

THE  
WAXAHACHIE  
PROJECT



# CONTENTS

3	Waxahachie Project Story
7	Executive Summary
8	Key Findings
10	Community Households
18	Asset Map
30	Waxahachie's Strengths
31	Waxahachie's Needs
32	Rationale
37	Research
38	Acknowledgements

# WAXAHACHIE PROJECT STORY

## VISION

It's undeniable that Waxahachie is filled people who want to help. They want to be part of the solution.

With dozens of non-profits, government initiatives, programs within the school system, business investments, and many churches, it's clear. There are a lot of people working for the good of Waxahachie.

In fact, did you know that there's an average of 16 churches for every McDonald's in America? We're throwing the averages off a little here in Waxahachie. For our one McDonald's, we have over 70 churches. Maybe this means we should build another McDonald's. Or Maybe it just proves the point that there are a lot of good things happening here. We think it's the latter.

Despite all the effort and good intentions, there are still significant needs that aren't being met. How can this be?

Our community wrestles with very real issues like homeless youth, poverty, access to healthcare, and racial tensions, along with many other valid concerns. *So which needs are most pressing?* Perhaps that's our greatest challenge.

Without clear, objective data it's hard to know how to prioritize. And it's even harder to work together toward real solutions. But when we know the truth about the needs in our community it allows various organizations to come together and work toward measurable outcomes.

So, with our genuine desire to help each other, maybe we've simply been asking the wrong questions. Instead of asking, "How can I help?" perhaps we should turn our attention toward discovering the answers to the question, *"What are our greatest needs that we can address together?"*

Of course, we're not on a mission to merely expose all of our city's shortcomings. We also want to discover what makes us so great and find ways for all of us to collaboratively support those strengths. We think it will make us even stronger.

Waxahachie is an incredible city with rich history, legacy, and charm. It's a pretty great place to live. With so many incredible assets, there's another important question we should be asking, "What are our greatest strengths that we can support together?"

Asking and answering these questions well will allow each of us to stay focused on our own mission, while contributing most efficiently to the big picture. As a community, we want to be strategic and we want to be able to measure the effectiveness of our current initiatives. Knowing the truth about our needs and strengths will allow us to do just that.

Can you imagine a city where leaders across every sector – business, education, government, non-profit, and the church – are working together, discovering the truth, and moving forward in the same direction? We can.

Welcome to The Waxahachie Project. Our best days are yet to come!

*The Waxahachie Project's vision is to unite community leaders, business leaders, non-profits, churches, and educational institutions to work for the good of our city. We do that by embracing a shared understanding of Waxahachie's greatest needs & strengths and measures for continual health & growth.*



# OUR APPROACH

In early 2015, a small group of community leaders sat around a table to brainstorm ways that we might improve our community. It was great conversation...if you enjoy talking in circles and running into dead ends.

We were asking all the typical questions and stumbling over all the typical answers. So we started asking the difficult questions. The ones that seemed to be neatly tucked away, just below the surface where the real issues were.

For example, we took a look at the amazing food pantries in our city. They're doing a great job, yet they all report that the demand for food is on the rise. You mean to tell us that despite all of their efforts, the hunger problem is not going away? This put a damper on our feel-good meeting. It made us stop and really think. So instead of asking, "How can we help feed more people?" we started asking, "Why are people hungry in our community?"

One hard question led to another and we realized we needed to change our approach.

**Before we could think about finding solutions, we had to identify exactly what our greatest needs were. But we also determined that we'd need to identify our community's greatest strengths so we could leverage them to help address those needs.**

As leaders, we were convinced. If we really wanted to tackle the major issues and improve the quality of life for everyone, it came down to finding the answers to two pressing questions.

What are our greatest needs that we can address together? And, what are our greatest strengths that we can support together?

It was this conversation that fueled the launch of The Waxahachie Project.

In the Fall of 2015, more than 60 of Waxahachie's most influential leaders from every sector of the city – business, education, government, non-profit, and the church – came together for lunch and more importantly, to open the conversation about how we would collaboratively find the answers to these two questions.

Interest was stirring. Energy was high. Momentum was building.

We determined that it would be imperative to collect reliable, objective data that would guide our discovery process. ***We also knew that strong, authentic relationships would be key.*** For stakeholders and decision makers to embrace the findings, the research would have to be done in a non-biased way and allow city leaders, across every sector, to speak into the process.

So we brought in an outside consultant to help.

The Florida-based group, OneHope, is a global organization that is well-respected for their research methodology. In addition to facilitating local community research assessments, they have also completed the largest study ever done on the attitudes and behaviors of youth around the world. Their.....

findings are shared among community organizations in order to design effective programs based on clearly defined and measurable outcomes.

That's exactly the kind of expertise we needed.

Throughout the fall and winter months our consultants spent time in Waxahachie, working alongside city leaders to develop a comprehensive research plan to help guide us toward our desired outcomes. They also provided research tools and training to ensure excellence in implementation.

With a passion to invest in our city's emerging leaders and a desire to engage in strategic community outreach, it only made sense that Southwestern Assembly of God University stepped up to fill the critical role of providing boots on the ground. Hundreds of SAGU students spent their spring 2016 semester canvassing the city, conducting well-designed surveys, one-on-one interviews, and focus groups with both leaders and residents.

As the initial discovery phase has come to a close, along with an additional round of focus groups with key leaders to provide further insight regarding the initial findings, it is now time to begin discussions that will enable our city to prioritize and collaborate around the most strategic outcomes, bringing measurable benefits to the entire community.

To truly make a long term impact, we're convinced that this must be an ongoing endeavor, not a one-time project.

Drawing upon strong relationships, and guided by trusted research findings, the only thing left to do now, is work together. And the road has been paved to ensure that it's a lasting and fruitful journey.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Waxahachie Project exists to unite community leaders, business leaders, non-profits, churches, and educational institutions to work for the good of our city. We do that by embracing a shared understanding of Waxahachie's greatest needs & strengths and measures for continual health & growth

The purpose of this study is to describe a baseline understanding of Waxahachie's community strengths and needs in order to mobilize community institutions around strategic objectives to further the common good of the city. It includes:

- 1. A community needs assessment**
- 2. An asset map of local congregations, non-profits, and public institutions**
- 3. An exploration of perspectives from local congregational, non-profit, public, and business leaders**

OneHope consulted with The Waxahachie Project and Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) to design, execute, and report on this study.

## THE WAXAHACHIE PROJECT: BY THE NUMBERS

This study included the perspective of over 600 members of the Waxahachie community.



**511**  
COMMUNITY  
HOUSEHOLDS



**20**  
CHURCHES



**22**  
NON-PROFITS



**10**  
PUBLIC  
INSTITUTIONS



**19**  
BUSINESSES

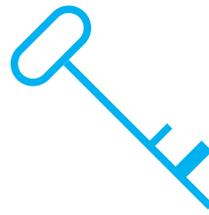
## QUESTIONS

This study aims to provide insight into the following questions:

- 1. What are we doing well that we can maximize – together?**
- 2. What do we need the most help in – that we can address together?**
- 3. Where are the gaps between services and needs – how can we close them together?**

These questions were explored with different audiences in the community in order to develop a multi-faceted perspective on Waxahachie's needs & strengths. OneHope designed unique surveys and interviews for each audience.

# KEY FINDINGS



## WAXAHACHIE'S STRENGTHS

**Local organizations impact an average of 70,875 people annually** – over twice the city population! While this number undoubtedly contains duplication, it signifies a broad reach for community assistance. Furthermore, 178 organizations were identified by community residents as addressing challenges in Waxahachie.

**88%** of surveyed organizations indicated some type of significant partnership, and community leaders cited “collaboration by organizations” as one of the community’s strengths. These partnerships include organizations from all sectors partnering within and outside their sector.

Programs offered by churches and organizations strongly focus on children and youth, holiday assistance, missions, food programs, and counseling. Most churches focus on meeting the needs of their congregation members; most non-profits and public institutions focus on the broader community.

*Waxahachie’s “hometown feel,” along with its “people” were found as significant strengths. “Faith/churches,” “growth,” and “community involvement” are also major strengths.*

## WAXAHACHIE'S NEEDS

**Households in Waxahachie face ongoing financial challenges – particularly “making ends meet,” and the costs of housing, healthcare/health insurance, and elder care.**

The ongoing financial challenges Waxahachie households face are likely related to the other major challenges of “lack of job opportunities” and “lack of stable, well-paid careers.” Community leaders identified a lack of well-paying jobs, and the lack of education for well-paying jobs, as the primary sources of this challenge.

Needs vary by demographic groups; particularly, “crime and personal or property safety” is a major concern from White/Caucasian residents making **\$50,000+** annually but not other households.

The impact of growth is a high concern for community leaders. “Public knowledge about programs” and avoiding duplication of services is also frequently cited. Finally, the role of race – both perceptions and experiences of racism, and disparities between racial/ethnic groups – is a major challenge.

# WAXAHACHIE'S GAPS

***“48.9% of residents identified a “moderate” or “major” employment-related challenge – however, no employment-related program is included in the ten most common programs for any sector... ”***

There is no single weekly employment-related program offered by any organization. Furthermore, while leaders identified a lack of well-paying jobs as the source of this challenge, there was minimal consensus as to why there are not enough well-paying jobs.

Care for the elderly, affordable housing, and healthcare/health insurance are three additional “moderate” or “major” challenges for community residents that community organizations do not address with frequency. “Crime and personal or property safety” is a major concern for one demographic group, and may be unaddressed with those households.

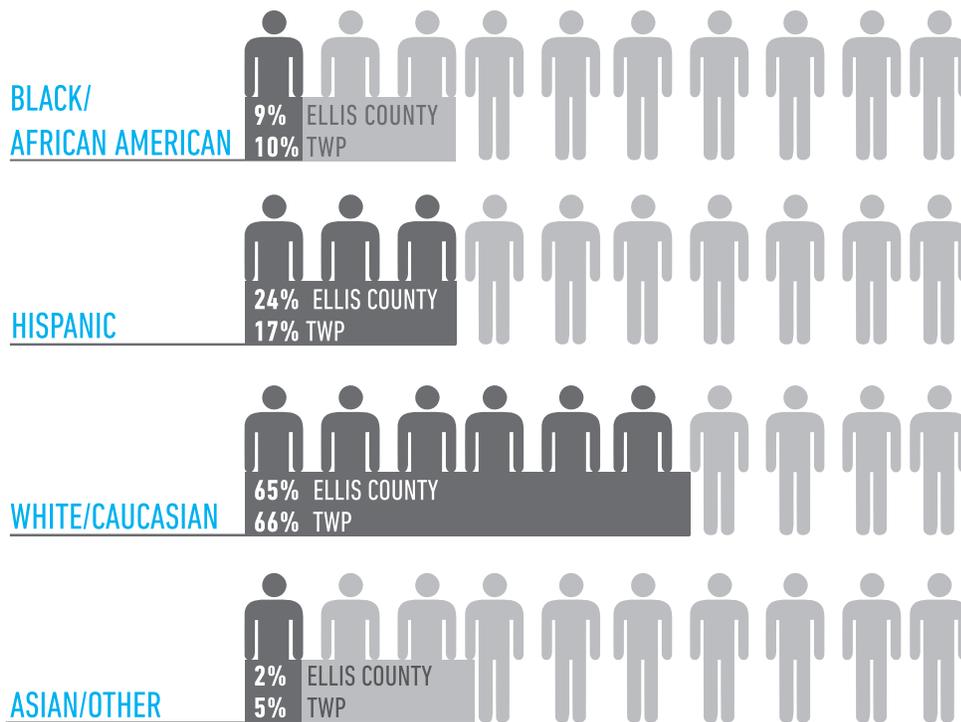
Community leaders frequently cited “faith/churches” as a significant strength, and churches as a primary location for community involvement. However, local churches are consistently viewed as less collaborative than non-profits, public institutions, and businesses. Additionally, 85% of churches said their programs were primarily for their “attendees” or “family/friends of attendees.” Connecting the strength of local churches to the needs of the broader community may be a meaningful gap.

