

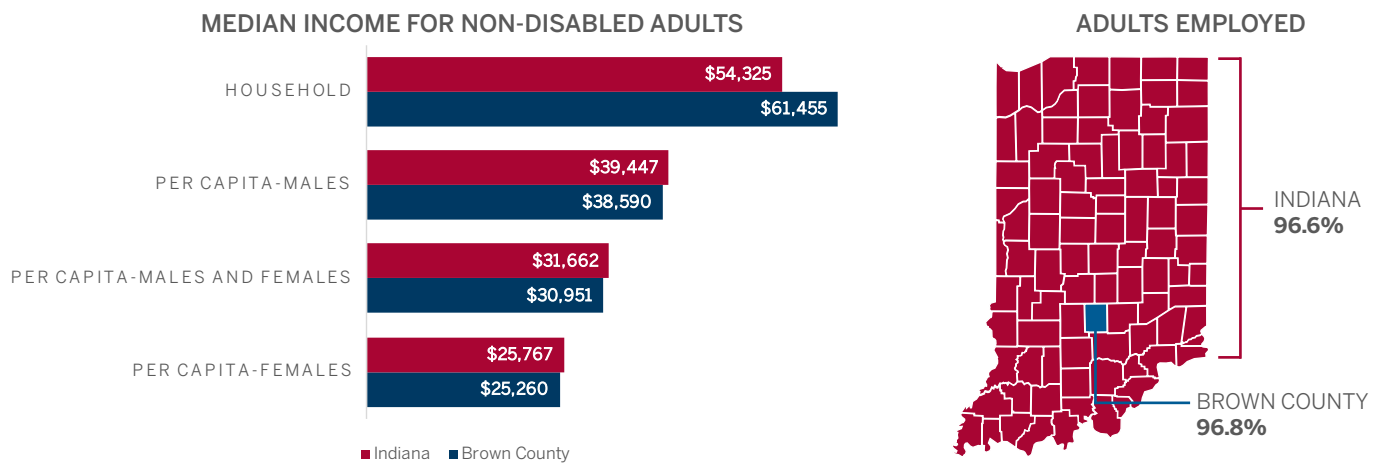
BROWN COUNTY COMMUNITY PROFILE

Facts, figures, and things to know about the people and places in Brown County.

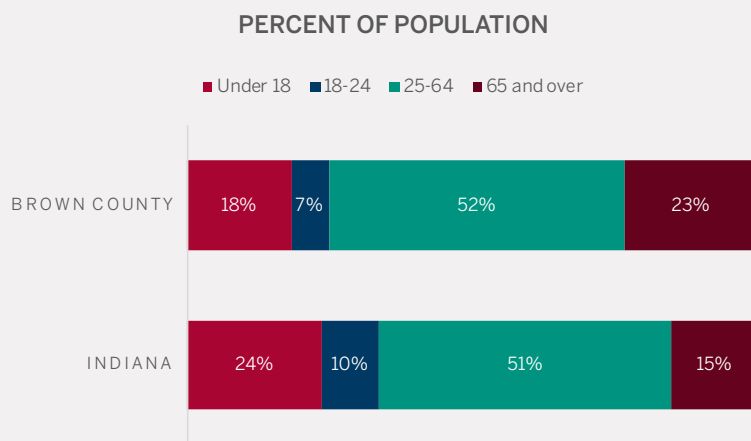
Household Demographics

According to population estimates, there are 15,034 people who live in Brown County.¹

The median household income for Brown County is approximately \$7,000 higher than the state average.² There is a notable wage disparity between women and men in the county, with women earning significantly less than men on average.³ The employment rate for Brown County is nearly identical to the state average, with most residents of Brown County being employed.⁴



The median age for Brown County is significantly higher than the state's median age. Older individuals make up a large percentage of the population of Brown County, with nearly one-quarter of residents being 65 years or older. There is a lower percentage of youth and young adults living in Brown County compared to the rest of the state.⁵



37.6
INDIANA

49.2
BROWN COUNTY



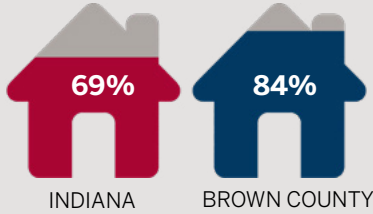
BEAN BLOSSOM BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL :

The Bean Blossom Bluegrass Festival was created by legendary bluegrass artist Bill Monroe, and the festival has been going on for over 50 years. The festival takes place over an eight-day period in June with daily events and live performances from more than 70 bluegrass bands. The festival is one of the most popular bluegrass festivals in the nation and continues to grow and expand each year, while still remaining true to Bill Monroe's vision and Brown County values. Learn more at <https://www.billmonroemusicpark.com>.

