
CHESTER 2023 EQUITY PROFILE

DataHaven

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Compiled by DataHaven in August 2023.

This report is designed to inform local-level efforts to improve community well-being and racial equity. This is version 2.0 of the DataHaven town equity profile, which DataHaven has published for all 169 towns and several regions of Connecticut. Please contact DataHaven with suggestions for version 3.0 of this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout most of the measures in this report, there are important differences by race/ethnicity and neighborhood that reflect differences in access to resources and other social needs. Wherever possible, data are presented with racial/ethnic breakdowns, as defined by existing federal data collection standards. However, for smaller groups or more detailed breakdowns, some values may not be available or have less reliable data. In these cases, values are marked as “N/A,” not available.

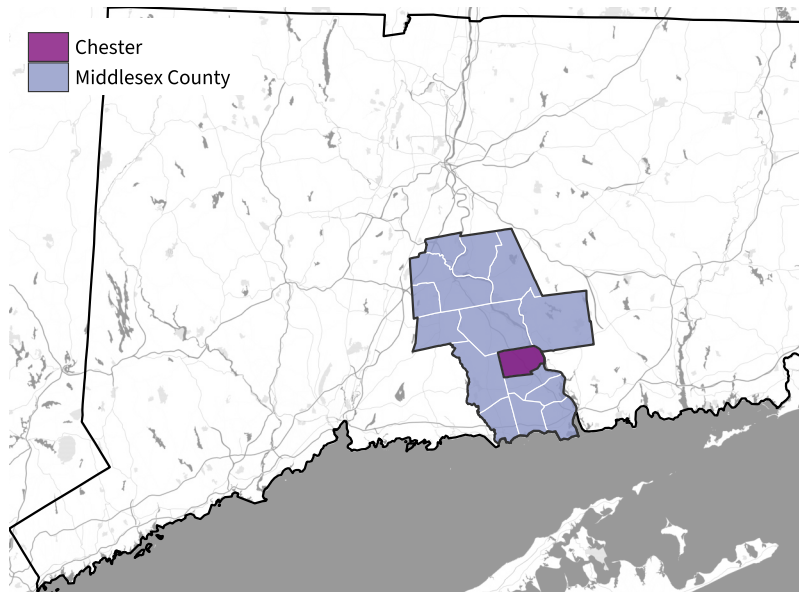
Federal and statewide approaches to data collection, including small sample sizes, tend to hide disparities within certain population groups. This does not mean that a given population is not impacted by inequitable social conditions. DataHaven and other organizations often collect information on demographic characteristics besides race/ethnicity, and encourage further analysis and advocacy that can lead to more inclusive data reporting. Please contact DataHaven at info@ctdatahaven.org with questions about additional reporting that may be possible.

- Chester is a town of **3,749 residents**, **9 percent** of whom are people of color. The town’s population has decreased by **6 percent** since 2010.
- Of the town’s **1,548 households**, **72 percent** are homeowner households.
- **Thirty-four percent** of Chester’s households are cost-burdened, meaning they spend at least 30 percent of their total income on housing costs.
- **Ninety-two percent** of public high school seniors in the class of 2021 in the Regional School District 04 graduated within four years.
- Among the town’s adults ages 25 and up, **36 percent** have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- Chester is home to **1,849 jobs**, with the largest share in the Manufacturing sector.
- The median household income in Chester is **\$93,333**.
- As of 2015, Chester’s average life expectancy was **82.4 years**.
- **Sixty-two percent** of adults in Middlesex County say they are in excellent or very good health.
- In 2021, **fewer than 5 people** in Chester died of drug overdoses.
- **Eighty-seven percent** of adults in Middlesex County are satisfied with their area, and **58 percent** say their local government is responsive to residents’ needs.
- In the most recent state election, **70 percent** of registered voters in Chester voted.
- **Forty-seven percent** of adults in Middlesex County report having stores, banks, and other locations in walking distance of their home, and **50 percent** say there are safe sidewalks and crosswalks in their neighborhood.

OVERVIEW

For the purposes of this report, Chester will be compared to Connecticut as a whole, as well as to the towns in Middlesex County.

FIGURE 1: STUDY AREA



Middlesex County is made up of the following towns (with 2020 populations):

- Chester (3,749)
- Clinton (13,185)
- Cromwell (14,225)
- Deep River (4,415)
- Durham (7,152)
- East Haddam (8,875)
- East Hampton (12,717)
- Essex (6,733)
- Haddam (8,452)
- Killingworth (6,174)
- Middlefield (4,217)
- Middletown (47,717)
- Old Saybrook (10,481)
- Portland (9,384)
- Westbrook (6,769)

TABLE 1: ABOUT THE AREA

Indicator	Connecticut	Middlesex County	Chester
Total population	3,605,944	164,245	3,749
Total households	1,397,324	68,200	1,548
Homeownership rate	66%	74%	72%
Housing cost burden rate	35%	31%	34%
Adults with less than a high school diploma	9%	5%	4%
Median household income	\$83,572	\$90,833	\$93,333
Poverty rate	10%	6%	6%
Adults 18–64 w/o health insurance	10%	8%	7%
Life expectancy (years, 2015)	80.3	81.0	82.4

DEMOGRAPHICS

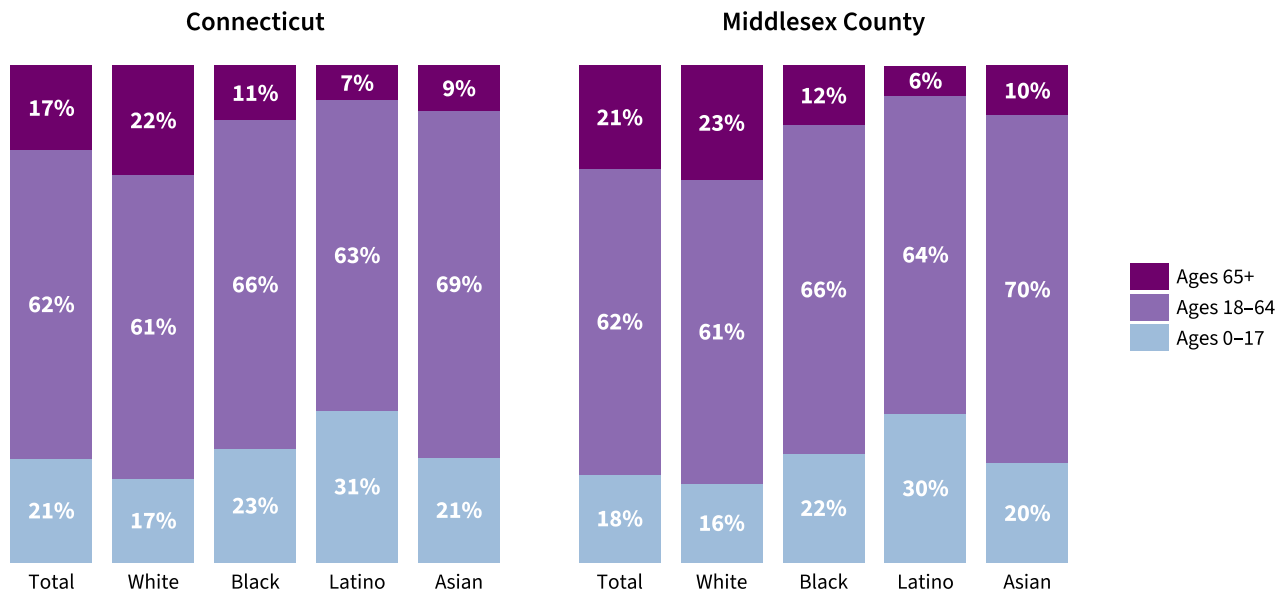
As of 2020, the population of Chester is 3,749, including 557 children and 3,192 adults. Nine percent of Chester’s residents are people of color, compared to 37 percent of residents statewide.

TABLE 2: POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2020

Area	White		Black		Latino		Asian		Other race/ethnicity	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	2,279,232	63%	360,937	10%	623,293	17%	170,459	5%	172,023	5%
Middlesex County	131,954	80%	8,001	5%	11,928	7%	4,923	3%	7,439	5%
Chester	3,424	91%	<50	N/A	135	4%	<50	N/A	133	4%

As Connecticut’s predominantly white Baby Boomers age, younger generations are driving the state’s increased racial and ethnic diversity. Black and Latino populations in particular skew much younger than white populations.

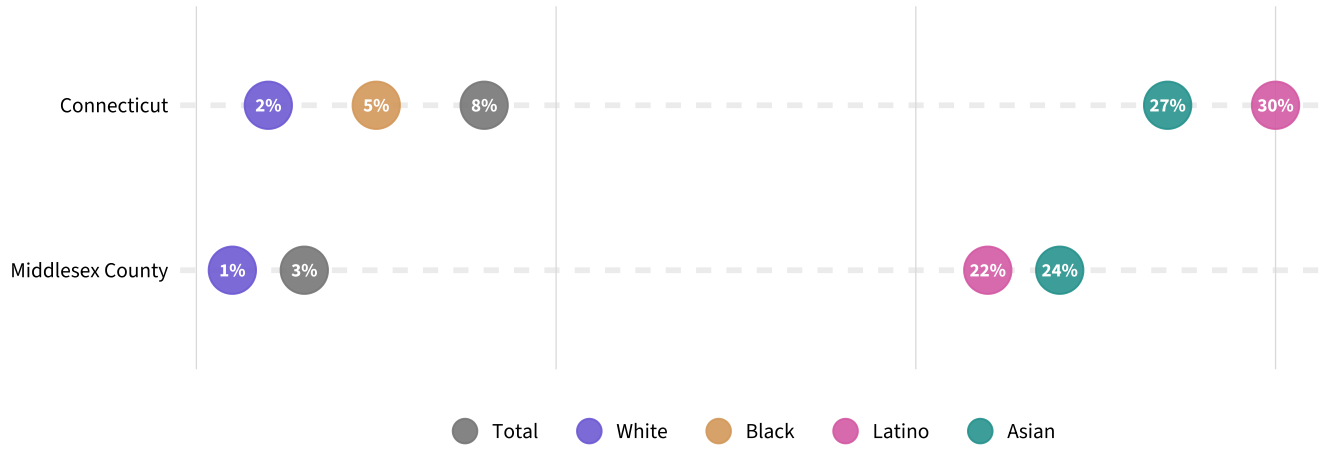
FIGURE 2: POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND AGE GROUP, 2021



Note: Only groups with at least 50 residents in each age group shown.

About 227 residents of Chester, or 6 percent of the population, are foreign-born. The largest number of immigrants living in Middlesex County were born in Poland, followed by China and Italy.

