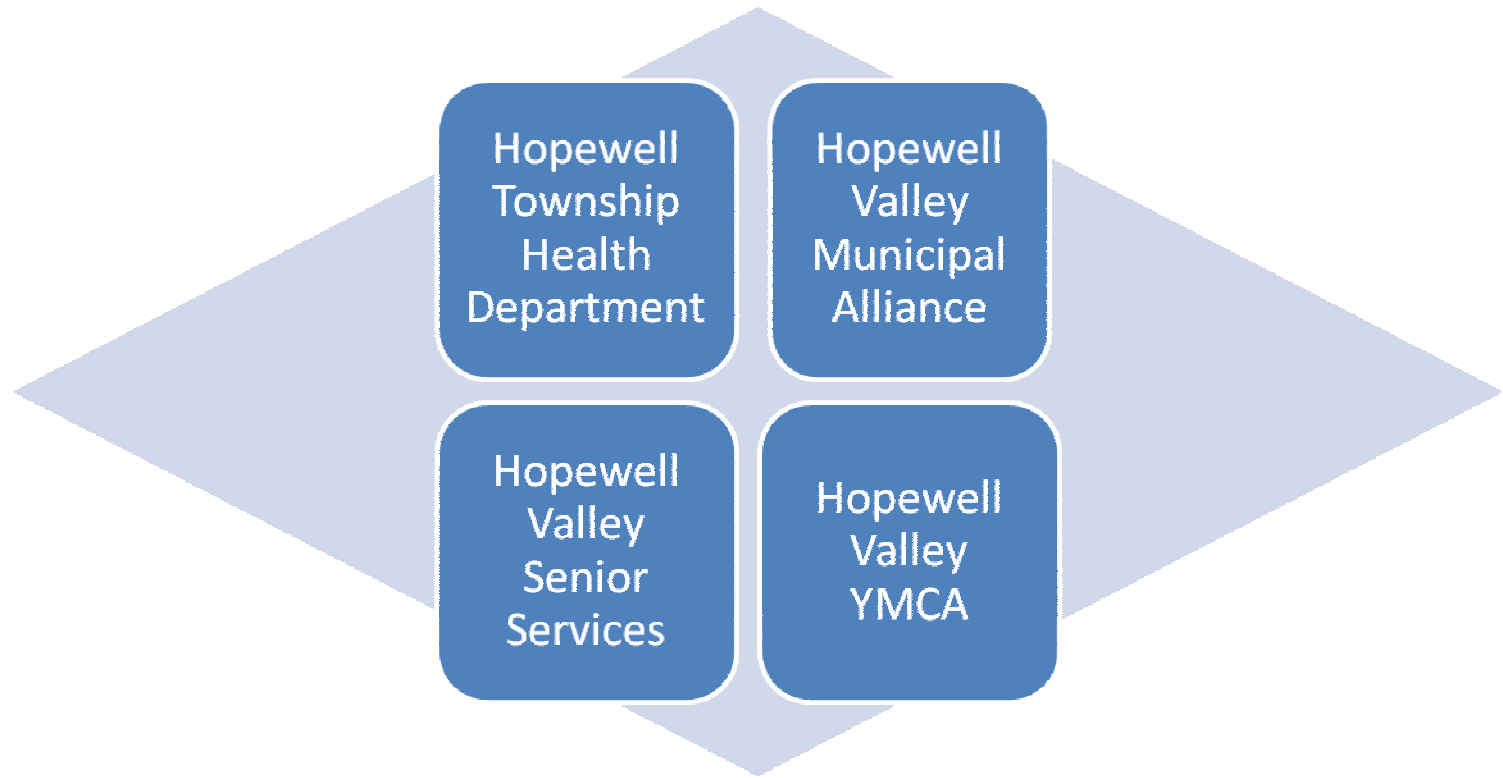


# Hopewell Valley Community Needs Assessment



*Professional Research Assistance Provided by Zeldis Research*

# Purpose

The purpose of this Community Needs Assessment is to understand community assets and identify interests and needs of residents (teens to seniors) in Hopewell Valley

Once a better understanding of what really matters to Hopewell residents is gained, then programs, grants, and policy can be formulated/knowledgeably

# Overview of Today's Presentation

Focus Groups

Five Central Focus Group Themes

Community Survey

Survey Results

Next Steps

# Focus Groups

Spring 2008

Community members were asked to participate in 2-hour focus group discussions facilitated by Ken Zeldis of Zeldis Research Associates.

Groups were organized by age:

- Teens (15-17)
- Adults (30-54)
- Older Adults (55-64)
- Seniors (65-85)

# Five Central Themes Emerged

1. Community

2. Transportation

3. Central Meeting Place

4. Need for Social Services

5. Communication

# 1. Community



## Positives:

- Friendly
- Safe
- Caring
- Library

## Negatives:

- Expensive place to live; high taxes
- Not walkable
- No central meeting place

## IN RESIDENTS' OWN WORDS...

*"Hopewell Valley has character and a heart."  
(Age 30-54)*

*"It is peaceful with proximity."  
(Age 30-54)*

*"Can I afford to retire here?"  
(Age 55-64)*

## 2. Transportation Challenge

- Few sidewalks/bike lanes
- Not walkable
- No public transportation



### IN RESIDENTS' OWN WORDS...

*"Hopewell Valley needs more sidewalks and bike lanes."  
(Age 15-17)*

*"Brandon Farms has paths.  
Could we do more of that?"  
(Age 55-64)*

# 3. Central Meeting Place



- Nothing currently exists
- Cost should be reasonable
- Provide “the arts”
- Should be able to walk to it
- Should have a pool

## IN RESIDENTS’ OWN WORDS...

*“I want a place where I can hang out and not get yelled at.”*

(Age 15-17)

*“I can’t believe there is no community pool!”*

(Age 30-54)

*“The biggest need is a centrally located Y or community center.”*

(Age 55-64)

## 4. Need for Social Services

- Need for caregivers
- Special needs services for disabled
- 211 directory or community concierge



### IN RESIDENTS' OWN WORDS...

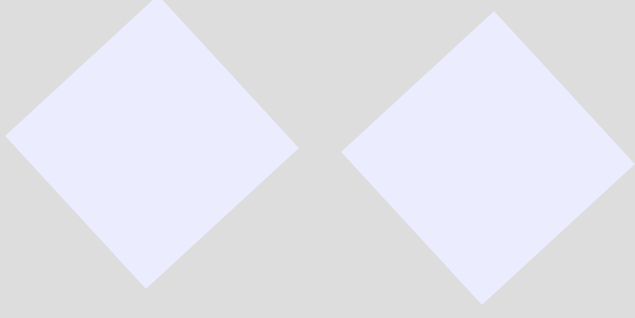
*"Hamilton Y and Princeton Y both have programs for kids with special needs."  
(Age 30-54)*

*"I looked at caregivers a few years ago and there was not much."  
(Age 55-64)*

## 5. Communications



- Not aware of programs offered by the community
- Need for centralized communications/postings



# Community Survey

Fall 2008

Survey questions were developed based on themes from focus groups.



Surveys were sent by mail to 2000 random households in Hopewell Borough, Hopewell Township, and Pennington Borough.

