

Working Together for Washington County’s Children and Families

Washington County Strategic Plan 2026 – 2031

Washington County is home to a strong and resilient community. Families, schools, nonprofits, healthcare providers, businesses, and public agencies work every day to support children and help families thrive.

As the needs of children and families continue to evolve, the county Local Management Board (LMB) developed this Strategic Plan to establish a shared direction between 2026 – 2031. The plan introduces a community investment approach that organizes funding around five shared community priorities, helping ensure resources are aligned where they can make the greatest difference for children and families.

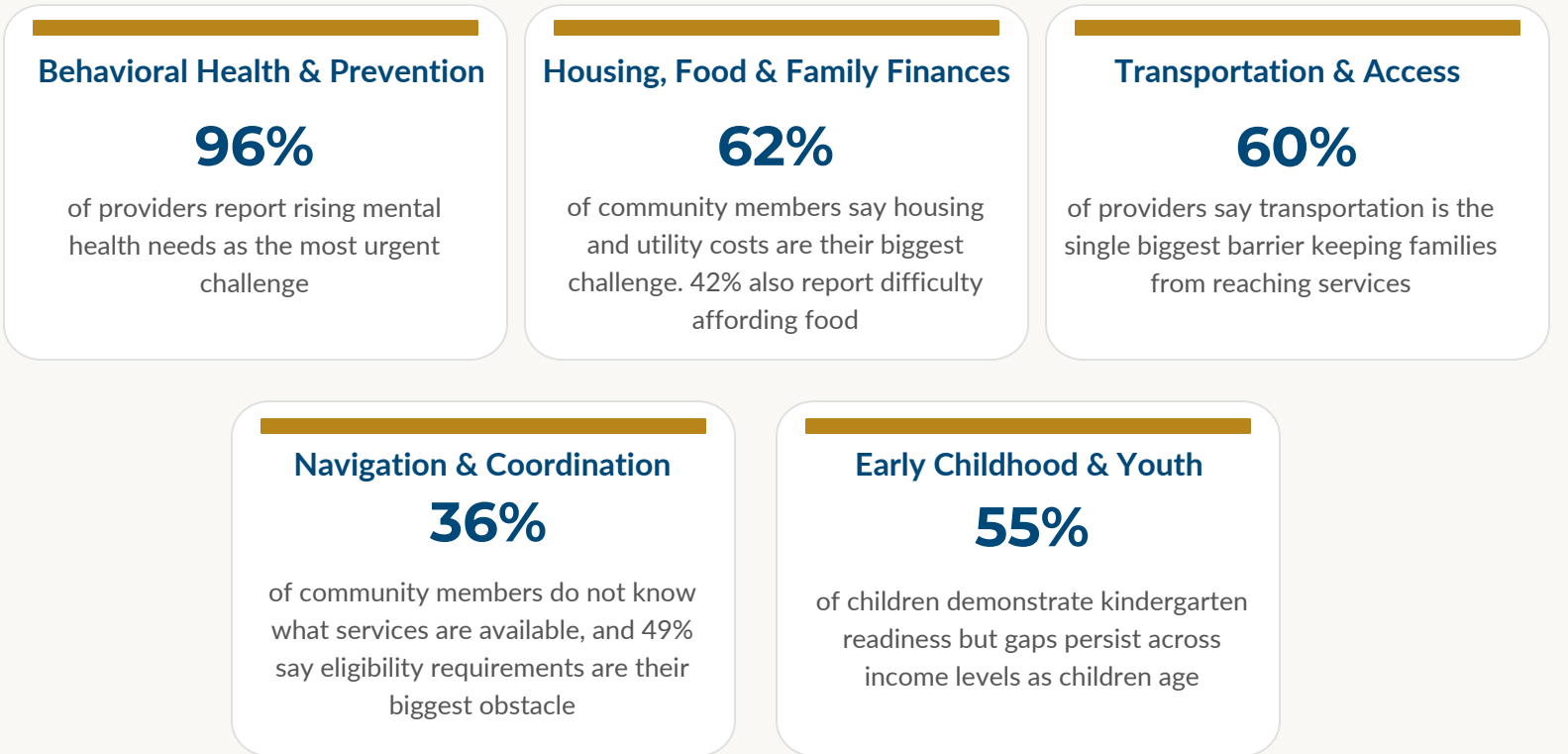
How We Listened



What We Heard

Washington County has real strengths — kindergarten readiness is steadily improving and is now the 5th best in the state, and a broad network of dedicated providers serves families every day. But too many families still face barriers that make it hard to access support, afford the basics, and find help when they need it most.

