



# **Community Foundation for South Central New York Needs Assessment Otsego County**

A report summarizing the primary needs and gaps in service  
in Otsego County including recommendations for funding priorities.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## DEMOGRAPHICS

**Funding Recommendation:**

Programming supporting the nutritional and health needs of children in poverty

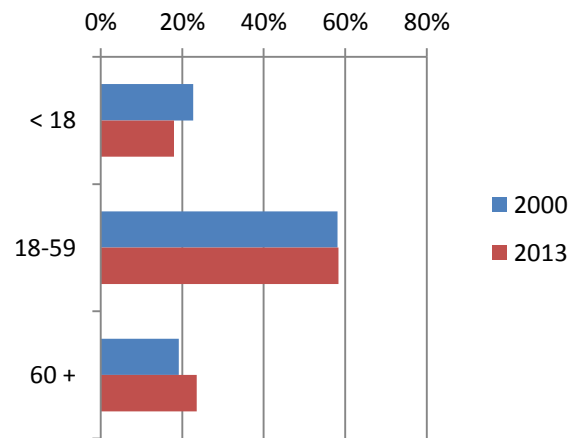
**Population Shift**

Unlike the rest of the region, the population in Otsego County increased slightly over the past several years. Between 2000 and 2013, the total population increased by 353 people. The age demographics of Otsego County have shifted as well with a reduction in the number of children under age 18 and people age 60 and over.

Table 1 Population Change by Township<sup>1</sup>

Township	2000	2013	Percent Change
Otsego County	61,676	62,029	+0.6%
Burlington	1,085	1,129	+4.1%
Butternuts	1,792	1,964	+9.6%
Cherry Valley	1,266	1,183	-6.6%
Decatur	410	357	-12.9%
Edmeston	1,824	1,978	+8.4%
Exeter	954	928	-2.7%
Hartwick	2,203	1,890	-14.2%
Laurens	2,402	2,588	+7.7%
Maryland	1,920	1,848	-3.8%
Middlefield	2,249	2,038	-9.4%
Milford	2,938	3,029	+3.1%
Morris	1,867	1,506	-19.3%
New Lisbon	1,116	978	-12.3%
Oneonta (city)	13,292	13,922	+4.7%
Oneonta (town)	4,994	5,202	+4.2%
Otego	3,183	3,102	-2.5%
Otsego	3,904	3,882	-0.6%
Pittsfield	1,295	1,467	13.3%
Plainfield	986	979	-0.7%
Richfield	2,423	2,317	-4.4%
Roseboom	684	699	+2.2%
Springfield	1,350	1,356	+0.4%
Unadilla	4,548	4,368	-4.0%
Westford	784	884	+12.8%
Worcester	2,207	2,435	+10.3%

Figure 1 Demographic Change 2000 to 2013<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Decennial Census 2000 (DP-1) & ACS 5-year estimates, 2013 (S0101)

<sup>2</sup> Decennial Census 2000 (DP-1) & ACS 5-year estimates, 2013 (S0101)

## Poverty

The percent of the population with incomes below the federal poverty level has increased slightly in Otsego County from 14.9% in 2000 to 15.5% in 2013. There has been a significant reduction in the number of children in poverty in the city of Oneonta with an increase in the neighboring townships of Butternut, Laurens and Otego suggesting that low income families have moved away from the urban center to more affordable rural locations. The poverty rate among seniors has declined somewhat county wide and is substantially lower than the overall poverty rate. Households headed by single mothers are significantly more likely to be poor with 38% of all female headed households with incomes below the federal poverty level.

Table 2 Percent below Poverty by Township and Year<sup>3</sup>

Township	All Individuals		Under 18		65 and older	
	2000	2013	2000	2013	2000	2013
Otsego County	14.9%	15.5%	15.8%	18.0%	8.2%	7.5%
Burlington	11.8%	9.4%	11.5%	9.5%	17.1%	6.6%
Butternuts	8.6%	18.4%	7.8%	39.4%	4.7%	4.8%
Cherry Valley	11.3%	14.2%	9.6%	26.1%	7.1%	5.1%
Decatur	4.4%	16.6%	3.4%	13.2%	0.0%	16.9%
Edmeston	13.6%	13.2%	11.5%	9.6%	7.5%	8.0%
Exeter	12.3%	18.4%	9.4%	30.0%	9.9%	13.7%
Hartwick	13.9%	13.8%	10.4%	27.7%	10.7%	4.3%
Laurens	11.9%	19.6%	10.2%	41.8%	6.3%	6.5%
Maryland	12.6%	13.7%	11.1%	17.8%	9.5%	12.1%
Middlefield	7.0%	7.9%	6.5%	17.3%	6.8%	0.0%
Milford	13.6%	13.1%	11.6%	15.8%	9.5%	11.7%
Morris	12.9%	12.8%	10.6%	24.5%	5.6%	4.2%
New Lisbon	14.5%	8.1%	12.5%	12.4%	6.3%	3.0%
Oneonta (city)	30.3%	28.9%	32.4%	14.9%	12.6%	9.3%
Oneonta (town)	15.2%	13.9%	13.4%	16.3%	4.8%	7.6%
Otego	11.4%	14.5%	10.1%	31.6%	6.6%	5.2%
Otsego	7.5%	10.8%	7.8%	18.2%	6.0%	7.5%
Pittsfield	7.5%	18.2%	7.8%	18.4%	6.0%	11.9%
Plainfield	17.0%	12.8%	15.5%	7.7%	12.3%	11.0%
Richfield	12.4%	11.9%	11.0%	10.0%	12.8%	2.7%
Roseboom	13.4%	12.3%	10.9%	16.8%	9.6%	2.5%
Springfield	10.6%	13.0%	7.9%	23.5%	2.7%	7.7%
Unadilla	8.5%	6.9%	7.8%	3.3%	5.4%	10.2%
Westford	12.8%	6.8%	10.8%	1.7%	6.6%	7.6%
Worcester	9.2%	10.8%	9.6%	19.9%	13.2%	10.7%

Table 3 Percent of Families in Poverty by Family Type<sup>4</sup>

Married	Single Male HOH	Single Female HOH
10.1%	14.6%	38.3%

<sup>3</sup> ACS 2013 5-year averages, Table DP03; CENSUS2000, Table QT-P34

<sup>4</sup> ACS 2013 5-year averages, Table B17006

## COMMUNITY HEALTH

### **Funding Recommendations:**

Support for integrated health planning and coordination

Support and treatment services for mental health and chemical dependencies including crisis, intensive outpatient and detox options

Support for in-home treatment options for high-need families with co-occurring disorders

Support for programming supporting people with developmental disabilities

Support for healthy weight programming especially for children/adolescents

Support for tobacco cessation programming

Support for programming that ensure early identification of youth/adolescents health issues

### **Access to Care**

An important aspect of access to care is the availability of health care providers. Compared to New York State as a whole, Otsego County has a very low ratio of population to primary care physicians placing it in the top five counties in NYS (Table 4). In addition, Otsego is in the top half of the state in terms of the number of mental health providers and dentists. Despite the relatively high number of primary care providers in the county, the County Health Assessment (CHA) noted that health care workforce shortages limit access to medical, dental and mental health care in the county. As a result, portions of northern Otsego County have been designated as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for primary care and the entire county has been designated as an HPSA for mental health and dental health.

Designated  
Health  
Professional  
Shortage Areas

- Primary Care (northern region)
- Mental Health
- Low Income Dental Health

Table 4 Ratio of Population to Number of Providers<sup>5</sup>

Provider Type	Otsego County	New York State
Primary Care Physicians	964:1	1,210:1
Dentists	2,127:1	1,580:1
Mental Health Providers	611:1	552:1

<sup>5</sup> University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

Table 5 Number of Mental Health Programs by Type<sup>6</sup>

Program Type	Number
Self-Help	8
Care Coordination	5
General Support	5
Crisis	4
Treatment Program	3
Unlicensed Housing	3
Clinic Treatment	2
General Hospital Psychiatric IP Unit	1

Six organizations provide mental health services in Otsego County through a total of 34 programs. The most frequently available programs are self-help, care coordination and general support programs. In the Local Services Plan (LSP) for 2016, the county mental health department noted a need for in-home clinical and intensive care management services for children and

their families, especially for a cohort of high need families. The LSP also noted a need for more prescribers for mental health needs and a reluctance by primary care physicians to provide care to individuals with behavioral health needs.

Otsego County has provides outpatient clinic treatment for chemical dependency in two locations in the county. The county LSP reported gaps in identifying individuals with addictions and linking them with services. The LSP also identified the lack of housing supporting recovery, limited medical assisted treatment, and challenges accessing residential care as primary gaps in service.

Four organizations currently provide services to people with developmental disabilities in Otsego County through a variety of programs. The county LSP said individuals with developmental disabilities lacked access to psychiatric services, in-home behavioral management, crisis intervention, specialized medical care, and meaningful work opportunities.

Table 6 Number of Developmental Disabilities Programs by Type<sup>7</sup>

Program type	Number
Family support services	3
Individual residence alternative	3
Community habilitation	2
Day habilitation	2
Prevocational	2
Supported Employment Enrollments	2
Individual Support Services	2
Work shop	1
Consolidated Supports and Services	1
Day treatment	1

<sup>6</sup> State of New York Open Data, Local Mental Health Programs, <https://data.ny.gov/>

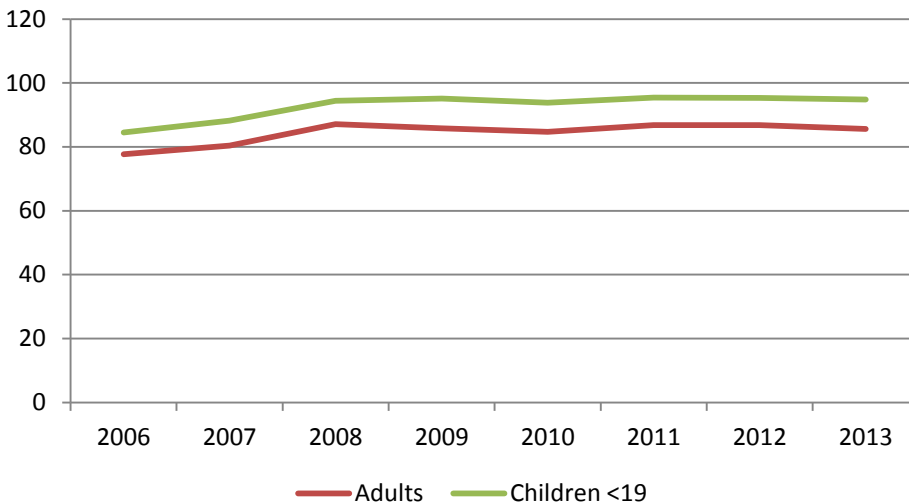
<sup>7</sup> State of New York Open Data, Directory of Developmental Disabilities Service Provider Agencies, <https://data.ny.gov/>

Otsego County has only seen slight improvement in the percent of the adult population with health insurance over the past 5 years. It matches the NYS rate as a whole, but has yet to meet the Prevention Agenda 2017 goal of 100% coverage. The County CHA commented on the challenges associated with health insurance in the county noting, “Inadequate health insurance has been a deterrent for families and individuals seeking health care services. Underinsurance, especially for dental and mental healthcare, is as much of a problem for rural residents as being uninsured.” Otsego is behind NYS in the percent of adults who have seen a dentist and the percentage of early stage cancer diagnoses for colorectal cancer.

