

Cross-Cutting Health Priority:

Social and Economic Factors that Influence Health

Vision

Marathon County where all people enjoy the opportunities to live, learn, work, and play in a healthy community

Goal Statements

- ✓ Protect and advance the community conditions that promote health in Marathon County
- ✓ Build upon community assets in a manner that benefits all Marathon County residents
- ✓ Foster resiliency among individuals, families, and communities in Marathon County
- ✓ Create a strong sense of place for all Marathon County residents to enjoy

Background

Social and economic factors are drivers of the conditions in which people live, learn, work, and play. Factors, such as employment, community safety, income, housing, transportation, educational attainment, social support, and discrimination account for roughly 40% of all health. These factors are significantly more influential of one's health than clinical care.

The six identified community health priorities are influenced by these social and economic factors. In order to move the needle on these priorities and work towards our vision of being the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county, our work must be upstream. Upstream work cannot be fully realized without addressing these social and economic factors.

Social and Economic Factors

Housing:

Homes that are safe and free from physical hazards promote health as do neighborhoods free from crime, violence, and pollution. Other neighborhood characteristics include employment opportunities, public resources, and social connectedness among residents. The affordability of housing shapes these home and neighborhood conditions which influence the options families have to make healthy choices.

Education:

More schooling and training leads to higher incomes and better employment opportunities. In addition, parents' education is linked to their children's health and educational attainment.

Employment:

Employment is a main source of income for families and provides benefits, such as health insurance and social connection. Positive physical and social conditions of workplaces have the ability to promote physical health and reduce stress.

Income:

Income enables families and individuals to live in adequate housing and safe neighborhoods as well as provides access to a greater number of resources. Furthermore, children's economic conditions can influence their health later on in life.

Social Support:

Positive relationships with family and friends as well as with neighbors and the community promote healthy behaviors and choices. Communities with high social capital are less prone to violence and often have sufficient resources.

Discrimination:

Discrimination, such as racism, leads to chronic stress which adversely affects individuals' health.