FIGURE 3: LINGUISTIC ISOLATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021



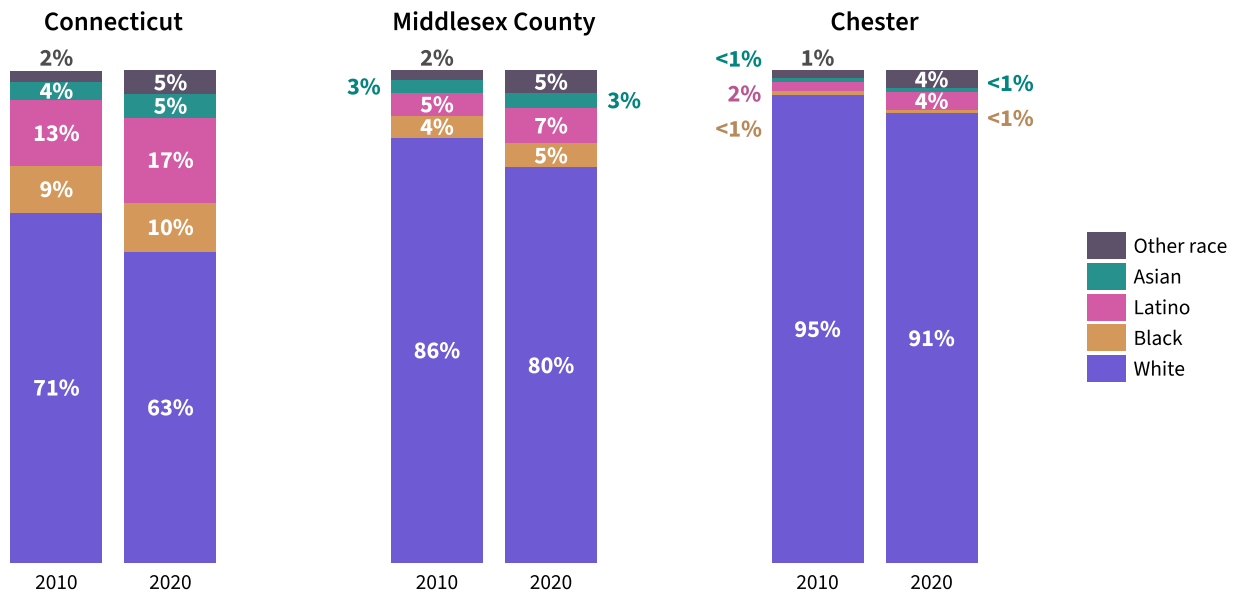
POPULATION CHANGE: 2020 CENSUS

The first set of data from the 2020 Census was released in August 2021, containing basic population counts by age and race/ethnicity. Between 2010 and 2020, Connecticut’s population was nearly stagnant. During the same period, Chester shrank by 245 people, a 6.1 percent decrease. The number of white residents in Chester shrank by 9.8 percent, while the non-white population grew by 64 percent.

TABLE 3: POPULATION AND POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE GROUP, 2010–2020

Area	Age	Population, 2010	Population, 2020	Change	Percent change
Connecticut	All ages	3,574,097	3,605,944	+31,847	+0.9%
	Children (0–17)	817,015	736,717	–80,298	–9.8%
	Adults (18+)	2,757,082	2,869,227	+112,145	+4.1%
Middlesex County	All ages	165,676	164,245	–1,431	–0.9%
	Children (0–17)	35,098	28,262	–6,836	–19.5%
	Adults (18+)	130,578	135,983	+5,405	+4.1%
Chester	All ages	3,994	3,749	–245	–6.1%
	Children (0–17)	787	557	–230	–29.2%
	Adults (18+)	3,207	3,192	–15	–0.5%

FIGURE 4: SHARE OF POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2010–2020



HOUSING

Chester has 1,548 households, of which 72 percent are homeowner households. Of Chester’s 1,639 housing units, both occupied and vacant, 80 percent are in single-family buildings and 20 percent are in multifamily buildings, compared to Middlesex County, where 75 percent are single-family and 24 percent are multifamily.

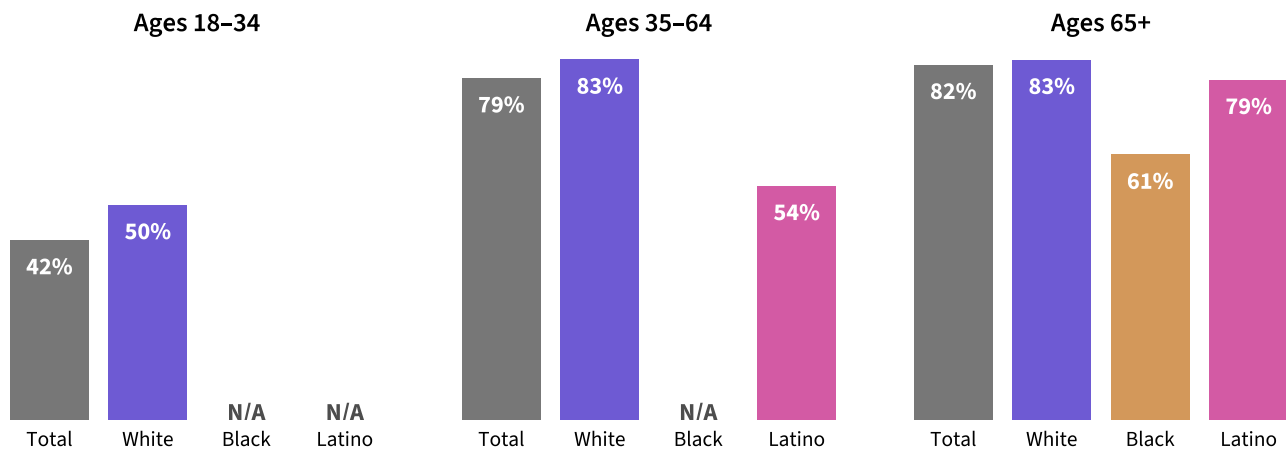
Homeownership rates vary by race/ethnicity. Purchasing a home is more attainable for advantaged groups because the process of purchasing a home has a long history of racially discriminatory practices that continue to restrict access to homeownership today. This challenge, coupled with municipal zoning dominated by single-family housing, results in de facto racial and economic segregation seen throughout Connecticut.

TABLE 4: HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian
Connecticut	66%	76%	41%	37%	60%
Middlesex County	74%	79%	39%	47%	53%
Chester	72%	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A

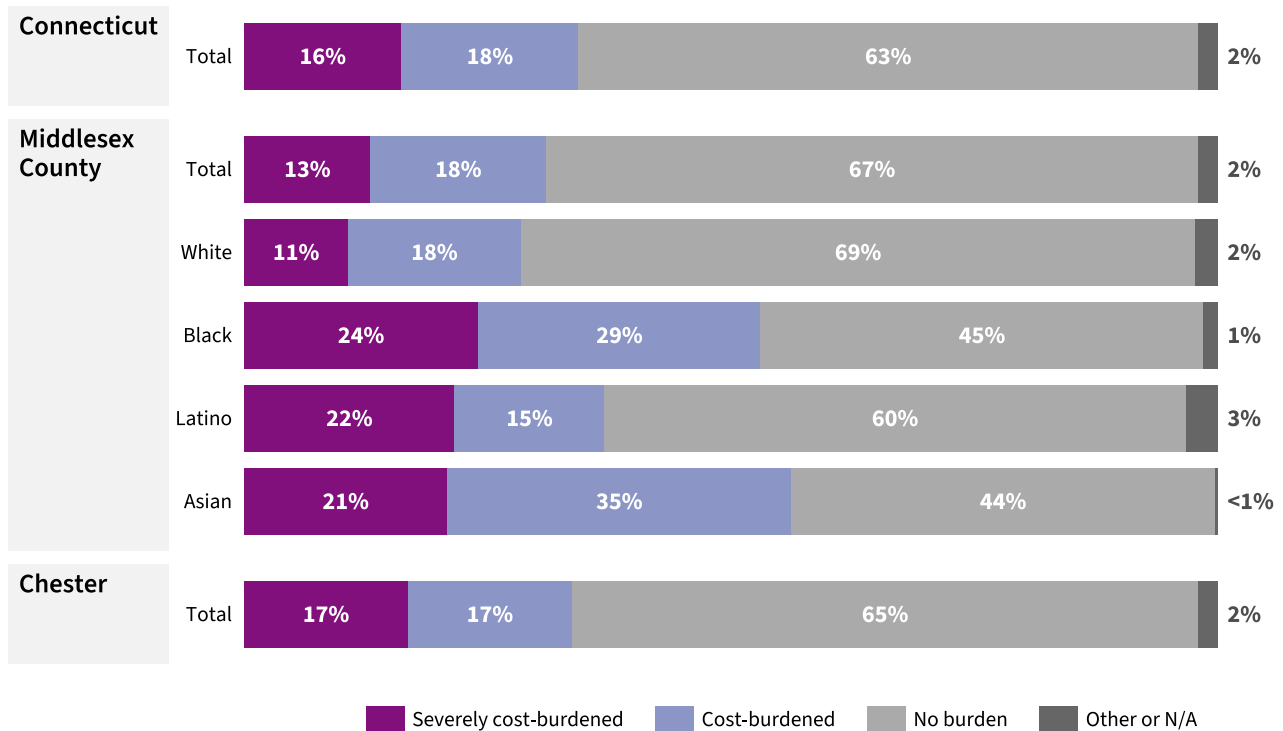
Younger adults are less likely than older adults to own their homes across several race/ethnicity groups. However, in most towns, younger white adults own their homes at rates comparable to or higher than older Black and Latino adults.

FIGURE 5: HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES BY AGE AND RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, 2021



A household is cost-burdened when they spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing costs, and severely cost-burdened when they spend half or more of their income on housing costs. Housing costs continue to rise, due in part to municipal zoning measures that limit new construction to very few towns statewide. Cost-burden generally affects renters more than homeowners, and has greater impact on Black and Latino householders. Among renter households in Chester, 47 percent are cost-burdened, compared to 28 percent of owner households.

FIGURE 6: HOUSING COST-BURDEN RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021



Household overcrowding is defined as having more than one occupant per room. Overcrowding may increase the spread of illnesses among the household and can be associated with higher levels of stress. Increasing the availability of appropriately-sized affordable units helps to alleviate overcrowding.

