



2009 Community Needs Assessment Update

2007 Needs Assessment

In 2007, United Way of Wyoming Valley purchased a research-based Needs Assessment to implement in our community. The assessment was purchased from O'Connor Research & Action. United Way of Wyoming Valley implemented the tools and O'Connor Research and Action (ORA) tabulated and provided the results.

2007 Activities Conducted

Among the research methods were the following components:

1. **Focus Groups:** The Focus Groups explored needs in Luzerne County through the participation of 52 diverse employees at local employers, as well as 25 community agencies that provide health and human services in the area. 50 community needs were identified during these exercises.
2. **Community Survey:** The 50 community needs identified during the Focus Groups were used in creating the Community Survey. To ensure random sampling in the survey, a vendor, FMP Direct, provided a contact database with random names in Luzerne County. A mailed survey was sent out to residents, as well as to Providers of Health and Human Services in the County. At the end of that process, 360 responses were returned.
3. **Collection of Statistical and Epidemiological data:** This data, including a basic profile of the Luzerne County population and statistics on the 50 issues listed on the Community Survey, provided factual information of the status on many issues in our community.

2009 Needs Assessment Update

Because Community Needs change throughout the years, United Way of Wyoming Valley staff performed activities to update the 2007 Needs Assessment.

2009 Activities Conducted

Many of the original components of the Needs Assessment were used to formulate the results of the 2009 Update due to resources and time.

1. **Focus Groups:** Focus groups were not performed this year. In order to provide an update on the needs that were examined 2 years ago, the same needs were used for the 2009 Community Survey.
2. **Community Survey:** The 50 community needs identified during the Focus Groups in 2007 were used in creating the Community Survey. An online tool was used to reach the most people possible. The survey was sent to donors and volunteers, as well as to local companies for employee participation, local Health and Human service providers, and recipients of service among our agencies. At the end of that process, 565 responses were received (an approximate 11% response rate).
3. **Collection of Statistical and Epidemiological data:** Because the surveys and focus groups provide qualitative (opinionated) information, it is crucial to collect and update yearly quantitative information. The data, including a basic profile of the Luzerne County population and statistics on the 50 issues listed on the Community Survey, provides factual information of the status on many issues in our community.

The Community Survey for Luzerne County Results
Community Needs: Ranked 1 through 50

The Community Survey asked respondents to review the list of 50 issues and mark the answer (based a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being ‘Not At All Serious’ and 5 being ‘Very Serious’) that best expresses how serious they think each need is in Luzerne County. Between 460 and 475 people responded to this question.

The Charts below list the needs in order of most important to the least important issue as indicated on the Community Survey, using the Rating Average of each issue.

