

**2009 LOW-INCOME
COMMUNITY NEEDS
ASSESSMENT**

Prepared for:

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.

Prepared by:

KS&R, Inc.
120 Madison Street, 15th Floor
Syracuse, New York 13202

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Section 1

INTRODUCTION

This community needs assessment report has been prepared by KS&R, Inc. for the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc. It presents findings from an assessment of community needs in Cayuga and Seneca counties with a focus on the needs of the low-income population segments traditionally served by community action agencies such as the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency. This report serves as an update to a similar community needs assessment that was conducted in 2006. The purpose of this report is to provide updated information which the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency can use in planning program areas and soliciting funds for its continuing work in assisting low-income individuals and families in Cayuga and Seneca counties.

BACKGROUND

The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc. was incorporated in 1965 and has a long history and excellent reputation for meeting the needs of individual persons and families affected by the problems of poverty. The mission of the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency is to assist people to achieve and sustain self-sufficiency and self-dignity.

In pursuit of its mission, the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency provides services through a wide variety of programs, as described below:

- **Attire for Hire (Cayuga):** provides individuals access to appropriate clothing and accessories for employment interviews or for starting a new employment opportunity. *Three people received this service in 2008-09.*
- **“Baby Think it Over” Lending Library (Seneca):** This program provides teens with a realistic parenting experience through the use of life-like simulators that require around-the-clock care. *In 2008-09, six at-risk teens were given the “Baby Think it Over” dolls in Seneca County and all six remained pregnancy-free.*
- **Car Seat Distribution (Seneca and Cayuga):** This program provides children’s

car seats, free of charge, to eligible families. The program also has a certified technician on staff to educate families on proper use and installation of child safety seats. *In 2008-09 in Cayuga County, 99 families were provided with a total of 134 safe, properly installed car seats. In Seneca County, 47 children received new, safe car seats.*

- Domestic Violence Intervention Program (Cayuga):** This program assists victims of domestic violence and their children to attain a life free of violence. Services include a 24-hour hotline (1-800-253-3358), safe, temporary shelter, advocacy, safety planning assistance, supportive counseling, survivors support group, children’s group, and educational presentations. *In 2008-09, the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) responded to 224 hotline calls, provided shelter to 77 women and children for 1,016 bed-nights, and served another 120 adult victims of domestic violence through our long-term, non-residential programming, and 270 with short-term assistance. The Domestic Violence Intervention Program also helped to pay for attorneys for 14 victims seeking child support and legal remedies of protection for themselves and their children. As part of ongoing safety planning, 56 women were given locksets, security lighting, and other protective devices. In addition, Agency staff provided presentations to 18 agencies, raising awareness about domestic violence and increasing the community’s understanding of what services are available to assist survivors.*
- Emergency Services (Seneca and Cayuga):** Emergency Services works with families and individuals through crisis situations. Emergency Services provides food, advocacy, clothing, shelter, prescription assistance, and emergency transportation assistance, and responds to a wide array of crisis situations. Funding for Emergency Services is provided from a wide variety of sources, including the NYS Community Services Block Grant, Federal Emergency Management Funds, the US Department of Agriculture, the NYS Department of State, and area food drives. *In the past year in Seneca County, 1,400 families utilized the Agency’s Emergency Services.* Services provided and numbers served are shown below:

	Unduplicated Families Served
Food Pantry	831
Referrals to Other Programs	530
FEMA/United Way Support for Rent, Security Deposits, and Utilities	28/26
Salvation Army Vouchers for Prescriptions, Food, Clothing, Personal Care Items, and Emergency Shelter	90

In Cayuga County, advocates and case managers have assisted over 1,300 families, all with unique needs and strengths. Below is a chart describing the variety and quantity of services provided to customers through Cayuga County Emergency Services during the last year:

	Unduplicated Families Served	Number of Services Provided
Food Baskets	938	3,009
Transportation Assistance	54	84
Prescription Assistance	44	86
Utility Assistance	155	369
Housing Assistance	362	1,013

* As of August 30, 2009

- Employment Transportation Case Management (Seneca):** Funded through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) of 2009, this new program combines short-term transportation support with ongoing case management to help customers overcome barriers to seeking and maintaining employment. Transportation services are offered to help customers attend interviews, get their children to and from child care, and support customers as they maintain their jobs and work toward obtaining personal transportation.
- EmPower NY (Cayuga):** EmPower New York (EmPower NY) is an energy efficiency program for tenants and homeowners administered by the New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA). The goal of this program is to help low-income households reduce energy use and costs using cost-effective Electric Reduction measures such as lighting and refrigerator replacements. Cost-effective Home Performance strategies such as insulation and air sealing are implemented in situations where major electric reduction strategies are not an option. Health and safety measures are also addressed as appropriate. On-site energy education provides households with further strategies for managing their energy costs, and energy education workshops are available in locations across the state. *In 2008-09, 180 households were served through this program.*
- Essentials for Employment (Cayuga):** This program incorporates hands-on computer training and Internet literacy with career development to assist customers in obtaining employment with a livable wage and benefits. The program incorporates one-on-one case management for customers to provide them with education and assistance with basic business etiquette, resume writing, and interviewing skills. *In 2008-09, 44 people were able to successfully complete the program and increase their employability skills.*
- Family Support Network (Cayuga):** This program provides advocacy, information, referrals, and resources for families who have an incarcerated loved one.
- Green Jobs Training (Cayuga):** Funded through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) of 2009, this new program serves youth and adults

(ages 16 and older) who are in need of basic academic and employment skills, and who are interested in pursuing training in the emerging “green jobs” industry. The program uses classroom and on-site learning experiences and includes components related to employability skills (often called “soft” skills), foundational and applicable reading and math skills, computer skills training, and hands-on construction and rehabilitation training focused on green building/energy conservation techniques.

- **Head Start (Cayuga):** Head Start is a comprehensive child development program for income eligible children ages 3-5 and their families. The program provides health, nutrition, education, disability, and family services at no charge. Licensed Head Start sites are located in Auburn, Southern Cayuga, and Moravia. A new center will be opening in Cato in 2010. Funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, *Head Start served 275 children and their families in Cayuga County in 2008-09.* The program provides the following services:
 - *Education:* Every child participates in a variety of learning experiences to foster cognitive, social, and emotional growth. The Agency administers both a center base and a combination option at three sites in Cayuga County (Cato, a fourth site, will be added in 2010).
 - *Health/Nutrition Services:* Children enrolled receive physical and dental exams. The Head Start program collaborates with the NY Miles of Smiles to provide an on-site dental clinic. All children enrolled receive nutritious meals in accordance with USDA Guidelines and nutrition education as part of the daily classroom activities.
 - *Mental/Health Disability Services:* Children who are professionally diagnosed with a disability receive services, including speech therapy. Children and families are referred to counseling services and receive speech enhancement services. To ensure easy access to services, we have developed a partnership with Cayuga Counseling Services to offer on-site mental health services to Head Start children and their families.
 - *Universal Pre-K Collaborations in Auburn, Moravia, Port Byron, Southern Cayuga, and Jordan Elbridge school districts provide for Head Start/UPK collaborative classrooms.*
- **Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca (Seneca and Cayuga):** Funded by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, this free and voluntary program is designed to provide support and information to new and expectant parents. It is comprised of several components including the most up-to-date information on child health and development, parent-child interaction, and supporting and achieving self-sufficiency. *Since the inception of Healthy Families*

Cayuga/Seneca in September of 2007, the program has served over 115 families, with 50 families currently enrolled.

- **Home Energy Assistance Program Cooling Initiative (Cayuga):** The New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides funds to the network of Weatherization providers to install air conditioners to those individuals with medical conditions that leave them vulnerable to health problems during extremely hot weather. *Fifteen Energy Star-rated air conditioning units were provided to residents of Cayuga County in 2008-09.*
- **Homeless Intervention and Case Management (Cayuga):** This program provides assistance to homeless individuals and families. An Agency advocate works with other agencies to provide necessary services such as financial assistance, emergency, and temporary housing. As a key component of our homeless intervention and prevention programs, case management offers families and individuals one-on-one support as they identify and overcome barriers to obtaining and maintaining stable housing. *In 2008-09, 34 households received homeless case management services and 34 households were placed in permanent housing.*
- **Supervised Visitation/Safe Exchange (Cayuga):** This program serves victims of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, and child abuse who are ordered by the Court to co-parent with their former partner. *Supervised Visitation* occurs when the Court orders the non-custodial parent to have visitation that is supervised by a third party. This program provides a secure, safe place for the non-custodial parent to visit his/her child/children without concern of having contact with the other parent. Program staff provide supervision for the visit. *Safe Exchange* is available for custodial parents who have to abide by a visitation order that may jeopardize their safety because of prior acts of domestic violence on the part of the other parent. When the court orders a monitored exchange, a safe, monitored, precisely-timed place to drop off and pick up their children is provided. *The Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange program provided 613 one-on-one supervised visits and 168 monitored exchanges in the 2008-09 program year.*
- **TASA (Take A Step Ahead) (Cayuga and Seneca):** TASA is a NYS Department of Health and Human Services Program authorized by the Teenage Services Act and coordinated locally by the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services and by the Seneca County Department of Human Services. TASA provides comprehensive case management to promote family stability, improve self-esteem, and encourage self-sufficiency to pregnant, parenting, and at-risk teens ages 10-21. TASA also coordinates a Teen Group and a Teen Parent Support Group. TASA goals include the following:
 - Promote a reduction in public assistance dependence
 - Increase the level of education for participants

- Develop/expand support networks for teen parents and their children
- Reduce the number of primary and secondary pregnancies for teens
- Increase the effective participant utilization of the health care system

In 2008-09 in Cayuga County, 109 youth received TASA services. In Seneca County, 47 teens were enrolled in the program.

- **Transitional Housing (Cayuga):** This program provides temporary housing, intensive case management, budgeting assistance, employment assistance, and crisis intervention to families. *In 2008-09, 26 families participated in our Transitional Housing services.*
- **Weatherization Assistance Program (Cayuga):** Funded by the US Department of Energy and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, this program provides direct services for the purpose of reducing the energy burden for both low-income, single-family homes and multi-family housing units by making their homes more energy efficient. The Division of Housing and Community Renewal administers the Weatherization Assistance Program in New York State and Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency is the Weatherization Sub-Grantee in Cayuga County. Rental units and owner-occupied dwellings are eligible for the program. Services include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Insulation
 - Caulking and weather-stripping
 - Reducing air filtration
 - Furnace testing, repair, and replacement
 - Baseload measures

Sixty-eight homes were weatherized in 2008-09 (61 owner occupied and seven rental properties).

- **Weatherization Referral and Packaging (Cayuga):** Funded by the New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and administered by the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services, the Weatherization Referral And Packaging (WRAP) program targets HEAP-eligible customers with high household energy burdens and a repeated need for assistance with their utility bills. WRAP customers are carefully screened for immediate and long-term needs. Customers enrolled in the program receive assistance navigating a myriad of community resources and, with the assistance of a Family Development Case Manager, work to identify strengths and support systems they can draw on as they work toward achieving their goals. *Twenty-seven customers were served and have received weatherization of their homes as well as referral to other useful programs and services and practical information regarding their current energy usage patterns and conservation goals. In addition, three new water heaters were installed and a furnace cleaned and tuned.*

- **Wheels to Work (Cayuga):** This program provides grants and loans for vehicle purchase, repairs, and/or insurance costs for customers who are TANF eligible, employed at least 20 hours per week, and have a clean and valid NYS Driver's License. The Wheels to Work program encompasses a variety of different approaches that will allow for comprehensive job skills training and empowerment of low-income families in Cayuga County. These services include computer and job skills training, financial budgeting education, defensive driving education, establishment of a savings account, grants with matched loans for vehicle purchases, insurance, registration, transportation assistance prior to car purchase, when necessary, and referral to a car seat program. *In 2008-09, the Wheels to Work program assisted fifteen households in the purchase of vehicles to assist them in keeping their current employment as well as expand their employment opportunities.*
- **Youth Achieving at Work (Cayuga):** Provided in partnership with Cayuga County Employment and Training Department and Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES Center for Learning, Youth Achieving at Work is a program geared towards in-school and out-of-school young people, ages 14-21, who are looking to gain employment and quality work experience. The program provides assistance with individualized goals, which are determined by the youth. It provides many opportunities for young people to test different career paths and see which ones suit them the best. Included in this program can be occupational skills training, tutoring/study skills, summer employment, job shadowing, paid work experience, as well as on the job training, supportive services, leadership development and personalized mentoring. Services provided are determined by the individual's goals. *Twenty-eight youth received services in 2008-09.*

OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This community needs assessment was undertaken in order to update the findings of the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency's 2006 community needs assessment and focuses on needs of the low-income population in Cayuga and Seneca counties. Key study objectives include the following:

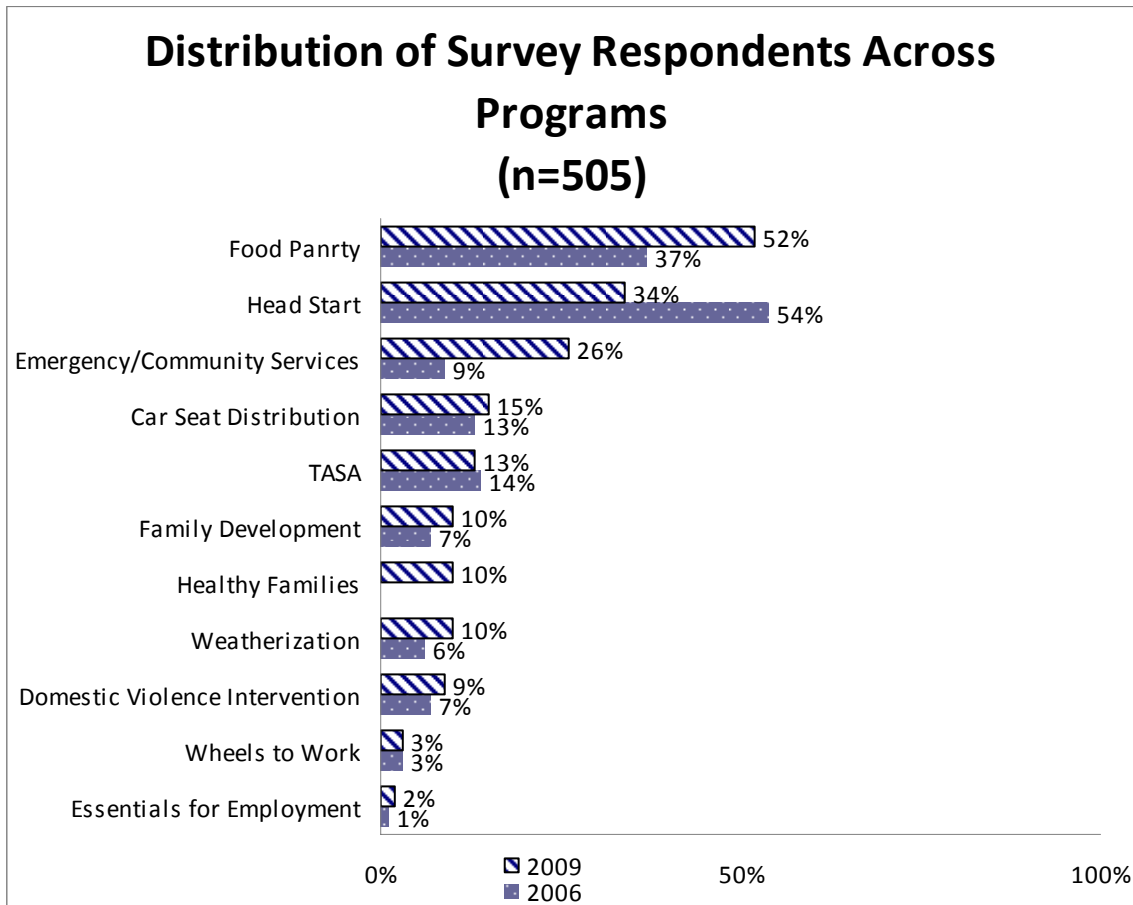
- To conduct a comprehensive community needs assessment which considers the current met and unmet needs of the low-income population in Cayuga and Seneca counties.
- To develop a flexible document which can be used as a planning tool as well as in support of future funding applications to meet current needs.

APPROACH

This assessment includes a review of both primary and secondary data that shed light on the needs of the low-income population in Cayuga and Seneca counties. Secondary data were obtained from readily available sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau and various state and local government sources. It was used to review general population, housing, employment, and poverty trends in Cayuga and Seneca counties.

With regard to primary data collection, three self-administered surveys were conducted during June 2009.

- A survey of **Human Service Providers** in Cayuga and Seneca counties was conducted during June 2009. A total of 85 agency surveys were mailed to human services providers within the two counties. A total of 24 agency surveys were returned, representing an agency response rate of 28 percent. Of the completed returns for the agency survey, 5 were from Seneca County and 22 were from Cayuga County. In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with six agency key informants in Cayuga and Seneca counties.
- A survey of **Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency Staff** was also conducted in June 2009. A total 115 surveys were distributed, of which 93 staff surveys were completed and returned, comprising an 81 percent response rate from staff.
- A survey was also conducted with **Program Participants** and was distributed to current and recent participants of the various programs operated by the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency. In all, 505 surveys were returned. Over one-half of survey respondents participate in the Food Pantry and over one-third in the Head Start Program. The following graph illustrates how respondents are distributed among various programs and compares this distribution to the distribution of respondents in the last Needs Assessment report issued in 2006 which had a total of 332 respondents.



*Program participation in the above table is based on self-report by respondents when given a list of CSCAA programs that included those listed above.

REPORT CONTENTS

This report presents the findings of the community needs assessment activities conducted. In Section 2, secondary data analysis findings are presented. Section 3 presents findings of the participant survey. Findings of the Human Services Provider and Staff surveys are found in Section 4. Summary and Conclusions are presented in Section 5.

Section 2

SECONDARY ANALYSIS FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

Cayuga and Seneca counties represent two of the less populous and more rural counties in New York State. Both counties have population density well under the 2000 New York State estimated average of 402 persons per square mile.

- Covering 693 square miles and with a 2008 estimated population of 79,823, Cayuga County has a population density of roughly 115 persons per square mile.
- Seneca County, with 325 square miles and a 2008 estimated population of 34,086 has a comparable population density of 105 persons per square mile.

Both counties are part of New York's Finger Lakes Region. Cayuga Lake serves as a common border for the two counties, extending about 60 miles north and south. Seneca Lake borders Seneca County on the west and Skaneateles Lake comprises a portion of the eastern border of Cayuga County.

The major highways crossing both counties are Route 20 and the New York State Thruway, both running east-west. Commercial and industrial development has occurred near these east-west arteries.

The city of Auburn is the urban center of Cayuga County and is centrally located in the county. With a 2008 estimated population of 27,138, it accounts for 34 percent of Cayuga County's entire population.

In Seneca County, the towns of Seneca Falls and Waterloo represent the population centers. Seneca Falls had a population of approximately 9,071 in 2008 and is located in the northeastern part of the county. Waterloo, with a population of approximately 7,632

in 2008, is located three miles west of Seneca Falls. Combined, these two towns account for approximately 49 percent of the population of Seneca County.

POPULATION

Population Size

The 2008 update of the U.S. Census estimates that Cayuga County's population decreased slightly, by 2.6 percent between 2000 and 2008, a net loss of 2,138 people. Contrary to Cayuga County's decrease, Seneca County's population increased by 2.2 percent between 2000 and 2008, a net gain of 744 people.

Age Distribution

Population age distribution in Cayuga and Seneca counties closely parallels that of the New York State population. Compared to New York State in 2008:

- Both counties have a slightly higher percentage of 65+ years or older population (14.6 percent in Seneca County and 14.8 percent in Cayuga County compared to 13.4 percent in New York State on the whole).
- Cayuga and Seneca counties have *slightly lower percentages of children*, with 20.8 percent of the population under 18 years of age in Cayuga County and 20.1 percent in Seneca County, compared to 22.6 percent in New York State on the whole.

Since the elderly are likely to be in need of services, this age distribution suggests somewhat higher needs than comparably sized counties with a younger age distribution.