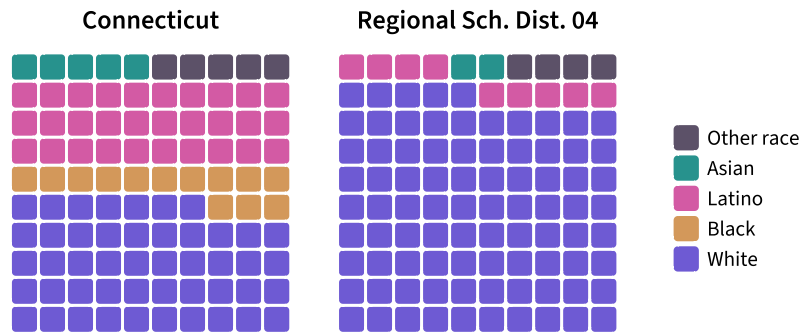
TABLE 5: OVERCROWDED HOUSEHOLDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021

Area	Total		White		Black		Latino		Asian	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	27,078	2%	7,418	1%	4,868	3%	10,971	6%	3,445	6%
Middlesex County	532	1%	490	1%	<50	N/A	<50	N/A	<50	N/A
Chester	<50	N/A	<50	N/A	<50	N/A	<50	N/A	<50	N/A

EDUCATION

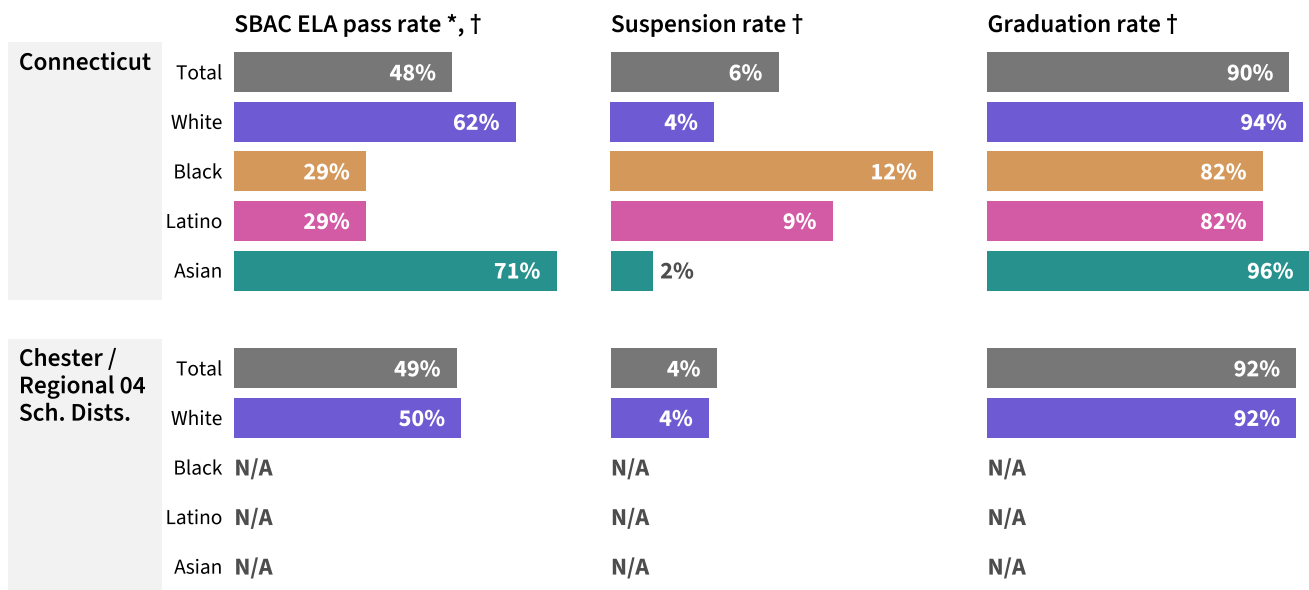
Public school students in Chester are served by the Chester School District for kindergarten through grade 6 and Regional School District 04 for grade 7 through grade 12. During the 2022-23 school year, there were 222 students enrolled in the Chester School District and 751 students enrolled in Regional School District 04. Tracking student success measures is important since disparate academic and disciplinary outcomes are observed as early as preschool and can ultimately affect a person’s long-term educational attainment and economic potential.

FIGURE 7: PUBLIC K–12 STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY PER 100 STUDENTS, 2022-23



Note: Counts of small groups are suppressed by the Dept. of Education and may be missing from this chart.

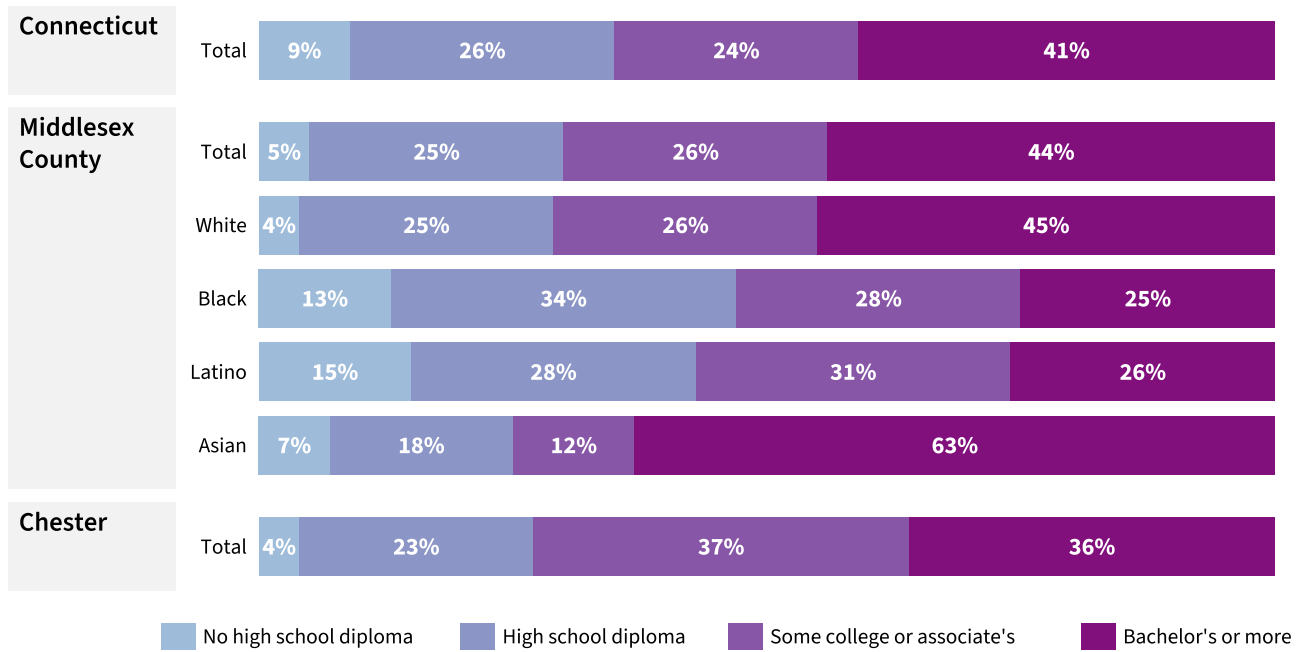
FIGURE 8: SELECTED ACADEMIC AND DISCIPLINARY OUTCOMES BY STUDENT RACE/ETHNICITY, 2020-21 AND 2021-22 SCHOOL YEARS



*: Chester School District; †: Regional School District 04

Adults with high school diplomas or college degrees have more employment options and considerably higher potential earnings, on average, than those who do not finish high school. In Chester, 4 percent of adults ages 25 and over, or 119 people, lack a high school diploma; statewide, this value is 9 percent.

FIGURE 9: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SHARE OF ADULTS AGES 25 AND UP, 2021



ECONOMY

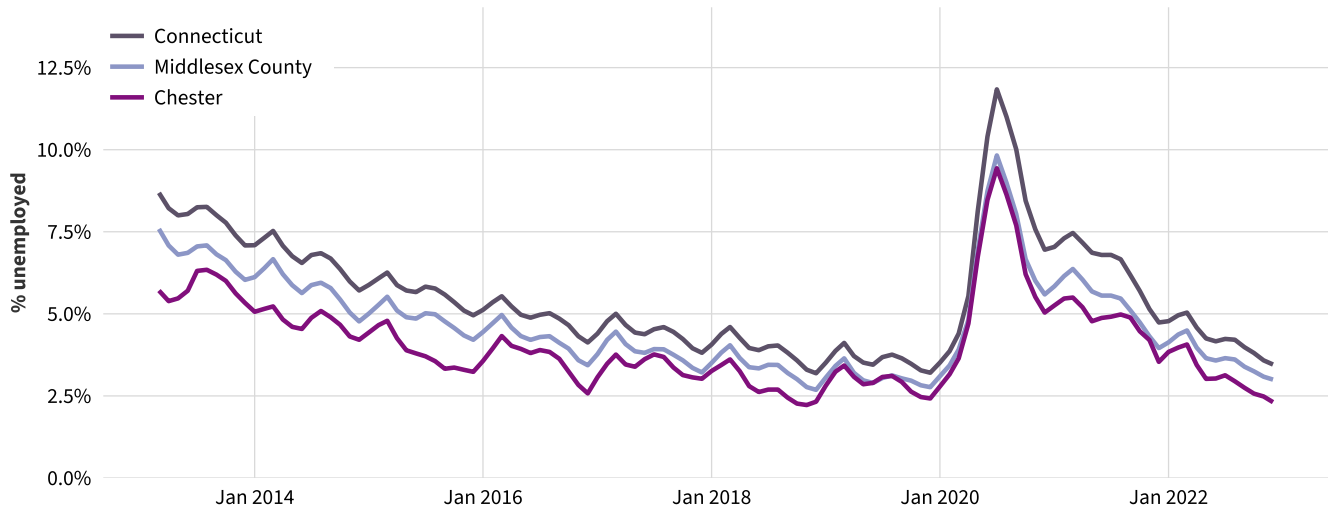
At the end of 2021, there were 1,849 total jobs in Chester, with the largest share in the Manufacturing sector. While many industries saw major job losses early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, by early 2023 the number of jobs statewide had nearly caught back up to pre-pandemic counts.

TABLE 6: JOBS AND WAGES IN CHESTER’S 5 LARGEST SECTORS, 2021

Sector	Connecticut		Chester	
	Total jobs	Avg annual pay	Total jobs	Avg annual pay
All Sectors	1,591,760	\$77,816	1,849	\$64,380
Manufacturing	152,860	\$89,604	823	\$86,690
Health Care and Social Assistance	267,984	\$60,835	428	\$38,398
Accommodation and Food Services	111,160	\$26,767	196	\$29,037
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	95,313	\$121,874	85	\$84,163
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	23,165	\$36,070	46	N/A

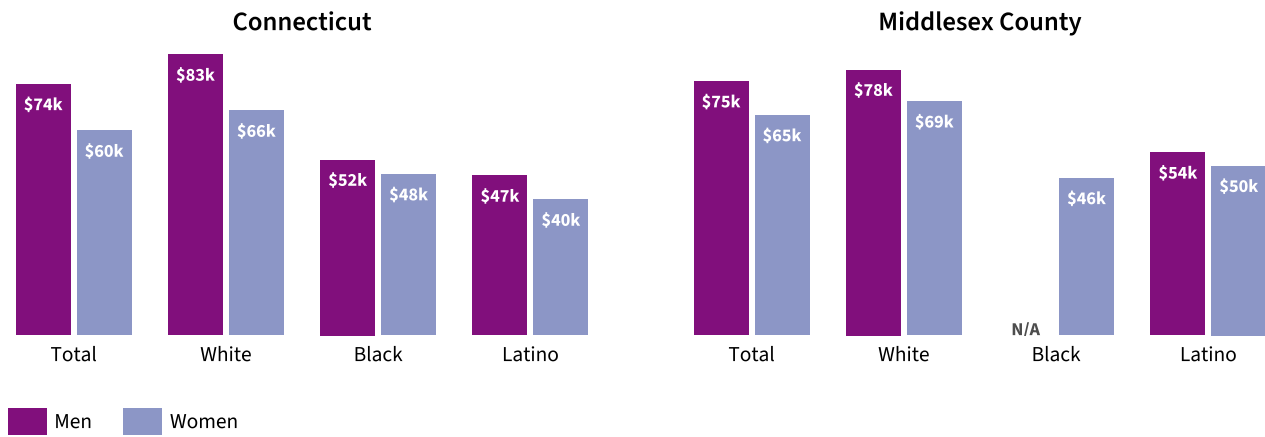
Nationwide, the onset of the pandemic led to a huge spike in unemployment rates, mirrored across Connecticut. At its peak in July 2020, Connecticut’s unemployment rate was 12.0 percent. As of December 2022, unemployment rates statewide and in Chester were 3.2 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively.