Housing

Residents of Brown County are much more likely to own the home that they live in compared to the average Hoosier, and the median value of owner-occupied units is over \$50,000 higher than the state median. Rent payments in Brown County also tend to be slightly higher than the state average.⁶ While less than half of the homes in Brown County are 40 years or older and only 14 percent are valued at less than \$100,000, nearly 30 percent of housing units are vacant.⁷ There are few multi-family housing options available for residents of Brown County.⁸

PERCENT OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS



MEDIAN RENT PAYMENT

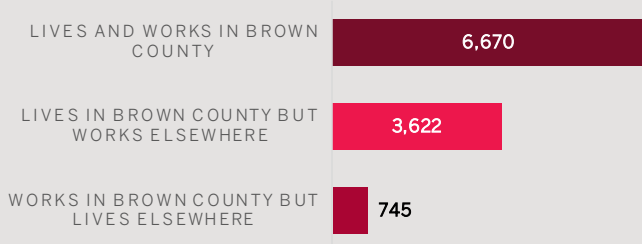


HOUSING CHALLENGES

BUILT PRIOR TO 1980	43.7%
HOUSES VALUED AT LESS THAN 100K	14.3%
MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING	5.5%
VACANT HOUSING UNITS	29.5%

COMMUTING

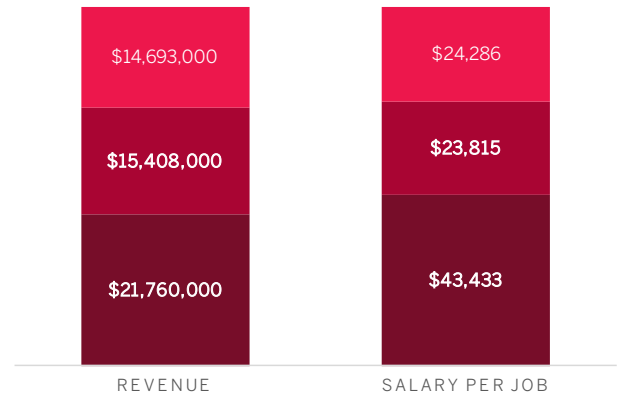
While the majority of Brown County workers both work and live in their county of residence, over 35 percent of Brown County residents commute outside of the county for work. Nearly 750 individuals live outside of Brown County but commute in for work.⁹



Industry

The top three industries in Brown County are Accommodation and Food Service, Retail Trade, and Construction.¹⁰ The top three major employers in the county are Brown County Health and Living, Brown County High School, and Abe Martin Lodge, all located in Nashville.¹¹ The average employee wage for Construction is much higher than the other two most prevalent industries in Brown County.¹² The average employee wage for the Construction industry is higher than the per capita income for Brown County, while the average employee wage for the Accommodation and Food Service and Retail Trade industries fall below the county's average per capita income.^{13,14}

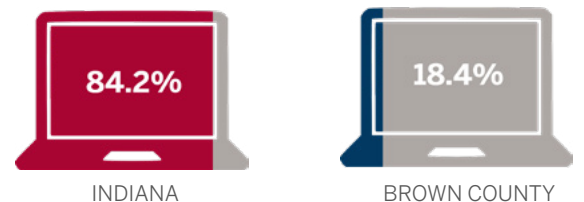
■ Construction ■ Accommodation and food service ■ Retail trade



Technology

Access to the internet provides communities with a number of opportunities, from new educational tools to the ability for local businesses to sell to people around the world. Access to high-speed broadband – which meets the FCC minimum speeds of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload, or the 25/3 standard – allows for the most effective use of new technology to link smaller, rural communities to resources worldwide.¹⁵ According to the Federal Communications Commission, only 18 percent of Brown County residents have access to broadband internet, in comparison to 84 percent of Indiana residents.¹⁶ One of the most promising ways that internet access can improve the lives of people in rural communities is via telemedicine. Using the internet, local health centers and clinics can leverage the expertise of specialists and mental health professionals located in areas throughout the country and state to meet the needs of people in Brown County.

