



# City of Gonzales

2020 Chartbook of

## Health and Well-being



Vision: Gonzales will continue to be a safe, clean, family-friendly community, diverse in its heritage, and committed to working collaboratively to preserve and retain its small-town charm.

# City of Gonzales

## **CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

JOSE RIOS, MAYOR

SCOTT FUNK, MAYOR PRO TEMPORE

LIZ SILVA

PAUL MILLER

LORRAINE WORTHY

## **CITY OF GONZALES**

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RENE MENDEZ, CITY MANAGER

City of Gonzales 2020 Chartbook of Health and Well-being provides data to inform residents, recognize opportunities, and make decisions that will continue to improve our quality of life.

Mission: provide excellent services that enhance the quality of life of our diverse community, with city services delivered in a cost-effective, respectful, and friendly manner to ensure the safety and well-being of residents and the promotion of business, recreational, housing, and employment opportunities in an environmentally sustainable manner.

# Message to Gonzales Residents and Community Partners



Mayor  
Jose Rios

I am pleased to present our *City of Gonzales 2020 Chartbook of Health and Well-being*. This Chartbook was prepared by the Monterey County Health Department to objectively examine the status and opportunities of health and well-being in our community of Gonzales.



Mayor Pro Tem  
Scott Funk

The Health Department conducted our initial Health Assessment back in 2012, which gave us a baseline to work off of, and understand, where improvement opportunities existed. Since then, we have made advancements in many of the areas identified, including bringing in two new state of the art medical centers to the community: Taylor Farms Family Health and Wellness Center and Clinica de Salud, a dental office, and an imaging center. In addition to partnering and attracting new agricultural employers like Del Monte/Mann Packing, Papé Material Handling and Braga Farms to name a few.



Councilmember  
Liz Silva

Continuing to assess where we are and how we are doing is important. The data included in the report will help to inform our practices and develop the programs and initiatives necessary to better serve our community. In addition, the Chartbook highlights many opportunities to work with our residents, private sector partners, and other agencies and organizations to continue to improve services for our community. It also presents some startling facts, and while we have improved in many areas since 2012, there is still a lot of work in front of us especially now that we are coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example; currently, approximately 30% of our population is under 15 years of age, 47% of our total population reports not being able to speak English well, and 11% of local households live under the federal poverty level, which for us was an average of \$25,750 for a family of four, pre pandemic.



Councilmember  
Lorraine Worthy

Research shows that one's socio-economic status is a contributing factor to individual and community health outcomes, but so is the community's ability to provide prosperous opportunities and the supportive infrastructure needed. Therefore, intentionally developing in a way that attracts economic opportunities to our community and bringing in programming that fulfills our population's specific needs by better understanding our data, we can address more of the issues our community faces and continue to set a standard for high performing outcomes, together – *The Gonzales Way*.



Councilmember  
Paul Miller








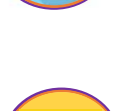



Sincerely,



City Manager  
Rene Mendez

**Jose L. Rios**  
**The Honorable Mayor**

# Table of Contents

	<b>The Gonzales Way</b> <span style="float: right;">5</span>
	Love, Care, and Connect, Gonzales Grows Green, Community Action Grants, Gonzales Youth Council
	<b>Population and Socio-Economic Characteristics</b> <span style="float: right;">6</span>
	Gonzales Population, Population by Race, Population by Ethnicity, Population by Age Groups, Languages Spoken, Employment Status, Graduation Rates, Educational Attainment, Annual Household Income, Rents per Income, Households with Children, Households with Grandparents, Families in Poverty, Children in Poverty
	<b>Access to Health Care</b> <span style="float: right;">11</span>
	Residents Lacking Health Insurance, Adults with Health Insurance, Adults who Delay Getting Care, Adults with a Usual Source of Care, Children who Visited a Dentist, Adults with Difficulty Living Independently
	<b>Communicable Disease Prevention</b> <span style="float: right;">13</span>
	Child Care Center Vaccine Rates, Kindergartners with all Required Immunizations, Kindergartners with Immunization Exemptions
	<b>Chronic Disease</b> <span style="float: right;">14</span>
	Adults with Asthma, Adults with Heart Disease, Adults with Diabetes
	<b>Health Behaviors</b> <span style="float: right;">15</span>
	Adults who Walk, Adults Drinking Sugar-sweetened Beverages, Adult Obesity, Adults who Smoke, Students who are Healthy, Students who are Overweight, Students with No Cigarette use, Students with No E-cigarette use, Students with No Marijuana use, Students with Alcohol use, Problems with Alcohol and Drug Use at School, Adequate School Counseling and Support Services, Ratio of Student Support Staff per Student
	<b>Mental Health</b> <span style="float: right;">19</span>
	Students Finding Creative Inspiration, Loneliness in Middle and High School Students, Stress in Middle and High School Students, Days Students felt Anxiety and Depression, Comprehensive Anxiety and Depression Risk Ratings, Family Life Impairment, Adults with Work Impairment, Adults Needing Mental Health Services, Adults with Serious Mental Psychological Distress
	<b>Public Safety</b> <span style="float: right;">22</span>
	Students' Perceived Safety at School, Chronic High School Absenteeism, Bicycle and Pedestrian Collisions, Crime Index, Property Crimes, Violent Crimes
	<b>Social Determinants and Community Assets</b> <span style="float: right;">24</span>
	Pollution Burden, Pesticide Use, Food Insecurity, Income Equality, Library, Local News, Food Assistance, Transportation, Schools, Government, Rental Assistance, Business Loans, Internet, New Jobs, Parks, Pre-Schools, Health Care, Civic Engagement, City Expansion
	<b>Vision for the Future: Gonzales Grows Green</b> <span style="float: right;">29</span>
	Economic Vitality, Health and Social Equity, Environmental Responsibility
	<b>Summary</b> <span style="float: right;">32</span>
	Throughout this Chartbook, the Gonzales Way logo indicates a positive or promising outcome





The Gonzales Way comes down to Love, Care, and Connect. It's our city's way of life: we look out for each other, work together, and strive to make our community a healthy, safe, and thriving.

## Gonzales Grows Green Sustainable Community Initiatives

- Reuse, Recycle, & Cleanup Day Events
- Free sharps disposal at kiosk collection sites
- Curbside clothing donations
- Residential household battery collection
- Clean energy collection with wind turbines
- High Temperature Liquid Composting
- Biodiesel-producing crops and fuel
- Recycling food processing waste
- City-wide water meter retrofitting
- Water treatment facility upgrade
- Ban on single-use plastic bags
- Campaign to ban plastic straws
- Incentivized two wind turbines
- School district recycling programs
- "Solar-ready" ordinance
- Environmental Leadership Academy
- Internet for All initiative
- Carbon footprint reduction
- Free business sustainability consultation
- General Plan Health & Wellness Element

## Gonzales Youth Council: the Voice of our Future

The Gonzales Youth Council gives voice and action to our community's future leaders. Youth Commissioners represent our youth at City Council and Gonzales Unified School Board meetings and fully participate with elected and appointed leaders. The Youth Commission also interacts with the Chamber of Commerce, Junior Ocean Guardians, Save the Whales, Gonzales Police Department, Sun Street Centers, 2020 Census Monterey County, Gonzales Community Church Food Pantry, Mental Health Action Project, and other organizations to improve social and environmental issues.

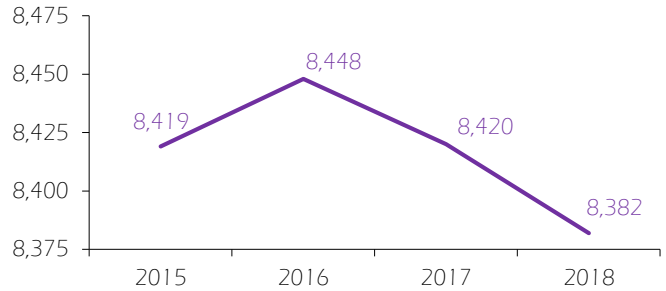




# Population and Socio-Economic Characteristics

The U. S. Census Bureau estimated Gonzales' population to be **8,382** in 2018, having grown by **2%** over the 2010 population estimate. The city's population slightly declined from a high of 8,448 in 2016. Of Monterey County's 12 cities, Gonzales ranks eighth in population. In 2017 the average household size was **4.0** people, which was greater than the county household size of 3.3 people.

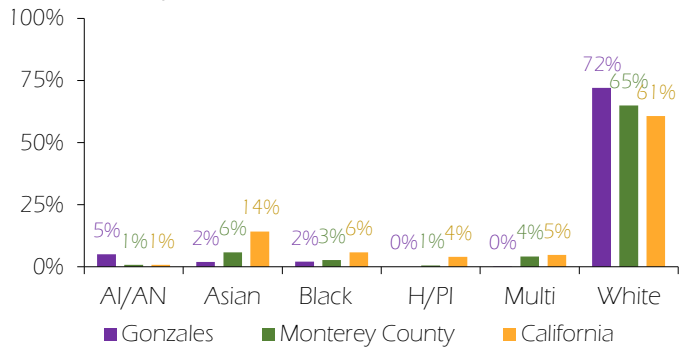
## Gonzales Population



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

The U. S. Census Bureau defines race as American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN), Asian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (H/PI), White, and multi-race. At **72%**, the racial composition of Gonzales is predominantly White and more so than the county (**65%**) and the state (**61%**). Slightly more American Indian/Alaskan Native people (**5%**) reside in Gonzales compared to the county and the state (**1%** each).

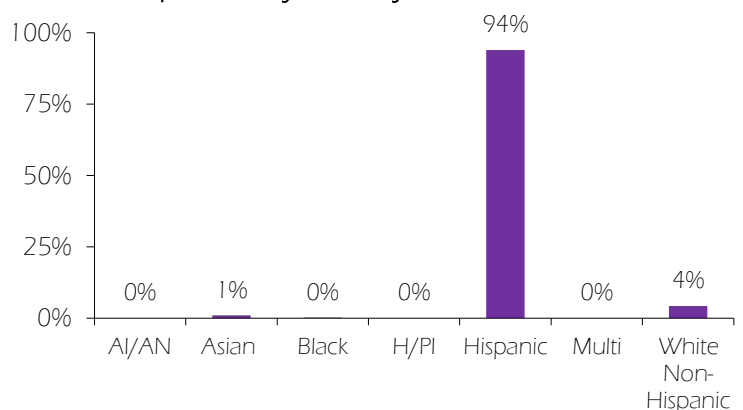
## Population by Race



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

The U. S. Census Bureau defines ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino of any race, White Non-Hispanic, Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN), Asian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (H/PI), White, and multi-race. At **94%**, the ethnic composition of Gonzales is predominantly Hispanic. Only about **5%** of Gonzales residents identify as White non-Hispanic, Asian, or Black.

