

# Chatham County

Updated: 23 July 2021

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## Introduction

Chatham County has an estimated population of 77,156. This is a significant increase of 20.85% from 63,845 in 2010. Population growth is concentrated in the northeast region, which is significantly wealthier compared to the rest of the county. The southwest region of the county has experienced a net population decline. This uneven distribution of population growth has exacerbated wealth inequality in Chatham County. Wealthier neighborhoods in the northeast “misrepresent the county’s overall fiscal health and stifful opportunities for underfunded areas to receive much-needed state assistance” (Dolder, 2020). Because Chatham County is grouped with the wealthier surrounding counties of Orange, Wake, and Durham, the poorer municipalities of Pittsboro and Siler City are excluded from state programs that assist with internet access and poverty relief.

Internet access is a major barrier in Chatham County. Chatham County residents without a computer or internet access cannot work from home, and as a result may have to work lower-paying and/or in-person jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. This further exacerbates the income and poverty gaps among BIPOC households in Chatham County. Furthermore, students with slow or no internet access face increased difficulty keeping up with their online education during the pandemic.

Race, ethnicity, and education have a strong impact on health outcomes in Chatham County. BIPOC households and residents with lower educational attainment are more at-risk for negative health outcomes. In Chatham County, BIPOC households and lower-educated residents have higher rates of poverty and lower median incomes, and thus more limited access to nutritious food and healthcare.

<b>Overview of Barriers Chatham County, NC</b>	<b>Black Households</b>	<b>Hispanic/LatinX Households</b>	<b>White Households</b>
Median Household Income (2019)	<b>\$40,752</b>	<b>\$47,644</b>	<b>\$75,848</b>
Poverty Rate (2019)	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>
% of Population with Bachelor’s Degree	<b>19%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>47%</b>

## Summary of Barriers

### Income & Poverty

	Chatham County	North Carolina	United States
Median Household Income (2019)	\$67,031	\$54,602	\$62,843
Family Poverty Rate (2019)	7.0%	10.6%	9.5%
Child Poverty Rate (2019)	15.7%	21.2%	18.5%
% of Population with Bachelor's Degree	22.4%	20.0%	19.8%
% of Population: Less than High School	11.1%	12.2%	12.0%

Chatham County has a higher median household income compared to the rest of the state and nation, as well as lower rates of family and child poverty. Chatham County is overall well-educated, with a lower rate of non-high school completion and a higher rate of bachelor's degree attainment compared to the state and national average.

### Internet Access

% of Households w/o Computer	10.8%
% of Households w/o Broadband	22.3%
% of Households w/o Internet Access	14.81%

Internet access is a major barrier in Chatham County. Even though 15% of households (4,300) in Chatham County do not have internet access, Chatham County is excluded from North Carolina's GREAT (Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology) program and other state programs that assist with internet and broadband services.

Chatham County residents without a computer or internet access cannot work from home, and as a result may have to work lower-paying and/or in-person jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. This further exacerbates the income and poverty gaps among BIPOC households in Chatham County. Furthermore, students with slow or no internet access face increased difficulty keeping up with their online education during the pandemic.

## Community Health

- The rate of heart disease among African Americans is 155.6 cases per 100,000 people, compared to 94 cases per 100,000 for the white population.
- 12.7% of the Hispanic/Latinx population and 12.1% of African Americans are diagnosed with diabetes, compared to 7.4% of the white population.
- Black or African American families have a higher infant mortality rate and a higher rate of low birth weight. The infant mortality rate for African Americans is 18.7 for every 1,000 live births, compared to 7.9 per 1,000 for white babies. 21.4% of African American babies were born with a low birth weight (<2500 grams), compared to 11.3% of Chatham County births overall.
- Children with parents who have a high school diploma are more likely to be obese than children with parents who are college-educated. 9.5% of children with college-educated parents are obese, compared to 30.4% of children with parents who have a high school diploma.
- Adults with less than a high school education are nearly twice as likely to have diabetes than adults with more than a high school education.