Table 7 Access to Care Indicators<sup>8</sup>

Indicator	Prevention Agenda 2017 Objective	NYS	Otsego County
Percent of adults with health care coverage	100%	84.7%	84.7%
Percent of adults with regular health care providers	90.8%	84.4%	80.4%
Percent of adults who have seen a dentist in the past year	83%	72.5%	66.4%
Early stage cancer diagnosis (2008-2012) <sup>9</sup>			
Breast	80%	64.8%	68.7% (F)
Cervical	65%	42.0%	Cannot be calculated
Colorectal	50%	43.6%	41.5%(M) 32.1% (F)

Figure 2 Percent of Residents with Health Insurance<sup>10</sup>



<sup>8</sup> NYS Dept of Health, County Health Assessment Indicators, <https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/indicators/index.htm#chai>

<sup>9</sup> New York State Cancer Registry, <http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/cancer/registry/table3/tb3county.htm>

<sup>10</sup> NYS Dept of Health, County Health Assessment Indicators, <https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/indicators/index.htm#chai>



## Behavioral Health

Data from the New York State Department of Health (DOH) suggest that Otsego County has a potential area for concern related to tobacco use. Rates of tobacco use, COPD hospitalization and lung cancer among males exceed both NYS as a whole and the Prevention Agenda objectives by wide margins. The Otsego County Community Health Assessment (CHA) identified a priority for bringing down smoking rates, especially among pregnant women. Sexually transmitted disease rates are lower than the state and the Prevention Agenda Objectives. Otsego County slightly trails NYS in many of the disease screening and management activities such as colorectal screening and flu immunizations.

Table 8 Key Behavioral Health Indicators<sup>11</sup>

Indicator	Prevention Agenda 2017 Objective	NYS	Otsego County
<b>TOBACCO USE</b>			
Percent cigarette smoking in adults	15%	15.9%	28.8%
Percent of adults with HH income <\$25,00 who are current smokers	-	24.2%	40.5%
COPD hospitalizations among adults (per 10,000)	31.0 (2013)	41.3 (2010)	49.4 (2010)
Lung cancer incidence (per 100,000) – Male	62.0 (2013)	75.8 (2010)	88.1 (2010)
Lung cancer incidence (per 100,000) – Female	41.0 (2013)	53.9 (2010)	49.4 (2010)
<b>PHYSICAL ACTIVITY/NUTRITION</b>			
Percent of adults engaged in some type of leisure time physical activity	80%	72.9%	80.7%
Percent of adults who consider their neighborhood suitable for walking and physical activity	-	91.3%	93.1%
Percentage of adults who consume fast-food three or more times per week	-	5.9%	4.2%
Percentage of adults who consume one or more sugary drinks per day	-	24.7%	21.6%
<b>STDs</b>			
Newly diagnosed HIV case rates per 100,000	16.1	19.1	3.8
Gonorrhea rate per 100,000 women age 15-44	183.4	188.6	63.1
Gonorrhea rate per 100,000 men age 15-44	199.5	267.7	49.5
Chlamydia rate per 100,000 women age 15-44	1458.0	1536.0	1207.0

<sup>11</sup> NYS DOH Open Data, Expanded Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, <https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/Expanded-Behavioral-Risk-Factor-Surveillance-Surve/jsy7-eb4n> and NYS Prevention Agenda Dashboard, <https://health.ny.gov/preventionagendadashboard>

Indicator	Prevention Agenda 2017 Objective	NYS	Otsego County
<b>Disease Screening/Management</b>			
Percent of adults who received a colorectal cancer screening, age 50-75	71.4%	69.3%	64.7%
Percent of adults with cholesterol checked	-	83.4%	91.5%
Percent of adults with flu immunization	-	46.0%	43.6%
Percent of adults who had a test for high blood sugar or diabetes within the past three years	-	59.1%	59.3%
Percent of adults who have taken class to learn how to manage their chronic health disease or condition	-	9.7%	3.5%
Percent of adults diagnosed with high blood pressure taking medication	-	55.5%	68.2%

### Chronic Disease

The Otsego County Department of Health has identified preventing chronic disease as a local health priority in the Community Health Assessment 2013-2017 through the reduction of obesity, increasing activity, and reducing tobacco use. Data regarding current rates of obesity, however, show that the percentage of Otsego County children who are obese is below the Prevention Agenda Objective and the rate for adults is only slightly above the Objective. Additionally, the rates of obesity related chronic diseases such as diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure are lower than or comparable to NYS rates.

Table 9 Key Chronic Disease Indicators<sup>12</sup>

Indicator	Prevention Agenda 2017 Objective	NYS	Otsego County
<b>CHRONIC DISEASE</b>			
Percent of obese children 2–4 Years (WIC)	11.6%	13.1%	15.6%
Percent of children and adolescents who are obese	16.7%	17.6%	15.9%
Percent of adults who are obese (BMI>30)	23.2%	24.6%	24.7%
Percentage of adults with HH income <\$25,000 who are obese	-	28.5%	17.8%
Diabetes prevalence in adults	5.7%	10.4%	5.3%
Diabetes short-term complication hospitalization rate (per 10,000)			
Age 6-17 years	3.1	3.1	5.21
Age 18+ years	4.9	6.3	5.23

<sup>12</sup> NYS Dept of Health, County Health Assessment Indicators, <https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/indicators/index.htm#chai>

Age adjusted heart attack hospitalization rate (per 10,000)	14.0	14.2	12.6
Hypertension emergency department visit rate (per 10,000)	-	32.3	15.4
Percentage of adults with physician diagnosed pre-diabetes		5.9%	5.2%
Percentage of adults with elevated cholesterol	-	34.5%	31.4%
Percentage of adults with physician diagnosed high blood pressure	-	27.3%	24.8%

### Mental Health

Data from the NYS DOH shows that Otsego County has a higher than average suicide mortality rate. The Otsego County CHA identified preventing suicide among youth and adults as a focus area in promoting mental health. In addition, the county LSP prioritized a county-wide system approach to suicide prevention in their goals. The percent of Otsego County residents reporting 14 or more days with poor mental health is very close to meeting the Prevention Agenda Objective. The Otsego County CHA identified promoting mental health as a priority area.

Table 10 Key Mental Health Indicators<sup>13</sup>

Indicator	Prevention Agenda 2017 Objective	NYS	Otsego County
Suicide mortality rate (per 100,000)	5.9	8	12.8
Percent of adults reporting 14 or more days with poor mental health in last month	10.1%	11.2%	10.5%

### Chemical Dependency

Indicators from the NYSDOH on substance abuse in Otsego County show that the percent of adults who engaged in binge drinking slightly exceeds both the Prevention Agenda and the NYS rate and the alcohol related motor vehicle injuries and deaths is nearly double the NYS rate. Otsego County also had higher drug-related hospitalizations than the NYS (excluding NYC) rate. The County Mental Health Department noted that the county has significant gaps with the lack of identification from and linkage to the medical community for individuals and families struggling with addiction. Stakeholders remarked on a need for intensive outpatient services. A treatment provider said, “When we apply for inpatient care on behalf of a client, one of the most common reasons for denial is that they would be more appropriately treated at an IOS level of care. Unfortunately, this is a type of service attended for multiple hours a day most days of the week, and the nearest option for our folks is over 50 miles away.” In addition, stakeholders said ambulatory detox would be more widely used if it were available.

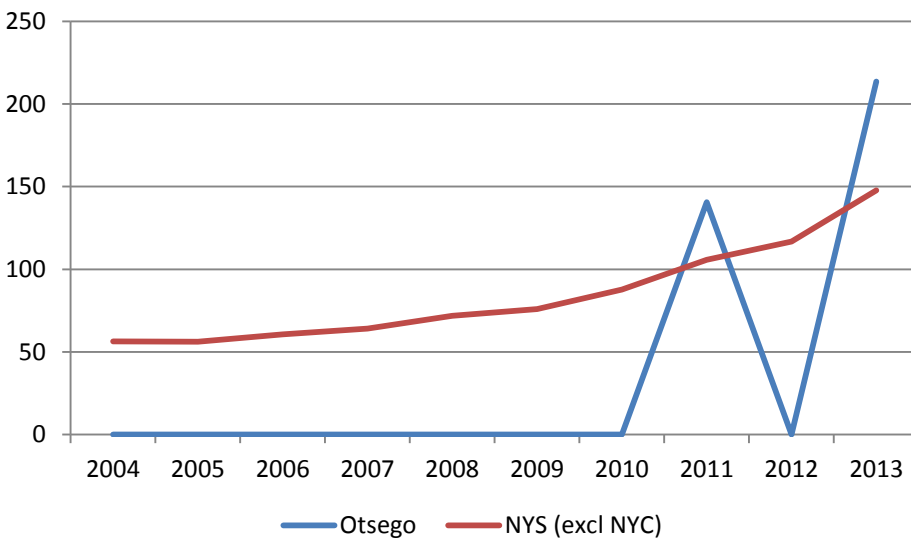
<sup>13</sup> NYS Dept of Health, County Health Assessment Indicators, <https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/indicators/index.htm#chai>

Table 11 Key Substance Abuse Indicators

Indicator	Prevention Agenda 2017 Objective	NYS exc. NYC	Otsego County
Drug-related hospitalizations (per 10,000)	26.0	21.6	29.1
Percent binge drinking past 30 days (5 + drinks in a row)	18.4	17.8	18.6
Alcohol related motor vehicle injuries and death per 100,000	-	33.9	52.7

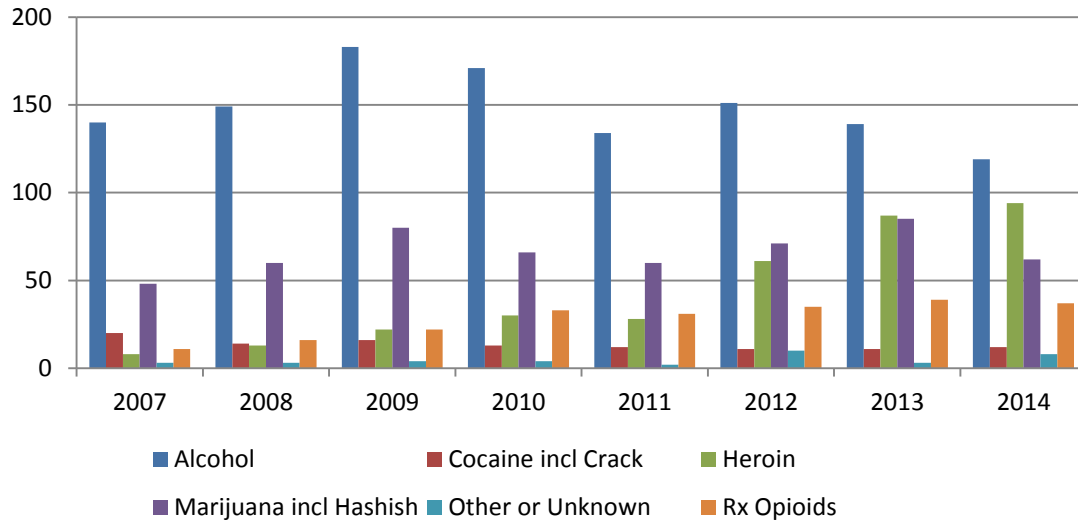
Stakeholders said the heroin epidemic was a high priority in terms of service needs. Data support this perception. Of particular note is the growing rate of newborns with a drug-related diagnosis. In Otsego County, the three-year average rate increased 256% from 42.4 per 10,000 newborn discharges in 2004-2006 to 151.1 in 2011-2013 (Figure 3). This was significantly higher than the upstate NYS rate increase of 81.5%.