## Gonzales Population by Ethnicity



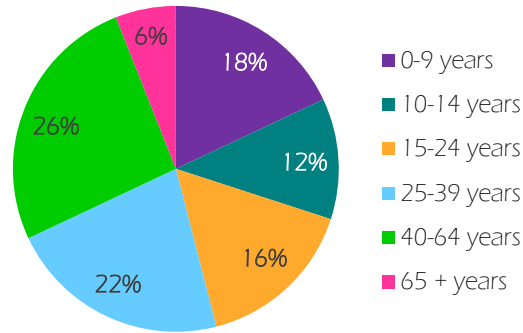
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



# Population and Socio-Economic Characteristics

Approximately **30%** of Gonzales' population is under age 15 while approximately **36%** is age 40 and older. Relative to the Monterey County as a whole, Gonzales' population is much younger – for example, the percentage of Monterey County's population over age 65, at **13.6%**, is more than twice the percentage in the city of Gonzales, which is **6%**.

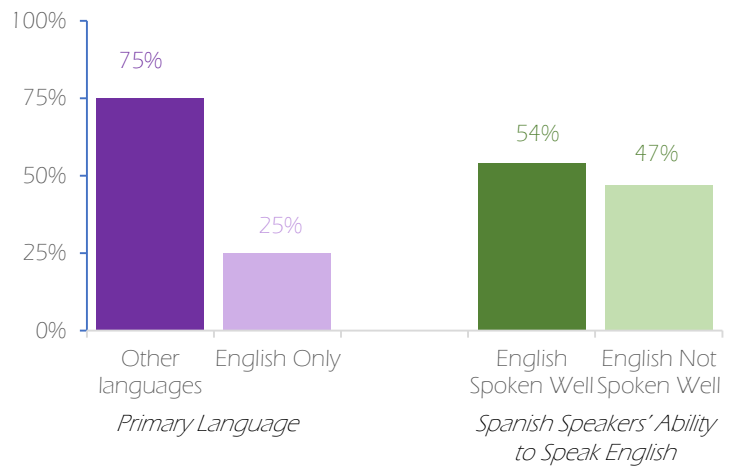
Gonzales Population by Age Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

In Gonzales, **25%** of residents speak English only while 75% speak other languages. Of all residents who speak Spanish, **54%** speak English well, and **47%** do not speak English well.

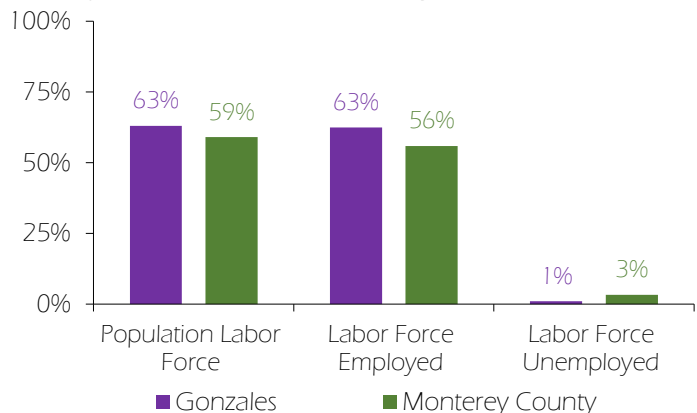
Languages Spoken (population ages 5 and older)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

Employment in Gonzales grew by **7%** from 2016 to 2017. In 2018, the U. S. Census Bureau estimated that **63%** of Gonzales' population (**3,673** residents) were in the labor force. Of those, **63%** were employed, and **1%** were unemployed, with the balance not seeking employment. At **34%**, agriculture is Gonzales' largest employment industry, followed by education (**13%**) and retail (**10%**). Only **2%** of Gonzales' labor force are self-employed. These percentages are not seasonally adjusted; employment is counted here whether it is year-round or seasonal.

Employment Status (population ages 16 to 64)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



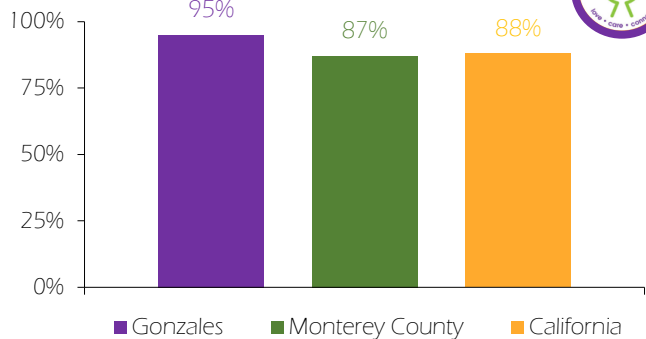
# Population and Socio-Economic Characteristics

The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate in Gonzales was **95%** in the 2018-19 school year, surpassing rates in both the county and the state. Of all 2017-18 high school grads, **70%** enrolled in an in-state college, and **2%** enrolled out-of-state. Of the **2,343** students in Gonzales Unified School District, **932** were registered at La Gloria Elementary, **534** at Fairview Middle, and **877** at Gonzales High School. Across the district, the student to teacher ratio was 21 to 1. Gonzales public schools spend **\$9,039** per student while average national school expenditure is **\$12,383**.

Of Gonzales residents age 25 and older, **27%** have college degree, **24%** have a high school diploma, and **49%** have less than a 12<sup>th</sup> grade education. For the 2017-18 school year, **71%** of graduating seniors enrolled in college.

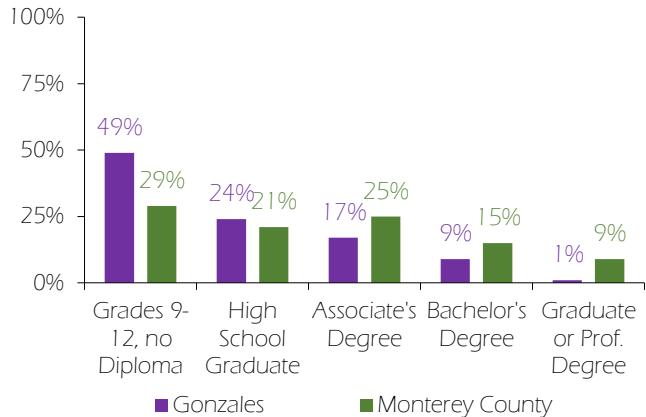
The 2019 federal household poverty level for a family of four was \$25,750. In that year, **11%** of Gonzales' households lived under the federal poverty level. In reality, the basic cost of living for a family of four is much higher than the federal poverty level. The cost of living in Gonzales is **7%** lower than the city of Salinas, and **32%** higher than the national average. The cost of housing in California versus the nation is the greatest factor in the cost of living differences.

Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates



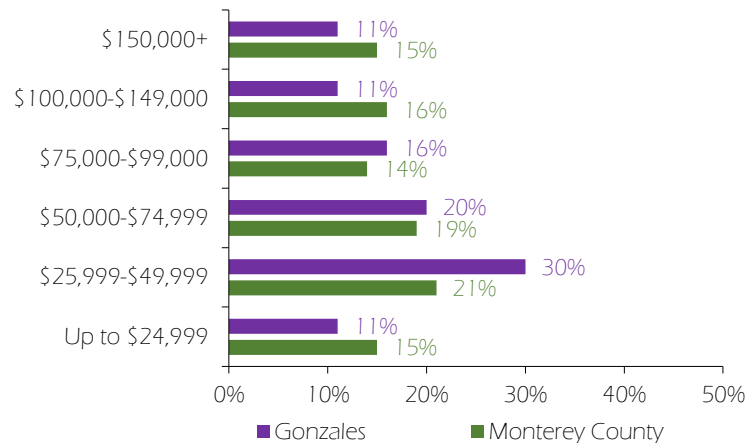
Source: Data Quest, 2019. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

Local and State Educational Attainment (25 and older)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

Annual Household Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



indicates a positive or promising outcome





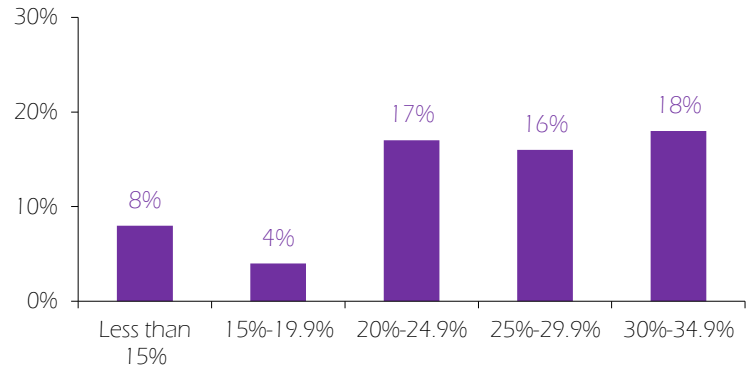
# Population and Socio-Economic Characteristics

Gonzales has approximately 2,124 housing units according to the 2014-2018 five-year American Community Survey, U. S. Census Bureau. Only **2%** of those housing units were vacant. About **70%** of all housing units were single family homes, with **27%** built between 1990 and 1999. Nearly **52%** of housing units were owner occupied, with the balance being renter occupied. It is recommended that no more than **30%** of household income be spent on rent, although **18%** of Gonzales households spend that or more.

The average family size in Gonzales is **4.5** people, while it is **3.9** people in Monterey County overall. Nearly **30%** of Gonzales households have children under age 18, compared to **25%** in the county overall. In Gonzales, **30%** of households have at least one person aged 60 or more, compared to **40%** in the county overall.

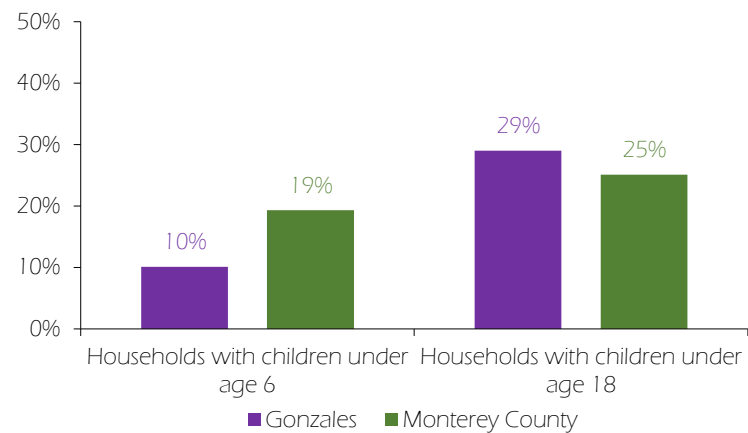
In Gonzales, twice as many households include at least one grandparent (**13%**) compared to Monterey County overall (**7%**). Fifty-five percent of those grandparents are in the labor force compared to **51%** in the county overall. In 2014-2018, **27.5%** of Gonzales residents age 65 or more lived alone.

