

Boone County Healthy Work Initiative (BCHWI)

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BOONE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

BELVIDERE, IL

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A special thanks to.....

Tessa Bonney, MPH, PhD, assistant professor at UIC

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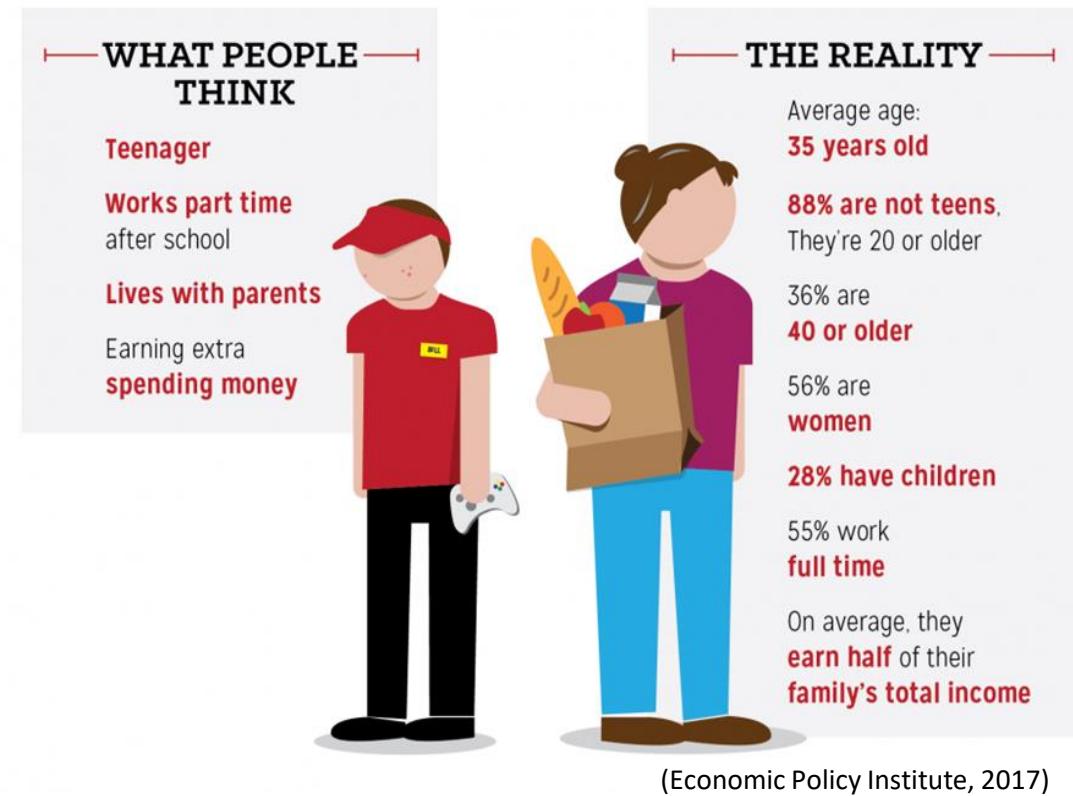
What Does Precarious Work Look Like?

Often characterized as:

- Insecure, unstable, and uncertain
- Lacking flexibility
- No control over hours; schedules
- Limited social benefits (health insurance, retirement benefits)
- Little opportunity for advancement
- Low wages; economic uncertainty
- Exposure to dangerous and hazardous conditions
- Little protection against discrimination and exploitation

What does Precarious Work look like?

- Many workers with precarious jobs can't:
 - Take care of family
 - Pay off debts
 - Pay for education
 - Save for retirement
 - Buy health insurance
 - Pay medical costs
- Workers with precarious jobs are more likely to:
 - Keep working while sick or injured
 - Be injured on the job
- To survive most workers rely on 1 or more social safety net programs



Phases of BCHWI

Phase 1-Summer 2018

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Center for Healthy Work

We contribute to changes in local, state and national programs, policies and laws that promote jobs with healthier working conditions that provide more people with fair employment and decent work.

Healthy Work Collaborative, Summer 2018



Overall Goal:

- Our goal was to build the capacity of the health sector to use policy, systems, and environmental change strategies and partner with other sectors to address precarious work.

Participant Outcomes:

- Connect with new partners to explore opportunities for collaboration and action to address precarious work across sectors.
- Access additional tools, strategies, and approaches to improve work experiences and health of workers in precarious employment.
- Create a work plan to address precarious work.

Acknowledgements

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Healthy Work Collaborative: Activities & Expertise