Figure 3 Newborn Drug-Related Diagnosis Rate (per 10,000 newborn discharges)



Another key indicator regarding substance abuse is the number of admissions to treatment by substance type. Regionally, there has been a great deal of concern about the increase in heroin and opioid addictions. Although not identified as a priority issue by either the county health department or the mental health department, the rate of admissions in Otsego County for heroin treatment increased by 1,075% from 8 in 2007 to 94 in 2014 (Figure 4). This data suggests that the county is seeing the effects of the regional heroin epidemic.

Figure 4 Admissions to Treatment by Primary Substance Type



### Children’s Health

Data from the NYSDOH shows that Otsego County is doing much better ensuring children receive lead screenings than upstate New York as a whole. The incidence of confirmed blood lead levels among children is also much better than the rest of the state.

Table 12 Lead Screening in Children

Indicator	NYS excl NYS	Otsego County (2009 birth cohort)
<b>Lead Screening and Poisoning</b>		
Percent of children with at least one lead screening by 9 months	2.9%	1.2%
Percent of children with a lead screening 10-17 months	68.3%	81%
Percent of children with a lead screening 18-35 months	66.2%	71.3%
Percent of children with at least two lead screenings by 36 months	50.6%	56.2%
Incidence of children <72 months with confirmed blood lead level $\geq$ 10 $\mu$ g/dl (per 1,000 children tested)	7.5	5.7

Data show that more children in Otsego County are going to the doctor regularly than the state as a whole. However, there is a significant drop-off in well-visits for children as they reach middle and high school. This lack of medical attention may prevent health issues from being identified in a timely manner and lead to worse health problems over time.

Data also indicate that the prevalence of childhood obesity is lower in Otsego County than the rest of upstate New York, but still represents a relatively large portion of children with 31.8% of children being either overweight or obese.

Figure 5 Percent of children who have had the recommended number of well visits (Medicaid/CHP)

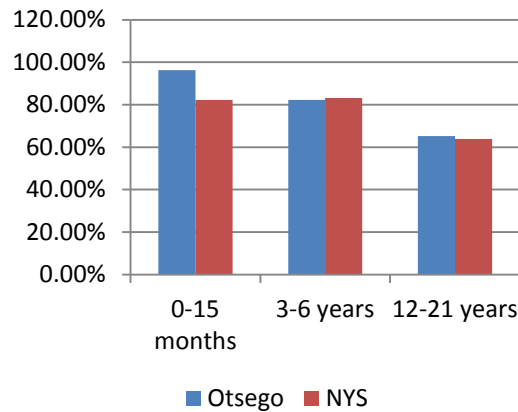
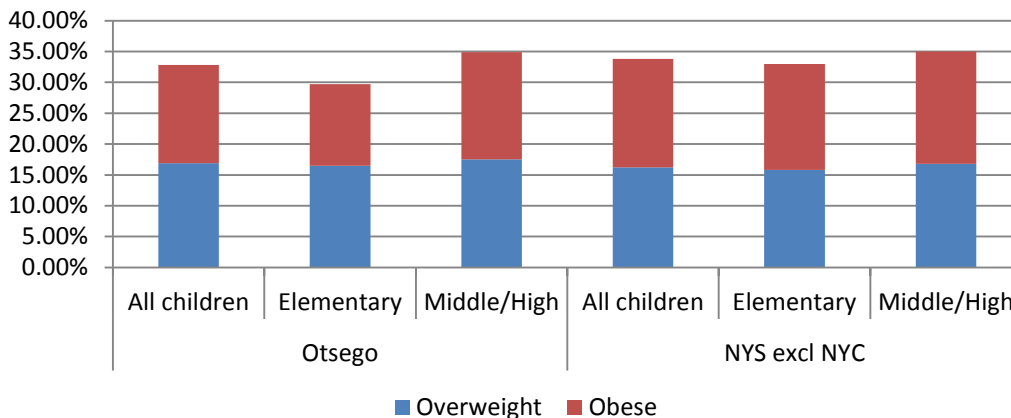


Figure 6 Percent of Children who are Overweight and Obese



### ***Primary Needs/Gaps in Services Identified by Community Stakeholders***

- Inadequate health insurance is a deterrent for families and individuals seeking health care services. Underinsurance, especially for dental and mental healthcare, is as much of a problem for rural residents as being uninsured.
- Long travel times and limited public transport to health care facilities, especially for those in the western part of Otsego County, deters access to care.
- A lack of volunteers specialized in Advanced Life Support has also been problematic in providing emergency health care delivery.
- The limited hours of operation at health centers and clinics, with the exception of the two county hospitals, also limits access to health care.
- Workforce shortages limit access to medical, dental and mental care
- Need for more preventive, community-based programs with a 'healthy weight' focus and initiatives that educate adults and children about the nutritional value of foods should be continued, expanded, and promoted to help more Otsego County residents make healthy food choices.
- Need for existing resources for physical activity to continue to be promoted among all age groups.
- Need for more programs that educate the public about the short and long term health risks of smoking should be increased and targeted to affected populations
- Lack of identification and linkage from the medical community for those struggling with addiction
- Lack of housing that supports recovery
- Limited medication assisted treatment
- Need for intensive outpatient therapy and ambulatory detox
- Pre-mature death prevention and difficulty accessing residential care due to restrictions and logistics.
- Need for in-home clinical and intensive case management services to support both the child and the family.
- Cohort of high need families that interface in many systems over generations that need in-home behavioral management to reduce ED visits and the need for hospitalization.
- Few positive social supports accessible in rural communities for at risk children.
- There is a lack of appropriate psychiatric services, in-home behavioral management and crisis intervention, specialized medical care and meaningful work opportunities for individuals and families challenged by developmental disabilities.
- For individuals with mental health needs the access to prescribers is a challenge. PCP are very reluctant to work with individuals with behavioral health needs and access to specialty care is limited for individuals on Medicaid.
- There is a need for more recovery supports such as peer services, employment, housing, wellness activities.

***Priority Areas Identified by Community Organizations/County Departments***

*Community Health Assessment by Otsego County Department of Health*

1. Prevent Chronic Disease through addressing the risk factors associated with chronic disease such as low activity, obesity, and tobacco use could help ameliorate chronic health issues like high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.
2. Promote Mental Health & Prevent Substance Abuse

*Local Services Plan for Mental Hygiene Services by Otsego County Community Mental Health Services*

1. Successful reform of health care delivery system
2. Access to appropriate services
3. Housing
4. Recovery support services
5. Integrated prevention, treatment and recovery/support services



## HOUSING

**Funding Recommendation:**

- Supportive housing for the developmentally delayed population
- Supportive housing options for people with mental health disabilities
- Funding to support to families facing homelessness and needing moving assistance
- Financial assistance for seniors for weatherization, repairs and home modifications to age in place
- Financial assistance for low-income families to make needed repairs

**Availability<sup>14</sup>**

Overall, Otsego County has a relatively low occupancy rate at 78.5% of the total housing units in the county. The vacancy rate for home ownership is very low at 1.9% and moderate at 7.1% for renters suggesting that individuals hoping to buy a home would have a much more difficult time than those wanting to rent. A fairly large proportion (12%) of the housing in Otsego County is for seasonal and recreational use putting significant pressure on the rest of the housing market increasing costs and decreasing availability for year-round rentals and purchases. The majority of homes in Otsego County are single family homes (67.8%) and mobile homes (14.7%).

Figure 7 Total Housing Units (30,633) by Occupancy

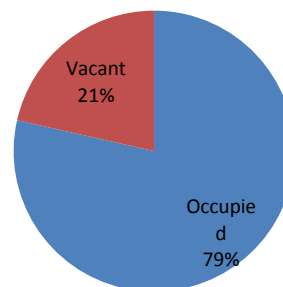


Figure 9 Ownership Status and Vacancy Rates

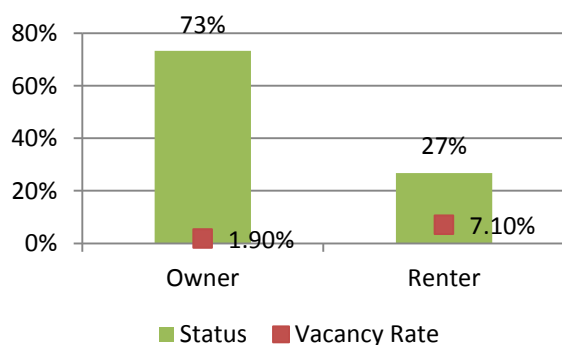
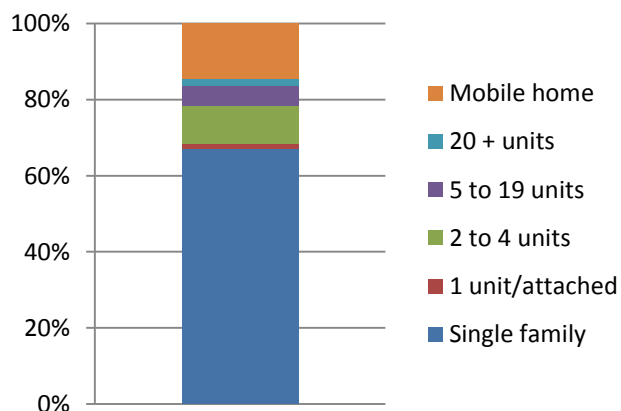


Figure 8 Percent of Housing Units (30,633) by Type



<sup>14</sup> ACS 5-year averages, 2013, Table DP04

## Quality

Data on housing quality on the county level is not widely available, however, the Otsego County Housing Needs Analysis reported on pockets of deteriorating housing stock and a number of mobile home parks that are in poor condition.

Approximately 6% of the housing stock in Otsego County has an “other vacant” status according to the American Community Survey. “Other vacant” can mean homes that are in the process of being repaired, foreclosed homes, homes being used exclusively for storage, and abandoned or condemned homes.

Table 13 Unoccupied Units by Status<sup>15</sup>

Status	Number	Percent
Total unoccupied	6,585	
For rent	498	7.6%
Rented, not occupied	137	2.1%
For sale only	336	5.1%
Sold, not occupied	78	1.2%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	3,714	56.4%
For migrant workers	0	0.0%
Other vacant	1,822	27.7%

## Affordability

Overall, the cost of homes in Otsego County is moderate with the median value of owner occupied homes in Otsego County at \$137,900 and over a third of houses (39.8%) valued between \$100,000 and \$199,999. The Otsego County Housing Needs Analysis noted that the county has several pockets of high cost housing and a general lack of affordable housing making it difficult for lower and moderate income, special needs, aging and disabled individuals to find housing. The report suggests that these populations are moving out into rural areas to find affordable housing which compounds transportation difficulties.