# Barriers by Race & Ethnicity

## Overview

Figure 1: Median Household Income by Race

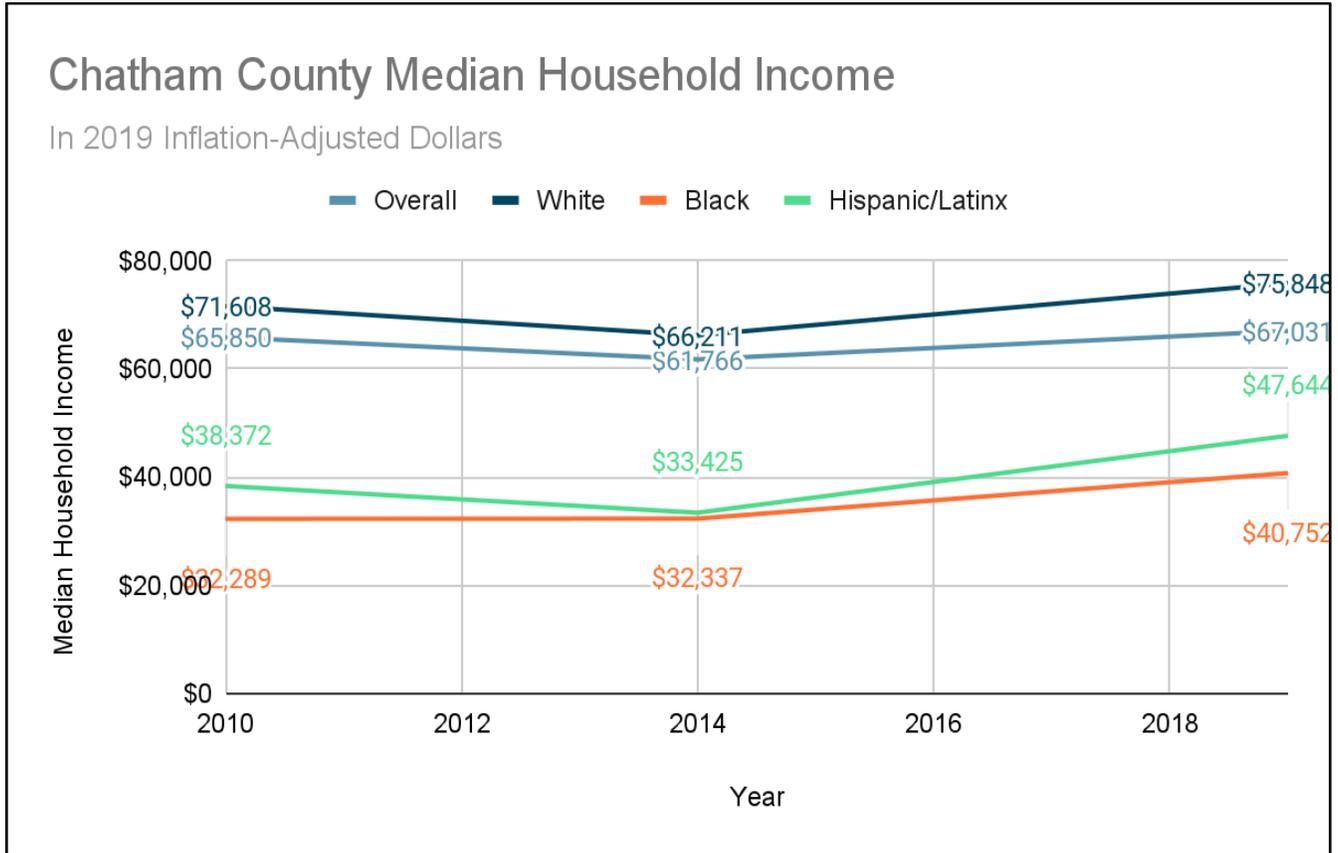


Figure 2: Poverty Rate by Race

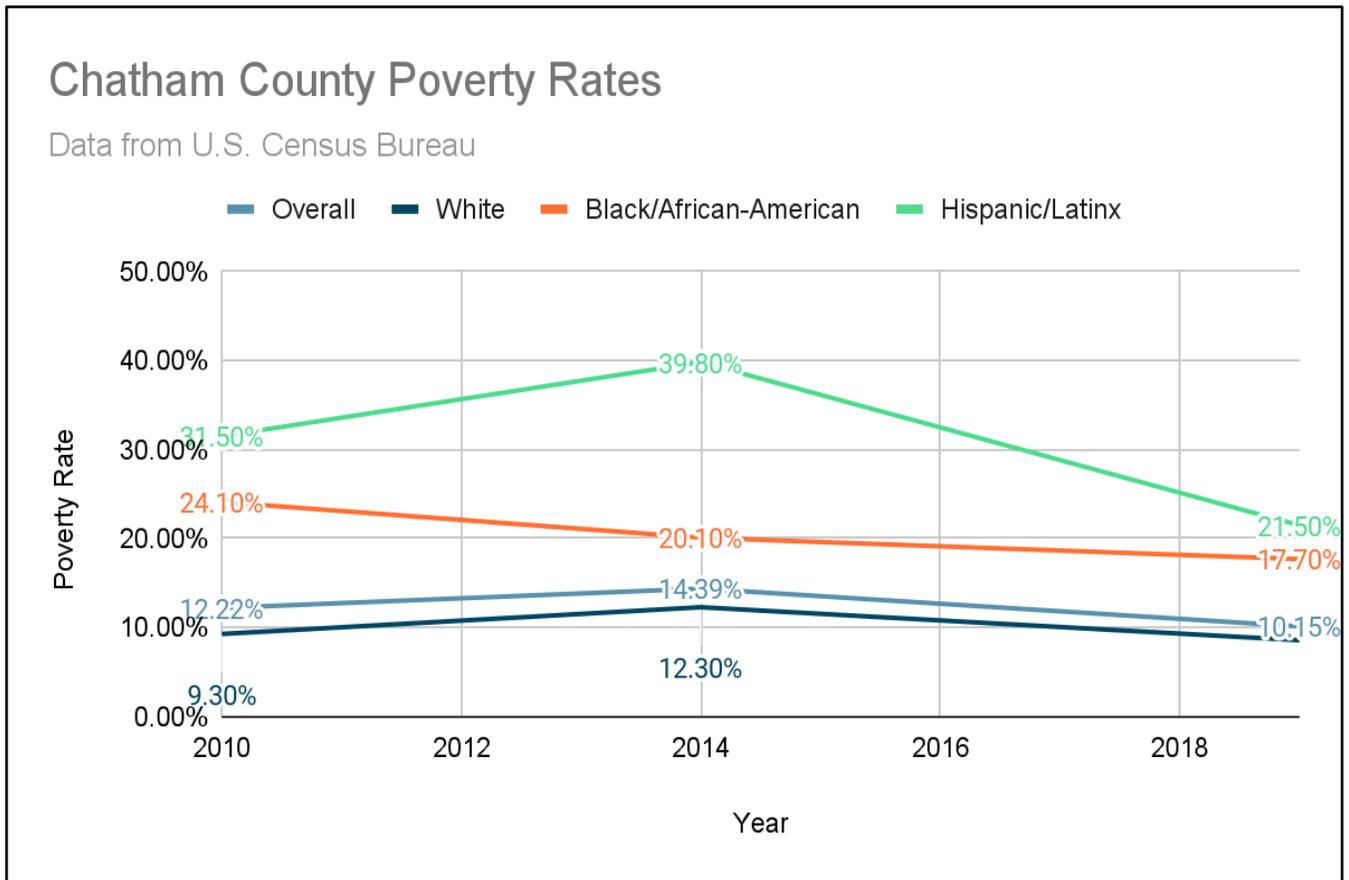
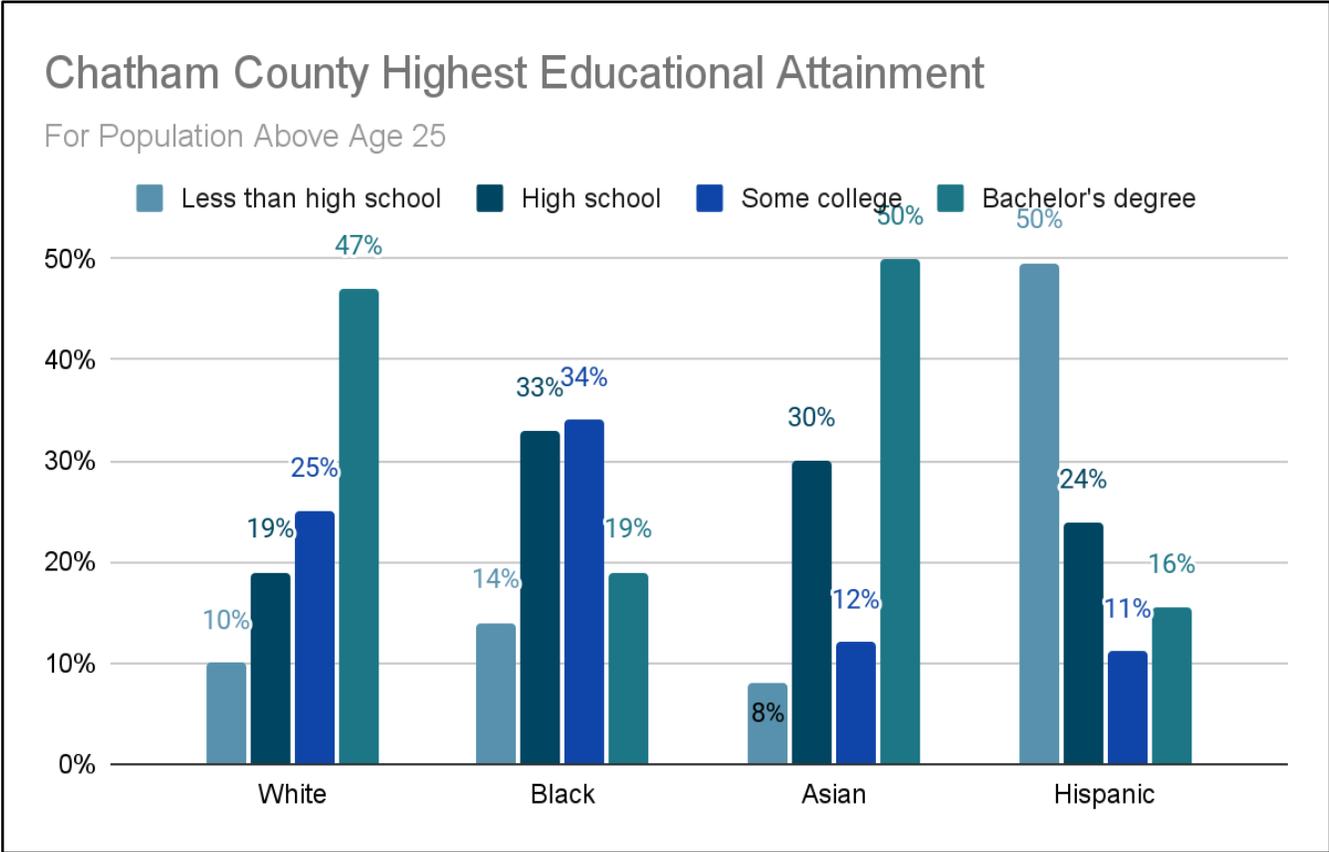


Figure 3: Educational Attainment by Race<sup>1</sup>



### Black & African American

- Black households have the lowest median income in Chatham County.
  - The median income for Black households was \$40,752 in 2019, while the overall median income for Chatham County was \$67,031.
  - Median income for Black households is consistently \$30,000-\$35,000 lower than the median household income for white households (see *Figure 1*).
- 17.7% of Black households lived in poverty in 2019, compared to 10.15% of all Chatham County residents.

<sup>1</sup>TownCharts. (2021). *Chatham County, North Carolina Education Data*. <https://www.towncharts.com/North-Carolina/Education/Chatham-County-NC-Education-data.html>

- The poverty rate for Black households is consistently 7-8% higher than the poverty rate for white households (see *Figure 2*).
- Black households have lower rates of higher educational attainment.
  - 14% of Black residents over age 25 did not graduate high school.
  - 19% of Black residents over age 25 have a bachelor's degree, which is lower than the rate of bachelor's degree attainment for white and Asian residents.

## Hispanic & Latinx

- The median income for Hispanic households was \$47,644 in 2019. The overall median income in Chatham County was \$67,031.
  - The median income for Hispanic households is consistently \$25-30,000 lower than the median income for white households (see *Figure 1*)
- Hispanic and Latinx households have the highest poverty rates in Chatham County.
  - In 2019, 21.50% of Hispanic households lived in poverty.
  - The poverty rate for Hispanic and Latinx households is consistently 10-20% higher than the poverty rate for white households (see *Figure 2*).
- Hispanic and Latinx households have the lowest rates of higher educational attainment in Chatham County.
  - 50% of Hispanic or Latinx residents above age 25 did not complete high school.
  - 9% of Hispanic or Latinx residents over age 25 have a bachelor's degree.

## Social & Community Context

### Demographics

#### Population

- 71,338 people lived in Chatham County in 2019 according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Chatham County covers an area of 682 sq. miles, with a population density of 105 people per sq. mile.<sup>2</sup>
- The population is 34.1% urban and 65.9% rural.<sup>3</sup>
- There are 4,394 veterans living in Chatham County. 59% of veterans (2,591) are over the age of 65. 37.6% of veterans (1,583) served in the Vietnam War.<sup>4</sup>
- 10.8% of the population under age 65 has a disability.

#### Age<sup>5</sup>

*Figure 4: Chatham County Age Distribution*

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<sup>2</sup>SE:A00002. Population Density (Per Sq. Mile) (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12858859](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858859)

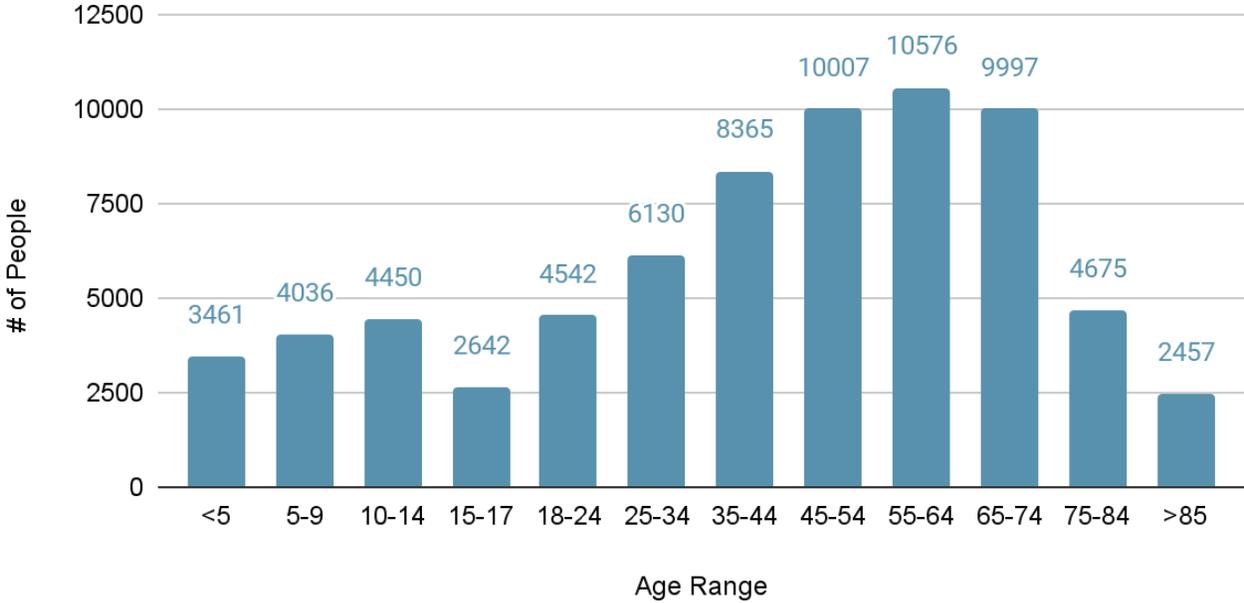
<sup>3</sup>AccessNC. (2020). *County Profile Chatham County (NC)* [Fact sheet]. North Carolina Department of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division. <https://accessnc.nccommerce.com/DemoGraphicsReports/pdfs/countyProfile/NC/37037.pdf>

