ASSESSING COMMUNITY ASSETS $oldsymbol{\mathsf{\&}}$ OPPORTUNITIES

Asset Mapping in Midcoast Maine

KNOX, LINCOLN, SAGADAHOC, & WALDO COUNTIES

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The term system-involved youth includes young people with lived experiences of any of thefollowing: homelessness, educational pushout, the mental and behavioral health system, the child welfare system, and the youth justice system.

Foreword

ABOUT THE PLACE MATTERS PROJECT

The places in which we live, learn, and grow influence our trajectory in life. The transition from childhood to adulthood is often a challenging experience for young people. Leading research tells us that this important developmental phase, typically defined as ages 14 to 24, is significantly impacted by the community in which young people live and the resources to which they have access.\(^1\) Yet communities are not equally resourced and many young people lack access to the support and services they need to thrive as young adults.

System-Involved Youth are a vulnerable and underserved population for whom the transition to adulthood is often marred with obstacles. At age eighteen, many of these young people age out of child-serving systems and are often left to navigate this difficult transition on their own. Youth with criminal records stemming from involvement in the justice system face additional barriers to employment, education, housing, and other essential resources.² This is further compounded by persistent opportunity gaps experienced by youth of color, girls, LGBTQ+, and gender nonconforming youth who often make up a disproportionate percentage of these system populations.³,⁴

The relationships among demographics, system involvement, and subsequent outcomes are often referred to as "pipelines." Some examples are the "school-to-prison pipeline," the "child welfare-to-juvenile justice pipeline," and even the "womb-to-foster care"

- 1 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2019. The Promise of Adolescence: Realizing Opportunity for All Youth. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/25388
- 2 Hawes, S., King E., Sanchez, M., & Shaler G. (March 2017). *Unsealed fate: The unintended consequences of inadequate safeguarding of juvenile records in Maine*. Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/2Ek6SCG
- 3 Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2014). *Race for results: Building a path to opportunity for all children*. Retrieved from http://www.aecf.org/resources/race-for-results/
- 4 Movement Advancement Project, Center for American Progress, and Youth First. (2017). *Unjust: LGBTQ youth incarcerated in the juvenile justice system*. Retrieved from http://www.lgbtmap.org/criminal-justice-youthdetention
- 5 Petteruti, A. (2011). Education under arrest. The case against police in schools. Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute. Retrieved from http://www.justicepolicy.org/uploads/justicepolicy/documents/educationunderarrest_fullreport.pdf
- 6 Whitaker, A., Torres-Guillen, S., Morton, M., Jordan, H., Coyle, S., Mann, A., & Sun, W. (n.d.). *Cops and no counselors: How the lack of school mental health staff is harming students*. American Civil Liberties Union. Retrieved from https://www.aclu. org/sites/default/files/field_document/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf
- 7 Herz, D.C., Ryan, J.P., & Bilchik, S. (2010). Challenges facing crossover youth: An examination of juvenile-justice decision making and recidivism. Family Court Review, 48(2), 305–321. doi:10.1111/j.1744-1617.2010.01312.x

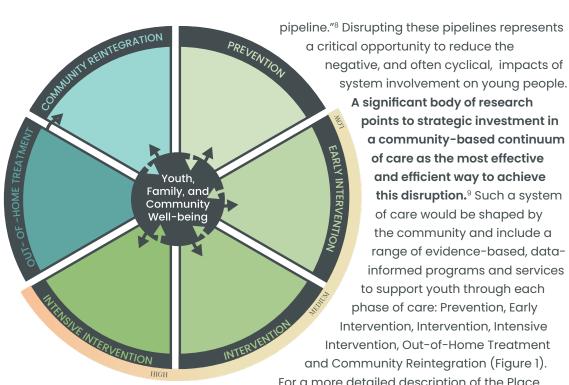


FIGURE 1 **Community-based Continuum of Care**

points to strategic investment in a community-based continuum of care as the most effective and efficient way to achieve this disruption.9 Such a system of care would be shaped by the community and include a range of evidence-based, datainformed programs and services

to support youth through each phase of care: Prevention, Early Intervention, Intervention, Intensive Intervention, Out-of-Home Treatment and Community Reintegration (Figure 1). For a more detailed description of the Place

Matters Community-Based Continuum of Care, refer to the Place Matters: Aligning Investments in a Community-Based Continuum of Care for Maine Youth Transitioning to Adulthood¹⁰ report which is available on our website.11

Recognizing the need for consistent and targeted services to support systems-involved, transition-aged youth, the Place Matters project aims to support the state of Maine and its communities in redesigning, implementing, and evaluating a community-based continuum of care through systems innovation, data resources, and community inclusion. Our work focuses on translating data and innovative practices into community-based solutions that are both responsive to local needs and supplement existing assets so that all transition-aged young people in Maine thrive into adulthood.

Housed under the Justice Policy Program at the University of Southern Maine's Cutler Institute, the Place Matters team is a collaboration of researchers, policy advisors, data visualization experts, and directly impacted young people. The Place Matters project has received support from the following funders: the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Rocking Moon Foundation, the Maine Juvenile Justice Advisory Group, and the Maine Economic Improvement Fund.

- 8 Ketteringham, E.S., Cremer, S., & Becker, C. (2016). Healthy mothers, healthy babies: A reproductive justice response to the "Womb-to-Foster-Care Pipeline." CUNY Law Review, 20(1), 77-125 Retrieved from https://academicworks.cuny.edu/clr/vol20/iss1/4/
- 9 Heilbrun, K., Sevin, N., Redding, R. (2005). Juvenile Delinquency: Prevention, Assessment, and Intervention. Oxford University Press.
- 10 Sanchez, M., King, E., & Ward, J. (2019). Place matters: Aligning investments in a community-based continuum of care for Maine youth transitioning to adulthood. Portland, ME: University of Southern Maine. Retrieved from https://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/cutler/Place%20Matters%20CoC%20 FINAL.pdf
- 11 https://justicepolicyprogr.wixsite.com/imagineanewfuture/place-matters

Our Three Core Values

SYSTEM INNOVATION

We are committed to working towards universal goals and targeted reinvestment into a community-based continuum of care based on analysis of underlying indicators of economic and social wellbeing.

DATA RESOURCES

We are informed by and accountable to the best available data across systems and communities, including the underlying factors and forces of place that shape outcomes.

COMMUNITY INCLUSION

We engage and activate community assets and accountability in local problem solving and adaptation.

PLACE MATTERS REPORT SERIES

Place Matters has produced a series of reports summarizing our research, community engagement and policy recommendations. The reports in this series are intended to inform and support the work of policy makers and community members dedicated to improving outcomes for Maine's youth. As our work continues, additional reports and resources will be added to the series. All published reports can be accessed in full on our website.

Reports in the PlaceMatters series include:

Aligning Investments in a Community-Based Continuum of Care for Maine Youth Transitioning to Adulthood¹²

The first report in this series examines the influence of place on our developmental experiences, and how the resources and supports we have access to shape our pathways into adulthood. Citing national research and state level statics, this report highlights how Maine's transition-aged, systems-involved youth are negatively impacted by inconsistently available community-based interventions and supports, particularly in rural areas. It further argues that these gaps in services are exacerbated by state reductions in services and fluctuating government contributions to the social safety net, leaving many of our most vulnerable young people without the support they need to thrive in their communities.

