

# Determining Community Strengths and Needs for Head Start Services

**A Community Assessment**

**Kalamazoo County Head Start  
Kalamazoo Michigan**



**June 2006**

 Kalamazoo County  
**Health & Community Services**

## **Determining Community Strengths and Needs for Head Start Services**

A Community Assessment

June 2006

Kalamazoo County Head Start

Serving the entire County of Kalamazoo

including the:

City of Galesburg

City of Kalamazoo

City of Parchment

City of Portage

Village of Augusta

Village of Schoolcraft

Village of Vicksburg

and the townships of

Alamo, Brady, Charleston, Climax, Comstock, Cooper,

Kalamazoo, Oshtemo, Pavilion, Prairie Ronde,

Richland, Ross, Schoolcraft, Texas and Wakeshma

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Community Action Bureau

## Table of Contents

### Determining Community Strengths and Needs for Head Start Services

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>The Need .....</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <i>Poverty Has Increased Since the 2000 Census.....</i>   | <i>7</i>  |
| <i>Poverty Definitions for the 2000 Census and Current Year - 2006.....</i>   | <i>8</i>  |
| <b>Children Eligible for Head Start .....</b>   | <b>8</b>  |
| <i>Childhood Poverty by Census Tract.....</i>   | <i>9</i>  |
| <b>Characteristics of Those Living in Poverty .....</b>   | <b>15</b> |
| <i>Poverty by Race .....</i>  | <i>15</i> |
| <i>Poverty Among Families.....</i>  | <i>15</i> |
| <i>Single Mother Families and Poverty .....</i>   | <i>16</i> |
| <b>Children with Disabilities.....</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Education, Health, Nutrition and Social Service Needs of Head Start Eligible Children and Their Families .....</b> | <b>21</b> |
| <i>Education.....</i>   | <i>21</i> |
| <i>Health.....</i>  | <i>21</i> |
| <i>Nutrition.....</i>   | <i>22</i> |
| <i>Employment .....</i>   | <i>22</i> |
| <i>Housing.....</i>   | <i>23</i> |
| <i>Violence .....</i>   | <i>23</i> |
| <i>Risk Factor Ranking for Kalamazoo County.....</i>  | <i>24</i> |
| <b>Education, Employment and Living Situation of Current and Potential Head Start Families .....</b>                  | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Client Surveys .....</b>   | <b>24</b> |
| <i>Respondent Profile.....</i>  | <i>25</i> |
| <i>Causes of Poverty .....</i>  | <i>29</i> |
| <i>Perceived Causes of Community Problems.....</i>  | <i>33</i> |
| Affordable Housing .....  | 33        |
| Unemployment.....   | 33        |
| Health Care .....   | 34        |
| Heating Costs.....  | 34        |
| Life Experiences .....  | 35        |
| <i>Satisfaction with Services .....</i>   | <i>36</i> |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Focus Group Summary .....</b>                                | <b>36</b> |
| <i>Findings .....</i>   | 36        |
| <i>Demographics of Focus Group Respondents .....</i>            | 37        |
| <b>Key Informant Survey Results .....</b>                       | <b>38</b> |
| <i>Causes of Poverty .....</i>                                  | 38        |
| <i>Seriousness of Community Issues .....</i>                    | 40        |
| <i>Perceived Causes of Community Problems .....</i>             | 41        |
| Affordable Housing .....  | 41        |
| Unemployment.....   | 42        |
| Health Care .....   | 43        |
| Heating Costs.....  | 44        |
| <i>Availability of Resources .....</i>                          | 45        |
| <b>Qualitative Data Comparisons .....</b>                       | <b>45</b> |
| <b>Resources for Preschool Children and Their Families.....</b> | <b>47</b> |
| <b>Survey Tools .....</b>                                       | <b>55</b> |
| <i>Community Needs Survey .....</i>                             | 55        |
| <i>Head Start Focus Group Questions.....</i>                    | 59        |
| <i>Key Informant Survey .....</i>                               | 60        |

## Determining Community Strengths and Needs for Head Start Services

### The Need

Since Head Start is designed to serve low-income children, children with disabilities and may have up to 10 percent of its enrollment be children who are neither low-income or disabled, it is difficult to come up with an exact number of children in Kalamazoo County who would be eligible for Head Start services. Local need will be based on an estimate of the number of 3 and 4 year olds who live at or below poverty, plus an estimate of the number of 3 and 4 year olds who have a disability who are not also living at or below poverty. Several sources will be used to derive these estimates, including birth data, disability assessment data, and census data.

Each year approximately 3,000 children are born in Kalamazoo County. Of those, approximately 11 percent<sup>1</sup>, or 330, have a disability. Of the estimated 6193 children 3 and 4 years of age in Kalamazoo County in 2004, approximately 681 have special needs.

| Geographic Area                              | Number | Percent |
|--|--------|---------|
| Kalamazoo County                             | 681    | 11.0%   |
| Kalamazoo City                               | 260    | 13.8%   |
| Source: PET Primary Evaluation Team – K/RESA |        |         |

Since most of the county-level economic data in this report are based on the 2000 Census, the numbers of persons and children in poverty in 2006 are actually higher than in most data in this report. The Census Bureau has not released detailed updates on poverty at the county level or below. The most recent national poverty figures released by the Bureau are for 2004. Nationally, children under 5 continued to have a higher poverty rate than people 5 to 17, 18 to 64, or 65 and over. If the 2004 national poverty rate of 21.0 percent<sup>2</sup> for children under 5 was applied to Kalamazoo County's 3 and 4 year olds, the results would be 1,301 children below poverty (based on 2004 population estimate of 6,193 3- and 4-year olds)<sup>3</sup>. Nearly half of these or approximately 620 live within the city of Kalamazoo which is 26.7 percent of all 3 and 4 year olds within the city<sup>4</sup>.

If the 11 percent disability rate was applied to the estimated 1,301 children below poverty level, approximately 143 of them have a disability. Table 2 shows the estimated number of income-eligible and disabled 3 and 4 year olds in Kalamazoo County.

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<sup>1</sup> Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency Assessments, Pre-primary Evaluation Team

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2005 Annual Social and Economic Supplement

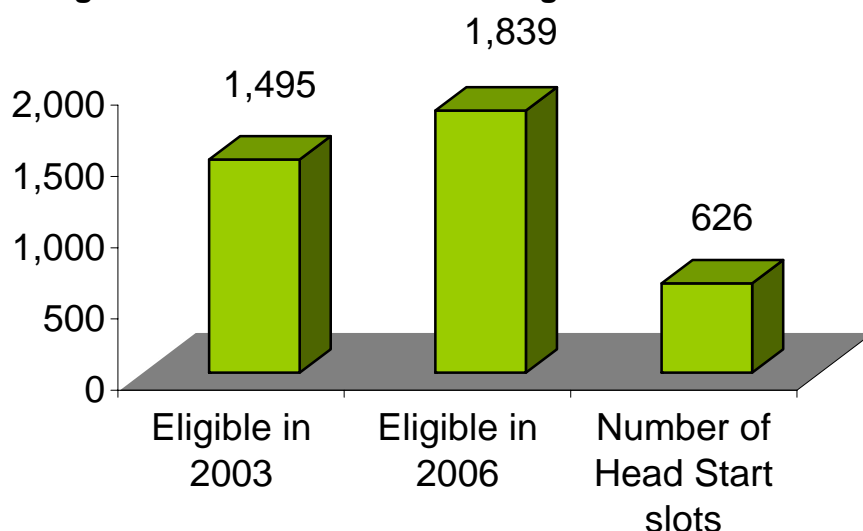
<sup>3</sup> Current Population Survey and Single year population estimates based on the 2000 Census and prepared by the Library of Michigan for the Michigan Department of Community Health

<sup>4</sup> Based on 2000 U.S. Census counts, U.S. Census Bureau

| Eligible Category                              | Number |
|--|--------|
| Children at or below poverty level             | 1,301  |
| Children above poverty level with a disability | 538    |
| Total estimated children eligible              | 1,839  |

The estimated number of children eligible for Head Start has increased by 23 percent from 2003 to 2006 (1,495 to 1,839). There has not been a corresponding increase in Head Start slots as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 - Estimated Children Eligible for Head Start**



Estimates from 2004 for 3 and 4 year olds in Kalamazoo County indicate that 5.1 percent are Hispanic, 74.9 percent are White (non-Hispanic), 17.9 percent are African American (non-Hispanic), 1.8 percent are Asian-Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic), and 0.3 percent are Native American (non-Hispanic).<sup>5</sup>

| Race/Ethnicity                                   | Number | Percent |
|--|--------|---------|
| White (non-Hispanic)                             | 4637   | 74.9%   |
| Black (non-Hispanic)                             | 1108   | 17.9%   |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native (non-Hispanic) | 17     | 0.3%    |
| Asian or Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic)         | 115    | 1.8%    |
| Hispanic   | 316    | 5.1%    |

<sup>5</sup> National Center for Health Statistics. Estimates of the July 1, 2000 – July 1, 2004, United States resident population from the Vintage 2004 postcensal series by year, age, sex, race and Hispanic origin, prepared under a collaborative arrangement with the U.S. Census Bureau, September 9, 2005.

Kalamazoo County receives funding for the Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP), which is designed to serve 4 year olds in families with incomes between 100 and 200 percent of the poverty level. Table 4 shows the distribution of Head Start and MSRP children served in 2005/06.

| <b>Table 4 - Preschool and Michigan School Readiness Programs<br/>Serving Residents of Kalamazoo County, MI: 2005/06<br/>Survey Conducted Spring 2006</b> |  |  |              |
|---|--|--|--------------|
|   | Total<br>Preschool<br>Students<br>Funded for | Total<br>Preschool<br>Students<br>Served | Waiting List |
| Schools within Kalamazoo County<br>Returning Survey   |  |  |              |
| Galesburg-Augusta Schools   | 24   | 24                                       | 10           |
| Gull Lake School District   | 16   | 16                                       | 8            |
| Kalamazoo Advantage Academy   | 32   | 28                                       | 0            |
| Head Start/School Readiness, Kalamazoo<br>County  | 624  | 731                                      | 16           |
| Kalamazoo Public School PEEP  | 324  | 324                                      | 10           |
| Learning Village, Inc.  | 72   | 72                                       | 5            |
| Parchment Public Schools  | 36   | 36                                       | 8            |
| Comstock Public Schools   | 100  | 99                                       | 0            |
| Portage Public Schools  | 32   | 32                                       | 14           |
| Vicksburg Community Schools   | 16   | 16                                       | 8            |
| Totals  | 1,276  | 1,378                                    | 79           |

### **Poverty Has Increased Since the 2000 Census**

After falling for four straight years, the nation's poverty rate rose from 11.3 percent in 2000 to 11.7 percent in 2001. Nationally, children under 18 continued to have a higher poverty rate (16.3 percent) than people 18 to 64 or 65 and over. The median income in Michigan rose 5.4 percent in 2003 to \$45,022, after falling 5.2 percent in 2002.<sup>6</sup> The median income in Kalamazoo County in 2003 was \$42,179<sup>7</sup>. In 1999 the median household income in Kalamazoo County was \$42,022.<sup>8</sup> The 2003 median income in the United States was \$43,318.<sup>9</sup>

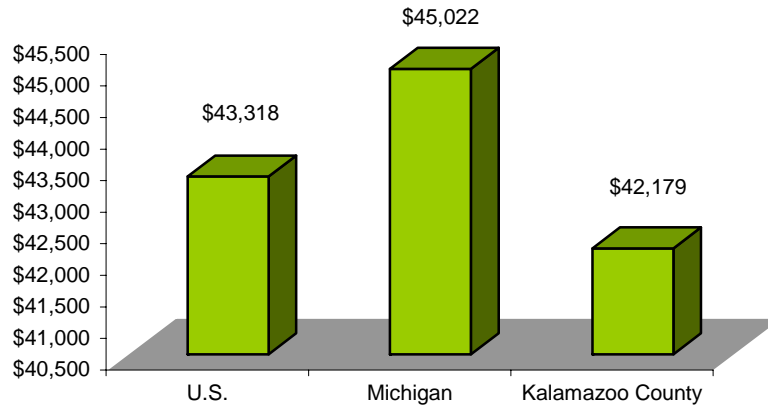
<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau: Historical Income Tables – Households.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau: Summary File 4

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau: Historical Income Tables – Households.

**Figure 2 - 2003 Median Income Comparison**



**Poverty Definitions for the 2000 Census and Current Year - 2006**

The federal government uses the following guidelines for determining whose income is below poverty. The income on the left was the income used to determine poverty for Census 2000, while the incomes on the far right are the guideline for determining poverty in 2006.

| <b>Table 5 – Poverty Guidelines Comparison</b>  |                |                                    |                |
|---|----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Poverty Guidelines for 2000 Census</b>   |                | <b>Poverty Guidelines for 2006</b> |                |
| Persons in Household  | Poverty Income | Persons in Household               | Poverty Income |
| 1   | \$ 8,350       | 1                                  | \$ 9,800       |
| 2   | \$11,250       | 2                                  | \$13,200       |
| 3   | \$14,150       | 3                                  | \$16,600       |
| 4   | \$17,050       | 4                                  | \$20,000       |
| 5   | \$19,950       | 5                                  | \$23,400       |
| 6   | \$22,850       | 6                                  | \$26,800       |
| for each additional person, add   | \$ 2,900       | for each additional person, add    | \$ 3,400       |
| Source: U.S. Census Bureau<br><a href="http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/06poverty.htm">http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/06poverty.htm</a> |                |                                    |                |

**Children Eligible for Head Start**

The next table shows the number of children of any age enrolled in any preschool as reported by households for Census 2000. While a child may be any age and enrolled in preschool, the majority of preschools require that the child be toilet trained. Therefore, the majority of children in preschool are probably age 3 and 4, as well as some children age 5 who are not ready for kindergarten or who are enrolled in half-day kindergarten and half-day preschool by working parents. The next to the last column uses Census 2000 data to estimate the number of eligible Head Start children, based on poverty data and disability data minus the overlap of these two conditions. The last column takes the known number of children enrolled in Kalamazoo County Head Start programs, plus known students in the Kalamazoo Public School - PEEP or Pre-Kindergarten Early Education Program, as well as several other smaller county preschool programs.

**Table 6 - Number of Children Enrolled in Preschool, Kalamazoo County, MI: Census 2000 and Estimated Number of Eligible Poor and Disabled 3 and 4 Year Olds**

| Geographic Area                | Children enrolled in preschool | All Children age 3-4 | Age 3-4, enrolled in school | % Age 3-4, enrolled in school | Estimated Head Start Eligible | Eligible and Enrolled in Any Preschool |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Kalamazoo County</b>        | 3,813                          | 6,083                | 2,886                       | 47.4%                         | 1,495                         | 1,190                                  |
| <b>Cities and Villages</b>     |                                |                      |                             |                               |                               |  |
| Kalamazoo city                 | 1,119                          | 1,790                | 863                         | 48.2%                         | 657                           | 585                                    |
| Portage city                   | 862                            | 1,157                | 622                         | 53.8%                         | 174                           | 120                                    |
| Galesburg - Augusta            | 36                             | 83                   | 29                          | 34.9%                         | 36                            | 30                                     |
| Schoolcraft village            | 20                             | 34                   | 7                           | 20.6%                         | 4                             | 2                                      |
| Vicksburg village              | 66                             | 82                   | 48                          | 58.5%                         | 16                            | 15                                     |
| <b>Townships</b>               |                                |                      |                             |                               |                               |  |
| Alamo twp.                     | 76                             | 84                   | 55                          | 65.5%                         | 19                            | 17                                     |
| Brady twp.                     | 44                             | 108                  | 39                          | 36.1%                         | n/a                           | n/a                                    |
| Brady twp. Minus villages      | 36                             | 80                   | 31                          | 38.8%                         | 10                            | 9                                      |
| Charleston twp.                | 24                             | 34                   | 18                          | 52.9%                         | 7                             | 5                                      |
| Climax twp.                    | 41                             | 70                   | 34                          | 48.6%                         | 16                            | 11                                     |
| Comstock twp.                  | 244                            | 391                  | 189                         | 48.3%                         | 121                           | 106                                    |
| Cooper twp.                    | 110                            | 200                  | 59                          | 29.5%                         | 36                            | 18                                     |
| Kalamazoo twp.                 | 238                            | 561                  | 199                         | 35.5%                         | 79                            | 70                                     |
| Oshtemo twp.                   | 250                            | 441                  | 186                         | 42.2%                         | 130                           | 60                                     |
| Parchment city                 | 34                             | 68                   | 20                          | 29.4%                         | 12                            | 12                                     |
| Pavilion twp.                  | 127                            | 144                  | 69                          | 47.9%                         | 33                            | 21                                     |
| Prairie Ronde twp.             | 47                             | 68                   | 35                          | 51.5%                         | 13                            | 12                                     |
| Richland twp.                  | 134                            | 215                  | 143                         | 66.5%                         | 45                            | 43                                     |
| Ross twp.                      | 84                             | 121                  | 59                          | 48.8%                         | 13                            | 12                                     |
| Schoolcraft twp.               | 115                            | 193                  | 82                          | 42.5%                         | n/a                           | n/a                                    |
| Schoolcraft twp. with villages | 44                             | 108                  | 39                          | 36.1%                         | 25                            | 20                                     |
| Texas twp.                     | 230                            | 345                  | 181                         | 52.5%                         | 42                            | 18                                     |
| Wakeshma twp.                  | 10                             | 30                   | 11                          | 36.7%                         | 7                             | 5                                      |

Eligible and Enrolled is the number of Head Start eligible children, (those actually enrolled in KCHSD-Head Start and KPS-PEEP), plus an estimate of children who might be eligible (below poverty or disabled), from the total preschool enrollment of Kalamazoo Advantage Academy, the Learning Village, and six public school preschool or Pre-Kindergarten Early Education Program (PEEP) programs.