FIGURE 10: MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2013–2022, 3-MONTH ROLLING AVERAGE



Individual earnings vary by race/ethnicity, sex, and other characteristics. These can be measured comparing the differences in average earnings between groups. White workers and men often out-earn workers of color and women. These trends hold even when controlling for educational attainment and within many occupational groups.

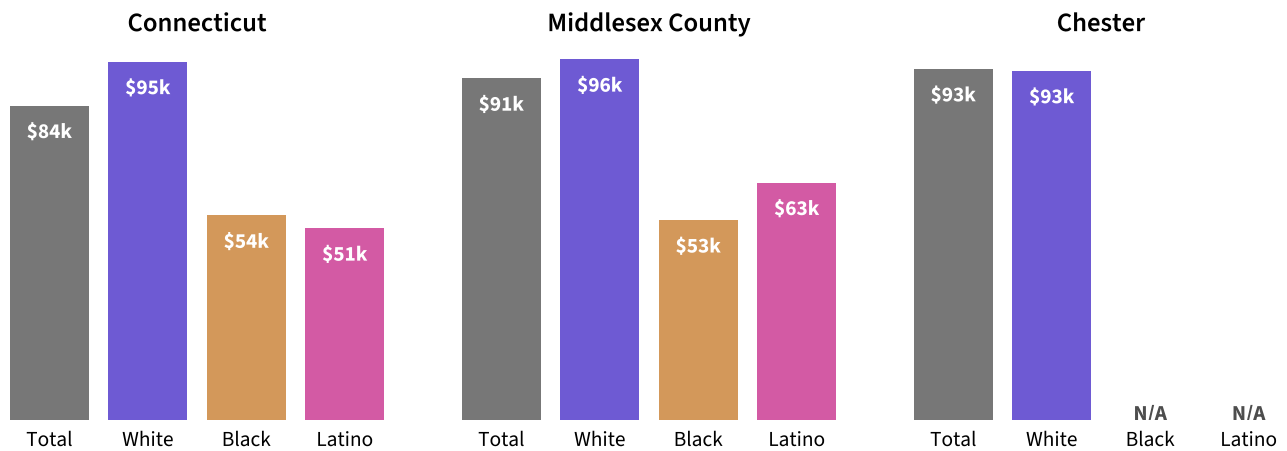
FIGURE 11: MEDIAN INCOME BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SEX FOR FULL-TIME WORKERS AGES 25 AND OVER WITH POSITIVE INCOME, 2021



INCOME & WEALTH

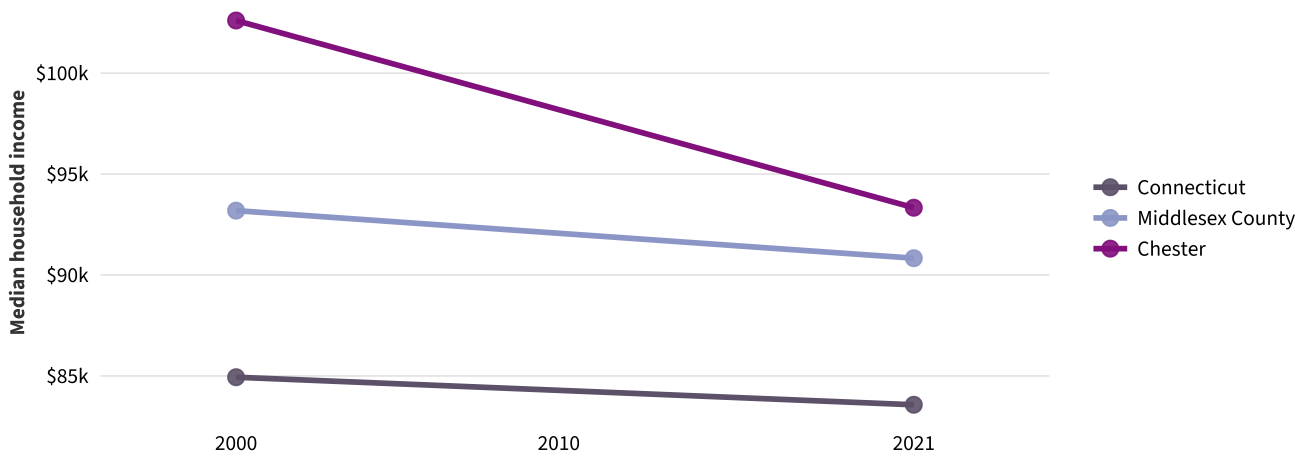
The median household income in Chester is \$93,333, compared to \$83,572 statewide. Racial disparities in outcomes related to education, housing, employment, and wages result in disparate household-level incomes and overall wealth. Households led by Black or Latino adults generally average lower incomes than white households.

FIGURE 12: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021



Between the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic, average incomes have not kept pace with inflation over the past two decades. Connecticut’s median household income was \$83,572 in 2021; adjusted for inflation, this was \$1,365 lower than in 2000.

FIGURE 13: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2000–2021, IN 2021 DOLLARS



The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, or food stamps) is a program available to very low-income households earning less than 130 percent of the federal poverty guideline (\$26,500 for a family of four in 2021). Throughout the state, poverty and SNAP utilization rates are higher among Black and Latino households than white households.

With many of the safety measures early in the COVID-19 pandemic, having reliable, high-speed internet at home became a necessity for remote participation in school, expanded job opportunities, and telehealth. Statewide, Black and Latino residents are slightly more likely than average to live in a household without broadband access.

Access to a personal vehicle may also be considered a measure of financial security since reliable transportation plays a significant role in job access and quality of life. Vehicle access reduces the time a family may spend running errands or traveling to appointments, school, or work.

TABLE 7: SELECTED ECONOMIC RESOURCES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021

	Total		White		Black		Latino		Asian	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Population living below poverty level										
Connecticut	351,476	10%	139,246	6%	64,472	17%	127,775	21%	14,134	9%
Middlesex County	10,261	6%	6,744	5%	1,288	15%	1,451	14%	N/A	N/A
Population without broadband internet at home										
Connecticut	269,234	8%	159,553	7%	38,465	10%	61,883	10%	5,334	3%
Middlesex County	13,620	9%	9,792	7%	1,725	21%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

TABLE 8: SELECTED HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC INDICATORS BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021

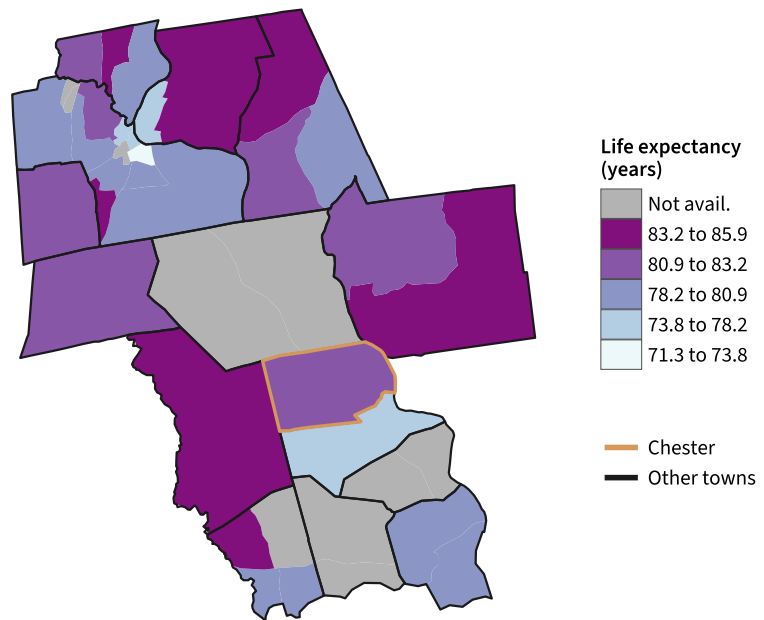
	Total		White		Black		Latino		Asian	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Households receiving food stamps/SNAP										
Connecticut	160,416	11%	62,974	6%	34,132	24%	57,456	30%	3,501	6%
Middlesex County	5,300	8%	3,471	6%	931	26%	750	20%	N/A	N/A
Households without a vehicle										
Connecticut	118,174	8%	53,628	5%	25,802	19%	31,312	16%	4,728	9%
Middlesex County	3,434	5%	2,148	4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

HEALTH

The socioeconomic disparities described above tend to correlate with health outcomes. Factors such as stable housing, employment, literacy and linguistic fluency, environmental hazards, and transportation all impact access to care, physical and mental health outcomes, and overall quality of life. Income and employment status often drive differences in access to healthcare, the likelihood of getting preventive screenings as recommended, the affordability of life-saving medicines, and the ability to purchase other goods and services, including high-quality housing and nutritious food.

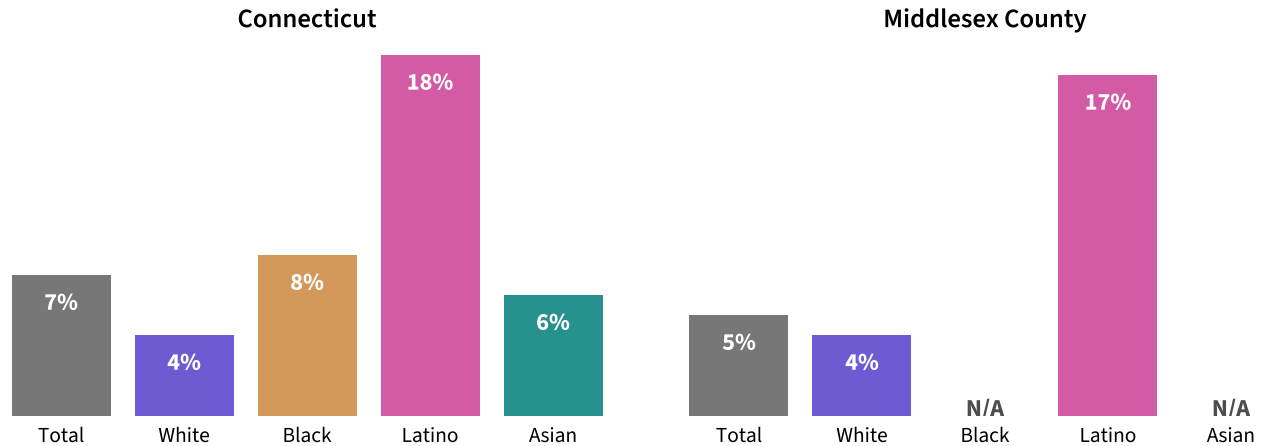
Life expectancy is a good proxy for overall health and well-being since it is the culmination of so many other social and health factors. The average life expectancy in Chester is 82.4 years, compared to 81.0 years across Middlesex County and 80.3 years statewide.