<sup>4</sup>SE:A16001. Period of Military Service for Civilian Veterans 18 Years and Over. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12858860](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858860)

<sup>5</sup>SE:A0100. Age. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12858859](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858859)

# Chatham County Age Distribution

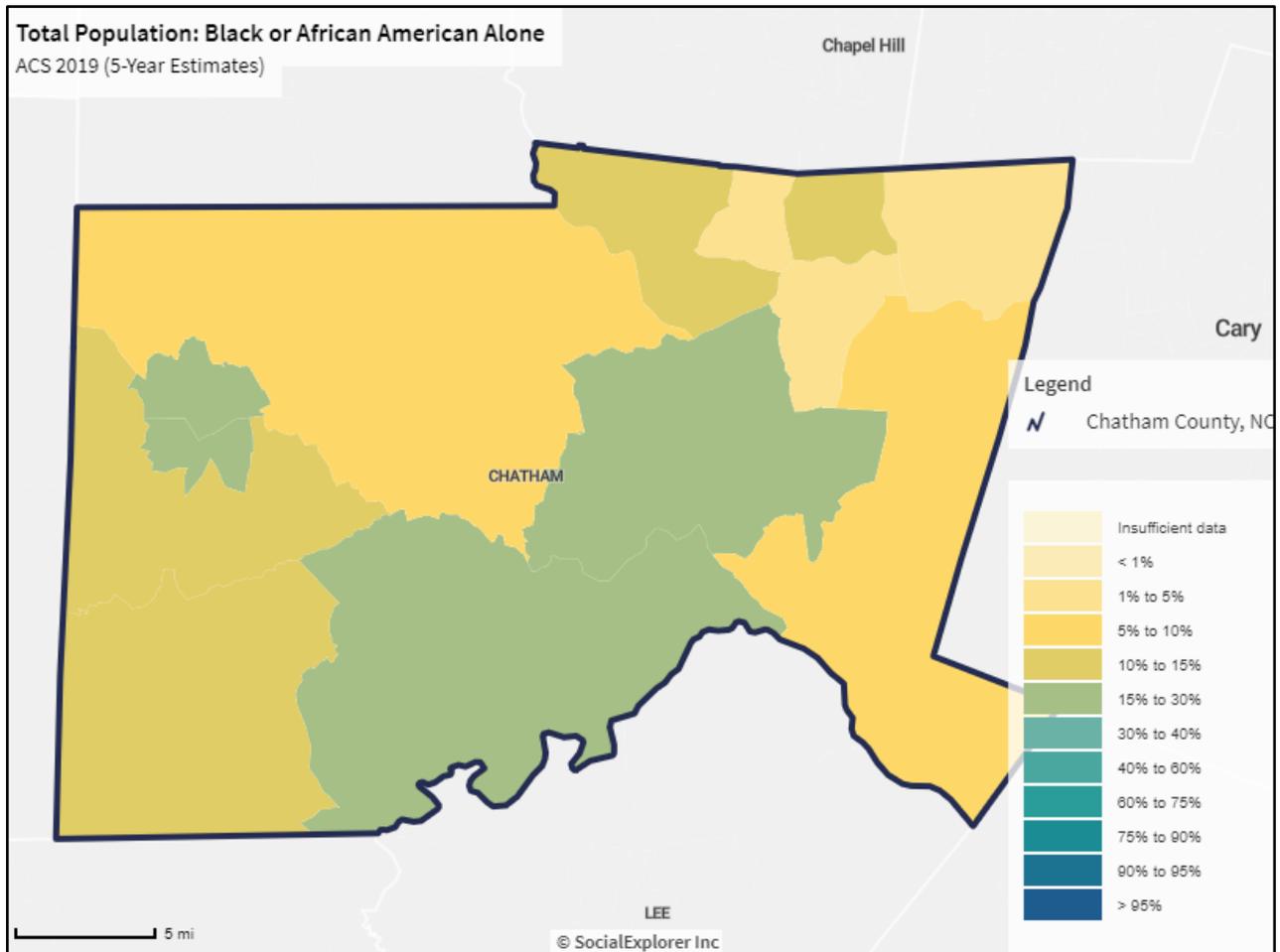
From 2019 ACS



**Race**

- Chatham County is 80.9% white, 11.3% Black or African American, and 12.2% Hispanic or Latinx.<sup>6 7</sup>

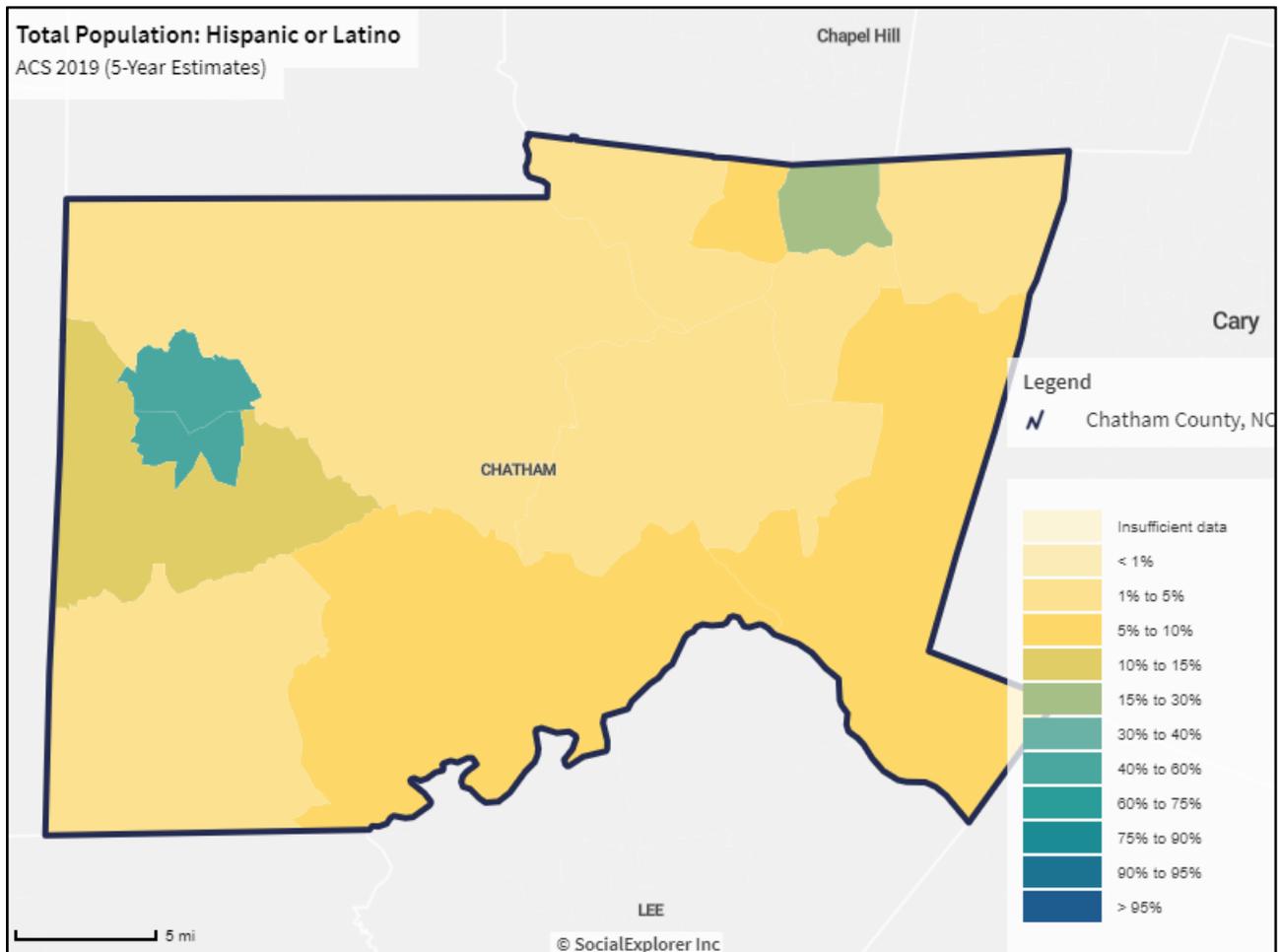
Figure 5: Black or African American Population



<sup>6</sup>SE:A0300. Race. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12858859](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858859)

<sup>7</sup>SE:A04001. Hispanic or Latino by Race. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12858859](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858859)

Figure 6: Hispanic or Latinx Population



## Immigration

- As of 2018, 8.67% of Chatham County, NC residents (6.05k people) were born outside of the United States, which is lower than the national average of 13.7%.
  - In 2017, the percentage of foreign-born citizens in Chatham County was 8.63%, meaning that the rate has been increasing.

## Education<sup>8</sup>

- 11.1% of residents above age 25 did not complete high school.
- 21.2% of residents completed high school as their highest educational attainment.

<sup>8</sup>SE:A12001. Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R1285885](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R1285885)

- 22.4% of residents have a bachelor's degree.

### Single-Parent Households<sup>9</sup>

- 27% of children in Chatham County live with a single parent.
- 8.9% of households with children under 18 years old are single-parent households.
  - 6.4% of households with children under 18 years old are single-mother households.