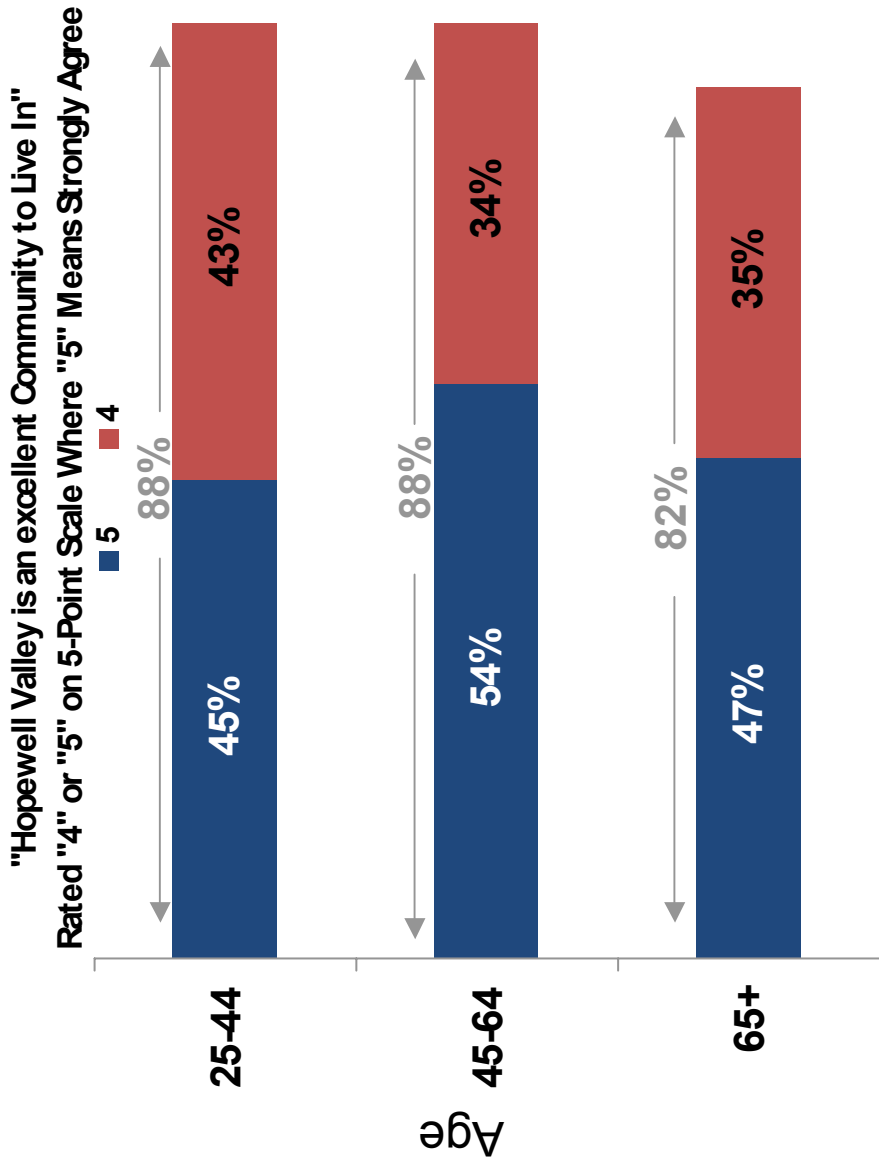


338 Surveys were completed. Results were tabulated by Zeldis Research Associates.

# Survey Results

## Perceptions About Our Community

# The large majority of residents surveyed agree that Hopewell Valley is an excellent community to live in.



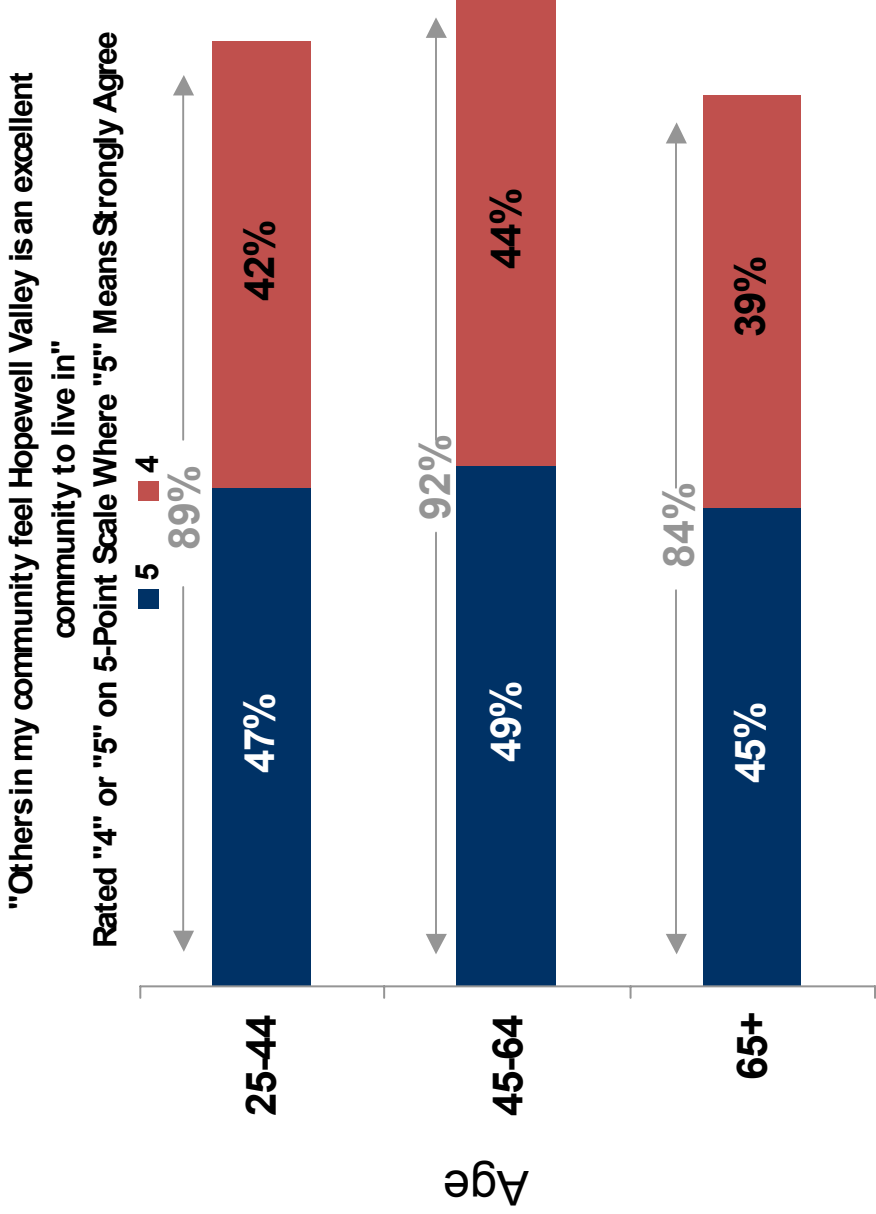
## IN RESIDENTS' OWN WORDS...

*"My son is in a wheelchair. This community is very accepting. The people are caring."*  
 (Age 30-54)

*"In Hopewell Valley, people take care of each other."*  
 (Age 55-64)

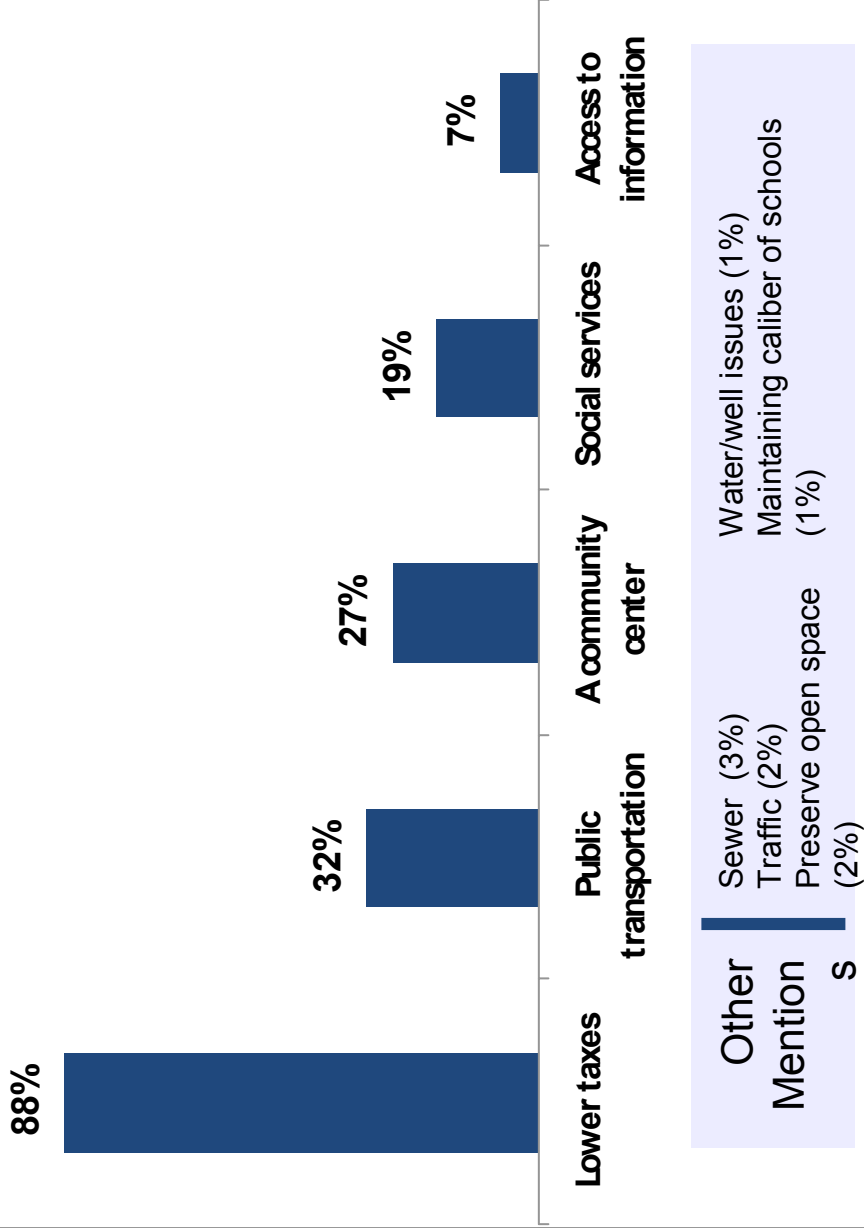
*"Pennington is a wonderful place to raise kids."*  
 (Age 65+)