Rents as a Percentage of Household Income



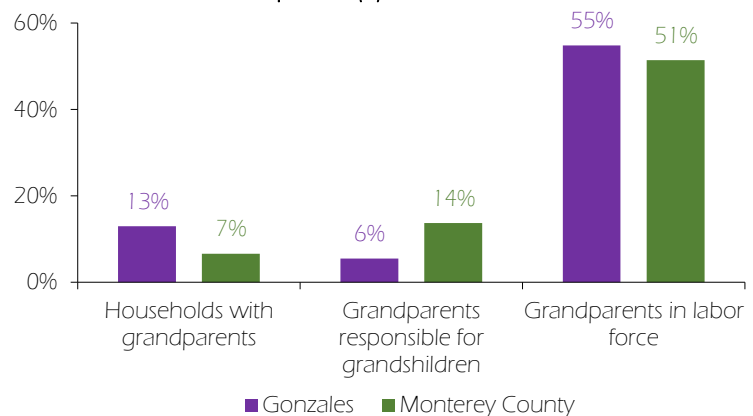
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

Households with Children



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

Households with Grandparent(s)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



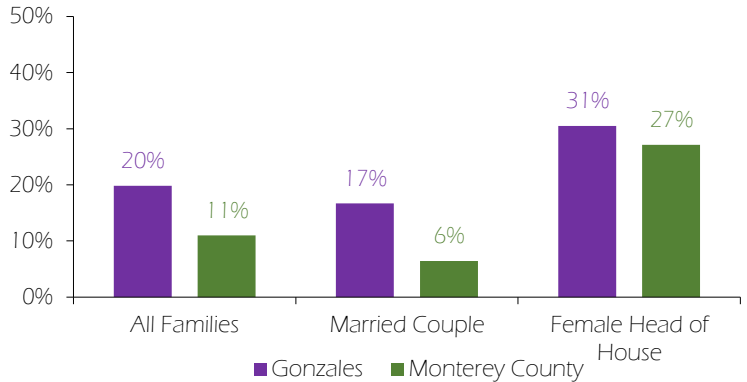
# Population and Socio-Economic Characteristics

Poverty is more prevalent in the City of Gonzales than in Monterey County overall. In Gonzales, **20%** of all families, or one in five families, live below the Federal Poverty Level. Of those, **31%** are headed by a single female and **17%** are headed by a married couple.

The U. S. Census Bureau estimated in 2014-18 that **15%** of Gonzales children lived below the federal poverty level, compared to **21%** in the county overall. In the city and county, about **26%** of impoverished households included three to four children.

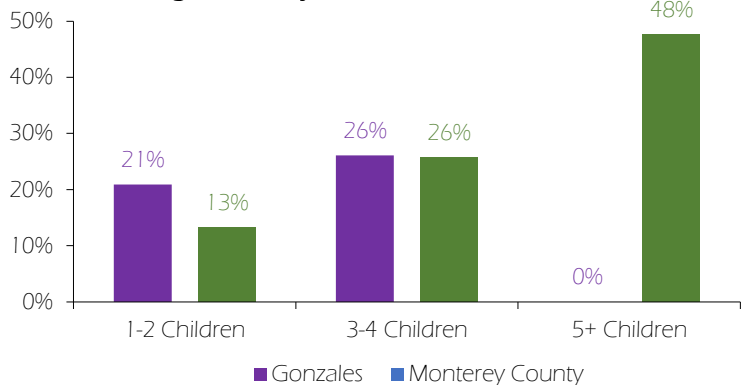
Unbanked means not having a banking account in an insured institution. Not having a checking or savings account, debit cards, paycheck direct deposit, the ability to make online payments, earning interest on savings or having a safe place to store money, makes financial transactions complicated and time consuming. Being underbanked means a household has a bank account but goes outside of the bank for financial services such as money orders, check cashing, payday loans and more. Gonzales has one full-service bank branch at 400 Alta Street and additional ATMs located at 220 S. Alta (Corner Store), 114 Alta (Jim’s Liquors), and 326 Alta (Bonilla Supermarket).

## Families Living in Poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Children Living in Poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Unbanked and Underbanked households

Region	Unbanked Households	Underbanked Households
Gonzales	13%	20%
Monterey County	9%	19%
California	7%	18%

Source: Prosperitynow.org. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



# Access to Health Care

The percentages of Gonzales adults ages 18-64 with health insurance has increased from **67%** in 2014 to **85%** in 2018, demonstrating a substantial improvement.

Unfortunately, a greater percentage of Gonzales residents (**15%**) are uninsured compared to residents in Monterey County overall and California. Without health insurance, residents may not seek medical treatment, prescription drugs, or routine checkups in a timely manner. Sometimes, people without health insurance delay seeking health care until their health condition becomes much worse, making recovery more difficult.

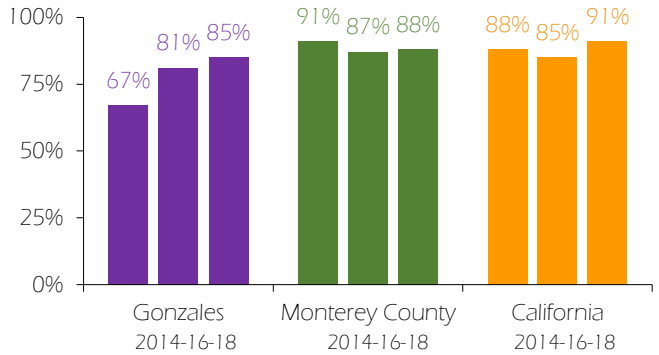
Lack of access to health care is a social disparity that can put an entire community at greater risk for the spread of communicable disease. This disparity is caused by great individual and family difficulties when people are forced to choose between health care and food, heat, rent, and/or transportation. Fortunately, three Gonzales health clinics accept Medi-Cal or a sliding payment scale. Gonzales has six medical offices, two medical testing offices, and two dental offices in the city.

Presently, the Chualar/Gonzalez/Greenfield/Soledad area is designated as underserved for primary care physicians, obstetrics and gynecology professionals, and psychiatrists, indicating a solution may be regional in nature.



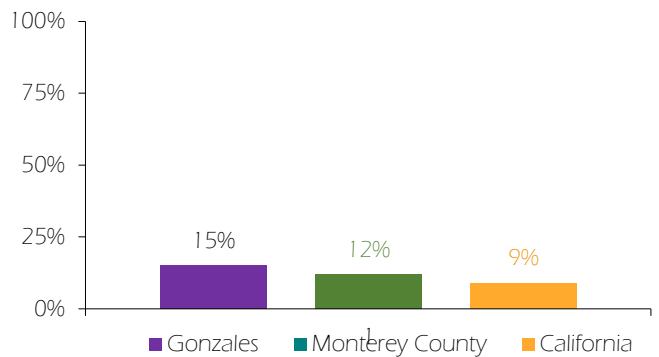
indicates a positive or promising outcome

## Adults age 18-64 with Health Insurance



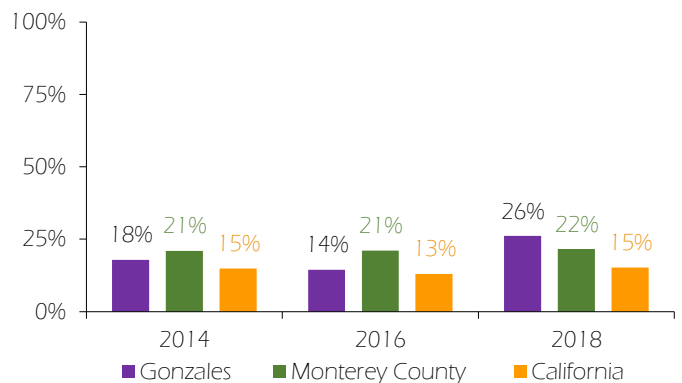
Source: CHIS 2014-18. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Residents Lacking Health Insurance



Source: CHIS 2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Adults who Delay or Have Difficulty Getting Care



Source: CHIS 2014-2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



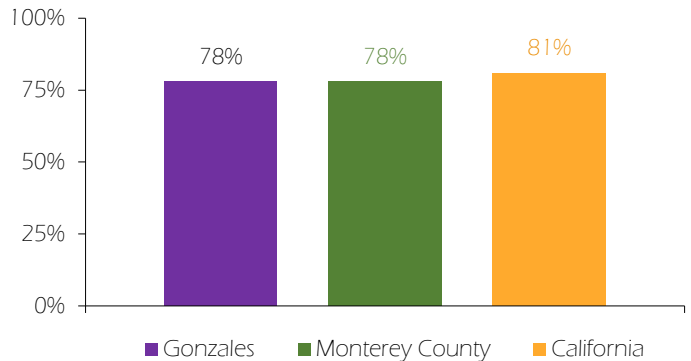
# Access to Health Care

Timely medical care and prescription medications can help prevent illness or lessen the effects of chronic diseases. In both Gonzales and Monterey County overall, **78%** of adults received timely attention to their medical needs. Statewide a slightly greater percentage of adults (**81%**) received timely medical attention.

Data from 2016 – the latest available year – indicate that **87%** of Gonzales children ages two to 11 had seen a dentist in the previous year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cites tooth decay and gum disease as the most common chronic, infectious diseases in American children. Untreated oral problems can result in general health problems, pain, interference with eating, and lost school time. Good oral health supports a child’s growth and ability to learn.

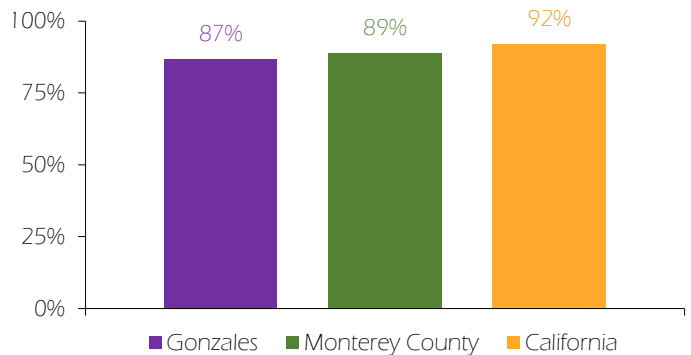
Slightly more than **20%** of Gonzales adults age 65 and older have difficulty living independently, which is a greater percentage than the county overall or the state. Without assistance, some of these people may have difficulty accessing food, health care, transportation, financial resources, and social interactions. These difficulties may contribute to ill health, depression, and isolation which may in turn contribute to premature death.

