# Senior Assets for Optimal Living

*Healthy and positive aging among the growing population of senior citizens requires community, family, and individual assets conducive to optimal living. The Senior Assets provide a model for an engaging society where seniors flourish and thrive.*

**THE LEGACY CENTER**
FOR COMMUNITY SUCCESS

## External Assets

### Support

1. **Family Support:** Family members are actively involved and provide appropriate levels of love and support (connect at least once a week)

2. **Positive Family Communication:** Senior and family regularly participate in constructive, stimulating conversation. Each willing to seek advice/counsel from the other

3. **Family Proximity:** Family member lives within an hour driving distance

4. **Other Relationships:** Senior has two or more people to socialize with and visit regularly

5. **Caring Neighbors:** Senior experiences caring neighbors

6. **Caring Groups:** Seniors experiences groups, clubs, organizations, and faith-based communities that provide a caring, encouraging environment.

### Empowerment

7. **Community Values Seniors:** Senior perceives that the community values seniors through services provided and support given by the community

8. **Senior as a Resource:** Senior holds a role in the community utilizing their opinion, time, money, talent, or skills

9. **Physical Safety:** Senior feels safe at home, in the neighborhood, and in the community

10. **Financial Safety:** Senior has support and/or ability to protect their assets from abuse or misuse by others (scam awareness)

### Expectations

11. **Positive Peer Influences:** Senior has a friend or peer who models healthy behaviors

12. **Encouragement:** Senior has people encouraging him/her to live well

13. **Family Boundaries:** Healthy Family Boundaries have been discussed/communicated

### Constructive Use of Time

14. **Creative Activities:** Senior participates in cultural activities or hobbies

15. **Programs:** Senior participates in clubs, organizations, or classes

16. **Faith Based Activities:** Senior participates in activities in a faith-based organization

17. **Physical Activity:** Senior participates in physical activities

18. **Nutritional Health:** Senior adheres to nutritional guidelines

## Internal Assets

### Lifelong Learning

19. **Learning Engagement:** Senior is actively engaged in learning in a structured or unstructured setting (internet, hands-on experiences..)

20. **Mental Exercise:** Senior reports doing a variety of challenging "brainwork" daily (reading, puzzles, music, writing, art..)

21. **Resilience:** Despite current and future limitations/roadblocks, senior is motivated to cope with/recover from adversity, remaining engaged

### Positive Values

22. **Caring:** Senior places high value on helping other people

23. **Equality and Social Justice:** Senior values human rights and recognizes the dignity of every human being

24. **Responsibility:** Senior accepts and takes personal responsibility

25. **Restraint:** Senior believes it is important not to engage in risky behaviors that harm themselves or others (abuse alcohol or other drugs, gamble more than willing to lose, drive if putting themselves and others in harms way..)

### Social Competencies

26. **Planning and Decision Making:** Senior demonstrates critical thinking and problem solving skills in planning for current and future opportunities, limitations and roadblocks (including end of life plan)

27. **Interpersonal Competence:** Senior has empathy, sensitivity, assertiveness, and friendship skills

28. **Resistance Skills:** Senior can resist putting self in dangerous situations (financial, physical, emotional)

### Positive Outlook

29. **Personal Power:** Senior believes that he or she has control over things in his/her life

30. **Self-Esteem:** Senior reports having good self-esteem

31. **Sense of Purpose:** Senior reports that "my life has a purpose"

32. **Positive View of Personal Future:** Senior is optimistic about his or her personal future

**Senior Services**
Midland County Council on Aging

# THE LEGACY CENTER
## FOR COMMUNITY SUCCESS

# Senior Assets for Optimal Living

Executive Summary and Complete Survey Report

Results from The Legacy Center for Community Success

Midland County
Midland, MI
October 2019

3200 James Savage Rd. #5
Midland, MI 48642

# Contents

# Senior Assets for Optimal Living

## Executive Summary
## Midland County

*History:*

In 2014 The Legacy Center for Community Success received a request from Senior Services of Midland County to help identify, define, and measure key attributes older adult need in their lives to live optimally. Inspiration was taken from the research-based framework that Midland County has been utilizing to measure basic building blocks of human development in young people.

This initiative was funded by The Midland Area Community Foundation.

A team of key stakeholders was assembled to serve and guide the process as the Senior Assets for Optimal Living Steering Team. Taking care to select local representation well versed in research on aging, many educated in gerontology, and all worked with the older adult population.

It is widely understood in Midland County as in any community, that some older adults are not doing well. Senior Services was convinced that wonderful research exists from many reputable universities that proves the importance of wellbeing. What Midland needed was a much better idea of the characteristics, traits, supports, and opportunities older adults are experiencing in Midland. Senior Services named these wellbeing indicators "Senior Assets for Optimal Living".

*Senior Assets for Optimal Living Defined*

Through research reviews and data analysis, a list of thirty-two Senior Assets for Optimal Living were identified that established a framework of healthy and positive aging among the growing population of older adults. This list provides a model for engaging the community in the important work of creating an environment where all older adults can flourish and thrive. The Senior Assets framework covers extensive territory of supports, empowerment, expectations, constructive use of time, lifelong learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive outlook.

*Senior Assets for Optimal Living Measured*

Some measuring of older adults wellbeing happens in silo's, mostly in the medical field. Data includes only those people who visit the doctor or hospital and there are many regulations around this data.  Senior Services needed a process to cast a wide net and hear from a diverse group of older adults.  In 2014 a baseline measure was taken.  In 2019 a second measure was desired.   A group of approximately two hundred community members came together to blanket Midland County older adult population with surveys, every township in the county participated.  An astounding 2,085 older adults completed the survey.

The older adults in the community were asked questions about their experiences in each of the thirty-two assets.  Their answers form the basis of this report.

 To help grasp the depth of the concepts measured, we can divide the assets into two key categories:  external assets and internal assets.  External assets are the positive experiences that families, neighbors, community groups, and others provide our older adult population.  Internal assets are the choices, actions, and beliefs that form a person's inner guidance.

There is no question that these assets are crucial for the wellbeing of our older adult population.  This report summarizes the extent to which our older adult population experience these Assets for Optimal Living.

*Recommendation*
- Give adequate support through long-term positive relationships
- Provide meaningful community involvement opportunities
- Engage older adults in groups, clubs, organizations, faith-based communities that provide a caring encouraging environment
- Provide supports to encourage older adults to plan for the future
- Provide supports to encourage older adults to set, discuss and communicate boundaries
- Help older adults connect to their community

# Senior Assets for Optimal Living Steering

Team served to guide and direct the process.  Members included:

Charlie Schwedler, Senior Services
Richard Dolinski, The Legacy Center, Founder
Amanda Ewald, Midland Community Center
Angela Cole, Attorney at Law
Deb Conarty, Senior Services
Kim Stuhler, United Way
Barb Zebley-Oldani, Senior Services
Darlene Nadane, A&D Homecare
David Scott, Department Human Services
Deana Mason, Community Mental Health
Elaine White, Member at Large
Gib Giblin, Midland Evangelical Free Church
Greg Dorrien, West Midland Family Center
Jen McCormack, Coleman Schools
Jim Gall, Right at Home
Kim Samborn, Senior Housing
Kyle Tomaski, North Midland Family Center
Mike DeRuyter, Midland Reformed Church
Mike Wood, Jerome Township Supervisor
Nicole Swanton, Midland County Health Department
Pam Singer, The Legacy Center
Ross Ahlich, Veterans Administration
Ruth Bott, Member at Large

The Senior Assets for Optimal Living were assessed in Midland County from March 4th through April 29th 2019.  Below you will find a brief summary of demographic data that describes the older adult population who participated in this study.

## DETERMINING ASSET LEVELS

A team of 184 Survey Team members surveyed 2,085 Midland County Older Adult Citizens March 4th – April 29th



| Audience |
| --- |
| Midland County Older Adults 60+ |
| Older Adults by Gender |
| Older Adults 60-69, 70-79, 80-89, 90-99, 100+ |
| Older Adults in Assisted or Independent Living |
| Older Adults Social Security as Main Income or Not |
| Older Adults Living in City and by township |

# SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

## Gender of our Older Adults

67% 1,364
33% 687

■ Men ■ Women
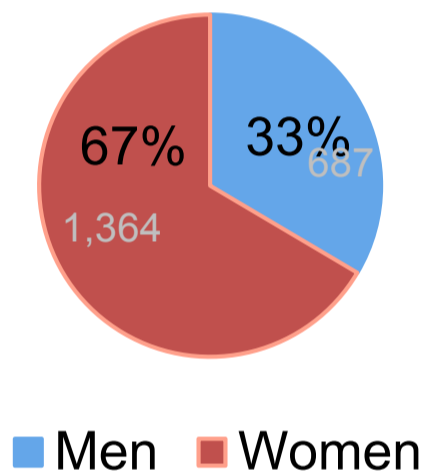
## Ages of our Older Adult Survey Participants

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 39.1% 799 | 33.4% 683 | 21.4% 437 | 5.9% 120 | 0.3% 6 |
| 60-69 Years | 70-79 Years | 80-89 Years | 90-99 Years | 100+ Years |

## Is Social Security your Main Source of Income?

39% 61%

■ No
■ Yes
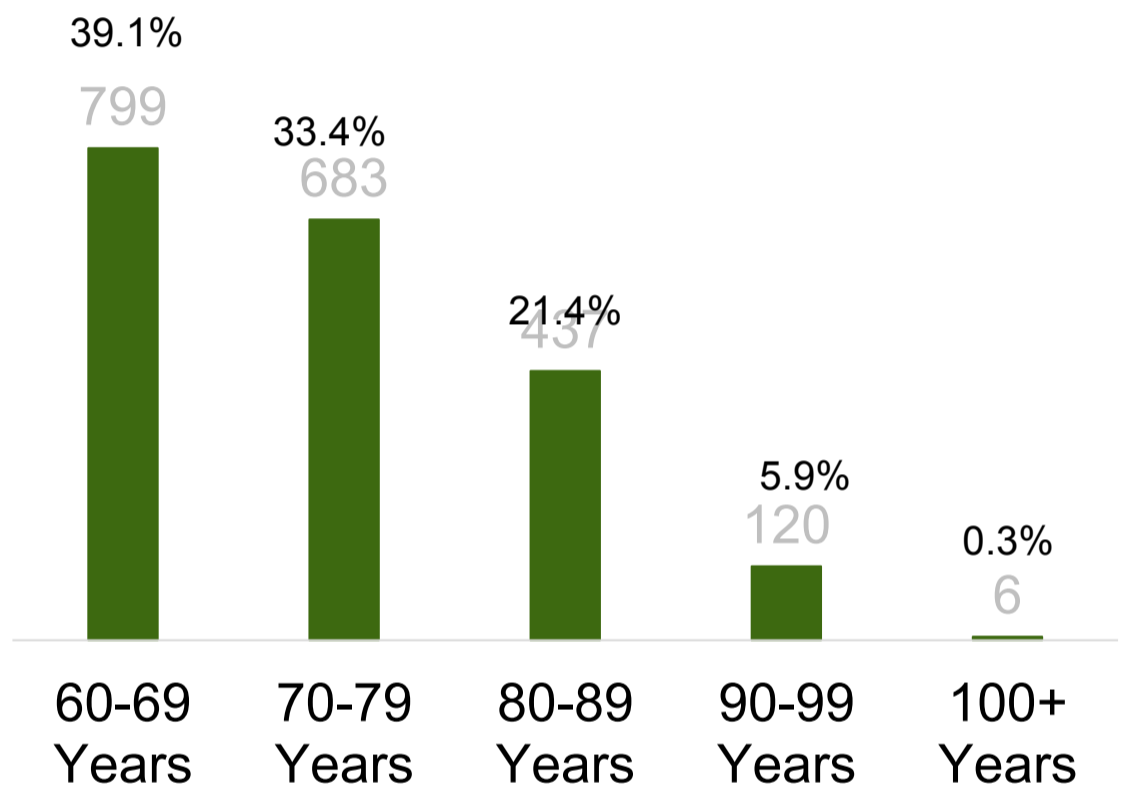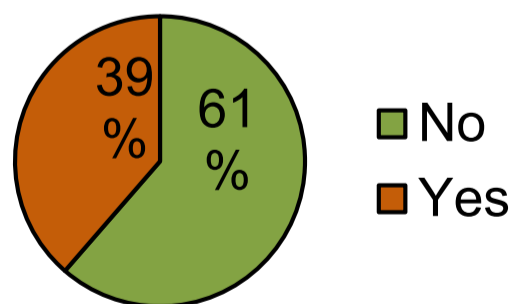
Nationally, almost 75% of Social Security recipients aged 65+ depend on Social Security for all or most of their monthly income.    (Social Security Administration, 2012)

# SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

## Overall Residency

61.1%
1224

38.9%
779

City of Midland    Township Areas

## Township Participants

| | |
|---|---|
| City of Midland | 1224 |
| Edenville Township | 34 |
| Geneva Township | 31 |
| Greendale Township | 30 |
| Homer Township | 77 |
| Hope Township | 30 |
| Ingersoll Township | 33 |
| Jasper Township | 4 |
| Jerome Township | 108 |
| Larkin Township | 67 |
| Lee Township | 61 |
| Lincoln Township | 62 |
| Midland Township | 99 |
| Mills Township | 35 |
| Mount Haley Township | 25 |
| Porter Township | 11 |
| Warren Township | 72 |

## Do you reside in Assisted Living?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 108 | 5.4% |
| No | 1900 | 94.6% |

Midland County: Assisted Living and Adult Foster Care estimated 335 capacity = 2.02% of our older adult population

# Older Adult Assets in Midland County
# 2014-2019 Comparison – External Assets

The Senior Assets for Optimal Living framework covers experiences of older adults and their supports, opportunities, values, skills, and identity. Older adults were asked questions about their experiences for each of the 32 assets. Their answers form the basis for this report. To understand the concepts measured, we can divide these assets into two areas: external assets and internal assets.

