



# TOOLE COUNTY Community Health Assessment

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*A summary of current population-level data on the health of our community*

Presented by:  
Loveland Consulting LLC

Prepared For :  
The Toole County Health Department

# Preface

In 2018, the Toole County Health Department (TCHD) received funding from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to develop a comprehensive Community Health Assessment. In November 2018, TCHD and the Healthy Toole County Coalition partnered with DPHHS to conduct a CASPER survey to gather primary data on the health of our county. The Health Department also hired an independent consultant, Katie Loveland of Loveland Consulting LLC, to compile the available secondary population health data for our population. The result is this document which summarizes the most up to date population level health data for our community as of July 2019. For questions or more information on this assessment please contact the TCHD at 406-424-5169 or rkimmet@toolecountymt.gov.

## Introduction

Toole County is a frontier county on Montana's northern border know as the Hi-Line. The county is governed by three elected commissioners, each serving 6-year terms. The county encompasses 1,946 square miles and, according to the 2010 US Census, is home to 5,324 residents, for a population density of 2.8 people per square mile. 2018 US Census population estimates state Toole County's population to be closer to 4,853 residents. The town of Shelby (2010 population 3,376; 2018 population estimate is 3,089) serves as the county seat. Toole County is also home to six other frontier communities: Sunburst, Sweetgrass, Kevin, Galata, Oilmont, and Ethridge.

Healthcare providers within Toole County include Toole County Health Department (TCHD), Marias Healthcare Services Inc (MHSI), Marias Healthcare-Dental Clinic, Marias Medical Center (MMC), Robert A Clary, DO, PC, and Northern Montana Eyecare.

The Toole County Health Department administers a number of public health services including infant, child, and adult immunizations; Vaccines for Children program; Maternal and Child Health program; WIC; Certified Car-Seat inspections; Certified Lactation Consultant and Breastfeeding Peer Counseling services; Tobacco Use Prevention Program; Cancer Control program including assistance with breast, cervical, and colorectal screenings; Chronic Disease Self-Management program; Walk With Ease program, Public Health Emergency Preparedness program; school screenings; communicable disease surveillance and investigation; Fetal Infant Child Mother Mortality Review program; and other health related education as requested by the communities we serve. TCHD is staffed by 3.5 employees.

Marias Healthcare Services Inc offers primary care across the lifespan in Shelby, Sunburst, Valier, and Conrad as well as a dental clinic in Shelby. They offer men's and women's, obstetric, pediatric, geriatric, and family health services; podiatry services; extensive dental care; home visiting nurse program; preventive care and screening services; behavioral health and counseling; substance abuse counseling; infant, child, and adult immunizations; Vaccines for Children program; and an one-site pharmacy. They are a 501c3 nonprofit organization owned by the citizens of Toole County. MHSI offers a sliding fee schedule for qualifying families and accept all patients regardless of ability to pay. They are staffed by multiple doctors, physician's assistants, nurse practitioners, a podiatrist, two dentists and many supporting staff.

Marias Medical Center (MMC) is a 21-bed critical access hospital that is county owned. Their services include:

Acute Care

- 24/7 emergency care
- Telehealth
- birthing room/LDRP
- operating room
- visiting physicians
- swing bed
- outpatient infusion center
- outpatient observation

Radiology

- X-ray
- CT scan
- MRI
- Ultrasound
- Mammography
- DEXA-fitness exams & bone density
- Fluoroscopy
- nuclear medicine

Laboratory

- annual screenings-birthday month reduced rates
- inpatient & outpatient services
- therapeutic phlebotomies
- lab send outs.

Rehabilitation – Occupational & Physical Therapy

- stroke and neurological rehab
- motor vehicle accident recovery
- orthopedic rehab
- back & neck pain
- sports injuries
- swing bed
- outpatient
- sprains/strains
- fractures
- massage therapy
- work comp/work injuries
- wheelchair seating, positioning & splinting
- diastase recovery

Cardio-Pulmonary

- 24/7 acute care coverage & intervention
- obtaining & analyzing blood gas samples
- mechanical ventilation
- cardiac rehab
- c-section coverage
- therapeutic percussion & vibration
- PADNET
- echo stress tests

The Marias Heritage Center is an assisted living/retired, independent living community with 38 apartments that is also part of MMC. Marias Care Center, managed by EmpRes, is part of the hospital building and leased is a 32-bed, long-term care center. MMC is staff by approximately 110 employees.

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- Alliance for Youth
- City of Shelby
- Healthy Toole County Coalition
- Marias Heritage Center
- Marias River Electric
- MSU-Extension Services, Shelby
- Opportunities Incorporated
- Shelby Public Schools
- Sunburst Public Schools
- Toole County Commissioner's Office
- Toole County Board of Health
- Toole County Health Department
- Toole County Health Foundation
- Toole County Sheriff's Department
- Youth Dynamics



# CASPER Survey

## Primary health data from Toole County residents

In November 2018 year, the Toole County Health Department conduct a Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) Survey. CASPER is a household level survey conducted in-person using volunteers over the course of a 72 hour period.

