



FY26 – FY28 Community Plan

LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD OF ALLEGANY COUNTY

Local Management Board of Allegany County
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I. INTRODUCTION

The FY26–FY28 Community Plan is a companion document to the 2026 Allegany County Community Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment reviewed quantitative data, community survey responses, key informant feedback, and local service assets to better understand the conditions affecting children, youth, and families across Allegany County.

This Community Plan translates those findings into a framework for planning, coordination, and investment over the next three years. It is intended to help the Local Management Board of Allegany County and its partners align priorities, strengthen collaboration, identify progress measures, and support programs and services that respond to local needs.

The plan is organized around the four ENOUGH Initiative planning areas: **Cradle-to-Career Education, Healthy Families, Economically Secure Families, and Safe and Thriving Communities**. These areas provide a shared structure for connecting local data, resident voice, provider insight, and community assets to strategies that can improve outcomes for children and families.

While the plan is informed by countywide findings, it also supports Allegany County’s participation in Maryland’s ENOUGH Initiative, including place-based planning in the South Penn and John Humbird neighborhoods. The goal is to move from assessment to action in a way that reflects the Local Management Board’s core values.

Vision

All children, youth, and families in Allegany County are healthy, safe, supported, and able to thrive.

Mission

The Local Management Board of Allegany County collaborates with families and community partners to assess needs, coordinate resources, and improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Guiding Principles

Keep these short. Listen to the community, use data, build on assets, reduce barriers, support whole families, strengthen coordination, and advance equity.



"Building and Coordinating Community Resources to Empower Children and Families"

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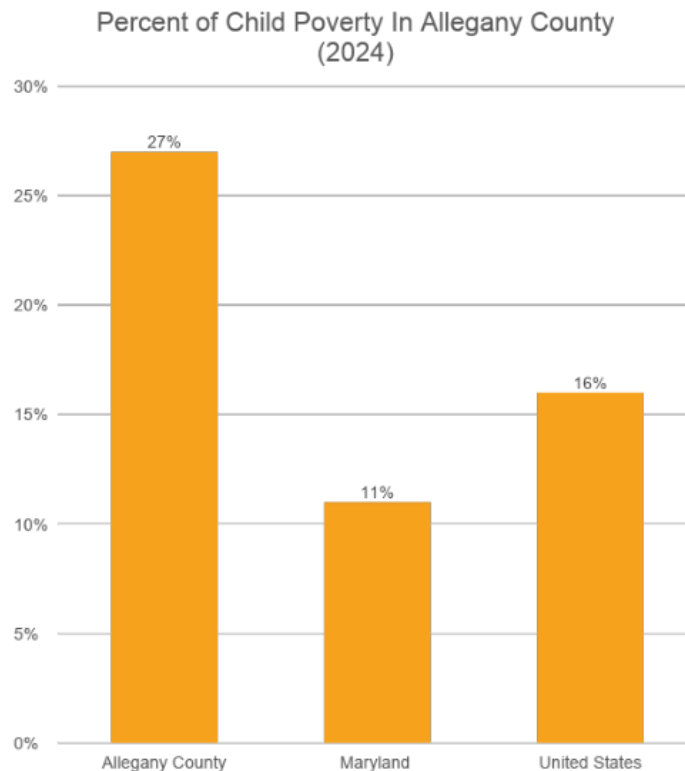
II. NEEDS ASSESSMENT SNAPSHOT

The FY26–FY28 Community Plan is based on the findings of the 2026 Allegany County Community Needs Assessment. The assessment reviewed quantitative indicators, community survey responses, key informant interviews, and the local service landscape to better understand the conditions affecting children, youth, and families in Allegany County. The findings show a community with meaningful strengths, including committed service providers, schools, libraries, health providers, housing resources, food assistance programs, youth-serving organizations, and strong local relationships. However, the assessment points to persistent challenges related to poverty, housing, basic needs, transportation, child care, health, school attendance, youth well-being, and service access.

KEY FINDING: FAMILY STABILITY AND BASIC NEEDS REMAIN CENTRAL.

One of the clearest findings is that family economic stability remains a major concern. The

assessment shows that 27% of children in Allegany County live in poverty, compared with 11% in Maryland and 16% in the United States. Housing cost burden is most severe among the lowest-income households, and homelessness increased in the most recent year shown. Community survey responses reinforce these findings: residents identified utilities, food, transportation, health care, housing, clothing, toiletries, and education as challenges in meeting basic needs. Key informants also raised concerns about housing, utilities, food, low wages, and families who may be working but still unable to meet basic expenses.



Definition: The percentage of children living below the federal poverty level.