### Child Care

- As of May 2021, 2,278 children under age 6 live in a household where the sole parent or both parents work. This number represents 55% of all children under age 6.<sup>10</sup>
  - 7% of children participated in the state subsidized child care program in April 2021 to help offset the high cost of child care.
- 359 children from 0-3 years of age and 686 children from 3-5 years of age are currently enrolled in a licensed early care and education center in Chatham County.<sup>11</sup>
  - Of these children under three years of age, 65% are in 4- and 5-star centers.
  - Of these children three to five years of age, 80% are in 4 or 5-star centers.
- In February 2021, 269 infants and toddlers in Chatham County were enrolled in child care centers. This number compares to 377 enrolled in child care centers prior to the pandemic.<sup>12</sup>

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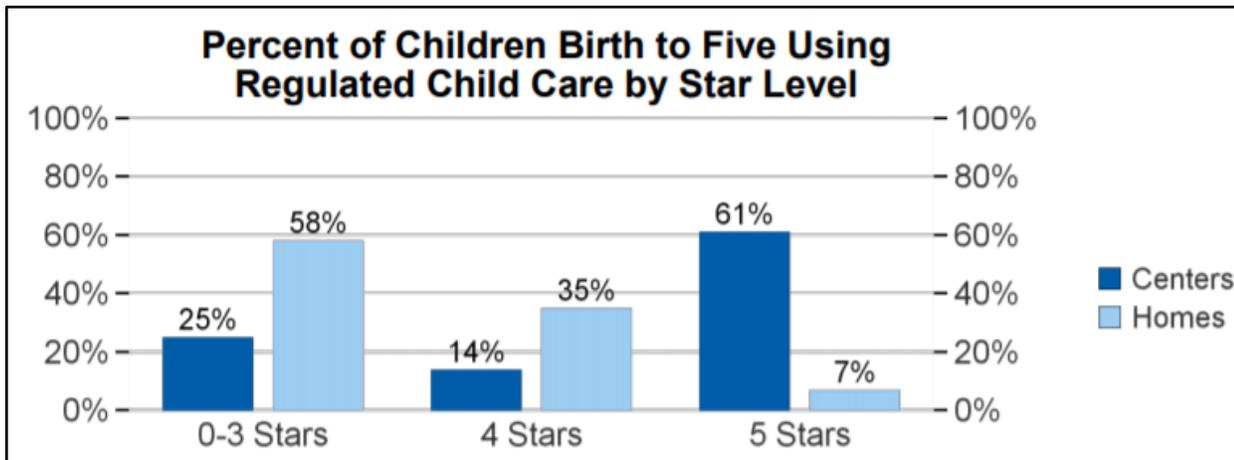
<sup>9</sup>SE:A10008. Households by Household Type. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 9, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12858859](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12858859)

<sup>10</sup>Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Young Children and their Families in Chatham County* [Fact sheet]. [https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section\\_id%5B%5D=4&rep\\_month=5&rep\\_year=2021&rep\\_month\\_end=&rep\\_year\\_end=&county\\_id%5B%5D=19](https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section_id%5B%5D=4&rep_month=5&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=19)

<sup>11</sup>Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Early Care & Education Use in Chatham County* [Fact sheet]. [https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section\\_id%5B%5D=3&rep\\_month=5&rep\\_year=2021&rep\\_month\\_end=&rep\\_year\\_end=&county\\_id%5B%5D=19](https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section_id%5B%5D=3&rep_month=5&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=19)

<sup>12</sup>Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Infant and Toddler Care in Chatham County* [Fact sheet]. [https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section\\_id%5B%5D=7&rep\\_month=5&rep\\_year=2021&rep\\_month\\_end=&rep\\_year\\_end=&county\\_id%5B%5D=19](https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section_id%5B%5D=7&rep_month=5&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=19)

Figure 7: Child Care by Star Level



© 2021 Child Care Services Association. Figures derived using the most recent available data from Child Care Services Association, NC Division of Child Development and Early Education, NC Child Resource and Referral Council, NC Head Start State Collaboration Office.

## Neighborhood & Built Environment

### Housing

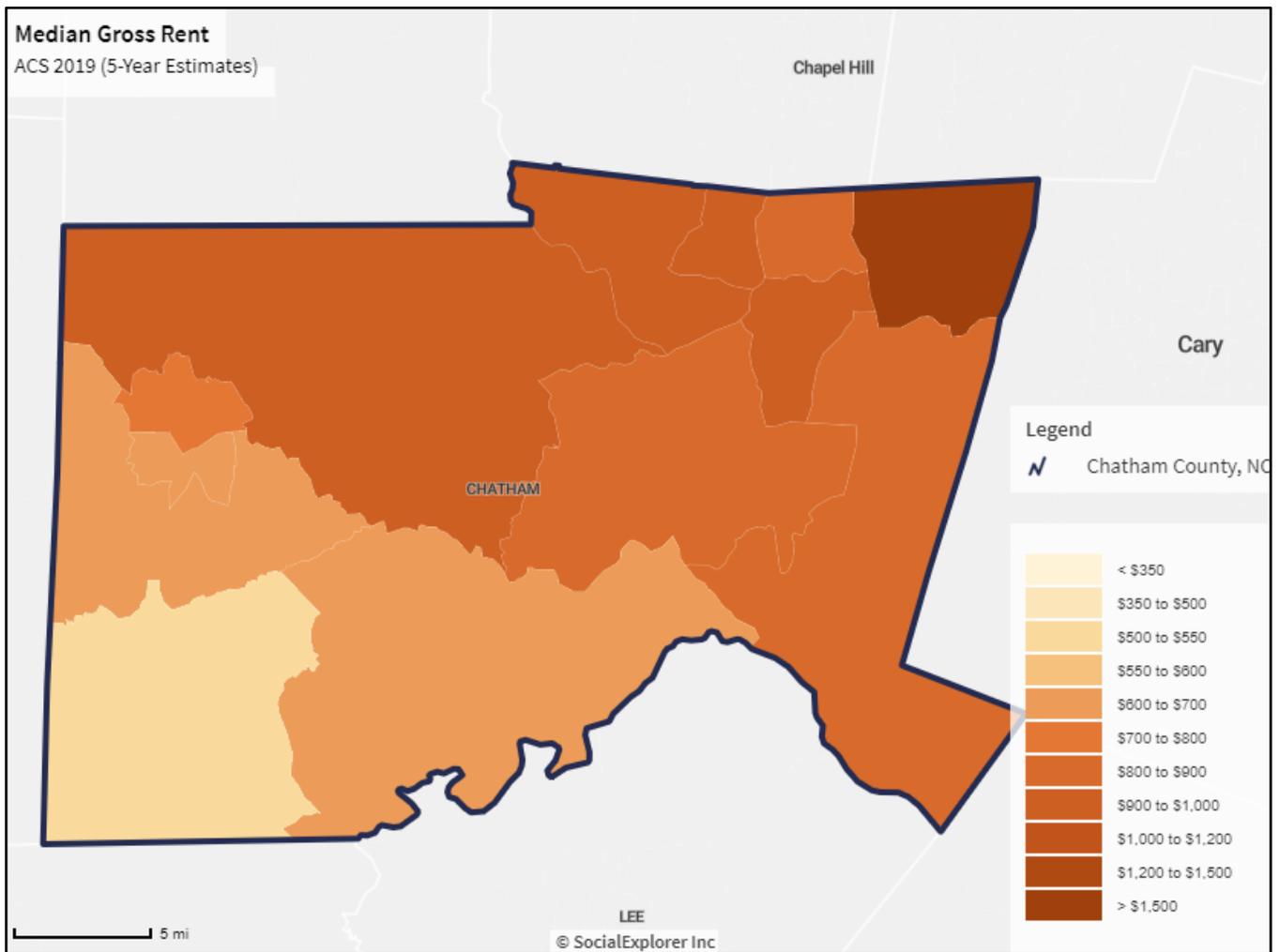
- Median gross rent was \$845 in 2019. This is a 0.55% *decrease* from the median gross rent in 2014.
- The typical home value of homes in Chatham County is \$370,065. Chatham County home values have gone up 8.6% over the past year.<sup>13</sup>
- 20.8% of residents spend 30-49% of their income on rent. 17.0% of residents spend more than 50% of their income on rent.<sup>14</sup>
- 18.7% of homeowners spend 30-49% of their income on homeownership expenses. 7.9% of homeowners spend more than 50% of their income on homeownership expenses.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Zillow. (2021, May 31). *Chatham County Home Values*. <https://www.zillow.com/chatham-county-nc/home-values/>

<sup>14</sup>SE:B18002. Residents Paying More Than 30% or at least 50% of Income on Rent. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 14, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12861309](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12861309)

<sup>15</sup>SE:B10040. Residents Paying More Than 30% or at least 50% of Income on Selected Home Ownership Expenses. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved July 14, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12861309](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12861309)