# COMMUNITY HOUSEHOLDS

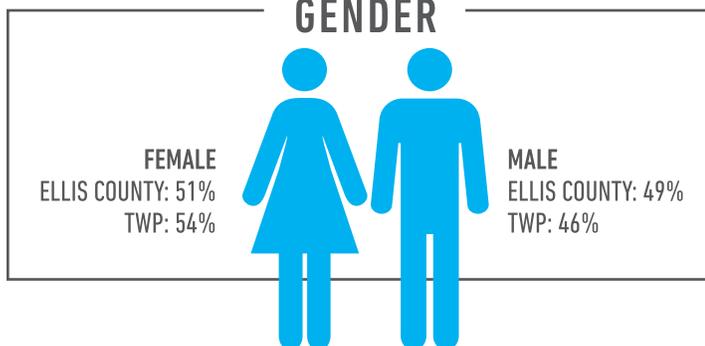
## SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Please note that percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and/or missing demographic data. Ellis County demographics defined by 2010 Census and associated data. TWP demographics defined by self-reported answers on each survey

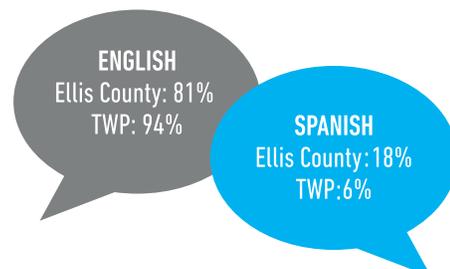
### RACE / ETHNICITY



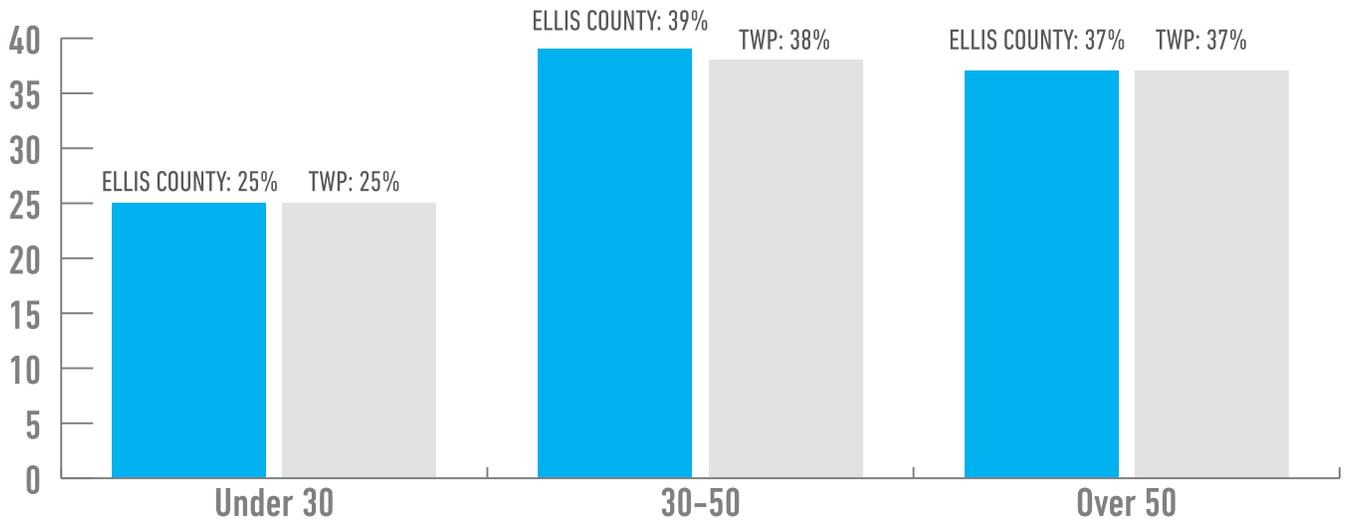
### GENDER



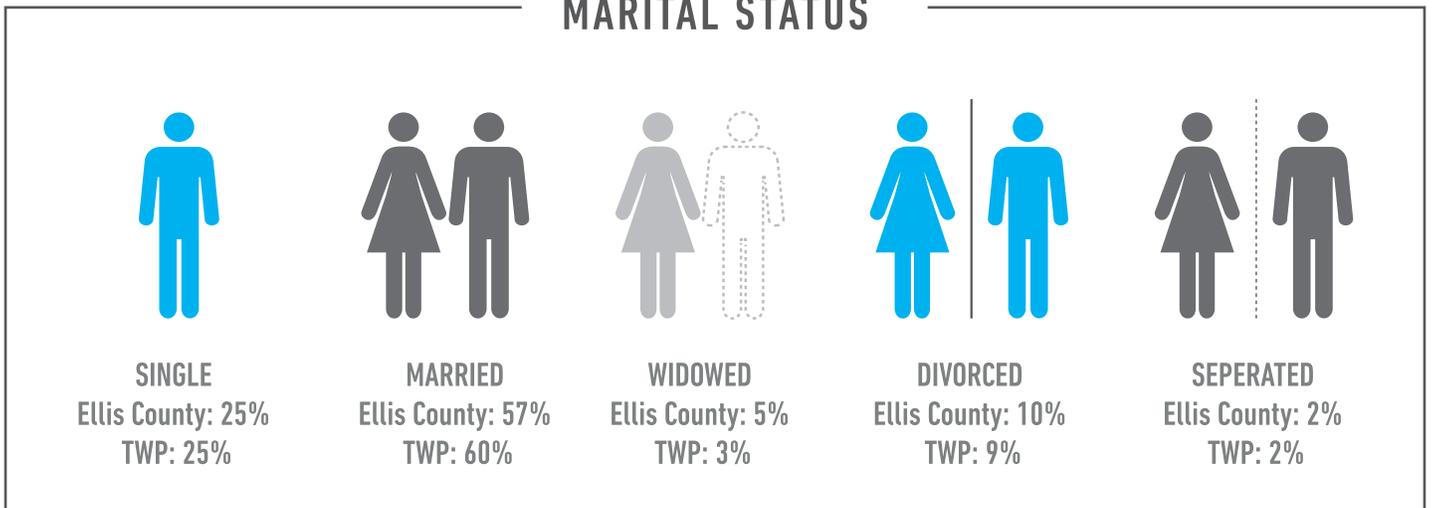
### LANGUAGE



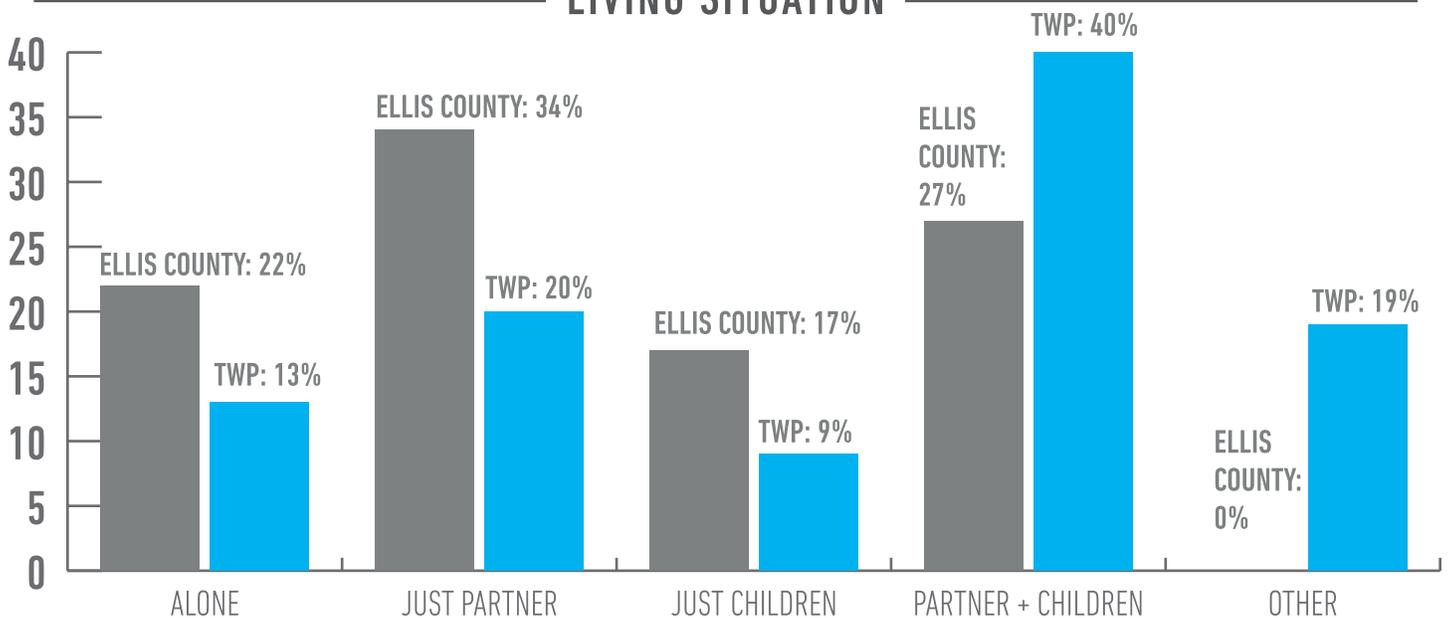
## AGE



## MARITAL STATUS



## LIVING SITUATION



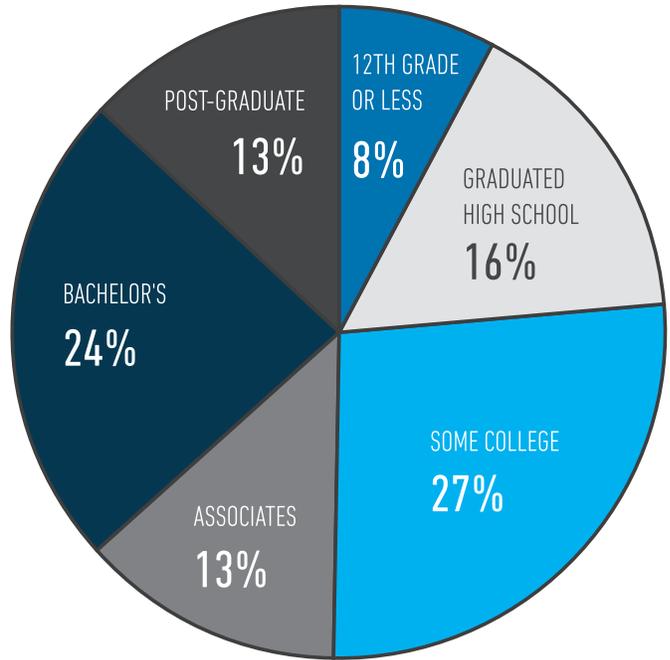
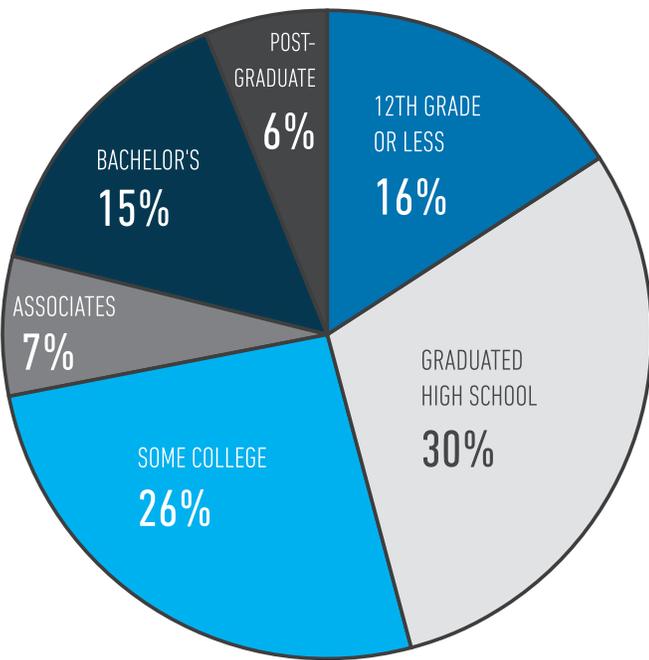
## ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME



## EDUCATION

**ELLIS COUNTY**

**TWP**



# OVERALL NEEDS

Survey participants were given a list of 28 challenges and asked to indicate if it is a “Major,” “Moderate,” or “Minor” Challenge, or “Not a Challenge” for their household. Then, they were asked to choose the top three challenges for their household.

No single challenge was indicated by more than 50% of participants; only 8 of the 28 choices were indicated by more than 35%. Therefore, more households in Waxahachie do not experience challenges on any single item than do.

## MODERATE OR MAJOR CHALLENGES | FOR RESPONDENT’S HOUSEHOLD



Adequate health insurance/healthcare  
**(26.2%)**



Financial need (making ends meet)  
**(26.2%)**



Lack of stable, well-paid career opportunities  
**(25.6%)**



Lack of job opportunities  
**(23.3%)**



Crime and personal or property safety  
**(20.2%)**

## TOP 3 CHALLENGES | FOR RESPONDENT’S HOUSEHOLD



Financial need (making ends meet)  
**(24.1%)**



Crime and personal or property safety  
**(20.5%)**



Poor financial management (planning, saving, retirement, debt)  
**(16.8%)**

## LEAST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED CHALLENGES | FOR RESPONDENT’S HOUSEHOLD



Inadequate clothing  
**(1.8%)**



Lack of treatment options for substance and alcohol abuse  
**(2.0%)**



Inadequate foster care  
**(2.2%)**



Lack of adoption aid or alternatives to abortion for unwanted pregnancy  
**(2.2%)**



Domestic abuse and/or domestic violence  
**(2.3%)**

# NEEDS BY ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Household challenges vary significantly by annual household income. Crime and personal or property safety is a higher concern for higher-income households; inadequate care for the elderly for lower-income households. Some concerns – such as inadequate health insurance/healthcare – are significant for all households.

## LESS THAN \$25,000



Financial need (making ends meet)  
**(34.5%)**



Inadequate care for the elderly  
**(22.1%)**



Inadequate housing  
**(21.2%)**

## \$25,000 to \$49,999



Financial need (making ends meet)  
**(30.4%)**



Inadequate health insurance/healthcare  
**(24.0%)**



Inadequate care for the elderly  
**(21.5%)**

## \$50,000 to \$74,999



Financial need (making ends meet)  
**(21.6%)**



Crime and personal or property safety  
