Community Needs Assessment Summary Report for 2023

RELEASED APRIL 2025

CCRB
the community and children's resource board of st. charles county

stcharlescountykids.org

Acknowledgement

Many organizations located in St. Charles County participated in the needs assessment process, and several other sources of information were utilized to prepare this assessment. We appreciate their contributions to this process.

In addition, the CCRB partnered with Cynthia Berry, Ph.D., *Principal Researcher and Report Producer*, of **Berry Organizational and Leadership Development, (BOLD), LLC**, to conduct this research and prepare the reports. Dr. Berry served as Principal Researcher and Report Producer.

The following agencies and organizations provided data for this assessment:

- Behavioral Health Response
- Bethany Christian Services
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri
- Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Charles County
- CHADS Coalition for Mental Health
- Community Council of St. Charles County
- Community Living, Inc.
- Compass Health Network
- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
- Division of Social Services
- Family Advocacy and Community Training (F.A.C.T.)
- Eleventh Circuit Family Court
- FamilyForward
- Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition
- Gateway Alliance against Human Trafficking
- Crisis Aid International, Inc.
- Juvenile Office, 11th Circuit Juvenile Court
- Kids In The Middle
- Kids Under Twenty One (KUTO)
- LINC St. Charles County
- Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri
- Megan Meier Foundation
- Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri
- Missouri Department of Mental Health
- Missouri Department of Social Services
- Missouri Eating Disorders Association
- Missouri Kids Count
- NAMI St. Louis
- Nurses for Newborns
- Our Lady's Inn
- Partners In-Kind
- Preferred Family Healthcare, Inc.
- PreventEd
- Saint Louis Counseling
- Saint Louis Crisis Nursery
- SSM Health Care St. Louis
- Saints Joachim & Ann Care Service
- The Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri
- The Sparrow's Nest
- ThriVe St. Louis
- United Services for Children
- Youth In Need

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement 1

Community Needs Assessment Purpose and Overview 4

About Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB) 5

Summary Of Key Findings 7

COMMUNITY INDICATORS 9

Behavioral & Mental Health 10

- Key Findings 13

Economic Well-Being 13

- Key Findings 14

Physical Health 15

- Key Findings 16

Education 16

- Key Findings 17

CCRB-FUNDED SERVICES 18

CCRB-Funded Prevention Services 19

- Key Findings 20

CCRB-Funded Direct Services 21

- Key Findings 22

CCRB-FUNDED PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS 26

Youth Population (18 and under) of St. Charles County and the CCRB Population Served 26

Gender Distribution in St. Charles County and the Gender Breakdown of CCRB Youth Served 26

- Key Findings 27

Racial Distribution of the St. Charles County Population and the Racial Breakdown of CCRB Youth Served 28

- Key Findings 29

Geographic Distribution of CCRB Youth Served 29

- Key Findings 30

CONCLUSION **30**

Community Needs Assessment Purpose and Overview

The Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB) periodically conducts a community needs assessment to understand the economic, physical health, educational, and mental health strengths, needs, and gaps of children and families living in St. Charles County. This information is used to support the CCRB's community planning, funding decisions, and broader decision-making processes.

In 2024, CCRB contracted with Cynthia Berry, Ph.D. of BOLD, LLC to conduct a needs assessment that included the following components:

- *CCRB-Funded Program Assessment Report: St. Charles County Youth in 2023:* provides client data on 61 programs funded by CCRB in 2023 as well as trends, gaps, and challenges identified by CCRB Partner Agencies
- *St. Charles County Youth Data – Analyzing Community Trends from 2004 to 2023*: analysis of several economic, physical health, mental/behavioral health, and educational indicators concerning youth in St. Charles County*

From these reports, the *Community Needs Assessment Summary Report for 2023* was created. This report summarizes data from these two extensive reports and identifies key findings. Data sources used in this summary report can be found in one of the above reports.

An Executive Summary has also been created to provide a very high-level overview of the findings.

Since its founding, the Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB) has been committed to improving the lives of kids and their families by strategically investing in effective and quality mental health and substance use treatment services. CCRB continues to significantly invest in children, youth, and families through innovative partnerships, which helps kids create brighter futures. While CCRB funding does not directly address all of the economic, physical health, behavioral/mental health, and educational indicators reflected in these reports, these indicators are interrelated. CCRB's sustained investment has contributed to the progress noted in this Needs Assessment. Continued investment in our youth benefits St. Charles County as a whole.

Copies of all reports can be found on CCRB's website at stcharlescountykids.org.

* The most recent data period available was used for each indicator. This was typically 2021 or 2022. In a few cases, 2023 data was available and was therefore reported.

About Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB)

Vision
Preparing all youth and families to realize a brighter tomorrow.

Mission
Maximizing community resources to build and sustain a comprehensive system of services for children and families in need.

Values
In support of our mission and vision, the CCRB is dedicated to:

1. Encouraging collaboration and integration of mental health services and public funds to deliver services that are effective, efficient, and continually improved.
2. Making sure that children and families in need of services are partners in the planning, development, and delivery of those services.
3. Developing accountable service delivery systems that are responsive to the community as well as public health and welfare authorities.
4. Working to strengthen children and families.

The CCRB is governed by the following State Statutes and Local Ordinances:

Missouri Revised Statutes
Title VI COUNTY, TOWNSHIP AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISION GOVERNMENT

- Chapter 67
    - 67.1775. Authorizes local sales tax in all counties and St. Louis City to provide services for children — establishes fund

Title XII PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

- Chapter 210
- 210.860. Tax levy, amount, purposes — ballot — deposit of funds in special community children's services fund
- 210.861. Board of directors, term, expenses, organization — powers — funds, expenditure, purpose, restrictions.