Racial/Ethnic Distribution

The overwhelming majority of Cayuga and Seneca counties' population is white. The racial/ethnic distribution of the population was reported in the 2008 Census estimate to be as follows:

Racial/Ethnic Distribution

	Cayuga County	Seneca County
White	93.7%	92.2%
Black	4.2%	5.3%
Asian	0.5%	1.0%
Indian	0.4%	0.3%
Other	1.2%	1.1%
Hispanic	2.3%	3.0%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Since 2000, there have been changes in the racial distribution in Seneca County. The county has seen an increase in the percent of non-white population, particularly within the African American population in Seneca County, up from 2.2% in 2000.

The minority population in Cayuga County is concentrated in the city of Auburn and the town of Moravia, with 80 percent of the county's minority population located in one of these two jurisdictions. (Town-level data is available from the 2000 Census.) *In the town of Moravia, 27.7 percent of the population in 2000 was reported to be minority (1,122 residents). In the city of Auburn, 11.4 percent of the population in 2000 was reported to be minority (3,267 residents). Undercounting is a particular concern when reporting on the size of the minority population, particularly with the Hispanic population.*

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

In 2000, there were 30,558 households in Cayuga County and 12,630 in Seneca County. The average number of persons per household was 2.53 for Cayuga County, down from 2.86 in 1990. Seneca County averaged 2.51 persons per household, down from 2.64 in 1990. Other findings on household composition are:

- Sixty-eight percent of households in Cayuga County were family households in 2000. Of these, 76 percent are husband and wife families, 16 percent have female householders and the remaining eight percent have male householders. *Twenty-six percent of households in Cayuga County are headed by someone who is at least 65 years of age.*

- Sixty-eight percent of households in Seneca County were family households in 2000; 78 percent are husband and wife families, 15 percent have female householders and seven percent have male householders. *Twenty-five percent of households in Seneca County are headed by someone who is at least 65 years of age.*

INCOME LEVELS

The 2007 median household income in Cayuga County was \$45,105, compared to \$53,448 in New York State. Jurisdictions in the county with the lowest median household income in 1999 are the village of Cato (\$29,375), the city of Auburn (\$30,281), the village of Moravia (\$33,864), and the town of Mentz (\$34,398). Median household income was slightly lower in Seneca County, at \$43,440 in 2007. Jurisdictions in Seneca County with the lowest median household income in 1999 are the village of Lodi (\$30,625), the village of Waterloo (\$32,460), and the town of Ovid (\$32,833).

In 2007, 12.7 percent of Cayuga County's population was below the poverty level. The largest concentration of these individuals was in the city of Auburn, followed by the town of Brutus and the town of Sterling. In Seneca County, 12.1% of the population was below the poverty level. The largest concentrations of these individuals were in the towns of Seneca Falls and Waterloo. *These percentages are well above the average for counties outside of New York City, where the average poverty rate was 10.3 percent in 2007.* Minorities are much more likely to reside in households with incomes below the poverty level; in 2000, 43 percent of minorities in the city of Auburn and 39 percent of minorities in the town of Seneca Falls resided in households with incomes below the poverty level.

Another available indicator of poverty is the number of persons eligible for medical assistance through New York State. *In 2008, 12,091 Cayuga County residents (15 percent) were eligible for Medicaid and 4,283 Seneca County residents (13 percent) were Medicaid eligible.*

Statistics from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance also provide insight into the level of needs in these counties. In July 2009, Cayuga and Seneca County service statistics include the following:

	<u>Cayuga</u>	<u>Seneca</u>
Temporary Assistance (Cases)	489	153
Temporary Assistance (Recipients)	959	263
Food Stamps (Households)	4,018	1,296
Food Stamps (Persons)	8,514	2,501
SSI Recipients	1,862	696
HEAP Authorized Benefits (Cases)	8,793	2,932

Based on these figures, nearly 11 percent of the population of Cayuga County and 7 percent of the population of Seneca County are receiving Food Stamp assistance. Additionally, about 29 percent of Cayuga County households and 23 percent of Seneca County households are authorized for HEAP benefits.

HOUSING

In 2007, there were 35,904 total housing units in Cayuga County and 14,823 in Seneca County, both slightly up from 2000. The following table presents information available from the Census on this housing stock.

Housing Stock

	Cayuga County	Seneca County
Total Housing Units (2007)	35,904	14,823
Median Year Built (2000)	1949	1953
Occupied Housing Units (2000)	30,558	12,630
% Owner Occupied	72%	74%
Median Housing Value	\$75,300	\$72,400
Vacancy Rate	2.0%	2.3%
% Renter Occupied	28%	26%
Median Monthly Rate	\$392	\$416
Vacancy Rate	10.2%	11.4%
# Lacking Complete Plumbing	131	53

Both counties have a high percentage of owner-occupied housing. Housing values and rents are well below the state average. Cayuga County’s housing stock is somewhat older than Seneca County’s, which is close to the state average.

A 2006 Housing market study of Auburn provided additional housing information. The median sales price of single family homes within Cayuga County is \$86,000, up from \$76,500 in 2003, and \$103,203 for Auburn specifically (with an average home age of 82 years) compared to \$98,050 for Central New York.

A task force was formed to identify the need for homeless shelters – a census identified 46 homeless, 29 adults, three children and four families. Cayuga County now has a homeless shelter with 19 beds available each night.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Looking at averages for 2008 reported by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Cayuga County had a civilian labor force of 41,686 and Seneca County’s was 17,189. During 2008, Cayuga County’s average unemployment rate was 5.7 percent and Seneca County’s was 5.6 percent, both somewhat over the state average of 5.4 percent. Twelve-month comparisons and 2009 unemployment peaks are in the following chart.

	Unemployment Rates (Not Seasonally Adjusted)		
	October 2008	2009 Peak (February)	October 2009
Cayuga	5.0%	9.0%	7.4%
Seneca	5.6%	9.8%	7.9%

According to the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, almost 1,000 jobs were lost in Cayuga County between March of 2008 and March of 2009 (938 jobs lost/3.6% of March 2008 total). According to the same source, Seneca County lost 227 jobs (2.1%) during that 12-month period. Private industry jobs were hit harder than government jobs. The following chart provides a summary of those losses.

	Change in Government Jobs		Change in Private Jobs	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Cayuga	-35	-0.5%	-903	-4.6%
Seneca	+13	+0.3%	-238	-3.1%

Some companies that have closed or downsized recently include the following:

- NYS Department of Corrections
- Bombardier
- Honeywell
- TRW
- AT&T
- New Process Gear
- Welch Allyn
- Nucor
- Goldberg's Furniture
- P&C
- Steve and Barry
- Kay B Toys
- Circuit City
- Variety of construction companies and restaurants

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

A 2003 survey of Emergency Food Programs by Hunger Action Network of New York State indicates that hunger continues to be a major problem in New York State and in Central New York. The survey found a large increase in the demand for emergency food, as well as a reduction in emergency food resources. Findings include:

- Statewide, a 10% increase in the number of meals served by soup kitchens between 2002 and 2003, and even higher in Central New York (19% increase).
- Over ½ of programs experienced an increase in the number of seniors and children being served statewide, with similar findings in Central New York (nearly ½ saw increases in seniors and 70% saw increases in children).
- Statewide and in Central New York, about ⅓ experienced an increase in the number of employed people being served.
- Nearly ½ of programs statewide and in Central New York reported that their total food and money resources decreased in the last year.

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency's Family Development program maintains detailed service records. These records indicate that in Cayuga County in the past year, not only have more households come to the Agency for assistance, but more households have come more often. This indicates an ongoing food crisis for many of our customers.

- From FY 2007-08 to FY 2008-09, the Agency's Family Development program saw a 54% increase in the number of food baskets provided.
- In FY 2007-08, 931 unduplicated households were served food. In the most recent year, that increased by 2.25% to 952 households.

Additionally, the Nutrition Consortium of New York State reports 40% - 50% unmet need in Cayuga and Seneca counties, based on food stamp participation rates for 2003.

While hunger continues to be an issue in Cayuga County, the 2005-2010 Community Health Assessment reported that some of the most serious health risks for Cayuga County children include: obesity, poor nutrition, lack of exercise and diabetes, with emerging issues including high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

- In a 2004 survey, school nurses identified overweight/obesity, poor nutrition, lack of exercise and diabetes as some of the most serious child health care issues.
- In the same survey, school nurses also reported that 25 percent of their time is spent addressing problems with poor dental health in children.
- Providers reported seeing more type 2 diabetes in children.
- Lower income individuals who frequently eat processed foods appear to be adding to the obesity and diabetes cases.

Because of their long shelf life, affordability, and easy portability, the majority of food donated to/purchased for local food pantries is processed food. In the past, this was not considered a significant problem because people used pantry food to supplement their regular food budgets on an infrequent basis (most customers used the pantries one time per month or less). Concerns about how the quantity and quality of processed foods are affecting customers are being raised by emergency food providers, as the frequency with which customers visit pantries is increasing rapidly.

Free Lunch Programs

According to the New York State Education Department's School Report Cards (2007-08), 2,452 students in Cayuga County were eligible for free school lunches in 2007-08, representing 23 percent of enrollees. Auburn, Moravia, Southern Cayuga and Port Byron show the highest percentages. The following table presents the School Report Card Summary.

Cayuga County

<u>School District</u>	<u>Total Enrolled</u>	<u>Eligible for Free Lunch</u>	<u>% Free Lunch</u>
Auburn	4,488	1,280	29%
Moravia	1,042	275	26%
Southern Cayuga	843	189	22%
Port Byron	1,076	226	21%
Cato-Meridian	1,101	209	19%
Union Springs	991	170	17%
Weedsport	<u>939</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>11%</u>
Total	10,480	2,452	23%

Seneca County has an even higher percentage of students eligible for free lunch (25 percent), led by Southern Seneca Central School District and Waterloo.

Seneca County

<u>School District</u>	<u>Total Enrolled</u>	<u>Eligible for Free Lunch</u>	<u>% Free Lunch</u>
Southern Seneca	837	249	30%
Waterloo	1,950	553	28%
Romulus	511	132	26%
Seneca Falls	<u>1,379</u>	<u>222</u>	<u>16%</u>
Total	4,677	1,156	25%

Infant Mortality, Low Birth Weights and Teen Pregnancy

The New York State Healthy Families program provides statistics on births by locality, focusing on infant mortality and other issues that affect infant health. The tables below provide information for Cayuga and Seneca counties, ranked by priority for Healthy Family service provision.

Cayuga County Births 2003-2005									
	Births 2003-05	Rank Average	% LBW (<2500)	% Out of Wedlock	% Medicaid / Self Pay	% Late/ No PreNatal Care	Infant Mortality	Teen Births	Teen Pregnancies
Port Byron	145	8.1	11	53	50	4	21	25.5	34.6
Genoa	37	8.0	14	49	39	11	0	38.1	47.6
Martville	49	7.7	12	51	53	4	61	13.5	27.0
Auburn	1,313	7.3	8	44	42	2	8	33.9	51.3
Scipio Ctr.	40	7.3	13	18	50	5	0	30.3	36.4
Union Springs	54	7.1	7	33	30	4	19	32.8	54.6
Weedsport	193	7.0	6	41	45	5	5	31.6	43.1
Moravia	171	6.7	6	38	42	2	18	20.6	31.7
Cayuga	63	6.4	18	33	36	3	16	4.7	18.8
Cato	122	6.1	13	33	32	3	8	14.7	18.9
Locke	92	6.1	4	49	56	4	0	21.2	24.2
Sterling	56	5.9	4	43	44	4	0	27.1	31.0
King Ferry	33	5.3	9	18	28	3	0	9.0	45.0
Aurora	34	3.0	6	29	16	0	0	2.2	6.6

**All percents are rounded to the nearest whole number.*

Seneca County Births 2003-2005									
	Births 2003-05	Rank Average	% LBW (<2500)	% Out of Wedlock	% Medicaid / Self Pay	% Late/ No PreNatal Care	Infant Mortality	Teen Births	Teen Pregnancies
Interlake n	78	8.0	9	32	47	5	13	42	69
Lodi	18	7.0	6	56	41	11	56	9	27
Ovid	124	7.4	15	34	49	11	8	11	27
Romulus	105	5.1	3	30	49	15	0	10	12
Seneca Falls	383	7.0	6	39	40	4	5	35	60
Waterloo	335	7.1	10	46	37	2	3	33	51

**All percents are rounded to the nearest whole number.*

Statistics show high rates of teen pregnancies and births as well as high rates of uninsured or Medicaid funded births. High rates of late or no prenatal care are also particularly evident in the more isolated areas of these counties.

EDUCATION

School Readiness

The Cayuga County 2005-2010 Community Health Assessment indicates that more children in Cayuga County are in need of pre-school and other early intervention programs. The report notes that the value of early intervention with children was an important issue raised during the 2004 Cayuga County needs assessment process. These early interventions with young children can prevent behavioral problems and failure in school. An article by Barnett reviewed 36 studies of model demonstration and large public programs such as Head Start to understand the long-term effects on children from low-income families. According to the article, “Results indicate that early childhood programs can produce large short-term benefits for children on intelligence quotient (IQ) and sizable long-term effects on school achievement, grade retention, placement in special education, and social adjustment.”

High School Dropout Rates

According to the NYS Education Department’s School Report Cards (2007-08), Auburn and Port Byron school districts have the highest dropout rates in Cayuga County. Waterloo and South Seneca have the highest dropout rates in Seneca County.

Cayuga County		2006-07	2007-08
School District	Total Enrolled	Attendance Rate	Dropped Out
Auburn	4,488	93%	4%
Port Byron	1,076	93%	3%
Cato-Meridian	1,101	95%	2%
Union Springs	991	96%	2%
Moravia	1,042	95%	1%
Southern Cayuga	843	95%	1%
Weedsport	939	96%	0%

Seneca County		2006-07	2007-08
School District	Total Enrolled	Attendance Rate	Dropped Out
Waterloo	1,950	94%	6%
South Seneca	837	95%	5%
Seneca Falls	1,379	95%	3%
Romulus	511	97%	3%

A more accurate way to evaluate graduation rates is to consider cohort graduation rates. The following chart shows the Total Cohort Graduation Rate and Enrollment Outcome Summary for 2004, 2003, and 2002 total Cohorts as of June 2009 (All students).

School District	Count of Cohort Members	Graduated w/ Regents or Local Diplomas	Earned IEP Diploma	Still Enrolled	Transferred to GED Preparation Programs	Dropped Out
CAYUGA COUNTY						
Auburn Enlarged City						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	371	68%	3%	12%	5%	13%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	375	65%	2%	10%	6%	17%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	376	69%	2%	11%	4%	15%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	375	70%	2%	1%	7%	20%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	376	74%	2%	1%	4%	19%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	376	75%	2%	0%	4%	19%
Cato-Meridian Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	100	82%	4%	10%	1%	3%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	87	75%	3%	11%	5%	6%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	97	76%	2%	12%	4%	5%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	87	77%	3%	2%	5%	13%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	97	80%	3%	6%	4%	6%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	97	81%	3%	NA	5%	10%
Moravia Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	78	74%	4%	5%	3%	14%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	90	72%	4%	6%	7%	11%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	84	81%	6%	5%	4%	5%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	90	74%	6%	1%	8%	11%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	84	85%	6%	1%	4%	5%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	84	85%	6%	NA	5%	5%
Port Byron Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	84	62%	2%	18%	4%	14%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	93	69%	4%	5%	8%	14%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	89	73%	2%	13%	4%	7%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	93	72%	4%	1%	9%	14%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	89	81%	2%	1%	7%	9%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	89	81%	2%	NA	7%	10%
S. Cayuga Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	84	83%	2%	6%	2%	6%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	86	77%	3%	5%	5%	10%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	99	66%	2%	12%	6%	14%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	86	79%	3%	NA	5%	13%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	99	72%	4%	2%	6%	16%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	99	72%	5%	NA	6%	17%

School District (cont.)	Count of Cohort Members	Graduated w/ Regents or Local Diplomas	Earned IEP Diploma	Still Enrolled	Transferred to GED Preparation Programs	Dropped Out
CAYUGA COUNTY						
Union Springs Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	90	81%	2%	10%	NA	7%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	86	74%	7%	7%	2%	9%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	81	78%	1%	5%	2%	14%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	86	78%	7%	1%	2%	12%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	81	79%	1%	2%	2%	15%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	81	80%	1%	1%	2%	15%
Weedsport Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	89	89%	3%	4%	3%	NA
2003 total cohort: 4 years	85	95%	NA	1%	1%	2%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	76	83%	3%	4%	3%	8%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	85	96%	NA	NA	1%	2%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	76	84%	3%	NA	3%	11%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	76	84%	3%	NA	3%	11%
SENECA COUNTY						
Seneca Falls Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	134	72%	6%	13%	1%	7%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	117	75%	1%	13%	3%	9%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	132	78%	5%	8%	NA	9%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	117	83%	2%	1%	3%	12%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	132	79%	6%	5%	NA	11%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	132	79%	6%	3%	NA	12%
Romulus Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	51	82%	4%	4%	NA	10%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	52	71%	4%	15%	2%	6%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	36	86%	3%	8%	3%	NA
2003 total cohort: 5 years	52	75%	6%	8%	2%	8%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	36	89%	3%	6%	3%	NA
2002 total cohort: 6 years	36	89%	3%	6%	3%	NA
South Seneca Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	66	76%	2%	9%	NA	14%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	78	67%	NA	14%	1%	18%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	78	74%	5%	10%	3%	8%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	78	76%	NA	3%	1%	21%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	78	81%	5%	3%	3%	9%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	78	81%	5%	3%	3%	9%
Waterloo Central						
2004 total cohort: 4 years	170	70%	3%	5%	NA	22%
2003 total cohort: 4 years	149	81%	1%	5%	NA	13%
2002 total cohort: 4 years	136	65%	3%	12%	NA	20%
2003 total cohort: 5 years	149	83%	1%	1%	NA	15%
2002 total cohort: 5 years	136	72%	3%	4%	NA	21%
2002 total cohort: 6 years	136	72%	3%	1%	NA	24%

The above data clearly shows that the dropout situation is significantly worse than the school report cards show. For specific population subgroups, dropout rates are even higher:

- Dropout rates for Black/African American students in Auburn range from 21-27%.
- Dropout rates for students with disabilities are as high as 50%.
- Dropout rates for economically disadvantage students can range as high as seven times the rate for not economically disadvantaged students, though on average they are two to three times higher.

SUMMARY

The following points summarize the findings of this secondary analysis:

- Both Cayuga and Seneca counties are rural in nature, with low population densities, small urban centers and relatively stable populations.
- Both counties have slightly higher percentages of elderly than the state averages; this population group tends to have high levels of needs.
- Both counties have high rates of unemployment and below average income levels for New York State with over 12 percent of the population in these counties living on income below the poverty level. Level of need for health, nutrition, emergency assistance, employment and education are all high as a result.
- The housing stock in both counties is old, with a median age of 60 years. This has implication of housing quality, energy usage, and need for repairs. Approximately one-quarter of households are authorized for HEAP benefits.