Understanding the Problem

What is Precarious Work?
Systems Thinking Activity
Rich Picture Activity



TA Providers

System, Strategies, and Approaches

Power Mapping
Framing & Perspectives
Existing Approaches



AL Facilitators

Theory of Change and Finalized Workplans

Stake & Outcome Decisions
Theory of Change Activity



Teams

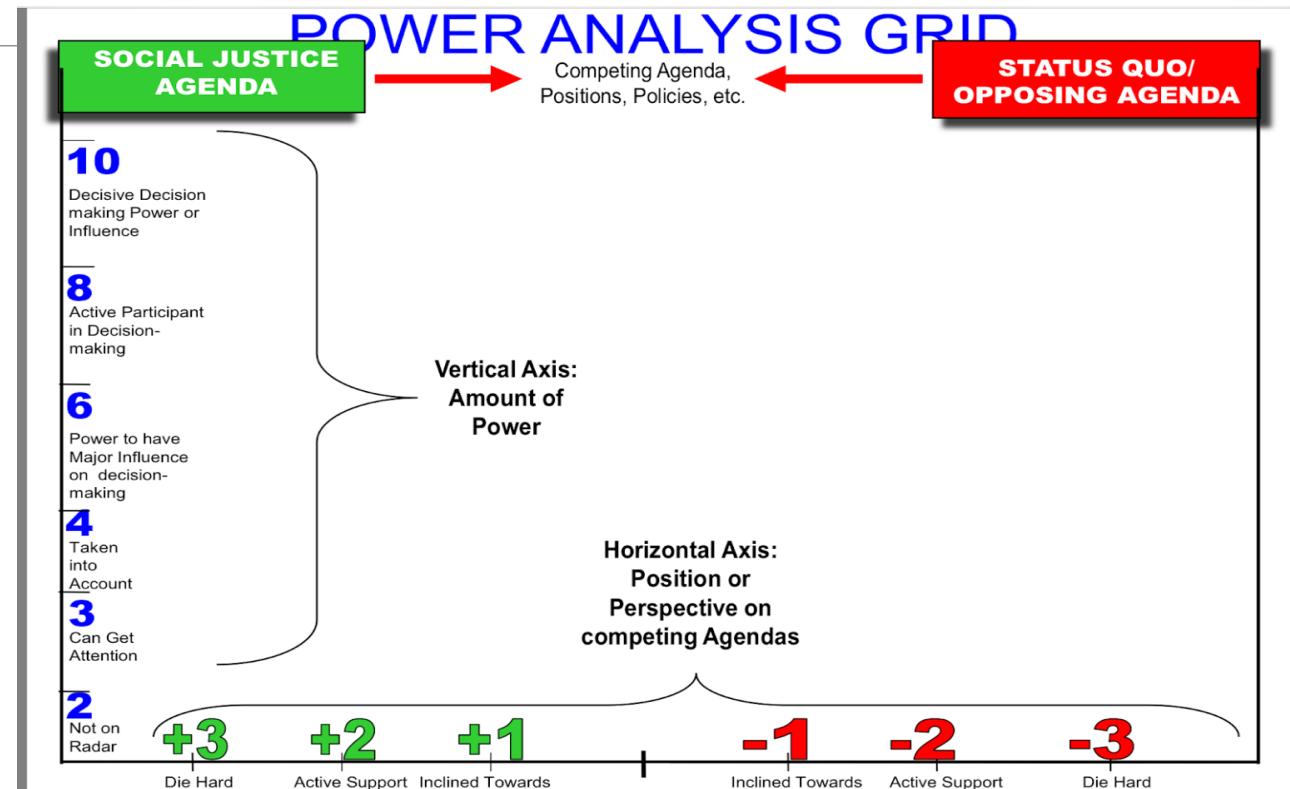
What is Power and Who Has It?

“Power is the ability to control circumstances or to make things happen”

— Assata’s Daughters

“Power is the manifestation of our collective visions into coordinated action. Power is what happens when we build together”