**(20.3%)**



Inadequate health insurance/healthcare  
**(17.0%)**

## \$75,000 to \$99,999



Lack of job opportunities  
**(23.3%)**



Crime and personal or property safety  
**(20.3%)**



Lack of awareness or advertising/promotion of community resources or services  
**(19.0%)**

## \$100,000 or more



Crime and personal or property safety  
**(28.8%)**



Lack of awareness or advertising/promotion of community resources or services  
**(16.3%)**



Poor financial management (planning, saving, retirement, debt)  
**(16.3%)**

# NEEDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Financial need (making ends meet) is a consistent challenge for households across all race/ethnicities. However, other challenges vary significantly.

## BLACK/ AFRICAN-AMERICAN



Inadequate care  
for the elderly  
**(32.0%)**



Financial  
need (making  
ends meet)  
**(26%)**



Inadequate  
childcare, daycare,  
nursery school  
**(20%)**

## HISPANIC



Inadequate  
health insurance/  
healthcare  
**(21.5%)**



Financial  
need (making  
ends meet)  
**(21.5%)**



Inadequate care  
for the elderly  
**(12.9%)**

## WHITE CAUCASIAN



Crime and personal  
or property safety  
**(23.4%)**



Financial  
need (making  
ends meet)  
**(23.4%)**



Inadequate  
childcare, daycare,  
nursery school  
**(17.8%)**

## ASIAN/ OTHER



Financial  
need (making  
ends meet)  
**(23.5%)**



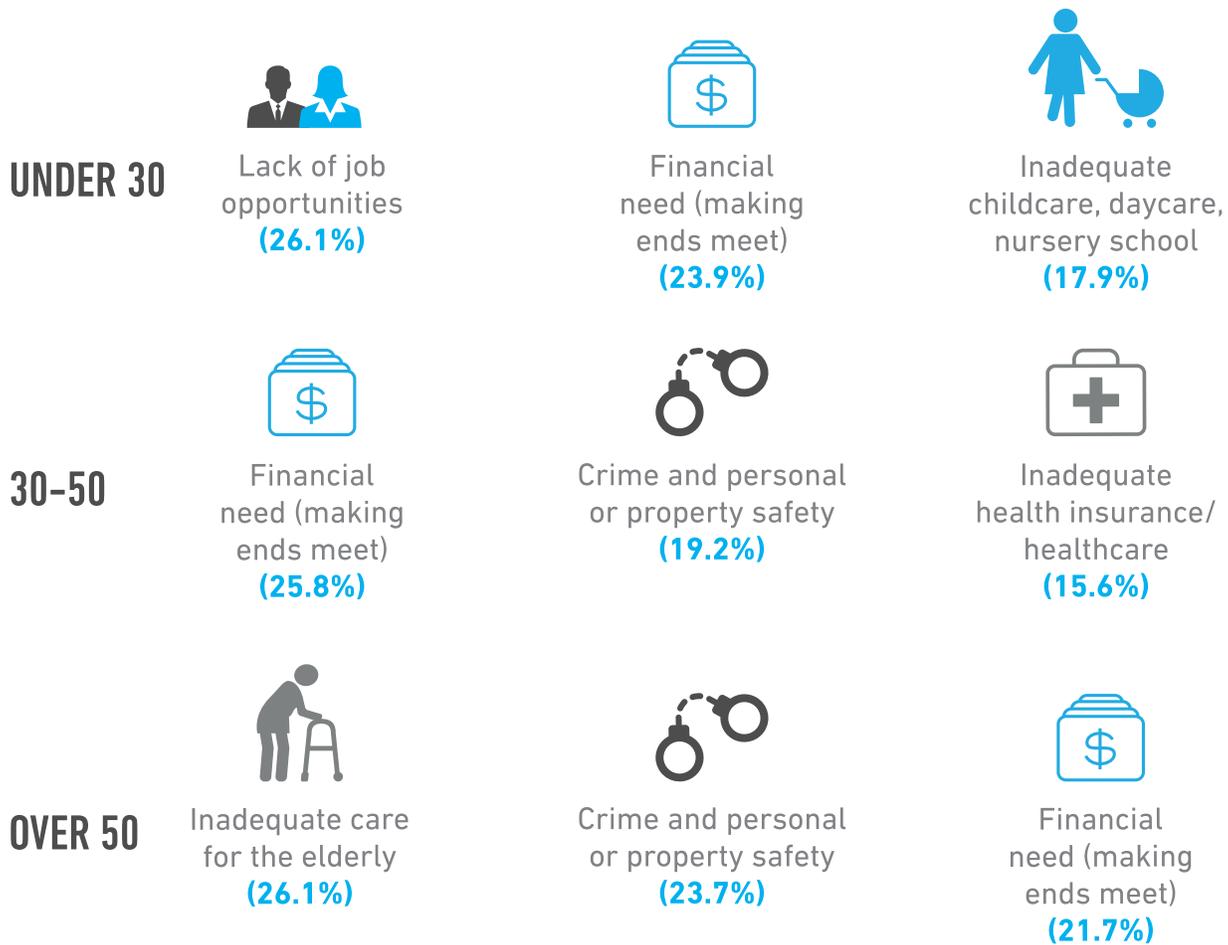
Inadequate care  
for the elderly  
**(20.6%)**



Inadequate  
childcare, daycare,  
nursery school  
**(14.7%)**

# NEEDS BY AGE

Financial need (making ends meet) is a consistent challenge for households across all age groupings. However, other challenges do vary.



# EXPLORING THE DATA: CRIME



Even though Waxahachie has a low crime rate compared to both national and neighboring city averages, “Crime and personal or property safety” was cited as the second most frequent “top challenge” for community households. Because this finding surprised focus groups of local leaders, this page explores this finding in further detail.

## WHO IS MOST CONCERNED ABOUT CRIME?

Whites/Caucasians over the age of 30, who make more than \$50,000 annually are most concerned about crime. It is this group’s top challenge regardless of their education level, gender, living situation, or marital status. Interestingly, crime is cited 3.5X as much by this group as Whites/Caucasians who are similarly aged but make less than \$50,000 annually. In comparison, crime is only the 9th highest challenge for Hispanics of similar income and age, and 12th for Blacks/African-Americans.

## HOW DOES CRIME IN WAXAHACHIE COMPARE TO OTHER PLACES?

Waxahachie’s crime rate is below national averages in 7 of 8 major categories since at least 2006. The sole exception is “theft,” which has caused the overall property crime indicator to be at or slightly above the U.S. average since 2002. In 2014, theft was 36.7% higher in Waxahachie than the U.S. average. Theft and burglary account for 96% of crime in Waxahachie. Please note averages in the above table are adjusted to “per 100,000” scale, not actual number of crimes, for comparative purposes.