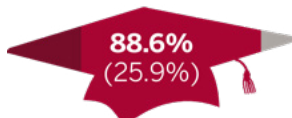
HIGH SPEED INTERNET (25 MBPS OR HIGHER)



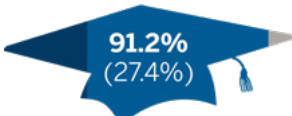
Educational Attainment

Brown County is home to one public school corporation: Brown County School Corporation. Over 90 percent of Brown County residents aged 25 years or older are high school graduates, and more than one-quarter have a bachelor's degree or higher.¹⁷ Nearly all high school graduates complete their diploma in four years, exceeding the state rate by almost 10 percent.¹⁸ In comparison to the rest of the state, students in Brown County are less likely to pass the ISTEP 10th grade math and language arts exams combined.¹⁹ However, 12th grade students in Brown County are much more likely to take the SAT in comparison to other Indiana 12th grade students.²⁰

% WITH HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA (BACHELOR'S DEGREE)



INDIANA



BROWN COUNTY

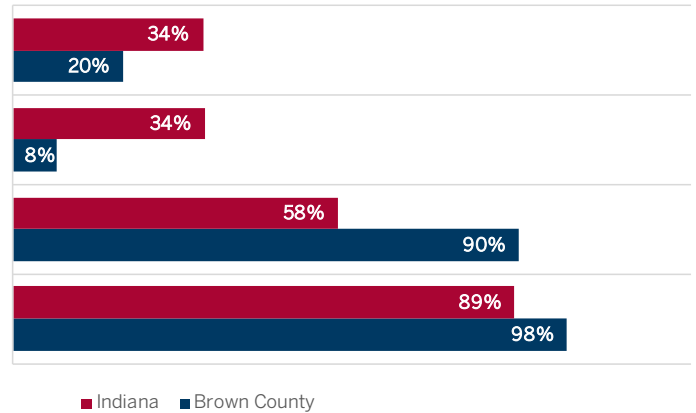
COMBINED ISTEP PASS IN ENGLISH AND MATH

12TH GRADERS TAKING ACT

12TH GRADERS TAKING SAT

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES IN 4 YEARS

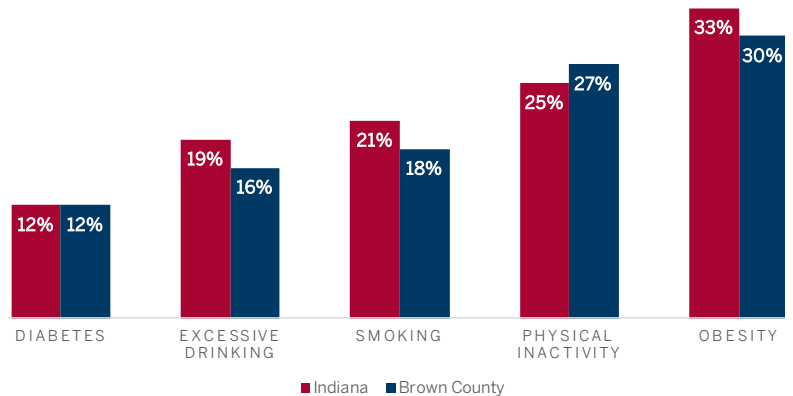
COLLEGE READINESS



Health

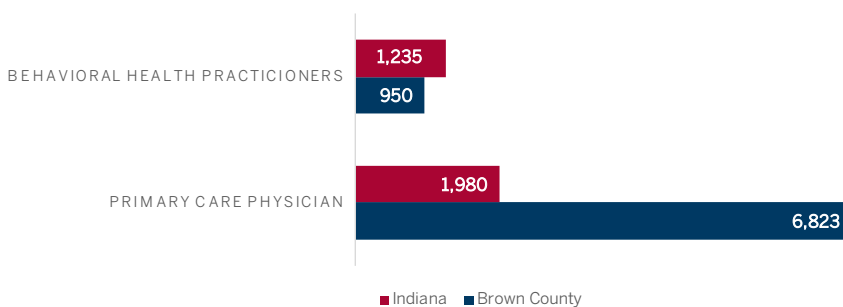
Health indicators for Brown County indicate that residents are less likely to smoke or excessively drink than the average Hoosier.²¹ More than one-quarter of Brown County residents report being physically inactive, and 30 percent of residents are classified as obese.²² While obesity rates in Brown County are slightly lower than the state average, increasing awareness of and access to exercise opportunities can help lower the rates of chronic diseases and improve the quality of life for many residents in Brown County.