Section 3

PARTICIPANT SURVEY FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This section presents the findings of the participant survey conducted during June 2009. The survey was completed by 505 Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency program participants (82 percent residing in Cayuga County and 18 percent in Seneca County). The survey was self-administered, and was collected by Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency staff. A distribution of respondents across programs appears in Section 1.¹

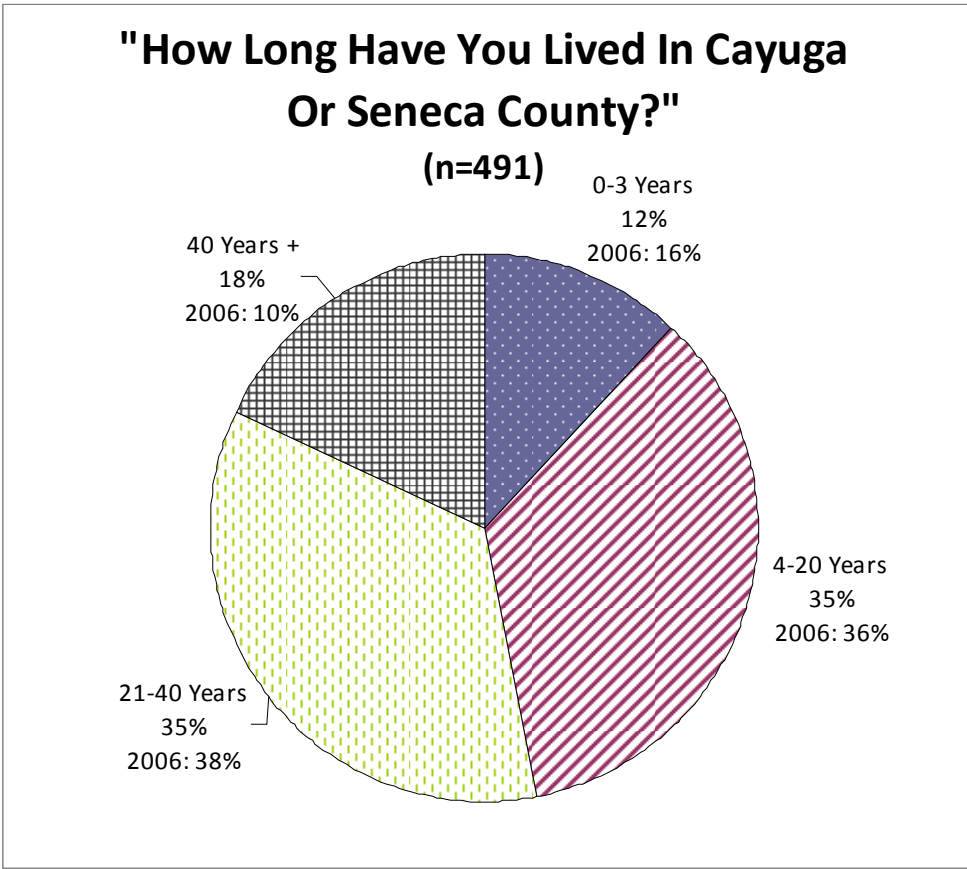
RESPONDENT AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Respondents were asked a series of questions to obtain information about their household composition, access to transportation and other characteristics that might provide insights with regard to overall need.

Length of Residency

Respondents were asked several questions regarding their residence in Cayuga or Seneca County. As illustrated in the next figure and similar to three years ago, 88 percent of respondents have lived in the area for more than four or more years, 53 percent for more than twenty years. On average, respondents reported living in Cayuga or Seneca Counties for 25 years.

¹ Please note that because the survey was self administered, not all questions were answered by all respondents. The number of respondents is typically noted in the tables.



Both Seneca and Cayuga County respondents report being long term residents. Other findings with regard to residency tenure include the following:

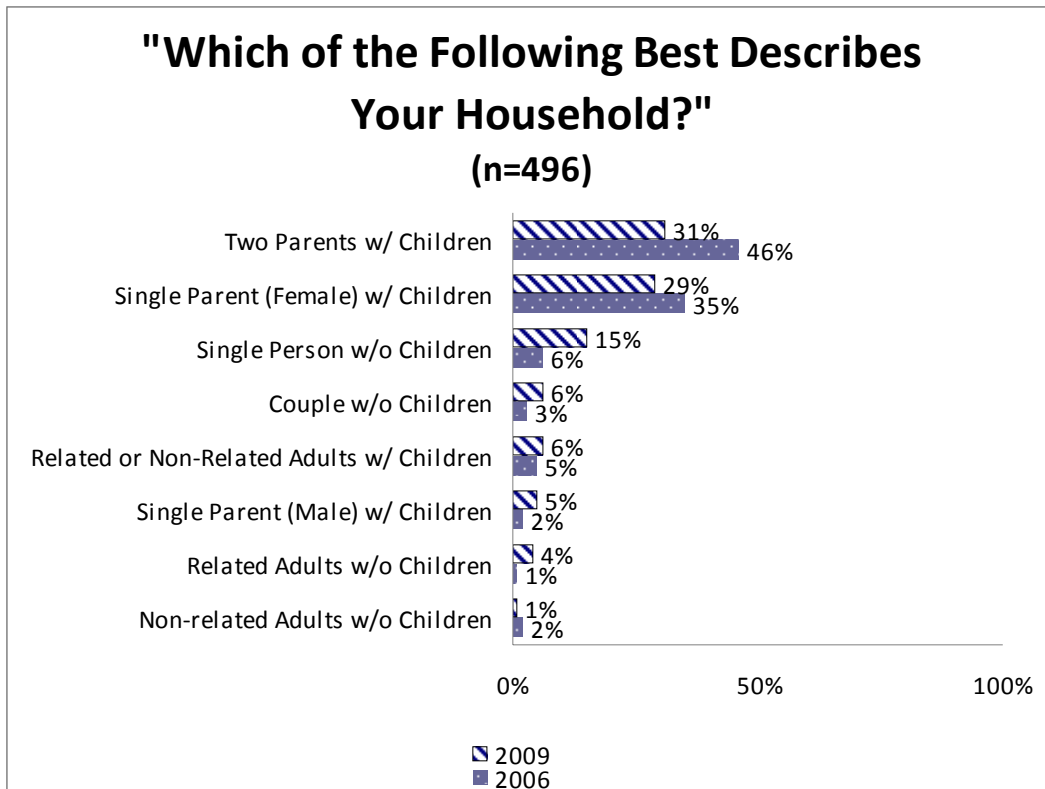
- Three-quarters of those who reported living in the area for less than 3 years moved to Cayuga or Seneca County from other counties in New York State.
- Most respondents are currently living in the following municipalities:

Residence (n=463)	School Districts (n=487)	
	2009	2006
Auburn	54%	58%
Waterloo	8%	5%
Seneca Falls	7%	2%
Port Byron	5%	3%
Moravia	4%	5%
Weedsport	4%	3%
Locke	2%	3%

Nearly all respondents (99 percent) indicate that they live in their Cayuga/Seneca county homes for the full 12 months of the year.

Household Information

Several questions were asked to investigate household composition, including relationships to other household members as displayed in the following graph.



Most participant households (71%) include children, generally either two parent households or single parent (female) households. Other findings with regard to household composition include the following:

- Domestic Violence Intervention Program, Car Seat and Healthy Families participants were more likely to describe their households as single parent (61, 46 and 47 percent, respectively, compared to 34 percent overall).
- Head Start and Healthy Families have a higher percentage of two-parent households with children, compared to other program participants (47 and 42 percent, respectively, compared to 31 percent overall).

Respondents and their household members represent a mix of age, gender, occupation and education levels, which are comparable to 2006.

- Over one-half of adult household members are female (59 percent) and 41 percent are male.
- The vast majority of adult household members are White (88 percent), followed by African American (6 percent).
- 29 percent of adult household members have not completed high school or received a GED and 5 percent do not read at an 8th grade level.
- For those working, employment is most often work in service positions such as retail, food service, and medical.
- 24 percent of adult household members are between the ages of 18 and 24 and another 44 percent between the ages of 25 and 44; the average age for adults is 37.
- Over one-quarter (27 percent) of adult household members are reported to have a diagnosed disability.

Respondents with children report an average of 2.0 children per household. In addition:

- Nearly one-half (45 percent) of children in respondent households are five years of age or younger.

Infants (0-2)	19%
Children (3-5)	26%
Children (6-10)	19%
Teens (11-17)	36%

- Most children are White (77 percent), followed by African American (5 percent) and Bi-racial (16 percent).
- 13 percent of children have a diagnosed disability.
- 29 percent of children do not read on grade level.

Respondents were questioned about the language spoken in the home and their potential experiences with discrimination.

- Nearly all households (99 percent) reported their primary language to be English.

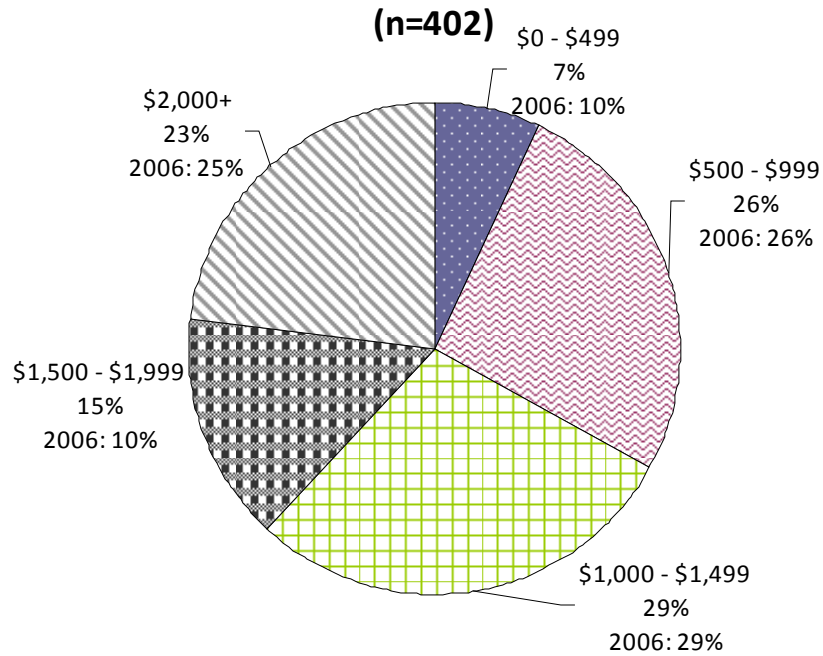
- Respondents most often feel that education is the best method of combating racial discrimination. When asked, 9 percent of respondents indicated they have been racially discriminated against in the past. Most frequent areas of discrimination include employment and housing as noted below:

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
None	91%	87%
Employment	6%	5%
Housing	3%	4%
Stores	1%	5%
Schools	1%	3%
Accessing Service	1%	2%
Restaurants	1%	2%

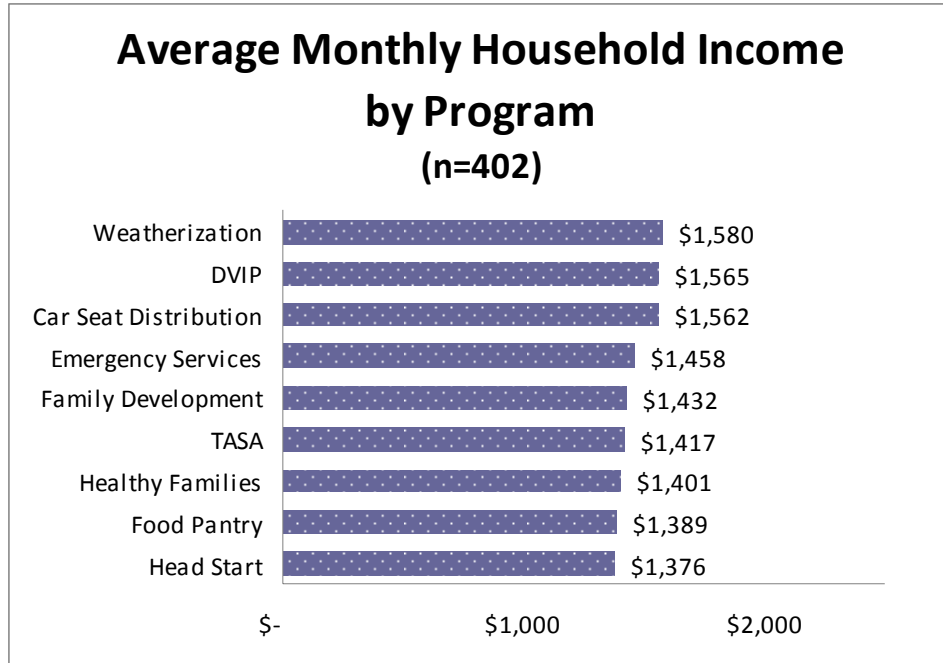
- Five percent of respondents indicated that a member of their family is currently incarcerated in Cayuga or Seneca County; *only 20 percent of these respondents are interested in networking with other families with incarcerated family members. (14 percent indicated that someone in their family was incarcerated in Cayuga Seneca County in the past 2 years.)*

When asked about their household income, most survey respondents (80 percent) provided information, as displayed in the following chart.

"Approximately What is Your Household's Total Monthly Gross Income From All Sources?"



On average, respondent's monthly household income was reported to be \$1,484 (down from \$1,870 in 2006). However, as *illustrated in the figure above*, 62 percent of respondents reported household income below \$1,500 per month and 33 percent reported it to be below \$1,000 per month.

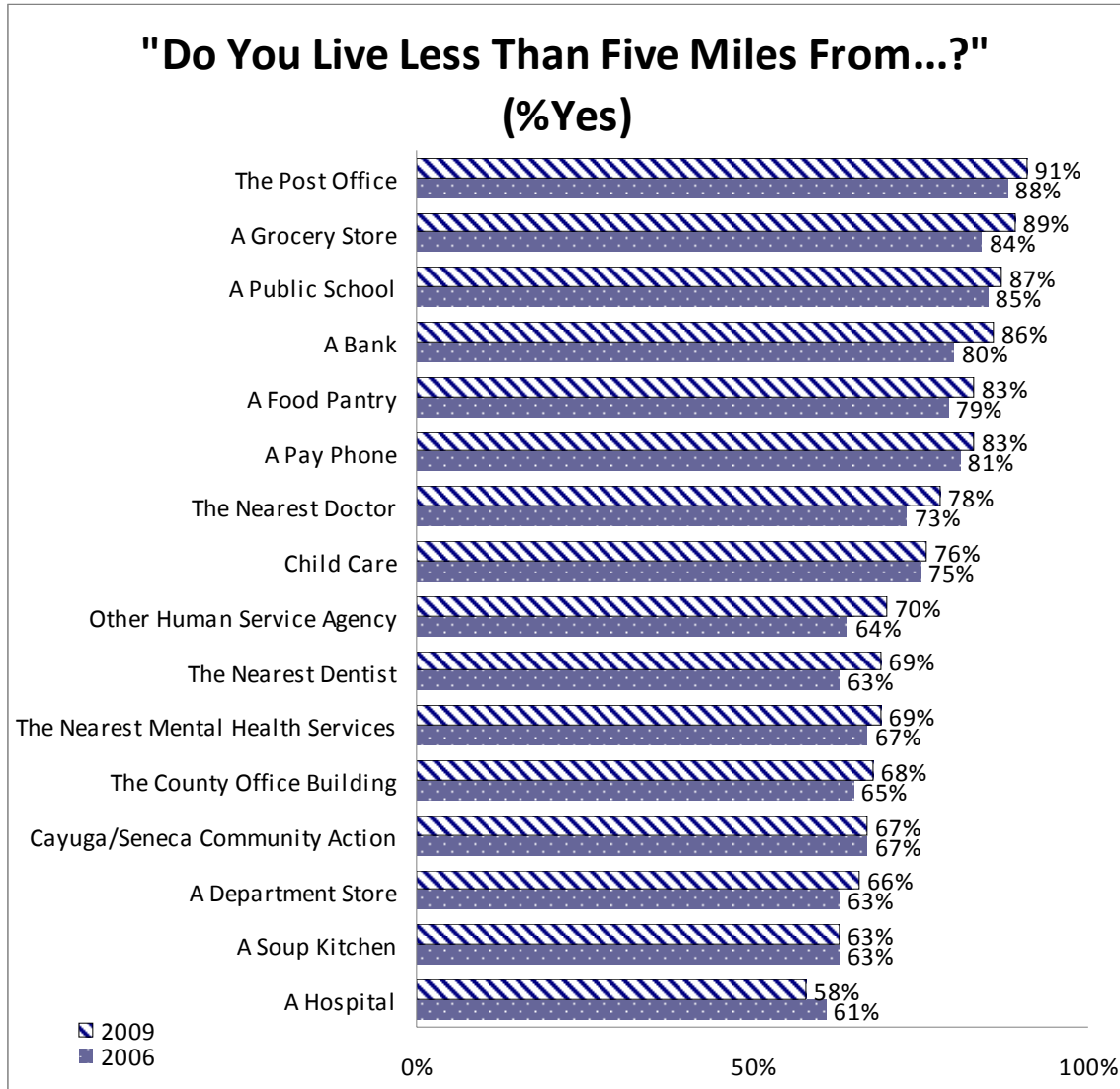


By program, average household income varied as presented in the above graph. *Food Pantry and Head Start participants reported the lowest monthly household incomes, although average income does not differ substantially by program.*

- Over one-third (36 percent) indicated a decrease of income in the last year and another 38 percent indicated that their income stayed the same.

Access to Services

Respondents were asked to indicate if they lived within five miles of commonly used services as displayed in the following graph, with findings very similar to 2006.



Limited access to hospitals and various social services, indicative of rural areas nationwide, was reported by over one-quarter of respondents. Respondents participating in the Weatherization program were more likely to be more than five miles away from the listed services.

Availability of personal or public transportation was investigated by asking respondents if they had a car and, if not, what mode of transportation they used. The results are presented below.

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
They, or someone in household, owns a reliable car	74%	69%
 Transportation for those without a car in the household		
Rides from family and friends	70%	73%
Walk	68%	46%
Bus	61%	42%
Taxi	51%	37%
Car	5%	16%
SCAT van	2%	3%
Other	7%	7%

- One-quarter of respondents do not have a car and rely solely on public transit, taxis and rides from friends and family.
- Rides from family and friends and walking are most often mentioned by those without a car, followed by bus and taxi.
- 70 percent of the respondents indicated that the bus stop is less than one mile from their home.
- *Respondents participating in DVIP, Family Development, TASA and Healthy Families programs were less likely to have a car than other respondents.*
- Respondents participating in the Weatherization program were more likely to have a car than other respondents (87 percent vs. 73 percent).

Respondents were also asked if they had a telephone in their home; 56 percent of respondents currently have a landline telephone in their homes and 82 percent have a cell phone...96 percent have one or the other. In addition, 55 percent of the respondents reported that they have a working computer at home and 45 percent have access to the Internet. This is below the US average; the US Census data indicated that 55 percent of US households had a web-connected computer in 2003 and that percent is now believed to be over 75 percent.

- Respondents least likely to have either a working telephone or a cell phone in their homes were Seneca County respondents (90 percent and 97 percent respectively).
- Participants in the DVIP, Family Development, Food Pantry and Emergency Community Services program were least likely to have a computer and Internet access in their homes.

Finally, in media-related questions, respondents most often reported home delivery of *The Pennysaver* (76 percent), *The Citizen* (24 percent,) and *The Shopper* or *Shopping Guide* (20 percent).

With regard to the services (such as Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency or WIC), respondents most frequently mentioned learning about these services mostly through word of mouth as seen below:

Information Source

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Friends and Neighbors	58%	45%
Referrals	37%	38%
Family	32%	35%
School	17%	26%
Phone Book	14%	22%
Newspaper	13%	20%
Television	10%	16%
Internet	10%	na
Pennysaver	9%	8%
Radio	5%	9%
Other*	8%	15%

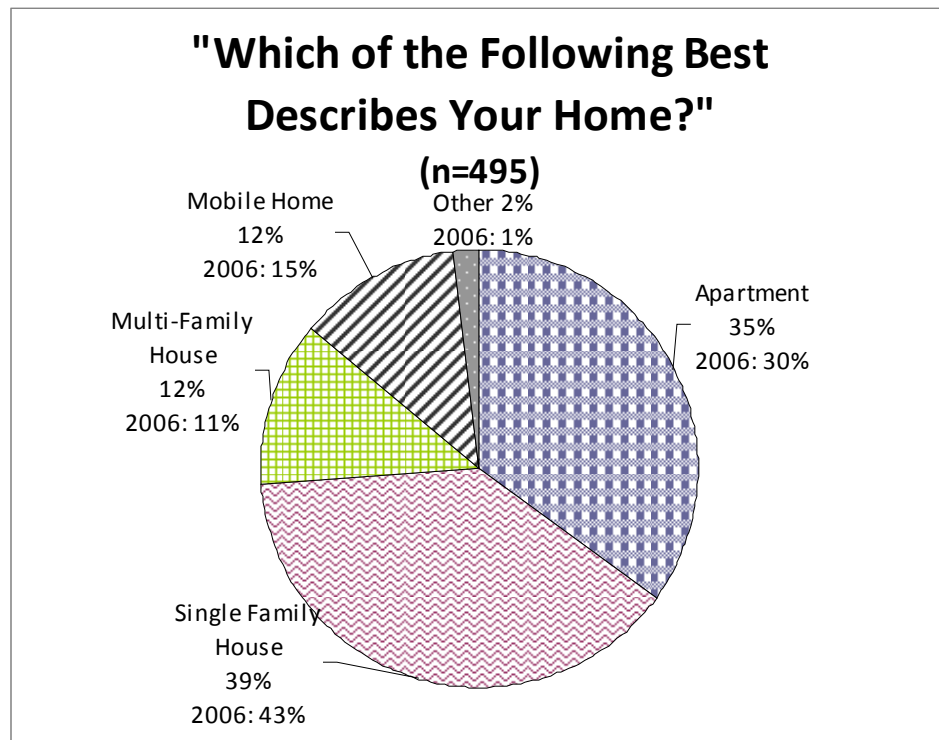
* Other mentions include: through another program and previous knowledge.

