

PHASE Three





Forces of Change

The Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA) is centered around answering the questions:

"What is occurring or might occur that affects the well-being of our residents or the local system?"

"What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?"

The FOCA was facilitated by the Impact DuPage Core Team, comprised of DuPage County Health
Department staff. Facilitated brainstorming sessions were conducted with community leaders to identify forces
such as trends, factors, or events that are influencing the quality of life and health of the community. To obtain
wide-ranging input, the assessment was conducted with 15 distinct audiences during meetings held in the winter
of 2021. The groups that participated in the brainstorming sessions were the Community Hunger Network, Impact
DuPage Steering Committee, ADAPT (Alliance of DuPage Advocates for Pregnant and Parenting Teens), Bensenville
Interfaith Council, DuPage Federation's Council of Community Leaders, Choose DuPage, Behavioral Health
Collaborative, Prevention Leadership Team, WeGo Together for Kids, Addison Resources Connect, DuPage Early
Childhood Collaborative, the DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) Leadership staff, DCHD Program
Manager staff, and the DCHD Board of Health.

Findings

The 15 groups of community leaders discussed forces, threats, and opportunities across eight categories: Social, Economic, Political, Technological, Environmental, Scientific, Legal, and Ethical. The results of the discussions were reviewed to determine the themes that were most commonly discussed within the groups. However, a more comprehensive table of the discussions is included in Appendix I.

These sections are meant to summarize the discussion and are not necessarily reflective of the positions of any participating agency. Statements are the perspectives and perception of the individuals who participated and have not been verified. The results of these discussions are listed below.





Employment Issues:

Remote work options have increased dramatically over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. This change is forcing workplaces to adapt to new ways of working and recruiting employees. Companies and organizations are also struggling to fill roles and have adequate staffing to complete necessary tasks.

Affordable and Adequate Housing:

Expensive housing and high taxes have made it difficult for people to find housing in DuPage County.

The increased cost of living has caused people to be priced out of their communities, potentially moving out of the county. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for housing that is uncrowded and safe to keep people healthy. Several groups made comments like "housing is healthcare".

Technology and Social Media Use:

Social media can have a large influence on a child's mental health and wellbeing. Social media can cause trauma to children and may contribute to teen depression and anxiety. Parents need more education about ways to monitor/ limit access to technology. Increased use of social media has led to changes in the way that a community is built and interacts, given that young people's community is mostly online, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. An additional concern regarding technology is that it is difficult for low-income individuals to access the internet and own technological devices.

Transportation Options:

Transportation services within DuPage County are limited and people cannot get the services that they need because they do not have access to transportation. There is no sense of a true transportation system within the county, and there are limited public transit routes. There are also opportunities to improve how walkable and bikeable communities are. Car maintenance is expensive, and there are many families who cannot afford to have cars.





Mental Health and Substance Use:

Due to a shortage of mental health care providers and an increased need for care during the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for care cannot be met within the community. It is harder for people in historically marginalized communities or people who are uninsured/under-insured to find care that fits their unique needs. Stigma regarding mental health as well as substance abuse treatment facilities is still present, however it seems there is some additional awareness of mental health issues in recent years. The increase in telehealth options, in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic, may have increased access to mental health care for some populations.

COVID-19:

All the conversations touched on challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic as it has truly touched every aspect of life. Discussions included changes to the education system and the economy as well as the effect the pandemic has had on how the public views science and politics.





Appendix I: Summary Table of Discussions

Social

Forces of Change	Threats	Opportunities
(Trends, Events,		
Factors.)		
Social		
Mental Health	 Increase in mental health symptoms and crisis's during pandemic. Mental illness can be more severe in low income, persons of color, immigrants, and non-English speakers due to difficulty access to care. Need for more mental health awareness and early intervention among community of colors and children with traumatic experience. Increased isolation puts at risk to mental illness, substance use, and suicide ideation. It can be more detrimental to physical and mental health of elderly population. Not enough mental health treatment providers and affordable care options. Need for more trauma informed care, especially for immigrants. Unhealthy work environment affecting families by bringing stress into the home. Lack of qualified bilingual clinicians and culturally 	 Lots of locally based resources for youth, which can help alleviate financial burden of receiving mental health care. Decreased stigma around mental health and increased acceptance in treatment in younger generation. Faith communities developing mental health-focused ministries. Law enforcement working to improve responses to mental health crises. Strengthening ties with treatment and support organizations, emphasizing deescalation. Developing community mental health boards. Allows communities to assist with local mental healthcare.
	 sensitive mental health services. Adults need to have open dialog about mental health issues in safe space and appropriately respond to youths. Lack of school-based health centers that can provide social and emotional supports to students. Need for mental health access for regular checkups not just during mental health crisis. There is a need to recruit more mental health professionals into community-based work that serves the underserved populations. However, the challenge is that often these positions do not pay as much as private practice or hospital-based care. 	 Illinois may implement training for home visitors in trauma-informed care. Mental healthcare is important to learn coping skills, which will help people get into the workforce and higher education. Telehealth provides more accessible care for individuals with health concerns or disabilities.
Educational Challenges	 Disturbance in learning and teaching during the pandemic which will impact students' academic success. Challenges in parent engagement since many caregivers have multiple jobs. 	Teachers and parents more creative in instruction. COVID-19 has forced technology on people that wouldn't have ordinarily had to use it.





