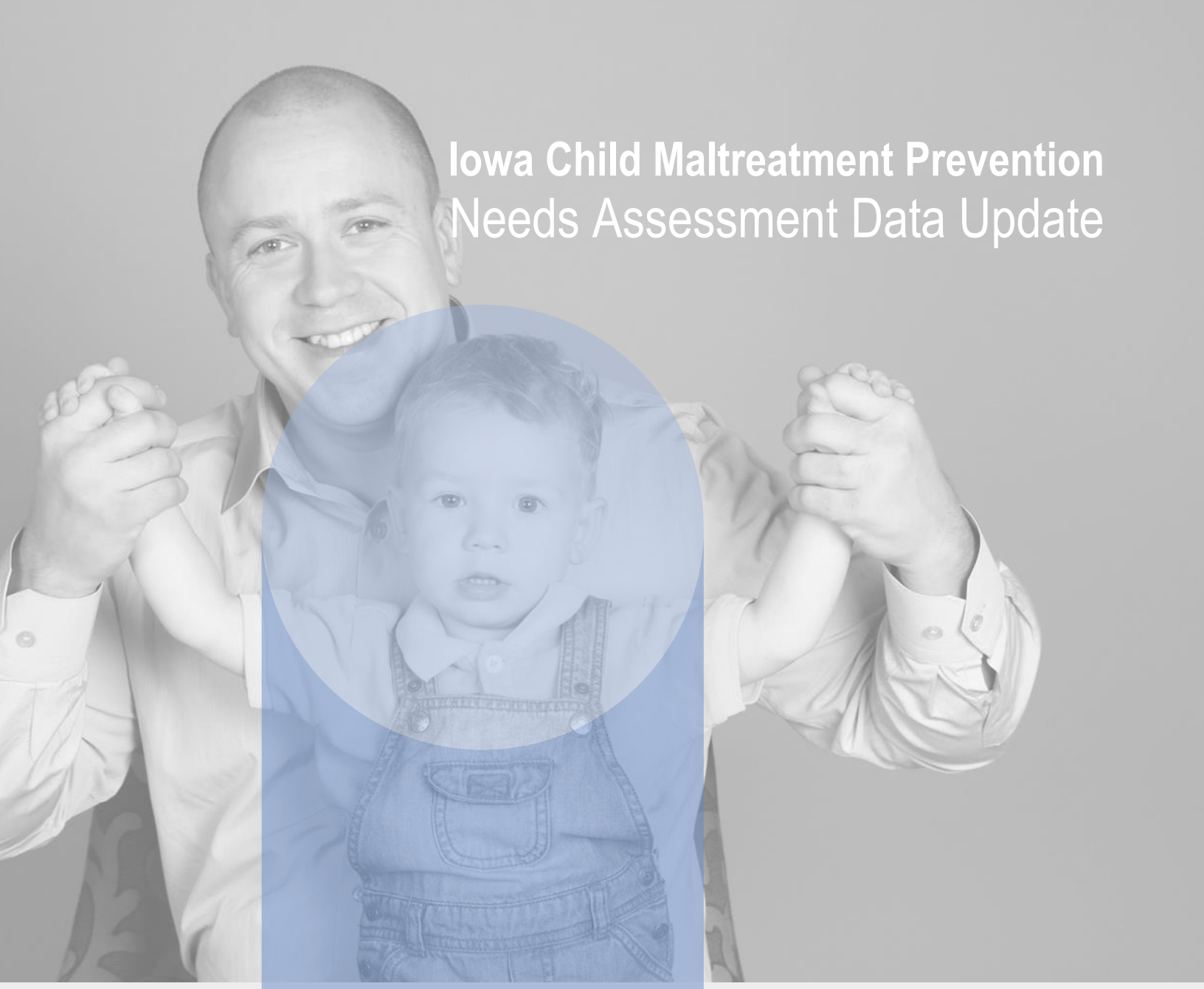

Iowa Child Maltreatment Prevention
Needs Assessment Data Update

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September 2019

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NEEDS ASSESSMENT DATA UPDATE

THIS REPORT IS PREPARED FOR
THE IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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Introduction

In 2019, Prevent Child Abuse Iowa (PCA Iowa) contracted with Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG, formerly Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc.) to provide an update to the 2017 child maltreatment prevention needs assessment. The aim of the 2019 assessment was to use updated data to identify the counties at greatest risk for maltreatment. To achieve this aim, a county-by-county index of need was created, which incorporates actual incidence of abuse and neglect, along with the incidence of known risk factors. This document presents the findings from the 2019 assessment and is intended to be added as an addendum to the 2017 assessment.