<i>CASPER Survey Respondents</i>	<i>Number</i>
Male	32
Female	76
Aged 20-44	34
Aged 45-64	49
Aged 65+	26
White or Caucasian	102
Other race or ethnicity	4
Lived 0-15 years in Toole County	33
Lived 16+ years in Toole County	76

In all, a total of 113 Toole County residents completed the survey. Survey respondents were more likely to be white, female, and over the age of 40. Most respondents were long time residents of Toole County.

The CASPER survey results included throughout this document are weighted at the household level and represent the projected percentages of all Toole County households.

## Perceptions of Overall Health

When asked to identify the top health issues in Toole County during the CASPER survey, more than half of residents identified the issues in the above table as a “Problem” or a “Big Problem”. Substance use issues comprise three of the top six identified health issues.

<i>Top health issues of concern in Toole County</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Distracted driving	75.7
Obesity	67.3
Tobacco use	65.5
Alcohol	63.6
Illegal drug use	54.3
Availability of affordable childcare	50.3

*How do you rate the general health of Toole County? Percent*

Very Healthy	3.2
Healthy	28.3
Somewhat healthy	50.0
Unhealthy	2.2
Very Unhealthy	0.7
Don't know	15.5

Four out of five households rate the general health of the county as somewhat healthy, healthy or very healthy.

*Overall community environment measures*

*Percent agree or strongly agree*

My community is a good place to raise children	92.5
I feel safe in my home	91.7
I feel safe in my community	88.4
There are places to be physically active in my community	73.1
My community is a good place to grow old	73.0
People of all races, ethnicities, backgrounds and beliefs in my community are treated fairly	70.2
My community provides accessibility to people of all abilities/disabilities	65.5

When asked about the overall community environment, residents are very likely to agree that Toole County is a good place to raise children and report that it is generally safe. They are less likely to agree that the community is accessible to people with disabilities and treats all people fairly, regardless of race, background or belief.

*Social connectivity measures*

*Percent Yes*

Do you know the first names of your neighbors?	90.4
Do you trust your local law enforcement?	90.3
Do you see or talk to people you care about and feel close to three or more times per week?	77.3
Do you volunteer?	67.2
Do you attend religious/church services?	59.3

Toole County households report high levels of social connectivity, with nine in ten residents saying they know their neighbors and trust law enforcement. Over two thirds volunteer and more than half regularly attend religious services.



<i>What is most important for a healthy community?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Access to health care	52.5
Good jobs and healthy economy	41.6
Clean air/water	37.7
Good schools	33.7
Strong family life	33.4
Affordable housing	28.8
Healthy behaviors and lifestyles	26.1
Community involvement	22.1
Religious or spiritual values	21.1
Low crime/safe neighborhood	17.8
Healthy food choices	15.3
Parks and recreation	9.6
Public transportation	8.6
Low levels of domestic violence	8.6
Low death and disease rates	6.8
Strong early childhood education	6.6
Arts and culture events	6.4
Tolerance for diversity	5.9
Access to adult learning opportunities	5.4

When asked to describe what is most important for making Toole County a healthy community, access to healthcare, good jobs, clean water and good schools ranked as the top priorities for residents.

**Toole County residents rank access to healthcare and good jobs as top priorities for creating a healthy community.**



## — Overall Health

In the CASPER survey, almost one in five Toole County residents reported having fair or poor health. Fewer than one in ten residents reported that their health is excellent. Overall, adults in Toole County report that they have an average of 3.5 poor physical health days per month (Robert Wood Johnson County Health Profiles, 2019)

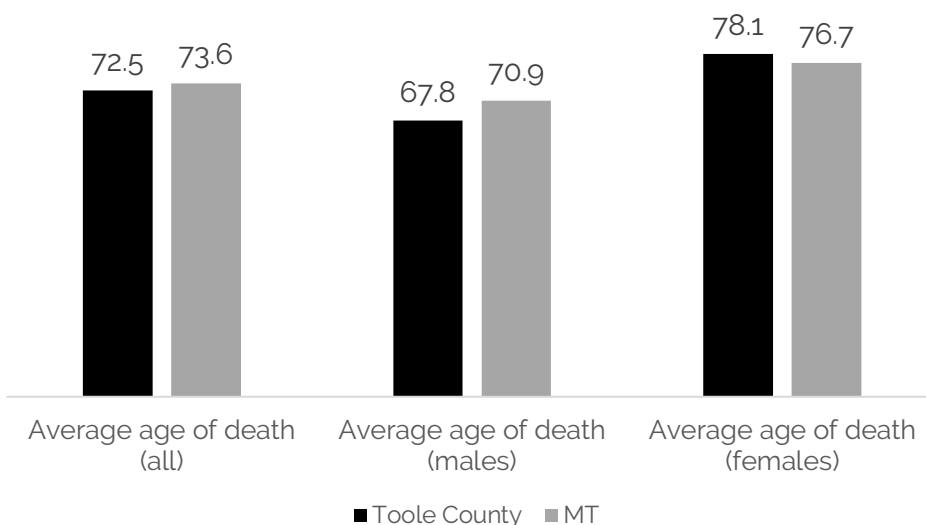
*CASPER: In general, how do you rate your physical health? Percent*