Chart I: The Top Ten Needs in Luzerne County

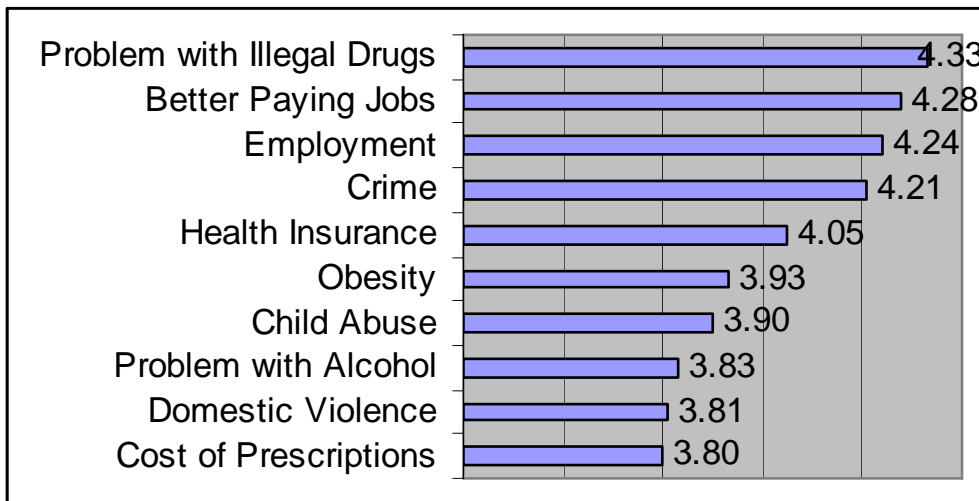


Chart 2: Second Tier of Needs in Luzerne County

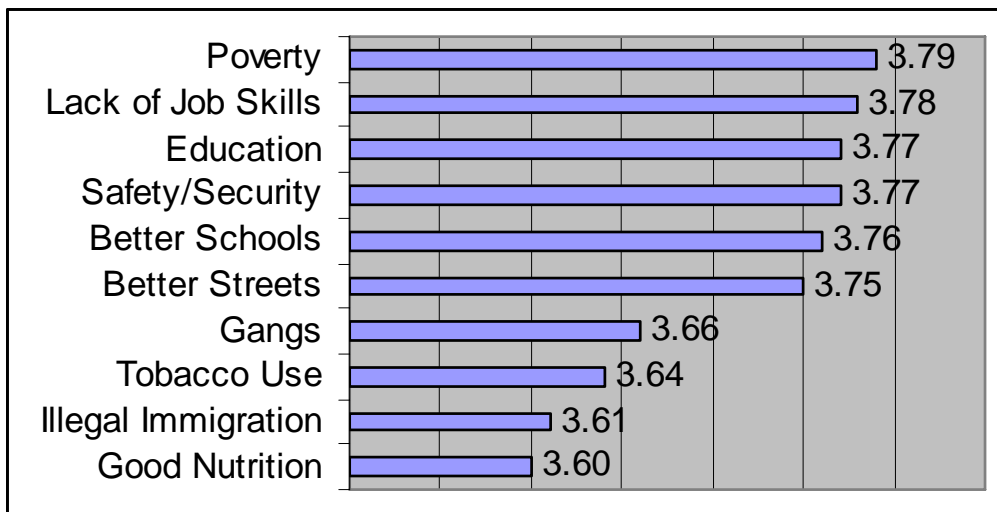


Chart 3: The Third Tier

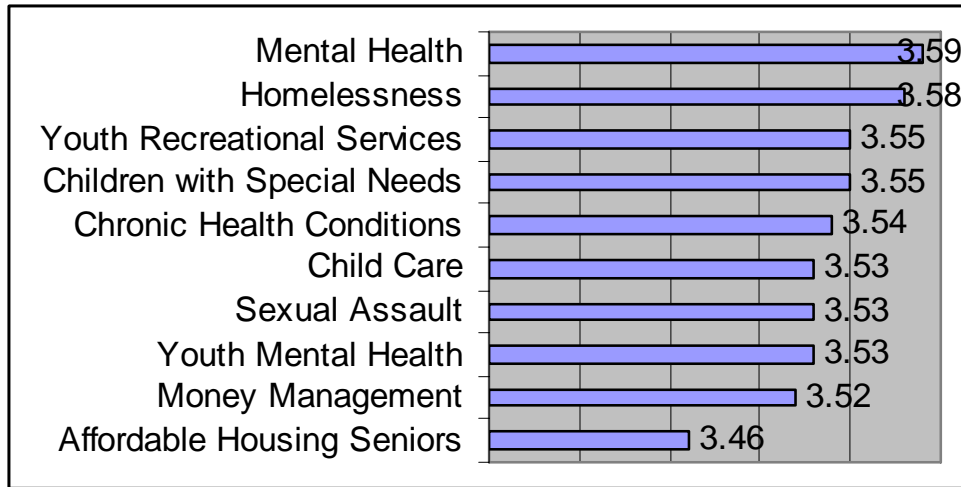


Chart 4: The Fourth Tier

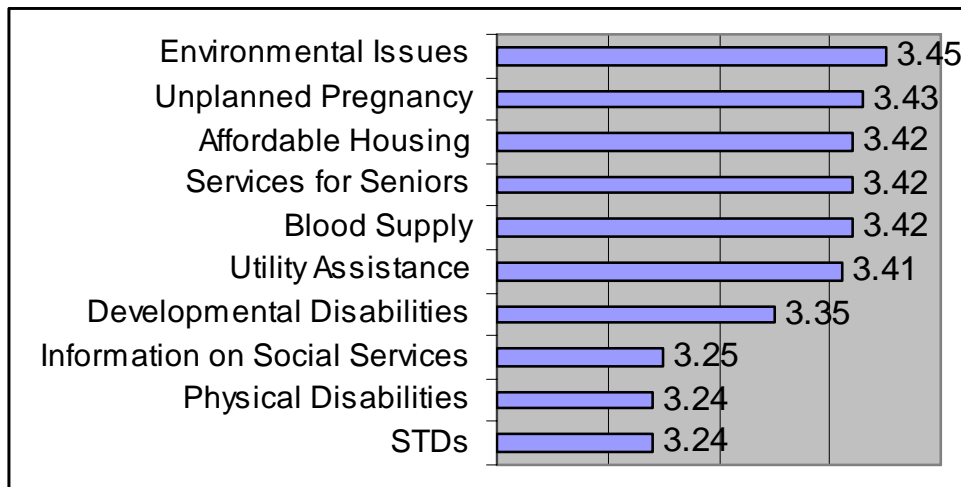
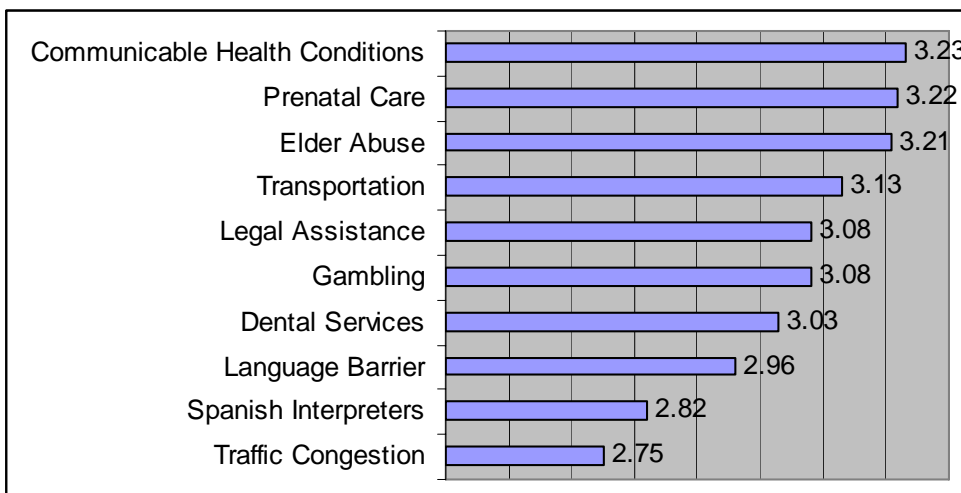


Chart 5: The Fifth Tier



Community Needs: Issue Shift

The following chart highlights the difference between the issue rankings in the 2007 Survey and the 2009 Survey. In comparison to the 2007 Survey, Positive Changes indicate shifts that result in higher rankings in 2009 and Negative Changes show issues that scored lower in the 2009 Survey,

Community Issue	2009	2007	Positive Change
Domestic Violence	9	42	33
Child Abuse	7	38	31
Homelessness	22	40	18
Children with Special Needs	24	41	17
Sexual Assault	27	44	17
Youth Mental Health	28	43	15
Mental Health	21	33	12
Problem with Alcohol	8	19	11
Child Care	26	36	10
Developmental Disabilities	37	47	10
STDs	40	49	9
Education	13	21	8
Prenatal Care	42	50	8
Problem with Illegal Drugs	1	8	7
Unplanned Pregnancy	32	39	7
Communicable Health Conditions	41	48	7
Poverty	11	17	6
Lack of Job Skills	12	18	6
Good Nutrition and Exercise	20	26	6
Obesity	6	10	4
Employment	3	6	3
Elder Abuse	43	46	3
Blood Supply	35	37	2

Community Issue	2009	2007	Negative Change
Better Paying Jobs	2	1	-1
Crime	4	2	-2
Health Insurance	5	3	-2
Safety/Security	14	12	-2
Gangs	17	14	-3
Chronic Health Conditions	25	22	-3
Better Schools	15	11	-4
Services for Seniors	34	30	-4
Spanish Interpreters	49	45	-4
Cost of Prescriptions	10	5	-5
Money Management	29	23	-6
Physical Disabilities	39	32	-7
Youth Recreational Services	23	15	-8
Affordable Housing	33	25	-8
Utility Assistance	36	28	-8
Tobacco Use	18	9	-9
Transportation	44	35	-9
Environmental Issues	31	20	-11
Legal Assistance	45	34	-11
Better Streets and Highways	16	4	-12
Illegal Immigration	19	7	-12
Lack of Information on Social Services	38	24	-14
Affordable Housing for Seniors	30	13	-17
Gambling	46	29	-17
Language Barrier	48	31	-17
Dental Services	47	27	-20
Traffic Congestion	50	16	-34

Notable Changes (highlighted in table):

Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, and Problems with Alcohol ranked among the top 10 issues in the 2009 Survey and did not in the 2007 Survey. Large shifts between the two years are represented in the issues.

Problems with Illegal Drugs, Obesity, Employment, Better Paying Jobs, Crime, and Health Insurance ranked in the top 10 list of issues in both the 2007 and the 2009 Survey. Most significantly, **Problems with Illegal Drugs** moved 7 places to the Number 1 issue in Luzerne County (from #8).

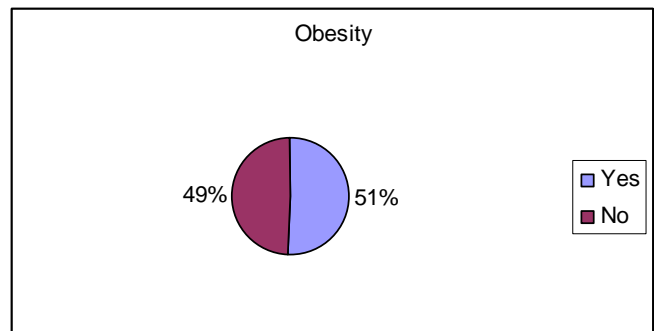
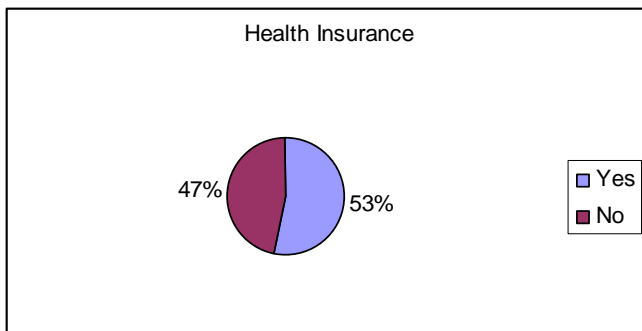
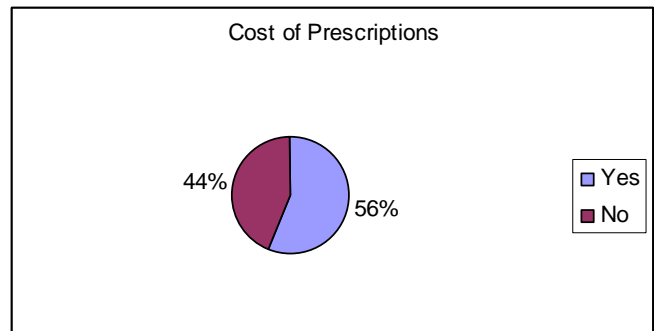
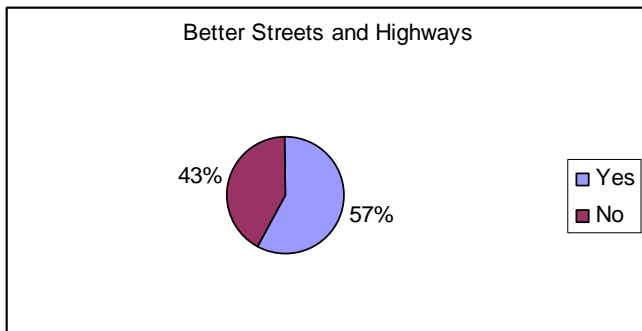
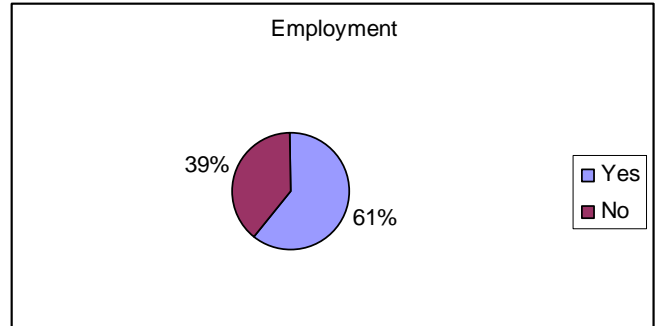
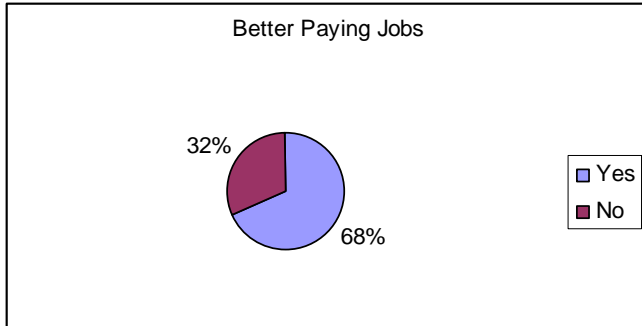
Tobacco Use, Better Streets and Highways, and Illegal Immigration moved from the top 10 list of issues in 2007 to considerably lower positions in 2009.