Counties at Greatest Risk for Maltreatment

Like the 2017 needs assessment, the current assessment examined current child abuse and neglect incidence in Iowa, in conjunction with data on multiple known risk factors. Child abuse rates, comprised of confirmed and founded reports of physical abuse and sexual abuse, were examined for 2018. The initial needs assessment also included reports of cohabitation with a sex offender in the definition of child abuse, but data for this risk factor were not available for the 2019 assessment. Child neglect data included confirmed reports of a registered sex offender being allowed access to a child, neglect, mental injury, and presence of illegal drugs in a child's system. Additionally, results of the 2019 assessment did not include data on the exposure of children to methamphetamine manufacturing because data were not available as these cases are now classified under category of dangerous substances.

The eight risk factors found to be statistically significantly correlated to child abuse and neglect in the 2017 needs assessment were included in the 2019 assessment. Table 1 lists the 10 indicators (eight risk factors, child abuse, and child neglect) and their data sources.

Table 1. Indictors and associated data sources

Indicator	Data Source	Year
Teen Births	Iowa Department of Public Health	2016 – 2018
Children Living in Poverty	U.S. Census, American Community Survey	2013 – 2017
Low Birthweight Births	Iowa Department of Public Health	2016 – 2018
Children Living with Domestic Violence*	Iowa Department of Public Safety	2016
Children Living with Parents with 4+ ACEs*	Iowa Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Study	2012 – 2015
Children Living in Households Where Rent is >35% of Family Income	U.S. Census, American Community Survey	2013 – 2017
Children Between Ages Zero and Five	U.S. Census, American Community Survey	2013 – 2017
Children Living with Mental Illness in Family*	Iowa Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Study	2012 – 2015
Child abuse	Iowa Department of Human Services	2016 – 2018
Child neglect	Iowa Department of Human Services	2016 – 2018

*Data from the 2017 needs assessment were used because updated data were not available

County rankings

The following steps were completed to identify counties at highest risk for maltreatment:

1. Determined county rankings for each of the 10 indicators (eight risk factors, child abuse, and child neglect),
2. Calculated the county-level composite score by summing the standard deviation from the mean for each score and
3. Created a risk ranking by summing the standard deviations for all county scores.

There was a high degree of consistency between the 2017 and 2019 assessments. More specifically, the high-risk counties, which were those counties ranked in the bottom 10, were very similar in the two assessments. Table 2 lists the 10 counties at greatest risk for child maltreatment from the 2017 and 2019 assessments. Six of the high-risk counties from 2019 (Lee, Appanoose, Woodbury, Des Moines, Clinton, Wapello) were also high-risk in the 2017 assessment. Decatur, Scott, Emmet, and Wayne Counties were high-risk counties in 2019, but not in 2017. However, they were in the bottom third in 2017 with rankings of 85, 88, 89 and 69, respectively.

Table 2. High-risk counties* identified in the 2017 and 2019 needs assessments

Rank	2017 County	2019 County
90	Clarke	Wayne
91	Lee	Lee
92	Pottawattamie	Woodbury
93	Union	Scott
94	Appanoose	Des Moines
95	Woodbury	Appanoose
96	Clinton	Decatur
97	Des Moines	Clinton
98	Wapello	Emmet
99	Montgomery	Wapello

* High-risk counties were those ranked in the bottom 10

The 2017 ranking used a slightly different methodology. Instead of summing the standard deviation from the mean for each risk factor as was done in 2019, the ranking (1-99) for each risk factor was summed for each county to determine overall risk ranking.

The following map depicts the county rankings from the 2019 assessment broken down by rank into ten risk groups by county.