HOUSING

Respondents were asked a series of questions designed to investigate their current housing arrangements. Information on housing style, rent, and heating issues was collected.

Housing Type

The type of housing respondents live in is presented in the following chart.



Single family homes and apartments were the most frequently mentioned housing arrangements, followed by one-quarter of respondents who live in either trailers or mobile homes or multi-family houses.

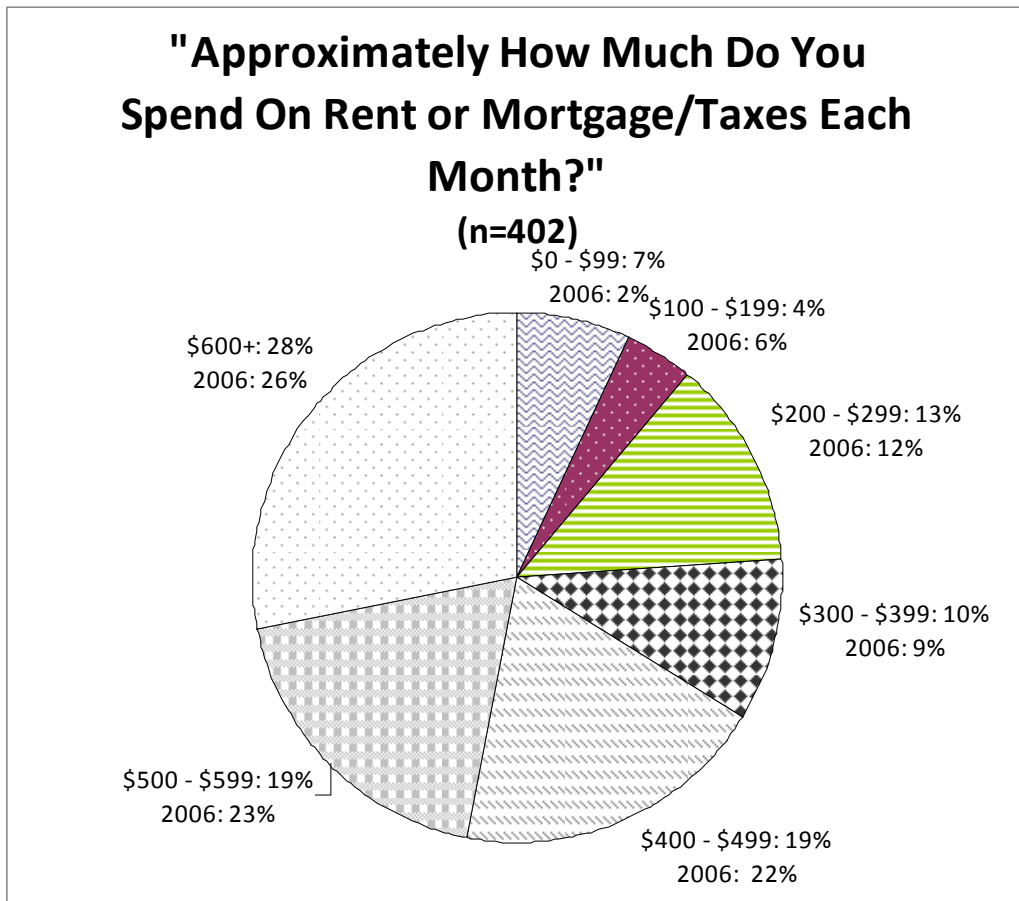
- Over two-thirds (67 percent) of Weatherization participants live in a single-family house.
- Majority of participants in DVIP (67 percent), Family Development (50 percent) and Food Pantry (40 percent) live in an apartment.

Sixty-six percent of respondents indicated that they rent their homes and 26 percent own. Not surprisingly, home ownership (including mobile homes) is highest among Weatherization participants (89 percent). Renting is most prevalent among Healthy Families (82 percent) and Car Seat (82 percent) participants.

- 13 percent indicate that their housing is a temporary arrangement, most often citing loss of income or lack of funds for a security deposit.

Housing Costs

Monthly rent or combined mortgage/taxes payments were reported by 80 percent of respondents. On average, respondents report spending \$437 per month on rent or mortgage/taxes (compared to \$473 in 2006). As a percent of income, on average respondents spend 41 percent of their monthly income on rent or mortgage and taxes, compared to 25 percent in 2006.



- Average housing costs are similar across programs.
- Over one-fifth (22 percent) of respondents report receiving a rent subsidy, averaging \$371 per month. Car Seat participants are more likely to receive the rent subsidy than others (41 percent vs. 19 percent).

When asked whether they have experienced specific problems in the last year, *40 percent of respondents indicate that they had financial problems and 33 percent reported family problems in the last year.* These top 2 issues are similar to those mentioned in 2006. The following table shows other related problems:

<u>Problems Experienced</u>		
(n=459)		
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Financial issues	40%	62%
Family issues	33%	74%
Loss of jobs	24%	41%
Disability	13%	31%
Relocation	9%	20%
Threatened eviction	9%	15%
Homeless	9%	9%
Eviction	7%	14%
House condemned	1%	7%
Foreclosure	1%	3%

- Across all programs, financial and family issues were most often encountered in the last year.
- Family Development, TASA, and Domestic Violence Intervention Program participants were most likely to have experienced multiple problems, including family issues (44, 52, and 79 percent), homelessness (31, 11, and 33 percent), and threatened eviction (19, 20, and 16 percent).

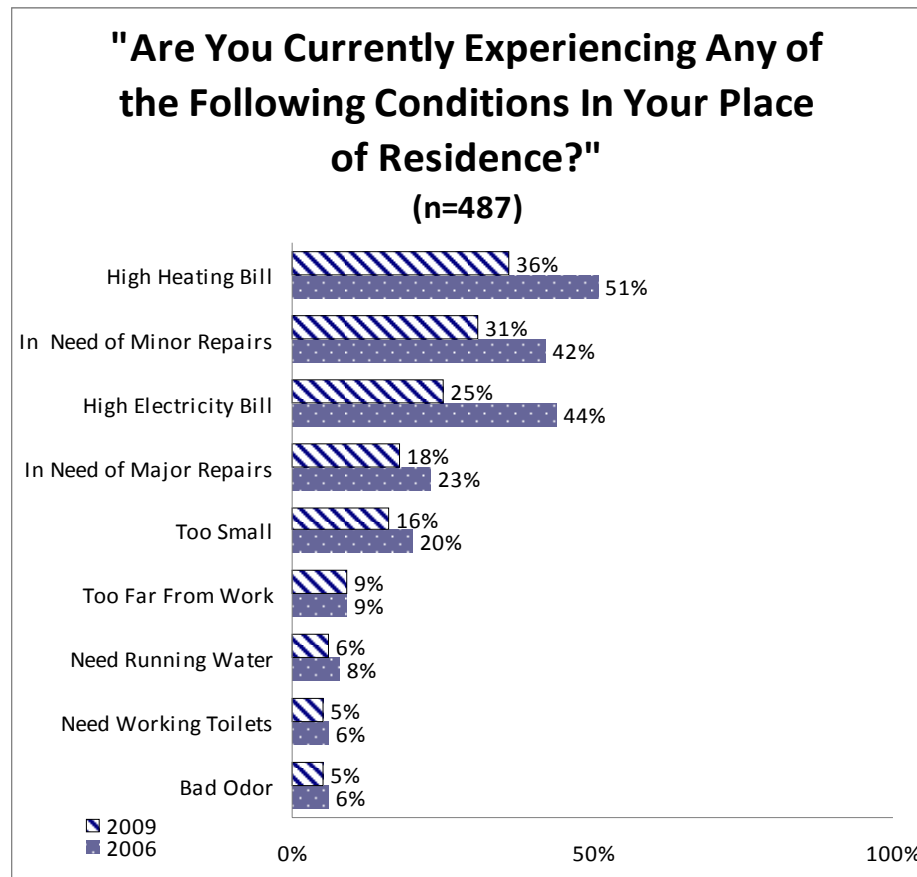
Utilities

Respondents also provided information on their heating fuel and heating expenses. Natural gas was the most frequently reported fuel and is used by 66 percent of respondents. Electricity is the second most used fuel for heating (19 percent), followed by propane (10 percent), fuel oil (7 percent) and kerosene (4 percent).

- 78 percent of respondents indicated that they pay for heat directly. All respondents who participated in the Weatherization program reported paying for their own heat; 87 percent of those participating in Emergency Services reported paying for their heat.
- The average monthly heating bill for respondents who pay for heat directly is \$196, compared to \$243 in 2006. *Respondents who pay for heat directly spend, on average, 18 percent of their monthly income on heat (13 percent in 2006).*
- 13 percent indicate they supplement their primary heat source most typically (77 percent) with electric heat.
- Respondents who don't heat with electricity, pay an average of \$87 per month on electricity.

Housing Condition

Respondents indicated various problems with the condition of their homes as shown below.



- High bills and minor repairs top the list of housing issues, similar to 2006.

- Nearly one-third indicate need for minor home repairs. Windows, doors, paint, floors, and plumbing are most often in need of minor repair.
- *Nearly one-fifth indicated need for major home repairs.* Respondents most often indicate that their windows, roofs, furnace, insulation, floors, and ceilings are in need of major repair.
- Other housing issues include lack of space; 16 percent indicate their residence is too small for their family size.

Nearly all respondents (99 percent) reported having a refrigerator in working condition, 96 percent have ovens, 94 percent have stove burners, 88 percent have microwave ovens, and 20 percent have a stand-alone freezer. Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of respondents have a washer and 61 percent have a dryer. More than three-quarters (79 percent) reported having fans and 44 percent have window air conditioners.

Paying for heat and utilities is clearly a major issue:

- *17 percent of the respondents reported that their utilities had been shut off in the past year, compared to 25 percent in 2006.* Of these, one-third report multiple shut-offs. To rectify shut-offs, over one-half of respondents turn to the HEAP program and 8 percent transferred the account to another adult.
- *Over one-third (37 percent) of respondents indicate that they currently have a past due balance for utilities, compared to 57 percent in 2006. This is more of a problem for participants in Seneca County (51 percent).* Of those with past due utility bills, 30 percent owe more than \$1,000, including 52 percent of Car Seat program participants and 41 percent of Head Start participants.
- 16 percent of home owners indicate their homes are not insulated.
- *Less than one-half (38 percent) report that their homes have storm windows, 30 percent have storm doors; 20 percent reported they have doors that are warped or do not close and about 15 percent have broken or missing windows.* Over one-quarter (27 percent) of respondents indicate that they have a furnace over ten years old, 21 percent have a fridge over ten years old, and 20 percent have a water heater that is over ten years old.
- 43 percent of respondents have moved an average of 2.2 times in the last two years. Reasons given for moving include eviction, domestic violence, change in family circumstance, bought a house, or sought a better living situation.

- *Among the respondents, 9 percent reported that they have been evicted from their place of residence in the last two years (10 percent in 2006). The reason for eviction most often mentioned by respondents was loss of job or inability to pay rent.*
- *11 percent have been homeless in the past 2 years (4 percent in 2006), led by participants of Family Development (41 percent) and Food Pantry (14 percent). Most frequent reasons given for homelessness are domestic violence, family issues and lack of funds. The homeless duration typically was one time and lasted 3 months or less.*

Over one-half of respondents would like to move. As seen in the following table, the most frequently given reason for not moving is that it is too expensive.

<u>Reasons for not Moving</u>		
(n=275)		
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Moving is too expensive	43%	37%
Lack security deposit	38%	37%
Rental Cost	36%	32%
Like my present neighborhood	29%	24%
Poor Quality to Choose From	16%	10%
Lack of Choice in Rural Areas	14%	na
Pets not Allowed	11%	13%
Lack of vehicle to move	11%	8%
Waiting List	7%	5%
Lack of References	7%	4%
Legal Issues	3%	5%
Racial Discrimination	1%	1%

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND TRAINING

Respondents were asked about the employment status of household members over the age of 18. Findings suggest high rates of unemployment and disability and low rates of health insurance coverage.

- *27 percent of households reported at least one adult member was unemployed, (28 percent in 2006) about 4 percent of households had at least one adult member who was temporarily laid off; and 2 percent reported a household member in the welfare-to-work program.*

- 39 percent of households reported at least one adult member worked full-time permanently (46 percent in 2006), another 4 percent indicated at least one adult member worked full-time temporarily, and 6 percent of households reported at least one adult member was self-employed; 7 percent indicated that at least one adult member works for minimum wage or less.
- 14 percent of households reported at least one adult member worked part-time permanently and 5 percent temporarily, similar to 2006.
- Over one-fifth (22 percent) of households reported having an adult homemaker (33 percent in 2006).
- 12 percent of households reported at least one adult member was a full-time student and 3 percent had part-time students, similar to 2006.
- *30 percent of households reported at least one adult member is disabled and about 9 percent reported at least one adult member is retired (24 percent and 5 percent, respectively in 2006).*
- *29 percent of households reported at least one adult member who receives health insurance benefits (23 percent in 2006).*
- *Over one-third (39 percent) of respondents indicated that they are earning less money than they did three years ago and 12 percent indicated that they changed jobs in the last three years due to the economic impact on their company.*

Occupational status by program includes the following:

- One-third of Family Development households (33 percent) have someone who is unemployed, 45 percent have someone who is disabled, and 6 percent have someone who is in the welfare-to-work program. Family Development participants are most likely to receive Health Insurance Benefits (43 percent) and more likely to have adult homemakers (29 percent).
- *One-fifth of TASA participants (20 percent) indicated that they have an adult in the household who is a full time student.*

Respondents were asked a series of questions with regard to household members' participation and interest in education, job training programs, and other skills:

- *17 percent of respondents indicate that their household members would like to obtain a GED, compared to 28 percent in 2006. 45 percent of those respondents mention there are barriers to doing so, most often child care, transportation needs, and time/scheduling.*

- *When asked whether any of their household members would like to attend training or educational programs, 28 percent of respondents answered YES (40 percent in 2006), of which 56 percent indicate some barriers to doing so, most often mentioning affordability, child care, transportation constraints, and time concerns.*
- Similar to 2006, about 12 percent of respondents indicate that at least one of their household members participated in a job-training program within the last year. Most often mentioned programs include Employment and Training Program, on the job training, and Health & Human Services.
- Also similar to 2006, over one-fourth (26 percent) of respondents mentioned that they have skills that they believe could be developed into a small business. Most frequently mentioned skills were: computer skills, cooking and baking, child care/daycare, construction, and crafts.

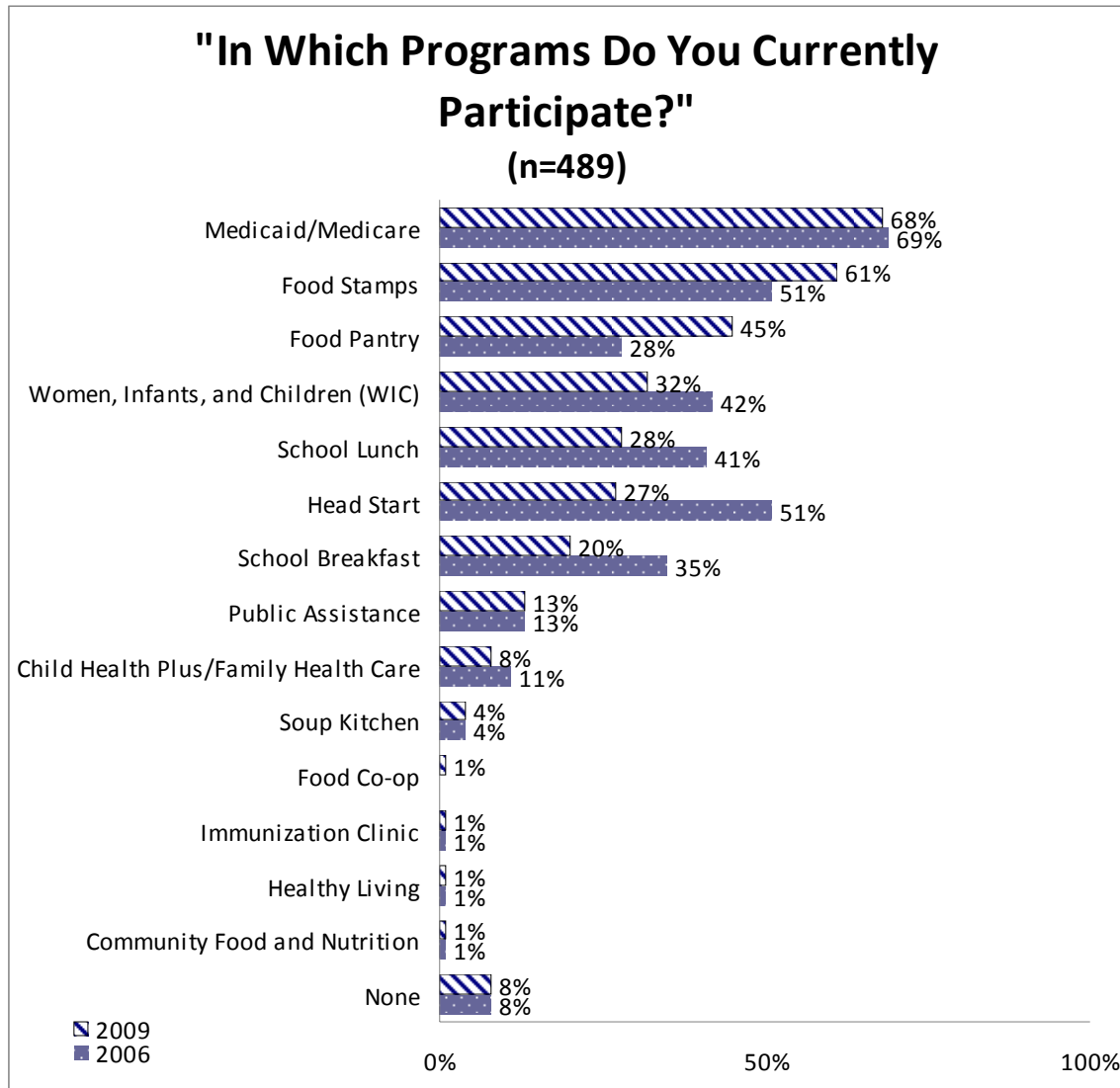
Consistent with 2006 findings, transportation and childcare are the most common barriers respondents indicate they face in obtaining employment or obtaining their GED or college education, as seen below:

Barriers of Employment/Obtaining GED or college education

	<u>Employment</u> (n=183)		<u>Education</u> (n=75)	
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Transportation	42%	47%	43%	44%
Childcare	40%	47%	51%	55%
Disability	29%	26%	24%	29%
Lack of appropriate skills	25%	19%	15%	18%
Lack of appropriate attire	12%	9%	5%	2%
Age discrimination	8%	7%	3%	3%
Spousal/partner abuse	7%	7%	7%	3%
Race discrimination	4%	7%	3%	2%

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Respondents were asked to identify in which health programs they currently participate. Responses are highlighted in the next graph and show some differences from 2006.



