



2022 DeWitt County Needs and Resources Assessment for Mental Health, Substance Use, and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

January 2023

Sponsored by the DeWitt County Mental Health Board, Chestnut Health Systems, Inc. and the Central Illinois Area Health Education Center, Illinois State University

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Executive Summary

Assessment Purpose and Process

Many individuals and health and human service organizations participated in a year-long assessment to identify resources for and needs of DeWitt County residents related to mental health, substance use, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. The results show the steps organizations are taking to address residents' needs and where additional emphasis should be placed. The report will help organizations determine their directions and plans for several years to come. It also can help increase awareness among residents and organizations of the many services and programs available in the county, enhance communication among stakeholders, and identify priorities to address together.

National, state, and local public and organizational data, a survey of residents, interviews with providers, and identified resources formed the assessment findings and its conclusions and recommendations. The DeWitt County Community Mental Health Board, charged with helping to plan and fund services and programs, will continue to work with organizations aligned with its mission to provide access to comprehensive, community-based services in an efficient and effective manner to all residents of DeWitt County with mental illness, substance use disorder, and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Community Response and Organizations

In the last seven years, health and human service providers, including law enforcement, worked to respond to the opioid crisis which saw many overdose deaths nationwide and in DeWitt County. The DeWitt County Substance Abuse Coalition grew out of these efforts but was disbanded in 2022. Beginning with a shut-down of businesses deemed non-essential in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted residents, businesses, and health and human service providers and increased mental health and substance use concerns already being seen prior to the pandemic's start. County residents and businesses experienced economic impacts due to closures, loss of employment, and/or responding to needs for personal protective equipment and other pandemic mitigations. Social isolation, disconnection from regular routines, grief at the loss of life, and the stress of managing life and work during the pandemic are still being experienced with long-term impacts expected.

While some providers had to temporarily close due to COVID-19 for health and safety reasons, others were able to adjust the way they deliver services by offering telehealth (that is, services provided via the Internet). Today, they are still giving their patients and clients the option to utilize telehealth when it is feasible for the person and their needs. Collaborative groups such as the DeWitt County Social Service Coalition, Community Together Partnership through Heritage Behavioral Health Center, and Children's Mental Health Forum, met in online meeting spaces to discuss their clients' needs. They continue to meet online or in hybrid formats.

Despite its relatively small size and population compared to neighboring counties, DeWitt County is fortunate to have many amenities including an array of health care and human service organizations addressing mental health, substance use, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. The DeWitt County Mental Health Board currently funds programs and services of 11 organizations addressing mental health/illness, substance use disorder or problem substance

use, psychiatric needs, crisis response, health education and prevention, intellectual/developmental disabilities, victim advocacy related to domestic violence and physical or sexual assault/abuse, and support for getting services. The organizations receiving funding for fiscal year 2023, December 1, 2022-November 31, 2023 include: Children's Advocacy Center; the Clinton Community YMCA; DeWitt County Drug Court; Dove, Inc.; Encore Developmental Services; Growing Strong Sexual Assault Center; Heritage Behavioral Health Center; Macon County CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) serving Macon and DeWitt Counties; Prairieland Service Coordination; Piatt County Mental Health Center; and Tri-County Special Education Association.

Other providers including first responders (law enforcement, emergency medical responders, and firefighters), the DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department, Warner Hospital and Health Services, primary care offices, and school districts and educators also encounter individuals who may be experiencing mental health, substance use, and/or disability challenges. Many nonprofit and faith-based service providers help to address the basic needs of DeWitt County residents including food, utilities, health care, transportation, and emergency financial support, a lack of which are risk factors for developing or increasing other problems and health concerns. Organizations focused on youth recreation, education, and development such as The Vault, various sports leagues, Scouts, 4-H, and other groups also have a vital role in the health and well-being of young people and families. The DeWitt County Friendship Center provides recreation and socialization for older adults and is an access point for them to obtain some services.

Challenges and Opportunities

While this assessment included a broad spectrum of providers, it did not include every organization serving the county. The collective data reviewed suggests areas in which DeWitt County organizations and residents can work to strengthen and develop education, prevention, treatment, and recovery support services and programs related to mental health, illness, and problematic substance use. Data also suggests focus areas for serving and accommodating people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other identities. Report themes and opportunities for individuals, organizations, and collaborative partners can be found in the full report.

Together, we can support and enhance the health and well-being of people who live and work in DeWitt County. Project sponsors (DeWitt County Mental Health Board, Chestnut Health Systems, and the Central Illinois Area Health Education Center at Illinois State University) and the Assessment Steering Committee, comprising many organizations, thank everyone who contributed to the assessment. Obtain the full report *2022 DeWitt County Needs and Resources Assessment for Mental Health, Substance Use, and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities* at the Mental Health Board's Website at www.dewittcountymhb.com. A limited number of print copies are available. Request a print copy from or direct questions to Sharon Mills, Administrator, DeWitt County Mental Health Board, at smills@dewittcountymhb.com.

1 – Acknowledgements

Many individuals and organizations participated in the needs and resources assessment. The DeWitt County Community Mental Health Board, co-sponsors, and the Steering Committee recognize the time, effort, and dedication of individuals and organizations in DeWitt County. They are thankful to those who took part in research activities and contributed in other ways.

Individuals and organizations who participated in the Provider Survey, Community Survey, Key Informant Interviews, or Public Data Collection

Organizations Represented on the Steering Committee

Blue Ridge CUSD 18
Central Illinois Area Health Education Center, Illinois State University*
Chestnut Health Systems, Inc.*
City of Clinton Police Department
Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce
Clinton CUSD 15
DeWitt County Community Mental Health Board*
DeWitt County Farm Bureau
DeWitt County Housing Authority
DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department
Encore Developmental Services
Heritage Behavioral Health Center
Macon County CASA serving Macon and DeWitt Counties
Neighborhood Care Center
Piatt County Mental Health Center
Prairieland Service Coordination, Inc.
Regional Office of Education 17
United Way of Decatur and Mid-Central Illinois
Warner Hospital & Health Services

*Sponsors

Other Contributing Organizations

Clinton Area Ministerial Alliance
Farmer City Public Library
Kenny Fire Department
Texas Christian Church
The Immigration Project
Vespasian Warner Public Library
Waynesville Township Library
Weldon Public Library
WHOW Radio Station

2 – Introduction

DeWitt County Community Mental Health Board Mission, Meetings, Funding

On August 22, 1967, DeWitt County residents voted by referendum to establish the DeWitt County Community Mental Health Board, herein referred to as the Mental Health Board, under the provisions of the Community Mental Health Act (405 ILCS 20/.01-14). The Mental Health Board is also known as the 708 Board in reference to House Bill 708 which introduced the Act.

The Mental Health Board’s mission is to provide access to comprehensive, community-based services in an efficient and effective manner to all residents of DeWitt County with mental illness, substance use disorder, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. The seven-member Board currently meets on the second Monday of each month at 5:00 pm at the Vespasian Public Library Museum Room. All meetings are open to the public. In months where there is a federal holiday, the Board meets on the third Monday.

Under the Community Mental Health Act, the Mental Health Board is required to develop one- and three-year plans in support of its mission. Upon completion of the *2022 DeWitt County Assessment for Mental Health, Substance Use, and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities*, the Board will develop its next one- and three-year plans.

The source of funding for the Mental Health Board is an annual tax levy collected by the DeWitt County Board and placed in the “Mental Health Fund.” The Mental Health Board members review requests for funding annually from eligible nonprofits and governmental providers of programs or services for DeWitt County residents. See www.dewittcountymhb.com

Figure 1. Health and Human Service Providers Receiving FY 2023 DeWitt County Mental Health Board Funding

Organization	Service Areas Funded 12/1/21 – 11/31/23*
Children's Advocacy Center	MH, Victim Advocacy
Clinton Community YMCA	MH, I/DD
DeWitt County Probation/Drug Court	SUD
Dove, Inc.	MH, Prevention, Victim Advocacy
Encore Developmental Services	I/DD
Growing Strong Sexual Assault Center	MH, Prevention, Victim Advocacy
Heritage Behavioral Health Center	MH, Crisis, SUD, Psychiatry, Prevention
Macon County CASA serving Macon and DeWitt Counties	MH
Piatt County Mental Health Center	MH, SUD, Prevention
Prairieland Service Coordination	I/DD, Support to Access Services
Tri-County Special Education Association	MH, SUD

*MH=Mental Health; SUD=Substance Use Disorder; I/DD=Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

Report Structure

Section 1 of this report acknowledges contributions of organizations and individuals to the needs and resources assessment. **Section 2** provides an overview of the Mental Health Board, purpose of the assessment, and its structure and limitations. **Section 3** outlines the process the Steering Committee followed to develop the project and the research methods used. **Section 4** provides a county profile and resident demographics. **Section 5** provides a summary of findings across many topics related to DeWitt County mental health, substance use, and intellectual/developmental disabilities. **Section 6** highlights collaboration and organizational efforts to address diversity and ensure access to buildings, public spaces, programs, and services. **Section 7** provides conclusions and recommendations for the Mental Health Board and other organizations to consider and act upon individually and as collaborators. **Section 8** provides references. **Section 9** is a compilation of resources available to DeWitt County residents. The report ends with an Appendix in **Section 10**.

Purpose of the Assessment

The Mental Health Board periodically identifies needs and resources in or near DeWitt County to support planning and service provision. The purpose of the assessment for participating organizations includes the following:

- Gain and increase awareness of DeWitt County needs and resources;
- Engage multiple perspectives and experiences;
- Enhance communication among stakeholders;
- Identify priorities to address; and
- Plan for and support new/existing services, programs, and initiatives.

Limitations of the Assessment

Limitations of the assessment should be noted. The Steering Committee and partners outlined desired data and indicators for the assessment most relevant to the Mental Health Board's mission to serve residents with mental illness, substance use disorder, and intellectual/developmental disabilities. The assessment did not attempt to identify needs and resources related to all possible public health and health care indices.

Multiple research methods were used to gain wide participation of individuals and health care, human service, and other organizations throughout DeWitt County. The methods were designed to address the desired data and indicators and were not based on standardized surveys or assessment tools.

The Steering Committee identified several groups of people whose experience may be important to the assessment including the Hispanic/Latinx population, military veterans, people who identify as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer), older adults, and young people (under age 18). All county residents aged 18+ and several organizations representing these groups were invited to participate in the project, but some did not reply. Each of these groups are not specifically represented at length in this report. Future initiatives may wish to engage specific groups more fully.

Young people (under age 18) were not invited to complete surveys as their inclusion would have required parental permissions and additional staff resources. Local schools already participate in the Illinois Youth Survey (IYS). Results from the Spring 2022 survey administration have been released and are referenced in this report along with 2018 IYS data.

The Provider Survey resulted in a strong overall response from organizations. Some questions though, did not provide meaningful analysis, e.g., a question related to the number of people the organization served in various categories.

The Community Survey did not have sufficient responses to generalize to the DeWitt County population. Survey data and comments are provided where they can substantiate themes in the Findings section and suggest recommendations. Although the Community Survey was translated into Spanish to make it more accessible to the Spanish-speaking population, there were no responses to the Spanish version.

3 – Process and Methods

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee began meeting in Fall 2021 to plan and implement the needs and resources assessment. The Committee met monthly November 2021-December 2022 except for a few months where meetings were not needed. The Committee was formed to represent each of the primary assessment topics (mental health, substance use, and intellectual/developmental disabilities) and community sectors who interact with residents with various conditions, concerns, or needs. These sectors include business, health care and public health, human services, education, faith-based organizations, housing, and agriculture.

The Steering Committee began their work by outlining the assessment’s purpose, areas of interest, and timeline. They brainstormed target audiences and data that may be useful to various organizations for their planning, service development, grant writing, and other purposes. A few members reviewed needs assessment reports produced by other counties’ Mental Health Boards for both data points and instruments to determine if there were items that could inform this assessment. Data (or questions to yield data) were grouped and then methods were determined to collect it. These research methods are described briefly below with response rates.

Public Data Collection

Steering Committee members identified sources of public and local organizational data and volunteered to acquire or provide specific data. State of Illinois and DeWitt County population, workforce, education, and public benefits data were sought from federal and state agencies such as the U.S. Census Bureau, Illinois State Board of Education, and Illinois Department of Human Services. The State’s Opioid Dashboard and Prescription Drug Monitoring Program were consulted. Data is included that was collected through other assessment projects such as the Illinois Youth Survey and County Health Rankings. Local health care and human service organizations provided relevant aggregated data.

Provider Survey

Steering Committee members developed a 25-question Provider Survey to send to health care and human service organizations (e.g., nonprofits, law enforcement agencies, public housing, school districts) serving DeWitt County. Survey Monkey was used to provide the survey online and capture responses.

Survey questions covered the following areas:

- Primary mission or purpose of the organization and geographical area it serves.
- Number of DeWitt County residents served in 2021.
- Ways the organization delivers its services.
- Internet capability of the organization and its clients.
- Open positions within the organization, challenges with filling positions, and staff training needs.
- Extent to which the organization collaborates with other organizations.
- Policies and practices around diversity, equity, inclusion, and access to services.
- Strengths of the organization and other organizations serving DeWitt County.

- Gaps in health care and human service provision in the county and resources needed to address gaps.
- Barriers or challenges people experience in accessing services.
- Trends with or needs of people served.
- Issues and/or services DeWitt County organizations should focus on in future work.

The survey included a cover letter describing the purpose of the needs and resources assessment and inviting participation. Contact information was provided if anyone needed more information or had any questions. The letter also stated:

- The survey would take approximately 15 minutes to complete.
- Participation is voluntary and respondents could skip any question or discontinue the survey at any point.
- There were not any anticipated risks for participating.
- Responses would remain anonymous and would be aggregated for reporting.

The survey was sent to 88 individuals representing 65 organizations. In most cases, surveys were sent to one organizational representative; in some cases, several representatives were invited. Responses were provided by 36 individuals representing 30 organizations. The response rate for total surveys sent (36/88) was 0.409 or 41%. The organizational response rate (30/65) was 0.461 or 46%.

Community Survey

Steering Committee members developed a 29-question survey to gather the community's input for the assessment. Survey Monkey was used to provide surveys online and capture responses. The Community Survey also was made available in paper form through the four public libraries in DeWitt County: Vespasian Warner, Farmer City, Weldon, and Waynesville Township Public Libraries. Posters and fliers with all ways to access the survey were hung throughout the county and shared by social media. The fliers and the Community Survey were translated into Spanish to make them accessible to the Spanish-speaking population.