## Adults Receiving Timely Medical Care and Prescriptions



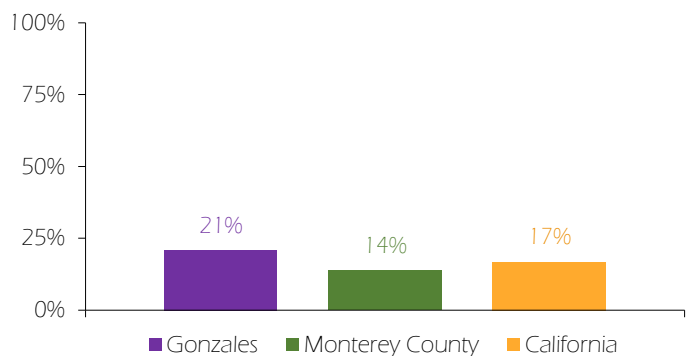
Source: CHIS 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Children age 2-11 who Visited Dentist in Past Year



Source: CHIS 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Adults age 65+ with Difficulty Living Independently



Source: CHIS 2014-18. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



# Communicable Disease Prevention



Child care centers with low vaccination rates are at increased risk for outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, mumps, and rubella, which can affect students, teachers/staff, and families. Two licensed child care centers in Gonzales with 20 or more children reported more than **95%** of incoming children had received the recommended immunization doses.

### Vaccine Abbreviations:

- DTaP = diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis vaccine
- POLIO = polio
- MMR = measles, mumps, and rubella
- HIB = Haemophilus influenzae, type B
- HEPB = hepatitis B vaccine
- VAR = varicella (chickenpox) vaccine

Nearly **94%** of Gonzales kindergartners had all required immunizations at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year. Very few kindergartners had an immunization exemption in the 2018-19 school year. A “Conditional Entrant” is a child not yet due for at least one immunization, no permanent medical or personal belief exemption, no physician’s statement of medical exemption, or is a transfer student without an available immunization record. “Immunization overdue” are children overdue for one or more required immunizations. “Permanent medical exemption” is based on a physician’s statement that immunization is contrary to a child’s physical condition or medical circumstances. “Personal Belief Exemption” is based on a parent’s affidavit that an immunization is contrary to their beliefs.

## Child Care Center Vaccine Rates

Vaccine	MAOF Early Childhood Learning Center	La Paz Migrant Headstart
DTaP Rate	<95%	<95%
POLIO Rate	<95%	<95%
MMR Rate	<95%	<95%
HIB Rate	<95%	<95%
HEPB Rate	<95%	<95%
VAR Rate	<95%	<95%

Source: California Department of Public Health, 2018-19 School Year. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



## Kindergartners with All Required Immunizations

School Year	Percentage of Students	Number of Students
2019-20	93.8%	167
2018-19	88.8%	150
2017-18	>95%	>181
2016-17	91.1	175
2015-16	89.4	168

Source: California Department of Public Health, 2018-19 School Year. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Kindergartners with Immunization Exemptions

Exemption Type	Number of Students
Conditional Entrant	Less than 2
Immunization Overdue	11
Permanent Medical Exemption	Less than 2
Personal Belief Exemption	Data not available
Other Exemption	Less than 2

Source: California Department of Public Health, 2018-19 School Year. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



indicates a positive or promising outcome





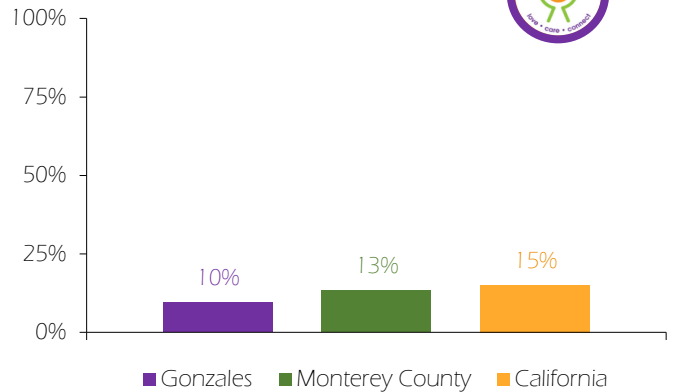
# Chronic Disease

A lower percentage (10%) of Gonzales adults have been diagnosed with asthma compared to Monterey County and the state. Asthma is a condition in which a person's air passages become inflamed, and the narrowing of the respiratory passages makes it difficult to breathe. Asthma triggers include exposure to dust, pollen, mold, cigarette smoke, and animal dander, or by exertion and stress. Asthma has no cure, but symptoms can be managed through medication.

A lower percentage (4%) of Gonzales adults have been diagnosed with heart disease compared to Monterey County and the state. Heart disease one of the nation's leading causes of death. The most common type is coronary artery disease, which can cause heart attack, angina, heart failure, and arrhythmias. Behavior modifications that can lower a person's risk of heart disease include avoiding tobacco use and second-hand smoke, obesity, and a sedentary lifestyle.

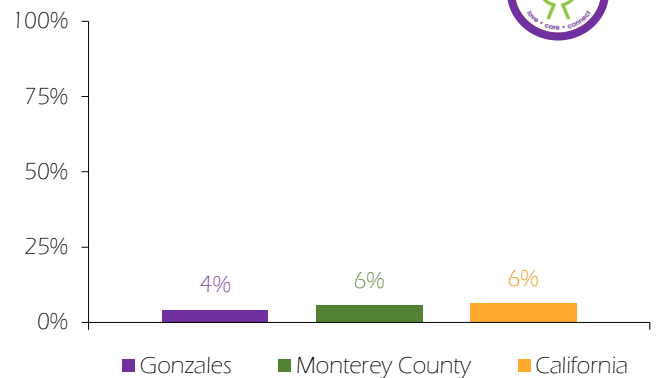
Diabetes is a debilitating disease that is one of the nation's a leading causes of death. Diabetes can have a harmful effect on most of the organs in the body, can cause kidney failure, amputation of lower extremities, and blindness. Persons with diabetes are also at increased risk for ischemic heart disease, neuropathy, and stroke. Diabetes can be treated with medications and in some cases, reversed with lifestyle changes.

## Adults Diagnosed with Asthma



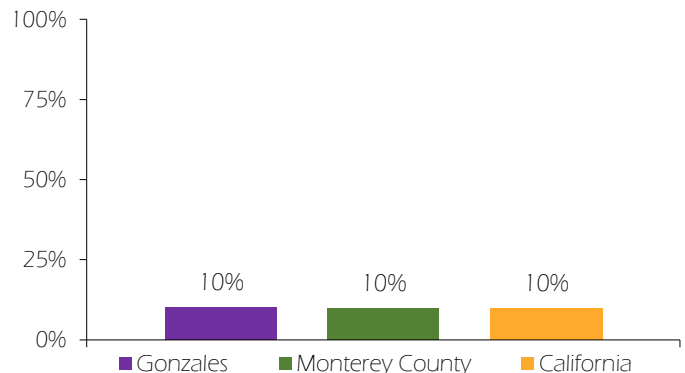
Source: CHIS, 2017-18. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Adults Diagnosed with Heart Disease



Source: CHIS, 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Adults Ever Diagnosed with Diabetes



Source: CHIS, 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



indicates a positive or promising outcome



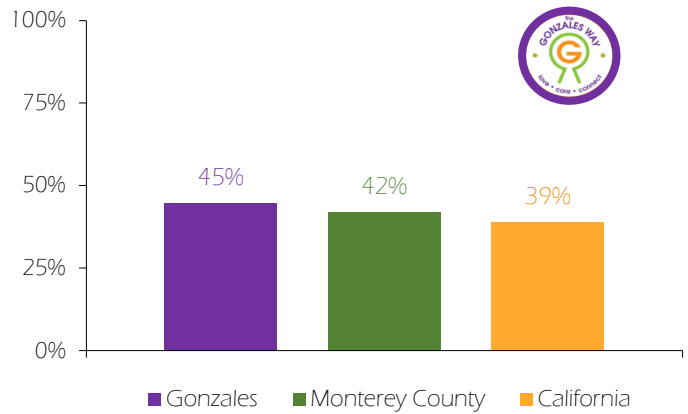
# Healthy Behaviors

Active adults reduce their risk of many serious health conditions including obesity, heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, and high blood pressure. A greater percentage of Gonzales adults (**45%**) take regular walks compared to the county and the state. For adults, physical activity is recommended three to five times each week for 20 to 60 minutes at a time. Gonzales' Canyon Creek Park has walking trails and benches, and other parks and recreation areas include Gonzales Community Pool, Central Park, Centennial Park, Meyer Park, Venice Park, the Skate Park, and Toots Vosti Memorial Recreation Center.

A greater percentage of Gonzales adults (**16%**) regularly drink sugar-sweetened beverages compared to adults in the county and the state. Sugar-sweetened beverages have large amounts of added sugar, lack nutritional value, and are high in calories. They are associated with weight gain and obesity. Reducing sugar-sweetened drink consumption can decrease weight and problems associated with obesity, and is an important element of obesity prevention.

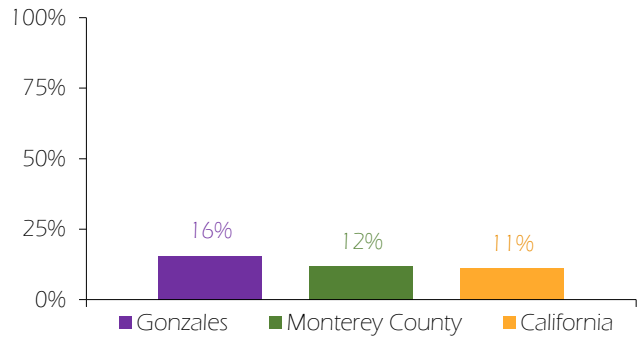
The percentage of adults in Gonzales who are obese (**46%**) exceeds that of the county and state. Many factors that contribute to obesity are socially determined, such as poverty, inability to access healthy and affordable food choices, long work hours, or unsafe environments. Sedentary lifestyles and lack of adequate sleep can also contribute to obesity.

