

The City of Newton participated in a community health assessment which included Brookline, Dedham, Dover, Needham, Newton, Waltham, Wellesley, Weston and Westwood. Led by a team from the Newton Health and Human Services Department and the Newton Community Service Center, 11 interviews were conducted with residents and professionals in Newton, yielding rich information about the health of Newton residents.

Overall, Newton compares extremely favorably with the other communities in CHNA 18 and with the state of Massachusetts with respect to community health status.

	Population (2005)	Median Income (2000)	% Below Poverty Line (2000)	% of children getting free or reduced price lunch (2010-11)	Population per square mile (2011)
Newton	83,346	\$86,052	4.3%	10.7%	4,687
CHNA 18	309,560	N/A	4.5%	N/A	2,783
Massachusetts	6,436,940	N/A	9.3%	34.2%	839

## Summary Data

### General Health Status

Newton has lower rates of mortality, diabetes, smoking, hypertension and adult and child obesity, teen births and motor vehicle-related ER visits than the State, and a similar rate of HIV/AIDS as the state and the other CHNA 18 communities.

### Demographics

Newton has a higher percentage of White residents, a lower percentage of Black and Hispanic residents and a higher percentage of Asian residents than CHNA 18 and the State of Massachusetts

Newton has a greater percentage of both older people and young people than do other towns in CHNA 18 and the State. It also has a higher percentage of the “old old” (over 80) than Massachusetts communities as a whole.

### Community Strengths

The most important community strengths were seen as community involvement, strong government infrastructure and strong schools.

### Top Health Concerns

- Mental Health (especially depression/anxiety, substance abuse and academic stress)
- Affordable Housing
- Transportation barriers
- Financial Strain

## Summary

- Suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts among high school students are lower in Newton than in CHNA 18 and the state of Massachusetts.
- A smaller percentage of high school students in Newton (57% in 2005) reported having a teacher or adult to consult with about problems in school as compared to Massachusetts as a whole (92%), suggesting opportunities for intervention.
- 3.9% of Newton adults report experience more than 15 days of poor mental health in a month, as compared to close to nine percent of adults in Massachusetts.
- Newton has a lower percentage of hospitalizations for substance abuse or opioid-related injuries than Massachusetts as a whole
- While the percentage of unemployed Newton residents has more than doubled since 1999-2001, it still remains substantially lower than the state.

## Selected Interviewee Comments

*"There is a well established human services delivery system at the local level with a good "safety net" for the most vulnerable populations – senior services staff member*  
*"Children in Newton are increasingly programmed and pushed by their parents"*  
*health care professional*

*"The village vitality in Newton is a good example of what today people call smart growth."*  
*city staffmember*

*"Newton has lots of resources to make changes and lots of people willing to act on their beliefs. Newton's young people are instilled with a strong sense of volunteering and giving back"*  
*community agency staff member*

*"Access to health care is an issue, particularly for businesses that want to do the right thing"*  
*community business leader*