Change in Early	 Challenge in transitioning from remote to in- person learning and safety concerns. More real-life applicable curriculum needs to be implemented. Increased cost for childcare when children are not in school. Enrollment in schools shifting up and down as people move rapidly in response to COVID-19. Delayed social emotional learning results in behavioral dysregulation, including increased screen time. Need to educate physicians on early childhood Infrastructure change in early
Childhood Education Infrastructure	development so they can direct patients to the proper resources in a timely manner. Lack of funding for Early Childhood education. childhood is growing, currently there are few agencies that are funded, which administer different elements of early childhood. There will be one agency overseeing statewide early childhood activities.
Aging Population	Median age is rising.
	Not enough people to take care of aging population.
	 Increased job vacancies from aging population retiring.
	 Senior population living longer and staying in a community for most of their lives leading to need for more in-home and affordable care options.
Change in	Increased diversity in race and ethnicity, religion, and
Population	languages spoken.
Demographics	Impact of city residents moving into suburbs.
	Delayed reproduction. Paid family leave and job
	security are big factors.
	Large influx of refugee population.
	o Increased homeless population.
	Older people are downsizing, and families are
	moving in together to save money.
Health Equity	Conversations about social determinants and health
	equity are needed in all sectors not just human
	services and healthcare.
	Need for implementing unified intake system across
	early children childcare, social service, healthcare
	system to link families to resources.
	Need a more durable social services system to
	handle quick changes.





	0	More decentralized services in the community (E.g.		
		Mobile care, churches, parking lots, etc.).		
	0	Inequity in access to same level of care due to		
		judgment. Individuals may be less likely to share their		
		voice due to backlash.		
Community	0	Multiple ways of disseminating information makes it	0	DuPage County collaborations
Organizing and		difficult to effectively convey important information.		should include more community
Communication	0	Need for effective communicate between		voices of diverse stakeholders.
Challenges		organizations for community involvement.		
	0	Social service agencies need to find a way to provide		
		technology access to whole groups.		
Inclusion of LGBTQ	0	Increased visibility of gender identity and sexual		
Populations		orientation issues.		
	0	Need more community advocacy to prevent		
		traumatic experiences from gender discrimination		
		across all sectors.		
Racism	0	Separation between groups, against others.		
	0	Increased racism towards Asian population during		
		the COVID-19.		
	0	Racism in our community has significantly changed		
		however racism persists.		
Lack of Trust	0	Difficult to discern which facts to trust based on		
towards		political beliefs or science.		
Government and	0	Uncertainty in where to find trusted information.		
Media				
Domestic Violence	0	Displaced victims unable to seek services due to		
		transportation barriers.		
	0	Domestic violence may be more reported issue from		
		school counselors, need for addressing domestic		
		violence other than in a school setting.		
	0	Challenge in reporting issues from home for students		
		during the COVID-19 pandemic.		
	0	Need for more social workers and mental health		
		supports in the school building.		





Economic

Forces of Change (Trends, Events,	Threats	Opportunities
Factors.)		
Economic		<u>, </u>
Housing Scarcity and Affordability	 Lack of affordable and available housing across all economic groups. Types of housing for larger families are not affordable or available. Housing is an essential need during pandemic for isolation and is effective in decreasing wide spread of COVID-19. Difficult to access shelters during COVID-19. Difficult finding housing for refugees and undocumented populations. Need for educating low-income families moving in on how housing works in the county. Housing debt after pandemic from people not being able to pay their mortgages. 	 Community organizations can aid with housing debt. Lots of empty buildings could be converted to low-income housing.
Increased Cost of Living	 Significant increased cost in housing, transportation, and food. Increase in taxes is hard on lower income people and the effects are expanding to other populations as well. Increased healthcare costs may prevent access to healthcare. Many lower wage workers are dependent on employer benefits and work multiple jobs. Increase in people applying for public assistance benefits, eviction help, and utility cost assistance. Increase of minimum wage resulting in inflation. Convenience and cost can affect access to healthier food. 	Employers shifting to provide more comprehensive healthcare and childcare to retain employees.
Food Insecurity	 Food is a strong need in local area. Need for variety ways to receive food, not heavily dependent on food pantries. Increased free and reduced lunch in school. Food stamp benefits have increased; however, it is not a permanent solution. 	 Potential technological platform where restaurants can communicate for food distribution. Pandemic has opened the number of ways to distribute food. Re-using food waste coming from suppliers, groceries, and offering more local imports.
Increased Poverty	 Higher need of community support as poverty level rises. 	





