WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED AND WHAT WE DO NEXT

The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread
Thursday, February 10, 2011

Presented by

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The Planning Council for Health and Human Services conducted the study in partnership with Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency.

The report identifies both needs and assets based on both quantitative and qualitative data (secondary data, key informant interviews and focus groups).

Time Frame - April - November, 2010
WHAT DO WE WANT TO GET OUT OF THIS?

- Review of basic findings in four key areas
- Recognition of interaction and connection
- Introduction to ongoing opportunities for dialogue and partnership
- Eye toward root causes and sustainable solutions
FOCUS TODAY ON A FEW KEY AREAS

- Racine County
  - Food Security
  - Economic Security
  - Education
  - Changing Demographics

Full reports for both Racine and Kenosha Counties available at www.planningcouncil.org or www.rkcaa.org
FOOD INSECURITY IN WISCONSIN

- All households: 8.4%
- Inner city: 15%
- Disabled household member: 24%
- African American: 30%
- Poor: 31%
- Headed by single mother: 33%

percent of households food insecure
Approximately 3,200 households in the City receive Food Stamps, 4,500 in the County
Nearly 7% of households with children in the City of Racine receive food stamps
Food Share reports a 25-30% increase from 2009-2010
Participation in WIC is up 8% in Racine Co from 2009-2010 about (5,700 participants)
Access to supermarkets and large grocery stores is limited for low-income families in the central city
Some schools do not participate in the school breakfast program
Need outreach to the Latino community
“Accessing emergency food and meal programs can be challenging. If you are directed to a pantry that happens to be open and it’s on the south side and you live on the north side, you will be traversing all over on the bus. It would be an all day project for a couple of bags of groceries. Also, it’s just a two to three day supply of food. It is not a week’s worth of groceries-- it is for emergencies. The community meal program is scattered so transit is an issue.”

“I still see seniors making the choice between taking their meds or eating good meals.”

“Our emergency food network of providers is very good. Sure there are problems because its not enough. They need more than an emergency food allotments: they need access to meals on a daily basis. But the network of food providers is very good.”
RKCAA:

- Provides meals and snacks to over 650 three, four and five year olds at Head Start

- Distributes over 1.4 million pounds of food to households through food pantries, meal sites and shelters

- In 2010, began to operate the Commodity Food Supplement Program, providing food to 1,000 elderly households
FOOD SECURITY
WHAT DO WE DO NEXT?

- Support the development of Sustainable, Edible, Economic Development (SEED)
  - Building local food markets for local farmers
  - Establishing distribution strategies for products to consumers
  - Creating incubator for local food business
  - Liaison with Wild Root grocery co-op effort

Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc.
FOOD SECURITY
WHAT DO WE DO NEXT?

- Racine Urban Garden Network
  - Fiscal Sponsorship
  - Expanded gardens and initiatives including children and youth

- Opportunities
  - Summer food program for children
  - Nutrition cooking sessions
ECONOMIC SECURITY

- More than 15% of the population of the City of Racine lives in poverty
- 22% of the children living in the City are living in poverty
- The County poverty rate for senior adults age 65 and older (12.22) is double the city rate (6.38).
- The majority of those living in poverty are white.
- Families with a single female head of household are most likely to be living in poverty.
- Median household income for the County was a little above $54,000 annually and below $41,000 for the city.
- Nearly 26% of Racine county residents receive Social Security.
ECONOMIC SECURITY

- Racine has experienced increased unemployment, job losses, bankruptcies and foreclosures

- People identified the need to
  - link education and future job opportunities
  - increase outreach to the Latino community
  - address intergenerational poverty
City of Racine
Percent of Population in Poverty by Age

* Red = Percentage below FPL
Poverty rates for Racine children under 5 whom poverty status has been determined

![Bar graph showing poverty rates for Racine City, Racine County, and Wisconsin. The bars indicate higher rates in Racine City compared to Racine County and Wisconsin.]
“There is a desperate misunderstanding and it is really important... These are not simple things to deal with. It's not like you can give me a job and let me earn money. There is a lot more underlying the issue...”

“Employment barriers include lack of education, lack of a driver’s license or transit and child care... After a while, you start to feel hopeless.”

“A lot who are poor don’t have phones. It is hard to get a job because a lot of employers like to leave messages about coming in for interviews... and now you almost need a computer to get jobs. If you don’t have one, you need to find time to go to the library... going to the library with kids is a challenge...”