Compiled by: Community Information System & Research Services, WMU  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, SF3, Tables P1, P36, PCT23

### **Childhood Poverty by Census Tract**

The U.S. Census conducted in 2000, provided a wealth of information about those living at or below poverty. Within the county, there are 2,203 children under age 5 who live below poverty, over half of those (1,241) live within the city of Kalamazoo. Neighborhoods within the city of Kalamazoo with the highest number of children under the age of 5 below poverty, include census

tract 3.00, on the Northside, with 208 preschoolers (48.0%) below poverty, next highest is Edison (tract 10.00) with 151 (25.8%), then tract 29.05 In Oshtemo township with 149 preschoolers below poverty (26.9%).

The next table spans two pages and shows the total number and percent of persons of all ages who live at or below poverty from Census 2000, as well as the number and percent of children under 5 years of age and under 12 years of age who live below poverty. The table is sorted by highest number of children under 5 years who live at or below poverty. The table contains potential younger and older siblings of eligible Head Start children.

**Table 7 - Childhood Poverty - Persons for Whom Income is Known and Poverty Status is Determined by Census Tracts within Kalamazoo County, Michigan: Census 2000**

| Geographic Area                 | Total Persons Below Poverty |       | Under 5 years Below Poverty |       | Under 12 years Below Poverty |       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
| Kalamazoo County                | 27,483                      | 10.5% | 2,203                       | 14.6% | 5,429                        | 14.4% |
| Kalamazoo city                  | 16,641                      | 12.0% | 1,241                       | 26.7% | 3,064                        | 28.7% |
| 3.00 - Northside                | 1,539                       | 34.8% | 208                         | 48.0% | 616                          | 55.3% |
| 10.00 - Edison                  | 1,420                       | 21.8% | 151                         | 25.8% | 400                          | 28.3% |
| 29.05 - Oshtemo twp. So. of RR  | 879                         | 14.8% | 149                         | 26.9% | 295                          | 24.9% |
| 5.00 - Stuart/Alamo             | 1,455                       | 35.1% | 110                         | 40.1% | 207                          | 35.3% |
| 22.02 - Comstock twp. N of RR   | 582                         | 8.2%  | 108                         | 21.3% | 202                          | 17.1% |
| 1.00 - Eastside                 | 767                         | 30.1% | 97                          | 40.2% | 283                          | 40.9% |
| 15.07 - Knollwood               | 2,364                       | 45.3% | 95                          | 30.3% | 236                          | 36.3% |
| 14.01 - Burke Acres             | 500                         | 14.6% | 86                          | 30.8% | 144                          | 23.1% |
| 2.02 - Northside                | 567                         | 43.2% | 81                          | 77.1% | 221                          | 66.0% |
| 9.00 - Edison                   | 596                         | 35.8% | 79                          | 48.2% | 206                          | 46.7% |
| 14.02 - Twp. -Eastwood          | 694                         | 11.2% | 69                          | 14.4% | 189                          | 17.2% |
| 20.03 - Oakland W to Texas      | 259                         | 5.5%  | 61                          | 14.6% | 104                          | 10.9% |
| 16.01 - Oakland/Winchell        | 316                         | 12.0% | 59                          | 31.9% | 105                          | 24.1% |
| 33.02 - Pavilion twp.           | 436                         | 7.5%  | 56                          | 13.0% | 109                          | 9.8%  |
| 20.05 - Oakland/Centre to Moors | 430                         | 9.7%  | 55                          | 12.4% | 109                          | 9.7%  |
| 11.00 - Southside               | 541                         | 23.9% | 54                          | 38.6% | 168                          | 46.8% |
| 24.00 - Galesburg city          | 243                         | 12.9% | 52                          | 35.6% | 92                           | 24.9% |
| 29.04 - Oshtemo twp. No. of RR  | 313                         | 4.9%  | 48                          | 12.4% | 100                          | 9.4%  |
| 6.00 - Vine                     | 2,126                       | 41.5% | 44                          | 23.0% | 75                           | 26.5% |
| 15.01 - Twp. - Northwood        | 366                         | 9.1%  | 39                          | 10.6% | 126                          | 15.2% |
| 18.02 - Milwood                 | 426                         | 9.4%  | 38                          | 10.9% | 80                           | 11.8% |
| 18.01 - Edison/Milwood          | 362                         | 11.0% | 37                          | 16.4% | 92                           | 19.1% |
| 27.00 - Richland twp.           | 314                         | 4.8%  | 37                          | 8.0%  | 111                          | 9.0%  |
| 29.01 - Alamo twp.              | 194                         | 5.2%  | 36                          | 15.7% | 71                           | 1.7%  |
| 15.03 - Twp. - Westwood         | 553                         | 11.9% | 33                          | 10.9% | 56                           | 9.2%  |
| 17.01 - South Westnedge         | 245                         | 7.8%  | 32                          | 16.3% | 44                           | 9.8%  |
| 28.02 - Cooper twp., East       | 275                         | 5.7%  | 27                          | 11.5% | 88                           | 11.5% |
| 19.05 - East & S. of airport    | 243                         | 4.7%  | 26                          | 7.1%  | 41                           | 5.1%  |
| Geographic Area                 | Total Persons Below Poverty |       | Under 5 years Below Poverty |       | Under 12 years Below Poverty |       |
| 15.04 - WMU                     | 656                         | 57.1% | 25                          | 73.5% | 25                           | 45.5% |

**Table 7 - Childhood Poverty - Persons for Whom Income is Known and Poverty Status is Determined by Census Tracts within Kalamazoo County, Michigan: Census 2000**

|                                      |       |       |    |       |    |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|----|-------|----|-------|
| 17.02 - South Westnedge              | 488   | 13.9% | 25 | 9.9%  | 97 | 16.5% |
| 30.03 - Texas twp. West of KVCC      | 245   | 4.6%  | 22 | 7.0%  | 57 | 6.4%  |
| 2.01 - CBD Central Business District | 691   | 37.7% | 20 | 35.7% | 28 | 35.4% |
| 34.00 - Climax & Wakeshma twps.      | 212   | 5.6%  | 20 | 8.2%  | 60 | 9.0%  |
| 21.02 - Austin Lake Area             | 92    | 3.6%  | 18 | 12.6% | 18 | 5.2%  |
| 30.04 - Texas twp. West of KVCC      | 116   | 2.1%  | 17 | 4.1%  | 32 | 2.9%  |
| 32.00 - Vicksburg Village            | 157   | 6.8%  | 15 | 9.6%  | 33 | 7.2%  |
| 19.07 - CBD / Crossroads             | 236   | 5.8%  | 12 | 4.6%  | 63 | 10.2% |
| 23.00 - Comstock twp. E. of 30th     | 188   | 4.5%  | 12 | 4.2%  | 52 | 6.8%  |
| 22.01 - Comstock twp. - CBD          | 210   | 8.7%  | 10 | 8.5%  | 52 | 15.2% |
| Brady twp. Minus villages            | 93    | 2.6%  | 9  | 4.9%  | 26 | 4.2%  |
| 15.02 - Twp. - Westwood              | 600   | 13.4% | 8  | 4.1%  | 38 | 8.9%  |
| Schoolcraft twp. minus villages      | 171   | 4.3%  | 7  | 3.2%  | 25 | 4.3%  |
| 25.00 - Charleston twp.              | 126   | 7.1%  | 5  | 6.1%  | 25 | 10.3% |
| 20.02 - Sugarloaf & Game Area        | 123   | 3.5%  | 4  | 1.8%  | 19 | 2.9%  |
| 31.02 - Schoolcraft Village          | 109   | 6.9%  | 3  | 3.3%  | 12 | 4.2%  |
| 13.00 - Parchment                    | 84    | 4.4%  | 2  | 1.7%  | 12 | 3.3%  |
| 26.01 - Ross twp.                    | 159   | 3.1%  | 2  | 0.9%  | 20 | 2.7%  |
| 12.00 - Westnedge Hill               | 115   | 4.0%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 0  | 0.0%  |
| 15.06 - Arcadia                      | 1,134 | 20.4% | 0  | 0.0%  | 0  | 0.0%  |
| 16.03 - Oakwood                      | 188   | 10.5% | 0  | 0.0%  | 24 | 8.2%  |
| 16.04 - Colony Farm/Parkview         | 108   | 7.5%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 13 | 10.7% |
| 18.03 - Twp. - Lakewood              | 189   | 8.7%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 6  | 1.4%  |
| 19.02 - Portage Northern             | 103   | 3.0%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 3  | 0.5%  |
| 19.04 - Upjohn/Pharmacia             | 72    | 6.2%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 0  | 0.0%  |
| 19.06 - E of Oakland/ N of Centre    | 356   | 7.3%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 68 | 8.8%  |
| 20.04 - Moorsbridge to Milham        | 104   | 2.7%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 13 | 2.3%  |
| 21.01 - West Lake Area               | 131   | 1.9%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 11 | 1.0%  |
| 28.01 - Cooper twp., West            | 30    | 0.8%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 0  | 0.0%  |
| 29.03 - Oshtemo twp. E. of US-131    | 1,104 | 25.6% | 0  | 0.0%  | 23 | 9.4%  |
| 30.02 - Prairie Ronde twp.           | 88    | 4.2%  | 0  | 0.0%  | 4  | 0.9%  |

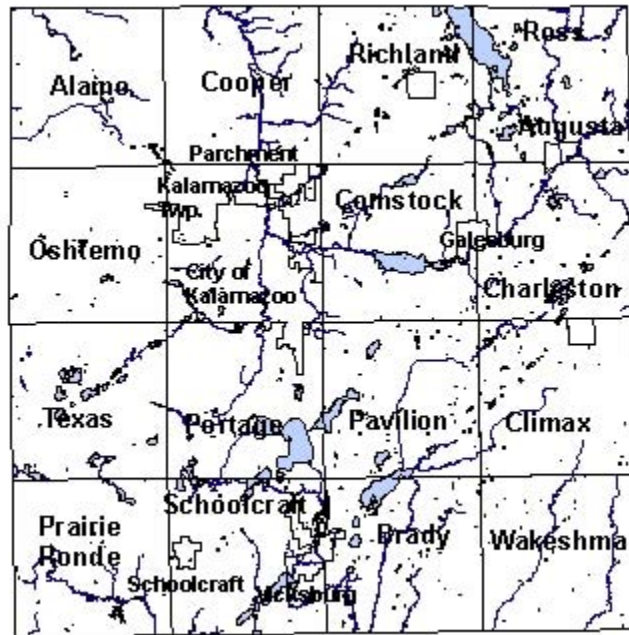
Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Summary File 3, Table P87

Compiled by: Community Information System & Research Services, Western Michigan University

## Maps

The map below is presented to help familiarize readers with the location of the cities, villages and townships within Kalamazoo County. Each township is approximately 6 miles by 6 miles. The city of Portage occupies an entire square near the center of the map. The city of Kalamazoo shares the square with two other municipalities. Just north and east of the city of Kalamazoo is Kalamazoo Township, which wraps around the city, but is located within the same square as the city. The area just north of the city of Kalamazoo is the city of Parchment. The city of Galesburg and the villages of Augusta, Schoolcraft and Vicksburg straddle township lines. The map shows the entire area served by Kalamazoo County Head Start.

**Figure 3 - Kalamazoo County Michigan**



To show the distribution of children in poverty takes two maps. The first map (Figure 4) shows the entire county. The darker shades of green indicate higher numbers of children in poverty. Number, rather than percentage is used to assist outreach efforts. One can see that the highest number of children in poverty live within the central neighborhoods within the City of Kalamazoo and several other areas within the urbanized areas of the county. The map shows that there are few areas within the county in which children totally escape poverty. The second map (Figure 5) zooms in to enable a better view of census tracts within the cities of Kalamazoo and Portage. The labels indicate the census tract number.

