

The Relationship Between Community Health and Education

March 18, 2014

*By: George T. Roberts, Jr., Chief Executive Officer
Northeast Texas Public Health District; and
Christi Khalaf, Executive Director
Business Education Council
Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce*

Key Findings: Public Data

- Compared to the regional and state rates, Smith County has a higher prevalence of cancer deaths – especially lung cancer, female breast cancer, and male prostate cancer.
- Chronic disease prevalence rates in Smith County are consistently at or below state rates, and almost always lower than the region's average prevalence rates. Smith County is better off with diabetes and heart disease, but has higher rates of stroke deaths.
- Higher prevalence of hypertension and blood cholesterol are found in Smith County vs. Texas.

Key Findings: Public Data

- Smith County is becoming more diverse. The county saw significant increases in minority populations. Rates of some chronic diseases such as obesity are projected to affect minority populations in greater proportions in the future, especially African American populations.
- Smith County is on average older than U.S. and TX rates, and is aging. Older populations in Smith County concentrate in the northwest point of Smith County, and south Tyler.

Key Findings: Public Data

- Smith County has lower rates of poverty than surrounding areas, and lower than state averages, but more than the national rate, and the amount in poverty is growing at a faster rate than the state's rate of change.
- This relationship is similar with people over 65: the rate of those over age 65 in poverty is growing at a faster rate in Smith County than the state rate of change.
- The amount of uninsured children in Smith County is decreasing, but there are still many more children uninsured than adults, and the disparity is worse in Smith County than that national rate. Children in Smith County are receiving more Medicaid than any other group compared to the state rate.

Key Findings: Public Data

- WIC Nutritional Risk Assessment data from 2009-2011 indicate a high incidence of maternal smoking among pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, as well as a high incidence of overweight and anemia for all WIC-eligible groups. Prenatal care is lower in Smith County than regional and state rates. Additionally, there is a racial disparity in lower birth weights: African American births are nearly twice as likely to result in low birth weight.

Key Findings: Community Data and Key Informant Insights

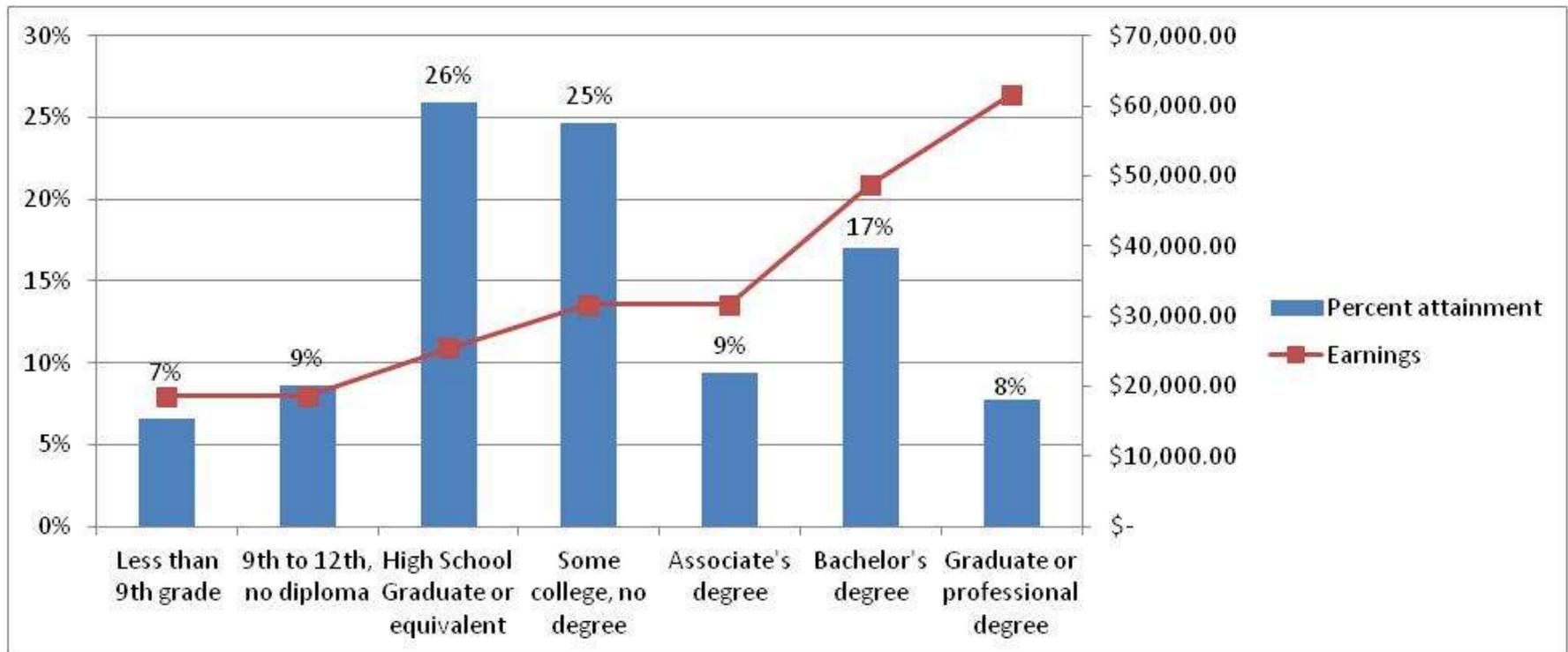
- The biggest issues facing Smith County are obesity and cancer. Many believe there needs to be a culture change.
- Several key informants cite transportation and access to care as major issues.
- Weather, safety, busy schedules, and a lack of childcare are some of the biggest barriers to physical activity for Smith County residents.
- There are many programs and service providers already doing great work in Smith County. Many believe these need more resources and awareness.