HEALTH RISK FACTORS



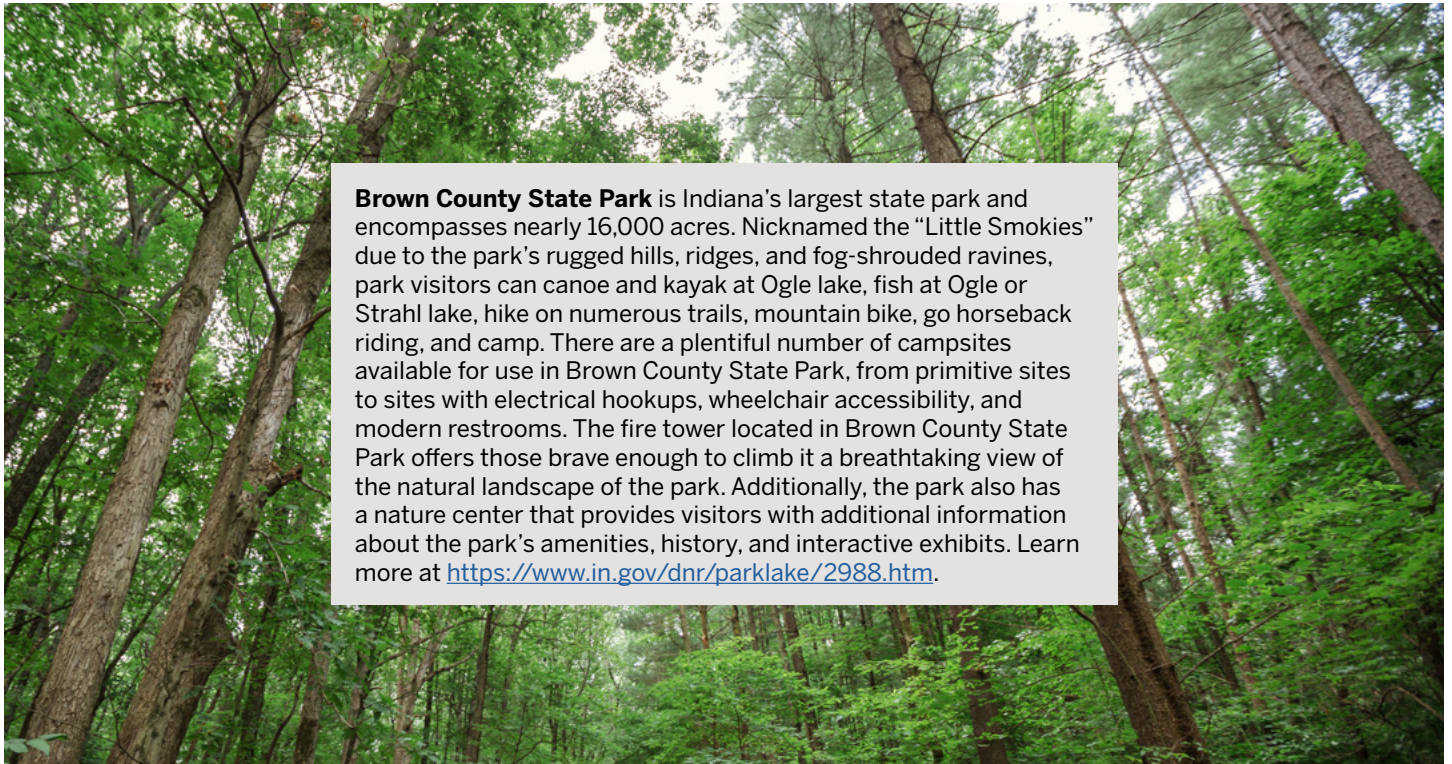
Health Provider Shortages

NUMBER OF PATIENTS PER PROVIDER



Medical providers can also help address issues such as diabetes and obesity and provide assistance to those struggling with mental health and substance use – issues currently facing many Hoosiers. One struggle facing Brown County residents is access to primary care. In Brown County, there is only one primary care physician available per more than 6,800 county residents.²³ This figure is nearly 3.5 times the number of people per primary care provider across the entire state of Indiana. In comparison to the rest of the state, Brown County does have a slightly higher proportion of behavioral health practitioners available, with one behavioral health practitioner per 950 county residents.²⁴

Highlights



Brown County State Park is Indiana's largest state park and encompasses nearly 16,000 acres. Nicknamed the "Little Smokies" due to the park's rugged hills, ridges, and fog-shrouded ravines, park visitors can canoe and kayak at Ogle lake, fish at Ogle or Strahl lake, hike on numerous trails, mountain bike, go horseback riding, and camp. There are a plentiful number of campsites available for use in Brown County State Park, from primitive sites to sites with electrical hookups, wheelchair accessibility, and modern restrooms. The fire tower located in Brown County State Park offers those brave enough to climb it a breathtaking view of the natural landscape of the park. Additionally, the park also has a nature center that provides visitors with additional information about the park's amenities, history, and interactive exhibits. Learn more at <https://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2988.htm>.

The Indiana Raptor Center is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to assisting injured and orphaned wild birds and nurturing them back to health so they can safely return to the wild. The Raptor Center welcomes visitors age 6 and older to come and learn about the great birds of prey and educates visitors on how to help contribute to the preservation of hawks, eagles, owls, falcons, and vultures. The Raptor Center puts on small educational shows with the birds and offers visitors a unique educational experience to view birds of prey first-hand, showing how the center works to rescue and rehabilitate orphaned or injured birds of prey. Learn more at <http://indianaraptorcenter.com>.



