



EMERGING FOCUS AREAS

What We Learned

SINCE COVID-19

25.5%
of survey
respondents
sought help
through
mental health
counseling

Behavioral Health

- Behavioral health issues touch all demographics and include depression, substance abuse, and opioid addiction. Although mental health is influenced by a variety of individual factors, environmental factors, social and economic circumstances also play a role.
- Need for Behavioral Health Services. Since COVID-19, 25.5% of survey respondents sought help through mental health counseling. Before COVID-19 and since COVID-19, 26.4% and 33.0% of survey respondents in the 02907 respectively indicated concerns with depression.

“I haven’t been convicted of a felony since 2003 when I was 18 years old. I’m 35 years old now and that’s still biting me in my..., 17 years later.” – Focus Group participant

Incarceration

- Incarceration disproportionately impacts lower-income communities, communities of color, and persons with disabilities, and creates significant barriers to achieving health equity.
- The impact of incarceration reaches far beyond the prison or jail, impacting not only the formerly incarcerated, but also their families and communities. Nationally, almost 10 million children have experienced having one or both parents incarcerated at some point in their lives—impacting their health and future opportunities.
- According to the Rhode Island Department of Corrections, one out of every 13 people living in the 02907 is on probation or parole. One in every six males between the ages of 30–40 living in the 02907 is on probation or parole.
- The 02907 has the highest rates of probation and parole for men between the ages of 30–50 in the state. It also has the highest incarceration rate in the state for women of all ages at one out of every sixty-two females. There are 1,173 people on probation and parole in the 02907, which is 7.8% of the total HEZ population and is the highest percentage in Providence where the average by zip code is 4.2%. In Providence, the 02909 zip code has the second-highest rate at 5.2%. The state-wide average is 2.1%.

Social Cohesion and Civic Engagement

- Relationships are important for physical and mental health and well-being. Social cohesion refers to the strength of relationships and the sense of solidarity among members of a community.
- However, as one HEZ Community Action Team member noted, the issue of incarceration significantly diminishes civic engagement and political power in the HEZ, as incarcerated citizens are removed from the community to the Adult Correctional Institutions in Cranston where they are counted as constituents.

“For me, a healthy community is everyone helping and not just helping the people that need it, but say you see someone struggling and you can help, like, you can give them something to eat for the day. That’s a healthy community, because you’re helping others.”