	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Theft	Auto Theft	Arson
Waxahachie	0.0	0.0	37.4	53.0	421.2	2511.5	137.3	15.6
Cedar Hill	0.0	27.6	59.5	110.5	575.9	2344.0	138.1	6.4
Ennis	0.0	32.0	64.0	202.7	522.9	2721.0	181.4	5.3
U S Average	4.5	26.4	102	232	543	1837	216	18.7

## HOW SHOULD WE INTERPRET THE DATA?

Leaders expressed concern in the focus groups that there was a “perception issue” around crime that needs to be corrected. If so, the demographic mentioned above is the best audience for any education campaign.

*Good news! Waxahachie has a low crime rate compared to both national and neighboring city averages.*

However, it is also possible that this group is disproportionately affected by crime – particularly by theft. If this is the case, collaborative strategies to reduce theft are the best solution.

1 “Waxahachie, Texas.” “Cedar Hill, Texas.” “Ennis, Texas.” City-Data.com. Web. 20 October 2016.

# ASSET MAP

## CONGREGATIONS, NON-PROFITS, AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

A diverse group of churches, non-profits, and public institutions participated in a survey to share about their current programs and initiatives, who they reach, and how they are measured.

**20**  
CHURCHES

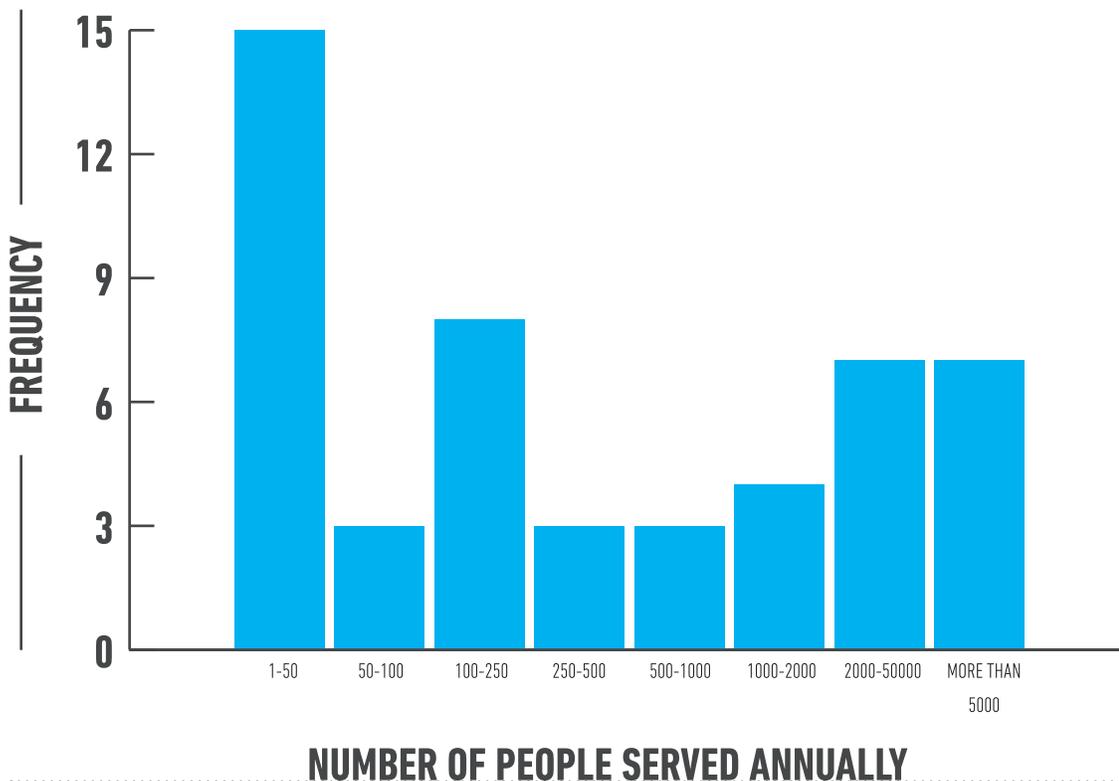
**22**  
NON-PROFITS

**10**  
PUBLIC  
INSTITUTIONS

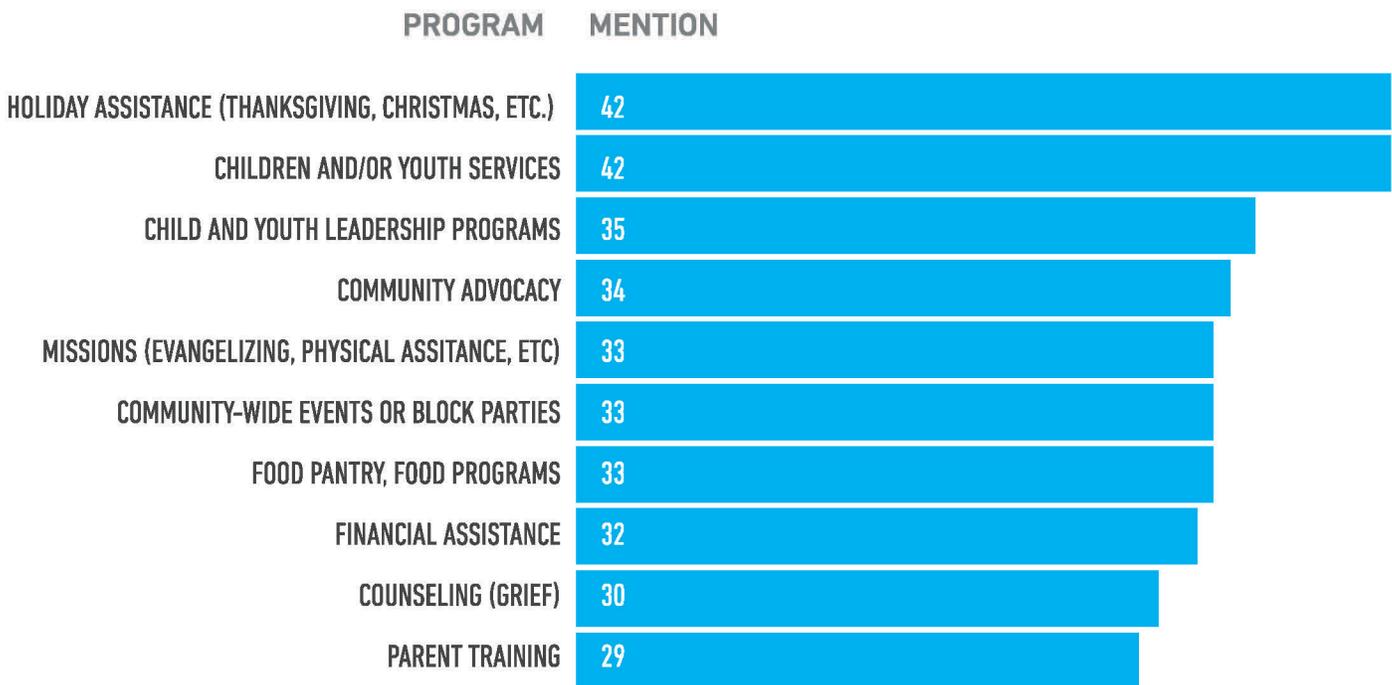
The data is first presented as a summary of all three sectors, followed by each individual sector. Finally, the organizations identified by community residents are included at the end.

## SUMMARY: IMPACT

Together, organizations report helping approximately 70,875 people annually . However, the most typical organization helps between 1-50 people. *The largest 14 organizations (28%) are responsible for 84% of the total people impacted.*

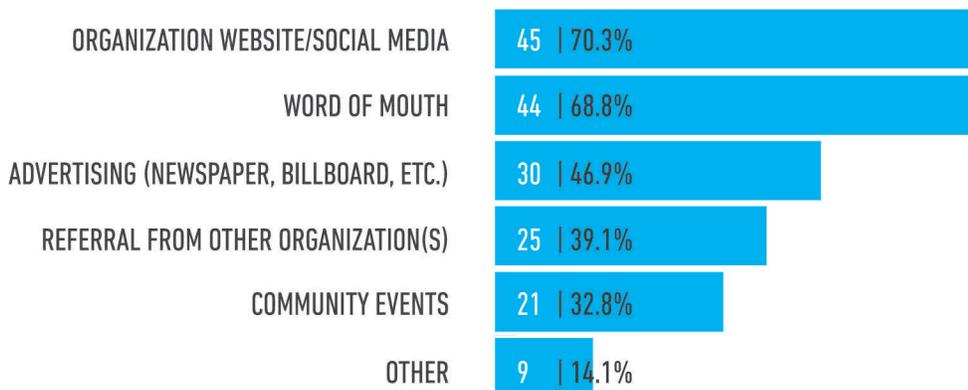


# SUMMARY: MOST COMMON PROGRAMS



# SUMMARY: PROGRAM ACCESS

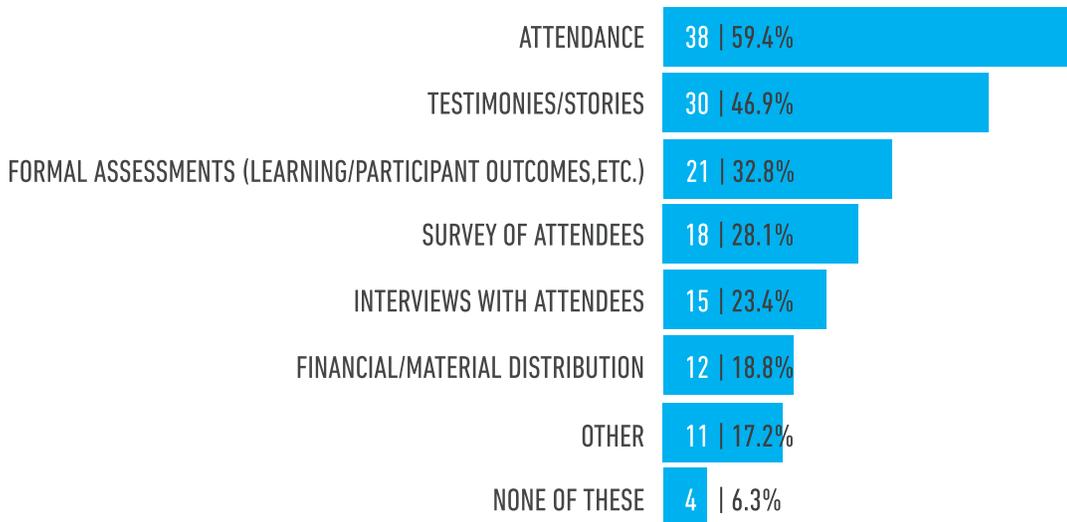
*How do people in the community find out about these programs?*



2 This number is calculated by taking the median amount for each range provided (i.e. using 75 for the range of 50-100), then multiplying that number by the number of organizations that responded in that range. For the organizations that serve more than 5,000 individuals, the lower end of that range (5,000) was used.