## Adults Who Walk 2 1/2 Hours+ in the Past Week



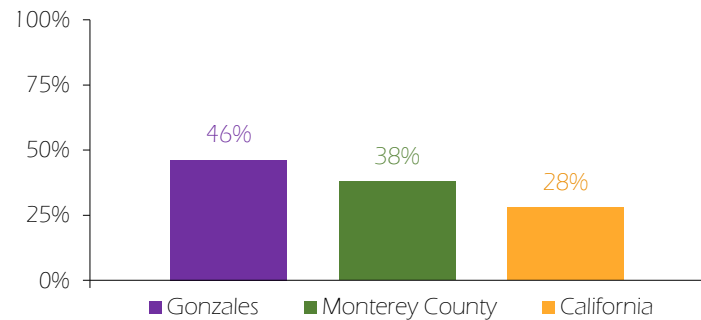
Source: CHIS, 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Adults Drinking Sugar-Sweetened Beverages



Source: CHIS, 2015-16. Prepared by: Monterey County Health Department

## Adult Obesity



Source: CHIS, 2016. Prepared by: Monterey County Health Department



indicates a positive or promising outcome



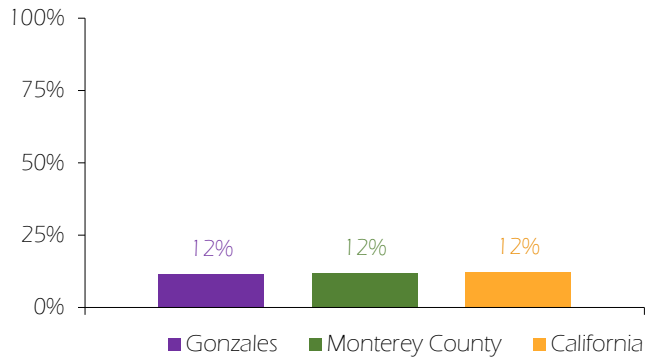
# Healthy Behaviors

Tobacco use contributes to the most avoidable causes of illness and death in the U. S. Every organ in the body can be affected by tobacco use, causing heart disease, lung and throat cancers, stroke, low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome. Secondhand smoke contains nearly 70 cancer-causing chemicals that can cause or exacerbate a wide range of adverse health effects on children and adults. E-cigarettes, snuff, and vaping are equally dangerous.

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) indicates that Fairview Middle School teachers consider nearly all or most (54%) of their students to be healthy and physically fit. Students who are more physically fit are less likely to suffer from stress, anxiety, and depression, and reduces chances of diabetes, high blood pressure and heart failure later in life. At Fairview Middle School, 60% of teachers say there are a lot of physical education and activities at school.

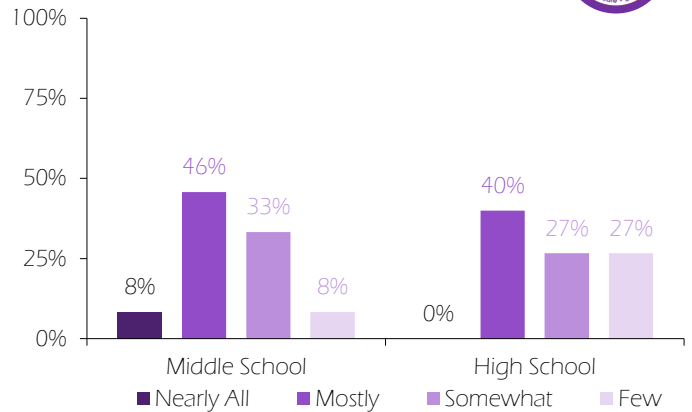
2018 California Department of Education data indicate that more 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the Gonzales Unified School District are overweight or obese compared to the county and the state. Contributing factors include increased consumption of junk food and sugary beverages, increased screen time, less physical education, neighborhoods that do not promote walking or riding bikes, and decreased safe places for children to play.

## Adults who Currently Smoke



Source: CHIS 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Students who are Healthy and Physically Fit



Source: CHKS, 2015-17. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Students who are Overweight or Obese

Grade	Gonzales Unified	Monterey County	California
Grade 5	57%	51%	41%
Grade 7	53%	41%	39%
Grade 9	51%	45%	37%

Source: California Department of Public Health, 2018-19 School Year. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



indicates a positive or promising outcome



# Healthy Behaviors



Teen cigarette use at Gonzales High is nearly nonexistent, and estimates are equal to or slightly better than the county or state. While the percentages of E-cigarettes and vaping device non-use are high, slightly more Gonzales 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders are estimated to have used E-cigarettes compared to Monterey County and California students. Compared to California students, slightly more Gonzales 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders are estimated to have used marijuana in the prior month.

Smoking any substance causes cumulative, irreversible harm, and most long-term smokers start when they are teens or young adults. Tobacco, E-cigarettes, and marijuana use are all linked to adverse health effects such as respiratory problems, anxiety attacks, cognitive difficulties, and coordination loss, as well as aggressive behavior and poor academic performance among youth.

Compared to California 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, slightly more Gonzales students in those grades are estimated to have used alcohol in the prior month. Alcohol is the most widely used substance among our nation's young people. Initial alcohol use peaks in the years between Grades 7 and 11. Underage drinking is associated with risky health behaviors such as unsafe sexual practices, injuries, motor vehicle accidents, impaired cognitive functioning, poor academic performance, physical violence, and suicide attempt. Drinking during adolescence increases the likelihood of alcohol dependence in adulthood.

## Students with No Cigarette Use in the Past Month

Grade	Gonzales Unified	Monterey County	California
Grade 7	98%	98%	99%
Grade 9	100%	98%	98%
Grade 11	98%	98%	96%

Source: California Department of Education, 2018-19 School Year.  
Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Students with No E-Cigarette Use in the Past Month

Grade	Gonzales Unified	Monterey County	California
Grade 7	89%	94%	97%
Grade 9	94%	92%	92%
Grade 11	88%	94%	90%

Source: California Department of Education, 2018-19 School Year.  
Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Students with No Marijuana Use in the Past Month

Grade	Gonzales Unified	Monterey County	California
Grade 7	96%	95%	98%
Grade 9	91%	90%	91%
Grade 11	82%	96%	84%

Source: California Department of Education, 2018-19 School Year.  
Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Students with No Alcohol Use in the Past Month

Grade	Gonzales Unified	Monterey County	California
Grade 7	92%	91%	95%
Grade 9	82%	87%	85%
Grade 11	70%	83%	78%

Source: California Department of Education, 2018-19 School Year.  
Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



# Healthy Behaviors

In the 2015-17 school years, teachers at Fairview Middle and Gonzales High schools were asked about the extent to which student alcohol and drug use is a problem on campus. Results indicate that alcohol and drug use pose greater problems at Gonzales High than at Fairview Middle.

Approximately half of the teachers at Fairview Middle and Gonzales High schools expressed the need for more student support services. Support staff aid in students' social, emotional, behavioral, physical, and cognitive needs to help them reach their maximum academic and health potential.

- Counselors help students learn coping, conflict-resolution, and goal-setting skills.
- Librarians and speech/language/hearing specialists provide direct services and case management for students with specific disabilities.
- Nurses manage the daily health needs of students, which may include providing basic health care and screenings, connecting students to health care resources, and helping students manage chronic health conditions.
- Psychologists offer mental health counseling, identify learning challenges, and assist teachers in tailoring instruction accordingly.
- Social Workers can assist with positive behavioral support in individual or group settings.
- Special Education teachers provide instruction and supports to facilitate full participation for students with other abilities.

## Problem of Alcohol & Drug Use at School

School	Slight	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Fairview Middle	63%	29%	8%	0%
Gonzales High	33%	33%	20%	13%

Source: California Department of Education, 2015-17 School Year.  
Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Teachers: Adequate Counseling and Support Services

District	Strongly Agree or Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Fairview Middle	42%	50%	8%
Gonzales High	47%	53%	0%

Source: California Department of Education, 2015-17 School Year.  
Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Number of Student Support Service Staff per 1 Student

Support Staff	Gonzales Unified	Monterey County
Counselor	592	689
Librarian	Less than 1	Less than 1
Speech/Language/Hearing Specialist	911	1,265
Nurse	2,369	4,870
Psychologist	1,185	1,617
Social Worker	0	77,923
Special Education	0	635

Source: California Department of Education, 2015-17 School Year.  
Prepared by Monterey County Health Department





# Mental Health

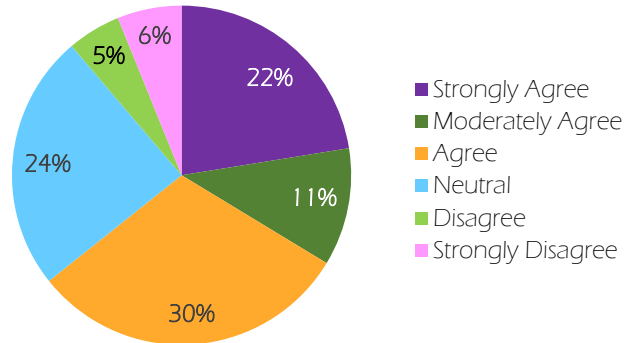
In 2020 the Gonzales Youth Council initiated its Mental Health Action Project to identify gaps in mental health resources for youth and to discover if the COVID-19 pandemic was causing additional mental health issues. The project included a survey of Gonzales Unified School District middle and high school students.

Because the 2019-2020 school year ushered in online education, the GYC wanted to learn if students were able to find creative inspiration online. Of Gonzales middle and high school students, **63%** agreed, moderately agreed, or strongly agreed that creative inspiration could be found online.

When Fairview Middle and Gonzales High students (n=355) were asked how often they felt lonely, **74%** answered “never” or “sometimes.” The remaining **26%** of surveyed students said they felt lonely half the time, most of the time, or always.

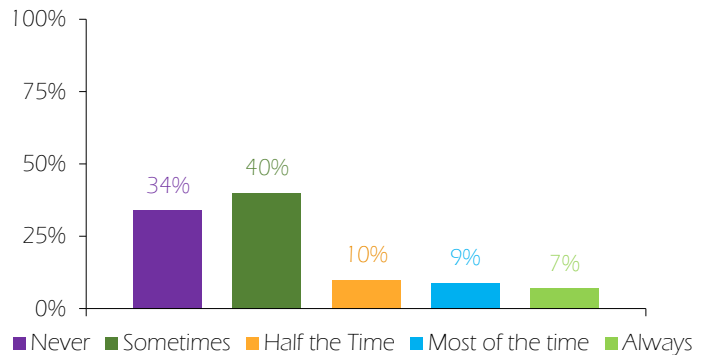
Stress is a reaction to a situation where a person feels threatened, anxious, tense, restless, nervous, or is unable to sleep. In youth, stress can interfere with the ability to attend school, learn, and socialize. The GYC mental health survey results indicated that among 355 middle and high school students, **30%** indicated they felt stress not at all or not often, and **42%** indicated they felt stress often or all the time.