Excellent	6.8
Very good	37.3
Good	36.4
Fair	18.7
Poor	0.8

<i>Age-adjusted death rates per 100,000, 2010-2017</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Circulatory, heart disease	176.4	153.8
Neoplasm, malignant (cancer)	171.0	155.5
Respiratory, chronic lower respiratory disease	60.1	51.4
Circulatory, cerebrovascular diseases	42.2	36.0

In 2017, there were 45 deaths in Toole County. From 2010-2017, the leading causes of death in Toole County were heart disease, cancer, chronic lower respiratory disease and circulatory cerebrovascular disease like stroke. Women live longer than men in Toole County, and the average age of death in our community is similar to that in Montana as a whole.

Average age of death, Toole County and Montana, 2014-2017



Sources: Toole County CASPER Survey, 2018  
Montana Vital Statistics, DPHHS

## — — Demographics

Less than one half of one percent of all of Montana’s residents live in Toole County and the county has seen a 9% decrease in population since 2010. Toole County is slightly older than Montana and the US as a whole, with a median age of almost 42 years old, and has a higher percentage of males and Veterans than all of Montana. Like much of rural Montana, Toole County is largely White with American Indians comprising the largest racial minority. Residents of Toole County have lower levels of education

than Montanans as a whole, with only 15% of county residents having a bachelor’s degree or higher. Toole County residents are also more likely to live in older housing and be renters.

	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Population	4,853	1,062,305	327,167,434
Median Age	41.9	40.0	37.8
Under age 5	4.8%	5.8%	6.1%
Under 18	19.7%	21.9%	22.6%
65 and older	15.8%	18.1%	15.6%
Female	41.7%	49.9%	51.3%
Male	58.3%	50.1%	48.9%
Veterans	12.0%	10.6%	7.3%

<i>Race/Ethnicity (alone or in combination)</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
White alone (not Hispanic or Latino)	93.5%	91.6%	75.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	7.7%	8.1%	1.7%
Hispanic Latino	3.5%	3.7%	18.1%

<i>Education</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Less than a high school graduate	15.6%	7.0%	12.0%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	14.8%	32.3%	32.0%
3 and 4 year olds enrolled in preschool	5.7%	41.1%	48.0%
15 to 17 year olds enrolled in school	82.5%	93.8%	96.8%

<i>Housing</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Owner Occupied Housing	58.0%	69.2%	63.9%
Renter Occupied Housing	42.0%	30.8%	36.1%
Vacant Housing	21.2%	17.1%	12.6%
Housing built in year 2000 or later	4.0%	21.0%	19.2%
No telephone service	3.0%	2.1%	1.5%

Sources: American Community Survey 2013-2017 5 Year Estimates  
Population Estimates from July 1, 2018

<i>Income and Employment</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Median household income	\$46,735	\$53,386	\$57,652
Percent in poverty	16.6%	12.5%	13.4%
Percent under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level	40.1%	32.1%	30.1%
Poverty (under 18)	20.8%	14.7%	18.4%
Households on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	9.5%	9.4%	11.7%
Households with children under 18 receiving SNAP	12.6%	17.5%	19.1%
Unemployment rate (age 16+)	1.0%	3.5%	5.3%

The median income in Toole County is lower than in Montana or the US . Two out of every five residents lives below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Despte having higher rates of poverty, Toole County residents are not accessing higher levels of social safety net services like food stamps. Food insecurity still affects many households. In the CASPER survey, 9% of Toole County households reported that, in the last year, someone in their household cut the size of a meal or skipped a meal because there was not enough money for food. Low income households in Toole County also reported feeling the affects of State of Montana closing the local Office of Public Assistance (OPA) in January 2018. 15% of households say they are now driving further than normal to access in-person services, 9% report extended wait times on the phone as well as delays in approval notifictions for benefits.