St. Charles County, Missouri Ordinance No. 97-152
Title I Government Code
Chapter 120 Boards and Commissions

- Article X: Section 120.730-Section 120.785

As mandated by State Statute, CCRB funds:

- Crisis Intervention Services
- Home and Community-based Intervention Services
- Individual, Group, and Family Counseling and Evaluation Services
- Outpatient Psychiatric Services
- Outpatient Substance Use Treatment Services
- Respite Care Services
- Prevention Services
- Services to Teen Parents
- Temporary Shelter Services
- Transitional Living Services

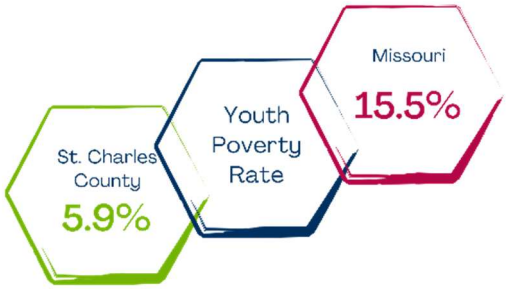
During the 12-month contract period from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, CCRB provided over $9.1 million in funding to 61 programs at 31 non-profit agencies. This funding supported a wide range of mental health programs offering direct treatment services, early intervention, and prevention initiatives to address mental health needs and promote the safety and well-being of St. Charles County's youth.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

In 2023, the youth of St. Charles County experienced a mix of positive developments and emerging challenges. The Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB) played a crucial role in supporting the well-being of young people, with 81% of K-12 students in the County benefiting from at least one CCRB-funded prevention service. Additionally, 12.5% of all County youth were served through a CCRB-funded direct service program, such as counseling, crisis intervention, or outpatient psychiatric treatment. This impressive reach highlights our community's commitment to fostering a supportive environment for our youth.

Overall, the data reveals several positive changes in the economic, physical health, educational, and mental health well-being of children and adults over the past two decades, such as:

- Decreased substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect
- Lower rates of youth admissions to substance use treatment
- Lower poverty rates
- Fewer cases of infant mortality
- Increased high school graduation rates



The data also reveals issues needing closer attention, notably:

- There has been a significant increase in youth self-harm and suicide ideation rates.
- Anxiety, controlling emotions/anger management, peer relationship management, social skills, and depression were frequently identified as major behavioral and mental health challenges by CCRB-funded providers.
- The intensity of mental health concerns among youth has risen, impacting the capacity of providers to manage their caseloads effectively, leading to longer treatment windows, and increased pressure on service delivery.
- Juvenile law interactions and various justice- and substance use-related offenses have seen a recent uptick, although the overall numbers remain low.
- Economic stability is also becoming a growing concern, with an increase in cost-burdened households contributing to higher levels of household stress, which can negatively affect the physical and mental health of families.
- Staff turnover and shortages at CCRB-funded providers have further strained their ability to deliver services.

Despite these challenges, CCRB-funded providers have continued to offer high-quality, effective, and responsive services to youth and their caregivers. This dedication is commendable, especially given the increased acuity of youth mental health symptoms and the staffing challenges faced by these programs.

One significant finding from the *CCRB-Funded Program Assessment Report: St. Charles County Youth in 2023* is that only 3.7% of youth in St. Charles County received CCRB-funded mental health therapeutic services in 2023. This is much lower than the estimated 10-12% of youth with a serious emotional disorder, indicating a potential gap in services that needs to be addressed.

To ensure ongoing support for youth and families across the County, it is essential for CCRB to continue funding a comprehensive, readily accessible range of mental health and substance use treatment services.

By both addressing these challenges and building on the successes, our community can work towards a brighter future for our young people.

COMMUNITY INDICATORS

Community indicators are measurements that provide information about past trends, current realities, and future direction, aiding in decision making for CCRB, funded programs, and the broader community. While CCRB funding does not directly address all of the indicators reflected in this report, these indicators reflect the interplay between the health, social, environmental, and economic factors affecting the well-being of our county's youth and offer an objective measure of the effects of the CCRB's and our community's sustained investments.

Since 2004, CCRB has tracked the health and wellness of youth across four key indicators:

- Behavioral and mental health
- Economic well-being
- Physical health
- Education

Within each indicator we identify three trend categories based on an analysis of data:

- Strengths – data demonstrates positive trends over time
- Mixed results – data shows mixed outcomes over time or in the past 1, 3, or 5 years
- Concerns – data reflects a decline over time and/or are not comparable to regional or state trends

Those indicators noted as "Concerns" demand our community's closer attention, research, and potentially additional resources and/or targeted services. By closely monitoring these indicators, CCRB can proactively identify areas needing improvement, allocate resources more effectively, and implement targeted interventions to enhance the overall health and well-being of our county's youth.

The following is a summary of the findings.

BEHAVIORAL & MENTAL HEALTH

Behavioral and mental health indicators are crucial for understanding the psychological well-being of youth in St. Charles County. These indicators provide insights into the prevalence of mental health issues, access to services, and the effectiveness of interventions aimed at supporting young people's mental health. Trends in this area are varied, with some areas showing improvement while others are more mixed or have seen declines. The following charts explore key behavioral and mental health indicators, highlighting areas of strength, mixed results, and concerns that require our community's attention and resources.

Strengths
Substance abuse treatment program youth admission In 2023, 41 youth were admitted to substance abuse treatment programs in the County, representing a 57% decrease since 2009. Youth admissions comprised 3.6% of admissions for all ages that year.
Injurious behavior (behavior that is harmful to the child's own welfare or that of others) Offenses decreased by 78% from 2004 to just 9 in 2023.
Neglect offenses (related to juvenile offenses) Incidents decreased by 47%, from 177 in 2004 to 94 in 2023.
Youth receiving psychiatric services, ages 6 – 17 Rates dropped from 947 youth in 2017 to 709 youth in 2022, a 25% decrease.
Substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect Cases decreased by 24%, dropping from 257 in 2004 to 195 in 2023. The County rate of 2.1 cases per 1,000 is lower than the state rate of 3.2. Further, St. Charles County has the second lowest rate in the St. Louis region.
Mixed Results
Juvenile law violation referrals Significant progress has been made with referrals reduced by 61% since 2004 to 17.1 per 1,000 youth in 2022 in the County. However, in 2022 there was a 25% increase over 2021, which requires deeper investigation.
Drug offenses Offenses declined 54% from 2004 to 2023 (238 to 109 offenses), however the three-year trend shows a significant increase from 2020 to 2023 (58 to 109 offenses). This suggests a need for closer examination to understand why.
Alcohol-related offenses Overall, offenses dropped by 82% from 2004 to 2023 (109 to 20 offenses). However, rates increased by 18% from 2019 to 2023.
Truancy Since 2004, truancy offenses have declined by 54%, from 91 cases to 42 in 2023. However, there was a 15% increase from 2022 to 2023.