Table 14 Value of Owner-Occupied Homes<sup>16</sup>

Home Value	Number	Percent
Median	\$137,900	
Less than \$50,000	1,630	9.2%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	4,067	23.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	3,881	22.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3,145	17.8%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	2,746	15.6%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	1,598	9.0%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	532	3.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	59	0.2%

A large proportion (42.2%) of owner occupied units without a mortgage which suggests that a substantial portion of the county have very affordable housing costs. In general, rental prices in Otsego County are moderate and the majority of rental households are paying well below the HUD Fair Market Rent Guidelines. Gross rent as a proportion of median income is low (17.8%), but over half of renters in

<sup>15</sup> ACS 5-year average, 2013, Table B25004

<sup>16</sup> ACS 5-year average, 2013, Table DP04

Otsego County spend more than 30% of their income on housing. This indicates there is a relatively large sub-group of the population for whom housing is generally unaffordable.

Table 15 Monthly Housing Costs<sup>17</sup>

Monthly Costs	Owner with Mortgage	Owner without Mortgage	Renter
Median	\$1,156	\$476	\$678
Less than \$300	0.3%	20.4%	8.8%
\$300 to \$499	2.0%	38.8%	15.3%
\$500 to \$699	7.8%	24.6%	31.8%
\$700 to \$999	26.0%	20.5%	30.3%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	37.3%	--	10.4%
\$1,500 or more	26.7%	--	3.3%

Median Annual Housing Costs (with Mortgage)  
\$13,872  
30.2% of Median Income

Median Annual Housing Costs (no Mortgage)  
\$5,712  
12.4% of Median Income

Median Annual Housing Costs (Gross Rent)  
\$8,136  
17.8% of Median Income

Figure 10 Housing Costs as a Proportion of Income

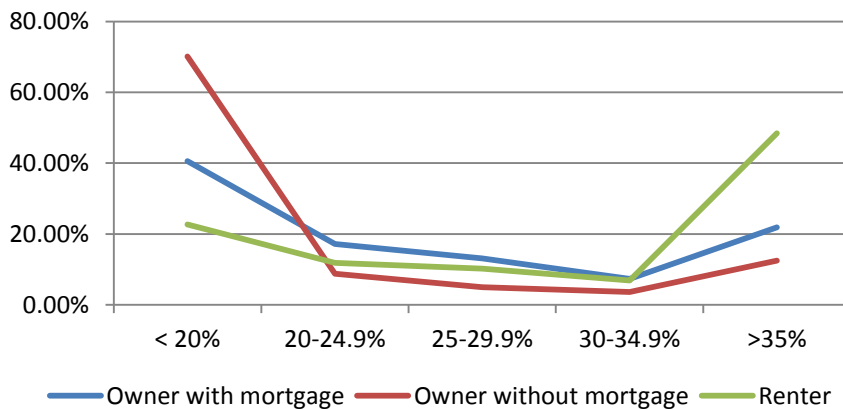
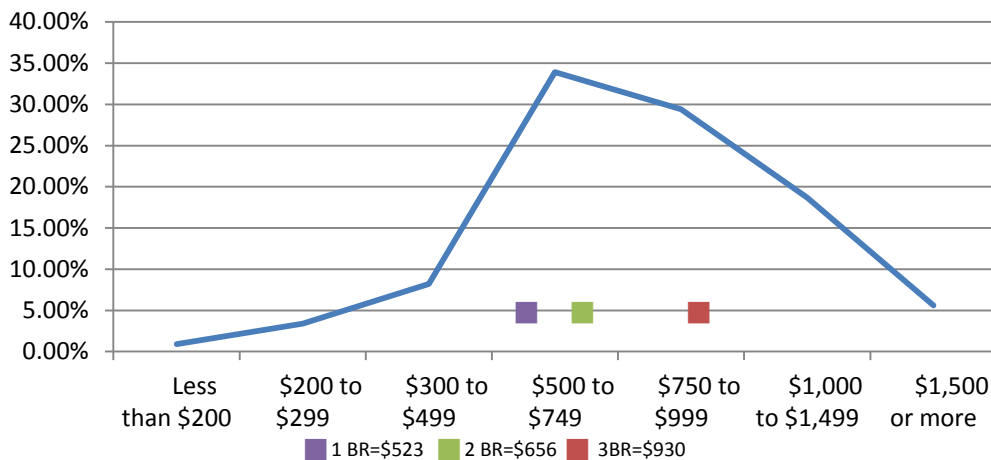


Figure 11 Percentage of Households by Rental Cost and HUD Fair Market Rents



<sup>17</sup> ACS 5-year averages, 2013, Table DP04

### Senior Housing

According to information from the Community Housing Needs Analysis, Otsego County has 233 units dedicated to low-income senior housing. Otsego County also has 5 adult care facilities offering a range of care to help seniors stay independent. These facilities provide an additional 196 senior housing beds to the county. In addition, Otsego County has 3 residential health care facilities providing nursing home and rehabilitation services to seniors for a total of 384 beds. The NYSDOH estimates that the 2016 need for beds in Otsego County will be 509 suggesting that the county has an unmet need of 125 beds.

The Housing Needs Analysis noted a concern about needing housing options throughout the county for seniors who are unable to keep up with their home, but want to stay in their local community and to stay in their own home. The report indicated one of the primary goals of the proposed action plan is to encourage senior housing development.

### Homelessness

Otsego County participates in the Continuum of Care with Broome, Delaware, Tioga, and Cortland Counties. Within these five counties there are a total of 165 emergency shelter beds and 164 transitional housing shelter beds available to homeless individuals. Otsego County has one homeless facility with a maximum occupancy of 18 people that runs on average 70% capacity. In addition, some families are sheltered in area motels for an average total of 20 people sheltered per day.

### Housing for Special Needs

Stakeholders noted an insufficient number of housing options for individuals with special needs in particular for those with co-occurring mental health disabilities and chemical dependency issues. The county mental health department's LSP noted there is a long standing need for sober housing. In addition, it noted a need for transitional housing for youth and a "housing first" approach. Data show Otsego County's mental health residential programs have a high occupancy rate in congregate and apartment treatment housing and high lengths of stay, but relatively low occupancy rates for adult supported housing.

Table 16 Occupancy Rate – MH Residential Programs<sup>18</sup>

	Congregate Treatment	Apartment Treatment	Supported Housing
Number of beds	8	8	30
Beds/10,000 adult pop	1.6	1.6	6.0
Percent occupancy rate	92.8%	93.5%	53.9%
Median Length of Stay (LOS) (days)	1,002	333	364
Percent LOS greater than 2 years	71.4%	14.3%	31.6%

<sup>18</sup> NYS Office of Mental Health County Profiles, <http://bi.omh.ny.gov/cmhp/index>

### ***Primary Needs/Gaps in Services Identified by Community Stakeholders***

- Lack of affordable housing near employment centers
- Old and substandard housing
- Sober housing/special needs housing
- Transitional housing for youth
- Overall shortage and development of affordable housing in Otsego County
- The impact of week-long family visits to the youth baseball camps in the area has had a major impact on the availability of year round rental housing and overall property costs. The challenge to find affordable homes and apartments is compounded by the challenge to find property owners willing to rent for a full 12 months.
- Many of the larger employers, Bassett and Fox Hospital, New York Central Mutual, Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta, are at a loss to present affordable quality housing to attract employees to the area.
- Recent changes in rental housing continues to force lower moderate income, special needs, aging and disabled individuals to look further into rural parts of the county to satisfy their housing needs, forcing more expensive and difficult deliveries of public support services to this population.
- The County's economy and need for service employees is exceeding the availability of affordable housing and rental units in the area. People are forced to look for housing further from their jobs, compounding the difficulty and expense of transportation.

### ***Priority Areas Identified by Community Organizations/County Departments***

#### *Otsego County Community Needs Analysis 2014*

1. Provide for a variety of housing in Otsego County
  - Identify and improve residential development within city, town and village centers
  - Encourage the development of mixed income housing projects
  - In partnership with both county organizations and non-profit housing organizations, promote housing rehabilitation and homeownership programs
  - Encourage employer sponsored worker housing initiatives
2. Encourage development of senior housing
  - Identify specific subsidized or market rate senior housing developments that will assist the senior population
  - Provide opportunities for seniors to continue to age in place
3. Mitigate or eliminate barriers to affordable and workforce housing
  - Provide assistance to local municipalities to mitigate and eliminate barriers for housing
  - Undertake a public education campaign to raise public official and citizen awareness about the importance of housing choice and representing a complete life-cycle of housing.
4. Encourage municipalities to adopt land management tools that create opportunities for affordable and workforce housing
  - Encourage municipalities to adopt sound development principles
5. Continue to expand or improve public infrastructure and transportation access to facilitate more adequate housing
  - Work with local municipalities with existing public water and sewer to upgrade their facilities and explore expansion opportunities

- Expand public transportation system to accommodate new housing development

*Otsego Opportunities*

1. Continue to promote affordable housing solutions for low-income families in and around major employment centers such as Oneonta and Cooperstown.

*Local Services Plan for Mental Hygiene Services by Otsego County Community Mental Health Services*

1. Work with OASAS, social services and the community systems to create housing options that promote recovery and improve quality of life.
2. Increase community supports to maintain high need individuals within the community.

## CHILD CARE/EARLY EDUCATION/K-12

### **Funding Recommendations:**

Support for increasing child care options, particularly for children under 3

Support for additional child care providers serving non-traditional hours

Subsidies for child care for both parents and providers

Programming which support positive social development to fill the after-school gap

### **Availability**

Availability of child care was identified as a challenge for Otsego County parents by a number of stakeholders. The majority of parents in Otsego County are in the labor force indicating a large demand for child care. Nearly three quarters (72.9%) of two parent households have both parents in the workforce and nearly all (90.6%) of female headed single-parent households are in the labor force.<sup>19</sup> Otsego County has a total of 41 regulated child care providers with a total capacity of 1,024 child care slots. The regulated capacity of child care providers (N=700) in the county along with Census data indicates that an estimated 4,243 children are either in unregulated care or are not being served at all.