Survey questions included the following:

- Respondent's residence in DeWitt County or another area.
- What they like and do not like about living in DeWitt County.
- Their experience with a mental health challenge, problematic substance use, intellectual/developmental disability, or another disability.
- If they helped care for a person with one of the above conditions.
- If they have ever tried to get services, supports, or resources for themselves or others related to mental health, substance use, or disabilities, and if so, what challenges they may have experienced.
- Awareness of services, supports, or resources for DeWitt County residents related to mental health, substance use, and disabilities and what should be added to help more people.
- What assistive devices are needed for themselves or someone they know with intellectual/developmental disabilities.
- Where they would turn first if they needed help with mental health, substance use, or a disability and how they would prefer to get services.

- Their access to the Internet.
- Desire for training about mental health, substance use, or intellectual/developmental disabilities, the type of training that would be useful, and the best way to get information to them.
- If they need any help getting specific types of services or supports and if they have any housing-related needs.
- Area strengths in serving needs of DeWitt County residents.
- Advice for improving services for DeWitt County residents.
- Demographics including their age, gender, race, ethnicity, and educational attainment.

The survey included a cover letter describing the purpose of the needs and resources assessment and inviting participation from individuals aged 18 years and older. A qualifying question on the survey asked for the participant's age and would advance the survey if they qualified. The letter also said:

- The survey would take approximately 15 minutes to complete and includes multiple choice and short answer questions.
- Participation is voluntary and respondents could skip any question or discontinue the survey at any point.
- There were not any anticipated risks for participating beyond those that occur in everyday life and related to the survey topics.
- Responses would remain anonymous and would be aggregated for reporting.

Contact information was provided if anyone needed more information or had any questions. There were 75 responses to the Community Survey with 44 of them coming from Clinton and the remaining coming from Farmer City and other unspecified areas.

Key Informant Interviews

To gain more in-depth information from health and human service providers and a few individuals who were not included in the Provider Survey, a few Steering Committee members conducted Key Informant Interviews. Steering Committee members suggested sectors to be covered and individuals to be included for interviews. Interviews were conducted with 12 representatives from law enforcement, faith-based communities, education, housing, health care, behavioral health, and other human service organizations.

Although interviews were tailored to everyone and their field of work, they tended to include these general questions:

- What issues are you or your organization facing now that affect your ability to serve clients?
- How does substance use impact this community? What substances are the most misused?
- How would you describe your community's attitude toward substance use?
- How does mental illness or related challenges impact this community?
- How would you describe your community's attitude toward mental health and illness?
- How do intellectual/developmental disabilities impact the community?
- How would you describe your community's attitude toward people with intellectual/developmental disabilities?
- What programs or opportunities would benefit your community?

- For providers who are experiencing fatigue or burnout, what is needed to help with resilience and recovery?
- What are your ideas for building the workforce to support programs/services for mental health, substance use, and/or intellectual/developmental disabilities?

4 – DeWitt County Profile and Demographics

Location

DeWitt County is a rural community in Central Illinois that covers a total area of 405 square miles and is located 25 miles from Bloomington-Normal and Decatur, 50 miles from Springfield and Champaign-Urbana, and 150 miles from Chicago and St. Louis.¹ DeWitt County is easily accessible from two major interstates (I-72 & I-74), two major U.S. Routes (U.S.-51 & U.S.-150), and three major State Routes (IL-10, IL-48, & IL-54). The larger cities in DeWitt County include Clinton and Farmer City along with smaller Villages such as DeWitt, Kenny, Wapella, Waynesville, and Weldon. DeWitt County borders Logan, McLean, Macon, and Piatt Counties.² DeWitt County is home to Clinton Lake, Mascoutin State Recreation Area, and Weldon Springs State Park.

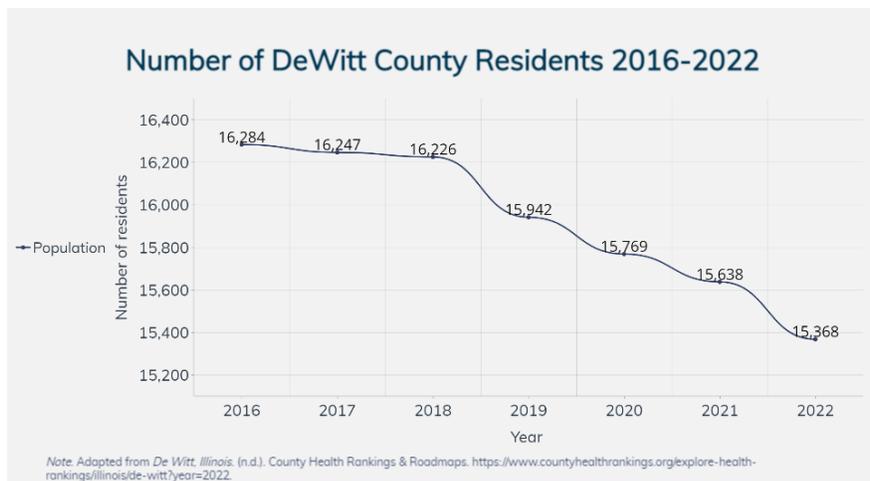
Figure 2.



Population

Nearly half (48.8%) of the DeWitt County population is considered rural, compared to Illinois where 11% of the total population is considered rural.³ The U.S. Census Bureau defines “rural” as any population, housing, or territory not in an urbanized area or urban cluster. Urbanized areas have a population of 50,000 or more and urban clusters have a population of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000.⁴ The overall population of DeWitt County has been gradually declining from 2016 to 2022 as Figure 3 displays.

Figure 3.



¹ *Welcome to DeWitt County, Illinois*. (n.d.). Retrieved November 9, 2022 from <https://www.dewittcountyil.gov/>

² Wikipedia. (June 28, 2022). *DeWitt County, Illinois*. Wikipedia. Retrieved November 9, 2022, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DeWitt_County,_Illinois#Communities

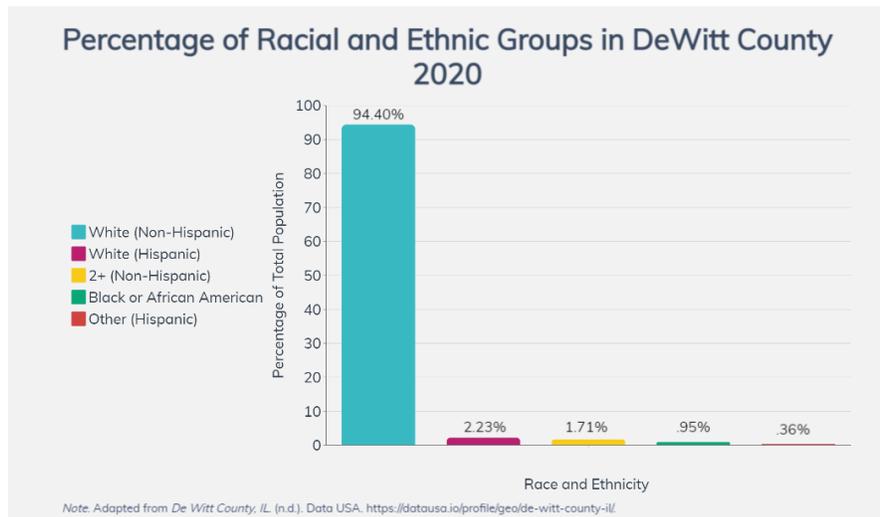
³ County Health Rankings. (n.d.). *De Witt, Illinois*. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Story Map Journal*. Mtgis. Retrieved November 9, 2022, from <https://mtgis-portal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=2e65cb763f3048d8955b4c1d58362f31&embed>

Ethnicity and Age

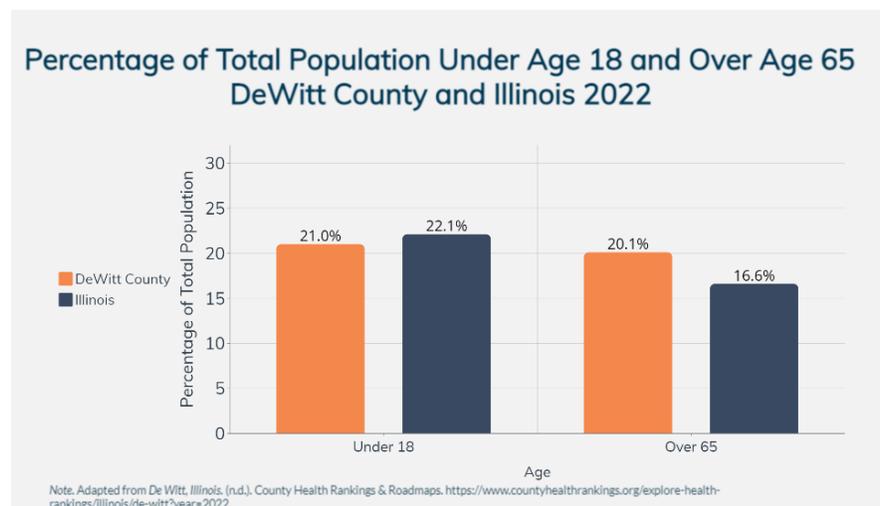
In 2020, the top three racial and ethnic groups for DeWitt County were White (Non-Hispanic), White (Hispanic), and Two or More Races (Non-Hispanic). The White (Non-Hispanic) group made up 94.4% of the total population. None of the households reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language.⁵ Figure 4 shows the racial and ethnic group makeup for DeWitt County in 2020.

Figure 4.



DeWitt County has a higher percentage of adults over the age of 65 compared to Illinois. As of 2022, 20.1% of DeWitt County residents were over the age of 65 compared to Illinois at 16.6%.⁶ There are also slightly less people under the age of 18 in DeWitt County compared to Illinois as a whole. Figure 5 outlines the age demographic makeup of DeWitt County and Illinois.

Figure 5.



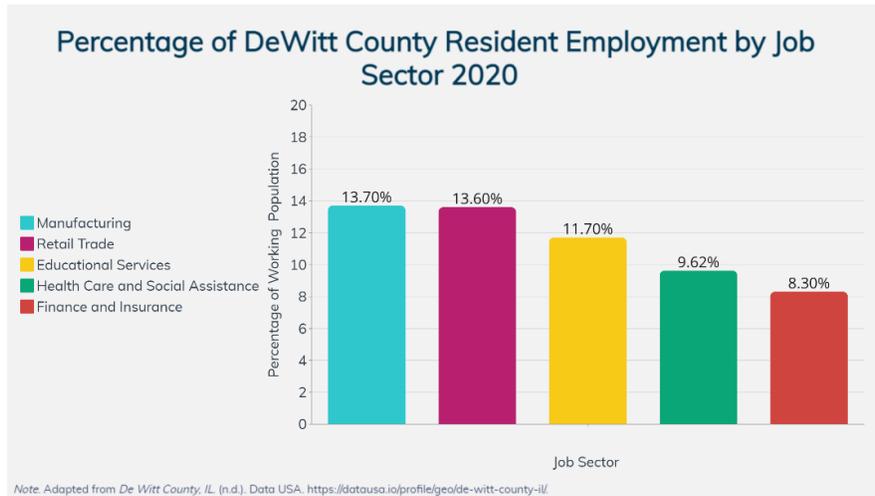
⁵ Data USA. (n.d.). *De Witt County, IL*. Data USA. Retrieved November 9, 2022, from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/de-witt-county-il/#about>

⁶ County Health Rankings. (n.d.). *De Witt, Illinois*. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>

Employment

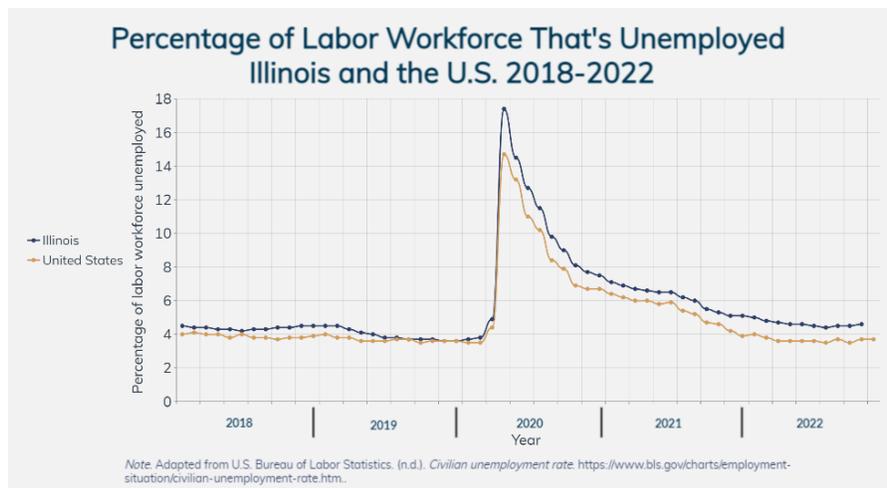
Figure 6 displays the top employment sectors of people who live in DeWitt County as of 2020. The top three job sectors were Manufacturing (13.7%), Retail Trade (13.6%), and Educational Services (11.7%).⁷

Figure 6.



The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted employment in Illinois and throughout the United States. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for the United States jumped from 4.4% in March 2020 to 14.7% just one month later in April 2020 after the onset of the pandemic. In Illinois, unemployment jumped from 4.9% in March 2020 to 17.4% in April 2020.⁸ Figure 7 displays the unemployment trend of Illinois vs. the United States from 2018-2022.

Figure 7.