Mixed Results (continued)
Runaway/absent from home In 2023, this was the most common status offense, with 166 reported incidents. Although cases have decreased by 47% since 2004, recent trends show an uptick.
Children entering/reentering state custody The number of children entering or re-entering state custody increased by 27% between 2004 and 2022. However, the rate per 1,000 youth has decreased, suggesting that population growth may be a contributing factor to the overall rise in cases.
Psychiatric service utilization for children Significant trends include an increase in psychiatric service needs for children under 6 years old (19% increase from 2017 to 2022), a 25% decrease in those aged 6-17, and a 15% decrease in those aged 18-24.

Concerns
Violent offenses While overall trends in the County showed a 26% reduction since 2004, short-term trends indicated a significant increase, rising from 276 offenses in 2019 to 350 in 2023.
Abuse offenses (related to juvenile data) Rates increased by 64% from 14 cases in 2004 to 23 in 2023.
Custody offenses Incidents rose by 95%, increasing from 19 cases in 2004 to 37 in 2023; cases were up 118% from 2022 to 2023.
Out-of-home placements Overall placements increased by 17%, rising from 93 cases in 2004 to 109 in 2023. Placements related to parental drug use saw a sharp increase, while cases linked to parental alcohol use declined.
Suicide among adolescents, ages 15 – 19 Rates rose from 23 deaths in the 2003 – 2013 period to 26 in the 2011 – 2021 period. In 2022, 8.9% of St. Charles County students reported having "planned" a suicide attempt in the past year, while 12.9% had "seriously considered suicide."
Self-Injury (a key indicator linked to suicidal ideation) Rates rose from 11.2% in 2012 to 21.5% in 2022.
Substantiated cases of emotional abuse Rose from 3 cases in 2005 to 8 cases in 2023.

St. Charles County St. Charles County Youth Data – Analyzing Community Trends from 2004 to 2023 examined psychiatric services provided for various psychiatric disorders across all age groups and tracked changes over time. Since diagnosis-specific data for youth is unavailable, these results are not included in the above charts. However, this data may indicate changes within the youth population and has been summarized below.

Changes in psychiatric services for all ages in St. Charles County, 2017 – 2022		
Strength	**Mixed Results**	**Concerns**
Bipolar Mood Disorders Impulse control/conduct disorders	Depressive mood disorders	Trauma and stress-related conditions Anxiety/fear disorders

Another concerning trend was fentanyl and methamphetamine use in the general population. Since 2020, cases rose from 140 cases in 2020 to 207 cases in 2022. Methamphetamine use increased from 126 to 154 cases during that same time period. Again, youth-specific data is not available.

Common Behavioral/Mental Health Challenges Youth Experience in St. Charles County

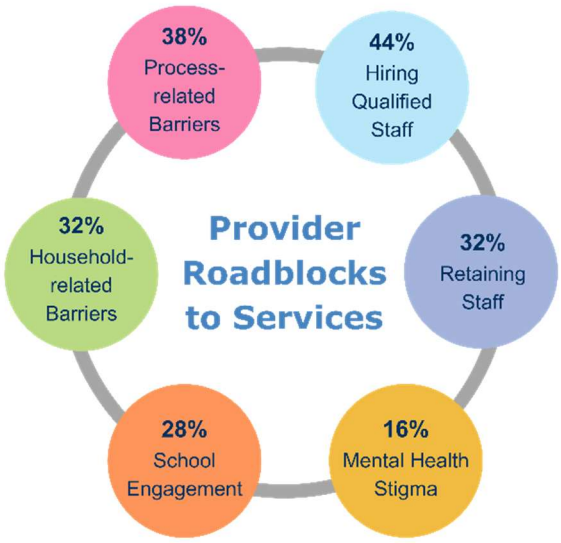
As part of the needs assessment, CCRB-funded providers were asked to identify the most prevalent behavioral and mental health issues among the youth they served. The following are the top issues identified across providers.

Behavioral and Mental Health Issues	% Indicated
Anxiety, worrisome, fear	83%
Controlling emotions, anger management, and conflict resolution	73%
Friend/peer relationships, social skills, problem solving, and self-esteem	72%
Depression/sad a lot	70%
Feelings of acceptance/belonging	52%

Further, several agencies in the survey reported youth presenting more acute mental health concerns which necessitated longer time in care/treatment. This could have impacted some programs leading to higher waitlists and number of youth carried over from one year to the next.

Roadblocks to Services

Agency staff were asked to provide insights into recent challenges they encountered, beyond funding, which had an impact on the utilization of CCRB funds and the delivery of services. Most significantly, 44% of agencies reported hiring qualified staff was a barrier to providing services to County youth and families.



Key Findings

These findings reinforce the need for comprehensive prevention, crisis and early intervention, and treatment programs. Programs must address the psychological, emotional, and social needs of youth while also providing resources to support their families. Further exploration is needed to understand the increase in rates of suicide and self-injury.

The rise in juvenile law interactions as well as the increase of several types of offenses bears close monitoring. The CCRB is encouraged to strengthen its relationship with the Juvenile Court to better understand the root causes of these increases and successful intervention strategies.

The most prevalent issues identified by agencies – anxiety, emotional regulation, and peer relationships – underscore the need for early intervention programs focused on emotional intelligence, stress management, and social skills development. Depression is often intertwined with anxiety and poor self-esteem and demands a comprehensive approach, including counseling services, peer support, and community education on mental health.

As these trends indicate both positive and negative shifts in youth behavior, the CCRB must work together with providers to raise awareness about mental health, substance use, and prevention and the importance of ensuring services are available to youth and families.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Economic well-being indicators are essential for understanding the financial health and stability of a community. These indicators provide insights into various aspects of economic conditions and help guide policy decisions. Overall, the economic well-being of youth and families in St. Charles County has steadily improved over time. The following chart summarizes those indicators.

Strengths
Poverty rates The general and youth poverty rates (5.2% and 5.9%, respectively in 2022) in the County have remained low, significantly below the State of Missouri average of 13.1% (overall) and 15.5% (youth).
Free/Reduced-price lunch enrollment While more students have enrolled in the free/reduce-price lunch program as the County's population size grew, St. Charles County's rate declined to 13.3% in 2022, which was more than three times lower than Missouri's rate for free/reduced-price lunch enrollment.
Food insecurity Youth food insecurity in St. Charles County saw a dramatic 70% decline, from 16,070 (17.6%) individuals in 2010 to 4,780 (5.1%) in 2022, well below Missouri's 12.8% that same year.