**Residents also agree that others in the community feel Hopewell Valley is an excellent community to live in.**



# Lowering taxes is considered Hopewell Valley's most pressing need.

Hopewell Valley's Most Pressing Needs



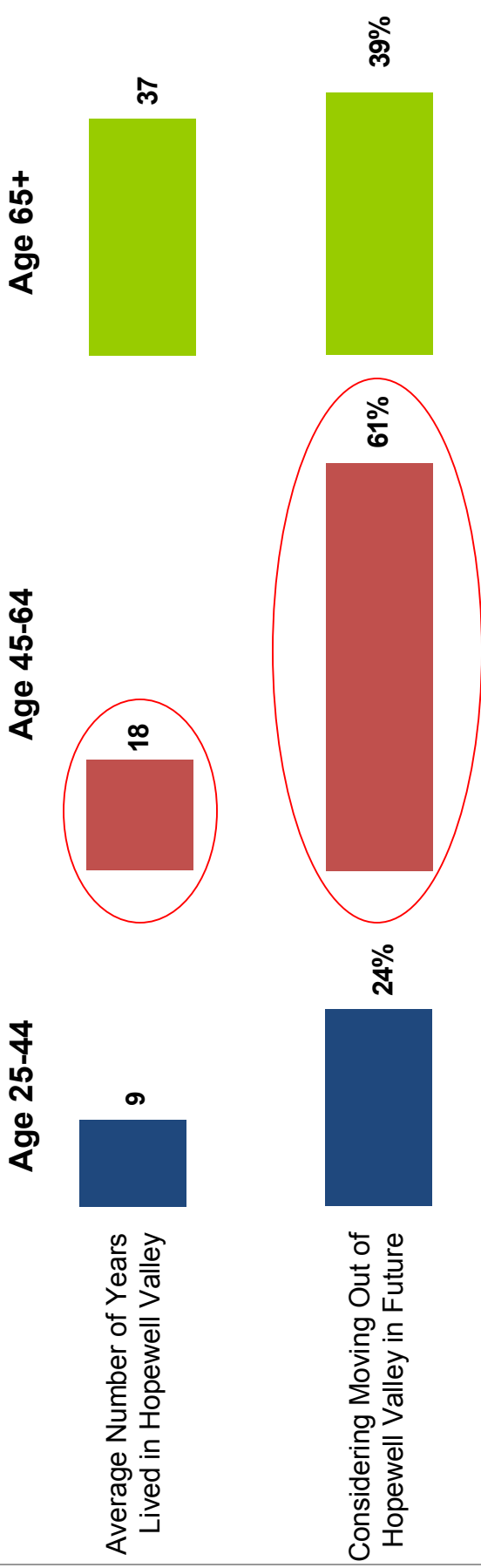
## IN RESIDENTS' OWN WORDS...

"Hopewell Valley is expensive...the taxes!"  
(Age 55-64)

"One thing that is lacking is public transportation."  
(Age 65+)

"There is nothing for the teens to do."  
(Age 30-54)

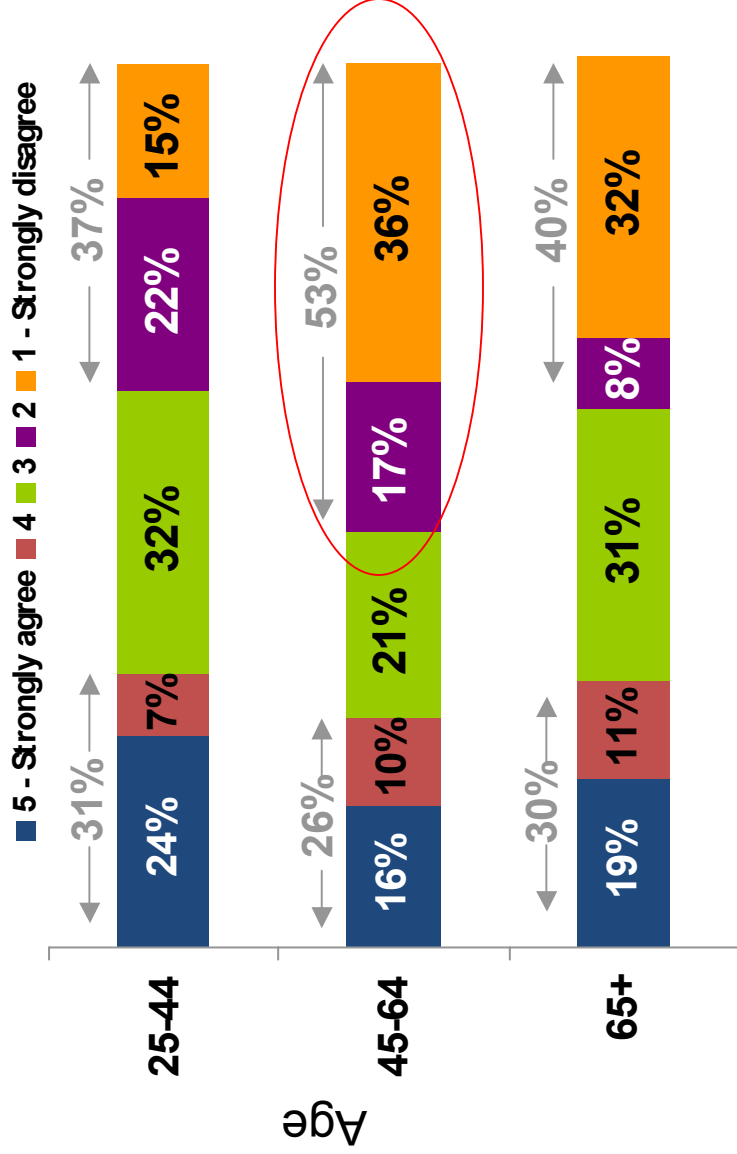
# Residents age 45 to 64 are the most likely to say they are considering a move out of Hopewell Valley in the future.



The majority of those who are considering a move say it is because of taxes (69%).