<i>Disability</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Disability status	16.0%	13.7%	12.7%
Disability aged 5-17	7.6%	5.4%	5.5%
Disability 65 and over	42.5%	34.2%	34.6%

Toole County residents, especially those aged 65 and older, experience higher rates of disability than their counterparts in Montana and the US as a whole. Since disabilities accelerate in later life, it is important to assess what services would make Toole County a better place for seniors. When asked this question in the CASPER survey, Toole County households were most likely to select expanded medical services and social options, along with transportation support.

<i>CASPER: What would make Toole County a better place to grow old?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Expanded medical services	34.2
More social options	31.6
Transportation assistance	29.3
Expanded senior services	24.5
Ability to exercise	19.8
Home meals	19.8

## — — Nutrition and Physical Activity

More than one quarter of high school students describe themselves as overweight and one quarter of all adults in Toole County are obese. High school students in Toole County are more likely than students in Montana to report not eating fruits or vegetables in the last week. CASPER survey respondents report that the high cost of healthy food is the #1 barrier to healthy eating.

<i>High School Students Nutrition and Weight</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Self-described overweight	27.1%	30.5%	31.5%
Trying to lose weight	32.2%	41.1%	47.1%
Did not eat fruit in the past 7 days	13.7%	9.8%	NA
Did not eat vegetables in the past 7 days	12.7%	4.7%	7.2%
Drank pop every day in last 7 days	12.7%	15.1%	18.7%

<i>CASPER: What makes it hard to eat healthy?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Healthy food costs too much	22.5
There aren't any places in my community to buy healthy foods	16.9
Its hard to find healthy choices when you eat outside of the home	13.1
It takes too much time to prepare/shop for healthy choices	10.5
There aren't any places in my community to eat healthy foods	9.1

<i>Adult obesity and inactivity</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Obese	26.0%	25.0%
Physical inactivity	19.0%	20.0%
Driving alone to work	66.0%	76.0%
Long commute-drive alone	21.0%	16.0%

One in five adults is physically inactive in Toole County along with 15% of high school students. More than a third of high school students spend three or more hours per day playing video games or on computers.

<i>High school students physical activity and screen time</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Met recommended levels of physical activity (60 minutes per day on 5 or more of the last 7 days)	55.6%	53.4%	46.5%
Were not physically active one day in the last week	15.4%	11.1%	15.4%
Watched TV three or more hours per day	18.0%	10.0%	20.7%
3 or more hours of video games or computer time per day	37.4%	34.6%	43.0%

Sources: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2017  
Robert Wood Johnson County Health Profiles - Toole County Casper Survey, 2018

## — — Chronic Disease

<i>Tobacco Use</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Current cigarette use (High School students)	6.7%	12.1%	8.8%
Current smokeless tobacco use (High School students)	3.4%	9.8%	5.5%
Current smoking (adults)	19.0%	19.0%	NA
Lifetime e-vapor product use (High School students)	30.5%	46.6%	42.2%

Youth in Toole County are less likely to report all forms of tobacco use compared to their peers in Montana and the US. Adults in Toole County smoke at rates similar to all Montana adults.

<i>Asthma among High School students</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Lifetime asthma	26.7%	21.6%	22.5%

Lung disease is a concern in Toole County. One in four high school students in Toole County reports having been diagnosed with asthma and the hospitalization and ED rates for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) are also elevated in Toole County relative to Montana as a whole.

<i>Disease, hospitalization and emergency department visit rates for chronic diseases per 100,000 residents</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Cancer incidence rate (overall)-all sites combined	322.0	441.6
Stroke hospitalization rate	228.2	152.0
Acute myocardial infarction hospitalization rate	131.8	118.1
Diabetes hospitalization Rate	1255.3	1058.9
Asthma-related emergency department visit rate	187.1	253.4
COPD hospitalization rate (residents aged 45+)	545.4	278.1
COPD emergency department visit rate (residents aged 45+)	1101.5	669.9

**One in four high school students in Toole County has been diagnosed with asthma.**

Sources: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2017  
Robert Wood Johnson County Health Profiles  
Montana Hospital Discharge Data System, DPHHS, 2012-2014

Marias Healthcare served almost 5,500 patients in 2018. Of these patients, 668 had hypertension and 198 had diabetes. (Uniformed Data System measures, 2018). Clinical quality data indicate some areas where care could be improved to better manage chronic conditions, including increasing access to screening and appropriate follow up for patients.