Mixed Results
Youth homelessness During the 2022-23 school year, 616 students were reported as homeless across the five public school districts in St. Charles County. This represents a 53% increase (from 402 students) since the 2009-10 school year. The 1-, 3-, and 5-year trends indicated continued growth in youth homelessness. It is important to note that in 2022, only 0.7% of youth in St. Charles County were homeless, significantly lower than Missouri's statewide rate of 2.5%.

Concerns
Cost-burdened households Nearly half of renters in St. Charles County spent 30% or more of their income on gross household costs—a key indicator used to predict the risk of homelessness—placing approximately 13,469 renter households at risk. This percentage is slightly higher than the statewide figure of 46%. • Among homeowners with a mortgage, 18-19% spent 30% or more of their income on housing costs in 2023, lower than Missouri's 22-23%. • Altogether, approximately 21% of occupied housing units, equaling 34,515 households (renters and homeowners combined), were at risk of homelessness in St. Charles County, highlighting affordability challenges.

Key Findings

The substantial decrease in youth poverty and food insecurity could reflect the success of existing economic and social programs. Continuing to invest in child-focused initiatives could further reduce these rates and improve overall youth well-being.

While St. Charles County outperforms Missouri in nearly all economic indicators, the increasing number of cost-burdened households (particularly renters) and youth homelessness indicates growing inequality. Housing instability was also identified as an emerging area of concern with some CCRB-funded providers. Although the CCRB cannot directly influence housing costs or availability, it is crucial to recognize that ongoing housing challenges could have negative effects on youth mental health if these issues persist.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Physical health well-being indicators help identify health trends within a community. By addressing these indicators, communities can implement preventive measures that improve overall health outcomes. The physical health trends in St. Charles County reveal a complex landscape of outcomes, with some areas showing significant improvements while others present mixed results or concerning declines. The following chart provides a summary of these trends, highlighting indicators where progress has been made, those with fluctuating outcomes, and areas that require closer attention.

Strengths
Infant mortality There was a 25% decrease in infant deaths, with the rate dropping from 6.5 per 1,000 births in 2004 to 5.0 in 2021. The County's rate was lower than the state rate of 6.0 per 1,000 births.
Births to teens There has been a 70% reduction in the number of births to teens since 2004 to just 5.4 per 1,000 in 2021, which is significantly less than the state rate of 10.0 per 1,000.

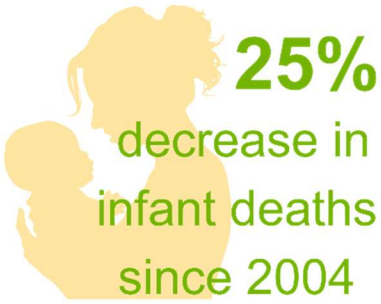
Mixed Results
Child deaths, ages 1 – 14 There was a 41% decrease in child deaths in the County, with the rate dropping from 21.0 per 100,000 youth in 2000-2004 to 11.4 in 2017-2021, well below the state rate. However, rate trends have fluctuated over the past 1, 3, and 5 years, indicating a need to closely track.
Child deaths, ages 15 – 17 The number of teen deaths decreased by 26% from 2010 to 2022, falling from 35 to 26 deaths per 100,000, respectively. However, trends were negative in the past 1, 3, and 5 years.
Violent teen deaths, ages 15 – 19 The rate of violent teen deaths decreased by 74% since 2004 to 27.1 per 100,000 in 2022, which was significantly lower than the state rate of 60.8 per 100,000 and lower than surrounding counties. However, the 1-year rate rose in 2022, signaling a need to pay attention.

Concerns
Infants born with low birth weight While still below the state average of 8.8%, the number of low-birth-weight infants born in the County rose from 6.4% in 2004 to 7.4% in 2022.

Key Findings

The decline in infant and child mortality potentially reflects the positive impact of healthcare and community interventions in the County. However, the slow increase in low birth weight and the fluctuations in violent teen and child deaths suggest that targeted health-related programs should be continued and monitored.

Given the fluctuating trends, especially in short-term periods, ongoing monitoring and timely interventions are essential to ensure that St. Charles County continues to make progress in reducing health risks for infants, children, and teens.



EDUCATION

Education indicators are essential tools for assessing the performance and effectiveness of education systems. They provide valuable insights into various aspects of education, such as graduation rates and literacy levels. This data helps illustrate the educational landscape in the community, highlighting areas of strength and identifying opportunities for improvement. Indicator trends in this area are also varied, with some showing improvements while others are more mixed or have seen declines. The following chart summarizes those indicators where trends have been positive in St. Charles County, those indicators with mixed results, and those indicators which have shown a negative change and deserve closer attention.

Strengths
High school graduation rate County rates increased from 88.7% in 2004 to 93.9% in 2022, surpassing the state average of 91.2%.
High school dropout rate Decreased from 2.6% in 2004 to 1.0% in 2021, below the state rate of 1.7%.
In-school suspension (ISS) rate Declined from 128 students in 2004 to 13 in 2022, an 89.1% reduction.

Mixed Results
Disciplinary incidents Decreased by 41.3% since 2004 in the County. While positive long-term trends were observed in most districts, the St. Charles School City District saw negative trends, particularly with tobacco and weapons-related incidents.
Out-of-school suspension (OSS) rate Declined from 1.4% of students in 2004 to 0.9% in 2022. However, the 1, 3, and 5 year trends were all negative, warranting further research.
MAP testing proficiency 3rd grade English proficiency increased by 1.8% in 2022, but negative trends over 3 and 5 years signal the need for continued academic support. 4th grade math proficiency decreased by 3.9% since 2011, though a 10.4% improvement in 1 year suggests progress. Algebra I proficiency demonstrated a 23.7% increase in 2022, although negative trends over 3 and 5 years point to the need for sustained efforts.

Concerns
Student attendance Decreased by 2.3% for K-12th and 2.5% for County 9-12th graders since 2011, with negative trends in all time frames, indicating ongoing challenges.
8th grade ELA proficiency (MAP test) Proficiency dropped by 6.4% since 2011, with negative trends over 1, 3, and 5 years.

Key Findings

Steady improvements in these indicators point to the success of local education policies, community involvement, and district-level initiatives. Areas with mixed results and negative trends require further exploration to understand the root cause(s) and potential pandemic-related impacts.