External assets are the positive experiences that families, neighbors, community groups, and others provide our older adult population. Internal assets are the choices, actions, and beliefs that form a person's inner guidance.

There is no question that these assets are crucial for the wellbeing of our older adult population. This report summarizes the extent to which our older adult population experience these Assets for Optimal Living
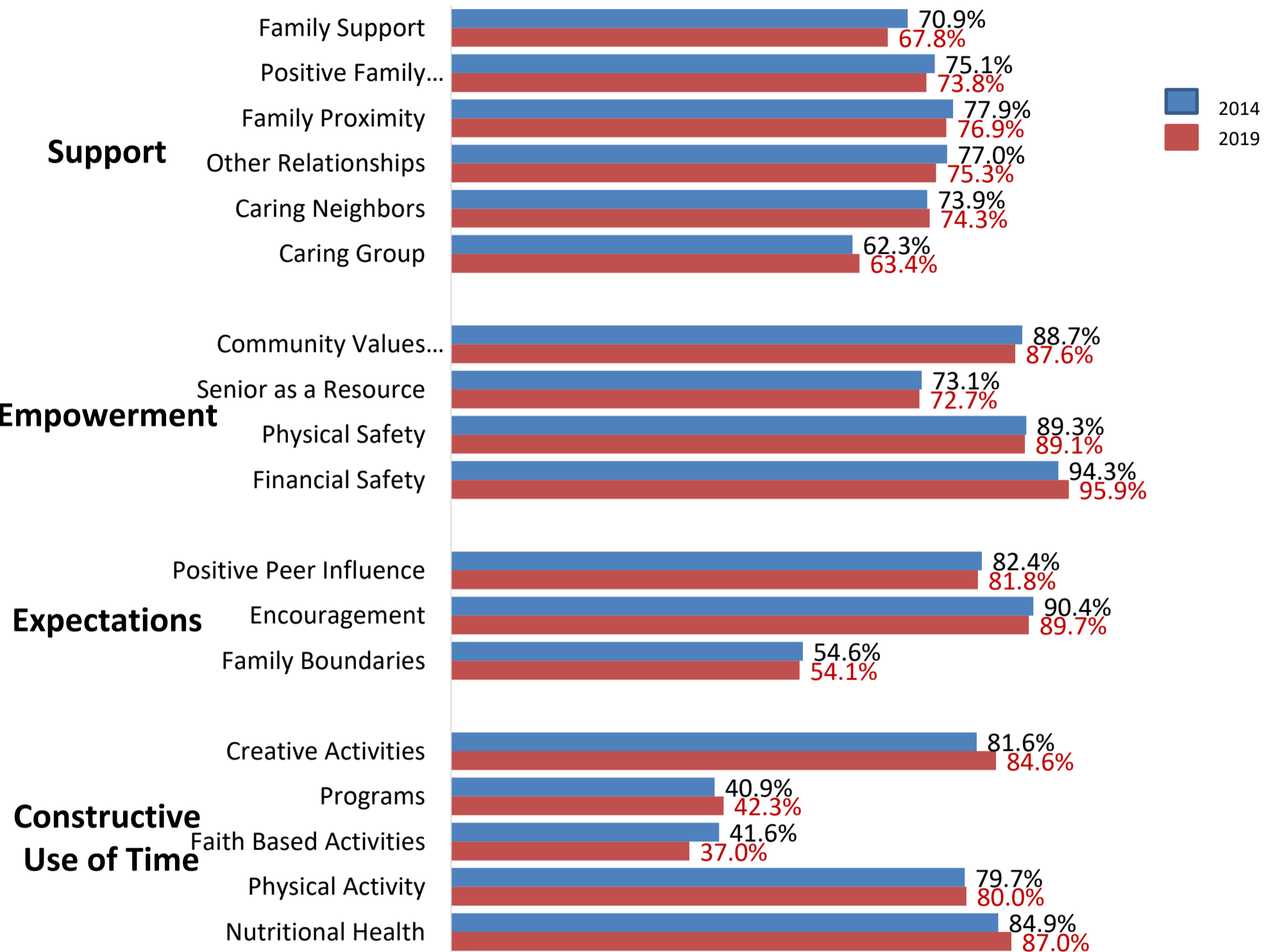
This table reflects percentages of External Senior Assets reported by the total sample of older adults surveyed. We have also included reference data from 2014 survey.

| Category | Asset name | Definition | Percent 2014 | Percent 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Support** | 1. Family Support | Family members are actively involved and provide appropriate levels of love and support (connect at least once a week) | 70.9 | 67.8 |
| | 2. Positive Family Communication | Senior and family regularly participate in constructive, stimulating conversation. Each willing to seek advice/counsel from other | 75.1 | 73.8 |
| | 3. Family Proximity | Family member lives within an hour driving distance | 77.9 | 76.9 |
| | 4. Other Relationships | Senior has two or more people to socialize with and visit regularly | 77.0 | 75.3 |
| | 5. Caring Neighbors | Senior experiences caring neighbors | 73.9 | 74.3 |
| | 6. Caring Groups | Seniors experiences groups, clubs, organizations, and faith-based communities that provide a caring, encouraging environment. | 62.3 | 63.4 |
| **Empowerment** | 7. Community Values Seniors | Senior perceives that the community values seniors through services provided and support given by the community | 88.7 | 87.6 |
| | 8. Senior as a Resource | Senior holds a role in the community utilizing their opinion, time, money, talent, or skills | 73.1 | 72.7 |
| | 9. Physical Safety | Senior feels safe at home, in the neighborhood, and in the community | 89.3 | 89.1 |
| | 10. Financial Safety | Senior has support and/or ability to protect their assets from abuse or misuse by others (scam awareness) | 94.3 | 95.9 |
| **Expectations** | 11. Positive Peer Influences | Senior has a friend or peer who models healthy behaviors | 82.4 | 81.8 |
| | 12. Encouragement | Senior has people encouraging him/her to live well | 90.4 | 89.7 |
| | 13. Family Boundaries | Healthy Family Boundaries have been discussed/communicated | 54.6 | 54.1 |
| **Constructive Use of Time** | 14. Creative Activities | Senior participates in cultural activities or hobbies | 81.6 | 84.6 |
| | 15. Programs | Senior participates in clubs, organizations, or classes | 40.9 | 42.3 |
| | 16. Faith Based Activities | Senior participates in activities in a faith-based organization | 41.6 | 37.0 |
| | 17. Physical Activity | Senior participates in physical activities | 79.7 | 80.0 |
| | 18 Nutritional Health | Senior adheres to nutritional guidelines | 84.9 | 87.0 |

# Older Adult Assets in Midland County
## 2014-2019 Comparison – External Assets

### *External Assets*



**Support**
- Family Support: 70.9% (2014), 67.8% (2019)
- Positive Family…: 75.1% (2014), 73.8% (2019)
- Family Proximity: 77.9% (2014), 76.9% (2019)
- Other Relationships: 77.0% (2014), 75.3% (2019)
- Caring Neighbors: 73.9% (2014), 74.3% (2019)
- Caring Group: 62.3% (2014), 63.4% (2019)

**Empowerment**
- Community Values…: 88.7% (2014), 87.6% (2019)
- Senior as a Resource: 73.1% (2014), 72.7% (2019)
- Physical Safety: 89.3% (2014), 89.1% (2019)
- Financial Safety: 94.3% (2014), 95.9% (2019)

**Expectations**
- Positive Peer Influence: 82.4% (2014), 81.8% (2019)
- Encouragement: 90.4% (2014), 89.7% (2019)
- Family Boundaries: 54.6% (2014), 54.1% (2019)

**Constructive Use of Time**
- Creative Activities: 81.6% (2014), 84.6% (2019)
- Programs: 40.9% (2014), 42.3% (2019)
- Faith Based Activities: 41.6% (2014), 37.0% (2019)
- Physical Activity: 79.7% (2014), 80.0% (2019)
- Nutritional Health: 84.9% (2014), 87.0% (2019)

Legend: 2014, 2019

Care should be taken when comparing one year with a prior year as these are a snap shot in time data points. The people surveyed in 2014 are not the same people surveyed in 2019 so this data is not a measure of growth.

# Older Adult Assets in Midland County
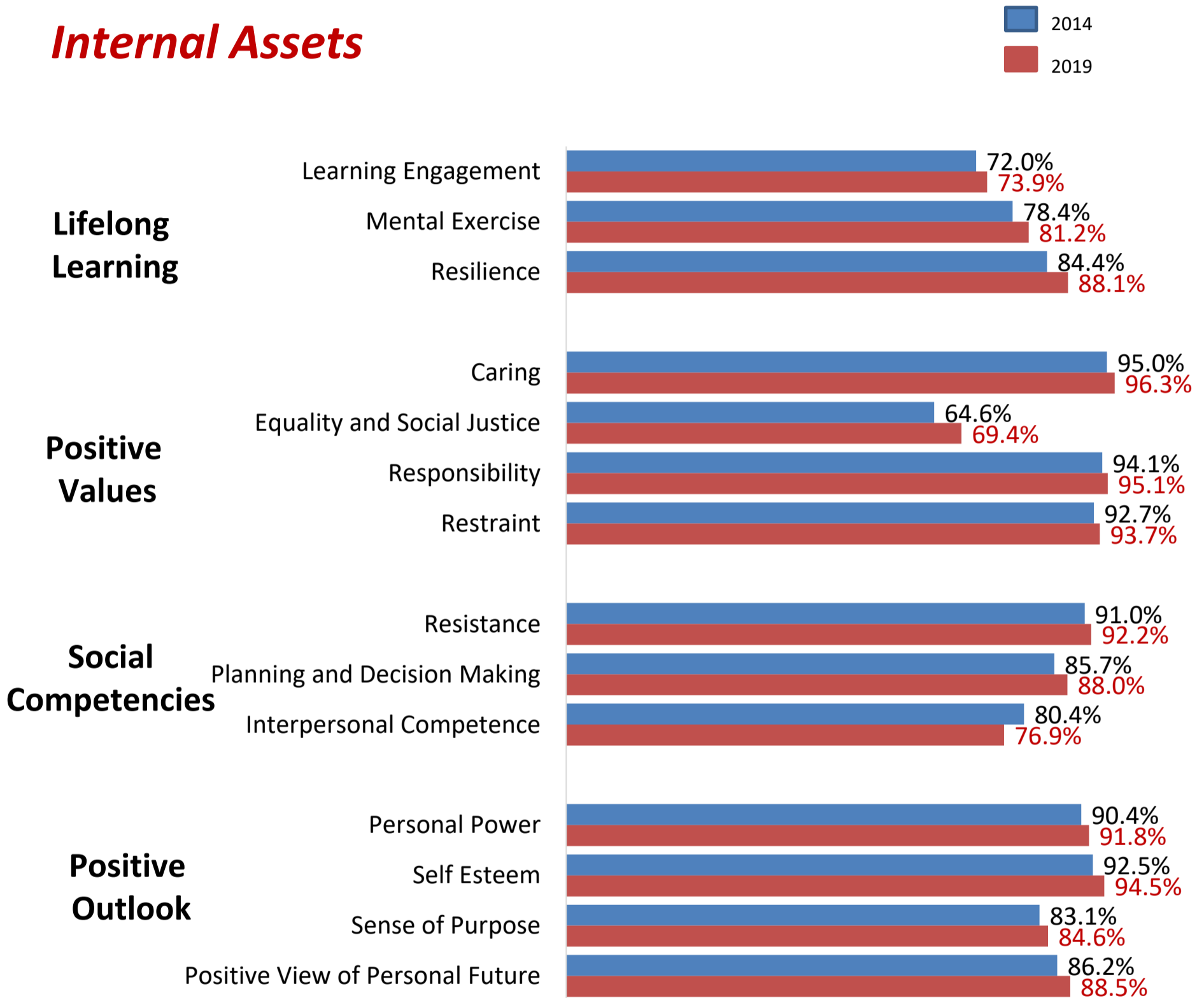## 2014-2019 Comparison – External Assets (Assets 1-18)

External assets are positive experiences provided for our older adult population by networks of people. They offer older adults relationships, opportunity, supports, safety, and engagement.

