



Pulse Survey
Battle Creek, Michigan
Data Collected 2014 and 2019

BC Pulse, working to build an effective early childhood system in Battle Creek since 2012

The Pulse Survey is funded by a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

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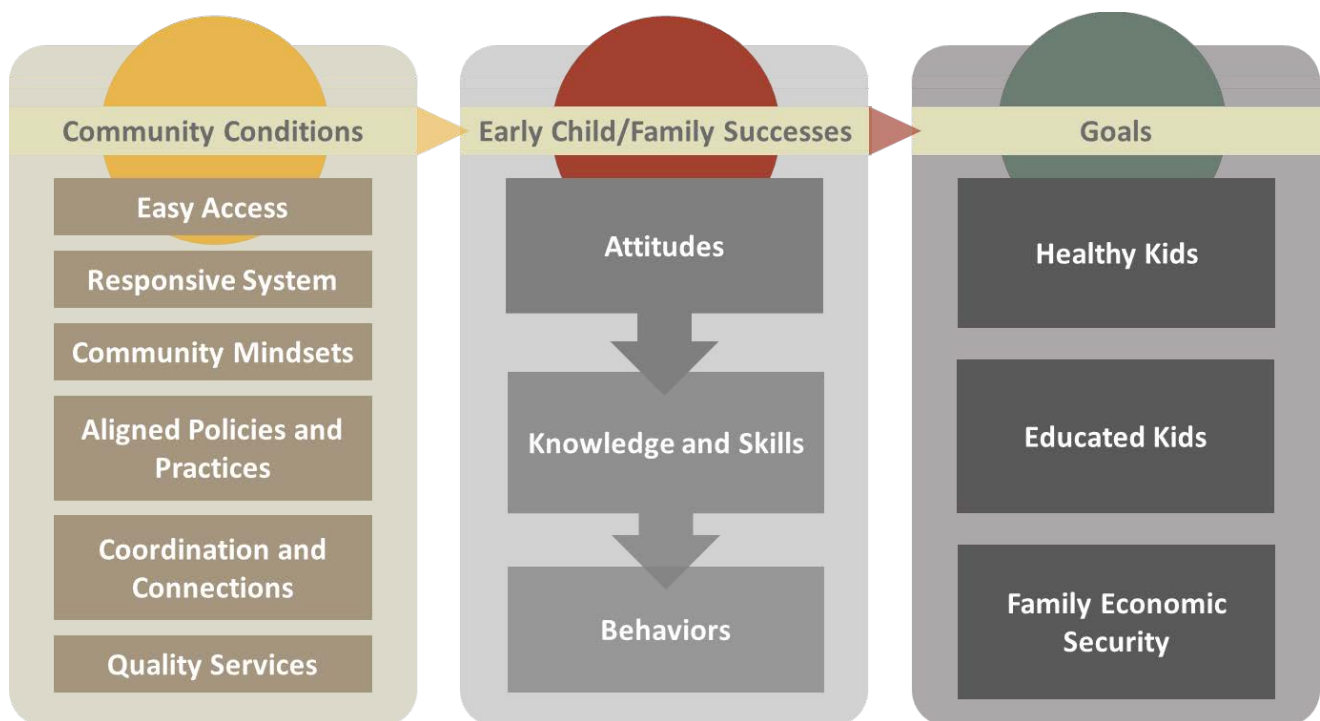
About the Pulse Survey

The Pulse Survey was designed to help **local organizations and funders** learn more about the **needs, desires, and experiences of vulnerable families** with children ages 0-5 in Battle Creek and **how the community can best support these families**.

This survey was developed by the System exChange Team at Michigan State University, BC Pulse, and an advisory group representing organizations providing health, education, and financial supports in the Battle Creek community. The survey was funded through a grant received from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

The framework illustrates the key concepts measured in the survey, reflecting an understanding that community conditions impact child/family successes, which lead to improved population-level outcomes (goals).

Pulse Survey Framework



The Population Targeted in this Survey

The survey was given to vulnerable families in Battle Creek in Summer 2014 and Fall 2019. Individuals were considered **vulnerable** if they met one or more of the following criteria:

- Families living at or below **200% of the federal poverty level**
- **Teenagers who are pregnant or have children**
- Individuals who identified themselves as a **racial/ethnic minority**

Survey Sites

Data were collected from families receiving services from organizations providing health, education, and financial supports in the Battle Creek community. Each type of site had questions specific to its goal area (e.g., education specific question, health specific questions) as well as common questions answered by respondents across sites.