# SUMMARY: PROGRAM EVALUATION

*In what ways do you currently measure the results of these programs?*



# SUMMARY: PARTNERS

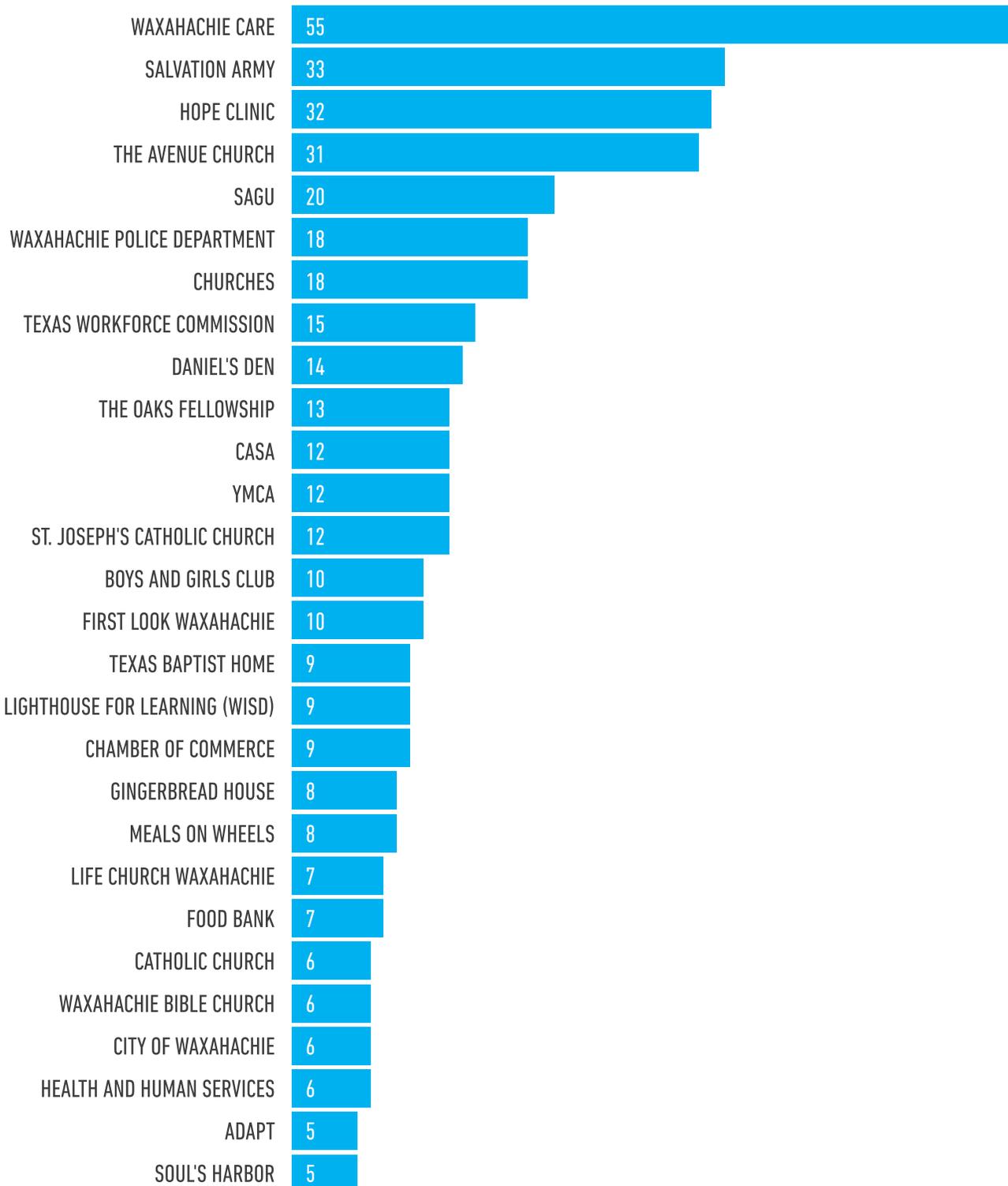
**88% (46 out of 52) of participating organizations have significant partnerships with other congregations,** non-profits, businesses, or public institutions in Waxahachie. Organizations partner with a variety of organizations both within and outside their sector; the large majority are local groups.

88 organizations were cited as partners. The following were mentioned more than once:

- |                                 |                                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Waxahachie CARE 11              | 4 Waxahachie ISD                  |
| The Avenue Church 8             | 3 Salvation Army                  |
| First Look 8                    | 3 The Oaks Fellowship             |
| United Way 7                    | 3 Big Brothers/Big Sisters        |
| First United Methodist Church 7 | 2 Alcoholics/Narcotics Anonymous  |
| Mission 75165 7                 | 2 First Baptist Waxahachie        |
| Daniel's Den 6                  | 2 Ellis Baptist Association       |
| God's City God's Church 5       | 2 Texas Baptist Home for Children |
| Hope Clinic 4                   | 2 Impact Waxahachie               |
| Navarro College 4               | 2 Waxahachie Bible Church         |
| SAGU 4                          | 2 Baylor Scott and White          |
| Connect 4 Life Church 4         | 2 Boys and Girls Club             |
| Common Ground 4                 |                                   |

# SUMMARY: VISIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

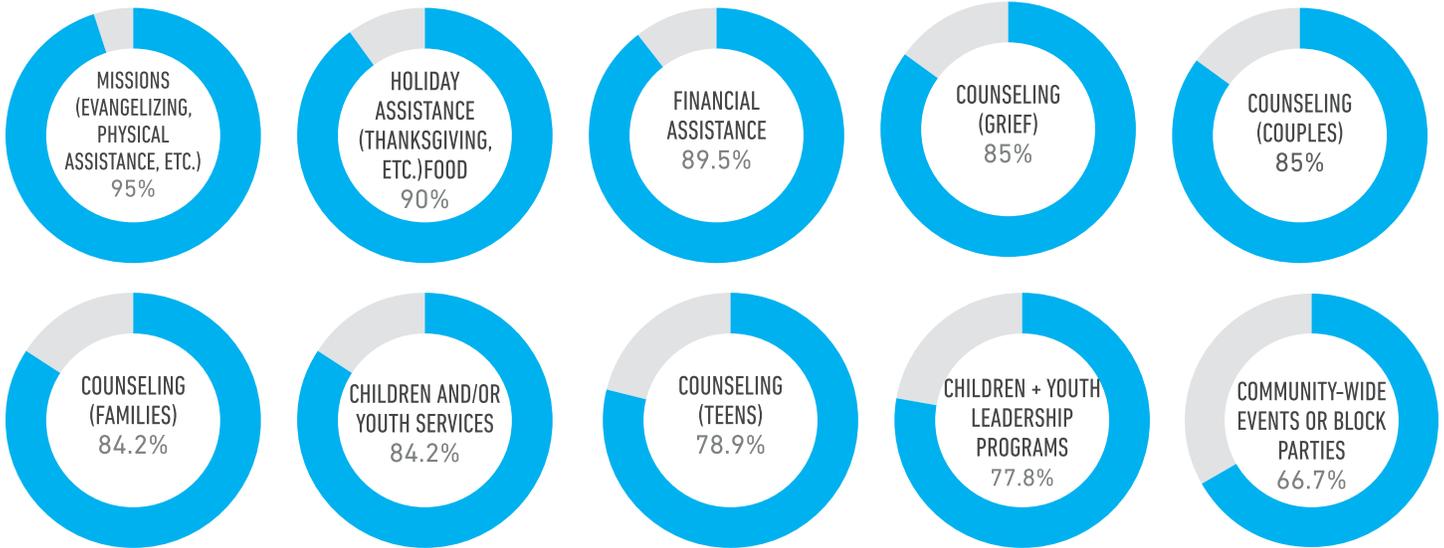
Community residents were asked to identify up to five services or organizations that are addressing needs in Waxahachie. **178 organizations were identified helping community residents.** The organizations mentioned more than five times are included here.



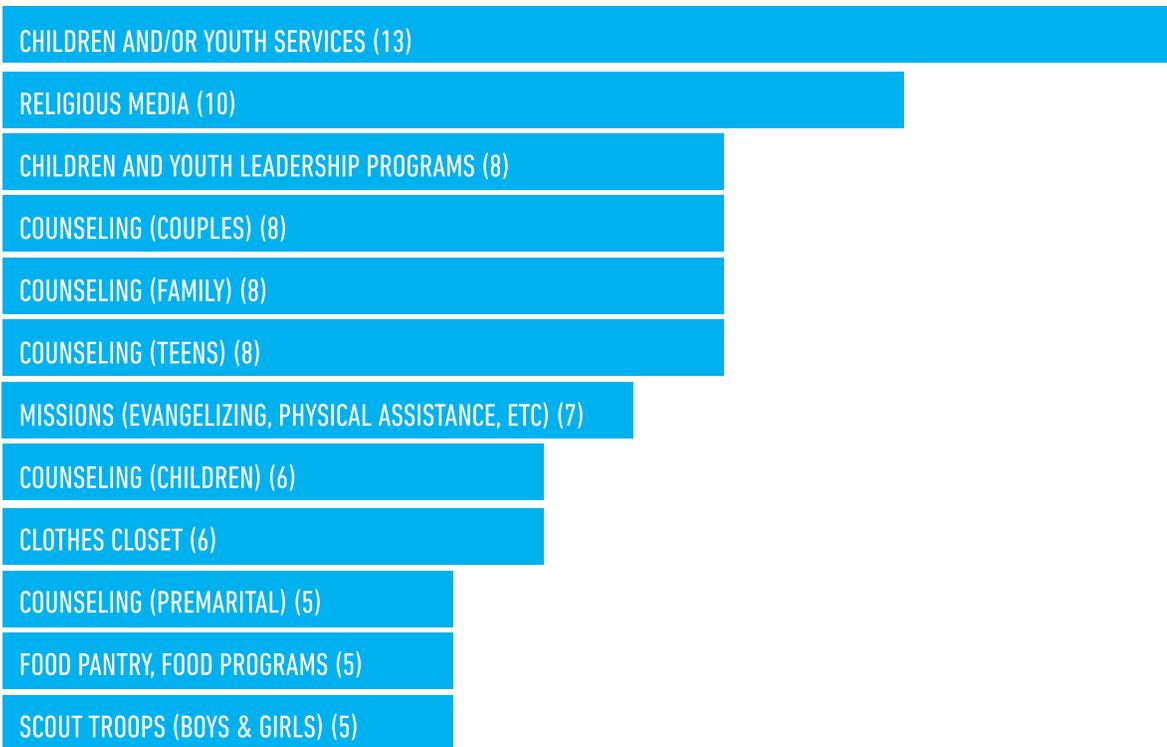
# CONGREGATIONS

## Programs

Each church was presented a list of 46 different programs that may be offered, along with the option of adding other programs that were not listed. The ten most common programs offered by participating churches include:



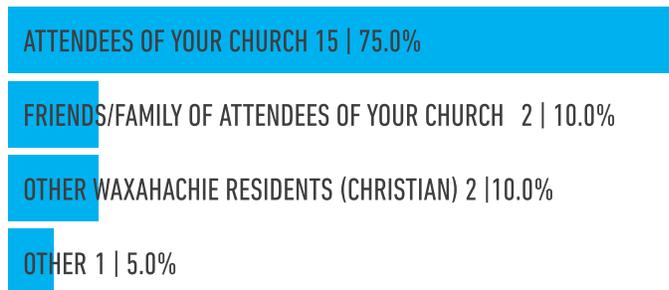
Programs offered weekly by at least 5 different congregations:



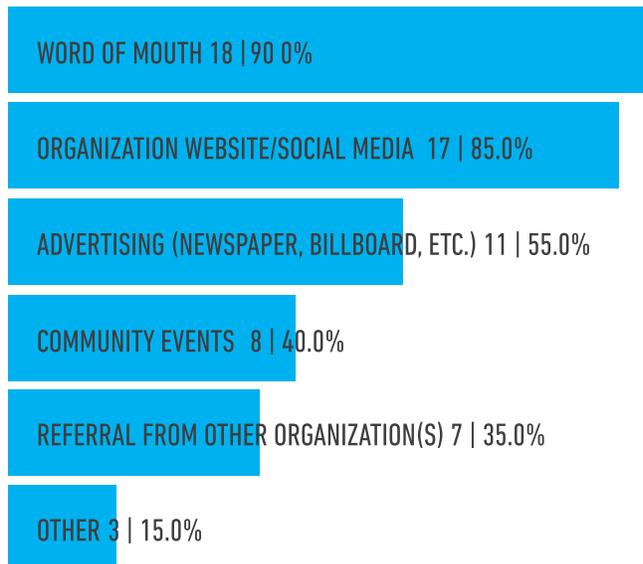
## Program Audience

Churches were asked to specify the primary attendees of their programs and how attendees find out about the programs. The vast majority of church programs are for attendees of that church. They learn about the programs through word of mouth or the church's website/social media.

