
LAKE COUNTY SMART START – BRIGHT FUTURE INITIATIVE



NARRATIVE

HOPE RISING was created to be a neutral convener, to bring together community leaders to identify issues, develop innovative solutions, and implement agreed-upon actions with accountability and measurable outcomes. Hope Rising manages financial resources, provides alignment for new or existing resources to maximize impact. Hope Rising provides facilitation and project management support to drive work forward and keep projects on track, ensuring active engagement of stakeholders with a focus on outcomes.

Vision: Lake County is a healthy place for every person to live, learn, engage, and thrive.

Mission: To mobilize and inspire community partnerships and actions that support individual, collective, and community health and wellness.

CURRENT STATE

Lake County (pop. 64,382) is located 120 miles north of San Francisco. Residents are primarily White, with 20% Hispanic, 5% American Indian, and 3% African American comprising the remainder of Lake County's population. The county's rugged rural geography, winding two-lane roads, and isolated towns limit access to health care and social support. The poverty rate is 22.8% (compared with 15.1% statewide) and the median household income is \$40,446 compared to the state average of \$75,277. Since 2015, the county has experienced four floods and nine wildfires that destroyed 4,000 homes and other structures. Residents now deal with mental health challenges that come in the aftermath of repeated disasters, such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Prior to the fires, 2/3 of residents had reported experiencing one or more Adverse Childhood Experience.

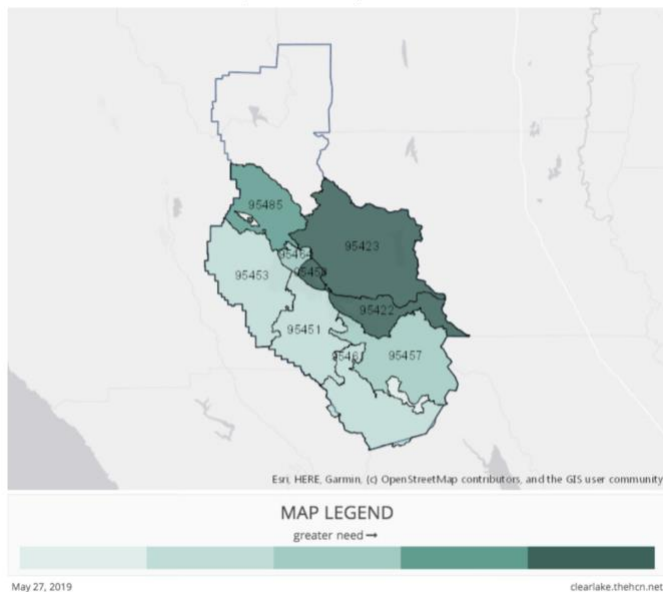
Many residents have lost their homes or suffered economic displacement in the wake of the fires. Low-rent housing stock has always been limited and has been severely challenged by the disasters. Census data showed a rental vacancy rate of 5.4% in 2013. After fires and floods, vacancy rates dropped to 0%, although one realtor described a "negative vacancy rate," with multiple families living in single-family rentals. Rentals that do become available are often out of reach, because rents have skyrocketed along with home prices.

The 2019 Health Rankings placed Lake County lowest in overall health and length of life compared to all other California counties, and lower than all but 4 in health factors such as substance use. The county's 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment identified health disparities related to poverty, diabetes, asthma, heart disease, and nutrition. African Americans were the most negatively impacted, with disparities in 14 indicators, followed by American Indians (10 indicators) and Latinos (7 indicators). Substance misuse is one of the county's most challenging problems, and the rate of death due to drug poisoning/overdose is almost four times the state average and higher than all other California counties. In times of economic difficulty, people who are at risk for substance use disorders have even greater needs for treatment and recovery support services.

SOCIONEEDS INDEX

All communities can be described by various social and economic factors that are well known to be strong determinants of health outcomes. Healthy Communities Institute developed the SocioNeeds Index® to easily compare multiple socioeconomic factors across geographies. This index incorporates estimates for six different social and economic determinants of health, income, poverty, unemployment, occupation, educational attainment, and linguistic barriers that are associated with poor health outcomes including preventable hospitalizations and premature death.