Through surveys, focus groups, interviews, and a review of local data, five interconnected challenges emerged consistently as the areas where families need the most support.



From Community Needs to Community Action

Our Five Investment Portfolios

A B C D E

Our needs assessment identified **five connected priorities** that consistently emerged through community conversations, surveys, and local data. To turn those priorities into action, the LMB will organize its work around **five funding portfolios** that organize related strategies around a shared community outcome. Together, these portfolios will guide how the LMB invests, builds partnerships, and supports community efforts to improve outcomes for children and families.

A

Behavioral Health and Prevention

Mental health and well-being, from prevention to crisis response

Behavioral health surfaced as an urgent need. Strengthening behavioral health requires a continuum of support that meets people where they are, from prevention and early intervention through to treatment and recovery.

OUR VISION

Children and families have access to the support they need to maintain positive behavioral health and mental well-being, and services are available before challenges escalate into crisis and after crisis has occurred.

EXAMPLE INITIATIVES

 **EARLY INTERVENTION & SUPPORT**
School and community mental health services

 **PREVENTION**
Prevention and resilience programs

 **CRISIS RESPONSE**
Mobile crisis response and stabilization

 **SUBSTANCE USE RECOVERY**
Substance use programs

B

Housing, Food, and Family Finances

Basic needs stability, so families can focus on the future

When families worry about their basic needs, the effects reach beyond household finances. We will support meeting basic needs today so families can build toward a more stable tomorrow.

OUR VISION

Families have the resources to meet basic needs, navigate challenges, and build a strong future for themselves and their children.

EXAMPLE INITIATIVES

 **HOUSING STABILITY**
Eviction and utilities assistance

 **FOOD ACCESS**
Community food access network expansion

 **ECONOMIC MOBILITY**
Supports that help families build financial stability

 **CHILDCARE & FAMILY SUPPORT**
Childcare access and programming for families

C Transportation and access

Connecting families to services, regardless of geography

For many residents, transportation is the barrier between a family and the support that could change their situation.

OUR VISION

Families can access the services, opportunities, and supports they need regardless of geography and transportation barriers.

EXAMPLE INITIATIVES

- | | |
|---|---|
|  TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE
Ride assistance programs |  RURAL ACCESS
Mobile services in rural communities |
|  REMOTE ACCESS
Telehealth and virtual service expansion |  PARTNERSHIPS
Cross-agency transportation coordination |

D Early childhood, adolescent development & youth transitions

Supporting young people from first steps to adulthood

Washington County's strong kindergarten readiness shows that early investment works. The next step is to support children through adolescence and into adulthood.

OUR VISION

Children and youth are supported from early childhood through adulthood, with the opportunities and guidance they need to thrive at every stage.

EXAMPLE INITIATIVES

- | | |
|---|---|
|  EARLY CHILDHOOD
Expand investment in early childhood development |  YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
Mentoring and programming for disconnected youth |
|  EXPANDED LEARNING
Summer learning and enrichment programs |  COLLEGE & CAREER PATHWAYS
Support college attainment and workforce transition |

E Building a connected system families can navigate

Making it easier to find help and move between services

Washington County has many resources. The challenge is making sure families can find, understand, and access them when they need them most.

OUR VISION

Families can find, understand, and access resources. Organizations work together to provide coordinated support.

EXAMPLE INITIATIVES

- | | |
|---|---|
|  RESOURCE NAVIGATION
Helping families connect to the right services |  RESOURCE DIRECTORY
Easy-to-use community resource directory |
|  OUTREACH
Multilingual outreach and awareness campaigns |  COORDINATION SYSTEMS
Cross-agency coordination and referral systems |

INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

The LMB will organize its funding and partnerships around five investment portfolios that reflect the community's highest priorities. Together, these portfolios provide a long-term framework for investing in children and families while strengthening the services, supports, and opportunities that help our community thrive.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

This Strategic Plan is a shared roadmap for improving outcomes for children and families in Washington County. While the LMB will help guide this work, lasting change depends on the continued partnership of families, schools, nonprofits, healthcare providers, businesses, public agencies, and the broader community.

Success won't be measured by how many programs are funded, but by whether children and families experience greater opportunity, stability, and well-being throughout Washington County.

The LMB is committed to tracking progress, sharing updates, and continuing to engage the community as this work moves forward.