Figure 4

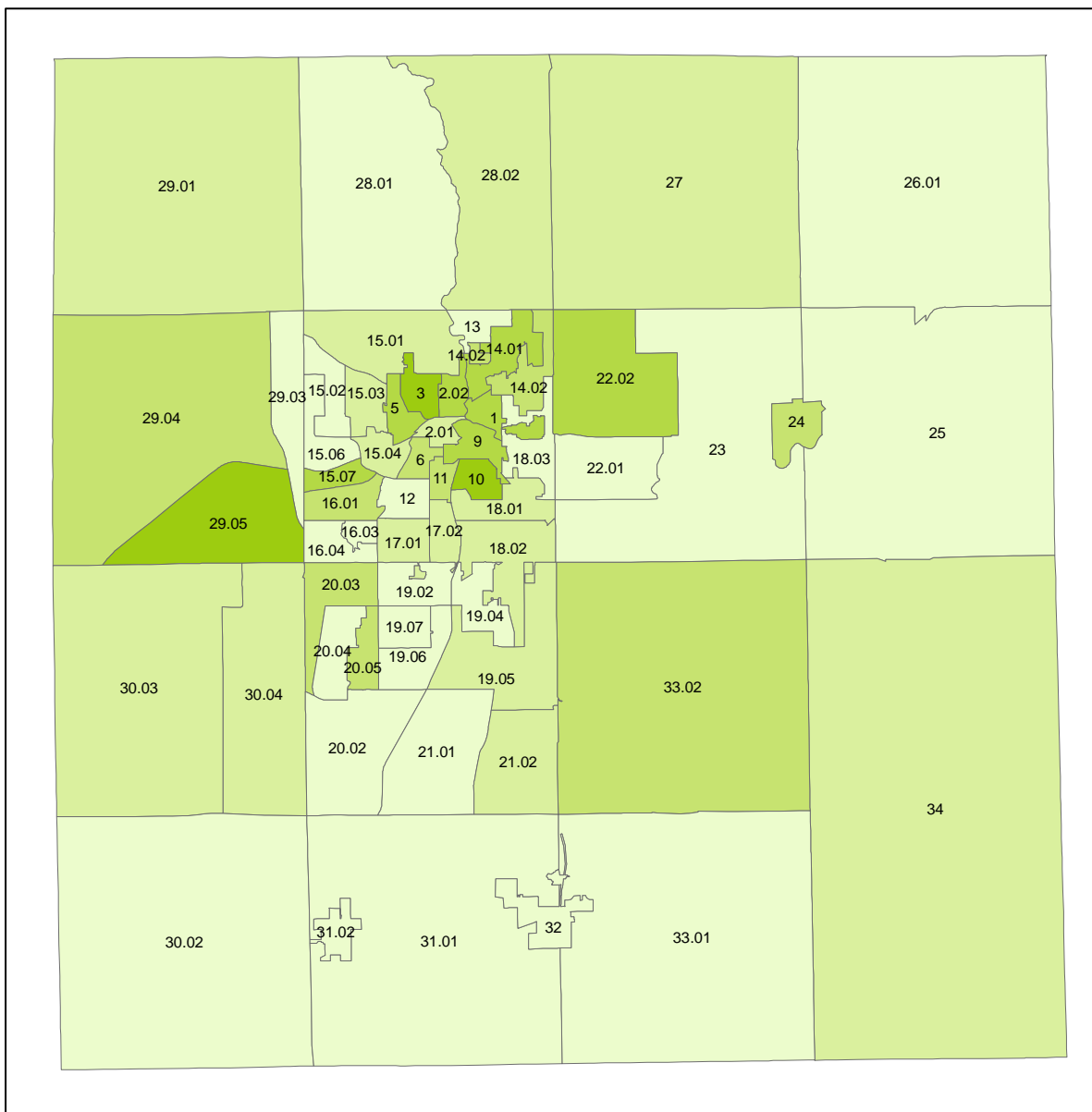
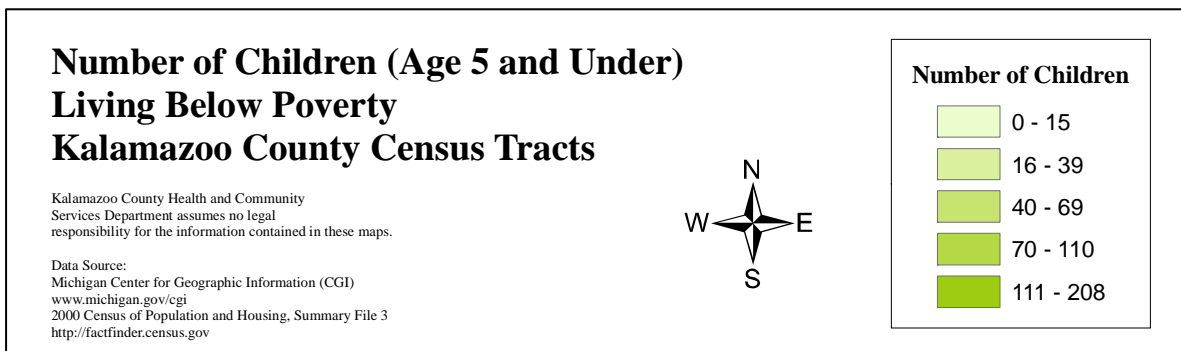
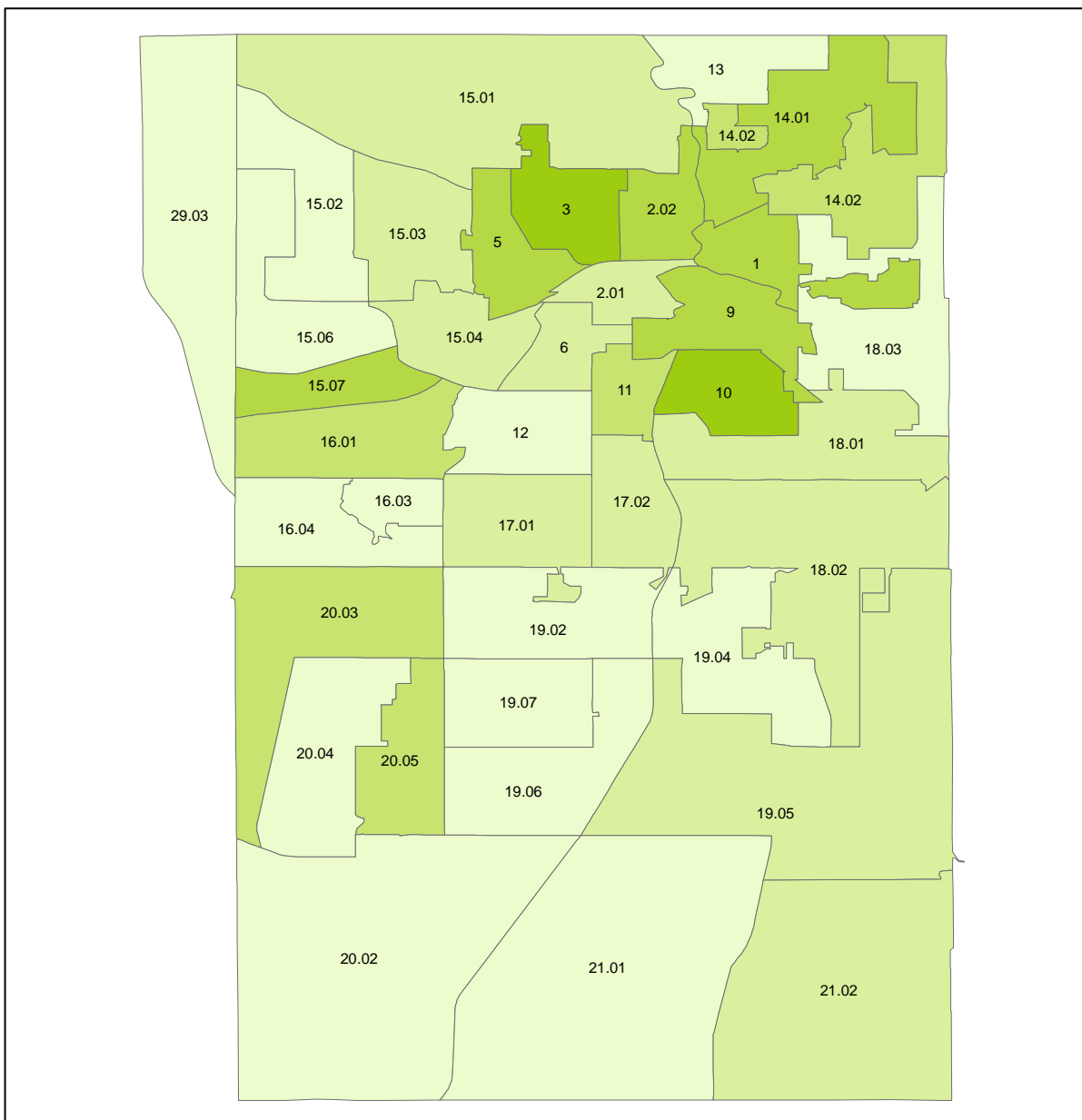
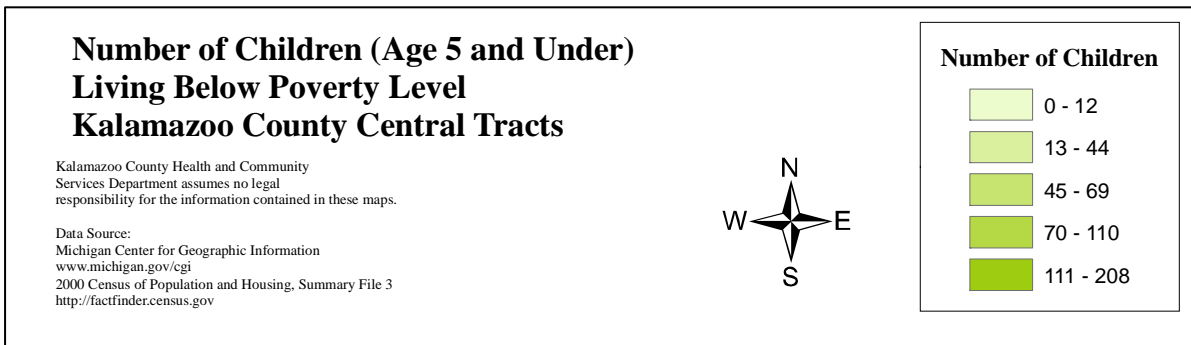


Figure 5



## Characteristics of Those Living in Poverty

### Poverty by Race

There is a strong correlation between race and poverty status. While the greatest number of persons below poverty within Kalamazoo County are white (18,140 persons or 66% of 27,483), a disproportionate number and percentage of persons of other racial and ethnic backgrounds are below poverty. Within the county, 5,986 of the county's 21,748 persons of African American heritage live at or below poverty. This is a rate of 29.2 percent compared to only 9.4 percent for whites. Similarly, 1,379 of the county's 6,276 persons of Hispanic origin live below poverty, which is 21.8 percent. The trend is very similar at the state level as can be seen in the table below.

| Geographic Area  | Number of persons living at or below poverty (ALL AGES) |         |          |         |          |
|------------------|---|---------|----------|---------|----------|
|                  | All Races   | White   | Nonwhite | Black   | Hispanic |
| Michigan         | 1,021,605   | 586,910 | 434,695  | 338,492 | 59,874   |
| Kalamazoo County | 27,483  | 18,140  | 9,343    | 5,986   | 1,379    |
| Kalamazoo city   | 16,641  | 9,690   | 6,951    | 4,578   | 950      |
| Geographic Area  | Percent below poverty                                   |         |          |         |          |
|                  | All Races   | White   | Nonwhite | Black   | Hispanic |
| Michigan         | 10.5%   | 7.5%    | 22.8%    | 25.2%   | 19.2%    |
| Kalamazoo County | 12.0%   | 9.4%    | 26.6%    | 29.2%   | 21.8%    |
| Kalamazoo city   | 24.3%   | 20.5%   | 33.0%    | 32.5%   | 29.5%    |

Nonwhite includes Asian, Native American (Indian), Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander and Black  
Source: U.S. Census, SF3, Tables P87, P159

As can be seen in the table below, while nearly half of the children living below poverty in Kalamazoo County are white (44.4%), as a proportion within each racial group, only 8.7 percent of white children live below poverty compared to 38.1 percent of the county's African American or black children and 20.7 percent of the county's Hispanic children.

| Geographic Area  | Number of children (age 17 and under) living at or below poverty  |         |          |         |          |
|------------------|---|---------|----------|---------|----------|
|                  | All Races   | White   | Nonwhite | Black   | Hispanic |
| Michigan         | 352,935   | 165,127 | 187,808  | 148,352 | 25,221   |
| Kalamazoo County | 7,230   | 3,207   | 4,023    | 2,754   | 508      |
| Kalamazoo city   | 4,067   | 1,110   | 2,957    | 2,124   | 344      |
| Geographic Area  | Percent of children (age 17 and under) living at or below poverty |         |          |         |          |
|                  | All Races   | White   | Nonwhite | Black   | Hispanic |
| Michigan         | 13.9%   | 8.7%    | 29.4%    | 33.9%   | 21.7%    |
| Kalamazoo County | 12.8%   | 7.3%    | 32.2%    | 38.1%   | 20.7%    |
| Kalamazoo city   | 26.7%   | 14.4%   | 39.1%    | 40.6%   | 26.6%    |

### Poverty Among Families

The causes of poverty for whites, African Americans and Hispanics tend to be similar. The primary events contributing to poverty are: 1) below average educational achievement, which in turn leads to lower paying jobs and fewer job opportunities, 2) pregnancy and childcare responsibilities, especially for single-mothers, and 3) lack of job opportunities.

There are 58,270 families in Kalamazoo County for whom income is known. Of these, 3,812 families or 6.5 percent have incomes below poverty. Of these, 2,616 or 62 percent are single mothers with children. Of the 3,812 families living below poverty, 2,616 or 68.6 percent have at least one person employed.

| Geographic Area  | Number of families | Number of families living at or below poverty | Percent of families living at or below poverty | Families below poverty, at least one person working | Female headed families below poverty |
|------------------|--------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Kalamazoo County | 58,270             | 3,812   | 6.5%   | 2,616   | 2,362                                |
| Kalamazoo city   | 14,437             | 1,957   | 13.6%  | 1,351   | 1,323                                |
| Kalamazoo twp.   | 5,337              | 319   | 6.0%   | 187   | 198                                  |
| Oshtemo twp.     | 4,051              | 307   | 7.6%   | 267   | 200                                  |
| Portage city     | 12,252             | 375   | 3.1%   | 283   | 249                                  |
| Comstock twp.    | 3,775              | 225   | 6.0%   | 125   | 150                                  |

Source: U.S. Census, SF3, Tables P90, PCT160

### Single Mother Families and Poverty

The percentage of single-mother or female-headed households is disproportionate by race. While only 24.8 percent of white single-mother families live below poverty, 46.2 percent of non-white single-mother families and 41.5 percent of Hispanic single-mother families live below poverty. This is most likely related to several factors, mother's age at birth of first child, total number of children under age 12 and educational attainment of mother, which affects her employment and income.

| Geographic Area  | Female-Headed Families Below Poverty |       |          |          |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|----------|----------|
|                  | Total below poverty                  | White | Nonwhite | Hispanic |
| Kalamazoo County | 2,362                                | 1,198 | 1,164    | 95       |
| Kalamazoo city   | 1,323                                | 447   | 876      | 45       |
| Kalamazoo twp.   | 198                                  | 103   | 95       | 22       |
| Oshtemo twp.     | 200                                  | 114   | 86       | 20       |
| Michigan         | 31.5%                                | 25.4% | 39.2%    | 38.7%    |
| Kalamazoo County | 32.1%                                | 24.8% | 46.2%    | 41.5%    |
| Kalamazoo city   | 40.0%                                | 32.1% | 45.7%    | 45.9%    |
| Kalamazoo twp.   | 32.8%                                | 27.8% | 40.9%    | 71.0%    |
| Oshtemo twp.     | 47.5%                                | 38.9% | 67.2%    | 46.5%    |

Source: U.S. Census, SF3, Tables P90, PCT160

Figure 6 shows the distribution of female-headed families with no husband present living below poverty in Kalamazoo County by census tract. Figure 7 shows the distribution of female-headed families with no husband present living below poverty in Kalamazoo County in the central census tracts which include the cities of Kalamazoo and Portage. The labels indicate the census tract number.

Figure 6

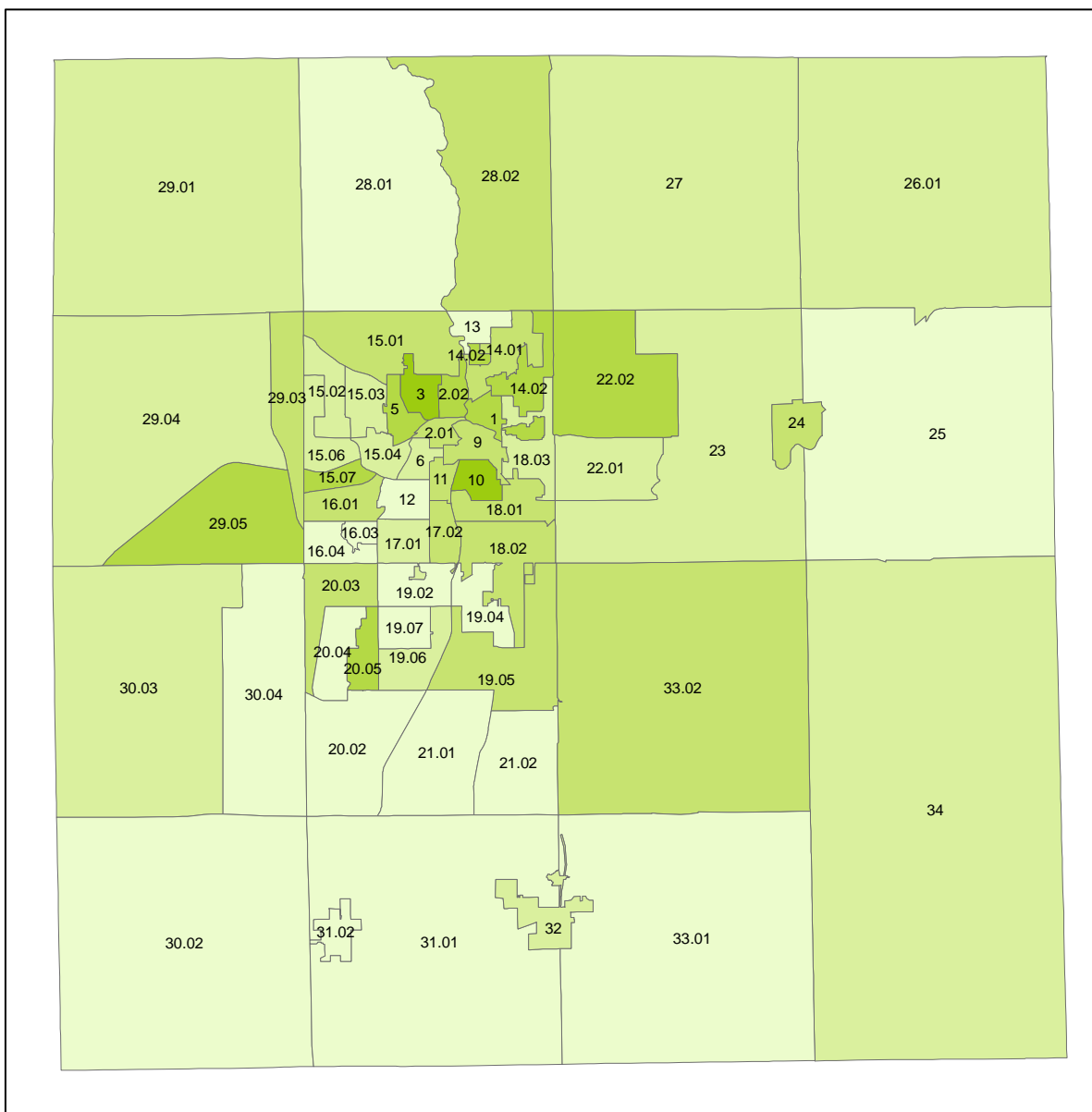
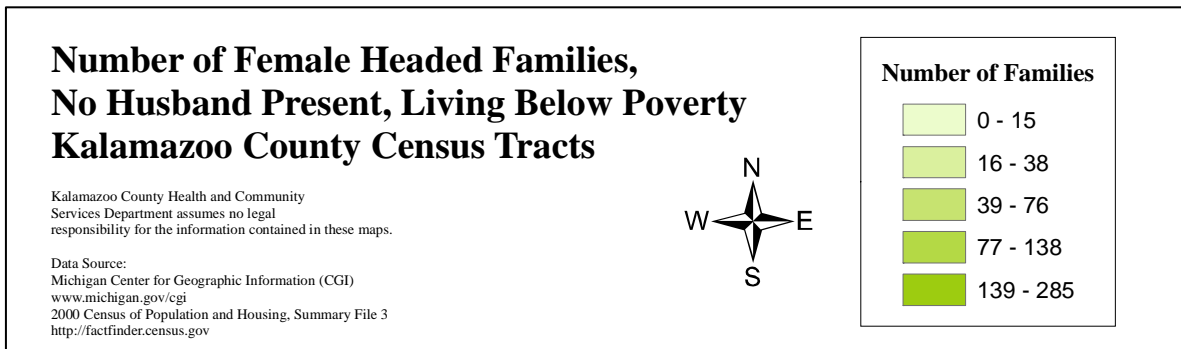
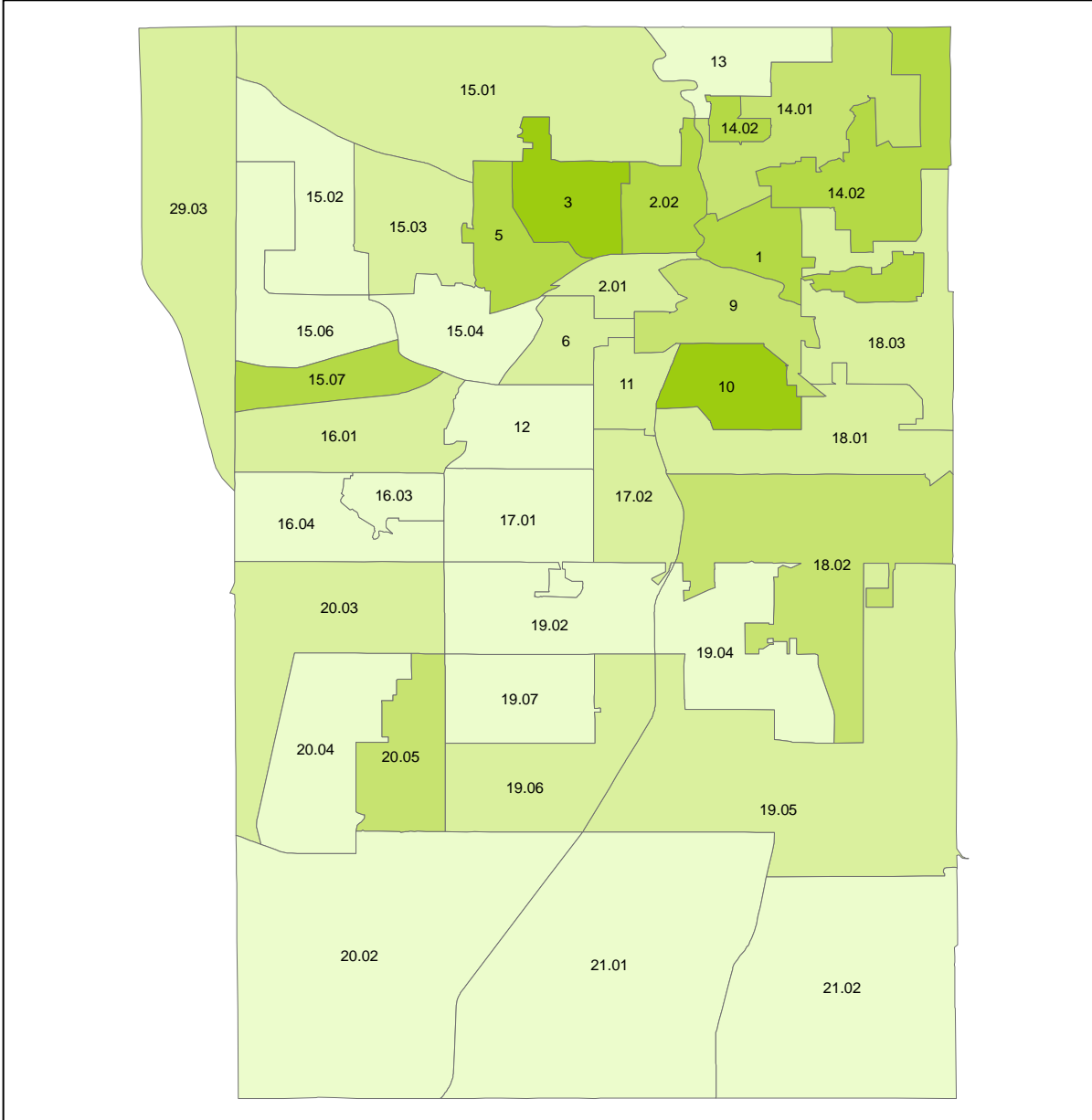
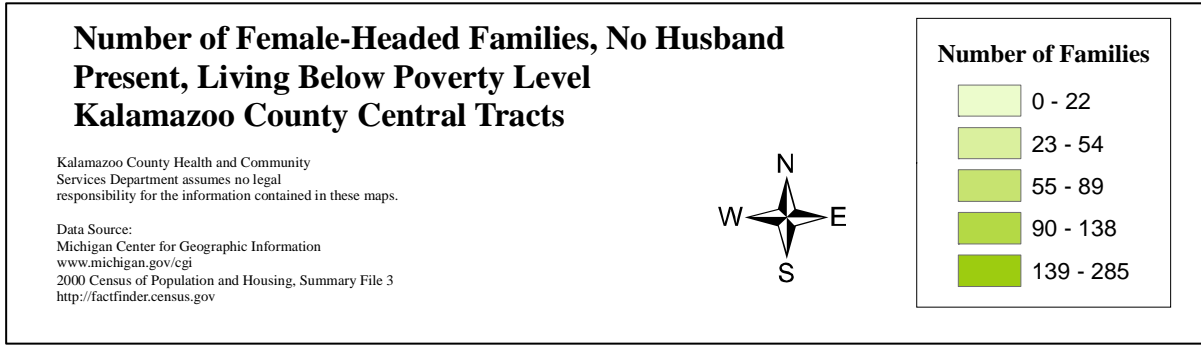