Table 17 Regulated Child Care Providers<sup>20</sup>

Type	Number of Providers
Child Care Centers	5
Family Child Care	27
Group Family Child Care	7
School Age Child Care	2

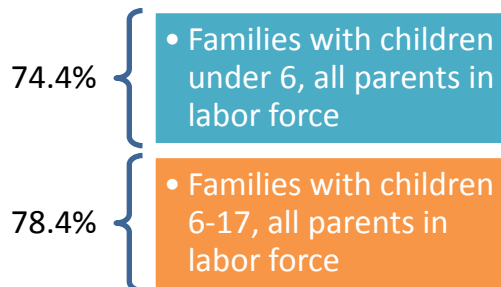


Table 18 Unmet Need for Child Care<sup>21</sup>

Indicator	Under 5	5-12 Years
Number of Children	2,741	5,040
Demand for Child Care <sup>22</sup>	(70%) 1,919	(60%) 3,024
Regulated Capacity	405	295
Total Unmet Need/Unregulated Care	1,514	2,729

<sup>19</sup> ACS 5-year averages, 2013, Table S2302

<sup>20</sup> NY Open Data, Child Care Regulated Programs

<sup>21</sup> NY Open Data, Child Care Regulated Programs; ACS

<sup>22</sup> Based on percent of children in families with all parents in the workforce and number of children in age groups

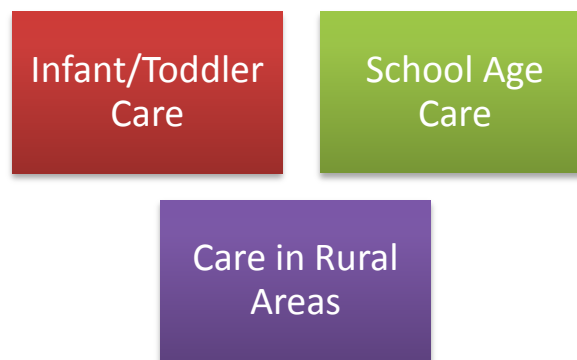
### Early Education Options

In addition to child care, Opportunities for Otsego provides Head Start services in 10 locations in the county with 295 Head Start slots and 100 Early Head Start slots. Stakeholders noted that many Head Start slots provide only half-day care however and parents would need an additional care option in order to meet full-day child care needs. In addition, Otsego County has 190 full-day Universal Pre-K (UPK) slots and 46 half-day UPK slots in area schools. Based on data from the American Community Survey, Otsego County has a potential surplus of 105 Head Start slots, a potential unmet need for 115 Early Head start slots and a need for 202 UPK slots.

Table 19 Early Education Supply and Demand Data<sup>23</sup>

Early Head Start	Number
3 year olds in 2013	522
Potential 3 year olds eligible for Early Head Start (based on children < 6 in poverty = 26.9%)	106
Early Head Start slots	100
Potential unmet need for Early Head Start	6
Universal Pre-K	
4 year olds in 2013	469
UPK full and half-day slots	236
Estimated number of 4 year olds not served by UPK/not eligible for Head Start	265
Head Start	Number
4 year olds in 2013	469
Potential 4 year olds eligible for Head Start (based on children < 6 in poverty = 20.3%)	95
Head Start slots	295
Potential surplus slots for Head Start	200

Based on demand and supply data, there are three high need categories of care including infant and toddler care, school age care options and care in rural areas.



<sup>23</sup> Decennial Census Data, 2010, Table QTP2; ACS 5-year data, Table B17024, Kids' Well-Being Indicators Clearing House, KWIC Maps



## Cost of Care

The cost of child care represents a significant portion of a family's income. The average annual cost of care for a child under age 6 is approximately \$8,400 and \$7,800 for a school age child. For a family of four with two parents and two children, child care costs can rival other household costs such as mortgages and taxes. And while most (67.2%) of households with children under age 18 have two parents, nearly 23% of households are led by single mother who have substantially lower incomes and are significantly more impacted by the high cost of child care.<sup>24</sup>

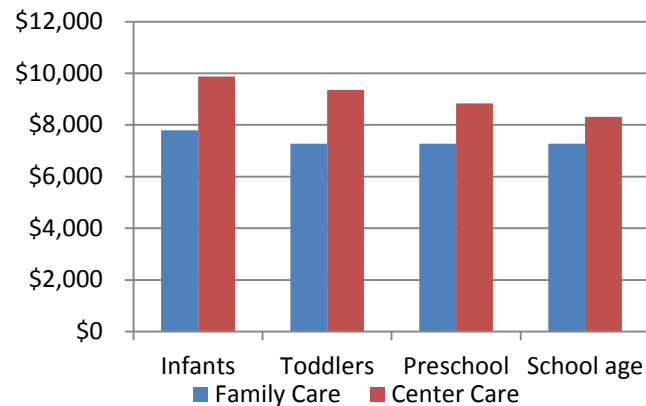
Table 20 Household Types

Household Type (with children <18)	Number	Percent
Two parent household	6,747	67.2%
Single father	1,017	10.1%
Single mother	2,277	22.7%

Figure 13 Cost of Child Care as a Percent of Median Income by Family Type



Figure 12 Yearly Cost of Child Care per Child by Age Group



## High Cost of Care Insufficient to Maintain Child Care Centers/Providers

Despite the high cost of care for parents with respect to income, the cost of care provides a limited income for family care providers which may prevent potential care providers from moving into the field. Information from other counties indicates that child care centers typically cannot cover overhead and personnel costs through parent tuition alone, which is also likely to be a challenge for Otsego County.

NYS Regulations for Family Day Care	Average Gross Weekly Income	Average Gross Hourly Income
6 children under school age	\$140 x 6 = \$840	\$21
2 children under age 2	\$150 x 2 = \$300	\$7.50

<sup>24</sup> ACS 5-year, 2013, Table B09002; ACS 5-year, 2013, Table B19126

## K-12 Education

Overall, the proficiency of public school students in Otsego County is similar to NYS in English language arts (ELA) and below in math. Otsego County students have seen increased proficiency scores in math between 2013 and 2014, but no improvement in ELA. Students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students lag far behind NYS rates in math but have comparable ELA scores. The very low proficiency in both math (21%) and ELA (18%) for economically disadvantaged students is particularly concerning due to the sheer number of students in this category (45%).

Figure 14 Proficiency of Public School Grades 3-8 by Type of Student<sup>25</sup>

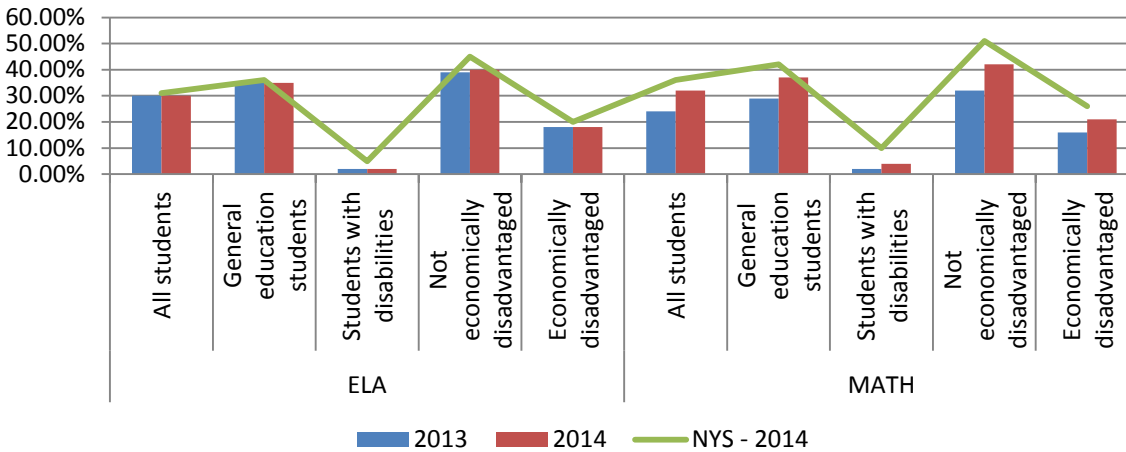


Figure 16 Percent of Public School Students

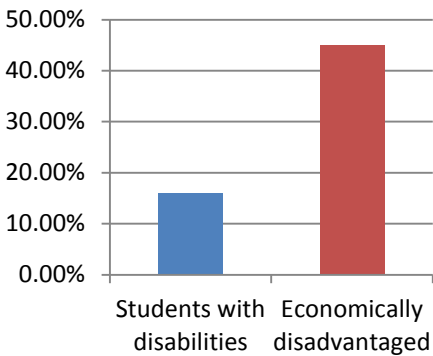
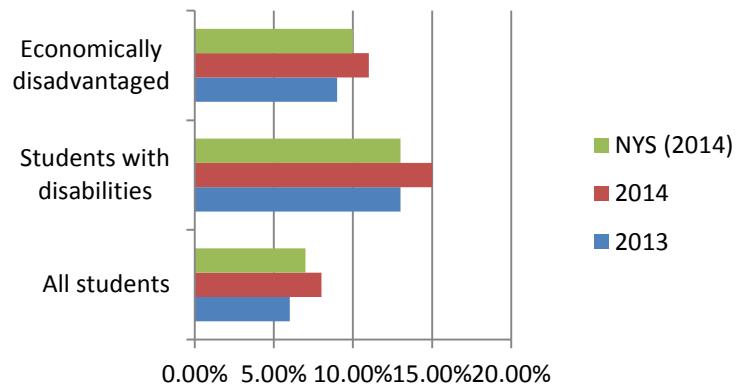


Figure 15 Drop Out Rate by Type of Student



Graduation rates have held steady in Otsego County over recent years and are higher than NYS as a whole. The Regents with Advanced Designation graduation rate is comparable to the NYS rate. The dropout rate is also similar to NYS, but has increased somewhat in recent years.

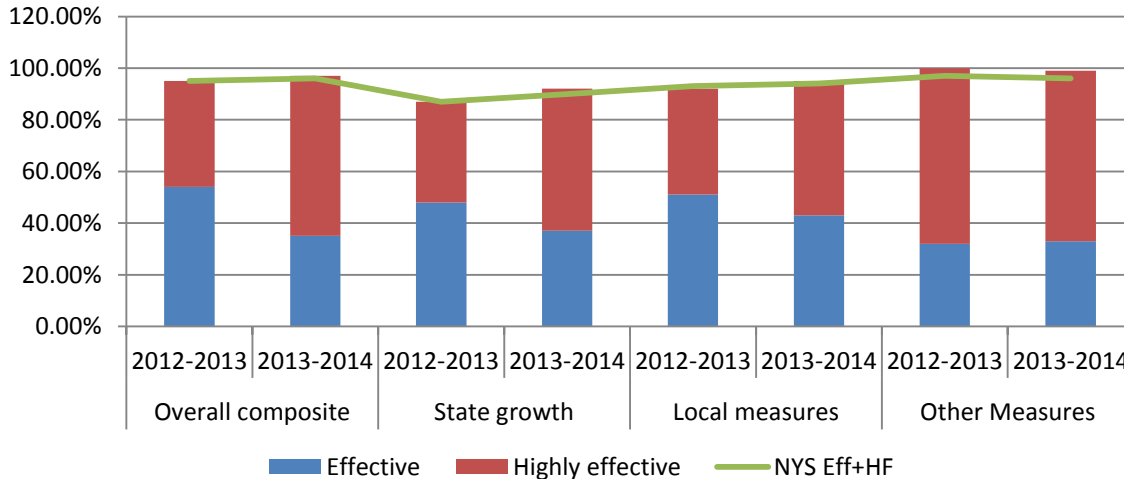
Table 21 Graduate Rates

Type of Diploma	2013	2014	NYS (2014)
Public school graduation rate	83%	83%	76%
Regents with Advanced Designation	31%	30%	31.0%
ELA/Math APM (Aspirational Performance Measure/College Readiness)	39%	37%	38.0%

<sup>25</sup> NYS Report Cards

The vast majority of teachers in Otsego County scored either effective or highly effective in the annual performance review ratings. Otsego County teachers exceed the overall NYS ratings and have also improved between the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.