As noted above, 68 percent receive Medicaid/Medicare, 61 percent receive Food Stamps, and 45 percent access the Food Pantry. Other findings related to these programs include the following:

- Consistent with program design, Head Start participants also receive services from a number of other programs, with 81 percent receiving Medicaid/Medicare, 58 percent receiving WIC, and 73 percent receiving Food Stamps.
- Family Development participants also receive services from a number of other programs with 84 percent receiving Medicaid/Medicare, 82 percent receiving Food Stamps, 43 percent receiving WIC, and 67 percent accessing the Food Pantry.
- 66 percent of Food Pantry participants also receive Food Stamps, 32 percent participate in free/reduced cost school lunch, and 25 percent in free/reduced cost school breakfast.
- When asked if they participate in other programs, such as Senior Nutrition Program, church sponsored programs, Meals on Wheels, or special meals programs, 4 percent of respondents mentioned they participate in church-sponsored programs and 1 percent participates in Meals on Wheels.
- 62 percent of respondents report exercising regularly, most often walking (90%). *Respondents report concerns over obesity - 28 percent report overweight adults in the household and 9 percent report having children who are overweight, most often between 11 and 15 years old. While over one-fifth would like information on purchasing fresh or minimally processed foods affordably, less than one-fifth would like information on healthy eating.*

Medical/Dental Care Access

When asked, 12 percent of respondents indicated that they could not get medical care when needed (14 percent in 2006). The biggest barriers to needed medical care were given as: no insurance (61 percent), too expensive (40 percent), can't afford prescriptions (29 percent), transportation (26 percent), and Medicaid not accepted (13 percent). At least 15 percent of respondents do not have an established relationship with a medical provider.

One-fifth (20 percent vs. 23 percent in 2006) of respondents also reported that they could not get dental care when needed. Of these, two-thirds (66 percent) mentioned no insurance, 55 percent thought it was too expensive, 18 percent indicated Medicaid not accepted by dentist, about 11 percent can't find a dentist who accepts the insurance they do have, about 10 percent are afraid to go, and about 16 percent indicated a transportation problem. One-third of respondents do not have an established relationship with a dentist.

Nearly one-third of respondents report utilizing an emergency room at least once in the past year for non-emergency medical or dental care for a member of their household.

Access to Food

Food and nutrition continue to be major areas of need for low income households:

- *Over one-half of the respondents (57 percent vs. 45 percent in 2006) indicate that they have accessed an emergency food pantry in the last 12 months. The following table shows that nearly one-quarter of Food Pantry users depend on it weekly, much higher than in 2006:*

Frequency of Accessing a Food Pantry

(N=278)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Less than three times a year	40%	55%
Monthly	36%	39%
Weekly	23%	6%

- 8 percent of respondents found the emergency food pantry to be inaccessible, most indicating that it's not open at convenient times, they need delivery, or that the pantry is in a bad location. This is down from 21 percent in 2006.
- *Similar to 2006, 41 percent of respondents mentioned that they had to choose between eating and paying bills necessary to meet their basic needs. Nearly one-half of Food Pantry participants indicated having to choose between essential food items and bills necessary for basic needs during the last year.*
- *On average, respondents reported spending \$100 on food weekly, or about \$400 per month (\$512 in 2006); this represents about 27 percent of average monthly income.*

Respondents also provided information about the health and nutrition of their children, which is similar to 2006 findings.

- *About 9 percent of respondents mentioned that they or their children do not have enough to eat.*
- *About 6 percent of respondents indicated that their children often went without milk. The types of milk used include 2% milk (39 percent), followed by 1% (38 percent), whole milk (30 percent), and non-fat milk (9 percent), with some families indicating that they use more than one type of milk.*

- About 4 percent of respondents mentioned that their household members, including children, did not eat fruits and vegetables, generally due to affordability (61 percent) or because of dislike (26 percent).

Respondents were asked the degree to which household members experienced specific health-related problems. *Two-thirds of all respondents noted problems distributed as follows:*

<u>Household Member Problems</u>		
(n=341)		
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Financial Stress	63%	60%
Family Problem (Children, Aging)	39%	38%
Personal or Emotional Problem	36%	32%
Marital Problem (Stress, Arguing)	24%	22%
Excessive Debt	23%	25%
Mental Health	20%	19%
Serious Health Problem	20%	16%
Lack of Transportation	19%	22%
Household Member with Disability	16%	25%
Domestic Violence	14%	12%
Death	13%	10%
Alcohol	8%	9%
Poor Housing Conditions	8%	8%
Rape, Incest, or Sexual Abuse	6%	4%
Drugs	5%	6%
Sanctioned by Public Assistance	4%	3%
Racial Discrimination	1%	3%
Other	4%	5%

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Nearly one-half of respondents have children 3 years old or younger in their households, 43 percent have 4 and 5 year olds, and 47 percent have children 6-12 years of age in the household.

- Over three-quarters (77 percent vs. 68 percent in 2006) of respondents with children under 12 years of age in their households indicate that the mother takes care of the children during day/night or when not in school.

- Other caregivers include the father (29 percent), other adult relatives/friends (29 percent), babysitter (11 percent), and brother/sister under 18 (3 percent).
- About 5 percent of respondents indicated a day care center as another source of taking care of children.
- 17 percent of respondents have children ages 12-19 in their household that stay home alone between the hours of 3-7 p.m. (11 percent in 2006).

Similar to 2006, over one-fifth (22 percent) of respondents have children under 18 with disabilities in their households. Of those respondents, 32 percent indicate that the children with disabilities are not adequately served. For those reported adequately served, the most frequent services mentioned are speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and special education.

Respondents with children 12 years of age or younger in their household were asked a series of child care questions to evaluate the availability and access to child care.

- Similar to 2006, 24 percent of respondents indicated that they have used a day care center. Reasons most frequently given for not using such a center, if a center was available, are shown below:

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Have Satisfactory Child Care	45%	44%
Can't Afford It	33%	42%
Fear of Abuse	21%	17%
Transportation	8%	8%
Infant Care Not Available	3%	1%
No Slots Available at Night	2%	3%
No Daytime Slots Available	1%	2%
Other	25%	21%

- *Nearly two-thirds (61 percent) of respondents reported that they would use a day care center or nursery/preschool, if a good one were available in their area. Domestic Violence Intervention Program (74 percent) and Family Development (75 percent) participants are more likely to use a good day care if one were available.*

- Over one-quarter (27 percent) of respondents do not believe quality child care is available for infants and toddlers and 20 percent do not believe it is available for pre-school aged children.

Respondents were questioned about the risks their children may be encountering.

- One-tenth (10 percent vs. 17 percent in 2006) of respondents indicated that they did not have car seats for all children required to have them, typically because they could not afford it or they had a broken one.
- Less than one-tenth (6 percent) of respondents indicated that there are pregnant or parenting teens in their households, same as 2006. Not surprisingly, TASA, Car Seat Distribution, and Healthy Families program participants reported a higher percentage of pregnant or parenting teens in their households (20 percent, 16 percent, and 19 percent respectively). Nearly all are receiving pre-natal care and about one half are involved in parenting classes.
- 13 percent of respondents with children ages 5 and under report concerns for their children’s readiness for school and 15 percent have concerns of problem behavior, most often citing temperament and anger management issues; 11 percent with children ages 5 and under indicate concerns for their child’s social or emotional needs, once again mentioning issues of temper as well as issues related to being withdrawn or clingy.
- *20 percent of parents with children 6-12 years old have concerns about problem behavior, frequently related to ADHD.*
- 4 percent of respondents report having a child between ages 12 and 19 in the household who has dropped out of school (6 percent in 2006).
- When asked if household members under the age of 21 were at risk for a number of potential conditions, 18 percent indicated some risks as noted below:

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Sexual Activity	10%	11%
Dropout	8%	8%
Irregular School Attendance	7%	6%
Drug/Alcohol	5%	6%
Living Outside of Your Home	4%	3%
Involvement in Criminal Activity	3%	5%
Runaway Youth	2%	3%
With a violent or abusive partner	1%	2%
Other	1%	1%
None of the Above	82%	81%

- Over one-half of respondents (57 percent vs. 61 percent in 2006), who report their child/children being at risk for one of the above, would be interested in having the youth participate in a mentoring program.
- Among all households, when asked about services in which youth in their households are involved, 30 percent of respondents indicated involvement in TASA, 28 percent in extra-curricular activities, 20 percent in organized sports, 13 percent in Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, 10 percent in Y Pals, 9 percent in PINS, 7 percent in Youth Employment Services, and 5 percent in a Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency support group.
- Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (62 percent vs. 55 percent in 2006) indicated there are adequate youth recreation programs within two miles of their homes. Three-quarters (76 percent) of respondents report that there is a playground within walking distance of their homes.

OTHER

Legal Services

Nearly one-third (31 percent vs. 36 percent in 2006) report having contact with the family court system over the past year, most often for child support and custody reasons. 14 percent of respondents report that they are currently in need of legal services, most often for child custody, divorce, and domestic violence. Over one-third (38 percent vs. 35 percent in 2006) of respondents say they have not been able to access legal services they need in a satisfactory manner.

Public Assistance

12 percent of respondents reported that someone in their household went off public assistance in the last two years. Of those who went off public assistance, 40 percent indicated that they found full-time employment, 44 percent found part-time employment, 8 percent report they are “getting by” with odd jobs, 12 percent went off because they did not want to/or could not deal with the rules and regulations and 8 percent lost eligibility due to a time limit.

When asked whether leaving public assistance created any hardships for their households, 15 percent of respondents indicate YES. Nearly all (88 percent) reported it is

difficult to meet basic expenses and about one-fifth (22 percent) indicated they have inadequate resources to maintain family and remain employed. Other hardships given included the following:

“Paying rent.”
“Money is very tight.”
“Sometimes harder to buy food.”

Financial and Emotional Needs

Over one-third (34 percent vs. 39 percent in 2006) of respondents feel that they are better off financially now than they were three years ago, most often indicating that they had gotten better jobs, higher incomes, and that they are working. Selected verbatims include the following:

“Getting child support/better job.”
“I obtained employment & affordable housing.”
“Have a better paying job.”
“I am using my money in a better way.”
“All family members were able to get disability SSI.”
“I have established responsibility financially.”
“My job pays more.”

However, two-thirds (66 percent vs. 61 percent in 2006) of respondents feel that they are not better off financially than they were three years ago. Reasons include lost jobs, the cost of children, and cost of living increasing. Common barriers are financial issues, child care and no job.

“Making less money, not enough to pay bills.”
“No income now, 3 years ago I did have income.”
“Divorce-just one income now.”
“The cost of everything keeps increasing.”
“No job, more people in house.”
“Had a good job and less people to take care of.”
“Prices go up - income doesn't.”
“The price of everything going up, no more money to keep up with the inflation.”

From an emotional perspective, 55 percent of respondents feel that they are better off emotionally than they were three years ago (59 percent in 2006). Most indicate better family lives, personal strengths and better financial situations. Examples include:

“Happy with my family.”
“My job & relationships are less stressful.”
“Stronger person now.”
“Relationship with significant other is great.”
“More secure in my job.”
“Less financial worries.”
“I have my family for support and help if I need it.”

However, 45 percent of respondents do not feel better emotionally than three years ago (41 percent in 2006). Financial and employment problems, more stress in their life, and illness or disability of themselves or family members were the most common reasons.

Examples include:

“So much stress.”
“Not working, location of residence.”
“Lack of work and income.”
“Stress from back injury.”
“Mentally disabled.”
“We just don't get enough money to pay everything.”
“Too much stress with family issues.”
“No money and wife has been sick.”

Personal and Community Strengths and Needs

As a final line of questioning, respondents were asked to express what they perceive to be their family's personal strengths and needs. By far, the most frequently mentioned strengths are strong family ties and love (61 percent mention); 16 percent added that helping and working together was a key strength. Selected verbatims include the following:

“Loving, respecting and having faith in one another.”
“Having a loving family and family support.”
“Close family, strong bonds, good communication, focus on children.”
“Try to do things together as a family.”
“We work together and all help with everything.”

“Working together under all conditions good or bad.”
“We love each other and enjoy spending time together.”
“We have a very strong family.”
“We're all very close to one another, if anyone is in need of help we're always there for each other.”

Respondents were asked to express the areas of their lives with which they would like or need assistance. Asked in an open-ended framework, respondents generally considered job-related, finance, and housing needs as the most significant for them.

- Respondents most frequently mentioned needing direct financial assistance, housing, and job opportunities as strongest needs. Examples include:

“Finding a good job, so we can be financially stable, we're living but not easily.”
“A job, a house, and finding child care.”
“Money, paying bills.”
“Finances/finding employment.”
“Money to get the leaks fixed, GED, help our family members get a new home.”
“Budget my money better.”
“A nice, safe place to live.”
“Finding and paying for new housing.”

- Emotional/Mental Health and Education problems were also frequently mentioned as needs for assistance.

“Dealing with emotional stress.”
“Counseling, need more emotional help.”
“Mental health counseling.”
“Education to get a better career.”
“Just help with going back to school.”

- Transportation is another issue frequently mentioned.

“Getting a car and a job.”
“Need a car.”
“Learning to drive.”
“Transportation and child care.”

- Child Care and Health Care Services were among respondent's priority needs.

"Assistance with childcare to go back to work."

"To be able to get some child care."

"Child care is very hard to find."

"Finding insurance."

"Obtaining medical assistance."

"Maintain health."

- A few respondents also mentioned nutritional needs as an area of need for assistance.

"Need help with food."

"Food Pantry."

"Supplying food for family."

"Just help with food."

Respondents were also asked to identify community strengths. Respondents most often identified community agencies and programs (38 percent) as well as safe, small, and friendly community (26 percent) as the positive things in their community.

"The Salvation Army, Soup Kitchen, Pregnancy Care Center, HI."

"Agencies that help people in need."

"Domestic Violence program and Head Start."

"Agencies to help with just about anything."

"TASA, WIC, all helping agencies."

"Many community resources available to those in need, YMCA."

"Small town, my children are safer here."

"How they keep it safe."

"Great neighborhoods, schools, people."

"Friendly atmosphere."

"We look out for each other and our children."

"People, small town."

When asked what areas they think need improvement, respondents made the following comments:

- Activities for youth/children

"More programs for kids."

"More recreational areas that are free, summer programs that are free."

"Services for the youth."

"More things for kids to do so they don't get in trouble."

- Jobs
“Employment options.”
“Better career opportunities.”
“More jobs needed in the area.”
“Keeping jobs in our area.”
“Job market.”
- More services
“More stores.”
“More handicap accessible areas.”
“Bus system, afterschool programs.”
“Sidewalks, parks.”
- Housing
“Adequate and affordable housing & childcare.”
“Better housing quality.”
“More safe places to live.”
“Better housing choices.”
- More help from agencies
“More programs for people that need temporary assistance that make too much for ongoing help.”
“Need programs for families with low/middle income that make too much for county assistance.”
“More help for working families.”
- Crime/Violence prevention
“Crime rates.”
“Drugs, domestic violence and killing kids.”
“Less violence, keep teenagers occupied, teen center.”
“Crime and drugs, seems like there is mere trouble in this area.”

SUMMARY

The following summarizes the findings of the participant survey.

- Similar to 2006 findings, program participants experience numerous problems, in particular, financial issues (40 percent), family issues (33 percent), and loss of jobs (24 percent).
- Rent or mortgage/taxes (41 percent) and heating costs (18 percent) represent over half of a households’ monthly income and many homes are in need of repair.

- Unemployment and underemployment are high and many adults lack a high school diploma or GED. Lack of transportation and child care limit opportunities for school and work.
- A large number of adults and children do not have enough to eat. Over one-half of respondents have accessed a food pantry in the last year and nearly one-quarter of these individuals rely on a food pantry weekly.
- A large number of adults and children are disabled and behavioral problems continue to be an issue among children.
- Money, livable wage jobs and affordable housing appear to be the most frequently mentioned needs.
- Most perceive the strength of their families to be in their love, support for each other and sticking together; community strengths include existing community agencies and programs which provide assistance and the friendly, small town, safe environment.

Section 4

HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY AND STAFF SURVEY FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

To enhance the community needs assessment of the low-income population, two surveys were conducted during June 2009, one to other Human Service providers in Cayuga and Seneca counties and one to Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency staff members.

- A total of 85 agency surveys were mailed to other human service providers within the two counties; a total of 24 agency surveys were returned, representing an agency response rate of 28 percent. (Two of the agency respondents were from municipalities and indicated they did not feel qualified to respond to the questionnaire.) In addition to the mailed agency survey, telephone interviews were conducted with 6 community leaders that were identified as key informants.
- With regard to the staff survey, 93 of 115 staff members responded, a commendable staff response rate of 81 percent. Of the staff respondents, 7 did not complete the survey because their job responsibilities did not include contact with customers, resulting in 86 completed staff survey questionnaires.

Findings are summarized in this section.

AGENCY SURVEY/KEY INFORMANT FINDINGS

Services provided by agencies responding to the survey are highlighted in the table on the next page. Agencies responding more often offer Financial Assistance, Education, and Job Training.

% of Agency Respondents*

<u>Service</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Financial Assistance	29%	24%
Education	24%	35%
Job Training	24%	15%
Family Support	19%	32%
General Human Services	19%	27%
Emergency Food, Clothing Shelter	19%	24%
Youth Development	19%	21%
Transportation	14%	15%
Elderly Services	14%	15%
Employment	14%	12%
Nutrition Service	10%	18%
Recreational or Cultural Programs	10%	15%
Mental Health Care	10%	15%
Housing Repair/Energy	10%	15%
Housing	10%	9%
Physical Health Care	10%	9%
Substance Abuse Programs	5%	24%
Child Care	5%	15%
Legal Services	5%	9%
Public Safety	5%	6%
Consumer Protection	5%	3%

* Multiple Responses Allowed.

Pressing Needs of the Low-income Population

When asked to identify the most pressing needs of the low-income population in their county, agency survey respondents most often mentioned the need for housing, jobs, and healthcare/insurance, all of which were mentioned by several key informants as well. These were the same top three mentions as three years ago. Transportation, education, and financial assistance were also mentioned by several. By frequency of mention, top responses were as follows:

Most Pressing Needs

Highest Needs:	Affordable Housing	57%
	Employment/Training	43%
	Health Care/Insurance	43%
High Needs:	Transportation	33%
	Education	19%
	Financial Assistance	19%

Respondent comments include the following:

- Affordable Housing
“Shortage of affordable housing. Rental properties and assistance for 18-21 year olds.”
“Access to decent housing.”
“Appropriate, affordable housing.”
- Employment/Training
“Opportunity to earn a living wage - jobs, skills.”
“Access to educational training opportunities for employment.”
“Education, training/employment opportunities.”
- Health Care/Insurance
“Access to care issues, dental.”
“Medical coverage for those slightly over income limits.”
“Low cost health insurance.”

Service Gaps

Agency respondents provided information on services statistics and waiting lists. Based on the agencies responding, the largest waiting lists appear to be for housing and residential programs for special populations, including:

- US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8 Assistance (waiting list of 100).
- NYS Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) Residential Program (waiting list of 100).
- HUD HOME Program (waiting list of 35).
- NYS Affordable Housing Program (waiting list of 35)

Additionally, waiting lists exist for home-based services for special needs populations, including:

- NYS Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly (waiting list of 15).
- NYS Access to Home Program for home modifications for the elderly and disabled (waiting list of 15).
- Community Services for the developmentally and physically disabled (waiting list of 15).

Agency respondents were asked to identify the service gaps they have encountered, given the programs they provide. The top 2 mentioned gaps by area are shown below.

Northern Cayuga County (n=15)	Southern Cayuga County (n=14)	Auburn (n=13)	Seneca County (n=2)
Transportation	Transportation	Transportation	Emergency Housing
Financial Assistance	Healthcare/Insurance	Affordable Housing	Domestic Violence Services

Examples of comments given include:

- Transportation
“Transportation, particularly for children/youth and elderly is not adequate. It is extremely difficult for rural residents to access services.”
“Transportation access to county offices (Social Security, DSS, etc.) and majority of other services (mental health, medical treatment, etc.) Weedsport, Port Byron, Martville have little to no access to transportation. There are no satellite offices for service.”
- Healthcare/Insurance
“Health Hospitalization. Access to medical specialties. Mental health.”
“Many without basic medical coverage. Unaware of county/state prescription discount cards.”
- Affordable Housing/Emergency Housing
“More rental subsidies are needed.”
“Availability of emergency or transitional housing.”
“Transitional housing especially for kids coming out of foster care and young teen parents.”