—HIV Racial Justice Now

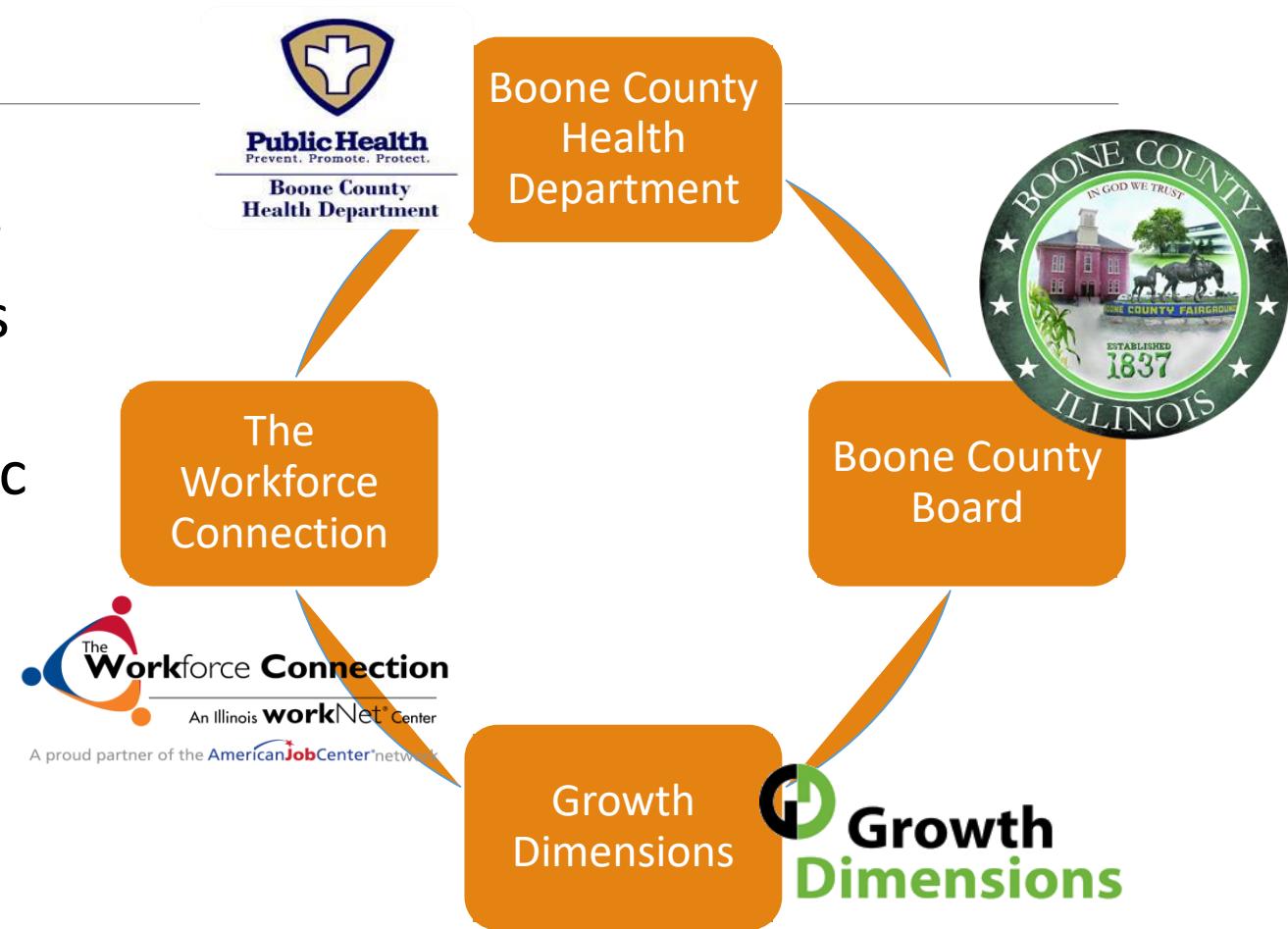


Team	Projects
AHA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing organizational awareness and understanding of precarious work Working on identifying policies that their members can support to address and impact health of precarious workers
Boone County Healthy Work Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of a strategic plan linked to the health department's Illinois Plan for Local Area Needs (IPLAN) and the county comprehensive and city strategic plan Discussions with stakeholders and integration of elected officials into the implementation of a workforce needs assessment
CCHHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate patients about their workplace rights, discrimination, and wage/hour requirements Referral system for legal counsel to: educate them about how to seek redress when their workplace rights have been violated; or help them file for worker's compensation Staff training to identify patients with workplace injuries, enroll eligible patients in insurance, and refer them to our partners for legal assistance
ROC/CDPH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop city-wide manual for rights, regulations, and best practices for restaurant employees Gain city-wide support Create framework for the co-production of enforcement, penalization for violators
CTU/CCDPH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipalities that opted-out of Paid Sick Leave and Minimum Wage ordinances will opt-in Develop targeted research plan for the south suburbs around why raising the minimum wage is beneficial for local municipalities Organize workers, gain public support through county-level campaign, identify power players and elected officials
IPHA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on Community Health Workers: how local public health departments are utilizing these workers and how to address precarious work situations in this arena
HMPRG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of an internship program to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion at Health & Medicine and in the health and social sector workforce through education and leadership opportunities
SEIU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize Chicago hospital workers to build a membership organization through which they take collective action Low-wage hospital workers not otherwise represented will become stakeholders in relevant policymaking processes

The Boone County Healthy Work Collaborative

Overall aims:

- Further explore the root causes of precarious work and the pathways to healthy work in the county
- Enhance the relationships of public health, healthcare, and social service organizations with worker centers, labor unions, and other worker advocacy organizations
- Together with elected leaders, address the drivers of precarious work across systems level



Embracing Healthy Work

- Developed to define the project and adapted to the needs of the community.
- Reframing the language to create a positive “glass half full” definition.
- Boone County Definition of Healthy Work: Inclusive, safe, and sustainable employment that provides a living wage, benefits, and opportunities for advancement while fostering inclusion.

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Needs
Assessment:
Key Economic
Indicators

Key Economic Indicators



Education

- Percent of Population 25 and Over without a High School Diploma: 19.24%
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 22%

Living Wage

Average Family Size in Boone County is three:

- 2 Adult (1 working) + 1 Child: \$21.10
- 1 Adult + 2 Children: \$27.85

Top 3 Industry Sectors Employment 2016:

- Manufacturing: 7,562
- Government: 2,217
- Construction: 1,434

Commuting Patterns

- Out of the 23,555 workers that live in Boone County 67% work outside of Boone County

Identifying Allies in the Community/ Pass a Resolution

- Identification of county government committee support:
 - After being met with skepticism and resistance from the City and County Committee Board, we received the support of the Health and Human Services Committee.
 - Using feedback from the City and County Committee Board helped develop a more cohesive and clear argument that sounded less academic and more straightforward.
 - Buy in was gained from the Mayor of Belvidere, the County Administrator and County Board Chairman, the Village President of Poplar Grove and the Mayor of Capron.



Focus Groups in the Community

- Using networks within our interdisciplinary team to organize focus groups with the United Auto Workers 1268, WIC recipients, the Rotary club of Belvidere and others
 - Developed a script with simple targeted questions for employers and employees
 - Achieved the most successful focus groups with those that took place during already scheduled meeting times for these groups
 - Empowering workers to speak with us continues to be a struggle

Themes of Focus Groups

- Affordability of caregivers for children and our aging population
- Transportation to work
- Supportive mental health services
- Occupations that involve working with hazardous materials

*"I have a **daughter** who has a baby and she **struggles** to find affordable AND safe childcare. **Safe affordable child care is a big deal!**"*

"Transportation is a barrier to work in the county."

*"If wages are not **good enough** for you to afford a babysitter, transportation, and all kinds of things then sometimes its not even worth it. I think that **causes mental health issues** like **depression** or **drug use**."*

*"My biggest **concern** right now is the care of **elderly people**. I have been playing nurse to my wife for the last 3 months after she broke her foot. It's a big concern right now."*

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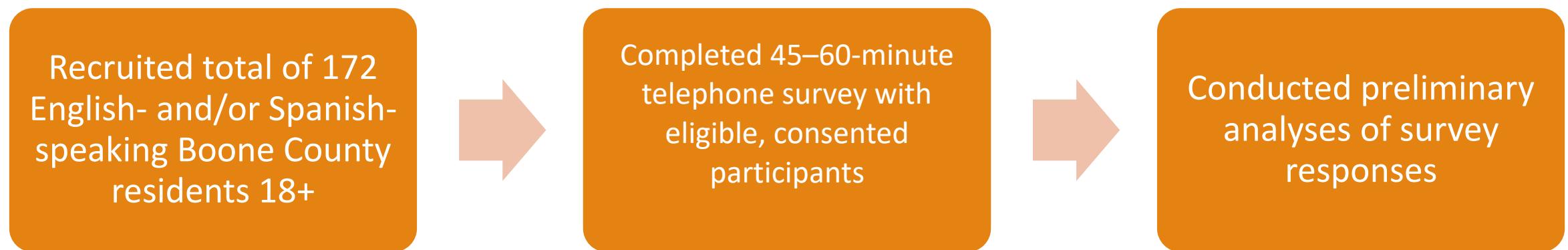
Searching for more funding

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Boone County Work, Mental Health, and Substance Use Survey

Funding for this presentation was made possible by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health under grant numbers U19 OH011232 and OH008672-15. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