County Outcomes and Factors Comparison

	Texas	Williamson	Denton	Smith	McLennan	Gregg
Health Outcomes		1	3	83	147	185
Health Factors		3	10	50	149	154
Social & Economic Factors		5	6	115	185	146
High school graduation	86%	91%	93%	89%	87%	87%
Some college	57%	74%	75%	58%	56%	55%
Unemployment	7.9%	6.8%	7.0%	7.8%	7.4%	6.8%
Children in poverty	27%	11%	12%	24%	34%	26%
Inadequate social support	23%	17%	14%	24%	26%	24%
Children in single-parent households	33%	22%	21%	32%	38%	36%
Violent crime rate	483	144	198	444	567	715

Educational Attainment and Earnings: Smith County Residents ages 25 and over

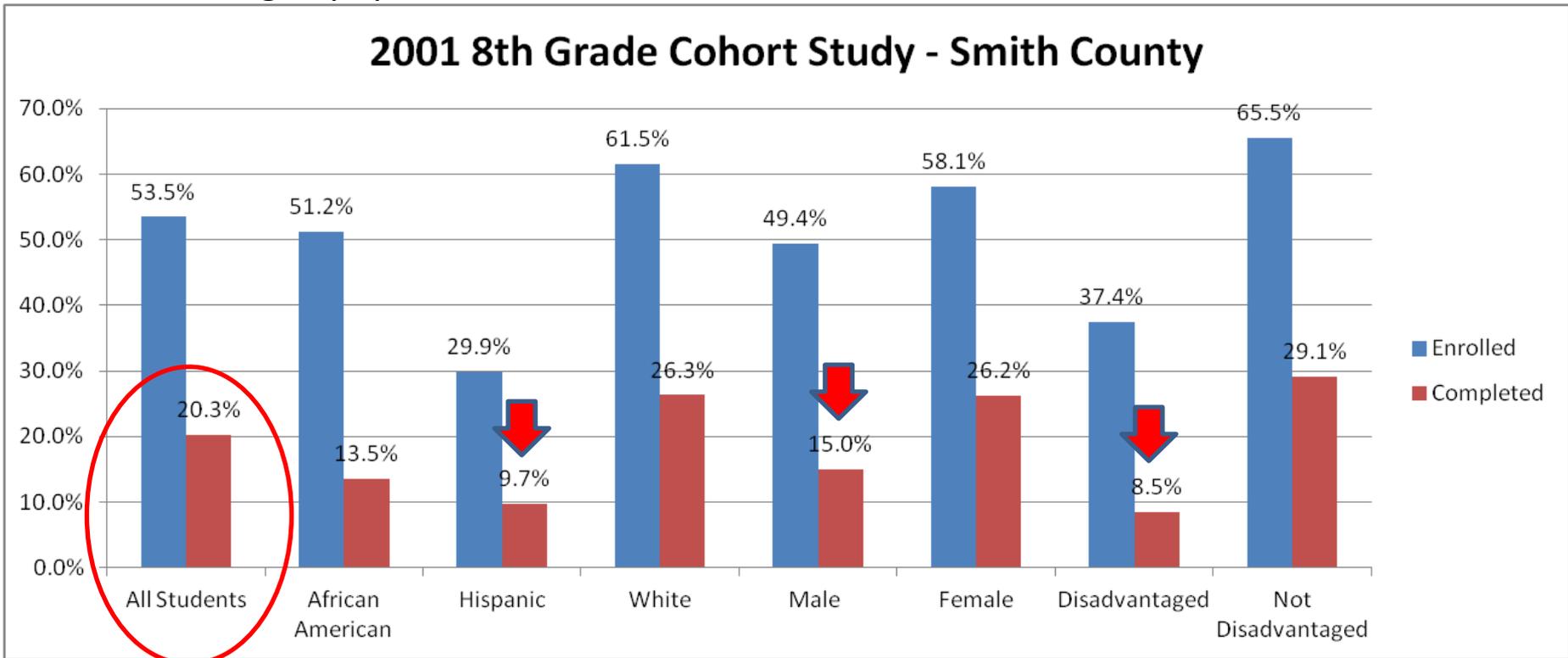
- 34% of Smith County residents over age 25 have earned an Associate's degree or higher
- 42% have not continued their education beyond high school