*Who primarily attends these programs?*



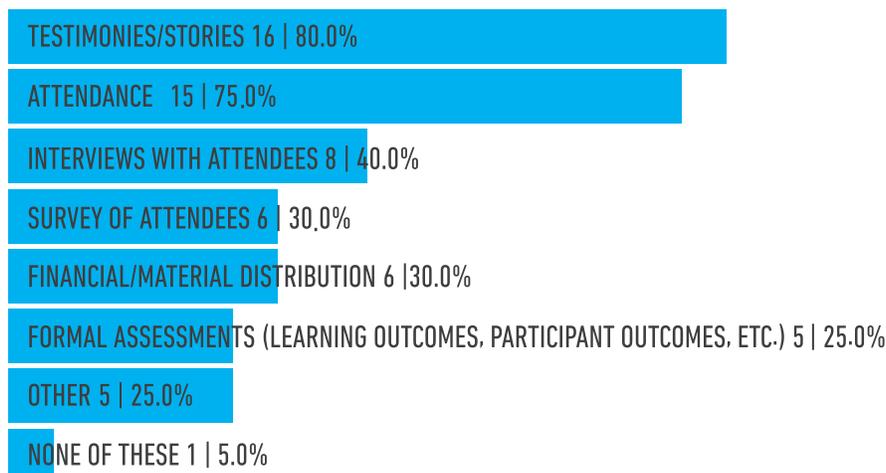
*How do people in the community find out about these programs?*



## Program Evaluation

Most church programs are evaluated by measuring attendance or recording testimonies/stories.

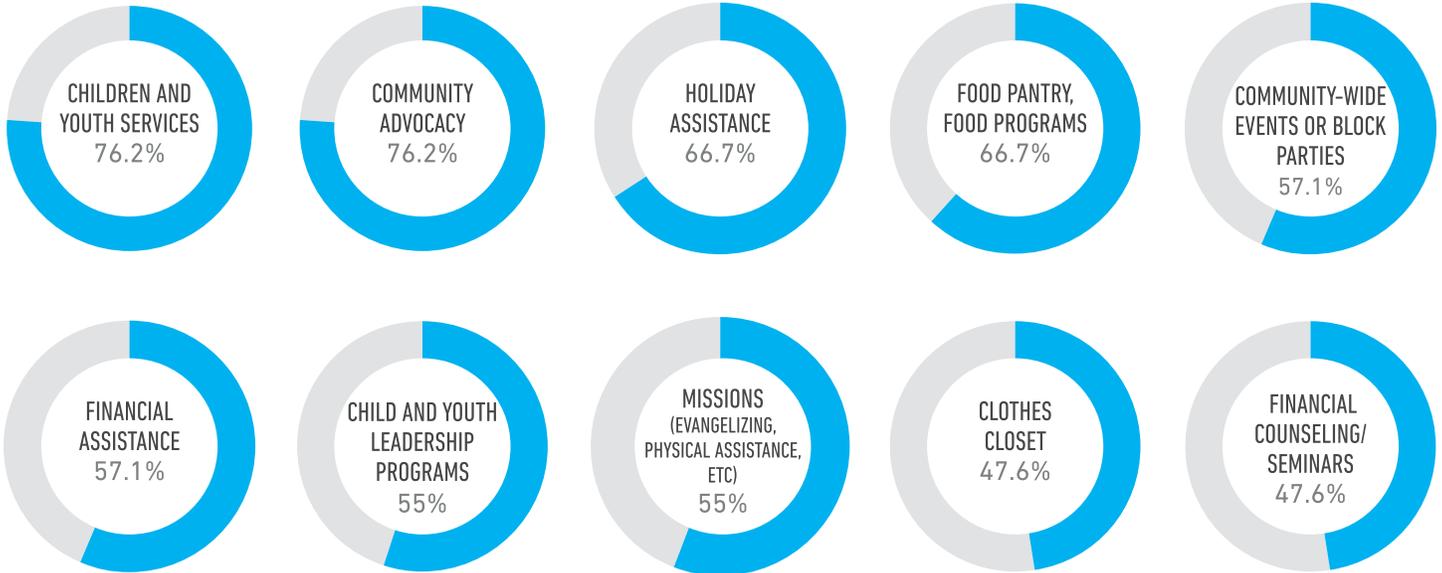
*In what ways do you currently measure the results of these programs?*



# NON-PROFITS

## Programs

The ten most common programs offered by participating organizations include:



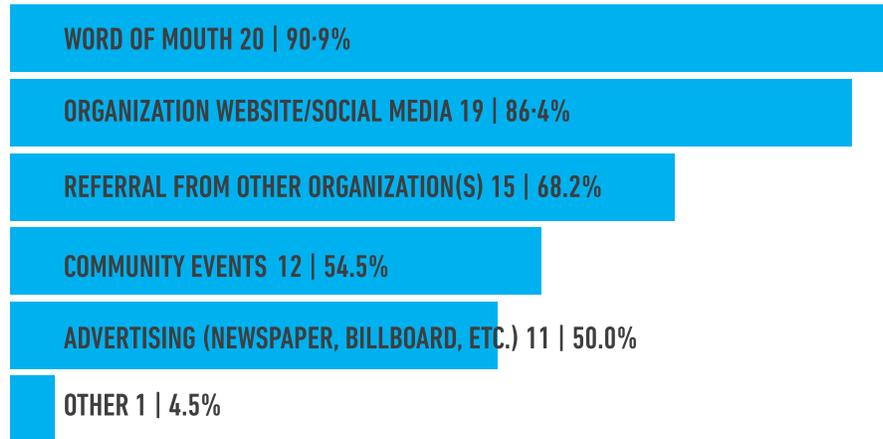
Programs offered weekly by at least 5 different organizations:



## Program Audience

It was assumed that non-profit program attendees are general community members. Most non-profit program attendees learn about the program through word of mouth or the organizational website/social media.

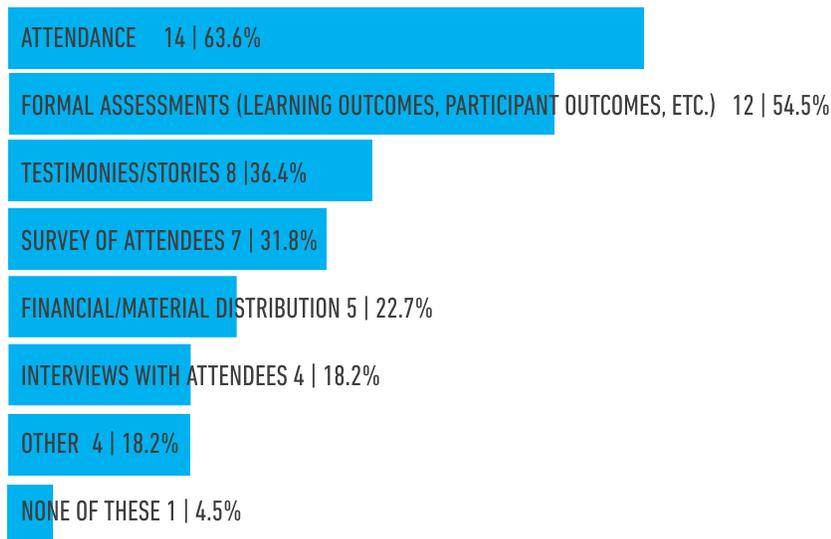
*How do people in the community find out about these programs?*



## Program Evaluation

Most non-profit programs are evaluated by measuring attendance or using formal assessments.

*In what ways do you currently measure the results of these programs?*



## Organizational Needs

Non-profits were asked to identify their 3-5 biggest challenges and/or needs. Funding and community awareness are the two most frequent.

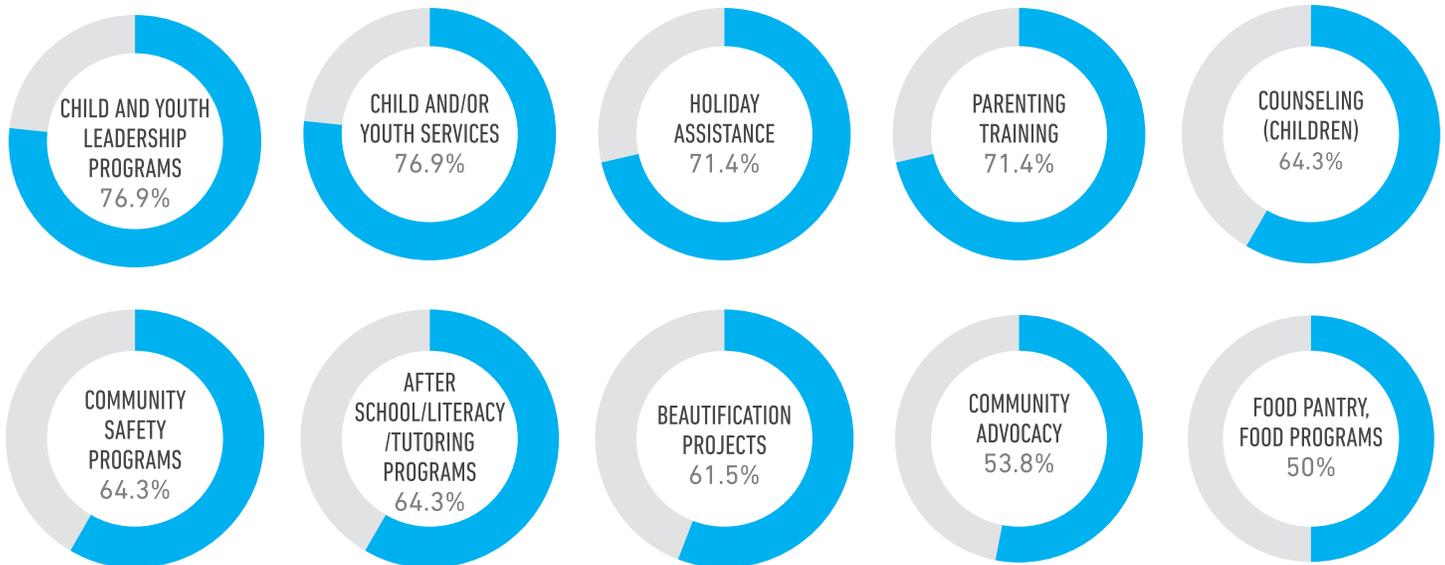
*What are the 3-5 biggest challenges and/or needs your organization faces?*