CCRB-FUNDED SERVICES

CCRB awards funding to local organizations to provide essential mental health and substance use treatment services for children under age 19 in St. Charles County.

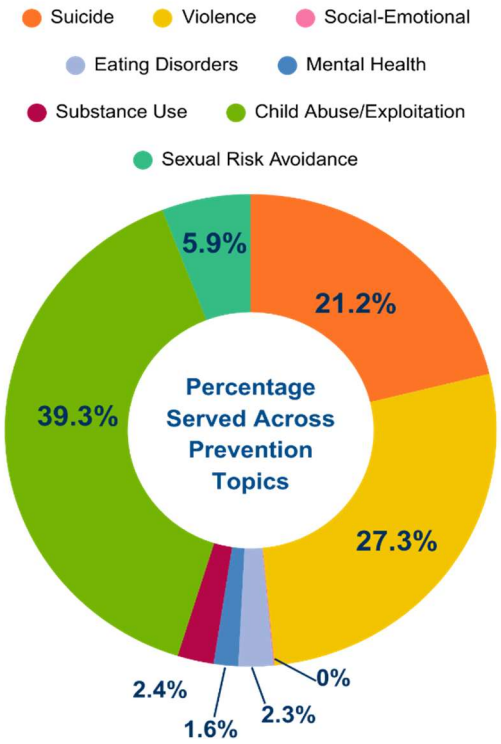
This section highlights the diverse mix of CCRB-funded services. CCRB funds services in the following 10 categories, as mandated by the State Statute. Nine categories support direct services, and one targets prevention services. Totals represent youth, adults, and professionals served through each category and a measure of duplication across services.

Distribution of CCRB-funding Across Service Categories for 2023

CCRB-FUNDED PREVENTION SERVICES

Prevention services focus on proactively addressing mental, emotional, and behavioral health challenges among students and youth. These programs aim to promote healthy development, prevent the onset of mental health issues, and reduce risk factors for negative outcomes such as substance use, violence, academic failure, and/or emotional distress. Offering prevention education services can help foster a supportive environment that nurtures a child's overall well-being and equips them with skills needed for lifelong success. Integrating mental health prevention programming in schools and the broader community reaches students where they spend a significant portion of their time, providing early intervention and support in a familiar setting.

Prevention programs funded by CCRB in 2023 included substance use prevention, abuse and exploitation prevention, social-emotional well-being skill-building, and suicide prevention. Some programs last one class period, while others are delivered over several days. Most programs were delivered in schools.



Ten CCRB-funded prevention programs reached 89,742 youth through prevention programs in 2023 (including some duplication). Furthermore, 100 parents/caregivers received educational programming, and 1,895 professionals were also reached, benefiting a total of 91,737 individuals.

Ninety percent of CCRB-funded prevention programs reported meeting or surpassing their projected outcomes and client impact in 2023, indicating a high degree of effectiveness. Research indicates that prevention programming can prevent the emergence of mental health conditions and nurture students' overall wellbeing.

Key Findings

CCRB-funded services have a broad reach, impacting an impressive 81% of the youth population in St. Charles County. This demonstrates the importance of such programs in addressing youth needs. Meeting children where they spend a significant portion of their time increases their opportunity for early intervention and support in a familiar setting. However, with a population of nearly 93,000 youth, there is still a gap in reaching every young person who could benefit from these services, which suggests the need for continued program expansion or further outreach.

In 2024, the CCRB began collecting school-level data to understand where each prevention service was delivered. This data is needed to help CCRB, service providers, and schools target prevention services where they are most needed and ensure an equitable distribution of programming across both school districts and individual schools. This more granular data will help facilitate stronger service delivery coordination moving forward.

CCRB has not gathered information from schools to assess their views on the effectiveness and satisfaction with CCRB-funded school-based prevention services, nor has it collected data on the unmet mental health needs of students. Doing so could enhance the effectiveness of services and strengthen communication and the already positive relationships between the CCRB, schools, and service providers.

CCRB-FUNDED DIRECT SERVICES

All other service categories

CCRB funds a wide array of direct services for children and youth. These interventions and support are provided directly to the young person with the purpose of improving youth overall mental health and well-being, reducing symptoms, and helping youth develop coping mechanisms when faced with challenges. Direct services may include individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, respite care, and others. By addressing the unique needs of each young person, the CCRB aims to foster resilience, promote positive development, and ensure that youth have the tools they need to navigate life's difficulties successfully.

The CCRB provided funding to 51 direct service programs in 2023, which impacted 11,552 youth. With a total youth population (aged 19 and under) of 92,296, this equates to 12.5% of St. Charles County's youth receiving direct program services. In 2023, CCRB-funded direct service programs also supported 2,957 parents/caregivers, 1,965 families, and 591 professionals, reaching a total of 17,065 clients.

CCRB-Funded Service Categories: Children and Total Others Served for 2023

Service Category	Children: Carried Over	Children: New	Children: Total Served	Children: Waitlisted	Total Others Served*	Total Pop Served
Crisis Intervention	244	1,938	2,182	0	1,278	3,460
Home and Community-based Intervention	2,570	5,039	7,609	284	3,835	11,444
Individual, Group, and Family Counseling and Evaluation	312	926	1,238	252	227	1,465
Outpatient Psychiatric	23	10	33	0	0	33
Outpatient Substance Use Treatment	58	64	122	0	0	122
Respite Care	4	276	280	84	156	436
Services to Teen Parents	15	27	42	0	17	59
Temporary Shelter	2	31	33	0	0	33
Transitional Living	4	9	13	0	0	13
Prevention	51	89,691	89,742	0	1,995	91,737
Total Direct	***3,232***	***8,320***	***11,552***	***620***	***5,513***	***17,065***
Total Prevention	***51***	***89,691***	***89,742***	***0***	***1,995***	***91,737***
Total	***3,283***	***98,011***	***101,294***	***620***	***7,508***	***108,802***

* Includes parents/caregivers, families, and professionals.

94% of CCRB-funded direct service programs reported meeting or surpassing their projected outcomes and client impact in 2023, indicating a high degree of effectiveness.