FIGURE 14: LIFE EXPECTANCY, MIDDLESEX COUNTY BY CENSUS TRACT, 2015



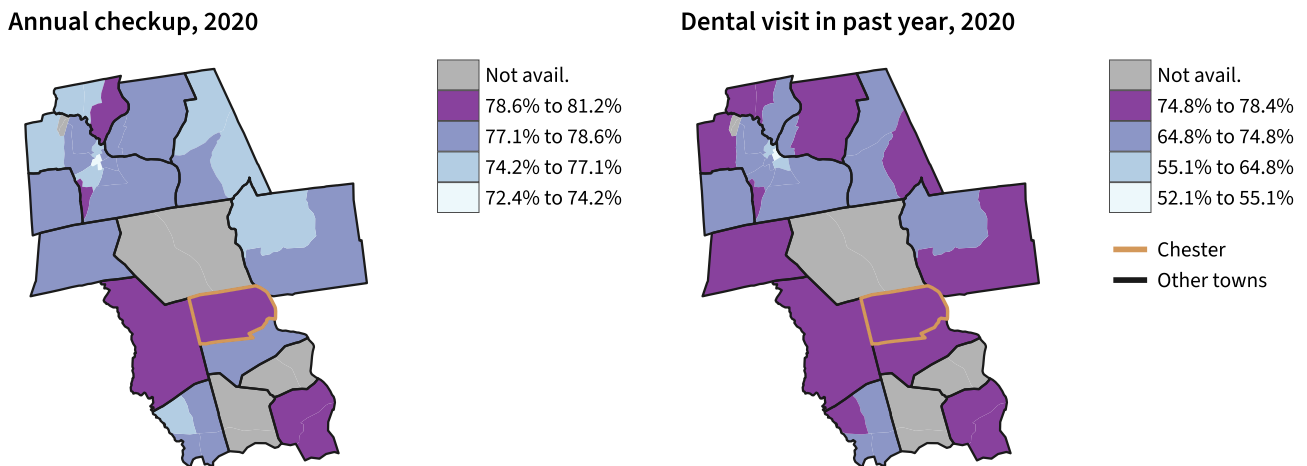
Health-related challenges begin with access to care. Due to differences in workplace benefits, income, and eligibility factors, Black and especially Latino people are less likely to have health insurance than white people.

FIGURE 15: UNINSURED RATE AMONG ADULTS AGES 19–64 BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021



Preventive care can help counteract economic disadvantages, as a person’s health can be improved by addressing risk factors like hypertension and chronic stress early. Lack of affordable, accessible, and consistent medical care can lead to residents relying on expensive emergency room visits later on. Overall, 80 percent of the adults in Chester had an annual checkup as of 2020, and 76 percent had had a dental visit in the past year.

FIGURE 16: PREVENTIVE CARE MEASURES, SHARE OF ADULTS BY CENSUS TRACT, MIDDLESEX COUNTY



Throughout the state, people of color face greater rates and earlier onset of many chronic diseases and risk factors, particularly those that are linked to socioeconomic status and access to resources. For example, diabetes is much more common among older adults than younger ones, yet middle-aged Black adults in Connecticut have higher diabetes rates than white seniors.

FIGURE 17: SELECTED HEALTH RISK FACTORS, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015–2021

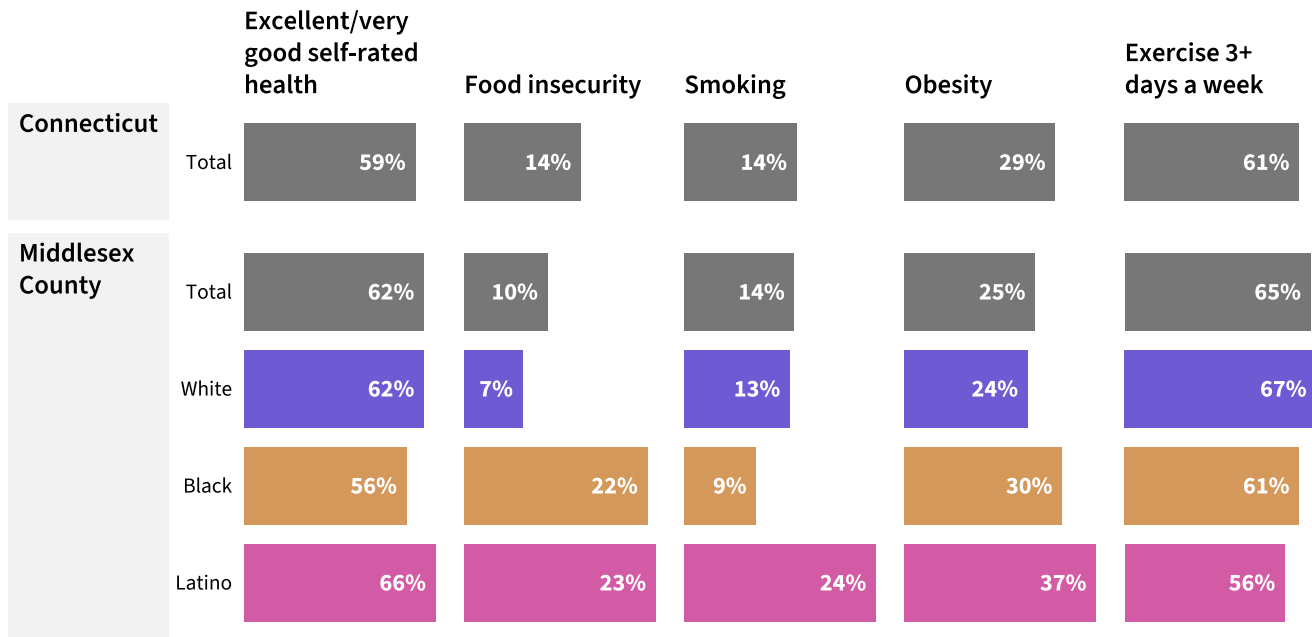
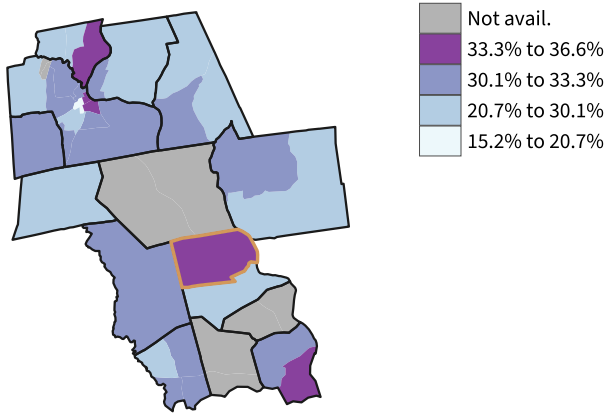
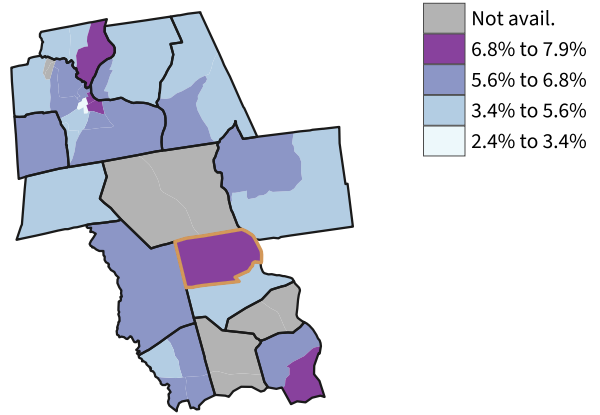


FIGURE 18: CHRONIC DISEASE PREVALENCE, SHARE OF ADULTS BY CENSUS TRACT, MIDDLESEX COUNTY

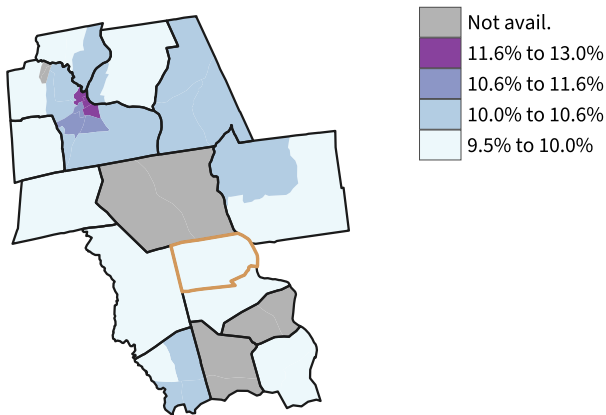
High blood pressure, 2019



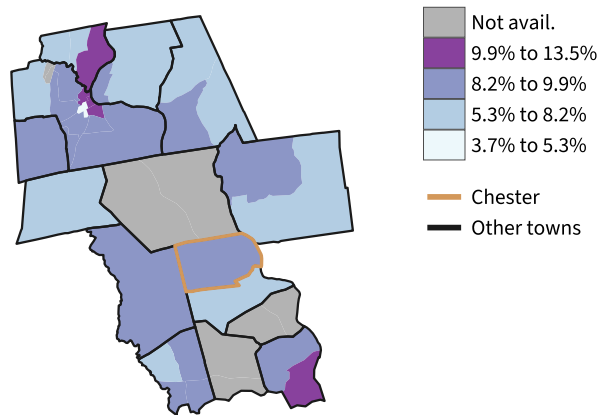
Coronary heart disease, 2020



Current asthma, 2020



Diabetes, 2020



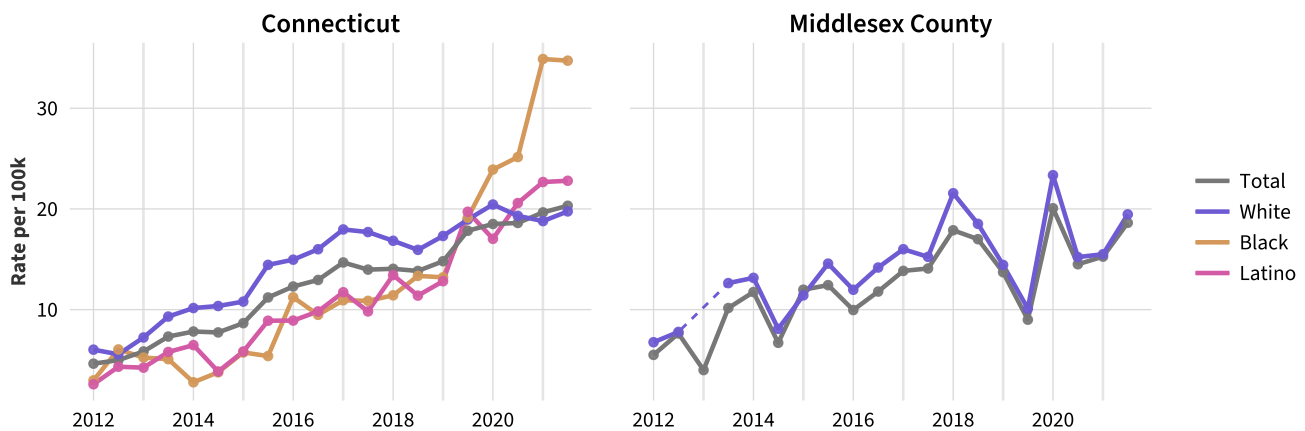
Mental health issues like depression and anxiety can be linked to social determinants like income, employment, and environment, and can pose risks of physical health problems as well, including by complicating a person’s ability to keep up other aspects of their health care. People of color are slightly more likely to report feeling mostly or completely anxious and being bothered by feeling depressed or hopeless. Overall, 12 percent of Middlesex County adults report experiencing anxiety regularly and 11 percent report being bothered by depression.