Affordable Housing for Seniors moved from one of the top issues (as #13) in 2007 to the 30th issue in 2009, representing a 17 point decrease. Most notable is the large shift in both **Dental Services** and **Traffic Congestion**, portraying a 20 point and 34 point drop respectively.

Community Needs: In The Home

The Community Survey asked respondents to answer (in a yes or no format) whether they, or anyone they know, have a problem/need pertaining to each of the 50 issues listed. Between 450 and 460 people responded to this question.

Six issues resulted in the majority of respondents listing them as being a problem for them or someone they know. The charts below indicate these 6 issues, with 'yes' signifying that it is a problem and 'no' meaning that it is not a problem.

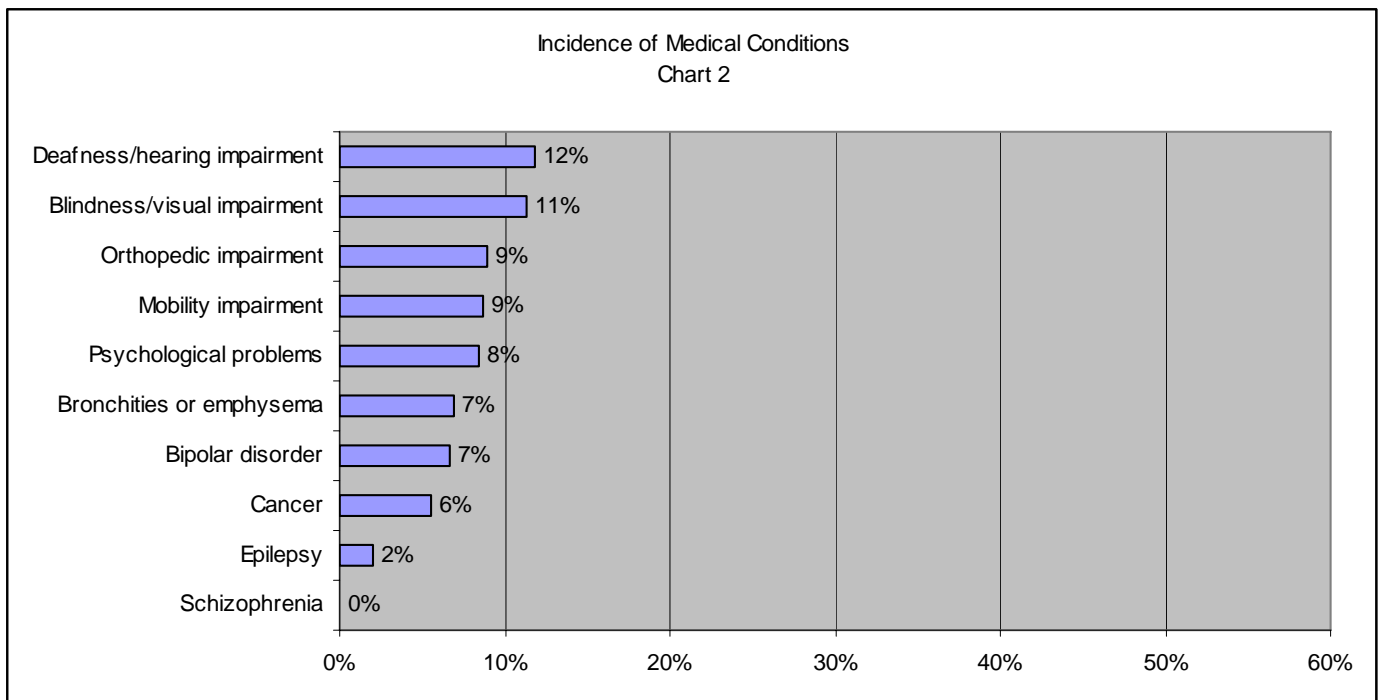
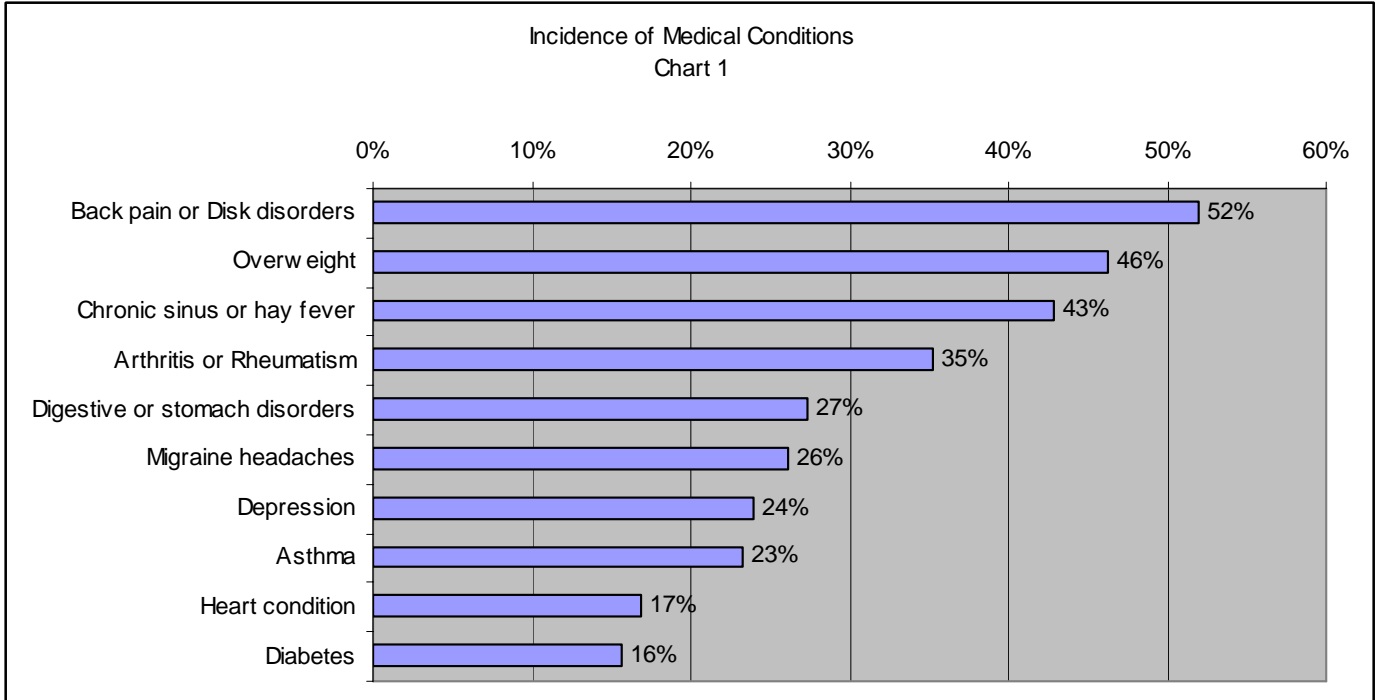