FIGURE 42: SOCIONEEDS INDEX, LAKE COUNTY, 2019



Source: Conduent Healthy Communities Institute, 2019

Within Lake County, zip codes are ranked based on their index value to identify the relative levels of need. Those geographic areas with the highest values (from 0-100) are estimated to have the highest socioeconomic need which can be correlated with preventable hospitalizations and premature death. Figure 42 shows that Clearlake (95422), Lucerne (95458), and Clearlake Oaks (95423) are the areas within the county that have the highest socioeconomic needs. Lake Counties most disadvantaged

communities are Lower Lake and Clearlake. The towns of Clearlake and Lower Lake are impacted with not only the highest socioeconomic needs but the lowest household income as well. 35.9% of residents within Clearlake and Lower Lake live below the federal poverty level. The figure to the above illustrates the current climate.

Median Household Income

Zip Code: 95422

Measurement Period: 2013-2017

Filter: none (all Zip Codes)

This indicator shows the median household income. Household income is defined as the sum of money received over a calendar year by all household members 15 years and older.

Why is this important?

Median household income reflects the relative affluence and prosperity of an area. Areas with higher median household incomes are likely to have more educated residents and lower unemployment rates. Higher employment rates lead to better access to healthcare and better health outcomes, since many families get their health insurance through their employer. Areas with higher median household incomes also have higher home values and their residents enjoy more disposable income.

Zip Code: 95422

\$27,161

Source: American Community Survey
Measurement period: 2013-2017
Maintained by: Conduent Healthy Communities Institute
Last update: March 2019
Filter(s) for this location: County: Lake

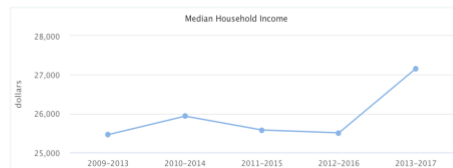
Graph Selections

INDICATOR VALUES

☒ Change over Time

COMPARED TO

CA Zip Codes U.S. Zip Codes Lake, CA County Value (\$40,446) Prior Value (\$25,506) Trend



STATE OF OUR CHILDREN

In January of 2019, community partners from multiple agencies within Lake County agreed to work together to compile a “data snapshot” of some of the most pressing issues affecting Lake County’s children. The areas covered in the State of Our Children report (www.stateofourchildren.org) include early prenatal care, fetal alcohol and drug exposure, youth substance use, poverty, education, child safety and security, and criminal activity of youth.

Early Prenatal Care in Lake County

- Importance: A child’s health and wellbeing begin in utero. The most dramatic changes and development occur for the baby in the first trimester of the mother’s pregnancy. It is also during this time that the baby is most susceptible to damage from alcohol, drugs, certain medications and illnesses. Because of this, early prenatal care is vital. Recent statistics: 69% of pregnant women received prenatal care beginning in the first trimester in Lake County in 2016, and 31% did not.
- Ranking: This puts Lake County 45th out of 58 California counties, and significantly lower than the national average of 77.1%.
- Possible reasons why: A combination of the lack of knowledge of the importance of early prenatal care and limited availability of appointments with an obstetrician are likely the driving factors.