BCWMHSU Study Data Collection & Analysis

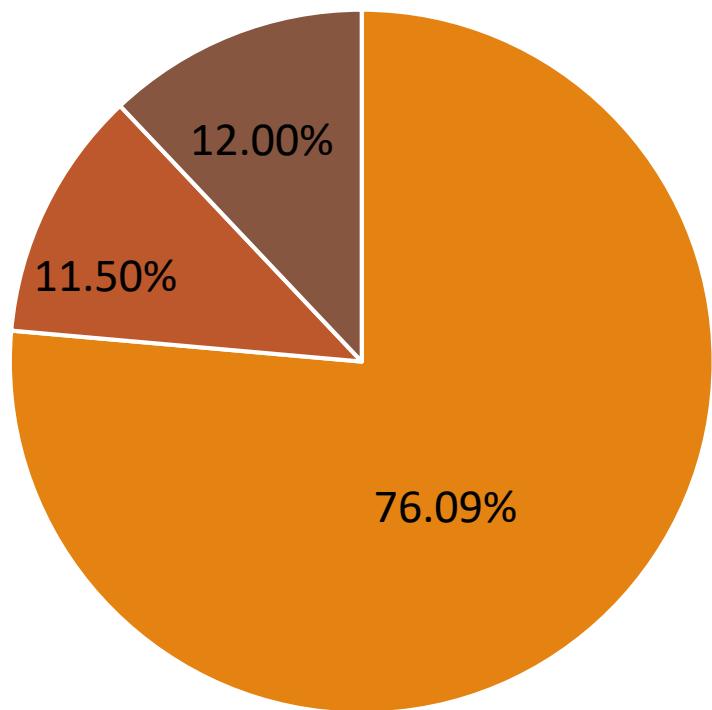


Survey Participants

	US Census Data	Respondents Data		US Census Data	Respondents Data
Population	53,448	172	Marital Status		
Gender			Married	53%	48%
Female	50%	80.80%	Divorced	10%	12%
Male	50%	19.20%	Separated	1%	4%
Income			Widowed	6%	1%
Median	69,272	75,500	A member of an unmarried couple	-	11%
Race			Never married and not currently with a partner	30%	24%
White	82.0%	82%	Education		
Black/African American	2.6%	3%	High school graduate or GED	34.80%	35%
Other	15.4%	15%	Some college	19.60%	9%
Ethnicity			Associate degree	8.30%	16%
Hispanic/Latino	24.1%	19.20%	Bachelor's degree or higher	23.40%	39%
Household			Other	13.80%	1%
Average household size	2.86	3.3			
Child in home	34.40%	53.50%			