**Fewer than one in three residents surveyed agree that the public transportation available in Hopewell Valley is adequate for the members of their household.**

**"The public transportation available in Hopewell Valley is adequate for the members of my household"**



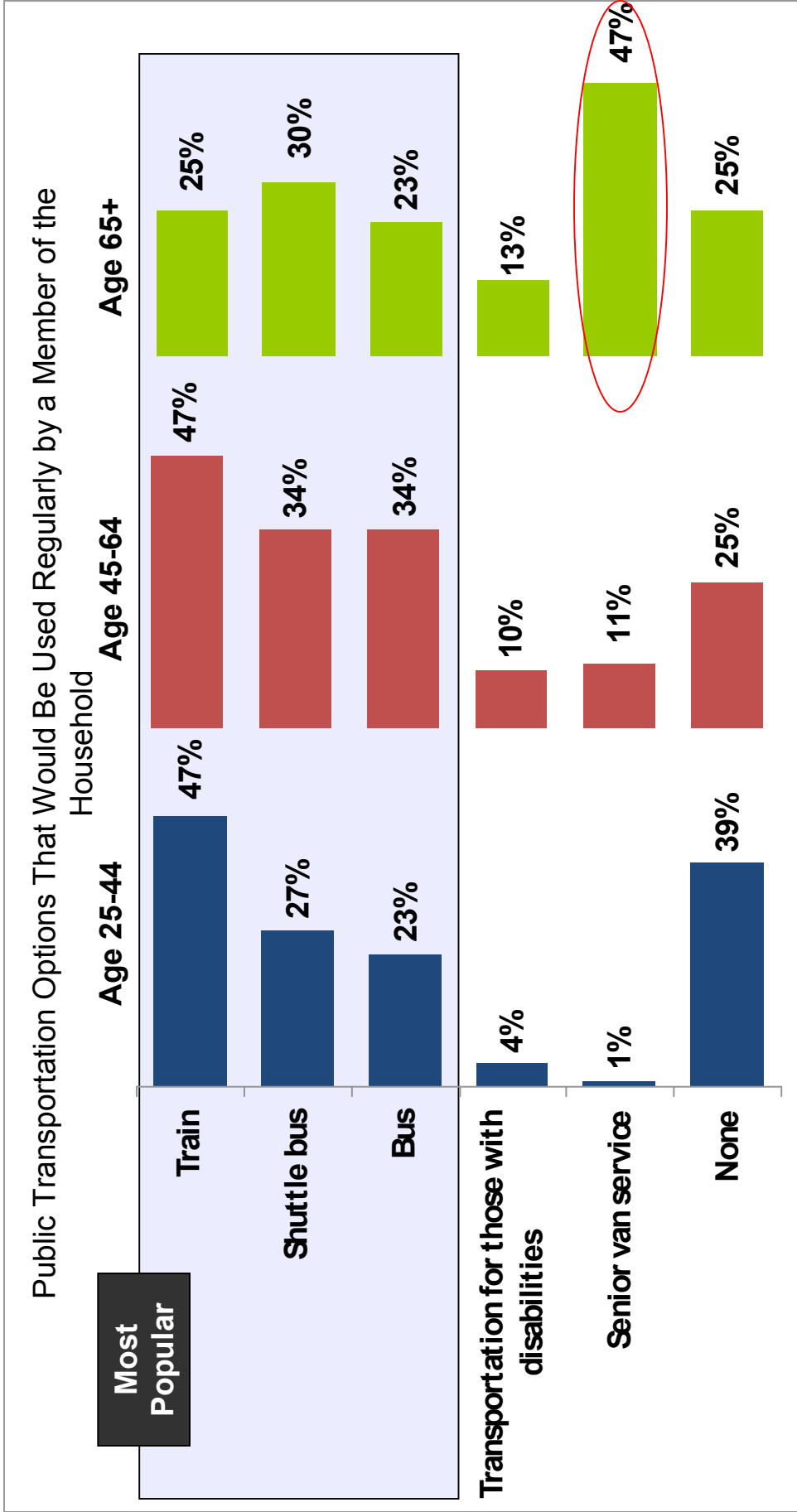
**IN RESIDENTS' OWN WORDS...**

*"There is no public transportation. And everyone in my family is busy. I need my older brother."*  
 (Age 15-17)

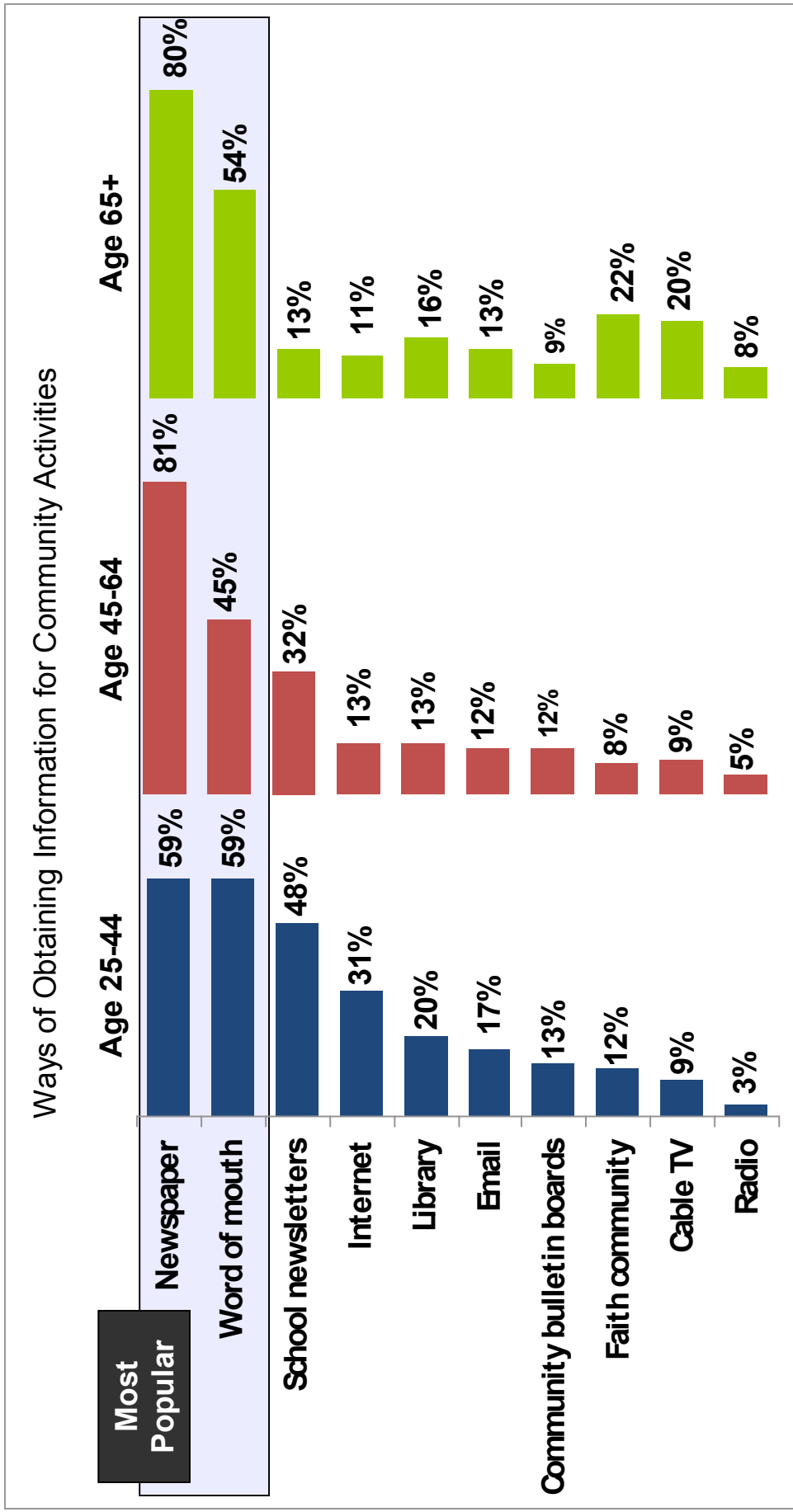
*"We need bus service. Europe always had more public transportation."*  
 (Age 55-64)

*"One thing is lacking... public transportation."*  
 (Age 65+)

The public transportation options residents are most likely to use on a regular basis are a train, shuttle bus, or bus. Nearly half of seniors say they would use a senior van service