The table below summarizes the extent to which older people in our community experience each of the 18 external assets as a total sample size, by male and female, and split by age groups.

| External Asset | Total Sample | Gender | | Age | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Men | Women | 60-69 Years | 70-79 Years | 80-89 Years | 90-99 Years | 100+ Years |
| **SUPPORT** | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Family Support | 67.8 | 65.9 | 68.8 | 57.1 | 69.9 | 76.6 | 91.5 | |
| 2. Positive Family Communication | 73.8 | 69.7 | 76.1 | 69.9 | 74.3 | 76.3 | 85.5 | |
| 3. Family Proximity | 76.9 | 74.2 | 78.2 | 74.7 | 77.8 | 76.9 | 84.6 | |
| 4. Other Relationships | 75.3 | 72.2 | 77 | 74.5 | 77.7 | 73.3 | 75.2 | |
| 5. Caring Neighbors | 74.3 | 70.4 | 76.2 | 69.7 | 75.3 | 78.4 | 83.3 | |
| 6. Caring Groups | 63.4 | 57.9 | 66.3 | 62.4 | 65.7 | 65.5 | 52.2 | |
| **EMPOWERMENT** | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Community Values Seniors | 87.6 | 86.6 | 87.9 | 82.5 | 90.8 | 90.8 | 91.2 | |
| 8. Senior as a Resource | 72.7 | 72.7 | 72.7 | 72.1 | 72.5 | 73.9 | 70.8 | |
| 9. Physical Safety | 89.1 | 89 | 89.3 | 90.2 | 89.5 | 87.8 | 84.7 | |
| 10. Financial Safety | 95.9 | 96 | 95.9 | 96 | 96.5 | 95.9 | 91.3 | |
| **EXPECTATIONS** | | | | | | | | |
| 11. Positive Peer Influence | 81.8 | 74.9 | 85.3 | 80.9 | 82.7 | 83.6 | 76.8 | |
| 12. Encouragement | 89.7 | 89.4 | 89.9 | 88.2 | 89.4 | 91.3 | 94.7 | |
| 13. Family Boundaries | 54.1 | 47.1 | 57.8 | 47.9 | 54.3 | 60.4 | 70.3 | |
| **CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME** | | | | | | | | |
| 14. Creative Activities | 84.7 | 84.3 | 85 | 87.5 | 84.1 | 83.9 | 72.1 | |
| 15. Programs | 42.3 | 40 | 43.3 | 41.6 | 43.6 | 42.6 | 38.2 | |
| 16. Faith Based Activities | 37.1 | 32 | 39.5 | 33 | 36.5 | 44.9 | 40.1 | |
| 17. Physical Activity | 80.0 | 79.3 | 80.6 | 80.3 | 83.3 | 74.9 | 77.2 | |
| 18. Nutritional Health | 87.0 | 84.7 | 88.2 | 83.2 | 87.9 | 90 | 92.2 | |

*Percent of Older Adults Reporting External Assets by Gender and Age*

# Older Adult Assets in Midland County
## 2014-2019 Comparison – Internal Assets

**Internal Assets**

Legend: 2014 (blue), 2019 (red)

**Lifelong Learning**

| Asset | 2014 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Learning Engagement | 72.0% | 73.9% |
| Mental Exercise | 78.4% | 81.2% |
| Resilience | 84.4% | 88.1% |

**Positive Values**

| Asset | 2014 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Caring | 95.0% | 96.3% |
| Equality and Social Justice | 64.6% | 69.4% |
| Responsibility | 94.1% | 95.1% |
| Restraint | 92.7% | 93.7% |

**Social Competencies**

| Asset | 2014 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Resistance | 91.0% | 92.2% |
| Planning and Decision Making | 85.7% | 88.0% |
| Interpersonal Competence | 80.4% | 76.9% |

**Positive Outlook**

| Asset | 2014 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Personal Power | 90.4% | 91.8% |
| Self Esteem | 92.5% | 94.5% |
| Sense of Purpose | 83.1% | 84.6% |
| Positive View of Personal Future | 86.2% | 88.5% |

# Older Adult Assets in Midland County
# 2014-2019 Comparison – Internal Assets

Internal assets are the strengths or skills older adults poses and include commitment to learning, mindset, positive values, social competencies, and overall positive outlook.

This table reflects percentages of Internal Senior Assets reported by the total sample of older adults surveyed. We have also included reference data from 2014 survey

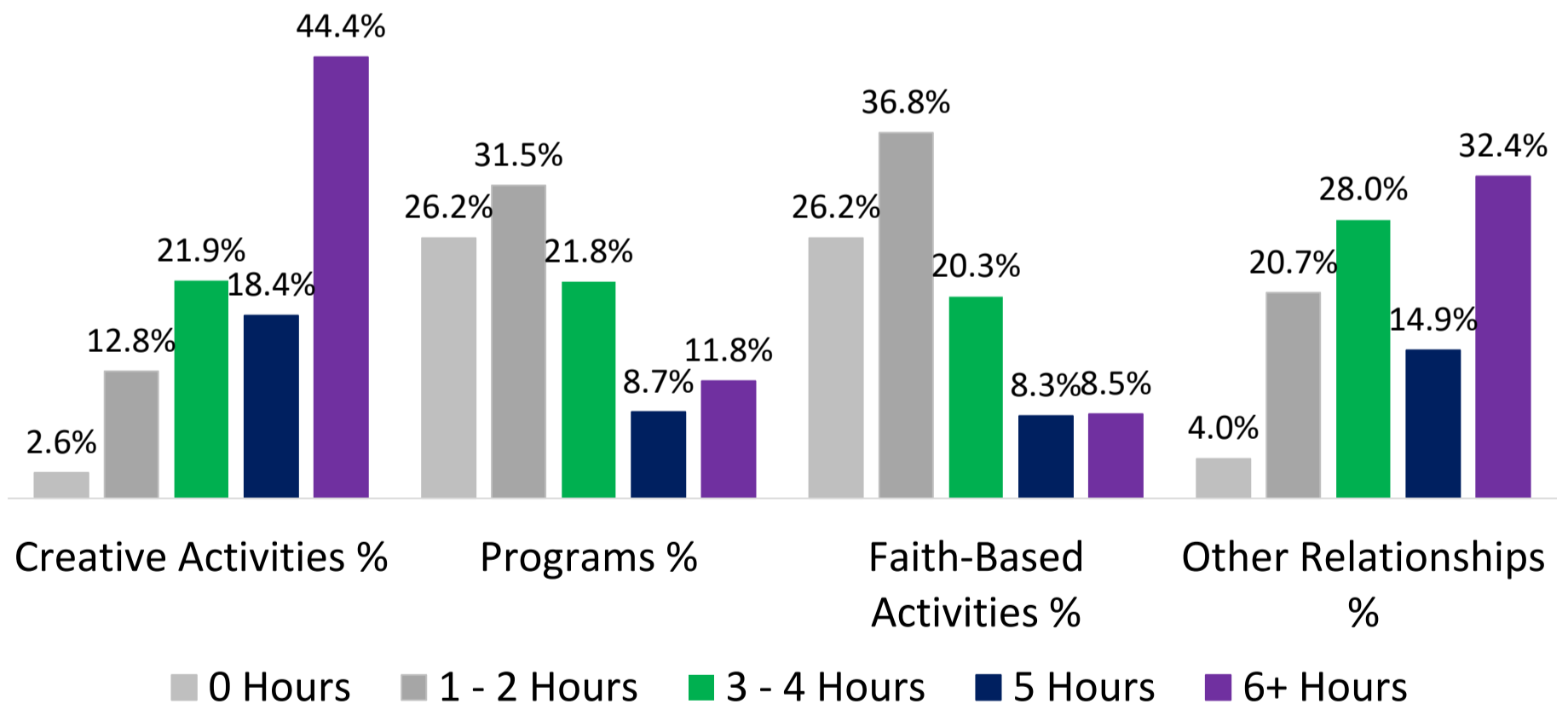| Category | Asset name | Definition | Percent 2014 | Percent 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lifelong Learning | 19. Learning Engagement | Senior is actively engaged in learning in a structured or unstructured setting (internet, hands-on experiences..) | 72.0 | 73.9 |
| | 20. Mental Exercise | Senior reports doing a variety of challenging "brainwork" daily (reading, puzzles, music, writing, art..) | 78.4 | 81.2 |
| | 21. Resilience | Despite current and future limitations/roadblocks, senior is motivated to cope with/recover from adversity, remaining engaged | 84.4 | 88.1 |
| Positive Values | 22. Caring | Senior places high value on helping other people | 95 | 96.3 |
| | 23. Equality and Social Justice | Senior values human rights and recognizes the dignity of every human being | 64.6 | 69.4 |
| | 24. Responsibility | Senior accepts and takes personal responsibility | 94.1 | 95.1 |
| | 25. Restraint | Senior believes it is important not to engage in risky behaviors that harm themselves or others (abuse alcohol or other drugs, gamble more than willing to lose, drive if putting themselves and others in harms way..) | 92.7 | 93.7 |
| Social Competencies | 26. Planning and Decision Making | Senior demonstrates critical thinking and problem solving skills in planning for current and future opportunities, limitations and roadblocks (including end of life plan) | 85.7 | 88 |
| | 27. Interpersonal Competence | Senior has empathy, sensitivity, assertiveness, and friendship skills | 80.4 | 76.9 |
| | 28. Resistance Skills | Senior can resist putting self in dangerous situations (financial, physical, emotional) | 91.0 | 92.2 |
| Positive Outlook | 29. Personal Power | Senior believes that he or she has control over things in his/her life | 90.4 | 91.8 |
| | 30. Self-Esteem | Senior reports having good self-esteem | 92.5 | 94.5 |
| | 31. Sense of Purpose | Senior reports that "my life has a purpose" | 83.1 | 84.6 |
| | 32. Positive View of Personal Future | Senior is optimistic about his or her personal future | 86.2 | 88.5 |

The table below summarizes the extent to which older adults in our community experience each of the 14 Internal Assets as a total sample size, by male and female, and by age group.

| Percent of Older Adults Reporting Internal Assets by Gender and Age | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Internal Asset | Total Sample | Gender | | Age | | | | |
| | | Men | Women | 60-69 Years | 70-79 Years | 80-89 Years | 90-99 Years | 100+ Years |
| LIFELONG LEARNING | | | | | | | | |
| 19. Learning Engagement | 73.9 | 72.4 | 74.6 | 80.4 | 75.3 | 62.2 | 66.4 | |
| 20. Mental Exercise | 81.2 | 73.8 | 85 | 80.9 | 83.5 | 78.4 | 77.3 | |
| 21. Resilience | 88.1 | 87.1 | 88.8 | 88.1 | 89.7 | 85.7 | 88.6 | |
| POSITIVE VALUES | | | | | | | | |
| 22. Caring | 96.3 | 94.4 | 97.4 | 96.4 | 96.6 | 95.7 | 97.4 | |
| 23. Equality and Social Justice | 69.4 | 68 | 70.3 | 74 | 68.8 | 61.9 | 68.8 | |
| 24. Responsibility | 95.1 | 95.7 | 95.1 | 94.8 | 94.7 | 96.7 | 96.7 | |
| 25. Restraint | 93.7 | 91.2 | 94.9 | 93.1 | 94.2 | 93.8 | 94.7 | |
| SOCIAL COMPETENCIES | | | | | | | | |
| 26. Planning and Decision Making | 88 | 86.9 | 88.7 | 89.9 | 87.6 | 78.7 | 73.5 | |
| 27. Interpersonal Competence | 76.9 | 73.1 | 78.9 | 75.1 | 77.8 | 77 | 82.5 | |
| 28. Resistance Skills | 92.2 | 89.6 | 93.4 | 89.7 | 93.8 | 93.9 | 93.1 | |
| POSITIVE OUTLOOK | | | | | | | | |
| 29. Personal Power | 91.8 | 90.8 | 92.4 | 92.4 | 92.1 | 91.1 | 89.7 | |
| 30. Self-Esteem | 94.5 | 94.3 | 94.8 | 93.7 | 94.9 | 94.3 | 98.3 | |
| 31. Sense of Purpose | 84.6 | 85.8 | 84.1 | 86.8 | 84.1 | 83.4 | 76.5 | |
| 32. Positive View of Personal Future | 88.5 | 87.9 | 88.9 | 89.1 | 90.6 | 85.4 | 84.7 | |

# How Older Adults Spend their Free Time

It is important to understand how older adults spend their free time.  In the chart below the bars in color identify older adults who respond that they have this asset which means they spend 3 or more hours in these activities in  a normal week.  The gray bars indicate those older adults who are considered not to have the asset.  This chart  shows the Break down by hours in a normal week for older adult participation in programs, activities, as well as other relationships.



Amount of Time Older Adults spend in Programs, Activities and Interactions

Legend: ■ 0 Hours  ■ 1 - 2 Hours  ■ 3 - 4 Hours  ■ 5 Hours  ■ 6+ Hours

**Creative Activities %**: 2.6%, 12.8%, 21.9%, 18.4%, 44.4%
**Programs %**: 26.2%, 31.5%, 21.8%, 8.7%, 11.8%
**Faith-Based Activities %**: 26.2%, 36.8%, 20.3%, 8.3%, 8.5%
**Other Relationships %**: 4.0%, 20.7%, 28.0%, 14.9%, 32.4%

# Loneliness

In order to better understand loneliness among older adults, a loneliness score was created by identifying the absence of the following assets:  Positive Family Communication, Family Proximity, Other Relationships, Caring Neighbors, and not living with someone.  Older adults having two or fewer of these assets are considered lonely.