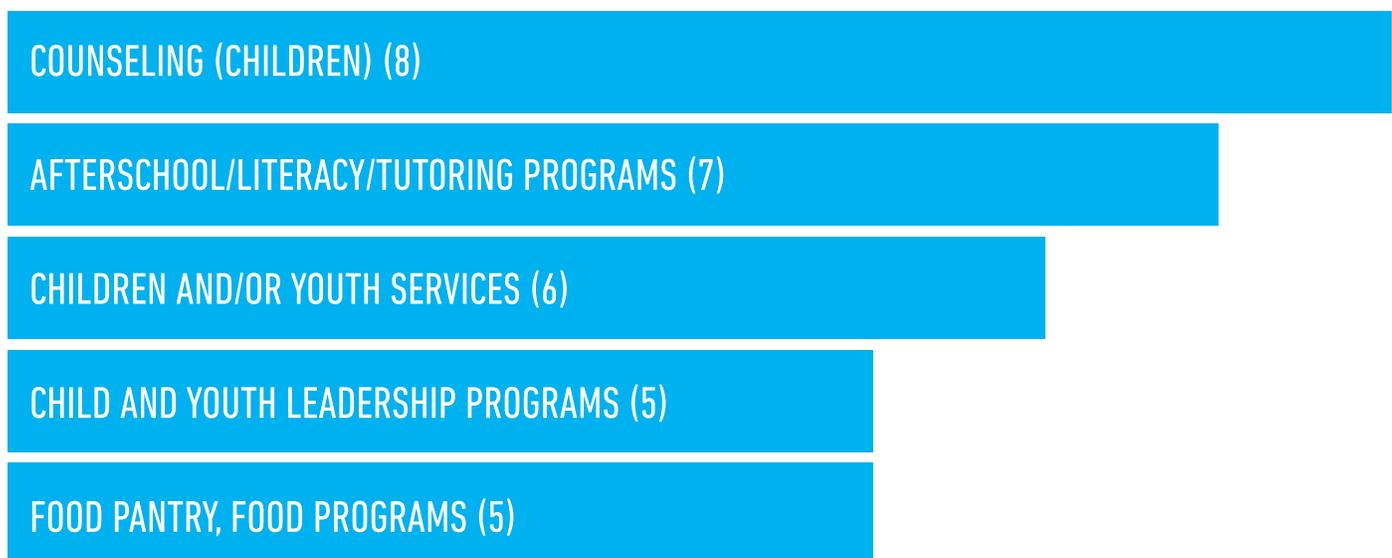
# PUBLIC INSITUTIONS

## Programs

The ten most common programs offered by participating organizations include:



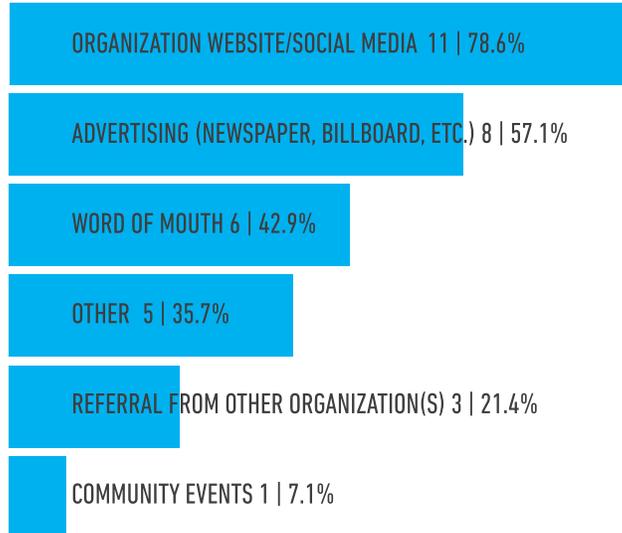
Programs offered weekly by at least 5 different organizations:



## Program Audience

It was assumed that public institution program attendees are general community members. Most public institution program attendees learn about the program through the organizational website/social media or advertising.

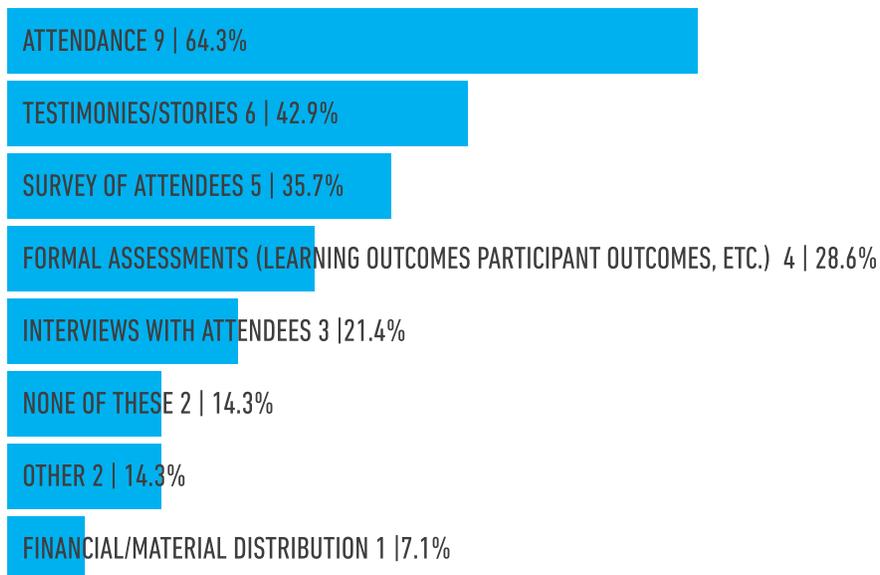
*How do people in the community find out about these programs?*



## Program Evaluation

Most public institution programs are evaluated by measuring attendance or recording testimonies/stories.

*In what ways do you currently measure the results of these programs?*



## Organizational Needs

Public institutions were asked to identify their 3-5 biggest challenges and/or needs. Needs are spread across several areas.

*What are the 3-5 biggest challenges and/or needs your organization faces?*



# WAXAHACHIE'S STRENGTHS

Community leaders from every sector – business, non-profit, public, and congregational – were asked their perspective on Waxahachie's greatest strengths. Below is a word cloud with the summary of responses; the larger the words, the more frequently they were mentioned.



*The following needs were mentioned at least twice:*

Hometown feel	25	4 Diversity
Growth	15	4 Non-profits
Faith/churches	15	3 Families
Community involvement	13	3 City government
Collaboration by organizations	11	3 Businesses
People	11	3 Welcoming
Good schools	9	2 Navarro College
Good leadership	8	2 Law enforcement
Heritage	7	2 Self-supporting
Development potential	5	2 Pride
SAGU	4	

# WAXAHACHIE'S NEEDS

Community leaders from every sector – business, non-profit, public, and congregational – were asked their perspective on Waxahachie's greatest strengths. Below is a word cloud with the summary of responses; the larger the words, the more frequently they were mentioned

TRANSPORTATION

AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING  
EMPLOYMENT racism | racial divide  
*lack of partnerships*

***The following needs were mentioned at least twice:***

- |                                   |                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Affordable housing 11             | 3 Infrastructure          |
| Lack of partnerships 8            | 3 Job training            |
| Transportation 8                  | 3 Mental health resources |
| Education 7                       | 3 Shelters                |
| Employment 7                      | 3 Substance abuse         |
| Racism/racial divide 7            | 3 Volunteerism            |
| Public knowledge about programs 6 | 2 Child abuse             |
| Elder care 6                      | 2 Child hunger            |
| Activities for children/youth 6   | 2 Domestic violence       |
| Unity/understanding differences 5 | 2 Mentoring               |
| Duplication of services 5         | 2 Leadership              |
| Growth/future-oriented 5          | 2 Special needs           |
| Preparation for growth 5          | 2 Ex-offender help        |
| Food insecurity 4                 | 2 Family breakdown        |
| Poverty 4                         | 2 Healthcare              |
| Homelessness 3                    | 2 Higher wages            |
| Affordable childcare 3            |                           |

# RATIONALE

## ASSESSMENT OF RESIDENTS' NEEDS

A community needs assessment identifies the strengths and resources available in the community to meet the needs of children, youth, and families. The assessment focuses on the capabilities of the community, including its citizens, agencies, and organizations. It provides a framework for developing and identifying services and solutions and building communities that support and nurture children and families.<sup>3</sup>

The goal of a needs assessment is to identify the assets of a community and determine potential concerns that it faces. A straightforward way to estimate the needs of a community is to simply ask residents their opinions about the development of services within the community, their satisfaction with services, and what particular services are needed. Their opinions can be used in building an agenda aimed at community change that can build the capacity of community-based organizations that are designed to provide its resident's services and development opportunities.

Resources allocated in a manner that is cognizant of the presenting problem(s), and targeted to address inherent and underlying causes, are more likely to achieve efficacious and sustained outcomes than single issue approaches. The allocation of scarce resources to meet increasing demands for services warrants an approach that identifies trends, so that the county can be proactive in addressing emerging issues.

Community assessments such as The Waxahachie Project Assessment of Residents' Needs can and should be more than just a gathering and analyzing of data—they can also be a basis for creating change. A community based needs

assessment can help the agency address families by providing a snapshot of families in the service area and their economic well-being, educational status, health and welfare. Agencies can begin to create change either by setting a framework for programs and plans that work toward ending poverty (or helping individuals and families to move up and out) or family stabilization (helping individuals and families to stop moving down). It can provide important community information as to who may be working on issues and where gaps in community services lie. It provides an opportunity to meet and develop partnerships strengthening services for citizens in the area.

Finally The Waxahachie Project Assessment of Residents' Needs helps the community in Waxahachie in its planning process by providing the foundation for strategic operational planning, assessing if the agency is meeting the needs of the community and determining what programs or projects may have become obsolete and what programs or projects may provide new opportunities for the agency. Moreover, it is the beginning of a comprehensive strategic planning process.<sup>4</sup>

The following are ways The Waxahachie Project Assessment of Residents Needs intends to benefit Waxahachie: <sup>5</sup>

- There is increased understanding within the community about its needs, why they exist, and why it is important for the needs to be addressed.
- Community members have the opportunity to share how the needs impact the quality of

3 See United States Department of Health & Human Services. (2012). Community needs assessment. Retrieved: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/assessment/>

4 See Missouri Association for Community Action. (2009). Community needs assessment tool kit.

5 For more information, United States Department of Health & Human Services. (2012). Conducting a community assessment. Retrieved: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/conducting-a-community-assessment-1#needsandassets>

life for the larger community.