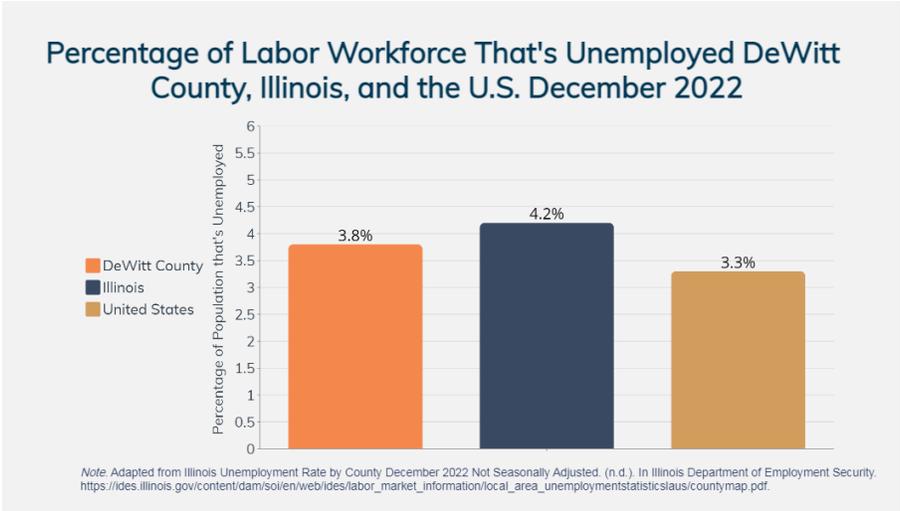


⁷ Data USA. (n.d.). *De Witt County, IL*. Data USA. Retrieved November 9, 2022, from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/de-witt-county-il/#about>

⁸ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (n.d.). Charts related to the latest "The employment situation" news release | more chart packages. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved December 9, 2022, from <https://www.bls.gov/charts/employment-situation/civilian-unemployment-rate.htm>

While April 2020 had record high unemployment rates, rates have progressively decreased since then. Figure 8 displays the unemployment rates for DeWitt County, Illinois, and the United States in December 2022.

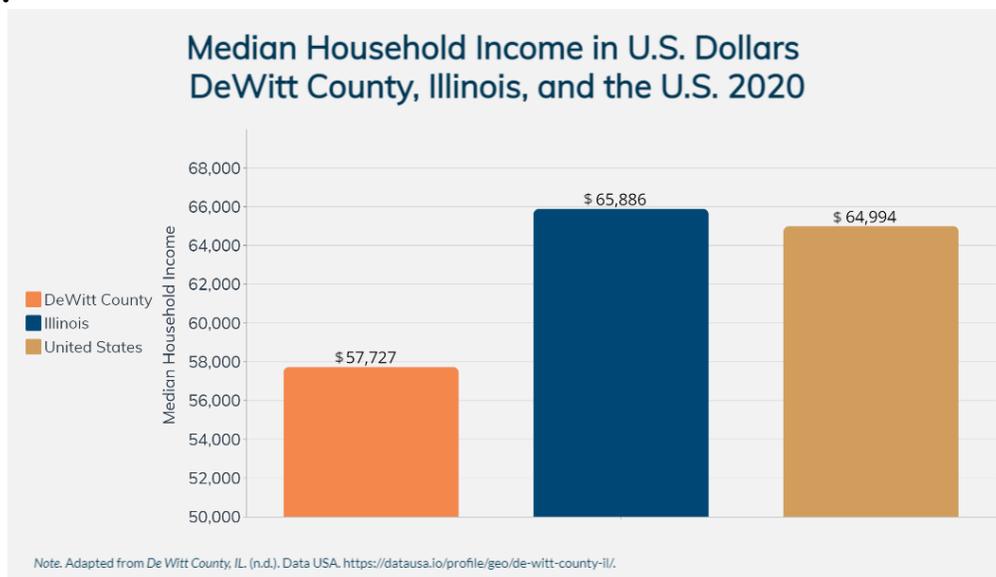
Figure 8.



Education, Income, and Poverty

Most (93%) of individuals in DeWitt County are high school graduates with 66% having completed some college. Illinois has slightly lower high school graduation rates than DeWitt County and the United States (90%) but had higher completion of some college (71%) than rates in DeWitt County (66%) and the United States (67%).⁹ The median household income for a resident of DeWitt County is approximately \$57,727.¹⁰ As of 2020, DeWitt County had a lower median household income compared to Illinois and the United States.

Figure 9.

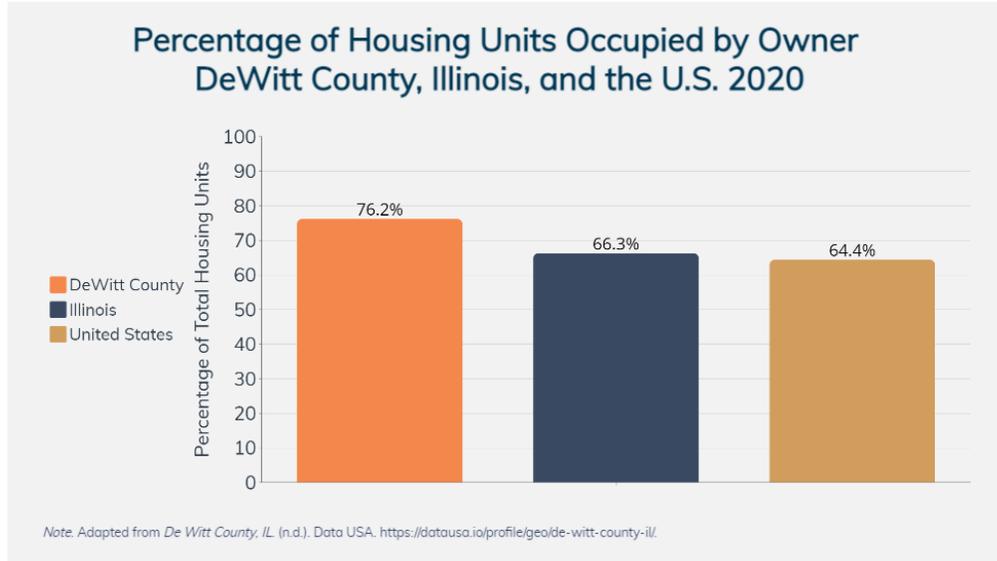


⁹ County Health Rankings. (n.d.). *De Witt, Illinois*. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>

¹⁰ Data USA. (n.d.). *De Witt County, IL*. Data USA. Retrieved November 9, 2022, from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/de-witt-county-il/#about>

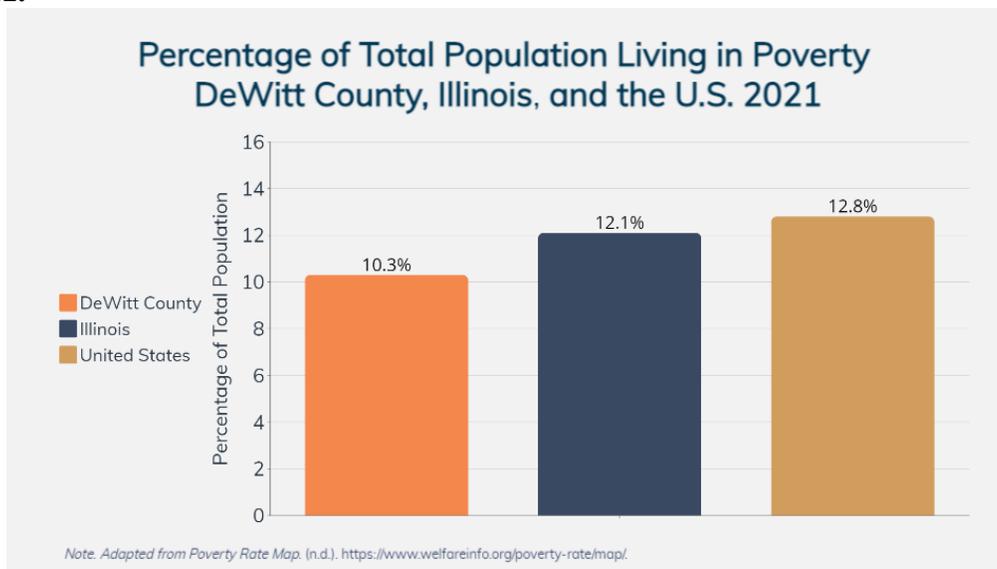
In 2020, the median property value in DeWitt County, Illinois grew to \$103,600 from the previous year's value of \$99,500.¹¹ In 2020, 76.2% of the housing units in DeWitt County were occupied by their owner. This percentage of owner-occupation is higher than the state and national averages. Figure 10 displays the percentage of housing units occupied by the owner.

Figure 10.



Poverty plays a large role in the health outcomes of individuals and communities. Higher rates of poverty are linked to poorer health outcomes, decreased quality of life, and shorter life expectancy. DeWitt County had a slightly lower poverty rate than Illinois and the United States in 2021 (see Figure 11).

Figure 11.



¹¹ Data USA. (n.d.). *De Witt County, IL*. Data USA. Retrieved November 9, 2022, from <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/de-witt-county-il/#about>

Health Trends

According to County Health Rankings, DeWitt County is in the lower middle range of Illinois counties (lower 25%-50%) for Health Outcomes ranking 65 out of 102 counties. The Health Outcomes rank is based on length of life and quality of life measures. Length of life is determined by the rate of premature death. Quality of life considers factors such the percentage of adults reporting fair or poor health, the average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in the past 30 days, and the percentage of live births with low birthweight.¹² Figure 12 displays Health Outcomes in DeWitt County, Illinois, and the United States for 2022.

Figure 12.

	DeWitt County	Illinois	United States
Years of potential life lost before age 75 per 100,000 population (age-adjusted)	9,700	7,100	7,300
Percentage of adults reporting fair or poor health (age-adjusted)	18%	17%	17%
Average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in past 30 days (age-adjusted)	4.8	4.2	4.5
Average number of physically unhealthy days reported in past 30 days (age-adjusted)	4.0	3.6	3.9
Percentage of live births with low birthweight (< 2,500 grams)	6%	8%	8%

Note. Adapted from *De Witt, Illinois*. (n.d.). County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>

¹² County Health Rankings. (n.d.). *De Witt, Illinois*. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>

DeWitt County is ranked among the healthiest counties in Illinois (highest 75%-100%) for Health Factors. The Health Factors ranking is based on health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment factors.¹³ Figure 13 highlights some Health Factors for DeWitt County, Illinois, and the United States.

Figure 13.

	DeWitt County	Illinois	United States
Percentage of adults who are current smokers (age-adjusted)	20%	15%	16%
Percentage of the adult population (age 18 and older) that reports a body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to 30 kg/m ² (age-adjusted)	36%	32%	32%
Number of deaths due to injury per 100,000 population	87	70	76
Percentage of driving deaths with alcohol involvement	14%	29%	27%
Percentage of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking (age-adjusted)	23%	23%	20%
Number of reported violent crime offenses per 100,000 population	188	403	386
Number of births per 1,000 female population ages 15-19	22	18	19
Rate of hospital stays for ambulatory-care sensitive conditions per 100,000 Medicare enrollees	4,164	4,447	3,767

Note. Adapted from *De Witt, Illinois*. (n.d.). County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>.

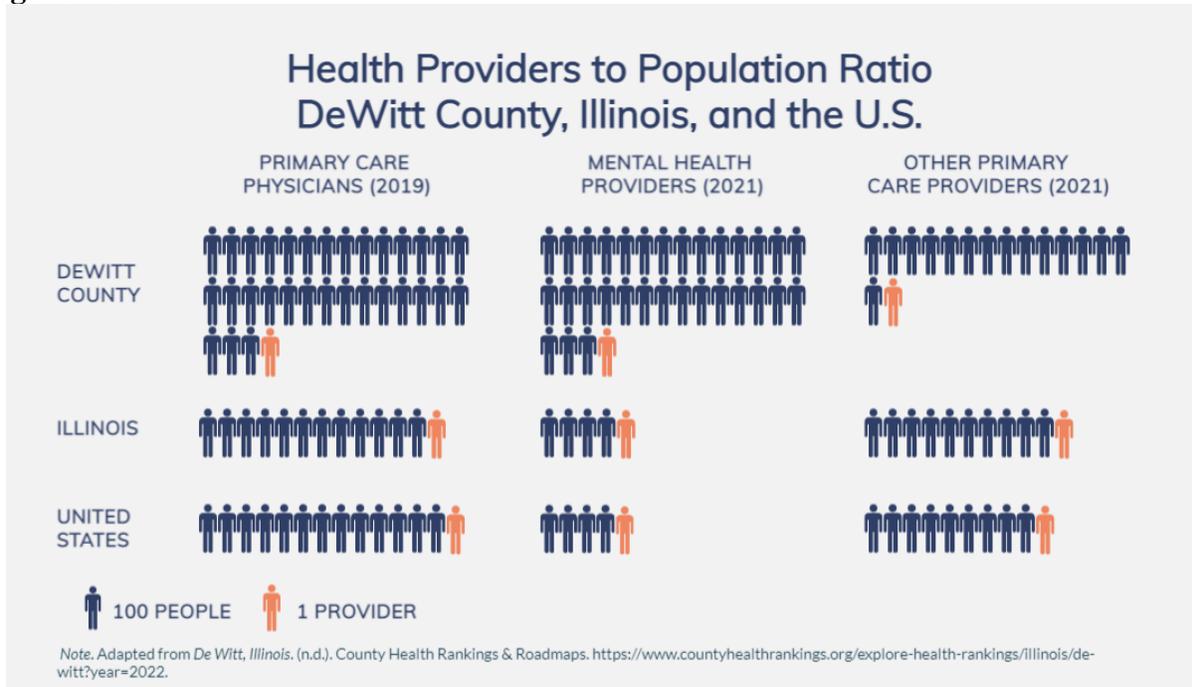
DeWitt County has higher rates of adults who are current smokers, adults with a BMI greater than or equal to 30kg/m², and number of births per 1,000 female population ages 15-19 than Illinois and the United States. The county also has lower rates of driving deaths with alcohol involvement than Illinois and the United States. Illinois and DeWitt County are equal in their percentage of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking and higher than the United States percentage. For social and economic factors, there are higher rates of deaths due to injury in DeWitt County compared to Illinois and the United States. DeWitt County has significantly lower rates of reported violent crime compared to Illinois and the United States.

For clinical care, Illinois has the highest rate of preventable hospital stays per 100,000 Medicaid enrollees compared to DeWitt County and the United States.¹⁴ DeWitt County has significantly lower rates of primary care physicians, mental health providers, and other primary care providers compared to Illinois and the United States. Figure 14 displays the population to health care provider ratio for DeWitt County compared to Illinois and the United States.

¹³ County Health Rankings. (n.d.). *De Witt, Illinois*. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>

¹⁴ County Health Rankings. (n.d.). *De Witt, Illinois*. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>

Figure 14.



5 – Findings

This section reviews findings from the assessment’s data collection activities and categorizes information under broad themes that apply to health care and human service providers, population health status or conditions, and disabilities. The section also relays information specific to each of the major focus areas of mental health, substance use, and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Public Benefits and Education

With invitation of the 6th Circuit, the Macon County CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) serving Macon and DeWitt Counties began in 2022 to provide case advocates, management, and review for children in DeWitt County foster care. CASA trains volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocates who are sworn in by a Circuit Judge to create a meaningful connection with their assigned foster children and ensure their needs are being addressed. As of October 2022, CASA is serving 10 out of 50 children who are placed with foster families in DeWitt County utilizing 12 volunteer advocates. CASA is currently operating out of rented space through the Clinton Presbyterian Church and hopes to expand the number of children (and families) it can serve with additional funding and volunteer support.

The WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program provides supplemental food and nutrition information for low-income women, infants, and children in Piatt and DeWitt Counties. Eligible participants include women during pregnancy, postpartum, and lactating periods, and children under the age of 5. Participants must meet the financial guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and have an identified medical or nutritional risk. The DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department administers this free program in DeWitt County and will help determine eligibility. Figure 15 shows the number of DeWitt County WIC participants dropped off greatly in years 2020-2022 compared to 2019.

Figure 15.

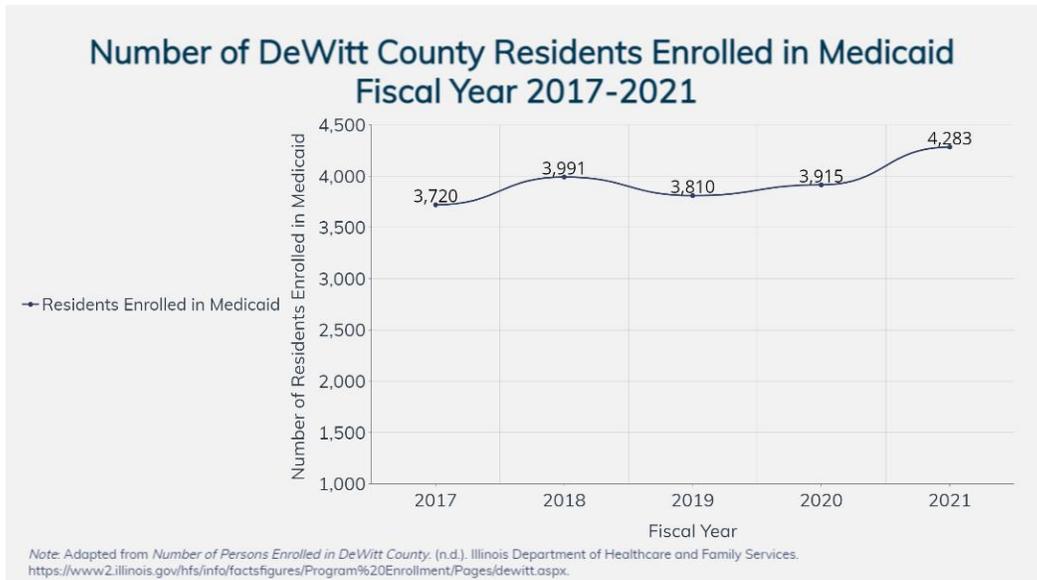
**Number of WIC Participants in DeWitt County
Fiscal Years 2019-2022**

Participant Type	2019	2020	2021	2022
Infants	115	n/a	n/a	61
Children	162	n/a	n/a	124
Pregnant	173	n/a	n/a	26
Breastfeeding (exclusively)	27	6	6	11
Postpartum	96	n/a	n/a	26
Total	573	191	170	248

WIC: Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
Note: The years 2020 and 2021 do not have a breakdown of participant type due to COVID-19. Data cited from the DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department.

Medicaid enrollment for DeWitt County has increased overall by 15% between fiscal year 2017 and 2021. Fiscal year 2021 saw 4,283 DeWitt County residents utilizing this program (Figure 16).¹⁵

Figure 16.



There are no shelters in DeWitt County for people or families experiencing homelessness. DeWitt County is part of the Central Illinois Continuum of Care which addresses homelessness in 11 counties. The Regional Office of Education (ROE) 17 has a staff member that works with students and their families who are experiencing homelessness. The ROE reported there were 116 families experiencing homelessness or at-risk for homelessness in DeWitt County as of Spring 2022. Additionally, 1,162 students are on free and reduced lunch. Students that qualify for free lunch must be at 130% of the Federal Poverty Guideline; students that qualify for reduced lunch must be at 185% of the Federal Poverty Guideline.

¹⁵ Data regarding Medicaid enrollment was retrieved from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services in 2022.

The Illinois Report Card includes information released by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) annually for each school, district, and Illinois to see how each is performing on a wide range of educational goals. Figure 17 shows the Illinois Report Card for the three school districts serving DeWitt County: Deland-Weldon CUSD 57; Blue Ridge CUSD 18; and Clinton CUSD 15. School-level metrics can be viewed in the Appendix under Figure 23.

Figure 17.

School district & state	Number of schools	Grades served	Number of students enrolled	Graduation rate	Mobility rate	Truancy rate	Low-income	IEP's
Deland-Weldon CUSD 57*	3	PK-12	178	88%	18%	10%	47%	17%
Blue Ridge CUSD 18	3	PK-12	643	88%	8%	12%	43%	16%
Clinton CUSD 15	5	PK-12	1,673	80%	10%	13%	46%	19%
State of Illinois	N/A	N/A	1.9 M	86%	8%	22%	47%	15%

• Graduation rate – percentage of students who entered 9th grade for the first time four years prior to the year being reported.
 • Mobility rate – percentage of students who experienced at least one transfer in or out of the school between the first school day of October and the last school day of the year, not including graduates.
 • Truancy rate – percentage of students who miss 5 percent or more of school days per year without a valid excuse.
 • Low-income students – percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, live in substitute care, or whose families receive public aid.
 • IEP's – percentage of students who receive special education and related services in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
 *Deland Weldon School District (Piatt County) is included because it serves some DeWitt County residents

Note. Adapted from Illinois State Board of Education. (n.d.). *DeWitt County, Illinois Report Card 2021-2022*. [https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/SearchResult.aspx?type=COUNTY&SearchText=\\$DeWitt\\$](https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/SearchResult.aspx?type=COUNTY&SearchText=$DeWitt$).

Birth to Five Illinois is a statewide program which started in 2022 to review, redesign, and expand the early education and care system with families at the center.¹⁶ Regional Birth to Five Action Councils and Family Councils will assess community needs and develop collaborative plans to address them. The Region 17 Birth to Five team covers DeWitt, Livingston, Logan, and McLean Counties.

COVID-19 and Its Effects on the Population and Service Provision

The COVID-19 pandemic had significant effects on citizens of DeWitt County and people all over the world. Many of the lasting effects from social isolation on behavioral health conditions may not be seen for years to come. Some of the immediate symptoms that people may have experienced from the COVID-19 pandemic include depression, anxiety, and sleep disturbances. This may have been the first time people have ever experienced a mental health issue, or it may have caused pre-existing mental health conditions to worsen. To deal with some of these new feelings, some people turned to substances to help them cope. This has led to an increase in substance use disorders and substance misuse across the country. Increased rates of domestic violence and child abuse is another concern that has come from the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, it is believed that the full effects from the pandemic have not yet been realized and it may take many more years to see the impacts.¹⁷

¹⁶ See Birth to Five Illinois at <https://www.birthtofiveil.com/home>

¹⁷ Pietrabissa, G. & Simpson, S. G. (2020). Psychological Consequences of Social Isolation During COVID-19 Outbreak. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.02201/full>

Through every data collection tool for this assessment, COVID-19 was repeatedly noted as a contributing factor to mental health, substance use, and intellectual/developmental disability concerns. Through the Provider Survey, it was noted that providers in all social services fields felt overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated. The effects of burnout from these issues are striking with many social service providers choosing to leave the profession or feeling as though they are not able to adequately fulfill their roles. Respondents to the Provider Survey also noted providers are seeing a variety of trends with the clients they serve. Some of these include an increase in mental health and substance related issues, specifically depression, stress, and anxiety, as well as an increase in homelessness and housing insecurity.

An important factor to consider is that society relied heavily on Internet and broadband access during COVID-19 social distancing. While society typically relies on Internet access to connect people to services, many communities do not have adequate broadband to support these needs. Most things were done over the Internet including schooling, church, work, medical appointments, and social interactions. Most Community Survey respondents (88%) said they had reliable access to the Internet at home. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 79.3% of DeWitt County residents have broadband access at home compared to 82.7% of Illinois residents.

Transportation

As is common in many rural communities, public transportation is a need in DeWitt County. If a resident does not have a reliable vehicle and money for gas or vehicle upkeep, they are essentially stranded unless they walk or can arrange for other transportation. There is currently no widely available public transportation and no taxi services available in the county.

The SHOW BUS is the public transportation that is available and covers all of DeWitt County since 2008. Prices for rides depend on where the passenger is going (within or outside DeWitt County). There is a set schedule the bus takes every day which can be found on their website, or special services can be set up in advance. Some disadvantages of SHOW BUS are that it does not run at night, it has a set schedule, and there is typically only one trip a day. This means if someone needs to travel into a neighboring county for an appointment, it can turn into an all-day event. SHOW BUS has a current need for experienced drivers with a commercial driver's license (CDL). SHOW BUS can provide training to help someone obtain their CDL.

On the Provider Survey, several service providers stated they are actively trying to limit transportation as a barrier for clients. This includes bringing services directly to client's homes or bringing services to DeWitt County periodically if their organization is based out of the county. Unfortunately, this comes with its own challenges including ensuring providers have reliable transportation, and the time and money it takes to make these trips. This can create additional expenses for organizations trying to accommodate their clients.

On the Community Survey, several individuals stated they do not have transportation to get to their appointments. When asked where they would prefer to get services, they were nearly evenly divided with preferring services in their homes, at an organization in DeWitt County, or at an organization outside of DeWitt County.

Awareness of Services and Referral

There are many organizations located in DeWitt County, or providing services for DeWitt County residents, that people are not aware of. Awareness is important because the services that do exist can be better utilized and new or expanded services/programs can be considered if there are identified gaps in services.

The Community Survey asked respondents to identify specific providers that exist in the county to address mental health, substance use, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Mental health providers they named include the Mental Health Board, Heritage Behavioral Health, and Human Resource Center (HRC). The substance use treatment providers they named include Heritage Behavioral Health and Dove. Intellectual and developmental disabilities providers they named include Encore and the Human Resource Center. It is important to note that some of the organizations they identified either no longer exist (Human Resource Center), were incorrectly categorized (Dove), or do not provide direct client services (Mental Health Board). While some people were able to identify service providers, many people said they did not know what organizations could help for any of the three specific areas.

Since many survey respondents do not know what organizations exist in their community and what those organizations can do, it is important to continue to educate community members and providers about existing programs and services serving DeWitt County. A question on the Community Survey asked for ways to improve knowledge of services. Some responses include having a place to get information about services; increasing education about services available; and getting the word out about services/events in the community through flyers and social media.

Dial 211 for information about services

Generally, the best way to get information about programs and services in the county is by dialing 2-1-1. 211 is a comprehensive source of information about local resources in the county answered through PATH (Providing Access to Help) in Bloomington, Illinois. Most callers to 211 are looking to address basic needs such as housing, food, transportation, and health care. All organizations that provide services to DeWitt County residents should ensure their information is up to date with 211 so that individuals answering 211 calls will have the most accurate information to relay to community members.

Through Key Informant Interviews, it was suggested that a campaign should be implemented to increase awareness of services within the county. The United Way of Decatur and Mid-Central Illinois may be a possible organization to lead these efforts since they already are a hub for information in the county and help to promote 211. Some ideas for how to spread organization and service information include direct mailers, brochures, and billboards. It was suggested that any printed material also could be displayed on billboards in the county and made available at local organizations such as churches, libraries, and the Chamber of Commerce.

Integrated Referral Intake System (IRIS)

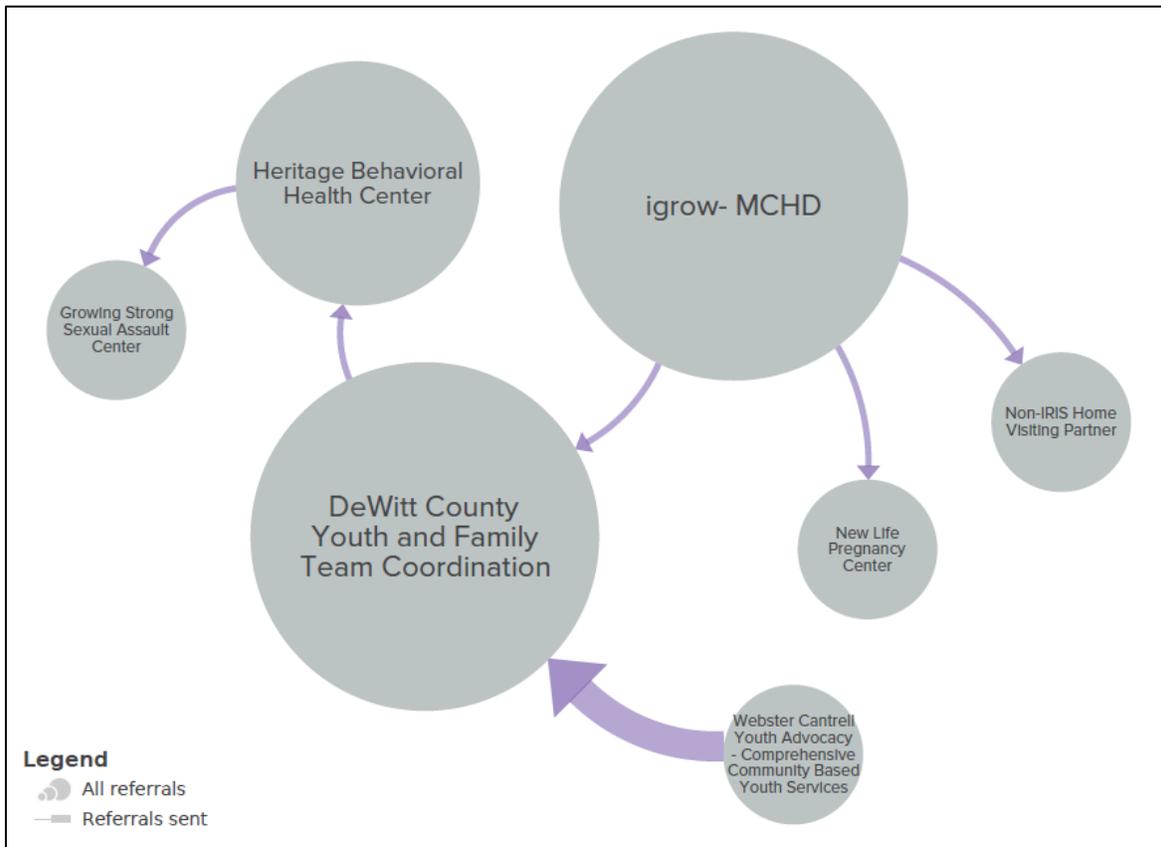
To support timely and accessible services for youth and families in Macon and DeWitt Counties, Heritage Behavioral Health Center launched an Integrated Referral Intake System (IRIS) in Macon and DeWitt Counties in March 2021. IRIS is funded through an Illinois Children’s Healthcare Foundation grant and the Community Together project which includes Heritage, a group of caregivers, and partner organizations. The project is supporting overall mental health and wellness for youth and families through education and training, collaborative initiatives, connections to services, and increasing capacity in organizations and communities to address needs.

