



## **Overall Well-Being Remains High in the Beach Cities and Outpaces the Nation**

*Manhattan Beach tips the scales with the highest community measurement ever recorded*

### **For Immediate Release**

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REDONDO BEACH, Calif. (February 15, 2024) – The Beach Cities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach continue to score high on the Gallup National Health and Well-Being Index (WBI) while well-being declines nationally coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Beach Cities' score of 68.0 substantially outpaces the national score of 58.2. Notably, this year's Manhattan Beach score of 70.6 is the highest community measurement ever recorded by Gallup out of more than 1,500 community scores since WBI measurement began in 2008. The highest score previous to this was Manhattan Beach's score of 70.4 in 2020.

The WBI surveys adults nationwide on five elements of well-being: career, community, financial, physical and social. These five anchors contribute to the overall WBI score; a high score means a life well-lived. Gallup, on behalf of Beach Cities Health District (BCHD), has administered the WBI since 2010, the year that the Blue Zones Project® came to the Beach Cities. The 2023 WBI data was collected last fall and is weighted and adjusted based on demographic statistics and sample size.

The Beach Cities excels overall in well-being and is statistically better than the nation in each of the WBI's five elements. The element with the largest gap between the Beach Cities and the nation is financial well-being followed by community well-being. Specifically for community well-being, the WBI measures how proud adults are of their community. In the Beach Cities, 73.4% of residents agree that they are proud of their community compared to 44.2% of adults nationally, nearly a 30-point gap in sense of community and pride. Furthermore, 63% of the Beach Cities report having excellent or very good health compared to 33% nationally this year.

Not only does the 2023 Beach Cities WBI score outperform the nation, but it is also statistically better than its scores from previous years. From 2015 to 2023, the Beach Cities' overall WBI score increased by 3.1 points, with financial well-being increasing 4.0 points and community well-being rising by 3.7 points. Since 2010, there has been a 50% decrease in smoking, a 25% decrease in above-normal weight, a 29% increase in exercise, and an 11% increase in thriving, a holistic look at life evaluation. These statistically significant increases are especially impressive as well-being in the nation has decreased in many of these domains over the same period.

Dan Witters, research director of the Well-Being Index, who has managed the WBI since 2009, notes the impressive trends that the Beach Cities has seen over time and compared to the nation, but calls out daily stress as an area for improvement. "While there has been an 11% decrease in daily stress from 2010 to 2023, the Beach Cities still has a higher level of stress compared to the nation. We tend to see 'productive stress' in more affluent areas with a high level of professionals working. Stress goes down as incomes go up, but you see a U-turn effect with stress going back up when a household income reaches \$180,000 and goes up even more at \$240,000," says Witters.

Along with stress, substance use and mental health continue to be other areas of focus, as alcohol consumption is 68% higher in the Beach Cities than in the United States, and nearly one in five adults report little or no connection to other people. The data parallels Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy's advisory on the devastating impact of loneliness and isolation from May 2023, calling attention to the lack of connection across the nation.

"Data from the WBI gives us insights into the well-being of the Beach Cities community and informs our program and decision-making process. BCHD's programming will continue to focus on social connection and developing empathy, kindness and gratitude through our work around mental health and happiness, while also providing opportunities for connection through our community events, services and spaces," says Tom Bakaly, CEO of Beach Cities Health District. "We're thrilled to see data showing our community living well, but know there's still work to be done."

For more information about the Beach Cities WBI scores, please visit [www.bchd.org/impact](http://www.bchd.org/impact).

### **About Beach Cities Health District**

Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) is a healthcare district focused on preventive health and serves the communities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach. Established in 1955 as a public agency, it offers an extensive range of dynamic health and wellness programs, with innovative services and facilities to promote health and prevent diseases across the lifespan. BCHD also operates AdventurePlex, a health and fitness facility where kids play their way to good health; the Center for Health & Fitness, a comprehensive fitness center that is one of just two Medical Fitness Association-certified facilities in California; and allcove Beach Cities, a youth center for ages 12-25. BCHD was named the 2021 "Special District of the Year" by the Association of California Healthcare Districts. Visit [www.bchd.org](http://www.bchd.org) or call (310) 374-3426 for more information.