“Some people are working two to three jobs just to get by.”
ECONOMIC SECURITY
WHAT ARE WE DOING?

- **Energy assistance**
  - Over 9,000 households received some help in paying energy bills

- **Weatherization**
  - Energy saving measures taken to reduce the cost of energy in the dwelling
  - Nearly 790 homes receive weatherization service and over 150 furnace replacements or repairs

- **Skills Enhancement**
  - 43 persons received a diploma or certificate
  - 10 received an increase of $2.50 per hour on average
ECONOMIC SECURITY
WHAT ARE WE DOING?

- **Rent Assistance and Homeless Prevention and Re-housing Program**
  - Over 300 served in the county preventing eviction and homelessness

- **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act**
  - Funds Supported Driver’s license restoration in partnership with Legal Action of Wisconsin and Workforce Development
  - Transitional Jobs in partnership with Racine Vocational Ministries
  - Summer Youth employment
  - **VITA - EITC**
Economic Security
What Do We Do Next?

- Analysis of data related to Transitional Jobs to more fully develop this as a part of an ongoing employment effort
- Support the continuation of Driver’s License Restoration as part of a workforce development strategy
- Continue the development of SEED as model of economic development
Racine County has approximately 36,000 children between the ages of 5 and 18 with nearly 15,000 of those living within the City of Racine.

More than one in five of the school-age children in the City are below the poverty rates with those in the 5-11 age range having the greatest percentage in poverty.

The actual high school graduation rate is estimated at around 60% with variation between 36% and 81%.

RUSD experienced an overall enrollment decline accompanied by a steady increase in minority students.

Dropout Trends

- RUSD
- Wisconsin

2009-10 scores in the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE) showed improvement at nearly all age levels in reading and many levels in math.

There is a persistent and significant gap of more than 20 percentage points between WKCE scores achieved by African American students and their white peers.
“It’s tough to focus on school when you have to focus on whether or not you are going to have a roof over your head, or where you are going to stay tonight, or if you are going to get a meal.”
Head Start - Quality Early Childhood programs have the ability to improve outcomes for children

Economists find this investment has the best return of government dollars

- Art Rolnick (Minnesota Federal Reserve) describes this as economic development
- James Heckman, a Nobel laureate, makes the economic case for early education. He argues that investing in programs for prekindergarten children will yield dramatic returns for individuals and for society.

“Early education offers the most cost-effective path to a whole range of social benefits: not just higher future incomes for participants, but a more productive workforce, greater economic growth, lower crime rates, smaller prison populations, and substantial savings for taxpayers.” (2007 University of Chicago Annual Report)
School Readiness Coalition

- Piloting use of Ages and Stages measurement tool for four year olds (RUSD, RKCAA Head Start, NGN and 21st Century Preparatory School, United Way of Racine County, Johnson Foundation)

- Build stronger transitions to kindergarten

- Track outcomes to build stronger programming
Racine County has the 5th largest population in the state (198,870), and continues to experience growth overall and particularly among seniors (12.3%) alongside a slight decrease in the number of children under the age of 5 (6.5%).

The racial makeup is 82% white, 10% black. Approximately 10% of the population identify as Hispanic/Latino.

The City’s population is eroding and accounts for approximately 40% of the county.

More than one third of the population in the city are people of color.

In the city of Racine, the rate of infant deaths among African-American infants is 28 per 1000, which is higher than the city of Milwaukee.

The number of residents 65 and older is projected to increase by 86% by the year 2035.

More than 12% of the elderly population is living at or below the poverty level.
Healthy Birth Outcomes for Greater Racine: Lifecourse model

- Community model for change being developed by a broad-based collaborative
- Reducing African American infant mortality
- Improving healthy birth outcomes, reducing the high cost of babies born too soon, leading to expensive supportive cost

Access and support for seniors

- Elderly food program
- Altering service deliver to meet the needs of aging
Value of parks and libraries to all families, more important in tough economic times

Access to Lake Michigan

Afterschool programs for children and youth

Gateway Technical College

Supportive programs for elderly and low income
THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLECTIVE EFFORTS

- Community strengthening is the process of community conversations and cooperative efforts
- Including non-traditional partners
- Developing partnerships and collaborations are critical to the process of determining initiatives, models, programming
- Moving beyond the emergent needs to long-term solutions for a more prosperous Racine