TABLE 9: SELECTED MENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015–2021

	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian
Experiencing anxiety					
Connecticut	13%	11%	15%	19%	15%
Middlesex County	12%	11%	14%	16%	N/A
Bothered by depression					
Connecticut	9%	8%	10%	14%	9%
Middlesex County	11%	8%	11%	23%	N/A

Like other states, Connecticut has seen a rise in drug overdose deaths in the last several years. In 2021, Connecticut saw an average of 122 overdose deaths per month, up from 59 in 2015. White residents long comprised the bulk of these deaths, but as overall overdose death rates have increased, an increasing share of those deaths have been people of color.

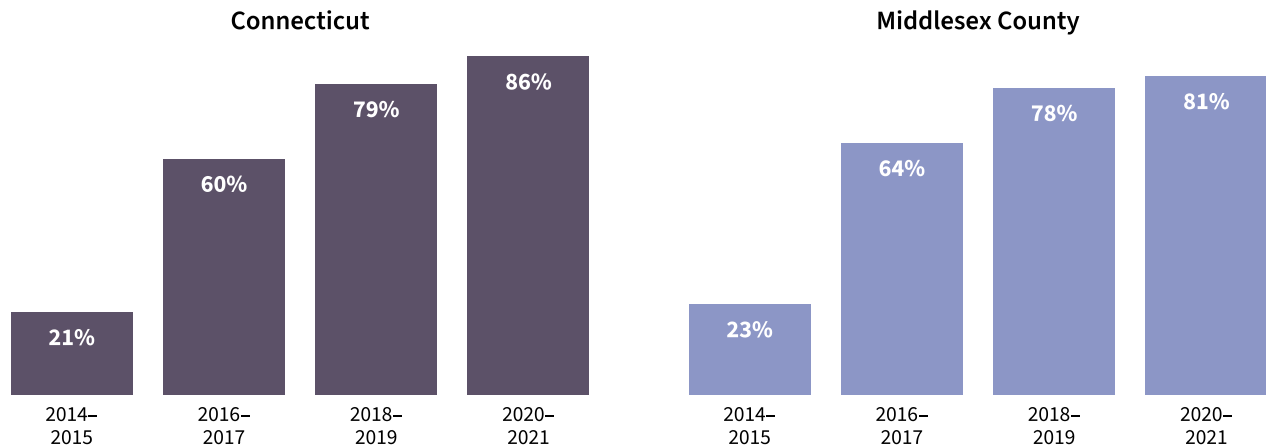
FIGURE 19: AGE-ADJUSTED SEMI-ANNUAL RATES OF DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS PER 100,000 RESIDENTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2012–2021



Note: Values are suppressed for small populations or few overdose incidents. Dashed lines indicate periods where values are suppressed or otherwise unavailable.

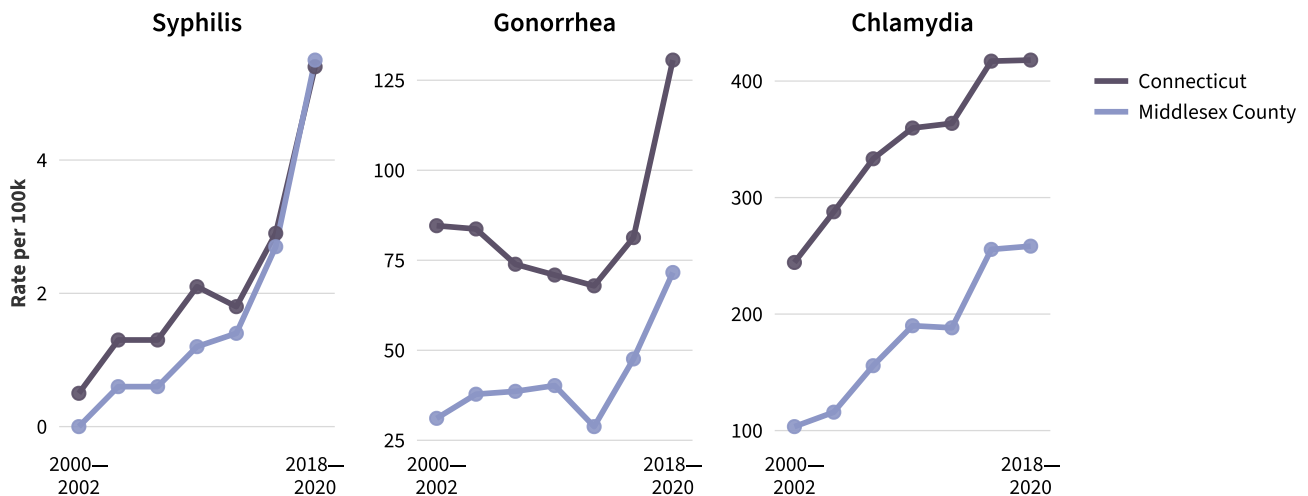
The introduction and spread of fentanyl in drugs—both with and without users’ knowledge—is thought to have contributed to this steep rise in overdoses. In 2016 and 2017, 64 percent of the drug overdose deaths in Middlesex County involved fentanyl; in 2020 and 2021, this share was 81 percent.

FIGURE 20: SHARE OF DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS INVOLVING FENTANYL, 2012–2021



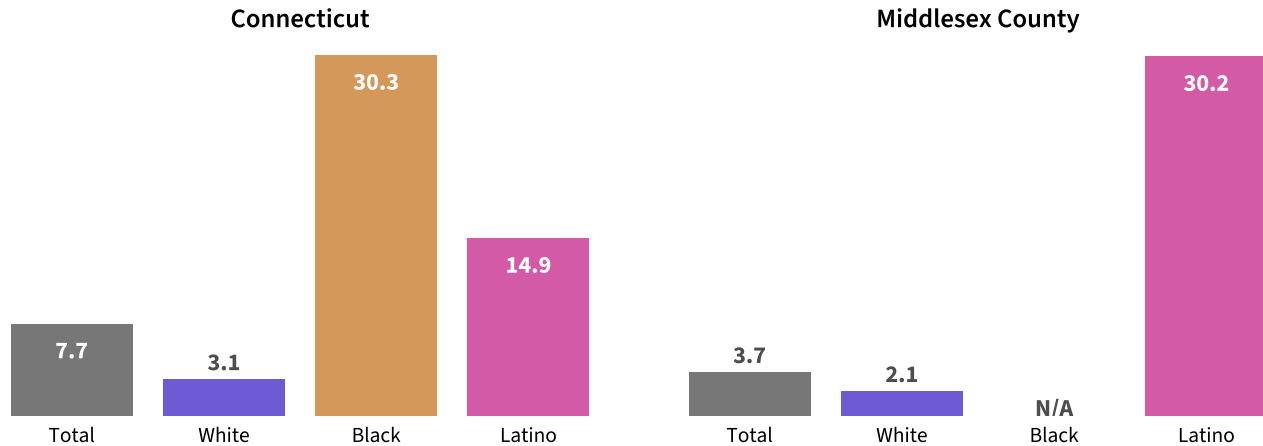
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can have long-term implications for health, including reproductive health problems and certain cancers, and can increase the risk of acquiring and transmitting diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C. Following nationwide trends, Connecticut has seen increases in the rates of STIs like chlamydia and gonorrhea over the past two decades. Between 2018 and 2020, Middlesex County had annual average case rates of 258 new cases of chlamydia per 100,000 residents, 72 cases of gonorrhea per 100,000, and 5.5 cases of syphilis per 100,000.

FIGURE 21: ANNUALIZED AVERAGE RATES OF NEW CASES OF SELECTED SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS PER 100,000 RESIDENTS, 2000–2020



As with many other diseases, Connecticut’s Black and Latino residents face a higher burden of HIV rates. Statewide between 2016 and 2020, Black residents ages 13 and up were nearly 10 times more likely to be diagnosed with HIV than white residents.

FIGURE 22: ANNUALIZED AVERAGE RATE OF NEW HIV DIAGNOSES PER 100,000 RESIDENTS AGES 13 AND OVER, 2016–2020

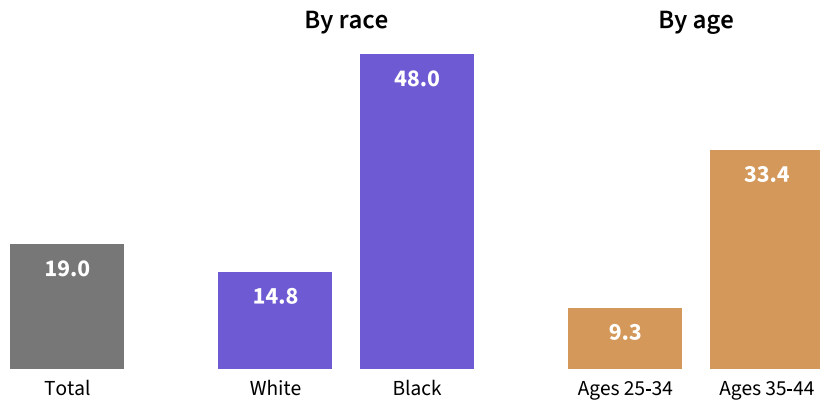


Birth outcomes often reflect health inequities for parents giving birth, and those outcomes can affect a child throughout their life. Often, parents of color have more complications related to birth and pregnancy than white parents. Complications during pregnancy or childbirth also contribute to elevated mortality among parents giving birth.

TABLE 10: SELECTED BIRTH OUTCOMES BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF PARENT GIVING BIRTH, 2017–2021

Area	Total	White	Black	Latina			Asian
				Latina (overall)	Puerto Rican	Other Latina	
Late or no prenatal care							
Connecticut	3.4%	2.5%	5.2%	4.4%	3.0%	5.6%	3.4%
Middlesex County	2.2%	1.9%	2.8%	2.3%	N/A	N/A	3.9%
Low birthweight							
Connecticut	7.9%	6.4%	12.4%	8.4%	10.0%	7.0%	9.0%
Middlesex County	7.3%	6.8%	9.5%	7.6%	10.6%	4.9%	9.4%
Infant mortality (per 1k live births)							
Connecticut	4.5	3.0	9.1	5.4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middlesex County	3.4	3.2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

FIGURE 23: MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE PER 100K BIRTHS, CONNECTICUT, 2013–2017



Children under 7 years old are monitored annually for potential lead poisoning, based on having blood-lead levels in excess of the state’s accepted threshold. Between 2018 and 2020, 0.6 percent of children tested in Middlesex County were found to have elevated lead levels. Children living in homes built before 1960 are at a higher risk of potential lead poisoning due to the more widespread use of lead-based paints in older homes. Black and Latino households are more likely to live in structures built before 1960.