Figure 7



According to the 2000 Census there are 1,208 grandparents responsible for their own grandchildren under 18 in Kalamazoo County.<sup>10</sup> In 2003 in Michigan, 17 percent of grandparents responsible for their own grandchildren under 18 are in poverty.<sup>11</sup> Applying the Michigan percentage to Kalamazoo County results in an estimated 205 grandparents in poverty who are responsible for their own grandchildren.

**Children with Disabilities**

In 2005/06, Kalamazoo County Head Start served 731 children, of whom 82 (11 percent) had a diagnosed disability. Of the children served, 73 had a speech or language impairment, one had an orthopedic impairment, one had a hearing impairment, two had health impairments, two were autistic, and 3 had non-categorical developmental delays.

The Michigan Department of Community Health commissioned a study of children’s health in Michigan. The study was conducted by the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research at Michigan State University. While the study looked at illness and injury in children from birth through age 14 and was conducted statewide, the characteristics of the households surveyed are fairly representative of the general population with the exception of those households without phones. Therefore some extrapolation can be made for Kalamazoo County and its children ages 3 and 4. The next table takes the statewide results and does an estimate for Kalamazoo County.

| <b>Table 12 - Estimated Children Age 3 and 4 Years with Physical Or Cognitive Disabilities Kalamazoo County, Michigan<sup>12</sup></b> |       |  |
|--|-------|--|
| #  | %     |  |
| 6,193  | 100.0 | Total children                         |
| 675  | 10.9  | Special needs                          |
| 85   | 12.6  | Asthma or reactive airway disease      |
| 65   | 9.6   | Mental, cognitive, learning condition  |
| 80   | 11.8  | Paralysis or motor function impairment |
| 348  | 51.5  | Congenital anomalies                   |
| Note: A child might have more than one condition.  |       |  |

The next table shows the number of children diagnosed with birth defects, by major system or diagnostic category up to their second year of life. Some birth defects, especially hearing and vision impairments, may not be diagnosed until after age 2 when language delays lead to testing. Also not included in this list of disabilities are those disabilities that are not congenital, that may occur by age 3 or 4 due to illness or injury.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Michigan Selected Social Characteristics: 2003, 2003 American Community Survey Summary Tables.

<sup>12</sup> 2002 Single-year population estimate, U.S. Census Bureau and The Michigan Child Health and Safety Risk Survey: 2001, Institute for Public Policy and Social Research, Michigan State University

| <b>Table 13 - Congenital Anomalies and Other Birth Defects Diagnosed by Age 1 for Potential Head Start Eligible Children in Kalamazoo County, Michigan (Based on Incidence of Birth Defects for the State of Michigan in 2003)<sup>13</sup></b> |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|   |   | Incidence Rate Per 10,000 Live Births in Michigan, 2003 | Estimated Number of Kalamazoo 3 & 4 Year-Olds with Birth Defect <sup>14</sup> |
|   | Congenital Anomalies of the...  |   |   |
| a.  | Central Nervous System  | 34.8  | 22  |
| b.  | Eye   | 27.4  | 17  |
| c.  | Ear, Face and Neck  | 15.2  | 9   |
| d.  | Heart and Circulatory System  | 175.3   | 109   |
| e.  | Respiratory System  | 54.2  | 34  |
| f.  | Cleft Palate and Cleft Lip  | 16.2  | 10  |
| g.  | Upper Alimentary Canal/Digestive System                                   | 43.3  | 27  |
| h.  | Genital and Urinary Systems   | 134.3   | 83  |
| i.  | Musculoskeletal System  | 154.1   | 95  |
| j.  | Integument  | 22.0  | 14  |
| k.  | Chromosomal Anomalies   | 21.3  | 13  |
| l.  | Other and Unspecified Congenital Anomalies                                | 48.7  | 30  |
|   | Other Reportable Conditions   |   |   |
| m.  | Infectious Conditions Occurring in the Perinatal Period                   | 11.0  | 7   |
| n.  | Endocrine/Metabolic Disorders   | 29.8  | 18  |
| o.  | Diseases of Blood & Blood Forming Organs                                  | 18.5  | 11  |
| p.  | Other Diseases of the Central & Peripheral Nervous System                 | 12.9  | 8   |
| q.  | Other Diseases of the Eye   | 41.1  | 25  |
| r.  | Hearing Deficiency  | 24.9  | 15  |
| s.  | Other Diseases of Heart & Circulatory System                              | 30.1  | 19  |
| t.  | Other Diseases of Gastrointestinal System                                 | 55.4  | 34  |
| u.  | Other Diseases of Genital and Urinary System                              | 2.4   | 1   |
| v.  | Maternal Exposures Affecting Fetus (i.e. FAS – alcohol, drugs, AIDS, etc) | 15.2  | 9   |
|   | Total Children with One or More Birth Defects Discovered by Age 1         | 705.2   | 437   |
| Note: Some children may have more than one condition.   |   |   |   |

During the 2004/05 school year, the parents of 298 children called to set up consultation interviews for potential educational delays for children 3-6 years old. Of those, 256 were felt to have disabilities severe enough to be involved in a three-step evaluation process. The remaining 42 were screened during initial interviews as not having a disability causing significant educational delay. All parents were given information about resources.

<sup>13</sup> Michigan Birth Defects Registry, Michigan Department of Community Health, Reports Processed through August 8, 2005.

<sup>14</sup> County population estimates from National Center for Health Statistics, prepared under a collaborative agreement with the US Census Bureau (from the Vintage 2004 postcensal series, available on the internet at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/popbridge/popbridge.htm>).

| <b>Table 14 – PET Screening of Children Age 3 -6 years for Potential Educational Delays</b> |          |
|---|----------|
| PET Pre-primary Evaluation Team<br>K/RESA - Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency   | Children |
| Parents concerned about educational delays  | 298      |
| Initial interview led to full 3 step disability evaluation                                  | 256      |
| Not evaluated (parents given reassurance and resource information)                          | 42       |
| Source: Kalamazoo County Special Education Programs and Services                            |          |

## **Education, Health, Nutrition and Social Service Needs of Head Start Eligible Children and Their Families**

### **Education**

In Michigan 20 percent of low-income children are in households where the most educated parent has less than a high school education. Forty-one percent of low-income children are in households where the most educated parent has a high school diploma, and 39 percent are in households where the most educated parent has some college or more.<sup>15</sup>

According to the 2000 Census, there are 8,799 households in Kalamazoo County where English is not the primary language spoken. A number of these households are identified as linguistically isolated, meaning that all members of the household 14 years old and older have at least some difficulty with English.<sup>16</sup> The following table depicts household language by linguistic isolation.

| <b>Table 15 - Primary Household Language by Linguistic Isolation<br/>Kalamazoo County, 2000</b> |                  |                                    |
|---|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Primary Household Language  | Total Households | Households Linguistically Isolated |
| Spanish   | 3,643            | 335                                |
| Other Indo-European   | 3,315            | 343                                |
| Asian and Pacific Island  | 1,360            | 360                                |
| Other   | 488              | 42                                 |
| Source: U.S. Census Bureau, SF3, Table P20  |                  |                                    |

### **Health**

Kalamazoo County has one of the highest rates of low birth weight compared to other counties in the state with 8.2 percent of babies born at low birth weight (69 out of 82 counties). In 2003, there were 3,164 live births to Kalamazoo County residents, of which Medicaid covered 41.7 percent and 37.1 percent were to single women.<sup>17</sup> An average of 294 teens aged 15-19 years gave birth per year in Kalamazoo County from 2001-2003<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Annual Social and Economic Supplement (March) of the Current Population Survey from 2002, 2003, and 2004, representing information from calendar years 2001, 2002, and 2003. Three years of data were averaged because of small sample sizes in less populated states.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Live Birth Files, Division of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Michigan Department of Community Health

<sup>18</sup> Live Birth Files, Division of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Michigan Department of Community Health

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 3 percent of Michigan's children 3 and 4 years of age, who live at or below 200 percent of poverty, had no healthcare insurance in 2003<sup>19</sup>. Using the percentage of the total Kalamazoo County living at or below 200 percent of poverty in 1999 (27.7 percent) and applying this to the estimated population in 2004 ages 3 and 4, an estimated 51 children ages 3 and 4 do not have health insurance coverage (3 percent of this population living at or below 200 percent of poverty)<sup>20</sup>. This estimate is conservative; the actual numbers are likely to be higher because families with children less than 5 years of age are more likely to live below poverty than the overall population in Kalamazoo County (20.1 percent of families with children under 5 years live below the poverty level vs. 12.0 percent of individuals). In May 2006 there were 20,277 Medical Assistance cases in Kalamazoo County.<sup>21</sup>

## **Nutrition**

Participation of public school children in the free and reduced price lunch program in the nine school districts within Kalamazoo County grew substantially over the past decade, from 19 percent of all public school students in the 1991-1992 school year to more than one third (34.4 percent) in 2004-2005. From 1990-1996, Kalamazoo County schools had a participation rate below the state as a whole. In 1997, Kalamazoo rates matched state rates for the first time, and in 1998 exceed them. For the 2005-2006 school year, Kalamazoo's rate was similar to the state's rate (36.05 percent). All of the school buildings in the Kalamazoo Public Schools and Comstock Public Schools were rated as severely needy in terms of free/reduced breakfast and lunch served, with several schools reporting as high as 80-98 percent eligibility<sup>22</sup>.

In May 2006 there were 13,406 food stamp cases in Kalamazoo County, a 12 percent increase from May 2005.<sup>23</sup> According to the results of the 2000 Kalamazoo County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, 4.8 percent of households reported being concerned about having enough food for their families. Analysis of the data by income levels shows that 11.6 percent of households with incomes under \$25,000 experienced food insecurity.<sup>24</sup>

## **Employment**

In Michigan 47 percent of low-income children live in households where the parent who works the most is employed full-time/year round. Thirty-four percent of low-income children live in households where the parent who works the most is employed part-year or part-time and 18 percent are in households where there is no parent employed.<sup>25</sup>

The unemployment rate in the Kalamazoo – Portage MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) was 6.0 percent in March 2006, down 0.1% from March 2005. This translates into 10,721 people who are

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<sup>19</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2004.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, SF3, Tables P87 and P88

<sup>21</sup> Michigan Department of Human Services, Kalamazoo County Statistics for May 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Michigan Department of Education, School Breakfast and Lunch Information by School District and Building - School Year 2005-2006 (October 2005 data)

<sup>23</sup> Michigan Department of Human Services, Kalamazoo County Statistics for May 2006.

<sup>24</sup> 2000 Kalamazoo County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey Data Summary Sheet.

<sup>25</sup> Annual Social and Economic Supplement (March) of the Current Population Survey from 2002, 2003, and 2004, representing information from calendar years 2001, 2002, and 2003. Three years of data were averaged because of small sample sizes in less populated states.

unemployed.<sup>26</sup> “In 2002, 20.4 percent of all Michigan workers were employed in jobs paying less than the poverty wage for a family of four.”<sup>27</sup> Over 9,700 families in Kalamazoo County earn less than \$25,000 a year.<sup>28</sup>

Michigan has a growing low-wage labor force due in part to the reduction over the past 30 years of the role of manufacturing. “In November 2003, four out of five occupations with the highest employment in Michigan had a median wage below the poverty wage for a family of four.”<sup>29</sup> The Michigan League for Human Services calculated an “economic self-sufficiency wage” which is what a family needs to earn to meet its basic expenses independent of public or private assistance. “In 2004 the self-sufficiency wage level was as follows:

- Single individual -- \$8.28 per hour;
- Single-parent family with two children under six -- \$16.58 per hour
- Two-parent family with two children under six in which both parents work -- \$9.23 per hour each;
- Two-parent family with two children under six in which one parent works -- \$10.79 per hour.”<sup>30</sup>

## **Housing**

Currently, 5,767 Kalamazoo County renter households earn 30 percent of AMI or less and are unable to afford rent.<sup>31</sup> At least 12,000 housing units do not meet the affordability standard.<sup>32</sup> Approximately 5,000 residents of the County of Kalamazoo pay 35 percent or more of their income toward rent.<sup>33</sup> There are 4,981 permanently affordable rental units existing throughout the County of Kalamazoo with many losing their “permanent” status each year.<sup>34</sup> Fair market rents by unit bedrooms increased an average of 5 percent over the past year.<sup>35</sup> In Michigan 22 percent of low-income children live in households that have moved in the last year.<sup>36</sup>

## **Violence**

In 2004/05 in Kalamazoo, 1,985 cases of child abuse and neglect were investigated. Of cases investigated, 698 were confirmed and 283 were referred to Juvenile Court for intervention.<sup>37</sup>

According to the Michigan Child Health and Safety Risk Survey, 2001, 12.2 percent of survey respondents reported that incidents of interpersonal violence happen occasionally in their neighborhood and 5.6 percent reported the incidents happen somewhat often or more.<sup>38</sup> “About 1.7

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<sup>26</sup> Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth

<sup>27</sup> Michigan League for Human Services, Michigan’s Growing Low-Wage Labor Force, June 2005.