## Students Find Creative Inspiration Online



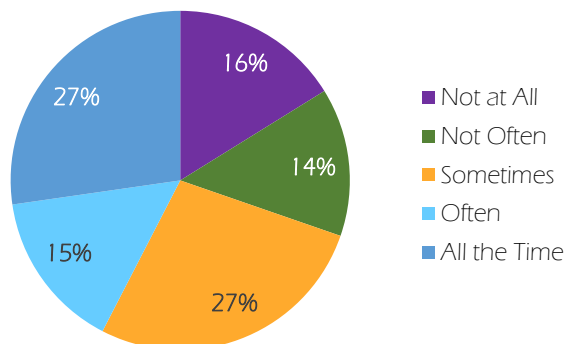
Source: Gonzales Youth Council Mental Health Project 2020. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Loneliness Among Gonzales Middle and High Schoolers



Source: Gonzales Youth Council Mental Health Project 2020. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Stress Among Gonzales Middle and High School Students



Source: Gonzales Youth Council Mental Health Project 2020. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



# Mental Health

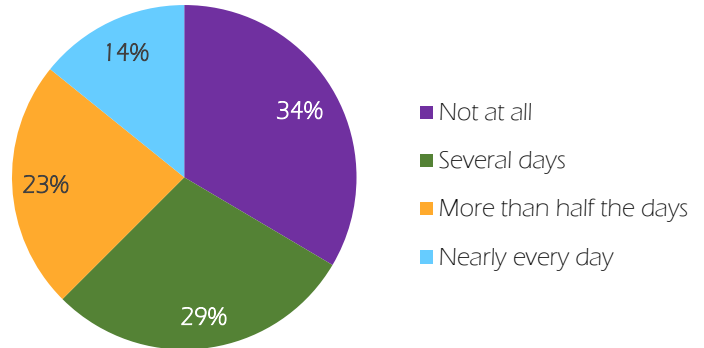
Gonzales high school students (n=176) were asked, "Over the last two weeks, how many days have you been bothered by feeling nervous or anxious or on edge, and not being able to stop or control worrying." About 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of high school students (n=176) answered "not at all," and about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> answered, "several days."

A comprehensive analysis of risk concluded that 48% of high schoolers were at low risk for anxiety and depression. Nearly 30%, however, were at risk for both anxiety and depression.

In the 2020-21 school year, Gonzales Unified School District partnered with the following agencies for student mental health support services:

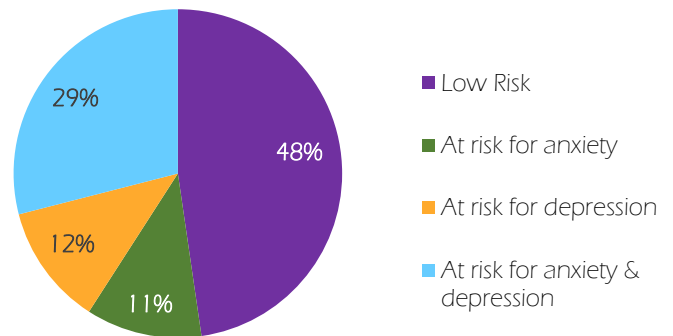
- Monterey County Behavioral Health for individual counseling
- Two licensed Clinical Social Workers for individual and group counseling, co-sponsored by the City and School District
- CSUMB Master of Social Work Student Interns for group counseling
- Sun Street Centers for substance abuse intervention and prevention groups
- Monterey County Rape Crisis Center for Voluntary Life Skills Club, sexual harassment, and human trafficking education
- Epicenter for LGBTQ+ support and club
- Teen Success, Inc for teen moms
- Virtual Calming Corner Website
- Mental Health Student Newsletters

## Days Gonzales High Students felt Anxiety and Depression



Source: Gonzales Youth Council Mental Health Project 2020. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Comprehensive Anxiety and Depression Risk Ratings



Source: Gonzales Youth Council Mental Health Project 2020. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department





# Mental Health

The California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) is conducted every other year by University of California, Los Angeles. A series of mental health questions were last asked in the telephone survey conducted in 2016.

That year, **10%** of Gonzales adults who were surveyed said their emotions had interfered relationship with friends and family in the prior 12 months. This percentage is lower than the county overall (**12%**) and the state (**14%**).

In 2016, **9%** of Gonzales survey respondents said their emotions had interfered work performance in the prior 12 months. This percentage is higher than the county overall (**7%**) and the state (**6%**). The uncertainty of seasonal agricultural employment may be a contributing factor in worry and anxiety in the workplace.

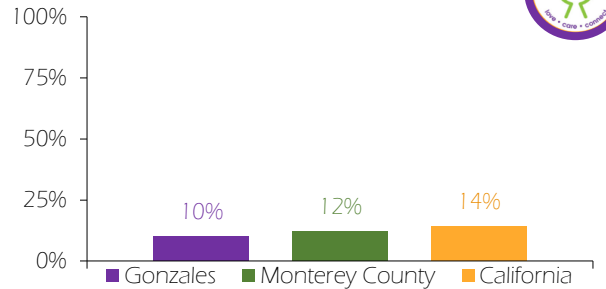
In 2016, **11%** of Gonzales adults who were surveyed said they needed help for emotional or mental health or alcohol/drug problems in the prior 12 months. This percentage is lower than the county overall (**14%**) and the state (**17%**).

Using a method to measure non-specific psychological distress associated with anxiety and depression called the Kessler 6 Mental Health Scale, analysis indicated that **6%** of Gonzales adults may have had serious psychological distress in the prior 12 months. This percentage is identical to the county percentage and lower than the state percentage (**8%**).



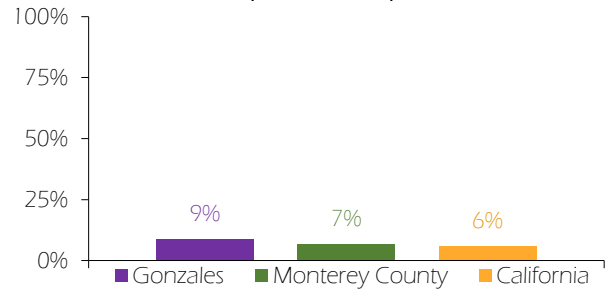
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## Family Life Impairment in prior 12 months



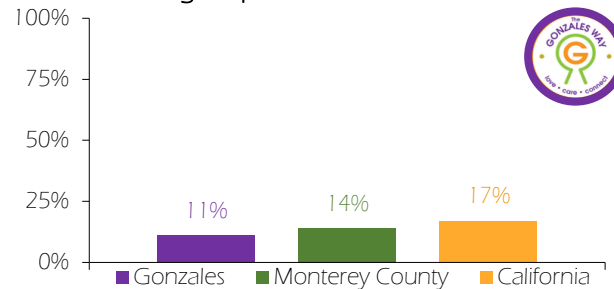
Source: CHIS 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Adults with Work Impairment in prior 12 months



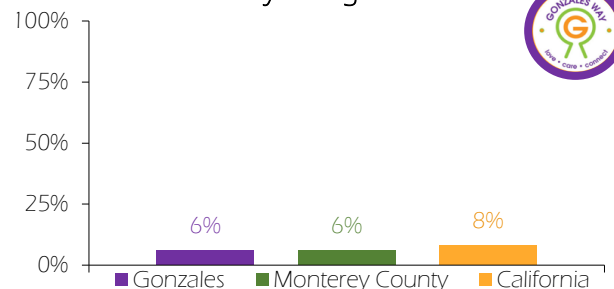
Source: CHIS 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Adults Needing Help with Mental Health Problems



Source: CHIS 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Adults with Serious Psychological Distress



Source: CHIS 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



# Public Safety

Student perceptions of safety affect their academic achievement. When students feel safe, they are better able to focus on learning, which leads to increased academic achievement. In Gonzales Unified School District, **50%** or more of 7th, 9th, and 11th graders feel safe or very safe at their school. The district provides anti-bullying, including anti-cyber bullying resources, to students and parents.

Students who are chronically absent from high school are at serious risk of falling behind in school and are more likely to dropout. Nationally, about **20%** of high school are chronically absent. In Gonzales, chronic high school absenteeism (**10%**) is less than that of the county and state.

California's Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS) indicates that between 2016 and 2019, **six** motor vehicle collisions involving bicycles and pedestrians occurred near Gonzales schools. **Two** bicyclists and one pedestrian suffered visible injuries, and **three** pedestrian injuries did not.



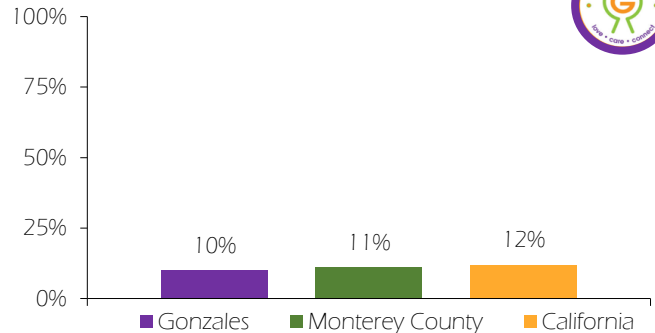
## Students' Perceived Safety at School

Grade Level	Safe or Very Safe	Neither safe or unsafe	Unsafe or Very Unsafe
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	51%	43%	6%
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	60%	33%	7%
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	50%	47%	6%

Source: DataQuest 2018-19. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

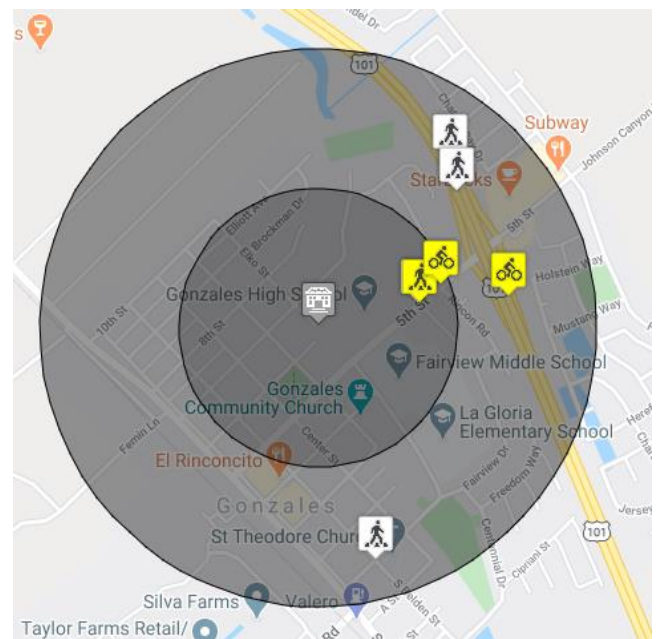


## Chronic High School Student Absenteeism



Source: DataQuest 2018-19. Prepared by Monterey County Health

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Collisions Around Schools



Source: TIMS 2016-19. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



indicates a positive or promising outcome



# Public Safety

On the U. S. Department of Justice crime index scale of 1 to 100, with 1 being the least amount of crime and 10 being the most amount of crime, the City of Gonzales scored **better ratings** than the county or state for violent and property crime. The 2018 average national rate of sworn officers to residents was **2.4 per 1,000 residents**. In Gonzales, with 12 sworn officers, the rate was **1.4 per 1,000 residents**. To achieve the national average, the City would need to have **20** more sworn officers.