Across the board, lack of funding is the most frequent reason given for service gaps. The rural nature of Northern and Southern Cayuga County was also cited as a reason for service gaps.

Trends in Needs

Agency respondents were asked to comment on their perception of the changing needs of certain sub-segments of the low-income population over the last three years. Population groups with the greatest level of increased need mentions were the mentally ill, elderly, youth, and adults.

<u>Population Group</u>	<u>% Noting Needs Increased Dramatically</u>
Individuals with psychiatric or mental health problems	38%
Elderly (55+)	31%
Youth (16-24)	25%
Adults (25-54)	24%
Teens (11-15)	20%
Rural households	20%
Migrant/transient households	18%
Non-English speaking households	17%
Children (5-10)	15%
Victims of crime	15%
Physically or developmentally disabled individuals	13%
Prison-related households	9%
Children (4 years old)	8%

Comments received on specific population needs include the following:

- Individuals with psychiatric or mental health problems
“I can only report on mental health, really. A grant ended in '08, after 3 years of service, which provided a MOST counselor to grades 6-12 in Port Byron, So. Cayuga, Union Springs & Auburn, and the other grant serving K-5 in Auburn (1 counselor per school) also ended after 3 years. There is a need for school-based mental health services in general.”
“Timely access to Mental Health services is a problem.”
- Elderly

“Senior Nutrition program home-delivered meals served 102 more seniors in 2008 than in 2007. Number of meals - 12,223 more meals served in 2008 than in 2007.”

“Outreach and education for the elderly is needed; some existing services need to change; quality of life issues need to be addressed.”

“Need for assisted living in Seneca County.”

- Youth (16-24)

“Need for jobs for low income youth and adults.”

- Adults (25-54)

“Economic down-turn has created a population of people "newly poor", where perhaps they have some assets, but have a general lack of knowledge of services available to meet their needs or a degree of pride that prevents them from accessing services.”

“The obvious one is job opportunities and being forced out of housing due to lack of job opportunities.”

Respondents were also asked how needs areas have changed in the last three years. Needs for an adequate family living wage, for mental health services and for services to address children’s behavioral issues are reported to have increased most dramatically: as noted in the next table. These three needs were among the top four needs (together with Quality, Affordable Housing) that were also mentioned in 2006 as having increased the most dramatically.

<u>Needs Area</u>	<u>% Noting Needs Increased Dramatically</u>
Adequate Family Living Wage	60%
Need for Mental Health Service	50%
Need to Address Children's Behavioral Problems	47%
Focused Job Training	41%
Quality Child Care	40%
General Job Training	39%
Need for Quality, Affordable Housing	35%
School Readiness Issues Prior to Kindergarten	33%
Homeless Services:	
for homeless adults	33%
for homeless teens	31%
Need for Basic Literacy Skills	29%
Youth Services	
for youth 16-21	6%
for youth 11-15	7%
for youth 5-10	7%
for youth 3-4	7%

Mental Health Needs

Similarly, agency respondents were asked if the mental health needs of their customers have changed over the past three years. *Three-quarters of the 19 respondents indicated the mental health needs increased over the past three years (74 percent, similar to 77 percent in 2006).*

Children's Behavioral and Emotional Concerns

Agency respondents were asked how the number of children with behavior and emotional issues has changed over the last three years. *Of the 17 respondents to this question, an astounding 94% indicate these problems have increased.*

Reasons for School Dropouts

Agency respondents were asked to identify the key reasons why youth drop out of school. *The primary reason given was lack of support, particularly parental support.* Other reasons relate to motivation, peer pressure, and substance abuse, as seen below:

Lack of parental or other support	33%
Lack of interest/motivation	17%
Peer pressure	11%
Substance abuse	11%

Nutritional Needs/Obesity

Agency respondents were asked to comment on their perception of the changing needs of nutrition and obesity of the low-income population. *As indicated in the following table, the majority of 18 respondents to the nutrition question and 17 respondents to the obesity question think that these problems have increased over the past three years. Based on these responses, nutritional needs appear to have grown in the past three years.*

	<u>Change in Nutritional Needs</u>		<u>Change in Obesity Problem</u>
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2009</u>
Increased	72%	55%	88%
Stayed the Same	17%	39%	6%
Decreased	11%	7%	6%

Several respondents and key informants noted the increased need for nutrition programs including demand for food stamps, school lunch programs, senior nutrition programs, and food pantry requests.

Resources Available

When asked if their agencies have eliminated services or jobs in the past three years, 38% of 21 respondents indicated they eliminated services and, similarly, 38% indicated they have eliminated jobs. (One agency reported a 20-25 percent cut in programs.) One-third of respondents believe that the availability of programming space has limited their agency’s ability to provide needed services.

Family Strengths

When asked for comments on the strengths they see in the families to which they provide services, many agency respondents commented on family values and support as well as resiliency and motivation. Example comments include the following:

- **Family Values/Support**
“Families that we work with continue to hold a strong belief in advancement through educational opportunities. Parents hold these values but at times are challenged to support and follow through due to financial limitations and access.”
“Strong sense of family belonging. Desire to improve conditions at home, school, community.”
“Willingness to work together, strong family values, desire to remain independent.”
- **Resiliency**
“Resiliency - in general. Always surprised that individuals with low paying jobs who keep finding another job when laid off - sometimes several in one year.”
- **Motivation**
“Families are generally bright, motivated and knowledgeable about resources.”
“Cohesiveness. Goals. Pride in accomplishment.”

Community Strengths

Many respondents mentioned the collaborative environment as a key strength of the community. This was clearly stated in the key informant interviews as well. Example comments include the following:

- “Human services agencies work together to get needed services for individuals and families.”*
- “Providers work well together. Leadership knows each other. There is a lot less worry about turf.”*
- “Cooperative relationships of agencies – looking to serve the best interest of the community – tremendous cooperative feeling.”*

Additionally, several mentioned the caring nature of the community:

- “Bright spot – generous and caring community that shows a lot of compassion.”*
- “Very caring community.”*
- “This community is very giving and pulls together.”*

STAFF SURVEY FINDINGS

Staff of the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency responded to a survey similar to that completed by agency respondents. As noted above, 86 staff members completed this survey. Findings are summarized below.

Pressing Needs of the Low-income Population

When asked to identify the most pressing needs of the low-income population in their county, staff respondents often mentioned the need for employment, affordable housing, and transportation, all of which were also mentioned as most pressing needs three years ago. By frequency of mention, high needs responses were as follows:

Most Pressing Needs

Highest Needs:	Employment/Living Wage	51%
	Decent Affordable Housing	43%
	Transportation	35%
High Needs:	Food/Nutrition	19%
	Affordable, Quality Child Care	15%
	Financial Assistance	14%
	Better Access to Services	13%
	Education	12%

Respondent comments on these needs areas include the following:

- Employment/Living Wage
“Jobs that offer wages families can live on!”
“Having more jobs available in this area.”
“Lack of jobs with living wages.”
“Lack of full-time employment.”
- Affordable Housing
“Lack of affordable/livable homes/apartments.”
“Affordable, decent housing.”
“Affordable housing especially for those on public assistance.”
- Transportation
“Transportation - expanded bus route and time.”
“Transportation in the rural areas.”
“Lack of transportation.”

- Food/Nutrition
“More food services.”
“The most requested is our food pantry.”
“Nutrition education/food pantry to meet needs.”
“Having enough food for their family.”
- Affordable, Quality Child Care
“Lack of dependable childcare providers.”
“Dependable child care at a fair cost.”
“Obtaining child care.”
- Financial Assistance
“Rental assistance.”
“Rising economy costs.”
“Ways to stretch budgets that are already too tight.”
- Better Access to Services
“Knowledge of the services available to them .”
“Making using DHHS more comfortable, informative and less stressful.”
“Access to services in isolated rural pockets.”
- Education
“Education – to improve job skills.”
“Accessible, flexible education programs with child care.”
“Lack of education.”

Service Gaps

Staff members were asked in an unaided question to identify service gaps by different locations in Cayuga and Seneca County.

- Outside of Auburn, the most frequently mentioned gaps in service mentioned were transportation and access to services, typically followed by affordable housing, employment, and healthcare services.
- In Auburn, affordable housing is at the top of the list, followed by access to services, employment, and healthcare services.

By frequency of top-of-mind mention, gaps noted by staff were as follows:

Service Gap	Northern Cayuga County (n=52)	Southern Cayuga County (n=40)	Auburn (n=53)	Seneca County (n=12)
Transportation	44%	50%	9%	42%
Access to services	39%	28%	23%	42%
Affordable housing	15%	15%	34%	17%
Employment	10%	15%	17%	8%
Health care/Health insurance	8%	20%	13%	25%
Food/Nutrition	8%	10%	2%	
Programs for children	8%		2%	
Services for the homeless	6%		8%	8%
Emergency services	6%	13%		
Dental care	4%	8%	6%	
Education	4%			
Financial assistance	4%		2%	8%
Quality child care	4%	5%	9%	
Lack of program resources	4%	10%	8%	
Energy/weatherization	2%			
Sanctioned/Above guidelines	2%	5%		
Parenting			2%	
Recreation/Programs for teens			6%	

The most frequently mentioned reasons given for these gaps not being addressed are lack of program funding/resources and difficulty in accessing programs, either because of lack of information, transportation, or other reasons. A summary of the most frequent reasons given for service gaps are shown below.

Reasons for Gap	Northern Cayuga County (n=46)	Southern Cayuga County (n=37)	Auburn (n=45)	Seneca County (n=16)
Lack of funds	46%	27%	29%	25%
Transportation	24%	16%	2%	6%
Rural area	15%	16%		6%
Lack of staffing/volunteers	11%	16%	7%	13%
Space restrictions	9%	3%		
Sanctioned/above guidelines	7%	3%	13%	
Housing availability	7%	14%	4%	6%
Services difficult to access	2%	35%	17%	19%

Trends in Needs

Staff respondents were asked to comment on their perception of the changing needs of certain sub-segments of the low-income population. Dramatic increases in need over the last three years are particularly noted for low-income youths (16-24 years old), adults, and individuals with psychiatric or mental health problems. However, one-half or more of staff also indicated dramatic increases in needs for the elderly, rural households, all ages of children, minority households, households with physically or developmentally disabled individuals, and crime victims.

<u>Population Group</u>	<u>% Noting Needs Increased Dramatically</u>
Youths (16-24 years)	73%
Adults (21-54 years)	71%
Individuals with psychiatric or mental health problems	71%
Elderly (55+ years)	66%
Rural households	62%
Teens (11-15 years)	60%
Children, elementary age (5-10 years)	58%
Toddler (18 months- 3 years)	57%
Minority households	56%
Physically or developmentally disabled individuals	56%
Children, (4 years)	55%
Victims of crime	55%
Infants (0-18 months)	52%
Prison-related households	43%
Migrant/transient households	42%
Non-English speaking households	37%

Specific comments on the areas of greatest increase include the following:

- Low-income Youths
 “More teenage parents and families.”
 “Small employers are not able to hire young people and others.”
 “Social, emotional, drug/alcohol abuse, high dropout rate.”

“There is a lack of education, kids getting pushed through school unable to read.”

- Low-income Adults

“18 to 54 yrs. People and families that were making it on their income are no longer - increases in food, personal items (diapers, toilet paper, shampoo, etc.) housing, utilities. prescriptions, transportation.”

“Because of the economy, basic needs (food, etc.) are getting harder for families to get.”

“Families that once had 2 working adults. Full time working adults are losing jobs due to the present economy.”

“I see more families with multiple children under 5 years old which have no income or very little income. These families are in need of parenting classes, food, proper shelter and proper medical care.”

- Individuals with Psychiatric or Mental Health Problems

“It seems so many more people are diagnosed and on meds for mental illnesses.”

“Many young adults are facing mental health issues.”

“Mental health issues. Lack of employment opportunities.”

“Due to the lack of transportation and the high number of people needing assistance, there are long waits to receive MH care.”

Respondents were also asked how areas of need have changed in the last three years. Needs for an adequate family living wage, for affordable housing, behavioral problems in children, and need for quality child care have increased most dramatically, as noted by at least 75% of staff, as shown in the next table. (The top three needs indicated in the next table were also the top three noted in 2006.)

<u>Needs Area</u>	<u>% Noting Need Increased Dramatically</u>
Adequate Family Living Wage	88%
Need for Quality, Affordable Housing	82%
Need to Address Children’s Behavioral Problems	80%
Need for Quality Child Care	78%
Need for Mental Health Services	74%
Emergency Shelter Needs for Homeless Adults	69%
Need for Basic Literacy Skills	66%
Need for Children or Youth Services	
for children < 3 years old	63%
for children 3-4	60%
for youth 5-10	55%
for youth 11-15	55%
for youth 16-21	59%
Emergency Shelter Needs for Homeless Teens	61%
Need to Address School Readiness Issues prior to Kindergarten	60%

Comments received on dramatic increases in needs areas include the following:

- Adequate Family Living Wage
“Families/people are struggling with working minimum wage jobs and affording basic needs, housing, food, prescriptions and transportation.”
“Families are having a hard time making ends meet. They cannot afford to live on what their wages are.”
“Especially in the current economy many families need good housing and decent wages.”
“The customer's wages a lot of times cannot find affordable housing with the economy the way it is. We have more 18-21 yr olds that need help.”
- Quality, Affordable Housing
“Quality, affordable housing is extremely difficult to find - good landlords are hard to find.”
“Housing has become very expensive and wages have not gone up to help with that. Also, day care is very expensive.”
“Since people are having financial problems, it's harder to afford housing and good child care.”

- Child Behavioral Issues
“Social emotional, behavioral problems with children.”
“More behavior problems, children not being reached before the age of 4 yrs, lack of community knowledge of benefits and need for services for 3 yr olds. Children coming to Head Start not served by early intervention but have delays in developmental.”
“Lack of family support and structure along with high family stress has an effect on children's behavior.”
“Behavioral problems in children, teen homelessness.”
- Quality Child Care
“The need for quality day care, again I hope we will be able to work with children and families in the early Head Start program in the near future.”
“More mothers on work force - more affordable quality day-care needed.”
“Good quality daycare is difficult to find. Children are not learning the skills to succeed at home causing need to further services for these children.”
“Although the job market is low, the parents who have jobs cannot afford quality child care and end up quitting their job and getting into more financial stresses.”

Children’s Behavioral and Emotional Concerns

Staff respondents were specifically asked how the number of children with behavior and emotional issues has changed over the last three years. *Responses indicate a large concern with children’s behavior, similar to 2006 when 93 percent indicated these issues had increased.*

Increased Greatly	50%
Increased Some	32%
Stayed the Same	17%
Decreased Some	1%
Decreased Greatly	0%

Mental Health Needs

Staff respondents were also asked if they have seen a change in the mental health needs of their customers. *As indicated in the following table, the majority of respondents think that the mental health needs have increased over the past three years, comparable to the 82 percent response in 2006.*

Increased Greatly	37%
Increased Some	41%

Stayed the Same	19%
Decreased Some	3%
Decreased Greatly	0%

Nutritional Needs/Obesity

Staff respondents were asked to comment on their perception of the changing needs of nutrition and obesity of the low-income population. *As indicated in the following table, most respondents think that these problems have increased over the past three years, similar to the concern noted in 2006.*

	Change in Nutritional Needs		Change in Obesity Problem
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2009</u>
Increased Greatly	28%	32%	26%
Increased Some	42%	37%	48%
Stayed the Same	22%	28%	25%
Decreased Some	6%	2%	0%
Decreased Greatly	2%	1%	1%

Reasons for Dropouts

Staff were asked to identify the key reasons why youth drop out of school. *The primary two reasons given were lack of family support and lack of support from the school.*

Lack of parental guidance/family support	48%
Lack of encouragement/support from the school	35%
Teen pregnancy	22%
Lack of motivation	21%
Low academic achievement	20%
Peer pressure	16%
Need to work	14%
Substance abuse	14%
Other	17%

Racial Discrimination

When staff respondents were asked *“Have you identified racial discrimination as a barrier for any of your customers?”* 29 percent of respondents indicated YES, similar to 2006. Among those indicating racial discrimination (n=23), respondents identified housing and employment as the areas that have the biggest discrimination barrier for customers.

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>
Housing	65%	80%
Employment	52%	44%
Shopping	26%	56%
Accessing Services	26%	44%
Recreational Activities	4%	16%
Other	17%	16%

Respondent comments about some other areas that have racial discrimination include the following:

“Day to day attitudes of public in general, service providers, an underlying skepticism of others not like themselves.”

“Education.”

“Law enforcement interaction, fear of turning to them.”

Family Strengths

When asked about the strengths they see in the families they serve, many staff members indicated strong family ties/love, a willingness to collaborate or help, and a determination to succeed. Sample comments include the following:

- **Strong Family Ties/Love**
“Close family ties and supports, independence, a desire to live in a rural area despite the lack of services.”
“Love their children, want what is best for their family.”
“Family connections to provide support.”
- **Willingness to Collaborate/Help**
“Recognition of needs/services. Willingness to accept help.”
“Good communication, knowledge of services available, willingness to use services.”
“Willingness to work, to improve their life situations.”
- **Determination to Succeed**
“Desire to succeed. Desire to be trained in job skills.”
“Becoming more self-sufficient. Buying homes, taking classes to prepare for GED, receiving a GED and higher education.”
“Desire to provide for their family. They see the education of their children as a priority.”

Community Strengths

When asked about community strengths, staff often mentioned the number of agencies and programs available in the community, willingness for community entities to collaborate and help each other and the small size of the community:

- **Number of Agencies/Programs**
“To have more agencies working together to help the customers.”
“Our community has numerous services that a majority of the public may not be aware of. We need to get the word out more.”
“We have many dedicated organizations and individuals who collaborate to ensure quality of care for customers. We should continue to build on that and encourage multi-dimensional partnerships with service providers including local school districts.”
- **Willingness to Collaborate/Help**
“Supportive, willingness to collaborate. Strong networks.”
“People in our community are willing to help each other out. Every week a fund raiser is being held to assist the families coping with medical and financial needs.”
“Agencies in Seneca County collaborate very well often making referrals to other agencies.”
“Community members are giving.”
- **Small Community**
“Small community and very close as to everybody, know everyone.”
“Community has a strong family base.”
“People genuinely like living in Auburn. Neighborhoods care about their street when they see that public works cares too.”
“Close knit communities. Availability of services available to low income families.”

Additional Changes

When asked to provide additional comments on how needs in the two counties have changed over the last three years, respondents most often indicated the greatest areas of need include better paying jobs. Other comments often related to increased needs related to increased costs and the economy.

- **Better Jobs**
“There is a higher need for employment for lower income families. Better awareness of job training programs available.”

“The needs in all areas have increased because of the failing economy. Jobs are hard to come by.”

“Over the last 3 years, there has been an increase in unemployment which has led to more dependence on public services.”

“More people are in need. Jobs are scarce. We had high hopes when Bass Pro moved in. Another strip mall was built but a store left during Christmas. Our mall has been losing stores. The rent is high.”

“It seems we have less jobs. Mid income families are increasingly becoming low income (due to job loss, having to take lower-paying jobs).”

- Other Comments

“We really need things that are less expensive for our youth and teens. Parents cannot afford the few things that are out there.”

“Since January 2009 I’ve seen more homelessness, food and utility people.”

“I guess just more help with security deposits for those who are hard workers. More programs for the working family.”

“More working class families need a wider variety of services to avoid slipping into poverty.”

SUMMARY

As in the last needs assessment, Human Services Agency and CSCAA Staff respondents continue to see affordable housing, good jobs and transportation as key needs of the low income population. These needs have been exacerbated by the poor national and local economy.

Other needs that respondents believe particularly warrant attention include the need to address behavioral problems of young children, mental health issues, problems related to nutrition and obesity, and access to health care services.

Programs need to continue to build on the collaborative strengths of the community as well as on parents’ desires to improve their situations and those of their children.