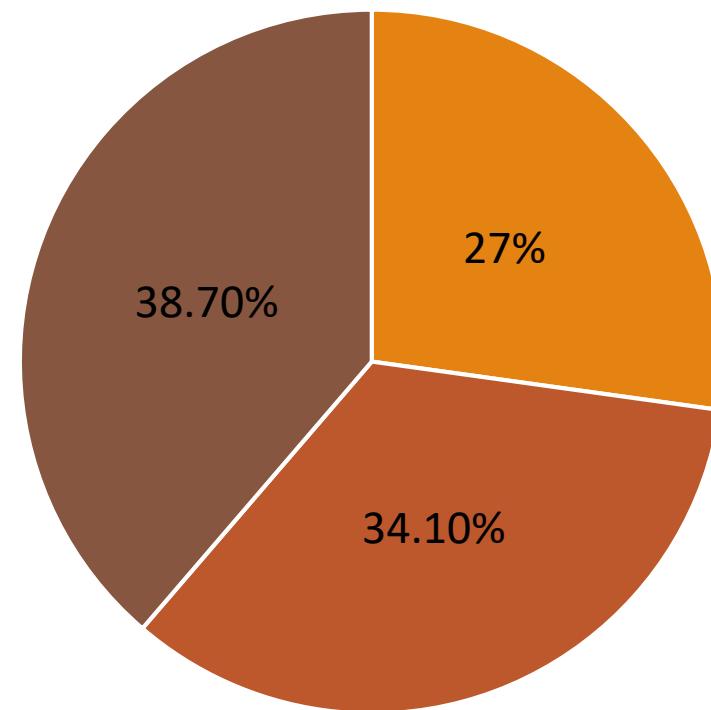
Characteristics of Employment

Number of Jobs that People Work/Worked



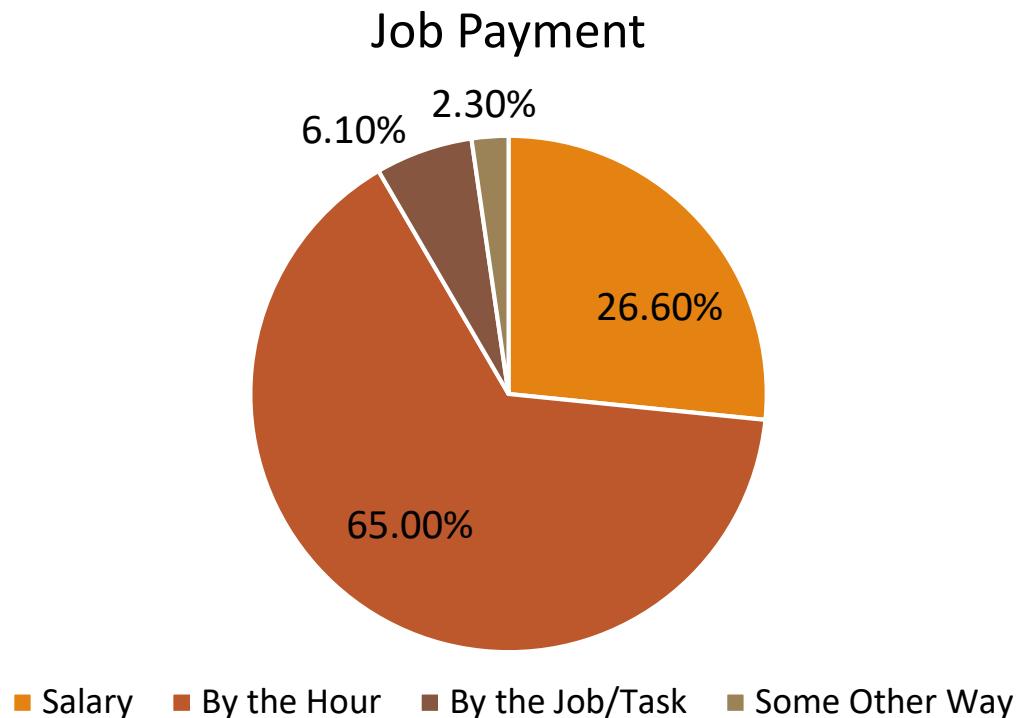
■ 1 job ■ 2-3 jobs ■ 0 jobs at the time

Number of Hours of Paid Employment



■ 40+ hrs/Week ■ >35 hrs/Week ■ 35-40 hrs/Week

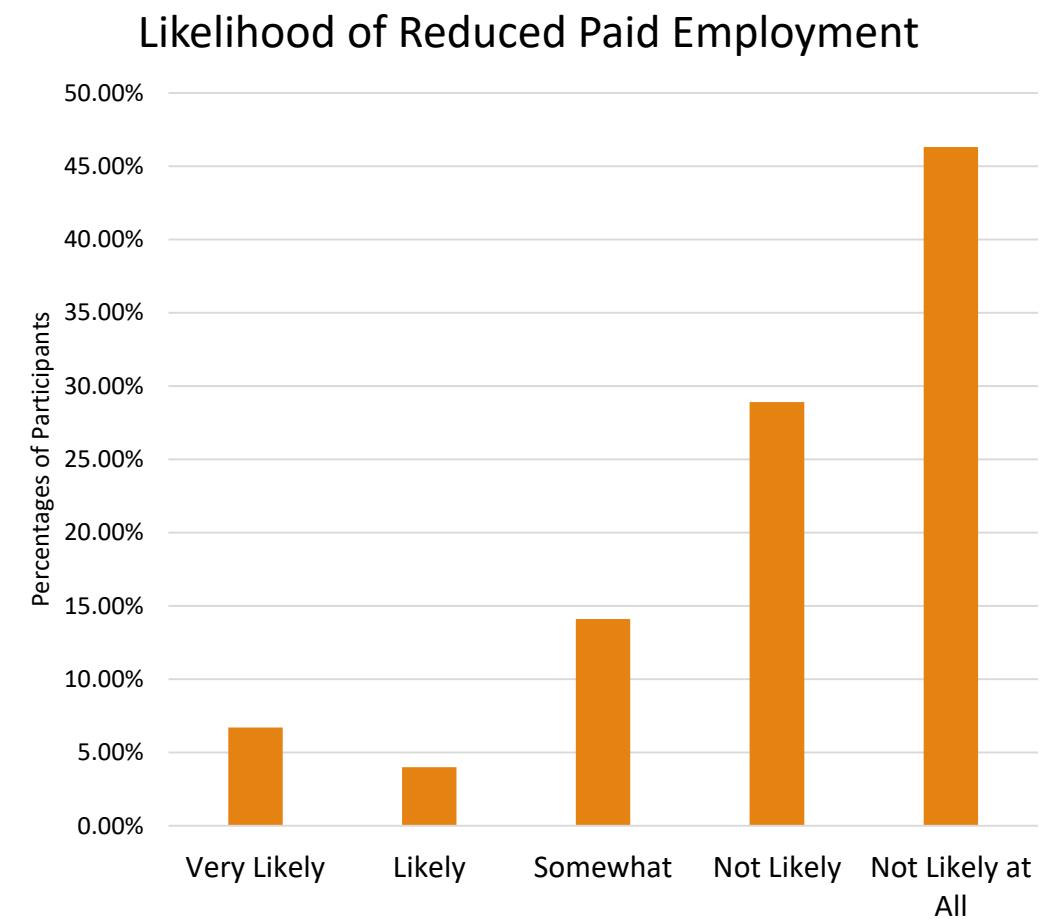
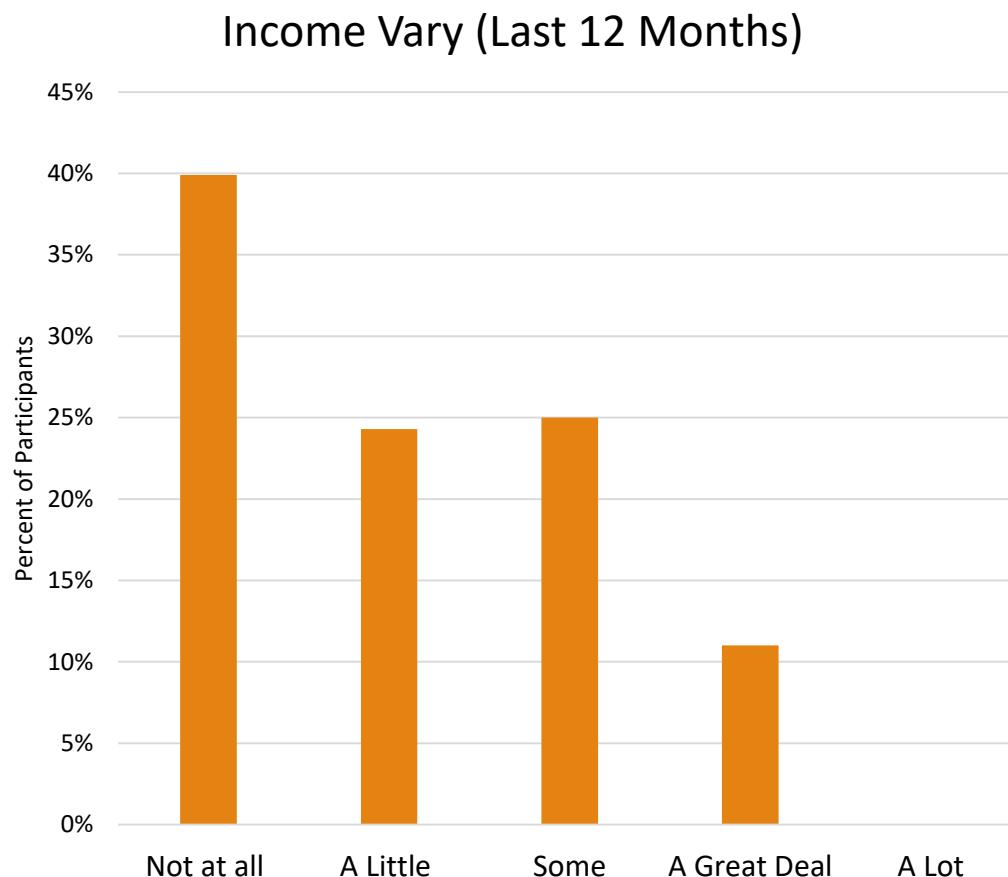
Characteristics of Employment



Results based on how participants are/were paid generally for the work they do/did.