<i>Adult, Clinical Quality Measures, Marias Healthcare, 2018</i>	<i>Percent</i>
BMI screening and follow up (adults)	82.8%
Poorly controlled diabetes (18-75 years)	18.1%
Diabetes patients receiving a foot exam in the last year (18-75 years)	18.1%
Improved blood pressure among hypertensive patients (age 18-85)	19.2%
Patients screened for high blood pressure and for which follow up plan documented, if indicated (aged 18+)	17.2%
Patients with a diagnosis of hypertension whose blood pressure is adequately controlled (age 18-85)	62.3%
Current medications documented (aged 18+)	74.1%
Women who had a mammogram (age 50-74)	38.4%
Women screened for cervical cancer (age 21-64)	40.8%
Adults appropriately screened for colorectal cancer (50-75)	41.3%
Tobacco screening and cessation intervention	89.8%

## — — Communicable Disease

<i>Sexual risk behaviors-High School students</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Ever had sexual intercourse	39.3%	43.2%	39.5%
Currently sexually active-last three months	29.1%	31.6%	28.7%
Did not use a condom at last intercourse (among currently sexually active students)	43.5%	55.4%	46.2%
Did not use any method to prevent pregnancy during last intercourse	8.3%	8.7%	13.8%

High school students in Toole County report fewer sexual risk behaviors than other teens in Montana and the US, which likely contributes to the lower rate of sexually transmitted infections like chlamydia seen in Toole County compared to Montana. Most pet owning households also report up to date rabies shots. The only concerning trend in Toole County is a lower rate of influenza vaccination among the senior adult population relative to Montana as a whole (Source: Robert Wood Johnson County health profiles, 2019).

<i>Communicable disease among adults</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Newly diagnosed chlamydia infections per 100,00	137.6	427.5
Flu vaccinations among Medicare enrollees	27.0%	40.0%
Patients aged 65+ at Marias Healthcare who have received a pneumococcal vaccine	57.6%	NA

<i>CASPER If you own cats or dogs, have they had a rabies shot in the last 2 years?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	95.6
No	4.1

**Toole County teens engage in fewer sexual risk behaviors than their peers in Montana and the US.**

Sources: YRBS, 2017 - Robert Wood Johnson County Health Profiles  
Clinical Quality Measures, 2018, Marias Healthcare  
Toole County CASPER Survey, 2018

## — — Substance Use

<i>Alcohol use-High School students</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Lifetime alcohol use	51.3%	68.0%	60.4%
Current alcohol use	18.0%	33.1%	29.8%
Binge drinking in the last month	13.6%	17.6%	13.5%

High school students in Toole county are less likely to report alcohol use than students in Montana or the US as a whole. However, rates of adult alcohol misuse are similar and 3 out of ever five driving deaths in the county involves alcohol.

<i>Alcohol use-Adults and criminal offenses</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Excessive drinking in the last month	23%	21%
Percent of driving deaths that are alcohol impaired	60%	45%
Liquor law violations per 1,000	3.4	2.5
DUI arrests per 1,000	5.1	5.9

Teens in Toole County also report less substance use than teens in Montana or the US as a whole, except for inhalants and misuse of prescription drugs. Despite lower rates of use, almost one in five teens does report using marijuana sometime in their life. Based on these low rates of youth use, it is not surprising that the rates of drug use hospitalization for Toole County are lower than those seen in Montana as a whole.

<i>Substance use- high school students</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Lifetime marijuana use	18.6%	35.2%	35.6%
Current marijuana use	5.1%	19.8%	19.8%
Synthetic marijuana use	4.2%	7.3%	6.9%
Lifetime cocaine use	2.5%	4.4%	4.8%
Lifetime inhalant use	10.2%	6.4%	6.2%
Lifetime heroin use	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
Lifetime methamphetamine use	2.5%	2.2%	2.5%
Lifetime ecstasy use	4.2%	4.5%	4.0%
Ever took steroids without a doctor's prescription	3.4%	2.1%	2.9%
Lifetime misuse of prescription drugs	13.6%	13.7%	14.0%

<i>Substance use- adults</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Opioid prescription rate	49.6	61.1
Drug use hospitalizations per 100,000	224.3	372.5
Drug-related arrests per 1,000	4.8	4.0

Sources: YRBS, 2017 - Robert Wood Johnson County Health Profiles  
 Montana Board of Crime Control, 2018, Montana Hospital Discharge Data System, DPHHS, 2012-2014, CDC Opioid Prescribing Rate Estimates, 2017



Research has found a number of factors that either protect against future drug use or put youth at risk for use. The inset tables describe the rates of reported key risk and protective factors among Toole County and Montana teens in grades 8th, 10th and 12th.