**Newspapers and word of mouth are the most common ways of obtaining information about community activities.**



# Survey Results

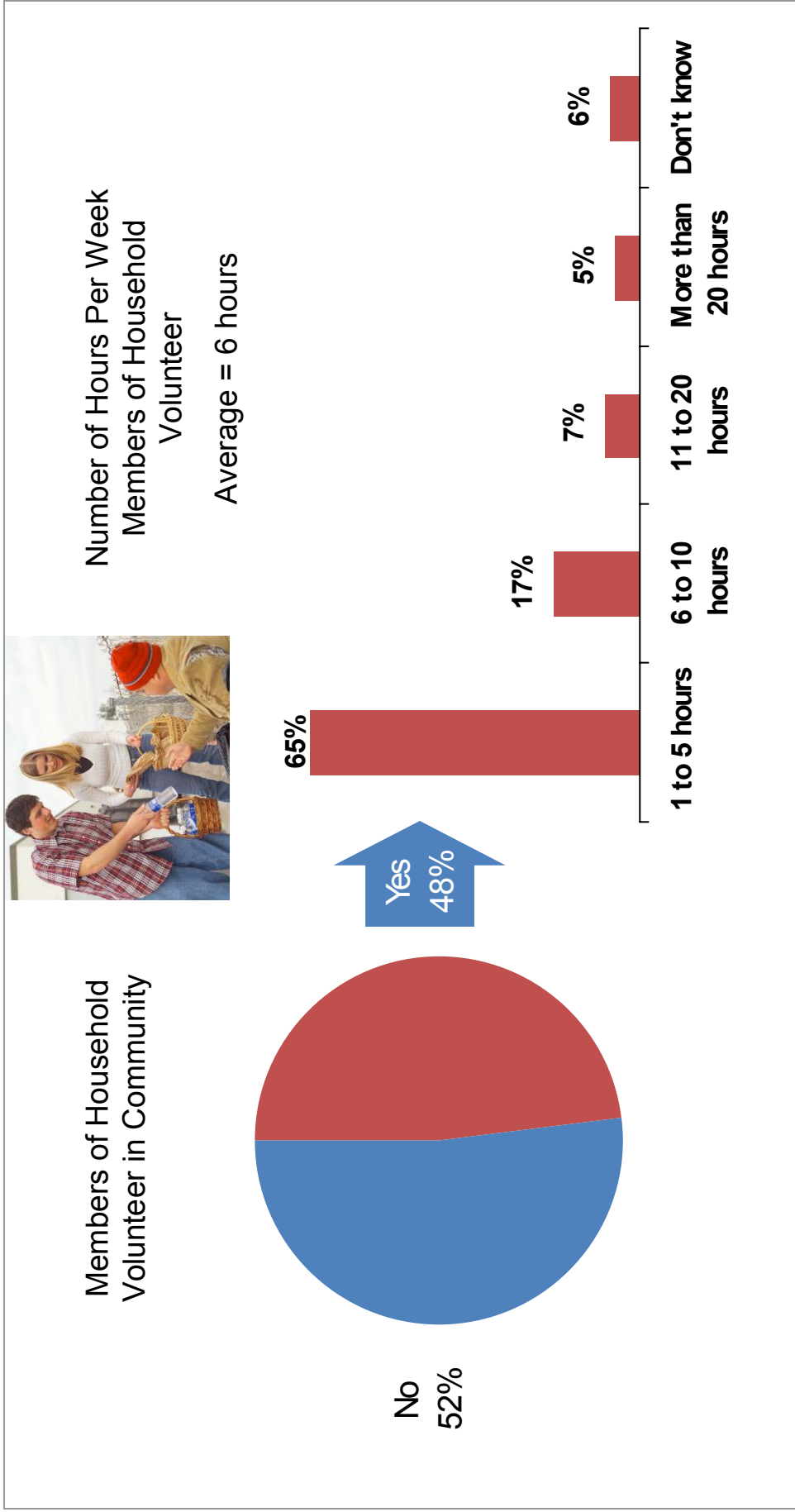
## Community Involvement

# Social Connectedness

61% of residents surveyed attend or belong to a social organization or networking group, such as a faith-based group, Rotary Club, fitness center, book club, sports team, or card club.

67% of residents surveyed frequently schedule family time together, such as a meal, games, reading, or trips.

**Nearly half of residents surveyed report that members of their household volunteer in the community. These residents volunteer an average of six hours a week.**



# Volunteer Opportunities

75% of residents surveyed believe there are enough opportunities for people to volunteer in the Hopewell Valley community.

One in three residents surveyed would consider volunteering for beautification projects, working with seniors, children, and animals.

# Survey Results

## Our Children

# Children in Household

41% of residents surveyed have children under the age of 18 living in their household

85% of parents surveyed say their children participate in extra-curricular activities

The average age parents would allow their children to stay at home alone for a

# Teenagers

20% of residents surveyed have teens in their household.

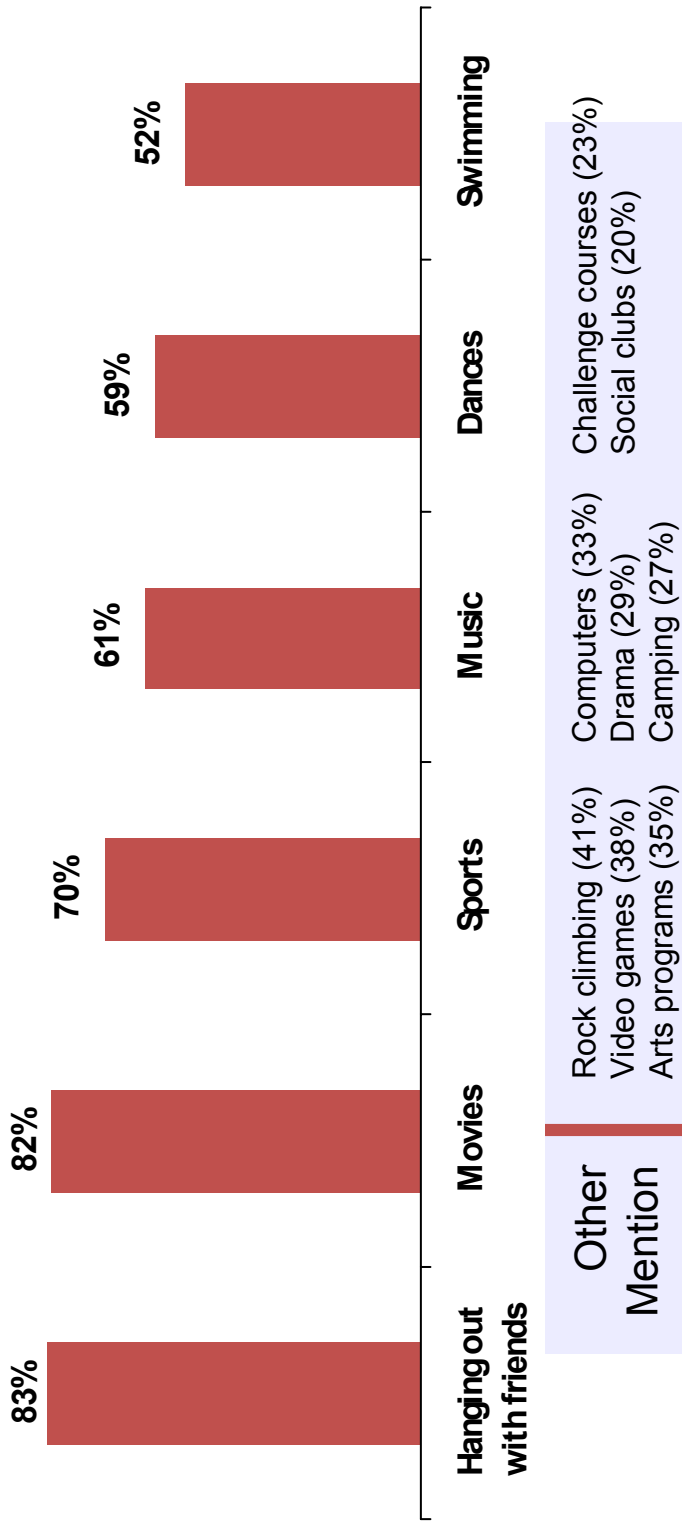
93% of parents surveyed say their teens participate in school functions, such as dances, clubs, or sports.

33% of parents surveyed say their teens have a part-time job.