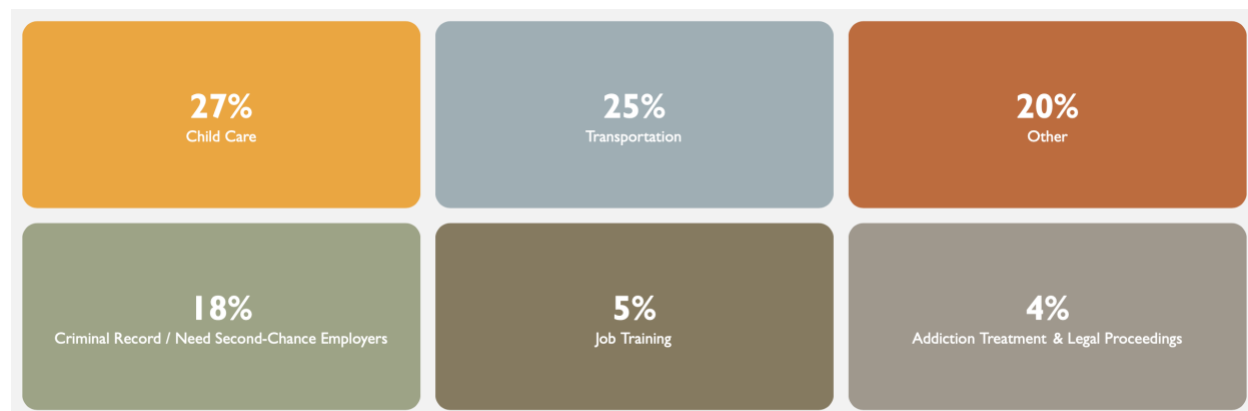
Source: Allegany County, MD, Census Reporter.

A second major finding is that transportation, child care, and service access affect nearly every part of family life. Residents

KEY FINDING: ACCESS BARRIERS AFFECT MULTIPLE OUTCOMES.

identified child care and transportation as the leading barriers to getting or keeping good jobs. Survey respondents also reported uneven awareness of programs and services for children, youth, and families, and more than one-third of respondents reported encountering challenges or barriers when accessing programs. These findings suggest that Allegany County has services, but it should ensure residents can find them, reach them, qualify for them, and use them in ways that fit their lives.

Key informants reinforced this point. They described transportation as a barrier to school attendance, employment, health care, child care, food access, training programs, and service participation. They also emphasized the need for stronger follow-through after referrals, better service navigation, and improved coordination among providers. This feedback is important because it shows that access is not a single issue; it is tied to transportation, program hours, eligibility, awareness, child care, trust, and the ability of agencies to work together.



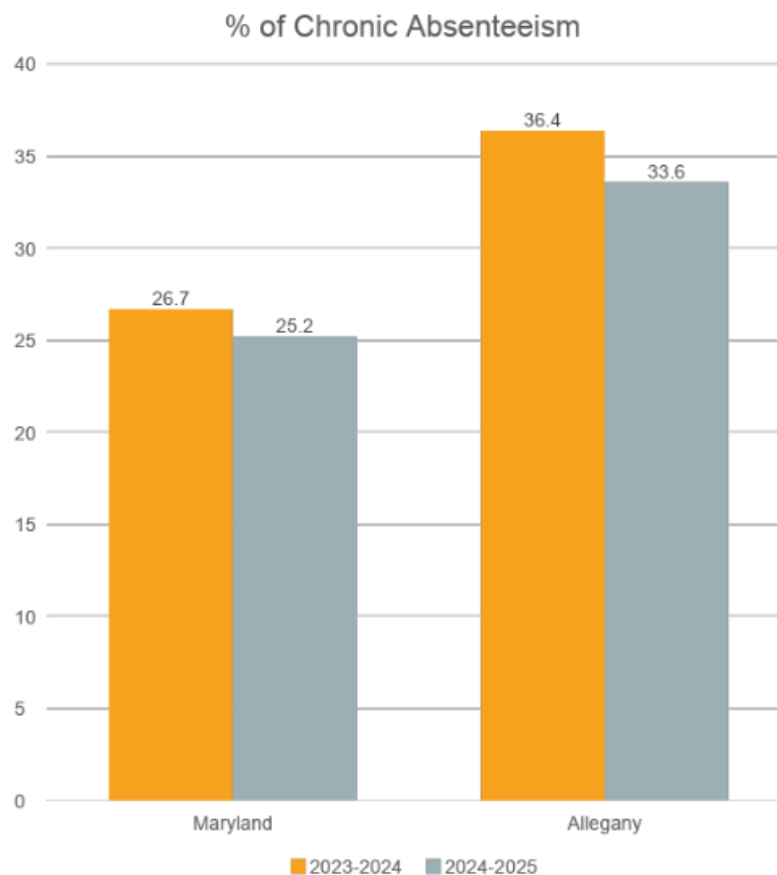
Source: “What prevents residents from getting or keeping good jobs?” Community Survey, selected all that applied (n=50, Q13)

The assessment also identifies youth and family well-being as a major area of concern. Youth Risk Behavior Survey data shows substantial percentages of middle and high school students reporting sadness or hopelessness, with roughly one-third of students in the grades shown reporting these feelings. Electronic vapor product use also increases sharply by grade level, especially among high school students. Residents raised similar concerns in the community survey, identifying a need for after-school programs, mentoring, family support, mental health support, recreation, cultural events, and other positive activities for children and teens.