The following 5 issues had the least amount of people indicate that it is a problem for them or someone they know:

- Elder Abuse
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Prenatal Care
- Blood Supply
- Communicable Health Conditions

Medical conditions in the households in Luzerne County

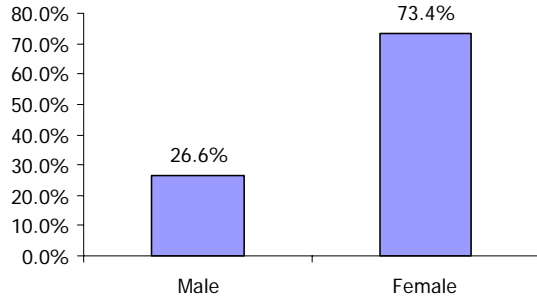
The question to the respondents to the survey was, “do you or anyone in your household presently have any of the following conditions?” There were 20 different conditions from which the respondents could choose:



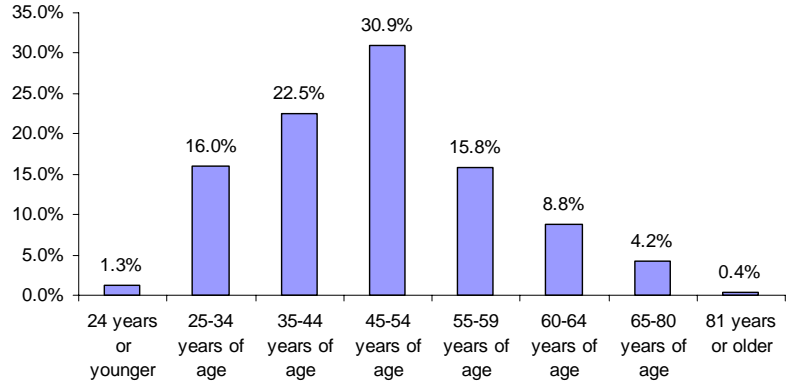
Community Survey: Demographics

Respondents were asked to provide their background information, including age, race, and income, though it was not required. Charts below provide the demographical information for those who responded to the survey and completed this section.

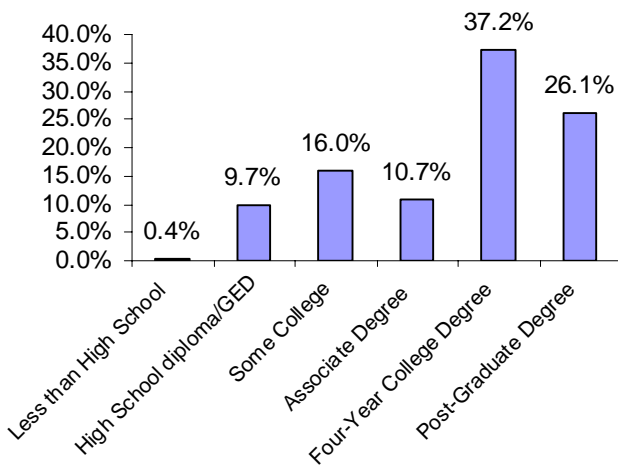
Gender



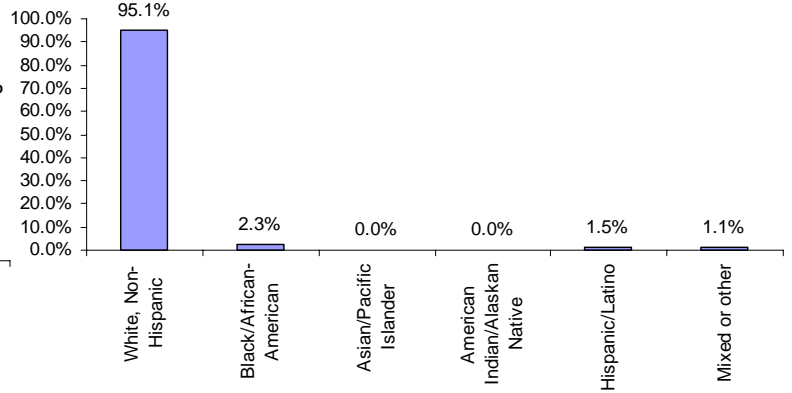
Age



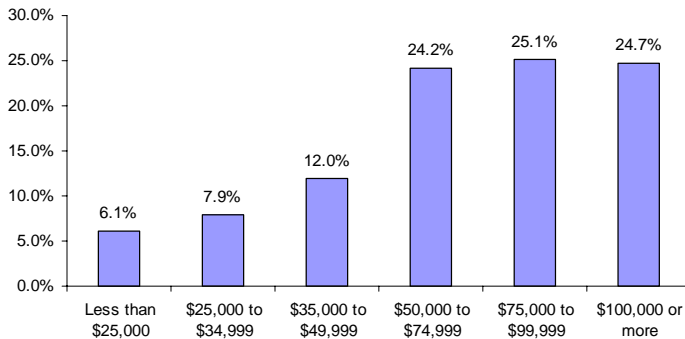
Education



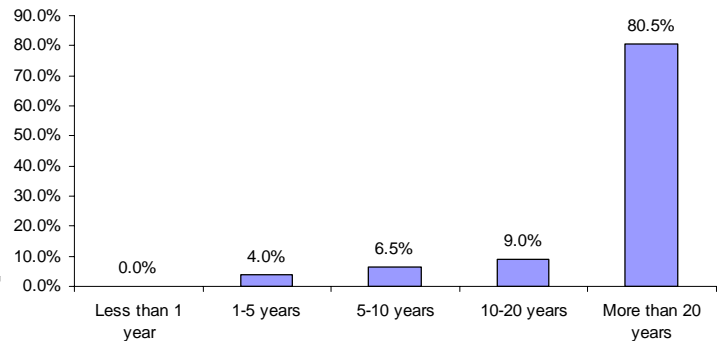
Ethnicity/Race



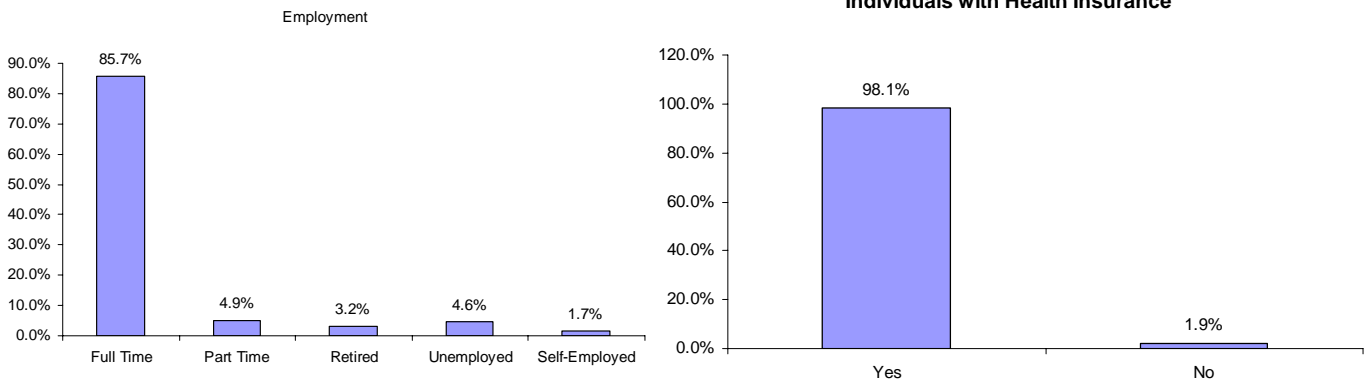
Household Income (before taxes)



of Years Living in Luzerne County



Community Survey: Demographics (continued)



Statistical and Epidemiological Data

The final component of the needs assessment was the collection of statistical and epidemiological data. Since the surveys and focus groups provide qualitative (opinionated) information, it is crucial to collect quantitative information. This data provides factual information of the status on many issues in our community. When collecting the data, statistics for Luzerne County was always collected first, followed by state, then national information.

