

West Suburban Community Health Network (CHNA) 18 Community Needs Assessment – Weston Supplement

The Town of Weston participated in a community health assessment which included Brookline, Dedham, Dover, Needham, Weston, Waltham, Wellesley, Weston and Westwood. Interviews were conducted with residents and professionals in Weston, yielding rich information about the health of Weston residents.

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

	<i>Population (2005)</i>	<i>Median Income (2000)</i>	<i>% Below Poverty Line (2000)</i>	<i>% of children getting free or reduced price lunch (2010-11)</i>	<i>Population per square mile (2011)</i>
Weston	11,591	\$153,918	2.9%	3.4%	702
CHNA 18	309,560		4.5%		2,783
Massachusetts	6,436,940		9.3%	34.2%	839

Summary Data

General Health Status

Weston has lower rates of mortality, diabetes, smoking, hypertension, adult obesity, asthma and motor vehicle-related ER visits than the State.

Demographics

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

Weston has a higher percentage of both residents age 19 and younger and those age 80 and over than Massachusetts communities as a whole.

The most significant community strengths identified were:

- Community involvement
- Adequate resources
- Adequate green space

Top Health Concerns

- Mental Health (especially depression/anxiety and substance abuse)
- Social Isolation
- Transportation barriers

Spotlight Health Issue: Mental Health

Summary

- Suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts among high school students are lower in Weston than in the state of Massachusetts.
- A smaller percentage of high school students in Weston report having a teacher or adult to consult with about problems in school or out of school as compared to Massachusetts as a whole, suggesting opportunities for intervention.
- Weston has a lower percentage of hospitalizations for substance abuse or opioid-related injuries than Massachusetts as a whole
- Weston has a higher percentage of high school students who report engaging in binge drinking in the past 30 days than the state.
- While the percentage of unemployed Weston residents has more than doubled since 1999-2001, it still remains substantially lower than the state.

Selected Interviewee Comments

"In Weston, people have their game faces on but things are very insular and separate"
School staff person

"People are civic minded, electively involved in community service, and enjoy being engaged, in a meaningful way."
Council on Aging staff

"Traffic - it affects everyone, we're a cut through community. It has to do with our location - it's a major east-west artery".
Town Manager

"It's a high achieving community, and there is lots of pressure for success for kids"
Community Coalition member

"It's very green, a lot of open space for people, many trails, paths, and people know about them."
Council on Aging staff

The West Suburban Community Health Network Area (CHNA) 18 is a regional coalition of public, non-profit, and private organizations working together to build healthier communities. For more information about CHNA 18, email: administrator@chna18.org. To view additional more extensive data, visit our website at www.chna18.org.