

# APPENDIX 1

## RANDOM HOUSEHOLD SURVEY REPORT

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## Introduction

The COMPASS NOW 2015 community needs assessment included a Random Household Survey to complement the socioeconomic indicators. The objective of the household survey was to increase the understanding of the community's needs and their perceptions of the main challenges facing the region. Results from this survey were examined by respondent characteristics as well as compared to the previous survey results.

## Methods

The COMPASS NOW Random Household Survey was developed and tested by a team of research experts in 2007. The same survey was used in spring 2011 and again in fall 2014. The 2014 survey was nearly identical to the 2011 survey to allow for comparisons. The survey included 88 items with questions covering major areas of community life, including: health, income and the economy, public safety, care giving, education and lifelong learning, community environment, and community concerns. The majority of the survey questions asked respondents to rate certain aspects of their community. Each question had a four-level response scale where 1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, and 4=excellent. There was no undecided, neutral middle, or a response of 'I don't know.' A 'does not apply' response was added to questions pertaining to education, care giving, and economic aspects, in the event that the respondent could not answer the question because the situation didn't apply to them.

The survey was mailed to 5,000 randomly selected households in La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, Vernon, and Houston Counties, which make up the Great Rivers Region. A mailing service was used to draw the sample and manage the mailing list. The number of surveys mailed in each county was proportional to the number of households in the county. The surveys were also sent proportionately to the male head of household and the female head of household according to the male/female distribution in each county with a slight oversampling of adults under age 50 and males over age 50 to increase the possible response from these age-gender demographics. **Table 1** shows the geographic distribution of the household survey and response rate for each county.

County	# of Households Received Survey	# of Households Returned Survey*	Response Rate
La Crosse	2400	435	18.1%
Monroe	900	124	13.8%
Trempealeau	600	69	11.5%
Vernon	650	90	13.8%
Houston	450	67	14.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>15.8%</b>

\*Note: Six surveys were returned without county or ZIP code identification.

Each randomly selected household received a postcard one week in advance of the survey release to inform recipients of the COMPASS NOW community needs assessment and encourage their participation. The postcard also explained that the survey was also available online via Survey Monkey. The household surveys were mailed out on September 2, 2014. Respondents were asked to return their survey in the enclosed postage-paid self-addressed envelope by September 30. The eight-page survey included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and the confidentiality of participating, a return envelope, and a drawing ticket for five \$50 gift cards to any grocery store in the region. The only requirement for entering the drawing was to return a completed survey. Three weeks after the survey was mailed, a reminder post card was sent to the entire sample to remind them to return the survey.

Survey responses were entered into the secure Survey Monkey data entry site and then transferred into SAS for data analysis. The data was analyzed in aggregate and disaggregated by county. Data analysis was also carried out examining differences in demographic characteristics including county of residence, gender, age, education level, income level, and race. Frequencies and mean scores for each survey item were calculated. Based on the calculated mean scores, survey items were ranked for discussion and compared to 2011 survey means. County differences in mean scores were tested for significance using analysis of variance in order to make inferences about a variety of issues at the regional and county level. Analyses of demographic characteristics were examined by comparing frequencies using chi-square analysis.

## Results

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A total of 791 surveys were returned for a total response rate of 15.8%. Six respondents did not identify which county they lived in. There were 67 surveys completed online. This was a lower response rate than the 2011 survey, in which 22% of selected households returned a survey, but was closer to the response rate of the survey sent in 2007 (response rate of 13.3%).

### Profile of the Respondents

The random selection of the household sample ensured that every household in the region had an equal chance of being selected to receive a survey. We compared the demographics of the survey respondents to 2010 U.S. Census data and to the 2011 respondents to see how similar or different the sample was. In general, we found some differences in the survey sample to both the Great Rivers Region and the previous survey. See **Table 2**.

Compared to the general population of the Great Rivers Region, the survey sample had more female respondents than male respondents. Of survey respondents, 65% were female and 33% were male, compared to the general population, where women and men are represented equally. The age range of the respondents was 21-97. The median age was 52, which was considerably older than the median age of the Great Rivers Region, but significantly younger than the respondents surveyed in 2011. These differences between the sample and the general population did not surprise the COMPASS steering committee, as it has been our experience that older adults are more likely to complete surveys, as are women when compared to men. We found that even though surveys were addressed to a male householder, female householders still tended to be the ones to complete the survey.

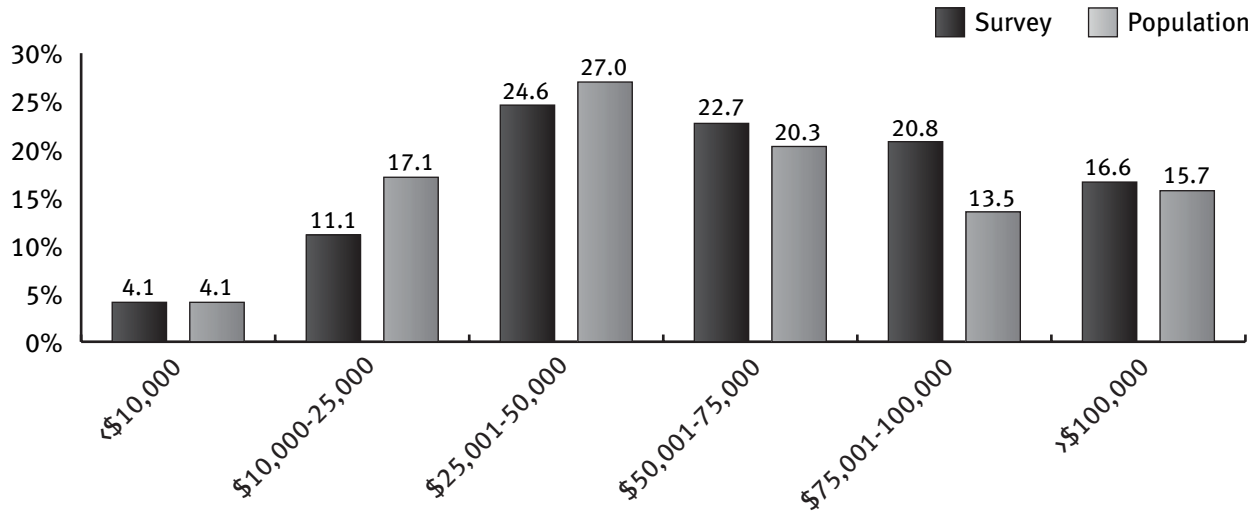
Similar to the general population, 94% of the survey respondents were Caucasian. The educational attainment of the respondents tended to be higher than that of the general population. Among the respondents, 25% had a high school diploma or less, 30% had vocational school training or some college, and 44% were college graduates or had postgraduate training. According to the U.S. Census, by comparison, 35% of the Great Rivers Region has a high school diploma, 32% has an associate's degree or some college and 23% have a bachelor's degree or higher. The educational attainment was also significantly higher in the current survey than in the 2011 survey.

A majority of respondents owned their home (86%) relative to respondents who were renters (statistically higher than the 2011 survey). By comparison, 70% of the Great Rivers Region are homeowners. Of 2014 respondents, 32% had dependent children living at home, compared to the regional average of 29%. This was also statistically higher than the 2011 survey.

<b>Table 2: Demographics of Household Survey by Year</b>			
<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>2011 Respondents (N=1100)</b>	<b>2014 Respondents (N=791)</b>	<b>Difference in demographics</b>
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	357 (32.5%)	259 (33.0%)	0.6727
Female	729 (66.2%)	507 (64.7%)	
Prefer not to say/didn't answer	14 (1.3%)	18 (2.3%)	
<b>Age</b>			
21-35	97 (9.1%)	114 (15.0%)	<0.0001
36-50	190 (17.8%)	234 (30.8%)	
51-64	377 (35.3%)	199 (26.2%)	
65+	405 (37.9%)	212 (27.9%)	
Average age (sd)	59.76 (16.22)	53.94 (15.98)	<0.0001
<b>Race</b>			
White	1053 (95.7%)	747 (94.4%)	0.2041
Non-white	21 (1.9%)	22 (2.8%)	
Didn't answer	26 (2.3%)	22 (2.8%)	
<b>Education</b>			
High school diploma or less	361 (32.8%)	200 (25.3%)	0.0002
Vocational or some college	328 (29.8%)	234 (29.6%)	
College or advanced degree	396 (36.0%)	351 (44.4%)	
Didn't answer	25 (2.3%)	6 (0.8%)	
<b>Income</b>			
<\$25,000	298 (27.1%)	111 (14.0%)	<0.0001
\$25,001-\$75,000	522 (47.4%)	344 (43.5%)	
\$75,001+	211 (19.2%)	272 (34.4%)	
Didn't answer	69 (6.3%)	64 (8.1%)	
<b>Children living at home (% yes)</b>	253 (24.3%)	253 (32.4%)	<0.0001
<b>Ownership (% rent)</b>	199 (18.5%)	106 (13.8%)	0.0066
<b>Work for pay</b>			
Yes	Not asked	498 (63.9%)	
No		80 (10.3%)	
No/looking for work		18 (2.3%)	
Retired		184 (23.6%)	

**Figure 1** shows a comparison of respondents' household incomes compared to the general population. In general, the survey had a slightly higher representation from the \$75,000-100,000 household income and less in the \$10,000-25,000 income level. Household income was also significantly higher for the respondents in 2014 compared to the 2011 survey.

**Figure 1: Household Income - Survey Compared to Overall Population**



Summary: The survey respondents were more likely to be female, slightly older, have a higher level of education, more likely to have children living in home, and have a slightly higher income than the population. Race was similar to the population. Differences in demographics between the 2011 and 2014 surveys could result in many differences in interpretation of the results to the previous study.

### Overall Rating of the Community as a Place to Live

Before starting on the issues sections of the survey, respondents were asked in which county they lived. They were also asked to rate their community as a place to live. Overall, respondents rated their communities highly. La Crosse and Houston Counties were rated the highest, and Monroe and Trempealeau Counties were rated the lowest (see **Figure 2**). There was a significant decline in ratings of their community between 2011 and 2014 by respondents in Trempealeau and Monroe Counties. Overall, 35% of respondents reported their community was an excellent place to live, and 54% indicated it was a good place to live.