In response to this growing need, Place Matters calls on policy makers and community members to work collectively across our systems of care to align resources and efforts into a community-based continuum of care that is responsive to the needs of the diverse communities across Maine's 16 counties. The second half of this report outlines Place Matters' vison of such a continuum of care. It defines each of the six phases of care included in the continuum and provides examples of promising community-based programs from around the country. Finally, this report identifies six recommendations for policy makers, youth advocates and community members to ensure all Maine transitionaged youth experience a fair, equitable, and responsive system of care that contributes to positive youth outcomes (Figure 2). In particular, community asset mapping was highlighted as an important first step in assessing a community's assets and needs.

Justice Reinvestment

The concept of justice reinvestment is central to the strategies of resourcing a community-based continuum of care and informs the work of the Place Matters project. The **Urban Institute defines** justice reinvestment as a system wide process designed for local leaders who want to rethink how they allocate resources throughout their criminal justice and social service system.

Commit to **aligned action** that measurably improves positive youth outcomes for transitionagedyouth.

Create opportunities
for those with lived
experiences to
participate in building
solutions.

Recommit to a **leadership body** that shares accountability across systems.

Invest in strategies that focus on **common measures of success**.

Identify **community** assets, needs and opportunities for **investment**.

Prioritize reinvestment in community-based interventions and capacity building.

FIGURE 2
Six Recommendations for Positive Youth Outcomes

¹² Sanchez, M., King, E., & Ward, J. (2019). Place matters: Aligning investments in a community-based continuum of care for Maine youth transitioning to adulthood. Portland, ME: University of Southern Maine. Retrieved from https://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/cutler/Place%20Matters%20CoC%20 FINAL.pdf

From Pipelines to Informing Place-Based Strategies for Maine's Older Youth¹³

The second report in this series uses county and state level data to illustrate the structural, placed-based risk factors at play in communities across our state which negatively impact youth outcomes. Building on research that identifies social and economic factors as influential in shaping a young person's predisposition for both risk and protective patterns of behavior, this report challenges the notion that individual choices drive delinquent or criminal behavior. Rather, key community characteristics have been consistently identified as determinants of youth vulnerability, risky behavior, and poor outcomes. Examples of these community level determinants include concentrated poverty, housing stability, school quality, and social capital.

This report asserts that understanding youth outcomes as a product of place is critical for both policy discussions and informing investments in strategies. Furthermore, we must have a clear, comprehensive, and data-informed understanding of the challenges young people face in our communities in order to create population level change. By analyzing the current trends in youth outcomes, we can accurately identify where young people are succeeding and where we need to redesign and reinvest our efforts. To that end, this report provides in-depth analysis of 14 place-based economic and social determinants of youth outcomes, comparing trends across counties using a specific population data point selected to measure each determinant (Figure 3). For example, the median family income was used to compare the determinant of Household Economic Well-being across counties as well as at the state level. In addition to exploring these key determinants of youth outcomes, the report also includes "snapshots" for each of Maine's 16 counties providing a deeper look at each county's strengths and opportunities to inform the level and type of investments needed in a community. Further, these determinants provide a baseline of population level indicators against which to measure subsequent progress.

Household Economic Well-being	\$ Community Financial Security
Economic Inclusion	A Housing Affordability
School Quality	Community Security
Social Belonging	3 Area Economic Growth
Human Capital	Youth Homelessness
Youth Justice Involvement	Child Welfare System Involvement
Educational Pushout	Mental & Behavioral Health Care

FIGURE 3
Economic and Social
Determinants of Youth
Outcomes

¹³ Sanchez, M., King, E., and Dumont, R. (2019). Place matters: From pipelines to place-based strategies for Maine's older youth. Retrieved from https://cec47d12-75a7-45a9-98a1-99f79c7lca5b.filesusr.com/ugd/d5b6af_2cela22f71814c94936d1309e4e79198.pdf



Assessing Community Assets & Opportunities – A Case Study of Asset Mapping in Androscoggin County

The third report in the Place Matters series provides a case study of asset mapping in Maine's communities. Turning to Androscoggin County as a community in which to pilot this grassroots approach, the report explores existing assets and needs in the county. It looks at how this information can inform investments in a community-based continuum of care that is responsive to both population level data as well as the voices of youth and individuals who live and work in that community.

Drawing on the comprehensive data analysis conducted in the second Place Matters report, this report first examines Androscoggin County's strengths and opportunities regarding the social and economic determinants previously outlined. The second part of this report synthesizes this information with local expertise and experiences gained by engaging young people and adults in asset mapping and community dialogues. The report provides analysis of this important qualitative data, highlighting common themes that emerged from community insights on existing assets and opportunities for investment. The report concludes with recommendations to further efforts to improve youth outcomes in Androscoggin County stemming from both the community's insights and best practices identified through research from around the nation.

Transitioning From Youth to Adulthood - Mapping the Impact of Systems & Places on Youth Pathways (Forthcoming)

The fourth report in this series seeks to lift up the voices of Maine's youth and place their lived experiences at the center of public discourse and decision-making. This study elicited life stories from 36 youth (age 14-24) using art-based narrative inquiry methods to map their journeys from childhood to adulthood. This forthcoming report will offer a deeper look at the firsthand experiences of Maine's systems-involved youth and explore how their stories can and should inform the development of a community-based continuum of care.

A Toolkit for Community Asset Mapping (Forthcoming)

The fifth report in this series offers a guide for policy makers, community organizers, and youth advocates wanting to conduct asset mapping in their communities. The report will walk users through the steps of analyzing population level data, engaging youth expertise, eliciting cross-systems feedback and using the information gathered to elevate community action in order to improve youth outcomes. It will share best practices and recommendations as well as results-focused tools and resources to support this important foundational step in developing a community-based continuum of care.



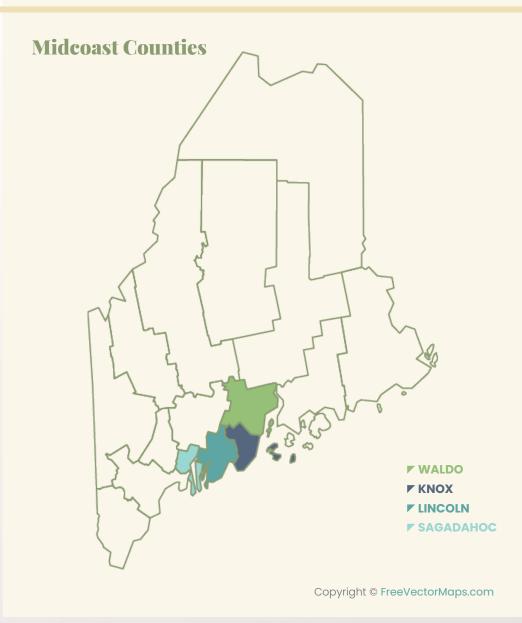
Introduction

Every community or place has positive elements, referred to in this report as **assets**, whether they be programs, spaces, organizations, or people. He They also have place-based structural risk factors and service gaps that represent **opportunities** for community level investments. To understand where and how to best direct resources within a community it is necessary to be informed about the current landscape of that community's assets, needs, and opportunities. Community members are often the best source of information about their community. Aligning population and system data with the experiences and expertise of community members develops a clear picture of what services currently exist, what services should exist, and what steps are needed to build an effective community-based continuum of care. In

Community Asset Mapping is a strength-based approach to gathering information about community resources in order to guide solutions within that community through a combination of population level data analysis and community stakeholder engagement. This report provides a case study of asset mapping in Maine's Midcoast communities. The report explores existing assets and needs in Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo counties. It also looks at how this information can inform investments in a community-based continuum of care that is responsive to both population level data as well as the voices of youth and individuals who live and work in that community.

¹⁴ Kretzmann, J., & McKnight, J. (1993). Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets. Evanston, IL: Institute for Policy Research.