IRIS is a web-based HIPAA-compliant communication tool which links service agencies and organizations within a community to each other and helps them connect families they serve with the right resources. IRIS makes it easy for agencies to track all referral activity, such as seeing if partners accepted or denied a referral. It can help families simplify the process of connecting families to services that will meet their needs. All providers gain consent from individuals prior to entering their information into IRIS.

The DeWitt and Macon County IRIS community currently includes 79 organizations and is growing. Since launching in March 2021, and through October 19, 2022, 566 referrals have been made in IRIS for individuals in both counties. Of this total, Heritage has received 126 incoming referrals. There are 19 partners/organizations who serve youth in DeWitt County using IRIS and 8 referrals were made in DeWitt County as of October 19. Heritage reports many referrals are still made by phone or in-person contact; these contacts are not reflected in IRIS. There are additional organizations in DeWitt County who could be added to the IRIS system and use it to make referrals.

Figure 18 shows the use of IRIS for DeWitt County resident referrals March 2021 to October 2022. Each circle represents an organization, and the width of arrows demonstrates the number of referrals being sent between organizations.

Figure 18.



Square 1 Program

Square 1 is a new Prairieland Service Coordination, Inc. program that helps individuals in Macon County who are facing life struggles. Program staff provide help by connecting those who need assistance with local agencies and organizations who can help and addressing barriers to access. Staff members will aid in completing the required paperwork for services and ensuring someone has a ride to an appointment or to an interview for a job. Square 1 staff are advocates for individuals and families facing life struggles by providing support as they move toward sustainability. The Square 1 Program will be launching in DeWitt County in February 2023.

Crisis Response in DeWitt County

The new nationwide 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline launched July 16, 2022. 988 is a three-digit (like 911) emergency phone number (and text line) for individuals struggling with a mental health crisis or thoughts of suicide. In DeWitt County, this call will be answered by PATH in Bloomington, Illinois and directed to Heritage Behavioral Health Center. Heritage works alongside law enforcement in the community to respond to these calls as quickly as possible. In the future, individuals with lived experience may be employed and trained to help respond to these calls and provide insight and guidance into the best way to respond to individuals in crisis situations. There are concerns about sustainable funding for 988, crisis response, and increased training needs among first responders and service providers. There needs to be cross-sector training to ensure that community health workers through Heritage are protected from potential harm and law enforcement officers can respond appropriately to individuals who may be in crisis or have mental health conditions.

Increasing the overall number of crisis intervention-trained individuals across the county can be considered including law enforcement officers/deputies at city and county levels. Hospital emergency room staff members also need training and support when they encounter a crisis-related or mental health situation. The emergency room staff, working with Heritage, can establish procedures for holding and placing individuals who are present at the emergency room so they can receive the level of care necessary in a timely fashion.

While the 988-crisis grant is relatively new, Heritage Behavioral Health has been providing crisis care in DeWitt County since opening in 2017. Heritage responded to 391 crisis calls in 2019, 284 crisis calls in 2020, and 265 crisis calls in 2021. These high numbers, and the state's and nation's view toward enhancing crisis response, suggest this is an essential need in the county and should be emphasized moving forward.

Another resource that should be noted is the [Illinois Helpline for Opioids & Other Substances](#). An individual can call 1-833-2FINDHELP to speak with a trained professional for support and advice or to be directed to customized resources. There is also a website, helplineil.org, that can be accessed to search for substance use and recovery services in Illinois.

There are a variety of other free resources that are available through the State of Illinois and federal funding for all individuals. Some of these include the Illinois Call4Calm Text Line, Illinois Warm Line, Crisis Text Line, etc. All resources can be found here: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=123539>

Youth Mental Health and Substance Use

The Illinois Youth Survey (IYS) is a self-reported survey administered in school settings that is designed to gather information about a variety of health and social indicators including substance use and perceptions, bullying, school climate, nutrition, and physical activity. This survey is conducted every other year with current 8th, 10th, and 12th graders. Unfortunately, there is no IYS data for 2020 due to the testing period being interrupted by COVID-19 restrictions. 2022 data is available for DeWitt County, but aggregate data for Illinois is not available for comparison due to low overall participation. In 2022, both DeWitt County middle schools and both DeWitt County high schools participated in the survey. The following table displays 2022 IYS data for DeWitt County schools. Please note, 12th grade data is not representative due to low participation.

Figure 19.

Percentage of DeWitt County Students That Reported Using Substances in Past 30-Days by Grade Level 2018 vs. 2022

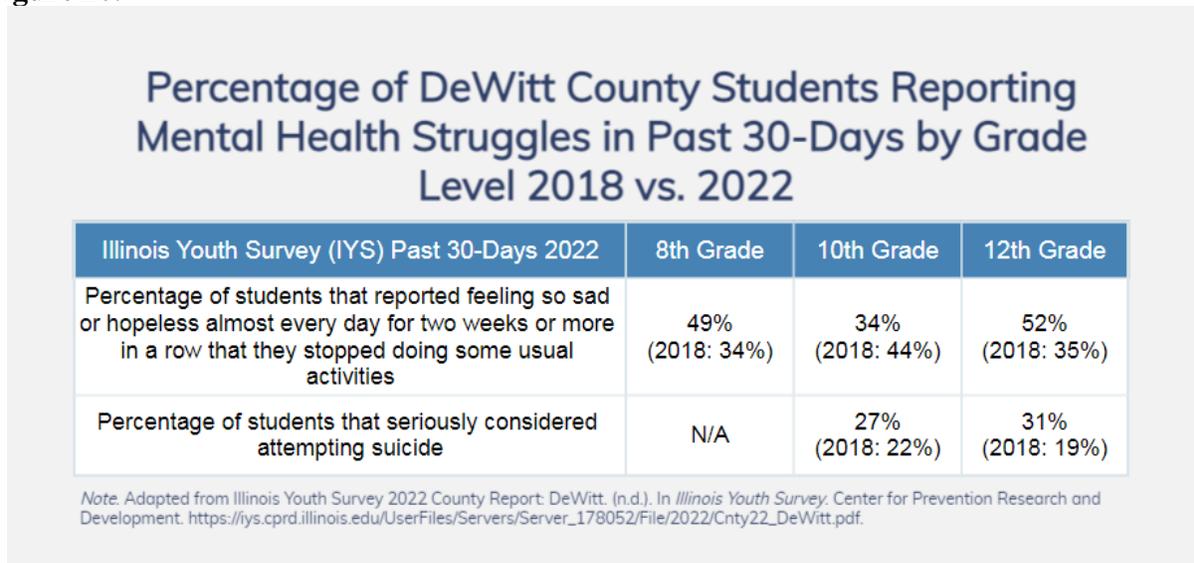
Illinois Youth Survey (IYS) Past 30-Days 2022	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Used alcohol	14% (2018: 13%)	22% (2018: 20%)	32% (2018: 31%)
Used any tobacco or vaping product	14% (2018: 8%)	29% (2018: 25%)	33% (2018: 38%)
Used marijuana	7% (2018: 4%)	18% (2018: 14%)	23% (2018: 16%)
Used prescription drugs not prescribed to you	1% (2018: 1%)	3% (2018: 5%)	2% (2018: 2%)
Binge drank (past 2 weeks)	4% (2018: 4%)	11% (2018: 8%)	27% (2018: 12%)

Note. Adapted from Illinois Youth Survey 2022 County Report: DeWitt. (n.d.). In *Illinois Youth Survey*. Center for Prevention Research and Development. https://iys.cprd.illinois.edu/UserFiles/Servers/Server_178052/File/2022/Cnty22_DeWitt.pdf.

Looking over IYS data for DeWitt County, numbers are typically higher than what was reported on the 2018 survey. This suggests that more students are using substances than they have in the past. Some of the most concerning statistics are the large number of students who have used marijuana in the past 30 days and have reported binge drinking during the past 2 weeks. Higher rates of alcohol use are common in rural communities, and alcohol usage by minors was reported to be a large problem by Key Informant Interview participants. Additionally, tobacco and e-cigarette smoking rates are higher than in the past for 8th and 10th grade students. This aligns with trends across the country with many students using vaping devices and not knowing the adverse consequences that vaping can have short- and long-term. Key informant interviewees identified marijuana and alcohol use as two additional substances they are concerned about for young people. Marijuana use is perceived as more acceptable and access to it has increased for young people since it was legalized in Illinois for recreational use in 2020. Underage alcohol use is perceived as more acceptable to some extent in the county with some parents condoning underage alcohol use especially around “special events” such as football games and prom. This normalization is common in rural communities but can be addressed.

Other notable mental health related questions included on the IYS pertain to feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities and seriously considering attempting suicide. Around half of all DeWitt County 8-12th grade students reported these symptoms associated with depression and nearly a third of 10th and 12th grade students reported seriously considering attempting suicide. These numbers align with other students in Illinois and demonstrate a striking mental health crisis among youth in DeWitt County.

Figure 20.



With DeWitt County Mental Health Board and State of Illinois funding, the Piatt County Mental Health Center (PCMHC) has provided a substance use prevention curriculum, *Too Good for Drugs*, to children and teens in DeWitt County schools including Blue Ridge CUSD 18 Junior and Senior High Schools and Clinton CUSD 15 High School. Another ongoing prevention program in the community is Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.). This program has been a great way for law enforcement to build relationships with young people in the community.

There are additional prevention programs and initiatives that have been implemented in the county. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)/Youth MHFA is a course that teaches adults how to identify possible signs and symptoms of someone who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge or who may be in crisis. The course also teaches them an action plan for providing an appropriate and helpful response. The youth course is for adults who work with or interact with adolescents and who need to be attuned to what may be a normal part of adolescent development versus an issue that needs attention. Teen MHFA, piloted in Clinton High School in Spring 2020 and provided again Fall 2022, teaches teens in grades 10-12 how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among their friends and peers. Each of these MHFA programs has been offered in schools and communities across the county.

In addition to Heritage Behavioral Health Center and student support services through the schools, there are several organizations in DeWitt County that address youth mental health and/or provide safe spaces for youth recreation and development. The Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) investigates allegations of severe physical and/or sexual abuse of children up to age 18. The CAC provides medical and legal advocacy and support services for children who are abused and their families while the case is being investigated and brought through the court system. Growing Strong Sexual Assault Center is a rape crisis center that provides healing services to survivors of sexual violence, and to their family members and significant others. They offer free and confidential support to DeWitt County residents aged 4 and up. The Clinton Community YMCA provides a variety of programs that address youth development, healthy

living, and advocacy. The Vault in Clinton is a nonprofit community center that helps teens recognize their value, realize their potential, and reach their goals. They offer a safe space for teens to hang out and participate in programs, career camps, service projects, and more.

Central Illinois Bridge Academy is a specialized alternative educational program under ROE #17 which opened Fall 2022. It serves adolescents in 7th through 12th grade who are internalizing mental health concerns, at-risk for hospitalization, returning from hospitalization, or utilizing significant resources that exceed their school's ability. Students attend for full days, meet state standards for their academics through project-based learning, and have full access to case managers, a therapist with an on-site sensory room, and community connections for ongoing resources. Students have individualized success plans with a goal of a return to their referring district. Students' emotional well-being and academic goals are considered in the development of their plans. All staff are trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid and have had specific training on sensory needs and interventions of students, crisis prevention, and response to trauma.

In 2022, the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) launched the Pathways to Success program for children enrolled in Medicaid, under the age of 21, and who have a behavioral health diagnosis. Eligible children have complex behavioral health needs and require intensive services and support. The voluntary program provides access to “an evidence-informed model of intensive care coordination and additional home and community-based services.”¹⁸ The Center for Youth and Family Solutions in Bloomington, Illinois is the HFS-designated “care coordination and support organization” for DeWitt County when a child is approved for the program. Center staff members work with other organizations, the child, and family to address their needs.

Suicide

Suicide was identified as a significant area of concern in DeWitt County for both adults and youth. The numbers of people who attempt suicide and die by suicide are hard to identify for several reasons. Many suicide attempts are either not reported or are incorrectly characterized, making them hard to track. Deaths by suicide numbers can be hard to track due to misclassification and individuals being taken out of the county for a higher level of care.

There have been multiple youth and adults who have died by suicide in recent years in DeWitt County. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for people ages 10-14 and 25-34 nationwide.¹⁹ This is a strikingly high metric that can be addressed through reducing stigma around mental illness, increasing prevention programming, and normalizing reaching out for help.

The crisis in youth mental health came up throughout research for this assessment with every Key Informant Interview identifying this topic in some way. The U.S. Surgeon General has issued an advisory about the youth mental health crisis throughout the country. The Advisory states that even before the pandemic, a growing number of young people struggled with feelings of helplessness, depression, and thoughts of suicide. These numbers of young people struggling

¹⁸ See the Pathways to Success program at <https://www2.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalProviders/behavioral/pathways/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (October 2022). *Facts About Suicide*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/index.html>

have only grown due to the widespread disruption of normal life caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Estimates show there were more than 6,600 suicide deaths among people ages 10-24 in the United States during 2020. Some recommendations from the Surgeon General's Advisory include ensuring all children have access to mental health care, supporting mental health care education, and recognizing mental health is an essential part of overall health.²⁰

A Suicide Prevention Workgroup, led by Heritage Behavioral Health Center, has been focusing on youth in DeWitt County schools. Ending the Silence has been incorporated at Clinton High School. This is a National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) program designed for middle and high school students to learn about mental health conditions with an adult who describes their recovery journey. A first-time event, Knocking Out the Stigma Dodgeball Tournament, was held at Clinton High School in July 2022 to raise awareness and reduce stigma associated with mental illness.

