

OUR TOMORROWS SCAN

April 17, 2020

The **Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund** is leading efforts to build an "Our Tomorrows Story Bank" which will house brief accounts – or stories – of the variety of experiences Kansans are facing during, The **Our Tomorrows Scan** is a periodic snapshot of story narratives, and includes interesting data, outliers, and observations on the experiences of Kansans. Decision-makers at all levels can use these insights to stay informed of Kansas-specific trends and emergent needs, and to prompt further exploration into the larger shared Story Bank.

Summary of data collected April 2-April 13, 2020

Food For Thought. *Interesting observations about the stories, organized into thematic categories.*

From Child Care Providers

- As families lose jobs, childcare providers are losing tuition. Some have been forced to close their doors.
- Child care facilities across the state are trying to stay open to serve the child care needs of essential workers on drastically reduced income. They are struggling to locate and afford the necessary resources (*ex*: food, cleaning supplies, diapers, wipes, etc.) while also expanding to meet the needs of school-age learners.
- Providers, communities, and families are pitching in to help each other. Many are feeling grateful despite challenges.

From Healthcare Providers and Essential Workers

- Essential workers are making the decision to report to work despite being high-risk. They are balancing the risks of exposure with the need for income.
- Kansans are feeling stress and anxiety from the inability to plan and economic instability.

From Working-from-Home Social Distancers

- Parents across the state are feeling overwhelmed at the closure of schools and assuming the responsibility of educators. They are inundated with resources, struggling to learn new skills to support their children while navigating a traumatic situation.
- Parents of children with special needs are feeling compounded strain and stress.

From All Worker Groups

- Kansans are feeling grief and loss from being disconnected from their social networks. Many are struggling to connect. Older adults are hard hit by social distancing. Some are learning new technologies as ways of reaching out.
- Kansans are adapting and finding ways of appreciating and improving quality of life, time with loved ones, and purposeful quality time together. Children and adults are coming together in resilience.
- Many Kansans have been hard hit by unemployment.

Low-Hanging Fruit. *Articulated needs from story narratives that can be addressed quickly.*

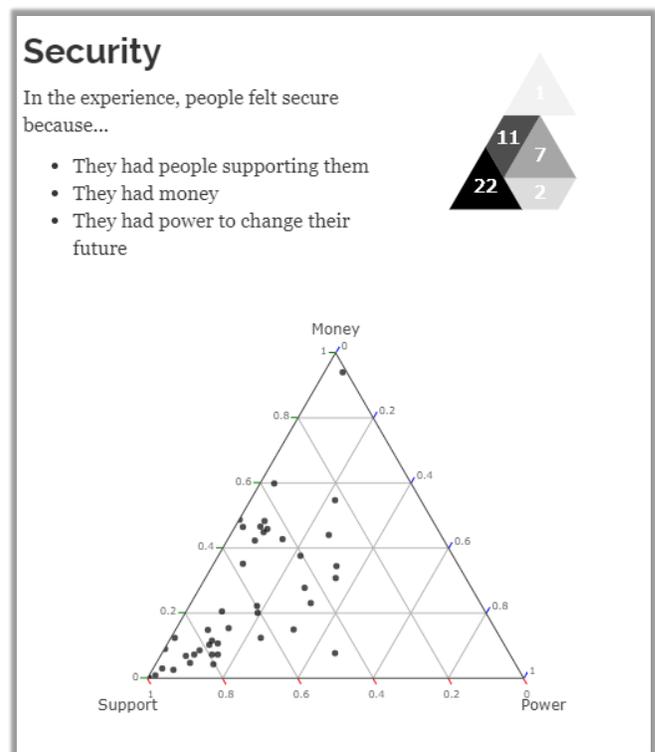
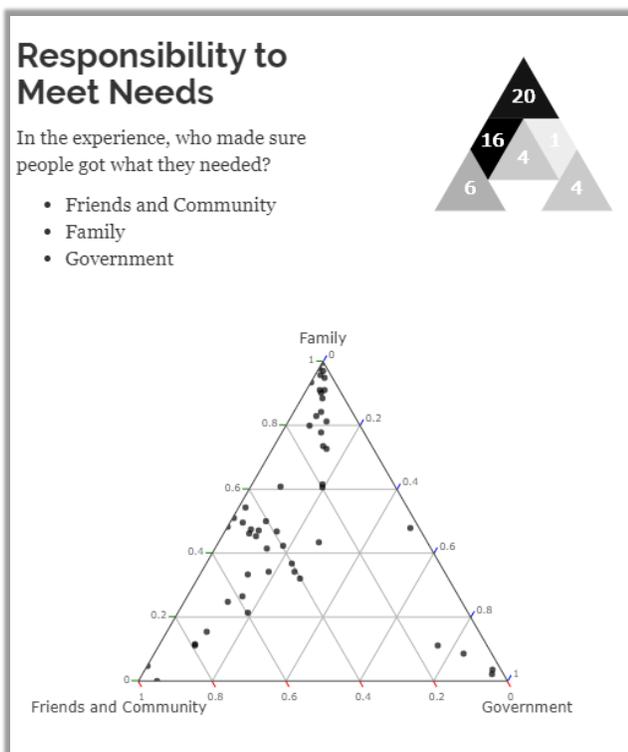
Child care providers are lacking food and cleaning supplies needed to maintain a safe and healthy environment. Stores are poorly stocked, and childcare providers are limited in the resources they can purchase. Kansas child care providers need support with obtaining the necessary items required as an essential business.