**Figure 2: Thinking of your community, how would you rate the area as a place to live?**

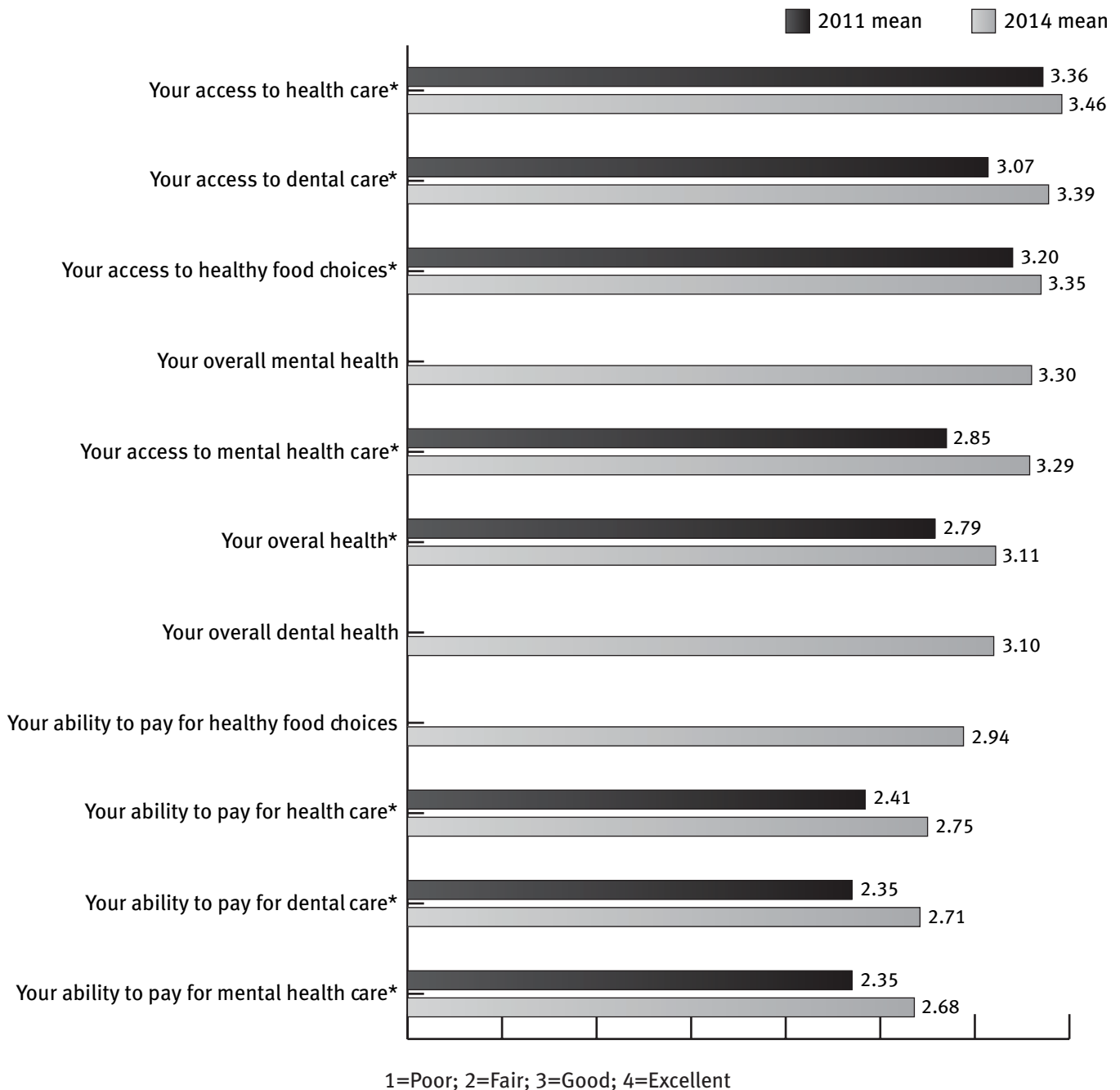


Response to this question varied by education: 43% of those with a college degree stated their community was excellent, compared to 27% of those with some college or vocational training, and 30% of those with a high school diploma or less. Responses also varied by income, with a similar pattern – those with higher income rated their community as a place to live higher than lower income groups.

### Aspects of Health

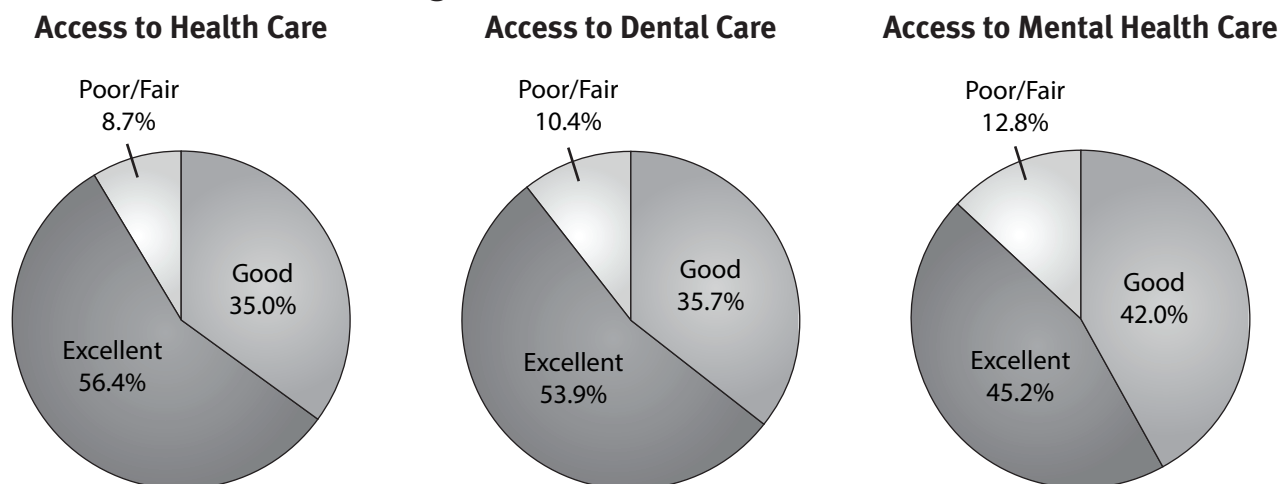
Respondents were asked to rate access to health care, ability to pay for health care, and their overall health status. Results from the current survey are shown in **Figure 3**, ranked from highest to lowest rating, including the mean scores from the 2011 survey, when a comparable question was asked. Items with an asterisk (\*) indicate a significant difference from 2011 to 2014.

**Figure 3: Perception of Aspects of Health Within the Community**

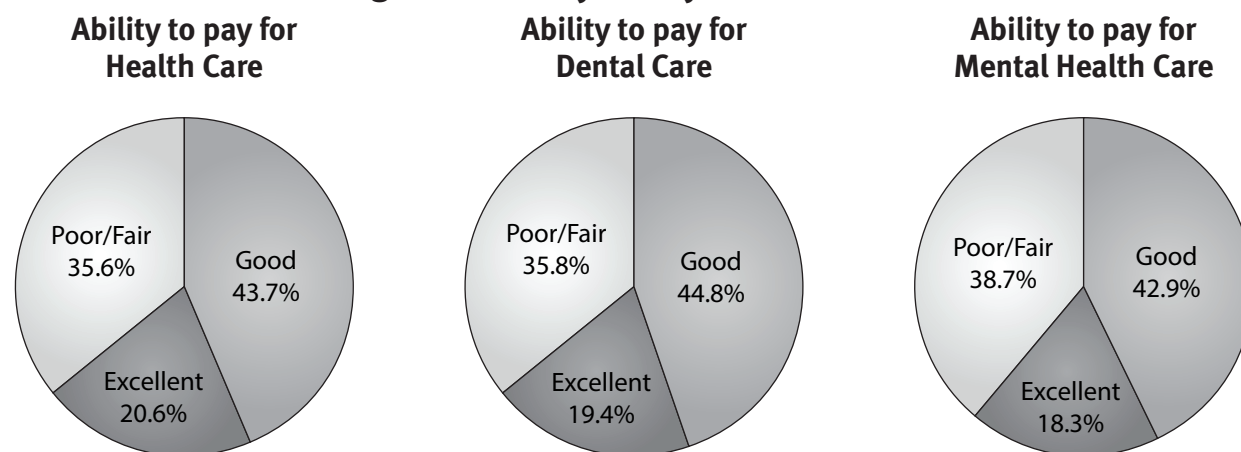


**Average scores for all aspects of health improved statistically from the 2011 to 2014 survey.** The highest rated item in the health category was access to health care followed by access to dental care, with a mean score of 3.46 and 3.39 respectively. Overall, 56.4% of survey respondents rated their **access to health care** as excellent in their community, 35% indicated it was good, 6.5% rated it fair, and 2.2% rated access as poor. Access to dental care was also rated high by respondents. See **Figure 4**. Ability to pay for mental health care was rated the lowest by respondents. Over one-third of respondents rated the ability to pay for health care, mental health care or dental care as fair or poor. See **Figure 5**.

**Figure 4: Access to Health Care**



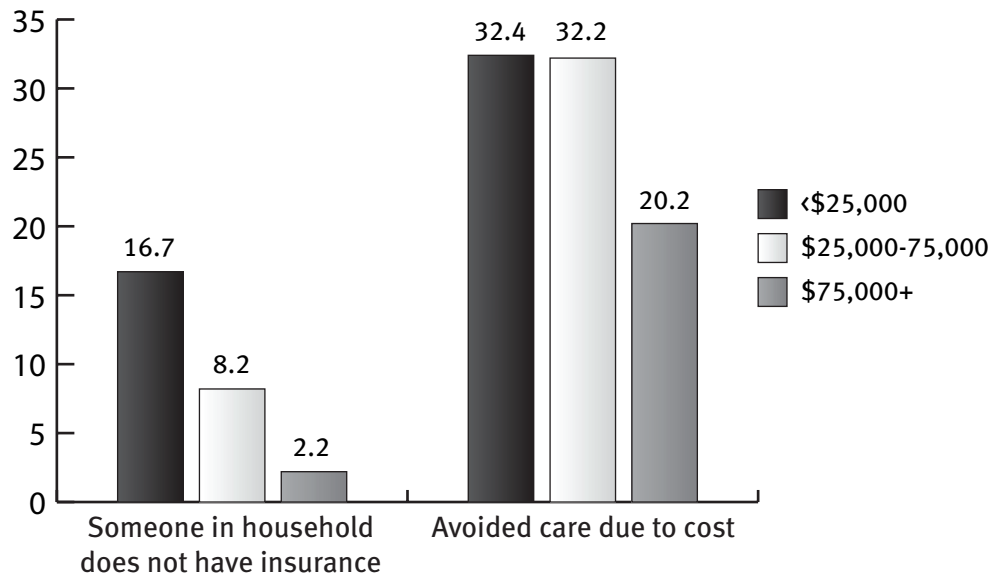
**Figure 5: Ability to Pay for Health Care**



Overall, 6.9% of respondents reported that not everyone in their household had insurance. Of respondents, 27% also reported avoiding needed care because of the cost. Neither of these questions varied statistically by county, but did differ by gender, age, education, and income. See **Figure 6** for differences by household income. See **In-Depth Analysis** for more detail on comparisons.