The most up-to-date, fully-vetted available statistics show that Gonzales' overall crime rate is **lower than 84%** of other California communities.



Gonzales's violent crime rate is 1 per one thousand inhabitants. A person's chance of becoming a victim of property crime in Gonzales is 1 in 105, which is **much lower** chance than the California rate of 1 in 42. A person's chance of becoming a victim of violent crime in Gonzales is 1 in 762, which is a much lower chance than the California rate of 1 in 224.

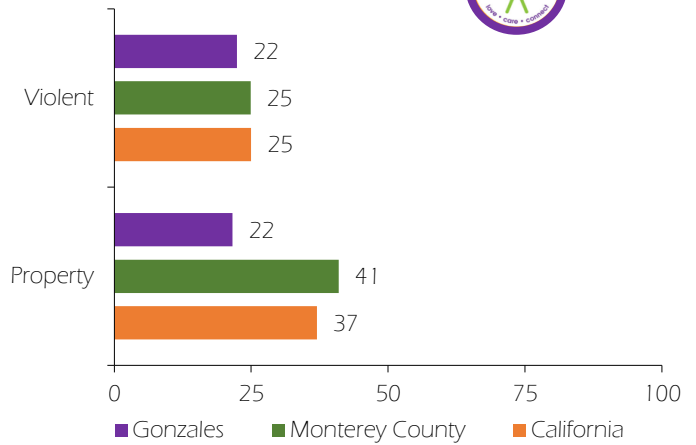
The Gonzales Police Department will assist any neighborhood in setting up a neighborhood watch program by calling (831) 675-5010.



indicates a positive or promising outcome



## Crime Index (scale 1-100)



Source: U. S. Department of Justice 2018-19. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Number of Property Crimes

Type	2018	2019
Arson	0	1
Burglary	11	12
Motor Vehicle Theft	33	21
Larceny-Theft	30	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>73</b>

Source: DOJ 2018-19. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

## Number of Violent Crimes

Type	2018	2019
Aggravated Assault	6	12
Homicide	0	0
Rape	1	1
Robbery	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>

Source: DOJ 2018-19. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department





# Social Determinants and Community Assets

The air quality score, compiled by measures of ozone, diesel particulate matter, pesticides, and other toxins, is **32** in the City of Gonzales, which is higher than the County (**21**) and the state (**25**). This Pollution Burden Score represents the potential exposures to adverse environmental conditions. A higher score represents a higher exposure risk.

## Pollution Burden Score

Gonzales	Monterey County	California
32	21	25

Source: CHIS NE 2008-12. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

Pesticide use affects air and water quality. Measured in pounds per square mile, the City of Gonzales has **1,446** pounds, which is over three times more than the state (**369**), but under the amount in the county overall (**2,435**) by about half. People who live near fields can be exposed to pesticides both outdoors and inside homes. Exposure to high levels of some pesticides can cause illness right away or conditions such as birth defects or cancer later in life.

## Pesticide Use

Gonzales	Monterey County	California
1,446	2,435	369

Source: CHIS NE 2008-11. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

Food insecurity is the lack of consistent ability to afford enough food. A grave disparity exists between families who cannot afford enough food living in Gonzales (**18%**) the county (**10%**), and the state (**7%**).

## Food Insecurity for Adults with incomes < 200% Poverty

Gonzales	Monterey County	California
18%	10%	7%

Source: CHIS 2016. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department

Income inequality demonstrates income distribution on a scale of 0 to 1, with 1 being perfect equality and 100 being perfect inequality. The City of Gonzales has **greater** equality than the county and state, meaning that household incomes in Gonzales are relatively more equal than the county or state.

## Household Income Equality

Gonzales	Monterey County	California
.38	.45	.48

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2018. Prepared by Monterey County Health Department



indicates a positive or promising outcome



# Social Determinants and Community Assets

## Gonzales Branch, Monterey County Free Libraries

English and Spanish books, CDs, magazines, newspapers, audio books, community information kiosk, and after school homework center. Free internet and computer use (scan, fax, print, and copy) programs and special events for kids and adults. The Gonzales Branch Library had a circulation of **13,040** in 2018-19.



## Local News and Opinion

The Salinas Valley Tribune features paid and online articles, opinion, and announcements for the Gonzales, Soledad, and Greenfield communities. Other local newspapers include the Salinas Californian, the Monterey County Herald, and Monterey County Weekly. Local radio stations include KHIP-FM 104.3 and KKMC-AM -880. Television service for the community comes from the Monterey-Salinas-Santa Cruz designated market area.



## Basic Food Assistance

The City sponsors and installs Little Free Pantries for residents to “Take what you need, share what you can” as great way for neighbors to help other neighbors in need. Little Free Pantries are located on various city corners. Public Works staff monitor the pantries and clean them regularly.

The Monterey County Food Bank distributes food from St. Theodore’s Church weekly. Supplemental food assistance is also available from the Salvation Army – Gonzales and the Gonzales Community Church.



Rovertto Zavala (left) and Jacob Schoch stand with the frame of a little food pantry before installing a clear front door and finishing the box.



# Social Determinants and Community Assets

## Public Transportation

Greyhound and Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) have 10 bus stops that provide bus service to the greater Monterey and Salinas areas, southward to Paso Robles, and north as far as Watsonville and San Jose. MST “On Call” neighborhood transportation is available with one-hour advance request by calling 866-663-3278 to schedule a pick-up.



Monterey-Salinas Transit

## Schools

Gonzales Unified School District includes La Gloria Elementary, Fairview Middle, Gonzales High, Somavia High, Gonzales Adult School, and Summer School. Gonzales Adult School classes include English as a Second Language, Citizenship, High School Diploma/GED, Computer Literacy, and industry certificates including Clerical, Food Handling, First Aid/CPR, and Forklift Certification.



Gonzales Adult School

## City Government

The city is governed by five elected council members who serve four-year terms. The Mayor serves a two-year term. Council meetings are open to the public and are held on the first and third Mondays of the month at 6 pm at the City Council Chambers, 117 Fourth Street. The City Council sets policies, approves budgets and contracts, and provides a forum for public discussion.

The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer with responsible for overseeing and managing all the activities of the city including budget and risk management, finance, personnel, public services, and future planning.

City services include police and fire departments, public works, construction permits and inspections, utilities, parks and recreation, utilities, community development, and community engagement.



Gonzales Community Center Complex, Conceptual Site Plan, is planned for construction on 5<sup>th</sup> Street near Fairview Middle School. The approximately 29,500 square foot building may include a large multi-purpose room, conference rooms, public library, kitchen, and adjacent outdoor theater. Potential uses may include community meetings and events, recreation and fitness programs, farmers markets, and performing arts. Public comments and questions may be submitted via [public.input@ci.Gonzales.ca.us](mailto:public.input@ci.Gonzales.ca.us)





# Social Determinants and Community Assets

## Mortgage and Rental Assistance

In 2020 the City of Gonzales obtained a grant to assist 33 low income families (totaling 129 individuals) with rental and mortgage payments. All had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic that limited their ability to earn their regular incomes.



## Expedited Small Business Loans

Gonzales' Business Assistance Loan Programs lends funds at **2%** interest rate, and funds that are paid back are rolled back into the program to fund future loans. Businesses must create the equivalent of one new full-time job for every \$35,000 loaned. Loans can be used for furniture, fixtures, inventory, equipment, machinery, supplies, advertising, or working capital.



## Internet for All

Gonzales residents can receive a free 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspot through the City's Internet for All initiative in partnership with T-Mobile. A total of 2,000 hotspots are available, one per household with proof of address. Each hotspot provides unlimited, high-speed internet access that supports up to 12 connections at once.



## New Job Creation

In the decade from 2010 through 2020, the City of Gonzales has assisted businesses of all sizes create a total of **1,465** new jobs. The largest business expansions are attributed to Taylor Farms, Foxy Foods, Del Monte Foods, Pure Pacific Organics, and Growers Express. Looking forward, Del Monte Foods anticipates hiring another **150** employees by 2025. The City assists in business job development through public/private partnerships, promoting economic opportunities, and facilitating expansion permits.





# Social Determinants and Community Assets

## Parks and Playgrounds

The city holds an abundance of park and recreation areas, programs, and staff to provide outdoor activities for residents of all ages. Activities include youth and adult sports, playgroups, youth camps and theater, aquatics, senior programs and special events and celebrations



## Daycare and Preschools

The City of Gonzales is home to **9** in-home child daycare establishments with a total capacity of **102** children, and **3** preschools with a total capacity of **96** children.

## Health and Dental Care

Health and dental care can be obtained from Alta Medical Clinic, Christine Ponzio MD, Clinica de Salud del Valle de Salinas, David Ramirez DDS, Gonzales Dental, Gonzales Dental Care, Gonzales Medical Imaging Center, LabCorp, Oscar Gantes MD, Taylor Farms Family Health and Wellness Center, and Steven William Harrison MD,



Mural at LabCorp building, 133 4<sup>th</sup> Street

## Civic Engagement

- Gonzales' voting population (citizens age 18 and older) is **3,479**. and **44%** of registered voters participated in the last election.
- **12%** of Gonzales adults say they volunteer in charitable organization, and 5 % say they serve on a local committee.
- Nonprofit organizations in Gonzales include Rotary, Lions Club, Gonzales Young Farmers, American Legion, Swiss-American Club, and Padres Unidos Especiales.



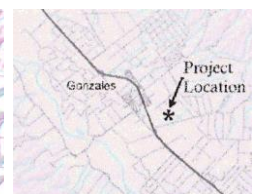
Gonzales Youth Council and Gonzales High School Interact Club planting native plants at Canyon Creek Park

## Gonzales Expansion

In 2023, the City of Gonzales expects to begin a 20 to 30-year project to annex about **1,300** acres that will provide about **6,800** residential units, schools, parks, and public infrastructure. The annexation objectives will follow the City's General Plan policies that maintain a long-term vision, small town characteristics, discouragement of suburban sprawl, and sustainability.