Health	2014	2019	Education	2014	2019	FES	2014	2019
Surveys Collected:	274	309	Surveys Collected:	128	265	Surveys Collected:	172	172
Sites:			Sites:			Sites:		
Alternatives		✓	BC Christian	✓	✓	Womens Coop	✓	✓
NFP	✓	✓	Community Unlimited		✓	Michigan Works		✓
20 Hands		✓	Altrusa	✓		Goodwill	✓	✓
Grace Health	✓	✓	Calhoun ISD	✓	✓	Community Action		✓
Diaper Distribution		✓	BC Public Schools		✓	Charitable Union	✓	✓
Oaklawn	✓		Garden of Dreams		✓			
WIC	✓	✓	Head Start	✓	✓			
			Lakeview		✓			
			Learning Zone	✓				
			Lemon Tree		✓			
			New Harvest		✓			
			New Level		✓			
			Take A Break	✓				
			Woodlawn Preschool	✓	✓			

Ensuring Representative/Comparable Samples

To ensure the findings were as representative as possible of the population of vulnerable families within Battle Creek, we:

- Selected a variety of sites within Battle Creek where vulnerable families often go for services and supports.
- Used Census strategies to determine the sample size for each of the targeted subgroups (e.g., pregnant moms; families living below poverty, etc.) and data collection sites.

To ensure the 2014 and 2019 samples were **comparable** (or demographically similar), we:

- Compared demographic characteristics between 2014 and 2019 responses and found that, overall, 2019 respondents were more likely to report higher income, be older, and be white than 2014 respondents. Based on this, it was determined that weighting of 2019 responses was needed in order to have two demographically similar groups across years.
- Age, race, and education level were used to compute the weighted scores. This produced demographically similar samples across the two years. The sample demographics for 2014, unweighted and weighted 2019 survey respondents are included in the table below.
- Throughout the report, all Ns and % for 2019 represent findings from the weighted sample.

About the Survey Sample



	2014 N=574		2019 Unweighted N=746		2019 Weighted N=708	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Age						
Younger Than 20	45	9%	19	3%	49	8%
Ages 20 To 24	125	24%	72	10%	151	23%
Ages 25 To 34	200	39%	353	51%	256	40%
Ages 35 To 49	101	20%	152	22%	127	20%
Ages 50 and older	47	9%	94	14%	62	10%
Income	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than \$10,000	221	44%	195	31%	192	30%
\$10,000 to \$23,339	159	31%	155	24%	164	26%
\$23,340 to \$31,459	68	13%	100	16%	108	17%
\$31,460 to \$39,589	26	5%	56	9%	49	8%
\$39,590 to \$47,699	14	3%	43	7%	39	6%
\$47,700 to \$55,819	9	2%	34	5%	32	5%
Over \$55,820	9	2%	40	6%	57	9%
Race/Ethnicity	#	%	#	%	#	%
White	274	50%	374	58%	351	52%
Black	172	32%	193	30%	214	32%
Hispanic	54	10%	44	7%	72	11%
Native American	14	3%	9	1%	8	1%
Asian/Burmese	32	6%	30	5%	31	5%
Education	#	%	#	%	#	%
8th grade or less	24	4%	10	2%	15	2%
Some high school	90	17%	67	10%	121	18%
High school diploma / G.E.D.	188	34%	223	34%	238	35%
Trade / vocational school	19	4%	21	3%	17	3%
Some college	154	28%	186	28%	196	29%
Associate's degree	50	9%	81	12%	64	9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	21	4%	63	11%	23	3%

Note, because the weighted 2019 sample has fewer individuals at the lowest income levels than the 2014 sample, we explored differences by income level across the survey constructs and note in the findings below where income significantly influenced the findings.


⇒ For the Education area, income appears to play a significant role in Child Care and Preschool experiences.