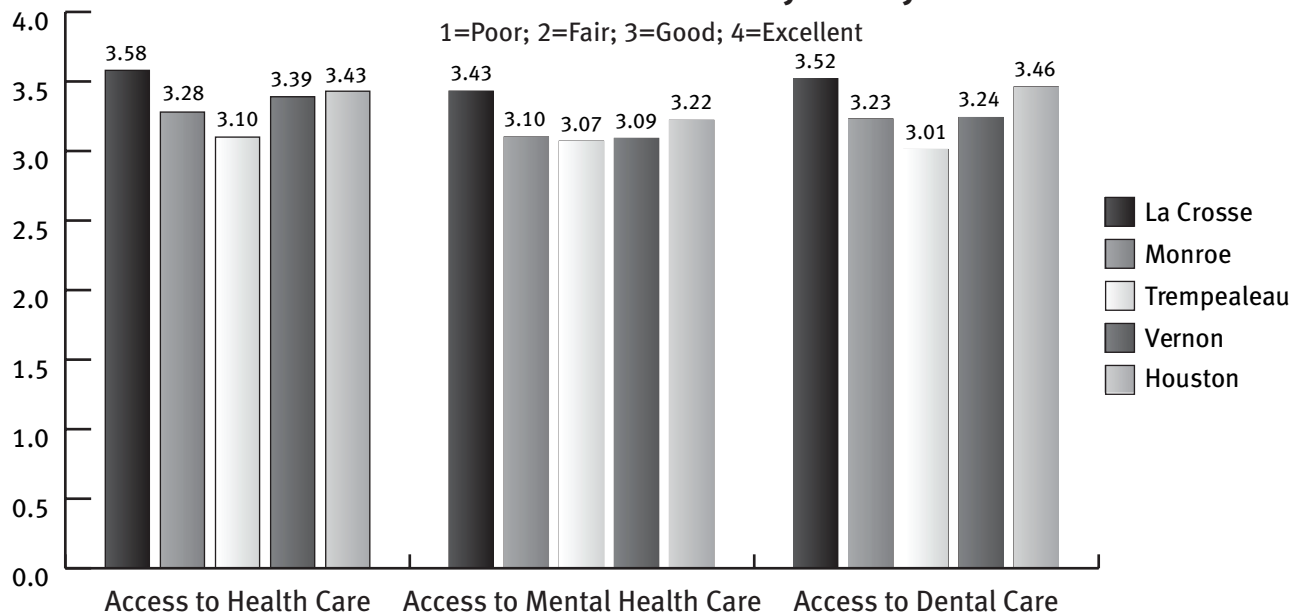


**Figure 6: Insurance and Care Avoidance by Income**



Access to health care, dental care, mental health care, and access to healthy food choices varied by county of residence, but ability to pay and overall mental health and dental health status did not vary by county. La Crosse County residents rated access to health care, dental care, mental health, and healthy food choices all higher than residents from the other four counties. Houston County residents also rated access highly. See **Figure 7**. Nearly 28% of Trempealeau County residents rated access to health care as fair or poor, and 12% of Monroe County residents indicated this. Nearly 30% of Trempealeau County residents rated access to dental care or access to mental health care as fair or poor. About one-in-five respondents from Trempealeau County reported their overall health was fair or poor. This was nearly double the rate in the other counties. About 30% of respondents from Houston and La Crosse Counties indicated their health was excellent. See **In-Depth Analysis** for more detail.

**Figure 7: Access to Health Care, Dental Health Care, and Mental Health Care by County**



## Aspects of health by demographic characteristics

See In-Depth Analysis for more detail.

**Gender:** Females rated their overall mental health lower than males. Females rated their ability to pay for healthy food choices lower than males. Females rated their ability to pay for dental care lower than males. Females were more likely than males to report that in the past month they avoided seeing a doctor because of cost (31% reported this, compared to 19% of males).

**Age:** Older adult respondents were more likely to rate their overall health as fair or poor than those under age 65. Older adult respondents were more likely to rate most other aspects of health more positively. Access to health care was rated higher among those 65 and up, and lowest among those 21-50 years. Access to mental health care was rated higher by those over age 65. Access to healthy food choices was rated highest among those ages 51-64 years and lowest among those 21-50 years. Respondents over age 65 were more likely to say their ability to pay for healthy food choices was good or excellent. Younger respondents (under age 65) all rated their ability to pay for health care, dental care and mental health care lower than those over age 65. Younger respondents were more likely to report avoiding care due to cost (37% reported this) compared to 8% of adults over age 65.

**Education:** In general, respondents with lower educational attainment rated all aspects of health lower than those with some post-secondary education. Those with some college or vocational training rated all aspects of health lower than those with a college or advanced degree, although those with some college/vocational training rated the overall mental health about the same as those with less education. Additionally, those with some college/vocational training rated their overall health similarly to those with less education. Those respondents with less education (less than a college degree) were less likely to report that everyone in the household has health insurance. Those with some college or vocational training were more likely to report avoiding care in the past 12 months due to cost.

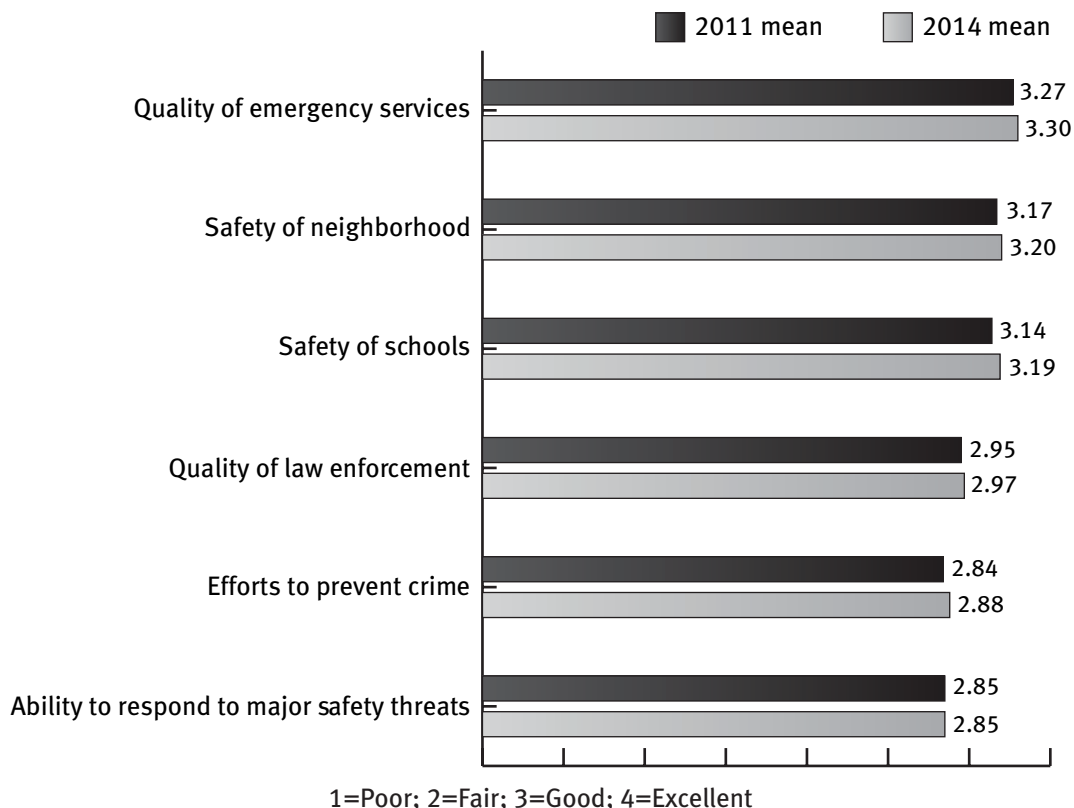
**Income:** Respondents earning less than \$25,000 were more likely to rate all aspects of health lower than those earning over \$25,000. Those earning between \$25,000 and \$75,000 rated all aspects of health lower than those earning more than \$75,000. Those earning less than \$25,000 were more likely to report someone in the household was without health insurance (17%) compared to those earning \$25,000-75,000 (8%) and those earning more than \$75,000 (2%). Those earning less than \$75,000 were more likely to report avoiding care in the past year because of cost.

**Race:** There were no differences in rating of aspects of health by race, except for access to mental health care. Over 25% of non-white respondents rated their access to mental health care as fair or poor, compared to 12% of white respondents.

## Aspects of Public Safety

Respondents were asked to rate aspects of public safety in their community. Results from the current survey are shown in **Figure 8** ranked from highest to lowest rating, including the mean scores from the 2011 survey when a comparable question was asked.