<sup>28</sup> 2000 United States Census

<sup>29</sup> Michigan League for Human Services, Michigan’s Growing Low-Wage Labor Force, June 2005.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach 2004, Kalamazoo County.

<sup>32</sup> 2000 United States Census

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> LISC Housing Report Card, November 2004.

<sup>35</sup> Fair Market Rent History 2000 to 2005 for Kalamazoo County, Michigan

<sup>36</sup> Annual Social and Economic Supplement (March) of the Current Population Survey from 2002, 2003, and 2004, representing information from calendar years 2001, 2002, and 2003. Three years of data were averaged because of small sample sizes in less populated states.

<sup>37</sup> Children’s Services Summary Report, Family Independence Agency, October 1998-September 2005.

<sup>38</sup> Michigan Department of Community Health, Michigan Child Health and Safety Risk Survey, 2001: Summary of Findings. January 2003.

percent of the respondents reported that shootings and gun fire happen very often, 4 percent said somewhat often, and 8.8 percent said occasionally.”<sup>39</sup>

### **Risk Factor Ranking for Kalamazoo County**

The latest edition of *Kids Count in Michigan* ranks Kalamazoo County higher than the state average rates in the following areas<sup>40</sup>:

- Substantiated victims of child abuse and neglect: 21.9 per 1,000 children (74 out of 83 counties)
- Children in out-of-home care for abuse or neglect: 8.8 per 1,000 children (68 out of 78 counties)
- Infant mortality: 10.2 per 1,000 live births (46 out of 54 counties)

### **Education, Employment and Living Situation of Current and Potential Head Start Families**

#### **Client Surveys**

During the winter of 2006, the Community Action Bureau, the Health and Community Services Department’s (HCSD) WIC program, and the HCSD Dental Clinic asked clients for their opinions about the causes of poverty in Kalamazoo County, their own experiences, and for ideas on what they and the community can do to improve conditions for people living in poverty. A total of 240 low-income residents completed surveys at federal food commodities sites, Head Start parent meetings, the WIC and dental clinics, tax preparation sites, and the Community Action Bureau main office. The survey respondents for this report were taken from the 240 surveys received. Respondents were either current Head Start parents (61) or parents with children ages 5 and under who are potential Head Start parents (82).

This study made no effort to survey a sample of low-income residents who would be representative of the population living in poverty in Kalamazoo County. The typical current Head Start survey respondent was female (80.0%), 24-44 years old (75.4%), with a high school diploma (23.0%) or some college (42.6%). Most were African American (44.3%) or Caucasian (36.1%). Over half (59.0%) were currently employed full or part-time. Nearly one-quarter (21.8%) reported annual incomes of \$5,000 or less; over one-third (40.0%) reported incomes of \$10,000 or less.

The typical potential Head Start parent survey respondent was female (89.0%), 24-44 years old (65.0%), with a high school diploma (37.0%) or some college (37.0%). Most were Caucasian (61.0%) or African American (23.2%). Half (50.0%) were currently employed full or part-time. Nearly one-quarter (20.0%) reported annual incomes of \$5,000 or less; over one-third (37.3%) reported incomes of \$10,000 or less.

The Head Start Policy Council and the Community Action Bureau uses the information gathered in the survey to document the needs of Kalamazoo County low-income residents, to develop long-range and short-term program plans, and to inform the community of the status of one of its most vulnerable populations.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Kids Count in Michigan 2005 Databook.

## Respondent Profile

Most of the survey respondents are female.

|        | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|--------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Female | 80%                       | 89%                         |
| Male   | 20%                       | 11%                         |

The majority of current Head Start parent respondents identify themselves as African American (44.3%), followed by Caucasian (36.1%) and Hispanic (26.2%). The majority of potential Head Start parent respondents identify themselves as Caucasian (61.0%), followed by African American (23.2%) and Hispanic (14.6%). Respondents were asked to select all races/ethnicities they identify with, so the percentages total more than 100.

| <b>Race/Ethnicity</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Caucasian             | 36.1%                     | 61.0%                       |
| African American      | 44.3%                     | 23.2%                       |
| Hispanic              | 26.2%                     | 14.6%                       |
| Native American       | 4.9%                      | 2.4%                        |
| Asian                 | 3.3%                      | 1.2%                        |
| Other                 | 0%                        | 1.2%                        |

Most of the respondents are between the ages of 24 and 44.

| <b>Age range</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 17 and under     | 0%                        | 2%                          |
| 18-23            | 16%                       | 32%                         |
| 24-44            | 76%                       | 65%                         |
| 45-64            | 8%                        | 1%                          |

Over half of the respondents are not currently married. Nearly half of the respondents have never married. Over one-third (38%) of current Head Start parent respondents and nearly one-half (45%) of potential Head Start parent respondents are married.

| <b>Marital Status</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Never Married         | 42%                       | 45%                         |
| Married               | 38%                       | 44%                         |
| Divorced/Separated    | 18%                       | 10%                         |
| Other                 | 2%                        | 1%                          |
| Widowed               | 0%                        | 0%                          |

Over one-third of all respondents have annual incomes of \$10,000 or less. Two-thirds report annual incomes less than \$20,001.

| <b>Table 20 – Annual Income</b> |                           |                             |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Annual income range</b>      | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
| \$5,000 or less                 | 22%                       | 20%                         |
| \$5001- \$10,000                | 18%                       | 17%                         |
| \$10,001 - \$20,000             | 26%                       | 30%                         |
| \$20,001 - \$30,000             | 18%                       | 25%                         |
| \$30,001 and over               | 16%                       | 8%                          |

Over three-quarters of the respondents have a high school diploma, GED, or some college. Current Head Start parent respondents are more likely to have some college (43%) or are college graduates (13%) than potential Head Start parent respondents (37% and 9% respectively).

| <b>Table 21 – Educational Attainment</b> |                           |                             |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Education</b>                         | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
| Less than high school                    | 21%                       | 17%                         |
| High school graduate                     | 23%                       | 37%                         |
| Some college                             | 43%                       | 37%                         |
| College graduate                         | 13%                       | 9%                          |

Current Head Start parent respondents were more likely to be working or in job training or school (65.6%) than potential Head Start parent respondents (58.5%).

| <b>Table 22 – Employment Status</b> |                           |                             |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Employment Status</b>            | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
| Employed, full-time                 | 37.7%                     | 28.0%                       |
| Employed, part-time                 | 21.3%                     | 22.0%                       |
| Job training or in school           | 6.6%                      | 8.5%                        |
| Unemployed                          | 21.3%                     | 26.8%                       |
| Disabled                            | 9.8%                      | 4.9%                        |
| Full-time Homemaker                 | 9.8%                      | 18.3%                       |
| Other                               | 3.3%                      | 4.9%                        |

Current Head Start parent respondents were more likely to rent an apartment or house (65%) than potential Head Start parent respondents (40%) and less likely to own a home (28%) or live with others (7%).

| <b>Table 23 – Housing Status</b> |                           |                             |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Living situation</b>          | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
| Homeowner                        | 28%                       | 33%                         |
| Rent house                       | 16%                       | 12%                         |
| Rent apartment                   | 49%                       | 28%                         |
| Live with others                 | 7%                        | 22%                         |
| Other                            | 0%                        | 5%                          |

Over half of the current Head Start parent respondents (52%) pay more than \$450 per month for housing or rent costs.

| <b>Table 24 – Housing Costs</b> |                           |                             |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Monthly Housing Cost</b>     | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
| \$150 or less                   | 24%                       | 21%                         |
| \$151-\$250                     | 7%                        | 4%                          |
| \$251-\$350                     | 7%                        | 15%                         |
| \$351-\$450                     | 10%                       | 17%                         |
| \$451-\$550                     | 12%                       | 9%                          |
| \$551 and over                  | 40%                       | 34%                         |

Overall, more than one-third of the respondents moved one or more times in the past year. Those most likely to move were those who lived with others, people who rent houses, and people who rent apartments.

| <b>Table 25 – Mobility</b>      |                           |                             |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Times moved in past year</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
| None                            | 59%                       | 55%                         |
| One                             | 30%                       | 24%                         |
| Two                             | 5%                        | 8%                          |
| Three                           | 3%                        | 10%                         |
| Four or more                    | 3%                        | 3%                          |

| <b>Table 26 - Mobility By Housing Status</b> |                           |                             |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Living Situation</b>                      | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
| Homeowner                                    | 25%                       | 11.1%                       |
| Rent house                                   | 60%                       | 55.6%                       |
| Rent apartment                               | 40%                       | 57.1%                       |
| Live with others                             | 75%                       | 71.5%                       |

The majority of respondents have health insurance.

| <b>Health insurance</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Yes                     | 75%                       | 76%                         |
| No                      | 25%                       | 24%                         |

The majority of current Head Start parent respondents are covered by public insurance (Medicaid at 52.5% and Medicare at 6.6%). Current Head Start parent respondents who are employed full-time are more likely to be uninsured (36.4%) or have health insurance provided by their employer (30.4%). The majority of potential Head Start parent respondents are covered by public insurance (Medicaid at 61.0% and Medicare at 3.7%). Potential Head Start parent respondents who are employed full-time are more likely to have health insurance provided by their employer (39.1%) or to be uninsured (26.1%).

| <b>Insurance Source</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Medicaid                | 52.5%                     | 61.0%                       |
| Medicare                | 6.6%                      | 3.7%                        |
| Private Insurance       | 1.6%                      | 1.2%                        |
| Employer Provided       | 19.7%                     | 17.1%                       |
| Other Provider          | 3.3%                      | 3.7%                        |
| No Insurance            | 25%                       | 24%                         |

| <b>Insurance source</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Medicaid                | 26.1%                     | 34.8%                       |
| Medicare                | 0%                        | 0%                          |
| Private Insurance       | 0%                        | 0%                          |
| Employer Provided       | 30.4%                     | 39.1%                       |
| Other Provider          | 4.3%                      | 4.3%                        |
| No Insurance            | 36.4%                     | 26.1%                       |

When compared to the national average of assets owned, current and potential Head Start respondents own fewer assets except for computers.

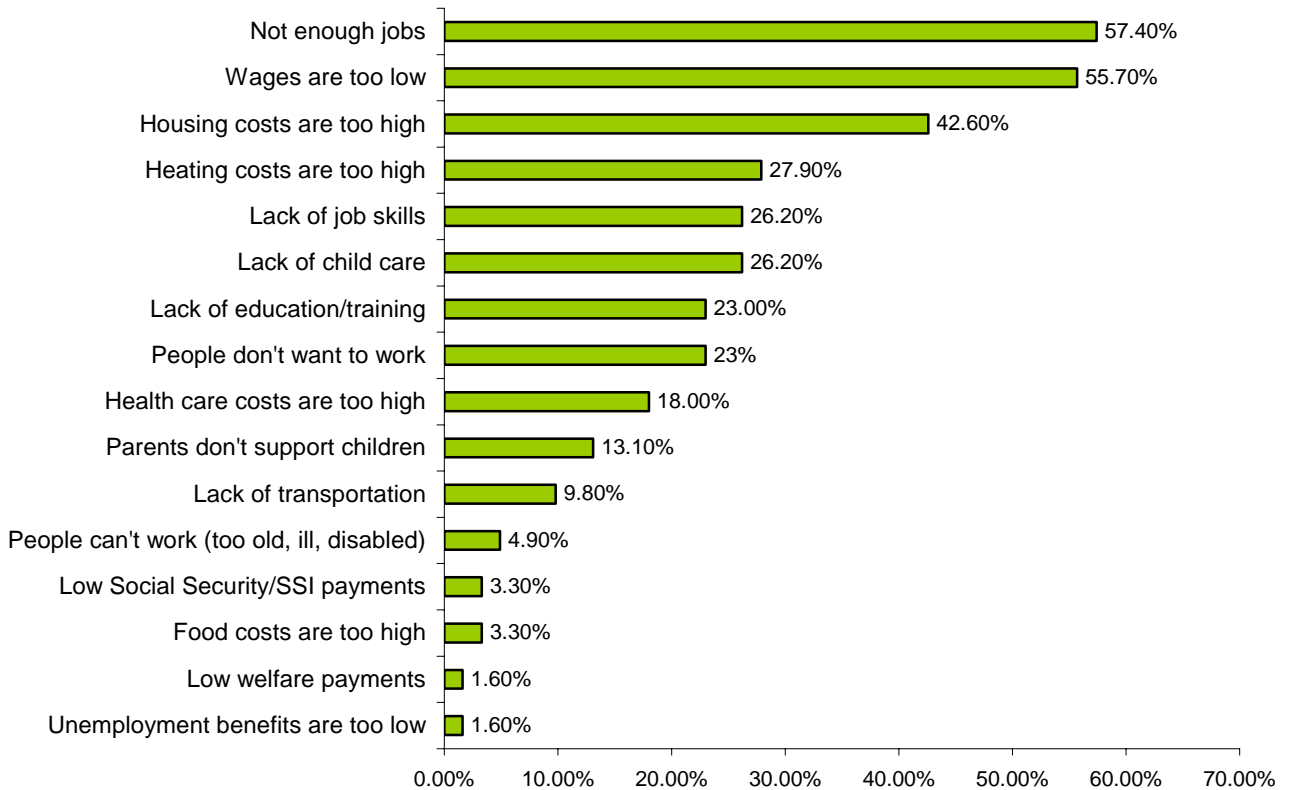
| <b>Assets</b>      | <b>National Average</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Homeownership      | 69.1%                   | 28%                       | 33%                         |
| Bank account       | 87.3%                   | 83.6%                     | 73.2%                       |
| Retirement savings | 62%                     | 8.9%                      | 6.2%                        |
| Computer at home   | 56.5%                   | 70.5%                     | 51.2%                       |

## Causes of Poverty

When current Head Start parent respondents were asked to select the top three causes of poverty in Kalamazoo County, the results were:

- Not enough jobs (57.4%)
- Low wages (55.7%)
- High housing costs (42.6%).

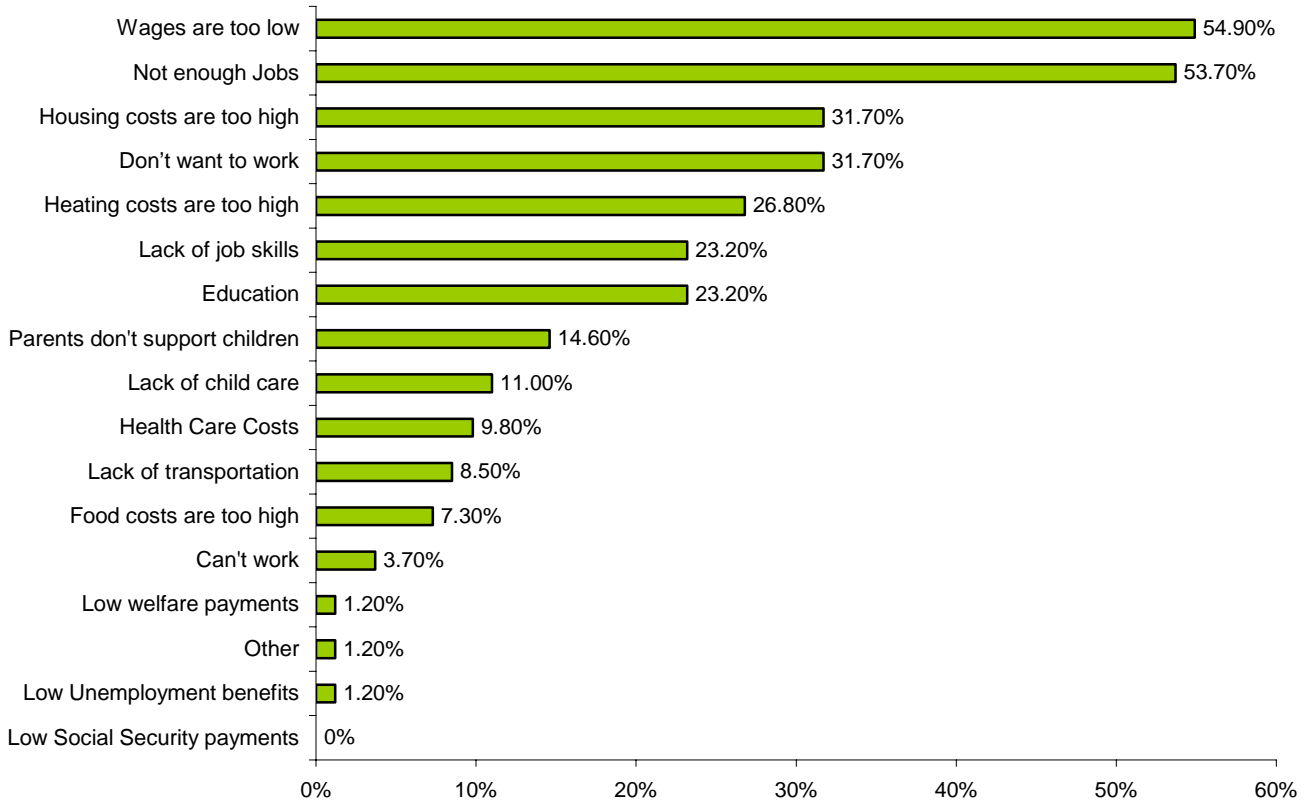
**Figure 7 - Causes of Poverty as Identified by Current Head Start Parent Respondents**



Potential Head Start parent respondents selected the same top two causes of poverty in Kalamazoo County, and added a fourth:

- Low wages (54.9%)
- Not enough jobs (53.7%)
- High housing costs (31.7%)
- People don't want to work (31.7%).