Reading This Report


Each section of this report has two types of data:

- **Highlights** include key trends over time and differences between demographic groups, including by race, age, income.
- **Details** compare 2014 and 2019 responses to individual items. Watch for these notes:
 -  and  indicate a statistically significant change between 2014 and 2019
 - A **green** arrow indicates an improvement or success.
 - An **orange** arrow indicates an area of concern.
 - A **blue** arrow indicates a change that is neutral or of no concern.
 - For each question/year, you'll find this data:
 - "N=" which indicates the number of responses for that particular question (weighted N provided for 2019)
 - The sites where the question was asked: Ed = Education FES = FES Sites H = Health Sites

2014
N=186
Ed, FES


Highlights: Child Care		Full Population	White	African-American	Latinx/Asian /Native American	Income
 <p>Items marked in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange: Area of concern • Blue: No change/no concern/neutral • Green: Improvement/Success 	Looking for childcare	Fewer parents reported looking for childcare in 2019 (37%) than in 2014 (50%)	Less likely to look for child care outside of home in 2019(36%) than in 2014 (54%)	Less likely to look for child care outside of home in 2019 (40%) than in 2014 (64%)		Families with income \$31,460 and higher reported more difficulty finding desired childcare in 2019 (66%) than in 2014 (22%)
	Satisfaction with childcare	Satisfaction with childcare decreased between 2019 (51%) and 2014 (77%)	Less happy with child care in 2019 (55%) than in 2014 (77%)	Less happy with child care in 2019 (44%) than in 2014 (74%)		Parents with lowest incomes least likely to be happy with child care in 2019 (34%)
	Climate for Inclusion within childcare/ preschool settings	Majority of parents (88%) did not report feeling unwelcome in child care setting				Income (46%) was most common reason reported by those who felt unwelcome

Details: Child Care Experiences				
Easy Access to Quality Child Care Settings	<i>Have you tried to find childcare with someone outside your family?</i>		2014 N=186 Ed, FES	2019 N=305 Ed, FES
	Yes, have tried to find child care.		50%	 37%
	<i>If yes, which of the statements below describe this experience?</i>		N=50-70	N=83-96
	Found childcare that they are happy with		77%	 51%
	Had difficulty finding the child care they wanted		63%	72%
	Found there are no good options for child care in their neighborhood		46%	53%
Parent Priorities for Quality Child Care	<i>In your opinion, what are the characteristics of a high quality childcare or preschool setting?</i>		2014 N=172 Ed, FES	2019 N=363 Ed, FES
	Qualified nurturing staff			
	Adults who are friendly, warm, and loving		43%	50%
	Adults who have experience and education in early childhood development		36%	34%
	Quality child care sites			
	Small group sizes and adult-to-child ratios		33%	52%
	Site is licensed by the State of Michigan		44%	42%
	Quality learning opportunities			
	Learning opportunities that will help my child succeed in school		58%	 44%
	Selected by less than 25% of parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site has a 4 or 5 star rating on the Great Start to Quality system Use of technology in the classroom Opportunities for meaningful parent involvement Other children who have a common cultural background as my child Adults who have a common cultural background as my child 			
Inclusive Climate	Do you or your family ever feel unwelcome or uncomfortable at your child’s childcare/preschool/school because of any of the following? (Select ALL that apply)		2014 Not asked	2019 N=239 Ed
	Yes to ANY item below			12%
	Top reasons given by those who felt unwelcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income Level (46%) Language spoken (22%) Appearance (21%) 	The following items were selected by less than 7% of those who felt unwelcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race/ethnicity Where you live Disability Gender 		

Highlights: Preschool		Full Population	White	African-American	Latinx/Asian /Native American	Income
 <p>Items marked in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange: Area of concern Blue: No change/no concern/neutral Green: Improvement/Success 	Enrollment in preschool					Income less than \$10K most likely (52%) to have children enrolled in preschool compared to families with income over \$10k (28%)
	Beliefs about preschool	No shifts between 2019 & 2014				
	School attendance	Most parents report making efforts to limit child's absences (77%)	Parents of color (85%) less likely to report making efforts to reduce school absences in 2019 than white parents (97%).			
	Responsive environment	Teachers less likely to ask parents about needs and connect them to services in 2019 (41%) than in 2014 (57%)	More likely to report teachers providing info on how to support learning at home in 2019 (87%) than in 2014 (67%)	Teachers less likely to ask about needs and connect to services in 2019 (37%) than in 2014 (64%)	More likely to be asked by teacher about their concerns related to child's learning in 2019 (56%) than in 2014 (22%)	
		Most parents continue to feel heard by school staff (92%)			Teacher less likely to ask if they know where to go to get help for emotional well-being in 2019 (30%) than in 2018 (61%)	