A basic profile of the Luzerne County population was collected. This information shows total population and the breakdown of sex, age, ethnicity, and income.

In addition statistics were collected for each of the 50 issues listed on the community survey. This information is very specific to the issue.

As mentioned in the previous commentary it is very important to compare the statistics against the perceptions. For example, if low-income children are not receiving dental services that may trump the perception of the respondents. It is the most successful way to focus in on needs and move forward with strategic planning.

**United Way of Wyoming Valley
Community Needs Assessment Update 2009
Statistical Data**

The final component of the Community Needs Assessment is the collection of statistical and epidemiological data. Since the surveys and focus groups provide qualitative (opinionated) information, it is crucial to collect quantitative information. This data provides factual information of the status on many issues in our community.

Luzerne County Population

- 311,983 estimated population (as of 2008)
- -2.3% population change from 2000 to 2008
(U.S. Census Bureau: State & County QuickFacts 2009)
- 79.7% of population is considered urban and 20.3% rural (248,875)
(PA Department of Health and Rural PA, 2009)
- It is estimated that 15.2% or 46,406 people in Luzerne County have a disability.
(American Community Survey, 2008)
- 9% of all households are single parent households (male & female, no spouse present)
(The Center for Rural Pennsylvania, 2007)

Age of Population

- 5.3% of population are children from ages 0 to 5 (as of 2008)
- 19.9% of population are children from ages 0 to 18 (as of 2008)
- 18.2% of population are people 65 years or older (as of 2008) compared to 15.3% in Pennsylvania
(U.S. Census Bureau: State & County QuickFacts 2009)
- Median age of population is 41.4 (PA Department of Health and Rural PA, 2009)

Ethnic Diversity

- 95.4% of population is considered White
- 2.9% is Black or African American
- 1.7% of population is considered “Other”
- 4.5% is Hispanic or Latino
(U.S. Census Bureau: State & County QuickFacts 2009)
- With a growth rate of 222.2%, Luzerne County was ranked 2nd of the Counties with the most Hispanic Growth Rate from 2000 to 2007 (for counties with 10,000 or more Hispanics in 2007)
- 15% increase in the Hispanic population from July 1, 2007 to July 1, 2008
(U.S. Census Bureau)

Income and Poverty

- 11.7% of the population is living in poverty
- \$41,679 is the median household income, as of 2007
(U.S. Census Bureau: State & County QuickFacts 2009)
- 17.9% is the poverty rate for children (under 18 years old)
(The Center for Rural Pennsylvania, 2007)
- 31.2% of households are low income (<\$25,000)
- 18% of households are lower-middle income (\$25-39,999)
- 19.6% of households are middle-income (\$40-59,999)
- 25.6% of households are upper-middle income (\$60-124,999)
- 5.6% of households are upper income (\$125,000+)
(The Center for Rural Pennsylvania, 2005-2007)

Providing Mental Health Assistance Statistical Data 2009

Children with Special Needs

Of the 62,025 residents under the age of 18 in Luzerne County, 3,468 have a disability.
(American Community Survey, 2008)

Special needs have generally been identified through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Young children who have been diagnosed as having developmental delays, or any child who has been evaluated as having one of a limited list of disabilities specified in IDEA, are considered as having special needs when they require special education and related services. (Brennan & Rosenzweig, 2008)

In general, the term 'child with a disability' means a child with*:

- specific learning disabilities – 3,277
- speech or language impairments – 1,223
- mental retardation - 766
- serious emotional disturbance - 447
- autism - 212
- hearing impairments (including deafness) - 63
- visual impairments (including blindness) - 43
- orthopedic impairments – not included in study
- traumatic brain injury – not included in study
- or other health impairments – not included in study
- and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

(Department of Education, IDEA 2004)

**number following the disability is the number of special education enrollments in 2007-2008 in Luzerne County, which is a good indicator of the number of children living with disabilities in Luzerne County.
(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)*

6,119 students were enrolled in special education in Luzerne County in 2007-2008 (which includes 88 students with multiple disabilities, not included above).
(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Developmental Disabilities

Developmental disabilities are a diverse group of severe chronic conditions that are due to mental and/or physical impairments. People with developmental disabilities have problems with major life activities. Developmental disabilities begin anytime during development up to 22 years of age and usually last throughout a person's lifetime.
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Approximately 5.4 million Americans have developmental disabilities
(National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities)

Types of Developmental Disabilities include:

- Nervous system disabilities, which include Mental Retardation (Down Syndrome and Fragile X Syndrome) and Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Sensory-related Disabilities
- Metabolic Disorders, which include Phenylketonuria (PKU) and Hypothyroidism
- Degenerative Disorders, including Rett syndrome

(National Institute of Child Health & Human Development)

705,000 people with a mental disability live in Pennsylvania, which is 6.1% of population. This is compared to U.S.'s 5.8%.

("Disability Statistics in the United States." Erickson, 2009)

Throughout the United States, 36% of people with a disability were employed and 27% with a mental disability were employed in 2007. This is compared to 70% of the general (working age) population. This represents a 43% gap between people with and without disabilities.

Of those individuals with disabilities who work, 40% have incomes less than 200% of the poverty level.

(National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities)

Mental Health **Youth Mental Health Services**

Mental Health is a state of successful performance of mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and the ability to adapt to change and to cope with adversity. *Mental Illness* is the term that refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders. Mental disorders are health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination thereof) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning.

(Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General)

11,137 individuals were seeking treatment at the community Mental Health centers in Luzerne and Wyoming Counties 2001-2002. Those numbers increased to 14,637 individuals in 2007-2008. This represents a 31% increase in 6 years.

The numbers of individuals ages 65+ seeking mental health treatment in Luzerne/Wyoming Counties decreased while the numbers of individuals under the age of 65 substantial increased (despite the large elderly population in the counties).

The adult population increased 24% since 2002-2003 for a total number of 6,899 seriously ill adults seeking mental health treatment.

The number of seriously ill children and adolescents seeking mental health treatment has increased 270% from 339 individuals in 2002-2003 to 1,266 individuals in 2007-2008.

(Luzerne/Wyoming County MH/MR)

Luzerne County's suicide rate in 2006 was 16.3%, compared to Pennsylvania's suicide rate of 10.7%.

Luzerne County's suicide rate increased by 3.6% since 2000, as the suicide rate in 2000 was 12.7%.

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

**Supporting Physical & Medical Needs
Statistical Data 2009**

Chronic Health Conditions

Chronic diseases are noncommunicable illnesses that are prolonged in duration, do not resolve spontaneously, and are rarely cured completely. Examples of chronic diseases include heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and arthritis. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

From 2005-2007, the top three major causes of death in Luzerne County were:

Cause:	Total:	Rate*:	Pennsylvania Rate*:
Diseases of Heart	3,693	259.0	223.0
Cancer	2,593	195.2	194.0
Stroke	589	41.6	47.5

*Average Annual Age-Adjusted Death Rate, per 100,000 2000 U.S. standard million population.

In 2007 in Luzerne County, Diseases of the Heart was the 2nd leading cause of death for ages 45-64 (117) and the 1st leading cause of death for those 65 years or older (1,073).

In Luzerne County in 2007, Cancer was the 2nd leading cause of death for ages 25-44 (20), the 1st for ages 45-64 (189), and the 2nd leading cause of death for those 65 years or older (640).