Figure 17 Annual Professional Performance Review Ratings



**Primary Needs/Gaps in Services Identified by Community Stakeholders**

- Increase in UPK options have decreased the enrollment in Head Start limiting these children’s access to other services available through Head Start programs such as WIC, dental screenings, parent support
- Need for additional Early Head Start slots
- Need for additional infant and toddler child care providers
- Need for additional school age child care providers

**Priority Areas Identified by Community Organizations/County Departments**

*Opportunities for Otsego*

- Explore the feasibility shifting funded Head Start slots to Oneonta locations to correlate to need and access to employment.
- Continue efforts to collaborate with school districts that implement UPK to ensure that the needs of Head Start-eligible children and families are being met.

*Otsego County Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Agenda, 2014*

- Support programs for STEM and career and technical learning in middle and high school.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### **Funding Recommendations:**

Support for anti-drug programming  
 Support for domestic violence programs

### **Arrests and Crimes<sup>26</sup>**

Overall, crime rates in Otsego County are lower than the rest of NYS (excluding NYS) and have decreased over the past 5 years. Violent crime rates have remained consistently low over time while the property crime rate had a spike in 2012 and 2013, but declined again in 2014. Domestic violence crimes have increased by 25% in recent years and may be a cause for concern.

Adult arrests have remained flat or decreased between 2005 and 2014 with the exception of drug arrests and property crime. Felony drug arrests increased by 105% and misdemeanor drug arrests increased 132% between 2005 and 2014. Misdemeanor property arrests have also increased by 30% in the past 10 years. Juvenile arrests have decreased in recent years and are overall very low.

Table 22 Adult Arrests by Category and Year

Arrest Category	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Arrests	1,240	1,396	1,353	1,419	1,542	1,680	1,546	1,624	1,339	1,270
Felony Total	317	425	430	447	429	465	427	428	403	366
Drug	39	45	49	64	57	74	76	81	72	80
Violent	65	91	81	81	94	83	83	79	85	63
DWI	49	39	46	54	53	67	44	40	36	32
Other	164	250	254	248	225	241	224	228	210	191
Misdemeanor Total	923	971	923	972	1,113	1,215	1,119	1,196	936	904
Drug	37	56	37	49	83	89	91	99	70	86
DWI	300	312	301	299	372	358	291	283	218	226
Property	234	192	197	283	300	321	335	372	304	304
Other	352	411	388	341	358	447	402	442	344	288

<sup>26</sup> New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, Statistics  
<http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/stats.htm>

Figure 18 Index Crime Rate by Type (per 100,000 population)

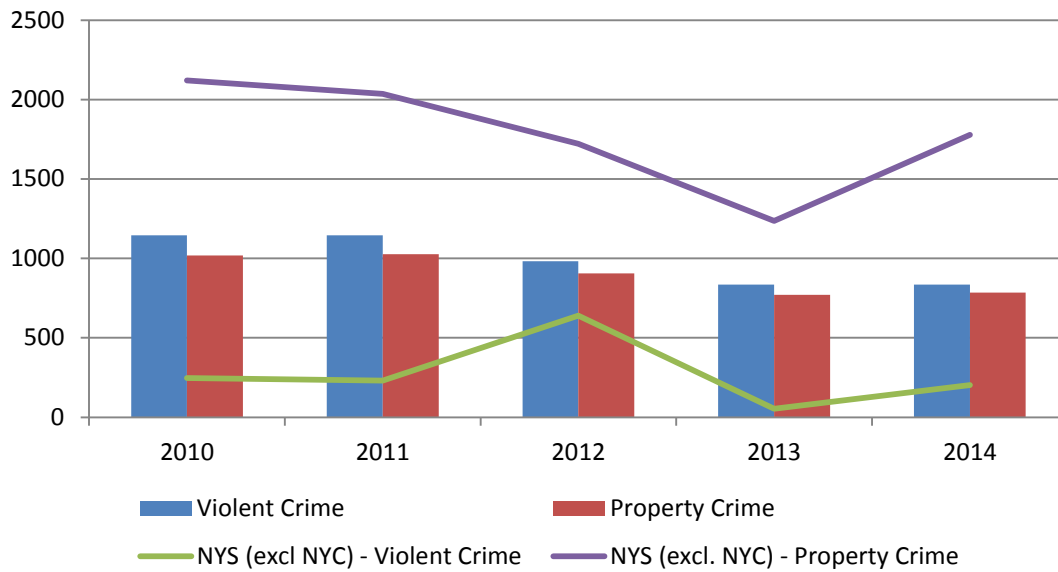


Figure 20 Domestic Violence Crimes by year

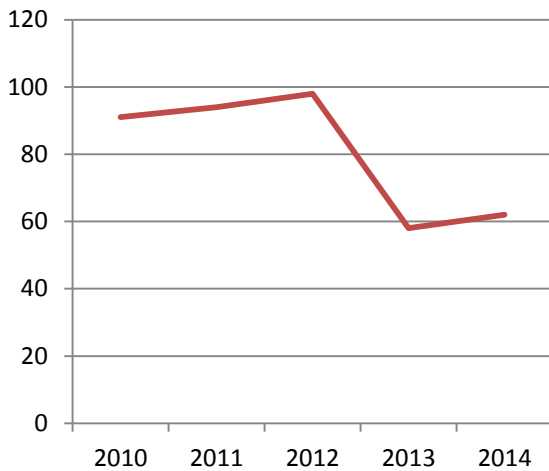
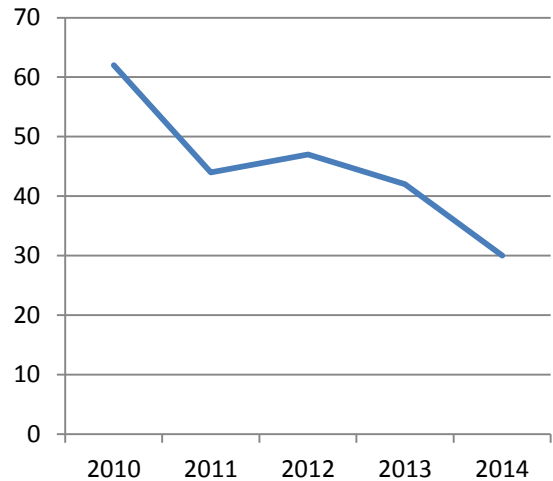


Figure 19 Juvenile Arrests by Year



**Primary Needs/Gaps in Services Identified by Community Stakeholders**

- Increasing drug addiction leading to increased property crimes

**Priorities Identified by Community Organizations/County Departments**

None

## TRANSPORTATION

### **Funding Recommendations:**

Support for transportation options serving vulnerable populations (seniors, people with disabilities, low-income) needing to reach services and appointments

Support for transportation coordination efforts

Subsidies for bus fares for those with low and fixed incomes

### **Access to Vehicles**

While transportation was noted as a problem by many stakeholders, data from the American Community Survey indicated the vast majority of households (91.2%) in the county have access to at least one vehicle which is slightly higher than the NYS (excluding NYC) rate of 90.2%.<sup>27</sup> The majority of workers drive to work alone in their own vehicle (73.7%) or carpool (11.7%). Very few workers (1.4%) rely on public transportation to get to work in Otsego County. Less than 5% of workers aged 16 and over live in households without vehicle access.<sup>28</sup>

Figure 22 Percent of Households with No Vehicles

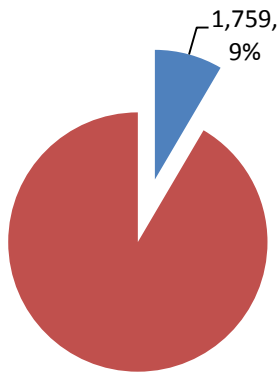
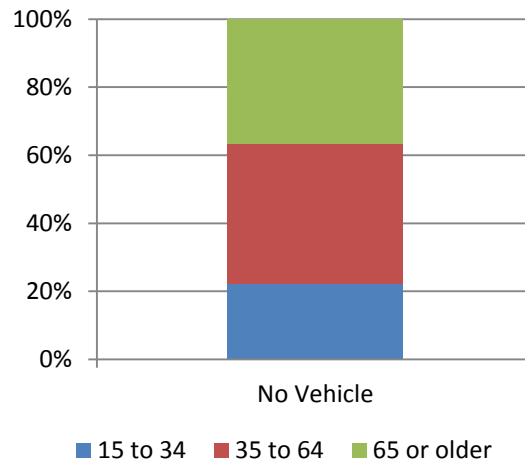


Figure 21 Percent of Individuals without Access to a Vehicle by Age Group



### **Public Transportation**

Otsego County is home to two public transportation systems: the Otsego Express and Oneonta Public Transit. Otsego Express is run by the county and currently runs 9 fixed routes throughout the county. The bus system reduced services in March of 2014 from the 13 routes previously available due to changes in Medicaid transportation reimbursement. Oneonta Public Transit is run by the city of Oneonta and offers 9 fixed routes around the city. Both bus services offer paratransit services as well. In addition to the public transit options, several agencies provide transportation to specific populations including veterans, seniors, people with developmental disabilities, and low-income individuals.

Ridership Data	Total Passengers 2011
Otsego Express (Birnie Bus + Cooperstown Trolley)	113,365
Oneonta Public Transit	713,821

<sup>27</sup> ACS 5- year average, 2013, Table B08201

<sup>28</sup> ACS 5-year average, 2013, Table S0802

### ***Primary Needs/Gaps in Services Identified by Community Stakeholders***

- Support for seniors to use and understand the public transit systems
- Physical assistance for seniors and people with disabilities using the public transit systems e.g. packages/groceries, curbside assistance
- Need for reliable, affordable and convenient transportation options for low-income individuals to access services and employment
- Need for increased transportation routes to remote areas
- Need to match affordable housing with transportation options
- Need for transportation options that coordinate with work schedules
- Need for transportation options outside of 9-5 time frame
- More park and ride options

### ***Priorities Identified by Community Organizations/County Departments***

#### *Otsego County Coordinated Transportation Plan, 2008*

1. Improve the image of public transportation, by educating the public on how to use the public transportation system and to encourage non-riders to become riders. Provide individualized special events focusing on certain population groups.
2. Improve on publicizing public transportation and create a more visual presence in the county through use of various media.
3. Improve upon and recognize the need for personal assistance to passengers with individual needs.
4. Improve upon and emphasize the safety of riding a bus to the general public
5. Concentrate on applying for funding through 5311, 5310, JARC and New Freedoms program in order to minimize expenses to the customer and open other opportunities to the transportation system.
6. Consider increasing operational hours of transportation outside of the M-F 9-5 hours.
7. Work to implement a universal pass system that will interconnect with other public transportation services in the county.
8. Encourage the transportation advisory committee to continue to meet and discuss future improvements and participants to the system.
9. Provide for the accommodation of accessory items - bikes, strollers, walkers, grocery bags, etc.
10. Improve upon the hours of operation of the transportation system especially in the Oneonta area and the access to the Southside area where the major shopping center of the county exists.
11. Work to keep the cost of public transportation minimal to those individuals who are seeking assistance from county government and whose only means of transportation to and from the service organization may be by the county public transportation.
12. Improve upon matching the transportation schedule with seasonal, tourist based employment to allow greater access to the low income and student based population seeking work during the summer in the Cooperstown area.
13. Open discussion between the County and the local school systems to discuss the need to accommodate students in after school activities that may need a ride home after practice.
14. Designate and identify through signage areas of park-n-rides for individuals seeking to access the public transportation route.
15. Improve and enhance energy efficiency in the transportation system.