<i>Protective factors against substance use among 8th, 10th and 12th graders</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Youth that say their family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use	86%	86%
Say they have talked to their parents about the dangers of alcohol use during the previous 12 months	37%	36%
Say they have talked with their parents about the dangers of drug use during the previous 12 months	57%	42%
Think there moderate to great risk of people harming themselves if they drink alcohol almost every day.	77%	66%
Think there is moderate to great risk of people harming themselves if they use prescription drugs not prescribed to them	100%	92%

<i>Risk factors for substance use among 8th, 10th and 12th graders</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Say that they wanted to get alcohol, it would be sort of/very easy to get	57%	61%
Say they have been drunk or high at school at least once in the past year	3%	12%
Say that, of their four best friends, at least one has used marijuana in the last year	43%	46%
Say that, of their four best friends, at least one has used LSD, cocaine, amphetamines or illegal drugs in the last year	10%	14%
Say they know an adult over the age of 21 who has used marijuana, crack cocaine or other drugs in the last year	43%	42%
Think there is a pretty good or very good chance they would be seen as cool if they began drinking alcohol regularly	3%	18%

<i>CASPER: Where would you refer a person for treatment of alcohol/drug addiction?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Don't know	25.2
Marias Health Care	24.0
Alcohol Anonymous	23.4
Primary care provider	21.1
Faith-based leader	8.6
Private therapist or social worker	8.5
Emergency room	4.3

As with many rural communities, access to treatment for substance use disorders is limited in Toole County. One out of four households would not know where to refer a person for substance abuse treatment services.

Sources: *Prevention Needs Assessment, DPHHS 2018*  
*Toole County CASPER Survey, 2018*

# — — Mental Health

<i>Depressive symptoms among 8th, 10th and 12th graders</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Sometimes I think that life is not worth it.	29.0%	34.0%
At times I think I am no good at all.	38.0%	46.0%
All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure	24.0%	27.0%
In the past year, I have felt depressed or sad MOST days, even if I feel okay sometimes.	40.0%	40.0%

<i>Mental health among High School students</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Symptoms of depression in the last year	26.3%	31.0%	31.5%
Seriously considered suicide in the last year	16.8%	20.8%	22.1%
Suicide attempts in the last year	11.8%	9.5%	9.3%

Many teens in Toole County report symptoms consistent with depression and more than one in ten report attempting suicide in the last year. Emergency department visit rates for intentional self-harm are slightly elevated in Toole County compared to Montana as a whole. Adults in our community report an average of 3.3 poor mental health days per month and one in ten are in frequent mental distress.

<i>Adult mental health and hospitalizations</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Poor mental health days in the last month	3.3	3.5
Frequent mental distress	11.0%	11.0%
Ratio of population to mental health providers	700:1	360:1
Mental disorders hospitalizations per 100,00	203.4	241.3
Intentional self-harm ED visits per 100,000	175.9	126.9

<i>Toole County households are more aware of the referral sources for mental health care than for substance use treatment, with 97% at least having some idea of where they would refer a person for mental health services.</i>	<i>CASPER: Where would you refer a person for mental health services</i>	<i>Percent</i>
	Marias Health Care	42.5
Private therapist or social worker	25.0	
Faith-based leader	18.5	
Primary care provider	16.0	
Don't know	3.3	
Youth dynamics	3.1	
Emergency room	1.4	

*Sources: YRBS, 2017 - Prevention Needs Assessment, 2018  
Robert Wood Johnson County Health Profiles  
Montana Hospital Discharge Data System, DPHHS, 2014-2016  
Toole County CASPER Survey, 2018*

## — — Injury and violence

<i>Violence-High School students</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Carried a weapon in the past 30 days	34.5%	25.2%	15.7%
In a physical fight in the past year	21.6%	20.1%	23.6%
Ever physically forced to have sexual intercourse	11.1%	9.3%	9.7%
Ever experienced dating violence	5.2%	7.2%	8.0%
Ever experienced sexual dating violence	6.8%	6.5%	6.9%
Bullied on school property in the last year	25.9%	21.6%	19.0%
Electronically bullied in the last year	17.8%	17.6%	14.9%

One in four Toole County high school students reports bullying on school property in the last year and more than one in three reports carrying a weapon in the last thirty days. One out of every ten high school students reports being sexually assaulted. More than a quarter of the firearms stored in households in Toole County are not locked or secured.

*CASPER: If you have firearms in your home, are they locked or secured?*

	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	72.9
No	27.1

Toole County has slightly elevated rates of most injury-related emergency department and hospitalization categories, except for traumatic brain injuries and overall injury hospital admissions.