From 2004-2006, the top 3 incidences of cancer in Luzerne County were:

- #1: Prostate for men – incident rate is lower than PA rate
 - #1: Female breast for women – incident rate is lower than PA rate
 - #2: Bronchus and lung – incident rate is higher for men and lower for women than PA rate
 - #3: Colon and Rectum – incident rate is higher for men and lower for women than PA rate
- (PA Department of Health)

**Health Insurance
Cost of Prescriptions
Dental Services**

CHIP is short for the Children's Health Insurance Program - Pennsylvania's program to provide health insurance to all uninsured children and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance. (Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Program)

- As of March of 2009, 3,181 children in Luzerne County are enrolled in CHIP (Rural PA)

HMO, also called health maintenance organization, provides comprehensive health care to voluntarily enrolled individuals and families in a particular geographic area by member physicians with limited referral to outside specialists and that is financed by fixed periodic payments. (Merriam-Webster)

- As of 12/08, the total HMO enrollment in Luzerne County was 75,150 (PA Dept. of Health)

Medical Assistance (MA), also referred to as Medicaid, provides payment for health care services on behalf of eligible low-income individuals with limited income and high medical expenses. (PA Depart. of Public Welfare)

- 17.6 % of the Luzerne County population is eligible for medical assistance (Rural PA, 06/08)

PACE (Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly), PACENET and PACE Plus Medicare are Pennsylvania's prescription assistance programs for older adults, offering low-cost prescription medication to qualified residents age 65 and older. (Pennsylvania Department of Aging)

- In Luzerne County, 18,390 elderly are enrolled in PACE/PACENET (Rural PA, 2006)

Dental Services are based on eligibility category, age, and need. Medical Assistance covers all medically necessary dental services for enrolled children, and Adults are eligible at a minimum for surgical procedures and emergency services related symptoms and pain. (PA Depart. of Public Welfare)

- In Luzerne County, 43 % of adults do not have dental insurance. (Steps to a Healthier US, 2005)

Blood Supply

There are four main blood types: A, B, AB, and O. AB is the universal recipient and O negative is the universal donor.

- Approximately 32,000 pints of blood are used each day in the United States.
- One pint of blood can save up to three lives. (Brookhaven National Laboratory)

Physical Disabilities **Children with Special Needs**

It is estimated that 15.2% or 46,406 people in Luzerne County have a disability.
(American Community Survey, 2008)

Throughout the United States, 36% of people with a disability were employed, compared to 70% of the general (working age) population.

Of those individuals with disabilities who work, 40% have incomes less than 200% of the poverty level.
(National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities)

Of the 62,025 residents under the age of 18 in Luzerne County, 3,468 or 5.6% have a disability.
(American Community Survey, 2008)

Special needs have generally been identified through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Young children who have been diagnosed as having developmental delays, or any child who has been evaluated as having one of a limited list of disabilities specified in IDEA are considered as having special needs when they require special education and related services. (Brennan & Rosenzweig, 2008)

In general, the term 'child with a disability' means a child with*:

- specific learning disabilities – 3,277
- speech or language impairments – 1,223
- mental retardation - 766
- serious emotional disturbance - 447
- autism - 212
- hearing impairments (including deafness) - 63
- visual impairments (including blindness) - 43
- orthopedic impairments - not included in study
- traumatic brain injury – not included in study
- or other health impairments – not included in study
- and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

(Department of Education, IDEA 2004)

**number following the disability is the number of special education enrollments in 2007-2008 in Luzerne County, which is a good indicator of the number of children living with disabilities in Luzerne County.
(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)*

6,119 students were enrolled in special education in Luzerne County in 2007-2008 (which includes 88 students with multiple disabilities, not included above).
(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Revitalizing Neighborhoods Statistical Data 2009

Better Schools Education

92.4% is the overall **daily school attendance rate** (for grades K-12), with the lowest rate occurring at the secondary level, with 90.4% of students attending daily in 2006-2007 school year.

The **proficiency rates** of mathematics (87.3%) and reading (87%) in Luzerne County ranked well above state targets of 56% for mathematics and 63% for reading in 2008. Wyoming Area School District ranked highest for both mathematics and reading (94.2%) and Hanover Area School District ranked lowest in reading (81.2%).

Luzerne County reported an average **Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score** of 960 (scored out of 1600) in 2008. This is a 7 point increase over its 2007 score. Crestwood School District was highest at 1,014 and Wilkes-Barre School District was lowest with 888.

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Dropout Rate for Luzerne County was 1.7% in 2006-2007, compared to Pennsylvania's dropout rate of 1.6% and the national rate of 4.4%.

(Pennsylvania Department of Education)

For ages 25-64, those who do not complete high school earn an average of \$25,243 per year in Pennsylvania, whereas the average annual income for those with a high school diploma is \$29,938. This trend increases with higher education levels with Master (\$59,477) and Professional/Doctorate degrees (\$89,211).

From 2000-2007, Luzerne County experienced for the population aged 25 or older:

- 3.4% improvement in the % of the population with a Bachelor's degree or higher
- 1.9% increase in those holding an Associate's degree
- 0.8% increase in those holding a graduate or professional degree*
- - 0.4% in the number of residents holding a Bachelor's degree

*Luzerne County ranked lower than the statewide average in the category of persons age 25 or older with a graduate or professional degree.

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Environmental Issues

Waste Management

- Luzerne County produced 337,567.90 tons of waste that was distributed among 14 disposal facilities in 2007, compared to 325,860.20 tons distributed to 15 facilities in 2006.

Recycling

- In 2008, Luzerne County reports having 44 recycling drop-off locations, 22 municipal drop-off programs and 39 municipal curbside recycling programs.

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Illegal Immigration

As of January 2008, an estimated 11.6 million unauthorized immigrants were living in the United States.

- An estimated 7.0 million of the 11.6 million unauthorized residents were from Mexico
- An estimated 8.8 million of the 11.6 million unauthorized residents were from the North America region, including Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central America, 1.2 million from Asia and 850,000 from South America.

(DHS, Office of Immigration Statistics, 2008)

Information on Social Services

The 24-hour, 365 day/year Information and Referral Service (and first response point for crisis calls) in Luzerne and Wyoming Counties reported receiving 69,372 calls and 9,655 website hits in FY 2008-09. The most frequent requests include:

- Crisis Lines: 17,916 calls
- Financial Assistance & Support: 2,249 calls
- Consumer Help (advocacy, complaints, protection): 2,157 calls
- Housing: 1,613 calls
- Health/Medical Assistance: 1,585 calls
- Mental Health: 1,194
- Government/Taxes (tax preparation, government information): 1,075

(Help Line Annual Report)

Language Barrier **Spanish Interpreters for Services**

Of the 295,636 population age 5 years and older, 278,205 people (or 94.1%) speak English only, with 17,431 people (or 5.9%) speaking a language other than English.

(American Community Study, 06/08)

Between 1995 and 2005, the Limited English Proficient (LEP) enrollment in public schools nationwide grew by 56 percent, though the entire student population grew by only 2.6 percent

Results from the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that nationally, LEP students trailed non-LEP students by 39 points in reading and 36 points in math on a 500 point scale

(Migration Policy Institute, 2007)

Better Streets & Highways **Traffic Congestion** **Transportation**

In 2007, 82.9% of workers (16 years of age and older) in Luzerne County used cars, trucks, or vans as a primary means of transportation to and from work (compared to 76.7% in PA and 75.8% in US). This represented a 2.3% increase over 2006 in Luzerne County.

In 2007, 3.2% of workers walk to and from work (compared to 4.0% in PA and 2.8% in US).

0.7% of workers use public transportation to and from work (compared to 5.1% in PA and 4.9% in US).

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development, 2007)

Luzerne County Transportation Authority schedule for public transportation:

- Monday through Friday 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Saturdays 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- No public transportation available on Sundays

(Luzerne County Transportation Authority, 2009)

Revitalizing Neighborhoods Statistical Data 2009 continued....

Disaster Relief

The total calls to 9-1-1 in Luzerne County totaled 197,658 in Fiscal Year 2008. (PA Emergency Management Agency).

432 emergency calls were made to the Luzerne County Information & Referral System in FY 2008-2009, which included assistance for 8 disasters and 15 fire/rescue. (Help Line Annual Report)

Listed below are the 10 emergencies that are most likely to occur in Pennsylvania:

- Floods
- Fires
- Winter Storms
- Tropical Storms, Tornadoes and Wind Storms
- Influenza Pandemic
- Hazardous Material Incidents
- Earthquakes and Landslides
- Nuclear Threat
- Dam Failures
- Terrorism

(PA Emergency Management Agency)

Floods are the most common natural disasters in the U.S., causing more than \$7.1 billion in property damage in the last 10 years.