For more than a century, many artists and artisans have called Brown County home, including the American impressionist painter T. C. Steele. **The T. C. Steele State Historic Site** in Nashville encompasses over 200 sprawling acres, including the painter's hilltop home built in 1907, a rotation of Steele's original work, 3+ miles of trails, a state-designated nature preserve, and the Singing Winds Visitor Center. Visitors can enjoy the grounds and gardens on their own, take guided tours of the artist's studio and home, or even set up a space to paint the views of scenic Brown County. Learn more at <https://tcsteele.org>.



Sources

^{1,2,3,5,6,7,8,13,17}U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; ⁴U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018 Local Area Unemployment Statistics; ⁹Indiana Business Research Center, 2017 Annual Commuting Trends; ^{10,12,14}U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018 Employment and Earnings by Industry; ¹¹Hoosiers by the Numbers: Major Employers for Brown County; ¹²Purdue University Center for Regional Development, Rural Indiana Stats, 2017 Digital Divide Index; ¹⁶Federal Communications Commission, 2017 Mapping Broadband Health in America, Connect2Health; ¹⁸Indiana Youth Institute, 2017 County Aggregates of Indiana Department of Education Graduation Rates; ¹⁹Indiana Youth Institute, 2017 County Aggregates of Indiana Department of Education ISTEP Pass Rates; ²⁰Indiana Youth Institute, 2016 County Aggregates of Indiana Department of Education ACT and SAT rates; ^{21,22}University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, 2019 County Health Rankings; ²³Bowen Health Workforce Information Portal, 2018 Supply, Characteristics, and Distribution of Physicians; ²⁴Bowen Health Workforce Information Portal, 2018 Supply, Characteristics, and Distribution of Psychologists and Behavioral Health Professionals.



CENTER FOR
RURAL ENGAGEMENT