Figure 8: Median Gross Rent



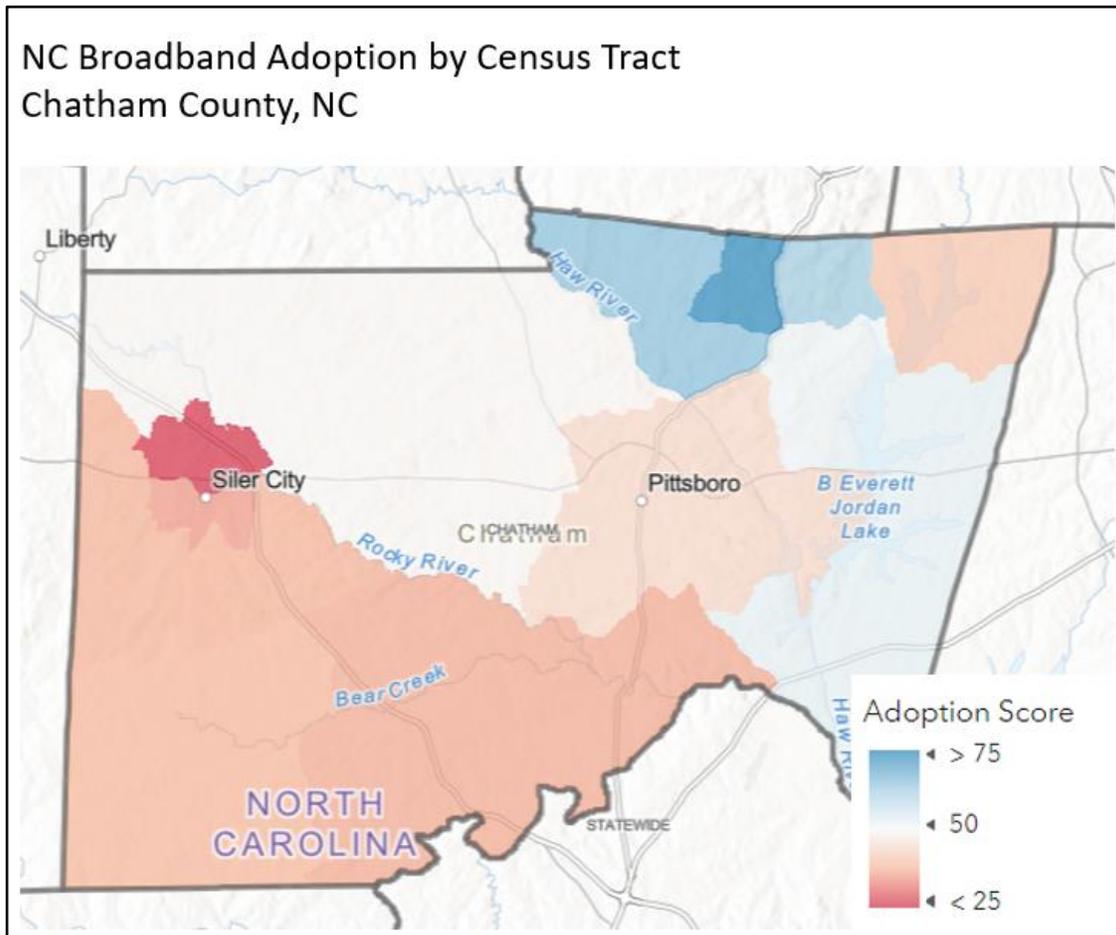
## Transportation

- 1.38% of households (426) do not have access to a vehicle. 15.8% have access to one vehicle, and 41.2% have access to two.

## Internet Access<sup>16 17</sup>

- 10.8% of households do not have a computer.
- 22.3% of households have a broadband internet subscription.
- 14.81% of households do not have internet access.

Figure 9: Broadband Adoption in Chatham County



- Nearly 4,300 households (15%) in Chatham County do not have internet access.

<sup>16</sup>U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts. (2019). American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/chathamcountynorthcarolina/AGE295219> (Accessed on July 12, 2021).

<sup>17</sup>Federal Communications Commission. (2019). *NC Broadband Availability Index* [Map].

[https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/1ca29805a2454ffab6b9579702b99e59/page/page\\_0](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/1ca29805a2454ffab6b9579702b99e59/page/page_0)

- The rate of broadband adoption is much lower in Siler City and the surrounding area. The west and southwest area of the county has higher rates of poverty and lower median incomes.

## Crime<sup>18</sup>

- The crime rate is 23.15 per 1,000 residents in a standard year, which is lower than the national average. Crime is lower in the northern part of the county, near Pittsboro.
- Chatham County is in the 83rd percentile for safety, meaning 17% of counties are safer and 83% of counties are more dangerous.
- The property crime rate is 14.54 per 1,000 residents, while the violent crime rate is 2.557 per 1,000 residents.

## Economic Stability

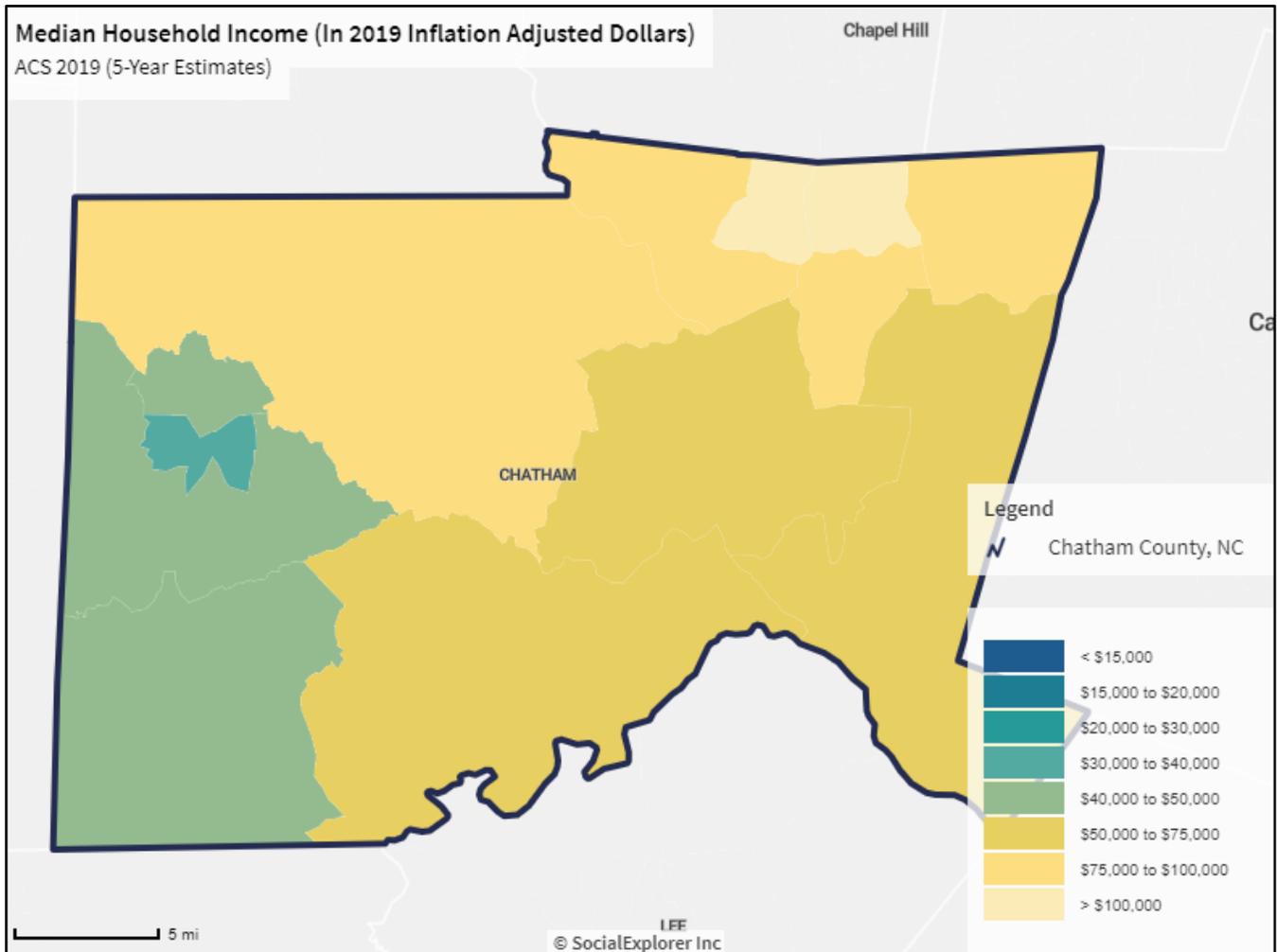
### Income

- The median household income in Chatham County was \$67,031 in 2019.

*Figure 10: Median Household Income*

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<sup>18</sup>CrimeGrade. (2021). *Crime per Capita in Chatham County*. <https://crimegrade.org/safest-places-in-chatham-county-nc/>



## Poverty

- 7% of families live in poverty.
- 3.4% of single-mother households live in poverty.
- 15.7% of children live in poverty.
- (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019)