Key Findings

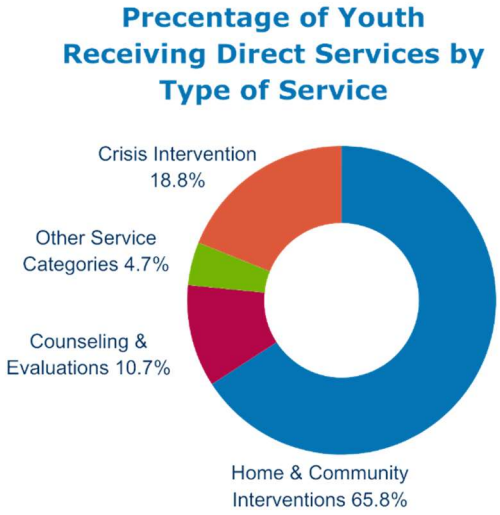
Overall

In 2024, the CCRB began collecting school-level data to understand where each direct service was delivered. This data is needed to help CCRB, service providers, and schools allocate prevention services equitably and ensure appropriate distribution of programming across both school districts and individual schools. This more granular data will help facilitate stronger service delivery coordination moving forward.

As is true for CCRB-funded prevention programs, CCRB has not gathered information from schools to assess their views on the effectiveness and satisfaction with CCRB-funded school-based direct services, nor has it collected data on the unmet mental health needs of students. Doing so could enhance the effectiveness of services and strengthen communication and the already positive relationships between the CCRB, schools, and service providers.

Crisis Intervention

Crisis Intervention services respond to an acute mental health crisis or other family emergencies and focus on rapidly restoring a child's baseline functioning. The CCRB funds a variety of services in this category. Accurately assessing community needs for crisis intervention remains challenging due to the diverse services offered. Ensuring adequate funding requires a nuanced understanding of demand and impact. Further research is needed.



Home and Community-based Intervention Individual, Group, and Family Counseling and Evaluation

Home and Community-based Intervention services allow children, youth, and families to access behavioral health interventions in their homes, schools, and communities. They are essential in stabilizing families and supporting children and youth with various mental health issues and serious emotional disturbances (SED). Individual, Group, and Family Counseling and Evaluation Services offer essential support to individuals and families facing emotional, behavioral, and relational challenges. CCRB-funded services in these two categories play a critical role in addressing the behavioral and mental health needs of youth in St. Charles County and is where most funding was directed in 2023. Based on national data, an estimated 10-12% of the youth population in St. Charles County experiences a serious emotional disorder. In 2023, approximately 3,418 youth received CCRB-funded mental health therapeutic services, representing 3.7% of the total youth population in the County. This potentially indicates a significant gap in services which should be explored further.

Upon a closer review of the programs in each of these service categories, some programs in the Home and Community-based Intervention category are more therapeutic in nature and may better align with services in the Individual, Group, and Family Counseling and Evaluation category. Moving forward, the CCRB should review service category assignments and adjust where appropriate.

Outpatient Psychiatric

Outpatient Psychiatric services provide essential evaluations and interventions for children and adolescents experiencing psychiatric disorders.

Given the small number of youth served through CCRB-funded psychiatric programs in 2023, it is possible that the demand exceeded the services provided, as suggested by national. However, it is important to note that CCRB funds psychiatric services within other programs, thus increasing the number of youth served. Unfortunately, it is not possible to tease out those numbers for inclusion in this section.

Outpatient Substance Use Treatment

Outpatient Substance Use Treatment services for adolescents/teens aim to address the complexities of drug and alcohol use among youth by providing therapeutic services including assessments, early intervention, educational, counseling, therapy, and aftercare treatment.

St. Charles County Youth Data – Analyzing Community Trends from 2004 to 2023 reflects that, while substance use by youth has decreased over the years, substance use among youth remains a concern. Without adequate access to outpatient treatment services, at-risk youth are more likely to experience negative outcomes, perpetuating cycles of addiction and instability. Therefore, it is important to continually assess trends in the perceptions of and use of substances among youth, and subsequently the need for outpatient treatment and prevention programs.

Respite Care

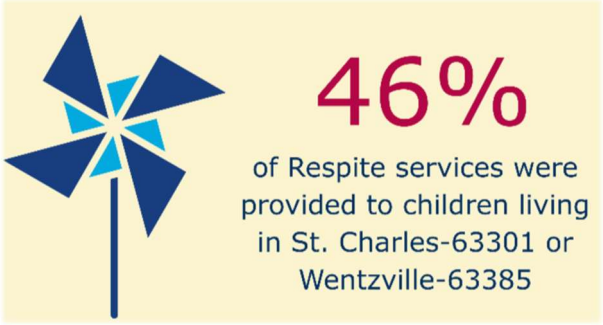
Respite Care services provide temporary, emergency shelter, and support for children whose families are experiencing crises, often preventing child abuse and neglect or out-of-home placement for children.

The short-term trends for reported child abuse and neglect indicate positive progress for St. Charles County. However, 59% of substantiated incidents of child abuse or neglect were due to parental

neglect in 2023. Given recent shifts in household economic well-being, CCRB should monitor trends and continue to invest in these services.

Services for Teen Parents

Services for Teen Parents is aimed at equipping young parents with positive parenting skills, behavioral health support, counseling, and connections to further resources.



Rates of teen pregnancy have significantly dropped over the past two decades, which has decreased the need for these types of services. CCRB should continue to monitor rates to determine if additional investments are needed in the future.

The program associated with this service category appears to be misclassified and should be assigned to a different category.

Temporary Shelter

Temporary Shelter services are designed to provide short-term safety and support to vulnerable youth who are facing dangerous or unstable situations, such as abuse, neglect, homelessness, or emotional disturbances.

St. Charles County Youth Data – Analyzing Community Trends from 2004 to 2023 reflects low youth homelessness and runaway rates, with little changes across the years, indicating that currently funded services may be appropriately meeting needs. Schools are reporting a greater number of youth who are homeless, but St. Charles County percentage rates remain relatively steady, with an increase of 0.1% from 2021 to 2022. Given the increase in the number of youth who are runaway or absent from home, cost-burdened households, and other economic factors that are changing, CCRB should continue to monitor the need for temporary shelter services.

33 Youth
(aged 10-18)

found a safe haven at Youth In Need's Youth Emergency Shelter

Transitional Living

Transitional Living services offer homeless youth more than just housing—they provide comprehensive support to help them build independent living skills and transition into productive adulthood.