Child care providers are lacking direction from agencies responsible for supplying information/direction (*ex:* following the school district protocol or essential worker protocol, knowing which agency to defer to). They desire rules and regulations for preventing risk, encouraging families served to comply with social distancing, and tips for decision-making.

Emerging Patterns. *How respondents interpreted their story in the triads.*

Responsibility and Security

- A majority of participants reported **family** and **a combination of family and community** were the responsible party in meeting people’s needs, potentially indicating a lack of response from the government or lack of knowledge about how to get help from the government.
- Respondents felt most secure when they had people supporting them, with very few focusing on the future or citing money as a source of security. This coincides with the narratives where many are reporting financial difficulties.



Sampling. *Who is sharing their story?*

Story Count

Total Story Count	67
Prompt 1: Something within the last week that helped or hurt the family	50
Prompt 2: Thrive or survive	17

- 88% of respondents are female
- Stories shared primarily from northeast Kansas
- 42% of respondents are white
- 43% of respondents are considered “COVID essential staff” and/or required to work outside of isolation
- 46% of respondents are between 45 – 65 years old
- 40% of respondents are between 30 – 44 years old

General Story Pack. *Actual Our Tomorrows stories shared by Kansans, in their own words. Titles are chosen by the respondent and observer edits are in [] to protect confidentiality.*

Covid-19 and Pregnancy

I have closed my daycare due to concerns of contracting COVID-19. I am pregnant, and there is not enough information about how COVID-19 affects pregnancy and babies. In order to prevent myself from contacting it, I've closed the daycare. I have stopped asking parents to pay to hold their child's spots, so I have no income. I've applied to a grant but was denied. I've applied for unemployment but was denied. I've applied for a loan, and I'm waiting to hear back about it. This is a very difficult and stressful time.

Times, they are a changing!!!

During this difficult time, My families and I made the decision that I would stay home and stay healthy so I could remain open for them, as they are essential workers. They do ALL my errands, buy my groceries and deliver them, generally at no charge. Although my parents are helping me out, my monthly income has really taken a hit! I am now operating on half my budget! As with many, unemployment is very different to get filed and I am struggling! I have chosen to be thankful and not dwell on the negative! I'm healthy and I have a job I've loved for 35 years! My grandkids are happy and healthy also! How could I not be thankful!!

Struggling

It is hard to find needed supplies for cleaning and healthy foods to provide for the children in my care. Health officials warn you to only go out as little as possible, but when the shelves are empty of needed items you need to go back and look again. Also I went from 8 children in care to 3 which limits my income and it is a struggle to get needed supplies and also keep up on monthly Bill's. I realize that utility companies will not disconnect services during this time, but when it is over, will I be able to catch up with one a reasonable amount of time...

COVID19 Testing

Monday, March 30th: The night before my fever broke after a weekend of staying in bed after getting off work on Friday. Since I am working as a CNA, I thought it wise to call in sick to work and to call the [NAME] Physician Clinic right away, since a little more than 14 day prior I had spent a week in Madison Wisconsin. After describing my symptoms and Travel all of which had me thinking it could be COVID, They told me they were uncertain that my Insurance would pay for the the test and their test cost 1500.00. So I elected their second treatment plan to pretend that I have the Virus, go on a 14 day Quarantine and except a daily check up call from the [NAME] Health Nurse. My 14 days are up and I have practiced a T-shirt face mask for when I return to work. I could have had the virus? I will never know? But I am returning to work on Monday hopefully...