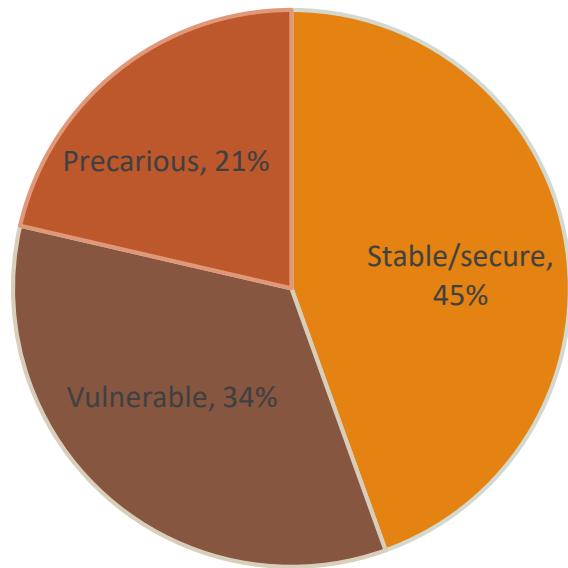
- Majority (65%) are paid by the hour
- 26.6% by salary
- 6.10% were by the job/task
- 2.30% reported to get paid in some other way.

Characteristics of Employment



Characteristics of Employment

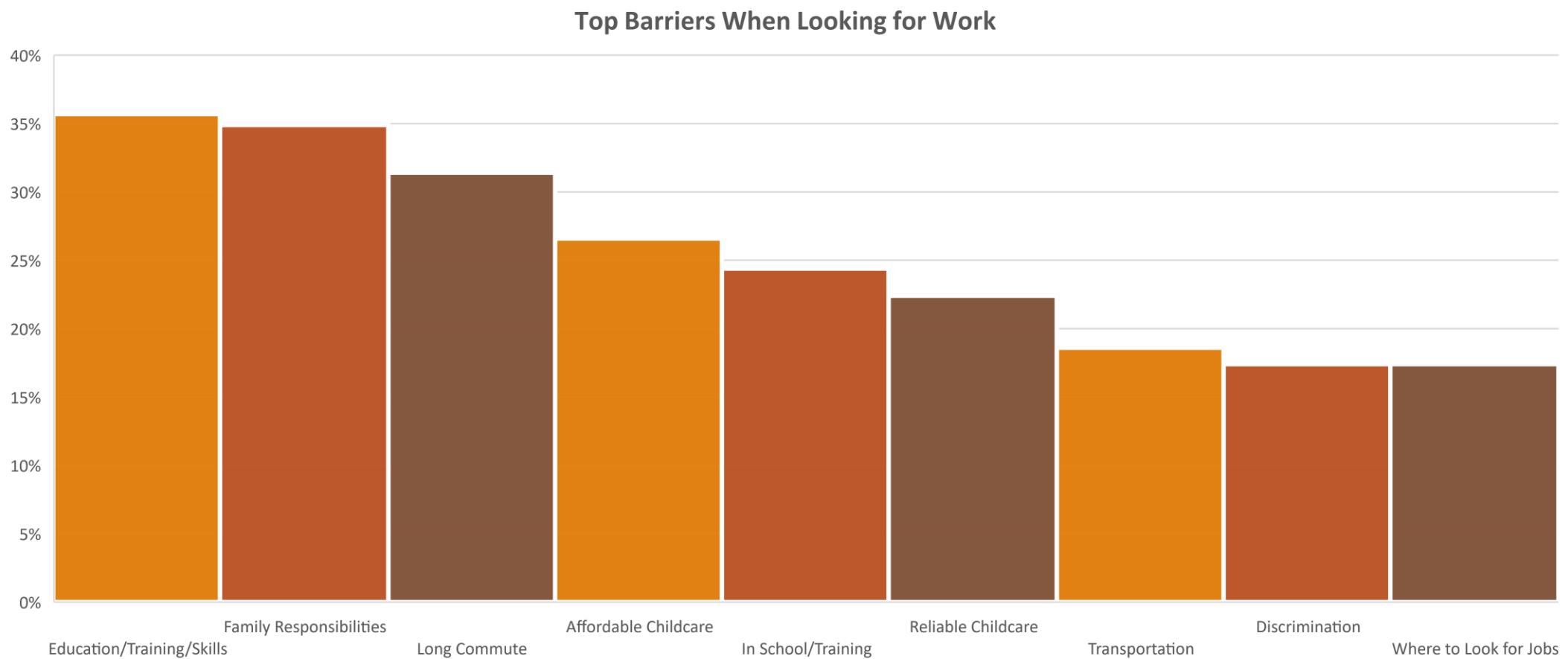
Employment Precarity Classifications



Employment precarity:

- Calculated using 10 survey items that capture characteristics of employment
- Includes measures such as:
 - Employment arrangement (standard vs. temporary, contract or no contract, day labor, etc.)
 - Wages & hours
 - Benefits
 - Ability to exercise workers' rights
- Generates comprehensive measure of employment quality and employment security.

Barriers To Employment



Facilitators Of Employment

- The vast majority of participants identified these facilitators to employment:
 - **Over 90%** agreed that **having a license or reliable vehicle** helped to get or keep work
 - **88%** said that **having a college degree** helped them to get or keep work
 - **75%** said that **a job training program** helped them to get or keep work
- Family, friends, and acquaintances were also facilitators of employment- both through recommendations and informing about available jobs