Section 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of the needs of the low-income population in Cayuga and Seneca counties. It has done this by seeking broad participation from individuals currently being served through Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency programs, by gathering the expert opinions of representatives of many human services agencies in both counties, as well as from Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency staff.

This community needs assessment results in the characterization of Cayuga and Seneca counties as rural counties with limited employment opportunities and below average incomes. The typical needs of the rural poor continue to be evidenced in these counties, particularly needs related to housing, living wage jobs, transportation for access to services, child care, and access to mental health, dental and medical services.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

Demographic trends in these two counties include the following:

- Population change in both counties has been minimal with Cayuga County decreasing by about 2% and Seneca County growing by about 2%.
- Both counties have slightly higher percentages of elderly than the state average; this population tends to have a high level of need compared to younger populations.
- Both counties have below average income levels for New York State.
- The percentage of the population residing below the poverty level is well above the average for counties in New York State outside of New York City.
- Jobs that provide a living wage continue to be a frequently mentioned need of the low-income population in both counties.

PARTICIPANT SURVEY FINDINGS RELATED TO NEED

Key findings of the participant survey shed light on the level of need of the low-income population in Cayuga and Seneca counties.

- Program participants experience numerous problems, in particular financial issues (40 percent), family issues (33 percent), and loss of jobs (24 percent).
- Rent or mortgage/taxes (41 percent) and heating costs (18 percent) represent over half of a households' monthly income and many homes are in need of repair.
- Unemployment and underemployment are high and many adults lack a high school diploma or GED. Lack of transportation and child care limit opportunities for school and work.
- A large number of adults and children do not have enough to eat.
- A large number of adults and children are disabled and behavioral problems continue to be an issue among children.
- Money, livable wage jobs, and affordable housing appear to be the most frequently mentioned needs.
- Most perceive the strength of their families to be in their love, support for each other, and sticking together; community strengths include existing community agencies and programs which provide assistance and the friendly, small town, safe environment.

HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY AND STAFF SURVEY FINDINGS

The following summarizes the findings of the surveys of Human Services Providers and staff:

- Human Services Agency and CSCAA staff respondents continue to see affordable housing, good jobs, and transportation as key needs of the low income population. These needs have been exacerbated by the poor national and local economy.
- Other needs that respondents believe particularly warrant attention include the need to address behavioral problems of young children, mental health issues, problems related to nutrition and obesity, and access to health care services.
- Programs need to continue to build on the collaborative strengths of the community, as well as on parents' desires to improve their situations and those of their children.

CROSS CUTTING CONCLUSIONS

Priority needs of the low-income population identified by this study include the following:

- **Financial Assistance.** Financial problems were cited by 40 percent of program participants. Reported household income is typically under \$18,000 per year, with over one-third at or below \$12,000 a year. Over one-third indicated a decrease in income last year. Medicaid/Medicare and Food Stamps are programs used by a large percentage of this population. 41 percent of respondents indicate that they had to choose between purchasing essential food items and paying a bill necessary to meet their basic needs in the last year, and 57 percent report that they accessed a food pantry over the past 12 months, suggesting severe financial problems.
- **Housing and Housing Repair.** Both counties have old housing stock, suggesting overall needs for weatherization and repair. As one of the highest needs stated by agency and staff respondents, housing and housing repair is one of the most important aspects that affect the low-income population. Low-income families report spending a large percentage (41 percent) of their household income on rent and mortgage. Nearly one-third of program participants indicate that their houses need minor repairs and 18 percent indicate they are in need of major repairs.
- **Jobs and Training.** The need for employment and/or better income job opportunities was mentioned by the majority of program participants and also cited as one of the highest pressing needs by agency and staff respondents in both counties. 27 percent of respondents indicate that one of their household members was unemployed. The need for education and training is also frequently mentioned; 17 percent of respondents indicate that their household members would like to obtain a GED or attend training or education programs. However, they also state barriers to doing so, most often mentioning child care, transportation constraints, and time concerns.
- **Services for Children.** Child care is indicated as one of the high needs by staff respondents. Child care is also cited by program participants as one of the largest barriers to employment and also a limitation to their educational opportunities. Nearly two-thirds of respondents who have children less than 12 years old state that they would use a day care center or nursery/preschool, if a good and affordable one were available in their area. Quality, affordability, and accessibility, however, were the most common concerns for respondents when considering such a place. Nearly one-quarter of respondents indicate that they have children with disabilities, many of whom are perceived to be inadequately served. Child behavior issues are also a major concern, with 94 percent of agency

respondents and 82 percent of staff respondents indicating that child behavior and emotional issues have increased in the last three years.

- **Transportation.** Transportation was one of the most pressing needs identified by agency respondents and by staff respondents. One-quarter of participants do not have direct access to a car and rely on rides with friends and family, bus, taxi and walking. Nearly half of program participants looking for work report that transportation has been a major barrier to their employment.

Other areas of high need include the following:

- **Health/Dental/Mental Health Care.** Health care and insurance were identified by the agency respondents as pressing needs. Program participants and staff respondents also mentioned the need for health providers/insurance quite frequently. Some participants indicate that they do not have access to health (12 percent) or dental care (20 percent) when they need it, primarily due to lack of insurance, expense, or provider not accepting Medicaid. Three-quarters of agency and staff respondents indicate that issues of mental health have increased over the last three years and one-fifth of participants indicate that a household member has a mental health problem.
- **Utilities.** Participants spend an average of 18 percent of their monthly income on heating bills. Nearly one-fifth of participants have had their utilities turned off in the past year and 36 percent are experiencing high heat or electricity bills at their current residence and 37 percent have past due balances for utilities.

It is expected that the above findings on priority needs will be used by the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency to plan and prioritize its programming and related financial resource development for the next several years, with the overall goal of alleviating the community needs identified.

APPENDIX:
COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEYS

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.

ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Your answers to the questions below will assist us in designing services to better meet the needs of Cayuga and Seneca County residents. Please fill in the blanks or circle the appropriate responses to the questions below. **Be assured that your responses will be treated confidentially.**

BACKGROUND

1. a. How long have you lived in Cayuga County? _____ Years _____ Months
OR
b. How long have you lived in Seneca County? _____ Years _____ Months
c. If less than 3 years, where did you reside before moving here? _____
2. a. How many months of the year do you live here? _____ Months
b. If less than 12 months, where do you live the rest of the year? _____
3. a. What is your ZIP CODE? _____ b. In what town or village do you live? _____
c. In what school district do you live? _____
4. Which of the following best describes your household? (*Circle one*)
 - 1.) Two parent household with children
 - 2.) Single parent (male) household with children
 - 3.) Single parent (female) household with children
 - 4.) Single person household with no children
 - 5.) Couple with no children
 - 6.) Related or non-related adults with children
 - 7.) Related adults without children
 - 8.) Non-related adults without children
 - 9.) Other, please explain _____
5. Please identify all members of your household by relationship (**not name**) in the space provided below. (Example: self, mother, father, sister, brother, daughter, son, in-law, roommate, friend, etc.), sex, age, whether or not they have a diagnosed disability, education, occupation, and race/ethnic origin. *Please don't forget to list yourself.* Use the following codes for race/ethnic origin: African American, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, Multi-racial, other. (Additional space is available on the back, if necessary.)

Relationship	Sex M/F	Age	Diagnosed Disability Y/N	Highest Grade Completed	Occupation	Reads at 8 th Grade level or higher? Y/N	Race/ Ethnicity
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Adults (18 & over)

	M F		Y N			Y N	
	M F		Y N			Y N	
	M F		Y N			Y N	
	M F		Y N			Y N	
	M F		Y N			Y N	

Children (under 18)

	Sex M/F	Age	Diagnosed Disability Y/N	Highest Grade Completed	Is child in school? Y/N	Does child read on grade level? What grade?	
	M F		Y N		Y N	Y N	
	M F		Y N		Y N	Y N	
	M F		Y N		Y N	Y N	
	M F		Y N		Y N	Y N	
	M F		Y N		Y N	Y N	
	M F		Y N		Y N	Y N	
	M F		Y N		Y N	Y N	
	M F		Y N		Y N	Y N	

6. What is the primary language spoken in your household? 1.) English 2.) Spanish 3.) Other _____
7. What, if any, other languages are spoken in your household? 1.) English 2.) Spanish 3.) Other _____
8. Would anyone in your household be interested in classes in English as a second language? 1.) Yes 2.) No

9. Do you live less than 5 miles from: (Circle a reply for each of the following)

- a. The nearest doctor? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- b. The nearest dentist? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- c. The nearest mental health services? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- d. The Post Office? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- e. A grocery store? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- f. A hospital? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- g. A department store? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- h. A pay phone? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- i. A public school? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- j. A bank? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- k. From the County Office Building? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- l. Childcare? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- m. Other human services agencies? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- n. A soup kitchen? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- o. A food pantry? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
- p. The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know

10. a. Do you have a working landline telephone in your home? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. Does someone in your household have a cellular phone? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- c. Do you have a working computer in your home? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- d. Are you connected to the Internet? 1.) Yes 2.) No

11. a. Do you, or someone in your household, own a reliable car? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. What type of transportation do you use? (Circle all that apply)

- 1.) Car
- 2.) Taxi
- 3.) Bus
- 4.) Rides with friends/family
- 5.) SCAT Van
- 6.) Walking
- 7.) Nothing
- 8.) Other, explain _____

- c. Is the bus stop less than one mile from your home? 1.) Yes 2.) No

12. What newspapers, Pennysavers, or newsletters, if any, come to your home? (Circle all that apply)

- 1.) *The Citizen* 2.) *Pennysaver* 3.) *Shopper's Guide* 4.) Other, explain _____

13. Where do you obtain most of your information on county services such as: Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency; Women, Infants and Children (WIC); Department of Health and Human Services? (Circle all that apply)

- 1.) Radio
- 2.) Television
- 3.) Newspaper
- 4.) Pennysaver
- 5.) Internet
- 6.) School
- 7.) Phone book
- 8.) Family
- 9.) Friends/neighbors
- 10.) Referrals
- 11.) Other _____

14. a. Approximately what is your household's total monthly gross income from all sources?

\$

b. In the last year, has your household income increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

- 1.) Increased
- 2.) Decreased
- 3.) Stayed the same

15. Are any members of your family currently incarcerated in Cayuga or Seneca County? 1.) Yes 2.) No

a. If yes, would you be interested in networking with other families with incarcerated family members?

- 1.) Yes
- 2.) No

21. a. Have you been evicted from your place of residence in the last two years? 1.) Yes 2.) No
 b. If yes, why? _____
 c. Have you been homeless in the past two years? 1.) Yes 2.) No
 d. If yes, why? _____
 e. If yes, for how long? _____
 f. If yes, how often? _____
22. a. If you rent, approximately how much do you spend on rent each month? \$ _____
 b. If you own your house, approximately how much do you spend on mortgage and taxes each month?
 Mortgage \$ _____ Taxes \$ _____
23. What fuel do you use as your primary source of heat?
 1.) Natural gas 5.) Wood
 2.) Fuel Oil 6.) Electricity
 3.) Kerosene 7.) Other _____
 4.) Propane
- a. Do you supplement your heat with space heaters? 1.) Yes 2.) No
 If yes, what type of space heater? 1.) Electric 2.) Kerosene 3.) Wood 4.) Other _____
24. a. Do you pay for heat? 1.) Yes 2.) No
 b. If you pay for heat, about how much do you spend on heating each month? _____
 c. If you do not heat with electricity, about how much do you spend on electricity each month? _____
 d. Do you currently have a past due balance for utilities? 1.) Yes 2.) No
 e. How far behind are you in your utility bill?
 1.) \$0 3.) \$101-\$250 5.) \$501-\$1000
 2.) \$1-\$100 4.) \$251-\$500 6.) \$1000 +
 f. Have your utilities been shut off in the past year? 1.) Yes. How many times? _____ 2.) No
 g. If yes, how was this rectified?
 1.) Account transferred into child's name 3.) HEAP assistance obtained
 2.) Account transferred to another adult 4.) Other: _____
25. Are you currently experiencing any of the following conditions in your place of residence? (*Circle a response for each of the following*)
- a. In need of major repair? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 If yes, please explain: _____
- b. In need of minor repairs? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 If yes, please explain: _____
- c. Too far from work? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 d. Too small for family size? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 e. Bad odor? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 f. Do you have running water? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 g. Do you have working toilets? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 h. High heating bill? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 i. High electric bill? 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know
 j. Other? _____ 1.) Yes 2.) No 3.) Don't know

26. If you would like to move but have not, why haven't you? (*Circle all that apply*)

- 1.) Poor quality to choose from
- 2.) Waiting list
- 3.) Rents too high
- 4.) Moving is too expensive
- 5.) Lack of security deposit
- 6.) Lack of choice in rural area
- 7.) Legal issues
- 8.) Like my present neighborhood
- 9.) Racial discrimination
- 10.) Other forms of discrimination
- 11.) Lack of vehicle to move
- 12.) Pets not allowed
- 13.) Lack of references
- 14.) Other _____

27. Is your home insulated with rolled or blown cellulose?

- 1.) Yes, fully
- 2.) Yes, partially
- 3.) No
- 4.) Don't know

28. Which of the following appliances do you have in working condition? (Circle all that apply)

- 1.) Stove burners
- 2.) Oven
- 3.) Refrigerator
- 4.) Washer
- 5.) Dryer
- 6.) Hot water heater
- 7.) Stand-alone freezer
- 8.) Microwave oven
- 9.) Window air conditioner
- 10.) Fans
- 11.) Furnace or boiler
- 12.) Well pump
- 13.) Other _____

29. Does your home have? (Circle all that apply)

- 1.) Broken or missing windows
- 2.) Doors that are warped or do not close properly
- 3.) Storm doors
- 4.) Storm windows
- 5.) Fridge over 10 years old
- 6.) Furnace over 10 years old
- 7.) Water heater over 10 years old
- 8.) None of the above

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

30. a. Are there any members of your household who would like to obtain a GED? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If yes, are there barriers to doing so? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- If yes, what? _____
- c. Are there members of your household who would like to attend training or educational programs? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- d. If yes, are there barriers to doing so? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- If yes, what? _____

31. Please indicate for each person, 18 years of age or older in your household, the following information:

	Person 1		Person 2		Person 3		Person 4		Person 5		Person 6	
	Yes	✓	Yes	✓	Yes	✓	Yes	✓	Yes	✓	Yes	✓
1. Working full-time/permanent	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
2. Working full-time/temporary	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
3. Working part-time/permanent	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
4. Working part-time/temporary	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
5. Self-employed	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
6. Earning minimum wage or less	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
7. Received health insurance benefits	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
8. Temporarily laid off	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
9. Unemployed	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
10. Homemaker	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
11. Student/full-time	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
12. Student/part-time	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
13. Disabled	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
14. Welfare-to-work Program	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
15. Retired	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	

32. a. Do you have employment skills but just can't find the right job? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. If yes, what kind of skills? _____

c. Have you faced any of the following barriers in obtaining employment? (*Circle all that apply*)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1.) Race discrimination | 5.) Child care |
| 2.) Age discrimination | 6.) Transportation |
| 3.) Spousal/partner abuse | 7.) Disability |
| 4.) Lack of appropriate attire | 8.) Lack of appropriate skills |

d. Have you faced any of the following barriers in obtaining either a high school diploma, GED or college education? (*Circle all that apply*)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.) Race discrimination | 5.) Child care |
| 2.) Age discrimination | 6.) Transportation |
| 3.) Spousal/partner abuse | 7.) Disability |
| 4.) Lack of appropriate attire | 8.) Lack of appropriate skills |
| | 9.) Lack of employment opportunities |

e. Have you been downsized or lost a job in the last three years due to the economic impact on your company? 1.) Yes 2.) No

f. Have you changed jobs in the last three years due to the economic impact on your company? 1.) Yes 2.) No

g. Are you earning less money than you did three years ago? 1.) Yes 2.) No

33. a. In the last year, did anyone in your household participate in a job training program? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. If yes, where did they go for this training?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1.) Employment and Training Program | 6.) Apprenticeship/internship |
| 2.) Youth Employment Services | 7.) Adult Education |
| 3.) Health and Human Services | 8.) On-the-job training |
| 4.) VESID | 9.) Other _____ |
| 5.) Essentials for Employment | |

34. a. Do you have any skills that could be developed into a small business? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. If yes, what kind of skills? _____

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

35. In which of the following programs do you currently participate? (*Circle all that apply*)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1.) Food Stamps | 10.) Medicaid/Medicare |
| 2.) Women, Infants & Children (WIC) | 11.) Nutrition Program for the Elderly |
| 3.) Public Assistance | 12.) School Breakfast |
| 4.) Immunization Clinic | 13.) School Lunch |
| 5.) Soup Kitchen | 14.) Summer Feeding |
| 6.) Food Pantry | 15.) Meals on Wheels |
| 7.) Food Co-Op | 16.) Child Health Plus/Family Health Care |
| 8.) Head Start | 17.) Community Food and Nutrition Program |
| 9.) Healthy Living | 18.) None |

36. a. Do your children often go without milk? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. What type of milk do you use at home?

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1.) Non-fat/skim cow milk | 5.) Powdered milk |
| 2.) 1% cow milk | 6.) Goat milk |
| 3.) 2% cow milk | 7.) Soy milk |
| 4.) Whole cow milk | 8.) Rice milk |

c. Do you or your children have enough to eat at home? 1.) Yes 2.) No

- d. Do you or your children eat fruits and vegetables? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- e. If not, why? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1.) Can't afford | 4.) Takes too much time to prepare |
| 2.) Don't feel it is important | 5.) Don't like them |
| 3.) Not sure how to prepare them | 6.) Other _____ |

37. a. Do you exercise regularly? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If yes, what type of exercise? 1.) Walk 2.) Run 3.) Workout 4.) Other _____

38. a. Have you accessed an emergency food pantry in the last 12 months? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If yes, how often do you access food pantries? 1.) Weekly 2.) Monthly 3.) Less than three times a year
- c. Did you find it accessible? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- d. If not, why not?
- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1.) Did not know about it | 3.) Need delivery |
| 2.) Open at inconvenient time | 4.) Stigma |
| 3.) Location is bad | 5.) Other _____ |

39. In the last 12 months, have you had to choose between purchasing essential food items or paying a bill necessary to meet your basic needs? 1.) Yes 2.) No

40. How much do you spend weekly on your food bill? \$

41. a. Do any of your children have a problem with being overweight? 1.) Yes 2.) No
If yes, please list their ages: _____
- b. Do you or any other adults in your household have a problem with being overweight? 1.) Yes 2.) No
If yes, how many? _____
- c. Would you like more information on how to prepare fresh/minimally processed foods? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- d. Would you like more information on how to purchase fresh/minimally processed foods affordably? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- e. Would you like other information on healthy eating? 1.) Yes 2.) No
Please specify: _____

42. Have any of the following created health or stress problems for you or your household members? (*Circle all that apply*)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1.) Marital problems (stress, arguing, etc.) | 10.) Domestic abuse or violence |
| 2.) Family problems (children, aging parents, etc.) | 11.) Death |
| 3.) Serious health problems (chronic or terminal) | 12.) Mental Health |
| 4.) Alcohol | 13.) Racial discrimination |
| 5.) Drugs | 14.) Financial stress |
| 6.) Gambling | 15.) Excessive debt |
| 7.) Personal or emotional problems | 16.) Sanctioned by Public Assistance |
| 8.) Rape, incest or sexual abuse | 17.) Household member with a disability |
| 9.) Poor housing conditions | 18.) Lack of Transportation |
| 19.) Other. Please explain _____ | |

43. Please explain any needs you have as a result of problems with the above: _____

44. a. Can you get medical care when you need it? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If not, why not? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1.) Too expensive | 6.) No insurance |
| 2.) Transportation | 7.) Can't get there during office hours |
| 3.) Afraid to go | 8.) Medicaid not accepted by doctor |
| 4.) Can't afford prescription | 9.) Religious reasons |
| 5.) Long waiting lists | 10.) Cannot find a doctor to accept insurance in your area |
| 11.) Other. Please explain _____ | |

- c. Do you have an established relationship with a medical provider? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- d. Can you get dental care when you need it? 1.) Yes 2.) No