**Figure 8 - Causes of Poverty as Identified by Potential Head Start Parent Respondents**



## Seriousness of Community Issues

Respondents were asked to rate the seriousness of issues that impact people in poverty in Kalamazoo County. The “number of good jobs available” and “low wages” were identified as the most serious concerns, followed by heating costs and affordable housing.

| <b>Table 31 - Community Issues As Identified by Current Head Start Parent Respondents</b> |          |          |          |          |          |             |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Sorted from Most Serious to Least Serious (based on mean)                                 |          |          |          |          |          |             |
| 1 = Not a Problem 5 = Very Serious Problem  |          |          |          |          |          |             |
| <b>Issues</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>Mean</b> |
| Wages are too low   | 8.6%     | 0%       | 13.8%    | 20.7%    | 56.9%    | 4.17        |
| Heating costs   | 3.4%     | 10.3%    | 12.1%    | 15.55    | 58.6%    | 4.16        |
| Number of good jobs available   | 8.6%     | 5.2%     | 10.3%    | 17.2%    | 58.6%    | 4.12        |
| Affordable housing  | 10.0%    | 1.7%     | 16.7%    | 21.7%    | 50.0%    | 4.00        |
| Affordable quality child care   | 13.6%    | 6.8%     | 15.3%    | 15.3%    | 49.2%    | 3.80        |
| Transition from welfare to work   | 18.2%    | 3.6%     | 16.4%    | 30.9%    | 30.9%    | 3.53        |
| Access to health care   | 25.0%    | 5.0%     | 13.3%    | 20.0%    | 36.7%    | 3.38        |
| Activities for young people   | 18.6%    | 11.9%    | 15.3%    | 25.4%    | 28.8%    | 3.34        |
| Education & training  | 20.0%    | 10.0%    | 11.7%    | 38.3%    | 20.0%    | 3.28        |
| Help for disabled residents   | 18.9%    | 7.5%     | 28.3%    | 24.5%    | 20.8%    | 3.21        |
| Cost of food  | 8.5%     | 18.6%    | 32.2%    | 25.4%    | 15.3%    | 3.20        |
| Support for families  | 15.5%    | 15.5%    | 25.9%    | 20.7%    | 22.4%    | 3.19        |
| Public safety/crime   | 17.5%    | 5.35     | 36.8%    | 24.6%    | 15.8%    | 3.16        |
| Help for older residents  | 22.6%    | 5.7%     | 32.1%    | 22.6%    | 17.0%    | 3.06        |
| Taxes   | 24.1%    | 8.6%     | 32.8%    | 17.2%    | 17.2%    | 2.95        |
| Public Transportation   | 25.0%    | 8.9%     | 35.7%    | 12.5%    | 17.9%    | 2.89        |
| Support for businesses  | 22.8%    | 12.3%    | 35.1%    | 22.8%    | 7.0%     | 2.79        |

Potential Head Start parent respondents were asked to rate the seriousness of issues that impact people in poverty in Kalamazoo County. The number of good jobs available and low wages were identified as the most serious concerns, followed by heating costs and affordable housing.

| <b>Table 32 - Community Issues as Identified by Potential Head Start Parent Respondents</b> |          |          |          |          |          |             |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Sorted from Most Serious to Least Serious (based on mean)                                   |          |          |          |          |          |             |
| 1 = Not a Problem 5 = Very Serious Problem  |          |          |          |          |          |             |
| <b>Issues</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>Mean</b> |
| Number of good jobs available   | 7.7%     | 2.6%     | 9.0%     | 30.8%    | 50.0%    | 4.12        |
| Wages are too low   | 6.5%     | 6.55     | 20.8%    | 15.6%    | 50.6%    | 3.97        |
| Heating costs   | 13.9%    | 11.4%    | 11.4%    | 21.5%    | 41.8%    | 3.66        |
| Affordable housing  | 15.4%    | 10.3%    | 20.5%    | 21.8%    | 32.1%    | 3.45        |
| Affordable quality child care   | 19.7%    | 13.2%    | 19.7%    | 21.1%    | 26.3%    | 3.21        |
| Cost of food  | 16.9%    | 18.2%    | 28.6%    | 15.6%    | 20.8%    | 3.05        |
| Public safety/crime   | 12.5%    | 20.0%    | 33.8%    | 18.8%    | 15.0%    | 3.04        |
| Support for families  | 18.2%    | 13.0%    | 33.8%    | 16.9%    | 18.2%    | 3.03        |
| Taxes   | 17.5%    | 20.0%    | 30.0%    | 13.8%    | 18.8%    | 2.96        |
| Transition from welfare to work   | 25.6%    | 15.4%    | 25.6%    | 12.8%    | 20.5%    | 2.87        |
| Help for older residents  | 23.3%    | 19.2%    | 26.0%    | 17.8%    | 13.7%    | 2.79        |
| Help for disabled residents   | 23.7%    | 19.7%    | 27.6%    | 11.8%    | 17.1%    | 2.78        |
| Activities for young people   | 22.8%    | 20.3%    | 27.8%    | 15.2%    | 13.9%    | 2.77        |
| Support for businesses  | 17.5%    | 31.3%    | 30.0%    | 10.0%    | 11.3%    | 2.66        |
| Access to health care   | 35.0%    | 13.8%    | 20.0%    | 13.8%    | 17.5%    | 2.65        |
| Public Transportation   | 25.3%    | 24.1%    | 25.3%    | 13.9%    | 11.4%    | 2.62        |
| Education & training  | 29.1%    | 20.3%    | 27.8%    | 8.9%     | 13.9%    | 2.58        |

## Perceived Causes of Community Problems

### Affordable Housing

Respondents were given a variety of reasons that affordable housing in Kalamazoo County is a problem and asked to select all that apply. Ninety-five percent of the current Head Start parent respondents agreed that affordable housing was a problem in Kalamazoo County. “High rents” was identified by the majority of respondents to be a cause of affordable housing problems in Kalamazoo County, with “credit problems” as the second highest response.

| <b>Affordable housing is a problem because:</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| High rents                                      | 65.6%                     | 69.5%                       |
| Credit problems                                 | 62.3%                     | 54.9%                       |
| Too expensive to own                            | 34.4%                     | 32.9%                       |
| Not enough good quality housing                 | 26.2%                     | 36.6%                       |
| Previous evictions                              | 14.8%                     | 14.6%                       |
| Not enough rentals                              | 9.8%                      | 13.4%                       |
| Not a problem                                   | 4.9%                      | 3.7%                        |
| Other   | 3.3%                      | 1.2%                        |

### Unemployment

Respondents were given a variety of reasons that affordable unemployment in Kalamazoo County is a problem and asked to select all that apply. All of the current Head Start parent respondents agreed that unemployment was a problem in Kalamazoo County. The leading response was “wages don’t pay the cost of living (60.7%)”. This was followed by “not enough jobs in the county (50.8%)” and “lack of job skills (49.2%)”.

| <b>Unemployment is a problem because:</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Wages don’t pay the cost of living        | 60.7%                     | 70.7%                       |
| Not enough jobs in the county             | 50.8%                     | 50%                         |
| Lack of job skills                        | 49.2%                     | 43.9%                       |
| Lack of transportation to good jobs       | 32.8%                     | 17.1%                       |
| Lack of child care                        | 27.9%                     | 26.8%                       |
| People don’t want to work                 | 26.2%                     | 24.4%                       |
| Other                                     | 3.3%                      | 0%                          |
| Not a problem                             | 0%                        | 1.2%                        |

## Health Care

Respondents were given a variety of reasons that health care in Kalamazoo County is a problem and asked to select all that apply. Of the nearly ninety-two percent (91.8%) of current Head Start parent respondents who agreed access to health care was a problem in Kalamazoo County, slightly over half identified that “health care is too expensive.” Of those uninsured, nearly two-thirds (60.0%) indicated that health insurance was too expensive and over fifty percent (53.3%) stated that people can’t get insurance. Of the nearly eighty-seven percent (86.6%) of potential Head Start parent respondents who agreed access to health care was a problem in Kalamazoo County, slightly over half identified that “health care is too expensive.” Of those uninsured, nearly two-thirds (60.0%) indicated that health care and health insurance were too expensive.

| <b>Health care is a problem because:</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Health care is too expensive             | 55.7%                     | 51.1%                       |
| Health insurance is too expensive        | 47.5%                     | 41.5%                       |
| Doctor’s don’t accept Medicaid           | 44.3%                     | 50%                         |
| People can’t get insurance               | 29.5%                     | 28%                         |
| Not a problem                            | 8.2%                      | 13.4%                       |
| Other                                    | 3.3%                      | 4.9%                        |

## Heating Costs

Due to significant increases over the past few years in the cost of heating (utilities and deliverable fuel) we asked respondents about high heating and utility costs. Respondents were given a variety of reasons that high heating and utility costs in Kalamazoo County are a problem and asked to select all that apply. Over ninety-eight percent (98.4%) of current Head Start parent respondents agreed that high heating and utility costs were a problem. Respondents identified poorly insulated houses/old appliances(63.9%) and low wages (62.3%) as two of the major reasons for high heating and utility costs, followed by and unpredictable fuel/utility costs (49.2%). All potential Head Start parent respondents agreed that high heating and utility costs were a problem. Respondents identified unpredictable fuel/utility costs (64.4%) and low wages (63.4%) as two of the major reasons for high heating and utility costs, followed by poorly insulated houses/old appliances (58.5%).

| <b>High heating and utility costs are a problem because:</b> | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Poorly insulated houses/appliances                           | 63.9%                     | 58.6%                       |
| Low wages  | 62.3%                     | 63.4%                       |
| Fuel/utility costs unpredictable                             | 49.2%                     | 64.4%                       |
| Poor budgeting by consumers                                  | 19.7%                     | 19.5%                       |
| Other  | 8.2%                      | 0%                          |
| Landlord not paying  | 8.2%                      | 6.1%                        |
| Not a problem  | 1.6%                      | 0%                          |

## Life Experiences

Respondents were asked if there had been a time in the past year when they or someone in their family had experienced any of the conditions listed in the following table. Current Head Start parent respondents were less likely to see a dentist when they needed to because of cost (67.8%). Four in 10 could not afford to see a doctor.

Nearly half of the respondents could not afford to buy food at least once in the past year, though only one in ten current Head Start parent respondents (11.9%) say they actually went hungry, compared to one in five potential Head Start parent respondents (21.3%).

Over two-thirds of the respondents were unable to pay their rent, mortgage or taxes in the past year. Of those unable to pay their rent, one-fourth (25%) were evicted.

One-half of the respondents had not been able to find a job in the past year, and almost one-third had a job and lost it.

Over one-third of the current Head Start parent respondents (35.6%) needed assistance in the past year, but did not receive it compared to nearly half of the potential Head Start parent respondents (45%).

### Hardship Encountered in the Past Year by Self or Household Member

| <b>Table 37 – Hardship Encountered in the Past Year by Self or Household Member</b> |                           |                             |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Health-related Hardship</b>  | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
| Needed to see a dentist but couldn't afford to                                      | 67.8%                     | 55.0%                       |
| Needed to see a doctor but couldn't afford to                                       | 42.4%                     | 41.3%                       |
| Needed to buy medicine but couldn't afford to                                       | 54.2%                     | 37.5%                       |
| <b>Nutrition-related Hardship</b>   |                           |                             |
| Needed food but couldn't afford to buy it   | 49.2%                     | 41.3%                       |
| Went hungry   | 11.9%                     | 21.3%                       |
| <b>Housing-related Hardship</b>   |                           |                             |
| Could not pay the rent  | 47.5%                     | 40.0%                       |
| Had utilities you pay for turned off  | 28.8%                     | 30.0%                       |
| Could not pay mortgage or taxes   | 22.0%                     | 23.8%                       |
| Evicted   | 11.9%                     | 10.0%                       |
| Had utilities landlord pays for turned off  | 1.7%                      | 6.3%                        |
| Had home condemned  | 1.7%                      | 2.5%                        |
| <b>Employment-related Hardship</b>  |                           |                             |
| Looked for work but could not get a job   | 49.2%                     | 52.5%                       |
| Lost a job  | 32.2%                     | 28.8%                       |
| <b>Needed assistance but did not receive it</b>                                     | 35.6%                     | 45%                         |

## Satisfaction with Services

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with a number of community services and conditions. Responses were recorded on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 as very satisfied. The response reported is the average score. Respondents were most satisfied with the “overall quality of preschool” and “local school district” and least satisfied with the “availability of affordable housing.”

| <b>Community service/condition</b>  | <b>Current Head Start</b> | <b>Potential Head Start</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Overall quality of preschool        | 7.54                      | 6.55                        |
| Local school district               | 7.26                      | 6.49                        |
| Availability of health care         | 5.98                      | 5.72                        |
| Overall safety of your neighborhood | 5.65                      | 5.52                        |
| Local police services               | 5.63                      | 5.41                        |
| Overall quality of child care       | 5.57                      | 5.97                        |
| Availability of child care subsidy  | 4.98                      | 5.49                        |
| Availability of child care          | 4.92                      | 5.55                        |
| New housing development             | 4.65                      | 4.70                        |
| Availability of affordable housing  | 3.84                      | 4.39                        |

## Focus Group Summary

In addition to the surveys previously described, two focus groups were held in April and May 2006 to gather information from low-income residents. Focus group participants did not respond to preset categories of needs, but engaged in discussion and dialogue about their experiences and perceptions. A total of 35 people participated in the focus groups. The first focus group was held in April at The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) distribution at the county fairgrounds. All TEFAP recipients were sent a notice of the focus group and invited to participate. Twenty-three people participated in this focus group. The second focus group was held in May at the Head Start Policy Council meeting. All Policy Council members were invited to participate. Twelve members participated in this focus group. The majority of the responses by the Head Start Policy Council focus group can be found in the Head Start Needs Assessment.

The findings in this section are not representative of all members of a population due to the non-random selection of participants and the small sample size.

## Findings

When asked “What is keeping people in poverty?” members of both focus groups mentioned low paying jobs, lack of education, transportation, and family structure. Additional reasons mentioned in the Head Start focus group were the mentality/mindset of low-income people, lack of a stable environment, and lack of support by two parents – both emotional and financial support. Additional reasons mentioned in the TEFAP focus group were not enough affordable houses, too many jobs going outside the country, health care costs, and the rise in energy costs.

The Head Start focus group was asked a series of questions regarding the parents’ role in their child’s education, preschool programs, and Head Start.

When asked “Do you believe it is important for parents to have a major role in the education of their children?” the response was yes. The reasons for this include that children look up to their parents, studies show that academic success equals parental involvement, parents are primary educators of their children from ages 0 – 3years, and listening to children teaches parents.

The focus group was asked: “Do you believe it is important to send your child to a preschool program?” and the response was yes. The reasons include social development (learn how to interact), develop motor skills, and re-iterate home lessons as long as the preschool is not too focused on academics. It is important that children enjoy learning/discovery.

This follow-up question was asked: “Do you think there is too much emphasis on academics in Head Start?” The group was divided in their response to this question. For those who responded yes they stated it is hard to find balance with 3, 4, and 5 year olds in the same class. The focus is on academics rather than learning, memorization versus active learning. Those who responded no stated younger children are able to follow along. Children help each other with concepts/activities. Some felt it was based on the quality of classroom staff and noted the importance of early identification of individual learning issues.

The list generated from the question “What do you think your child should learn in a preschool program to be ready for kindergarten?” included social skills, shapes/colors, name recognition, write name, vocabulary, hold a pencil, first stages of reading, follow directions, manners, share, basic language/speech, verbalize issues/communicate effectively, and simple problem solving.