Fetal Alcohol & Drug Exposure in Lake County

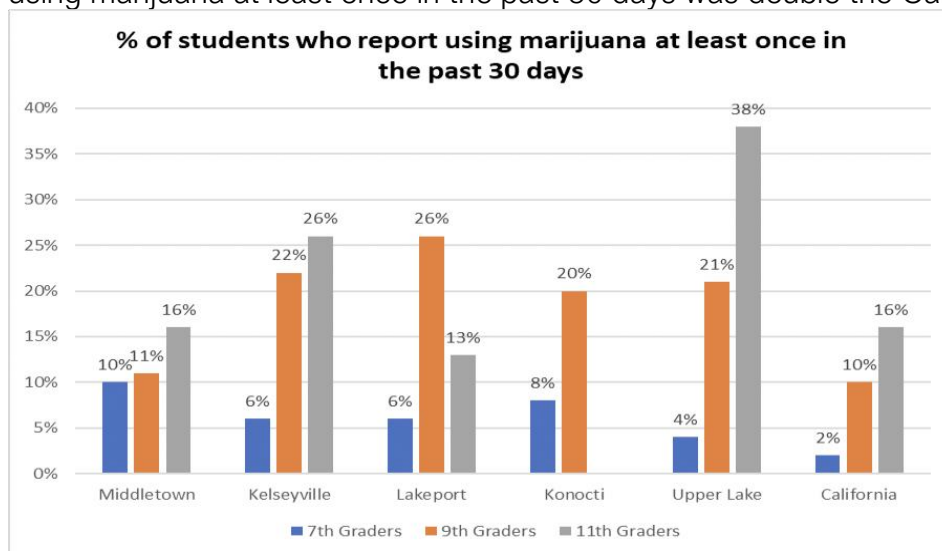
- Importance: Depending on the substance, a wide range of negative birth outcomes have been associated with drug use during pregnancy including but not limited to increased risks of preterm delivery, low birthweight, cognitive and behavioral challenges, adverse speech and language outcomes, and executive functioning deficits. In addition to these, substance use in pregnancy may also result in a dysfunctional maternal-infant relationship (attachment disorders) which can have lifelong negative effects.
- Recent statistics: Between 2013 and 2015, 9.69% of hospitalizations of pregnant females age 15-44 in Lake County included a substance use diagnosis. The Lake County rate of smoking during pregnancy was also more than 4 times the state average for the same period.



- Possible reasons why: Women are at highest risk for developing a substance use disorder during their reproductive years, especially ages 18-29. Substance use disorders in adults are frequently associated with adverse childhood experiences, which Lake County residents likely experience at significantly higher frequency than the state average.
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Marijuana & E-Cigarette Use by Youth in Lake County

- Importance: The teen brain is actively developing and often will not be fully developed until the mid 20's. Marijuana use during this period may produce negative effects including difficulty with problem solving, problems with memory and learning, impaired coordination, difficulty maintaining attention, increased risk of mental health issues, decline in school performance, and an increased potential for addiction. Likewise, the use of e-cigarettes is unsafe for children, teens, and young adults as nicotine is highly addictive and can also harm adolescent brain development.
- Recent statistics: Lake County 7th, 9th, and 11th graders reported using e-cigarettes at least once in the last 30 days at higher rates than the state average. The percentage of 9th graders in most Lake County school districts who reported using marijuana at least once in the past 30 days was double the California average.



- Possible reasons why: Research shows that adolescents from single-parent households are more prone to substance use; 45% of Lake County children live in single-parent households.

Economic Wellbeing of Children in Lake County

- Importance: Children living in poverty are at risk for poor outcomes in health, development and lower academic achievement. For children living in need, it isn't just the obvious effects of poverty that are at play (food scarcity, poor living conditions, etc.). Other factors like toxic stress can have long-term effects as well. Poverty in early childhood can be particularly impactful as studies show that children living in poverty early in life have poorer outcomes than adolescents who experience poverty later in life.
 - Recent statistics: The federal poverty level in 2017 for a family of 4 was \$24,600 and \$20,420 for a family of 3. At that time, 31.6% of all Lake County children were estimated to be living below poverty level and 60% of Lake County children were estimated to be living at or below two times the poverty level. 51.5% of Lake County children living in single-mother households and 63.6% of Native American children were living below poverty level.
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Education of Children in Lake County

- Importance: Quality education throughout childhood contributes to the ability to read and write, communicate well, use technology, build healthy relationships, develop thoughtful opinions, negotiate disagreements, learn from the past, exercise self-control, and see situations from a variety of perspectives, just to name a few of the benefits.
- Recent statistics: Lake County has the lowest attendance rates of first and third graders in the state of California. 46% of Lake County students who entered kindergarten in 2018 did not have the skills to be rated as “school ready” by their teachers. In the 2017/18 school year, 71.5% of Lake County third grade students did not meet grade level standards in English Language Arts/Literacy and 88.8% of Lake County fifth grade students did not meet grade level standards in mathematics.
- Possible reasons why: Poverty plays a key role in how students score on standardized tests. This is related to the resources available both to the student and to the schools as well as to the levels of stress that students and school staff are under.