Key findings: 16% of older adult respondents were categorized as lonely.    This would be an estimated 3,082 older adults living in Midland County ( 3,082 is 16% of  the 19,265 older adults that live in Midland County – census data)

## Older Adult Loneliness

Loneliness score  based on the absence of :
- Asset #2 – Positive Family Communications
- Asset #3 – Family Proximity
- Asset #4 – Other Relationships
- Asset #5 – Caring Neighbors
- Not Isolated – Lives with someone

Having 2 or fewer - considered "Lonely"
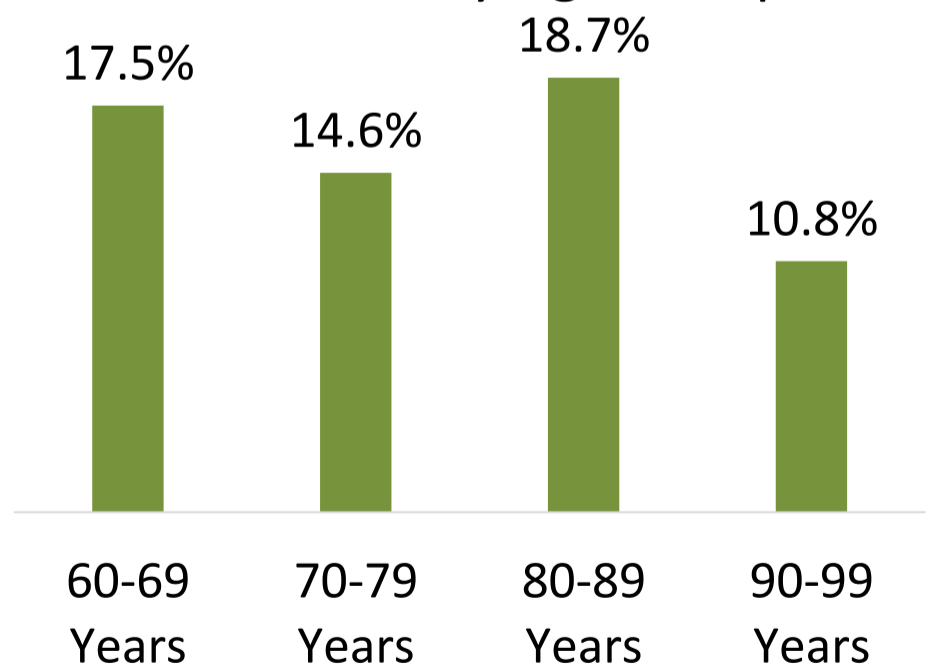
### Older Adult Responses

278
16%
84%
1,494

■ Lonely    ■ Not Lonely
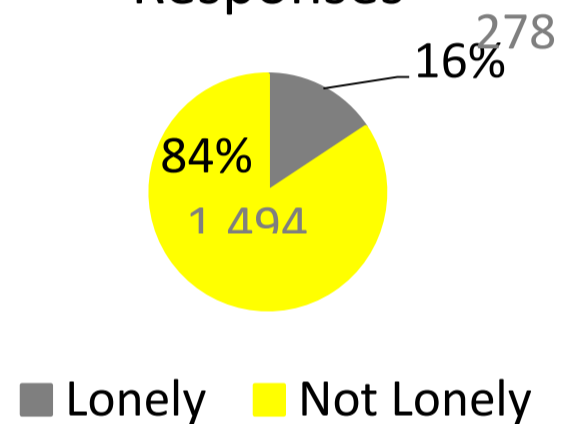
### Loneliness by Men and Women

20.9%
14.9%
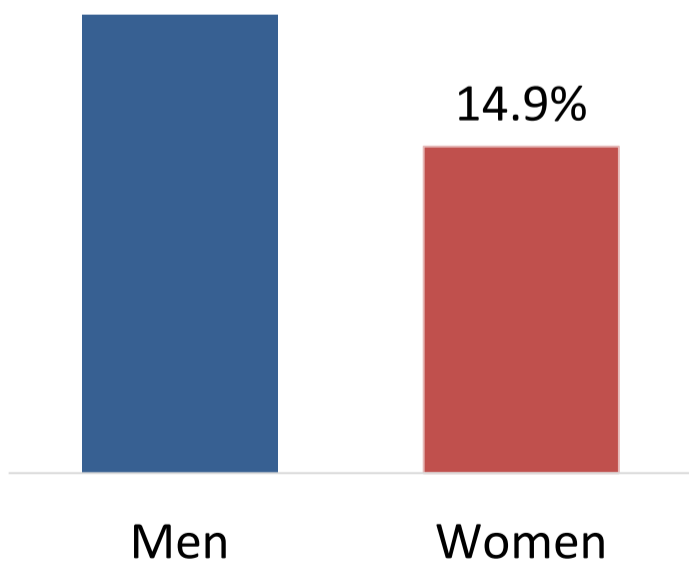
Men        Women

Of the Men who responded, 20.9% were considered Lonely.
Of the Women who responded 14.9%…

### Loneliness by Age Group

17.5%
14.6%
18.7%
10.8%

60-69 Years    70-79 Years    80-89 Years    90-99 Years

Key findings:  Of the lonely older adult population, 55.6% relied on Social Security as their main source of income

# Older Adult Loneliness
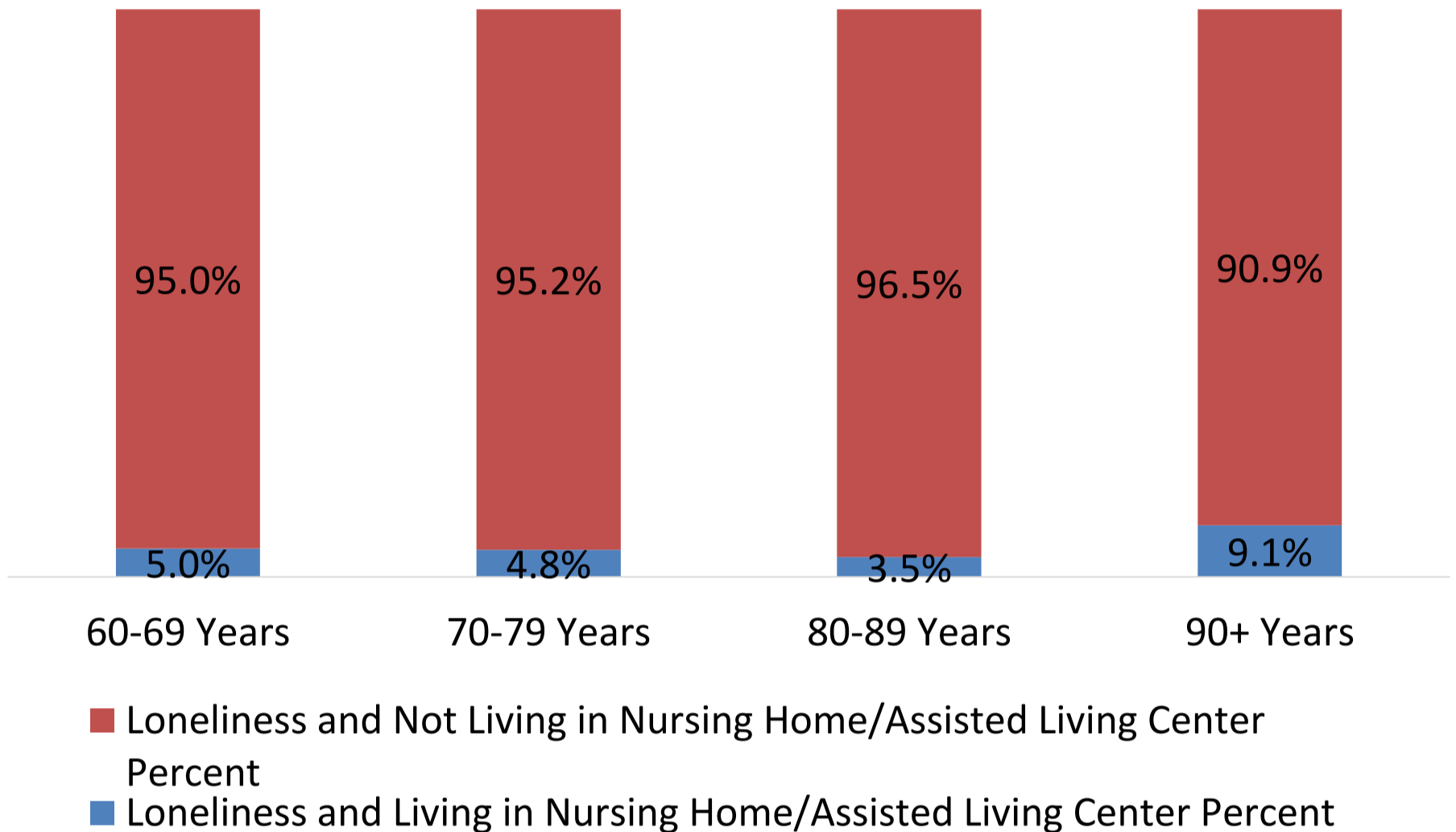
## Loneliness by Main Source of Income

55.6%

44.4%

■ Social Security is the Main Source of Income
■ Social Security is Not the Main Source of Income

62.9%
168

## Overall Residency

37.1%
99

City of Midland

Township Area.
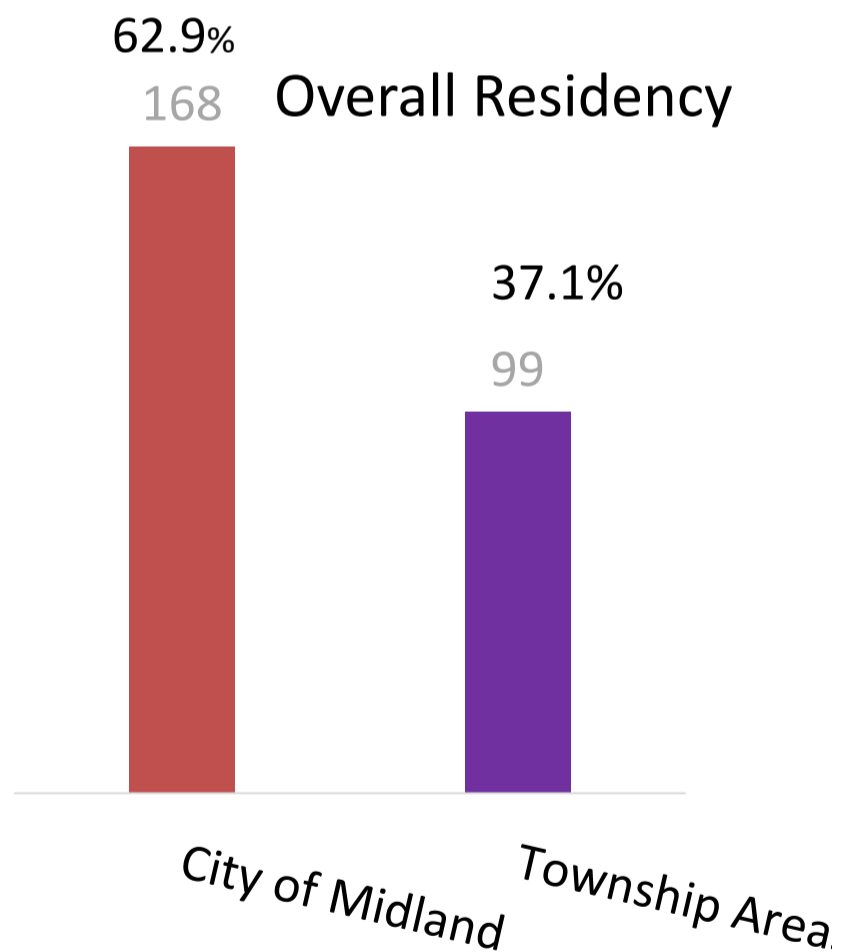
Loneliness and isolation are public health issues.  Research shows health risks associated with loneliness and social isolation are comparable to the dangers of smoking and obesity. Even moderate levels of loneliness put people at risk for clinical depression or suicidal ideation (Heinrich & Gullone, 2006), Elevated blood pressure (Hawkley, Masi, Berry, & Cacioppo, 2006), increased levels of stress hormones (Adam, Hawkley, Kudielka, & Cacioppo, 2006), Weakend immune systems (Cacioppo, Hawkley, & Berntson, 2003).

# Older Adult Loneliness

## Where our Lonely Older Adults are Living by Age Group

| | 60-69 Years | 70-79 Years | 80-89 Years | 90+ Years |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Loneliness and Not Living in Nursing Home/Assisted Living Center Percent | 95.0% | 95.2% | 96.5% | 90.9% |
| Loneliness and Living in Nursing Home/Assisted Living Center Percent | 5.0% | 4.8% | 3.5% | 9.1% |

■ Loneliness and Not Living in Nursing Home/Assisted Living Center Percent

■ Loneliness and Living in Nursing Home/Assisted Living Center Percent

## Lonely Older Adults by Age Group and Main Source of Income

| | 60-69 Years | 70-79 Years | 80-89 Years | 90+ Years |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Loneliness and Social Security is NOT Main Source of Income Percent | 46.7% | 43.5% | 44.8% | 27.3% |
| Loneliness and Social Security is Main Source of Income Percent | 53.3% | 56.5% | 55.2% | 72.7% |

■ Loneliness and Social Security is NOT Main Source of Income Percent

■ Loneliness and Social Security is Main Source of Income Percent

16

# Negative Outlook

Studies show that most older adults feel satisfied with their lives, despite having more illnesses or physical problems.  However, important life changes that happen as we age may cause  one to lose their sense of purpose, self-esteem, or positive view of their future.

For example, the death of a loved one or serious  health issues can leave people with these assets depleted .
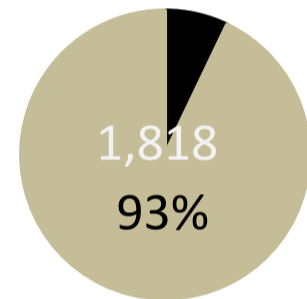
In order to understand Negative Outlook better  a score was created by identifying the absence of the following assets:  Self-esteem, sense of purpose, and positive view of personal future.  Having 1 or fewer of these assets was considered Negative Outlook.