Measures of Mental Health

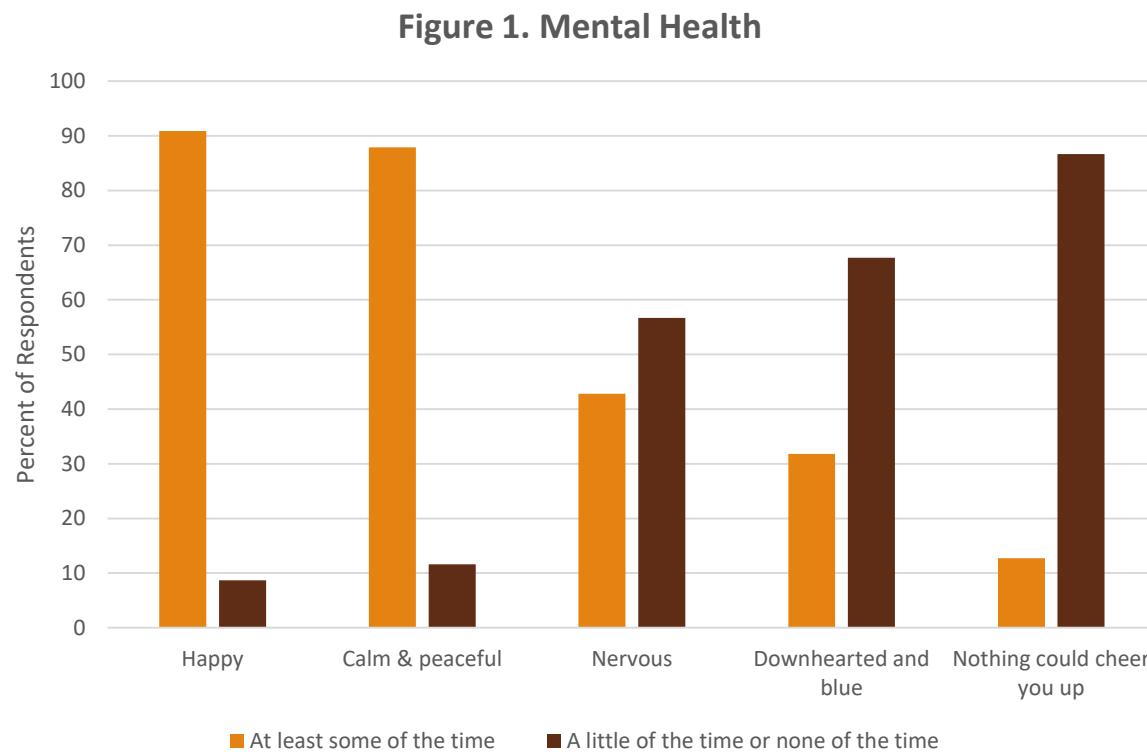
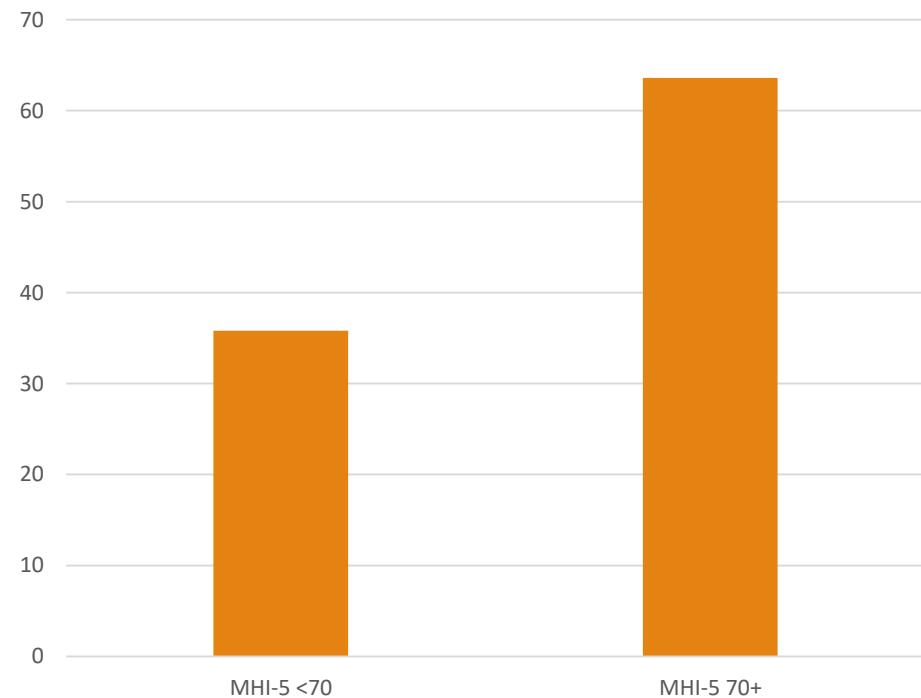
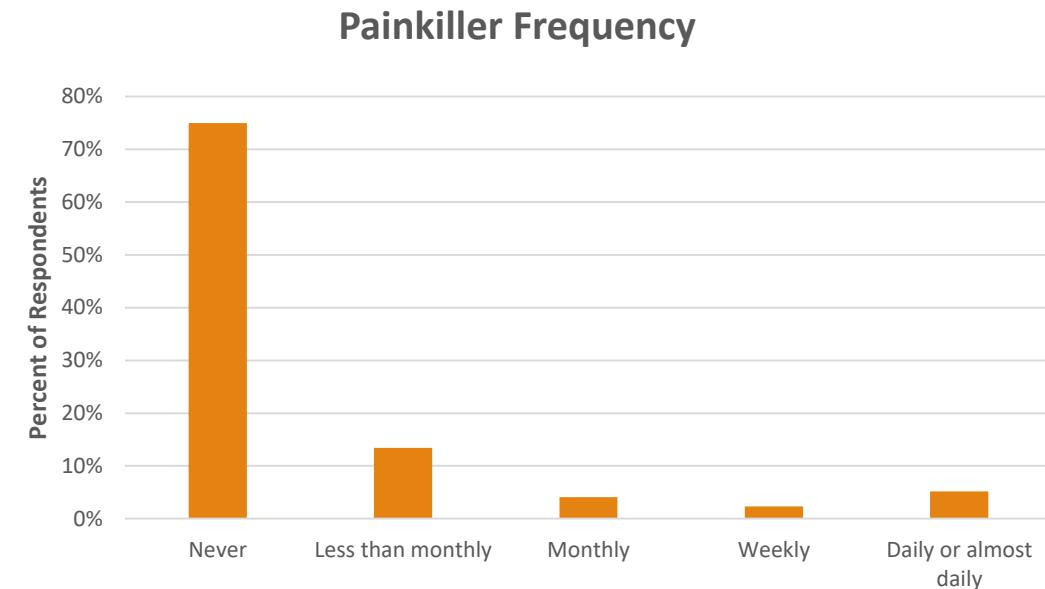
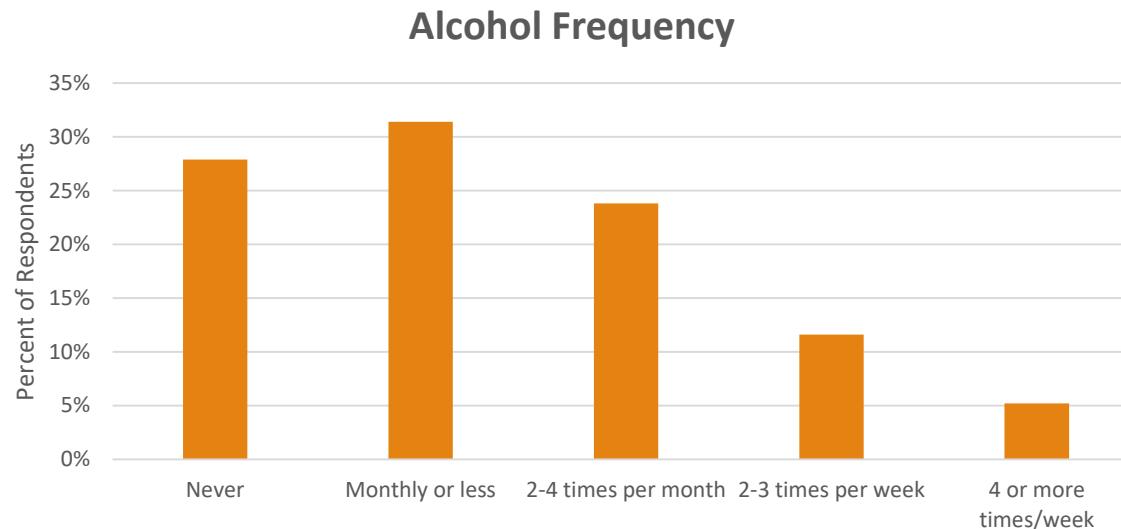