## ARTS, RECREATION & CULTURE

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### **Funding Recommendations:**

Increased funding for programming staff, marketing, and general operating support

Support for low-income children to participate in recreational activities

Support for arts education opportunities for children and adults

Otsego County has many arts and recreational options available including museums, galleries, parks and performing arts venues. According to a report by Tourism Economics shows that tourism around arts and recreation in Otsego County is a vital economic driver. The report noted that more than 3,400 people are employed in Otsego County's tourism industry and visitor spending in Otsego County topped \$175.6 million. In addition to arts and culture options, townships throughout Otsego County provide many recreation opportunities for both youth and adults including various sports, swimming, and arts and crafts.

12 Museums

3 Galleries

4 Performing Arts Venues

3 State/Regional Parks

Stakeholders noted that money is the primary need for arts and recreation in the county including more funding for arts and cultural initiatives. Stakeholders noted that industry and other traditional forms of revenue bases are diminishing, leaving the arts to compete with human services needs which tend to take priority funding.



### ***Primary Needs/Gaps in Services Identified by Community Stakeholders***

- Family low cost/no cost events
- Use of quality, local artistic talent
- Historical topics to increase public awareness/knowledge of local history
- Collaborative works utilizing local resources
- Projects/events that involve participation/engagement by patrons
- Funding to smaller groups with new ideas
- Events geared toward the 50 and older age bracket
- Live theatre and musical events
- Projects that inspire and engage the entire community rather than a select few
- Additional outreach/utilization of grant funds
- Additional organizational capacity building technical assistance to our constituents
- Additional/separate pools of funding for individual artists, specifically for public arts initiatives.
- Increased arts education opportunities including: Hands-on learning focused on local culture; Skill-building projects that create a greater awareness of the community and world; Projects that connect students to their own communities; Cultural projects that teach youngsters how to make a practical living in the commercial art field; Projects that inspire kids to make art a part of their lives while exposing them to different ideas and cultures in order to foster cooperation and communication between groups of people that might not otherwise interact; Use of the arts to promote knowledge and values to youth by encouraging them to explore and define their personal vision through original art rather than that defined by popular culture; Projects which expose students to teaching/professional artists so they can engage more freely with these individuals about their work, their livelihoods, training and other aspects that support a career in the arts; Projects that involve parents/families, as well as have a willingness to collaborate with resources outside of the school in order to provide enriching learning experiences that offer a wider perspective for students than what they began with.
- Lack of social events for children
- Not many recreational activities for young children; only McDonald's Playland or Innerskate 88
- High cost of gym memberships.

### ***Priorities Identified by Community Organizations/County Departments***

*Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan, 2011*

Funding Tourism Development Projects and Tourism Infrastructure Investments

*Town of Otsego Strategic Plan, 2008*

Promote adequate passive and active recreational opportunities

Promote lakes' recreational uses

*Town of Springfield Comprehensive Plan, 2009*

Enhance recreational opportunities for all ages and capitalize on Otsego Lake.

## *Town of Oneonta Comprehensive Plan*

1. It is recommended that a Town-City recreation commission be created. Area parks and recreation facilities are used freely by all residents and people appear to make no distinction between town facilities and those of the city. It is this committee's position that it would be more effective if decisions on new parks and recreational areas were made as if the system were unified. If successfully implemented, the commission would foster increased cooperation between the two municipalities, resulting in improved recreation opportunities for all of their people.
2. Where land is available and some use is indicated, the Town should consider or mark bicycle and/or walking paths where local residents are agreeable. This could be done, for example, when roads are repaved, assuming they are wide enough to accommodate some extra space for the paths on the sides (or only on one side, depending on conditions). Mixing bicycles and automobiles without bike lanes creates dangerous situations which should be avoided whenever possible.
3. It is recommended that the Town encourage, and cooperate with the City, in the continued development of the Susquehanna Greenway trails and playing fields.
4. When asked which should be most responsible for the cost of expanding or developing recreation resources within the Town, 64% responded that both the Town and private businesses should be responsible. Based on this result, it is recommended that the Town attempt to locate sources of outside funds such as State grants. There is currently a modest amount of money in Town accounts set aside for parks, mainly from fees collected from subdivision projects in lieu of open space (Town Code section 88-19). While this money is insufficient for parkland acquisition or development, it could be used as seed money, either for grant proposal writing or for matching funds.
5. Cross Country Skiing Trails development might be extended by discussions with existing resources that are only active during the summer months such as golf courses and summer camp property.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### **Funding Recommendations:**

Financial support for those who wish to take adult education/job training programs at BOCES in high-need job categories

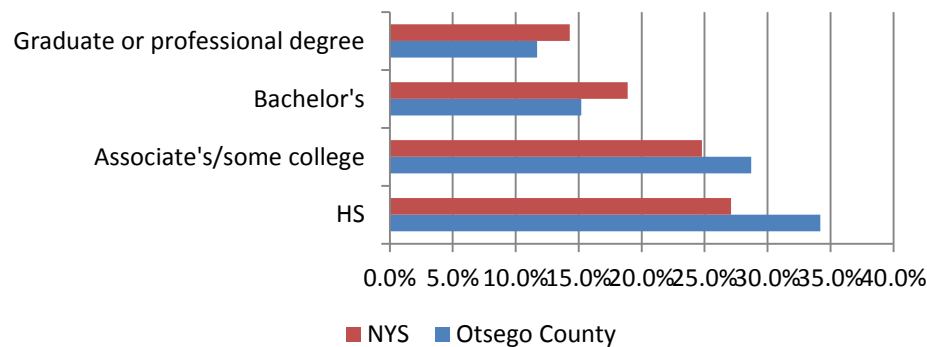
Support for entrepreneurship programming

Support for marketing the region to potential employers and employees, particularly young professionals

### **Educational Attainment**

The educational attainment of Otsego County residents lags behind NYS somewhat with only 26.9% of the population having a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 33.2% in NYS as a whole <sup>29</sup>

Figure 23 Educational Attainment of Population 25 and Older



### **Availability of Adult Education Opportunities**

Otsego County is home to two higher education institutes including:

- Hartwick College, a private, 4-year college in Oneonta offering bachelor's degrees in 31 majors.
- SUNY Oneonta, a 4-year public college part of the SUNY system offering bachelor's degrees and graduate degrees in a wide variety of fields.

Stakeholders noted the lack of a community college in the county and suggested that the absence of associate's degree programs created a gap in the training of the county's workforce.

<sup>29</sup> ACS 5-year estimates, 2013, Table S1501

In addition to the 4-year colleges, BOCES offers several adult education courses to support vocational learning. DCMO BOCES offers several adult education courses to support vocational learning. BOCES currently offers:

- ESL
- TASC & Adult Basic Ed
- Automotive Collision &
- Automotive Technology
- Barbering
- Carpentry & Building Construction
- CDL Training/Certification
- Computer Repair/Networking Tech
- Conservation & Equipment Tech
- Certified Nurses Aide
- Cosmetology

- Culinary
- Early Childhood Development
- OSHA Forklift Operator
- Phlebotomy
- Plumbing
- Practical Nursing
- Security & Law Enforcement
- Small Engine Repair
- Welding
- Visual Communications

Classes are held in the Norwich campus in Chenango County and the Sidney campus in Delaware County, but are not available in Otsego County requiring some residents to travel considerable distances. Stakeholders noted that BOCES classes are not eligible for Federal financial aid and may not be affordable for many individuals who might be interested in attending. Stakeholders noted that BOCES classes are not eligible for Federal financial aid and may not be affordable for many individuals who might be interested in attending.

### Employment

Overall, Otsego County’s unemployment rate is fairly low at 5.3% in June, 2015, slightly lower than the NYS rate of 5.4% in the same time period. While Otsego County has similar rates (79.7%) of labor force participation people aged 25-64 as NYS (78.4%), the Otsego rate is down slightly from the 80.5% rate in 2007 whereas NYS has increased labor force participation during the same time period. The majority of the people not in the labor force are aged 60-64, but Otsego County has a higher non-participation rate than NYS for men aged 35-44 and 54-59.<sup>30</sup>

Table 23 Percent Not in Labor Force by Geography, Age and Sex

Age	Male		Female	
	Otsego County	NYS	Otsego County	NYS
25-29	8.7%	13.9%	15.6%	21.2%
30-34	8.8%	11.2%	20.7%	23.9%
35-44	15.5%	10.7%	15.6%	23.6%
45-54	11.7%	14.3%	16.2%	23.1%
54-59	29.5%	22.1%	26.7%	30.3%
60-61	31.2%	31.2%	43.2%	40.1%
62-64	40.5%	45.2%	53.7%	52.6%

<sup>30</sup> ACS 5-year estimates, 2013 & 3-year estimates, 2007, Table B23001

Educational attainment has a significant impact on employment rates. In general, people in Otsego County with higher levels of education have lower rates of unemployment and higher labor force participation. However, Otsego County has seen a slight improvement in labor force participation for people with less than a high school education moving from 46.5% in 2007 to 40.5% in 2013 whereas all other education levels have seen decreased levels of labor force participation suggesting that new job creation has been mostly been for the low skill/low education workforce.

Figure 24 Educational Attainment by Status in Workforce, Ages 25-64

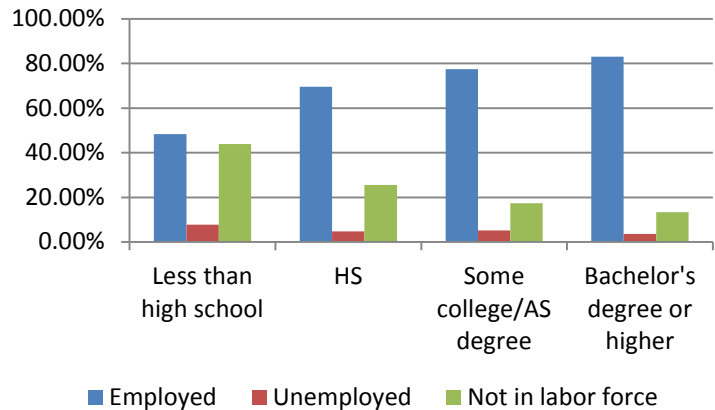


Table 24 Not in the Labor Force by Educational Attainment and Year, Age 25-64

	2013		2007	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than high school	1,015	40.5%	1,395	46.5%
HS	2,206	23.1%	2,077	19.8%
Some college/AS degree	1,581	17.4%	1,277	15.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,216	14.3%	1,119	13.2%
Total not in labor force	6,018	20.3%	5,868	19.6%
Total Population	29,634		30,015	

The number of employees in Otsego County has decreased steadily over the past 7 years. The private sector employs the vast majority of Otsego County's work force.