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Remote Working	 Increase in remote or hybrid jobs. Remote working allows employers to hire anyone anywhere in the markets. This may make employment progressively more globally competitive. Less engagement with clients for services since information can be received remotely. 	 Businesses could save lot of operational cost from remote working and re-purposing physical space.
College Affordability	 More affordable out-of-state institutions will lead to big loss of economic benefit since students may not return. Challenges in bridging two-year track students into the four-year track due to not meeting certain level of academic standards and affordability. High costs of education lead fewer people to attend college. 	

Political

Political		
Forces of Change (Trends, Events, Factors.)	Threats	Opportunities
Political		
Funding Allocations	 Defunding police and reducing police responses to mental health crises. Equitable and sustainable sharing of funds can be a challenge with multiple areas of needs and will vary by administration. Lack of funding to support developmental disability services. 	 708 funding grants to police departments, hiring social workers. New legislation in Illinois that mental health clinicians respond to mental health crisis calls.
Increased Mistrust of Government	 Increase in number of marches and protests. Changing political landscape on national, state, and local levels bring challenges and benefits. Illinois residents may be leaving the state because policies have weakened the economy, public safety, and trust. 	
Result of Census	 Political redistricting could change and reduce DuPage's representation at the state and federal level. 	
Healthcare Reform	 Healthcare reforms changes will likely occur during and after COVID-19. Need to address chronic diseases that did not receive as much attention during pandemic (I.e., Diabetes). 	





o Investment in public health. Historically a problem	
to get public health funding; may be more difficult	
after pandemic.	

Technological

Forces of Change	Threats	Opportunities
(Trends, Events,		
Factors.)		
Technological		
Technological Impact on Mental Health Access and Technology Literacy	 Social media can impact how young people perceive and interpret health information. Children are isolated by technology, may not be as socially adept now. Need education how to find credible sources of mental health information. Low levels of technological literacy in in remote learning and among aging population. Limited access to technology. Increased reliance on technology can be both 	 Media could be helpful in bringing more awareness to mental health needs of the community. Increased use of technology requires all populations to be techsavvy. Easier to share information online.
Providing Care and Education through Technology	beneficial and can be detrimental to children's development. Increased demand for telehealth. Need to educate students on online professionalism, safety, and etiquette. Need for high quality, simple technology for effective communication. Due to COVID-19 more organizations have conducted outreach activities through technology. Digital health records and communications have increased efficiency in healthcare (appointments, home tests and virtual health visits).	 Future opportunities with Artificial Intelligence can benefit health and public health. Good advancements in safety technology. Local businesses meeting COVID challenges with manufacturing of air purification and cleaning systems. Increase in use of technology by community service providers (e.g. food pantries) although software systems can sometimes be expensive to start up and maintain.