Figure 2. Mental Health MHI Scores



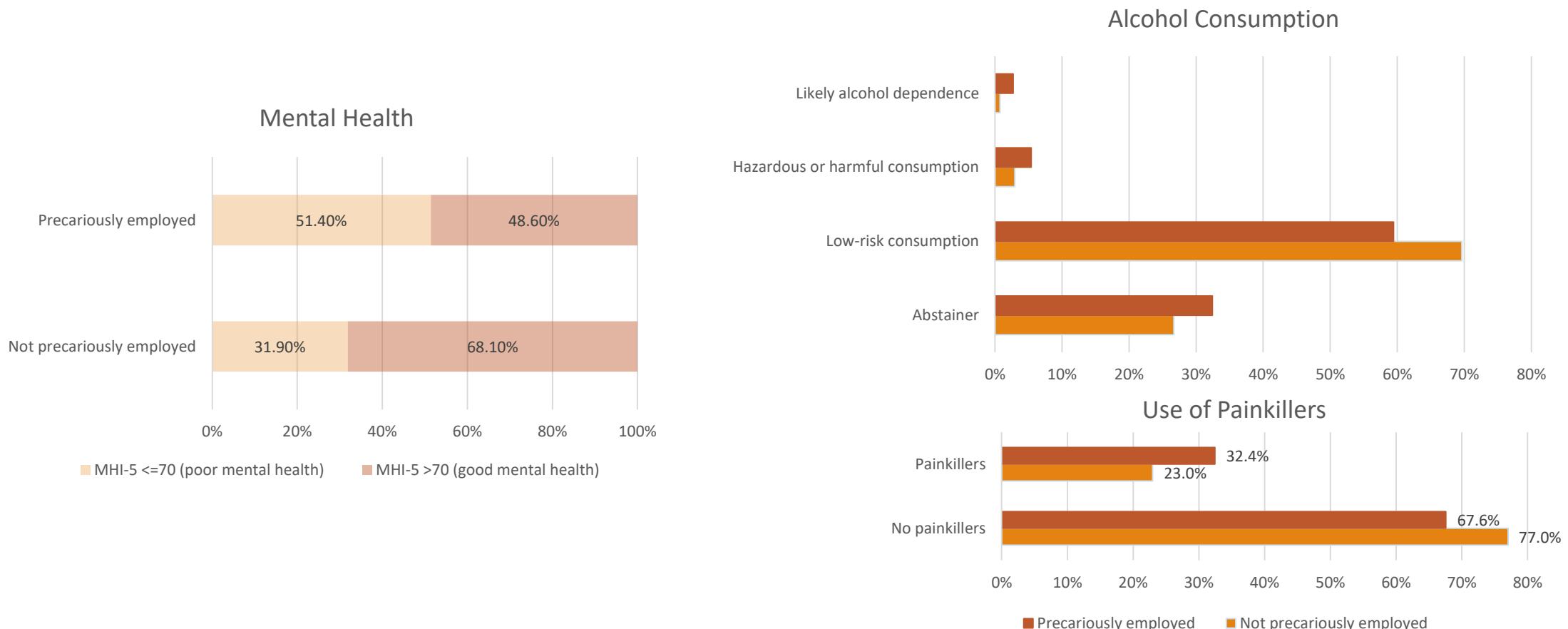
Measures of Health



- 28.2% said that their alcohol consumption had increased more since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic
- 15.3% said they had been drinking more when they do drink since the start of the pandemic

- 30.2% said that they were using painkillers without a prescription

Measures of Health: Precariously vs. Not Precariously Employed



Key Findings

- The final sample for this survey shares some characteristics with what is known about the overall population of Boone County (e.g., race and ethnicity breakdown, median income, educational attainment) and differs from population-level data by some characteristics (e.g., more women and individuals with children in the home participated in this survey).
- Access to reliable transportation, having the skills and education needed for good jobs, and having a network of friends and family who help to connect participants with jobs were reported as the most important facilitators to employment.
- For this sample, employment in the most precarious jobs was correlated with reports of poor mental health compared to those in less precarious jobs.
- Employment precarity may also be correlated with reports of increased or more dangerous substance use (alcohol and painkiller use).

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Summary

What We Learned:

- There will be bumps along the way but creativity and persistence is needed to keep moving forward.
- Challenges brought opportunities for self-reflection on public health's role and ability to engage with stakeholders in other sectors.
- Reflection on use of language and ways to connect with the community and find ways everyone can connect and use common language.

What to Continue Going Forward:

- Using feedback from our community members, elected officials and stakeholders to continually improve our work.
- Educating our community about work as a social determinant of health and empower them to create change.

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Please feel free to contact me

Amanda Mehl

Questions?

THANK YOU!

APPLICABLE BCHWI REPORTS CAN BE LOCATED ON OUR WEBSITE AT:

[https://www.boonecountyil.gov/government/departments/health department/chronic disease prevention program.php](https://www.boonecountyil.gov/government/departments/health_department/chronic_disease_prevention_program.php)

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