Figure 11: Families Below Poverty Level

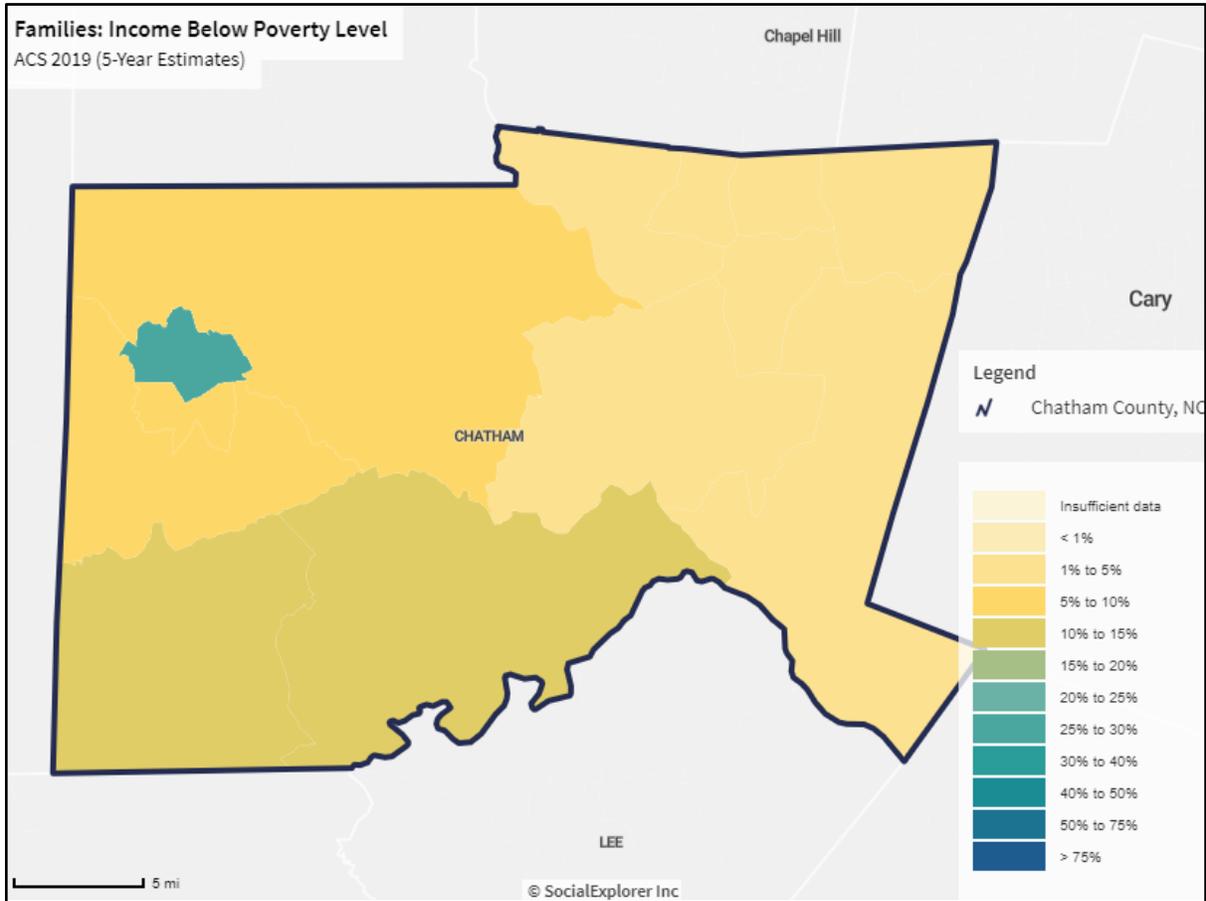
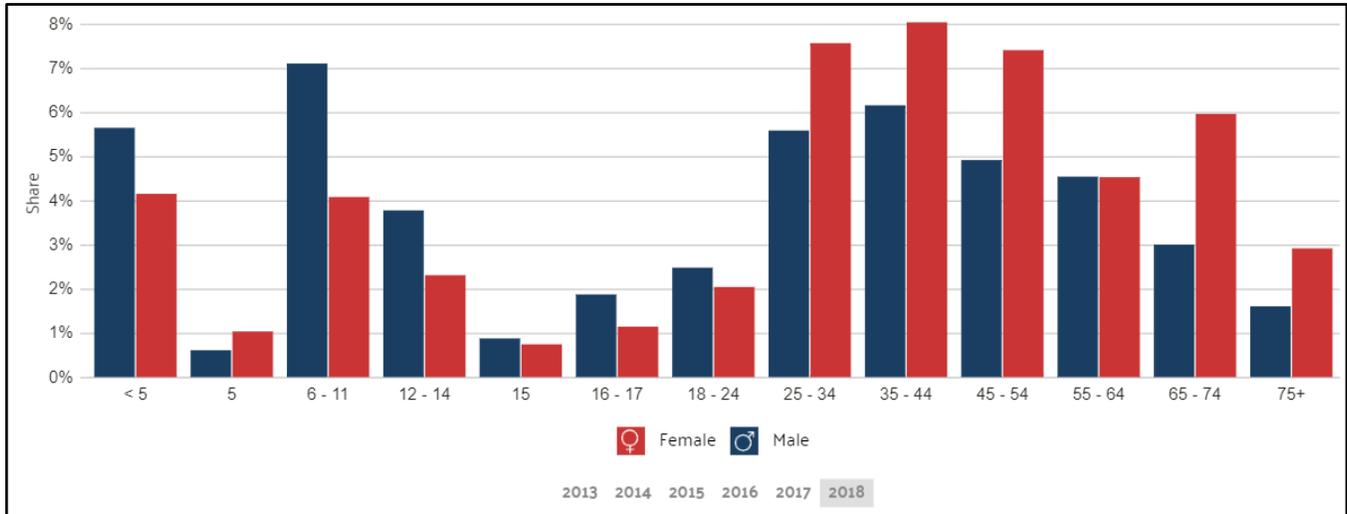


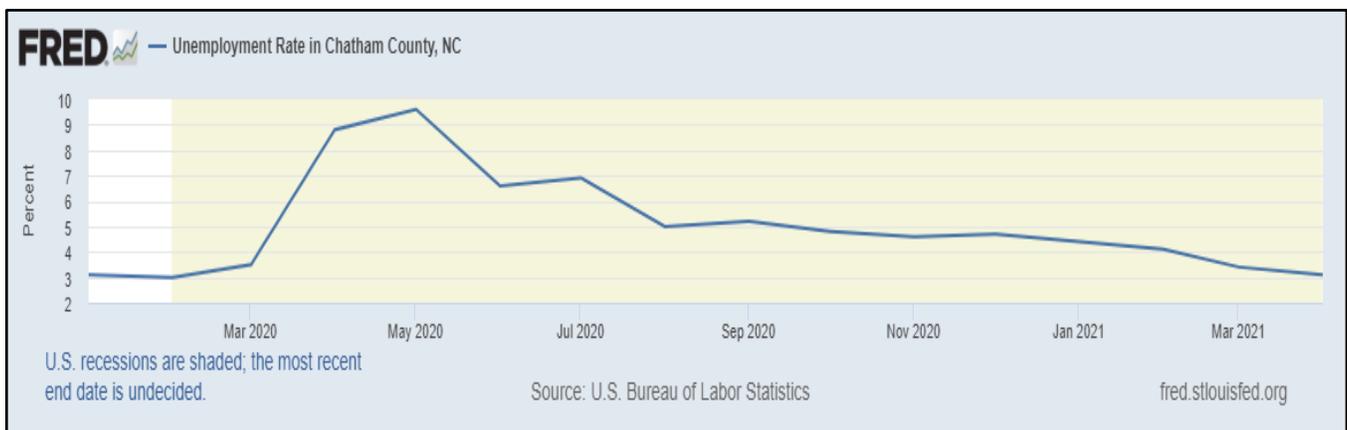
Figure 12: Poverty by Age & Gender



- Women ages 35 to 44 are the largest demographic living in poverty in Nash County, followed by women ages 25 to 34 and then women ages 45 to 54. Women ages 35 to 44 make up 8.03% of the population living in poverty (Data USA, 2021).

## Employment

Figure 13: Unemployment in Chatham County<sup>19</sup>



- The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the unemployment rate for Chatham County in June 2021 was 3.9%.

<sup>19</sup>U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment Rate in Chatham County, NC [NCCHAT7URN], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/NCCHAT7URN>, August 6, 2021.

- Unemployment in Nash County is trending downwards since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2020, unemployment peaked in Chatham County at 9.6% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021).
- Unemployment in Nash County tends to be higher compared to other counties in North Carolina, averaging between 3 and 4% each month since 2017 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021).

## Food Access

HungerNet by Feeding America

<https://feedingamerica.sharepoint.com/>

*Identifying Racism in the Drivers of Food Insecurity* by Feeding America Research

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/feeding.america.research/viz/IdentifyingRacismInTheDriversofFoodInsecurity/Introductionv2>

## Education

### Public Schools

#### **Enrollment<sup>20</sup>**

- During the 2019-2020 school year, there were 8,972 students enrolled across 18 schools in the Chatham County Schools district.
- 51% of students are white, 12% are Black, 32% are Hispanic or Latinx, and 1% are Asian.
- Per-pupil funding in 2019 amounted to \$10,735, which is slightly higher than the state average of \$9,938.

#### **School Performance<sup>21</sup>**

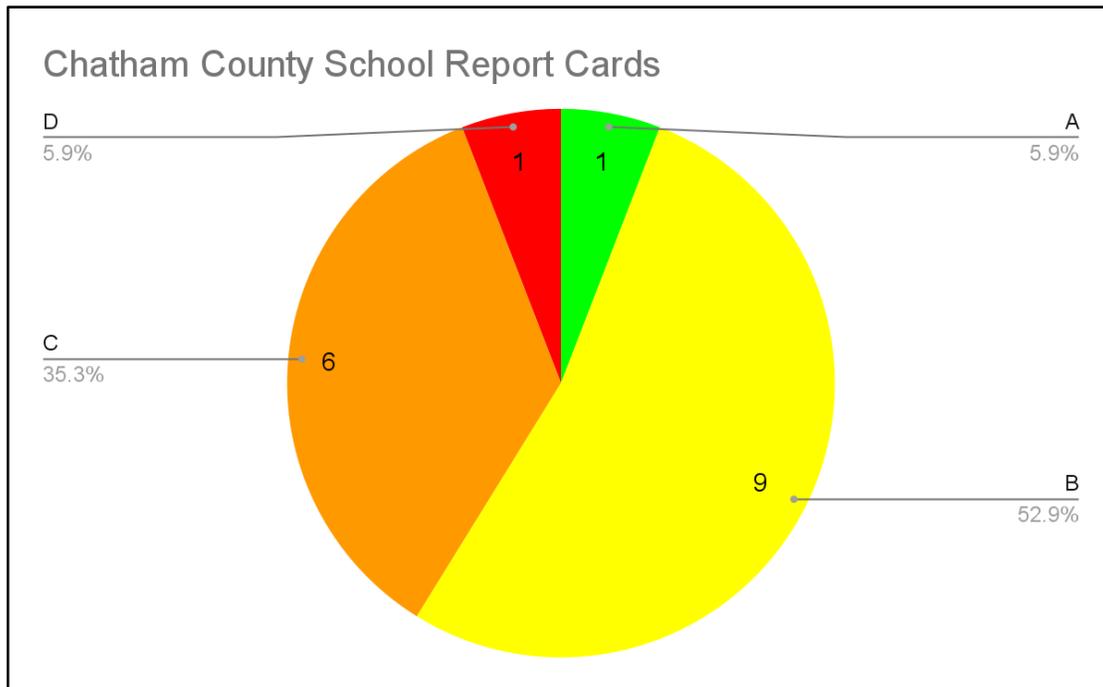
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<sup>20</sup>Public School Review. (2018). *Chatham County Schools School District*. <https://www.publicschoolreview.com/north-carolina/chatham-county-schools-school-district/3700750-school-district>

<sup>21</sup>North Carolina School Report Cards. (2020). *Chatham County Schools*. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. <https://ncreports.ondemand.sas.com/src/district?district=190LEA&year=2019&lng=en>

- Each academic year, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) releases school report cards, which assign each public school a letter grade based on school performance and academic growth metrics.