Safety & Security of Children in Lake County

- Importance: The safety and security of children is a community-wide concern. Safe environments, childcare facilities, schools, homes and relationships are critical to the wellbeing of all children. Accidents happen but known hazards and abusive behaviors can and must be prevented. The physical, mental and emotional effects of child abuse persist long after the abuse occurs. Child abuse is a core underlying factor to high school dropout rates, homelessness, incarceration, and chronic health and addiction issues.
- Recent statistics: There were 925 reported child victims of abuse/neglect in Lake County in 2018. That is one child abuse report every 10 hours. There were 117 verified child victims of abuse/neglect in 2018.
- Possible reasons why: According to Child Welfare data for Lake County, 76.9% of verified child abuse allegations in 2018 were due to general neglect and 15.4% were due to caretaker absence/incapacity. General neglect is the failure of a parent/guardian or caretaker to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter or supervision to a child. Caretaker absence/incapacity indicates that a child has no parent or guardian capable of providing appropriate provisions for care. This could be due to incarceration, institutionalization, addiction, abandonment, or other factors, when there is no provision of care that has been arranged for the child during his/her absence. Risk factors for child abuse and neglect include: poverty, unemployment, alcohol/drug abuse, history of child abuse/neglect or violence in the family, limited support systems, and poor health of parent.

Delinquent Activity of Children in Lake County

- Importance: There are many reasons and risk factors involved in a minor’s decision to break the law. No matter the cause of the offense, involvement by law
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enforcement can be an opportunity for a child on a dangerous and damaging path to be redirected and for protective factors to be strengthened. Children who start offending before age 12 are more likely to continue offending into early adulthood. Drug dealing and possession of weapons are offenses which have the highest likelihood of duration and persistence into early adulthood.

- Possible reasons why: There are many risk factors for delinquency including exposure to violence, substance use, aggression, hyperactivity, antisocial tendencies (attitudes, beliefs, behaviors), dishonesty, medical/physical problems, poverty, antisocial parents, poor parent-child relationships, inappropriate discipline, separation from parents, abuse, neglect, poor performance in school, delinquent peers, neighborhood crime/drugs, gang membership, family conflict, poor monitoring/supervision, risk taking, and restlessness. Possession of weapons are offenses which have the highest likelihood of duration and persistence into early adulthood.
- Recent statistics: According to Lake County Juvenile Probation, 154 juveniles were on probation in 2018 (71% male, 29% female) and an average of 6 to 10 Lake County youth were in Juvenile Hall at any one time during 2018.

MOVING ONWARD AND UPWARD

It is clear that a great deal of work is needed to raise our community and children in a place where they are free to reach their full potential. We have developed an innovative, grassroots model that will spark this transition. The youth of Clearlake, Lower Lake and Clearlake Oaks are most impacted by Lake Counties troubling statistics. By providing focused programs and services concentrated in this region we will positively impact on the success of our youth in these most vulnerable areas. There are four components to our approach:



1. Create and develop a Smart Start Lake County Eligibility Wizard
2. Employ a full-time Smart Start Family Resource Navigator
3. Invest in robust after school programs
4. Usher our youth into a bright future with 10,000 Degrees

1. Create and develop a

Smart Start Lake County Eligibility Wizard

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3. Invest in robust after school programs

4. Usher our youth into a bright future with 10,000 Degrees



Background: The Smart Start concept began in 2017, with the introduction of monthly safe sleep seminars by Sutter Lakeside Hospital. These ongoing classes provide expectant parents with education on risk reduction for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), maternal mental health tools to raise awareness about perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, and a “Smart Start Baby Bundle” including a Pack-n-Play, diapers, wipes, clothing, and other items to help new parents implement the skills they learned. Sutter Lakeside also invited community partners to give short presentations at the monthly classes, sharing information about the resources and services available to those in attendance. Within a year, Adventist Health Clear Lake adopted and funded the same model and began to offer the Smart Start Safe Sleep classes as well.