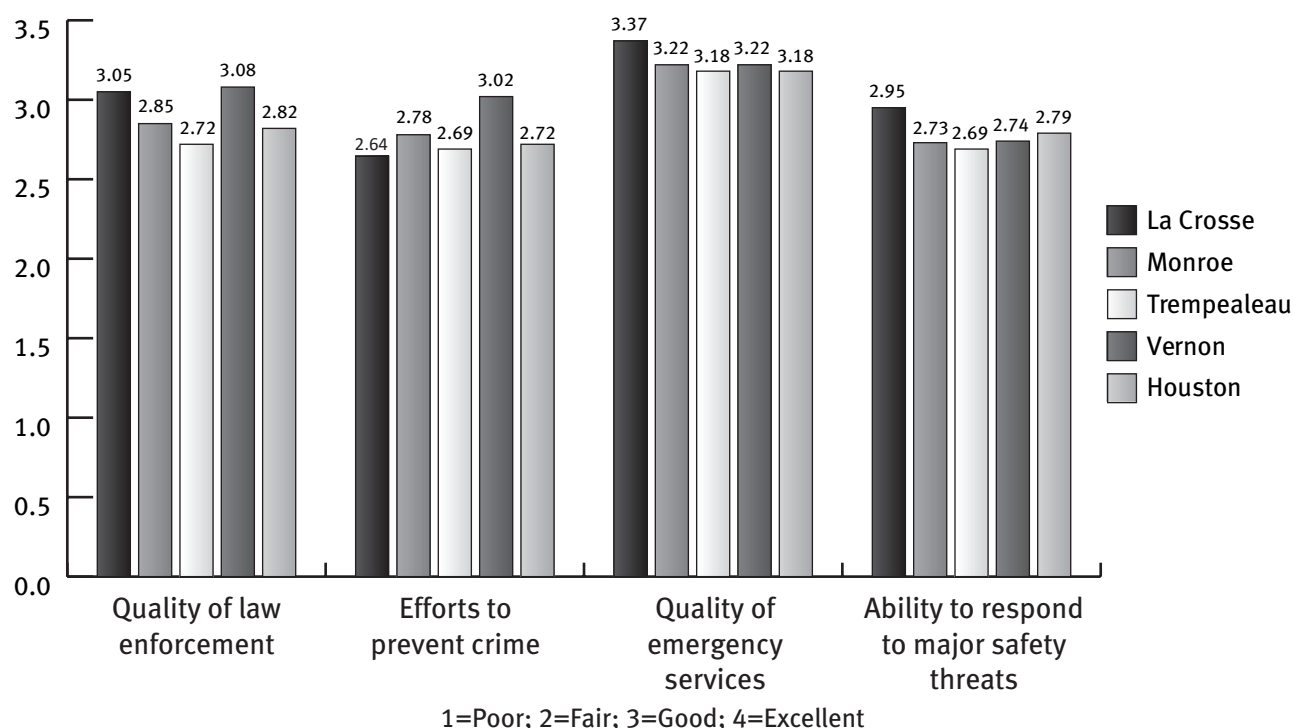
**Figure 8: Perception of Aspects of Public Safety within the Community**



Quality of emergency services and safety of the neighborhood and schools were rated the highest, and efforts to prevent crime and respond to major safety threats were rated the lowest. Overall, 39% of respondents indicated that emergency services in their community were excellent; 52% indicated they were good. All responses were rated higher in 2014 compared to the survey in 2011, although these differences were *not statistically significant*.

Ratings of “quality of law enforcement” varied by county. Respondents from Vernon and La Crosse counties were more likely to rate this as excellent, and respondents from Trempealeau were more likely to rate it as fair or poor. Ratings of “efforts to prevent crime” also varied by county. Respondents from Vernon County rated this the highest, while respondents from Trempealeau, Houston and Monroe Counties rated this lower. Ratings of “quality of emergency services” varied by county. Respondents from La Crosse County were more likely to rate this as excellent. Ratings of “ability to respond to major safety threats” varied by county. Respondents from La Crosse County were more likely to rate this as excellent. See **Figure 9. See In-Depth Analysis for more detail on comparisons.**

**Figure 9: Aspects of Public Safety by County**



### Aspects of health by demographic characteristics

See In-Depth Analysis for more detail.

**Gender:** There were no significant differences in respondents’ ratings of public safety, except for their community’s ability to respond to safety threats. Females rated their community’s ability to respond to safety threats lower than males.

**Age:** Respondents over the age of 65 rated most aspects of public safety higher than younger respondents.

**Education:** Respondents with college or advanced degrees rated the safety of the neighborhood higher than those with less than a college degree. Those respondents with a college degree were also more likely to rate the safety of the schools as excellent, compared to only 24% of those with less education.

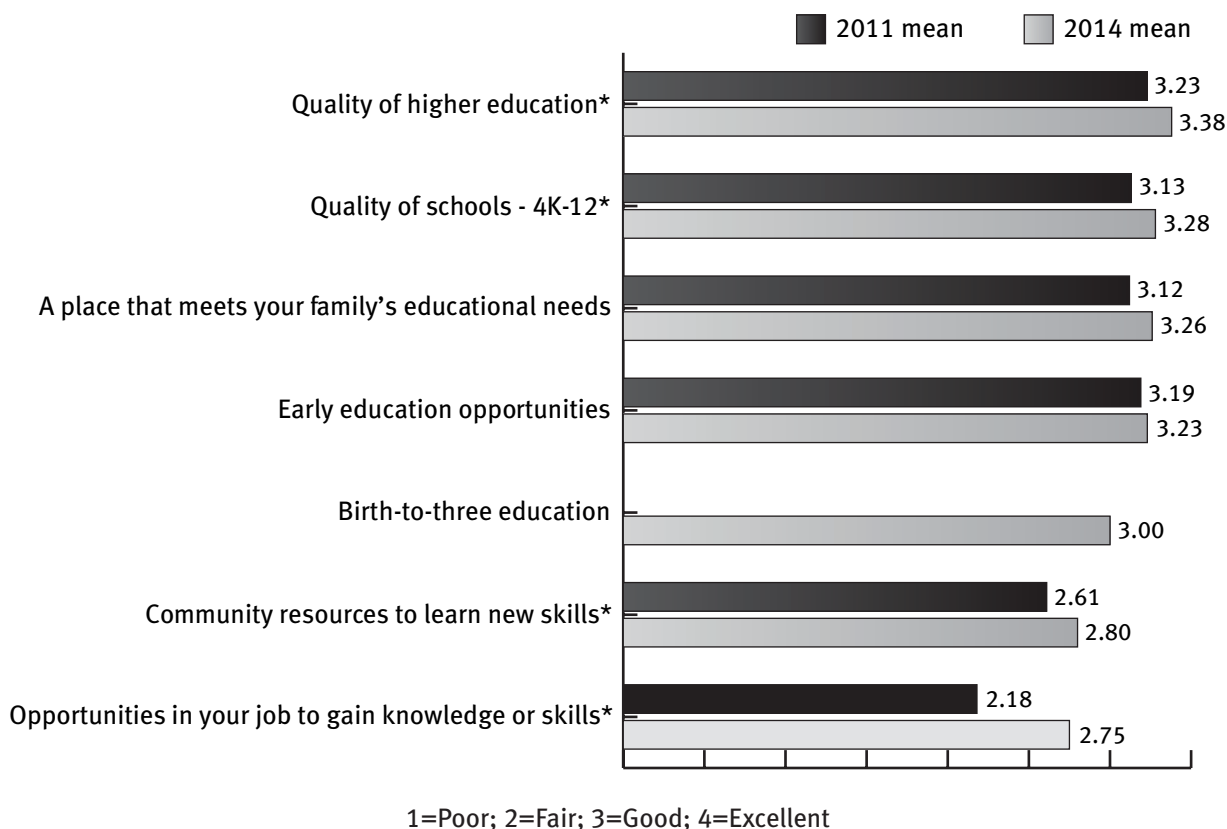
**Income:** Respondents with lower income rated quality of law enforcement, safety of their neighborhood, safety of schools, and quality of law enforcement poorer than those with higher education.

**Race:** Slightly more non-white respondents rated the quality of emergency services as excellent compared to white respondents. Non-white respondents were more “polar,” meaning more likely to rate the ability to respond to major safety threats as either fair/poor or excellent.

### Aspects of Education

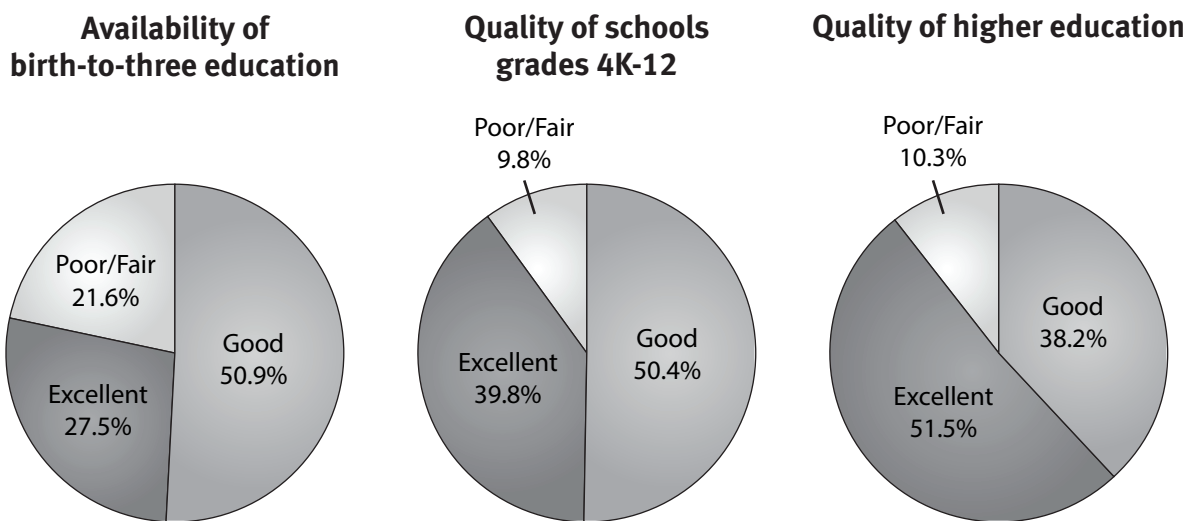
Respondents were asked to rate aspects of education in their community. Results from the current survey are shown in **Figure 10** ranked from highest to lowest rating, including the mean scores from the 2011 survey, when a comparable question was asked. Items with an asterisk (\*) indicate a significant difference from 2011 to 2014.