## Older Adult Negative Outlook

 Score based on absence of the following:
Asset #30 – Self-Esteem
Asset #31 – Sense of Purpose
Asset #32 – Positive View of Personal Future
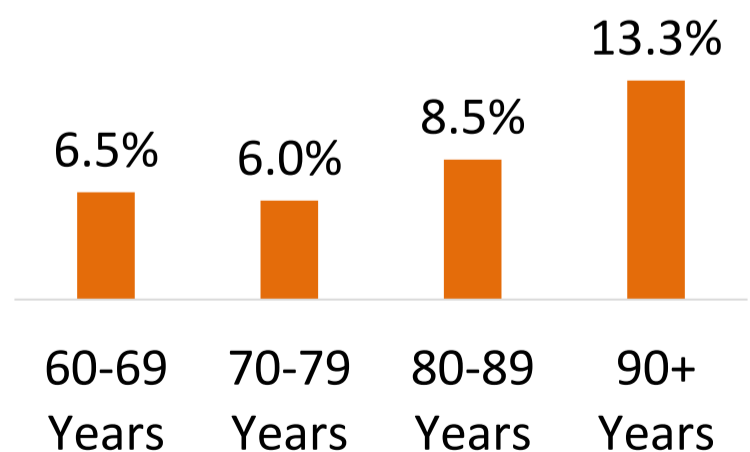
Having 1 or fewer - considered "Negative Outlook"

## Older Adult Responses

7%
139

1,818
93%

## Negative Outlook by Men and Women

6.9%
7.1%

Men          Women
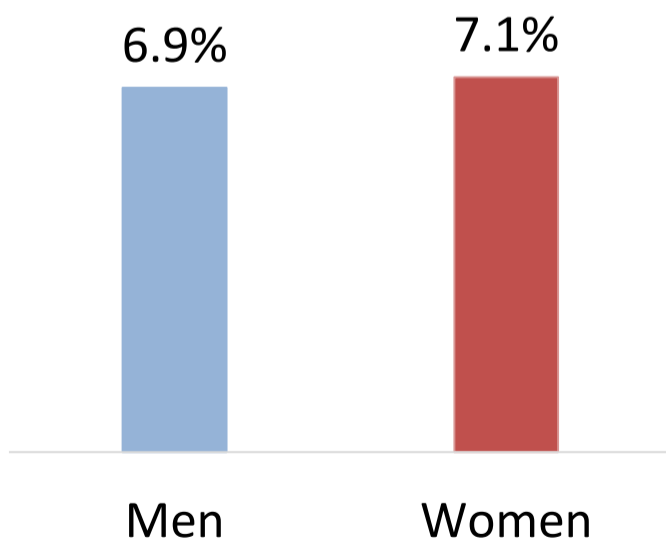
## Negative Outlook by Age Group

13.3%

8.5%

6.5%     6.0%

60-69      70-79      80-89      90+
Years      Years      Years      Years

# Older Adult Negative Outlook

Score based on absence of the following:
Asset #30 – Self-Esteem
Asset #31 – Sense of Purpose
Asset #32 – Positive View of Personal Future

Having 1 or fewer - considered "Negative Outlook"

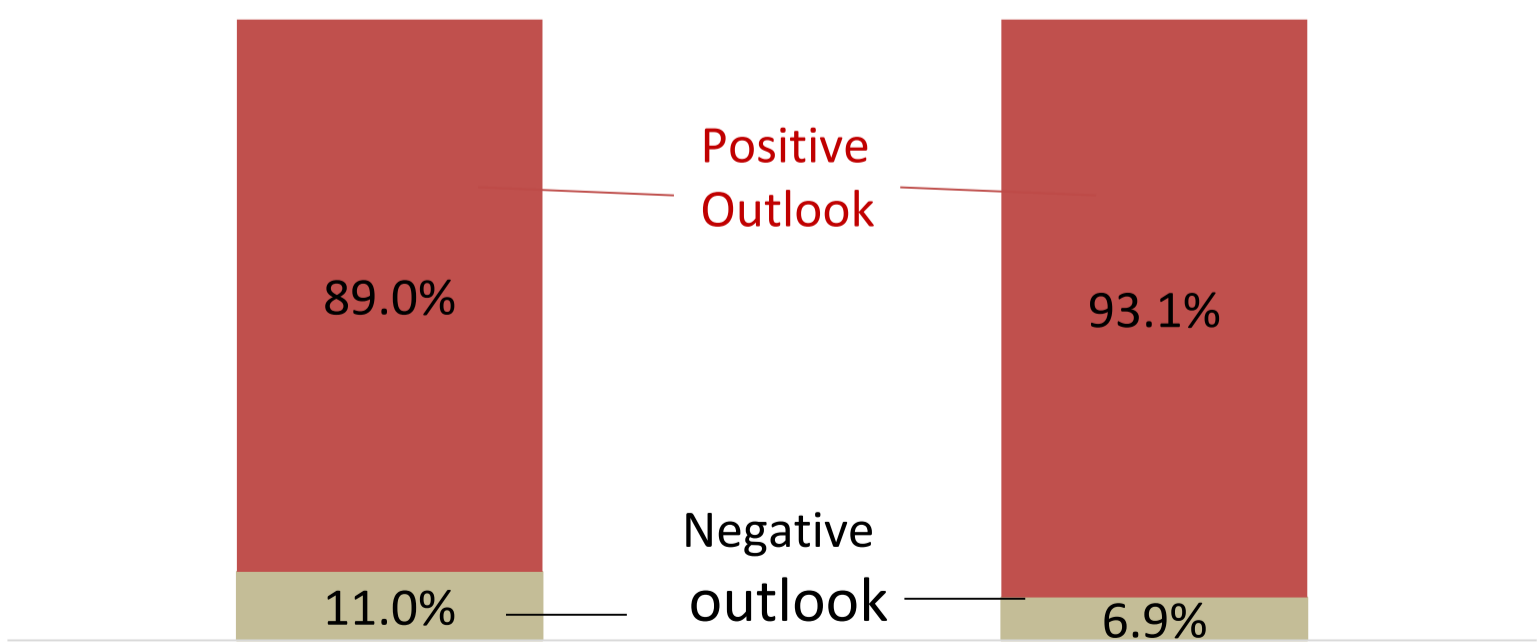## Negative Outlook by Main Source of Income

49.3%

50.7%

■ Social Security Main Source of Income

68          62
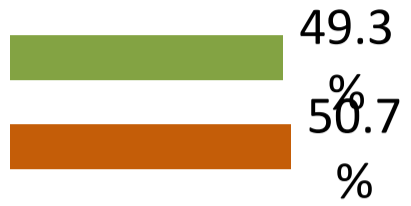
## Negative Outlook by Number of People in Home

52.3%          47.7%
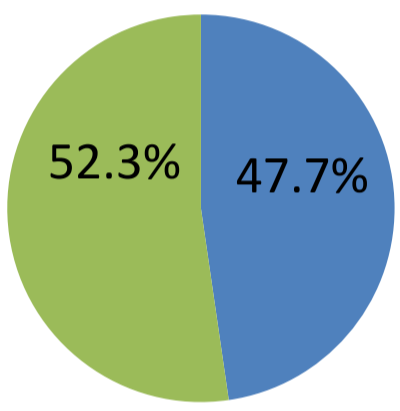
■ Lives Alone     ■ Lives with Others

## Outlook by Type of Home for Older Adults

Positive Outlook

89.0%                          93.1%

Negative outlook

11.0%                          6.9%

Live in an Assisted Living Center or Nursing Home

Does Not Live in an Assisted Living Center or Nursing Home

18

# Isolation

Human beings are social creatures.  Our connections with others help us to flourish.  Yet, as we age, many are alone more often than when they were younger, leaving them vulnerable to related health problems such as cognitive decline, depression, heart disease.

Isolation is defined in the following pages  as living alone.   An older adult may live alone and still have other relationships in their lives  and may not feel "socially"  isolated.  The following graphs only account for living alone.
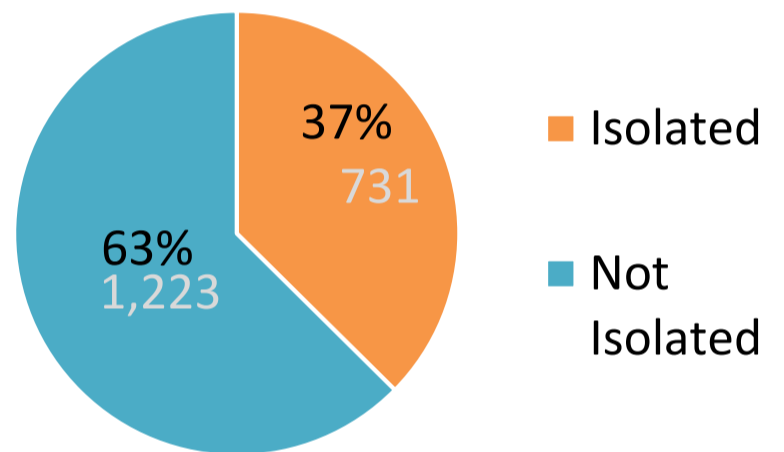
## Older Adult Isolation

Older Adults that recorded that they lived alone were considered "Isolated"

### Older Adult Responses



- 37% — 731 — Isolated
- 63% — 1,223 — Not Isolated

### Isolation by Men and Women



23.0%    44.3%

■ Men
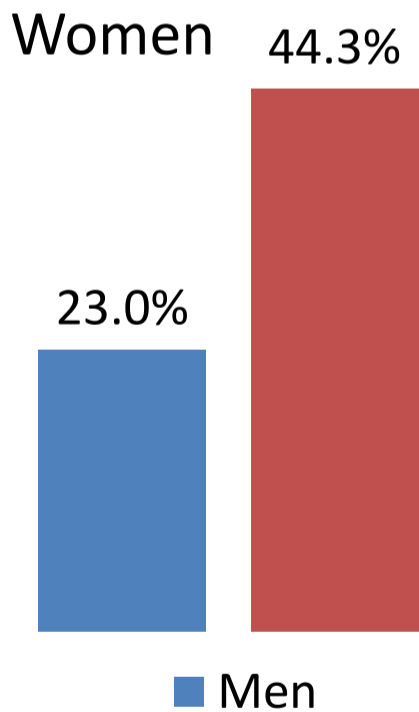
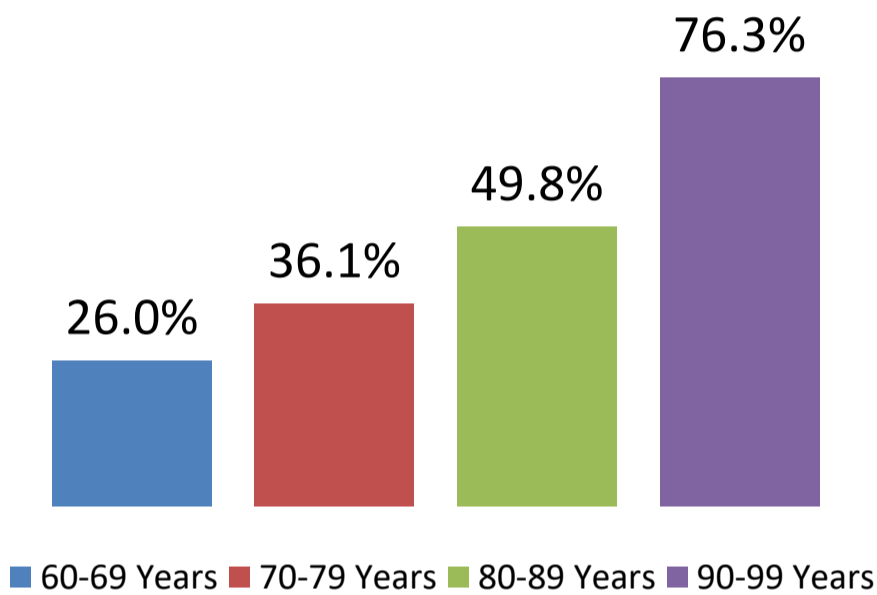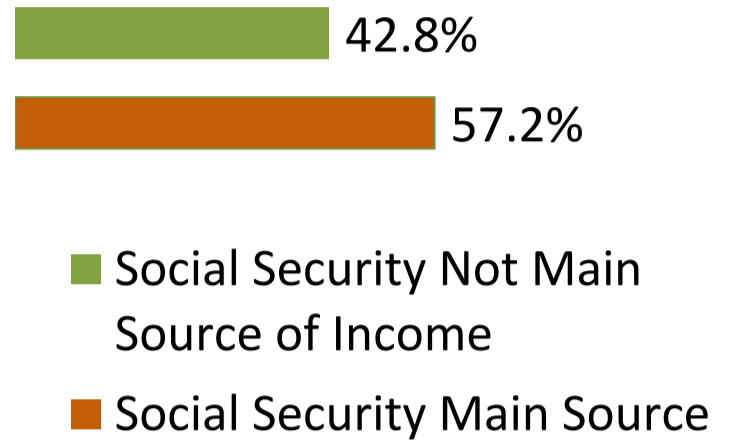Of the men who responded, 23% were considered Isolated.
Of the women who responded, 44.3%

# Older Adult Isolation

Older Adults that recorded that they lived alone were considered "Isolated"

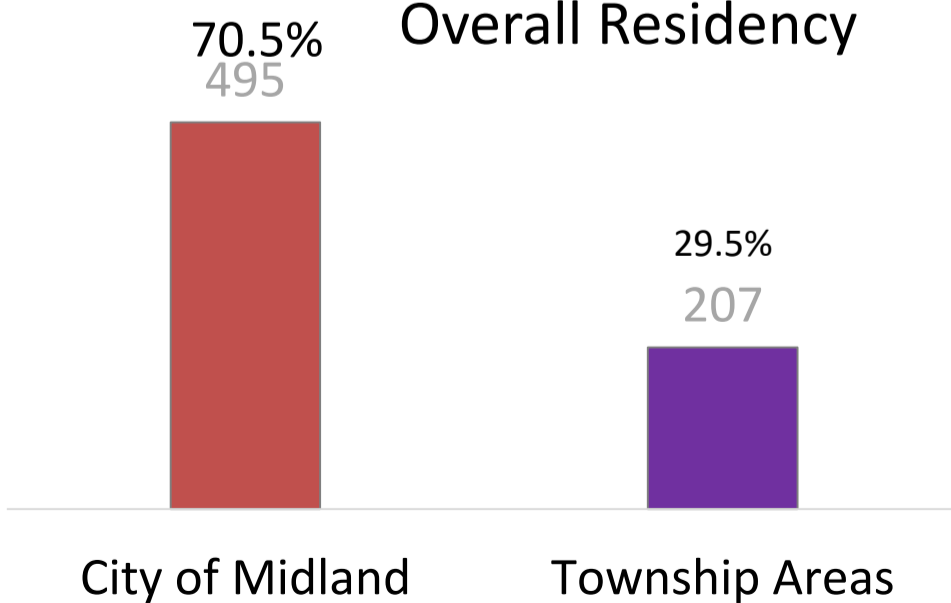## Isolation by Main Source of Income

42.8%

57.2%

- Social Security Not Main Source of Income
- Social Security Main Source of Income

## Isolation by Age Group

76.3%

49.8%

36.1%

26.0%

- 60-69 Years
- 70-79 Years
- 80-89 Years
- 90-99 Years

## Overall Residency

70.5%
495

29.5%
207

City of Midland      Township Areas

Many older adults experience great difficulty in their older years.  To understand what they are struggling with we asked an open ended question "Can you describe a time in your senior years (60+) when you experienced great difficulty?  And,  What helped you get through this?"
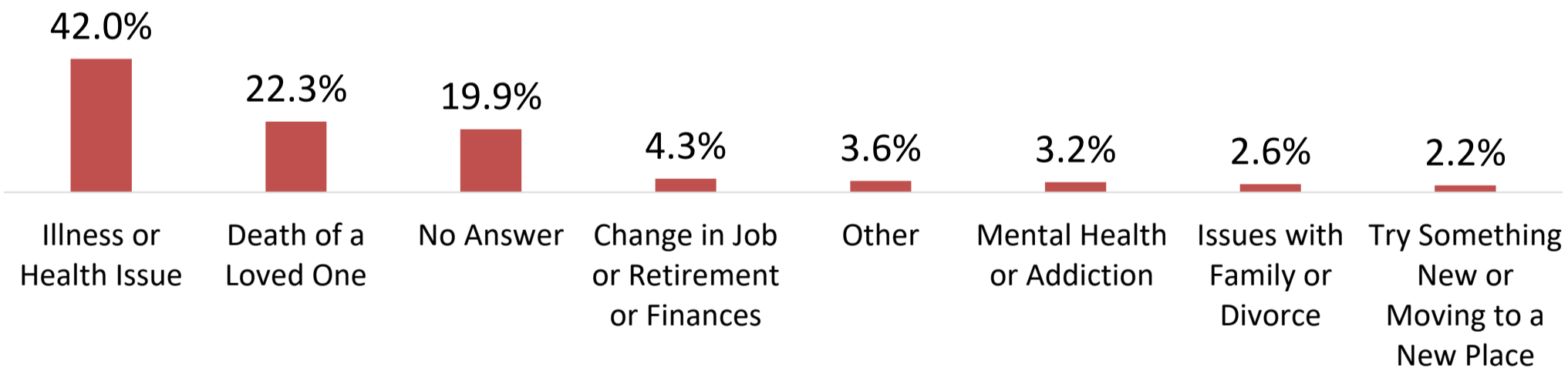
 Responses were categorized based on their answers:  42% illness or health issues, 22.3% death of a loved one.