When asked “Do you believe children are better prepared for entering kindergarten once they have participated in Head Start?” the response was yes. The reasons include all of the above (answers to the previous question), the ability for low income families to give child boost into education, structure – classroom, children enjoy learning, and Head Start promotes parental involvement – builds the foundation for involvement in the rest of their child’s education.

This follow-up question was asked, “What can Head Start do to help parents help their children succeed?” The responses included we need to reach more parents – go where parents are, teach parenting skills/life skills, provide transportation to parent meetings (bus stops, call in if you want a ride), make parents feel valued/appreciated for time spent, view parents as assets/not liabilities, encourage accountability from each other (parent to parent), and help people see the importance of participation.

### **Demographics of Focus Group Respondents**

The majority (75%) of the Head Start focus group respondents were ages 24-44, female (91.7%), and identified themselves as African American (58.3%) or Caucasian (41.7%).

## **Key Informant Survey Results**

Key informant surveys were conducted with community leaders. Forty surveys were received. The majority of the key informants indicated that they had the most contact with families (52.5%) and children and youth (45%) concerning key community issues, followed by senior citizens (37.5%), other (22.5%), and persons with disabilities (17.5%).

Key informants were most knowledgeable about early childhood development (55%), housing (45%), and health and wellbeing (42.5%), followed by self-sufficiency and basic needs (37.5%), neighborhood and community issues (27.5%) and workforce development preparation (17.5%).

The number of clients served ranged from 17 to 38,000. Four key informants did not directly provide services to clients. Fifty percent (50%) of the key informants indicated that the number of clients served over the past three years has increased, for over one-fourth (27.5%) the number of clients served has remained the same, and for 10 percent the number served as decreased. Several key informants pointed out that although their service level remained the same it was due to funding and that the needs had increased.

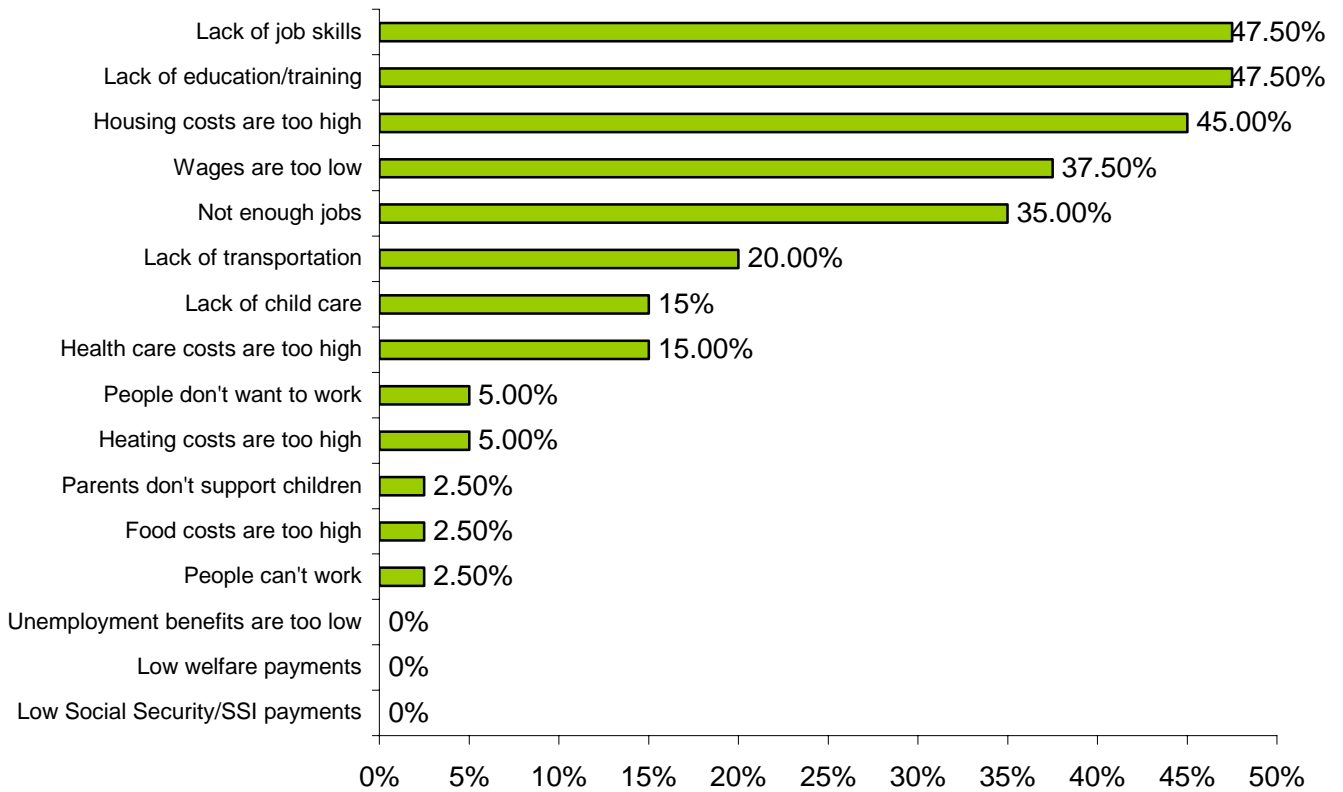
## **Causes of Poverty**

When key informants were asked to select the top three causes of poverty in Kalamazoo County, the results were:

- Lack of job skills (47.5%)
- Lack of education/training (47.5%)
- High housing costs (45%)

The overall ranking of causes of poverty follows.

**Figure 9 - Causes of Poverty as Identified by Key Informants**



## Seriousness of Community Issues

Key informants were asked to rate the seriousness of issues that impact people in poverty in Kalamazoo County. Affordable housing and heating costs were identified as the most serious concerns, followed by access to health care and the number of good jobs available.

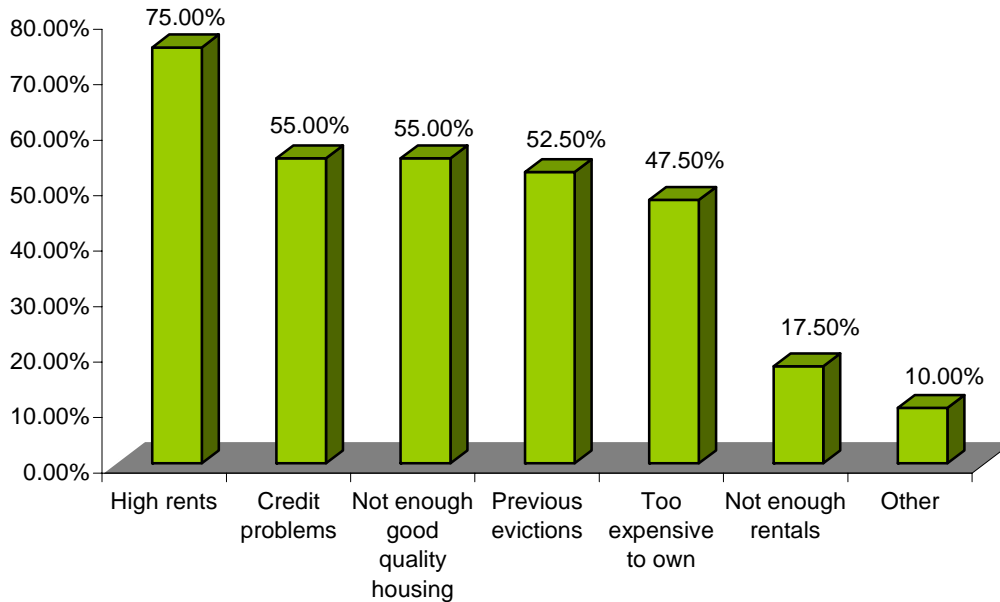
| <b>Table 39 - Community Issues as Ranked by Key Informants</b> |          |          |          |          |          |             |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Sorted from Most Serious to Least Serious (based on mean)      |          |          |          |          |          |             |
| 1 = Not a Problem 5 = Very Serious Problem                     |          |          |          |          |          |             |
| <b>Issues</b>  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>Mean</b> |
| Affordable housing   | 0%       | 2.5%     | 12.5%    | 25%      | 60%      | 4.43        |
| Heating costs  | 0%       | 2.5%     | 12.5%    | 30%      | 55%      | 4.38        |
| Access to health care  | 2.5%     | 0%       | 12.5%    | 30%      | 55%      | 4.35        |
| Number of good jobs available                                  | 0%       | 0%       | 21.1%    | 23.7%    | 55.3%    | 4.34        |
| Affordable quality child care                                  | 0%       | 0%       | 18.9%    | 37.8%    | 43.2%    | 4.24        |
| Wages are too low  | 0%       | 7.7%     | 10.3%    | 41%      | 41%      | 4.15        |
| Transition from welfare to work                                | 2.6%     | 0%       | 36.8%    | 31.6%    | 28.9%    | 3.84        |
| Help for disabled residents                                    | 2.6%     | 0%       | 36.8%    | 39.5%    | 21.1%    | 3.76        |
| Public Transportation  | 5.0%     | 12.5%    | 20%      | 32.5%    | 30%      | 3.7         |
| Support for families   | 5.4%     | 2.7%     | 37.8%    | 29.7%    | 24.3%    | 3.65        |
| Help for older residents                                       | 2.7%     | 5.4%     | 40.5%    | 45.9%    | 13.5%    | 3.62        |
| Cost of food   | 2.6%     | 7.7%     | 46.3%    | 30.8%    | 12.8%    | 3.44        |
| Activities for young people                                    | 0%       | 8.1%     | 54.1%    | 27%      | 10.8%    | 3.4         |
| Education & training   | 7.7%     | 12.8%    | 28.2%    | 35.9%    | 15.4%    | 3.38        |
| Public safety/crime  | 5.6%     | 8.3%     | 44.4%    | 36.1%    | 5.6%     | 3.28        |
| Taxes  | 8.1%     | 27%      | 43.2%    | 10.8%    | 10.8%    | 2.89        |
| Support for businesses   | 8.6%     | 28.6%    | 48.6%    | 11.4%    | 2.9%     | 2.71        |

## Perceived Causes of Community Problems

### Affordable Housing

Key informants were given a variety of reasons that affordable housing in Kalamazoo County is a problem and asked to select all that apply. All key informants agreed that affordable housing was a problem in Kalamazoo County. “High rents” was identified by three-quarters of the key informants to be a cause of affordable housing problems in Kalamazoo County, with “credit problems” and “not enough good quality housing” selected as the next highest response (55% for each). One key informant stated that “we have enough housing but it is not affordable or accessible.”

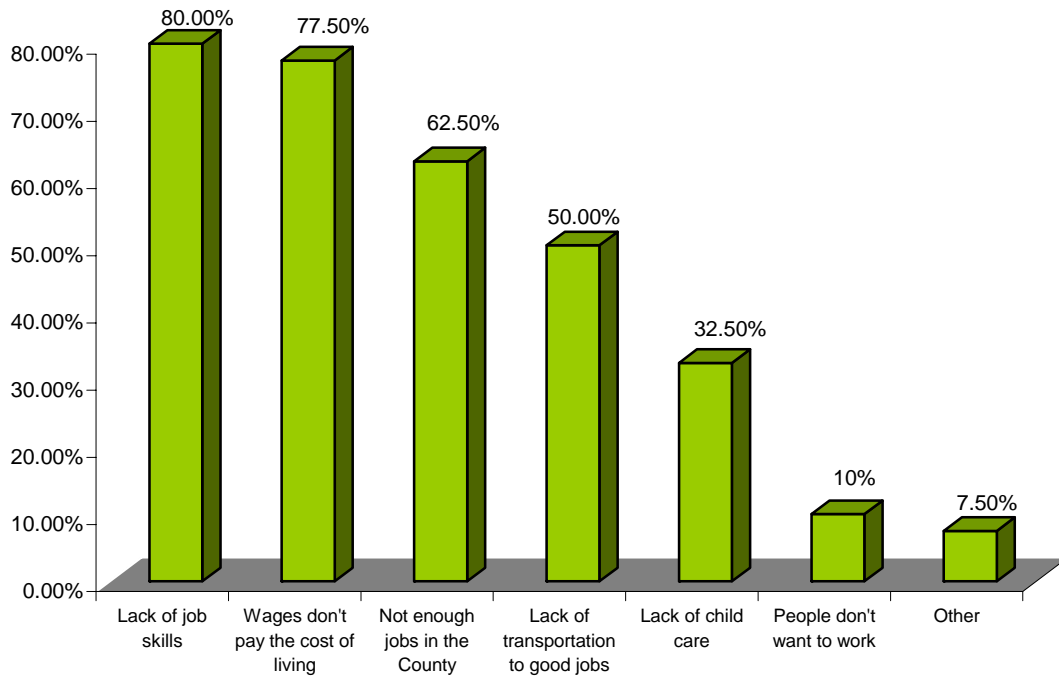
Figure 10 - Key Informant Reasons Heating Costs are a Problem



## Unemployment

Key informants were given a variety of reasons that unemployment in Kalamazoo County is a problem and asked to select all that apply. All key informants agreed that unemployment was a problem in Kalamazoo County. The leading response was “lack of job skills (80%)”, followed by “wages don’t pay the cost of living (77.5%)”. Other responses included “generational poverty” and “I understand people not wanting to work for a wage that is substandard.”

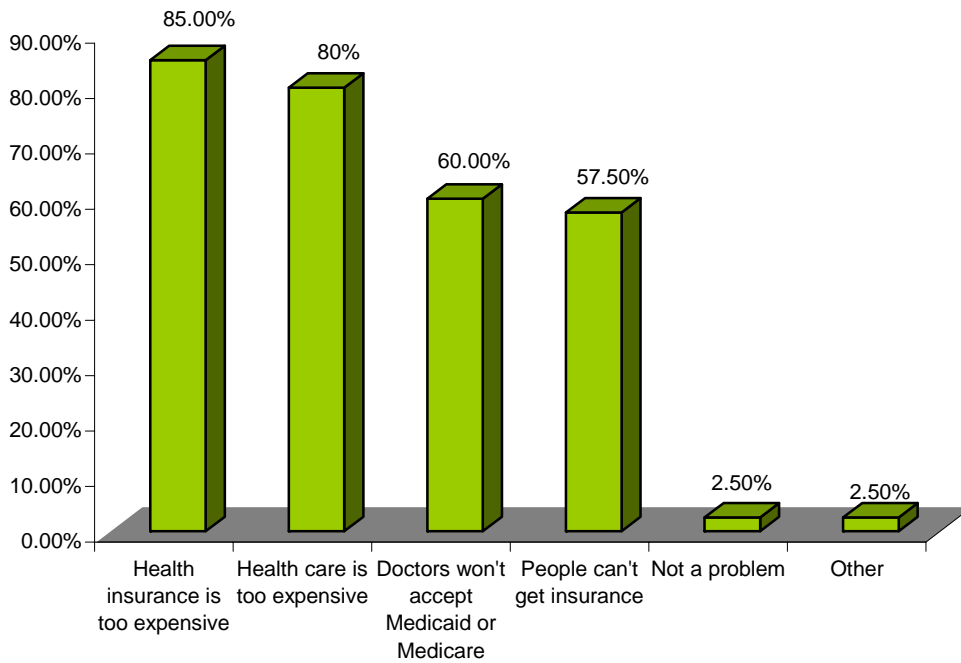
**Figure 11 - Key Informant Reasons Unemployment is a Problem**



## Health Care

Key informants were given a variety of reasons that health care in Kalamazoo County is a problem and asked to select all that apply. The majority of key informants (97.5%) agreed that access to health care was a problem in Kalamazoo County. Over three-fourths (85%) identified “health insurance is too expensive.” Eighty percent (80%) identified that “health care is too expensive.” One key informant stated, “people don’t know how to get insurance.”

