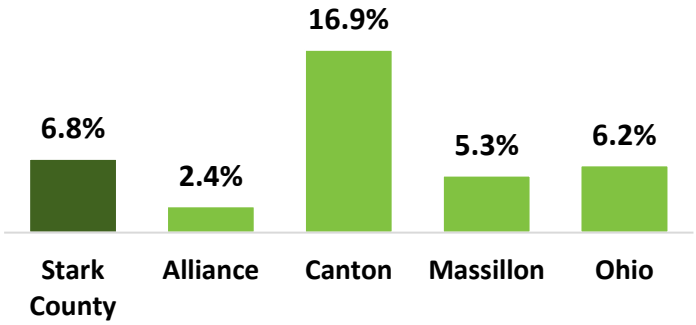



## Disengaged Youth

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

Economically disengaged youth are individuals between the ages of 16 and 19 who are not in school and not working. In Stark County, 6.8 percent of youth are disengaged, which is higher than the Ohio rate of 6.2 percent. However, **Canton's youth are almost three times as likely to be disengaged from school and work than the county as a whole. These rates are much higher than the rates calculated in 2017**. Disengaged youth rates tend to be closely linked to business cycles and usually follow trends of the economy. Young people may also have chosen to not pursue higher education, as many colleges and universities were still at least partially virtual during this time.

**Percentage of Disengaged Youth, 2021**



## SNAP

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps eligible households to stretch their food budget and buy healthy food. Thirteen percent of households in Stark County are receiving SNAP benefits, which is slightly higher than Ohio's 12.4 percent. However, many families experienced expanded eligibility criteria and benefits as a result of the SNAP expansion during the pandemic, so this number may be much lower today.

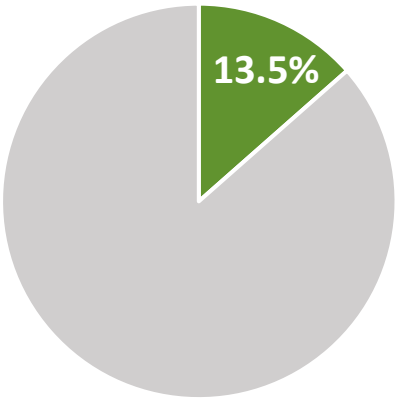
| Household Characteristics | Of those on SNAP… |
|---|---|
| **With one or more people in the household 60 years and over** | 30.5% |
| **Married-couple family** | 17.3% |
| **Male householder, no spouse present** | 7.9% |
| **Female householder, no spouse present** | 38.1% |
| **With children under 18 years** | 48.3% |
| **Below poverty level** | 51.0% |
| **With one or more people with a disability** | 46.0% |
| **White alone** | 72.2% |
| **Black or African American alone** | 19.5% |
| **No workers in past 12 months** | 20.0% |
| **1 worker in past 12 months** | 53.2% |
| **2 or more workers in past 12 months** | 26.8% |

## Broadband Access

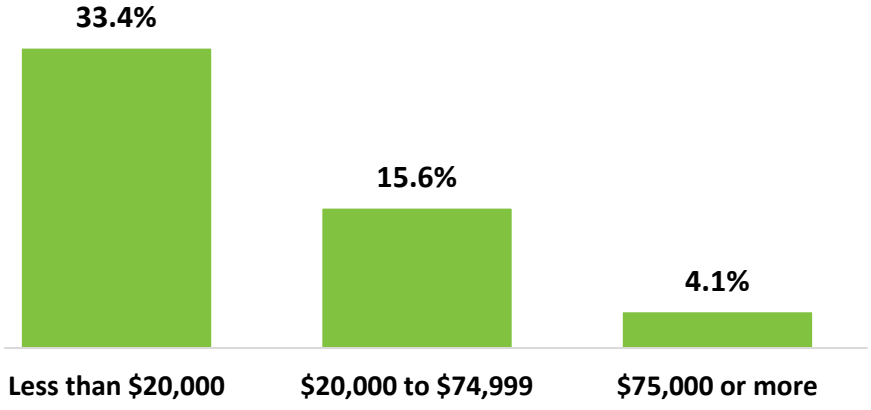
*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates.*

**In Stark County, 13.5 percent of households do not have an internet subscription**, but 92 percent of residents report having one or more types of computing devices. The high rate of a lack of broadband access may be due to the rural nature of some parts of Stark County. The digital divide becomes even more stark when comparing income levels. One in three households making less than $20,000 a year are without an internet subscription, compared to just 4 percent of households making $75,000 or more.

