

2014/15 Community Needs Assessment

ABOUT

Since 1967, Community Action of Greene County, Inc. has been a leader in providing opportunities to individuals and families in and around Greene County. We offer a wide variety of services and programs to help people achieve and maintain self sufficiency. With an annual budget of \$1,833,066.00, current programming includes the Columbia Greene Domestic Violence Program, Weatherization Assistance Program, Wheels for Work auto loan program, Healthy Homes. STEHP (Solutions to end Homelessness Program), HUD Permanent Supportive Housing, and Emergency Food Pantry. When discretionary funds allow, we also provide emergency assistance with rental arrears, utility payments, etc. In 2012 we opened the Pay it Forward Community Thrift Store which allows donations from the community to be sold to earn additional dollars to support agency program. Seasonal programs include the Back to School backpack distribution, Coat and Blanket Drive, Here Comes Christmas and Adopt a Family, Say Yes to the Prom Dress, and VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance).

Our mission statement is *“Creating Opportunities, Fighting Poverty, Changing Lives”*.

For our CSBG program year ended 9/30/14, CAGC served 3,044 unduplicated individuals, and 1,401 families. We work in close partnership with many other service providers in our community in order to reduce duplication of services and maximize resources.

We conduct a needs assessment every three years, in order to collect information and explore the issues facing residents of Greene County. The information collected assists us in analyzing the services we provide, and to identify gaps in service and unmet needs. The assessment serves as a guide to the programs and services we provide.

The survey tool utilized for this report was developed in partnership with the Executive Director and staff of the Greene County Department of Human Services. Paper surveys were distributed to consumers of both agencies, and the general public at the Greene County Youth Fair. An electronic version was also utilized, and was distributed via email to the entire Greene County Networking email list, was publicized on social media, and publicized in the local newspaper.

Our Community

The following data illustrates some of the social and economic conditions present at the time our survey was conducted:

Population

- State of NY – 19,487,052
- Greene County – 48,928

Unemployment

- State of NY – 5.4%
- Greene County – 5.6% (1,209 ppl)

Households in Poverty

- State of NY – 1,048,297
- Greene County – 2,499

Children in Poverty

- State of NY – 22%
- Greene County – 19.4% (1,187 children)

Victims of Violent Crime

- State of NY – 76,451
- Greene County – 58
- Columbia County - 76

Victims of Non Violent Crime (burglary, theft, etc.)

- State of NY – 355,902
- Greene County – 658
- Columbia County – 1049

(data source, New York State Community Action Association Needs Assessment Tool, US Census Bureau Report)

Respondent Profile:

Gender: Of the 154 individuals that responded to the survey, 110, or 71.43% were female. However, based on our last year's Annual Program Report to the Department of state, the percentage of females to males served in our agency was 57% to 42%

Age: The majority (35.06%) of those who responded were between the ages of 26 and 44, with 25.97% between the ages of 55 and 69. 20.13% were between 45 and 54, and seven (4.55%) were above the age of 70. 6.49% of respondents were between the ages of 21-25, and the remainder was under the age of 20.

Relationship to Providers: The majority of those completing the survey were members of the general public (51.38%). 15.60%, or 17 individuals identified as being a current customer of either Community Action or the Department of Human Services, , while 8, or 7.34% identified as being a former consumers. Others included those in the education fields, law enforcement, elected public officials and business community representatives.

Family Type – The majority, 46.75% of respondents identified as belonging to a two parent household, with 19.48% reporting as single, and 16.23% reporting as single parent/female..14.94% reported as belonging to a household with two adults/no children, and 2.6% reported as single parent/male.

Education – 36.36% of respondents reported having high school diplomas, 25.96% reported holding Bachelor's Degrees, 16.88% had Associate's Degrees, 10.39% had GED's and 10.39% and 10/39% did not complete high school

Employment – 42.14% of those completing the survey are employed full time, 40% are unemployed, 15.71% are employed part time, and 2.14% consider themselves underemployed.

Respondents reported living in towns throughout the County, with the majority living in Catskill, Cairo, Greenville, Coxsackie, and Durham.

Key Points from the Data Collected

Employment barriers reported

- Lack of/cost of daycare
- Low pay/lack of living wage
- Lack of jobs
- Lack of transportation

Problems related to education

- Cost of childcare (to attend school)
- lack of computer access at home
- lack of vocational skills or college
- lack of/cost of transportation

Problems related to housing

- Cost of rent
- Cost of utilities
- Lack of housing stock/housing stock in good repair
- Lack of temporary housing

Problems related to food and nutrition

- Lack of income
- Lack of education in nutrition
- Obesity
- SNAP runs out/not eligible for SNAP
- Food resources not available
- Knowledge of how to prepare nutritious food

Problems related to money and/or household income

- Lack of income
- How to save money
- Poor credit and how to address it
- How to prepare for retirement

Transportation

Most of the respondents, 53.9%, were not aware that Greene County had a public transportation system. An overwhelming majority of respondents, 94.04% indicated that they do not use the public transportation system. As for how the lack of transportation affected households:

- Access to employment
- Access to food and or medical resources
- Access to education
- Access to housing

Youth, those under 20, were asked what activities they were involved in when not “plugged in”. Some responses were work and school, outdoor activities, sports. What would they like to do that is not available to them? More family activities, job workshops, temp agencies, GED opportunities, indoor gym/activities for kids.

Of respondents over the age of 60, 71.05% stated they did not currently belong to a senior club, and 78.38% reported not regularly attending a senior club. Activities that filled their time included civic meetings, employment, church, crafts. Services they would like to see available to seniors included enhanced transportation, opportunities for socialization.