Adult Mental Health

There are two primary mental health providers based in DeWitt County. Cornerstone Counseling Services is in the Family Medicine clinic at Warner Hospital & Health Services. They can help with behavioral health needs including family, couples, and individual counseling. With the closure of mental health services through the DeWitt County Human Resource Center in 2016, Heritage Behavioral Health Center opened a new location in Clinton in July 2017.

Heritage provides access to mental health, substance use, crisis, and psychiatry services to DeWitt County residents. Additionally, Heritage can provide DeWitt County residents with access to in-patient substance use treatment, in-house crisis stabilization, and medication assisted recovery (MAR) services at their Decatur location. Some of these specific services include counseling and therapy services, skill-building, self-management of behavioral symptoms and medication, independent community living, interpersonal relations and social skills, relapse prevention, and motivation toward recovery. The following chart illustrates services Heritage provides and the number of DeWitt County residents served.

²⁰ Murthy, V. H. (2021). *Protecting Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory*. Retrieved from <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-youth-mental-health-advisory.pdf>

Figure 21.

Heritage Behavioral Health Service	2019	2020	2021	2022 (through Sept.)
Crisis adult	81	79	57	43
Crisis youth	27	19	32	29
Mental health adult	321	305	285	278
Mental health youth	83	98	135	132
Substance use adult	56	65	54	40

Note: Data provided by Heritage Behavioral Health Center.

There is a lack of psychiatric services in the county. Heritage provides limited psychiatric services through telehealth. A nurse is available weekly to provide medication-related services including medication management and training, and administration for injections for those receiving psychiatric services at Heritage. People receiving services with Heritage and living in DeWitt County are eligible for these services. Heritage offers telehealth psychiatric appointments three afternoons per month for individuals who are utilizing one of Heritage’s services.

DeWitt County does not have a local NAMI chapter with the closest chapter in McLean County. NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and it is the largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for Americans affected by mental illness and their families. Some of their initiatives include working in communities to raise awareness and providing support and education to persons experiencing mental illness and their families.

Kleemann Village provides Permanent Supportive Housing in Clinton with 14 subsidized apartments for people with mental, emotional, or physical impairment or a developmental disability. Permanent Supportive Housing is an evidence-based practice that provides safe and affordable housing with access to behavioral health support for tenants who choose to participate. Support services for Kleemann Village are provided through a dedicated case manager through Heritage Behavioral Health Center.

Adult Substance Use

Through Key Informant Interviews, multiple stakeholders identified the primary substances of concern as tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, heroin, and methamphetamine. Notably, in recent years substance use problems have shifted from heroin to methamphetamine in DeWitt County. This is consistent with many other rural communities in Central Illinois. The shift to methamphetamine from heroin can account for lower numbers of fatal overdoses and the increased availability of NARCAN® in Illinois.

Data related to reported nonfatal overdoses and NARCAN® distribution in the County is available via information provided by key community stakeholders. Data related to fatal overdoses is limited due to low population numbers in DeWitt County and privacy rights. The 2020 Illinois opioid fatality rate per 100,000 capita by county is 31.7 in DeWitt County compared to the Illinois rate of 23 deaths per 100,000 capita.²¹ The 2021 provisional Opioid Fatality rate per 100,000 capita by county is 13.0 in DeWitt County with 2 opioid fatalities compared to the Illinois rate of 24 deaths per 100,000 capita.²²

Between 2015 and 2019, there were 18 total overdose deaths in DeWitt County, making the Drug Overdose Mortality rate 35.5 per 100,000 (rate in Illinois is 28.6). It is believed there are overdoses that occur in the county that are reversed and not reported, especially due to NARCAN® access in the community. NARCAN®, also known as Naloxone, is a medicine that can rapidly reverse an opioid overdose. NARCAN® is a nasal spray that can be administered by anyone when an overdose is suspected. There is no harm in administering NARCAN® if the individual is not having any overdose—it will have no effects on a person that is not using opioids.

The use of NARCAN® is protected under the Good Samaritan Law and no one can get in trouble for carrying or using the medication on another person. In Illinois, every resident can get NARCAN® for free. Currently, there are no NARCAN® providers located in DeWitt County. Piatt County Mental Health Center provides free NARCAN® for DeWitt County residents upon request and facilitates periodic community training for residents. NARCAN® is available at CVS and Walgreens in Clinton with a prescription from a provider. Accessing NARCAN® at CVS and Walgreens is not free and must be charged through insurance. In the future, it would be beneficial for a provider based in DeWitt County to be a NARCAN® distribution point to make it more readily accessible for residents.

Heritage Behavioral Health Center has an office in Clinton offering a variety of services to address mental health, substance use, problem gambling, and/or emotional disturbance. Some specific services include counseling and therapy, skill-building, self-management of behavioral symptoms and medication, independent community living, interpersonal relations and social skills, relapse prevention, and motivation toward recovery. Heritage also provides Medication Assisted Recovery/Treatment (MAR/MAT) and offers all three FDA-approved medications for the treatment of Opioid and/or Alcohol Use Disorder: Methadone, Naltrexone (Vivitrol), and

²¹ Illinois Department of Public Health. (August 2021). *Statewide Semiannual Opioid Report*. Retrieved from <https://dph.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idph/publications/idph/topics-and-services/opioids/idphdata/idph-semiannual-opioid-report-august-2021.pdf>

²² Illinois Department of Public Health. (May 2022). *Statewide Semiannual Opioid Report*. Retrieved from https://dph.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idph/publications/idph/topics-and-services/opioids/idph-data-dashboard/Opioid-Report-5_22.pdf

Buprenorphine (Suboxone). Vivitrol is available in DeWitt County and all three medications are available in the Decatur office. Heritage also provides crisis services. These services are for someone who is experiencing acute symptoms of psychiatric distress or decreases in functioning, and/or who may be at risk of harm to themselves or others.

Recovery meetings and services are limited in DeWitt County. Clinton has two Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings. There is a meeting Wednesday at noon at the Neighborhood Care Center and a meeting Saturday at 7pm at Downey Park. It would be beneficial to bring more and a wider variety of recovery meetings to DeWitt County including Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Al-Anon, and Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART) Recovery. When asked on the Community Survey, several community members expressed interest in strengthening recovery support in the community. Some of the areas identified include bringing more AA meetings, NA meetings, Al-Anon/Teen-Anon meetings, non-religious recovery meetings, and more drug treatment options to the county.

Established in 2010, the DeWitt County Drug Court is coordinated through the DeWitt County Sheriff's Probation Department. Drug Court is a specialized, problem-solving court for jail diversion and substance abuse treatment of eligible defendants. It is a collaborative effort involving the judge, prosecutor, defense counsel, probation officer, substance abuse treatment professionals, law enforcement, and community-based organizations. Drug Court participants must make regular court appearances before the designated Drug Court judge. The participants receive treatment, meet frequently with their Drug Court officer, submit to frequent drug tests, attend individual and group counseling for substance abuse, and attend self-help meetings on a weekly basis. Program goals are to effectively address and reduce drug usage; to assist in creating productive citizens; and to reduce recidivism. Currently, the Drug Court has five participants with up to ten participants expected in 2023. Of the 43 total participants in the program, 19 participants have graduated.²³

Past DeWitt County Sheriff, Jered Shofner, convened a meeting in March 2016 to form a coalition to respond to heroin and opioid deaths in the county and the crisis existing statewide. The Heroin Taskforce grew to include faith-based community leaders, health and human service providers, other county and state law enforcement agencies, and citizens.

The group became the DeWitt County Substance Abuse Coalition with a mission to “prevent and reduce substance abuse by uniting citizens of DeWitt County, Illinois for the purpose of preventing and reducing substance abuse among the youth and adults, by promoting substance abuse awareness, education, and advocacy within the community.” In addition to supporting placement of several individuals with in-patient services, it involved young people and the public through meetings, education and training, activities, and events. It engaged all sectors of the community, citizens, families, and people in recovery.

Within the first few years of the Coalition working, the Clinton Area Ministerial Association (CAMA) and other area churches worked to form a Celebrate Recovery group in Clinton. They sought volunteers and individuals to make a commitment to leadership in the program. Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered holistic ministry for people with “hurts, hang-ups, and habits” which may include but are not limited to addictions. The effort did not gain enough participation

²³ The DeWitt County Probation Department provided the number of Drug Court participants and graduates, January 30, 2023.

to hold it locally. DeWitt County residents are encouraged to join the Celebrate Recovery groups meeting in Decatur or Lincoln.

The Substance Abuse Coalition was disbanded in Spring 2022 after achieving its original purpose to respond to the opioid overdose crisis and losing several active members. The Coalition relied on volunteers and had no paid staff members to help guide and implement objectives for the group. Several members expressed the desire to continue the mission and potentially reframe it.

The Recovery Oriented Systems of Care (ROSC) program through Illinois Department of Human Services—Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (IDHS-SUPR) is leading the state in developing resources and assistance for counties to invest in recovery supports in their communities. Piatt County Mental Health Center (PCMHC) plans to apply for funding in 2023 to establish a ROSC with a paid Coordinator and a Certified Recovery Support Specialist. The goal of this project is to build and strengthen recovery supports in the community to create a system that supports those in their recovery journey. There is hope that the work of the Substance Abuse Coalition can act as a jumping off point for ROSC development.

The Safe Passages program is designed to help residents enter substance use treatment. Anyone in active addiction can present to the Clinton Police or DeWitt County Sheriff offices and ask for help. All substances and paraphernalia should be turned in at this time with no repercussions unless there is an active warrant for arrest. Law enforcement will work with local treatment providers to find a spot for substance use treatment.

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Dewitt County has a slightly lower percentage (7.4%) of residents with disabilities under age 65 2017-2021 than Illinois (7.5%) and the United States (8.7%).²⁴ The providers serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities include Encore Developmental Services, Piatt County Mental Health Center, Prairieland Service Coordination, Marion County Horizons Center, DD Homes Network/Community Living Options, and LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFECIL).

A LIFE Center for Independent Living is a non-residential organization that assists individuals with disabilities by sharing the tools needed to take control of one's own life. They promote equal opportunities and access by breaking down barriers and prejudices within communities. The center has five core services including advocacy, peer support, information and referral, independent living skills training, and transition services.

Piatt County Mental Health Center offers a wide range of programming for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. All support is provided by staff and is based upon each person's needs, preferences, and strengths.

The mission of Prairieland Service Coordination, Inc (PSCI) is to provide lifespan individual service coordination to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Staff members help people with disabilities receive the assistance they need, want, and deserve to

²⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Illinois, DeWitt County*. United States Census Bureau., from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US,IL,dewittcountyillinois/PST045222>

navigate daily living and to connect people with disabilities to their community. Currently, PSCI, serves 48 people in DeWitt County, and there are 14 people in DeWitt County on the PUNS (Prioritization for Urgency of Need for Services) list. PUNS is a statewide database that records information about people with developmental disabilities who are planning for or seeking services. The wait time on the PUNS list averages five years once an individual is 18 years of age and is seeking services. If someone is in crisis (e.g., due to abuse, neglect, homelessness) they likely would be pulled from the PUNS list sooner after working with their independent service coordination agency.²⁵

Marion County Horizons Center provides Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILA). CILA's are 1 to 8-person residential homes for adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. The mission of Marion County Horizons Center is to meet the needs of individuals and foster the maximum level of independence for each person. There are a variety of community interactions and activities such as volunteering, attending local sporting events, dining at local restaurants, participating in local events, attending church, etc.

DD Homes Network/Community Living Options has been providing residential services to adults with developmental disabilities for over 35 years in Illinois. As a network, they are committed to creating a positive, respectful, and engaging environment that facilitates a sense of independent living for the individuals served.

The Transition Program at Clinton High School was developed to prepare students for adulthood in the areas of employment, post-secondary education/vocational training, and independent living. The program works collaboratively with the community on providing youth with opportunities to learn and grow.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990. This law prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the public. This law ensures that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. Considering the ADA has been around since 1990, there still needs to be some updating done in DeWitt County especially with the built environment. This includes the addition of ramps and elevators in all public spaces as well as alternative communication styles such as braille.

The Community Survey asked a question about the assistive devices individuals in the community need. The most popular devices that are needed in DeWitt County include noise-cancelling headphones, weighted blankets, wheelchairs, ramps, grab bars, and walkers. While respondents to the survey are not able to be individually identified, there was a large section of respondents that needed these assistive devices. This suggests that increased awareness of organizations that provide disability services and supplies should be a priority in the county.

Key Informant Interviews identified a couple of areas of concern within the Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) field. One of these was finding a psychologist to do assessments on eligibility for disability services. In some cases, the wait list can be up to four months or longer. As previously noted, DeWitt County is considered a health professional shortage area. Additional investments should be made in training and maintaining the health care workforce in DeWitt County. It also was suggested that colleges and universities consider adding

²⁵ Data provided by Prairieland Service Coordination January 27, 2023.

programs to train individuals to work in the Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities field. Currently, programs to train people for the I/DD field are extremely limited. It would be beneficial to the whole field to increase the availability of training and knowledge.

Encore Developmental Services provides education and training in community living, vocational skills, language development, leisure skills, cultural awareness, domestic skills, and social skills to people over 18 years of age with intellectual and developmental disabilities and/or mental health challenges. They also serve as an advocate in the community. Encore provides skill building opportunities to work toward independence, self-sufficiency, and quality of life improvement. Encore's purpose is to provide opportunities for personal growth and employment opportunities to a group of people that would not be served without their presence. Encore's focus is to provide services that enable individuals to fully live including those that follow.

Community Day Services (CDS): Those who participate in CDS can choose their activities for each day. Encore has two classrooms that provide learning for life skills, social skills, art classes, cultural knowledge, pre-vocational skills, language, and leisure skills. Encore also participates in community volunteer opportunities and daily choices of experiences around the community such as shopping, eating out, and going to the movies, the local library, parks, the YMCA, and on special trips (seasonal activities and museums). Individuals may also participate in work opportunities. Participation in CDS is funded through the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities, or can be provided through private pay.

Employment Services (ES): This program focuses on services for those who qualify for, but are yet to receive, funding from the Division of Developmental Disabilities and/or who may be struggling with traditional employment. People who participate mainly work in one of Encore's businesses. ES offers a range of opportunities to learn work skills through Encore Thrift Store and landscaping business. ES assists people to gain the tools they need to seek and to succeed in community employment. Each person receives individualized instruction and skill development. Skills may include work attendance, following instructions, safety, co-worker, and supervisor relationships, resume development, job coaching, interview skills, and social integration. Each person's plan is designed to develop the skill set that they choose.