In December of 2018, representatives from local agencies and organizations serving families with young children came together as the “0-5 Network Forum” and spent a half-day together mapping Lake County resources in the areas of health & medicine, child growth & development, basic needs & resources, and parenting education. Using this information, volunteer Blaze King designed and built the Smart Start Lake County website (smartstartlakecounty.org) as a capstone project for his Information Technology degree program through California State University, Monterey Bay. He spent countless hours creating a site that would be ADA compliant, mobile-friendly, bilingual, and intuitive to use. As the 0-to-5 Network Forum members worked together with Blaze to make the website a reality, the consensus was that their efforts on this project and other joint efforts going forward would all share the similar goal of helping Lake County parents to give their children the best possible start in life, and thus changed their name from the 0-to-5 Network Forum to the “Smart Start Lake County Collective.” Organizations and programs participating in this robust Collective are:

- Adventist Health Clear Lake
 - Easterseals Northern California
 - E-Center WIC
 - First 5 Lake County
 - Lake County Child Welfare Services
 - Lake County Department of Public Health – Maternal Child & Adolescent Health, Tobacco and Lead Prevention Programs, SNAP-Ed, Oral Health Program
 - Lake County Department of Social Services
 - Lake County Office of Education – Healthy Start, Child Care Planning Council, Bloom
 - Lake County Tribal Health Consortium
 - Lake Family Resource Center
 - Mendocino Community Health Clinics – Lakeview Health Center
 - Mother-Wise
 - North Coast Opportunities – Rural Community Child Care Resource & Referral
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- Partnership Health Plan
 - Redwood Coast Regional Center
 - Redwood Community Services
 - Sutter Lakeside Hospital

Sutter Lakeside Hospital has continued to expand on their Smart Start efforts in Lakeport by applying for and receiving a grant from First 5 Lake to add a part-time bilingual Family Resource Navigator position to their staff. In July of 2019, the Family Resource Navigator began contacting participating parents, who opted-in to the program at the safe sleep seminars, and she will continue reaching out by phone and mail multiple times in their baby's first year of life to help parents navigate service systems and access needed resources.

Below is a brief description of the four proposed efforts to expand on the work of the Smart Start Lake County Collective and extend it to also include a Strong Finish for our graduating seniors.

1. Smart Start Lake County Eligibility Wizard

The Collective is currently accepting proposals from web developers to create an attractive, user-friendly, bilingual online Eligibility Wizard that will enable parents of children (prenatally through age 5) to securely enter their demographic information in a single portal which would then provide them with a list of services and programs that they and their children are eligible to receive in Lake County (WIC, subsidized child care, home visiting programs, Imagination Library, Mother-Wise, parenting classes, etc.) and give them the opportunity to "opt-in" to the services they are interested in receiving with a single click from a mobile device or computer. Their qualifying information would then be sent electronically to the service providers that they selected as a "self-referral," for follow-up by each individual provider.

Currently, if a family with a young child wanted to know if they were eligible for all of the supportive programs in Lake County, they would 1) Have to know the programs exist, 2) Track down contact information for each program (made easier by smartstartlakecounty.org), 3) Reach out to each service provider individually, 3) Fill out the corresponding paperwork, and 4) Talk with multiple program representatives in multiple locations around the Lake either on the phone or in-person to complete enrollment.

Something that currently could take days, weeks, or even months will require only a few minutes of time for parents using the Eligibility Wizard! Along with the list of eligible services that a family qualifies for, the Wizard will also provide the monetary value of each service so that parents will see the total investment that is on the table for their child's future and begin to ask the question, "Why wouldn't I opt-in to these services and programs?!" We are hoping that the addition of the value of services will help reduce the

stigma of service-seeking by parents whose children could benefit greatly from the programs available to them.

The Wizard will provide service providers with a secure way to receive self-referrals from users including only the information from the eligibility fields that their program/service requires, and it will provide the Smart Start Lake County Collective with the ability to generate reports on demand to examine the demographics of the people who are using the tool so that they can tailor outreach efforts specifically to those who aren't being adequately reached.

The concept of a cross-agency collaborative resource eligibility wizard is not being used in any other county in California, currently. Lake County will pioneer this effort and do so in a way that is scalable for larger counties to implement in the future, thus benefiting children and families across the state.