**Stark County Households Without an Internet Subscription, 2021**




**Households Without an Internet Subscription By Income, 2021**



# ENVIRONMENT

## Air Pollution

*Data Source : AirNow, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences defines air pollution as “a mixture of natural and man-made substances in the air we breathe, and is typically separated into two categories: outdoor air pollution and indoor air pollution.” Examples of outdoor air pollution include ground-level ozone, particles produced by fossil fuels and urban smog. Indoor air pollutants can be in the form of building materials, such as asbestos and lead, as well as tobacco smoke, mold, carbon monoxide and radon.

In Stark County, the Air Quality Index on average is rated “good” per the scale used by the AirNow database from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The amount of particulate matter in the air on average was 10.3 micrograms per cubic meter. This data is from 2019 and does not consider air quality concerns from the recent Canadian wildfires. Long-term exposure to air pollution increases premature death risk among people age 65 and older, and poses health risks to those with asthma and other respiratory conditions. These particles are emitted from sources such as forest fires, or they can form when gases released from power plants, industries and automobiles react in the air.

## Drinking Water Violations

*Data Source: Safe Drinking Water Information System, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*

The Safe Drinking Water Information System shows that there are drinking water violations in Stark County. This means that at least one area in the county was in violation of EPA’s drinking water regulations, such as maximum containment levels, treatment techniques, or monitoring and reporting requirements.  A multitude of health problems have been linked to drinking contaminated water, such as nausea, lung and skin irritation, and cancer, kidney, liver, and nervous system damage.

# HEALTH

## Health Care Providers

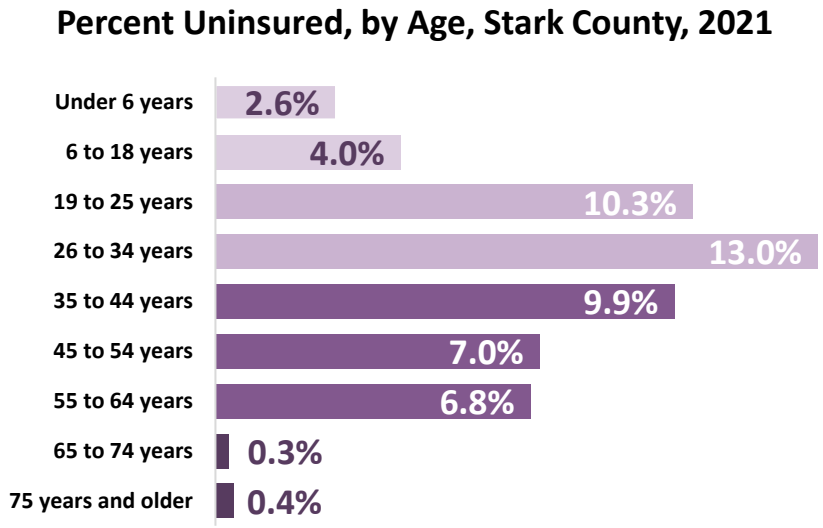
*Data Source: County Health Rankings, Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey.*

**In the 2023 County Health Rankings, Stark County ranked thirteenth out of Ohio's 88 counties for clinical care, which includes indicators of access to care, such as the number of providers and health insurance coverage, and the quality of care such as preventable hospital stays, mammography screenings, and flu vaccinations**. The ratios of providers represent the number of individuals served by one provider in the county, if the population was equally distributed across providers. A lower ratio is desirable. Stark County's provider ratio for primary care physicians (1230:1), dentists (1570:1), and mental health providers (310:1) is better than the state average. Since the last assessment, the ratio of mental health providers to residents has changed, with the previous ratio being 420:1. The availability of providers likely contributes to the fact that 90 percent of adults and 99 percent of children have a usual source of care, according to the Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey.