<i>Hospitalization and emergency department visit rates for injuries per 100,000 residents</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
ED visit rate for all injury	8077.5	7157.2
All injury hospital admission rate	428.8	474.6
Unintentional injury hospital admission rate	317.0	296.4
Unintentional injury emergency department visit rate	6831.7	5184.8
Unintentional fall injury emergency department visit rate,	2451.8	1834.2
Unintentional fall injury hospital admission rate	200.1	164.3
Assault injury emergency department visit rate	384.4	312.8
Traumatic brain injury emergency department visit rate	462.1	678.0

Sources: YRBS, 2017 - Toole County CASPER Survey, 2018  
Montana Hospital Discharge Data System, DPHHS, 2016-2017

<i>At-risk driving behavior-High School Students</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Never or rarely wears a seat belt when driving in a car driven by someone else	13.6%	7.8%	5.9%
In a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol in last month	17.7%	19.8%	16.5%
Drove while drinking alcohol during the past 30 days	1.7%	7.6%	5.5%
Text or email while driving in last month	54.6%	54.2%	39.2%
Talked on a cell phone while driving in last month	45.8%	56.6%	NA

High school students in Toole County are almost twice as likely to report never wearing a seatbelt when driving compared to other teens in Montana. Only two out of three adults report always wearing their seatbelts, though most adults do report that, if children ride with them, they always or nearly always buckle up. More than half of all high school students report texting or emailing while driving the last 30 days and almost half report talking on a cell phone while driving in the last 30 days.

<i>CASPER: How often do you use seatbelts when you drive or ride in a car?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Always	67.9
Nearly always	23.9
Sometimes	6.8
Seldom	1.5
Never	0.0

<i>CASPER: When your child rides in a car/vehicle with you, how often does he/she ride in a car seat or use a seat belt?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Always	63.7
Nearly always	8.1
Sometimes	0.0
Seldom	0.0
Never	0.0
Do not have a child	28.2

**More than half of all high school students text or email while driving.**

Sources: YRBS, 2017  
Toole County CASPER Survey, 2018

## — — Maternal child health

<i>Maternal child health indicators</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	
Number of births (2017)	60	11800	There are about 60 births annually in Toole County. Of these births, about about one in 11 are preterm and/or low birth weight. Almost two out of every 5 pregnant women in Toole County do not receive healthcare during their first trimester of pregnancy.
Birth rate per 1000 (2017)	12.3	11.2	
Teen birth rate, per 1000 adolescent females aged 15-19, 2014-2017	25.9	24.3	
Preterm birth (born less than 37 weeks) (2014-2017)	8.5%	9.0%	
Low and very low birth weight (less than 2500 grams)-2014-2017	8.9%	7.6%	
Percentage of births with mother receiving care during the first trimester, 2017	63.3%	73.4%	
Percentage of births with month initiating care during the third trimester, 2010-2017	7.0%	5.5%	

### Clinical measures

<i>from Marias</i>	<i>Pediatric Clinical Quality Measures from Marias Healthcare, 2018</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Healthcare for the more than 1,400 pediatric patients served annually indicate that most children are receiving	Two year olds, fully immunized	10.3%
Body Mass	BMI assessment (children aged 3-17)	91.2%
	Pediatric patients receiving counseling for nutrition	39.0%
	Pediatric patients receiving counseling for physical activity	32.8%
	Proper use of antibiotics for upper respiratory infection (children 3 months to 18 years of age)	95.0%
	Fluoride varnish (age 0-20)	33.4%

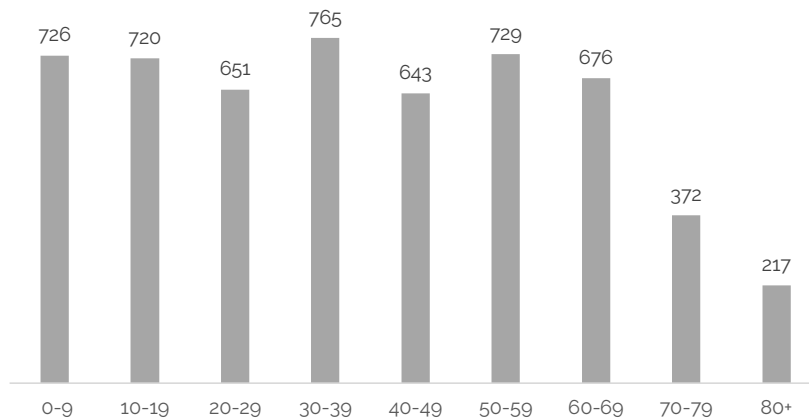
### Index screening

<i>and are being prescribe antibiotics appropriately. There is room for improvement with childhood immunizations and preventative dental care.</i>	<i>CASPER: What would make Toole County a better place to raise children?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
When asked what could make Toole County a better place for children, CASPER respondents indicated the need for more child friendly activities as well as better access to childcare.	More clubs/activities for children	43.0
	More summer activities	31.0
	More clubs/activities for teens	30.9
	More childcare	29.7
	After school care	29.6
	Improved summer activities	28.2
	Early childhood services	12.5
	Before school care	9.6
	Disability inclusive activities	6.5

Sources: Montana Vital Statistics, DPHHS  
Clinical Quality Measures, Marias Healthcare, 2018  
Toole County CASPER Survey 2018

# — — Access to care

Number of patients, by age, Marias Healthcare, 2018



Marias Healthcare is the main healthcare provider in Toole County. In 2018, Marias Healthcare served 5499 patients. One quarter of these patient were aged 19 and under and another quarter were over 60. Four out of five households report access to a primary care providre and 87% report having a routine check-up in the last year.