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Educational Attainment: Smith County Residents ages 18 to 25

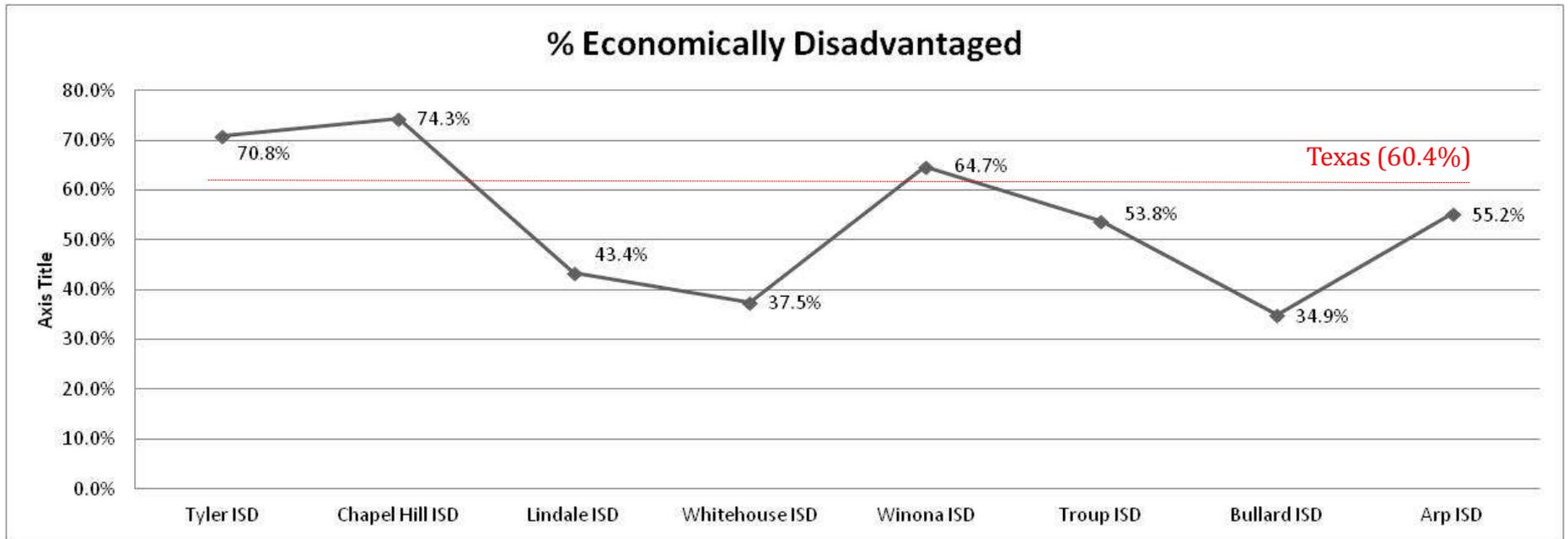
- 20.3% of 2001 8th graders received a higher education degree or certificate within six years of their anticipated high school graduation date (0.9 percentage points higher than the statewide rate).
- Lower completion rates are observed among the Hispanic, male and economically disadvantaged populations



Source: THECB 8th Grade Cohort

Socioeconomics in Smith County Public Schools

- In Smith County, 60% of students are considered economically disadvantaged (defined by eligibility from free/reduced lunch), up from only 30% in 1990



Source: Texas Education Agency, Academic Performance Report 2013

**Higher educational
attainment = higher income
= improved community
health outcomes**