Figure 14: Chatham County NCDPI School Report Cards

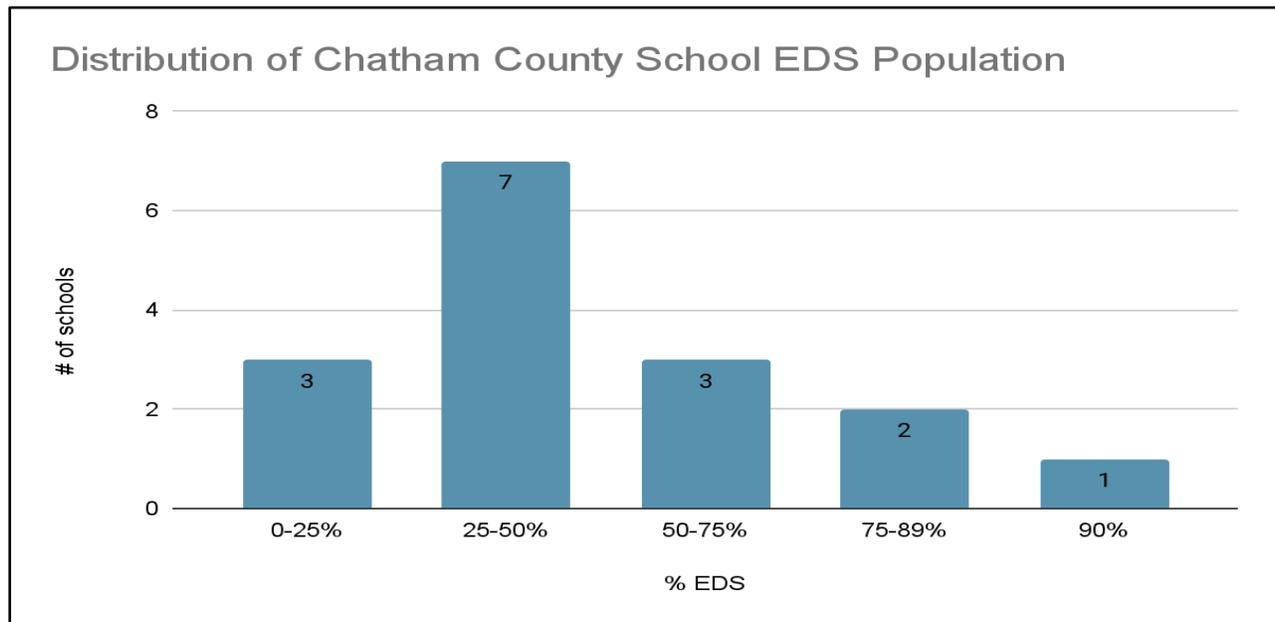


- During the 2018-2019 school year, one school in Chatham County received an 'A' ranking, 9 received a 'B', 6 received a 'C', and one school received a 'D'.
- 4 schools exceeded their growth targets during the 2019-2020 school year. 10 schools met but did not exceed their growth targets, and 3 schools did not meet their growth targets.
- One school was classified as 'low-performing' following the 2019-2020 school year.

## Economically Disadvantaged Students

- 3,758 students relied on free lunch services and 547 students relied on reduced lunch services during the 2019-2020 school year.
- A total of 46.38% of students in Chatham County Schools were identified as economically disadvantaged.

Figure 15: Chatham County School EDS



- There are 3 schools in Chatham County where less than 25% of the student population is economically disadvantaged.
  - There are 7 schools where 25-50% of the student population is economically disadvantaged.
  - There are 3 schools where 50-75% of students are economically disadvantaged.
  - There are 2 schools where 75-89% of students are economically disadvantaged.
  - There is one school where more than 90% of students are economically disadvantaged.
  
- The schools with an EDS population over 50% tend to be located in and around Siler City, in the western part of the county. Schools with an EDS population under 50% are mostly located in and around Pittsboro, in the eastern part of the county.

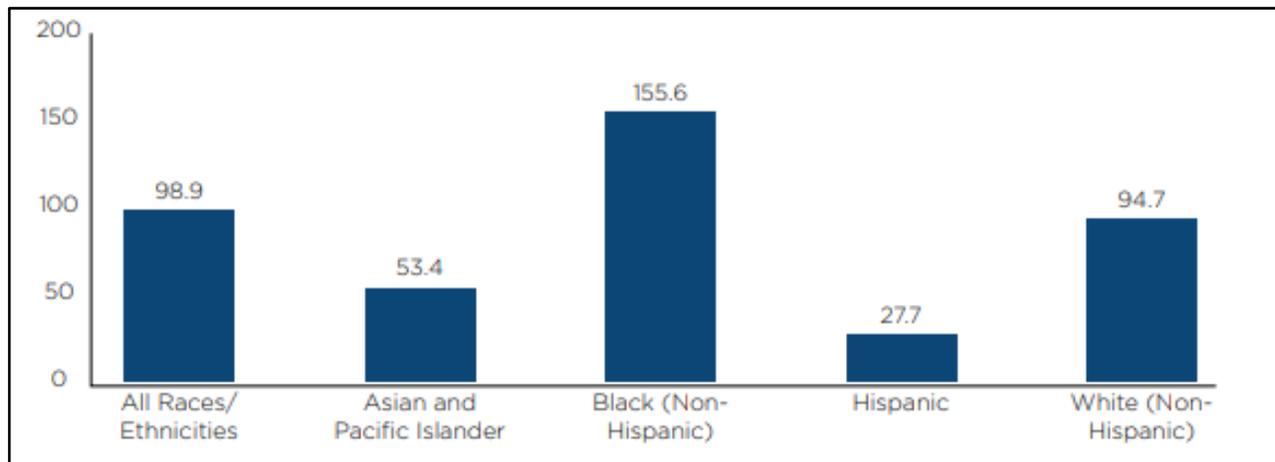
## Community Health

### Key Points

#### Heart Disease

- Heart disease accounts for 17% of all deaths and is the second leading cause of death in Chatham County.
  - 12% of all Chatham County adults are affected by cardiovascular or heart disease.

Figure 16: Chatham Heart Disease Rates per 100,000 by Race/Ethnicity



#### Diabetes

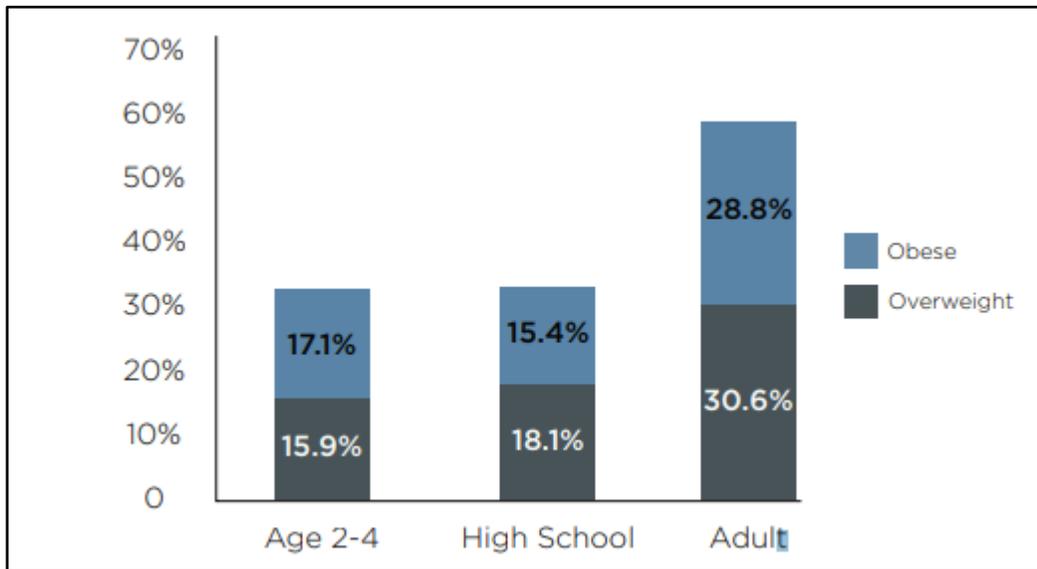
- Chatham County has a diabetes prevalence rate of 11.5% (DataUSA, 2021).
- 12.7% of the Hispanic/Latinx population and 12.1% of African Americans are diagnosed with diabetes, compared to 7.4% of the white population.
- Adults with less than a high school education are nearly twice as likely to have diabetes compared to those with more than a high school education.

#### Obesity

- The adult obesity prevalence rate is 26.4% (DataUSA, 2021).
- Black or African American and Hispanic or Latinx adults are more likely to be obese than white or Asian adults.

- Adults with lower education levels are more likely to be obese.
  - Children with parents who have a high school diploma are three times more likely to be obese than children with college-educated parents (30.4% and 9.5% respectively).
- Rural communities are more likely to be obese than their urban or suburban counterparts.