**KEY FINDING: YOUTH AND FAMILY WELL-BEING
REQUIRE SUPPORT ACROSS LIFE STAGES.**

School attendance and engagement also stood out in the assessment. Allegany County's chronic absenteeism rate was 36.4% in 2023–2024 and 33.6% in 2024–2025, both above the Maryland rates shown for those years. At the same time, the

county's four-year graduation rate improved from 86.5% in 2023–2024 to 91.61% in 2024–2025. These findings suggest that while many students are ultimately completing high school, attendance and engagement remain serious concerns. Key informant interviews added context by showing how attendance may be connected to transportation, family responsibilities, weather, neighborhood conditions, and access to school-based supports.



Definition: The percentage of students who are chronically absent during the school year.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education, Attendance Data, Allegany County.

The assessment points to the importance of early childhood and family health. Maternal and infant health indicators show areas requiring continued attention, including infant mortality, low birth weight, teen birth rates, and substance-exposed newborns. Kindergarten readiness data also shows that a meaningful share of children enter school not yet fully demonstrating readiness, and subpopulation data shows differences for children with disabilities and racial groups. These findings suggest that children and families benefit from

support early and consistently, beginning before birth and continuing through early learning, school readiness, adolescence, and career preparation.

Finally, the resource review shows that Allegany County has many assets to build on. Appendix A of the Needs Assessment identifies several public agencies, nonprofit organizations, schools, health and behavioral health

**KEY FINDING: ALLEGANY COUNTY HAS MEANINGFUL
ASSETS TO BUILD ON.**

providers, housing providers, food assistance programs, transportation resources, workforce partners, faith-based organizations, and youth-serving programs. Several organizations work across multiple areas of need. For example, HRDC is listed as providing Head Start and Early Head Start, energy assistance, weatherization, housing, and transportation.

However, the assessment shows that services can still be difficult for families to navigate. Residents may not know what exists, where to begin, whether they qualify, or how to follow through across multiple agencies. Key informants described strong provider relationships and a willingness to collaborate, but also identified fragmentation, duplication, and the need for stronger coordination and clearer referral pathways.

III. ENOUGH ALIGNMENT

The Community Needs Assessment supports the need for a Community Plan that is practical, coordinated, and aligned with state and local priorities. For FY26–FY28, the plan is organized around the four ENOUGH Initiative planning areas: **Cradle-to-Career Education, Healthy Families, Economically Secure Families, and Safe and Thriving Communities**. These pillars provide a shared framework for connecting local data, resident voice, provider insight, community assets, strategies, and progress measures.

The ENOUGH framework is a strong fit for the findings of the Needs Assessment because the challenges facing children, youth, and families in Allegany County are connected. Poverty, housing instability, transportation, child care, health, school attendance, youth opportunity, safety, and service access do not operate separately in the lives of families. The four ENOUGH pillars provide a way to organize those connected needs without losing sight of the whole family and the broader community conditions that shape outcomes. For example:

- The **Cradle-to-Career Education** pillar connects to assessment findings related to kindergarten readiness, academic performance, chronic absenteeism, graduation, CTE participation, school-based supports, after-school programming, mentoring, and youth opportunity.
- The **Healthy Families** pillar connects to findings related to prenatal care, infant health, substance-exposed newborns, health insurance, child and youth mental health, obesity, vaping, physical activity, and access to physical and behavioral health services.
- The **Economically Secure Families** pillar connects to findings related to child poverty, housing affordability, homelessness, utilities, food access, transportation, child care, employment barriers, and workforce access.
- The **Safe and Thriving Communities** pillar connects to findings related to child maltreatment, out-of-home placement, juvenile justice involvement, lead exposure, public safety, recreation, community spaces, resident trust, and neighborhood-level access.

This structure also supports Allegany County’s participation in Maryland’s ENOUGH Initiative, including place-based planning in the South Penn and John Humbird neighborhoods. While this Community Plan is countywide, the strategies identified in the following sections can help inform the Neighborhood Action Plan by identifying needs, aligning partners, strengthening service coordination, and focusing investment on barriers that affect children, youth, and families.