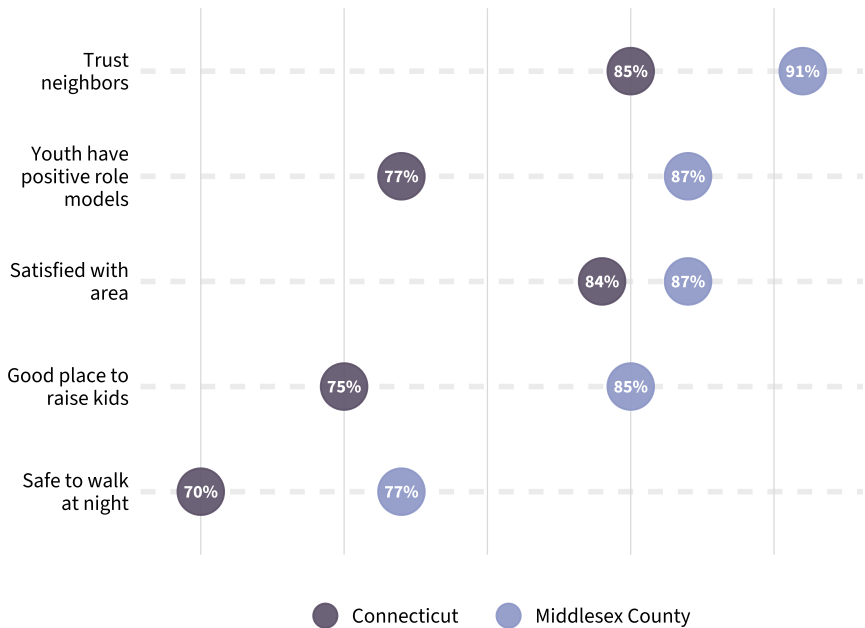
TABLE 11: HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN STRUCTURES BUILT BEFORE 1960 BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021

Area	Total		White		Black		Latino		Asian		Other race	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	579,568	41%	390,197	40%	64,854	49%	95,979	50%	14,732	27%	14,953	42%
Middlesex County	22,535	33%	19,525	34%	928	29%	1,504	39%	N/A	N/A	816	48%
Chester	695	45%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

CIVIC LIFE & COMMUNITY COHESION

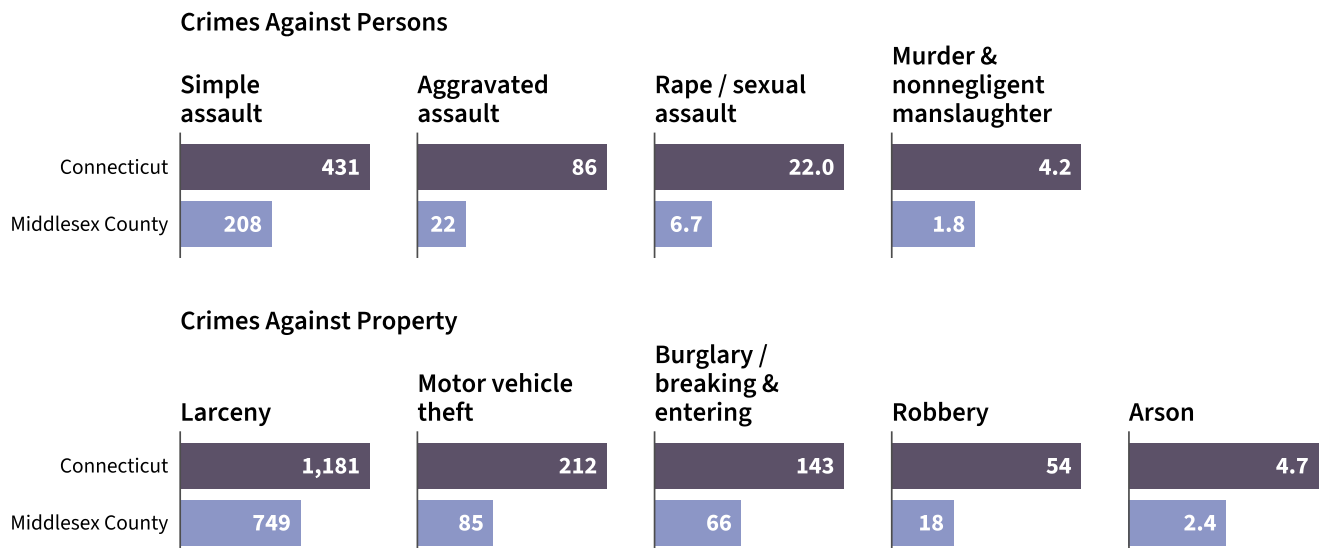
Beyond individual health, several measures from the DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey show how local adults feel about the health of their neighborhoods. High quality of life and community cohesion can positively impact resident well-being through the availability of resources, sense of safety, and participation in civic life. For example, adults who see the availability of role models in their community may enroll their children in extracurricular activities that benefit them educationally and socially; residents who know and trust their neighbors may find greater social support. Overall, 88 percent of Chester adults report being satisfied with the area where they live.

FIGURE 24: RESIDENTS' RATINGS OF COMMUNITY COHESION MEASURES, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015-2021



Crime rates are based on reports to law enforcement of violent force against persons, as well as offenses involving property. Not all crimes involve residents of the areas where the crimes occur, which is important to consider when evaluating crime rates in areas or towns with more commercial activity. Crime patterns can also vary dramatically by neighborhood. Crime can impact the social and economic well-being of communities, including through negative health effects.

FIGURE 25: GROUP A CRIME RATES PER 100,000 RESIDENTS BY TOWN / JURISDICTION, 2021



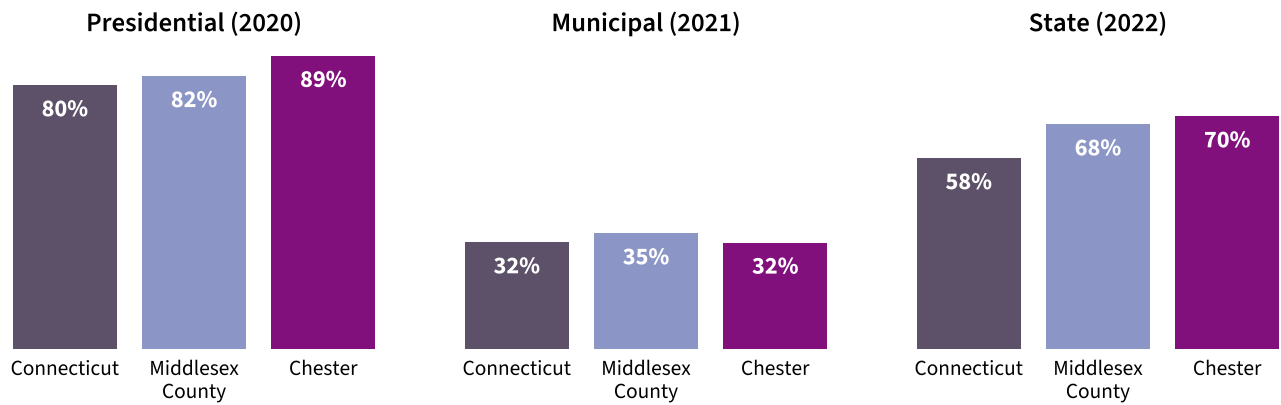
A lack of trust in and engagement with local government and experiences of unfair treatment by authorities can impair community well-being and cohesion. Seventy percent of adults in Chester feel their local government is responsive to residents’ needs, compared to 53 percent of Connecticut adults.

TABLE 12: RESIDENTS’ RATINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015–2021

Area	Local govt is responsive	Have some influence over local govt
Connecticut	53%	67%
Middlesex County	58%	68%

Eighty-nine percent of Chester’s eligible voters, or 2,596 people, voted in the 2020 presidential election, and 70 percent (2,020 people) voted in the 2022 state election.

FIGURE 26: REGISTERED VOTER TURNOUT, 2020–2022

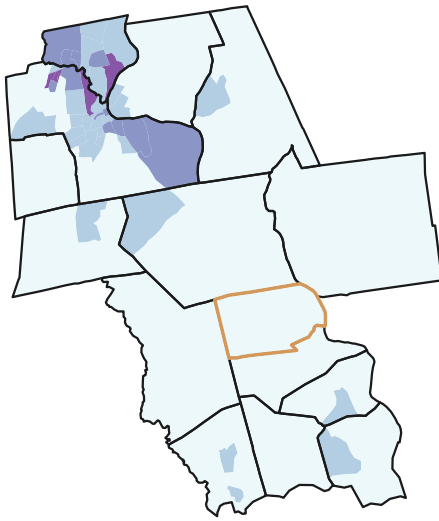


ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

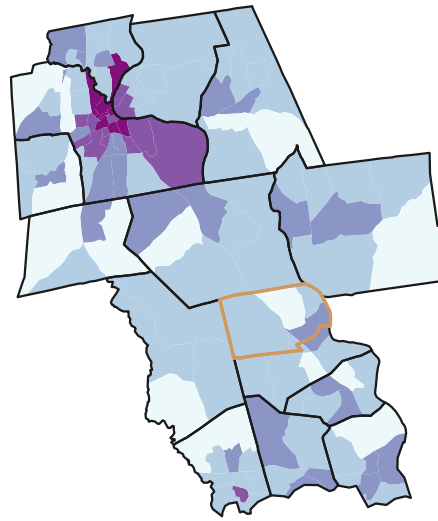
Many environmental factors—from access to outdoor resources to tree canopy to exposure to pollutants—can have direct impacts on residents’ health and quality of life. Environmental justice is the idea that these factors of built and natural environments follow familiar patterns of socioeconomic disparities and segregation. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ranks small areas throughout the US on their risks of exposure to a variety of pollutants and hazards, scaled to account for the historically disparate impact of these hazards on people of color and lower-income people.