Environmental

Forces of Change (Trends, Events,	Threats	Opportunities
Factors.)		
Economic	•	
Lack of Public or	Workforce shortage in public transit sector.	
Active	 Pace and Metra exist, but infrastructures still need 	
Transportation	to increase—especially for accessibility for seniors,	
Options	individual with disabilities, and lower wage workers	
	 Public transportation is urgent to maintain jobs. 	
	 Lack of walkable or bikeable paths. 	
Climate Change	Natural disasters causing damage and	
_	overstressing emergency response systems.	
	 Unclear on who should be leading responding to 	
	natural disasters.	
	 Believing vs not believing science of climate 	
	change creates a polarized response.	
	 Disease landscape may change including flu. Rare 	
	diseases may become more common.	
	 Impact of Climate-induced health risks. 	
	 Schools are ill prepared for the weather changes, 	
	such as lack of no air conditioning.	
	 Natural disasters can impact food pantries' 	
	delivery services to residents.	
Scarcity of Water	Will more people remain near the great lakes and	
Sourcity of Water	impact housing availability due to an eventual	
	scarcity of water?	
	 Health department should be working more on 	
	ensuring safe drinking water.	
Promoting Eco-	Employers increasingly moving to paperless	Passage of the Clean Energy Jobs
Friendliness	systems.	Act and transition to clean energy.
THEHUIIIESS	 Ability to recycle in DuPage is limited by the small 	 New partnership with Midwest
	number of facilities. Recyclables may still end up in	governors will build more electronic
		_
	landfills due to limited capacity and strict	vehicle charging stations.
	requirements.	
	 Invest in environmental activities at a legislative level. 	
Air Quality	 Lots of cars are moving to hybrid. 	
~~~,	<ul> <li>Air and water pollution, deforestation, rinse in</li> </ul>	
	microplastics and phthalates are all effects of the	
	growth of our society.	
	<ul> <li>Need for green chemical cleaning.</li> </ul>	
	O Need for green chemical cleaning.	





#### Scientific

Forces of Change (Trends, Events, Factors.)	Threats	Opportunities
Scientific		
Mistrust of Science	<ul> <li>The COVID-19 pandemic made science more politicized.</li> <li>The constant change of policies, such as mandate on masking.</li> <li>Misinformation and disinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine makes it hard to know what is credible and factual.</li> <li>Political rhetoric in scientific research, especially concerning public health and safety, is dangerous to the population.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>The COVID-19 pandemic offers an opportunity to show sectors working together for common good and provided plenty of lessons for rollout of future public health initiatives.</li> </ul>
Remote Care	<ul> <li>Providing care for substance use recovery is much difficult remotely than in-person.</li> <li>Electronic health information is in risk of cybersecurity.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Virtual healthcare can impact continuity and quality of care (easier to diagnose or see signs of use when face to face/in person).</li> <li>Can dramatically improve outcomes. Virtual care has increased access for some.</li> </ul>
Mental Health and Substance Use	<ul> <li>Treatment still not widely available, especially for those without insurance.</li> <li>Increased substance use from impact of COVID-19.</li> <li>High taxes on legal marijuana and illegal drugs are continuing to come into the U.S.</li> <li>Treatment of mental health disease as one path to reduce self-medication particularly with students.</li> <li>Need to mitigate barriers to mental wellness and increase awareness of resources for diagnosis.</li> <li>Increase in the number of traffic fatalities from drugged and drunk driving.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>New medication-assisted recovery tools to help fight substance use disorder.</li> <li>Has the focus on misuse of prescription medication led to more responsible prescribing habits and hopefully less abuse?</li> </ul>
COVID-19	<ul> <li>Changing variants of COVID-19 and other potential emergence of resistant bacteria.</li> <li>Unknown long-term effects of COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>COVID-19 will likely not be the only pandemic we face. Can we learn from our mistakes?</li> </ul>





### Legal

Forces of Change (Trends, Events,	Threats	Opportunities
Factors.)		
Legal		
Immigration Reform	<ul> <li>Current or future legislation around immigration reform.</li> <li>Immigration status can be a barrier to seeking help including mental health services and other public</li> </ul>	
	<ul><li>benefits.</li><li>Constant change of DACA and pathway to legalization.</li></ul>	
Workplace Policies and Ethics	<ul> <li>COVID-19 vaccination mandate can be a violation of personal freedoms and will creates stress on the employee and employer relationship.</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>Rise of television coverage on violence. The inequity has been more publicized, and we are seeing it appear in workplaces.</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>Need of flexible work and life balance for parents to coping with stress levels.</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>Hybrid work is becoming the expectation.</li> <li>Employees may come back in-office or some may not after pandemic.</li> </ul>	
Legalization of Drugs	Difficult to convey that legalization of marijuana	
10,000	<ul> <li>does not mean it is safe.</li> <li>Misuse of prescribed medication continues to grow and evolve during pandemic.</li> </ul>	
Politics	<ul> <li>Disagreement among people about how lawmakers should act and how much power they have.</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>Role of public health is being questioned in relation to executive orders. Challenging to enforce executive orders.</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>Shift to remove law enforcement from mental health crisis responses. Clinicians can provide care more immediately when responding on scene.</li> </ul>	
Compliance of Long-	<ul> <li>Need to shift reimbursement towards home health</li> </ul>	
Term Care Facilities	<ul> <li>care rather than long-term care facilities.</li> <li>Improve oversight of long-term care facilities to protect elderly and individuals with disabilities.</li> </ul>	





#### **Ethical**

Forces of Change (Trends, Events, Factors.)	Threats	Opportunities
Health Disparities	<ul> <li>Importance of equitable distribution of PPE.</li> <li>Equitable distribution of health information in appropriate languages and formats.</li> </ul>	
COVID-19	<ul> <li>Vaccine and testing mandates may limit people seeking out services.</li> <li>Cost of COVID-19 tests for businesses can be high.</li> <li>Medically necessary COVID-19 testing is often free; however, some still require insurance.</li> <li>End of life issues have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to be an issue for the next few years based on ever-evolving scientific developments.</li> </ul>	