## Health Insurance Coverage

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year estimates.*

Another factor related to access to health care is having insurance coverage. The number of Ohioans who are uninsured fell dramatically following the Medicaid expansion in 2014, especially among working-age adults. However, the highest rate of uninsured are those between the ages of 26 and 34. These young adults are usually no longer eligible to be covered under their parents' plans and may not have secured coverage through an employer. Nearly all older adults are covered by health insurance, thanks to the availability of public coverage through Medicare for those older than age 65, with less than half a percent remaining uninsured.




**Overall, 6.2 percent of Stark County's population is uninsured.** More than 1 in 5 (22 percent) of people who are unemployed are uninsured, and people who did not complete high school are more than twice as likely to be uninsured than the overall adult population. **Alliance and Canton both have uninsured rates that are more than double the county's average.**

| | Private Insurance | Public Insurance | Other Coverage Combinations | No Coverage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Under 19 years** | 46,300 | 29,033 | 7,262 | 3,093 |
| **19 to 34 years** | 43,215 | 15,017 | 4,206 | 8,377 |
| **35 to 64 years** | 99,725 | 21,397 | 11,410 | 11,233 |
| **65 years and over** | 1,497 | 23,642 | 44,512 | 220 |

Most people in Stark County who have health insurance are covered by private insurance, usually accessed through an employer. Older adults typically have a combination of coverage types, usually including both public coverage, such as Medicare and Medicaid, and private insurance, which is usually either employer-sponsored or directly purchased. These privately purchased health care options include Medicare Supplement or MediGap plans that provide additional coverage beyond traditional Medicare.

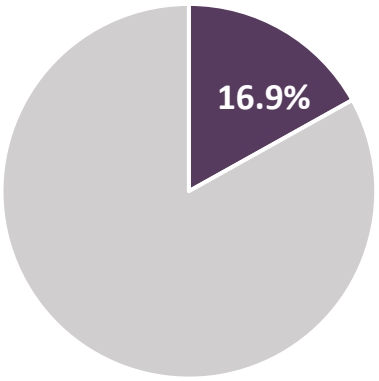
## Overall Health

*Data Source: Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey, 2021 and County Health Rankings.*

More than 48,000, or almost 17 percent, of Stark County adults reported that they were in poor or fair health according to the 2021 Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey. Physical ailments, illness and disease, a lack of exercise and physical activity, and smoking or drinking alcohol can all contribute to poor overall health.

Data from the County Health Rankings show that Stark County adults reported an average of 3.2 poor physical health days a month and 5.5 poor mental health days, which is equivalent to and worse than the Ohio average of 3.2 and 5.0 respectively. Poor mental health days increased by one day a month when compared to the rates in 2017.

**Percent of Stark County Residents Who Report Poor or Fair Health Status**




## Unmet Health Needs

*Data Source: Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey, 2021.*

Not getting prescription medications due to cost was the most common unmet health need for Stark County adults in 2021. Availability of providers, transportation challenges, health insurance coverage and cost can all contribute to unmet health needs.

| Adults with Unmet Health Needs, Stark County, 2021 | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Number** | **Percent** |
| Prescription | 42,156 | 15.1% |
| Dental | 26,925 | 10.0% |
| Vision | 12,109 | 4.5% |
| Other Unmet Needs | 5,953 | 2.2% |
| Mental Health | 13,281 | 5.0% |

## Cancer

*Data Source: Ohio Department of Health, Public Health Information Warehouse.*

There were more than 9,300 cases of cancer in Stark County between 2017-2020. The most common types were breast, prostate, lung, and bronchial.