Vista Lucia



Puente del Monte





# Vision for the Future: Gonzales Grows Green

## Economic Vitality

The City's aim is to diversify and grow an economically sustainable future. Because **one in five** Gonzales families are living in poverty, as are **15%** of all Gonzales children, *emphasis must be placed on attracting and creating living wage jobs*. Gonzales' agriculture businesses are considered leaders in innovation, and employee-valued measures such as Taylor Farms' Health and Wellness Center and scholarship program are examples of investments in employees that pay off for the entire community.

With its strategy of forming public/private partnerships, the City's goals are to continue and expand upon:

1. Sponsoring *innovative and sustainable agricultural industries that provide living wage jobs*, workforce readiness, entrepreneurialism, and advanced technologies
2. Diversifying the business mix of products and services, especially in *job-creating health care, education, manufacturing, and ag processing*
3. Supporting *growth opportunities that are environmentally sustainable* with respect to water, air, and soil qualities
4. Promoting "The Gonzales Way" to attract *responsible commercial activities that will enhance residents' health, education, employment, and satisfaction*
5. Working with El Pajaro Community Development to *maintain City resources and readiness to incentivize and support new business growth and existing business retention and expansion*
6. Facilitating *more workforce education partnerships* such as CSUMB, Hartnell College's Center for Advanced Technology, the Steinbeck Innovation Cluster, and ALBA's Farmer Education Program.



*In The Gonzales Way, the city annually displays banners to celebrate high school graduates who seek continuing education through community colleges, technical schools, or 4-year universities.*

## Gonzales Grows Green Economic Successes

- **HealthySoil Facility Expansion** now includes several regional offices and donates excess product to help landscape areas throughout the city
- **Converted Organics of California** developed a school lunch zero-waste diversion program that is considered as a model for other communities
- **Energy Alternative Solutions, Inc.** biodiesel-producing crops and fueling station produces tax revenues to fund essential local services.
- **Green Valley Farm Supply, Inc** operates from its Gonzales headquarters to provide certified and licensed crop consulting, fertilizing, and protection
- **Ramsey Highlander, Inc**, headquartered in Gonzales, is world's largest designer and manufacturer of self-propelled harvesting machinery



# Vision for the Future: Gonzales Grows Green

## Health and Social Equity

Recognizing the importance of social connectedness, the City promotes engagement through posted meetings and Facebook announcements, and providing programs and physical environment improvements such as biking and walkways. Because slightly more than 20% of Gonzales adults age 65 and older have difficulty living independently, *senior outreach and social activities are important to fostering better emotional health.*

*Efforts to reduce social equity barriers*, such as providing information in Spanish and Internet for All, are important for assuring residents are invited, engaged, and heard.

Health and social equity are related to educational attainment. Because 47% of City residents who speak Spanish do not speak English well, *bilingual speaking skills is an area ripe for improvement.* The City, Gonzales Unified School District, and the Salinas Valley Adult Education Consortium recognize the importance of *adult education to improve English and Spanish skills, increase digital literacy, and train for living wage earnings. Local collaboration to expand these imperative community resources have potential to improve equity for individuals and families.*

Gonzales is underserved for primary care physicians, obstetrics and gynecology professionals, and psychiatrists. This shortfall in can cause residents to travel up to 60 miles round trip to access medical and mental health specialists. *Opportunities for more medical services may exist in the City's planned land annexation.*



*Internet for All broadband strategy to ensure equitable internet access to all those residing in our community*

## Gonzales Grows Green Health and Social Equity Successes

- **Internet for All** provides one high-speed hotspot per household in a pilot program sponsored by the City and T-Mobile, as a response to COVID-19 school closures. Internet for All is a social equity effort that benefits families and the entire community.
- **Workforce training opportunities** are promoted by the City to help residents improve skills and higher paid employment. The Gonzales Adult School, the Farmer Education Course provided by Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association, and Hartnell College's Farmworker Education and Advancement program and agricultural business and technology courses are touted to residents and businesses.
- **The Robert Wood Johnson "Culture of Health" prize** was awarded in late 2019 to the City of Gonzales "Culture of Health" prize for advancing health, opportunity, and equity, based on the City's Gonzales Grows Green initiative, community engagement, and The Gonzales Way efforts to create health and equity for all.



# Vision for the Future: Gonzales Grows Green

## Environmental Responsibility

“Do the Right Thing” is the City’s approach to its Climate Action Plan that outlines reducing greenhouse gases and solid waste, seeking energy alternatives, conservatively managing water use, preserving air quality, and combating other devastating effects of global warming.

The City’s rural location provides challenges due to agricultural pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer use that can contaminate air and water. The City is cognizant of this pollution burden and has outlined mitigating actions that are described Chapter X: Health and Wellness section of the General Plan.

The City is committed to sustainability and has recently created these city-wide programs:

- Safe disposal of used sharps containers, needles, or diabetic testing supplies at Gonzales Rx Pharmacy on Fourth Street
- Safe prescription and non-prescription medications disposal at Gonzales Police Department on Fourth Street, and biannual National Prescription Drug Take-Back Events
- Free oil disposal containers available at Napa Auto Parts on Alta Street
- Biannual REuse, REcycle, and Cleanup weekend events held at Fairview Middle School for disposal of electronic waste and recyclables, and landfill vouchers for large items.
- Annual community-wide garage sales held on the second Saturday in June.



*The Gonzales Grows Green (G3) Initiative involves City residents in taking environmental responsibility seriously by implementing efforts to support long-term sustainability*

## Gonzales Grows Green Environmental Successes

- **Gonzales Electric Authority and Concentric Power, Inc.** executed an Energy Services Agreement to deliver wholesale electric power via a community-scale microgrid in and around the Gonzales Agricultural Industrial Business Park, to meet clean energy requirements of the City’s Climate Action Plan
- **ENGIE Services US INC.** and the City have partnered to upgrade City systems which will save \$8 million in energy costs over the life of the program.
- **Gonzales’ Wind Turbine** power program accounts for an 80% reduction in the City’s carbon footprint and was constructed at no cost to the City.
- **A Local Food Processor** now saves nearly \$80,000 annually on waste disposal fees after working with Gonzales Grows Green on recycling and redirecting its waste.
- **An international winery** with a local facility is now diverting 82% to 90% percent of its waste from the landfill.



# Summary

**Sociodemographics.** Gonzales is slowly growing in population (2% increase from 2010 to 2018), with many households (30%) having children 18 and younger and/or having grandparents (13%). City residents 65 and older have a more difficult time than those across the county living independently. While there is a relatively high graduation rate compared to the county (95% vs 87%) and lower student chronic absenteeism than in the county, Gonzales public schools spend \$9,039 per student while average national school expenditure is \$12,383 and poverty rates are higher than in the county as a whole.

In addition, Gonzales' overall crime rate is lower than 84% of other California communities. City youth have expressed the need for expanded social and emotional health supports. Gonzales is dedicated to sustainability as evidenced by the Gonzales Grows Green Sustainable Communities Initiative. It is also a community with much youth potential (which it supports in many ways, including the Gonzales Youth Council).

**Health.** Gonzales has seen improvements in the percentage of its population with health insurance (increasing from 67 to 88% in four years), but still lags behind the county. Importantly, since the first health profile, the city has expanded its primary care access, although the region is designated as underserved for primary care physicians, obstetrics and gynecology professionals, and psychiatrists. In addition, lower proportions of city children saw a dentist in the past year when compared to the county. However, childhood vaccination rates are high. Gonzales residents report lower rates of some chronic diseases (heart disease and asthma) and have some positive behaviors (such as higher percentage reporting regular walking). There are also several health outcomes where

city residents fare poorly compared to the county, including regular consumption of sugar sweetened beverages (16% vs 12%), obesity rates (46% vs 38% for adults and ), and vaping, cannabis, and alcohol use in middle and high school. A mental health survey conducted by Gonzales high school students, with support from a CSUMB team, indicated that 42% of the high school students surveyed felt stress often or all of the time and 30% were at risk for both anxiety and depression.

**Health Equity in All Policies Recommendation.** The city could continue to support healthy community development and the health of its residents by adopting a Health Equity in All Policies (HEiAP) resolution and approach. HEiAP is a collaborative approach that integrates and articulates health considerations into policymaking across sectors to improve the health of all communities and people. HEiAP recognizes that health is created by a multitude of factors beyond healthcare and, in many cases, beyond the scope of traditional public health activities. For example, as well as green growth, future growth planning should consider safety-oriented community design and youth and family supports. These could include considerations for:

- Using a community-driven approach for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) for old and new development;
- Multi-generational housing and access and functional needs considerations to enable older residents to age in place;
- Planning using a community engagement-centered approach; and
- Support for more equitable distribution of statewide funding for schools.

In addition to supporting infrastructure improvements, the city could consider opportunities for developing or





## Summary (con't.)

expanding supports for improving community health, including:

- Develop a regional partnership to improve access to healthcare specialists;
- Partnering with the local business community to support youth educational opportunities for higher paying jobs linked with the agricultural sector, the largest employer;
- Implementing or expanding on a Community Health Worker program to provide systems navigation for city residents, connecting them with health insurance, social resources, health specialists, and helping change health behaviors to improve health outcomes;
- Continuing with the expansions to school supports and staff to meet students' social, emotional, behavioral, physical, and cognitive needs to help them reach their maximum academic and health potential.
- Continue building partnerships that bring in diverse, well-paying job opportunities to the community.
- Work with partners like SVMH, GUSD, and Monterey County Behavioral Health to develop a community wide approach to mental health.
- As the City plans for growth, proactively look for opportunities and be intentional about applying the HEiAP framework, such as around the new Community Center Complex.
- Prioritize actions linked with policies in the Health and Wellness Element of the General Plan, in particular:
  - Increasing opportunities for active transportation, transit use, complete streets, and neighborhood access to nutritious retail food options
  - Support expansions of affordable childcare and strategically locate childcare to support workforce needs and livable communities.
  - Support innovative business solutions that add to neighborhood connectivity.
  - Encourage housing options that include affordable options, mixed use and resilient community additions, such as parks, community spaces, and public transit access.
  - Develop opportunities for improved community connections through youth and adult civic engagement and authentic community engagement processes for projects,

In addition, the Gonzales Grows Green strategies should be part of these supports for community health, with a focus on reducing social inequities while attracting environmentally-friendly businesses and employment options.

Health and wellbeing don't occur in a vacuum. Besides the strategies listed above, developing or strengthening community trust and using culturally sensitive and congruent practices to infrastructure and neighborhood development have to also be part of the planned approach. As such, in addition to strategies above, it will be important to implement inclusive, culturally relevant approaches for building a culture for health and wellbeing. This would include staff, resident, and agency training and the intentional development of racial equity policies and practices, with the goal of improved health equity for all.