CDS and ES both utilize work opportunities through Encore Thrift Store and landscaping contracts. These opportunities promote growth of independence and self-worth for participants.

Encore Thrift Store and Sort provides skill building opportunities based on skills needed in the retail industry: front of store operations; understanding and operating the Point-of-Sale system; customer service; product placement; intake of donations; sorting product; cleaning product; operating the baler and hand trucks; and processing clothing.

Landscaping contracts provide the opportunity to learn lawn maintenance and landscaping skills. This business provides direct learning experiences by maintaining landscapes of the City of Clinton's Mr. Lincoln Square, local businesses, and private residences. The skills learned are litter control (sweeping, vacuuming, and blowing of debris); installing and maintaining flower beds; grounds maintenance (mowing, trimming, edging, weed control, leaf removal and small tree and shrub pruning); and managing and maintaining equipment.

Encore Developmental Services also offers the following services to all in the program:

- Situational assessments to determine capabilities;
- Vocational Interest Testing;
- Assistance with completion of job applications;
- Assistance with resume creation;
- Assistance with interview preparation;
- Participation in job skills training; and
- Creation of a personal plan and personalized outcomes.

Workforce Issues

There is a shortage of medical providers in DeWitt County, especially compared to Illinois. The Health Resource Services Administration (HRSA) looks at three health care provider areas to make determinations of health provider shortages: primary care physicians, dentists, and mental health providers per registered person in the county. DeWitt County has been identified as a shortage area for each type of provider. As of 2022, DeWitt County had 1 primary care physician per 3,130 registered people compared to Illinois which has 1 primary care physician per 1,230 people. For dentists, there is 1 per every 3,070 people in DeWitt County and 1 per every 1,220 people in Illinois. Lastly, the largest service gap is related to the number of mental health providers with DeWitt County having 1 mental health provider per every 3,070 people compared to Illinois which has 1 per every 370 people.²⁶

Gaps in the health care workforce directly impact quality of and access to care and recovery supports for residents. There are many reasons for the workforce shortage in DeWitt County and throughout the United States. According to the Provider Survey respondents, it has been hard to fill jobs that were impacted by COVID-19 (teachers, nurses, mental health providers). According to the United States Census Bureau, DeWitt County has seen a decrease in the number of Healthcare and Social Assistance Workers since the onset of the pandemic. In quarter 1 of 2020 (Q1), there were 183 reported Healthcare and Social Assistance Workers in DeWitt County. By Q3 of 2020 the number dropped to 150 and finished the year at its lowest count since 2017 with only 122 workers. The number of workers slowly began to rise at the start of 2021 and as of Q1 of 2022 are at 172 workers.²⁷ The trend was clear that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the workforce, and most significantly during the year 2020.

Other fields are facing staffing challenges including the Intellectual/Developmental Disability field. There are currently not enough trained professionals in the I/DD field to keep up with the demand for direct service providers. There needs to be investment in training more professionals and creating incentives to keep them in the field and in DeWitt County long-term.

Provider Survey respondents stated there is a lack of qualified individuals for positions in law enforcement and substance use prevention, along with low interest in the fields themselves. Rural areas face their own challenges with maintaining a steady workforce. Rural areas are typically less competitive in their pay which may detract professionals from choosing to live and work in these areas. There also is less appeal for new or established providers to move to rural

²⁶ County Health Rankings. (n.d.). *De Witt, Illinois*. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/illinois/de-witt?year=2022>

²⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov/#x=0&g=0>

areas unless they want to serve there. Rural areas often have less resources compared to larger cities. As a result, residents must travel farther distances to receive in-person care.

There is a strong need to address workforce issues in mental/behavioral health care, social services, and substance use treatment in DeWitt County. One strategy is to promote the Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) career pathway. The CRSS program prepares individuals for entry-level positions as behavioral health workers, specifically in the areas of substance abuse and mental health disorders recovery. Recovery Support Specialists work in settings, such as outpatient drug and alcohol treatment, sobriety maintenance settings like sober houses, and behavioral health.²⁸

A Certified Recovery Support Specialist will help people develop, strengthen, and maintain recovery from substance abuse and mental health disorders. In 2021, the Illinois Department of Human Services presented Heartland Community College, located in neighboring McLean County, with \$710,088 in grant funding to provide a CRSS program. This program provides one pathway for DeWitt County and neighboring county residents to work in the mental health/substance use treatment field and bring their qualified skillset to the local workforce. DeWitt County residents can apply for this program at Heartland Community College because it is the only local college to offer it currently.

There are other local opportunities to strengthen the future workforce. The Clinton Community YMCA offers a program called Clinton Youth in Action. Clinton Youth in Action is an 8-week summer program for high school students that offers job skills training, outdoor summer work, transportation to job sites, and a YMCA membership.²⁹ When it comes to actively recruiting a current workforce, resources such as Illinois WorkNet connects employers to resources and tools for growing and developing their workforce, including programs to attract and place qualified candidates. The DeWitt Piatt Bi-County Health department has implemented a plan to offer an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for its staff as of December 1, 2022.

There are opportunities to support workforce training for non-health care professionals. Some Provider Survey respondents stated a lack of training around substance use and mental health and expressed interest in receiving training. All community members must know how to respond to mental health crises for children and adults, from law enforcement to teachers and parents. Educating the community and supporting professional development can provide better outcomes for people needing support in the local community.

General Infrastructure

Heritage Behavioral Health Center is currently located at 40 Clinton Plaza in Clinton and is searching for a new office space after outgrowing the current space. Larger space would allow Heritage to offer more group counseling services for people receiving mental health and substance use services at Heritage. Additionally, with more office space available, Heritage would be able to house more staff and increase the capacity to provide more services in DeWitt County. Heritage has experienced a challenge in finding a new space. Availability of existing

²⁸ Heartland Community College. (n.d.). *Recovery Support Specialist*. Retrieved from <https://www.heartland.edu/academicDepartments/hhs/recoverySupport.html>

²⁹ Clinton Community YMCA. (n.d.). *Youth in Action*. Retrieved from <https://clintoncommymca.org/clinton-youth-in-action>

and affordable office spaces that meet their minimum space requirements and ADA accessibility requirements is limited in Clinton.

Warner Hospital & Health Services is working on a few building projects. The first project, scheduled to be completed Summer 2023, will include a new parking lot to the west of the hospital with an off-lot direct entrance to the specialty clinic. The entrance will be weatherproofed, enclosed, and wheelchair accessible. A second project, remodeling and expanding the emergency room (ER) to improve its operation, is being developed and is anticipated for at least a year from now. The project will make the ER twice as large, centralize the nurses' station, provide an extra bed/triage space, and provide a room for someone experiencing a psychiatric emergency until an appropriate placement can be made.

Encore Developmental Services provides day services and employment services to adults in DeWitt County who have intellectual and developmental disabilities and/or mental health challenges. Regular inspections of Encore's buildings by the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) are a part of certification through the Department of Human Services Bureau of Accreditation, Licensure, and Certification (BALC). The current Encore building has been in compliance with the Office of State Fire Marshal since 1996. For the current inspection, a new inspector was assigned. After the inspector's initial visit, another inspection was scheduled with additional personnel from OSFM. After the second visit, Encore's classification was changed, and multiple citations were issued for correction.

Encore is in the former Trainor Bros. Livestock Sale Barn. The building is a business space with an attached pole barn. It has been repurposed to meet its current occupational needs as best as possible. The inspection failures requiring mitigation necessitate the guidance of an architect with knowledge of the Life Safety and Building Code. The changes required are extensive and will include fire walls of various ratings, structural changes, increased exits/signage, fire doors, increased emergency lighting, potential relocation of equipment, and alarm/sprinkler system. For Encore to continue to provide services, OSFM citations must be corrected.

Currently, Encore has retained Jim Fouse of Architectural Expressions to develop the plans to correct the most demanding violations in consultation with the Office of State Fire Marshal. The Encore Board of Directors has decided to stay in the current location as Encore owns the property. Here, Encore will be able to develop the services needed most effectively while being financially responsible. It is felt that Encore will be able to develop and maintain the current property to be able to serve more people in our community and come into full compliance with Life Safety and Building Codes through a phased project approach.

The DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department has named a new administrator, Michael Schroeder, in 2022. Recognizing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Health Department is working to support behavioral health initiatives related to mental health, suicide prevention, and substance use in DeWitt County. There is grant funding available through June 2023 with renewal of funding anticipated. The Health Department also can share its DeWitt County conference room, office space, computer, and fax machine at no charge during business hours (8-4 pm) with nonprofit organizations that may have a need. Those interested can contact the Health Department.

The *DeWitt and Piatt Counties Community Health Assessment and Plan, 2018-2022*, identified these priorities in DeWitt County (see <https://dewittpiatthealth.com/file/4/IPLAN-2018.docx-REVISED.pdf>):

- Mental Health (screening, referral, and access to services)
- Chronic Disease (increase community-clinical linkages and education for chronic disease management)
- Aging in Place (increase access to home health services; increase discharge nurse programs)
- Transportation (increase access to medical transportation)
- Single Information Source (develop with partners a health care and community services information center)

The Health Department is working on its next required community health assessment. Currently, staff members are accumulating data to present as part of the IPLAN (Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Needs) process. This data will include input from the community and community leaders to determine more specific priority needs and areas for improvement within the bi-county area. Completion of the assessment is expected late January 2023. Once submitted and approved, the plan will be published on the agency's webpage.

6 – Collaboration and Inclusion in the County

Participating health and human service providers reported they collaborate with other providers a great extent of the time to serve DeWitt County residents. They also participate in several groups throughout the county to engage in networking, information sharing, problem-solving, professional development, and project planning and implementation. The following multi-organization groups and teams meet to address DeWitt County resident health and human service needs.

The DeWitt County Social Services Coalition meets virtually on the second Wednesday monthly (except for June-August) at noon. This Coalition has been meeting for many years and currently, the United Way of Decatur and Mid-Central Illinois manages meeting invites and the email list of organizations.

The DeWitt County Children’s Mental Health Forum has been meeting since May 2016 to address findings of a 2015 DeWitt County Mental Health Assessment and build capacity for a comprehensive system of care for children’s mental health and wellness ages 0-18. Three areas drive the Forum’s work:

- Equipping adults through professional development;
- Universal interventions impacting ALL kids (e.g., in schools and communities); and
- Coordinating care for highest need youth.

The Forum meets bi-monthly on the second Wednesday of January, March, May, July, September, and November, 1:30-3:30 pm, virtually. Currently, the DeWitt County Mental Health Board coordinates these meetings and the email list. The Social Service Coalition and Forum meetings include time for organizations to share their updates, needs, and events, and may include training and education on specific topics or about organizations and their programs. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, these groups met in person.

The Community Together Partnership, with Heritage Behavioral Health Center leadership, will be establishing a parent/caregiver group for DeWitt County in 2023. Heritage currently leads Caregiver Connections in Decatur at the Decatur Public Library on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 5:30-7:30 pm. While DeWitt County residents are welcome at the group in Decatur, holding a group in Clinton will provide greater accessibility for caregivers who would like to meet.

The caregiver-led group in Clinton will be for those with children aged 0-17 for whom they are responsible. The group will meet quarterly and provide a space to socialize, get information about resources, and share their experiences. Childcare and meals will be provided. Any caregivers are welcome; they do not have to be caring for a child or adolescent with a mental health challenge. The group members will decide how they want to structure the group and what it will do.

Community Together's outcome goals include the following:

- Measure impact on the integration of service providers
- Overall improvement of functioning in children
- Strengthened parenting practices and caregiver-child relationships
- Early identification of children and youth
- Reduction in families' unmet needs
- Reduction in caregiver related stress
- Increased capacity in the service system
- Increased parent/youth services leadership
- Effective use of outcome measurement data
- Analysis of costs/benefits of the project
- Development of the mental health workforce

The DeWitt County Youth and Family Team Wraparound Program has been developed over several years as a family-driven, strengths-based process to aid in coordinating linkages and supports for youth and families to achieve the family and youth's changes, needs, and goals. Every family creates unique plans that fit their needs, beliefs, and wants. Teams are formed to be:

- Family-driven: Resources and services are centered on the youth, their family, and their choices.
- Strength-based: Building on what is already working in the youth and family's life to achieve their goals.

Teams are created to include both formal and informal support selected by the youth and family. All team members will work together to actively support the youth and family's goals. The Youth and Family Team Coordinator will set up meetings and manage linkages to youth and families who may be involved in multiple systems/organizations (for example, behavioral health and academic support) and would like coordinated care.

Depending on the individual's needs, teams may look at providing linkages/coordination in one or more of these areas:

- Academic support
- Goal setting and planning
- Mental health concerns
- Legal concerns
- Social supports

Each team is unique, and each family will have their own plan of care to support their needs. Youth and families must be interested and willing to participate in the process to be eligible for the program. The Program is 100% voluntary, and the youth/family may leave the program at any time. Tri-County Special Education Association, with Heritage Behavioral Health Center, United Way of Decatur and Mid-Central Illinois, and the Mental Health Board support, manages the coordinator's position in DeWitt County. Organizations can make referrals to Youth and Family Teams through IRIS (Integrated Referral Intake System) or direct contact with the coordinator, Katy Arnold, who is located at Clinton High School.

The DeWitt County Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) includes representation from the DeWitt County State's Attorney's Office, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), local law enforcement agencies, Children's Advocacy Center staff, and the Pediatric Resource Center. The DeWitt County MDT holds monthly case review sessions on the first Thursday of each month at 3 PM at the DeWitt County States Attorney's Office. The Children's Advocacy Center Child & Family Advocate, Amanda Goben, is the point of contact for the DeWitt County MDT.

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is a neutral, child-friendly environment for children to be interviewed when there has been an allegation that they may have been sexually and/or seriously physically abused, a witness to a major crime, or a victim of human trafficking. The CAC provides services that include a forensic interview, a multi-disciplinary team investigation, a specialized medical exam, crisis intervention and counseling services, and legal advocacy, all of which are tailored to meet the unique needs of the child. All services are provided free of charge to the children and families the CAC serves. The Children's Advocacy Center in Clinton is open by appointment only.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

The Provider Survey asked about an organization's efforts around diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) for the people they serve. Diversity relates to the practice of appreciating the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of the American people, including underserved communities. Equity is the consistent, systematic, fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities who have been denied such treatment. Inclusion is the recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of people of all backgrounds. Accessibility is the design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information, communication technology, and programs and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can fully and independently use them.³⁰

An underlying area of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility is stigma. Stigma is a negative and often unfair belief that a society or group of people have about someone or something. A large part of this are stereotypes against certain groups including, but not limited to, women, ethnic and cultural minorities, LGBTQ+, seniors, those with mental health challenges, and those with disabilities. Stigma can prevent individuals from seeking treatment when they need it. Stigma is a complex issue, but there are several starting points that can be used to address it. These include sharing accurate information, correcting and speaking out against negative or dehumanizing language and behaviors, and communicating in inclusive ways.