| Stark County Cancer Incidence, 2017-2020 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Site/Type** | **Cases** | **Age-Adjusted Rate** |
| **Lung and Bronchus** | 1,345 | 60.9 |
| **Breast** | 1,327 | 67.0 |
| **Prostate** | 1,137 | 108.7 |
| **Other Sites/Types** | 747 | 36.3 |
| **Colon & Rectum** | 699 | 33.8 |
| **Melanoma of Skin** | 557 | 28.8 |
| **Bladder** | 483 | 22.1 |
| **Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma** | 381 | 18.5 |
| **Kidney & Renal Pelvis** | 329 | 16.3 |
| **Pancreas** | 297 | 13.6 |
| **Uterus** | 286 | 1633 |
| **Leukemia** | 269 | 13.7 |
| **Oral Cavity & Pharynx** | 253 | 12.3 |
| **Thyroid** | 225 | 14.6 |
| **Liver & Intrahepatic Bile Duct** | 148 | 6.8 |
| **Ovary** | 136 | 12.7 |
| **Brain and Other CNS** | 126 | 6.8 |
| **Multiple Myeloma** | 126 | 5.8 |
| **Stomach** | 111 | 5.2 |
| **Esophagus** | 103 | 4.5 |
| **Larynx** | 78 | 3.6 |
| **Cervix** | 73 | 9.2 |
| **Testis** | 50 | 7.9 |
| **Hodgkins Lymphoma** | 41 | 2.7 |

## Diabetes

*Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, United States Diabetes Surveillance System.*

In 2020, the age-adjusted percentage of adults in Stark County who had been diagnosed with diabetes was 9.9, which was lower than the Ohio average of 10.9 percent. Men were more likely to have diabetes than women, with an age-adjusted percentage of 10.1 and 9.7 respectively. This rate is adjusted for age, which removes the influence of age when comparing the rate across different populations.

## Obesity

*Data Source: Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey, 2021.*

Over 106,000 adults and 14,000 children in Stark County are obese, defined as a body mass index of 30 or above. Stark's adult obesity rate of 40.7 percent is similar to the state average. Obesity can be a contributing factor to many health conditions, including diabetes.

## Alzheimer's Rates

*Data Source: Dhana, et al. 2023.*

Millions of Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias, including about 11 percent of older adults in Stark County. In the United States, the cost of caring for people with Alzheimer's was $321 billion in 2022. **Between 2020 to 2025, the projected number of Ohio residents with Alzheimer's is expected to grow by almost 14 percent.**

## Premature Death

*Data Source: County Health Rankings.*

Premature death can indicate the overall health of a community. Years of potential life lost measures the number of years of life lost to premature deaths. Usually the benchmark age for premature death is below 75 years of age. Therefore, someone who passes away at age 55 has 20 years of potential life lost. It is calculated as a rate per 100,000 population. Stark County's rate of 8,500 per 100,000 people for 2023 was better than Ohio's rate of 8,700.

## Leading Cause of Death

*Data Source: CDC WONDER, 2018-2021.*

Diseases of the heart and malignant neoplasms (tumors) were the two leading causes of death in Stark County. COVID-19 is the third leading cause of death for residents between the years of 2018-2021. Since the pandemic didn't begin until 2020, this shows that a significant number of people died from COVID. According to a national survey, 20 percent of Americans knew 1 person who died from COVID, 13 percent knew 2 who passed from COVID, and 7 percent said that they knew 3 or more individuals who died from COVID.