Online Communication

This week someone helped me learn how to use zoom, so that I could get in touch with my local church community. This helped me feel more connected and was a new skill.

COVID and Teenagers

I feel guilty for enjoying this period of slowing down. I'd say my happiness has increased, because this time has allowed me to take better care of myself and others. I'm working from home, so I'm not commuting and so I've gained time. I didn't think I'd like working from home, but I do. It's also helped me gain some perspective about living life more intentionally and not take things for granted. COVID has changed our whole family environment and sometimes it is overwhelming, but there are positive outcomes for every instance. First, our teenage daughter is cooking a lot more out of boredom, which is helping her develop tools for future use and become self reliant. However, it is becomes a problem for me and my desire to eat healthy!

With the onset of social distancing, she has become more isolated and withdrawn from social activities. She has struggled at times to be socially active, so this is limiting her abilities and growth in that realm; however, in the past week she has become much more engaged with her friends on line. The group is starting to plan a PromVID as a way to look forward and make plans when things return to somewhat normal. My husband is home with her, and they are doing more things together including school project, which are strengthening their relationship and developing life skills. I am still working, so I do not have as much time at home, but she is more engaged with me while I am home. One of the greatest changes, I have observed is her respond to COVID and the ever changing recommendation. She is thinking about COVID's total impact instead of how it impacts her individually. I see her developing an educated adult perspective instead of an emotional response of a self-absorbed teenager angered by how this is destroying her spring plans. For this, I am thankful!

Emergent Needs Story Pack. *Actual Our Tomorrows stories shared by Kansans, in their own words.*

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Decision to stay open or to close my daycare home

With each new day I had to decide if we should keep our daycare open or if we should close it. It was a very emotional time for me. Day by day I learned new things about the COVID19 coronavirus. Each day became for frightening for me. First of all 1-2 of my children stopped attending daycare and I began thinking how am I going to pay my bills. Then I learned about the severity of this virus. My daughter who lives with me is immunosuppressive . She has Lupus and has no use of her kidneys along with the fact that she has had two heart surgeries. So I began to think of the possibility of her getting this virus. Then more and more of my daycare children stopped attending the daycare. And I started thinking about all those people at the dialysis center where my daughter must go three days a week and the impact this virus could have on those people. So with 2 of my 9 children left I had to choose to temporarily close my daycare until this disaster is over.

I was following USD [NAME]'s for covid19

As USD [NAME] School closed its doors for two weeks. I was following their lead as a daycare operator I closed my doors as well for 2 weeks then the governor came back and said the schools will be closed indefinitely has that happened and we were preparing for it if Coronavirus I was informed by three different daycare parents all of their children was sick , The one set of children was sick with fevers on Friday March 13th and there sickness lasted for two weeks these are my grandchildren as well as my client for daycare. The next set of children is a family of two as well and the mother took them to the hospital on March 14th they were diagnosed with the flu. The other set of children were just sick at home this is also a family of two children . The parents were all not able to work then USD [NAME] announced that they were closing their doors in definitely all of my parents contacted me and said are you still following the school district's lead of course I said no I could not afford to be closed that long but if I had not been closed I would have been sick along with the majority of my children. I feel we should have something in play to protect daycare provider from covid19 as well we are not able to be closed and as faith would have I just did closed .We are exposed to people coming in and out of our home .Some are going to work in health care facilities and others are not working but bringing there children to daycare while they go shopping exposing daycare providers and there families even further this is a very this is a very scary and unnerving feeling not have any say as to what myself and my family has been exposed to because I have to keep daycare open in order to Survivor live

Misjudgement

As lives and businesses change due to COVID-19, the childcare business is essential but has taken a big hit. The daily number of child attendance has dropped, teachers have been laid off and money is tight. On March 23, a state-wide stay-at-home order was put in place. Non-essential businesses had to close, forcing a lot of parents to work from home or file for unemployment. After the order was put in place, we immediately informed all the families of our Center that we would remain open to provide service for essential families and all the necessary steps we'd take to protect their children. At our Center, we provide service to families of all income levels. Majority were understanding and appreciative. One parent was not pleased with our decision to remain open. She sent us a lengthy email (including articles about corona virus) shaming us for staying open. This is a mother who before COVID-19 and the stay-at-home order is employed with a company which allows her to work from home. We may only have 1/3 of our children daily but their families need us, and we are here for them. They are nurses, fire fighters, McDonald's employees, delivery drivers and many other essential occupations. It's hurtful to have someone misjudge and condemn our profession because it doesn't seem adequate or essential in their opinion.