On the Provider Survey, organizations identified different things they are doing to address DEIA. Some of these things include being an equal opportunity employer, promoting trainings that address DEIA, hosting events that address stigma, hiring a DEIA officer, reviewing internal policies, providing annual trainings, having strict policies against discrimination, and implementing a strategic plan to address DEIA. The libraries in DeWitt County have particularly focused on DEIA efforts. Vespasian Warner Public Library District has developed an equity,

³⁰ National Institutes of Health, Clinical Center. (n.d.). *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility at the Clinical Center*. Retrieved from <https://clinicalcenter.nih.gov/about/welcome/deia.html>

diversity, and inclusion plan and has made a conscious effort to diversify their collections and items selected for displays and book clubs to highlight traditionally marginalized groups. Farmer City Library has made sure materials in their collection are educational, informational, diverse, and inclusive so they are representing everyone in all populations. Additionally, Encore has been working to build community awareness by participation in diverse events and integrating their participants in the community through work and outings.

When asked on the Provider Survey if their organization has implemented policies, practices, and training to address DEIA, respondents overwhelmingly said yes. Several organizations stated they did not need to implement DEIA policies and training since they do not discriminate based on demographic characteristics. Some areas identified they can improve upon include focusing on people whose primary language is not English, who cannot read, without adequate insurance, without transportation, and/or without Internet access.

Overall, every organization should have policies, practices, and training regularly to address DEIA. This should start with the basics of what DEIA entails and expand into specific areas. There are several populations that should be included and/or considered when training or planning, in the workforce, etc. Some of these populations include minorities, veterans, youth, LGBTQ+, senior citizens, non-English speakers, and those with disabilities. It was specifically mentioned that LGBTQ+ populations are underrepresented in DeWitt County organizations and policies. Organizations can work to increase representation and inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals in all areas of their practices.

7 – Conclusions and Recommendations

Listed below are the conclusions, challenges, recommendations, and opportunities from this assessment. DeWitt County is a strong rural community with a wide variety of social service organizations doing excellent work in their respective sectors. While this assessment has identified strengths and weaknesses present in the community, this should be used as a basis for further development. Providers can continue to work together for the betterment of the community. This information should be used to guide organizations’ and groups’ strategic planning and identify where their strengths can best fit.

Figure 22.

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>
Need for increased services, support, and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establish a cross-sector group dedicated to substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery in DeWitt County. • Increase provider- and community-based support groups for people with specific conditions including mental illnesses and problematic substance use. • Hold recovery support meetings in more areas of the county. • Increase awareness of support groups and hotlines available in Illinois and the Nation. • Organizations can consider establishing employee assistance programs for their employees. • Expand services and programs for specific populations with unique needs such as young people, older adults, and those who identify as LGBTQ+ . • Build awareness of existing and new programs and services in DeWitt County. • Market 211 as a resource for residents and providers to get information about available services. • Educate and enroll providers in IRIS (Interagency Referral and Intake System) for provider-to-provider referrals. • Educate providers and community members about the new Square 1 Program to help with navigating service access. • Provide education and training to increase knowledge, skills, and abilities among DeWitt County residents and reduce stigma related to obtaining behavioral health and other services.
Workforce shortages in the health care, behavioral health, and intellectual/developmental disability fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with workforce development and education programs and institutions. • Build career awareness, education, and development programs. • Develop mental health and substance use peer support services and programs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide incentives for professionals to work in DeWitt County.
Barriers to accessing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support residents to address barriers that may keep them from obtaining services. • Expand transportation options. • Maintain, market, and increase telehealth services as an option for service delivery. • Expand rural broadband access.
Crisis and emergency response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market the 988 Suicide and Crisis Prevention Lifeline • Providers and first responders work together to develop/enhance processes for responding to behavioral health crises. • Increase number of crisis-intervention trained professionals. • Invest in dedicated staffing for placement of individuals in services and programs.
Diversity, equity, inclusion, and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations and communities ensure they are meeting Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements. • Develop community integrated approaches for work for individuals with disabilities. • Invest in and connect with programs to support people with disabilities, including for individuals who are considered transition ages of 18-21. • Consider specific populations unique needs when offering programs and services. • Coordinated county-level planning and assessments among providers and residents.
Responding to needs of under-resourced populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen relationship with Central Illinois Continuum of Care to address homelessness. • Work to ensure awareness of support through the Regional Office of Education (ROE) for families experiencing homelessness. • Continue to market programs and services that meet basic needs (e.g., food pantries, utility assistance programs).
Resource and legislative development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop coordinated action plans to address needs. • Remain aware of and respond to funding opportunities. • Develop relationships with and among key stakeholders, e.g., legislators, professional associations. • Track relevant legislation and participate in the legislative process.

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9 – Resource Directory

RESOURCES

PIATT/DEWITT COUNTIES - 2022

Where to find
information
when someone
you know is in
need of help.



Piatt County Mental Health Center



1921 North Market Street
Monticello, Illinois 61856
217-762-5371
www.piattmhc.org

National & State Emergency Services

Al Anon

888-425-2666
888-4AL-ANON

Alcoholics Anonymous Hotline

217-373-4200
www.aa.org

Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (DCFS)

800-252-2873 (800-25-ABUSE)
TTY: 800-358-5117

Center for Disease Control

www.cdc.gov
1-800-CDC-INFO

Illinois Poison Control Center Hotline

800-222-1222

Illinois Tobacco Quit Line

866-784-8937 (866-QUIT-YES)
www.quityes.org

Narcotics Anonymous Phone Line

800-539-0475
www.na.org

National Child Abuse Hotline

800-422-4453 (800-4-A-CHILD)

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800-799-7233 (800-799-SAFE)

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Call, text, or chat 9-8-8

SAMHSA's National Helpline

(Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration)
1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Illinois Helpline

If you or a loved one is struggling with
substance use.

Call 833-234-6343 or text "HELP" to
833234

<https://helplineil.org/app/home>

Community Information and Referral Services - Federal

United Way 2-1-1 Path Crisis Center (IL) Dial 211- 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Alternative No.: 1-888-865-9903

TDD: 309-829-9027

Website: navigateresources.net/path/

211 is a free & confidential service that helps people across North America. 211 provides callers with information about & referrals to social services - for every day needs and in times of crisis.

Developmental Services

DeWitt County

Encore Services

10840 Rte. 10 East,

Clinton, IL 61727

217-935-2218

Provides opportunities to DeWitt County individuals with developmental/intellectual disabilities to work toward independence and self-sufficiency, improve quality of life, and the individuals overall level of functioning.

Piatt County

Piatt County Mental Health Center

1921 North Market Street

Monticello, Illinois 61856

217-762-8546

PCMHC offers a wide range of programming for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

Employment

DeWitt/Piatt Counties

WorkNet Center

757 West Pershing Road

Decatur, Illinois 62526

217-875-8751

Piatt County Workforce Development

115 North State, Suite 111

Monticello, Illinois 61856

217-762-8404

Substance Abuse Treatment

DeWitt County

Heritage Behavioral Health Center

40 Clinton Plaza, Highway 54

Clinton, Illinois 61727

217-362-6262

Piatt County

Piatt County Mental Health Center

1921 North Market Street

Monticello, Illinois 61856

217-762-5371

www.piattmhc.org

Transportation

DeWitt County

Show Bus Public Transportation

1-800-525-2454

Piatt County

Piatt County Public Transportation (Piattran)

1925 North Market Street

Monticello, Illinois 61856

217-762-7821

Youth Services - Comprehensive Community-Based

DeWitt/Piatt Counties

Comprehensive Community-Based Youth Services

Call to connect with CCBYS crisis services 24/7, 365 days a year.

877- 870-2663

Food Banks

DeWitt County

Clinton First Church of the Nazarene
1220 Kleeman Dr. Clinton, IL 61727
217-935-9516

Community Action Partnership of DeWitt Co.
45 Cedar Square, Clinton, IL 61727
217-935-2455

Dove, Inc.
803 West Leander
Clinton, Illinois 61727
217-935-6619
Thursday 10am -2pm

Neighborhood Care Center
PO Box 346
St. Clinton, IL 61727
217-935-6844
Tuesdays & Thursdays 1-3 p.m.
1st & 3rd Tuesday 4-5:30 p.m.

Food Mobile
219 N Elizabeth St Clinton, IL 61727
217-328-3663
Check website for schedule - eifoodbank.org.

Piatt County

A Small Hand – asmallhand.org
315 E. Center St.
PO Box 592
Monticello, IL 61856
217-480-6291
Call for appointment.

Community Action Partnership of Piatt County
1115 North State St., Suite 102
Monticello, IL 61856
217-762-2421
Call for days and times.

Lord's Storehouse
209 N Main, LaPlace IL 61936
10a.m.-2p.m. 1st Saturday after 3rd Tuesday
monthly by appointment for emergencies.
217-521-8450

Martha's Cupboard @ Mansfield United Methodist Church (UMC)

116 East Oliver St. Mansfield, IL 61854
217-489-3561
2nd Saturday each month 9-10:30 a.m.

Monticello Christian Church

1699 North State St. Monticello, IL 61856
217-762-2221
Tuesdays 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Monticello United Methodist Church

2020 East Washington Street
Monticello, IL 61856
217-762-2579
Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. by appointment

Mental Health

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 9-8-8

Call, text, or chat **9-8-8** to be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network.

DeWitt/Piatt Counties

Crisis Line 217-362-6262

DeWitt County

Heritage Behavioral Health Center

40 Clinton Plaza, Highway 54
Clinton, Illinois 61727
217-362-6262

Piatt County

Kirby Medical Center Mental Health Counseling

1000 Medical Center Drive
Monticello, Illinois 61856
217-762-2115
www.kirbyhealth.org

Piatt County Mental Health Center

1921 North Market Street
Monticello, Illinois 61856
217-762-5371
www.piattmhc.org

Family Resources

DeWitt County

Clintonia Township Assistance

9180 Township Rd,
Clinton IL, 61727
217-935-2506

Department of Human Services (DHS)

1-833-2-FIND-HELP
(1-833-234-6343)

DeWitt County Housing Authority

100 South Railroad Street
Clinton, Illinois 61727
217-935-8804

DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department

5924 Revere Road Clinton, Illinois 61727
217-935-3427

Dove, Inc.

803 West Leander
Clinton, Illinois 61727
217-935-6619

Farmer City Outreach Ministries

701 E. Clinton Avenue
Farmer City, IL 61842
309-928-9400

Liberty Village of Clinton

1 Park Lane
Clinton, Illinois 61727
217-935-8500

The Vault Community Center

802 N. Side Square, Clinton, IL 61727
217-934-4003

Piatt County

Central Illinois Economic Development Corporation (Community Action Agency)

1115 North State St, Suite 102,
Monticello, Illinois 61856
217-762-2421

Offers programs for lower income individuals, families, and senior citizens.

Piatt County

DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department

1020 South Market St Monticello,
IL 61856
217-762-7911

Services for Seniors & Faith in Action

1115 North State St. Suite 160
Monticello, IL 61856
217-762-7575
Non-medical services for senior adults.

Lions Club

P.O. Box 85
Monticello, Illinois 61856
217-762-7972

www.monticellolions.org

Provides eye exams, glasses, and hearing aids for individuals in need in the Monticello School District.

Housing Authority of Piatt County

103 West First Street
Hammond, Illinois 61929
217-262-3231

Piatt County Nursing Home

1111 North State Street
Monticello, Illinois 61856
217-762-2506

Willow Tree Missions Domestic Violence Program

Family Service Center

301 S. Charter in Monticello
217-631-1018

Resale Shop

351 W. Monroe in Monticello
217-762-2350

www.willowtreemissions.org

10 – Appendix

Figure 23. Illinois Report Card Data for School Districts Serving DeWitt County Residents, 2021-2022

IL Report Card 2021-2022	Schools	Grades Served	Enrollment	Graduation Rate	Mobility Rate	Truancy Rate	Low-Income	IEP's
Blue Ridge CUSD 18	Blue Ridge High School	9-12	185	88%	10%	15%	42%	16%
Blue Ridge CUSD 18	Blue Ridge Intermediate-Jr High School	4-8	204	N/A	11%	10%	45%	15%
Blue Ridge CUSD 18	Ruth M Schneider Elementary School	PK – 3	254	N/A	5%	11%	43%	16%
Clinton CUSD 15	Clinton High School	9-12	474	80%	13%	14%	44%	15%
Clinton CUSD 15	Clinton Jr High School	6-8	375	N/A	9%	18%	48%	21%
Clinton CUSD 15	Clinton Elementary School	2-5	468	N/A	8%	10%	49%	21%
Clinton CUSD 15	Douglas Elementary School	PK-1	168	N/A	17%	N/A	51%	24%
Clinton CUSD 15	Lincoln Elementary School	PK-1	188	N/A	N/A	N/A	32%	16%
Deland-Weldon CUSD 57	Deland-Weldon High School	9-12	54	88%	N/A	N/A	43%	N/A
Deland-Weldon CUSD 57	Deland-Weldon Middle School	7-8	25	N/A	N/A	N/A	52%	N/A
Deland-Weldon CUSD 57	Deland-Weldon Elementary School	PK-6	99	N/A	17%	N/A	48%	20%
State of Illinois	N/A	N/A	1.9M	86%	8%	22%	47%	15%

- Graduation rate – percentage of students who entered 9th grade for the first time four years prior to the year being reported.
- Mobility rate – percentage of students who experienced at least one transfer in or out of the school between the first school day of October and the last school day of the year, not including graduates.
- Truancy rate – percentage of students who miss 5 percent or more of school days per year without a valid excuse.
- Low-income – percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, live in substitute care, or whose families receive public aid.
- IEP's – percentage of students who receive special education and related services in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Note: Illinois State Board of Education. (n.d.). DeWitt County. *Illinois Report Card 2021-2022*. Retrieved from [https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/SearchResult.aspx?type=COUNTY&SearchText=\\$Dewitt\\$](https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/SearchResult.aspx?type=COUNTY&SearchText=$Dewitt$)