

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Focus on Prevention (FoP) aims to improve the quality of life of all Stanislaus County residents and families through coordinated prevention efforts that work across multiple sectors to promote health and well-being. Following the Youth and Family Well-being Spotlight in 2019, FoP wanted to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on residents in the county in their four strategic result areas of health, strong and safe neighborhoods, first-rate education and a healthy economy.

In 2019 the community survey targeted community members with children under the age of 18. In the 2021 survey, all residents were included, regardless of parental status. When comparisons between 2019 and 2021 are made, the data for 2021 only includes survey respondents who indicated that they have children under 18 to allow for a valid comparison.



HEALTH

Regular physical activity and maintaining a healthy Body Mass Index (BMI) can improve health and quality of life regardless of age or the presence of a chronic disease or disability. In 2021, 84% of surveyed Stanislaus County parents had a BMI indicating they were overweight or obese, up from 72% 2019.

Routine health checkups are an important indicator of overall health and well-being. In 2021, 91% of parent survey respondents indicated their children had visited a health care provider within the past year, up from 88% in 2019. In both 2021 and 2019, Hispanic or Latino survey respondents were less likely than White survey respondents to report that their children had visited a health care provider within the past year.

Mental health plays a major role in a person's ability to maintain good physical health. Thirty eight percent (38%) of parent survey respondents reported that their mental health was not good for at least one day during the previous third days, a sizable increase from 22% in 2019. Forty-nine percent (49%) of all survey respondents reported experiencing social isolation due to COVID-19, with the following changes reported: withdrawal from others (23%) and feeling depressed or more sad (11%).

Taking individual precautions to keep oneself, one's family and community safe from COVID-19 are important public health disease prevention strategies. Fifty-seven (57%) of survey respondents plan to continue to wear a mask or face covering in public spaces and 39% plan to continue avoiding public spaces, gatherings and crowds. Overall, 25% of survey respondents had either tested positive for COVID-19 themselves or had household members test positive. The majority (68%) of respondents had been vaccinated, with 19% reporting that they are not at all likely to get vaccinated.



STRONG AND SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

Crime contributes to poor physical and mental health for victims, perpetrators, and community members. The total crime rate for Stanislaus County was 25.0 per 1,000 residents in 2020, down from 31.4 per 1,000 residents in 2019. Communities can increase safety by reducing and preventing injury and violence, as well as building strong, cohesive, vibrant, and participatory neighborhoods. When asked if they feel safe in their neighborhood, 69% of 2021 parent survey respondents indicated they feel very safe, compared to 63% in 2019. Overall, 71% of 2021 survey respondents reported feeling very safe in their neighborhood. In 2021, 72% of parents responded that they always have someone they can turn to when they need help, an increase from 66% in 2019.

Fifty-three percent (53%) of survey respondents reported that their neighbors worked together to take care of each other when COVID-19 social distancing measures were put in place.

FIRST-RATE EDUCATION

High school graduation and college readiness are important measures of how well a region or community prepares its young people for future success and well-being. The high school graduation rate in Stanislaus County was 85% in 2019-20, down slightly from 87% during the 2017-18 and 2018-2019 school years.

Overall, the majority of parents (63%) were satisfied with their student's distance learning experience during COVID-19, although White respondents (58%) were less likely to be satisfied than Hispanic or Latino respondents (68%).

Higher education is an important driver of economic and intergenerational mobility and socioeconomic advancement in our society. The percentage of Stanislaus County residents with a bachelor's degree or higher remained relatively constant at 18% in 2017 to 17% in 2019.

HEALTHY ECONOMY

Employment status is one factor affecting the ability of an individual to live healthfully and contribute to the community as a whole. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of Stanislaus County parents of children aged 0 to 5 had secure employment in 2019, up slightly from 85% in 2018. Fifty-three percent (53%) of all survey respondents reported that their employment did not change due to COVID-19.

Homeownership can offer financial security and stability and is an important step towards gaining and maintaining wealth. Additionally, homeownership helps to insulate owners from cost volatility and inventory shortages in the rental markets. In 2021, Hispanic or Latino survey respondents in Stanislaus County reported owning their own homes at lower rates than White respondents, 45% and 71% respectively.

When asked how difficult it had been for their household to pay for household expenses in the last 12 months, 51% of 2021 survey respondents reported at least some difficulty, with Hispanic or Latino respondents (58%) and respondents identifying as 'other' (65%) more likely to report any difficulty than White respondents (39%). Overall, 64% of 2021 survey respondents reported spending more than one-third of their income on housing. In 2021, 75% of parent respondents reported spending more than one-third of their income on housing, up from 63% in 2019.