- Community engagement is increased because members from different parts of the community are included in discussions about needs, assets, and the community's response.
- The community's strengths and weaknesses are identified.
- There is an inventory of the resources currently available within the community that can be leveraged to improve the quality of life for community members.
- Communities identify the asset gaps that exist in their communities.
- Community members have an increased awareness of how they can contribute to their community's assets.
- Community organizations can use the information about community needs to assess their service delivery priorities.
- There is data for making decisions about the actions that can be taken to address community needs and how to use the available assets.
- Data can be used to inform strategic planning, priority setting, program outcomes, and program improvements.

organizations, and the like) and public institutions (government, education, and healthcare). Asset maps are used to determine the scope and nature of existing assets, or resources, and therefore help stakeholders leverage existing assets or contribute to where there is a lack, or gap.

Although conducting needs assessments are generally the first step in catalyzing change in a community, there is a growing support for the need to identify a community's assets before identifying the needs or challenges. According to Kretzman & McKnight (1993), identifying assets (versus deficiencies or needs) leads to a development of policies and efforts based on what already exists, which is often more sustainable and successful.<sup>6</sup> This approach is commonly known as "Asset Based Community Development" or "ABCD."<sup>7</sup> By having a good understanding of a community's assets, stakeholders are able to leverage what is already occurring in the community and avoid spending significant time, money, and resources to embark on high-risk efforts with uncertain impact. Moreover, The Waxahachie Project Asset Map seeks to compare organizations with each other in order to better understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats among organizations in Waxahachie and therefore increase collaboration, resource- allocation, and community impact.

<sup>6</sup> Kretzman, John P. and McKnight, John L., *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*, 1993.

<sup>7</sup> For more information, see the ABCD Institute at [www.abcdinstitute.org](http://www.abcdinstitute.org)

# ASSET MAP: CONGREGATIONS, NON- PROFITS, AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

An asset map is a systematic identification of the resources—tangible or intangible—that already exists within a given domain. For The Waxahachie Project, the asset map will identify and document the existing resources among Christian congregations, the non-profit sector (including charities, foundations, nonprofit

-Missouri Association for Community Action. (2009). Community needs assessment tool kit.

United States Department of Health & Human Services. (2012). Community needs assessment.

-Retrieved: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/assessment/community.cfm>

United States Department of Health & Human Services. (2012). Conducting a community assessment.

-Retrieved: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/conducting-a-community-assessment-1#needsandassets>

# METHODOLOGY

## Assessment of Residents' Needs

### **Instrument Basis**

The Waxahachie Project Assessment of Residents' Needs is based upon the assessment used in the Discover Broward project, sponsored by OneHope and National Christian Foundation of South Florida in 2014. The instrument was reviewed by The Waxahachie Project Working Team to affirm suitability for the Waxahachie community.

### **Instrument Design**

The survey instrument titled The Waxahachie Project Community Survey (WPCS) was created to measure needs among community households. The majority of the instrument asks closed-end questions about individual and household felt needs, as well macro-level, community or countywide needs. Participants were asked to identify the top 3 needs or challenges for both their households and their community. The final section of the instrument covers respondent demographics, helpful for later analysis and insight on specific populations.

The instrument employs forced ranking, multiple choice, and Likert scale items to effectively measure participant responses. For logistical purposes, the WPCS was translated into Spanish and was administered in Spanish with Spanish-speaking participants.

### **Randomization and Sampling**

The sample size (n=379) was determined by the entire population of Waxahachie and based on a 95% confidence level at +/- 5% margin of error.

Without access to a comprehensive list of the total sample population (Waxahachie residents), the most practical method to administer the WPCS is through chain or "snowball" sampling. However, the research team selected volunteer and paid Waxahachie residents to administer the

survey across a diverse stratum proportional to the demographic profile of Waxahachie using a quota sampling methodology.

Surveys were primarily administered by Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) students who were assigned certain neighborhoods to canvas individual households. Each survey administrator was instructed in proper survey administration. Additional surveys were administered online through The Waxahachie Project social media accounts.

After initial data collection, the research team implemented a quota sampling strategy to complete the sample where particular demographic factors were under-represented. This strategy was designed to ensure an acceptable standard of randomization and representation to reduce community bias.

### **Data Collection**

The instrument was administered orally (with responses marked by the administrator) and in written form (with responses marked by the respondent) as appropriate, with the administrator collecting the completed surveys and returning them to the research team for data entry.

After initial data collection, surveys were administered online to reach the most under-represented demographic groups.

### **Data Entry**

Data entry was completed by Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) students trained in online entry via SurveyGizmo (surveygizmo.com), the online application chosen for data housing and initial analysis. Quality control standards were followed to ensure accurate data entry.

## Analysis

The final response set was made up of 511 completed surveys. This set was used for all analyses of specific demographic groups, i.e. analysis by gender, race, income, etc.

To control for over-representation and skewed results, a second response set was developed. Caucasians, females, and primary English speakers, for example, were heavily over-represented. To control for this and to develop a response set more representative of the Waxahachie population as a whole, responses from over-represented populations were randomly removed.

This process was halted when further removal from one population set would send another below -5% of the originally established quota.

The second data set still skews substantially toward native English speakers, over-represents bachelor degree-holders, and under-represents Spanish speakers but it brings the entire data set much closer to established quotas. This adjusted data set was used for all analysis of the Waxahachie population as a whole.

# ASSET MAP: CONGREGATIONS, NON-PROFITS, AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

## ***Participant Selection***

In 2016, The Waxahachie Project Working Group identified a list of key Christian congregations, non-profits, and public institutions. These lists were based upon existing data sets – such as a congregational database and United Way non-profit directory – and supplemented by primary research.

## ***Survey Design***

OneHope staff designed and tested a survey to obtain basic descriptive information about congregations, non-profits, and public institutions. These surveys were based upon a similar instrument used in the Discover Broward project. On completion, the survey was deployed via a web-based application for data collection.

## ***Data Collection***

Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) students contacted each organization by phone, email, or in-person and requested their participation. Surveys were either administered orally or in a web-based application.

## ***Response Analysis***

The approved organizational responses were analyzed to describe the organizations and their work by longevity, religious affiliation (if applicable), missional focus, budget, staff, volunteer participation, programs utilized, ethnic and linguistic focus, and Waxahachie residents served.

# COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES: BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

## ***Participant Selection***

In 2016, The Waxahachie Project Working Group identified a list of key business and community leaders whose perspective was important for inclusion in the research project.

## ***Instrument Design***

OneHope staff designed interview and focus group instruments for use with these leaders. These instruments were based upon a similar instrument used in the Discover Broward project. On completion, the survey was deployed via a web-based application for data collection.

## ***Data Collection***

Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) students contacted each organization by phone, email, or in-person and requested their participation. Surveys were either administered orally or in a web-based application.

## ***Response Analysis***

The approved organizational responses were analyzed to identify key themes related to Waxahachie's strengths and needs, and their causes.

# RESEARCH

## ABOUT ONEHOPE

OneHope is an international ministry, founded in 1987, known for its innovative approaches in working with children and youth in over 150 countries around the world.

OneHope is considered a thought leader and pioneer in the field of Outcome-Based Ministry, a transformative approach that begins by identifying the desired result and then building programs specifically designed to achieve that purpose. Outcome-Based Ministry incorporates research and evaluation at every step of a process, from pre-design to post-implementation.

Notably, OneHope gained international attention through their large-scale research initiative entitled Spiritual State of the World's Children. This multi-nation research project, the largest of its kind, was conducted among 152,000 13-19 year olds in 44 nations on 5 continents, and provided a wealth of data regarding the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the next generation.

*“What’s measured improves.”*

*– Peter Drucker*

OneHope’s programs have strategically impacted the lives of over one billion children and youth around the world through thousands of partnerships with churches, nonprofits, governments, educational systems, and business leaders.

OneHope has a passion to serve community leaders by applying Outcome-Based principles to local community initiatives by creating platforms for collaboration and measurements for strategic transformation. In addition to their local and global efforts, OneHope serves as the primary consultants and research directors for a joint initiative connecting hundreds of churches and nonprofits in the tri-county South Florida region—the location of OneHope’s international headquarters—an area with a population of over six million people.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



**Southwestern Assemblies of God University** - Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU) is a private, Christian university located in Waxahachie, Texas. The university was established in 1927, and offers a broad selection of associate, bachelor's and master's degrees. SAGU features respected programs in education, business, ministry, communication, music and psychology.



**Mission 75165** - Mission 75165 is a local nonprofit, 501(c)(3), working to form a coalition of churches, nonprofit agencies and other entities to assist in meeting the needs of people in the Waxahachie community.



**The United Way of West Ellis County** - The United Way of West Ellis County seeks to create a positive environment by providing opportunities for all to experience a better life. They do this by supporting local organizations who advocate for the three key building blocks of education, income, and health.



**Connect4LIFE Church** - Connect4LIFE Church exists to build relationships with people to help them know the love and grace of God, empowering them to be difference-makers in everyday life.



**God's City, God's Church** - God's City, God's Church seeks to bring unity in the community by providing opportunities for collaborative initiatives among churches, non-profits, and other community groups.



**John Houston Custom Homes** - John Houston Custom Homes, one of the regions largest homebuilders, believes in creating more than just quality homes. They believe in building lifelong relationships with their customers and the communities in which they build.



**Life Church Waxahachie** - Life Church, located in East Waxahachie, aims to empower people emotionally, spiritually, and socially, to reach their full potential for a victorious life.



**The Oaks Fellowship** - The Oaks Fellowship, a large, Christian church in Ellis County, seeks to fulfill it's mission of "growing generations that transform communities" by investing in the next generation and working together with others to bring healing and serve others in our community.



**Waxahachie Police Department** -The Waxahachie Police Department is committed to building trust and positive relationships with every component of the community in a team effort to maintain a safe and secure environment for families and maintain a high quality of life in our city.



**Waxahachie Downtown Merchants Association** - The WDMA is a membership organization of like-minded business owners and supporters who work collaboratively to make Downtown Waxahachie a beautiful, safe, viable, and profitable location for our community to shop, dine and attend sponsored events.



**URBANwell Magazine** - The URBANwell Magazine is published by Q Ministry Project; a Non-Profit 501-(C)3. Our mission is to be a blessing to the "The City", the communities we serve by doing and supporting local, good works and raising awareness. We provide a common, unifying forum that enables the Church to engage its local community and culture in redeeming and restorative ways through high quality print and digital media.

THE  
WAXAHACHIE  
PROJECT



[thewaxahachieproject.org](http://thewaxahachieproject.org)



[hachieproject](https://twitter.com/hachieproject)



[hachieproject](https://www.instagram.com/hachieproject)



[hachieproject](https://www.facebook.com/hachieproject)