Details: Preschool Experiences			
Preschool Access and Enrollment	<i>Does your child attend preschool? (yes)</i>	2014 N=58 FES, H	2019 N=87 FES, H
	Parents of 3 and 4 year olds	43%	33%
	Parents of 3 year olds	26%	19%
	Parents of 4 year olds	63%	54%
	<i>Parents of Children 3 and 4 years old: If your child does not attend preschool, please select the reasons:</i>	2014 N=28 FES, H	2019 N=45 FES, H
	Preschool isn't right for my child/it's not needed		
	My child is too old/young for preschool.	54%	44%
	I stay home with my child.	36%	11% ↓
	Preschool isn't accessible		
	Preschool costs too much.	25%	11%
I have a family member or friend who cares for my child.	21%	16%	
Fewer than 7% of parents of children 3-4 who do not attend preschool named these reasons:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't have transportation to get my child to preschool. There is no room for my child in the preschool I wanted. Preschools can't serve my child's unique needs. Signing up for preschool is too complicated and/or time-consuming. There are no quality preschools nearby. There are no quality preschools that fit my schedule. There is no preschool in my community that fits my family's culture. I have not considered sending my child to preschool. 			
Adults' Attitudes about Pre-School and School Readiness	<i>Which of the following do you agree with? (Select ALL that apply)</i>	2014 N=545 Ed, FES, H	2019 N=685 Ed, FES, H
	Parents play an important role in getting their kids ready for school	88%	84%
	Children need to go to preschool to be ready for school	72%	75%
	There are some apps, websites, or TV programs that are as good as preschool	15%	13%
	Fewer than 5% of adults agreed with these statements:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only kids with disabilities need preschool You have to be on public assistance for your children to go to preschool I didn't need preschool, so my kids won't need it either Preschool is not a safe place 			


Details: Preschool Experiences				
Adults' Attitudes about School Attendance	<i>Which of the following statements best reflects how you feel about your child missing days of preschool or kindergarten?</i>	2014 Not asked		2019 N=178 Ed
	I do everything I can to make sure my child is in school every day			77%
	I try to make sure my child is in school every day but sometimes I let him/her miss			14%
	I worry about the number of times my child has missed school but I have not done much about it			6%
	I don't really worry about how often my child misses school			4%
Responsive Providers and System	<i>Has your child's teacher or other school staff talked to you in the last 3 months about:</i>	2014 N=63 Ed		2019 N=165 Ed
	Ways you can get together with your neighbors or other parents (for example, neighborhood groups, parent groups, activities at the park)?	41%		42%
	Resources for parents and families in your area (for example, recreational activities, child care, counseling, housing)?	45%		55%
	If you have any concerns about your child's learning, development, or behavior?	51%		60%
	If you know where to go for help with your child's emotional well-being?	57%		52%
	Ways that you can support your child's learning at home?	72%		83%
	<i>During your most recent interactions with your child's school, did your child's teacher or other school staff...</i>	2014 N=63 Ed		2019 N=177 Ed
	Ask about needs AND refer you to resources (Yes to following two items)	57%	↓	41%
	Ask you about other (non-school) needs or concerns you might have, such as needing help with housing, health, or emotional support?	67%		59%
	Refer you to any needed programs, services, or resources?	62%	↓	46%
	Make you feel heard (Yes to following three items)	93%		92%
	Answer all of your questions?	97%		98%
	Explain things clearly to you?	97%		94%
Hear your concerns and respond to them in a way that made you feel heard?	97%		92%	

Highlights: Early Child/Family Successes		Full Population	White	African-American	Latinx/Asian /Native American	Parent Age
 <p>Items marked in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange: Area of concern Blue: No change/no concern/neutral Green: Improvement/Success 	Beliefs About When Learning Starts	Parents less likely in 2019 (63%) to believe that learning starts at birth or before than in 2014 (73%)	Less likely in 2019 (64%) to believe that learning starts at birth or before than in 2014 (81%)			Parents under 20 more likely to report that learning starts at birth or before in 2019
	Reading To Children	No shifts between 2014 and 2019				
	Talking and Singing to Children	About half of parents (55%) report talking to and singing to their child in 2019	More likely to tell stories or sing to their child (68%) than other parents (43%)	Less likely to tell stories or sing to their child (43%) than other parents (68%)		
	Parent Confidence in Helping Their Child Learn	Higher levels of confidence in helping child have a conversation (92%) and interact with peers (81%) in 2019 compared to 2014 (82% and 68%, respectively).		Higher levels of confidence in helping their child learn in 2019		Parents in their 20's more confident than older parents in 2019
	Beliefs about Role Parents Play in School Readiness	No shifts between 2014 and 2019	LESS likely to believe that parents play an important role in getting their kids ready for school in 2019 (87%) than in 2014 (93%).		LESS likely to believe that parents play an important role in getting their kids ready for school in 2019 (72%) than in 2014 (84%).	