¹⁵ This toolkit is not being offered as a complete accounting of every program, service, or organization focused on youth in these counties. There are programs, services, and organizations that are doing beneficial work in the region that were not captured by this process.





ABOUT THE MIDCOAST REGION

For the purpose of this report, the Midcoast represents a region in Maine that includes Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo counties. Together these four counties represent 11% of the Maine population with 149,977¹⁶ people. Of those residents, 37,059 or 25%¹⁷ are under the age of 24. The populations in each county range from 34,635 in Lincoln to 39,772 in Knox. Sagadahoc is the smallest county in Maine by geographic area, and thus has the highest population density in the Midcoast region at 139.1 people per square mile. Topsham is the largest city in the area with 8,878 people, followed closely by Bath (8,338), and Rockland (7,165). ¹⁸

There are 16,197 youth aged 14–24 who are transitioning to adulthood in the whole population (Figure 4) of the Midcoast region. Within that population are a number of system populations, or populations being served by public systems that can be supported by a community-based continuum of care. Examples of early indicators of involvement for these system populations in the Midcoast include approximately 687 youth who were disconnected from school, 798 who were referred to Maine's behavioral health system, 1,812 youth who were referred to child welfare, 290 youth who were referred to the juvenile justice system, and 115 youth who have experienced homelessness. Furthermore, many of these youth are involved in multiple systems. Although a lack of data sharing across systems makes quantifying multiple system involvement challenging in Maine, national data shows substantial numbers of youth who experience multiple system involvement, often with inadequate supports amplifying poor outcomes. Additionally, as system-involved youth transition to adulthood, their outcomes impact and are impacted by the well-being of the broader community illustrating how places can both shape and be shaped by the people who live there.

16 All population level statistics from: United States Bureau of the Census. (2019). *Quick Facts*. Retrieved November, 3, 2020 from, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts

17 Population breakouts by age from: United States Bureau of the Census. (2018). *American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables*. Retrieved November 03, 2020 from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/

- 18 United States Bureau of the Census. (2019). *Quick Facts*. Retrieved November, 3, 2020 from, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts
- 19 Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2020). Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2019. Retrieved from https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/.
- 20 Homeless counts and counts of youth disconnected from school come from the Maine Department of Education, 2018 data. Counts of youth receiving behavior health services and youth involved with the child welfare system come from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, 2017 data. Counts of youth involved with the juvenile justice system come from the Maine Department of Corrections, 2017 data.
- 21 Currie, J., & Tekin, E. (2006). Does child abuse cause crime? NBER Working Paper No. 12171. Retrieved from http://www.nber.org/papers/w12171
- 22 As was demonstrated in Sanchez, M., King, E., and Dumont, R. (2019). Place matters: From pipelines to place-based strategies for Maine's older youth. Retrieved from https://cec47d12-75a7-45a9-98a1-99f79c71ca5b.filesusr.com/ugd/d5b6af_2ce1a22f71814c94936d1309e4e79198.pdf

1 in **4**

MIDCOAST RESIDENTS

are age

24 or younger

Midcoast Youth

EARLY INDICATORS OF INVOLVEMENT IN SYSTEM POPULATIONS

- 687 disconnected from school
- 1,812 referred in child welfare
- referred to the juvenile justice system
- have experienced homelessness



Methods

EXAMINATION OF POPULATION LEVEL QUANTITATIVE DATA

Data gathering in the Midcoast began with an examination of population level quantitative data that points to research based factors influencing youth and community outcomes. Drawing on the comprehensive analysis conducted for the second Place Matters report,²³ this report uses the social and economic wellbeing and system involvement data previously outlined by the Place Matters project to explore Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo counties' youth trends and identify areas of strength and opportunities for investment in the local continuum of care. This foundational information provided critical context and baseline data from which to launch our community stakeholder engagement.

For a complete description of the methodology behind those indicators, please refer to the Place Matters: From Pipelines to Informing Place-Based Strategies²⁴ report, which is available on our website.

COMPILATION OF QUALITATIVE DATA

The qualitative phase of the research sought to synthesize the current population level data with local expertise and experiences by engaging local stakeholders representing a wide variety of youth-serving organizations and agencies in asset mapping, community dialogues, and key informant interviews. In total, 137 people were engaged in this process.

COMMUNITY DIALOGUES & ASSET MAPPING

Community assets and opportunities for investment were gathered from stakeholders through community dialogues and asset mapping done at a Place Matters summit and combined with a Virtual Community Asset Mapping activity.

In January 2020, Place Matters held a Midcoast Summit focused on Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc and Waldo counties. The event was held at the University of Maine Hutchinson Center in Belfast, Maine and convened 60 community stakeholders representing a wide variety of youth-serving organizations and agencies from across the Midcoast region. The summit included an overview of the Place Matters project and an exploration of what investments are needed to expand the community-based continuum of care in each of the four Midcoast counties. Attendees participated in a data walk using county and state level data to examine the structural, placed-based

23 Sanchez, M., King, E., and Dumont, R. (2019). Place matters: From pipelines to place-based strategies for Maine's older youth. Retrieved from https://cec47d12-75a7-45a9-98a1-99f79c7lca5b. filesusr.com/ugd/d5b6af_2ce1a22f71814c94936d1309e4e79198.pdf

24 Sanchez, M., King, E., and Dumont, R. (2019). Place matters: From pipelines to place-based strategies for Maine's older youth. Retrieved from https://cec47d12-75a7-45a9-98a1-99f79c7lca5b. filesusr.com/ugd/d5b6af_2cela22f71814c94936d1309e4e79198.pdf

risk factors which negatively impact youth outcomes across our state. The summit culminated with a Community Asset Mapping activity in which attendees listed assets that help support youth in their county and identified any gaps in service and opportunities for growth.

In addition to the Midcoast Summit, the Place Matters team designed a Virtual Community Asset Mapping activity to update and gather additional assets utilizing an online survey. The virtual asset mapping activity was sent to a list of 217 Midcoast stakeholders and community service providers in October and November 2020. In total, 22 (10% response rate) responses were received from stakeholders in the Midcoast from the online survey.

Both attendees and virtual participants were invited to name assets in their community that help meet the needs of youth in each of the six phases of care on the Place Matter's continuum of care: Prevention, Early Intervention, Intervention, Intensive Intervention, Outof-Home Treatment, and Community Reintegration. Individuals were asked to focus on one county and were also asked to share any gaps in service or opportunities for growth in each of these area. This report presents a combined summary of the assets named at both the Midcoast Summit and in the online survey.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

To supplement and expand on data gathered at the summit and in the virtual asset mapping survey, key informant interviews were conducted with stakeholders by a community partner in 2020. In total, 18 interviews were conducted with stakeholders from Knox County. The data from these interviews was incorporated into the qualitative data from the Midcoast Summit and the online survey.

Additional qualitative data was gathered through two focus groups (total n=37) made up of corrections staff and administrators. These focus groups featured discussions of assets and opportunities in these specific counties, as well as statewide. Data relevant to assets and opportunities in the four midcoast counties was incorporated into analysis that informed this report.

Finally, in 2021, several listening circles were held by Restorative Justice Project (RJP) of Maine in Knox County in collaboration with USM. These circles included 49 young people ages 14-18, whose perspectives were incorporated into this report.

CODING & ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Following the summit, the lists of assets and needs generated from the conversations was cleaned and entered into a dataset. Internet research was conducted to confirm accurate information and add additional details for each organization or service named. The data from the Virtual Community Asset Mapping survey was exported and added into the dataset from the summit. Duplicates were removed and data was analyzed for themes including phases of care and service sector. Qualitative comments about gaps and opportunities were coded and grouped into themes for summarizing.



LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH & REPORT

Place Matters acknowledges that there are programs, services, and organizations doing beneficial work in the Midcoast region that were not captured by this process. This report intends to present a picture of the assets and opportunities that were frequently named by community members who participated in data gathering methods for this project, to reflect resources that are regarded as assets by communities they serve. The assets and opportunities included within this report do not represent an exhaustive list for each county. Additionally, this report is not intended as an evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs identified, since establishing effectiveness for all populations, especially for those defined by race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation is complex and not possible within the resources available for this report.

The county level results summarized in this report reflect the information and opinions shared by the participants and are not intended to represent an exhaustive list of youth assets or needs in each of the Midcoast counties. The phases of care assigned to assets were provided by participants and may not accurately represent the full spectrum of supports and services these programs or organizations offer.

Finally, the global pandemic had impact on the methodology, timeline, and data gathered for this report.





By the Numbers

PLACE MATTERS' MEASURES OF SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS

The population level data analysis conducted for the *Place Matters: From Pipelines to Informing Place-Based Strategies*²⁵ report served as the starting point for a closer look at Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc and Waldo counties' youth outcomes. Based on a diverse body of research, that report identified nine community indicators that shape outcomes for youth and families²⁶ along with five indicators of system involvement for a total of 14 place-based social and economic determinants of youth outcomes. These determinants provide a framework for assessing population level factors and outcomes at the county level and comparing these trends across counties by using a specific population data point selected to measure each determinant.

For example, the median family income was used to compare the determinant of Household Economic Well-being across counties as well as at the state level. The chart on the following page (Figure 4) lists all 14 determinants along with a short description and the population data point selected to measure each. Indicators that are unfavorable in comparison to the state are emphasized in the following tables, with the exception of the three indicators chosen for the mental and behavioral health care system involvement outcome.²⁷

Place Matters acknowledges that the measures summarized here have limitations. Together they serve as a starting point and highlight what is needed in terms of a data-informed understanding of underlying factors and root causes that often are precursors to systems involvement for Maine's youth. For more information on how these determinants were developed, and to review Place Matters' analysis of state and county youth outcomes, please refer to the Place Matters: From Pipelines to Informing Place-Based Strategies²⁸ report, which is available on our website.

- 25 Sanchez, M., King, E., and Dumont, R. (2019). Place matters: From pipelines to place-based strategies for Maine's older youth. Retrieved from https://cec47d12-75a7-45a9-98a1-99f79c7lca5b. filesusr.com/ugd/d5b6af_2cela22f71814c94936d1309e4e79198.pdf
- 26 In looking at population outcomes, it is beyond the scope and resources of this report to prove a causal relationship between underlying social forces, the assets that mitigate them, and the system outcomes that youth experience. But an examination of these indicators side by side suggests a relationship between population conditions and early system involvement in these counties.
- 27 The goal for communities isn't necessarily a reduction or increase mental or behavioral health care involvement, but rather achieving a fuller understanding about how and why young people are identified for services, which is why there is no clear way to highlight comparisons to the state as favorable or unfavorable.
- 28 Sanchez, M., King, E., and Dumont, R. (2019). Place matters: From pipelines to place-based strategies for Maine's older youth. Retrieved from https://cec47d12-75a7-45a9-98a1-99f79c7lca5b. filesusr.com/ugd/d5b6af_2cela22f71814c94936d1309e4e79198.pdf

		Determinant	Description		
	(5)	HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC WELLBEING	Economic stability is directly tied to the ability of individuals and families to access quality school systems, housing, healthcare, and participate fully in the workforce and economic life of their communities.		
O	A	HOUSING AFFORDABILITY	Having access to quality, affordable housing has a profound impact on individual and family well-being.		
BEIN	(S)	AREA ECONOMIC GROWTH	Area economic growth and opportunity is a crucial component of community well-being. The ability of community members to obtain work and a livable wage has great bearing on the financial security of individuals and families.		
NOMIC & SOCIAL WELL	\$	FINANCIAL SECURITY	Young people who grow up in communities affected by poverty experience negative outcomes such as: less economic mobility over the course of a lifetime, worse health outcomes, increased exposure to and participation in crime and delinquency.		
	1	ECONOMIC INCLUSION	In communities where economic opportunities and income are unequal, families and individuals who have a lesser share in the community's economic prosperity suffer worse outcomes.		
		SCHOOL QUALITY	School quality refers to a variety of measures including student and teacher engagement, access to advanced curriculum, readiness for college, and a safe school environment.		
ECON		COMMUNITY SECURITY	Exposure to crime, violence, and social disorder decreases perceived and actual security in homes and communities.		
	4 4	SOCIAL BELONGING	Youth sense of belonging entails having access to full participation in community life, being respected at a basic human level, and feeling "part of" the community such that one can co-create that community and rely on the community for support.		
		HUMAN CAPITAL	Human capital can be described as the capabilities and understanding that exist in a community that can be used in a productive way. A community's education level is a major component of human capital.		
		EDUCATIONAL PUSHOUT	In-school and out-of-school suspensions are a form of exclusionary school discipline and are an early indicator of educational push-out.		
SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT	•	MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT	Research has consistently demonstrated the importance of early community level responses to youth with emerging emotional, behavioral and developmental challenges.		
	•	YOUTH HOMELESSNESS	It is known nationally that there is significant overlap between youth experiencing homelessness and the justice system, as well as with the child welfare system, and disproportionality in how homelessness impacts Black/		
SAS		YOUTH JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT	Youth justice involvement can be understood as an outcome of adverse community environments, as well as a determinant of a community's well-being in terms of community members' health, economic prosperity, and public safety.		
FIGU		CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT	Similar to juvenile justice involvement, involvement in the child welfare system is both an outcome of adverse community environments and a determinant of community well-being.		

Measure	KNOX	LINCOLN	SAGADAHOC	WALDO	MAINE
Household Income The midpoint of income distribution.	\$53,117	\$54,041	\$60,457	\$50,162	\$53,024
Housing Cost Burden Housing burden rates.	31%	31%	30%	28%	31%
Unemployment Percentage of civilian labor force that is unemployed.	4.7%	3.4%	4.1%	6.5%	5.3%
Poverty The percent of families below the poverty line.	8.9%	7.6%	7.6%	9.6%	8.4%
Income Inequality The Gini Coefficient is a measure of income inequality that can range from 0 to 1. The higher the Gini Coefficient (closer to 1) the more uneven the income distribution of a given community.	0.431	0.446	0.425	0.446	0.453
4 Year High School Graduation Rate The percent of freshmen who graduate in four years.	91%	85%	86%	87%	87%
Crime The number of reported violent crime offenses per 100,000 population.	12.1	11.0	13.4	8.0	16.3
Social Belonging Answers of agree or strongly agree from the Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS) in 2017.	59.9%	59.8%	58.6%	48.6%	57.3%
Education Level The percent of the population with a BA or higher in 2017.	31%	33%	35%	30%	30%
Suspension Rates Rate of suspensions for every 100 students in 2017.	4.4	2.5	2.4	4.9	5.2
Individualized Education Program (IEP) and 504 plans Percent of student population with an IEP or a 504 plan in 2018.	24.1	24.8	24.1	23.9	21.3
Targeted Case Management (TCM) Behavioral Services Percent of youth who receive TCM behavioral services in a community as the result of a confirmed diagnosis in 2017.	8.1	7.7	8.4	7.4	2.56
Targeted Case Management (TCM) Developmental Services Percent of youth who receive TCM developmental services in a community as the result of a confirmed diagnosis in 2017.	1.92	1.99	1.67	2.91	7.5
Student Homelessness Rates The percent of student population who report homelessness in 2018.	0.60%	0.25%	0.89%	0.62%	0.72%
DOC Referrals from Law Enforcement Rate per 100 of population age 14-24 referred to corrections in 2017.	3.29	5.84	5.45	3.69	4.34
DHHS Referrals Rate per 100 of appropriate reports to child protective services in 2018.	6.8	7.4	4.8	7.7	6.5

KNOX, LINCOLN, SAGADAHOC, AND WALDO'S YOUTH OUTCOMES & DETERMINANTS

Using the social and economic determinants outlined in the previous section we are able to gain a better understanding of the placed-based risk factors at play in the Midcoast region. The previous chart (Figure 4) provides a "County Snapshot" comparing each county's social and economic determinant measurements with state averages.