**Figure 10: Aspects of Education within the Community**



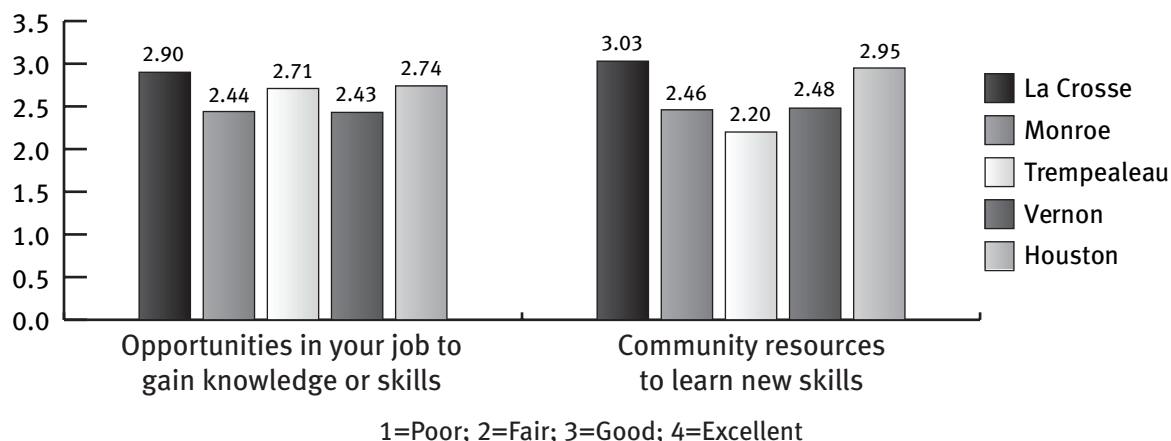
All aspects of education were rated statistically higher by the current survey respondents compared with the 2011 respondents except for quality of early education opportunities. Quality of higher education was rated the highest, followed by quality of schools grades 4k-12. Over 50% of respondents indicated the quality of higher education was excellent, while nearly 40% indicated the quality of schools grades 4k-12 in the community was excellent. Only 21% of respondents indicated that birth to age 3 opportunities were excellent. An equal number indicated this was fair or poor. See **Figure 11**.

**Figure 11: Quality of Education Across the Lifespan**



All ratings of “aspects of education” varied by county of residence. Most aspects were rated higher by La Crosse and Houston County respondents and rated lower by Monroe, Trempealeau or Vernon County respondents. **See In-Depth Analysis for more detail.** Opportunities in your job to gain knowledge or skills and community resources to learn new skills or other hobbies, by county, are shown in **Figure 12**. While Trempealeau County residents rated higher opportunities in your job to gain knowledge or skills, they rated community resources to learn new skills lower than residents from other counties.

**Figure 12: Aspects of Skills Training by County of Residence**



### Aspects of education by demographic characteristics

**See In-Depth Analysis for more detail.**

**Gender:** There were no differences in respondent’s ratings of aspects of education by gender.

**Age:** There were only minor differences in how respondents of different ages rated educational aspects. Respondents 21 to 50 years rated the quality of schools (4K-12) lower than older adults. Although they were more likely to rate it as fair or poor, they were equally as likely to say it was excellent as other respondents. Respondents under age 65 were more likely to rate community resources to learn new skills as fair or poor, over 35% indicating this. One-third of adults over age 65 said this was excellent. *(This might be reflective of who is more likely to use these resources.)*

**Education:** Those with a higher level of education were more likely to rate many aspects of education higher than those with less education. There was no difference by education in rating of birth-to-three education, quality of schools (4K-12), or opportunities in your job to gain knowledge or skills.

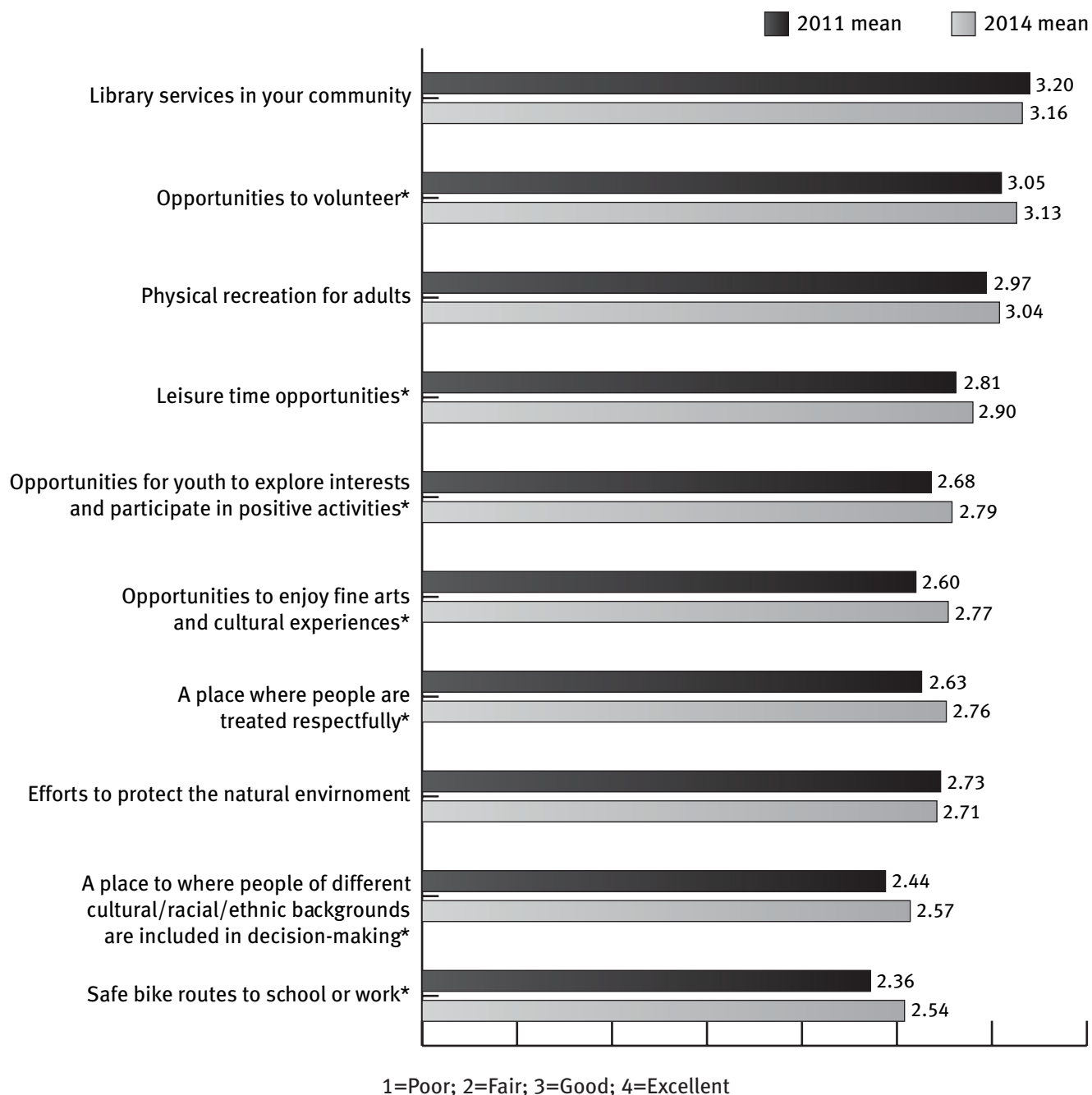
**Income:** Respondents with lower income rated lower their community as a place that meets the family’s educational needs than those with higher education. Respondents with lower education also rated the quality of higher education poorer than those with higher education. Finally, 52% of respondents with income less than \$25,000 rated opportunities in your job to gain knowledge or skills as fair or poor.

**Race:** Non-white respondents were more likely to rate the quality of schools 4K-12 as good, fair, or poor than white respondents. No other differences were noted for ratings of education by race.

### Aspects of Quality of Life

Respondents were asked to rate aspects of quality of life in their community. Results from the current survey are shown in **Figure 13** ranked from highest to lowest rating, including the mean scores from the 2011 survey when a comparable question was asked. Items with an asterisk (\*) indicate a significant difference from 2011 to 2014.

**Figure 13: Aspects of Quality of Life in the Community**



The highest rated aspect of quality of life in the community was library services, followed by opportunities to volunteer and physical recreational activities for adults. Library services ratings decreased slightly from the 2011 survey responses; however, this was not statistically significant. *Improvements* were seen in all other aspects of quality of life except for efforts to protect the natural environment, which worsened from the 2011 survey. All “aspects of quality of life” varied by county of residence. Most aspects were rated higher by La Crosse and Houston County respondents and rated lower by Monroe, Trempealeau, or Vernon County respondents. **See In-Depth Analysis for more detail.**

## Aspects of quality of life by demographic characteristics

See In-Depth Analysis in Appendix for more detail.

**Gender:** Most aspects of quality of life were rated similarly between male and female respondents. Female respondents rated their community lower as a place where people are treated respectfully. Females also rated lower their community as a place where people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds are included in decision-making.

**Age:** There were many significant differences by age in ratings of aspects of quality of life in the community. In general, respondents over age 65 rated aspects of quality of life higher or better than younger adults. Ratings for physical recreation for adults and opportunities to volunteer did not differ by age.

**Education:** Those with a higher level of education were more likely to rate aspects of quality of life higher than those with less education. Ratings for safe routes to school and work and efforts to protect the natural environment did not differ by education level.