Parents report that the activities their teens most like to participate in is hanging out with friends and going to the movies.

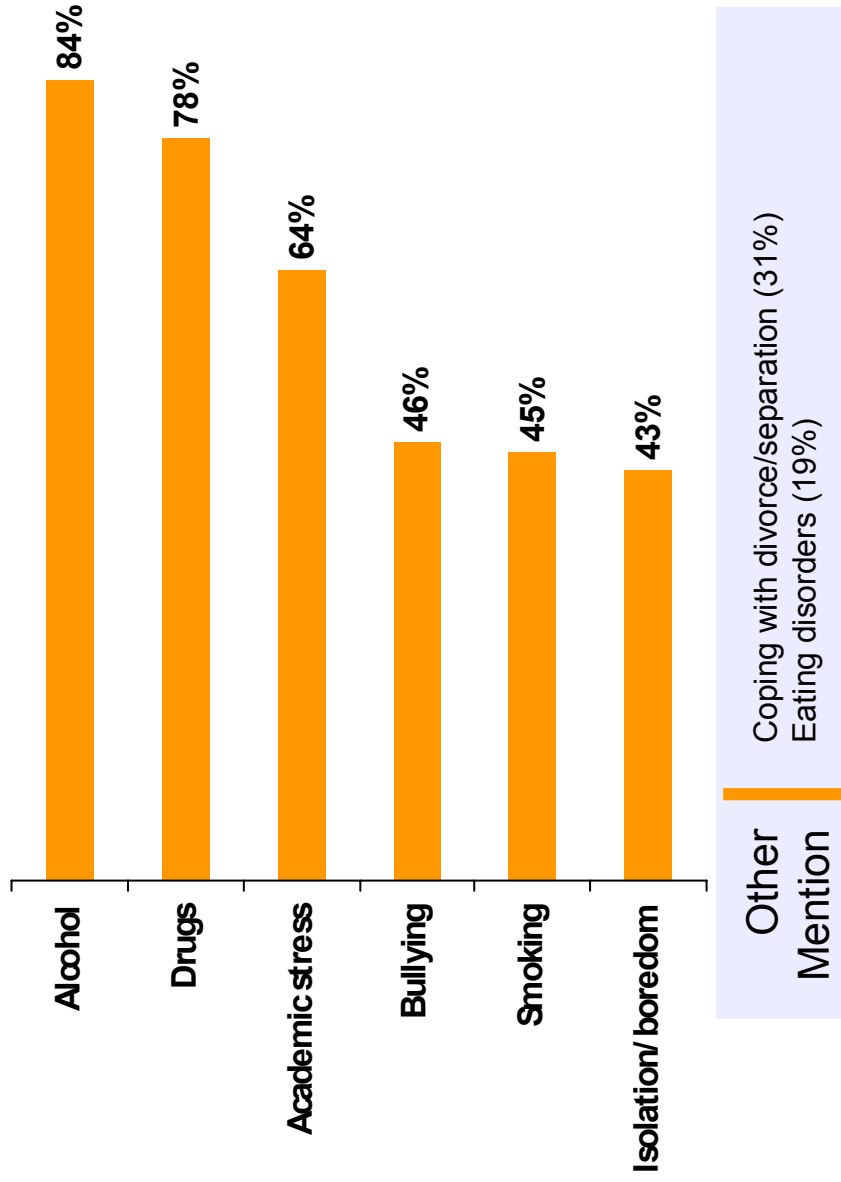


Activities Teens Would Like to Participate In  
(as reported by parents surveyed)



# Alcohol, drugs, and academic stress are considered the greatest challenges facing teens.

Major Challenges Facing Teens  
(as reported by parents surveyed)



## IN TEENS' OWN WORDS...

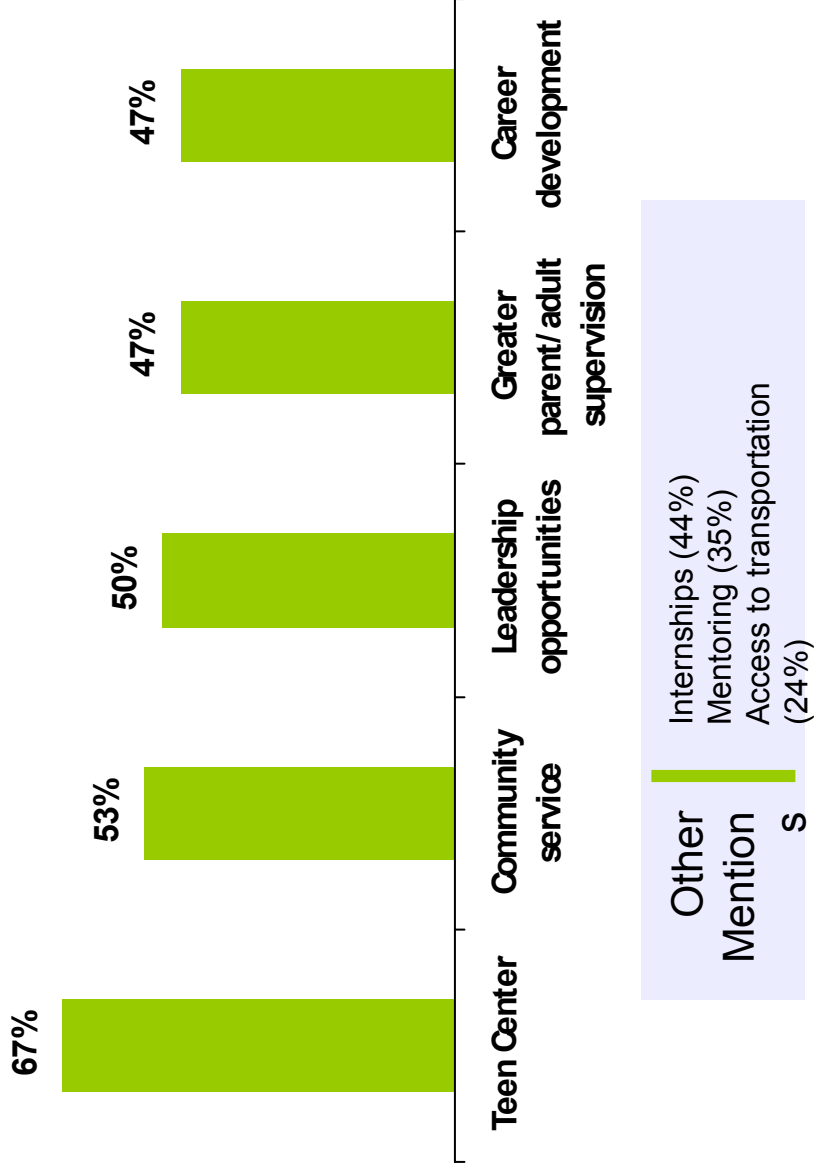
*"A lot of kids experiment. The vast majority experiment. Mostly because of boredom."*  
(Age 15-17)

*"Parents do not believe, but [drugs and alcohol] are here."*  
(Age 15-17)

*"It is harder to tell kids are using in Hopewell. They have more reason to hide it, so it really goes underground."*  
(Age 15-17)

# Two in three parents feel a Teen Center would be beneficial for teens in Hopewell Valley.

Most Beneficial for Teens in Hopewell Valley  
(as reported by parents surveyed)



## IN TEENS' OWN WORDS...

*"If they build it [a teen center], we will come!"*  
(Age 15-17)