"What helped you get through?"  44.3% responded family or friends and 31.1% responded church or faith and 14.8% responded professional services or healthcare team.
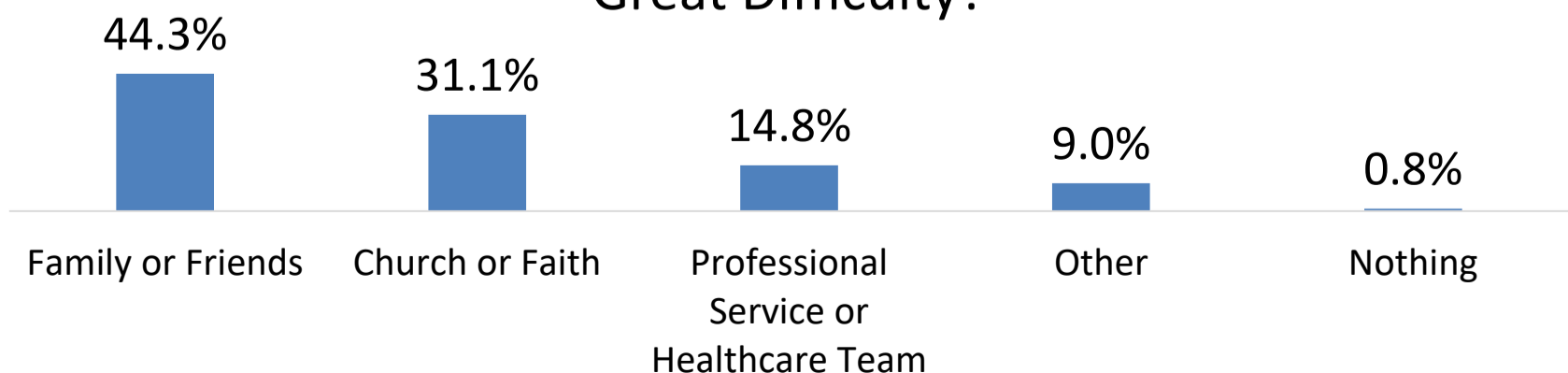
When older adults are faced with great difficulty in their lives the response indicated a heavy reliance on family & friends, and church & faith.

## Great Difficulty

### What Experiences have Caused Great Difficulty in our Older Adults' Lives?

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Illness or Health Issue | 42.0% |
| Death of a Loved One | 22.3% |
| No Answer | 19.9% |
| Change in Job or Retirement or Finances | 4.3% |
| Other | 3.6% |
| Mental Health or Addiction | 3.2% |
| Issues with Family or Divorce | 2.6% |
| Try Something New or Moving to a New Place | 2.2% |

### What Helped our Older Adults Get Through this Great Difficulty?

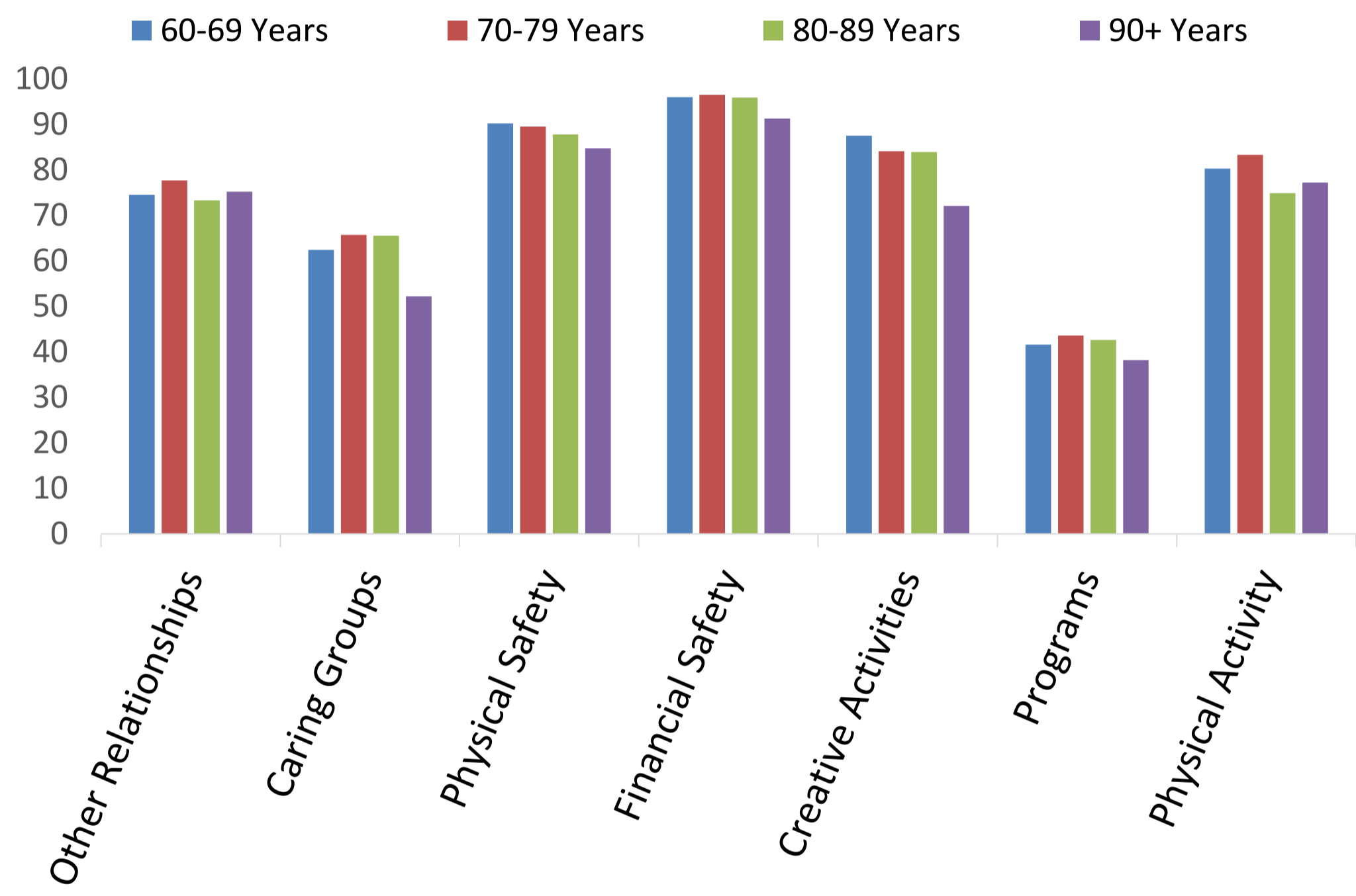| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Family or Friends | 44.3% |
| Church or Faith | 31.1% |
| Professional Service or Healthcare Team | 14.8% |
| Other | 9.0% |
| Nothing | 0.8% |

"The following pages show the internal and external assets broken out by age and asset. It is interesting to understand which assets grow as we age and which decline.



## Older Adult External Assets Increasing by Age

Legend: 60-69 Years | 70-79 Years | 80-89 Years | 90+ Years

Categories: Family Support, Positive Family..., Family Proximity, Caring Neighbors, Community Values..., Positive Peer..., Encouragement, Family Boundaries, Faith Based Activities, Nutritional Health

# Older Adult External Assets Decreasing by Age



Legend: 60-69 Years, 70-79 Years, 80-89 Years, 90+ Years

Categories: Other Relationships, Caring Groups, Physical Safety, Financial Safety, Creative Activities, Programs, Physical Activity

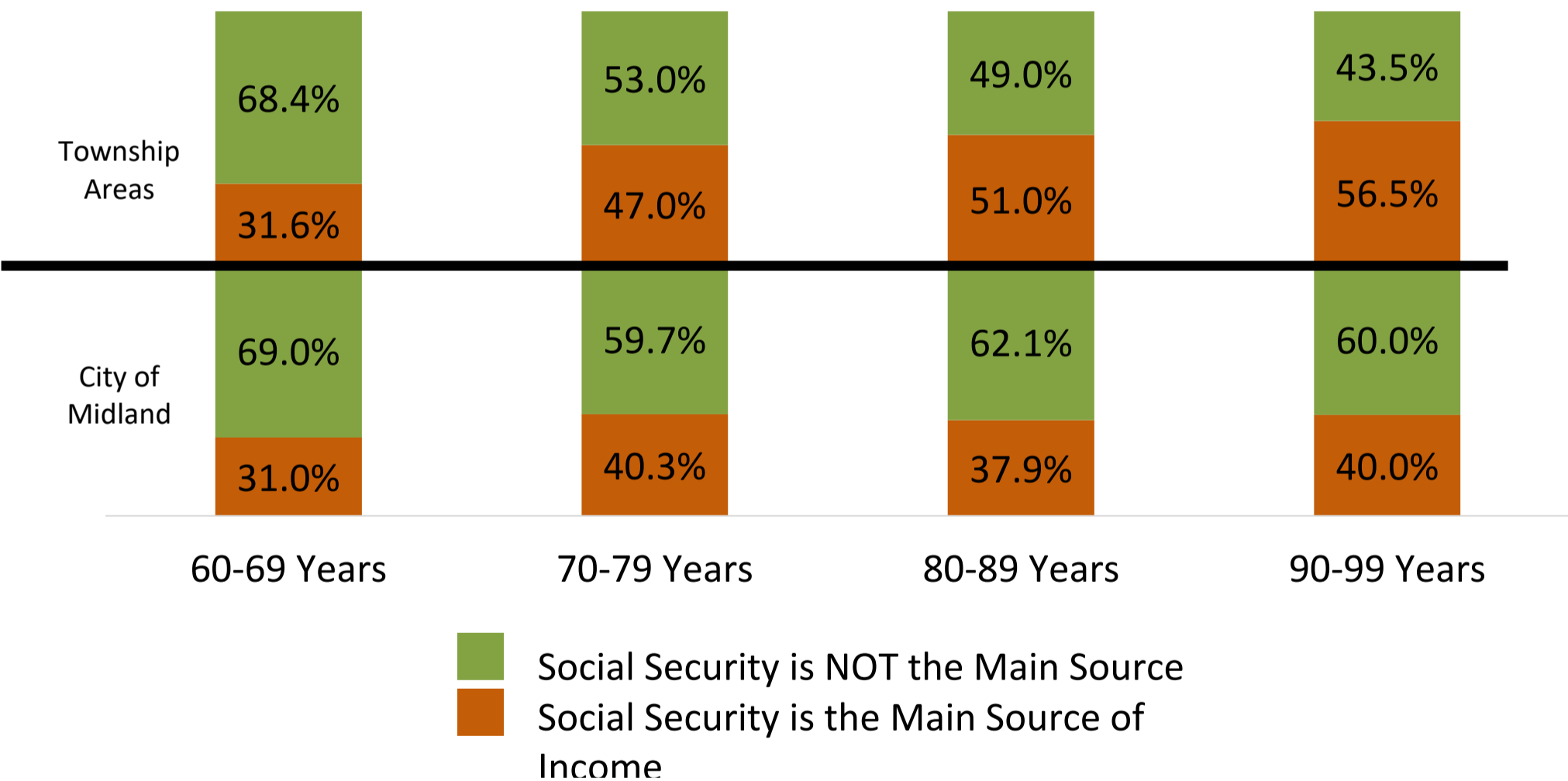# Older Adult Internal Assets Decreasing by Age
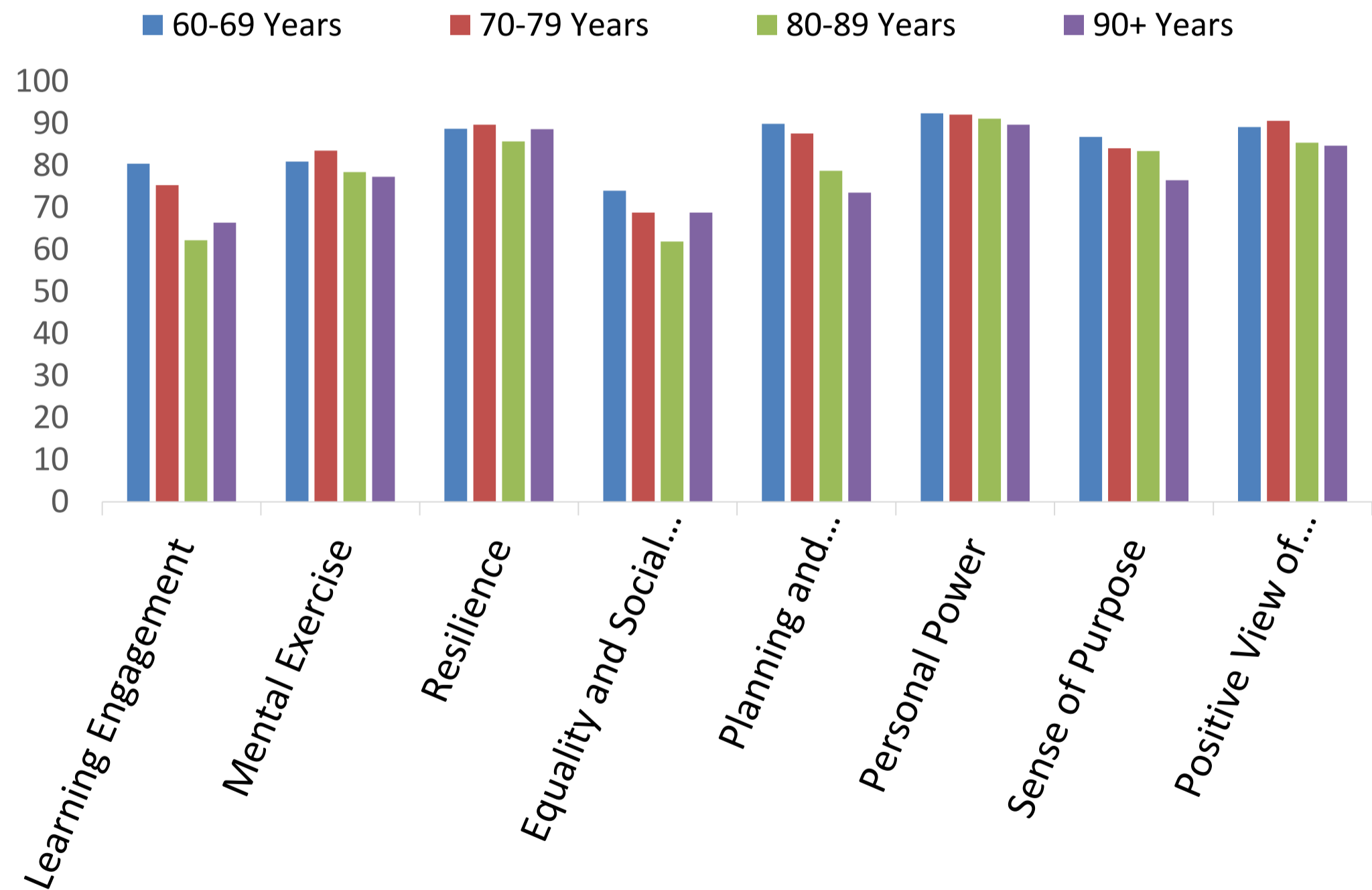
Common risk factors for older adult population are: age, income, and where you live.