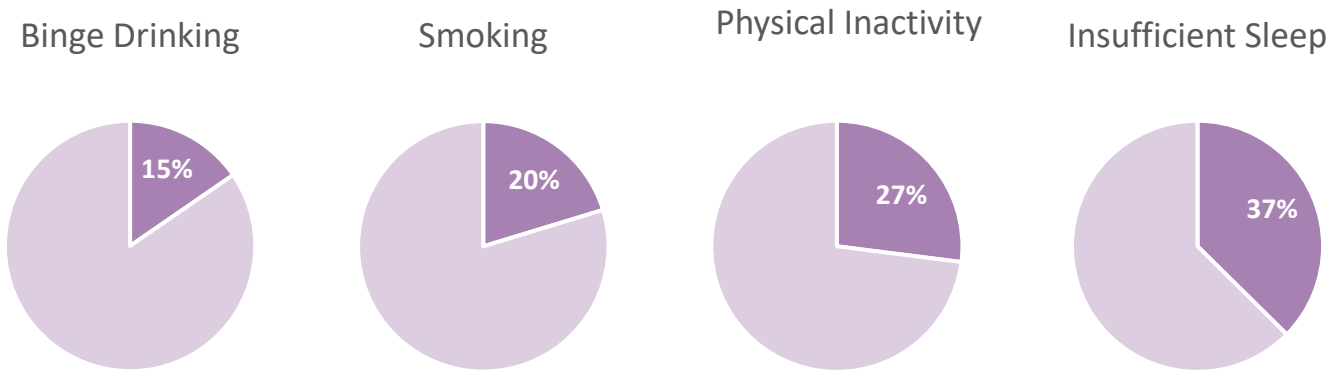
| Causes of Death | Crude Rate per 100,000 |
|---|---|
| **Diseases of the Heart** | 265.8 |
| **Malignant Neoplasms (Tumors)** | 244.1 |
| **COVID-19** | 97.1 |
| **Alzheimer Disease** | 79.2 |
| **Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases** | 71.4 |
| **Accidents (Unintentional Injuries)** | 69.2 |
| **Cerebrovascular Diseases** | 60.7 |
| **Diabetes Mellitus** | 38.6 |
| **Kidney Diseases** | 21.5 |
| **Parkinson Disease** | 19.7 |
| **Influenza/Pneumonia** | 19.5 |
| **Suicide** | 18.4 |
| **Liver Diseases** | 17.1 |
| **Septicemia** | 16.8 |
| **Hypertension** | 13.3 |

## Health Behaviors and Behavioral Health

*Data Source: CDC Places, 2021.*

Despite well-known evidence of the harmful effects of smoking, 1 in 5 Stark County adults are current smokers. Another negative health behavior is not engaging in leisure-time physical activity, and in Stark County, more than a quarter of adults aged 20 and older engaged in no leisure-time physical activity. This is a slightly higher rate than the state average of 25 percent.

**Adults Engaged in Unhealthy Behaviors, Stark County, 2021**

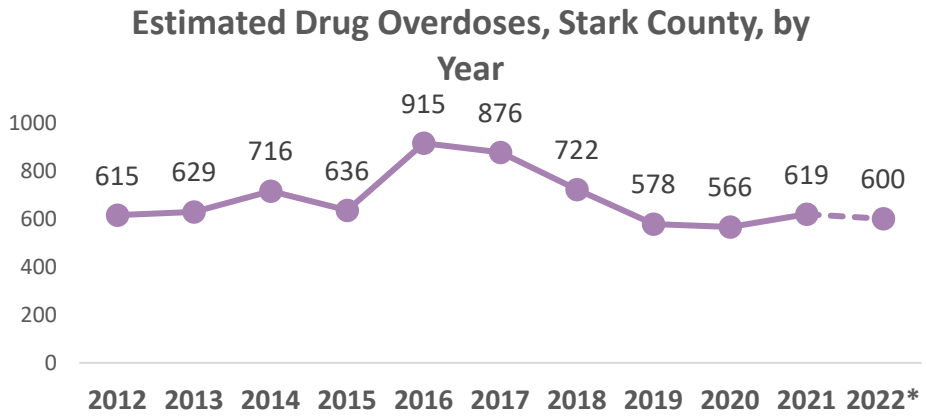



Twenty-two percent of adults 18 years and older reported having depression and 16 percent reported that their mental health was not good for 14 or more days in the last month. Almost 40 percent of adults in Stark County also reported sleeping less than 7 hours at night.

## Drug Overdoses

*Data Source: Ohio's EpiCenter Surveillance System Accessed via Summit County Public Health Statewide Estimated Drug Overdose Dashboard.*

Following a peak in 2017, the number of emergency department visits for drug overdoses among Stark County residents has fallen over the past several years. However, these totals do not include victims who were treated by safety forces and not transported to emergency rooms. The average age of people who overdosed in Stark County was slightly younger than the state average.