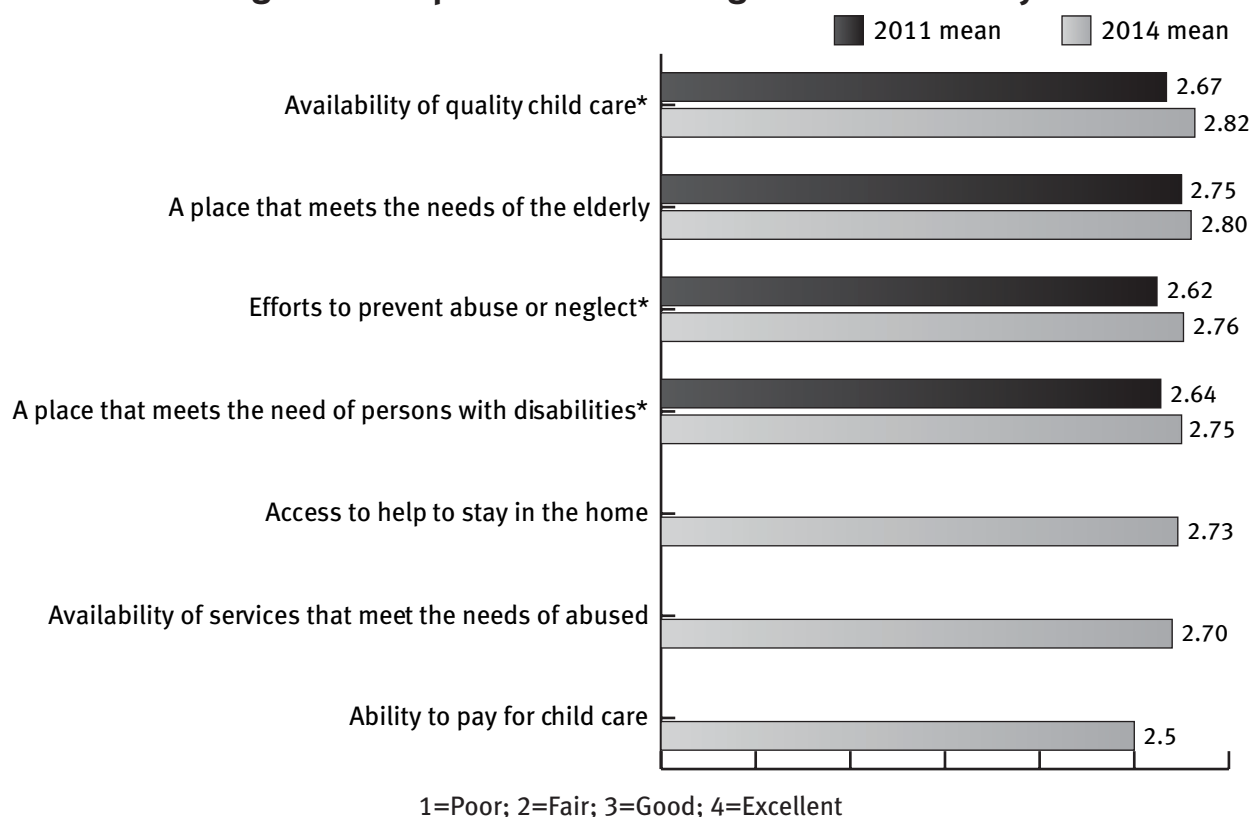
**Income:** There were only a few significant differences in quality of life ratings by household income. Respondents with a household income less than \$25,000 were more likely to rate leisure time opportunities, physical recreation for adults, and opportunities to volunteer as fair or poor.

**Race:** There were no differences in white and non-white respondent ratings for any of the aspects of quality of life.

## Aspects of Care Giving in the Community

Respondents were asked to rate aspects of care giving in their community. Results from the current survey are shown in **Figure 14** ranked from highest to lowest rating, including the mean scores from the 2011 survey when a comparable question was asked. Items with an asterisk (\*) indicate a significant difference from 2011 to 2014.

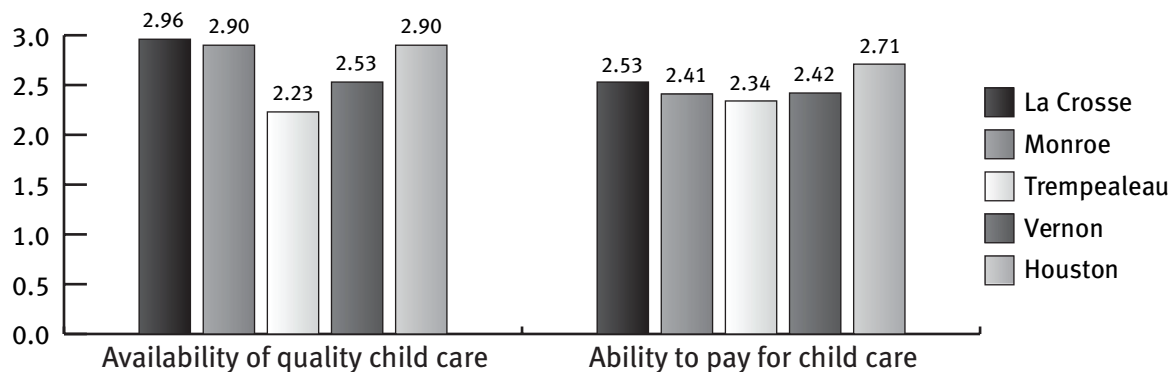
**Figure 14: Aspects of Care Giving in the Community**





The highest rated aspects of care giving were availability of quality child care and a place that meets the needs of the elderly. *Improvements* were seen in all aspects of care giving from the 2011 survey, although this was not statistically significant for “a place that meets the needs of the elderly.” All “aspects of care giving” varied by county of residence. Most aspects were rated higher by La Crosse and Houston County respondents and rated lower by Monroe, Trempealeau, or Vernon County respondents. **See In-Depth Analysis for more detail.** Availability of quality child care varied significantly by county, with Trempealeau County respondents rating it the lowest, but ability to pay for child care was rated consistently across counties. See **Figure 15**.

**Figure 15: Ratings of Child Care by County**



### Aspects of care giving by demographic characteristics

**See In-Depth Analysis for more detail.**

**Gender:** Aspects of caregiving were rated similarly by male and female respondents, except for “the community as a place that meets the needs of the elderly.” More males rated this as excellent (25%) compared to females (16%).

**Age:** There were no differences in ratings of aspects of caregiving in the community by age.

**Education:** Those with a high school diploma or less were more likely to rate as excellent their community as a place that meets the needs of the elderly. Those with less education were also more likely to rate as excellent help to stay in the home. Those with less education were more likely to rate as excellent their community as a place that meets the needs of persons with disabilities. Finally, those with a high school diploma or less education were more likely to rate as excellent efforts to prevent abuse or neglect; *they were, however, also more likely to say this was fair or poor.*

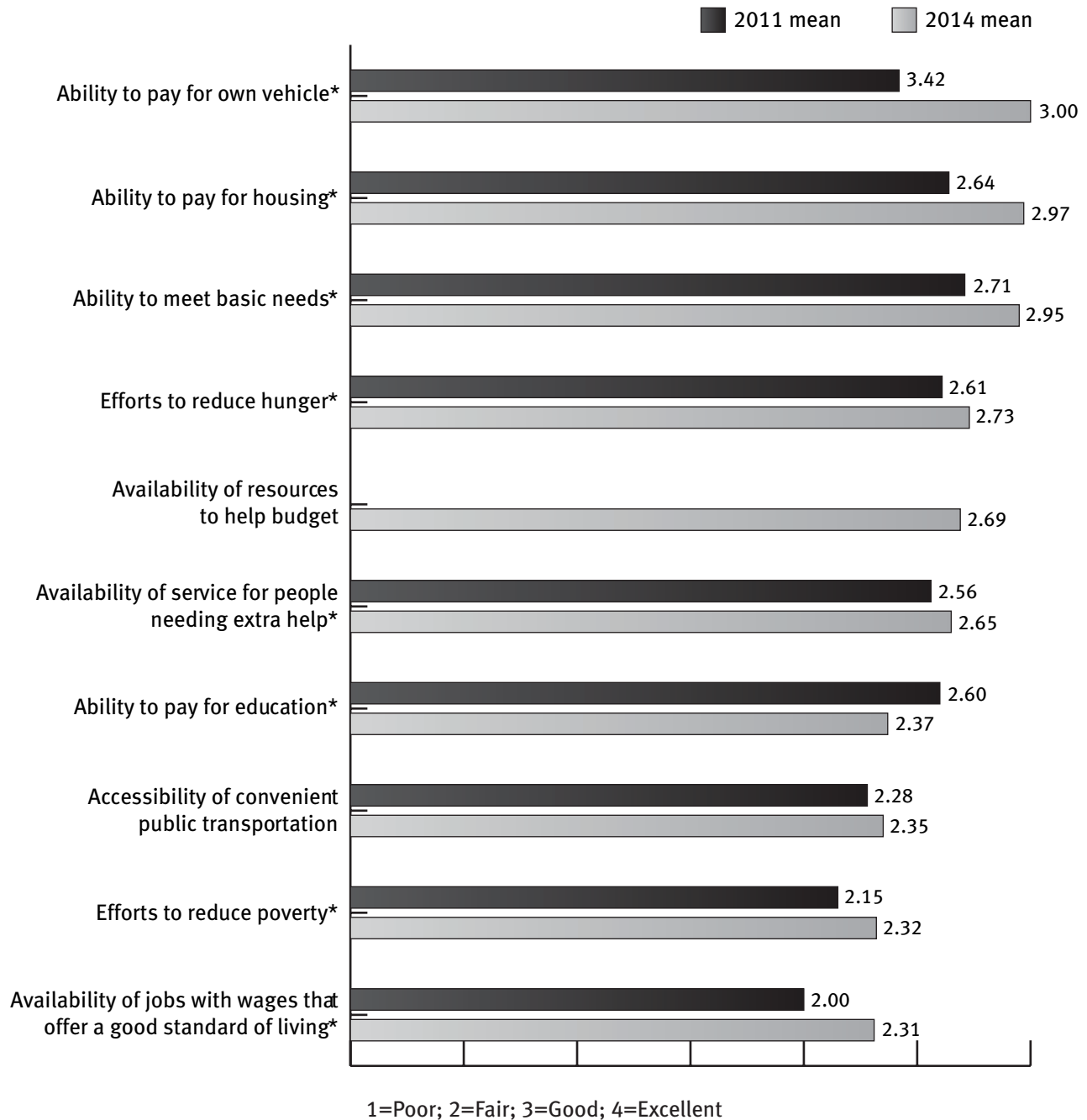
**Income:** Aspects of caregiving varied significantly by household income. Those earning less than \$25,000 were more likely to rate fair or poor ability to pay for child care, a place that meets the needs of the elderly, access to help to stay in the home, and a place that meets the needs of persons with disabilities. Those earning \$25,000-75,000 were more likely to rate fair or poor availability of quality child care and ability to pay for child care.

**Race:** There were no differences between white and non-white respondent ratings for any of the aspects of caregiving.

## Aspects of the Economy

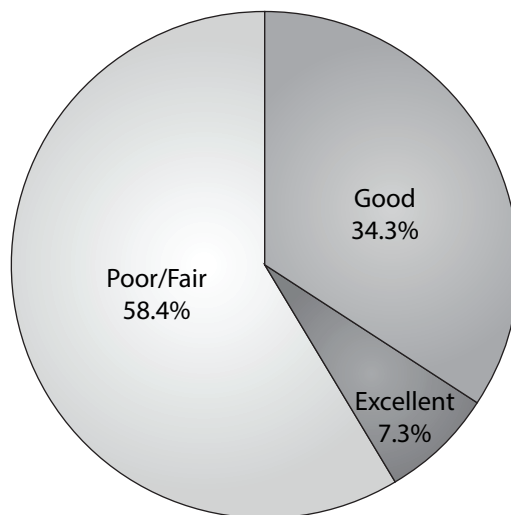
Respondents were asked to rate economic aspects of life in their community. Results from the current survey are shown in **Figure 16** ranked from highest to lowest rating, including the mean scores from the 2011 survey when a comparable question was asked. Items with an asterisk (\*) indicate a significant difference from 2011 to 2014.