CCRB-Funded Program Assessment Report: St. Charles County Youth in 2023 reflects a higher number of youth accessing Transitional Living Services who identify as "Other" gender. This supports research indicating these gender-diverse youth are at higher risk for homelessness or lack of safe living environments, further hindering their path to independence. Transitional living programs provide vulnerable youth with safe living conditions and resources to achieve educational and financial stability. Sustaining these services provides at-risk youth with the tools and support needed for a stable and successful future.

CCRB-FUNDED PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS

This section provides an overview of the County's population characteristics, gender breakdown, racial and ethnic composition, and ZIP codes served. By examining these demographic factors, the community can gain valuable insights into the community's diversity and identify areas where targeted interventions may be necessary to support the well-being of all residents.

Youth Population (18 and under) of St. Charles County and the CCRB Population Served

In 2022, there were 92,296 youth under age 19 in St. Charles County, making up 22.3% of the total population of 413,803. While the youth population increased by 5% from 2004 to 2022, youth as a percentage of total population decreased by 5% during that same time. This shift may be explained by a declining birth rate or a growing adult population.

In 2023, CCRB funded services reached:

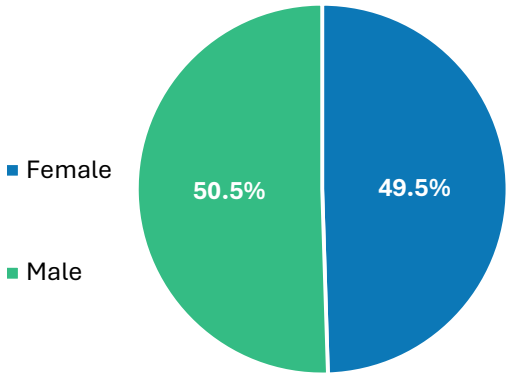
- 89,742 youth through prevention programs (includes some duplication), or 81% of K-12 students. Furthermore, 100 parents/caregivers received educational programming, and 1,895 professionals were also reached.
- 11,552 St. Charles County youth, or 12.5% of the total youth population, through direct service programs (includes some duplication). Additionally, these programs served 2,957 parents/caregivers/guardians, 1,965 families, and 591 professionals.

Gender Distribution in St. Charles County and the Gender Breakdown of CCRB Youth Served

Direct service programs only

Within St. Charles County, the gender distribution among the general population in 2023 was nearly even, with 50.5% who identified as male and 49.5% as female. Across all CCRB-funded direct service programs, the gender breakdown among youth clients closely aligned with the general population distribution. Males and females each constituted 49% of the 11,552 youth clients served (for those who reported gender information), while 2% identified as "other."

St. Charles County Population Gender Breakdown

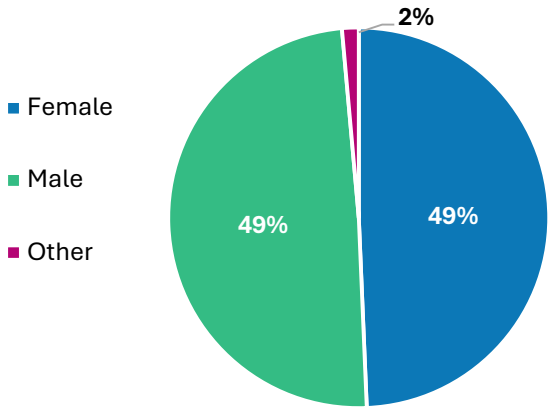


However, an analysis of individual service programs revealed varying degrees of gender representation. Some service categories, such as Home and Community-based Services, Respite Care Services, and Outpatient Psychiatric Services, reflected near gender parity. In contrast, other service categories exhibited imbalances. More females were served in Individual, Group, and Family Counseling/Evaluation, Crisis Intervention, and Temporary Shelter services. Conversely, more males were served in Outpatient Substance Use Treatment, Services to Teen Parent, and Transitional Living services.

Key Findings

The observed gender differences within programs likely resulted from the nature of the services and societal or systemic factors influencing access and participation. Further analysis is recommended.

CCRB-Funded Direct Service Programs Gender Breakdown

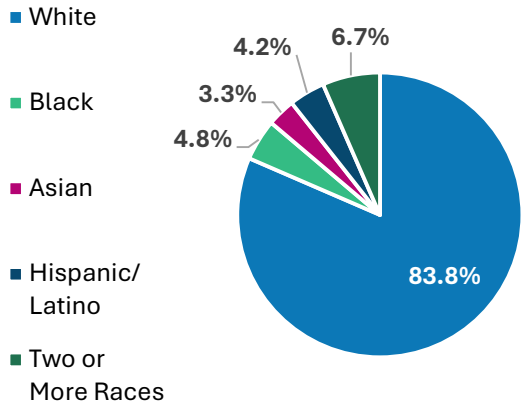


Racial Distribution of the St. Charles County Population and the Racial Breakdown of CCRB Youth Served

Direct service programs only

St. Charles County, located in Missouri, is a vibrant and dynamic community that has experienced sustained growth and increasing diversity for over two decades. The County is predominantly White, comprising 83.8% of the population, while other racial groups such as Black or African American (4.8%), Asian (3.3%), and Hispanic or Latino (4.2%) contribute to the County's cultural diversity. Additionally, 6.7% of the population identifies as being of two or more races. The racial breakdown for youth is not available.

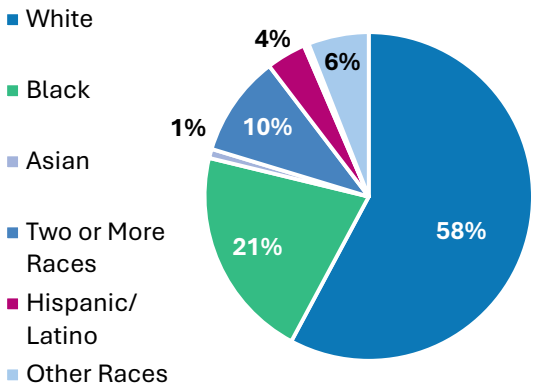
2023 St. Charles County Racial Population Data Distribution



In comparison, the racial breakdown of youth clients served by CCRB-funded direct service programs showed a more diverse representation. While White youth still constituted the majority at 58%, their proportion was notably lower than their share of the general population. Black youth accounted for 21% of the clients served by CCRB-funded programs, substantially more relative to their population share. Youth who were Two or More Races made up 10% of CCRB youth served, which was a larger proportion than the population data. Asian youth served represented only 0.9%, a significantly smaller proportion than the County's Asian population.