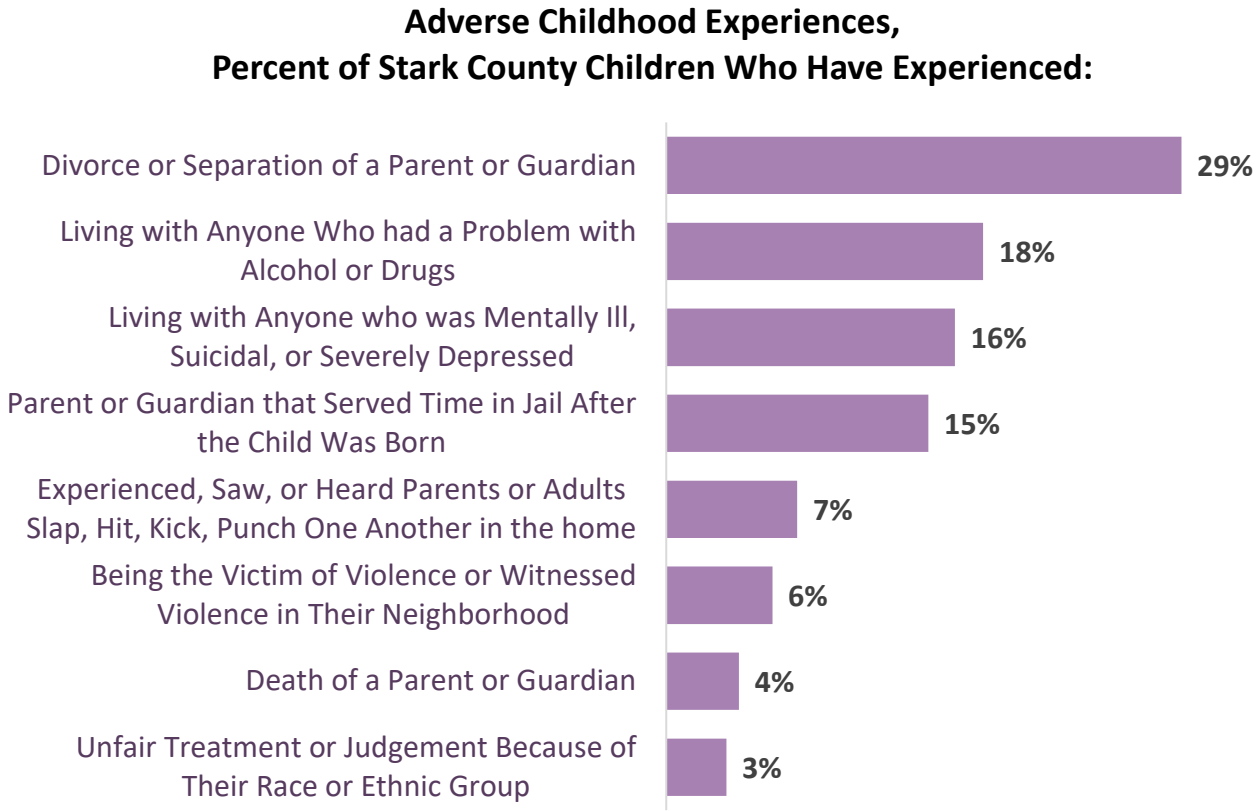



*NOTE: Data is only available through August, 2022 so the figure for that year is an estimate based on the monthly average for the first eight months of the year.*

## Adverse Childhood Experiences

*Data Source: Ohio Medicaid Assessment Survey, 2021.*

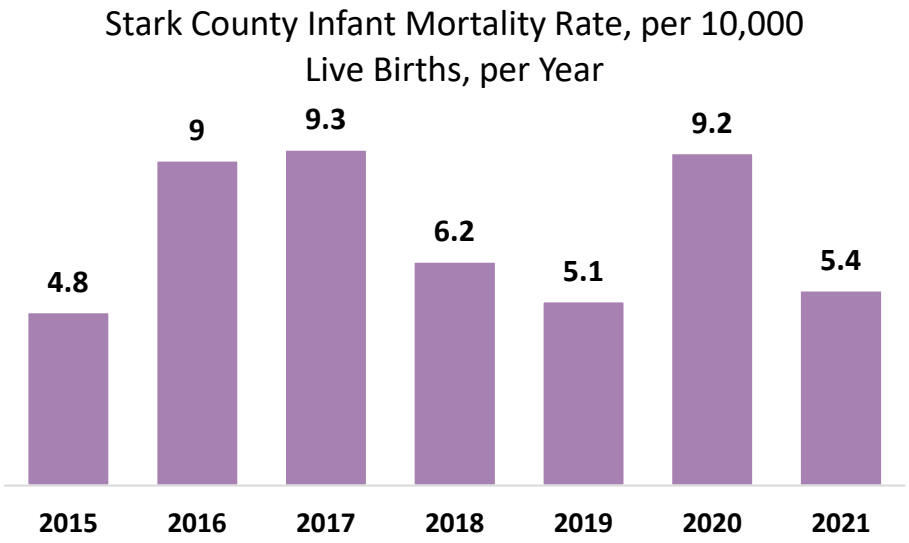
Adverse childhood experiences are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years). Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can include direct impact events or aspects of the child's environment that can undermine their sense of safety, stability, and bonding. ACEs have been linked to chronic medical conditions, mental illness, and substance use problems both in adolescence and adulthood.