IV. FY26-FY28 COMMUNITY PLAN PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

CRADLE-TO-CAREER EDUCATION

RELEVANT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS:

Chronic absenteeism, kindergarten readiness, academic performance, CTE participation, graduation, transportation barriers to attendance, after-school needs, mentoring, and family engagement.

EXISTING ASSETS TO BUILD ON:

Allegany County Public Schools, Allegany College of Maryland, Allegany County Library System, HRDC Head Start/Early Head Start, Bishop Walsh Early Childhood Center, DORS, Western Maryland Consortium, youth-serving organizations, and school-based supports.

STRATEGIES:

- Support school readiness, early learning, and family engagement.
- Strengthen attendance strategies, especially where transportation and family stability affect school participation.
- Expand or coordinate after-school, summer, tutoring, mentoring, and enrichment opportunities.
- Strengthen career readiness pathways through CTE, workforce partners, and youth employment supports.
- Improve coordination between schools, family-support agencies, behavioral health partners, and youth programs.

POSSIBLE PROGRESS MEASURES:

- Kindergarten readiness
- Chronic absenteeism
- Third grade ELA/math proficiency
- Eighth grade ELA/math proficiency
- Graduation rate
- CTE completion
- Participation in after-school/summer/youth programming

HEALTHY FAMILIES

RELEVANT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS:

Prenatal care, infant mortality, low birth weight, teen births, substance-exposed newborns, immunizations, health insurance, obesity, youth mental health, vaping, and physical activity.

EXISTING ASSETS TO BUILD ON:

Allegany County Health Department, UPMC Western Maryland, WVU Children's Medical Group, 1st Way Pregnancy Support Center, Maryland AHEC West, Mountain Laurel Medical Center, Tri-State Community

Health Center, behavioral health providers, Archway Station, The Children’s League, schools, and community-based health partners.

STRATEGIES:

- Strengthen maternal, infant, and early childhood health supports.
- Support coordination for substance-exposed newborns and families affected by substance use.
- Improve access to physical and behavioral health services.
- Support youth mental health, substance-use prevention, and vaping prevention.
- Promote healthy activity, nutrition, and wellness through schools, community spaces, and family programming.

POSSIBLE PROGRESS MEASURES:

- First-trimester prenatal care
- Infant mortality
- Low birth weight
- Teen birth rate
- Substance-exposed newborn referrals
- Youth sadness/hopelessness
- Youth vaping
- Physical activity
- Health insurance coverage

ECONOMICALLY SECURE FAMILIES

RELEVANT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS:

Child poverty, household income, housing cost burden, homelessness, food access, utilities, transportation, child care, employment barriers, and service navigation.

EXISTING ASSETS TO BUILD ON:

DSS, HRDC, Western Maryland Food Bank, food pantries, Cumberland Housing Group, Frostburg Housing Authority, Interfaith Housing Alliance, Union Rescue Mission, Maryland Legal Aid, Allegany County Transit, Horizon Goodwill, Western Maryland Consortium, Allegany College of Maryland, and other workforce partners.

STRATEGIES:

- Strengthen coordination among food, housing, benefits, utility, legal aid, and emergency assistance providers.
- Improve service navigation and warm handoffs for families facing basic-needs challenges.
- Address transportation and child care barriers that limit employment, training, and service access.
- Support workforce pathways that connect residents to training, employment, and stabilizing supports.
- Use the asset inventory to identify where services exist and where access gaps remain.

POSSIBLE PROGRESS MEASURES:

- Child poverty
- Housing cost burden

- Homelessness
- Youth homelessness
- Program awareness/use
- Employment barrier survey data
- Families connected to basic-needs supports
- Workforce training/youth employment participation

SAFE AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

RELEVANT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS:

Child maltreatment, out-of-home placement, juvenile justice involvement, lead exposure, crime, public safety, neighborhood trust, recreation, community spaces, and resident voice.

EXISTING ASSETS TO BUILD ON:

DSS, Family Crisis Resource Center, Jane's Place Child Advocacy Center, Allegany County Health Department, LMB, libraries, parks, schools, Safe Space Cumberland, YMCA, Salvation Army/Red Shield, faith-based partners, and community organizations.

STRATEGIES:

- Support prevention and early intervention for families at risk of deeper system involvement.
- Strengthen child safety, family support, and trauma-informed responses.
- Promote safe, accessible community spaces for children, youth, and families.
- Improve resident engagement and trust through neighborhood-based outreach.
- Support coordination among child welfare, behavioral health, schools, public safety, housing, and community partners.

POSSIBLE PROGRESS MEASURES:

- Child maltreatment cases
- Out-of-home placement
- Juvenile felony offenses
- Lead prevalence
- Use of community spaces
- Resident perceptions of safety/access
- Participation in youth/community programming