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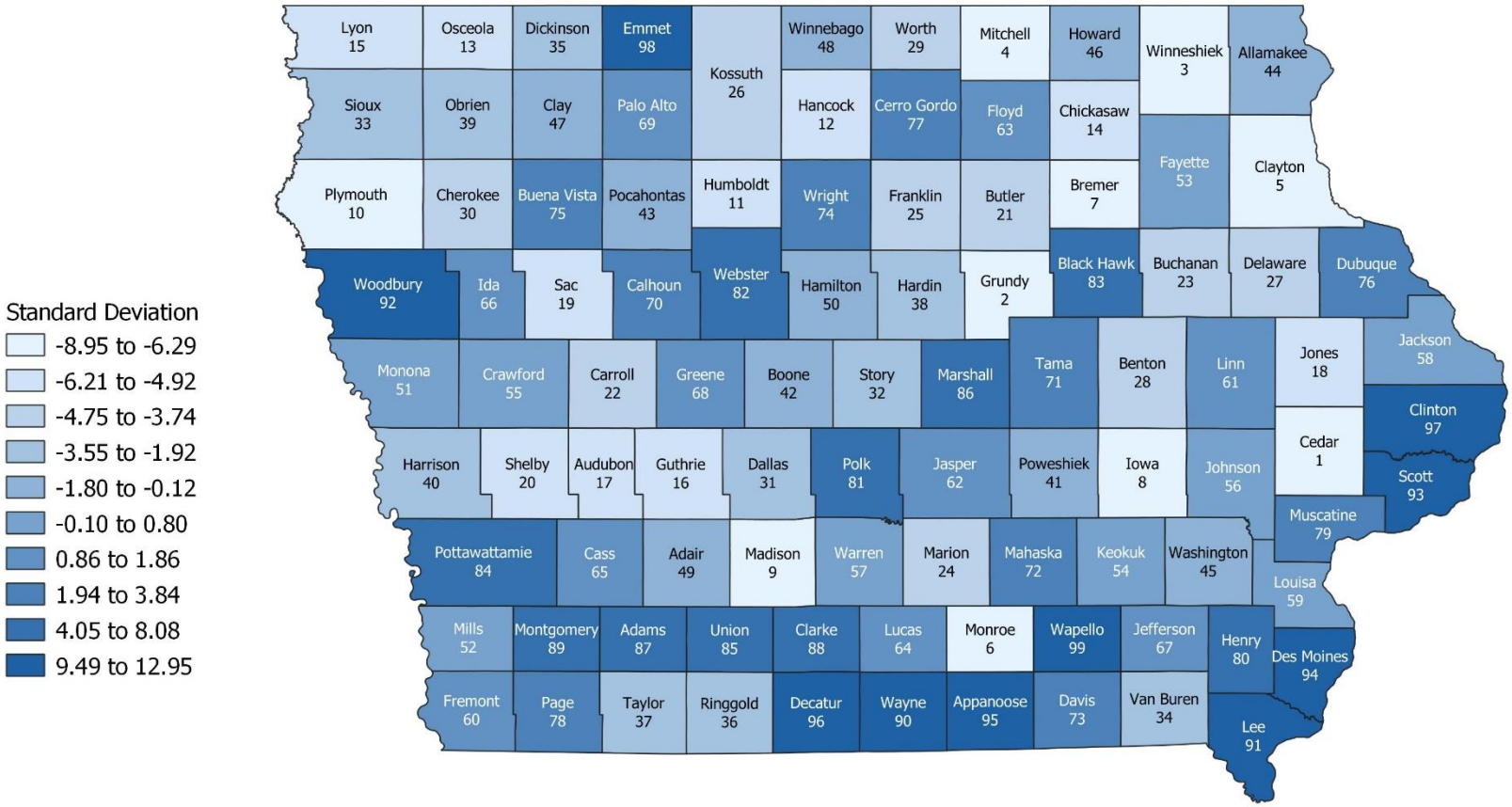

Counties with higher standard deviations (the darkest colors) have higher percentages of abuse, neglect, and all risk factors.

To develop this map, the standard deviations for all risk indicators correlated with maltreatment were summed and then the counties were ranked by the sum. The factors included are child abuse and neglect, child poverty, teen births, low-birthweight births, children living with parents with 4+ ACEs, children living with domestic violence, children living in households where rent is more than 35 percent of income, child population between the ages of zero and five, and children living with mental illness in the family.

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