2. Smart Start Family Resource Navigator

The addition of a Family Resource Navigator (FRN) at Sutter Lakeside Hospital has been an important step toward providing the earliest possible connection to resources in order to engage in primary prevention and early intervention during the first year of a child's life. We know that the earlier these services are introduced, the greater the return on investment and the greater their impact on the life of a child. The current part-time FRN contacts new mothers, who opt-in to the program, by phone at predetermined intervals in the first year of the new baby's life to assess overall developmental progress, and inquire about: symptoms of postpartum depression, retained knowledge and use of safe sleep practices, helpfulness of baby bundle supplies, need for assistance with concrete supports, need for referral to additional community resources.

The proposed addition of a full-time Family Resource Navigator in Clearlake would offer the same services as well as more intensive case management, home visits, an evidence-based parenting and child development curriculum, and include specialized training to serve those with Perinatal Substance Use Disorder. The Clearlake FRN would be employed by a local social service organization, rather than by a hospital, to more seamlessly connect participating families to services beyond the first year of life.

3. Enhanced After School Programs

Effective afterschool programs bring a wide range of benefits to youth, families and communities. Afterschool programs can boost academic performance, reduce risky behaviors, promote physical health, and provide a safe, structured environment for the children of working parents. Effective afterschool programs can improve classroom behavior, school attendance, academic aspirations, and can reduce the likelihood that a

student will drop out. STEM jobs are driving global economic growth—7 million students are exploring STEM in afterschool.

Participation in afterschool programs has been associated with:

- reduced drug use,
- reduced criminal behavior,
- increased physical activity,
- improved dietary habits,
- reduced obesity,
- increased school attendance,
- better grades,
- increased likelihood of graduation

Working families and businesses also derive benefits from afterschool programs that ensure that youth have a safe place to go while parents are at work. Parents concerned about their children's afterschool care miss an average of eight days of work per year, and this decreased worker productivity costs businesses up to \$300 billion annually.



We propose enhancing and building upon Konocti Unified School Districts afterschool program as a locally-driven solution that will help students, families, and employers get ahead. These enhanced programs will keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help parents keep their jobs.

4. 10,000 Degrees®

California's leading college success nonprofit, 10,000 Degrees® helps students from low-income backgrounds get to and through college. Thanks to comprehensive personal support, college advising, and financial aid management, over 80% of 10,000 Degrees four-year college students earn bachelor's degrees, compared to 49% of their peers nationally. For those who start at community college, 10,000 Degrees® students transfer to and graduate from four-year colleges at a rate that is three times the national average.

Powered by the innovative Fellowship Program in support of financial aid workshops, on-campus office hours, cohort-building initiatives, and other outreach events, 10,000 Degrees reached more than 10,000 students and their families in the past year, including more than 2,000 colleges students. With help from over 500 well-trained mentors and volunteers, 10,000 Degrees staff currently serve students in seven Bay Area counties in 27

area high schools, 34 community colleges, and over 50 four-year colleges and universities across the nation.

This year 10,000 Degrees awarded \$4M in annual scholarships to over 1,800 students. Through financial aid counseling and money management training, 10,000 Degrees students receive on average an additional \$16,000 in non-loan aid and, in turn, take on 85% less student loan debt than their peers.

As for the students, 100% come from low-income backgrounds, and 85% are the first in their families to go to college. In addition, unlike most other college success organizations, there is no GPA requirement for students applying to 10,000 Degrees programs. As vital members of local communities, 10,000 Degrees college alumni are more likely to vote, more likely to volunteer, and earn over \$1 million more in their lifetimes.

10,000 Degrees understands setting a college-going mindset starts early. That's why staff work directly with local elementary and middle school students to help make sure they can envision a pathway to college.

Source: <https://www.10000degrees.org/our-impact/what-we-do/>

The youth of Lake County face a variety of health, economic, and social issues which if not properly addressed will negatively impact the county for generations to come. Lake County has already taken actions to stem the generational cycles of poverty and poor health outcomes with tailored programs founded with community leader involvement molded with measurable outcomes. Lake County enjoys support from health, educational, religious, tribal, and community leaders for the continued improvement of the county's youth but lacks the financial resources to ensure these fledgling programs reach their full potential as outlined in our plan. With the generous support from agencies like yours, Lake County can positively impact lives of our most vulnerable youth, give them an opportunity to reach their full potential, provide them with the smartest start and brightest future possible.