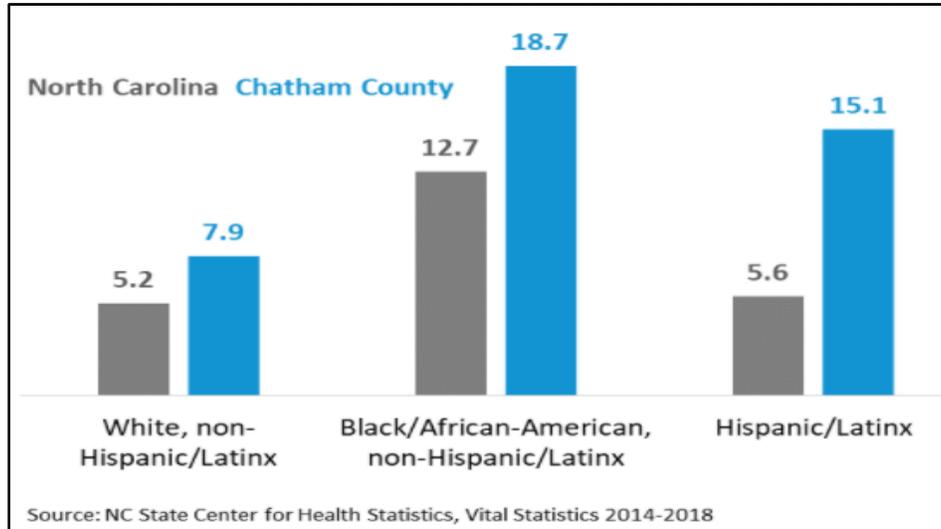
Figure 17: Percent Overweight and Obese in Chatham by Age Group



### Infant Mortality

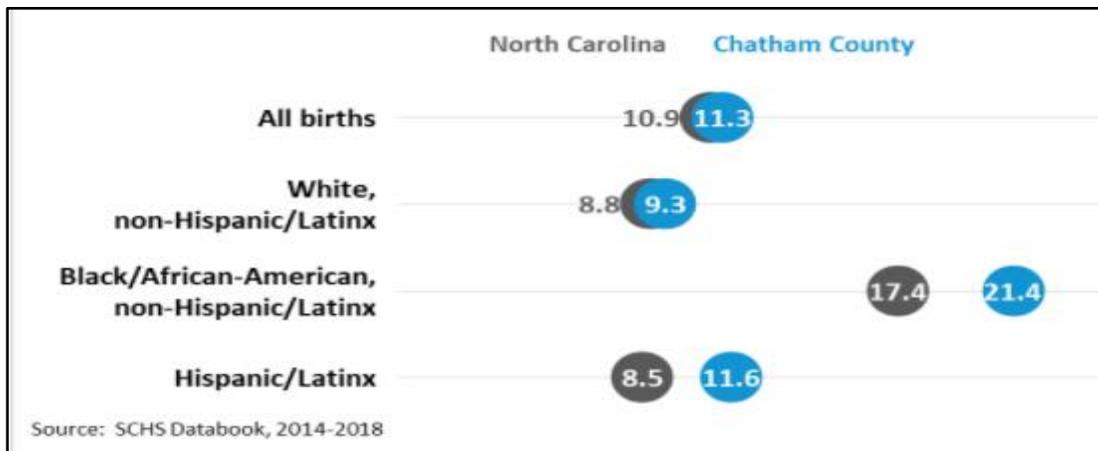
- Chatham County's 2018 infant mortality rate was 10.7 per 1,000, compared to the state average of 7.1.

Figure 18: Infant Mortality per 1,000 Live Births



- BIPOC residents have higher infant mortality rates per 1,000 live births when compared to white residents.
- Infant mortality rates are 2.2 times higher for Black or African American babies compared to white babies.

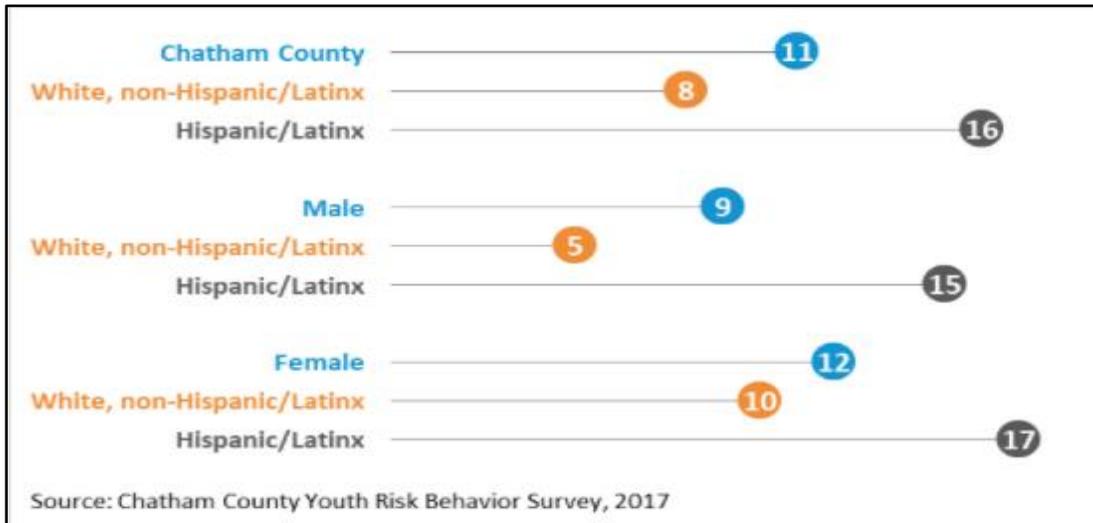
Figure 19: Low Birth Weights by Race



- Women in Chatham County have a higher percentage of low or very low weight births compared to the state average.
  - Low birthweight is defined as >2500 grams. Very low birthweight is defined as >1500 grams.
- Black women have the highest percentage of low or very low weight births.

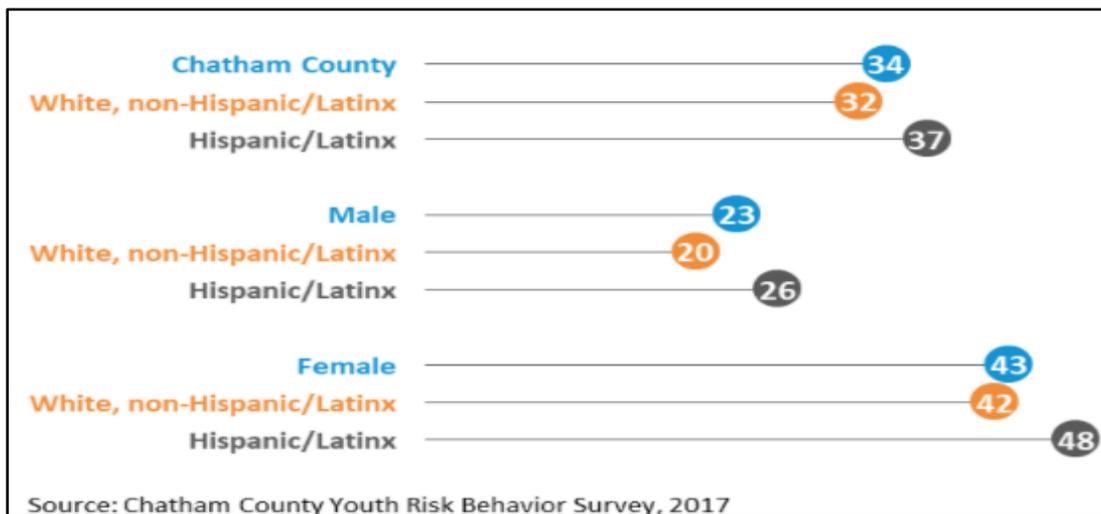
## Mental Health

Figure 20: % of High School Students Who Attempted Suicide in 12-Month Period



- A higher percentage of Hispanic or Latinx high school students reported attempting suicide during the survey period compared to white students.

Figure 21: % of Students Who Felt Sad or Hopeless Almost Every Day During a 2-Week Period



- A higher percentage of Hispanic/Latinx high school students in Chatham County felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks compared to white students.

## Healthcare Access

- 88.1% of the population has health coverage (DataUSA, 2021).
  - 43.8% are on employee plans.
  - 12.7% are on Medicaid.
  - 17.2% are on Medicare.
  - 13.3% are on non-group plans.
  - 1.17% are on military or VA plans.
- There are 36 licensed physicians in Chatham County, or 4.7 per every 10,000 residents (AccessNC, 2020).
- Primary care physicians see an average of 1,076 patients per year (DataUSA, 2021).

## Impact of COVID-19 <sup>22 23 24</sup>

- As of July 2021:
  - There have been 4,896 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Chatham County since the start of the pandemic.
  - There have been 89 deaths attributed to COVID-19.
  - 51.3% of the population is fully vaccinated.<sup>25</sup>
- Chatham County's white population makes up 56% of confirmed cases, 43% of COVID-19 deaths, and 74% of vaccinations, while comprising 83% of the total population.
- African Americans make up 14% of confirmed cases, 13% of COVID-19 deaths, and 10% of vaccinations while comprising 13% of the total population.
- The Hispanic/Latinx population makes up 34% of confirmed cases, 3% of COVID-19 deaths, and 9% of vaccinations while comprising 12% of the total population.

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<sup>22</sup>USA Facts. (2021). *Chatham County, North Carolina Coronavirus cases and deaths*. <https://usafacts.org/visualizations/coronavirus-covid-19-spread-map/state/north-carolina/county/chatham-county>

<sup>23</sup>North Carolina Department of Health & Human Safety. (2021). *Cases Demographics*. <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/cases-demographics>

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<sup>25</sup>Citizen Times. (2021). *Chatham County, NC COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker*. <https://data.citizen-times.com/covid-19-vaccine-tracker/north-carolina/chatham-county/37037/>

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