Waldo County

Compared to state averages, Waldo County had a higher-than-average poverty rate (9.6%) and unemployment rate (6.5%) in comparison to the rest of the state. These numbers point to weaker economic safety net, especially in comparison to more financially stable neighboring counties in the Midcoast region. Waldo County had the second lowest percentage of social belonging, or young people who felt like they mattered in their community (48.6%) compared to all other counties in Maine. This percentage went up slightly in 2019 (49.5%) but is still the second lowest for the state, and the rates are lower for female identifying youth (45.6%) than for male identifying youth (53.3%)²⁹. This points to a potential disengagement that young people in Waldo may be experiencing from full participation in community life. At the same time, **Waldo County also had the lowest crime rate in the state (8 violent offenses per 1000 people)** and lower than average referrals to the youth justice system (3.69 referrals per 100 youth), which may indicate a strength Waldo County has in protecting public safety and intervening with disconnected youth.

Sagadahoc County

Sagadahoc County had a higher-than-average rate of students who were homeless in 2018 (0.89%) in comparison to the rest of the state and one of the highest referral rates to the youth justice system in Maine (5.5 referrals per 100 youth). At the same time, Sagadahoc County had a lower than state average rate of reports to the child welfare system (4.8 reports per 100 youth). While Sagadahoc County also had a lower-than-average high school graduation rate (86%), **Sagadahoc County had the second lowest suspension rate (2.4%)** and a higher-than-average proportion of adults who hold a college degree (35% bachelor's or higher) in comparison to the rest of Maine. These data, when considered in relationship to each other, bring shape to a county that needs more supports and resources to apply its protective factors, like it's highly educated adult population and supportive public education system, to the issues it is facing addressing youth justice and housing insecurity.

²⁹ The gender disparity in these data is a statewide trend, not just limited to Waldo County.



Lincoln County

Lincoln County had both higher than average referrals to child welfare (7.4 reports per 100 youth) and the youth justice system (5.84 referrals per 100 youth) in comparison to the rest of the state. Lincoln County also had the third lowest high school graduation rate in Maine (85%). Taken together, these three indicators highlight the difficulty youth serving public systems are having in this county in addressing youth needs. On the positive side, Lincoln County had lower than average suspension rates (2.5 per 100 youth) and rates of student homelessness (0.25%) compared to state averages. Lincoln County also had one of highest proportions of youth who felt like they mattered in their communities (60%) and **the lowest unemployment rate in Maine (3.4%)**. These indicators demonstrate a level of resilience in Lincoln County as well as opportunities for youth to find purpose and belonging.

Knox County

Knox County ranked higher in comparison to the rest of Maine on two indicators: poverty (8.9%) and reports to child welfare (6.8 reports per 100 youth). However, the differences between the Knox rates and the Maine rates for both these indicators is fairly small, and Knox County also had the highest high school graduation rate in Maine (91%). It also had lower than average referrals to the youth justice system in (3.3 referrals per 100 youth) and one of the highest rates of social belonging (60%). Viewed collectively, these data suggest that young people in Knox County are more likely to grow up in an environment where they feel protected and supported and have access to opportunities, in comparison to the rest of the state and the rest of the Midcoast region.



Local Expertise & Experience

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY ASSETS

In total, 166 assets³⁰ were identified across the Midcoast region. Assets were identified in each county for all six phases of care on the Place Matters' continuum indicating some level of access to services and supports addressing each phase of care. However, a consistent pattern across all four counties showed that the majority (88%) of named services and programs targeted prevention, early intervention and intervention with significantly fewer named assets addressing the intensive intervention, out-of-home treatment, and community reintegration phases. In fact, half (51%) of all assets mentioned were prevention services and programs. Nearly one-third (32%) of all assets in the Midcoast region were offered in Waldo county. In particular, a large proportion of programs and services were located in Belfast (23%) and Rockland (17%). Assets that were frequently mentioned across multiple counties included; the various local school systems, the Restorative Justice Project Maine (RJP), the regional YMCA's, Child Development Services, Head Start, the Wayfinder School's Passages program, Sweetser, and Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine (SASSMM).

Qualitative data on community assets and strengths were gathered from stakeholders in the Midcoast through asset mapping, community dialogues, focus groups, and key informant interviews. Analysis of this data revealed several common themes and **frequently identified assets** as important resources for youth and the community. These included:

- Educational opportunities and school-based services such as early childhood education, vocational schools, alternative education centers and programs.
- **Youth development** assets ranging from sports & outdoor activities to programs focused on mentoring, volunteering, and the arts.
- Coalitions and alliances which address a variety of community needs and locations.

³⁰ Duplicates were removed if an asset was named multiple times. However, some larger organizations with multiple locations were counted for each location within the region. For example, Alcoholics Anonymous offers services in both Belfast and Rockland so this was counted twice for the regional totals.

Educational Opportunities

The Midcoast region has a number of school-based and alternative education services which were mentioned by participants across all four counties. Assets mentioned ranged from preschool through higher education and included prevention programs (Head Start, Telstar High School- Freshman Academy), early intervention and intervention programs to help support at risk students (Wayfinder School, REAL School), and more intensive intervention programs to support youth with a higher level of needs (Sweetser **School** in Belfast). There are also many vocational schools and programs in the region such as the Herring Gut Learning Center, which offers marine science focused programming, including the **RSU 13 Alternative Education** science program for high school students. Effective educational programming, strong public education systems, and the availability of alternative education options are all key components to a successful continuum of care for young people in communities. The diverse array of educational offerings in this region was seen as a key strength in these communities, but also mentioned as an opportunity for further expansion and development so that all youth have a quality education to fit their unique needs and interests.

Youth Development

Youth development assets identified by community members included programs such as recreational activities, summer camps, afterschool programs, and long-term mentorship programs. Youth development programs were named by participants as a key strategy to address multiple phases on the continuum of care from prevention and intervention activities through community-based re-entry programs. Recreational-based activities discussed included programs such as the **Game Loft**, which was

mentioned frequently for Waldo County and the Bath Skate Park Center. Some recreational-based activities included more development components such as **Knox County Martial Arts, and the YMCA** which was mentioned in each of the four counties. Another programs with a focus on youth leadership development that was highlighted by participants was Youthlinks, which offers community service and enrichment programming in Knox County. There were more intensive, long-term mentorship programs mentioned such as Big Brothers Big Sisters in Waldo and Sagadahoc counties, as well as the **Trekkers** program offering a long-term mentorship support program for older youth. Youth development programs are key to not only help youth develop life skills and independence, but also to provide positive adult relationships as mentors who can be an additional support for a young person. The Midcoast region has a variety of youth development programs for young people of all ages. Despite the many youth development assets highlighted by the community, a desire to increase and diversify these assets was also indicated as an opportunity for growth in this region by those who live and work there.