FIGURE 27: EPA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INDEX BY BLOCK GROUP, MIDDLESEX COUNTY

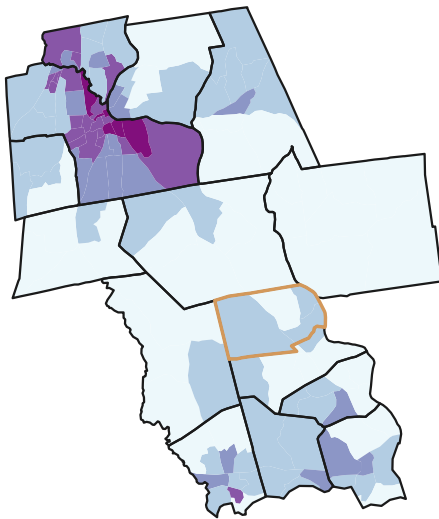
Air toxics cancer risk



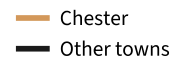
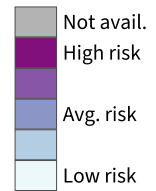
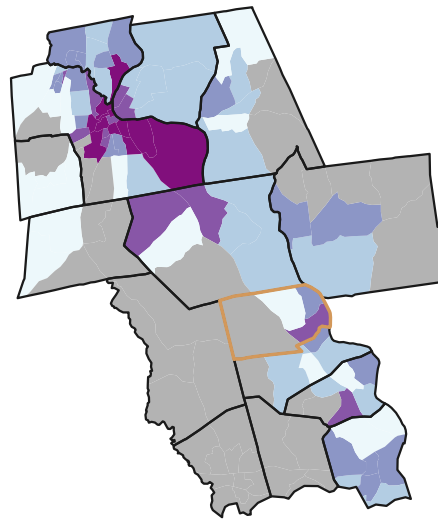
Lead paint exposure



Hazardous waste proximity

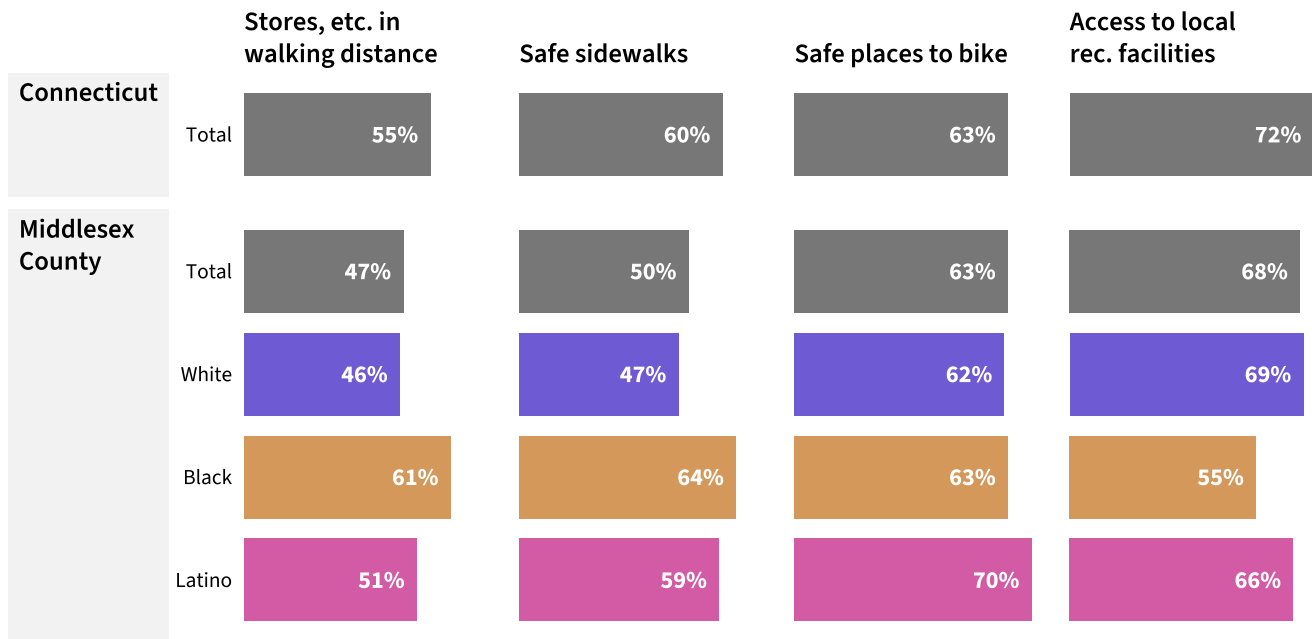


Wastewater discharge



High-quality built environment resources, such as recreational facilities and safe sidewalks, help keep residents active and bring communities together. Walkable neighborhoods may also encourage decreased reliance on cars. Throughout Connecticut, Black and Latino residents are largely concentrated in denser urban areas which tend to offer greater walkability. Of adults in Middlesex County, 47 percent report having stores, banks, and other locations they need in walking distance, lower than the share of adults statewide.

FIGURE 28: RESIDENTS' RATINGS OF LOCAL WALKABILITY MEASURES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015–2021



NOTES

Figure 1. Study area. Map tiles by Stamen Design, under CC BY 3.0. Data by OpenStreetMap, under ODbL.

Table 1. About the area. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates. Available at <https://data.census.gov>; US Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data. Available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/rdo.html>; PLACES Project. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/places>; and National Center for Health Statistics. U.S. Small-Area Life Expectancy Estimates Project (USALEEP): Life Expectancy Estimates Files, 2010–2015. National Center for Health Statistics. 2018. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/usaleep/usaleep.html>. Note that for the sake of privacy, the Census Bureau suppresses any income values above \$250,000 in their tables; any such values not calculated by DataHaven will be shown as \$250,000+.

Table 2. Population by race/ethnicity, 2020. US Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data.

Figure 2. Population by race/ethnicity and age group, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 3. Linguistic isolation by race/ethnicity, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Table 3. Population and population change by age group, 2010–2020. US Census Bureau 2010 & 2020 Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data.

Figure 4. Share of population by race/ethnicity, 2010–2020. US Census Bureau 2010 & 2020 Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data.

Table 4. Homeownership rate by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 5. Homeownership rates by age and race/ethnicity of head of household, Middlesex County, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year public use microdata sample (PUMS) data, accessed via IPUMS. Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Matthew Sobek, Danika Brockman, Grace Cooper, Stephanie Richards, and Megan Schouweiler. IPUMS USA: Version 13.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V13.0>

Figure 6. Housing cost-burden rates by race/ethnicity, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of Ruggles, et al. (2023).

Table 5. Overcrowded households by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 7. Public K–12 student enrollment by race/ethnicity per 100 students, 2022-23. DataHaven analysis (2023) of enrollment data from the Connecticut State Department of Education, accessed via EdSight at <http://edsight.ct.gov>. At the school district level, not all groups may be shown due to CTSDE data suppression rules for small enrollment counts, even though they may represent more than 1% of the school district population.

Figure 8. Selected academic and disciplinary outcomes by student race/ethnicity, 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years. DataHaven analysis (2023) of Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) testing (3rd and 8th grade English/language arts), discipline, and four-year graduation data from the Connecticut State Department of Education, accessed via EdSight. Not all groups' values may be included, or in some cases may be based on estimates, due to CTSDE data suppression rules for small counts. Because students can be suspended more than once in a school year, the suspension rate represents the percentage of students with one or more suspension or expulsion during the school year.

Figure 9. Educational attainment by race/ethnicity, share of adults ages 25 and up, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Table 6. Jobs and wages in Chester’s 5 largest sectors, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of annual employment data from the Connecticut Department of Labor. Note that in some cases, especially for smaller towns or where data were deemed unreliable for whatever reason, data have been suppressed by the department. In a few cases, that may mean large sectors in an area are missing from the analysis here. Available at https://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/202/202_annualaverage.asp

Figure 10. Monthly unemployment rate, 2013–2022, 3-month rolling average. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov/lau>

Figure 11. Median income by race/ethnicity and sex for full-time workers ages 25 and over with positive income, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of Ruggles, et al. (2023).

Figure 12. Median household income by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates and Ruggles, et al (2023).

Table 7. Selected economic resource indicators by race/ethnicity, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Table 8. Selected household economic indicators by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates and Ruggles, et al (2023).

Figure 13. Median household income, 2000–2021, in 2021 dollars. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; and American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Table 9. Median household income in large towns, 2000–2021, in 2021 dollars. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; and American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 14. Life expectancy, Middlesex County by Census tract, 2015. Data from National Center for Health Statistics. U.S. Small-Area Life Expectancy Estimates Project (USALEEP): Life Expectancy Estimates Files, 2010–2015. National Center for Health Statistics. 2018. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/usaleep/usaleep.html>

Figure 15. Uninsured rate among adults ages 19–64 by race/ethnicity, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 16. Preventive care measures, share of adults by Census tract, Middlesex County. Data from PLACES Project. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Figure 17. Selected health risk factors, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey. Available at <https://ctdatahaven.org/reports/datahaven-community-wellbeing-survey>

Figure 18. Chronic disease prevalence, share of adults by Census tract, Middlesex County. Data from PLACES Project. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Table 10. Selected mental health indicators, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey.

Figure 19. Age-adjusted semi-annual rates of drug overdose deaths per 100,000 residents by race/ethnicity, 2012–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of Accidental Drug Related Deaths. Connecticut Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Available at <https://data.ct.gov/resource/rybz-nyjw>. Rates are weighted with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 2000 U.S. Standard Population 18 age group weights available at <https://seer.cancer.gov/stdpopulations>

Figure 20. Share of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl, 2012–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of Accidental Drug Related Deaths. Connecticut Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Figure 21. Annualized average rates of new cases of selected sexually transmitted infections per 100,000 residents, 2000–2020. DataHaven analysis (2023) of data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NCHHSTP AtlasPlus. Updated 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/atlas/index.htm>

Figure 22. Annualized average rate of new HIV diagnoses per 100,000 residents ages 13 and over, 2016–2020. DataHaven analysis (2023) of data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NCHHSTP AtlasPlus.

Table 11. Selected birth outcomes by race/ethnicity of parent giving birth, 2017–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of data from the Connecticut Department of Public Health Vital Statistics. Retrieved from <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Health-Information-Systems--Reporting/Hisrhome/Vital-Statistics-Registration-Reports>

Figure 23. Maternal mortality rate per 100k births, Connecticut, 2013–2017. America’s Health Rankings analysis of CDC WONDER Online Database, Mortality files, United Health Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.americashealthrankings.org>

Table 12. Households living in structures built before 1960 by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates and Ruggles, et al (2023).

Figure 24. Residents’ ratings of community cohesion measures, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey.

Figure 25. Group A crime rates per 100,000 residents by town / jurisdiction, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2021 Crime in Connecticut Overview By Town. Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. Available at <https://portal.ct.gov/DESPP/Division-of-State-Police/Crimes-Analysis-Unit/Crimes-Analysis-Unit>. Group A crimes under the FBI’s National Incident Based Reporting System are categorized into crimes against persons, crimes against property, and crimes against society. The first two of these, shown here, are similar to the Part I Offenses of the previous reporting system and shown in older reports.

Table 13. Residents’ ratings of local government, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey.

Figure 26. Registered voter turnout, 2020–2022. DataHaven analysis (2023) of data from the Connecticut Office of the Secretary of the State Elections Management System. Available at <https://ctemspublic.pcctg.net>

Figure 27. EPA Environmental Justice Index by block group, Middlesex County. United States Environmental Protection Agency. 2022 version. EJSCREEN. Retrieved from <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

Figure 28. Residents’ ratings of local walkability measures by race/ethnicity, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey.

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Visit DataHaven (ctdatahaven.org) for more information. This report was authored by Camille Seaberry, Kelly Davila, and Mark Abraham of DataHaven.

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ABOUT DATAHAVEN

DataHaven is a non-profit organization with a 30-year history of public service to Connecticut. Our mission is to empower people to create thriving communities by collecting and ensuring access to data on well-being, equity, and quality of life. DataHaven is a formal partner of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership of the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C.

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