**Figure 16: Economic Aspects of Life in their Community**



The lowest rated economic aspect was “availability of jobs with wages that offer a good standard of living.” See **Figure 17**.

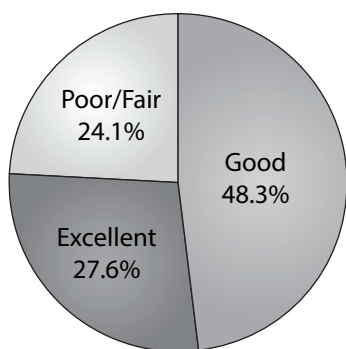
**Figure 17: Availability of Jobs with Wages that Offer a Good Standard of Living**



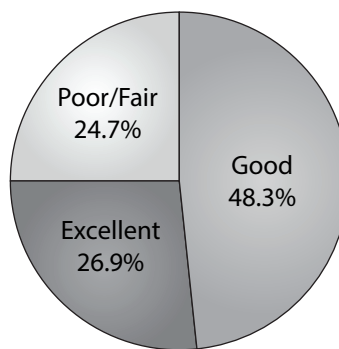
Overall, 58.4% of respondents rated this as fair (41.1%) or poor (17.3%). This was an *improvement* from responses in 2011. Statistical *improvements* were also seen in all aspects of the economy from the 2011 survey except ability to pay for education and accessibility of convenient public transportation. The rating of one’s ability to pay for education *worsened* from the 2011 survey. The highest rated economic aspects of life in the community were ability to pay for their own vehicle, ability to pay for housing, and ability to meet basic needs. See **Figure 18** for ratings of ability to pay for vehicle, housing, basic needs, and education. Overall, about one-quarter rated their ability to meet these basic needs as excellent, about half rated these as good, and another quarter rated these as fair or poor. Ability to pay for education, however, was rated as fair or poor by 56%.

**Figure 18: Ability to Pay for Basic Needs**

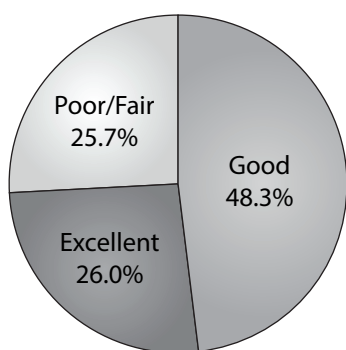
**Ability to pay for vehicle**



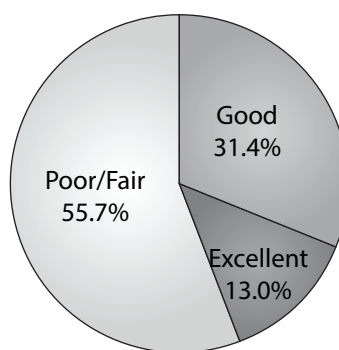
**Ability to pay for housing**



**Ability to meet basic needs**

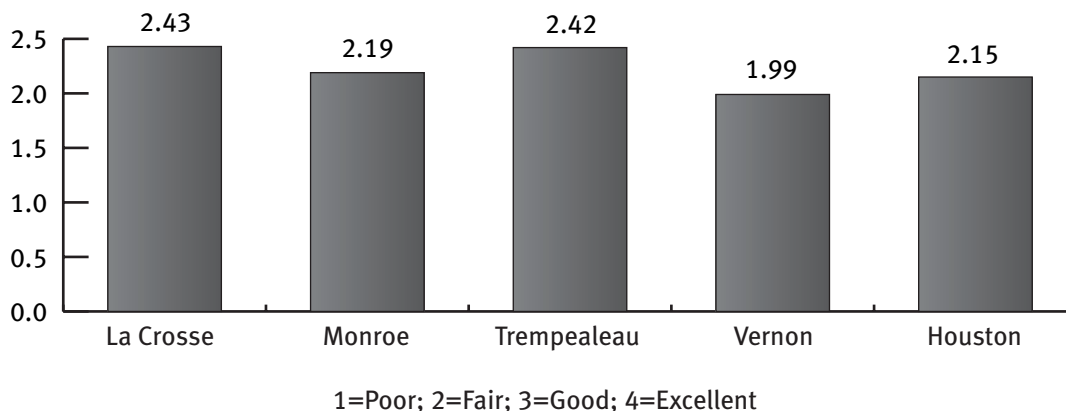


**Ability to pay for education**

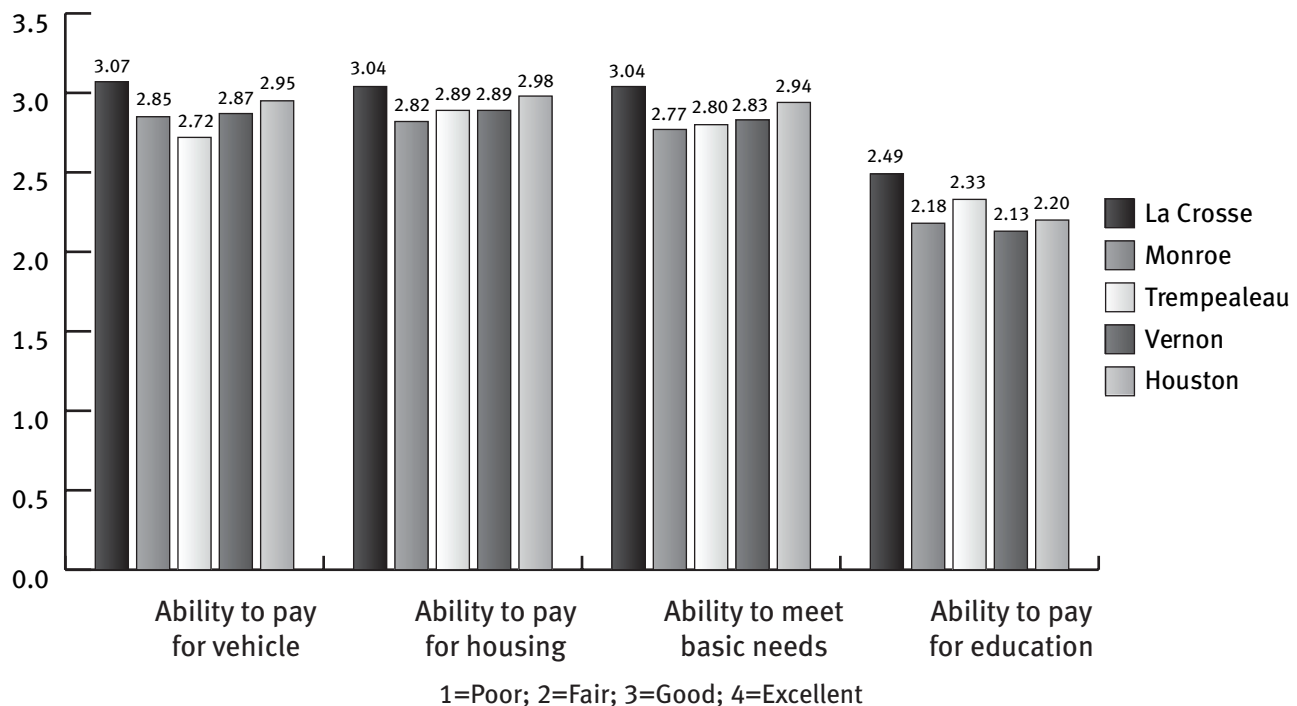


All economic aspects varied by county of residence except for ability to pay for housing. **See In-Depth Analysis for more detail.** Most aspects were rated higher by La Crosse and Houston County respondents and rated lower by Monroe, Trempealeau, or Vernon County respondents. Availability of jobs with wages that offer a good standard of living was rated highest for La Crosse and Trempealeau County residents and lowest for Vernon County residents. See **Figure 19**. Ability to pay for basic needs by county of residence is shown in **Figure 20**.

**Figure 19: Availability of Jobs with Wages that Offer a Good Standard of Living by County of Residence**



**Figure 20: Availability to Pay for Basic Needs by County of Residence**



**Economic Aspects of Life by demographic characteristics**

**See In-Depth Analysis in Appendix for more detail.**

**Gender:** There were a few differences in ratings of economic issues by gender. Females rated the availability of resources to help budget lower than males. Females rated the ability to pay for education lower than males (60% of females rated this as fair or poor compared to 47% of males). Females also rated access to convenient public transportation as lower than males.

**Age:** Younger respondents rated several economic aspects poorer than older respondents. Younger adults rated the ability to meet basic needs, ability to pay for housing, and ability to pay for their own vehicle lower than older adults. Younger adults were more likely to rate the accessibility of convenient public transportation as fair or poor (52% to 59%) compared to adults over age 65 (41%). Younger adults were more likely to rate as fair or poor the availability of resources to help budget. Younger adults rated lower efforts to reduce poverty compared to older adults. Of adults age 51 to 64, 67% indicated this was fair or poor, compared to 60% of adults age 21 to 50, and 43% of adults over age 65.

**Education:** Those with a higher level of education rated most economic aspects in the community higher than those with less education. There was no difference by education in rating of accessibility of convenient public transportation.

**Income:** Economic aspects varied significantly by household income. Those earning less than \$25,000 were more likely to rate fair or poor availability of jobs that offer a good standard of living (77%), ability to meet the basic needs (51%), ability to pay for housing (50%), ability of resources to help budget (51%), ability to pay for education (78%), availability of services for people needing extra help (50%), ability to pay for own vehicle (53%) efforts to reduce poverty (67%), and efforts to reduce hunger (43%). There was no difference by income for rating of accessibility of convenient public transportation.

**Race:** Non-white respondents were more likely to rate the availability of services for people needing extra help as fair or poor compared to white respondents. Of non-white respondents, 65% indicated this compared to white respondents (37%). There were no other differences between white and non-white ratings for any of the other economic aspects.