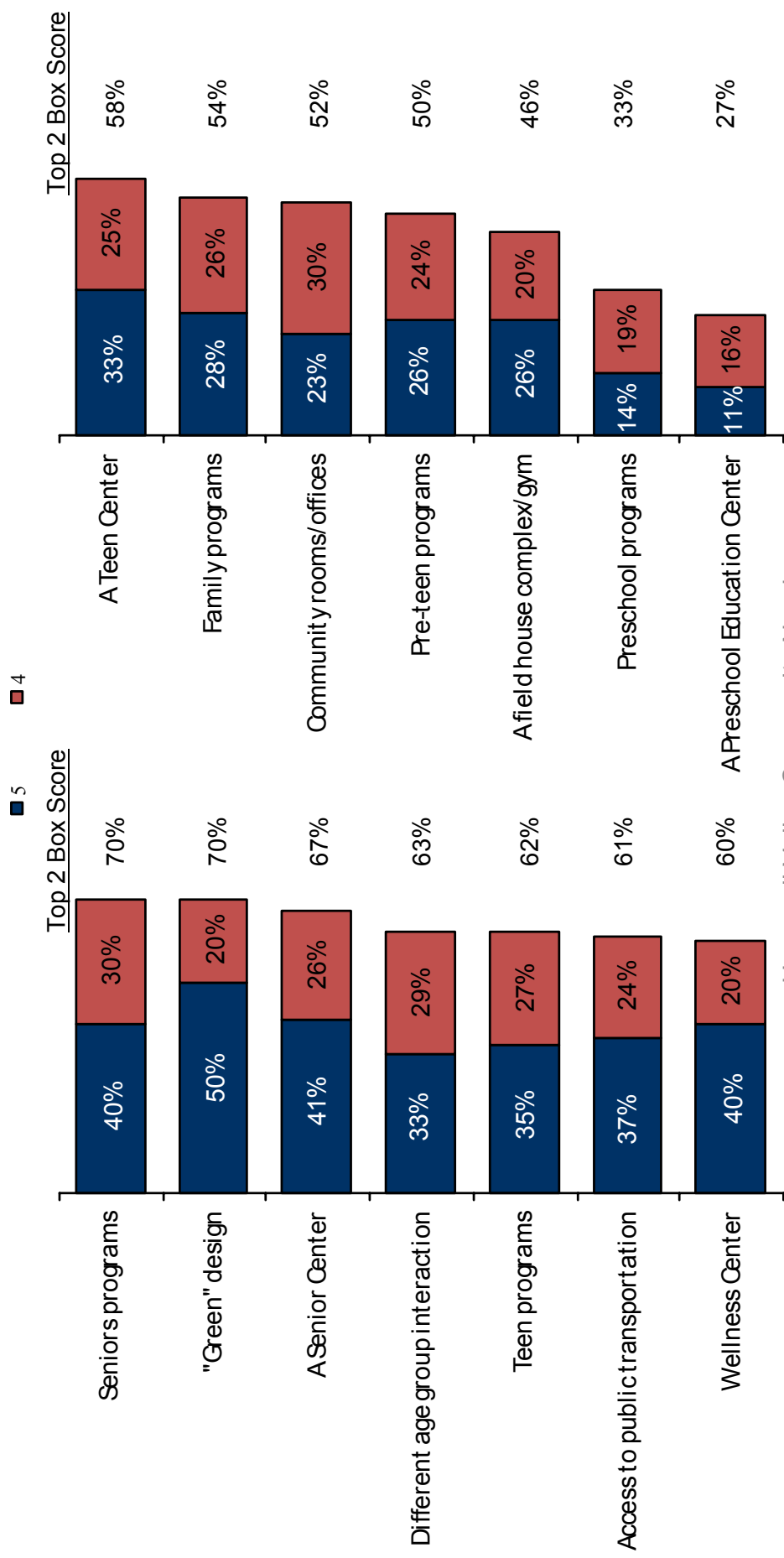
*"[We need] a safe haven."*  
(Age 15-17)

# Survey Results

## A Hopewell Valley Community Center

# Senior programs, a “green” design, and a Senior Center are considered the most important features of a community center.

Importance of Features of a Community Center in Hopewell Valley  
 Rated “4” or “5” on 5-point scale where “5” means very important



# Most Important Features of a Community Center: Those With Children Under 18 in Household vs. Those Without

**Those With Children Under 18**  
(41% of those surveyed)



- Teen programs (77%)
- A “green” design (76%)
- A Teen Center (75%)
- Family programs (70%)
- Different age group interaction (69%)
- Pre-teen programs (65%)

**Those Without Children Under 18**  
(59% of those surveyed)

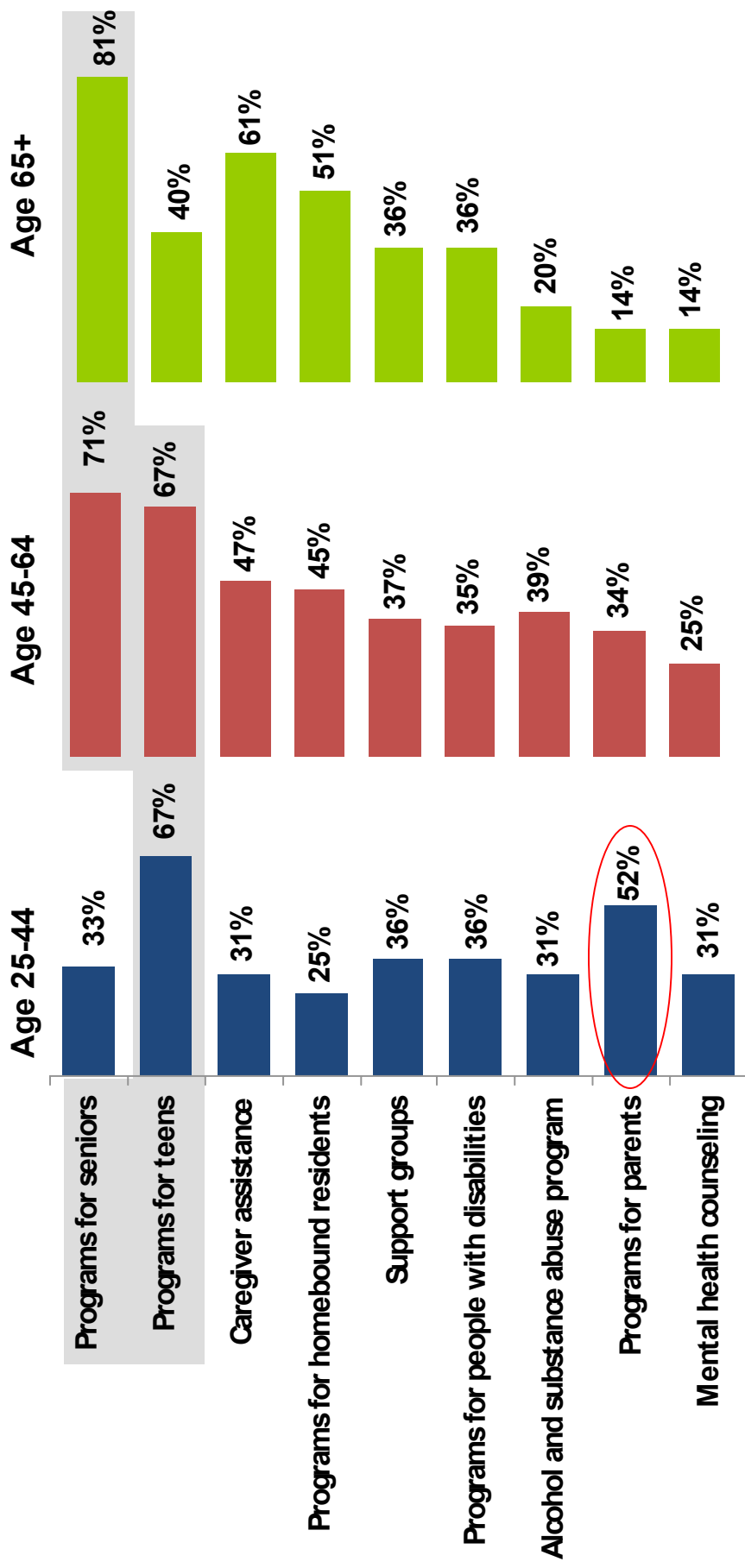


- Senior programs (76%)
- A Senior Center (74%)
- A “green” design” (66%)
- Access to public transportation (63%)

54% of residents age 65 and older say they would use a Senior Center at the Hopewell Valley Community Center.

# The majority of residents feel that programs for seniors and teens should be available to Hopewell Valley community members.