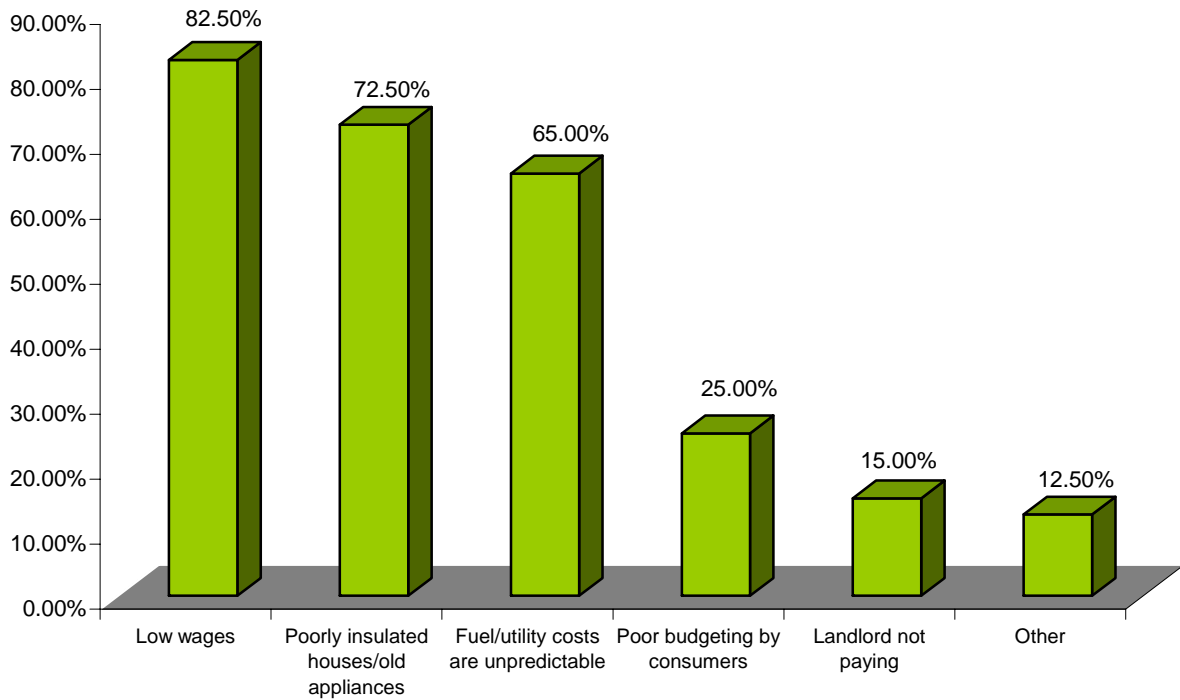
**Figure 12 - Key Informant Reasons Health Care is a Problem**



## Heating Costs

Key informants were given a variety of reasons that high heating and utility costs in Kalamazoo County are a problem and asked to select all that apply. All key informants agreed that high heating and utility costs are a problem in Kalamazoo County. Key informants identified “low wages (82.5%)” and “poorly insulated houses/old appliances” as two of the major reasons for high heating and utility costs. Many key informants commented that fuel costs were “skyrocketing” and were “too high.”

Figure 13 - Key Informant Reasons Heating Costs are a Problem

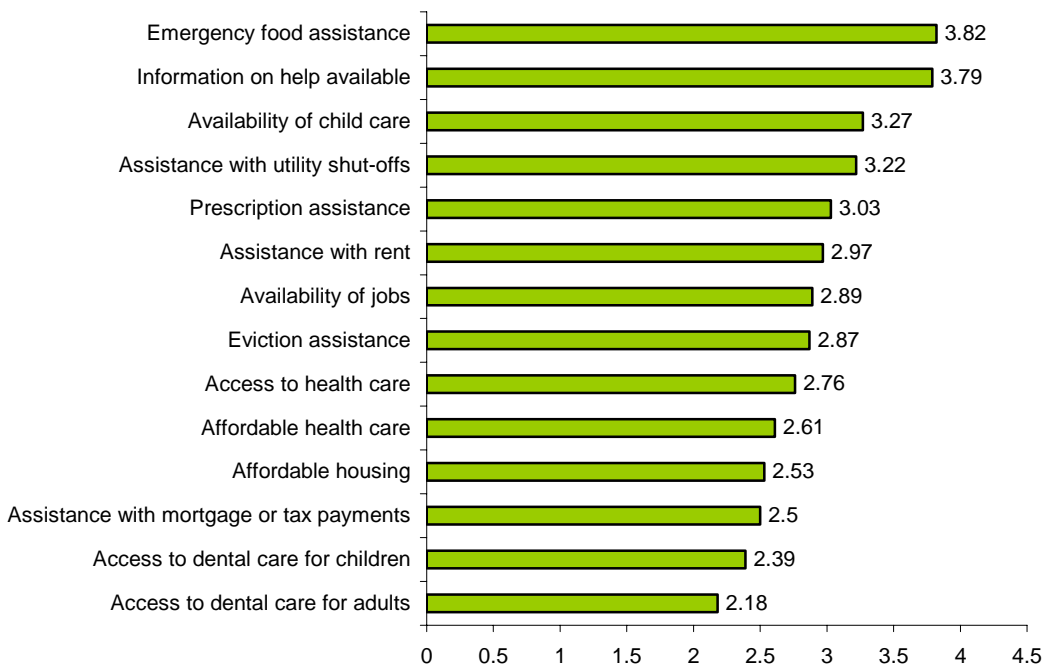


## Availability of Resources

Key informants were asked to rate the availability and adequacy of a number of resources for low-income people in Kalamazoo County. The following scale was used: 1 for unavailable, 2 for extremely limited, 3 for meets minimal need, 4 for available, but not easy to get, 5 for generally available but needs some improvement, and 6 for adequate.

Emergency food assistance and information on help available were rated as available, but not easy to get, while availability of child care, assistance with utility shut-offs, prescription assistance, assistance with rent, availability of jobs, eviction assistance, and access to health care were rated as meets minimal needs. The following figure shows the mean of the responses.

**Figure 14 - Availability of Resources**



## Qualitative Data Comparisons

Current Head Start parent respondents are more likely to have some college or a college degree than potential Head Start parent respondents. They are also more likely to be working or in job training or school. They are more likely to be renters than homeowners or living with others. They are more likely to pay more than \$450 a month for housing costs.

Current Head Start parent respondents who work full time are more likely to have no health insurance than potential Head Start parent respondents. They are also more likely to have a computer at home.

Current Head Start parent respondents are more likely to have needed to see a dentist, needed to buy medicine, and needed food but could not afford it than potential Head Start parent respondents. They are also more likely to be unable to pay the rent and have lost a job. They are less likely to

need assistance but not receive it, although over one-third (35.6%) indicated this had happened compared to nearly one-half (45%) of potential Head Start parents.

Current Head Start parent respondents are more likely to be satisfied with the overall quality of preschool and their local school district than potential Head Start parent respondents and less likely to be satisfied with the overall quality of child care, the availability of child care subsidy, the availability of child care, and the availability of affordable housing.

Both current and potential Head Start respondents identified not enough jobs, low wages, and high housing costs as the top three causes of poverty in Kalamazoo County. Key informants identified lack of job skills, lack of education/training, and high housing costs as the top three causes of poverty.

The number of good jobs available, wages are too low, heating costs, and affordable housing were identified as serious problems in Kalamazoo County by current and potential Head Start respondents, while key informants identified affordable housing, heating costs, access to health care, number of good jobs available, affordable quality child care, wages are too low, transition from welfare to work, help for disabled residents, and public transportation as serious problems.

Over half of the low-income respondents or someone in their household experienced a health, housing, or employment related hardship in the past year. Key informants are aware of the limited resources in the community in the areas people are experiencing hardships.

















## Survey Tools

### Community Needs Survey

The Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services Community Action Bureau is interested in your opinion about programs and services for low-income people in Kalamazoo County. We need your ideas and experience to help us serve the community. This survey is confidential. All of your answers will be grouped together. We will use this information to address the top problems facing low-income people in Kalamazoo County.

- A. How serious is each of the following items in Kalamazoo County? (Please circle your response.)

(Please use the following scale, where 1 = "Not a Problem" and 5 = "Very Serious Problem")

| Item                            | Rating |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------|--------|---|---|---|---|
| Access to health care           | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Activities for young people     | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Affordable housing              | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Affordable quality child care   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Cost of food                    | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Education and training          | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Heating costs                   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Help for disabled residents     | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Help for older residents        | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Low wages                       | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Number of good jobs available   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Public safety/crime             | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Public transportation           | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Support for businesses          | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Support for families            | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Taxes                           | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Transition from welfare to work | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- B. Please check the top **three** reasons you think are the primary cause of poverty in Kalamazoo County.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not enough jobs                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wages are too low                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of job skills                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of education/training                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of child care                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of transportation                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | People can't work (too old, ill, disabled) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | People don't want to work                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Low welfare payments                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Low social security/SSI payments           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Unemployment benefits are too low          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Housing costs are too high                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Health care costs are too high             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Heating costs are too high                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Food costs are too high                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Parents don't support children             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (specify) _____                      |

1. Affordable housing in Kalamazoo County is a problem because: (check all that apply)
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> high rents  | <input type="checkbox"/> credit problems      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> previous evictions                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> not enough rentals   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not enough good quality housing                         | <input type="checkbox"/> too expensive to own |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing is not a problem in Kalamazoo County |   |
  
2. Unemployment is a problem in Kalamazoo County because: (check all that apply)
 

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> lack of child care                                | <input type="checkbox"/> not enough jobs in the county       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lack of job skills                                | <input type="checkbox"/> people don't want to work           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> wages don't pay the cost of living                | <input type="checkbox"/> lack of transportation to good jobs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____                                       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment is not a problem in Kalamazoo County |  |
  
3. Access to health care is a problem in Kalamazoo County because: (check all that apply)
 

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> health care is too expensive                               | <input type="checkbox"/> doctor's won't accept Medicaid or Medicare |
| <input type="checkbox"/> health insurance is too expensive                          | <input type="checkbox"/> people can't get insurance                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to health care is not a problem in Kalamazoo County |   |
  
4. High heating and utility costs are a problem in Kalamazoo County because: (check all that apply)
 

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> low wages  | <input type="checkbox"/> landlord not paying                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> poor budgeting by consumers  | <input type="checkbox"/> fuel/utility costs are unpredictable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> poorly insulated houses/old appliances                               |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High heating and utility costs are not a problem in Kalamazoo County |   |
  
- C. Has there been a time in the last year when you or someone in your family: (check the most accurate answer)
 

|   |                              |                             |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Needed to see a dentist but couldn't afford to?    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Needed to see a doctor but couldn't afford to?     | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Needed to buy medicine but couldn't afford to?     | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Needed food but couldn't afford to buy it?         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Went hungry?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6. Could not pay the rent?                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 7. Had utilities turned off? (Couldn't pay)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 8. Had utilities turned off? (Landlord failed to pay) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 9. Could not pay mortgage or taxes?                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10. Been evicted?                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 11. Had home condemned?                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 12. Looked for work but could not get a job?          | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 13. Lost a job?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 14. Needed assistance but did not receive it?         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

D. For each of the following rate your satisfaction (Please circle your response)

(Please use the following scale, where 1 = very unsatisfied and 10 = very satisfied)

| Item   | Rating |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|--|--------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| The availability of affordable housing in Kalamazoo County that meets your needs | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| New housing development in Kalamazoo County                                      | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Overall safety of your neighborhood  | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Local police services  | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Local school district  | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Availability of child care   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Overall quality of child care  | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Availability of child care subsidy   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Overall quality of pre-school  | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Availability of health care  | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

E. Now we would like to ask you for suggestions on how we can improve conditions in your community.

1. Are there things you need to improve your household’s standard of living? If so, what do you need?
2. Are there things you can do to improve your household’s standard of living? If so, what can you do?
3. Are there things that the Community Action Bureau and other community organizations can do to help you improve your household’s standard of living? If so, what can we/they do?

We would like to know some general information about you that will help us use the results of this survey. Your identity and answers will be **confidential** and we are not asking for your name.

1. Sex  
 Male       Female
2. Age Group: (check only one)  
 17 and under       45 – 64  
 18- 23       65 or over  
 24 – 44
3. Ethnicity/Race: (check all that apply)  
 Asian/Pacific Islander       Black/African American  
 Hispanic       Native American  
 White/Caucasian  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Marital Status: (check only one)  
 Married                       Divorced/Separated  
 Never Married               Widowed  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the highest level of education you have attained? (check only one)  
 Less than high school  
 High school diploma or GED  
 Some college  
 Graduated from college
6. What is your current employment status? (check all that apply)  
 Employed full-time                       Unemployed/not working  
 Employed part-time/seasonal               Disabled  
 Retired                                       Full time homemaker  
 In job training/school                       Other \_\_\_\_\_
7. What community/neighborhood do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is your annual household income? (check only one)  
 \$5,000 or less                       \$30,001 - \$40,000  
 \$5,001 - \$10,000                       \$40,001 - \$50,000  
 \$10,000 - \$20,000                       Over \$50,000  
 \$20,001 - \$30,000
9. Which of the following best describes your current living situation? (check only one)  
 Homeowner                                       Rent an apartment  
 Rent a house                                       Live with family or friends  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
10. How much do you pay each month for rent or mortgage? (check only one)  
 \$150 or less                                       \$551 - \$650  
 \$151 - \$250                                       \$651 - \$750  
 \$251 - \$350                                       \$751 - \$900  
 \$351 - \$450                                       \$901 or more  
 \$451 - \$550
11. How many times have you moved in the past year? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Do you have a bank/credit union account (checking or savings)?  
 Yes                                       No
13. If you are not yet retired, have you put money into a retirement plan, through IRA, 401(k), or work pension in the past six months?  
 Yes                                       No
14. Number of jobs held in the past two years \_\_\_\_\_

15. Do you have health insurance?  
 Yes                     No
  
16. If you have health insurance, what type do you have? (check all that apply)  
 Medicaid                     Insurance from a private company                     Other  
 Medicare                     Insurance from employer
  
17. Do you have a computer at home?  
 Yes                     No
  
18. Do you have an Internet connection at home?  
 Yes                     No
  
19. What language do you speak at home? (check only one)  
 English                     Spanish  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
20. What is the total number of people living in your household? \_\_\_\_\_  
a. How many of these are children 5 years old or younger? \_\_\_\_\_  
b. How many of these are children between 6 and 17? \_\_\_\_\_  
c. How many of these are adults between 18 and 60? \_\_\_\_\_  
d. How many of these are adults over 60 years old? \_\_\_\_\_
  
21. What is your citizenship status? (check only one)  
 U. S. citizen, native                     Non-U.S. citizen, Permanent resident  
 U.S. citizen, naturalized                     Non-U.S. citizen, Temporary resident  
 Other

**Head Start Focus Group Questions**

1. Do you believe it is important for parents to have a major role in the education of their children?
  
2. Do you believe it is important to send your child to a preschool program? Why?
  
3. What do you think your child should learn in a preschool program to be ready for kindergarten?
  
4. Do you believe children are better prepared for entering kindergarten once they have participated in Head Start?
  
5. What is keeping people in poverty?

**Key Informant Survey**

The Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services Community Action Bureau is interested in your expert opinion about programs and services for low-income people in Kalamazoo County. We need your ideas and experience to help us serve the community. We will use this information to address the top problems facing low-income people in Kalamazoo County.

A. Which of the following key community issues do you feel most knowledgeable about? (check all that apply)

- Housing
- Early childhood development
- Self-sufficiency and basic needs (e.g. emergency assistance, food assistance, transportation assistance, utility assistance)
- Workforce development preparations
- Health and well-being issues
- Neighborhood and community issues (e.g. safety, crime prevention, recreation and enrichment opportunities)

B. Which groups of community members do you have most contact with concerning key community issues? (check all that apply)

- Children and youth
- Senior Citizens
- Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- Families
- Persons with disabilities

C. Approximately how many clients did your agency serve in 2005? \_\_\_\_\_

D. How has the number of clients you served over the past three years changed? (check only one)

- Increased       Decreased       Stayed the same

E. How serious is each of the following items in Kalamazoo County? (Please circle your response or highlight it if returning electronically.)

(Please use the following scale, where 1 = "Not a Problem" and 5 = "Very Serious Problem")

| Item                            | Rating |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------|--------|---|---|---|---|
| Access to health care           | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Activities for young people     | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Affordable housing              | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Affordable quality child care   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Cost of food                    | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Education and training          | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Heating costs                   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Help for disabled residents     | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Help for older residents        | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Low wages                       | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Number of good jobs available   | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Public safety/crime             | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Public transportation           | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Support for businesses          | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Support for families            | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Taxes                           | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Transition from welfare to work | 1      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

F. Please check the top **three** reasons you think are the primary cause of poverty in Kalamazoo County.

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Not enough jobs                            |
|  | Wages are too low                          |
|  | Lack of job skills                         |
|  | Lack of education/training                 |
|  | Lack of child care                         |
|  | Lack of transportation                     |
|  | People can't work (too old, ill, disabled) |
|  | People don't want to work                  |
|  | Low welfare payments                       |
|  | Low social security/SSI payments           |
|  | Unemployment benefits are too low          |
|  | Housing costs are too high                 |
|  | Health care costs are too high             |
|  | Heating costs are too high                 |
|  | Food costs are too high                    |
|  | Parents don't support children             |
|  | Other (specify) _____                      |

1. Affordable housing in Kalamazoo County is a problem because: (check all that apply)

- high rents
- credit problems
- previous evictions
- not enough rentals
- not enough good quality housing
- too expensive to own
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- Affordable housing is not a problem in Kalamazoo County

2. Unemployment is a problem in Kalamazoo County because: (check all that apply)

- lack of child care
- not enough jobs in the county
- lack of job skills
- people don't want to work
- wages don't pay the cost of living
- lack of transportation to good jobs
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- Unemployment is not a problem in Kalamazoo County

3. Access to health care is a problem in Kalamazoo County because: (check all that apply)

- health care is too expensive
- doctor's won't accept Medicaid or Medicare
- health insurance is too expensive
- people can't get insurance
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- Access to health care is not a problem in Kalamazoo County

4. High heating and utility costs are a problem in Kalamazoo County because: (check all that apply)

- low wages
- landlord not paying
- poor budgeting by consumers
- fuel/utility costs are unpredictable
- poorly insulated houses/old appliances
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- High heating and utility costs are not a problem in Kalamazoo County