Coalitions & Alliances

Participants cited a number of innovative collaborations that are working in the Midcoast region to serve youth in a variety of areas. Many of these collaborations were formed to address specific community issues. For example the Knox **County Homeless Coalition** helps support people of all ages with housing and other assistance services. There were many networks and coalitions mentioned to help provide support to people in recovery such as the Knox County Recovery Collaborative and the Midcoast Recovery **Coalition. The Midcoast Community** Alliance started as a community coalition to address the high rates of teen suicide in

Safety & Comfort at School

In Listening Circles, Knox **County youth expressed** feeling safe and comfortable in school. As one youth stated: "I think, for youth, school is a good place because you have people available to you that can help navigate whatever the conflict is. A lot of times students will come in with stories about something that happened on social media and we make a plan to deal with it before the school day ends because there's support here."

the region and today has grown to offer an array of holistic services for youth to improve their wellbeing. The number of alliances and coalitions in this region shows a strong desire for collaboration and are excellent examples of how a coalition of many people and organizations can successfully work together to address community-wide problems with community-focused solutions. A strong collaborative body can be a backbone for a community, leveraging and sharing resources, and working in a coordinated way to improve outcomes for youth, families, and communities.

HIGHLIGHTED ORGANIZATIONS

Individuals who live and work in the Midcoast region identified 166 assets over the course of qualitative data gathering for this report (see Appendices A through D for a list of named assets). The most frequently named assets were various local school systems, the Restorative Justice Project Maine (RJP), the regional YMCA's, Child Development Services, Head Start, the Wayfinder School's Passages program, Sweetser, and Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine (SASSMM).

Many participants spoke optimistically about the organizations and initiatives happening across the region and took hope from various data across counties that indicated improvements in youth and community outcomes.

Listed here in alphabetical order are examples of programs and initiatives worth considering for expansion or replication throughout Maine as we work to redesign our systems of care. These programs and organizations were named by individuals who contributed asset data for this report.

Knox County Homeless Coalition

Knox County Homeless Coalition is an organization dedicated to homeless services in Knox, Waldo, and Lincoln counties. They aim to address the root causes of homelessness through innovation and collaboration around affordable housing. They offer family shelter services through the Hospitality House as well as wrap-around client services and a comprehensive youth program, The Landing Place. In addition to housing and emergency services, they also collaborate with community partners to provide additional supports such as childcare, healthcare, transportation, and job or skills training. Their innovative approach has enabled more than 90% of their clients who complete the full program to achieve sustainable independence. For more information see homehelphope.org.

Midcoast Youth Center (MYC)

The Midcoast Youth Center started in 2016 as the Midcoast Community Alliance, which included 75 people from 34 different organizations all working together to address high rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide among youth in their community. Today, the coalition is located in Bath and provides an array of programs and services to youth up to age 24 in Sagadahoc County, Brunswick, and Harpswell. Their mission is to empower Midcoast youth to be healthy, engaged, and resilient, by offering recreation, education & enrichment, leadership & life skills programming as well as referrals to mental health support & substance use treatment, and support to youth experiencing housing insecurity. For more information see midcoastyouth.org



The Restorative Justice Project Maine

The Restorative Justice Project Maine (RJP) was the most frequently named asset for this region and was mentioned across all four counties. The RJP is a non-profit organization based in Belfast, ME. They provide services and programs from prevention to integration and reintegration for the Maine Coast Regional Reentry Center and the K-12 schools. They also host conferences for adult and juvenile offenders in Knox, Lincoln, Waldo, and Sagadahoc Counties. Their mission is to promote justice that is community-based, repairs harm, and creates safety and well-being. For more information see rjpmidcoast. org

Sweetser

Sweetser is a nonprofit community mental health provider offering services to children and adults statewide. They offer a range of community and school based services, as well as crisis interventions and residential treatment. Sweetser also operates a special purpose private school located in Belfast to support K-12 children who may be struggling with social, emotional, and academic challenges. The school helps children gain the skills they need to return to and be successful in a public school setting. For more information about Sweetser and the Sweetser School in Belfast, see sweetser.org

Wayfinder School - Passages Program

The Wayfinder Schools Passages Program is an alternative, home-based high school diploma program that was originally designed for teen parents. The program not only provides an opportunity for students to earn their high school diploma, but also teaches life skills, parenting skills, and enables students to become more self-sufficient, independent adults. For more information see wayfinderschools.org

Trekkers

Trekkers is a nonprofit organization based in Rockland with a mission to "cultivate the inherent strengths of young people through the power of long-term mentoring relationships". They provide a 6-year, outdoor-based mentorship program that starts in seventh grade and ends when youth graduate from high school. The program connects youth with adult mentors who work with the student and their networks (parents, coaches, schools) to provide a stable, long-term support system. Trekkers students have been shown to be more likely to graduate high school and go on to higher education. For more information see trekkers.org

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTMENT

Analysis of qualitative data gathered from the individuals who live and work in the Midcoast region also provided insight into some of the challenges young people may be facing in the region as well as opportunities for investment to address those challenges. Several themes emerged from this data including the need to increase: accessibility of opportunities, affordable housing and transportation, collaboration, and amount of reintegration support.

Accessible Education and Youth Development Programming

Participants across all four counties expressed a desire to see an increase in both number and diversity of accessible youth development and educational programming. Numerous programs are available, but access can be an issue for youth participation due to location, cost, lack of transportation, program capacity or requirements and other obstacles.

Affordable Housing

A need for safe and affordable workforce housing, homeless shelters and housing resources for youth were common area of concern across all counties in the region.

Transportation

A key area for development that was mentioned across all counties was a need for more transportation services. Transportation is a major barrier for youth and families in rural areas in particular where there is limited or no public transportation. Transportation is key for access to programs and services.

Community and provider collaboration

A need for more provider collaboration and coordination of youth services was commonly discussed as an area for development. Many expressed a desire for a resource center or community hub aimed at addressing the full spectrum of youth needs. Participants also showed an interest in developing a comprehensive community-based continuum of care, specifically highlighting needs such as reducing waitlists for services, expanding services within the community and increasing outpatient services.

Reintegration support

Participants expressed significant concern for the lack of assets to support reintegration for system-involved youth. In particular, there was a desire to see an increase in intensive outpatient re-entry programs, transitional housing, collaboration between employers and workforce development programs, and more community acceptance to reduce the stigma reintegrating youth face.

Knox County

A main area of concern for individuals from Knox County was employment, particularly access to career training and support, quality jobs and higher wages. Participants also expressed a need for more affordable workforce housing. Knox County stakeholders calling out for increased employment options for young people may recognize that early employment opportunities may translate to higher earnings in the future, and help impact poverty rates. Knox County conversations additionally focused on mental health care, requesting an increase in the number of beds and staff on youth psychiatric units. Youth development was a prominent theme, with individuals pointing to a need for more youth clubs, sports teams, physical activities, and volunteer opportunities to engage young people in their communities. In particular, participants mentioned a need for more accessible afterschool and summer programming for youth.