Details: Early Child/Family Successes				
Beliefs about When Children Start Learning	<i>At what age do you think a child starts learning?</i>	2014 N=528 Ed, FES, H		2019 N=698 Ed, FES, H
	At birth or before	73%	↓	63%
	As an infant or later	28%		37%
Reading to Children	<i>How often do you read to/look at picture books with your child? Parents of children under 1</i>	2014 N=64 Ed, FES, H		2019 N=96 Ed, FES, H
	Every day	38%		39%
	Several times a week	34%		28%
	Once a week or less	28%		33%
	<i>How often do you read to/look at picture books with your child? Parents of children ages 1-5</i>	2014 N=248 Ed, FES, H		2019 N=302 Ed, FES, H
	Every day	53%		47%
	Several times a week	36%		43%
Once a week or less	11%		10%	
Telling Stories and Singing Songs to Children	<i>How often do you tell stories or sing songs to your child? Parents of children under 1</i>	2014 Not asked		2019 N=388 Ed, FES, H
	Every day			61%
	Several times a week			18%
	Once a week or less			21%
	<i>How often do you tell stories or sing songs to your child? Parents of children ages 1-5</i>	2014 N/A		2019 N=388 Ed, FES, H
	Every day			57%
	Several times a week			36%
Once a week or less			7%	
Parent Engagement	<i>Have you participated in any of the following activities in the last 12 months?</i>			2019 N=239 Ed
	Yes, have participated			66%
	<i>In what ways have you participated?</i>			2019 N=158 Ed
	Distributed Information			72%
	Joined a Group			51%
	Engaged in Leadership			12%
	Engaged in Advocacy			10%

Details: Early Child/Family Successes

Confidence in Preparing Children for Kindergarten	<i>To what extent do you (or did you) feel confident in helping your child learn the following skills by the time they start(ed) kindergarten? (% reflects those who selected “confident” or “very confident”)</i>	2014 N=115 Ed		2019 N=229 Ed
		Social/Emotional Skills		
	Interact well with peers	68%	↑	81%
	Have a conversation	82%	↑	92%
	Follow directions	71%		80%
	Understand and be able to handle their emotions in positive ways	63%		65%
	Academic Skills			
	Sort colors	81%		84%
	Identify 10 letters and identify their sounds	77%		80%
	Use and appreciate books	76%		78%
	Count to 20	65%		73%
	Know where he/she lives	71%		62%
	Physical Development			
	Jump and hop	87%		92%
	Use pencils and crayons	86%		91%

Highlights: Quality Supports		Full Population	White	African-American
	<p>Support from Medical Providers around Child Development</p>	<p>Parents more likely in 2019 to say they go to doctors for support in areas like vision/hearing, coordination/mobility, behavior, and managing emotions than in 2014.</p>	<p>Less likely in 2019 (60%) to say they learn about what to expect from their doctor/medical professional than in 2014 (71%)</p>	<p>Less likely in 2019 (48%) to say they learn about what to expect from their doctor/medical professional than in 2014 (63%)</p>

- Items marked in:
- Orange: Area of concern
 - Blue: No change/no concern/neutral
 - Green: Improvement/Success

Details: Quality Supports For Families

Where Parents Learn What to Expect	<i>Where have you learned about what you can expect from your child at different ages?</i>				2014		2019
					N=370		N=585
					Ed, FES		Ed, FES
	A parent or family member				72%		73%
	Doctor or medical professional				60%		55%
	My own experience - I have other children				50%		50%
	Friends				48%		41%
	Books				47%		42%
The Internet				34%		35%	
Family Coach				11%		11%	

Where Parents Look for Help for their Children	<i>Where would you go if your child needed extra help in any of these areas?</i>				
	% of parents selecting each option in 2019. Top choices for each area (vision, etc.) are bolded.				
	Arrows (↑↓) indicate significant change from 2014 to 2019. N=227				
		Family/Friends	Medical Provider	School System	Family Coach
	Vision/Hearing	10%	↑93%	↓9%	5%
	Speaking/Language	19%	52%	47%	16%
	Coordination/Mobility	20%	↑61%	↓22%	10%
	Learning reading and math	33%	14%	78%	13%
Behaving appropriately	45%	↑42%	34%	17%	
Managing emotions	53%	↑40%	27%	↓19%	
Getting along with other children	55%	21%	53%	19%	