Figure 26 All Employees across All Industries

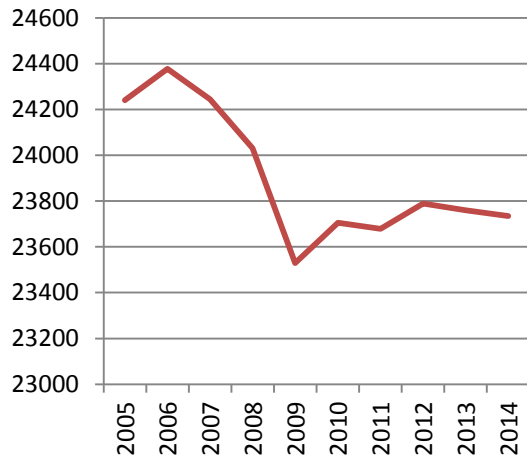
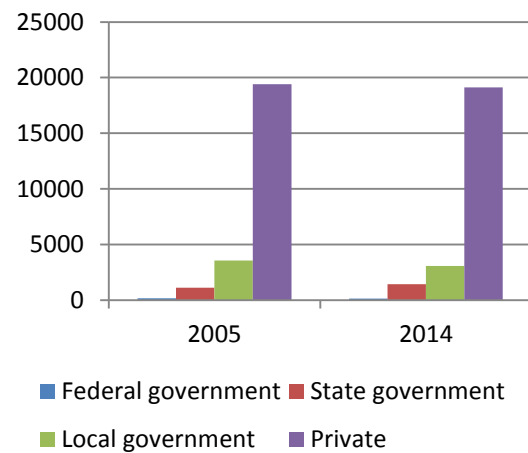


Figure 25 Number of Employees by Sector



The transportation and utilities, health and education, and hospitality industries employ the most people in Otsego County. The construction and manufacturing industries have seen the greatest job loss in Otsego County with education and health seeing the greatest job growth (Table 25).

Real wages have increased slightly in Otsego County from \$35,725 in 2005 (adjusted to 2014 dollars) to \$38,484 in 2014. All sectors except federal government have seen wages increases in this time period. State government saw the most dramatic increase in real wages growing from \$34,206 to \$50,972 between 2005 and 2014 (Figure 28). In the private sector, only the construction, transportation/utilities, and information industries had real wage decreases between 2005 and 2014 while all other industries saw increases (Figure 29).

Figure 27 Percent of Employees by Industry (Private Sector Only)

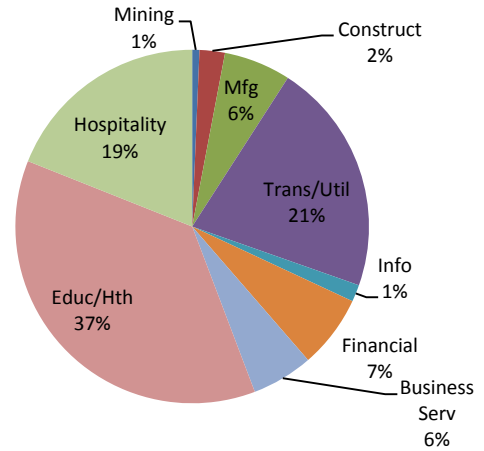


Figure 28 Average Real Wage by Sector

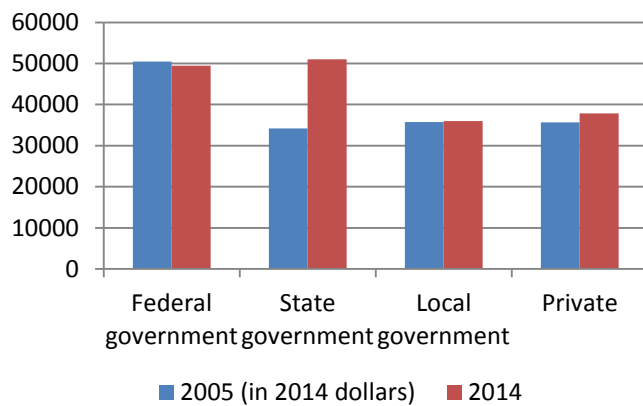
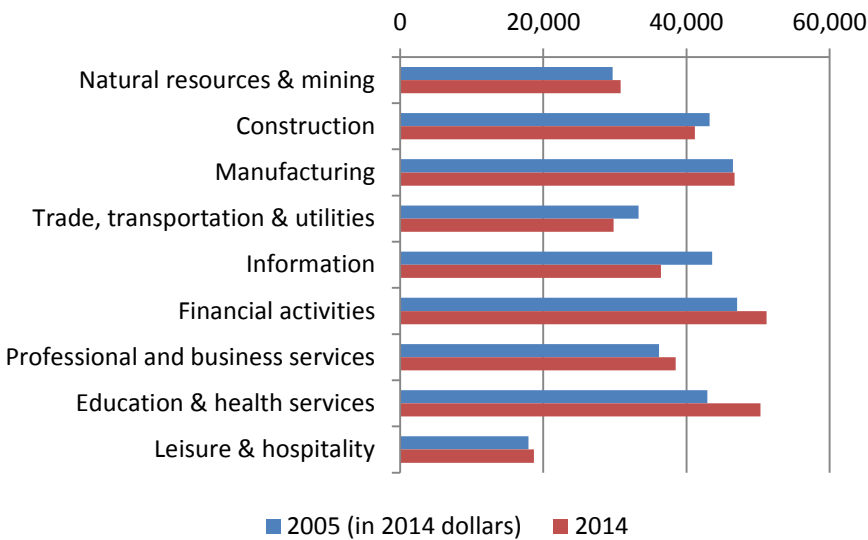


Table 25 Industry by Percent Job Growth/Loss and Average Wage

Industry	Percent Job Growth/Loss 2005-2014	Average Wage 2014
Mining	-3.2%	\$30,811
Construction	-29.7%	\$41,118
Manufacturing	-13.3%	\$46,744
Transportation /Utilities	-8.9%	\$29,816
Information	-8.9%	\$36,454
Financial	-9.5%	\$51,200
Business Services	-6.2%	\$38,497
Education/Health	10.6%	\$50,342
Hospitality	9.8%	\$18,661

Figure 29 Average Real Wage by Industry (Private Sector Only)



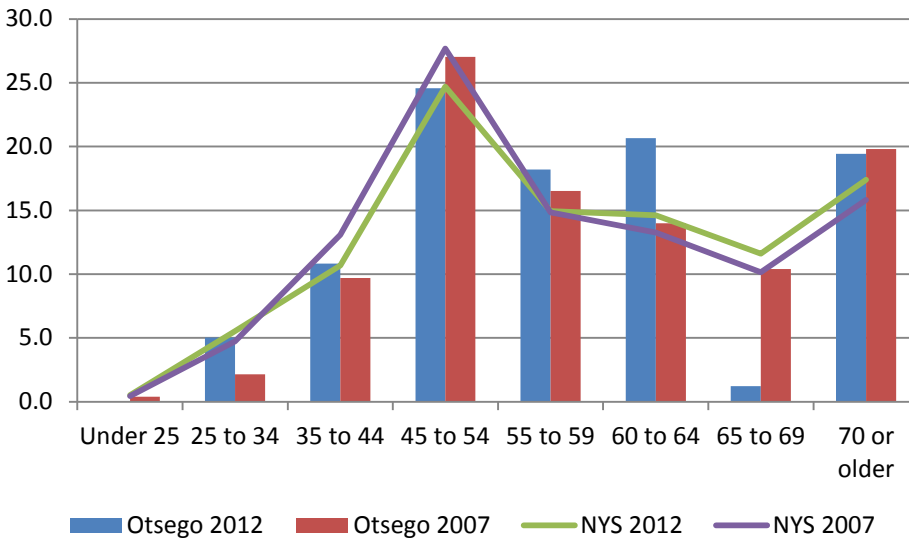
### Agriculture

Unlike most of the surrounding region, agriculture in Otsego County has been increasing in recent years. Between 2007 and 2012, Otsego County increased the number of farms by 1.5% and increased the acres of harvested cropland by 5.1%. The total number of farms with organic sales has decreased by nearly 30%, but the value of both organic and conventional crop sales have increased dramatically. Otsego County has also seen an increase in the number of younger farmers in the county compared to NYS. Between 2007 and 2012 farmers aged 25 to 34 more than doubled (Figure 30).

Table 26 Key Agricultural Indicators

Indicator	Percent change 2007 to 2012
Number of farms	+1.5%
Acres in farms	+2.4%
Acres of harvested cropland	+5.1%
Total woodland acres	+13.7%
Total pastureland acres	-16.9%
Total farms with organic sales	-29.3%
Value of organic product sales	+148.5%
Value of crop sales	+170.9%
Value of livestock/poultry and products sales	+1.0%
Acres treated by commercial fertilizer	+1.3%
Acres treated by manure	-11.5%
Farms receiving government payments	-8.8%
Total government payments in dollars	+42.4%
Primary occupation as farming	55% to 57%

Figure 30 Percent of Owners by Age Group



**Primary Needs/Gaps in Services Identified by Community Stakeholders**

- Training for manufacturing skills like blueprint reading, welding, CNC operators
- Need more for personal care aids, CNAs and other direct care staff
- Lightly populated, but large geographic area makes it difficult for training providers to serve the needs in a cost effective way
- Transportation
- Child care
- Limited access to broadband, challenges with wireless
- Challenges with topography/access to land for development
- Need pipeline of skilled workers to bring companies with high quality jobs to area
- No access to interstate highway/small airport – hard to get to
- Recent lack of leadership
- No community college requires anyone looking for associate’s degree have to go somewhere else



## ***Priority Areas Identified by Community Organizations/County Departments***

*Note: Otsego County and Cooperstown are both in the process of developing new comprehensive plans.*

### *Town of Otsego County Comprehensive Plan - Economic Development*

1. Protect and promote agriculture and ag-tourism businesses
2. Promote diversified economic developments that support existing and future businesses that cater to local needs, and that are consistent with community character.

### *Town of Oneonta Comprehensive Plan, 2013*

The Town and City work together whenever it is in the best interest of both municipalities. Areas where this is possible are:

- a. Southside Water District: This could be done by either working with the City to provide water or by developing a standalone district. The need for a water district on Southside is critical in order to facilitate future development along this corridor.
- b. The following areas have a need for water and sewer services for the existing residents and for future development i. West Oneonta Water District ii. West Oneonta Sewer District iii. East End
- c. The railroad yards have potential commercial development; and the owners, River Corporation, have been working with Cornell and Go-Edu to develop a plan. It is recommended that the Town participate in this plan.
- d. Coordination with the County and the City of Oneonta to establish an Economic Development Group that will work to promote manufacturing and industry along the I- 88 corridor keeping in mind that the Town residents "made it clear of the need to protect the environment."
- e. Coordination with the County and City in writing grant applications concentrating on growing existing businesses and encouraging new types of industry and manufacturing to locate in Oneonta, again keeping in mind the residents "want to protect their quality of life."

### *Otsego Now, Mission & Objectives*

Assist in the enhancement and diversity of the economy of the County of Otsego (the "County") by acting in support of projects in the County that create and/or retain jobs and/or promote private sector investment utilizing the statutory powers of the Agency as set forth under the provisions of the laws of the State of New York.

Otsego Now's prime objective is to provide assistance to existing businesses, expansions, and business startups with professional assistance, tax incentives, educational programs, and access to capital for the purposes of creating jobs and economic development activity within Otsego County.