KNOX COUNTY YOUTH

raised the need for more mental health services

in Listening Circles

Lincoln County

Lincoln County participants identified a need for investments in building a county wide comprehensive community-based continuum of care. Individuals specifically expressed a desire for a community hub or resource clearing house to help coordinate wraparound services for youth and an emergency response team to address the full spectrum of youth needs. Given the higher than average number of child welfare and youth justice system referrals in Lincoln County in comparison to the rest of the state, the need for a community-based support network, including re-entry services, is key to helping system-involved youth in this area. Youth development and education was also an area of concern, citing a need for more diverse education opportunities, including vocational education, and a desire for more community involvement in education. Participants discussed the need for more accessible intervention and intensive support programs, such as high fidelity wraparound programming. The final two themes were transportation and technology, in particular a need to improve access to both public transportation options and internet access. In rural communities, a lack of public transportation can be a major barrier to accessing services and programs. Similarly, internet access can also be a barrier in rural areas that can prevent youth from accessing information, participating in education, and connecting to employment opportunities.

"Restorative justice programming for first time offenders providing mentoring, assistance with repair plans, and support for reintegrating into the public school."

LINCOLN COUNTY
PARTICIPANT

Sagadahoc County

School-based services were mentioned as a key area for development in Sagadahoc County. In particular, participants recommended expanding school-based health clinics, counseling services, and social workers. They also shared a desire to see a 9 to 5 school day to support working parents and reduce the need for afterschool care. Participants in Sagadahoc shared a desire for more youth development opportunities, particularly around mentoring, as well as an increase in reintegration support targeted specifically towards youth ages 18 to 25. Similar to other counties, housing and transportation were mentioned as areas of concern. Participants pointed to a need for more affordable housing, housing resources for youth, day and evening homeless shelters, and transportation particularly for those who live on the peninsulas. The high homelessness rate in Sagadahoc county compared to the rest of the state and compared to the rest of the Midcoast region does point to a need for further resources in this area. A need for increased healthcare access was also discussed, especially the need for more local physicians.



Waldo County

Like other Midcoast counties, housing, transportation and accessibility to services were significant areas of concern with Waldo County individuals. In particular, Waldo County participants mentioned a need for more safe and affordable housing and homeless shelters. Additional barriers that were addressed included transportation, the cost of services, and the lack of child care available that enable access to services for families and mothers. Within the theme of youth development, participants shared a desire to see more youth mentoring programs, particularly for middle school and high risk youth. A lack of trauma support was another area of concern, with participants indicating a need for more trauma-informed providers as well as increased resources and supports for students, survivors, and their families. Additionally, more prevention education, particularly around issues of abuse and sex trafficking, was mentioned. Concerns were also raised around the justice system, including a need for more legal aid for youth and intensive outpatient reentry programs, as well as increased restorative practices throughout the legal system and in the community.

"While there are a lot of good programs in Waldo County, transportation for youth is a huge issue. After school programs help considerably, but they aren't widely available. The more opportunities youth have to have positive adult role models sharing meaningful educational experiences with them, the stronger youth will be and the less likely they'll be to take part in at-risk behaviors"

WALDO COUNTY
PARTICIPANT



Recommendations

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected and analyzed for this report, and drawing on nationally established research and best practices, the authors recommend the following investments to advance the development of a community-based continuum of care and improve youth outcomes in Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo counties.

Invest in organizations and programs focused on housing support, transportation services, and internet access, particularly in rural areas.

A continuum of care can only mitigate and decrease system involvement to the extent those in need of supports and services can access it. With limited public transportation options and a lack of affordable housing many community members must contend with the high price of living in resource and service rich coastal towns or navigate transportation barriers and limited broadband access in more affordable areas inland.

In Knox and Sagadahoc counties, the need for affordable housing arose as a common theme among participants, but there were no services or organizations named as assets in either county that focus on supporting access to affordable housing. In Lincoln County, public transportation was also named as an area of need. Yet not one asset was named in that county that provides transportation services.

Waldo County participants also highlighted housing and transportation as areas of need. However, **Waldo Community Action Partners** was identified as an asset that provides services in both these areas. While this CAP agency provides crucial transportation services to residents of all four counties as well as rent relief programs through Maine Housing the need is greater than any one organization can meet. Agencies operating across Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc and Waldo counties working to address these challenges need increased support and resources to continue and expand services.

Assess the capacity of current programming in comparison to the demand and then invest in expansion where needed.

The four counties that comprise the Midcoast region have many organizations and agencies doing great work to address the needs of young people transitioning to adulthood. However, in every county participants expressed a desire for more opportunities and supports for young people: more school-based supports, mentoring programs, recovery, and reintegration services. These communities clearly see needs that are not being fully met. This raises the question: how many youth are currently being served by the programs in these places and how many youth need services?





This question can be answered through targeted data support. For example, the rate of referral to law enforcement in Lincoln County is 5.84% per 100 youth in the county. This is the second highest county rate in the state. When applied to the population count of youth in Lincoln County that rate represents 81 young people. By identifying this specific system population count we can then ask if the existing diversion programming, arrest alternative programming, and other detention alternatives within Lincoln County have the capacity to serve this population. We can also evaluate the capacity of services and supports to assist those 81 young people with staying connected to school, home, and natural supports while they navigate the youth justice system. By assessing both the specific numbers of youth in need and the capacity of current programs to meet those needs we can clearly articulate the gaps within a community and use this data to inform targeted investments to fill those gaps ensuring that youth are better served across the Midcoast region.

Develop and invest in community-based hubs, coalitions, or collaboratives that aim to address gaps in the continuum of care in each county, especially the lack of community reintegration services.

When people have low barrier access to a complete continuum of care, made up of aligned and networked agencies, organizations, and systems providing programs and interventions, they are more likely to receive the support and care they need prior to reaching a crisis point. This in turn reduces negative involvement in public serving systems. Though many of the programs and services named by Midcoast stakeholders contribute to a continuum of care that diverts individuals from involvement in public serving systems, they are often limited in capacity and scope of work. Furthermore, many of the programs and organizations named by participants are not located in the counties that are being served, creating an access barrier.

Public serving systems that have strong relationships as well as share aligned goals and measures with service providers, community partners, and each other, are more successful at addressing root causes, connecting those in need to services, and



evaluating their impact at both the program and population level. A desire for such an aligned and connected system of care was a common theme in the data collected for this report with community members describing the need for a resource center or community hub to help coordinate services. A frequently cited strength of these Midcoast counties is the ability of existing coalitions and collaboratives to work together to impact community wellbeing. Drawing on this strength the Midcoast region should continue build relationships across systems and sectors, identify shared goals and align efforts to expand and increase services in the continuum of care.

A particular area in need of enhanced and networked support identified by many Midcoast participants is community reintegration. The Restorative Justice Project Maine (RJP), a highlighted organization in this report, is currently undertaking a multi-year, grant-funded effort to build Community Justice Hubs in the Midcoast region. With this project, RJP seeks to work towards their desired impact to 'shift societal responses to crime and misbehavior from punishment to responding restoratively, meeting needs of both those who have been harmed and those who have caused harm.' Community Justice Hubs will provide community access to restorative justice practices in each of the four counties in the Midcoast region.

Developed collaboratively by RJP Maine staff, USM, law enforcement, and community members, the Community Justice Hubs will decrease over-reliance on law enforcement and the justice system and recidivism. A Steering Team for each county will recommend local, data-informed strategies to reduce arrests and re-arrests for at risk youth (18-24 years old) who have substance use and/or mental health diagnoses. An Advisory Partner team with members representing all four counties is also in place to help identify key issues and shape the work of all four Community Justice Hubs.

The initiative recognizes the power of community, soliciting and engaging participation from all sectors. Community Justice Hubs will transform the capacity of Midcoast community members to work together to increasing community safety and belonging by building social capital, shifting local resources, and supporting restorative approaches to policy and practice.