A home has a 26% chance of being damaged by a flood during the course of a 30-year mortgage in a high-risk area, compared to a 9% chance of fire. (FEMA)

Two inches of water can cost a person \$7,800. (National Flood Insurance Program)

**Maximizing Individual Safety
Statistical Data 2009**

**Crime
Safety and Security
Sexual Assault**

In 2007, the following 7,171 property crimes occurred in Luzerne County:

- 5,301 larceny thefts
- 1,357 burglaries
- 444 motor vehicle thefts
- 69 arsons

The amount of property crimes increased from 6,495 in 2006, with increases in both burglary and larceny thefts and decreases in motor vehicle thefts and arson.

In 2007, the following 982 violent crimes occurred in Luzerne County:

- 688 aggravated assaults
- 236 robberies
- 65 rapes
- 13 murders

The amount of violent crimes increased from 893 in 2006. While murder and rape occurrences decreased during that time period, robbery increased by 32 and aggravated assaults increased by 88.

Luzerne County's number of police increased from 2000 to 2008, with the number of police per 1,000 residents increasing from 1.57 in 2000 to 2.57 in 2008.

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Child Abuse

In 2006, there were 1.9 substantiated cases of child abuse per 1,000 children (Rural PA)

In Pennsylvania, child abuse and/or neglect occurs 37,599 times a year; 103 times a day; an average of 4 children are abused or neglected every hour. (PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency)

The average age at which children are sexually abused is between 7 and 13, and 90% of the time the child knows his/her abuser. (PA Coalition Against Rape)

Domestic Violence

In 2008, 144 domestic violence fatalities occurred in Pennsylvania.

In 2008, there were 3 domestic violence fatalities in Luzerne County

Note: Pennsylvania does not mandate domestic violence incident reporting by law enforcement

(Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence)

Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is the infliction of physical, emotional, or psychological harm on an older adult. Elder abuse also can take the form of financial exploitation or intentional or unintentional neglect of an older adult by the caregiver. (American Psychological Association)

An estimated 1 to 2 million Americans aged 65 and older have been injured, exploited, or otherwise mistreated by someone on whom they depend for care and protection.

- It is estimated that for every one case of reported abuse, neglect, or exploitation reported to authorities, about 5 more go unreported.

(National Center on Elder Abuse, 2003)

As reported in a 2004 survey among 19 states, types of elderly maltreatment included:

- Self Neglect (32.7%)
- Caregiver neglect (20.4%)
- Financial exploitation (14.7%)
- Emotional/psychological verbal abuse (14.8%)
- Physical abuse (10.7%)
- Sexual abuse (1%)
- Other (1.2%)

(State Adult Protective Services)

Gangs

According to a 2006 survey conducted in elementary, middle, and high schools in 46 states, including Pennsylvania:

- 42.2% of schools reported gang fights in and around their school.
- 35% of respondents reported complaints of gang recruiting occurring in and around their school within the past year.
- 26.1% of schools stated that gang shootings had occurred nearby the geographical location of your school within the past year.
- Schools responded that they estimate 11.3% of the security problems in the last year were caused by gang members or gang associates and 12.4% of the threats of violence were gang-related.
- Only 16.4% of schools stated their staff received mandatory training about gang issues.

(National Gang Crime Research Center)

Legal Assistance

In 2005, the Legal Services Corporation's Justice Gap Report established that for every client who received service, one eligible applicant was turned away. 50% of eligible potential clients requesting assistance from legal services were turned away for lack of adequate program resources.

Cases include:

- family (i.e. domestic violence, child custody)
- housing (i.e. housing foreclosures)
- income maintenance
- consumer
- health
- other

Three out of four clients that receive legal assistance are women.

(Legal Services Corporation)

Increasing Financial Stability Statistical Data 2009

Affordable Housing Affordable Housing for Seniors

The **Housing Affordability Index** shows the relationship between family income and income required to qualify for a newly constructed home. An index value of 100 indicates that a family making the median income (calculated from \$41,804 in Luzerne County) can afford to buy a new, median-priced home (of \$111,900 in Luzerne County), while less than a 100 indicates less affordability.

- Luzerne County has a Housing Affordability Index score of 93.5 in 2007, which increased by .8 from 2006.
- However, it is 6.5 points less than 100, indicating that the median household cannot afford a 30-year mortgage (at 6.49% interest) on a median-priced home.

Luzerne County had a median monthly mortgage of \$1,105 in 2007.

Luzerne County had an estimated 2.6% foreclosure rate (between January 2007 and June 2008), compared to a foreclosure rate of 3.9% in Pennsylvania

In 2007, there were 147,798 total housing units in Luzerne County, with 87% occupied & 13% vacant.

In 2007, Luzerne County reported 17,485 elders living alone.

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Better Paying Jobs Lack of Job Skills

From 2005-2007, the average annual wage in Luzerne County was \$52,465.

In 2007, there were 124,185 employees in Luzerne County. (Rural PA)

In 2006, Luzerne County reported average per capita income of \$31,845.

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Employment

In 2007, Luzerne County saw an unemployment rate of 5.0. This number increased by 1.3 in 2008 to 6.3. In January 2009, the County's unemployment rate was 8.3, which is an increase of 3.3 since 2007.

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Homelessness

4,701 clients were receiving homelessness assistance in Luzerne County in 2007. (Rural PA)

It is estimated that 1,075 homeless people are sheltered in some form through the emergency shelter or transitional housing network in Luzerne County. 55.7% of homeless are individual cases and 44.3% include homeless people in families with children. Children account for 35.5% of the homeless.

The Luzerne County homeless identified during the 2008 One Nigh Count include people who are:

- Experiencing domestic violence (21%)
- Having issues with chronic substance abuse (15.7%)
- Identifying severe mental illness (15.2%)
- Chronically Homeless (8.1%)
- Veterans (8.1%)

(Luzerne County Continuum of Care)

Money Management

As of 2004, the number one cause of divorce is financial stress.

Seven out of 10 low-and middle-income households reported using their credit cards as a financial safety net to pay for car repairs, rent or housing repairs, and medical expenses, rather than relying on savings.

The average interest rate paid on credit cards was approximately 14.54% in 2005. (Creditcards.com)

Poverty

In 2007, 11.5% of Luzerne County residents fell below the federal poverty level.
(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

In 2007, there were 11,169 children living below the poverty level in Luzerne County (or 18% of 62,095).

9.6% of families are living below poverty level in Luzerne County, with 16.4% of those families including children under age of 18 and 19.9% include children under age 5 only.

29.2 % of families living in poverty report having female heads of household (no husband present) in Luzerne County.

- 44.7% of female headed families have children under age 18
- 54.0% had children under age 5 only

Unrelated individuals 15 years and over represent the largest population living in poverty at 24.2% in Luzerne County.
(American Community Study, 2006-2008)

Out of 128,548 households, 12,630 or 9.8% were receiving Food Stamps in 2007 in Luzerne County.
(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

The Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) provides supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant women and mothers, as well as infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk. (U.S. Department of Agriculture)

- In 2007, Luzerne County reported having 1,999 participants between the ages of 15 and 60 in WIC. Of the 1,999, 199 or 9.95% were considered 100% below the poverty level.
(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Utility Assistance

In 2007, the Pennsylvania Utility Commission handled approximately 50,465 requests for payment arrangements from both residential and commercial customers. (PA Utility Commission)

Child Care

Approximately 61% of households in Pennsylvania with young children, all parents work.

More than 350,000 children in Pennsylvania receive child care from certified or registered child care programs at some point in their lives. (Office of Child Development and Early Learning)

Every \$1 spent on high quality early education saves \$7 in reduced future expenditures for special education, delinquency, crime control, welfare, and lost taxes.
(Office of Child Development and Early Learning)

See attached document for Luzerne County Early Childhood Education Profile 2008-2009.

Luzerne County Early Childhood Education Profile 2008-2009

Quality early learning and child development play a major role in a child's future success in school and in life. Pennsylvania's early childhood initiatives provide families with access to reliable, quality early learning opportunities.