When considering these three risk factors the graph indicates risk increases with age and lower income.

## Older Adult At-Risk Factors

At-Risk Factors based on:
* Age
* Whether they Live in the City or Township Areas
* Whether or not Social Security is the Main Source of Income

| | 60-69 Years | 70-79 Years | 80-89 Years | 90-99 Years |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Township Areas** (Social Security NOT main) | 68.4% | 53.0% | 49.0% | 43.5% |
| **Township Areas** (Social Security main) | 31.6% | 47.0% | 51.0% | 56.5% |
| **City of Midland** (Social Security NOT main) | 69.0% | 59.7% | 62.1% | 60.0% |
| **City of Midland** (Social Security main) | 31.0% | 40.3% | 37.9% | 40.0% |

Social Security is NOT the Main Source
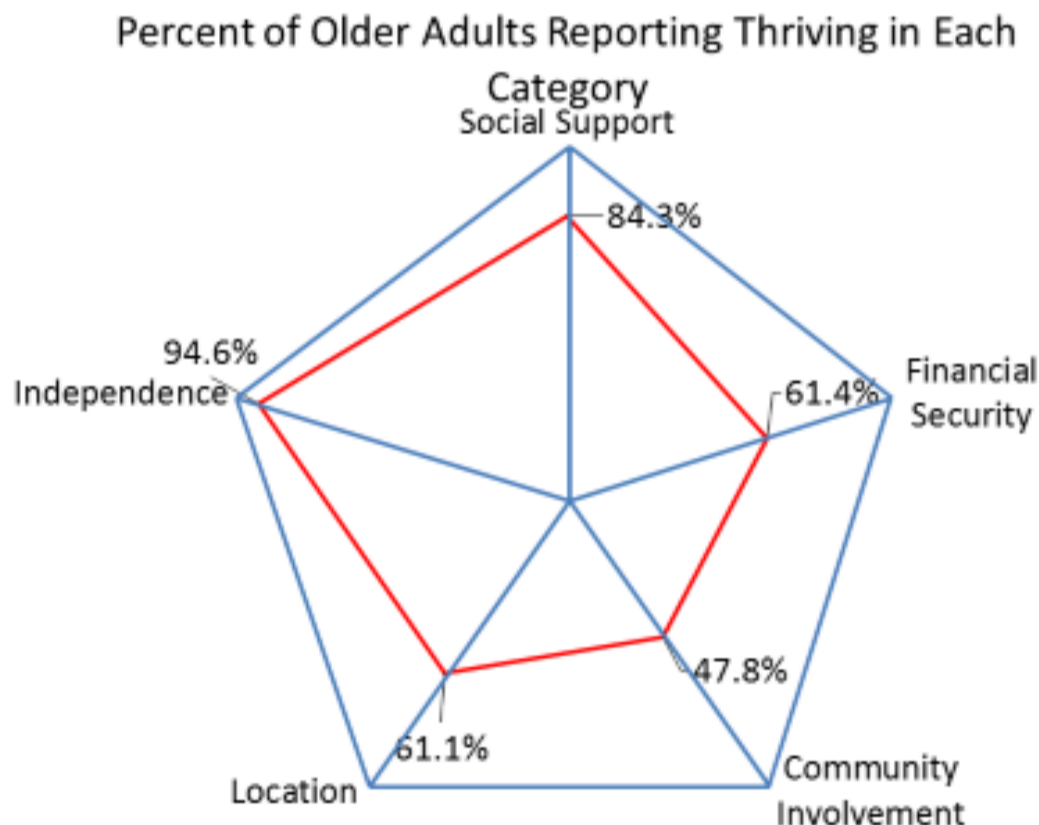Social Security is the Main Source of Income

Thriving

The pentagon graph in blue below shows five categories of thriving:  Social Supports, Financial Security, Community Involvement, Location, and Independence.  The red pentagon indicates where Midland County falls with our asset levels.

This graph shows great opportunity in the area of community involvement

## Thriving Assets for Older Adults

### Percent of Older Adults Reporting Thriving in Each Category



Social Support = Not Lonely based on our 5 indicators
Financial Security = Social Security is NOT the main source of income
Community Involvement = Participating in 3 or more hours of activities, programs and/or interacting with others each week
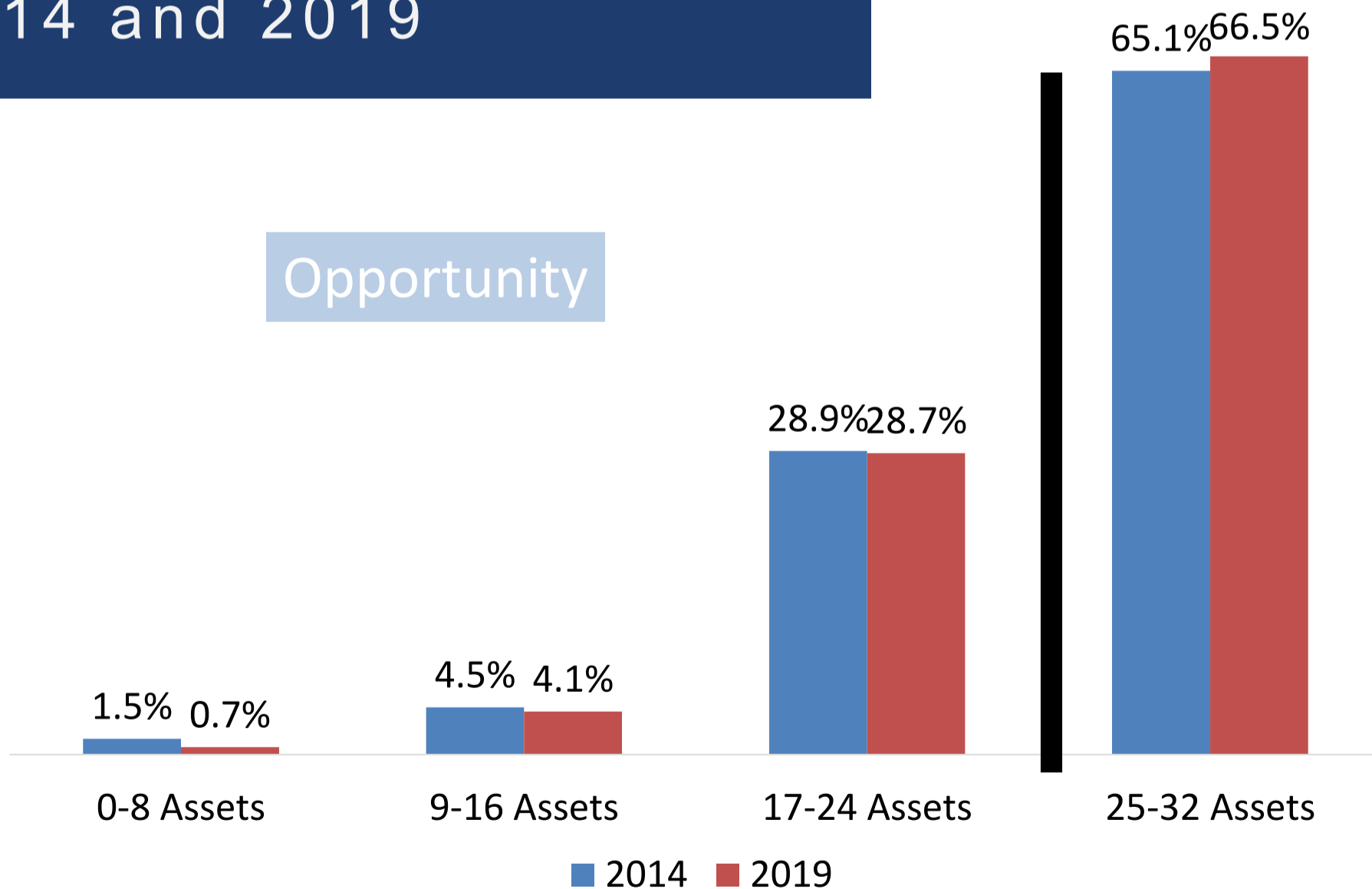Location = Lives in the City of Midland
Independence = Lives in own home

34

Average number of Senior Assets for Optimal Living

For optimal older adults outcomes, the more assets you have the better.  Having 25-32 assets is better than having 17-24 assets.  In our community over 33% of our older adults have less than 24 Senior Assets for Optimal Living.

This report has shown the state of Senior Assets in our community.  By combing through the data you will be able to identify areas of strength and weakness.  If you wish to establish a community wide goal and metric, consider increasing  the number of older adults who have 25-32 Senior Assets for Optimal Living.   This allows our community to work together on important matters that improve older adults wellbeing in our community without prescribing what assets each agency or family or neighbor should focus on.  More is better.

## Comparative Distribution Average Number of Assets 2014 and 2019

Opportunity

65.1% 66.5%

28.9% 28.7%

4.5% 4.1%

1.5% 0.7%

| 0-8 Assets | 9-16 Assets | 17-24 Assets | 25-32 Assets |

■ 2014  ■ 2019

The Community Goal : Build Assets for Optimal Living

Assets are cumulative, the more assets the better. While well-intentioned efforts often focus on the problem areas or deficiencies, research show that focus on the strengths will create energy around creating a community where all older adults can thrive.