Hispanic/Latino youth served, which constituted 3.9% of the total served, was representative of the County's population data. The other racial groups served included Middle Eastern/North African (0.2%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (0.2%), and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.1%). Other Races represented 6% of youth served.

2023 CCRB-funded Direct Service Programs Racial Breakdown



Key Findings

The data revealed differences between the racial composition of the general population and those served by various programs. White youth were consistently underrepresented across most service types, while Black youth were significantly overrepresented in nearly every direct service category. The findings underscore the need for tailored outreach strategies to ensure equitable access to services for all racial and ethnic groups in the community while addressing the specific needs of those with higher utilization rates. The data suggests further investigation to understand and address the underlying factors driving these patterns.

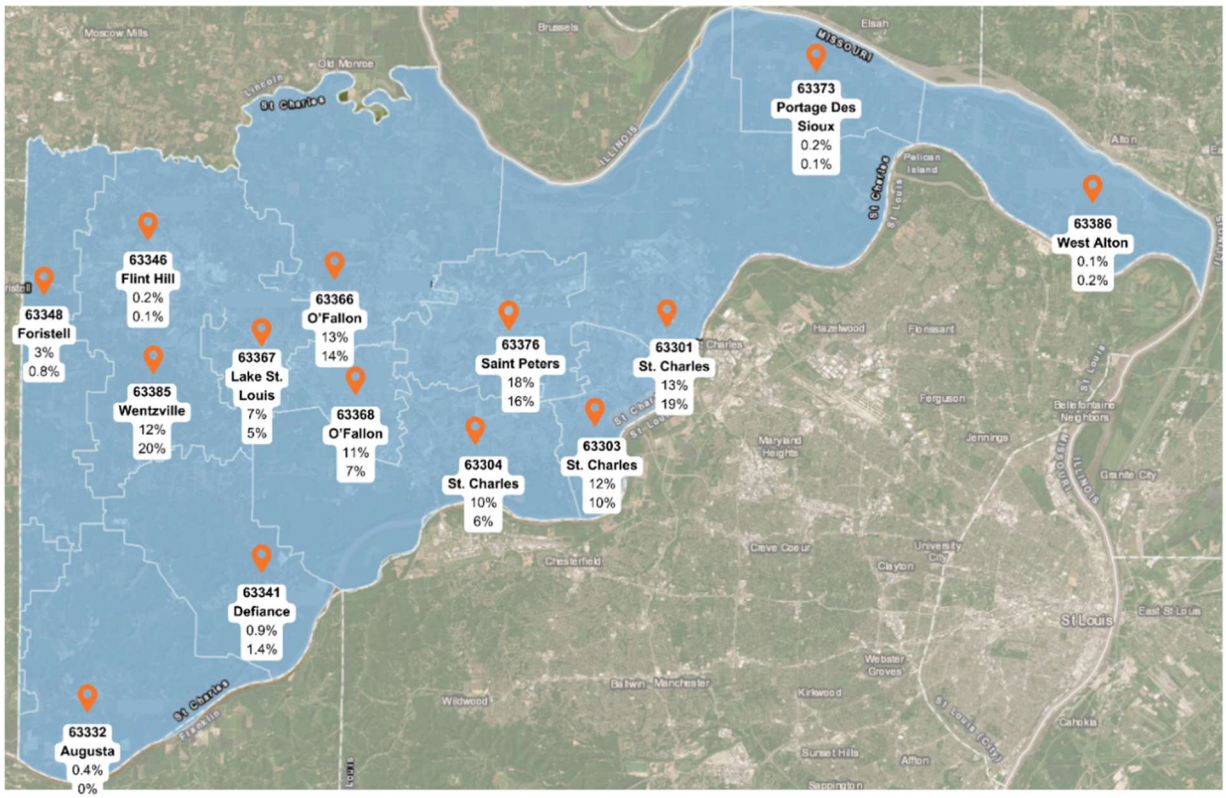
Geographic Distribution of CCRB Youth Served

Direct service programs only

St. Charles County is divided into 15 ZIP codes, each with its own unique population characteristics, encompassing a broad network of densely populated suburban cities and rural communities with pockets of density. CCRB plays a crucial role in supporting the youth across these areas.

The map below illustrates the general population distribution in 2022, and the percentage of youth served through CCRB-funded direct services in each ZIP code in 2023.

ZIP Code Breakdown: Percentage of Individuals in the St. Charles County Population (2022; top percentage) and Youth Served by CCRB-Funded Programs in 2023 (bottom percentage)



Key Findings

Programs serving youth are over- or under-represented in certain ZIP codes. The data revealed strong service utilization in densely populated ZIP codes while less populated ZIP codes showed more limited-service engagement. While this geographic analysis provides valuable insights, it offers only a partial perspective. This could indicate that services are more readily available in certain areas, or it might reflect regions with a higher demand for services. Further analysis is suggested.

CONCLUSION

For over 20 years, the Community and Children's Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB) has significantly supported the County's youth through various mental health-related programs. While there have been **improvements** in youth mental health, economic stability, physical health, and educational outcomes, challenges like **youth self-harm** and **intense** mental health issues are growing.

To further promote the well-being of St. Charles County's youth, CCRB should collect school-level data for direct services and school-based prevention programs to gauge **service effectiveness**, satisfaction, and **unmet** student mental health needs. CCRB should also examine **disparities** in service utilization to ensure equitable access across different groups and areas, and ensure youth have access to therapeutic mental health services.

Continuing to provide high-quality, effective services that promote resilience and healthy development remains crucial. By focusing on these overarching goals, the CCRB can support all youth in **navigating** life's challenges and **thriving** in a supportive community. Embracing these goals will empower the community to foster a brighter future for all youth, helping them reach their potential in a nurturing environment.

CCRB
the community and children's resource board of st. charles county

2440 Executive Drive, #214
St. Charles, MO 63303

636.939.6200

info@scckids.org

www.stcharlescountykids.org

Prepared by Cynthia Berry, Ph.D.,
Principal Researcher & Report Producer
Berry Organizational & Leadership Development (BOLD), LLC

(636) 544-7328

cynberry42@msn.com