## Birth Outcomes and Infant Mortality

*Data Source: Stark County THRIVE, Ohio Department of Health, 2021 Infant Mortality Report, Ohio Department of Medicaid.*

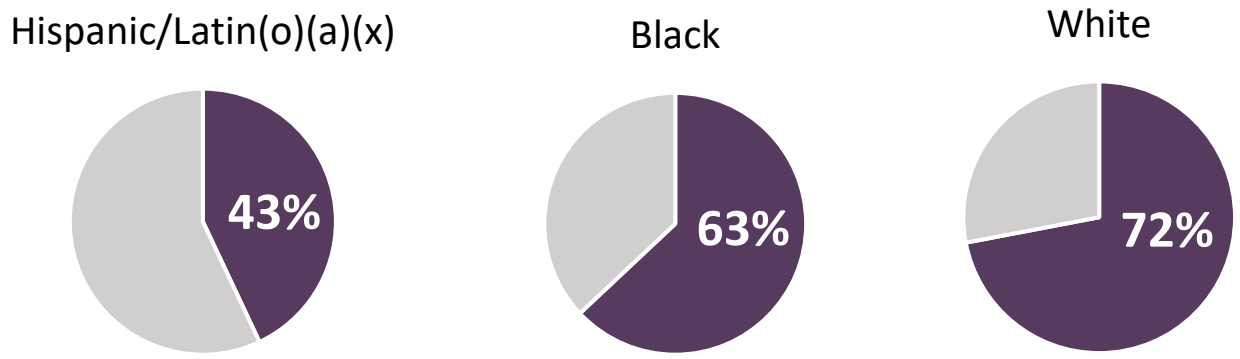
Infant mortality refers to the number of babies who die during the first year of life. In 2021, Stark County's infant mortality rate of 5.4 deaths per 1,000 live births was well below the 2020 rate of 9.2 and below the Healthy People 2020 goal of 6.0. While Ohio's infant mortality rate has remained relatively steady over the past several years, as the chart shows, Stark County's rate has fluctuated. The infant mortality rate for Black babies in Stark County continues to be higher when compared to white babies, with the most recent rates being 14.1 and 5.4, respectively.




A birth is considered preterm when a baby is born less than 37 weeks gestation. Preterm births are associated with many birth complications, including immature or underdeveloped lungs, poor feeding, difficulty regulating body temperature, and slower weight gain. In 2020, the preterm birth rate for Stark County was 13 percent. Compared to 2019, this was a 16.5 percent increase in preterm births. Very preterm births occur before 32 weeks gestation, and while very preterm births have a smaller rate at 2.4 percent, this was also an increase from the previous year.

Prenatal care is important for both mother and baby. Being connected to a provider can help prevent complications or catch them early before they become more serious. Babies of mothers who did not receive prenatal care were three times more likely to have a lower birth weight and five times more likely to die when compared to mothers who did receive care. In Stark County, 79 percent of mothers received prenatal care in 2020, higher than the state average. However, there are racial disparities. In 2021, 43 percent of Hispanic/Latin(o)(a)(x) mothers sought care in their first trimester, compared to 63 percent of Black mothers and 72 percent of white mothers. Rates of progesterone usage to prevent preterm birth, contraceptive care, and postpartum visits were also higher in Stark County than the state average.

**First Trimester Prenatal Care Usage**





stark community foundation

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