"Belonging is when you have a community of people you can talk to, and being willing to be there for others in the community who are down on their luck."

KNOX COUNTY YOUTH
PARTICIPANT





Conclusion

Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo counties share a number of common aspects. They are interconnected, vibrant coastal towns surrounded by tight-knit rural communities and farms, with breathtaking natural beauty and resources. Some of the most heavily frequented tourist destinations exist in these counties, boosting the economy and supporting the area's rich arts and culture scene. There are many places for young people to make connections and find opportunity. These counties face obstacles as well and at times struggle to provide the supports their young people need to succeed and thrive in their own communities. In Sagadahoc County, young people need more supports that divert them from the justice system and increase housing stability. Youth and families in Lincoln County struggle with negative impacts of public serving systems, and many youth in both Knox and Waldo counties face real economic insecurity.

What is apparent, through the information gathered for this report, is that individuals in this county also recognize the importance of facing these challenges by banding together. Strong leadership and deep, longstanding relationships are at the heart of the important work already being done in communities across the Midcoast. This foundation of human capital is one of this region's richest resources and an essential component of making a real impact on the lives of area residents. Expanding this foundation into a comprehensive and aligned continuum of care will take commitment, support, and resources both large and small. By leveraging relationships and using data to drive decisions and strategies, this region can be a lighthouse on the coast of Maine, showing the way towards better outcomes for youth, families, and communities throughout the state.

Named Assets in Knox County

Acadia Healthcare Family Behavioral

Health Services

Alcoholics Anonymous

Area Interfaith Outreach (AIO) Food

and Energy Assistance

Child Development Services

Crisis and Counseling Centers

Fedcap

Groups Recover Together

Head Harbor Trail Head

Headstart

Herring Gut Learning Center

HopeAir

Kennebec Behavioral Health

Knox County Homeless Coalition

Knox County Jail

Knox County Martial Arts

Knox County Recovery Collaborative

Knox County Sheriff's Office

Maine Behavioral Health

Maine Coast Gymnastics & Activity

Center

Maine Coastal Regional Reentry

Center

Maine Pretrial Services

Merryspring Nature Center

Mid Coast Children's Preschool

Mid Coast Hospital's Addiction

Resource Center

Mid-coast Recovery Coalition

MidCoast Recreation Department

Mid-Coast School of Technology

New Hope For Women

New Ventures Maine

One Community Many Voices

PBMC Psychiatric Addiction &

Recovery Center

Pen Bay Medical Center PARC Unit

Penquis Com. Health & Counseling

Restorative Justice Project

Rockland Career Center

RSU 13 Afterschool

School Garden Project - Knox-Lincoln

Soil & Water Conservation District

Sexual Assault Support Services of

Midcoast Maine

Sweetser Mobile Crisis Intervention

Teen Center YMCA

Telstar High School - Freshman

Academy

Thompson Community Center

Trekkers Inc.

United Midcoast Charities

Wayfinder School

YMCA - Penobscot Bay YMCA

Youth Arts

Youth Links

Named Assets in Lincoln County

Child Development Services

Coastal Kids Preschool

Crisis and Counseling Centers

Department of Labor - Bureau of

Rehabilitation Services

Goodwill Career Center

Headstart

Healthy Kids

Healthy Lincoln County

Hearty Roots

Kennebec Behavioral Health

Kieve Wavus

Lincoln County District Attorney -

Natasha Irving

LincolnHealth

Maine Parent Federation - G.E.A.R.

Parent Network

Mid Coast Hospital

Mid Coast Hospital's Addiction

Resource Center

Midcoast Conservancy

Mobius Inc.

New Hope For Women Inc

New Ventures Maine

People to People Free Clothing

Exchange

Planned Parenthood

Public Health Nurses

Restorative Justice Project

Salt Bay Area Headstart

School Garden Project - Knox-Lincoln

Soil & Water Conservation District

Sexual Assault Support Services of

Midcoast Maine

Spurwink

Spurwink School

Sweester

Sweetser Mobile Crisis Intervention

The Harbor Peer & Wellness Center

(Amistad)

United Way of Mid Coast Maine

University of Maine's High School

Aspirations Program

Wayfinder School

Waypoint

Whitefield Head Start Center

Woman, Infants & Children Nutrition

Program

YMCA - Central Lincoln County YMCA

Youth Leadership Advisory Team

Named Assets in Sagadahoc County

Access Health

Art Van

Bath Middle School

Bath Skate Park Center

Bath YMCA

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Child Development Services

Crisis and Counseling Centers

Discovery Boatbuilding- Maine

Maritime Museum

Family Focus

Headstart

Jobs For Maine's Graduates

Kennebec Behavioral Health

Kieve Wavus

Maine Children's Trust: Child Abuse &

Neglect Prevention Councils

Maine Connections Academy

Maine Court Appointed Special

Advocate (CASA)

Maine Youth Court

Merrymeeting Art Center

Mid Coast Hospital

Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program

Midcoast Community Alliance

Mid-Coast Early Childhood Center

Midcoast Maine Community Action

Midcoast Youth Center

New Beginnings

New Hope For Women Inc

NFI North - Oliver Place

Peer Learning Community (Amistad)

Projects for Assistance in Transition

from Homelessness

REAL School

Restorative Justice Project

Sexual Assault Support Services of

Midcoast Maine

Spurwink

Sweester

Sweetser Mobile Crisis Intervention

Tedford Housing

The American Red Cross - Northern

New England Region

The Opportunity Alliance

Trekkers Inc.

United Way of Mid Coast Maine

University of Maine Cooperate

Extension

Wayfinder School

Waypoint

YMCA - Bath Area Family YMCA

Named Assets in Waldo County

Acadia Healthcare Family Behavioral Health Services- Northern Light

Acadia Hospital

Alcoholics Anonymous

Belfast Adult Educations (BAE)

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition

Belfast Community Outreach Program

in Education

Belfast Creative Coalition

Belfast Flying Shoes

Belfast Maskers

Belfast Skate Park

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Child Development Services

Come Boating!

Department of Health & Human

Services

Fedcap

Food Corps

Friends of Sears Island

Game Loft

Goodwill Career Center

Groups Recover Together

Headstart

Health Equity Alliance

Intensive Outpatient Reentry for

Incarceration (DOC)

Ironwood Maine

Jobs For Maine's Graduates

Kennebec Behavioral Health

MAIER Family Partnership

Maine Behavioral Health

Maine Children's Trust: Child Abuse &

Neglect Prevention Councils

Maine Coastal Regional Reentry

Center

Maine Family Planning, Belfast

Maine Pretrial Services

MAS Community Health

Midcoast Children's Advocacy Center

Midcoast Hunger Prevention Program

NAMI

Narcotics Anonymous

New Hope For Women

Northern Light Behavioral Health

Home

Protection From Abuse Court

Public Health Nurses

Restorative Justice Project

Rockland Metro Treatment Center

School Garden Project

Seaport Community Health

Sequel Care of Maine

Sexual Assault Support Services of

Midcoast Maine

Sweetser Mobile Crisis Intervention

Sweetser School

UMaine 4-H Learning Center at

Tanglewood

Unity Barn-Raisers

University of Maine Cooperate

Extension

University of Maine Hutchinson Center

Waldo Community Action Partners

Waldo County General Hospital

Waldo County Recovery Committee

Waldo County Sheriff's Office

Waldo County Technical Center

Waldo County Wood Shed

Waterfall Arts

Wayfinder School

WCAP - Early Childhood Programs

Wings

Woman, Infants & Children Nutrition

Program

YMCA - Waldo County YMCA



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