## Issues in the Community

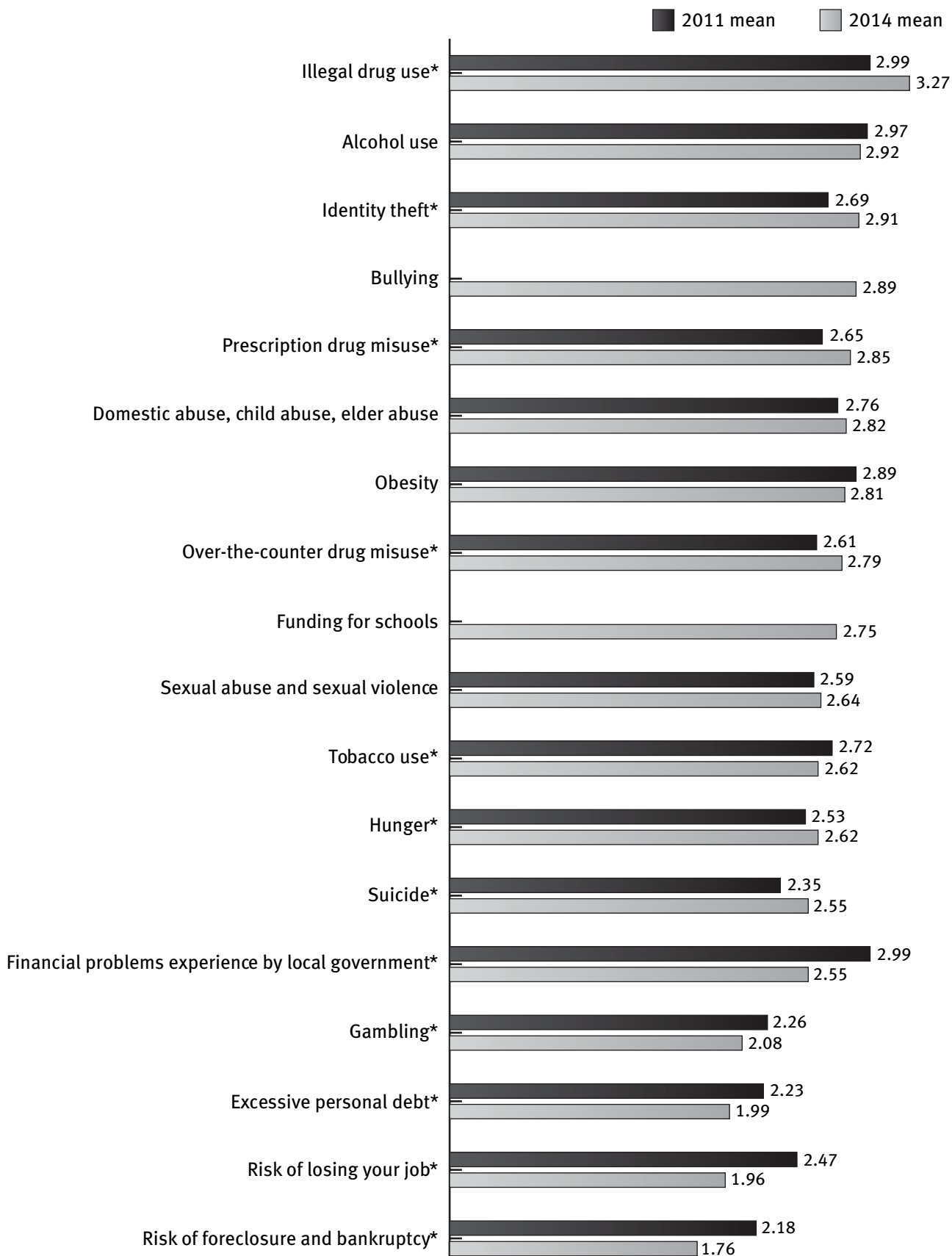
Respondents were asked to indicate their level of concern for their community for 18 different issues. Results from the current survey are shown in **Figure 21** ranked from highest to lowest rating, including the mean scores from the 2011 survey, when a comparable question was asked. Items with an asterisk (\*) indicate a significant difference from 2011 to 2014.

The top five concerns identified by respondents were: **illegal drug use, alcohol use, identity theft, bullying, and prescription drug misuse**. In 2011, the top five concerns were: illegal drug use, financial problems experienced by local governments, alcohol use, obesity, and domestic, child, and elder abuse. Compared to the 2011, survey six issues were statistically rated as more of a concern, six were rated as less of a concern, and four were not statistically different. See **Table 3**.

**Table 3: Change in Rating of Concern on Issues**

Statistically Higher Concern	Statistically Lower Concern	No Statistical difference	New to the survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal drug use</li> <li>• Identity theft</li> <li>• Prescription drug misuse</li> <li>• Over-the-counter drug misuse</li> <li>• Hunger</li> <li>• Suicide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tobacco use</li> <li>• Financial problems experienced by local governments</li> <li>• Gambling</li> <li>• Excessive personal debt</li> <li>• Risk of losing your job</li> <li>• Risk of foreclosure and bankruptcy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol use (slightly lower)</li> <li>• Domestic abuse, child abuse, elder abuse (slightly higher)</li> <li>• Obesity (slightly lower)</li> <li>• Sexual abuse and sexual violence (slightly higher)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Funding for schools</li> </ul>

**Figure 21: Concern for Issues in the Community**



1=Poor; 2=Fair; 3=Good; 4=Excellent

Ranking of community issues by county are shown in **Table 4**. Illegal drug use was the top rated concern in all counties. Alcohol use, identity theft, and bullying were in the top 6 of highest rated concerns for all counties.

**Table 4: Ranking of Community Issues by County**

Rank	La Crosse	Monroe	Trempealeau	Vernon	Houston
1	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use
2	Alcohol Use	Rx Drug Misuse	Identity Theft	Alcohol Use	Bullying
3	Rx Drug Misuse	Alcohol Use	Bullying	Obesity	Identity Theft
4	Identity Theft	Identity Theft	Funding for Schools	Identity Theft	Funding for Schools
5	Bullying	Bullying	Obesity	Bullying	Alcohol Use
6	Over-the-Counter Drug Misuse	Over-the-Counter Drug Misuse	Alcohol Use	Funding for Schools	Obesity
7	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse
8	Obesity	Obesity	Suicide	Tobacco Use	Suicide
9	Funding for Schools	Funding for Schools	Tobacco Use	Rx Drug Misuse	Over-the-Counter Drug Misuse
10	Hunger	Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence	Rx Drug Misuse	Over-the-Counter Drug Misuse	Tobacco Use
11	Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence	Tobacco Use	Financial Problems - Local Governments	Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence	Prescription Drug Misuse
12	Suicide	Financial Problems - Local Governments	Over-the-Counter Drug Misuse	Hunger	Hunger
13	Tobacco Use	Hunger	Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence	Financial Problems - Local Governments	Financial Problems - Local Governments
14	Financial Problems - Local Governments	Suicide	Hunger	Suicide	Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence
15	Gambling	Gambling	Gambling	Gambling	Excessive Personal Debt
16	Risk of Losing Your Job	Excessive Personal Debt	Risk of Losing Your Job	Excessive Personal Debt	Gambling
17	Excessive Personal Debt	Risk of Losing Your Job	Excessive Personal Debt	Risk of Losing Your Job	Risk of Losing Your Job
18	Risk of Foreclosure and Bankruptcy	Risk of Foreclosure and Bankruptcy	Risk of Foreclosure and Bankruptcy	Risk of Foreclosure and Bankruptcy	Risk of Foreclosure and Bankruptcy



## Issues of Concern by demographic characteristics

See In-Depth Analysis for more detail. See Table 5 for ranking of top concerns by demographic characteristics.

**Gender:** Rating of community issues varied between males and females. Females rated obesity, alcohol use, and bullying as a bigger issue in the community compared to males. Males rated identity theft as a bigger issue in the community.

**Age:** Adults over age 65 rated hunger, tobacco use, alcohol use, over-the-counter drug misuse, illegal drug use, gambling, funding for schools, identity theft, sexual abuse and violence, domestic, child, and elder abuse, and suicide as greater community issues than younger adults. Adults less than 65 rated risk of losing your job, risk of foreclosure and bankruptcy, and excessive personal debt as greater community issues than older adults.

**Education:** Those with a high school diploma or less rated the following as a bigger problem in the community than those with more education: tobacco use, alcohol use, over-the-counter and prescription drug misuse, gambling, risk of losing your job, risk of foreclosure, identity theft, sexual abuse and violence, domestic, child, and elder abuse, and suicide. Those with some college or vocational training were more likely than those with higher education to rate as a significant issue: risk of losing your job, risk of foreclosure, and excessive personal debt. Those with a college or advanced degree rated obesity as a bigger problem in the community than those with less education.

**Income:** Those earning less than \$25,000 ranked most all the issues as more significant issues than other income groups: hunger, tobacco use, alcohol use, over the counter drug misuse, prescription drug misuse, gambling, risk of losing your job, risk of foreclosure and bankruptcy, excessive personal debt, financial problems experienced by local governments, sexual abuse and violence, bullying, domestic, child, and elder abuse, and suicide were all rated as higher concerns.

**Race:** Non-white respondents rated alcohol use, and risk of losing your job as bigger issues in the community.

**Table 5: Top 5 Ranking of Community Issues by Demographic Characteristics**

Rank	Gender		Age		
	Male	Female	21-50	51-64	65+
1	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use
2	Identity Theft	Alcohol Use	Bullying	Identity Theft	Identity Theft
3	Rx Drug Misuse	Bullying	Obesity	Alcohol use	Alcohol Use
4	Alcohol Use	Obesity	Alcohol Use	Rx Drug Misuse	Bullying
5	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse	Rx Drug Misuse	Rx Drug Misuse	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse	Over-the-counter drug misuse; Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse
Rank	Education			Race	
	<High School	Vocational/ Some college	College degree+	White	Non-White
1	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use
2	Identity Theft	Identity Theft	Alcohol Use	Alcohol Use	Alcohol Use
3	Rx Drug Misuse	Bullying	Obesity	Identity Theft	Bullying
4	Over-the-counter drug misuse	Alcohol Use	Rx Drug Misuse	Bullying	Rx Drug Misuse
5	Alcohol Use	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse	Bullying	Rx Drug Misuse	Over-the-counter drug misuse
Rank	Income				
	<\$25,000	\$25,000-75,000	\$75,000+		
1	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use	Illegal drug use		
2	Alcohol Use	Alcohol Use	Alcohol Use		
3	Bullying	Identity Theft	Identity Theft		
4	Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse	Bullying	Obesity		
5	Rx Drug Misuse	Rx Drug Misuse	Bullying		