The **benefits of early education** extend throughout communities in better school performance and lower special education and remediation costs. As these children become adults, communities benefit from a:

- higher skilled workforce
- lower public costs for public assistance
- crime control
- and lost taxes

Children in Luzerne County are at moderate-high risk of school failure.¹

Research has shown that children affected by risk factors, such as poverty, family status, or poor school system, are at higher risk of entering school behind their peers, struggle in school, or drop out altogether. When at-risk children have access to quality early education before age five, these children can often make up for setbacks in their development, enabling them to enter kindergarten on par with their peers.

There are 15,987 children under age five living in Luzerne County. Of those:

- 43.9% live in low-income households. (2000 US Census defines "low income" as below 200% of federal poverty level, which was equivalent to \$34,058 for a family of four in 2000)
- 16.4% live in families whose mother has less than a high school degree.

20.5% of 3rd graders in local school districts scored below proficient on PSSA in Reading in 2009.

Every child benefits from a quality early education. Approximately 42.2% of children under age five in Luzerne County have access to publicly funded quality early childhood programs.

Quality early education can bridge the achievement gap before it begins.

Research has also shown that at-risk children who receive quality early education can catch up to their peers in cognitive and social emotional development before they reach kindergarten.

Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts provides high quality pre-kindergarten education for 3 and 4 year olds in Pennsylvania which is free to families, with a focus on children at risk of academic failure.

- 370 3 & 4 year olds are being served by agencies and their partners in Luzerne County
 - 5.83 % of Luzerne County's 3 & 4 year olds participate in PA Pre-K Counts.
-

Keystone STARS is proven to improve the quality of child care based on an independent study and offers parents a tool to gauge the quality of the programs they choose. Child care and Head Start programs earn a STAR 1 to STAR 4 level based on quality standards for teacher qualifications, learning environment and program management. The higher the STAR level, the higher the quality.

- 74.8% of Luzerne County's regulated child care centers participate in Keystone STARS.
 - 72.2% of Luzerne County's children under age five are enrolled in Keystone STARS child care programs with 3.3% enrolled in STAR 3 and STAR 4 programs.
-

Child Care Works provides low-income working families with reliable access to child care, making them more likely to retain employment and be more productive at work.

- Approximately 1,093 children under age five in Luzerne County receive Child Care Works subsidy on a monthly average.
 - Approximately 379 children under age five were on waiting lists for Child Care Works in Luzerne County in May 2009.
-

¹ You can find out more about how each county's risk level is determined in the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Reach and Risk Report at www.pde.state.pa.us.

**Advancing Personal Wellness
Statistical Data 2009**

Communicable Health Conditions

Communicable diseases are diseases that may be transmitted directly or indirectly from one individual to another. A person can get a communicable disease through blood, body fluid, body secretions, non-intact skin and mucus membranes, an airborne infection or droplets.

(Kozier and Erb's Fundamentals of Nursing, 2008)

The Pennsylvania Department of Health's Bureau of Communicable Diseases is comprised of three divisions – **HIV/AIDS, Immunizations, and Tuberculosis/Sexually Transmitted Diseases**. The mission of the Bureau is to prevent, monitor, and control communicable diseases.

Immunizations/Vaccinations are available for the following Communicable Diseases:

- measles,
- diphtheria,
- tetanus,
- pertussis (whooping cough),
- polio,
- mumps,
- rubella (German measles),
- hepatitis A,
- hepatitis B,
- influenza,
- Haemophilus influenzae type b,
- pneumonia,
- varicella (chickenpox),
- meningococcal,
- human papilloma virus
- and rotavirus.

The incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases remains low in Pennsylvania, though data from 2002 to 2006 shows fluctuating pertussis (whooping cough) cases and an increase in mumps.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), including Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, Herpes, Hepatitis B, Human Papilloma Virus, and others are spread from person to person through sexual contact.

- Half of all STDs occur in teenagers or young adults (15 to 24 years of age)
- Complications from untreated STDs are more common and severe in females. They include infertility, cervical cancer, tubal pregnancy, spontaneous abortion, and serious complications in newborns.
- Having an STD increases the risk of transmitting HIV or acquiring HIV from an infected partner through unprotected sex.

(Pennsylvania Department of Health)

The **Tuberculosis** infection rate in Luzerne County was 1.0 in 2006, which is an increase from 0.6 in 2005. Luzerne County rates low compared to Lackawanna County (at 2.4) and Lehigh County (at 3.9).

(The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development, 2006)

The **AIDS** average annual rate (per 100,000) between 2005 and 2007 in Luzerne County is 5.3 (with a reported incidence of 50 individuals (well below the rate in PA of 10.9). Pennsylvania ranked seventh in the nation in the number of AIDS cases in 2005, with a cumulative number of AIDS cases (from 1980 to 2005) equalling 31,977.

(Pennsylvania Department of Health)

Gambling

Current estimates suggest that 3% percent of the adult population in Pennsylvania will experience a serious problem with gambling that will result in significant debt, family disruption, job losses, criminal activity or suicide. (PA Department of Health)

In 2007, there were 467 casinos across the United States and they generated \$34 billion in gross gaming revenues. (American Gaming Association 2008 Survey)

Older adults are considered at increased risk of gambling addiction due to factors unique to that population, such as loneliness, isolation, physical or mental illness; additionally in one study of older adults, the most likely reported motivations to gamble were relaxation, boredom, passing time and getting away for the day. (McNeilly & Burke, 2000)

Obesity **Good Nutrition and Exercise** **Youth Recreation Services**

In Luzerne, Lackawanna, and Wyoming Counties, approximately 26% of adults are obese and 63% are overweight (includes obese). (PA Department of Health)

Luzerne County reported 18 schools registered in Keystone Healthy Zone Schools Campaign (an initiative that promotes improvement in nutrition and physical activity) in 2008. This is an increase of 5 schools from 2007. However, Luzerne County's involvement has declined by about 50% since 2006. (Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

In 2007, 30% of children (10-17) were overweight or obese in Pennsylvania, as compared to 32% in the U.S. (State Health Facts)

Problems with Alcohol **Problems with Illegal Drugs**

In Luzerne County last year, 1,200 men, women and children were abused as a result of drug and alcohol use in their families. And 240 families in were separated due to drug/alcohol abuse by one or both parents.

Automobile accidents, homicides and suicides are the top three killers of young people between the ages of 16-25. (75% of these deaths are rooted in drug/alcohol use.)

Drug and alcohol issues cost the taxpayers of Luzerne County \$45 million annually

85% of all crime is drug related (Luzerne County Drug and Alcohol Study Commission)

In 2007, Luzerne County reported 25 alcohol-related crash deaths. In the state, Luzerne County trailed only Philadelphia County, which reported 40 alcohol-related deaths in 2007.

In Luzerne County, there were 1,363 DUI offenses in 2008.

Drug Possession Offenses increased from 302 in 2000 to 851 in 2007 in Luzerne County.
Drug Sale/Manufacturing Offenses increased from 183 in 2000 to 564 in 2007 in Luzerne County.

In 2007, the number of Drug Possession Offenses decreased from 2006, but the number of Drug Sale/Manufacturing Offenses increased.

(Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Services for Seniors

18.2% of population are people 65 years or older (as of 2008) compared to 15.3% in Pennsylvania
(U.S. Census Bureau: State & County QuickFacts 2009)

In Luzerne County, there were 19,051 elderly individuals living alone in 2007. This is steady decrease
from 2000 (20,846 individuals) and 2006 (19,312 individuals).
(Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development)

Tobacco Use

From 2005-2007, it was reported that 29% of adults in Luzerne, Lackawanna and Wyoming Counties are
current smokers, compared to 22% of adults in the state of Pennsylvania. (PA Department of Health)

Pre-natal Care **Unplanned Pregnancy**

The goal of prenatal care is to monitor the progress of a pregnancy and to identify potential problems
before they become serious for either mom or baby. (March of Dimes)

17.9% of all pregnancies in Luzerne County received no prenatal care in the first trimester in 2007.

7.9% of all births in Luzerne County were low birth rate in 2007

In Luzerne County, there were 3,306 live births, 25 fetal deaths and 554 induced abortions in 2007.
(PA Department of Health)