

Food Access & Food Security



- There are several **food deserts** in Springfield (areas with limited access to affordable and nutritious food)
- **1 in 7 Hampden County** residents are food insecure
- Residents of Hampden County experience high rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity with higher rates among Black residents
- 31% of adults in Hampden County are obese, compared to 25% statewide.

Racial Equity

- People with lower incomes and people of color are more likely to live in food deserts
- Almost twice as many respondents of color reported worrying about getting food compared to White respondents (46% vs. 25%) (CCIS 2020)

Assets/Momentum

- There are many food pantries and emergency food providers.
- Improved access to local produce: Gardening the Community, Go Fresh Mobile Market, Forest Park Farmers Market.
- There are coalitions and collaborations working on the issue: Springfield Food Policy Council, Mass UP Springfield.
- Healthy Incentives Program, SNAP
- Federal changes have increase opportunities for growth in local food footprint.
- There is a strong partnership with state leaders in advocating for local farming and sourcing.
- There were efforts made in Springfield public schools to increase access to fruits and vegetables in the first round of TCI, that we could build off.

Opportunities/Gaps

- Support to grow your own food- access to seed banking, preserving food
- Bring information/resources to the people rather than expecting them to visit a website to find it
- Expand SNAP qualifications (and other programs) to include more people. There are working people who don't qualify for programs like SNAP, but still need the support.
- Increase understanding about what "healthy food" is

Housing & Homelessness



- **35%** of households in Hampden County are housing-cost burdened (meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing)
- Between 2010 and 2019, **homelessness increased three-fold** in Hampden County
- There is a **shortage of affordable housing units**--UMass Donahue Institute projects a housing gap of over 13,000 units in Hampden County by 2025
- **Housing stock is old** and deferred maintenance can lead to problems that affect health; Springfield is a **high-risk community for childhood lead poisoning**

Racial Equity

- housing cost burden was greater for people of color in the Pioneer Valley- could be related to lower median incomes, and higher proportion of renters
- People of color are overrepresented in the Hampden County's unhoused population
- History of housing discrimination/redlining continues to reverberate today

Assets/Momentum

- There are great allies in the legislature.
- There are many housing providers in Springfield, including subsidized housing, emergency housing, shelters, and transitional housing.
- There are several home repair programs in Springfield, including lead-based paint hazard reduction, emergency home repair, and healthy home and accessibility improvements.
- Medicaid flex services program fund home repair and housing efforts (Revitalize CDC, Way Finders)
- There are a few organizations that provide housing and homeownership counseling.
- There are several housing advocates, including Springfield No One Leaves, Arise for Social Justice, and Neighbor to Neighbor.
- There are several organizations working on housing discrimination issues.
- There are several local and regional housing collaborations: Springfield Healthy Homes, (PHIWM convened); Regional: Hampden County Continuum of Care (convened by Springfield Office of Housing)

Opportunities/Gaps

- Affordable housing
- Housing conditions
- Needs of currently homeless
- Barriers to getting into housing
- People with CORIs
- People with DV situations
- Aging homeless population
- People with severe mental health conditions/substance use disorders
- Address CORI, gap for young people with associates degree to get affordable housing, housing conditions (mold)
- Advocacy to create more affordable housing,
- Housing as healthcare-what can Medicaid pay for to get into housing, both condition of housing and having housing
- Housing discrimination- redlining/zoning

Mental Health



- More than **4 in 10 Springfield eighth graders** felt sad or hopeless for two weeks or more in a row (2021 YHS)
- **1 in 7 Hampden County adults (15%)** reported their mental health was not good for 14 days or more within the prior 30 days. This exceeded the statewide rate of 13%.

Racial Equity

- Emergency Department visits for mental health in Hampden County were **highest for Black residents** (3,851 per 100,000) and lowest for Asian residents (712 per 100,000). The state did not provide data for those who identify as Latino/a/e.
- BIPOC families may delay getting mental health help for many reasons: the trauma of racism normalized, gender stereotypes, trauma bonding

Assets/Momentum

- There are many Springfield organizations offering mental health services and programming.
- There are a few local coalitions and collaborations working on mental health issues:
 - o Springfield Youth Mental Health Coalition
 - o City Council Mental Health Subcommittee
- There are several local and regional coalitions working on substance use:
 - o Stop Access Coalition- Springfield
 - o Greater Springfield Opioid Coalition
 - o Healing Communities
 - o Hampden County CHIP Community Team #2 on Substance Use Disorder
 - o Hampden County Addiction Task Force
 - o NACCHO Interventions for Opioid Harm Reduction Hampden County
- Normalization campaigns are underway on youth mental health and substance use disorder services.
- DPH is funding new community behavioral health centers and Baystate is opening a new Behavioral Health hospital
- Integration of Behavior health into primary care

Opportunities/Gaps

- **Key populations** identified by Advisory Committee: Black and Latino/a/e Youth, LGBTQIA+ youth, single Black mothers, older adults
- **Opportunities**
 - o Recognize cultural differences with treatment, incorporate ancient healing arts
 - o Young children need bonding with adults- develop opportunities for this
 - o Increase awareness about where people can go for mental health resources
 - o Role and toll of racism to be considered in mental health care for BIPOC communities
- There is a gap in available mental health providers leading to long wait lists to get care and a limited number of BIPOC providers.

Violence and Trauma



- **1 in 5** Springfield students (**1 in 4** Latino/a/e students) do not consider their neighborhood safe from crime (2021 SYHS)
- **1 in 4** students have witnessed someone being physically harmed in their neighborhood (2021 SYHS)
- In 2020, the Springfield Police Department responded to 8,700 calls, equivalent to **more than 23 calls per day**, involving either a domestic disturbance and/or a domestic disturbance involving a weapon.
- Springfield Police are under federal consent decree because of pattern of excessive use of force by narcotics agents.
- Springfield saw a more than **50% increase** in gun violence in 2020
- There are many different types of violence- random, gang-related, by law enforcement, neighborhood violence, generational violence

Racial Equity

- Police violence and vigilantism against Black people
- Black and Latino/a/e people have a higher intimate partner firearm homicide compared to White counterparts in Massachusetts. Latino/a/e death rates **4x higher** than White rates and **2x higher** than Black rates.
- Systemic racism, lack of opportunities and resources, poverty all contribute

Assets/Momentum

- There are many services and programs for victims of violence and prevention, with the YWCA the key service provider on domestic and sexual violence and human trafficking.
- There are several local and regional collaborations and coalitions:
 - o C3 meetings,
 - o New North Citizens Council Good Vibes Program,
 - o Hampden CHIP Violence and Injury Prevention Community Team,
 - o Commercial sexual exploitation of children Coalition/human trafficking
- Springfield police commission set up by the federal consent decree, although commission members have reported lack of administrative support to City Council Public Safety Committee.

Opportunities/Gaps

- More coordination among programming
- Improve accessibility of resources, care, and treatment to those who need them most
 - o Barriers: Transportation, childcare, concerns about DCF involvement, norms about masculinity
- Go to the individual- the most vulnerable young people do not participate in programming
- More peer groups where youth can talk about and process their experiences- not tied to therapist or insurance
- Criminal records disqualify people who are trying to work with youth
- Create/build community