<i>CASPER: I have access to a primary care provider in Toole County</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Strongly agree	39.5
Agree	42.0
Neutral	10.6
Disagree	4.0
Strongly disagree	0.7
Don't know	3.3

<i>CASPER: How long has it been since you visited a primary care provider for a routine check-up?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Within the past year	86.9
Within the past 2 years	6.4
Within the past 5 years	4.2
Don't know	2.6

<i>CASPER: If in the last year you delayed seeking health care services, what were the reasons?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Did not delay care	46.3
It costs too much	11.8
Could not get off work	11.6
My insurance did not cover	9.8
Too long to wait for an appointment	9.2
Do not like doctors	7.0
Could not get an appointment	5.7
Not treated with respect	5.7
Too nervous/afraid	5.1

<i>CASPER: Are you aware of programs that pay for health care expenses?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes, and I use them	18.9
Yes, but I do not qualify	46.0
No	35.2

More than half of Toole County households report delaying healthcare in the last year, primarily because of the cost of the service, lack of insurance coverage or the inability to get off of work. Only one in five Toole County residents reports being aware of and utilizing programs that help cover the cost of health expenses.

Sources: Marias Healthcare, 2018

Toole County has a higher rate of uninsured individuals than Montana or the US as a whole. Toole County residents are more likely to have direct purchase insurance or insurance through the military than all Montanans. Despite higher rates of poverty, Toole County residents access Medicaid at slightly lower rates than the state as a whole.

<i>Insurance Status</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>US</i>
Uninsured (all)	12.7%	8.5%	8.7%
Uninsured (under 19)	8.1%	5.8%	5.0%
Medicaid	19.0%	20.4%	20.6%
Medicare	18.7%	19.6%	17.3%
Veteran's Administration	6.3%	4.2%	2.3%
Tricare/Military Health	3.6%	3.4%	2.7%
Direct purchase	23.4%	18.7%	13.5%
Employment based	46.6%	48.5%	55.0%

<i>Dental Care access</i>	<i>Toole County</i>	<i>MT</i>
Population to dentist ratio	1220:1	1390:1
Did not see a dentist during the past 12 months-High school students	32.5%	21.5%

*CASPER: If you haven't visited the dentist in the last year, what were the main reasons why?*

	<i>Percent</i>
Could not get off work	10.0
No teeth/no dental problems	7.8
It costs too much	7.3
Low priority	7.3
Availability of services	6.3
Could not get an appointment	5.7
Do not like dentists	3.0
My insurance did not cover	2.9

High school students in Toole County are less likely to report seeing a dentist in the last year than other students in Montana. Toole County households rank the ability to get off work and the costs of care as the most common barriers to seeking dental care.

## More than half of households in Toole County delayed seeking healthcare in the last year.

Sources: American Community Survey 2013-2017 5 Year Estimates  
Toole County CASPER Survey, 2018

Respondents to the CASPER survey reported that they like to hear about health-related services through social media and mailings or newsletters and indicated that the availability of specialists and healthcare access outside of business hours would most improve access in their community.

<i>CASPER: How would you like to learn about health-related services available in Toole County?</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>CASPER: What would improve our community's access to healthcare?</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Social media	33.8	Availability of specialists	26.6
Mailings/Newsletters	31.0	Weekend/evening hours	25.2
Radio	28.1	Availability of a walk-in clinic	20.3
Newspaper	21.2	More primary care providers	19.1
Public health department	19.2	Nothing	18.9
Website/internet	16.8	Transportation assistance	9.0
Healthcare provider	16.6	Health education resources	4.2
Presentations	2.1	Telemedicine	4.1
TV	2.0	Cultural sensitivity	0.7

## — — Conclusion

Toole County faces a number of health challenges. Based on CASPER survey and the secondary data sources analyzed for this report, the following health issues should be prioritized for action in our community:

- Access to quality healthcare including dental care for youth and services for disabled, chronically ill and elderly adults
- Maximizing access to social safety net services like food stamps and Medicaid for low income and disabled residents
- Safe driving including seatbelt use, reducing distracted driving and driving sober
- Prenatal care access during the first trimester
- Bullying and youth mental health, including suicide prevention

Addressing these health issues in a frontier county presents many challenges but also opportunities to partner in new ways to make a difference in the health of our community. We look forward to utilizing this data to foster innovative partnerships to improve the health of our community.



**2019**

**Toole County  
COMMUNITY  
HEALTH  
ASSESSMENT**

Presented by



**LOVELAND  
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