- e. If not, why not? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1.) Too expensive | 6.) No insurance |
| 2.) Transportation | 7.) Can't get there during office hours |
| 3.) Afraid to go | 8.) Medicaid not accepted by doctor |
| 4.) Can't afford prescription | 9.) Religious reasons |
| 5.) Long waiting lists | 10.) Cannot find a dentist to accept insurance in your area |
| 11.) Other. Please explain _____ | |
- f. Do you have an established relationship with a dental provider? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- g. How many times have you utilized the emergency room (ER) for non-emergency medical and dental care for you or members of your household in the last year? _____
- h. Do you or any member of your household participate in any of the following? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1.) Senior Nutrition Program | 4.) Special Meals Program |
| 2.) Church Sponsored Programs | 5.) Other _____ |
| 3.) Meals on Wheels | 6.) None of the above |

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

45. a. Are there any children in your household who are 3 years old or younger? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. Are there any children in your household who are 4 to 5 years old? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- c. If yes, do you have any concerns about your child's readiness for school? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- d. If yes, do you have any concerns about problem behavior in your child? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- e. If yes to either, please explain _____
- f. If child 5 or under, do you have any concerns about the social/emotional needs of your child? 1.) Yes 2.) No
If yes, please explain _____
If yes, is your child receiving counseling, play therapy or other therapy? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- g. Are there any children in your household who are 6 to 12 years old? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- h. If yes, do you have any concerns about problem behavior in your child? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- i. If yes, please explain _____
- j. Is there a child 18 or younger in your household with a disability? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- k. If child with disability, are they adequately served? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- l. If yes, what services are provided in Independent Education Plan (IEP), for example speech therapy, physical therapy, special ed, etc.) _____
- m. If not adequately served, what are the barriers to services? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1.) Lack of providers | 3.) No slots available |
| 2.) Lack of services | 4.) Timeline of process |
| 5.) Other _____ | |
- n. Who takes care of the child(ren) 12 or younger during the day/night or when not in school? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1.) Child's Mother | 5.) Babysitter |
| 2.) Child's Father | 6.) Day Care Center |
| 3.) Other adult relative/friend | 7.) Other _____ |
| 4.) Brother/sister under 18 | |
- o. Is there a child(ren), ages 12-19, that stays home alone between the hours of 3-7 PM? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- p. Is there a child(ren), ages 12-19, who has dropped out of school? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- q. Have your children ever witnessed violence toward someone in their home? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- r. Have your children ever witnessed violence outside the home? 1.) Yes 2.) No

- s. Have you ever used a day care center? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- t. If no, why not? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.) Can't afford it | 5.) Fear of abuse |
| 2.) Transportation | 6.) No daytime slots available |
| 3.) Have satisfactory child care | 7.) No slots available at night |
| 4.) Infant care not available | 8.) Other _____ |
- u. Do you feel quality childcare is available for infants and toddlers? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- v. Do you feel quality childcare is available for preschoolers? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- w. If a good day care center or nursery/preschool were available near you, would you use it? 1.) Yes 2.) No
46. a. Do you have car seats for all children required to have them? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If no, why not? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1.) Can't afford | 3.) Wouldn't use it |
| 2.) Broken | 4.) Other _____ |
47. Are there any pregnant or parenting teens currently in your household? 1.) Yes 2.) No
48. If pregnant, are they receiving any pre-natal care? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If no, why not? _____
49. a. If parenting, are they involved in any parenting programs? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If no, would they be interested in any parenting programs? 1.) Yes 2.) No
50. a. Is any member of your household, under the age of 21, at risk in any of the following areas? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1.) Drug/alcohol | 6.) Involvement in criminal activity |
| 2.) Sexual activity | 7.) Runaway youth |
| 3.) Living outside of your home | 8.) With a violent or abusive partner |
| 4.) Drop-out | 9.) Other _____ |
| 5.) Irregular school attendance | 10.) None of the above |
- b. If yes to at least one, would you be interested in having this youth participate in a mentoring program? 1.) Yes 2.) No
51. What services are the youth in your home currently involved in? (*Circle all that apply*)
- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1.) Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts | 6.) Cayuga/Seneca CAA Support Group |
| 2.) PINS | 7.) Y Pals |
| 3.) Extra-curricular activities | 8.) Organized Sports |
| 4.) Youth Employment Services | 9.) Male Mentoring Program |
| 5.) TASA | 10.) Other _____ |
52. Are there adequate youth recreation programs within two miles of your home? 1.) Yes 2.) No
53. Is there a playground within walking distance of your home? 1.) Yes 2.) No

LEGAL SERVICES

54. a. Have you had any contact with the family court system over the past year? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If yes, why? _____
- c. Are you currently in need of legal services? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- d. If yes, why?
- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1.) Domestic violence | 3.) Divorce |
| 2.) Custody or visitation matter | 4.) Other: _____ |
55. a. Have you been able to access the legal services you need in a satisfactory manner? 1.) Yes 2.) No
- b. If no, why not? _____

OTHER

56. In which, if any, of the following areas have you been racially discriminated against? (Circle all that apply)

- 1.) Housing
- 2.) Stores (shopping)
- 3.) Restaurants
- 4.) Schools
- 5.) Employment
- 6.) Recreation
- 7.) Accessing services
- 8.) Receiving services
- 9.) Other _____
- 10.) None of the above

57. What do you feel should be done to combat racial discrimination in your community? _____

58. a. Has anyone in your household gone off public assistance in the last two years? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. Has anyone in your household lost their TANF eligibility in the last 2 years due to the 5-year limit? 1.) Yes 2.) No

c. If yes to either above, did they (Circle all that apply)

- 1.) Find part-time employment
- 2.) Find full-time employment
- 3.) Get by with odd jobs
- 4.) Expired time limit
- 5.) Decide that they did not want to/or could not deal with the rules and regulations
- 6.) Work more than one job

d. Has leaving public assistance created any hardships for your household? 1.) Yes 2.) No

e. If yes, what hardships were created? (Circle all that apply)

- 1. Difficulty meeting basic expenses
- 2. Inadequate resources to maintain family and remain employed
- 3. Other _____

59. a. Do you feel you are better off financially than you were 3 years ago? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. Why or why not? _____

c. What are your barriers? _____

60. a. Do you feel you are better off emotionally than you were 3 years ago? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. Why or why not? _____

c. What are your barriers? _____

61. a. What do you view as your family's personal strengths? _____

b. What areas of your life would you like/need assistance with? _____

62. a. What do you think are the most positive things in your community? _____

b. What areas do you feel need improvement? _____

63. Any other comments? _____

Check if survey was completed in Spanish

Date completed: _____

Program Name: _____

Staff Survey

County (*Circle one*): Cayuga Seneca

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.

LOW INCOME NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

As a staff member, you encounter the problems and needs of the low income population in your County daily. The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc. is currently undergoing a ***needs assessment of this low income population*** so that we can better meet existing needs. We are seeking input from our staff in order to obtain a comprehensive view of these needs. ***Please return your completed questionnaire by May 22, 2009 in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.*** Your input is very much appreciated. Thank you!

1. What do you see as the most pressing needs of the low income population that the Agency serves?
(Please be as specific as possible.)
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 2 – 5 BASED ON YOUR FAMILIARITY WITH THE VARIOUS PARTS OF CAYUGA AND SENECA COUNTIES (Attach additional sheets, if necessary)

2. a. What gaps in service have you encountered in serving the low income population in Northern Cayuga County?

- b. Why do you think these gaps are not being addressed in Northern Cayuga County?

3. a. What gaps in service have you encountered in serving the low income population in Southern Cayuga County?

b. Why do you think these gaps are not being addressed in Southern Cayuga County?

4. a. What gaps in service have you encountered in serving the low income population in the City of Auburn?

b. Why do you think these gaps are not being addressed in the City of Auburn?

5. a. What gaps in service have you encountered in serving the low income population in Seneca County?

b. Why do you think these gaps are not being addressed in Seneca County?

6. For each of the following population groups, please indicate the degree to which you believe the overall need for service has changed in the past three years. Please use a 5 point rating scale, where 1 indicates their need has decreased dramatically and 5 indicates their need has increased dramatically, 3 indicates there has been no change in need for service.

	<u>Decreased Dramatically</u>		<u>No Change</u>		<u>Increased Dramatically</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
a. Low income infants 0 – 18 months	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Low income toddlers 18 months – 3 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. Low income children 4 yrs. old	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. Low income elementary age 5 – 10 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Low income teens 11 – 15 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Low income youth 16 – 24 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Low income adults 25 – 54 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Low income elderly 55+	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Migrant/transient households	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. Minority households (e.g., African American, Hispanic, Asian)	1	2	3	4	5	6
k. Non-English speaking households	1	2	3	4	5	6
l. Prison-related households	1	2	3	4	5	6
m. Physically or developmentally disabled individuals	1	2	3	4	5	6
n. Individuals with psychiatric or mental health problems	1	2	3	4	5	6
o. Victims of crime	1	2	3	4	5	6
p. Rural households	1	2	3	4	5	6
q. Other population group: _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

r. Please briefly describe any dramatic increases in need that you have observed in these groups.

7. Please briefly describe the strengths you see in the families you provide service to upon which we should build our service delivery.

8. How have the following needs changed in the past three years? Please use a 5 point rating scale, where 1 indicates that the need has decreased dramatically and 5 indicates that the need has increased dramatically, 3 indicates that there has been no change in need for service.

	<u>Decreased Dramatically</u>		<u>No Change</u>		<u>Increased Dramatically</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
a. Need for quality affordable housing	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Need for adequate family living wage	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. Need for children or youth services for:						
i. Less than 3 years old	1	2	3	4	5	6
ii. 3-4 years old	1	2	3	4	5	6
iii. 5-10 years old	1	2	3	4	5	6
iv. 11-15 years old	1	2	3	4	5	6
v. 16-21 years old	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. Emergency shelter needs of homeless adults	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Emergency shelter needs of homeless teens	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Need for basic literacy skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Need for mental health services	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Need to address children's behavioral problems	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Need to address school readiness issues prior to Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. Need for quality child care	1	2	3	4	5	6
k. Other needs: _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

l. Please briefly describe any dramatic increases in need area that you have observed.

9. a. Have you identified racial discrimination as a barrier for any of your customers? 1.) Yes 2.) No

b. If yes, in what areas? (*Circle all that apply*)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.) Accessing services | 4.) Employment |
| 2.) Housing | 5.) Recreational activities |
| 3.) Shopping (stores) | 6.) Other _____ |

c. If yes, for what ethnic groups? (*Circle all that apply*)

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1.) African American | 3.) Asian |
| 2.) Hispanic | 4.) Other _____ |

10. Have you found the nutritional needs of your customers has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Increased greatly | 4.) Decreased some |
| 2.) Increased some | 5.) Decreased greatly |
| 3.) Stayed the same | |

11. Have you found the mental health needs of your customers has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Increased greatly | 4.) Decreased some |
| 2.) Increased some | 5.) Decreased greatly |
| 3.) Stayed the same | |

12. Have you found that the problem of obesity among your customers and their families has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Increased greatly | 4.) Decreased some |
| 2.) Increased some | 5.) Decreased greatly |
| 3.) Stayed the same | |

13. Have you found that the number of children with behavioral or emotional concerns has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Increased greatly | 4.) Decreased some |
| 2.) Increased some | 5.) Decreased greatly |
| 3.) Stayed the same | |

14. What are the key factors that you see cause young people to drop out of school?

15. Please describe the strengths of the community upon which we should build our service delivery.

16. Your additional comments on how needs in Cayuga and/or Seneca County have changed over the last three years are appreciated:

Name _____

Date _____

Thank you for your assistance!

Agency Name: _____

Cayuga County

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.

LOW INCOME NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

As a service provider, you encounter the problems and needs of the low income population in Cayuga County daily. The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc. is currently undergoing a ***needs assessment of the low income population*** so that we can better meet existing needs. We are seeking input from other service providers, like you, in order to obtain a comprehensive view of these needs. ***Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope by May 29, 2009.*** Your input is very much appreciated. Thank you!

1. What do you see as the most pressing needs of the low income population in Cayuga County?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. What types of services does your agency provide in Cayuga County? (*Circle all that apply*)

1.) Emergency food, clothing or shelter.

2.) Housing

3.) Housing Repair

4.) Financial Assistance

5.) Employment

6.) Job Training

7.) Education

8.) Transportation

9.) Mental Health Care

10.) Substance Abuse Programs

11.) Physical Health Care

12.) Family Support

13.) Household Violence Programs

14.) Child Care

15.) Youth Services

16.) Elderly Services

17.) Recreation or Cultural Programs

18.) Public Safety

19.) Legal Services

20.) Consumer Protection

21.) General Human Services

22.) Nutrition Services

23.) Other, please describe: _____

4. a. Given the programs that you provide, what gaps in service have you encountered?

b. Why do you think these gaps are not being addressed?

c. Have you had to eliminate services in the last three years? 1.) Yes 2.) No

d. Have you had to eliminate jobs in the last three years? 1.) Yes 2.) No

5. a. Has lack of availability of programming space limited your agency's ability to provide needed services?

1.) Yes 2.) No

b. If yes, please briefly explain.

6. Please briefly describe the strengths you see in the families you provide service to on which service delivery should build.

7. For each of the following population groups, please indicate the degree to which you believe the overall need for service has changed in the past three years. Please use a 5 point rating scale, where 1 indicates their need has decreased dramatically and 5 indicates their need has increased dramatically, 3 indicates there has been no change in need for service.

	<u>Decreased Dramatically</u>		<u>No Change</u>		<u>Increased Dramatically</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
a. Low income infants 0 – 18 months	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Low income toddlers 18 months – 3 yrs.						
c. Low income children 4 yrs. old	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. Low income elementary age 5 – 10 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Low income teens 11 – 15 yrs	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Low income youth 16 – 24 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Low income adults 25 - 54	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Low income elderly 55+	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Migrant/transient households	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. Minority households (e.g., African American Hispanic, Asian)	1	2	3	4	5	6
k. Non-English speaking households	1	2	3	4	5	6
l. Prison-related households	1	2	3	4	5	6
m. Physically or developmentally disabled individuals	1	2	3	4	5	6
n. Individuals with psychiatric or mental health problems	1	2	3	4	5	6
o. Victims of crime	1	2	3	4	5	6
p. Rural households	1	2	3	4	5	6
q. Other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

r. Please briefly describe any dramatic increases in need that you have observed in these groups.

10. Have you found the nutritional needs of your customers has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- 1.) Increased greatly
- 2.) Increased some
- 3.) Stayed the same
- 4.) Decreased some
- 5.) Decreased greatly

11. Have you found the mental health needs of your customers has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- 1.) Increased greatly
- 2.) Increased some
- 3.) Stayed the same
- 4.) Decreased some
- 5.) Decreased greatly

12. Have you found that the problem of obesity among your customers and their families has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- 1.) Increased greatly
- 2.) Increased some
- 3.) Stayed the same
- 4.) Decreased some
- 5.) Decreased greatly

13. Have you found that the number of children with behavioral or emotional concerns has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- 1.) Increased greatly
- 2.) Increased some
- 3.) Stayed the same
- 4.) Decreased some
- 5.) Decreased greatly

14. What are the key factors that you see cause young people to drop out of school?

15. Please describe the strengths of the community upon which service delivery should be built.

Thank you for your assistance!

Name/Title _____
(Optional)

Agency Name: _____

Seneca County

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.

LOW INCOME NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

As a service provider, you encounter the problems and needs of the low income population in Seneca County daily. The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc. is currently undergoing a ***needs assessment of the low income population*** so that we can better meet existing needs. We are seeking input from other service providers, like you, in order to obtain a comprehensive view of these needs. ***Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope by May 29, 2009.*** Your input is very much appreciated. Thank you!

1. What do you see as the most pressing needs of the low income population in Seneca County?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. What types of services does your agency provide in Seneca County? (*Circle all that apply*)

1.) Emergency food, clothing or shelter.

2.) Housing

3.) Housing Repair

4.) Financial Assistance

5.) Employment

6.) Job Training

7.) Education

8.) Transportation

9.) Mental Health Care

10.) Substance Abuse Programs

11.) Physical Health Care

12.) Family Support

13.) Household Violence Programs

14.) Child Care

15.) Youth Services

16.) Elderly Services

17.) Recreation or Cultural Programs

18.) Public Safety

19.) Legal Services

20.) Consumer Protection

21.) General Human Services

22.) Nutrition Services

23.) Other, please describe: _____

4. a. Given the programs that you provide, what gaps in service have you encountered?

b. Why do you think these gaps are not being addressed?

c. Have you had to eliminate services in the last three years? 1.) Yes 2.) No

d. Have you had to eliminate jobs in the last three years? 1.) Yes 2.) No

5. a. Has lack of availability of programming space limited your agency's ability to provide needed services?

1.) Yes 2.) No

b. If yes, please briefly explain.

6. Please briefly describe the strengths you see in the families you provide service to on which service delivery should build.

7. For each of the following population groups, please indicate the degree to which you believe the overall need for service has changed in the past three years. Please use a 5 point rating scale, where 1 indicates their need has decreased dramatically and 5 indicates their need has increased dramatically, 3 indicates there has been no change in need for service.

	<u>Decreased Dramatically</u>		<u>No Change</u>		<u>Increased Dramatically</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
a. Low income infants 0 – 18 months	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Low income toddlers 18 months – 3 yrs.						
c. Low income children 4 yrs. old	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. Low income elementary age 5 – 10 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Low income teens 11 – 15 yrs	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Low income youth 16 – 24 yrs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Low income adults 25 - 54	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Low income elderly 55+	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Migrant/transient households	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. Minority households (e.g., African American Hispanic, Asian)	1	2	3	4	5	6
k. Non-English speaking households	1	2	3	4	5	6
l. Prison-related households	1	2	3	4	5	6
m. Physically or developmentally disabled individuals	1	2	3	4	5	6
n. Individuals with psychiatric or mental health problems	1	2	3	4	5	6
o. Victims of crime	1	2	3	4	5	6
p. Rural households	1	2	3	4	5	6
q. Other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

r. Please briefly describe any dramatic increases in need that you have observed in these groups.

10. Have you found the nutritional needs of your customers has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Increased greatly | 3.) Stayed the same | 4.) Decreased some |
| 2.) Increased some | | 5.) Decreased greatly |

11. Have you found the mental health needs of your customers has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Increased greatly | 3.) Stayed the same | 4.) Decreased some |
| 2.) Increased some | | 5.) Decreased greatly |

12. Have you found that the problem of obesity among your customers and their families has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Increased greatly | 3.) Stayed the same | 4.) Decreased some |
| 2.) Increased some | | 5.) Decreased greatly |

13. Have you found that the number of children with behavioral or emotional concerns has increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1.) Increased greatly | 3.) Stayed the same | 4.) Decreased some |
| 2.) Increased some | | 5.) Decreased greatly |

14. What are the key factors that you see cause young people to drop out of school?

15. Please describe the strengths of the community upon which service delivery should be built.

Thank you for your assistance!

Name/Title _____
(Optional)

Interviewee: _____

Agency/Title: _____

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.

LOW INCOME NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

1. What do you see as the most pressing needs of the low income population in Cayuga and/or Seneca Counties and how has that changed in the last three years?

Needs:

Changes:

2. What gaps in service, if any, are you aware of and is anyone addressing these gaps, to your knowledge?

In Northern Cayuga County:

In Southern Cayuga County:

In the City of Auburn:

In Seneca County:

3. Have you made program cuts in the last three years that eliminated Jobs?

Services?

4. For which, if any groups, have you noted increases in overall need over the last three years?

Infants 0 – 18 mos

Low income toddlers 18 mos – 3 years

Low income children 3 - 4

Low income children 5 - 10

Low income teens 11 – 15

Low income youth 16 – 24

Low income adults 25 - 54

Low income elderly 55+

Migrant/transient households

Minority Households

Non-English speaking households

Prison-related households

Physically or developmentally disabled individuals

Individuals with psychiatric or mental health problems

Victims of crime

Rural households

Other _____

5. Has your agency identified racial discrimination as a barrier to service? If yes, how so?

6. What other barriers to service are in particular need of addressing?

7. What are the community strengths that service deliverers should build upon?

8. Other Comments.