Social Services That Should be Available to Hopewell Valley Community Members



# Survey Results

## Demographics



## Demographic Profile

### Age:

25-44 23%

45-64 48%

65+ 29%

### AVERAGE

56

### Gender:

Male

40%

Female

60%

### Annual Household Income:

Less than \$70,000

25%

\$70,000 to less than

42%

\$150,000 or more

33%

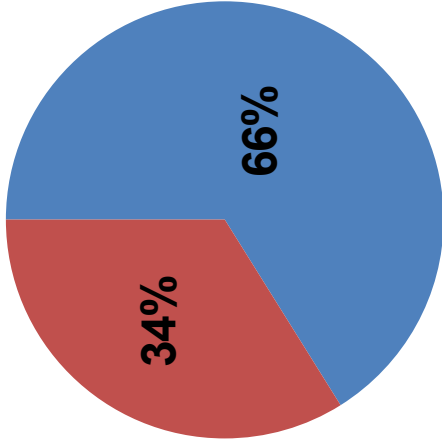
### AVERAGE

\$134,000

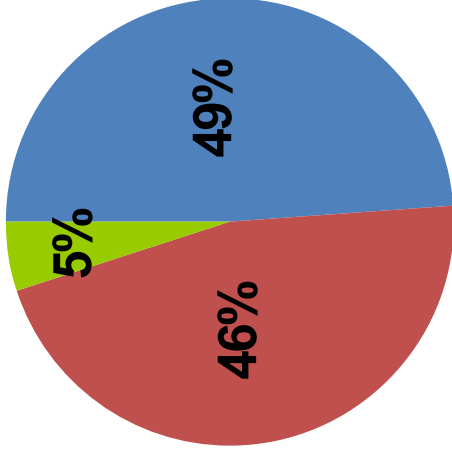
# Most residents say they are in “excellent” or “good” health.

Description of Overall Health

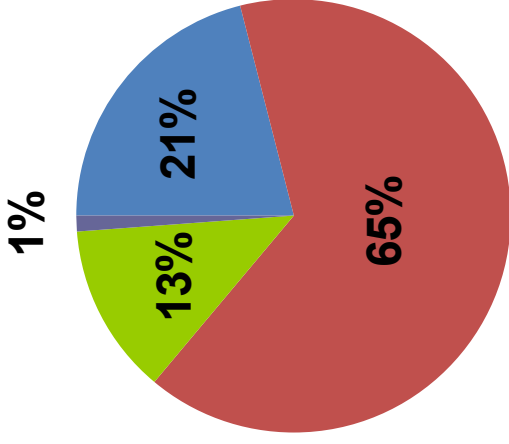
■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Fair ■ Poor



25-44 Year Olds



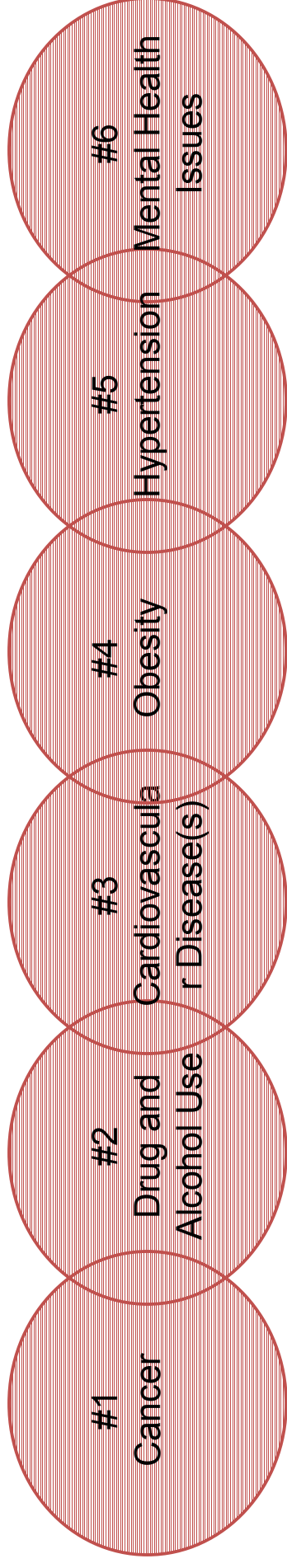
45-64 Year Olds



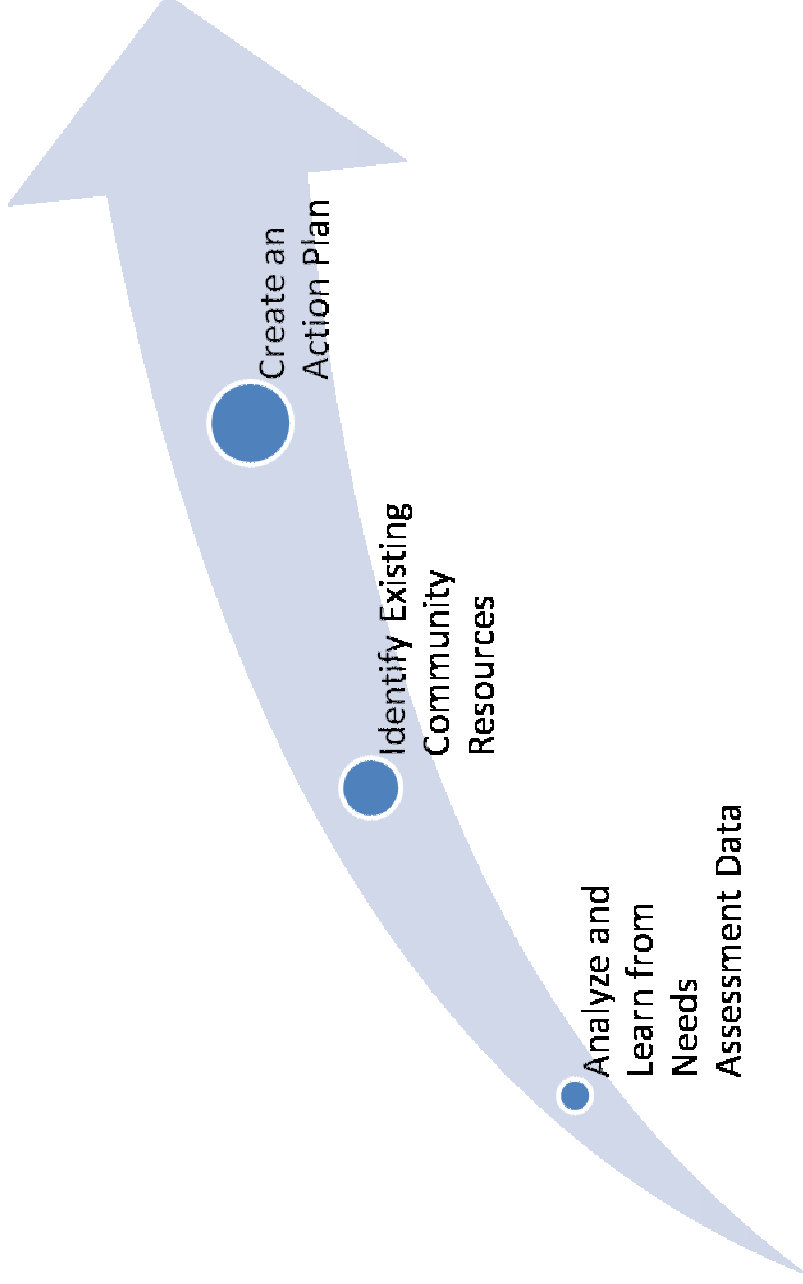
65+ Year Olds

**Cancer, drug and alcohol use, and cardiovascular disease(s) are seen as the top health concerns for Hopewell Valley residents.**

### Major Health Concerns for Hopewell Valley Residents



# Next Steps



# Contact Information

## Hopewell Township Health Department

- Gary Guarino, Health Officer
- 737-0605 ext. 653
- gguarino@hopewelltp.org

## Hopewell Valley Municipal Alliance

- Heidi Kahme, Chair/Coordinator
- 737-0120 ext. 642
- HVMA@hopewelltp.org

## Hopewell Valley Senior Services

- Abigail Waugh, Coordinator
- 737-0605, ext. 692
- awaugh@hopewelltp.org

## Hopewell Valley YMCA

- Doug Pszczolkowski, CEO
- 737-3048
- dpszczolkowski@hvymca.com