Recommendation:
- Give adequate support through long-term positive relationships
- Provide meaningful community involvement opportunities
- Engage older adults in groups, clubs, organizations, faith-based communities that provide a caring encouraging environment
- Provide supports to encourage older adults to plan for the future
- Provide supports to encourage older adults to set, discuss and communicate boundaries
- Help older adults connect to their community

# TAKE ACTION!

# Average Assets over Time

## Average number of Older Adult Assets
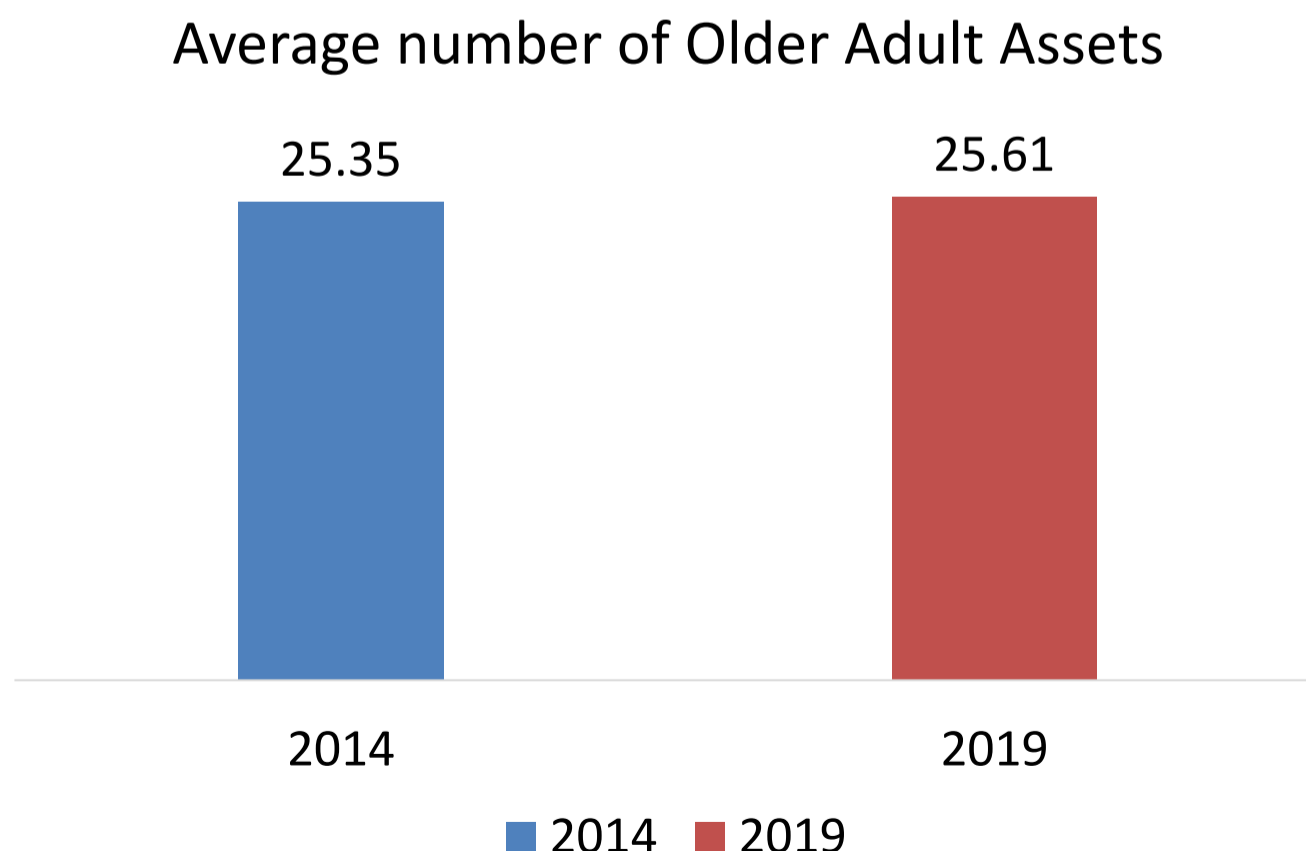
# Next Steps

❖ **Developing additional analysis and discussion**

❖ **Planning for community feedback, updating, presentations**
- Steering Team
- Survey Team & Community
- Office of Services to the Aging
- Media
- HHSC
- Government bodies
- Physician Organization of Michigan (POM/ACO network)

❖ **Addressing Longer Term steps**
- Additional research needs
- Specific follow-up issues
- Additional funding

❖ **Set Community-Wide Goal**
- Set a shared vision with measurable goals of a higher average total number of Assets for Optimal Living
- Set a community goal for building meaningful relationships among older adults (Reduce loneliness)

❖ **Begin With First Steps**
- As a neighbor or caring citizen, you can…
- As a family member, you can…
- As an organization member or business person, you can…

# SENIOR ASSETS FOR OPTIMAL LIVING
## Our Community' Challenge

Build Assets: Strive for all older adults to have between 25-32 assets

**Recommendations:**
- Give adequate support through long-term positive relationships
- Provide meaningful community involvement opportunities
- Engage older adults in groups, clubs, organizations, faith-based communities that provide a caring encouraging environment
- Provide supports to encourage older adults to plan for the future
- Provide supports to encourage older adults to set, discuss and communicate boundaries
- Help older adults connect to their community

**Barriers**
- Absence of family support/communication/proximity
- Older adults who are isolated from one another
- Public disengagement from important work of building meaningful connections with older adults
- Poverty and lack of access to supportive programs and services
- Inadequate opportunities to be involved or build positive relationships

# Senior Assets for Optimal Living

*Please participate in the Survey only **one** time.*

Gender:  Male ☐   Female ☐

Age:  60-69 ☐   70-79 ☐   80-89 ☐   90-99 ☐   100+ ☐

Do you reside in an assisted living or nursing home?   Yes ☐   No ☐

Is Social Security your main source of income?   Yes ☐   No ☐

Do you live within the Midland City limits?   Yes ☐   No ☐

Number of people in your household: _____

In which township do you reside?
Circle One

Edenville    Geneva    Greendale

Homer    Hope    Ingersoll

Jasper    Jerome    Larkin    Lee

Lincoln    Midland    Mills

Mount Haley    Porter    Warren

| **Questions:** Please indicate your answer with a check mark ✓ in the appropriate columns to the right. | Never | Seldom | Some-times | Usually | Always |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. My family really tries to help me………………………………… | | | | | |
| 2. I have a family member who lives within an hour driving distance………………………………………………………… | | | | | |
| 3. I take responsibility (don't blame others) for the choices I make………………………………………………………… | | | | | |
| 4. I belong to a group, club, or organization that provides a caring, encouraging environment……………………………… | | | | | |
| 5. I believe my community values seniors by providing supports and services……………………………………………… | | | | | |
| 6. I stay away from people or places that can cause me harm. | | | | | |
| 7. I feel unsafe in my home…………………………………… | | | | | |
| 8. I am good at planning and making decisions for my future… | | | | | |
| 9. I have a friend or peer who models healthy behaviors……... | | | | | |
| 10. I discuss with my family expectations of their support and involvement……………………………………………………… | | | | | |
| 11. I look positively toward my future……………………………... | | | | | |
| 12. I am engaged in learning new things………………………… | | | | | |
| 13. My family and I have poor communication………………….. | | | | | |
| 14. My daily routine involves challenging my brain with activities such as puzzles, reading, art, writing  playing an instrument, etc……………………………………………… | | | | | |

**Senior Services**
Midland County Council on Aging

**THE LEGACY CENTER**
FOR COMMUNITY SUCCESS

| Questions: Please indicate your answer with a check mark ✓ in the appropriate columns to the right. | Never | Seldom | Some-times | Usually | Always |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15. On the whole, I like myself……………………………….. | | | | | |
| 16. When things don't go well for me, I am good at finding a way to make things better…………………………………….. | | | | | |
| 17. I believe it is important to help others……………………….. | | | | | |
| 18. I have neighbors that care about me……………………….. | | | | | |
| 19. I take action when people are not treated fairly……….…… | | | | | |
| 20. If something is harmful to myself or others, I am able to avoid it. (abuse alcohol, gamble more than willing to lose, or drive if my skills have declined..)…………………………….. | | | | | |
| 21. I find it difficult to make or keep friends……………………... | | | | | |
| 22. My finances are safe from abuse or misuse by others (scam awareness, pressured sharing..)……………………………. | | | | | |
| 23. I have control over things in my life………………………….. | | | | | |
| 24. I contribute to make my community a better place for people to live (my opinion, time, money, or skills)………………….. | | | | | |
| 25. I am physically active in my daily life………………………… | | | | | |
| 26. I feel like my life has no purpose…………………………….. | | | | | |
| 27. I have people in my life who encourage me to live well…… | | | | | |
| 28. I eat nutritiously (eating foods that are good for me, eating three meals a day..)…………………………………………… | | | | | |
| *Please answer the following questions based on an average week* | 0 | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5 | 6+ |
| 29. The amount of hours I spend in leisure activities or hobbies such as art, music, film, food or sports…………………….. | | | | | |
| 30. The amount of hours I spend time in clubs, organizations or classes……………………………………………………… | | | | | |
| 31. The amount of hours I spend in a faith-based program or service……………………………………………………………. | | | | | |
| 32. The amount of hours I spend in social interaction with people outside of my family members……………………... | | | | | |

Can you describe a time in your senior years (60+) when you experienced great difficulty? What helped you get through this?

Who would you call in the middle of the night if you were sick or afraid?

Appendix B
# Survey items and related Assets for Optimal Living
## *External Assets*

### Support

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Family Support | Family members are actively involved and provide appropriate levels of love and support (connect at least once a week) | My family really tries to help me. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 2. Positive Family Communication | Senior and family regularly participate in constructive, stimulating conversation. Each willing to seek advice/counsel from other | My family and I have poor communication | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 3. Family Proximity | Family member lives within an hour driving distance | I have a family member who lives within an hour driving distance | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 4. Other Relationships | Senior has two or more people to socialize with and visit regularly | The amount of hours I spend in social interaction with people outside of my family members | 0, 1-2, 3-4, 5, 6 |
| 5. Caring Neighbors | Senior experiences caring neighbors | I have neighbors that care about me | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 6. Caring Groups | Seniors experiences groups, clubs, organizations, and faith-based communities that provide a caring, encouraging environment. | I belong to a group, club, or organization that provides a caring, encouraging environment | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

Ex

### Empowerment

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7. Commmunity Values Seniors | Senior perceives that the community values seniors through services provided and support given by the community | I believe my community values seniors by providing supports and services | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 8. Senior as a Resource | Senior holds a role in the community utilizing their opinion, time, money, talent, or skills | I contribute to make my community a better place for people to live (my opinion, time, money, or skills) | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

### Empowerment (con't)

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9. Physical Safety | Senior feels safe at home, in the neighborhood, and in the community | I feel unsafe in my home | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 10. Financial Safety | Senior has support and/or ability to protect their assets from abuse or misuse by others (scam awareness) | My finances are safe from abuse or misuse by others (scam awareness, pressured sharing…) | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

### Expectations

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 11. Positive Peer Influences | Senior has a friend or peer who models healthy behaviors | I have a friend or peer who models healthy behaviors. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 12. Encouragement | Senior has people encouraging him/her to live well | I have people in my life who encourage me to live well | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 13. Family Boundaries | Healthy Family Boundaries have been discussed/communicated | I discuss with my family expectations of their support and involvement. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

### Constructive Use of Time

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 14. Creative Activities | Senior participates in cultural activities or hobbies | The amount of hours I spend in leisure activites or hobbies such as art, music, film food or sports | 0, 1-2, 3-4, 5, 6 |
| 15. Programs | Senior participates in clubs, organizations, or classes | The amount of hours I spend time in clubs, organizations or classes | 0, 1-2, 3-4, 5, 6 |
| 16. Faith Based Activities | Senior participates in activities in a faith-based organization | The amount of hours I spend in faith-based program or service | 0, 1-2, 3-4, 5, 6 |
| 17. Physical Activity | Senior participates in physical activities | I am physically active in my daily life | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 18. Nutritional Health | Senior adheres to nutritional guidelines | I eat nutritiously (eating foods that are good for me, eating three meals a day…) | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

Survey items and related Assets for Optimal Living

## *Internal Assets*

### Lifelong Learning

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 19. Learning Engagement | Senior is actively engaged in learning in a structured or unstructured setting (internet, hands-on experiences..) | I am engaged in learning new things. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 20. Mental Exercise | Senior reports doing a variety of challenging "brainwork" daily (reading, puzzles, music, writing, art..) | My daily routine involves challenging my brain with activities such as puzzles, reading, art, writing, playing an instrument, etc. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 21. Resilience | Despite current and future limitations/roadblocks, senior is motivated to cope with/recover from adversity, remaining engaged | When things don't go well for me I am good at finding a way to make things better. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

### Positive Values

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 22. Caring | Senior places high value on helping other people | I believe it is important to help others. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 23. Equality and Social Justice | Senior values human rights and recog- nizes the dignity of every human being | I take action when people are not treated fairly. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 24. Responsibility | Senior accepts and takes personal responsibility | I take responsibility (don't blame others) for the choices I make. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 25. Restraint | Senior believes it is important not to engage in risky behaviors that harm themselves or others (abuse alcohol or other drugs, gamble more than willing to lose, drive if putting themselves and others in harms way..) | If something is harmful to mself or others, I am able to avoid it (abuse alcohol, gamble more than willing to lose, or drive if my skills have declined…) | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

### Social Competencies

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 26. Planning and Decision Making | Senior demonstrates critical thinking and problem solving skills in planning for current and future opportunities, limitations and roadblocks (including end of life plan) | I am good at planning and making decisions for my future. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 27. Interpersonal Competence | Senior has empathy, sensitivity, assertiveness, and friendship skills | I find it difficult to make or keep friends. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 28. Resistance Skills | Senior can resist putting self in dangerous situations (financial, physical, emotional) | I stay away from people or places that can cause me harm. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

### Positive Outlook

| Asset | Definition | Question | Answers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 29. Personal Power | Senior believes that he or she has control over things in his/her life | I have control over things in my life. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 30. Self-Esteem | Senior reports having a good self-esteem | On the whole, I like myself. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 31. Sense of Purpose | Senior reports that "my life has a purpose" | I feel like my life has no purpose. | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |
| 32. Positive View of Personal Future | Senior is optimistic about his or her personal future | I look positively toward my future | Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Usually, Always |

# Survey items and related Assets for Optimal Living
## *Demographics and Key*

| Question | Answers |
|---|---|
| Gender | Male/Female |
| Age | 60-69, 70-79, 80-89, 90-99, 100+ |
| Do you reside in an assisted living or nursing home? | Yes/No |
| Is Social Security your main source of income? | Yes/No |
| Do you live within the Midland City limits? | Yes/No |
| Number of people in your household: | blank |
| Number of people in your household: | blank |

**Key for Loneliness, Depression, Isolation**

Loneliness - have 2 or fewer (#2 Positive Family Communication, #3 Family Proximity, #4 Other Relationships, #5 Caring Neighbors, live alone)

Negative Outlook - have 1 or less then (#30 self-esteem, #31 sense of purpose, #32 positive view of personal future)

Isolation - live alone